

# 26th Annual Conference of the Western Jewish Studies Association



March 27–28, 2022

University of Oklahoma, Norman Campus



Hosted by:



DODGE FAMILY COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES  
**THE SCHUSTERMAN CENTER  
FOR JUDAIC & ISRAEL STUDIES**  
*The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA*



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# Conference Schedule

## Sunday, March 27th

8:00 AM | Registration Check-In, Thurman J. White Forum Building

9:00-10:30 AM | Session One, Thurman J. White Forum Building

10:45 AM-12:15 PM | Session Two, Thurman J. White Forum Building

12:30-2:00 PM | Lunch, Thurman J. White Forum Building

2:15-3:45 PM | Session Three, Thurman J. White Forum Building

4:00-5:30 PM | Session Four, Thurman J. White Forum Building

6:00-8:30 PM | Dinner and Keynote Lecture with Andrew Porwancher, Headington Hall

## Monday, March 28

9:00-10:30 AM | Session Five, Thurman J. White Forum Building

10:45 AM-12:15 PM | Session Six, Thurman J. White Forum Building

12:30-2:00 PM | Plenary Lunch with Jill Hicks-Keeton, Thurman J. White Forum Building

2:15-3:45 PM | Session Seven, Thurman J. White Forum Building

4:00-5:30 PM | Session Eight, Thurman J. White Forum Building

## **1.1 FORUM B-1**

### **AMERICAN INFLUENCES ON ISRAEL**

**Chair: Sam Lehman-Wilzig (Bar-Ilan University)**

#### **From Manhattan to Modiin: Suburbia in Israel**

Jacob Jeffrey (University of Oklahoma)

#### **Homeland run: Israeli baseball and American transmigrants**

Amir Segal (Hebrew University)

## **1.2 FORUM B-2**

### **JEWISH DIVORCE AND THE COURTS: RELIGIOUS AND CIVIL RESPONSES**

**Chair: Haim Sperber (Western Galilee College)**

#### **If These Walls Could Talk: Stories from Canadian Batei Din**

Deidre Butler (Carleton University)

Betina Appel Kuzmarov (Carleton University)

#### **Criminal Prosecution for Exercising “Coercive Control”: Assessing A New Tactic in Agunah Advocacy**

Lisa Fishbayn Joffe (Brandeis University)

#### **Trying to Repair a Patriarchal Legal Regime: Reinterpretation, Performance, and Code Switching**

Susan Weiss (Center for Women’s Justice)

## **1.3 FORUM B-3**

### **THE RENAISSANCE OF JEWISH LIFE IN GERMANY TODAY – CULTURE, POLITICS AND IDENTITIES**

**Chair: Armin Langer (Brandeis University)**

#### **Sex and Berlin: Female Jewish Israeli Immigrants Between Heteronormativity and Singlehood**

Hadas Cohen (University of Oklahoma)

#### **Gender, migration, wishes and expectations: Aspects of Gendering Jewish Israeli Migration to Germany**

Dani Kranz (Ben Gurion University)

#### **Jewish Musical Heritage in Germany after 1945: Between Individual Need and Socio-Political Necessity**

Sarah Ross (Hanover University of Music, Drama and Media)

## **2.1 FORUM B-1**

### **FROM MAIMONIDES TO ADORNO**

**Chair: Kenneth Seeskin (Northwestern University)**

#### **Maimonides' Mentors**

Aaron Adler (Harvard University)

#### **Virtue Ethics in the Thought of Nahmanides**

Jonathan Jacobs (Bar-Ilan University)

#### **Out of Orbit: Adorno, Maimonides, and the Critique of Astrology**

Benjamin Fisher (University of California-Davis)

## **2.2 FORUM B-2**

### **COMPARATIVE APPROACHES TO THE HOLOCAUST**

**Chair: Stephen Norwood (University of Oklahoma)**

#### **Men and Women in the Concentration Camp: A Comparative Analysis of the Concentration Camps Dachau and Ravensbrück**

Michael Powell (University of Oklahoma)

#### **Rothberg's Concept of Multidirectional Memory and Its Limits: The Second Historian's Debate in Germany**

Elke Heckner (University of Iowa)

