

Schwartz, Howard, ed. *Gates to the New City: A Treasury of Modern Jewish Tales*. New York: Avon, 1983.

Schwartz, Howard and Anthony Rudolf, eds. *Voices Within the Ark: The Modern Jewish Poets*. New York: Avon, 1980.

Trachtenberg, Joshua. *Jewish Magic and Superstition: A Study in Folk Religion*. New York: Atheneum, 1970.

Dr. Jay Jacoby is Associate Professor of English at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. A fuller version of this paper was presented at the 1984 Convention of the Association of Jewish Libraries in Atlanta.

Notes of A Jewish Women's Studies Publisher

Doris B. Gold
Biblio Press
Fresh Meadows, NY

Beginnings

"Yes, Henrietta, there is a Jewish women studies publisher," ran our classified ad in *Hadassah magazine* four years ago. Queries trickled in, asking for our publications list, and at least two were addressed "Attention: Henrietta, BIBLIO PRESS." We had overlooked the generation or knowledge gap regarding instant recognition of the forename of Henrietta Szold, the founder of *Hadassah*. This anecdote illustrates the potency of the printed word—our "product," and fortunately, one still held in high regard by the Jewish people.

We later wrote to women's organizations, suggesting that they, too, had a history; that there were books and materials they could use during March, National Women's History Month, and that some of them were available from us, Biblio Press.

Biblio Press was founded with private capital by a professional Jewish publicist, simultaneously a part-timer at a major reference publisher. The founders were influenced by the small press "movement" in New York City and across the country—particularly the West, where we had visited. The Press was an outgrowth of *Lilith* magazine, which "inspired" us, but without its non-profit status; we needed faster output. Our first publication was Aviva Cantor's *Bibliography on the Jewish Woman: 1900-1978* (hence the name Biblio Press), which was to become one of the basic tools in the field—study materials and guides to help individual Jewish women and groups learn more about themselves. This work went through two printings and two supplements, and is being reissued and updated this Spring 1987 to cover 1900-1985, with an added list of 1986 books and articles. By the end of 1987, we will have published 10 titles on heretofore neglected subjects—sex, politics, and religion. Among our publications are a first book of women's ritual, *Miriam's Well* by Penina V. Adelman (1986), *The Political Life of American Jewish Women* by Susan Welch and Fred Ullrich (1984), and the ever-popular revised edition of *Written Out of History: Our Jewish Foremothers*, by Emily Taitz and Sondra Henry (whose young people's biography of Gloria Steinem from Dillon Press will make its appearance this Spring). Soon to be announced is a second edition of Rabbi Sue Levi Elwell's *Jewish Women's*

Studies Guide (first edition 1982), and a new important biography, translated from the Hebrew, of an Israeli woman of the pre-State period.

Biblio Press began to fill the gap in sex information with Joan Scherer Brewer's (recently of Kinsey Institute) annotated bibliography, *Sex and the Modern Jewish Woman* (1986), which contains essays by two academics. Throughout the nine years of our development, we have attempted to serve the needs of both the general reader and the student by supplying information which to us seemed in short supply via approaches that had not been formerly attempted by either Judaica or trade publishers.

Achievements

We assess the pleasure and pain of our experiences thus:

—The most gratifying achievement is a personal sense of intellectual competence, and even "power and influence" in using ideas and words. This is especially welcome after years of being blocked by male managers and plodding voluntarism dedicated to the Jewish *status quo*.

—The satisfaction of "inventing" Jewish women studies in publication form, and adding to the raised consciousness of our "sisters," even where a sense of such sisterhood is often missing.

—Pioneering: Achieving recognition from National Women's History Month Project, in that nationwide materials for schools now include information about Jewish women—among "other minorities"; making available to the many women's bookstores from New York to California Jewish women's books alongside those of other groups; joining with the newly formed Jewish Women's Caucus of the National Women's Studies Association, as well as women students and academics in the Modern Language Association, to make all aware of "Jewish women studies"; seeing Biblio books in Judaica bookstores whose proprietors are often Orthodox, and possibly unsympathetic to feminism; joining the Association of Jewish Book Publishers, where there are few women publishers, and sending Biblio books for display to the Moscow Book Fair,

the Conventions of the American Library Association and the Association for Jewish Studies, and other heretofore-unreached audiences.

