

# **SISTERHOOD TORAH FUND BOOK CLUB**

**April 18, 2015**



## ***American Ghost* by Janis Owens**

Jolie Hoyt, the daughter of a Pentecostal preacher, and Sam Lense, a young Jewish anthropology student, fell in love, but tragedy struck when Sam began investigating the dark racial history of Jolie's hometown. Twelve years later they are forced to come to terms with the past.

## **FURTHER READING**

**Available in the Maxwell Abbell Library**

Non-Fiction:

### ***An Unspeakable Crime: The Prosecution and Persecution of Leo Frank* by Elaine Marie Alphin (T900.73)**

Discusses the 1913 murder of Mary Phagen, a 13-year-old employee at an Atlanta pencil factory, and the trial of Leo Frank, a Jewish factory manager, who was subsequently lynched by an angry mob that stormed the prison.

### ***The Provincials: A Personal History of Jews in the South* by Eli Evans (900.73)**

Eli N. Evans takes readers inside the nexus of southern and Jewish histories, from the earliest immigrants to the present day. Evoking the rhythms and heartbeat of Jewish life in the Bible belt, Evans weaves together chapters of recollections from his youth and early years in North Carolina with chapters that explore the experiences of Jews in cities and small towns across the South. He presents the stories of communities, individuals, and events in this quintessential American landscape that reveal the deeply intertwined strands of what he calls a unique "Southern Jewish consciousness." See also: ***The Lonely Days Were Sundays: Reflections of a Jewish Southerner***

### ***Matzoh Ball Gumbo: Culinary Tales of the Jewish South* by Marcie Cohen Ferris (741.1)**

From colonial Savannah and Charleston to Civil War era New Orleans and Natchez, from New South Atlanta to contemporary Memphis and across the Mississippi and Arkansas Deltas, Ferris examines the expressive power of food throughout southern Jewish history.

### ***The Temple Bombing* by Melissa Fay Greene (900.73)**

Describes the October 1958 bombing of the Reform Jewish synagogue in Atlanta and discusses the role of Rabbi Jacob Rothschild as an early spokesman for racial equality.

***The Color of Water* by James McBride (B)**

A young African-American man describes growing up in an all-black Brooklyn housing project, one of twelve children of a white, Jewish mother and black father, and discusses his mother's contributions to his life and coming to terms with his confusion over his own identity.

***Black-Jewish Relations on Trial: Leo Frank and Jim Conley in the new South* by Jeffrey Melnick (301)**

An analysis of the Leo Frank case as a measure of the complexities characterizing the relationship between African Americans and Jews in America.

***Terror in the Night: The Klan's Campaign Against the Jews* by Jack Nelson (307)**

The Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist recounts the Ku Klux Klan's terrorizing of Mississippi's Jewish community and the ambush staged by the FBI and the Meridian police that ended the terror.

***And the Dead Shall Rise: The Murder of Mary Phagan and the Lynching of Leo Frank* by Steve Oney (900.73)**

Describes the 1913 murder of Atlanta factory worker Mary Phagan, the arrest of her Jewish supervisor, Leo Frank, and the abduction and lynching of Frank, offering a compelling account of the crime and its aftermath, the history of Atlanta's Jewish community, the miscarriage of justice, the lives of various members of the lynch mob, and the long-term repercussions.

***Shared Dreams: Martin Luther King Jr. and the Jewish Community* by Marc Schneier (301)**

Examines Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s efforts in support of the Jewish community and looks at the relations between Jewish and African-American communities.

***The Jew Store* by Stella Suberman (900.73)**

The author describes her family's life in a small town in Tennessee before World War II, where, as the first Jews in town, they owned a dry goods store and struggled to prosper in a place where Jews were treated as outsiders

Fiction:

***Beach Music* by Pat Conroy (F)**

Living in Rome with his daughter, Jack McCall finds his grief following his wife's suicide interrupted by the arrival of his sister-in-law and two friends seeking his help in tracking down a classmate who went underground as a Vietnam protestor

***Saving Ruth* by Zoe Fishman (F)**

When Ruth Wasserman returns home to the South for the summer after her freshman year at college, a near tragedy pushes her to uncover family truths and take a good look at the woman she wants to become.

