





# Winners

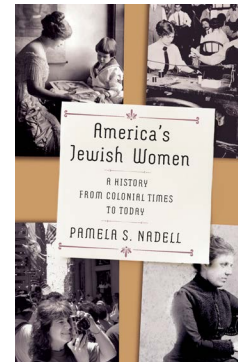


*America's Jewish Women: A History  
from Colonial Times to Today*  
Pamela S. Nadell

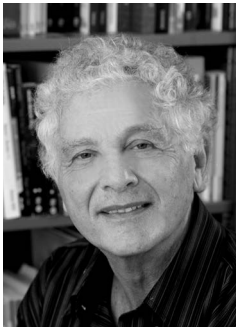
W. W. Norton & Company

Jewish Book of the Year  
Everett Family Foundation Award

My thanks to the National Jewish Book Awards and the judges for honoring *America's Jewish Women: A History from Colonial Times to Today* as the 2019 Everett Family Foundation Jewish Book of the Year. We writers know that the making of books is not a solitary experience although our names stand alone above our titles. If we are fortunate, and I have been, we have remarkable guides along the way. Mine include the eminent historian Jonathan Sarna and the Jewish Book Council's executive director emerita extraordinaire Carolyn Starman Hessel. My agent, Peter W. Bernstein, W. W. Norton's Vice President and Senior Editor Amy Cherry, and the entire Norton team steered this book's course. These and colleagues and friends in the Association for Jewish Studies read what I wrote, listened as I tested ideas, and pointed me down new paths. Above all, I thank my family—my husband and best friend, Ed Farber; and our children, Yoni, Rachael, and Orly. At the end of each day, they pulled me back to the present toward the future, even as the stories of America's Jewish women drew me to the past.



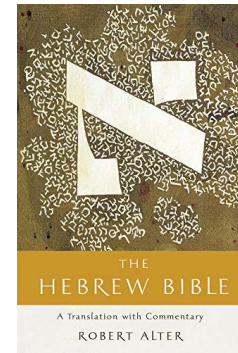
This enthralling and well-documented chronicle of the variety of ways in which Jewish women have embraced the possibilities of America is essential reading for all American Jews. Building on her deep scholarly foundations in American Jewish history and her pioneering and innovative research on Jewish women, Pamela Nadell's accessible and revelatory narrative begins in the early era of European settlement and concludes in an ever-evolving present. Much of the charm of Nadell's approach is her focus on individuals, some well-known and others obscure. She brings names and personal details to women's experiences of immigration, education, the workplace, marriage and motherhood, and synagogue, organizational, and political involvements, as well as of antisemitism, sexual discrimination, and harassment. Nadell's approach renders the larger patterns of Jewish women's lives vivid and particular, as do her well-chosen illustrations that visually demonstrate what her book relates about women's engagement in American Jewish life. Images include a family doing garment piece work at home, and women striking for better work conditions, playing mah-jongg, working for civil rights, and studying for rabbinic and cantorial ordination. We see Ruth Bader Ginsberg's 1946 confirmation picture and Chabad women attending a 2015 weekend, as well as a photograph of female philanthropy in action. As Nadell teaches us, the diversity of America's Jewish women is staggering, but equally awe-inspiring is their share in the "collective American Jewish female past."



## *The Hebrew Bible: A Translation with Commentary* Robert Alter

W. W. Norton & Company

My chief motivation in undertaking a new translation of the Bible, after countless previous translations, most by learned committees, is that no one has really done justice to the subtle and purposeful literary fashioning of the Hebrew texts. The literary vehicle of the Bible is by no means “decorative” but rather the essential expression of the biblical vision in all its power and complexity. Although, given the disparities between ancient Hebrew and modern English, by no means all of this can be conveyed in translation, a good deal of it can be, and the reception of my work encourages me to think I have succeeded in this. The translation is accompanied throughout with a commentary, some of it devoted to basic aspects of the biblical world and the biblical text that require elucidation for modern writers but much of it seeking to illuminate the literary artistry of the texts, something no previous commentary has done much with.



Lifetime Achievement Award

“Robert Alter’s historic one-man translation of the entire Hebrew Bible is like two worlds at once, the heavens and the earth, with the translation above and the commentary below. One can spend a lifetime in either of these worlds.” – Aviya Kushner

Robert Alter spent a two-decades translating the Hebrew Bible into English—and many more as a biblical scholar and literary critic—resulting in the impressive three-volume set *The Hebrew Bible: A Translation with Commentary*. The completed work is an achievement that *The New York Times Book Review* calls “monumental, marked by literary grace and intelligent commentary.” Alter’s translation is the first translation of the Hebrew Bible by a single person, and his translation coupled with his commentary have made the Hebrew Bible accessible to an even wider audience—a resource for not only academics and serious bible scholars, but a vital contribution to every Jewish home library and reader. His work showcases the role of translation in our understanding of the Hebrew Bible, and the necessary effort that goes into accurately capturing its text, rhythm, and poetics.

Jewish Book Council is proud to honor Alter’s work with a Lifetime Achievement Award for his valuable contribution to the community, which will surely be treasured for years to come.



Dena W. Neusner

Mentorship Award  
in Honor of Carolyn Starman Hessel

Editing sometimes feels like a puzzle. If I can just fit the right pieces into the right places, then I'll have a great book. That may be true, but it's such a small part of the story. A talented author has a vision, a voice, a passion for a story, and my job as editor is to guide authors to dig deep and draw out their very best work. Whether I'm working on a picture book or popular nonfiction for adults, an educational book or even a haggadah (yes, I wear a lot of hats), helping authors and artists bring those puzzle pieces together is one of the most rewarding things I do as an editor. And as I've learned so much from my mentors, I find immense satisfaction and purpose in helping my colleagues at Behrman House and Apples & Honey Press develop their skills as well. That's why receiving the Jewish Book Council's Mentorship Award is so exciting to me. Thank you, JBC, for the award. And thank you for all you do to promote Jewish books.

They say you never want to watch the sausage being made, and aside from it being a potentially treyfe metaphor, it's usually true.

But it's not true of the work of Dena Neusner, our quite marvelous Executive Editor. The world can see the quality of what she produces as she leads our Editorial Team and as she has spearheaded the launch of Apples & Honey Press. What you can't see is her understated competence and her commitment to developing the talents of everyone on our staff to their fullest potential. You can't see her making the work we do as engaging for her colleagues as we hope our books are to our readers. And you can't see her helping even to improve the work and skills of authors who submit manuscripts that we are unable to take on.

Every day I'm glad to have Dena on our team, and I'm thrilled that her talents can be recognized not only by her colleagues, but by the larger world as well.

*- David E. Behrman, President of Behrman House Publishing*

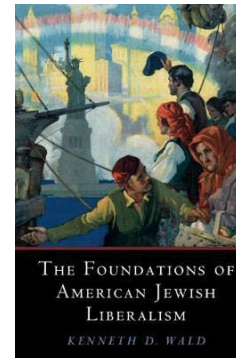


*The Foundations of American  
Jewish Liberalism*  
Kenneth D. Wald

Cambridge University Press

American Jewish Studies  
Celebrate 350 Award

American Jewish liberalism fascinates me because it contradicts nearly everything I was taught about why people vote as they do. If economic self-interest largely drives voting choices, why for nearly a century has this affluent population favored the more liberal political party? In trying to solve this puzzle, I realized that conventional explanations based on Judaic factors are inadequate. If something intrinsic to Judaism is responsible for Jewish liberalism, why are American Jews the only diaspora community still on the left side of their nation's political spectrum and why does their attachment to liberalism fluctuate over time? These insights helped me realize that American Jews are disproportionately attracted to political liberalism because they are American Jews for whom the liberal design of the American polity has offered full citizenship and political opportunities unavailable elsewhere.



Wald provides a timely, persuasive, readable, and thoroughly researched explanation for American Jewish liberalism and the post-1928 propensity of Jews to support the Democratic Party. He argues that a distinctive American Jewish political culture emerged in the wake of the American Revolution that embraced the secular state as the best guarantor of Jewish political and social equality. This classical liberal position, he shows, has characterized the American Jewish community from its infancy, continues to persist notwithstanding changes in Jews' social and economic status, and distinguishes America's Jews from Jewish communities elsewhere, including contemporary Israel. Wald's ambitious and sophisticated interpretation, embedded in understated political science theory, supersedes all previous efforts to explain American Jewish liberalism, and makes a major contribution to our understanding of American Jews' distinctive political behavior.



*What We Talk about When We Talk about Hebrew (and What It Means to Americans)*

Naomi B. Sokoloff,  
Nancy E. Berg, eds.

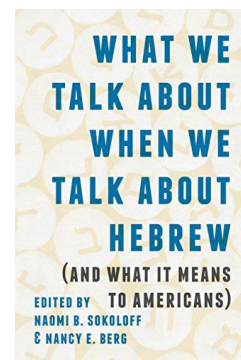
University of Washington Press

our ongoing conversations with and about Hebrew and our invitation to others to join us.

We are honored to receive a National Jewish Book Award for *What We Talk about When We Talk about Hebrew (and What It Means to Americans)*, and we are delighted that this occasion helps us draw attention to the Hebrew language and its remarkable backstory. This book grew out of our conviction that Hebrew can contribute centrally and vitally to the Humanities. The revival of Hebrew has been an extraordinary feat. We are proud to lay claim to being a part—however minor or marginal—of that triumph, and we urge other Americans to be part of it as well.

Essay collections are, by definition, collaborative projects. As we express our gratitude to the Jewish Book Council, and to the University of Washington Press and all those who supported the publication, we applaud our contributors to the volume. We thank our teachers and mentors who encouraged us, our colleagues who inspire us, and our students who continue to challenge us. We acknowledge the accomplishments of our fellow American Hebraists, and we are saddened that the untimely death of one of them, our contributor Alan Mintz, prevented him from seeing the book in print and celebrating the award with us.

*What We Talk about When We Talk about Hebrew* tells of



*What We Talk About When We Talk About Hebrew*, subtitled *And What It Means to Americans*, is a fascinating collection of essays extolling the beauty and depth of the Hebrew language.

This theme—that even modern Ivrit draws upon biblical context and images in subtle yet unmistakable ways—is discussed in multiple essays by scholars, writers, and poets. Several professors of Hebrew who have taught in both the U.S. and Israel reveal how differently students understand Hebrew literature in English translation as opposed to the Hebrew original, where biblical context and allusions are deeply rooted. Examples include not only familiar Hebrew writers (Agnon and Bialik) but modern Hebrew poetry in which the biblical echoes are equally clear.

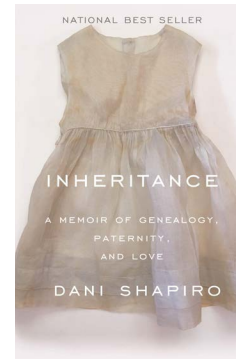
This collection is not only for scholars of literature, however. The essays leave no doubt that the oft-discussed differences between Israelis and non-Hebrew speaking American Jews reflects a fundamental disparity in language as well as thought. Yet you cannot read this book without coming away with a desire to learn Hebrew. If you ever wanted to learn Hebrew, this collection will rekindle the urge. If you haven't had that urge, read this remarkable book and you will. And then maybe we—Israelis and American Jews—will be able to understand each other better.



# *Inheritance: A Memoir of Genealogy, Paternity, and Love* Dani Shapiro

Alfred A. Knopf

Autobiography and Memoir  
The Krauss Family Award in Memory of  
Simon & Shulamith (Sofi) Goldberg



How do you make sense of your identity after a DNA test reveals that the man who raised you is not your biological father? Dani Shapiro did not resemble anyone in her family and was often met with skepticism when she told people she was Jewish, but she never expected a genetic test that she took whimsically would reveal that the father she adored was not related to her. What secrets—buried fifty years earlier—could explain such life-altering facts?

*Inheritance* is a memoir that reads like a psychological suspense novel with a central character who faces epic challenges and moral dilemmas which are all the more gripping because they are not fictional. There is also a meaningful exploration of genetics, paternity, and the world of infertility. And there is irony in *Inheritance*: this gifted author of numerous novels and memoirs who has written brilliantly and compulsively for three decades about identity and family history has accidentally discovered the seminal secret in the seed of her very existence.

“I have used my life—rather than my life using me,” Dani Shapiro recently told the *New York Times*. *Inheritance* may be her finest work yet.



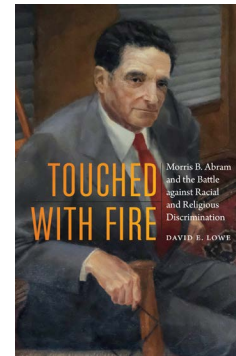


*Touched with Fire: Morris B. Abram and the Battle against Racial and Religious Discrimination*  
David E. Lowe

Potomac Books

I am thrilled that my biography of the late civil rights lawyer and Jewish community leader Morris B. Abram has received the National Jewish Book Award. Sadly, most Americans have never heard of Abram, the courageous southern lawyer who played a major role, during the height of Jim Crow segregation, in unmasking the Ku Klux Klan, facilitating the release of Dr. Martin Luther King from prison prior to the 1960 presidential election, and ending Georgia's racially discriminatory electoral system. His lengthy battle against that system resulted in the Supreme Court's pathbreaking "one person, one vote" ruling. From a childhood spent in a rural Georgia town with a tiny Jewish presence, Abram rose to the leadership of the American Jewish community. He used the platforms afforded him, including official roles at the United Nations under three U.S. presidents, to speak out on behalf of Jews trapped behind the Iron Curtain and to call out the UN's relentless bullying of the Jewish state of Israel.

I trust that this award will help provide wider exposure to Morris Abram's remarkable story and the lessons we can take from it.



Biography  
In Memory of Sara Berenson Stone

Reading the biography of Morris B. Abram is a little like telling the story of the Exodus during a Passover seder—it would have been enough if he had just been a civil rights activist who unmasked the Ku Klux Klan, or was just instrumental in getting the Reverend Martin Luther King released from prison, or had just fought against the discriminatory voting system in his home state of Georgia resulting in the historic "one man, one vote" ruling of the U.S Supreme Court.

It would have been enough if he was just a leading advocate for the Jewish state of Israel, or the youngest person chosen to lead the American Jewish Committee, or had just led the massive Soviet Jewry rally on the Washington D.C. mall, or had just served as chairman of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry, and the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations. It would have been enough if he had just been the second president of Brandeis University, or the chairman of the United Negro College Fund, or the ambassador to the European Office of the UN. It would have been enough had he just served under five Presidents of the United States—from John F. Kennedy through George H. W. Bush.

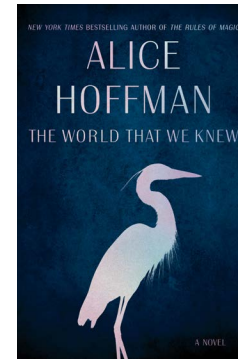
Author David Lowe deftly tells the story of Morris B. Abram, who was born in 1918 and raised in the small southern town of Fitzgerald, Georgia to a Jewish family of humble origins. It is the story of a brilliant attorney and inspiring leader who rose to prominence during the twentieth century battling the very issues that continue to challenge us today—legislative apportionment, affirmative action, campus unrest, and international human rights. David Lowe's biography of Morris B. Abram skillfully portrays the life of a giant of a man whose story is the story of America. It will enlighten and inspire readers of every generation.



## *The World That We Knew* Alice Hoffman

Simon & Schuster

Thank you so much to the Jewish Book Council for the honor of this award. I would also like to thank my publisher, Simon & Schuster, especially Carolyn Reidy, Jonathan Karp, and my wonderful editor, Marysue Rucci. Many thanks to Amanda Urban for her invaluable advice. My biggest debt of gratitude goes to the survivors who so generously shared their stories with me here and in France, whose bravery and compassion changed the way I look at the world.



**Book Club**  
The Miller Family Award in Memory of Helen  
Dunn Weinstein and June Keit Miller

Hanni is desperate to get her fourteen-year-old daughter, Lea, out of Berlin before the Nazis come and destroy everything and everyone. She hatches a plan to ask the rabbi to help Lea, but the rabbi's wife refuses to even let her ask the rabbi. However, Etti, the rabbi's daughter, has eavesdropped on the men's incantations and offers to create a golem who will accompany Lea to safety. Once the golem has completed its task, Lea is to remove its animating letters, and return it to mud.

But the golem develops its own personality and relationship with Lea, as they race and hide through Europe. Along the way, all the characters meet and fall in love with partners who both strengthen and endanger them.

Will Lea ultimately be able to escape the Nazis? And daring and resourceful Etti, the rabbi's daughter—will she survive? And what will be the ultimate fate of the golem?

This beautifully written novel of adventure, fantasy, and love takes us on a journey through a dark time that is both heart-breaking and uplifting.

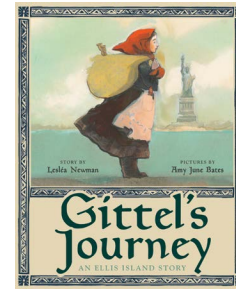


## *Gittel's Journey: An Ellis Island Story* Lesléa Newman; Amy June Bates, illus.

Abrams Books for Young Readers, an imprint of ABRAMS

Children's Literature

I am thrilled and honored to receive the National Jewish Book Award for *Gittel's Journey: An Ellis Island Story*, a book inspired by my own family history. "Gittel" is based on two people, Sadie Gringrass (my godmother's mother) and Ruth Levin (my maternal grandmother). Both came to America as children in the early 1900s. Sadie traveled alone, carrying a piece of paper with the name and address of a relative. She held the paper so tightly during her voyage that by the time she arrived in America, the ink had worn off on her hand. Her photo appeared in the newspaper and a relative saw it and came to Ellis Island to claim her. Ruth traveled with her mother carrying only their Sabbath candlesticks. They were detained on Ellis Island until a male relative claimed them. I now light my Shabbos candles in the candlesticks my ancestors brought over from The Old Country and passed down to me. I wrote *Gittel's Journey* to pay homage to these women of blessed memory and in hopes that young readers will be inspired to learn their own family histories and be kind to those traveling to America today searching for a better life.



