



Association for Canadian Jewish Studies  
Association d'études juives canadiennes



Association for Canadian Jewish Studies Annual Conference  
May 25-27, 2025 | du 25 au 27 mai 2025



“Convergences - A Gathering of Perspectives in Canadian Jewish Studies”

PROGRAM | PROGRAMME

**SUNDAY, MAY 25 COMMUNITY DAY | DIMANCHE 27 MAI JOURNÉE OUVERTE**  
**Soloway Jewish Community Centre, 21 Nadolny Sachs Private, Ottawa, ON K2A 2E1**  
For room number, contact / Pour plus de détails, contactez [ACJS-2025@cjarchives.ca](mailto:ACJS-2025@cjarchives.ca)

**10:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. : Welcome and coffee | 10h00 – 10h15 Accueil et café.**

**10:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. : Session 1 | 10 h 15 – 12 h 15 : Séance de conférence 1**  
**ANTISEMITISM AND DISCRIMINATION**

**Session chair: Norman Ravvin**

[Megan Hollinger](#) - Preliminary Findings on Combating Antisemitism in Canada Through Social Strategies

[Elliot Fonarev](#) - How Jewish people in Toronto respond to pressures brought on by unsettled times

[Valentina Gaddi](#) - Féminismes et judéités : convergence(s) ou divergence(s) ?

[Ariel Waller](#) - Assimilation and Canadian Jews

**12:15 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. Lunch and book displays | 12 h 15 – 13:30 h Déjeuner/ dernières parutions**

**1:30 p.m. – 2:45 p.m. : Session 2 | 13 h 45 – 14 h 45: Séance de conférence 2**  
**PRESENTATIONS AND RE-PRESENTATIONS OF THE PAST**

**Session chair: Adara Goldberg**

[Richard Menkis](#) - “Friends or foes? Amateurs, professionals and the writing of Canadian Jewish history in the 1970s and 1980s.”

[Hernan Tesler Mabé](#) - The National Film Board of Canada and the Memorialization of the Holocaust

[Natalia Vesselova](#) - To Play or Not to Play: Shylock and Antisemitism in Two Jewish-Canadian Dramas

**2:45 p.m.– 4:45 p.m. : Session 3 | 14 h 45– 16 h 45 : Séance de conférence 3**  
**GENDER AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS**

**Session chair: Jesse Toufexis**

[Deidre Butler](#) and [Betina Appel Kuzmarov](#) - Doubling Indignities: Living Jewish Divorce in Canada

[Benya Villani](#) and [Romy Shoam](#) - Full of Naches: Jewish Gay and Lesbian Activism in 1970s and 1980s Montreal

[Anna Sheftel](#) - “They Have Been Long Enough an Untermensch”: Exploring Holocaust Survivor Activism and Tensions around the Founding of the Montreal Holocaust Museum

**5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. : EVENING PROGRAM | 17 h – 19 h : PROGRAMME DU SOIR**

**Chair : Norman Ravvin**

Louis Rosenberg Canadian Jewish Studies Distinguished Service Award & Presentation to [TBA] from 5:00 to 5:30, followed by [Garry Beitel](#) “Convergences: Three Decades of Canadian Jewish filmmaking”



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Continued (2) | Suite (2)

**MONDAY, May 26 | LUNDI 26 mai**

**University of Ottawa, Ottawa, ON K1N 6N7**

**For room number, contact / Pour plus de détails, contactez [ACJS-2025@cjarchives.ca](mailto:ACJS-2025@cjarchives.ca)**

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**9:00 a.m. - 11:00 p.m. : Annual General Meeting & Open Board Meeting - open to all |**

**9 h – 11 h : Assemblée générale annuelle - ouverte à tous**

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**11:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. : Session 4 | 11 h 15 – 12 h 15 : Séance de conférence 4**

LATIN AMERICAN ISSUES

Session chair: [Hernan Tesler Mabé](#)

[Zachary Baker](#) - The Yiddish Press of Montreal and Buenos Aires during the 1920s: Comparisons and Contrasts

[Melany Chaquin](#) - “At Home” Away from Home: How Belonging to the Diaspora Impacts Latin American Jews’ Insertion into Life in Canada

