

# *Der Bay*

## *The International Anglo-Yiddish Newsletter*

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January 2008

Vol. XVIII No. 1

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### **The XII IAYC Conference: From Czernowitz to Cyberspace and Beyond**

Yiddish, you have come a long way!

Little could the conveners of the Czernowitz Conference in 1908 have anticipated the obliteration of most of the Yiddish-speakers of Europe, the founding of Israel with its concomitant reestablishment of the Jewish Homeland (and its diminishing Yiddish), or the powerful tool of the Internet in producing a "Virtual Shtetl."

Our 12<sup>th</sup> IAYC conference will examine the last 100 years of Yiddish, and look into the future. We most likely can no more predict the next hundred years than the Czernowitz conveners could foretell the actual series of events that characterized the Yiddish world of the 20<sup>th</sup> century—but it will be very exciting.

Specifically, how will the IAYC mark this 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first-ever Yiddish conference? What will be the ways in which the parent organization will assist the hundred local clubs celebrate this centennial? These resources will be emphasized at the conference as well as in the club materials to be sent out.

In anticipation of the worldwide interest in this theme, *Der Bay* has announced that it will act as the clearinghouse in listing any and all local major events commemorating the Czernowitz Conference. It is hoped that not only will it bring more attention to the event, but assist the planners in avoiding conflicting dates. It will also act as a resource to identify those key speakers and entertainers.

**San Diego—Here We Come!**

The 2008 12th IAYC Conference Site Selection Committee has come up with a winner. La Jolla is the premier section of San Diego, and the conference will be situated in the beautiful La Jolla Marriott Hotel located within a short walking distance from the Jewish Community Center, restaurants, an exclusive outdoor mall and the skywalk spanning the busy twelve-lane highway. The setting is breathless.

La Jolla is the location of the world renowned Salk Institute, the University of California at San Diego, and the world-famous Scripps Memorial Hospital with its Research Center.

For scenery, the nearby shoreline is the most memorable of La Jolla's districts. La Jolla is home to one of the most spectacular waterfronts in Southern California, with remarkable caves, cliffs, beaches and sunsets.

Norman Sarkin and his committee are getting off to the fastest start of any conference to date. He came forward in Cleveland and said that La Jolla wants the next IAYC conference!

Norman is a Yiddish-speaker from South Africa and belongs to a S.D. South African Jewish Club. He said that because of Mexico City's closeness we may anticipate a notable attendance from Mexico's Yiddish-speaking community.

Major events will appear in the separate listing: [www.derbay.org/calendars/kalendar.html](http://www.derbay.org/calendars/kalendar.html)

# Why Have A Yiddish Culture Club

by Meyer Zaremba

## WHEREAS:

Jews have been around for thousands and thousands of years.

## AND WHEREAS:

Over this period of time they have found themselves scattered over the vast expanse of the world and have had a diversity of experiences wherever they have taken root.

## AND WHEREAS:

These experiences have been mirrored in the various languages that they have evolved through origination and/or adaptation

## AND WHEREAS:

For the past 1000 years, Jews living in certain areas of Europe have "recorded" these experiences in the language that they spoke, a language that we now call a YIDDISH CULTURE

## AND WHEREAS:

The lives of so many of our forbears have been etched in that Yiddish language and in that YIDDISH CULTURE

## AND WHEREAS:

It might justifiably be maintained that what they dreamed, can be found in the words of the language that they spoke to each other, in the stories and jokes they told each other, in the songs they sang together with each other, in the expressions they created to enrich communication with each other, in the poetry they visualized to lift the souls of each other, in the literature they evolved to elevate their level of humanity, etc., all of which make up **YIDDISH CULTURE.**

## AND WHEREAS:

The past has significance not just as an historical record but, in ways in which we may not completely understand, significance for the future.

## THEREFORE:

It is incumbent upon us to try to keep YIDDISH CULTURE as it has been lived through its language and cultural creativity, alive and that our Yiddish Culture Club is important, not just for the nurturing of feelings of nostalgia, but for the purpose of, in our small way, contributing to keeping the memory of our people alive through keeping their language and their culture alive.

