

**PANEL ON CATALOGING ISSUES -- DEDICATED TO ROSALIE KATCHEN ז"ל:**

**IN MEMORY OF ROSALIE KATCHEN:  
A TRIBUTE DELIVERED ON JUNE 26, 2001**

*Heidi Lerner*

*Description:* Rosalie E. Katchen, ז"ל, served as Hebraica Librarian in the Goldfarb Library of Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts. When she died in September 2000, the *AJL Newsletter* printed the following: "...The flood of tributes that appeared on *Hasafran* [AJL's electronic newsletter] described Rosalie as an exemplary Judaica librarian, a patient teacher, a lovely, caring mentsh, and a true 'class act.' Rosalie was a friend and mentor to so many librarians, and to catalogers, especially." Because of this, Judaica catalogers chose to dedicate this Panel on Cataloging Issues in Rosalie's memory.

Heidi Lerner will deliver the introduction to the Panel discussion.

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**Heidi Lerner** received an MLS from the Graduate School of Library and Archive Studies at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem in 1982. Since 1990, she has worked as the Hebraica/Judaica Cataloger at the Stanford University Libraries. Ms. Lerner helped found the Northern California Chapter of AJL and has spoken at several national AJL conventions on various topics. During the past year she was a member of the Research Library Group's "JACKPHY Scripts on Eureka" Working Group. Currently, she serves as Chair of the Cataloging Committee of the R&S Division of AJL, and also is the Coordinator for the NACO Hebraica Funnel within the Library of Congress' Program for Cooperative Cataloging.

Just one year ago, Rosalie Katchen and I walked back together from the Library of Congress to our hotel following a busy day of AJL and cataloging-related activities. I had asked her if she wanted to catch a cab, but she preferred to walk. I did not know at that time, but this half hour would be the last time that I would see her. As had become our typical fashion, our professional discussions mixed with more personal talk, and we easily moved from matters of subject heading proposals and vernacular cross-references in the National Authority File, to pictures of her new grand-child and sharing of Bat Mitzvah advice.

In spite of our quick pace, I noticed that she seemed a bit tired, but did not think too much of it. We continued to correspond through the summer via e-mail, and it was only early on a September morning, when I read Charles Cutter's announcement on *Hasafran* that she had died the day before, did I realize how sick she had been.

Ten months later, the shock of that news has not abated and we continue to deeply mourn our beloved friend and colleague.

Rosalie worked in our profession for almost 30 years and rose to the forefront of the American Hebraica cataloging community. But it was during the past decade that most of us here today came to know her personally. I was well acquainted with Rosalie's work before ever meeting her, from reading her articles in *Judaica Librarianship*. She managed the automation of Brandeis' Hebraica catalog and its integration into the main library system. She served as the Chair of the AJL Cataloging Committee and was a frequent speaker at IFLA conferences

(International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions). In 1997, Rosalie was asked to speak on Non-Roman databases at IFLA. Rosalie was also a frequent contributor to the Program for Cooperative Cataloging and was a member of the Non-Roman Core Record Task Group.

Perhaps most significantly to her cataloging cohorts in AJL, Rosalie was a professional's professional. She tirelessly guided us to create cataloging records that met national standards, and participate in national and international cooperative cataloging efforts. I think that from among all of us, she most deeply understood the importance of, and how to provide, accurate and quality access to library materials, within the most cost-effective means possible. Rosalie combined a deep technical and theoretical knowledge, with an innate pragmatism. She was also deeply committed to the belief that patrons should be able to search for and read catalog records for Hebrew script materials in the alphabet in which they were written. To achieve this end, under Rosalie's leadership, Brandeis was one of the first libraries to take advantage of the Hebrew script capability in RLIN (Research Libraries Information Network) as its Hebraica catalog went online. Rosalie devoted much time encouraging and working with library vendors to also develop library systems that are multilingual and multi-script. Unfortunately, her untimely death prevented her from seeing this happen at Brandeis with the installation of the Ex Libris system.

Rosalie's presence and influence will always remain with us. In tandem with her consummate professionalism, she always maintained an extraordinary grace and elegance. Today's AJL cataloging session is dedicated to her memory.