Oz, Amos. ***A Tale of Love and Darkness.*** Translated from the Hebrew by Nicholas de Lange. Harcourt, 2004. *A beautiful memoir that captures the history of Israel as it focuses on the life and family of the noted author.*

Raphael, Marc Lee. ***Judaism in America.*** Columbia University Press, 2003. *A full portrait of the religious tradition and a very readable history of Judaism in America.*

Rapoport, Nessa. ***House on the River: A Summer Journey***. Harmony. 2004. *The author's philosophical and poetic meditations on the power of family and place as she travels to the locale of her childhood summers.*

Rosenthal, Donna. ***The Israelis: Ordinary People in an Extraordinary Land***. Free Press, 2004. *Israel is revealed as a vibrant and diverse nation. An interesting and compelling antidote to the world's focus on Israelis as oppressors or victims.*

Rubinstein, Judah and Jane A. Avner. ***Merging Traditions: Jewish Life in Cleveland.*** Revised edition. Kent State University Press, 2004. *Dedicated to the memory of its original author, Judah Rubenstein, this revised photo documentary starts with the early Jewish settlers in 1839 and updates the 1978 edition to 2003.*

Sarna, Jonathan D. ***American Judaism: A History.*** Yale University Press, 2004. *First comprehensive history of the Jewish religion in the United States in over 50 years. Examines assimilation, revitalization, and Jews' struggle to hold on to their Judaism while adapting to America. Winner of a 2004 National Jewish Book Award.*

Sherwin, Byron L. ***Golems Among Us: How a Jewish Legend Can Help Us Navigate the Biotech Century.*** Ivan R. Dee, 2004. *Using the Golem story as a metaphor for today's scientific advances, the author examines the ethics of several aspects of biotechnology, including stem cell research and cloning.*

Slezkine, Yuri. ***The Jewish Century.*** Princeton University Press, 2004. *An innovative and stimulating study that maps out a new history of Jewish culture over the past 100 years.*

The Zohar. Translation and commentary by Daniel Matt. Volumes 1 & 2. Pritzker edition. Stanford University Press, 2004. *Far superior to earlier English language editions. The study of Kabbalah has now expanded into popular and celebrity culture and this edition, when complete, will provide an excellent resource. Winner of a 2004 National Jewish Book Award.*

VIDEOS

The Believer. Lion's Gate Home Entertainment, 2003, 99 minutes. *Daring portrayal of a young Jewish man living an impossible contradiction as a neo-Nazi – a struggle between destroying his own people and being drawn back to Judaism. Winner of the Grand Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival.*

Divan. Zeitgeist Films, 2003, 77 minutes, English, Yiddish, Hungarian with English subtitles. *There's a legend in filmmaker Pearl Gluck's Hasidic family that generations of rebbes slept on a divan that her great-great grandfather owned. Gluck travels to Hungary to search for the couch and collect Yiddish folklore; along the way she finds a relationship with her past and her religion.*

Simple Wisdom With Irwin Kula. Jewish Television Network, First Run Features, 2004, 12 episodes, 30 minutes each. *Religion, self-help and spirituality meet in this new PBS series. In each half-hour program, Kula's compelling presence and powerful stories offer guidance to those looking for connection and healing.*

The Struma. National Center for Jewish Film, 2002, 92 minutes. *Story of Jewish refugees who fled Romania in 1941, aboard a dilapidated vessel, the* Struma. *Bound for Palestine, the over-crowded ship eventually was towed out to sea and left to drift aimlessly, resulting in the deaths of almost 800 men, women and children. Using groundbreaking research and never before seen footage, this film unravels the mystery surrounding the tragedy.*

Trembling Before God. New Yorker Films, 2003, 84 minutes. *Documentary built around intimately told personal stories of Hasidic and Orthodox Jews who are gay or lesbian. Portrays a group of people who face a profound dilemma: how to reconcile their passionate love for Judaism with the biblical prohibition.*

WEBSITES

Celebrate 350
Jewish Life in America
1654 ~ 2004

Explore the websites below to find information on the history and practices of Jewish life in America, plus local and national events commemorating its beginning.

www.ajhs.org The American Jewish Historical Society: includes the online edition of *Heritage*, the society's newsletter. Vol. 2 no. 1 focuses on the 350th anniversary.

www.celebrate350.org Lists events, activities, exhibits and sponsors of commemorative programs.

www.cjh.org The Center for Jewish History: includes the information and activities of five important organizations.

www.jwa.org The Jewish Women's Archive: contains history, curricula, exhibits, book discussion guides, etc.

