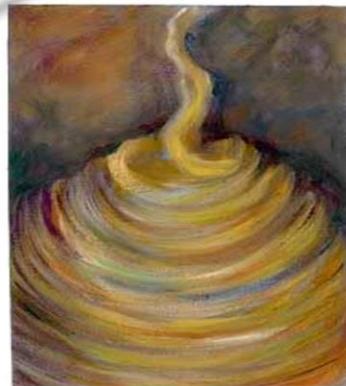
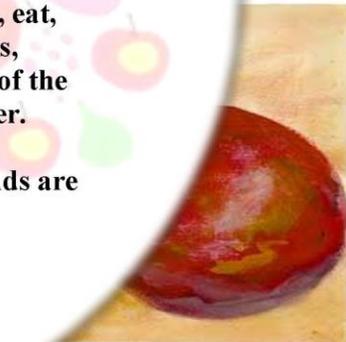
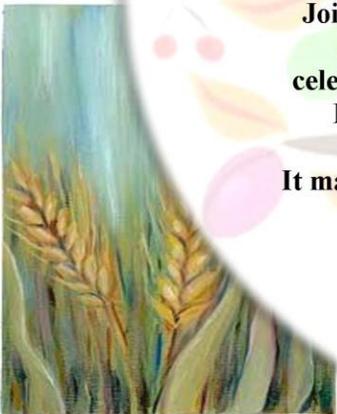




**THE CONSERVATIVE SYNAGOGUE OF
FIFTH AVENUE
11 EAST 11 STREET NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10003
NEWSLETTER
JANUARY 2018**



The Conservative Synagogue
Of Fifth Avenue
invites you to a

Tu B'Shevat Seder
Tuesday, January 30, 2018
7:30 pm

Join with us as we come together to learn, eat,
drink, observe the birthday of the trees,
celebrate the Seven Species and the fruits of the
Land of Israel with a Tu B'Shevat Seder.

It may be cold in New York but the first buds are
blooming in the Land of Israel.

Rsvp:
Csfall11@aol.com
212-929-6954

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Happy 2018. The secular calendar begins with the month of January, which is named for the ancient Roman god, Janus. Many of you may recall that Janus was the king of beginnings and endings. That is why he is depicted as having two faces, one looking backward and one looking forward. It is only fitting, therefore, that I take a moment to look back to the past month, and look forward to what is coming up at CSFA in the coming weeks.

We all owe a debt of gratitude to Lynn Kutner and Richard, who once again provided the CSFA community with a night of fun and food at their annual pre-Chanukah Latke Night. The turnout was overflowing and the latkes and brick were delicious.

The month of December ended with the CSFA Chanukah Party and Talent Show. Thanks to the hard work of Gail Berman, Pam Wolf, and Leor Sabbah we were able to enjoy great food and a extraordinary Talent Show. The sanctuary was filled with a "standing room only" crowd and everyone enjoyed a wonderful show. Thank you to the many CSFA members and friends who volunteered to entertain at the Chanukah event.

Even though it looks like January is going to be a freezing cold month, there are lots of activities scheduled for the first month of 2018 to keep everybody active and warm. We kick off the month with our annual New Year's Day Brunch, which promises to be "just what the doctor ordered" after everyone's freezing New Year's Eve. Rabbi Schwartz will be back from vacation and will resume his regular Wednesday Hebrew classes, as well as his "Masterworks of Jewish Scholarship". There is an Italian themed Shabbat Dinner scheduled for January 12, and we will be commemorating Martin Luther King Day on Monday, January 15 with a screening of the movie "Rosenwald", the story of Julius Rosenwald, the owner of Sears Roebuck, who was a Jewish philanthropist in Chicago committed to supporting the Black community and Black educational programs.

We end the month with a Tu B'Shevat Seder on the evening of Tuesday, January 30. "What", you may ask, "is a Tu B'Shevat Seder?". Tu B'Shevat, the 15th day of the Hebrew month of Shevat, is the New Year for Trees, and it is a time for all of us to re-connect with the agricultural cycle of the Bible and with the Land of Israel. While it may be cold and snowing in New York, in Israel the first buds are blooming on the almond trees and the light of spring can be seen everywhere. Join us as we come together to learn about the 7 species of Israel, the importance and meaningfulness of trees in the land of Israel, and to enjoy a variety of fruits, nuts, and wine.

There is an old Talmudic tale which goes as follows:

Honi the Wise One was also known as Honi the Circle Maker. By drawing a circle and stepping inside of it, he would recite special prayers for rain, sometimes even argue with God during a drought, and the rains would come. He was, indeed, a miracle maker. As wise as he was, Honi sometimes saw

something that puzzled him. Then he would ask questions so he could unravel the mystery.

One day, Honi the Circle Maker was walking on the road and saw a man planting a carob tree. Honi asked the man, "How long will it take for this tree to bear fruit?"

The man replied, "Seventy years."

Honi then asked the man, "And do you think you will live another seventy years and eat the fruit of this tree?"

The man answered, "Perhaps not. However, when I was born into this world, I found many carob trees planted by my father and grandfather. Just as they planted trees for me, I am planting trees for my children and grandchildren so they will be able to eat the fruit of these trees."

In Judaism, trees are regarded as extremely precious and important. There are blessings over the first buds of spring and also when we eat the fruits for the first time in each season. We are prohibited from eating a trees fruit before the tree is 3 years old, and that itself is one of the reasons we need the holiday of Tu B'Shevat. We are taught that the Jewish calendar has 4 New Years. There is Rosh Hashana, the 1st of Tishre, which is the "Head of the Year". Yet when we are freed from the slavery of Egypt, we are instructed to celebrate the 1st of Nisan as the first day of the "first month of the year". Likewise the 1st of Elul is the New Year for the tithing of cattle, and the 15th of Shevat is the New Year of the Trees. Since we cannot eat the fruit of the tree before the tree is 3 years old, Tu B'Shevat becomes the birthday of every tree that is planted in that year.

