

Jodi Eichler-Levine

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Religion Studies Department
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POSITIONS

Philip and Muriel Berman Assoc. Professor of Jewish Civilization, Lehigh University, 2015-present
Associate Professor, Religion Studies Department

Associate Professor, University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, Religious Studies Department, 2013-2015
Joint Appointment, Women's and Gender Studies Program

Assistant Professor, University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, Religious Studies Department, 2007-2013
Joint Appointment, Women's and Gender Studies Program

Lecturer, Wesleyan University, Religious Studies Department, Spring 2007

Instructor, University Writing Program, Columbia University, Fall 2006

EDUCATION

Columbia University, New York New York. 2001-2007.
Ph.D. conferred October 2007. Religion.
M.A. conferred May 2004. Religion.

Brandeis University, Waltham Massachusetts.
B.A. conferred May 2000. Near Eastern and Judaic Studies, *summa cum laude*.

PUBLICATIONS

Books

Painted Pomegranates and Needlepoint Rabbis: How Jews Craft Resilience and Create Community (University of North Carolina Press, October 2020)

Suffer the Little Children: Uses of the Past in Jewish and African American Children's Literature

(New York: NYU Press, April 2013).

(Paperback release: April 2015)

Reviewed in: *American Literary History Advance*, *American Jewish History*, *Catholic Library World*, *Children's Literature*, *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*, *Choice*, *The Lion and The Unicorn*

Articles in Peer-Reviewed Volumes and Academic Journals

- “Teaching American Jewish Children’s and Young Adult Literature,” in Roberta Rosenberg and Rachel Rubinstein, eds., *Teaching Jewish American Literature* (Modern Language Association, 2020)
- “American Judaism and Race,” in Paul Harvey and Kathryn Gin Lum, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Race in American History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018)
- “Maurice Sendak’s Jewish Mother(s),” in Jane Kanarek, Marjorie Lehman, and Simon Bronner, eds., *Mothers in the Jewish Cultural Imagination* (Oxford, UK: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2017)
[Volume was a National Jewish Book Award finalist for the Barbara Dobkin Award in Women’s Studies, 2017]
- “Golems and Goblins: The Monstrous in Jewish Children’s Literature,” in Stephen Parker, Susan Ridgely, and Ann Strhan, eds. *The Bloomsbury Reader in Religion and Childhood*. (London: Bloomsbury, 2017)
- “Imagining Mary Magdalene: The Discourse of Hidden Wisdom in American Popular Culture.” *Postscripts: The Journal of Sacred Texts and Contemporary Worlds* (April 2011).
- “The Curious Conflation of Hanukkah and the Holocaust in Jewish Children’s Literature.” *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies* (Winter 2010), 92-115.
- “As Americans Against Genocide’: The Crisis in Darfur and Interreligious Political Activism,” with Rosemary R. Hicks. *American Quarterly* 56:3 (September 2007), 711-735.

Essay

- “Minyan-less in Oshkosh: Or, How the JWA Brought *Yiddishkeit* to Northeast Wisconsin,” in Joyce Antler, ed., *Why Jewish Women’s History Matters: An Archive of Stories in Honor of Gail Reimer* (Boston: Jewish Women’s Archive, 2014).

Forthcoming Peer-Reviewed Project

- “Dancing Out the Torah: Body, Ritual, and Transitions in Transparent,” in *Queer Jews on TV: Transparent and the Changing Landscape of Jewish Popular Culture*, edited by Nora Rubel and Brett Krutzsch (accepted, in final revisions, Rutgers University Press)

Book Reviews

- Review of Jennifer Glaser, *Borrowed Voices: Writing and Racial Ventriloquism in the Jewish American Imagination*. *American Jewish History* (2018), 444-446.
- Review of Rebecca T. Alpert, *Religion and Sports: An Introduction and Case Studies*. *Material Religion: The Journal of Objects, Art, and Belief*. 12:4 (2016), 511-512.
- Review of Erika Seamon, *Interfaith Marriage in America*. *Theology and Sexuality* 20:1 (2014), 83-84.

