

RACHEL B. GROSS

Department of Jewish Studies
San Francisco State University

1600 Holloway Avenue
San Francisco, California 94132

rbgross@sfsu.edu
(571) 275-4068

EDUCATION

- Ph.D. Princeton University, Religion, 2014.
M.A. Princeton University, Religion, 2011.
M.A. University of Virginia, Religious Studies, 2008.
B.A. University of Virginia, Jewish Studies, 2007.

PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

- 2022–present Associate Professor, John and Marcia Goldman Chair in American Jewish Studies, Department of Jewish Studies, San Francisco State University.
2016–2022 Assistant Professor, John and Marcia Goldman Chair in American Jewish Studies, Department of Jewish Studies, San Francisco State University.
2014–2016 Visiting Assistant Professor of Judaic Studies, Department of Religion and Culture, Virginia Tech.

FELLOWSHIPS & HONORS

- Spring 2023 Scholar in Residence, Hadassah-Brandeis Institute, Brandeis University.
2022 Research Award, Hadassah-Brandeis Institute, Brandeis University.
2018 Presidential Award for Professional Development of Probationary Faculty, San Francisco State University.
2016–2017 Young Scholars in American Religion Program, Center for the Study of Religion and Culture, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis.
2014 Summer fellowship, Feinstein Center for American Jewish History, Temple University.
2013–2014 Dissertation Completion Fellowship in American Religion and Politics, John C. Danforth Center on Religion and Politics, Washington University in St. Louis.
2012–2013 Berman Foundation Dissertation Fellowship for the Social Scientific Study of the Contemporary American Jewish Community, Association for Jewish Studies.
2008–2013 Fellowship, Program in Judaic Studies, Princeton University.
2007 Lily Safra Summer Internship, Hadassah-Brandeis Institute, Brandeis University.

PUBLICATIONS

Books

In progress: *Wanderings of the Spirit: Mary Antin's American Religious Adventures*.

Beyond the Synagogue: Jewish Nostalgia as Religious Practice. New York: New York University Press, 2021.

Finalist, 2021 National Jewish Book Award in American Jewish Studies, awarded by the Jewish Book Council.

Honorable mention, 2021 Saul Viener Book Prize, awarded by the American Jewish Historical Society.

Articles, Book Chapters, and Exhibits

"Can You Tell If You're Jewish from Your DNA?" In *Judaism in Five Minutes*, edited by Sarah Imhoff. Equinox Publishing, 2025.

"Lived Religion and Contemporary U.S. Jews." In *The Princeton Companion to Jewish Studies*, edited by Leora Batnitzky, Eve Krakowski, and Steven Weitzman. Princeton University Press, 2025.

Co-curator, *Next Generations: Turning the Page* exhibition. Jewish Museum of Maryland, Baltimore. Opened February 2, 2025.

"Friends Are the Cream of Life: Mary Antin and Jessie Sampter's Religious Creativity." Co-authored with Sarah Imhoff. *Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation* 33, no. 3 (February 2025): 354–384.

"Rebecca Rubin: American Girl and American Jewish Heritage." In *American Contact: Intercultural Encounter and the Boundaries of Book History*, edited by Rhae Lynn Barnes and Glenda Goodman. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2024.

"American Religion at The Met Cloisters." *Material Religion: The Journal of Objects, Art, and Belief* 18, no. 4 (2022): 459–484.

"Feeling Jewish: Nostalgia and American Jewish Religion." *CrossCurrents* 71, no. 1 (April 2021): 19–33.

"Jews, Schmaltz, and Crisco in the Age of Industrial Food." In *Feasting and Fasting: The History and Ethics of Jewish Food*, edited by Aaron S. Gross, Jody Meyers, and Jordan D. Rosenblum. New York: New York University Press, 2020.

"Table Talk: American Jewish Foodways and the Study of Religion." *Religion Compass* 13, no. 4 (March 2019). <https://doi.org/10.1111/rec3.12297>

"Moving Parts: Contraptions and Jewish Traditions." In *Contraption: Rediscovering California Jewish Artists*, edited by Mark D. Johnson and Renny Pritikin. Munich, Germany: Hirmer Publishers, 2018.

"People of the Picture Book: PJ Library and American Jewish Religion." In *Religion and Popular Culture in America*, third edition, edited by Bruce David Forbes and Jeffrey H. Mahan. Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2017.

"Field Trip to the Kosher Kitchen: Religion and Politics in the University Dining Hall." *Transformations: The Journal of Inclusive Scholarship and Pedagogy* 25, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 2014): 128–137.

“Draydel Salad’: The Serious Business of Jewish Food and Fun in Postwar America.” In *Religion, Food, and Eating in North America*, edited by Benjamin E. Zeller, Marie W. Dallam, Reid L. Neilson, and Nora L. Rubel. New York: Columbia University Press, 2014.

Public Scholarship

“Potato Latkes Really Aren’t That Old. Here’s Their True History.” *J. The Jewish News of Northern California*. 30 December 2024. <https://jweekly.com/2024/12/30/potato-latkes-really-arent-that-old-heres-their-true-history/>

“I Don’t Care What I Am Called’: Mary Antin and the Boundaries of Religious Identity.” *AJS Perspectives: The Magazine of the Association for Jewish Studies* (Winter 2024: The Conversion Issue): 38–40.

“Is American Girl a Religious Authority?” Society for U.S. Intellectual History Blog. 22 November 2021. <https://s-usih.org/2021/11/is-american-girl-a-religious-authority>

“If You’re Asking American Jews If They’re Religious, You Don’t Understand American Jews.” Jewish Telegraphic Agency. 11 May 2021. <https://www.jta.org/2021/05/11/opinion/if-youre-asking-american-jews-if-theyre-religious-you-dont-understand-american-jews-pew>

“Jewish Objects and Jewish Affects: A Conversation,” in conversation with Jodi Eichler-Levine, Laura A. Leibman, and Laura S. Levitt. *CrossCurrents* 71, no. 1 (April 2021): 82–94.

