

American, Jewish, Feminist: Literature and Critical Analysis

Hebrew University of Jerusalem Fall 2003-4 Tues. & Thur. 10:30-12:00
 Fulbright Professor Lori Lefkowitz

This seminar will explore the cultural phenomenon of Jewish American Feminism through the analysis of selected literary texts, including essays and manifestoes, fiction and poetry by Jewish women writers from early America to the present, memoir, contemporary feminist liturgy, and documentary film. We will consider the Hebrew Bible in the American feminist imagination, the relationship between autobiography and art, the articulation and development of feminist and religious ideologies, generational shifts, questions of influence, and the emergence of mixed genres. We will try to develop an appreciation of the complexity of three contested terms—"American," "Jewish," and "Feminist"—and an appreciation for some of the literature that has resulted from their fruitful intersection.

Book list**Anthologies and Essays:**

- Evelyn, Torton Beck, ed. *Nice Jewish Girls: A Lesbian Anthology* (1982)
 *Lynn Davidman and Shelly Tenenbaum, eds. *Feminist Perspectives on Jewish Studies* (1994)
 *Susanah Heschel. *On Being A Jewish Feminist (A Reader)* (1983)
 *Melanie Kaye/Kantrowitz and Irena Klepfisz, eds. *The Tribe of Dina: A Jewish Women's Anthology* (1986)
 Irena Klepfisz. *Dreams of An Insomniac: Jewish, Feminist Essays, Speeches and Diatribes* (1990)
 Laura Levitt. *Jews and Feminism: The Ambivalent Search for Home* (1997)
 Faye Moskowitz, ed. *Her Face in the Mirror: Jewish Women on Mothers and Daughters* (1994)
 Miriam Peskowitz and Laura Levitt, eds. *Judaism Since Gender* (1997)
 *Danya Ruttenberg. *Yentl's Revenge: The Next Wave of Jewish Feminism*
 Sarah Silberstein Swartz and Margie Wolfe, eds. *From Memory to Transformation: Jewish Women's Voices* (1998)

The short story:

- *Joyce Antler, ed. *America and I: Short Stories by American Jewish Women Writers* (1990)
 Jules Chametzky, John Felstiner, Hilene Flanzbaum, Kathryn Hellerstein, eds. *Jewish American Literature: A Norton Anthology*

Poetry and Prayer:

- Marcia Falk. *The Book of Blessings: New Jewish Prayers for Daily Life, the Sabbath and the New Moon Festival*
 Irena Klepfisz. *A Few Words in the Mother Tongue: Poems Selected and New (1971-1990)*
 *Marge Piercy. *The Art of Blessing the Day*
 *Nessa Rapoport. *A Woman's Book of Grieving*
 Ellen M. Umansky and Dianne Ashton, eds. *Four Centuries of Jewish Women's Spirituality: A Sourcebook* (1992)
 Henny Wenkart, ed. *The Jewish Women's Literary Annual*

*Henny Wenkart, ed. *Sarah's Daughters Sing: A Sampler of Poems by Jewish Women* (1990)
 Eleanor Wilner. *Sarah's Choice*
Jewish Women's Literary Annual, 1994-

Bible and the Feminist Imagination:

Alice Bach, *Women in the Hebrew Bible: A Reader* (1999)
 Enid Dame, Lilly Rivlin, and Henny Wenkart. *Which Lilith? Feminist Writers Re-Crete the World's First Woman* (1998)
 *Anita Diamant. *The Red Tent* (1999)
 India Edghill. *Queenmaker: A Novel of King David's Queen*
 Ellen Frankel. *The Five Books of Miriam*
 Naomi Graetz. *She Created Them*
 *Judith Kates and Gail Reimer. *Reading Ruth: Contemporary Women Reclaim a Sacred Story*
 *Alicia Ostriker. *Nakedness of the Fathers*
 Jane Sprague Zones. *Taking the Fruit*

Other Commentaries:

Rebecca Alpert. *Like Bread on the Seder Plate: Jewish Lesbians and the Transformation of Tradition* (1997)
 Aviva Cantor. *Jewish Women Jewish Men: The Legacy of Patriarchy in Jewish Life* (1995)
 Rabbi Sharon Cohen Anisfeld, Tara Mohr, and Catherine Spector, eds. *The Women's Passover Companion: Women's Reflections on the Festival of Freedom and The Women's Seder Sourcebook: Readings and Rituals for Use at the Passover Seder* (2003)
 Ora Wiskind Elper and Susan Handelman eds. *Torah of the Mothers: Contemporary Jewish Women Read Classical Jewish Texts* (2000)
 Gail Twersky Reiner and Judith Kates, eds. *Beginning Anew: A Woman's Companion to the High Holy Days* (1997)
 Susan Weidman Schneider. *Jewish and Female: Choices and Changes in Our Lives Today*

Theology:

Rachel Adler. *Engendering Judaism: An Inclusive Theology and Ethics* (1998)
 Judith Plaskow, *Standing Again at Sinai: Judaism from A Feminist Perspective* (1990)

American Jewish Women's History and Material Culture:

Joyce Antler. *The Journey Home: How Jewish Women Shaped Modern America* (1997)
 Joyce Antler, ed. *Talking Back: Images of Jewish Women in American Popular Culture* (1998)
 Charlotte Baum, Paula Hyman, and Sonya Michel. *The Jewish Woman in America* (1975)
 Pamela Nadell, ed. *American Jewish Women's History: A Reader* (2003)
 Pamela S. Nadell and Jonathan D. Sarna, eds. *Women and American Judaism: Historical Perspectives* (2001)
 Jenna Weissman Joselit. *The Wonders of America: Reinventing Jewish Culture, 1880-1950* (1994)

Films:

Crossing Delancy; Half the Kingdom; Hester Street; Marjorie Morningstar; Return of Sarah's Daughters; Torahs and Timbrels; Women of the Wall; Tell Me A Riddle; Yentl;

Suggested Authors and/or Texts for seminar papers and presentations:

Pearl Abraham (*Giving Up America; The Romance Reader*);
 Mary Antin;
 E.M. Broner;
 Kim Chernin;
 Anita Diamant, (*The Red Tent*);
 Elana Dykewoman (*Beyond the Pale*);
 India Edghill (*Queenmaker*)
 Jyl Lynn Felman (*Cravings: A Sensual Memoir*)
 Tirzah Firestone (*With Roots in Heaven*);
 Betty Friedan;
 Myla Goldberg (*The Bee Season*);
 Rebecca Goldstein (*Mazel; The Mind Body Problem*);
 Emma Goldman;
 Allegra Goodman;
 Joy Horowitz (*Tessie and Pearlie: A Granddaughter's Story*)
 Melanie Kaye/Kantrowitz;
 Irena Klepfisz;
 Barbara Meyerhoff;
 Anne Michaels, (*Fugitive Pieces*);
 Tova Mirvis (*Ladies Auxiliary*);
 Gina Nahai (*Moonlight on the Avenue of Faith*);
 Tillie Olsen;
 Cynthia Ozick;
 Grace Paley;
 Marge Piercy;
 Letty Cottin Pogrebin (*Deborah, Golda, and Me*);
 Anne Roiphe;
 Muriel Ruykeser;
 Jo Sinclair;
 Alix Kates Shulman;
 Stella Silberman (*The Jew Store*);
 Henrietta Szold (*Lost Love*);
 Sydney Taylor (*All of a Kind Family*—a children's book series)
 Lillian Wald (*House on Henry Street*);
 Anzia Yezierska (*The Bread Givers*);