# Kadimah activitetn

fun Alex Dafner

Kol Hakavod fraynd Fishl. grusn fun undz in Melburn un farshraybt undzere hige Yidishe Web zaytlekh far *Der Bay* un der Czernowitzer konferents efsher:

<http://home.iprimus.com.au/kadimah/>  
<http://www.sholem.vic.edu.au/>  
<http://www.radio.sbs.com.au/language.php?language=Yiddish>  
<http://www.3zzz.com.au/staging/default.aspx>  
<http://www.yidtzayt.com.au/>  
<http://home.iprimus.com.au/kadimah/gvardie.htm>

## Yiddish Radio Program: Australia

SBS Yiddish radio program has an excellent news coverage that includes, current events, cultural activities, historical, health religious and Holocaust themes.

Alex Dafner is in charge of the programming in Melbourne. He was born in Lodz, Poland in 1949, and migrated to Australia in 1959 with his parents and settled in Melbourne.

He taught and studied in Melbourne, London and as well as in the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Alex joined the SBS Radio's Yiddish Youth Program in 1980.

Alex is also a teacher of Yiddish and President of the "Kadimah" Jewish Cultural Centre and Vice President of the Holocaust Museum and Research Centre in Melbourne.

Ruth Leiser is also on staff. She was born in Vilna, in 1935, migrated to Australia in 1951 and joined SBS in 1988. Ruth is active in the Holocaust survivor community and is a regular guide at the Sydney Holocaust Museum. As part of the Museum's education program about the Holocaust, she speaks to groups and schools.

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SBS Radio Sydney	SBS Radio Melbourne
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Crows Nest	South Melbourne
NSW 1585	VIC 3205
Australia	Australia

e-mail: for both locations  
[yiddish.program@sbs.com.au](mailto:yiddish.program@sbs.com.au)

tel. 02-9430-2828

tel. 03-9949-2121

## YIDDISHE HEFTN

Cercle Bernard Lazare

From: Yvette METRAL <alyvet@noos.fr>

We are proud to present our monthly magazine—the only Yiddish publication in Western Europe. It has existed since 1996 with the support of The Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah.

Yiddishe Heftn features articles dealing with cultural and literary issues (essays, poems, fiction, letters.) and articles concerning important Israeli political events and distinguished Jewish individuals.

The magazine publishes articles by French and foreign writers and scholars in presenting information about new publications on Jewish matters, conferences, etc. Here are some articles published in our recent issues

2006 Jan.: Our 100th issue!

- Milka Szulsztajn: “100 numer Yiddishe Heftn un 10 yor ekzistentz” (100th issue and 10 years of existence)
- Mordkhe Lerman: “Men greyt zikh tsu di kumendike valn in Israel” (Preparing oneself for the forthcoming polls in Israel)
- I. Schreibman: “Yidish in Keshenev” (Yiddish in Kishinev)
- Leyb Kvitko: “Tsu aldi gute yor”, lid (“Happy New Year”, a poem)
- Ekiga Fishbein: Benn – “der kinstler fun yidishn banem” (Benn - painter of the yiddishkayt)

Claude Hampel, co-founder and editor-in-chief of YIDDISHE HEFTN, has conceived a beautiful layout. The full-color magazine covers display artworks by Jewish artists such as Moulé Ben-Haim, Ilex Beller, Alain Kleinmann, Benn, and others. The articles are supplemented with black and white illustrations. Owing to C. Hampel's love and care, YIDDISHE HEFTN offers the reader a high-quality publication, designed to keep alive the Yiddish heritage and culture.

Though we have readers in France, Israel, Poland, Lithuania and Russia, we look forward to receiving new subscribers. To keep the flame alive, we would be happy to welcome new writers from abroad who wish to contribute by publishing in our magazine.

We would be grateful if you promoted YIDDISHE HEFTN among your members, your students, and any Yiddish lovers. New articles and YH magazine covers will soon be available online.

To subscribe: see our site: [www.bernardlazare.org](http://www.bernardlazare.org)  
or contact us at: [bernardlazare@noos.fr](mailto:bernardlazare@noos.fr).

## A Garment Worker's Legacy: The Joe Fishstein Collection of Yiddish Poetry by Goldie Sigal

This Yiddish link should be in your list of Yiddish links. It was recommended by YIVO's Brad Hill, and is on the *required reading list* of many Jewish and Yiddish courses at universities. The website is entitled: A Garment Worker's Legacy: the Joe Fishstein Collection of Yiddish Poetry. The URL for this site is:  
<http://digital.libray.mcgill.ca/fishstein>

“The Joe Fishstein Collection of Yiddish Poetry, housed in the Division of Rare Books and Special Collections at McLennan Library, McGill University, Montreal, Canada is considered to be one of the finest private collections of its kind in the world.