—The pleasure of corresponding with and meeting potential women authors; guiding them to a final manuscript for us or for another publisher in the Jewish network. (One such encounter has resulted in a memoir of mine serving as a Jewish content book used in Tokyo schools; also, a male academic specialist in Jewish literature in Japan has increased his interest in the field through our “influence.”) As “editor and publisher,” it is often gratifying to relate to budding authors and to steer them to new trends in publishing. Since we have not yet ventured into the waters of fiction or short story, (not a staple of the highly segmented Jewish marketplace anyway), we are not yet privy to new novelists.

—Not the least of our positive achievements has been entrepreneurial. Except for three years when we recorded small losses, we have consistently increased sales, and have even shown a profit. We have thus far functioned on a part-time schedule, with one secretary and many freelancers and vendors, preferring to “roll over” our investment into new titles yearly.

Disappointments

“The smoothest way is full of stones,” says the Yiddish proverb. Biblio Press has tripped in its path on the following impediments:

—While Biblio Press has been featured in *Ms.*, *Choice* (A.L.A.), countless women's newsletters, and several local papers and feminist journals, it is still difficult to get our books reviewed or mentioned in major Jewish publications. Their display advertisements are higher priced than those of other groups, and many do not carry classified columns, a necessary staple for our outreach. Many requests for books are made, but few reviews appear. (My observation on many Jewish magazines is that they take note of the titles of major Jewish or trade publishers, but not often of small presses.) Local Jewish weeklies seem to be read less by women than by men, especially in the New York City area, where we often feel unheralded in our “home town” as compared with elsewhere.

—A disappointment to one who has worked in the community center field, is the lack of programming on Jewish women studies in adult departments, with a consequent lack of awareness of our titles. Often, women staffers seem less informed than their constituents on feminism, as is often the case in other Jewish organizations or service agencies.

—Synagogue shops stock mostly gifts, cookbooks, prayer books, and juvenile books. Bent on fundraising, they are reluctant to purchase women's titles; this is even more regrettable since these shops are staffed by women.

—National events of women's organizations, major and minor, do not feature book exhibits of any kind, except for their own materials, and some do not even include those. A major Jewish women's organization informed us that to do so would be “commercial.” One feels this cultural lag acutely, as well as an attitude that reinforces the image of women as “hands,” with the men as “heads.” At Purim, “a women's holiday,” and during March, during National Women's History Month, we have written all major Jewish women's groups offering “bargains” on our major titles, with few results.

—A surprising omission for us has been bookfairs. While there are several sources that return each year looking for new titles to sell, usually featured at these fairs are children's works and used books; this is an area of Judaica marketing not yet well developed, that could lead to the purchase of more books. (It is a fading impression that homes of Jewish families are filled with books read for pleasure. The “people of the book” are not such inveterate book buyers as supposed, except for academic and/or student or children's needs.)

—Poetry is our *bête noire*. As a published poet, I added my own *Honey in the Lion* (1979) to our list, together with Mollee Kruger's *Daughters of Chutzpah: Humorous Verse on the Jewish Woman* (1983). While both are enthusiastically received at readings, especially from the army of poetry writers within the Jewish community, buying poetry (except for college-level critiques of Biblical poetry) seems nil among Jews. We are learning the vagaries of Jewish taste; one audio-cassette publisher of Jewish prose noted that “Jewish buyers don't yet pay for the spoken word either—only for music—but we may get where others are—and maybe soon!”

—Independence often means isolation. While we have found many correspondents, authors, inquirers, friends, and colleagues, we still find it necessary to attend meetings of women and publishers (when the topics are relevant) to keep abreast. We had hoped that co-publishing with another Judaica or trade publisher would have resulted from our efforts by now, or that a touch of the current “merger-mania” would have come our way. We think someone out there in publishing needs us as a specialized imprint, for a “niche in the marketplace”—and for us it is needed as a *quid pro quo*, affording us office and warehouse space and a wider

field for our know-how and energy. Born in the late '70s to accelerate Jewish women's awareness, Biblio Press resists the idea of remaining a women's “cottage industry” beyond the '80s.

The Library Market

Readers of this journal naturally wish to know how we relate to Judaica librarians. Twice in eight years we have rented the membership lists of the Association of Jewish Libraries and publicized our work. The results have been “spotty.” Major cities such as Los Angeles, Chicago, Detroit, Cincinnati, Boston, Miami, New York City, and selected ones in the Midwest, have become regular buyers, in addition to new libraries devoted to Judaica in Gainesville, Florida and in Georgia, as well as some collections sponsored by Jewish federations in various cities. The Jewish Women's Resource Center library in New York City (there is a similar collection in Los Angeles; both are sponsored by the National Council of Jewish Women), responds to our announcements frequently. One perceives that since many Jewish synagogue libraries are staffed by volunteers, there is little or no budget, and requests from such libraries for free or very low-cost titles are the norm. Also felt is a lack of demand for adult women's materials in synagogue libraries, as many serve primarily the religious school population in their midst. Our non-fiction and semi-scholarly titles, however, have been popular with some Jewish day school and university libraries especially where there are Jewish studies programs and women's studies (these do not often intersect in universities).