Fear, courage, resilience, and hope merge in a marvelous picture book that is everything one should be. This warm, empathetic, historical tale focuses on a still current issue: immigration. Gittel's homeland is no longer safe. Gittel and her mother flee to a new beginning, but her mother is denied boarding the ship due to an eye infection. Nine-year-old Gittel must sail alone, the name and address of her American cousin held so tightly that, at landing, her sweaty palm has smeared all the ink. An interpreter rescues a sobbing Gittel; a photographer snaps her picture, publishes it in the local Jewish newspaper. Her cousin recognizes Gittel, and comes to claim her until her mother can arrive. The story springs from the author's family, discounting naysayers: a child could not do this today. The gentle text is fast paced, full of the touchstones of Jewish identity, sprinkled with Yiddish at perfect moments. Soft watercolor illustrations in a muted brown palette highlight vignettes of Gittel's journey, including details of Ellis Island. They capture the expressive, tiny girl against the looming ship, first a threatening behemoth, later big and sad despite new friends, finally passing the Statue of Liberty. This is a first-rate volume, both with rich, thick paper, woodcuts on the end pages, and art on book cover and paper jacket. Our country as a beacon of hope jumps off these pages, grabs our eyes, our hearts, and our minds and makes us proud to remember that we are the place to start over.



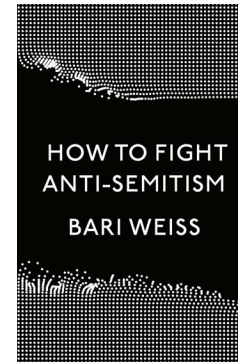
## *How to Fight Anti-Semitism* Bari Weiss

Crown

My parents raised me and my three sisters on the Groucho Marx quip: “I wouldn’t want to belong to any club that would have me as a member.” It’s a line that’s always kept me in good stead—and not only because I’ve never had any clubs extending invitations.

But if there was one group I had always hoped to join, it was this one: the writers who tell Jewish stories.

I am honored to be in this room, and humbled to have my first book recognized by people I respect so deeply.



Contemporary Jewish Life and Practice  
Myra H. Kraft Memorial Award

*How to Fight Anti-Semitism* is a powerful tool for anyone trying to understand the renewed power of antisemitism in today’s world. Weiss asks her readers to confront the reality of antisemitism today and to define how it plays out differently on both sides of the political spectrum. Weiss is at her best when she acts as a spotlight, offering clear and usable definitions for an ancient force that often eludes simple characterizations. She explains that antisemitism is not just another form of racism. Rather, it is a conspiracy theory, a contagious thought virus that “turns Jews into the symbol of whatever a given civilization defines as its most sinister and threatening qualities.” In this way, antisemitism is not just a threat to the Jews, it is a threat to all people. Any society that tolerates lies, hatred, and conspiracy theories will end up embracing other forms of racism and discrimination. In the end, Weiss’s answer is a two-pronged approach: 1) think clearly and have the courage to stand up against antisemitism and 2) double down on being Jewish and embrace all of the wisdom, beauty, and power of Jewish life.

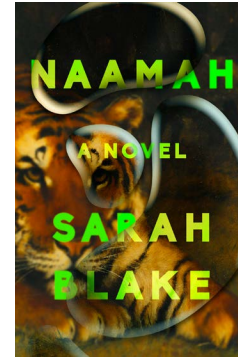


*Naamah*  
Sarah Blake

Riverhead Books

Debut Fiction  
Goldberg Prize

Thank you so much for recognizing *Naamah*. I returned to Genesis when I was seeking out women I had overlooked as a girl. When I realized Naamah had been on that ark, with all of those animals, for over a year, I understood her immediately. I saw her trapped and hopeless, but thankful her children had been spared, and devoted to her family's survival. I, too, feel extremely grateful to have my family, but hopeless in the face of my country, with its rising antisemitism and racism, its gun violence, and its neglect for the Earth. Helping Naamah through her journey helped me through mine. And returning to this story, I feel reconnected to my heritage and reinvigorated to find my place within it. I am forever grateful to the Jewish Book Council for this award. I'd like to dedicate it to my mother, Barbara Ruth Benowitz Maloney.



A compelling work of debut fiction, *Naamah* transports the reader to the boat in the Biblical story of Noah's Ark and introduces us to Noah's wife, Naamah. Storytelling at its finest with lyrical prose, magical realism, a provocative and intelligent reimagining, Sarah Blake gives us a female hero who holds everyone together through the storms, while struggling for answers about her and her family's uncertain future. Naamah is a complex, spiritual, and powerful woman with tremendous insight mixed with angst and worry about the world she lives in. With a fresh voice, Blake has brought *Naamah* to the contemporary world of literature and made her relevant today.



## *Antisemitism: Here and Now* Deborah E. Lipstadt

Schocken

I have spent the past 40 years teaching, writing, researching, and thinking about Jew hatred, a word I prefer to antisemitism. I spent more than six years entwined in a legal system that forced me to defend myself against a Holocaust denier.

In the light of that record, one of the questions I am frequently asked is how I have found the stamina to face this barrage of hatred and contempt. How can I maintain my optimistic views about the existence of the Jewish people, when I have encountered this animus on both an intellectual and personal level? And how, particularly in the light of the recent surge in antisemitic incidents, can I believe in a Jewish future?

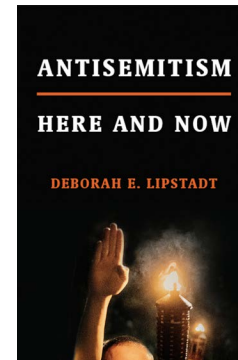
The answer to those queries lies in the simple fact that there is no logical reason, by any historical measure, that Jews, as a people and a faith, should still exist. The fact that they do confounds historical reality. They should have disappeared long ago. But they have not. They have thrived, even in the wake of a genocide that but eight decades ago took the lives of one out of every three Jews alive. That fact alone should make one optimistic. But there is another reason.

It is to be found in the array of books that have been published on Jewish topics in this year alone. They are an

affirmation of the fact that, while others may be intent on disparaging, harming, and even killing us, these authors and their readers have kept their eye on the essence of Jewish history, peoplehood, culture, and religion.

It is to be found in the vast number of people—Jews and non-Jews—who read those books, think about them and study them. It is to be found in this vibrant enterprise called the Jewish people.

There is darkness. But there is so much more light.



Distinguishing this book from her life's work by noting its focus on contemporary antisemitism and the unfolding Jewish future, rather than analyses of the past, Deborah Lipstadt masterfully weaves the most burning questions of our time through her correspondence with two fictional thought partners. In her joint letters to "Abigail," a Jewish student in many of Lipstadt's university courses, and "Joe," a colleague posted at the university's law school, Lipstadt connects the three in a year-long conversation that explores the current rise in antisemitism, first through its definition in light of the past, then through analyses of its overt and more nuanced promulgation in today's world.

Lipstadt invites every reader into the teacher-student relationship that is born of a year of deep reflection and animated by the backdrop of our ever evolving political and social realms.

Perhaps most salient of all is Lipstadt's depiction of the struggle to locate one's sense of agency amid such destabilizing times and within today's increasingly messy narrative of Jewish life and the ideas and people who threaten it. It is through this prism that the questions pertaining to Jewish identity surface, forcing readers to consider their Jewishness in relation to externally imposed perceptions, victimhood and othering, as well as consider the place of Israel in the larger scheme of antisemitism. Taken together with Lipstadt's strong discouragement of antisemitism's becoming "the linchpin of (one's) identity" and her belief that the Jewish tradition is "far too valuable to be tossed aside and replaced with a singular concentration on the fight against hatred," it is this set of considerations that will be most empowering for readers.



## *Fly Already: Stories*

Etgar Keret

Riverhead Books

Fiction

JJ Greenberg Memorial Award



Etgar Keret has delivered a tour-de-force once again in his latest collection of short stories, *Fly Already*. These stories run the gamut. They are dark and funny, touching and heartbreaking, edgy and probing, weird yet relatable.

Keret has the uncanny ability to write stories that are both distinctly Israeli and also perfectly universal. In his story, “Pineapple Crush,” a lonely man meets a woman on the Tel Aviv pier and finds comfort and connection with her. Though the setting is ancillary to the story, one sees upon deeper inspection that this is a story that can only be told as it is in Tel Aviv.

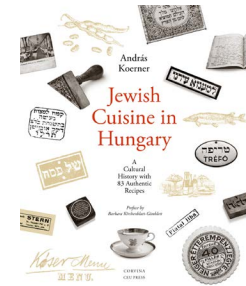
Through tightly packed, terse language, he builds worlds wholly constructed over the course of a page, inviting his readers in to suspend disbelief as he weaves together a reality both like and different from our own. The mundane become alive in his writing. Whether it’s a story about looking for drugs, searching for love, celebrating a birthday, or dealing with a miscarriage, his rich characters and nuanced descriptions breathe new life into these everyday topics.



## *Jewish Cuisine in Hungary: A Cultural History with 83 Authentic Recipes* András Koerner

Central European University Press

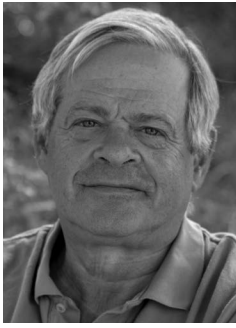
At the end of my book I already thanked those who helped me in my work on it. Nevertheless, I wish to repeat here the names of a few of them, since they are to whom I owe the greatest gratitude: Katalin Fenyves, the editor of the original Hungarian edition; Laurent Stern, who shared his childhood memories with me; Zsuzsa Körner Fábri, my sister, who assisted me in my research, László Kúnos; the director of Corvina Books, the publisher of the Hungarian edition and co-publisher of the English one; and, last but not least, Krisztina Kós and Linda Kúnos, the past and present directors of Central European University Press, the publisher of the English version.



Food Writing & Cookbooks  
Jane and Stuart Weitzman Family Award

András Koerner's *Jewish Cuisine in Hungary* paints a vivid portrait of prewar Jewish Hungary through its food, its bakers, its homemakers, and more. The focus on Jewish households and local businesses shifts the scholarly gaze from typical historical subjects to the realm of working people and women—fertile ground for meaningful inquiry. The book quotes extensively from memoirs, cookbooks, and periodicals of the time with each rich passage reveling in the minutiae of daily life. Koerner masterfully weaves together photos, objects, and eighty-three recipes plucked from rare historical cookbooks to transport the reader to Budapest in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, to Hungarian-Jewish holiday tables and rural goose farms. Ultimately, Koerner sheds new light on prewar Hungarian Jewish life by exploring the role food plays in its culture in such innovative ways, and so too does he help us understand the Hungarian Jewish place in broader Jewish food culture. *Jewish Cuisine in Hungary* will no doubt serve as an essential historical reference for years to come, while also modeling what's possible in the field of food scholarship.



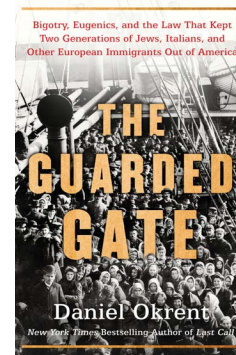


*The Guarded Gate: Bigotry, Eugenics and the Law That Kept Two Generations of Jews, Italians, and Other European Immigrants Out of America*

Daniel Okrent

Scribner

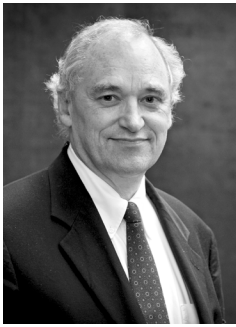
When I began work on *The Guarded Gate* in 2014, border walls, ethnically exclusionary immigration policies, and Donald Trump as candidate were not even on the horizon. By the time I had completed my work in late 2018, people were telling me how lucky I was to be publishing a book with so timely a subject. Frankly, I would have preferred otherwise. I'm nonetheless grateful to the judges, and hopeful that my subject will once again become a matter not of current debate, but of history.



History

Gerrard and Ella Berman Memorial Award

*The Guarded Gate: Bigotry, Eugenics, and the Law That Kept Two Generations of Jews, Italians and Other European Immigrants Out of America* by Daniel Okrent is a work of history that illuminates the country and the world in which we live today. Okrent, a distinguished author, editor, and journalist, reveals how scientists of an earlier era provided lawmakers with a spurious rationale for barring “the golden door” of America to immigrants deemed to be undesirable, including two generations of European Jews. He tells a tale that “cut[s] close to my own bone”—Okrent is the child of a Jewish couple from Poland and Romania—but he widens the lens to include other families from southern and eastern Europe who were accused of falling into “the lowly ranks of the mongrel races.” *The Guarded Gate* looks to the recent past, but it also shines a bright light on the debate over immigration policy that figures so prominently in public conversation right now.



## *The Unwanted: America, Auschwitz, and a Village Caught In Between* Michael Dobbs

Alfred A. Knopf in association with  
the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

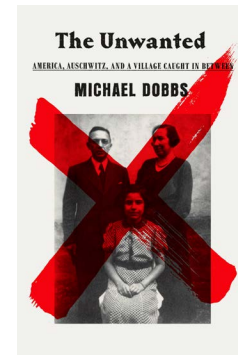
I am honored to receive the 2019 Holocaust National Jewish Book Award in Memory of Ernest W. Michel for my book *The Unwanted*. The book builds on my research for the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum for the exhibition “Americans and the Holocaust.” It is published by Knopf, in association with the museum.

Most books examining U.S. immigration policy under FDR have had a primarily Washington focus. They describe the political fight in the United States between advocates of a more generous refugee policy and those who wanted to slam the doors shut. I tried to connect these somewhat abstract debates to the fates of a few Jewish families from a single German village who were desperately trying to reach the United States. Some make it to America; some perish along the way; many are denied visas, and end up in places like Auschwitz. In the words of the American journalist, Dorothy Thompson, “a piece of paper with a stamp on it” frequently meant “the difference between life and death.” I wanted to tell the story of these “pieces of paper.” How difficult was it to get one? What was the basis for issuing them? What happened to those who were denied? The Holocaust was a German story, of course, but it had an American dimension. Decisions taken in

Holocaust  
In Memory of Ernest W. Michel

the United States have a direct impact on lives far across the ocean. It’s important that we understand the nature of that impact, both then and now.

*The Unwanted* would not have been written without the help and support of many people, particularly the families of Holocaust victims and survivors, who shared documents and correspondence that enabled me to bring alive their frequently terrible, but sometimes uplifting, experiences. Thank you!



Timely and compelling, *The Unwanted* tells the story of how the small community of Jews from the Black Forest village of Kippenheim sought to escape Nazi persecution and flee to safety in the United States. Michael Dobbs’s meticulous research into the stories of individuals is an exercise in scale, focusing on the small stories in order to illuminate the larger picture in a new and more meaningful way. He reconstructs the immense difficulties German Jews faced as they tried—with increasing desperation—to escape to America, navigating a hostile and unwelcoming bureaucracy with greater and lesser degrees of success. Telling the story of U.S. policy from the point of view of refugees trying to navigate it allows readers to understand, on a deeper level, the very human cost of America’s exclusionary refugee policies in the 1930s and 40s.

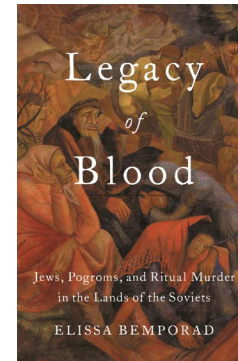


*Legacy of Blood: Jews, Pogroms, and Ritual Murder in the Lands of the Soviets*  
Elissa Bemporad

Oxford University Press

I thank the people in my life who not only make life worth living, but who, by being there, made the writing of this book happen. Thank you to my siblings Jonathan, Hali, Micol, and Joel: as Natalia Ginzburg noted, I could recognize you “in the darkness of a cave, amid millions of people.” Thank you to my kids, Elia and Sonia: To put it simply, I adore you! Thank you to the love of my life, Dovid Fishman, for his curiosity, openness, criticism, and warmth, and for learning Italian quite well. I thank my parents, Nino and Donna, for their unyielding support even when faced with the craziest ideas that a daughter can confront her parents with. They taught me the beauty of books and the magic of building bridges where there are none, and they showed me the wisdom of smiles and laughter. I dedicate this book to them.

Modern Jewish Thought and Experience  
Dorot Foundation Award in Memory of Joy  
Ungerleider Mayerson



Accusations of blood libel and violent pogroms not only occurred but also were often encouraged from above in Tzarist Russia. In *Legacy of Blood*, Elissa Bemporad breaks important new scholarly ground. Moving past Soviet claims of having eradicated the blood libel and anti-Semitic violence, Bemporad traces the continuities and discontinuities of anti-Jewish violence and propaganda in the Soviet context. Drawing on a wealth of previously unutilized sources, she paints a vivid, fascinating, and complex picture of the suppression, and later transformation, of traditional anti-Jewish motifs in the U.S.S.R, with additional attention to their afterlife over the past few decades. Her work not only transforms our understanding of a disturbing aspect of modern Jewish history, but also constitutes an important contribution to our broader understanding of violence between social and political realities.



