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# south african Jewish Report

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## Local extremists endorse antisemitic Mapping Project

TALI FEINBERG

South African Jewish leaders and antisemitism experts are angered by anti-Israel organisation Africa4Palestine's endorsement of the Mapping Project in Boston, Massachusetts, which has been called "antisemitic" and "dangerous".

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) is monitoring the project, which lists the names and addresses of Massachusetts Jewish groups, including schools, community fundraisers, and shuls.

The project claims these organisations are promoting "local institutional support for the colonisation of Palestine" and "other harms". Using dots and lines in different colours, it maps everything from a centre for

people with disabilities to student groups, to newspapers, to Jewish-run charities, and even a Jewish art centre. The project has been denounced across the American political and denominational spectrum as antisemitic.

Even the international Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement officially distanced itself from the project, saying it "violated a key guideline" of the movement.

But on 23 June, Africa4Palestine officially endorsed the project. It was among only 15 organisations worldwide that did so in a statement titled "Reject repression: support the Mapping Project!"

The statement was shared on Facebook by a number of other South African anti-Israel organisations. The local Media Review Network (MRN) also posted articles in support

of the Mapping Project on its Facebook page and website. MRN also labelled local Jewish organisations "Zio-Nazis" in 2021.

Local antisemitism expert and emeritus professor of history at the University of Cape Town, Milton Shain, says, "In endorsing the Mapping Project, Africa4Palestine illustrates how easy it is to cross the thin divide between anti-Zionism and blatant Jew-hatred. In this action, we see a crude escalation of efforts that can only be deemed antisemitic. Overwhelmingly, it's Jewish organisations that are targeted for 'disruption and dismantling'. Jews are nefariously identified with the use of age-old antisemitic tropes, including Jewish power and wealth."

David Saks, the associate director of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies, agrees. "Evidently, some BDS factions no

longer feel the need even to pay lip service to the fiction that they are only against Israel, not Jews," he says. "Instead, Jews are being openly identified as 'the enemy'."

Benji Shulman, the director of public policy at the South African Zionist Federation, reiterates this, saying, "The Boston BDS Mapping Project is antisemitic, and Africa4Palestine's support fits its hate-fuelled mandate."

"This is nothing less than an endorsement to 'cancel' a whole community for who they are rather than what they believe. In my opinion, it's antisemitic at its core," says the Community Security Organisation's Jevon Greenblatt.

"Just as importantly, it's a clear attempt to highlight a specific group of individuals and organisations for targeting, whether that be politically or physically. Publishing information like this is tantamount to a call to action, but leaving it up to the individual to decide what that action is going to be. How many followers will choose to use violence, much like ISIS does when calling on its supporters to take matters into their own hands?"

The Anti-Defamation League (ADL), the global leader in combating antisemitism, says "many familiar antisemitic tropes are woven into this project. This includes myths of Jewish wealth, power, and control through the project's inordinate focus on revealing the identity of Jewish philanthropists, doctors, and media." It scapegoats the Jewish community by claiming that Jews are overwhelmingly responsible for a range of societal ills, and advocates for the isolation and shunning of the entire Jewish community and those who interact with it. "Any campaign that blames and scapegoats Jews as a community for perceived ills is, by definition, antisemitic," the

organisation says.

"In all, about 400 organisations are named," says the ADL, pointing out that the project intends to "expose and isolate" Jewish community institutions. "This BDS Boston-endorsed project includes a disturbing and antisemitic call to 'dismantle' and 'disrupt' most of Boston's Jewish community, and concludes with a thinly veiled threat that 'every entity has an address, every network can be disrupted'."

The BDS National Committee (the Palestinian leadership of the BDS movement) said in a statement that "the project unstrategically targets and provides names and physical addresses of institutions and individuals, and promotes messaging that includes phrases such as 'resistance in all its forms'. By having BDS in your group's name, and yet promoting messaging which indirectly advocates for armed resistance and associating with groups that do, you have violated a key guideline of our movement."

It threatened the Boston BDS chapter that it would no longer be able to use the BDS brand if it continued. This would follow its expulsion of Africa4Palestine, which was booted out of the international organisation because of a sexual-abuse scandal.

"The [Mapping] Project is, as Seth Moulton [of the United States House of Representatives] said, 'an antisemitic enemies list with a map attached,'" wrote *Washington Post* columnist Dana Milbank on 15 June. He said the project had "plunged headlong into outright antisemitic bigotry, conspiracy theories, and implicit invitations to violence. It's just the latest manifestation of an antisemitic canard alleging secret, hidden Jewish control of, and the buying of influence over, academia, the media, corporations, charities, law enforcement, and more."

**Continued on page 11**

## Heading to the Games



Photo: Gina Smit

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2 SA JEWISH REPORT

Argentina suspects Iranian-owned  
plane of terrorism activity

An Argentine prosecutor is investigating the circumstances behind an aircraft flown by an Iranian pilot that is being held in Buenos Aires, the site of multiple terror attacks on Jewish sites believed to be co-ordinated by Iran in recent decades.

A Boeing 747 plane arrived in Argentina from Queretaro, Mexico, on 6 June, with a crew of five Iranians and 14 Venezuelans.

Two days later, the cargo plane operated by Emtrasur, a Venezuelan state-owned company, flew from the main Argentine international airport, in Ezeiza, a city in the Buenos Aires province, to Montevideo, the capital city of Uruguay. But once there, authorities refused to receive it. The plane has since been held in Ezeiza.

Argentine security forces inspected the aircraft on its return, finding that it was carrying automobile parts. Argentine Federal Judge Federico



Villena ordered an investigation. Last week, the Israeli embassy in Paraguay argued that the plane, which was at one point owned by Iran's Qeshm Fars Air, could have been trafficking illegal arms.

Facial recognition tech helps rocker  
identify family members

Rockstar Geddy Lee found never-before-seen photos of his mother's family thanks to a new effort to apply artificial intelligence facial recognition technology to photographs from the Holocaust.

Lee's mother, Holocaust survivor Mary Weinrib, died last summer at 95. But the researchers of the AI technology, From Numbers to Names, managed to find a photo of Weinrib from her time at the displaced persons camp in Bergen-Belsen – a photo that then led Lee to find other photos of



Geddy Lee attends the 13th Annual Artists for Peace and Justice Fundraiser in Toronto, September 2021

his mother's extended family from the Yad Vashem photo collection.

Created by Daniel Patt, a Google engineer and the descendant of four Holocaust survivors, From Numbers to Names allows users to upload a photo and then suggests 10 other photos with faces that could be a match. The technology is now being used by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's photograph collection.

Torah Thought

To give or to take



Rabbi Rodney Richard  
– Emmarentia Shul

According to our sages, Korach made many valid claims about the worthiness of the Jewish people.

Chief among them was that he reckoned that, as all the children of Israel were holy, ought there not be more prominent designations for Moshe and Aharon?

The Torah doesn't delay in informing us of Korach's fatal flaw. "Vayikach Korach [and Korach took]", are the introductory words of this week's parsha. Korach was a taker!

His motive in inciting the rebellion against Moshe and Aharon was predicated on self-interest. He coveted the title and position of high priest. His political speak, albeit seasoned with the doctrines of democracy and equality, was, at its core, self-serving and self-promoting. In spite of his great wealth and standing in the community, Korach desired a bigger slice of the *kavod* (glory) pie.

The story of Korach, as with all episodes recounted in the Torah, resonates in our time as well.

Rabbi Eliyahu Dessler posits that at any given moment, a person is either a giver or a taker. In every act, in every word, and in every thought, a person is devoted either to lovingkindness and giving or to selfishness and taking. One is either motivated by the divine tendency to care and share or animated by an animal urge that focuses on the self. Dessler goes one step further. He maintains that one can give when taking, and one can take when giving. He uses the example of an egotistical philanthropist who donates to charities so that his name and benevolence will be broadcast to the world. In this scenario, he actually takes when giving. Conversely, he cites the case of the holy Chofetz Chayim, who opened a bakery to make a livelihood. Once he had earned enough to sustain his family, he immediately closed the shop, as he didn't want to adversely affect other local bakeries. There, he so clearly gave while taking.

Korach may have, overtly, appeared to be a giver – championing the rights of the masses – but ultimately, he was a taker – effectively campaigning for his own *kavod*.

This deficiency in Korach's character disqualified him from a leadership role amongst the Jewish people.

In stark contrast, Moshe and Aharon, who epitomised humility, selfless benevolence, the promotion of unity, and the pursuit of peace, were the perfect candidates.

(As an important aside and following the release of the final instalment of the state capture report last week, we should pray that Hashem blesses our country that its leaders follow the Torah's model of leadership – one of

service and giving to the people.)

The next time we act, speak, or even think, let's pause and consider whether we're giving or taking and if we're giving,

whether we're giving wholeheartedly and with a pure motive. Every moment of our lives is an opportunity to promote a more peaceful, wholesome, and kinder world!

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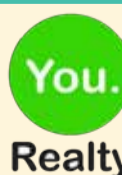
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According to tradition, the three Shabbat meals (Friday night, Saturday lunch, and Saturday late afternoon) each begin with two complete loaves of bread. This "double loaf" (*lechem mishneh*) commemorates the manna that fell from the heavens when the Israelites wandered in the desert after the exodus. The manna did not fall on Sabbath; instead, a double portion would fall before the Sabbath to last for both days.

\*one hour ahead of SA time

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# Engineer uses expertise in search for child

TALI FEINBERG

When six-year-old Khayaletu Magadla fell into a sewer manhole in Soweto on 12 June 2022, Johannesburg’s Darryl Epstein felt he had to help find the little boy. A trained civil and structural engineer, Epstein is the founder and managing director of Delta Scan. The company specialises in the digitisation and inspection of infrastructure using high-tech solutions such as drones, robots, and artificial intelligence. “I felt it was my responsibility and duty to assist,” says Epstein. “I came across an article two days after he had fallen into the manhole, and read how they were sending divers in and trying to get through a difficult tunnel infrastructure. “Having inspected a major underground culvert system last year that runs through Houghton and Orange Grove, I knew we could add value to the search efforts, having successfully used unmanned vehicles and drone systems to get through complex routes. We had to act fast to have the best chance of finding him alive.”

Epstein reached out to every news outlet he could find which was covering the story, “and within a few hours, we were put in touch with Robert Mulaudzi, the spokesperson for the EMS [Emergency Medical Services]. When he heard that we wanted to get involved, he called an emergency meeting with all rescue staff and appointed us in charge of inspecting the lines. We had to postpone our current projects and get all hands on deck to help with the search.”

Regarding the environment that Magadla fell into, Epstein says, “Initially, we all thought it was a stormwater line, which would have minimal water in it during the winter months. It’s common to find storm water covers missing and kerb inlets damaged, and it’s where we normally do condition audits on fairly accessible underground tunnels. We brought our ground-inspection vehicles to go into the route, but when we got to the manhole on day one, we realised this was going to be a highly complex inspection.”

They used robots with cameras to get a 360 degree view of the pipeline under and above water, searching 18 hours a day for about 10 days. This was faster and safer than sending divers into the tunnels.

“The tunnel was an active sewerage system removing waste from half of Soweto with constant, fast-flowing water and toxic gases,” says Epstein. “With a sewerage system of this

size, there’s no ‘off button’, and we had to work around the heavy flow. The chance of the boy’s survival dramatically decreased, and we went back to building a remote-controlled boat system with specialised cameras to move through the tunnels while above the water.” On the first day, “we thought there may be a chance we would find him alive”, he says. “After discovering it was a toxic sewerage system, we knew the chances of finding him alive were slim. The tunnels go more than 20 metres below ground level in some places and the oxygen supply is very low. When divers entered, they had to wear closed-circuit breathing systems and even with that, they couldn’t stay down there longer than 40 minutes. But at this stage, we didn’t know the make-up of the system and if there were any chambers or blockages along the route.”



Darryl Epstein in an interview with ENCA

The emotional toll on Epstein and his team was enormous. “Our day-to-day job is inspecting infrastructure and doing engineering audits. On this project, we had the family of the boy with us begging for answers on a daily basis. We had the community rioting over the state of open manholes. We were surrounded by police, fire fighters, EMS teams, government officials, and at times more than 100 emergency personnel on-site. There was a constant urgency and desperation in the air to find answers as quickly as possible.

“It was also freezing working around the sewerage system every night, but we had a job to do and stayed focused on the objective. I have three little children of my own at home around

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the same age as Khayaletu. Every day, I was asking myself what if this was my own child [G-d forbid]? I would want to move heaven and earth to find them, so we needed to do the same for this kid.” Delta Scan uses unmanned drones and robots to inspect the condition of infrastructure in

we’ll definitely be working alongside them in the future. They have asked us to teach them how to use the tools and provide training so that they can manage disasters more effectively in the future.” Tragically, the search for little Khayaletu was eventually called off. “It was heartbreaking,” says an emotional Epstein. “We gave it our all, and managed to cover about 13km of sewer lines all the way to the treatment works. I wouldn’t be able to sleep at night knowing we had missed something or didn’t finish the job. The search has now been handed over to Johannesburg water and police units to determine other possibilities.”