“Crossing National and Religious Boundaries.” (book review). Karen I. Leonard, Alex Stepick, Manuel A. Vasquez, and Jennifer Holdaway, eds., *Immigrant Faiths: Transforming Religious Life in America* for, H-net Reviews, March 2007

PUBLIC SCHOLARSHIP (selected)

“Why ‘Hamilton’ is the ‘Most Disney’ Disney Film.” *Newsweek*. July 3, 2020.

<https://www.newsweek.com/why-hamilton-most-disney-disney-film-opinion-1515158>

“What We Miss When We Miss Disney World.” *The Revealer*. June 3, 2020.

<https://therevealer.org/what-we-miss-when-we-miss-disney-world/>

“In Memory of Touch.” *Medium*. April 29, 2020.

<https://medium.com/@joe315/in-memory-of-touch-8c22b59d5493>

“Holy Shit.” *Killing the Buddha*. March 23, 2020.

<https://killingthebuddha.com/mag/confession/holy-shit/>

“Why Christian nationalists think Trump is heaven-sent.” (Review of Katherine Stewart’s *The Power Worshippers*). *The Washington Post*. March 20, 2020.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/why-christian-nationalists-think-trump-is-heaven-sent/2020/03/20/a3c42734-5983-11ea-9b35-def5a027d470_story.html

“Blossoms (Hadeish Yameinu).” *Killing the Buddha*. April 29, 2019.

<https://killingthebuddha.com/mag/confession/blossoms-hadeish-yameinu/>

“Returning to Mary Poppins, This Time with Stage 4 Cancer.” *Kveller*. January 11, 2019.

<https://www.kveller.com/returning-to-mary-poppins-this-time-with-stage-4-cancer/>

“Mary Poppins Can’t Return Fast Enough: An Adult in the Room is the Best Fantasy of 2018.” *Salon*. October 3, 2018

<https://www.salon.com/2018/10/05/mary-poppins-cant-return-fast-enough-an-adult-in-the-room-is-the-best-fantasy-of-2018/>

“Mediating Moses and Matzah.” *AJS Perspectives*. May 2018.

<http://perspectives.ajsnet.org/the-oldnew-media-issue/mediating-moses-and-matzah/>

“The long, nasty moral war over sexuality in America.” (Review of Marie Griffith’s *Moral Combat*). *The Washington Post*. January 26, 2018.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/the-long-nasty-moral-war-over-sexuality-in-america/2018/01/26/2f900ade-dde5-11e7-8679-a9728984779c_story.html?utm_term=.60f198b2bc4f

“The Needle and the Planetarium.” *The Immanent Frame*. January 11, 2018.

<https://tif.ssrc.org/2018/01/11/the-needle-and-the-planetarium/>

“Transparent Season 3: The Intersectional Messiah.” *Religion Dispatches*. September 30, 2017.
<http://religiondispatches.org/transparent-season-3-reaching-the-promised-land-on-the-jewish-new-year/>

“Bernie Sanders: Jewish Rorschach Test.” *The Huffington Post*. February 22, 2016.
https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/bernie-sanders-jewish-ror_b_9278726.html

“‘Star Wars’ and the Solstice.” *The Huffington Post*. December 6, 2017.
https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/star-wars-and-the-solstice_b_8865704.html

“The Blockbuster Spirituality of *The Fault in Our Stars*.” *Religion Dispatches*. June 12, 2014.
<http://religiondispatches.org/the-blockbuster-spirituality-of-john-greens-the-fault-in-our-stars/>

Further Religion Dispatches pieces 2012-2016: <http://religiondispatches.org/author/jodi-eichler-levine/>

“Beyond the Narrow Straits of Memory.” *Tikkun*. June 4, 2014.
<http://www.tikkun.org/nextgen/beyond-the-narrow-straits-of-memory>

“The Jew in the Lotus.” *The Christian Century*, “Then and Now” blog. August 20, 2014.
<https://www.christiancentury.org/blogs/archive/2014-08/jew-lotus>

Media Appearances (selected)

Quoted in Flora Rosefsky, “Baby Naming During COVID.” *Atlanta Jewish Times*. August 19, 2020.

