

WJSA Conference Program  
All Times Are Pacific Standard Time (10 hours earlier than Israeli time)

Sunday, March 14

9-10:30 AM **Zoom A**

Welcome and Keynote Address:

Welcome: Laurie Baron, President of the Western Jewish Studies Association

**Keynote Address: They Came in Station Wagons: The Jews of Southern Nevada**

Barbara Tabach, Oral History Research Center, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Michael Green, Associate Professor of History, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

10:30-11 AM Break

11 AM-12:30 PM **Zoom A**

**Panel 1 Infrastructure and Immigrant Absorption in Palestine and Israel**

Chair: Sam Lehman-Wilzig, Bar-Ilan University

Michael Davidson, Independent Scholar

The Development of Palestine Crop Production and Irrigation Improvement Project

Stephanie Shosh Rotem, University of California Berkeley

Hadassah and the Creation of a Modern Medical Center in Jerusalem

Amir Akiva Segal, Hebrew University

Employment in the process of migration and absorption of Jewish migrants from United States to Israel

**Panel 2: Modern Jewish Thought Zoom B**

Chair: David Weinberg, Wayne State University

Ghila Amati, Oxford University

Freedom and Creativity in Modern Orthodox Judaism: Between Rav Kook and Henri Bergson

Evyatar Varman, Hebrew University

Birth and *Sehnsucht*: Buber's Discourse with Midrash, Plato and Kierkegaard

Haeyeun Han, University of Chicago

Levinas on Time

Danielle Roth-Johnson, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Intertextuality in Albert Memmi's *Portrait d'un juif* and Françoise d'Eaubonne's *Le féminisme ou la mort*

Panel 3: **Holocaust in Eastern Europe**      **Zoom C**

Chair: Victoria Khiterer, Millersville University

Judith Vöcker, University of Leicester

“In the Name of the German Nation” Jews, Poles and Ethnic Germans in front of German courts during the Nazi occupation of the Warsaw district (1939-1944)

Florian Zabransky University of Sussex

Reproduction in the Ghetto: Jewish Men Negotiating Contraception, Abortion and Childbirth during the Holocaust

Jeffrey Koerber, Chapman University

Young Soviet Jews Who Posed as Slavs During the Holocaust

12:45-1:45 Zoom Lunch with Chatrooms      **Zoom D**

2:00-3:30 PM

Panel 4: **Current Holocaust Research on Germany, Bohemia-Moravia, and Hungary**      **Zoom A**

Chair: Timothy Pytell, California State University, San Bernardino

Wolf Gruner, University of Southern California

Current Holocaust Scholarship on Bohemia and Moravia

Georg Michels, University of California, Riverside

Current Holocaust Scholarship on Hungary

William Katin, California State University, San Bernardino

Current German Scholarship on the Volksgemeinde

Panel 5: **German Jewish Thinkers**      **Zoom B**

Chair: Alan Levenson, University of Oklahoma

J.J. Kimche, Harvard University,

Celebrating 150 Years of Heinrich Graetz’s ‘History of the Jews’

Amy Shevitz, Loyola University Chicago

“Seien Sie Innigst Begrüßt”: The Correspondence of “Rosenzweig’s Women”

Susanne Hillman, San Diego State University

The Will to Truth: Margarete Susman on Chaos and How to Overcome it

**Panel 6 American Jewish Women Zoom C**

Chair: Mara W. Cohen Ioannides, Missouri State University

Janna M. Bernstein, University of Nevada, Las Vegas,  
An Invisible Minority: Experiences of Ashkenazi Jewish Women Leaders in Higher Education

Ellen Eisenberg, Willamette University  
A Woman's Place? Supporting Jewish Causes and Community in Post-War Portland

Laurie Baron, San Diego State University  
The Pioneering American Jewish Women Directors