**12:15 p.m. - 1:45 p.m. : Lunch break | 12 h 15 – 13 h 45 : Pause déjeuner**

**1:45 p.m. – 3:15 p.m. : Session 5 | 13 h 45 – 15 h : 15 Séance de conférence 5**

“THE OBJECT IN QUESTION” – STUDIES IN THREE DIMENSIONS

Session chair: [Barbara Weiser](#)

[Melissa Castron](#) – The Documentary Value of Objects in the Archives

[Karen Halliday](#) - Nazi looted Jewish Cultural Property in Canada – What are Their Stories?

[Noa Billick](#) - Chutzpah, Clay, and Community: Shaping Jewish Identity in Canadian Spaces

**3:15 p.m. – 4 :15 p.m. : Session 6 | 15:15 h – 16 h 15: Séance de conférence 6**

PODCAST SESSION: [Jonathan Slater](#) and [Josh Tapper](#)

Tête-à-tête: Conversations in Canadian Jewish Studies, with special guest [Seymour Mayne](#)

**4:15 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. : Break | 16 h 15 – 16 h 30 : Pause**

**4:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. : Session 7 | 16 h 30 – 18 h : Walking Tour**

WALKING TOUR : THE JEWISH HISTORY OF SANDY HILL, LOWERTOWN, AND THE BYWARD MARKET

Led by: [Hagit Hadaya](#)



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Continued (3) | Suite (3)

**TUESDAY, May 27 | MARDI 27 mai**

**University of Ottawa, Ottawa, ON K1N 6N7.**

**For room number, contact / Pour plus de détails, contactez [ACJS-2025@cjarchives.ca](mailto:ACJS-2025@cjarchives.ca)**

**8:30 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.** Additional meeting time, if needed | **8h 30 – 9 h 15** : Fin de l'AGA, si nécessaire

**9:15 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.** : Session 7 | **9 h 15 – 10 h 45** : Séance de conference 7  
ROUND TABLE: DIGITAL HUMANITIES AND THE FUTURE OF THE CANADIAN JEWISH STUDIES  
(D Koffman)

With: [Josh Tapper](#), [Miriam Bordon](#), [Maya Pasternak](#), [Jonathan Slater](#)

**10:45 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.** : Session 8 | **10 h 45 – 12 h 15** : Séance de conference 8  
RELIGIOUS THEMES

Session chair: [Adara Goldberg](#)

[Orah Liss](#) - Translating Selfhood: The Significance of Names in Adele Wiseman's The Sacrifice

[Frederick Strack](#) re Hassidic Jews in Montreal - beyond the clash (in E or F)

[Jessica Taylor Charland](#) – Narrative Intersections of Jewish educators' cultural identity and teaching practices: A self-study exploration through arts-based storytelling

**12:15 p.m. – 1:45 p.m.** : Lunch Break | **12 h 15 – 13 h 45**: Pause-déjeuner

**1:45 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.** : Session 9 | **13 h 45 – 14 h 45**: Séance de conférence 9  
UNEXPECTED JEWISH CONNECTIONS

Session chair: [Megan Hollinger](#)

[Michael Rosen](#) - Erik Jorgensen – the Jewish Father of Urban Forestry

[Irving Rosen](#) - The Jewish Disease, its Toronto Cure Which Prevented a Nazi Genocide

**2 :45 p.m. - 3 :00 p.m.** : Closing words | **14 h 45 – 15 h 00** : Séance de clôture





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**SPEAKER BIOS/ À PROPOS DES CONFÉRENCIERS**

**Zachary M. Baker** is the Reinhard Family Curator Emeritus of Judaica and Hebraica Collections in the Stanford University Libraries, where he served from 1999 to 2018. Prior to coming to Stanford, he was Head Librarian of the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research (1987-1999), Head of the Yiddish Department and Technical Services of the Jewish Public Library of Montreal (1981-1987), and a Yiddish cataloger in the YIVO Library (1976-1981). His articles on Judaica bibliography and Yiddish culture have appeared in numerous publications, including the *Association for Canadian Jewish Studies Journal*.