Hillel rabbis (both male and female) as well as students, with or without libraries in their quarters, have been prime buyers also. Public library systems in major cities and surrounding suburbs have, on occasion, queried and purchased our titles, but this is still a trickle compared with the demand from library distributors such as Baker & Taylor, Coutts and others.

By gaining a distributor this year (Inland Book Co., East Haven, Conn.), we have already ordered larger quantities of new titles for a wider audience that frequents literary and independently owned bookstores which stock small press books. Chains like Barnes and Noble, Dalton's, and Walden's, are still showing books of mostly major trade publishers and Judaica houses of long-standing reputation. We thus welcome librarians in every sector who can introduce Jewish women's knowledge to the ubiquitous but elusive Jewish reader of both sexes.

Doris B. Gold is the founder and publisher of Biblio Press. (P.O.B. 22, Fresh Meadows, NY 11365-0022).

Appendix

Women and Judaism: a Selected Annotated Bibliography

Marcia W. Posner

JWB Jewish Book Council
New York, NY

I. Books

A. Non-fiction

Adelman, Penina V. *Miriam's Well: Rituals for Jewish Women Around the Year*. NY: Biblio Press, 1986.

Stories, prayers, life-cycle and holiday rituals for Jewish women.

Aschkenasy, Nehama. *Eve's Journey: Feminine Images in Hebraic Literary Tradition*. NY: Hippocrene Books, 1986.

Focusing on the evolution of early female archetypes, Aschkenasy uncovers the ancient roots of modern female characters, and demonstrates how ancient male biases reappear in a new garb in modern works. (See also: III. Lectures.)

Baum, Charlotte; Hyman, Paula. *The Jewish Woman in America*. NY: Plume/NAL, 1975, 1976.

Includes women in the Jewish tradition, women from Germany and from Eastern Europe, the trade-unionism movement, social mobility, and the changing image of the Jewish woman in literature—for the worse. From primary and secondary sources with photographs.

Biale, Rachel. *Women and Jewish Law: An Exploration of Women's Issues in Halakhic Sources*. NY: Schocken, 1984.

Presents some of the central halakhic sources on women and demonstrates that Jewish Law is characterized by mechanisms of change.

Bitton-Jackson, Livia. *Madonna or Courtesan? The Jewish Woman in Christian Literature*. NY: Seabury Press, 1982.

The mystique of the Jewish woman in Christian Literature.

Brewer, Joan Scherer. *Sex and the Modern Jewish Woman, Annotated Bibliography*. NY: Biblio Press, 1986.

Citations from the fields of feminism, sociology, psychology, mental health and religion. Essays on fictional portraits of Jewish women and sex, etc.

Cantor, Aviva. *The Jewish Woman: 1900–1985, a Bibliography, With additional citations by Ora Hamelsdorf*. 2nd ed. NY: Biblio Press, 1987.

An impressive array of articles, pamphlets, periodicals, fiction and non-fiction about Jewish womanhood.

Dash, Joan. *Summoned to Jerusalem: The Life of Henrietta Szold*. NY: Harper, 1979.

A biography which traces Szold's life from pampered, dutiful daughter, to educator, scholar, Zionist, rescuer of thousands of children from the Holocaust, and founder of Hadassah and Youth Aliyah.

Elwell, Sue Levi. *The Jewish Women's Studies Guide*. 2nd ed. NY: Biblio Press, 1987. College-level guide.

Fine, Irene. *Educating the New Jewish Woman—A Dynamic Approach* (1985) and *Midlife and Its Rite of Passage Ceremony* (1983). San Diego, CA: Women's Institute for Continuing Jewish Education (4079 54th St. San Diego, CA 92105).

Greenberg, Blu. *On Women and Judaism: A View from Tradition*. Phila.: Jewish Publication Society, 1983.

The author confronts the relationship between contemporary feminism and traditional Judaism.

Hamelsdorf, Ora; Adelsberg, Sandra. *Jewish Women and Jewish Law: Bibliography*. NY: Biblio Press, 1980, 1981; 1987 update.