Compiled by
Merrily F. Hart, Aaron Garber *Library, Siegal College, Committee Chair*
Lee Haas, *Temple Emanu El*
Marcia Klein, *Beachwood Branch, Cuyahoga County Public Library*
Jean Lettofsky, *Aaron Garber Library, Siegal College*
Nina Rosner, *Beachwood Branch, Cuyahoga County Public Library*
Wendy Wasman, *Anshe Chesed Fairmount Temple*
Maureen Weisblatt, *University Heights Branch, Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library*

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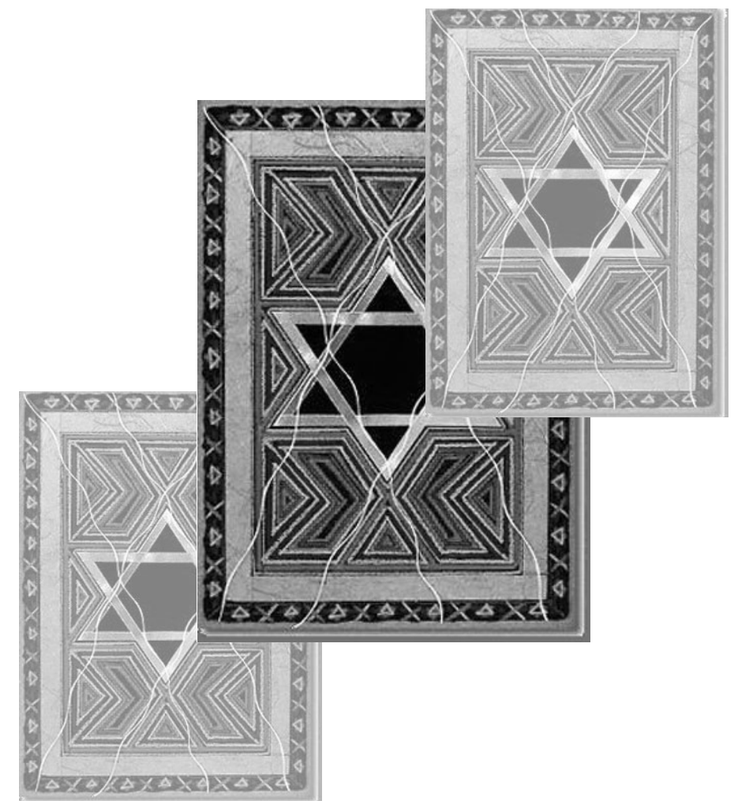
JEWISH BOOK MONTH 2004



A SELECTED LIST OF RECENT BOOKS, VIDEOS AND WEBSITES FOR ADULTS

FICTION

Be'er, Haim. ***Feathers.*** Translated from the Hebrew by Hillel Halkin. Brandeis University Press/University Press of New England, 2004. *Be'er's first novel, written in 1979, finally translated into English. Listed as one of the 100 greatest works of modern Jewish literature by the National Yiddish Book Center.*

Bezmozgis, David. ***Natasha and Other Stories.*** Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2004. *Linked stories relate the experiences of an immigrant Russian family in modern Toronto as they set about reinventing their lives. The grace and sensitivity of the writing has made Bezmozgis an overnight star in the literary world.*

Cohen, Paula Marantz. ***Much Ado About Jessie Kaplan.*** St. Martin's Press, 2004. *Witty and engaging – an amusing tale of love, loss and family rites of passage.*