Quoted in Julia Sklar, “‘Zoom Fatigue’ is taxing the brain. Here’s why that happens.” *National Geographic*. April 24, 2020.
<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/2020/04/coronavirus-zoom-fatigue-is-taxing-the-brain-here-is-why-that-happens/>

Interview, Religion in American History. April 7, 2015.
<http://usreligion.blogspot.com/2015/04/interview-with-jodi-eichler-levine.html>

Interview, New Books in Jewish Studies. “Jodi Eichler-Levine, *Suffer the Little Children*.”
<https://newbooksnetwork.com/jodi-eichler-levine-suffer-the-little-children-uses-of-the-past-in-jewish-and-african-american-childrens-literature-nyu-press-2013/>

PRESENTATIONS

Invited lectures

“Bezalel’s Daughters: Crafting a Judaism of Feeling, Stitch by Stitch.” Hadassah-Brandeis Institute, Brandeis University (Zoom). November 9, 2020. (*upcoming*)

“Citizens of Memory: Suffering and Girlhood in Holocaust Commemoration.” Jewish Studies Program, University of Kentucky. November 11, 2019.

“Suffering Citizens: Past Traumas in Jewish and African American Youth Literature.” Institute for Jewish-Catholic Relations, St. Joseph’s University. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. October 23, 2019.

“Disney Devotees: Religion and the Walt Disney Company.” Department of Religious Studies Colloquium. University of Pennsylvania. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. September 26, 2019.

“Golems and Goblins and Dybbuks, Oh My! The Monstrous in Jewish Children’s Literature.” The Jeremy Zwelling Lecture. Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT. April 11, 2016

Invitations received but cancelled/rescheduled due to extenuating circumstances

Keynote, Columbia University Religion Graduate Students Conference, “Childhoods and Religion.” April 3, 2020 (**cancelled due to COVID-19 pandemic**).

Research presentation, “The Religion of Disney,” University Seminar in American Religion, Columbia University, New York, March 2020 (**rescheduled for 2021 due to COVID-19 pandemic**)

Keynote, LUCSor Annual Conference, “Interpreting Rituals: Historiographical Perspectives and Pluralistic Contexts.” Universiteit Leiden, Leiden, Netherlands, October 2018. (**cancelled due to serious health issues**)

Conference presentations (selected)

Roundtable panelist. “Imperfect Panacea? American Jewish Education and the Response to Crisis.” Association for Jewish Studies Annual Meeting. Online. December 2020 (*upcoming*).

Organizer and roundtable panelist, “Jewish Objects and Affects.” American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting. Online. December 2020 (*upcoming*).

Chair and respondent, “Judaism, Gender, and Modern Change-Makers: An Interdisciplinary Discussion.” Association for Jewish Studies, San Diego, California. December 16, 2019.

“Crafting a Promised Land: Israel, Past and Present, in Diaspora Material Culture.” Oxford Summer Institute in Modern and Contemporary Jewish Studies. Eynsham Hall, Oxfordshire, England. July 2019.

“Grandma Salle’s Needlepoint Rabbi.” Association for Jewish Studies. Boston, Massachusetts. December 18, 2018.

Respondent, “Children’s Spirituality: Beyond Institutional Structures.” American Academy of Religion. Denver, Colorado. November 19, 2018.

“From Pomegranates to Pussyhats: On Studying Craft, Creativity, and American Jews.” American Jewish Historical Society Biennial Convention, Philadelphia, PA. June 17, 2018.

Conference presentations (selected), continued

“‘I Made it a Jewish Quilt’: Telling Stories, Crafting Difference.” Association for Jewish Studies. Washington, DC. December 18, 2017.

Respondent, “Jews and Whiteness in Trump’s America.” Association for Jewish Studies. Washington, DC. December 18, 2017.

