

The Modern Library – UM’s Jewish Heritage Collection
as a Model of Innovation and Integration

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Description: When one thinks of a library, the typical image is of a collection of books and serials. Today, the image might also include electronic resources and digitized materials. The Jewish Heritage Collection (JHC) at the University of Michigan expands these boundaries even further. The JHC is a unique assemblage of books, ephemera, archival materials, and objects that relate to the Jewish experience. By including objects, the JHC expands the definition of a “library” into worlds previously dominated by museums and cultural institutions. However, unlike these institutions, libraries pride themselves on accessibility to researchers, scholars, and the public at large. This allows the collection to be utilized rather than just displayed and also gives those involved with the collection an opportunity to look to the future in new and innovative ways. The JHC is an example of an immersive collection, a collection in which all five senses are served and researchers are given the opportunity to interact with more than just texts related to their subject.

Arielle I. Sokol earned a BA in History at the University of Denver and a MSI at the University of Michigan where she has been working with Judaica for several years. Arielle has a passion for teaching and making information interactive and accessible. She is a lifelong musician and loves to help with her local community, especially with the organization of Yiddish and book-themed events.