The last time the *SA Jewish Report* spoke to Epstein, he and his team were working on restoring buildings at the University of Cape Town after the devastating mountain fires of April 2021. Asked about how that project is going, Epstein says, “Since the UCT fires, we have had numerous meetings to discuss rehabilitation work, and our digital models have been used to plan the restoration.

“Over the past few months, we have inspected more fires than I can count,” he says. “We have been called in to do forensic audits on many of the fire-damaged houses in Houghton which have been reported on in the past few weeks [as a result of a serial arsonist on the loose] and have inspected major fire claims around the country.”

Asked if he would volunteer his services pro-bono again, Epstein says, “Absolutely. It’s not often that we have the opportunity to give back to the community. Especially in rural environments and informal settlements, there’s limited access to services and unfortunately, much of the infrastructure we take for granted in the suburbs is non-existent there.

“In this particular situation, it’s not just one manhole that was left open, there are many, many more. Every time a manhole is installed, it doesn’t take long for it to be stolen for scrap metal,” he says. “In some places, it took hours to access the tunnels because the covers and grids had to be welded closed. The city is now looking at ways to use composite materials with little scrap value.”

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# Overturning Roe v. Wade a symptom of endemic violence against women

OPINION

JOANNE FEDLER



I won't lie. I slumped when I heard the news.

A generation of feminists my age feel like our life's work has just been obliterated.

In the 1990s, as a young, inflamed women's rights activist, I was part of the Reproductive Rights Alliance in South Africa, which advocated for the legalisation of abortion as part of our strategy to protect women from all forms of violence.

In 1996, South Africa legalised abortion within the first 12 weeks with the Choice in Termination of Pregnancy Act. South Africa's globally progressive law was a humane response to a national study about the dangers of unsafe abortion to women's lives. Since then, the morbidity of young

...we must have the freedom to choose. Anything less is a form of reproductive slavery – and there's simply no equivalent oppression men can suffer.



freedom to choose. Anything less is a form of reproductive slavery – and there's simply no equivalent oppression men can suffer.

I am, of course, enraged.

But let's stop and think clearly for a moment.

The overturning of Roe v. Wade is only a symptom of systemic endemic violence against women and minorities. Imagining this is the end is a mistake. We're nowhere close to that ground zero.

It's not only women's rights that will continue to be tenuous and unstable going forward, but

those of people with disabilities, the poor, the LGBTQI (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex) community and our climate. The whole ugly violent patriarchal system is implicated here. Access to contraception and gay marriage are the Supreme Court's next targets. The right to reproductive choice can't be separated from the multitude of attitudes, laws, and systems that devalue the powerless.

Rich women will continue to be able to afford to pay their private doctors to terminate unwanted pregnancies (as mistresses,

wives, and daughters of the wealthy have always done, sometimes funded by the man responsible). But what of the rest?

This is not a judgement about anyone's personal view on abortion (we all have one). But we cannot confuse our personal opinion based on our spiritual beliefs with a law that tells someone else what to do when they have an unwanted pregnancy. Men also benefit enormously from a woman's right to choose because unprotected sex could always potentially lead to child-support claims.

Even though the resonance of this travesty has universal implications, it's unlikely South African women's rights are endangered. Equality is the founding principle of the Constitution, against which all legislation is measured, unlike in the US, where the cult of individualism informs its policy,

evidenced in its allegiance to "the right to carry arms" in spite of endless shootings.

Rage fuels revolutions, and we are on the brink of systemic transformation.

In the past 50 years, feminism and gender equality have evolved. It's one revolution to be granted a right you never had, and quite another to have one you've busted your life for taken away. In this time, we've raised fierce children in the #metoo generation. We are stronger, wiser, and a force to be reckoned with.

The amplification of catastrophe always drives an evolutionary leap. When we understand that it's the system that needs fixing, we'll know that when things fall apart, the system is rearranging itself and reconfiguring all its relationships.

The question for each of us is how we can show up on behalf of a fairer system that honours and protects all human and non-human rights (including the reproductive rights of women). Without understanding all these intersections, the future of our planet is at risk and the "right to choose" will become irrelevant.

• *Joanne Fedler is the internationally bestselling author of 14 books, a women's rights and environmental activist, and ocean swimmer. [www.joannefedler.com](http://www.joannefedler.com)*

women through unsafe abortions has decreased by almost 90%.

On 24 June 2022, the landmark decision of Roe v. Wade passed down by the United States (US) Supreme Court in 1973 was overturned by a bench stacked with three judges Trump nominated and appointed: Neil Gorsuch, Brett Kavanaugh, and Coney Barrett. Half a century of constitutionally protected access to abortion for women and girls in the US has been wiped out.

Now, instead of the younger generation turning its attention to solve climate change and progress equal rights, they, in Sisyphean exhaustion and frustration must claw back rights previous generations fought so hard to attain while the backstreets become clogged with sepsis and morbidity.

I have spent my life advocating for an end to violence against women. It comes in many guises beyond sexual and domestic abuse. A law that takes away anyone's right to live their best life – in whatever form they choose – is violence.

Part of the struggle the women's movement has faced has been to wrestle the language of "sanctity of life" from the state and church and reframe abortion as a health and safety issue for women.

It is – and must be – an equality conversation. If women cannot access safe abortion, we will have unsafe ones. If we don't want a pregnancy (the consequence not of our actions alone, but a sperm-wielding participant) because we cannot afford a child, have mental or physical health issues, the pregnancy was rape-induced, or we have planned a life that doesn't include motherhood, we must have the

## Our bodies don't belong to us, but to Hashem

OPINION

RABBI GIDON FOX



The recent ruling of the Supreme Court of the United States (Scotus) upturning Roe v. Wade has certainly set the cat amongst the pigeons. To my limited understanding, the scope of its decision was whether or not there was an inherent constitutional right to an abortion.

The ruling, which held that no such constitutional right exists, turns the decision and regulations surrounding abortion to state legislators.

Naturally, the intricacies of such an argument are beyond my expertise. However, this article will endeavour to give some insight into this very weighty and important discussion from a Torah point of view.

It's important to note that this article shouldn't be viewed either as definitive, authoritative, or comprehensive. Any personal question regarding abortion should be had in consultation with medical specialists and competent halachic authorities.

Unlike secular law, which often walks in lock-step with the mores of the time, Jewish law is absolute. It's predicated on ancient legal precedent which doesn't change as societies' values become what some would call more progressive.

One of the arguments expounded by pro-abortionists is that it's the woman's body, and no other individual or group of individuals should have a right to dictate what she does to her body.

There is an interesting law brought down in the Mishna. If a person were to admit before a Beth Din that they owe another individual a certain amount of money, they would be obliged to pay, based on their own admission. On the other hand, if the person would confess to a violation whose penalty was corporal punishment, they would not be believed and no

punishment would be exacted.

The reason for the discrepancy is simple. A person's money belongs to them in toto, and they may do with it as they wish. Consequently, in admitting liability, they are choosing to dispose of their money by giving it to someone else, something which is their right to do.

On the other hand, our bodies belong not to us, but to Hashem, and therefore we don't have the right to harm them since they don't belong to us. As such, any surgery undertaken, be it by a man or a woman, needs to be viewed first through the prism of halacha.

Though most surgeries would be without issue, there are some which would require greater halachic analysis and determination. In an extreme example, a man wouldn't be allowed to have a finger amputated on the grounds that it's his body, and he may do with it as he wishes. The same is true for the question of abortion, exacerbated naturally by the fact that it deals with the termination of the pregnancy.

As is well known, Judaism values life above all else (excepting for the three cardinal sins). Therefore, in considering the permissibility of an abortion, the value of life likewise plays a key role.

All authorities agree that if the pregnancy is threatening the life of the mother, an abortion is

to be performed. The status of the mother is that of "certain life". In other words, we know with absolute certainty that she's a viable human being.

The foetus, on the other hand, isn't certain, for the woman may, G-d forbid, miscarry, or the child may be still-born. As such, one sets aside the life of possible in favour of the life of definite.

It's noteworthy that Rabbi Moshe Feinstein states that the primacy of the mother's life over the child's is up until the head crowns. At that point, both lives have to be viewed as equal, with the birthing process itself, naturally fraught with risk (thankfully mitigated significantly today due to science) placing both mother and baby on an equal footing.

The difference of opinion amongst later authorities revolves around the question of how one defines "threat to the mother's life".

According to certain authorities, most notably the aforementioned Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, it must be that the mother will actually die as a consequence of continuing with the pregnancy.

Others, notably the famed Tzitz Eliezer – Rabbi Eliezer Yehuda Waldenberg – was of the opinion that any threat to the woman including serious emotional and psychological harm may also be factored in to the decision regarding abortion. Naturally, such a determination would need to include not only the doctor and rabbi, but social workers, psychologists, and the like.

In sum, therefore, the Torah doesn't ban abortion. It views the life of the mother as paramount. Abortion is allowed to protect that life, and if it is to be undertaken, must be done under the direction and guidance of a competent halachic authority.

• *Rabbi Gidon Fox is a dayan on the Johannesburg Beth Din and the rabbi of the Pretoria Hebrew Congregation.*



# Pro-abortion doctor laments backslide in women’s rights

NICOLA MILTZ

An elderly, ex-South African Jewish doctor this week recalled the perilous time when he was one of a few doctors countrywide performing illegal abortions. He risked everything – from his reputation to his professional career – to help hundreds of women from all walks of life who were desperate and had nowhere else to turn.

More than 30 years ago, this doctor, who asked to remain anonymous, felt forced to pack up his family, close his thriving Johannesburg practice, and head for the United Kingdom (UK) because things became “too hot and uncomfortable” regarding his activities.

He started a new practice from scratch in a country that didn’t frown upon abortion and definitely didn’t consider it a crime.

He said he chose to perform abortions in South Africa in spite of the fact that it was illegal because he “had a heart” and believed women deserved a choice.

“I always disagreed with the anti-abortion policies of the day. I didn’t think it was fair on women, it wasn’t fair that they had no choice,” he told the *SA Jewish Report* this week from his UK home.

He believes the United States (US) Supreme Court decision last week to reverse the Roe v. Wade ruling would take the country into a “backslide in time reminiscent of South Africa” when he had to hide the fact that he was helping women make extraordinarily personal life choices.

The court’s decision made the constitutional right to abortion, upheld for nearly a half century in the US, no longer valid.

“Americans are mad. Half of them want to sell guns to children to commit mass murder, and the other half say it’s criminal to terminate unwanted pregnancies. It’s all mad,” the doctor said.

“The people deciding these laws past and present have absolutely no idea of the suffering and anguish caused by women who run around like blue-arsed flies desperately seeking help. I’ve seen this.”

In the height of apartheid and for more than 30 years, he opened his practice to women of all races when

virtually no one was willing to do so. These women had nowhere to turn, but they had heard about a certain Jewish doctor who was empathetic to their situation. Women would come and find him from all over the country and beyond.

Abortion was legalised in South Africa in 1996, during the nation’s transition from apartheid to democracy, under the Choice on Termination of Pregnancy Act. The doctor had already left the country a number of years before this came into effect. This revised law drastically reduced the number of deaths caused from botched backstreet abortions.

The doctor said he knew that people in the community spoke of him, mostly behind his back, and there were murmurs and rumblings of his clandestine activity. However, though the rumour mill included speculation that he was arrested and struck off the roll, this wasn’t the case. “Suspensions were around, but it was hearsay,” he said.

“As far as I’m aware, not one of my patients ever suffered, all lived, and thankfully, those who desired to do so went on to have children later on in their lives. My patients were grateful beyond words,” he said.

He left on his own accord at a time when “things were becoming hot for me. I knew it would be better to work beyond the rules of South Africa where what I was doing was seen as a crime”.

The writing was on the wall. “I may have been helping others in dire need, but who was going to be there for me when I was in dire need? I realised I had little choice.

“I sweated a lot. It was tough. I was fully aware of the dangers to myself and my family and how badly things could have turned out,” he said.

Looking back, “Do I think I did anything wrong? No. Do I feel guilty? No.”

The only regret he has is the countless women he wasn’t able to help because they hadn’t heard of him at the time. “I’m just sorry for



the people who didn’t know me and couldn’t be helped,” he said.

To this day, he has never divulged his methods and never will. “Only G-d knows, but what I will say is that none of my patients passed away, and all went on to live normal lives.”

“They never risked their lives by coming to me – I was the one to take all the risk,” he said. “For me, it was terribly risky, and I knew no one would come to my defence.”

So why did he do it?

“I felt in my heart there was no one around to help these women, and I thought I’d take that chance. There were hard-hearted doctors. I wasn’t one of them. Some would call it a terrible crime, others would say I saved their lives, their marriages, their jobs. Different people believe different things – it depends which side you’re on. It’s emotive and

complicated. This isn’t a simple matter.”

