

FRESHMAN SEMINAR

A LIBRARIAN'S GUIDE FOR THE PERPLEXED

Developing a Children's Collection

Presented by Linda R. Silver, Jewish Education Center of Cleveland

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Description: What does a children's collection development policy for a Jewish library include? How does it help with selection and de-selection decisions? What guidelines are there for selecting good children's books that meet patrons' needs and interests? What selection tools are reliable in terms of reviewing Judaic children's books? What non-print materials are available? How can AJL resources help? These questions and others that perplex the inexperienced librarian will be addressed in this Freshman Seminar session on Collection Development.

Linda Silver has an M.L.S. from Case Western Reserve University and is currently the librarian of the Jewish Education Center of Cleveland. She has previous experience as a public, school, and synagogue librarian. Her AJL activity includes service on the Sydney Taylor Book Award Committee as both a member and then as chair. Currently, she is president of SSC and AJL's Greater Cleveland Chapter as well as being the editor of the Jewish Valuesfinder, www.ajljewishvalues.org. With Ellen Cole as co-editor, Linda edits children's book reviews for the AJL Newsletter and is also the editor of children's book reviews for Jewish Book World. She speaks and writes frequently about Jewish children's literature.

1. General Principles

- a. **Definition of Library Users:**The library's Collection Development Policy will identify the populations served by the library and describe how the library will support the institution's mission: e.g., if the library will support the curriculum of the school, preschool, adult ed. classes, etc.
- b. **Guiding Philosophy:**The philosophy of the institution of which the library is a part (Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, Recons.) is the basic guide to selecting materials. (Samples; examples from audience.)
- c. **Collection Formats:**The Collection Development Policy will describe the formats included in the collection: e.g., hardcover and paperback books, magazines, videos, DVD's, etc.
- d. **Scope:** The Collection Development Policy will describe the scope of the collection: focus on materials that reflect the movement with which the library is associated; primary sources, modern Jewish life, American Jewish experience, diversity of Jewish communities around the world, etc. Decide if you will buy secular as well as Judaic materials. Budget is a factor, as well as need.
- e. **Weeding:**The Collection Development Policy will describe in general terms the criteria for weeding.
- f. **Gifts and Donations:**The Collection Development policy will include a statement about gifts and donations.

2. **Selecting Children's Books of Jewish Content: Handout *Excellence in Jewish Childre's Literature: A Guide for Book Selectors, Reviewers, and Award Judges***
 - a. General selection criteria
 - b. Jewish criteria
3. **Selection Resources**
 - a. AJL Publications
 - b. Other Jewish Review Media
 - c. Secular Review Media
4. **Selecting Non-print Materials**
5. **Selection Resources for Non-print Materials**
6. **Acquisitions**
7. **Weeding**

SELECTION RESOURCES FOR PRINT MATERIALS

AJL PUBLICATIONS

- AJL Newsletter*** One of the benefits of membership in AJL. Published quarterly; includes both a section of adult reviews and a section of reviews for children and teens. About 40 books for children and teens are reviewed in each issue; reviews are signed; recommended and not recommended titles are reviewed. A few non-print reviews also appear. The reviewers are volunteer AJL members and are sent guidelines with each book they review.
- Bibliography Bank*** A collection of electronically accessible bibliographies created by AJL members. Find it on the Resources page of the AJL website, www.jewishlibraries.org
- Developing a Judaic Children's Collection: Recommended Books and Videos*** (AJL, 2001). For sale from AJL Publications for \$15.00 for members, \$18.00 for non-members. Consists of titles for preschool – high school. Organized topically and by grade level. Use in conjunction with the *Jewish Valuesfinder* (below).
- FAQS*** Answers to frequently asked questions are posted on the AJL website, www.ajljewishlibraries.org. They include questions about book recommendations, basic lists of books and periodicals, Jewish publishers, out of print titles, etc.

HaSafran AJL's discussion list offers a wealth of information, resources, and guidance. To subscribe, go to the AJL website, www.jewishlibraries.org and click on Resources. Questions and requests for help are always answered in abundance.

Jewish Valuesfinder A free, Internet guide to values in Jewish children's books, www.ajljewishvalues.org, published by AJL. The database of currently over 800 titles is being added to continuously. Each entry includes bibliographic information, an annotation grade level, and the book's subjects and Jewish values.

Notable Children's Books of Jewish Content

Annual lists from 1999 – 2004 may be downloaded and printed from the AJL website, Publications page. A new list of Notable Children's Books is compiled annually by members of the Sydney Taylor Book Award Committee. These lists include **Sydney Taylor Book Award** winners and honor titles.