Croci, Pascal. ***Auschwitz.*** Abrams, 2004. *This graphic novel chillingly conveys the message that the evil of the Holocaust persists today. Croci's interviews with survivors add depth and realism.*

Freud, Esther. ***The Sea House.*** Ecco Press, 2004. *A restless graduate student spends the summer in an English village studying the letters German-Jewish architect Klaus Lehman wrote to his wife in the 1950s. In parallel, readers learn the events of the fateful summer of 1953 when the lives of Lehman, his wife, and artist Max Meyer collided. Stylish, atmospheric and elegantly written.*

Honigmann, Barbara. ***A Love Made Out of Nothing and Zohara's Journey.*** Translated from the German by John Barrett. David R. Godine, 2003. *Stories of two very different women's attempts to rise from the ashes of their former lives. Honigmann's is a powerful new voice from Germany. Koret Foundation Jewish Book Award Winner.*

Kohn, Rebecca. ***The Gilded Chamber: A Novel of Queen Esther.*** RuggedLand, 2004. *Closely adheres to the biblical story of Esther, with the author's well-researched descriptions of palace life and customs.*

Langer, Adam. ***Crossing California.*** Riverhead Books, 2004. *Set in late 1979 to early 1981, this novel examines the intersecting lives of three families and their teenage children in the Jewish neighborhoods of Chicago.*

Lebrecht, Norman. ***The Song of Names.*** Anchor, 2004. *The story of a man's 40-year search for his childhood friend, a violin prodigy who mysteriously disappeared. Explores themes of love, envy and genius. Winner of the Whitbread First Novel Award.*

Liss, David. ***A Spectacle of Corruption.*** Random House, 2004. *In 1720 London, Benjamin Weaver (who first appeared in* A Conspiracy of Paper*) privately acknowledges his Jewish background but hides it from the outside world as he investigates crime in high places.*

Megged, Aharon. ***Foiglman.*** Translated from the Hebrew by Marganit Weinberger-Rotman. Toby Press, 2003. *Through the exploration of the relationship between a reserved Israeli historian and a haunted Yiddish poet, Megged investigates the writing of Hebrew and Yiddish literature and history. Koret Foundation Jewish Book Award Winner.*

Mirvis, Tova. ***The Outside World.*** Knopf, 2004. *Set inside the Orthodox world, a story portraying two very different Orthodox families who are brought together by the marriage of their children.*

Nattel, Lilian. ***The Singing Fire.*** Scribner, 2004. *An historical work set in London at the turn of the last century, focusing on two women who've arrived there from Eastern Europe, united by their pasts and by a daughter given up by one and adopted by the other.*

Ozick, Cynthia. ***Heir to the Glimmering World***. Houghton Mifflin, 2004. *With her imaginative prose and vivid imagery, Ozick paints a fascinating portrait of an impoverished, dysfunctional, depression-era German refugee family in New York.*

Ravel, Edeet. ***Look for Me.*** Perennial, 2004. *The second in a trilogy set in Israel dealing with the impact of war, conflict and the everyday lives of both Jews and Arabs.*

Rosen, Jonathan. ***Joy Comes in the Morning.*** Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2004. *Exploration of the complex life of a rabbi attempting to balance her identities as a woman, rabbi and Jew when she becomes involved with the son of a Holocaust survivor.*

Roth, Philip. ***The Plot Against America.*** Houghton Mifflin, 2004. *Roth creates an eerily plausible alternate world in which anti-Semite Charles Lindbergh is elected president. A suspenseful and dramatic novel of ideas.*

Sandor, Marjorie. ***Portrait of My Mother, Who Posed Nude in Wartime.*** Sarabande, 2003. *Linked stories follow a Jewish-American family across several generations. Winner of a 2004 National Jewish Book Award.*

Schwartz, Lynne Sharon. ***Referred Pain and Other Stories.*** Counterpoint, 2004. *A dozen precisely written stories, alternating between reality and fantasy. The title novella presents a man, who, through his own dental agony, finally understands his immigrant parents' suffering during World War II.*