## *Deaf Republic* Ilya Kaminsky

Graywolf Press

*Deaf Republic* is a story of a pregnant woman and her husband in a time of crisis. They see a soldier shoot and kill a young deaf boy—and in response to that murder the whole town decides to protest by refusing to hear the authorities. Their protest is coordinated by sign language. Thus begins the fable in verse that is both a fairy tale and a mediation on the echoes of the life of my family in occupied Odessa in 1940s, as well as the Ukraine today, and the United States today. It is a great honor to be recognized by the Jewish Book Council for this book. I am grateful to the incredible team at Graywolf Press for their help in every stage in the process of bringing this book into the world. *Deaf Republic* wouldn't exist without the support of my wife, who is both my muse, my brilliant co-conspirator, co-author, co-translator, great love, and best friend.

Poetry  
Berru Award in Memory of Ruth  
and Bernie Weinflash



Ilya Kaminsky's *Deaf Republic* is an allegorical tale of resistance. After soldiers murder Petya, a deaf child in Vasenka, the entire town becomes deaf. The townspeople organize against the soldiers using sign language, which is reproduced in the text. *Deaf Republic* reminds readers that apathetic “silence” in the face of atrocity is an act of privilege: “The deaf don’t believe in silence. Silence is the invention of the hearing.” This is a book that honors historic acts of resilience while also shattering contemporary complacency.



# *Rashi's Commentary on the Torah: Canonization and Resistance in the Reception of a Jewish Classic*

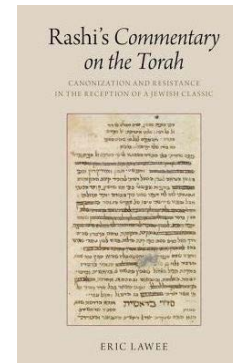
Eric Lawee

Oxford University Press

Scholarship  
Nahum M. Sarna Memorial Award

Serendipitously or providentially, I cite Nahum Sarna on the opening page of my book. Regarding *Rashi's Commentary on the Torah* he wrote: “no other commentary on the Hebrew Scriptures in any language has ever attained comparable recognition, acceptance, and sustained popularity or similar wide geographic distribution, or ever equaled it in its profound impact on human lives.”

But just how did the *Commentary* become the most influential work of Hebrew biblical scholarship ever written? What led to its appeal across all strata of Jewish society among young and old, scholar and lay person, women and men? Why made Rashi's reading of the Torah a staple in the Jewish curriculum? It was questions such as these that spurred my years-long effort to try to understand the processes that turned the *Commentary* into the closest thing Judaism has to a canonical biblical commentary and a foundational text that has shaped Jewish interpretations and ideas—and perhaps even the nation's collective identity—for over nine centuries. I am deeply honored that the fruits of this effort are now associated with the distinguished name and scholarship of Nahum Sarna.



Studying the text of the Bible through the commentary of Solomon Ben Isaac (1040-1105), famously known as R. Shlomo Yitzhaki or Rashi, has become so culturally ingrained that, for many teachers and students, it is difficult to disentangle the plain meaning of the text of the Bible from the comments of Rashi that they absorbed in their youth. Culturally speaking, the commentary achieved such authoritative status that biblical literacy implied familiarity with the commentary of Rashi. And yet we know that this was not always so. How did the commentary of Rashi itself become a canonical text? How does one eleventh-century commentary achieve such universal acceptance throughout the Jewish world? The research on this question has been relatively scant—until now. In *Rashi's Commentary on the Torah*, Eric Lawee, professor of Bible at Bar-Ilan University in Israel has written a comprehensive reception history of the most important Jewish commentary on the Torah. The reader might be surprised to discover the intensity of responses, both positive and harshly critical, to the increasing popular acceptance of Rashi's work on the Torah. Through meticulous scholarship and a vibrant writing style, Lawee takes us on a journey as we follow the twists and turns of this adventure, as the commentary's reach extended around the world. The book affords the reader the opportunity to more fully comprehend Rashi's work as well as the interpretative, philosophical and political issues that were at stake in the debates that took place around its reception. Furthermore, the study of this particular example of reception history shines a light on the ways that interpretation and canonization shape the development, decline and evolution of traditions throughout the generations. Lawee's book is an example of exemplary scholarship written in a style that will keep you engaged and turning its pages.

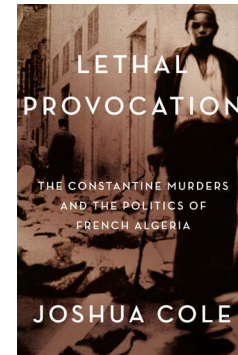


*Lethal Provocation: The  
Constantine Murders and the  
Politics of French Algeria*  
Joshua Cole

Cornell University Press

I am deeply honored that my book has been awarded the Mimi S. Frank Award in Memory of Becky Levy by Jewish Book Council. The book is about a very particular and local story, a moment of violence that took the lives of twenty-five Jews and three Muslims in French Algeria in 1934. In a more general sense, however, my book is about the way that provocative acts can transform the ways that close neighbors relate to one another, making social and political conflict seem inevitable, obvious, taken for granted, without any need for explanation—even murder. The book took a long time to write, and it would have been impossible without the extraordinary scholarship and support of other historians. There are so many, but let me name especially Laure Blévis, Benjamin Brower, Julien Fromage, Julia Clancy-Smith, Ethan Katz, James McDougall, Malika Rahal, Joshua Schreier, Jennifer Sessions, Todd Shepard, Sarah Abrevaya Stein, and Benjamin Stora.

Sephardic Culture  
Mimi S. Frank Award  
in Memory of Becky Levy



*Lethal Provocation* is a masterful account of one of modern North Africa's most infamous episodes of violence between Jews and Muslims. The riots that broke out in Constantine in the summer of 1934 left twenty-eight people dead (twenty-five of them Jewish). Cole contextualizes the tragic events in the long history of French rule in eastern Algeria.

But more than a riveting history of the Constantine murders, Cole uses this incident to rethink the politics of belonging in French Algeria. Most historians have viewed the Constantine murders as an expression of a deeply entrenched enmity between Jews and Muslims. Cole instead historicizes the violence as part of a broader story of contestations about what it meant to be French—among Jews (French citizens since 1870), Muslims (colonial subjects fighting for greater rights), and European settlers (many of whom were avid antisemites).

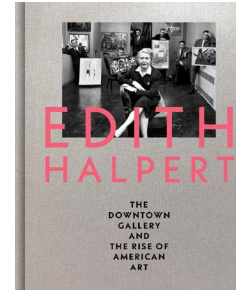
Cole's extensive archival research offers a gripping history of Algerian Jews and their relations with their Muslim and Christian neighbors. And he ends with an unexpected twist, showing that the murders were not a spontaneous eruption of hatred, but rather the work of cold, calculated provocation.



## *Edith Halpert: The Downtown Gallery, and the Rise of American Art* Rebecca Shaykin

The Jewish Museum and Yale University Press

Visual Arts



“I often think,” wrote artist Charles Sheeler, “where would any of us be if there were no Downtown Gallery?” This companion volume to the Jewish Museum’s recent exhibition, which quotes Sheeler, is a richly-textured appraisal of the Downtown Gallery’s visionary founder, Edith Halpert. Author Rebecca Shaykin highlights Halpert’s long-obscured history as a trailblazing gallerist and intrepid champion of American modernists.

A Russian Jewish immigrant, Halpert helped support her family during her early years in New York while studying art and forming lasting friendships with artists. She opened her Downtown Gallery in 1926. As Shaykin’s account reveals, in her forty-year career as a gallerist, Halpert was a leader in myriad respects: as the first of a vanguard of powerful women art dealers; as one of the first gallerists to locate downtown, closer to working artists; as a trusted advisor to key U.S. art patrons; as a savvy merchandiser committed to making art affordable and gallery-going less intimidating; as an impassioned promoter of American modernists at a time when European art held sway; and as a progressive whose recognition of talent embraced people of color, women, Jews and self-taught folk artists.

Guided by Shaykin’s meticulous scholarship, this vividly-illustrated volume supports a fuller appreciation of Halpert’s influence. Readers will quickly recognize that artworks from the Downtown Gallery that appear in this revelatory book—by such artists as Georgia O’Keefe, Jacob Lawrence, Stuart Davis, and Ben Shahn—have shaped the identities of our most celebrated institutions and continue to grace their walls.

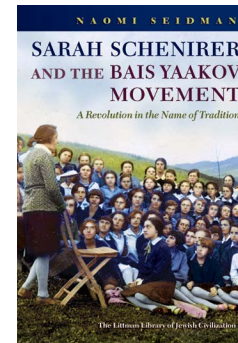


*Sarah Schenirer and the Bais  
Yaakov Movement*  
Naomi Seidman

The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization

Women Studies  
Barbara Dobkin Award

The scholar's work is often lonely. But it is also true that every research project opens up social worlds. I am grateful not only for the honor of this award but also the opportunity to mention some of the people who eased my path. Connie Webber at Littman Library urged me to write a book on Bais Yaakov. The Hadassah-Brandeis Institute supported my translation of Sarah Schenirer's Yiddish writings. The capable librarians at YIVO taught me how to mine an archive and Lyudmila Sholokhova helped curate an exhibit of YIVO's Bais Yaakov holdings for the book launch. These collaborations continue, for instance in the Bais Yaakov Project ([www.thebaisyaakov.com](http://www.thebaisyaakov.com)), dedicated to preserving Bais Yaakov history, performing its music, and documenting its culture; the team includes Dainy Bernstein, Leslie Ginsparg Klein, Basya Schechter, and Pearl Gluck. Many archives and individuals shared photos or documents. Most precious, my book provided me with an occasion for interviewing my mother, Sara Seidman, about her experiences in Bais Yaakov before, during, and after the Holocaust. Sarah Schenirer spoke often of "returning the hearts of the daughters to their mothers." Indeed, she did so for this particular daughter and mother, in ways she could hardly have anticipated.



This fascinating and original study blends biography, the history of an educational movement, and primary sources into a significant and accessible book that brings Bais Yaakov to a wider audience. Naomi Seidman takes the Bais Yaakov movement as a lens through which to explore tensions between tradition and modernity and the paradoxes of gender roles and opportunities in interwar Poland and beyond. Bais Yaakov schools were founded in 1917 by the indomitable Sarah Schenirer to provide Jewish girls with an alternative to assimilation that would also expand their educational and aspirational options. The movement grew quickly, offering young women the opportunity to combine freedom and religious commitment, and attracting the interest—and controlling influence—of male communal leaders. Seidman traces the trajectory of the Bais Yaakov movement from its charismatic roots to institutionalization, pointing out how seemingly oppositional tendencies, such as religious stringency and radicalism, could also be mutually enforcing. And she enriches her narrative by weaving her personal connections to the Bais Yaakov movement into the story; these reflections illuminate the ongoing relevance of both the Bais Yaakov tradition and the conflicts at its heart.

Seidman's volume is enriched by English translations of Schenirer's Yiddish and Polish writings. Making these primary sources in Schenirer's own voice available to a general readership illuminates her profound contributions and commitment to the significant movement she founded.





*A Mortuary of Books: The  
Rescue of Jewish Culture  
after the Holocaust*  
Elisabeth Gallas;  
Alex Skinner, trans.

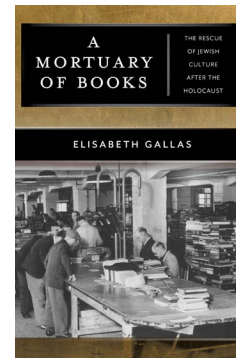
New York University Press

Writing Based on Archival Material  
The JDC-Herbert Katzki Award

as the memory of those institutions and people they once belonged to.

*A Mortuary of Books* tells the story of the truly remarkable initiative of Jewish scholars to rescue the remnants of the European Jewish cultural heritage after the Nazi destruction. Just as much as it is a tale of devastation, loss, grief, and desperation, it is also a story of the indefatigable fight of a small group of Jewish individuals for justice and memory after the catastrophe.

To receive this honorable prize is especially meaningful for me, because it helps bringing the story of these actors' herculean efforts and their powerful devotion to saving books, documents, and ritual objects to a broader audience. Since the JDC played an important role in all the rescue activities described in this book, I am especially honored to have won the JDC-Herbert Katzki Award. All the protagonists of my book—among them some of the outstanding intellectuals of their time such as Hannah Arendt, Salo W. Baron, Lucy Dawidowicz, and Gershom Scholem—understood that the survival of books is an existential element in the rebuilding and revitalizing of postwar Jewish culture, especially in the new centers of Jewish existence. Some of the hundreds of thousands of salvaged books are kept today in New York libraries and hopefully continue to serve scholarship as well



In *A Mortuary of Books*, Elisabeth Gallas has crafted a meticulously researched, well-written, and vital history of the recovery of lost Jewish property after the war. More than just a history of restitution, *A Mortuary of Books* demonstrates that the work of Jewish Cultural Reconstruction, Inc., and in particular the efforts of four of the most prominent Jewish historians of the twentieth century, Hannah Arendt, Salo Baron, Lucy Dawidowicz, and Gershom Scholem, constituted a critical Jewish response to catastrophe in the aftermath of the Holocaust. The return of Jewish property and the allocation of the traces of European Jewish property to such institutions as Yad Vashem, the Israel Museum, and the National Library in Jerusalem; the Leo Baeck Institute in Jerusalem, London, and New York; YIVO, Yeshiva University, and JTS in New York; the Wiener Library in London; and the Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine in Paris, built a transnational space of memory, while developing new networks for research and commemoration after the war. More than plundered Jewish property, Gallas reveals how the recovered objects became the last traces of Jewish lives lost and their rescue after the war fused history and memory, shaping generations of future research while preventing the complete erasure of prewar Jewish life.



## *Someday We Will Fly* Rachel DeWoskin

Viking, an imprint of Penguin Young Readers

Young Adult Literature

by the National Jewish Book Awards, and I am so grateful for the deeply meaningful work Jewish Book Council does, supporting and celebrating Jewish literature, bringing readers to books and books to readers.

Eighteen thousand Jewish refugees fled Nazi-occupied Europe and survived World War II in the only city in the world that would allow them safe landing: Shanghai. In the Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum in 2011, I saw something that inspired me to write *Someday We Will Fly*: a 1940 photo of four Jewish boys from Europe. They have the soulful, hollowed-out look of teenagers in war-time, but also look like boys anywhere, mischievous and sweet, wearing polos monogrammed with school insignias. They hold table tennis paddles. I stared. These kids had fled entire lives; their grown-ups, on top of managing near-impossible survival, had made them a school, a table tennis table team, even tee-shirts. How? I began imagining teenage life in World War II Shanghai; Chinese citizens welcoming thousands of Jewish families into their city, the Shanghai Jews building businesses, schools, girl scout troops, theater companies, chamber music groups, community, and a sense—astonishingly—of normalcy for their children. *Someday We Will Fly* is a tribute to their gritty practicality and profound courage, to the resilience that refugees demonstrate by holding onto hope in contexts that guarantee the pulse of its twin force, dread. It is a thrilling honor to have this history and my novel recognized



The daughter of Jewish circus performers, Lillia Kazka has already seen her beloved Warsaw torn apart by the Nazis. When her mother goes missing after her parents' last acrobatic performance ends in disaster, Lillia flees to Japanese-occupied Shanghai with her father and younger sister. She doesn't face the same dangers there as she did in Poland, but life as a refugee in an embattled city is far from easy. As she and her father try to scrape together enough food and money to survive, Lillia clings to hope—that her mother is alive somewhere, that her new school represents a genuine future, and that she is developing a lasting connection with a funny and talented boy named Wei. Through it all, she seeks solace in the acrobatic arts that sustained her parents before the war. Rachel DeWoskin's thorough research and sharp, empathetic prose will immerse readers in wartime Shanghai. Fully-realized characters leap and twirl off the pages of this luminous, haunting novel.

# Mox Nox

## Shimon Adaf

The Paper Brigade Award  
for New Israeli Fiction  
in Honor of Jane Weitzman

The *Paper Brigade* Award  
for New Israeli Fiction in  
Honor of Jane Weitzman

### Mox Nox

SHIMON ADAF  
*Translated by Philip Simpson*

Shimon Adaf is one of Israel's most innovative and highly acclaimed young writers, and *Mox Nox* shows him at the top of his form.

The unnamed narrator of the novel describes the events of one summer when, as a sixteen year old from a small Israeli town, he worked at a kibbutz factory. He recalls his dealings with two other boys working there, and with the factory's secretary—a lonely woman who he suspects has romantic intentions toward his father. The narrator initially views his acquaintanceship with the secretary as an unwelcome imposition. But soon her profound interest in poetry and language prove to be the means by which he can free himself; ultimately, it will determine the narrator—now an older woman who underpins the world and forces him to re-examine the midst of all this, ghosts of his life, ghosts that he must live up to the expectations of a son, living as a creative person between the human and the divine.

—Philip Simpson

PAPER BRIGADE  
A PUBLICATION OF THE JEWISH BOOK COUNCIL • VOLUME FOUR • 2020/5780

This award honors an outstanding short work or excerpt of Israeli fiction published in Hebrew by an author little-known in the United States.

By conferring this prize and publishing the winning piece in Jewish Book Council's annual literary magazine, *Paper Brigade*, we aim to help outstanding Israeli authors gain exposure to new readers and publishers in the United States.

This year's winning piece is an excerpt from *Mox Nox* by Shimon Adaf, selected and translated by guest translator Philip Simpson. The translated excerpt appears in the 2020 issue of *Paper Brigade*.