He has chosen to remain anonymous because he said that coming out now would be unfair to all his patients who relied on his discretion.

“People came to me from all over. Some were well known. There’s no benefit in disclosing anything. That’s all in the past.” Even the late Winnie Madikizela Mandela contacted the doctor seeking help for an acquaintance of hers involved in the then banned African National Congress.

It’s unknown what effect the US Supreme Court decision will have on South Africa, if any.

“Women should have a choice, but that’s my belief,” said the doctor, who feels sad that “the world finds itself here”.

## Days after US ends right to abortion, Israel eases restrictions

PHILISSA CRAMER – JTA

Israelis seeking to end pregnancies will no longer be required to appear before an approval committee, go to a hospital for medication, or be asked invasive questions about why they want an abortion.

A Knesset committee approved the new regulations on Monday, 27 June, just days after the United States Supreme Court overturned the 50-year-old Roe v. Wade precedent guaranteeing Americans the right to abortion.

The regulations fall short of the full abolition of the hospital-based approval committees that Israeli Health Minister Nitzan Horowitz had said he wanted, saying that their existence curtails women’s autonomy even if they approve virtually all requests. Eliminating the committees entirely would require the Knesset to pass a law, a tall order at a time when the government is in disarray.

Still, Horowitz said the changes showed that Israel was moving toward more access to abortion at a time when the US was rolling it back. He had said in May after a draft of the Supreme Court’s ruling leaked that overturning Roe v. Wade would be “a fatal blow to human rights”.

“The move by the US Supreme Court to deny women control of their bodies is a backward move, oppressing women and setting back the leader of the free and liberal world by 100 years,” Horowitz said in a statement. “We’re in a different place, and today we’re taking big steps in the right direction.”

The committees will remain under the new regulations, as will rules limiting abortion

to certain situations that some women have said forces abortion-seekers to lie. Abortion is still legal only within the first 12 weeks of pregnancy.

But how applicants interact with the committees will change dramatically. Instead of having to appear in person, people seeking abortions will be able to submit their requests online. They also won’t be asked about their use of contraception, as the form that has been in place since 1977, when Israel legalised abortion, has asked.

Under the new regulations, which will go into effect in three months, people seeking abortions also won’t have to meet a social worker as part of the process, although they will be offered access to one. And if they are able to terminate their pregnancy using medication, possible in many early abortions, they will be able to do so under the oversight of a community health clinic.

Previously, they had to go to hospitals to receive the medication.

Israel legalised abortion four years after Roe v. Wade in the US. Since then, even as religion looms large in Israel, no significant movement to outlaw abortion has taken root there. In 2014, legislators signed off on allowing government funds to pay for abortions.

Many American Jews have mobilised in response to the Supreme Court ruling on Friday, 24 June, overturning Roe v. Wade. The National Council of Jewish Women, for example, is raising donations for a fund that will support women who must travel to obtain an abortion. Abortion restrictions or bans have gone into effect already in at least eight states, affecting millions of women.

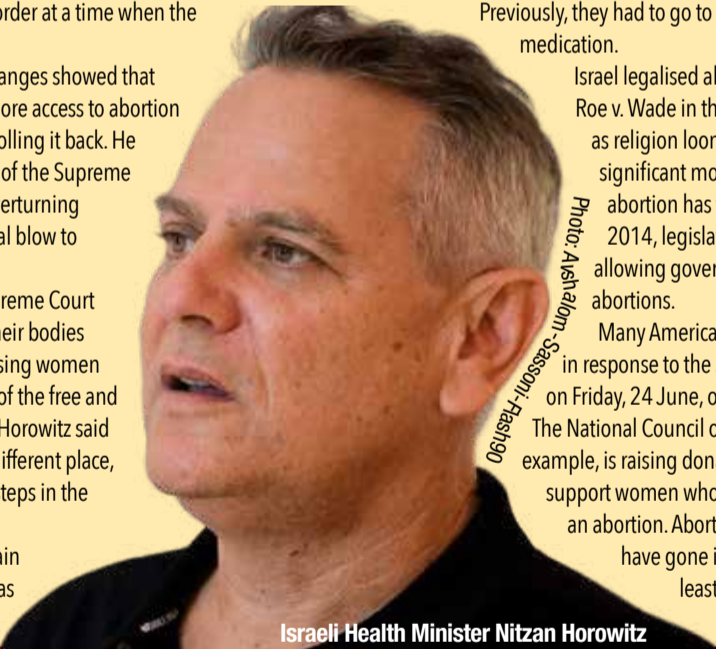


Photo: Avishalom Sasson-Flash90

Israeli Health Minister Nitzan Horowitz

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# Out of the darkness

I cannot help thinking that we’ve been thrown back into the dark ages – literally – as I sit here in the dark, wondering when the lights will come back on and if loadshedding could possibly get worse.

It was at Stage 6 when I began writing, hoping that my laptop battery would outlast the period of loadshedding. Crazy times!

As my eternally pragmatic chairperson, Howard Sackstein, said this week, it’s a little difficult to be optimistic and upbeat in the dark.

However, being is the dark is a great leveller. We may have our differences with many people, but at the end of the day, when Eskom switches off the lights, it switches off all our lights. I know there are some who are off the grid and others who have massive generators, but for the most part, it has an impact on all of us and everyone in South Africa is smarting because of loadshedding.

We’re all in the same not-so-fabulous dark boat. We’re also all having to fork out exorbitant amounts to fill our cars. The good news is that our petrol prices are way lower than in the United Kingdom, Canada, Israel, and most of Europe. I guess there has to be a silver lining, doesn’t there?

I know when you are feeling glum, it’s hard to believe that anything could be better here, but it is.

And then we can compare ourselves to the United States where the Supreme Court last week took the country 50 steps (at least) backwards into the dark ages by overturning Roe v. Wade. Originally, this watershed case made abortion a constitutional right in the country. Meanwhile, South Africa has the most progressive women’s reproductive health rights and laws in the world.

It wasn’t always like that, though. In my years as a journalist, I can recall the horrific stories I covered about illegal abortions. Women took desperate steps that ended their lives or permanently impaired them to avoid unwanted pregnancies.

In this week’s newspaper, we track down a South African doctor who helped so many women who weren’t in a position to be good parents. This man defied the law to help women who were desperate. He believed women had a right to choose. (See page 5.)

Now, don’t get me wrong, I’m a proud and loving parent. I adore my children, but I do believe that being a parent isn’t an easy task and not one that should be taken lightly.

There are a great many parents out there who shouldn’t have had children because their children aren’t a priority in their lives. I may sound terribly judgemental, but how many criminals do you think had parents who did their best for them? How many were given the best opportunities their parents could give them?

I’m talking across the board in this country and around the world. The core for any value-driven and moral adult is having had parents who loved them and brought them up consciously and to the best of their ability.

I know that many people who aren’t able to do this do give their children up for adoption. I salute those people because it’s extraordinarily difficult to give birth and then give your child away. They are honourable, because they give couples who yearn to have a family the chance to do just that.

However, far too few do this. And the rest becomes history.

I believe those who want to be parents should be taught what this means, and then tested on how they would fare. It shouldn’t be a given that you have children unless you are going to do right by them. Having been a journalist most of my life, I have seen so much sadness and despair among children for so many reasons. But had those children had parents who loved and cared for them, they might not have been in such situations.

Having children is the greatest responsibility, not one that should follow abuse, rape, irresponsible passion, or even just a little bit of fun. At least that’s my opinion.

So, for me, the US Supreme Court overruling Roe v. Wade is horrific. It literally takes the country into the dark ages. It takes the leader of the free world back to a place where women have no rights over their bodies and doctors are criminalised for giving women the choice over how to live their best life.

So, while I sit in the darkness, I feel sad for women in the US who have to face not having a respectful choice over their lives.

I know it sounds rich, but it’s easy to be judgemental about unwanted pregnancies. The truth is that it’s easy until you or someone you care deeply about finds themselves in this situation.

Then, for young women in the US, the legalities around this become a virtual jail.

What I find fascinating is that our halachic laws are so much more openminded and fair than the US Supreme Court judges. That isn’t surprising though, because Jewish laws are based on years and years of wisdom and learned minds.



**Mapping Project**

Deciding to put the Mapping Project story on our front page was, between you and me, not easy. We particularly wanted to put a positive story on our cover because we felt like we all needed something uplifting to start our weekend.

However, when so-called South African “human-rights” activists in Africa4Palestine endorsed mapping Jewish schools, shuls, and institutions in Boston, we needed to highlight this.

Even more so considering that the BDS organisation’s international headquarters, which kicked Africa4Palestine out a few years back, is vehemently against the mapping exercise. That doesn’t seem to bother our Africa4Palestine “human-rights” activists. This same group, which used to have on its website a whole section about not being antisemitic, supports mapping of Jewish institutions. What a farce!

Hence, it was important to alert you to this clearly antisemitic situation in the US that has its tentacles spreading here.

Here’s to a light and bright weekend!

**Shabbat shalom!**

**Peta Krost**  
**Editor**

# To fulfil its promise, SA must change its relationship with Israel

OPINION

MUZI KUZWAYO



The bond between Jewish South Africans and Israel is unbreakable. And the role that this community has played in various fields of South African society over the past 100 years and more is indisputable and indispensable. Therefore, South Africa must change its relationship with Israel if this equation is to balance.

Our country is in a dire situation. According to the *World Population Review*, we have the worst unemployment rate in the world. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, the World Bank’s Poverty & Equity Brief reported that more than 30 million people in South Africa were already living in poverty.

It goes without saying that this nation needs to retain every brain cell and every cent to help turn around this untenable situation.

We all know the cruelty of some African governments, which have willingly starved their people to death just to stay in power. How can we forget the 1983 Ethiopian famine, which Human Rights Watch attributed to human-rights abuses? It was the Americans who came to the rescue, not the Organisation of African Unity, the precursor of the African Union.

It was the soft but undefeatable power of people-to-people relationships that saved the day with *USA for Africa*. Produced by Quincy Jones and Michael Omartian, written by Lionel Richie and the King of Pop, Michael Jackson, 45 musicians sang:

“We are the world; we are the children; we are the ones who make a brighter day...”

The set piece to date has raised more than \$100 million (R1.5 billion) to ease poverty, and has donated 75% of that to 500 African organisations in 21 countries. The Gupta stole \$3.5 billion (R55.4 billion) in South Africa, can you imagine what that loot could have done to help alleviate poverty in our country?

As we speak, Somalia is suffering from the worst drought in 70 years. According to AP News, hundreds have started dying. We saw when the Western Cape suffered its worst drought that national and provincial governments heartlessly allowed the citizens to suffer rather than build a desalination plant using Israeli technology. The Eastern Cape is reeling from the worst drought ever, but sadly, a crooked and misguided anti-Israeli ideology prevails. Are we waiting for the bodies to start piling up before we act?

The good news is that South Africa is now producing a new cohort of politically mature leaders who are committed to breaking the proverbial African begging bowl and free the continent from the choking clutches of poverty. They understand that it’s education not hollow sloganeering that creates a better life. After all, it was the original GOAT (greatest of all time), Muhammad Ali, who said, “A man who views the world the same at 50 as he did at 20 has wasted 30 years of his life.”

Geopolitics are like sand dunes that shift all the time, bringing new opportunities. The Abraham Accords, signed by several Arab countries with Israel, is delivering enormous benefits to all sides. We are now witnessing

a positive spill-over to other parts of the world.

Every country has opportunities and challenges. Israel is no exception. China has lifted millions of people out of poverty, yet it’s committing crimes against humanity, and possibly genocide against its Uyghur population. The leader of the free world, the US, where the Black Lives Matter Movement started, has a horrific record of the police killing unarmed black people in the streets and even in their homes. So why is it that we’ve never heard anyone shout, “Boycott China!” or “Boycott America”? Could it be because they secretly harbour the belief that the lives of Uyghurs or Black people don’t really matter? Alternatively, do Israel’s problems give all antisemites a chance to belch their deep-seated hatred for the Jewish people?

THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT SOUTH AFRICA IS NOW PRODUCING A NEW COHORT OF POLITICALLY MATURE LEADERS WHO ARE COMMITTED TO BREAKING THE PROVERBIAL AFRICAN BEGGING BOWL AND FREE THE CONTINENT FROM THE CHOKING CLUTCHES OF POVERTY.

We mustn’t be fooled. Those who oppose prosperity are well-funded and fanatical about their evil mission. They see the suffering of millions not as something to be urgently cured, but as fodder for their own vile ideologies. Even though their hearts are empty, they have no room for compassion.

We’re lucky that South Africa was built on a foundation of tolerance and coexistence. We dare not stray from that path if we want to pull the masses out of the pain of poverty and the misery of unemployment.

