



CAS Scroll - the weekly newsletter of Congregation Ahavas Sholom

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# Herman Wouk Dies at 103



**H**erman Wouk, the Jewish Pulitzer Prize winning author of such classics as *The Caine Mutiny*, *the Winds of War*, and *The Hope*, died in his sleep last week at his home in Palm

Springs California, a mere 10 days before his 104th birthday.

Born on May 27, 1915 in the Bronx NYC, to Ester and Abraham Wouk, Herman, the second of three children became a prolific award winning writer. Wouk's extensive writing career would span many genres including comedy, drama, and romance; and encompass several literary disciplines including copy editing, playwriting, screenplay dialogue and contributing to musical theater.


Still, Herman Wouk was best known for his novels, including the Pulitzer Prize winning *Caine Mutiny* (1951) *Majorie Morningstar* (1955) *The Winds of War* (1978) *This is my God: the Jewish way of life* (1959) *The Hope* (1993) and its follow up, *The Glory* (1994.) As most 20th century writers disavowed or downplayed their religious beliefs, Wouk, an Orthodox Jew embraced and basked in his Judaism. Wouk's writings introduced Jewish characters and life to a wide religiously diverse reading audience. Jewish characters were present, often prominent, in his works. In *Majorie Morningstar*, Wouk follows Marjorie Morganstern a 17 year old Jewish girl, who frustrates her mother's plan of arranging an ideal marriage for her, by pursuing a career as a theater actress. Later historical novels, *The Hope* and *The Glory*, together cover the first 33 years of Israel's existence.

Many of Wouk's books eventually made it to the screen, big and small. *The Cain Mutiny*, starring Humphrey Bogart, was a huge success, earning 7 Oscar nominations including a best leading actor nomination for Bogart. *Majorie Morningstar*, starring Natalie Wood and Gene Kelly, also made it to the big screen. The miniseries, *The Winds of War* set records for viewership. The miniseries *War of Remembrance* was also hugely popular.

After Graduating from Columbia University in 1934, where he acted as editor of the school's Humor magazine, the *Columbia Jester*, Wouk held several writing jobs and eventually spent five years writing for Fred Allen's, the *Fred Allen Show*. Wouk was already tiring of comedy writing when America entered WWII. He enlisted in the navy reserves. Being at sea gave Wouk both time to write and something to write about. His first novel, *Aurora Dawn*; or, *The True history of Andrew Reale* (1947,) was written while still in the service and was published shortly after his being discharged from the service in 1946. His second novel *City Boy*, suffered disappointing sales; but all that changed in 1951, with the release of *The Caine Mutiny*.

In 1944, Wouk met Betty Sarah Brown, a Protestant girl from Idaho. The two fell in love, in short order. Betty Brown started studying Judaism when Wouk went back to sea. She converted to Judaism and they were married on December 10, 1945. They had three children, Nathaniel, Joseph, and Abraham. The eldest, Abraham, would die in a drowning accident just shy of his fifth birthday. Betty would become Wouk's confidant and eventual literary agent. They would remain married for 66 years, until her passing in 2011.

In 1999 Herman Wouk received a Lifetime achievement award from the Jewish Book Council. Wouk also became the first recipient of the Library of Congress Prize for American Fiction in 2008.

Wouk's last published work was *Sailor and Fiddler: Reflections of a 100-Year-Old Author*, published in 2015; but, according to his literary agent, Amy Rennert, he continued to write right up to his passing 

THE JEWISH MUSEUM OF NEW JERSEY PRESENTS

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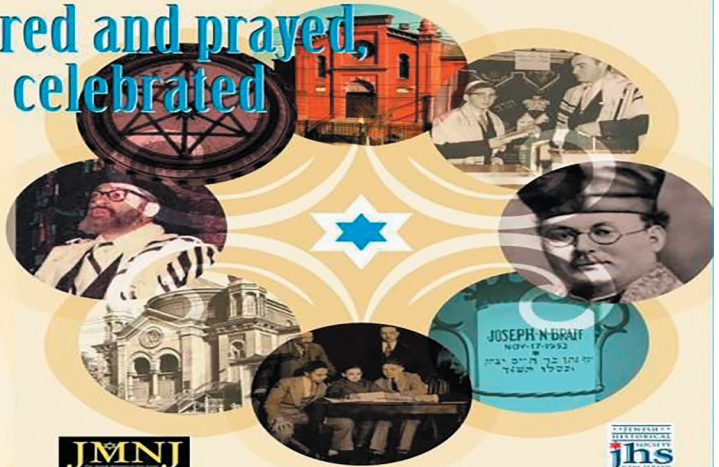
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**For More Information Call**

