

# Recent National Jewish Book Award Categories/Winners Not Covered in This Course

Bibliography compiled for the Contemporary Jewish Writing Class

at Congregation Beth Ami in April-May 2015

by Gabor Por - May 21, 2015

Available online at [JewishBookWorld.org/tag/cjw/](http://JewishBookWorld.org/tag/cjw/)

## Children's and Young Adult Literature

- **Spinoza: The Outcast Thinker** by *Devra Lehmann* (Namelos, 2014) 292 pages, **SCL\***  
<http://amzn.to/1LpJKPh>  
At the center of the storm, he lives the simplest of lives, quietly devoted to his work as a lens grinder and to his steadfast search for truth.
- **The War within These Walls** by *Aline Sax; Caryl Strzelecki* ( Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2013) 176 pages, <http://amzn.to/1FEYX09>  
Teenage Misha narrates the story of what happened during WWII when Nazi forces took over Poland and walled off a part of Warsaw in 1940 to hold all the Jews in that city.

## Contemporary Jewish Life and Practice

- **A Guide to the Complex: Contemporary Halakhic Debates** by *Shlomo M. Brody* (Maggid, 214) 456 pages, <http://amzn.to/1IRzEa6>  
Abortion, stem-cell research, conversion standards, female rabbis, DNA testing, animal cruelty, civil marriages in Israel...
- **Kaddish: Women's Voices** by *Michal Smart and Barbara Ashkenas* (Urim, 2013) 268 pages, <http://amzn.to/1IRzYWv>  
The collection shares viewpoints from diverse perspectives and backgrounds and examines what it means to heal from loss and to honor memory in family relationships, both loving and fraught with pain.

## Education and Jewish Identity

- **A Philosophy of Havruta: Understanding and Teaching the Art of Text Study in Pairs** by *Elie Holzer with Orit Kent* (Academic Studies Press, 2014) 264 pages, <http://amzn.to/1F41CL4>  
This book breaks new ground from two perspectives: by offering a model of havruta text study situated in broader theories of interpretation and learning, and by treating havruta text study as composed of textual, interpersonal and intra-personal practices which can be taught and learned. <http://amzn.to/1F41CL4>
- **Educating in the Divine Image: Gender Issues in Orthodox Jewish Day Schools** by *Chaya Rosenfeld Gorsetman and Elana Maryles Sztokam* (Brandeis UP, 2013) 368 pages, <http://amzn.to/1LpLVIR>

Drawing a stark picture of the many ways both girls and boys are molded into gender identities, the authors offer concrete resources and suggestions for transforming educational practice.

## Illustrated Children's Book

- **The Patchwork Torah** by *Allison Ofanansky; Elsa Oriol* (Kar-Ben, 2014) 32 pages, **SCL\***, <http://amzn.to/1FF0dAd>  
Fragments of damaged and rescued Torahs from several periods of history are woven together in this touching tale of four generations of a Torah scribe and his family.
- **Hanukkah Bear** by *Eric A. Kimmel; Mike Wohnoutka*, illus. (Holiday House, 2013) 32 pages, **SCL\***, <http://amzn.to/1BefpNI>  
Bubba Brayna makes the best latkes in the village, but at ninety-seven, she doesn't hear or see well. When the bear arrives at her door, she believes he is her rabbi.

## Modern Jewish Thought and Experience

- **The Koren Ani Tefillah Siddur** by Rabbi Jay Goldmintz, Rabbi Jonathan Sacks (Koren, 2014) 805 pages, <http://amzn.to/1LgGAMZ>  
An engaging and thought-provoking siddur for the inquiring high school student and thoughtful adult.
- **The Koren Sacks Pesach Machzor** by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks (The Toby Press/Koren, 2013) 1288 pages, <http://amzn.to/1FF0WBr>  
Renowned translation and commentary clarify the prayers and explore the themes of the festival, from slavery to nationhood, and from exile to freedom.

## Outstanding Debut Fiction

- **The Mathematician's Shiva** by *Stuart Rojstaczer* (Penguin Books, 2014) 384 pages, **SCL\***, <http://amzn.to/1GsxyNC>  
A brilliant and compelling family saga full of warmth, pathos, history and humor
- **The Lion Seeker** by *Kenneth Bonert* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2013); 576 pages, **SCL\***, <http://amzn.to/1liMvjB>  
We are caught between the urgent ambitions of a mother who knows what it takes to survive and a son straining against the responsibilities of the old world.

## Scholarship

- **Outside the Bible, 3-Volume Set: Ancient Jewish Writings Related to Scripture** by *Louis H. Feldman, James L. Kugel and Lawrence H. Schiffman*, eds. (Jewish Publication Society, 2013) 3302 pages, <http://amzn.to/1LgHUzE>  
Introduction and opening essays, new and revised translations, and detailed introductions, commentaries, and notes that place each text in its historical and cultural context.
- **Maimonides: Life and Thought** by *Moshe Halbertal* (Princeton UP, 2013) 400 pages, <http://amzn.to/1eizjC4>  
Examines Maimonides's philosophical positions on fundamental questions such as the nature

and limits of religious language, creation and nature, prophecy, providence, the problem of evil, and the meaning of the commandments.

## Sephardic Culture

- **Sephardi Lives: A Documentary History, 1700–1950** by *Julia Phillips Cohen* and *Sarah Abrevaya Stein*, eds. (Stanford UP, 2014) 480 pages, <http://amzn.to/1Hx7PoR>  
An intimate view of how Sephardim experienced the major regional and world events of the modern era—natural disasters, violence and wars, the transition from empire to nation-states, and the Holocaust.
- **Mixing Musics: Turkish Jewry and the Urban Landscape of a Sacred Song** by *Maureen Jackson* (Stanford UP, 2013) 272 pages, <http://amzn.to/1GsyRfJ>  
Demonstrates the integration of Jewish musicians into a larger art world and traces continuities and ruptures in a nation-building era.

## Women's Studies

- **A Question of Tradition: Women Poets in Yiddish, 1586-1987** by *Kathryn Hellerstein* (Stanford UP, 2014) 512 pages, <http://amzn.to/1PyYktI>  
Explores the roles that women poets played in forming a modern Yiddish literary tradition.
- **Ballots, Babies, and Banners of Peace: American Jewish Women's Activism, 1890-1940** by *Melissa R. Klapper* (NYU Press, 2014) 301 pages, <http://amzn.to/1AhM5uB>  
Voluminous personal papers and institutional records paint a vivid picture of a world in which both middle-class and working-class American Jewish women were consistently and publicly engaged in all the major issues of their day.

## Writing Based on Archival Material

- **Becoming Ottomans: Sephardi Jews and Imperial Citizenship in the Modern Era** by *Julia Phillips Cohen* (Oxford UP, 2014) 256 pages, <http://amzn.to/1Sj6hC9>  
Offers new perspectives for understanding Jewish encounters with modernity and citizenship in a centralizing, modernizing Islamic state in an imperial, multi-faith landscape.
- **Becoming Soviet Jews: The Bolshevik Experiment in Minsk** by *Elissa Bemporad* (Indiana University Press, 2013) 292 pages, <http://amzn.to/1INqZXH>  
Demonstrates that the often violent social changes enforced by the communist project did not destroy continuities with prerevolutionary forms of Jewish life in Minsk.

\* Books marked with SCL are available at the Sonoma County Library