People-to-people co-operation between South Africans and Israelis must continue. Israel is a water and agricultural superpower. People in South African rural villages, informal settlements, and townships need food, water, and dignified sanitation. It’s time to take brave decisions that feed people, not egos.

At South Africa’s Promise, our mission is to end poverty and therefore fulfil our constitutional obligation of improving “the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person”.

Recently, the organisation got a call from someone in a village in KwaZulu-Natal. Their well had run dirty and dry. Could we perhaps help?

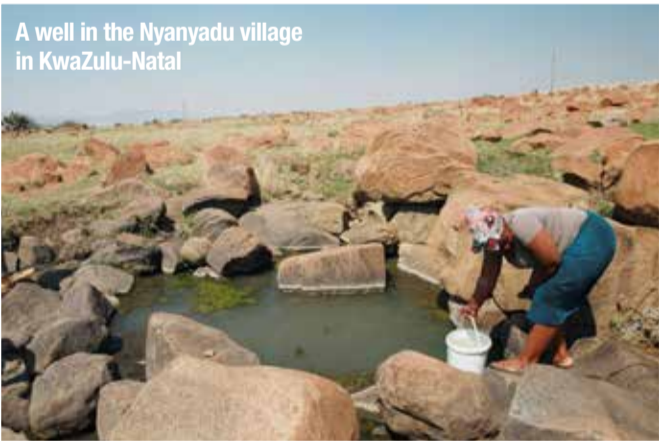
My colleague and I drove to the village. We arrived late at night. It was dark, but once we made it through broken bridges and badly graded gravel roads, we were ready to meet the villagers in the morning. The nearest water source was 1.6km away. It’s a systemic disadvantage for children, who must spend the whole afternoon walking to fetch water instead of spending time on their books.

A problem shared is a problem halved. I then asked a friend who is a member of the Jewish community to assist. He connected us to an Israeli water technology company that assisted the village. His family graciously paid for the project.

Work has started, and water is flowing in the village again. The children have a bit more time to spend on their books.

When we told the villagers about Jewish kindness, and the Israeli technology that had helped them, they replied, “Let us pray for Israel.” Amen.

• Muzi Kuzwayo is the ultimate optimist, and co-founder of South Africa’s Promise.



# Remembering Rhoda Kadalie, feisty friend of Israel

STEVEN GRUZZ

Rhoda Kadalie, a passionate human-rights supporter, strident critic of the corruption of the South African government, and lover of Israel, was remembered at a service at the Rondebosch United Church in Cape Town on 26 June 2022.

Kadalie died from lung cancer on 16 April in Los Angeles, California, aged 68. She had moved to the United States four years ago to be with her daughter, Julia, son-in-law Joel Pollak – a well-known political author on the American right – and her grandchildren Maya, Alex, and Amira.

Kadalie was born in District Six in 1953, the granddaughter of Clements Kadalie, South Africa’s first black trade union leader. Her family was forcibly removed from the white suburb of Mowbray.

Kadalie was a fearless and fierce supporter of Israel. “Rhoda defended Israel, even when it cost her friendships and relationships,” Pollak said in his eulogy at the memorial service.

Kadalie served on the South African Human Rights Commission during the Nelson Mandela presidency, and used the platform to speak out against growing antisemitism in South Africa. This stance didn’t make her popular in leftist political circles. She refused to be cowed, however.

The naked and vicious antisemitism on display at the 2001 World Conference Against Racism in Durban spurred Kadalie to become even more of an outspoken advocate for Israel and the Jewish community. She condemned the Durban conference for obsessing about Israel to the detriment of real racism issues, and for promoting Jew-hatred.

Kadalie went on record to say that the African National Congress (ANC) had used the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a smokescreen to obscure burning local issues and fissures. She also disparaged the ANC’s loyalty to its struggle comrades in its foreign policy, including the Palestinians and Cubans.

She attacked Jewish-born ANC stalwart Ronnie Kasrils for his vocal anti-Zionism in the early 2000s, saying it was pandering to the Muslim vote, especially in the Western Cape.

The Jewish community in South Africa embraced her, just as she was shunned and pilloried by the political left. She frequently spoke at Jewish events. Kadalie sat on the boards of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre and the Jewish Museum.

Her support for Israel had deep roots in her Christian faith – she had learned from her parents to pray for Jerusalem. In 2008, she co-authored, with her daughter, Julia Bertelsmann, a blistering critique of odious comparisons between Israel and apartheid South Africa. This was a repeated refrain in her provocative columns. “She believed that human rights meant nothing unless equally applied to all,” Pollak said.

In that report, she wrote, “On the one hand, the use of the apartheid metaphor is hardly unusual in the South African political context. Almost every political debate is framed in terms of apartheid ... On the other hand, Israel is different. The ANC devotes more attention to Israel than to many domestic issues and conflicts closer to home. It denies that anti-Israel protest is often antisemitic, but on no other issue has the party been more willing to abandon its supposedly non-racial ideals.”

She visited Israel in 2010, and wrote in *Business Day*, “Those who are prejudiced against Israel for ideological reasons do us a disservice when they portray the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in black-and-white terms.”

Kadalie fiercely opposed the severing of ties between the University of Johannesburg and Ben Gurion University, and other attempts at an academic boycott of Israeli institutions. She called the boycott “politically correct nonsense” to mask the failure of South African universities. She also went after the late Archbishop Desmond Tutu, taking the cleric to task for his criticism of Israel in the press and his efforts to prevent the Cape

Town Opera from performing in Israel. She was also unafraid to take on left-wing Jews, including Judge Dennis Davis.

She wrote, “Bashing Israel has become a self-promotion industry, and the disinvestment campaign is its marketing tool. We should be attracting Israelis to our shores as the ideal foreign direct investment destination for Israelis.”

Kadalie also championed the rights of Christians in the Middle East, a much persecuted minority, a cause routinely ignored by the pro-Palestinian lobby.

At the service, former Western Cape Premier Helen Zille spoke fondly of her friendship and regular verbal sparring with Kadalie. “I experienced the icy chill of her wrath and the warmth of her forgiving



Rhoda Kadalie's daughter Julia remembers her mother at her memorial service

embrace. She hated hypocrisy, double standards, and dissembling.” Zille joked that Kadalie could have made a success of anything “except a diplomatic career!”

Pollak mentioned how devoted Kadalie was to her Christian faith and reading her Bible, yet helped organise her daughter’s Orthodox Jewish wedding. “She mastered the rules of kashrut,” Pollak said, and learned to keep meat and milk dishes separate.

- Pollak has been writing a biography titled “Rhoda: Comrade Kadalie, You Are Out of Order!” to be published by the University of Johannesburg Press. He is thanked for providing some background material used in this article.

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# SA *olah* feeds family of terror victim

TALI FEINBERG

Thirty-five-year-old Barak Lufan, the head coach of the Israeli national kayak team and father of three, died in April 2022, the day after he was shot by a terrorist on Dizengoff Street in Tel Aviv. Now, 30-year-old South African *olah* Lili Goldberg is cooking meals for the family he left behind, and has raised funds to ensure they have food on the table as they try to move forward from the tragedy.

Lufan was a coach on Israel's paralympic team, an athlete, an educator, and a member of the Olympic kayaking team staff. Goldberg also works in health and fitness: coaching clients, selling environmentally-friendly sports equipment, as a personal trainer, and catering kosher, healthy meals. Just like Lufan, she was on Dizengoff Street the night the attack happened. "I walked past the bar about an hour before the attack. It's on my walk home. I live five minutes from there. It could have been me," she says.

She spent that evening sheltering in her apartment, and is still affected by the attack. Though she could have crossed paths with Lufan that night, she came into contact with his family only in June. "One of my regular clients is the wife of a man who was injured in battle. He's blind. When she was ordering, she also ordered a meal for the Lufan family," Goldberg says. His three children, aged seven months, three years, and six years will grow up without a father.

"When I was cooking the meal, I realised there was so much more I could do for this family. I spoke to Barak's wife and asked her if she would feel comfortable if I organised more than one meal, and she was happy to accept."

Goldberg reached out to her network on social media, and in a very short space of time, she managed to raise enough funds to cover the family's meals for the next month. She hopes to raise even more to cover a longer period.

"I will deliver meals every week for them to enjoy over a few days. My labour for the project is free, so this is just to cover ingredients and delivery," she says. Donations came from people across the spectrum, from fellow chefs to single twenty-somethings, to mothers with families. "I have strangers contributing, which comes down to the power of social media," she says.

Goldberg says that every time she speaks to the family, she gets emotional, but she says Lufan's widow is "strong, positive, and grateful. She's taking it day by day." She cooked them a macaroni cheese, chocolate brownies, and a banana loaf with chocolate chips – all food that young children will enjoy.

Her Israeli fiancé is also involved, and delivered the food to the family. The pair got engaged in May, and they plan to move to Jerusalem, to which Goldberg feels a special connection. Their wedding will be in Jerusalem in December.

Goldberg lives a busy life, but says it's important for her to make time to help others. "I'm part of the 05:00 club!" she quips. "If you want to do something, you make it happen. You wake up earlier, and you get it done. If you're in a position to help, why not take up that beautiful opportunity?"

She was raised in Cape Town by a single mother who taught her the value of outreach from a young age. "I made aliya seven years ago. My father, who I never knew, was Jewish. My mother wasn't, and I later converted. I attended St Cyprians School where I focused on ballet and drama, but also put a lot of time into helping others." She won the community service award when she matriculated in 2010.

"Community service has always been

close to my heart. South Africa and the Jewish community taught me to give back, and my mother and school encouraged me even more. My mom moulded me into who I am today." She also works closely with Telfed, helping new *olim* – especially the youth – and taking part in various initiatives.

"The Jewish community always helped me and my mom so much. Now it's my turn to contribute and be thankful for what I have," she says.

Goldberg sees food as an important way to bring people together and offer comfort, warmth, and support when words aren't enough. "That's why my business is called Food for Thought Israel. I want to try to bring about goodness through food – whether it's giving meals to those in need, cooking, or just buying groceries. Food is associated with family and community, especially in Jewish life."



Lili Goldberg cooking for the Michael Levin Lone Soldier Centre in Israel

Once a year in winter, around Chanukah, she cooks litres of soup, which she sells to raise money for abused mothers and children. It's just one of many ways she's

quietly making the world a better place, one meal at a time.

Goldberg can speak and understand Hebrew, and is mostly self-taught. "But in community service, we all speak the same language of giving," she says.

She says South Africa gave her the entrepreneurial spirit to start a number of businesses. She began catering when many of her clients told her that they didn't have time to cook healthy meals. *Olim* also said they struggled to read labels and ingredients. Goldberg saw a gap, and believes that Israel "really needs healthy food businesses. Knowledge of health and fitness is only starting out here."

Now, she caters to about 20 to 50 families a week, including weekday meals and Shabbat dinners. She studied nutritional psychology and personal training, but she's a "chef by passion" who

taught herself how to cook and bake.

Goldberg describes herself as a Zionist, and feels angry that a family has been left without an incredible father and husband because of a senseless act of terrorism. But "Barak leaves a beautiful legacy", she says. Along with his other achievements, Lufan served as the Israel Canoe Association's head coach and was considered one of Israel's leading kayakers. After his death, 40 kayakers sailed down the Yarkon River in honour of him and his personal kayak was placed at the pier to serve as a memorial.

"His children will always hear amazing things about their dad, and Israel as a family will support them," says Goldberg. "They will need their mother to lead the way, and I can see that she's doing that. Being open to accepting help is a brave thing to do."

If South Africans would like to contribute towards meals for the Lufan family, "they're more than welcome to contact me", says Goldberg. "I still have a South African bank account, so I'm happy to accept donations there. Contact me on foodforthoughtisrael@gmail.com, on Instagram: @foodforthoughtisrael, or WhatsApp: +972 52 628 38 98. A little goes a long way."

## Lifting the mask on post-COVID-19 challenges

GILLIAN KLAWANSKY

Whether it be emotional or, in the case of children, developmental, the impact of mask-wearing has gone far beyond providing COVID-19 protection. And though many are rejoicing the recent lifting of the mask mandate, others have mixed feelings.

Before you celebrate no longer having to wear masks, consider the fact that you can no longer pretend not to recognise people at the school pick-up or hypermarket queue. Such observations may be tongue-in-cheek, but there's an element of truth to them. For some, especially the introverts among us, mask-wearing was a perfect way to avoid socialising or revealing our true emotions. Without masks, there's suddenly nowhere to hide.

If you're feeling completely overwhelmed at this prospect, there may be deeper issues at play. "People may experience anxiety in social circumstances with feelings of extreme self-consciousness and low self-esteem, self-doubt, and insecurity," says clinical psychologist Lana Kagan Sack. "The pandemic may have masked this for a prolonged period and, together with masks and social distancing, allowed those people not to have to engage fully with others."

