

WOMEN OF TORAH SEMINAR SERIES

NEW YORK KOLLEL

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Lisa Perry

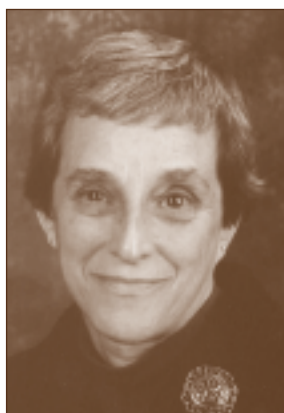
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Spinoza and the Quest for Meaning

Professor Carol Ochs | Wednesday, February 23, 2005

Dr. Carol Ochs is Director of Graduate Studies at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion/New York where she also serves as Professor of Jewish Religious Thought and supervises the Doctor of Ministry Program in Pastoral Counseling for ordained clergy of all faiths. Her research, writing, and teaching encompass Jewish spirituality, comparative religion, and Jewish feminism. In addition to teaching spiritual guidance, she serves as spiritual guide to rabbinic, cantorial, and Doctor of Ministry students at HUC-JIR. She is the author of eight books: *Behind the Sex of God; Women and Spirituality; An Ascent to Joy; The Noah Paradox; Song of the Self; Jewish Spiritual Guidance; Our Lives as Torah* and *Reaching Godward*. Prior to joining the faculty of HUC-JIR, she taught philosophy at Simmons College in Boston, where she is professor emerita. Dr. Ochs received the Ph.D. in philosophy from Brandeis University in 1968.

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The Rabbinic David

Rabbi Ruth Gais | Wednesday, March 2, 2005

Rabbi Ruth Gais is Director of the New York Kollel and was ordained by Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. She received her B.A. from Bryn Mawr College in Greek and Latin and her M.A. and Ph.D. from Princeton University in Classical Archaeology. Before turning to the rabbinate, she taught about the ancient world for many years at Syracuse University, Hunter College, The Intercollegiate Center for Classical Studies in Rome, the University of Georgia, The Brearley

School, and Drew University. Gais also participated in excavations at Isthmia, Greece, Khirbet Shema, Israel, and Metaponto, Italy.

Since her ordination, Gais has switched her attention to Jews both ancient and modern. She frequently teaches about the role of Jews in antiquity as well as topics in Talmud, Bible and Hebrew literature. Her publications reflect her eclectic and wide-ranging interests; she has published most recently on Ignazio Silone and I.I. Peretz, *The Practice of Torah Study*, *The Book of Jonah*, and *Ground Zero*. In addition to directing the New York Kollel, Gais is the rabbi of Chaverat Lamdeinu in Madison, New Jersey.

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Trends in Translation of the Torah

Professor Andrea Weiss | Wednesday, March 9, 2005

Dr. Andrea Weiss is Assistant Professor of Bible at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion/New York. She received her undergraduate education at the University of California at Berkeley, where she majored in literature. After her ordination at HUC-JIR in New York in 1993, she started her doctoral studies at the University of Pennsylvania, focusing on the Bible and ancient Near Eastern languages and civilizations. Dr. Weiss's doctoral dissertation, completed in January 2004, examines figurative language in biblical prose narrative, looking specifically at metaphor in the book of Samuel. She currently serves as the Assistant Editor for the *Women of Reform Judaism Women's Torah Commentary*.

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Sibling Rivalry: The Emergence of Rabbinic Judaism and Christianity

Dr. Sharon Koren | Thursday, March 10, 2005

Dr. Koren teaches history and Jewish mysticism at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion/New York. Before moving to New York, Dr. Koren taught at Boston College, Hebrew College, and the University of Pennsylvania.

Dr. Koren received her Ph.D. in Medieval Studies from Yale University and her B.A. in History from Columbia University. Her research interests include medieval Jewish mysticism, Jewish women's spirituality, and the relationship between Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Her dissertation, which she is currently revising into book form, explores the role of women in medieval Jewish spirituality. She has written numerous articles that have appeared in the *AJS Review*, *Women and Water*, edited by Rahel Wasserfall, and *Nashim* (forthcoming).