# Finalists

## American Jewish Studies Celebrate 350 Award



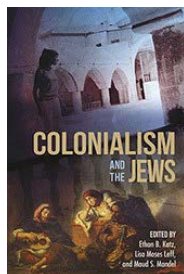
*American JewBu: Jews, Buddhists, and Religious Change*

Emily Sigalow

Princeton University Press

Utilizing an interdisciplinary lens, Emily Sigalow has produced a highly important work on the encounter between Judaism and Buddhism. Her *American JewBu: Jews, Buddhists, and Religious Change* traces the relationship of these groups back to the nineteenth century (specifically to the World Parliament of Religions, held in Chicago, 1893), demonstrating the porousness of American religion. Later chapters grapple with what Sigalow defines as syncretism, the mixing of religious cultures, from Buddhism to Judaism and in the reciprocal. She studies the discourse between leaders of both groups, arguing for the complexities of power, borders and authority in American life. In the second section, Sigalow uses ethnography and fieldwork to address the “lived experiences” of the Jewish-Buddhist amalgam, analyzing ritual, spirituality, and cultural behaviors. She deepens our understanding of contemporary religious mixing and change, as well as the fluidity of Jewishness in the United States.

## Anthologies and Collections

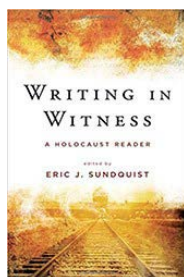


*Colonialism and the Jews*

Ethan B. Katz, Lisa Moses Leff, Maud S. Mandel, eds.

Indiana University Press

*Colonialism and the Jews* revisits the complexities of the Jewish position in foreign empires during the Imperial Turn. For much of modern history, scholars have avoided the topic for a variety of reasons explored in this anthology. Rather than avoid the complicated relationship between Jews and nineteenth- and twentieth-century European empires, this essay collection confronts the realities, calling particular attention to France and its vast empire. It posits that France is of such interest due to its historical role regarding emancipation and its “paradoxes of inclusion and exclusion.” The third section of this book focuses on Zionism and colonialism. No contemporary book on colonialism would have relevance without a deep examination of Zionism, as it has become a polarizing topic, both within the Jewish community as well as interfaith dialogue. This volume explores topics through a new paradigm, bringing a fresh understanding of history and its implications on modern Jewish life.



*Writing in Witness: A Holocaust Reader*

Eric J. Sundquist

SUNY Press

In a genre already brimming with compelling works, *Writing in Witness* stands out as an important addition to the canon of Holocaust literature. Several dozen authors, some familiar, some less so, provide their own first-hand accounts of the horror inflicted upon Jews during Nazi rule. The pieces are divided into six distinct sections covering the narrative arc of the Shoah, from the early criminalization of Jews, to the implementation of ghettos and the Final Solution, to survival

and its devastation. They are presented as diary entries, essays and/or poems. But regardless of format, they are not easy to digest, even for those familiar with the work of Primo Levi and Elie Wiesel, both of whom have pieces here. With imagery and detail only afforded by a personal account, each piece allows the reader to be an eyewitness to unimaginable horrors. A handful of reports from non-Jews are included as well, such as that of Kurt Gerstein who recounts in plain language the operation of the gas chambers. It's all excruciating to read, to process, and to make sense of, but it's never been more important to do so.

*The Zionist Ideas: Visions for the Jewish Homeland—Then, Now, Tomorrow*

Gil Troy

The Jewish Publication Society



A bold new look at Zionist ideologies and thinkers. Gil Troy in *The Zionist Ideas* expands Arthur Hertzberg's classic work, *The Zionist Idea*, originally published in 1959. Troy's work divides Zionism into six sections: Political, Revisionist, Religious, Labor, Cultural, and Diaspora and explores the diversity of Israeli society with authors who are Ashkenazi and Sephardi, men and women, straight and gay, and the broad swath of Jewish identity along the religious/secular spectrum. The book includes short essays by the founding Zionist thinkers of the nineteenth and early twentieth century like Theodore Herzl and Ahad Ha'am, by those who put Zionist theory into practice, ranging from David Ben Gurion to Rebbetzin Esther Jungreis, and by current Diaspora and Israeli leaders including former ambassador to the U.S., Michael Oren, Leah Shakdiel (who fought to be elected to the Religious Council of her town of Yerhucham), and Stav Shaffir, of mixed Iraqi and Holocaust survivor background. Troy's introduction is a true tour de force.

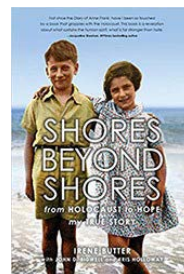
## Autobiography and Memoir

**The Krauss Family Award in Memory of  
Simon & Shulamith (Sofi) Goldberg**

*Shores Beyond Shores: From Holocaust to Hope, My True Story*

Irene Butter, John D. Bidwell, Kris Holloway

TSB

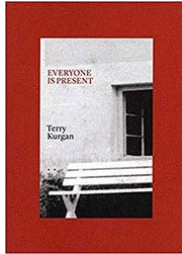


Irene Butter's stirring memoir, *Shores Beyond Shores*, recreates the nightmarish existence she and her family endured with Hitler's rise to power. Butter's past was buried for more than forty years—until she was asked to speak on a panel about Anne Frank, a neighbor in Amsterdam. We are fortunate she did so, bearing witness as she quoted Elie Wiesel “to prevent the dead from dying again.” Now, Butter's memoir does the same, providing us with her indelible Holocaust testimony and evidence of the strength of the human spirit.

Throughout her story, Butter's adored father did all he could to hold the family together. In 1937, the family fled Berlin for Amsterdam; Irene was seven years old. By 1942, the Nazi vise in the Netherlands tightened and Irene observed that with a Star of David on her coat people looked away or through her: “I was eleven and I was disappearing.” Following a roundup by the Dutch police, the family was sent to Camp Westerbork where deprivation and the threat of deportation to Auschwitz were constants. After eight months, the family was sent to the hell of Bergen Belsen. That her parents and older brother remained alive at Bergen Belsen was the source, however tenuous, from which the adolescent Irene drew

her strength, even as her body weakened.

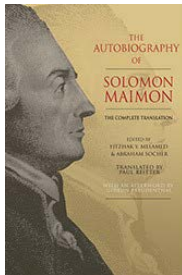
At war's end, Irene's journey took her to a displaced persons camp on the shores of Algeria and then onward to a new life in the United States. What distinguishes this remarkable memoir is Irene Butter's innocence, her descriptive power and her hope.



*Everyone is Present: Essays On Photography, Memory And Family*  
Terry Kurgan  
Fourthwall Books

*Everyone is Present* is a series of essays using a war-time diary and a collection of family photographs left by the author's grandfather to create a work fusing text and image, which creates a moving family memoir and reflection on photography and memory. A cross genre work that draws on the author's twenty-five years of visual arts practice and writing, the volume itself is a work of art.

Each essay builds a gripping family history, beginning with the German invasion of Poland, as the family traveled through Romania, Turkey and India to South Africa where the family's transit visas finally ran out. By fusing this account of the Jewish refugee journey with a detailed reading of seemingly ordinary photographs (which actually hold secrets) the author teases out details of her family (who typically never spoke about their wartime experiences) in extreme conditions. Through this process, the reader begins to understand what was lost, what was found, and the relationship between fate and character in forging a new life in an unintended place.



*The Autobiography of Solomon Maimon: The Complete Translation*  
Yitzhak Y. Melamed, Abraham Socher, eds.; Paul Reitter, trans.  
Princeton University Press

*The Autobiography of Solomon Maimon* has mesmerized readers for more than two centuries with its blend of astute perspective and dramatic storytelling. This new translation, by Paul Reitter and edited by Yitzhak Y. Melamed and Abraham P. Socher, is the first since 1888 and the only complete translation from its original German into English (it includes ten chapters on Maimonides and a final allegorical section, both removed from the earlier version). Maimon, writes the translator in his Note, "was a linguistic shape-shifter whose level of German proficiency changed according to the occasion," and whose native syntax included (in Maimon's own words) "a grammatically deficient mix of Hebrew, Yiddish-German, Polish, and Russian." This masterful translation successfully captures his language nuances and elevates an already gripping story. In it, Maimon describes a harrowing childhood in what is now Belarus, followed by an arranged childhood marriage he flees to pursue philosophical studies. A contemporary of Hegel, Goethe, and Moses Mendelssohn (the later a thoughtful and keen patron), Maimon held nothing back in describing what he saw as the state of Jewry within and outside the tribe, which resonated with many Jews at the time, shocked others, and serves as a valuable perspective today.

## Biography In Memory of Sara Berenson Stone



*The Notorious Ben Hecht: Iconoclastic Writer and Zionist Militant*  
Julien Gorbach  
Purdue University Press

Looking back at Holocaust-era history is inevitably an exercise in asking ourselves what would we have done if we'd lived at the time. Julien Gorbach takes us on a moral journey through the life of a legendary Hollywood screenwriter. Ben Hecht's body of work in film, fiction and journalism is astounding. He invented whole movie genres like film noir and the gangster movie. He wrote the original *Scarface* and the Hitchcock movie, *Notorious*, to name just two.

His early career as a Chicago crime reporter instilled in Hecht both a cynicism about human nature and an understanding of criminal underworlds. Those sensibilities colored his understanding of the Nazi threat and of how Jews should respond. Even before the final solution was hatched, Hecht's 1939 novella, *The Little Candle*, predicted an "international pogrom" and a Fuhrer's order to murder Europe's Jews. It was derided as fantasy. But his sobriety about Nazism drove him to break the silence of the American media about the persecution and, later, the slaughter of the Jews. His resolve to ensure Jews could protect themselves drew him to militant Zionists like Peter Bergson, and to enlist the help of gangsters like Mickey Cohen in the fight for a Jewish state.

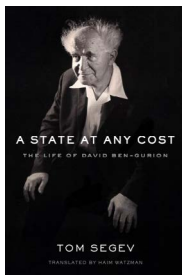
Hecht disavowed his generation's faith in cultural pluralism and took a stand in the debate over how to guarantee the vow of "Never Again." Hecht read the war as proof that Jews could not survive by the rules the world made nor could they rely on the world's great democracies. Liberal Zionists believed in the rule of international law, "while Hecht and the Irgun believed in the rule of the gun."

Hecht wrote that he spoke as "neither a Jew, nor a propagandist but as an honest writer who was walking down the street one day when he bumped into history." Sometimes events of history knock at our door, Gorbach's biography of Hecht prompts us to think critically about how we will answer.



*Vasily Grossman and the Soviet Century*  
Alexandra Popoff  
Yale University Press

Vasily Grossman was one of the greatest forgotten writers of the twentieth century. His talent was prodigious, but he was held back by the tyrannical Soviet system under which he lived his entire life. His struggle to be an honest writer and yet survive under the repressive Soviet regime would have forced a lesser man to compromise. Yet, Grossman was determined to express his true artistic vision despite the impositions of the oppressive state censors. Grossman's struggle to express his true self while living in a hostile environment mirrors the eternal struggle of the Jewish people, who want to express their Jewish selves while still remaining welcome in often unfriendly environments. Grossman had a difficult life, with his mother murdered by the Nazis and his greatest work, *Life and Fate*, censored by the government until years after his death. Alexandra Popoff brilliantly describes Grossman's background, his struggles, his works, and his legacy, producing a work that will go a long way to burnishing Grossman's insufficiently remembered career.



*A State at Any Cost: The Life of David Ben-Gurion*

Tom Segev; Haim Watzman, trans.

Farrar, Straus and Giroux

Since his death in 1973 there have been countless biographies and historical insights written about the seminal historical figure of David Ben-Gurion. Yet, in *A State at Any Cost: The Life of David Ben-Gurion*, Tom Segev (as translated from Hebrew by Haim Watzman) makes a substantial contribution to the understanding of this inspiring, and deeply complex, man and the totality of his life and its historical impact. Meticulously researched and expertly framed, *A State at Any Cost* takes the reader beyond the surface of Ben-Gurion's life, and explores the motives, the relationships, and the consequences that shaped the man, and that ultimately helped shape the modern state he founded. While it isn't easy to look at a life as consequential as Ben-Gurion's without making critical judgments, Segev's approach delivers a deep look at a life in context, but without critique, allowing the reader to look at Ben-Gurion's life as a prism through which one can understand the complex times in which he lived and led.

### Book Club

**The Miller Family Award in Memory of  
Helen Dunn Weinstein and June Keit Miller**



*The Guest Book*

Sarah Blake

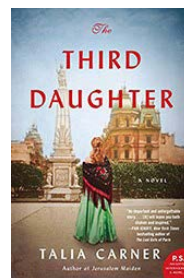
Flatiron Books

*The Guest Book* is a beautifully written, multigenerational saga about a wealthy New England family who felt that nothing in their lives would or should ever change. The first generation of Miltons suffered an unimaginable tragedy and never spoke of it again. Their questionable ties during World War II enabled them to buy an island off the coast of Maine where they summered and hosted dinner parties. This island is their guarantee that everything will remain the same. As fortunes dwindle, the grandchildren must confront the possibility that they will have to sell the island.

In the process of going through the house, family secrets are discovered, and explored. A very “genteel” racism and antisemitism are apparent as the next generations open their tight circle to a Jew and a black man. They invite them in, but only so far. You just don't marry a Jew; socialize with a black man; or acknowledge that your son is gay.

The characters are well developed and believable. We see the grandchildren questioning their parents' and grandparents' beliefs and decisions as they try to come to terms with the past.

With increased antisemitism and racism in the world, the committee felt that *The Guest Book* could lead to a meaningful discussion about families, white privilege in our society, and the danger of subtle prejudice.



*The Third Daughter*

Talia Carner

William Morrow Paperbacks

This book shines a light on a little known and dark chapter of Jewish history. A young, vulnerable woman's family enters into what was to be an advantageous match for an impoverished young girl whose family is fleeing a pogrom. Tragically, they have unknowingly sold their oldest daughter, Batya, into prostitution. Batya's life and thousands of other young women have been scammed into a shameful life of prostitution in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

So many innocent victims were human trafficked by other Jews. This was perpetrated by prominent Jewish men praying on unsuspecting families, desperate for a better life for their daughters. Batya becomes Esperanza, but never loses her Jewish heart. She is repeatedly challenged and degraded, yet survives. All the women who were victimized were never given pity or love of the Argentine Jewish Community. The gang of thugs and their female victims were shunned. This made life even more difficult for God-fearing, good, young women. Many did not have the health or stamina to survive.



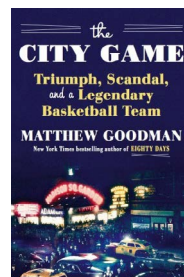
*The Last Train to London*

Meg Waite Clayton

HarperCollins Publishers

*The Last Train to London* is a beautifully written book about the Kindertransport and the terrible events that led up to it. It is the story of one amazing Dutch woman who risked her life to bring mostly Jewish children to Holland so they could reach safety in England. The book gives a clear picture of what life was like under the Reich. It shows that rich and poor and the sick and dying were all punished for the sin of being Jewish and how no one was punished for torturing, stealing from and murdering the victims. It also tells the story of how parents and children sacrificed for each other.

Her grit and intelligence help her forge the path to freedom. Batya does meet some truly good men who aid her pursuit to reunite with her fractured family. The journey is fraught with difficulties and we learn of goodness and risks. This story is of a very unpleasant chapter in Jewish history with endearing and memorable characters.



*The City Game: Triumph, Scandal, and a Legendary Basketball Team*

Matthew Goodman

Ballantine Books

This absorbing and heartbreaking narrative takes you back to a time when college basketball was king and New York City was its hotbed. It weaves the tale of one of the most improbable and remarkable sports stories of all time amidst the backdrop of governmental corruption and protection of a massive gambling network that ensnared young players in its web and changed their lives, and New York City college basketball, forever.

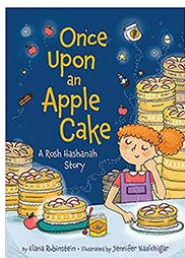
In March 1950, the City College of New York (CCNY) accomplished a feat that will never be repeated by winning both the NCAA tournament and the National Invitational Tournament. The team from CCNY, the first fully free public institution of higher education in the United States (and known as the

“Harvard of the proletariat”), was made up entirely of Jews and Blacks, children and descendants of immigrants and slaves. During the following season, many of its players and other college players were found to have been involved in taking bribes from gamblers to shave points to alter the margin of victory.

Goodman does an artful job in telling this poignant story through characters that are rich and compelling. He provides us with a piece of New York City history and a glimpse into organized crime and police corruption that reached the highest levels of City government, as well as a tale of the exploitation of college athletes and, sadly, how those at the bottom suffer the greatest punishments.

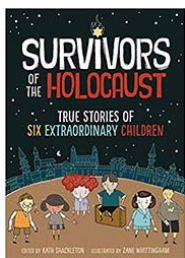
“So much of the best literature has been a variety of sports writing,” writes author Rich Cohen. He says *The City Game* is “a sports-writing masterpiece,” and we heartily agree.