Obviously, in the context of COVID-19, there may be those feeling uncomfortable about removing their masks purely out of fear of contracting the virus. Yet, it's important to differentiate between COVID-19 anxiety and fear of engaging with others socially, says Kagan Sack.

There are those who feel vulnerable in opening up to others. "Those with underlying depression and/or anxiety may find this even harder." Yet it's important to remember that simply revealing our faces doesn't mean we need to divulge our deepest secrets.

If social engagement has long been a challenge, COVID-19 restrictions have probably exacerbated it. "For people with social insecurities, we can't underestimate the fact that the past two years have seriously hampered development and the practice of social skills," says Kagan Sack. "Reading verbal and non-verbal cues has been hampered for many. We need to remember how to make small talk – to chat about anything from the news to the weather. Practice that as a first step towards socially engaging again."

For adults and children alike, anxiety levels have been particularly high since the pandemic began. "Psychiatrists are fully booked for a year and medication is a constant," says educational psychologist Sarah-Jane Lipshitz. "The mask rituals, the handwashing, and the constant cleaning created its own anxiety and obsessive-compulsive behaviour that may take years to lessen. Some children who were naturally anxious are having a

hard time adapting to life without a mask."

Although high anxiety levels are undeniable, children are naturally resilient and have bounced back much quicker than expected, she says. Yet, there are those who will have a harder time adapting.

"If you have a child that already has an anxious disposition, there may be some hesitation or anticipatory anxiety towards the removal of masks," says educational psychologist Ashley Jay. "This is especially pertinent for kids who were afraid or have subsequently become afraid of germs and illness. It may also apply to kids who worry about yet another change of the rules, or to younger children who may have trouble recalling a mask-free world."

To deal with this, Jay suggests adapting mask-wearing to the person and situation, for example a doctor's office versus a park. "Let kids know that if they feel uncomfortable, it's their choice to wear a mask and no one can force them not to until they feel comfortable. Address your child's questions before



different situations, and slowly desensitise towards mask removal."

Investigate the underlying reasons for reluctance to let go of masks, says Lipshitz. "Holding onto your mask is about anxiety. It's because you felt out of control when the virus started and now you want to maintain some form of control," she says. She suggests drawing two circles with your kids, one representing what we can control, like going to school, and the second a smaller circle within it that represents what we can't control, like the weather or COVID-19. "This helps them to feel safer and more in control."

Though the impact differs from child to child, mask-wearing has also probably affected speech development. "When we're listening to someone talk, we're not just listening to the words that they're saying, we're also looking at their faces and their bodies and

getting a lot of information from how the person is talking," says Naomi Barsky Brick, a speech therapist and audiologist. "It's not just about decoding and understanding a message through facial expressions, it's also about being able to form the sounds."

Auditory processing – the way in which you decode and make sense of what you hear – has also been affected by mask-wearing, she says. "In order to process sounds better, we compensate with the visual. Once we take that away by putting on a mask, we resort only to that auditory system. For kids with auditory processing difficulties – which go hand in hand with attention deficit and anxiety – it's so much harder. In the classroom where the medium of instruction is primarily auditory or verbal, having those masks on teachers and peers has highlighted auditory processing issues."

In terms of socialisation, mask-wearing may have posed a challenge for some. "Children can read some emotions with masked faces, but it may have been more difficult, particularly for younger kids, to do so," says Jay. "Mask-wearing may have impacted processes important for emotional development such as social referencing and emotional mimicry."

Yet, she says, emotions are communicated in a variety of ways other than facial expressions – tone of voice, body posture, and physical touch. "Therefore, kids would have been able to use these cues to figure out what another person was feeling even if that person was wearing a mask and in turn, apply these skills to themselves."

In terms of developmental delays, it's difficult to say what can be attributed to masks and what can be attributed to the COVID-19 era and the environmental changes it brought, says Barsky Brick. "Anxiety has been massive, and children have spent more time at home and on the screen than ever before. So much has had an impact on development."

Experts also argue that many kids may be behind educationally due to the impact of things like periodic online learning. An educational and emotional catch-up across all grades and schools must be the focus, argues Lipshitz.

Yet, says Barsky Brick. "Pressurising our kids will just increase the already heightened anxiety brought by COVID-19. We need to give them extra support and have realistic expectations."

- If you're experiencing symptoms of depression or anxiety or severe anxiety reactions to a social situation such as panic or anxiety attacks, seek help from a professional psychologist or healthcare professional.

# The toughest choice

PERSONAL STORY

ANONYMOUS



I believe that children are the greatest gift, and I cherish my own. However, I also believe that parenting isn't easy and it should be taken seriously in order to bring up our children to be contributing members of society.

So, when I fell pregnant in my early 20s, I wasn't in a position to get married nor give up the work I loved to be able to bring up a child properly.

I also thought that my parents – who were traditional, conservative members of the Orthodox community – would force me to have the child and give up my life as I knew it. I couldn't imagine becoming a 'child mother'. I really wasn't much more than a child, I thought.

I was irresponsible, I drank and drove regularly. I partied up a storm, sometimes even going off to work straight from the party. I made silly errors of judgement and took chances I shouldn't have taken.

The only thing I was responsible about was my work as a young lawyer, which I loved. It was the career I dreamed of.

My partner was about to embark on his studies abroad, and was in no position to turn it down. I couldn't stop him because there was no way our relationship would sustain him having to give up his studies and become a dad in his early 20s.

We both had our lives ahead of us and so much growing up to do before we could become parents. I was also unsure whether he was the man I wanted to spend my life with.

However, at the time, you couldn't get a legal abortion in South Africa, and it was a criminal offence to enable abortion – even before the pregnancy was three months gone.

Women did not have rights over their own bodies, nor the right to decide whether they were able to be a parent – never mind a good one.

I know I was old enough to be a mother, but I wasn't ready to take on this enormous responsibility. It was something I knew I wanted to do, but not then. I thought endlessly about it, considering every scenario, and was

clear I would not be good for any child at the time.

I started asking around for people who could help me to get an abortion. I first went to a clinic in Alex, where I couldn't go in the front door. It stank, and I had this desperate feeling that if I went in, I was unlikely to come out in one piece.

I then went to a doctors' rooms in Bedfordview and gave a code word to get to speak to the doctor. He humiliated me by telling me what a bad girl I was, and that I deserved what I got. He then turned me away.

Another doctor went as far as giving me an internal examination and confirmed – like I needed confirmation – that I was pregnant.

He then told me that he could only do an abortion for me in a few weeks' time. I didn't have a few weeks. I knew I had to do it well before I was 11 weeks pregnant.

Finally, I contacted a friend in England and asked her if she could help me. Within half an hour, she had booked the procedure for me at the Marie Stopes Clinic in London. She, too, was a lawyer.

Now I had to find the money to get to England.

The only other people who knew about it were my best friend and my sister, who was encouraging me to tell my mother.

But first, I told my boss, who needed to know why I wasn't going to be at work for 10 days. I also needed to take a loan against my salary to get me to England. He was a wonderful man and not only did he support me, he paid for my plane ticket. He told me that I shouldn't stress about paying him back, but that I could do so when I had the money to spare.

The night before I left, I finally worked up the courage to tell my mother and we both cried buckets. She was fairly conservative, but so sorry for the situation I had found myself in. She agreed it was an extraordinarily tough decision.

She also said that I was doing what I needed to do, and stood by me 100%. She said she couldn't tell my father because it would break his heart. She did suggest that I have the child and move in with them, but I knew I couldn't do that.

I hadn't slept from the day I found out I was pregnant until I got on the plane to England.

It was a sad day, and it took me a long time to get past the trauma and loss. I still wonder if I would have had a little girl or boy.

It wasn't easy, but I know that I made the right decision. I also know that had I been forced to have a baby, I wouldn't have been the kind of parent I would have wanted for my child.



When I got there, it was like another world in its attitude to abortion. I was treated as an adult woman who had a right to make decisions about my body and my life.

I did speak to a therapist at Marie Stopes to help me deal with the hormonal and psychological impact this was going to have on me. She felt it necessary to discuss and be clear that I was 100% sure about what I was doing. I was.

Now, as the mom of three, I know exactly how tough it is to be a parent. I adore my children and want to make sure they have everything they need in this world to be the best they can be. I love them with all that I am.

It isn't easy always to know the right thing to do as a parent. There's no rule book, but I get by because I had my children when I was ready and as prepared as I was ever going to be to be a mom.

## Distributions Officer

A large charitable foundation, based in Durban, is looking for someone to co-ordinate its charitable distributions, as the current incumbent is retiring.

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# SA’s sole golfer sets sights on silver

SAUL KAMIONSKY

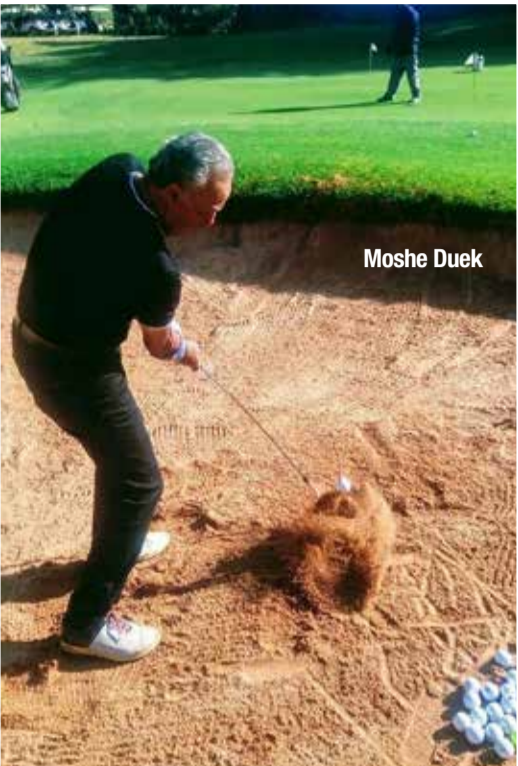
Johannesburg 74-year-old grandmaster golfer, Moshe Duek, won’t just be Team Maccabi South Africa’s oldest athlete at the Maccabi Games in July, he’ll also be the sole golfer representing the country.

“It feels great being the only golfer from South Africa playing here,” says this Israel-born self-described “old *yente*”, speaking from Israel this week. He left for Israel on 25 June to spend time with the large family he has there before the games. “It’s hard to represent your country just by yourself, but I’m here, and I’m going to play.”

Golf is one of the five sports that South Africa has won medals for at every one of its participations in the Maccabiah. Since 1965, the country has attained 54 medals in the sport. Duek hopes to increase this tally.

“I hope I do well,” he says. “When you hit the first shot, you don’t know where you’re going to place, but I did very well four years ago. I came second, and I got a silver medal, so I’m coming to defend it.”

Over the past 30 years, Duek has played golf in five Maccabiah, winning two silver medals in singles and one gold in the team event.



Moshe Duek

Duek has lived in South Africa for 52 years, and literally resides at the Houghton Golf Club in Johannesburg. “I play golf there every second day. It’s better than work. If I don’t practice, I go home and have a fight with my wife,” he chuckles.

When he was 45, his business partners, Lollie and Colin Meyerowitz, introduced him to golf. He has been bitten by the bug ever since, but he also plays tennis once a week. “I love my tennis,” he says.

# Not even brain surgery will stop Matt



Photo: Gira Smit

Matt Carrol at the South African regional senior and junior champs in George in April 2022

SAUL KAMIONSKY

Six weeks after having double brain surgery, 16-year-old South African national junior swimmer, Matt Carrol, is ready to compete at the 2022 Maccabi Games in July.

This Grade 11 student at Herzlia High School in Cape Town was struggling with headaches, “when in January, we discovered that he had an enormous cyst about the size of a large peach on the frontal lobe of his brain”, says his mom, Gila, Team Maccabi South Africa’s swimming convenor. “The doctor said, ‘Just leave it, it’s nothing to be worried about.’ In April, it ruptured. He was taken into an emergency craniotomy on 26 April. Unfortunately, it didn’t work.

“On 10 May, he was rushed into emergency VP [ventriculoperitoneal] shunt brain surgery, so he now has a VP shunt. It’s a valve at the back of his head which runs all the way down his shoulder, across his chest, into his stomach. It’s permanent. It’s extremely rare in this case because he’s 16 years old, and it’s never really used for this reason. It’s pretty unbelievable. We thought he was out. The physician said to him, ‘Your competitive swimming is over.’ He said, ‘No, I’m going to the Maccabi Games.’”

Now, Carrol is looking forward to performing well in his 12 swims in

the open category though he’s unsure if he’ll be able to add to the 102 medals South Africa has received for swimming. “I don’t know how tough the competition is going to be, but I know that within my squad, I can do pretty well,” he says.

When he was in Grade 8, some of his friends went to the European Maccabi Games. “Since then, I wanted to go for swimming,” says Carrol. “I’ve been training six, seven times a week for the past few months.”

“He feels fine generally,” Gila says. “He swam his first gala last week. He swam ridiculously fast.”

