

Jews and Crime and Espionage in Our Time: A Survey of the Literature, Fiction and Non-Fiction

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Introduction: Bibliographies on Jews and Crime/Espionage

Crime and deviant behaviour have always been subjects of universal fascination, and the Jews are no exception, at least since Jacob stole his brother's birthright blessing by deceiving his blind, aged father, aided and abetted by his mother. I do not share the view that Jewish involvement with crime and espionage, whether in their pursuit or their investigation/interdiction, should be avoided or hushed up, for fear of "washing dirty linens in public" and providing raw material to the antisemites.

At the same time, I do not deny that the times we are living through, when old-fashioned Jew-hatred – whether on the so-called progressive Left or the unreformed Right – is again raging, under the guise of opposition to Israeli policies, have given me pause. On one hand, the antisemites don't need any encouragement for their loathsome obsessions, which continue flying on automatic pilot, in all conditions, uninfluenced by protestations of virtue and merit. And on the other hand, self-censorship for fear of the exploitation of information by bad actors is the essence of subordination and surrender to evil, which should always be resisted.

In what follows, I have included works focusing on Jews and law-enforcement, as well as on Jews and crime. Often, that turns into an examination of Jewish communal self-defense measures and outstanding Jewish lawyers and judges. The preoccupation of Jews with Law – their own or others' – has not waned in our time. Crime and law-enforcement evoke rather different levels of interest.

ChatGPT estimated that the ratio of crime-centered literature, both fiction and non-fiction, to law-enforcement literature is on the order of 4:1, based on a broad survey of catalogues and reading guides. Narrowing the focus to Jews and their involvement with both subjects virtually doubles that ratio. The reasons are not mysterious. Crime is dramatic and therefore popular, while the details of law-enforcement are not. The personal memoir of a famous criminal attracts vastly more readers than the memoir of a veteran policeman. The logistics of police work in preventing and investigating crime – critical as they are – make for less compelling reading.

One finding about our author sample, at least about the Americans, who make up over half of it, is how many of the protagonists are law-enforcement professionals (police and private detectives): 36%! Another 40%, including a variety of occupations – psychologists, journalists, lawyers, rabbis and active retirees - are "amateur sleuths". That does not reflect the occupational profile of western Jews today. Of course we expect crime fiction to feature protagonists alert to crime-detection, and can argue about the significance or insignificance of such findings. At minimum, I'd say they indicate a reading public highly receptive to the image of Jews in crime-interdiction roles.

The Jews are people, just like other people in some ways and unlike them in others, with their own particular heritage(s), and without any obligation to justify their existence. The involvement of some of them in demonstrably beneficial pursuits – in medicine, science, technology, scholarship, commerce, civil rights, law enforcement, etc. – is one part of their story. And the involvement of others in crime or espionage is another. There is no need to legitimize interest in the latter by invocation of the former. At least in the free world, we are past persecuted minority status, with all its attendant apologetic defensiveness, anti-Israel activism notwithstanding. In examining our bad guys, it is unnecessary to remind the world about all our good guys. Liberation means not having to convince anyone that, despite all, we are really ok. If anyone has a problem with that.... the problem is theirs, not ours. I simplify, of course, but it is not really much more complicated than that.

Crime is an inherent component of life and Jews interact with all parts of it, on both sides of the line, just as other people do. This expresses itself in Jewish history and in the fiction and non-fiction about it. That is an intrinsically interesting subject for examination, without paranoia or apology. Enough said.

Mysteries and thrillers are among the most popular fiction genres, as measured by sales to the reading public, and among my favourites since my first encounters with Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes. That might be because they offer a sense of order and the triumph of justice over evil in a chaotic world. The "good guys" usually win. Or just because they tease our brains to figure out "whodunnit" or pique our sensibility to violence, danger, suspense and courage in the face of adversity; or provide compelling entertainment and escapist relief from humdrum daily routine.

Jews are quite well represented in this literary space, whether as detectives, spies, villains, victims, collaborating experts and professionals, what-have-you. I noticed this a long time ago and have greatly enjoyed it, in terms of my own leisure reading. I recently thought of recording it in a survey of the scattered sources that does not, to my knowledge, yet exist. You can't appreciate the dimensions of this Jewish participation until you actually try measuring it. So I set out to map the territory, for others to enjoy, learn from and expand further.

I started with simple lists of authors and books. When the lists grew longer, I divided them up geographically. Then, as can sometimes happen, the whole thing took off, escalated. The subject is fascinating, if not intoxicating. I began compiling lists of non-fiction books and articles providing background and insight to the novels, and adding more and more authors. And then: biographies of the authors, publication details of the books, and synopses of some of them. And then again: a list of some of the movies, documentaries and television series that have joined the party. In dealing with Jews and law-enforcement, I found myself overwhelmed by the heavy Jewish presence in the legal profession

as prosecutors, defenders and judges, and had to limit the scope of coverage. Setting boundaries for what to include in this survey, and what not to include, became a pressing necessity. So here I am, over six months later, with the following six bibliographies and one filmography:

1. U.S. Jewish Detectives, Spies, Criminals et al – FICTION (**206** authors);
2. U.S. Jewish Detectives, Spies, Criminals, etc. – NON-FICTION: History, Biography, Analysis;
3. Israeli Secret Agents, Spies, Detectives, Criminals, etc. – Fiction (**75** authors) & Non-Fiction;
4. Canadian Jews and Crime/Espionage – Fiction (**14** authors) & Non-Fiction;
5. U.K. Jews and Crime/Espionage – Fiction (**21** authors) & Non-Fiction;
6. International – Jewish Detectives, Spies, Criminals, etc. - Fiction (**58** authors) & Non-Fiction;
7. Filmography - Movies, Films & TV Series (**128** listed) about Jews and Crime/Espionage (listed chronologically by year of release).

Each one of these bibliographies, in the above order, forms a chapter in this combined document. Each chapter begins with an **alphabetical list of the authors** it includes, for easy reference – on pages 47 (Americans), 281 (Israelis), 349 (Canadians), 390 (British) and 432 (International). The list of authors' brief biographies and their relevant books in each chapter is followed by a survey of non-fiction books and articles of direct relevance. Because of their size, the American lists were divided into two separate bibliographies, one for fiction, one for non-fiction. **The detailed Table of Contents (TOC) provides the best overview of the project and an efficient guide to finding specific items. That is supplemented by an Index, starting on p. 540. The TOC, the Index, and page references in the text are “clickable”: Placing a cursor on the page reference, and then left-clicking your mouse takes you directly to the page indicated.**

The obvious question is: WHY? For whom is all this intended, and for what purpose? Without apology, much of it was for my own pleasure. Jigsaw puzzles do not appeal to me, but there was genuine satisfaction in assembling the far-flung pieces of information that make up this broad landscape of Jewish and

human experience. Beyond that, what practical use will this serve, a pragmatic criterion I take seriously?

I hope this survey of the tremendous material out there will benefit the following:

- Students and teachers of general and Jewish literature;
- Scholars and researchers into the areas covered by this literature;
- Libraries with, or seeking to acquire collections of this literature; and
- The general public who enjoy – as I do – reading this stuff.

If the survey can contribute in any way to facilitating serious research in the field, or promoting renewed readership of some or many of the authors mentioned, it will have been well worth every minute invested.

Considerable effort has gone into providing details, such as the 13-digit ISBN numbers or the older ASIN (Amazon Standard Identification Number) codes, comprised of letters and numbers, of each listed book, in at least one hardcover and one paperback edition, in order to make them easier to access. (Sorry, no Kindle or audiobook data provided.)

I am a lifelong lover of Jewish books, and that is my main qualification for undertaking this project. There are **374** fiction authors and playwrights mentioned in these lists, and almost 1500 of their books, plus over 250 relevant non-fiction books and many articles. This guide is intended as a finding aid rather than an evaluation of their literary or scholarly merit. Most of the annotations synthesize information drawn from publicly available bibliographic and reference sources, such as Google/AI Mode, ChatGPT, Claude, Wikipedia and Amazon blurbs, supplemented by my own reading and cross-checking. The information available from these sources is vast, though not, as they all caution, perfect. Some mistakes may have crept in, despite my efforts, and they are of course my sole responsibility. Please note: ALL the information in the survey is in the public domain – no secrets are exposed.

The classification of authors according to national categories (American, Israeli, British, Canadian and International) does not describe where they were born and raised, or what passports they hold, but rather where their novels or plays are primarily set. Thus, for example, seven of the 21 authors in the U.K. list (Astaire, Fish, Frazer, Hurst, King, Liss and Meyer) were born and raised in the U.S. And thirteen of the 58 “International” authors (Black, Bockian, Furst, George, Grossman, Kanon, Margolis, Mesusan, Poole, Rabb, Trop, Weinstein and Zimler) are American-born, plus one Canadian (Roe).

Many of the authors address different geographical and historical settings in their works and are thus not easily pigeonholed. Where for example would you classify **Adam Lebor**, born in London, studied in the UK and Israel, lives in

both Budapest and London, and has two main fictional protagonists, one a Gypsy-origin Budapest homicide detective and the other an Israeli former-intelligence operative who handles missions for the United Nations?

“International”, obviously. So some of the national assignments are a bit arbitrary.

Twenty-seven of the **75** authors classified as Israeli are foreign-born. **30** of them (Abarbanell, Azrieli, Benjamin, Berman, Burbara, Carmon, Drori, Dunsky, Frankel, Friedland, Gordon, Haddad, Hannah, Hasak-Lowy, Hawke, Kaplan, Kestin, Kluger, Louvish, Mandelman, McVaugh, Ragen, Rees, Rosenberg [Joel and Robert], Rothstein, Silva, Sinclair, Tidhar and Wilson) write in non-Hebrew languages, all but four in English. [See the note on Hebrew-English translations at the beginning of the Israeli fiction bibliography, p. 282]. 17 of the Israeli authors live outside Israel. Well over half the total authors (**206**) are American, together with **75** Israeli, **21** British, **14** Canadian and **58** “International” – **374** in all.

The “International” group includes nine authors who wrote in **Yiddish** - Sholem Aleichem, Sholem Asch, Jonas Kreppel, Joseph Opatoshu, Isaac Rabon, Nokhum-Meyer Shaykevitch, I.B. Singer, I.J. Singer and Oyzer Warshawsky. This barely scratches the surface. When indicating the main setting of each International author’s work in the initial list (France, Argentina, Russia, etc.), my description of these nine authors’ settings was simply “Yiddish”, because their Yiddishland artistic consciousness is equivalent to and every bit as complete in my view as the country-listings of the others.

My good friend, **David Roskies**, Professor Emeritus of Yiddish and Jewish Literature at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York, confirms that “there is a vast amount of folkloric, fictional, and reportorial writing in Yiddish on the Jewish underworld.” He shared with me an amusing footnote, taken from a collection of Yiddish folklore and philology, “בײַ אונז יודען” (“Among Us Jews” – *I wonder whether that title should be followed by a question mark, as in: Among us.... really??* - SS), edited by M. Vanvild and published in Warsaw in 1923. It seems there was a synagogue in Warsaw dedicated specially for Jewish pickpockets, criminals, forgers, smugglers and related persons. A sign on its wall in Yiddish warned the worshippers to be mindful of the dangers of shutting their eyes (the customary Orthodox practice) during recitation of the opening lines of the central “Shma Yisrael” prayer! At your own risk! It is clear that much work remains to be done on Yiddish crime/espionage fiction. See the summary of Eddy Portnoy’s **Bad Rabbi** in the non-fiction section of the International bibliography (p. 507) for a good start.

The International group also includes novels set in France, Germany, Austria, Argentina, Scandinavia, South Africa, Poland, Hungary and several other countries. All of them, as well as the Filmography list of 128 movies,

documentaries and TV series on the subject, need supplementing. By the same token, there is still much to do on Israeli crime/espionage fiction, which is here mostly limited to the authors who have been translated into English. Twelve of the 45 Israeli authors in this sample who write in Hebrew have not yet been translated into English.

I will attempt to highlight some of the patterns which emerge from these bibliographies. While many authors, some of them lesser-known or long-forgotten, are included, it does not necessarily follow that these are *representative* samples in a statistical sense. I chose them as widely as I could, including classical works by Sholem Aleichem, Sholem Asch, Isaac Babel, Elie Wiesel, Isaac Bashevis Singer, Charles Dickens, Benjamin Disraeli, Israel Zangwill, John Le Carré, Ian Fleming, Franz Kafka, Howard Fast, Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud, Philip Roth, E.L. Doctorow, Arthur Koestler, Mordecai Richler, Patrick Modiano, Imre Kertész and some of the best-known Israeli authors, e.g. Amos Oz, A.B. Yehoshua, Aharon Appelfeld, Meir Shalev and David Grossman. Except for Fleming and Le Carré, none of them are regarded as mystery/thriller writers. This requires some explanation.

One conclusion from my review of this material is that crime/espionage, far from being a minor literary genre, is in fact a focus of universal preoccupation which cuts widely across and through all other literary areas. An author doesn't have to be focusing on cops and robbers in order to employ motifs of deception, secrecy, treachery, jealousy, memory and grievance, domination and subjugation, expropriation and greed, guilt and innocence, transgression and punishment, violence and injustice, as narrative drivers of their stories. This is not an attempt to reduce all human interaction to one form or another of "crime", defined so broadly as to become incoherent. It is merely a recognition of the universal passions and motivations embodied in crime and espionage, which shed light on the broadest array of human lives, values, lifestyles, institutions, loyalties and indeed, meanings. These vantage-points on reality facilitate the uncovering of hidden truths, and the clarification of uncertainties, in circumstances of partial and incomplete information – one reasonable description of the universal human condition. That is why it is rewarding to examine many ostensibly non-crime authors from this angle.

The authors included in this survey were chosen liberally, with a view to inclusiveness but without the pretense or burden of exhausting all possibilities. Readers will inevitably discover authors or personalities or books which are missing. They are invited to send me their inputs. The mystery/thriller category under discussion, as a mainstay of mass popular readership, has existed for only 150 years or so, and there is no need to go all the way back to Shakespeare's Shylock or medieval religious anti-Jewish screeds for examples.

In some cases our authors have published many novels of relevance (Faye Kellerman with 30 and Daniel Silva with 26 are the most prolific), and in other cases only one or two. The languages they write in include English, Hebrew, Yiddish, Ladino (one representative - Armando Bezés – in the International list, p. 434), French, German, Russian, Spanish, German, Italian, Hungarian, Swedish, Finnish, Polish, Danish and Serbo-Croatian. There are a few Nobel laureates - Bellow, I.B. Singer, Kertész, Modiano and Wiesel. The latter's Nobel was for Peace rather than Literature – certainly no less a distinction. Taken together, I believe these 374 are a significant sampling of the relevant authors, but cannot claim more than that. Therefore, any generalizations derived from these bibliographies should be treated with caution. They are more indicative than conclusive.

I recorded brief tributes to two late friends of mine – Sol Stern on p.229 and Mordy Dzikansky on p. 257 – at appropriate points in the text. I think both of them would have enjoyed the fruits of this project, and deeply regret that they are not here to see them.

This Introduction ends here and yields next to an examination of some characteristics of our author sample, as a potential guide for future research. I welcome readers' comments and corrections (to: shelcrimebib@gmail.com). I hope you enjoy using this survey as much as I did in compiling it. I wish to close with deep thanks to my wife, Shoshi, for her incredible patience, understanding, feedback and support throughout; and to my son-in-law, Josh Berkowitz, and my good friend, Seth Greenfield, for their invaluable help in formatting and stitching all this material together. All the best,

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Observations and Further Questions

Much can be learned by examining the assembled body of information on the Jewish interaction with crime and espionage, both in reality and in published fiction. Doing so hopefully points to directions for future research, in our never-ending fascination with analyzing and explaining ourselves (not that you have to be Jewish or a criminal or a spy to be interested). Let's get started.

Age: The age of authors in the mystery/thriller genre, compared to other genres, tends to be somewhat older, starting out somewhere in the latter 40s. The reasons cited include the fact that many began writing only *after* careers in law, journalism, policing, medicine, intelligence, etc., have equipped them with the relevant experience and expertise.

The present sample confirms that, only more so. There is a sharp **generational fault line** among the authors, who are overwhelmingly advanced in age and not being replenished proportionately by younger writers entering the field. I took as an arbitrary criterion the age of 50, i.e. birth-year 1976, and looked at the authors older and younger than that age. Of 206 American authors, only 13 are 50 or younger, 56 are deceased, and 137 are older, most of them *a lot* older. Among the Israeli authors, there were 8 younger, 12 deceased, and 55 older. Among the British, it was 2 under 50, 8 deceased (including several 19th-century authors), and 11 older. Among the Canadians, 3 deceased, none under 50, and 11 older. Among the International group (including 15 born *more* than 100 years ago), 26 deceased, 3 under 50, and 29 older.

Is this perhaps a faulty sample, under-representing younger authors who need more time to become recognized and established, and whom I may therefore have missed? Maybe in part. But it rather seems to reflect the changes in the socioeconomic and occupational structure of Jews in the various countries over the last 50-100 years.

Early 20th-century Jewry was far more proletarian and blue-collar in its class structure, and produced many more tailors, taxi drivers and regular cops, criminals, professional athletes and union organizers. Over time, as more Jews entered white-collar and professional jobs, their crime patterns did not disappear, but rather evolved in tandem. Unlike mobsters of some other ethnic groups, the Jewish ones did not usually welcome their offspring into the family business, preferring to encourage their entry into middle-class, law-abiding lifestyles and occupations. On this subject, see for example books by Rich Cohen ("Tough Jews"), Stephen Birmingham ("The Rest of Us"), Jenna Weissman Joselit ("Our Gang") and Robert Rockaway ("But He Was Good To His Mother"). All are referenced in the companion non-fiction bibliography on histories and biographies of American Jewish detectives and criminals.

Today's Jewish criminals are mostly of the white collar variety, rather than direct heirs of Meyer Lansky, Bugsy Siegel, Louis "Lepke" Buchalter and Abe Reles. Jonathan Stone's amusing book, "The Prison Minyan", referenced in the U.S. fiction bibliography, illustrates the point. Here are some of the crimes for which the Jewish convicts in that book were serving time: embezzlement of synagogue funds; tax evasion and funeral fraud; polygamy; art forgery; bribery; insurance fraud, etc. The non-fiction bibliography of American criminals, detectives, etc. lists numerous books about Lansky, Siegel, Rothstein and the others but also seven volumes on Madoff (by Behar, Campbell, Eren, Henriques, Kirtzman, Brian Ross and Weinstein).

If this reasoning is correct, it explains a great deal about the life experiences and therefore the subjects that seem to preoccupy younger Jewish authors these days. Their gradual distancing from the mystery/thriller genre may be inevitable, rendering much of the present discussion of historical rather than current applicability. Or maybe a new wave of Jewish crime/espionage fiction of the white-collar, corporate and "techno" variety is on its way.

There is not much mention or awareness of the famous American Jewish gangster personalities of the first half of the 20th century in the body of literature under consideration. Only 10% of the authors in our sample make any reference at all to them, and basically none of the authors outside the American group. In one recurring pattern, the protagonist is a grandchild or other relation of a Jewish gangster or hitman of the earlier generation, sometimes only discovering that fact by chance, and then dealing with its implications. The echoes of the "Kosher Mafia" or "Kosher Nostra" legacy are a decidedly minority phenomenon for the authors in our sample, though they make for good entertainment. Some examples:

David Black, ("An Impossible Life: A Bobeh Myseh")

Michael Chabon, (The Mysteries of Pittsburgh")

Zev Chafets, ("Inherit the Mob")

Joan Lipinsky Cochran, ("The Yiddish Gangster's Daughter")

Max Allan Collins, ("Neon Mirage")

Phillip DePoy ("Cold Florida")

Eric Dezenhall ("The Devil Himself")

Jason Diamond ("Kaplan's Plot")

E.L. Doctorow, ("Billy Bathgate")

Bruce J. Friedman ("Mr. Siegel")

Michael Gold (“Jews Without Money”)
 Tod Goldberg (“Gangsterland” Trilogy)
 Harry Grey, (“Portrait of a Mobster”)
 David Hazan (“Kosher Mafia”)
 Gregg Keizer “The Longest Night”)
 Zachary Lazar (“I Pity the Poor Immigrant”)
 Lily Barrish Levner, (“Banquets & Bootleg Bounty”)
 Richard Parrish, (“Nothing But The Truth”)
 Eileen Pollack, (“The Bible of Dirty Jokes”)
 Thane Rosenbaum, (“How Sweet It Is!”)
 Michael Simon, (“The Last Jew Standing”)

Gender: Going back to the early 20th century, there were many more male crime authors than female ones, though this evened out over the years and evolved into a certain female majority today. And there was a sort of thematic division of labour as well. Male authors strongly dominated the noir, tough detective end of the genre, following precedents of authors like Dashiell Hammett, Raymond Chandler and Mickey Spillane. Military-political-espionage-techno thrillers followed a similar pattern. Female authors were more associated with the “cozy” end of the genre, characterized by gentler tones; minimal-to-no violence, sex and profanity; amateur rather than professional sleuths; and smaller, more intimate settings with fewer suspects. Think: Agatha Christie, Dorothy L. Sayers and Ngaio Marsh. The men were more stereotypically *macho*, cynical, hard-bitten types (think: Humphrey Bogart); the women protagonists were more often sharp-tongued, clever at connecting the dots and perceiving clues, calmly restoring order and providing comforting, happy endings.

These stereotypes have given way to a greater degree of gender parity nowadays, though earlier patterns to some extent remain. Male authors in our sample outnumber the female ones in a ratio of about 2.7:1, actually 270:99, with five mixed-couple author duos (Brill, Ephron, Lockridge, Rosen and Zerries – all Americans) left out of the count. And how about the ratio of male to female main protagonists? Male authors continue to dominate the noir end of the spectrum, and female authors the cozy end, but there are also numerous “crossovers”. Here for example is a short list of some of the *female* noir protagonists in our sample, all of them American:

- Shlomit Beck's Officer Helen Barry of the Los Angeles Police Department;
- Elizabeth Cosin's Zen Moses, a hard-boiled, cigar-smoking private investigator;
- Phillip DePoy's Maddy Brimley, who stands up to attempts to shut down the small-town bookstore inherited from her aunt;
- David Feldman's Dora Ellison, the hardboiled garbage collector (!) who becomes a relentless vigilante investigator;
- Kimberly Giarratano's Billie Levine, a blue-collar, "badass Jersey girl" private investigator;
- Neil Gordon's Allison ("Alley") Rosenthal, the gun-runner's daughter who is also a Yale law student; and
- Sara Paretsky's V.I. Warshawski, the famous Chicago private investigator star of Paretsky's 22-volume series.

While the male Jewish detective protagonists in our sample include some noir, hard-boiled examples, many of them also deviate from the stereotype, for example Canadian Howard Engel's Benny Cooperman and American Roger Simon's Moses Wine. Some of our male authors are included in the cozy category, e.g. Jacob Appel, Ezra Barany, Larry Beinhart, Arthur Goldstein, Ron Goulart, David Handler, Harry Kemelman, Neil Plakcy, Frederick Ramsay, Arthur Schaefer, Joseph Telushkin, Mervyn Westreich and James Yaffe.

Do the female authors present more female main protagonists, while the male authors present less, as might be expected? One study confirms that quite dramatically, finding that 59% of the books written by women featured at least one female detective, while only 11% of the books by men did! [Source: Sharon Lohr, **Measuring Crime: Behind the Statistics** (hc, Chapman and Hall/CRC, 2019) 978-0367192310 (pb, Chapman and Hall/CRC, 2019) 978-1138489073] Our sample had a similar trend, but with significantly more deployment of female protagonists on the part of male authors.

"Geezer Noir" and "Geezer Cozy"

"Geezer" is one of those flexible terms which can be applied negatively and pejoratively or positively and fondly. I prefer the latter usage, with no connection to the fact that, as of this writing, I am a mere 77. Euphemisms such as "geriatric detective literature" rather than "geezer mysteries" are unnecessary and even a little silly.

Here is a ChatGPT definition: **Geezer noir** is a crime-fiction subgenre in which an elderly protagonist—typically in later retirement—investigates crime while confronting the physical, psychological, and social realities of aging. Unlike the lighter "geezer cozy," geezer noir retains the moral ambiguity, melancholy, and

existential concerns of classic noir, using old age not merely as characterization but as a central source of conflict, insight, and narrative meaning.

“**Geezer noir**” is not an officially recognized publishing category but rather an informal critical term that has gained currency. It refers to crime fiction featuring an older—usually retired or semi-retired—protagonist, often in his or her late sixties, seventies, or beyond, who becomes involved in criminal investigation while confronting the realities of old age. Its main protagonist is usually diminished to some extent, either physically or mentally or both, aware of and worried about it, and acutely conscious of mortality. Despite recurring health issues – such as hearing or vision loss, reduced stamina, memory lapses and fear of despondency – the protagonist wins out in the end, not through brawn or bravado, but rather through experience, wisdom, psychological insight and patience.

Much of the writing in this category carries a bittersweet undertone, an awareness of past disappointments, unfinished business – personal and professional, moral ambiguity, lost opportunities and a sense of detachment from current fads and slang. In many cases it is counter-balanced by the satisfaction of “beating the clock” through continued effectiveness and through exploiting both a long memory and society’s frequent under-estimation, as investigative advantages. Recurring themes are: aging with dignity, memory and identity, intergenerational conflict, friendship in old age, widowhood, the joys (or not) of grandparenthood, declining masculinity or femininity, regrets and sheer survival.

The cozy-noir distinction among geezers runs mostly parallel to gender, with the women clearly enjoying a better time of it in their cozy mode. ChatGPT offers this summary of the differences:

Geezer cozy	Geezer noir
Warm community	Alienation or isolation
Humorous tone	Bittersweet or dark tone
Violence minimized	Violence and moral ambiguity remain significant
Optimistic endings	Ambiguous or melancholy endings
Amateur sleuthing for enjoyment	Investigation driven by necessity or conscience

Here are some examples from our author sample, including the main protagonist’s name and one of the relevant titles. In some cases, later stages of long-running series are included, as protagonists age through the years:

Reed Farrell Coleman - *Moe Prager* ("The Hollow Girl")

Howard Engel - *Benny Cooperman* ("East of Suez") – See Canadian bib.

Steven Forman - *Eddie Perlmutter* ("Boca Knights")

Daniel Friedman – *Buck Schatz* ("Running Out of Road")

Arthur D. Goldstein - *Max Guttman* ("Nobody's Sorry He Got Killed")

Saul Golubcow – *Frank Wolf* ("Were the Angels Wrong?")

Philip Gourevitch – *Andy Rosenzweig* ("A Cold Case")

Jane Isenberg - *Bel Barrett* ("Hot Wired")

Stuart M. Kaminsky - *Abe Lieberman* ("The Dead Don't Lie")

Faye Kellerman - *Peter Decker* ("The Hunt")

Rita Lakin - *Gladdy Gold* ("Getting Old Will Haunt You")

Derek Miller - *Sheldon Horowitz* ("Norwegian by Night")

Mark Reutlinger - *Rose Kaplan & Ida Berkowitz* ("Mrs. Kaplan and the Matzoh Ball of Death")

James Siegel – *William Riskin* ("Epitaph")

Seymour Shubin - *Jack Lehman* ("The Man from Yesterday")

Serita Stevens & Rayanne Moore - *Fanny Zindel* ("Red Sea, Dead Sea")

Andy Weinberger - *Amos Parisman* ("The Gonif")

James Yaffe - *Mom mysteries* ("A Nice Murder for Mom")

Chat GPT offers a final thought on the **difference between Jewish and non-Jewish geezer trends**. "In many mainstream examples—such as Richard Osman's *The Thursday Murder Club*—age is often treated with warmth, humor, and the pleasure of outwitting younger people. By contrast, Jewish examples are more likely to intertwine aging with historical memory, questions of moral responsibility, continuity of Jewish life, and the lingering effects of the Holocaust or immigrant experience. The mystery becomes not only "Who committed the crime?" but also "What does this crime reveal about the past that still shapes the present?" That emphasis on memory and ethical reckoning gives the Jewish branch of geezer noir a distinctive tone within the larger subgenre." I am not sure how consistently that holds true, but it suggests an interesting line of future inquiry.

Guardians of the Jewish People?

After considering some of the gender variations in this literature, we should pause to examine the stereotype of the Jewish gangster as symbols of masculinity, “tough Jews” who – their criminal activities notwithstanding – still retained basic ethnic loyalties and knew how to physically protect other Jews from external enemies when necessary. In other words: rough characters who would still stand up as guardians of their people when the chips were down. The stereotype was not without some truth, primarily based on events during the 1930s in different countries, where local pro-fascist movements flourished and targeted local Jews.

Many British Jews know about the violent encounters – literally street battles – against the Union of British Fascists led by Sir Oswald Mosely, culminating in the Battle of Cable Street on Oct. 4, 1936. On that occasion, a demonstrative fascist march through London’s heavily Jewish East End was violently halted by a coalition of young, working-class British Jews, reinforced by some of the famous Jewish thugs of those same neighbourhoods, together with a sympathetic force of trade-unionists and members of other minority groups. (See the companion UK non-fiction bibliography for more on this.)

In the US, some meetings of the flagrantly pro-Nazi German-American Bund were broken up bloodily by groups recruited from the ranks of local Jewish toughs wielding baseball bats and padded lead pipes. See: Robert Rockaway, **“Gangsters vs. Nazis: How the Jewish mob fought American admirers of the Third Reich”**, *Tablet*, July 3, 2020; and Benson, Michael, **Gangsters vs. Nazis: How Jewish Mobsters Battled Nazis in WW2 Era America** (see p. 209 for summary) in the non-fiction bibliography of U.S. Jews and crime. See also another Rockaway article (“Hoodlum Hero”) and the Bergoffen article (**“Guardians, millionaires, and fearless fighters”**) in the same place.

These are usefully supplemented by the historically based novel, **Newark Minutemen** by Leslie K. Barry, in the U.S. crime fiction bibliography (see p.54); by Rachel Maddow’s **Prequel: An American Fight Against Fascism**, in the U.S. non-fiction crime bibliography (see p.215); and by the references in the novel by Philip Roth, a son of Newark, NJ - **The Plot Against America** (see p.168). Michael Chabon’s **The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay** ([see p.64](#)) describes other forms of Jewish resistance to the American Nazi activity of that era. The spy network and resistance to the Nazi takeover of Hollywood, led by Jewish attorney, **Leon Lewis**, is described in **Hitler in Los Angeles** by Steven J. Ross (see p.219) and in **Hollywood’s Spies** by Laura B. Rosenzweig (see p.218), in the U.S. Jewish non-fiction bibliography.

After WWII, in reaction to the Holocaust and subsequent events in the Middle East, Ben Hecht famously joined forces with the notorious Los Angeles mobster

leader, Mickey Cohen, to raise funds from Jewish gangland figures to buy and smuggle arms for the “tough Jews” of the Irgun, fighting the British for a Jewish homeland in Palestine. See the entry on Ben Hecht in the bibliography on American Jewish crime fiction (p.116), as well as the details of Micky Cohen’s biography in the non-fiction bibliography of American Jewish crime (p.206). Joan Lipinsky Cochran (“The Yiddish Gangster’s Daughter”) also references the arms smuggling.

Canadian Jewish history has parallel stories as part of its legacy of the 1930s and confrontations with local pro-Nazi movements. The riot at Christie Pits in Toronto in 1933 (see p. 371 in the non-fiction bibliography on Canadian Jews and Crime) was marked by the active participation of well-known Jewish criminals and professional boxers. And I recall hearing verbal testimony as a youngster in Montreal about pitched battles between groups of young Jewish men (though not the Jewish underworld figures) and local French-Canadian fascist sympathizers.

As post-WWII Jews moved rapidly into the middle classes and their children into white-collar occupations, becoming less familiar with rough street conflict in tough neighbourhoods, a certain romanticized nostalgia about these events of the 1930s gained currency. Rachel Rubin provides a reality check in her **Jewish Gangsters of Modern Literature** (see summary on p.221 in the American Jewish criminals non-fiction bibliography). Without diminishing the role some gangsters played in certain situations in protecting other Jews, Rubin emphasizes that these same criminals were victimizers first and foremost of their own people! Their fortunes were typically based on extorting protection money from vulnerable Jewish merchants and tradesmen in their own neighbourhoods. For further material on this point, see also two other books cited in the same Jewish - American non-fiction bibliography: Robert Rockaway’s **But He Was Good To His Mother** (p.217) and Jenna Joselit’s **Our Gang** (p.213).

ChatGPT suggests an inverse relationship between the type of conflict depicted in a given novel and the gender of the main protagonists. Where the friction is institutional – as in war, geopolitics, military operations and intelligence services – male protagonists dominate. And where it is interpersonal – as in families, marriages, neighbourhoods and personal relationships – female protagonists are more prominent. That is another hypothesis for future testing.

The crime/espionage genre is very broad, and includes numerous sub-genres. A few of them will be listed below, along with some of the authors associated with them, as potential vectors for future research:

Psychological thrillers – where the focus is less on physical action and crime-solving and more on the mental-emotional states and conflicts of the main characters. Suspense derives from the uncertainties of hidden motivations, past

traumas and grievances and character traits of the main protagonists. Some examples from a few authors on our different bibliographies: Atir, Ceren, Ephron, Gundar-Goshen, Hannah, Hezroni, Horowitz, Inbar, Jackont, Kirschman, Krich, Lawson, Liss, Nevo, Roth, Shubin, Tallis, Wiesel,

Police Procedurals – the emphasis is on official investigations of crimes, usually by teams of police or detectives, using professional methods and tools to unravel the mystery and to prove the case. Some examples from our bibliographies: Abram, Beck, Gur, Harstad, Hartstein, Haymon, Faye Kellerman, Krich, LeBor, Lescroart, Liss, Lockridge, Mishani, Miské, Nadel, Nykänen, Ramsay, Robert Rosenberg, Rotenberg, Sidransky, and Sheldon Siegel, Male and female authors are near-parity in this sub-genre.

Diverse Historical Settings – the mysteries take place in a wide variety of historical settings, where the Jewish protagonist has to cope with the constraints on Jewish life of the time and place. Examples: Trop (1st-century Alexandria); Mesusan (Andalus, in 10th-century Spain); Roe (14th-century Spain); Poole (Rome, 1492); Lewis M. Weinstein (15th century Seville, Spain and Florence, Italy); Bockian (17th-century Venice Ghetto); Zimler (16th-century Portugal and 17th-century Goa); Zelvin (16th-century Turkey); Goldin (19th-century Constantinople); Margolis (a Russian shtetl in 1871); George (Russia in the 1880s-1890s); Babel (Odessa, 1905–1919); Miłoszewski (Sandomierz, Poland, 2009); Liss (London in the 1700s); Astaire (Regency London, early 19th century); Hurst (a town in the English Cotswolds in the 1860s); Sansom (County Antrim, Northern Ireland, 2004); Brady (Dublin, 1991); Miské (Paris, 2010); Kazinski (Copenhagen, 2009); Gilbers (Berlin, 1930s); Wishnia (Prague Ghetto, 1592); Cozarinsky (Buenos Aires, 1920s); Ebersohn (South Africa, 1977); Greenwood (Melbourne, 1928); Allan Levine (Winnipeg, 1911); LeBor (Budapest, 2015); Padura (Havana, 2009).

Legal Thrillers – in this subset of crime fiction, the legal process and its practitioners, including lawyers, judges, law professors and students, are central to the action and the suspense. Proving guilt or innocence, seeking conclusive evidence, struggling with legal-ethical dilemmas, combatting corruption in the system, are typical recurring themes. Some examples from our bibliographies: Beck, Carmon, Gruber, Lescroart, Michael Kahn, Levitsky, Miloszewski, Ram Oren, Parrish, Patterson, Piesman, Shoham, Julie Smith.

Comic, humorous and satirical crime fiction – where liberties are taken with the standard characters and plots of the genre to serve the purposes of entertainment, parody or social criticism. This manifests in the use of eccentric detectives or criminals, witty, tongue-in-cheek dialogue, parody and unexpected outcomes, and often – happy and comforting endings. This may overlap some of the cozy mysteries, though certainly not all. Some examples from our bibliographies: Chafets (“Inherit the Mob”); Forman (“Boca Knights”); Kinky

Friedman (the “Kinkster” series, starring himself); Ed Goldberg (Lenny Schneider in “Served Cold”); Matthew Lee Goldberg (“the Great Gimmelmans”); Goulart (Groucho Marx series); Susan Isaacs (Judith Singer series); Delia Rosen (the Deadly Deli series); Elise Sax (Matchmaker Mysteries series); Jasmine Schwartz (Melissa Morris series); Laurie Gwen Shapiro (Heather Greenblotz in “The Matzo Ball Heiress”); Roger L. Simon (Moses Wine series); Stevens-Moore (Fanny Zindel series); Stone (“The Prison Minyan”). Woody Allen (“Getting Even” and “Without Feathers”) and Bruce Jay Friedman (“The Dick”) both satirize the entire mystery genre, each in his own unique manner.

A subset of this category pays tribute to **the enduring precedent of Sherlock Holmes** by generating novels referencing him, e.g.: Chabon (“The Final Solution”); Fish (“Schlock Holmes”); Ron Goulart (“Elementary, My Dear Groucho”); Laurie King (Sherlock mentor to Mary Russell); Kreppel (the Yiddish Holmes); Horowitz (the Hawthorne & Horowitz Mystery Series); Nicholas Meyer (“The Adventure of the Peculiar Protocols”); and Weinstein (the James Bond Jewish parody – “Agent Oy-Oy-7”). See also Margalit Fox’s non-fiction “Conan Doyle for the Defense” at the end of the UK bibliography (p. 424).

Holocaust Consciousness - The shadow of the Holocaust is pervasive, finding varied expressions in some of the novels, and is a recurring component in the Jewish identity and awareness of many of the protagonists. A survey of literature on the interaction of Jews with crime could easily have become obsessed with the astronomical crime of the Holocaust (see the synopsis of Michael Berkowitz’s seminal book on the Nazi myth of total Jewish criminality in the non-fiction part of the International authors’ chapter below). This subject deserves respectful treatment on its own. Certainly it can and should be studied with the tools of literary scholarship, but not in the same universe as the mysteries and thrillers of this collection.

For this reason, I have not attempted to survey the material on the bogus crimes attributed by the Nazis to their Jewish victims, nor on the Jewish police in ghettos during the Holocaust. There is more than enough material to examine on the subject in so-called “normal” times and societies. The unique circumstances of the Shoah and its literature mandate separate attention. I have therefore tried – not always successfully – to avoid overlapping with Holocaust literature and issues.

[I will digress and momentarily contradict the point just made by briefly referencing one remarkable recent book: Rose, Sven-Erik, (Making and Unmaking Literature in the Warsaw, Lodz, and Vilna Ghettos [hc, Brandeis UP, 2025]) 978-1684582730 [pb, Brandeis UP, 978-1684582754.

What Rose shows is that certain authors in the ghettos in real time grappled with their impossible situations by doing what they best knew how to do – writing – in

a variety of genres, including the detective story and the gothic horror tale. They were not naively resorting to literary escapism, they were asserting their humanity and artistic autonomy by creating works of literature that would live after them and after the unimaginable conditions of deteriorating daily lives in the ghettos. The detective mode was one useful tool to apply to the threatening realities in which only fragments of information and disparate clues were available, in the attempt to understand and make some sense out of what was really happening. The ghetto authors brilliantly meditated on the grotesque incongruities between established literary models – like the classic detective story – and the extreme conditions of their daily existence. Even there, detective story models had a role in helping to mediate reality and preserve personal agency.

*Authors like **Gustawa Jarecka** in Warsaw and **Hermann Kruk** in Vilna chronicled daily occurrences in their extreme environments and sought to use detective-like logic to assemble some coherent picture of what was happening. This was ultimately a hopeless task, because of the systematic deceptions and disinformation deployed by the Nazi authorities. The Jewish authors could not therefore analyze and solve a crime that had already happened, because the crime was continuous and they were trapped within its confines. What they could do was to use their human and artistic resources to grasp the scraps of evidence that were available, and thereby to refuse the surrender of their humanity through passive despair and withdrawal. I think Viktor Frankl would have approved].*

Some of our 374 authors are survivors (Wiesel, Appelfeld, Kertész, Kiš, Bezés). Some escaped only by emigrating in time, like Sholem Asch, Joseph Opatoshu, the two Singer brothers and two graphic artists, Will Eisner and Joe Kubert. More than 50 years later, Kubert published a graphic book (“**Yossel April 19, 1943**”) imagining what his life would have been like in the Warsaw Ghetto had his parents not emigrated when they did. Arthur Koestler was living in France when the War began and barely made it out to Britain, where he spent the duration. Romain Gary, born in Vilnius and later naturalized as a French citizen flew with the Free French Air Force during the war. Joseph Heller and Henry Denker both saw combat during the war. Will Eisner, Budd Schulberg, Saul Bellow, Howard Fast, Meyer Levin and Jerome Weidman all served in various non-combat, mostly writing roles. At least 14 of the authors are the children of survivors (Bonert, Fradkin, Golubcow, Gourevich, Gur, Gutfreund, Keret, Krich, Modiano, Raphael (Lev), Rotenberg, Thane Rosenbaum, Sidransky, Warsh).

Some of the authors’ main **protagonists** are **survivors**, e.g. Bellow (Arthur Sammler); Del Bourgo (Simon Wolfe); Dunskey (Adam Lapid); Golubcow (Frank Wolf); Horowitz (Atticus Pünd); Kanon (Max Weill); Novis (“Riva”, closest friend of the main protagonist); Modiano (Guy Roland); Paretsky (the Lotty

Herschel persona); Robert Rosenberg (Avram Cohen); Wiesel (e.g. “The Fifth Son” and “The Sonderberg Case”); Zerries (“Stealing from the Dead”); and Zimler (Benni and Shelly Zarco). In Canadian Louise Penny’s Armand Gamache series, the beloved grandmother figure who raises the main protagonist after his parents’ tragic death is a Holocaust survivor named, simply, “Zora”.

And some of the main **protagonists** in their novels are *children of survivors*, e.g. Shlomit Beck (Sergeant Joe Gallo); Kenneth Bonert (Isaac Helger); Sam Bourne (Rebecca Merton); Talia Carner (Brooke Fielding); Miles Corwin (Ash Levine); Barbara Fradkin (Inspector Michael Greene); Andrew Gross (Nathan Blum); Faye Kellerman (Rina Lazarus); Nicole Krauss (Yoav and Leah Weisz); Richard Patterson (Harold Shorr, father of protagonist’s fiancée); Lev Raphael (Nick Hoffman); Robert Rotenberg (Detective Ari Greene); Sylvia Warsh (Dr. Rebecca Temple).

A few authors focus on **the Weimar regime** in Germany preceding the Nazi rise to power in 1933, and the increasingly disastrous situation of German Jewry in the years following. Four fictional policemen attempt to dispense justice in the fast-deteriorating German situation during this period: **Philip Kerr**’s Bernie Gunther, a non-Jew (actually a quarter Jew – enough for the Nazi race laws – with one Jewish grandparent); **Jonathan Rabb**’s Nikolai Hoffner, a half-Jew; and **Paul Grossman**’s Willi Kraus, a highly successful Jewish detective in the Berlin Police Homicide Department. **Harald Gilbers**’ Richard Oppenheim, a Jew married to an Aryan German woman, is depicted as such a brilliant Berlin detective that he survives WWII – they literally can’t do without him – and continues working into the Cold War era of the 1950s. **Faye Kellerman** has a one-off, standalone novel (“Straight Into Darkness”) set in Munich in 1929, featuring a non-Jewish detective romantically involved with a Jewish woman, and pursuing a serial killer. (See also the material in the International authors’ non-fiction section – under Germany – about the real-life Berlin Jewish policeman, **Dr. Bernhard Weiss**.)

German efforts to infiltrate agents into the U.S. had a precedent, even before the American entry into World War I. German saboteurs orchestrated a massive explosion in July 1916 at the Black Tom Island munitions depot in New York harbor, an event underlying **Neil Perry Gordon**’s novel (“The Bomb Squad: Clash of the Patriots”). Max Rothman, a Jewish NYPD detective, forms a special squad to foil extension of this terror campaign on U.S. soil. In the late 1930s and early 40s, German spies were active in America, and extraordinary efforts were made to intercept them. **Andrew Rosenheim** presents a 3-volume series featuring a non-Jewish German-American FBI agent in the late 1930s (Jimmy Nessheim) infiltrating American pro-Nazi organizations. In “The Fifth Column” by **Andrew Gross**, a hidden network of Nazi sleeper cells and spies working covertly to

sabotage the United States from within is uncovered. And **Eric Dezenhall** (“The Devil Himself”) describes a collaboration between Meyer Lansky and the U.S. Navy to catch German spies during WWII, a subject he later expanded on in a non-fiction work (“Wiseguys and the White House”). Details of all these books are available in the fiction bibliography on American Jewish crime.

The massive **Nazi theft of Jewish-owned art** and other assets during the Shoah and later attempts to recover it are a backdrop in some of the novels, e.g. Asher (“The Titus Conspiracy”); Neil Gordon (“Sacrifice of Isaac”); Marks (“Artist’s Proof”); LeBor (Danube Blues trilogy); Padura (“Heretics”); Paretsky (“Total Recall”); Rose (“The Hypnotist”); Rosenbaum (“Sasha’s Trick”); B.A. Shapiro (“The Muralist” and “The Lost Masterpiece”); Silva (“The English Assassin”); Zerries (“The Lost Van Gogh”); and Zimler (“The Warsaw Anagrams”).

Attempts to rescue Holocaust victims are central in Abarbanell (“Displaced”); Gross (“The One Man”); Keizer (“The Longest Night”); LeBor (“Dohany Street” & “The Last Days of Budapest”); Rose (“The Book of Lost Fragrances”); Silva (“The Confessor”). The unique Holocaust refugee community in China is the setting for Kanon’s “Shanghai” and Rozan’s “The Shanghai Moon”.

The post-war **pursuit of Nazi war criminals** figures in the following books, among others: Abram (“An Eye for an Eye”); David Del Bourgo (“Tracking Down Gruppenführer Kunitz”); Daniel Friedman (“Don’t Ever Get Old”); Kanon (“The Accomplice”); Kerr (“A German Requiem” & “A Quiet Flame”); LeBor (“District VIII” & “The Budapest Protocol”); Richler (“St. Urbain’s Horseman”); James Siegel (“Epitaph”); Silva (“A Death in Vienna”); and Warsh (“To Die in Spring”).

Finally, Tova Reich (“My Holocaust”), exposes the ugly face of Jewish **post-war exploiters of the Holocaust** and survivors for criminal gain. A.J. Zerries (“Stealing from the Dead”) describes a dark conspiracy to defraud Holocaust survivors of the reclamation funds due them and to redirect them to the financing of international terrorism. Boris Fishman (“A Replacement Life”) has a protagonist who assists elderly Russian Jews in Brooklyn, who are Soviet refugees but not necessarily Holocaust survivors, to file fraudulent restitution claims, for which he is paid.

This does not add up to a massive preoccupation with the Holocaust on the part of our author sample. All the examples just cited don’t involve more than 10-20% of them. But even if it is not referred to explicitly and frequently, my strong impression is that the Holocaust has a place in the consciousness of most of them.

Jewish Identity of Authors and Protagonists – The diversity is wide: the great majority of both authors and protagonists are not religiously observant, but rather

secular or cultural Jews, often identifying loosely with a general idea of improving the world or protecting the weak. A few with some Jewish knowledge may connect this approach to Jewish values, such as *tikkun olam*, but most do not. One American author (Zachary Klein) had his protagonist (Matt Jacob, a private investigator) say that his “connection to Jewish ended when the hospital tossed his foreskin into a tray after his birth”. This same author experienced religious influences during his youth and eventually rejected the lifestyle, but still considers himself a Jewish American. In one of his novels, he has Matt Jacob clear a Hasidic rabbi of murder charges. Certain other authors – e.g. Beinhart, Stanley Cohen, Lyons, Salinger, Steven Schwartz and Shubin – identify only very marginally with Jewish ethnicity. As one indication of distance from conventional Jewish affiliation, almost one-third of the Jewish protagonists in our sample are either married or romantically linked to non-Jewish partners.

Some of the authors make their **protagonists half- or partial Jews**. Examples:

Ceren, Sandra Levy, Dr. Cory Cohen (“Prescription for Terror”)

Max Allan Collins – Nate Heller (“True Detective”)

Julia Dahl – Rebekah Roberts (“Invisible City”)

Kyra Davis – Sophie Katz (“Sex, Murder and a Double Latte”)

Matt Goldman – Nils Shapiro (“Gone to Dust”)

Susan Isaacs – Linda Voss (“Shining Through”)

Philip Kerr – Bernie Gunther (“The Pale Criminal “)

Laurie King – Mary Russell (“The Beekeeper’s Apprentice”)

John Lescroart – Abe Glitsky (“A Certain Justice”)

Laura Lippman – Tess Monaghan (“By a Spider’s Thread [Tess Monaghan #8])

Arthur Lyons – Jacob Asch (“The Dead Are Discreet”)

Sara Paretsky – V.I. Warshawski (“Total Recall”)

Jonathan Rabb – Detective Nikolai Hoffner (“Rosa”)

Laurie Gwen Shapiro – Rachel Ganelli (“The Unexpected Salami”)

This might suggest a certain ambivalence on the author’s part about Jewish identity, though that would not apply to at least two of the above (Kerr and Lescroart), who are not Jewish. It is also not relevant for Susan Isaacs, who deploys Jewish protagonists liberally throughout her many books.

A number of the authors have **non-Jewish protagonists addressing Jewish cases** and situations, for example:

Cara Black – Aimée Leduc (“Murder in the Marais”)

John Brady – Matt Minogue (“Kaddish in Dublin”)

Margaret Frazer – Sister Frevisse (“The Sempster’s Tale”)

G.K. George – Inspector Vasili Vasiliev (“To Kill a Tsar”)

Tod Goldberg – in which Sal Cupertine, an Italian-American gangster, successfully masquerades as a rabbi to evade the FBI (“Gangsterland” series)

Donald Harstad - Deputy Sheriff Carl Houseman (“A Long December”)

Douglas Jackson – Jan Kalisz (“Blood Sacrifice”)

Stuart Kaminsky – (Inspector Porfiry Rostnikov – (“A Cold Red Sunrise” – note that Rostnikov’s wife is Jewish)

William Kienzle – Father Robert Koesler (“Requiem for Moses”)

Adam LeBor - Balthazar Kovacs (“Kossuth Square”)

Zygmunt Miloszewski – Prosecutor Teodor Szacki (“A Grain of Truth”)

Leonardo Padura – Detective Mario Conde (“Heretics”)

Sara Poole – Francesca Giordano (“Poison: A Novel of the Renaissance”)

Andrew Rosenheim – Jimmy Nessheim (“Fear Itself”)

Debbie Viguié – Cindy Preston in partnership with Rabbi Jeremiah Silverman (“The Lord Is My Shepherd”)

Of the 15 authors just mentioned, 11 are non-Jewish, which perhaps makes their choice of non-Jewish protagonists more convenient.

How many of the authors in this sample of 374 are non-Jewish? I estimate 47, or 12.6%, though not all authors publicize their religious or ethnic membership, so that may be an under-estimate, at least of those *born* Jewish. (Authors of mixed Jewish and non-Jewish parentage are not included in this count.) How many actively *identify* as Jewish is not easily knowable. Here are the ones whose non-Jewish identity is on the public record:

1. Stephan Abarbanell (has Jewish ancestors going back 5 or more generations)
2. Toni Brill (Anthony & Martha Brill Olcott)

3. John Brady
4. Rawya Burbara
5. Phillip DePoy
6. Charles Dickens
7. Wessel Ebersohn
8. Umberto Eco
9. Ian Fleming
10. Margaret Frazer
11. G.K. George (Alfred J. Rieber)
12. Harald Gilbers
13. Robert Goddard
14. Kerry Greenwood
15. Robert Harris
16. Donald Harstad
17. Douglas Jackson
18. Dietrich Kalteis
19. A.J. Kazinski (pseudonym of Danish authors, Anders Rønnow Klarlund and Jacob Weinreich, both non-Jewish – ChatGPT)
20. Gregg Keizer
21. Philip Kerr
22. William Kienzle
23. Laurie King
24. Stieg Larsson
25. John LeCarré
26. John Lescroart
27. Laura Lippman
28. Frances & Richard Lockridge
29. Charlotte MacLeod
30. Ernesto Mallo
31. Zygmunt Miloszewski
32. Karim Miské
33. Rayanne Moore (co-author with Serita Stevens, who is Jewish)
34. Barbara Nadel
35. Harri Nykänen
36. Sergio Olguin
37. Leonardo Padura
38. Richard N. Patterson
39. Louise Penny
40. Sara Poole
41. Frederick Ramsay
42. Caroline Medora Sale Roe
43. Ian Sansom
44. Guy Saville

- 45. Hubert Selby Jr.
- 46. Julie Smith
- 47. Frank Tallis

At the other end of the spectrum, there are numerous strongly identifying Jews, and even rabbis! To begin with, there are a number of **rabbis among the authors**, e.g. Martin S. Cohen, Naomi Graetz (a rabbi's wife), Philip Graubart, Roger Herst, Andrew Kane, Lawrence Raphael, Gidon Rothstein, Arthur Schaefer, Ilene Schneider and Joseph Telushkin.

Clergy are also well represented **among the protagonists**, as follows: Jacob Appel (Rabbi Jacob Kappelmacher); Tod Goldberg ("Rabbi David Cohen" who is actually a hitman posing as a rabbi, but who puts in a fair performance); Naomi Graetz (Toby Kramer, a rabbi's wife and professor who solves a murder in her Teaneck, NJ community); Philip Graubart (Rabbi Yael Gold); Roger Herst (Rabbi Gabrielle Lewyn); Sharon Kahn (Ruby Rothman, the rabbi's widow, who remains heavily involved in running the temple); Harry Kemelman (Rabbi David Small, pioneer of the clerical sleuths); Shulamith Kustanowitz (Rabbi David London); Rachel Lewis (Rabbi Vivian Green); Arthur Schaefer (Rabbi Elijah Daniels); Ilene Schneider (Rabbi Aviva Cohen); Joseph Telushkin (Rabbi Daniel Winter); Debbie Viguié (Rabbi Jeremiah Silverman); Marvin Wolf (Rabbi Ben Maimon).

In addition to the rabbis, some authors are personally observant, or write for or about an explicitly orthodox or even ultra-orthodox ("haredi") audience, or else present protagonists who are religiously observant to one extent or another, e.g.

Shlomit Beck ("Lapdance")

John Jacob Clayton, ("Mitzvah Man")

Joan Lipinsky Cochran ("The Hasidic Rebbe's Son")

Julia Dahl ("Invisible City")

Chaim Eliav ("In the Spider's Web")

Harriet K. Feder, ("Mystery in Miami Beach")

Saul Golubcow (in his Frank Wolf series)

Stuart Kaminsky (in his Abe Lieberman series)

Faye Kellerman (Rina Lazarus in the Lazarus-Decker series)

Zachary Klein ("Still Among the Living")

Rochelle Major Krich (in her Molly Blume series)

Richard Parrish (“Nothing But the Truth”)
 Neil Plakcy in his Steve Levitan/Golden Retriever series)
 Naomi Ragen (“The Devil in Jerusalem”)
 David Rosenbaum (“Zaddik”)
 Irv Segal (“Secrets of the Rabbi’s Mafia”)
 Yair Weinstock, (“The Gordian Knot”)
 Melvyn Westreich (“Murder in the Kollel”)
 Batya Swift Yasgur (“The Search for the Real Megan”)

Nonetheless, to avoid misrepresentation, it should be repeated that the great majority of the Jewish protagonists are not religiously observant. In many cases they are conscious of and comfortable with a cultural and ethnic tie to their Jewish backgrounds, but not a formal religious one. A number of them are so-called **“gastronomic” Jews**, i.e. emphasize the role of Jewish food in connecting them to their Jewish affiliations (Joan L. Cochran, Ed Goldberg, Anthony Horowitz, Sharon Kahn, Beth Kalikoff, Lily Levner, Carol Novis, Delia Rosen, Dorothy & Sidney Rosen, Robert Rotenberg, Laurie G. Shapiro, Daphne Silver).

Many more refer to **Yiddish** as the link to their Jewish roots. None of them is depicted as a fluent Yiddish speaker, but many employ Yiddish terms and expressions and enjoy “Yiddish-inflected humour”. See for example: Miriam Allenson, Jacob Appel, Jerome Charyn, Harlan Coben, Will Eisner, Robert Fish, Barbara Fradkin, Daniel Fuchs, Michael Gold, Arthur Goldstein, Ron Goulart, Andrew Gross, Isidore Haiblum, Sharon Kahn, Joe Kubert, Rita Lakin, Samuel Ornitz, Mark Reutlinger, Delia Rosen, Elise Sax, Jasmine Schwartz, Andy Weinberger and Daniel Weizmann. This suggests that many of them were raised in first- or second- generation families where Yiddish language and expressions were common. Very few of the American and Canadian authors were born outside of North America, barely 5%, and almost all of those that were - arrived as children.

Two famous elements of **Jewish folklore** inform some of the novels in our sample. The first is the legend of the 36 “Righteous Men” – **the Lamed Vav** in Hebrew letters, with a numerical value of 36 - whose gigantic moral stature is the only thing saving the world from obliteration. Their identities are hidden, and protecting them from various conspiracies is tantamount to rescuing the world. This motif recurs in five novels:

Barany, Ezra, (“36 Righteous: A Serial Killer’s Hit List”)

Bourne, Sam, (“The Righteous Men”)

Gordon, Neil Perry, (“The Righteous One: A Cobbler’s Journey into the Dreamworld and Beyond”)

Gregory, Jill & Karen Tintori, (“The Book of Names”)

Kazinski, A.J. pseudonym of Anders Rønnow Klarlund and Jacob Weinreich), (“The Last Good Man”)

The more widespread reference is to the **legend of the Golem**, the powerful giant created out of mud or clay by the 16th-century Prague Rabbi Judah Loew (the “Maharal” of Prague), using Kabbalistic ceremonies, to protect his community from deathly anti-Semitic attacks. This precursor to Mary Shelley’s 19th-century *Frankenstein*, like his literary descendants, falls out of his creator’s control and wreaks havoc, and figures in a number of the works in our sample:

Chabon, Michael, (“The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay”)

Jackson, Douglas (“Blood Sacrifice”)

Kellerman, Jonathan & Jesse Kellerman, (“The Golem of Hollywood”)

Kellerman, Jonathan & Jesse Kellerman, (“The Golem of Paris”)

Kluger, Daniel, (“The Shtetl Book: Jewish Horror Stories”)

Kubert, Joe, “The Golem”, first appeared as a standalone graphic story in *The Challenger* #3 (published by Interfaith Publications / T.C. Comics, 1946).

Lewis, Rachel Sharona, (“The Rabbi Who Prayed for the City”) – examines the ethics of artificial intelligence by referencing the Golem narrative.

Nadel, Barbara, (“The East Ham Golem”)

Piercy, Marge, (“He, She and It”)

Rosenbaum, Thane, (“The Golems of Gotham”)

Simon, Roger L., (“Emet”)

Isaac Bashevis Singer (“The Golem”)

Tallis, Frank, (“Darkness Rising”)

Wishnia, Kenneth, (“The Fifth Servant” & “Burning Twilight”) [Note: Wishnia’s first “Jewish Noir” anthology also featured a dark, supernatural crime story “The Golem of Jericho” by Jonathan Santlofer, which explores a bullied boy and his grandfather who build a golem to retaliate against abusers]. See also the summary of Arnold Goldsmith’s book (“The Golem Remembered, 1909–1980: Variations

of a Jewish Legend”) in the non-fiction section of the International Authors chapter (p.485) of this bibliography.

References to Jewish folklore and golem legends often overlap a preoccupation with **Jewish mysticism and Kabbalah**, with powerful secret codes, dybbuks, demons, formulae and hidden meanings, in some of these books. This is true of the Kluger and Tallis books in the preceding list, as well as in the following:

Paul Auster (“City of Glass”) – U.S. fiction bib.

Ezra Barany, “The Torah Codes” – U.S. fiction bib.

Arthur Asa Berger, “The Kabbalah Killings” – U.S. fiction bib.

David Black, “An Impossible Life: A Bobeh Myseh” – U.S. fiction bib.

Martin S. Cohen, “Light from Dead Stars” – U.S. fiction bib.

Jill Gregory and Karen Tintori, “The Book of Names” – U.S. fiction bib.

Katz, Yoram (Yoav), “Lethal Scripture: A Historical Mystery” - _ Israeli fiction bib.

Zachary Lazar, “I Pity the Poor Immigrant” – U.S. fiction bib.

Caroline Roe, “Solace for a Survivor” – International fiction bib.

Janice Steinberg, “Death in a City of Mystics” – U.S. fiction bib.

Richard Zimler, “The Last Kabbalist of Lisbon” – International fiction bib.

The Jewish White Slave Industry: One of the most shameful and painful aspects of 20th century Jewish criminal activity was the trafficking of young Jewish women from Eastern Europe, primarily to Argentina, for work as prostitutes. White slavery is also an integral part of the current Israeli crime landscape. Ironically, many of those trafficked to Israel today are non-Jewish women from Eastern Europe. Our bibliographies, fiction and mainly non-fiction, list a number of sources on this subject:

Carner, Talia, “The Third Daughter” – U.S. fiction bib. (p.63)

Englander, Nathan, “The Ministry of Special Cases” – U.S. fiction bib. (p.85)

Gordon, Neil Perry, – “Sadie’s Sin: The Zwi Migdal’s Reign of Terror” – U.S. fiction bib. (p.106)

Cozarinsky, Edgar, “The Moldavian Pimp” – International fiction bib. (p.438)

Singer, Isaac Bashevis, “Scum” – International fiction bib. (p.475)

Non-fiction Sources: (full references in the companion U.S. Jewish crime non-fiction, International and Israeli non-fiction bibliographies)

Adler, Polly, “**A House Is Not A Home**” (p.207)

Applegate, Debby, “**Madam: The Biography of Polly Adler, Icon of the Jazz Age**” (p.208)

Bristow, Edward, “**Prostitution & Prejudice: The Jewish Fight Against White Slavery, 1870–1939**” [hc, Schocken, 1983] 978-0805238662

Donovan, Brian and Tori Barnes-Brus, “**Narratives of sexual consent and coercion: Forced prostitution trials in progressive-era New York City**”

Glickman, Nora, “**The Jewish White Slave Trade & the Untold Story of Raquel Liberman**” (p.499)

Hertzog, Esther & Erella Shadmi [eds], “**Prostitution, Pornography and Trafficking in Women: Israel’s Blood Money**” (p.332)

Joseph, Judith Lee Vaupen, “**The Nafkeh and the Lady: Jewish Prostitutes and Progressives in New York City, 1900–1930**” (p.214)

Mensch, Jean Ulitz, “**Social pathology in urban America: desertion, prostitution, gambling, drugs and crime among eastern European Jews in New York City between 1881 and World War I**” (p.216)

Pinzer, Maimie, “**The Maimie Papers: Letters from an Ex-Prostitute**” (p. 216)

Vincent, Isabel. “**Bodies and Souls: The Tragic Plight of Three Jewish Women Forced into Prostitution in the Americas**” (p. 500)

Yarfitz, Mir, “**Impure Migration: Jews and Sex Work in Golden Age Argentina**” (p.500)

Social-Political Perspectives on Jewish Crime

Crime is viewed by a significant group among our authors as an integral part of the immigrants’ lives, in response to the poverty and discrimination they experience in their struggle to survive and improve their circumstances against the oppression of “grasping landlords and exploitative employers”. Some politically conscious authors attribute this to the injustices of the American capitalist system. Michael Gold (p.100) writes in **Jews Without Money**: “America is so rich and fat because it has eaten the tragedy of millions of immigrants.” Others view **crime as a warped form of Americanization**, and the blurring of a tenuous line between respectable and illicit conduct in the process of “making it”. As the second and third generations gradually transition out of the immigrant ghettos via socioeconomic mobility, some of them resort to cutting

corners and predatory business tactics to achieve success, as in Jerome Weidman's classic protagonist in **I Can Get It For You Wholesale** (p.192) and Budd Schulberg's in **What Makes Sammy Run?** (p.172) In different circumstances, such as pre-Revolutionary Russia or the Holocaust, crime becomes a completely legitimate means of fighting for survival and resisting an evil, antagonistic world. Some of the authors and books in this category include:

Babel, Isaac, ("Benya Krik, the Gangster" & "Odessa Stories") – International fiction bib.

Amy Bloom, ("Away" & "Lucky Us") – U.S. fiction bib.

E.L. Doctorow, ("The Book of Daniel", "Billy Bathgate" & "Ragtime") – U.S. fiction bib.

David Evanier, ("Red Love") – U.S. fiction bib.

Howard Fast. ("The Confession of Joe Cullen") – U.S. fiction bib.

Daniel Fuchs, ("The Williamsburg Trilogy")

G.K. George. ("To Kill a Tsar" & "The Kiev Killings") – International fiction bib.

Herbert Gold. ("Fathers") – U.S. fiction bib.

Michael Gold. ("Jews Without Money") – U.S. fiction bib.

Neil Gordon. ("The Company You Keep") – U.S. fiction bib.

Albert Halper. ("The Chute" & "Atlantic Avenue") – U.S. fiction bib.

Robert Littell, ("The Revolutionist") – U.S. fiction bib.

Bernard Malamud, ("The Fixer") – U.S. fiction bib.

Samuel Ornitz. ("Haunch, Paunch and Jowl") – U.S. fiction bib.

Marge Piercy. ("Gone To Soldiers") – U.S. fiction bib.

Budd Schulberg, ("What Makes Sammy Run?") - U.S. fiction bib.

Jerome Weidman, ("I Can Get It For You Wholesale") – U.S. fiction bib.

Shapiro, B.A., ("The Muralist") – U.S. fiction bib.

Israel

The crime literature of the Jewish Diaspora is mainly a local phenomenon in which Israel does not play a pivotal role, or in many cases, any role at all. The protagonists are focused on the challenges of their environment, their occupations, their families. Israel is mostly a taken-for-granted background factor of their mostly secular, cultural identity, and not something which impacts their daily lives. Some of them may have friends or relatives there, or mention it in the context of giving refuge to Holocaust survivors and Jewish refugees from Middle Eastern or Eastern European countries. Israeli politics or Israeli crime and criminals are rarely referenced in the Diaspora crime literature. In this as in everything else to do with our subject, there is no uniformity and plenty of diversity.

The authors who have more religious identities, such as the rabbinical authors mentioned earlier, or observant Jews like Faye Kellerman or Rochelle Krich, are more aware of and involved in Israel.

There are several examples of “**archaeological thrillers**”, where a Diaspora Jewish protagonist participates in an Israeli quest involving ancient artifacts or documents with major global implications, for example:

Bourne, Sam, (“The Last Testament”) – U.K. fiction bib.

Levin, Daniel, (“The Last Ember”) – U.S. fiction bib.

Raffel, Keith, (“Temple Mount”) – U.S. fiction bib.

In the same category, we can add a book by an American Jewish author with an Israeli protagonist: Frankel, Ellen, (“The Deadly Scrolls” – Israeli fiction bib.); and another by an Israeli-born author - Katz, Yoram (Yoav), (“Lethal Scripture: A Historical Mystery”).

The major interaction between our mystery/thriller authors and Israel occurs in the area of **Mossad activities**, anti-terrorism and offshoots of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, i.e. firmly in the espionage and thriller side of the genre. These are by definition action novels and typically involve present and former Mossad agents. Some of the Israeli authors are themselves former intelligence officers of one kind or another, drawing on their operational experiences as source material, e.g. Yiftach Atir, Mishka Ben-David, Haggai Carmon, Uzi Eilam, Eli Evron and Nir Hezroni. Three others are senior or classified enough that they write under pen-names - Jonathan de Shalit, Spencer Hawke and Yarin Inbar – with almost no personal details about them publicly available.

Among writers referencing Mossad or other Israeli military activities or personnel, Daniel Silva is in a class of his own with his Gabriel Allon series (26 volumes and counting). There are other non-Israel-born authors who have either lived in Israel for varying periods and in some cases also served in the IDF or the intelligence services, as have some of their protagonists. For example:

Frankel, Ellen, (“The Passover Protocols”)

Friedland, Noah S., (“A House Divided”)

Gordon, Dan, (“Day of the Dead: Book One – Gaza”) – U.S. fiction bib.

Gordon, Stephen J. (“In the Name of God”) – Israeli fiction bib.

Jacobs, Daniel, (“The Eyes of Abel”) – U.S. fiction bib.

Kaplan, Howard, (“Bullets of Palestine”) – U.S. fiction bib.

Kestin, Hesh, [“The Lie”] – U.S. fiction bib.

Oren, Ram & Moti Kfir, (“Sylvia Rafael: The Life and Death of a Mossad Spy” – Israeli non-fiction bib.) – Israeli bib.

Rosenberg, Joel C., (“The Jerusalem Assassin”) – Israeli bib.

And two more Israel-born authors who touch on Mossad-related themes:

Isaac (Zepel) Yeshurun (“In the Service of the Mossad” – Hebrew series) – Israeli bib.

Zur, Yigal, (“Death in Shangri-La”) – Israeli bib.

It is tempting to digress from the focus on Jews and crime/espionage to examine the general attitudes of some of the authors in our sample to Israel. I will resist the temptation partially, limiting myself to a few brief observations. The general orientation of the authors in our sample is liberal, which predisposes them to criticism of Israel’s policies in recent decades. At the same time, none of them is prepared to deny a basic emotional attachment to the Jewish state, given their awareness of the Jewish past and what it took to create and defend the country

Israel was not very present in the written concerns of the authors who approached Jewish crime in its social-political context, except for **Robert Littell**, who spent some time there and co-authored a book with Shimon Peres about Israel’s future. Two Chicago-born authors – **Ben Hecht** (born 1894) and **Meyer Levin** (born 1905) – stand out for their passionate involvement with and advocacy for Israel’s emergence and early survival. **Saul Bellow** (“To Jerusalem and Back, 1976”), another Chicagoan, felt an instinctive though not uncritical solidarity with Israel.

His Holocaust-survivor protagonist, Arthur Sammler, rushed to be in Israel after its dramatic 1967 war victory.

Philip Roth was certainly preoccupied with Israel (see “The Counterlife, 1986” and “Operation Shylock: A Confession, 1993”), but his attitude was much more ambivalent, and he rejected Zionist claims to a monopoly on an authentic Jewish life there. He was deeply concerned about Palestinian dispossession. He felt both alienation and “inescapable kinship”, with typical Rothian complexity. **Michael Chabon** is cooler in his attitude, and reaffirms Diaspora Jewish existences, as in his alternative-history invention of a Jewish world without Israel (“The Yiddish Policemen’s Union”, 2007). A strong and public critic of Israel’s policies vis-à-vis the Palestinians, Chabon still insists he is “animated by love” and empathy for the basic necessity of Israel’s existence.

Nathan Englander (“Dinner at the Center of the Universe”, 2017) professes a deep love for Israel alongside heartbreak at the political direction it has taken in the 21st century. Inspired by the Oslo Accords, he moved to Jerusalem in 1996, and left with the outbreak of the Second Intifada in 2001. Other American Jewish writers, like **Nicole Krauss**, evince a deep attachment to Israel, and **Zev Chafets** lives in Tel Aviv. Canadian **Mordecai Richler** (“This Year in Jerusalem”, 1994) is in a similar place: basic attachment paired with deep disappointment. Israel must exist for all the historical reasons, but it gets no moral blank check for deviating from the humanitarian ideals of its socialist founders. The right-wing religious and nationalistic impulses are leading the country profoundly astray.

One conclusion: An in-depth study of the relationship between Israel and contemporary Diaspora Jewish authors and intellectuals is much needed.

APPENDIX – A Few Miscellaneous Points of Interest:

Publishers:

Here is an impressionistic list of some of the main publishers of Jewish crime fiction, or at least some of the publishers with the most interesting names:

Avon	Collins	Dutton
Ballantine	Cozy Cat Press	Farrar, Straus & Giroux
Berkley	Crown Publishers	Fawcett
Bitter Lemon	Dark Horse	Felony & Mayhem Press
Black Opal	Doubleday	
Chatto & Windus	Thomas Dunne	

Forge Press	Little, Brown	Scribner's
Foul Play	William Morrow	Severn House
Grand Central	Minotaur	Simon & Schuster
Harper	Mysterious Press	Soho
Harper Collins	Norton	St. Martin's Press
Henry Holt	Penguin	Toby
Holt, Rinehart & Winston	Picador	Viking
Kitchen Sink	Poisoned Pen	Vintage
Knopf	Putnam's	Weeping Willow
Level Best	Random House	Wheatmark
Lippincott	Red Dress Ink	Wicked Son

[My personal favourite is the aptly named “Felony & Mayhem Press.”] Interestingly, some 40 of our 374 fiction authors published their works independently, through the **CreateSpace** or other available platforms, featuring print-on-demand and other technological mechanisms designed to optimize circulation and free authors from publishing industry constraints. University presses (UPs) such as Harvard, Rutgers, Yale and Indiana, also participated in this space, more often in publishing relevant non-fiction works.

The Russian Connection:

There is a significant “Russian presence” among the authors in our sample. Many of them are the children and grandchildren of Russian, Lithuanian and Ukrainian Jews, e.g. Bellow, Doctorow, Fast, Fuchs, Furst, Harry Grey, Hecht, Kaminsky, Krauss, M. Levin, Littell, Malamud, Piercy, Roth and others.

Some of our authors write in Russian – **Isaac Babel** and **Dina Rubina** (International bib.) and **Daniel Kluger** (Israeli bib.). **G.K. George** (International bib.) explores the struggles of Jewish revolutionaries in pre-1917 Russia. **Sasha Margolis** (International bib.) describes a barber-musician trying to save his shtetl from a pogrom in 1871. And the children of Russian Jews in western countries are the dramatic protagonists of several novels:

Jonathan Rabb, (“Shadow and Light”) – part of the Nikolai Hoffman trilogy about a half-Russian police detective in Weimar Germany [International bib.];

Reggie Nadelson, (“Red Hot Blues”) - part of the Artie Cohen series about a Moscow-born NYPD detective active in the heavily Russian Brighton Beach neighbourhood of Brooklyn [U.S. crime fiction bib.];

Michael Idov’s (“Cormorant Trilogy”) features Ari Falk, an American CIA agent with Russian expertise, dealing with spies and complex Russia vs. USA intrigues [U.S. crime fiction bib.];

A.J. Sidransky, (“Forgiving Stephen Redmond”) has Russian-Jewish detective, Tolya Kurchenko, solving murders in Washington Heights, New York City [U.S. crime fiction bib.];

Gabriel Cohen, (“Neptune Avenue”) - NYPD homicide detective, Jack Leightner, with a Russian-Jewish father, delves into the criminal enclaves of Crown Heights and Brighton Beach, New York City [U.S. crime fiction bib.];

Four of the five authors listed above have Russian-origin protagonists who are police officers, while the fifth is a CIA operative. And in addition:

Peter Golden, (“Wherever There Is Light”) - in which the American Jewish protagonist takes on the Soviet-era black market bosses in an attempt to avenge his grandmother’s murder, and encounters the legacy of the Holocaust and the lengths it forced people to go for the sake of survival. [U.S. crime fiction bib.]

Robert Littell, (“A Plague on Both Your Houses: A Novel in the Shadow of the Russian Mafia”) provides a Jewish crime boss, Naum Caplan, in Moscow! In other works, he depicts a young Russian-American, Alexander Til, who returns to Russia in order to participate in the Revolution (“The Revolutionist”) and offers a fictional account of Leon Trotsky’s 10-week sojourn in New York in early 1917 (“Bronshtein in the Bronx”). [U.S. crime fiction bib.]

Gary Shteyngart, (“The Russian Debutante’s Handbook”) has Vladimir Girshkin, a low-level Russian-Jewish immigrant clerk, stumble comically into involvement with Russian-Jewish American mafiosi. [U.S. crime fiction bib.]

Amy Bloom, (“Away”) -features Lillian Leyb, a Russian-Jewish immigrant to America who goes through a noirish landscape and criminal entanglements in her attempts to survive and find her missing daughter. [U.S. crime fiction bib.]

David Bezmozgis, (“Immigrant City”) Russian Jewish immigrants come to Canada and the U.S. with high hopes and intentions and get pulled into sordid jobs and underworld complicity [Canadian crime fiction bib.]

Talia Carner, (“Hotel Moscow: A Riveting Literary Thriller of Women, Heritage, and Conspiracy in Post-Communist Russia”) – the protagonist helps to train entrepreneurial Russian women in 1993. [U.S. crime fiction bib.]

Stuart Kaminsky (16-volume series starring Inspector Porfiry Petrovich Rostnikov of the Moscow Police. He is not Jewish but his wife is, which exposes him and his family to the Russian anti-Semitism of the late 20th century. [U.S. crime fiction bib.]

Bernard Malamud, (“The Fixer”) – a classic fictional presentation of the famous Beiliss blood libel case in late Tsarist Russia. [U.S. crime fiction bib.]

Edgardo Cozarinsky, (“The Moldavian Pimp” and “The Bride from Odessa”) – exposes the white slave trade of young Jewish women from the Pale of Settlement to South America.

Javier Sinay, (“The Murders of Moisés Ville: The Rise and Fall of the Jerusalem of South America”) – dramatizes the struggles of the refugees from Czarist pogroms who sought a new beginning in Argentina, only to encounter new murderous enemies there.

Graphic Book Artists

Three are cited in our sample, in the U.S. Crime fiction bibliography: **Will Eisner, Joe Kubert and David Hazan**. Eisner and Kubert, born respectively in 1917 and 1926, were regarded as pioneers of the graphic book genre, and produced works with strong Jewish affirmation, with the American immigrant ghetto as a familiar setting. Physical violence and macho heroics pervade their works. David Hazan, whose birth-year is estimated as 1993, situates his story in a similar setting (Cleveland, 1936), even though his protagonist is not one of the Jewish gangsters but rather the bookkeeper who keeps their financial records.

Connection to Professional Sports

One of the classic avenues to upward mobility for first-generation children of immigrants is through professional sports. American and Canadian Jews produced many boxers and were prominent in the earliest years of organized basketball. The sports world was long a target of organized crime, particularly through its interest in the control of gambling. Two pertinent works on this subject are summarized in the non-fiction bibliography of American Jewish crime:

Ross, Ron, (**Bummy Davis vs. Murder, Inc.: The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Mafia and an Ill-Fated Prizefighter**); and

Goodman, Matthew, (**The City Game: Triumph, Scandal, and a Legendary Basketball Team**)]

Max Allan Collins (“True Detective”) presents Nate Heller as a lifelong close friend of Bummy Davis, with whom he grew up on Maxwell Street in Chicago. Richard Rosen is the only fiction author in our sample to have made a former professional baseball player – Harvey Blissberg – into the detective protagonist of his mystery series (5 volumes). The penetration of major league baseball by criminal gambling interests is alluded to but not developed in this series, which focuses on the protagonist’s solution of specific murder cases. There is nothing close to the allegations levelled against Jewish gambling kingpin, Arnold Rothstein – never proved and in doubt to the very day – about fixing the results of the 1919 World Series by bribing several Chicago Black Sox players. Rosen also wrote a biography of Jewish football legend **Sid Luckman**, exploring his career and his father’s ties to organized crime.

Rosen, Richard D. (**Strike Three You’re Dead**) [-U.S. Jewish crime fiction bib.]

Rosen, Richard D., (**Tough Luck: Sid Luckman, Murder, Inc., and the Rise of the Modern NFL**) [U.S. non-fiction Jewish crime bib.]

Pietrusza, David, (**Rothstein: The Life, Times, and Murder of the Criminal Genius Who Fixed the 1919 World Series**)

See also the film, **The Catcher Was A Spy (2018)** in the Filmography list, about professional baseball catcher, Moe Berg, who spied for the American Office of Strategic Services (OSS) during WWII.

The only other protagonist in our sample with a professional sports connection is Myron Bolitar, the sports agent at the center of Harlan Coben’s series (p.68). It begins with basketball-term titles like “**Deal Breaker**”, “**Drop Shot**”, “**Fade Away**” and “**Back Spin**”. Coben’s unconventional choice of an occupation for his protagonist, moreover one with a warm Jewish identity and family, generated the energy for a successful 12-volume series. Coben had himself played college basketball at Amherst College and he chose to make Myron a former Celtics first-round draft pick whose career was instantly shattered by a devastating knee injury. Forced to reinvent himself, Myron attends Harvard Law School and launches his sports rep agency. Elite athletes are often young, inexperienced, very rich and easy prey for unscrupulous characters, and Myron protects them, befriends them, and solves their murder mysteries along the way. His warm ethnic personality and Yiddish-flavoured humour make him a compelling guardian of his clients. By combining the high-stakes wheeling and dealing of professional sports with a grounded, protective Jewish family dynamic, Coben created a protagonist who can comfortably trade quips with mobsters, console a grieving mother, and still make it home in time to argue with his parents (in whose basement he continues to live for part of the series) about eating enough dinner. - Google/AI]

Reformed Jewish Gangsters

Not all Jewish gangsters were tough guys with limited consciences, and a small phenomenon of attempted repentance does make an appearance. In some cases, it leads to serious personal transformation, and in others it falls short, despite the protagonist's efforts. Two books in the American Jewish non-fiction bibliography offer testimony in this vein:

Borovitz, Mark & Alan Eisenstock, (**The Holy Thief: A Con Man's Journey from Darkness to Light – An Uplifting Memoir: From Mobster to Rabbi**)

Goldstein, Gary, (**Jew in Jail**)

Borovitz became a rabbi, Goldstein an author and motivational speaker.

Three somewhat related instances turn up in the American Jewish fiction bibliography:

DePoy, Phillip (**Cold Florida**) [Foggy Moskowitz, a former car thief and son of a hitman for the Jewish Mob, on the run from the Brooklyn authorities, ends up in Florida working for the Child Protective Service.]

Feldman, David E. (**Let Thy Children Come**) [Judah Hammer is a former enforcer who rose to become a "local crime boss", described as having a "heart of gold". He is an ex-convict who, after serving time for manslaughter, attempts to protect his community while managing a sprawling, complicated family. Judah is not retired. His current criminal activities involve managing his territory and defending it against rival organizations.]

Shulman, Irving, (**The Devil's Knee**) [A former brutal enforcer for the "Amboy Dukes" gang, Simon "Bull" Bronstein, is consumed with remorse for the bloody misdeeds of his youth, and seeks a new life as a penitent, religious Jew. In the end, he proves unable to truly change his nature, despite well-intentioned efforts, and reacts with extreme violence to an anti-Semitic street orator.]

American Jewish Detectives, Spies, Criminals, et al - FICTION

Fiction Authors

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Jonah Agus | 45. Selma Eichler |
| 2. Woody Allen | 46. Will Eisner |
| 3. Miriam Allenson | 47. Nathan Englander |
| 4. Jacob M. Appel | 48. G.H. Ephron {pseudonym for Hallie Ephron and Dr. Donald Davidoff} |
| 5. David Asher (a pseudonym) | 49. David Evanier |
| 6. Paul Auster | 50. Howard M. Fast (sometimes used the pseudonym "E.V. Cunningham") |
| 7. Ezra Barany | 51. Harriet K. Feder |
| 8. Leslie K. Barry | 52. Howard Feigenbaum |
| 9. Shlomit Beck | 53. David E. Feldman |
| 10. Larry Beinhart | 54. Boris Fishman |
| 11. Saul Bellow | 55. Richard Fliegel |
| 12. Barbara Bensoussan | 56. Steven M. Forman |
| 13. Arthur Asa Berger | 57. Bruce Jay Friedman |
| 14. Andrew Bergman | 58. Daniel Friedman |
| 15. David Black | 59. Kinky Friedman |
| 16. Amy Bloom | 60. Daniel Fuchs |
| 17. Toni Brill (pseudonym for Anthony Olcott & Martha Brill Olcott) | 61. Kimberley Garnick Giarratano |
| 18. Abigail Browning | 62. Herbert Gold |
| 19. Talia Carner | 63. Michael Gold |
| 20. Sandra Levy Ceren | 64. Ed Goldberg |
| 21. Michael Chabon | 65. Lee Matthew Goldberg |
| 22. Zev Chafets | 66. Tod Goldberg |
| 23. Jerome Charyn | 67. Peter Golden |
| 24. John Jacob Clayton | 68. Matt Goldman |
| 25. Dick Cluster | 69. Arthur D. Goldstein (pseudonym of Albert Ross) |
| 26. Harlan Coben | 70. Saul Golubcow |
| 27. Joan Lipinsky Cochran | 71. Dan Gordon |
| 28. Gabriel Cohen | 72. Neil Gordon |
| 29. Martin S. Cohen | 73. Neil Perry Gordon |
| 30. Nancy J. Cohen | 74. Ron Goulart |
| 31. Stanley I. Cohen | 75. Philip Gourevitch |
| 32. Reed Farrel Coleman | 76. Naomi Graetz |
| 33. Max Allan Collins | 77. Philip Graubart |
| 34. Miles Corwin | 78. Jill Gregory & Karen Tintori |
| 35. Elizabeth M. Cosin | 79. Harry Grey (pseudonym for Herschel Goldberg) |
| 36. Julia Dahl | 80. Andrew Gross |
| 37. Kyra Davis | 81. Michael Gruber |
| 38. David Del Bourgo | 82. Isidore Haiblum |
| 39. Henry Denker | 83. David Handler |
| 40. Phillip DePoy (sometimes used the pseudonym "P.J. Nelson") | 84. Albert Halper |
| 41. Eric Dezenhall | 85. Donald Harstad |
| 42. Jason Diamond | 86. David Hazan |
| 43. E.L. Doctorow | |
| 44. Amram Ducovny | |

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- | | |
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| 87. Ben Hecht | 135. Reggie Nadelson |
| 88. Joseph Heller | 136. Alan Orloff |
| 89. Libby Fischer Hellmann | 137. Samuel Ornitz |
| 90. Roger Herst | 138. Ellen Pall |
| 91. Dara Horn | 139. Sara Paretsky |
| 92. Michael Idov | 140. Richard Parrish |
| 93. Susan Isaacs | 141. Richard North Patterson |
| 94. Jane Isenberg | 142. Marge Piercy |
| 95. Steve Israel | 143. Marisa Piesman |
| 96. Daniel Jacobs | 144. Neil S. Plakcy |
| 97. Jody Jaffe | 145. Eileen Pollack |
| 98. Pam Jenoff | 146. Keith Raffel |
| 99. Michael A. Kahn (+ 1 book using
pseudonym of Michael Baron) | 147. Frederick Ramsay |
| 100. Sharon Kahn | 148. Lawrence W. Raphael |
| 101. Beth Kalikoff | 149. Lev Raphael |
| 102. Stuart M. Kaminsky | 150. Ellen Rawlings |
| 103. Andrew Kane | 151. Tova Reich |
| 104. Gregg Keizer | 152. Mark Reutlinger |
| 105. Faye Kellerman | 153. M.J. Rose (pseudonym of Melisse
Shapiro) |
| 106. Jonathan & Jesse Kellerman | 154. Delia Rosen (pseudonym for either Jeff
Rovin or Jerome & Suzanne Preisler) |
| 107. Harry Kemelman | 155. Dorothy & Sidney Rosen |
| 108. William X. Kienzle | 156. Richard D. Rosen |
| 109. Ellen Kirschman | 157. David Rosenbaum |
| 110. Zachary Klein | 158. Thane Rosenbaum |
| 111. Nicole Krauss | 159. Andrew Rosenheim |
| 112. Rochelle Majer Krich | 160. Philip Roth |
| 113. Joe Kubert | 161. S.J. Rozan |
| 114. Shulamith Englander Kustanowitz | 162. Ona Russell |
| 115. Rita Lakin | 163. Steven D. Salinger |
| 116. Adam Langer | 164. Elise Sax |
| 117. Diane Lawson | 165. Arthur Gross Schaefer |
| 118. Zachary Lazar | 166. Ilene Schneider |
| 119. John Lescroart | 167. Budd Schulberg |
| 120. Daniel Levin | 168. Jasmine Schwartz |
| 121. Meyer Levin | 169. Steven Jay Schwartz |
| 122. Ronald Levitsky | 170. Irv Segal |
| 123. Lily Barrish Levner | 171. Hubert Selby Jr. |
| 124. Rachel Sharona Lewis | 172. B.A. Shapiro |
| 125. Laura Lippman | 173. Laurie Gwen Shapiro |
| 126. Robert Littell | 174. Gary Shteyngart |
| 127. Frances & Richard Lockridge | 175. Seymour Shubin |
| 128. Arthur Lyons | 176. Irving Shulman |
| 129. Charlotte MacLeod | 177. A.J. Sidransky |
| 130. Bernard Malamud | 178. James Siegel |
| 131. David Mamet | 179. Sheldon Siegel |
| 132. Wallace Markfield | 180. Daphne Silver |
| 133. Lander Marks (pseudonym of Sarah Lee
Marks) | 181. Michael Simon |
| 134. Derek B. Miller | 182. Roger L. Simon |

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|-------------------------------------|---|
| 183. Shelley Singer | 196. Irving Weinman |
| 184. Bob Sloan | 197. Raymond M. Weinstein |
| 185. Julie Smith | 198. Sol Weinstein |
| 186. Janice Steinberg | 199. Daniel Weizmann |
| 187. Serita Stevens & Rayanne Moore | 200. Melvyn Westreich |
| 188. Jonathan Stone | 201. Kenneth Wishnia |
| 189. H. William ("Bill") Taeusch | 202. Marvin J. Wolf |
| 190. Joseph Telushkin | 203. James Yaffe |
| 191. Debbie Viguié | 204. Batya Swift Yasgur |
| 192. Ayelet Waldman | 205. Elizabeth Zelvin |
| 193. Edward Lewis Wallant | 206. A.J. Zerries (pseudonym for Al & Jean Zerries) |
| 194. Jerome Weidman | |
| 195. Andy Weinberger | |

U.S. Geographical Distribution

Where did the protagonists created by our 206 American authors live and work? What are the settings for their activities? There were no big surprises. The numbers are not precise because many authors spread their protagonists all round the U.S. and the world. As expected, the biggest locale was the New York-New Jersey-Connecticut Tri-State area with some 75 of our American protagonists (36%). Brooklyn had the largest concentration within that area.

Next-largest was California, including San Francisco, Los Angeles and San Diego, with 32 protagonists (15%). After that came Chicago with 13 (6.2 %), Boston with 11 (5.2%) and Florida with 6 (2.9%). Michigan, Texas, Washington, D.C. and Las Vegas showed three protagonists (about 1.4%) each, with the rest scattered in ones and twos from Baltimore and Charlotte to Hawaii (nothing much doing in Alaska or Wyoming, though). In terms of detectives, criminals, and so on, the Jewish map is still concentrated in major cities, but somewhat more spread out than before.

Jonah Agus (est. birth 1990, city not disclosed) [- *American author and researcher, with B.A. in International Relations, MBA in Conflict Management and Ph.D. in Human Geography, awarding universities not disclosed. Has traveled to more than 60 countries and participated in high-level negotiations and field research. Married with two children.*]

Agus, Jonah, (**Danger in Jerusalem** [hc, Attila Books, 2025] 979-8991932707 [pb, Attila Books, 2025] 979-8991932714 [*The novel follows **Remy Ripken**, a young American Jewish journalist whose routine reporting assignment in Israel unexpectedly develops into an international conspiracy. While investigating what initially appears to be a local incident, Remy uncovers evidence linking crime, political corruption, terrorism, and espionage across several countries. The investigation carries him from Jerusalem and the West Bank through Europe and eventually into the Sahara Desert, revealing a network whose influence extends far beyond the Middle East. Unable to trust the competing political and security interests surrounding him, Remy forms an unusual investigative team consisting of an experienced Palestinian police officer, and a former Israeli commando. Despite deep political and cultural differences, the three cooperate to pursue a conspiracy involving soldiers, intelligence operatives, criminal organizations, religious figures, and corrupt officials. Their investigation combines traditional detective work with action-thriller elements, gradually exposing a plot whose consequences could affect regional stability.* – ChatGPT])

Woody Allen (born 1935 in the Bronx, raised in Brooklyn and residing in New York City, original name: Allan Stewart Konigsberg, which he changed legally to Heywood Allen at the age of 17) [*Began his career in show business as a teenager, selling jokes to newspaper columns and writing for prominent television comedians like Sid Caesar. He transitioned into a highly successful stand-up comedian in the 1960s, developing his signature persona of a neurotic, insecure, and intellectual New Yorker. He pivoted*

to filmmaking, initially directing slapstick comedies like *Take the Money and Run* (1969). He achieved massive critical acclaim by blending comedy with serious existential and romantic themes in masterpieces like *Annie Hall* (1977)—which won four Academy Awards—and *Manhattan* (1979). Over a career spanning more than six decades, he became one of cinema's most prolific directors, writing and directing roughly one film per year, including later hits like *Hannah and Her Sisters* (1986) and *Midnight in Paris* (2011). His legacy remains highly influential yet deeply polarized due to highly publicized personal controversies and abuse allegations in his private life. He explores the overlap of Jewish identity, morality, and crime, frequently writing in or parodying the mystery and thriller genres. While he rarely depicts traditional "Jewish mobster" or street-crime motifs, he constantly uses theological guilt, Talmudic-style ethical dilemmas, and secularized Jewish anxiety as the ultimate narrative drivers for his criminal plots. His written work approaches these themes across two distinct styles: cynical philosophical thrillers and comedic hardboiled parodies.

Allen, Woody, (**Getting Even** [hc, Random House, 1971] 978-0394473482 [pb, Warner Books, 1972] 978-0446659451

Allen, Woody, (**Without Feathers** [hc, Random House, 1975] 978-0394497433 [pb, Grand Central Pub, 1981] 978-0446890359

Allen, Woody, (**Side Effects** [hc, Random House, 1980]) 978-0394511047 [pb, Ballantine Books, 1981] 978-0345296535

In his serious and long-form fiction, crime is never just a legal issue; it is a direct confrontation with God and the cosmos.

The Existential Thriller: While famously executed on screen, Allen's definitive take on this theme stems from his prose obsession with Dostoyevsky and Jewish theology. In these narratives, a prosperous, secular Jewish professional commits a major crime (usually murder) to protect their social standing.

The Narrative Driver: The primary driver is not the police investigation, but the protagonist's internal crisis regarding **the "Eyes of God."** Allen routinely pits a secular Jewish worldview (where one can get away with murder if there is no divine justice) against the deeply ingrained moral conscience of traditional Judaism. The narrative tension relies on whether the universe possesses a moral compass or if it is entirely cold and indifferent.

The "Shallowest Man" Paradigm: In his short fiction like *The Shallowest Man* (published in *The Kenyon Review* and collected in **Side Effects**), Allen uses a casual Jewish social setting—a low-stakes poker game in a deli—to deconstruct human callousness and moral decay, proving that he uses the mundane rhythms of Jewish life to frame ethical bankruptcy.

In his comedic short stories, Allen directly adopts the hardboiled detective genre but subverts it by replacing grit and physical violence with hyper-intellectual, distinctly Jewish neuroses.

"The Whore of Mensa": First published in *The New Yorker* and collected in **Without Feathers**, this is a direct parody of Raymond Chandler-style noir. The narrative follows **Kaiser Lupowitz**, a hard-bitten private eye investigating a ring of intellectual call girls who, for a price, fulfill men's secret desires to discuss Proust, Yeats, and anthropology. The "crime" here is a brilliant satire of cultural pretension cast in a criminal mold.

"Mr. Big": Found in his collection **Getting Even**, this story features detective Kaiser Lupowitz again. This time, a beautiful woman hires him to find God, who is missing. Lupowitz hits the pavement, treating the Almighty like a missing person in a standard noir thriller; interviewing religious figures and philosophers to solve the ultimate existential mystery.

"Hassidic Tales": Also in **Getting Even**, Allen parodies classic spiritual parables by introducing absurd transactional elements, petty thefts, and community trickery into the lives of holy rabbis, effectively turning religious folklore into mock-criminal case studies.

Satirizing Organized Crime

*Rather than glorifying or accurately depicting historical Jewish organized crime (like the Murder, Inc. era), Allen mocks the entire concept of the underworld through a comedic lens. In his essay “**A Look at Organized Crime**” (published in **Getting Even**), he analyzes the Mafia and criminal syndicates with deadpan, academic gravity. He reduces terrifying criminal masterminds to petty, bickering neurotics concerned with bureaucratic logistics, bad air conditioning, and social etiquette, stripping the genre of its traditional menace. – Google/AI]*

Miriam Allenson (est. birth 1950) - an author known for her “later-in-life” Jewish female protagonists. She lives in northern New Jersey with her husband, near five of her seven grandchildren. Well-known for her 5-volume (so far) **Tootsie Goldberg** series. Tootsie is a feisty, fifty-plus amateur sleuth and Jersey native living in a town near Clifton, NJ. The novels are regarded as a humorous or cozy mystery series, typified by the avoidance of graphic violence, explicit sex, or excessive profanity and focusing instead on character development and community dynamics. Tootsie’s Jewish identity is central to her character and the series’ humor:

Moral Compass and “Mitzvahs”: Tootsie views her meddling and pursuit of justice as a “feisty mitzvah”. She is driven by a deep-seated need to “hell-raise” for those who cannot help themselves.

Cultural Expressions and Language: The narratives frequently use Yiddish-derived terms like **chutzpah** and **kvetching** to describe her personality and actions.

Family Dynamics: Her Jewish heritage is reflected in her family life, such as her ninety-year-old aunt moving in next door.

Confronting Antisemitism: In her sleuthing, Tootsie occasionally faces antisemitic antagonists, whom she handles with her signature “sharp-as-a-tack banter”.

Relatable Struggles: Her character deals with “later-in-life” issues common to many women in her community, including hot flashes, complicated relationships with ex-husbands, and navigating life after children have grown.

Series Books in Order

Allenson, Miriam [Tootsie Goldberg Series #1], **(When She Gets Hot)** [pb, MS Allenson & Associates, 2023] 978-1733850162 [*Tootsie’s quiet life ends when new owners fire her and her senior coworkers from their beloved radio station. What starts as a mission to save their jobs spirals into a dangerous conspiracy involving local secrets and a series of “suspicious dead ends”.*]

Allenson, Miriam [Tootsie Goldberg Series #2], **(When She Gets Smart)** [pb, MS Allenson & Associates, 2023] 978-1733850186 [*Tootsie discovers the local mayor is involved in a scheme that could frame her friend, the assistant mayor. Her investigation leads her into the path of a dangerous mob-affiliated thug, forcing her to decide how far she will go to clear her friend’s name.*]

Allenson, Miriam [Tootsie Goldberg Series #3], **(When She Gets Busy)** [pb, MS Allenson & Associates, 2023] 979-8988761808 [*When her grumpy neighbor’s grandson is caught in a legal jam, Tootsie steps in to help. She uncovers a beachfront scandal involving an arrogant tech billionaire and illegal dealings that threaten the local Jersey Shore environment.*]

Allenson, Miriam [Tootsie Goldberg Series #4], **(When She Gets Riled)** [pb, MS Allenson & Associates, 2023] 979-8988761815 [*Tootsie goes to war against a library board member attempting to ban books written by her ninety-year-old aunt. Her fight for free speech attracts a nasty cyberbully and unearths long-held community secrets that threaten to explode into a full-blown scandal.*]

Allenson, Miriam [Tootsie Goldberg Series #5], **(When She Gets Conned)** [pb, Miriam Allenson, 2025] 979-8230297260 [*In the final installment of the current quintet, Tootsie faces a new mystery involving deception and “bad guy business.” As with previous cases, she must use her industrial-strength chutzpah to root out the truth before she ends up in over her head.*] [Google/AI]

Jacob M. Appel (born 1973) – a modern polymath—an American author, bioethicist, physician, lawyer, and social critic. He is primarily recognized for his prolific output in literature and his specialized medical work in psychiatry and ethics. In addition to writing numerous books and short stories, he is the Director of Ethics Education in Psychiatry and a professor at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York City. His **Wedding Wipeout** (2013) is a lighthearted murder mystery in which the idiosyncratic **Rabbi Jacob Kapplemacher** and his assistant, Steinmetz, solve the sudden death of an elderly Jewish spinster immediately following her wedding. They use “rabbinic reasoning” to unmask the culprit and pepper their speech with Yiddish words. The book captures the social dynamics of the New York Jewish community, portraying interactions between religious and more secular or “assimilated” Jews, as well as their relationships with gentiles. [Google/AI]

Appel, Jacob M., (**Wedding Wipeout**) [pb, Cozy Cat Press, 2013] 978-1939816146

“David Asher” - the pseudonym of a Seattle-based thriller writer, birth-year unknown. The story follows ex-intelligence operative **Jack Berman** and Mossad-trained guide Lily as they uncover a global conspiracy linking stolen Nazi art to modern-day white supremacist networks. [Google/AI]

Asher, David, (**The Titus Conspiracy** [Weyyakin Ranch Publishing, 2025] [hc] 979-8993025926 [pb] 979-8993025933 [- an international espionage thriller that combines contemporary intelligence operations with the unresolved legacy of Nazi-looted art during World War II. The story follows **Jack Berman**, a former CIA operative, whose vacation in Kitzbühel, Austria, takes an unexpected turn when he discovers a mysterious historical photograph and becomes entangled in a murder. The incident draws him into an investigation reaching across Europe and the United States.

As Jack pursues the mystery, he joins forces with **Lily**, a backcountry guide who is secretly a Mossad operative. Their investigation uncovers an international criminal network trafficking in masterpieces stolen by the Nazis. The proceeds from these illicit sales are being used to finance contemporary extremist movements, money laundering operations, and transnational organized crime. Their adversaries include a wealthy financier with extensive black-market connections, private security forces, and individuals determined to prevent the recovery of the looted works.

The novel moves rapidly through Austria, Portugal, France, Monaco, and the United States, combining action sequences with historical research into Nazi art theft, postwar restitution efforts, intelligence agencies, and international finance. Jack and Lily must decipher encrypted clues, evade assassins, and expose the conspiracy before its financial network strengthens modern white-supremacist organizations.]

Paul Auster (1947–2024, born in Newark, NJ and died in Brooklyn, NY) [Raised in a middle-class Jewish family in the Newark suburbs, Auster had a remote relationship with his father, a dynamic that deeply influenced his future writings. He became obsessed with literature and baseball at an early age. He attended Columbia University, earning his Master’s degree in English and Comparative Literature in 1970. After graduating, he spent several years living a bohemian lifestyle in France, working as a translator for French poets and authors to make ends meet. Auster struggled financially until the sudden death of his father prompted him to write the critically acclaimed 1982 memoir **The Invention of Solitude**. Shortly after, he achieved major international fame with **The New York Trilogy** (1987), a groundbreaking collection of postmodern anti-detective stories. He became the quintessential chronicler of literary Brooklyn. His works frequently blend hardboiled noir with existentialism, focusing heavily on coincidences, chance, unreliable identities, and metafiction (often writing himself into his own books). Beyond his extensive catalog of novels (such as **Moon Palace** and **Leviathan**), Auster was a prolific screenwriter and director. He penned the script for the acclaimed independent film *Smoke* (1995). He lived for decades in Park Slope, Brooklyn, with his wife, the celebrated novelist Siri Hustvedt. He passed away at his home from complications related to lung cancer.]

Auster, Paul, (**City of Glass** [New York Trilogy, Vol. 1, hc, Sun and Moon Press, 1985] 978-0940650527 [pb, Penguin Publishing, 1987] 978-0140097313 [This is Auster’s masterpiece of metaphysical detective

fiction and his most profound integration of Jewish theological mystery. A reclusive writer of pulp detective fiction answers a wrong-number phone call, assumes the identity of a private investigator, and accepts a stakeout job to protect a young man from his abusive father. The entire investigation revolves around Kabbalistic linguistic theory, the Tower of Babel, and the search for God's lost, pure language. The "criminal" walks the streets of Manhattan to map out giant letters that spell out religious phrases. The detective's descent into madness mirrors a failed mystical quest to decode the universe.

Auster, Paul, (**Leviathan** [hc, Viking Adult, 1992] 978-0670846764 [pb, Penguin, 1993] 978-0140178135 [This book is Auster's most traditional nod to the political thriller and espionage genre, driven entirely by Jewish moral conscience. The book opens like a true crime procedural. A man blows himself up on a Wisconsin highway. The narrator, an author, must reconstruct the dead man's secret life before the FBI tracks down the truth. The dead man is Benjamin Sachs, a brilliant Jewish-American intellectual. His transformation from a pacifist writer into a fugitive, bomb-making domestic terrorist is deeply tied to his Jewish heritage, his obsession with American democratic ideals, and his overwhelming guilt over accidentally killing a man.

Auster, Paul, (**The Book of Illusions** [hc, Henry Holt & Co., 2002]) 978-0805054088 [pb, Picador, 2009] 978-0312429010 [This novel utilizes the classic mystery trope of the missing person and the hidden archive to explore the intergenerational trauma of European Jews. A grieving professor becomes obsessed with a silent-film comedian who vanished without a trace in 1929. The professor turns detective, tracking down rare film prints, following cryptic leads, and eventually being led at gunpoint to a secret desert compound. The investigation unearths a dark history deeply scarred by the Holocaust. The mystery of the missing actor collides with characters whose families were destroyed by the Nazis in Europe. The thriller elements of tracking secrets and adopting fake aliases serve as a direct metaphor for the displacement, erasure, and forced reinvention of 20th-century European Jews.

Auster, Paul, (**4 3 2 1** [hc, Henry Holt & Co., 2017] 978-1627794466 [pb, Picador, 2020] 978-1250618801 [While this is a sprawling, multi-verse coming-of-age epic rather than a tight thriller, it represents Auster's most explicit exploration of identity, crime, and the Jewish-American experience. The novel plays with the concept of parallel universes, telling four completely different versions of the life of the same boy, Archie Ferguson. Archie is the grandson of Russian-Jewish immigrants. Across his four lives, Auster constantly injects noir-esque elements: one version of Archie is a crime reporter investigating inner-city violence; another deals with a family retail business that is burned down in a suspected insurance-fraud arson; and all versions navigate the dangerous political criminality of the 1960s civil rights and anti-war movements. It acts as a massive study on how chance, crime, and history shape Jewish assimilation.

Paul Auster frequently weaves Jewish identity and historical trauma directly into his signature subversions of the crime, thriller, and espionage genres. As a Jewish-American author, Auster uses the paranoid mindsets, secret identities, and hunting/evading frameworks typical of thrillers to explore the deep psychological scars of the Holocaust and the fragmentation of Jewish identity in the 20th century. Rather than writing straightforward spy operations, Auster merges Jewish history with the following specific crime and mystery motifs. Thus, in **Leviathan**, he constructed a narrative which mirrored a political thriller, complete with an FBI investigation, tracking a fugitive, and building bombs. **The Book of Illusions** reprised the paradigm of unearthing historical mysteries and a secret past, in this case in the shadow of the Holocaust, leaving a legacy of permanent dislocation and the desire to vanish completely. In **City of Glass**, a standard stakeout scenario turns into a meditation on the Fall of Man, the Tower of Babel, and Jewish mystical interpretations of words creating or destroying reality. The "crime" being investigated becomes a metaphysical quest regarding God's silence. In the autobiographical and semi-fictional **4 3 2 1**, Auster highlights how Jewish immigration to America required a thriller-like reinvention of the self. Characters change their names at Ellis Island, hide their ancestry, or live double lives. For Auster, changing your name isn't just a way to hide from the mob or the police; it is a survival mechanism rooted in the historical reality of European anti-Semitism. [Google/AI]

Ezra Barany (born 1969) – a novelist and educator known for his suspenseful thrillers that weave together Jewish mysticism and modern technology. Born and raised in Oakland, California, Barany has

had a diverse career as a high school physics teacher, fiction writing coach, and pop musician. He became deeply interested in Bible codes while attending a seminar in Jerusalem, which inspired his transition into thriller writing. He often collaborates with his wife, book coach Beth Barany, on resources for writers. In **The Torah Codes** (which has been described as a “Jewish version of *The Da Vinci Code*), the protagonist is **Nathan Yirmorshy**, a reclusive computer programmer. After discovering his landlord is part of a secret society, Nathan is thrust into a dangerous conspiracy where he finds his own life and identity are encoded in ancient scriptures. He joins forces with a tarot reader to uncover the truth behind the Bible codes, leading them from California to Israel. Two sequels continue Nathan’s story, who faces new challenges as the information hidden within the ancient codes is revealed.

In **36 Righteous: A Serial Killer’s Hit List**, Nathan has to stop a serial killer from destroying the 36 righteous people (the Lamed-Vovniks) on whom the world’s existence depends. The book includes an appendix with essays from various religious leaders discussing the question, “Why do bad things happen to good people?”. In **Deborah’s Number: A Bank Heist Mitzvah**, Nathan continues to explore the implications of the codes in dealing with a bank heist.

Bullets Aren’t Kosher is described as a “kosher crime thriller” of amnesia set in San Francisco, this book follows a man who wakes up with no memory, wanted for murder. As evidence mounts against him, he must race to clear his name while questioning his own identity. This book includes essays that delve into Jewish themes, such as what defines a good person, redemption, and the Ten Commandments.