“The Politics of Nostalgia.” *Religion & Politics*. 2 February 2021. <https://religionandpolitics.org/2021/02/02/the-politics-of-nostalgia>

“How Children’s Books Keep the Jewish American Immigrant Story Alive.” *Alma*. 13 January 2021. <https://www.heyalma.com/how-childrens-books-keep-the-jewish-american-immigrant-story-alive/>

“Memory.” In “A Universe of Terms” series, edited by Mona Oraby and Daniel Vaca. *The Immanent Frame: Secularism, Religion, and the Public Sphere*. 29 May 2020. <https://tif.ssrc.org/2020/05/29/memory-gross/>

“Crisco and Jews: A Story ‘4,000 years’ in the Making.” *J. The Jewish News of Northern California*. 2 March 2020. <https://www.jweekly.com/2020/03/02/crisco-and-jews-a-story-4000-years-in-the-making>

“Sexiest Intellectuals’ List Can Be Dangerous for Academics.” Co-authored with Elias Sacks. *The Forward*. 16 December 2019. <https://forward.com/life/436571/sexiest-intellectuals-list-can-be-dangerous-for-academics>

“A Million Matzo Balls.” Co-authored with Jessica Kirzane. *The Yiddish Book Center’s Great Jewish Books Teacher Resources*. 30 March 2018. <http://teachgreatjewishbooks.org/module/million-matzo-balls>

“Jewish Food Does Not Begin and End with Kosher.” Jewish Telegraphic Agency. 15 February 2018. <https://www.jta.org/2018/02/15/news-opinion/opinion/jewish-food-does-not-begin-and-end-with-kosher>

“‘An Unjustified S(ch)mear Campaign’: Narratives of American Jewish Food.” *Stroum Center for Jewish Studies E-Journal*, University of Washington. 16 November 2017. <http://jewishstudies.washington.edu/arts-culture/unjustified-schmear-campaign>

“Is the Statue of Liberty a Jewish Woman?” J. *The Jewish News of Northern California*. 3 July 2017. <http://www.jweekly.com/2017/07/03/is-the-statue-of-liberty-is-a-jewish-woman>

“‘Anne ♥ Peter’ and the Rise of Anne Frank Fan Videos.” *The Forward*, The Sisterhood blog. 17 November 2015. <http://forward.com/sisterhood/324909/anne-peter>

“Who Counts as a Jew?” *Religion & Politics*. 8 October 2013. <http://religionandpolitics.org/2013/10/08/who-counts-as-a-jew>

Literature and Exhibition Reviews

Review of *Religion in Plain View: Public Aesthetics of American Display* by Sally M. Promey. *American Religion*, forthcoming fall 2025.

Review of *Funny, You Don't Look Funny: Judaism and Humor from the Silent Generation to Millennials* by Jennifer Caplan. *American Jewish History* 107, no. 4 (2023): 791–793.

Review of *The Art of the Jewish Family: A History of Women in Early New York in Five Objects* by Laura Arnold Leibman. *Winterthur Portfolio* 56, no. 1 (Spring 2022): 84–86.

“Building Community One Tile at a Time.” Review of *Mahjong: A Chinese Game and the Making of American Culture* by Annelise Heinz. *Moment Magazine* (Summer 2021). <https://momentmag.com/mahjong>

Review of *American JewBu: Jews, Buddhism, and Religious Change* by Emily Sigalow. *Journal of Religious History* 42, no. 1 (March 2021): 161–163.

Review of *Global Jewish Foodways: A History*, edited by Hasia R. Diner and Simone Cinotto. *Journal of Jewish Identities*, 13, no. 2 (2020): 262–264.

Review of *The Life of the Synagogue*, online exhibition curated by Samuel D. Gruber, Sarah Glover, and Amy Lazarus, <http://lifeofthesynagogue.library.cofc.edu>. *Southern Jewish History* 18 (2015).

“Creating the December Dilemma.” Review of *Hanukkah in America: A History* by Dianne Ashton. H-Judaic, H-Net Reviews (February 2015). <https://networks.h-net.org/node/28655/reviews/61247/gross-ashton-hanukkah-america-history>

“Sites of Memory and Life.” Review of *Space and Place in Jewish Studies* by Barbara E. Mann. *Sh'ma* 42, no. 691 (June 2012).

“New Directions in the Study of Prayer: Scientific, Social Scientific, Ethnographic, and Theoretical Perspectives.” Co-authored with Molly Farneth and Allison Youatt Schnable. Princeton: Center for the Study of Religion Working Paper. Princeton University, 2009.

Review of *Feminism and Theology*, eds. Janet Martin Soskice and Diana Lipton. *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 98, no. 4 (Fall 2008).

TEACHING

San Francisco State University

American Jewish History. Department of Jewish Studies. Cross-listed under History.

American Jews and Popular Culture. Department of Jewish Studies. Cross-listed under History and Humanities.

Christmas and Hanukkah in America. Department of Jewish Studies. Cross-listed under American Studies, History, and Religious Studies.

Food Fights: The Politics of American Jewish Consumption, 1654–Present. Department of Jewish Studies. Cross-listed under History.

Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Department of Jewish Studies. Cross-listed under Humanities and Philosophy.

Introduction to Jewish Studies. Department of Jewish Studies.

Introduction to Judaism. Department of Jewish Studies.

Virginia Tech

American Jews and Popular Culture. University Honors Seminar.

Food Fights: Jews and Food from the Bible to Bagels. Department of Religion and Culture.

