Riverdale Jewish Center
Resident Scholar Series

Susan Gross
Family Health and Halakha
With Susan Klugman and Nicole Schreiber
Agus

Michelle Greenberg-Kobrin
Between a Rock and Hard Place: The Agunah Crisis, Secular Law and Halakha

Rabbi Yona Reiss
Modern Jewish Controversies

Isaac Chavel
Rambam: his Life and Works

J. John Mann
The Myth of the Mind-Brain Dichotomy

Yoni Brafman
Heidegger's Jewish Teachers and Disciples

All classes are followed by Q and A.
Check the RJC Bulletin for exact times and locations
Series or course sponsorships are available

Riverdale Jewish Center
3700 Independence Avenue * Bronx, NY 10463 * 718-548-1850 * www.rjconline.org
RJC Resident Scholar Series

Course #1

Family Health and Halakha
with Dr. Susan Gross

Class #1: November 1st
Jewish Genetic Screening -
What we all need to know to protect
our children and grandchildren

Class #2: November 8th
With Susan Klugman
The Genetics of Breast and Ovarian Cancer
Challenge and hope for the
Jewish community

Class #3: November 15th
With Nicole Schreiber Agus
Jewish genetic testing and life-saving tech-
nologies-Deciphering the "Science Times"

Dr. Susan Gross, FRCS(C), FACOG, FACMG is a Professor of
Clinical Obstetrics & Gynecology and Women’s Health and
Pediatrics at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine and Chair-
person of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the North Bronx Health-
care Network (Jacobi Medical Center and North Central Bronx
Hospital). She also serves as the founder and Medical Director of
the Human Genetics Laboratory at Jacobi Medical Center, with the
mission of clinical molecular genetics facility that will provide
accessible, state-of-the-art genetic testing for the underserved.

Nicole Schreiber-Agus, Ph.D., serves as Scientific Director to the
Human Genetics Laboratory at Jacobi Medical Center and the
coordinator of its Jewish Genetic Disease Carrier Testing
Program. She was the Principal Investigator of a biomedical re-
search laboratory for eight years, focusing there on transcriptional
regulation in development and disease

Susan Klugman, MD, is a board–certified obstetrician
gynecologist and a board certified geneticist. She is also an
Associate Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology and Women's
Health at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine and is a member
of the Faculty Senate and the Admissions Committee. She has
given lectures to many Jewish organizations over the past 18 years
on various topics pertaining to women’s health.

Course #2

Between a Rock and a Hard Place:
The Agunah Crisis,
Secular Law and Halakha
with Michelle Greenberg-Kobrin

Class #1: November 22nd
How Did We Get Into This Mess:
An Overview of the Agunah Crisis
(and is it a crisis)?

Class #2: November 29th
A history of secular and halakhic
responses to the agunah problem

Class #3: December 13th
Prenuptial Agreements:
What are they, do they work,
and why should I be talking about divorce
when I'm getting married?

Michelle Greenberg-Kobrin is Dean of Students and Lecturer-in-
Law at Columbia Law School. Prior to her appointment at
Columbia, Dean Greenberg-Kobrin was an attorney in the
Corporate and Securities and Financial Institutions groups at
Arnold & Porter. She received both her B.A. and her J.D. from
Columbia. She was a Bruria Scholar at Midreshet Lindenbaum as
well as a Torat Miriam Fellow. Dean Greenberg-Kobrin has
written and lectured extensively on a range of issues, including
issues related to agunot. She serves on number of not-for-profit
boards, and lives in Riverdale, New York, with her husband, Rabbi
Jeffrey Kobrin, and their four children.
RJC Resident Scholar Series

Course #3
Modern Jewish Controversies
with Rabbi Yona Reiss

Class #1: December 20th
The Conversion Conundrum

Class #2: December 27th
Jewish Sexual Mores

Class #3: January 3rd
Women's Communal Leadership:
Opportunities and Challenges

Rabbi Yona Reiss, a noted Torah scholar, attorney, and jurist, is the Max and Marion Grill Dean of Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary. Previously, Rabbi Reiss served as director of the Beth Din of America from 1998 to 2008.