[Google/AI]

Barany, Ezra, (**The Torah Codes** [pb, Dafkah Books, 2011]) 978-0983296010

Barany, Ezra, (**36 Righteous: A Serial Killer’s Hit List** [pb, Dafkah Books, 2014]) 978-0989500432

Barany, Ezra, (**Deborah’s Number: A Bank Heist Mitzvah** [pb, Dafkah Books, 2018]) 978-1944841164

Barany, Ezra, (**Bullets Aren’t Kosher** [pb, Dafkah Books, 2019] 978-1944841232 [hc, Dafkah Books, 2021] 978-1944841416

Baron, Michael, (**The Mourning Sexton: A Novel of Suspense** [hc, Doubleday, 2005]) 978-0385513265 [mass mkt pb, Jove, 2006] 978-0515141467 [Note: This book was authored by **Michael A. Kahn**, using “Michael Baron” as a pseudonym. See **Michael Kahn** listing in this bibliography.]

Leslie K. Barry (born 1962 in Washington, D.C.; resides in Tiburon, CA with her family) [*She has worked as a leading marketing executive at major entertainment and tech companies, including Turner Broadcasting, Hasbro/Parker Brothers, Mattel, Mindscape Video Games, Lotus Development, and AOL. She is an avid genealogy researcher. It was through this deep-dive hobby—specifically sparked at her mother’s 90th birthday celebration—that she unearthed her Uncle Harry Levine’s hidden history with the anti-fascist boxing rings of New Jersey. The historical fiction novel, originally the screenplay, that emerged from this project is her only main publication and the reason for her inclusion in this bibliography. She is involved in trying to turn the story into a major film.*

Barry, Leslie K., (**Newark Minutemen: A True 1930s Legend About One Man’s Mission to Save a Nation’s Soul Without Losing His Own** [hc, Morgan James Fiction, 2020] 978-1631950728 [*The book chronicles a dark, frequently overlooked chapter of American history: the rise of homegrown fascism via the German-American Bund and the violent underground resistance mounted against them by Jewish prize fighters, the FBI, and organized crime. The narrative is set in Newark, New Jersey, during the late 1930s, a city deeply scarred by the Great Depression. With millions unemployed, the charismatic and dangerous Führer Fritz Kuhn forms the **German-American Bund**. Operating under the slogans “America First” and “**Make America Great**”, Kuhn seeks to expand a shadow Hitler-Nazi party across the United States.*

*The story follows **Yael Newman**, a fierce young Jewish boxer. Years prior, he witnessed his father’s brutal murder at the hands of anti-Semites, leaving him with an intense vow of vengeance. Seeing American democracy on trial, the Jewish Mob and the FBI join forces to recruit Yael into an underground anti-fascist militia known as the **Newark Minutemen**.*

*Yael receives orders to go **undercover as a goose-stepping Storm Trooper** within the Bund to gather intelligence, expose Hitler Youth indoctrination camps, and ultimately put the American Führer behind bars. His mission turns deeply personal and dangerous when he meets Krista Brecht, the daughter of a high-ranking Nazi enemy. The two fall into a forbidden, high-stakes romance that threatens to compromise Yael's undercover operation. Moving from secret spy missions to the historic 1939 Nazi rally at Madison Square Garden, Yael is forced to walk an ethical tightrope—using the mob's brutal tactics to defend his people while trying desperately to save his own soul from being consumed by hate.*

*While the novel uses a fictionalized romance, the backdrop of the New Jersey Minutemen and the direct involvement of organized crime is entirely factual. Abner "**Longy**" **Zwillman** was the undisputed Jewish mob kingpin of New Jersey, often called the "Al Capone of Newark". He amassed immense wealth through bootlegging, gambling, and racketeering, effectively controlling local ports and police forces. When Prohibition was repealed in 1933, Zwillman's bootlegging operation ended, leaving his enforcers with sudden downtime. Simultaneously, Nazi groups like the Friends of New Germany (later the German-American Bund) began aggressively marching and harassing Jews in Newark. Infuriated by their anti-Semitic rhetoric, Zwillman decided to weaponize his syndicate against them, starting in 1933-34. .*

*Zwillman funded and organized a specialized vigilante group called the **Minutemen**. He appointed professional featherweight boxer **Nat Arno** (born Sidney Nathan Abramowitz) to lead the front. Arno recruited tough guys from Zwillman's Third Ward Gang, alongside Jewish factory workers, dockworkers, and collegiate athletes. Among the Minutemen fighters were Harry Levine and another professional boxer, **Abie Bain** (born Abraham Itzhok Bain). The Minutemen specialized in raw counter-violence. Armed with **stink bombs, baseball bats, brickbats, and lead pipes wrapped in rubber**, they regularly ambushed Nazi rallies. In famous clashes like the ambush at Irvington's Schwabenhalle, the Minutemen smashed windows, flooded the venue with noxious fumes, and physically bludgeoned fleeing Bund members. Because law enforcement initially viewed the Nazi rallies as protected free speech, authorities were slow to act officially.*

*The factual backstory related in the novel starts with **Judge Nathan D. Perlman**, a highly respected New York judge, a former Republican U.S. Congressman, and a leader in the American Jewish Congress. In 1938, deeply frustrated that the First Amendment protected the Nazi Bund's marches and hateful rhetoric, Perlman decided to use extra-legal means. He called **Meyer Lansky**—the logistical genius behind the National Crime Syndicate and Murder, Inc.—to a private meeting. Perlman offered to pay Lansky and his enforcers from private funds to physically break up Nazi rallies. Lansky famously refused the money, stating, "I am a Jew, and I feel for those Jews in Europe... I don't want the money." Perlman brought prominent **Reform Rabbi Stephen S. Wise** to the meeting to establish strict moral and legal guardrails. Perlman gave Lansky's syndicate full permission to terrorize the Nazis, with one absolute caveat: "**I want you to do anything but kill them.**" This led to the "no head shots" rule, to avoid incrimination for murder, thus allowing law enforcement to turn a blind eye to the violent anti-Nazi campaign. Minutemen were instructed to aim exclusively for the torso, arms, and legs. Breaking a Nazi's ribs, snapping his arms, or shattering his kneecaps with lead pipes sent a terrifying message. Avoiding the temple and jaw ensured nobody suffered fatal brain hemorrhages or fractured skulls that could result in a murder rap*

Lansky's underworld connections joined Zwillman's local New Jersey Minutemen in interdicting American Nazi activities throughout the area. Zwillman established a quiet pipeline with the FBI and local police. Newark police officers would routinely leak the times and locations of secret Nazi meetings to Zwillman's men, purposefully vacating the area right before the Minutemen arrived to dish out street justice. The head of the FBI, J. Edgar Hoover, consciously used the Minutemen as an informal, aggressive proxy force. FBI field agents quietly shared intelligence on Bund movements and meeting locations with trusted mob conduits. In exchange, undercover Minutemen—who successfully infiltrated Nazi camps—fed high-level intel on German espionage operations, list of names, and Nazi youth indoctrination schedules back to the Bureau. Hoover ensured that as long as the Minutemen strictly adhered to the "no head shots" rule and left no bodies behind, federal investigators would deliberately look the other way, leaving the street warfare entirely to local precincts that were already in the pocket of Longy Zwillman's syndicate.

Through these relentless operations from 1933 to 1941, Zwillman's Minutemen effectively raised "mortal risks" for American Nazi leaders, severely crippling their propaganda machine and successfully deterring them from holding public meetings in northern New Jersey. [Google/AI]

Shlomit Beck (no personal information available) – [she is included in this Bibliography because of the enigmatic and intriguing descriptions of her recent **Joe Gallo** trilogy, as featured on Amazon, which offers the following details about her: "... the author of the novel *The Iron Wall*, and has published widely under other names on politics, philosophy, film, and literature". No details about *The Iron Wall* are available, either.]

Beck, Shlomit [*Joe Gallo series #1*], (**Lapdance** [pb, independently published, Oct. 27, 2025]) 979-8271839047 [*a gritty, character-driven police procedural that introduces a brilliant and deeply flawed heroine. Officer **Helen Barry** is a USC master's graduate and a self-described "badge bunny with a badge," whose affair with a married superior gets her exiled to the Area Nuisance & Crime Task Force—the department's doghouse. Her new beat isn't the high-stakes police work she craves, but the soul-crushing boredom of noise complaints, sad drunks, and the grim discovery of a wealthy young woman left to die like a "bundle of rags" in a filthy alley.*

*Helen's new partner is **Sergeant Joe Gallo**, a tenured professor of Criminal Justice who seems to relish the "boring" essence of policing. He's a "fallen rabbi" with his own catastrophic failures, and he challenges Helen's every instinct. As she is drawn into Gallo's intellectual orbit, a dangerous new man enters her life: Dr. Harris Gable, a Harvard-trained combat veteran who sees Helen's chaos not as a flaw, but as a high-risk asset to be acquired. Harris doesn't offer Helen romance; he offers a merger. A chillingly logical life plan that is as seductive as it is terrifying. Caught between a partner who wants to save her soul and a suitor who wants to own it, Helen must decide which cage is safer. In a city of transaction and illusion, she's about to learn that the most dangerous nuisance of all is a woman's own desire, and the price of containing it is everything. - Amazon]*

Beck, Shlomit [*Joe Gallo series #2*], (**Conversion Therapy** [pb, Iron Wall Books, published on Dec. 22, 2025]) 979-8994190135 [*Vincent Levy is a mess. A gay, meth-using Pomona dropout and Hollywood grip, he vibrates with the nervous energy of a life lived without guardrails. When he gets arrested, he expects the usual revolving door of the legal system. Instead, he gets his uncle.*

Sergeant Joe Gallo is an anomaly: an Orthodox Jewish cop in Los Angeles who believes in rules, rituals, and the restorative power of boredom. He offers Vincent a plea deal that looks less like modern rehab and more like a boot camp for the soul. No drugs. No screens on Shabbat. No excuses.

As Vincent struggles with Gallo's regime of curfews and bad Ashkenazi food, he finds himself working on a Christian film set, giving spiritual advice to evangelicals, and wondering if his uncle's ancient methods might actually be saving his life. But if Vincent needs Gallo's rules and connections to stay alive, Gallo discovers he needs some of Vincent's Romanesco will to make life worth living.

Yet even Gallo has his own "wilderness" to tame. Clara Huber, the former mistress who once wrecked his marriage, re-enters his life with a crisis of her own. Her mother, a mad-scientist academic, has made her condo into a hazardous chemical lab, forcing Gallo to confront the chaotic past he has hoped to wall out. Gallo must prove that the discipline he forces on his nephew holds firm even when the fire gets close.

Conversion Therapy, the second Joe Gallo novel, is a sharp, procedurally grounded novel about the necessity -- and insufficiency -- of fences in a world that worships boundless autonomy. – Amazon]

Beck, Shlomit [*Joe Gallo series #3*], (**The Land** [pb, Iron Wall Books, March 3, 2026]) 979-8994190159 [*From the high-stakes real estate scams of Santa Ynez to the chaotic underground of Tel Aviv, the Gallo family is scattered and in danger. To bring his strays home, Sergeant Joe Gallo must rely on the one man he never truly understood: his father, Vincenzo. A retired physicist and Holocaust survivor, Vincenzo built a fortress in Pasadena to protect his secrets from shadows only he could see. Now, Vincenzo's secrets might be the only thing that can save Joe's daughter from the wilderness. - Amazon]*

Larry Beinhart (born 1947 in New York City) – American author and screenwriter. In “*The Librarian*”, the protagonist is a Jewish librarian named **David Goldberg**, who works at a college library in Washington D.C. plot develops around his character and the situations he finds himself in after taking on an unusual job. In “*Salvation Boulevard*”, a Jewish lawyer plays a key role. Beinhart’s work often incorporates a wide range of social and political themes, and sources mention that he covers topics like racism and antisemitism within his novels. His narratives often aim to challenge ideas about God, politics, and morality through specific circumstances and character interactions. While Beinhart has addressed “Jews” as a subject in his writing, he has stated that his own personal “Religion” is “No”. His interest is in using different worldviews to drive his narratives. [Google/AI]

Beinhart, Larry, (**The Librarian** [pb, Bold Type Books, 2004]) 978-1560256366

Beinhart, Larry, (**Salvation Boulevard** [hc, Nation Books, 2008] 978-1568584119 [pb, Nation Books, 2009] 978-1568584324

Saul Bellow (1915–2005, born in Lachine, Quebec, a suburb of Montreal, and died in Brookline, MA) [- Born Solomon Bellows to Russian-Jewish immigrant parents. Moved at age nine to Chicago, which became his spiritual home and literary backdrop. Grew up speaking Yiddish, English, French, and Hebrew. Earned an undergraduate degree in anthropology and sociology from Northwestern University. Recruited by Irving Howe and Eliezer Greenberg to translate I.B. Singer’s short story, “Gimpel the Fool”, for their *A Treasury of Yiddish Stories* (a major turning-point in Singer’s literary career). They were both later to win the Nobel Prize for Literature, Bellow in 1976 and Singer in 1978. Bellow also won the Pulitzer Prize in 1976 for *Humboldt’s Gift*, and the National Book Award three times, for *The Adventures of Augie March* (1954), *Herzog* (1965) and *Mr. Sammler’s Planet* (1971). Major works of relevance to this bibliography:

Bellow, Saul, (**The Adventures of Augie March** (First edition Viking Press, 1953, hc, Everyman’s Library, 2015)) 978-1101907719 [pb, Penguin Classics, 2006] 978-0143039570 [

Bellow, Saul, (**Seize the Day** [hc, The Viking Press, 1956]) 978-0670631766 [pb, Penguin Classics, 2003] 978-0142437612 [

Bellow, Saul, (**Herzog** [hc, Viking Adult, 1964]) 978-0670369126 [pb, Penguin Classics, 2015] 978-0143107675 [

Bellow, Saul, (**Mr. Sammler’s Planet** [hc, Viking, 1970] 978-0670333196 [pb, Penguin Group, 2012] 978-0141188812 [

Bellow, Saul, (**Humboldt’s Gift** [hc, The Viking Press, 1975] 978-0670386550 [pb, Penguin Classics, 2008] 978-0143105473

Bellow, Saul, (**To Jerusalem and Back: A Personal Account** [hc, Viking Press, 1976] 978-0670717293 [pb, Penguin Publishing Group, 1998] 978-0141180755

Bellow, Saul, (**The Dean’s December** [hc, Secker & Warburg, 1982] 978-0436039522 [pb, Penguin Classics, 2008] 978-0141188867 [

Bellow, Saul, (**Him With His Foot In His Mouth and Other Stories** [hc, Harper & Row, 1984] 978-0060151799 [pb, Penguin Classics, 1998] 978-0141180236 [

For Bellow, the convergence of Jews and crime serves as a vital thematic vehicle for exploring menschlichkeit (the struggle to remain an ethical human being) amidst the raw, lowbrow realities of urban America. Rather than viewing Jewish criminals through a lens of moral condemnation or sensationalized gangsterism, Bellow treats them with an attitude of intimate, ironic fascination. Influenced by his own childhood memories of his father’s brief, ill-fated stint as a Chicago bootlegger, Bellow portrays Jewish criminals not as existential monsters, but as energetic “schemers and dreamers” who embody the chaotic multiplicity of American life.

In relating to issues of Jews and crime, Bellow intentionally subverts the trope of the passive, fragile Jewish victim. He was drawn to “tough guy” personas who possessed the vitality to impose their will on the world. In Bellow’s universe, intellectual and hoodlums are interdependent: highly educated Jewish protagonists (usually professors, writers, or thinkers) are rarely detached from criminality. Instead, they are deeply enticed by—and codependent on—charismatic, street-smart crooks. Bellow views lawbreaking not as a symptom of pure evil, but as a misguided expression of American energy and the desire to break free from standard social conformity.

*In **Humboldt’s Gift** (1975), the focus is on the relationship between the cerebral protagonist, **Charlie Citrine**, and a flashy, erratic petty Mafioso named **Rinaldo Cantabile**. He aggressively draws Citrine into his criminal underworld, forcing him into illegal poker games and demanding financial restitution. Rather than fleeing, Citrine is psychologically fascinated by Cantabile’s raw, unpolished energy. Bellow uses this criminal dynamic to force his intellectual protagonist out of his safe, ivory-tower meditations and back into the messy reality of the “here-and-now.”*

*In **The Adventures of Augie March** (1953), set in the depression-era neighborhoods of Chicago, he captures a broad spectrum of petty Jewish criminality. Augie’s world is populated by poolroom sharks, bookmakers, and small-time thieves. Augie himself drifts effortlessly into illicit endeavors—including a stint assisting a thief named **Einhorn** and a later involvement in a botched jewelry smuggling scheme. Bellow presents these actions with an air of comic picaresque adventure rather than dark moralism, showing how crime was a natural survival mechanism for Jewish immigrants trying to “carve out a destiny” in America.*

*“Cousins” (a short story from **Him With His Foot In His Mouth**, 1984) offers a profound meditation on the unshakeable nature of familial loyalty despite legal and moral divides. The protagonist, **Ijah Brodsky**, a successful and highly cultured intellectual, is contacted by his cousin, **Tanky**, a well-connected mobster and racketeer facing federal prosecution. Despite the vast moral and social gulf between them, Brodsky chooses to act as a character witness for Tanky. Bellow uses this scenario to demonstrate that the ancient, tribal bonds of Jewish “family feeling” defy both modern legal structures and Western rational logic.*

*In **Mr. Sammler’s Planet** (1970), an elegant Holocaust survivor copes with life in 1960s New York, with crime as the catalyst for the novel’s philosophical questions. Sammler is haunted by witnessing an elegant, non-Jewish pickpocket plying his trade on a city bus, but the surrounding web of financial illegality involves his own family circles (namely, the questionable wealth of his benefactor, Elya Gruner). Bellow contrasts the grand, horrific historical crimes of Europe (the Holocaust) with the petty, chaotic, and degraded street crime of modern America, suggesting that Western civilization is gradually losing its moral grounding.*

Saul Bellow expanded the scope of American literature by showing that the post-war Jewish-American experience was not just defined by suffering, assimilation, or intellectual achievements. By infusing his narratives with street-level grifters, white-collar schemers, and full-blown gangsters, he contributed a much more holistic, complex, and un-sanctified portrait of the Jewish identity—one that unapologetically acknowledged its shadows while celebrating its irrepressible human vitality. [Google/AI]

Bellow was obviously not a straightforward crime author. Rather, crime for him is usually a lens for exploring modernity, morality, identity, and social decay rather than a mystery to be solved and he was often more interested in moral than legal crime. He addresses the question of what happens when Jews become fully integrated into American society and gain access to all its opportunities—including its corruptions? His fiction often suggests that Jewish characters have entered mainstream America so completely that they are no longer morally insulated from its criminal, commercial, or predatory tendencies.

Bellow is not a novelist of Jewish crime in the sense of portraying Jewish detectives, gangsters, or criminal subcultures. However, he is an important novelist of Jewish encounters with crime, corruption, and urban disorder in modern America. His work helps trace a transition in Jewish-American literature from the immigrant world of the early twentieth century to a fully integrated Jewish presence within the

*moral ambiguities of postwar American society. He is relevant primarily as a writer of **crime as social and moral condition**, rather than crime as genre fiction. [ChatGPT]*

Barbara Bensoussan (birth est. 1960, Philadelphia, PA, now resides in Brooklyn, NY) – veteran journalist in the American Jewish press.

Bensoussan, Barbara, (**Seven Blessings and a Murder**) [pb, independently published, 2024] 979-8227719041 [hc, independently published, 2024] 979-8345620311 *[When Jewish businessman Danny Sutton announces his engagement to a stunning Israeli model, his brother and sister-in-law Ezra and Dalia are thrilled for him. They're equally thrilled to pack their suitcases and leave for a destination wedding in Jerusalem! A colorful assortment of family members from England, France, and the U.S. converge in Jerusalem for the wedding, comprised of the devoutly religious and casually traditional, the well-heeled and cash-strapped, those with Moroccan roots and those with Syrian roots. Despite the inevitable clashes of culture, the wedding goes off in picture-perfect style.*

*And then the unthinkable happens. A family member turns up dead, under suspicious circumstances. The celebration turns into a crime scene! Who would do such a thing? **Dalia** is determined to find out, even if it means running headlong into danger. It will take all her powers of observation, not to mention the formidable memory bank of Jewish grandmothers and the analytical genius of the mysterious Rabbi Mugarbi, to connect the dots and bring the mystery to its shocking conclusion. – Amazon]*

Arthur Asa Berger (born 1933, Boston) - an American social scientist and professor emeritus of media and popular culture. He has authored over 70 books and 130 articles covering media analysis, popular culture, humor, and tourism. Notable works include *Media Analysis Techniques and Ads, Fads, and Consumer Culture*. Has written extensively on Jewish humour as a tool for dealing with collective trauma (such as the Holocaust) and marginality, arguing that Jewish self-criticism in jokes is often liberating rather than masochistic.

Berger has explicitly integrated Jewish themes into his “educational murder mysteries,” most notably in **The Kabbalah Killings** (2004). This book is part of a series featuring **Detective Solomon Hunter**, designed to teach academic theories through fiction. The novel serves as a “murder mystery introduction to Jewish mysticism”. The plot centers on the murder of Azriel Moshe, a scholar of the Kabbalah, who leaves a cryptic symbol in blood as a clue. To solve the case, Detective Hunter must learn about the fundamentals of the **Zohar** and Jewish mystical traditions; and about Jewish hidden symbolism and interdisciplinary scholarship on Jewish texts.

Postmortem for a Postmodernist: While primarily focused on postmodern theory, this mystery includes a character named **Shoshana TelAviv**, the wife of the murder victim. Her name and identity contribute to the book's exploration of cultural theory and identity within a fictional framework.

Detective Solomon Hunter of the San Francisco Police Department: The recurring protagonist of these mysteries—including *Mistake in Identity* and *The Mass Comm Murders*—is often used as a vehicle to explore various cultural and sociological lenses, including race, identity, and ethnic heritage. Hunter is portrayed with strong Jewish cultural and intellectual ties, which is a central element of his identity and his investigative approach. [Google/AI]

Berger, Arthur Asa, [*Solomon Hunter #1*] (**Postmortem for a Postmodernist**) [hc, AltaMira Press, 1997] 978-0761989103 (pb, AltaMira Press, 1997) 978-0761989110

Berger, Arthur Asa, [*Solomon Hunter #2*] (**The Mass Comm Murders: Five Media Theorists Self-Destruct**) [hc, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2002] 978-0742517202 [pb, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2002] 978-0742517219

Berger, Arthur Asa, [*Solomon Hunter #3*] (**The Kabbalah Killings** (A Solomon Hunter Educational Murder Mystery [pb, PulpLit, 2004]) 978-0974619620

Berger, Arthur Asa, [*Solomon Hunter #4*] (**Mistake in Identity**) [hc, AltaMira Press, 2005] 978-0759108646 [pb, AltaMira Press, 2005] 978-0759108653

Andrew Bergman (born 1945 in New York City) is an American screenwriter, director and author. **Jack LeVine** (originally Jacob Levine), a Jewish private investigator, is the protagonist of his series of “hard-boiled” noir detective novels set in 1940s New York. The novels are known for their blend of period-accurate detective fiction with Bergman’s signature comedic and satirical tone. The Jewish component is central to both the protagonist’s identity and the books’ subversive take on the hard-boiled detective genre

The Protagonist’s Identity: Unlike the traditional “WASP” private eyes (like Philip Marlowe or Sam Spade), Jack LeVine is explicitly Jewish—described as “stocky, sweaty, and bald”. His Jewishness is a defining trait that influences his worldview and interactions in 1940s America.

Cultural Perspective: LeVine often operates as an “outsider” within the power structures of the era. The series uses his Jewish perspective to provide a satirical and often cynical look at American institutions, including Hollywood and the Cold War political landscape.

Historical Context: The novels explore themes relevant to the mid-20th-century Jewish-American experience, such as the Red Scare in **Hollywood and LeVine** (where a friend is suspected of being a Communist) and the personal impact of his father’s death, which is a major plot point in **Tender is LeVine**.

Literary Subversion: Bergman, known for his comedic writing (including *Blazing Saddles*), uses LeVine’s Jewish identity to inject a “flip, easy style” and wit into the typically grim noir genre, creating a “New Jew” archetype in crime fiction who relies on intellect and street smarts rather than just brawn.

[Google/AI]

Bergman, Andrew, (**The Big Kiss-Off of 1944** [*Jack LeVine Mysteries #1*]) [hc, Holt, 1974] B002DGOLJ0 [mass mkt pb, Ballantine, 1975] 978-0345244024 [pb, HarperCollins, 1983] 978-0060806736

Bergman, Andrew, (**Hollywood and LeVine** [*Jack LeVine Mysteries #2*]) [hc, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1975] 978-0030138164 [pb, Ballantine, 1976] 978-0345250063

Bergman, Andrew, (**Tender is LeVine** [*Jack LeVine Mysteries #3*]) [hc, Minotaur Books, 2001] 978-0312262051

David Black (born 1945 in Boston and resides there and in New York) [*An American journalist, novelist, screenwriter, and television producer. After graduating from Amherst College, he worked as an investigative journalist, writing over 150 articles for major publications like **The Atlantic Monthly**, **The New York Times Magazine**, **Rolling Stone**, and **Harper’s**. He has published 11 books including the true-crime book **Murder at the Met**, a multi-generational Jewish crime novel **An Impossible Life**, and the conspiracy thriller **The Extinction Event**. He also enjoyed success as a television writer and producer, working on well-known series such as **Law & Order**, **Miami Vice**, **Hill Street Blues**, **CSI-Miami**, and **Blue Bloods**. He also wrote and produced the 1992 made-for-TV movie, **Legacy of Lies**. See the entry on this movie in the companion Filmography.*]

Black, David, (**An Impossible Life: A Bobeh Myseh** [hc, Moyer Bell Ltd., 1998]) 978-1559212229 [*The book serves as a multi-generational, magical realist epic that blends gritty gangster drama with Jewish folklore, family mythologies, and dark Borscht Belt comedy. It tracks backward from contemporary American life to the 19th-century European shtetls, using the specter of Jewish gangsters as a primary structural element. The protagonist, **Leo Polishook**, is attempting to understand the root of his mother’s severe mental illness and dementia. To make sense of his family’s chaotic reality—symbolized by his mother sifting his deceased father’s ashes through his sister’s marijuana strainer to “save his gold”—Leo reaches back through time to investigate seven generations of family history. Throughout the entire book,*

Leo carries on a witty, biting, and deeply moving conversation with the ghost of his deceased father. Rather than a somber haunting, their ongoing dialogue plays out like a Woody Allen or Borscht Belt comedy routine, acting as the emotional anchor of the book. As Leo sifts through his ancestry, the book moves backward through centuries of Jewish history, tracking three distinct eras:

The American Immigrant Era: Leo recalls the life of his kindly but fiercely vicious grandfather, an infamous Depression-era mobster known as “the Pasha of Allen Street.” This grandfather embodies the classic “Jewish gangster” archetype, casually gossiping with God over glasses of Slivovitz at a local café while organizing local crime rackets.

The 19th-Century Shtetls: The narrative shifts back to Eastern Europe, focusing on the hardships, pogroms, and everyday survivals of his ancestors. This includes mythologized ancestral feats, such as a great-grandfather who famously strangled a wolf barehanded because the beast was blocking his path to the outhouse.

The 18th-Century Mysticism: The deepest layer of the book dives into Eastern European Jewish mysticism, featuring haunting tales of demonic possession, transmigrating souls (dybbuks), and wonder rabbis.

The novel explores how the historical trauma of the Jewish diaspora—from European pogroms to the gritty underworld of New York immigrant survival—manifests as psychological burdens in modern descendants. Black highlights how families use exaggerated folklore and humor to shield themselves from tragic realities. As Leo’s father’s ghost notes, “The living are surrounded by ghosts,” illustrating that ancestry is never truly dead. [Google/AI]

Amy Bloom (born 1953 in New York City and resides in Connecticut) [She has balanced a highly successful career as both a practicing clinical psychotherapist and a literary writer for over four decades. Her academic background includes a B.A. from Wesleyan University and an M.S.W. from Smith College. She published her debut short story collection, *Come to Me*, in 1993 at the age of 40. Her bibliography spans acclaimed novels including *Away* and *Lucky Us*, as well as numerous short story collections. In 2022, she published the deeply personal, bestselling memoir *In Love*, which chronicled her late husband’s battle with Alzheimer’s disease and their journey to Switzerland for legal accompanied suicide. Beyond books, Bloom has written for *The New Yorker* and *Vogue*, and created, wrote, and ran the 2007 Lifetime television drama series *State of Mind*. Though she is known primarily as a literary historical fiction author rather than a genre thriller novelist, her works explicitly feature crime, illicit underworlds, and moral ambiguity as core narrative drivers of her Jewish fiction. She subverts traditional narratives of victimization to explore Jewish survival through unlawful means. - GoogleAI]

Bloom, Amy, (*Away* [h, Random House, 2007]) 978-1400063567 [pb, Granta Books, 2008] 978-1847080134 [In her breakout historical novel *Away*, the entire plot is propelled by illegal acts and underground networks. The protagonist, **Lillian Leyb**, is a Russian-Jewish immigrant fleeing a horrific pogrom. To survive and fund an impossible cross-continental journey to find her missing daughter, she actively engages in a world of vice. Rather than being a passive victim, Lillian engages in sexual compromises with a Yiddish theater impresario and his son simultaneously. As she travels west, she falls in with deep-underworld figures, including an ambitious prostitute. Her journey takes a dark, noir-like turn when she helps cover up a fatal stabbing and participates in a robbery to steal the dead man’s money. Her quest eventually lands her in an Alaskan women’s prison, solidifying the narrative framework of a fugitive on the run.

Bloom, Amy, (*Lucky Us* [hc, Random House, 2014] 978-1400067244 [pb, Random House, 2015] 978-0812978940 [Here Bloom explores the mid-20th-century Jewish-American experience through the lens of con artistry and shifting identities. The main characters—half-sisters Iris and Eva—navigating a landscape of scandals and betrayals, literally kidnap (or “liberate”) a young boy named Danny from a Jewish orphanage. The characters reinvent themselves through stolen cars, forged identities, and active deception. Bloom uses the crime of fraud not to condemn her characters, but to highlight how

marginalized people, particularly Jewish survivors, had to break societal laws to forge alternative family structures.

Bloom, Amy, (**Blunt Instrument** [hc, The Mysterious Press, 2026] 978-1613167601 [*This book marks Bloom's first foray into a direct "whodunnit" format, but the only Jewish thing about it is its author*]

In sum, Bloom rejects the trope of the saintly, suffering immigrant. Instead, she utilizes crime as a practical, almost casual mechanism for survival (Az me muz, ken men — "When one must, one can"). In her universe, Jewish identity and criminality intersect when the law of the land fails to protect the individual, forcing her characters to operate in the gray zones of the law to achieve justice, family, and safety. – Google/AI]

"Toni Brill" was a joint pseudonym used by **Anthony Olcott** (1947–2012), a specialist in Russian affairs, Colgate U. academic, and US intelligence community analyst, and his wife **Martha Brill Olcott** (1949–2024), a scholar on Central Asia and Colgate U. academic. Their two humorous, cozy novels are set in Brooklyn and feature Midge Cohen, a fluent Russian-speaking former scholar and children's book author who repeatedly finds herself entangled in international intrigue and murder, heavily exasperated by her overbearing mother, Pearl.

Brill, Toni [Midge Cohen #1], (**Date with a Dead Doctor**) [hc, St. Martin's Press, 1991] 978-0312054090 [pb, Worldwide Library, 1992] 978-0373261093 [*In this series debut, Midge Cohen's busybody mother fixes her up on a blind date with Dr. Leon Skripnik, an immigrant physician. The date does not go particularly well, but things take a much worse turn when the doctor is abruptly murdered, making Midge the last person to see him alive. As the police circle, Midge finds herself relentlessly hounded by her mother, the deceased doctor's erratic ex-wife, and a mysterious relative named "Cousin Shmuel" who has recently arrived from the "Old Country". To clear her name and make sense of the chaos, Midge is forced to put her Russian language skills to use and navigate an eccentric web of Brighton Beach characters, family drama, and old-world secrets.*

Brill, Toni [Midge Cohen #2], (**Date With a Plummeting Publisher: A Midge Cohen Mystery**) [hc, St. Martin's Press, 1993] 978-0312087531 [pb, Worldwide Library, 1995] 978-0373261611 [*Feeling discouraged after her recent adult fiction draft and Girl Scout mystery novels receive a lukewarm reception, Midge reluctantly agrees to another one of her mother's fix-ups. This time, her date is an eccentric publisher of Russian literature. The date goes horribly, and Midge quickly realizes she is merely being used as a pawn in the publisher's high-stakes game involving Soviet politics and blackmail. The very next morning, the publisher plummets to his death from a hotel window. While the authorities lean toward suicide, a highly suspicious Midge teams up with a handsome policeman named Mike Russo to unravel a dangerous conspiracy that stretches from Brooklyn all the way back to the collapsing Soviet Union. [Google/AI]*

Abigail Browning (est. birth 1975) - She specializes in curating award-winning stories from publications like Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine and Alfred Hitchcock's Mystery Magazine. No personal details publicly available. [See also the Jewish crime anthologies of **Rabbi Lawrence Raphael, Laurence Roth and Kenneth Wishnia** in this bibliography. [Google/AI]

Browning, Abigail [ed], (**Murder is No Mitzvah: Short Mysteries About Jewish Occasions** [hc, Minotaur Books, 2004]) 978-0312325060

Talia Carner (birth est. 1960?) – born in Tel Aviv, she is the author of six historical and psychological suspense novels, including *Jerusalem Maiden*, *The Third Daughter*, and *The Boy with the Star Tattoo* (published in 2024).

Carner, Talia, (**Hotel Moscow: A Riveting Literary Thriller of Women, Heritage, and Conspiracy in Post-Communist Russia** [pb, William Morrow, 2015]) 978-0062388599 [**Brooke Fielding**, a thirty-eight

year old New York investment manager and daughter of Jewish Holocaust survivors, finds her life suddenly upended in late September 1993 when her job is unexpectedly put in jeopardy. Brooke accepts an invitation to join a friend on a mission to Moscow to teach entrepreneurial skills to Russian business women, which will also give her a chance to gain expertise in the new, vast emerging Russian market. Though excited by the opportunity to save her job and be one of the first Americans to visit Russia after the fall of communism, she also wonders what awaits her in the country that persecuted her mother just a generation ago.

Inspired by the women she meets, Brooke becomes committed to helping them investigate the crime that threatens their businesses. But as the uprising of the Russian parliament against President Boris Yeltsin turns Moscow into a volatile war zone, Brooke will find that her involvement comes at a high cost. For in a city where “capitalism” is still a dirty word, where neighbors spy on neighbors and the new economy is in the hands of a few dangerous men, nothing Brooke does goes unnoticed—and a mistake in her past may now compromise her future. – Amazon]

Carner, Talia, (**The Third Daughter** [pb, William Morrow, 2019]) 978-0062896889 [*illuminates a little-known piece of history: the sex trafficking of young women from Russia to South America in the late 19th century.*]

Sandra Levy Ceren [born 1936, New York City], long-time clinical psychologist in private practice in Del Mar, California. In her **Dr. Cory Cohen Mystery series**, the protagonist’s Jewish identity is a central component of her character’s diverse background. Dr. Cory Cohen is explicitly identified as a **bi-racial woman of both Jewish and Japanese heritage**.

Narrative Focus: Her identity is more than just a background detail; the series is often categorized within **Jewish fiction** and “Women Sleuths”. The author, a real-life psychologist, uses this multi-ethnic background to infuse the character with unique cultural perspectives as she solves crimes in the **San Diego** area.

Series Context: The mysteries (such as *Stolen Secrets* and *Prescription for Terror*) often delve into “authentic human drama,” where her professional ethics as a clinical psychologist and her personal cultural history intersect.

While she is not defined solely by her religion, her **Japanese-Jewish roots** are frequently highlighted as a defining feature of her identity in the series’ promotional materials and character descriptions. [Google/AI]

Ceren, Sandra Levy, (**Prescription for Terror** [Dr. Cory Cohen]) [pb, Andrew Scott Pub., 1999]) 978-0966986105 [hc, Ulverscroft large print, 2003] 978-0708947197

Ceren, Sandra Levy, (**Secrets from the Couch** [Dr. Cory Cohen]) [pb, Mystery Writers of America, 2003]) 978-0708947197

Ceren, Sandra Levy, (**Stolen Secrets: A Dr. Cory Cohen Mystery #1** [hc, Modern History Press, 2011]) 978-1615990696 [pb] Modern History Press, 2011] 978-1615990689

Ceren, Sandra Levy, (**Imposter for Hire: A Dr. Corey Cohen Mystery #2** [pb, Modern History Press, 2012]) 978-1615991426

Ceren, Sandra Levy, (**Vanished: A Dr. Cory Cohen Psychological Thriller #3** [pb, Modern History Press, 2014]) 978-1615992300

Michael Chabon (born 1963, Washington, D.C.) - celebrated American novelist, screenwriter, and essayist known for his elegant prose and genre-bending storytelling. Married to author **Ayelet Waldman** since 1993; they have four children and reside in Berkeley, California. He often blends the conventions of crime and detective fiction with deep explorations of Jewish history, identity, and the weight of the Holocaust. His work uses the “positivist, rationalist worldview” of the detective genre as a foil to the “incomprehensible reality” of historical trauma. His debut novel, **The Mysteries of Pittsburgh**

(1988) is the coming-of-age story of a mobster's son. Crime and Jewish identity serve as the foundational "mysteries" through which the protagonist, **Art Bechstein**, navigates his transition into adulthood.

The Yiddish Policemen's Union (2007) is a "hardboiled detective noir" set in an alternate history where a Yiddish-speaking Jewish settlement was established in Sitka, Alaska, after the destruction of Israel in 1948. Detective Meyer Landsman investigates the murder of a heroin-addled chess prodigy, uncovering a conspiracy involving evangelical Christians and Jewish fundamentalists. The book explores themes of diaspora, exile, and the "uncertainty" of a temporary homeland. It features a unique lexicon where Yiddish terms are repurposed for crime: a gun is a "**sholem**" (peace), and a beat cop is a "**latke**".

In **The Final Solution (2004)** a Sherlock Holmes pastiche featuring an aged detective (implied to be Holmes) who investigates a murder and the theft of a parrot belonging to a young Jewish refugee. The novella uses the "Holmesian" perspective to demonstrate that human reason and logic are fundamentally unable to "solve" or comprehend the mystery of the Holocaust.

The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay (2000): While primarily a historical novel about the comic book industry, it incorporates elements of the Golem legend and "escapology" as narrative devices. Josef Kavalier is a trained escape artist who uses his skills to flee Nazi-occupied Prague; his cousin Sammy Clay writes superhero stories that function as a form of "vigilante justice" against historical trauma. The novel explores the **Shoah**, the immigrant experience in New York, and the creation of "Jewish superheroes" as a psychological defense mechanism.

Recurring Themes

The Failed Messiah: Characters often grapple with the search for a savior or a solution to Jewish suffering, which usually ends in moral ambiguity rather than resolution.

The Imaginary Homeland: Chabon frequently constructs "counterfactual" worlds to examine the psychological impact of displacement and the spatial dimension of Jewish identity.

Linguistic Subversion: He integrates Yiddish and Hebrew into the hardboiled detective idiom to foster "authenticity" while simultaneously critiquing the Americanization of Jewish culture.

Chabon, Michael, (**The Mysteries of Pittsburgh**) [hc, William Morrow, 1988] 978-0688076320 [pb, Harper, 2005] 978-0060790592

Chabon, Michael, (**The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay**) [hc, Random House, 2000] 978-0679450047 [pb, Fourth Estate, 2001] 978-1841154930 [- frames American Nazi activity and Jewish resistance through the lens of popular culture, political apathy, and imaginative defiance. The novel portrays this dynamic by highlighting American fascist and pro-Nazi organizations during the 1930s. It depicts them not just as ideological threats, but as active, dangerous saboteurs. This culminates in a plot point where they attempt to bomb a bar mitzvah, illustrating the violent reality of domestic extremism. Chabon captures the pre-war American mood of isolationism. Corporate entities and publishers are initially hesitant to anger Germany or alienate readers, viewing Nazi aggression as a European problem rather than an American one. For the protagonists, creating their superhero, **The Escapist**, is an act of explicit political warfare. Punching Adolf Hitler on the comic's very first cover mirrors the real-world defiance of Jewish creators like Jack Kirby and Joe Simon with Captain America. The resistance is deeply rooted in Jewish folklore. Chabon links the comic book superhero to the **Golem of Prague**—a mythical creature created to protect Jews from persecution—arguing that superheroes are a modern mythology born out of powerlessness and the desire for justice. The novel demonstrates the limitations of artistic resistance. After learning that the comic book fantasy cannot stop the physical horrors of the Holocaust, Joe Kavalier abandons his art and physically enlists in the military to fight fascism directly. - [Google/AI]

Chabon, Michael, (**The Final Solution: A Story of Detection**) [hc, Harper, 2004] 978-0060763404 [pb, Harper Perennial, 2005] 978-0060777104

Chabon, Michael, (**The Yiddish Policemen's Union**) [hc, HarperCollins, 2007] 978-0007149827 [pb, Harper Perennial, 2008] 978-0007149834

Ze'ev (Zev) Chafets (born 1947, Pontiac, MI, spent a long period commuting back and forth between New York and Israel, living in Tel Aviv with his family since 2012) [*Graduated from the University of Michigan and immigrated to Israel in 1967 immediately following the Six-Day War. Served in the Israel Defense Forces and spent a decade in government and military politics. Appointed Director of Israel's Government Press Office (GPO), serving from 1977 to 1982 under Prime Minister Menachem Begin. Participated directly as an active delegate in the historic Israeli-Egyptian peace negotiations. Co-founded and served as the original managing editor of The Jerusalem Report. Wrote regular political columns for major global publications, including the New York Daily News and The New York Times Magazine. He later became a prominent opinion columnist for platforms like Bloomberg. Published over 14 books, spanning satirical fiction (**Inherit the Mob**), socio-political commentary (**Devil's Night**), and high-profile biographies of American conservative icons like Rush Limbaugh and Roger Ailes.*

Chafets frequently writes books that touch on the mystery thriller genre and explicitly uses Jewish crime motifs as core narrative drivers. Rather than writing straight, gritty noir, Chafets approaches these themes through a satirical, fast-paced, and comedic lens. His work leans heavily on the subgenre of Jewish-American organized crime, the intersection of journalism and the underworld, and international political intrigue.

Chafets, Zev, (**Inherit the Mob** [hc, Random House, 1991]) 978-0679402633 [mass mkt pb, 1993] 978-0449221662 [*This novel serves as his most direct exploration of the Jewish crime motif. William Gordon, a Pulitzer Prize-winning Jewish foreign correspondent, discovers that his late uncle, Max Grossman, was actually a major Mafia kingpin. Gordon shockingly inherits his uncle's multi-million dollar "Mafia territory" and must figure out how to rule it. To protect his turf from rival Italian mobs, the highly educated reporter has to enlist the help of retired, old-school Jewish mobsters to beat the underworld at its own game. The book plays heavily on the legacy of Murder, Inc. and classic Jewish-American gangsters, contrasting them humorously with modern media and culture.*

Chafets, Zev, (**The Bookmakers** [hc, Random House, 1995]) 978-0679414568 [*Chafets continued exploring the comedic-crime thriller angle in his next novel. A washed-up novelist becomes tangled in a web of deception, bookies, and illegal gambling. The narrative is driven by slapstick encounters with the Jewish and Italian mob elements running the gambling underworld, mocking the classic tropes of criminal enforcers and shady publishing deals.*

Chafets, Zev, (**Hang Time**) [hc, Grand Central Publishers, 1996] 978-0446520478 [pb, Grand Central Publishers, 1997] 978-0446604116 [*This book pivots toward the international, high-stakes political mystery thriller. [Three American basketball stars (from a team modeled after the Detroit Pistons) and their coach are kidnapped by Shi'ite terrorists while on an exhibition tour in Israel. It functions as an offbeat thriller involving global ransom demands, bumbling criminal underlings, and the intersection of American sports culture with Middle Eastern geo-political crime.*

Chafets, Zev, (**The Project** [hc, Grand Central Publishing, 1997]) 978-0446518864 [pb, Grand Central Publishing, 1998] 978-0446605427 [*A political thriller that utilizes a "crime against the state" motif rather than street-level organized crime. Dewey Goldberg becomes the first Jewish President of the United States, only to find his administration targeted by a rogue, conservative Israeli Prime Minister who is trying to sabotage his reelection. Filled with political double-crosses, deep-state conspiracies, and red herrings, it leans squarely into the White House/political thriller subgenre.*

In sum, Zev Chafets treats crime, the Mafia, and terrorism as backdrops for witty ethnic satire, sharp dialogue, and absurd situations. He utilizes the historical trope of the "tough Jew"—whether as an old-school wiseguy or a cynical Israeli operative—to drive his plots forward. [Google/AI]

Jerome Charyn (born 1937, Bronx, NY) >12-volume **Isaac Sidel** series. He incorporates Jewish components into his books primarily through detailed depictions of the early 20th-century Jewish immigrant experience in New York City, particularly the Lower East Side and the Bronx, and an underlying literary style that blends history with a sense of the spiritual or the mythic.

Key Jewish components and themes in his works include:

Setting and Community: Several novels, most notably *Ravage & Son* (2023) and his earliest novel *Once Upon a Droshtky* (1964), use the Yiddish-speaking Jewish ghetto of the Lower East Side as a central backdrop. He describes the poverty, crime, and social struggles of the community, where families were often “packed into tenements”.

Historical Figures: Charyn integrates real-life historical figures into his fiction, such as *Abraham Cahan*, the editor of the *Jewish Daily Forward*, who serves as a “conflicted moral compass” and a de facto detective in *Ravage & Son*.

Characters and Identity: His characters often represent the first-generation immigrant experience, acting as a bridge between their Yiddish-speaking parents’ world and their own semi-assimilated American reality. This includes a Jewish homicide detective in one novel.

Cultural and Literary References: Charyn’s writing style is described as deriving from a “fertile tradition of Jewish storytelling”. He uses Yiddish vocabulary (e.g., “ganeef”, “shul”, “shamas”) and references figures from Jewish culture and literature, such as the “fools of Chelm” and Isaac Babel.

Historical Trauma: In novels like *Cesare* (2018) and *Jerzy* (2017), the backdrop of World War II and the Holocaust is central. These stories deal with the plight of Jews in Nazi Europe, the Jewish underground, and the complex moral choices people made to survive persecution.

Themes of Morality and Suffering: Charyn explores themes of “spiritual potential within a mire of poverty and violence,” a focus on ethics, and a stoic acceptance of suffering, which critics associate with Jewish literary traditions. He also highlights the resilience of Jewish women who kept families together in the face of immense hardship.

Key Jewish components of the *Isaac Sidel* character include:

The “Jewish James Bond”: Sidel is often described as a Jewish version of James Bond, but one who is a “practicing Jew” carrying a Glock alongside his cultural history.

Cultural Roots: Born and raised in the Bronx, Sidel operates within the “Jewish-puerto rican-chinese-italian” milieu of the Lower East Side and the Bronx. His character is deeply rooted in the “rough and tumble” world of “gangster Jews” that Charyn observed in his own youth.

Archetypal Influences: Charyn draws on Jewish literary archetypes for Sidel and his associates. While Sidel is a powerful authority figure (rising from NYPD detective to New York City Mayor and even Vice President), he possesses the “spiritual persistence” and moral weight characteristic of Jewish-American literature.

Family and Community: His relationship with his daughter, *Marilyn the Wild*, and his “adopted” son and partner, Manfred Coen (modeled after Charyn’s own brother), reflects traditional Jewish themes of fierce family loyalty and the “moral but also very cruel” dynamics found in the Hebrew Bible.

A “Moral Compass”: Despite the surreal and often violent underworld he inhabits, Sidel acts as a “patriarch” and a flawed but human moral force, a role informed by what critics call a “moral consciousness deeply influenced by Jewish experience”. [Google/AI]

1. Charyn. Jerome, [*Sidel #1*] (*Blue Eyes* [hc, Simon & Schuster, 1975]) 978-0671218560 [pb, Mysterious Press/Open Road, 2012] 978-1453290002
2. Charyn. Jerome, [*Sidel #2*] (*Marilyn the Wild* [hc, Arbor House, 1976]) 978-0877951292 [pb, Mysterious Press, 1990] 978-0445407565
3. Charyn. Jerome, [*Sidel #3*] (*The Education of Patrick Silver* [hc, Arbor House, 1976]) 978-0877951421 [mass mkt pb, Avon, 1981] 978-0380016983
4. Charyn. Jerome, [*Sidel #4*] (*Secret Isaac*, [hc, Arbor House 1978]) 978-087795196 [pb, Arbor House, 1978] 978-0877951964

5. Charyn. Jerome, [*Sidel #5*] (**The Good Policeman** [hc, Mysterious Press, 1990]) 978-0892963607 [pb, Mysterious Press, 1991] 978-0446400121
6. Charyn. Jerome, [*Sidel #6*] (**Maria's Girls** [hc, Mysterious Press, 1992]) 978-0892964604 [pb, Mysterious Press, 1993] 978-0446400466
7. Charyn. Jerome, [*Sidel #7*] (**Montezuma's Man** [hc, Mysterious Press, 1993]) 978-089296461 [pb, Mysterious Press, 1993] 978-0446400473
8. Charyn. Jerome, [*Sidel #8*] (**Little Angel Street** [hc, Mysterious Press, 1994] 978-0892964628 [pb, Mysterious Press, 1995] 9780446400480
9. Charyn. Jerome, [*Sidel #9*] (**El Bronx** [hc, Mysterious Press, 1997]) 978-0892966042
10. Charyn. Jerome, [*Sidel #10*] (**Citizen Sidel** [hc, Mysterious Press, 1999] 9780892966059
11. Charyn. Jerome, [*Sidel #11*] (**Under the Eye of God** [pb, Mysterious Press and Open Road Media, 2012]) 978-1453270998 [hc, Open Road Media, 2014] 978-1480479760
12. Charyn. Jerome, [*Sidel #12*] (**Winter Warning** [hc, Pegasus Crime, 2017]) 978-1681773483 [pb, Pegasus Crime, 2018] 978-1681778990

Charyn, Jerome, (**Ravage & Son** [pb, Bellevue Literary Press, 2023]) 978-1954276192 [*Jewish crime and law enforcement in early 20th century Lower East Side*]

John Jacob Clayton (born 1935 in New York City, now resides near Amherst, MA) – [B.A. Columbia U. 1956, M.A. New York U. 1959, Ph.D. in modern literature from Indiana U. in 1966. After teaching at Boston University for five years, he spent 30 years as a Professor of English and Creative Writing at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, retiring to part-time teaching in 2000. Highly regarded for his contributions to modern American Jewish literature - four novels (including **Kuperman's Fire** and **Mitzvah Man**) and five short story collections. His short fiction has been widely anthologized in prestigious collections such as the *Best American Short Stories* and the *O. Henry Prize Stories*. He also served as the primary editor for six editions of the widely used college textbook, *The Heath Introduction to Fiction*. He was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease in 2016, a journey he chronicled in his 2020 memoir, **Parkinson's Blues: Stories of My Life**. He is the father of the late rock singer-songwriter Josh Clayton-Felt.

Some of his fiction approaches the mystery-thriller genre and incorporates criminal elements, but he uses these frameworks primarily as vehicles for spiritual, ethical, and Jewish identity exploration rather than traditional genre tropes. He does not typically utilize "Jewish crime motifs" (such as Jewish gangsters or localized mafia syndicates) as narrative drivers. Instead, Clayton frequently pits observant, ethically minded Jewish protagonists against broad corporate, systemic, or domestic evils. The "thriller" mechanics serve as an existential catalyst forcing his characters to confront their heritage and moral boundaries. His work intersects with crime and thriller genres in several notable ways:

Clayton, John Jacob, (**Kuperman's Fire** [hc, Permanent Press, 2007]) 978-1579621520 [*Corporate Thriller: This is Clayton's most explicit foray into the thriller structure, merging high-stakes corporate crime with deep Jewish introspection. Michael Kuperman is a successful software entrepreneur on the verge of a lucrative merger with a massive conglomerate called Chemicorp. The narrative shifts into a suspense thriller when his technical engineer uncovers a dark corporate secret: a Chemicorp subsidiary is illicitly manufacturing and shipping lethal nerve gas. Instead of reacting like a standard thriller protagonist, Kuperman filters this corporate crime through his Jewish heritage and generational trauma. He relates the contemporary corporate atrocity to the Russian pogroms his grandfather fled. The subsequent danger—hiding out from corporate operatives among Orthodox families in Brooklyn—becomes a literal and spiritual return to his roots.*

Clayton, John Jacob, (**The Man I Never Wanted to Be** [hc, Permanent Press, 1998]) 978-1579620141 [pb, Permanent Press, 1998?] 978-1579620578 [*Psychological & Criminal Suspense: This novel leans directly into the suspense genre to dissect male violence and morality. David, a divorced college professor, agrees to help a former lover who runs a shelter for battered women in Boston. He gets caught in a dangerous, terrifying sequence of events while trying to protect a woman and her child from a psychotic, abusive husband. The book operates on high narrative tension and threat. However, Clayton utilizes the encroaching criminal danger to force his protagonist into a psychological breakdown where he must reckon with his own capacity for violence and basic human beliefs.*

Clayton, John Jacob, (**Mitzvah Man** [hc, Texas Tech UP, 2011]) 978-0896726833 [*The Anti-Crime Catalyst: While not a traditional thriller, this novel uses a foiled violent crime as the inciting incident for a deeply spiritual story. Following the tragic death of his wife, Adam Friedman begins a manic, obsessive quest to perform mitzvot (good deeds). Friedman unexpectedly thwarts a violent street crime. This act of intervention thrusts him into the public eye, turning him into a media-anointed “prophet” or madman. Here, the localized element of street crime is used purely as a narrative pivot to transition a secular businessman into a modern-day spiritual seeker.*

Clayton has been referred to as a baal teshuvah (master of return/repentance) of American Jewish literature. He uses **external criminal threats**—whether a psychotic stalker, a corporate bioweapons conspiracy, or urban violence—specifically to wake his secular characters up and drive them toward ethical and spiritual accountability. [Google/AI]

Dick Cluster (est. birth 1947) is an American author, historian, and translator currently based in Oakland, California. He is best known for his Alex Glauberman mystery trilogy. He first visited Havana in 1969 and was active in U.S. radical movements during the 1960s and '70s. In addition to writing, he is a prominent translator of Cuban and Latin American literature and has taught courses on Cuban history and culture at the University of Massachusetts at Boston. The Alex Glauberman series is unique for its “regular guy” protagonist—a divorced auto mechanic in Boston who balances amateur sleuthing with real-life struggles like single parenthood and cancer recovery. Alex is explicitly Jewish. He is frequently described as a “*mensch*”—a person of integrity and honor—which often serves as his primary motivation for getting involved in dangerous cases. At the start of the series, Alex is 41 years old and undergoing chemotherapy for lymphoma. His preoccupation with whether his cancer will return adds a layer of vulnerability and realism to the books.

Series Breakdown

Return to Sender (1988): Alex meets a stranger at a post office who asks him to mail a package to Berlin. When the stranger turns up dead, Alex travels to London and Berlin (during the final years of the Berlin Wall) to find the man’s daughter and clear his own name.

Repulse Monkey (1989): Now recovered from his first bout of chemo, Alex is pulled into a mystery when his babysitter disappears, leading him into a world of Boston old money, corruption, and addiction recovery.

Obligations of the Bone (1992): A medical thriller where a pioneer in bone-marrow transplants hires Alex to investigate a blackmail letter. The story heavily incorporates figures from the 1960s

Cluster, Dick [Alex Glauberman series, #1], (**Return to Sender** [hc, Dutton, 1988] 978-0525246909 [pb, Penguin Books, 1990] 978-0140127843

Cluster, Dick [Alex Glauberman series, #2], (**Repulse Monkey** [hc, Dutton, 1989]) 978-0525248118

Cluster, Dick [Alex Glauberman series, #3], (**Obligations of the Bone** [hc, St. Martin’s Press, 1992]) 978-0312082741

Harlan Coben (born 1962, Newark, NJ) - 12-volume series featuring **Myron Bolitar** – sports agent – [Note: the publishing years of this series are not perfectly consecutive with the number of each

volume in the series, for reasons I could not work out. There are also many editions of each book of this very popular author. I just recorded the details as best I could from the internet.

From Google/Wikipedia: Myron Bolitar, Harlan Coben's central character, is explicitly Jewish, a trait shared with his creator, Harlan Coben; he comes from a close-knit Jewish family in New Jersey and often uses Yiddish expressions, making his Jewish background a key part of his identity.

Key Details:

Author's Inspiration: Coben, himself Jewish, based Myron partly on himself, including his New Jersey roots and Jewish identity.

Family Life: Myron has a warm, loving Jewish family, with a strong bond to his parents, and also looks after his nephew, Mickey.

Cultural Markers: He incorporates Yiddish phrases and cultural elements into his dialogue, which is a deliberate choice by Coben.

Contrast: Myron's Jewish identity is often highlighted in contrast to his rich, WASP-y best friend, Win (Windsor Horne Lockwood III). [Google/AI]

Coben, Harlan, [*Myron Bolitar #1*] (**Deal Breaker** [hc, Delacorte Press, 1995]) 978-0385340601 [mass mkt pb, 2014, Dell] 978-0345535153 [pb, Dell, 2024] 978-0593974513

Coben, Harlan, [*Myron Bolitar #2*] (**Drop Shot** [hc, Delacorte Press, 1997]) 978-0385342100 [pb, Orion, 2014] 978-1407249087

Coben, Harlan, [*Myron Bolitar #3*] (**Fade Away** [hc, Delacorte Press, 1998]) 978-0385342506 [pb, Orion, 2009] 978-1407234465

Coben, Harlan, [*Myron Bolitar #4*] (**Backspin** [hc, Dell, 1997]) 978-1568654805 [pb, Orion, 2013] 978-1407234472

Coben, Harlan, [*Myron Bolitar #5*] (**One False Move** [hc, Delacorte, 1998]) 978-0385323697 [pb, Orion, 2014] 978-1409150534

Coben, Harlan, [*Myron Bolitar #6*] (**The Final Detail** [hc, Delacorte, 2009]) 978-0385323710 [pb, Orion, 2014] 978-1409150497

Coben, Harlan, [*Myron Bolitar #7*] (**Darkest Fear** [hc, Delacorte, 2000]) 978-0385334334 [pb, Orion, 2013] 978-1409150459

Coben, Harlan, [*Myron Bolitar #8*] (**Promise Me** [hc, Dutton, 2006]) 978-0525949497 [pb, E.P. Dutton, 2014] 978-1409150503

Coben, Harlan, [*Myron Bolitar #9*] (**Long Lost** [hc, Dutton, 2009]) 978-0525951056 [pb, Dutton, 2012] 978-0451236982

Coben, Harlan, [*Myron Bolitar #10*] (**Live Wire** [hc, Dutton, 2011]) 978-0525952060 [pb, Dutton, 2012] 978-0451233936

Coben, Harlan [*Myron Bolitar #11*], (**Home** [hc, Dutton, 2016]) 978-0525955108 [pb, Dutton, 2017] 978-1101984260

Coben, Harlan, [*Myron Bolitar #12*] (**Think Twice** [Grand Central Publishing, 2024]) 978-1538756317 [pb, Grand Central Publishing, 2024] 978-1538756331

[Harlan Coben has also authored a 3-volume series based on Mickey Bolitar, Myron's nephew, intended for young adult readers]

Coben, Harlan, (**Shelter** [hc, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2011]) 978-0399256509 [pb, Penguin Young Readers, 2012] 978-0142422038

Coben, Harlan, (**Seconds Away** [hc, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2012]) [pb, Speak, 2012] 978-0399256516

Coben, Harlan, (**Found** [hc, Putnam, 2014]) 978-0399256523 [pb, Speak, 2015] 978-0147515742

Coben Harlan, (**The Woods** [hc, Dutton, 2007] 978-0525950127 [pb, Dutton, 2020] 978-1524746841 [Features Jewish New Jersey prosecutor])

Joan Lipinsky Cochran (born 1954, Miami Beach, FL) - best known for her *Becks Ruchinsky Mystery* series, which features a former investigative reporter dealing with complex Jewish communities:

Cochran, Joan Lipinsky, (**Still Missing Beulah: Stories of Blacks and Jews in Mid-Century Miami** [pb, Pericot Publishing, 2014]) 978-0692298350 [*Stories of Jews and Blacks in Mid-Century Miami: A collection of interlinked short stories examining South Florida's civil rights era. Examines the complex relationship between Jews and Black people in mid-century Miami during the Civil Rights era. It addresses both the shared experiences of prejudice and internal tensions, such as the use of Yiddish racial slurs like schvartze.*]

Cochran, Joan Lipinsky, (**The Yiddish Gangster's Daughter** (pb, *Becks Ruchinsky Mystery* #1, self-published, 2018) 978-0999828007 [*A mystery following a woman who discovers her father was a member of the Jewish mafia. It explores the 1940s and 50s Jewish syndicate in Miami and New York. The story details activities such as running numbers for the Cuban lottery, combating Nazi sympathizers, and smuggling arms to Israeli independence fighters.*]

Cochran, Joan Lipinsky, (**The Hasidic Rebbe's Son** [pb, *Becks Ruchinsky Mystery* #2, self-published, 2021] 978-0999828038 [*This installment explores the secretive world of Hasidic Judaism and the nightlife of South Beach following the murder of an ultra-religious student. It portrays both the "beauty of Hasidic traditions" and the "destructive side" of insular communities, specifically the shunning of those who leave. Examines the heavy guilt some sects carry regarding the Holocaust and their strict adherence to ritual as a perceived safeguard against future catastrophe.*]

Cochran's work is noted for its "intimate knowledge" of various Jewish enclaves:

Eastern European Immigrants: Inspired by her childhood in Miami, she writes about the "balalaika-playing" immigrants in South Beach parks.

Cuban Jews: Her writing references the "Jewban" community that arrived in Miami after Castro's rise, characterized by synagogues where prayers are sung in unfamiliar melodies.

Ultra-Orthodox/Hasidim: Her later work focuses on secretive Hasidic enclaves in Miami, Brooklyn, and upstate New York, exploring the life of those born into these "black-hatted" communities. [Google/AI]

Gabriel Cohen (born 1961, Brooklyn, NY) – The protagonist of his 4-volume series, **Jack Leightner**, is a Jewish NYPD homicide detective. The character's heritage and personal background are central themes throughout the series:

Family Heritage: Leightner is of **Russian-Jewish** descent. His father was a Russian immigrant who worked as a longshoreman in the Brooklyn neighborhood of Red Hook.

Professional Identity: As an NYPD homicide detective, Leightner is often described as an "outsider" because he is part of a small minority—approximately five percent—of Jewish officers in the department.

Cultural Connection: In the third book of the series, *Neptune Avenue*, Leightner's investigations delve into his own roots as he navigates the diverse Jewish sects of Crown Heights and the Russian immigrant community in Brighton Beach. [Google/AI]

Cohen, Gabriel [*Detective Jack Leightner* #1], (**Red Hook** [hc, Minotaur Books, 1981]) 978-0312274580

Cohen, Gabriel [*Detective Jack Leightner* #2], (**The Graving Dock**) [hc, Minotaur Books, 2007] 978-0312362669

Cohen, Gabriel [*Detective Jack Leightner* #3], (**Neptune Avenue** [hc, Minotaur Books, 2009]) 978-0312380618

Cohen, Gabriel [*Detective Jack Leightner #4*], (**The Ninth Step** [hc, Minotaur Books, 2010]) 978-0312625016

Martin S. Cohen (born 1953, New York City) is a Conservative Rabbi and a biblical/Judaic scholar. He has maintained a dual career as a scholarly theologian and a writer of “ordinary mysticism” and crime fiction. His religious works range from academic studies of Jewish mysticism to practical guides for modern Conservative Judaism. Cohen’s fiction often blends mystery with Jewish folklore, history, and “ordinary mysticism”. **The Truth About Marvin Kalish** (1992) – his first novel, is a mystery connecting 1940s Germany to modern New York. **Light from Dead Stars** (1996) – explores themes of memory and mysticism. **The Sword of Goliath: A Cosmic Mystery** (1998) – blends biblical history with contemporary intrigue. **Heads You Lose** (2002) – is a “macabre crime tale” and road story set in Western Canada. **Jerusalem Ghosts: A David Ben Simon Mystery** (2021) is a fictional double murder inquiry set against the political and spiritual tensions of ancient Israel. [Google/AI]

Cohen, Martin S., (**The Truth about Marvin Kalish** [pb, Ben-Simon Publications, 1992]) 978-0914539056

Cohen, Martin S., (**Light from Dead Stars**) [pb, Coteau Books, 1996] 978-1550501025

Cohen, Martin S., (**The Sword of Goliath** [pb, Coteau Books, 1998]) 978-1550501162

Cohen, Martin S., (**Heads You Lose** [pb, Ekstasis Editions, 2002]) 978-1896860930

Cohen, Martin S., (**Jerusalem Ghosts: A David Ben Simon Mystery**) [hc, Resource Publications, 2021] 978-1725295223 [pb, Resource Publications, 2021] 978-1725295230

Nancy J. Cohen (born 1948) – New Jersey-born, worked as a registered nurse, resident in Florida. She frequently incorporates Jewish identity and culture into her *Bad Hair Day* mystery series through her protagonist, **Marla Vail**. While not described as deeply religious, Marla has a “basic belief in Judaism” and follows traditional holidays.

Jewish Traditions, Folklore, Holidays:

The “Evil Eye”: In the novel **Died Blonde**, Cohen references the Jewish tradition of saying “**Kinehoreh**” to ward off the evil eye.

Weddings: Cohen has written about traditional Jewish wedding customs, such as the breaking of the glass, and has used these rituals as inspiration for her stories.

Hanukkah: The 19th book in her series (scheduled for 2026) is titled **Hanukkah Hairloom Mystery**, specifically focusing on the holiday.

Passover: Her website and blogs often discuss personal connections to Jewish holidays like Passover and Hanukkah, which inform her characters’ backgrounds.

Interfaith Relationships: A recurring theme in the series is Marla Shore’s romantic relationship with Detective Dalton Vail, who is **not Jewish** and whom she eventually marries. Cohen uses this dynamic to explore how Marla’s cultural background affects her personal life.

Characters: The series features other Jewish characters, such as **Miriam Pearl**, for whom Marla works as a nurse’s aide in *Body Wave*. [Google/AI]

Cohen, Nancy J., [*Marla Shore/Bad Hair Day Mystery Series*] – 18 volumes (hc and mass mkt pb - **Kensington Publishing** through vol. 9, then as indicated) [pb – **Orange Grove Press**, all 19 volumes]

1. **Permed to Death** – [hc, 1999] 978-1575664828 [pb, 2016] 978-0997003819
2. **Hair Raiser** - [hc, 2000] 978-1575666228 [pb, 2015] 978-0991465552
3. **Murder by Manicure** – [hc, 2001] 978-1575666877 [pb, 2015] 978-0991465576
4. **Body Wave** – [hc, 2002] 978-0758200686 [pb] 978-0758200686

5. **Highlights to Heaven** – [hc, 2003] 978-0758200709 [pb, 2017] 978-0997003864 [mass mkt pb, 2004] 978-0758200716
6. **Died Blonde** – [hc, 2004] 978-0758206565 [pb, 2018] 978-0998531717 [mass mkt pb, 2005- 978-0758206572
7. **Dead Roots** [[hc, 2005] 978-0758206589 [pb, 2019] 978-0998531786 [mass mkt pb, 2006] 978-0758206596
8. **Perish by Pedicure** [hc, 2006] 978-0758212245 [pb, 2019] 978-0999793213 [mass mkt pb, 2007] 978-0758212269
9. **Killer Knots** [hc, 2007] 978-0758212252 [pb, 2019] 978-0999793237 [mass mkt pb, 2008] 978-0758212276
10. **Shear Murder** [hc, Five Star, 2012] 978-1432825546 [pb, 2020] 978-0999793299
11. **Hanging by a Hair** [hc, Five Star, 2014] 978-1432828141 [pb, 2020] 978-1952886010 [mass mkt pb, 2015] Worldwide Library
12. **Peril by Ponytail** [hc, Five Star, 2015] 978-1432830984 [pb, 2020] 978-1952886034
13. **Facias Can Be Fatal** [hc, Five Star, 2017] 978-1432832827 [pb, 2020] 978-1952886058
14. **Hair Brained** [pb, 2017] 978-0997003888
15. **Trimmed to Death** [pb, 2018] 978-0998531762
16. **Easter Hair Hunt** [pb, 2020] 978-0999793275
17. **Styled for Murder** [pb, 2021] 978-1952886225
18. **Star Tangled Murder** [pb, 2023] 978-1952886256
19. **Dreidels and Dead Ends** [pb, Orange Grove Press, Publication: June 23, 2026] *[When salon owner Marla Vail agrees to speak at the local history museum's gala opening for a new exhibit, she expects applause—not a catastrophe. But shortly after she takes the stage, a thief steals the featured diamond-studded hairbrush, leaving behind an empty display case and a badly injured security guard.*

Marla's friend, museum curator Becky Forest, begs for her help in recovering the prized heirloom before the mayor uses this scandal as an excuse to cut their funding. To make matters worse, the antique hairbrush comes with a curse, and suddenly bad luck is spreading through town faster than a botched dye job. As Hanukkah festivities begin, Marla would rather be lighting candles than chasing clues, but with Becky's job at stake, she takes on the case.

Her trail leads to a knot of suspects including the hairbrush's owner, his greedy cousin, shifty museum staff, and a reclusive collector of mystical antiquities. Instead of enjoying menorah lights and latkes, Marla discovers murder, lies, and larceny. She'll need sharp wits and a holiday miracle to save the museum and to keep the truth from being brushed aside. – Amazon]

Stanley I. Cohen (1928–2010) – Raised in Nashville, Tennessee. Some of his characters bear Jewish surnames (such as the protagonists **Gary Feldman** or **Jerry Silver**), but their religious identity is typically secondary to the plot of the thriller. [Google/AI]

Cohen, Stanley, (**Taking Gary Feldman**, [hc, Putnam, 1970]) B0006DYGU6 [pb, Vivisphere Publications, 2000] 978-1587760525

Cohen, Stanley, (**Tell Us, Jerry Silver** [pb, Bobbs-Merrill, 1973]) 978-0672518287

Cohen, Stanley, (**330 Park: The Hijacking of a Skyscraper** [mass mkt pb, Berkley, 1977] 978-0425038741 [pb, New English Library, 1979] 978-0450041693

Reed Farrel Coleman (born 1956, Brooklyn, NY) - His fictional private investigator, **Moe Prager**, is Jewish, and his Jewish heritage, along with his insider-outsider New York sensibility and

struggles with faith, is a significant aspect of his character and the series. While often described as an “unobservant Jew” or non-practicing, his background informs his worldview and internal conflicts.

Key Aspects of Moe Prager’s Jewish Identity:

Cultural Background: *He’s a Brooklynite, bringing a New York Jewish flavor to the hardboiled detective genre.*

Internal Struggle: *He grapples with decisions in his life and reflects on his Jewish identity, sometimes finding internal peace within his heritage.*

Author’s Inspiration: *Author Reed Farrel Coleman, who has Jewish heritage himself, uses Moe to explore themes related to Judaism and the “view from the fringes,” according to Mystery Readers Journal..*

*In essence, Moe Prager’s Jewishness isn’t just a detail; it’s a core part of his personality and the texture of the novels, making him a unique figure in crime fiction. Coleman also has a 3-book series featuring **Dylan Klein**, an insurance investigator. Aside from Klein’s name, however, there is nothing Jewish about him.] [Google/AI]*

Coleman, Reed Farrel [*Moe Prager #1*], (**Walking the Perfect Square** [hc, Permanent Press, 2002]) 978-1579620394 [pb, Permanent Press, 2010] 978-1579622909

Coleman, Reed Farrel [*Moe Prager #2*], (**Redemption Street** [hc, Viking, 2004] 978-0670032914 [pb, Gallery Books, 2012] 978-1440563850

Coleman, Reed Farrel [*Moe Prager #3*], (**The James Deans** [pb, Plume, 2005]) 978-0452286504

Coleman, Reed Farrel [*Moe Prager #4*], (**Soul Patch** [hc, Bleak House Books, 2007]) 978-1932557411 [pb] Bleak House Books, 2007] 978-1932557350

Coleman, Reed Farrel [*Moe Prager #5*], (**Empty Ever After** [hc, Bleak House Books, 2008]) 978-1932557640 [pb, Busted Flush Books, 2010] 978-1935415091

Coleman, Reed Farrel [*Moe Prager #6*], (**Innocent Monster** [hc, Tyrus Books, 2010]) 978-1935562207 [pb, Gallery Books, 2012] 978-1440536090

Coleman, Reed Farrel [*Moe Prager #7*], (**Hurt Machine** [hc, Gallery Books, 2011]) 978-1440532023 [pb, Gallery Books, 2011] 978-1440531996

Coleman, Reed Farrel [*Moe Prager #8*], (**Onion Street** [hc, Gallery Books, 2013]) 978-1440539459 [pb, Gallery Books, 2013] 978-1440539466

Coleman, Reed Farrel [*Moe Prager #9*], (**The Hollow Girl** [hc, Gallery Books, 2014]) 978-1440562020 [pb, Gallery Books, 2014] 978-1440573019

Max Allan Collins (born 1948, Muscatine, Iowa) – prolific American mystery author of, among other others, the long-running (19 volumes) **Nate Heller** series. Heller is a private investigator born in 1905 to a German Jewish immigrant father, Mahlon Heller, and an Irish mother. His father was a labor organizer, whose socialist beliefs and experiences with strike-related violence significantly influenced Nate’s character. His upbringing in Chicago’s Maxwell Street neighborhood—a historically Jewish enclave—deeply informs his character.

True Detective (1983) is the first novel in the **Nathan Heller series** which establishes his heritage, detailing his father’s life as a labor organizer and book seller.

Historical Figures: Heller frequently interacts with real-life Jewish figures, such as world-class boxer **Barney Ross**, who grew up with him on Maxwell Street, the classic Jewish immigrant neighbourhood in Chicago.. Other books in the series mention interactions with Meyer Lansky, Bugsy Siegel, Julius Rosenberg, and other Jewish characters.

Nate Heller is not “very Jewish” in a religious sense, though not completely oblivious. For instance, the short story “Kaddish for the Kid” (1998) references the traditional Jewish mourning prayer. Nonetheless, his Jewish-Irish heritage is a core part of his identity and world outlook.

Heller is a “soiled” hero rather than a traditional “knight” of noir; his mixed heritage places him as an outsider who can “draw lines” in a corrupt world while remaining deeply connected to his family history. [Google/AI]

Collins, Max Allan, (**True Detective** [hc, St. Martin’s Press, 1983]) 978-0312820510 [pb, Thomas & Mercer, 2011] 978-1612180885

Collins, Max Allan, (**True Crime** [hc, St. Martin’s Press, 1984]) 978-0312820459 [pb, AmazonEncore, 2011] 978-1612180939

Collins, Max Allan, (**The Million-Dollar Wound** [hc, St. Martin’s Press, 1986]) 978-0312532529 [pb, AmazonEncore, 2011] 978-1612180953

Collins, Max Allan, (**Neon Mirage** [hc, St. Martin’s Press, 1988]) 978-0312014841 [pb, Gollancz Crime – London, 1990] 978-0575048386 [Heavily involves **Bugsy Siegel** and the Jewish mob’s role in the development of Las Vegas. – Google/AI]

Miles Corwin (*est. birth 1952?, Los Angeles*) - *an American journalist, author, and professor, best known for his immersive books on crime and the criminal justice system. He had a long career as a high-profile crime reporter for the Los Angeles Times. He is a professor in the Literary Journalism Program at UC Irvine. The protagonist, Ash Levine, is a divorced LAPD homicide detective, a former paratrooper in the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), and the son of a Treblinka concentration camp survivor. - Google/AI]*

Corwin, Miles, [*Ash Levine #1*] (**Kind of Blue** [hc, AmazonUs/INDPB, 2010]) 978-1608090075 [pb, AmazonUs/INDPB, 2012] 978-1608090365

Corwin, Miles, [*Ash Levine #2*] (**Midnight Alley** [hc, Oceanview Publishing, 2012]) 978-1608090389 [pb, Oceanview Publishing, 2014] 978-1608091157

Corwin, Miles, [*LAPD homicide detective Jacob Silver*] (**L.A. Nocturne** (Points policiers) [pb, French Edition, POINTS, 2017] 978-2757860663

Elizabeth M. Cosin (*birth est. 1964, possibly Los Angeles where she now resides*) - *a former journalist and sportswriter who transitioned into writing for television and fiction. She is a survivor of lung cancer and, like her protagonist, lives with only one lung—an experience she has spoken about to address the realism of her character’s active lifestyle. Her protagonist, Zen (Zenaria) Moses, is described as a Jewish girl and a cigar-smoking private investigator based in Los Angeles, and very much in the tough, “hard-boiled” style of other fictional female detectives, as in the writings of Sue Grafton or Sara Paretsky [see her listing in this Bibliography]. After her second novel, she transitioned primarily into writing and producing for television.*

Cosin, Elizabeth M., (**Zen and the Art of Murder** [hc, St. Martin’s Press, 1998] 978-0312193768 [pb, St. Martin’s/Minotaur, 1999] 978-0312969486 [*“Zen” Moses is having a rough time: her cat just died, she’s facing an IRS audit, and she is a survivor of lung cancer. Her life gets more complicated when she walks into her favorite Santa Monica bar and finds the body of her cousin, Danny, wrapped around a beer keg. Danny was supposed to have died 12 years earlier in a mass cult suicide. While investigating her cousin’s “second” death, Zen is also hired for a high-paying job to find the long-lost father of a famous TV talk-show host. Zen soon discovers that the two cases are dangerously intertwined, involving the mob, dirty money, and a hitman tracking her every move. [Google/AI]*

Cosin, Elizabeth M., (**Zen and the City of Angels** [hc, Minotaur Books, 1999] 978-0312206116 [mass mkt pb, Minotaur Books, 2000] 978-0312974466 [*In the madness of L.A., Zen Moses is a risk-taking P.I. who has already fought for her life and her sanity—so what’s wrong with doing a little favor for a friend?*

The friend is Jim Gray, a trusted attorney, who needs her to find a missing dog. But this simple case leads Zen to a dead man with no face, the trail of a vanished dealmaker, and the hospital room where Gray is fighting for his life. Suddenly the suspect in a murder-and an unwitting participant in a woman's violent unraveling-Zen finds herself in a tight spot. And it may be too late when she finally uncovers the truth: that in the city of angels, she's been handpicked by some very powerful people-for a long hard fall down to hell. [Amazon]

Julia Dahl (born 1977, Fresno, CA) –journalist, novelist and professor of journalism at New York U. Her work often explores themes of family dysfunction, small-town secrets, and the complexities of crime. Her 3-volume **Rebekah Roberts** series is deeply rooted in Jewish themes, specifically the culture and insularity of Hasidic communities in Brooklyn and upstate New York. She explores the internal justice systems of these communities, such as the concept of *mesirah* (the prohibition against reporting a fellow Jew to secular authorities) and the role of the *Shomrim* (Jewish volunteer safety patrols). Her work is heavily informed by her own interfaith background as the daughter of a Jewish mother and a Lutheran father.

Rebekah Roberts is a secular journalist who was abandoned as an infant by her Hasidic mother. Much of the narrative involves Rebekah navigating her “outsider” status while attempting to reconnect with her Jewish roots and understand the community that her mother chose over her.

Her writing touches on the legacy of the Holocaust, noting how historical persecution informs the modern Hasidic community's deep distrust of outsiders and the police. She also examines the patriarchal structure of ultra-Orthodox life, focusing on the experiences of women within the community and the challenges faced by those who attempt to leave or who do not fit traditional norms (e.g., LGBTQ+ individuals).

Dahl identifies as Jewish and has stated that her Judaism is central to her identity—likening it to her “arm”—even though she is not traditionally religious. She uses her writing to challenge the divisions between different faiths and to provide a “not unsympathetic” portrait of a world often viewed through caricatures. [Google/AI]

Dahl, Julia [*Rebekah Roberts #1 – American Hasidic community setting*], (**Invisible City** [hc, Minotaur Books, 2014]) 978-1250043399 [pb, Minotaur Books, 2015] 978-1250043412

Dahl, Julia, (*Rebekah Roberts #2 - Run You Down* [hc, Minotaur Books, 2015]) 978-1250043405 [pb, Minotaur Books, 2016] 978-1250043429

Dahl, Julia, (*Rebekah Roberts #3 - Conviction* [hc, Minotaur Books, 2017]) 978-1250083692 [pb, Faber & Faber, 2018] 978-0571342778

Kyra Davis (born 1972, Santa Clara, CA) - an American novelist and screenwriter primarily known for her mystery and romance series. She is of mixed Jewish and black ancestry and so is **Sophie Katz**, the protagonist of her 7-volume mystery series. Her Jewishness is woven into her everyday life through her dialogue, humor, and worldview. She frequently uses **Yiddish expressions** (e.g., calling herself or others “meshugeneh”) and deals with family dynamics that Davis describes as reflecting “stereotypes of the **Jewish mother**”. Her identity often drives plot points, particularly how she navigates the world as a woman of color who is also Jewish. For instance, she may wear a Star of David necklace, which sometimes leads to questions from others about her background due to her “well-brewed latte” skin tone. Her identity is also tied to the vibrant, multicultural culture of San Francisco, where her family and social circle reside. While her Jewishness is always present, the series focuses heavily on her career as a mystery writer and her romantic tension with Anatoly Darinsky, a Russian private investigator. [Google/AI]

Davis, Kyra, [*Sophie Katz #1*], (**Sex, Murder and a Double Latte** [hc, Red Dress Ink, 2005]) 978-0373895199 [pb, Red Dress Ink, 2006] 978-0373895809

Davis, Kyra [*Sophie Katz #2*], (**Passion, Betrayal and Killer Highlights** [hc, Red Dress Ink, 2006]) 978-0373895786 [pb, 2007] 978-0373895526

Davis, Kyra [*Sophie Katz #3*], (**Obsession, Deceit and Really Dark Chocolate** [pb, Red Dress Ink, 2007]) 978-0373895533

Davis, Kyra [*Sophie Katz #4*], (**Lust, Loathing and a Little Lip Gloss** [pb, MIRA, 2009]) 978-0778327363

Davis, Kyra [*Sophie Katz #5*], (**Vows, Vendettas and a Little Black Dress** [pb, MIRA, 2010]) 978-0778327899

Davis, Kyra [*Sophie Katz #6*], (**Vanity, Vengeance & A Weekend In Vegas** [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2012]) 978-1475007862

Davis, Kyra [*Sophie Katz #7*], (**Chaos, Desire & A Kick-Ass Cupcake** [pb, Latte Press, 2017]) 978-0999499405

David Del Bourgo (est. birth 1942, Los Angeles) - an American author and poet primarily known for his 1968-era noir mystery novel, ***Prague Spring: A Simon Wolfe Mystery***. *Despite the title, the book is a noir detective story set in San Francisco and Berkeley in 1968. It follows Inspector **Simon Wolfe**, a Holocaust survivor and former Mossad agent, as he investigates the murder of a congressman's son while being blackmailed over his past. **Tracking Down Gruppenführer Kunitz**, the follow-up, continues Wolfe's journey as he pursues a high-ranking Nazi official. Wolfe is a former prisoner of **Theresienstadt** and **Auschwitz**.*

***Past Life:** Before joining the SFPD, he served in Mossad's "Nokim," [Nokmim] a group dedicated to hunting and executing former Nazis. The books explore the conflict between legal justice and personal revenge, often set against the backdrop of 1960s social upheaval. [Google/AI]*

Del Bourgo, David, (**Prague Spring: A Simon Wolfe Mystery** [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2011]) 978-1442119871

Del Bourgo, David, (**Tracking Down Gruppenführer Kunitz** [no print editions found – Kindle only, 2011]) B005EUUPWY [*A prequel to "Prague Spring", set in Paris, 1949*]

Henry Denker (1912–2012, born, lived and died in different parts of New York City) [*Born to an Orthodox Jewish family, Denker originally trained in his youth to become a rabbi. He shifted gears in his mid-teens to pursue a secular track and earned his law degree from New York University School of Law in 1934. Though admitted to the New York Bar in 1935, the economic constraints of the Great Depression drew him into creative writing. During World War II, he put his skills to use writing on the English Desk for the Office of War Information. Denker is credited as the creator and writer of False Witness (1939), considered by many to be the first-ever produced television series. He also wrote the premiere script for the famous religious radio program The Greatest Story Ever Told. He successfully transitioned to the stage, authoring six Broadway plays. His most prominent theatrical work was A Case of Libel (1963), a tense courtroom drama based on Louis Nizer's autobiography. Denker published 34 novels over his career. His books mirrored his personal life, drawing heavily from his background in law and his 61-year marriage to Edith Heckman, a former nurse. In his explicitly Jewish-themed fiction, Denker does not position Jews as criminal masterminds; instead, he uses crime, the legal system, and victimization to drive characters' personal growth, racial tensions, and assimilation struggles:*

Denker, Henry, (**Horowitz and Mrs. Washington** [hc, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1979]) 978-0399123412 [pb, Quill, 1991] 978-0688107857 [*This became one of Denker's best-known and -loved novels, and it starts*

out with Jew-as-victim. Samuel Horowitz is a wealthy, seventy-year-old Jewish widower living alone on Manhattan's Upper West Side. After being brutally mugged by a group of young Black assailants, he suffers a stroke that leaves him partially disabled. Bitter, frightened, and increasingly consumed by racial prejudice as a result of the attack, he reluctantly accepts the services of Harriet Washington, an experienced Black physical therapist sent to supervise his rehabilitation. The novel centers on the often-comic, frequently contentious relationship between the two strong-willed personalities. Horowitz insults and resists Mrs. Washington at every opportunity, while she refuses to be intimidated, meeting his sarcasm with firmness, humor, and compassion. Gradually, through months of rehabilitation, card games, arguments, shared meals, and conversations about family, aging, religion, and race, mutual respect develops between them.

Around this central relationship Denker explores several themes: the loneliness and loss experienced by the elderly; the struggle to retain dignity and independence in old age; prejudice born of fear and personal trauma; the possibility of friendship across racial and religious boundaries; tensions between aging parents and their adult children.

When Horowitz's children decide he should be placed in a nursing home and his beloved apartment sold, Mrs. Washington becomes his principal ally. Together they devise a plan that enables him to remain independent, while his children gradually come to appreciate both his continuing vitality and Mrs. Washington's extraordinary influence on his life. The novel ends on a hopeful note, with Horowitz having largely overcome his bitterness and formed an enduring, affectionate friendship with the woman he initially regarded as his enemy.

Although the novel begins with a violent street crime, crime is primarily a catalyst rather than the novel's central subject. The assault triggers Horowitz's stroke; fuels his racial resentment; initiates the relationship between Horowitz and Mrs. Washington; allows Denker to examine urban crime, fear, aging, and racial stereotyping in late-1970s New York. Horowitz's Jewish identity is important chiefly as part of his cultural outlook—his Yiddish-inflected humor, family relationships, food traditions, and memories—rather than through specifically Jewish criminal themes. This novel was followed by a 1993 sequel – **Mrs. Washington and Horowitz, Too** (William, Morrow, ISBN 978-0688124663) – of less relevance to this bibliography.

Denker, Henry (**My Son, the Lawyer** [hc, Thomas Y. Crowell, 1950]) B0006AS9W0 [pb, Star, 1987] 978-0352320834 [*In this early work, Denker explores the mid-century Jewish-American dream through a legal lens. Here, the legal system and the defense of those accused of crimes act as a primary narrative engine. Becoming a lawyer is framed as the ultimate mechanism for a Jewish family to achieve safety, fight institutional prejudice, and protect their community from the looming threat of criminal or civil ruin.*

Denker, Henry (**Labyrinth** [hc, William Morrow, 1994]) 978-0688137007 [*This is Denker's closest direct marriage between a contemporary crime/legal thriller and a Jewish narrative lens. The book tracks David Kirk, a high-stakes, highly sought-after criminal defense lawyer operating within the grimy, fast-paced courtrooms and cold psychoanalysts' offices of New York City. The plot hinges on a complex web of crime, defense strategy, and psychological suspense. In a direct callback to Denker's **My Son, the Lawyer**, the book explores the punishing personal toll of the "Jewish defense attorney" archetype. It frames the legal system as a chaotic psychological maze (hence the title) where Jewish ethical identity clashes heavily with the dark realities of defending violent criminals.*

Denker, Henry (**The Healers** [hc, William Morrow, 1983]) 978-0688015855 [pb, Avon Books, 1984] 978-0380674053 [*While structured as a multi-generational historical saga, **The Healers** relies intensely on the life-or-death high stakes of early medical investigations, epidemics, and wartime trauma. The narrative thrives on the suspense of early medical pioneering, pushing characters into desperate battles against deadly cholera, diphtheria, and tuberculosis outbreaks, alongside the visceral, nightmarish backdrop of performing under-supplied field surgery during the Civil War. The book follows David, a young Jewish doctor, who marries Mary, a non-Jewish woman who converts to Judaism after being deeply moved by Jewish history. The narrative heavily uses Jewish identity as a driver—from battlefield encounters where Confederate soldiers shock David by recognizing his heritage ("Bist du ein yid?") to generational Jewish values powering their relentless crusades for sweatshop reform and public health safety.*

Denker, Henry (**The Kingmaker** [hc, David McKay Co., 1972]) 978-0679503101 [pb, Mayflower, 1974] 978-0583122320 [*This book leans heavily into classic noir and crime-thriller tropes. It focuses on a ruthless, shadowy Hollywood power-broker who works alongside the Mafia to manipulate celebrities, control media networks, and buy political power. The protagonist and the Hollywood elite depicted in the novel are explicitly rooted in mid-century Jewish-American studio culture. Denker uses this thriller to expose the moral compromises, identity scrubbing, and deep-seated fears of antisemitism that drove early Jewish entertainment moguls to align with dangerous criminal elements to protect their empires.* – Google/AI]

Phillip DePoy (born 1950, Rockford, Illinois, raised and resides in Atlanta, GA). Best-known for his 5-volume **Foggy Moskowitz** mystery series. Foggy is the former car-thief son of a famed hitman in the Jewish mob. His Jewish identity is a central part of his “hard-boiled” persona, often contrasted with the settings he finds himself in, such as 1970s Florida or Manhattan. The books often feature other characters from his past within the Jewish community, such as his boyhood friend “Sammy Two Shoes”. Foggy is defined by a blend of cultural identity, linguistic style, and moral framework that marks him as a “Yankee Jew” in the 1970s American South. He frequently references his upbringing in a Jewish neighbourhood in Brooklyn, where he developed a distinct New York accent and a “funny” way of speaking that uses complex vocabulary as a defensive tool. Foggy operates on a pragmatically Jewish, often fatalistic, philosophy focused on “what is” rather than what “should be,” viewing reality as the only thing that truly exists. His transition from a criminal to an officer for Child Protective Services is driven by a desire to “make up for what he’d done wrong,” reflecting a deeply internalized, secularized Jewish sense of moral accounting. His Jewishness is often a point of conversation and occasional friction in his Florida setting, where characters sometimes make assumptions based on his name and accent. – Google/AI]

DePoy, Phillip [*Foggy Moskowitz*, #1], (**Cold Florida**) [hc, Severn House, 2016] 978-0727885753 [pb, Severn House, 2016] 978-1847516831 [*It’s 1974. Foggy Moskowitz, a Jewish car thief on the run from the Brooklyn authorities, ends up in Florida working for the first office of Child Protective Service. For personal reasons. An unlikely, but tenacious, child protection officer, he takes on an investigation to find a missing infant, taken from the hospital by her addict mother. But the case takes several unexpected turns as Foggy makes his way from seedy Fry’s Bay to Indian Seminole swampland, undertaking a vision quest, a rite of passage in some Native American cultures, in the process. Along the way he encounters more than a few interesting characters, including John Horse, an Indian mystic, and works to foil a vast land-grab scam by an uber-rich felon.* – Amazon]

DePoy, Phillip [*Foggy Moskowitz*, #2], (**Three Shot Burst**) [hc, Severn House, 2017] [pb, Severn House, 2018] 978-1847517661 [*Foggy Moskowitz is called to Mary’s Shallow Grave, everyone’s favorite bar. A man has been killed – shot three times – by a young girl. With no parents, no fixed abode, and no services to help her, Foggy is forced to shelter her in his beachside apartment. The victim was the son of the richest Seminole in Florida, Ironstone Waters, who sends several of his men, including Mister Redhawk, to collect the girl and find out what happened. With Ironstone’s men, a Colombian drug cartel, and the police all in pursuit, Foggy has nowhere to turn but to John Horse. With some help from the Seminole mystic, Foggy realizes some disturbing truths.* – Amazon]

DePoy, Phillip [*Foggy Moskowitz*, #3], (**Icepick**) [hc, Severn House, 2018] 978-0727887955 [pb, Severn House, 2019] 978-184751923 [*Foggy Moskowitz is shocked when ID found on a body in the bay suggests it’s his close Brooklyn friend, Pan Pan Washington, and the car involved belongs to one of their old associates, Sammy ‘Icepick’ Franks. What message is Icepick trying to send Foggy, and why? The children who found the body were looking for their mother – one of twenty-seven women missing from John Horse’s Seminole tribe, and Foggy immediately takes the pair under his wing as they follow a disturbing trail. Is John right about there being a connection between the car in the bay and the missing women? Could Foggy’s old associates in New York be involved? Hit men, crooked police officers, and even oil-rich Oklahomans can’t stop Foggy on his mission to uncover the truth.* – Amazon]

DePoy, Phillip [*Foggy Moskowitz*, #4], (**Sidewalk Saint**) [hc, Severn House, 2019] 978-0727889577 [pb, Severn House, 2021] 978-1780296364 [*Florida*, 1976. *Foggy Moskowitz knows he's having a bad night when he wakes to find a gun pressed to his face. Nelson Roan has busted out of his prison cell and broken into Foggy's house, demanding Foggy finds his eleven-year-old daughter, Etta. But as Foggy searches for Etta, it seems her father is not the only person who wants her found: Canadian mobsters, crazy New York Irishmen, the FBI and even the Seminole elite are all on her trail. But why? Etta has a special gift – and she knows something that certain people would go to any lengths to make sure stays buried in her memory. As Foggy helps Etta to reveal what she knows, he uncovers a sinister plot with tentacles that stretch further and higher than he could ever have imagined . . .* – Amazon]

DePoy, Phillip [*Foggy Moskowitz*, #5], (**Sammy Two Shoes**) [hc, Severn House, 2021] 978-0727850669 [1976. *Foggy Moskowitz has decided to pay his hometown of New York a visit and soon bumps into his old friend, Sammy 'Two Shoes' Cohen. Sammy wants a favor – Emory Brewster, an actor in an all-female production of Hamlet, is sending threatening notes to Sammy's girlfriend and the play's stage manager, Phoebe Peabody, and Sammy asks Foggy to speak to her. But before he has a chance, Emory is brutally murdered backstage and Phoebe is arrested. The other actors all despised Emory, but as Foggy strives to prove Phoebe's innocence, Sammy stuns him with an astonishing revelation. Is he telling the truth, or is there more to the story? Foggy is reluctantly pulled back into New York's criminal underworld as he uncovers more about Emory Brewster. Can he stay alive long enough to catch her killer?* – Amazon]

Phillip DePoy continues to weave **Jewish elements** and characters into his work, including the **Old Juniper Bookshop** mystery series (written under the pseudonym **P.J. Nelson**). The use of the pen name **P.J. Nelson**—created from DePoy's initials and his wife's middle name—marks his transition into this “Dixie cozy” subgenre. While the series shifts away from the gritty, urban Jewish noir of Foggy Moskowitz, it maintains a connection to Jewish culture through its protagonist, **Madeline “Maddy” Brimley**, a Jewish woman and former actress who returns to her small hometown of Enigma, Georgia, to run her late grandmother's bookstore. She is portrayed as a “cynical native-turned-outsider” whose Jewish identity often contrasts with the predominantly Southern Christian atmosphere of her small town. The stories often feature interactions between Maddy and her close friend, **Gloria Coleman**, who is an Episcopal priest.

Nelson, P.J. [Phillip DePoy], (**Booked for Murder**) [hc, Minotaur Books, 2024] 978-1250909954 [pb, Minotaur Books, 2025] 978-1250909954 [*Madeline Brimley left small town Georgia many years ago to go to college and pursue her dreams on the stage. Her dramatic escapades are many but success has eluded her, leaving her at loose ends. But then she gets word that not only has her beloved, eccentric Aunt Rose passed, but she's left Madeline her equally eccentric bookstore housed in an old Victorian mansion in the small college town of Enigma. But when she arrives in her beat-up Fiat to claim The Old Juniper Bookstop, and restart her life, Madeline is faced with unexpected challenges. The gazebo in the back yard is set ablaze and a late night caller threatens to burn the whole store down if she doesn't leave immediately.*

But Madeline Brimley, not one to be intimidated, ignores the threats and soldiers on. Until there's another fire and a murder in the store itself. Now with a cloud of suspicion falling over her, it's up to Madeline to untangle the skein of secrets and find the killer before she herself is the next victim. – Amazon]

Nelson, P.J. [Phillip DePoy], (**All My Bones**) [hc, Minotaur, 2025] 978-1250909978 [pb, Minotaur, 2026] 978-1250456366 [*Settling in, Madeline recruits her friend Gloria Coleman, the local Episcopal priest, to help her plant azaleas in the front yard of the old Victorian that houses the bookstore. Turning the soil, however, uncovers the body of one Beatrice Glassie, a troublesome woman who has been missing for the past six months. When her friend Gloria is arrested for the murder, Madeline is determined to prove her innocence and, as she quickly finds out, there aren't many people in town who hadn't wanted to kill Bea Glassie at one point or another. And the very expensive and rare first edition of a particular volume of Grimm's Fairy Tales—ordered by the victim and her sister is somehow tied to the grim death. With the*

help of her not-quite-boyfriend, a local lawman, and her deceased aunt's best friend, Madeline plans to set a trap to catch the real murderer—before she becomes the next victim. – Amazon]

Eric Dezenhall (born 1962, Camden, NJ) - author and crisis-management professional. His work is deeply infused with Jewish themes, characters, and historical perspectives, often drawing from his own background growing up in a Jewish community in South Jersey. In *The Devil Himself* (2011), he focuses on Jewish mob boss **Meyer Lansky** and his collaboration with the U.S. Navy to catch Nazi spies during WWII. Dezenhall uses these stories to explore how these figures sought respectability and patriotism as a path toward American assimilation.

Fictional Alter Ego: His recurring protagonist, **Jonah Eastman**, is a Jewish pollster and crisis manager who serves as a fictional alter ego for Dezenhall. Jonah is the grandson of a legendary Jewish mobster, a background that often complicates his work in the “upperworld” of politics and PR. In another novel, *Money Wanders*, Jonah enlists the help of a “street fighting rabbi”

Biblical Allusions: Dezenhall has noted that the character of Jonah Eastman is partially shaped by the [Book of Jonah](#), reflecting themes of fleeing from and eventually facing one's responsibilities.

Jewish Identity and Crisis Management: In his non-fiction and public commentary, he frequently applies his professional “crisis” lens to Jewish issues. He has written about the rise of antisemitism as a “crisis management conundrum” rather than just a PR problem. [Google/AI]

Jonah Eastman appears in all six books of Eric Dezenhall's “PR Crisis Management Mystery” series.

Dezenhall, Eric, (*Money Wanders*) [hc, Thomas Dunne Books, 2002] 978-0312282752 [pb, St. Martin's Griffin, 2003] 978-0312311346

Dezenhall, Eric, (*Jackie Disaster* [hc, Minotaur Books, 2003]) 978-0312307691 [pb, Minotaur Books, 2004] 978-0312307714

Dezenhall, Eric, (*Shakedown Beach* [hc, Minotaur Books, 2004]) 978-0312307721 [pb, Minotaur Books, 2005] 978-0312307738

Dezenhall, Eric, (*Turnpike Flameout* [hc, Minotaur Books, 2005]) 978-0312340612

Dezenhall, Eric, (*Spinning Dixie* [hc, Thomas Dunne Books, 2006]) 978-0312340636

Dezenhall, Eric, (*The Devil Himself* [hc, Thomas Dunne Books, 2011]) 978-0312668822

In addition, see Dezenhall's recent non-fiction book:

Dezenhall, Eric, (*Wiseguys and the White House: Gangsters, Presidents, and the Deals They Made – An Authoritative Exposé of the Mob's Secret Influence on American Political Power* [hc, Harper, 2025] 978-0063390614 [pb, Harper Perennial, 2027] 978-0063390621 [-explores the historical “Jewish component” of American power by examining the intersection of the Jewish mob, influential Jewish power brokers, and the presidency. **Meyer Lansky** is a central figure in the book, particularly regarding “Operation Underworld”. Dezenhall details how the Navy enlisted Lansky and other mobsters to protect the U.S. waterfront and facilitate the invasion of Sicily during WWII. The book also examines the significant influence of **Lew Wasserman**, the powerful Jewish Hollywood mogul, specifically his long-standing association with **Ronald Reagan**. Dezenhall identifies a shared Jewish cultural drive for “recognition and respectability” that motivated both the mob consiglieri and the political commanders-in-chief they influenced. The narrative often highlights the historical cooperation (and occasional double-crosses) between Jewish mob figures and prominent Irish-American political families, most notably the **Kennedys**. While this is a non-fiction historical exposé, it is heavily influenced by the research Dezenhall conducted for his earlier novel, *The Devil Himself* (2011). – Google/AI]

Jason Diamond (born 1979, Chicago) - a contemporary American author and journalist based in Brooklyn, best known for his work in pop culture and Jewish identity. *Searching for John Hughes* (2016) — A memoir about his obsession with the director and growing up in Chicago. His debut

novel, *Kaplan's Plot*, follows **Elijah Mendes**, a disgraced tech entrepreneur who returns to Chicago to care for his dying mother. Elijah discovers a family secret involving his grandfather, **Yitz Kaplan**, who was a Jewish mob boss in the 1920s. The book explores inheritance, generational trauma, and the evolution of the immigrant "American Dream". [Google, AI]

Diamond, Jason, (**Kaplan's Plot** [hc, Flatiron Books, 2025]) 978-1250385918 [set in Chicago]

E.L. Doctorow (Edgar Lawrence Doctorow, 1931–2015, born and died in New York City) [- one of the most celebrated American novelists of the late 20th century, famous for blending historical facts with fictional characters. He grew up in a secular, leftist Jewish household in the Bronx. His parents were second-generation immigrants. B.A. degree from Kenyon College and Army Service in the Signal Corps during the Korean War. Worked as book editor at New American Library and then Dial Press while starting his own writing career. He broke out into major mainstream success with his third novel, *The Book of Daniel* (1971), and became a literary superstar with *Ragtime* (1975). Over his career, he won the National Book Award, the PEN/Faulkner Award, and multiple National Book Critics Circle Awards. Alongside writing, he was a dedicated educator, serving for many years as Professor of American and English Letters at New York University (NYU). Main books of relevance:

Doctorow, E.L., (**The Book of Daniel** [hc, Random House, 1971] 978-0394462714 [pb, Random House, 2007] 978-0812978179 [[See related film](#)])

Doctorow, E.L., (**Ragtime** [hc, Random House, 1975] 978-0394469010 [pb, Random House Paperback, 2007] 978-0812978186)

Doctorow, E.L., (**Billy Bathgate** [hc, Random House, 2007] 978-0394575131 [pb, Plume, 1998] 978-0452280021 [[See related film](#)])

Doctorow, E.L., (**City of God** [hc, Random House, 2000]) 978-0679447832 [pb, Random House, 2014] 978-0812985894

Doctorow approaches the intersection of Jewish identity and crime not to write simple potboilers, but to critique the core of the American Dream. In his literary framework, crime is rarely a moral failure of individuals. Instead, it is an economic engine, a survival strategy, and a tool for radical political expression used by marginalized Jewish immigrants trying to force their way into an exclusionary American society. His exploration of this theme spans three major categories across his novels:

1. **Crime as Capitalist Assimilation** (*Billy Bathgate* and *Ragtime*)

Doctorow frequently portrays early 20th-century organized crime as just another cutthroat form of American corporate capitalism. *The Organized Syndicate* (**Billy Bathgate**): In this novel, the real-life Jewish mobster **Dutch Schultz** (Arthur Flegenheimer) and his brilliant numbers-accountant Otto "Abbadabba" Berman operate less like lawless thugs and more like corporate executives. To Doctorow, their criminal enterprise is a grim, highly organized distortion of immigrant enterprise—a way for marginalized Jews to bypass systemic discrimination, build generational wealth, and command power.

From Desperation to Hollywood (**Ragtime**): The character of Tateh, an impoverished Eastern European Jewish immigrant in New York, watches his family collapse into poverty. His wife resorts to prostitution to keep them alive—a survival crime born entirely of economic desperation. Escaping the slums, Tateh illegally barbers and uses street-smart hustle to transform himself into a pioneer of early silent cinema, illustrating how close the line was between early commercial showmanship and outright grift.

2. **State Injustice and Political Crime** (*The Book of Daniel*)

Doctorow is deeply fascinated by what he views as "political crimes"—instances where the American government weaponizes the legal system to target Jewish dissidents. *The Book of Daniel* (1971): This historical masterpiece fictionalizes the trial and execution of **Julius and Ethel Rosenberg**, the Jewish communists convicted of Soviet espionage. The title character was based on Michael Meeropol, their son.

Doctorow does not romanticize his characters or even definitively argue their innocence. Instead, he focuses on how the state committed a massive moral crime of its own. The novel posits that the execution was fueled by Cold War paranoia wrapped in implicit, mid-century antisemitism, punishing Jewish radicals who challenged the American capitalist empire.

3. Theological and Philosophical Transgression (City of God)

In his later career, Doctorow evolved the theme from street crime and politics into a profound exploration of philosophical and spiritual transgressions. **City of God** (2000): This complex, postmodern novel centers on a detective-like mystery where a massive brass cross is stolen from an Episcopal church and inexplicably mounted on the roof of a small, progressive synagogue on the Lower East Side. Through this sacred “theft,” Doctorow investigates the ultimate historical crime: the Holocaust. He uses Jewish literary tools like Midrash (imaginative interpretation of texts) to examine how the collective traumas and crimes of the 20th century shattered traditional Jewish faith and forced a theological reckoning. **Summary of Doctorow’s Approach:**

Novel	Type of Crime	The Jewish Aspect	Doctorow’s Core Message
<i>Ragtime</i> (1975)	Survival prostitution, copyright grift, class revolt	Impoverished, desperate pale-settlement immigrants	Poverty forces immigrants into legal gray areas to achieve the American Dream.
<i>The Book of Daniel</i> (1971)	Political espionage and state execution	Secular, intellectual Jewish leftists and communists	The state uses the legal system to commit crimes against marginalized political outsiders.
<i>Billy Bathgate</i> (1989)	Brutal racketeering, murder, and financial fraud	The “Kosher Nostra” (Dutch Schultz, Otto Berman)	Mob syndicates simulate corporate capitalism as a dark shortcut to American power.
<i>City of God</i> (2000)	Sacrilegious theft, genocide (The Holocaust)	Survivors, modern rabbis, and religious thinkers	Historical trauma fractures modern theology, turning writing itself into an act of spiritual detective work.

[Google/AI]

Amram Ducovny (1927–2003, born in New York City, died in Paris, France) [- born to Ashkenazi Jewish immigrants. His father, Moshe, was a notable Yiddish writer and journalist for the *Morning Journal*. Amram grew up in the Coney Island neighborhood of Brooklyn, which heavily inspired his later creative work. Served in the U.S. Army and later graduated with a B.A. from New York University. Writing was primarily his second career. For decades, Ducovny paid the bills as a high-level public relations and public affairs professional. He worked first for the American Jewish Committee in New York, later served as the Vice President for Public Affairs at Brandeis University in Massachusetts, and eventually retired from the Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Boston. Before turning to fiction, Ducovny wrote 10 nonfiction books covering a wide range of social issues and satire (including **The Billion Dollar Swindle: Frauds Against the Elderly**). In 1967, he wrote the Off-Broadway play **The Trial of Lee Harvey Oswald**, which was later adapted into a television movie. Around 1993, he retired from his PR career and moved to Paris to fulfill his lifelong dream of writing a novel. At age 73, he published his debut (and only) novel, **Coney** (2000). His fiction directly approaches the theme of Jewish involvement in crime and heavily utilizes elements of the mystery/thriller and noir genres.

Ducovny, Amram, (**Coney** [hc, The Overlook Press, 2000]) 978-1585670673 [pb, The Overlook Press, 2001] 978-1585671991 [- a combination of a coming-of-age story and a dark, gritty thriller set in 1939 Coney Island. The narrative engine kicks off when the 15-year-old Jewish protagonist, **Harry Catzker**, takes an after-school job picking up illegal betting slips for a local bookie from the carnival sideshow performers. This criminal underworld provides the background tension and atmospheric suspense typical of mid-century noir fiction. The book features a prominent subplot involving local mobsters and an arson

scheme. Ducovny relies on these underworld figures to break up the insular, intellectual, and combative atmosphere of Harry's immigrant household. The threat of violence from these criminals hangs over the entire narrative arc. A classic mystery device Ducovny uses is the burden of a dark, historical secret. **Aba Stolz**, a melancholy Yiddish poet boarding with Harry's family, carries a deeply buried secret from his past in Poland. Rather than a standard whodunit, the suspense builds around what happened in Europe and how those ghosts will catch up to the characters in America. Ultimately, this hidden history triggers the novel's tragic and violent climax, directly linking old-world trauma to criminal elements in the new world. – Google/AI]

Selma Eichler (born 1941, New Jersey). The protagonist of her 15-volume mystery series is **Desiree Shapiro**. She is explicitly Jewish, a core part of who she is within the books. Her Jewishness, along with her love for food and her figure, makes her a down-to-earth, relatable character for readers. She lives in New York City, and her Jewish cultural identity grounds her in that setting.