**Noa Vigny Billick** is a Jewish book artist and PhD student in the Communication and Culture program at Toronto Metropolitan University. Her research explores Jewish storytelling, communication, and the symbolic power of books as tools for cultural preservation and identity formation. Through her art and academic research, Noa emphasizes the interconnectedness of personal stories and cultural archives, reshaping understandings of Jewish identity and the narrative tradition.

**Miriam Borden** is a doctoral candidate at the University of Toronto and a Lecturer at University of California Berkeley in the Department of German, specializing in Yiddish literature and culture. She teaches courses on Yiddish language, literature, and history and has published on post-Holocaust Yiddish education in Toronto.

**Deidre Butler**, PhD, is an Associate Professor of Jewish Studies in the Religion program at Carleton University and Director of the Zelikovitz Centre for Jewish Studies. Butler is lead researcher of the Hear Our Voices project which centres oral history within the study of the Holocaust. Her research focuses on Jewish divorce in Canada and antisemitism on Canadian campuses. She is an ISGAP Fellow and is co-founder of (NECA).

**Melissa Castron** has been working as the Archives Technician at the Alex Dworkin Canadian Jewish Archives since 2022, following almost 10 years of research contracts that kept bringing her back in to visit the collections. She holds a graduate degree in History with a specialization in Archival Studies from the University of Manitoba (Winnipeg), and undergraduate degrees in art history and history from Concordia University (Montreal).

**Melany Chaquin** is a Jewish high-school teacher, writer, and editor. She notes: "I have been adamant about fighting antisemitism in Canada (especially within the field of education) for a number of years. I believe in teaching co-existence and in building bridges, and maintain that research and education are some of the surest ways to advance a society into one that is more united, less divisive, and overall safer for everyone. As a Canadian citizen who immigrated as a Jewish teenager from Argentina many years ago with no knowledge of English, I am passionate about immigration studies as well as about Jewish studies."

**Jessica Taylor Charland** is a PhD student in the department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning at OISE with an interest in how teachers' cultural identities influence their pedagogy and classroom practices. She has been a teacher educator for the last decade helping preservice teachers learn about literacy instruction, infusing her knowledge of multimodal literacies and social justice advocacy into her practice. She is the proud mom of two kids, an avid reader, and art enthusiast.

**Elliot Fonarev** is a PhD candidate at the University of Toronto in the Department of Sociology, with a collaborative specialization at the Anne Tenenbaum Centre for Jewish Studies. The author is also a Research Fellow at the Lab for the Global Study of Antisemitism at the University of Toronto.

**Valentina Gaddi** is a doctoral student in Sociology at Université de Montréal (ABD). Her thesis explores the construction of gender among Hasidic Jewish women in Montréal, based on a three-years ethnography. More broadly, her academic wonders focus on the place of pious citizens in democratic societies. Her work received the support of the CRSH (Vanier scholar 2017-2020, Irtg-Diversity scholar 2020-2023). She is the co-creator of the Podcast Ma-Nishtana and the coordinator of the Collectif Judéité(s) at Université de Montréal. Valentina is also the French language associate editor of the *Canadian Jewish Studies Journal/Journal d'études juives canadiennes*.



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**Karen Halliday** is a librarian at Georgian College in Barrie, Ontario. Karen's work with design and visual arts programs has prompted exploration into the Nazi-looted cultural property in Canada. Karen has received two grants from the college to research Nazi-looted books and Judaica in Canada. Karen is writing an article on Nazi-looted books in Canada for *Judaica Librarianship* journal. She has been awarded a Teaching Excellence Award and an Award of Excellence for Collaborative Teamwork.

**Megan Hollinger** is a doctoral candidate in Religious Studies at the University of Ottawa, researching social and community strategies for combating antisemitism in Canada. Megan teaches about the Holocaust at Carleton University and about antisemitism and Canadian Jewry at the University of Ottawa. Megan graduated as a Scholar-In-Residence from the ISGAP Oxford Summer Institute for the Development of Curriculum in Critical Antisemitism Studies and as a member of their research collective is engaged in mapping and understanding contemporary antisemitism from a scholarly perspective. Megan was also an Ian Stewart Graduate Fellow at the University of Victoria's Centre for Studies in Religion and Society in 2023. She is the Treasurer and Membership Chair of the Association for Canadian Jewish Studies.