This collection consists of some 2300 Yiddish works, most of which is poetry, and also includes many rare volumes, most of which have been preserved in vintage condition by beautiful hand-made jackets that were fashioned by Joe Fishstein, the Bronx garment worker who amassed them.

This extraordinary collection, which also includes unusual ephemeral items, such as albums of early 20th century postcards, photographs and trade union memorabilia, offers rich opportunities for research to scholars of Yiddish literature and 20th century social history.

The catalogue, A Garment Worker's Legacy, edited by Goldie Sigal, was published by McGill University Libraries as volume eleven of the Fontanus Monograph Series in 1998 (ISBN 0-7717-0511-5). A major exhibit of highlights accompanied the book launch in January of that year.

From this collection at McGill Redpath Library it went January to March 1998. The book and exhibit were prepared by editor/curator Goldie Sigal, who also acted as editor and curator of the present online catalogue and exhibit.

“The first section, the Catalogue, enables the user to search and access the catalogue entries by electronic means. It also includes the scholarly apparatus found in the published catalogue, as its Introduction, Indices & Table of Name Equivalents.

“The second section, the virtual Exhibit, consists of the actual exhibit, augmented in content, and strengthened with hyperlinks and enlargement capacities. Photographs and audio-visual material of the 1998 exhibition have been included.”

## "Kids & Yiddish: Ode To Oy!"

The Drama Desk Award-winning National Yiddish Theatre, Folksbiene, presents the musical funfest for families, "Kids & Yiddish: Ode to Oy!" The multi-media show that mixes Jewish folk traditions with popular culture, introduces new characters, new songs, satire of the latest fads on TV, and some of the long-running series' greatest hits.

Directed by Joanne Borts and co-written by Borts, Michael Fox and Zalmen Mlotek (who is the music director) "Kids & Yiddish: Ode to Oy!" performs on 5 consecutive Sundays, December 2 - 30 at The JCC in Manhattan. All shows are at 11am. Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$17 for children 12 and under, call Ticket Central at (212) 279-4200. For more information visit [www.folksbiene.org](http://www.folksbiene.org).

It features Lily Shoretz and Aaron Mayer, both aged 13, 9-year-old Sarah Mlotek, and Josh Berk, aged 12. The adult cast members are; puppeteer Jenny Romaine (Circus Amok and Obie-winning Great Small Works), Joanne Borts ("Hello Muddah, Hello Fadduh" "Fiddler on the Roof" on Broadway with Topol), and the Yiddish music expert and conductor Zalmen Mlotek. (Zalmen and Joanne were at the Cleveland IAYC conference).

In this cultural escapade, we meet a sweet-natured ventriloquist's puppet who breaks things off with her longtime partner (who's a bit too controlling). While she travels the world, meeting people from different cultures and walks of life—and after learning traditional Eastern European dance, playing Are You Smarter than a Finfyoriker? being on American Iddle Diddle Didel, learning about colors on Gray's Anatomy, and interviewed on tsvantsik / tsvantsik—she returns to her old friend to renew their partnership, but this time as an equal!

Mixing a rich tapestry of musical styles—from Beethoven and the blues, klezmer and calypso—"Kids & Yiddish: Ode to Oy!" celebrates the classical and contemporary, the old and the new. The performance is 90% English and 10% Yiddish. It is a silly and enriching family tradition that introduces children to the joys of the Yiddish language and to the culture's rich and still relevant theatrical traditions.

Last season's show was rated "hilarious!" by The New York Times. It said that "The show is like a wacky borscht belt-style revue, but much hipper than anything your grandmother might have enjoyed."

In its 93rd consecutive season, the National Yiddish Theatre, The Folksbiene, is America's only professional Yiddish theatre and the longest-continuously producing Yiddish theatre-company in the world.

## Dr.. Sheva Zucker Writes

Exec. Dir. – League for Yiddish

In Troim Katz Handler's article "Journal Entry (Memoir) Aug. 14, 2007 International Association of Yiddish Clubs" (p. 8) she mentions that Kadye Molodowsky was omitted from the 9-volume *Leksikon fun der nayer yidisher literatur* "like so many women writers." I, too, was shocked when I first went to look up Kadye Molodowsky in the *Leksikon* and couldn't find her.