Focus: While Jewish, the series is primarily about her solving mysteries, not delving deeply into religious themes. In short, Desiree Shapiro is Jewish, and it's an important, but not the sole, facet of her identity. [Google/AI]

Eichler, Selma [*Desiree Shapiro* #1], [**all pb, though some have hc large-print editions, all titles begin with the 2 words, "Murder Can"**], (**Murder Can Kill Your Social Life**) [Signet, 1994] 978-0451181398

Eichler, Selma [*Desiree Shapiro* #2], (**Ruin Your Looks**) [Signet, 1995] 978-0451183842

Eichler, Selma [*Desiree Shapiro* #3], (**Stunt Your Growth**) [Signet, 1996] 978-0451185143

Eichler, Selma [*Desiree Shapiro* #4], (**Wreck Your Reunion**) [Signet, 1997] 978-0451185211

Eichler, Selma [*Desiree Shapiro* #5], (**Spook Your Cat**) [Signet, 1998] 978-0451192172

Eichler, Selma [*Desiree Shapiro* #6], (**Singe your Old Flame**) [Signet, 1999] 978-0451192189

Eichler, Selma [*Desiree Shapiro* #7], (**Spoil Your Appetite**) [Signet, 2000] 978-0451199584

Eichler, Selma [*Desiree Shapiro* #8], (**Upset Your Mother**) [Signet, 2001] 978-0451202512

Eichler, Selma [*Desiree Shapiro* #9], (**Cool Off Your Affair**) [Signet, 2002] 978-0451205186

Eichler, Selma [*Desiree Shapiro* #10], (**Rain on Your Shower**) [Signet, 2003] 978-0451208231

Eichler, Selma [*Desiree Shapiro* #11], (**Botch Up Your Birthday**) [Signet, 2004] 978-0451211521

Eichler, Selma [*Desiree Shapiro* #12], (**Mess Up Your Mascara**) [Signet, 2005] 978-0451214300

Eichler, Selma [*Desiree Shapiro* #13], (**Run Your Stockings**) [Signet, 2006] 978-0451217813

Eichler, Selma [*Desiree Shapiro* #14], (**Depress Your Dachsund**) [Signet, 2007] 978-0451220608

Eichler, Selma [*Desiree Shapiro* #15], (**Crash Your Party**) [Signet, 2008] 978-0451223845

Will Eisner (1917–2005, Brooklyn, NY) – an American cartoonist and writer widely considered the “Father of the Graphic Novel” and a revolutionary figure in the development of sequential art. In 1940, he created his most famous character, **The Spirit**, a masked crime-fighter. The series was groundbreaking for its innovative layouts, lighting, and cinematic storytelling. In 1978, he popularized the term “graphic novel” with the publication of **A Contract with God**, a collection of stories about Jewish life in Depression-era New York. Will Eisner's work is defined by a deep synthesis of his Jewish heritage and the visual vocabulary of crime and mystery fiction.

Jewish Motifs

Eisner's Jewish identity moved from subtext in his early work to explicit themes in his later graphic novels.

- **The Immigrant Experience:** Much of his work focuses on the struggle for **assimilation and resilience** in New York tenements.
- **The “Contract” with God:** In his seminal work *A Contract with God*, he explores the theological concept of a “covenant” (pact) between man and deity, often portrayed as fragile or broken by the harshness of life.
- **Cultural Codedness:** Even in his early mystery work, characters often used Yiddishisms or names that were thinly veiled references to the Jewish Bronx.
- **Combatting Anti-Semitism:** His final major works, such as *Fagin the Jew* and *The Plot*, directly confronted historical and literary anti-Semitism.

Mystery & Noir Motifs

Eisner utilized the “noir” aesthetic not just for entertainment, but as a sophisticated narrative tool.

- **The Masked Detective:** His most famous creation, *The Spirit*, followed **Denny Colt**, a detective who “died” and returned to fight crime from a cemetery—a classic “mystery” setup.
- **Visual Language of Mystery:** He pioneered the use of chiaroscuro (dramatic light and shadow), rain-soaked streets, and off-kilter camera angles to create a sense of dread and tension.
- **Femme Fatales:** Consistent with noir traditions, his mystery stories frequently featured complex, dangerous women like **P’Gell** and **Silk Satin** who challenged the protagonist’s morality.
- **Urban Decay:** The “mystery” in Eisner’s world was often the city itself—a dark, labyrinthine character where crime was a byproduct of poverty and systemic failure. *A Contract with God* and *While Will* Eisner’s Jewish heritage subtly influenced his early work like *The Spirit*, it became the primary focus of his later career starting in 1978. The following works are his most significant regarding Jewish content:

The “Dropsie Avenue” Trilogy

This collection of stories is the bedrock of his exploration of the Jewish immigrant experience in New York City.

A Contract with God and Other Tenement Stories (Baronet Books, 1978): A seminal work featuring four stories of poor Jewish characters. The title story follows **Frimme Hersh**, a religious man who feels betrayed by God after his daughter’s death.

A Life Force (Kitchen Sink Press, 1988): A sequel focusing on the struggle of Jewish characters to survive during the Great Depression.

Dropsie Avenue: The Neighborhood (Kitchen Sink Press, 1995): A history of a fictional Bronx street, documenting its transition through various ethnic waves, including Jewish, Italian, and African-American communities.

Autobiographical & Historical Works

To the Heart of the Storm (Kitchen Sink Press, 1991): This work is largely autobiographical, following a young man on a troop train during WWII as he recalls his family’s experiences with **anti-Semitism** and the challenges of the Jewish-American immigrant life.

Fagin the Jew (Doubleday, 2003): A graphic retelling of Charles Dickens’ *Oliver Twist* from Fagin’s perspective. Eisner intended to humanize the character and counter the **anti-Semitic stereotypes** prevalent in Victorian literature.

The Plot: The Secret Story of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion (W.W. Norton, 2005): Eisner’s final work, published posthumously. It is a non-fiction graphic investigation into the origins of the infamous anti-Semitic forgery, *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. [Google/AI]

Eisner, Will, (**The Best of the Spirit** [pb, DC Comics, 2005] 978-1401207557 [*Many different editions available of The Spirit series*])

Eisner, Will, (**To the Heart of the Storm** [hc, Kitchen Sink Press, 1991] 978-0878161324 [pb, Norton & Co., 2008] 978-0393328103)

Eisner, Will, (**The Contract with God Trilogy: Life on Dropsie Avenue** [A Contract With God, A Life Force, Dropsie Avenue] [hc, W.W. Norton & Co., 2005] 978-0393061055)

Eisner, Will, (**Fagin the Jew: 10th Anniversary Edition** [hc, Dark Horse Books, 2013] 978-1616551261)

Eisner, Will, (**The Plot: The Secret Story of The Protocols of the Elders of Zion** [hc, Norton & Co., 2005] 978-0393060454)

Nathan Englander (*born in 1970 in West Hempstead, Long Island, New York*) [- grew up in a Modern Orthodox Jewish family and attended the Hebrew Academy of Nassau County before earning degrees from Binghamton University and the Iowa Writers' Workshop. In the 1990s he lived in Israel for approximately five years, an experience that later influenced some of his fiction. Englander first gained major attention with his debut story collection, *For the Relief of Unbearable Urges* (1999), whose stories about Orthodox Jews were widely acclaimed. His awards include the PEN/Malamud Award, the Sue Kaufman Prize, a Guggenheim Fellowship, and the 2012 Frank O'Connor International Short Story Award.] His major books include:

Englander, Nathan, (**For the Relief of Unbearable Urges** [hc, Knopf, 1999]) 978-0375404924 [pb, Knopf/Doubleday, 2000] 978-0375704437

Englander, Nathan, (**The Ministry of Special Cases** [hc, Knopf, 2007] 978-0375404931 [pb, Knopf/Doubleday, 2008] 978-0375704444)

Englander, Nathan, (**What We Talk About When We Talk About Anne Frank** [hc, Knopf, 2012] 978-0307958709 [pb, Vintage, 2013] 978-0307949608)

Englander, Nathan, (**Dinner at the Center of the Earth** [hc, Knopf, 2017] 978-1524732738 [pb, W & N (Weidenfeld and Nicolson/Orion), 2018] 978-1474607971)

Englander, Nathan, (**Kaddish.com** [hc, Knopf, 2019]) 978-1524732752 [pb, Vintage, 2020] 978-0525434054

*In addition to fiction, he translated portions of **The New American Haggadah** (2012, edited by Jonathan Safran Foer) and co-translated Etgar Keret's **Suddenly, a Knock on the Door** (2012, together with Miriam Shlesinger and Sondra Silverston), from the Hebrew. He has also written for the stage, adapting his story **The Twenty-Seventh Man** into a play that premiered at The Public Theater in 2012.*

*Among Englander's works, **The Ministry of Special Cases** (2007) remains by far the most relevant to the theme of Jews and crime. It addresses the history of the Argentine Jewish underworld and prostitution networks; Jewish communal memory and shame; political repression during Argentina's Dirty War; and the theme of state criminality. It is widely regarded as one of the most significant Jewish novels dealing with Argentina's "Dirty War" (1976–1983) and the phenomenon of the desaparecidos ("the disappeared").*

*The novel is set in Buenos Aires in 1976, shortly after the military junta seizes power. The protagonist, **Kaddish Poznan**, is the son of a prostitute and a member of a marginalized Jewish subculture descended from the city's notorious Jewish pimps and brothel owners. He earns a living by removing names from gravestones in a cemetery belonging to the old criminal and prostitution networks, helping respectable descendants erase embarrassing family histories. He lives with his wife **Lillian** and their university-age son **Pato** (Pablo), who is politically engaged and increasingly alienated from his father. When he is seized by security forces and becomes one of the "disappeared," Kaddish and Lillian begin a desperate search through police stations, government offices, prisons, and finally the sinister "Ministry of Special Cases," a Kafkaesque bureaucracy that embodies the state's refusal even to acknowledge that victims exist. The*

novel follows the parents' increasingly hopeless efforts to discover what happened to their son while confronting a regime that systematically erases people from public memory.

The novel is particularly relevant to the study of Jews and crime because Englander places Jewish identity at the center of a story about memory, shame, erasure, and state violence.

Key Jewish elements include:

- The history of the Jewish underworld in Argentina, especially the legacy of the prostitution and trafficking organization commonly known as the Zwi Migdal. Kaddish's community descends from this stigmatized world.
- Questions of Jewish respectability and the desire to erase criminal ancestors from communal memory.
- The significance of Kaddish's own name ("Kaddish" being the Jewish prayer for the dead), which reinforces the novel's concern with mourning and remembrance.
- Debates over how Jews respond to persecution, bureaucracy, and powerlessness, themes that critics have linked to Kafka and Jewish historical experience.

Among contemporary Jewish novels, *The Ministry of Special Cases* is unusual because it connects Jewish criminal history (the Argentine Jewish underworld) with state criminality during the Dirty War. Kaddish is neither a detective nor a gangster, but a marginal figure whose livelihood depends upon literally erasing traces of Jewish criminal ancestors—making the novel one of the most sophisticated literary explorations of Jewish memory, shame, crime, and historical disappearance.

After *The Ministry of Special Cases* (2007), Nathan Englander largely moved away from crime as a central subject, but he continued to engage themes highly relevant to a "Jews and crime" framework—especially revenge, violence, terrorism, state power, moral transgression, historical injustice, and the boundary between victimhood and wrongdoing. A chronological overview:

1. *What We Talk About When We Talk About Anne Frank* (2012): This collection contains almost no conventional crime fiction, but several stories touch on criminality and violence in broader moral and historical senses. Most important is "**How We Avenged the Blums.**" The story concerns a group of Jewish boys in suburban America who seek revenge against a local antisemitic bully. Englander explores vigilantism, retaliation, and the temptation to answer hatred with violence. The story is comic, but it raises serious questions about Jewish powerlessness and Jewish revenge. Other stories involve Holocaust-era murder and betrayal, suspected Nazi collaborators, antisemitic violence, and the shifting categories of victim and perpetrator. This collection is less about criminals than about the ethics of vengeance and justice in Jewish historical experience. Critics have noted that questions of guilt, innocence, victimhood, and moral responsibility run throughout the collection.

2. *Dinner at the Center of the Earth* (2017): This is Englander's work that comes closest to political-crime fiction after *The Ministry of Special Cases*. The novel intertwines the stories of an Israeli prisoner held in secret confinement, an Israeli intelligence operative, Palestinian and Israeli political actors, and covert operations and betrayals connected to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Unlike classic spy thrillers, however, the focus is not on solving crimes but on the moral ambiguity of power and conflict. Jewish characters are no longer marginal victims, as in much earlier Jewish literature, but participants in the exercise of state power. This marks an important evolution in Englander's treatment of Jewish history and responsibility.

3. *Kaddish.com* (2019): This novel shifts almost completely away from crime. Its protagonist, Larry, hires a stranger online to recite the Kaddish prayer after his father's death. The resulting deception creates a chain of lies and ethical failures. There is no criminal underworld here, but Englander remains interested in fraud, impersonation, moral misconduct, guilt and repentance. The novel is essentially a comic Jewish morality tale about ethical rather than criminal transgression.

A general survey of Englander's works as a whole highlight the following patterns:

<i>Work</i>	<i>Crime-related theme</i>
<i>For the Relief of Unbearable Urges</i> (1999)	Moral transgression, religious violation
<i>The Ministry of Special Cases</i> (2007)	Jewish criminal past, prostitution, state crime, disappearance
<i>What We Talk About When We Talk About Anne Frank</i> (2012)	Revenge, antisemitic violence, Holocaust crimes
<i>Dinner at the Center of the Earth</i> (2017)	Espionage, terrorism, political violence
<i>Kaddish.com</i> (2019)	Fraud, deception, guilt, repentance
<i>What distinguishes Englander from writers such as Jerome Charyn, Harlan Coben, or Andrew Bergman is that he rarely writes genre crime fiction. Instead, he uses crime-related subjects as vehicles for examining Jewish questions of memory and forgetting, justice and revenge, victimhood and power, guilt and atonement, communal shame and historical responsibility. [Google/AI]</i>	

G.H. Ephron - a pseudonym for Hallie Ephron (born 1948, Los Angeles) and Dr. Donald Davidoff (est. birth 1949) > protagonist **Dr. Peter Zak** is explicitly identified as a Jewish forensic psychologist. His Jewish identity is a foundational element of his character and often influences his interactions and the themes of the series:

Cultural Background: Zak is a forensic neuropsychologist based in **Boston, Massachusetts**. His heritage is frequently acknowledged as part of his personal identity and professional perspective.

Thematic Relevance: In the novel *Addiction* (2001), Zak's Jewish identity is brought to the forefront when he confronts a "Jewish skinhead" and a musician who spews anti-Semitic hate, highlighting the cultural and religious tensions he navigates.

Collaborative Origins: The character was co-created by **Hallie Ephron**, who comes from a prominent Jewish family (sister to Nora and Delia Ephron), and Dr. Donald Davidoff. This background likely informs the authentic portrayal of Zak's cultural roots. [Google/AI]

Ephron, G.H., (**Amnesia** [Dr. Peter Zak #1]) [hc, St. Martin's Minotaur, 2000] 978-0312268671 [pb, St. Martin's Paperbacks, 2001] 978-0312981242

Ephron, G.H., (**Addiction** [Dr. Peter Zak, #2]) [hc, 2001] 978-0312266776 [pb, Minotaur, 2002] 978-0312982416

Ephron, G.H., (**Delusion** [Dr. Peter Zak, #3]) [hc, Minotaur, 2002] 978-0312305000 [pb, Minotaur, 2003] 978-0312993528

Ephron, G.H., (**Obsessed** [Dr. Peter Zak, #4]) [hc, Minotaur, 2003] 978-0312305314 [pb, St. Martin's Paperbacks, 2004] 978-0312994709

Ephron, G.H., (**Guilt** [Dr. Peter Zak, #5]) [hc, Minotaur, 2005] 978-0312335953

David Evanier (born 1947 and resides in New York City) – [American novelist, biographer, and editor whose work frequently centers on New York culture, the post-war Jewish-American experience, and profiles of iconic twentieth-century cultural figures. Raised in New York City, Evanier developed an early obsession with writing and the arts. He moved to Vancouver, Canada, in the early 1970s to attend university and helped found the literary magazine "Event" at Douglas College in 1972. Upon returning to Manhattan, he served as a senior editor for the prestigious literary magazine **The Paris Review** and later worked as a writer and researcher for the Anti-Defamation League. Evanier's fiction frequently leans into tragicomic satire, capturing Jewish post-war anxieties. His prominent novels include **The One-Star Jew**

(1983), **Red Love** (1991)—a fictionalized deep dive into the Rosenberg espionage trial—and **The Great Kisser** (2007). His short fiction won the Aga Khan Prize for Fiction and has been featured in *The Best American Short Stories* anthology. Later in his career, Evanier became widely recognized for his exhaustively researched biographies of iconic, complex entertainers and figures. His most notable subjects include singer Bobby Darin (*Roman Candle*), traditional pop legend Tony Bennett (*All the Things You Are*), underdog crooner Jimmy Roselli (*Making the Wiseguys Weep*), filmmaker Woody Allen (*Woody: The Biography*), and public intellectual Norman Podhoretz (*Norman Podhoretz: The Man Who Changed People's Minds*).

David Evanier's work heavily touches on the themes of Jews, political crime, and the criminal underworld, though his execution leans more toward satirical tragedy, historical docufiction, and investigative biography rather than a traditional formulaic mystery thriller. He repeatedly uses real-world Jewish criminal activity, treason, and mob ties as the primary narrative engines for both his fiction and non-fiction. In his fiction, Evanier uses the ultimate political crime—cold war espionage—as a narrative framework:

Evanier, David, (**Red Love** [hc, Scribner, 1991]) 978-0684191911 [pb, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1991] B06XCQQX5T [*This novel is a direct, tragicomic reimaging of the trial and execution of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg. Renamed Solomon and Dolores Rubell in the book, the narrative drives forward like a post-facto investigation. A writer named Gerald Lerner places ads in Yiddish and adult magazines to hunt down and interview former Soviet spies. Evanier uses the mechanics of a historical mystery investigation to unpack the psychological motives behind American Jewish leftists who committed treason against the United States.*]

Evanier, David, (**Making the Wiseguys Weep: The Jimmy Roselli Story** [hc, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1998] 978-0374199272 [pb, Methuen, 2002] 978-0413740700 [*In his biographical work, Evanier pivots directly into traditional true crime territories, focusing on Jewish figures entangled with organized crime. This biography focuses heavily on the Italian and Jewish mafia underworld of New York and New Jersey. Evanier explores how singer Jimmy Roselli navigated—and frequently clashed with—powerful mob syndicates. The book is rich with true-crime motifs, detailing extortion, underworld enforcement, and the dangerous overlap of show business and organized crime.*]

Evanier, David, (**Roman Candle: The Life of Bobby Darin** (hc, Rodale Books, 2004) 978-1594860102 [pb, SUNY Pres, 2010] 978-1438434582 [*Evanier digs into the life of singer Bobby Darin. The biography heavily outlines Darin's intersections with the Copacabana crowd, Vegas wiseguys, and the shadow of the mob that dictated the entertainment industry at the time.*]

Evanier, David, (**The Great Kisser** [hc, Rager Media, 2007]) 978-0979209123 [*Even when not writing explicitly about felonies, Evanier relies on the paranoia and investigative instincts of the thriller genre to drive his literary fiction, as for example when satirizing Jewish organizations. The protagonist works for a fictional activist organization called "Jewish Punchers". His entire job mimics an intelligence analyst or detective—sorting massive files of data into two absolute categories: "Good for the Jews" or "Bad for the Jews". Evanier uses this thriller-like obsession with threats, surveillance, and tribal protection to satirize post-war Jewish anxiety.*]

In sum, Evanier is obviously not a "whodunit" crime author. Rather, he uses espionage investigations, mob syndicates, and the anxiety of exposure as narrative drivers to analyze the Jewish experience. — Google/AI]

Howard M. Fast (1914–2003, born in New York City) – author and screenwriter, famous for being blacklisted for membership in the Communist Party during the McCarthy era. He wrote about Diaspora Jewish history, the Maccabees, and the Holocaust. His best-known books were **Citizen Tom Paine** (1943) and **Spartacus** (1951). Fast also wrote 21 mystery novels under the pseudonym of **E.V. Cunningham**, many of them including Jewish characters. The lead in seven of these novels is the Japanese detective, **Masao Masuto**, who partners with **Sy Ledger**, a Jewish detective. Ledger's Jewish identity is a critical element of the series' thematic structure, functioning in three main ways:

Minority Solidarity: Masuto and Ledger are both outsiders in the wealthy, predominantly white enclave of Beverly Hills. Their partnership reflects a shared experience of discrimination, as they both face bigoted attitudes from suspects and sometimes within their own police department.

The “Meat-and-Potatoes” Foil: Ledger’s character is often used as a grounded, traditional American counterpoint to Masuto’s Zen Buddhist practices and meditation-driven investigative style. His Jewish cultural background provides a secular, often skeptical perspective that balances Masuto’s more philosophical approach.

A Lens for Social Justice: Fast uses Ledger to explore historical traumas. For example, in Cunningham, E.V., **The Case of the One-Penny Orange** [pb, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1977] 978-0515048766, the investigation into a rare stamp leads back to the Holocaust and World War II. Ledger’s identity makes these connections personal, reinforcing the series’ recurring focus on the consequences of prejudice and historical memory. While Masuto is the lead, this novel involves the world of rare stamp collecting and high-stakes crime, often a setting where Fast introduced Jewish side characters or backgrounds tied to European history.

Cunningham, E.V., (**The Assassin Who Gave Up His Gun** [hc, Morrow, 1969] B0006CK6RE [pb, Ace, 1969] B00KR01VR4 [*Features **Harvey Krim**, a cynical, world-weary investigator. Like many of Fast’s protagonists, his Jewish heritage is a quiet but firm foundation for his skepticism of authority and his personal code of ethics.*]

Cunningham, E.V., (**The Wabash Factor**) [hc, Doubleday, 1986] 978-0385294386 [mass mkt pb, Dell, 1986] 978-0440193906 [**Harry Golding** is a “tough but lovable” New York detective and the central hero of this novel. He is a Jewish police officer characterized by his sharp “instinct for foul play”. [Google/AI – Amazon]

For Fast, being Jewish in these novels meant a refusal to ignore “foul play”. His detectives—whether Jewish like Golding, Krim and Ledger or not—often act as protectors for marginalized groups, a theme he explored more explicitly in his non-mystery works like **The Jews: Story of a People** (hc, The Dial Press, 1968) B0006BWLZU [pb, Random House, 1992] 978-0440505068. The main example of a Jewish detective in a Fast (rather than Cunningham) novel is the following:

Fast, Howard, (**The Confession of Joe Cullen** [hc, Houghton Mifflin, 1989] 978-0395509364 [pb, Coronet, 1990] 978-0340530672 [*Detective **Mel Freedman**’s life changes forever the day Joe Cullen walks into his New York City office to confess to murder. Cullen, a pilot and Vietnam veteran, has come to admit his guilt in the murder of an American priest, thrown from a helicopter to his death in the jungles of El Salvador 800 feet below. But when a prostitute to whom Cullen also confessed turns up dead, Freedman quickly realizes that there is much more to Cullen’s story than meets the eye. As he digs deeper into the mystery, Freedman unravels a tangled web of conspiracy stretching from the cocaine fields of Central America all the way to CIA headquarters.*

Freedman is a Jewish officer in a precinct that is largely Catholic and Black. This positioning provides a secular, often skeptical lens through which to view the “confession” of the title character, Joe Cullen, who is a guilt-ridden Catholic. While the book delves into Catholic mysticism and the moral weight of a priest’s murder, Freedman represents the “tough-guy” procedural side of the narrative. His role is to untangle the political conspiracy—linking the CIA and drug smuggling—that lies beneath the religious guilt of the confession. – Amazon]

Harriet K. Feder (1928–2010, born in the Bronx, NY and died in Amherst (Buffalo), NY) [*She spent much of her career as an educator, teaching history and social studies in the Buffalo, New York public school system. Following her career in education, she shifted her focus to writing children’s literature and young adult mysteries. Her publications deeply reflect her heritage and include Jewish holiday children’s books such as *It Happened in Shushan: A Purim Story* (1988) and *Judah Who Always Said “No!”: A Hanukkah Story* (1990), alongside her notable **Vivi Hartman** Young Adult mystery series. She lived the latter part of her life in Amherst, a suburb of Buffalo, where she was an active member of her local Jewish community alongside her husband, Herbert Feder. The *Vivi Hartman* series follows a sharp,*

observant 15-year-old Modern Orthodox Jewish girl who uses her deep knowledge of Jewish history, language, and culture to untangle dark criminal plots. The extensive plot, character, and thematic details for each of the three books in the series are organized below.

Feder, Harriet K. [*Vivi Hartman #1*], (**Mystery in Miami Beach** [hc, Lerner Pub Group, 1992]) 978-0822507338 [*While visiting her grandmother over winter break, Vivi discovers a string of suspicious, alarming events occurring at the local condominium complex. She begins noticing a bizarre pattern around the neighborhood—including secretive tall men with British accents, odd recurring symbols like red birds, and misplaced umbrellas. A local teenage Jewish boy, Mike, becomes Vivi's sidekick, romantic interest, and sounding board. Together, they follow the clues to unravel a localized criminal plot. The underlying puzzle is directly anchored in real-world Holocaust history. The criminal conspiracy traces back to the tragic 1939 voyage of the St. Louis, a ship carrying 907 Jewish refugees that was infamously denied entry by Cuba and the United States, forcing it back to Europe where many passengers perished.*

Feder, Harriet K. [*Vivi Hartman #2*], (**Mystery of the Kaifeng Scroll** [Lerner, Pub Group, 1995]) 978-0822507390 [*While in Istanbul, Turkey, Vivi's mother suddenly disappears. Vivi teams up with an Arab girl Shari, to locate her, uncovering a high-stakes conspiracy revolving around a priceless, ancient Chinese-Jewish Torah scroll. Vivi must use her comprehensive knowledge of the Torah and linguistic skills to decode clues left behind. The narrative heavily emphasizes intercultural trust. Vivi has to look past geopolitical prejudices to align with Shari so they can save her mother and protect a piece of global Jewish heritage.*

Feder, Harriet K. [*Vivi Hartman #3*], (**Death on Sacred Ground** [hc, Lerner Pub Group, 2001]) 978-0822507413 [*Takes place in the fictional town of Pikes Landing in upstate New York, bordering a Seneca Indian reservation. Now a tenth-grader, Vivi travels with her father, Rabbi Hartman, to help coordinate the funeral of a young Orthodox Jewish girl named Mindy Solomon. Mindy was a rebellious teenager who was found dead during a high school archery club outing—pierced through the heart with an arrow. Oddly, her body was found deep in the woods on snake-infested, sacred Seneca ground, far from where her school group was practicing. Vivi's father, Rabbi Hartman, acts as both a spiritual guide to a grieving community and an active investigator alongside his daughter. The plot centers on an intense, explosive standoff between the local townsfolk and the Seneca people. Vivi is forced to navigate a minefield of local suspects, including prejudiced local teenagers, Mindy's strict father, and a predatory, born-again Christian group actively targeting and recruiting vulnerable Jewish youth in the area.*

Through this series, Feder introduces a YA lens where criminality serves as a backdrop for positive Jewish identity formation. Vivi relies on Yiddishkeit (essential Jewish tradition and character) and Jewish problem-solving frameworks to parse out clues, proving that traditional values can actively fight societal ills. The series reconfigures the classic detective dynamic by positioning a Rabbi as the investigator's mentor and father. Rather than treating religious authorities as insular or detached from the secular world, Rabbi Hartman applies ethical leadership, community awareness, and Jewish law (Halakha) to real-world criminal justice issues. - Google/AI]

Howard Feigenbaum (birth est. 1945 in a small town in the Catskill Mts., NY and moved with his family to Los Angeles as a youth) – After a business career, he turned (or returned) to writing, authoring two books of poetry and the **Benny Goldfarb, Private “I”** trilogy. The series begins in Los Angeles and transitions into travel-heavy investigations across South and Central America, focusing on local culture, cuisine, and geography. Benny is depicted as very consciously Jewish, even if not necessarily religious. His actions are driven by a sense of duty that aligns with the Jewish concept of Tzedek (Justice), which compels individuals to act righteously and protect the vulnerable. Benny moves beyond a simple “tough guy” persona to grapple with ethical dilemmas, reflecting the idea of Tikkun Olam (repairing the world) through his work as a private investigator. The series also integrates a sense of communal responsibility by linking modern mysteries to Jewish historical trauma, such as the Spanish Inquisition and the Sephardic diaspora. [Google/AI]

Feigenbaum, Howard [*Benny Goldfarb #1*], (**Benny Goldfarb, Private “I”**) [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2014] 978-1499632538 [*Benny, a regular at a Los Angeles car wash, is hired by the owner,*

Rosa Zuleca, when her cardiologist brother disappears in Cartagena, Colombia. The investigation involves Colombian drug cartels and leads to Rosa discovering her family's hidden Sephardic Jewish history.]

Feigenbaum, Howard [Benny Goldfarb #2], (**Home Stretch**) [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2015] 978-1518606304 [*Set in Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay, the story involves a bank specializing in racehorse loans being defrauded. The case leads Benny to the lawless "tri-border" region, a hub for international criminals and terrorists.*]

Feigenbaum, Howard [Benny Goldfarb #3], (**Hot Zone**) [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2017] 978-1979018951 [*Tasked by the FBI, Benny travels to Panama to investigate growing Chinese influence and their potential control over the Panama Canal.*]

David E. Feldman (born 1957, in Brooklyn, NY, resides in Long Beach on Long Island, NY) – author of the 6-volume *Dora Ellison Mystery series* and of the 5-volume *Hammer & Sharpe Noir Mystery Series*, both involving Jewish protagonists. He is also a professional piano player and singer, as well as a commissioned painter and a film-maker. [*One wonders whether this guy ever sleeps!*]

Dora Ellison is a hard-boiled sleuth with a traumatic childhood (details undisclosed) who works as a **garbage collector** (!) and who becomes a relentless vigilante investigator. Her past is explicitly described as her secret weapon. The pain and anger she carries are not just burdens; she channels them into a "violent streak" that she directs toward bullies, criminals, and those who exploit the vulnerable. Because of her past, Dora has an unyielding sense of right and wrong that often conflicts with official legal systems. She frequently operates "off-the-books" because she believes the systems meant to protect people are broken or corrupt. Her own history of victimization makes her a fierce advocate for marginalized groups, such as the transgender community (in ***A Biological Storm***) and young people with special needs (in ***A Special Storm***). In ***A Divisive Storm***, Dora investigates a dark web of white supremacists, a plot that directly engages with themes of antisemitism and racism.

Feldman's unconventional casting of Dora as a garbage collector; cleaning the gutters of her town, gives her a unique, inconspicuous vantage point on society; she sees the literal and figurative trash of the city, often uncovering evidence of corruption and crime that respectable society ignores. Being a "robust garbage collector" also provides her with the physical strength and martial arts proficiency needed to face the city's most ruthless figures. In the first book, ***Not Today***, she is described as "hauling trash for a living," but also as a tough, motorcycle-riding investigator, who "tears through the lies" and power of men who think they are untouchable, effectively "cleaning up" the human trash of her city.

While her job is gritty and blue-collar, it connects to her Jewish identity through the themes of **justice and moral labor**:

Tikkun Olam (Repairing the World): Though not always explicitly stated as a religious practice, Dora's work—both as a sanitation worker and a vigilante—is a physical manifestation of a "fierce Jewish woman sleuth" cleaning up a broken world.

The Outsider Status: Historically, Jewish detective fiction often features protagonists who are "outsiders" to traditional power structures. By being a female Jewish garbage collector, Dora exists on the social periphery, allowing her to challenge institutional failures and "the men who think they're untouchable" from a position of moral independence.

Shared Identity: Her work on the truck is often shared with others of similar backgrounds; for example, in the first novel, she works alongside **Maurice "Mo" Levinson**, another character with a Jewish name, highlighting a community of labor within her heritage. [Google/AI]

The Dora Ellison series consists of six primary novels and one prequel short story:

Feldman, David E., (**Storm Warnings: Dora Ellison's Dark Prequel Story**, [Kindle edition, 2022] B09QFSJ759

Feldman, David E. [*Dora Ellison series, #1*], (**Not Today** [pb, Eface Media, 2021] 978-0578951850 [*Dora investigates a decades-old murder cover-up that led to city-wide corruption.*])

Feldman, David E. [*Dora Ellison series, #2*], (**A Gathering Storm** [pb, Eface Media, 2022] 978-0578358994 – [*Dora and her partner, librarian Missy Winters, investigate the murder of a councilwoman's brother in a drug-ridden alley.*])

Feldman, David E. [*Dora Ellison series, #3*], (**A Sickening Storm** [pb, Eface Media, 2022] 978-0578297538 [*A medical mystery where someone is infecting hospital patients with deadly diseases.*])

Feldman, David E. [*Dora Ellison series, #4*], (**A Biological Storm** [pb, Eface Media, 2022] 979-8218050993 – [*Dora and Missy hunt a killer targeting transgender individuals.*])

Feldman, David E. [*Dora Ellison series, #5*], (**A Special Storm** [pb, Eface Media, 2023] 979-8218174521 – [*The duo investigates the on-stage murder of a talented young singer with special needs.*])

Feldman, David E. [*Dora Ellison series, #6*], (**A Divisive Storm** [pb, Eface Media, 2023] 979-8852649270 – [*A thriller centered on a dark web of white supremacists and a cold-blooded murder from years prior.*])

Feldman's **Hammer & Sharpe Noir Mystery** series is a gritty crime saga centered on two morally complex protagonists navigating a landscape of corruption and personal demons. The series explores themes of systemic failure and moral compromise, often blending psychological depth with hard-boiled action. **Sam Sharpe** is a private investigator with a cynical streak and a haunted past, who constantly battles a brutal addiction to opioids and heroin. **Judah Hammer** is a former enforcer who rose to become a "local crime boss", described as having a "heart of gold". He is an ex-convict who, after serving time for manslaughter, attempts to protect his community while managing a sprawling, complicated family. Note that Judah is not retired. His current criminal activities involve managing his "territory" and defending it against rival organizations.

Regarding Judah's Jewish credentials, they start with the name given him by the author. By naming a "street-smart" investigator and crime boss after a historical hero of Jewish resistance, Feldman subverts the stereotype of Jewish characters being physically weak or intellectual-only. In the tradition of Jewish Noir, Hammer represents a gritty, uncompromising figure who operates in a morally gray underworld but maintains a personal moral compass. The prequel novelette **Nailed** focuses specifically on Judah Hammer's origins, exploring the specific life events and cultural upbringing that shaped his cynical yet protective worldview. It reveals that he was initially driven into the underworld to find the killers of the woman he loved, who died in a botched robbery. His character is often surrounded by other Jewish figures, such as Detective **Abe Gold**, creating a distinct Jewish subculture within the series' urban crime setting. While his partner, Sam Sharpe, struggles with addiction, Judah Hammer often serves as the "anchor," albeit a criminal one, who values loyalty and community in a way that echoes traditional Jewish emphasis on family and social responsibility. [Google/AI]

The series includes several novels and two prequel works available through the [David E. Feldman Author Website](#):

Feldman, David E., (**Nailed**: Judah Hammer prequel novelette [Kindle edition, 2025]) B0FMPPM1K2W

Feldman, David E., (**Sharpe Decline**: Sam Sharpe prequel novelette [Kindle edition, 2025]) B0FHBKL1GL

Feldman, David E. [Hammer/Sharpe #1, (**Let Thy Children Come** [pb, independently published, 2024] 979-8320484877 [*Sharpe searches for a missing seven-year-old while Hammer investigates his father's murder, leading both toward a ruthless crime boss named Wallace North.*])

Feldman, David E. [Hammer/Sharpe #2, (**Dead Ringers** [pb, independently published, 2024] 979-8342494304 [*Hammer hires Sharpe to solve three seemingly unrelated workplace murders where employees killed their bosses, only for Sharpe to uncover a killer whose impersonation skills frame Hammer himself.*])

Feldman, David E. [Hammer/Sharpe #3, (**Mama's Boy** [pb, Eface Media, 2025] 979-8992679816 [*Sharpe investigates missing prostitutes while Hammer battles a rival organization, "Dante's Inferno," during a violent mayoral election.*]

Feldman, David E. [Hammer/Sharpe #4, (**Death Con Seduction** [pb, Eface Media, 2025] 979-8330320783 [*A noir thriller where a femme fatale's crew of scammers targets a small town, drawing Sharpe and Hammer's empire into a labyrinth of fraud and betrayal.*] [Google/AI]

Feldman, David E. [Hammer/Sharpe #5, (**Ice Blue Murder** [pb, Eface Media, 2026] 979-899267984 [*Beth Beckett was pregnant when she was stabbed to death in her own kitchen. Days earlier, she'd been confronted at a protest. Now the obvious suspect won't hold—and her husband, a police officer, has an alibi provided by fellow cops. As protests erupt, secrets surface, and loyalties harden, detectives and a private investigator uncover an affair, a cover-up, and a truth no one wants exposed. Ice Blue Murder is a tense, morally charged crime novel about power, betrayal, and what happens when justice collides with loyalty.* - Amazon]

Boris Fishman (born 1979, Minsk, then in the Byelorussian SSR (now Belarus). [Emigrated to the U.S. in 1988, at age nine, settling first in Brooklyn and later New Jersey. : B.A. in Russian Literature from Princeton University; MFA in Creative Writing from New York University. Novelist, memoirist, essayist and journalist. He has written for *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times Magazine*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Guardian*, and many other publications, and has taught creative writing at Princeton, the University of Montana, and the University of Austin. Although a native Russian speaker, all his books are written in English and move between the U.S., Russia and occasionally other locations. Although he is not a crime or espionage writer, several of his books contain criminal acts, fraud, moral ambiguity, or the legacy of state oppression—making him relevant to a study of Jews and crime in a broader literary sense.

Fishman, Boris, (**A Replacement Life** [hc, Harper, 2014] 978-0062287878 [pb, HarperCollins UK, 2015] 978-0957548893 [*Slava Gelman, a struggling young writer and child of Soviet Jewish immigrants, is asked to help elderly Russian Jews prepare applications for German Holocaust restitution payments. He gradually becomes involved in fabricating and embellishing restitution claims for applicants whose wartime histories are uncertain or impossible to document. What begins as helping his grandfather becomes a lucrative underground enterprise. The novel explores: Holocaust memory, survivor guilt, post-Soviet immigrant ethics, fraud committed in the name of historical justice, intergenerational conflict, and the moral ambiguity of victimhood. Slava is engaging in document forgery, fraud against the German restitution program, and conspiracy among members of the immigrant community. Yet the novel is not structured as a detective novel. Rather, it asks whether people brutalized by Nazism and Stalinism can be judged by ordinary moral standards. Fishman has explained that he wanted to examine the "flexible relationship to the law" that sometimes developed among ex-Soviet Jews under oppressive regimes—not to vilify them, but to understand how trauma shaped their ethics.*

None of Fishman's other books touches on the theme of Jews and crime/espionage. – ChatGPT]

Richard Fliegel (born 1954 in Mt. Vernon, NY and raised in the Bronx) - an American mystery novelist, television writer, and academic administrator. He is best known for his "Allerton Avenue Precinct" (in Bronx, NY) detective series featuring the duo of **Shelly Lowenkopf** and Homer Greely. Outside of fiction, he serves as the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs at the USC Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences. His academic work includes research on using student writing to assess critical thinking skills. [Google/AI]

Fliegel, Richard, (**The Next to Die** [The Allerton Avenue Precinct Novels/Sergeant Shelly Lowenkopf #1] [pb, Pocket Books, 1989]) 978-0671688493

Fliegel, Richard, (**The Art of Death** [The Allerton Avenue Precinct Novels/Sergeant Shelly Lowenkopf #2] [originally published by Pocket Books and re-released by Open Road Media on Kindle, 2014] 978-1497670396

Fliegel, Richard, (**The Organ Grinder's Monkey** [*The Allerton Avenue Precinct Novels/Sergeant Shelly Lowenkopf* #3] [pb, Pocket Books, 1989] 978-0671649395

Fliegel, Richard, (**A Minyan for the Dead** [*The Allerton Avenue Precinct Novels/Sergeant Shelly Lowenkopf* #4] [pb, Pocket Books, 1993] 978-0671744496 [**Note:** The exact text of this book was also published under the title **Time to Kill**, [pb, Pocket Books, 1990]) 978-0671688509]

Fliegel, Richard, (**A Semi-Private Doom** [*The Allerton Avenue Precinct Novels/Sergeant Shelly Lowenkopf* #5]) [pb, Pocket Books, 1991] 978-0671688516

Fliegel, Richard, (**The Man Who Murdered Himself** [*The Allerton Avenue Precinct Novels/Sergeant Shelly Lowenkopf* #6] [pb, Pocket Books, 1994] 978-0671744519

Steven M. Forman (born 1942, Boston, MA) - Graduated from the University of Massachusetts in 1963 and spent 45 successful years in international business. Founded a major global seafood marketing company in 1970. Relocated to Boca Raton, Florida as a "snowbird" in 1992, joining a large community of fellow Jewish retirees. Left corporate work to fulfill a lifelong dream of writing fiction. His fictional protagonist is **Eddie Perlmutter**, a tough, aging, 60-year-old Jewish Boston cop. Facing severe arthritis, Eddie retires to Florida but cannot escape crime. He becomes a "senior citizen superhero" fighting the Russian mafia and local corruption. In the first novel, *Boca Knights*, he is drawn back into action to defend resident Jews and Caribbean expats against a group of neo-Nazis known as the "Aryan Army". [Google/AI]

Forman, Steven [*Eddie Perlmutter* #1], (**Boca Knights** [hc, Forge Books, 2009]) 978-0765319876 [pb, Tor Books, 2009] 978-0765359575

Forman, Steven [*Eddie Perlmutter* #2], (**Boca Mournings** [hc, Forge Books, 2010]) 978-0765319883 [pb, Forge Books, 2011] 978-0765387325

Forman, Steven [*Perlmutter* prequel novella], **Eddie the Kid: A Tale of Eddie Perlmutter** [e-book, New Word City / Forge Books, 2011] **ASIN:** B006C78U9M [*Set in 1974 Boston, detailing Eddie's early years on the police force during the city's racial tensions and busing crisis.* **Note:** Author states that another prequel novel is in the works. – Google/AI]

Forman, Steven [*Eddie Perlmutter* #3], (**Boca Daze** [hc, Forge Books, 2012] 978-0765328762 [pb, Forge Books, 2013] 978-0765375186

Bruce Jay Friedman (1930–2020, born in Bronx, NY and died in Brooklyn, NY) [*He was a defining figure in mid-century American literature, celebrated for pioneering "Black Humor" and writing highly successful screenplays, plays, and novels that captured modern urban anxiety. He studied journalism at the University of Missouri and served as an officer in the U.S. Air Force during the Korean War, where his commanding officer encouraged his writing. In the 1950s, he worked as a writer and executive editor for Magazine Management Co., overseeing popular men's adventure magazines like Men, Male, and Man's World. He burst onto the literary scene with his debut novel **Stern** (1962), followed by the bestseller **A Mother's Kisses** (1964). Both books defined the archetype of the anxious, neurotic, and alienated Jewish protagonist navigating modern America. As the editor of the 1965 anthology *Black Humor*, he helped coin and popularize the genre. Friedman transitioned seamlessly into theater and film. He wrote the hit Off-Broadway plays **Scuba Duba** (1967) and **Steambath** (1970). In Hollywood, he penned the blockbusters **Stir Crazy** (1980) and **Splash** (1984). His short story "A Change of Plan" was also adapted into the classic comedy film *The Heartbreak Kid* (1972).*]

While he is primarily known as a pioneer of American "Black Humor" and the creator of the modern literary Jewish schlemiel, he frequently used law enforcement, international espionage, and contract killing as narrative engines. However, rather than writing straightforward mystery or thriller fiction, he hijacked these genres to dissect the neuroses, guilt, and identity crises of his Jewish protagonists.

Three major works directly subvert the crime, detective, and espionage genres through Jewish lenses:

Friedman, Bruce Jay, (**A Father's Kisses** [hc, Dutton Adult, 1996]) 978-1556114991 [pb, Donald J. Fine Books, 1996] B000UZSWN2 [*The Jewish Schlemiel as Hitman: In this direct parody of the thriller genre, Friedman introduces William Binny, a middle-aged, recently unemployed Jewish poultry distributor and widower living in a nondescript American town. Desperate to secure a financial future for his 11-year-old daughter, Binny is approached by a mysterious Englishman who recruits him to become an international contract killer for a reclusive billionaire. Binny is the antithesis of a cold-blooded assassin. He is a gentle, bumbling Everyman who reads classical literature but is completely out of his depth. The book turns into a ridiculous, globe-trotting thriller parody where his targets—including retired Catskills comedy figures—are often practically dead before he even arrives.*

Friedman, Bruce Jay, (**The Dick** [hc, Knopf, 1970]) B0006C2SCK [hc, Vintage/Ebury, 1971] 978-0224005050 [pb, Penguin, 1973] 978-0140036329 [*Subverting the Hardboiled Cop Novel: This novel is Friedman's twisted take on the classic American procedural and detective novel. The protagonist is **Kenneth LePeters**, whose birth name was **Sussman**. He has changed his name, moved away from his roots, and works as a "quasi-dick"—a public relations bureaucrat for a major, rough-and-tumble urban homicide precinct. The core of the novel rests on Sussman/LePeters trying to survive in an ultra-masculine, often bigoted, and violent law enforcement culture while hiding his sensitivities and his Jewish background. To reclaim his manhood after his wife leaves him for a real detective, he is forced to try and become the tough, gun-toting "badass sleuth" he was never meant to be.*

Friedman, Bruce Jay, ("**Mr. Siegel**" - [*The Shadow of Murder, Inc.* – published in **Tablet**, Dec. 4, 2018. Directly grapples with the historical legacy of organized Jewish crime. The narrator recalls a kind, gentle, and paternal elderly man named Mr. Siegel. The narrator eventually discovers that this unassuming, polite man had spent a decade in prison and was actually a notorious, feared hitman for **Murder, Incorporated**—the real-life, predominantly Jewish enforcement mob of the 1930s and 40s. The story masterfully plays on the jarring disconnect between stereotypical suburban Jewish gentleness and brutal historical underworld criminality. [Google/AI]

Daniel Friedman (born 1981 in Memphis, Tennessee) – lawyer and author of the **Buck Schatz** trilogy which follows an 87-year-old retired Jewish Memphis homicide detective. The series blends "geezer noir" with dark humor as Buck grapples with aging, memory loss, and the violent reappearance of his past. Buck is a nickname for Baruch, and he has contended with anti-Semitism throughout his life, starting as a WW2 P.O.W. and later in the Memphis Police Department. The character is loosely based on the author's grandfather, Buddy Friedman.

Don't Ever Get Old (2012) - Buck's quiet retirement is upended when a dying fellow veteran reveals that **Heinrich Ziegler**, the SS officer who tortured them in a Nazi POW camp (they were U.S. soldiers captured during World War II), is alive in the U.S. and in possession of stolen Nazi gold. Buck decides to hunt down his old tormentor to claim the loot, enlisting his NYU law student grandson, "**Tequila**" (a fraternity nickname for "Willaim Tecumseh Schatz", which Buck dislikes and often purposely distorts) to help him deal with the modern world and technology. The hunt attracts a "murderous crew," including a Mississippi loan shark, Israeli agents, and a bloodthirsty killer.

Don't Ever Look Back (2014) - Set four months later, Buck is now 88 and living in an assisted-living facility, using a walker and facing worsening dementia. An old nemesis named **Elijah**, a criminal mastermind from a 1965 bank robbery, approaches Buck for protection. Elijah claims someone is trying to kill him and offers to confess to his cold cases if Buck brokers his surrender. The narrative jumps between the 2009 present and the 1965 robbery, revealing a decades-old feud that reaches a final, explosive conclusion.

Running Out of Road (2020) - Now even more frail and struggling with significant cognitive decline, Buck faces a threat to his entire career legacy. **Chester March**, a serial killer Buck put on death row 35 years ago, is finally facing execution. However, an NPR producer begins investigating the case, claiming Buck coerced a confession from an innocent man. While Buck's wife, Rose, faces a terminal health crisis, Buck must enter his own fracturing memories to defend his reputation and prove that he caught the right man.

Friedman, Daniel, [Buck Schatz series #1], (**Don't Ever Get Old** [hc, Minotaur Books, 2012] 978-0312606930 [pb, Minotaur Books, 2013]) 978-1250028921

Friedman, Daniel, [Buck Schatz series #2], (**Don't Ever Look Back** [hc, Minotaur Books, 2014] 978-1250027566 [pb, Minotaur Books, 2015]) 978-1250060983

Friedman, Daniel, [Buck Schatz series #3], (**Running Out of Road** [hc, Minotaur Books, 2020] 978-1250058485

Kinky Friedman (1944–2024, born in Chicago, raised in Texas died at Echo Hill Ranch, his family's historic summer camp and beloved home located in the Texas Hill Country near Medina, Texas) [*Iconic American singer, songwriter, novelist, humorist, and politician. Fondly known as "The Kinkster" due to his curly hair, he built an outsized persona as a cigar-chomping Jewish cowboy who used biting satire to challenge social norms. He heavily modeled his sharp storytelling style after classic American satirists like Mark Twain and Will Rogers. Graduated from the University of Texas at Austin in 1966 with a bachelor's degree in psychology. Served for two years as a U.S. Peace Corps volunteer in Borneo, Malaysia. Formed the satirical country-rock band Kinky Friedman and The Texas Jewboys in 1973. Gained cult fame for pushing boundaries with provocative songs like "They Ain't Makin' Jews Like Jesus Anymore" and "Get Your Biscuits in the Oven and Your Buns in the Bed". Earned high praise from legendary musicians, eventually touring with Bob Dylan as part of the famous Rolling Thunder Revue in 1976. Shifted his focus to writing in the mid-1980s. He published over 20 offbeat mystery novels featuring a fictionalized, amateur-detective version of himself living in Greenwich Village, New York City. Ran a colorful independent campaign for Governor of Texas in 2006. Using slogans like "Why the hell not?" and "How Hard Could It Be?", he placed fourth with 12.6% of the vote. Alongside his artistic career, he was a passionate animal lover who founded the Utopia Animal Rescue Ranch, which saved over 1,000 stray and aging dogs.*]

Supporting Characters: In the series, Kinky is often aided by a group called the "Village Irregulars," which includes **Steve Rambam**, a character based on a real-life investigator who is described in the books as being trained as both a **rabbi** and a **cop**.

Cultural Themes: The books frequently feature Jewish cultural references, such as the protagonist's "Jewfro" hairstyle and his penchant for comparing his own life of "irritating people" to that of Jesus, whom he also identifies as a "skinny Jew". [Google/AI]

Kinky Friedman Mysteries

1. **Greenwich Killing Time** [hc, Beech Tree Books, 1986]) 978-0688064099 [pb, Vandam Press, 2000] 978-0970238306
2. **A Case Of Lone Star** [hc, Beech Tree Books, 1987]) 978-0688064105 [pb, Vandam Press, 2000] 978-0970238313
3. **When The Cat's Away** [hc, Beech Tree Books, 1988] 978-0688075552 [pb, Berkley, 1989] 978-0425118306
4. **Frequent Flyer** (hc, William Morrow, 1989) 978-0688081669 [pb, Berkley, 1990] 978-0425123454
5. **Musical Chairs** (hc, William Morrow, 1991) 978-0688091484 [pb, Vandam Press, 2000] 978-0970238344
6. **Elvis, Jesus & Coca Cola** [hc, Simon & Schuster, 1993]) 978-0671869229 [pb, Bantam, 1994] 978-0553568912
7. **Armadilloes & Old Lace** [hc, Simon & Schuster, 1994]) 978-0671869236 [pb, Bantam, 1995] 978-0671869236
8. **God Bless John Wayne** [hc, Simon & Schuster, 1995]) 978-0684810515 [pb, Bantam, 1996] 978-0684810515
9. **The Love Song of J. Edgar Hoover** [hc, Simon & Schuster, 1996] 978-0684803777 [pb, Ballantine Books, 1997] 978-0345415097

10. **Roadkill** [hc, Simon & Schuster, 1997] 978-0684803784 [pb] Ballantine Books, 1998] 978-0345416322
11. **Blast From The Past** [hc, Simon & Schuster, 1998] 978-0684803791 [pb, Ballantine Books, 1999] 978-0345416308
12. **Spanking Watson** [hc, Simon & Schuster, 1999] 978-0684850610 [pb, Gallery Books] 978-0671047429
13. **The Mile High Club** [hc, Simon & Schuster, 2000] 978-0684864860 [pb, Gallery Books] 978-0671047436
14. **Steppin' on a Rainbow** [hc, Simon & Schuster, 2001] 978-0684864877 [pb, Pocket, 2002] 978-0671047443
15. **Meanwhile, Back at the Ranch** (hc, Simon & Schuster, 2002) 978-0684864884 [pb, Simon & Schuster] 978-1416578024
16. **Curse of the Missing Puppet Head** (hc, Vandam Press, 2003) 978-0970238368
17. **The Prisoner of Vandam Street** (hc, Simon & Schuster, 2004) 978-0743246026 [pb, 2014] 978-1476794525
18. **Ten Little New Yorkers** (hc, Simon & Schuster, 2005) 978-0743246033 [pb, Simon & Schuster, 2008] 978-1416592723

Daniel Fuchs (1909–1993, New York City) – was a prominent Jewish-American novelist and Academy Award-winning screenwriter, best known for his “Williamsburg Trilogy” which captured the gritty reality of life in Brooklyn during the Great Depression.

Fuchs's work is characterized by its “naturalistic” style, blending the existential angst of Jewish immigrant life with the suspense of urban crime.

Jewish Identity and Life: His *Williamsburg Trilogy* is a pioneering contribution to Jewish American literature. He depicted first- and second-generation Jewish immigrants struggling with poverty and social mobility, often using the Yiddish-inflected speech of his childhood. Rachel Rubin says his novels mark the decline or “death” of the Jewish gangster myth (see p.223). **Mystery and Crime Themes:**

Low-Life and Gangsters: Fuchs delved into the “hard-boiled” world of Jewish criminals and racketeers. His characters often inhabit a world where the line between “illicit and respectable conduct” is blurred for the sake of survival.

Plotting Violence: *Summer in Williamsburg* features a subplot involving gangsters hired to terrorize a bus line, while *Low Company* centers on a war between a brothel syndicate and an independent operator.

Film Noir Influence: Many of his screenplays, such as the classic noir *Criss Cross* (1949) and *The Gangster* (based on his own novel *Low Company*), explored dark, suspenseful themes of betrayal and fatalism. [Google, AI]

Fuchs, Daniel, (**The Williamsburg Trilogy** – including *Summer in Williamsburg* (1934), *Homage to Blenholt* (1936), and *Low Company* (1937) – [pb, Avon Books, 1976] 978-0380014682

Kimberley Garnick Giarratano (birth est. 1982 in New York, raised in New Jersey) - She currently serves as an instructor at SUNY Orange County Community College, acts as a reviewer for BookPage, and is a chapter liaison for *Sisters in Crime*. Resides in the Poconos region of northeastern Pennsylvania with her husband and three children. Best-known as author of 3-volume (so far) **Billie Levine** private investigator series. Billie is 24, from a Jewish blue-collar family. She is described as a “badass Jersey girl” whose cultural background is heavily influenced by the “displaced New Yorker” experience common in North Jersey. Unlike her peers who had lavish Bar/Bat Mitzvah parties in catering halls, Billie had hers at home. Her family is economically pressured, e.g. her mother struggling to pay synagogue dues and Billie herself dealing with student debt and a leaky roof. Her primary motivation for work is providing for her mother, who has early-onset Alzheimer's. The first mystery in the series (**Death**

of a Dancing Queen) involves a historical and modern connection to a Jewish mob, linking Billie's investigation to her family's past and the local community's darker history.

Giarratano, Kimberley G. [Billie Levine series #1], (**Death of a Dancing Queen** [pb, Datura Books, 2023] 978-1915202420 [After her mother's Alzheimer's diagnosis, Billie Levine revamped her grandfather's private investigation firm and set up shop in the corner booth of her favorite North Jersey deli hoping the free pickles and flexible hours would allow her to take care of her mom and pay the bills. So when Tommy Russo, a rich kid with a nasty drug habit, offers her a stack of cash to find his missing girlfriend, how can she refuse? At first, Billie thinks this will be easy earnings, but then her missing person's case turns into a murder investigation and Russo is the detective bureau's number one suspect. Suddenly Billie is embroiled in a deadly gang war that's connected to the decades-old disappearance of a famous cabaret dancer with ties to both an infamous Jewish mob and a skinhead group. Toss in the reappearance of Billie's hunky ex-boyfriend with his own rap sheet, and she is regretting every decision that got her to this point. Becoming a P.I. was supposed to solve her problems. But if Billie doesn't crack this case, the next body the police dredge out of the Hudson River will be hers. – Amazon]

Giarratano, Kimberley G. [Billie Levine series #2], (**Devil in Profile** [pb, Datura Books, 2024] 978-1915523297 [Unlicensed P.I. Billie Levine is trying to bank some extra cash, so she picks up hours working as a process server for another investigative firm. Mindless and mostly 9 to 5, Billie is content to simply hand over court documents until during a routine stakeout, she stumbles upon the corpse of an elderly man, an art collector with ties to Nazi Germany. Billie is feeling on edge lately. Maybe it's because her father is insisting his estranged kids come to his wedding in Sedona, or that David is making plans to move out, or that a smug teaching assistant is getting underfoot on her latest case. Although, it's possible she could use the help when the cops zero in on Billie's boyfriend, Aaron, and his connections to an international art ring. Turns out, Aaron's stint abroad has left him with more than just a thick scar across his neck. The woman he screwed over wants revenge, and she's determined to leverage Billie's murder case to get it. With the detectives focused on Aaron, Billie sets her sights on stopping a killer who is tying up loose ends — Billie being one of them. – Amazon]

Giarratano, Kimberley G. [Billie Levine series #3], (**Make a Killing** [pb, Datura Books, 2025] 978-1915523433 [Private Investigator Billie Levine should be ecstatic. She's finally getting the cheating spouse cases she's always wanted. Nothing to do but sit back, snap incriminating photos, and get paid. Except Jeremy Yang is competing for work with his own P.I. firm. Advertising himself as "the man to get the job done", he keeps swooping in and stealing prospective clients. Not to be outmaneuvered, Billie has offered her services to scorned women everywhere. Their rivalry escalates when Billie and Jeremy are hired by an ultra-wealthy couple on opposite sides of a corporate takeover. When the bodies start dropping, Billie and Jeremy will have to join forces if they are to come out unscathed; they can kill each other later. – Amazon]

Herbert Gold (1924–2023, born Lakewood/Cleveland, OH and died in San Francisco) [- a highly prolific American novelist, essayist, and journalist whose career spanned over seven decades. Born to Russian and Ukrainian Jewish immigrants, he grew up as part of the only Jewish family in his immediate Ohio neighborhood, an "outsider" status that heavily influenced his early writing. At age 17, he left Ohio for New York City to study philosophy at Columbia University. His studies were interrupted by World War II, during which he served in the U.S. Army. After the war, Gold earned his degrees from Columbia and moved to Paris on a Fulbright fellowship, where he published his first novel, **Birth of a Hero** (1951). During his travels, he befriended major literary figures of the Beat Generation, including Allen Ginsberg, though he always maintained a distinct, traditional prose style rather than joining the movement. In 1960, Gold settled permanently in San Francisco. He became a legendary fixture of the city's bohemian literary scene, famously typing out more than 20 novels and numerous essays on a manual typewriter. His work frequently focused on mid-century love, marriage, divorce, and the realities of the American immigrant experience. He achieved major commercial and critical success with his bestselling novels **The Man Who Was Not With It** (1956) and **Fathers** (1966). Alongside his writing, Gold supported himself as a journalist and taught literature at prestigious universities, including UC Berkeley, Stanford, and Harvard. He

continued writing well into his nineties, turning to poetry in his final years. Herbert Gold did not write traditional genre thrillers, but he directly engaged with the theme of Jewish identity intersecting with crime through a series of “masquerading” hard-boiled detective and con-artist novels later in his career. While he is best known for his mid-century post-WWII literary fiction and Beat-adjacent bohemian social satire, his later works subvert mystery tropes and utilize crime motifs—specifically white-collar scams, extortion, and vice—to drive narrative conflicts and explore Jewish-American assimilation. Rather than writing traditional “whodunits,” Gold used the frameworks of noir, private investigators, and financial grifters to construct existential character studies.

Gold, Herbert, (**She Took My Arm As If She Loved Me** [hc, St. Martin’s Press, 1997]) 978-0312156534 [pb, St. Martin’s Griffin, 1998] 978-0312195250 [*This novel is the closest Gold ever came to the mystery/thriller genre, tracking a Jewish protagonist named **Dan Kasdan** who is a former philosophy instructor turned veteran San Francisco private investigator. The book functions as a hard-boiled detective novel on the surface. Dan spends his time tracking down deadbeat dads and missing teens, but the plot becomes a complex narrative driven by illegal cash and drug transfers when he gets entangled with an exotic pornographer and drug dealer named Karim. Gold uses the P.I. framework strictly to dissect themes of aging, the decay of bohemian love, and moral compromise.*

Gold, Herbert, (**When a Psychopath Falls in Love** [hc, Jorvik Press, 2015]) 978-0988412293 [pb, Jorvik Press, 2015] 978-0988412279 [*Gold’s twentieth novel features Dan Kasdan again, this time working as an impoverished court translator. The entire plot is a crime-driven narrative based on a shady property and real estate scam orchestrated by a sleazy lawyer and con artist named Ferd Conway. The plot heightens like a thriller, complete with deep personal betrayal, exploitation, extortion, and the looming threat of murder. Gold based this crime plot on a real-life San Francisco real estate scam that he personally fell victim to.*

In his more overtly Jewish-themed fiction, Gold does not focus on violent “Jewish mob” tropes (like Murder, Inc.), but rather on survivalist criminality, street scams, and the black market as coping mechanisms born out of immigration and systemic antisemitism.

Gold, Herbert, (**Fathers** [hc, Random House, 1966]) 978-9997411594 [pb, Fawcett, 1968] 978-0232011074 [*His landmark autobiographical novel charts the trajectory of Sam Gold, a Russian-Jewish immigrant. In detailing the journey from the New York ghetto to establishing a grocery business in Cleveland, Gold highlights how minor, aggressive street-level hustling, price-haggling, and skirting municipal rules were narrative necessities for Jewish survival during the Great Depression. Crime is framed not as malice, but as an inescapable structural element of early 20th-century immigrant capitalism. – Google/AI]*

Michael Gold (1893–1967, born New York City) - Michael Gold (born Itzhok Isaak Granich) was a radical journalist and a pioneer of proletarian literature. He did not write traditional mystery or crime novels. However, his most famous work, **Jews Without Money** (1930), contains significant crime-related themes as a byproduct of its setting:

- **Street Crime & Vice:** The semi-autobiographical novel depicts the New York Lower East Side as a slum filled with thieves, gangsters, and prostitutes.
- **Criminal Characters:** The narrator, Mikey, interacts daily with “disreputable men” like Louis One Eye and local Jewish gangsters.
- **Gangs:** Mikey and his friends form a street gang for protection against other neighborhoods.

Instead of a traditional mystery, the book portrays crime as an inescapable environmental factor of impoverished tenement life.

Key Social Dimensions of Crime in the Novel:

Crime as “Upward Mobility”: Gold depicts crime not as a moral failing but as a survival strategy or a parasitic “vehicle of upward mobility” for those trapped in the slums.

The Ubiquity of Vice: *The narrator, Mikey, grows up surrounded by prostitutes, pimps, and “degenerates” who line the streets. Characters like **Harry the Pimp** represent the paradoxical paternalism and exploitation inherent in these destitute environments.*

Jewish Gangsters: *The novel features specific underworld figures, such as the dangerous upstairs neighbor **Louis “One Eye,”** illustrating how gangsters and thieves were integrated into the daily fabric of the community.*

Street Gang Culture: *For protection against rival neighborhoods, Mikey and his friends form the **Chrystie Street gang**. These “feral youths” use solidarity and physical confrontation as essential survival tools, reflecting the early development of class consciousness.*

Systemic Exploitation: *Gold argues that the true crimes are committed by grasping landlords and exploitative employers who thrive on immigrant tragedy: “America is so rich and fat because it has eaten the tragedy of millions of immigrants”. - criminality not simply as moral failure but as a distorted response to capitalism and social exclusion. (See Rachel Rubin’s comment, p.222)*

Normalization of Chaos: *The older, pious generation often responded to the surrounding vice by shrugging and murmuring “This is America,” a phrase capturing their resignation to the loss of Old World moral structures in the face of urban poverty. [Google/AI]*

Gold, Michael, (**Jews Without Money** [hc – first edition – Liveright Publishing Co., 1930] B006R1T7H8 [pb in many subsequent editions, e.g. Public Affairs, 2009] 978-0786713455

Ed Goldberg [born 1943, Bronx, NY] – his protagonist, **Lenny Schneider**, is defined by a deep, multifaceted Jewish identity that blends cultural heritage with the grit of a New York private investigator.

The Jewish aspects of his character include:

Cultural Roots and Profession: *Lenny is a Jewish private investigator originally from New York who later moves to Portland, Oregon. His Jewishness is not incidental but central to the themes of the books, often involving cases tied to Jewish history and the community.*

The “Jewish Deli” Sensibility: *His character is closely associated with Jewish culinary traditions. He is described as a “food-loving hero” whose adventures often feature descriptions of Jewish food so evocative they inspire readers to visit a local Jewish deli.*

Historical Conscience: *In the first novel, **Served Cold**, Lenny’s Jewish identity is central to the plot as he is hired to prevent an aging Holocaust survivor from seeking revenge against a former prison camp guard. This places him in the role of a moral mediator within the context of post-Holocaust Jewish trauma.*

Humor and Personality: *He is characterized by a “funny, foul-mouthed” demeanor that reflects a specific brand of secular Jewish wit and cynicism.*

Outsider Status: *As a New York Jew in Portland, Schneider often navigates the “self-righteous smugness” and “PC preciousness” of his new environment from the perspective of an outsider, a common trope in Jewish-American literature. [Google/AI]*

Goldberg, Ed, [**Lenny Schneider**] (**Served Cold** [mass mkt pb, Berkley, 1997] 978-0425159439 [pb, Blue Heron Pub, 1999]) 978-1883303129

Goldberg, Ed, (**Dead Air** [pb, Berkley, 1998]) 978-0425162972

Goldberg, Ed, (**Red Flags** [1998, Kindle Edition only] 978-1601741448

Goldberg, Ed, (**Season of Miracles** [2010, Kindle Edition only] 978-1601741066 [not part of Schneider series]

Lee Matthew Goldberg (born 1978, New York City) – prolific novelist (15 published novels) and screenwriter based in New York City, focusing on the thriller and young adult genres. His only novel dealing directly with Jewish themes and protagonists is **The Great Gimmelmans**.

Goldberg, Lee Matthew, (**The Great Gimmelmans** [pb, Level Best Books, 2023]) 978-1685124212 [Middle child Aaron Gimmelman watches as his family goes from a mild-mannered Reform Jewish clan to having over a million dollars of stolen money stuffed in their RV's cabinets while being pursued by the FBI and loan sharks. But it wasn't always like that. His father Barry made a killing as a stockbroker, his mother Judith loved her collection of expensive hats, his older sister Steph was obsessed with pop stars, and little sister Jenny loved her stuffed possum, Seymour.

After losing all their money in the Crash of 1987, the family starts stealing from convenience stores, but when they hit a bank, they realize the talent they possess. The money starts rolling in and brings the family closer together; whereas back at home, no one had any time for bonding due to their busy schedules. But Barry's desire for more, more, more will take its toll on the Gimmelmans, and Aaron is forced into an impossible choice: turn against his father, or let his family fall apart.

From Jersey, down to an Orthodox Jewish community in Florida where they hide out, and up to California, *The Great Gimmelmans* goes on a madcap ride through the 1980s. Filled with greed and love and the meaning of religion and tradition until the walls of the RV and the feds start closing in on the family, this thrilling literary tale mixes Michael Chabon and the Coen Brothers with equal parts humor and pathos. – Amazon]

Tod Goldberg [born 1971, Berkeley, CA] an author whose work often explores Jewish identity, heritage, and ethics through the lens of “Jewish Noir.” He is best known for his **Gangsterland** series, which uses a criminal premise to delve into Jewish theology and community life.

The “Rabbi” Protagonist: The series follows **Sal Cupertine**, a non-Jewish hitman who hides from the FBI by assuming the identity of **Rabbi David Cohen** in Las Vegas.

Talmudic Influence: Despite being an imposter, the protagonist deeply studies the Torah, Mishnah, and Talmud to maintain his cover. Goldberg uses this to explore how Jewish law and ethics—such as the concept of “witnessing history”—can intersect with a life of violence.

Hanukkah Noir: He recently edited the anthology **Eight Very Bad Nights** (2024), which brings a Jewish voice to the traditionally non-Jewish noir genre by setting crime stories during Hanukkah.

Social Satire: His work often satirizes contemporary American Jewish life and the affluent suburban culture of modern synagogues.

Goldberg's writing is informed by his own family history and a “spiritual but not religious” personal identity.

- **Ancestral Trauma:** He discovered that his paternal grandmother's family was assassinated in front of her after WWI and his maternal grandfather escaped Ukrainian pogroms hidden in a potato sack.
- **Personal Philosophy:** He describes his faith as a “belief in metaphor more than God,” rooted in the Jewish tradition of questioning and interpretation.
- **Honoring History:** He views his writing as a way to light the way to his own past and honor the “indomitable spirit” of the Jewish people. [Google/AI]

Goldberg, Tod, (**Gangsterland** [pb, Counterpoint, 2014]) 978-1619025783

Goldberg, Tod, (**Gangster Nation** [hc, Counterpoint, 2017]) 978-1619027237 [pb, 2018] 978-1640091061

Goldberg, Tod, (**Gangsters Don't Die** [hc, Counterpoint, 2023]) 978-1640093041 [pb, 2024] 978-1640096615

Goldberg, Tod, (**Eight Very Bad Nights: A Collection of Hanukkah Noir** [hc, Soho Crime, 2024] 978-1641296137 [pb, Soho Crime, 2025] 978-1641297363

Peter Golden (born in Newark, NJ, est. late 1940s, resides in Guilderland, NY) [B.A. in philosophy from SUNY Albany. Journalism career, focusing on Cold War history, international relations, and political biographies and including interviews with American Presidents, Soviet and Israeli leaders. In 1992, he published *Quiet Diplomat*, a biography of the Jewish-American industrialist and political insider Max M. Fisher. He later transitioned to writing sweeping historical fiction, beginning with his debut **Comeback Love** (2012), followed by **Wherever There Is Light** (2015) and **Nothing Is Forgotten** (2018). His novels directly address the theme of Jews and crime, but they treat crime primarily as a historical lens for survival, assimilation, and family secrets rather than standard genre fiction.

Golden, Peter, (**Nothing Is Forgotten** [hc, Atria Books, 2018] 978-1501146800 [pb, Atria Books, 2019] 978-1501146817 [adds a unique angle to the Jewish crime narrative by looking at crime through the lens of Soviet smuggling and post-WWII vengeance. The story begins in 1960s New Jersey when the grandmother of the protagonist, **Michael Daniels**, is murdered inside her candy store. To solve her murder, Michael travels to Cold War-era Europe and Khrushchev's Soviet Union. Instead of focusing on organized street gangs (like Italian or traditional American-Jewish mobs), the novel explores the Soviet black market ("Der Schmuggler") and the criminal lengths European Jews went to for basic survival and escape during and after World War II. The novel shows how trauma, identity, and displacement force individuals into "criminal" undergrounds. The central mystery explores the legacy of Holocaust survivors and the moral ambiguity of vigilante justice or hidden pasts in the face of absolute atrocity. It vividly portrays the trauma of Eastern European Jews (specifically from Ukraine/Russia) who emigrated to America in the mid-20th century. A central pillar of the book is the absolute secrecy of the elder generation, who hid their Jewish wartime histories from their Americanized children to protect them. It contrasts the life of an American Jew growing up during the Red Scare with Soviet-Jewish life under Khrushchev's regime.

Golden, Peter, (**Wherever There Is Light** [hc, Atria Books, 2015]) 978-1476705583 [pb, Atria Books, 2016] 978-1501107634 [Follows the decades-long, sweeping love affair between Julian Rose and Kendall Ann Wakefield. The protagonist, **Julian Rose**, is a Jewish bootlegger who builds a fortune during Prohibition. Beyond the bootlegging aspect, the novel explores a fascinating, overlooked piece of history: historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) hiring and rescuing German-Jewish professors who fled Nazi Germany. It is a deep dive into Jewish immigration, assimilation, and Black-Jewish relations in mid-century America. - Google/AI]

Matt Goldman [born 1969, Rochester, MN] - is a New York Times bestselling author and Emmy Award-winning television writer (notably for *Seinfeld* and *Ellen*). He is the creator of the **Nils Shapiro** mystery series (5 volumes so far), which features a private investigator based in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Nils Shapiro is explicitly identified as a Jewish private investigator, though his "Jewishness" is often more about identity and cultural wit than religious practice. He was named "Nils" after a man who saved his father's life. It also serves to locate him in the Minnesota setting, which had historically large Scandinavian immigrant roots.

Identity vs. Practice: While he is clearly Jewish—a fact reinforced by his sardonic, "wise-cracking" humor reminiscent of author Matt Goldman's background writing for *Seinfeld*—the books often lack heavy religious content in their plots.

Cultural Contrast: *His Jewish heritage serves as a notable contrast to his **Scandinavian first name** and the series' primary setting in the upper Midwest (Minneapolis/Edina), where he is described as "not the norm".*

Plot Integration: *In the first novel, **Gone to Dust**, his religious affiliation plays a minor role in the investigation as it provides a connection to one of the suspects.*

In summary, Nils Shapiro is "culturally Jewish"—defined by his background, voice, and perspective—even when the mysteries themselves are secular. [Google/AI]

Goldman, Matt, (**Gone to Dust** [Nils Shapiro # 1]) [hc, Forge Books, 2017] 978-0765391285 [pb, Forge Trade, 2023] 978-1250907677 [Minneapolis private eye]

Goldman, Matt, (**Broken Ice** [Nils Shapiro # 2]) [hc, Forge Books, 2018] 978-0765391315 [pb, Forge Trade, 2024] 978-1250323675

Goldman, Matt, (**The Shallows** [Nils Shapiro # 3]) [hc, Forge Books, 2019] 978-1250191311 [pb, Forge Books, 2024] 978-1250323682

Goldman, Matt, (**Dead West** [Nils Shapiro # 4]) [hc, Forge Books, 2020] 978-1250191342 [pb, Forge Books, 2024] 978-1250323699

Goldman, Matt, (**Dark Humor** [Nils Shapiro # 5]) [hc, Severn House, 2025] 978-0765391315

Arthur D. Goldstein (1937–2021, born, lived and died in New York City) *was an American mystery novelist best known for his series featuring **Max Guttman**, a retired Jewish tailor living in New York City. "Arthur D. Goldstein" was a pseudonym for Albert Ross.*

Jewish themes are central and defining elements of Arthur D. Goldstein's Max Guttman series. The series is frequently cited as a prominent example of the "ethnic detective" genre that emerged in the 1970s, where the protagonist's cultural identity is as important as the mystery itself.

Key ways these themes manifest include:

- *Protagonist Identity: Max Guttman is a 70-something retired Jewish tailor and a widower. His worldview is deeply shaped by his heritage, his years of work in New York's garment district, and his role as a respected elder within his community.*
- *The Immigrant Experience: The books explore the lives of European Jewish immigrants in New York City, particularly the struggles of aging in a changing urban landscape.*
- *Cultural Values and Philosophy: The very title of the first book, **A Person Shouldn't Die Like That** (1972), reflects a specific Jewish ethical perspective on the sanctity of life and the dignity of the deceased.*
- *Communal and Generational Shifts: The series follows Max from his traditional neighborhood in New York City to a senior center in California in later books, touching on themes of displacement, the Jewish Diaspora, and the evolution of Jewish-American identity across generations.*
- *Dialogue and Atmosphere: Goldstein uses Yiddish-inflected dialogue and humor to create an authentic atmosphere, grounding the procedural elements of the mystery in the specific social and religious rhythms of Jewish life. [Google/AI]*

Goldstein, Arthur D. [*Max Guttman* #1], (**A Person Shouldn't Die Like That** [hc, Random House, 1973]) 978-0394472300

Goldstein, Arthur D. [*Max Guttman* #2], (**You're Never Too Old to Die** [hc, Random House, 1974]) 978-0394494319

Goldstein, Arthur D. [*Max Guttman* #3], (**Nobody's Sorry He Got Killed** [hc, Random House, 1976]) 978-0394400280

Saul Golubcow [*est. birth 1946? In a DP camp in Germany after WW2*] is an American author and commentator specializing in Jewish-themed historical mystery fiction and cultural commentary. His parents were Holocaust survivors who became poultry farmers in rural New Jersey. B.A. in **History**, Rutgers University. Ph.D. in English Literature, Stony Brook University (State University of New York). Rather than entering academia full-time, he worked for many years as a project director in the health insurance industry before turning seriously to fiction after retirement. His work primarily explores the psychological and cultural complexities facing Holocaust survivors in 1970s America. Before publishing fiction, Golubcow wrote extensively on American Jewish culture, Jewish identity, Israel, Torah commentary, and Jewish communal affairs. His three-volume (so far) series – which he began writing in his seventies – features **Frank Wolf**, a religiously observant Holocaust survivor who relocates to New York City and becomes a private investigator. Golubcow resides in Potomac, MD. [Google/AI]

Golubcow, Saul, (**The Cost of Living and Other Mysteries/Frank Wolf #1**) [hc, publisher?, 2022] 978-1479473144 [pb, Wildside Press, 2022] 978-1479473014

Golubcow, Saul, (**Who Killed the Rabbi's Wife?: A Frank Wolf Mystery** [pb, Wildside Press, 2024]) 978-1479477968 [*The novel is set in New York City in 1975, primarily within the Modern Orthodox Jewish communities of Brooklyn. Batya Flaum, the wife of the respected Rabbi David Flaum, is found brutally murdered in the family's Brooklyn home. Initially, police suspect a botched robbery, but months pass without an arrest. The case is revived when an investigative newspaper series reveals that Rabbi Flaum had been conducting a long-term extramarital affair, throwing suspicion onto both the rabbi and those around him.*

Private investigator Frank Wolf is asked to examine the case. Assisted by his grandson Joel, a young attorney, and Joel's wife Aliya, a psychology graduate student, Wolf probes the lives of the victim's family, synagogue members, and acquaintances. The investigation uncovers layers of concealed relationships, resentments, financial pressures, religious expectations, and family loyalties. As the inquiry progresses, the detectives discover that many seemingly upright members of the close-knit community have secrets they are desperate to protect.

Rather than relying on action or forensic spectacle, the novel emphasizes careful interviewing, psychological insight, and logical deduction. Frank Wolf's experience as a Holocaust survivor also informs his moral outlook, leading him to examine not only who committed the murder but who may bear moral responsibility through silence, deception, or complicity. The solution ultimately exposes a carefully hidden truth within the victim's social circle and forces several characters to confront the ethical consequences of their choices. – ChatGPT]

Golubcow, Saul, (**Were the Angels Wrong?: A Frank Wolf Mystery** [pb, Wildside Press, Nov. 2025] 978-1667662176

Dan Gordon (born 1947 in Los Angeles) – American-Israeli author, screenwriter and playwright. His literary work is deeply intertwined with his 40-year history as a soldier in the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) and his identity as an American-Israeli. His thrillers often blend contemporary geopolitical realities with what he calls “Terror-fi”. Gordon's thrillers are known for their “frighteningly realistic” portrayal of Middle Eastern combat and international espionage. He maintains dual residences in southern California and in Israel. [Google/AI]

“Day of the Dead” Series: Book One: Gaza - A thriller detailing the mechanics of modern “terrorist armies” like Hamas and the use of attack tunnels; **Book Two: America** – A “Terror-fi” scenario where ISIS collaborates with Mexican drug cartels to invade the U.S. via existing smuggling tunnels. Gordon's Jewish and Israeli identity is a central pillar of his creative output, often focusing on heroism, survival, and national security.

The Assignment: A novel based on his 1997 film, focusing on the hunt for the international terrorist Carlos the Jackal.

***Murder in the First:** A legal thriller (also a film) that explores systemic corruption and a high-stakes murder trial.*

***Irena's Vow** is based on the story of a "Righteous Gentile" who hid 12 Jews during the Holocaust.*

***Just Play Dead** is based in Hawaii and features the only Jewish policeman there, **Dani Kahane**.*

Gordon, Dan, (**Just Play Dead** [hc, St. Martin's Press, 1997]) 978-0312168766 [pb, St. Martins Press, 1999] 978-0312965679

Gordon, Dan, (**Day of the Dead: Book One – Gaza** [pb, Liberty Hill Publishing, 2015] 978-1498430982

Gordon, Dan, (**Day of the Dead: Book Two – America** [pb, Liberty Hill Publishing, 2016] 978-1498458696

Gordon, Dan, (**Irena's Vow** [pb, Regalo Press, 2024] 979-8888456101

Neil Gordon (1958–2017, born in Johannesburg, South Africa and died in New York City) – [Born to anti-apartheid activists, his family fled South Africa in 1961 when he was three years old, eventually settling in New York City. B.A. in English Literature (U. of Michigan, 1980) and Ph.D in French Literature (Yale, 1991). Served as Dean of Eugene Lang College at The New School in New York, and later as the Dean and Vice President of the American University of Paris. Long-time, founding literary editor for the *Boston Review* and editorial positions at *The New York Review of Books*. Alongside his academic work, he authored four deeply political mystery-thriller novels, most notably **The Company You Keep**. His novels touch on the mystery thriller genre, specifically utilizing Jewish identities, historical trauma, and political crime as major narrative drivers. They are cerebral, political thrillers that directly weave Jewish history, Israeli intelligence, international crime, and biblical subtext into their plots. His work directly integrates these themes across his major thriller releases:

Gordon, Neil, (**Sacrifice of Isaac** [hc, Random House, 1995]) 978-0679437048 [pb, Picador, 2014] 978-1447227885 [This debut novel is a whodunit international murder mystery that explicitly deals with the trauma of the Holocaust and the founding of Israel. The story follows **Luke Benami**, who returns to Israel for the funeral of his father—a revered, pioneering national hero. Luke discovers dark family secrets involving his brother Daniel, a Yom Kippur War deserter turned criminal. The narrative functions as a high-stakes thriller involving stolen art from the Holocaust, hidden identities, and institutional cover-ups. The core mystery and crime elements hinge entirely on a theological and narrative interrogation of the biblical story of Abraham and Isaac, examining the moral compromises made by the early state of Israel and its founding generation.

Gordon, Neil, (**The Gun Runner's Daughter** [hc, Random House, 1998]) 978-0679437055 [pb, Picador, 2014] 978-1447227854 [Gordon's second novel bridges corporate crime, court drama, and espionage. It details the life of an Israeli-American woman, **Allison ("Alley") Rosenthal**, whose family becomes entangled in illicit, global weapons trafficking and the underground arms trade. The book consciously frames its high-stakes crime plot around the biblical story of **Queen Esther**. The protagonist acts as a modern-day incarnation of Esther—hiding her identity while navigating a corrupt world of military crimes to ultimately protect her community and uncover corporate malfeasance.

Gordon, Neil, (**The Company You Keep** [hc, Viking Adult, 2003]) 978-0670032181 [pb, Penguin Books, 2013] 978-0143123873 [While this thriller focuses primarily on the American radical Left (specifically the Weather Underground), Jewish identity remains a crucial background driver. The novel focuses on a former militant, Jason Sinai, living under the alias "James Grant" to evade the FBI after a bank robbery turned fatal decades prior. Sinai's run from the law and his deep-seated political choices are deeply tied to themes of displacement, exile, and moral absolutism—traits Gordon frequently explored through a secular Jewish lens examining 20th-century political activism. This book was later adapted into a 2012 political thriller film directed by and starring Robert Redford

Gordon, Neil, (**You're a Big Girl Now** [hc, Picador, 2014]) 978-1447227908 [pb, Picador, 2014] 978-1447229810 [*Serves as a sequel to **The Company You Keep**. and traces the evolution of the American Left across generations through the life of the protagonist, **Isabel Montgomery**. The Jewish content in the book explores the deep historical connection between 20th-century secular American Jewish identity and radical left-wing politics. It tracks how the political idealism of a Jewish family evolves—and takes a psychological toll—from the Spanish Civil War through the Vietnam protests, all the way to modern surveillance and the Occupy Wall Street movement. It emphasizes themes of inheritance, displacement, and persistent ideological struggles—influenced subtly by Gordon's own South African roots in exploring exile and belonging.* – Google/AI]

Neil Perry Gordon (born 1958 in the Bronx, NY) [- a prolific novelist known for blending historical fiction with metaphysical, spiritual, and speculative themes. B.A. Marketing (Pace U., 1980). Moved to South Florida to open a drapery and window treatment business. Returned to New York in 1990 and continues to operate his professional design firm, *Decorating with Fabric*. He has also authored two professional trade books about design and architectural shading. Did not publish his first novel until 2018. He utilizes an “organic” writing method, meaning he eschews rigid plot outlines and allows his characters to guide the story naturally, resulting in frequent narrative twists. Has published 18 novels in diverse historical settings and literary genres, including metaphysical dramas and historical thrillers. His four novels of most relevance to this bibliography:

Gordon, Neil Perry, (**Sadie's Sin: The Zwi Migdal's Reign of Terror** [pb, self-published, 2020]) 978-1732667754 [*This book is a historical crime thriller that uses a real-life, notorious Jewish organized crime syndicate as its core narrative driver. The novel exposes the inner workings of the **Zwi Migdal**, an actual Jewish human trafficking ring that operated from the late 19th century through the 1930s. Set in 1924, traditional Jewish parents in Warsaw hastily arrange a marriage for their daughter, Sadie, to a wealthy Argentine businessman to keep her from marrying a gentile. The husband is actually a pimp for the syndicate. Sadie is trafficked to Buenos Aires and forced into a high-end brothel called *The Tango*. The story shifts into a fast-paced, multi-continental rescue thriller as her Polish lover tracks her across oceans, fighting against a corrupt network of criminals protected by South American law enforcement.*

Gordon, Neil Perry, (**The Bomb Squad: Clash of the Patriots** [pb, self-published, 2020]) 978-1732667778 [*This novel is a historical espionage and investigative thriller focused on wartime sabotage. The book opens with the true historical event of July 30, 1916—the massive, devastating explosion at the Black Tom Island munitions depot in New York harbor, orchestrated by German saboteurs. British Intelligence recruits Max Rothman, a highly-regarded New York City Detective. Rothman, who is Jewish, is tasked with forming a specialized “Bomb Squad” of German-speaking investigators. Detective Rothman engages in a high-stakes cat-and-mouse game against Dr. Harold Schwartz, a German spy operating out of the Ellis Island Hospital who is executing a campaign of terror along the American Eastern Seaboard.*

Gordon, Neil Perry, (**The Righteous One: A Cobbler's Journey into the Dreamworld and Beyond** [pb, self-published, 2019]) 978-1732667792 [*This novel takes a unique approach by blending a gangster/crime thriller with Jewish mysticism and Kabbalah. The plot centers around a corrupt Jewish mob boss and gangster, **Solomon Blass**, and his son Myron. They are attempting to violently seize control of Manhattan's largest businesses, the police department, and the city government. Solomon is a rasha (a wicked person) who uses dark spiritual gifts and predictive dreams to advance his criminal enterprise. To stop this criminal empire, an aging Jewish cobbler named Moshe Potasznik is revealed to be a tzaddik (a righteous, saintly man). Moshe must learn to navigate a metaphysical dreamworld, training with ancient spirits to launch a spiritual counter-attack to dismantle the gangster's terrestrial crime ring.*

Gordon, Neil Perry, (**A Cobbler's Tale** [hc, self-published, 2018]) 978-1913545017 [pb, self-published, 2018] 9781732667709 [*While primarily a historical immigrant survival story, Gordon's debut novel introduces the Jewish Mob as a secondary plot device. The narrative follows **Pincus Potasznik** fleeing Europe for the Lower East Side of New York. On his transatlantic voyage, he meets and relies on Jakob Adler. Adler is a fugitive actively running away from violent crimes he committed while working directly for the Jewish Mob in Poland.* [Google/AI]

Ron Goulart (1933–2022, born in Berkeley, CA) - was a prolific American author and popular culture historian known for his satiric style across science fiction, mystery, and fantasy.

Groucho Marx, Master Detective Series

This cozy mystery series features a fictionalized **Groucho Marx** as an amateur sleuth in 1930s and 1940s Hollywood. Groucho is accompanied by his “Watson,” a radio scriptwriter named **Frank Denby**, who narrates their adventures.

- **Series Premise:** To stay busy between movie stints, Groucho agrees to star in a radio serial, only to find himself solving real-life murders involving starlets, mobsters, and Hollywood power players.

Tone: The books are characterized by Goulart’s recreation of Groucho’s signature wit, rapid-fire puns, and one-liners. In *Groucho Marx, Master Detective* series, Jewish elements are woven through the historical setting of late-1930s Hollywood and the protagonist’s cultural identity.

- **Protagonist’s Jewish Identity:** Goulart portrays Groucho as a “middle-aged Yiddish Robin Hood” who uses humor and a sharp social conscience to navigate the dark side of Hollywood. The character’s dialogue is filled with the quick-witted, pun-heavy banter typical of the real-life Marx, whose parents were Jewish immigrants from Alsace.
- **Confronting Antisemitism and Nazism:** Several books in the series feature plotlines directly related to the rise of Nazism in the pre-war era.

In *Elementary, My Dear Groucho*, the duo investigates the murder of a Jewish film director and encounters the **German American Bund**, a pro-Nazi organization active in Hollywood during the late 1930s.

In *Groucho Marx, Secret Agent*, Groucho’s role shifts toward counter-espionage, reflecting the real-life political tensions of the Jewish community as WWII approached.

Cultural Milieu and Industry Connections: The series highlights the Jewish-dominated Golden Age of Hollywood, featuring interactions with prominent Jewish figures of the era such as producer **Daniel Manheim** and novelist **Nathanael West**.

Yiddishisms and Humor: Goulart utilizes Groucho’s signature “wisecracking” style, which is deeply rooted in Yiddish comedy traditions and Vaudeville-style wordplay. [Google/AI]

Goulart Ron, (**Groucho Marx: Master Detective** [GM #1], [hc, St. Martin’s Press, 1998]) 978-0312181062 GM investigates the death of a young actress during the production of his new radio show.

Goulart Ron, (**Groucho Marx, Private Eye** [GM #2] (hc, St. Martin’s Press, 1999) 9780312198954 A plastic surgeon is found dead, and Groucho must prove the innocence of a faded actress.

Goulart Ron, (**Elementary, My Dear Groucho** [GM #3] (hc, Minotaur Books, 1999) 978-0312208929 Groucho and Frank investigate a murder on a film set modeled after Sherlock Holmes’s 221B Baker Street.

Goulart Ron, (**Groucho Marx and the Broadway Murders** [GM #4] (hc, Minotaur, 2001) 978-0312265984 The duo travels to New York by train, encountering a murder on stage during a Broadway premiere.

Goulart Ron, (**Groucho Marx, Secret Agent** [GM #5] (hc, Thomas Dunne Books/Minotaur, 2002) 978-0312280055 Groucho continues his sleuthing in this espionage-themed mystery.

Goulart Ron, (**Groucho Marx, King of the Jungle** [GM #6] (hc, Minotaur, 2005) 978-0312322168 [pb, Wheeler Publishing, 2005] 978-1597223317 Set on the set of a Tarzan knock-off film where the lead actor is murdered.

Philip Gourevitch (born 1961, Philadelphia, PA) - an acclaimed American author, journalist and long-time staff writer for *The New Yorker*. He is widely recognized for his narrative non-fiction that explores themes of crime, memory, and survival. Gourevitch is well-known for his writing on the Rwandan genocide [*We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will Be Killed with Our Families* (1998)] and the American prison during Iraq War [*Standard Operating Procedure* (2008)]. He served as the editor of *The Paris Review* from 2005 to 2010.

A Cold Case (2001): a true-crime narrative centered on the 1970 double homicide of restaurateurs Richie Glennon and Pete McGinn in Manhattan. The story follows **Andy Rosenzweig**, a retired investigator for the Manhattan District Attorney's office, who becomes obsessed with closing the 27-year-old case. Despite a lack of leads for decades, Rosenzweig eventually tracks the suspect, Frankie Koehler, to Benicia, California, where he had been living under an assumed identity. Critics often describe the book as "Manhattan noir," transforming a criminal investigation into a philosophical meditation on the natures of the hunter and the hunted.

Gourevitch, Philip, (*A Cold Case*) [hc, Farrar Straus & Giroux, 2001] 978-0374125134 [pb, Picador, 2002] 978-0312420024

Naomi Graetz (est. birth 1943, New York) – American-Israeli retired educator who taught English at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev for 35 years. Her work often explores the intersection of feminism and Jewish tradition. Beyond teaching, she is a prolific *Times of Israel* blogger and has published several books on feminist midrash and Jewish law.

The Rabbi's Wife Plays at Murder (2004): This mystery novel, set in Teaneck, NJ, centers on **Toby Kramer**, a professor and rabbi's wife who investigates a murder in her Jewish community. Graetz drew upon her own experiences as a rabbi's wife to write the book, which addresses morality, justice, and the rejection of the traditional "Rebbetzin" role. [See abstract of and link to article by **Koplowitz-Breier, Anat & David J. Zucker** in this Bibliography, analyzing this and related works.] [Google/AI]

Graetz, Naomi, (*The Rabbi's Wife Plays at Murder*) [pb, Shiluv Press, 2004] 978-9659074600.

Philip Graubart (born 1962) – San Diego-based Conservative Rabbi, educator and author. His novels frequently blend mystery with deep theological inquiry, using the detective genre to explore the complexities of Jewish history and identity. Many of his stories, such as *Here There Is No Why*, center on a central investigation—often the suspicious death of a prominent Jewish figure—that serves as a vehicle for exploring larger historical traumas. Graubart is noted for his "rabbi-sleuth" protagonists (e.g., in *Rabbis and Gangsters* and its sequel *Women and God*) who use rabbinic logic and moral reasoning to solve crimes within Jewish communities. Motifs of "Jewish extraterrestrial existence" appear in his sci-fi fable, *Planet of the Jews*, which uses space as a metaphor for the Diaspora and the search for a safe homeland. In *Silwan*, his American Jewish protagonist tackles a murder mystery embedded in the complexities of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. [Google/AI]

Graubart, Philip, (*Planet of the Jews*) [pb, Creative Arts Book Co., 1999] 978-0887391866

Graubart, Philip, (*Rabbis and Gangsters*) [pb, Exile Editions, 2012] 978-1550962987

Graubart, Philip, (*Silwan*) [pb, Inkwater Press, 2016] 978-1629013930

Graubart, Philip, (*Women and God*) [pb, Olympia Publishers, 2020] 978-1788308502

Graubart, Philip, (*Here There Is No Why*) [hc, Koehler Books, 2024] 979-8888244876 [pb, Koehler Books, 2024] 979-8888244852

Jill Gregory (est. born 1950, Chicago) & **Karen Tintori** (born 1948, near Detroit, MI) – veteran American authors get together on a thriller about saving the **Lamed Vovniks** (36 hidden righteous men) on whose lives the world's existence depends. **The Book of Names** is an ancient, mystical text—traditionally said to have originated with the Biblical Adam—that lists every righteous person born into each generation. Jewish mystical concepts and **Gematria** (numerical values of Hebrew letters) serve as tools used by characters to decode hidden messages and locate the remaining survivors. **David Shepherd** and **Yael HarPaz** team up to solve the mystery. [Google/AI]

Gregory, Jill & Karen Tintori, (**The Book of Names**) [hc, St Martin's Press, 2007]) 978-0312366322 [pb, St. Martin's Press, 2008] 978-0312354732

Gregory, Jill & Karen Tintori, (**The Illumination** [hc, St. Martin's Press, 2008]) 978-0312375973 [pb, St. Martin's Paperbacks, 2009] 978-031236526 [It gleamed up at her like a small golden egg encrusted with jewels of lapis lazuli, carnelian, and jasper. The classic eye, one of the most ancient symbols of protection. Natalie Landau, a museum curator with an expertise in Mesopotamian protective amulets and magical beliefs, has received a puzzling gift from her sister Dana--a necklace with a blue evil eye pendant on it. The Evil Eye is a symbol of protection common throughout the world, with a history connecting it to many religions.]

When Natalie learns Dana was murdered only hours after sending the gift, she begins to think her evil eye amulet had something to do with her sister's death. As she races to discover the origin of the pendant, Natalie is sucked into an international battle between powerful religious factions, each battling for the eye, which turns out to be far more valuable—and far more powerful--than she could ever imagine. – Amazon]

Harry Grey (pseudonym of Herschel Goldberg, 1901–1980, born in Kyiv, former Russian Empire, now Ukraine, died in New York City) [- Goldberg immigrated to the United States as a child with his family. He eventually fell into a life of crime, operating as a real-life gangster and enforcer during the Prohibition era. In his fifties, after being hospitalized by an accident, he decided to write about the syndicates that controlled New York. He adopted the pseudonym “Harry Grey” to protect his wife and children. He wrote his famous debut, **The Hoods**, while serving time in Sing Sing prison. Following the massive success of *The Hoods*, Grey authored two subsequent crime novels based on his firsthand underworld experiences, though neither achieved the same level of mainstream fame.]

Grey, Harry, (**The Hoods** [originally published in 1952, hc, Buccaneer Books, 1991]) 978-0899665498 [pb, Black Mask, 2008] 978-1596543461 [See related film] [- a gritty, semi-autobiographical crime novel that **revolves entirely around Jewish gangsters** growing up in New York City. The book serves as the direct source material for Sergio Leone's iconic **1984** epic film, **Once Upon a Time in America**. [See the entry on this movie in the companion filmography on Movies and films about Jews and crime/espionage.]

The novel chronicles the lives of four street-tough childhood friends from Manhattan's Lower East Side: **David “Noodles” Aaronson** (the narrator, known as “Noodles the Shiv”), **Maximilian “Maxie” Bercovicz**, **Patsy**, and **Cockeye**. The story begins with the boys juggling grade-school attendance with juvenile delinquency along Delancey Street. They start with petty theft, running errands for local drug dealers, and committing assaults. As Prohibition begins, the group transitions into full-blown organized crime. They specialize in lucrative heists, bootlegging liquor, breaking labor strikes, and systematic execution. They eventually graduate from an independent street gang to elite, cold-blooded enforcers for “The Combination” (the national crime syndicate). Unlike the romanticized film adaptation, the book reads like a raw, episodic, and procedural instructional manual on mob tactics. It details how to dispose of bodies, hijack rival shipments, and navigate underworld politics. It paints a brutal, grim picture of capitalism taken to an illegitimate, violent extreme.

Jewish identity and the specific immigrant experience are fundamental backdrops to the entire narrative. It is deeply rooted in the Jewish ghetto of the Lower East Side during the early 20th century. It captures

the specific socio-economic realities of first-generation Jewish immigrants looking for a way out of extreme poverty. All the core characters—including Noodles, Max, and their families—are Jewish. The book highlights real-world history by illustrating how Jewish street gangs formed alliances and rivalries with neighboring Italian and Irish syndicates during the Prohibition era.

Grey, Harry, (**Call Me Duke** [pb, Graphic Books, 1956] B000EA6SUM [Set in the grim, unforgiving slums of New York City, the novel shifts perspective to a small-time criminal and anti-hero named **Duke Romero**. Duke decides to leave petty street crime behind to enter the private detective racket—which, in Grey's universe, is just as corrupt and dirty as the mob. The plot takes a massive turn when Duke attempts to track down and steal a legendary hidden fortune. This treasure belongs to none other than **David "Noodles" Aaronson**, the main character of *The Hoods*. The book serves as a stealth sequel, providing the narrative conclusion to Noodles' story and revealing what happened to the money hidden away by the old gang. Because the core motivation of the book connects directly to the fallout of *The Hoods*, it remains tethered to the Jewish gangster network of New York. The book heavily explores the intersection of Jewish, Italian, and other immigrant youths being corrupted by the "teeming bowels of a big-city slum", continuing Grey's exploration of how environment drove immigrant children into organized crime. - Google/AI]

Grey, Harry, (**Portrait of a Mobster** [pb, Signet, 1958]) B000VZEY24 [\[See related film\]](#) [This book is a highly stylized, fictionalized biography of the notorious Depression-era gangster **Arthur Flegenheimer**, better known to history as **Dutch Schultz**. The novel tracks Schultz's meteoric and exceptionally violent rise to power in New York. He starts by embedding himself with the "Legs" Diamond gang during Prohibition before aggressively breaking away to form his own empire. Schultz takes over the illegal beer supply in the Bronx and masterminds massive illegal gambling rackets. The story explores his intense paranoia, his brutal policy of killing anyone who stands in his way (including rivals like "Mad Dog" Coll), and his ultimate assassination in a New Jersey chop house. Unlike *The Hoods* (which features a fictionalized amalgamation of gangsters), this book profiles one of the most famous real-life Jewish mobsters in American history. The book heavily highlights Schultz's background as a Jewish kid from the East Bronx. It explicitly covers how he adopted the tough, non-Jewish-sounding alias "Dutch Schultz" to command fear on the streets, while navigating an underworld dominated by the Jewish and Italian syndicates of the 1920s and 30s. – Google/AI] See the entry on the 1961 movie adaptation of this book in the companion *Filmography*.

Andrew Gross (1952–2025) – in his brief but prolific writing career, NY-born Gross dealt with mystery and war-related themes, with three books in particular touching on the subjects in this bibliography.

Gross, Andrew, (**The One Man**) [hc, Minotaur, 2016] 978-1250079503 [pb, Minotaur, 2018] 978-1250160539 [*Holocaust novel* - **Nathan Blum** is sent on a daring mission to rescue a renowned Jewish physicist from Auschwitz]

Gross, Andrew, (**Button Man**) [hc, Minotaur Books, 2018] 978-1250179982 [pb, Minotaur, 2019] 978-1250445292 [*Historical thriller about the early 20th-century struggle between the rising Jewish garment industry in NY and the attempts by organized crime, and many of its Jewish members, to dominate and exploit it.*]

Gross, Andrew, (**The Fifth Column** [hc, Minotaur Books, 2020]) 978-1250180001 [pb, Minotaur Books, 2020] 978-1250391308 [*"Charlie" Mossman, is a Jewish-American former university lecturer, down-and-out, unemployed, divorced, and newly released from jail after accidentally killing a teenager in a barroom brawl with German-American Nazi supporters. He stumbles upon a massive "fifth column"—a hidden network of Nazi sleeper cells and spies working covertly to sabotage the United States from within. Because of Charlie's criminal record and unstable past, nobody believes his warnings. As the attack on Pearl Harbor thrusts America into the war, the spy ring shifts into a deadly operational phase. Charlie must take matters into his own hands, risking his life to stop a catastrophic domestic terror plot and protect his daughter.* – Google/AI]

Michael Gruber (born 1940, Brooklyn, NY, now resident in Seattle) – *He worked as a US Army medic (1968-69), a restaurant chef, and a traveling roadie for rock bands. Along the way, he completed a Ph.D. in marine sciences at the U. of Miami and served as a policy analyst and speechwriter in the Jimmy Carter administration. In the mid-1980s, he entered a partnership with his law professor first cousin, Robert K. Tanenbaum, to write a series of novels featuring a Jewish New York District Attorney and his Catholic-Italian assistant D.A., who is also his wife. Tanenbaum supplied the legal details based on real cases and Gruber ghostwrote them into novels for the popular market, with the cousins splitting the proceeds 50-50. Gruber conceived the plots and character development, and did 100% of the actual writing. This arrangement lasted for the first 15 novels, spanning the years 1987–2003. The series continued through another 14 volumes after that, with different ghostwriters, but without the same degree of success of the first phase.*

Tanenbaum, Robert K., (**No Lesser Plea** [first book in 29-volume Roger “Butch” Karp & Marlene Ciampi series, hc, Franklin Watts, 1987]) 978-0531097830 [pb, Pan Books, 1988] 978-0330303460. [**Butch Karp** is a non-religious, secular Jew whose Jewishness is defined by cultural roots and an unyielding moral framework. He is married to a non-Jewish woman and teaches a Bar Mitzvah class at a local synagogue (!). Issues of anti-Semitism, geopolitical friction and New York City inter-ethnic tensions all come up during the series.]

Among Gruber’s post-Butch Karp novels, under his own name, three feature Jewish protagonists:

Gruber, Michael, (**The Book of Air and Shadows** [hc, William Morrow, 2007] 978-0060874469 [pb, Harper, 2008] 978-0061456572 [**Jake Mishkin** is a brilliant New York intellectual property lawyer. He possesses a sharp, characteristically ironic Jewish wit and skeptical world view. The plot revolves around the search for an undiscovered Shakespeare manuscript, which attracts the dangerous interest of nefarious mobsters and treasure hunters.

Gruber, Michael, (**The Good Son** [hc, Henry Holt & Co., 2010] 978-0805091281 [pb, St. Martin’s Griffin, 2011] 978-0312674946 [**Sonia Bailey Laghari** is an American-Jewish psychologist, author and pacifist. Born into a traditional Jewish family of circus performers (!), she later converts to Islam after marriage to a wealthy Pakistani man. She is later kidnapped by jihadi terrorists from a peace conference and subsequently rescued by her son, Theo, a deeply scarred ex-Delta Force soldier.

Gruber, Michael, **The Return** [hc, Henry Holt & Co., 2013] 978-0805091298 [pb, Corvus, 2014] 978-1848875913 [**Richard Marder** is a Jewish book editor, who is discreet about his background as a tough, Vietnam war veteran. Years earlier, a Mexican drug cartel murdered his late wife’s family. Marder is diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumour, leaving him “nothing left to lose”. He embarks on a bloody, apocalyptic campaign of retribution to wreak revenge on the cartel responsible for the earlier massacre. [ChatGPT]

Isidore Haiblum (1935–2012, born, lived, and died in New York City) was an American author primarily known for his science fiction, fantasy, and mystery novels. His work is noted for combining a hardboiled narrative style with a distinct Yiddish humor.

Haiblum’s writing often incorporated unique cultural and time-bending elements. He was a quintessential New Yorker and Yiddish speaker, which heavily influenced his work, such as *The Tsaddik of the Seven Wonders*. Published in 1971, this novel is an influential work in “Judeofuturism” and concerns an intergalactic operative navigating a complex time loop through Jewish history. He wrote several detective series, including the “Gunjer” books (e.g., *Interworld*) and the “Weiss and Weiss” sequence, which is significant for its development of a “Yiddish Hardboiled” style in non-fantastic detective novels.

Key Themes and Reception

Haiblum’s writing is characterized by its witty, offbeat vision and complex plots. While his work was not always widely appreciated upon initial publication in the US, *The Tsaddik of the Seven Wonders* gained significant recognition among Israeli science fiction and fantasy writers after its Hebrew translation.

Reviewers of his work, such as Roger Zelazny, have praised it as “a rousing blend of the hard-boiled and the zany”.]Google/AI]

Haiblum, Isidore [*James Shaw*], (**Murder in Yiddish** [hc, St. Martins Press, 1988]) 978-0312014827

Haiblum, Isidore [*James Shaw*], (**Bad Neighbours**) [hc, St. Martins Press, 1990]) 978-0312042639

Haiblum, Isidore, [*Max and Morris Weiss*], (**New York Confidential** [pb, Berkly, 2005]) 978-0425203606

Haiblum, Isidore, [*Max and Morris Weiss*], (**Murder In Gotham** [pb, Berkly, 2008]) 978-0425219072

Albert Halper (1904–1984, born in Chicago) - *As a prominent proletarian and social-realist writer, Halper focused on economic desperation, industrial espionage, and labor rackets within the gritty working-class environments of Chicago and New York. In 1928, after publishing his early short fiction, he moved to New York City to pursue writing full-time. He achieved major commercial and critical success with his novel **Union Square** (1933), which depicted the struggles of Depression-era New Yorkers. Because books like **The Foundry** (1934) and **The Chute** (1937) focused on industrial workers and difficult economic conditions, critics frequently labeled him a “proletarian” writer. Halper rejected this political label, stating that he simply wanted to write authentic stories about everyday people surviving in industrialized environments. Over his career, he wrote multiple novels, plays, anthologies about Chicago, and a 1970 memoir titled **Good-Bye, Union Square**. While he is primarily remembered as a Depression-era labor novelist, his works provide a vital record of the generational tensions, assimilation struggles, and daily lives of working-class American Jews. Halper was one of the few writers to treat Jewishness not just as a religious or spiritual identity, but as a deeply working-class experience. His characters struggled simultaneously with anti-Semitism, Americanization, and labor exploitation. By writing authentically about the messy reality of being both American and Jewish without hiding behind idealized tropes, Halper served as an important structural precursor to the major post-war Jewish-American authors of the 1950s and 60s such as Saul Bellow and Bernard Malamud. See also the listings on Jerome Weidman and Budd Schulberg in this bibliography.*

His contribution to the subject of Jews and crime in fiction rests on his unique ability to strip away the sensationalism of the era’s tabloid gangsters, choosing instead to analyze crime as an inevitable, socio-economic byproduct of urban immigrant life. Writing out of Chicago—the epicenter of Prohibition-era mob violence—Halper demystified Jewish involvement in crime, presenting it through a lens of economic desperation and flawed assimilation rather than moral failure or inherent villainy.