There is a saying that if the Messiah is coming while you are planting a tree, finish planting first and then go and greet the Messiah. Yet at the same time in Avot we read, "Rabbi Shimon says: If one is walking along the road reciting, and suddenly stops his recitation to say; "How pleasing is this tree! How pleasing is this furrow!", the Bible implies it as though he endangers his life." Based on a simple interpretation we would presume that our Sages had no regard for the beauty and miracle of nature, and that we should only concentrate on the repetition and memorization of the Oral Law. However, another interpretation would see a different dimension to Rabbi Shimon's teaching. His admonition is just because he is so aware and in awe of the miracle and the beauty of nature that he feels it necessary to forewarn his students. The fields and forest of the Land of Israel are breathtaking and never became humdrum vistas in Jewish eyes, even after generations of farming life in Israel.

Join us on the 30th, as well as at all the activities and services throughout the month, and learn about Tu B'Shevat and what makes CSFA such a special place.

Leslie Penn

A Message from the Chesed Committee

By Susan Leimsider

The Chesed committee participated in projects in August, September, November, and December. We also held our Second Annual Coat Drive for New York Cares.

Thanks to all of you who donated coats this year, and I would like to give a special shout-out to Richard Geist and Susan Brown for their very generous donation of dozens of coats.

We will be on hiatus in January, but will resume our activities shortly thereafter.

I always appreciate suggestions for new projects in which to participate, and new avenues to explore (daytime activities on weekdays, as well as weeknight activities).

Please let me know if you are interested in participating with us, and, if you would like to pass on any suggestions, you can email me at: thomasandsusan@gmail.com Please put "Chesed" in the subject line

Finally, don't forget that Tom and I will be sponsoring a **kiddush on January 20**, in honor of all the Chesed volunteers and supporters.

A MESSAGE FROM THE ACTIVITIES AND SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE

By Pam Wolf

Happy New Year everybody. Happy to see so many of you at the Chanukah party and New Year's brunch. Coming up we have a Shabbat dinner on January 12th and the Tu B'Shvat Seder on January 30th. Try to make it for Tu B'shvat if you can; it is a very interesting event. We then have our monthly Shabbat dinner for February on the 9th. And please don't forget our annual Purim party and megillah reading on February 28th. Start sewing those costumes NOW.

Conservative Synagogue of Fifth Avenue
11 East 11 Street New York, New York 10003
212-929-6954
Csfa11e11@aol.com
<http://www.csfanyc.org>

Joseph Schwartz, Rabbi
David Gaffney, Rabbi Emeritus
Beth Farber Loewentheil, President
Russel Winer, Vice President
Pam Wolf, Vice President
Gail Berman, Vice President
Harold Anfang, Treasurer
Lynn Kutner, Secretary
Merril Mironer, Vice President, Emeritus
Leslie Penn, Executive Director

A MESSAGE FROM THE ISRAEL COMMITTEE

By Stella Schindler

Hope your Chanukah and the New Year were joyous.

If you have not yet seen the Eichmann exhibit, Operation Finale, at the Museum of Jewish Heritage, run do not walk as it closes on January 14. I am happy to be your tour guide for the cloak and dagger story of the the hunt, capture and trial of Adolf Eichmann. Just contact me to arrange a visit.

Jerusalem - the Capital: It may be the wrong President — but it is the right decision, especially after the 2016 UN Resolution. This in no way means that East Jerusalem is not on the negotiating table. To be discussed at our next meeting.

Dec. 6 Meeting: We had a rousing bit of fun singing with the Rabbi in preparation for a spirited Yom Ha 'Atzmaut.

Wednesday, Jan. 31, @ 7 PM is scheduled for our next meeting.

We will be discussing, "Harpoon", by Nitsana Darshan- Leitner, CEO of Shurat Ha'Din, The Israeli Law Center whose goal is to combat terrorism one lawsuit at a time.

At that meeting, we will also plan our Agenda for Spring, 2018 which will include the Grossman book, "A Horse Walks into a Bar."

I wish you all a good year.

NOVEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS

DUES

David and Jennifer Silverman

KOL NIDRE

Avram and Yael Mlotek

In honor of Leslie Penn

Zmira Sabbah

In honor of Leeor Sabbah

KIDDUSH

Harold Anfang

Merril and Roselle Mironer

Paul Kutner

In honor of Lynn Kutner & Christine Priotto

Joseph & Alyson Schwartz

Sarah Goldberg

Yahrzeits

Charlotte Fainblatt

Yahrzeit of Marjorie Horowitz

Susan Brown and Richard Geist

Yahrzeit of Isaac Geist

Leonard and Barbara Greenberg

Yahrzeit of Samuel Greenberg

David and Inge Gaffney

Yahrzeit of Ezra Nachimowicz

David Goodman

Yahrzeit of Martha Goodman

Cyrena P. Konecky

Yahrzeit of Lewis Konecky

YIZKOR

Frederic and Barbara Newman

IN MEMORY OF

Russell and Toby Winer

In memory of Michael Bailey

IN HONOR OF

Merril and Roselle Mironer

In honor of Sarah Goldberg

SYNAGOGUE FUND

Robert Reicher and Michael Delvin

Charles R. and Susa Schaiier Tribbitt

Michelle Shimon

JANUARY Yahrzeits

Jacob Bykofsky	1/1/2018	Tevet 14, 5778
Rachel Gaffney	1/1/2018	Tevet 14, 5778
Joseph Hoffman	1/1/2018	Tevet 14, 5778
Marilyn Scott	1/1/2018	Tevet 14, 5778
Rabbi Gershon B. Chertoff	1/2/2018	Tevet 15, 5778
Julius Glover	1/2/2018	Tevet 15, 5778
Mollie Haddad	1/2/2018	Tevet 15, 5778
David Riesel	1/2/2018	Tevet 15, 5778
Florence Shillman	1/2/2018	Tevet 15, 5778
Paul Weiner	1/3/2018	Tevet 16, 5778
Edward Baker	1/4/2018	Tevet 17, 5778
Rabbi Paul Chertoff	1/5/2018	Tevet 18, 5778
Mary Edelman	1/5/2018	Tevet 18, 5778
Annie Ginsburg	1/5/2018	Tevet 18, 5778
Aaron Gaffney	1/6/2018	Tevet 19, 5778
Irene Hirsch	1/6/2018	Tevet 19, 5778
Bertha Wallach	1/6/2018	Tevet 19, 5778
Leonie Haboucha	1/7/2018	Tevet 20, 5778
Samuel Isaac Jacobs	1/7/2018	Tevet 20, 5778
Elaine Lesser	1/7/2018	Tevet 20, 5778
Frances Perlmutter	1/7/2018	Tevet 20, 5778
Edith Rosenberg	1/7/2018	Tevet 20, 5778
Stan Simon	1/7/2018	Tevet 20, 5778
David Edelman	1/8/2018	Tevet 21, 5778
Mary Greenberg	1/8/2018	Tevet 21, 5778
Martha Schick	1/8/2018	Tevet 21, 5778
Morris Shillman	1/8/2018	Tevet 21, 5778
Harriet Tischler	1/8/2018	Tevet 21, 5778
Rose Lowenfish	1/9/2018	Tevet 22, 5778
Bessie Samek	1/10/2018	Tevet 23, 5778
Fred Strauss	1/10/2018	Tevet 23, 5778
Mollie Cohen	1/12/2018	Tevet 25, 5778
Renee Hamilton	1/12/2018	Tevet 25, 5778
Louis Schaffel	1/12/2018	Tevet 25, 5778
Jack Biscow	1/15/2018	Tevet 28, 5778
Evelyn Mishaan	1/16/2018	Tevet 29, 5778
Solomon Nimeroff	1/16/2018	Tevet 29, 5778
Rachel Springer	1/16/2018	Tevet 29, 5778
Ann Molod Waco	1/16/2018	Tevet 29, 5778
Celia Klotz	1/17/2018	Shevat 1, 5778
Isidore Wolfe	1/17/2018	Shevat 1, 5778
Vickie Akel	1/19/2018	Shevat 3, 5778
Abe Apsel	1/19/2018	Shevat 3, 5778
Hyman Drucker	1/19/2018	Shevat 3, 5778
Barbara Oestreich	1/19/2018	Shevat 3, 5778
Isidore Penn	1/19/2018	Shevat 3, 5778
Elsa D. Friedman	1/21/2018	Shevat 5, 5778
Florence Pieken	1/21/2018	Shevat 5, 5778
Siegfried Schwind	1/21/2018	Shevat 5, 5778
Morris Mereson	1/22/2018	Shevat 6, 5778
Barney Mironer	1/22/2018	Shevat 6, 5778
Jeffrey Samek	1/22/2018	Shevat 6, 5778
Max Gertheim	1/23/2018	Shevat 7, 5778
Nachman David Berkman	1/24/2018	Shevat 8, 5778
Arthur Goodman	1/24/2018	Shevat 8, 5778
Esther Ir	1/24/2018	Shevat 8, 5778
Herbert N. Rosenberg	1/24/2018	Shevat 8, 5778
Jill Nadler	1/25/2018	Shevat 9, 5778
Harry Rosenberg	1/25/2018	Shevat 9, 5778

JANUARY YAHRZEITS

CONTINUED

Edwin Borgos	1/26/2018	Shevat 10, 5778
Marvin Greenfeld	1/27/2018	Shevat 11, 5778
Julius Horowitz	1/27/2018	Shevat 11, 5778
Louis Anfang	1/28/2018	Shevat 12, 5778
Eva Geller	1/28/2018	Shevat 12, 5778
Sidney Maratik-Schonekin	1/28/2018	Shevat 12, 5778
Oscar Reicher	1/29/2018	Shevat 13, 5778
George Fink	1/30/2018	Shevat 14, 5778
Laurence Kaufman	1/30/2018	Shevat 14, 5778
Kate Nordlinger	1/30/2018	Shevat 14, 5778
Clara Zweig	1/30/2018	Shevat 14, 5778

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Lisa Lauber	1/7/2018
Russell Winer	1/16/2018
Ellen J. Odoner	1/23/2018
Jacob Loewentheil	1/24/2018
David Oppenheim	1/27/2018
David Neil Steinman	1/30/2018

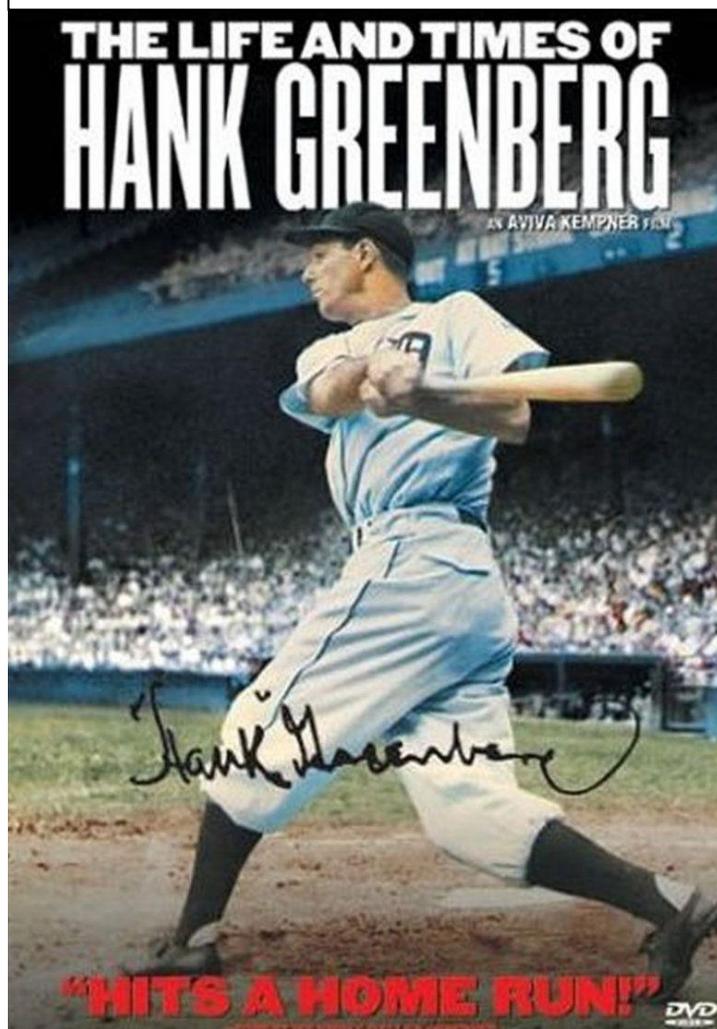
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**DRAWING ON
PURIM NIGHT
FEBRUARY 28, 2018**

**CSFA MOVIE NIGHT
THURSDAY, JANUARY 25, 2018
7:30 PM**



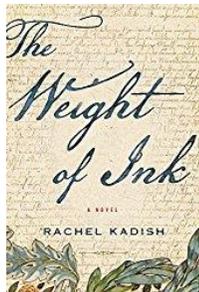
The Life and Times of Hank Greenberg is a 1998 documentary film directed, produced and written by Aviva Kempner about Hall of Fame first baseman Hank Greenberg of the Detroit Tigers.