The Holocaust. Department of Religion and Culture. Cross-listed under History.

Introduction to Jewish History, Culture, and Heritage. Department of Religion and Culture.

Material Culture and Humanities in the Public Sphere. Graduate seminar, Department of Religion and Culture.

Washington University in St. Louis

Food Fights: The Politics of American Jewish Consumption, 1860–2014. Center on Religion and Culture. Cross-listed under Religious Studies, American Culture Studies, and Jewish, Islamic, and Near Eastern Languages and Cultures.

Princeton University

American Places: An Introduction to American Studies. Program in American Studies. Developed and taught with William Gleason and co-assistants in instruction.

Religion and War in America. Assistant in instruction to Kathryn Gin Lum. Department of Religion. Cross-listed under History.

Teaching Certification

2020 Quality Teaching and Learning badge, Online Teaching Lab, Center for Equity and Excellence in Teaching and Learning, San Francisco State University.

2010–2012 Teaching Transcript, McGraw Center for Teaching and Learning, Princeton University.

PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS

Invited Lectures and Conversations

“What Do We Talk About When We Talk about Jewish Food?” Conversation with Adrienne Krone. The Philip and Buriel Berman Center for Jewish Studies, Lehigh University. November 5, 2025.

“A Pickle Problem: The Deli Revival and American Jewish Religion.” Center for Jewish Studies, Eastern Michigan University. January 20, 2025.

“‘I Don’t Care What I Am Called’: Mary Antin and the Boundaries of Religious Identity.” Center for Jewish Studies colloquium, University of Minnesota. 28 March 2024.

“Feeling Jewish: Nostalgia and American Jewish Religion.” Center for Jewish Studies and Department of History, University of Minnesota and Temple Israel, Minneapolis. 27 March 2024.

“Feeling Jewish: Nostalgia and American Jewish Religion.” College of Arts & Letters, College of Social Science, Department of Religious Studies, International Studies & Programs, James Madison College, Office for Institutional Equity, and Residential College in the Arts & Humanities, Michigan State University. 24 January 2024.

“Preaching the Promised Land: Mary Antin’s American Religions.” Hadassah-Brandeis Institute, Brandeis University. 28 March 2023.

“A Pickle Problem: The Deli Revival and American Jewish Religion.” Department of Religion and Culture, Virginia Tech. 21 March 2023.

“Beyond the Synagogue: Jewish Nostalgia as Religious Practice.” Seminar in Modern Jewish Thought, Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies, Oxford University. Online, 9 November 2022.

“Feeling Jewish: Nostalgia and American Jewish Religion.” Program in Jewish Studies, University of Kentucky. Online, 20 October 2022.

“Referendum on the Deli Menu: American Jewish Religion and the Deli Revival.” Jewish Studies Program, California State University, Long Beach. Online, 13 October 2022.

“Feeling Jewish: Nostalgia and American Jewish Religion.” Church History Department, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Online, 16 September 2022.

“Give Us Our Name: Genealogy and American Jewish Religion.” History Department and Neal A. Maxwell Institute, Brigham Young University. 15 September 2022.

Respondent: “From Rachel and David to Maya and Ezra: Trends in American Jewish Personal Names,” presentation of study by Sarah Bunin Benor and Alicia B. Chandler. Jewish Languages Project. Online, 11 September 2022.

“Feeling Jewish: Nostalgia and American Jewish Religion.” Kalamazoo College. 4 May 2022.

“Feeling Jewish: Nostalgia and American Jewish Religion.” Rabbi Hillel Cohn Endowed Lecture on the Contemporary Jewish Experience. California State University, San Bernadino. Online, 9 May 2022.

In conversation with Sarah Imhoff and Lisa Silverman: “The Lives of Jessie Sampter: Queer, Disabled, Zionist.” Sam and Helen Stahl Center for Jewish Studies, University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee. Online, 3 March 2022.

“Feeling Jewish: Nostalgia and American Jewish Religion.” Neilsen Lecture Series in Judaic Studies, The College of Idaho. 28 February 2022.

“Referendum on the Deli Menu: American Jewish Religion and the Deli Revival.” Greenberg Center for Judaic Studies, University of Hartford. Online, 1 November 2021.

“Feeling Jewish: Nostalgia and American Jewish Religion.” Faculty Seminar in Jewish Studies, Emory University. Online, 25 October 2021.

“Feeling Jewish: Nostalgia and American Jewish Religion.” Center for Jewish Studies, The Graduate Center, CUNY. Online, 15 October 2021.

“Feeling Jewish: Nostalgia and American Jewish Religion.” Swig Program in Jewish Studies and Social Justice, University of San Francisco. 5 October 2021.

“Feeling Jewish: A Book Conversation with Professor Rachel B. Gross.” In conversation with Vanessa Ochs. University of Virginia. Online, 1 March 2021.

“Give Us Our Name: Genealogy and American Jewish Religion.” University of Chicago Divinity School Jewish Students Association. Online, 22 February 2021.

“Feeling Jewish: A Book Launch for *Beyond the Synagogue* by Rachel B. Gross.” In conversation with Deena Prichet. SF State Department of Jewish Studies and the Jewish Community Library, San Francisco. Online, 12 January 2021.

“Nostalgia: On Longing for an Imagined Past.” Crown Family Center for Jewish and Israel Studies, Northwestern University. Online, 21 January 2021.

“Referendum on the Deli Menu: American Jewish Nostalgia and the Deli Revival.” Program in Jewish Studies, Rice University. 31 October 2019.

“The Jewish Deli Revival: Buying and Selling American Jewish Nostalgia.” Center for Judaic Studies, Virginia Commonwealth University. 26 November 2018.

