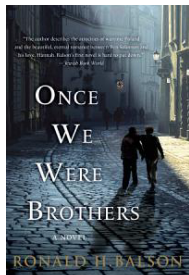


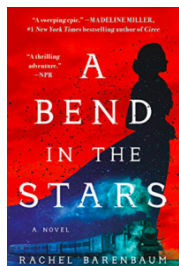
## Temple Emanu-El – Member Book Recommendations

The books on this list have all been recommended by Temple Emanu-El members. To suggest a book for inclusion on the list, contact Carl Wetzstein (585-266-6982, [carlwetzstein38@gmail.com](mailto:carlwetzstein38@gmail.com)). Enjoy!



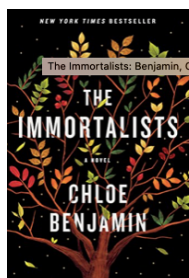
### Once we Were Brothers, by Ron Balson (fiction)

The story of two Polish boys, once as close as brothers, who wind up on opposite sides of the Holocaust. [Submitted by Marty and Thelma Nemeroff, posted May 19, 2020]



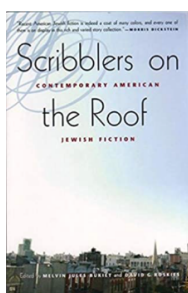
### A Bend in the Stars, by Rachel Barenbaum (fiction)

The story takes place in the summer of 1914 in Russia, and is both an epic love story and a journey by an ambitious young doctor to solve one of the mysteries of the universe. [Submitted by Judy Goldstein, posted May 19, 2020]



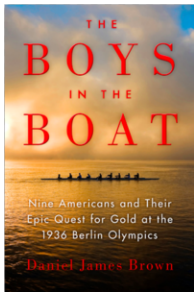
### The Immortalists, by Chloe Benjamin (fiction)

The story starts in New York's Lower East Side, when four teenagers consult a psychic about their destinies. Was it those prophecies or other influences that affected their adult lives? NPR and the Washington Post called The Immortalists one of the best books of the year. [Submitted by Judy Goldstein, posted May 19, 2020]



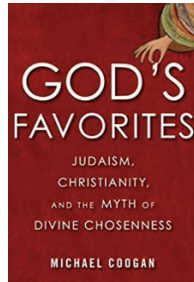
### \*Scribblers on the Roof: Contemporary Jewish Fiction, edited by Melvin Jules Bukiet and David G. Roskies (fiction)

A wide range of stories - provocative, funny, and sad. [Submitted by Carl Wetzstein, posted March 12, 2021]



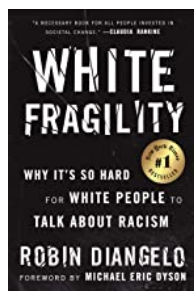
The Boys in the Boat – Nine Americans and Their Epic Quest for Gold at the 1936 Berlin Olympics, by Daniel James Brown (non-fiction)

The rowing team from the University of Washington first had to overcome the prejudice of the American Olympic Committee in favor of the Ivy league schools and then the tough competition at the Berlin Olympics. [Submitted by Marty and Thelma Nemeroff, posted May 19, 2020]



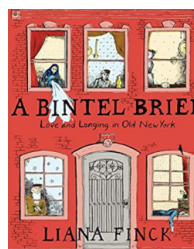
\*God's Favorite People: Judaism, Christianity and the Myth of Divine Chosenness, by Michael Coogan (non-fiction)

The book describes how various people and groups through the ages saw themselves as being God's chosen people. [Submitted by Carl Wetzstein, posted March 12, 2021]



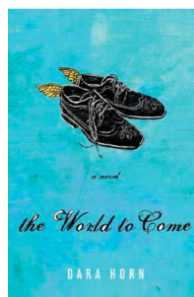
White Fragility – Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism, by Robin DiAngelo and Michael Eric Dyson (non-fiction).