A Jewish player who chose not to play on Yom Kippur in 1934 during a heated pennant race, Greenberg experienced a great deal of anti-Semitism. He nearly broke Babe Ruth's 60 home run record by hitting 58 home runs in 1938.

Like many players of the era, Greenberg's career was interrupted by military service. Initially, Greenberg was classified unfit for service due to flat feet. However, upon re-examination, he was cleared. Before Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor, the United States Congress released men over age 28. After the attack, Greenberg immediately reenlisted in the United States Army Air Forces.

In 1947, Hank Greenberg, as a member of the Pittsburgh Pirates and playing his final season, was one of the few ballplayers to give the Brooklyn Dodgers' Jackie Robinson, the majors' first black player in many years, a warm welcome. Robinson later said, "Class tells. It sticks out all over Mr. Greenberg".

BOOK REVIEWS



[The Weight of Ink](#)

By Rachel Kadish

History and mystery converge in this intriguing novel by Rachel Kadish, whose fluid prose is ignited by flashes of poetry. In her complex protagonist, Ester Velasquez, she has created a character inspired by Virginia Woolf's imagined Judith Shakespeare, a 17th-century woman of talent and intellect and sister of the Bard who, Woolf speculates, would have died young without utilizing her gifts. Kadish's Jewish heroine exists in a narrative that leaps across centuries and continents.

Ester, an immigrant to England from the Portuguese Jewish community of Amsterdam, serves as scribe to her benefactor, the brilliant and compassionate Rabbi HaCoen Mendes, blinded by Inquisition torturers. But Ester's writings go well beyond the rabbi's dictation to encompass her own clandestine correspondence with leading philosophers of that period. Each letter she composes in HaCoen Mendes's name is an exquisitely phrased treatise outlining her emergent beliefs. The only clue to her persona is the barely discernible Hebrew letter *aleph* at the bottom of each document.

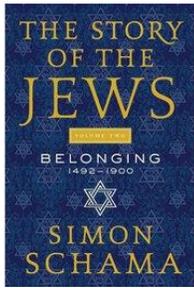
Concealed for centuries in a *genizah* in a mansion in Richmond, a suburb of London, her letters are serendipitously discovered by a 21st-century non-Jewish scholar, Helen Watt. Elderly, ailing Helen, devoted to the study of Jewish history, immediately recognizes the importance of the delicate documents and realizes that they are endangered by the toxicity of the very ink they are written with. With the assistance of an American Jewish graduate student, Aaron Levy, she undertakes the arduous task of discovering the true identity of *aleph* and recreating her world. Their work is invigorated by an academic rivalry with a competing team of historians.

The narrative proceeds in alternating chapters: Ester's life and experiences chronicled in her own voice, followed by the contemporary narrative that adds Aaron and Helen's stories. London, both past and present, is almost a corporeal presence as the tales unfold with cleverly scattered clues and gathering suspense.

Jewish history informs every chapter. The Inquisition, the pseudo-messianism of Sabbatai Zevi, the serial expulsions of Jewish communities, the Holocaust, Israel's War of Independence, the twin episodes of Jewish martyrdom at Masada in Israel and in England's York, all contribute to the kaleidoscope of Jewish tragedy and redemption. Historic personalities emerge, such as chronicler Glückel of Hameln, and Benedict de Spinoza's persona and philosophy are pivotal to the story.

Helen's romantic experience as a young woman in the nascent State of Israel explains her lifelong academic involvement with Jewish history. Aaron achieves rare insights—personal, academic and, ultimately, Jewish. And against all odds, Ester survives the horrific plague that decimated England and is vouchsafed the intellectual life denied the fictional Judith Shakespeare. That her happy ending is based on authorial contrivance is a forgivable flaw.

And the author does include Shakespeare. As a bonus, Kadish introduces a letter from the Jewish authority in Amsterdam to HaCoen Mendes describing Ester's grandmother, who supposedly had an illicit affair with an unnamed English gentile. In words plucked from Shakespeare's sonnet 144, it reads: "A beauty to tempt away man's better angel...her power tempts the most righteous among us," thus raising the possibility, however, remote, "that Ester's grandmother, a Portuguese Jewess, might have been Shakespeare's conjectural Dark Lady." What a delicious speculative nugget to add to a book already packed with romance and drama. All kudos to Rachel Kadish for this literary gift.



**THE STORY OF THE
JEWS**
Volume 2
Belonging: 1492-1900

By Simon Schama

Simon Schama's "Belonging: 1492-1900," the second volume of his panoramic study of Jewish life, "The Story of the Jews," is in fact an account of serial exile. Jews never belong enough anywhere to avoid vilification as parasites, vultures, usurers and traitors. "They have clung to us like leeches," wrote the French polemicist Georges-Marie Mathieu-Dairnvaell in the 1840s, and were no more than "vampires, scavengers of nature."

This is the standard lexicon of Jew hatred during the period Schama covers in "Belonging." Loathing flares — from Mantua to Prague, from London to Lisbon, from the Vatican to Berlin — with scant variation. Degradation amounts to the Jews' "perpetual punishment for the sin of the Crucifixion," Schama writes. They are the Christ killers, fit principally for the ghetto, unfit for citizenship.

The book begins around the time of the Spanish Inquisition and ends with the Dreyfus case, a 400-year round trip back to the same Jewish question. Theodor Herzl finally answers that question with his Zionist vision of a "home that is destined to be a safe haven for the Jewish people." The homeland, for Herzl, whose pamphlet "The Jewish State" was published in 1896, was needed because it had proved "useless" for Jews to be "loyal patriots." Only in their own state would they not be potential pariahs.