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Keep on Lifting Me Higher: The Psalms of Ascent as a Shabbat Afternoon Delight

Professor Lisa Grant | Wednesday, March 23, 2005

Dr. Lisa D. Grant is Associate Professor of Jewish Education at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion/New York. Prior to joining HUC-JIR, she served as the Research & Evaluation Manager at the Melton Research Center for Jewish Education at the Jewish Theological Seminary. Her research interests include adult Jewish learning, professional development of Jewish educators, and the role Israel plays in American

Jewish life. Her publications have appeared in a range of academic journals and she is the lead author of *A Journey of Heart and Mind: Transformative Learning in Adulthood* (JTS Press, 2004), with Diane Schuster, Meredith Woocher, and Steven M. Cohen, and author of *Aytz Hayim Hi*, a two-year curriculum guide for Adult Bat Mitzvah published by the Women's League for Conservative Judaism. She and Diane Schuster co-authored *The Impact of Adult Jewish Learning in Today's Jewish Community* (United Jewish Communities, 2003) and "Teaching Jewish Adults," a chapter in *The Ultimate Jewish Teachers Handbook* (ARE Publishing, 2003).

Dr. Grant has presented her research at the Network for Research in Jewish Education, the Israeli Association for Research in Jewish Education, the Association for Jewish Studies, and the Jewish Agency for Israel. She has been a featured speaker at the Coalition for Advancement of Jewish Education (CAJE), the Women's League for Conservative Judaism, the Alliance for Adult Jewish Learning, and several synagogues and other Jewish organizations.

She holds a B.A. from the University of Michigan and M.B.A. in public management from the University of Massachusetts. She earned her Ph.D. in Jewish Education from the Jewish Theological Seminary.

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When Music Becomes Midrash

Cantor Josee Wolff | Thursday, March 31, 2005

Cantor Josee Wolff is Director of Student Placement at the School of Sacred Music, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion/New York. She has served as the cantor for Reform congregations in the U.S. and Europe for the past 15 years, and has also served as Director of the Department of Synagogue Music at the Union for Reform Judaism.

She is co-author of *The Art of Torah Cantillation* and *The Art of Cantillation, Volume 2*, published by UAHC Press, and music editor of the CCAR Haggadah, *The Open Door*. Cantor Wolff most recently produced the CD recording of *Tov Lehodot, Voices from the Dutch Liberal Community*.

Cantor Wolff, a native of The Netherlands, holds a degree in flute from the Royal Conservatory in The Hague. In 1991, she received her Masters degree in Sacred Music from HUC-JIR and was the first woman from the European continent to be invested as a cantor.

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Law and Narrative in The Major Rabbinic Law Codes

Professor Alyssa Gray | Thursday, April 7, 2005

Alyssa Gray, Ph.D., J.D., is Assistant Professor of Codes and Responsa Literature at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion/New York. She has also taught at the Jewish Theological Seminary, from which she received her Ph.D. in Talmud and Rabbinics in 2001. Before beginning her doctorate, she studied at the Hebrew University Faculty of Law (LL.M.

1994) and worked as a litigation associate at Davis Polk and Wardwell in

New York. She received her J.D. from Columbia University and holds B.A. degrees from Barnard College (magna cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa) and the Jewish Theological Seminary. She is the co-author of "Halacha and Law," included in the award-winning *Oxford Handbook of Jewish Studies* (2002), and is a contributor to the series *My People's Prayer Book*. Other articles and reviews have appeared in *The Journal of Jewish Studies*, *Prooftexts*, *Hebrew Studies*, and *Conservative Judaism*. She is the author of *A Talmud In Exile: The Influence of Yerushalmi Avodah Zarah on the Formation of Bavli Avodah Zarah* (forthcoming, Brown Judaic Studies, 2005). Her current research concerns wealth and poverty in classical and medieval rabbinic literature.

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Feminist Midrash and Modern Hebrew Women's Writers

Dr. Wendy Zierler | Wednesday, May 4, 2005

Dr. Zierler is Assistant Professor of Feminist Studies and Modern Jewish Literature at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion/New York. Prior to joining HUC-JIR, she was a Research Fellow in the English Department of Hong Kong University, where she lived for five and a half years while teaching at the Hong Kong University.

Dr. Zierler received her Ph.D. and her M.A. from Princeton University, and her B.A. from Yeshiva University, Stern College. She also studied at Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Michelelet Bruria in Jerusalem. Dr. Zierler is currently working towards an M.F.A. in Fiction Writing at Sarah Lawrence College. Her book, *And Rachel Stole the Idols: The Emergence of Hebrew Women's Writing*, came out this year from Wayne State University Press. At HUC-JIR she teaches courses on American Jewish Literature, Popular Culture and Theology, various topics in Modern Hebrew and Modern Jewish Literature, Holocaust Literature, Literature of the Holidays, The Jew and the Other, in addition to courses dealing with Gender and Judaism.