OTHER JEWISH REVIEW MEDIA

Jbooks www.jbooks.org, an online literary magazine that published reviews and interviews relating to Jewish books, both adult and children's.

Jewish Book World Published three times a year by the Jewish Book Council; available by subscription. Includes an adult section and a section of reviews for children and teens. Only recommended books are reviewed; reviews are signed. Occasionally publishes articles and interviews.

Jewish Education News

Published quarterly by CAJE (Coalition for the Advancement of Jewish Education), www.caje.org. Available with CAJE membership. The Book Corner column reviews and discusses a few Jewish children's books.

My Jewish Books www.myjewishbooks.com, a blog and website filled with information about Jewish books.

Nextbook www.nextbook.com, calls itself "the gateway to Jewish literature, culture, and ideas." It has a large collection of reviews and a database searchable by author, title, and subject.

NON-JEWISH REVIEW MEDIA

Experience has shown that even the best known secular review journals are not consistently reliable when it comes to reviewing books of Jewish content. This is especially true in the case of books about Israel, where the reviewers often overlook errors, questionable interpretations, and even outright bias.

The media listed below should be used only to supplement Jewish review sources.

Booklist *An ALA publication. Subscription information is available at www.ala.org.*

Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books

Children's Literature Comprehensive Database

CLCD is on the Internet at www.childrenslit.com. It is a database of book reviews from many review journals, including the *AJL Newsletter*, *Children's Literature*, *Kirkus*, *the Horn Book Guide*, etc. A free subscription is available to AJL members who meet the eligibility criteria. To inquire about a subscription, contact Barbara Sutton at bsutton@san.rr.com.

Horn Book

Kirkus

School Library Journal

VOYA

REVIEWS OF NON-PRINT MATERIALS

Educational Media Reviews Online www.libweb.lib.buffalo.edu/emro/about

Associated Talmud Torah's Goldman Computer Dept. www.att.org

Jewish Education News Computer Corner

A regular feature of JEN which reviews computer software and websites of Jewish interest. JEN comes with membership in CAJE.

AUDIOVISUAL DISTRIBUTORS (make landscape)

VIDEO/DVD

NAME	TELEPHONE	WEBSITE	FAX
A&E Television Network	888-423-1212	www.aetv.com	
Alden Films 0330	732-462-3522	www.aldenfilms.com	732-294-
Amazon		www.amazon.com	
ASCD 9600	800-933-2723	www.ascd.com	703-578-
Chip Taylor Communications 2723	800-876-CHIP	www.chiptaylor.com	603-432-
Cinema Guild 4717	212-685-6242	www.cinemaguild.com	212-685-
Direct Cinema Limited 8228	310-636-8200	www.directcinema.com	310-636-
Discovery Channel	800-627-9399	www.discovery.com	
Ergo Media Inc. 0663	201-292-0404	www.jewishvideo.com	201-692-
Filmakers Library 4983	212-808-4980	www.filmakers.com	212-808-
Films for the Humanities 0266	800-257-5126	www.films.com	609-671-
First Run Features 7649	800-229-8575	www.firstrunfeatures.com	212-989-
Judaica Multimedia			
Kino 0871	800-562-3330	www.kino.com	212-714-
Knowledge Unlimited 1570	800-356-2303	www.thekustore.com	800-618-
National Center for Jewish Film 2070	718-899-7044	www.brandeis.edu	781-736-
PBS		www.pbs.org	
Pyramid Film 9083	800-421-2304	www.pyramidmedia.com	310-453-
Simon Wiesenthal Center 4521	800-900-9036	www.wiesenthal.com	310-553-
Sisu Home Entertainment 7115	800-393-4264	www.sisu.com	212-779-
Social Studies School Service 2249	800-421-4246	www.socialstudies.com	310-839-
Sound Write Production 6124	800-976-8639	www.soundwrite.com	619-697-

Spoken Arts 4620	914-633-4620	www.patricapolacco.com	914-633-
WGBH Boston Video (NOVA)	800-949-8670	www.pbs.org	
Weston Woods 0498	800-243-5020	http://teacher.scholastic.com	203-845-
Yad Vashem	972-2-6443654	www.yadvashem.org	

JEWISH COMPUTER SOFTWARE

Bar Ilan University 7992	972-2-652-7178	www.judaicawebstore.com	972-2-651-
Davka 5456	800-621-8227	www.davka.com	773-583-
JEMM Productions 9701	416-635-9567	http://archive.jesna.org	416-635-
Judaica Multimedia	800-583-2476	www.judaism.com	
Torah Education Software (TES) 6337	845-362-6380	www.jewishsoftware.com	845-362-

AUDIO CD's

Transcontinental/URJ
ARE Publishing
Tara