**David Koffman** is the J. Richard Shiff Chair for the Study of Canadian Jewry, and an associate professor in the Department of History at York University. He is the author of *The Jews' Indian: Colonialism, Pluralism, and Belonging in America*, the editor of *No Better Home? Jews, Canada, and the Sense of Belonging*, and the co-editor of *Promised Lands North and South: Jewish Canada and Jewish Argentina in Conversation*. He serves as the associate director of York's Israel & Golda Koschitzky Centre for Jewish Studies, and the editor-in-chief of the journal *Canadian Jewish Studies / Études juives canadiennes*.

**Betina Appel Kuzmarov**, LL.M., Ph.D. is an Associate Professor in the Department of Law and Legal Studies at Carleton University, and Associate Vice-President (International). She is an interdisciplinary researcher in legal studies. She researches at the intersections of law and religion and international law and legal theory. She has published in the areas of international law and law and religion, including her book *Unilateral Acts: History of a Legal Doctrine* (Routledge: 2020).

**Orah Liss** is a PhD student for Canadian Literature at the University of Ottawa, Canada. A German native, she completed her undergraduate and postgraduate studies in Scotland, completing an MLitt thesis on trauma in Japanese Canadian and Indigenous Canadian literature. Her PhD project examines four modern Canadian Jewish women writers' engagement with exile and diaspora, balancing a literary home grounded in traditional Jewish literatures and a physical home grounded in their contemporary Canadian context.

**Richard Menkis** is in the Department of History at UBC. He recently published, with Pierre Anctil, 'In a Land of Hope': Documents on the Canadian Jewish Experience, 1627-1923. He has edited a collection of essays of Gerald Tulchinsky, with a historiographic introduction, currently under review at the University of Toronto Press. He is currently working with Anctil on volume two of *In a Land of Hope*, to appear in 2027.

**Maya Pasternak** is the Director of Archives at the Jewish Public Library, Montreal. With a background in art and social practice, she has curated international archival exhibitions for the Sydney Biennale (Australia), the Kunstverein (Amsterdam), Badischer Kunstverein (Karlsruhe, Germany), La Filature (Mulhouse, France), Jerusalem Film Festival (Israel), and more. She previously ran the archives of the Center for Digital Art (Holon, Israel), the Center of Contemporary Art (Tel Aviv, Israel), and the Noa Eshkol Foundation for Movement Notation (Holon, Israel). With a Masters of Information from the University of Toronto in Archiving and User Experience Design, she cares passionately about the care and access of archival materials.

**Michael Rosen**, R.P.F., Cert. Arb. is an Adjunct Professor at the University of British Columbia and a former President of Tree Canada, a national tree-planting charity. He notes: "I am one of the few Jewish Registered Professional Foresters in Canada."

**Irving Rosen** - Born and educated in Toronto, Irving Rosen received MD IN 1954 and retain an academic position at the Temerty School of Medicine of the University of Toronto but am fully retired from practice. He presently devotes his time to history of medicine research and meetings related to that field.



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**Romy Shoam** (she/her) is a M.A. Public History student at Carleton University. Her research background and work in heritage include projects related to immigration history, social and gender history, and language and nationalism in Canada. Her M.A. research focuses on oral histories of French-speaking Jewish immigrants to Quebec in the mid-20th century.

**Anna Sheftel** is Principal and Associate Professor in the School of Community and Public Affairs at Concordia University. She has worked with Holocaust survivors in Montreal since 2008. She has published extensively on oral history practice and ethics, for example her article, "Talking and Not Talking about Violence: Challenges in Interviewing Survivors of Atrocity as Whole People," which won the OHA's 2019 Article Award.

**Jonathan Slater** is professor emeritus of public relations at the State University of New York at Plattsburgh, where he also directed the Institute for Ethics in Public Life and founded and led the institution's Jewish Studies Program. Dr. Slater currently serves on the board of the Marshall McLuhan Initiative in Winnipeg. He is the host of Tête-à-tête: Conversations in Canadian Jewish Studies – the official podcast of the ACJS journal, *Canadian Jewish Studies/Études juives canadiennes*.