Halper’s deep familiarity with the Chicago labor landscape allowed him to explore a specific, historically accurate intersection: labor racketeering. He illustrated how the underworld encroached upon legitimate immigrant enterprises, small shops, and burgeoning labor unions. Rather than focusing on high-profile bank heists, Halper detailed the mundane, day-to-day corruption affecting working-class Jewish laborers—such as small-business owners paying protection money or desperate young men acting as low-level muscle for local bosses.

In Halper’s literary world, the “Jewish gangster” or street criminal is often a tragic figure caught between two worlds. The older immigrant generation clings to traditional religious morality and honest, low-wage labor. In contrast, the younger, American-born generation—facing rampant anti-Semitism and lack of upward mobility—views the secular, aggressive tactics of American street gangs as a fast track to the American Dream. Halper positioned Jewish involvement in crime as a warped form of Americanization.

By embedding Jewish criminal elements into the realistic, unglamorous backdrop of sweatshops, factories, and tenements, Halper paved the way for a more nuanced subgenre of Jewish-American fiction. He proved that Jewish characters did not just exist as spiritual victims or successful professionals; they were complex urban citizens susceptible to the same economic pressures, corrupt systems, and moral compromises as any other immigrant group in America. – Google/AI]

Halper, Albert, **The Chute** [hc, Viking Press, 1937]) [pb, Viking/Compass, 1964] [*This novel highlights industrial labor law violations, criminal negligence, and systematic employee exploitation. Set inside a massive Chicago mail-order fashion house, the book centers on **Paul Sussman**, a Jewish entrepreneur. Under intense economic pressure during the Depression, Sussman and the management force workers into incredibly hazardous labor conditions to keep up with “the chute”—the mechanical maw that swallows order packages. They cut corners, bribe inspectors, and knowingly bypass safety and labor laws to keep profit margins high. Halper contrasts the wealthy, predatory Jewish owners who break the law out of greed with the impoverished Jewish workers who are destroyed by those exact same criminal business practices. It provides a raw, negative portrait of how capitalistic pressure causes people to exploit their own demographic.*]

Halper, Albert, (**Atlantic Avenue** [pb, Award Books, 1956]) [*This novel highlights street-level drug distribution, fencing stolen goods, racketeering, and violent assault. Shifting from Chicago to Brooklyn, New York, this gritty, noir-infused novel follows **Nate Feldman**, a desperate Jewish storefront owner on Atlantic Avenue. Trapped by debts and neighborhood gentrification, Feldman drifts away from his legitimate business and gets sucked into a dangerous local crime ring. He begins using his shop as a front for fencing stolen merchandise, illegal bookmaking, and interacting with violent neighborhood syndicates. Unlike the corporate boardrooms of Schulberg or Weidman, Halper explores street-level survival. The book tracks the psychological downfall of an ordinary immigrant businessman who turns to crime not out of global ambition, but out of absolute economic panic and the fear of financial ruin.* – Google/AI]

David Handler (born 1952 in Los Angeles and resides in Old Lyme, CT) - began his professional life as a reporter and Broadway critic in New York City. Became a screenwriter and prolific author of mystery series. His most Jewish protagonist is **Benji Golden** in a 2-volume series:

Handler, David, (**Runaway Man** [hc, Minotaur Books, 2013] 978-1250011626

Handler, David, (**Phantom Angel** [hc, Minotaur Books, 2015] 978-1250059734

Benji's Jewish identity is a central, recurring element that shapes the series' tone, humor, and setting. It is expressed less through religious practice and more through cultural heritage, family dynamics, and his specific New York City environment. His Jewishness is expressed through:

Family Legends: he is the son of a “hero-cop” father and a mother who is famously known in the series for being the only Jewish pole dancer in New York City. This unconventional family background provides a humorous, secular Jewish lens through which he views the world.

The Family Business: He works for Golden Legal Services, a “struggling mom-and-pop” private detective agency located above a 24-hour diner on Broadway and 103rd Street—a quintessential Upper West Side Jewish-American setting.

Cultural “Outsider” Status: Benji is often described as “baby-faced” and short (five-foot-six), which he uses to his advantage. His Jewish identity often serves as a point of contrast when his investigations take him into “WASPy” or high-society Manhattan circles, where he feels like a street-smart outsider.

Dialogue and Humor: The series utilizes a “witty and amusing” tone that echoes traditional Jewish-American humor—self-deprecating, fast-paced, and deeply cynical yet sentimental.

Secular Identity: While Benji is culturally Jewish, he is not portrayed as particularly observant of religious laws. His identity is defined by his neighborhood, his mother's influence, and his father's legacy rather than synagogue attendance or ritual. [Google/AI]

Handler's other Jewish protagonist is **Mitch Berger**, a pudgy, widowed film critic from New York City, who gets together with **Desiree Mitry**, a brilliant and beautiful African-American Connecticut State Trooper in an 11-volume series. Their relationship isn't just a romance; it is a “deliciously mismatched” partnership in crime detection where their differing cultural experiences allow them to see clues that the upper-crust, WASP-y residents of Dorset, CT overlook. Berger/Mitry is regarded as a cozy mystery, though one with more edge and sharp humour than most others. Handler infuses Mitch with a specific “Jewish

angst” characterized by a cycle of guilt and hand-wringing. This informs his internal monologue and his cautious, often self-deprecating approach to the mysteries he investigates. His background as a “nice Jewish boy” from the city pavements shapes his moral compass. While he isn’t a detective by trade, his perspective as a film critic—often analyzing moral themes in cinema—is filtered through his Jewish cultural upbringing. Mitch is described as being only one generation removed from Eastern Europe. This proximity to his roots creates a sense of living between two worlds—the traditional world of his parents and the elite, secular world of the Connecticut Gold Coast. In ***The Blood Red Indian Summer***, Mitch’s Jewishness is the primary driver of the plot’s social tension. His parents’ visit forces him to reconcile his private life with his traditional Jewish family expectations, specifically regarding his choice of a partner. [Google/AI]

Handler, David [Berger/Mitry Series #1], (***The Cold Blue Blood***) [hc, Minotaur Books, 2001] 978-0312280031 [pb, Minotaur, 2002] 978-0312986100 [*Mitch Berger, a reclusive widower and film critic, moves to Connecticut’s Gold Coast for a change of scenery. He teams up with Lt. Desiree Mitry after stumbling upon a high-society murder.*]

Handler, David [Berger/Mitry Series #2], (***The Hot Pink Farmhouse***) [hc, Minotaur, 2002] 978-0312280154 [pb, Minotaur, 2003] 978-0312987046 [*Mitch and Des investigate a case involving a colorful property and a rebellious teenager, deepening their personal and professional bond.*]

Handler, David [Berger/Mitry Series #3], (***The Bright Silver Star***) [hc, Minotaur Books, 2003] 978-0312307141 [pb, Minotaur, 2004] 978-0312307141 [*Hollywood drama arrives in Dorset when a movie star dies on a cliffside, testing the duo’s partnership.*]

Handler, David [Berger/Mitry Series #4], (***The Burnt Orange Sunrise***) [hc, Thorndike Press, 2005] 978-0786271344 [pb, St. Martin’s Press, 2005] 978-0312985790 [*In an “Agatha Christie-style” setup, Mitch and Des are trapped in a snowed-in castle with a killer.*]

Handler, David [Berger/Mitry Series #5], (***The Sweet Golden Parachute***) [hc, Minotaur Books, 2006] 978-0312342111 [*The pair navigates the complex social hierarchies and hidden motives of the wealthy residents of Dorset.*]

Handler, David [Berger/Mitry Series #6], (***The Sour Cherry Surprise***) [hc, Minotaur Books, 2008] 978-0312376697 [*Mitch briefly moves back to New York City, creating a rift in his relationship with Des while they deal with a new mystery.*]

Handler, David [Berger/Mitry Series #7], (***The Shimmering Blond Sister***) [hc, Minotaur Books, 2010] 978-0312574857 [*The duo investigates secrets involving families and local gossip in their historic village.*]

Handler, David [Berger/Mitry Series #8], (***The Blood Red Indian Summer***) [hc, Minotaur Books, 2011] 978-0312648350 [*Mitch’s Jewish parents, Seymour and Sarah Berger, visit from Florida, to meet Desiree for the first time. The plot heavily features the cultural and generational clash as his traditional Jewish parents react to his relationship with Desiree, who is both black AND non-Jewish! This creates cultural tension just as a new murder investigation begins.*]

Handler, David [Berger/Mitry Series #9], (***The Snow White Christmas Cookie***) [hc, Minotaur Books, 2012] 978-1250004543 - *A holiday-themed mystery set against the backdrop of Dorset’s small-town traditions.*]

Handler, David [Berger/Mitry Series #10], (***The Coal Black Asphalt Tomb***) [hc, Minotaur Books, 2014] 978-1250041975 [*Mitch and Des tackle another case involving the dark secrets of the Connecticut shoreline.*]

Handler, David [Berger/Mitry Series #11], (***The Lavender Lane Lothario***) [hc, Minotaur Books, 2016] 978-1250076113 [*The investigation focuses on a local building inspector who was secretly juggling four girlfriends before being found in the remains of a burned-down bar.* [Google/AI]

Donald Harstad (born 1946, Los Angeles) - served as a police investigator for over two decades in rural Iowa before retiring in 1996 to write full-time. His work is acclaimed for its authentic portrayal of police procedures and the atmosphere of small-town America. *A Long December* is a small-town Iowa police procedural murder mystery, featuring Deputy Sheriff **Carl Houseman**, against the backdrop of a major kosher meat factory employing immigrant labour in the town.

Harstad, Donald, (*A Long December* [hc, Rugged Land, 2003] 978-1590710135) [pb, Rugged Land, 2005] 978-1590710401

David Hazan (est. born 1993) is a comic book writer and editor based in Melbourne, Australia. *Kosher Mafia*, a graphic book, takes place in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1936. It tells the story of Howard Berkowicz, the bookkeeper for the Jewish Mob who finds himself on the wrong end of an enforcer's gun when he tries to spur the Kosher Mafia into action against the rising tide of domestic Nazism in the German American Bund. [Google/AI]

Hazan, David, Sami Kivelä (Illustrator), et al, (*Kosher Mafia* [pb, Mad Cave Studios, 2025] 978-1545816165

Ben Hecht (1894–1964, born and died in New York City and primarily resided in Racine, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Nyack. Known as the “Shakespeare of Hollywood,” he became one of America’s most influential and prolific screenwriters, journalists, and fierce political activists.) [- born to Russian-Jewish immigrants and grew up in the Midwest. He was a child prodigy on the violin and briefly performed as a circus acrobat before running away to Chicago at age 16 to become a reporter. Immersed in the city’s gritty, gang-ridden jazz age, Hecht perfected a sharp, human-interest style of journalism for the *Chicago Daily News*. His cynical yet vibrant newsroom experiences directly inspired his legendary 1928 Broadway play, *The Front Page*.

Hecht transitioned seamlessly to cinema, writing or co-writing around 70 films. He won the first-ever Academy Award for Best Story for *Underworld* (1927) and a second Oscar for *The Scoundrel* (1935). He also became Hollywood’s premier uncredited “script doctor,” rewriting major films like *Gone with the Wind* in mere days.

During the 1940s, the horrors of the Holocaust transformed Hecht into a passionate Zionist activist. He collaborated with the Bergson Group to author massive pageants and newspaper advertisements to shock the American public into recognizing the plight of European Jews. He also actively raised funds for the Irgun underground resistance fighting British rule in Palestine. His fierce public criticism resulted in a British boycott of his films late in his career. Hecht remained a prolific author of books, plays, and memoirs until his sudden death from a heart attack in 1964. His vast body of work heavily intersects with both the mystery/thriller genre and the theme of Jewish criminality. Hecht approached these concepts from two completely different phases of his life: his early days as a gritty, cynical Chicago crime reporter and his later transformation into a militant Zionist activist who actively collaborated with real-world Jewish gangsters

Before he ever infused his work with explicit Jewish themes, Hecht was already a titan of American crime and mystery fiction. *The Florentine Dagger* (1923) was Hecht’s most direct foray into the classic detective mystery genre. Billed as “A Novel for Amateur Detectives,” it follows a protagonist descended from the infamous Borgia family who becomes a suspect in a bizarre murder theater case. It utilizes heavy psychological suspense and classic whodunit tropes. In *Scarface* (1932), Hecht solidified his legacy in the thriller genre by writing the screenplay for this seminal film. Drawing from his time reporting on Al Capone in Chicago, Hecht essentially laid the foundational blueprint for the American gangster film genre. Hecht became a premier Hollywood thriller writer, penning masterpieces for Alfred Hitchcock including *Spellbound* (1945) and *Notorious* (1946).

In his early literary career, Hecht was a self-declared secular bohemian who viewed traditional Jewish life with cynicism. When he did write Jewish characters, they were often deeply flawed, transgressive, and morally compromised—breaking the standard “noble victim” mold.

Hecht, Ben, (**A Jew in Love** [originally published by Covici Friede in 1931 [hc, Hassell Street, 2021] 978-1013462924 [pb, Hassell Street, 2021] 978-1013741890 [*This highly controversial satirical novel focuses on Jo Boshere (born Joseph Bodenheimer), a wealthy, deeply neurotic, and manipulative Jewish book publisher. While not a “mobster,” Boshere operates on a level of emotional criminality and psychological fraud, preying on people. Hecht used the motif of the modern, rootless Jew who abandons tradition only to become a lawless charlatan of the secular world.*]

*The ultimate convergence of “Jews and crime” in Hecht’s life did not happen as a fictional narrative driver, but rather as a real-life political crusade that read like a political thriller. In the 1940s, horrified by the Holocaust and the British blockade of Jewish refugees in Palestine, Hecht had a profound political awakening. He famously allied with infamous Jewish mobster Mickey Cohen. Hecht used Cohen’s underworld network to host gambling-ring fundraisers and smuggle black-market weapons to the Irgun (the militant Zionist underground). In his later writings, polemics, and theatrical pageants (like *A Flag Is Born*), Hecht completely flipped the anti-Semitic motif of the “sneaky Jewish criminal” on its head. He openly celebrated the Irgun as “brave outlaws” and proudly embraced terms like “gangster” and “terrorist” against the British Empire, arguing that breaking international law was a moral imperative to save lives.*

Hecht, Ben, (**Perfidy** [originally published by Julian Messner, Inc. in 1961, hc, Milah Press, Inc., 1997]) 978-0964688636 [pb, Milah Press, Inc., 1997] 978-1981044207 [*Hecht’s final major work of non-fiction is written exactly like a gripping political thriller or a courtroom expose. The book investigates the real-life Rudolf Kastner trial in Israel, accusing the mainstream Zionist establishment of making a deal with Adolf Eichmann to save a select elite while leaving Hungarian Jewry to perish. Hecht structures the entire narrative around themes of criminal betrayal, cover-ups, and institutional complicity, utilizing his lifelong true-crime reporting skills to prosecute his political enemies. – Google/AI*] *Note: Subsequent research on this case, whose findings were not known to Hecht, has largely vindicated Kastner, but the subject still arouses controversy in some Jewish circles.*

Joseph Heller (born 1923 in the Coney Island neighborhood of Brooklyn, New York and died in 1999 in East Hampton, New York) [*Born to poor, first-generation Russian-Jewish immigrants. Grew up in a working-class, bilingual household where both Yiddish and English were spoken. Critics directly link his trademark dark, skeptical, and wisecracking humor to his upbringing in the Jewish immigrant community of Coney Island. Maintained a secular, agnostic outlook on faith—inherited from his politically socialist father—despite his deeply ingrained Jewish cultural identity. Earned his B.A. in English from New York U. in 1948, funding his education via the G.I. Bill after serving as a WWII bombardier. M.A. in English from Columbia U. (1949) and Fulbright scholar at Oxford (1949-50). Taught English at Pennsylvania State U. for two years. To support his family and fund his spare-time writing, Heller entered the corporate media world as an advertising copywriter and promotion manager. He climbed the ranks at several major American magazines – Time, Look, McCall’s. Published his breakthrough novel, *Catch-22*, in 1961, which enjoyed enormous success. Went on to publish several additional books, working through creative and health challenges. Two of his books are most relevant to this survey:*

Heller, Joseph, (**Good as Gold** [hc, Simon & Schuster, 1979]) 978-0671229238 [pb, Simon & Schuster, 1997] 978-0684839745 [*This novel serves as Heller’s most explicit meditation on the “Jewish experience in America” interwoven with themes of political deception and international espionage. The protagonist, Dr. Bruce Gold, is a secular Jewish English professor trying to navigate a path into high-level Washington politics. Along the way, he is courted, monitored, and manipulated by a series of bizarre government officials and international actors—including agents from Mossad (the Israeli intelligence agency).*

Heller frames the entire American executive political apparatus as a massive, legal criminal syndicate. White House operations are presented as exercises in institutional gaslighting, disinformation, and corporate-style fraud, where the high-ranking officials are actively engaged in subverting laws to

maintain power. The core satire explores how secular Jewish intellectuals compromise their morals, distance themselves from their heritage, and participate in shady government machinations just to achieve proximity to political power.

Heller, Joseph, (**Closing Time** [hc, Simon & Schuster, 1994]) 978-0671746049 [pb, Simon & Schuster, 1995] 978-0684804507 [*As the official sequel to Catch-22, this book shifts part of its focus away from Yossarian to follow two working-class Jewish men from Brooklyn, Sammy Singer and Lew Rabinowitz. The book explores the underbelly of New York through the memories of Jewish characters growing up in Coney Island. It frequently leans into the imagery of neighborhood scams, black markets, and localized criminal grifts. The institutional “crime” aspect is spearheaded by Milo Minderbinder, the Catch-22 wheeler-dealer, who has evolved from a wartime mess-hall black marketer into a massive, shadowy defense contractor. Milo engages in globally corrupt weapons-dealing, insider trading, and corporate espionage that effectively control the United States government.* [Google/AI]

Libby Fischer Hellmann [born 1949, Washington, D.C.] - *Her Ellie Foreman series* [6 volumes so far] is deeply rooted in Jewish culture, history, and family life in Chicago. Key Jewish elements of the series include:

- *Protagonist and Family Identity:* Ellie is a Jewish single mother and documentary filmmaker living on Chicago's North Shore. Her father, Jake Foreman, is a retired lawyer with “deep roots in Chicago's Jewish community” and often provides historical or legal context for her investigations.
- *Historical Origins:* The series evolved from the short story *The Day Miriam Hirsch Disappeared*, which is set in Lawndale in the 1930s, then a thriving Jewish neighborhood on Chicago's West Side. This prequel establishes a multigenerational history that carries into the modern novels.
- *Mystery Themes:* Many plots center on secrets within the Jewish community or historical events affecting it. For example, *An Eye for Murder* (Book 1) investigates wartime relics and secrets tied to Nazi-era Prague and their connection to an elderly Jewish man in modern Chicago.
- *Cultural Texture:* The books include specific cultural touchpoints, such as descriptions of lavish Bar Mitzvahs and the “Jewish geography” Ellie navigates to connect suspects and witnesses.
- *Chicago Jewish History:* Readers learn about the migration of the city's Jewish population from neighborhoods like Lawndale to suburbs like Skokie and the North Shore. [Google/AI]

Hellmann, Libby Fischer [*Ellie Foreman* #1], (**An Eye for Murder** [hc, Poisoned Pen Press, 2002] 978-1590580356 [pb, Poisoned Pen Press, 2002]) 9780425187395

Hellmann, Libby Fischer [*Ellie Foreman* #2], (**A Picture of Guilt** [hc, Poisoned Pen Press, 2003] 978-1590580738 [pb, Poisoned Pen Press, 2012] 978-1590585153

Hellmann, Libby Fischer [*Ellie Foreman* #3], (**An Image of Death** [hc, Poisoned Pen Press, 2004]) 978-1590581018 [pb, Poisoned Pen Press, 2012]) 978-1590586754

Hellmann, Libby Fischer [*Ellie Foreman* #4], (**A Shot To Die For** [hc, Poisoned Pen Press, 2005]) 978-1590581858 [pb, Poisoned Pen Press, 2011]) 978-1590588000

Hellmann, Libby Fischer [*Ellie Foreman* #5], (**Jump Cut** [pb, Poisoned Pen Press, 2016] 978-1464205194

Hellmann, Libby Fischer [*Ellie Foreman* #6], (**Virtually Undetectable** [pb, Poisoned Pen Press, 2020] 978-1736452837

Roger Herst (*est. birth – 1975?, San Francisco, CA*) is an American author and ordained Reform Rabbi with a doctorate in Middle Eastern history, best known for his Rabbi Gabrielle mystery series.

*The Rabbi Gabrielle Series follows the adventures and growth of **Rabbi Gabrielle “Gabby” Lewyn** from her first job as a neophyte rabbi in Washington DC. to a mature biblical scholar in Israel. It goes behind the scenes of the clerical life of an unmarried female in a profession once dominated by men. As she encounters taxing conflicts, readers will experience a pattern of thinking generally not seen in pulpit ministers, including a carefully guarded sex life. If only the clergy could say what they really feel and express natural inclinations we’d have an entirely different view of our religious leaders. Unlike detectives in mystery novels who simply solve crimes, Rabbi Gabrielle always has something personal in the balance. And as she acquires new experiences, so her personality grows. [Amazon]*

Herst, Roger, [*Rabbi Gabrielle Series #1*] (**Scandal** [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2016]) 978-1539537472

Herst, Roger, [*Rabbi Gabrielle Series #2*] (**Kiss**) [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2021] 978-1539537571

Herst, Roger, [*Rabbi Gabrielle Series #3*] (**Defiance**) [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2016] 978-1539537656

Herst, Roger, [*Rabbi Gabrielle Series #4*] (**Felony** [aka **Rabbi Gabrielle Commits A Felony**, pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2016] 978-1539537779

Herst, Roger, [*Rabbi Gabrielle Series #5*] (**Tempest** [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2016]) 978-1539537830

Herst, Roger, [*Rabbi Gabrielle Series #6*] (**Scheme** [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2016]) 978-1522887539

Herst, Roger, [*Rabbi Gabrielle Series #7*] (**Secret** [pb, independently published, 2021]) 978-1090201928

Herst, Roger, [*Rabbi Gabrielle Series #8*] ? [Amazon says there are 8 books in the series but gives no details for the 8th; Google/AI is no wiser. It is not clear whether any further Rabbi Gabrielle novels are forthcoming.]

Dara Horn (born 1977 in New Jersey and resides there with her family. [*M.A. in Hebrew Literature* (Cambridge, 2000) and *Ph.D. in Yiddish and Hebrew Literature* (Harvard U., 2006). Published five novels, including her debut **In the Image** (2002) and the art-heist story **The World to Come** (2006), earning multiple National Jewish Book Awards throughout her career. In 2021, she published her first major nonfiction collection, **People Love Dead Jews: Reports from a Haunted Present**. The book became a massive cultural touchstone and bestseller, sharply exploring how public memory exploits Jewish tragedy while ignoring living Jewish civilization. Horn has taught Jewish literature and Israeli history at institutions like Harvard, Yeshiva University, and Sarah Lawrence College. She is also the founder and president of The Tell Institute, a non-profit dedicated to expanding education about Jewish civilization in American K-12 schools and public channels.

While she does not write conventional, formulaic hard-boiled detective fiction, she frequently utilizes mystery thriller structures, true crime elements, and heist/kidnapping narratives to drive her complex historical plots. Instead of exploring standard underworld organized crime, Horn adapts Jewish history, text, and folklore to anchor high-stakes suspense. Her books explicitly lean into thriller pacing, crime motifs, and mystery investigations in several notable ways:

Horn, Dara, (**A Guide for the Perplexed** [hc, W.W. Norton, 2013] 978-0393064896 [pb, W.W. Norton, 2014] 978-0393348880 [*This novel is Horn’s closest foray into the literal mystery thriller genre. The book opens with the terrifying modern-day kidnapping of **Josie Ashkenazi**, a brilliant software developer who is abducted in post-revolutionary Egypt. Parallel to the kidnapping plot is a historical mystery centered around the 19th-century recovery of the Cairo Genizah (a massive hoard of sacred Jewish manuscript fragments). Horn uses the modern criminal investigation of the kidnapping alongside historical archival sleuthing to mirror the biblical story of Joseph and his siblings, building a fast-paced psychological and literal rescue thriller.*

Horn, Dara, (**The World to Come** [hc, W.W. Norton, 2006]) 978-0393051070 [pb, W.W. Norton, 2006] 978-0393329063 [*This book uses an art heist as the foundational narrative anchor. The plot is set in motion when the protagonist, **Benjamin Ziskind**, steals a multi-million dollar painting by Marc Chagall from a museum during a singles mixer. The act of theft launches an investigation into whether the painting is an authentic masterpiece or a brilliant forgery. It forces a deep dive into the black-market art world and Soviet-era history. The stolen art piece functions as a classic thriller plot device, forcing the characters to unravel a generational mystery involving Soviet Jewish artists, forgery, and the historical erasure of Yiddish culture.*]

Horn, Dara, (**All Other Nights** [hc, W.W. Norton, 2009]) 978-0393064926 [pb, W.W. Norton, 2010] 978-0393338324 [*This novel blends historical fiction with a deeply tense spy thriller. Set during the American Civil War, the protagonist is **Jacob Rappaport**, a Jewish Union soldier who is recruited into a web of espionage, treason, and state-sanctioned murder. Jacob is ordered by his commanders to infiltrate a conspiracy and assassinate his own uncle, who is plotting to murder Abraham Lincoln. Later, he must marry a suspected Confederate spy to uncover her secrets. The entire book relies on classic espionage thriller beats—secret identities, double-crosses, smuggling networks, and the constant threat of execution for treason.*]

Horn, Dara, (**People Love Dead Jews: Reports from a Haunted Present** [hc, W.W. Norton, 2021]) 978-0393531565 [pb, W.W. Norton, 2022] 978-1324035947 [*A collection of non-fiction essays which demonstrates Horn's sharp fascination with how society processes antisemitic violent crime. Horn directly analyzes contemporary acts of deadly violence, such as the Tree of Life synagogue shooting and the Jersey City kosher supermarket attack. Horn acts as an investigative cultural critic, dissecting the "true crime" framing of these events by modern media and pointing out how public narratives often warp the reality of anti-Jewish hate crimes.* – Google/AI]

Michael Idov (born 1976 in Riga, Latvia and emigrated with his family to the US in 1991) novelist, journalist, screenwriter and director now living in Berlin.

Idov, Michael, (**Ground Up** (pb, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2009) 978-0374531546 [*In his debut novel, Idov repudiates traditional immigrant and ethnic tropes and Russian-American clichés, focusing instead on non-ethnic American characters. The narrative depicts characters who grapple with fading cultural roots rather than celebrating them, using Jewish identity as a subtle background layer rather than the central conflict. The novel explores "performance" and "deception". Mark's Jewishness is sometimes framed through the lens of "passing" or pretending to belong to specific social groups, where ethnic markers are just another part of the "fake" or "faux" layers of his New York life. The Jewish identity in the book is often tied to secular intellectualism and the "cosmopolitan ideal" of European coffeehouse culture, which the characters fail to successfully transplant to modern New York.* [Google/AI]

Idov, Michael [The Cormorant Trilogy #1], (**The Collaborators** [hc, Scribner, 2024] 978-1668055571 [pb, Scribner, 2025] 978-1668055588 [*a spy thriller novel blending contemporary espionage with Soviet-era history and focusing on the intersection of modern CIA tradecraft with the legacy of Cold War-era Russian intelligence, featuring a plot that spans from the 1980s to 2021. A key protagonist is **Ari Falk**, a Jewish CIA field operative. The backstory involves Soviet Jews leaving the USSR in the 1980s. The narrative weaves in the experiences of Russian-speaking immigrants, utilizing the author's background to provide an authentic, "non-stereotypical" view of post-Soviet Russia and its agents. The book touches upon the history of Jewish refugees fleeing the Soviet Union, using the 1980s-1990s as a backdrop for the characters' motivations. The title refers not only to the double agents and spies (KGB, GRU, FSB) but also highlights the complex relationships between the characters and their past, including the "collaboration" required to navigate life in the Soviet Union and its aftermath.* [Google/AI]

Idov, Michael [The Cormorant Trilogy #2], (**The Cormorant Hunt** [hc, Scribner, 2026] 978-1668082287 [***Ari Falk** is now a disillusioned former CIA officer living in exile in the Republic of Georgia. He previously blew the whistle on a major conspiracy and is recruited for a sensitive undercover mission that requires his specific status as a "disavowed" operative. Falk's background often informs his jaded, outsider perspective on international loyalty and national identity. Much of the series' tension is rooted in*]

the “Old World” of Soviet-era secrets and the 1996 Russian elections. This historical context frequently touches on the experiences of the Jewish diaspora within the Soviet intelligence apparatus and their subsequent lives in the West. The themes of exile and being “homeless” in a geopolitical sense (moving between the US, Russia, and Georgia) echo classic themes of the Jewish experience in 20th and 21st-century literature. [Google/AI]

The third volume of the trilogy is expected in late 2027 or early 2028.

Susan Isaacs (born 1943, Brooklyn, NY) – Her work is deeply rooted in Jewish-American identity, often exploring the experiences of assimilated Jewish characters. Having grown up in a secular but culturally Jewish Brooklyn household, she weaves this background into her novels through humor, character origins, and historical settings.

Key Jewish elements in her books include:

Jewish Protagonists: Many of her lead characters are Jewish women, such as **Judith Singer** in *Compromising Positions* (a Long Island Jewish housewife turned sleuth) and **Linda Voss** in *Shining Through* (a half-Jewish secretary during WWII).

Cultural Assimilation & Identity: Her stories often focus on “assimilated characters seeking Jewishness in the secular world”. For instance, *Shining Through* follows a character who must navigate her hidden Jewish identity while working as a spy in Nazi Germany.

Jewish Humor and Sensibility: Critics frequently note her “suburban New York Jewish” wit and style, described as “salted with earthy humor” and “sardonic insights”.

Family Sagas and History: Books like *Red, White and Blue* chronicle multiple generations of a Jewish family, while *Almost Paradise* features a half-Jewish protagonist and explores the friction between different cultural backgrounds.

Community Involvement: Isaacs’ personal connection to Judaism extends to her professional life; she has served on the board of the **Jewish Theological Seminary** and is frequently featured by the **Jewish Book Council**. [Google/AI]

Isaacs, Susan, (**Compromising Positions** [hc, Viking, 1978]) 978-0713911763 [mass mkt pb, Jove, 1985] 978-0515080896 [Features Judith Singer, a smart and bored Jewish housewife on Long Island who becomes an amateur detective.]

Isaacs, Susan, (**Close Relations** [hc, Ty Crowell, 1980]) 978-0690019407 [pb, HarperTorch, 1992] 978-0061099472 [Follows Marcia Green, a speechwriter involved in New York Democratic politics, set against a background of ethnic and Jewish family dynamics.]

Isaacs, Susan, (**Shining Through** [hc, Harper & Row, 1988]) 978-0060159795 [pb, Ballantine Books, 1992] 978-0345358035 [\[See related film\]](#) [Tells the story of Linda Voss, a German-Jewish secretary in 1940s New York who becomes a spy in Nazi Germany during World War II. See entry on the movie version in the companion list of movies, films and TV series.]

Isaacs, Susan, (**After All These Years** [hc, HarperCollins, 1993]) 978-006016768 [pb, Perennial, 2004] 978-0060563738 [The protagonist, Rosie Meyers, is a Jewish woman from Long Island whose life is upended when her husband leaves her and is then found murdered]

Isaacs, Susan, (**Long Time No See** [hc, Harper, 2001]) 978-0060195700 [pb, HarperCollins, 2002] 978-0007130351 [The sequel to *Compromising Positions*, continuing the story of Judith Singer, now a history professor and widow.]

Isaacs, Susan, (**As Husbands Go** [hc, Scribner, 2010]) 978-1416573012 [pb, Scribner, 2011] 978-1416573081 [Features Susie B. Anthony Rabinowitz Gersten, whose life is thrown into chaos after the death of her husband, a prominent plastic surgeon.]

Isaacs, Susan, (**Goldberg Variations** [hc, Scribner, 2012]) 978-1451605914 [pb, Scribner, 2013] 978-1451605921 [*Centers on Gloria Garrison (née Goldberg), a wealthy and demanding matriarch who brings her grandchildren together to decide who will inherit her fortune.*]

Isaacs, Susan, (**Takes One to Know One** [hc, Atlantic Monthly Press, 2019]) 978-0802147554 [pb, Grove Press, 2020] 978-0802149411 [*Introduces Corie Geller, a Jewish former FBI agent living in the Long Island suburbs who starts investigating her neighbor.*]

Isaacs, Susan, (**Bad, Bad Seymour Brown** [hc, Atlantic Monthly Press, 2023]) 978-0802159069 [pb, Grove Press, 2024] 978-0802163349 [*Continues the Corie Geller series, focusing on her and her retired NYPD detective father as they solve a cold case.*]

Jane Isenberg [born 1940, Paterson, NJ, now residing in the Puget Sound area of Washington State] incorporates Jewish themes primarily through historical research and character identity, with her most significant Jewish component appearing in her historical mystery, **The Bones and the Book** (2012). The protagonist of her 8-volume “cozy” series is **Bel Barrett**, a strongly identified secular Jewish woman whose cultural and religious identity becomes a central theme in later installments of the mystery series.

Bel’s Jewish identity is characterized by several key elements:

- **Midlife Spiritual Awakening:** In **Midlife Can Be Murder**, Bel experiences a “religious identity crisis” and prepares for an adult bat mitzvah.
- **Cultural Traits:** She is frequently described as grappling with “Jewish guilt” and uses Yiddish-inflected humor, such as the phrase “oy vey,” to navigate her life as a community college professor and amateur sleuth.
- **Secular Professionalism:** For most of the series, she is portrayed as a secular “fifty-something” urban professional whose Judaism is more cultural than strictly observant, though this shifts as she explores her heritage more deeply.
- **Connection to Author:** Isenberg has noted that while Bel is not her literal alter ego, she shares many of Bel’s personality traits and vices. Isenberg herself is deeply involved in Jewish historical research, having also written **The Bones and the Book**, a historical mystery set in Seattle’s Jewish community
- **Contemporary Jewish Protagonists:** While her popular Bel Barrett mystery series focuses on a menopausal community college professor in Jersey City, NJ, Isenberg occasionally weaves in cultural or social nuances reflective of her own Jewish heritage and the “transplant” experience of moving between Jewish communities in different states. [Google/AI]

Isenberg, Jane [*Bel Barrett* #1], (**The “M” Word**) [pb, Avon, 1999] 978-0380802807

Isenberg, Jane [*Bel Barrett* #2], (**Death in a Hot Flash**) [pb, Avon, 2000] 978-0380802814

Isenberg, Jane [*Bel Barrett* #3], (**Mood Swings to Murder**) [pb, Avon, 2000] 978-0380802821

Isenberg, Jane [*Bel Barrett* #4], (**Midlife Can Be Murder**) [pb, Avon, 2001] 978-0380818860

Isenberg, Jane [*Bel Barrett* #5], (**Out of Hormone’s Way**) [pb, Avon, 2002] 978-0380818877 [hc, Wheeler Publishing, 2003] 978-1587243967

Isenberg, Jane [*Bel Barrett* #6], (**Hot And Bothered: When a Colleague’s Murder Reveals a Secret Life, a Professor Hunts the Killer**) [pb, Avon, 2003] 978-0380818884

Isenberg, Jane [*Bel Barrett* #7], (**Hot on the Trail**) [pb, Avon, 2004] 978-0060577513

Isenberg, Jane [*Bel Barrett* #8], (**Hot Wired**) [pb, Avon, 2005] 978-0060577537 [hc, Wheeler Publishing, 2006] 978-1597222198

Isenberg, Jane, (**The Bones and the Book** [pb, Oconee Spirit Press, 2012]) 978-0984010929

Steve Israel (born 1958, Brooklyn, NY) – former 16-year member of the U.S. Congress, now a bookseller, political commentator and author of political satires and one thriller. *The Einstein Conspiracy* is based on actual events and follows two FBI agents attempting to stop a Nazi plot to kidnap Albert Einstein in the 1930s. [Google/AI]

Israel, Steve, (**The Einstein Conspiracy** [Compass Rose Publishing, 2025]) [hc] 979-8998899577 [pb] 979-8998899560

Daniel Jacobs (est. birth 1970, now residing and practicing medicine in California) - During the 1990s, he served as a medical officer in an elite airborne extraction unit of the Israeli Air Force and worked as a surgeon in Israel's largest hospital. *The Eyes of Abel* was heavily influenced by his 2010 visit to World War II concentration camp ruins and his observations of the Middle East conflict through the lens of international journalism. It features a non-Jewish American journalist combating terrorism in partnership (and romantic involvement) with a Mossad agent. [Google/AI]

Jacobs, Daniel, (**The Eyes of Abel** [pb, West Hills Press, 2013]) 978-1933512327

Jody Jaffe [born 1953] is an American author, journalist, and equestrienne best known for her mystery novels centered on the horse show world. The protagonist of her 3-volume mystery series is **Natalie "Nattie" Gold**, a fashion reporter and horse-show enthusiast investigating crimes in the South. Nattie's Jewish identity is a recurring element of her characterization and narrative voice:

- **Cultural Identity:** She is described as "self-consciously a Philadelphia yenta" and often provides "ingratiating complaints" about her life.
- **Thematic Focus:** Her experiences often highlight the friction of being Jewish in the American South, specifically navigating "the problems of being Jewish during a Dixie Yuletide".
- **Autobiographical Elements:** Author Jody Jaffe has noted that her books are semi-autobiographical, reflecting her own background as a Jewish journalist and equestrienne. [Google/AI]

Jaffe, Jody, (**A Horse of a Different Killer**) [hc, Ballantine Books, 1995] 978-0449909973 [pb, Fawcett, 1996] 978-0449909973

Jaffe, Jody, (**Chestnut Mare, Beware**) [hc, Ballantine Books, 1996] 978-0449909980 [pb, Ballantine Books, 1997] 978-0804115520

Jaffe, Jody, (**In Colt Blood**) [hc, Fawcett, 1998] 978-0449000847 [pb, Fawcett, 1999] 978-0804117111

Pam Jenoff [born 1972] is primarily known for her novels set during WW2 and involving Jewish protagonists. In two of her novels, **Jordan Weiss** is primarily defined by her professional and personal partnerships with Israeli operatives and the Holocaust-related history she uncovers during her missions. While Jordan herself is an American U.S. State Department intelligence officer, her connection to Jewish themes includes:

- **Partnership with Israeli Agents:** In *A Hidden Affair*, Jordan teams up with an Israeli operative named **Aaron** (also referred to as Ari Bruck). He is a nationalistic character who views certain European interactions through the lens of the Holocaust and is seeking a woman named Nicole connected to Jordan's past.
- **Wartime Mystery:** Her investigations often intertwine with Jewish history; for example, she and Aaron track down extremely rare wine that disappeared during **World War II**.
- **Author Parallelism:** Jordan's background as a U.S. State Department official in Europe mirrors Pam Jenoff's real-life career, where she worked at the U.S. Consulate in Krakow, Poland, focusing on Holocaust restitution and maintaining relations with the surviving Jewish community.

Unlike Jenoff's other protagonists (such as Astrid in *The Orphan's Tale* or Emma in *The Kommandant's Girl*), who are explicitly Jewish and navigating the Holocaust directly, Jordan Weiss serves as a modern vehicle through which Jenoff explores the lingering shadows of Jewish history in contemporary Europe. [Google/AI]

Jenoff, Pam, [*Jordan Weiss*], **Almost Home** [hc, Atria Books, 2009] 978-1416590699 [pb, Atria/Emily Bestler Books, 2010] 978-1416590705

Jenoff, Pam, (**A Hidden Affair** [hc, Atria Books, 2010] 978-1416590712 [pb, Atria/Emily Bestler Books, 2011] 978-1416590729

Michael A. Kahn (born 1952, St. Louis, MO) – trial attorney in St. Louis and creator of the 12-volume **Rachel Gold** legal mystery series published between 1988 and 2020. The protagonist is deeply rooted in Jewish culture, integrating religious, historical, and communal elements through its central themes.

1. Protagonist and Character Dynamics

Rachel Gold: The series lead is a Harvard-educated Jewish attorney based in St. Louis. Her identity is central to her character; for example, her romantic life often highlights different “brands” of Judaism, such as when she dates Jonathan Wolf, whose **Orthodox beliefs** regarding premarital sex provide both character depth and comedic tension.

Supporting Cast: Her “best buddy” and recurring collaborator is **Benny Goldberg**, an “obnoxious” but brilliant law professor who provides much of the series’ trademark wit and Jewish cultural humor.

2. Jewish Cultural and Religious Themes

Yiddish Maxims: Kahn frequently uses Yiddish proverbs and philosophies to frame his narratives. A recurring motif in multiple books, including **The Dead Hand** and **Bad Trust**, is the maxim: “Man plans, and God laughs”.

Jewish Family Dynamics: Books like **Bad Trust** specifically delve into the “complex dynamics” of the Jewish family, using legal trust fund disputes to explore sibling rivalry and communal ties.

Holocaust History: In **Bearing Witness**, a routine age discrimination case evolves into a chronicle of Nazi atrocities and the lasting impact of the Holocaust. This theme is personal for Kahn, as his wife is the daughter of Holocaust survivors.

3. Setting and Community

St. Louis Jewish Community: The books are noted for their authentic portrayal of the St. Louis atmosphere, specifically referencing the local Jewish community and institutions.

Genre Alignment: The series is often categorized alongside other notable “Jewish mysteries,” such as those by Harry Kemelman and Faye Kellerman, due to its focus on Jewish ethics and daily life. [Google/AI]

Kahn, Michael [*Rachel Gold* #1], (**The Canaan Legacy**, aka *Grave Designs*) [pb, Lynx Books, 1988] 978-1558021563 - *Grave Designs* [mass mkt pb, Berkley, 1992] 978-0451402936

Kahn, Michael, [*Rachel Gold* #2], (**Death Benefits**) [hc, Dutton, 1992] 978-0525934561 [pb, Onyx Press, 1994] 978-0451176875

Kahn, Michael, [*Rachel Gold* #3], (**Firm Ambitions**) [hc, Dutton, 1994] 978-0525937425 [mass mkt pb, Onyx Press, 1995] 978-0451179616

Kahn, Michael, [*Rachel Gold* #4], (**Due Diligence**) [hc, Dutton, 1995] 978-0525937432 [pb, Onyx, 1996] 978-0451179708

Kahn, Michael, [*Rachel Gold* #5], (**Sheer Gall**) [hc, Dutton, 1996] 978-0525941880 [mass mkt pb, Signet, 1998] 978-0451407337

Kahn, Michael, [*Rachel Gold* #6], (**Bearing Witness**) [hc, Forge Books, 2000] 978-0312848835 [mass mkt pb, Forge Books, 2003] 978-0812579833

Kahn, Michael, [*Rachel Gold* #7], (**Trophy Widow**) [hc, Forge Books, 2002] 978-0765302182 [mass mkt pb, Forge Books, 2003] 978-0765341402

Kahn, Michael. (**A Handful of Gold**: Three Rachel Gold Short Stories [2012]] B007JINIUK Available only on Kindle, according to Amazon.

Kahn, Michael, [*Rachel Gold* #8], (**The Flinch Factor**) [hc, Poisoned Pen Press, 2013] 978-1464201400 [pb, Poisoned Pen Press, 2013] 978-1464201424

Kahn, Michael, [*Rachel Gold* #9], (**Face Value**) [hc, Poisoned Pen Press 2014] 978-1464202780 [pb, Poisoned Pen Press, 2014] 978-1464202803

Kahn, Michael, [*Rachel Gold* #10], (**The Dead Hand**) [hc, Poisoned Pen Press, 2016] 978-1464206771 [pb, Poisoned Pen Press, 2016] 978-1464206795

Kahn, Michael, [*Rachel Gold* #11], (**Bad Trust**) [pb, Poisoned Pen Press, 2020] 978-1464212567

[Note: See also *The Mourning Sexton* by **Michael Baron**, a pseudonym used by Michael A. Kahn]

Sharon Kahn (1934–2024, born Birmingham, AL) was an attorney and arbitrator living in Austin, Texas. Her **Ruby Rothman series** (also known as “*Ruby, the Rabbi’s Wife*”) is a collection of six “kosher cozy” mysteries, celebrated for their humor, Jewish cultural themes, and satirical look at congregational life.

Protagonist and Premise

Ruby Rothman: A 40-something computer consultant and the widow of a rabbi. Despite her husband’s death, she remains deeply involved in the social and spiritual life of her small-town Jewish community in *Eternal, Texas*.

Setting: Much of the action takes place at **Temple Rita**, where Ruby often tangles with her arch-nemesis and temple yenta, Essie Sue Margolis.

Companions: Ruby is often accompanied by her three-legged dog, **Oy Vey**, and later a kitten named **Chutzpah**.

Kosher Cozy: The books are lighthearted, featuring no graphic violence or explicit content, and often include recipes (e.g., chopped liver with tofu).

Identity: Academic analysis identifies Ruby as an “**outsider within**”—someone who possesses insider knowledge of the community but lacks formal religious authority, allowing her to observe and investigate from a unique perspective. See the article by **Koplowitz-Breier, Anat & David J. Zucker**, “**Fictional Rabbis’ Spouse Sleuths: Married to the Rabbi, Wedded to Mystery**” – referred to in this Bibliography.

Humor: The series is noted for its “wry humor” and sharp observations of small-town Jewish life and the dynamics of synagogue boards. [Google/AI]

Kahn, Sharon, [*Ruby Rothman* #1], (**Fax Me a Bagel**: A Novel Introducing Ruby, the Rabbi’s Wife [hc, Scribner, 1998] 978-0684847375 [mass mkt pb, Berkley, 2001] 978-0425180464

Kahn, Sharon [*Ruby Rothman* #2], (**Never Nosh a Matza Ball**) [hc, Scribner, 2000] 978-0684847382 [pb, Prime Crime, 2002] 978-0425184325

Kahn, Sharon, [*Ruby Rothman* #3], (**Don’t Cry for Me, Hot Pastrami**) [hc, Scribner, 2001] 978-0684871554 [pb, Berkley, 2002] 978-0425187159

Kahn, Sharon, [*Ruby Rothman* #4], (**Hold the Cream Cheese, Kill the Lox**) [hc, Scribner, 2002] 978-0684871561 [pb, Scribner, 2003] 978-0425191316

Kahn, Sharon, [*Ruby Rothman* #5], (**Which Big Giver Stole the Chopped Liver?**) [hc, Scribner, 2004] 978-0743243575 [mass mkt pb, Berkley, 2005] 978-0425205341

Kahn, Sharon, [*Ruby Rothman* #6], (**Out of the Frying Pan, Into the Choir**) [hc, Scribner, 2006] 978-0743243582 [pb, Wheeler – large print, 2007] 978-97225311

Beth Kalikoff (born est. 1954-55 in New York City and resides in the Seattle area) [*She built a distinguished career combining creative writing, Victorian literary scholarship, and higher education leadership. She completed her B.A. in English and Political Science at Johns Hopkins University and earned her M.A. and Ph.D. in English and Rhetoric from Indiana University Bloomington in 1983. After holding early teaching positions at Eastern Illinois University and the University of Puget Sound, she joined the University of Washington Tacoma (UWT) faculty in 1998. At UWT, she became a champion for student literacy, founding and directing the campus's very first campus-wide Writing Center. Her expertise in pedagogical innovation led her to the main University of Washington campus in Seattle, where she served as the Founding Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning from 2010 until her retirement in 2021. In this role, she spearheaded university-wide programs focusing on inclusive teaching, educational equity, and digital learning advancements. As a writer, her diverse publications span academic books on 19th-century crime culture (**Murder and Moral Decay in Victorian Popular Literature**), educational research on learning communities, personal essays, poetry, and her 2011 cozy Jewish mystery novel, **Dying for a Blue Plate Special**. -Google/AI]*

Kalikoff, Beth, (**Dying For A Blue Plate Special** [hc, Five Star, 2005]) 978-1594142970 [*New Jersey expatriate Jewel Feynmann finds herself up to her kugel in aggro when her fledgling business, Blue Plate Catering in Tacoma, WA, does dinner for Commencement Bay University, aka Zoo U. Keeping dreamy employee Del Troutman and runaway student waiters in line is hard enough. Then Zoo U Dean Matthew Mulcahy dies of poison at Blue Plate's dinner while hundreds of poorly dressed academics watch in horror. Chocolate-eyed homicide detective Ben Hartsock works the case in a quiet, capable, good-looking way - damn good-looking, not that Jewel cares - but too methodically for her East coast taste. Everyone from the Brown and Hailey candy factory to the Museum of Glass will think Blue Plate killed Mulcahy unless Jewel finds out who did. And yesterday. Jewel dives in among the college people, including foul-mouthed playwright Leo Wallinsky; puppy-like Ace Birney, fraternity boy; and watchful Helena Moore, in charge of student grievances and a lot more. Del pitches in. Together, they find out enough about Mulcahy and his women students to gag a mule. Detective Hartsock's official investigation gets close enough to lift Jewel's pulse to code red. Surely it's unethical for a cop to have sex with a suspect? When Jewel's e-mail box fills with death threats and Courtney Mitznick cancels her son's Bar Mitzvah buffet supper, Jewel really gets angry. Hair flying, she finally finds the answer with the murderer in Blue Plate's deserted kitchen, late at night. Maybe too late. - Amazon]*

Stuart M. Kaminsky (1934–2009, born in Chicago) was a prolific American mystery writer, with three long-running series:

Toby Peters (24 novels): A Jewish-born private investigator in 1940s Hollywood who often interacts with real-life stars like Judy Garland, Mae West, the Marx Brothers and Charlie Chaplin. Peters is culturally but not religiously Jewish, and the Jewish factor is part of his background and humour, but not otherwise prominent.

Inspector Porfiry Petrovich Rostnikov (16 novels): A resilient and incorruptible Moscow police inspector. His wife is Jewish, which exposes him and his family to the anti-Semitic discrimination in the USSR of his day. The Jewish factor is not otherwise very significant in his activity.

Abe Lieberman (10 novels): A veteran Chicago police officer whose stories often explore his Jewish faith and morality.

Talmudic Influence: Lieberman is often described as a figure out of “Talmudic lore,” characterized by a “weary wisdom” and a deep concern for justice based on the Talmud.

Moral Code: *He is a deeply moral man who prefers resolving conflicts without violence, emphasizing “God’s justice” over the literal letter of the law.*

Jewish “Guilt” and “Tsurris”: *Lieberman frequently navigates tsurris (trouble/aggravation) and carries a traditional sense of Jewish guilt.*

The “Rabbi” Moniker: *In a recurring dynamic with his Irish Catholic partner, Bill Hanrahan, the two refer to each other as “Rabbi” and “Father Murphy” (or “the Priest”).*

Cultural & Community Settings

- **Maish’s Deli:** *A central social hub in the series is the deli owned by Abe’s brother, Maish, where Lieberman often meets his partner or gathers with his community.*
- **The “Alter Cockers”:** *A group of elderly Jewish men who frequent Maish’s deli and offer commentary or wisdom throughout the series.*
- **Synagogue Life:** *Lieberman is an active member of Temple Mir Shavot. Plotlines often involve the temple’s internal politics, fundraising committees, and vandalism incidents.*

Rituals & Language

- **Religious Milestones:** *Major family events, particularly his grandson Barry’s Bar Mitzvah, serve as significant narrative and personal milestones for Lieberman.*
- **Observance:** *Stories frequently reference the Jewish Sabbath (Shabbat) and Lieberman’s adherence to certain traditions, such as avoiding specific work on the holy day.*
- **Yiddishisms and Dialogue:** *The narrative is enriched with Jewish inflections and Yiddish terms like tsurris and kosher, as well as a distinct style of gentle sarcasm and cynical humor.*

Thematic Elements

- **Social & Religious Tensions:** *Several novels, most notably **Lieberman’s Law**, explore the friction between different Jewish groups (Conservative, Orthodox, militants) and their relations with other religious and ethnic communities in Chicago.*
- **Family Centrality:** *His commitment to his wife, Bess, his children, and his grandchildren reflects the traditional Jewish emphasis on family as a moral anchor. [Google/AI]*

Kaminsky, Stuart M. [*Abe Lieberman #1*], (**Lieberman’s Folly**) [hc, St Martin’s Press,] 978-0312053987 [pb, St. Martin’s Press, 1991] 9780804109246

Kaminsky, Stuart M. [*Abe Lieberman #2*], (**Lieberman’s Choice**) [hc, St Martin’s, 1993] 978-0312088361 [pb, Fawcett, 1994] 978-0804111768

Kaminsky, Stuart M. [*Abe Lieberman #3*], (**Lieberman’s Day**) [hc, Henry Holt, 1994] 978-0805025750 [mass mkt pb, Fawcett, 1994] 978-0804112864

Kaminsky, Stuart M. [*Abe Lieberman #4*], (**Lieberman’s Thief**) [hc, Henry Holt, 1995] 978-0805025767 [mass mkt pb, Fawcett, 1996] 978-0804112871

Kaminsky, Stuart M. [*Abe Lieberman #5*], (**Lieberman’s Law**) [hc, Henry Holt, 1996] 978-0805037494 [mass ‘mkt pb, Forge Books, 2000] 978-0812575330

Kaminsky, Stuart M. [*Abe Lieberman #6*], (**The Big Silence**) [hc, Forge Books, 2000] 978-0312869267 [mass mkt pb, Forge Books, 2001] 978-0812575194

Kaminsky, Stuart M. [*Abe Lieberman #7*], (**Not Quite Kosher**) [hc, Forge Books, 2002] 978-0312874537 [pb, Forge Books, 2003] 978-0812561906

Kaminsky, Stuart M. [*Abe Lieberman #8*], (**The Last Dark Place**) [hc, Forge Books, 2004] 978-0765304636 [pb, Forge Books, 2005] 978-0765343840

Kaminsky, Stuart M. [*Abe Lieberman #9*], (**Terror Town**) [hc, Forge Books, 2006] 978-0765311641 [mass mkt pb, Forge Books, 2007] 978-0765350213

Kaminsky, Stuart M. [*Abe Lieberman #10*], (**The Dead Don't Lie**) [hc, Forge Books, 2007] 978-0765316028 [pb, Forge Books, 2008] 978-0765319388

Andrew Kane (est. birth 1958, grew up in Woodmere, Long Island, NY) – practicing Long-Island clinical psychologist, Ph.D. from Yeshiva U. Author of several novels which prominently feature Jewish motifs and themes, exploring the complexities of faith, culture, and community within modern American Judaism. His works also incorporate mystery and suspense elements to drive their narratives.

Rabbi, Rabbi and Joshua: A Brooklyn Tale, use Jewish culture and religion as central to the characters' lives and conflicts. **Joshua: A Brooklyn Tale** is set against the backdrop of Brooklyn's diverse neighborhoods and the 1991 Crown Heights riots. It explores the lives of a Black man, a Hasidic woman, and a privileged Jewish man from Long Island, all of whom navigate their respective communities and the racial tensions between them.

While not traditional genre mysteries, Kane's books incorporate elements of suspense and moral dilemmas that drive the plot forward. **The Night, The Day** presents a "thrilling journey from darkness to light" connecting the streets of Lyon, France, during the Vichy government's collaboration in shipping Jews to concentration camps, with events decades later in New York, where its characters deal with profound questions of justice, forgiveness, and guilt. The narrative centers on a clinical psychologist facing a significant ethical quandary related to client confidentiality and a potential killer, which creates a core mystery for the reader: "Will Martin ever betray his ethics for someone else's cause?". [Google/AI]

Kane, Andrew, (**Rabbi, Rabbi** [hc, St. Martin's Press, 1995] 978-0312118792 [pb, Berwick Court Publishing, 2015] 978-0990951582

Kane, Andrew, (**Joshua: A Brooklyn Tale** [hc, Abbott Press, 2011] 978-1458200754 [pb, Berwick Court Publishing, 2015] 978-0990951544

Kane, Andrew, (**The Night, the Day** [pb, Berwick Court Publishing, 2015]) 978-0990951520

Gregg Keizer (est. birth 1955, Denver, CO) - an American journalist and novelist best known for his historical thrillers and his long-standing career in tech journalism. He is a Senior Reporter and long-time journalist for the publication, Computerworld. [Google/AI]

Keizer, Gregg, (**The Longest Night**) [hc, Putnam, 2004] 978-0399151705 [pb, Signet, 2005] 978-0451216113 [*A World War II suspense novel featuring Leonard "Mouse" Weiss, a hitman for Meyer Lansky sent to Europe to help the Dutch resistance and to try and save a trainload of Jewish prisoners from execution.*]

Keizer, Gregg, (**Midnight Plague** [hc, Putnam Adult, 2005] 978-0399153198 [pb, Signet, 2006] 978-0451219305 [*A follow-up thriller set in late 1944 London during a mysterious biological outbreak.*]

Faye Kellerman (born 1952, St. Louis, MO) - In her novels, particularly the long-running **Peter Decker and Rina Lazarus series**, Jewishness is an essential narrative engine that provides cultural depth, drives character development, and offers a unique perspective on the mystery genre. The role of Jewishness is characterized by several key elements:

Integration of Religious Observance: Unlike many procedurals, Kellerman's work portrays Orthodox Jewish life as a lived daily reality. Characters frequently observe **Shabbat**, keep **kosher**, and participate in community rituals like the **mikveh** (ritual bath), which often serves as a setting for plot developments.

Dual Perspectives on Faith: The series explores Judaism through two distinct lenses:

- **Rina Lazarus:** Represents deep-rooted tradition as a born-Orthodox woman.

- **Peter Decker:** *A detective raised as a Baptist who discovers his Jewish biological heritage and eventually converts, providing a “convert’s eye view” that helps explain Jewish concepts to readers.*

A “Kosher Hybridity”: *Scholars describe her work as a form of “kosher hybridity,” where the tropes of the American police procedural (order, justice, violence) are synthesized with Jewish ethical values and communal concerns.*

Setting as Character: *Many novels take place in specialized Jewish environments, such as yeshivas (religious schools), Hasidic communities, or Israel. These settings often present unique jurisdictional or cultural challenges for the investigators.*

Humanizing the Community: *Kellerman uses her fiction to make Orthodox Jewry accessible and respectful to a mainstream audience, intentionally avoiding stereotypes while exploring complex internal conflicts, such as the tension between religious law and secular justice.*

Historical and Mythical Exploration: *Beyond the contemporary Decker/Lazarus series, Kellerman has explored Jewishness in historical contexts, such as **The Quality of Mercy**, which features a secret Jew in Elizabethan England and reimagines the origins of Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice*.*

Kellerman, herself an Orthodox Jew, views this integration as a natural outgrowth of her personal identity rather than a political statement, aiming to entertain while providing an authentic look at Jewish life. [Google/AI]

Kellerman, Faye, [*Peter Decker & Rina Lazarus #1*], (**The Ritual Bath**) [hc, Arbor House, 1986] 978-0877957713 [pb, Headline Feature, 1996] 978-0747255918

Kellerman, Faye, [*Peter Decker & Rina Lazarus #2*], (**Sacred and Profane**) [hc, Arbor House, 1987] 978-0877958871 [pb, Ballantine Books, 1994] 978-9999980562

Kellerman, Faye, [*Peter Decker & Rina Lazarus #3*], (**Milk and Honey**) [hc, William Morrow, 1990] 978-0688086039 [mass mkt pb, Fawcett, 1991] 978-0449147283

Kellerman, Faye, [*Peter Decker & Rina Lazarus #4*], (**Day of Atonement**) [hc, William Morrow, 1991] 978-0688086046 [pb, Headline Feature, 1991] 978-0747234319

Kellerman, Faye, [*Peter Decker & Rina Lazarus #5*], (**False Prophet**) [hc, William Morrow, 1992] 978-0688105532 [pb, Fawcett, 1993] 978-0449148983

Kellerman, Faye [*Peter Decker & Rina Lazarus #6*] (**Grievous Sin: A Gripping Suspense Thriller of Murder, Fear, and Justice in a Hospital Where a Newborn Vanishes**) [hc, William Morrow, 1993] 978-0688105549 [pb, Headline Feature, 1993] 978-0747241188

Kellerman, Faye, [*Peter Decker & Rina Lazarus #7*], (**Sanctuary**) [hc, William Morrow, 1994] 978-0688046125 [pb, Headline Feature, 1995] 978-0747247029

Kellerman, Faye, [*Peter Decker & Rina Lazarus #8*], (**Justice: A Dark Crime Thriller of Murder, Conspiracy, and Corruption in Affluent Southern California**) [hc, William Morrow, 1995] 978-0688046132 [pb, Headline Feature, 1996] 978-0747249498

Kellerman, Faye, [*Peter Decker & Rina Lazarus #9*], (**Prayers for the Dead: A Crime Thriller Where Homicide Detective Investigation Reveals Family Secrets That Complicate the Hunt for Justice**) [hc, William Morrow, 1996] 978-0688143671 [pb, Headline Book Publishing, 1997] 978-9999983372

Kellerman, Faye, [*Peter Decker & Rina Lazarus #10*], (**Serpent’s Tooth**) [hc, William Morrow, 1997] 978-0688143688 [pb, Headline Feature, 1998] 978-0747252306

Kellerman, Faye, [*Peter Decker & Rina Lazarus #11*], (**Jupiter’s Bones: A Dark LAPD Thriller Where Lieutenant Peter Decker Investigates a Cult’s Deadly Secrets and Missing Child**) [hc, William Morrow, 1999] 978-0688156121 [pb, Feature, 2000] 978-0747259220

Kellerman, Faye, [*Peter Decker & Rina Lazarus #12*], (**Stalker**) [hc, William Morrow, 2000] 978-0688156138 [pb, Avon, 2001] 978-0380818549

- Kellerman, Faye, [*Peter Decker & Rina Lazarus #13*], (**The Forgotten**) [hc, William Morrow, 2001] 978-0688156145 [pb, Avon, 2001] 978-0380730841
- Kellerman, Faye, [*Peter Decker & Rina Lazarus #14*], (**Stone Kiss**) [hc, Grand Central Publishing, 2002] 978-0446530385 [pb, Headline Book Publishing, 2003] 978-0747265382
- Kellerman, Faye, [*Peter Decker & Rina Lazarus #15*], (**Street Dreams**) [hc, Warner Books, 2003] 978-0446531313 [pb, Headline Book Publishing, 2004] 978-0747265351
- Kellerman, Faye, [*Peter Decker & Rina Lazarus #16*], (**The Burnt House**) [hc, William Morrow, 2007] 978-0061227325 [pb, HarperCollins, 2008] 978-0007243228
- Kellerman, Faye, [*Peter Decker & Rina Lazarus #17*], (**The Mercedes Coffin: A Dark LAPD Thriller Where Past and Present Collide in a Deadly Cold Case Conspiracy/aka Cold Case**) [hc, William Morrow, 2008] 978-0061227332 [pb, William Morrow, 2008] 978-0061685972
- Kellerman, Faye, [*Peter Decker & Rina Lazarus #18*], (**Blindman's Bluff**) [hc, William Morrow, 2009] 978-0061702327 [pb, Harper Collins, 2009] 978-0007295630
- Kellerman, Faye, [*Peter Decker & Rina Lazarus #19*], (**Hangman: A Stunning Crime Thriller of Brutal Murder and a Dangerous Sociopath**) [hc, William Morrow, 2010] 978-0061702563 [pb, Harper Collins, 2011] 978-0007384402
- Kellerman, Faye, [*Peter Decker & Rina Lazarus #20*], (**Gun Games/aka Blood Games**) [hc, William Morrow, 2012] 978-0062064325 [pb, Harper, 2012] 978-0007424498
- Kellerman, Faye, [*Peter Decker & Rina Lazarus #21*], (**The Beast: An LAPD Detective Thriller Where Bizarre Murder and Family Crisis Collide/aka Predator**) [hc, William Morrow, 2013] 978-0062121752 [pb, Harper, 2013] 978-0007488483
- Kellerman, Faye, [*Peter Decker & Rina Lazarus #22*], (**Murder 101: A Gripping Decker and Lazarus Police Procedural – Veteran LAPD Detective and Rookie Hunt a Ruthless Killer**) [hc, William Morrow, 2014] 978-0062270184 [pb, HarperCollins, 2014] 978-0007517671
- Kellerman, Faye, [*Peter Decker & Rina Lazarus #23*], (**The Theory of Death**) [hc, William Morrow, 2015] 978-0062270214 [pb, Harper, 2016] 978-0007517718
- Kellerman, Faye, [*Peter Decker & Rina Lazarus #24*], (**Bone Box: A Detective Mystery Thriller About Decades-Old Murders and a Hidden Serial Killer**) [hc, William Morrow, 2017] 978-0062424969 [pb, HarperCollins, 2017] 978-0008148867
- Kellerman, Faye, [*Peter Decker & Rina Lazarus #25*], (**Walking Shadows: A Gripping Decker & Lazarus Thriller – A Brutal Murder Uncovers Decades of Small Town Secrets**) [hc, William Morrow, 2018] 978-0062424983 [pb, HarperCollins, 2019] 978-0008148911
- Kellerman, Faye, [*Peter Decker & Rina Lazarus #26*], (**The Lost Boys: A Chilling Decker/Lazarus Crime Thriller – Small Town Homicide and Dark Mysteries**) [hc, William Morrow, 2021] 978-0062910455 [pb, HarperCollins, 2021] 978-0008327507
- Kellerman, Faye, [*Peter Decker & Rina Lazarus #27*], (**The Hunt**) [hc, William Morrow, 2022] 978-0062910493 [pb, HarperCollins, 2023] 978-0008327552
- Kellerman, Faye, (**The Garden of Eden and Other Criminal Delights**) [hc, Grand Central Publishing, 2006] 978-0446530392 [pb, Headline, 2007] 978-0747265368 [*Fourteen short crime tales feature the partnership of Peter Decker and Rina Lazarus and including three previously unpublished works, as well as two essays drawn from the author's personal life*]
- Kellerman, Faye, (**Quality of Mercy: A Jewish Woman's Forbidden Romance with Shakespeare in Elizabethan England**) [hc, William Morrow, 1989] 978-1557100276 [pb, Fawcett, 1990] 978-0449218921
- Kellerman, Faye, (**Straight into Darkness**) [hc, Grand Central Publishing, 2005] 978-0446530408 [pb, Headline Book Publishing, 2006] 978-0755331291 [*murder mystery set in 1929 Weimar Germany and illustrating the threats and discrimination to which German Jews were by then already subject*].

[**Note:** Faye Kellerman's husband, **Jonathan Kellerman** (born 1949), is the author of the 41-volume (as of 2026) *Dr. Alex Delaware* series. Alex is presented as having been born Jewish, he shows some occasional awareness of Jewish history and anti-Semitism, and seems comfortable in Jewish settings. But otherwise – virtually nothing. Jewishness seems to play no role in his personal or professional life, and he was therefore not included in this bibliography. The emphasis in the series is on his role as a psychologist.

Jonathan and Faye's son, **Jesse Kellerman** (born 1978), is also a mystery author [joining the family business?], in whose novels Jewish motifs are not prominent. The exceptions are two books co-authored by Jonathan and Jesse (see below), in which contemporary crime procedurals are combined with ancient Jewish folklore, mysticism and biblical tales, references to the Holocaust, and Hebrew terminology. The main character, Detective **Jacob Lev**, is a fallen-away Orthodox Jew and a rabbi's son, providing a direct link to a scholarly Jewish world. His internal conflict and investigations are driven by his heritage and knowledge of Jewish lore. Father and son have in addition co-authored a 6-volume (as of 2026) mystery series in which Jewish themes do not play a role.] [Amazon and Google/AIKellerman, Jonathan & Jesse Kellerman, [*Jacob Lev*], (**The Golem of Hollywood**) [hc, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2014] 978-0399162367 [pb, Headline, 2015] 978-0755395293 [*Jacob Lev is a troubled LAPD detective: brilliant but emotionally damaged, alcoholic, estranged from his colleagues, and the son of a rabbi whose faith he has long since abandoned. After a drunken blackout, he awakens beside an unknown woman with no memory of the previous night. Before he can make sense of what happened, he is drawn into an extraordinary homicide investigation.*

The case begins with the discovery of a severed human head in an abandoned Hollywood Hills house. Burned into the kitchen counter is the Hebrew word "Tzedek" ("Justice"), suggesting that the killer is deliberately invoking Jewish symbolism. Lev is assigned to a secretive Special Projects unit that suspects the murders may be connected to a series of inexplicable crimes.

As the investigation unfolds, Lev follows clues from Los Angeles to London, Oxford, and ultimately Prague, where the legendary Golem of Jewish folklore was said to have been created by Rabbi Judah Loew. The contemporary police investigation is interwoven with a parallel narrative reaching back to biblical times, exploring the origins of evil, Cain and Abel, divine justice, and the creation of supernatural beings. These two storylines gradually converge.

Rather than offering a conventional police procedural, the novel becomes a fusion of detective fiction, supernatural thriller, Jewish mystical fantasy, biblical reimagining, and philosophical meditation on justice, vengeance, free will, and redemption. Jacob gradually discovers that his own obscure family history is intimately connected to the mystery, forcing him to confront both his Jewish heritage and the possibility that ancient legends may be terrifyingly real. – ChatGPT]

Kellerman, Jonathan & Jesse Kellerman, (**The Golem of Paris**) [hc, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2015] 978-0399171734 [pb, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2016] 978-0515156089 [*More than a year after the traumatic events of *The Golem of Hollywood*, LAPD Detective **Jacob Lev** remains emotionally shattered. He has resumed drinking, is estranged from his father, and is haunted by memories of **Mai**, the enigmatic woman who may be far more than human. His rediscovered mother, long believed dead, remains institutionalized and unable to explain the secrets of her past. Meanwhile, the LAPD's mysterious Special Projects Division continues to monitor him for reasons he does not fully understand.*

*Assigned to a dead-end archival post, Jacob becomes fascinated by an unsolved 2004 murder in Los Angeles: a woman and her young son were executed with chilling ritual precision. The case appears impossible to solve until Jacob uncovers striking similarities to an unsolved homicide in France. His investigation takes him to **Paris**, where another recent murder suggests that the killer—or someone imitating the killer—has resurfaced.*

Working across France, the Czech Republic, Israel, Brooklyn, and California, Jacob gradually uncovers links between: his mother's hidden life in Communist Eastern Europe, Soviet-era intelligence and secret-police operations, wealthy Russian oligarchs with violent pasts, an international conspiracy spanning

decades, and the ancient legend of the **golem**, whose mysterious influence continues to shadow modern events.

As in the first novel, the investigation unfolds on two levels. One is a conventional detective story involving cold cases, forensic clues, and international police cooperation. The other explores Jewish mystical traditions, supernatural beings, and ancient struggles between forces of justice and destruction, leaving the reader uncertain where reality ends and myth begins. Note: The Kellermans did not continue this series because it did not sell well enough, according to statements made by Alex in 2025. – ChatGPT]

Harry Kemelman (1908–1996) – Boston-born mystery writer and professor of English, author of the 12-volume *Rabbi David Small* (a Conservative movement rabbi) series. The core Jewish element in his books is the use of the protagonist Rabbi David Small's Talmudic logic (*pilpul*) to solve mysteries, while also serving as a vehicle to educate readers about Jewish life, philosophy, and culture. The series takes place in *Barnard's Crossing*, a fictional, small coastal town in Massachusetts, located not far from Boston.

Jewish Analytical Techniques

- **Talmudic Logic (*Pilpul*):** Rabbi Small's primary detective skill is a method of analytical reasoning derived from traditional Jewish learning, specifically the Talmud. This approach involves rigorous examination of texts and situations, questioning witnesses, and laying traps for liars, reflecting the traditional role of a rabbi as a judge in a Jewish community.
- **Moral and Ethical Focus:** Unlike some other fictional detectives, Rabbi Small's investigations are driven by a desire to restore moral order and ensure justice for those unjustly accused, a reflection of Judaic ethics.

A Primer to Instruct the Gentiles

Kemelman explicitly stated the purpose of his books was to teach and explain Judaism to both Jews and Gentiles. The narratives are often woven with lessons from Judaic tradition, making them accessible even to those without prior knowledge of Jewish culture.

- **Portrayal of the American Jewish Community:** The books offer an insightful look into the complexities of post-war American Jewish life, including temple politics, interfaith marriages, and evolving social attitudes towards issues like women's liberation and civil rights.
- **Challenging Stereotypes:** Kemelman's work was significant for introducing nuanced Jewish characters into detective fiction, actively resisting anti-Semitic stereotypes prevalent in earlier literature.

Specific Religious Practices and Beliefs

- **Sabbath and Holidays:** The titles themselves (e.g., *Friday the Rabbi Slept Late*, *Saturday the Rabbi Went Hungry*, *Sunday the Rabbi Stayed Home*) highlight the centrality of the Sabbath and Jewish holidays, which often form the backdrop or context for the mysteries. The stories explore the practicalities and challenges of observing religious laws (*Halacha*) in a modern, secular American context.
- **Trips to Israel:** In some books, such as *Monday the Rabbi Took Off* and *One Fine Day the Rabbi Bought a Cross*, Rabbi Small and his wife visit Israel, allowing Kemelman to explore the different dynamics of Jewish life and religious issues within the Holy Land. [Google/AI]

Kemelman, Harry [Rabbi David Small #1], (**Friday The Rabbi Slept Late**) [hc, Crown Publishers, 1964] 978-0517506912 [pb, Fawcett, 1964] 978-0449231142

Kemelman, Harry, [Rabbi David Small #2], (**Saturday the Rabbi went Hungry**) [hc, Crown Publishers, 1966] B0007DU4X8 [pb, Fawcett, 1966] 978-0449014592

- Kemelman, Harry, [Rabbi *David Small* #3], (**Sunday the Rabbi Stayed Home**) [hc, Putnam Books, 1969] 978-0399107795 [pb, Penguin Books, 1971] 978-0140033427
- Kemelman, Harry, [Rabbi *David Small* #4], (**Monday the Rabbi Took Off**) [hc, G.P. Putnam, 1972] 978-0399105500 [pb, Fawcett, 1972] 978-0449017852
- Kemelman, Harry, [Rabbi *David Small* #5], (**Tuesday the Rabbi Saw Red**) [hc, Dutton, 1973] 978-0525630074 [pb, Fawcett Crest, 1973] 978-0140042498
- Kemelman, Harry, [Rabbi *David Small* #6], (**Wednesday the Rabbi Got Wet**) [hc, William Morrow, 1976] 978-0688030605 [pb, Fawcett Crest, 1977] 978-0449232910
- Kemelman, Harry, [Rabbi *David Small* #7], (**Thursday the Rabbi Walked Out**) [hc, William Morrow, 1978] 978-0688033620 [pb, Fawcett Crest, 1978] B009AEC280
- Kemelman, Harry, [Rabbi *David Small* #8], (**Conversations with Rabbi Small**) [hc, William Morrow, 1981] 978-0688006273 [pb, 1books, 2003] 978-1596872257
- Kemelman, Harry, [Rabbi *David Small* #9], (**Someday the Rabbi Will Leave**) [hc, William Morrow, 1985] 978-0688041748 [pb, 1books, 2003] 978-0743459112
- Kemelman, Harry, [Rabbi *David Small* #10], (**One Fine Day the Rabbi Bought a Cross**) [hc, William Morrow, 1987] 978-0688056315 [pb, Crest, 1990] 978-0449206874
- Kemelman, Harry, [Rabbi *David Small* #11], (**The Day the Rabbi Resigned**) [hc, Ballantine Books, 1992] 978-0449906811 [pb, Severn House Publishers, 1993] 978-0727850300
- Kemelman, Harry, [Rabbi *David Small* #12], (**That Day the Rabbi Left Town**) [hc, Ballantine, 1996] 978-0449910023 [pb, Fawcett Books, 1997] 978-0449225707

William X. Kienzle (1928–2001 in Detroit, MI) – *former Catholic priest, author of the 24-volume **Father Robert Koesler** series. In **Requiem for Moses** (18th in the series), Father Koesler agrees to host an unofficial wake for the Jewish Dr. Moses Green, at St. Joseph's Catholic Church. This sparks significant media attention and a "devil of a mystery" when the deceased appears to stir in his casket. Critics often compare the Father Koesler series to Harry Kemelman's Rabbi Small series.*

- **Detroit Backdrop:** Like his creator, Father Koesler is based in **Detroit**, a city where the Catholic and Jewish communities historically coexist, providing a realistic setting for interfaith storylines.
- **Interfaith Exploration:** Kienzle frequently uses his mysteries to explore the friction between traditional religious laws and contemporary human nature, occasionally involving non-Catholic characters to highlight these themes. [Google/AI]

Kienzle, William X., (**Requiem for Moses** [hc, Andrews McMeel Publishers, 1996]) 978-0836210422 [pb, Ballantine Books, 1997] 978-0345402912

Ellen Kirschman (born 1939, New York City) is the author of the 5-volume **Dr. Dot Meyerhoff** Mystery series. A police psychologist herself, Kirschman uses her professional expertise to write these psychological mysteries featuring a protagonist with the same career. Her books include Jewish content primarily through her mystery protagonist's identity and specific short fiction. While her main mystery series does not focus on religious themes, she identifies as Jewish by heritage and has written about the rise of antisemitism and her family's history. Although the books are not primarily about religion, Dot's Jewish heritage is an integral part of her character, influencing her thoughts and choices. The first book in the series, **Burying Ben**, has been categorized as a best seller in "Jewish American Fiction" on some platforms.

"The Almost Sisters": This short story was published in the 2022 anthology *Jewish Noir II: Tales of Crime and Other Dark Deeds* (see Kenneth Wishnia in this Bibliography). The anthology explores various aspects of Jewish culture and religion, including themes of antisemitism, identity, and assimilation. In her

non-fiction work and public writing, Kirschman has shared personal connections to Jewish history and contemporary issues:

Heritage: *She is a second-generation American whose paternal grandparents fled Russia to escape the Czar.*

Social Commentary: *She has written about her alarm regarding the modern rise of antisemitism in the United States and globally.*

Character Inspiration: *She has noted that she and her protagonist, Dot Meyerhoff, share several traits, including their Jewish identity and experience working as civilians in male-dominated law enforcement subcultures.* [Google/AI]

Kirschman, Ellen, [Dot Meyerhoff #1] (**Burying Ben**) [pb, Aakenbaaken & Kent, 2013] 978-1938436116

Kirschman, Ellen, [Dot Meyerhoff #2] (**The Right Wrong Thing**) [hc, Oceanview Publishing, 2015] 978-1608091546 [pb, Oceanview Publishing, 2015] 978-1608092246

Kirschman, Ellen, [Dot Meyerhoff #3] (**The Fifth Reflection**) [hc, Oceanview Publishing, 2017] 978-1608092505 [pb, Open Road Integrated Media, 2024] 978-1504094221

Kirschman, Ellen, [Dot Meyerhoff #4] (**The Answer to His Prayers**) [pb, Hillcrest House Publishing, 2022] 978-1737863304

Kirschman, Ellen, [Dot Meyerhoff #5] (**Call Me Carmela**) [pb, Open Road Media, 2024] 978-1504095754

Zachary Klein (born 1948) – Colourful, New Jersey-born, Boston-based former VISTA volunteer, personal counsellor, legal and jury consultant, and author of the 4-volume **Matt Jacob** detective series. The series contains significant Jewish content, primarily through the protagonist's identity and specific plotlines that explore Jewish culture and history. Matt Jacob, is a Jewish private investigator whose identity is a recurring, if sometimes detached, element of his character.

Perspective on Religion: Matt's connection to Judaism is often portrayed as cultural or historical rather than religious. Klein famously wrote a line for Matt stating that **his "connection to Jewish ended when the hospital tossed his foreskin into a tray after his birth"**.

Thematic Focus: No Saving Grace: The third novel in the series, *No Saving Grace*, is the most prominent example of Jewish content within the series:

- **The Plot:** Matt is hired to clear a **rabbi** of murder charges.
- **Setting:** The investigation leads Matt into the world of **Hasidic orthodoxy**.
- **Conflict:** The story explores the intersection of religious fundamentalism and a white supremacist movement, forcing Matt to confront his own identity and moral boundaries.

Author's Connection

Zachary Klein's own upbringing heavily informs these elements. He spent years in yeshivas (including a Hasidic one) and lived in the home of a rebbitzin (rabbi's wife) during his youth. He has noted that while he is not religious, he considers himself a Jewish American and uses his writing to explore the complexities of that heritage. [Google/AI]

Klein, Zachary [Matt Jacob #1], (**Still Among the Living**) [hc, HarperCollins, 1990] 978-0060164119 [pb, Farrar, 1993] 978-1858134659

Klein, Zachary [Matt Jacob #2], (**Two Way Toll**) [hc, HarperCollins, 1991] 978-0060164201 [pb, Fontana, 1992] 978-0006179269

Klein, Zachary [Matt Jacob #3], (**No Saving Grace**) [hc, Ballantine Books, 1994] 978-0449907337 [mass mkt pb, Fawcett, 1994] 978-0804110143

Klein, Zachary [*Matt Jacob #4*], (**Ties That Bind**) [pb, Polis Books, 2015] 978-1940610269

Koplowitz-Breier, Anat & David J. Zucker, “Fictional Rabbis’ Spouse Sleuths: Married to the Rabbi, Wedded to Mystery”, an Open Access article in **Modern Judaism**, Volume 45, Issue 3, October 2025, pp. 281- 303, <https://doi.org/10.1093/mj/kjaf015>. Link:

<https://academic.oup.com/mj/article/45/3/281/8305702> . From the **Abstract**: *These spouse sleuths first appear more than three decades after Harry Kemelman’s pioneering Rabbi David Small mysteries. They occupy a liminal “outsider within” position in their communities. Through analysis of four characters—Sharon Kahn’s Ruby Rothman (1998–2006), Rochelle Krich’s Molly Blume (2002–2005), Naomi Graetz’s Toby Kramer (2004), and Brenda Barrie’s Dan Goldin (2011), all rabbi’s-spouse sleuths—the article reveals how this innovative subgenre creates protagonists who navigate between insider knowledge and outsider perspective. Unlike conventional clerical detective fiction, these works feature characters who lack formal religious authority yet possess privileged community access. The protagonists of these novels employ distinct investigative approaches, from amateur detection to academic research methods. The subgenre’s emergence in early twenty-first century works, all by female authors, represents a significant literary innovation that challenges traditional representations of Jewish leadership and gender dynamics. By transforming the marginalized position of the rabbi’s spouse into a narrative advantage, these works create a unique literary space where questions of religious identity, gender equality, and cultural belonging can be explored through the accessible medium of mystery fiction.*

Nicole Krauss (born 1974 in New York City, now residing in Brooklyn) – an internationally acclaimed American author known for her complex exploration of Jewish identity and memory. She has published five major novels and numerous uncollected short stories. She frequently uses mystery and “detective” frameworks to explore Jewish identity, historical trauma, and the weight of memory. While not typical crime thrillers, her novels often center on plundered property, forged identities, and literal disappearances.

Krauss, Nicole, (**The History of Love** [hc, W.W. Norton & Co., 2005]) 978-1419342240 [pb, Norton, 2006] 978-0393328622 [*This novel is framed as a literary mystery where characters piece together a fragmented past through a lost manuscript. The primary mystery involves a book, “The History of Love”, which was written by a Holocaust survivor (Leo Gursky) but published under the name of another man who plagiarized it. The plot is driven by the dislocation of Jews during World War II. 14-year-old Alma Singer embarks on a “detective” quest to find the real author and her namesake, uncovering secrets about her family’s Jewish heritage and the survival of their culture through stories.*]

Krauss, Nicole, (**Great House** [hc, Norton, 2010]) 978-0393079982 [pb, Norton, 2011] 978-0393340648 [*The central “detective” element here is a provenance mystery involving a massive writing desk with multiple drawers. The desk was plundered by the Nazis from a Jewish family in Budapest in 1944. Its subsequent journey involves it being stolen, inherited, and eventually tracked down by descendants. One narrative thread involves a Chilean poet who disappears at the hands of Pinochet’s secret police, adding a layer of political crime. The desk serves as a symbol for the “portable homeland” of Jewish learning—a reference to the “Great House” (Yavneh) established by Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai after the destruction of the Temple. Brother-and-sister Yoav and Leah Weisz are the key protagonists in pursuit. The mystery is one of cultural and physical restitution.*]

Krauss, Nicole, (**Forest Dark** [hc, Harper, 2017]) 978-0062430991 [pb, Harper Perennial, 2018] 978-0062431004 [*Krauss employs a missing-persons mystery to explore existential and metaphysical questions. Jules Epstein, a wealthy New York lawyer, disappears in Tel Aviv after giving away his fortune and art collection. Simultaneously, a novelist named Nicole becomes embroiled in a mystery regarding the unpublished papers of Franz Kafka, involving a real-life legal battle over Kafka’s estate. The book examines what it means to be Jewish in both the homeland (Israel) and the diaspora. The mystery of the Kafka papers touches on the theft and preservation of Jewish intellectual property and the complexities of Israeli law.*] [Google/AI]

Rochelle Majer Krich (1947–2025, born in Bayreuth Germany to Holocaust survivors who moved to the US) – was an American author of mystery and suspense novels known for incorporating Jewish themes and Orthodox detectives into her work. Arrived in the US at the age of four and grew up in Los Angeles. She was a trailblazer in the “clerical detective” subgenre, featuring Orthodox Jewish protagonists, and authored the **Molly Blume** (4 volumes) and **Jessie Drake** (5 volumes) detective series and several standalone mysteries as well. She lived in Los Angeles with her husband and six children. [Google/AI]

Across her work, several subjects recur: Orthodox Jewish life in contemporary America; Holocaust trauma and inherited memory; family secrets; moral responsibility; women’s roles in traditional and modern Judaism; crime within affluent and religious communities; and the tension between secular society and religious observance. Unlike Harry Kemelman, whose mysteries often revolve around synagogue life, Krich generally uses Judaism as an integral part of her characters’ identities while maintaining the pacing and suspense of mainstream crime fiction.

The most important novel in her **Jessie Drake** series from the standpoint of Jewish themes is **Angel of Death**. Jessie unexpectedly learns that her mother is Jewish and concealed both her identity and her Holocaust past. The investigation becomes intertwined with family history, survivor trauma, and questions of identity. This revelation changes Jessie’s understanding of herself throughout the remainder of the series. The **Jessie Drake** books are primarily police procedurals with strong psychological elements.

Molly Blume is an observant Orthodox Jewish freelance journalist and true-crime writer in Los Angeles. Unlike **Jessie Drake**, Molly is openly Orthodox from the beginning. These novels naturally incorporate: Sabbath observance, kosher living, synagogue life, Orthodox family dynamics, dating and marriage. And Jewish ethical values - without becoming didactic. Because Molly is a journalist rather than a police officer, the novels combine investigative reporting with amateur detection. The books also explore elder abuse, domestic violence, medical ethics, fraud, psychological manipulation, Holocaust memory and conflicts within Jewish families.

Krich occupies an important place in American Jewish mystery writing because she demonstrates that explicitly Orthodox Jewish protagonists can function successfully within mainstream detective fiction. Her work helped broaden representations of Jewish women in crime fiction by creating capable investigators. – ChatGPT]

Krich, Rochelle Majer, (**Where’s Mommy Now?** [pb, Pinnacle Books, 1990]) 978-1558173668

Krich, Rochelle Majer [**Jessie Drake** #1], (**Fair Game** [hc, Mysterious Press, 1993]) 978-0892965076 [mass mkt pb, Mysterious Press, 1994] 978-0446403108

Krich, Rochelle Majer, [**Jessie Drake** #2], (**Angel of Death** [hc, Mysterious Press, 1994]) 978-0892965083 [mass mkt pb, Mysterious Press, 1996] 978-0446403115

Krich, Rochelle Majer, [**Jessie Drake** #3], (**Blood Money** [hc, Twilight, 1999]) 978-0380973798 [pb, Twilight, 2000] 978-0380789542

Krich, Rochelle Majer, [**Jessie Drake** #4], (**Dead Air** [hc, William Morrow, 2000]) 978-0380977697 [mass mkt pb, Avon, 2001] 978-0380807017

Krich, Rochelle Majer, [**Jessie Drake** #5], (**Shadows of Sin** [hc, William Morrow, 2001]) 978-0380977703 [mass mkt pb, Avon, 2002] 978-0380807024

Krich, Rochelle Majer, ([**Molly Blume** #1] **Blues in the Night** [hc, Ballantine Books, 2002]) 978-0345449719 [mass mkt pb, Ballantine Books, 2003] 978-0449007266

Krich, Rochelle Majer, [**Molly Blume** #2], (**Dream House** [hc, Ballantine Books, 2003]) 978-0345449726 [mass mkt pb, Fawcett, 2004] 978-0449007273

Krich, Rochelle Majer, [**Molly Blume** #3], (**Grave Endings** [hc, Ballantine Books, 2004]) 978-0345468109 [mass mkt pb, Ballantine Books, 2005] 978-0345468116

Krich, Rochelle Majer, [*Molly Blume #4*], (**Now You See Me ...**[pb, Ballantine Books, 2005]) 978-0345468123

Krich, Rochelle Majer, ([*Other*] (**Till Death Do Us Part** [mass mkt pb, Avon, 1992]) 978-0380765331

Krich, Rochelle Majer, (**Nowhere to Run** [mass mkt pb, Avon, 1994]) 978-0380765348 [hc, Piatkus Books, 1995] 978-0749902803

Krich, Rochelle Majer, (**Speak No Evil** [hc, Mysterious Press, 1996]) 978-0892965847 [pb, Mysterious Press, 1997] 978-0446405058

Krich, Rochelle Majer, (**Fertile Ground**) [hc, William Morrow, 1998] 978-0380973781 [mass mkt pb, Avon, 1999] 978-0380789535

Joe Kubert (1926–2012, born in Poland, brought to US as an infant) was a highly influential American comic book artist, editor, and educator whose career spanned over seven decades. He is widely recognized as a titan of the industry, particularly for his definitive work at DC Comics and for establishing a legacy of formal art education through his namesake school. He increasingly integrated Jewish themes and history into his work during the later stages of his career. Born in a Polish shtetl and raised in Brooklyn by a kosher butcher, Kubert's Jewish heritage influenced several significant projects.

Key Jewish Works and Themes

Yossel: April 19, 1943 (2003): This graphic novel is an “alternate autobiography” imagining Kubert's life if his family had not immigrated to America. It follows a young Jewish artist, Yossel, during the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising.

Jew Gangster: A Father's Admonition (2005): A semi-autobiographical story set in Depression-era Brooklyn, exploring Jewish life, morality, and the struggle to survive in a tough urban environment.

The Adventures of Yaakov and Isaac: Beginning in the late 1980s, Kubert created these strips for the Lubavitcher children's magazine *The Moshiah Times*. These stories imparted Torah values and explored Jewish history, such as the story of **Alexander the Great and the High Priest**.

The Golem: In 1946, a very young Kubert illustrated a story titled “The Golem” for *Challenger Comics*. It is often cited as one of the first comic book stories to explicitly address the Holocaust as a Jewish event.

Dina Babbitt Campaign: Kubert led a campaign to persuade the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum to return portraits painted by Holocaust survivor Dina Babbitt. He gathered over 450 signatures from comic creators to support her cause.

Postmemory: Scholars often describe Kubert's work as a vivid recounting of the 1.5 million Jewish children killed in the Holocaust, fueled by “postmemory”—the experience of those whose lives were shaped by stories of traumatic events that preceded their birth.

Israeli Archives: Original pages from *Yossel* were donated to the **Israeli Cartoon Museum** in Holon, marking a significant cultural link between Kubert's work and Israel. [Google/AI]

Kubert, Joe, (**Yossel April 19, 1943** [hc, Ibooks, 2003]) 978-0743475167 [Kubert is best known for heroic war and superhero stories, but here he tackles wartime heroism of a different nature, as he depicts the courageous, doomed Warsaw ghetto uprising. Imagining his life as it might have been had his parents not left for America in 1926, Kubert portrays himself as a ghetto youngster whose drawing ability ingratiates him with the Nazis, allowing him to overhear their plans and aid the underground resistance. Besides depicting life in the ghetto with shocking vividness, Kubert shows the barbarism of the concentration camps through the eyes of an escapee. In a striking departure from standard comics presentation, the artwork is printed in rough, penciled form rather than as finished ink drawings. The visual looseness this gives to work that is stylized by mainstream-comics standards conjures a potent intimacy that adds to the story's impact. - Gordon Flagg, Booklist]

Kubert, Joe, (**Jew Gangster: A Father's Admonition** [UNKNO, 2005]) 978-1596878273 [pb, Vertigo, 2011] 978-1401231798 [With his father's words, Don't be a jew gangster, still ringing in his head, a young

man finds himself doing just that, as no other path in life opens for him. Easy money and easier women lure him into doing the dirty work of the local gang; it's not a pretty life, but he can eat well, and his mother's apartment continues to get heat all through the cold winter. But what he has to pay — in flesh, in pride, in honor — may not be worth all he earns. With the same intensity and eye for detail that he put into Yossel, Joe Kubert recreates a time when even the most innocent person was caught up in the dark underbelly of society. - Amazon]

Shulamith Englander Kustanowitz (1944–2011, born in Jersey City, NJ) was an American Jewish author, editor, and community leader. In **Murder at the Minyan**, Rabbi London has to contend with an antagonist driven by an obsession with a religious imperative: the requirement of a 10-man **minyan** for the purpose of reciting the mourner's Kaddish. The murderer reasons that by killing specific people, he can create enough mourners to guarantee an adequate daily turnout! [Google/AI]

Kustanowitz, Shulamit, (**Murder at the Minyan** [pb, Infinity Publishing, 2010]) 978-0741433824

Rita Lakin (1930–2023) was a pioneering American screenwriter, producer, and novelist, recognized as one of the first female showrunners in television history. Born in **New York**, she established herself as a skilled writer of various television series, including various "soap operas". In her later years, Lakin became a successful novelist, authoring the 9-volume **Gladdy Gold Mystery series**, which focuses on a group of "zany" Jewish senior women in Fort Lauderdale who become private investigators. Her Jewish identity, which was not given expression (or even consciously suppressed) when she was writing for mainstream American television, was fully evident in this series. The books are noted for their Jewish humor and heavy use of Yiddish, so much so that Lakin included a glossary in the first novel, **Getting Old Is Murder**, to translate terms for non-Jewish readers. She based the characters on her mother, aunts, and their friends who moved from the Bronx to Florida condominiums where approximately 90% of the residents were Jewish.

In addition: She contributed the story "The Nazi in the Basement" to the anthology Jewish Noir II (2022 – see Kenneth Wishnia in this Bibliography), which explores themes of Jewish identity and antisemitism. She co-authored the theatrical play Saturday Night at Grossinger's, set at the famous Jewish resort in the Catskills. In her personal memoir, she reflects on her career as a Jewish woman navigating a male-dominated industry where she was often "the only woman in the room". [Note: A number of the series books are also out in large-print Thorndike editions. Later re-issues of some are in the CreateSpace Independent format.] [Google/AI]

Lakin, Rita, [*Gladdy Gold* #1], (**Getting Old Is Murder** [mass mkt pb, Dell, 2005]) 978-0440242581

Lakin, Rita, [*Gladdy Gold* #2], (**Getting Old Is The Best Revenge** [mass mkt pb, Dell, 2006]) 978-0440242598

Lakin, Rita, [*Gladdy Gold* #3], (**Getting Old Is Criminal** [mass mkt pb, Dell, 2007]) 978-0440243861

Lakin, Rita, [*Gladdy Gold* #4], (**Getting Old Is To Die For** [mass mkt pb, Dell, 2007]) 978-0440243878

Lakin, Rita, [*Gladdy Gold* #5], (**Getting Old Is A Disaster** [mass mkt pb, Dell, 2008]) 978-0440243885

Lakin, Rita, [*Gladdy Gold* #6], (**Getting Old Is Tres Dangereux** [mass mkt pb, Dell, 2010]) 978-0440245421

Lakin, Rita, [*Gladdy Gold* #7], (**Getting Old Can Kill You** [mass mkt pb, Dell, 2011]) 9780440245605

Lakin, Rita, [*Gladdy Gold* #8], (**Getting Old Can Hurt You** [hc, Severn House, 2018]) 978-0727888068

Lakin, Rita, [*Gladdy Gold* #9], (**Getting Old Will Haunt You** [hc, Severn House, 2019]) 978-0727888563

Adam Langer (born in Chicago, 1967, resides in New York City) [*After graduating from Vassar College in 1988, he returned to Chicago and spent over a decade working as a theater director,*

playwright, and freelance journalist, writing frequently for the *Chicago Reader*. In 2000, he moved to New York City after winning a National Arts Journalism Fellowship at Columbia University. He shifted his focus to fiction writing and achieved critical acclaim with his 2004 debut novel, **Crossing California**, which vividly depicted Jewish life in late-1970s Chicago. He followed it with several successful books, including *The Washington Story*, *Ellington Boulevard*, and *Cyclorama*. Alongside his career as a novelist, Langer is a prominent journalist and currently serves as the Executive Editor for *The Forward*. He crosses into the mystery thriller genre, specifically through metafictional, satirical literary thrillers. While his earliest, most famous works like *Crossing California* focus on Jewish identity and coming-of-age in Chicago, his subsequent novels lean heavily into elements of crime, hoaxes, and noir conventions. Rather than using classic “Jewish mob” or historical Jewish underworld crime motifs as primary narrative drivers, Langer filters Jewish identity through the contemporary publishing industry, intellectual property crimes, and literary deception.

Langer, Adam, (**The Thieves of Manhattan** [pb, Random House, 2010]) 978-1400068913 [*This novel is a direct dive into a crime-caper narrative. Styled with a distinct crime noir flavor, it follows a barista and aspiring writer who gets sucked into a high-stakes con game and literary hoax. Langer uses hard-boiled thriller pacing and a hyper-literary “lingo” to satirize the ethics of the publishing world.*

Langer, Adam, (**The Salinger Contract** [pb, Open Road Media, 2013]) 978-1453297940 [*This is Langer’s most explicit approach to the mystery thriller genre. The plot centers on a writer named Adam Langer who encounters a successful crime novelist. The crime novelist has been roped into a dangerous, lucrative scheme by a sinister Chicago millionaire who forces famous authors to write manuscripts solely for his private collection. It features extortion, forced isolation, classic cliffhangers, and a layer of paranoia.*

The “crimes” in Langer’s thrillers are acts of forgery, theft of identity, intellectual property fraud, and psychological manipulation rather than physical violence or traditional racketeering. When Jewish identity intersects with his suspense plots, it is usually manifested in the neuroses, ethical dilemmas, and cultural survival instincts of his characters as they contend with secular, cutthroat American industries. [Google/AI]

Diane Lawson (est. birth 1969 in La Russell, MO) is a Jewish psychotherapist working in San Antonio, Texas – she wrote this book about a psychotherapist, Dr. Nora Goodman, whose patients start dying suspiciously]

Lawson, Diane, (**A Tightly Raveled Mind** [pb, Cinco Puntos Press, 2014]) 978-1935955924 [*While Nora Goodman follows a historical lineage of Jewish women crime-solvers (ranging from Faye Kellerman’s Orthodox protagonists to Michael A. Kahn’s savvy lawyers), Lawson contributes a highly psychological layer. Her protagonist utilizes Freudian analysis to decipher motives, turning the crime-solving process into a breakdown of the human psyche. Lawson anchors the protagonist’s internal conflict in her heritage, explicitly defining Nora as the daughter of a “ranting bipolar Talmudic scholar”. The narrative weaves cultural expectations, Jewish identity, and deeply rooted family dysfunctions into a traditional Texas noir thriller setting. The book plays on the juxtaposition of Jewish intellectualism against an insular, “uppity” Texas social backdrop and a skeptical, non-Jewish private investigator who represents street-smart pragmatism over Freudian theory.* - Google/AI]

Zachary Lazar (born 1968, Phoenix, AZ) – Professor of English at Tulane U. His writings frequently explore Jewish identity, history, and mysticism, often through a secular or cultural lens.

His work is deeply informed by his own Jewish heritage and its connection to larger themes of exile and violence. I Pity the Poor Immigrant (2014) is central to Lazar’s exploration of Jewishness. It interweaves the life of Jewish American gangster Meyer Lansky with a fictional investigation into the murder of an Israeli poet. The book meditates on the 20th-century Jewish experience, the desire for a homeland, and the paradoxes of modern Israel. Recurring Jewish themes:

Jewish Mysticism: Lazar has referenced the *Shekhinah* (the feminine aspect of God) and the Lurianic Kabbalah concept of “shattering the vessels” as part of his creative process and thematic focus.

Cultural Identity: Lazar describes some of his work as “accidentally Jewish,” noting that while his characters may not be religious, they are steeped in Jewish culture and the search for meaning. He uses Hebrew terms like *olim* (those who “go up” to Israel) and *yordim* (those who leave) as metaphors for the human condition.

Holocaust Legacy: His narratives often feature secondary characters or historical backdrops involving Holocaust survivors and the generational reverberations of that trauma.

Lazar is an active contributor to the Jewish Book Council and has discussed his efforts to write about Jewishness in a way that avoids traditional irony or self-deprecation. [Google/AI]

Lazar, Zachary, (**Evening’s Empire: The Story of My Father’s Murder** [hc, Little Brown & Co., 2009] 978-0316037686 [pb, Back Bay Books, 2010] 978-0316037693

Lazar, Zachary, (**I Pity the Poor Immigrant** [hc, Little, Brown, 2014]) 978-0316254038 [pb, Back Bay Books, 2015] 978-0316254052

Lazar, Zachary, “Meyer Lansky’s Ghost Haunts My Visit to Miami Beach,” *Tablet*, April 14, 2014 . See also Adam Kirsch’s review, “I Dream of Lansky: The Dead Jewish Mob King Rules Zachary Lazar’s Law-Bending Novel,” *Tablet*, April 14, 2014]

John Lescroart — (born 1948 in Houston, TX) is a contemporary American author of more than 30 novels, bestselling legal and crime thrillers. He has two main protagonists, San Francisco police detectives, Dismas Hardy and **Abe Glitsky**. Abe is half-Jewish and half-African American. While he is often described as “scary-looking” with a prominent facial scar, his internal character is defined by a rigid moral code and sensitivity. Abe’s father, Nat Glitsky, is an Orthodox Jew. His background and relationship with Abe provide a recurring cultural and familial context for Abe’s identity within the series. Though his physical appearance is strongly African-American, the books frequently reference his Jewish heritage and the unique challenges this dual identity presents, especially in the context of San Francisco politics. [Google/AI] The Lescroart novels in which Glitsky plays a central or significant role:

Lescroart. John, (**Dead Irish** [hc, Dutton Adult, 1989] 978-1556111594 [pb, Island Books, 1996] 978-0747254317

Lescroart. John, [*Abe Glitsky* #1] (**A Certain Justice** [hc, Dutton, 1995] 978-1556114458 [pb, Signet, 2006] 978-0451217769

Lescroart. John, [*Abe Glitsky* #2] (**Guilt** [hc, Delacorte Press, 1997] 978-0385316552 [pb, Dell Island Books, 1998] 978-0747254577

Lescroart. John, (**The Hearing** [hc, Dutton Adult, 2001] 978-0525945758 [pb, Berkley, 2002] 978-0451204899

Lescroart. John, (**The First Law: An Abe Glitsky/Dismas Hardy Mystery** [hc, Dutton Adult, 2003]) 978-0525947059 [pb, Signet, 2004] 978-0451210227

Lescroart. John, (**The Second Chair** [hc, Dutton Adult, 2004]) 978-0525947752 [pb, Berkley, 2004] 978-0451211415

Lescroart. John, (**The Motive** [hc, Dutton Adult, 2004]) 978-0525948445 [pb, Berkley, 2005] 978-0451215727

Lescroart. John, [*Abe Glitsky* #3] (**Damage** [hc, Dutton, 2011] 978-0525951766 [pb, Berkley, 2012] 978-0451235428

Lescroart. John, (**The Keeper** [hc, Atria Books, 2014] 978-1476709185 [pb, Headline Book Publishing, 2015] 978-0755393251

Daniel Levin (born 1975 in Hollywood, FL)- an American Jewish lawyer and author. *The Last Ember* is an archaeological crime thriller, whose protagonist, an American lawyer named **Jonathan Marcus**, stumbles onto a hidden message in an ancient marble fragment in Rome. This discovery pulls him and **Dr. Emili Travia**, a UN antiquities preservationist and former flame of his, into a high-stakes race to find the legendary **Tabernacle Menorah**.

The plot centers on the search for the solid gold, eight-foot-high Menorah stolen from the Second Temple in Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 A.D. The protagonists must outmaneuver a dangerous radical known as **Salah ad-Din**, who is part of a modern plot to erase all Jewish and Christian historical ties to Jerusalem's Temple Mount. The journey takes the characters through the hidden tunnels of the Colosseum, the Roman Forum, and the biblical-era labyrinth beneath Jerusalem. [Google/AI]

Levin, Daniel, (**The Last Ember**) [hc, Riverhead Books, 2009] 978-1594488726 [pb, Riverhead Trade, 2010] 978-1594484605

Meyer Levin (1905–1981, born in Chicago and died in Jerusalem) [*Raised in the gritty, working-class “Bloody Nineteenth” ward and educated at the University of Chicago. Studied art in Paris (1925), worked on a collective farm (Kibbutz Yagur) in Mandatory Palestine (1928), and briefly lived in New York managing an experimental marionette theater. Returned to serve as an associate editor and film critic for Esquire magazine. Primarily based in New York in the 1940s-50s, interspersed with major stints in Europe as a World War II correspondent. Between 1958 and 1981, he maintained dual, part-time residency, splitting his final decades between homes in New York City and Jerusalem. He was a pioneering Jewish-American novelist, journalist, and filmmaker whose work relentlessly explored the complexities of Jewish identity, assimilation, and the horrors of the Holocaust. He began his career at just 18 as a cub reporter for the Chicago Daily News, where he covered the infamous 1924 Leopold and Loeb murder trial—an event that would alter the trajectory of his career. He established himself as a gritty social realist with novels like **The Old Bunch** (1937), which captured the lives of second-generation Jewish immigrants during the Great Depression. During World War II, working for the U.S. Office of War Information and Jewish news agencies, he became one of the first American journalists to enter liberated concentration camps. This trauma turned his creative focus entirely toward chronicling the Holocaust and documenting the mass migration of survivors to Israel, which he captured in his 1948 film **The Illegals**. [See the entry on this film in the companion Filmography.] In 1956, Levin achieved massive commercial success with **Compulsion**, a fictionalization of the Leopold and Loeb case. Despite his literary achievements, his later life was deeply overshadowed by a bitter, litigious obsession over his rejected stage adaptation of **The Diary of Anne Frank**, a conflict that isolated him from the mainstream literary establishment but defined his legacy as a fierce defender of uncompromised Jewish memory.*]

Levin, Meyer, (**Compulsion** [hc, originally published in 1956 by Simon & Schuster] B01H0Q8L6Q [pb, HarperCollins, 1995] 978-0006476191 [*Levin pioneered the “documentary novel” (a precursor to Truman Capote’s In Cold Blood) by fictionalizing the real-life 1924 Leopold and Loeb murder case. In his hands, Jewish identity and anxiety over Jewish criminality serve as the primary narrative drivers. The plot follows two wealthy, brilliant Jewish college students in Chicago—Judd Steiner and Artie Straus (avatars for Nathan Leopold and Richard Loeb)—who kidnap and murder a 14-year-old Jewish boy, Paulie Kessler (Bobby Franks), strictly as an intellectual exercise to prove they are Nietzschean supermen. Levin, who actually attended the University of Chicago with the killers and covered the case as a young reporter, used the thriller framework to dissect the specific anxieties of the American-Jewish diaspora. Levin deliberately weaves specific Jewish motifs throughout the narrative to drive both the tension and the underlying subtext. A major driving tension in the book’s midsection is the reaction of the Chicago Jewish community. Levin shows how deeply the community feared that the heinous actions of these two privileged boys would ignite a wave of violent antisemitism. The community actively demanded swift justice to prove that “Jewish law” did not condone such behavior, making communal self-preservation a major plot mechanism. Levin also uses the crime as a cautionary tale regarding the loss of Jewish identity. He frames the killers’ psychological deviance not just as a medical “compulsion,” but as a spiritual pathology stemming from their rejection of traditional Jewish morality in favor of secular, European nihilism. Their*]

crime is driven by a desire to assimilate so deeply into elite Western thought that they lose their human empathy. The narrative explicitly deals with internalized antisemitism. The killers intentionally target a victim from their own insular, elite Jewish neighborhood, treating their own people as a testing ground for their perceived superiority. – Amazon & Google/AI]

Ronald Levitsky (born 1949 in Chicago?) is an American mystery author and educator best known for his 4-volume series of legal thrillers featuring civil liberties lawyer **Nate Rosen**. He handles sensitive cases involving racism, religious fundamentalism, and Native American rights across the United States. Nate Rosen is often described as an “affirmative Jewish protagonist” who struggles with his identity as a Jew while defending complex or controversial figures, including anti-Semites and murderers. His Jewishness is a central lens through which he views justice and morality. Levitsky’s stories often explore the intersection of traditional Jewish thought—such as the dilemma between existence and justice—and contemporary legal issues. Though primarily a legal thriller writer, he has also addressed his own identity as a descendant of Holocaust survivors in his later public life, discussing how the survivor experience and anti-Semitism informed his worldview and desire to write about human rights and social justice. [Google/AI]

Levitsky, Ronald [*Nate Rosen #1*] (**The Love that Kills** [hc, Scribner, 1991] 978-0684192956 [pb, Berkley, 1993] 978-0451403742

Levitsky, Ronald, (**The Wisdom of Serpents** [hc, Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1992] 978-0684194110

Levitsky, Ronald, (**Stone Boy** [hc, Scribner, 1993] 978-0684195544

Levitsky, Ronald [*Nate Rosen #2*], (**The Truth that Kills**/re-release of the *Wisdom of Serpents* [mass mkt pb, Onyx, 1994]) 978-0451404015

Levitsky, Ronald [*Nate Rosen #3*], (**The Spirit that Kills**/re-release of *Stone Boy* [mass mkt pb, Onyx, 1995]) 978-0451405401

Levitsky, Ronald [*Nate Rosen #4*], (**The Innocence That Kills**) [hc, Scribner, 1994] 978-0684197074 [pb, independently published, 2018] 978-1717875839

Lily Barrish Levner (est. born 1985? In Kiamesha Lake, NY) – She comes from a family deeply rooted in the Catskills resort industry; her grandparents worked in the resorts, and her father served as the director of the Monticello Library. She pays homage to her paternal grandparents by naming her new novel’s main characters Dotty and Abe Barrish after them. Her writing is praised by historians for providing an “authentic glimpse” into the Borscht Belt era. It captures the atmosphere of resorts like *Kutsher’s*, *the Pines*, and *the Concord*, which were central to Jewish life in the mid-20th century. The “exploits” of *Murder Inc.* and Jewish organized crime form a backdrop to her novels, specifically the search for a cache of loot reputedly concealed somewhere in the Catskills by such individuals. [Google/AI]

Levner, Lily Barrish, (**Banquets & Bootleg Bounty** [Catskills Capers]), [pb, Neversink Press, 2024] 979-8990895201

Levner, Lily Barrish, (**Mountain Maître D’ Mystery** [Catskills Capers]) [pb, Neversink Press, 2025] 979-8990895218

Rachel Sharona Lewis (est. birth – 1987?) – full-time community organizer who coordinates faith-based social justice efforts in the Greater Boston area. She lives with her family in Watertown. She is the twin sister of Tali, the partner of Rabbi Mimi. The protagonist of her novels is **Rabbi Vivian Green**, a young, queer assistant rabbi solving mysteries in a contemporary Conservative congregation in Providence, Rhode Island. In ***The Rabbi Who Prayed with Fire* (2021)**, Rabbi Vivian uses Midrash (rabbinic commentary) to address communal trauma. The book directly references the 2018 Tree of Life shooting, exploring how Jewish communities balance valid fears of antisemitism with the religious

obligation of *Tikkun Olam* and solidarity with other marginalized groups. In ***The Rabbi Who Prayed for the City* (2023)**, she uses Jewish folklore (e.g. the Golem narrative) to examine the ethics of artificial intelligence. She also examines the complexities of the American Jewish community's relationship to Israel, and its attitude to climate change and other contemporary issues. [Google/AI]

Lewis, Rachel Sharona, [*Rabbi Vivian Green #1*] (***The Rabbi Who Prayed with Fire*** (pb, Ladiesladies Press, 2021) 978-1792356520

Lewis, Rachel Sharona, [*Rabbi Vivian Green #21*] (***The Rabbi Who Prayed for the City*** (pb, Ladiesladies Press, 2023) 979-8218231132

Laura Lippman (born 1959 in Atlanta, GA). Her writing frequently incorporates Jewish characters and themes, often reflecting the cultural landscape of her longtime home, Baltimore. While she was raised Presbyterian and identifies as an atheist, she has a Jewish paternal grandfather and is married to David Simon (creator of *The Wire*), who is Jewish. She has noted that she engages with cultural Judaism through her family life. Key examples of Jewish content in her work include: [Google/AI]

Lady in the Lake: The protagonist, **Maddie Schwartz**, is a Jewish housewife in 1960s Baltimore who leaves her traditional life to become a newspaper reporter. The novel explores the intersection of Jewish and African-American communities during that era.