It is difficult to read the 800 pages of "Belonging" and not reach the same conclusion. No Jewish patriot, rich or poor, was secure. The fate of Alfred Dreyfus, a loyal French officer falsely convicted of treason, was always

possible. To think otherwise was indeed useless, an exercise in delusion. Expulsion, imprisonment or worse lurked — a constant threat.

A century before Herzl, in 1789, the French Revolution and the Declaration of the Rights of Man had seemed to signal a new era. That year, Mirabeau, an aristocratic philosophe, argued that "in church men are Catholics, and in synagogue, Jews, but in all civil matters they are patriots of the same religion." Stanislas de Clermont-Tonnerre, another French "ex-aristo," as Schama puts it with his trademark vernacular brio, declared that "prejudices should be silent in the face of the language of the law."

Jews heard the liberating message. For a time, Napoleon's army carried it forth. Out of the shtetl and into the mainstream of European life the new citizen-Jew duly emerged. Throughout the 19th century, Jews rose in business and the professions, becoming physicians and lawyers, even politicians and army officers, only to discover that half-acceptance into Christian society could be more dangerous than nonacceptance.

In retrospect, the ardent patriotism of European Jews had a pathetic, plaintive quality. Assimilation, even conversion, would do them no good when the tide turned. In a passage with eerie echoes of today's reactionary xenophobic fever, propagating itself a little more than a quarter-century after the euphoria that accompanied the fall of the Berlin Wall, Schama writes:

"The timing of Jewish emancipation had been terrible for its beneficiaries, albeit not of their choosing. For it came about exactly when Enlightenment cosmopolitanism, the universal brotherhood, that short-lived little flame, had burned out. By the second quarter of the 19th century, resistance to the dominion of the machine took the form of a militant cult of history, religion, nature and nation, against which the Jews seemed to personify the opposite: a people — a dynasty like the Rothschilds — indifferent to borders, a race who were everywhere and nowhere."

Liberating flames died. Scapegoating returned. Nothing under the sun was quite as it seemed. “Belonging” is not, then, an ironic title. It was the core dilemma of the Jews across these four centuries. It was their constant quest (and equally constant worry), neither quite attainable nor, it seemed, definitively out of reach.

Here and there — in the 17th-century Dutch Republic for example, or in 19th-century Britain — a sense of belonging did take hold. The Jews of Amsterdam in the 1640s could feel “simultaneously autonomous and yet integrated into the life of the Dutch Republic,” because there was “no monolithic sense of ‘Dutchness,’” religious or dynastic, against which Jews could be judged alien. The British, almost six centuries after the banishment of the Jews in 1290, would elect Benjamin Disraeli (whose father had however deemed it prudent to get his son baptized) as prime minister. Yet the stories gathered here point to a single conclusion: Precariousness is the inescapable Jewish condition.

Schama is a remarkable storyteller. His approach is cinematic. He sets scenes with great vividness and writes, from street level, with an unflagging verve. His overarching title is “The Story of the Jews,” not “The History of the Jews.” Few statistics, let alone big-picture summaries, encumber, or anchor, the cascading, virtuoso narrative. The effect is kaleidoscopic, if occasionally disorienting.

Like the Jewish peddler with his cart and wares, ever in search of a livelihood and a home, we shift from place to place. Our companion may be Leone de Sommi, a 16th-century Italian Jewish showman, or Daniel Mendoza, an 18th-century British Jewish pugilist of “long lashes fringing wide brown eyes.” Each tells a story of creative straining toward fragile, often ephemeral acceptance. The reader is ushered into a galaxy of Jewishness, from the Ottoman court to faraway China by way of Cochin in India. What emerges is a riveting picture, gorgeously rendered, of the stubborn, argumentative miracle of Jewish survival against the odds.

In the late 18th century, a German Jew by the name of Moses Mendelssohn, the pupil of a rabbi from Dessau, grappled with the thorny Jewish dilemma. In his “Jerusalem, or On Religious Power and Judaism,” he argued that nothing in Jewish precepts and ethics made it impossible for, as Schama puts it, “an observant Jew to be also a conscientious citizen of wherever he or she lived.” Mendelssohn wrote: “Let everyone be permitted to speak as he thinks, to invoke God after his own manner or that of his fathers and seek salvation where he thinks he may find it as long as he does not disturb the public peace and acts honestly according to the civil laws. Let no one be a searcher of hearts and judge of thought.”

In such expressions of liberalism, with their debt to Locke and Hobbes, the impact of the Enlightenment is palpable. Yet tolerance remained elusive. For Christian Europe, the Jew was ever the outsider. The United States was another story. The Constitution, and in particular the First Amendment, seemed to set Jews free. For Uriah Levy, a Jewish naval officer who bought Jefferson’s Monticello in 1834 (what greater symbolism of Jewish emancipation could there be?), “the Constitution had made an independent America the first true ‘sanctuary’ of the modern world.” Washington himself celebrated “a government which gives to bigotry no sanction.”

That, of course, was not the whole truth; America’s original sin of slavery would cast a terrible shadow. Nor did anti-Semitism die overnight in the New World. Schama describes as reeking of Old World prejudice Ulysses Grant’s Order 11 of 1862, expelling all Jews from his military jurisdiction on the flimsy ground that they were smuggling goods to the Confederacy. “If commercial treason was being committed against the Union, the order implied, it must be the notoriously shady Jews who were to blame.” The order, which appalled Lincoln when he discovered it, was never carried out.

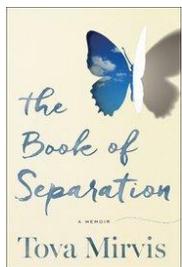
Millions of European Jews flooded into the United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, fleeing pogroms and seeking opportunity and protection under the law. They could not know what would befall the continent they left behind. But Herzl had a strong intuition. For Zionism to take hold, he wrote, “we shall have to sink lower, shall

have to be even more insulted, spat on, mocked, whipped, plundered and slain.”