White Fragility discusses the response of people who are unable to handle the feedback that they may be racist and not realize it, by getting defensive and angry and refusing to listen. The book makes the reader aware of the struggles that people of color go through. [Submitted by Cathy Leora Dayan, posted August 9, 2020]



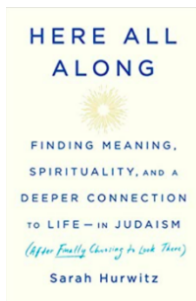
\*A Bintel Brief: Love and Longing in Old New York, by Liana Finck (fiction).

The book is graphic novelist Liana Finck's ode to immigrant ancestors. The "Bundle of Letters" written to the advice columnist at The Forward provides a glimpse into the joys and sorrows of Jewish life at the turn of the last century, addressing topics from politics to premarital sex. Finck's illustrations provide whimsy and depth to the stories contained in the letters. [Submitted by Drorah Setel, posted March 12, 2021]



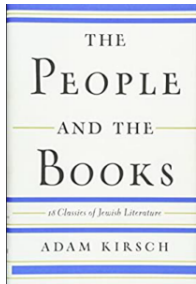
The World to Come, by Dara Horn (fiction)

The process of unraveling the mystery of a stolen Chagall painting includes the actual story of Chagall and other writers that he worked with. Another interesting part is the author's telling the story of how a soul is being prepared for both birth and life on earth. [Submitted by Carl Wetzstein, posted May 19, 2020]



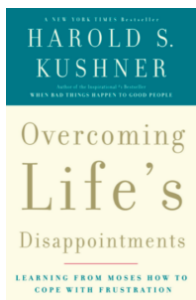
Here All Along: Finding Meaning, Spirituality, and a Deeper Connection to Life – in Judaism (After Finally Choosing to Look There), by Sarah Hurwitz (non-fiction)

The author found her introduction to Judaism and Torah in Hebrew School meaningless. As an adult, she set out to learn about Judaism – this book tells her story. The book was discussed by Rabbi Setel in her Rabbi's Reading Group. [Submitted by Carl Wetzstein, posted May 19, 2020]



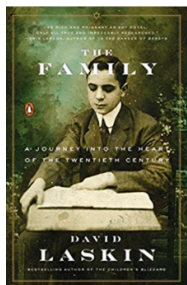
The People and The Books: 18 Classics of Jewish Literature, by Adam Kirsch (non-fiction)

The classics discussed here deal with many issues and questions faced by Jews over time – God, Israel, Diaspora, and others. [Submitted by Carl Wetzstein, posted May 19, 2020]



Overcoming Life's Disappointments, by Rabbi Harold Kushner (non-fiction)

With his usual spiritual wisdom and practical advice, Rabbi Harold Kushner writes how to cope with everyday (but especially today's) frustrations. [Submitted by Judy Goldstein, posted May 19, 2020]



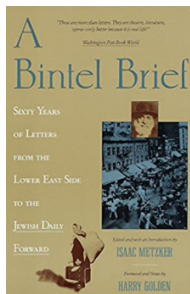
\*The Family: A Journey into the Heart of the Twentieth Century, by David Laskin (memoir)

The story of a Jewish family living in Eastern Europe early in the 20th century. They split up into three parts: those going to the US, those going to Palestine and those staying behind. [Submitted by Carl Wetzstein, posted: Mar 17, 2021]



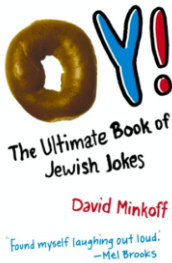
The Last Watchman of Old Cairo, by David Michael Lukas (fiction)

A remarkable history of the actual discovery in the 1880's of the geniza (store room) in a Cairo synagogue that contained many documents of the Jewish community dating to the 9th century. Also told is the story of the fictional family who for centuries were watchmen of the synagogue. [Submitted by Carl Wetzstein, posted May 19, 2020]



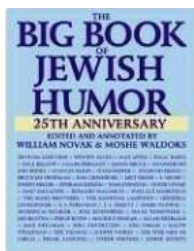
\*A Bintel Brief: Sixty Years of Letters from the Lower Eastside to the Jewish Daily Forward, by Isaac Metzker (non-fiction)

A publication of letters to the Bintel Brief column with answers covering the years 1906 to 1967. [Submitted by Carl Wetzstein, posted March 12, 2021]