Shapiro, Rami M. ***Hasidic Tales: Annotated & Explained***. Skylight Paths Publishing, 2004. *Presentation of often-perplexing classic tales as stories rather than parables, making them accessible and meaningful.*

Waldman, Ayelet. ***Murder Plays House.*** Berkley, 2004. *In her fifth well-plotted "Mommy–Track" mystery, a very pregnant private investigator searches for a new home for her growing family, stumbles upon a body and solves a murder.*

NONFICTION

Berlin, Adele and Marc Zvi Brettler, eds. ***The Jewish Study Bible***. Oxford University Press, 2004. *An important volume of essays & commentary keyed to the JPS Tanakh translation. Winner of a 2004 National Jewish Book Award.*

Cramer, Richard Ben. ***How Israel Lost: The Four Questions.*** Simon & Schuster, 2004. *Readable, even entertaining, exploration modeled on the seder's questions, argues that Israel is slowly being destroyed by its continued occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, which is in turn destroying the Palestinians' hopes for a homeland of their own.*

Diner, Hasia R. ***The Jews of the United States, 1654 to 2000***. University of California Press, 2004. *Chronicles the 350-year experience of Jews in the New World. Examines the ways in which Jews were influenced by their new country and the ways in which they participated in U.S. history.*

Glazer, Phyllis and Miriyam Glazer. ***The Essential Book of Jewish Festival Cooking: 200 Seasonal Holiday Recipes and Their Traditions.*** HarperCollins, 2004.

Goldstein, Elyse. ***The Women's Haftarah Commentary: New Insights From Women Rabbis on the 54 Weekly Haftarah Portions, the 5 Megillot & Special Shabbatot.*** Jewish Lights, 2004.

Grossman, Grace Cohen. ***Jewish Museums of the World.*** Hugh Lauter Levin, 2003. *A beautiful large format book that focuses on Jewish ceremonial art, manuscripts, historic objects and important edifices. Includes a comprehensive directory of 200 museums. Finalist, 2004 National Jewish Book Award.*

Hoffman, Joel M. ***In the Beginning: A Short History of the Hebrew Language.*** New York University Press, 2004. *Traces the history and development of the Hebrew language, elucidating the role of Hebrew in other modern writing systems.*

Horovitz, David Phillip. ***Still Life With Bombers: Israel in the Age of Terrorism.*** Alfred A. Knopf, 2004. *The current anguished state of existence in Israel is well described in a mix of personal and political reportage.*

Kushner, Tony. ***The Art of Maurice Sendak: 1980 to the Present.*** Abrams, 2003. *Illustrated volume details Sendak's recent theater work in set and costume design, book fair posters, and adult as well as children's books. Playwright Kushner has written the text providing personal and professional glimpses into Sendak's genius.*

Lamm, Maurice. ***Consolation: The Spiritual Journey Beyond Grief.*** Jewish Publication Society, 2004. *Finalist, 2004 National Jewish Book Award.*

Lansky, Aaron. ***Outwitting History: The Amazing Adventures of a Man Who Rescued a Million Yiddish Books.*** Algonquin, 2004. *Describes a two-year personal mission to salvage hundreds of Yiddish books from dumpsters, damp basements and sweltering attics that turned into a life-long passion and resulted in the establishment of the Yiddish Book Center.*

Levenson, Alan. ***Between Philosemitism and Antisemitism: Defenses of Jews and Judaism in Germany, 1871-1932.*** University of Nebraska Press, 2004.

Mallet, Eleanor. ***Tevye's Grandchildren: Rediscovering a Jewish Identity.*** Pilgrim Press, 2004. *Having been raised in a secular, assimilated family, the former* Plain Dealer *columnist writes about her exploration into her Jewish heritage. Inspired by her own sons' interest, Mallet finds her Jewish identity through trips to Israel and Germany and studying Hebrew and Jewish history.*

Moore, Deborah Dash. ***G.I. Jews: How World War II Changed a Generation***. Belknap/Harvard University Press, 2004.