



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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2015 WINNERS OF NATIONAL JEWISH BOOK AWARDS ANNOUNCED

Daniel Torday wins Fiction category for *The Last Flight of Poxl West*

**Book of the Year Awarded to
Anonymous Soldiers by Bruce Hoffman**

New York, January 13, 2016 – Jewish Book Council announces the winners of the 2015 National Jewish Book Awards, North America’s longest-running awards program in the field of Jewish literature, now in its 65th year. This year’s winners include Daniel Torday for his “ambitious and moving novel of two Jewish stories set in rich contrapuntal relation,” *The Last Flight of Poxl West* (St. Martin’s Press), and Newbery Award recipient Laura Amy Schlitz, the first winner of the Young Adult Literature award for *The Hired Girl* (Candlewick Press).

Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks wins his fifth National Jewish Book Award in the Modern Jewish Thought category for *Not in God’s Name* (Schocken Books), a “dramatic and ebullient” philosophical contemplation of the increasing frequency and scale of violence catalyzed by religious beliefs. Debut author Shulem Deen receives the Contemporary Jewish Life and Practice award for his memoir *All Who Go Do Not Return* (Graywolf Press), “a book for the nomad, the explorer, the insatiable.”

The Everett Family Foundation Jewish Book of the Year Award is awarded to *Anonymous Soldiers: The Struggle for Israel, 1917 – 1947* (Knopf) by Bruce Hoffman,

“a morally illuminating and challenging work about the role of violence in politics.” This crucial new study examines anticolonial attitudes and actions of Jewish operations in the last three decades of Mandate Palestine preceding the establishment of the State of Israel.

This year’s National Jewish Book Award winners reflect the incredible range of important and powerful stories of Jewish communities past and present. Jewish Book Council is honored to add these authors to the increasingly impressive list of National Jewish Book Award awardees.

Please find the additional 2015 National Jewish Book Award winners as well as this year’s finalists below.

The winners of the 2015 National Jewish Book Awards will be honored on March 9 at a gala awards celebration to be held at the Center for Jewish History in New York City. If you are interested in purchasing a ticket to the dinner, please be in touch with the Jewish Book Council directly at 212-201-2920. Space is limited and all tickets must be acquired by February 29, 2016.

About the National Jewish Book Awards: As the longest-running North American awards program in the field of Jewish literature, the National Jewish Book Awards is designed to recognize outstanding books of Jewish interest. The honor is awarded in 18-20 individual categories. A complete list of the 2015 National Jewish Book Award winners and finalists follows and additional information is available at www.JewishBookCouncil.org.

About the Jewish Book Council: Jewish Book Council's mission is to promote the reading, writing and publication of Jewish interest literature. Engaging and educating authors and readers across the globe, Jewish Book Council works to enrich Jewish life and identity and create conversations with generations of readers across communities. Key programs and resources include the JBC Network author tours, the National Jewish Book Awards and the Sami Rohr Prize for Jewish Literature, writer seminars, book club resources and programs, book reviews, interviews, reading recommendations, and more.

2015 Winners and Finalists

Jewish Book of the Year Award

Everett Family Foundation

Winner:

Anonymous Soldiers: The Struggle for Israel, 1917-1947

Bruce Hoffman

Knopf

American Jewish Studies

Celebrate 350 Award

Winner:

Beyond Sectarianism: The Realignment of American Orthodox Judaism

Adam S. Ferziger

Wayne State University Press

Finalists:

Roads Taken: The Great Jewish Migrations to the New World and the Peddlers Who Forged the Way

Hasia R. Diner

Yale University Press

Young Lions: How Jewish Authors Reinvented the American War Novel

Leah Garrett

Northwestern University Press

Lincoln and the Jews: A History

Jonathan D. Sarna and Benjamin Shapell

Thomas Dunne Books

Anthologies & Collections

Winner:

Dear Mendl, Dear Reyzl: Yiddish Letter Manuals from Russia and America

Alice Nakhimovsky and Roberta Newman

Indiana University Press

Finalists:

The Literature of the Holocaust

Alan Rosen

Cambridge University Press

The New Diaspora: The Changing Landscape of American Jewish Fiction

Victoria Aarons, Avinoam J. Patt, Mark Shechner, eds.

Wayne State University Press

Biography, Autobiography & Memoir

The Krauss Family Award In Memory of Simon & Shulamith (Sofi) Goldberg

Winner:

After the Holocaust the Bells Still Ring

Joseph Polak

Urim Publications

Finalists:

A Brief Stop on the Road From Auschwitz

Goran Rosenberg; Sarah Death, trans.

Other Press

The Seven Good Years: A Memoir

Etgar Keret

Riverhead Books

Children's Literature

Winner:

Oskar and the Eight Blessings

Richard Simon and Tanya Simon; Mark Siegel, illus.

Roaring Brook Press

Finalists:

Farmer Kobi's Hanukkah Match

Karen Rostoker-Gruber and Rabbi Ron Isaacs; CB Decker, illus.