“The Jewish Deli Revival: Buying and Selling American Jewish Nostalgia.” The Humanities Institute and the Center for Jewish Studies, University of California, Santa Cruz. 8 November 2018.

“Give Us Our Name: Genealogy and American Jewish Religion.” History Department, University of Utah. 1 November 2018.

“Referendum on the Deli Menu: American Jewish Nostalgia and the Deli Revival.” Haverford College, Pennsylvania. 26 February 2018.

“Referendum on the Deli Menu: American Jewish Nostalgia and the Deli Revival.” Stroum Center for Jewish Studies, University of Washington. 7 December 2017.

“Lost in the Diaspora: Jewish Genealogy and American Jewish Nostalgia.” Bay Area Academic Consortium for Jewish Studies, San Francisco State University. 3 May 2017.

“Beards in History: Theodor Herzl.” Department of Religion and Culture fall 2015 lecture series, Virginia Tech. 25 September 2015.

“What Is American Judaism?” Teaching-focused graduate student colloquium, Department of Religion, Princeton University. February 2013.

Conference Papers

“‘I Don’t Care What I Am Called’: Mary Antin and Christian Community at Gould Farm.” American Society of Church History, San Francisco. January 2024.

“‘Choose the Blessing Now’: Mary Antin, Healing, and the Boundaries of Religious Community at Gould Farm.” Association for Jewish Studies, San Francisco. December 2023.

“Mary Antin as American Religious Seeker.” Association for Jewish Studies, Boston. December 2022.

“Sufferings of the Soul: The Friendship of Mary Antin and Jessie Sampter” with Sarah Imhoff. *The Histories of Jewish Friendship, 1650–1950*. University of Michigan, 26–27 October 2022.

“Referendum on the Deli Menu: The Deli Revival, Nostalgia, and American Jewish Religion.” American Jewish Historical Society. Online, 24 June 2020.

“Give Us Our Name: Jewish Genealogy and American Jewish Religion.” Association for Jewish Studies, San Diego. 17 December 2019.

“Playing with Nostalgia: Teaching Ashkenazi Heritage to Children and Parents.” Childhood in the Jewish Imagination. The Richard S. Dinner Center for Jewish Studies, Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, California. 11 March 2019.

“Ghosts in the Gallery: Historic Synagogues and American Jewish Nostalgia.” International Conference Urban Jewish Heritage: Presence and Absence. Ironbridge International Institute for Cultural Heritage, University of Birmingham. Krakow, Poland. 6 September 2018.

“‘To Have It in Their Hearts’: PJ Library and American Jewish Religion.” Association for Jewish Studies, San Diego. December 2016.

“‘Referendum on the Jewish Deli Menu’: A Culinary Revival.” American Academy of Religion, San Diego. November 2014.

“‘Feel the History at Your Feet’: Historic Synagogues Turned Heritage Sites.” Graduate Student Workshop in American Jewish History, University of Michigan. May 2013.

“Ghosts in the Gallery: Nostalgia and Authenticity in Historic Synagogues Used as Heritage Sites.” Association for Jewish Studies, Boston. December 2013.

“The Arts and Crafts of Nostalgia: Teaching Sentimentality at the Eldridge Street Synagogue.” The Arts of Jewish Memory Symposium, the Chicago Center for Jewish Studies Graduate Student Conference, University of Chicago. February 2013.

“Lost in the Diaspora: Authority and Authenticity in American Guidebooks to Jewish Genealogy.” Association for Jewish Studies, Chicago. December 2012.

“‘What Their Souls Need’: The Spirituality and Morality of American Medievalism at the Cloisters Museum and Gardens.” Gothic America, Ninth Annual American Art History Graduate Student Symposium, Yale University, New Haven. May 2012.

“Morality in Stone: The Moral Imperative of the Cloisters Museum.” American Academy of Religion, San Francisco. November 2011.

“‘Draydel Salad’: The Serious Business of Jewish Food and Fun in Postwar America.” Enduring Trifles: Writing the History of Childhood with Ephemera, Cotsen Children’s Library, Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey. February 2011.

“‘Draydel Salad’: The Serious Business of Jewish Food and Fun in Postwar America.” American Academy of Religion, Atlanta. October 2010.

Conference Roundtable Panels

“The Sound of Silence: Lived Religion and the Gaps in Historical Memory.” American Society of Church History, Chicago. January 2026.

“What Do They Mean When They Say...? Quantitative and Qualitative Researchers in Conversation About Studying American Jewry.” Association for Jewish Studies, Washington, DC. November 2025.

“Lived Religion and Jewish Studies: Possibilities, Politics, and Publics.” American Academy of Religion, San Diego. November 2024.

Public roundtable at Across the Normative Divide: Religion, Race, and Justice in America conference. Stanford University. 27 May 2022.

“Religion Matters: American Jewish History and Religious Studies in Conversation.” American Jewish Historical Society, New Orleans. May 2022.

“Producing Jewish Culture.” Association for Jewish Studies, Chicago. December 2021.

“Jewish Objects, Jewish Affects: Crafting, Relics, Tea Cups, Toys, and Delis.” American Academy of Religion. Online, November 2020.

“Teaching Jewish Studies Through Food.” Association for Jewish Studies, San Diego. December 2019.

“The Sensory/Material” panel. Religion and Its Many American Publics conference, Lehigh University. 7–8 April 2019.

“Taking Care of Business: Jews and Business History” panel. Association for Jewish Studies, Washington, DC. December 2017.

Conference Responses

Respondent: “Making Memories: The Politics and Practices of Religious Memories.” American Academy of Religion, San Diego. November 2024.

Respondent: “Yerushalmi’s *Zakhor* at 40: Reconsidering Jewish Memory in Theory and Practice.” American Academy of Religion, Denver. November 2022.