By a Spider's Thread: This novel in the Tess Monaghan series delves deeply into the world of Orthodox Judaism. The plot involves a Modern Orthodox man whose wife and children have disappeared, leading the protagonist to navigate the traditions and "old world" values of that community.

Tess Monaghan Series: The series' central character, private investigator Tess Monaghan, is of mixed heritage - **half-Jewish** (on her mother's side) and half-Irish Catholic, but she does not practice either religion. Her full name is: Theresa Esther Weinstein "Tess" Monaghan.

My Life as a Villainess: In this collection of personal essays, Lippman discusses her experiences raising a daughter in a Jewish household, her relationship with Jewish traditions like making brisket, and the role of the Hebrew school in her family's life.

Lippman, Laura, (***Lady in the Lake***) [hc, William Morrow, 2019] 978-0062390011 [pb, William Morrow Paperbacks, 2020] 978-0062390028

Lippman, Laura, (***By a Spider's Thread*** [Tess Monaghan #8]) [hc, William Morrow, 2004] 978-0060506698 [pb, MorrowPb, 2005] 978-0060858445

Lippman, Laura, (***My Life as a Villainess: Essays – Personal and Candid Reflections on Motherhood, Journalism, and Friendship***) [hc, William Morrow, 2020] 978-0063007154 [pb, William Morrow Paperbacks, 2020] 978-0062997333

Robert Littell (born 1935, Brooklyn, NY, resident in France, original family name was "Litzky" which his father changed legally, a fact he discusses in his book, "*Bronstein in the Bronx*") – master of the espionage genre, author of 24 standalone books, most dealing with the CIA, the Soviet Union and the Cold War. Before becoming a novelist, he was a journalist and foreign correspondent for *Newsweek* from 1965 to 1970, specializing in Soviet affairs. Jewish themes and characters feature in a number of his books, as follows:

Littell, Robert, (***Legends: A Novel of Dissimulation***) [hc, Overlook Press, 2005] 978-1585676965 [pb, Penguin Books, 2006] 978-0143037033 [*The protagonist, Martin Odum, operates in a "largely Jewish world" ranging from Crown Heights to Israel and Prague, encountering post-Soviet gangsters and bioterrorism plots. Odum's quest involves recovering Torah scrolls lost during the Holocaust. Odum is a CIA field agent turned private detective, struggling his way through a labyrinth of past identities - "legends" in CIA parlance. Is he suffering from multiple personality disorder, brainwashing, or simply exhaustion? Can Odum trust the CIA psychiatrist? Or Stella Kastner, a young Russian woman who engages him to find her brother-in-law so he can give her sister a divorce. As Odum redeploys his*

dormant tradecraft skills to solve Stella's case, he travels the globe battling mortal danger and psychological disorientation. – Amazon]

Littell, Robert, (**Vicious Circle: A Novel of Complicity** [hc, Overlook Press, 2006] 978-1585679263 [pb, Penguin Books, 2007] 978-0143112662 [*Explores the complex relationship between a kidnapped ultra-Orthodox rabbi (Isaac Apfelbaum) and his Muslim captor (Dr. Ishmael al-Shaath), finding shared moral ground in their mutual fundamentalism. The Palestinian demands the release of several Palestinian prisoners in exchange for his prisoner. As a Mossad strike team closes in and with a peace treaty at stake, al-Saath and Apfelbaum find themselves building an extraordinary relationship and parallels between these two battle-hardened partisans become the bonds that could lead to reconciliation. Is there any chance, or has the vicious circle already been closed?* - Amazon]

Littell, Robert, (**The Revolutionist** [hc, Bantam, 1988] 978-0553052602 [pb, Penguin Books, 2009] 978-0143116554 [*This follows **Alexander (Zander) Til**, a Russian-Jewish immigrant radicalized by the tragic Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire, who is recruited by Leon Trotsky during Trotsky's brief exile in New York. Trotsky bankrolls their return to Russia to participate in the burgeoning Bolshevik movement. Upon arriving in Petrograd on the eve of the October Revolution, Til is swept into the struggle to oust the provisional government. The narrative spans approximately 36 years (1917–1953), following Til's journey from a starry-eyed idealist to a witness of the revolution's brutal devolution. The story leads to a shattering personal confrontation with Stalin, taking Til from the storming of the Winter Palace to the horrors of the Gulag. Unlike Littell's standard Cold War spy thrillers, this work is often described as a more ambitious, "moral" exploration of how revolutionary ideals can be corrupted by those in power.* – Amazon & NY Times]

Littell, Robert, (**Comrade Koba** [hc, Harry N. Abrams, 2020] 978-1419748325 [pb, Harry N. Abrams, 2022] 978-1419748332 [*Features a young Jewish boy, Leon Rozental, whose mother is arrested during the Stalinist "Doctors' Plot," where Jewish doctors were falsely accused of a criminal conspiracy to poison Soviet leaders. In hiding from the NKVD (the KGB's predecessor), Leon by chance meets Koba, a high-ranking Soviet officer with troubling insight into the thoughts and machinations of Comrade Stalin. Through encounters between a naive boy and a paranoid tyrant, Littell creates in Koba a nuanced portrayal of the Soviet dictator, showing his human side and his simultaneous total disregard for and ignorance of the suffering he inflicted on the Russian people. The charm and spontaneity of young Leon make him an irresistible character—and not unlike Holden Caulfield, whom he admits to identifying with—caught in the spider's web of the story woven by this enigmatic old man.* - Amazon]

Littell, Robert, (**A Plague on Both Your Houses: A Novel in the Shadow of the Russian Mafia**) [hc, Blackstone Publishing, 2024] 979-8212227711 [pb, Blackstone Publishing, 2024] 979-8212638357 – [*a gritty, "Shakespearean" thriller that recasts Romeo and Juliet within the violent power vacuum of post-Soviet Russia. The setting is the chaotic period following Mikhail Gorbachev's resignation in December, 1991, and the collapse of stable government, followed by the jockeying for power of various political and criminal elements. Littell imagines a brutal turf battle for control of the Moscow protection industry between an Ossetian crime clan and a Jewish Mafia, the latter led by **Naum Caplan**. Blatant anti-Semitism and racial stereotypes are on full display, as Caplan's daughter becomes romantically involved with the rival gang's leader, in a Russian Mafia reimagining of the classic story of "star-crossed lovers".* – Amazon & Google/AI]

Peres, Shimon & Robert Littell, (**For the Future of Israel** [hc, Johns Hopkins UP, 1998] 978-0801859281 [*This account of five lengthy conversations between Littell and Peres in 1996-97 provides a platform for the exposition of Peres' visionary views on the Oslo Peace Process, Rabin and Arafat, and Israel's future hopes and prospects in the region.*]

Littell, Robert, (**Bronshtein in the Bronx** [hc, Soho Press, 2025] 978-1641296861 [pb, Soho Press, 2026] 978-1641297431 [*a fictionalized account of the ten weeks [Leon Trotsky](#) (born Lev Bronshtein) spent in New York City in early 1917. Arriving in January 1917 after a decade on the run, Bronshtein settles in the Bronx with his family while awaiting the revolution in Russia. The novel follows his immersion into the city's vibrant socialist scene, where he writes for Russian-language newspapers and engages in fiery*

debates at local watering holes, encountering historical figures such as Eugene Debs, Emma Goldman and Abraham Cahan.

A central feature is Trotsky's ongoing dialogue/debate with his personified conscience, whom he names "Leon Litzky" (the name of [Littell's] father). This subconscious antagonist serves as a foil, challenging his revolutionary ideology and the morality of the violence he plans to unleash. The story concludes as news of the February Revolution reaches New York, prompting Trotsky and his family to race back to Russia. The novel is described as a "mordantly funny" meditation on the price of progress and the struggle to maintain a personal conscience while pursuing a global worker's revolution. Littell's Trotsky displays no interest in Jewish affairs and plenty of contempt for American non-revolutionary socialists, but is glad to accept a financial contribution from a Jewish industrialist to cover his fare back to Russia - Penguin/Random House]

Frances (1896–1963, born in Kansas City, MO) and **Richard** (1898–1982 born in St. Joseph, MO) **Lockridge** – They authored a 10-volume series based on **Detective Nathan Shapiro**, a Jewish New York City police detective who first appeared in **The Faceless Adversary** (1956). Unlike the more confident leads in the Lockridges' other series (such as the Norths or Captain Heimrich), Shapiro is characterized as a "sad-sack" detective. He is often depicted as melancholy, chronically pessimistic, and plagued by a deep sense of inadequacy, despite his actual professional success. While the mysteries follow traditional procedural structures, Shapiro's internal monologue frequently reflects a specific mid-20th-century secular Jewish sensibility, emphasizing his status as an underdog who feels his promotions are undeserved.

*The Lockridges were known for weaving liberal social theories and political commentary into their fiction. While their most famous series, Mr. and Mrs. North, features a more "WASP" social environment in Greenwich Village, their broader body of work occasionally touches on Jewish-adjacent themes. In the novel **Twice Retired** (1970), which features Bernie Simmons (another recurring character often associated with Shapiro), the narrative explores the "evil effects of fascism on families," a theme deeply resonant with the Jewish experience during and after World War II. As the authors' work provided a "richly detailed look at the changing life in New York City," it naturally incorporated the diverse ethnic landscape of the city, including the Jewish presence within the legal and law enforcement systems. [Google/AI]*

Lockridge, Frances & Richard: The Detective (NYPD) Nathan Shapiro Series – 10 volumes

1. Lockridge, Frances & Richard, (**The Faceless Adversary** [hc, J.B. Lippincott, 1956]) B001KW431Y
2. Lockridge, Frances, (**Murder and Blueberry Pie** [hc, Lippincott, 1959]) B0006AVYOA
3. Lockridge, Frances, (**The Drill is Death** [hc, Lippincott, 1961]) B0006AX6H8
4. Lockridge, Richard, (**Murder for Art's Sake** [hc, Lippincott/BOMC, 1967]) B0006BQGBK
5. Lockridge, Richard (**Die Laughing** [hc, Lippincott, 1969]) B0006BYOHS
6. Lockridge, Richard (**Preach No More** [hc, Lippincott, 1970]) B00005WP29
7. Lockridge, Richard (**Write Murder Down** [hc, Lippincott, 1972]) 978-0397009466
8. Lockridge, Richard (**Or Was He Pushed?** [hc, Lippincott, 1975]) 978-0397010806 [pb, John Curley – LARGE PRINT, 1981] 978-0893403454
9. Lockridge, Richard (**A Streak of Light** [hc, Lippincott, 1976]) 978-0397011773
10. Lockridge, Richard (**The Old Die Young** [hc, Lippincott & Crowell, 1980] 978-0690019483 [pb, John Curley – large print, 1980] 978-0893403430

Arthur Lyons (1946–2008 in Los Angeles) – author of the 11-volume **Jacob Asch** series (1974–94), whose protagonist is a half-Jewish former-journalist-turned-private-eye. The series is noted for its "hard-boiled" style and focus on the darker aspects of Los Angeles and Palm Springs—such as cults, pornography, and homicide— and exploration of gritty social issues like religious fanaticism and political corruption. It also includes several key Jewish elements:

- **Protagonist's Heritage:** *Jacob Asch is a secular, half-Jewish private investigator.*
- **Cultural Perspective:** *Asch's Jewish background often informs his perspective as an outsider and moral guide through the diverse social strata of California.*
- **Family Background:** *The books occasionally touch upon his family history, including his Jewish father and non-Jewish mother, which contributes to his sense of identity and detachment.*
- **Literary Context:** *Critics often compare Asch to other famous Jewish private eyes of the era, noting how his background adds a layer of cynicism and compassion to the standard detective archetype. [Google/AI]*

Lyons, Arthur, [Jacob Asch #1], (**The Dead Are Discreet**) [hc, Mason & Lipscombe, 1974] 978-0884050780 [pb, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1983] 978-0030603938

Lyons, Arthur, [Jacob Asch #2], (**All God's Children**) [hc, Mason/Charter, 1975] 978-0884051091 [pb, Henry Holt & Co., 1982] 978-0030603945

Lyons, Arthur, [Jacob Asch #3], (**The Killing Floor**) [hc, Mason/Charter, 1976] 978-0884053729 [pb, Henry Holt & Co., 1982] 978-0030603976

Lyons, Arthur [Jacob Asch #4], (**Dead Ringer**) [hc, Mason/Charter, 1977] 978-0884055815 [pb, Henry Holt & Co., 1983] 978-0030603969

Lyons, Arthur, [Jacob Asch #5], (**Castles Burning**) [hc, Henry Holt & Co., 1980] 978-0030476211 [pb, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1983] 978-0030624179

Lyons, Arthur, [Jacob Asch #6], (**Hard Trade**) [hc, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1981] 978-0030536212 [pb, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1983] 978-0030633331

Lyons, Arthur, [Jacob Asch #7], (**At the Hands of Another**) [hc, Henry Holt & Co., 1983] 978-0030596162 [pb, Henry Holt & Co., 1987] 978-0030085338

Lyons, Arthur, [Jacob Asch #8], (**Three With a Bullet**) [pb, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1985] 978-0030596179 [hc, Macmillan UK, 1987] 978-0333441114 [pb, Henry Holt & Co. 1986] 978-0030085390

Lyons, Arthur, [Jacob Asch #9], (**Fast Fade**) [hc, Mysterious Press, 1987] 978-0892962167 [pb, Popular Library, 1988] 978-0445407039

Lyons, Arthur, [Jacob Asch #10], (**Other People's Money**) [hc, Mysterious Press, 1989] 978-0892962181 [pb, Old Castle, 2000] 978-0948353963

Lyons, Arthur, [Jacob Asch #11], (**False Pretenses**) [hc, Mysterious Press, 1994] 978-0892962204 [pb, Old Castle, 2000] 978-1874061342

Charlotte MacLeod (1922–2005) was a prolific Canadian-American author celebrated as a master of the “cozy” mystery. Born in Bath, New Brunswick, Canada, she moved to the United States with her family as an infant in 1923. Her 12-volume **Sarah Kelling & Max Bittersohn Series** is set among Boston's “upper crust” and follows the investigations of socialite Sarah Kelling and Jewish art detective Max Bittersohn. Max's Jewish identity is a central element of his character, primarily defined by his familial roots, his role as a social outsider in Boston, and the interfaith dynamics of his marriage to Sarah Kelling.

Key Jewish Characteristics:

Heritage and Family: Max comes from a middle-class Jewish background with deep ties to the **North Shore** of Massachusetts. His family is tight-knit and features prominently in the series, such as when he and Sarah host a wedding for his nephew, Mike, at their home.

Social Status: Max is often viewed through the lens of his class and background, which contrasts sharply with Sarah's “Boston Brahmin” (upper-crust) family. While Sarah's family includes blustering uncles and busybody aunts, Max's relatives are described as “equally unusual” but grounded in a different social reality—for instance, his brother-in-law owns a local gas station and garage.

Outsider Perspective: *As a Jewish art theft investigator, Max functions as a “one-man detective agency” with more freedom of movement than Sarah. His status as an outsider to the Kelling family’s elite social circles allows him to navigate different worlds, though Sarah is occasionally envious of how easily he is accepted in places where she is not.*

Interfaith Marriage Challenges: *The series explicitly addresses the friction caused by their interfaith relationship. In **The Bilbao Looking Glass**, Max faces anti-Semitism from members of a yacht club and some of Sarah’s associates. Conversely, some of Max’s own family members are initially hesitant about his marriage to a non-Jewish woman. [Google/AI]*

MacLeod, Charlotte, [Kelling-Bittersohn Series #1], (**The Family Vault**) [hc, Doubleday, 1979] 978-0385148719 [pb, Avon Books, 1983] 978-0380490806

MacLeod, Charlotte, [Kelling-Bittersohn Series #2], (**The Withdrawing Room**) [hc, Doubleday, 1980] 978-0385171816 [pb, Avon Books, 1982] 978-0380564736

MacLeod, Charlotte, [Kelling-Bittersohn Series #3], (**The Palace Guard**) [hc, Doubleday, 1981] 978-0385175333 [pb, Open Road, 2021] 978-1504067669

MacLeod, Charlotte, [Kelling-Bittersohn Series #4], (**The Bilbao Looking Glass**) [hc, Doubleday, 1983] 1983] 978-0385183369 [pb, Avon Books, 1984] 978-0380674541

MacLeod, Charlotte, [Kelling-Bittersohn Series #5], (**The Convivial Codfish**) [hc, Doubleday, 1984] 978-0385193337 [pb, Avon Books, 1985] 978-0380698653

MacLeod, Charlotte, [Kelling-Bittersohn Series #6], (**The Plain Old Man**) [hc, Doubleday, 1985] 978-0385230032 [pb, Avon Books, 1986] 978-0380701483

MacLeod, Charlotte, [Kelling-Bittersohn Series #7], (**The Recycled Citizen**) [hc, Mysterious Press, 1988] 978-0892961870 [pb, Arrow Books/Random House, 1989] 978-0099588207

MacLeod, Charlotte, [Kelling-Bittersohn Series #8], (**The Silver Ghost**) [hc, Collins Crime, 1987] 978-0002321587 [pb, Mysterious Press, 1999] 978-0099654506

MacLeod, Charlotte, [Kelling-Bittersohn Series #9], (**The Gladstone Bag**) [hc, Mysterious Press, 1990] 978-0892963706 [pb, Mysterious Press, 1991] 978-0446400022

MacLeod, Charlotte, [Kelling-Bittersohn Series #10], (**The Resurrection Man**) [hc, Mysterious Press, 1992] 978-0892964437 [pb, lbooks, 1992] 978-0743423779

MacLeod, Charlotte, [Kelling-Bittersohn Series #11], (**The Odd Job**) [hc, Mysterious Press, 1995] 978-0892965717 [pb, Grand Central Publishing, 1996] 978-0446403979

MacLeod, Charlotte, [Kelling-Bittersohn Series #12], (**The Balloon Man**) [hc, Mysterious Press, 1998] 978-0892966578 [mass mkt pb, Grand Central Publishing, 2000] 978-0446608350

Bernard Malamud (1914–1986, born in Brooklyn, NY, died in Manhattan, NY) [*a preeminent American novelist and short story writer who became one of the most prominent Jewish-American literary voices of the 20th century. Alongside contemporaries like Saul Bellow and Philip Roth, his work defined the postwar Jewish-American experience, blending everyday realism with a distinct sense of myth and parable. Born to Russian Jewish immigrant parents who ran a small neighborhood grocery store. Raised in a modest, working-class household during the Great Depression, an environment that heavily inspired his later fiction. B.A. from the City College of New York (1936) and M.A. from Columbia University (1942). Worked as a factory hand, a government census clerk, and a New York City high school teacher while writing in his spare time. Relocated in 1949 to teach English composition at Oregon State University, where he began publishing his major works. Returned East in 1961 to teach creative writing at Bennington College in Vermont, staying there for most of his remaining career. Focused intensely on*]

morality, redemption, loneliness, and human suffering. Masterfully captured the struggles, distinct Yiddish-English speech patterns, and quiet aspirations of urban immigrants. Infused stark, bleak urban realities with elements of magical realism, folklore, and quiet, human-scale miracles. Produced 8 novels and dozens of short stories. **Major Works of Relevance:**

Malamud, Bernard, (**The Natural** [hc, Farrar, Straus & Giroux/Book Club Edition, 1952] B0024O0HBW [pb, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2003] 978-0374502003 [*His debut novel, which used Arthurian Grail myths to tell a story about a gifted baseball prodigy; it was famously adapted into a 1984 film starring Robert Redford.*])

Malamud, Bernard, (**The Assistant** [hc, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1957]) 978-0374106447 [pb, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2003] 978-0374504847 [*A novel exploring crime, poverty, and ethical rehabilitation through the lives of a struggling Brooklyn grocer and a young Gentile crook.*]

Malamud, Bernard, (**The Magic Barrel** [hc, Farrar, Straus & Cudahy, 1958]) 978-0374504120 [pb, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2003] 978-0374525866 [*A collection of short stories that earned Malamud his first National Book Award.*]

Malamud, Bernard, (**The Fixer** [hc, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1966]) 978-0374155728 [pb, Penguin Classics, 1994] 978-0140185157 [*A harrowing narrative centered on anti-Semitism in Tsarist Russia, based on the real-life Beilis trial. It earned him both the National Book Award and the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction.*]

Bernard Malamud subverts the traditional conventions of the crime genre by reframing “crime” not as a legal issue or a pursuit of illicit wealth, but as a profound psychological and moral arena for spiritual testing, suffering, and redemption. Instead of treating Jews as conventional criminal masterminds or systemic lawbreakers, Malamud utilizes the intersection of Jewish identity and crime to explore universal human vulnerability, ethical choices, and historical victimization. His treatment of and contribution to this theme can be broken down into three major dimensions.

1. The Jew as the Victim of Systemic, Manufactured Crime

In *The Fixer* (1966), Malamud approaches crime from the perspective of the unjustly accused. Based heavily on the real-life 1911 Mendel Beilis blood libel case in Tsarist Russia, the narrative follows **Yakov Bok**, a secular Jewish handyman who is falsely imprisoned for the ritual murder of a Christian boy. Crime here is an institutional weapon wielded by an antisemitic state. The state itself becomes the true criminal, creating a fabricated case to validate cultural prejudices. Malamud uses this dynamic to illustrate how “being born a Jew meant being vulnerable to history”. Yakov’s imprisonment becomes an allegory for the broader existential trap of the Jewish experience, transforming a literal crime story into a profound meditation on endurance, moral awakening, and how individual suffering links a secular man back to his heritage.

2. The Jew as the Victim of Petty Crime (and the Vehicle for Gentile Redemption)

In *The Assistant* (1957), Malamud positions the Jew as the passive victim of local, urban crime. Morris Bober, a desperately poor Jewish grocer in Brooklyn, is beaten and robbed by a young Italian-American drifter, Frank Alpine, and his vicious accomplice. The crime serves as the catalyst for an intense psychological and moral convergence. Plagued by immense guilt, Frank sneaks back into Bober’s life to work for free, trying to secretly repay what he stole. Malamud famously asserted that “all men are Jews,” using the term to define a state of ethical responsibility and suffering. Through the crucible of his crime against a Jew, the Gentile criminal undergoes a slow, agonizing process of spiritual rehabilitation. By the end of the novel, Frank effectively “becomes” Bober—integrating into the family and converting to Judaism—demonstrating Malamud’s belief that confronting one’s criminal impulses can lead to the ultimate assumption of moral responsibility.

3. The Internalized “Prison” of the Small-Time Criminal

In his short fiction, most notably the widely analyzed short story “The Prison,” Malamud explores the domestic and psychological aftermath of petty crime within the Jewish immigrant ecosystem. The protagonist, Tommy Castelli, is a frustrated man trapped in a dull marriage and running a monotonous

candy store. He is haunted by a failed, youthful attempt to rob a liquor store—a crime from which his father-in-law had to financially rescue him. Physical incarceration is avoided, but the moral failure and economic desperation lock Tommy into a lifelong mental prison. When he catches a young girl stealing candy from his shop, he sees his past self and desperately tries to stop her from following his criminal path. Malamud subverts the crime narrative by showing that the worst punishment for a crime is not a jail cell, but the internal death of one's dreams and the daily burden of unexpiated guilt. Crime is treated as a symptom of a larger, systemic social suffocation.

Bernard Malamud's definitive contribution to the theme of Jews and crime was to de-sensationalize it. While his contemporaries sometimes leaned into the gritty realism of urban delinquency, Malamud elevated crime to a **Dostoevskian moral drama**. He utilized crime as a lens to show that the line between the criminal and the victim is fluid, that suffering can be transformative, and that true justice is a matter of personal conscience and human empathy rather than legal verdicts. [Google/AI]

Malamud is not a significant novelist of Jewish criminality in the sense of depicting gangsters, racketeers, or detective investigations. He is, however, a major novelist of crime, guilt, punishment, accusation, and redemption as Jewish moral and historical experiences. If Bellow explores crime as part of the social reality of modern America, Malamud explores it as a profound moral and existential problem.— ChatGPT]

David Mamet (born 1947 in Chicago, residing primarily in Los Angeles) [-an acclaimed American playwright, screenwriter, and film director. Raised in a Jewish family on Chicago's South Side, Mamet worked odd jobs as a cab driver, real estate salesman, and busboy at The Second City. These gritty, working-class environments deeply shaped his understanding of American hustle and fast-talking scams. Graduated from Goddard College in Vermont in 1969. Returning to Chicago, he co-founded the St. Nicholas Theater Company. He achieved national acclaim in the mid-1970s with plays like **American Buffalo** and **Sexual Perversity in Chicago**. In 1985, he co-founded the Atlantic Theater Company in New York alongside actor William H. Macy. Won the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 1984 for his masterpiece, **Glengarry Glen Ross**, a ruthless look at desperate real estate salesmen. He also earned Oscar nominations for writing the screenplays to **The Verdict** (1982) and **Wag the Dog** (1997). He is universally recognized for his highly distinct dialogue style. His characters speak in rapid-fire, fragmented, rhythmic sentences, often packed with profanity, overlapping speech, and strategic repetitions that mask deception and power struggles. He explores the intersections of Jewish identity, crime, and the mystery/thriller genre, utilizing unique Jewish motifs as explicit narrative drivers. While he is famous for general neo-noir thrillers (**House of Games**, **The Spanish Prisoner**), his specifically Jewish fiction and films use crime as a psychological landscape to dissect assimilation, anti-Semitism, an

Mamet, David, (**Homicide: A Screenplay** [hc, Grove/Atlantic, 1992] B000RIH70G [pb, Grove Press, 1992] 978-0802133083

Homicide (1991 Film) – See entry in the companion *Filmography* to this *Bibliography*. He also wrote the HBO movie, **Lansky (1999)**, described in the *Filmography*.

Mamet, David, (**The Old Religion** [hc, Free Press, 1997]) 978-0684841199 [pb, The Overlook Press, 2002] 978-1585671908 [Here Mamet tackles true crime through a historical mystery lens. It is a fictionalized, stream-of-consciousness reimagining of the infamous 1913 rape and murder of Mary Phagan in Atlanta, Georgia. The book focuses on **Leo Frank**, the Jewish factory manager wrongfully accused, railroaded by a corrupt legal system, and eventually lynched by an anti-Semitic mob. Mamet treats the court case and the crime not as a standard procedural whodunit, but as a Kafkaesque mystery where Frank is forced to realize that no amount of secular assimilation can protect him from the ancient, recurring biases of the world.

Mamet avoids clichés like “Jewish mobsters” or standard gangster tropes. Instead, he implements deeply theological, linguistic, and historical motifs to drive his mysteries. Mamet frequently utilizes the Passover Haggadah archetype of the “Wicked Son” (the assimilated Jew who distances himself from his people by asking, “What does this ritual mean to **you**?”). In **Homicide**, detective **Bobby Gold** begins the film as the

Wicked Son—using anti-Semitic slurs to overcompensate and fit into the Irish/ secular police culture. The mystery of the crime is the catalyst that forces him to change his question from “What do you Jews want?” to “Who am I?”.

In *Homicide*, Mamet uses Yiddish and Hebrew as narrative blockades to evoke anxiety and alienation. When Detective Gold interviews the wealthy, devout family of the slain storeowner, they speak in Yiddish. Gold cannot understand them, establishing his “liminal state”—he is an outsider to the gentiles because he is a Jew, but a criminal justice outsider to the Jews because he lacks their language and tradition.

In both *Homicide* and *The Old Religion*, Mamet positions his protagonists as ancestral scapegoats caught in a recurring historical cycle. The underlying narrative driver is never just “who committed the murder,” but rather the dread that the secular rule of law is a thin veneer. Mamet uses the criminal investigation to suggest that society inherently views the Jew as an unassimilable element, meaning the mystery will inevitably conclude with the sacrifice of the Jewish character. – Google/AI]

Wallace Markfield (1926–2002, born in Brooklyn, NY, died in Roslyn, NY) [Known primarily as a comic and satirical novelist. Wrote 6 novels and 40 periodical articles,, including *To An Early Grave* (1964), *Teitelbaum’s Window* (1970 and *You Could Live If They Let You* (1974). In his later career, he shifted into the mystery/thriller genre, intertwining Jewish identity with high-stakes international plots.

Markfield, Wallace, (*Radical Surgery* [hc, Bantam, 1991]) 978-0553074239 [This was Markfield’s explicit foray into the political thriller genre in the form of a dark, cynical espionage satire. It follows the panic within the highest levels of the U.S. government when a new, reform-minded Soviet leader begins preaching world peace and global brotherhood. Fearing the collapse of America’s permanent war economy, government factions orchestrate “dirty trick” assassinations and bombings to stoke domestic paranoia and dismantle the peace movement. The story features an academic and novelist who finds himself trapped in a KGB blackmail plot. True to Markfield’s voice, the book filters intense Cold War espionage and deep-state conspiracy through a lens of biting, neurosis-driven cynicism.

Markfield, Wallace, (*The Trojan Jew* [published posthumously in a Kindle edition, 2024]) 978-1962461092

[This is Markfield’s absolute closest alignment with the theme of Jews, espionage, and international crime. He spent over a decade writing it before his death in 2002, but its release was stalled because its prophetic plot involving a foreign attack on New York City felt too raw immediately after 9/11. The book functions as a high-stakes, intercontinental thriller that toggles between two timelines. It tracks the launch of a covert Nazi project in World War II Berlin and follows its explosive, disastrous conclusion half a century later in Manhattan. Markfield wrote the book partly in response to critics who expected him to keep writing standard “Jewish novels”. Instead, he delivered a complex spy thriller that explicitly forced the concepts of Jewish identity, historical trauma, and global espionage to collide head-on. [Google/AI]

Lander Marks (est. birth 1965) – Lander Marks is the pen-name of Sarah Lee Marks, an automotive executive, artist, and contemporary art collector based in Henderson, Nevada. No other biographical information about her is publicly available, nor has she published any other books. The story follows *D.J. Singer*, a “savvy” Las Vegas car dealer and art collector who serves as the author’s alter ego. She becomes involved in a hunt for the source of forged art and the recovery of missing masterpieces, including art stolen during the Nazi era, while on a luxury ocean liner. [Google/AI]

Marks, Lander, (*Artist’s Proof: A Twisted Tale of Fakes, Frauds, & Murder*) [hc, Stephens Press, 2008] 978-1932173734

Derek B. Miller (born 1970 in Boston and has lived for periods in Norway, the UK, Switzerland, Israel, Hungary, presently in Spain) [B.A. from Sarah Lawrence College, M.A. in National Security Studies from Georgetown U., Ph.D. in International Relations from the Graduate Institute in Geneva, Switzerland and post=grad research at Oxford. Before turning to fiction full-time, Miller worked for more than a

decade in international diplomacy and peace research. He has collaborated extensively with the United Nations, serving as a senior fellow with the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR). He is also the founder and director of The Policy Lab, a center focused on human-centered public policy and design. Transitioned into a novelist known for blending serious historical or political backdrops with wit and rich character development. Two of his six published novels are relevant for this bibliography:

Miller, Derek B., (**Norwegian by Night** [hc, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2013]) 978-0547934877 [pb, Mariner Books, 2014] 978-0544292666 [- his debut novel, a genre-blending thriller that functions simultaneously as a Nordic noir chase story, a fish-out-of-water dark comedy, and a poignant exploration of aging, trauma, and grief. The story follows **Sheldon Horowitz**, an 82-year-old, cantankerous Jewish watch repairman and widowed Korean War veteran. Reluctantly, Sheldon has moved from New York to Oslo to live with his granddaughter, Rhea, and her Norwegian husband, Lars. While adjusting to his alien surroundings, Sheldon's world is upended when his upstairs neighbor—an Eastern European woman—is brutally murdered by a Kosovar Balkan gang. Sheldon manages to rescue the woman's young, mute son and promptly goes on the run into the vast Norwegian wilderness. Influenced by the collective trauma of the Holocaust, he chooses immediate, active resistance, weaponizing his Marine training to protect a young boy. Crime becomes the stage where an elderly Jewish man asserts absolute agency over a chaotic world. Reflecting Derek B. Miller's professional background in international peace and security, the book offers a sharp critique of Norway's naive immigration policies and how war criminals easily slip through open European borders unvetted.

Miller, Derek B., (**How to Find Your Way in the Dark** [hc, Mariner Books, 2021]) 978-0358269601 [This prequel to *Norwegian by Night* focuses on a 12-year-old Sheldon growing up in 1938 Massachusetts. When 12-year-old Sheldon's father is killed in a suspicious truck crash, Sheldon does not wait for an unjust legal system. He steps into a world run by mobsters, jewel thieves, and mafia hitmen, operating on a fierce, self-determined moral compass. Sheldon, his cousin Abe, and his friend Lenny navigate a pre-WWII America that is actively ignoring the Nazi menace. By intertwining street-level mafia crime with the looming shadow of the Holocaust, Miller argues that history itself is a sequence of crimes, right and wrong, big and small. For his characters, fighting crime isn't just about law enforcement—it is a battle against a world that tolerates the erasure of Jewish lives.

Instead of writing conventional mafia or true-crime stories, Miller utilizes the crime genre as a vessel to explore the fractured weight of 20th-century history, the generational trauma of the Holocaust and war, and the uniquely Jewish intersection of tragedy and comedy. He subverts the crime-fiction Jewish stereotypes of intellectual or cynical investigator, helpless victim or crooked gangster with an 82-year old retiree who refuses to be a passive bystander to blatant injustice. Throughout the action, Sheldon inserts his “Borscht Belt” style dark humour. The absurdity of the criminal situations, whether in the 1930s Catskills or in a noirish Nordic setting, becomes a tool for Sheldon to maintain his humanity in the face of horror. In this and his other fiction, Miller applies a Tikkun Olam consciousness. Crime is the ultimate expression of the world's brokenness: Miller's protagonists view their extra-legal actions not as a violation of civic law, but as a moral necessity to fix a universe shattered by violence. – Google/AI]

Reggie Nadelson (est. birth 1948 in New York City) - a contemporary American journalist, filmmaker, and novelist, primarily known for her “Artie Cohen” mystery series. The series centers on **Artie Cohen** (Artemy Maximovich Ostalsky), a Moscow-born detective who emigrated to the United States and works for the NYPD. His Jewishness is often tied to his secular Russian roots and his struggle to balance his past in the Soviet Union with his life in America.

- **Cultural Setting:** Many novels are set in Brooklyn neighborhoods like **Brighton Beach** (often called “Little Odessa”), which are known for their high concentration of Russian-Jewish immigrants.
- **Thematic Focus:** The series frequently explores the “wild ride” of Russian immigrant enclaves, dealing with the trauma of the past, the complexities of the diaspora, and the intersection of Jewish heritage with secular modern life.

- **Secular Perspective:** While the series contains “minimal Jewish content” in terms of religious observance, it deeply examines secular Jewish culture. Nadelson herself comes from a secular Jewish family and has reported on this culture for the BBC. [Google/AI]

Nadelson, Reggie [*Artie Cohen #1*], (**Red Hot Blues** [also Red Mercury Blues]) [hc, Minotaur Books, 1998] 978-0312181666 [pb, Minotaur Books, 1998] 978-0312291969 [*Artie is a tough but introspective NYPD detective who emigrated from Moscow as a teenager with his Jewish family, later served in the Israeli army, and eventually settled in New York. His Russian language, cultural knowledge, and personal history make him uniquely suited to investigating crimes connected with the former Soviet Union.*

The novel opens dramatically when General Gennadi Ustinov, a former KGB officer, is assassinated during a live television interview in New York. Ustinov had been a close friend of Artie's father in Moscow, giving the investigation an intensely personal dimension. As Artie follows the trail, he is drawn into the world of Brighton Beach's Russian émigré community, where organized crime, corrupt businessmen, and remnants of Soviet intelligence networks intermingle.

The investigation centers on rumors of “red mercury,” a mysterious and possibly mythical substance believed to have applications in compact nuclear weapons. Whether the substance actually exists matters less than the fact that criminals, intelligence operatives, and arms traffickers are willing to kill to obtain it. Artie's pursuit uncovers a network of nuclear smuggling extending from Brooklyn to post-Soviet Moscow, exposing the lawlessness and corruption that followed the collapse of the USSR.

Forced to return to Moscow for the first time since his family's emigration, Artie confronts memories of his childhood, the fate of friends who remained behind, and the complicated emotions of exile. His journey becomes both a murder investigation and a search for personal identity, as he grapples with questions of loyalty, nationality, and belonging. Along the way he develops a romantic relationship, suffers personal losses, and ultimately uncovers the truth behind the conspiracy. [Google Books]

Nadelson, Reggie [*Artie Cohen #2*], (**Hot Poppies** [hc, St. Martin's Press, 1999]) 978-0312199869 [pb, Faber & Faber, 2002] 978-0571191963

Nadelson, Reggie [*Artie Cohen #3*], (**Bloody London** [hc, Minotaur, 1999]) 978-0312243722 [pb, Faber & Faber, 1999] 978-0571201389

Nadelson, Reggie [*Artie Cohen #4*], (**Sex Dolls**, also published as *Skin Trade*) [pb, Faber & Faber, 2002] 978-0571192144

Nadelson, Reggie [*Artie Cohen #5*], (**Disturbed Earth** [Walker Books, 2005]) 978-0802733832 [pb, Bloomsbury USA, 2007] 978-0802715456

Nadelson, Reggie [*Artie Cohen #6*], (**Red Hook** [hc, Walker Books, 2006]) 978-0802715340 [pb, Walker Books, 2007] 978-0802716385

Nadelson, Reggie [*Artie Cohen #7*], (**Fresh Kills** [hc, Walker Books, 2007]) 978-0802715999 [pb, William Heinemann, 2006] 978-0434011933

Nadelson, Reggie [*Artie Cohen #8*], (**Londongrad** [hc, Walker Books, 2009]) 978-0802717528 [pb, Atlantic Books, 2009] 978-1843548331

Nadelson, Reggie [*Artie Cohen #9*], (**Blood Count** [hc, Atlantic Books, 2010] 978-1843548355 [pb, Atlantic Books, 2010]) 978-1843548379

Nadelson, Reggie [*Other*], (**Comrade Rockstar** [hc, Chatto & Windus, 1991]) 978-0701134723 [pb, Arrow (Rand), 2004] B01K3JRURS

Nadelson, Reggie [*Other*], (**Somebody Else** [hc, Faber & Faber, 2003]) 978-0571209392 [pb, Faber & Faber, 2004] 978-0571217526

Alan Orloff (born 1960 in Washington, D.C.) - He writes mystery, thriller, horror, and young adult novels and short stories, some under the pen name Zak Allen. **Diamonds for the Dead** is a mystery novel

that follows **Josh Handleman** as he returns to his childhood home in Reston, Virginia, to settle his late father Abe's estate. Josh is shocked to discover that his seemingly frugal father was secretly a multimillionaire who generously supported local charities and accumulated a valuable diamond collection. When the diamonds go missing and Abe's best friend suggests his father's death might not have been an accident, Josh begins a personal investigation. Orloff has also contributed short fiction on Jewish themes to various anthologies. Aside from his fiction, he has also collaborated on musical arrangements for Jewish traditional nursery tales. [Google/AI]

Orloff, Alan, (**Diamonds for the Dead** [pb, independently published, 2021]) 979-8514658237

Samuel Ornitz [1890–1957, born in New York City] - While primarily known for his socially conscious literature and his role as one of the **Hollywood Ten**, he did not write traditional mystery or crime novels. However, his work often intersected with these genres through his screenwriting and the gritty subject matter of his prose. His novels typically focused on the Jewish-American experience and social issues, but they shared the gritty, cynical tone often found in crime fiction of the era: **Haunch, Paunch, and Jowl (1923)**: Written as an "anonymous autobiography," this novel explores corruption, power, and the underbelly of New York City's Lower East Side. While not a "whodunit," its focus on professional and political vice overlaps with themes of crime fiction. In Rachel Rubin's analysis, it critiques "both bourgeois respectability and the commodification of ethnicity. Jewish culture becomes something that can be "plundered," marketed, or manipulated." (see p.222)

A Yankee Passional (1927): A social drama that follows a mystical young man's journey through various social upheavals.

Bride of the Sabbath (1951): His final novel, written while in prison, returns to the themes of Jewish life in New York

Samuel Ornitz used Jewish content not as a "whodunit" device, but as a gritty, sociological framework that frequently intersected with mystery and crime motifs. His work is a cornerstone of the "Jewish Gangster" subgenre in modern literature.

Connection to Mystery & Crime Motifs

Criminal Underworld as Setting: In **Haunch, Paunch, and Jowl**, Ornitz uses the Lower East Side as a landscape for gang life, political intrigue, and organized corruption. The "mystery" is often the protagonist's own moral decay as he navigates these criminal circles.

The "Ethnic Outlaw": Ornitz portrays Jewish characters as "ethnic outlaws" who use crime as a means of social mobility. This mirrors the "hard-boiled" detective's cynical worldview, where the line between the law and the lawless is blurred.

Sociological Exposé: His first novel was originally marketed as an anonymous autobiography, creating a real-world mystery about the author's identity while exposing the "professional Jew" who manipulates his community for power.

Urban Noir Themes: His writing style—filled with Yiddish-English slang and streetwise dialogue—contributed to the development of a Jewish urban noir aesthetic that predated later crime masters like Raymond Chandler.

Key Jewish Elements

Religious vs. Secular Conflict: His books explore the tension between Hester Street orthodoxy and the "treacherous wilderness" of modern American life.

Cultural Lore: He utilized Jewish mysticism and folkloric concepts (such as the veneration of the Sabbath) as psychological anchors for characters who were otherwise deeply involved in "pimpism" or graft.

Linguistic Hybridity: Ornitz was one of the first to blend Yiddish phrases directly into the narrative, creating an immersive, "insider" feeling common in police procedurals. [Google/AI]

Ornitz, Samuel, (**Haunch, Paunch, and Jowl** [pb, Markus Wiener Publishing, 1986 – original publication in 1923]) 978-0910129466. Reprint edition, Joel Dinerstein, ed., pb, U. of New Orleans Press, 2025 - 978-1608012695

Ornitz, Samuel, (**A Yankee Passional** [hc, Boni & Liveright, 1927] B000OK1KMI

Ornitz, Samuel, (**Bride of the Sabbath** [hc, Rinehart & Co., 1951] B0007E6724

Ellen Pall (born 1952, Long Island, NY) – She completed her higher education at U.C. Santa Barbara and resides in Manhattan, New York City. Her novels frequently incorporate Jewish characters and themes, often reflecting her own background and observations of secular Jewish life in New York. Pall's treatment of Jewishness typically focuses on cultural identity, secularism, and family dynamics rather than religious observance. **Juliet Bodine**, her protagonist in her two mystery novels, is an author of Regency romance novels and a former professor of English literature at Barnard. She partners with a NY Jewish cop named **Murray Landis**. As a prominent freelance journalist, Pall frequently writes about individuals in the arts. Her work is regularly featured in *The New York Times Magazine*, *The New Yorker*, and *The New York Review of Books*. [Google/AI]

Pall, Ellen, (**Corpse de Ballet**) [hc, Minotaur Books, 2001] 978-0312280338 [mass mkt pb, Minotaur Books, 2002] 978-0312980108

Pall, Ellen, (**Slightly Abridged**) [hc, Minotaur Books, 2003] 978-0312281854

Pall, Ellen, (**Must Read Well** [hc, Bancroft Press, 2022]) 978-1610885423 [pb, Bancroft Press, 2023] 978-1610885430 [*The book functions as a high-stakes, domestic psychological game that deals heavily with interpersonal crime, fraud, and historical secrets. Elizabeth, a desperate, struggling Columbia University PhD candidate, orchestrates a calculated web of lies to infiltrate the life of Lily, a reclusive, legally blind 80-year-old literary icon. Elizabeth scams her way into a job reading Lily's private journals aloud. Her actual intent is to steal Lily's private, unpublished life stories to build her own academic career. The novel is deeply rooted in the upper-class, intellectual world of Manhattan's Upper West Side Jewish elite. The generational tension, the academic background, and the specific literary subculture all carry the distinct cultural-secular Jewish framework characteristic of Pall's writing. Unlike the Nine Muses books (the previous two Pall books cited), which feature murder, Must Read Well focuses on white-collar and psychological crimes: identity fraud, intellectual property theft, severe betrayal, and escalating blackmail.* – Google/AI]

Sara Paretsky (born 1947, Ames, Iowa and raised in Kansas) – one of the most successful woman thriller authors, Paretsky is Jewish, but her protagonist – **V.I. Warshawski** – is not self-consciously an identifying Jew (even though Paretsky makes her halachically Jewish by giving her an Italian Jewish mother and a Polish Catholic father). The series features 22 standalone novels and 4 short story collections. Jewish elements include:

Mother's Refugee Status: Gabriella Sanni was a refugee who fled Europe during the rise of Fascism.

Key Jewish Supporting Characters:

Dr. Lotty Herschel: V.I.'s closest friend and mentor is a Jewish doctor who fled Vienna via the **Kindertransport**. Her traumatic past as a Holocaust survivor is a major narrative thread in several books.

Max Loewenthal: A cultured Jewish character and executive at a Beth Israel hospital who becomes a significant figure in the series and a romantic interest for V.I. in later books.

Major Novels with Jewish Themes

Total Recall (2001): This novel is centered on **Holocaust restitution** and insurance fraud. It explores Lotty Herschel's childhood in Nazi-occupied Austria and features a character claiming to be a long-lost Jewish relative.

Bleeding Kansas (Standalone, 2008): While not part of the Warshawski series, this novel draws on Paretsky's own upbringing in Kansas and includes a subplot involving a "perfect red heifer" and religious tensions.

Breakdown (2012): Features a prominent character who is a Lithuanian Jewish immigrant billionaire.

Critical Mass (2013): The plot delves into the history of Jewish physicists during World War II and includes journeys back to wartime Jewish ghettos and concentration camps.

Sara Paretsky was raised in a Jewish family in Lawrence, Kansas, where they were often the only Jewish family in town—an experience that informed her perspective on "outsideness" and social justice. She has stated that her own family's history with the Holocaust made her feel an urgency to tell those stories through her fiction. [Google/AI]

Paretsky, Sara [*V.I. Warshawski #10*], (**Total Recall**) [hc, Delacorte Press, 2001] 978-0385313667 [pb, Delacorte, 2001] 978-0440224716

Paretsky, Sara, (**Bleeding Kansas**) [hc, Putnam Adult, 2008] 978-0399154058 [pb, Signet Books, 2008] 978-0451224484

Paretsky, Sara [*V.I. Warshawski #15*], (**Breakdown**) [hc, Putnam Adult, 2012] 978-0399157837 [pb, Berkley, 2012] 978-0451238801

Paretsky, Sara, (**Critical Mass**) [hc, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2013] [pb, Berkley, 2014] 978-0451468185

Richard Parrish (1946–2025, born in Decatur, Illinois, a veteran criminal defense lawyer in Tucson, Arizona. His 5-volume **Joshua Rabb Mystery series** is set in post-WWII Tucson. Brooklyn-born and Jewish, Rabb served as a GI in WW2, losing his left arm and sustaining other injuries at the Battle of the Bulge. He moved to Tucson in 1946. His "outsider" status as a Jew in a predominantly "lily-white" community mirrors the struggles of the Native American clients he represents for the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Rabb's Jewishness serves as a bridge to other marginalized groups. By facing anti-Semitism and "racist bad old boys" in Arizona, he develops a unique empathy for the Papago Indians, often drawing parallels between their treatment and the persecution of Jews. The series frequently references the Holocaust. Rabb's legal battles are often framed as a struggle for "the Truth" (a word appearing in three of the five titles), reflecting a relentless pursuit of justice.

Parrish's first novel, **Our Choice of Gods** hc, Carol Pub Group, 1989) 978-1559720021 - deals extensively with the Israeli-Arab conflict and survivors of the Treblinka death camp. A holocaust survivor and a Nuremberg War Crimes prosecutor fall in love, join the Israeli war for independence, and save an Arab woman from a murderous Jewish soldier. The books in the Joshua Rabb series include:

Parrish, Richard [*Joshua Rabb series #1*], (**The Dividing Line**) [hc, Dutton Adult, 1993] 978-0525935612 [mass mkt pb, Onyx, 1994] 978-0451404305 [Shortly after arriving in Tucson, Rabb is caught in a crossfire between greedy local politicians and the Papago Indians. He defends a Native American man accused of the brutal rape and murder of three children and a nun, uncovering a deep-seated racist conspiracy that threatens his new life.]

Parrish, Richard [*Joshua Rabb series #2*], (**Versions of the Truth**) [hc, Dutton Adult, 1994] 978-0525936527 [mass mkt pb, Onyx, 1994] 978-0451405234 [A deadly cholera outbreak on the Papago reservation forces Rabb to oversee the awarding of a multimillion-dollar sewer system contract. This assignment thrusts him into a world of corporate greed and corruption as two ruthless rivals battle for the contract. Amidst the legal maneuvering, Rabb finds himself defending an amoral client linked to "greasy evidence" while navigating the advances of a rival's niece.]

Parrish, Richard [*Joshua Rabb series #3*], (**Nothing But the Truth**) [hc, Dutton Adult, 1995] 978-0525938521 [mass mkt pb, Onyx, 1996] 978-0451405388 [Approached by organized crime brain Meyer

Lansky, attorney Rabb attempts to discover the link between recent mafia activities and the murders of two Chassidic Jews, exploring the diverse and sometimes conflicting expressions of Jewish identity during that era.]

Parrish, Richard [Joshua Rabb series #4], (**Wind and Lies**) [mass mkt pb, Onyx, 1997] 978-0451405395 [When his long-time friend is wrongly accused of a gruesome murder on Arizona's Papago Indian reservation, attorney Joshua Rabb suspects a renegade clan is responsible, but proving it could get him killed.]

Parrish, Richard [Joshua Rabb series #5], (**Defending the Truth**) [pb, Onyx, 1998] 978-0451408334 [Set in 1951, the final installment finds Rabb at the center of the **McCarthy era's** national hysteria. He takes on the defense of a Tucson professor accused of "traitorous activities," standing against a tide of public opinion and political vengeance. As patriotism is used as a cover for greed and treachery, Rabb faces his most formidable courtroom challenge while trying to protect his family from the fallout of the Red Scare.] [Google/AI]

Richard North Patterson (born 1947 in Berkeley, CA and raised in Cleveland, OH) – lawyer, political commentator, and prolific author of thrillers. Several of his novels feature significant Jewish content, most notably through characters and themes related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and Jewish-American identity. **Exile** (2007) is his most prominent work involving Jewish themes. The protagonist, **David Wolfe**, is a Jewish-American lawyer in San Francisco. The plot centers on:

The Conflict: Wolfe defends his former lover, a Palestinian woman accused of assassinating the Prime Minister of Israel.

Identity: The book explores Wolfe's internal struggle with his Jewish heritage and his relationship with his fiancée's father, a Holocaust survivor.

Geopolitics: Patterson conducted extensive research in Israel and the West Bank, meeting with figures like **Shimon Peres** to represent multiple perspectives on the conflict.

Political Thrillers: In his broader political series (like the Kerry Kilcannon books), Jewish characters often appear in roles as advisors, judges, or political figures, reflecting the demographics of the American legal and political landscapes he writes about. [Google/AI]

Patterson, Richard North, (**Exile** [hc, |Henry Holt & Co., 2007]) 978-0805079470 [pb, Macmillan, 2014] 978-1447264248

Marge Piercy (born 1936, Detroit, and residing since 1971 on Cape Cod/Wellfleet, MA) [Born into a working-class family during the Great Depression, Piercy grew up in a segregated Detroit neighborhood with a Presbyterian father and an observant Jewish mother who instilled her love of poetry. After a childhood battle with rheumatic fever that turned her into a voracious reader, she became the first person in her family to attend college, earning a scholarship to the University of Michigan and later completing an M.A. at Northwestern University. During the 1960s, Piercy became heavily involved in civil rights, anti-war movements, and New Left organizations like the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). By 1969, she fully committed herself to the women's rights movement. Her prolific literary career spans over 15 novels and 15 collections of poetry. Her work is celebrated for its deep intersection of Marxism, feminism, environmentalism, and Jewish traditions. She is widely known for her seminal feminist utopian/dystopian novel **Woman on the Edge of Time** (1976), her World War II bestseller **Gone to Soldiers** (1987), and her cyberpunk novel **He, She and It** (1991). She continues to write and manage Leapfrog Press alongside her husband, novelist Ira Wood. While she is not a traditional mystery or thriller writer, she frequently utilizes crime motifs, illegal acts, and genre thriller elements as primary narrative drivers in her Jewish fiction. Rather than writing standard "whodunits," Piercy reframes crime through a political, feminist, and historical lens, exploring how marginalized individuals—particularly Jewish women—interact with lawlessness to survive or fight for justice.]

Piercy, Marge, (**He, She and It** [hc, Knopf, 1991] 978-0679404088 [pb, Del Rey, 2016]) 978-1785033797 [*Piercy here leans heavily into cyberpunk thriller conventions, utilizing data piracy, corporate espionage, and biologically enhanced assassins. The story centers on Tikva, an independent, environmentally stable Jewish “free town” defending itself against predatory global corporations. To protect the community from illegal corporate raids, a scientist creates Yod, a highly advanced, illegal cyborg. This futuristic thriller plot is directly parallel to the 17th-century Jewish folk story of **the Golem of Prague**, who was similarly created outside the law to protect Jews from violent pogroms.*]

Piercy, Marge, (**Gone to Soldiers** [hc, Random House, 1990]) 978-0517023396 [pb, Simon & Schuster, 2015] 978-1501118760 [*In her sweeping World War II epic **Gone to Soldiers**, crime is redefined by the context of the Holocaust, where survival and morality require breaking the law. The novel follows multiple characters, including Jewish women struggling with the horrors of the war. Piercy tracks a Jewish heroine embedded in the French Resistance. In this context, “crime”—forgery, smuggling, sabotage, and assassination—is transformed into a heroic narrative driver. Piercy explores the psychological toll of adopting a criminal, clandestine lifestyle to combat state-sponsored genocide.*]

Piercy, Marge, (**The Longings of Women** [hc, Fawcett, 1994]) 978-0449909072 [pb, Open Road Media, 2018] 978-1504051880 [*Though not strictly focused on Jewish identity, **The Longings of Women** functions as a domestic noir/psychological thriller. One of the three main protagonists is **Leila Landsman**, a Jewish academic and researcher specializing in abused women. Leila becomes deeply entangled in investigating a notorious, highly publicized murder case involving a young woman accused of killing her husband. The novel uses the architecture of a true-crime thriller to dissect how the legal system and criminal acts intersect with the domestic entrapment of women.*]

Piercy, Marge, (**Braided Lives** [hc, Simon & Schuster, 1982]) 978-0671438340 [pb, PM Press, 2013] 978-1604864427 [*The semi-autobiographical protagonist, Jill, is a dark, fiercely independent Jewish intellectual with “Detroit street smarts” who acts as a sometime thief to get by in a repressive 1950s landscape. The book also intensely treats the “crime” of seeking illegal abortions during that era.*]

Piercy, Marge, (**Sex Wars: A Jewish Immigrant’s Epic Pursuit of the American Dream in Post-Civil War New York** [hc, William Morrow, 2005] 978-0060789831 [pb, William Morrow Paperbacks, 2006] 978-0060789879 [*Piercy follows Freydeh, a Jewish immigrant builder in Gilded Age New York, navigating a world of economic survival, shifting legalities, and the criminalization of women’s health and autonomy.*]

Confirming her connection to the genre, Piercy contributed to the anthology **Jewish Noir II: Tales of Crime and Other Dark Deeds (2022)**. This collection specifically explores the complexities of Jewish identity through the lens of regional warfare, political corruption, anti-Semitism, and greedy stereotypes. See the reference under Kenneth Wishnia, editor of the anthology, below in this bibliography. - Google/AI]

Marissa Piesman (est. birth – 1951 in New York City) - an American attorney and mystery novelist, best known for creating the humorous **Nina Fischman** mystery series (6 volumes). Nina is a Bronx-raised Jewish legal aid lawyer living on the Upper West Side of New York. The books frequently explore the specific anxieties of 30-something single Jewish women in the 1980s and 90s, particularly regarding dating and family expectations.

A recurring theme is Nina’s relationship with her mother, Ida, which involves traditional “guilt-inducing” dynamics common in Jewish-American literature. In **Heading Uptown**, Nina provides caustic commentary on the affluent Jewish communities of Great Neck, Long Island, and their consumer-driven lifestyle. She occasionally reflects on the differences between American Jewish identity and Israeli personality traits, noting the “cocky” and “direct” nature of Israelis she encounters.

Unorthodox Practices (1989): Sets the tone for the series’ focus on NYC real estate and urban Jewish life.

Heading Uptown (1993): Features Nina acting as an executor for her mother’s friend, leading to a deep dive into suburban Jewish social structures.

Survival Instincts (1994): *Highlights the tension between Nina's legal mind and her "Jewish female angst".* [Google/AI]

Piesman, Marissa, (**Unorthodox Practices** [*Nina Fischman* #1, Pocket Books, mass market pb, 1989]) 978-0671673154 [pb, Pocket Books, 2004] 978-1416506928 [pb, Felony & Mayhem Press, 2005] 978-1933397191

Piesman, Marissa, (**Heading Uptown** [*Nina Fischman* #2, Delacorte Press]) [hc, 1993] 978-0385305372 [mass market pb, 1994] 978-0440211617 [pb, 2008] 978-1934609101

Piesman, Marissa, (**Personal Effects** [*Nina Fischman* #3, Felony & Mayhem Press] [pb, 1991] 978-1933397764 [mass market pb, 2007] 978-0671742751

Piesman, Marissa, (**Close Quarters** [*Nina Fischman* #4]) [hc, Delacorte, 1994] 978-0385305389 [pb, Dell, 1995] 978-0440211624

Piesman, Marissa, (**Alternate Sides** [*Nina Fischman* #5]) [hc, Delacorte, 1995] 978-0385313551 [mass market pb, Dell, 1996] 978-0440222408

Piesman, Marissa, (**Survival Instincts** [*Nina Fischman* #6]) [hc, Delacorte, 1997] 978-0385313582 [mass market pb, Dell, 1997] 978-0440224532

Neil S. Plakcy (*est. birth 1958, in Yardley, PA*) - a prolific multi-genre author and retired English professor from Broward College. He is best known for his dog-centered cozy mysteries and gay fiction, including the *Mahu* series. He lives in Hollywood, Florida, with his husband and their golden retrievers. Best-known for his 22-volume **Golden Retriever Mystery series**, featuring the Golden Retriever named Rochester and his owner ("permanent guardian and Dad"), **Steve Levitan**. Steve treats Rochester as a co-investigator with "an uncanny nose for clues" and as a family member. Steve's Jewish identity is a fundamental part of his character, evolving from a background detail to a central theme as the series progresses. He is a Reform Jew and active synagogue member. Its manifestations:

Tikkun Olam Commitment: Steve's drive for justice is explicitly framed as an extension of Tikkun Olam—the Jewish concept of "repairing the world". This spiritual obligation informs his moral compass and motivates his efforts to hold wrongdoers accountable.

Synagogue Life: Steve is an active member of a local synagogue, participating in events like the "Blessing of the Animals". He also joins a Torah study group led by the local rabbi, which serves as both a spiritual outlet and a plot device for his investigations.

Jewish Education: As an adjunct professor, Steve teaches a course in Jewish American literature, reflecting his intellectual engagement with his heritage.

Observance of Holidays and Rituals: Major Jewish holidays often serve as the backdrop for specific novels. For instance, **Dog Have Mercy** (Book 6) integrates Hanukkah traditions—such as lighting the menorah and playing dreidel—into the narrative.

Lifecycle Events: His wedding to Lili is depicted as a traditional Jewish ceremony, incorporating elements like the chuppah and the breaking of the glass, while highlighting the historical context of his wife's Eastern European Jewish heritage.

Family History: The series explores Steve's roots in the Jewish community of Trenton, New Jersey, where he grew up. Investigations often lead him to uncover secrets tied to his family's past, his childhood congregation, and broader Jewish history, including links to the Holocaust.

Knowledge of Orthodox Culture: In **Dog of Deliverance** (Book 21), Steve's Jewish identity allows him to navigate and investigate the insular world of Kiryas Lev, an ultra-religious Orthodox community. [Google/AI]

Key Books in Golden Retriever series with Explicit Jewish Content:

Plakcy, Neil S., [Golden Retriever Mystery Series #6], (**Dog Have Mercy**) [pb, Dimensions, 2015] 978-1507844960 - *Set during the Hanukkah season, the story weaves traditional holiday elements—such as menorah lighting and dreidel games—into an investigation involving a string of deaths at a nursing home.*

Plakcy, Neil S., [Golden Retriever Mystery Series #8], (**Dog is in the Details**) [pb, Dimensions, 2017] 978-1548767969 - *Steve investigates the murder of a rabbi's brother. The plot explores the history of the Jewish community in Trenton, the role of sacred spaces (synagogues), and the intersection of tradition and modernity.*

Plakcy, Neil S., [Golden Retriever Mystery Series #21], (**Dog of Deliverance**) [pb, independently published, 2025] 979-8287443207 - *This installment centers on a Purim carnival where a young Orthodox diamond dealer is found dead. It explores the secretive world of Kiryas Lev, an ultra-religious community, and touches on contemporary social issues within Orthodox culture.*

Eileen Pollack (born 1956, Liberty, NY, resides in Boston) [B.S. in physics (Yale U., 1978) and MFA from the Iowa Writers' Workshop in 1983. She spent decades as a professor, eventually becoming a tenured faculty member and the long-time Director of the Helen Zell MFA Program in Creative Writing at the University of Michigan. She is currently a professor emerita. Author of multiple novels, short story collections, and creative nonfiction books. Her 2018 novel, **The Bible of Dirty Jokes**, is a comedic murder mystery deeply rooted in her upbringing, exploring the history of Borscht Belt comedy, Las Vegas, and the Jewish mob. Her nonfiction work **Woman Walking Ahead** was adapted into a major feature film starring Jessica Chastain. While she is primarily recognized as a literary fiction writer, essayist, and scholar, she deliberately blends elements of the missing-person thriller with historical Jewish underworld themes in her work.

Pollack, Eileen, (**The Bible of Dirty Jokes** [pb, Four Way Books, 2018]) 978-1945588143 [This novel serves as Pollack's most direct engagement with the mystery genre and Jewish criminal history. The narrative centers on Ketzel Weinrach, a failed stand-up comic who travels to Las Vegas to find her beloved brother, Potsie, after he goes missing. To solve the mystery of her brother's disappearance, Ketzel is forced to dig into her family's shady history and its deep-seated **ties to the legendary Jewish mob and Murder, Inc.** The legacy of the Jewish mob—juxtaposed against the backdrop of the Catskills hotel era and modern-day Las Vegas strip clubs—acts as the primary catalyst for the plot and the main vehicle for exploring themes of generational guilt, family secrets, and Jewish identity.

Pollack, Eileen, (**Breaking and Entering** [pb, Four Way Books, 2012]) 978-1935536123 [Though not a traditional whodunit, this novel flirts with the political thriller genre and features criminal subplots. The story kicks off when a client of the protagonist's husband commits suicide, plunging the family into a dark period and forcing a relocation to Michigan right before the Oklahoma City bombing. The narrative deals with a massive explosion that destroys a public building, unleashing a wave of conspiracy theories regarding Arabs, Jews, and the FBI. The book functions as a psychological and political thriller driven by fear, militia groups, and anti-Semitic or religious scapegoating. - Google/AI]

Keith Raffel (born 1951, Chicago) - an American novelist, syndicated columnist, and former technology executive and Senate aide. "Before he turned to writing full-time, Keith Raffel watched over the CIA, supported himself at the racetrack, founded a software company, taught writing to Harvard freshmen, ran for Congress, and sold DNA sequencing to medical researchers." (Amazon) His books often include significant Jewish characters and themes that reflect the author's own background and engagement with Jewish life. Raffel has also authored five mystery/thriller novels, often drawing on his experiences in Silicon Valley and Washington, D.C.

In **Dot Dead** and **Smasher**, set in Silicon Valley, a "career Jewish couple," **Ian Michaels** and **Rowena Goldberg**, are the protagonists. Reviewers noted that "Jewish actions are an innate part of Ian's life". The first book also includes an "opinionated Jewish mother" character, adding cultural depth.

***Drop by Drop**, set in Washington D.C., features prominent Jewish characters and themes:*

***Jewish Protagonist:** The main character, **Sam Rockman**, is a Jewish man grieving the loss of his wife.*

***Rabbinic Support:** Sam seeks counsel from his wife's former rabbi, who serves as one of his key allies as he navigates a landscape of congressional politics and anti-terrorism.*

***Cultural Identity:** Like Raffel's other works, the Jewish identity of the characters is treated as an integrated, lived experience rather than just a plot device.*

***A Fine and Dangerous Season** - This historical thriller is set during the Cuban Missile Crisis and also centers on a Jewish protagonist, **Nate Michaels**, a Jewish businessman and Hewlett-Packard salesman living in California. Michaels, who knew John F. Kennedy during their time at Stanford in 1940, is recruited by the President to act as a back-channel negotiator with a KGB agent to prevent nuclear war. Nate Michaels is also the father of **Ian Michaels**, the protagonist of Raffel's Silicon Valley mysteries like *Smasher* and *Dot Dead*, providing a multi-generational Jewish family narrative across his books.*

***Temple Mount** is a thriller which Lee Child described as "Silicon Valley meets Raiders of the Lost Ark". It centers on a quest for the Ark of the Covenant that takes the characters to Jerusalem. The plot incorporates specific Hebrew terms and Jewish concepts like Yom Hakippurim (Day of Atonement), the significance of the Western Wall, and historical references to the ancient temples. The Jewish protagonist, Alex Kalman, goes on a quest spanning from Washington D.C. to ancient passages under Jerusalem's Temple Mount. The plot involves Israeli intelligence, a partner archeologist named **Rivka Golan**, and an action-packed chase through Jerusalem, directly immersing the narrative in a religiously and politically significant Jewish location.*

Raffel has used a quote from the Talmud in his personal writings ("As my parents planted for me, so too do I plant for those who will come after me") to describe his inspiration, indicating the deep influence of Jewish thought on his perspective and work. He has also written columns that address antisemitism and Jewish holidays, further highlighting his engagement with his Jewish identity. [Google/AI]

Raffel, Keith, (**Dot Dead** [pb, Midnight Ink, 2006]) 978-0738708331

Raffel, Keith, (**Smasher** [pb, Midnight Ink, 2009]) 978-0738718743

Raffel, Keith, (**Drop by Drop** [Kindle edition only, 2013] B0051UA9KA

Raffel, Keith, (**A Fine and Dangerous Season** [pb, Thomas & Mercer, 2013] 978-1477818206

Raffel, Keith, (**Temple Mount** [pb, Keith Raffel, 2014] 978-0988509887

Frederick Ramsay (1936–2017, born in Baltimore, MD) – described as a “Renaissance Man” whose life included US army service, a doctorate in anatomy, serving as a medical school Dean, and as an ordained Episcopal priest, and a long-time author of mystery novels prominently featuring Jewish protagonists. In his **Jerusalem Mysteries** series (which will not be detailed here), he seeks to recreate first-century Judaism in the ancient Holy Land, with Rabban Gamaliel, leader of the Sanhedrin, as the central protagonist who interacts with various Jewish sects, characters such as the Galilean Rabbi Yeshua (Jesus) and the Roman authorities. He also authored the 10-volume series following **Sheriff Ike Schwartz**, a former CIA agent who moves to the small, predominantly Baptist town of Picketsville, Virginia. A central theme is Ike's experience as a Jewish sheriff living in a community where his religion makes him an outsider. Some of the plotlines involve Ike and his partner, Ruth, navigating their identities in high-pressure law enforcement situations. Ike is a cultural Jew, not religiously observant. He occasionally references Jewish history or uses Yiddish-inflected humor, and frequently reflects on the cultural disconnect between his background and the evangelical traditions of his neighbors. His approach to justice is often informed by a secularized version of Jewish ethics, emphasizing community responsibility and a nuanced understanding of moral ambiguity, likely influenced by the author's own background in theology. In the Ike Schwartz series, Ramsay used Ike's Jewish identity to explore the social dynamics of being a cultural minority in a small, Southern Baptist town. This allowed him to examine themes of

community, morality, and belonging through a character who is intrinsically connected to his environment but culturally distinct from it. – Google/AI]

Ramsay, Frederick [*Ike Schwartz #1*], (**Artscape**) [hc, Poisoned Pen Press, 2004] 978-1590581223 [pb, Poisoned Pen Press, 2017] 978-1464208546

Ramsay, Frederick [*Ike Schwartz #2*], (**Secrets**) [hc, Poisoned Pen Press, 2005] 978-1590581889 [pb, Poisoned Pen Press, 2012] 978-1464200571

Ramsay, Frederick [*Ike Schwartz #3*], (**Buffalo Mountain**) [hc, Poisoned Pen Press, 2007] 978-1590585375 [pb, Poisoned Pen Press, 2011] 978-1590585375

Ramsay, Frederick [*Ike Schwartz #4*], (**Stranger Room**) [hc, Poisoned Pen Press, 2008] 978-1590585351 [pb, Poisoned Pen Press, 2012] 978-1590586488

Ramsay, Frederick [*Ike Schwartz #5*], (**Choker**) [hc, Poisoned Pen Press, 2009] 978-1590586358 [pb, Poisoned Pen Press, 2011] 978-1590588512

Ramsay, Frederick [*Ike Schwartz #6*], (**The Eye of the Virgin**) [hc, Poisoned Pen Press, 2010] 978-1590587607 [pb, Poisoned Pen Press, 2010] 978-1590587621

Ramsay, Frederick [*Ike Schwartz #7*], (**Rogue**) [hc, Poisoned Pen Press, 2011] 978-1590589045 [pb, Poisoned Pen Press, 2011] 978-1590589045

Ramsay, Frederick [*Ike Schwartz #8*], (**Scone Island**) [hc, Poisoned Pen Press, 2012] 978-1464200533 [pb, Poisoned Pen Press, 2012] 978-1464200557

Ramsay, Frederick [*Ike Schwartz #9*], (**Drowning Barbie**) [hc, Poisoned Pen Press, 2014] 978-1464202148 [pb, Poisoned Pen Press, 2014] 978-1464202162

Ramsay, Frederick [*Ike Schwartz #10*], (**The Vulture**) [hc, Poisoned Pen Press, 2015] 978-1464204760 [pb, Poisoned Pen Press, 2015] 978-1464204784

Lawrence W. Raphael (1943–2019, born in Los Angeles) – was a senior Reform Rabbi, widely recognized as a leading expert on Jewish mystery and detective fiction. He viewed the detective story as a form of “modern midrash”—a way to interpret Jewish tradition and ethics through the lens of a crime and its resolution, extracting deep meaning from subtle details, much like a rabbi interpreting holy texts. He wrote numerous articles and essays on the theme of Jewish identity in detective fiction, examining how Jewish protagonists use their heritage to contend with moral dilemmas. He worked closely with other prominent Jewish mystery writers such as Lev Raphael (no relation), who contributed the story “Your Papers, Please” to his anthologies.

He explored characters (particularly “rabbi-sleuths”) as outsiders who navigate both Jewish and secular societies, using their unique cultural lens to critique both. His anthologies focus on characters who must solve “mysteries of being” and spiritual identity alongside whodunits. He highlighted the parallels between theology and crime fiction, both of which center on the Conflict between Good and Evil and the pursuit of justice.

Raphael categorized “Jewish Mysteries” into three sub-categories based on the role of Jewish identity in the plot: “Jewish Protagonist,” where the protagonist is Jewish but it’s a background detail; “Jewish Theme or Setting,” where the plot is centered on Jewish life or history; and “Jewish Law or Ritual,” where the mystery’s resolution relies on Jewish law or ritual, sometimes termed “Modern Midrash”.

See also Abigail Browning’s anthology, “Murder is No Mitzvah” and Kenneth Wishnia’s two “Jewish Noir” anthologies in this Bibliography. [Google/AI]

Raphael, Lawrence W., [ed], (Mystery Midrash: An Anthology of Jewish Mystery & Detective Fiction [hc, Jewish Lights, 1999] 978-1683362166 [pb, Jewish Lights, 1999] 978-1580230551

Raphael, Lawrence W., [ed], *Criminal Kabbalah: An Intriguing Anthology of Jewish Mystery & Detective Fiction* [hc, Jewish Lights, 2001] 978-1683360193 [pb, Jewish Lights, 2001] 978-1580231091

Lev Raphael (born 1954, New York City) - American author and critic known for his extensive work across multiple genres, particularly as a pioneer in literature regarding the children of Holocaust survivors. His 10-volume **Nick Hoffman** series features a protagonist whose Jewish identity is central to his character development and the series' thematic depth. In Nick Hoffman's world, as a gay Jewish academic, these identities frequently intersect with the "dirty reality" of university politics.

Core Jewish Content

- **Second-Generation Identity:** Nick is the son of Holocaust survivors, a background that heavily influences his worldview and psychological makeup. (So, by the way, is the author, Lev Raphael, whose original birth-name was Reuben Lewis Steinberg.)
- **Religious and Cultural Traditions:** While the series is primarily academic satire and mystery, it incorporates Jewish life through specific events and cultural markers. For instance, Raphael often explores the tension of being "openly gay and Jewish," themes he also addresses in his non-fiction and other novels like **Dancing on Tisha B'Av**.
- **Ethical and Moral Framework:** Nick's investigative approach is often colored by his heritage. In **Department of Death**, he grapples with doing the "right thing" in a corrupt environment, a struggle framed by both his literary expertise and his moral grounding as a Jew.
- **Thematic Depth:** The series uses the "detective" role to explore deeper questions of Jewish heritage, such as healing and the long-term impact of historical trauma on the descendants of survivors. [Google/AI]

Raphael, Lev [*Nick Hoffman* #1], (**Let's Get Criminal**) [hc, St. Martin's Press, 1996] 978-0312139995 [pb, St. Martin's Griffin, 1997] 978-0312151607

Raphael, Lev [*Nick Hoffman* #2], (**The Edith Wharton Murders**) [hc, St. Martin's Press, 1997] 978-0312155193 [pb, Stonewall Inn Mysteries, 1998] 978-0312198633

Raphael, Lev [*Nick Hoffman* #3], (**Death of a Constant Lover**) [hc, Walker & Co., 1999] 978-0802733269 [pb, Stonewall Inn Mysteries, 2020] 978-0312264963

Raphael, Lev [*Nick Hoffman* #4], (**Little Miss Evil**) [hc, Walker & Co., 2000] 978-0802733429

Raphael, Lev [*Nick Hoffman* #5], (**Burning Down the House**) [hc, Walker & Co., 2001] 978-0802733658 [pb, ReQueered Tales, 2022] 978-1951092658

Raphael, Lev [*Nick Hoffman* #6], (**Tropic of Murder** [pb, Perseverance Press/Daniel & Daniel Publishers, 2004]) 978-1880284681

Raphael, Lev [*Nick Hoffman* #7], (**Hot Rocks** [pb, Perseverance Press/Daniel & Daniel Publishers, 2007]) 978-1880284834

Raphael, Lev [*Nick Hoffman* #8], (**Assault with a Deadly Lie** [hc, U. of Wisconsin Press, 2014]) 978-0299302306 [pb, ReQueered Tales, 2025] 978-1959902232

Raphael, Lev [*Nick Hoffman* #9], (**State University of Murder** [pb, Perseverance Press, 2019]) 978-1564746092

Raphael, Lev [*Nick Hoffman* #10], (**Department of Death** [pb, Perseverance Press, 2021] 978-1564746191

Ellen Rawlings (est. birth 1941, Columbia, MD) - a mystery and romance novelist active primarily in the 1990s. She includes significant Jewish content and characters in her mystery novels, often

reflecting contemporary Jewish identity and community life. The Jewish protagonist of *The Murder Lover* is **Rachel Crowne**, a young, divorced investigative journalist. The plot centers on the murder of another Jewish woman in their suburban Washington, D.C. community. Themes include modern Jewish life and the threat of white supremacy. Rawlings contributed to *Mystery Midrash* (see Lawrence Raphael in this bibliography), an award-winning anthology of Jewish mystery & detective fiction. The collection explores how characters manage both criminal investigations and their spiritual lives through “Talmudic logic” and the nuances of Jewish identity. [Google/AI]

Rawlings, Ellen [*Rachel Crowne* #1], (**The Murder Lover** [mass mkt pb, Fawcett, 1996]) 978-0449149881

Rawlings, Ellen [*Rachel Crowne* #2], (**Deadly Harvest** [mass mkt pb, Fawcett, 1997]) 978-0449149874

Tova Reich (born in Liberty, NY and lives in Chevy Chase, MD) [*Grew up in a prominent Jewish family; her father was a rabbi and her brother is the well-known activist Rabbi Avi Weiss. She earned a B.A. from Brooklyn College in 1964 and an M.A. in English Literature from New York U. in 1965. Traveled extensively and lived for periods in the ultra-Orthodox quarter of Jerusalem, Israel, as well as in Varanasi, India. Over her four-decade career, she worked as an editor and university professor, including teaching in the MFA program at the University of Maryland. In 1965, she married Walter Reich, a psychiatrist who later served as the first director of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Highly acclaimed for her provocative, satirical fiction that explores Orthodox Jewry, zealotry, and religious excesses with sharp wit. She has published numerous novels—including **Mara**, **The Jewish War**, **My Holocaust**, and **Camp Jeff**—and her short fiction has won the National Magazine Award.*]

Tova Reich does not write conventional mystery or thriller fiction, but she frequently utilizes crime, fraud, and illicit schemes as central narrative engines for her dark, satirical Jewish fiction. Instead of a classic “whodunit” framework, Reich approaches the intersection of “Jews and crime” through a lens of biting communal satire. She exposes characters who commit white-collar fraud, capitalize on trauma, or break laws in pursuit of religious or political fanaticism.

Reich, Tova, (**My Holocaust** [hc, Harper, 2007]) 978-0061173455 [pb, Harper Perennial 2008] 978-0061173479 [*Tackles the commodification of historical trauma through a multi-generational criminal enterprise. The narrative follows a father-and-son duo, **Maurice and Norman Messer**, who operate “Holocaust Connections Inc.” Under the guise of holy remembrance, they engage in lucrative scams, including selling counterfeit Holocaust victim certificates and siphoning funds to seize control of a United States Holocaust museum. Crime here serves as a metaphor for the manipulation and exploitation of communal guilt.*]

Reich, Tova, (**Camp Jeff** [pb, Seven Stories Press, 2024]) 978-1644214213 [*Reich pivots directly toward contemporary criminal headlines by crafting a satire deeply inspired by the crimes of Jeffrey Epstein. The story is set at a converted hotel in the Catskills purchased by a wealthy man named Jeffrey Epstein (distinct from the historical figure). He establishes a re-education camp for alleged sex offenders caught up in the MeToo movement. Reich utilizes the backdrop of sexual deviance, legal fallout, and institutional confinement to dissect intersectional themes of misogyny and rising antisemitism.*]

Reich, Tova, (**The Jewish War** [hc, Pantheon Books, 1995] 978-0679439875 [pb, Syracuse UP, 1997] 978-0815604525 [*Reich utilizes the motifs of political violence, illegal weapon hoarding, and militant extremism. The narrative tracks a radical group of Jewish settlers who break away from conventional Israeli governance to declare an independent kingdom. The narrative driver is fundamentally political crime and armed insurrection, drawing direct narrative parallels to a modern-day standoff reminiscent of Masada.* - Google/AI]

Mark Reutlinger (birth est. 1944 in San Francisco - an American attorney and Professor of Law Emeritus at Seattle University, residing in University Place, WA.) Author of the 3-volume Mrs. Kaplan cozy mystery series featuring **Rose Kaplan** and her sidekick **Ida Berkowitz**, two sharp-witted

residents of the “Julius and Rebecca Cohen Home for Jewish Seniors”, located in an undisclosed city that could be in New York or Florida or the Pacific Northwest or wherever American Jews go to retire.

Google/AI contends that Reutlinger has some serious purposes in depicting two elderly and very Yiddish ladies as detectives solving murders. For one thing, he wishes to assert the competence and capability of the elderly, who use brains over brawn to outmaneuver the police and solve complex crimes. He leans into the “nosy grandma” stereotype but elevates it, turning gossip and sharp observation into a legitimate investigative tool. The series is sometimes described as “Lucy and Ethel (protagonists of the classic 1950s sitcom, “I Love Lucy”) meet Holmes and Watson”. For another, he celebrates and preserves a specific post-WWII ethnic world, accurately capturing the grammar, worldviews, and dialects (Yiddish) of a generation that is passing. He includes “a bisser (a little) Yiddish” in his books with the explicit goal of having readers learn the language as they go. For Reutlinger, the Yiddish “mameloshen” (mother tongue) is the “deepest soul” of his characters. He uses it to express nuances that English cannot fully capture—for example, terms that convey deep emotional bonds or specific worldviews rather than just literal translations.

He also uses fiction to examine social issues, such as the exploitation of the elderly by “unreliable companions” or the dynamics of living in assisted care. A core “engine” of the books is the powerful bond of female friendship between Rose and Ida, highlighting that life’s joy and purpose don’t end with retirement. He explicitly states he writes cozies because he enjoys the “snappy dialogue” and the challenge of working a murder plot around specific Jewish holidays like Passover or Purim. [Google/AI]

Reutlinger, Mark [*Mrs. Kaplan Mysteries #1*], (Oy Vey, Maria! [pb, Wild Rose Press, 2021]) 978-1509238354

Reutlinger, Mark [*Mrs. Kaplan Mysteries #2*], (A Pain in the Tuchis [pb, Wild Rose Press, 2022]) 978-1509238736

Reutlinger, Mark [*Mrs. Kaplan Mysteries #3*], (Mrs. Kaplan and the Matzoh Ball of Death [pb, Wild Rose Press, 2022]) 978-1509245475

M.J. Rose (1953–2024, born in New York City) - M.J. Rose was a pseudonym for **Melisse Shapiro**, an American author, whose work often explored themes of reincarnation and historical intrigue. One of her novels, **The Hypnotist**, relates to the rescue of Jewish families during the Holocaust, centers around a character investigating an art collector (**FBI Agent Lucian Glass**), and touches upon the subject of hidden art and secrets. A related novel, **The Book of Lost Fragrances**, features a story element set in Paris, 1942, where characters **Suzanne Belperron** and **Dixie Osgood** help transport hundreds of Jewish families out of harm’s way during the Nazi occupation. [Google/AI]

Rose, M.J., (**The Hypnotist: A Novel of Suspense** [hc, MIRA, 2020]) 978-0778326755 [pb, MIRA, 2011]) 978-0778329206

Rose, M.J., (**The Book of Lost Fragrances** [hc, Atria Books, 2013]) 978-1451621488

Delia Rosen (est. birth 1950, Brooklyn, NY) – author of the 6-volume **Deadly Deli series**, also referred to as the **Nashville Katz Series**, a “cozy mystery” collection that blends traditional whodunit plots with Jewish cultural and culinary themes. The series centers on **Gwen “Nashville Katz” Silver** (née Katz), a native New Yorker who inherits her late uncle Murray’s Jewish deli, **Murray’s Pastrami Swami**, the only one of its kind in Nashville, Tennessee. Much of the action occurs within the deli, featuring events like “Kosher Karaoke Night”. Each book’s title and plot revolve around traditional Jewish foods, including brisket, matzo balls, herring, and chopped liver. The stories often explore the “fish out of water” experience of a New York Jew in the South, alongside plotlines involving local hate groups, family secrets, and kosher catering for diverse events. Delia Rosen lives in Manhattan (formerly living in Maine). She is

known for her love of searching for the “perfect bagel” and owns two identical Siamese cats named Johnson & Johnson.

Note: “Delia Rosen” may be a pseudonym for other authors wishing to distinguish this series from their other novels. (This is not certain.) Author **Jeff Rovin** (born 1951 in Brooklyn) has explicitly stated that he writes the *Deadly Deli* series. He has written or co-written over 100 books using several pseudonyms and is widely recognized for his work in the techno-thriller genre, particularly for writing more than a dozen novels in the **Tom Clancy’s Op-Center** series. Alternately, the “real” Delia Rosen may be **Jerome and Suzanne Preisler**, also prolific authors using various pseudonyms. Jerome has written a different Tom Clancy series (from Rovin’s) within the Tom Clancy universe and both have written episodes in the *Mortal Kombat* franchise, though never officially collaborating. It is more than likely they know one another and possible they have both contributed to the Delia Rosen series. We apparently have to reconcile ourselves to not knowing for sure. [Google/AI]

Rosen, Delia [Deadly Deli series #1], (**A Brisket, A Casket** (pb, Kensington Books, 2010) 978-0758241702 [Gwen (nee Katz) Silver heard the brisket at her uncle’s Jewish deli, Murray the Pastrami Swami--the only one of its kind in Nashville, Tennessee--was “to die for”. But she didn’t realize that meant literally... When Gwen learns she’s inherited Murray’s, the native New Yorker leaves her chaotic career and messy divorce behind to start over in Nashville. But the venture seems doomed from the start. Murray has taken his recipes and secret list of food suppliers to the grave with him, and ruthless real estate developer Royce Sinclair will stop at nothing to try and sandwich Murray’s into his already overstuffed portfolio. Then, on Kosher Karaoke Night, longtime customer Buster Sergeant bites into his brisket... and bites the dust. The coroner says food poisoning, but Gwen’s not convinced. Now, with the help of hunky police detective “Nashville Katz”--as Gwen is quickly nicknamed--will find herself adding “private investigator” to her resume--and a new love to her life. - Amazon]

Rosen, Delia [Deadly Deli series #2], (**One Foot in the Gravy** (mass mkt pb, Kensington Books, 2011) 978-0758241719

Rosen, Delia [Deadly Deli series #3], (**A Killer in the Rye** (mass mkt pb, Kensington Books, 2012) 978-0758241726

Rosen, Delia [Deadly Deli series #4], (**From Herring to Eternity** (mass mkt pb, Kensington Books, 2013) 978-0758281999

Rosen, Delia [Deadly Deli series #5], (**To Kill a Matzo Ball** (mass mkt pb, Kensington Books, 2014) 978-0758282019

Rosen, Delia [Deadly Deli series #6], (**Fry Me a Liver** (mass mkt pb, Kensington Books, 2015) 978-0758282033 [Deli owner Gwen “Nashville” Katz has certainly had some very un-Kosher experiences since her move from New York--dead customers, dead street musicians, dead deliverymen. Sometimes the country music capital of the world feels more like a cemetery. But Gwen is finally knocked flat on her tuchas when a van comes plunging through her roof, causing an explosion and barricading her inside with her employees and Nashville mayoral candidate Tootsie Pearl. Was this an attack on the mayoral hopeful, or a war against Gwen herself? With her deli in shambles, Katz is hot to grill the putz responsible for turning deli into a culinary nightmare. – Amazon]

Dorothy (1912–2001) & Sidney (1916–2005) Rosen – born in Boston, co-authored the two-volume **Belle Appleman mystery series**, which features a young Jewish widow and amateur sleuth in 1930s Boston. The stories depict the daily struggles and social fabric of the 1930s Jewish working class. Belle works as a sewing machine operator in a pants factory, a common trade for Jewish immigrants of that era. The narrative often captures the specific cadence of Jewish immigrant speech, using Belle’s internal monologue and dialogue to reflect her cultural heritage. As the titles suggest, traditional Jewish foods like **blintzes** and **strudel** serve as cultural markers and central plot

points. Sidney was also an astrophysicist and professor emeritus of science education at the University of Illinois. Dorothy was also an author of biographical works for children. [Google/AI]

Rosen, Dorothy & Sidney, [*Belle Appleman #1*] (**Death and Blintzes**) [hc, Walker & co., 1985]) 978-080275625 [pb, Academy Chicago Publishers, 2005] 978-0897334501

Rosen, Dorothy & Sidney, [*Belle Appleman #2*] (**Death and Strudel**) [hc, Academy Chicago Publishers, 1991]) 978-0897334785

Richard D. Rosen (born 1949 in Chicago) - prominent American mystery novelist and television writer/producer who authored five mystery novels featuring **Harvey Blissberg**, a retired Major League Baseball player turned private investigator and based in Boston. Blissberg is a rare example of a Jewish professional athlete in fiction, specifically a former center fielder for the Providence Jewels. While the plots focus on sports-related crimes (baseball and basketball), Blissberg's Jewishness provides a cultural lens through which he observes the world. This identity is a central feature of the character, distinguishing him from the typical hard-boiled "gentile" private eye. Rosen later explored Jewish themes more directly in his nonfiction, such as his book on Holocaust survivors, **Such Good Girls**. He also wrote a biography of Jewish football legend **Sid Luckman**, exploring his career and his father's ties to organized crime. [Details in companion Bibliography – "U.S. Jewish Criminals, Detectives, Spies, et al – History, Biography, Analysis, Film"] [Google/AI]

Rosen, Richard D. [*Harvey Blissberg #1*], (**Strike Three You're Dead**) [hc, Walker & Co., 1984] 978-0802755872 [pb, Walker & Co., 2001] 978-0802776082

Rosen, Richard D. [*Harvey Blissberg #2*], (**Fadeaway**) [hc, HarperCollins, 1986] 978-0060155995 [mass mkt pb, HarperCollins, 1986] 978-0060155995

Rosen, Richard D. [*Harvey Blissberg #3*], (**Saturday Night Dead**) [hc, Viking, 1988] 978-0670819775 [pb, Berkley, 1989] 978-0451401342

Rosen, Richard D. [*Harvey Blissberg #4*], (**World of Hurt**) [hc, Walker & Co., 1994] 9780802732514

Rosen, Richard D. [*Harvey Blissberg #5*], (**Dead Ball**) [hc, Walker & Co., 2001] 978-0802733665

David Rosenbaum (born 1949, Brooklyn, NY) - a veteran journalist based in the Boston area. His novels blend "hard-boiled" crime fiction with deep dives into Jewish mysticism, history, and the insular world of Hasidic communities. **Zaddik** is a "Jewish noir" that centers on the intersection of modern crime and ancestral legacy. **Dov Taylor**, a cynical, recovering alcoholic and former NYPD detective who has abandoned his faith, is recruited by a Brooklyn rabbi to solve the ritualistic murder of a Hasidic diamond merchant. The book explores the internal politics and rivalries of Hasidic sects in Brooklyn and provides a detailed look at the New York Diamond District. In **Sasha's Trick**, a survivor of the Soviet gulags becomes entangled in a heist involving a cache of priceless art stolen during World War II. As in his previous book, Rosenbaum uses a thriller framework to examine how the Holocaust and WWII-era theft continue to haunt Jewish survivors and their descendants in New York. [Google/AI]

Rosenbaum, David, (**Zaddik**) [hc, Mysterious Press, 1993] 978-0892965403 [mass mkt pb, Felony & Mayhem Press, 2016] 978-1631940385

Rosenbaum, David, (**Sasha's Trick**) [hc, Mysterious Press, 1995] 978-0892965915 [pb, Mysterious Press, 1996] 978-0446404419

Thane Rosenbaum (born 1960 in the Washington Heights neighborhood of New York City and raised in Miami Beach, Florida) – [The only child of Holocaust survivors who endured the Majdanek and Auschwitz concentration camps. The unspoken trauma of his childhood heavily influenced his career and creative worldview. He graduated from the University of Florida, obtained an MPA from Columbia

University, and earned a JD from the University of Miami. A prominent legal scholar, he works as a Distinguished University Professor at Touro University and acts as a legal analyst for CBS News Radio. As an author, he is regarded as a pivotal literary voice for the “Second Generation” (children of Holocaust survivors). His acclaimed fiction includes **Elijah Visible**, **Second Hand Smoke**, and **The Golems of Gotham**. He is also a prolific essayist and commentator on Middle Eastern politics, human rights, and constitutional law.

Thane Rosenbaum’s primary identity as a novelist is rooted in post-Holocaust fiction and the intergenerational transmission of trauma, rather than traditional espionage or detective fiction. He does not write formulaic, commercial mystery/thriller novels. However, his work frequently subverts the tropes of the mystery, crime, and thriller genres, transforming them into narrative drivers to explore historical reckoning, vengeance, and inherited trauma. His use of Jewish crime motifs and thriller elements functions across his bibliography through specific literary mechanisms:

Rosenbaum, Thane, (**Second Hand Smoke** [hc, St. Martin’s Press, 1999] 978-0312199548 [pb, St. Martin’s Griffin, 2000] 978-0312254186 [*The “Nazi Hunter” as a Psychological Thriller Driver: Rosenbaum here directly borrows the premise of a classic political/crime thriller. One of the main protagonists, Duncan, is raised in America by his Holocaust-survivor mother to be an aggressive, physically formidable “avenging Nazi hunter.” Instead of a traditional, plot-driven action thriller about tracking down war criminals, Rosenbaum treats the trope as a dark comedy and a psychological mystery. The thriller framework drives a deeper existential investigation into how children of survivors inherit and are poisoned by their parents’ unresolved rage.*

Rosenbaum, Thane, (**The Golems of Gotham** [hc, Harper, 2002] 978-0060184902 [pb, Harper Perennial, 2003] 978-0060959456 [*The Meta-Mystery of the Crime Writer: In this magical-realist novel,, Rosenbaum utilizes a crime novelist protagonist to bridge the gap between popular fiction and historical atrocity. The protagonist, **Oliver Levin**, is actually a hugely popular crime author who experiences a severe, paralyzing creative block following the suicides of his Holocaust-survivor parents. The narrative uses Oliver’s inability to write his typical crime stories as a metaphor for the “unspeakability” of the ultimate real-world crime: the Holocaust. The mystery element is turned inward, as his daughter uses Kabbalistic magic to summon the ghosts of famous suicide-survivor writers (the “golems” of the title) to help him solve his emotional and creative paralysis.*

Rosenbaum, Thane, (**How Sweet It Is!** [hc, Mandel Vilar Press, 2015] 978-1942134008 [pb, Mandel Vilar Press, 2016] 978-1942134015 [*Jewish Mobsters and Historical Noir: Rosenbaum pivots to historical fiction set in Miami Beach during the pivotal year of 1972. The book incorporates real-world Jewish organized crime figures, most notably the legendary mob kingpin **Meyer Lansky**. The presence of the mob and Miami’s seedy, neon-noir atmosphere acts as a colorful backdrop to a deeper narrative about a Jewish family trying to escape the shadow of Europe. Rosenbaum uses the Jewish gangster motif not to celebrate criminality, but to contrast the raw, defensive power of figures like Lansky against the vulnerability of Holocaust survivors trying to build a new life.*

Rosenbaum, Thane, (**The Myth of Moral Justice: Why Our Legal System Fails to Do What’s Right** [hc, Harper, 2004] 978-0060188160 [pb, Harper Perennial, 2005] 978-0060735241 [*Legal Thriller Philosophies: As a law professor and legal analyst, Rosenbaum has written extensive non-fiction that directly challenges how Western societies define and litigate “crime”. His fiction reflects this legalistic fixation, often framing the aftermath of the Holocaust as an unpunished, ongoing cosmic crime where the traditional legal system offers zero closure or justice.* – Google/AI]

Andrew Rosenheim (born 1955, Chicago) - an American-born author and former publishing executive who has lived in England for over four decades. While the 3-volume series explores themes related to the Jewish experience during WWII, protagonist **Jimmy Nessheim** himself is not Jewish. He is characterized as a German-American FBI agent. The novels feature significant Jewish content primarily through their historical focus on the rise of Nazism and the Holocaust. In **Fear Itself**, Nessheim infiltrates

the German-American Bund, an ardently pro-Nazi and antisemitic organization in the U.S. that conspired against American efforts to oppose Hitler.

- **Key Jewish Characters:** *The series includes prominent Jewish figures, most notably **Harry Guttman**, an FBI Assistant Director who serves as Nessheim's superior and mentor.*
- **Refugees and the Holocaust:** *The books frequently deal with the plight of Jewish refugees fleeing Europe.*
- **Atomic Research:** *In **The Accidental Agent**, the narrative involves the race for the atom bomb, highlighting the contributions of scientists such as **Enrico Fermi** (who had a Jewish wife and fled Fascist Italy) and others involved in the Manhattan Project. [Google/AI]*

Rosenheim, Andrew [*Jimmy Nessheim #1*], (**Fear Itself** [hc, The Overlook Press, 2012]) 978-1468300727 [pb, Arrow, 2016] 978-1784756697

Rosenheim, Andrew [*Jimmy Nessheim #2*], (**The Little Tokyo Informant** [hc, Overlook Books, 2013]) 978-1468300734 [pb, Overlook Books, 2014] 978-1468309423

Rosenheim, Andrew [*Jimmy Nessheim #3*], (**The Accidental Agent** [hc, The Overlook Press, 2016]) 978-1468309355 [pb, Arrow, 2017] 978-0099557890

Philip Roth (1933–2018, born in Newark, NJ and died in New York City) – [*the pre-eminent American Jewish novelist of his generation. He engaged the subject of Jews and crime, though usually in indirect, psychological, social, or symbolic ways rather than through conventional gangster fiction or detective plots. Crime in Roth is often tied to transgression, fraud, sexual scandal, political paranoia, or the fear of Jewish moral corruption within American society. For the purposes of this bibliography, I will limit the focus to three of his books which deal more directly with different forms of criminal behaviour:*

Roth, Philip, (**American Pastoral** [hc, Houghton Mifflin, 1997] 978-0395860212 [pb, Vintage, 1998] 978-0099771814 [*Seymour "Swede" Levov is the Jewish American success story, handsome, a gifted athlete, manager of his family's glove manufacturing company, married with a family. His world is shattered when his daughter, Merry Levov, becomes radicalized in antiwar politics, and plants a bomb in protest which kills a man. She subsequently disappears and becomes a fugitive and the Levov family is disgraced. Swede spends futile years searching for her, while his marriage and sanity deteriorate. When he finally finds her years later, she is living in abominable conditions, a physical and emotional wreck. At its bleak conclusion, Swede's entire world, family, and assumptions about his life and place in the world have collapsed in ruins. Roth's final point is devastating: the dream of stable, assimilated, postwar American innocence—the "American pastoral"—was always fragile and perhaps illusory. The Swede's tragedy is not simply that catastrophe struck his family, but that he fundamentally misunderstood the nature of human beings and history.*]

Roth, Philip, (**Operation Shylock: A Confession** [hc, Simon & Schuster, 1993] 978-0671703769 [pb, Vintage, 1994] 978-0679750291 [*a complex, metafictional political thriller, identity satire, and meditation on Jewishness, Israel, and the Holocaust. The novel begins with a character named "Philip Roth" traveling to Jerusalem during the late 1980s, at the time of the trial of alleged Nazi war criminal John Demjanjuk ("Ivan the Terrible"). Roth has recently suffered a mental breakdown caused by the misuse of a tranquilizer. Once in Israel, he discovers that another man is impersonating him. This double—also calling himself Philip Roth—is publicly advocating a bizarre ideology about Jews leaving Israel and returning to Europe, and the relative safety of avoiding concentration in one vulnerable location. The novel intertwines various storylines, including pursuit of the impersonator; encounters with Israeli intellectuals, Mossad-linked figures, settlers, Palestinians, and Holocaust survivors; reflections on Jewish identity after the Holocaust; the Demjanjuk trial and questions of memory, testimony, and historical truth; and a quasi-spy narrative involving Israeli intelligence services. The narrator is eventually drawn into murky espionage intrigues and pressured by Israeli agents who suspect manipulation, propaganda, or deeper conspiracies. This cauldron of conflicting issues and blurred distinctions destabilizes the reader by mixing real historical events, autobiographical detail, and invented*]

material. The narrator repeatedly insists that the book is a “confession,” while simultaneously making it impossible to know what is true. Among Roth’s works, it is one of the most sustained engagements with Israel and with internal Jewish ideological conflict.]

Roth, Philip (**The Plot Against America** [hc, Houghton Mifflin, 2004] 978-0618509287 [pb, Vintage, 2005] 978-1400079490 [[See related film](#)] [an alternative-history story imagining what might have happened if the United States had turned toward authoritarian nationalism and antisemitism on the eve of World War II. In the 1940 presidential election campaign, the isolationist Charles Lindbergh promises to keep America out of the war in Europe while subtly encouraging antisemitic sentiment. He defeats Franklin D. Roosevelt and signs non-aggression understandings with Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan. Anti-Semitism gradually becomes normalized in American public life. Rather than focusing on high politics alone, the novel shows how national changes invade everyday life: friendships fracture, relatives become politically divided, and ordinary Jews begin to fear for their safety and citizenship. Government programs pressure Jewish families to disperse from urban communities into rural America in the name of “Americanization.” Crime here becomes governmental and societal.]

As the novel progresses, riots, intimidation, conspiracy theories, and state-sanctioned persecution intensify. Radio commentator Walter Winchell becomes one of Lindbergh’s loudest critics and is eventually assassinated, helping trigger nationwide anti-Jewish violence. Lindbergh then mysteriously disappears, the country descends toward chaos, and rumors of a Jewish conspiracy fuel further pogrom-like unrest. Eventually the historical timeline is restored, Roosevelt returns to power, and the United States enters World War II.]

In sum, Roth is not concerned with Jewish organized crime so much as with the question: What happens when Jews cease being exemplary outsiders and become fully implicated in the corruption, violence, and disorder of modern life? That question runs through much of his fiction. Roth helped transform Jewish-American literature by insisting Jews could be immoral, violent, sexually excessive, politically dangerous, self-divided, ridiculous, or destructive—rather than merely victims, moral exemplars, or comic outsiders. That was one reason his work was so controversial within parts of the American Jewish community in the 1960s and 1970s. [ChatGPT] See companion list of Movies-Films-TV Series for entry on 2020 TV miniseries adaptation of the book.

S.J. Rozan (born 1950, Bronx, NY) - an acclaimed American mystery writer, best known for her **Lydia Chin/Bill Smith** private investigator series, and a former practising architect. She has famously described herself as a “nice Jewish girl growing up in the Bronx”. Her full name is **Shira Judith Rozan**, and her family background is **Ukrainian-Jewish**. While she is best known for her deep dives into Chinese-American culture through her detective series, she has increasingly integrated her own heritage into her work:

Jewish Themes: *The Shanghai Moon* explores the history of Jewish refugees in Shanghai during the Holocaust. The plot follows the search for a legendary piece of jewelry belonging to a refugee, Rosalie Gilder, and uses letters and diaries to depict the tragic experiences of the Jewish community in wartime Shanghai.

Literary Contributions: She has contributed to the Jewish Noir anthology series [see Kevin Wishnia in this bibliography] and written short stories like “Playing for Keeps,” which follows a young Jewish girl in post-WWII America. [Google/AI]

Rozan, S.J., (**The Shanghai Moon** [hc, Minotaur Books, 2009]) 978-0312245566 [pb, Minotaur Books, 2020] 978-0312644529

Ona Russell (born 1952 in Los Angeles and resides in Solana Beach, CA) - She is the author of a trilogy set in Los Angeles in the 1920s and featuring **Sarah Kaufman**, a Jewish probate officer and social justice advocate based on a real historical figure Russell discovered in 1920s news clippings. Sarah is depicted as a complex, independent professional working in a male-dominated environment. As a Jewish

woman, she frequently encounters and overcomes the era's common prejudices, including gender bias and anti-Semitism. Sarah is deeply connected to her Jewish heritage, though her "Jewishness" is often expressed through cultural identity and social justice rather than strict religious ritual. She is a secular but proud Jewish woman who is acutely aware of her "outsider" status in 1920s America. Her identity is shaped by the immigrant experience and the specific challenges faced by Jewish professionals in that era. Her heritage makes her naturally empathetic to other marginalized groups, such as the Mexican community she defends in **Rule of Capture**. Because she understands what it feels like to be "othered," she is often the only character willing to investigate crimes involving other overlooked populations, like immigrants and the poor.

Russell, Ona [Sarah Kaufman series #1], (**O'Brien's Desk**) [hc, Sunstone Press, 2004] 978-0865344167 [pb, Sunstone Press, 2008] 978-0865345492 [The first novel introduces Sarah in 1923 Ohio. Sarah's mentor, the prominent and progressive Judge O'Brien O'Donnell, suffers a near-fatal breakdown following a blackmail attempt after the birth of his first child. The book is based on the real career of Russell's husband's grandfather, a well-known judge in Toledo who actually worked with a woman named Sarah Kaufman. It explores the tension between political corruption and progressive reform, including early 20th-century struggles for racial tolerance and women's suffrage.]

Russell, Ona [Sarah Kaufman series #2], (**The Natural Selection**) [pb, Sunstone Press, 2008] 978-0865346284 [The second book takes Sarah to Tennessee in July 1925. While visiting her cousin Lena, an English professor at Edenville College, Sarah investigates the mysterious murder of one of Lena's colleagues. The investigation leads Sarah to the famous Scopes "Monkey" Trial in Dayton, where she encounters historical figures like H. L. Mencken, Clarence Darrow, and William Jennings Bryan. The story deals with the clash between religious fundamentalism and Darwinian evolution, as well as the presence of the KKK in the South.]