3:30-4:00 PM Break

4-5:30 PM

**Panel 7 Contemporary Anti-Semitism: Right and Left Zoom A**

Chair: Max Baumgarten, California State University, Los Angeles

Jeffrey Blutinger, California State University, Long Beach  
Kevin MacDonald's Reconceptualization of Antisemitic Conspiracy Theory

Jeffrey Demsky, San Bernardino Valley College,  
Ahchoo! Ahchoo! Let's Blame the Jews: Disease Tropes in Covid-19 Cartoons and Memes

Maor Levitin, York University  
The Psychology of Left Anti-Semitism

**Panel 8 Jewish Film Zoom B**  
Chair: Marat Grinberg, Reed College

Dror Abend-David, University of Florida  
Jewish Identity, Silent Films and the Invisibility of the Translator

Joel Rosenberg, Tufts University  
The First Jewish Film: On Georges Méliès's *L'Affaire Dreyfus* (1899)

Elyce Rae Helford, Middle Tennessee State University  
Jewishness, Survivor Guilt, and Billy Wilder's *Ace in the Hole*

**Panel 9 Yiddish and Hebrew in America Zoom C**

Chair: Sharon Oster, University of Redlands

Mara W. Cohen Ioannides, Missouri State University  
The Singer Siblings: Different Views of Shtetl Life

Michal Fram Cohen, Open University of Israel  
The Disappearance of Hebrew Women Writers in America

Alan Levenson, University of Oklahoma  
Forgotten Yiddishist: Maurice Samuel (1895-1972)

5:30-6:30 PM, Happy Hour (BYO and Chatrooms) **Zoom D**

Monday, March 15

9-10:30 AM Plenary Session **Zoom B**

**Yitzhak Rabin's Assassination in Israeli Film and Television**

Chair: Naomi Sokoloff, University of Washington

Shmuel Meiri, Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design

A Leader's Memory on Display:

Yitzhak Rabin's Memorial Exhibitions in Academies of Arts vs. The Yitzhak Rabin Center

Naomi Meiri-Dann, Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design

The Commemoration of Yitzhak Rabin in Tel Aviv – Between Israeli “Battlefield”

Monuments and JFK 's Memorial Sites in Dallas TX

Miri Talmon, Tel-Aviv University

A Touch Away from Making Love, not War: 1990s Filmic and Televisual Negotiations of Rabin's Assassination

Anat Zanger, Tel-Aviv University

Yitzhak Rabin's Assassination and the Messianic Turn in Israeli Cinema: From *Rabin: The Last Days* to *Our Boys*

11 AM-12:30 PM

**Panel 10 19<sup>th</sup> Century Jewish History Zoom A**

Chair: Jody Myers, California State University, Northridge

Armin Langer, Reconstructionist Rabbinical College

A Barbaric, bloody act: The anti-circumcision polemics of the Enlightenment and its internalization among nineteenth-century German Jews

Zack Rothbart, National Library of Israel

The Impact of the Early 19th Century Eastern Mediterranean Bubonic Plague on Jewish Settlement in Jerusalem

Dóra Pataricza, Szeged Jewish Archives Digitalization Project

The concept of the kiss perceived by Immanuel Löw, chief rabbi of Szeged, Hungary (1875-1944)

**Panel 11 Gender in Jewish Law and Texts Zoom B**

Chair: Roberta Sabbath, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Ronit Irshai, Bar-Ilan University

Cross-Dressing in Jewish Law and the Construction of Gender Identity

Aron Tillema, University of California-Davis,

“Efficacious Laments, Misguided Corrections? Reading Lamentations Then and Now”

Yaron Silverstein, Hemdat Academic College

The question of the authority of a new regime during the twilight of power: A Study of the Commentary to David and Abigail's meeting in the Yerushalmi Sanhedrin (2: 3, 20: 2)

**Panel 12 Israel and Jews in Africa and Asia Zoom C**

Chair: Seth Ward, University of Wyoming

Sara Ahmadova Arshad, Azerbaijan National Academy  
Mountain Jews of Azerbaijan

Ilana Maymind, Chapman University  
The Jews of Japan

Suchibrata Roy, O.P. Jindal Global University  
Israeli affinity towards Indian village people and growing Philosemitism in the Himalayas region of India.