Faculty respondent: “Religious Rhetoric in Policy and Practice Decisions” panel. Sites of Religious Practice: An Undergraduate Research Conference. Department of Religious Studies, UC Davis. 20 May 2017.

Faculty respondent: “Controversies and Approaches in Public History and Material Culture” panel. 19th Annual Brian Bertoti Innovative Perspectives in History Graduate Conference, Virginia Tech. March 2016.

Conference Panels Organized

“Taking Care of Business: Jews and Business History” panel. Association for Jewish Studies, Washington, DC. December 2017.

“Direct Objects: Authenticating Jewishness through Material Culture” panel. Association for Jewish Studies, Boston, December 2013.

“How-To Jews: The Instruction Manuals of American Judaism” panel. Association for Jewish Studies, Chicago, December 2012.

Paper Workshops

“A New Promised Land: Christian Community at Gould Farm.” Jewish Studies Workshop, Indiana University Bloomington. 6 September 2024.

Beyond the Synagogue and *Preaching the Promised Land* book proposal. American Religions in a Global Context proseminar, Stanford University. 26 May 2022.

“Nostalgia: The American Jewish Mitzvah.” Rocky Mountain American Religion Seminar, University of Utah. 2 November 2018.

“The Modern Jewish Mitzvah.” Feinstein Center for American Jewish History, Temple University. 1 February 2016.

“Referendum on the Jewish Deli Menu’: A Culinary Revival.” Religion in the Americas Workshop, Department of Religion, Princeton University. December 2013.

“Referendum on the Jewish Deli Menu’: A Culinary Revival.” Religion and Politics Colloquium, John C. Danforth Center on Religion and Politics, Washington University in St. Louis. October 2013.

“‘Lost in the Diaspora’: Authority and Authenticity in the Practices of Jewish Genealogy.” Religion in the Americas Workshop, Department of Religion, Princeton University. September 2012.

“Heartwarming Histories: Nostalgia as the American Jewish Mitzvah.” American Religion Workshop, Department of Religion, Princeton University. February 2012.

“Morality in Stone: The Moral Imperative of John D. Rockefeller’s Cloisters Museum.” American Religion Workshop, Department of Religion, Princeton University. November 2010.

“Spaces of Memory: Historic Synagogues as Museums and the Jewish Community.” American Religion Workshop, Department of Religion, Princeton University. October 2009.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

Community Lectures and Conversations

“A Conversation with Jewish Studies Scholars.” University of Virginia Jewish Studies Program 25th Anniversary Celebration. November 1, 2025.

“American Jewish History: Building Connections and Building Boundaries.” Jewish Parent Academy, Palo Alto. October 21, 2025.

“Nostalgia Served Fresh: Exploring Religion Through Deli Cuisine.” JCCSF, San Francisco. August 14, 2025.

“Preaching the Promised Land: Mary Antin’s American Religions.” New Lehrhaus. Online, March 18, 2025.

“A Pickle Problem: The Deli Revival and American Jewish Religion.” Congregation Shir Ami, Castro Valley, California. March 2, 2025,

“A Pickle Problem: The Deli Revival and American Jewish Religion.” The J, West Bloomfield Township, Michigan. January 19, 2025.

“‘I Don’t Care What I Am Called’: Mary Antin, Jewish Resilience, and the Boundaries of Religious Identity.” Greenfield Summer Institute, Mosse/Weinstein Center for Jewish Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison. 23 July 2024.

“A Pickle Problem: The Deli Revival and American Jewish Religion.” Harry & Rose Samson Family Jewish Community Center, Milwaukee. 22 May 2024.

Scholar in residence, Or Hadash: A Reconstructionist Congregation. Fort Washington, Pennsylvania. 12 April 2024.

Panelist: “The Contemporary Jewish Landscape: Realities, Responses, and Impacts.” Central Conference of American Rabbis, Continuing Rabbinic Education. Online, 21 March 2024.

“A Pickle Problem: The Deli Revival and American Jewish Religion.” Telling Our Stories Through Food: The Anita Herzfeld - Deborah Sivan Annual Series, Lawrence Jewish Community Congregation, Lawrence, Kansas. 29 February 2024.

“A Pickle Problem: The Deli Revival and American Jewish Religion.” Temple Beth El, Aptos, California. Online, 25 February 2024.

Speaker, deconsecration ceremony. Congregation B’nai Emunah, San Francisco. 28 May 2023.

“Feeling Jewish: Nostalgia and American Jewish Religion.” Temple Beth El, Aptos, California. Online, 21 May 2023.

“Family History Today: Give Us Our Name – Jewish Genealogy and American Jewish Religion.” Ackman & Ziff Family Genealogy Institute, Center for Jewish History, New York. Online, 27 April 2023.

Adult learning: The Vilna Shul, Boston. Online, 8 February, 8 March, and 19 April 2023.

“Referendum on the Deli Menu: American Jewish Religion and the Deli Revival.” Bender JCC of Greater Washington. Online, 26 January 2023.

Winter Beit Midrash: Temple Rodef Shalom, Falls Church, Virginia. Online, 12, 19, and 26 January 2023.

Scholar in residence: Temple Beth Shalom, Framingham, Massachusetts. 16–17 December 2022.

“Give Us Our Name: Genealogy and American Jewish Religion.” Jewish Genealogical Society of Cleveland. Online, 1 June 2022.

“Feel the History at Your Feet: Nostalgia and American Jewish Religion.” Museum at Eldridge Street. Online, 26 April 2022.

“Deli Revival: American Judaism and the Return of Pickles and Pastrami.” Temple Israel, Westport, Connecticut. Online, 2 February 2022.

Scholar in residence: Oak Park Temple B’nai Abraham Zion, Oak Park, Illinois. 17–18 December 2021.