## Children’s Literature



*Once Upon an Apple Cake: A Rosh Hashanah Story*  
Elana Rubinstein; Jennifer Naalchigar, illus.  
Apples & Honey Press

Ten-year-old Saralee Siegel has a super-nose. She says she can smell things “like nobody’s business.” She can discern any recipe’s ingredients with a sniff or two, as well as knowing what shampoo someone used last night. She is part of a hilarious, quirky family who own a popular local restaurant. Saralee’s Aunt Bean is a germaphobe who cleans the glass dessert case with a toothbrush, a five-year-old cousin thinks he’s a doctor, her Bubbie can’t remember names so she calls everyone “Pookie-Wookie,” and youthful Aunt Lotte is generally on the phone and just can’t be bothered. Siegel House restaurant is particularly known for their awesome Rosh Hashanah apple cakes baked by Saralee’s Zaide, using a special secret ingredient that even her super-nose can’t detect. But three days before the holiday, Zaide falls down the basement stairs and gets a bump on the head that causes temporary amnesia. It is left to Saralee to fulfill all the town’s apple cake orders, but that super-nose of hers just can’t sniff out the secret ingredient. When some sinister newcomers try to sneak into Zaide’s files in order to bake apple cakes for their own rival bakery called “Perfection on a Platter,” it is left to Saralee to use her wits (along with her sniffer), to save Rosh Hashanah. Along the way she learns much about friendship, patience, persistence and love. This funny and well-plotted story with delightful characters and amusing line-drawn illustrations is a perfect choice for early chapter book readers.

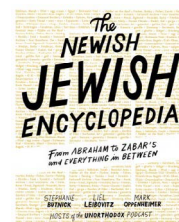


*Survivors of the Holocaust: True Stories of Six Extraordinary Children*  
Kath Shackleton; Zane Whittingham, illus.  
Sourcebooks Explore

This graphic nonfiction book, based on an award-winning British animated documentary film series, takes an innovative, sensitive approach to telling the story of the Holocaust. The six chapters are narrated by six survivors who endured the trauma of the Holocaust as children and now reside in Leeds, England. Heinz, originally from Germany, tells of roaming the streets on Kristallnacht to avoid being arrested. When he fled to England, he was interned as an enemy alien. Trude left Czechoslovakia on a kindertransport train for England, where

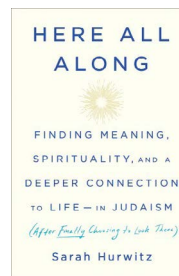
she was homesick for her parents and struggled to adjust to the unfamiliar food and language. Suzanne, from Paris, narrowly escaped the Gestapo’s arrest of her family thanks to a kind, quick-thinking neighbor who claimed Suzanne was her child. During the war, Suzanne remained hidden on a French countryside farm that was so remote that no one there realized the war was over until two years after it ended. These and the other first-hand testimonies are accompanied by vivid, graphic illustrations. The compelling accounts of societal upheaval, family separation, fear, and loss are likely to provoke discussions on the plight of today’s child refugees.

## Contemporary Jewish Life and Practice Myra H. Kraft Memorial Award



*The Newish Jewish Encyclopedia: From Abraham to Zabar’s and Everything in Between*  
Stephanie Butnick, Liel Leibovitz, Mark Oppenheimer  
Artisan Books

For anyone who has politely turned down offers from a well meaning aunt of all ten plus volumes of the Jewish Encyclopedia, the hosts of Tablet Magazine’s “Orthodox” podcast have created a compact, compelling, and hilarious solution. *The Newish Jewish Encyclopedia*, despite only comprising one volume, is expansive and comprehensive in what it covers. Flipping to a random page, one can learn about the 1976 raid on Entebbe, the basics of how eruv operate to make Shabbat easier for religious Jews, and the Jewish roots of Esperanto, a constructed language. The authors cleverly bring in images and graphics that transform the traditional encyclopedia experience into something technicolor. Entries are punctuated with a clever concoction of wit, seriousness and academic curiosity. Open up a page and see what you find out—who knew that the character of Bugs Bunny was allegedly inspired by Groucho Marx? The authors have created the improbable: the encyclopedia that you might actually leaf through and the coffee table that not only adorns but also educates.

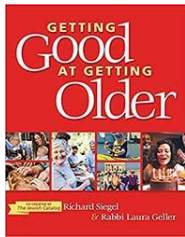


*Here All Along: Finding Meaning, Spirituality, and a Deeper Connection to Life—in Judaism (After Finally Choosing to Look There)*  
Sarah Hurwitz  
Spiegel & Grau

Books that aim to convince you “why you really ought to give Judaism another shot” are a dime a dozen; most are undone by condescension, inaccessibility, and general flavorlessness. Sarah Hurwitz’s *Here All Along* is a refreshing antidote to the glut of preceding books. The former speechwriter for Michelle Obama, Hurwitz found herself with that greatest of modern luxuries—a little bit of free time—and stumbled into Jewish learning. It is an understatement to say that she was transformed, and the book is a powerful result. She alternates between her own story and a deep dive into the canon of Jewish life—she lays out a powerful case for all parts of Jewish life: text study, prayer, holidays to name a few. One of the most compelling aspects of her book is that she comes in as a self-described outsider—this is not a rabbi who wants to tell you why to be Jewish. This is someone so similar to many modern Jews: intellectually curious but not yet steeped



in Jewish learning. She makes a powerful and timely case for why now is the time to dive in.



*Getting Good at Getting Older*

Richard Siegel (z"l), Rabbi Laura Geller  
Behrman House

“Seventy is not the new 50. Seventy is simply a new 70” (from the introduction, p. 3) These days, we’re not just living longer, we’re living differently and this book presents an honest look at how. Richard Siegel, z”l, and Rabbi Laura Geller have curated useful articles for their work *Getting Good at Getting Older*, to address topics not commonly addressed about living as an older Jewish adult with some humor and fun illustrations. Topics covered include: cultivating spiritual practices, creating ritual experiences, finding meaning in volunteering and lifelong learning. In addition, this book addresses spiritual challenges of living longer, such as parting with possessions, leaving home, deepening intimacy, appreciating your body as it is, and what to say when you visit a sick friend. This book will serve as an important work as more people discover what it means to live longer, meaningfully and Jewishly.

**Debut Fiction  
Goldberg Prize**

*Fleishman is in Trouble*

Taffy Brodesser-Akner  
Random House

The story begins in the middle. Meet Toby Fleishman, a forty-one-year-old successful physician whose marriage just failed. He was faithful to his now ex-wife, Rachel, but today his phone is buzzing with women (something he never thought possible). Inconveniently, Rachel drops his pre-adolescent children off early... and then vanishes. No text, no calls, no trace, nothing. And we are transported to where it all started, to Toby’s junior year abroad in Israel where he meets three friends. A complicated relationship ensues and their shared experiences, including a prophecy from an old woman in Jerusalem, influences their futures in unexpected ways. It’s also about Rachel living the American Jewish dream, married to a respected doctor with two children (a girl and a boy), a successful career and yet in the end it’s not enough, it’s never enough. And she disappears. The book examines the diversity of the American Jewish experience. With rich characters readers will find themselves repeatedly saying “I know that person.” Taffy Brodesser-Akner brings the exquisite writing her fans expect to her first novel. It’s a resounding success with wide appeal.



*Nick Bones Underground*

Phil M. Cohen  
Koehler Books

A noir detective romp, set in the not-so-far future, about two estranged yeshiva friends and the adults they turned into. Professor Nick Friedman and Shmulie Shimmer’s friendship was forged in being the two bad boys in their Flatbush yeshiva—the first day of school, Shmulie hands Nick half his ham and cheese sandwich.

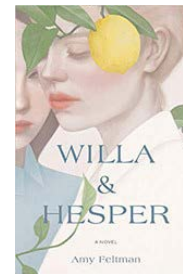
Years later, Nick is a professor in post-apocalyptic Brooklyn, a place where no one cares about academia. He doubles as a private detective, nom de guerre Nick Bones. Shmulie has developed a ridiculously addictive designer drug. Nobody knows who he is—not his fellow gangsters, not the law, and least of all his father, who hires Nick to track down Shmulie. With *Nick Bones*, we move deeper into the case and deeper through this surreal and all-too-probable science fiction world, witnessing a surprisingly tender relationship between two friends adrift in a world that’s just as lost.

*Willa & Hesper*

Amy Feltman  
Grand Central Publishing

Strong character development awaits the reader in Amy Feltman’s debut fiction novel, *Willa and Hesper*. Feltman focuses on the two young women’s lives after their whirlwind romance falls apart. Seeking refuge by connecting with their past, Hesper visits Tbilisi, Georgia with her family to learn about her grandfather’s past, while Willa joins a Jewish survivor trip to Germany and Poland. Feltman’s intelligent treatment of sensitive issues deals with lesbian relationships, the long term effects of being assaulted, and the emotional turmoil of heartbreak. *Willa and Hesper* is an exploration of the identity of one’s past while understanding how to live in the present.

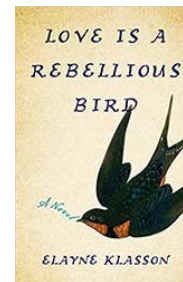
Feltman’s skillful writing captures an emotional journey of self acceptance for both women and makes this debut novel a worthy read.



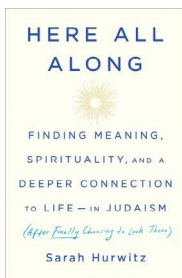
*Love Is a Rebellious Bird*

Elayne Klasson  
She Writes Press

A touching illustration of a sixty-year relationship between a girl and boy from early childhood to old age. Over time there is a power shift from one to another as their lives intersect. From first love to last love, *Love Is a Rebellious Bird* by Elayne Klasson explores the manner in which someone special always holds a place in our heart. This book illustrates that our connections help us deal with the obstacles we all encounter. Along the way the main characters, Judith and Eliot, engage in making us question the lengths one might go to retain that bond. This work was chosen as its message will resonate with readers who may be facing challenging life decisions now; realizing we will all experience the vicissitudes of life sooner or later. This poignant novel addresses the nature of love and commitment (through a Jewish lens) and is a remarkable depiction of such.



## Education and Jewish Identity In Memory of Doroth Kripke

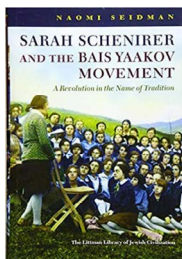


*Here All Along: Finding Meaning, Spirituality, and a Deeper Connection to Life—in Judaism (After Finally Choosing to Look There)*

Sarah Hurwitz  
Spiegel & Grau

After accidentally happening upon an introductory class on Judaism, Hurwitz embarks on a journey to discover and understand Judaism and what it means to be Jewish. This book shares the story of that journey. She visited synagogues, met with rabbis, joined different families for Shabbat dinner and read endlessly about Judaism. Her stories are personal but the impact of the questions she raises are universal.

Hurwitz served as head speechwriter for Michelle Obama, senior speechwriter for President Barack Obama and chief speechwriter for Hillary Clinton on her presidential campaign. In this book, Hurwitz brings a wonderful ability to tell a story and engage an audience. While the story Hurwitz tells is about her personal Jewish journey, the book reminds us of what is wonderful about Judaism and introduces themes important for us to consider as we face our own Jewish journeys and challenges in the twenty-first century.



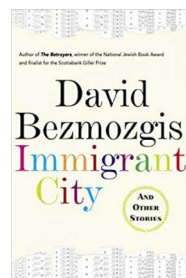
*Sarah Schenirer and the Bais Yaakov Movement*

Naomi Seidman  
The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization

In *Sarah Schenirer and the Bais Yaakov Movement*, Naomi Seidman brings to us a world mostly unknown, of the founding of the formidable Orthodox education system for women. This volume is an important historical overview of the school system and the educator and leader who stood at its helm. The book crosses between the contextualization of a unique educational system as it emerges from within its Polish sociopolitical milieu and the portraiture of the leadership of Sarah Schenirer, her character and innovation.

While many who are part of the world of the Bais Yaakov schooling system will find this book interesting and relevant, this book also holds critical import for the broader world of Jewish education. As a trailblazer for the educated Jewish women, this book provides keen insight into the emergence of and the formidable growth of education for Orthodox Jewish women. At a time in Jewish history where we are again encountering some radical fringe seeking to erase women's visual images and presence from the public sphere of Jewish communal life, this book serves as a reminder of the early emergence and important growth of Bais Yaakov systems of access to Jewish education for girls and young women. This volume is a wonderful reflection of the ways the Bais Yaakov school system flourishes today educating, empowering and growing Jewish women Torah study and Jewish women leadership across the Orthodox community.

## Fiction JJ Greenberg Memorial Award



*Immigrant City: And Other Stories*

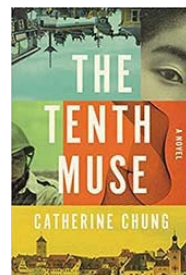
David Bezmozgis  
HarperCollins Publishers Ltd (Canada)

The past informs both the present and future in these beautifully written and incisive stories. The subtle ways in which immigrants and children of immigrants adjust or not to new surroundings, homes and challenges is revealed but never solved, because the immigrant's reinterpretation of the self in a new land is an ongoing journey.

The stories place us in a Toronto nightclub or a doctor's office, at a virtual reality conference or even in Latvia where a very Canadianized former child of that country goes to obtain a gravestone for his grandfather. In every case, the characters are vivid, the dialogue trenchant and the feelings of location and dislocation examined with great sensitivity. The large issue of Jewish immigrant life underlies the tales but it is in the details of the dutiful son or the renegade daughter, the grandfather's Yiddish letters or an encounter with a Somali immigrant, that the poignant nuances of everyday life come through. *Immigrant City* is filled with tragic and comic characters and moments, beguiling a reader every step of the way.

*The Tenth Muse: A Novel*

Catherine Chung  
HarperCollins Publishers

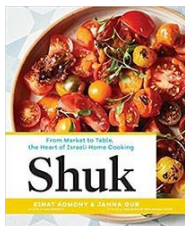


*The Tenth Muse* covers a lot of territory! First and foremost, the challenges and victories of a brilliant mathematician who happens to be female. The protagonist, Katherine, is taken advantage of through routine sexism as well as her own poor choices: an unfortunate relationship with an older professor, as well as by a dastardly peer, both of whom lay claim to her work. On top of that, Katherine has a biracial Chinese background, so she faces issues of identity and an unsupportive family life. All in all, the novel highlights the need for women to continue to assert and advocate for themselves.

Readers also get an unusual window into the world of abstract math, our author-cicerone having academic background in the space. Math also provides a metaphor for complexities for the personal issues confronted throughout the novel, a truly unique feature among this year's choices.

Finally, the central plot gives us satisfying solved mysteries embracing a good span of twentieth-century history (with a focus on Jewish experience in World War II) addressing her and her parents' identities, and revolving around a cool German notebook with provocative formulas.

## Food Writing & Cookbooks Jane and Stuart Weitzman Family Award

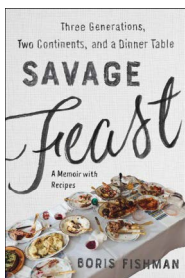


*Shuk: From Market to Table, the Heart of Israeli Home Cooking*

Einat Admony, Janna Gur

Artisan Books

Einat Admony and Janna Gur's *Shuk* is a love letter to Israel's vibrant food culture. *Shuk* (Hebrew for market) transports you as close as possible to the bustling and energetic markets of Israel without getting on a plane. Under the guidance of two passionate experts, you'll experience the flavors of Israel's melting pot, fresh produce and local specialties. Einat Admony brings a seasoned chef's perspective, while writer and Israeli food expert Janna Gur adds cultural and historical context. The vegetable-forward recipes—such as Freekah with Crunchy Seeds, Charred Eggplant, and Yogurt-Tahini Sauce, as well as Cabbage Cake stuffed with Beef, Nuts, Rice and Raisins—are lush, inviting, and boldly flavored. In addition to the wide variety of recipes, the duo share insider recommendations for the best hidden spots in the food markets across the country. Until you're able to get to Mahane Yehuda Market to taste the beet kubbeh at Azura, *Shuk* is the next best thing.

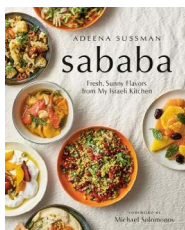


*Savage Feast: Three Generations, Two Continents, and a Dinner Table (a Memoir with Recipes)*

Boris Fishman

HarperCollins Publishers

“Laughter through tears” may be a cliché, but it aptly describes this lyrical memoir by novelist Boris Fishman. Chekhovian in its poignancy and hilarity, *Savage Feast* describes the difficulties of Soviet life and emigration with honest emotion. But the book goes deeper than just one person's experience. In telling the story of his childhood and young adulthood as a Soviet Jewish émigré, Fishman explores what it means to live in exile, to feel unease with one's original and adopted culture alike. In this way, the book tells a universal story of the immigrant condition. The lively narrative revolves largely around food (or the lack thereof) and is enhanced by enticing recipes from Fishman's father's caretaker, Oksana, whose culinary prowess eventually draws Fishman back into the family fold. The recipes provide a sensual, gustatory through line in the book, making *Savage Feast* a welcomed addition to both library and kitchen.



*Sababa: Fresh, Sunny Flavors From My Israeli Kitchen*

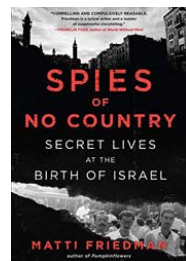
Adeena Sussman

Avery

Adeena Sussman uses Tel Aviv's vibrant Shuk HaCarmel as a lens to explore the food traditions of the many peoples who call Israel home. Through enticing recipes, informative essays, headnotes, and sidebars, a vivid picture emerges of a varied, distinctive cuisine and of what it means to live an Israeli food life. “Sababa” is Arabic and Hebrew slang for “everything is awesome,” which perfectly reflects expat Sussman's enthusiasm for her adopted homeland and its ingredients, cooks, and food producers. Writing from the perspective of a curious—and very talented—home cook, Sussman experiments with iconic Israeli flavors, turning

them into endlessly versatile dishes for our everyday cooking: five colorful tahini sauces with clever toppings; Za'atar Roasted Chicken; Six Things to Do with Labneh; Halvah and Baharat Coffeecake, and more. *Sababa* is several books in one: a market and city guide; the story of modern Israeli life; and an excellent cookbook that inspires readers to head into their kitchens knowing a good friend is by their side. Ottolenghi gave us Jerusalem; with *Sababa*, Sussman gives us Tel Aviv, an altogether different Israeli food story that is a beautiful addition to the growing canon of Israeli cookbooks.