#### **Sexualized Violence and Sadism: A Reflection on the Holocaust and the Former Yugoslavia**

Timothy Pytell (California State University-San Bernardino)

## **2.3 FORUM B-3**

### **PALESTINE AND ISRAEL IN REGIONAL AND WORLD POLITICS**

**Chair: Hadas Cohen (University of Oklahoma)**

#### **Gertrude Bell and the Question of Palestine: Schemes and Realities**

Liora Lukitz (Independent Scholar)

#### **Israel and Pakistan, the Only Islamic Nation that has Nuclear Weapons**

Joseph Hodes (Texas Tech University)

## FORUM CONFERENCE ROOM B

### WELCOME FROM THE SCHUSTERMAN CENTER FOR JUDAIC AND ISRAEL STUDIES

#### Remarks from Director Alan Levenson



**Alan Levenson** holds the Schusterman/Josey Chair in Judaic History and has served as Director of the Center since 2015. He has written extensively on the Jewish experience for both scholarly and popular audiences. He has won a number of prestigious fellowships, including an ACLS, and has lectured in the United States, Israel and Germany.

### HONORING WJSA FOUNDING MEMBER

#### Tribute in Honor of Jody Myers Upon Her Retirement



**Jody Myers** served as a Professor of Religious Studies and director of the Jewish Studies Interdisciplinary Program at California State University until her retirement last year. She specializes in modern Jewish religious thought and expression and has authored *Seeking Zion: Modernity and Messianic Activism in the Writings of Tsevi Hirsch Kalischer* (Littman Library, 2004), and *Kabbalah and the Spiritual Quest: The Kabbalah Center in America* (Praeger, 2007) and the co-editor of *Feasting and Fasting: The History and Ethics of Jewish Food* (NYU Press, 2020). She is a founding member of the Western Jewish Studies Association and has served on its Executive Board since it was founded in 1995.

### AWARD PRESENTATION

#### 2022 Baron Award for Best Graduate Paper



The Baron Award honors the best graduate student paper presented at the conference. The award is named in honor of the founder and president of the WJSA, **Lawrence Baron**. Baron held the Nasatir Chair of Modern Jewish History at San Diego State University from 1988 until 2012 and directed its Jewish Studies Program until 2006. He received his Ph.D. in modern European cultural and intellectual history from the University of Wisconsin where he studied with George L. Mosse. He taught at St. Lawrence University from 1975 until 1988.

### **3.1 FORUM B-1**

#### **IRISH-JEWISH RELATIONS**

**Chair: Aidan Beatty (University of Pittsburgh)**

**Irish-Jewish Movie Couples: The Evolution of an American Trope**

Laurie Baron (San Diego State University)

**'Old Enemy in New Garb': Theological Representations of Jews in Mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century Ireland**

Sean Gannon (Limerick City and County Library)

**'The most antisemitic country in the world'? Jewish/non-Jewish Relations in the Irish Context**

Natalie Wynn (Trinity College Dublin)

### **3.2 FORUM B-2**

#### **MISHNA AND MIDRASH THEN AND NOW**

**Chair: Seth Ward (University of Wyoming)**

**And By Our Way We Have Concluded - The Stories in Mishna Sukkah II**

Tzachi Cohen (Ono Academic College)

**The Art of Midrash and the Midrash of Art: Kadishman in Oklahoma**

Shmuel Shepkaru (University of Oklahoma)

### **3.3 FORUM B-3**

#### **MODERN JEWISH IDENTITIES**

**Chair: Ronnie Grinberg (University of Oklahoma)**

**Redrawing the Line: Religion and the Public Sphere in the Modern State (Yeshayahu Leibowitz)**

Lilach Ben Zvi (Azrieli Institute of Israel Studies, Concordia University)

**Jewish Identity and Expression: Exploring Various Interpretations of "Jewishness"**

Rachel Lopo (University of Oklahoma)

**B'tzelem: Towards A Transgender Talmud**

Laurence Myers Reese (University of Nevada-Las Vegas)