“The Deli Revival and Practicing American Jewish Religion.” Contra Costa JCC. Online, 24 October 2021.

Jews and Food. Jewish Student Union, Garfield High School. Online, 20 September 2021.

“Feeling Jewish: Nostalgia and American Jewish Religion.” Erev Tisha B’Av, Aitz Hayim Center for Jewish Living, Glencoe, Illinois. Online, 17 July 2021.

“Feeling Jewish: Nostalgia and American Jewish Religion.” Jewish Historical Society of Michigan, Farmington Hills, Michigan. Online, 25 May 2021.

“The American Matzah Ball” with Jessica Kirzane. Contemporary Jewish Museum, San Francisco. Online, 1 April 2021.

Scholar in residence: Congregation Olam Tikvah, Fairfax, Virginia. Online, 21 and 28 February 2021.

“Referendum on the Deli Menu: American Jewish Religion and the Deli Revival.” Aquarian Minyan, Berkeley, California. Online, 6 January 2021.

“Girlhood, Children’s Books, and Hanukkah.” Judaism Unbound’s Geltraiser. Online, 12 December 2020.

“Intimate Histories: Genealogy and American Jewish Religion.” San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society. Online, 19 October 2020.

“The Jewish Deli Revival: Buying and Selling American Jewish Nostalgia.” Aspen Jewish Congregation, Aspen, Colorado. Online, 25 June 2020.

Conversation with Jordan Rosenblum: “What We Talk About When We Study Jewish Food: Scholarly Perspectives.” The Great Big Jewish Food Fest. Online, 20 May 2020.

“Jews, Schmaltz, and Crisco in the Age of Industrial Food.” Congregation Rinat Yisrael, Teaneck, New Jersey. Online, 3 May 2020.

“A Slippery Slope: Jews, Schmaltz, and Crisco in the Age of Industrial Food.” The Jewish Community Library, San Francisco. Online, 19 April 2020.

“Following Instructions: How American Jews Learned to Cook and Consume.” Congregation Beth Yeshurun, Houston. 30 October 2019.

“Rugalech and Remembering: Food as a Path to Jewish Identify and Traditions.” Bay Area Jewish Healing Center’s Healing Circle. 23 January 2019.

“Buying and Selling American Jewish Nostalgia.” Peninsula Jewish Community Center, Foster City, California. 6 August 2018.

“Intimate Histories: Genealogy and American Jewish Nostalgia.” Kol Hadash, the Northern California Community for Humanistic Judaism, Berkeley, California. 6 May 2018.

“Intimate Histories: Genealogy and American Jewish Religion.” San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society. 15 April 2018.

“Jewish Queer Ritual Objects with Nicki Green and Merissa Nathan Gerson.” Contemporary Jewish Museum, San Francisco. 1 February 2018.

“Looking for Judaism in New Places: Contemporary American Jewish Practice.” Congregation Beth Israel Judea, San Francisco. 26 January 2018.

Keynote speaker: “The Trefa Banquet 2.0.” The Illuminoshi: Bay Area Jewish Food Professionals. 7 January 2018.

“Referendum on the Deli Menu: American Jewish Nostalgia and the Deli Revival.” Rhoda Goldman Plaza, San Francisco. 3 January 2017.

Scholar in residence: Keshet Israel, Washington, DC. 15–16 December 2017.

“Judaism and Representational Art.” Gallery Chat, *The 613 by Archie Rand* exhibit, Contemporary Jewish Museum, San Francisco. 6 October 2017.

Inaugural lecture, John and Marcia Goldman Chair in American Jewish Studies at San Francisco State University: "Feeling Jewish: Buying and Selling American Jewish Nostalgia." Contemporary Jewish Museum, San Francisco. 15 June 2017.

"American Jewish Nostalgia." SF Hillel board meeting, San Francisco. 3 April 2017.

"Following Instructions: How American Jews Learned to Cook and Consume." Congregation Olam Tikvah, Fairfax, Virginia. 15 May 2016.

"Looking for Judaism in New Places: Contemporary American Jewish Practice." Docent continuing education class, National Museum of American Jewish History, Philadelphia. 1 February 2016.

Panelist: "Healthcare Access as a Moral Imperative: An Interfaith Discussion in New River Valley." Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy; Virginia Consumer Voices for Healthcare; Virginia Organizing, and the New River Valley Chapter; and the Montgomery County, Floyd County and Radford City Chapter of the NAACP. Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Blacksburg, Virginia. 26 October 2015.

"The Holocaust and American Public Memory." Conversation with Fred Zeidman, Chairman Emeritus of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Council. John C. Danforth Center on Religion and Politics, Washington University in St. Louis. 22 April 2015.

Keynote speaker: Jewish Student Union Aliyah (Graduation) Ceremony. Multicultural Programs and Services, Virginia Tech. 14 April 2015.

"From Home Cooking to Trendy Fare: The Translation of Ethnic Cooking." Hickory Feast, Virginia Tech. 16 November 2014.

"Following Instructions: How American Jews Learned to Cook and Consume." Bais Abraham Congregation, St. Louis. 3 May 2014.

"Shabbat Candlestick Salad: The Serious Business of Jewish Food and Fun in the 1950s." Chabad on Campus, Rohr Center for Jewish Life, Washington University in St. Louis. 10 October 2013.

"Do-It-Yourself Judaism: Reflecting on the 1970s Jewish Catalogs Today." Congregation Shaare Zedek, New York. 16 May 2012.

Community Teaching

"History as Mystery: The Surprises Historical Objects Reveal" panel. National Educators Institute, the Weitzman National Museum of American Jewish History. Online, 23 August 2023.