## History Gerrard and Ella Berman Memorial Award



*Spies of No Country: Secret Lives at the Birth of Israel*

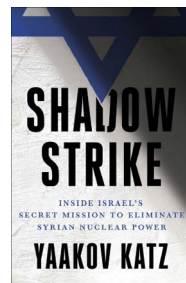
Matti Friedman

Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill

In popular conception, Israel was founded as a refuge from persecution by Jews who came from Europe. That popular view is certainly not inaccurate; some ninety percent of the *Yishuv's* pre-state inhabitants were Ashkenazi.

But it is far from the whole picture, as Matti Friedman thrillingly shows in *Spies of No Country: Secret Lives at the Birth of Israel*. *Spies* is the true (if less shoot-out packed) version of the hit Israeli TV series, *Fauda*. And notwithstanding the relative absence of gunplay, there's no shortage of tension in the story of four Mizrahi men, born in Arab lands and native speakers of Arabic, who were part of a pre-independence Zionist intelligence unit, the “Arab Section,” which operated in Syria and Lebanon during the 1948 war. That tension is captured by one member's regular attendance at public hangings to prepare for what awaits him if he incorrectly uses a bit of Arabic slang or makes a mistake in his observance of Islamic custom.

In addition to detailing an example of the contribution of Mizrahi Jews to Israel's founding, Friedman stresses the cultural influence of the *Mizrachim* and *Sephardim* who now make up slightly more than half of Israel's population. *Spies* thus serves the important purpose of providing a more accurate portrait of Israeli diversity than is commonly appreciated.



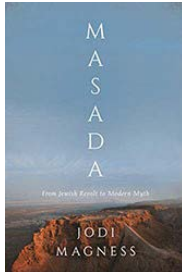
*Shadow Strike: Inside Israel's Secret Mission to Eliminate Syrian Nuclear Power*

Yaakov Katz

St. Martin's Press

*Shadow Strike: Inside Israel's Secret Mission to Eliminate Syrian Nuclear Power* by Yaakov Katz reads like an international thriller, but it is actually a compelling factual day-by-day (and sometimes hour-by-hour) account of an incident of acute threat and decisive action by the Jewish state—the 2007 airstrike that destroyed a Syrian reactor and denied President Bashar al Assad a nuclear arsenal. The story that Katz tells is heroic, but the author never loses sight of both the geopolitical origins and strategic implications of Israel's decision to take out the Syrian nuclear target. In early 2007, Israel detected the reactor when it was still under construction, using personnel and nuclear technology provided by North Korea, in a wadi in the Syrian desert—precisely the same existential threat that now looms so large in the Iranian nuclear program. An ominous question hangs over

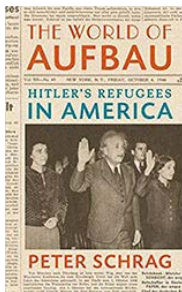
every page of *Shadow Strike*—can Israel do it again in order to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear arsenal? Not until the closing pages of the book does Katz offer an answer: “This book shows how, if needed, it can still be done,” he concludes. “What happened in 2007 is a playbook for how one country neutralized an existential threat.” Above all, *Shadow Strike* allows us to see the inner calculus of decision-making when it comes to deployment of military assets in the face of an existential threat.



*Masada: From Jewish Revolt to Modern Myth*  
Jodi Magness  
Princeton University Press

In *Masada: From Jewish Revolt to Modern Myth*, Professor Jodi Magness, a former co-director of excavations at the site, gives an engrossing account of the history of the legendary mountain-top redoubt.

Using the site’s archeological discoveries as her palette, the author paints an engaging picture of what it might have been like to live there at the time of the first Jewish revolt against Rome. As to the “myth” of the book’s title, Magness examines whether, as legend has it, more than nine hundred Jewish men, women, and children committed suicide rather than surrender to the Romans, a story based wholly on the uncorroborated account of Jewish historian Flavius Josephus. Although the author concludes, after examining different interpretations of the artifacts, that the question is beyond archeology’s reach, the reader will be entertained and informed, and come away with a deeper understanding of the story’s significance to the State of Israel, itself besieged and surrounded by enemies.



*The World of Aufbau: Hitler's Refugees in America*  
Peter Schrag  
University of Wisconsin Press

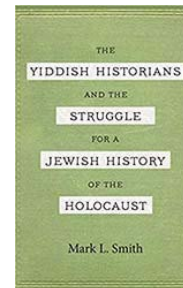
In *The World of Aufbau: Hitler's Refugees in America*, author Peter Schrag, himself one of those refugees, engagingly details the outsized role that the German language weekly played in helping Jewish refugees adapt to their new country and become Americans. In addition to serving as a vital bulletin board for “displaced persons,” searching for loved ones and friends from whom they had been separated, *Aufbau* helped its readers with invaluable information on the practicalities of life in America, including the frequently changing immigration and naturalization procedures they had to navigate. *Aufbau*’s pages also provided extensive reports on subjects of critical concern to the refugee community, featuring articles on such topics as the designation of Hitler refugees as enemy aliens, the punishment of Nazi crimes, the struggle for compensation and restitution, and the fight for a Jewish homeland. More than the history of a publication, *The World of Aufbau* paints an evocative picture of the entire refugee experience.

## Holocaust In Memory of Ernest W. Michel



*Bitter Reckoning: Israel Tries Holocaust Survivors as Nazi Collaborators*  
Dan Porat  
Harvard University Press

Dan Porat’s book opens a new horizon for English readers by documenting how some Jews did Nazis’ work, by acting as “Kapos” in the Nazi camps. The author gently points out that not all survivors were “heroes,” as they tend to be depicted, particularly in the U.S. He persuasively analyzes the legal and ethical issues raised by the trials, which, he argues, channeled social unrest in the Displaced Persons camps and in Israel into legal institutions. Based on deep research into Israeli sources, this book may open the way to a new wave of literature (in English) dealing with how some people survived by using what those who were not in Europe at that time would say was “collaboration” and/or unethical, immoral behavior. Porat makes the reader keenly aware that “having been a victim does not place a person in a morally superior position, and having been a kapo does not define a person as cruel,” though he dramatically recounts cases where the accused was uncoerced and unnecessarily cruel.



*The Yiddish Historians and the Struggle for a Jewish History of the Holocaust*  
Mark L. Smith  
Wayne State University Press

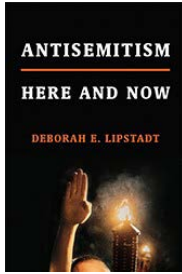
Mark L. Smith immersed himself in the works of Yiddish writers in general, whether poets, prose writers, playwrights, humorists, or historians who penned before and after the Holocaust. In this pioneering work, Smith focused on the works of five important historians who were survivors of the Nazi occupation of Poland. They used as their resources local documentation, such as Yizkor Books and focused on the internal Jewish life under Nazi occupation.

The historians are: Philip Friedman, Isaiah Trunk, Nachman Blumenthal, Joseph Kermish and Mark Dworzecki. Incredibly, they did not draw the attention of scholars previously. Smith opens the book by describing the works of each of the historians. The following chapters analyze at length and in great depth the subjects they researched. Their approach was regionally specific, assuming that a more general history could be extrapolated. They did not study the spiritual struggles of religious Jews during the Holocaust. Extensive bibliographies of the works of each historian are included in the last part of the book which is 150 pages long.

This is the most important presentation of the historiography of the Holocaust from a Jewish approach. It is engaging reading in spite of the grave subject discussed and the detailed references. The notes appear on each page, allowing one to read continuously or check below when desired.

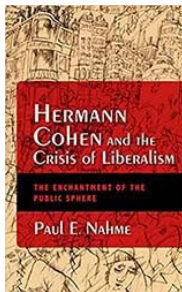
Smith’s work is an outstanding effort at righting a wrong by describing the efforts of the five neglected postwar Yiddish historians and so shedding new light on the work that was done during a time considered a period of silence for Yiddish writers immediately after the war.

**Modern Jewish Thought and Experience**  
**Dorot Foundation Award in Memory of Joy Ungerleider Mayerson**



*Antisemitism: Here and Now*  
Deborah E. Lipstadt  
Schocken

Framed as a correspondence with a Jewish graduate student and a non-Jewish professor, *Antisemitism: Here and Now* is an accessible, clear, thought-provoking analysis of antisemitism as it presents itself today, emanating from the right and left alike. This timely work touches on the breadth of antisemitic expression in America today, ranging from the re-emergence of white nationalism to a marked increase in antisemitic and anti-Zionist rhetoric on college campuses across the nation. Antisemitism in its varied forms is challenging the Jewish community today on very deep levels, and Deborah E. Lipstadt shies away from none of it. One of the strengths of this book is that she does so not by relying on academic theory or historical analysis alone (though her deep understanding of the history and realities of modern antisemitism is visible on every page), but by using personable, relatable language and anecdotes that speaks to the heart as well as the mind of the reader. While not offering absolute answers to the unanswerable questions we struggle with today, Lipstadt provides a well-reasoned, nuanced, and compelling starting point for the critical conversations we must have with ourselves and our neighbors in order to understand and confront antisemitism wherever we encounter it.



*Hermann Cohen and the Crisis of Liberalism: The Enchantment of the Public Sphere*  
Paul E. Nahme  
Indiana University Press

*Hermann Cohen and the Crisis of Liberalism* by Paul E. Nahme is an in-depth philosophical discourse on one of the major theological architects of modern Jewish thought. Hermann Cohen's posthumous treatise, *Religion of Reason: Out of the Sources of Judaism*, was viewed at the time by some as the foremost work of Jewish theology perhaps since Maimonides.

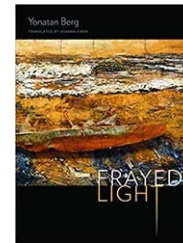
Cohen (1842-1918), was raised in a traditional Jewish family, enrolled in 1857 in Zacharias Frankel's recently opened Jewish Theological Seminary in Breslau and embraced the Seminary's Wissenschaft des Judentums approach to the study of Judaism. His commitment to philosophy, however, led him away from rabbinic ordination and to a coveted appointment as Professor of Philosophy at the University of Marburg where he was a leading exponent of neo-Kantianism.

Nahme's book, an expansion of his doctoral dissertation, is a comprehensive analysis of Cohen's philosophical roots and uniqueness. This book is for readers seeking a deeper understanding of the root intellectual challenges confronting modern religious thinkers and how the leading German Jewish philosopher of the day addressed these challenges. It was Max Weber, the nineteenth century German Jewish father of sociology, who captured in a memorable phrase the unprecedented reality confronting religion: "Our age is characterized by rationalization and intellectualization and, above all, by the disenchantment of the world." The key word is "disenchantment," the loss of enchantment in the founding myths that underlie traditional faith and society.

The author notes that resurgent contemporary nationalist populisms underscore the connection between disenchantment and the crisis of parliamentary democracy. "Would be prophets and seers...exploit the moment of disenchantment and the weakness inherent in liberal democracy...active mass democratization...disenchants authority as such." Nahme discusses Cohen's lifelong commitment and involvement in German political liberalism of the Weimar era and how it was destroyed by populist demagogues.

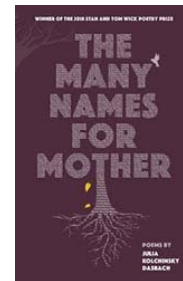
Hermann Cohen's liberal theology seeks to attach the power of enchantment to reason and liberalism and thereby create a new basis for Jewish religion. While many contemporary religious thinkers still embrace this philosophical approach, they face opposition and the criticism of being naive. Nahme acknowledges that "Cohen has not been remembered fondly and his philosophy has not received the recognition in its afterlife that it knew and deserved in its own time." The author bravely resurrects in four dense chapters Cohen's reimagined "enchanted" liberalism, idealized messianism and secularized reason. Nahme has written a thoughtful and important book about a major Jewish philosopher, for the serious reader.

**Poetry**  
**Berru Award in Memory of Ruth and Bernie Weinflash**



*Frayed Light*  
Yonatan Berg; Joanna Chen, trans.  
Wesleyan University Press

In *Frayed Light*, Yonatan Berg stands witness to the horrors of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from the perspective of a soldier. Translated from the Hebrew by Joanna Chen, poems like "Ramallah Through the Window of a Bus" wrestle with growing up amidst a "creeping fear, but it came from the outside, never from within, and it left us drumming/with confused fingers on steamy bus windows." *Frayed Light* documents the shift of this fear from the external to the internal as Berg heroically grapples with a soldier's doubt.



*The Many Names for Mother*  
Julia Kolchinsky Dasbach  
The Kent State University Press

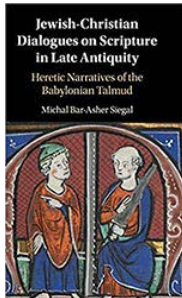
Julia Kolchinsky Dasbach's *The Many Names for Mother* is an intergenerational exploration of parenthood, ancestry, and inheritance. The poems document a Jewish refugee experience as the family leaves Ukraine for America, preserving what "there/is no recovering/from." These transnational poems span language, place, and form, exploring topics including the Holocaust and race through the lens of motherhood. These poems expand and multiply like generations, like a mother reaching for her child even while knowing she "cannot contain the whole of him."



*SoundMachine*  
Rachel Zucker  
Wave Books

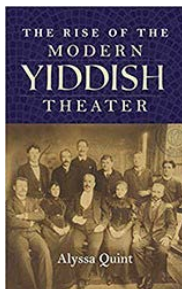
When Rachel Zucker quotes the Yiddish saying “*Verter zol men vegn un nit tseyln*. One should weigh words, not count them,” she captures the essence of *SoundMachine*’s ambitious project. These extended prose poems and meditations bravely create room for the heretical, confessional, and experimental. *SoundMachine* embodies critic Rachel Blau DuPlessis call for a “radical poetics” that draws on this “Jewish structure of feeling, this Jewish sense of textuality involved with endless writing, multiple commentary and vectors, endless deferral.”

### Scholarship Nahum M. Sarna Memorial Award



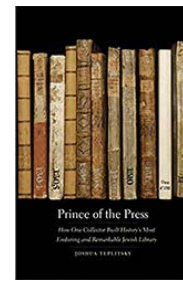
*Jewish-Christian Dialogues on Scripture in Late Antiquity: Heretic Narratives of the Babylonian Talmud*  
Michal Bar-Asher Siegal  
Cambridge University Press

In *Jewish-Christian Dialogues on Scripture in Late Antiquity*, Michal Bar-Asher Siegal focuses on the heretic (*minim*) narratives of the Babylonian Talmud. She lucidly argues that in order for them to be properly understood, these stories need be read against the background of the contemporary Christian polemics. Bar-Asher Siegal shows that the rabbis were aware of and familiar with Christian understandings of biblical texts. This work offers new and important understandings of familiar material, and contributes to the new understandings of the relationship between Jews and Christians in late antiquity.



*The Rise of the Modern Yiddish Theater*  
Alyssa Quint  
Indiana University Press

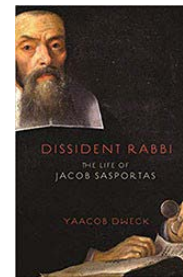
*The Rise of the Modern Yiddish Theater* sheds important new light on the histories of both Yiddish culture and imperial Russia. Alyssa Quint offers a corrective account of the life and career of Avrom Goldfaden, the father of modern Yiddish theater, whose artistic merit was minimized by rivals and historians alike. Quint argues that Goldfaden was an important artist and theatrical entrepreneur who wrote for an urban middle class audience of Jews and non-Jews alike. Yiddish theater was remarkably broad in its appeal and adaptable in its content and form, she shows, and it developed in dynamic relationship with life off of the stage up until 1883, when it was banned by the czar. Goldfaden’s plays channeled live concerns about Jewish culture and integration, even as they encouraged new means of performance and self-fashioning in their audience. Drawing on diverse sources, Quint carefully reconstructs Goldfaden’s work and the vivid social world of competitors, actors, and audiences in which it was written and performed.



*Prince of the Press: How One Collector Built History’s Most Enduring and Remarkable Jewish Library*  
Joshua Teplitsky  
Yale University Press

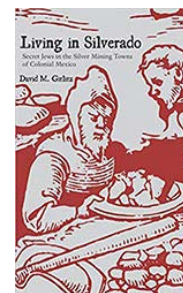
*Prince of the Press: How One Collector Built History’s Most Enduring and Remarkable Jewish Library* by Joshua Teplitsky is a beautifully written study of one of Jewish history’s great book collectors. Rabbi David Oppenheim built a remarkable library of Jewish books (very broadly defined), which were made available on a limited basis to scholars throughout Europe. Teplitsky contextualizes the collection, its fate, and its users against the backdrop of the political and cultural history of the Jews of Mitteleuropa between the Thirty-Years War and the rise of Napoleon. The result is an illuminating addition to Jewish book history, while also advancing our understanding of early modern Jewish political culture.

