

FRESH LIT: RECENT & FORTHCOMING ADULT JEWISH FICTION

Description: How can you keep up with all the Jewish fiction published in a year? Come hear from the members of the AJL Fiction Award committee (**Rosalind Reisner**, **Merrily Hart**, **Rachel Kamin**, **Laura Schutzman** & **Sheryl Stahl**) and meet the 2020 AJL Fiction Award Winner **Goldie Goldbloom**, author of *On Division* and **Julie Orringer**, Honor Award Winner, for *The Flight Portfolio*.

Rosalind Reisner is a former librarian, author of *Jewish American Literature: A Guide to Reading Interests*, which won the AJL Reference Award in 2004. She was a member of the first Sophie Brody Medal committee and chaired the reading committee of Great Group Reads for six years. Rosalind speaks and writes about Jewish literature and Readers' Advisory services.

Merrily F. Hart served as librarian at the Laura and Alvin Siegel College of Judaic Studies for over fifteen years. She served AJL as an officer of the SSC Division, member of the AJL Board, Chair of the Sydney Taylor Book Award Committee, and editor of the Adult review section of *AJL News and Reviews* (2007-2011). Merrily was the editor for several versions of the AJL publication *Creating a Collection: A Resource Booklist for a Beginning Judaic Library* (5th ed. 2008). AJL honored her with a Life Membership. She is currently a member of the AJL Fiction Award Committee.

Rachel Kamin has been a synagogue librarian for over twenty years and has worked as the Director of the Joseph and Mae Gray Cultural & Learning Center at North Suburban Synagogue Beth El in Highland Park, IL since 2008. She contributes articles and book reviews to *BookLinks*, *School Library Journal*, *Jewish Book World*, *Judaica Librarianship*, *Library Journal* and *AJL Reviews*. Rachel facilitates the Sisterhood Book Club at NSS Beth El and also leads book discussions at several synagogues and organizations across the Chicago area. She is currently a member of the AJL Fiction Award Committee and the co-chair of the 2020 AJL Conference.

Laura Schutzman has been the librarian at the Hebrew Academy of Nassau County in Uniondale, NY for the past eight years. She has been a member of the AJL Council as Publications Chair since 2016. She also writes for the *AJL Reviews*. Laura holds a BA in Judaic studies and music from Yeshiva University and an MLIS from Pratt Institute. She has been a member of the AJL Jewish Fiction Award for the last year and will be taking over as committee chair in June 2020.

Sheryl Stahl is the Director of the Frances-Henry Library at the Los Angeles Campus of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. She is an active member of AJL and has served two terms each as Vice President of Membership and as Treasurer. Sheryl currently serves as the AJL webmaster. This past year, she presented a webinar on behalf of AJL and ALA on cataloging Jewish sacred texts and another on cataloging Jewish history. Sheryl is currently a member of the AJL Fiction Award Committee.

Goldie Goldbloom was born in Western Australia. Her first novel, *The Paperbark Shoe*, won the Association of Writers and Writing Programs Award for Fiction, the Literary Novel of the Year from ForeWord Magazine, and was placed on the National Endowment for the Arts "Big Read" list. Her new novel, *On Division*, is the 2020 AJL Fiction Award Winner and was chosen to be San Francisco's One Bay One Book selection for 2019-2020. Goldie is an activist working on behalf of queer Orthodox Jews and the creator of the international blog, Frum Gay Girl, where she interviews Orthodox LGBTQ Jews and their allies. The mother of eight children, she lives in Chicago and teaches at the University of Chicago and Northwestern University.

Julie Orringer is the author of two award-winning books: *The Invisible Bridge*, a *New York Times* bestselling novel, and *How to Breathe Underwater*, a collection of stories; her new novel, *The Flight Portfolio*, tells the story of Varian Fry, the New York journalist who went to Marseille in 1940 to save writers and artists blacklisted by the Gestapo. All her work has been published by Alfred A. Knopf, and her books have been translated into twenty languages.