NONFICTION FAVORITES
FROM THE SOPHIE BRODY BOOK AWARD COMMITTEE

Barbara Bibel, Sean Boyle, Rachel Fryd, Rachel Kamin
and Adela Peskorz

Description: The Sophie Brody Medal is presented by the Reference & User Services Association of the American Library Association to highlight outstanding works of Jewish literature which merit special attention by general adult readers and the librarians who work with them. Fiction, nonfiction and poetry that explores the Jewish experience is considered for the award. Come learn about the 2023 winners and honor books as well as other recommendations published in 2022, recent 2023 releases, and upcoming new books to have on your radar. Four committee members, representing academic, public and synagogue libraries, will discuss their favorite non-fiction titles to add to both your personal to read list and to your library collection.

Barbara Bibel has been a reference and collection development librarian for over forty years. She is retired from the Oakland Public Library in California and currently serves as the volunteer librarian at Congregation Netivot Shalom in Berkeley. She reviews books for Booklist, Library Journal, the Jewish Book Council, and AJL. She is a founding member of the Sophie Brody Medal Committee. She has a BA in French from UCLA, an MA in Romance Languages from Johns Hopkins and an MLS from UC Berkeley.

Sean Patrick Boyle is the librarian at Congregation Keneseth Israel, in Allentown, PA, and received his MLIS from the University of Pittsburgh. He is the current AJL Vice President, President-elect, and is a former SSCPL Division President. Sean is also the chair of the Advocacy committee for AJL’s SSCPL division. He is a retired U.S. Naval Officer with 27 years of Naval Service, with over 12 of those years being stationed or deployed overseas.

Rachel Fryd has been a public librarian at the Free Library of Philadelphia for the past 18 years. In that time, she has been a children's librarian, a branch manager, city wide programs & partnerships coordinator, and finally a collection development librarian specializing in materials for young adults and graphic novels for teens and adults. She has served on multiple award committees including the 2014 Randolph Caldecott Medal Committee, the 2019 Michael Printz Award Committee and currently the 2023 Sophie Brody Book Award Committee.

Rachel Kamin has been a synagogue librarian for over 25 years and has worked at North Suburban Synagogue Beth El in Highland Park, IL since 2008, currently as the Director of Lifelong Learning. She received the 2021 Fanny Goldstein Merit Award from AJL in recognition of her ongoing contributions to the profession. Rachel has served on the committees for the Sydney Taylor Book Award, the AJL Jewish Fiction Award and the Sophie Brody Book Award and also leads book discussions for four Chicago area synagogues. She holds a BA in history from Grinnell College and a master's degree in library and information science from the University of Michigan.
Adela Peskorz is a Prof. Emerita at Metropolitan State University in St. Paul, MN, where she has taught both information studies and adolescent literature and created the nationally recognized "Teens Know Best" review group. She was the Coordinator of YA Services at the Minneapolis Public Library and was a YA librarian at The New York Public Library and The Newark Public Library. Adela has served on multiple ALA committees, including the Sophie Brody, Printz Award, Best Books for Young Adults, Quick Picks, William C. Morris Award, ALEX Awards, Outstanding Books for the College Bound, the Award for Excellence in Nonfiction Literature, and the Rainbow List. She currently serves on the Board of the Kerlan Collection of Children’s Literature.