Henry, Sondra; Taitz, Emily. *Written Out of History: Our Jewish Foremothers*. 2nd ed. NY: Biblio Press, 1983.

Describes the lives and deeds of outstanding Jewish women of the past.

Heschel, Susan, ed. *On Being a Jewish Feminist*. NY: Schocken, 1983.

Presents the thinking of Jewish feminists anxious to be an integral part of the Jewish community; includes: women in Federation activities, single women in synagogue life, new feminist fiction, and lesbianism.

Kashtan, Rivka. *Wild Variations on a Theme of the Garden of Eden & Other Poems from Those Troubled Times*. NY: Shapolsky, 1986.

A woman's version of the story of Adam and Eve.

Klepfisz, Irena; Kaye/Kantrowitz, Melanie, eds. *The Tribe of Dina: A Jewish Woman's Anthology*. Vermont: Sinister Wisdom Books, 1986.

Forty contributors including poets, new and established writers, women of all ages and nationalities, speak of what it means to be a Jew and a woman.

Koltun, Elizabeth, ed. *The Jewish Woman: New Perspectives*. NY: Schocken, 1976.

Addresses, essays, and lectures reprinted from various periodicals.

Marcus, Jacob R. *The American Jewish Woman, 1654–1980; and The American Jewish Woman: A Documentary History*. Hoboken, NJ: Ktav, 1981.

A redressing of the omission of women in American Jewish history.

Roth, Cecil. *Dona Gracia of the House of Nasi*. Phila.: Jewish Publication Society, 1978.

The first English biography of an extraordinary 16th-century woman who escaped the Inquisition to become the dominant Jewish personality in the Turkish empire.

San Diego Woman's Haggadah. 2nd edition. San Diego, CA: Women's Institute for Continuing Jewish Education, 1986.

A collection of feminist expression and contemporary writings blended with readings and songs of the traditional Haggadah. Deals with the role of women in the Exodus and at Sinai and Canaan. Describes women's subjugation and lauds heroines Miriam Bat Amran and Chana Senesh.

Schneider, Susan Weidman. *Jewish and Female: Choices and Changes in Our Lives Today*. NY: Simon and Schuster, 1984.

Confronts the issues facing Jewish women today. A guide to integrating Jewish traditions and beliefs into contemporary life.

Sochen, June. *Consecrate Every Day: The Public Lives of Jewish American Women*. NY: SUNY Press, 1981.

Using a broad definition of Jewish identification, the author discusses women who in the past 100 years have at some level established a conscious connection with Jewish themes.

Tolley, Jacquelyn, ed. *On Our Spiritual Journey: A Creative Shabbat Service*. San Diego, CA: Women's Institute for Continuing Jewish Education, 1984.

An innovative prayerbook blending traditional Jewish morning worship with new prayers, running commentaries, poetry, and songs.

Welch, Susan; Ullrich, Fred. *The Political Life of American Jewish Women*. NY: Biblio Press, 1985.

Includes annotated bibliography.

Zones, Jane Sprague, ed. *Taking the Fruit: Modern Women's Tales of the Bible*. San Diego, CA: Women's Institute for Continuing Jewish Education, 1981.

Midrashic material.

B. Fiction

Banks, Lynne Reid. *Sarah and After: Five Women of the Old Testament*. NY: Doubleday, 1975.

More a midrash than a novel, it speculates on the relationship between Sarah and Hagar; Rebecca, Isaac, and their sons; Leah and Rachel; and on Dinah.

Merkin, Daphne. *Enchantment: A Novel*. NY: Hippocrene Books, 1986.

The vagaries of sibling rivalries, childhood friendships, and, most importantly, the bond between mother and daughter are explored.

II. Pamphlets, Periodicals and Newsletters

Pogrebin, Letty Cottin, "Anti-Semitism in the Women's Movement" *MS. magazine*, Vol. 10, No. 12 (June 1982), pp. 45–70.

The Jewish Woman in the Middle. Hadassah Jewish Education Department. 50 West 58th St., New York, NY 10019 (An excellent study guide).

The Jewish Women's Resource Center Newsletter. Vol. 1, No. 1, Spring 1986. Published by the Center of the National Council of Jewish Women., 9 East 69th St. NY, NY 10021. Published three times a year. Subscription \$5.00 annually.

Lilith: The Jewish Women's Magazine. Lilith Publications, Inc., 250 West 57th St., New York, NY 10019.

