American, Jewish, Feminist: Literature and Critical Analysis
Hebrew University of Jerusalem          Fall 2003-4              Tues. & Thur. 10:30-12:00
Fulbright Professor Lori Lefkovitz

This seminar will explore the cultural phenomenon of Jewish American Feminism through the analysis of selected literary texts, including essays and manifestoes, fiction and poetry by Jewish women writers from early America to the present, memoir, contemporary feminist liturgy, and documentary film. We will consider the Hebrew Bible in the American feminist imagination, the relationship between autobiography and art, the articulation and development of feminist and religious ideologies, generational shifts, questions of influence, and the emergence of mixed genres. We will try to develop an appreciation of the complexity of three contested terms—“American,” “Jewish,” and “Feminist”—and an appreciation for some of the literature that has resulted from their fruitful intersection.

Book list

Anthologies and Essays:
*Lynn Davidman and Shelly Tenenbaum, eds. Feminist Perspectives on Jewish Studies (1994)
Faye Moskowitz, ed. Her Face in the Mirror: Jewish Women on Mothers and Daughters (1994)
Miriam Peskowitz and Laura Levitt, eds. Judaism Since Gender (1997)
*Danya Ruttenberg. Yentl’s Revenge: The Next Wave of Jewish Feminism
Sarah Silberstein Swartz and Margie Wolfe, eds. From Memory to Transformation: Jewish Women’s Voices (1998)

The short story:
*Joyce Antler, ed. America and I: Short Stories by American Jewish Women Writers (1990)
Jules Chametzky, John Felstiner, Hilene Flanzbaum, Kathryn Hellerstein, eds. Jewish American Literature: A Norton Anthology

Poetry and Prayer:
Marcia Falk. The Book of Blessings: New Jewish Prayers for Daily Life, the Sabbath and the New Moon Festival
*Marge Piercy. The Art of Blessing the Day
*Nessa Rapoport. A Woman’s Book of Grieving
Ellen M. Umansky and Dianne Ashton, eds. Four Centuries of Jewish Women’s Spirituality: A Sourcebook (1992)
Henny Wenkart, ed. The Jewish Women’s Literary Annual

Eleanor Wilner. *Sarah’s Choice*
*Jewish Women’s Literary Annual, 1994-

**Bible and the Feminist Imagination:**
India Edghill. *Queenmaker: A Novel of King David’s Queen*
Ellen Frankel. *The Five Books of Miriam*
Naomi Graetz. *S/he Created Them*
*Judith Kates and Gail Reimer. Reading Ruth: Contemporary Women Reclaim a Sacred Story*
*Alicia Ostriker. Nakedness of the Fathers*
Jane Sprague Zones. *Taking the Fruit*

**Other Commentaries:**
Susan Weidman Schneider. *Jewish and Female: Choices and Changes in Our Lives Today*

**Theology:**

**American Jewish Women’s History and Material Culture:**
Pamela S. Nadell and Jonathan D. Sarna, eds. *Women and American Judaism: Historical Perspectives* (2001)
Films:
Crossing Delancy; Half the Kingdom; Hester Street; Marjorie Morningstar; Return of Sarah’s Daughters; Torahs and Timbrels; Women of the Wall; Tell Me A Riddle; Yentl;

Suggested Authors and/or Texts for seminar papers and presentations:

Pearl Abraham (Giving Up America; The Romance Reader);
Mary Antin;
E.M. Broner;
Kim Chernin;
Anita Diamant, (The Red Tent);
Elana Dykewoman (Beyond the Pale);
India Edghill (Queenmaker)
Jyl Lynn Felman (Cravings: A Sensual Memoir)
Tirzah Firestone (With Roots in Heaven);
Betty Friedan;
Myla Goldberg (The Bee Season);
Rebecca Goldstein (Mazel; The Mind Body Problem);
Emma Goldman;
Allegra Goodman;
Joy Horowitz (Tessie and Pearlie: A Granddaughter’s Story)
Melanie Kaye/Kantrowitz;
Irena Klepfisz;
Barbara Meyerhoff;
Anne Michaels, (Fugitive Pieces);
Tova Mirvis (Ladies Auxiliary);
Gina Nahai (Moonlight on the Avenue of Faith);
Tillie Olsen;
Cynthia Ozick;
Grace Paley;
Marge Piercy;
Letty Cottin Pogrebin (Deborah, Golda, and Me);
Anne Roiphe;
Muriel Ruykeser;
Jo Sinclair;
Alix Kates Shulman;
Stella Silberman (The Jew Store);
Henrietta Szold (Lost Love);
Sydney Taylor (All of a Kind Family—a children’s book series)
Lillian Wald (House on Henry Street);
Anzia Yezierska (The Bread Givers);