Lisa Suss, JCC curator, (973) 530-3413

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# Senseless Attacks on Religious Institutions Continues, Unabated



*Rabbi Avi Bukiet speaks about the recent arson attacks against Boston Chabad Centers*

**T**he insanity just never seems to end. The latest in a recent rash of attacks on religious institutions occurred in Chicago; this time, a couple of Jewish structures were targeted. A synagogue, and the community center adjacent to it, was targeted in a failed arson attempt. In a separate incident, in another section of the city, approximately 14 vehicles were vandalized outside a number of synagogues. According to Chicago police, On May 19, 2019 at approximately 12:34am an unidentified man tossed three Molotov cocktails at the Anshe Sholom B'nai Israel Congregation Synagogue, located in Chicago's

Lakeview neighborhood, and the community center that abuts it. Fortunately the attack failed. The vandals targeted vehicles parked outside of a number of synagogues in the Rogers Park District of the city. The unknown assailants smashed rear and side windows with bricks and large rocks. At this time it is unknown whether the incidences or suspects are related. Outraged by these apparently hateful events, the Jewish American Committee (AJC) spoke out against the attacks. Laurence A. Bolotin, Director of AJC Chicago said, ““The willful effort to attack a house of worship, to try to burn it down, is a chilling reminder, at a time of rising anti-Semitism in the United States, of the vulnerability of synagogues and other Jewish institutions.” He commended police authorities for their diligence saying, ““Thankfully, no one was hurt, and the Anshe Sholom B’nai Israel Congregation was not damaged, but this incident demonstrates yet again the need for vigilance by the Jewish community and law enforcement.” There was also a recent incident in Boston. Between May 22 and May 16, 2019, Boston firefighters were called three time to deal with suspicious fires, two at the Chabad Center for Jewish Life in Arlington, Massachusetts, where Rabbi Avi Bukiet lives with his family, and one at the Chabad Jewish Center in Needham Massachusetts, a Boston suburb, where Rabbi Mendy Krinsky lives with his family. While authorities believe each of the Massachusetts fires was deliberately set, they have not been able to conclude whether they’re connected. ✡

# Simon Says

*Weekly insights from Rabbi Simon Rosebach*



***Rabbi Simon Rosenbach***

heartbeat. (A fetal heartbeat can be detected after about six weeks after fertilization [a fetus doesn't have heart that early; the "heartbeat" comes from tissue called the "fetal pole"], in many cases earlier than a woman will know that she is pregnant.) The "heartbeat" laws that I researched do not make allowances for rape and incest, but I could not determine whether they make allowances for the mother's physical, mental, or emotional health.

But this column is not my political position. This column is to inform you about the Jewish view on abortion.

The majority of Jews in the United States are politically liberal, and the majority of Jews in the United States support *Roe v. Wade* and they don't want to see the opinion weakened. Probably the majority of Jews in the United States view abortion as a matter between the mother (and the father, if he matters) and her doctor. The majority of Jewish women in the United States probably take the position, "Hands off my body." But that is not the Jewish position at all. The Jewish view, and it is not confined to the Orthodox community, is that sometimes abortion is required, sometimes abortion is permitted, but at no time abortion is elective.

The Jewish view is that life does not begin at conception (which some anti-abortion people propose). The Talmud considers the baby in the first 40 days of its life "simply water." Another Talmudic source differentiates the first trimester from the rest of the gestation period,

**A**bortion is in the news lately. Alabama's governor signed a bill that would ban all abortions, even in the cases of rape and incest. The law exempts cases where the pregnancy endangers the mother's health or the fetus has what the law calls a "lethal anomaly," which means that the fetus suffers from a defect that it would cause the fetus to be stillborn or the child, if born alive, to die shortly after birth. The mother's health that the statute contemplates is physical health; the mental or emotional health of the mother is relevant only if two doctors certify that the mother mental health is so fragile that she or the fetus will die.


A few other states have enacted so-called "heartbeat" laws. These laws make abortion illegal if a doctor can detect a fetal

when the fetus is categorized “like the thigh of its mother.” (The fetus doesn’t attain personhood until birth, when the forehead emerges or, if it is a breech birth, when most of the body emerges.) The effect of this categorization is that a person can not amputate his or her thigh except to preserve his or her life or health, so logically and legally (in Jewish law), a mother can not abort a fetus after the first trimester except to preserve her life or health.