In Austria, Herzl, who lived much of his life in Vienna, foresaw that “the people will let themselves be intimidated by the Viennese rabble and deliver up the Jews. There you see the mob can achieve anything once it rears up.” He concluded: “They will kill us.” These were the grim, prescient ruminations that preceded Herzl’s writing of “The Jewish State” and the first Zionist Congress of 1897 in Basel.

Not even Herzl, however, could have foreseen the industrialized mass murder of the Holocaust, the unspoken shadow that hovers over these pages. Nor could he have imagined the fulfillment in 1948, with the foundation of the modern state of Israel, of his dream. Nor how the Zionism he described in Basel as a “moral, humanitarian movement” would be prodded over time toward messianic nationalism by the violent, still unresolved confrontation with the Arabs of Palestine; nor how the Jewish exercise of power, rather than Jewish subjection to its cruel whim, would test the very ethics that bound Jews to their formless, faceless God during the millenniums of tribulation in the diaspora.

In the end the price of Jewish statehood has been heavy: the exile of another people, the Palestinians. More than a half-century of occupation of the West Bank has corroded Israeli democracy. This was not inevitable and is still not irreparable. No doubt, these themes will be prominent in Schama’s next volume. At a time of facile anti-Zionism spilling sometimes into outright anti-Semitism, Schama has made an eloquent and a far-reaching case for why Jews needed a small piece of earth they could call home.



**THE BOOK OF
SEPARATION**
A Memoir
By Tova Mirvis

Modern Orthodox Judaism — a loosely defined sect that adheres to the strictures of Jewish Scripture, while engaging with the broader world, intellectually and economically — has always been something of a paradox: It embraces modernity and, at the same time, lives by the dictums of an ancient system. Tova Mirvis’s memoir, “The Book of Separation,”

chronicles this paradox, and many others, in an intimate tale of leaving a community that served as the literary inspiration for her first two novels, and the bulwark of her life.

Mirvis’s story is less stark than recent memoirs of leaving ultra-Orthodox sects; Modern Orthodoxy, by definition, allows more mingling with the outside world. Nonetheless, her narrative is one of deep heartache, both in the predeparture attempt to quiet her own objections to the faith, and in the self-willed abandonment of certainty that departure requires. Early in the book, Mirvis writes about a childhood objection to the biblical verse that commanded Adam to rule over Eve; her mother quieted her objections with alternative explanations. Mirvis muses about the contradictions she felt: “The text couldn’t be wrong; the rabbis couldn’t be wrong. If sexism was wrong, the text couldn’t be sexist. ... The laws couldn’t change, the words couldn’t change — nothing, in fact, could change — yet you could turn the words, reframe them, and reshape them, do anything so that you could still fit inside.”

The struggle to fit inside takes up much of the book, which skips from the aftermath of Mirvis’s divorce from her husband and her faith back to the genesis of that faith, and of her marriage. Mirvis’s tale is one of privilege — a prosperous Memphis upbringing, college at Columbia, graduate school in creative writing — run through with a red thread of anguish. In many ways, to those of Modern Orthodox background, it is a deeply familiar story: She attended an Orthodox school, studied Jewish texts for a year in Israel, got engaged at 22 to an Orthodox man after 12 weeks of dating and lived under the watchful eye of a tight-knit, conformist community. (A Jewish marriage manual she read during her engagement had a chapter entitled “Thoughts to Banish.” “I wanted to scream,” Mirvis writes.) The choking tangle of laws that dictate how to handle everything, from dishware to vaginal discharge, was stifling. Orthodox Judaism, unlike other forms of American fundamentalism, largely avoids the question of belief; steadfast, granular obedience to the 613 commandments of the Torah, and the embrace of the community, preclude the question. The journey toward leaving is a slow awakening to her own suffering, and then a sudden leap to cut its bonds.

The most powerful parts of the memoir are those in which Mirvis struggles against a belief system and community that demand rigid adherence and punish refusals to conform. Her steps to freedom are minute at first: engaging in a ritual bath of purification in a lake, and not a mikvah; declining to self-censor at an Orthodox Forum discussion of the role of art. "In this freedom, there are no preordained questions, no easy answers, no ready definitions," she writes. "You leave and you leave again." Her first willful transgression is checking email and Facebook on her phone, locked in the bathroom, on a Friday night.

Yet for all the earned drama of that transgression, the present-day moments of the memoir — her post-divorce courtship with a secular Jewish lover, a rendezvous in Costa Rica — feel comparatively saccharine and unsatisfying, making the memoir's scattershot, nonchronological structure frustrating. She eats nonkosher cheese pizza; she dances at a yoga class. A repeated motif throughout is a Hasidic story, in which a rabbi cautions a would-be heretic student that he can never truly enjoy the forbidden pleasures in which he partakes. Yet the comparative banality of Mirvis's post-religious life reminds me of another Jewish aphorism: "If you are going to eat pork," as the Yiddish proverb goes, "let the juices run down your beard."

TU B'SHEVAT RECIPES

7 SPECIES CHOLENT



This is a lighter, vegetarian cholent to celebrate the New Year for the trees. The recipe has something for everyone. It is heartwarming and delicious.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 large red onion, sliced
- 2 medium carrots, thinly sliced
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 cup wheat berries
- 1 cup barley
- 1 cup raisins
- 1 cup Kalamata olives, pitted and chopped
- ½ cup pitted and chopped dates
- ½ cup stemmed and chopped dried figs
- Kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 7 cups vegetable broth or water
- 3 tablespoons of extra virgin olive oil, such as Colavita extra virgin olive oil
- Garnish: Pomegranate arils, chopped flat-leaf parsley

PREPARATION

1. Preheat slow cooker to low.
2. Combine onions, carrots, tomato paste, garlic, wheat berries, barley, raisins, Kalamata olives, dates, figs, salt, pepper, and broth or water in the insert of the slow cooker. Drizzle with extra virgin olive oil.
3. Cover and cook overnight.
4. Before serving, scatter arils and parsley over the top.