Russell, Ona [Sarah Kaufman series #3], (**Rule of Capture**) [pb, Sunstone Press, 2015] 978-1632930477 [The final book in the trilogy moves the setting to Los Angeles in 1928. Sarah travels to L.A. to witness the trial of the perpetrators of the Julian Petroleum stock scandal, which had cost her her own savings. While there, she discovers the body of a young Mexican woman whom the police are quick to dismiss, prompting Sarah to launch her own investigation. The novel features early Hollywood landmarks (like Grauman's Chinese Theatre) and the real-life "Julian Pete" Ponzi scheme. It highlights racial and ethnic tensions in Southern California, specifically comparing Sarah's experience as a Jewish woman with the treatment of the Chicano community.] [Google/AI]

Steven D. Salinger (est. birth 1941?) – He spent nearly two decades living and working in the Caribbean before finding success as a novelist. While he is of Jewish descent, Salinger's books do not focus on Jewish religious themes, centering instead on the political and psychological thriller genres.

Behold the Fire (1997) is a military and political thriller about a Vietnam POW/MIA who resurfaces after 25 years. The narrative focuses on government conspiracies and survival rather than religious or ethnic identity.

White Darkness (2001): Like his debut, this work draws from his extensive time living in the Caribbean, focusing on international intrigue and atmospheric suspense. His writing remains firmly within the realm of modern secular thrillers. The story explores the struggle of Moe Rosen, a jewelry store owner in Brooklyn, to maintain his family business in a changing neighborhood and his subsequent entanglement with a Haitian neighbor's "alien" world of Voodoo. [Google/AI]

Salinger, Steven D., (**Behold the Fire**) [hc, Grand Central Publishing, 1997] 978-0446520799 [pb, Grand Central Publishing, 1998] 978-0446606202

Salinger, Steven D., (**White Darkness**) [hc, Crown, 2001] 978-0609607282 [pb, NAL Trade, 2003] 978-0451207845

Elise Sax (born 1968 in San Diego, CA) – after working as a journalist and a private investigator, Elise turned in 2012 to full-time writing with her 11-volume (+ 1 prequel) **Matchmaker Mysteries Series**. She has since published dozens of books in several series, including a spin-off of her original series called the **Matchmaker Marriage Mysteries** series, following the protagonist after her own marriage. **Gladie Burger** comes from a family with a long-standing matchmaking tradition. A central character is Gladie's eccentric grandmother, **Bubbe Zelda**, who recruits Gladie into the family matchmaking business. She believes Gladie has inherited her “gift” for psychic insights into people's true characters. This is a key asset in bringing the right people together for matrimonial purposes, but also for detecting guilty parties in criminal cases. While the series is a “romantasy” mystery set in a small California town, Jewish identity is a core element of the main character's life. Gladie serves both Jewish and non-Jewish clients, and encounters a wide variety of murder cases in the course of her work, which she proceeds to solve. Elise Sax is a single mother of two sons and currently resides in Southern California. The **Matchmaker** series includes the following:

Sax, Elise [*prequel to Matchmaker series*], (**Road to Matchmaker**) [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2017] 978-1978443297

Sax, Elise [*Matchmaker Mysteries #1*], (**An Affair to Dismember**) [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2017] 978-1542466974

Sax, Elise [*Matchmaker Mysteries #2*], (**Citizen Pain**) [formerly titled *Matchpoint*] [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2017] 978-1542533362

Sax, Elise [*Matchmaker Mysteries #3*], (**The Wizard of Saws**) [formerly titled *Love Game*] [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2017] 978-1542585477

Sax, Elise [*Matchmaker Mysteries #4*], (**Field of Screams**) [formerly titled *Playing the Field*] [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2017] 978-1542392099

Sax, Elise [*Matchmaker Mysteries #5*], (**From Fear to Eternity**) [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2017] 978-1544850863

Sax, Elise [*Matchmaker Mysteries #6*], (**West Side Gory**) [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2017] 978-1548050566

Sax, Elise [*Matchmaker Mysteries #7*], (**Scareplane**) [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2017] 978-1976100956

Sax, Elise [*Matchmaker Mysteries #8*], (**It Happened One Fright**) [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2017] 978-1981216673

Sax, Elise [*Matchmaker Mysteries #9*], (**The Big Kill**) [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2018] 978-1985705739

Sax, Elise [*Matchmaker Mysteries #10*], (**It's a Wonderful Knife**) [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2018] 978-1719143059

Sax, Elise [*Matchmaker Mysteries #11*], (**Ship of Ghouls**) [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2018] 978-1721767427

Matchmaker Marriage Mysteries (Spin-off Series)

This series picks up three years after Gladie and Spencer have married.

Sax, Elise [*Marriage Mysteries #1*], (**Gored of the Rings**) [pb, independently published, 2020] 979-8685628718

Sax, Elise [*Marriage Mysteries #2*], (**Slay Misty for Me**) [pb, independently published, 2021] 979-8706579999

Sax, Elise [*Marriage Mysteries #3*], (**Scar Wars**) [pb, independently published, 2021] 979-8544146056

Sax, Elise [*Marriage Mysteries* #4], (**Die Charred**) [pb, independently published, 2022] 979-8821892843

Sax, Elise [*Marriage Mysteries* #5], (**Spawn with the Wind**) [pb, independently published, 2022] 979-8840592229

Arthur Gross Schaefer (birth est. 1951) – he is a Reform Rabbi, lawyer, and C.P.A.; serves as a Professor of Marketing and Business Law at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles; and is the rabbi for the Community Shul of Montecito. He lives in Santa Barbara, CA. He is the author of the 3-volume (so far) cozy **Rabbi Elijah Daniels** series. Rabbi Daniels serves a congregation, has frequent contact with clergy of other faiths, and uses his knowledge of Jewish history and mysticism to solve crimes.

Schaefer, Arthur Gross [*Rabbi Elijah Daniels* #1], (**The Rabbi Wore Moccasins**) [pb, Weeping Willow Books, 2017] 978-0999099421 [*Rabbi Daniels is invited to a Native American sweat lodge ceremony by the leaders of the Antchu community. A spiritual elder from the tribe confesses to murdering his wife. The tribe asks Rabbi Daniels—who is also an attorney—to defend the elder. He initially struggles with the ethics of representing someone who has already confessed. As he digs deeper, he finds that the evidence doesn't match the confession. He uncovers ties to a tribal casino and corruption involving one of its directors. Along the way, he deals with his own grief from the loss of his wife and finds a new connection between Jewish tradition and Native American spirituality.*]

Schaefer, Arthur Gross [*Rabbi Elijah Daniels* #2], (**The Rabbi Wore a Fedora**) [pb, Weeping Willow Books, 2017] 978-0999099407 [*This installment follows the rabbi as he chaperones evangelical students on a study tour of Germany. He becomes a prime suspect in the murder of a woman at a research institute and must clear his name while confronting the history of the Holocaust.*]

Schaefer, Arthur Gross [*Rabbi Elijah Daniels* #3], (**The Rabbi Wore A Collar**) [pb, Kendall Hunt Publishing, 2023] 979-8765752531 [*The rabbi joins a group of Jesuit priests on an investigative mission to Nicaragua during the Sandinista era, tasked with determining whether the new regime is anti-Semitic. The State Department warns the rabbi that entering the country openly as a rabbi will result in his death. To protect him, the Jesuits disguise him as one of their own, forcing him to “wear the collar”. The mission is upended when a nun is murdered, and a Jesuit priest befriended by the rabbi is accused of the crime. Rabbi Daniels reveals his true identity and acts as the accused priest's attorney, putting himself in legal and physical jeopardy.* [Google/AI]

Ilene Schneider (born 1948–1949 in Boston) – She graduated from the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College in Philadelphia in 1976, becoming one of the first six women rabbis ordained in the United States. She later earned an Ed.D. and served in congregational and hospice settings, including as Coordinator of the Jewish Hospice Program for Samaritan Hospice in Marlton, New Jersey. After retiring from full-time rabbinical work, Schneider devoted herself to writing fiction. Her **Rabbi Aviva Cohen Mysteries** combine classic amateur-sleuth conventions with an insider's portrayal of American Jewish religious life. Schneider wrote the nonfiction book *Talking Dirty—in Yiddish?* and contributed to the Jewish Noir anthology. From her website: *Work is in progress on another Rabbi Aviva sequel, occurring on Purim, to be titled “Killah Megillah”.* [ChatGPT]

Schneider, Ilene, [*Rabbi Aviva Cohen* #1] (**Chanukah Guilt**) [pb, Aakenbaaken & Kent, 2018]) 978-1938436475

Schneider, Ilene, [*Rabbi Aviva Cohen* #2] (**Unleavened Dead**) [pb, Aakenbaaken & Kent, 2018]) 978-1938436529

Schneider, Ilene, [*Rabbi Aviva Cohen* #3] (**Yom Killer**) [pb, Aakenbaaken & Kent, 2016] 978-1938436192 [Note: it is not clear why no. 3 was published in 2016 and nos. 1 and 2 in 2018. Live with it.]

Budd Schulberg (1914–2009, born in New York City) - *He was the son of B.P. Schulberg, the head of production at Paramount Pictures and grew up immersed in early Hollywood culture. He was an acclaimed novelist and screenwriter (Academy Award for **On the Waterfront** in 1954). In 1951, he was called before the House Un-American Activities Committee. He voluntarily testified about his brief time in the Communist Party and named other members. He founded the Watts Writers Workshop in Los Angeles in 1965 to support diverse artistic voices after the Watts riots. He later co-founded the Frederick Douglass Creative Arts Center in New York. He was also a passionate boxing reporter who frequently wrote for Sports Illustrated and was named a living legend by the World Boxing Association. Schulberg's crime narratives focus heavily on institutionalized racketeering, showing how ambition drives Jewish antiheroes to adopt criminal methods. [See also the listings for Albert Halper and Jerome Weidman in this bibliography.]*

Schulberg, Budd, (**What Makes Sammy Run?** [originally published in 1941, hc, Random House, 2002] 978-0375508318 [pb, Vintage, 1993] 978-0679734222 [*The novel highlights plagiarism, intellectual property theft, corporate fraud, and labor exploitation. It follows **Sammy Glick**, a ferocious, fast-talking Jewish kid from New York's Lower East Side who claws his way up to become a Hollywood studio mogul. Sammy does not commit violent street crimes; instead, he relies on white-collar theft. He steals scripts from struggling writers, takes credit for other people's work, illegally breaks labor unions, and commits corporate sabotage against his colleagues. Sammy runs directly away from his traditional Jewish roots and impoverished past. The book explores how the frantic push for assimilation can strip an individual of their ethical compass, turning the immigrant hustle into outright corporate criminality. Like Jerome Weidman's work, it caused a massive stir in the Jewish community for portraying a Jewish man as a predatory opportunist.*]

Schulberg, Budd, (**The Harder They Fall** [hc, Random House, 1947] B000NUSSPG [pb, Ivan R. Dee, 2007] 978-1566631075 [*This novel highlights sports racketeering, fight-fixing, wire fraud, extortion, and mob collusion. This hard-boiled exposé of the boxing industry centers around **Nick Latka**, a powerful, ruthless Jewish mobster and racketeer who controls the fight game. Latka hires a cynical press agent to hype up a massive but utterly untalented giant of a boxer. Latka orchestrates a series of highly illegal, fixed boxing matches, defrauding the betting public and pocketing the massive payouts. When the broken, exploited boxer is no longer profitable, Latka cold-bloodedly discards him with pennies. Schulberg uses Latka to look at the dark reality of Jewish involvement in mid-century syndicated crime, portraying a character who has fully integrated into the violent, multi-ethnic American underworld.* - Google/AI]

Jasmine Schwartz (birth est. 1970, New York City?) – *author of the **Melissa Morris Detective Series** which follows the misadventures of a neurotic New York fashionista-turned-sleuth. Her work has been described as “Bridget Jones with guns and dead bodies” and compared to the wit of Woody Allen. According to Melissa's official bio, she lives in New York with her “future ex-husband”. The series has been described as a humorous contemporary mystery series with elements that align with the “cozy” genre, though one with more edge and “urban neuroses” than a traditional small-town cozy. Jasmine Schwartz is the pen name of **Devorah Blachor**, who lived in Jerusalem for over 20 years, including a period of working for Israeli Prime Minister, Yitzchak Rabin. She is married to the author Matt Rees and has lived in Luxembourg since 2014 (see Matt Rees entry in the Israeli Bibliography linked to this one).*

Melissa Morris Detective Series Publications: *The series consists of two full-length novels and several short stories:*

(**Farbissen: Melissa Morris and the Meaning of Money**) – [pb, Createspace Independent, 2012] 978-1479182459 [*Melissa is banished from the New York fashion industry and follows her boyfriend to London, only to find a dead body*]

(**Fakakt: Melissa Morris and the Meaning of Sex**) – [pb, Createspace Independent, 2012] 978-1479182633 [*Melissa chases a cheating boyfriend to Rome, where she is arrested for the murder of a Romanian businessman.*]

(Email From Beyonce) – [Kindle edition, 2012] B009Q8N4RI [*Short story*]: *Melissa joins the Obama campaign and finds herself in a situation where nothing is as it seems.*]

(Before the Crash) – [Kindle edition, Camari Books, 2013] B0088D5KMY [*Short Story/Prequel*: *Introduces Melissa working in a Manhattan boutique before her life takes a strange turn.*]

(Jewish Christmas) – [Kindle edition, 2014] B00A8J1430 [*Short story*: *Set in Manhattan, Melissa gets tangled in a burglary and kidnapping while dealing with a mess of a personal life.*]

(How Would You Fight A Lion?) - [Kindle edition, 2014] B00BU8VLLS [*Short story*: *Melissa starts a new job on Wall Street, but a mysterious email threatens her fresh start.*]

“Melissa Morris” is regarded as a cozy mystery series with a comedic edge. In subsequent writing, Blachor has concentrated on humour and parenting. Jewish elements in her work:

Cultural “Jew-ishness”: The series leans into secular Jewish-American culture, specifically the “Jewish Christmas” tradition of Chinese takeout and a movie in Manhattan.

Yiddish Influence: The book titles themselves - **Farbissen** (Yiddish for “embittered” or “grim”) and **Fakakt** (Yiddish for “messed up” or “shitty”) - signal the protagonist’s cultural lens and use of Yiddishisms to describe her chaotic life.

Character Neuroses: The protagonist, Melissa Morris, is often described through the lens of “quirky neuroses,” a staple of Jewish humor that Blachor has compared to the style of Woody Allen.

Professional Background: Before writing humor and mysteries, Blachor covered the **Palestinian Intifada** and directed the documentary *Waiting For Quds*, reflecting a career-long engagement with Jewish and Middle Eastern identity.

Jewish Pride & Resilience: Outside of her fiction, Blachor has written about the importance of teaching the next generation to draw strength from their Jewish identity rather than hiding it, particularly in the face of modern challenges. [Google/AI and Amazon]

Steven Jay Schwartz (est. birth – 1955, grew up in New Mexico) – noir detective novelist.

Hayden Glass is a highly competent LAPD detective but struggles with a crippling secret: he is a **sex addict** who cruises Sunset Boulevard for prostitutes to cope with childhood trauma. Some readers and critics find the exploration of shame, personal responsibility, and trauma to align with themes prevalent in Jewish literature, even if the character is not overtly practicing. Glass’s religious/ethnic background is not emphasized in the series. [Google/AI]

Schwartz, Stephen Jay [*Hayden Glass*], (**Boulevard** [hc, Forge Books, 2009]) 978-0765322944 [pb, Forge Books, 2010] 978-0765326614

Schwartz, Stephen Jay, (**Beat** [hc, Forge Books, 2010]) 978-0765328205 [pb, Forge Books, 2010] 978-0765322951

Irv Segal (est. birth – 1956?, in Detroit, MI) Lived ultra-Orthodox lifestyle in his younger years and ultimately abandoned it. Long career in computer programming, before turning to full-time writing, with his **Jake Cooper** series – 3 volumes so far. Protagonist **Jake Cooper** is a former Ultra-Orthodox scholar of Jewish Talmudic law turned amateur sleuth. He delves into crime and corruption hidden within Chicago’s Ultra-Orthodox Jewish community, exploring themes of hidden sin, abuse of power, and the tension between religious tradition and secular law. In **Secrets of the Rabbi’s Mafia** (2023).he takes on and exposes a criminal ultra-Orthodox rabbi. His fiction is heavily inspired by his personal experiences living within and eventually leaving the Ultra-Orthodox community, including a traumatic divorce and custody battle that mirrored events in his first novel. Main themes:

Corruption within Religious Authority: A central theme across the series is the abuse of power by individuals in positions of religious authority. The novels highlight how some leaders use their religious standing to conceal crimes, control followers, and justify evil behavior.

The Divide Between Tradition and Modernity: The character of Jake Cooper embodies the conflict between the strict, insulated Ultra-Orthodox world and a more modern, secular life. The stories explore the guilt, mental constraints, and challenges faced by those who seek a less restrictive life, highlighting the clash between religious law and secular law.

The “Jewish Mafia”: The series explores the surprising notion of an organized crime element operating within a tight-knit Jewish community. The author makes a point to clarify this is not a reflection of the entire community, but rather a “bad apples” scenario, emphasizing that corruption can exist in any insulated group.

Family and Personal Dilemmas: At its core, the series is also about personal relationships and moral choices. Jake’s motivations are often driven by a desire to protect loved ones, forcing him to make difficult decisions that put him in physical and emotional peril. [Google/AI]

Segal, Irv, (**Secrets of the Rabbi’s Mafia: A Jake Cooper Novel** [My Identifiers, 2023]) [hc] 978-1959802075 [pb] 978-1959802068

Segal, Irv, (**Fatal Flaw in the Tenth Commandment: Nobody Outfoxes Jake Cooper** [independently published, 2024]) [hc] 979-8336586244 [pb] 979-8336580075

Segal, Irv, (**Murder of a Kosher Pig: Thriller Murder Mystery about an Amateur Legal Sleuth Who Investigates Crimes in an Ultra-Orthodox Jewish Community in Chicago** [Jake Cooper #3, Independently published, 2025]) [hc] 979-8288192180 [pb] 979-8288190735

Hubert Selby Jr. (1928–2004, born in Brooklyn, NY, died in Los Angeles) - was a non-Jewish American novelist and screenwriter best known for his gritty, uncompromising portrayals of addiction and urban life in works like “Last Exit to Brooklyn” and **Requiem for a Dream** [hc, Marion Boyars Publishers, 1979] 978-0714526829 [pb, Penguin Classics, 2012] 978-0141195667 [\[See related film\]](#). The novel is a brutal exploration of the American Dream’s failure through the lens of four individuals in Coney Island whose lives are dismantled by various forms of addiction. The story follows two parallel descents into physical and mental ruin:

Sara Goldfarb’s Delusion: A lonely, widowed mother, Sara becomes obsessed with appearing on a television game show. To fit into a red dress from her youth, she visits a “doctor” who prescribes amphetamine-based diet pills. Her initial euphoria quickly turns into a harrowing psychosis as her dosages increase, eventually leading to her institutionalization.

The Heroin Trio: Sara’s son **Harry**, his girlfriend **Marion Kleinmitz** (both Jewish), and his friend Tyrone (an African-American) attempt to achieve financial freedom by trafficking a “pound of pure” heroin. They dream of opening an artsy café but soon succumb to their own product. As the drug supply in New York dries up, their relationships and moral boundaries collapse under the weight of withdrawal.

The novel ends in absolute catastrophe for all four characters: **Harry and Tyrone** travel to Florida to find a new source but are arrested after a doctor notices Harry’s severely infected arm, which is ultimately amputated. **Tyrone** is sentenced to a Southern chain gang, where he faces brutal manual labor and racial abuse while in withdrawal. **Marion** stays in New York and descends into prostitution, trading her body and her dignity for fixes. **Sara** is subjected to forced electroconvulsive therapy in a state mental ward, leaving her in a permanent, catatonic state.

The characters’ Jewishness provides a specific cultural and linguistic framework for their lives in Brooklyn. Sara Goldfarb’s sections are heavily marked by Yiddish slang and “Yiddish-spattered prattle”. The story is set in the 1970s in Brighton Beach and Coney Island in a neighborhood of Jewish retirees and widows. Sara is surrounded by “Yenta” friends who reinforce her delusions of television stardom. Sara’s driving motivation—fitting into her red dress—is specifically so she can wear it to a high-profile event like her son’s bar mitzvah. The book includes numerous mentions of Jewish foods that anchor the characters in their heritage. Minor characters like the pawn shop owner, Mr. Rabinowitz, provide moral

commentary using a distinct “Yinglish” dialect, urging Sara to help her son rather than just enabling his cycle of theft. Sara refers to Harry as “the last of the Goldfarbs,” framing his addiction as the tragic end of a family line. [Google/AI]

B.A. (Barbara Ann) Shapiro (born 1952 in Hartford, CT and now divides her time between Boston and Naples, FL) [*With a background in sociology (Ph.D. from Tufts University) and experience in research and academia, B.A. Shapiro pivoted to writing suspenseful historical “art thrillers”. Following early work under her full name, she gained significant recognition in 2012 with **The Art Forger**, establishing a career characterized by heavily researched novels centering on art theft and history. She writes explicitly within the mystery, thriller, and psychological suspense genres, and frequently uses Jewish identity, historical trauma, and specific narrative motifs involving crime or wrongdoing to drive her fiction. She holds a Ph.D. in sociology with a specialization in deviant behavior, which heavily informs her approach to crime and human motivation. Rather than focusing on traditional “mobster” tropes or pulp crime, Shapiro’s integration of Jewish themes and crime centers on art theft, forgery, and the systemic, state-sanctioned crimes of the Holocaust.*]

Shapiro, B.A., (**The Art Forger** [hc, Algonquin Books, 2012] 978-1616201326 [pb, Algonquin Books, 2013] 978-1616203160 [*Nearly all of Shapiro’s major novels are structured fundamentally as mysteries or thrillers, relying on double-narrative timelines (historical and modern) to uncover a past crime or secret. Her breakout novel (Art Forger) is a literary thriller directly structured around a real-life crime—the infamous 1990 Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum heist in Boston. It deals heavily with the criminal underbelly of the art world, illegal contracts, and forgery. There is no Jewish component in this book nor in **Metropolis** (hc, Algonquin, 2022). 978-1616209582. The following two of her books showcase how Shapiro blends historical fiction with the mystery genre. In both, she swaps traditional pulp mobsters for white-collar, historical, and systemic wrongdoing, framing the Nazi plundering of Jewish life, identity, and property as the ultimate “crime.” In both **The Muralist** and **The Lost Masterpiece**, Nazi art plundering (the looting of Jewish collectors) is used as a foundational plot device. The crime is not just the theft of canvas, but the literal erasing of Jewish presence, requiring modern descendants to act as detectives to reclaim their history.*]

Shapiro, B.A., (**The Muralist** [hc, Algonquin Books, 2015]) 978-1616203573 [pb, Algonquin Books, 2016] 978-1616206437 [*The story follows **Alizée Benoit**, a young Jewish-American painter working for the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in New York City in 1940. While rubbing shoulders with future abstract expressionist legends like Mark Rothko and Jackson Pollock, Alizée is privately living a nightmare. Her Jewish relatives are trapped in Nazi-occupied Europe. She frantically utilizes every possible legal avenue to secure them American visas. Suddenly, Alizée vanishes without a trace. Seventy years later, her great-niece, Danielle Abrams, an appraisal expert at an auction house, discovers hidden canvases behind a collection of Rothko paintings. Danielle realizes these hidden murals might be Alizée’s lost work, triggering a modern-day detective quest to solve the mystery of Alizée’s sudden 1940 disappearance and discover what happened to her European family. Shapiro shifts the villain archetype away from individual criminals to the U.S. State Department. The narrative highlights how real-life historical figures, specifically Assistant Secretary of State **Breckinridge Long**, actively manipulated bureaucratic rules to block Jewish refugees from entering America. The book frames this anti-refugee stance as a bureaucratic crime against humanity. Driven to the edge by American institutional apathy, Alizée is forced into criminal subversion. She begins falsifying documents, forging affidavits, and seeking illegal backchannels to smuggle her family out of Europe. This flips the script on traditional crime fiction: the Jewish protagonist must break the law to survive state-sanctioned murder. The historical timeline is anchored by a classic mystery convention. Alizée’s abrupt disappearance functions as a Cold Case investigation that Danielle must systematically solve using historical records, art provenance, and old family artifacts.*]

Shapiro, B.A., (**The Lost Masterpiece** [hc, Algonquin Books, 2025] 978-1643756370 [pb, Algonquin Books, 2016] 978-1616206437 [*This multigenerational art thriller centers on a fictional, newly*]

discovered Édouard Manet painting titled *Party on the Seine*. The narrative weaves across 150 years through four generations of women, beginning in 19th-century Paris with Berthe Morisot—the real-life, often-sidelined female Impressionist painter who, in the novel’s alternate history, has a passionate affair with Manet. In the modern-day timeline, her great-great-great-great-granddaughter, **Tamara Rubin**, receives stunning news from an organization dedicated to returning Nazi-looted art to Jewish families. They identify Tamara as the sole legitimate heir to *Party on the Seine*, a priceless masterpiece confiscated from her Jewish ancestors by the Nazis during World War II. However, the moment Tamara takes possession of the painting, her life plunges into chaos. She is slapped with a massive lawsuit by the elite, non-Jewish Manet Foundation, which claims they are the rightful owners. To protect her inheritance, Tamara must turn into an investigator to track how the painting survived Nazi hands, fires, and decades of black-market dealing.

The foundational crime fueling the entire plot is **Nazi art theft**. The book utilizes the real-world history of the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg (the Nazi task force that systematically plundered Jewish art collections). The narrative treats the painting not merely as high-value currency, but as a stolen artifact of a stolen lineage. The primary tension manifests as a legal battle royale between the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (backing Tamara) and the wealthy European art elite. Shapiro uses this to explore the real-world moral crimes of modern art foundations and museums that obfuscate provenance records to keep looted Jewish properties. Tamara’s role is that of a forensic art detective. To win her case, she has to reconstruct a broken paper trail across a century of historical trauma, uncovering how her family was defrauded, how the painting was laundered through the post-war black market, and who exactly is trying to keep the crime covered up today. – Google/AI]

Laurie Gwen Shapiro (born 1966, New York City) – an American author, documentary filmmaker, and journalist. Graduated from Syracuse University’s School of Public Communications in 1988. Early in her career she worked in publishing (including as an assistant to Peter Jennings) before moving into documentary filmmaking and writing. Jewish identity and culture are central themes in several of Laurie Gwen Shapiro’s early books. As a native of the Lower East Side and an active contributor to publications like *The Forward*, her work often explores the intersection of Jewish heritage with modern life and history. While Laurie Gwen Shapiro is primarily known for fiction that blends screwball comedy and literary satire, several of her works utilize mystery motifs—from classic “who-dunnit” setups to modern historical investigations. **Rachel Ganelli** is the half-Jewish protagonist of ***The Unexpected Salami***. Heather Greenblotz is the Jewish protagonist of ***The Matzo Ball Heiress***. Although Jewish themes appear in some of her fiction, Shapiro is not principally a writer of Jewish literature. Her work is characterized by humor, strong female protagonists, and an interest in unusual historical figures and true stories. [Google/AI & ChatGPT]

Shapiro, Laurie Gwen, (***The Unexpected Salami*** [hc, Algonquin Books, 1998] 978-1565121942 [pb, Algonquin Books, 1999] 978-1565122321

Shapiro, Laurie Gwen, (***The Matzo Ball Heiress*** [pb, Red Dress Ink, 2004]) 978-0373250530

Gary Shteyngart (born in Leningrad, now St. Petersburg, Russia in 1972) – [Immigrated to the United States with his Soviet-Jewish family in 1979 at the age of seven. He later graduated from New York City’s prestigious Stuyvesant High School, earned a politics degree from Oberlin College, and completed an MFA in creative writing from Hunter College. Celebrated for his sharp, darkly comedic, and satirical novels that explore the modern immigrant experience, technology, and global capitalism. His notable works include his debut novel ***The Russian Debutante’s Handbook*** (2002), ***Absurdistan*** (2006), the dystopian ***Super Sad True Love Story*** (2010), and his candid 2014 memoir ***Little Failure***. In addition to writing best-selling fiction, he teaches creative writing as an associate professor at Columbia University.

Shteyngart touches significantly on the intersection of Jewish identity and crime, but he does so through satirical dark comedy and picaresque absurdity rather than traditional mystery thriller conventions. He frequently utilizes the trope of the post-Soviet Russian-Jewish mobster or oligarch as a central narrative

driver to explore American consumerism, immigration, and assimilation. His work uses elements of the crime genre as a springboard for satire in several notable books.

Shteyngart, Gary, (**The Russian Debutante's Handbook** [hc, Riverhead Books, 2002]) 978-1573222136 [pb, Riverhead Books, 2003] 978-1573229883 [*His debut novel is the closest he comes to a crime caper structure, though it reads like a comic romp rather than a mystery. Vladimir Girshkin, a frustrated, low-level Russian-Jewish immigrant clerk in New York, stumbles into the world of organized crime. He allies with a murderous, fun-loving Russian-Jewish mafioso nicknamed "The Groundhog". Shteyngart uses the post-Cold War wave of Eastern European organized crime as a narrative vehicle. Vladimir moves to the fictional Eastern European city of Prava (a stand-in for Prague), where he uses his mafia backing to launch a massive Ponzi scheme targeting gullible, wealthy American expatriates.*

Shteyngart, Gary, (**Absurdistan** [hc, Random House, 2006]) 978-1400061969 [pb, Random House, 2007] 978-0812971675 [*This novel deals directly with the generational inheritance of oligarchic and mafia-related crime. The protagonist, Misha Vainberg, is the wealthy, melancholic, 325-pound son of the "1,238th-richest man in Russia". Misha is trapped in Russia and unable to return to his girlfriend in New York because his father was a notorious gangster who murdered an Oklahoma businessman. The plot kicks off when Misha's gangster father is assassinated. This forces Misha to travel to a corrupt, oil-rich post-Soviet state ("Absurdistan") to buy a fake Belgian passport from a crooked consular official. The book acts as an absurd, dangerous political thriller featuring ethnic civil wars, rogue warlords, and circumcision-happy Hasidic Jews caught in the geopolitical crossfire.*

Shteyngart, Gary, (**Lake Success** [hc, Random House, 2018]) 978-0812997415 [pb, Penguin, 2019] 978-0241984086 [*While not a mafia story, this road-trip novel pivots around white-collar financial crime. The protagonist is Barry Cohen, a wealthy, narcissistic Manhattan hedge-fund manager who is a secular Jewish-American. Barry's entire life unravels because he is under federal investigation by the SEC for insider trading. Instead of facing the legal music, he panics, abandons his family, and flees on a cross-country Greyhound bus journey to find his college ex-girlfriend. The threat of white-collar criminal prosecution drives the entire plot forward.*

Shteyngart deliberately avoids the traditional mystery thriller genre. His books do not feature hardboiled detectives, whodunit puzzles, or forensic procedures. Instead, they feature hapless, anxious Jewish anti-heroes who are completely out of their depth, surrounded by genuine, terrifying criminals. Crime in Shteyngart's world is not a puzzle to be solved, but an absurd, baseline reality of the post-Soviet and capitalist landscapes. [Google/AI]

Seymour Shubin (1921–2014, born Philadelphia) was a prolific American author and journalist known for his psychologically driven crime fiction. Shubin was noted for writing "how-dunnits" rather than traditional "who-dunnits," focusing on the humanity and motivations of the criminal. His characters frequently reflect his own roots as a middle-class, urban Philadelphian. In **The Man from Yesterday**, retired Philadelphia detective **Jack Lehman** shares a Jewish background similar to Shubin's, though the "mystery" centers on psychological trauma or past guilt rather than religious identity. Lehman struggles with bold old cases and the challenges of aging, specifically failing memory. [Google/AI]

Shubin, Seymour, [*Jack Lehman*] (**The Man from Yesterday** [hc, Academy Chicago Publishers, 2005] 978-0897335294

Irving Shulman (1913–1995, born in New York City, died in Sherman Oaks, CA) [- He earned bachelor's and master's degrees, focusing on literature, philosophy, education and social sciences. Later in life, he completed a doctorate in English literature at UCLA. Served in the US Army in World War II in an educational writing role in Washington, D.C. He achieved massive commercial success with his debut novel, **The Amboy Dukes** (1947), whose primary characters were Jewish. The book offered a shocking, sociological look at the grim, and sometimes short, lives of teenage street criminals in Brooklyn (where Shulman grew up) during World War II. It sold five million copies and led to his being hired as a screenwriter by Warner Bros. Two subsequent novels, **Cry Tough!** and **The Big Brokers**, followed the

equally grim experiences of some of the characters who survived *The Amboy Dukes*, with decreasing emphasis on their being Jewish. Post-WWII American Jewish literature frequently focused on rapid assimilation, educational attainment, and middle-class success. Shulman's trilogy aggressively pushed back against this narrative. He proved that the squalor of urban tenements could produce Jewish social deviance just as easily as it did with any other marginalized immigrant group.

Through this trilogy, Irving Shulman built a unique space in the "Jews and Crime" genre by delivering a **tragedy of assimilation**. While mainstream post-war Jewish literature celebrated the community's move from tenements into universities and suburban professional life, Shulman documented the parallel, dark pipeline from the tenements straight into American criminality. Shulman completely avoids the romanticism found in later epics like *The Godfather* or *Once Upon a Time in America*. His thesis across all three books remains unwavering: **crime does not pay**. The characters' rejection of their families' traditional ethics does not make them powerful magnates; it turns them into disposable cogs in a violent machine that chews them up and spits them out.

Moving to Los Angeles in the late 1940s, Shulman became a successful contract screenwriter. He is most famously credited with writing the original story treatment for the iconic James Dean film, *Rebel Without a Cause* (1955). He also penned the official novelization of *West Side Story* (1961). In the 1960s, he transitioned into writing highly successful, albeit controversial, celebrity biographies of Hollywood figures like Jean Harlow and Rudolph Valentino. Alongside writing, he taught at George Washington University and Cal State Los Angeles. – Google/AI]

Note on Shulman's authorship of the *West Side Story* novel (1961): He was commissioned to write the tie-in novel because of his unmatched literary track record with urban delinquency. With *The Amboy Dukes*, Shulman had already written the definitive postwar novel on teenage street gangs, neighborhood tribalism, and the generational collapse of immigrant households. He knew exactly how to translate street slang, juvenile posturing, and localized turf wars into compelling prose. Even though the musical had pivoted away from its original Jewish vs. Catholic (*East Side Story*) premise, Shulman's understanding of ethnic friction remained highly relevant. His career-defining theme—how second-generation American youths abandon the traditions of their immigrant parents to find an abusive, surrogate family on the streets—aligned with the thematic core of *West Side Story*. This recapitulated the erasure of Jewish settings and characters, and their replacement by other ethnic groups, in the movie adaptation of *The Amboy Dukes* over 10 years earlier, though for somewhat different purposes. – Google/AI] See note on ***City Across the River* (1949)** in the companion Filmography.]

Shulman, Irving, (*The Amboy Dukes* [originally published in 1947, hc, Buccaneer Books, 2000]) 978-1568497358 [pb, Pocket Books, 1971] 978-0671774134 [\[See related film\]](#) [The novel is set early in the summer of 1944 in the primarily Jewish neighbourhood of Brownsville, Brooklyn. The wartime economic boom forces parents into working long hours and overtime shifts at local munitions plants and the Navy Base. Neglected by their busy parents, local teenagers are left to fend for themselves. They seek identity, protection, and status by forming violent street gangs like the Amboy Dukes. The narrative centers on **Frank Goldfarb**, a 16-year-old Jewish youth drifting away from school and moral constraints. Along with his volatile friends, including Benny Semmel and "Crazy" Sachs, Frank dives headfirst into the gang culture of the Dukes. The gang's daily routine consists of cutting class, smoking marijuana reefers, committing petty robberies, and engaging in brutal street brawls with rival territory gangs. The gang's reckless lifestyle spirals out of control during a confrontation with a high school teacher. In a moment of panic and escalating aggression, two of the gang members accidentally kill the teacher.

Paralyzed by fear of the electric chair, the boys scramble to hide their involvement while the authorities launch an investigation. Trust evaporates within the Dukes. Paranoid and desperate, the group begins turning on itself. The cycle of violence peaks during a chaotic, tragic assault at a community gang dance. The characters are ultimately unable to escape the consequences of their actions, leading to a grim, unromanticized ending where youthful mistakes solidify into lifetime criminal records or premature death.

Shulman aggressively critiques the lack of parental oversight, ineffective school systems, and the collateral damage of a war economy on home life. Despite the temporary financial relief of wartime jobs, the characters remain physically and socially trapped in the tenements of Brownsville. Unlike later

Hollywood depictions of troubled youth, Shulman offers a deeply pessimistic view. Adolescent rage is not solved by understanding adults; it naturally hardens into permanent delinquency and moral decay. Shulman consciously demystifies the “tough Jew” stereotype of Jewish criminals. The Amboy Dukes are not calculating criminal masterminds or glamorous mafiosi. Instead, they are deeply insecure, uneducated, and reckless teenagers. Their criminality is defined by petty thefts, zip guns, and a botched, accidental murder.

Upon release, the book was considered shocking and outré for its explicit depictions of teenage sex, drug use, and casual brutality, leading to it being banned from multiple schools. It became a massive cultural phenomenon and best-seller. – Google/AI]

Shulman, Irving, (**Cry Tough!** (hc, Avon Publishing, 1949)) [pb, iUniverse, 2000] 978-0595144853 [The second novel follows **Mitch Wolf**, a former leader of the Dukes, as he is released from the Elmira Reformatory. Mitch genuinely wants to “go straight,” return to his loving, traditional family, and marry a nice Jewish girl named Dorothy. However, the economic reality of working a low-wage job vs. the flashy, lucrative allure of a local crime syndicate pulls him right back into the criminal lifestyle.

The book serves as an “occupational novel” of the post-WWII Jewish working class. The traditional, stabilizing values of the Jewish immigrant home are depicted as completely powerless against the forces of modern American materialism. Mitch’s family is decent, but their poverty makes their lifestyle look suffocating compared to the wealth of the mob. Mitch is physically and morally torn between two archetypes. On one side is Dorothy, representing domestic stability, Jewish community continuity, and honest labor. On the other is Joyce, a manipulative woman tied to criminal elements who represents carnal temptation and lawlessness. Mitch’s ultimate failure to choose Dorothy signifies his permanent exile from the respectable Jewish mainstream.

Just like the first book, when Hollywood adapted *Cry Tough* into a 1959 film starring John Saxon, the Jewish component was stripped entirely. The filmmakers transposed the story onto a completely different demographic, changing the characters into Puerto Rican immigrants and relocating the action to Spanish Harlem. This actually foreshadowed a process which *West Side Story* experienced shortly afterward. – Google/AI]

Shulman, Irving, (**The Big Brokers** (hc, The Dial Press, 1951)) [pb, iUniverse, 2000] 978-0595141449 [In the third book, the narrative expands drastically. Mitch Wolf, along with former Dukes Larry Tunig and Bull Benson, are sent west by the “big brokers” of the East Coast Syndicate to run the fictional Rivera Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada. The metamorphosis of the former young, neighbourhood petty criminals into crime business executives is completed. In Las Vegas, the explicitly Jewish nature of the characters’ upbringing is drastically muted. This is not an accident of Shulman’s writing; it is a thematic point. In the corporate, cold world of the national crime syndicate, ethnic identity is ironed out in favor of corporate utility. The boys are no longer street-corner Jewish toughs; they are suited mid-level executives in a transnational criminal enterprise. Shulman uses the syndicate as a dark mirror of corporate America. For these Brownsville boys, organized crime becomes their twisted vehicle for achieving the American Dream—wealth, luxury, and geographic mobility away from the ghetto. However, this “assimilation” requires the total abandonment of their moral heritage, ultimately leading to their psychological and physical destruction. – Google/AI]

Shulman, Irving, (**The Devil’s Knee** (hc, Trident Press, 1973)) 978-0671270926 [pb, iUniverse, 2000] 978-0595141463 [Published over two decades after the original trilogy, **The Devil’s Knee** (1973) serves as a cynical, darkly satirical epilogue to the saga of the Amboy Dukes. The book catches up with the surviving, aging members of the gang—Larry “**Tunafish**” Tunig and Simon “**Bull**” Bronstein—who have spent the last 18 years hiding in Mexico City. The narrative ignites when the East Coast crime syndicate forces them out of hiding and relocates them to a luxury mansion in Beverly Hills, California. Larry is ordered to marry Joyce, the widow of a major mob boss, to act as a front, keep the press away, and manage her out-of-control, rock-star-aspiring daughter. In this final installment, Shulman’s exploration of

Jews and crime undergoes a radical shift from tragic realism to an absurdist examination of guilt, generational trauma, and American prosperity.

*The most striking Jewish evolution in the book belongs to Simon “Bull” Bronstein. In his youth, Simon was the muscle—a violent, unthinking thug. In exile, however, he is completely consumed by crippling remorse for his past misdeeds. He entirely sheds his street moniker “Bull” and demands to be called by his Hebrew birth name, **Simon**. He grows a traditional beard and spends his days attending daily services at the local synagogue, seeking spiritual absolution for the blood on his hands. Simon’s commitment to Jewish pacifism is put to the test on the streets of Los Angeles. When a street-corner antisemitic orator begins spouting hate speech, Simon snaps—brutally attacking and maiming the speaker. This reveals that his deeply ingrained “Tough Jew” violent impulses are only barely contained beneath his religious veneer.*

*While *The Big Brokers* showed crime as a vehicle for geographic mobility, *The Devil’s Knee* shows the ultimate destination of that trajectory: the wealthy Jewish suburbs of Southern California. Living in Beverly Hills, Larry and Simon are physically insulated from the squalor of Brownsville. However, Shulman demonstrates that luxury cannot erase their origins. Their wealth is built on a foundation of historical violence, and they remain prisoners of the syndicate. Larry’s forced marriage to Joyce (a non-Jewish former Las Vegas sex worker) and his role as a stepfather to her chaotic, counter-culture daughter emphasize a total break from traditional Jewish family continuity. The generational transmission of Jewish identity is completely dead, replaced by the vapid demands of American celebrity culture and the music industry.*

*The Google/AI commentary on Shulman’s trilogy positions it within the changing depiction of organized crime in American culture, from the gritty realism of the 1930s to its repackaging as pop-culture entertainment by the 1970s, as in *The Godfather* series. *The Devil’s Knee* directly contrasts the old-school, disciplined violence of the Jewish mobsters with the chaotic, drug-addled nihilism of 1970s youth culture. In one absurd climax, a crew of Tommy-gun-wielding mobsters has to defend Larry and Simon’s mansion from a group of radicalized, drug-crazed hippies attempting to blow it up.*

*Through *The Devil’s Knee*, Shulman concludes his commentary on the Jewish criminal trajectory. The Jewish street toughs did not become the respected community patriarchs their immigrant parents hoped they would be, nor did they remain terrifying underworld kingpins. Instead, they became tired, paranoid old men hiding behind suburban gates, trapped between the crushing weight of religious guilt and a surreal, modern America that views their violent history as a mere novelty. – Google/AI]*

A.J. Sidransky (est. birth – 1956, Bronx, NY) – A.J. Sidransky’s mystery and crime novels are deeply rooted in Jewish history and identity, often using the genre to explore “a little-known slice of Jewish history”. Born in the Bronx, New York, he grew up in a family of avid readers and developed an early interest in both mystery fiction and sweeping historical novels. He has lived for many years in Washington Heights, Manhattan, a neighborhood that serves as the setting for much of his work, and spends part of each year in the Dominican Republic, whose history and culture feature prominently in his novels. His family’s experiences during the Holocaust, together with his longstanding interest in Jewish refugee history, are central influences on his writing.

*His three “Forgiving” novels (see below, 2013, 2015, 2021), address the dynamics of Diaspora Jewish existence, for example of Holocaust refugees in the Dominican Republic and in Washington Heights. A key protagonist is **Detective Tolya Kurchenko**, a Russian-Jewish detective in Washington Heights, whose investigation into the murder of a Holocaust survivor forces him to confront his own heritage. ***Forgiving Stephen Redmond***, for example, examines how Holocaust survivors passed their intergenerational trauma to their children and how that trauma affects their adult faith. The plot centers on a “murder to protect the soul,” using Jewish concepts of forgiveness and repentance (often discussed in relation to Yom Kippur) as a lens for the crime. ***Incident at San Miguel*** focuses on a Jewish Cuban family torn apart by the Cuban Revolution, depicting how the community was caught between capitalism and communist ideology. [Google/AI]*

Sidransky, A.J. [*Pete Gonzalez & Tolya Kurchenko #1*] (**Forgiving Máximo Rothman** [pb, Berwick Court Publishing, 2013]) 978-0988954007

Sidransky, A.J., [*Pete Gonzalez & Tolya Kurchenko #3*] (**Forgiving Mariela Camacho** [pb, Black Opal Books, 2015]) 978-1953434067

Sidransky, A.J., [*Pete Gonzalez & Tolya Kurchenko #2*] (**Forgiving Stephen Redmond** [pb, Black Opal Books, 2021]) 9781953434524

Sidransky, A.J., (**Incident at San Miguel**) [hc, Black Opal Books, 2023] 978-1953434999 [pb, Black Opal Books, 2023] 978-1960050182

*Note: The internal chronology of the Rothman family story deviates from the publication order. Stephen Redmond (2021) functions as the **second installment**, while Mariela Camacho (2015) is effectively the **third**. This is because Stephen Redmond fills in the missing history between the first and second published novels and answers questions that were left unresolved in both earlier books. – ChatGPT]*

James Siegel (born 1954, New York City) – Raised in New York City, he attended York College of the City University of New York, supporting himself at one point by driving a taxi before beginning a distinguished career at the advertising agency BBDO, where he rose to become Vice Chairman and Executive Creative Director. After leaving commercial advertising, he also created political advertising for prominent Democratic campaigns. He then turned to writing thrillers, two of which are relevant here::

Siegel, James, (**Epitaph** [hc, Mysterious Press, 2001] 978-0892967124 [pb, Mysterious Press, 2003] 978-0446678704 [*William Riskin is a retired, “energy-deficient” New York private investigator spending his golden years working as a janitor at a Queens off-track betting office. He is essentially lonely and waiting to die. His quiet life is disrupted when he reads the obituary of his former detective business partner, Jean Goldblum. Goldblum was a concentration camp survivor and supposed WWII Resistance hero, but he also brutally destroyed Riskin’s marriage by revealing an affair. At Goldblum’s funeral, Riskin is handed a list of names left behind by his ex-partner. The list contains several elderly retirees who supposedly moved from New York to Florida but completely disappeared along the way. Driven by complex lingering emotions and a desire to finish what Goldblum called the “biggest case of his life,” Riskin takes over the investigation. Riskin acts as the central investigator, traveling from Flushing to Miami. Despite battling physical ailments like arthritis and exhaustion, he methodically pieces together dark secrets. His investigation exposes a trail leading back to occupied France and a WWII criminal based on Dr. Marcel Petiot. Ultimately, Riskin’s role is to uncover the truth—including Goldblum’s own dark, morally corrupt complicity in wartime atrocities.* – Google/AI])

Siegel, James, (**Detour** [hc, Warner Books, 2005] 978-0446531856 [pb, Time Warner, 2005] 978-0751536133 [*While the core plot revolves around an American couple caught up in a dangerous Colombian kidnapping and drug-smuggling scheme, a significant portion of the book’s second half heavily features Jewish characters and specific New York Jewish cultural subcultures. Miles Goldstein is the Orthodox Jewish lawyer based in New York who initially coordinates the international adoption for the protagonists, Paul and Joanna Breidbart. When the plot goes sideways, Paul turns to him for desperate assistance. Moshe Skolnick is a dangerous and powerful Brighton Beach Russian mobster whom Paul and Miles must deal with as the conspiracy deepens. When the main character, Paul, returns to New York forced to act as a drug mule, his quest to save his family takes him deep into the highly insular worlds of Brooklyn’s Orthodox Jewish communities and the Russian-Jewish immigrant enclaves of Brighton Beach. The book uses these distinct cultural backdrops to ground the fast-paced thriller elements in local New York color.* – Google/AI])

Sheldon Siegel (born 1958 in Chicago, moved in 1980 to the San Francisco Bay Area where he still resides and practises law) – He is the prolific author of a long-running mystery series whose protagonists are non-Jewish defense attorneys. One of them is an ex-priest (Catholic). In 2013, Siegel initiated a new series with a Jewish protagonist – **David Gold**, a Chicago homicide detective. In **The**

Terrorist Next Door, Gold struggles against a terrorist targeting iconic Chicago landmarks like Wrigley Field, Millennium Park, and O'Hare Airport. While the book is a mainstream thriller, David Gold's identity as a **Jewish detective** is woven into the narrative through the setting and his background. The investigation takes the detectives through crumbling old synagogues in South Chicago, reflecting the author's own history growing up as a Jewish native of that area. Siegel has spoken publicly on how mystery novels can embody Jewish values, such as the pursuit of justice. The David Gold series never went beyond this first book.

Siegel, Sheldon, (**The Terrorist Next Door** [pb, self-published by Sheldon Siegel, 2012] 978-0983006268 [hc, Poisoned Pen Press, 2013] 978-1464201646

Daphne Silver (est. birth 1980, in Baltimore, MD) –has over 20 years of experience in the cultural arts and nonprofit sectors. She has held leadership roles at Historic London Town and Gardens as deputy director and recently accepted a position as Chief Advancement Officer for the Friends of the National Arboretum in Washington, D.C.. Her books in the **Rare Books Cozy Mystery Series** often align with the Jewish calendar. For example, the second book, *The Tell-Tale Homicide*, takes place as Rosh Hashana approaches. The author has also expressed interest in setting future installments during Chanukah. The next (4th) book in the series is due in November, 2026. The stories frequently feature traditional Eastern European Jewish treats. Specifically mentioned items include: Sweet Lokshen Kugel (Noodle Pudding), Tzimmes (Sweet Carrot) Cake and Lekach (Honey Cake). Daphne Silver also writes historical nonfiction under her legal name, +**Lauren R. Silberman**, including books titled **The Jewish Community of Baltimore** (Arcadia, 2008) and **Wild Women of Maryland** (History Press, 2015). - Google/AI]

Silver, Daphne [*The Rare Books Cozy Mystery Series #1*], (**Crime and Parchment** [pb, Level Best Boks, 2023] 978-1685125080 [*Last year, Juniper Blume saw the 1,200-year-old Book of Kells in Ireland. She learned how their bejeweled covers were stolen centuries ago, never to be seen again. So how could they have ended up in Rose Mallow, a small Chesapeake Bay town? Being Jewish, the Book of Kells might not be her sacred text, but as a rare books librarian, the ancient book is still sacred to her, making it important to find out the truth. Rose Mallow is the same place where Juniper used to summer with her sister Azalea and their grandmother Zinnia, known as Nana Z. Ever since Nana Z passed away, Juniper's avoided returning, but her curiosity is greater than her grief, so she heads down. She discovers that her sister Azalea has transformed their grandmother's Queen Anne style mansion into the Wildflower Inn, backing up to the Chesapeake Bay. Although Juniper isn't much of a cook, Azalea has kept their grandmother's legacy alive, filling the house with the smells of East European Jewish treats, like sweet kugels and tzimmes cake. Will coming back here feel like returning home or fill Juniper with a deeper sorrow? Can she apologize to her sister for not being there when she was needed most?* – Amazon]

Silver, Daphne [*The Rare Books Cozy Mystery Series #2*], (**The Tell-Tale Homicide** [pb, Level Best Books, 2024] 978-1685127947 [*Rare books librarian Juniper Blume lands her dream job: creating a new museum in her Chesapeake Bay town of Rose Mallow, Maryland. But on her very first week, she makes a shocking discovery-a dead man clutching a book by Edgar Allan Poe, stolen from the collections! As Juniper gets closer to cracking the coded message hidden inside the book, she realizes someone is desperate to keep its literary secrets buried...even if that means burying her, too. Dressed in her signature vintage style with rescue pup Clover by her side, the fearless bookworm must hunt down the culprit before becoming the next victim. But can she solve the case without jeopardizing a budding romance with her boss, the dashing Leo Calverton? And can she help her sister Azalea perfect their grandmother's legendary blintz recipe before the Rose Mallow Festival?* – Amazon]

Silver, Daphne [*The Rare Books Cozy Mystery Series #3*], (**Poison and Prejudice** [pb, Level Best Books, 2025]) 979-8898201197 [*When a simple storage unit auction turns deadly, librarian Juniper Blume finds herself unpacking more than she bargained for... Rare books librarian Juniper Blume has settled into life at her sister's Wildflower Inn in the charming Chesapeake Bay town of Rose Mallow, Maryland. But when curiosity draws her to a local storage unit auction, Juniper's winning bid comes with a shocking bonus - a dead body hidden among meticulously organized museum-quality boxes. As Rosh Hashanah approaches,*

Juniper must navigate a web of secrets, a town full of suspects, and valuable collectibles-including letters from Jane Austen. Can Juniper solve the mystery before the killer strikes again? Her librarian's curiosity and attention to detail might be her greatest strengths-or put her directly in harm's way. - Amazon]

Michael Simon (born 1963, Levittown, Long Island, NY) - Before becoming a novelist, he held various eclectic roles, including probation officer in Austin, Texas - an experience that heavily influenced the grit of **Dirty Sally** (2005). He also worked as an actor, cab driver, and disc jockey. In his **Dan Reles** series, Jewish content is less about religious practice and more about cultural identity, historical legacy, and the protagonist's status as an "outsider" in the American South. Dan Reles is frequently defined as the only Jewish homicide detective on the Austin police force. His Jewish heritage and New York roots set him apart from his Southern colleagues, often serving as a lens through which Simon explores themes of social inequity, religion, and class. Throughout the series, Reles grapples with his identity. In a pivotal narrative arc, he discovers on his mother's deathbed that she was Jewish, leading him to actively reconstruct his identity as a Jew.

The Jewish Underworld: The series links Reles to the historical "Jewish Mob." His father, Ben, was a Mafia enforcer, and the final book, **The Last Jew Standing**, features Sam Zelig, described as the "last of the Jewish crime bosses".

Generational Conflict: Simon uses Jewish archetypes to explore the "sins of the father," pitting Reles against his father's criminal past and the violent legacy of Jewish gangsters from the previous generation. While the series is categorized as **Jewish fiction**, it functions primarily as hard-boiled noir where the protagonist's Jewishness provides a distinct psychological and cultural backbone to the gritty police procedural elements. [Google/AI]

Simon, Michael, [*Dan Reles #1*] (**Dirty Sally**) [hc, Viking Adult, 2004] 978-0670033195 [pb, Penguin, 2005] 978-0143035312

Simon, Michael, [*Dan Reles #2*] (**Body Scissors**) [hc, Viking Adult, 2005] 978-0670034437 [pb, Penguin, 2006] 978-0143038054

Simon, Michael, [*Dan Reles #3*] (**Little Faith**) [hc, Viking Adult, 2006] 978-0670037902 [pb, Penguin, 2007] 978-0143112310

Simon, Michael, [*Dan Reles #4*] (**The Last Jew Standing**) [hc, Viking Adult, 2007] 978-0670063246 [pb, Penguin, 2007] 978-0143114314

Roger L. Simon (born 1943 in New York City) – novelist and screenwriter. Graduated from Dartmouth College and the Yale School of Drama. Beyond writing, he served as a president of the West Coast branch of PEN, sat on the Writers Guild of America board, and co-founded the political news website PJ Media. His **Moses Wine**, a Los Angeles-based private detective, was a groundbreaking character for the private-eye genre: a "hip, political, and edgy longhair" who was proudly Jewish and often smoked marijuana. Jewish identity and themes evolve throughout the series:

Identity & Heritage: Wine is often portrayed as a secular Jew with roots in Berkeley radicalism, contrasting with the traditionally "ethnicity-devoid" detectives of earlier noir fiction.

Raising the Dead (1988): In the sixth novel, Wine travels to Israel to clear an Arab organization of murder. The plot involves "fanatic Jewish religious leaders," terrorists, and the complexities of his homeland.

Director's Cut (2003): Set in post-9/11 Prague, Wine investigates threats against a film crew making a love story about the Holocaust. The story features the Grand Rabbi of Prague and explores antisemitism and modern terrorism.

External Perspectives: The series frequently uses Wine's Jewishness to highlight social absurdities, such as an FBI computer system flagging the Jewish detective as a potential associate of terrorists. [Google/AI]

Simon, Roger L. [*Moses Wine #1*], (**The Big Fix**) [hc, Andre Deutsch, 1974] B0033M2WUI [pb, Straight Arrow Books, 1973] 9780879320485 [pb, ipicturebooks, 2010] 978-1876963330 [*Wine is hired by an old girlfriend, Lila Shea, to locate Howard Eppis, the elusive leader of the radical Free Amerika Party. Eppis is believed to be orchestrating a smear campaign against liberal Democratic presidential candidate Miles Hawthorne by distributing forged campaign literature linking Hawthorne to extremist causes.*

Before Wine can complete the assignment, Lila is murdered. What begins as a political investigation becomes a murder case involving wealthy backers, former New Left activists, Chicano radicals, and political operatives. As Wine traces the conspiracy through the remnants of 1960s idealism, he uncovers a cynical plot in which personal ambition, money, and political manipulation have replaced revolutionary ideals. The novel culminates in the exposure of the real conspirators behind both the murder and the campaign sabotage. The main Jewish component is not the facts of the case, but rather Wine's character, especially his outsider's perspective, self-deprecating humor, intellectual skepticism, and moral ambivalence. His Jewishness is an integral part of who he is, but it is not heavily emphasized in the investigation itself. – ChatGPT]

Simon, Roger L. [*Moses Wine #2*], (**Wild Turkey**) [hc, Straight Arrow Books, 1974] 978-0879320829 [pb, ipicturebooks, 2011] 978-1876963385

Simon, Roger L. [*Moses Wine #3*], (**Peking Duck**) [hc, Simon & Schuster, 1979] 978-0671228804 [pb, ipicturebooks, 2011] 978-1876963422

Simon, Roger L. [*Moses Wine #4*], (**California Roll**) [hc, Villard, 1985] 978-0394537115 [pb, ipicturebooks, 2011] 978-1876963361

Simon, Roger L. [*Moses Wine #5*], (**The Straight Man**) [hc, Villard, 1986] 978-0394558370 [pb, ipicturebooks, 2013] 978-1876963538

Simon, Roger L. [*Moses Wine #6*], (**Raising the Dead**) [hc, Villard, 1988] 978-0394564418 [pb, Warner Books, 1989] 978-0446348225

Simon, Roger L. [*Moses Wine #7*], (**The Lost Coast**) [hc, HarperCollins, 1997] 978-0060177072 [pb, ipicturebooks, 2011] 978-1876963484

Simon, Roger L. [*Moses Wine #8*], (**Director's Cut**) [hc, Atria, 2003] 978-0743458023

Simon, Roger L., (**Emet** [hc, Green Hills Books, 2026] 979-8994109328 [pb, Green Hills Books, 2026] 979-8994109311 [*When Nashville is shaken by the brutal murder of a young woman visiting from New York, Rabbi Benjamin "Ben" Golub—a reluctant spiritual leader whose faith has long wavered—finds himself drawn into a crisis far larger than grief and consolation. The crime unmoors his congregants, ignites simmering fears, and pulls the rabbi into the orbit of two people connected to the victim: Ed, a Serbian-born sculptor with a past marked by war, and Tamara, a sharp-witted New York publicist fleeing her own heartbreak.*

But when a freak tornado hits the city, exposing strange phenomena in the rabbi's own backyard, Ben confronts something he never expected: evidence that an ancient Jewish legend may be more than myth. What begins as a whispered joke—a lump of mud shaped like a man—soon reveals a terrifying capacity for action. As violence escalates, anti-Jewish hatred rises worldwide, and the rabbi's private doubts collide with what he witnesses, Ben must decide what he truly believes—and what he is willing to unleash. Because the line between protector and monster is thinner than anyone imagined. And truth—emet—has consequences. – Amazon]

Shelley Singer (1939–2022, grew up in Minneapolis, MN) - was an American mystery and science fiction author primarily known for her 6-volume **Jake Samson** detective series. Jake is an ex-Chicago cop turned unlicensed PI who is explicitly identified as Jewish. However, his heritage is often mentioned subtly or only once per book rather than being a central theme. Marketing for the series frequently uses the tagline "Nice Jewish cop turns PI" to highlight his more laid-back, non-macho investigative style compared to traditional hardboiled detectives. In the sixth novel, **Royal Flush**, Jake's Jewish identity

becomes a central plot point when he goes undercover to infiltrate a neo-Nazi group called the Aryan Command in Marin County. [Google/AI]

Singer, Shelley [*Jake Samson #1*], (**Samson's Deal**) [hc, St. Martin's Press, 1983] 9780312698492 [pb, Paperjacks, 1986] 978-0770103972

Singer, Shelley, [*Jake Samson #2*], (**Free Draw**) [hc, St. Martin's Press, 1984] 978-0312303662 [pb, St. Martin's Press, 1984] 9780312303662

Singer, Shelley, [*Jake Samson #3*], (**Full House**) [hc, St. Martin's Press, 1986] 978-0312309732 [pb, Worldwide Library, 1988] 978-0373260072

Singer, Shelley, [*Jake Samson #4*], (**Spit in the Ocean**) [hc, St. Martin's Press, 1987] 978-0312006853 [pb, Worldwide Library, 1989] 978-0373260263

Singer, Shelley, [*Jake Samson #5*], (**Suicide King**) [hc, St. Martin's Press, 1988] 978-0312022938 [pb, Worldwide Library, 1989] 978-0373260409

Singer, Shelley, [*Jake Samson #6*], (**Royal Flush**) [pb, Daniel & Daniel Publishers, 2015] 978-1880284339

Bob Sloan (*est. birth 1958 in Champaign, Illinois*) - Beyond writing crime fiction, Sloan is a professional chef and educator who has authored several cookbooks. His protagonist, **Lenny Bliss**, is explicitly described in reviews as **a T.S. Eliot-loving Jewish detective**. This indicates a foundation for potential Jewish content or themes throughout the series. Lenny's Jewish background is a noted aspect of his characterization, setting him apart as an "appealingly offbeat protagonist" within the detective genre. The first book in the series involves a neighborhood with a significant Russian and Russian-Jewish immigrant population, which provides a culturally rich setting for the police procedural elements of the story. While specific plot points directly tied to religious practice are not detailed in available summaries, his Jewish identity is a foundational trait of the character and likely influences his perspective and interactions in the New York setting. [Google/AI]

Sloan, Bob [*Lenny Bliss*], (**Bliss**) [hc, Scribner, 1996] 978-0684822501 [pb, W.W. Norton & Co., 2000] 978-0393321142

Sloan, Bob, (**Bliss Jumps the Gun**) [hc, Foul Play Press, 1999] 978-0393047509 [pb, W.W. Norton & Co., 2000] 978-0393321142

Sloan, Bob, (**In the Middle of Nowhere**) [hc, Atlantic Monthly Press, 2003] 978-0871138729 [pb, Atlantic Monthly Press, 2004] 978-0802141415

Julie Smith (*born 1944 in Annapolis, Maryland and raised in Savannah, Georgia, she later moved to New Orleans and eventually to San Francisco to pursue a career as a newspaper journalist and a prolific novelist*) – She also established a publishing house [*"Booksbnimble"*] and became a licensed private investigator. She has written over 20 books in various series, including the 5-volume **Rebecca Schwartz** series. Schwartz describes herself as a "Jewish feminist lawyer". Smith has not identified herself publicly as Jewish, the Schwartz series notwithstanding. The Jewish aspects of the Schwartz series are centered primarily on the protagonist's identity and her family life:

Protagonist's Identity: Rebecca Schwartz is an amateur sleuth and attorney in San Francisco who often leans into her "nice Jewish lawyer" persona, using it as a self-descriptor that blends her professional life with her cultural background.

Family Dynamics: A recurring source of humor and "Jewish content" comes from Rebecca's interactions with her overbearing mother, which often reflects traditional cultural stereotypes and family drama common in Jewish-American literature.

Cultural Perspective: While the series are “cozy mysteries” primarily focused on crime in San Francisco, Rebecca’s Jewish worldview often colors her observations of the “absurdities of urban life” and her social circle. - [Google/AI and Amazon]

Smith, Julie [*Rebecca Schwartz series #1*], (**Death Turns a Trick** [hc, Walker & Co. 1982] 978-0802754820 [pb, Booksbnimble, 2020] 978-0999813195 [*Young San Francisco lawyer Rebecca Schwartz encounters jealous lovers, blackmailed officials, prostitutes, and angry pimps as she attempts to clear her latest boyfriend of the murder of his prostitute sister.* – Amazon])

Smith, Julie [*Rebecca Schwartz series #2*], (**The Sourdough Wars** [hc, Walker & Co., 1984] 978-0802755896 [mass mkt pb, Ivy Books, 1992] 978-0804109291 [*When the heir to the Martinelli family’s renowned sourdough starter is murdered before they were to auction it off, Rebecca Schwartz is determined to discover if he died for a handful of dough. The more she sifts through the tangled relationships of the city’s bread-making dynasties, though, the closer she gets to the recipe for murder.* – Amazon])

Smith, Julie [*Rebecca Schwartz series #3*], (**Tourist Trap** [hc, Mysterious Press, 1986] 978-0892961627 [pb, Mysterious Press, 1987] 978-0445406407 [*Rebecca heads to an Easter morning sunrise service and gets the shock of her life when she sees a real body nailed to the cross. N.B.: She’s there because her boyfriend’s covering the service for the San Francisco Chronicle. The body’s there because someone’s making a statement he doesn’t want the press to miss. Rebecca learns the man was a tourist. And he’s only the first to die. A man identifying himself as the Trapper is out to destroy San Francisco’s tourist trade by killing visitors. But when the cops arrest an innocent man as the Trapper, Rebecca takes on an impossible defense and goes undercover to find a killer.* – Amazon])

Smith, Julie [*Rebecca Schwartz series #4*], (**Dead in the Water** [mass mkt pb, Fawcett, 1991] 978-0804108553 [hc, Robert Hale & Co. 2005]) 978-0709078449 [*Attorney and exotic fish fancier Rebecca Schwartz would love to relax in picturesque Monterey, California, with her friend Marty. But when Marty’s boss, the woman who’s been sleeping with her husband, is found dead in a giant tank and the aquarium where Marty works, she looks sunk. Rebecca takes on her friend’s case, and has some serious clue-harpooning to do. As she swims closer to the line, her friend looks more and more guilty, and Rebecca begins to wish she had just gone fishing....* Amazon])

Smith, Julie [*Rebecca Schwartz series #5*], (**Other People’s Skeletons** [mass mkt pb, Fawcett, 1993] 978-804110860 [hc, Five Star, 1999] 978-0786219537 [*When Rebecca learns that her best friend and legal partner Chris Nicholson is accused of murder and won’t give an alibi, she gets curious. To her amazement, she finds that her partner has a secret life--and so did the victim, dashing critic Jason McKendrick. For that matter, so does everyone else in the case, causing Rebecca to wonder what planet she’s stumbled onto. One thing she knows with certainty: She has to shake some skeletons from the closets--and fast--or Chris is going to prison....* Amazon])

Note: All 5 volumes of the series are available in a single collection, published only on Kindle.

Janice Steinberg (born 1950, Whitefish Bay, WI) - an arts journalist who has published more than 400 articles. She is also the author of five mystery novels. Her books contain notable Jewish content. In *The Tin Horse* (2013), she focuses on Boyle Heights, the Jewish immigrant and refugee neighbourhood of Los Angeles in the 1920s and 30s. **Margo Simon** is the protagonist of Janice Steinberg’s five-book mystery series published in the 1990s. She is a sharp-witted public radio reporter based in San Diego, California. Margo is an assimilated Jew whose religious background is rarely the focus of her daily life. However, her relationship with Judaism is explored through her mother, Alice, who “rediscovers” her faith and eventually moves to Israel to study Jewish mysticism (Kabbalah) [Google/AI]

Key Storylines

Death of a Postmodernist (Book 1): Margo investigates a murder at an avant-garde art foundation.

Death in a City of Mystics (Book 5): *This is the most “Jewish” of the series. Margo travels to Safed, Israel, to investigate a suspicious “accident” involving her mother at a center for mystical studies.* [Google/AI]

Steinberg, Janice, [*Margo Simon #1*] (**Death of a Postmodernist** [pb, Berkley Publishing Group 1995] B01FIXHI08

Steinberg, Janice, [*Margo Simon #2*] (**Death Crosses the Border** [pb, Berkley, 1995] 978-0425150528

Steinberg, Janice, [*Margo Simon #3*] (**Death-Fires Dance** [pb, Berkley, 1996] 978-0425155516

Steinberg, Janice, [*Margo Simon #4*] (**The Dead Man and the Sea** [pb, Berkley, 1997] 978-0425160374

Steinberg, Janice, [*Margo Simon #5*] (**Death in a City of Mystics** [pb, Berkley, 1998] 978-0425166154

Steinberg, Janice, (**The Tin Horse** [hc, Random House, 2013] 978-0679643746

Serita Stevens (born 1949 in Chicago) and **Rayanne Moore** (est. birth 1952) – Each has published novels on her own in the mystery and romance genres. They collaborated on the **Fanny Zindel Mystery** series, featuring a 65-year-old Jewish widow and grandmother from California (from the Greater Los Angeles area) who becomes an amateur sleuth. Fanny embodies the “bubbe” (grandmother) figure—persistent, sharp-witted, and deeply involved in her family’s life. Her speech is heavily flavored with Yiddish-influenced phrasing and Jewish colloquialisms (e.g., “Such a lump you have, I could put it under a hen to hatch”).

In **Red Sea, Dead Sea, (1991)**, Fanny travels to Israel for the first time, ostensibly to convince her granddaughter to return to school. However, she is secretly investigating the suspicious death of her brother, Albert, who died there 30 years prior. The plot involves forgery, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and international espionage. In **Bagels for Tea (1993)**, she visits York, England, to attend a memorial for a 1190 massacre of Jews. [Google/AI]

Stevens, Serita & Rayanne Moore [*Fanny Zindel #1*], (**Red Sea, Dead Sea**) [hc, St. Martin’s Press, 1991] 978-0312064518

Stevens, Serita & Rayanne Moore [*Fanny Zindel #2*], (**Bagels for Tea**) [hc, St. Martin’s Press, 1993] 978-0312093488

Jonathan Stone (born 1956, Pittsburgh, PA), (**The Prison Minyan** [pb, Lightning Books, 2022] 978-1785632754 [*Note:* In this novel, a colorful group of Jewish white-collar criminals find themselves serving time at Otisville, a real-life federal prison in upstate New York known for its kosher amenities. Otisville is portrayed as a relatively comfortable “penitentiary of choice” for Jewish offenders. The inmates have gamed the system to enjoy a peaceful routine centered around a kosher deli and their daily “minyan” — a prayer and study group where they debate Talmudic ethics.

The status quo is shattered by the arrival of a celebrity inmate, “The Pisk” (a character based on Michael Cohen), whose presence draws unwanted attention from the 45th President of the United States. To punish the newcomer, the White House enforces a “toughened regime,” stripping the inmates of their comforts, including their beloved rugelach and blintzes. When shadowy forces attempt to assassinate the celebrity inmate (a move the book refers to as “Epsteining” him), a visiting poetry professor, Deborah Liston, accidentally witnesses the plot and ends up in mortal danger. The fraudsters, forgers, bigamists and tax evaders of the minyan must use their unique criminal skills to outmaneuver the authorities, protect the outsider, and decide if they are willing to risk their own safety for a higher moral cause.

Key Characters:

The Minyan Members: A group of “miscreants” including Phil Steinerman (blood testing fraud), Marty Adler (matrimonial fraud), and Rabbi Morton Meyerson (embezzlement).

The Pisk: The high-profile snitch whose arrival triggers the White House’s revenge.

Deborah Liston: *A poetry professor who helps the men find their spiritual depth.*

Big Willie: *A non-Jewish guard who has supervised so many services he can chant in Hebrew.]*

[Google/AI]

H. William (“Bill”) Taeusch – (born 1941, Cleveland, OH) – prominent American neonatologist and author, Professor Emeritus at UC San Francisco. He now lives in Jerusalem and writes fiction, often drawing on his NICU experiences. He is the author of *The Neonatal ICU Series*:

Baby Doe (2021): *A novel exploring the ethical and legal complexities of treating a newborn with severe disabilities amidst 1980s “Baby Doe” laws.*

DiBene’s Offer (2023): *A thriller following Dr. Eli Kurz as he navigates medical research and a mysterious private lab in the Antilles. The mystery revolves around the lab and the ethical boundaries of applying experimental medical discoveries to infants.*

Saving Julian (2024): *The plot hinges on a corrupt social services department attempting to seize custody of a baby. The protagonist, Dr. Eli Kurz, becomes “complicit” in a desperate, high-stakes attempt to circumvent the system.*

Sula’s Sacrifice (2026): *[The story follows Dr. Eli Kurz, a neonatologist who is “encouraged” to take a sabbatical in Ethiopia following an incident of medical malfeasance back in Boston. Eli arrives in Ethiopia with the goal of running a clinical trial for a simple medical device designed to improve the survival rates of newborns delivered outside of hospitals. What Eli hopes will be a straightforward clinical mission quickly devolves into a dangerous ordeal involving theft, kidnapping, and ransom demands.*

Settings and Influence: Taeusch’s move to Jerusalem and his studies at the Shaindy Rudoff Creative Writing Program at Bar Ilan University (Israel’s only English-language creative writing program) significantly influence his narrative voice and the cultural context of his writing.

Ethical Intersections: The books often explore the intersection of **modern medicine and moral philosophy**, themes that frequently resonate with Jewish ethical debates regarding the sanctity of life and the “right to die” (e.g., the Baby Doe laws). [Google/AI]

Taeusch, William, [Neonatal ICU Series #1] (**Baby Doe** [pb, Wheatmark, 2021]) 978-1627878135

Taeusch, William, [Neonatal ICU Series #2] (**DiBene’s Offer** [pb, Wheatmark, 2023]) 979-8887471167

Taeusch, William, [Neonatal ICU Series #3] (**Saving Julian** [pb, Wheatmark, 2024]) 979-8887472010

Taeusch, William, [Neonatal ICU Series #4] (**Sula’s Sacrifice** [pb, Wheatmark, 2026]) 979-8887473291

Joseph Telushkin (born 1948, Brooklyn, NY) - a prominent American Modern Orthodox rabbi, lecturer, and author known for his extensive work (16 books and counting) on Jewish ethics, history, and theology. He also authored four mystery novels, including a trilogy featuring **Rabbi Daniel Winter**. In *The Unorthodox Murder of Rabbi Wahl*, Winter becomes a suspect in the death of a radical feminist rabbi. In *The Final Analysis of Dr. Stark* (1988), Winter investigates the brutal murder of a prominent psychiatrist whose list of patients included many elite L.A. citizens. His *An Eye for an Eye* (1990) later served as the basis for multiple episodes of the Emmy-winning TV series *The Practice*. *Heaven’s Witness* (2004), co-authored with **Allen Estrin**, is a paranormal thriller centering on a psychiatrist and a patient whose memories under hypnosis lead to a decades-old disappearance.

Telushkin uses *Rabbi Daniel Winter* to explore how ancient laws apply to modern crimes. Key themes include:

- **Vigilante Justice vs. Morality:** In *An Eye for an Eye*, a father kills his daughter’s murderer after a light sentence is handed down. Winter must navigate the tension between a killing that is legally wrong but arguably moral.

- **Legal “Flaws”:** *The novels explore fascinating legal quirks, such as the Talmudic rule that a unanimous guilty verdict from a jury might be invalid because it suggests a lack of defense or deep suspicion.*
- **Social & Religious Issues:** *His stories touch on controversial topics including Jewish views on abortion, homosexuality, and the nuances of the death penalty.*
- **Personal Integrity:** *Beyond the crime, Winter provides lessons on judging others fairly, the ethics of speech, and managing human impulses like envy and revenge. [Google/AI]*

Telushkin, Joseph, [*Rabbi Daniel Winter*] (**The Unorthodox Murder of Rabbi Wahl** [pb, Toby Press, 2005] 978-1592641079 [Originally published as: *The Unorthodox Murder of Rabbi Moss* - [pb, Collins Crime, 1988] 978-0006176268

Telushkin, Joseph, [*Rabbi Daniel Winter*] (**The Final Analysis of Dr. Stark** [hc, Collins Crime Club, 1988]) 978-0002314947 [pb, Toby Press, 2005] 978-1592641086

Telushkin, Joseph, [*Rabbi Daniel Winter*] (**Eye for an Eye** [hc, Doubleday, 1991] 978-0385421164 [pb, Toby Press, 2006] 978-1592641093)

Telushkin, Joseph & Allen Estrin, (**Heaven’s Witness** [hc, Toby Press, 2004] 978-1592640911

Debbie Viguié (born 1973) - prolific American author (over 50 books and counting). Holds a degree in creative writing from U.C. Davis. She grew up in the San Francisco Bay Area and now lives near Orlando, Florida with her husband, Scott, and their cat, Schrödinger. Her bibliography spans dark fairy tale retellings (*Once Upon a Time* novels), urban fantasy (*Abracadabra*), and mystery (*Psalms 23 Mysteries*). She is also a spiritual leader, through her personal ministry, which she conducts via her official website and social media platforms. She also plays a recurring character on the audio drama, *Doctor Geek’s Laboratory*.

Her ***Psalms 23 Mysteries* series** is noted for its respectful blend of Jewish and Christian themes within the amateur sleuth genre. The series features **Rabbi Jeremiah Silverman**, a Reform rabbi who partners with a Christian church secretary, **Cindy Preston**. Plots are often set during significant times such as Passover or Rosh Hashanah, providing educational insights into Jewish traditions and preparations. The books use specific textual details, such as spelling “God” as “G-d” when written from Jeremiah’s point of view to reflect Jewish practice.

The “cozy mystery” format is driven by the unlikely partnership between a church secretary and a rabbi from the synagogue next door. A recurring mystery element is Jeremiah’s “sordid” past, which involves “dubious skill sets” and a history of danger in Israel that slowly unfolds over the series. Many books involve high-stakes investigations, including serial killers, arsonists targeting synagogues, and international threats. Each book title is taken from a verse of Psalm 23, such as *The Lord Is My Shepherd* and *I Shall Not Want*. [Google/AI]

Viguié, Debbie, [*The Psalms 23 Mysteries #1*] (**The Lord Is My Shepherd**) [hc, Abingdon Press, 2010] 978-1616643263 [pb, Abingdon Press, 2010]) 978-1426701894

Viguié, Debbie, [*The Psalms 23 Mysteries #2*] (**I Shall Not Want**) [hc, Thorndike large print, 2011] 978-1410434173 [pb, Abingdon Press, 2010] 978-1426701900

Viguié, Debbie, [*The Psalms 23 Mysteries #3*] (**Lie Down in Green Pastures**) [pb, Abingdon Press, 2011] 978-1426701917 [hc, Thorndike large print, 2011] 978-1410439062

Viguié, Debbie, [*The Psalms 23 Mysteries #4*] (**Beside Still Waters**) [pb, Big Pink Bow, 2012] 978-0615675978 [hc, Thorndike large print, 2013] 978-1410459831

Viguié, Debbie, [*The Psalms 23 Mysteries #5*] (**Restoreth My Soul**) [pb, Big Pink Bow, 2013] 978-0615779492 [hc, Thorndike large print, 2013] 978-1410462244

Viguié, Debbie, [*The Psalms 23 Mysteries #6*] (**In the Paths of Righteousness**) [pb, Big Pink Bow, 2013] 978-0615860268

- Viguié, Debbie, [*The Psalm 23 Mysteries #7*] (**For His Name's Sake**) [pb, Big Pink Bow, 2013] 978-0615895529
- Viguié, Debbie, [*The Psalm 23 Mysteries #8*] (**Walk Through the Valley**) [pb, Big Pink Bow, 2014] 978-0692212356
- Viguié, Debbie, [*The Psalm 23 Mysteries #9*] (**The Shadow of Death**) [pb, Big Pink Bow, 2014] 978-0990697107
- Viguié, Debbie, [*The Psalm 23 Mysteries #10*] (**I Will Fear No Evil**) [pb, Big Pink Bow, 2014] 978-0990697114
- Viguié, Debbie, [*The Psalm 23 Mysteries #11*] (**Thou Art With Me**) [pb, Big Pink Bow, 2015] 978-0990697138
- Viguié, Debbie, [*The Psalm 23 Mysteries #12*] (**Thy Rod and Thy Staff**) [pb, Big Pink Bow, 2015] 978-0990697145
- Viguié, Debbie, [*The Psalm 23 Mysteries #13*] (**Comfort Me**) [pb, Big Pink Bow, 2017] 978-0990697152
- Viguié, Debbie, [*The Psalm 23 Mysteries #14*] (**A Table Before Me**) [pb, Big Pink Bow, 2017] 978-0990697176
- Viguié, Debbie, [*The Psalm 23 Mysteries #15*] (**In the Presence of Mine Enemies**) [pb, Big Pink Bow, 2018] 978-0990697183
- Viguié, Debbie, [*The Psalm 23 Mysteries #16*] (**Anointest My Head With Oil**) [pb, Big Pink Bow, 2019] 978-1733428101
- Viguié, Debbie, [*The Psalm 23 Mysteries #17*] (**My Cup Runneth Over**) [pb, Big Pink Bow, 2019] 978-1733428125
- Viguié, Debbie, [*The Psalm 23 Mysteries #18*] (**Goodness and Mercy**) [pb, Big Pink Bow, 2022] 978-1733428149
- Viguié, Debbie, [*The Psalm 23 Mysteries #19*] (**Follow Me**) [pb, Big Pink Bow, 2024] 978-1733428187
- Viguié, Debbie, [*The Psalm 23 Mysteries #20*] (**All the Days of My Life**) [pb, Big Pink Bow, 2024] 978-1966402992
- Viguié, Debbie, [*The Psalm 23 Mysteries #21*] (**I Will Dwell**) [pb, Big Pink Bow, 2025] 978-1966402008
- Viguié, Debbie, [*The Psalm 23 Mysteries #22*] (**In the House of the Lord**) [pb, Big Pink Bow, 2025] 978-1966402015
- Viguié, Debbie, [*The Psalm 23 Mysteries #23*] (**Forever**) [pb, Big Pink Bow, 2025] 978-1966402022

Ayelet Waldman (born 1964 in Jerusalem, Israel and emigrated to US as a child with her family) - prolific novelist and essayist, best known for The "**Mommy-Track Mysteries**" series, featuring a public-defender-turned-mother. Waldman is herself a lawyer who worked as a public defender before leaving the practice of law for full-time parenthood and writing. Married to author **Michael Chabon** since 1993; they have four children and reside in Berkeley, California.

Ayelet Waldman launched her Mommy-Track Mysteries series in 2000, centering on **Juliet Applebaum**, a former public defender in Los Angeles who transitions to stay-at-home motherhood while inadvertently solving crimes tied to family and childcare settings. The 7-volume series blends cozy mystery elements with domestic realism as Applebaum juggles investigations amid diaper changes and playdates

Juliet Applebaum is explicitly identified as a Jewish housewife and amateur detective. Her voice is characterized by a "smart, snappy repartee" and a sense of humor often rooted in Jewish folklore and cultural tropes. In the second novel, **The Big Nap**, the disappearance of Juliet's young Hasidic babysitter serves as a catalyst for her to investigate her own commitment to her family's Jewish heritage.

The series explores the dynamics of diverse Jewish environments, specifically the Hasidic communities of Brooklyn and Los Angeles, contrasting their traditional lifestyles with Juliet's more secular existence.

*Waldman often explores the dark side of parenting, where bad parenting, negligence, or intense, competitive, and anxious parenting acts as the catalyst for the murder or crime in question. Her mysteries often set their scenes in Los Angeles, poking fun at elite, affluent lifestyles, including the cut-throat real estate business and the entertainment industry. Her characters often grapple with issues of class, and her narratives frequently involve sharp, sometimes humorous, observations about the social structures of modern American life. Despite being labeled as "cozy" mysteries, Waldman tackles dark themes such as neglected children, murder, kidnapping, and the legal system's failures (e.g., in **Daughter's Keeper** and **Death Gets a Time-Out**). [Google/AI]*

Waldman, Ayelet [*Juliet Applebaum* #1], (**Nursery Crimes** [hc, Berkley Hardcover, 2000] 978-0425174692 [pb, Berkley Trade, 2010] 978-0425234983

Waldman, Ayelet [*Juliet Applebaum* #2], (**The Big Nap**) [pb, Berkley Trade, 2002] 978-0425179499 [pb, Berkley, 2002] 978-0425184523

Waldman, Ayelet, [*Juliet Applebaum* #3] (**A Playdate with Death**) [hc, Berkley Hardcover, 2002] 978-0425184738 [pb, Berkley, 2003] 978-0425191040

Waldman, Ayelet, [*Juliet Applebaum* #4] (**Death Gets a Time-Out**) [hc, Berkley Hardcover, 2003] 978-0425190142 [pb, Berkley, 2004] 978-0425197127

Waldman, Ayelet, [*Juliet Applebaum* #5] (**Murder Plays House**) [hc, Berkley Hardcover, 2004] 978-0425196359 [pb, Berkley, 2005] 978-0425198698

Waldman, Ayelet, [*Juliet Applebaum* #6] (**The Cradle Robbers**) [hc, Berkley Hardcover, 2005] 978-0425202845 [pb, Berkley, 2006] 978-0425206171

Waldman, Ayelet, [*Juliet Applebaum* #7] (**Bye-Bye, Black Sheep**) [hc, Berkley Hardcover, 2006] 978-0425210185 [pb, Berkley, 2007] 978-0425216392

Edward Lewis Wallant (1926–1962, born in New Haven, CT and died in Norwalk, Connecticut, while maintaining a deep creative and professional connection to New York City) [*- a highly influential novelist who grew up in Connecticut and served as a U.S. Navy gunner's mate during World War II. After the war, he graduated from the Pratt Institute in 1950 and took creative writing classes at The New School. For most of his adulthood, he worked by day as a successful advertising graphic designer and art director—eventually working at McCann-Erickson—while writing fiction strictly at night. Wallant began writing professionally at age 29. His first novel, **The Human Season** (1960), won the National Jewish Book Award. His most famous masterpiece, **The Pawnbroker** (1961), was a finalist for the National Book Award and became one of the first major American works to deeply explore the psychological trauma of a Holocaust survivor. It was famously adapted into an 1964 film by Sidney Lumet. [See detailed description in the companion Filmography, p.511.] He died tragically young at the age of 36. Two of his novels, **The Tenants of Moonbloom** and **The Children at the Gate**, were published posthumously. Despite his short life, his gritty, empathetic depictions of urban alienation cemented his legacy, and the annual Edward Lewis Wallant Award was established in his honor to celebrate Jewish-American fiction.*

Wallant, Edward Lewis, (**The Pawnbroker** [hc, Harcourt Brace, 1961]) B0007DST8A [pb, Mariner Books, 1978] 978-0156714228 [[See related film](#)] [*The synopsis appears in the companion Filmography under the listing "The Pawnbroker (1964)". The film follows the events in the book closely, with some differences in interpretation and character descriptions. The book ends with some hope of redemption and "return to life" for Sol Nazerman, while the movie concludes on a much bleaker and more despairing note. – Google/AI]*

Jerome Weidman (1913–1998, born and died in New York City) - novelist, playwright, and librettist who gained fame for his gritty, satiric depictions of New York business and political life. Worked as an office boy and clerk in Manhattan's garment district, which heavily inspired his early writing. Published his first novel, *I Can Get It for You Wholesale*, in 1937 at age 24. The book became a national sensation but drew controversy for its harsh portrayal of a ruthless dress-trade businessman. He later won a Pulitzer Prize for Drama for co-writing the book of the 1959 Broadway musical "Fiorello!", and adapted his first novel into a 1962 musical, in which Barbra Streisand made her Broadway debut. He wrote over 20 novels, multiple screenplays, and numerous short stories. His short fiction frequently appeared in *The New Yorker*. He was known for his naturalistic, slang-colored style. He wrote about the rough underside of New York business, politics, and Jewish-American life.

While his books are traditionally classified as social realism or immigrant fiction, they are deeply rooted in white-collar crime, financial fraud, and moral corruption. His work shifts the lens of crime fiction away from murder mysteries and onto organized white-collar exploitation, corporate sabotage, and industrial fraud. His protagonist, Harry Bogen, operates exactly like a classic noir antihero—charming, highly intelligent, deeply cynical, and utterly lacking a moral compass. Weidman belongs to a specific generation of mid-century Jewish-American writers (alongside **Budd Schulberg** and **Albert Halper** – see their listings in this bibliography) who rejected idealized immigrant narratives. Instead of writing about victims of crime, they wrote about **Jews as the perpetrators of crime**. In *I Can Get It for You Wholesale*, the crime is internal. Harry Bogen does not target the outside world; he criminally exploits and destroys other Jewish business owners and workers within his own community to siphon off their capital.

In broader Jewish crime fiction, criminal acts are often tied to the pressures of assimilation. Weidman's books serve as an excellent case study for this motive. In his novels, crime is presented as the dark underside of the American Dream. The pressure to escape the poverty of New York's Lower East Side during the Great Depression distorts the classic immigrant hustle into actual criminality. Harry Bogen views legality as an artificial barrier to the success he feels he is owed. Weidman's contribution to the genre is looking at crime entirely through the eyes of the perpetrator, mapping out the exact point where the "immigrant hustle" morphs into a criminal indictment.

A study of Jewish crime fiction must also grapple with the reception of such literature, and Weidman is a central figure in this history. The publication of *What's in It for Me?* (1938) sparked intense controversy and protest within the Jewish community. Because Weidman chose to write about an unrepentant Jewish fraudster at a time when global anti-Semitism was rapidly rising in Europe, many critics accused him of feeding anti-Semitic stereotypes of the "shyster" or dishonest businessman. Weidman offers a classic example of the unique burdens and anxieties Jewish authors faced when writing flawed, criminal characters from their own demographics. – Google/AI]

Weidman, Jerome, (**I Can Get It for You Wholesale** [Harry Bogen #1, originally published in 1937, *hc* new edition, Vintage/Ebury/Random House, 1985] 978-0370306841 [pb, Arbor House, 1984] 978-0877956044 [- the debut novel of Jerome Weidman and one of the classic novels about New York's Jewish garment industry during the Depression era. It follows **Harry Bogen**, the ambitious son of Jewish immigrants in the Bronx. Intelligent, charming, and utterly unscrupulous, Harry is determined to escape poverty and rise to the top of Manhattan's garment district. He believes that success belongs to those willing to manipulate, deceive, and exploit others, and he pursues wealth with relentless energy. Harry begins as a low-level worker but quickly discovers opportunities for profit in labor disputes, business deals, and the complex world of dress manufacturing. He lies to employers, partners, friends and even family members whenever it serves his interests. As Harry climbs the ranks and forms corporate partnerships, he actively misappropriates money belonging to the business. He drains the company's accounts and embezzles capital to fund his own lavish lifestyle and buy expensive gifts for his mistress. He functions as a classic con man and orchestrates an artificial shipping clerks' strike in Manhattan's garment district. By intentionally paralyzing the supply chain, he manipulates the dress manufacturers to bring them to their knees, positioning himself to profit off the manufactured crisis.

His rise is spectacular: he accumulates money, influence, and status, becoming a successful manufacturer while leaving a trail of damaged relationships behind him. When Harry's fraudulent schemes eventually

collapse and the company faces bankruptcy, he actively shifts the legal blame. He frames his trusting business partners (Teddy and Meyer), leaving them to take the fall and go to jail for the missing funds while he secures the stolen fortune for himself.

At the center of the novel is Harry's relationship with Ruthie Rivkin, a loyal childhood friend who genuinely loves him, and with his devoted mother, who remains blind to many of his faults. As Harry's success grows, he becomes increasingly isolated. He discovers that wealth cannot buy loyalty, affection, or self-respect. His ruthless pursuit of money ultimately leads to personal and moral bankruptcy.

The novel is notable for its unsentimental portrayal of Jewish immigrant and second-generation Jewish life in New York; detailed depiction of the garment industry; exploration of ambition, greed, and the American dream; critique of success achieved at the expense of human relationships; examination of the tension between traditional family values and modern commercial capitalism.

*Unlike many earlier American novels that portrayed Jewish immigrants sympathetically, Weidman made Harry Bogen a deeply flawed antihero. The novel's frank depiction of a Jewish protagonist driven by greed and opportunism was controversial when published, but it also helped establish a more complex and realistic portrayal of American Jewish life. The book was a major bestseller and was followed by a sequel, *What's in It for Me?* – Google/AI & ChatGPT]*

Weidman, Jerome, (**What's in It for Me?** [*Harry Bogen* #2, hc originally published in 1938, Simon & Schuster and pb, Avon, 1950]) [*At the end of I Can Get It for You Wholesale, Harry Bogen has seemingly achieved success in New York's garment industry through ruthlessness, manipulation, and an almost pathological ambition. In What's in It for Me?, Weidman examines what happens after such a man "wins."*

Harry is now an established operator on Seventh Avenue, but his success has not brought him security, happiness, or respect. Instead, he becomes increasingly involved in dubious financial schemes and shady business dealings. Convinced that cleverness can overcome any obstacle, he attempts to outmaneuver creditors, competitors, and even underworld figures. His guiding principle remains the question implied by the title: "What's in it for me?"

As the novel progresses, Harry's schemes begin to unravel. He becomes entangled with loan sharks and financial frauds, loses money, acquires enemies, and attracts legal attention. Unlike the first novel, where his aggressive opportunism often seems rewarded, this sequel steadily exposes the costs of his behavior. Harry's personal relationships deteriorate, and his emotional isolation deepens.

A major emotional thread concerns Harry's family, particularly his devoted Jewish mother. Weidman contrasts her traditional values, loyalty, and affection with Harry's relentless self-interest. The decline of Harry's fortunes is accompanied by personal tragedy within the family, forcing him to confront losses that money and cleverness cannot repair. By the end of the novel, Harry is financially ruined, pursued by the consequences of his actions, and stripped of many of the illusions that fueled his rise. The book functions as a moral and psychological reckoning, showing the collapse of a man who believed that ambition alone could substitute for character.

*The novel is deeply rooted in the world of New York's Jewish garment district during the Depression and takes further its exploration of the same themes. Although not a detective novel, *What's in It for Me?* is highly relevant to the study of Jews and crime in American literature. Harry Bogen is neither detective nor gangster but rather a white-collar operator whose conduct borders on fraud and organized criminality. The novel traces his movement from aggressive business practices into outright illegality, making it an important precursor to later Jewish novels about corruption, racketeering, and moral compromise. - ChatGPT]*

Weidman, Jerome, (**The Enemy Camp** [hc, Random House, 1958 and hc, Literary Licensing LLC, 2011] 978-1258046309 [pb, Literary Licensing LLC, 2011] 978-1258149925 [*This became one of Weidman's most commercially successful yet deeply controversial novels. The book features a secondary protagonist, Danny Schorr (who changes his name to Danny Shaw to pass as a Gentile). Danny commits theft, embezzlement (stealing a massive fortune in stamps), and framing an innocent man for his crimes. He uses the stolen funds to buy his way into a major hotel-chain monopoly and corrupt political circles. The*

criminal element is tied directly to the psychology of assimilation. Danny's criminality stems from his desperate desire to escape what his family views as "the enemy camp" (the Gentile world). He chooses to discard his Jewish identity and ethics entirely to achieve power. – Google/AI]

Weidman, Jerome, (**Other People's Money** [hc, Random House, 1967] 978-0370006376 [A sweeping novel that tracks two foster brothers from the Lower East Side over several decades. The book details the mechanics of wartime profiteering, corporate fraud, and financial exploitation. It explores the divergence of two Jewish men—one who maintains his ethical compass, and another who realizes that manipulating "other people's money" through legally gray and outright criminal avenues is the fastest way to achieve status in American society.]

Weidman, Jerome, (**Last Respects** [hc, Random House, 1972] 978-0394465517 [pb] B0006YHKIA [A later, more satirical look at the author's youth on the Lower East Side. The novel directly tackles Prohibition-era bootlegging. The protagonist, Benny Kramer, is ordered by his own mother to illegally traffic and deliver eighteen bottles of bootlegged alcohol through New York. This book provides a unique angle on crime as a family survival mechanism. Instead of high-level corporate fraud, it highlights working-class, street-level criminal hustle embedded within the everyday life of the early 20th-century Jewish immigrant community. – Google/AI]

Andy Weinberger (est. birth 1948?, New York City) - an American author and longtime bookseller. He is best known for creating the **Amos Parisman** mystery series, which features a semi-retired Jewish private investigator in Los Angeles. It is deeply rooted in the Jewish-American experience, specifically within the historic Jewish enclaves of Los Angeles. Amos is a "secular Jew" and an agnostic who relies on a strong personal ethical code and humanism rather than religious observance. The books are filled with Yiddishisms and a "dry, Jewish humor" often compared to a mix of Philip Marlowe and Larry David. The series frequently explores tensions within the L.A. Jewish community, such as the murder of a controversial rabbi at Canter's Deli (Book 1) or a plot centered on a rare 200-year-old Torah (Book 5). Beyond the "whodunnit," the series meditates on Zionism, anti-Semitism, and the historical legacy of the Holocaust. [Google/AI]

Weinberger, Andy, [*Amos Parisman* #1] (**An Old Man's Game** [hc, Prospect Park Books, 2019] 978-1684428724 [pb, Prospect Park Books, 2019] 978-1945551642

Weinberger, Andy, [*Amos Parisman* #2] (**Reason To Kill** [Prospect Park Books, 2020] 978-1945551956 [pb, Prospect Park Books, 2020] 978-1945551864

Weinberger, Andy, [*Amos Parisman* #3] (**The Kindness of Strangers** [hc, Prospect Park Books, 2022]) 978-1684428175 [pb, Prospect Park Books, 2022] 978-1684428168

Weinberger, Andy, [*Amos Parisman* #4] (**Die Laughing**) [hc, Prospect Park Books, 2023]) 978-1684429615 [pb, Prospect Park Books, 2023] 978-1684429608

Weinberger, Andy, [*Amos Parisman* #5] (**The Gonif**) [hc, Prospect Park Books, 2024] 978-1684421329 [pb, Prospect Park Books, 2024] 978-1684421305

Irving Weinman (1927–2015, born in Boston, MA) – an American author and educator. Before becoming a novelist, he worked as a lawyer and was a committed liberal activist. He also wrote book reviews for major publications like the *New York Times Book Review*. His novels feature **Lenny Schwartz**, a multifaceted protagonist whose identity is defined by a blend of 1960s radicalism, Ivy League education, and secular Jewishness. Schwartz is a Harvard-educated activist from the 1960s who became a disillusioned but "uncorrupted" NYPD homicide detective before eventually turning to private investigation. He is characterized by ruminative internal wisecracks and a cynical but deeply moral outlook on the New York and Miami crime worlds. Unlike hard-boiled detectives of the past, Schwartz's methods are often intellectual and reflective, influenced by his academic background and radical past.

*While the series primarily focuses on the “art setting” and high-stakes crime, Schwartz’s Jewish identity is a constant, subtle backdrop. His character reflects a specifically New York Jewish intellectualism, balancing a secular, “drop-out” radical history with his Jewish heritage. Weinman often surrounds Schwartz with characters that highlight Jewish cultural threads, such as his association with a Russian Jewish émigré fence in **Easy Way Down**. The “wisecracking” narrative voice is frequently compared to the tradition of Jewish humor—using irony and self-deprecation to cope with corrupt systems.*

[Google/AI]

Weinman, Irving, [Lenny Schwartz #1] (**Tailor’s Dummy** [hc, Atheneum/1986, Arlington Book/1988]) 978-0851407197 [pb, Fawcett, 1986] 978-0449212011

Weinman, Irving, [Lenny Schwartz #2] (**Hampton Heat** [1988]) [hc, Scribner, 1988] 978-0689117626 [pb, Fawcett, 1989] 978-0449215463

Weinman, Irving, [Lenny Schwartz #3] (**Virgil’s Ghost** [1989]) [hc, Fawcett Columbine, 1989] 978-0449904459 [pb, Fawcett, 1990] 978-0449147269

Weinman, Irving, [Lenny Schwartz #4] (**Easy Way Down** (hc, Fawcett, 1991)) 978-0449904466 [pb, Fawcett, 1992] 978-0449217054

Raymond M. Weinstein (born 1940, Brooklyn, NY) - an author of Jewish murder mysteries and historical fiction. He is best known for writing mysteries and memoirs that often draw on Jewish culture and postwar history. His notable works include:

The Anniversary: A Jewish Murder Mystery (2019) – A story set in Brooklyn centered on a cold case involving the Hebrew calendar.

The Hebrew Calendar Murder – Another entry in his mystery series.

Soldiers’ Field: A Novel of Postwar Germany – Historical fiction exploring life after World War II.

Munich 1960 Remembered – A memoir detailing his time as a Jewish G.I. in Germany.

Raymond M. Weinstein blends Jewish culture and mystery by using religious traditions as both narrative structure and thematic depth. His approach typically centers on the following elements:

Hebrew Calendar as a Clue: In novels like *The Anniversary: A Jewish Murder Mystery*, Weinstein uses the Hebrew calendar to link seemingly unrelated events. A detective discovers that two deaths occurring decades apart on the Gregorian calendar actually fall on the exact same Hebrew date, turning a religious timeline into a “theory of the crime”.

Observance-Based Motives: He explores the concept of the *yahrzeit* (the anniversary of a death) as a potential catalyst for revenge, framing the mystery around the spiritual significance of honoring the deceased.

Jewish Perspectives on Justice: His protagonists are often Jewish detectives who apply their understanding of Jewish history and community dynamics—such as the legacy of **Murder, Inc.** in Brooklyn—to interpret modern crimes.

Historical and Cultural Identity: His books often feature “Jewish G.I.s” or characters navigating postwar Germany, using the backdrop of the Holocaust and Jewish displacement to heighten the tension of the mystery. [Google/AI]

Weinstein, Raymond M., (**Soldiers’ Field: A Novel of Postwar Germany** [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2012] 978-1480025882

Weinstein, Raymond M., (**The Anniversary: A Jewish Murder Mystery** [pb, independently published, 2019] 978-1070854410

Weinstein, Raymond M., (**The Hebrew Calendar Murder** [pb, independently published, 2020] 979-8685975812

Weinstein, Raymond M., (**Munich 1960 Remembered**: Memoir of a Jewish G.I. in Postwar Germany [pb, independently published, 2021] 979-8736445998

.... And, lest we take all this too seriously, check the following entry:

Sol Weinstein (1928–2012, born in Trenton, NJ) – [- left New York University before graduating and began his career as a reporter for the *Trentonian*. He soon established himself as a comedy writer, producing material for leading entertainers including Alan King, Joe E. Lewis, Bob Hope, and Dean Martin. He also contributed to *MAD* magazine and wrote the song “The Curtain Falls,” which became Bobby Darin’s signature closing number and later appeared in the film *Beyond the Sea* (2004). In the late 1960s he hosted a nightly radio talk show in Philadelphia before moving into television writing. Famous for creating **Israel Bond**, a satirical Jewish version of James Bond. Operating under the code name **Oy-Oy-7**, Israel Bond is a “Hebrew Secret Agent” who is “licensed not only to kill, but to say prayers over the corpse”. The character first appeared in parodies serialized in *Playboy* magazine during the mid-1960s. During the 1970s Weinstein partnered with Howard Albrecht, writing for popular television series including *The Love Boat*, *The Jeffersons*, *Three’s Company*, *Barney Miller*, *Maude*, and *Chico and the Man*. Examples of Sol Weinstein’s approach to humour may be inferred from some of his other published titles, e.g. *Everything you never wanted to know about sex* [1971], *Jonathan Segal Chicken* [1973], *The Oddfather* [1973], *The Exerciser* [1974] and *Oh, Henry! The Supersecret Adventures of Henry Kissingherr* [2014]. In 2002 Weinstein emigrated to Plimmerton, New Zealand, to be near his son. He died there in 2012 at the age of 84. – ChatGPT]

Weinstein wrote four novels starring Israel Bond, all published between 1965 and 1968:

Loxfinger (1965) – A parody of *Goldfinger*, featuring villain Lazarus Loxfinger and the femme fatale Nu Kee.

Matzohball (1966) – A parody of *Thunderball* involving a KGB plot to restore its reputation.

On the Secret Service of His Majesty, the Queen (1966) – Bond guards a monarch on the Arabic island of Sahd Sakistan.

You Only Live Until You Die (1968) – A parody of *You Only Live Twice* featuring the villain Dr. Ernst Holzknicht.

Key Characteristics of the Parody

Lifestyle: Unlike the luxury-obsessed original, Israel Bond favors generic “Mall labels,” such as *Lazy Possum hush puppies*.

Cover Identity: He often poses as a salesman for Mother Margolies’ *Old World Chicken Soup*.

Humor Style: The books are known for relentless puns, Jewish folklore, and a rapid-fire comedic pace.

The entire series was later collected in **The Israel Bond Omnibus**. See also the Sherlock Holmes parodies of **Robert L. Fish** in this Bibliography. [Google/AI]

Weinstein, Sol [*Israel Bond #1*], (**Loxfinger** [pb, About Comics, 2011]) 978-1936404100 [pb, Pocket Books, 1965] B002B22NO6

Weinstein, Sol [*Israel Bond #2*], (**Matzohball** [pb, About Comics, 2011] 978-1936404117 [hc, Pocket Books, 1966] B000SGPUKG

Weinstein, Sol [*Israel Bond #3*], (**On the Secret Service of His Majesty, the Queen** [pb, About Comics, 2011]) 978-1936404124 [pb, PB Special, 1966] B000KFQZV8

Weinstein, Sol [*Israel Bond #4*], (**You Only Live Until You Die** [pb, About Comics, 2011]) 978-1936404131 [hc, Trident Press, 1968] B0006BUW06

Weinstein, Sol (**The Israel Bond Omnibus** [pb. About Comics, 2011]) 978-1936404148

Daniel Weizmann (born 1957 in Israel and grew up in Los Angeles) - a Los Angeles-based American author, journalist, and editor best known for his “rock noir” mystery series and his deep roots in the L.A. punk scene. He spent 8 years living in Israel as well, before returning to the US. His **Pacific Coast Highway Mystery Series** (2 volumes so far, more in development) features **Adam Zantz**, a Lyft driver and failed songwriter who uses his obsession with song lyrics to solve crimes. Zantz is described as having a secular Jewish identity, and the series is set largely within the Los Angeles Jewish Community. The dialogue is frequently peppered with Jewish expressions, slang, and a “rich seam of gentle Jewish humor” that is self-deprecating but life-affirming. Weizmann draws inspiration from classic Jewish “schlemiel” characters found in the works of authors like Saul Bellow and Isaac Babel. He is described as having a “soft-boiled” noir style.

In **Cinnamon Girl**, Zantz undertakes to help his Holocaust survivor piano teacher and mentor to clear the name of his son, falsely accused of murder. The narrative is frequently peppered with Yiddishisms (such as *noodnik* and *schmuck*) and features supporting characters like Ephraim “Double Fry” Freiburger, a photographer who wears a Grateful Dead yarmulke and studies Torah on his boat, “The Shechinah”. Adam Zantz continues to embody the “schlemiel”—a classic Jewish literary figure characterized by bad luck and awkwardness, but possessing a strong moral core. The book explores themes of redemption, the importance of family legacy, and a deep respect for elders within a tight-knit Jewish community.

[Google/AI]

Weizmann, Daniel, [*Adam Zantz* #1] (**The Last Songbird** [pb, Melville House, 2023]) 978-1685890308

Weizmann, Daniel, [*Adam Zantz* #2] (**Cinnamon Girl** [pb, Melville House, 2024]) 978-1685891152

Melvyn Westreich (born 1944 in Hampton Court, England and raised in New York City). He became a plastic surgeon and served in the U.S. Army Medical Corps during the Vietnam War. He immigrated to Israel in 1978 where he became a prominent specialist in plastic and reconstructive surgery. Following his retirement, he embarked on a new career as author of Jewish-themed mysteries and romance novels. His 3-volume **Lincoln/Lachler Mystery series** is a collection of “Frum” (Orthodox Jewish) cozy mysteries. The series follows the investigations of an unlikely sleuthing duo: **Shimon (Simon) Lincoln**, a muscular former Detroit police detective turned Yeshiva student, and **Dafna Lachler**, a widowed computer genius. The books are characterized by a blend of serious mystery and Jewish humor, often incorporating Yiddish and exploring the nuances of living within the rules of ultra-Orthodox Judaism while facing mortal danger. The relationship between the two protagonists evolves from professional partners to a burgeoning romance over the course of the trilogy.