**Frederic Strack** is a Postdoctoral Researcher at the Université de Sherbrooke. He works on the public management of religious diversity based on the case of Orthodox Jews. His current investigation, supported by the Fonds de Recherche du Québec, is about Hassidic Jews in Montreal. He recently published « Laïcité, Public Governance of Religion, and the Orthodox Jews in France », in Vekovic, M., Jevtic, M. (eds.), *Religion and Politics in Europe, the USA and Asia*, Routledge

**Joshua Tapper** is a doctoral candidate in Jewish History at Stanford University, where he is completing a dissertation on the renaissance of Jewish culture and politics in the last years of the Soviet Union. He is vice president of the Association of Canadian Jewish Studies and managing editor of the journal *Canadian Jewish Studies*, which has published his work on Soviet Jewish immigration to and resettlement in Canada.

**Hernan Tesler-Mabé** is Associate Professor and Coordinator of the Jewish Studies program at Huron University in London, Ontario. His research centers on modern Jewish history and culture across the Diaspora, with a focus on the intersection of Jewish culture and identity. He is Past President of the Association for Canadian Jewish Studies (ACJS).

**Natalia Vesselova**, Ph.D, is Coordinator of the Vered Jewish Canadian Studies Program at the Department of Classics and Religious Studies at the University of Ottawa. Her doctoral dissertation was dedicated to Leonard Cohen's philosophy of time. She has widely published on comparative literatures, East European literatures and cultural studies, and Canadian literature. Her current research interests include Jewish Canadian theatre.

**Benya Villani** (they/them) is a PhD candidate at the University of Western Ontario, and the Research Manager at the Museum of Jewish Montreal. Their areas of focus is Jewish history in Europe and Canada during the early and mid-20th century. The subject of their doctoral research is Jewish identity during the post-World War II Displaced Persons crisis.

**Ariel Waller** is a graduate student in anthropology at the University of Ottawa currently working on a master's thesis on Jewish communities in small-town Ontario. She notes: "I grew up in Fergus, Ontario when it was only known for the Scottish Festival and Highland Games, and where my fondest memories are playing in cornfields and exploring the Grand River caves. I have always had a love for understanding how other people see the world; anthropology suits me well."



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Sunday evening program speaker :

**Garry Beitel** is a Montreal based documentary filmmaker whose probing portraits of individuals and communities have been screened in theatres and broadcast on Canadian television for over 35 years, winning national and international awards. He works primarily in Canada – both in English and French - but has also made films in China, Africa, South America, Mexico and the Middle East. His acclaimed *Bonjour! Shalom!* won three Géméaux awards including Best Quebec Documentary (1991). *Vive le Québec ... Anglé!* was nominated for a Géméau (2004) for best direction in a public affairs documentary and *The Man Who Learned to Fall* won two Freddie Awards at the International Health and Medical Media Awards (2005). *My dear Clara* (2002) and *The "Socalled" Movie* (2010) received the J.I. Segal Award from the Jewish Public Library for best Canadian film on a Jewish theme. Other noteworthy award-winning films are *Chez Schwartz* and *More Than Half the Sky*. Beitel has an MA in Film and Communications from McGill University where he has been a Course Lecturer since 1988 teaching courses on Documentary Film and Cultural Studies in the Departments of English and Jewish Studies. He is the 2011 recipient of the *Bourse de carrière* (for lifetime achievement) awarded annually by the Conseil des arts et des lettres de Québec. He is the first Anglophone filmmaker in Quebec to receive this prestigious award.

Walking tour guide :

**Hagit Hadaya** holds a Master of Canadian Heritage Conservation and a High Honours BA in Architectural History, both from Carleton University. For the past 35 years, she has conducted walking tours in Ottawa and vicinity for a variety of groups. She has published two books: *In Search of Sacred Space: Synagogue Architecture in Ottawa* (2013) and *At Home With The Prime Minister: Ottawa Residences of the Prime Ministers Prior to 1952* (2017).