

## Laura Suzanne Lieber

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### Education

Ph.D. in History of Judaism, University of Chicago, August 2003

*Dissertation*: “‘Let Me Sing for My Beloved’: Transformations of the Song of Songs in Synagogal Poetry.” Advisor: Michael Fishbane

Rabbinic Ordination, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, June 1999

*Rabbinic Thesis*: “An Ephramite Yankee in King David’s Court: Dialect-Switching in the Book of Judges.” Advisor: Stephen Kaufman

M.A. in Hebrew Letters, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, June 1998

B.A. *Summa Cum Laude* in English Literature with minors in Classics and Social Work, University of Arkansas, May 1994; Phi Beta Kappa, Fall 1992

*Honors Thesis*: “Lilith: History of an Archetype.” Advisor: Robert Cochran

### Professional Positions

Duke University

Associate Professor of Late Ancient Judaism, Department of Religion, Fall 2011-present

Assistant Professor of Late Ancient Judaism, Department of Religion, Fall 2008-Spring 2011

Director, Center for Late Ancient Studies, Fall 2011-present

Assistant Director of the Center for Jewish Studies, Fall 2008-present

Middlebury College

Assistant Professor of Classics and Religion, Fall 2003-Spring 2008

University of Chicago

Lecturer in Biblical Hebrew, Divinity School, Fall 2001-Spring 2003

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (Cincinnati)

Instructor in Bible and History of Interpretation, Summers 2000-2002

Teaching Assistant in Rabbinics, 1997-1999

University of Cincinnati

Adjunct Instructor, Department of Religion, 1997-1999

### Books (completed)

*Yannai on Genesis: An Invitation to Piyyut* (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 2010).

### Books (in progress)

*The Poetry of Communal Lament in Late Ancient Judaism and Eastern Christianity* (in preliminary planning stage).

*The Vocabulary of Desire: The Song of Songs in the Early Synagogue* (Leiden: Brill, advance contract for series, *Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity*; forthcoming 2012).

### Edited Volumes

Lawrence Edwards and Laura Lieber, eds., *The CCAR Journal: The Reform Jewish Quarterly* (Special Issue: Essays on Michael Fishbane, *Sacred Attunement: A Jewish Theology*), Summer 2011.

Deborah Green and Laura Lieber, eds., *Scriptural Exegesis: The Shapes of Culture and Religious Imagination, a Festschrift in Honour of Michael Fishbane* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2009).

### Journal Articles (Peer Reviewed)

- “‘You Have Been Skirting this Hill Long Enough’: The Tension between History and Rhetoric in a Byzantine Piyyut,” *Hebrew Union College Annual* (vol. 80), forthcoming 2011.
- “Themes and Variations: Yannai on Exodus 3:1 and Deuteronomy 6:4,” *Prooftexts* (vol. 30:2), 2010: 180-216.
- “The Rhetoric of Participation: The Experiential Elements of Early Hebrew Liturgical Poetry,” *Journal of Religion* (vol 90:2), 2010: 119-147.
- “Portraits of Righteousness: Noah in Early Christian and Jewish Hymnography,” *Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte* (vol. 61), 2009: 332-355.
- “The Exegesis of Love: Text and Context in the Early Synagogue,” *Review of Rabbinic Judaism* (vol. 11), 2008: 73-99.
- “There is None like You among the Mute: the Theology of *Ein Kamokha Ba-Illemim* in Context, with a New Edition and Translation,” *Crusades* (vol. 6), 2007: 15-35.
- “The Generation that Built the Tower: Yannai on Genesis 11,” *Review of Rabbinic Judaism* (vol. 8), 2005: 161-188.
- “Kissing Cousins: The Relationship of the Mekhilta and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan to *Parashat Mishpatim*,” *The Journal of the Aramaic Bible* (vol. 2), 2000: 89-119.

### Articles (in progress)

- “Zevadiah, Amittai, and the Poetry of Creation”
- “Theater of the Holy: Piyyut and the Rhetoric of the Late Ancient Stage”
- “From Payyetan to the Troubadours? Traces of Early Piyyut in Medieval Lyric Poetry”