There, Carrol’s coach, whom he describes as his mentor, said, “I can’t actually believe what I’m seeing.”

Carrol started swimming competitively in Grade 6. “I was doing lots of other sports. I just really enjoyed swimming. I liked the competitiveness and how hard you had to train to succeed. Since then, swimming has been my main sport.”

His message for those facing obstacles is, “It’s tough, but there’s really nothing that can stop you from getting where you want to be. When I found out I needed surgery, it was disheartening, especially so close to the competition, but I got through it, rested a bit, and got back into training. Now I’m back to full fitness and being the best I can be.”

# “It’s the experience of a lifetime,” says tennis champion

SAUL KAMIONSKY

When Jacqui Boyd got the call to be one of Team Maccabi South Africa’s flag bearers at the Maccabi Games in July, her lifelong dream came true.

“It’s amazing,” she says. “I think it’s any athlete’s lifetime dream to be a flag bearer for your country at such a special event.”

Accomplished distance runner Adam Lipschitz, a two-time Maccabiah gold medallist, will be South Africa’s other flag bearer at the games. Whereas he will be running in the 5 000m, 10km, and marathon at the showpiece, Boyd is hoping to defend her singles and doubles tennis titles in what will be her fifth Maccabiah.

“I’ve been a proud Maccabean my whole life,” says Boyd. “I’m super excited and can’t wait. I’ve been to four previous Maccabiahs, and it’s the most amazing experience. Every time you walk into the stadium, there’s a feeling that you can’t explain to anyone unless you’ve been there. I’ve played in Junior Fed Cups and World Senior Tennis Championships – it just doesn’t compare to a Maccabiah, the marching in, looking around, and seeing Jews from all over the world. There’s just something special about it.”

Boyd first represented South Africa in tennis at the age of 14, and has since represented the country at all levels. As for the Maccabiah, she has bagged five gold and two bronze medals since making her debut as South Africa’s youngest competitor at the 1993 edition.

“It’s been different every time,” she says. “As a 14-year-old in my first Maccabiah, I experienced it very differently to a 43-year-old. I still remember



Jacqui Boyd

my first one vividly. I missed two afterwards because I was playing tennis overseas. When I returned at 25 as an open player, the experience of the Maccabiah was very different to 10 years prior. All of a sudden, four years ago, I was in the master’s category at 35, even though I feel quite young. But each time, it’s more special. I’ve got a lot of friends and family who will all be competing for different countries in different sports.”

Tennis is the only sport South Africa has participated in at every Maccabiah since 1935. The country has brought home 118 tennis medals, the most it has achieved in any sport at the games.

Leading up to this year’s Maccabiah, Boyd has been practising tennis about four times a week. “I also enjoy running, going to the gym and cycling, so I keep fit and active,” she says.

Boyd took a liking to tennis as a seven-year-old. “My brother started going for tennis lessons and my parents kind of took me along,” she recalls. “I started playing, getting better, enjoying it more, and playing some tournaments. I started winning Western Province tournaments and then national tournaments. As I got older, I started winning more, and just loving the sport.”

Playing tennis has allowed her to travel the world and meet amazing people. “It’s a sport you can play until you’re 80 plus,” says Boyd. “When I moved overseas, you could join a tennis club and automatically meet like-minded people in an outdoor, friendly environment under the beautiful sunshine.”

# A family affair as Sulcas trio head for games

SAUL KAMIONSKY

Team Maccabi South Africa’s padel convenor, Rob Sulcas, will be competing in his fifth Maccabi Games in his fourth sport, padel, a game making its debut at this year’s Maccabiah. Having previously competed in squash, football, and tennis, Sulcas has won two bronze medals and a silver for tennis, and a bronze for squash.

He will be at the games with his two sons, 20-year-old Jamie and 18-year-old Benjamin, who are in South Africa’s open futsal team.

“It’s an absolute privilege to be representing South Africa at my fifth games and to be part of the Maccabiah organisation,” says Sulcas. “The fifth is just a number. I’m lucky to have had the opportunities before and much more importantly, to be able to go and have both my kids playing at the same time. A real family affair. What a lucky guy I am!”

His Maccabiah journey started as an under-15 squash player at the 1985 edition. In 2009, he played soccer in the over 35 category before competing in tennis in the 2013 and 2015 games.

“It’s been a nice transformation,” says Sulcas. “Now I’m going to play padel, a real mixture of squash and tennis. Squash has always been in the Sulcus ambit, with my late dad being a very good squash player. I was a squash player when I was

young and then started playing tennis when I was about 16. When padel came along, I found it a little bit easier on the body. It was something new. Everything else went out the window and all I actually do now is play padel. I’ve always been an avid soccer player as well. Both my kids love soccer.”



Robert Sulcas

His sons both say it’s “amazing” to be going to the games as a family.

“Not many people can say that their sibling and dad are representing South Africa with them at the games, so I’m excited,” says Benjamin.

“It’s going to feel quite cool when I pass the ball to my brother,” says Jamie, who will be turning 21 during the games.

Both brothers, alumni of Herzlia in Cape Town, got into futsal, a fast-paced indoor five-a-side football game, when hearing

about trials for the sport and making their respective teams.

“Usually, we’ve been training two or three times a week,” says Jamie. “But in the past month or two, we’ve really ramped it up.”

Speaking about the futsal team’s coach, Reon Siyaya, Benjamin says, “He’s a good coach who has a lot of knowledge about the game. We all trust his knowledge and that his tactics will come right.”

“We hope to get a medal,” says Jamie. “We think it’s possible, but we’re really not sure how good the other teams are. It’s not as though their games are televised and we can accurately judge, so we are sort of going in there blind. I think we’re well prepared, but anything could happen. The other teams could all be absolutely amazing, or not.”

It won’t be the brothers’ first time at an overseas tournament, as they played futsal at the 2019 European Maccabi Games in Budapest. “That was my Maccabi highlight because both my boys were there as well,” says Sulcas, who played tennis at those games. “Regarding performance, probably the 2015 Maccabi Games was the highlight. I got a silver medal for tennis, losing in the final of the doubles and in the semifinal of the singles. But it’s not just about winning medals. It’s more about the camaraderie, meeting new people, and travelling for sport.”

# Help for those at the end of the line

TALI FEINBERG

The mental-health crisis in South Africa is leading to a loss of lives, including a spate of suicides across all ages in the Jewish community. At the beginning of May, a man described as being mentally ill shot and killed two patients and a police officer before being subdued by a brave nurse at New Somerset Hospital in Cape Town.

All this highlights the need for mental-health services and support systems. Abigail Smith has taken up that challenge in her new role of executive director of LifeLine in the Western Cape. "Being brave can be lonely," is one of the organisation's slogans, and Smith says this applies to the Jewish community as much as everyone else. Whatever our circumstances, there are moments when we may need help, and we are allowed to ask for it.

LifeLine has been part of the mental-health landscape for decades. The only thing people need to do is pick up the phone. The organisation began in Sydney, Australia. One evening in the 1960s, Alan Walker (a Protestant clergyman), received a telephone call from a man who spoke of his intention to commit suicide.

The minister arranged to meet him, but the man killed himself before that could happen. It was then that Walker decided to start a telephone service that would offer support and hope to those in distress. Today LifeLine International has more than 250 centres in 14 different countries, with 26 LifeLine centres in southern Africa. The LifeLine telephone counselling service began in Cape Town at 17:00 on 5 November 1968, when the telephone rang for the first time in a small office in

Church Square. "It's been a tough time for the non-government sector in South Africa," says Smith. "Donors have dwindled in light of the pandemic. But this gives us new opportunities to collaborate and partner. Mental health touches everything, and COVID-19 has allowed that to be acknowledged."

Today, LifeLine Western Cape has a team of trained and carefully-selected volunteer counsellors who offer

non-judgemental, empathic, caring, and non-directive counselling services. This is one of the most exciting aspects of LifeLine, as ordinary people make time to train in-depth, and then give back.

Smith says the organisation aims to help callers and clients discover "the inner resources to find constructive solutions to the problems they face. LifeLine counselling is based on the theories espoused by Carl Rogers, a well-known psychologist. He believed that every person has the answers to their own

problems, and that the primary task of the counsellor is to empower the client to find those answers."

Thus, building strength, resilience, and support systems allows people to navigate challenges, even if they cannot access mental-health facilities. However, Smith emphasises that LifeLine will always ensure that a client gets the care they need, and works closely with other organisations to refer people to them if necessary.

Confidentiality is one of the cornerstones of the organisation, and no information is shared. It also offers up to four free face-to-face counselling sessions. Another aspect is HIV counselling and testing. All these services are free of charge.



Abigail Smith

Though friends have commented that it must be an emotionally taxing place to work, Smith sees it as the opposite. She has been in the role for only seven months, but she's enthusiastic about working in what she sees as "one of the next public-health frontiers". She's also grateful to learn from colleagues who have been in this space for decades. "Some of my team have been at LifeLine for 50 years. My main objective as executive director is to ensure that mental health never falls into the background when it comes to the welfare of those most vulnerable, and to ensure we're here for another 50 years.

"I don't feel overwhelmed in this role," she says. "This work gives me hope and inspires me. Especially because this organisation is volunteer-based, it tells me that we can be collectively better." She says the non-governmental organisation (NGO) sector is an exciting, transformative, challenging space to build a meaningful and rewarding career. "In my experience, there are also no glass ceilings for women, and diversity is a very real aspect of this industry."

She grew up in a home that "placed a lot of value on community, public service, and traditional Yiddishkeit," she says. Her father was the late, great Jewish communal leader, Mervyn Smith. "For me, being in the non-profit sector made sense."

She doesn't hide the fact that it can also be tough. For example, she worked in HIV and sexual violence but eventually took a step back. However, she emphasises that giving back doesn't have to be outside of one's comfort zone. "There is nothing wrong with giving in a way that feels comfortable for you – for example a Barmitzvah or birthday collection. Make it work in your life. As long as you're doing something, that's what matters. As it says in *Pirkei Avot*, "You're not obligated to complete the work, but neither are you free to desist from it."

Smith says she meets Jewish compatriots across the NGO sector "and it warms my heart. There's incredible work to be done, and you get so much back."

## Local extremists endorse antisemitic Mapping Project

>>>Continued from page 1

Thirty-seven members of Congress signed a letter urging an investigation of "the use of the Mapping Project by extremist organisations". The letter was addressed to Attorney General Merrick Garland, Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, and FBI Director Christopher Wray. "We fear that this map may be used as a roadmap for violent attacks," they wrote.

US Senators Elizabeth Warren and Edward Markey said in an official statement on 10 June, "At this moment of rising antisemitism, racist attacks, and political violence,

this 'mapping' of the Jewish community is dangerous and irresponsible."

The American Jewish Committee pointed out that, "The Mapping Project comes at a time when Americans are facing dangers from rising gun violence and mass shootings. Jewish institutions have increasingly become targets."

Jeremy Burton, the executive director of the Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Boston, told a local radio host, "They are using inflammatory language. They are engaging in classic antisemitic tropes of blaming Jews, Jewish institutions, [and] Jewish influence,

for all of the evils of society. And then they're pointing a finger at us and saying, 'Go get them.'"

Back in South Africa, Sacks says, "The calculated, systematic way in which this is being done is itself quite frightening. As for the explicit linkages made between Jews and so-called systems of oppression like policing and global imperialism, this feeds directly into age-old antisemitic tropes about world domination. It's extremely disturbing for Jews worldwide to see these reappearing in their modern guise, and for us in South Africa, to see Africa4Palestine importing this hate is shameful."

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# Faith-based groups on frontline of refugee response

OPINION ALANA BARANOV



Humanity and dignity. These two concepts need to be at the heart of all our dealings with the refugee, asylum seeker, and migrant communities. They were the focus of discussions at the “Welcoming the stranger, shaping the future” conference held in Geneva, Switzerland, to mark World Refugee Day 2022.

Hosted by The Lutheran World Federation, Islamic Relief Worldwide, and HIAS, the Jewish humanitarian organisation working with refugees and asylum seekers, I was privileged to be invited to this two-day gathering that brought together more than 50 faith leaders and activists from more than 37 countries around the world to share best practices and challenges in today’s difficult global context. The conference aimed to support faith-based organisations, strengthen partnerships between grassroots groups and the international humanitarian system, and to highlight the work being done by faith-based actors to contribute to a more co-ordinated international refugee response.

While I was in Geneva, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees announced that more than 100 million people were displaced around the world, the highest number in recorded history. These people, whose number has increased steadily every year over the past decade, have been forced to flee their homes and seek safety from war, violence, and persecution. The vast majority find shelter in neighbouring countries which are often developing nations, facing their own challenges with poverty, structural inequality, and the provision of basic services and resources to local populations.