The reason has nothing to do with discrimination against women. I was told, if I recall correctly, by Dina Abramovitch o'h, the legendary librarian at YIVO, that a number of Yiddish writers chose to be omitted because the encyclopedia was made partly with German reparations money, and they wanted no part of it. Others, most notably Isaac Bashevis Singer, are omitted as well.

On p. 14, as a note to Dovid Kunigis's "How Do You Say...?" you refer to VZMAY (Vi zogt men af Yidish) as "an online activity of Binyumen Schaechter." Binyumen coordinates this project, but it is a project of the League for Yiddish.

## Merle Levy Writes

I went to Beys Rivkah, originally in Brownsville but relocated to Flatbush—next door to Erasmus H.S. on Church Avenue—a K-Seminary school for girls. Seminary was training for the high school graduates who would go on to teach.

I attended 6th-9th grade before moving to Calif. My school day was 8 hours, including lunch. Because I enrolled so late (to avoid busing from Brownsville to Coney Island), my Hebrew / Yiddish classes were "little red schoolhouse" style, with the girls who enrolled after 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> Grade.

First, was the Hebrew / Yiddish curriculum at 9 a.m. with davening. We learned from the "Khumesh", memorizing the verses and Yiddish translations. We had Hebrew and Yiddish primers, and their accompanying grammar lessons, and learned Jewish history, (really Midrash). Classes went until 12:30 when we went to lunch and "bentshed" Birkat HaMazon. Secular classes, held after lunch, were intense, for we would have to take the Regents just like the public school students.

I still correspond with the Hebrew / Yiddish teacher. I've worked to keep up the Yiddish, and still write in near perfect penmanship. (I'm lost when trying to read & write in transliteration!)

# The Jewish Nose As News (Revisited)

by Harold Ticktin

The stories about Hallie Berry and her "Jewish nose" and about the Amsterdam soccer team that has chosen 'Jews' as its squad name and sometimes dubs itself "The Noses" point to the belief that a Jew can be identified by the shape of his or her nose. In Yiddish, that shape is called "hoykerdik," hooked. The idea that Jews have hooked noses, and the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, are two myths that never go away.

It may be that Jews share that view subconsciously. In 1996 at the Jewish Museum in NY there was an exhibit titled *Too Jewish? Challenging Traditional Identities*. One format featured Casts of Noses of Jews in the Art World with row after row of Jewish noses, with a special showing for Barbara Streisand. An Israeli scholar, Isaiah Shacher, wrote a book, *The Jew by His Looks*. It contained the entry "The Jewish Hook Nose." He was the first to identify the anthropologist who measured 4,000 Jewish noses.

Later Sander Gilman, a Jew and general historian, wrote *The Jew's Body*, a study of the medical "science" that once held that Jews walked "funny", tended toward hysteria and transmitted syphilis while remaining immune to it. Gilman coined the term "nostrility" for "hoykerdik."

Around the time of the Jewish Museum's exhibit I wrote an article on the subject, but I only had the data in Max Weinreich's definitive textbook, *College Yiddish*, specifically chapter 23. Since then, the subject has been amplified considerably. The text has stood the test of time since 1946.

Weinreich's chapter 23 *Di Yiddishe Noz*. opens the discussion with this somber note: "It is said that according to the form of the nose one can tell who is a Jew and who is not, by the "hoykerdik" shape. Is this true? What do the anthropologists say?"

One anthropologist (Fishberg, then unnamed) measured the noses of 4,000 NY Jews. This is what he found". The results are tabulated: Weinreich's coda is predictable: From this one cannot tell who is a Jew and who is not by the shape of the nose.

Women %	Men %	Nasal Form
59	57	Straight
14	22	Short
13	14	Hooked ("Jewish")
14	6	Wide

That demonstration has become a lodestone of Jewish learning or trivia. The paths are too tangled to recite in detail. Maurice Fishberg came from the same academic tree as the more famous Franz Boaz. Fishberg was the first Jewish anthropologist and his magnum opus was a monumental 1912 volume entitled *The Jews*. Fishberg was a man of his time.

According to the academic mores of that time, Jews were defined as a race (no longer the case). He utilized the tools of the trade as then understood, and used calipers to measure 4,000 Jewish noses, in 1911. The results are on page 78 of his book, which was published in 1912. Once Fishberg was identified, I thought that would be the end of the story. It wasn't."