7 SPECIES KUGEL



A fun twist on a kugel, 7 Species Kugel has something for everyone. The addition of dry-cured olives adds a snappy, salty bite. Don't worry if it doesn't stick together like most kugels, still a great dish.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound wide egg noodles, cooked according to package directions
- ½ cup raisins
- ½ cup stemmed, chopped dried figs
- ½ cup chopped pitted dates
- ½ cup dry-cured black olives, pitted and chopped
- 6 eggs, whisked
- 2 cups non-dairy coconut yogurt, or favorite brand, or regular yogurt or sour cream for dairy preparation
- 1 cup canned coconut milk or 1 cup WHOLE milk for dairy preparation
- Pinch of kosher salt
- 2 cups puffed barley cereal
- Garnish: pomegranate arils

PREPARATION

1. Grease 9- x 13-inch pan. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Stir together noodles, raisins, figs, dates, olives, eggs, yogurt, coconut milk, and salt in a large bowl and pour into prepared pan.
3. Top with barley cereal and bake at 350°F for 30 minutes or until golden brown.
4. Scatter pomegranate seeds over the top.

POMEGRANATE SALMON



Sweet-and-sour combinations work beautifully with salmon. The onions caramelize and contribute a sweet counterpoint to the vinegar. Another quick and delicious dish, just the way I like it— one pan and one step.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 (3 ½ pound) side salmon, no skin, no bones, trimmed
- 1 large red onion, sliced very thin
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 1 cup pomegranate juice
- ¼ cup unfiltered apple cider vinegar
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 teaspoon turmeric
- 1 cup pomegranate seeds (optional)

PREPARATION

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F.
2. Place the salmon in a pan just large enough to accommodate the fish in one layer.
3. Scatter the onions on top and on the sides of the fish. Mix the oil, juice, vinegar, tomato paste, salt, pepper, and turmeric in a bowl, and pour over the fish.
4. Cook about 20 minutes, or a tiny bit more until the fish flakes easily and the liquid thickens. Serve hot or at room temperature. Garnish with pomegranate seeds (optional).

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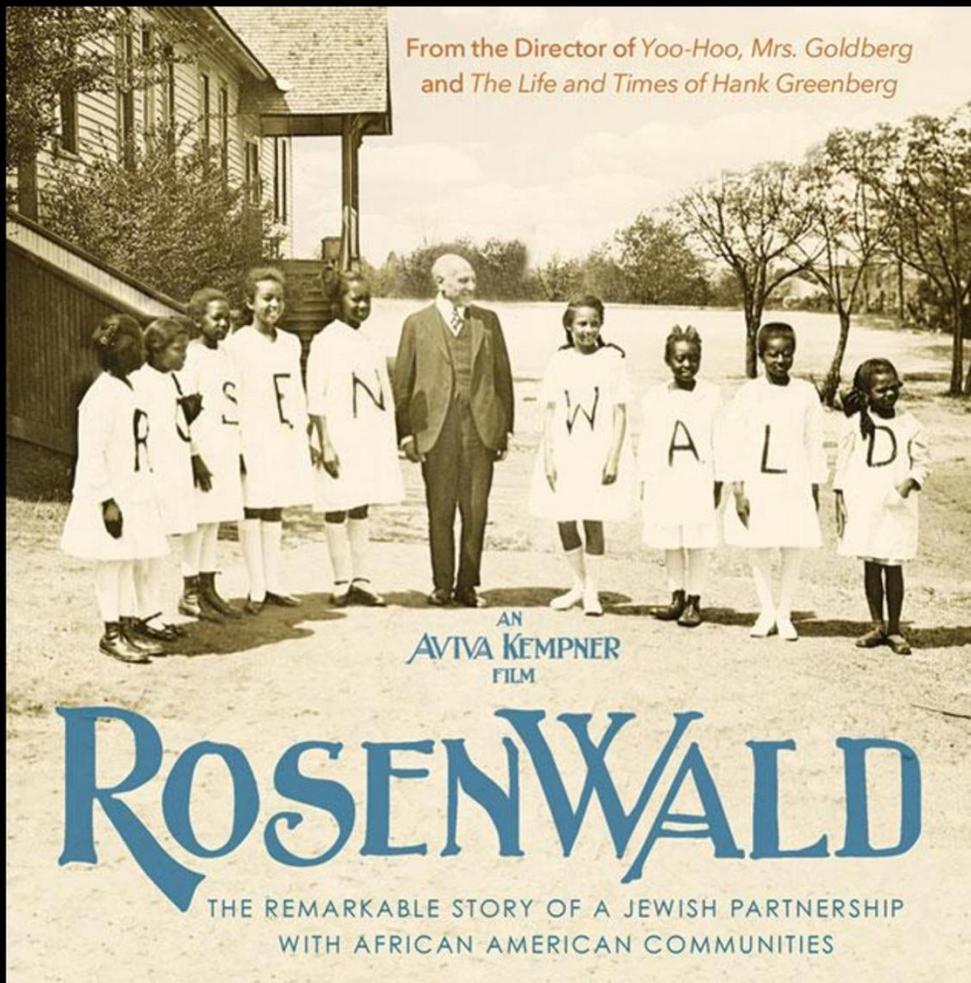
The remarkable story of a unique American Jewish philanthropist

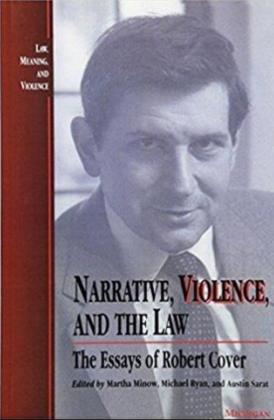
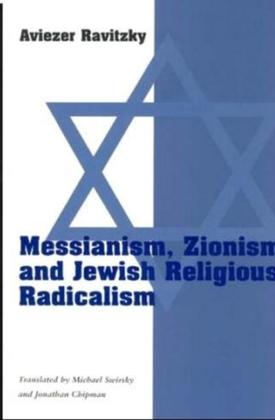
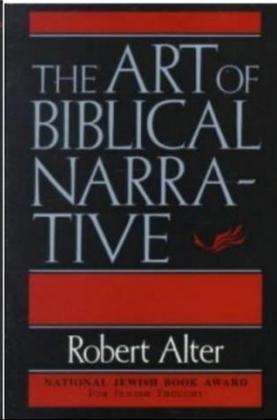
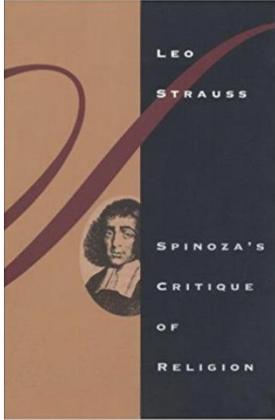
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Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