Asher Lubotzky, Indiana University  
‘Don’t Call Us Kushim.’ Racialized Experiences and Political Activism among African Students in Israel in the 1960s,”

12:45-1:45 PM Lunch Break, Chat Rooms **Zoom D**

2:00-3:30 PM

**Panel 13 Jews in the Midwest and West Zoom A**

Chair: Amy Shevitz, Loyola University Chicago

Diana Clarke, University of Pittsburgh  
Not the Same Old Moses: Jewish Settler-Colonialism in Oklahoma Territory

Ethan Nosanow Levin, Harvard Divinity School  
The Coloniality of Memory: A Historiography of Jewish Minnesota

Rebecca Wartell, University of Colorado  
Jews Outdoors: Post-War Jewish Recreation in the Rocky Mountains

**Panel 14: Torah Interpretation and Translation Zoom B**

Chair: Joel Gereboff, Arizona State University

Leonard Greenspoon, Creighton University  
The Septuagint as a Jewish Translation of the Bible”

Roberta Sabbath, University of Nevada, Las Vegas  
Human/Divine Intersectionality in *Sacred Tropes: Tanakh, New Testament and Qur'an*,”

Eran Viezel, Ben Gurion University  
The Relationship between ‘You Shall Not Let Your Cattle Mate with a Different Kind’ (Lev 19:19) and ‘You Shall Not Plow with an Ox and an Ass Together’ (Deut 22:10): A Reexamination

**Panel 15 Jews in American Popular Culture Zoom C**

Chair: Jeff Demsky, San Bernardino Valley College

Attilio Cantore, Università degli Studi di Milano  
The exodus of an Italian Jewish composer to the West Coast

Alexandra Sasha Zborovsky, University of Pennsylvania  
Mostly Dead Means Slightly Alive: The Jewish Comic Tradition of the 1950s

3:30-4:15 Break

4:30-6:00 PM

**Panel 16: American Legacies of the Holocaust Zoom A**

Chair: Jeffrey Blutinger, California State University, Long Beach

Meghan Riley, Indiana University  
The Unitarian Service Committee's Starvation Studies in Vichy France

James McSpadden, University of Nevada, Reno  
Ethical Debate on Looted Nazi and Holocaust-Era Books in the United States

Gregory Brown, University of Nevada, Las Vegas  
The Other New York Intellectuals: Jewish Refugee Historians and Post-War Historiography of the European Enlightenment"

**Panel 17 Local American Jewish History Zoom B**

Chair: Ava Kahn, Independent Scholar

Steven Green, University of California, Santa Cruz  
More Than Just a Store: Jewish Food Entrepreneurship in Turn of the Century

Jonathan L. Friedmann, Academy for Jewish Religion, California  
*The Secrets of Happiness and Longevity: A Jewish Response to the Metaphysical Movement in Early Twentieth-Century Los Angeles*

Joel Gereboff, Arizona State University  
Local and Regional American Jewish Historical Societies

**Panel 18 The Lingering Impact of the Holocaust on Literature Zoom C**

Chair: Victoria Aarons, Trinity University

Megan Reynolds, University of Oregon  
Monstrously Human: Seeing Evil in Emil Ferris's *My Favorite Thing Is Monsters*

Naomi Sokoloff, University of Washington  
The Beast of Memory: Animals and the Holocaust in Nava Semel's *And the Rat laughed*

Lucas Wilson, Florida Atlantic University

[Pre(Occupied) Longing: Toward a Definition of Postnostalgia in Jonathan Safran Foer's Everything Is Illuminated

