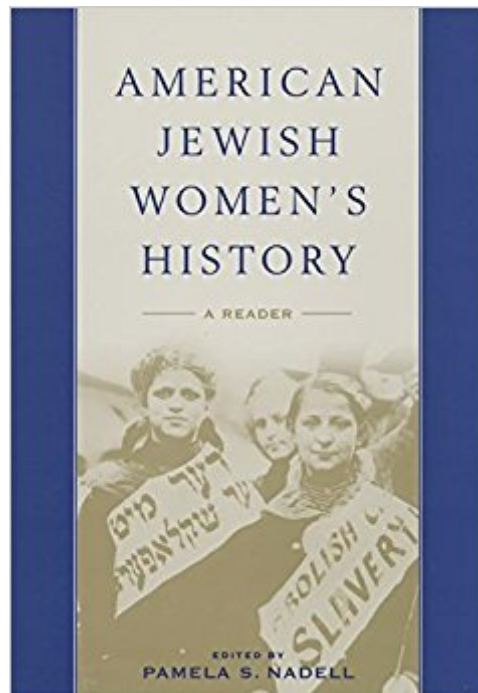




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American Jewish Women's History: A Reader



Synopsis

“It gives me a secret pleasure to observe the fair character our family has in the place by Jews & Christians,” Abigail Levy Franks wrote to her son from New York City in 1733. Abigail was part of a tiny community of Jews living in the new world. In the centuries that followed, as that community swelled to several millions, women came to occupy diverse and changing roles. *American Jewish Women’s History*, an anthology covering colonial times to the present, illuminates that historical diversity. It shows women shaping Judaism and their American Jewish communities as they engaged in volunteer activities and political crusades, battled stereotypes, and constructed relationships with their Christian neighbors. It ranges from Rebecca Gratz’s development of the Jewish Sunday School in Philadelphia in 1838 to protest the rising prices of kosher meat at the turn of the century, to the shaping of southern Jewish women’s cultural identity through food. There is currently no other reader conveying the breadth of the historical experiences of American Jewish women available. The reader is divided into four sections complete with detailed introductions. The contributors include: Joyce Antler, Joan Jacobs Brumberg, Alice Kessler-Harris, Paula E. Hyman, Riv-Ellen Prell, and Jonathan D. Sarna.

Book Information

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These 18 essays (17 written by women) illustrate the part women played in shaping the contours of American Jewish life. There are pieces on early-twentieth-century garment workers, colonial matrons, late-twentieth-century feminists, women involved in the antislavery and temperance

movements, and--more recently--those seeking to be ordained as rabbis. Other essays chronicle women's roles in the Great Depression, in modern dance, and their part in the New York City kosher meat boycott of 1902. These essays (all but two written after 1990) show the women as wives, daughters, and mothers, as workers and entrepreneurs. Nadell points out in her introduction that this anthology "demonstrates the enormous progress made in uncovering the history of American Jewish women" from the colonial era to the end of the twentieth century. It's a thought-provoking book that should be read by women and men alike. George CohenCopyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

“This anthology conveys the breadth of the historical experiences of American Jewish women.”
-Jewish Advocate
“Nadell makes explicit the diverse roles and experiences of Jewish women in the United States.”
-History Reviews of New Books
“A vibrant collection of classic and recent essays in American Jewish women’s history that form the perfect starting point to explore this burgeoning field. From the feminist politics of kosher meat boycotts and garment union organizing to the Jewish dimensions of modern dance and teenage diaries, this readable volume reveals the breadth and excitement of American Jewish women’s history.”
-Deborah Dash Moore, co-editor of Jewish Women in America: An Historical Encyclopedia
“It’s a thought-provoking book that should be read by women and men alike.”
-Booklist
“An impressive compendium of essays, American Jewish Women’s History paints a broad and diverse portrait of American Jewish women. Written by some of the most incisive historians of the American Jewish community, the chapters examine Jewish women in many different venues: the home and the marketplace, religious and secular institutions, and picket lines and cultural institutions.”
-Deborah E. Lipstadt, Emory University

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