The meeting discussed the ways in which “welcoming the stranger” is weaved through the Jewish, Christian, and Islamic traditions. Professor Abdul Mu’ti, the secretary general of the Central Board of Muhammadiyah, an educational non-governmental organisation in Indonesia, insisted that Islam commands Muslims to be people of peace and protect all those in need, especially the most vulnerable. The chief rabbi of Poland, Michael Schudrich, spoke of the experience of his community over the past few months, providing support to millions of Ukrainian refugees fleeing Russian attacks. Polish Jewry had gone from being refugees to becoming those who are “learning how to give to others in need”. German Bishop Heinrich Bedford-Strohm of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria reflected that the Hebrew Bible stresses that the duty to protect immigrants derives from the experience of the people of Israel who “were strangers in the land of Egypt”.

“This isn’t an imposed law, but something that comes from the heart, from knowing how it feels to be looking for a safe harbour,” he said.

In this way, “welcoming the stranger” is a moral imperative, motivating local faith actors across the globe to dedicate themselves to the needs of vulnerable refugee communities.

Although faith has historically been a source of

persecution and division, it can also be a solution to the crisis. Faith-based agencies are often already on the ground when a humanitarian crisis breaks out, and remain long after the international humanitarian organisations leave. They provide practical and psychosocial support, and religion can facilitate trauma healing and resilience in the face of stress and hardship. Faith leaders can play a major role in building social cohesion and acceptance of refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants, tackle xenophobia and hate in all its forms, and promote durable solutions not only to the displacement crisis, but the root causes of conflict.

The need to include refugees as protagonists in addressing displacement was stressed by many participants at the conference, who also called for increased interfaith advocacy and awareness, greater faith literacy between secular and religious organisations, more financing for local groups, and increased education about refugee protection in the different religious traditions.

Synagogues, churches, and mosques can be used as “places of encounter”, where refugee and local communities can learn more about each other’s heritage and share art, food, music, and sport. This exchange is an effective tool to combat fear, ignorance, and hostility towards immigrants, and allows refugees and asylum seekers to better understand and integrate into their host country.

“Faith matters to the people we are working with, allowing them to survive and thrive”, said HIAS Chief Executive Mark Hetfield, “so we have to stop pretending that faith doesn’t matter. Our commitment is to make sure that we use faith as a force for good”.

In South Africa, faith groups have often been at the forefront of the fight against xenophobia, responding alongside civil society in the wake of the 2008 xenophobic riots and again in 2015 when refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants were killed in the streets simply for being “outsiders”. The South African Jewish Board of Deputies was part of the formation of the Hate Crimes Working Group, a multisectoral network of non-governmental advocacy for hate crimes awareness and legislation, and other humanitarian and long-term policy focused initiatives work daily to combat hate and assist those affected.

Sadly, the current wave of hateful rhetoric against refugees in our country is building, with violent vigilante movements such as Operation Dudula threatening to further damage our fragile nation-building. We need to do all we can to halt the march of this hatred.

The challenge of “welcoming the stranger” can seem overwhelming in the face of the sheer scale of the unfolding crises in places like Ukraine, Syria, Venezuela, Ethiopia, and even on our own doorstep in Zimbabwe. As Jews, it’s not up to us to solve all the world’s problems, but we cannot desist from trying to make a difference in the lives of those around us. We must find ways of transforming our faith from liturgies and texts into action, putting the Jewish concepts of *tikkun olam* and *zedakah* into practice. As we reflect on what we can do to help those around us, let’s draw on our rich faith traditions to inspire us to be more empathetic, generous, and open-hearted to those seeking shelter, and to stand up for real change to make our world a more just and caring one.

- *Alana Baranov is a writer and the political and social justice liaison for the South African Jewish Board of Deputies. She’s a steering committee member of the Hate Crimes Working Group as well as the World Jewish Congress’ Jewish Diplomatic Corps.*

*As Jews, it's not up to us to solve all the world's problems, but we cannot desist from trying to make a difference in the lives of those around us.*



Alana Baranov discussing refugees in the Jewish tradition with Rabbi Dan Kaiman from B’nei Emunah in Tulsa, Oklahoma

# There’s no Pride to be found in gender ideology

OPINION ADAM SACHS



Pride month is supposed to be about celebrating societies’ collective coming out of the closet to accept the biological reality of same-sex attraction.

Pride is supposed to be about granting gays, lesbians, and bisexuals the same basic human rights as everyone else, the same tolerance, and dare I say, the same love, that all human beings desire.

Perhaps such a noble cause should not have latched onto the language of the seven deadly sins in choosing the moniker “Pride”. Maybe, “acceptance” would have been a better choice. Or perhaps we should have just stuck with the “free love” slogan from the 1960s.

Nevertheless, modern Pride movements emerged to celebrate the growing social acceptance in culture and in law of the fact that some are people are gay, lesbian, or bisexual so everyone else can just get over it.

The idea was to let gays, lesbians, and bisexuals get married legally (and also divorced) from whoever they want, and attempt to live worthwhile lives just like everyone else.

Perhaps “gay rights” is also an unfortunate choice of words because the struggle is and has always been for equal rights not special rights, treatment, or protection – the right for two men or two women to fall in love and get married just the same as heterosexual couples. That’s what we should be celebrating and what Pride was supposed to be about.

Contrary to popular but toxic “woke” progressive thought – in which everyone is an awful bigot – it’s actually perfectly fine for someone religious not to be too keen on homosexuality, just as long as they don’t oppress or show prejudice to anyone else, or as long as they don’t mistreat their own children if they turn out to be lesbian, gay, or bisexual. And it’s at the end of that neat little acronym that the trouble is brewing.

I’ve actually lost track of how many letters the woke, progressive, alphabet people have now attached to the original “LGB” to represent some or other new identity which they would have piggy-back on the acceptance fought for and won via the gay rights struggle.

We’ve gone from LGBTQ to LGBTQIA+ and beyond, all in the space of the past decade. At first, I didn’t really pay any attention to any of the new letters or the identities they represent. But the more I learn about them and the regressive ideology they actually represent, the more I believe it’s important to speak up and challenge the ideas we’re being demanded to accept and support as fact.

To explain further, we must unpack the “TQ” letters and beyond. Transgender and queer – or “questioning”, depending on who you ask, refers to the notion that you might be something other than what you appear to be. We’re now talking about something other than homosexuality and bisexuality, like something other than sexual orientation.

In fact, something beyond biology itself. You see, TQ people believe there’s something more than the human body and human sexuality. Something more than boys and girls and men and women. They believe in an entirely new belief system, and it’s called gender.

Gender theory would have us believe that biological sex differences between men and women don’t really exist. If they do, they don’t matter, and gender is simultaneously a social construct but also this ineffable, essential, quality that a person has which has nothing at all to do with their physical body.

Where once gender was a tool of language, used to describe and challenge traditional masculine or feminine stereotypes, now it becomes something essential, something you simply are, based purely on how you feel.

It all boils down to the simple and very dangerous idea that, according to gender ideology, it’s possible for someone to be born in the wrong body. Ask yourself whether this is something we should be exposing, teaching, and in fact indoctrinating our children into? Because that’s what the TQ people seek from us by attaching themselves to the LGB struggle for equal rights as if they were always part of it, by attempting to insert their beliefs into policies, laws, and school

curriculums.

Proponents of gender ideology want us all to accept the idea that a little girl or little boy might be trapped in the wrong body, and should be affirmed in their assumed new identity. If you don’t, congratulations, you’re now transphobic and bigoted, and in countries like Canada and the United Kingdom, you might have very real interference from social services forcing you to affirm the child’s transgender identity.

By the way, that child’s new identity might be male, female, or something else entirely. According to a recent communique to staff at the BBC, there are 150 genders, and it should think about creating a trans brand.

Proponents of gender ideology don’t just want social affirmation for a child’s new identity (which is where the pronoun nonsense kicks in). They demand that we affirm those new identities using everything modern medical and surgical practice can bring to bear on the human body, including hormone therapy, plastic surgery to create synthetic genitals, puberty blockers for children, and the very same chemicals that have been used in the past to castrate the worst sexual offenders including paedophiles – Google a drug called Lupron.

I’m not making this up, nor am I exaggerating for effect. This is what lurks behind the colours of the new more “inclusive” Pride flag and the innocent sounding language of “gender affirming treatment for transgender children”.

Whether the medical industry should even offer such treatments and surgeries to adults is one thing, after all, any adult of sound mind should be free to make their own decisions however unwise we may think them as long as they don’t hurt anyone else.

Do I care if a 40-year-old man wants to castrate himself and dress in women’s clothes? I don’t. But no child could possibly ever be capable of consenting to their own castration, sterilisation, and the consequent erasure of their future sexual potential as men or women.

Children who say they want to be another gender shouldn’t be given hormones or puberty blockers, let alone encouraged to be surgically “transitioned”. Any doctors who says this treatment is safe, proven, and reversible should have their licenses revoked because it’s none of those things. This isn’t an expression of transphobia or bigotry, it’s common sense.

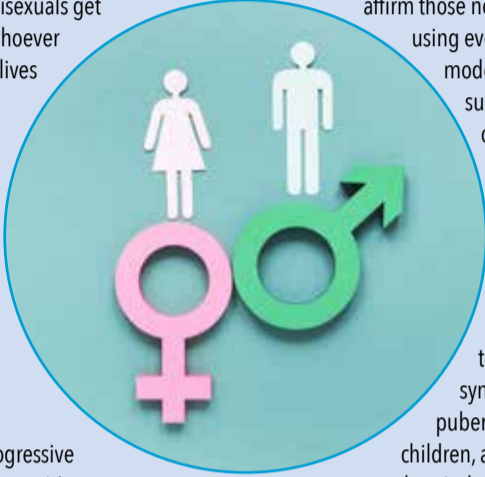
Nothing I’ve written here is to deny that some people suffer greatly from a type of body dysmorphic disorder known as gender dysphoria (the intense loathing and discomfort someone may feel for their biological sex and physical body). These people need and deserve our compassion, understanding, and appropriate care.

However, we dare not accept that the solution for the dysphoric child is to affirm them socially or medically in their ultimately unattainable identity and have them take pride in such.

Rather, we should remain grounded in the biological reality of sex differences, and return to the original message of acceptance and self-love that should be what Pride is all about – the message that no matter who you are, what you look like, or who you love, you are valid and worthy of love.

For some, these new Pride flags represent diversity and inclusion. But for many, they symbolise an ideological movement that’s antibiological, inherently homophobic, and hostile to gay people and women’s rights.

- *Adam Sachs is a proud gay, atheist and Zionist South African Jew who occasionally writes about social and political issues from his perspective. By day Adam is an entrepreneur and consultant in digital product development.*



# Working on bringing the many tribes of Israel together

JULIE LEIBOWITZ

The world looks at Israel as a country full of Israelis, but there is no such thing as a typical Israeli. Rather, there are about 30 to 40 different kinds of people who make up the mosaic of Israeli society, many of them wanting nothing much to do with the other.

Liat Amar Arran, the director of the Israel Centre in South Africa, was a guest at Greenside Shul last weekend, 25 June, and spoke to the congregation about the complexities of the multicultural country. She has a deep understanding of this, having come from a Sephardi family where both sets of grandparents came from Tunisia. She described how having come from an originally Arab-speaking family, they were, to a certain extent, alienated from Israel's predominantly Ashkenazi culture.

"How could I bring my friends back home to a home that spoke Arabic?" she asked rhetorically, pointing out that the narrative of 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s Israel was one of putting aside cultural differences in favour of building a single, Zionist, predominantly European narrative.

Because of that, she wasn't taught to speak Arabic. That's was a pity, she says. "To be able to understand 20% of the population is a big gift. Why wasn't this given to us?"

The idea of a single narrative started to change in the 1970s as Israelis started to question their roots and traditions. It heralded a new age of multiculturalism, which came to fruition 30 years later in 2015, with President Reuven Rivlin's "four tribes" initiative. At the time, Rivlin pointed out, "We're no longer one Israel, we're four tribes."

The truth is, Amar Arran told the congregation, "We're actually 30 to 40 tribes in Israel. Sephardi, Ashkenazi, ultra-Orthodox, Bnei Akiva, Mizrahi, Misnagdim, LGBT, women, feminists, etcetera.

"We even have different relationships to the Holocaust, with some families having first-hand experience and others not. We built a state on top of communities from all over the world. The question is, are we able to live together?"

Amar Arran went on to speak about the Living Together project that she was involved in prior to coming to South Africa four years ago. It was Initiated in 2017, and seeks to celebrate diversity among the Israeli population and promote an "innovative social partnership".

"Alongside Israel's many exemplary and well-known achievements since statehood, Israeli society faces a fundamental difficulty:

how to create a positive lasting connection between different groups, and live together in a society that pursues the common good," according to the organisation's website.

"Over the years, numerous social programmes have worked to address this issue. However, the reality is that significant progress hasn't occurred, while the rifts between communities persist – and at times, are even worse."

Through this project, 30 different communities were invited to get to know each other, understand one another's challenges, "find the red line", and find solutions and a way to live together, Amar Arran said.