Rabbi Reiss is a summa cum laude graduate of Yeshiva College, YU's undergraduate liberal arts and sciences college for men, and went on to receive his law degree from Yale Law School, where he was senior editor of the Law Journal. He received his rabbinic ordination from RIETS, where he also earned the distinction of Yadin Yadin.

Course #4
Maimonides, his Life and Works
with Isaac Chavel

Class #1: January 10th
Maimonides: His life

Class #2: January 17th
Maimonides: His works

Class #3: January 24th
Philosophical Case Study:
Maimonides on Jacob’s Dream

Class #4: January 31st
Halakhic Case Study: Maimonides on
Declaring the New Month
(according to Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik)

Isaac Chavel was born in Louisville, Kentucky, and moved, at the age of seven, to Edgemere, Long Island, when his father, Rabbi Charles B. Chavel accepted the position of Rabbi of Congregation Shaare Tzedek. Dr. Chavel was ordained in 1961, by Rabbi Israel Gustman, Dean of Yeshiva Netzach Israel, and in 1966 received his Ph.D. in Mathematics from the Belfer Graduate School of Science of Yeshiva University, his thesis written under the direction of Professor Harry E. Rauch. His mathematical research in Riemannian Geometry was published in international journals, and he has written a number of advanced monographs. In addition to Mathematics, he has also published articles in journals devoted to Jewish thought.

Dr. Chavel was a member of the Mathematics Department at City College from September 1970 through his retirement in February 2009, and was a member of the Doctoral Faculty in Mathematics at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. He is married to Arlene nee Kampner, has three children, and more than nine grandchildren.
Course #5:
The Myth of the Mind-Brain Dichotomy: considered from neurobiologic and theologic perspectives.

with J. John Mann

Class #1: February 7th
The effect of genes and childhood adversity on brain development and who we become as adults

Class #2: February 14th
Brain biology, determinism and free choice: implications for transgressions

Class #3: February 28th
The power of treatment or personal desire for change to help conditions due to genes and childhood adversity

J. John Mann MD, is The Paul Janssen Professor of Translational Neuroscience (in Psychiatry and in Radiology) and Vice Chair for Research in the Department of Psychiatry at Columbia University. He is Director of Research and Director of Molecular Imaging and the Neuropathology Division at the New York State Psychiatric Institute.

Dr. Mann is trained in Psychiatry and Internal Medicine and has a Doctorate in Neurochemistry. His research employs functional brain imaging, neurochemistry and molecular genetics to probe the causes of depression and suicide. Dr. Mann is the Director of the NIMH Conte Center for the Neuroscience of Mental Disorders, and Past President of the International Academy of Suicide Research.

Course #6:
Heidegger's Jewish Teachers and Disciples

with Yoni Brafman

Class #1: March 7th
The German Jewish Context of Heidegger's Thought: Hermann Cohen and Edmund Husserl

Class #2: March 14th
Heidegger's Life and Thought: "Being and Time," the Disputation at Davos, and the Nazi Inaugural Address

Class #3: March 21st
Heidegger's Jewish Students: Hannah Arendt, Leo Strauss, and Emanuel Levinas

Class #4: March 28th
Heidegger's Effect on Modern Jewish Thought: Joseph Soloveitchik and Michael Wyschogrod

Yonatan Brafman is a Ph.D. student in Columbia University's Department of Religion, where he studies Philosophy of Religion and Jewish Philosophy. He received a BA in Religion and Psychology and a MA in Philosophy of Religion, both from Columbia. His research focuses on the relationship between rationality and the social practices of religious communities. He has taught Jewish Philosophy at Yeshivat HaKotel and at the Columbia/Barnard Hillel.