## **4.1 FORUM B-1**

### **JEWISH REFUGEES, VICTIMS, AND SURVIVORS OF THE HOLOCAUST**

**Chair: David Weinberg (Wayne State University)**

**Voices from the Abyss: Jewish Refugees and the French Internment Camp System**

Meredith Scott (United States Air Force Academy)

**Beyond Europe: North African Jewish Communities and the Holocaust**

William Kaiser (West Chester University of Pennsylvania)

**Following the Clues – Child Survivors of Transnistria in Wartime Photographs**

Ionela Dascalu (US Holocaust Memorial Museum)

## **4.2 FORUM B-2**

### **WERE THE EARLY JEWISH SETTLERS IN THE MIDWEST AND WEST COLONIZERS OR PIONEERS?"**

**Chair: Ava Kahn (Independent Scholar)**

**Oh (no!) Pioneers: Rethinking Western Jewish Settlement**

Ellen Eisenberg (Willamette University)

**Sod Houses on Sacred Ground: The Jewish and Black Exodus to Kansas**

Jeannette Gabriel (University of Nebraska-Omaha)

**Midwestern Jewish Traders: Opportunists and Reluctant Settlers**

Mara W. Cohen Ioannides (Missouri State University)

## **4.3 FORUM B-3**

### **DIRECTION AND INTENTION: JEWS WHO DANCE, JEWS THAT MOVE**

**Chair: Philip Szporer (Concordia University)**

**Embodying Jewish Spaces: Collective Movement at KlezKanada and Yiddish New York**

Avia Moore (York University)

**Dancing Between Hope and Despair: Unsettling Canada through Jewish and Intercultural Performance**

Elan Marchinko (York University)

**From Victimized to Victorious: Yehudit Arnon's Zionist Dances in Post-War Hungary**

Gdalit Neuman (York University)



**HEADINGTON HALL SIXTH FLOOR**

**WELCOME FROM THE DODGE FAMILY COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES**

**Remarks from Dean David Wrobel**



**David Wrobel** serves as the dean of the Schusterman Center's home college, the Dodge Family College of Arts and Sciences and holds the Merrick Chair of Western American History. In 2015, he received the OU Dodge Family College of Arts and Sciences Holden Award for Teaching Excellence. Wrobel has received numerous research fellowships, including from the Huntington Library, the Newberry Library and the American Philosophical Society. He was the inaugural recipient of the David L. Boren Professorship, one of the most prestigious honors at OU, created to recognize scholars "whose excellence in teaching and research makes a positive difference in public affairs and civic life."

**KEYNOTE LECTURE**

**The Jewish World of Alexander Hamilton**

Andrew Porwancher (University of Oklahoma)

This lecture debunks myths about this founder's origins to arrive at a startling conclusion: Hamilton was, in all likelihood, raised Jewish in the Caribbean. While he did not identify as a Jew in his American adulthood, Hamilton formed important ties to the Jewish community in the United States. As the egalitarian promise of the revolution collided with the enduring reality of antisemitism, Hamilton envisioned a republic where Jew and Gentile would stand upon an equality.



**Andrew Porwancher** is the Wick Cary Associate Professor in the Department of Classics & Letters at the University of Oklahoma and an associated faculty member of the Schusterman Center for Judaic & Israel Studies. This year he is serving as the Ernest May Fellow at Harvard University's Belfer Center. He previously held fellowships at Princeton and Oxford.

## **5.1 FORUM B-1**

### **THE REBIRTH OF HEBREW**

**Chair: Ori Kritz (University of Oklahoma)**

**Eliezer Ben Yehuda, the Father of the Hebrew Mother tongue**

Shoshana Elharar (York University)

**The Representation of Jewish Languages on Screen: The Man Who Loved in Hebrew**

Yvonne Kozlovsky Golan (University of Haifa)

**From Haskalah to Zionism in Two Decades: Sarah Feiga Foner, the First Hebrew Woman Writer**

Michal Fram Cohen (Open University of Israel)

