

Jewish Women and Family Life



View of Paris, by Marc Chagall (1887-1985)

1:00pm—6:30pm

March 19th, 2009

At the Levine Hillel Center,
924 South Morgan St.

Scholarship on Jewish women within Jewish culture and their activities as intellectuals, professionals, and activists in secular society has become an integral part of different academic disciplines including Jewish Studies, Gender and Women's Studies, and the Social Sciences.

The multidisciplinary approach taken in this symposium is appropriate to the diversity of Jewish family life in modern times. Our speakers

represent several academic disciplines, and they focus in their work on different Jewish traditions. Examining especially the role of Jewish women at significant historical junctures and in different geographic and cultural settings, our symposium, rather than weaving a homogenous narrative, is designed to reveal some of the dynamics that shape Jewish family life and to explore the changing, often controversial and rebellious, attitudes of Jewish women toward the institution of the family.

“Re-thinking Women's Roles in Post-Feminist Jewish Families”



1:00pm

Sylvia Barack Fishman,

Professor of Contemporary Jewish Life, Brandeis University, presents an overview of Jewish women's educational and career trajectories. She will consider problem areas like delayed marriage, infertility, and the complications of 'doing it all' as well as how boys and men engage in the Jewish family enterprise.

“Confronting the Crisis of the Jewish Family:”



2:00pm

Elizabeth Loentz,

"Bertha Pappenheim and the Jewish Women's League of Germany." Associate Professor of Germanic Studies at UIC, Loentz will speak on the first decades of the twentieth century when a perceived demographic crisis provided a platform for the newly founded German-Jewish women's movement to fight for equality within the Jewish community.

“Egalitarianism and Economics: American Jewish Families”



3:00pm

Carmel Chiswick,

will discuss how the role of women in Jewish synagogue ritual changed dramatically at the end of the 20th century, at a point where full participation by women was the norm by 2000 rather than the rarity that it had been 30 years earlier. She will also consider some aspects of the economic context that help explain why the movement toward egalitarianism succeeded in that period in contrast to its many previous failures, and conclude with some predictions of future trends.

“A Family Collaboration”



4:00pm

*Jessica Lippman &
Matthew Lippman*

Jessica Lippman is a clinical psychologist with a private practice focusing on family, death, and divorce. She is an Adjunct Assistant Professor at Northwestern University Medical School in Chicago and has been featured in the Wall Street Journal, the London Times, and many other publications. She has co-authored two books, *Helping Children Cope With the Death of a Parent* in 2004 and her latest release in 2008, *Divorcing With Children*.

Matthew R. Lippman teaches in the Department of Criminology, Law, and Justice at UIC and is on the Jewish Studies Program Committee. He also serves on the legal team that is representing Chechenya in a World Court suit seeking to enjoin the continuing commission of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. Dr. Lippman is also one of the leading legal writers on genocide and the 1948 Convention On The Punishment And Prevention Of The Crime Of Genocide.

“Acculturation Among Iranian Jewish Women in LA”



5:00pm

Farideh Goldin,

was born and raised in the Jewish community of Shiraz, Iran. Her latest book, titled *Wedding Song, Memoirs of an Iranian Jewish Woman*, tells the story of her childhood in pre-revolutionary Iran along with the harrowing tale of her escape to the United States. In her talk she will discuss the disconnect between the life she was raised to lead in Iran and the one she, and other Iranian Jewish women have experienced in the U.S.

“The focus of this symposium lies on the intersection between family and public life and the conditions that enable Jewish women to thrive within both spheres, despite or because of culture specific gender role expectations.”