### Invited Book Chapters and Reference Articles (refereed)

- “Kedushah,” *Cambridge Dictionary of Ancient Mediterranean Religions* (forthcoming)
- “Piyyut,” *Oxford Bibliographies Online* ([www.oxfordbibliographiesonline.com](http://www.oxfordbibliographiesonline.com))
- “The *Piyyutim le-Hatan* of Qallir and Amittai: Jewish Marriage Customs in Early Byzantium,” in *Talmuda de-Eretz Yisrael: Archaeology and the Rabbis in Late Ancient Palestine*, ed. Steven Fine (Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, forthcoming)
- “Dew of Rest: The World of Nature in Qallir’s *Gevurot shel Tal*,” in *The Experience of Jewish Liturgy: Studies Dedicated to Menahem Schmelzer*, ed. Debra Reed Blank (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 167-183.
- “Piyyut (Jewish Liturgical and Secular Poetry),” in *The Encyclopedia of Ancient History* (Oxford: Blackwell, forthcoming 2011).
- “Jewish Women,” in *The Blackwell Companion to Women in the Ancient World* (Oxford: Blackwell, forthcoming 2011).
- “Piyyut” and “Song of Songs” entries, *Cambridge Dictionary of Judaism and Jewish Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010)., 479-480 and 552-553.
- “Confessing from A-Z: Penitential Forms in Early Synagogue Poetry,” in: Mark J. Boda, Daniel K. Falk, and Rodney Werline, eds., *Penitential Prayer: Origins, Development, and Impact*, vol. 3 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008), 99-125.
- “Post-Biblical Exegesis: *Parashat Tetzaveh*,” in *WRJ Women’s Commentary on the Torah*. Tamara Cohn Eskenazi, ed. (New York: UAH, 2007), pp. 490-491.
- “Piyyut,” *The Encyclopedia of Judaism*, Vol. 3. (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., pp. 2000-2019.
- “‘O, my dove in the cranny of the rocks, let me see your face!’ Targum, piyyut, and the literary life of the ancient synagogue,” *Paratext and Megatext in Jewish and Christian Traditions*. A. den Hollander, U. Schmidt, and W.F. Smelik, eds. (Leiden: Brill, 2003), pp. 109-135.

### Educational Media

- Study Guide to the JPS Bible Commentary: Haftarot* (Philadelphia: JPS, 2002).

### Reviews

- Steven Fine, *Art and Judaism in the Greco-Roman World*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010). *IMAGES* (forthcoming)
- Deborah A. Green, *Aroma of Righteousness: Scent and Seduction in Rabbinic Life and Literature* (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2011). *Interpretation* (forthcoming)
- Geza Vermes, *Jesus in the Jewish World* (Norwich, UK: SCM Canterbury Press, 2010). *Theology* (forthcoming).
- Isa Aron, Steven M. Cohen, Lawrence A. Hoffman, and Ari Y. Kelman, *Sacred Strategies, Transforming Synagogues from Functional to Visionary* (Herndon, VA: Alban Institute, 2010). *Worship* (forthcoming).
- Susan Ashbrook Harvey, *Song and Memory. Biblical Women in Syriac Tradition* (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2010). *Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte*, November 2010 (vol. 62): 393.
- Michael Satlow, *Creating Judaism: History, Tradition, and Practice* (New York: Columbia UP, 2006). *Hebrew Studies*, January 2008 (vol. 49): 329-330.
- Mark Washofsky, *Jewish Living: A Guide to Contemporary Reform Practice* (New York: UAHC, 2001). *The Journal of Religion*. October 2002 (vol. 82): 670-671.
- Samuel Balentine, *The Torah's Vision of Worship* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1999). *The Journal of Religion*, April 2002 (vol. 82): 269-270.

### Invited Professional Presentations

- “The Play’s the Thing: Theatricality in Aramaic Piyutim,” International SBL (Amsterdam), July 2012
- Merrick Lecture, Ohio Wesleyan University, March 2012
- Response to Steven Fraade, *Legal Fictions: Studies of Law and Narrative in the Discursive Worlds of Ancient Jewish Sectarians and Sages*. (Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism 147; Leiden: Brill, 2011), International SBL (London), July 2011
- Selected participant, American Academy for Jewish Research Workshop for Early Career Faculty in Jewish Studies (University of Pennsylvania), May 2011
- “Jewish Marriage in Early Byzantium: Piyut and Material Culture,” for Talmuda de-Eretz Yisrael: Archaeology and the Rabbis in Late Ancient Palestine (Yeshiva University), March 2011
- “The Poetry of Creation: Zevadiah and Amittai’s *Yotzerot le-Hatan* (‘Groom’s Yotzers’),” Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting (Atlanta) – Consultation on Midrash, November 2010
- “Love and Marriage in the Poetry of Qillir and Amittai,” European Association for Jewish Studies Annual Meeting (Ravenna, Italy), July 2010
- Hebrew Union College, Open History Seminar, “Poetry of the Early Synagogue” (Cincinnati), April 2010
- “A Vocabulary of Desire: Early Poetry on the Song of Songs,” Middlebury College, May 2009
- “‘You Have Been Skirting this Hill Long Enough’: The Tension between History and Rhetoric in a Byzantine Piyut,” Duke-Carolina Jewish Studies Seminar, October 2008
- Scholar-in-Residence, “The Making of the Matriarchs: The Mothers of Israel in Early Synagogue Poetry,” Chicago Area Reform Rabbis Annual Kallah, October 28-29, 2007
- Teaching Scholar, “Uncovering and Upsetting the Paradigms of Prayer: Liturgical Innovation from Antiquity to the Present,” Joint Commission for Sustaining Rabbinic Education (Central Conference of American Rabbis and HUC-JIR), Spring 2007
- “Penitential Themes in Early Synagogue Poetry,” Society for Biblical Literature Annual Meeting (Philadelphia) – Consultation on Penitential Prayer, November 2005
- “‘There is None like You Among the Mute’: a Jewish Response to the Second Crusade,” Medieval Symposium at Middlebury College, October 2004
- “Open and Shut: Genesis 49 in Targum and Piyut,” International Organisation for Targum Studies (Leiden, the Netherlands), July 2004.
- Scholar-in-Residence, “Folklore, Magic, and Mysticism: Fantastic Traditions from Antiquity to Medieval Ashkenaz,” Chicago Area Reform Rabbis Annual Academy (series of four day-long seminars), Spring 2004