### Sephardic Culture Mimi S. Frank Award in Memory Becky Levy



*Dissident Rabbi: The Life of Jacob Sasportas*  
Yaacob Dweck  
Princeton University Press

In *Dissident Rabbi: The Life of Jacob Sasportas*, Yaacob Dweck offers a fascinating portrait of both popular and rabbinic reactions to the messianic fervor of the seventeenth century. He situates Sasportas’ trenchant critique of Sabbateanism within a defense of Sephardic culture, reading his own skepticism as part of a longstanding tradition of philosophical rationalism and assertions of Sephardic cultural superiority. With the conversion of Shabbetai Sevi, Sasportas’ writings lapsed into obscurity, but were later recovered and used as the basis for a series of other formative debates within modern Judaism. In tracing the afterlife of Sasportas’ ideas, *Dissident Rabbi* also provides us with a meditation on how the very borders of Judaism can be challenged, defended, recovered, and redirected over large expanses of time and space. By illuminating the various “lives” of Sasportas’ writing, Dweck has added his own reading of Sephardic culture and Jewish intellectual history to yet another set of audiences.



*Living in Silverado: Secret Jews in the Silver Mining Towns of Colonial Mexico*  
David M. Gitlitz  
University of New Mexico Press

In *Living in Silverado: Secret Jews in the Silver Mining Towns of Colonial Mexico*, David Gitlitz mines Inquisitional records and other surviving archival sources in Mexico and Spain to forge a detailed social history of the sixteenth-century crypto-Jews who were pioneers of silver mining in Mexico. With attention to detail, Gitlitz reconstructs the intertwined lives of these individuals—Portuguese of Spanish descent, Christians of Jewish descent—in Mexico despite interdictions against the migration from Iberia of those who were not descended from at least two generations of Christians, who generally migrated in hopes of striking it rich. Gitlitz’s microhistory sheds light on developments and transformations in silver mining practices, and the often isolated and lonely lives of crypto-Jewish individuals who cast themselves into mining. In doing so, this book reveals what on-

the-ground practices of crypto-Judaism looked like, who observed or celebrated what aspects of Judaism and in what forms, what types of religious education these individuals had and from whom, and how crypto-Jewish practices varied with gender, age, and social class. *Living in Silverado* highlights, too, the connections that bound together crypto-Jewish miners, merchants and their families, and sheds light on how dense networks of family relationships both undergirded crypto-Jewish practices in Mexico, and ultimately exposed those practitioners to the Inquisition.

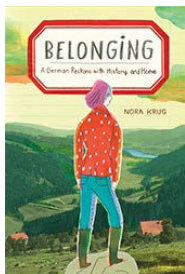


*Family Papers: A Sephardic Journey Through the Twentieth Century*

Sarah Abrevaya Stein  
Farrar, Straus and Giroux

An engaging tour through the lives of multiple generations of a prominent Ottoman Jewish family of Ashkenazi background and their progeny scattered across the world, *Family Papers* offers intimate snapshots of Sephardic Jewish life in the storied city of Salonica that reveal the aspirations and hardships not only of a single family but also of an entire community across the first half of the twentieth century. Culling from a remarkable trove of thousands of private letters exchanged by members of the Levy family dispersed across Salonica, Brazil, France, England, and India, Sarah Abrevaya Stein adds another plume to her cap by crafting an accessible and engaging tale that weaves together the diverse perspectives of the many members of a single clan: from the birth of Ladino publishing in the late nineteenth century through the annexation of Salonica by Greece in 1912-1913, to the Great War, a major fire, and ultimately the devastation of the Holocaust. The value of Stein's book comes not only in her deft storytelling ability that brings the world of Jewish Salonica and its diaspora alive, but also her new scholarly contributions, especially the reconstruction of the role of Salonica's most infamous Jewish collaborator during the Holocaust—himself a scion of the Levy family. More broadly, the book offers a stirring meditation on the meaning of family and the manner in which the bonds among its members varyingly strengthen, fray, and dissolve.

**Visual Arts**



*Belonging: A German Reckons with History and Home*

Nora Krug  
Scribner

*Belonging* is a compelling and explosively creative mixture of dense imagery, narrative memoir, exacting historical research, and painful honesty. Nora Krug has fashioned something more than a book; it is an experience that draws you in and changes your perception of accountability and identity.

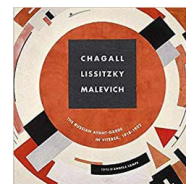
Born in Karlsruhe, Germany decades after World War II, but living in the United States as an adult, the author harbors questions about her opaque family history and its members participation in Nazi organizations during the Third Reich. With both courage and trepidation, she returns to Germany to unearth the truth about the relatives she never met, her maternal grandfather and uncle, an SS soldier mortally wounded in Italy. Throughout her investigation, Krug hopes to find evidence to exonerate them (and there are times when that seems

possible), but she is impelled to continue until she uncovers all the available documents. Krug's account of the pervasive antisemitism in Karlsruhe and timeline of growing persecution is chilling, especially because it is accompanied by vintage photographs of her relatives, the town, and its Nazi leaders.

At the same time that Krug builds suspense about the outcome of her quest, she examines her own conflicting feelings about her attachment to Germany, her birth country, as well as to America, her adopted country. With honesty and insight, she relates experiencing negative comments about Germans from Americans, and also acknowledges a deep attachment to her homeland, despite feelings of shame and guilt.

The historic and personal events that unfold are rich and complicated and both the drawings and design of the book reflect that. Krug's inventive use of a scrapbook format, annotated with authentic handwritten quotations, alternates with several distinct graphic styles. This visual variety enlivens and structures the several threads of narrative.

*Belonging* is a deceptive book; while at first the lively appearance attracts the reader, the probity of a sincere search for truth in order to find one's essential identity remains long after the story is over.

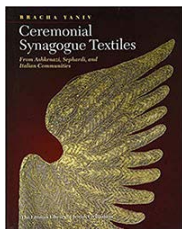


*Chagall, El Lissitzky, Malevich: The Russian Avant-garde in Vitebsk (1918-1922)*

Angela Lampe  
Prestel Publishing

Like a comet shooting across the sky and then disappearing, a brilliant new art school, formed by Marc Chagall, operated in Russia for four years, then disappeared, leaving behind its dreams of a new world order and art works to proclaim it. After the Russian Revolution of 1917, Jews for the first time received full Russian citizenship. Soon after being named Commissar of Arts for the Vitebsk region (in present-day Belarus), Chagall founded the People's Art School there. Free and open to everyone, it was designed to help young people of the area gain an art education. It went far beyond that goal: Chagall invited the Russian avant-garde artists El Lissitzky and Kazimir Malevich to join him, and the small provincial school became a hotbed of revolutionary art. Chagall, Lissitzky, Malevich, a catalog of the exhibition of that art work at the Jewish Museum, stuns with its paintings and drawings by those iconic Russian figures. Here is Chagall's "Onward, Onward," a peon to the era's optimism, showing a jumping man, legs spanning the composition, as though bounding into a utopian future. Here also are the Suprematist works of Malevich with their bold red and black geometric shapes, and Lissitzky's graphic architectural designs—paintings and drawings that reflect the excitement of an almost forgotten chapter in art history.

The school closed in 1922, with Chagall having left and the others taking on different projects. By then, the Bolsheviks had lost their enthusiasm for innovation. But as this book shows, its groundbreaking art pointed the way for generations of artists who followed.



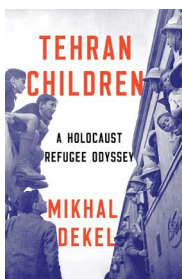
*Ceremonial Synagogue Textiles: From Ashkenazi, Sephardi, and Italian Communities*  
Bracha Yaniv  
The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization

*Ceremonial Synagogue Textiles: From Ashkenazi, Sephardi, and Italian Communities* by Bracha Yaniv advances our understanding of the Jewish cultural heritage in this medium from antiquity through the nineteenth century. Beautifully illustrated, the book carefully documents examples of Jewish textiles, including the Torah ark curtains, valances, mantles, wrappers, Torah scrolls, binders, reading desk covers, and much more. It traces the growth of the luxury textile industry in Italy and France and the critical role that Jews played in the expansion of international commerce throughout Europe, the Ottoman Empire, the Balkans and northern Africa.

This detailed volume contains a lively discussion of synagogue textile motifs, ornamentation and decoration. The book builds an integrated understanding of the role of sacred textiles in Jewish history by analyzing luxury fabrics and passementerie (silks, brocades, damasks, velvets, satins), colors (gold/silver/purple/crimson), embroidered, patterned, appliqued or high relief designs and weaving styles. Annotations of inscriptions and illustrations furthers our comprehension of the role of textiles in synagogue practices.

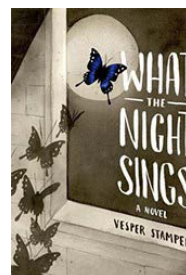
*Ceremonial Synagogue Textiles* is a treasure for all who appreciate an elegant, richly researched compendium dedicated to Jewish iconography, craft, and custom in the diaspora. It is a book for those who love Jewish ceremonial art, for those who admire historic textiles, and for those who want to know more about Jewish history across time and place.

### Writing Based on Archival Material The JDC-Herbert Katzki Award



*Tehran Children: A Holocaust Refugee Odyssey*  
Mikhal Dekel  
W. W. Norton & Company

Mikhal Dekel's *Tehran's Children: A Holocaust Refugee Odyssey* brings into focus a virtually erased chapter of Holocaust history: the suffering and survival of Polish Jews in Siberia, Central Asia, and the Middle East. Fleeing east from Nazi terror, over a million Polish Jews traversed the Soviet Union. With intimacy and detail, Dekel lays bare how the stories of Polish Jews' survival in places like Siberia, Central Asia, and Iran are as crucial to the Jewish past as those who survived on the European continent. The Katzki committee lauds Dekel who traced her father's convoluted 13,000-mile journey from Ostrow, Poland to Mandatory Palestine, by drawing on archives in Russia, Poland, Central Asia, Israel, England, and those held by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee and the Red Cross in the United States. The result is a book that is both a personal memoir and a valuable historical monograph that forces all to think anew about the contingencies of survival in the Holocaust and the many paths taken by Jews striving to survive the Nazi menace.



*What the Night Sings*  
Vesper Stamper  
Penguin Random House Children's Books

*What the Night Sings* by Vesper Stamper is an evocative and incredibly moving novel set in the purgatory of a displaced persons camp. The war has ended, and teenage Greta has been liberated from a concentration camp, emaciated and bereft. Stripped of family and humanity, she must now confront the question: where to go from here? In this limbo state, she meets a fellow survivor, Lev, whose compassion and faith dares her to hope, and allows her to entertain the possibility of freedom in Palestine. Through lush, affecting prose and haunting sepia-toned illustrations, Stamper delivers a distinct and exquisitely woven narrative that blends a celebrated musical past, when Greta was a promising young singer living with her violist father in native Germany, with the living nightmares of Bergen-Belsen, and the uncertain prospects of a future. This compelling, thoughtfully rendered story of passion and love, art, and identity, darkness and light is a standout debut, guaranteed to stir and stay with readers young and old.



*My Real Name is Hanna*  
Tara Lynn Masih  
Mandel Vilar Press

*My Real Name is Hanna* by Tara Lynn Masih tells a spare, heartfelt, and elegant story of escape and survival that will captivate audiences of all faiths. When her small Ukrainian town is occupied by the Germans, Hanna Slivka and her family must flee or face execution or deportation. They take to the forest, and eventually a hidden cave where they confront dire daily struggles like starvation, darkness, fear and despair. With Nazis on their trail, can the strength of family and their love of storytelling, the attention of a young man named Leon, and the kindness of Christian neighbors provide enough faith to sustain Hanna's fighting spirit? Masih taps Jewish and Ukrainian folklore to bring us a gripping, layered, and well-researched novel of courage, grit and resiliency. Told through the retrospective lens of adult Hanna narrating a formerly untold personal history to her daughter, the result is a lyrical, richly detailed and worthy addition to the Holocaust canon.



*What Makes Us*  
Rafi Mittlefehldt  
Candlewick Press

Eran Sharon, an Israeli-American teenager, has always cared deeply about social justice. When a protest he leads in Houston, Texas gets media attention, reporters find out something he never knew: his father, a man he barely remembers, was killed shortly after committing a deadly act of domestic terrorism at an Israeli Day parade when Eran was not yet two years old. As the news spreads, Houston turns against Eran and his mother with dizzying speed. A growing xenophobic and antisemitic movement rises around them, isolating Eran and feeding his own doubts about his past and his future. Does his anger, which sometimes spins into uncontrollable fury, mean he will meet the same fate as his father? This resonant,



relatable novel tackles complex themes with humor and empathy. Mittlefehldt's carefully-written prose honors the little moments that truly shape us—connections with new and old friends, difficult conversations, and thrilling nighttime epiphanies.



*Color Me In*  
Natasha Díaz  
Random House Children's Books

Nevaeh Levitz is caught between two worlds. After spending her whole life in a wealthy suburb outside New York City with her black mother and Jewish father, things begin to fall apart when her parents separate. Nevaeh and her mom move to Harlem—her mother's childhood home and a place they haven't visited in years—due to tension between Nevaeh's parents' families. Nevaeh settles into a different life that includes Sunday services at the black Baptist church where her grandfather is pastor; however, she still attends her affluent, predominantly white, private school in the Bronx—a constant source of anxiety. She's also required to spend time with her father, who grows more distant by the day.

Díaz's accomplished debut is filled with warmth and humor, but never hides the ugly truths that can plague families—especially when they haven't worked to understand each other's differences. For those questioning their faith to teens who feel like they don't quite belong anywhere, Nevaeh's journey toward self-discovery is highly relatable. Along the way, Nevaeh learns that identity is as beautiful as it is complicated, and readers will cheer her on as she gradually becomes empowered to stand up for herself and others.

# Named Awards

**Naming an award is a fitting way to honor a special person or remember a loved one. Thank you to all of the individuals and foundations that have supported the National Jewish Book Awards and Jewish Book Council programming and resources.**

**Jewish Book of The Year Award: Everett Family Foundation Award**

Endowed by the Everett family in 2003, this prestigious award honors the best nonfiction book of the year.

**American Jewish Studies: 350 Award**

The Celebrate 350 Committee commemorated the 350 years of Jewish life in America and conducted a year-long series of celebrations. This award provides the opportunity to remember the event and honor books that will contribute to the next major milestone.

**Autobiography and Memoir: The Krauss Family Award in Memory of Simon & Shulamith (Sofi) Goldberg**

This award was dedicated to the memory of Simon and Sofi Goldberg by their daughter, Carmel Krauss.

**Biography: In Memory of Sara Berenson Stone**

Born in Bogalusa, Louisiana, Sara Berenson Stone (1915–2018) was a devoted philanthropist and voracious reader. One of a handful of Jewish students at Duke University, she graduated in 1935 and moved to New Orleans, where she began her eighty-year long advocacy for Jewish causes. A prolific reader of fiction and nonfiction, Mrs. Stone had a particular interest in biographies pertaining to the Jewish experience. This award honors writers whose work has elucidated the lives of those, past and present, who exemplify what it means to live, work, and think as a Jew. By the high quality of their writing, our award winners have given their subjects and themselves an honored place in our literary canon.

**Book Club Award: The Miller Family Award in Memory of Helen Dunn Weinstein and June Keit Miller**

The Book Club Award recognizes an outstanding work of fiction or nonfiction that inspires meaningful conversation about Jewish life, identity, practice, or history, and which has the potential to nurture Jewish continuity. The award recognizes the power of books to promote Jewish community and thought-provoking discussions.

**Contemporary Jewish Life and Practice: Myra H. Kraft Memorial Award**

This award is dedicated to the memory of JBC Board member Myra H. Kraft by Robert Kraft and family. Myra loved to read, and for many years served as the leader of the Contemporary Jewish Life and Practice Award panel.

**Debut Fiction: The Goldberg Prize**

This prize is supported through a generous grant by the Samuel Goldberg & Sons Foundation.

**Education and Jewish Identity: In Memory of Dorothy Kripke**

Dorothy Kripke was a prominent writer of books for Jewish children, including the *Let's Talk About . . .* series, stimulating interaction between children and parents. This award, created by her family, cherishes the memory of Mrs. Kripke.

**Fiction: JJ Greenberg Memorial Award**

The Fiction Award is endowed by Jewish Book Council Board member and past president Blu Greenberg and her husband, Rabbi “Yitz” Greenberg, in loving memory of their son, JJ Greenberg. This is an eternal tribute to JJ’s love of reading, especially Jewish fiction.

**Food Writing & Cookbooks: Jane and Stuart Weitzman Family Award**

This award recognizes a cookbook or work of food writing— including, but not limited to, memoir and history—that explores Jewish identity, history, and culture through a culinary lens.

**History: Gerrard and Ella Berman Memorial Award**

The Bermans, lovers of Jewish history, endowed this award to ensure the continued study of our glorious past and to honor outstanding books in the field.

**Holocaust: In Memory of Ernest W. Michel**

This prize honors writers who produce exceptional books on the subject of the Holocaust. Ernest Michel, born in Mannheim, Germany, survived six years in forced labor camps, including two and half years in Auschwitz. He and two friends escaped from a death march from Auschwitz four weeks before the end of World War II. He was the only survivor to serve as a correspondent for the German news agency DANA at the Nuremberg War Crimes Trial in 1945. After arriving in America, he began to speak about his life experience and started working for the United Jewish Appeal. He served as Executive Vice President of New York UJA from 1970 to 1989, served as the organizer and chairman of the World Gathering of Holocaust Survivors in 1981, and was a founding trustee of the Museum of Jewish Heritage—A Living Memorial to the Holocaust. In 1993, he published his memoir, *Promises to Keep: One Man's Journey Against Incredible Odds*.

**Modern Jewish Thought and Experience: Dorot Foundation Award  
in Memory of Joy Ungerleider Mayerson**

**Paper Brigade Award for New Israeli Fiction in Honor of Jane  
Weitzman**

This award is named in honor of Jewish Book Council president Jane Weitzman, and recognizes an outstanding short work or excerpt of Israeli fiction written in Hebrew. The winning work is published in *Paper Brigade*.