The Ultimate Book of Jewish Jokes, by David Minkoff (non-fiction)

And now something lighter, OY! We can all use a joke today—have you heard this one? Two Jews go into a bar and.... [Submitted by Judy Goldstein, posted May 19, 2020]



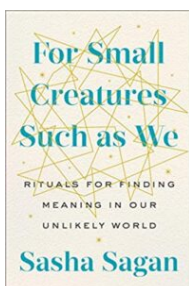
\*The Big Book of Jewish Humor, 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition, edited and annotated by William Novak & Moshe Waldox (fiction)

A collection of Jokes, cartoons and short stories by many Jewish authors. [Submitted by Carl Wetzstein, posted March 12, 2021]



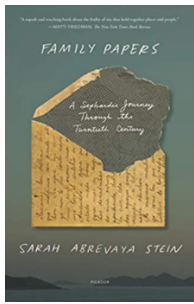
\*In My Hands: Memories of a Holocaust Rescuer, by Irene Gut Opdyke with Jennifer Armstrong (non-fiction)

Irene was an 18-year-old nursing student in Warsaw when the Germans invaded. As a laborer in a German factory she saw the treatment of the Jews and dedicated her life to saving them from the Nazis. [Submitted by Carl Wetzstein, posted March 12, 2021]



For Small Creatures Such as We: Rituals for Finding Meaning in Our Unlikely World, by Sasha Sagan (non-fiction)

Sasha is the daughter of scientist Carl Sagan. Her parents taught her that “nature, as revealed by science was a source of great, stirring pleasure. Logic, evidence, and proof did not detract from the feeling that something was transcendent – quite the opposite. It was a source of its magnificence.” Though raised in a secular home, she recognized the need for rituals, customs and traditions, and describes those of many communities throughout the world. She also talks about her personal life and her close relationship with her parents. [Submitted by Carl Wetzstein, posted: August 9, 2020]



**\*Family Papers: A Sephardic Journey Through the Twentieth Century, by Sarah Abrevaya Stein (non-fiction)**

Stein describes what she learned in tracing the records of her family over five generations, from their origins in the Ottoman Empire to their eventual dispersion throughout the world. For those of us raised on versions of Jewish history which focused on Ashkenazi Jews, this engaging book provides an important addition to our understanding of Jewish experience in the 20th century. [Submitted by Drorah Setel,

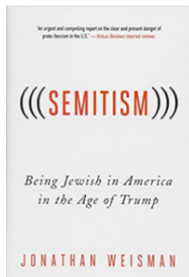
posted March 12, 2021]



**Nobody's Child: A Tragedy, a Trial, and a History of the Insanity Defense, by Susan Vinocour (non-fiction)**

Susan writes compellingly about a case in Rochester in which she served as a forensic psychologist, and about where the insanity law stands today. The NY Times gave it a very nice review. Mazel Tov to Susan, our very own Temple Emanu-El member!

[Submitted by Judy Goldstein, posted: May 19, 2020]

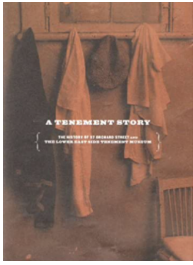


**((( Semitism ))) : Being Jewish in America in the Age of Trump, by Jonathan Weisman (non-fiction)**

A chilling look at the resurgence of anti-semitism, drawing on the author's personal experience as the target of "alt-right" supporters. [Submitted by Judy Goldstein, posted: May 19, 2020]



**White Like Me – Reflections on Race from a Privileged Son, by Tim Wise (non-fiction)**  
Tim grew up in a Black neighborhood, and now lectures throughout the United States on racism and white privilege. His memoir describes his growing realization of the differences of opportunities between whites and Blacks. [Submitted by Cathy Leora Dayan, posted: August 9, 2020]



\*The History of the Tenement Museum: A Tenement Story (non-fiction)

The book tells the story of the founding of the Tenement Museum in the Lower Eastside of New York and of the immigrant families who lived in two tenement buildings over the years. [Submitted by Carl Wetzstein, posted March 12, 2021]