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8:00 PM

Admission is Free of Charge



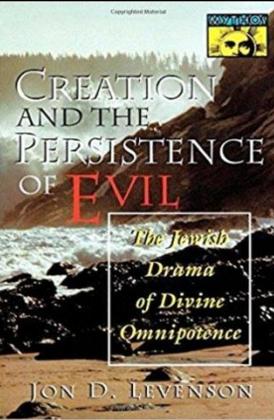


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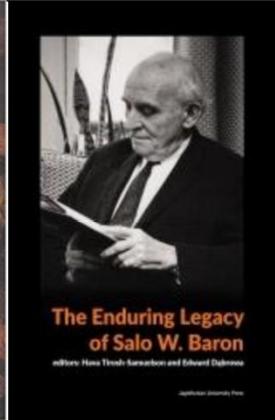
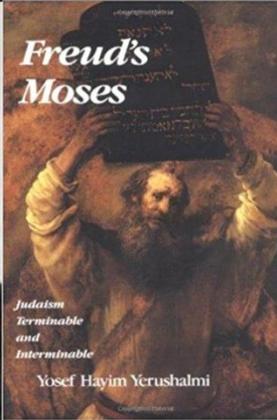
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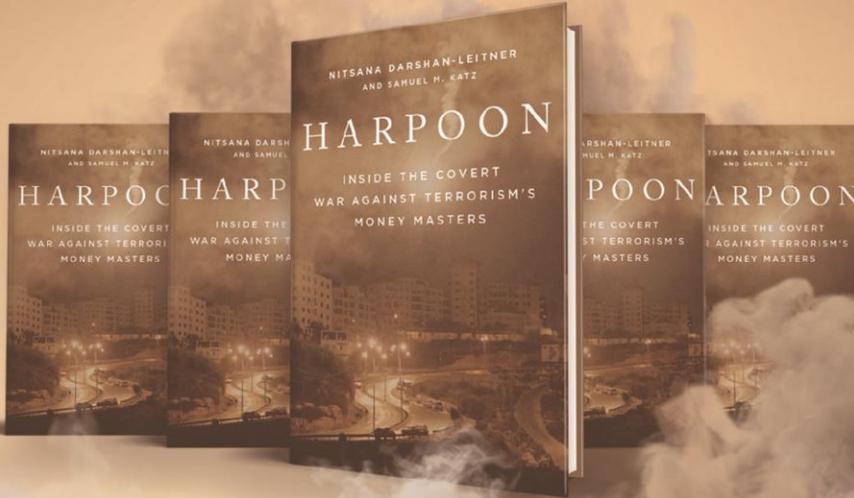
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MEET THE AUTHOR

Nitsana Darshan-Leitner is an Israel activist and human rights attorney. As the president of Shurat HaDin — Israel Law Center, she has represented hundreds of terror victims in lawsuits worldwide.

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JANUARY 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 14th of Tevet, 5778 New Year's Brunch	2 15th of Tevet, 5778 Mah Jonng	3 16th of Tevet, 5778 4:00 Hebrew 5:30 Hebrew 2 7:30 Masterworks of Jewish Scholarship	4 17th of Tevet, 5778	5 18th of Tevet, 5778 4:25p Candle lighting 6:00 pm Kabbalat Shabbat Services	6 19th of Tevet, 5778 Parashat Shemot 5:34p Havdalah (50 min) 9:00 AM Shabbat Services
7 20th of Tevet, 5778	8 21st of Tevet, 5778	9 22nd of Tevet, 5778 Mah Jonng Board of Trustees	10 23rd of Tevet, 5778 4:00 Hebrew 5:30 Hebrew 2 7:30 Masterworks of Jewish Scholarship	11 24th of Tevet, 5778	12 25th of Tevet, 5778 4:32p Candle lighting 6:00 pm Kabbalat Shabbat Services Italian Shabbat Dinner	13 26th of Tevet, 5778 Parashat Vaera 5:41p Havdalah (50 min) 9:00 AM Shabbat Services
14 27th of Tevet, 5778	15 28th of Tevet, 5778 Martin Luther King Day "Rosenwald" 8:00 PM	16 29th of Tevet, 5778 Mah Jonng	17 1st of Sh'vat, 5778 Rosh Chodesh Sh'vat 4:00 Hebrew 5:30 Hebrew 2 7:30 Masterworks of Jewish Scholarship	18 2nd of Sh'vat, 5778	19 3rd of Sh'vat, 5778 4:40p Candle lighting 6:00 pm Kabbalat Shabbat Services	20 4th of Sh'vat, 5778 Parashat Bo 5:49p Havdalah (50 min) 9:00 AM Shabbat Services
21 5th of Sh'vat, 5778	22 6th of Sh'vat, 5778 7:45 PM – Nitzana Darshan-Leitner at Chabad Upper East Side	23 7th of Sh'vat, 5778 Mah Jonng	24 8th of Sh'vat, 5778 4:00 Hebrew 5:30 Hebrew 2 7:30 Masterworks of Jewish Scholarship	25 9th of Sh'vat, 5778 Movie: "The Life and Times of Hank Greenberg" 7:30 PM	26 10th of Sh'vat, 5778 4:48p Candle lighting 6:00 pm Kabbalat Shabbat Services	27 11th of Sh'vat, 5778 Parashat Beshalach 5:58p Havdalah (50 min) 9:00 AM Shabbat Services
28 12th of Sh'vat, 5778	29 13th of Sh'vat, 5778	30 14th of Sh'vat, 5778 Mah Jonng Tu B'Shevat Seder 7:30 PM	31 15th of Sh'vat, 5778 Tu B'Shvat 4:00 Hebrew 5:30 Hebrew 2 7:30 Masterworks of Jewish Scholarship 7:00 PM Israel Committee Meeting			