My wife and I went to Trieste, Italy to follow in the steps of James Joyce (1904-1924), where the yet to be famous novelist taught English in a Berlitz school. We learned that Kafka was a valued employee of the Assicurazioni Generali, Europe's largest insurance company, founded by Triestian Jews. The company keeps a large complimentary dossier on Kafka, though he worked in Prague. Also Freud came to Trieste as a student to investigate the sex organs (never found) of eels at the Hapsburg Maritime Institute.

Only Joyce is important here. A permanent exhibition about the author of the 20th century's most important novel notes the books he kept in his personal library including *The Jews* by our esteemed Maurice Fishberg. The fact that *The Jews* was of interest to Joyce titillated me. Leopold Bloom did not appear out of thin air, not even airy Dublin. Nor did Joyce's interest in Hebraism (vs. Hellenism) come solely from books.

In Trieste Joyce first encountered Jews in all their sizes and shapes, physical and intellectual, not least of whom was the well-known Italian-Jewish author, Italo Svevo (born Ettore Schmitz) who was in Joyce's English Berlitz class. Svevo became a student and protégé of Joyce, who counseled him frequently on writing. The class was also attended by the future Admiral Nicolas Horthy, then an Austro-Hungarian naval officer, who became the Fascist leader of Hungary during WWII.

Who expected that Fishberg's 4,000-nose survey would keep popping up. Joyce, Fishberg, Gilman and Shacher had repeated news stories about "The Jewish Nose." The first was about Agnes De Mille who complained of the Jewish nose she inherited from her grandmother, thus obliging her to dance instead of starring in Uncle Cecil's films. As to Joyce, Ulysses's Leopold Bloom may owe more to Trieste, along with Fishberg's book, and a page in *College Yiddish*.

## IAYC Mailings

The International Association of Yiddish Clubs is the only major organization of, by, and for Yiddish clubs.

This is the list of Yiddish materials sent to the IAYC clubs during the last 10 years, not necessarily in chronological order:

1. **MAYN OYTSEY, GEMS OF YIDDISH ART AND FOLKSONGS**, cassette with text;
2. **YIDDISHE KULTUR**, one issue.
3. **DER ONHEYB**, journal, twice.
4. **SIMKHE**, poetry book By Troim Katz Handler, published by IAYC.
5. **MAYN SHEYNE MAYDL** by La Jolla Yiddish Club
- 5a. **MAYN SHTETELE BRONZVIL**, book published by IAYC. Sylvia Schildt.
6. **MAKING LOVE IN YIDDISH**, Sid Weinstein
7. **TOPLPUNKT**, Yiddish journal published in Israel.
8. **KUMT TSUM TISH**, poems, Sarah Moskovitz.
9. Peretz Miransky, poems and fables from **TSVISHN SHMEYKHL UN TRER**, translated by Barney Zumoff
10. **A SHEYNER GELEKHTER**, Ruth Levitan (romanized).
11. **POTPOURRI**, stories, poems, skits, Sid Weinstein.
12. **LOMIR REDN YIDISH**, Fannie Yokor.
13. **DER YIDN FRAYND**, Leonard Prager, Yiddish and romanized.
14. **TAM-TAM**, 2 issues.
15. **MOYSHE NADIR**, Sid Weinstein, Romanized
16. **HUMOROUS YIDDISH POSTCARDS**.
17. **PEARLS OF YIDDISH SONGS**, Chana and Yosl Mlotek
18. **THE YIDDISH TEACHER** beginners Yiddish book by Goldin
19. **Onkelos stories**, Yiddish, romanized. '04.
20. **YENTL**, romanized.
21. **MIDSTREAM**, summer '04.
22. Cookie Blattman's album plus booklet.
23. **HASKORE**, radio play, '05.
24. **VI ZOGT MEN AF YIDISH?** 3 mailings.
25. Vocabulary for **SOTN IN GORAY**, chaps 1-10
26. Vocabulary for **MAYN TATNS BEZDN SHTUB**, ch. 1-10
27. **YIDDISH PHILHARMONIC CHORUS CD**
28. **AFN SHVEL, VAYTER**, Dr. Sheva Zucker's talk plus cassette and precis.
29. 3 tapes from Teaneck '06 conference: Eugene Orenstein, Jack Berger, Frank Handler.
30. **DI VESHIN**, booklet based on Bashevis. romanized and translated.
31. Goldie Gold's book plus Kathryn Hellerstein's cassette and handout from Cleveland, '07.