## **5.2 FORUM B-2**

### **PARALLELS AND DUPLICATIONS IN TALMUDIC REDACTION AND TRANSMISSION**

**Chair: Hallel Baitner (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)**

**Replication in Talmudic Texts: The Oath of Testimony and the Oath of Deposit**

Shlomo Zemach (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

**Duplication and Creation in Amoraic Literary Work**

Ella Tovia (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

**Pointless Text – A Chapter in the Textual Tradition of Talmud Yerushalmi**

Elyashiv Cherlow (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

## **5.3 FORUM B-3**

### **LATINX AND JEWISH: IDENTITY, MIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP IN THE SEPHARDIC DIASPORA**

**Chair: Nora Glickman (Queens College, C.U.N.Y.)**

**Hispanic Jewish Consumer Identity from Religious Oppression to Degrees of Commitment**

Ruth Chavez (Metropolitan State University of Denver)

Seth Ward (University of Wyoming)

**Sephardic Strategies to Survive from the Expulsion to Securing Spanish Citizenship**

Roger Martinez-Davila (University of Colorado-Colorado Springs)

**The Conversos' Return Home: Modern Trends in Latin America, Spain, and Israel**

Rebecca Wartell (University of Colorado-Boulder)

## 5.4 FORUM B-4

### **UKRAINIAN JEWISH HISTORY UNDER THE SOVIETS AND THE GERMANS**

**Chair: Victoria Khiterer (Millersville University)**

**Jewish Party Politics in a Time of Catastrophe: Podolia, Ukraine, 1918-1920**

Michael Nutkiewicz (Independent Scholar)

**Fight for survival: Jewish women artisans in the early Soviet Ukraine**

Tatiana Perga (National Academy of Science of Ukraine)

**Survivors of the Purges: Yiddish Literati of Soviet Belarus and Soviet Ukraine and Their Wartime Narratives**

Jeff Koerber (Chapman University)

## **6.1 FORUM B-1**

### **COMPARATIVE JEWISH LAW**

**Chair: Shmuel Shepkaru (University of Oklahoma)**

#### **The Complexities of Freedom in Ancient Greek and Jewish Manumission Practices**

Javal Colman (University of Texas-Austin)

#### **The Laws of Justice in Judgment: Medieval Adjudication between Judaism and Islam**

Neri Ariel (Ben Gurion University of the Negev)

#### **What Would Lauterpracht Do? The Oklahoma Save Our State Amendment**

Itai Apter (American University)

## **6.2 FORUM B-2**

### **ZIONIST LEADERS AND WRITERS**

**Chair: Yvonne Kozlovsky Golan (University of Haifa)**

#### **Deconstructing and Reconstructing the Myth of Ze'ev Jabotinsky as Israel's Founding Father**

Ofira Gruweis Kovalsky (Zefat Academic College)

#### **Palmach and the War of Independence According to Netiva Ben-Yehuda**

Ori Kritz (University of Oklahoma)

#### **Golda Meir-The Israeli Iron Lady**

Orit Miller Katav (Ariel University)

## **6.3 FORUM B-3**

### **THE USES AND ABUSES OF DIGITAL JEWISH HISTORY**

**Chair: Lucas Wilson (Florida Atlantic University)**

#### **Victorian Jews in the Digital Age**

Lindsay Katzir (Langston University)

Brandon Katzir (Oklahoma State University)

#### **How A Handful of Wikipedia Editors Distort Holocaust History**

Shira Klein (Chapman University)

#### **eva.stories – A case study of Holocaust Commemoration on Instagram**

Liat Steir-Livny (Sapir Academic College)

**FORUM CONFERENCE ROOM B**

**WELCOME FROM THE OFFICE OF THE SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AND PROVOST**

**Remarks from Senior Vice President and Provost André-Denis Wright**



**André-Denis Wright** is a microbiologist and has served as the Senior Vice President and Provost of the University of Oklahoma since 2021. He has published 114 peer-reviewed papers, contributed 18 book chapters, presented 100 conference papers, and delivered 34 plenary lectures in 10 countries. Dr. Wright has served on review panels for the USDA, NSF, and NASA. He has also served as an external scientific reviewer for the governments of Canada, Russia, Kazakhstan, Scotland, and Switzerland, and in 2008, he had a ciliated protozoan named after him, *Apokeronopsis wrighti*, in recognition of his contributions to microbiology.