Actually, that standard governs all abortions during the gestation period, but the practical difference is during the first trimester (before the baby becomes “like the thigh of the mother”) and especially through the first 40 days of the pregnancy, the rabbis interpreted the “life or health of the mother” more broadly.

In broad terms, Jewish law requires an abortion when the mother’s life or physical or mental health is threatened by the pregnancy. Jewish law permits an abortion when the pregnancy carries a risk to the mother’s life or physical or mental health that is greater a risk in normal pregnancy, but not so great a risk that the pregnancy constitutes a clear and present danger to the mother. In all other cases, abortion is by Jewish law forbidden.

But our sages interpreted “a danger to the physical or mental health to the mother” broadly, and in the Conservative Movement and the Reform Movement the rabbis interpret “a danger to the physical or mental health to the mother” still more broadly. An older mother, a young mother, a victim of rape or incest, these are cases that have been interpreted to present dangers to the mother’s mental health if the mother is not mature enough to rear the child, or the mother is too old to fulfill the physical demands of motherhood, or the child will remind the mother of the trauma associated with the conception. An incapability to rear, for example, a severely physically deformed child or a severely mentally deficient child are cases that have interpreted to present dangers to the mother’s mental health. Some mothers (and parents) welcome, for example, a severely affected Downs Syndrome baby; they think that they should bestow love on the child. Some mothers (and parents) would recoil from rearing a similar child; they think that they are not emotionally strong enough to love the child. But abortion on demand, even though most American Jewish women would support it, is not the Jewish way.

I am not taking a position here. When a friend asked me the Jewish law of feeding tubes, I told him, “When a feeding tube is inserted, you can not remove it according to Jewish law until the patient can swallow on his own, or dies.” But I added, “Now that you know the law, you decide what to do.” If I am ever confronted by a woman seeking an abortion and she wants to know the state of Jewish law, I will tell her. But I will try to accommodate her if it is possible. 

***Our congregant Herb Oppenheimer is now in Saint Barnabas Medical Center in Livingston. I don’t know how long he will be there, but he will be pleased if you visit him or call him. His phone number is 973-634-1902, but call before you visit, because he may be home or in another facility. It is a mitzvah to visit the sick, even by telephone. Simon***



## Oven roasted mushrooms with Herbs

Oven roasted Mushrooms are a quick and easy dish; perfect for anyone on a tight schedule or in need of preparing a meal without a lot of fuss and clean up. Coupled with rice (white or brown) this dish is ready in slightly over a half hour.

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/2 pounds crimini mushrooms
- 2 sprig fresh rosemary, chopped
- 4–6 sprigs fresh thyme, chopped
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/2 teaspoon fresh ground black pepper

- 2 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 tablespoon lemon juice

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.
2. Place crimini mushrooms in baking dish. Sprinkle with rosemary and thyme around the mushrooms. Sprinkle the kosher salt and black pepper over the mushrooms.
3. Drizzle with olive oil and lemon juice.
4. Bake in preheated oven for 30-35 minutes or until mushrooms are tender. Serve hot.



## Kiddush Sponsorship

**L**ast weeks Kiddush was a President's Kiddush in honor of William Oppenheimer's graduation from Rutgers Law School. The cost of sponsoring Kiddush is \$150, which barely covers the cost of the lunch. Our goal is to have every Kiddush sponsored. To sponsor a Kiddush, email Rabbi Rosenbach or contact Alla Eicheldinger at [Alla7815@yahoo.com](mailto:Alla7815@yahoo.com). You can also help us by shopping, which doesn't cost any money, just a little time. We'll give you a list of items, you shop and we'll reimburse you.

Our friend, William (Bill) Oppenheimer graduates from Rutgers Law School today, mazel tov Bill.

## Shabbat Services

**J**oin us this Saturday for Shabbat services. Strangers, visitors, friends, old and new; our doors are open to you. Looking for a new home? New members are always welcome at Congregation Ahavas Sholom services starts at 9:00AM. Our congregation is open and welcoming, so feel free to pay us a visit.



*William Oppenheimer*



### Help Us Remodel Our Kitchen

It's been estimated it will take \$60,000 to properly renovate our kitchen.

April Modlinger, who has always been a pillar at Congregation Ahavas Sholom, has generously pledged \$10,000 to making this happen.

We have recently received another pledge for \$2,200, bringing the total to 12,200.

With your help Congregation Ahavas Sholom will soon have a kitchen we all deserve.

**Make your pledge today!**