Westreich, Melvyn [*Lincoln/Lachler* #1], (**Murder in the Kollel** [pb, Laurel Publishing, 2017] 978-0692883570 [*The series begins with the suspicious death of a rabbi in East Lansing, Michigan, which is staged to look like a suicide by hanging. Simon Lincoln is asked by his head rabbi to investigate the “impossible” locked-door death. He teams up with Dafna, whose late husband was a member of the same study center (Kollel). Together, they uncover anomalies in the case while dodging attempts on their lives.*]

Westreich, Melvyn [*Lincoln/Lachler* #2], (**The Kosher Butcher** [pb, Laurel Publishing, 2020] 978-1734700404 [*In this second installment, Simon (now Dafna’s fiancé) continues to balance his Yeshiva studies with his detective instincts. The story features well-developed red herrings and explores more of the couple’s relationship as they investigate a new murder case.*]

Westreich, Melvyn [*Lincoln/Lachler* #3], (**The Murders of Zion** [pb, Laurel Publishing, 2025] 978-1734700428 [*The third book finds Simon and Dafna on their honeymoon in the Holy Land, which is interrupted by a fatal automobile accident. Believing the crash was no accident, the couple discovers a*

conspiracy involving the Israeli police and potentially the Minister of Defense. They receive cryptic assistance from Rabbi Kalmonowitz and his “hints from the heavens” to solve the mystery and stay alive.] [Google/AI]

Westreich, Melvyn, [**According to Their Deeds: A Frum Romance** [pb, Laurel Publishing, 2022] 978-1734700411 *[It is never going to work. Ayelet Weinberg defends the charedi doctrine of strictly separating women and men, while Steve Lincoln believes in radical feminism. They are thrown together when they attend their grief counseling program at the Detroit Jewish Center. Unexpected things happen ... they always do ... and their ‘oil and water’ relationship, slowly transforms. Steve helps Ayelet overcome her grief and teaches her to utilize her amazing baking skills to start a business. Ayelet helps Steve see the beauty of Torah law. Rabbi Kalmonowitz is back once again giving his insights into death and dying [kind of a downer ... but that is part of life] and assists the evolution of this frum romance. A humorous look into Orthodox Judaism and a heartwarming frum love story.] [Amazon]*

Unlike strictly Haredi-authored fiction, which often follows rigid communal modesty and lifestyle guidelines, Westreich’s work includes romance and dating as central themes. It features female protagonists (Dafna Lachler) in prominent professional and investigative roles, which is avoided in the most conservative Haredi literature. And it uses humor and satire that bridges the gap between secular and religious worlds, making it a “crossover” style of writing. In summary, his work is “Frum-friendly” and celebrates Jewish life, but it is written with a general audience in mind, inviting readers of all backgrounds to enjoy the mystery and cultural nuance. [Google/AI]

Kenneth Wishnia (born 1960, Hanover, N.H.) - B.A. from Brown University (1982) and a Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from the State University of New York at Stony Brook (1996). Professor of English at Suffolk County Community College on Long Island. His work is deeply informed by Jewish history, theology, and the cultural intersection of Jewish identity with the “noir” genre. In his two Jewish Noir anthologies, he argues that the “tragic sensibility” of Jewish history aligns naturally with the grit of noir. He posits that while some faiths promise everything will turn out well if you follow the right path, in Judaism (citing Job), you can do everything right and still suffer—which he defines as the essence of “noir”. These anthologies tackle resurgent anti-Semitism, the long-term psychological effects of the Holocaust, tensions within ultra-Orthodox communities, and the contradictions of assimilation. **The Fifth Servant** (2010) and its follow-up novella, **Burning Twilight** (2024), are set in 16th-century Prague. They feature a Jewish sexton, **Benyamin Ben-Akiva**, solving a murder to save his community from blood libel accusations. His 2024 novel, **From Sun to Sun**, parallels a modern investigation with a reimagining of the biblical Book of Ruth. While his main mystery series features an Ecuadorian-American protagonist, Wishnia infuses the narrative with broader themes of Jewish-influenced social justice, ethnic identity, and the “vulnerability” of marginalized groups in New York City. [Google/AI]

Wishnia, Kenneth, (**The Fifth Servant: A Gripping Historical Thriller of Murder and Intrigue in Prague Under the Inquisition** [hc, William Morrow, 2010] 978-0061725371 [pb, Wm. Morrow Paperbacks, 2011] 978-0061725388 *[Set in 1592 Prague, this historical crime thriller follows Benyamin Ben-Akiva, a young Talmudic scholar who serves as the newly appointed shammas (caretaker). He is pressed into service as an investigator after a Christian girl is found murdered inside the Jewish ghetto, sparking a dangerous “blood libel” accusation. Benyamin works directly for Rabbi Judah Loew—the towering historical figure credited in Jewish folklore with creating the Golem of Prague. Wishnia presents a grounded, speculative origin for the myth. Rather than treating the golem purely as a supernatural creature made of animated clay, the book explores how the legend of a monstrous, defensive protector was birthed out of the very real, desperate political and physical maneuvers used by Rabbi Loew and his assistants to protect the community from an impending massacre.] [Google/AI]*

Wishnia, Kenneth, (**Burning Twilight: A Novella** [Kindle format only, 2013] 978-0062321138 *[In this sequel to The Fifth Servant, Wishnia continues this historical storyline and its connection to Rabbi Loew - Jewish Book Council]*

Wishnia, Kenneth [ed], (**Jewish Noir: Contemporary Tales of Crime and Other Dark Deeds** [pb, PM Press, 2015]) 978-1629631110

Wishnia, Kenneth & Chantelle Aimée Osman [eds], (**Jewish Noir II: Tales of Crime and Other Dark Deeds** [with foreword by Lawrence Block, pb, PM Press, 2022]) 978-1629638225

Wishnia, Kenneth, (**From Sun to Sun** [pb, PM Press, 2024]) 979-8887440354

Marvin J. Wolf (born 1941, Chicago) - a prolific American author; photojournalist, and former U.S. Army officer. His protagonist, **Rabbi Ben Maimon**, is a “Jewish paladin” who combines spiritual leadership with investigative grit. He is a master of the Torah and Talmud but also holds a degree from MIT and a black belt in Taekwondo, using “Talmudic logic” and pilpul (intricate dialectic reasoning) to solve crimes. Wolf explores diverse Jewish subcultures, including the “superstitious and almost medieval society” of Syrian Jewish immigrants in Brooklyn and the daily life of Ashkenazi households. [Google/AI]

Wolf, Marvin J., (**The Tattooed Rabbi: A Rabbi Ben Mystery** [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2012]) 978-1470058692 [*This was subsequently updated and renamed, “For Whom the Shofar Blows”*]

Wolf, Marvin J., [*Rabbi Ben #1*] (**For Whom the Shofar Blows** [pb, Rambam Press, 2013]) 978-0989960007

Wolf, Marvin J., [*Rabbi Ben #2*] (**A Scribe Dies In Brooklyn** [pb, Rambam Press, 2017]) 978-0989960021

Wolf, Marvin J., [*Rabbi Ben #3*] (**A Tale of Two Rabbis** [pb, CreateSpace, 2017]) 978-1974306008

Wolf, Marvin J., [*Rabbi Ben #4*] (**Bride of Finkelstein** [pb, independently published, 2020]) 979-8608796326

James Yaffe (1927–2017, born in Chicago) was a prominent American novelist, playwright, and screenwriter, best known for his mystery fiction and his exploration of American Jewish life. He was a professor of English at Colorado College from 1968 until his retirement in 2002.

The “Mom” Series: His most famous mystery series features “**Mom**,” a Jewish mother who solves crimes from her kitchen by applying her “bone-deep knowledge of human nature” to the cases brought home by her NYPD detective son, David. The central character, Mom, is a “wise, tough, shrewd Jewish New Yorker”. Yaffe initially utilized the humorous stereotype of the Jewish mother; later evolving the character into a deeper, nuanced portrait as the series progressed. Stories typically revolve around Dave, a New York policeman, and his wife Shirley visiting Mom every Friday night for dinner. These visits are the catalyst for the mysteries, as Mom provides insight into Dave’s cases over the meal. Yaffe incorporates details of Jewish life, such as Sabbath candle lighting. Some novels, such as **Mom Meets Her Maker**, explore tensions between Jewish and Christian communities, specifically involving an out-of-town Jewish student and a local minister. Beyond humour, Yaffe used his mysteries to explore the psychology of Jewish immigrants and the evolution of Jewish social status in the post-WWII United States. [Google/AI]

Yaffe, James, [*Dave & Mom # 1*] (**A Nice Murder for Mom** [hc, St. Martin’s Press, 1988]) 978-0312022600 [pb, Worldwide Library, 1990] 978-0373260447

Yaffe, James, [*Dave & Mom # 2*] (**Mom Meets her Maker**) [hc, St. Martin’s Press, 1990] 978-0312038939 [pb, Worldwide Library, 1991] 978-0373260676

Yaffe, James, [*Dave & Mom # 3*] (**Mom Doth Murder Sleep** [hc, St. Martin’s Press, 1991] 978-0312058982 [pb, Worldwide Library, 1992] 978-0373260980

Yaffe, James, [*Dave & Mom* # 4] (**Mom Among the Liars**) [hc, St. Martin's Press, 1992] 978-0312082642 [pb, Worldwide Library, 1994] 978-0373261420

Yaffe, James, (**My Mother, The Detective: The Complete "Mom" Short Stories** [pb, Crippen & Landru Publishers, 1997]) 978-1885941114 [enlarged edition, pb, Crippen & Landru, 2016] 978-1936363209

Batya Swift Yasgur (est. birth 1960) - is an active medical journalist, author, and licensed social worker, residing in Teaneck, New Jersey. Her 4-volume **Bina Gold Mystery** series is a collection of detective fiction for younger readers published between 1996 and 2001. The stories focus on the adventures of Bina Gold and are set within the context of the Orthodox Jewish community. She has also contributed to **Mystery Midrash: An Anthology of Jewish Mystery & Detective Fiction** (see Rabbi Laurence Raphael in this Bibliography) and received awards for other publications in the mystery genre.

Yasgur, Batya Swift, [Bina Gold #1] (**The Search for the Real Megan** [1996, Aura Press] B01A1MM7WK

Yasgur, Batya Swift, [Bina Gold #2] (**The Secret of the Grandfather Clock** [pb. Aura Press, 1998]) 978-0911643282

Yasgur, Batya Swift, [Bina Gold #3] (**The Clue of the Gold Earring** [Aura Press, 2001]) 978-0911643329

Yasgur, Batya Swift, [Bina Gold #4] (**The Trail of the Stolen Gold** [Aura Press, 2001]) 978-0911643275

Elizabeth Zelvin (born 1944 in New York City) – a New York City psychotherapist, poet and author of several book series. She is known for blending historical adventure, detective fiction, and urban fantasy genres with deeply ingrained Jewish themes. She uses these subgenres to explore different facets of the Jewish experience, from the trauma of the Inquisition to the humor of modern cultural identity.

1. Historical "Jewish Adventure" Mysteries

Zelvin's **Mendoza Family Saga** redefines the mystery genre by placing Jewish characters at the center of world-changing historical events:

The Inquisitional Mystery: In *Voyage of Strangers*, the "mystery" isn't just a crime, but the hidden identity of crypto-Jews (Marranos) sailing with Columbus. The suspense stems from the constant threat of the Spanish Inquisition.

Sephardic Resilience: Her character **Rachel Mendoza** acts as a sleuth within the 16th-century Ottoman Sultan's harem. Zelvin uses this setting to highlight how Jewish resilience and "cultural relativism" allowed the diaspora to survive and thrive through trade and diplomacy.

2. Contemporary "Jewish Noir"

Zelvin participates in the "Jewish Noir" movement, which uses crime fiction to address darker cultural issues:

Antisemitism as a Plot Driver: In her short story "The Cost of Something Priceless" (found in *Jewish Noir II*: see Kevin Wishnia in this Bibliography), she links a stolen family heirloom to a modern marriage where hidden antisemitism and greed collide.

Social Justice: Her work in this genre often focuses on *Legacies* and *A Shandeh Far Di Goyim* (shame before the world), exploring how internal community ethics intersect with external crime.

3. Subverting Tropes in Urban Fantasy

Even in her fantasy mysteries, Zelvin keeps Jewish themes at the forefront:

The “Jewish Shifter”: *In her Emerald Love series, she features Amy Greenstein, a “nice Jewish shapeshifter.”*

Cultural Satire: *She uses the genre to poke fun at traditional expectations, such as in the story “Shifting is for the Goyim,” where the protagonist must navigate a family Passover Seder while hiding her supernatural nature.*

4. Supporting Characters in the Bruce Kohler Series

While the Bruce Kohler Mysteries focus primarily on alcoholism and recovery, Zelvin infuses the series with culturally Jewish characters like Barbara, reflecting the diverse fabric of contemporary New York City where her mysteries are set. [Google/AI]

Zelvin, Elizabeth, [Mendoza Family Saga #1] (**Voyage of Strangers** [pb, Lake Union Publishing, 2014] 978-1477825167

Zelvin, Elizabeth, [Mendoza Family Saga #2] (**Journey of Strangers** [pb, Outsider Books, 2015] 978-0692591499

Zelvin, Elizabeth, [Mendoza Family Saga #3] (**Rachel in the Harem** [Outsider Books, 2024 – Amazon shows only a Kindle edition] B0DBJF864R [Google/AI]

A.J. Zerries *is the pen name for the husband-and-wife writing team of Al (1942–2009) and Jean (est. birth 1944 in Newark, NJ) Zerries. The duo worked on the creative side of the advertising industry for 20 years before becoming novelists. Al Zerries was also an award-winning portrait artist. They are best known for their international thrillers, including **Stealing from the Dead** (2012) and **The Lost Van Gogh**.*

*The plot of **Stealing from the Dead** revolves around a present-day conspiracy to steal millions of dollars in restitution funds intended for Holocaust survivors from Swiss bank accounts that had initially denied their existence decades ago. The novel is heavily focused on the historical and contemporary fallout of financial crimes against Jewish victims of the Holocaust. NYPD Detective **Greta Strasser** investigates the suspicious death of an elderly Jewish woman, a survivor, which leads her to uncover the vast international plot and a network of murders targeting people on a claims resolution list. The book directly addresses the real-world issue of unclaimed Jewish assets in Swiss banks and weaves it into a modern-day terrorist conspiracy, making the Holocaust and its aftermath a foundational element of the narrative.*

*Key themes of **The Lost Van Gogh** Jewish cultural property and the history of art theft during World War II. The mystery is triggered by the reappearance of a long-lost Vincent van Gogh painting, which was stolen from a Jewish family in Paris in 1944 by a German SS officer. The main heir to the painting is Rachel Meredith, an NYU professor and the grandchild of the original Jewish owners. The Israeli intelligence agency, Mossad, also becomes involved in the investigation, hunting for the Nazi officer who may still be alive. [Google/AI]*

Zerries, A. J., (**The Lost Van Gogh** [hc, Forge Books, 2006] 978-0765312501

Zerries, A.J., (**Stealing from the Dead** [hc, Forge Books, 2012]) 978-0765327178 [pb, Forge Books, 2013] 978-0765365743

U.S. Jewish Criminals, Detectives, Spies, et al – Non-Fiction: History, Biography, Analysis

Note: This Bibliography includes (alphabetically by author, below) synopses of the following key texts, in alphabetical order:

Michael Alexander, **Jazz Age Jews**

Herbert Asbury, **The Gangs of New York**

Michael Benson, **Gangsters vs. Nazis**

Stephen Birmingham, **The Rest of Us**

Rich Cohen, **Tough Jews**

Albert Fried, **The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Gangster in America**

Jenna Weissman Joselit, **Our Gang**

Robert Rockaway, **But He Was Good To His Mother**

Steven J. Ross, **(Hitler in Los Angeles: How Jews Foiled Nazi Plots Against Hollywood and America)**

Laurence Roth, **Inspecting Jews**

Rachel Rubin, **Jewish Gangsters of Modern Literature**

Dan Slater, **The Incorruptibles**

Alex Tepperman, **Vicious Bastards and Complete Bores**

While many of the above works refer to an array of Jewish gangsters, here for convenience are more specific works about some of the better-known ones – **Arnold Rothstein, Lepke Buchalter, Meyer Lansky, Bugsy Siegel, Dutch Schultz, Mickey Cohen and the Chicago Jewish crime figures:**

Arnold Rothstein (1882-1928):

Asinof, Eliot, (**Eight Men Out: The Black Sox and the 1919 World Series** [hc, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1961]) 978-0030206412 [pb, Holt Paperbacks, 2000] 978-0805065374 [*does not prove conclusively that Arnold Rothstein was the absolute mastermind behind the 1919 Black Sox scandal. Instead, Asinof portrays Rothstein as a cautious, calculated financier who initially rejected the fix before selectively bankrolling pieces of it through intermediaries like Abe Attell and Nat Evans. While the book heavily implicates Rothstein as a vital cog in the machine, Asinof's narrative and modern historical consensus frame the reality of his involvement differently.*

When writing the book in the early 1960s, Asinof did not have access to crucial primary source documents. He relied heavily on contemporary newspaper accounts and interviews with surviving figures. Much of the narrative linking Rothstein to the center of the plot relies on accounts by Abe Attell, a former boxing champion and Rothstein henchman. Attell openly used Rothstein's name to convince the players that the fix had massive financial backing. However, sports historians point out that Attell's claims were highly self-serving and designed to deflect blame, making it unclear if Rothstein orchestrated the plot or if Attell was freelancing.

Rothstein was famously known as "The Big Bankroll" because he knew how to manage risks. Asinof illustrates that Rothstein deliberately insulated himself from the actual baseball players. He rejected the initial pitch from player Chick Gandil and gambler Sport Sullivan, only choosing to gamble heavily on the outcome once he realized the fix was moving forward with or without him. Subsequent research by baseball historians, such as the Society for American Baseball Research (SABR), indicates that the

1919 fix was actually a chaotic, uncoordinated mess rather than a single, top-down operation run by one mob kingpin. Multiple independent gambling syndicates from Boston, Chicago, Des Moines, and New York were attempting to buy off different players at the same time, often double-crossing each other.

Ultimately, Asinof's work functions more like a meticulously reconstructed true-crime drama than a definitive legal or historical proof. It confirms that Rothstein profited immensely from the fix and provided the capital that made it look legitimate to the players, but it leaves open the question of whether he truly pulled all the strings. – Google/AI]

Clarke, Donald Henderson, (**In the Reign of Rothstein** [pb, Scholarly Publishing Office, University of Michigan Library, 2005]) 978-1425532857 [*Reprint of the original 1929 Vanguard Press edition - An early, near-contemporary account of Arnold Rothstein, useful as a primary-source-adjacent text rather than retrospective history.*]

Katcher, Leo, (**The Big Bankroll: The Life and Times of Arnold Rothstein** [Arlington House, 1972] 978-0870001659 [pb, 1994] 978-0306805653 [pb, Hassell Street Press, 2021] 978-1014175182 [[See related film](#)]

Pietrusza, David, (**Rothstein: The Life, Times, and Murder of the Criminal Genius Who Fixed the 1919 World Series**) [hc, Carroll & Graf, 2003] 978-0786712502 [pb, Basic Books, 2004] 978-0786714537 [pb, Basic, 2011]) 978-0465029389

Tosches, Nick, (**King of the Jews: The Greatest Mob Story Never Told – A Lively Biography of the Gangster Who Inspired The Great Gatsby**) [hc, HarperCollins, 2005] 978-0641703065 [pb, Ecco, 2006] 978-0060936006 [pb, Penguin, 2020] 978-0241990681 [*re: Arnold Rothstein*]

Film: See **King of the Roaring '20s: The Story of Arnold Rothstein (1961)**; and

Boardwalk Empire (HBO, 2010–2014) – details in the companion Filmography.

Lepke Buchalter (1897-1944) and Murder, Inc.:

Block, Alan A. (1976), **Lepke, Kid Twist, and the Combination: Organized Crime in New York City, 1930–1944** (Ph.D. dissertation, UCLA, 1975)

Elmaleh, Edmund, (**The Canary Sang but Couldn't Fly: The Fatal Fall of Abe Reles, the Mobster Who Shattered Murder, Inc.'s Code of Silence** [hc, Union Square Press, 2009] 978-1402761133 [*Centers specifically on Abe Reles, the star informant whose 12 days of confessions blew the lid off Murder, Inc. and provided the crucial evidence needed to indict Lepke Buchalter before Reles's mysterious, fatal plunge from a hotel window.*]

Kavieff, Paul R., (**The Life and Times of Lepke Buchalter: America's Most Ruthless Labor Racketeer** [hc, Barricade Books, 2006] 978-1569802915 [pb, Barricade Books, 2015] 978-1569805176

Turkus, Burton B. & Sid Feder, (**Murder, Inc. The Inside Story of The Syndicate Killing Machine** [revised edition of 1951 original, Tenacity Media Books]) [pb, 2012] 978-0615643021 [hc, 2015] 978-0996285537 [*See further details on this book in U.S. Jewish Prosecutors section of this chapter, below. See also description of the 1960 movie, Murder, Inc., based on the book, in the companion Filmography*]

Film: **Lepke (1975)** – details in companion Filmography

Meyer Lansky (1902-1983):

Auerbach, Patrick, (**Mafia Lucky Luciano Meyer Lansky & Bugsy Siegel: The Life And Crimes Of Notorious Gangsters Charles Lucky Luciano Meyer Lansky & Benjamin Bugsy Siegel** [pb, independently published, 2023]) 979-8385714803

Eisenberg, Dennis, Dan, Uri & Eli Landau (**Meyer Lansky: Mogul of the Mob** [hc, Paddington Press, 1979]) 978-0448222066 [pb] 978-0552115872 [[See related film](#)]

Hayden, Blake, (**Meyer Lansky Biography: The Inside Story of the Mobster Who Controlled the World's Gambling Empire** [pb, independently published, 2023]) 979-8864194690

Lacey, Robert, (**Little Man: Meyer Lansky and the Gangster Life** [hc, Little, Brown, 1991]) 978-0316511681 [pb, 1992] 978-0099971306

Messick, Hank, (**Lansky**) [hc, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1971]) 978-0425021088 [pb] 978-0425023259

Montague, Art, (**Meyer Lansky: The Shadowy Exploits Of New York's Master Manipulator** [pb, Altitude Publishing, 2005]) 978-1552651001

See also: The entry on Zachary Lazar in the U.S. crime fiction bibliography; his novel, **I Pity the Poor Immigrant**; and the following as well:

Lazar, Zachary,, "Meyer Lansky's Ghost Haunts My Visit to Miami Beach," *Tablet*, April 14, 2014 . See also Adam Kirsch's review, "I Dream of Lansky: The Dead Jewish Mob King Rules Zachary Lazar's Law-Bending Novel," *Tablet*, April 14, 2014]

See also listings of the following **films** about Lansky in the companion Filmography, including the name of the actor playing Lansky in each one:

The Godfather Part II (1974 – Hyman Roth)

Lansky (1999 - Richard Dreyfuss)

The Lost City (2005 - Dustin Hoffman)

Lansky (2021 - Harvey Keitel)

Lansky: The Zionist Gangster (2025 – documentary: no leading actors)

Note: the different actors portraying Lansky in the above films were all Jews. On the other hand, in the discussion of Bernie Madoff, below in this bibliography, the actors portraying the adult Bernie are mostly *non*-Jewish. I do not attribute any significance to this fact. Lansky was portrayed by numerous non-Jewish actors (e.g. Ben Kingsley) in different films, and Siegel as well (e.g. Warren Beatty). Harvey Keitel portrayed Lansky and Mickey Cohen but also several non-Jewish gangsters. Dustin Hoffman played Dutch Schultz and Lansky, but several non-Jewish gangsters as well. Richard Dreyfuss, another Jewish actor, has played both Lansky and Madoff and Duddy Kravitz, too, but also Baby Face Nelson. Certain actors can be typecast in certain roles, e.g. as criminals, but not on any obvious ethnic basis.

Bugsy Siegel (1906-1947):

Auerbach, Patrick, (**Mafia Lucky Luciano Meyer Lansky & Bugsy Siegel: The Life And Crimes Of Notorious Gangsters Charles Lucky Luciano Meyer Lansky & Benjamin Bugsy Siegel** [pb, independently published, 2023]) 979-8385714803

Carpozi, George, (**Bugsy: The Bloodthirsty, Lusty Life of Benjamin Bugsy Siegel** [pb, Spi Books, 1992 – earlier editions in 1973 and 1976]) 978-1561711482 [*This is a much more popular/sensational biography than either Gragg or Jennings. It is useful for seeing the development of the Siegel legend but should not be relied upon as the principal historical source. A contemporary Nevada bibliography describes it as a slimmer 1972 biography reissued in connection with the Warren Beatty film Bugsy.*]

Gragg, Larry D., (**Benjamin “Bugsy” Siegel: The Gangster, the Flamingo, and the Making of Modern Las Vegas** [Praeger, 2015] 978-1440801853 [*substantially better documented than other popular biographies, based on more than 2,400 pages of FBI records, New York municipal records, Kefauver Committee material, contemporary newspapers, and recollections from Siegel's eldest daughter. It covers Siegel's New York gang career, California years, race-wire operations, Flamingo investment, murder, and subsequent mythology. Gragg is particularly useful for correcting the familiar claim that Siegel single-handedly “invented” modern Las Vegas.*]

Hall, Aaron, (**A Gangsters Guide: Bugsy Siegel** [pb, independently published, 2025]) 979-8314330357

Jennings, Dean, (**We Only Kill Each Other: The true story of The Life and Bad Times of Bugsy Siegel** [hc, John Long, 1968] 978-0090891306 [pb, Fawcett Crest 1968] 978-0232011845 [pb, Pocket, 1992] 978-0671770341 [[See related film](#)] [*- the classic full-length Siegel biography and remains important despite its age. Jennings drew on government sources, files and, especially valuable today, interviews with people who actually knew Siegel and his milieu, including George Raft, Mickey Cohen and Chick Hill. The weakness is that it predates much later archival research and sometimes reproduces the gangster mythology that Gragg subsequently examines more critically.*]

Shnayerson, Michael, (**Bugsy Siegel: The Dark Side of the American Dream** [hc, Yale UP, 2021]) 978-0300226195

Film: See **Bugsy (1991)** listing in companion Filmography.

Dutch Schultz (Arthur Simon Flegenheimer – 1901-1935):

Geik, Alan, (**Uncle Charlie Killed Dutch Schultz: The Jewish Mob: A Family Affair** [pb, Sonador Publishing, 2022]) 978-0578877358

Sann, Paul, (**Kill The Dutchman!: The Story of Dutch Schultz** [hc, Arlington House, 1971] B00YDKHZY2 [pb, Da Capo Press, 1991] 978-0306804526 [pb, Birdye's Books, 2015] 978-0988430105 [*This is the essential full-length biography. Sann was a veteran New York newspaperman and editor who interviewed people who had known Schultz. The book excellent for its detailed treatment; later biographies have borrowed heavily from it.*]

Hendley, Nate. (**Dutch Schultz: The Brazen Beer Baron of New York.** [pb, Canmore, Alberta: Altitude Publishing Canada, 2005]) 978-1552651049 [*A much shorter and more recent biography, clearly written and useful as an introduction. It contains a bibliography, but it does not supersede Sann in depth or primary-source value. There is also a later edition: pb, Five Rivers Chapmanry, 2011*] 978-0986642388.

Tomlinson, Gerald, (**Murdered in Jersey.** [pb, Rutgers University Press, 1994]) 978-0813520780 [*Not devoted solely to Schultz, but useful for the New Jersey murder, especially the 1935 Newark shooting and its place among notable New Jersey homicide cases*]

Grey, Harry, (**Portrait of a Mobster** [pb, New American Library, 1958]) B000VZEY24 [*An older treatment of Schultz, useful mainly as a period popular account rather than as a modern scholarly biography. See synopsis in the Harry Grey entry in the companion bibliography on American Jewish crime fiction, above, and the entry on the 1961 movie by the same name in the companion Filmography*]

Doctorow, E.L., (**Billy Bathgate** [hc, Random House, 2007] 978-0394575131 [pb, Plume, 1998] 978-0452280021 [*See comments on this fictional treatment of Schultz under the Doctorow entry in the companion bibliography on American Jewish crime fiction, above, as well as the entry on the 1991 movie version in the Filmography*]

Jewish background on Schultz: *He was the son of German-Jewish immigrants Herman and Emma Flegenheimer. His relationship to his Jewish identity was complicated. Near death he requested a Catholic priest and received Catholic last rites; nevertheless, at his Orthodox Jewish mother's request, his body was reportedly draped in a tallit before burial.* - ChatGPT

Mickey Cohen (1913-1976):

Cohen, Mickey, (**In My Own Words: As Told to John Peer Nugent** [hc, Prentice-Hall, 1975]) 978-0135808528

Lewis, Brad, (**Hollywood's Celebrity Gangster: The Incredible Life and Times of Mickey Cohen** [pb, BookSurge Publishing, 2009]) 978-1439243657 [hc, 2021] 979-8759005582

Stevens, Steve & Craig Lockwood, (**King of the Sunset Strip: Hangin' with Mickey Cohen and the Hollywood Mob** [hc, Cumberland House, 2006]) 978-1581825077

Tereba, Tere, (**Mickey Cohen: The Life and Crimes of L.A.'s Notorious Mobster** [hc, 2012, ECW Press] 978-1770410008 [pb] 978-1770410633

Film: See **Gangster Squad (2013)** in companion Filmography.

Chicago Jewish Crime Figures:

Garel-Frantzen, Alex, (**Gangsters and Organized Crime in Jewish Chicago** [hc, History Press, 2013] 978-1540222282 [pb] 978-1626191938

Haller, Mark H., "**Organized Crime in Urban Society: Chicago in the Twentieth Century**," Journal of Social History 5 (1971–1972), 210-234.

Kraus, Joe, "**The Jewish Gangster: A Conversation across Generations**," The American Scholar 64, no. 1 (1995) [*The analysis frames Chicago's Jewish organized crime as a temporary, single-generation phenomenon that served as an aggressive, temporary path toward assimilation. The work highlights the transition from independent neighborhood bosses, exemplified by Benjamin "Zuckie the Bookie" Zuckerman, to the corporate structure of the Chicago Outfit under figures like Lenny Patrick. Key figures discussed include Zuckerman, Patrick, the Miller Brothers, Jack "Greasy Thumb" Guzik, and Jules Portuguese.* – Google/AI]

Kraus, Joe, (**The Kosher Capones: A History of Chicago's Jewish Gangsters** [hc, Northern Illinois UP, 2019]) 978-1501747311

Petepiece, Andy and Patti, (**Sidney Korshak: The Chicago Outfit's Fixer** [pb, Tellwell Talent, 2025]) 978-1779627841

Russo, Gus, (**Supermob: How Sidney Korshak and His Criminal Associates Became America's Hidden Power Brokers** [hc, Bloomsbury USA, 2006] 978-1582343891 [pb, Bloomsbury USA, 2007] 978-1596912113 [[See related film](#)] *extensively covers Jewish figures involved in organized crime and corporate-political fixing, tracing their origins directly back to Chicago's Jewish West Side. The book details how these white-collar power brokers acted as the essential bridge between the illicit street muscle of the Italian-dominated **Chicago Outfit** and the corporate "upperworld" of Hollywood, Las Vegas, and Washington, D.C. Russo defines the "Supermob" as a tight-knit cadre of second-generation, Eastern European Jewish immigrant heritage lawyers, businessmen, and fixers. He argues that they ultimately profited more from their white-collar criminal careers than their traditional Mafia counterparts. The book anchors itself around Chicago-born attorney **Sidney Korshak**, whom the FBI once labeled the most powerful lawyer in the world. Korshak grew up on Chicago's West Side, graduated from DePaul University, and began his career representing Chicago Outfit labor racketeers before moving to Los Angeles to rule over Hollywood labor unions*

Prominent Figures Covered: Russo details the lives, interconnected networks, and questionable deals of several major Jewish figures associated with this power structure, including:

John Jacob Factor: A Chicago-linked gangster, swindler, and brother of cosmetics mogul Max Factor.

Lew Wasserman & Jules Stein: The massive power brokers behind MCA (Music Corporation of America), who utilized Korshak's Outfit-backed leverage to build their entertainment monopoly.

Joe Glaser: The jazz booking agent and manager (notably for Louis Armstrong) who had deep-rooted ties to Chicago mobsters. [Google/AI]

Film: See **Sidney Korshak, Hollywood's Fabled Fixer (2014)** in companion Filmography.

General Reference: Non-fiction on Jews and Crime in the U.S.

Abadinsky, Howard, (**Organized Crime** [11th edition, Cengage Learning] [hc., 2016] 978-1305633711 [pb, 2020] 978-0357670880 [See the section in this book on Jewish organized crime in NY.]

Abramovsky, Abraham & Jonathan I. Edelstein, "The Drug War and the American Jewish Community: 1880 to 2002 and Beyond," *Journal of Gender, Race & Justice* 6 (2002)

Adin, Mariah, "The Supreme Adventure: Brooklyn's Thrill-Kill Gang and Mid Century Juvenile Justice," (PhD diss., State University of New York at Albany, 2013)

Adler, Polly, (**A House Is Not A Home**) [hc, Rinehart & Co., 1953] B08WJQN74W [pb, U. of Massachusetts Press, 2006] 978-1558495593 [[See related film](#)] ["A self-consciously literary work, *A House Is Not a Home* provides an informal social history of immigrant mobility, prostitution, Jewish life in New York, police dishonesty, the "white slavery" scare of the early twentieth century, and political corruption." - Amazon] See also the entry on the 1964 film adaptation of this book, in the companion Filmography.

Alexander, Michael, (Jazz Age Jews [hc, Princeton UP, 2003]) 978-0691086798 [pb] 978-0691116532 [- examines how American Jews in the 1920s negotiated the paradox of rapid social success while continuing to see themselves as outsiders. Michael Alexander argues that, although the children of Eastern European Jewish immigrants had achieved unprecedented economic, political, and cultural acceptance, many consciously identified with marginalized people and causes rather than embracing full assimilation. He contends that this enduring sense of outsiderhood was rooted not simply in anti-Semitism but in a deeply ingrained Jewish historical consciousness shaped by centuries of exile.

To develop this argument, Alexander centers the book on three emblematic figures:

- **Arnold Rothstein**, the legendary gambler and alleged organizer of the 1919 Black Sox scandal, illustrates Jewish attitudes toward wealth, gambling, and respectability. Alexander questions the traditional claim that Rothstein masterminded the World Series fix while exploring why many Jews admired a man widely viewed by the broader public as a criminal.
 - **Felix Frankfurter**, later a U.S. Supreme Court justice, serves as the political case study through his prominent defense of Sacco and Vanzetti. His advocacy reflected what Alexander sees as a broader Jewish inclination to champion outsiders and victims of perceived injustice.
 - **Al Jolson**, whose performance in *The Jazz Singer* helped inaugurate the era of talking pictures, represents the cultural dimension. Alexander examines the complex symbolism of Jolson's use of blackface, arguing that many American Jews identified with African Americans as fellow outsiders while simultaneously seeking acceptance within mainstream society.
- Drawing on Yiddish newspapers, legal records, popular culture, and contemporary commentary, Alexander challenges conventional interpretations that portray Jewish integration as a straightforward march toward assimilation. Instead, he presents the Jazz Age as a period in which American Jews simultaneously entered the mainstream and cultivated an identity based on solidarity with outsiders, a pattern that helped shape later traditions of Jewish liberalism and social activism.

*The book has **significant relevance to the theme of Jews and crime**. Roughly one-third of the volume focuses on **Arnold Rothstein**, Jewish gambling, organized crime, and the public image of Jewish criminality in the 1920s. Alexander is less interested in criminal enterprises themselves than in what Rothstein's celebrity reveals about American Jewish identity and the community's complicated relationship to figures who operated outside respectable society. The work is therefore an important scholarly study for anyone interested in the intersection of **Jewish identity, crime, and American culture** during the Jazz Age. – ChatGPT]*

Amir, Menachem, “**Criminality Among Jews: An Overview**”, *Issues in Criminology*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (SUMMER 1971), pp. 1-39

Applegate, Debby, (**Madam: The Biography of Polly Adler, Icon of the Jazz Age** [hc, Doubleday, 2021]) 978-0385534758 [pb, Anchor, 2022] 978-0307744128

Argersinger, Jo Ann E., (**Making the Amalgamated: gender, ethnicity, and class in the Baltimore clothing industry, 1899–1939**) [hc, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999] 978-0801859892

Arons, Ron (**The Jews of Sing Sing: Gotham Gangsters and Genuvum** [hc, Barricade Books 2008]) 978-1569803332 [pb, 2016] 978-1569801536

Asbury, Herbert, (The Gangs of New York: An Informal History of the Underworld [first published in 1928 by Alfred A. Knopf, hc, Wisehouse Classics, 2023]) 978-9180306096 [pb, Wisehouse Classics, 2023] 978-9180306089 [- charts nearly a century of lawlessness, vice, and political corruption in New York City. Spanning from the Revolutionary War era to the early 20th century, journalist Herbert Asbury maps out the evolution of the city's criminal underbelly before the modern Mafia took over during Prohibition. While chronicling the 19th-century Irish and Nativist factions, the latter portion of the book focuses extensively on the rise of Jewish criminals and street gangs on Manhattan's Lower East Side. As Jewish immigration from Eastern Europe surged toward the turn of the 20th century, the neighborhood's extreme poverty birthed powerful Jewish syndicates that altered the landscape of New York's underworld.

*The most prominent Jewish presence in the book is the Eastman Gang, led by the legendary **Monk Eastman** (born Edward Osterman). Under Eastman's leadership, this primarily Jewish-American gang grew into a massive army of over 1,200 pickpockets, thugs, and thieves. Asbury documents their brutal, bloody turf wars against the Italian-dominated Five Points Gang, led by Paul Kelly. This rivalry culminated in the famous **1903 Rivington Street pitched battle**, which required a massive police intervention to break up. Asbury famously describes Eastman as a scarred, terrifying brawler who oddly loved animals, frequently operating a pet shop front and walking around with a club and several cats.*

*Asbury traces how the disorganized street fighters of the 19th century evolved into sophisticated, modern criminals. He highlights several Jewish figures who dominated the city's vice and extortion rackets before and during Prohibition: “**Dopey**” **Benny Fein**, a Jewish gang leader who pioneered the concept of labor racketeering in New York, hiring out muscle to both labor unions and employers during strikes; **Nathan “Kid Dropper” Kaplan**, a notorious Lower East Side Jewish gangster who led a fierce war for control of labor racketeering against rival Jacob “Little Augie” Orgen; “**Gyp the Blood**” (**Harry Horowitz**), a ruthless Jewish hitman and co-leader of the Lenox Avenue Gang, infamous for his involvement in the 1912 murder of gambler Herman Rosenthal.*

*Asbury wraps up the book's look at the early 20th century by pointing to **Arnold Rothstein**, who transformed Jewish street crime into a multi-million-dollar corporate enterprise. Asbury notes that Rothstein effectively bridged the gap between the rough street gangs of the past and the sophisticated, organized crime syndicates that came to dominate the Prohibition era. [Google/AI]*

Auerbach, Patrick, (**Mafia Lucky Luciano Meyer Lansky & Bugsy Siegel: The Life And Crimes Of Notorious Gangsters Charles Lucky Luciano Meyer Lansky & Benjamin Bugsy Siegel** [pb, independently published, 2023]) 979-8385714803

Bell, Daniel, “**Crime as an American Way of Life,**” *The Antioch Review* 13, no. 2 (1953), and later included in Daniel Bell, **The End of Ideology: On the Exhaustion of Political Ideas in the Fifties**, with “The Resumption of History in the New Century” [pb, second edition, Harvard UP, 2000] 978-0674004269 [*understanding crime as one avenue of adaptation and upward mobility for American immigrant groups, e.g. Jews*]

Benson, Michael, (Gangsters vs. Nazis: How Jewish Mobsters Battled Nazis in WW2 Era America [hc, Citadel Press, 2022]) 978-0806541792 [pb, 2024] 978-0806541808 - *recounts the little-known campaign by Jewish organized crime figures to disrupt and intimidate pro-Nazi organizations in the United States during the late 1930s and early 1940s. Drawing on FBI files, newspaper accounts, memoirs, and previous historical studies, Benson focuses on the efforts of Jewish mob leaders—especially Meyer Lansky—who, at the request of Jewish community leaders and anti-fascist activists, organized teams of toughs to break up rallies, assault Nazi organizers, and undermine groups such as the German American Bund.*

The book traces these activities in cities including New York, Newark, Minneapolis, Chicago, and Los Angeles. It describes how figures such as Bugsy Siegel, Mickey Cohen, and other Jewish gangsters used violence and intimidation to prevent Nazi groups from gaining confidence or public visibility. Benson argues that, while these campaigns did not eliminate American fascism, they disrupted recruitment, demoralized supporters, and demonstrated that Nazi provocations would meet determined resistance.

Beyond the action-oriented narrative, Benson places these events in the broader context of widespread antisemitism in Depression-era America, the rise of fascist sympathies, and the reluctance of many public officials to intervene forcefully against pro-Nazi organizations before the United States entered World War II. He contrasts the willingness of underworld figures to act with the caution of many mainstream Jewish organizations, which generally feared that overt confrontation would provoke further antisemitism.

The book also examines the moral ambiguities involved. Benson does not romanticize the mobsters; he acknowledges that they remained violent criminals engaged in racketeering, gambling, and other illegal enterprises. Instead, he argues that their anti-Nazi activities represent an unusual historical episode in which criminal organizations temporarily served a cause widely regarded as morally justified.

The book has been well received as an engaging and thoroughly researched work of popular history. It is generally regarded as factually reliable, drawing heavily on earlier scholarship by historians such as Robert A. Rockaway and on contemporary documentation. However, it is not an academic monograph and sometimes dramatizes events for narrative effect. For scholarly purposes, it is best read alongside Rockaway’s work—particularly But He Was Good to His Mother and his Tablet essay “Gangsters vs. Nazis”—which provide more detailed historical analysis and documentation. See their details in this bibliography. – ChatGPT]

Wendy H. Bergoffen, “**Guardians, millionaires, and fearless fighters: transforming Jewish gangsters into a usable past,**” *Shofar* 25, no. 3 (2007): 91

Berman, Susan, (**Easy Street: The Story of a Mob Family**) [hc, Dial Press, 1981] 978-0385271851 [pb, Bantam Books, 1983] 978-0553229356 [See **Cathy Scott** book on Susan Berman, below in this Bibliography]

Birmingham, Stephen, (*The Rest of Us: The Rise of America's Eastern European Jews* [hc, Little, Brown & Co., 1984]) 978-0316096478 [pb, Syracuse UP, 1999] 978-0815606147 [- traces the experience of the nearly two million Jews who immigrated from the Russian Empire and Eastern Europe between roughly 1881 and 1915. Unlike his earlier books on Sephardic (*The Grandees*) and German-Jewish (*Our Crowd*) elites, this volume focuses on the poorer, Yiddish-speaking immigrants who transformed American Jewish life and, in many ways, American society itself.

Rather than presenting a conventional social history, Birmingham tells the story through vivid biographical sketches of representative figures. He begins with the immigrants' arrival in New York's Lower East Side, describing the overcrowded tenements, sweatshops, labor struggles, political radicalism, and intense drive for education and economic advancement. He explores the tensions between these newcomers and the earlier, more assimilated German-Jewish establishment, which often viewed the Eastern Europeans as uncultured and overly traditional.

*As the narrative progresses, Birmingham follows the remarkable upward mobility of the immigrant generation and their children. His subjects include entrepreneurs, entertainers, politicians, labor leaders, financiers, and cultural figures such as Irving Berlin, Samuel Goldwyn, Helena Rubinstein, David Sarnoff, and Samuel Bronfman. He also includes less respectable but historically significant personalities—notably **Meyer Lansky and Bugsy Siegel**—to illustrate the breadth of Jewish participation in American life, including organized crime. Rather than treating gangsters as representative, Birmingham presents them as one strand within the broader story of immigrant adaptation and ambition.*

The book concludes by examining the postwar generation, showing how Eastern European Jews moved from urban immigrant neighborhoods into the American middle and upper classes while maintaining varying degrees of Jewish identity. Birmingham argues that within only a few generations, these once-impoorished immigrants reshaped American commerce, entertainment, politics, and culture, completing one of the most successful immigrant stories in U.S. history.

*Although the book is primarily a broad social history rather than a study of crime, it contains useful material on Jewish organized crime through its discussions of **Meyer Lansky and Bugsy Siegel**. Birmingham treats them as part of the spectrum of Eastern European Jewish immigrant experience, alongside far more numerous examples of achievement in legitimate business, culture, and public life. – ChatGPT]*

Block, Alan A., “**Aw! Your mother's in the mafia: Women criminals in progressive New York,**” *Contemporary Crises* 1 (1977)

Block, Alan A., “**The snowman cometh: Coke in progressive New York,**” *Criminology* 17 no. 1 (1979)

Block, Alan A., (***East Side, West Side: Organizing Crime in New York, 1930–1950***), [hc, University College, 1980] 978-0901426994 [pb, Routledge, 1983] 978-0878559312 [hc, Routledge, 2017] 978-1138522558

Borovitz, Mark & Alan Eisenstock, (***The Holy Thief: A Con Man's Journey from Darkness to Light – An Uplifting Memoir: From Mobster to Rabbi*** [hc, William Morrow, 2004] 978-0060563790 [pb, William Morrow, 2005] 978-0060563806 [*The memoir of a remarkable man, a true-life gangster story, a passionate love story, and a case study in redemption. Mark Borovitz proved that you can change your life -- profoundly. He is now the rabbi at Beit T'Shuvah in Los Angeles, the House of Return, a rehabilitation facility for addicts of all kinds. – Amazon]*

Brett, Mia, “**The Murdered Jewess: Jewish Immigration and the Problem of Citizenship in the Courtroom in Late 19th-Century New York,**” (PhD diss., Stony Brook University, State University of New York, 2020)

Cohan, Hillary. (***Growing Up Jewish In The Mob***) [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2013] 9781491055229

Cohen, Rich, (*Tough Jews: Fathers, Sons, and Gangster Dreams* [pb, Vintage, 1999] 978-0375705472 [- a narrative history and cultural memoir that examines the rise of Jewish organized crime in the United States, especially in New York City during the 1920s–1940s. Cohen reconstructs the story of the Jewish gangsters who emerged from the immigrant neighborhoods of Brooklyn's Brownsville and other urban Jewish enclaves during the early twentieth century. At the center of the book are figures such as Meyer Lansky, Benjamin Siegel, and, above all, Abe Reles, the feared hitman and later government informant associated with *Murder, Inc.*

Rather than presenting these gangsters simply as criminals, Cohen explores them as products of a particular historical moment. He argues that many second-generation Jewish immigrants, raised amid poverty, antisemitism, and ethnic conflict, embraced violence and criminality as a means of asserting power and rejecting the stereotype of the weak, passive Jew. The gangsters became, in Cohen's telling, a distorted form of Jewish self-assertion in America.

Interwoven with the historical narrative is Cohen's personal reflection on growing up as the grandson of Jewish immigrants. He investigates why stories of Jewish gangsters fascinated later generations of American Jews and how these figures became part of a broader mythology of Jewish masculinity. The book contrasts the criminal world of the gangsters with the more respectable paths pursued by their descendants and by postwar American Jewry.

Major Themes

- Jewish immigration and urban ethnic life in New York.
- The relationship between antisemitism and the emergence of Jewish street gangs.
- Constructions of Jewish masculinity and toughness.
- Organized crime as a route to power and social mobility.
- The transformation of American Jewish identity after World War II.
- Memory, nostalgia, and the mythology of the Jewish gangster.

*Tough Jews helped popularize the history of Jewish organized crime for a broad readership. While some historians criticized Cohen for romanticizing gangsters and overstating their representative significance, the book remains one of the most influential and widely read accounts of Jewish gangsters in America. It is frequently cited in discussions of Jews and crime, Jewish masculinity, immigrant history, and the cultural legacy of figures such as Lansky and *Murder, Inc.**

Cohen explicitly notes that the Jewish gangsters of the Prohibition and Depression eras largely “went legit.” The book can also be read as a narrative account of the transition from street and organized crime to legitimate business and professional careers among later generations. - ChatGPT]

Conway, J. North, (***Queen of Thieves: The True Story of “Marm” Mandelbaum and Her Gangs of New York*** [hc, Skyhorse Publishing, 2014]) 978-1629144351

Davis, Marni, (***Jews and Booze: Becoming American in the Age of Prohibition*** [2012]) [hc, NYU Press] 978-0814720288 [pb, 2014] 978-1479882441

Deitch, Scott M., (***Garden State Gangland: The Rise of the Mob in New Jersey*** [hc, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2017] 978-1442267299 [pb, Rowman & Littlefield, 2019] 978-1538129777

Donovan, Brian and Tori Barnes-Brus, “Narratives of sexual consent and coercion: Forced prostitution trials in progressive-era New York City,” *Law & Social Inquiry* 36, no. 3 (2011)

Downey, Patrick, (***Gangster City: The History of the New York Underworld, 1900–1935*** [hc, Barricade Books, 2004]) 978-1569802670 [pb, Barricade Books, 2009] 978-1569803615

Farrell, Ronald and Carole Case, (**The Black Book and the Mob: The Untold Story of the Control of Nevada's Casinos** [hc, U. of Wisconsin Press, 1995]) 978-0299147501 [pb, U. of Wisconsin Press, 1995] 978-0299147549

Foner, Philip Sheldon, (**The Fur and Leather Workers Union: The Story of Dramatic Struggles and Achievements** [hc, Nordan Press, 1950; Literary Licensing LLC, 2013]) 978-1258789541 [pb, Literary Licensing LLC, 2013] 978-1258793562

Fournier, Gregory A., (**The Elusive Purple Gang: Detroit's Kosher Nostra** [pb, Wheatmark, 2019]) 978-1627877145

Fox, Margalit, (**The Talented Mrs. Mandelbaum: The Rise and Fall of an American Organized-Crime Boss** [hc, Random House, 2024]) 978-0593243855 [pb, 2025] 978-0593243879

Fox, Stephen R., (**Blood and Power: Organized Crime in Twentieth-Century America**) [hc, William Morrow, 1989] 978-0688043506 [pb, Penguin, 1990] 978-0140134384 [*broad survey including Jewish role in developing organized crime*]

Fried, Albert, (*The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Gangster in America*) [hc, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1980] 978-0030213717 [pb, Columbia UP, revised edition, 1994] 978-0231096836 [- *one of the pioneering scholarly histories of Jewish organized crime in the United States. Drawing on police records, court documents, newspapers, memoirs, and contemporary accounts, Fried traces the development of Jewish criminal organizations from the immigrant neighborhoods of the late nineteenth century to their decline after World War II.*

*The book begins with the overcrowded Jewish districts of New York's Lower East Side and similar immigrant neighborhoods in cities such as Chicago, Cleveland, Newark, Philadelphia, Boston, and Detroit. Fried argues that the same social conditions that produced successful entrepreneurs, labor leaders, and politicians also produced a small but highly visible criminal underworld. Early gang leaders such as **Monk Eastman, "Dopey" Benny Fein, and Big Jack Zelig** emerged from street gangs, gambling, prostitution, labor racketeering, and political corruption before the advent of Prohibition.*

*Prohibition transformed Jewish gangsters into major figures in organized crime. Fried examines the careers of **Arnold Rothstein, Waxey Gordon, Dutch Schultz (Arthur Flegenheimer), Meyer Lansky, Benjamin "Bugsy" Siegel, Louis "Lepke" Buchalter**, and others, showing how they expanded from bootlegging into gambling, labor extortion, narcotics, and national criminal syndicates. A central theme is the close cooperation between Jewish and Italian mobsters, whose alliances helped create the modern American Mafia and the National Crime Syndicate.*

The author also explores the public image of Jewish gangsters. He notes the discomfort of mainstream Jewish leaders, who feared that highly publicized criminality would fuel antisemitic stereotypes. At the same time, gangsters often cultivated reputations as benefactors within immigrant communities, donating to charities, supporting synagogues, or presenting themselves as protectors of fellow Jews. Fried treats these claims critically, distinguishing myth from documented reality.

The latter chapters describe the decline of the Jewish underworld after the Second World War. Greater social mobility, suburbanization, changing immigration patterns, and increasingly effective law enforcement reduced the prominence of Jewish organized crime. Many surviving Jewish mob figures retired, entered legitimate business, or ceded leadership to predominantly Italian-American crime families. The revised edition includes an afterword discussing the enduring cultural fascination with Jewish gangsters and their portrayal in later books and popular culture.

For anyone studying Jews and crime, Fried's work remains a foundational survey. Although later scholarship has refined some of his interpretations and added new archival material, it is still regarded as one of the most authoritative general histories of Jewish organized crime in America and an indispensable starting point for the subject. – ChatGPT]

Garland, Libby, (**After they closed the gates: Jewish illegal immigration to the United States, 1921–1965** [U. of Chicago Press]) [hc, 2014] 978-0226122458 [pb, 2018] 978-0226565224

Goldstein, Gary, (**Jew in Jail** [pb, Createspace Independent, 2010]) 978-1452864341 [*personal account of author's nearly six years of incarceration in NY state and transition from various addictions to eventual author and motivational speaker*]

Goodman, Oscar, with George Anastasia, (**Being Oscar: From Mob Lawyer to Mayor of Las Vegas** [hc, Hachette Books, 2013]) 978-1602861886 [pb, Grand Central Publishing, 2014] 978-1602862333

Goren, Arthur, (**New York Jews and the Quest for Community: The Kehilla Experiment, 1908–1922**) [hc, Columbia UP, 1970] 978-0231034227 [pb, Columbia UP, 1979] 978-0231083683 [*extensive coverage of crime in pre-WWI Jewish community and the response to it*]

Gorenstein, Nathan, (**Tommy Gun Winter: Jewish Gangsters, a Preacher's Daughter, and the Trial That Shocked 1930s Boston** [hc, ForeEdge, 2015]) 978-1611684261

Gudefin, Geraldine, “‘Should I go to other Rabbis . . . or should I go to court’: Eastern European Jewish women and Marital Litigation, 1900–1920,” *American Jewish History* 106, no. 1 (2022)

Hall, Aaron, (**A Gangsters Guide: Frank Rosenthal** [pb, independently published, 2025]) 979-8282604382 [*Las Vegas/casinos/Mafia*]

Hobsbawm, Eric J., “The Economics of the Gangster,” *The Quarterly Review*, no. 604 (1955)

Imhoff, Sarah, (**Masculinity and the Making of American Judaism** [Indiana UP, 2017]) [hc] 978-0253026064 [pb] 978-0253026217

Jackson, Toby, “Hoodlum or Businessman: An American Dilemma,” in Marshall Sklare [ed], **The Jews: Social Patterns of an American Group** (hc, The Free Press, 1958, B009NNL8PQ), pp. 542–550

Jobb, Dean, (**Empire of Deception: The Incredible Story of a Master Swindler Who Seduced a City and Captivated the Nation** [Algonquin Books]) [hc, 2015] 978-1616201753 [pb, 2016] 978-1616205355 [*Ponzi scheme by Chicago Jewish lawyer*]

Joselit, Jenna Weissman, (Our Gang: Jewish Crime and the New York Jewish Community, 1900–1940 [hc, Indiana UP, 1983] 978-0253158451 [pb, 1983]) 978-0253203144 [*Focusing on New York City between 1900 and 1940, Joselit explores both the Jewish underworld itself and how the organized Jewish community responded to the existence of Jewish criminals.*]

Her central argument is that Jewish crime was not an aberration outside Jewish life but developed within the same immigrant environment that produced respectable workers, entrepreneurs, labor activists, and communal leaders. Criminals emerged from the crowded immigrant neighborhoods of the Lower East Side and Brownsville and initially lived among the communities they exploited. Jewish crime was therefore a by-product of immigration, poverty, urbanization, and social mobility rather than a rejection of Jewish identity.

The Nature of Jewish Crime

The book traces a variety of criminal activities:

- *Street gangs and juvenile delinquency on the Lower East Side.*
- *Theft, burglary, fencing, and labor racketeering.*
- *Gambling and prostitution.*
- *Organized crime associated with Prohibition-era bootlegging.*
- *The rise of nationally known Jewish gangsters during the 1920s and 1930s.*

Joselit shows that Jewish criminals were often products of immigrant neighborhoods undergoing rapid social change. Criminal careers could offer an alternative route to economic success when legitimate opportunities seemed limited.

Community Reactions

One of the book's most important contributions is its analysis of how New York's Jewish leadership reacted to Jewish crime. Joselit describes a progression through several stages:

1. **Disbelief and denial** – *Many Jewish leaders initially minimized reports of Jewish criminality because they feared reinforcing antisemitic stereotypes.*
2. **Concern and reform** – *As crime became more visible, communal organizations began studying the problem and creating preventive and rehabilitative programs.*
3. **Institutional response** – *Jewish charities, settlement houses, educational organizations, and correctional agencies attempted to redirect at-risk youth and aid offenders.*
4. **Acceptance and normalization** – *By the interwar period, as Jews became more economically secure and socially integrated, crime came to be viewed as a normal social problem affecting Jews just as it affected other ethnic groups.*

Assimilation and the Underworld

A major theme is that Jewish crime followed the broader pattern of Jewish assimilation. Early criminal networks were strongly tied to immigrant neighborhoods and ethnic connections. Over time, however, Jewish gangsters became increasingly integrated into larger American criminal organizations. By the late 1930s, specifically Jewish forms of organized crime were fading as Jewish criminals were absorbed into the broader American underworld.

Historical Significance

The book challenges the long-standing myth that Jews were virtually absent from criminal activity. Joselit does not argue that Jews were disproportionately criminal; rather, she demonstrates that Jews participated in crime at rates and in forms typical of other immigrant groups undergoing urbanization and social mobility. Her work therefore normalizes Jewish history by showing that Jews experienced the full range of social phenomena found in other American ethnic communities.

Relevance to the Study of Jews and Crime

*For scholars of Jewish crime, gangsters, and Jewish detective fiction, *Our Gang* is foundational because it:*

- *Provides a historical background to real Jewish criminality in New York.*
- *Explains communal anxieties about antisemitic stereotypes.*
- *Shows the transition from immigrant street gangs to organized crime.*
- *Documents the emergence of Jewish social-service and reform institutions.*
- *Places famous figures such as the Prohibition-era Jewish gangsters within a broader social history rather than treating them as isolated celebrities.*

In short, Joselit's book is less a history of gangsters than a history of the relationship between Jewish criminality and Jewish communal self-understanding. Its central insight is that the New York Jewish community's response to crime reveals as much about Jewish immigration, acculturation, and identity formation as the criminals themselves. It also documents the forms of crime that largely disappeared after postwar upward mobility. - ChatGPT]

Joseph, Judith Lee Vaupen, **"The Nafkeh and the Lady: Jewish Prostitutes and Progressives in New York City, 1900–1930"** (PhD diss., State U. of New York at Stony Brook, 1986)

Katz, Daniel (**All together different: Yiddish socialists, garment workers, and the labor roots of multiculturalism** [hc, NYU Press, 2011]) 978-0814748367 [pb, NYU Press, 2013] 978-1479873258

Kavieff, Paul R., (**Detroit's Infamous Purple Gang** [hc, Arcadia, 2008]) 978-1531632779 [pb] 978-0738552385

Keefe, Rose, (**The Starker: Big Jack Zelig, the Becker-Rosenthal Case, and the Advent of the Jewish Gangster** [hc, Cumberland House, 2008]) 978-1581826029

Konigsberg, Eric, (**Blood Relation: An Investigative Memoir of a Mafia Hit Man, Long-Hidden Family Secrets, and Jewish-American History** [hc, Harper, 2005]) 978-0060099046 [pb, 2006] 978-0060099053 [*about "Kayo" Konigsberg, Mafia hit man*]

Kosak, Hadassa, (**Cultures of Opposition: Jewish Immigrant Workers, New York City, 1881–1905** [hc, State University of New York Press, 2000]) 978-0791445839 [pb, SUNY Press, 2000] 978-0791445846

Larson, David, (**The Last Jewish Gangster: The Early Years** [hc, WildBlue Press, 2022]) 978-1957288239 [pb] 978-1957288222 [*referring to Michael J. Hardy. He was the son of Shirley Rook, born Shirley Blaustein, a central figure characterized as the "Queen of New York City crime". She was closely associated with Bugsy Siegel, who was Michael Hardy's godfather. She rose to the top of the New York criminal ranks, where she laundered Mob money, managed the city's largest bookmaking operation, and facilitated payouts to corrupt judges, politicians, and police officers. A major narrative arc in the books is her ultimate betrayal of Michael. Despite his lifelong efforts to win her approval—including serving time in a Mexican prison for her counterfeiting operation—she eventually turned him in to the authorities to save herself from a prison sentence. Crushed by his mother's betrayal and facing a murder trial in 1991, Hardy cut a deal with Rudy Giuliani, agreeing to wear a wire to help the Feds take down corrupt police officers and marshals. He eventually enrolled in the Witness Security Program and relocated to Los Angeles under an alias. He found work there as "muscle" and a debt collector for a B-movie studio and even appeared in several films as a non-speaking background actor, effectively playing a version of himself. He wound up in San Diego being interviewed by David Larson starting in 2013, recounting his 26 years in prison, 11 shootings, and 19 killings while struggling with his legacy and his Jewish heritage.* – Google/AI]

Larson, David, (**The Last Jewish Gangster: The Middle Years** [hc, WildBlue Press, 2022]) 978-1957288093 [pb] 978-1957288079 [*The third volume of the trilogy, entitled The Later Years or The Final Years is for some reason unavailable in a print version. Its content is accessible in the Audiobook editions of the series. According to author David Larson, Hardy passed away in 2022.* – Google/AI]

Lazar, Zachary, (**Evening's Empire: The Story of My Father's Murder**) [hc, Little, Brown, 2009] 978-0316037686 [pb, Back Bay Books, 2010] 978-0316037693 [*re: Ed Lazar and Arizona land fraud*]

Maccabee, Paul, (**John Dillinger Slept Here: A Crook's Tour of Crime and Corruption in St. Paul, 1920–1936**) [hc, Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1995] 978-0873513159 [pb, Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1995] 978-0873513166

Maddow, Rachel, (**Prequel: An American Fight Against Fascism** [hc, Crown, 2023]) 978-0593444511 [pb, Crown 2025] 978-0593444511 [*- charts the rise of a wild American strain of authoritarianism that has been alive on the far-right edge of our politics for the better part of a century. Before and even after our troops had begun fighting abroad in World War II, a clandestine network flooded the country with disinformation aimed at sapping the strength of the U.S. war effort and persuading Americans that our natural alliance was with the Axis, not against it. It was a sophisticated and shockingly well-funded campaign to undermine democratic institutions, promote antisemitism, and destroy citizens' confidence in their elected leaders, with the ultimate goal of overthrowing the U.S. government and installing authoritarian rule.*]

That effort worked—tongue and groove—alongside an ultra-right paramilitary movement that stockpiled bombs and weapons and trained for mass murder and violent insurrection. At the same time, a handful of extraordinary activists and journalists were tracking the scheme, exposing it even as it was unfolding. In 1941 the U.S. Department of Justice finally made a frontal attack, identifying the key plotters, finding their backers, and prosecuting dozens in federal court. None of it went as planned.

While the scheme has been remembered in history—if at all—as the work of fringe players, in reality it involved a large number of some of the country's most influential elected officials. Their interference in law enforcement efforts against the plot is a dark story of the rule of law bending and then breaking under the weight of political intimidation.

That failure of the legal system had consequences. The tentacles of that unslain beast have reached forward into our history for decades. But the heroic efforts of the activists, journalists, prosecutors, and regular citizens who sought to expose the insurrectionists also make for a deeply resonant, deeply relevant tale in our own disquieting times. – Amazon]

Maller, Julius B., “**Juvenile Delinquency among the Jews in New York,**” *Social Forces* 10, no. 4 (1932)

Mays, Devi, “**Becoming Illegal: Sephardi Jews in the Opiates Trade,**” *Jewish Social Studies* 25, no. 3 (2020)

Mendelsohn, Adam D., (**The Rag Race: How Jews sewed their way to success in America and the British Empire**) [hc, NYU Press, 2014] 978-1479847181 [pb, NYU Press, 2016] 978-1479814381

Mensch, Jean Ulitz, “**Social pathology in urban America: desertion, prostitution, gambling, drugs and crime among eastern European Jews in New York City between 1881 and World War I**” (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1983)

Merkowitz, David, “**The Segregating City: Philadelphia's Jews in the Urban Crisis, 1964–1984,**” (PhD diss., University of Cincinnati, 2010)

Messick, Hank, (**The Silent Syndicate** [hc, Macmillan, 1967] B0006BO3EC [pb, Commonwealth Book Co., 2021] 978-1948986366 [*Cleveland Jewish crime syndicate, also active later in Las Vegas*])

Michels, Tony, (**A Fire in Their Hearts: Yiddish Socialists in New York** [hc, Harvard UP, 2005]) 978-0674019133 [pb, Harvard UP, 2009] 978-0674032439

Newton, Michael, (**Mr. Mob: The Life and Crimes of Moe Dalitz** [pb, McFarland, 2009] 978-0786435166

O’Kane, James M., (**The Crooked Ladder: Gangsters, Ethnicity and the American Dream** [pb, Routledge, 2002] 978-0765809940 [hc, Routledge, 2017] 978-1138534933

Pietrusza, David, (**Gangsterland: A Tour Through the Dark Heart of Jazz-Age New York City** [hc, Diversion Books, 2023]) 978-1635769890

Pinzer, Maimie, (**The Maimie Papers: Letters from an Ex-Prostitute** [pb, The Feminist Press at CUNY, 1997]) 978-1558611436

Porrello, Rick, (**Bombs, Bullets, and Bribes: the true story of notorious Jewish mobster Alex Shondor Birns** [hc, self-published, 2020] 978-0966250824 [pb, 2019, Next Hat Press] 978-0966250848

Portnoy, Eddy, (**Bad Rabbi: and other strange but true stories from the Yiddish press** [hc, Stanford UP, 2017]) 978-0804797610 [pb] 978-1503604117 – *See non-fiction section of International bibliography for synopsis.*

Rein, Raanan & David M.K. Sheinin [eds], (**Armed Jews in the Americas** [hc, Brill, 2021] 978-9004462533 [*A Jewish weapons manufacturer during the American Civil War, a Jewish-Canadian*])

chair of the Metropolitan Toronto Police Board, and Jewish-Argentine guerrilla fighters—these are some of the individuals discussed in this 1st-of-its-kind volume. It brings together some of the best new works on armed Jews in the Americas. Links between Jews and their ties to weapons are addressed through multiple cultural, political, social, and ideological contexts, thus breaking down longstanding, stilted myths in many societies about Jews and weaponry. Anti-Semitism and Jewish self-defense, Jewish volunteers in the Spanish Civil War and in the 1948 Arab-Israeli war; and **Jewish-American gangsters as ethnic heroes** (chapter authored by Larry D. Gragg, who also wrote a biography of Bugsy Siegel) form part of the little-researched topic of Jews and arms in the Americas.]

Ribak, Gil, “**The Jew Usually Left Those Crimes to Esau: The Jewish Responses to Accusations about Jewish Criminality in New York, 1908–1913**,” *AJS* (association of Jewish Studies) Review, Volume 38, Issue 1, April 2014, pp. 1-28 [*This paper centers on the scandals, street thugs, and vice rings that triggered massive public debates at the time. It focuses on Herman Rosenthal, a prominent Jewish gambler and underworld figure who was gunned down after exposing his corrupt partnership with NYPD Lieutenant Charles Becker. The hit on Rosenthal was carried out by Lower East Side Jewish street thugs—most notably Harry “Gyp the Blood” Horowitz, Jacob “Whitey Lewis” Seidenschner, Louis “Lefty Louie” Rosenberg, and Francesco “Dago Frank” Cirofici (who was Italian). The execution by these Jewish gunmen deeply shook the New York Jewish community, forcing leaders to confront visible proof of Jewish violent crime. The paper covers the era right before the “Labor Slugger Wars” exploded, highlighting early street gangs hired out as muscle, e.g. the Monk Eastman Gang: Though Eastman himself was imprisoned during part of this window, his heavily Jewish successor factions were actively running prostitution, gambling, and extortion rings on the East Side.: This era marked the rise of “Dopey” Benny Fein, one of the earliest pioneers of industrial labor racketeering who revolutionized hiring out thugs to garment unions.*]

Rather than glamorous bank robbers, the “gangsters” of this specific 1908–1913 window were often Maxims or operators of the “**White Slavery**” (prostitution) trade. Activists and muckrakers targeted the **Independent Benevolent Association**, a real-life mutual-aid society that was actually a front for Jewish pimps, brothel owners, and human traffickers operating out of the Lower East Side.

The title refers to a traditional Jewish mindset that physical, violent crimes were something “Gentiles” (Esau) did, while Jews (Jacob) were inherently non-violent. Ribak explores how the Jewish community, the Yiddish press, and the newly formed New York Kehillah scrambled to respond when figures like NYPD Commissioner Theodore Bingham publicly claimed that Jews were responsible for half the city’s crime. [Google/AI]

Riess, Steven A., “**Sport and the American Jew: A Second Look**,” *American Jewish History* 83, no. 1 (1995)

Rockaway, Robert A., “**Hoodlum Hero: The Jewish Gangster as Defender of His People, 1919–1949**,” *American Jewish History* 82, no. 1 (1994)

Rockaway, Robert, “**American Jews and Crime: An Annotated Bibliography**,” *American Studies International*, Vol. 38, No. 1 (February 2000), pp. 26-41

Rockaway, Robert, “**The Notorious Purple Gang: Detroit’s All-Jewish Prohibition Era Mob**,” *Shofar*, Vol.20, No.1 (Fall 2001), 113-130.

Rockaway, Robert, (But He Was Good to His Mother: The Lives and Crimes of Jewish Gangsters [pb, Gefen, originally published 1993, 2020]) 979-8664052619 [- challenges the popular stereotype that Jews were either uniquely law-abiding immigrants or, conversely, romanticized “tough Jews.” He argues that Jewish gangsters emerged from the same social conditions that produced criminal organizations among other immigrant groups: poverty, overcrowded urban neighborhoods, limited opportunities, and ethnic solidarity. Crime was not a Jewish phenomenon, but Jewish criminals participated in organized crime in ways similar to Irish and Italian counterparts.]

The title comes from a familiar refrain used by relatives and neighbors to excuse notorious criminals: despite murder, extortion, and racketeering, “he was good to his mother.” Rockaway uses the phrase to illustrate the tension between family loyalty and criminal behavior. The book traces Jewish gangsters from street gangs on New York’s Lower East Side and similar immigrant neighborhoods in cities such as Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, Newark, and Philadelphia. Many came from Eastern European Jewish immigrant families struggling to adapt to American life.

Rockaway shows how some young Jewish men used crime to gain wealth, status, and influence unavailable through conventional avenues. Activities included: gambling, labor racketeering, bootlegging during Prohibition, extortion, hijacking, murder-for-hire and loan-sharking .

*A recurring theme is the existence of a substantial Jewish organized-crime network—sometimes called the “**Kosher Nostra**”—which worked alongside and sometimes competed with Italian-American syndicates. Jewish gangsters played important roles in national organized crime, particularly during Prohibition and the 1930s.*

*Among the gangsters profiled are **Arnold Rothstein, Meyer Lansky, Benjamin “Bugsy” Siegel, Louis Buchalter, Abner “Longy” Zwillman, members of Detroit’s Purple Gang, and earlier gang leaders such as Jack Zelig and Jacob Orgen.***

One of the book’s most interesting observations is that many gangsters remained strongly connected to Jewish family life. Some attended synagogue on holidays, supported parents financially, married within the Jewish community, and donated to Jewish charities while simultaneously engaging in violent criminal enterprises. This contradiction lies at the heart of Rockaway’s analysis.

Decline of Jewish Organized Crime

Rockaway argues that Jewish organized crime declined after World War II because:

- *Jewish Americans achieved rapid upward social and economic mobility.*
- *Educational opportunities expanded.*
- *Residential dispersion weakened the ethnic urban neighborhoods that had nurtured gangs.*
- *Later generations entered professional and business careers rather than street crime.*

By the 1950s and 1960s, Jewish participation in organized crime had largely diminished, while other forms of criminal activity increasingly came to dominate organized-crime networks.

The book is important because it treats Jewish gangsters as historical actors rather than folklore figures. Rockaway neither glorifies nor condemns them; instead, he places them within the broader history of American immigration, ethnicity, urban life, and organized crime. It remains one of the standard scholarly works on the history of the American Jewish underworld and the phenomenon often referred to as the “Kosher Nostra.” - ChatGPT]

Rockaway, Robert, **“Gangsters vs. Nazis: How the Jewish mob fought American admirers of the Third Reich”**, Tablet, July 3, 2020

Ronel, Natti & Y. Ben Yair, **“Spiritual Criminology: The Case of Jewish Criminology,”** International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology 62, no. 7 (2018)

Rosen, Richard D., (**Tough Luck: Sid Luckman, Murder, Inc., and the Rise of the Modern NFL** [hc, Atlantic Monthly Press, 2019]) 978-0802129444 [pb, Grove Press, 2020] 978-0802157362

Rosenzweig, Laura B., (**Hollywood’s Spies: The Undercover Surveillance of Nazis in Los Angeles** [hc, New York U. Press, 2017]) 978-1479855179 [*This work draws directly from thousands of pages of archival documents to show how major Jewish movie moguls secretly financed the Los Angeles Jewish Community Committee (LAJCC) to place moles inside American Nazi chapters.*]

Ross, Ron, (**Bummy Davis vs. Murder, Inc.: The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Mafia and an Ill-Fated Prizefighter** [hc, St. Martin's Press, 2003]) 978-0312306380 [pb, St. Martin's Griffin, 2004] 978-0312335717 [pb, Bedell Books, 2014] 978-0615992877

Ross, Steven J., (Hitler in Los Angeles: How Jews Foiled Nazi Plots Against Hollywood and America [hc, Bloomsbury USA, 2017]) 978-1620405628 [pb, Bloomsbury Adult, 2019] 978-1620405635 [- *uncovers the largely forgotten history of Nazi and fascist activity in Southern California during the 1930s and early 1940s, and the clandestine Jewish-led intelligence network that worked to defeat it. Drawing on previously unknown archives, FBI records, court documents, and the papers of anti-Nazi activist Leon Lewis, Ross demonstrates that Los Angeles—home to Hollywood, a large German-American population, and major defense industries—was regarded by Nazi Germany as a strategically important center for propaganda, espionage, and sabotage.*

*At the heart of the book is **Leon Lewis**, a Jewish attorney, World War I veteran, and early leader of the Anti-Defamation League, who organized one of America's first civilian counterintelligence operations. Beginning in 1933, Lewis recruited German-Jewish refugees, anti-Nazi Christians, military veterans, and several courageous women to infiltrate organizations such as the German-American Bund, the Friends of New Germany, the Silver Shirts, and other fascist groups. Operating at enormous personal risk, these undercover agents rose through the ranks of extremist organizations, reporting on plans for anti-Jewish violence, industrial sabotage, and efforts to undermine American democracy.*

Ross describes how the spy ring uncovered plots to assassinate prominent Jewish and Hollywood figures, attack Jewish neighborhoods such as Boyle Heights, sabotage military installations and aircraft factories, and prepare for a possible Nazi-backed seizure of power in the United States. Because the FBI and many local authorities initially devoted greater attention to communists than to fascists—and because some officials were themselves sympathetic to anti-Semitic organizations—Lewis's independent intelligence network often became the country's first line of defense against domestic Nazi conspiracies.

Combining meticulous historical research with the pace of an espionage thriller, Ross introduces a vivid cast of undercover operatives, Nazi organizers, Hollywood executives, politicians, and law-enforcement officials. He also explores the broader climate of American anti-Semitism, the vulnerability of democratic institutions during periods of economic and political crisis, and the determination of ordinary citizens who chose to resist fascism long before the United States entered World War II.

A finalist for the 2018 Pulitzer Prize in History, Hitler in Los Angeles is widely regarded as an important contribution to both American Jewish history and the history of domestic extremism. It brings to light an extraordinary episode in which Jewish activists, operating largely without official support, successfully thwarted Nazi espionage and terrorist plots on American soil while helping to protect Hollywood, Southern California, and the broader United States from a serious internal threat. – ChatGPT]

Laurence Roth (est. born 1965 and grew up in Los Angeles) - Professor of English at Susquehanna University, founder/director of its Jewish and Israel Studies Program., and editor of the journal, *Modern Language Studies*.

Roth, Laurence, (Inspecting Jews: American Jewish Detective Stories [pb, Rutgers UP, 2003]) 978-0813533698

[Abstract- ChatGPT]: [*In Inspecting Jews: American Jewish Detective Stories, literary scholar Laurence Roth examines American Jewish detective fiction as a major site for negotiating Jewish*

identity, assimilation, memory, gender, and cultural belonging in the United States. Rather than treating detective novels as merely popular entertainment, Roth argues that they provide a revealing lens through which to understand the tensions of modern American Jewish life. The book studies how Jewish detective stories simultaneously embrace American popular culture and preserve distinct Jewish traditions, values, and anxieties. Roth calls this process “kosher hybridity,” a concept describing the attempt of Jewish Americans to be fully American while still remaining recognizably Jewish.

Roth situates Jewish detective fiction within the broader history of detective literature, emphasizing that **the detective genre is fundamentally concerned with restoring order in a chaotic society**. Because Jewish Americans historically occupied an ambivalent position within American culture—both insiders and outsiders—the detective story became an especially productive genre for expressing questions of identity, prejudice, assimilation, and cultural survival. Jewish detectives, rabbis, police officers, and amateur investigators are therefore not simply crime-solvers; they are symbolic figures navigating divided loyalties between Jewish communal traditions and secular American modernity.

The book is organized into thematic sections dealing with gender, memory, and alterity (“otherness”). Roth studies writers such as **Harry Kemelman, Faye Kellerman, Stuart Kaminsky, and Rochelle Krich**, among others. Through close readings of their works, he shows how Jewish detective fiction evolves from comic ethnic marginality into a sophisticated exploration of multicultural America.

One of Roth’s central arguments concerns **masculinity** and stereotypes of Jewish men. In early detective fiction, the classic detective hero was usually tough, masculine, and physically dominant—qualities historically denied to Jewish men in antisemitic stereotypes that depicted them as weak, intellectual, or feminized. Roth analyzes how Jewish detective fiction revises this model. For example, Harry Kemelman’s Rabbi David Small solves crimes not through violence or hard-boiled toughness but through Talmudic reasoning, textual interpretation, and intellectual analysis. Roth argues that these stories redefine detective heroism in specifically Jewish terms: knowledge, interpretation, and ethical inquiry replace brute force. The “Jewish detective” therefore challenges dominant American ideals of masculinity while creating alternative forms of authority grounded in Jewish learning and moral discourse.

Roth also explores intermarriage and assimilation, especially in fiction where Jewish and non-Jewish identities overlap. Detective stories frequently portray Jewish characters moving between Jewish and Gentile worlds, highlighting anxieties about cultural dilution and social acceptance. The detective’s role as a mediator between communities mirrors the broader experience of American Jews navigating between ethnic particularism and national integration. Roth argues that **these narratives neither fully reject assimilation nor fully celebrate separation. Instead, they dramatize the instability and ambiguity of hybrid identity in multicultural America.**

A major contribution of the book is its discussion of **Jewish women detectives** and female Jewish investigators. Roth demonstrates that women characters complicate traditional detective formulas even further because they negotiate both gender expectations and ethnic identity. Female investigators in Jewish detective fiction often balance domesticity, religious tradition, professional ambition, and communal responsibility. Their investigations become not only criminal inquiries but also explorations of gendered Jewish identity in modern America. Roth suggests that these stories expose tensions between feminism and traditional Judaism while also expanding the possibilities of Jewish cultural representation.

Memory, especially **Holocaust memory**, forms another major theme. Roth argues that later Jewish detective fiction increasingly incorporates the Holocaust into crime narratives. In these works, solving crimes becomes linked to recovering suppressed histories and confronting collective trauma. **The detective functions as a guardian of memory**, uncovering hidden pasts that American society might prefer to ignore. Roth particularly notes how Holocaust-related detective stories blend historical trauma with popular genre conventions, creating what he calls “hard-boiled Holocaust” narratives. These works demonstrate that detective fiction can address profound historical and ethical questions while remaining accessible to mass audiences.

The book further examines Sephardic and Ashkenazic Jewish identities, showing how detective fiction reflects internal diversity within American Jewish culture. Roth argues that Jewish detective stories do not present a unified Jewish experience; instead, they reveal tensions among different ethnic, religious, and ideological Jewish communities. The detective genre becomes a way of negotiating these differences while also exploring broader questions of multiculturalism and minority identity in America.

*Another recurring concern is the theme of **concealment and passing**. Roth discusses stories involving “undercover Jews” and “undercover Gentiles,” where identity is hidden, ambiguous, or strategically performed. Such narratives dramatize the historical pressure on Jews to assimilate or conceal difference while also revealing the instability of ethnic categories themselves. Detective fiction, with its emphasis on hidden truths and mistaken identities, becomes an ideal genre for examining the performative aspects of Jewishness in American life.*

Methodologically, Roth combines literary criticism, cultural studies, Jewish studies, and genre analysis. He treats detective fiction seriously as a cultural archive rather than dismissing it as formulaic popular literature. One important aspect of the study is his attention to readership and reception: the appendix includes an audience reception survey examining how readers interpret Jewish detective fiction. This allows Roth to argue that the genre actively shapes contemporary understandings of Jewish identity rather than merely reflecting preexisting realities.

*Ultimately, Roth concludes that **American Jewish detective stories are fundamentally about negotiation and mediation. They express the contradictions of Jewish American life: the desire for integration alongside the desire for distinctiveness; attraction to American secular modernity alongside attachment to Jewish ethics, religion, and communal memory. Detective fiction becomes a cultural laboratory where these tensions can be dramatized, tested, and partially reconciled. Through the recurring figure of the Jewish detective, these stories imagine ways of being simultaneously Jewish and American without fully dissolving either identity.***

Rachel Rubin (est. birth 1962) - a prominent scholar in American Studies, widely recognized for her work on the intersection of literature, music, and popular culture. Academic career at UMass, Boston. In ***Jewish Gangsters of Modern Literature*** (2000), Rachel Rubin explores how the figure of the Jewish gangster served as a powerful tool for left-wing Jewish writers to explore their own complex identities as outcasts in both the literary world and modern society.

Rubin, Rachel, “**Killer Jews**”, *Journal of Criminal Justice and Popular Culture* (2001, Volume 8, Issue 2), a review-essay of Robert Rockaway, “But He Was Good To His Mother”. Rubin argues that the book misses critical insights by separating historical headlines from pop culture. She points out that real-world Jewish gangsters heavily influenced early cinema, noting how the bizarre death of gangster Samuel “Nails” Nathan (thrown from a horse, which his gang then shot in revenge) was faithfully recreated in the iconic 1931 film *The Public Enemy*. She addresses the long-standing anxiety within the Jewish-American community regarding public discussions of Jewish criminals. Both journalists and academic historians researching these figures have historically faced criticism for exposing a dark side of the immigrant experience.

The “Protector” Myth vs. Reality: Rubin breaks down the romanticized trope of Jewish gangsters serving as heroic “Defenders of Their People”. While some gangsters did protect their communities from antisemitic violence, Rubin highlights Rockaway’s evidence that these same criminals built their wealth by extorting and shaking down the vulnerable Jewish merchants and pushcart vendors in their own neighborhoods.

Rubin, Rachel, (*Jewish Gangsters of Modern Literature* [hc, U. of Illinois Press, 2000]) 978-0252025396 [**Note:** See the entries on Ornitz, Gold and Fuchs in the companion bibliography,

“U.S. Jewish Detectives, Spies, Criminals, et al – FICTION”, and on Babel in the companion bibliography, “**International** – Jewish Detectives, Spies, Criminals et al – Fiction and Non-Fiction”]

Abstract [from ChatGPT]: *This book examines the figure of the Jewish gangster as a central symbol in interwar modernist literature and culture. It argues that Jewish writers on the political Left used the gangster figure not merely as a criminal stereotype, but as a powerful metaphor for artistic rebellion, ethnic transformation, masculinity, and cultural marginality in the modern age. Rubin places the Jewish gangster at the intersection of literature, politics, immigration, urban culture, and modernism, showing how criminality became a language through which Jewish writers explored their own uneasy entry into modern Western culture.*

Rubin’s central thesis is that Jewish writers and artists between the 1920s and 1940s identified with the gangster because both occupied ambiguous positions inside and outside dominant society. The gangster, in her reading, symbolizes the outsider who breaks rules in order to gain entry into systems of power. Jewish modernist writers, especially those aligned with socialism or communism, saw themselves similarly “breaking into” elite literary culture while remaining socially and ethnically marginal. Rubin repeatedly emphasizes the parallel between artistic experimentation and criminal transgression: writers “kneebreak” their way into the canon just as gangsters force their way into economic and social systems.

*The book focuses primarily on four major writers: **Isaac Babel, Mike Gold, Samuel Ornitz and Daniel Fuchs.***

*The introduction, “The Dream of His Kingdom,” establishes the theoretical framework. Rubin argues that the Jewish gangster emerged in the early twentieth century as a specifically modern figure tied to immigration, urban capitalism, ethnic reinvention, and masculine performance. Earlier Jewish literary traditions often portrayed Jews as intellectual, weak, scholarly, or victimized. The gangster represented a dramatic reversal: physical, aggressive, sexualized, and economically assertive. Rubin interprets this transformation as part of a **wider attempt by Jewish writers to reinvent Jewish identity under modern conditions. The gangster becomes both frightening and attractive because he rejects passivity and embodies mobility, risk, and self-invention.***

*The chapter on Babel’s **Odessa Tales** examines the gangster Benya Krik, one of modern literature’s most famous Jewish criminals. Rubin argues that Babel transforms the Odessa gangster into a mythic folk hero who combines brutality with theatricality and wit. Benya Krik is not simply a criminal; he is an artist-like figure who manipulates language, performance, and violence. Rubin shows how Babel links criminal power with storytelling itself. The gangster’s command over speech and legend parallels the writer’s power over narrative. At the same time, Babel’s work reflects anxieties about revolution, Jewish assimilation, and Soviet modernization. Rubin emphasizes how Babel merges Yiddish folklore, Russian literary modernism, and urban criminal mythology into a new hybrid Jewish aesthetic.*

*In her discussion of Samuel Ornitz’s **Haunch Paunch and Jowl**, Rubin explores how gangster imagery exposes tensions within immigrant Jewish culture. Ornitz depicts urban Jewish life as corrupt, commercialized, and morally unstable. Rubin argues that the novel presents criminality as inseparable from capitalist modernity itself. Gangsters thrive because American economic culture rewards aggression and exploitation. She also shows how Ornitz mixes realism with grotesque satire, using criminal figures to critique both bourgeois respectability and the commodification of ethnicity. Jewish culture becomes something that can be “plundered,” marketed, or manipulated.*

*The chapter on Mike Gold’s **Jews Without Money** is one of the book’s central analyses. Rubin examines Gold’s depiction of violent Jewish youth gangs on New York’s Lower East Side. She argues that Gold uses gangster figures to reject sentimental or assimilated representations of Jewish immigrants. His “tough Jews” embody rage against poverty, class oppression, and ethnic humiliation. Rubin connects this imagery to proletarian literature and communist politics of the 1930s. Gold presents criminality not simply as moral failure but as a distorted response to capitalism and social exclusion. Rubin also*

stresses the importance of vernacular language in Gold's work: slang, Yiddish-inflected English, and street speech become tools of literary authenticity and rebellion.

*Rubin's chapter on **Daniel Fuchs** argues that his novels mark the decline or "death" of the Jewish gangster myth. Whereas earlier writers portrayed gangsters as energetic rebels or folk heroes, Fuchs presents them as exhausted, tragic, and spiritually empty. His Brooklyn novels depict a world where the gangster no longer symbolizes liberation but entrapment within systems of money and violence. Rubin interprets this shift historically: by the late 1930s, the radical optimism associated with proletarian modernism had weakened, and Jewish writers became more skeptical about revolutionary transformation. The gangster loses his symbolic vitality and becomes merely another casualty of urban capitalism.*

One of Rubin's major contributions is her insistence that Jewish gangster narratives belong within modernist literary history. She challenges the tendency to separate "high modernism" from proletarian or ethnic writing. According to Rubin, left-wing Jewish writers experimented with language, fragmented identities, vernacular culture, and urban consciousness in ways fully comparable to canonical modernists. She therefore argues for expanding definitions of modernism to include immigrant, radical, and working-class Jewish literature.

*Another important theme is **masculinity**. Rubin argues that the Jewish gangster helped create a new model of Jewish manhood that rejected stereotypes of weakness or passivity. Gangsters display toughness, sexual confidence, and physical force. Yet Rubin also notes the instability of this masculine ideal. The gangster is simultaneously powerful and insecure, admired and feared, assimilated and alienated. His unstable identity reflects broader tensions surrounding Jewish modernization and ethnic transformation in both the United States and Soviet Russia.*

The book further explores language and vernacular culture. Rubin repeatedly emphasizes how these writers mixed Yiddish, slang, immigrant speech, and urban idioms into literary prose. The gangster's speech becomes a marker of authenticity and rebellion against elite literary norms. Vernacular language itself functions like a criminal intrusion into respectable culture.

In the conclusion, "The Gangster's Funeral," Rubin traces the fading of the Jewish gangster as a central literary figure after World War II. As Jewish communities became more integrated into middle-class American life, the gangster lost much of his symbolic power. The rebellious outsider gave way to other Jewish archetypes: intellectuals, suburbanites, survivors, and professionals. Rubin suggests that the earlier gangster figure belonged specifically to the volatile world of immigration, radical politics, and interwar modernity.

Overall, the book argues that the Jewish gangster was never merely a sensational criminal stereotype. Rather, he functioned as a deeply ambivalent cultural symbol through which Jewish writers explored modernity itself: violence, capitalism, masculinity, artistic ambition, class rebellion, and ethnic reinvention. Rubin demonstrates that criminal figures helped Jewish modernists negotiate the contradictions of becoming modern while remaining outsiders to dominant culture.

Rubin, Rachel, "**Gangster generation: crime, Jews and the problem of assimilation**," Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies 20, no. 4 (2002): 9.

Rudensky, Red, Morris Rudensky & Don Riley, (**The Gonif** [hc, Piper Pub, 1970]) 978-0878320028

Sadowsky, Sandy, (**Wedded to Crime: My Life in the Jewish Mafia** [hc, Putnam, 1992]) 978-0399136146 [mass market pb, Berkeley, 1993] 978-0425137642

Sarna, Jonathan D., "**Observations: The Jewish Way of Crime**," Commentary 78, no. 2 (1984): 55. [critique of Albert Fried book, listed above]

Scott, Cathy, **Murder of a Mafia Daughter: The Life and Tragic Death of Susan Berman** [hc, Barricade Books, 2002] 9781569802380 [*Susan Berman (1945–2000), an American journalist and author, was the daughter of David "Davie" Berman, a Minneapolis mobster who took over*

the Flamingo Hotel after Bugsy Siegel's 1947 gangland murder. She herself died as a victim of murder. See her memoir, "Easy Street" above in this Bibliography.]

Seligman, Scott D., *The Great Kosher Meat War of 1902: Immigrant Housewives and the Riots That Shook New York City* [hc, Potomac Books, 2020] 978-1640123588 [pb, Potomac Books, 2023] 978-1640123588 [*In the wee hours of May 15, 1902, three thousand Jewish women quietly took up positions on the streets of Manhattan's Lower East Side. Convinced by the latest jump in the price of kosher meat that they were being gouged, they assembled in squads of five, intent on shutting down every kosher butcher shop in New York's Jewish quarter.*

What was conceived as a nonviolent effort did not remain so for long. Customers who crossed the picket lines were heckled and assaulted and their parcels of meat hurled into the gutters. Butchers who remained open were attacked, their windows smashed, stock ruined, equipment destroyed. Brutal blows from police nightsticks sent women to local hospitals and to court. But soon Jewish housewives throughout the area took to the streets in solidarity, while the butchers either shut their doors or had their doors shut for them. The newspapers called it a modern Jewish Boston Tea Party.

The Great Kosher Meat War of 1902 tells the twin stories of mostly uneducated women immigrants who discovered their collective consumer power and of the Beef Trust, the midwestern cartel that conspired to keep meat prices high despite efforts by the U.S. government to curtail its nefarious practices. With few resources and little experience but steely determination, this group of women organized themselves into a potent fighting force and, in their first foray into the political arena in their adopted country, successfully challenged powerful, vested corporate interests and set a pattern for future generations to follow. [Amazon]

Singer, David, "The Jewish Gangster: Crime as 'Unzer Shtik,'" *Judaism* 23, no. 1 (1974)

Siporin, Steve, "The Kosher Con Game: Who's Keeping Kosher in Prison?" *Western Folklore* 74, no. 1 (2015)

Slater, Dan, (*The Incorruptibles: A True Story of Kingpins, Crime Busters, and the Birth of the American Underworld* [hc, Little, Brown 2024] 978-0316427715 [*Explores the intersection of Jewish immigration, organized crime, and private reform efforts in early 20th-century New York City. The story is primarily set in the Lower East Side of the 1910s, then the most densely populated ghetto on Earth. Eastern European Jewish immigrants, facing limited economic mobility and living in squalid tenements, formed a complex web of crime syndicates involved in horse poisoning, gambling, prostitution, and labor racketeering. The narrative is bookended by two notorious crimes: the 1912 murder of gambler Herman Rosenthal and the 1928 murder of Arnold Rothstein. Rosenthal's murder, which involved a conspiracy between gangsters and corrupt police (specifically Lieutenant Charles Becker), drew international attention and fueled nativist, anti-immigrant sentiment.*

The Benefactors: *Afluent German-Jewish "uptowners," including Jacob Schiff and Felix Warburg, were horrified by the criminal element in the Jewish community. They feared that Jewish crime would validate antisemitic rhetoric and lead to immigration restrictions.*

The Mission: *They privately funded a secret, off-the-books vice squad nicknamed the "Incorruptibles" to clean up the Lower East Side.*

Key Figures: *The squad was led by ambitious young reformers like Harry Newburger and utilized revolutionary investigative techniques from detective Joseph Faurot, such as early wiretapping ("bridging wires"). Slater weaves together the lives of various historical figures, illustrating the "uptown vs. downtown" clash:*

Gangsters: *Arnold Rothstein (the "Big Bankroll"), Meyer Lansky, Lucky Luciano, "Dopey Benny" Fein, and "Bald Jack" Rose.*

Reformers and Public Figures: *Louis Marshall, Judah Magnes, and Abraham Cahan.*

Unintended Consequences: *The book argues that the Incorruptibles' efforts to dismantle local vice unwittingly cleared the way for a more sophisticated, professionalized "mobster class" that would dominate the Prohibition era.*

Social Evolution: *The Jewish crime wave was ultimately a one-generation phenomenon; as the community gained social and economic footing, involvement in crime plummeted by 1950.*

Political Climate: *The narrative highlights the looming threat of the anti-immigration lobby and the burgeoning antisemitism that mirrored later developments in Europe. – Google/AI]*

Stuart, Mark, (**Gangster No. 2: Longy Zwillman, the Man Who Invented Organized Crime** [hc, Lyle Stuart, 1985]) 978-0818403972

Sugerman, Myron, (**The Chronicles of The Last Jewish Gangster: From Meyer to Myron** [pb. Independently published, 2019] 978-1973212591 [\[See related film\]](#) *[Note: See "Last Man Standing: The Chronicles of Myron Sugerman (2023)" in the companion Filmography.]*

Templer, Donald I. & Penny A. Jackson, "**Jewish inmates: an Atypical Prison Group,**" *Psychological Reports* 71, no. 2 (1992)

Tepperman, Alex, "Vicious Bastards and Complete Bores: Trends in Jewish American Crime History since World War Two," *Journal of Jewish Identities*, 18:2, July 2025 (Johns Hopkins UP).

Alex Tepperman is a Canadian historian and criminologist whose work focuses on historical criminology, prisons, crime history, and, more recently, Jewish crime in North America. He is currently an Assistant Professor in the Department of Criminal Justice at the University of Winnipeg. I thought his essay on the field sufficiently comprehensive and insightful to provide the following synopsis of it:

Alex Tepperman's article is primarily a **historiographical essay**. Rather than studying Jewish criminals themselves, it examines how scholars have written about Jewish crime in America from the 1940s to the present and how interpretations of Jewish criminality have changed over time.

Central Argument: Tepperman argues that the study of Jewish-American crime has passed through several distinct phases:

1. **Pre–World War II:** largely the domain of sociologists and criminologists.
2. **Postwar through the late twentieth century:** dominated by historians who focused heavily on gangsters and organized crime.
3. **Twenty-first century:** increasingly shaped by social historians studying ordinary offenders, community responses to crime, prisons, policing, vice, gender, and everyday experiences rather than only famous mobsters.

His title reflects a tension in the field: historians have often preferred colorful, violent, larger-than-life gangsters ("vicious bastards") while neglecting the far more representative but less dramatic criminals who made up most Jewish offenders ("complete bores").

1. Early Scholarship: Crime as a Sociological Problem

Tepperman notes that before World War II, Jewish crime was usually treated as a question of: immigrant adjustment, delinquency, poverty, social mobility, assimilation. Researchers asked whether Jews were more or less criminal than other groups and tried to explain statistical patterns of criminal behavior. Crime was viewed as a social problem rather than a cultural symbol.

This scholarship often focused on: juvenile delinquency, prison populations, urban social conditions, criminological measurement. By the 1960s, however, sociologists largely abandoned the subject, leaving historians to dominate the field.

2. The Rise of Historical Studies in the 1970s–1990s

The field expanded rapidly during the 1970s. Yet Tepperman argues that historians largely ignored the “new social history” methods then transforming other areas of scholarship. Instead of studying ordinary criminals from below, they concentrated on: famous gangsters, organized crime syndicates, racketeering and underworld celebrities. This produced a literature centered on figures such as: Meyer Lansky, Bugsy Siegel, Dutch Schultz and other nationally known Jewish mobsters. The result was a highly selective picture of Jewish criminality. Rather than asking how crime functioned within Jewish communities, historians often focused on spectacular personalities and criminal empires.

3. The Gangster as an Ethnic Hero

One of Tepperman’s most important observations is that late twentieth-century historians frequently transformed Jewish gangsters into symbols of ethnic pride. Several recurring themes emerged:

Tough Jews: Gangsters became evidence that Jews were not merely passive victims. Historians and popular writers portrayed mobsters as: physically powerful, masculine, aggressive and capable of defending Jewish communities against antisemitism. This interpretation challenged stereotypes of Jewish weakness.

Community Protectors: Gangsters were often depicted as: defenders of Jewish neighborhoods, enemies of Nazis and antisemites, protectors of immigrants. According to Tepperman, this tendency sometimes romanticized criminal activity by emphasizing communal service over exploitation or violence.

Symbols of Assimilation: Scholars also used gangsters as indicators of Jewish integration into American society. The logic was that participation in organized crime demonstrated Jews had become fully involved in every aspect of American life—even its criminal underworld.

4. The Myth of the Jewish Underworld

Tepperman is especially critical of what he calls the tendency to imagine a separate Jewish “underworld.” In much historical writing: gangsters appear detached from normal Jewish life, crime is treated as a self-contained world, criminals are depicted as exceptional figures existing outside the community.

This approach borrowed heavily from literary and popular culture notions of an organized-crime “underworld.” Tepperman argues that such portrayals obscure the fact that criminals remained embedded within: families, neighborhoods, synagogues, businesses and ethnic networks. The separation between “respectable Jews” and “criminal Jews” was often far less complete than earlier historians suggested.

5. Critique of Romanticized Narratives

A major theme of the article is criticism of what Tepperman sees as overly sentimental scholarship. He identifies several problems:

Selective Memory: Historians often celebrated gangsters while minimizing: extortion, violence, exploitation, prostitution and labor racketeering.

Masculinity Narratives: Many works treated gangsters as vehicles for reconstructing Jewish masculinity. The gangster became a cultural hero rather than a subject of critical analysis.

Exceptionalism: Research focused on a tiny number of highly visible criminals while neglecting the broader realities of crime and deviance among ordinary Jews.

6. New Directions in Twenty-First-Century Scholarship

Tepperman sees the most significant advances occurring in recent decades. New historians have shifted attention toward:

Everyday Criminality - Instead of studying only famous mobsters, scholars investigate: petty offenders, juvenile delinquents, prisoners, smugglers, sex workers, traffickers, small-scale criminals.

Gender - Recent studies examine: women offenders, prostitution, trafficking, family strategies and female participation in criminal economies.

Migration - Crime is increasingly linked to: migration networks, transnational mobility, immigration restrictions and global economic systems.

Community Institutions - Researchers now study how Jewish organizations responded to crime through: social work, reform campaigns, welfare institutions, policing initiatives and anti-trafficking efforts.

7. Beyond Organized Crime

Tepperman highlights a broadening of the field beyond classic mob history. Recent work examines: drug markets, prisons, policing, white-collar crime, juvenile justice, social control, vice regulation and state surveillance. This produces a more complete picture of Jewish interactions with legal and illegal systems.

8. Future Research Agenda

The article concludes by identifying important areas still understudied. Tepperman calls for more work on: ordinary offenders rather than celebrity gangsters; women and gender; prisons and incarceration; white-collar and financial crime; comparative ethnic crime studies; interactions between Jews and criminal justice institutions and collaboration between historians and criminologists. He argues that historians and social scientists should reconnect after decades of separation, combining archival research with criminological methods.

Significance for the Study of Jews and Crime

For anyone researching Jewish crime history, Tepperman's article is important because it provides a map of the entire field. His main contribution is showing that scholarship moved:

from sociological studies of delinquency → to romanticized histories of gangsters → to a newer social history of crime embedded in everyday Jewish life.

The article is also a critique of the long-standing fascination with Jewish mobsters. Tepperman contends that historians have often preferred dramatic stories of gangland figures because they are more exciting and culturally meaningful, while neglecting the much larger history of ordinary Jewish encounters with crime, punishment, and social control.

Tuohy, John William, (**The Book of Jewish Gangsters** [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2010]) 978-1456475116

Varga, Joseph, “**For Speaking Jewish in a Jewish Neighborhood’: Civil Rights and Community-Police Relations during the Postwar Red Scare, 1919–1922,**” in **Uniform Behavior: Police Localism and National Politics**, ed. S. McGoldrick and A. McArdle (hc, Palgrave Macmillan, 2006) 978-1403971708 [pb, Palgrave Macmillan, 2006] 978-1349533138

Vincent, Isabel. (**Bodies and Souls: The Tragic Plight of Three Jewish Women Forced into Prostitution in the Americas** [hc, William Morrow, 2005] 978-0060090234 [pb, Harper Perennial, 2006] 978-0060090241

Weisburd, David, Elin Waring & Ellen F. Chayet, (**White-Collar Crime and Criminal Careers** [hc, Cambridge UP, 2001] 978-0521771627 [pb, Cambridge UP, 2001] 978-0521777636 [

Welt, Aaron, “**Policing the Jewish Quarter: Progressive Law Enforcement and Jewish Vigilantism in the Age of Mass Migration, 1900–1920,**” American Jewish History 104, no. 1 (2020)

Welt, Aaron, “**Butchers, Bakers, and Jewish Strong-Arm Men: Organized Crime in the Kosher Food Trades During the Age of Mass Jewish Migration, 1900–1917**,” *Journal of American Ethnic History* 40, no. 2 (2021)

Whitfield, Stephen J., “**Blood and Sand: the Jewish Community of South Florida**,” *American Jewish History* 82, no. 1 (1994)

Wolf, Marvin J., & Larry Attiebery, (**Family Blood: The True Story of the Yom Kippur Murders: One Family’s Greed, Love, and Rage**) [hc, HarperCollins, 1993] 978-0060165697 [pb, CreateSpace, 2013] 978-1482012873

Zellner, Maximillian, (**The Book of American-Jewish Gangsters: A Pictorial History** [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2013]) 978-1482311075

Zimmer, Kenyon, (**Immigrants Against the State: Yiddish and Italian Anarchism in America** [hc, U. of Illinois Press, 2015]) 978-0252039386 [pb, U. of Illinois Press, 2015] 978-0252080920

Recent American Jewish Malefactors and Jewish Reactions – Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, David Berkowitz (“Son of Sam”), Jonathan Pollard, Ivan Boesky, Michael Milken, Sackler Family, Bernie Madoff, Harvey Weinstein, Jeffrey Epstein, Sam Bankman-Fried

During the last 75 years a number of Jews have played extremely high-profile negative roles in different areas of American life. This is quite a “hall of fame/infamy”: a Soviet spy, an Israeli spy, two senior Wall Street stock manipulators, the greatest Ponzi schemer of all time, a massive cryptocurrency fraudster, a family of pharma-criminals, two sexual predators, and not forgetting the serial killer. Some of them participated prominently in Jewish philanthropy, others were only marginally Jewish. All were unmistakably of Jewish origin and their exposures prompted soul-searching and attempts by Jewish individuals and communal organizations to disassociate from them and assert their non-representativeness. A survey of published fiction and non-fiction on “Jews and Crime/Espionage” could hardly launder them out of the picture. We begin with a 2024 article which attempts to analyze the connections between a few cases. We then move on to examinations of individual ones:

Silow-Carroll, Andrew, “Exhausted by the Israel discourse? Blame backlash fatigue”, published by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency on May 26, 2024 and on the same day in The *Jerusalem Post* under the title, “**Jews have experienced many backlashes, and they are tired**”. [Silow-Carroll argues that many Jews’ heightened sensitivity to criticism surrounding Israel in 2024 is best understood not as simple defensiveness but as the product of “**backlash fatigue**”—a historically rooted expectation that Jewish actions, whether by individuals or institutions, will provoke collective blame and antisemitic reactions.

*The essay begins with the death of financier **Ivan Boesky**, whose 1987 insider-trading conviction reminded the author of an earlier era when Jewish leaders feared that the crimes of prominent Jews would damage the standing of all Jews. Boesky’s scandal followed closely on the arrest of **Jonathan Pollard**, whose espionage for Israel reinforced concerns about accusations of Jewish “dual loyalty.” Although public-opinion polling at the time found little evidence that ordinary Americans blamed Jews collectively, Jewish organizations nonetheless braced for an antisemitic backlash.*

*Silow-Carroll identifies this reaction with the traditional Yiddish concept of “**a shanda fur di goyim**” (“a shame before the gentiles”), reflecting a longstanding anxiety that the misconduct of one Jew can endanger an entire minority community. He notes that similar fears resurfaced after **Bernie Madoff’s** Ponzi scheme, although the internet and social media amplified antisemitic commentary far beyond anything seen during the Boesky era.*

*The author contends that after the **October 7, 2023 Hamas attack** and the ensuing Gaza war, the scale of anti-Jewish hostility has changed dramatically. Jews have experienced exclusion on university campuses, harassment in cultural institutions, threats against synagogues, vandalism of Jewish businesses, and growing social pressure simply for expressing sympathy toward Israel. In this environment, ordinary political disagreements are perceived through the lens of accumulated vulnerability.*

*Against this background, Silow-Carroll discusses the controversy over a **Washington Post** investigation describing a WhatsApp group of wealthy pro-Israel donors who coordinated advocacy efforts and communicated with New York City officials during the Columbia University protests. The Anti-Defamation League condemned the article for employing language that echoed classic antisemitic tropes about secretive Jewish financial and political influence. At the same time, Silow-Carroll acknowledges the tension this creates: organizations such as the American Israel Public Affairs Committee openly and legitimately seek to influence American policy, making it difficult to distinguish between legitimate reporting on political lobbying and narratives that reinforce antisemitic stereotypes.*

*The essay concludes that Jews today are not merely reacting to isolated incidents but to a cumulative history of anticipated and experienced backlash. Even lawful and conventional forms of political participation may now feel fraught because Jews fear they will be interpreted as evidence of **conspiratorial power**. If Jews appear unusually defensive in contemporary debates over Israel, Silow-Carroll argues, it is because decades of recurring episodes—from Boesky and Pollard to Madoff and the post-October 7 climate—have produced a condition he calls “**backlash fatigue**.”*

*This essay is noteworthy because it explicitly links the historical cases of **Ivan Boesky**, **Jonathan Pollard**, and **Bernie Madoff** to the enduring Jewish concern that the misconduct of prominent Jewish individuals can fuel collective stereotyping and antisemitic narratives. It thus provides a contemporary reflection on the relationship between Jewish criminality, espionage, public perception, and communal identity. – ChatGPT]*

Julius and Ethel Rosenberg:

The Rosenberg case illuminates not only Soviet espionage but also the deep divisions within American Jewish life over Communism, loyalty, antisemitism, and the politics of the early Cold War. Few episodes generated as much sustained debate within American Jewish organizations and among Jewish intellectuals as the arrest, trial, and execution of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg.