“Black Fire, White Pixels, and Golden Threads: Digital and Material Intersections in Jewish Women’s Creations.” Oxford Summer Institute in Jewish Studies. Eynsham Hall, Oxfordshire, United Kingdom. July 6, 2018.

“Canonizing Jewish Difference,” on panel “People of the Picture Book: PJ Library and American Jews.” Association for Jewish Studies. San Diego, California. December 19, 2016.

“Taking the ‘Alt’ Out of Alternate Academic Careers,” roundtable chair and organizer. Association for Jewish Studies. San Diego, California. December 19, 2016.

“Dancing Out the Torah: Body, Ritual, and Transitions in Transparent.” *Transparent: A Multidisciplinary Symposium*. University of Rochester, Rochester, New York. December 1, 2016. (Fully funded by the University of Rochester Susan B. Anthony Institute).

Roundtable panelist. “Introducing the *Bloomsbury Reader in Childhood and Religion*.” American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting. San Antonio, Texas. November 20, 2016.

“Abrahamic Bargains: Reflections on Memory and Religion in Jewish and African American Children’s Literature.” American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting. San Antonio, Texas. November 19, 2016.

“Crafting Judaism: American Jewish Women and Creativity.” Oxford Summer Institute in Modern Jewish Studies. (Co-sponsor: Berman Center for Jewish Studies). Oxford, UK. June 28, 2016.

“Zen and the Art of Jewish Knitting: The Romanticization of the East in the American Jewish Crafting Revival.” 2016 Biennial Scholars’ Conference on American Jewish History (American Jewish Historical Society). June 20, 2016. New York, New York.

Chair and session organizer. “Teaching Beyond the Canon: New Approaches to the Jewish Studies Classroom.” Roundtable. Association for Jewish Studies Annual Meeting. Boston, Massachusetts. December 2015.

“Patriots and Maccabees: Emily Solis-Cohen’s *Hanukkah: Feast of Lights*.” Paper as participant in seminar on “Jews in Postwar America, 1945-1965: New Approaches.” Association for Jewish Studies Annual Meeting. Baltimore, Maryland. December 2014.

“Where the Wild Hells Are: Dystopia, Darkness, and Monstrosity in American Jewish(ish) Children’s Literature.” American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting. San Diego, California. November 24, 2014.

Conference presentations (selected), *continued*

“Maurice Sendak’s Otherworldly Jewish Mothers, and Other Wild Relatives.” Children’s Literature Association. Columbia, South Carolina. June, 2014.

“Attracting Students to the Jewish Studies Classroom: Reports from the Field.” Roundtable. Association for Jewish Studies Annual Meeting. Boston, Massachusetts. December 16, 2013.

“What Can the Study Of American Judaism Bring to Religious Studies?: A Roundtable on Theory and Methods.” Roundtable. American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting. Baltimore, MD. November 25, 2013.

“Looking at Anne Frank’s Baby Pictures: A Midwestern Odyssey.” American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting. Chicago, Illinois. November 18, 2012.

“Primers in Sacrifice: American Jewish Children’s Literature and Notions of Liberal Democracy.” Association for Jewish Studies Annual Meeting. Boston, Massachusetts. December 21, 2010.

“Thinkable Fantasies: The Supernatural, the Really Real, and the Invented Memoir in Holocaust Literature for Children.” American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting. Atlanta, Georgia, November 1, 2010.

“Weren’t Never Friends?: The Ruptures of Race, Religion, and Gender in Tony Kushner’s *Caroline, or Change*.” American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting. Atlanta, Georgia. November 1, 2010.

Panelist, “Teaching Judaic Studies in a Non-Jewish Setting.” Association for Jewish Studies, Annual Meeting. Los Angeles, California. December 20, 2009.

“Raising Up Citizens of Memory: Girlhood in Jewish and Palestinian American Children’s Literature, 1945-2007.” North American Association for the Study of Religion. Montreal, Quebec. November 6, 2009.

“Maccabees and Memory: The Conflation of Hanukkah and the Holocaust in Jewish Children’s Literature.” American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. November 20, 2005.