**PLENARY LECTURE**

**The Museum of the Bible and the Politics of Interpretation**

Jill Hicks-Keeton (University of Oklahoma)

The Museum of the Bible was founded in 2017 in Washington D.C. Although it claims it is nonsectarian, apolitical, and does not proselytize, members of its board of directors are required to sign a “faith statement” regarding the truth of the Bible. This lecture will discuss the politics of its interpretation of scripture.



**Jill Hicks-Keeton** is Associate Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Oklahoma and an associated faculty member of the Schusterman Center for Judaic & Israel Studies. Her first book, *Arguing with Aseneth: Gentile Access to Israel’s Living God in Jewish Antiquity*, was awarded the 2020 Lautenschlaeger Award for Theological Promise. Hicks-Keeton was a 2018 recipient of the Society of Biblical Literature Regional Scholar Award.

## **7.1 FORUM B-1**

### **EARLY MODERN EUROPEAN JEWS AND JUDAISM**

**Chair: Amy Shevitz (Loyola University Chicago)**

**Jews, the Holy Language and the Sixteenth-Century Polyglot Bibles**

Luis Cortest (University of Oklahoma)

**The History of Sephardi Friendship in Early Modern Amsterdam (1650-1720)**

Shai Zamir (University of Michigan)

**Secularization vs. Religious Pluralism – The Jewish Naturalization Act of 1753**

Julia Pohlmann (University of Aberdeen)

## **7.2 FORUM B-2**

### **WESTERN JEWISH HISTORY**

**Chair: Ellen Eisenberg (Willamette University)**

**Hebrew in Harlingen: The Hidden History of Jews in the Rio Grande Valley**

Gabrielle Lyle (Texas A & M University)

**Jews on the Prairie: Agricultural Movements and the American Dream**

Naomi Sandweiss (Arizona State University)

**The “common clay of the new West”: Frontier Cosmopolitics in Mel Brooks’**

*Blazing Saddles*

David J. Peterson (University of Nebraska at Omaha)

Joan Latchaw (University of Nebraska at Omaha)

## **7.3 FORUM B-3**

### **NEW DIRECTIONS IN SEPHARDIC STUDIES**

**Chair: Misha Klein (University of Oklahoma)**

**Limpieza de Sangre in the Americas**

Tanja Zakrzewski (University of Potsdam)

**The Sephardic Mystique 2.0: Root-seeking, Identity, and Spanish Citizenship**

Kaylee Maxey (University of Oklahoma)

**Iberian Sephardic History and Jewish Studies in the 21st Century**

Carsten Schapkow (University of Oklahoma)

## 7.4 FORUM B-4

### **THE HOLOCAUST IN FILM**

**Chair: Laurie Baron (San Diego State University)**

**1940: *Jud Süß* and the Toil of the Anonymous Dead**

Joel Rosenberg (Tufts University)

**Norway's Holocaust Movie: *Betrayed* and the Enigma of Knut Rød**

Paul R. Bartrop (Florida Gulf Coast University)

***Commandment 613: A Different Kind of Holocaust Film and Holocaust Memorial***

Miriam Lewin (Filmmaker)

## **8.1 FORUM B-1**

### **HOLOCAUST MEMORY IN GERMANY, POLAND, AND UKRAINE**

**Chair: Janet Ward (University of Oklahoma)**

**“But this righteous anger of ours, this terrible bitterness, does not prevent us from appreciating every expression of righteousness, every active manifestation of compassion”:** Early Postwar Jewish Press on Poles’ Attitudes During the Holocaust

Alicja Podbielska (Yale University)

**The 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Babi Yar Massacre and the Creation of the Babi Yar Holocaust Memorial Museum in Kiev, Ukraine**

Victoria Khiterer (Millersville University)