## Using IAYC Materials

Member clubs range from those that use only all Yiddish materials with Hebrew/Yiddish oyses to those who wish strictly transliterated materials. Thus, to satisfy as many as possible with their varied needs, we have tried to balance mailings so that each time there is material for the different knowledge levels of Yiddish.

We hope to include a questionnaire in which individual clubs can voice their levels and needs. Whenever possible we then shall send materials to match the individual club's needs.

Roz Baker, the long-time leader of the highly successful Minneapolis Yiddish Club, has run sessions at our conferences with the theme "Sharing Yiddish Club Program Ideas". Here are several formats that our member clubs have used successfully.

Dink Holzman's Milwaukee club makes great use of celebrating the holidays with potluck bring-alongs. This can be extended to include the wonderful Yiddish-English recipes that Ethel Patt has been running in Toronto and published in *Dos Bletl*. Your editor has long recommended using them in the following manner:

First read the Yiddish through and learn the ingredients in Yiddish. Then go through the recipe—step by step. Finally several of your own members will comment on the steps and ingredients. A discussion will ensue as the merits and shortcomings are set forth. This lively debate can be carried on in Yiddish or using as much Yiddish as the individual is able to use.

Short scripts of comic scenes like the ones Ed Goldman has produced are fun and easy to use. Ed has a poem in this issue and a list of some of the skits published years ago in *Der Bay*. The discussion on that page is a supplement to this page.

Cassettes and CDs that are sent by IAYC make good material for meetings, and can be lent out to members. This is part of an idea that Fishl has touted, and that is to start a lending library of club magazines, newsletters, books, etc. Some will belong to members and should have their names attached. The ones that belong to the club should be so marked.

Finally, if your group has some special material or ideas, send them in so that we can share ideas and thus make IAYC even more meaningful.

## Questions and Answers in the Matter of Love)

From the "Forverts", Sept. 12, 2007—  
Fun der khaznte Khane Slek, a yidishe tokhter  
Ot entfert zi, in "Hilkhesh Libe", af  
farsheydene shayles fun mentshn mit tsores

Tayere khaznte,

Ikh voyn itst aley, zint mayn Beni iz geshtorb  
mit 2 yor tsurik. Ikh gib zikh an eytse un bederekh-  
klal [generally] ken ikh oyskumen aley bay tog:  
ikh shpil kortn mit khaveyrim, gey vi a frayviliker  
[...own accord] in mayn shil, farbreng mit mayne  
eyniklekh. Di problem iz bay nakht: ikh ken nisht  
shlofn un bin tomid ibergheshrokn. Ikh farbarakir di  
tir, loz ongetsundn ale likht in der dire un shpil di  
radyo zeyer hoykh, di ganovim zoln hobn moyre  
arayntsukumen. Afile mit dem alem, ken ikh nisht  
shlofn--ikh shrek zikh, az di rotskhim [murderers]  
veln mikh khapn. Vos zol ikh ton?

"Moyre"

Tayere "Moyre"

Dos lebn bayt zikh ven di froy oder der man  
shtarbt, un ikh bin tsufridn vos ir geyt vayter on  
mit ayere aktivitetn bay tog. Ober vi falt aykh ayn  
[occur...], az ir kent aynshlofn mit hele likht,  
hoykhe muzik un a barikade bay der tir? Farshaft  
zikh a gute alarm-sistem, vos derkent fremde  
bavegunen un vos varft a likht oyf a droysndikn  
mentshn. Bashtelt oykh a "panik"-knop, vos shikt  
glaykh a signal tsu ayere kinder un tsu der politsey.  
Ikh bin zikher az azoy arum vet ayer hoyz b'emes  
zayn bavakht [guarded] un ir vet kenen ruik  
shlofn.

"Forverts" -- Sept. 12, 2007

Tayere Khaznte,

Ikh hob bakumen a blitspost fun mayn balebos, vos  
er hot, aponem, gevolt shikn an andern ongeshtelten  
[employee]. Loytn brivl, hob ikh itst a khshad  
[suspicion], az er hot a gelibte. Ven ikh volt keynmol  
nisht gezen dos blitsbrivl, volt ikh gezogt, az er iz a  
vunderlekher, getrayer mentsh, velkher hot a gute  
batsiung mit zayn froy. Vos zol ikh ton? Zol ikh im  
lozn visn? Zol ikh zi vorenen?