TEACHING

Lehigh University (2015-present)

REL 0010 World Religions
REL/GS 013 Food and the Sacred
REL 079 Religion and Fantasy Literature
REL 090 American Gods and Monsters
REL 095 Religion and Science Fiction
REL 096 The Religion of Disney Corp
REL 098 Disney Religion Research

Lehigh University Teaching (2015-present), *continued*

REL/JST/WGSS 096 Women Writing Judaism
REL/ENGL/JST/AS 102 Promised Lands: Jewish and African American Children's Literature
REL/JST/WGSS 138 Sex, Gender, Jews
REL/JST 156 Judaism and Comic Books
REL/JST/Theatre 177 Jews and the Broadway Musical

Senior Honors Thesis Director

Felicia Galvez, "Religion and Latinx Youth Literature." May 2019.

Master's thesis reader

Kayla Lombardo, "Women Athletes and Career Success: How Are They Related?" Lehigh University, American Studies, May 2019.

University of Wisconsin Oshkosh (2007-2015) (*selected*)

Introduction to Religious Studies (Relstds 108)
Religion, Children's Books, Difference (Relstds 120/African Am St 120)
Introduction to Women's Studies (Womstds 201)
Hebrew Bible (Relstds 203)
Judaism (Relstds 215)
Women, Sustainability, Religion (Relstds/Womstds 263)
Women and Religion (Relstds/Womstds 265)
Gendering Jewish Children's Literature (Relstds/Womstds 317)
Religion and Sexuality (Relstds/Womstds 318) (Begins Fall 2013)
Judaism and Comic Books (Relstds 320)
The Holocaust and American Memory (Relstds 334)
Judaism Since Gender (Relstds/Womstds 360)
Special Topics: American Judaism (Relstds 395)
Special Topics: Judaism, Gender, Environment (Rel/Wom/Env 395/390)
Honors Seminar: Gender and Sexuality (Hnrs 175)

Wesleyan University (2007)

American Religions Through Children's Media (Reli/Amst 304)

AWARDS AND GRANTS

Lehigh University, Fast Track Faculty Development Grant, 2019, for "Disney Devotees: Religion and the Walt Disney Company" (\$6,000)

Lehigh University, Creative Inquiry Faculty Fellowship, "The Religion of Disney Corp." (\$2,000)
With colleague Professor Khurram Hussain.

Lehigh University, Fast Track Faculty Development Grant, 2017, for "Crafting Judaism," (\$6,000)

University of Wisconsin Oshkosh Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Program
Research on use of memoirs in “Women and Religion,” 2013 (\$1,500)

University of Wisconsin Oshkosh Faculty Development Program
Teaching Award Summer 2011. Research Award Fall 2009.

Brandeis University
Phi Beta Kappa 2000
Shapiro Family Prize in Near Eastern and Judaic Studies, 2000
Spinoza Prize in the History of Ideas, 2000
Schiff Undergraduate Fellow, 1998-1999
Rabb Scholarship, 1996-2000

SERVICE TO THE PROFESSION

Leadership Roles

American Academy of Religion. Childhood Studies and Religion Group, Steering Committee. (2017-present)

American Academy of Religion. Religion, Memory History Group. Co-chair, 2013-2016.
(Steering Committee 2011-2013; 2017-present)

American Academy of Religion. Religion, Holocaust, Genocide. Steering Committee (2012-2016)

Association for Jewish Studies. Director, Paula Hyman Memorial Mentoring Program. (2020-)

Association for Jewish Studies. Women’s Caucus. Co-chair. (2015-2017)

Association for Jewish Studies. Women’s Caucus Board (2013-2015; 2019-present)

Association for Jewish Studies. Pedagogy Working Group, Member (2009-2014)

Hadassah-Brandeis Institute (HBI), Brandeis University. Research Awards Academic Advisory Committee. (2020-2021)

Jewish Women’s Archive. Academic Advisory Board (2013-present)

- Shalvi/Hyman Encyclopedia of Jewish Women—2020 edition; Editorial Board

Manuscript reviewing

Presses: New York University Press. University of North Carolina Press. Oxford University Press. Princeton University Press. Rutgers University Press. Stanford University Press. Yale University Press.