"Curating History: The Surprises Historical Objects Reveal" panel. National Educators Institute, the Weitzman National Museum of American Jewish History. Online, 17 August 2022.

"Food Fights: Authority and Authenticity in American Jewish Food." Two-part course. The New Lehrhaus, San Francisco. Online, 6 December and 13 December 2021.

"The Twentieth-Century Miracle of Oil: Crisco, Hanukkah, and the Jews." Aitz Hayim Center for Jewish Living, Glencoe, Illinois. Online, 1 December 2021.

"Is the Statue of Liberty a Jewish Woman?" Mission Minyan Talmud Club, San Francisco. Online, 26 October 2020.

"Tchotchkes 101: The Lives of Jewish Objects." Tikkun Leil Shavuot, Mission Minyan, San Francisco. 8 June 2019.

“A Slippery Slope: Jews, Schmaltz, and Crisco.” Mission Minyan Talmud Club, San Francisco. 12 November 2018.

“The Good Old Days: Buying and Selling American Jewish Nostalgia.” Kohn Summer Intern Program, Jewish Vocational Service, San Francisco. 7 July 2018.

“The Jewish Deli Revival.” Congregation B’nai Emunah retreat, Ralston White Retreat, Mill Valley, California. 11 March 2018.

“Mitzvot and Midrash.” Docent and educator training, *The 613 by Archie Rand* exhibit, Contemporary Jewish Museum, San Francisco. 19–20 June 2017.

“DIY: Receiving and Reinventing Judaism in the 1970s.” Shavuot Banquet, the Kitchen, San Francisco. 30 May 2017.

“Do-It-Yourself Judaism: The 1970s Jewish Catalogs.” Tikkun Leil Shavuot, Mission Minyan, San Francisco. 30 May 2017.

“The Good Old Days: Buying and Selling American Jewish Nostalgia.” Three-part SPARK! Program course, Madeline Haas Russell Adult Jewish Studies Program, Congregation Emanu-El, San Francisco. 14, 21, and 28 March 2017.

“The Good Old Days: Nostalgia for American Jewish Children.” The JCC in Manhattan, Learn with Limmud NY. 17 March 2012.

“The Good Old Days: Nostalgia for American Jewish Children.” Limmud NY, Kerhonkson, New York. 14 January 2012.

Public Events Organized

“The Myth of Stan Lee: A Conversation with Abraham Riesman,” Department of Jewish Studies and Comic Studies Program, San Francisco State University. Cosponsored by the Jewish Community Library and the Cartoon Art Museum, San Francisco. Online, 28 March 2022.

“Lectures in Jewish Studies” series. Associated with Introduction to Jewish Studies course, Department of Jewish Studies, San Francisco State University. Cosponsored by the Jewish Community Library, San Francisco. Online, Fall 2020.

#JewishStudiesAnd lecture series. Department of Jewish Studies, San Francisco State University. Fall 2019.

Shayna Weiss, “What We Talk about When We Talk about Pools: Controversies in America and Israel.” Malcolm and Diane Rosenberg Program in Judaic Studies in the Department of Religion and Culture. 20 October 2015.

Etgar Keret, reading from *The Seven Good Years: A Memoir* and conversation with Dr. Shayna Weiss. Malcolm and Diane Rosenberg Program in Judaic Studies in the Department of Religion and Culture. 19 October 2015.

Jeffrey Yoskowitz, “Do-It-Yourself Pickles: Reviving Old World Jewish Food Traditions,” and “Creating a Kosher America: From Heinz Baked Beans to Nabisco Oreos.” Malcolm and Diane Rosenberg Program in Judaic Studies, Department of Religion and Culture, Virginia Tech. 27–28 April 2015.

“Representing American Jews” film series. Malcolm and Diane Rosenberg Program in Judaic Studies, Department of Religion and Culture, Virginia Tech. Fall 2015.

Film screening: *Little White Lie* and discussion with filmmaker Lacey Schwartz. Malcolm and Diane Rosenberg Program in Judaic Studies, Department of Religion and Culture, Virginia Tech. 26 February 2015.

Organizer and moderator: “Food, Religion, and Politics: A Conversation on Contemporary Issues in the U.S.” John C. Danforth Center on Religion and Politics, Washington University in St. Louis. 8 April 2014.

Selected Media Appearances

Podcast interview: Brigham Young University, *Maxwell Institute Podcast*. Episode 155, “Nostalgia as Jewish Religious Practice, with Rachel B. Gross.” 6 December 2022.

<https://maxwellinstitute.blubrry.net/2022/12/06/maxwell-institute-podcast-155-nostalgia-as-jewish-religious-practice-with-rachel-b-gross/>.

Podcast interview: The Canadian Jewish News. *Bonjour Chai*. “Skip Shul, Buy Pastrami: How Jewish Nostalgia Became a Religious Practice.” 14 January 2022. <https://thecjn.ca/podcasts/skip-shul-buy-pastrami-how-jewish-nostalgia-became-a-religious-practice>.

Podcast interview: *Judaism Unbound*. Episode 278, “The Deli Is My Synagogue.” 11 June 2021. www.judaismunbound.com/podcast/episode-278-rachel-gross.

Podcast interview: *Jewish History Matters*. Episode 69, “American Judaism Beyond the Synagogue with Rachel B. Gross.” 9 May 2021. www.jewishhistory.fm/american-judaism-beyond-the-synagogue-with-rachel-b-gross.

Podcast interview: Jewish Public Media. *Talking in Shul*. Episode 74, “Beyond the Synagogue & Shiva Baby.” 3 May 2021. <http://jpmedia.co/beyond-the-synagogue-shiva-baby>.

Podcast interview: *New Books Network*. “Beyond the Synagogue: Jewish Nostalgia as Religious Practice.” 19 April 2021. <https://newbooksnetwork.com/beyond-the-synagogue>.