"We brought together 30 different leaders," she said. "We met once every two weeks. We took them to the Ponevitch

"A religious lesbian shared her story of praying for two years to remove her inclination and eventually accepting it, whereupon an ultra-Orthodox rabbi said that his role had been to help people give up their homosexuality, but for the first time, he realised that he needed to give it

pain as Sephardim, who settled the country's borders while Ashkenazim moved into the centre of Israel. We need to understand what's frightening us.

"To live together, we have to leave space for the pain, but understand that we need to get beyond it and build the future.

"Second, it's a case of taking small steps, and third, about addressing issues at community level.

"We're not looking for full justice, but concurrent agreement," Amar Arran said. "We won't solve the Shabbat conflict, for example. What we decide in one community may not be relevant to another. It's not a case of all or nothing, we can aim to live together 60%, even if we're not able to 100%. Although we're definitely not the same, we need to build one story, one narrative, and keep building."

Amar Arran pointed out that in searching for commonalities, the army used to be a shared experience, but now only 50% of Israelis go to the army. Inclusion has shifted to academic institutions, for example, where there's greater participation amongst Arab women. "These are places where we can build communal values and interact with one another," she pointed out.

Although Israelis acknowledge the need for diversity, including on company boards, "we're not there yet", Amar Arran said. "There's still a lot of hate, tension, and non-acceptance. We're just at the beginning."

"In our generation, we may not find a solution. But if we're able to live together and not live in isolation, that's a first step. We aren't allowed to fail," she said.



Israelis celebrating Yom Yerushalayim

Yeshiva, met the Rosh Yeshiva. A Sephardi woman in the group asked if he would let his son marry her daughter. The answer was no. A modern Orthodox leader said that his vision was to be able to live in the same apartment building with people who were more Orthodox than him, but a haredi woman said that she wanted to live in a building only with people who looked and behaved like her.

more thought. "Understanding that we don't have a set vision is part of the process," Amar Arran said. "We won't 'live in one building.'"

She said the first step to true multiculturalism was to understand each other's pain. "In Israel, everyone has fear – we fear other communities, there's dislike for the ultra-Orthodox, Arabs, gays, Mizrahi women. I wanted to understand my family's



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A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

# The dire consequences of “othering”

Xenophobic sentiment has become pervasive in South Africa and all too often, what begins with inflammatory rhetoric leads to direct attacks against the targeted group. One of the most serious such incidents in recent times occurred last week, when a fire in the Yeoville Market destroyed 23 stalls run by foreign nationals. Though the cause of the blaze is still to be established, only the previous day, members of Operation Dudula reportedly threatened business owners and demanded that they leave the area. The South African Jewish Board of Deputies (SAJBD) and The Angel Network have since contributed to relief efforts on behalf of those left destitute by what one must assume at this stage was a xenophobically motivated attack.

Incitement to hate and cause harm on the basis of a person's national origins is abhorrent, and its consequences, as we are seeing, can be dire. Writing in the mainstream media this week, the Board's diplomatic liaison, Alana Baranov, who also represents us on the steering committee of the Hate Crimes Working Group, urged that we heed the warning signs of this growing rage building against foreign nationals. “If we fail to take action against xenophobia, South Africa's social cohesion will become a tinderbox which the smallest spark could set ablaze,” she wrote.

Respect for and tolerance towards those who differ from us is a *sine qua non* for a healthy society, particularly one as diverse as our own. The same applies to our own community. South African Jews aren't and never have been homogenous in terms of the kinds of beliefs they hold, whether concerning religious affiliation, attitudes towards Israel, or indeed the entire range of political, social and cultural viewpoints that exist. In recognition

## ABOVE BOARD

Karen Milner

of this, the make-up of the SAJBD at national and regional level has been structured to be as inclusive as possible, with the youth, women's groups, Zionist organisations, and Orthodox and progressive communities among the constituencies represented on its councils.

Likewise, the global Jewish family comprises many different components. This diversity is particularly in evidence at the annual World Jewish Conference Community Directors Forum, which our national director, Wendy Kahn, is attending in Budapest. Representatives of about 50 countries participate in this event, yet in spite of the significant differences in their respective backgrounds – language being just one – all are able to come together in a spirit of camaraderie, common purpose, and mutual esteem.

There's nothing wrong with disagreeing with what other people say, but not to the extent of “othering” them and treating them as if they're beyond the pale. In the modern era, this has become a serious problem, and it's far from being just a South African one. The world over, entire societies are increasingly being divided into warring ideological camps in which those with different views are seen as not simply misguided, but morally deficient pariahs who ought to be shamed and shunned. The detrimental effects of such intolerance extend beyond its immediate targets to cause profound harm to society as a whole. We need to be extremely vigilant against these trends taking root within our own ranks.

- Listen to Charisse Zeifert on Jewish Board Talk, 101.9 ChaiFM, every Friday from 12:00 to 13:00.

This column is paid for by the SA Jewish Board of Deputies



# EskomSePushes us over the edge

Do you lie awake at night waiting for the power to return? Do you feel anxious when the electricity remains on when according the schedule, it's meant to be off? Do you find yourself checking to see if that one appliance light is on because that's your loadshedding indicator?

Do you find yourself checking EskomSePush repeatedly in case of a sudden change and confirming your suburb zone? Do you feel it necessary to confirm with someone that their lights are out when you go dark? And then notifying a minimum of three people that your power is back?

If you answered yes to any of these questions then, like me, you're probably suffering from Loadshedding Anxiety Disorder. Otherwise known as LAD.

It's not a thing. But it should be. And I'm a sufferer.

LAD doesn't yet appear as a recognised psychiatric disorder. The psychologist's reference book *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th Edition*, the DSM-5 to its friends, in fact remains stubbornly silent in this regard. It gives no credit to this fast growing epidemic and offers no advice about how it should be managed.

My own experience is such that when stage 6 loadshedding was announced, I had full-blown symptoms. When the power was turned off at 18:00, I remained vigilant until 22:15 when it returned. The fact that I wanted to sleep was irrelevant as I knew there was little chance of that happening until I was assured that electricity had returned. This was exacerbated by the fact that we were scheduled to go off at midnight (I confirmed that on EskomSePush), which meant that I needed to remain awake until midnight to make sure that the schedule would be adhered to. It goes without saying that would also mean remaining alert until it returned at 02:30.

## INNER VOICE

Howard Feldman

Only, it didn't go off at midnight. Which is very anxiety provoking. After confirming the schedule, doing a quick zone search, and holding my breath for 12 minutes, I finally started to unwind and accept that the power was to remain on for this period.

Which is surprisingly and horrifyingly unnerving.

Eskom, together with the African National Congress, it would seem, isn't good for our mental health. At least, not mine. And those who suffer from LAD.

*Eskom, together with the African National Congress, it would seem, isn't good for our mental health. At least, not mine. And those who suffer from LAD.*

I don't have a generator. But from those who do have back up in this form, I'm told it isn't necessarily a silver bullet. Fellow sufferers speak of the incredible anxiety between the power going off and the generator turning on. Will it or won't it? Has it taken too long? Is there enough fuel? All are constant worries from the generated. Inverter owners have their own unique worries. Did the battery have enough time to charge? How long will it last, and is there something else we should be removing from the circuit?

Loadshedding Anxiety Disorder isn't a thing. Not officially anyway. But it's an accurate description of what we, as a country, are enduring. It's not pleasant. It's not fun. But the one thing that we know is that we're all in this together.



### Sunday 3 July

- Jewish Women's Benevolent Society host R30 book sale at Genesis Centre. Time: 09:00. Contact: 011 485 5232 or gloria@jwbs.co.za
- Pine Street Shul hosts Paula Slier "My standout, exciting, challenging, and scary moments as an international TV journalist and political correspondent". Time: 10:00. Cost: R50. Contact: 083 320 9229 or lynarch@worldonline.co.za
- Union of Jewish Women hosts Paula Slier "Reporting from the front line" at Sydenham Shul. Time: 19:00. Entry: R120 donation. Contact: 011 648 1053 or headoffice@ujw.co.za
- Rabbi Cyril Harris Community Centre and the South African Jewish Board of Deputies host the launch of Marlene Bethlehem's memoir – *To Serve with Love*. Time: 15:30. Contact: hazel.rhcc@gmail.com

### Monday 4 July

- Cape Town Holocaust & Genocide Centre hosts volunteer guide training. Contact: 021 462 5553 or danielle@holocaust.org.za

### Tuesday 5 July

- ORT Jet presents Excel 101 with Dan Stillerman and Avi Levy. Time 09:00. Entry: Free. Contact: 011 728 7154 or admin@ortjet.org.za

### Wednesday 6 July

- Cape Town Holocaust & Genocide Centre hosts webinar "Exploring common themes in transitional justice". Time: 13:00. Contact: 021 462 5553 or admin@holocaust.org.za

## Letters

### FROM FOOD TO SHULS, SA FEELS LIKE HOME AWAY FROM HOME FOR IRISH

Yanky Fachler certainly hit the nail on the head in his article, "Ties that bind: SA and Ireland linked by Litvak roots" (*SA Jewish Report*, 23 June 2022).

When we came to South Africa from Ireland in 1961, the first thing we noticed was the similarity between South African and Irish Jews. From the food to the shuls, it was home away from home.

Shopping in Doornfontein was the same as shopping in Clanbrassil Street (Dublin's Doornfontein). Chopped herring, kichel, pickled cucumbers, gefilte fish, meat blintzes, and shul services were identical – the same tunes, same tropes, chazzen/choir, and it was comforting, because everything here was so different and we were all a little homesick, but in the Jewish world, it was the same. Even at the kaddish after shul, old people were putting food in their handbags (*for der kinder*) and old ladies spat bits of chopped herring at you when they spoke.

My dad's cousin, Robert (Bobby) Briscoe, was the first Jewish lord mayor of Dublin in the 1950s. How sad it was when his great friend, Irish President Eamon De Valera, wouldn't allow Jews into Ireland during the Holocaust. He said he couldn't pull strings. I know that today, Ireland is hugely antisemitic and we (Ireland) also have security in our shuls. When we lived in Ireland,

there was no noticeable antisemitism except for the odd common kid yelling "Jew boy" at you when you walked to shul in your finery.

Lithuanian immigrants to Ireland came with nothing – they were pedlars, hawkers, scrap metal merchants, yet they put their children through Trinity College University, and the second generation were doctors, lawyers, dentists and so on, or top-class businessmen, contributing hugely to the Irish community in general.

"*Vickla*" is the Lithuanian accent for "weekly" – a *vickla* was a person who came to your home every week, be it to collect a debt or the insurance money, or to sell you their wares.

Yes, we use "*farible*" (and the reasons for a good *farible* are the same here as they are there – a slight, real or imagined).

We say "calves foot jelly" for *petzah* (petchah), and "*vuursh*" for polony.

If anyone thinks they may have Irish ancestry, Stuart Rosenblatt has a database of more than 70 000 people and can be contacted on [stuartrosenblatt@irishjewishroots.com](mailto:stuartrosenblatt@irishjewishroots.com), or WhatsApp +44 7889 794757.

– Anne Lapedus Brest, Johannesburg

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# “Oh to Believe in Another World”



Wits is delighted to present the South African premier of internationally renowned artist and Wits alumnus William Kentridge's "Oh to Believe in Another World," accompanied by Shostakovich's Symphony No. 10, and performed by the Mzansi National Philharmonic Orchestra, on **27 and 28 July 2022** at the Wits Linder Auditorium.

In 2022 Wits University turns 100 and Wits Art Museum turns 10. As part of the celebrations, WAM presents an exhibition by William Kentridge, who has played a vital role in championing WAM's creation and development. Open to the public.

**Visit [webtickets.co.za](https://webtickets.co.za) to book your seat now!**

## Joburg doctor scales KDVP Everest for Youth Day

Chapman University works closely with the 1939 Society of Survivors in LA. This society has been led for the past 20 years by William Ellperin. Ellperin, together with other staunch supporters of the 1939 society, all of them descendants of Holocaust survivors themselves, ensure that a variety of meetings, events, and competitions take place every year.

in him, and together with his amazing team, he pushed on to achieve another challenge! After cycling 223.61km over 19 hours and 36mins, he said modestly, with a smile, "We did it! What great teamwork!"

## Torah Academy plays hard in soccer and netball tournament

**T**orah Academy Primary School took part in the Inter Jewish Day School soccer and netball tournament at King David Sandton on Wednesday, 22 June. The other competing schools were King David Victory Park, King David Linksfield, King David Sandton, Yeshiva College, and Sandton Sinai.

**Y**outh movement Achim celebrated a *siyum* (the completion of a tractate of Gemorah) on Tuesday, 21 June, by 40 of its boys through an international programme called "Vehaaarev Na". The *siyum* was attended by the founder of the programme, Rabbi Dovid Newman, and his wife, Sarah.

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