Journals: *AJS Review*, *Children's Literature Quarterly*, *The Journal of Modern Jewish Studies*, *Journal of American Studies*, *Journal of Jewish Identities*, *MAVCOR Journal*, *Religion and American Culture*, *Shofar*, *Religion Compass*

External reader, tenure/promotion

Case Western Reserve University (Cleveland, Ohio); Marymount Manhattan College (New York, New York); University of Chester (Chester, England, United Kingdom)

SERVICE TO LEHIGH UNIVERSITY AND COMMUNITY

Program Leadership and Committees

Director, American Studies Program (January 2018—June 2019)

Interim Director, Berman Center for Jewish Studies (July 2019-December 2019)

Jewish Studies Minor and Berman Center for Jewish Studies. Core Faculty. (2015-)

Humanities Center Executive Committee (2016-2018)

Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies. Core Faculty (2015-2018)

Meetings Convened

Co-convenor, Oxford Summer Institute in Modern and Contemporary Judaism, 2020 (virtual meeting); 2021 (planned as face to face meeting)

Convenor, Symposium, "Religion and Its Many American Publics." Lehigh University American Studies Program. April 7-8, 2019.

Co-convenor, "Looking in and Looking Out." Berman Center Working Group. September 8-9, 2019.

Co-convenor, "Situating American Jewish Studies." Berman Center Working Group. March 26-28, 2017.

Other Lehigh Service

Search committee member, search for Endowed Director of Jewish Life Student Life and Associate Chaplain (Spring 2018)

Religion Studies Department, Publicity Committee, Tenure Guidelines Committee. (2015-)

American Studies Master's Degree Working Group (2016)

Local Lectures, Lehigh University and Eastern Pennsylvania

Invited speaker, “Hamantaschen and Her Story.” Temple Beth El, March 2020. Allentown, PA.

Panelist, “Israel/Palestine/Peace.” Lehigh University. November 7, 2019.

Panelist, LUMI student-sponsored interfaith initiative, “Feminism and Religion.” Lehigh University. February 1, 2018,

“Jews and the Broadway Musical.” Jewish Family Service of the Lehigh Valley clients. August, 2017.

“Crafting Judaism: Jewish Women and Creativity.” Congregation B’rith Shalom. Bethlehem, PA. May 6, 2017

“Wild Things and Chosen Children: Maurice Sendak as Jewish Author.” Congregation Keneseth Israel, Allentown, PA. March 19, 2017.

“Judaism and Comic Books” for Kibbutz Lehigh, Fall 2016 (Winner of Residence Life programming award)

SERVICE TO THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN OSHKOSH AND COMMUNITY (selected)

- Faculty Senate, Humanities Representative. (2013-2015)
- Women’s and Gender Studies Program Steering Committee (2007-2015)
- African American Studies Program Advisory Board (2008-2014)
- Faculty Development Program, Reviewer (2009-2015)
- Program Review Committee, College of Letters and Science (2010-2012)
- Diversity Committee, College of Letters and Science (EDIC) (2009-2015)

Selected Campus and local lectures, Wisconsin

Community Lecture. Book talk: “*Suffer the Little Children*: Religion, and Children’s Literature.” First Presbyterian Church, Neenah. October 12, 2014.

Community Lecture. “Greening Judaism: From the Israelites to Brooklyn.” Jewish Social Services of Madison, Levy Summer Salon Series. July 27, 2014.

Community Lecture, “Judaism and Comic Books.” First Presbyterian Church, Neenah. September 23, 2012.

LANGUAGE SKILLS

Reading knowledge: French, German, Hebrew (Biblical, Modern)

Working knowledge: Greek (Attic, Koiné), Latin

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Academy of Religion
American Jewish Historical Society
Association for Jewish Studies