- “Liars, Blasphemers, and Translators: the Role of the Targum in the Synagogue of Late Antiquity,” Silberman Symposium at Middlebury College, January 2004
- “The Language and Purpose of *sod* in the Passover *Yotzer* of Simeon bar Isaac,” Association for Jewish Studies Annual Meeting (Boston), December 2003
- “Targum and Piyyut: Initial Considerations,” University of Chicago Jewish Studies Workshop, April 30, 2001
- “O, My Beloved, Let Me Hear Your Voice: Targum, Piyyut, and the Literary Life of the Ancient Synagogue,” International SBL meeting (Rome), July 2000

### **Public Lectures and Residencies**

- Presented, “Gems of the Cairo Genizah,” Judea Reform Congregation, October 8, 2011
- Presented, “All Scholarship is Autobiography,” College of Charleston, September 4, 2011
- Keynote Speaker, Southern Jewish Historical Society (Durham, NC), October 10, 2010
- Scholar-in-Residence, “Judaism’s Sacred Seasons,” St. Michael’s Episcopal Church (Raleigh, NC), September 2010
- Keynote address, Religion Department Graduate Ceremony, May 2010
- Scholar-in-Residence, Fearington Havurah (Chapel Hill, NC), April 13, 2010
- Scholar-in-Residence, Temple Beth Or (Raleigh, NC), January 22-23, 2010
- Presented, “The Poetry of the Prayerbook,” Judea Reform Synagogue (Durham, NC), August 2008
- Keynote address, University of Arkansas Honors College, Seminar on Graduate Education, March 2008
- Scholar-in-Residence, “Let’s Talk About It: Exile and Identity” ALA/NextBook series, South Burlington Public Library, Fall 2007
- Feen Scholar-in-Residence, “A Marriage Made at Sinai: The Poetry of Revelation,” Congregation Ohavi Zedek (Burlington, VT), April 20-21, 2007
- “My Father was a Wandering Aramean,” Reichert Memorial Lecture (Ripton, VT), August 2004
- Scholar-in-Residence, “Shavuot: The Day of Israel’s Wedding,” North Shore Congregation Israel (Glencoe, IL; series of four lectures), Spring 2003
- McMichael Scholar-in-Residence, “Forgiveness and Atonement in the Jewish Tradition,” Saint Paul’s Episcopal Church of Northwest Arkansas, November 8-10, 2002

### **Selected Grants, Scholarships and Fellowships**

- Alternate Fellow, National Humanities Center, 2011-2012
- Littauer Foundation Publication Grant (for Yannai volume), 2008
- Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture Research Fellowship, 2007-2008
- American Philosophical Society Franklin Grant, 2005 (Summer research travel)
- Littauer Foundation Research Grant, 2003-2005 (Summer research travel)
- Graduate Fellowship, the University of Chicago, 1999-2001
- Fellowship and Appointment as Visiting Researcher, Theologische Universiteit-Kampen, the Netherlands, Summer 1999
- Phi Kappa Phi National Graduate Fellowship, 1994
- National Security Education Program Graduate Fellowship (one of two nationally; inaugural year), 1994
- Phi Beta Kappa Scholar (graduate school fellowship award), 1994

### **Selected Prizes and Awards**

- Nominee, Lamberti Faculty Appreciation Award for Excellence in Teaching (Middlebury College), 2006
- Netherlands School for Advanced Studies in Theology and Religion Travel Grant, 2000
- Simon Lazarus Memorial Prize (for highest academic standing in ordination class), 1999
- Nathan Stern Prize (for top M.A. student), 1998
- Nathan Stern Essay Prize in Hebraica, 1998