**Poetry: Berru Award in Memory of Ruth and Bernie Weinflash**

The Berru Award for Poetry is dedicated to the memory of Ruth and Bernie Weinflash, who were respected leaders in their northern New Jersey community for over fifty years. A dynamic couple with both substance and style, they were not just avid readers, but also were astute critics, honing in on what spoke to both them and to the world at large. The arts were an important part of their lives. Ruth, a former actress and a lively and gifted orator, chaired the Cultural Arts Committee for many years at the JCC on the Palisades in Tenafly, New Jersey. She also designed programs in local schools, introducing children to the lives of famous historical activists in order to spark interest in working to make this a better world. Bernie, an active member of many boards, served for over twenty years on the board of the Jewish Book Council. A true humanitarian, he believed that when people came together for a communal purpose, positive momentum would be ignited. With intellect, compassion, and vision, both Ruth and Bernie immeasurably enriched the Jewish community, understanding the important relationship between Jewish culture and Jewish survival.

**Scholarship: Nahum M. Sarna Memorial Award**

Dr. Nahum M. Sarna was a leading biblical scholar who touched many lives through his work at Brandeis University, and through the written word in his books. His family, headed by sons Jonathan and David, established this award in his memory.

**Sephardic Culture: Mimi S. Frank Award in Memory of Becky Levy**

Mimi S. Frank, a JBC Board member, endowed this award in memory of her grandmother, Becky Levy, who shared with her Sephardic recipes, a love of cooking and baking, and her culture from Tekirdag, Turkey.

**Women's Studies: Barbara Dobkin Award**

This award honors a leading figure in Jewish philanthropy and an outspoken advocate for Jewish women's rights. This award was established by Barbara Dobkin's friends, who wish to honor her extraordinary devotion to this cause.

**Writing Based On Archival Material: The JDC-Herbert Katzki  
Award**

This award honors a book of modern historical writing published in English based on archival material that includes footnotes and bibliography.

ABOUT JBC

# JEWISH BOOK MONTH

NOVEMBER 22-DECEMBER 22, 2019  
כ"ד חשוון - כ"ד כסלו תש"פ חודש הספר היהודי  
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# Jewish Book Council

Jewish Book Council, founded in 1944, is the longest-running organization devoted exclusively to the support and celebration of Jewish literature. For over seventy years, we have worked closely with Jewish authors and their books, and used literature to bring people together for meaningful discussions around Jewish life, identity, and culture. We facilitate over 1,300 author events across North America annually; provide resources to more than 2,000 book clubs; publish an annual print literary journal; and give out a number of annual literary awards, including the National Jewish Book Awards.

Jewish learning embodied in the printed word has played a crucial role in the development and strengthening of Jewish communities throughout the world. Jewish Book Council is proud to carry on this important tradition.

## Major Programs

**Jewish Book Month:** This special month on the Jewish calendar is traditionally observed during the thirty days before Hanukkah. As part of the month-long celebration, JBC advises local communities on exhibits, fairs, book clubs, author speaking tours, and book-related programs.

**Jewish Writers' Seminars:** JBC sponsors an annual seminar for writers of adult books and another for writers and illustrators of children's books.

**JBC Book Clubs:** JBC Book Clubs provides resources and support for book clubs reading books of Jewish interest. On the Jewish Book Council website, one can find thousands of book reviews, discussion questions and discussion guides, thematic reading lists, and more. JBC Book Clubs is a one-stop shop to build and enhance book clubs' conversations.

**JBC Network:** The JBC Network brings together over 130 participating sites around North America—JCCs, synagogues, Hillels, Jewish Federations, and other related organizations—that host Jewish book programs. JBC sends more than 250 authors annually on speaking tours during Jewish Book Month and throughout the year, and sponsors an annual three-day conference for all JBC Network coordinators and lay leaders. Authors who have toured through JBC Network include Jonathan Safran Foer, Dr. Eric Kandel, Daniel Libeskind, and ambassadors Dennis Ross and Michael Oren.

**JBC Read On:** This program is a speakers' bureau for those authors who have previously participated in JBC Network.

**Natan Notable Books:** Natan Notable Books brings Natan's values of infusing Jewish life with creativity and meaning into the intellectual arena by supporting and promoting a breakthrough book intended for mainstream audiences that will catalyze conversation in the Jewish community.

**National Conference Support:** Jewish Book Council serves as a resource for national conferences directed at the Jewish community, providing speakers, arranging book displays, and organizing book sales at events.

**National Jewish Book Awards:** Conferred annually since 1948, this is the longest-running North American awards program of its kind and recognized as the most prestigious. The awards are intended to recognize authors of outstanding English-language books of Jewish interest, and to encourage the reading of quality books of Jewish content.

**Paper Brigade:** *Paper Brigade* is Jewish Book Council's annual literary journal. Featuring articles, poetry, fiction, interviews, photography, and other artwork, it reflects the current Jewish literary landscape in America and abroad.

**PB Daily:** The digital arm of *Paper Brigade* includes articles, reading recommendations, author interviews, book excerpts, and more.

**Unpacking the Book: Jewish Writers In Conversation:** This annual literary series, hosted at The Jewish Museum in New York City, brings together Jewish-interest authors for conversations about contemporary Jewish life and identity.

**Website:** Located at [www.jewishbookcouncil.org](http://www.jewishbookcouncil.org), the Jewish Book Council website features thousands of book reviews, reading lists, book club resources, and essays.

**We wish to publicly acknowledge and thank the people who served on the panels of judges for the 2019 National Jewish Book Awards program:**

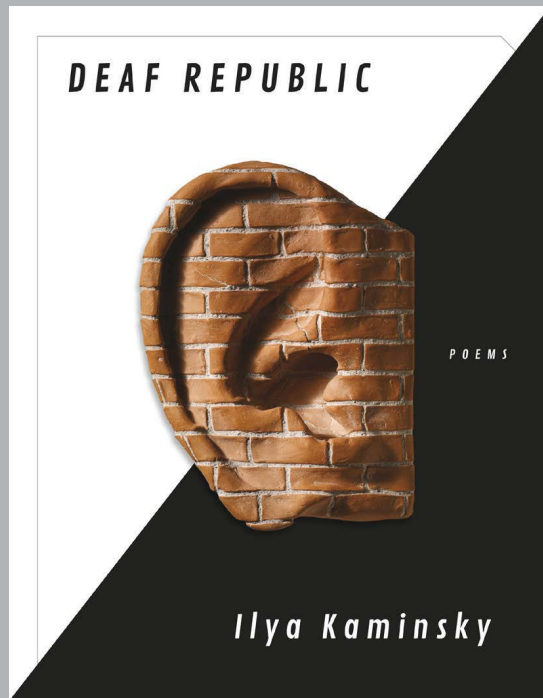
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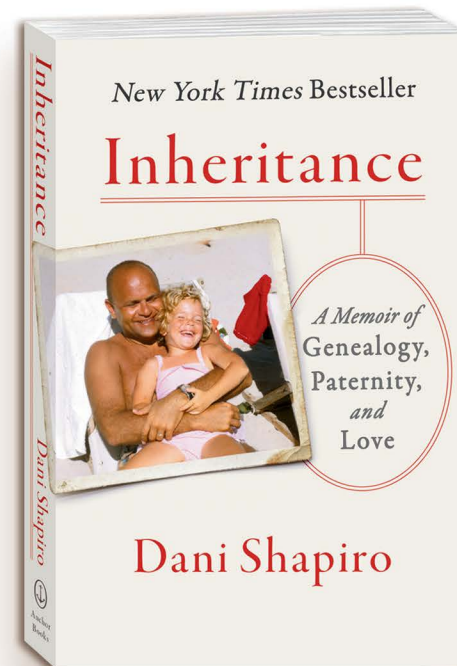


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**A BEST BOOK OF THE YEAR**

*Elle, Real Simple, Kirkus Reviews, BookPage, Vanity Fair*

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identity and the true meaning of family.”

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“Shapiro is skilled at spinning  
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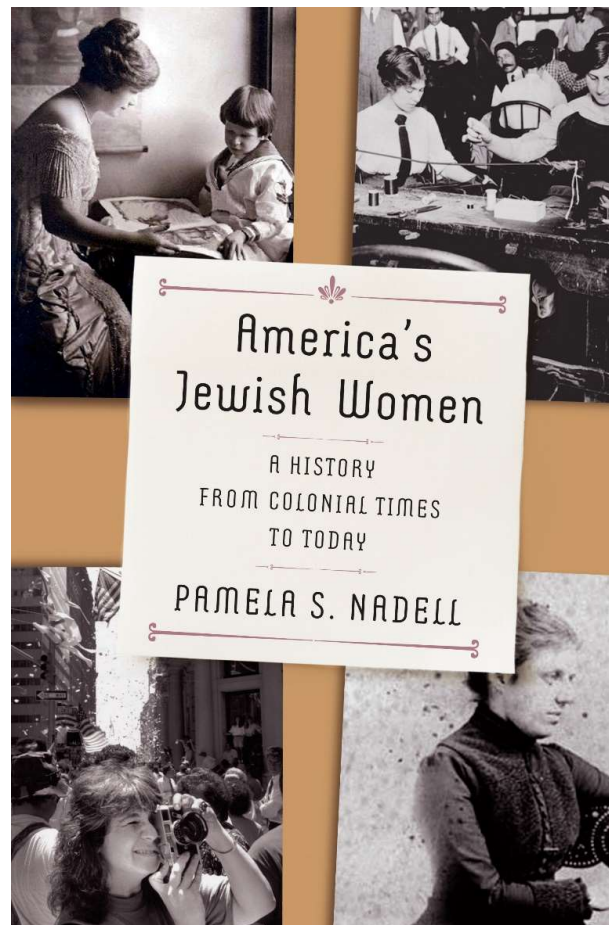
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At the age of 90,  
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my dear friends.

**-Marshall Weinberg**

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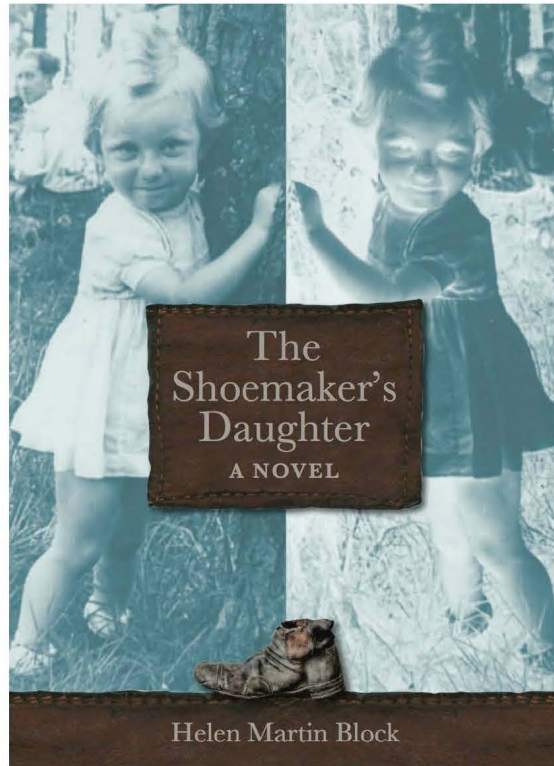


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Author Helen Martin Block is the daughter of Holocaust survivors and was born in the Fohrenwald Displaced Persons Camp, where she lived until she was five. *The Shoemaker's Daughter* incorporates her history in a fictional narrative, enriched by the stories she heard as a child. Featured in book clubs and Hadassah and synagogue groups from Fairfield County, CT, to Orange County, CA, *The Shoemaker's Daughter* recreates a vanished world where gentiles and Jews lived together in uneasy proximity, and yet occasionally found themselves collaborating for practical purposes.

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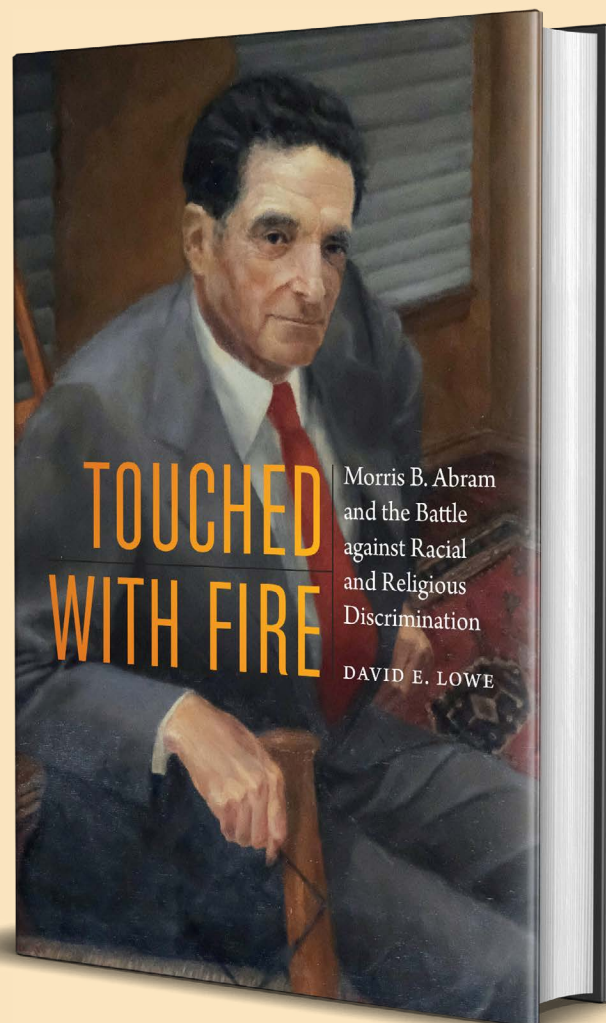
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WINNER OF THE 2019 NATIONAL JEWISH BOOK AWARD  
FOR BIOGRAPHY IN MEMORY OF SARA BERENSON STONE



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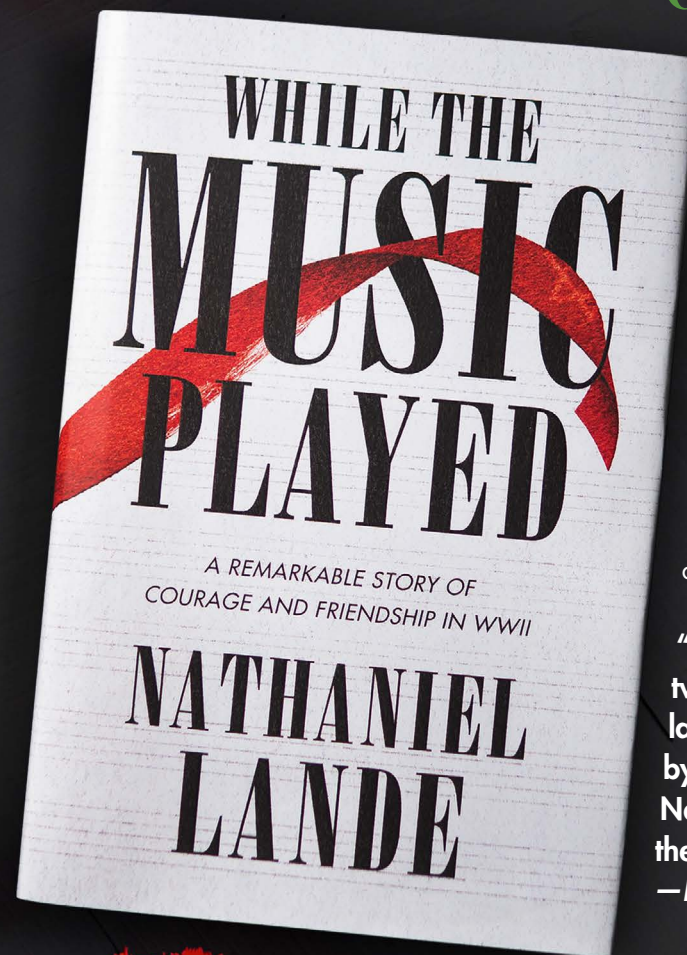
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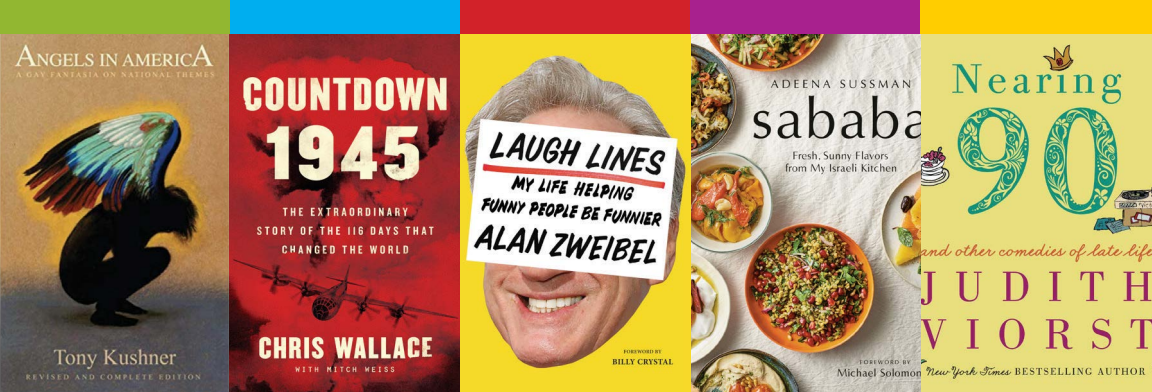




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