Apple & Honey Press

Adam and Thomas

Aharon Appelfeld; Jeffrey Green, trans; Philippe Dumas, illus.
Triangle Square

The Safest Lie

Angela Cerrito
Holiday House

Contemporary Jewish Life & Practice

Myra H. Kraft Memorial Award

Winner:

All Who Go Do Not Return: A Memoir

Shulem Deen
Graywolf Press

Finalists:

Jews and Genes: The Genetic Future in Contemporary Jewish Thought

Rabbi Elliot N. Dorff and Dr. Laurie Zoloth, eds.
The Jewish Publication Society

Wise Aging: Living with Joy, Resilience, & Spirit

Rabbi Rachel Cowen and Dr. Linda Thal
Behrman House Publishing

Debut Fiction

Goldberg Prize

Winner:

The Boatmaker

John Benditt
Tin House Books

Finalists:

After Abel and Other Stories

Michal Lemberger
Prospect Park Books

The Empire of the Senses: A Novel
Alexis Landau
Pantheon

Education & Jewish Identity
In Memory of Dorothy Kripke

Winner:

Pastrami on Rye: An Overstuffed History of the Jewish Deli
Ted Merwin
NYU Press

Fiction

JJ Greenberg Memorial Award

Winner:

The Last Flight of Poxl West: A Novel
Daniel Torday
St. Martin's Press

Finalists:

The Ambassador
Yehuda Avner and Matt Rees
Koren Publishers / Maggid Books / The Toby Press

The Book of Aron: A Novel
Jim Shepard
Knopf

A Reunion of Ghosts: A Novel
Judith Claire Mitchell
Harper

The Nightingale
Kristin Hannah
St. Martin's Press

History

Gerrard and Ella Berman Memorial Award

Winner:

Doomed to Succeed: The U.S.-Israel Relationship from Truman to Obama

Dennis Ross

Farrar, Straus and Giroux

Finalist:

Killing a King: The Assassination of Yitzhak Rabin and the Remaking of Israel

Dan Ephron

W. W. Norton & Company

Holocaust

Winner:

The Crime and the Silence: Confronting the Massacre of Jews in Wartime Jedwabne

Anna Bikont; Alissa Valles, trans.

Farrar, Straus and Giroux

Finalists:

KL: A History of the Nazi Concentration Camps

Nikolaus Wachsmann

Farrar, Straus and Giroux

Jewish Honor Courts: Revenge, Retribution, and Reconciliation in Europe and Israel after the Holocaust

Laura Jockusch and Gabriel N. Finder

Wayne State University Press

Modern Jewish Thought & Experience

Dorot Foundation Award—in Memory of Joy Ungerleider Mayerson

Winner:

Not in God's Name: Confronting Religious Violence

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

Schocken Books

Finalists:

The Secret of Chabad: Inside the World's Most Successful Jewish Movement

David Eliezrie

Koren Publishers / Maggid Books / The Toby Press

The Grammar of God: A Journey into the Words and Worlds of the Bible

Aviya Kushner
Spiegel & Grau

Leaving the Jewish Fold: Conversation and Radical Assimilation in Modern Jewish History

Todd M. Endelman
Princeton University Press

Poetry

Winner:

Gabriel: A Poem
Edward Hirsch
Knopf

Finalists:

The Glad Hand of God Points Backwards: Poems
Rachel Mennies
Texas Tech University Press

The Invention of Influence

Peter Cole
New Directions

In the Illuminated Dark: Selected Poems of Tuvia Ruebner

Tuvia Ruebner, Rachel Tzvia Back, trans. And intro
Hebrew Union College Press

Scholarship

Nahum M. Sarna Memorial Award

Winner:

What's Divine about Divine Law?: Early Perspectives
Christine Hayes
Princeton University Press

Finalists:

Rabbis, Sorcerers, Kings, and Priests: The Culture of the Talmud in Ancient Iran
Jason Sion Mokhtarian
University of California Press

Revelation and Authority: Sinai in Jewish Scripture and Tradition
Benjamin S. Sommer
Yale University Press

Skies of Parchment, Seas of Ink: Jewish Illuminated Manuscripts
Marc Michael Epstein, ed.
Princeton University Press

Sephardic Culture

Mimi S. Frank Award—in Memory of Becky Levy

Winner:

Double Diaspora in Sephardic Literature: Jewish Cultural Production Before and After 1492
David A. Wacks
Indiana University Press

Finalist:

Jews and Islamic Law in Early 20th Century Yemen
Mark S. Wagner
Indiana University Press

Visual Arts

Winner:

Skies of Parchment, Seas of Ink: Jewish Illuminated Manuscripts
Edited by Marc Michael Epstein
Princeton University Press

Finalists:

Ben Shahn's New Deal Murals: Jewish Identity in the American Scene
Diana L. Linden
Wayne State University Press

The Power of Pictures: Early Soviet Photography, Early Soviet Film
Susan Tumarkin Goodman and Jens Hoffman
The Jewish Museum/ Yale University Press

Roman Vishniac Rediscovered
Maya Benton
International Center of Photography / DeIMonico Books•Prestel

Women's Studies

Barbara Dobkin Award

Winner:

Birth, Sex and Abuse: Women's Voices Under Nazi Rule
Beverley Chalmers
Grosvenor House Publishers

Writing Based on Archival Material

The JDC-Herbert Katzki Award

Winner:

The Burdens of Brotherhood: Jews and Muslims from North Africa to France
Ethan B. Katz
Harvard University Press

Finalist:

The Archive Thief: The Man Who Salvaged French Jewish History in the Wake of the Holocaust
Lisa Moses Leff
Oxford University Press

Young Adult Literature

The Posner Award

Winner:

The Hired Girl
Laura Amy Schlitz
Candlewick Press

Finalists:

Somewhere There is Still a Sun: A Memoir of the Holocaust

Michael Gruenbaum with Todd Hasak-Lowy.

Aladdin

Audacity

Melanie Crowder

Philomel Books

Conspiracy of Blood and Smoke

Anne Blankman

Balzer + Bray