Herman E. Snyder Alumni Prize for Academic Excellence (HUC-JIR), 1995  
Phi Kappa Phi honor society, inducted 1993

### **Selected Rabbinical Experience**

Mentor, HUC-JIR/CCAR Joint Commission for Rabbinic Mentoring, 2007-2011  
Rabbi, Temple Shalom (Fayetteville, AR, monthly), Fall 2000-Spring 2003  
Visiting Rabbi, Liberal Congregation of Twente (the Netherlands), Summer 1999  
Student Rabbi, Temple Adath Israel (Owensboro, KY, tri-weekly), 1998-1999  
Student Rabbi, Congregation Beth Israel (Clarksdale, MS, bi-weekly), 1996-1998

### **Research Languages**

Hebrew (Biblical, Rabbinic, and Modern); Aramaic (particularly Jewish Palestinian Aramaic);  
Syriac; Ugaritic; Akkadian; epigraphic Northwest Semitic languages; Greek; Latin; French  
(reading); German (reading); Dutch (reading)

### **Professional Associations, Affiliations, and Service**

Board of Directors, Jewish Heritage Foundation of North Carolina  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, 2011-present  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, 2010-2011  
Editorial Board, Duke Judaic Studies Series, Duke University Press  
Member, Society for Biblical Literature  
Member, Steering Committee for “History of Biblical Interpretation” Section  
Member, Association for Jewish Studies  
Member, Central Conference of American Rabbis  
Reviewed Articles for: *Jewish Quarterly Review*, *Journal of Religion*, *Zeitschrift für Religions- und  
Geistesgeschichte*  
Panelist, NEH Summer Fellowship Applications (Fall 2011)

### **Duke Service:**

Director, Center for Late Ancient Studies, 2011-present  
Assistant Director, Duke Center for Jewish Studies, Fall 2008-present  
Member, Duke University Faith Council, 2011-present  
Director of Undergraduate Studies, Jewish Studies, Fall 2010-present

### **University and Departmental Committees:**

Majors and Honors Committee (Religion Department), Spring 2009-present  
Chair, Spring 2009-Fall 2010; Fall 2011-present  
Rudnick Lecturer Committee (Fall 2008-present)  
Hebrew Bible/Old Testament search committee for Divinity (2010-2011)  
Personnel Committee of Department of Religion (Fall 2009-Spring 2010)  
Graduate Program in Religion Executive Committee (Spring 2009)  
Smart Chair Search Committee (Spring 2009-Spring 2010)  
Undergraduate Overseas Travel Fellowship competition committee (Spring 2009)

### **Student Committees:**

Dissertation Committees:  
Alan Todd  
Ben Gordon  
Lori Baron  
Carrie Duncan (UNC)  
Ken Olson  
Doctoral Exam Committees:

Alan Todd  
Ben Gordon  
Yael Wilfand  
Carrie Duncan (UNC)

MA Committees:

Crystal Reinhardt (chaired)  
Katharine Albright (chaired)  
Dan Wales (chaired)  
Zvia Schwartz  
Lauren McCormick  
Albert McClure

Senior Honors Thesis:

Atif Mahmood (graduated with highest distinction, Spring 2011)

**Courses Offered: Undergraduate**

Judaism and Food (FYS)  
Jewish Magic and Mysticism (FYS)  
Introduction to Judaism  
Jewish Ethics  
Hebrew Bible/Old Testament  
Women in Judaism  
Exile and Diaspora in Rabbinic and Medieval Judaism (Focus course; not yet scheduled)  
Hebrew Bible/Old Testament  
Classical Jewish Texts  
    Theme for Fall 2003: "Joseph and Mrs. Potiphar"  
    Theme for Fall 2005: "Images of the Sacred"  
Judaism in the Greco-Roman World  
Introduction to Judaism  
Exile and Diaspora (seminar)  
Women in the Bible (seminar)  
Jewish Identity (seminar)  
Beginning, Intermediate, and Advanced Classical Hebrew (full, four-year sequence)  
Introduction to Religious Studies

**Courses Offered: Graduate**

Reading the Song of Songs (with Ellen Davis)  
Intermediate Ugaritic  
Beginning Classical Hebrew  
Rabbinic Bible Commentaries  
Exodus in the Jewish and Christian Traditions (with Ellen Davis)  
The Haftarah Cycle (HUC)  
The Succession Narrative of King David (HUC)  
Elijah and Elisha (HUC)  
Beginning Classical Hebrew (full year sequence; University of Chicago)