Tuesday, March 16  
9-10:30 AM

Panel 19 **Rabbinic Sources** Zoom A

Chair: Marvin Sweeney, Claremont School of Theology

Sophia Avants, Claremont School of Theology  
The Temple in Mishnah Yoma: Ideal but not Abstract

Rachel Albeck-Gidron, Bar Ilan University  
Half Light/ Half Dark, Metaphor as Stage Directions for a Thought Experiment in Ancient Hebrew Literature

Martin Zwick, Portland State University  
Polymorphism and Polysemy in the Kabbalistic Tree

Panel 20 **Eastern European Jewish History** Zoom B

Chair: Jeffrey Koerber, Chapman University  
Evelyn Gould, University of Oregon  
Henry Ponedel, Independent Scholar  
Mapping the Pale of Jewish Settlement in Sound and Space

Motti Zalkin, Ben Gurion University  
Deborah Romm: Innovative Publisher, Visionary Businesswoman, and Cultural Agent

Victoria Khiterer, Millersville University,  
The Rise and Fall of Jewish Scholarly Institutions in Kiev in the 1920s-1940s

Panel 21 **Holocaust and Jewish Education in Germany and Israel** Zoom C

Chair: Armin Langer, Reconstructionist Rabbinical College

Melanie Carina Schmoll, Bar Ilan University  
Holocaust Education at Jewish Schools – what Israel and Germany might learn from each other.

Adi Binhas, Beit-Berel College  
Iris Yaniv, Oranim College,  
“I had to invent my own Judaism:” Perceived personal and professional identity among teachers from the former USSR who teach Jewish culture in Israel

11:00 AM-12:30 PM

Panel 22: **Medieval Jewish Thought** Zoom A  
Chair: Alexander Warren Marcus, Yale University

Aaron Adler, Herzog College  
Universalism in Maimonides' Halakhic Writings

Jonathan Jacobs, Bar Ilan University  
Rabbi Meyuhas ben Elijah: His Geographical Provenance, Works, and Chronology

Roni Cohen, Tel-Aviv University

“And They will Rejoice, and Sing on the Day I Die”: A Medieval Anti-Gambling Hebrew Poem as a “Textual Doodle”

**Panel 23 Dancing the Jewish Experience Zoom B**

Chair: Naomi Jackson, Arizona State University

Margot Mink Colbert, University of Las Vegas

Transition Trilogy: The Trek of the European Jews to America and the Life They Made

Yvonne Montoya, Safos Dance Theatre

Stories from Home: Siglos. Sueños. Sefarad.

Cia Sautter, College of St. Scholastica

Job, The Garden, and Jewish Arts Activism

**Panel 24 Survivor Voices in Holocaust Education Zoom C**

Chair: Beth B. Cohen, California State University, Northridge

Norma Lisa Flores, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Esther Finder, Holocaust Survivors Group of Southern Nevada

Susan Dubin, Sperling Kronberg Mack Holocaust Resource Center

12:45-1:45 Lunch Break with Chat Rooms **Zoom D**

2-3:30 PM

**Panel 25 The Future of Jewish Studies Programs Zoom A**

Chair: Jody Myers, California State University, Northridge

Holli Levitsky, Loyola Marymont University,

Elyce Helford, Middle Tennessee State University

Sophia Avants, Claremont Graduate University

**Panel 26: Child Survivors Zoom B**

Chair: Laurie Baron, San Diego State University

Elke Heckner, University of Iowa

Playacting by Child Survivors as Working through Trauma in *Unzere Kinder* (1948)

Beth B. Cohen, California State University, Northridge

Forging a Collective Identity: Child Survivors of the Holocaust and Postwar US Networks

4-5:30 PM Plenary **Zoom C**

Holocaust Survivor Choreographic Collaboration: An Oral History, Dance, Video Production

Collaboration of the UNLV College of Liberal Arts, Religious Studies Program, College of Fine Arts, and Dance Department