## **8.2 FORUM B-2**

### **JEWISH INSTITUTIONS: HOSPITALS AND ORPHANAGES**

**Chair: Hanita Kosher (Haruv USA, University of Oklahoma - Tulsa)**

**Medical Science and the Angel of Death in the Thought of Yeḳutiel Yehudah Halberstam of Tsanz-Klauzenberg**

Cody Bahir (Kehillah Jewish High School)

**From Orphans to Children: The Transformation of an American Jewish Orphanage**

Sean Martin (Western Reserve Historical Society)



**The Schusterman Center for Judaic and Israel Studies  
Would Like to Offer Very Special Thanks To:**

**Laurie Baron (Western Jewish Studies Association)**

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**Tryce Hyman (OU Schusterman Center)**

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# ABOUT THE SCHUSTERMAN CENTER

The Schusterman Center for Judaic and Israel Studies at the University of Oklahoma began as the *Schusterman/ Josey Judaic Studies Program* with the establishment of the Schusterman/Josey Chair of Judaic History and the coming of Noam and Yedida Stillman to OU in 1995. From that modest beginning, Shmuel Shepkaru joined the program in 1997, and a Judaic Studies minor was established shortly thereafter. Ori Kritz arrived in 2003, enabling the establishment of a Hebrew minor in 2005. Carsten Schapkow joined the faculty in 2005 as well.

In 2007, the program expanded to become the *Schusterman Program in Judaic and Israel Studies*, including the establishment of a Judaic Studies Bachelor of Arts in 2008 and the creation of the endowed positions of Schusterman/Josey Professor of Jewish Intellectual & Religious History, initially held by Alan Levenson, and the

Schusterman Chair of Modern Israel Studies.

In 2014, the program expanded again, becoming a center and gaining its present title. Rhona Seidelman filled the Schusterman Chair in Modern Israel Studies in 2015.

That same year also saw the retirement of founding director Noam Stillman and the addition of Ronnie Grinberg

in American Jewish History. In 2019 the center successfully established a Judaic/Israel History major field for the History Master of Arts program, as well as the *Schusterman Center Graduate Fellowship in Judaic/ Israel History*, which welcomed its first cohort of four M.A. Fellows in fall 2020.



Charles and Lynn Schusterman, circa 1997.



Noam Stillman delivers a JuSt Lunch, circa 1997.

# CORE FACULTY



**Alan Levenson**

Professor | Schusterman/  
Josey Chair in Judaic  
Studies



**Shmuel Shepkaru**

Associate Professor |  
Schusterman Professor  
of Jewish Intellectual and  
Religious History



**Ori Kritz**

Professor of Hebrew and  
Jewish Literature | Head of  
the Hebrew Program



**Carsten Schapkow**

Associate Professor | L.R.  
Brammer Jr. Presidential  
Professor in History



**Ronnie Grinberg**

Assistant Professor |  
American Jewish History &  
Gender Studies



**Rhona Seidelman**

Assistant Professor |  
Schusterman Chair of  
Modern Israel Studies

# ASSOCIATED FACULTY

**Benjamin Alpers**  
Associate Professor  
Honors College

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**Kaleigh Bangor**  
German Language  
Program Coordinator

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**David Chappell**  
Rothbaum Professor of  
Modern American History

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**Rangar Cline**  
Assistant Professor of  
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**Luis Cortes**  
Professor of Spanish

**Lee Green-Hall**  
Religious Studies

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**Jill Hicks-Keeton**  
Assistant Professor of  
Religious Studies

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**Misha Klein**  
Associate Professor of  
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Associate Professor of  
Classics and Letters

**Nina Livesey**

Associate Professor of  
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Literacy

**Stephen Norwood**  
Professor of History

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**William Henry McDonald**  
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**Andrew Porwancher**  
Wick Cary Associate  
Professor in Classics and  
Letters

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**Tyson Putthoff**  
Lecturer | Hebrew Bible

**Karin Schutjer**  
Professor of German  
Studies

**Daniel Simon**  
Director/Editor-in-Chief of  
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**Janet Ward**  
Professor of History  
L.R. Brammer Jr.  
Presidential

Professor in History  
Senior Associate Vice  
President for Research &  
Partnerships

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**Robb Young**  
Lecturer | Religious Studies



Western Jewish Studies Association



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