"Mit Khshad"

Tayere "Mit Khshad",

Tut gornisht. Vos volt getrofn ven ir zogt oys dem  
balebos' froy vegn ayer khshad un se shtelt zikh  
aroy, az er hot a terets farn shlekht-opgeshiktn  
blitsbrivl? Kent ir zikh forshteln vos fara mayse es  
volt zikh farkokht? S'iz meglekh, az ir hot antdekt  
az epes iz do nisht in ordenung, ober gedenkt:  
nisht alts vos me zet iz vor [factual]. Es ken zayn  
az s'iz do a sibe farn blitsbrivl, vos ir zent nisht  
mesugl [able] tsu farshteyn. Vi es shteyt in peyrek  
[chapter in Mishnah] mishpet [judge] yedn eynem  
tsum gutn.

"Forverts" -- Sept. 12, 2007

Tayere Khaznte,

Ikh hob itst a batsiung [relationship] mit a man, vos  
ikh hob im zeyer lib. Ober es tut mir vey, vos  
mayne noente haltn az er iz nisht genug gut far  
mir. Ikh bin tomid geven fun di beste studentn. Ikh  
hob graduirt funem kaledzh un yurisprudents-shul  
mit di beste tseykhns, un ikh farnem a gute  
pozitsye un fardin gut. Joe iz keyn mol nisht  
gegangen in kaledzh un hot beser lib tsu arbetn mit  
zayne hent, bal-melokheven [craftsman]. Er hot  
shoyng gearbet vi  
a tekhniker far der bine.

Ikh bin organizirt un motivirt; Joe nemt zikh nisht  
iber [take to heart] un arbet ven se glust zikh im.  
Ikh bin a poet un muziker; Joe redt gramatish nisht  
rikhtik un zingt falsh. Fun destvegn, fil ikh zikh  
noent mit im un tsugebundn tsu im--ober farvos  
ken ikh es nisht derklern mayn mishpokhe. Er iz  
zeyer vikhtik far mir, un ikh vil zikh nisht antoysn  
in im [be disappointed]. Zayt azoy gut un helft mir.

Tsu Gut?

Tayere "Tsu Gut"

Ikh halt nisht az a mentshns gutskeyt [goodness]  
iz farbundn mitn nivo [level] fun zayn bildung  
[education] oder dergreykhungen [achievements].  
Ikh zorg zikh nor, az oyb ayere lebn-shteygers [life  
styles] zenen azoy andersh, vet ir un Joe zikh filn  
umbakvem in ayere farsheydene krayzn. Hot ir  
beshutfesdike shmuesn [chat together] af a tiferer  
madreyge [level]? Halt ir, az er iz genug intelligent  
tsu farshteyn aykh? Zent ir genug tolerant tsu hobn  
derekherets far im, er zol nisht darfn zikh baytn?

Oyb azoy, gedenkt, az dertsung [education]  
farglaykht men nisht mit gutskeyt. Gutskeyt iz  
glaykh tsu gutskeyt.

Shayles p.3

# Mama Was a Nice Lady

by Philip Fishl Kutner

Mama was very judgmental. She had a rating system—a combination of a few words, but *nice* was at the core.

Whenever mama wanted to say something positive she used the term, *nice*. It could refer to the weather (nice day), her children (nice boys), egg layers (nice hens), Roosevelt (nice man) and Clark Gable (nice actor).

Words like *fair, good, great, wonderful, magnificent, and tremendous* were not part of her vocabulary. These adjectives were replaced by *really* and *very*. The rating system went like this.

Really very nice	A
Very nice	B
Nice	C
Not nice	D
Not very nice	F

They say, "All rules have an exception." Well, mama's exception was *so, so*. It was a non-judgmental—a non-committal reply. She used it often in late life when we boys asked her, "Mama, how do you feel". Her answer was always, "so-so."

**Mama was a nice lady.**

Editor: Fishl Kutner: Founded Jan. 1, 1991

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## On Religion

Mama had no wiggle room. Her response was, "If it is written somewhere, then He meant it to be". However, when we boys asked, "Mame vu iz es geshribn?" The reply was always, "Azoy iz es. Der zeyde hot dos dertseylt".

Mama had only one exception. It came much later in life after all the boys were married, and after the grandchildren had been born. It happened when she was called up to the Torah. Up until then, it was strictly a no-no.

When she sat down after having finished saying the "borukh atos", she was beaming like I had never seen before. Her first statement was, "It's too good for men only." She went to shul every Saturday thereafter.