Podcast interview: *Tip of the Tongue*. Episode 68, “Food as Religious Practice.” 15 March 2021. <https://southernfood.org/tip-of-the-tongue/2021/03/15/tip-of-the-tongue-68>.

Podcast interview: *The Study*. Episode 19, “T”rumah.” 19 February 2021. www.listennotes.com/podcasts/the-study-raviv-ullman-d3uPB-jqsQ8.

Newspaper interview: Andrew Silow-Carroll. “Is the Jewish Deli the New Synagogue?” Jewish Telegraphic Agency. 11 February 2021. www.jta.org/2021/02/11/opinion/is-the-jewish-deli-the-new-synagogue.

Newspaper interview: Alix Wall. “In ‘Beyond the Synagogue,’ Jews Find Religion in Delis and Museums.” 28 February 2021. www.jweekly.com/2021/01/28/in-beyond-the-synagogue-jews-find-religion-in-delis-and-museums.

Magazine interview: Briallen Hopper. “11 Questions: *Beyond the Synagogue* by Rachel B. Gross.” *Killing the Buddha*. 8 February 2021. <https://killingthebuddha.com/mag/exegesis/11-questions-beyond-the-synagogue-by-rachel-b-gross>.

Podcast interview: Shalom Hartman Institute. *Identity/Crisis*. Episode 43, “Nostalgic Religion, Religion Nostalgia” 1 February 2021. www.hartman.org.il/identity-crisis-43-nostalgic-religion-religious-nostalgia.

Podcast interview: *Judaism Unbound*. Episode 171, “Digesting Judaism.” 24 May 2019.
www.judaismunbound.com/podcast/episode-171-rachel-gross.

Television interview: *Mosaic*. “Jewish Food and Culture.” KPIX Channel 5, CBS SF Bay Area. 17 March 2019.

Radio interview: Deena Prichet. “How A Corporation Convinced American Jews to Reach for Crisco.” NPR *Weekend Edition Sunday*. 2 December 2018.
www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2018/12/02/671960901/how-a-corporation-convinced-american-jews-to-reach-for-crisco.

Journal interview: Sallyann Amdur Sack-Pikus. “An Outsider Looks at the Jewish Genealogical Phenomenon.” *Avotaynu: The International Review of Jewish Genealogy* 30, no. 3 (Fall 2014).

ACADEMIC SERVICE

Service to the Profession

Co-chair, Steering Committee, Religion, Memory, and History Group, American Academy of Religion, 2019–2024. Steering committee membership, 2015–2024.

Research Awards Academic Advisory Committee, Hadassah-Brandeis Institute, Brandeis University, 2020–2021, 2022–2025.

Panelist for grant applications, National Endowment for the Humanities, Division of Preservation and Access, Fall 2022.

Dissertation Fellowship Committee, Association for Jewish Studies, 2022.

Co-creator and organizer: Junior Scholars in Jewish Studies in the Bay Area working group, 2018–2020.

Executive Committee, American Jewish Historical Society, 2018–2020. Wasserman Essay Prize Committee, American Jewish Historical Society, 2017.

Steering Committee, Religion and Food Group, American Academy of Religion, 2015–2019.

Review Committee for Jewish Studies Graduate Student Grant. Academic Consortium for Jewish Studies and the Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin and Sonoma Counties, 2018.

Peer review of manuscripts and book proposals: Amsterdam University Press, Bloomsbury Academic Publishing, Palgrave Macmillan, and Routledge.

Peer review of articles and book chapters: *Food, Culture, and Society*; De Gruyter; *Journal of Jewish Identities*; *MAVCOR Journal*; *Nashim: A Journal of Jewish Women's Studies and Gender Issues*; *Oxford Bibliographies*; *Queer Pasts*, and *Religions*.

Department, College, and University Service

Jewish Studies department representative, San Francisco State University chapter, California Faculty Association, 2023–present.

Visioning committee, Department of Jewish Studies, San Francisco State University, 2018–present.

Communications coordinator, Department of Jewish Studies, San Francisco State University, 2017–present.

Award selection committee, YF Chang Professorship in International Business, Lam Family College of Business, San Francisco State University, Fall 2024.

Scholarship Committee, College of Liberal & Creative Arts, San Francisco State University, 2021–2023.

Professional Development Council, Academic Senate, San Francisco State University, 2020–2021.

SFSU Constitution and Citizenship Day 2020: “The Unfinished Work of Suffrage.” Interview of Melissa Klapper. 17 September 2020.

Advisory Resource Center Faculty Advisory Board, College of Liberal & Creative Arts, San Francisco State University, 2017–2019.

Judaic Studies program coordinator, Department of Religion and Culture, Virginia Tech. 2014–2016.

Dissertation and Thesis Committees

Ph.D. dissertation committee member: Steven Green, “Noshing in the Midwest: Foodways in Midwestern Jewish Communities,” Department of History, University of California, Santa Cruz, 2024.

M.A. thesis committee member: Finley Marco Walker, “From Ourselves We Come to Be: Exploring the Use of Jewish Ritual and Ritual Objects in Trans Jewish Identity Formation,” San Francisco State University, 2024.

Ph.D. dissertation committee member: Jem Jebbia, “The Fruits of Their Labor: Religion, Labor, and Resistance in California’s Central Valley 1880–1970.” Department of Religious Studies, Stanford University, 2023.

M.A. thesis committee member: Claire Gogan, “To Play Jewish Again: Whiteness, Counterculture and The Klezmer Revival 1977–1997.” Department of History, Virginia Tech, 2016.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Board member, New Lehrhaus–The Bay Area Hub for Adult Jewish Learning, 2024–present.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

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