### ***Home in the Morning* by Mary Glickman (F)**

Jackson Sassaport is a man who often finds himself in the middle. Whether torn between Stella, his beloved and opinionated Yankee wife, and Katherine Marie, the African American girl who first stole his teenage heart; or between standing up for his beliefs and acquiescing to his prominent Jewish family's imperative to not stand out in the segregated South, Jackson learns to balance the secrets and deceptions of those around him. But one fateful night in 1960 will make the man in the middle reconsider his obligations to propriety and family, and will start a chain of events that will change his life and the lives of those around him forever. See also: *One More River*.

### ***All Other Nights* by Dara Horn (F)**

Jacob Rappaport, a Jewish soldier in the Union army, struggles with difficult moral questions when he is ordered to murder his own uncle, who has been plotting an assassination attempt against President Lincoln, a situation that becomes more challenging when Jacob is subsequently directed to marry a suspected spy.

### ***Landsman: A Novel* by Peter Charles Melman (F)**

In 1861, fleeing a murder charge in New Orleans, twenty-year-old Elias Abrams joins the Confederate Army, where he witnesses the horrors of war and falls in love with Nora Bloom, a young Jewish woman encouraged by her rabbi to correspond with a soldier.

### ***The Ladies Auxiliary* by Tova Mirvis (F)**

A moving novel set in the Orthodox community of Memphis, Tennessee, follows the uneasy movement of Batsheva--a newly widowed convert to the Jewish faith--as she and her five-year-old daughter, Ayala, unwittingly stir up trouble in the community. See also: *The Outside World*.

### ***Midnight Suppers* by Susan Monsky (F)**

Explores the conflicts and resonances of the relationships encompassing two men, Max Berenson and Abe Kern, both pediatricians and Jews in a community of the Deep South.

### ***The Street Sweeper* by Elliot Perlman (F)**

Working as a street cleaner at a large city hospital while searching for his estranged daughter, paroled felon Lamont forges an unlikely friendship with a dying man; while struggling professor Adam discovers wrenching historical recordings of victims of the Holocaust and pre-Civil Rights racism.

DVD:

### ***The People v. Leo Frank***

Vividly brings to life one of the most fascinating criminal cases in American history: the 1913 murder of a child laborer, Mary Phagan, and the trial and lynching of Leo Frank, the Jewish factory supervisor accused of her murder. Set against the backdrop of an American South struggling to shed its legacy of bigotry and xenophobia, the film is both a first-rate murder mystery and a compelling look at racial, religious, regional and class prejudices in the early years of the 20th century.

## Available in the Pinosof Children's Reading Room

### ***My Life with the Lincolns* by Gayle Brandeis (JF)**

In 1966 Illinois, twelve-year-old Wilhelmina, convinced that she, her parents, and sisters are Abraham Lincoln's family reincarnated, determines to keep them from suffering the same fates, which is complicated when she and her father become involved in the civil rights movement.

### ***Hot Pursuit* by Stacia Deutsch and Rhody Cohon (J301)**

Describes the events surrounding the disappearance and murder of the three young civil rights workers--James Earl Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner--in Mississippi in 1964, and discusses their lives up to that point.

### ***Heeding the Call: Jewish Voices in America's Civil Rights Struggle* by Norman H. Finkelstein (J301)**

Discusses the involvement of Jews in the African American struggle for civil rights in the United States, from the first settlers up to the 1990s.

### ***As Good as Anybody: Martin Luther King Jr. and Abraham Joshua Heschel's Amazing March Toward Freedom* by Richard Michelson (JB)**

Provides the story of the friendship of civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr. and Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel and their collective efforts to end discrimination through their non-violent peace protests and marches.

### ***Speed of Light* by Sybil Rosen (JF)**

An eleven-year-old Jewish girl living in the South during the 1950s struggles with the anti-Semitism and racism which pervade her small community.

### ***Northern Fried Chicken* by Roni Schotter (JF)**

A Jewish high school girl becomes increasingly involved in human rights for blacks in the early 1960s at the cost of some other important relationships in her life.