(Continued on next page, column 1)

MANAGEMENT—JEWISH

Job Descriptions for a Library Servicing a Synagogue and Day School

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Introduction

The job of a Judaica librarian appears to be indefinable because it is difficult to break down the myriad of tasks into their component parts. Frequently, synagogue/school librarians either do everything themselves or pitch-in wherever necessary, erasing the demarcation between professional and non-professional library jobs.

It is important to describe *in writing* the many tasks involved in supplying library services to your institution. Job descriptions serve as: (a) a clear definition of the duties and responsibilities of employees or volunteers (Evans, 1976, p. 188), and (b) an evaluation tool for both the employee/volunteer and the administrator. Job descriptions also force heads of libraries to analyze what they and their assistants do, and serve to highlight problem areas or deficiencies in service, allowing for their resolution.

Another very important use for job descriptions is to communicate to administrators, principals, and lay leaders exactly what is involved in providing quality library services. These people, who have had no library work

experience, usually have little understanding of library operations and responsibilities, and need enlightenment. Even if they do not read the entire document, it makes an impact by sheer detail and bulk, and gives them the feeling that the head of their library knows what to do and is well-organized. This can only help influence them positively when they need to make decisions affecting the library, such as personnel, expansion, furnishings, and budget.

The following is excerpted from a Job Description analysis made to justify a staff budgetary increase at Stephen S. Wise Temple Library, which employs the equivalent of eight full-time personnel. Job qualifications and compensations, which are frequently part of job descriptions, are not included here, but are enumerated in a separate document at the time when personnel changes need to be made.

Your library's job description may be different and simpler, but perhaps this can serve as a guide to make the task of writing a job description for your library more approachable.

The following set of Library Job Descriptions is divided into two main sections: (I) *Personnel*, and (II) *Operations and Services*. Section I is arranged by job title and notes Operations/Services performed by each staff member. Section II is arranged alphabetically by the name of the Operation/Service, with an indication of the responsible staff person in parentheses. Cross-references between Sections I and II are provided by the Personnel title or the Operation/Service name, the initial word of which is capitalized.

I. Personnel

A. Library Professionals and Non-Professionals are full-time (FTE) and part-time (PTE) employees who jointly keep the library open 55+ hours weekly and provide quality library services to all Temple departments, schools and members. Volunteers assist according to their abilities and schedules.

B. Professionals: "Professionals" is a collective term for Library Director, Adult Edu-

cation Librarian, School Librarians, Judaica Specialist, and Audio-Visual Specialist. Library professionals participate in the decision-making process and represent their patrons and collections in most of the Operations and Services described in Section II.

1. *Library Director* (FTE)—Plans and designs a flexible library program suited to changing Temple needs. Develops and supervises all library Operations and Services, supervises Personnel, and provides professional leadership to the entire staff—setting the tone for high-quality library services. Serves as library administrator and head librarian to the entire Temple, just as the other librarians serve their specific schools/departments. Establishes an interactive relationship with all Temple departments and schools; gives library support to Temple affiliate groups when needed; and works cooperatively with Temple and school library committees. Arranges for computer implementation wherever cost-effective. Prepares an annual budget. Reports directly to Senior Rabbi, Educational Director, Temple Executive Director, and Temple Board of Trustees, as necessary.

2. *Adult Education Librarian* (PTE)—Serves as administrator and librarian of Adult Education Services, and performs whatever other tasks are needed in order to serve patrons during evening hours.

3. *School Librarians* (FTE and PTE)

a. Under Library Director's guidance, each School Librarian is supervisor and administrator of his/her school's library program and is responsible for providing appropriate School Services and tailoring and implementing Operations and Services to serve his/her unique school needs. Also, School Librarians serve as resource specialists, work with curriculum development, provide library use instruction and library lessons, and serve student needs, described as follows:

(1) *As School Library Supervisor and Administrator*: Designs and manages his/her own school library media program to supplement, complement and enrich school

Posner (Continued)

III. Lectures

"Women in Judaic Literary Tradition," by Dr. Nehama Aschkenazy. NY: JWB Lecture Bureau.

IV. Jewish Women's Libraries

The Library of the Jewish Women's Resource Center of National Council of Jewish Women, New York Section, 9 East 69th St., New York, NY 10021. More than 3000 published books, newspaper and magazine clippings, unpublished dissertations, programs of workshops, speeches, poetry, ceremonies, and archival documents.

The Jewish Women's Resource Library of National Council of Jewish Women. 534 North Fairfax in Los Angeles, CA. Contact Naomi Marblestone or call 213-651-2930 for further information.

Forthcoming: *How to Set Up a Jewish Woman's Library*. New York: JWB Jewish Book Council, 1988.