Sol Stern (1935–2025) played a significant, though often overlooked role in changing the historiography of the Rosenberg case. [**Disclosure:** Sol Stern was a close personal friend of mine for over 50 years. He had a sterling reputation for fearless integrity and honesty and disregard of political correctness in his long journalism career, beginning with his membership on the editorial board of *Ramparts* magazine, the iconic American New Left publication. He made the case for Israel on the American Left throughout his life. His position on the Rosenbergs was thus typical. He is sorely missed.- SS] Here is the watershed article which broke the firm consensus on the American Left that the Rosenbergs were innocent:

*Stern, Sol and Ronald Radosh, “**The Hidden Rosenberg Case**”, *The New Republic*, June 23, 1979, pp. 13–19. Stern and Radosh had begun as members of the democratic anti-Stalinist left who were skeptical of the government’s case. After examining FBI files obtained under the Freedom of Information Act, interviewing numerous participants, and reviewing unpublished evidence, they reached several striking conclusions:*

- ***Julius Rosenberg had indeed headed an important Soviet espionage network.***
- *The traditional left-wing claim that Julius was completely innocent could no longer be sustained.*

- *The prosecution **greatly exaggerated Ethel Rosenberg's role**, using her as leverage against Julius.*
- *The trial itself was marred by prosecutorial excesses and misleading testimony, particularly from David and Ruth Greenglass.*

Their position therefore differed both from the government's original presentation and from the innocence campaign:

- *Julius was guilty.*
- *Ethel's involvement was much more limited.*
- *The death sentence was unjustified.*

Stern continued researching the Rosenbergs but stepped back from the long process of turning it into a detailed book in order to pursue other projects. He conducted interviews, collected documentary evidence, and publicly defended the book's conclusions. Radosh later credited Stern with helping uncover much of the evidence that became the basis for the book, as follows:

Ronald Radosh, and Joyce Milton, (**The Rosenberg File** [hc, Henry Holt & Co., 1983] 978-003049036 [Revised 2nd ed. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997] 978-0300072051 [978-0300072051 - Still regarded as the single most influential historical study. Drawing on FBI files and later supplemented by Soviet archival evidence, Radosh and Milton conclude that **Julius Rosenberg unquestionably directed an espionage network**, while **Ethel's legal guilt was much weaker than that presented at trial**. Initially controversial, many of its principal conclusions have been strengthened by later archival discoveries. The original 1983 edition was heavily based on FBI files obtained through Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests. The 1997 Yale University Press edition expanded on the original text by adding a **substantial new introduction** to address groundbreaking Cold War intelligence that came to light after the fall of the Soviet Union. This 1997 update explicitly incorporates:

- ***The Venona Papers:** Newly declassified U.S. Army signals intelligence decodes that explicitly detailed Soviet espionage in America.*
- ***Soviet Memoirs:** Newly available personal accounts and archives from Soviet leaders, including Nikita Khrushchev and Vyacheslav Molotov.*
- ***Documentary Evidence:** Material featured in a March 1997 Discovery Channel documentary regarding the espionage ring. The authors used these multi-sourced corroborations to argue that the newly revealed intelligence confirmed the primary conclusions of their 1983 research—namely, that Julius Rosenberg was an active agent in a Soviet spy ring.*

Schneir, Walter & Miriam, (**Invitation to an Inquest** [hc, Doubleday, 1965] B0006D7GHQ [pb, Pantheon Books, 1983] 978-0394714967 [This book provides the classic defense of the Rosenbergs. The Schneirs argued that both were victims of Cold War hysteria and judicial misconduct. The release of decrypted Soviet intelligence files (the Venona project) and KGB archives significantly changed the landscape of the Rosenberg case. Walter Schneir spent over a decade conducting new research—traveling to Moscow and Prague—to cross-reference these newly unsealed files. Walter passed away in 2009 before the text was fully prepared for print. Miriam completed the work, providing a preface and an afterword to this final volume. Unlike their initial 1965 thesis which argued complete innocence, this final piece provides details of how Julius Rosenberg was indeed a courier operating a Soviet World War II spy ring, though still confirming that the specific “atomic secrets” frame-up charges used to execute the couple were deeply flawed. Details of the greatly revised new edition:

Schneir, Walter & Miriam, (**Final Verdict: What Really Happened in the Rosenberg Case** [hc, Melville House Publishing, 2010] 978-1935554165 [pb, Melville House, 2011] 978-1935554165

Additional significant works on the Rosenberg case:

Sebba Anne, (**Ethel Rosenberg: An American Tragedy** [hc, St. Martin's Press, 2021]) 978-1250198631 [pb, Griffin, 2022] 978-1250198648 [*The best modern biography of Ethel. Sebba argues that Ethel knew of Julius's activities but that the evidence presented against her at trial was deeply flawed and insufficient to justify execution. She also emphasizes sexism and antisemitism in shaping public perceptions.*]

Haynes, John Earl, Harvey Klehr & Alexander Vassiliev, (**Spies: The Rise and Fall of the KGB in America** [hc, Yale UP, 2009]) 978-0300123906 [pb, Yale UP, 2010] 978-0300164381 [*Uses KGB archives to reconstruct Soviet espionage networks and places Julius Rosenberg firmly within them.*]

Fineberg, Rabbi S. Andhil, (**The Rosenberg Case: Fact and Fiction** [hc, Oceana Publications for the American Jewish Committee, 1953]) B0000CIQPL [*One of the earliest Jewish responses. Fineberg argued that Communist organizations deliberately exploited accusations of antisemitism and maintained that the evidence justified conviction. The pamphlet reflected the official position of the American Jewish Committee.*]

Dawidowicz, Lucy, “‘Anti-Semitism’ and the Rosenberg Case: The Latest Communist Propaganda Trap”, Commentary, July 1952 (Vol. 14, No. 1, pp. 41–45) [*Dawidowicz argued that the Communist Party and front organizations like the National Committee to Secure Justice in the Rosenberg Case deliberately fabricated claims of government anti-Semitism to manipulate the American Jewish community. She demonstrated that early communist reporting completely ignored the issue of anti-Semitism, only weaponizing it later as a “trap” to drum up financial and emotional support from mainstream Jewish liberals.*]

Dawidowicz, Lucy, “The Rosenberg Case: ‘Hate-America’ Weapon”, The New Leader, December 22, 1952 (Vol. 35, No. 51, p. 13) [*Published on the eve of 1953, this article focused on the geopolitical dimensions of the case. Dawidowicz explained how the Soviet bloc was using the impending executions of the Rosenbergs to paint the United States as a fascist state on the global stage. She strongly condemned the Rosenbergs as unrepentant Soviet spies, asserting that their loyalty belonged entirely to the USSR rather than the United States or the Jewish people.*]

Garber, Marjorie & Rebecca Walkowitz, eds., (**Secret Agents: The Rosenberg Case, McCarthyism and Fifties America** [hc, Routledge, 1995] 978-0415911191 [pb, Routledge, 1995] 978-0415911207 [*A collection of essays by literary scholars, historians, and cultural critics exploring the Rosenberg affair's influence on American intellectual life.*]

Carmichael, Virginia, (**Framing History: The Rosenberg Story and the Cold War** [hc, U. of Minnesota Press, 1993]) 978-0816620418 [pb, U. of Minnesota Press, 1993] 978-0816620425 [*Examines how the Rosenbergs became political and cultural symbols through film, literature, journalism, and public memory.*]

Meeropol, Michael & Robert, (**We Are Your Sons: The Legacy of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg** [hc, Houghton Mifflin, 1975] 978-0395205525 [pb, Ballantine Books, 1976] B001ZQZ4EA [*Contains memoirs, historical documents, and essays by the Rosenbergs' two sons, who were adopted and raised by Abel and Anne Meeropol.*]

Fiction Based on Rosenberg Case:

Doctorow, E.L., (**The Book of Daniel** [hc, Random House, 1971] 978-0394462714 [pb, Random House, 2007] 978-0812978179 . *See entry on Doctorow in the companion bibliography on U.S. Jewish crime fiction .*

Coover, Robert, **The Public Burning** [hc, Viking Press, 1977] 978-0670582006 [pb, Grove Press, 1998] 978-0802135278 [*The novel reimagines the three fateful days in 1953 that culminated with the execution of alleged atomic spies Julius and Ethel Rosenberg. Vice-President Richard Nixon - the*

voraciously ambitious bad boy of the Eisenhower regime - is the dominant narrator in an enormous cast that includes Betty Crocker, Joe McCarthy, the Marx Brothers, Walter Winchell, Uncle Sam, his adversary The Phantom, and Time magazine incarnated as the National Poet Laureate. All of these and thousands more converge in Times Square for the carnivalesque auto-da-fé at which the Rosenbergs are put to death. And not a person present escapes implication in Cold War America's ruthless "public burning." – Amazon]

Films – see entries in companion Filmography (chronologically by year of film's release)

Judgment: The Trial of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg (1974) ([see p. 514](#))

The Unquiet Death of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg (1974) ([see p. 514](#))

Daniel (1983) ([see p. 516](#))

Heir to an Execution: A Granddaughter's Story (2004) ([see p. 521](#))

The Rosenbergs: Atomic Spies (2025) ([see p. 537](#))

Jonathan Pollard:

Film: See note on *Pollard (2022 Docuseries)* in the companion Filmography.

Significant standalone books on the Pollard case:

Blitzer, Wolf, (**Territory of Lies: The Exclusive Story of Jonathan Jay Pollard — The American Who Spied on His Country for Israel and How He Was Betrayed** [hc, HarperCollins, 1989] 978-0060159726. *The first major book on the case; Blitzer (then Washington correspondent for The Jerusalem Post, later CNN) was the first journalist to interview Pollard in prison.*

Goldenberg, Elliott, (**The Hunting Horse: The Truth Behind the Jonathan Pollard Spy Case** (hc, Prometheus Books, 2000)) 978-1573928540 [*Goldenberg argues that Pollard's sentence was not due to the severity of the damage he inflicted on the security of the United States, contrary to assertions by the Justice Department and the Pentagon. His greatest crime, Goldenberg insists, was that Pollard inadvertently stumbled upon and threatened to expose secret dealings between President Reagan's most-trusted advisors and Saddam Hussein. Pollard, realizing how much of a threat this might mean to Israeli security, took it upon himself to pass on vital information regarding these U.S.-Iraqi dealings to Israel.* – Amazon]

Olive, Ronald J., (**Capturing Jonathan Pollard: How One of the Most Notorious Spies in American History Was Brought to Justice**) [hc, Naval Institute Press, 2006] 978-1591146520 [pb, Naval Institute Press, 2009] 978-1591146476 *Written by the Naval Investigative Service counterintelligence agent who led Pollard's interrogation and obtained his confession — an insider law-enforcement account, notably less sympathetic than Blitzer's, and explicit in describing this as a corrective to advocacy-driven accounts.*

Also worth knowing about, though less prominent as full standalone treatments:

Oren, Michael, (**Ally: My Journey Across the America-Israel Divide** [hc, Random House, 2015] 978-0812996418 [pb, Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2016] 978-0812986426 - *contains a substantial section on Pollard and communal reaction.*

Al-Abed, Lutfi, "**From Dreyfus to Pollard**", *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, July 23, 1987. [*Anti-Israel, anti-Zionist and anti-AIPAC advocates were active in linking the anxiety over the Julius and Ethel Rosenberg trial directly to the 1985 arrest of Jonathan Pollard. This piece outlines how Pollard's espionage for America's ally, Israel, triggered the modern pinnacle of "dual loyalty" anxieties, testing the domestic confidence and security of the American Jewish community more severely than any event since the 1950s Red Scare. It goes further by recalling the Dreyfus Affair (France, 1894) as another milestone in concerns about Jewish divided loyalties and potential for*

treason. It concludes that the Pollard scandal would “signal the beginning of the end of the Zionist dream” by eroding the Western public opinion and external material support that Israel relies upon.]

*Two prominent articles, by Seymour Hersh and Robert Friedman among others, document that Jonathan Pollard received between **\$45,000 and \$50,000 in direct cash and gifts** during his 18 months of espionage, alongside promises of an additional **\$300,000 to \$540,000** stashed in a secret Swiss bank account:*

Hersh, Seymour, “**The Traitor: The case against Jonathan Pollard**”, The New Yorker, January 11, 1999): - *meticulously details Pollard’s chronic debt, financial crises, and expensive lifestyle prior to spying. Hersh outlines how Pollard’s Israeli handlers agreed to a monthly salary that grew to **\$2,500** (\$1,500 initially), plus cash handouts for luxury hotels, upscale meals, and jewelry. Hersh quotes Assistant U.S. Attorney Charles S. Leeper pointing out that Pollard stood to make an additional **\$540,000** over the projected life of the spy ring.*

Friedman, Robert I., “**The Secret Agent**”, The New York Review of Books, October 26, 1989): *This comprehensive look at the operation provides deep context on how Israeli intelligence rewarded Pollard and his wife, Anne Henderson-Pollard. Friedman documents that the couple received tens of thousands of dollars in cash, a diamond-and-sapphire engagement ring, five-star European hotel suites, and were promised \$300,000 over ten years in a Swiss bank account.*

Leibovitz, Liel, “**National Insecurity: The Case for Jonathan Pollard**”, Tablet Magazine, November 16, 2010. *Describes Pollard as “the suburban American Jewish dream turned nightmare: a good, middle-class, high-achieving boy turned traitor;” and separately notes that NY Times columnist **William Safire** warned after Pollard’s sentencing that the case would encourage antisemites who charge Jews with dual loyalty or fifth-column allegiance.*

<https://www.tabletmag.com/sections/news/articles/national-insecurity> *A later article about Pollard in the Jerusalem Post (January 23, 2026) stated: “Richard Cohen, then a columnist for The Washington Post, called the Pollard case a ‘nightmare-come-true for American Jews. In Pollard, the Israelis created an anti-Semitic stereotype — an American Jew of confused loyalties who sold out his country.’”*

Mirsky, Yehudah, “**The Multiple Loyalties of American Jews**”, My Jewish Learning, 70 Faces Media. Page last modified April 11, 2018.

URL: <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/the-multiple-loyalties-of-american-jews/> *[The essay opens from the observation that “**dual loyalty**” as a charge against American Jews had, at time of writing, become more current and credible than at any point in the previous fifty years, crediting Stephen Walt and John Mearsheimer’s March 2006 essay “The Israel Lobby” as catalyst. Mirsky writes that the Pollard case hangs over all such discussions, and that as a committed Jew who served in the U.S. government, he finds it hard to justify Pollard’s actions even though the sentence seems excessive by comparison to other offenders. Mirsky is a rabbi, historian, and professor at Brandeis University; he previously worked in the U.S. State Department, which is relevant context for the essay’s vantage point.]*

*There is a striking contrast of Pollard’s case with Madoff’s — where **affinity-fraud** framing at least generated sympathy for Jewish victims — and even with Weinstein, where the debate was mostly about whether his identity mattered at all. With Pollard, mainstream Jewish organizations initially ran away from the case. As the Forward’s retrospective put it, the arrest sent shock waves through the community, and a former chairman of the Conference of Presidents recalled a pointed reluctance among organized Jewish groups to stand up on Pollard’s behalf, driven by concerns about antisemitism and dual loyalty, so most groups refrained from getting involved.*

Polling captured just how widespread the anxiety was: a 1987 New York Times poll found 61% of American Jews felt anger and embarrassment over the case, while 54% believed it would trigger a rise in antisemitism.

Some prominent voices went further, actively repudiating him. Former New York City Mayor Ed Koch stated plainly that while he was a proud Jew, he was also an American citizen and would not condone

the actions of a traitor to the United States, adding there was no excuse for Pollard to take \$150,000 from Israel or hand over American codes. Former Israeli ambassador Michael Oren recounted an even sharper version: a senior National Security Council official told him that as an American Jew, he believed Pollard should get out of prison — in a coffin.

The later shift: organizational advocacy without full grassroots buy-in

Over subsequent decades, something unusual happened: the organized Jewish establishment's position gradually diverged from broader Jewish public sentiment. Going back to 1989, the Central Conference of American Rabbis called on the entire Reform movement to support Pollard, and by the 1990s a wide range of Jewish leaders — including Rabbi Norman Lamm of Yeshiva University — were urging clemency, with some framing him as a “political prisoner” or victim of antisemitism. By his 2015 release, groups like Hadassah, B'nai B'rith, the Conference of Presidents, and the Union for Reform Judaism had all called for his release, and the Conference of Presidents issued a unified statement welcoming it.

But this elite consensus never fully reflected the base: a former chairman noted that despite the appearance of longstanding unified support, the community had in fact been pointedly slow to embrace Pollard's cause, only lobbying in earnest over roughly the final decade. Critics writing in Jewish Currents and similar outlets argued that most American Jews had actually recoiled from Pollard's actions even as certain organizations embraced him for reasons they hadn't adequately explained, suggesting an institutional/grassroots gap rather than genuine consensus.

The Israeli-vs-American Jewish divide

Pollard also became a flashpoint exposing a rift between Israeli and diaspora Jewish self-understanding, more than any of the other cases did. Commentary in JNS argued that Israelis by and large celebrated the Pollards' return, while American Jews bristled at both the arrest and at Israeli enthusiasm for him — with one analyst suggesting American Jews resented Pollard because his case reminded them of their own vulnerability, undercutting the idea that America was a full “promised land” free of the old exilic anxieties. That same piece argued the community's harsh reaction wasn't blindness to the antisemitic overtones of his sentencing, but the opposite — they were acutely aware of that dynamic and specifically feared it.

Academic sourcing adds one more layer: the Pollard case is credited with helping end the traditional silence of American Jewish leaders on criticizing Israel publicly, a shift that became fully visible with the first intifada in 1987 — suggesting the case reshaped not just how Jews saw an individual traitor, but how comfortable American Jewish leadership felt pushing back on Israel itself.

Where this leaves him relative to the others

*If Boesky, Milken, and Madoff triggered shanda anxiety (shame before non-Jews) and Weinstein triggered a fight over whether identity was even relevant, Pollard triggered something closer to **institutional panic about loyalty and belonging** — a fear that was, by most accounts in this reporting, taken far more seriously and organized around (via calculated public silence, then later calculated public advocacy) than any instinct to defend him on the merits. He doesn't fit the “Jewish criminal, communal embarrassment” pattern of the others so much as a distinct pattern: “Jewish traitor to America, existential threat to communal standing,” which is arguably why the reaction was so much more calculated and split, rather than simply defensive or ashamed. — Claude]*

Various articles and advocacy pieces about Pollard referred to in above account:

Ain, Stewart. “How Jonathan Pollard Freedom Crusade United American Jews,” *The Forward*, July 29, 2015. <https://forward.com/news/318074/how-jonathan-pollard-freedom-crusade-became-a-jewish-cause/>

Tablet Magazine (staff), “American Jews Disagree on Jonathan Pollard's Possible Release,” *Tablet Magazine*, April 4, 2014. <https://www.tabletmag.com/sections/news/articles/pollards-potential-release-divides-u-s-jews>

American Council for Judaism (staff), “What the Case of Jonathan Pollard Tells Us about Zionism’s Worldview,” *American Council for Judaism*, n.d. (referencing Pollard’s Nov. 2015 release). <https://acjna.org/articles/what-the-case-of-jonathan-pollard-tells-us-about-zionisms-worldview/>

Jewish Currents (staff/uncredited), “Jonathan Pollard: He’s No Victim,” *Jewish Currents*, August 21, 2021. <https://jewishcurrents.org/jonathan-pollard-hes-no-victim>

Unpacked (staff), “Did Jonathan Pollard Safeguard Israel or Betray America?” *Unpacked Media*, June 13, 2022 (citing journalist Caroline Glick). <https://unpacked.media/did-jonathan-pollard-safeguard-israel-or-betray-america/>

[Author, likely Caroline Glick], “Pollard and the great Jewish divide,” *JNS.org*, January 3, 2021. <https://www.jns.org/pollard-and-the-great-jewish-divide/>

My Jewish Learning (staff), “Jonathan Pollard,” *My Jewish Learning*, n.d. (citing a 1987 New York Times poll). <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/jonathan-pollard/>

Washington Report on Middle East Affairs (staff), “Jonathan Pollard, Occupation and Ethnic Cleansing: Where Zionism Has Led,” February 16, 2023. <https://www.wrmea.org/israel-palestine/jonathan-pollard-occupation-and-ethnic-cleansing-where-zionism-has-led.html>

Pollard in Israel - Postscript: Since moving to Israel, Pollard has adopted controversial positions on dual loyalty and Israeli political issues, appearing occasionally in the Israeli press.

*In a March 25, 2021 interview with the Israeli daily Israel Hayom, shortly after settling in Israel following the end of his parole, Jonathan Pollard said: “The bottom line on this charge of dual loyalty is, I’m sorry, we’re Jews, and if we’re Jews, **we will always have dual loyalty**”. This controversial quote was picked up and reported by multiple outlets:*

Jewish Telegraphic Agency (JTA). “Jonathan Pollard says Jews ‘will always have dual loyalty’ and would counsel young Jews to consider spying for Israel.” March 25, 2021. <https://www.jta.org/quick-reads/jonathan-pollard-says-jews-will-always-have-dual-loyalty-and-would-counsel-young-jews-to-consider-spying-for-israel>

The Times of Israel. “Pollard claims Jews ‘will always have dual loyalty,’ whether they know it or not.” March 25, 2021. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/in-blunt-interview-pollard-claims-jews-will-always-have-dual-loyalty/>

Intermountain Jewish News (IJN), Editorial Staff. “Pollard’s Dual Loyalty.” *Intermountain Jewish News*, April 1, 2021. *A sharply critical editorial arguing that Pollard’s own words show he “is not a Jewish hero,” and that his framing of every society outside Israel as one where Jews are “considered unreliable” ignores the freedom American Jews have historically enjoyed.* <https://www.ijn.com/pollards-dual-loyalty/> *Ijn*

Jerusalem Post. “Pollard: Jews ‘will always have dual loyalty’ & should consider spying for Israel.” March 26, 2021. <https://www.jpost.com/diaspora/pollard-jews-will-always-have-dual-loyalty-and-should-consider-spying-for-israel-663285>

On Sept. 15, 2022 (*Times of Israel*) *he said the West Bank town of Huwara “must be destroyed, but without killing people” and that Israel’s enemies “only understand decisive retaliation” (following terrorist attacks there).*

March 6, 2023— (*Times of Israel*), *Far-right National Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir intervened after Pollard was found by the Israeli Police not to meet the criteria for owning a weapon.*

Louis, Ari (interviewer). *“Jonathan Pollard sat down for first ever long-form interview in English since his release from prison.”* *The Nation of Israel* (Substack), May 22, 2023.

<https://thenationofisrael.substack.com/p/jonathan-pollard-sat-down-for-first/comments>

September 21, 2025 (*Jerusalem Post Magazine*) *“Is Israel ready for Jonathan Pollard? Ex-spy outlines 10-point plan for Knesset run.”* Pollard called for a government declaration that the Oslo Accords are “officially dead,” argued the PLO never actually ratified the agreement, and called for “eliminating the PA kinetically,” including closing Palestinian refugee camps he called “terrorist training centers.”

November 20, 2025 (*The Jerusalem Post*) *“US antisemitism led Jonathan Pollard to spy for Israel.”* Drawing on a Maariv interview. Pollard described being bullied as the only Jewish student at his Galveston, Texas school, carrying a knife at age 11, and said his father advised him, “If many are against you, kick one so hard that the rest will not return to you.”

<https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/defense-news/article-874568> The Washington Post

Separately: November 20, 2025 (*Times of Israel*/NYT) *“US Ambassador to Israel Huckabee hosted ex-spy Jonathan Pollard for meeting at US embassy,”*—reporting that the CIA’s Israel station chief was “alarmed” at the meeting and that the White House was not informed of it beforehand.

December 22, 2025 (*Times of Israel*) *“Former spy Jonathan Pollard: Israel sent a man to convince me to kill myself.”* In an Army Radio interview, Pollard claimed he was told years ago by someone “sent by the Israeli government” that he should commit suicide to “close the door” on his case. He also said he opposes any foreign military presence in Israel, calling the US-led Civil-Military Coordination Center in Kiryat Gat a “threat” to Israeli sovereignty.

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/former-spy-jonathan-pollard-israel-sent-a-man-to-convince-me-to-kill-myself/> Wikipedia

May 7, 2026 (NPR) - Estrin, Daniel. *“Ex-spy who sold U.S. secrets to Israel says he’s sorry, and will run for parliament.”* Pollard told NPR, “I made a mistake, I didn’t think about the consequences. And 30 years later, here I am trying to leave a better legacy.” He said the October 7, 2023 attack was a turning point, adding, “I also had assumed that my abandonment and betrayal by the Israeli government was the exception to the rule. When October 7 happened, I suddenly realized that the entire country had been betrayed and abandoned.” **He directly blamed Prime Minister Netanyahu**, saying Netanyahu “has never taken any share of the blame for the disaster that fell upon us on that day” and has made “a series of horrific blunders” since.

<https://www.npr.org/2026/05/07/nx-s1-5812527/former-u-s-analyst-once-jailed-for-spying-for-israel-to-run-for-israeli-parliament> Ex-spy who sold U.S. secrets to Israel says he’s sorry, and will run for parliament | NPR & Houston Public Media +2

May 2026 (*Ynet News*) *“Jonathan Pollard, once jailed in US for spying, says he will enter Israeli politics.”* He said he will run alongside Nissim Louk, father of Shani Louk, a victim of the Nova music festival massacre, and that he supports a “full transfer” of Gaza’s population.

<https://www.ynetnews.com/article/b12quic111> Ynetnews

Rosenberg-Pollard Link?

Goldberg, J.J., **Jewish Power: Inside the American Jewish Establishment** [hc. Addison-Wesley, 1996] 978-0201622423 [pb, Basic Books, 1997] 978-0201327984 [Probably the most important book on this question. Goldberg discusses both the Rosenberg and Pollard affairs as crises in American Jewish identity. He argues that:

- the Rosenberg case raised fears that Jews would be associated with international Communism;
- the Pollard affair revived fears that Jews would be suspected of putting Israel before the United States;
- American Jewish organizations responded in both cases by emphasizing the overwhelming patriotism of American Jews and distancing themselves from the accused.]

Krauthammer, Charles, “**Pollard and the Jews**”, *The Washington Post*, March 20, 1987 [*Written only months after Pollard’s arrest, Krauthammer argued that American Jews feared Pollard would become what the Rosenbergs had once been: a symbol allegedly proving Jewish disloyalty. He rejected that inference as a revival of an old antisemitic trope.*]

Ivan Boesky:

Salkin, Jeffrey, “**Ivan Boesky was not good for the Jews**”, *Religion News Service*, May 22, 2024 - *The word is ‘shanda.’ Ivan Boesky embodied it. [- Jeffrey Salkin uses the death of convicted insider trader **Ivan Boesky** as an occasion to reflect on the relationship between Jewish identity, ethics, and public reputation. He argues that while Boesky’s crimes were personal, they also became, in the public imagination, a source of embarrassment (shanda) for the Jewish community.*

*Salkin begins by recalling Boesky’s spectacular rise and fall. A pioneer of risk arbitrage, Boesky amassed immense wealth through insider trading before pleading guilty in 1987, paying a \$100 million penalty, and serving prison time. His story inspired the fictional Gordon Gekko in the film *Wall Street*.*

*The author criticizes *The New York Times* obituary for emphasizing Boesky’s Jewish background, questioning whether it was necessary to identify his father as “a Jewish immigrant from Russia” or to recount Boesky’s theatrical helicopter arrival at an extravagant Jewish bar mitzvah celebration. In Salkin’s view, such details reinforce longstanding stereotypes about Jews, wealth, and ostentation at a time when antisemitism has sharply increased following the October 7, 2023 attacks and the ensuing Israel-Hamas war.*

*At the same time, Salkin insists that Boesky’s case is legitimately a **Jewish story**—not because Jews are uniquely implicated in financial wrongdoing, but because Judaism places extraordinary emphasis on ethical business conduct. He notes that while the Torah contains only a few dozen dietary laws, it contains well over one hundred commandments governing economic justice, honesty, and fair dealing. Rabbinic tradition similarly teaches that true piety requires scrupulous integrity in commerce.*

*The article argues that the 1980s insider trading scandals, involving Boesky as well as other prominent Jewish financiers such as **Dennis Levine and Michael Milken**, exposed failures within the organized Jewish community to hold influential members morally accountable. According to Salkin, these scandals highlighted a troubling gap between Jewish ethical ideals and the behavior of some highly visible Jewish leaders.*

Boesky’s prominence in Jewish communal life made the disgrace particularly painful. Before his conviction, he served on the boards of major Jewish institutions, including the UJA-Federation of New York, the Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS), Yeshiva University, and the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council. Salkin notes that the JTS library had once borne Boesky’s name, but after the scandal Boesky himself requested that his name be removed—an act the author interprets as evidence that Boesky recognized the shame (busha) his actions had brought upon both himself and the Jewish community.

*The essay concludes with a reflection drawn from the Talmud. Salkin imagines Boesky facing the ultimate divine judgment, where the first and most important question would not concern ritual observance but whether he had **conducted his business honestly and faithfully according to Jewish ethical principles**. The author ends by extending condolences to Boesky’s family while reaffirming that Judaism ultimately measures a person’s character less by wealth or ritual than by integrity in financial and moral conduct. – ChatGPT]*

Ivan Boesky & Michael Milken:

These two are almost always covered together, since their cases were intertwined (Boesky’s plea deal implicated Milken).

Stewart, James B., **Den of Thieves** [hc, Simon & Schuster, 1991] 978-0671638023 [pb, Simon & Schuster, 1992] 978-0671792275 (*the classic, Pulitzer-winning account*) *shows for the first time how four of the eighties' biggest names on Wall Street—Michael Milken, Ivan Boesky, Martin Siegel, and Dennis Levine—created the greatest insider-trading ring in financial history.*

Bruck, Connie, **(The Predators' Ball: The Inside Story of Drexel Burnham and the Rise of the Junk Bond Raiders** [hc, Amer. Law/Simon & Schuster, 1988] B000GWK4I0 [pb, Simon & Schuster, 2020] 978-1982144265 - *recounts the rise of Michael Milken, his firm Drexel Burnham Lambert, and the leveraged buyout boom they helped fuel in the 1980s* [Wikipedia](#)

Stein, Benjamin J., **(A License to Steal: The Untold Story of Michael Milken and the Conspiracy to Bilk the Nation** [hc, Simon & Schuster, 1992] 978-0671742720 – *reveals the full scope of the damage that Milken's junk-bond empire inflicted on the U.S. economy* [Publishers Weekly](#)

Kornbluth, Jesse, **(Highly Confident: The Crime and Punishment of Michael Milken** [hc, William Morrow, 1992] 978-0688109370 - *an authorized, more sympathetic account — worth noting it was bought and paid for by Milken himself, according to some reviewers, so read with that in mind*) [all the above from **Claude**]

Sandler Richard V., **(Witness to a Prosecution: The Myth of Michael Milken** [hc, Forbes Books, 2023] 979-8887501338 [For a completely counter-mainstream perspective, this book was written by Milken's *personal defense attorney* who was by his side daily during the federal investigations. Utilizing actual court transcripts, Sandler argues that ambitious federal prosecutors and headline-hungry journalists systematically demonized and over-prosecuted an innocent financial innovator to boost their own political careers.]

See also: note on the movie “**Wall Street**” (1987) in the companion Filmography.

Bernie Madoff:

Films: *The companion Filmography includes three movies about Madoff, listed below with the name of the actor portraying Madoff):*

Madoff (2016 – Richard Dreyfuss - with Ben Dreyfuss, Richard's son, playing the younger Bernie in flashbacks) [\(see p. 528\)](#)

The Wizard of Lies (2017 – Robert De Niro) [\(see p. 529\)](#)

Madoff: The Monster of Wall Street (2023 - Grant Lowenstein played the younger Bernie in flashbacks; Joseph Scotto played the adult Bernie) [\(see p. 536\)](#)

In addition, two commercial films made in the years following the Madoff affair featured characters with different names, but openly based on Madoff and his activities:

Tower Heist (2011) – starring Alan Alda; and

Blue Jasmine (2013) – directed by Woody Allen and starring Alec Baldwin.

*See above in this bibliography: **Note** on the films made about **Meyer Lansky**, compared to those made about Madoff.*

Books and Articles:

Behar, Richard (**Madoff: The Final Word** [hc, Avid Reader Press, 2024]) 978-1476726892 [pb] 978-1476726908

Brown, Hannah, “**Scammer of the Tribe: Bernie Madoff ripped off Jewish organizations around world**”, [The Jerusalem Post](#), April 15, 2021 [Published after Madoff's death in prison, this retrospective provides a comprehensive global accounting of the “philanthropic tsunami” that hit the

*Jewish community. The article tracks how Madoff embedded himself in elite country clubs to court wealthy Jewish donors, board members, and massive institutional endowments. It profiles the collapse and severe crippling of major international organizations, showing how a single bad actor exploited religious and cultural solidarity to bypass traditional financial oversight and institutional due diligence. Here are excerpts from the article, with emphasis on specific organizations and individuals added. This case is extraordinary in its scale and in the high-profile Jewishness of both the perpetrator – Madoff was a prominent figure in Jewish philanthropy – and many of its victims. See also “**Why Were So Many Madoff Victims Jewish?**” - The trust people tend to feel toward others in the same ethnic, racial, and political groups makes them easy targets for scammers. - by Harold A. Pollack (article paywall-restricted) in *The Atlantic*, Feb. 8, 2016.]*

Bernie Madoff, who died on Wednesday at 82 while serving a 150-year sentence for running the largest Ponzi scheme in history, didn't prey only on the super-rich. He also scammed dozens of Jewish organizations in the US and charities in Israel, several of which were forced to close down because they lost everything. Many others had to make severe cutbacks.

His December 11, 2008, arrest, which came just after the subprime mortgage financial crisis in America, revealed the extent of his scheme that had such a devastating effect around the world: 37,000 victims in 136 countries.

***Hadassah**, the Women's Zionist Organization of America, which supports hospitals and other institutions in Israel, said it lost \$90 million that it had invested with Madoff; in 2010, WZO pledged to pay back \$45 million of the money that it had made earlier with the financier. Former Hadassah CFO Sheryl Weinstein claimed to have had a long-term affair with Madoff and wrote a book about it in 2009: *Madoff's Other Secret: Love, Money, Bernie and Me* (see below). She spoke witheringly about Madoff at his sentencing hearing, calling him “a beast” and urging the judge to give him a harsh sentence, which he did.*

*Madoff's scorched-earth policy burned scores of organizations, among them **Yeshiva University**, where Madoff served as the treasurer of the Board of Trustees and which lost over \$100 million; the **Jewish Community Foundation of Los Angeles** with losses of \$25.5 million; and **Washington's Jewish Federation**, which was bilked of \$10 million. **The Ramaz day school in New York** lost over \$5 million, while the **American Jewish Congress** found that about two-thirds of its nearly \$17 million endowment was gone.*

*Nothing was sacred: Madoff reportedly scammed **Elie Wiesel's charitable foundation** out of over \$36 million. The Wall Street Journal reported that **Steven Spielberg's charity, the Wunderkinder Foundation**, invested nearly 70% of its money with Madoff, most of which was lost. And **Fred Wilpon**, the Jewish owner of the New York Mets, was forced to pay \$162 million in restitution, eventually forcing him to sell the team.*

*No group was apparently too small to steal from, either. The **American branch of Elem**, an Israeli organization that helps youth in distress, lost \$850,000 it invested with him, according to The New York Times, as did **Yad Sarah**, the Israeli medical equipment charity, which reported losses of \$1.5 million. According to various reports, the **Technion** lost about \$6 million. The **Robert I. Lappin Foundation** in Massachusetts announced it would close after losing about \$8 million – all it had. The **Chais Family Foundation**, which gave over \$10 million each year to Jewish causes in Israel, the former Soviet Union and eastern Europe, also had to shut down. Detailed lists of the Jewish and Israeli organizations and individual victimized by Madoff are available on the internet. Thanks to the “clawback” mechanisms, some of them eventually received partial restitution of their losses of capital, provided they had not over the years withdrawn **more** than they originally invested (as was the case with Hadassah, for example). In some cases, restitution reached the level of 90%, but spread out over 9-16 years.*

Campbell. Jim, (**Madoff Talks: Uncovering the Untold Story Behind the Most Notorious Ponzi Scheme in History** [hc, McGraw Hill, 2021]) 978-1260456172 [\[See related film\]](#)

Chernow, Ron, “**Madoff and His Models.**” *The New Yorker*, Vol. 85, No. 5 (cover date **March 23, 2009**), pp. 32–37. *[Written only months after the collapse of Bernie Madoff’s investment empire, Ron Chernow’s essay places the scandal in the long history of Ponzi schemes rather than treating it as an unprecedented event. He argues that Madoff was less an entirely new kind of criminal than the most sophisticated practitioner of a fraud with deep historical roots.]*

Chernow begins by examining the original Ponzi operator, Charles Ponzi, and then compares him with earlier confidence men such as Ivar Kreuger. These figures all exploited investors’ willingness to believe in effortless wealth while relying on a continual flow of new money to satisfy earlier investors. Madoff, Chernow argues, perfected rather than invented the model.

The article explains that Madoff’s greatest innovation was psychological rather than financial. Unlike Charles Ponzi, who openly solicited investors with extravagant promises, Madoff cultivated exclusivity. He limited access to his fund, accepted clients only through trusted intermediaries, and projected an image of modest, steady success rather than spectacular profits. Annual returns of roughly 8–12 percent appeared plausible, encouraging wealthy and financially sophisticated investors to believe they had discovered an unusually prudent investment manager rather than an impossible miracle.

Chernow also explores the social dynamics that enabled the fraud. Madoff built extraordinary credibility through his legitimate market-making business, his service as chairman of the NASDAQ, and his extensive philanthropy. Within affluent Jewish circles in New York, Palm Beach, and elsewhere, introductions to Madoff became prized social currency, and many investors viewed him as a trusted insider. Chernow observes that Madoff “victimized his own community (in his case, Jewish),” although his clientele eventually expanded far beyond it to include major banks, hedge funds, universities, charities, and international investors.

A substantial portion of the essay examines Madoff’s personality. Chernow rejects simplistic portrayals of him as merely a financial genius or a cartoon villain, instead suggesting that, like many legendary swindlers, Madoff gradually came to believe his own mythology. His obsessive secrecy, insistence that clients never question his methods, and carefully controlled office environment all served to insulate the fraud from scrutiny while reinforcing his aura of authority.

Chernow concludes that the Madoff scandal reveals enduring weaknesses in human nature rather than simply failures of financial regulation. Greed alone does not explain the scheme’s longevity; equally important were trust, prestige, social conformity, and the desire to belong to an exclusive financial elite. These characteristics have sustained confidence schemes from Charles Ponzi’s era to the present, making Madoff’s crime both historically familiar and uniquely devastating.

Although this is primarily a historical analysis of financial fraud, Chernow directly addresses Madoff’s prominence within segments of the American Jewish community and explains how ethnic, familial, and philanthropic networks helped establish the trust on which the fraud depended. At the same time, he makes clear that Madoff’s victims ultimately extended far beyond Jewish circles and that the mechanisms of the fraud were universal rather than specifically Jewish. As such, the essay is one of the best concise historical analyses of Madoff and provides important context for understanding the relationship between Jewish communal networks and one of the largest white-collar crimes in history. – ChatGPT]

Eren, Colleen P., (**Bernie Madoff and the Crisis: The Public Trial of Capitalism** [hc, Stanford UP, 2017]) 978-0804795586 [pb, Stanford UP, 2017] 978-1503602724 *[Bernie Madoff’s arrest could not have come at a more darkly poetic moment. Economic upheaval had plunged America into a horrid recession. Then, on December 11, 2008, Madoff’s \$65 billion Ponzi scheme came to light. A father turned in by his sons; a son who took his own life; another son dying and estranged from his father; a woman at the center of a storm—Madoff’s story was a media magnet, voraciously consumed by a justice-seeking public. Bernie Madoff and the Crisis goes beyond purely investigative accounts to examine how and why Madoff became the epicenter of public fury and titillation. Rooting her argument in critical sociology, Colleen P. Eren analyzes media coverage of this landmark case alongside original*

interviews with dozens of journalists and editors involved in the reportage, the SEC Director of Public Affairs, and Bernie Madoff himself. Turning the mirror back onto society, Eren locates Madoff within a broader reckoning about free market capitalism. She argues that our ideological and cultural tendencies to attribute blame to individuals—be they regulators, victims, or “monsters” like Madoff—distracts us from more systemic critiques. Bernie Madoff and the Crisis offers fresh insight into the 2008 crisis, whether we have come to terms with it, and what we have yet to gain from the case of the century. – Amazon]

Fishman, Steve, “**Bernie Madoff, Monster,**” *New York Magazine*, cover story, late February 2009 (URL: nymag.com/news/businessfinance/54703/). [Summary: *The article frames Ezra Merkin as almost a mirror image of Madoff: where Madoff was a striving outer-borough operator with a “whiff of Queens,” Merkin was an Upper East Side intellectual showman — quoting Hamlet, discoursing on Jewish law and Rothko (whose paintings he collected), and serving as chairman of GMAC. A fellow congregant called him “pious, prayerful, and profound.”*

The piece traces this to Merkin’s upbringing as the son of Hermann Merkin, a wealthy but emotionally distant philanthropist who co-founded Fifth Avenue Synagogue. Despite the family’s wealth, the household enforced strict thrift, and Ezra — as the oldest son — carried outsized expectations. The article suggests this dynamic partly drove Ezra’s competitive pursuit of success in finance, philanthropy, and religious life, ultimately eclipsing his father’s fortune.

*Crucially, the piece reports that it was **Hermann**, not Ezra, who first knew and admired Madoff — and that this paternal endorsement likely gave Ezra the confidence to funnel client money to him in the early 1990s. At his peak, Merkin earned an estimated \$35 million a year simply for routing money to Madoff.*

*The article then details how Merkin brought a roster of prominent Jewish investors and institutions to Madoff — describing the list as “a kind of Jewish social register” — including Mort Zuckerman and Ira Rennert, along with more than 30 Jewish-affiliated charities, including Ramaz and Yeshiva University. On Yeshiva specifically: Merkin chaired the university’s investment committee from around 1994, directed \$14.5 million of its endowment into his **Ascot Fund** (which he passed to Madoff), and collected fees on it — while a 2003 disclosure obtained by the magazine described Madoff only as Ascot’s “executing broker,” a characterization the article treats as misleading given what’s now known. The piece notes the added irony that Madoff himself sat on Yeshiva’s board. – Claude]*

Ghert-Zand, Renee, “**Shaped by ‘shanda’:** Letty Cottin Pogrebin’s memoir on a life of shame and secrets,” *The Times of Israel*, Feb. 1, 2023. *The article was an interview with Letty Cottin Pogrebin about her personal family memoir. In that interview, discussing the concept of shanda far di goyim, Pogrebin observes that this kind of shanda seems to be less of a deterrent against wrongdoing today than it was when Jews were less integrated into American society. She points to the #MeToo movement and how disproportionately many Jewish men were exposed — musicians, professors, heads of Jewish agencies, sociologists, authors — as well as **Harvey Weinstein**, saying she doesn’t know a Jew who wasn’t ashamed by that wave of exposure. She then adds that **during the Madoff scandal, people were saying “thank heavens his victims were Jews,” because otherwise the community would have looked even worse in front of non-Jews.** Direct link: <https://www.timesofisrael.com/shaped-by-shanda-letty-cottin-pogrebins-memoir-on-a-life-of-shame-and-secrets/>*

Henriques, Diana B., (**The Wizard of Lies: Bernie Madoff and the Death of Trust** [hc, Times Books, 2011]) 978-0805091342 [pb, 2012] 978-1250007438 [[See related film](#)]

Kirtzman, Andrew, (**Betrayal: The Life and Lies of Bernie Madoff – A Page-Turning Financial Thriller About the King of the Swindlers** [hc, Harper, 2009]) 978-0061870767 [pb, 2020] 978-0061870774

Ross, Brian, (**The Madoff Chronicles: Inside the Secret World of Bernie and Ruth** [hc, Hyperion, 2009]) 978-1401310295 [pb, Kingswell, 2016] 978-1484752692 [[See related film](#)]

Philologos (pseudonym for Hillel Halkin), “**Before Madoff, or the Goyim, a Shande.**” *The Forward*, August 19, 2009. *Argues that Madoff’s Ponzi scheme is not merely a shande far di goyim but hillul ha-shem (desecration of God’s name) — a distinct and more serious Jewish category, unforgivable where a mere shande can be.*

Weinstein, Sheryl, (**Madoff’s Other Secret: Love, Money, Bernie, and Me** [hc, St. Martin’s Press, 2009]) 978-0312618377 [*Written by the former Chief Financial Officer of Hadassah (the Women’s Zionist Organization of America), this memoir offers a raw, firsthand look at Madoff’s personal exploitation of Jewish communal leaders. Weinstein details her secret multi-year romantic affair with Madoff alongside her decision to trust him with both her personal life savings and tens of millions of dollars in charitable institutional funds.*

*Bernie Madoff’s Jewish identity and his exploitation of the Jewish community are central to understanding how his multi-billion-dollar fraud survived for decades. The scandal is widely studied as one of the most catastrophic examples of **affinity fraud** in history—a crime where a fraudster weaponizes shared ethnic, religious, or cultural bonds to bypass standard financial scrutiny.*

The “Jewish Circuit” and Social Networks

Madoff built his empire by embedding himself into elite Jewish social spaces. He targeted wealthy country clubs in Long Island and Palm Beach, Florida, cultivating an air of exclusive privilege. He intentionally made his funds difficult to get into, turning away prospective clients to create false scarcity. Because he was a prominent figure in Jewish philanthropy, investors felt a profound sense of tribal trust, believing he was quietly rewarding “his own” with stable, conservative returns. Madoff relied heavily on powerful institutional gatekeepers within the community. For instance, **J. Ezra Merkin**, a highly prominent leader in the Modern Orthodox community, operated feeder funds (like Ascot Partners) that steered \$1.8 billion of communal, institutional, and private Jewish wealth directly into Madoff’s hands.

Impact on Jewish Non-Profits and Charities

The financial fallout decimated American Jewish philanthropy, forcing multiple organizations to temporarily close, slash operations, or dissolve entirely: **The Elie Wiesel Foundation for Humanity:** The Holocaust survivor and Nobel laureate lost his entire personal life savings and \$15 million of his foundation’s assets to Madoff, a betrayal Wiesel publicly described as paralyzing. [[1](#), [2](#)]

- **Hadassah:** The Women’s Zionist Organization of America was heavily defrauded, suffering losses calculated in the tens of millions of dollars.
- **The Lappin Foundation:** Based in Massachusetts and dedicated to funding Jewish youth trips to Israel, this foundation was forced to temporarily freeze all operations after its entire asset base vanished overnight.
- **High-Profile Foundations:** Steven Spielberg’s Wunderkinder Foundation, the Chais Family Foundation, and the prominent Picower Foundation (run by major philanthropist Jeffry Picower) were all severely impacted or completely wiped out.
- **Cultural and Artistic Responses to the Jewish Aspect**

The intense communal trauma, embarrassment, and anger spawned specific artistic works exploring the scandal through an explicitly Jewish lens:

About Affinity Fraud:

KKC (a legal/whistleblower-attorney site, not a government source): Kohn, Kohn & Colapinto LLP., “**Affinity Fraud & SEC Whistleblower Program.**” *KKC Frequently Asked Questions*. Washington, DC: Kohn, Kohn & Colapinto, updated February 11, 2026. <https://kkc.com/frequently-asked-questions/affinity-fraud-sec-whistleblower/> [*This page states: the largest affinity fraud case in history was Bernard L. Madoff Investment Securities in 2008, a \$50 billion fraud that targeted wealthy Jewish*

communities and organizations, including **Yeshiva University, Maimonides School, Kehilath Jeshurun Synagogue, Ramaz, the SAR Academy, and Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel's foundation and personal savings.**

Investor.gov

U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, Office of Investor Education and Advocacy. “Affinity Fraud.” *Investor.gov Glossary*. Washington, DC: U.S. SEC, n.d. <https://www.investor.gov/introduction-investing/investing-basics/glossary/affinity-fraud>

*Notably, the actual Investor.gov glossary entry itself is quite brief and does **not** name Madoff specifically — it's a general definition: **affinity fraud** refers to investment scams that prey upon members of identifiable groups, such as religious or ethnic communities, the elderly, or professional groups, and the fraudsters who promote affinity scams frequently are - or pretend to be - members of the group. They often enlist respected community or religious leaders from within the group to spread the word about the scheme, convincing those people that a fraudulent investment is legitimate and worthwhile, with many of those leaders becoming unwitting victims of the fraudster's ruse. The Madoff-specific detail comes from secondary sources describing/paraphrasing SEC materials, not the glossary page verbatim. [Investor.gov](https://www.investor.gov) [Source of KKC and Investor.gov refs: **Claude**, which also refers to FBI files citing cases of affinity fraud among Amish, Mennonite, Christian evangelical and Muslim Shariah-compliant investment funds]*

Sackler Family:

Significant **books** about the Sackler family and the opioid scandal:

Keefe, Patrick Radden, (**Empire of Pain: The Secret History of the Sackler Dynasty** [hc, Doubleday, 2021] 978-0385545686 [pb, Vintage Books, 2022] 978-1984899019 [*The definitive and most acclaimed book on the opioid scandal and the Sackler family*]

Other highly significant books on the epidemic include:

Barry Meier, (**Pain Killer: An Empire of Deceit and the Origin of America's Opioid Epidemic** [hc, Random House, 2018]): 978-0525511106 [pb, Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2023] 978-1984801180 [[See related film](#)] [*A pioneering investigative look at Purdue Pharma's aggressive marketing of OxyContin.*]

Macy, Beth, (**Dopesick: Dealers, Doctors, and the Drug Company that Addicted America** [hc, Random House, 2018] 978-0525511106 [pb, Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2023] 978-1984801180 [[See related film](#)] [*Focuses heavily on the ground-level destruction of communities alongside corporate greed.*]

Films, movies about the Sacklers and the scandal (listed in the companion Filmography):

The Crime of the Century (2021)

Dopesick (2021)

All the Beauty and the Bloodshed (2022)

Painkiller (2023)

Pain Hustlers (2023)

*The Jewish community's coping mechanisms and reactions to the Sackler family's role in the opioid crisis played out across individual moral reckoning, grassroots activism, and institutional reassessments of philanthropic ethics. Because the founders of **Purdue Pharma** were the children of Jewish immigrants, the scandal triggered significant internal community reflection.*

The response divided into four primary areas:

1. Grassroots Activism and Individual Backlash

Individual Jewish artists and community members often led the charge against the family.

- **Nan Goldin's Leadership:** *Renowned Jewish artist and activist Nan Goldin, herself a recovering OxyContin addict, spearheaded the most influential grassroots movement against the family. Through her organization, P.A.I.N. (Prescription Addiction Intervention Now), she led highly visible die-ins and protests at major cultural institutions to force them to cut ties with Sackler funding.*
- **The "Jewish Drive" Moral Reckoning:** *Within Jewish media, rabbis and commentators grappled with the concept of Tikkun Olam (the Jewish drive to repair or change the world). Commentators noted that while early generations of the Sackler family used their medical ambitions to build society, later family members channelled that same drive into greed and corporate deception, creating a severe perversion of Jewish values.*

2. The Rejection of Philanthropy by Cultural Institutions

Jewish cultural organizations had to navigate the ethics of "tainted money," choosing to cut future ties while dealing with legacy spaces.

The Jewish Museum Berlin: *In 2019, The Jewish Museum Berlin announced it would formally decline all future donations from the Sackler family trust.*

- **The Legacy Dilemma:** *The museum chose not to rename its "Sackler Staircase" (funded in 2002). A spokesperson stated that returning the money was structurally impossible and that renaming the staircase would be an "inappropriate attempt to disguise what happened," since the museum had acted in good faith decades prior.*
- **Institutional Reckoning in Israel**

The Sackler family was among the most prolific donors to Israeli scientific and medical academic circles, creating a protracted ethical battle.

- **Tel Aviv University (TAU):** *The family's name was deeply woven into the campus fabric, including the prominent Sackler Faculty of Medicine. For years, TAU resisted intense public pressure to remove the name, arguing that the initial donations were made 50 years prior and that they needed to wait for formal legal resolution in U.S. courts.*
- **The Name Removal:** *In June 2023, following the resolution of global lawsuits, Tel Aviv University officially removed the Sackler family name from its medical school. The university stated that the family "kindly agreed" to step down from the naming rights to allow the institution to raise new research funds without the burden of the scandal.*
- **4. Direct Impact: Addressing Addiction Within Jewish Communities**

The crisis forced Jewish communities to dismantle the myth that tight-knit religious or cultural circles were immune to substance abuse.

- **Breaking the Stigma:** *The visible connection of a prominent Jewish family to the opioid supply chain accelerated conversations regarding addiction within Jewish communities. Communal organizations used the crisis to fund local recovery programs, run educational campaigns about prescription opioid dangers, and establish support networks tailored to Jewish cultural and religious environments.*

Harvey Weinstein:

Significant Books

Kantor, Jodi & Megan Twohey, **(She Said: Breaking the Sexual Harassment Story That Helped Ignite a Movement)** [hc, Penguin Press, 2019] 978-0525560340 [pb, Penguin Books, 2020] 978-0525560364 [\[See related film\]](#) *[Written by the New York Times journalists who broke the initial 2017 expose, this book reveals how they built their case against Weinstein. It provides deep insight into the complex web of secret settlements and non-disclosure agreements used to silence victims. The book touches on a fascinating “Jewish subplot”. Kantor (who is Jewish) notes that during her investigation, Weinstein actively tried to influence her by appealing to her “Jew to Jew”. He explicitly leaned on cultural tribalism, assuming it would override her reporting ethics—a manipulation tactics Kantor described as highly offensive.]*

Farrow, Ronan, **(Catch and Kill: Lies, Spies, and a Conspiracy to Protect Predators)** [hc, Little, Brown & Co., 2019] 978-0316486637 [pb, Little, Brown Paperbacks, 2020] 978-0316486644 *[- details his parallel investigative reporting for The New Yorker. It reads like a corporate thriller, charting how Weinstein used a massive network of high-powered attorneys, media executives, and private intelligence to bury the story.. The book documents Weinstein’s hiring of Black Cube—a private investigative agency primarily staffed by former Mossad and Israeli intelligence agents—to track, manipulate, and gather dirt on journalists and accusers.]*

Auleta, Ken, **(Hollywood Ending: Harvey Weinstein and the Culture of Silence)** [hc, Penguin Press, 2022] 978-1984878373 *[This thorough biography digs into Weinstein’s early life, his psychological makeup, and his meteoric rise alongside his brother, Bob. Auletta explores the Weinsteins’ upbringing as working-class Jewish brothers in Queens, New York. It looks at their relationship with their parents, Max and Miriam (after whom they famously named their studio, Miramax), detailing how family dynamics and the specific post-war era shaped his aggressive, predatory ambition.]*

Articles Discussing His Jewish Background

When the story broke in late 2017, multiple publications directly debated the intersection of Weinstein’s Jewish identity and his behavior, sparking fierce media arguments.

Oppenheimer, Mark, **“The Specifically Jewy Perviness of Harvey Weinstein”**, Tablet Magazine, Oct. 9, 2017. *[This is the most explicit—and controversial—article regarding his Jewish background. Oppenheimer drew parallels between Weinstein and characters from Philip Roth novels, arguing that Weinstein behaved like an archetype of a 20th-century secular Jewish-American male driven by “revenge fantasies on the Goyim”. The piece sparked intense backlash for validating anti-Semitic tropes. While Oppenheimer later issued an apology, the article remains a notable piece of media analysis from that era.]*

Cannon, Benjy, **“Weinstein’s Assaults: Misogyny, Not Judaism”**, Jewish Currents, Oct. 11, 2017. *[Published as a direct rebuttal to the Tablet piece, this article argued that blaming Weinstein’s behavior on his Jewish heritage essentializes misogyny and dangerously flirts with anti-Semitic stereotypes. It emphasized that his crimes were an abuse of unchecked industry power, not religious or cultural upbringing.]*

Times of Israel Editorial, **“Harvey Weinstein is not a Jewish issue”**, Oct. 20, 2017 *[This piece chronicled the community soul-searching that occurred in the wake of the scandal. It pointed out how white nationalist groups weaponized Weinstein’s heritage online. The author re-framed the entire conversation, asserting that predatory behavior is strictly a moral and legal issue rather than a cultural one.]*

Reactions of Hollywood Peers: *High-profile Jewish figures in Hollywood, including **Jeffrey Katzenberg** (who had previously praised Weinstein as a “nice Jewish boy” at a Simon Wiesenthal Center dinner), forcefully denounced him once the allegations came to light.*

Initial Silence and Fear of Backlash: *According to analyses by Jewish outlets like Moment Magazine, many mainstream Jewish communal leaders initially opted for silence. This was driven by*

apprehension that high-profile “Jewish villains” (such as Weinstein, Jeffrey Epstein, and Bernie Madoff) would trigger waves of antisemitism.

The Push for Institutional Reform: *Once the #MeToo movement gained momentum, the focus shifted inward. Jewish organizations faced severe criticism for historically tolerating powerful donors and leaders who engaged in misconduct. This prompted major structural overhauls, leading groups like Hadassah and various Jewish federations to implement stricter workplace safety and anti-harassment policies.*

Direct References to His Jewishness

Weinstein’s Self-Referencing: *In a rambling public statement before his downfall, Weinstein explicitly referenced his upbringing, stating he would channel his anger into fighting the NRA and hosting a retirement party for its chief at the **same venue where he had his Bar Mitzvah**. Years prior, he also used an acceptance speech at a Simon Wiesenthal Center dinner to urge Jews to “kick these antisemites in the ass,” heavily leaning into his identity as a defender of the Jewish people.*

Weaponization of Israeli Intelligence: *Weinstein hired **Black Cube**, a private intelligence agency founded by former Mossad operatives, to track and gather intelligence on accusers like Rose McGowan and journalists investigating him. This connection was heavily criticized for intertwining Israeli state apparatuses with his personal cover-up.*

Antisemitic Tropes: *Watchdog groups like the American Jewish Committee (AJC) noted that antisemites weaponized Weinstein’s trial. They used his face to propagate age-old conspiracy theories regarding “**Jewish sexual perversion**” and Jewish manipulation of media and entertainment industries.*

The published books, investigative memoirs, and cultural articles addressing the Harvey Weinstein affair and its intersection with Jewish identity range from mainstream journalistic exposés to highly controversial cultural critiques and institutional autopsies.

Brodner, Steve. “**The Jewish Cabal Rings in 2013.**” *Tablet Magazine*, January 2, 2013 [Satirical and cultural commentary tracking the intersections of Hollywood power, prominent Jewish figures, and media perception, later cited by media critics examining how the industry coddled figures like Weinstein.]

Rejecting the Jewish Framing and Condemning Tropes

These articles directly countered the narrative that Weinstein’s actions had any root in Jewish culture, emphasizing instead the universality of abuse of power, while warning against the rise of antisemitic conspiracy theories.

Gliner, Ezra, “**There’s Nothing Especially Jewish About a Powerful Man Abusing His Power.**” *The Canadian Jewish News*, October 11, 2017. [Written as a direct rebuttal to Oppenheimer’s *Tablet* essay. Gliner argued that tying sexual predation to Jewish identity was **intellectually lazy and bigoted**. He asserted that Weinstein’s actions reflected a universal culture of workplace misogyny and patriarchal power, completely detached from Jewish religious or cultural values.]

Kirschenbaum, Eli, “**Harvey Weinstein is Not a Jewish Issue.**” *The Jewish Chronicle*, October 13, 2017. [A UK-based editorial arguing that framing Weinstein through his ethnicity plays directly into the hands of bad actors. The piece emphasized that while the community must deal with Jewish abusers, **the crime itself belongs to Hollywood’s systemic casting-couch culture**, not Jewish lineage.

Institutional Self-Reflection and the #MeToo Movement

These pieces focused on the internal reckoning within Jewish communal organizations and non-profits, analyzing how “philanthropic blackmail” protected wealthy donors.

Rosenblatt, Gary, “**The Jewish Community’s #MeToo Moment.**” *The New York Jewish Week*, October 25, 2017. [A retrospective look at how Jewish non-profits, synagogues, and federations

historically ignored whisper networks to keep mega-donors happy. It explicitly uses the Weinstein downfall as a warning shot to the Jewish institutional world.

Axelrod, Toby, “**After Weinstein, Jewish Groups Confront Their Own Harassment Issues.**” Jewish Telegraphic Agency (JTA), November 14, 2017. [A journalistic review of the structural updates implemented by Jewish organizations globally. This report covers the rewrite of safety protocols, code of ethics policies, and how the community historically feared the “antisemitic fallout” of exposing powerful Jewish men.

There are numerous articles, books, and investigative reports that directly link the cases of **Harvey Weinstein** and **Jeffrey Epstein**. Because both men were immensely powerful figures operating as serial sexual predators during the same era, commentators and journalists have connected them across several dimensions, including their personal overlapping networks, structural abuse tactics, and their impact on Jewish communal anxiety.

The connections are documented through several distinct lenses:

1. The Jewish Communal Reckoning (“Jewish Villains”)

Commentators within Jewish media have frequently linked Weinstein and Epstein (often alongside Bernie Madoff) to analyze a specific phenomenon: the communal panic over high-profile “Jewish villains” triggering antisemitism.

Joseph Berger, “**Jewish Villains: Does Fighting Antisemitism Require Calling Out the Tribe’s Most Notorious Criminals?**” Moment Magazine, March 9, 2026 (- details how mainstream Jewish leadership initially responded to both the Weinstein and Epstein sex scandals with distinct silence. The piece argues that institutional leaders intentionally chose to observe silence, fearing that publicly addressing the Jewish identities of both men would fuel pre-existing antisemitic tropes. Berger asks whether openly repudiating notorious Jewish wrongdoers might actually be a better response to antisemitism.

Mitchell Abidor, “**Good Jewish Boys Gone Bad**”, Public Seminar, August 31, 2022. Abidor argues that Weinstein (Queens) and Epstein (Brooklyn) shared similar middle-class Jewish upbringings. Both grew up in socially conservative outer-borough Jewish neighborhoods. Both later used wealth and power to compensate for adolescent frustrations surrounding sexuality. Their predatory behavior represented a pathological abuse of power rather than anything inherent in Jewish culture.

2. Legal Documents and Victim Testimony

Unsealed court records and books written by victims’ legal counsel have explicitly linked the two men’s behaviors.

Edwards, Brad, **Relentless Pursuit: My Fight for the Victims of Jeffrey Epstein** [hc, Gallery Books, 2020 978-1982148133 [pb, Gallery Books, 2021] 978-1982148140 [Written by a prominent attorney for Epstein’s victims, this book reveals that Epstein and Weinstein eventually had a falling out. According to Edwards, **Epstein actually accused Weinstein of being “a pig”** after Weinstein allegedly attempted to sexually assault one of Epstein’s “favorite girls” at a home in France.

The Unsealed Epstein Files: Legal document unsealings heavily feature cross-references between the two. Court records show that the FBI received tips naming Weinstein alongside Epstein’s circle, and unsealed phone logs from Epstein’s townhouse explicitly show **messages left by Harvey Weinstein**, proving they maintained direct, professional lines of communication. Specifically mentioned in an Associated Press article on Jan. 24, 2024, regarding handwritten message logs seized during a 2005 police raid on Epstein’s Palm Beach mansion. Also in an article by Jack Dunn in Variety, January 31, 2026.

Summary of the Parallel

Ultimately, media coverage linking the two concludes that Weinstein and Epstein utilized identical playbooks: they weaponized structural power; relied on “whisper networks” to keep victims quiet,

deployed aggressive legal intimidation, and left a Jewish community deeply anxious about how their public downfalls would be manipulated by bad actors.

Films (details in companion Filmography, in chronological order of year of release)

The Reckoning: Hollywood's Worst-Kept Secret (2018) ([see p. 530](#))

Citizen Harvey (2018) ([see p. 530](#))

The Assistant (2019) ([see p. 531](#))

Untouchable (2019) ([see p. 530](#))

She Said (2022) ([see p. 535](#))

FRONTLINE: Weinstein (2018 / Updated 2023) ([see p. 536](#))

Jeffrey Epstein (1953-2019):

There is no single book regarded as the authoritative overview of Jeffrey Epstein in all his aspects. The following are essential reading:

Brown, Julie K., (**Perversion of Justice: The Jeffrey Epstein Story** [hc, Dey Street Books, 2021]) 978-0063000582 [pb, HarperCollins, 2021] 978-0008388768 [*Julie Brown is the Miami Herald investigative reporter whose series of articles, beginning in November, 2018 brought the Epstein case to wide public attention. The book expands on Epstein's recruitment and abuse of teenage girls; the system under which victims were paid to recruit other girls; the Palm Beach police investigation; conflicts between police investigators and prosecutors; the role of Alexander Acosta's federal prosecutor's office; Epstein's lawyers' campaign to obtain unusually favorable treatment; the experiences of victims who attempted to seek justice; and the journalistic investigation that preceded Epstein's 2019 arrest. She located or examined the cases of dozens of women—her newspaper describes more than sixty—who said Epstein had abused them. Her work is strongest on **the victims, the Palm Beach investigation, and the failure of the criminal-justice system.** Questions concerning the ultimate sources of Epstein's wealth, possible intelligence connections, blackmail operations, and the conduct of every prominent associate remain incompletely resolved.*

Edwards, Bradley J., with Brittany Henderson, (**Relentless Pursuit: My Fight for the Victims of Jeffrey Epstein**) – referenced in the immediately preceding section on Harvey Weinstein. *This is the strongest firsthand legal history of the victims' struggle. He began representing Epstein victims in 2008 and spent more than a decade pursuing civil claims, obtaining testimony, challenging the federal non-prosecution agreement, and resisting legal and personal pressure from Epstein and his attorneys. He represented more than twenty women during the period covered by the book.*

The book is particularly authoritative concerning the civil litigation against Epstein; the Crime Victims' Rights Act proceedings; Epstein's use of aggressive litigation and surveillance; the collection of testimony from victims and witnesses; negotiations with Epstein's attorneys; efforts to hold federal prosecutors accountable; and the legal campaign that continued after Epstein's 2008 conviction.

Levine, Barry, (**The Spider: Inside the Criminal Web of Jeffrey Epstein and Ghislaine Maxwell** [hc, Crown, 2020]) 978-0593237182 [*This provides the broadest journalistic reconstruction of Epstein's personal and social network. Levine, formerly an executive editor at the National Enquirer, attempts a comprehensive narrative of Epstein's rise, his relationship with Ghislaine Maxwell, his powerful acquaintances, his properties, and the operation surrounding the recruitment of young women and girls. The publisher describes it as an extensive account of Epstein's life, death, and criminal network. It is useful for Epstein's social connections; Maxwell's role; Epstein's residences and travel; former employees and associates; the larger environment in which Epstein operated; events surrounding the 2019 arrest and death. Some portions rely on anonymous sources, recollections, and*

material that cannot always be independently verified. It is valuable but should not be treated as equal in evidentiary weight to Brown's documented investigation or Edwards's legal record.]

Patterson, James, John Connolly, and Tim Malloy, **(Filthy Rich: A Powerful Billionaire, the Sex Scandal That Undid Him, and All the Justice That Money Can Buy: The Shocking True Story of Jeffrey Epstein)** [hc, Little, Brown and Company, 2016] 978-0316274050 [[See related film](#)] *[The most important substantial book published before Epstein's 2019 arrest. The book draws on: Palm Beach police materials; statements and interviews involving victims; court and prosecution records; Epstein's social and financial background; the negotiations that produced the 2008 plea arrangement. Its publication in 2016 is significant: it documented the seriousness of the case before the renewed federal prosecution and before Epstein became the subject of constant international coverage. It should be read as an important precursor rather than the definitive account.]*

Giuffre, Virginia Roberts, **(Nobody's Girl: A Memoir of Surviving Abuse and Fighting for Justice)** [hc, Knopf, 2025] 978-0593493120 [pb, Random House Large Print, 2025] 979-8217347599 *[Giuffre became the most publicly recognizable Epstein survivor and a central accuser of Ghislaine Maxwell and Prince Andrew. Her memoir is authoritative regarding her own recruitment, experiences, perceptions, and later struggle for recognition and legal redress. It should be used as a firsthand source rather than as an impartial account of every contested allegation. As with all memoirs, individual recollection must be distinguished from independently documented findings. Nevertheless, no serious study of the human consequences of Epstein's organization should omit Giuffre's testimony. – ChatGPT]*

Significant Articles

Farrow, Ronan, **"How an Élite University Research Center Concealed Its Relationship with Jeffrey Epstein"**, *The New Yorker*, September 6, 2019. *[- The definitive article on Epstein's concealed relationship with the MIT Media Lab. Using internal emails and institutional documents, Farrow showed that senior personnel at the MIT Media Lab continued to deal with Epstein after his conviction and attempted to conceal or anonymize his donations and involvement. Employees reportedly used indirect language to keep Epstein's name out of formal records. The reporting precipitated Joi Ito's resignation and an independent institutional investigation. This article is especially important because it moves beyond Epstein's immediate crimes to examine how prestigious institutions normalized, concealed, and benefited from their association with him.]*

Enrich, David, **"How Jeffrey Epstein Got Away With It,"** *The New York Times Magazine*, July 13, 2021. *[A major retrospective examination of the lawyers, bankers, prosecutors, advisers, fixers, and institutional relationships that helped Epstein evade full accountability. The article is especially useful for understanding Epstein not simply as an individual criminal but as someone sustained by an ecosystem of professional enablers and respected institutions. It complements Brown: Brown is strongest on victims and prosecutors, while Enrich pays greater attention to elite financial and professional networks. The article is also cited in reference literature as a major retrospective on the case.]*

Rosman, Katherine, Matthew Goldstein, and others, **Investigative reporting on Epstein's finances and Leon Black**, *The New York Times*, 2019–21. *[The Times produced an important cluster of articles investigating: Epstein's unusually opaque financial career; his relationship with Leslie Wexner; the extraordinary fees paid by Leon Black; transactions and tax advice; his relationships with bankers and wealth managers; the difficulty of identifying a conventional investment business commensurate with his claimed wealth. These articles are valuable because the origins and mechanisms of Epstein's fortune remain one of the least satisfactorily explained parts of his biography. No single published book has yet resolved that question.]*

Sherman, Gabriel, **"The Talented Mr. Epstein"**, *New York*, vol. 42, no. 6, February 9, 2009, pp. 20–27. *[One of the most significant early post-conviction profiles. Sherman examined Epstein's social ambitions, relationship with Leslie Wexner, financial mystique, and remarkable ability to retain elite connections. It must be read historically: it appeared before the full scale of Epstein's conduct was*

publicly understood. Nevertheless, it is valuable evidence of how Epstein represented himself and how members of the financial and social establishment continued to regard him after his prosecution.]

*Although there is no large scholarly literature devoted specifically to **Jeffrey Epstein's Jewishness**, there is a substantial body of journalism examining (1) his Jewish background and philanthropy, (2) how Jewish organizations reacted to his crimes, and (3) concerns that the case was fueling antisemitic narratives.*

The material falls into several categories:

1. Epstein's Jewish identity and background

Most mainstream reporting notes that Epstein was born into a secular Jewish family in Brooklyn but was not known as an observant Jew. Rather than exploring his Jewish identity as such, journalists have focused on his strategic relationships with wealthy Jewish philanthropists and institutions. Among the better articles:

Amy Spiro, "Jeffrey Epstein's History of Jewish Giving," Jewish Insider, July 26, 2019. [This article is primarily an investigative survey rather than an opinion piece. Drawing on IRS filings made public after Epstein's arrest, Spiro reconstructs nearly two decades of charitable giving by Epstein's various foundations to Jewish organizations in the United States and Israel.

The article documents donations ranging from relatively modest gifts to local Jewish charities to substantial contributions—sometimes reaching hundreds of thousands of dollars—to major institutions including the Ramaz School, UJA-Federation of New York, Hillel, YIVO, the Friends of the Israel Defense Forces, the Jewish National Fund, the American Jewish Committee, and numerous yeshivot and educational organizations. The article emphasizes that Epstein's philanthropy continued even after his 2008 conviction for soliciting a minor, raising questions about institutional awareness and donor screening.

Rather than accusing the recipient organizations of misconduct, Spiro presents their responses to inquiries. Some institutions stated they had been unaware of the source of the funds or the extent of Epstein's criminal history; others explained that the donations had been made years before his notoriety became widely known. Several organizations acknowledged that the revelations would lead them to review their gift-acceptance policies more carefully.

The article's chief contribution is factual rather than interpretive. It establishes the scope of Epstein's Jewish philanthropy and provides a documentary foundation for later debates about accepting or retaining gifts from morally compromised donors. It also demonstrates how deeply Epstein had embedded himself within respected philanthropic networks despite his criminal record.]

Andrew Lapin, "Checks, charities and conversion classes: What the Epstein files show about Jeffrey Epstein's Jewish world," Jewish Telegraphic Agency (also reprinted by The Forward), February 26, 2026. [- revisits the subject following the release of previously undisclosed Justice Department files, using newly available emails and financial records to reconstruct Epstein's extensive networking within Jewish communal life.

A central narrative concerns a Jewish dentist who attempted to encourage Epstein to reconnect with Judaism, introducing him to Jewish books, rabbis, and charitable giving. This episode serves as a window into Epstein's efforts to cultivate relationships with Jewish professionals, educators, philanthropists, and religious institutions. The newly released documents suggest that Epstein consciously sought greater visibility within Jewish philanthropic circles and sometimes viewed charitable giving as part of a broader effort to rehabilitate his public image after his 2008 conviction.

Lapin also analyzes internal correspondence showing Epstein's attempts to publicize his philanthropy, including efforts to gain recognition from Jewish philanthropic publications while minimizing references to his relationship with Leslie Wexner. The article documents donations to schools, yeshivot, Israel-related charities, Hillel, YIVO, Friends of the Israel Defense Forces, the Jewish National Fund,

and numerous smaller organizations, many of which later stated they had been unaware of the circumstances surrounding the gifts.

Beyond philanthropy, Lapin explores the ethical dilemmas faced by individuals who interacted with Epstein before his crimes became widely known. The article also notes that renewed public attention to the files fueled antisemitic conspiracy theories, emphasizing that Epstein's extensive Jewish connections reflected networking and philanthropy rather than evidence for claims of collective Jewish responsibility. In this respect, the article combines investigative reporting with reflection on how Jewish institutions continue to reckon with Epstein's legacy years after his death.]

2. Jewish organizations confronting the Epstein scandal

Aiden Pink, **"Jewish Charities Took Epstein's Money For Years. So What Should They Do Now?"**, *The Forward*, August 5, 2019 [*Pink shifts the discussion from documenting donations to examining their ethical implications. The article asks what responsibilities Jewish communal institutions have after discovering they accepted contributions from a convicted sex offender whose wealth had become morally tainted. Rather than offering simple answers, Pink interviews historians of philanthropy, Jewish ethicists, rabbis, and nonprofit experts, including Thane Rosenbaum, Benjamin Soskis and Joan Harrington. They debate whether institutions should return Epstein's money, redirect it to organizations assisting victims of sexual abuse, publicly acknowledge the donations, or retain the funds if they had already been spent on legitimate charitable purposes.*

The article places the controversy within a broader history of philanthropy funded by ethically questionable fortunes, observing that Jewish organizations—like universities, museums, and hospitals—have often depended on wealthy donors whose business or personal conduct later proved controversial. Epstein therefore becomes a case study in a recurring dilemma rather than an isolated scandal.

Pink concludes that transparency, public accountability, and careful donor-vetting are more important than symbolic efforts to erase Epstein's name. Jewish ethical concepts concerning repentance, restitution, and communal responsibility are explored, but the experts generally agree that no single religious principle resolves the problem completely. The article is therefore less about Epstein himself than about the moral responsibilities of nonprofit institutions.]

Aiden Pink, **"Jeffrey Epstein Donated \$50,000 To A Major Jewish Charity. They Still Haven't Said Why"**, *The Forward*, July 20, 2019 [*Focuses specifically on UJA-Federation of New York; questions about donor vetting; and why donations continued to be accepted after Epstein's 2008 conviction. It became one of the earliest investigations into Jewish institutional links.]*

3. The Leslie Wexner connection

*Much Jewish discussion centered not on Epstein himself but on his relationship with Ohio billionaire **Leslie Wexner**, one of the most influential Jewish philanthropists in America.*

Ari Feldman, **"Epstein Ties Trigger Debate Over Ethics Of Wexner Foundation's Importance,"** *The Forward*, July 31, 2019. [*- examines the repercussions of Epstein's long relationship with billionaire philanthropist Leslie Wexner and the resulting questions surrounding the Wexner Foundation, one of the most influential institutions in American Jewish leadership development.*

The immediate catalyst is controversy within Jewish educational circles over whether students, rabbis, and nonprofit professionals should continue participating in Wexner-sponsored programs after Epstein's connections became public. Feldman explores how the foundation's enormous positive influence on Jewish communal life came into tension with revelations about Wexner's financial and personal association with Epstein.

The article carefully distinguishes between Wexner himself, the foundation's educational mission, and Epstein's role. It notes that many alumni viewed the foundation's fellowships and leadership programs as transformative experiences while simultaneously acknowledging the need to confront uncomfortable questions about the institution's history and governance.

Rather than advocating abandonment of the Wexner Foundation, Feldman portrays an intense communal debate over whether morally compromised funding necessarily contaminates worthwhile educational institutions. The broader issue becomes how Jewish communal organizations should preserve valuable philanthropic work while honestly confronting troubling aspects of their benefactors' histories.]

Postscript: *The Wexner Foundation survived, after a lengthy process of establishing that Epstein had never had any actual role in its day-to-day management or educational activities. The Foundation took steps to distance itself from any connection to Epstein and also to establish an institutional framework independent of Leslie Wexner personally, though he continued his massive financial support.*

4. Concern about antisemitic exploitation

Many Jewish writers worried less about Epstein's Jewish birth than about the use of his case in antisemitic conspiracy theories. Coverage appeared in: Jewish Telegraphic Agency, The Forward, Anti-Defamation League statements, American Jewish Committee commentary and later analyses after release of additional Epstein documents in 2026.

Recent examples discuss how the release of the Epstein files reinvigorated conspiracy theories alleging collective Jewish culpability or Mossad control, arguments that many commentators identified as recycled antisemitic narratives rather than evidence-based conclusions.

Grace Gilson, **"Latest Epstein Files Release Unleashes Wave of Antisemitic Conspiracy Theories on Social Media"**, Jewish Telegraphic Agency, published in The Jerusalem Post, February 6, 2026

Sebastien Levi, **"How the Epstein Affair Is Fueling a New Wave of Antisemitic Conspiracies"**, The Jerusalem Post, February 25, 2026 [*This opinion piece explains how extremists recycle classic myths such as: Jewish world control; Protocols of the Elders of Zion; claims of a Jewish global conspiracy - using Epstein as a contemporary hook.*]

Films: See companion Filmography for details on each.

*Several prominent documentary films and multi-part docuseries investigate the **Jeffrey Epstein** case, focusing heavily on his massive wealth, political connections, and the powerful testimonies of his survivors.*

Jeffrey Epstein: Filthy Rich (2020) ([see p. 533](#))

Surviving Jeffrey Epstein (2020) ([see p. 533](#))

Epstein: Behind the Facade (2020) ([see p. 533](#))

Ghislaine Maxwell: Filthy Rich (2022) ([see p. 535](#))

Jeffrey Epstein: The Unredacted Story (2025) ([see p. 537](#))

David Berkowitz ("Son of Sam"):

He was born in 1953 in Brooklyn, NY and adopted by Nathan and Pearl Berkowitz. He grew up in the Bronx and later Co-op City. Childhood acquaintances remembered him as intelligent but emotionally troubled. He frequently got into fights, engaged in fire-setting, and displayed aggressive behavior from an early age. He also experienced repeated bullying, including antisemitic taunts because he was Jewish. His adoptive mother, Pearl, died of breast cancer when he was fourteen, an event that friends and investigators later regarded as psychologically devastating. He served in the US army 1971-74 and received an honorable discharge. He then worked a succession of low-level jobs while becoming

increasingly isolated. Between July 1976 and July 1977, Berkowitz carried out a series of shootings in New York City, killing six people and murdering seven, usually young couples sitting in parked cars.

*He taunted police through letters, signing one of them “**Son of Sam.**” The nickname quickly became famous. He was arrested in August, 1977 and subsequently pleaded guilty to all charges. He was sentenced to six consecutive terms of 25 years to life and remains incarcerated in New York State. He no longer seeks release on parole.*

Both his biological and adoptive parents were Jewish but his identification with Judaism was minimal. In prison he underwent a dramatic conversion to evangelical Christianity, which has been his defining identity since the late 1980s. He has written religious books, counseled fellow inmates and worked with prison ministry. Unlike the other cases under review, there was no extensive Jewish communal discussion of Berkowitz. His crimes were viewed as individual expressions of psychopathology, unrelated to anything or anyone Jewish. His later conversion to Christianity harmonized with that narrative.

Significant books about his case:

Klausner, Lawrence D., (**Son of Sam: Based on the Authorized Transcription of the Tapes, Official Documents, and Diaries of David Berkowitz** [hc, McGraw-Hill, 1980]) 978-0070350274 [*Generally regarded as the closest thing to an authorized biography, though historians remain cautious because Berkowitz himself was often manipulative.*]

Abrahamsen, David, (**Confessions of Son of Sam** [hc, Columbia UP, 1985]) 978-0231057608 [*Written by the psychiatrist who interviewed Berkowitz.*]

Terry, Maury, (**The Ultimate Evil: An Investigation into America’s Most Dangerous Satanic Cult** [hc, Grafton, 1988] 978-0246132987 [[See related film](#)] [*Argues that Berkowitz did **not** act alone; the murders were connected to a satanic cult; and larger conspiracies linked various unsolved murders. Today most historians, criminologists, and law-enforcement officials regard Terry’s broader conspiracy theory as **unproven**, although it remains influential in popular culture.* – ChatGPT]

The final conclusion is that his Jewish identity is essentially incidental to the crimes. The killings had no Jewish motivation, victims, or ideological dimension, and neither Berkowitz nor most commentators have interpreted the case through the lens of Jewish identity. Consequently, the scholarly literature on Berkowitz focuses almost entirely on criminal psychology, media sensationalism, and serial murder rather than on Judaism or the American Jewish experience.

Films: (for details see Filmography)

Summer of Sam (1999) ([see p. 520](#))

Mindhunter - Netflix Series (2019) ([see p. 530](#))

The Sons of Sam: A Descent Into Darkness (2021) ([see p. 534](#))

Conversations with a Killer: The Son of Sam Tapes (2021) ([see p. 534](#))

Sam Bankman-Fried:

(born 1992 in Stanford, CA) *His parents are two prominent professors in the Stanford U. Law School. Raised in an upper-middle-class Jewish academic milieu, attendance at elite schools, with minimal Jewish content. B.A. in physics and mathematics from M.I.T. (2014). Founded Alameda Research hedge fund (2017) to automate arbitrage trading in cryptocurrency. Co-founded FTX, a cryptocurrency derivatives exchange (2019). FTX grew rapidly due to aggressive celebrity marketing, sports stadium*

sponsorships, and its reputation as a safe, compliant entry point into crypto. At his peak in 2022, Bankman-Fried's net worth was estimated at over \$26 billion, making him one of the wealthiest people under 30 in the world. He publicly branded himself as a devout follower of "**Effective Altruism**" (EA)—a philosophical movement aimed at using data and reasoning to maximize human good. He claimed his primary motivation for accumulating vast wealth was a concept called "**earn to give**," meaning he intended to donate the vast majority of his fortune to pandemic prevention, AI safety, and global poverty initiatives. He became one of the largest political megadonors in the United States, pouring tens of millions of dollars into political campaigns, primarily supporting Democratic candidates and pandemic preparedness PACs.

An investigative report by CoinDesk (Nov. 2022) revealed that Bankman-Fried's hedge fund (Alameda) was secretly backed by billions of dollars worth of FTT—a speculative token created by FTX itself. This triggered a massive, multi-billion-dollar bank run. FTX lacked the liquid reserves to meet customer withdrawals and declared bankruptcy days later. Investigations revealed that Bankman-Fried had secretly altered FTX's computer code to give Alameda an infinite line of credit, essentially using billions of dollars in regular FTX customer deposits to fund high-risk trades, venture capital investments, and real estate purchases. He was arrested in the Bahamas in December 2022 and extradited to the US. In November 2023, following a high-profile federal trial, a jury found him guilty on seven counts of fraud, conspiracy, and money laundering. In March 2024, Bankman-Fried was sentenced to **25 years in federal prison** and ordered to forfeit over \$11 billion. He had perpetrated one of the largest financial frauds in American history. – ChatGPT]

Significant books:

Lewis, Michael, (**Going Infinite: The Rise and Fall of a New Tycoon** [hc, W.W. Norton, 2023]) 978-1324074335 [pb, W.W. Norton, 2024] 978-1324105817 [- focuses heavily on Bankman-Fried's psychological quirks, his unkempt public persona, and the internal chaos at the Bahamas headquarters. The book faced heavy criticism from journalists for being overly empathetic and soft on Bankman-Fried's actual criminal actions.]

Morris, David Z., (**Stealing the Future: Sam Bankman-Fried, Elite Fraud, and the Cult of Techno-Utopia** [pb, Repeater, 2025] 978-1917516082 [Written by a cryptocurrency insider and veteran journalist who was part of the CoinDesk team that initially exposed FTX. It provides a highly accurate, technical breakdown of the actual math and data architecture used to siphon billions. It deeply explores how the "Effective Altruism" ideology was warped to justify elite fraud.]

Bennington, Ash & Artur Osinski, (**Crypto Crackup: Sam Bankman-Fried, FTX, and SBF's Weird Island Empire** [hc, Post Hill Press, 2023] 979-8888454749 [pb, Post Hill Press, 2023] 979-8888451366 [A balanced, step-by-step journalistic history tailored for general readers. It traces his journey from traditional Wall Street trading to building the Alameda Research hedge fund and the subsequent FTX exchange. It explains how the final 10-day bank run played out transparently on social media.]

In essays exploring the trial's fallout, writers noted that Bankman-Fried substituted traditional religious constraints with a hyper-rationalized, data-driven utilitarianism.

Scott Aaronson's "**Sam Bankman-Fried and the geometry of conscience**" (Nov 13, 2022) and "The Tragedy of SBF" (Nov 6, 2023) on his blog *Shtetl-Optimized*, analyze the moral collapse of the FTX founder, critiquing his utilitarian, "earn to give" approach to Effective Altruism. Aaronson argues that rigid mathematical utilitarianism and the pursuit of extreme expected value can lead to **moral bankruptcy**, as demonstrated by the misuse of Effective Altruism principles in the FTX case. He contends that morality requires absolute constraints, rejecting the idea that human ethics can be reduced to a single metric or that high-risk fraud can be justified by potential future gains.

Aaronson wrestled with how a young man raised with intense progressive, academic ethics—and surrounded by brilliant peers from similar backgrounds—could completely untether himself from foundational honesty in the name of the "greater good".

A core theme in Jewish religious commentary was the direct ideological conflict between Bankman-Fried's Effective Altruism (EA) and classical Jewish law (Halakha). In EA's "earn to give" framework, taking extreme risks with customer funds was seen as statistically acceptable if the potential payout could fund projects to save humanity. []

Rabbis and ethicists writing for outlets like the Jewish Telegraphic Agency (JTA) argued that classical Jewish charity (Tzedakah) strictly forbids systemic deception or risking innocent people's livelihoods, regardless of the altruistic endpoint. They argued that Bankman-Fried's worldview fell into the trap of "the ends justify the means," a philosophy inherently incompatible with covenantal ethics.

*Andrew Silow-Carroll, "The exhausting, never-ending job of debunking antisemitic conspiracy theories" (JTA, Nov. 22, 2022), reprinted in the Philadelphia Jewish Exponent) [- examines the immediate fallout of the FTX collapse and how the public unmasking of **Sam Bankman-Fried** triggered deep anxiety within the Jewish community. Silow-Carroll focuses on the "mental toll" of bracing for the inevitable rise in antisemitic tropes linking Jewish people to financial corruption, particularly after mainstream media began drawing direct comparisons between Bankman-Fried and Bernie Madoff. He critiques the unfair burden placed on the Jewish community, which is frequently forced to distance itself from or explain away the actions of individual bad actors, pointing out that similar multi-billion-dollar scandals involving non-Jewish figures rarely result in the collective profiling of an entire demographic.]*

Other cultural analysts noted a bizarre dichotomy in how Bankman-Fried was covered. In secular financial publications, Bankman-Fried was framed strictly as a modern, quirky Silicon Valley anomaly—defined by his cargo shorts, beanbags, and video games. Jewish media critics pointed out that his casual demeanor, hyper-fixation on logic puzzles, and complete rejection of traditional corporate hierarchies actually mimicked a very specific, insular type of elite East Coast / California secular Jewish youth culture. By ignoring this, mainstream profiles missed how his entire public persona was calculated to project a familiar form of harmless, intellectual trustworthiness. [Google/AI]

While Jewish commentators noted the shamefulness of Bankman-Fried's crimes, they also pointed out that unlike Madoff, who systematically targeted and devastated Jewish non-profits, synagogues, and families, Bankman-Fried's fraud was global, institutional, and decentralized. He did not utilize an insular "affinity fraud" model. While Bankman-Fried did contribute to some Jewish organizations, his involvement was minimal and the contributions were clearly for PR purposes. This distance of his from Jewish or Israel affairs served as a type of consolation for some Jewish commentators.

Films: See Filmography for details.

RUIN: Money, Ego and Deception at FTX (Bloomberg Originals, 2023) ([see p. 536](#))

The Collapse of FTX: Insiders Tell All (CNBC Digital, 2023) ([see p. 536](#))

Downfall of the Crypto King (BBC / Fulwell 73, 2024) ([see p. 537](#))

The Secret Story of FTX's Rise and Ruin (Reveal / Mother Jones, 2026) ([see p. 538](#))

The Altruists (Netflix, In Production/Upcoming- 2026-27) ([see p. 538](#))

American Jews and Law-Enforcement:

This section of the non-fiction on American Jews and crime includes summaries of the following books and articles:

Kitaeff, Jack, **Jews in Blue: The Jewish American Experience in Law Enforcement** [hc, Cambria Press, 2006])

Dzikansky, Mordecai & Robert Slater, **Terrorist Cop: The NYPD Jewish Cop Who Traveled the World to Stop Terrorists** [hc, Barricade Books, 2010])

Friedman, Ralph, with Patrick Picciarelli, **Street Warrior: The True Story of the NYPD's Most Decorated Detective and the Era That Created Him** [hc, St. Martin's Press, 2017]

Kestenbaum, Sam, "Inside the Heads, Hearts and Yarmulkes of Jewish Cops." *The Forward*, January 18, 2015

Seedman, Albert, (**Chief!: Classic Cases from the Files of the Chief of Detectives** [hc, Arthur Fields Books, 1974])

Dickter, Adam. "Safir's Mixed Legacy," *New York Jewish Week*, August 18, 2000

Levitt, Leonard. "Jews, Hasidic Jews and the NYPD," *NYPD Confidential*, November 5, 2018.

Tress, Luke. "Jessica Tisch, Jewish public servant, appointed as commissioner of NYPD," *New York Jewish Week*, November 20, 2024.

Kornbluh, Jacob, "Who Is Jessica Tisch, the Jewish NYC Police Commissioner Who Will Serve in Mayor-Elect Mamdani's Administration?" *The Forward*, November 19, 2025.

Strauss, Joseph, "Jessica Tisch to stay on as Mamdani's NYPD commissioner, reassuring some Jewish leaders," *Jewish Telegraphic Agency/New York Jewish Week*, November 19, 2025.

New York Jewish Week Staff, "Who will run Mamdani's Office to Combat Antisemitism? These names are in the mix," *New York Jewish Week*, January 28, 2026.

These New York-centered publications (except for Kitaeff, which is national in scope) are followed by references to Jewish police work in other parts of the U.S., Jewish prosecutors and defense attorneys, and Jewish judges. This section concludes with references on a unique case in the relationship of American Jews to crime and law-enforcement – the **Jewish Defense League**.

Kitaeff, Jack, (*Jews in Blue: The Jewish American Experience in Law Enforcement* [hc, Cambria Press, 2006]) 978-1934043042 [- *examines the history, experiences, and identity of Jewish Americans working in policing and related areas of law enforcement. A central theme is the apparent tension between the popular image of American Jews as lawyers, doctors, academics, merchants, or political activists and the much less familiar history of Jews as police officers and other criminal-justice professionals.*

Kitaeff places Jewish participation in policing within the broader story of Jewish integration into American society. In the great immigration era of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Jews were heavily concentrated in cities such as New York, where encounters with the police were often experienced from the civilian side—particularly by immigrants, labor activists, street peddlers, and residents of crowded working-class neighborhoods. Police departments themselves were frequently dominated by other ethnic groups, particularly Irish Americans, and antisemitism could be an obstacle to Jewish recruitment and advancement. Becoming a police officer therefore represented an unusual

but significant avenue of Americanization: the Jewish policeman was no longer merely a member of an immigrant minority dealing with state authority but was himself exercising that authority.

The book emphasizes the personal experiences of Jewish law-enforcement officers. Kitaeff is particularly interested in what happened when Jewish identity intersected with the occupational culture of policing. Jewish officers sometimes encountered stereotypes from colleagues and suspects alike. They could find themselves regarded as anomalous—people who did not fit conventional assumptions about either Jews or policemen. At the same time, Jewish officers frequently developed strong identification with police culture and regarded themselves primarily as professional law-enforcement officers rather than representatives of an ethnic or religious community.

*An important aspect of the book is therefore **antisemitism within law enforcement**. Kitaeff records the persistence of antisemitic jokes, stereotypes, exclusionary practices, and assumptions about Jewish physical weakness or unwillingness to perform dangerous work. The experience varied greatly according to department, generation, and location. The story is consequently not simply one of systematic discrimination but of a gradual erosion of barriers as Jewish officers demonstrated their competence and became increasingly integrated into American police institutions.*

*The book also deals with the relationship between Jewish police officers and the **Jewish community itself**. Historically, policing was not necessarily regarded as a prestigious Jewish occupation. Families that encouraged children toward higher education and the professions might regard becoming a policeman as an odd career choice. This produced an interesting double marginality: Jewish officers could encounter antisemitism among fellow policemen while simultaneously discovering that other Jews regarded their occupation as culturally unfamiliar or even somewhat alien.*

Kitaeff also challenges the stereotype of Jews as essentially cerebral, nonviolent, or physically unsuited to police work. Jewish participation in policing provides another example—alongside Jewish soldiers, boxers, gangsters, and athletes—of the inadequacy of the old stereotype of Jewish physical passivity. Police work required officers to exercise coercive authority and sometimes physical force, putting Jewish policemen in a social role almost exactly opposite to the conventional image of the vulnerable immigrant Jew.

*Another significant theme is **Jewish ethical and religious identity**. For observant or culturally identified Jewish officers, police work could create practical problems involving the Sabbath, holidays, dietary laws, family life, and participation in Jewish communal institutions. More broadly, officers sometimes interpreted their work through Jewish concepts of justice, protection of life, and responsibility toward the community. Yet Kitaeff does not suggest that there is a single identifiable "Jewish" approach to policing. The experiences he records demonstrate considerable diversity in religious observance, political outlook, and the importance individual officers attach to Jewish identity.*
– ChatGPT]

*While the book anchors its historical beginnings in New York, its modern geographic and institutional scope spans well beyond NYC, including substantial coverage to Jewish American men and women serving in municipal law enforcement on the West Coast. It also features firsthand interviews and research on Jewish agents working nationwide within the **Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)** as well as individuals serving across the country within the **Department of Homeland Security (DHS)**.*
[Google/AI]

Dzikansky, Mordecai & Robert Slater, (Terrorist Cop: The NYPD Jewish Cop Who Traveled the World to Stop Terrorists [hc, Barricade Books, 2010]) 978-1569804452 [pb, 2015] 978-1569801604]
(Disclosure: I had the honour and pleasure of knowing Mordy as a casual friend and occasional jogging partner during his final years in Ra'anana, Israel. He was a "mentsch" of rare integrity and modesty, a big man with a big heart. Like all who knew him, I was shocked and pained when that heart gave out at the age of 60 in 2022. "Yehi zichro Baruch" – may his memory be for a blessing. – SS)

[This is both a police memoir and a counterterrorism memoir, tracing Mordecai (“Morty”) Dzikansky’s unusual career from an Orthodox Jewish upbringing in Brooklyn to service as an NYPD detective and, after September 11, 2001, as the department’s representative in Israel. He was the son of Rabbi Jekuthiel Dzikansky and grew up Modern Orthodox, attending yeshiva and wearing a kippah. When he entered the NYPD, observant Jews were exceedingly rare in the department—the later paperback describes him as one of only two Orthodox Jewish NYPD officers at the time. He recounts the practical and cultural difficulties of combining Orthodox observance with police work. Interestingly, he argues that his yeshiva education actually helped prepare him for detective work: Talmudic-style habits of questioning, examining contradictions and looking at problems from different angles proved useful professionally.]

The first part of the book therefore gives a relatively rare insider’s account of an identifiably Orthodox Jew functioning within the NYPD. Dzikansky began as a uniformed officer patrolling Brooklyn and eventually became a first-grade detective. His Jewish background sometimes became a professional asset. One of his memorable early investigations involved going undercover to investigate the theft and illicit trafficking of Torah scrolls.

*He also became involved in cases at the intersection of policing and New York Jewish life, and was directly involved with two particularly important cases: the **1990 murder of Rabbi Meir Kahane** and the **1994 killing of Ari Halberstam**, the Hasidic student murdered in the Brooklyn Bridge shooting. These episodes helped establish Dzikansky as an officer who could operate effectively where ordinary criminal investigation, Jewish communal knowledge and politically motivated violence overlapped.*

The book changes character dramatically after 9/11. Under Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly, the NYPD developed its own international counterterrorism and intelligence capabilities rather than relying entirely upon federal agencies. Dzikansky’s combination of police experience, Jewish background, Hebrew/Israeli familiarity and investigative skills made him particularly suited to the department’s new overseas initiative. He was posted to Israel as an NYPD liaison, working with Israeli police and security personnel and reporting lessons from terrorist incidents back to New York.

Much of Terrorist Cop consequently becomes an eyewitness account of the Second Intifada and the suicide-bombing campaign in Israel. Dzikansky describes arriving at bombing scenes, observing Israeli emergency and investigative procedures, studying the construction and effects of explosive devices, and examining how terrorists selected targets and penetrated security. The descriptions can be graphic: buses, restaurants and other civilian sites become crime scenes from which police must reconstruct how an attack was planned and executed.

The point of these investigations was not simply to solve crimes in Israel. Dzikansky was continually asking: What can New York learn from this? Israeli experience offered lessons about protecting mass transit, restaurants, public gatherings and other “soft targets”; detecting suspicious behavior; coordinating police, intelligence and emergency services; and educating ordinary citizens to report potential threats. His work therefore illustrates an important development in post-9/11 American policing—the globalization of municipal counterterrorism, with an NYPD detective studying attacks overseas because similar methods might eventually be employed in New York.

His responsibilities also took him beyond Israel. Accounts of the book emphasize his exposure to terrorist incidents and counterterrorism practices in places including Egypt, Turkey, Spain and Russia. Thus the title’s “traveled the world” is not simply promotional: Dzikansky became, in effect, an NYPD specialist in learning from terrorist attacks wherever they occurred and translating those lessons into preventive policing at home.

*Repeated exposure to the immediate aftermath of suicide bombings took a psychological toll. The memoir describes Dzikansky’s eventual struggle with **post-traumatic stress**, so that the book becomes partly an account of the cost borne by police officers who repeatedly confront scenes of mass violence.*

– ChatGPT]

Friedman, Ralph, with Patrick Picciarelli, (*Street Warrior: The True Story of the NYPD's Most Decorated Detective and the Era That Created Him* [hc, St. Martin's Press, 2017] 978-1250106902 [pb, St. Martin's Griffin, 2018] 978-1250190437 [\[See related film\]](#) [- one of the most highly-decorated detectives in NYPD history. He served from 1970 to 1984, much of that time in the 41st Precinct in the South Bronx, the precinct famously nicknamed "Fort Apache." The book is both a personal memoir and a portrait of New York policing during the fiscal crisis, urban deterioration, drug epidemics, and extremely high violent-crime rates of the 1970s and early 1980s.

Friedman came to police work with the temperament of a street fighter rather than that of a cautious bureaucrat. The memoir begins even before his police career, portraying a young man attracted to cars, speed, physical risk, and confrontation. Once he joins the NYPD, these qualities translate into an unusually proactive style of policing. Rather than waiting for calls, Friedman actively searches for criminals and suspicious situations and repeatedly makes arrests while off duty. The publisher credits him with roughly 2,000 arrests, 100 off-duty arrests, 6,000 assists, involvement in 15 shootings, shooting eight suspects, and killing four.

The heart of the book is Friedman's account of policing the South Bronx during its most troubled period. The neighborhood is depicted as devastated by arson, abandoned buildings, poverty, heroin and later other drugs, gangs, robberies, and violent crime. Friedman and his partners confront armed robbers, drug dealers, murder suspects and street criminals, often in situations that suddenly become violent. The narrative therefore reads at times more like hard-boiled crime fiction than a conventional police memoir: stakeouts, foot pursuits, undercover operations, arrests and gun battles follow one another rapidly.

*But *Street Warrior* is not simply a collection of heroic-cop anecdotes. Friedman also describes the psychological and ethical ambiguities of street policing. He discusses racial profiling, police relations with minority residents, the decision to use deadly force, and confrontations with some of the same citizens police were supposed to protect. The perspective remains very much Friedman's own—that of a policeman operating in dangerous circumstances rather than a detached historian—but this makes the book useful as a primary-source account of how an exceptionally active officer understood policing during that era.*

An important underlying theme is the difference between the policing culture of Friedman's era and that of later decades. Officers enjoyed considerable individual discretion, communications and surveillance technology were primitive by today's standards, and street knowledge, informants, observation and physical courage mattered enormously. Friedman presents the policeman as an almost autonomous hunter of criminals. At the same time, the book inadvertently illustrates why later policing became more regulated: the latitude that enabled highly motivated officers like Friedman to operate so aggressively could also produce questionable searches, racial assumptions and dangerous confrontations.

His career was remarkably compressed. Friedman served only fourteen years, retiring in 1984 because of injuries sustained in the line of duty. Yet during that period he accumulated more awards and honors than any other detective in NYPD history, according to his publisher.

Friedman provides a relatively unusual example of a Jewish New York policeman whose memoir is principally about being a cop rather than about being Jewish. He represents the extent to which, by the postwar period, a Jewish officer could participate fully in the famously rough culture of New York street policing rather than appearing primarily as a Jewish outsider confronting an overwhelmingly Irish- or Italian-American institution. The book is therefore potentially valuable alongside explicitly Jewish-policing works: it shows Jewish integration into the rank-and-file culture of the NYPD rather than concentrating on antisemitism or ethnic identity. After retirement, Friedman remained interested in law enforcement and police issues, eventually becoming a frequent speaker, lecturer and interview subject.

*His own biographical site describes him as still involved with law enforcement through “talks, lectures and interviews.” His career also became the basis for the 2017 Discovery television series **Street Justice: The Bronx**, in which Friedman recounts cases from his years in the 41st Precinct, supplemented by dramatized reconstructions. [See description in the companion Filmography] - ChatGPT*

Kestenbaum, Sam, “Inside the Heads, Hearts and Yarmulkes of Jewish Cops.” *The Forward*, January 18, 2015 [- asks how Jewish identity, historical memory, and religious values interact with the culture and demands of police work. The article appeared amid the intense national debate over policing following the deaths of Eric Garner and other Black Americans, and it contrasts Jewish participation in protests against police brutality with the less-discussed fact that thousands of Jews themselves serve in law enforcement.

*A central figure is **Rabbi Gary Moskowitz**, a former NYPD officer who spent nearly a decade on the force, including work as an undercover narcotics officer. An observant Jew who wore a yarmulke, Moskowitz recalls public surprise at encountering a visibly Jewish policeman. For him, police work challenged the stereotype of Jewish men as intellectuals, professionals, or businessmen rather than physically assertive authority figures. He connects his policing to tikkun olam, although he is also sharply critical of inadequate police training and aspects of NYPD treatment of Black citizens.*

*Kestenbaum also interviews **Rabbi Alvin Kass**, longtime chief chaplain of the NYPD. Kass estimated that there were roughly **3,000 Jews among the NYPD's approximately 34,000 officers** at the time. He emphasizes the historical transformation represented by Jewish policemen: Jews came from European societies where police and other state authorities were frequently instruments of persecution; in America, Jews could themselves become officers charged with protecting citizens and enforcing democratic law.*

*The article discusses the **Shomrim Society**, founded in New York in 1924, described as the country's oldest and largest Jewish law-enforcement fraternal organization. It also profiles Jewish officers outside New York, including **Jerome Cobert** in Northern California and retired Bay Area officer **Steve Harris**. Their families initially had reservations about police careers—partly because Jewish historical experience created suspicion of uniforms and governmental authority.*

*Kestenbaum' argues that Jewish officers sometimes interpret policing through specifically Jewish ethical or historical categories. Kass invokes the Jewish conception of the struggle between the yetzer tov and yetzer hara; other officers cite memories of persecution, the Holocaust, civil rights, empathy with outsiders, and Jewish ideas of justice. At the same time, Jewish identity does **not** produce a uniform political attitude toward policing: some interviewees defend police conduct strongly, while Moskowitz is considerably more critical. – ChatGPT]*

Seedman, Albert, (Chief!: Classic Cases from the Files of the Chief of Detectives [hc, Arthur Fields Books, 1974]) 978-0525630043 [pb, expanded edition, Universe, 2011] 978-1450279727 [-both a **police memoir and true-crime casebook**, built around twelve major investigations handled by Albert A. Seedman during his thirty-year career with the New York City Police Department. Seedman eventually became **Chief of Detectives in 1971—the first, and apparently still the only, Jewish officer to hold that post.**

Rather than giving a conventional chronological autobiography, Seedman and journalist Peter Hellman reconstruct a series of cases that illustrate both Seedman's career and the workings of the NYPD Detective Bureau during the turbulent 1960s and early 1970s. The book combines investigative narrative with portraits of victims and suspects, courtroom material, police-station anecdotes, and Seedman's descriptions of how apparently insignificant clues could break a case. Contemporary Kirkus

Reviews particularly noted this combination of crime reconstruction, detection and accounts of station-house life.

Among the principal cases are: *The murder of Kitty Genovese (1964)*; *The Joe Colombo shooting*; *The Joe Gallo killing*; *The Greenwich Village townhouse explosion of March 1970 (Weather Underground)*; *Black Liberation Army attacks on police officers*; *Jewish Defense League cases*, including the investigation of attacks associated with militant protests against Soviet treatment of Jews; Other cases include major frauds, sniper attacks and less celebrated investigations demonstrating Seedman's painstaking approach to ordinary detective work.

A recurrent theme is Seedman's belief that successful detection depends less upon cinematic brilliance than upon **attention to detail, records, patient questioning and the intelligent coordination of large numbers of detectives**. One description of the book summarizes his method as extracting solutions from the mundane information generated by a highly documented modern society.

There is also a substantial institutional dimension. Seedman describes an NYPD coping simultaneously with conventional organized crime, racial conflict, anti-police violence, political radicalism and intense press scrutiny. He was unusually comfortable with reporters and became one of the most recognizable NYPD officials of his era. The cases therefore double as a portrait of New York during the transition from the relatively conventional crime problems of the 1950s to the politically and socially explosive environment of the late 1960s and early 1970s.

The Jewish dimension

Seedman was born in the Bronx in 1918 to Jewish immigrant parents and rose through a police institution in which Jewish officers had historically encountered significant obstacles to advancement. His eventual appointment as Chief of Detectives was therefore notable in itself. A library catalog describes him explicitly as the only Jewish officer ever to hold that position.

The book is not primarily a memoir about Jewish identity or antisemitism, however. Seedman's Jewishness is part of his personal and professional background rather than its organizing subject. That actually makes the book useful for your project: it is a first-person account of a Jewish policeman who reached the highest level of the NYPD detective hierarchy rather than a retrospective study specifically devoted to "Jewish cops."

There is an additional Jewish angle in the Jewish Defense League investigations, where Seedman found himself in the unusual position of being a prominent Jewish police commander investigating militant Jewish activists. The JDL's campaign against Soviet targets and others it considered complicit in Soviet antisemitism created precisely the conflict between ethnic/religious solidarity and impartial law enforcement that makes Seedman's career relevant to a study of Jews in American policing.

Dickter, Adam. "Safir's Mixed Legacy." *New York Jewish Week*, August 18, 2000.

*Adam Dickter's article appeared as **Howard Safir** was leaving office after four years as NYPD commissioner (1996–2000). Its central argument is captured by the title: Safir left a genuinely mixed legacy. He could point to dramatic reductions in crime and significant achievements in combating hate crimes, but his tenure had also become associated with controversies over police shootings, brutality, and deteriorating relations between the NYPD and minority communities.*

*On the positive side, during Safir's tenure overall crime reportedly declined **38 percent and homicide 44 percent**, reaching its lowest level in three decades. Jewish organizations particularly appreciated his attention to **bias crimes**. The Anti-Defamation League's New York regional director, Howie Katz, praised Safir for upgrading the NYPD Bias Crime Unit into a task force, enlarging its staff, and establishing an advisory board through which community representatives could offer recommendations. Katz nevertheless thought Safir's defensive response to criticism contributed to the barriers between police and communities—hence, in Katz's phrase, a "mixed legacy."*

The principal negative issue was police use of force. Safir and Mayor Rudolph Giuliani were accused of emphasizing aggressive crime reduction at the expense of police-community relations. The article refers particularly to several highly publicized police encounters involving unarmed Black civilians. Jewish critics such as Jews for Racial and Economic Justice argued that it was especially disappointing that New York's first Jewish commissioner had presided over a period associated with notorious police-brutality controversies.

Safir and the Jewish community

*The most important case affecting Safir's reputation among Jews was the **1999 police killing of Gideon (Gidone/Gary) Busch**, a mentally disturbed Orthodox Jewish man in Borough Park. Police maintained that Busch threatened officers with a hammer; civilian witnesses disputed important elements of that account. Safir strongly defended the officers, and Busch's family and some Borough Park leaders believed that he had responded insensitively and too readily accepted the police version. Although a grand jury declined to indict the officers, the incident seriously damaged Safir's standing in parts of Orthodox Brooklyn.*

This is significant because Safir's Jewish identity did not automatically translate into solidarity with Jewish complainants against the police. In the Busch controversy, he behaved primarily as the institutional head and defender of the NYPD rather than as a Jewish communal figure.

Safir and Jewish police officers

The article is especially valuable here. It reports that the Shomrim Society, the organization of Jewish NYPD personnel, represented roughly 2,000 Jewish officers and employees at the time. Safir's appointment as the city's first Jewish police commissioner initially produced a considerable boost in Shomrim morale.

Safir did not conceal or minimize his Jewish identity. Shomrim president Gene Stevens recalled that Safir openly expressed pride in being Jewish. More concretely, he was himself a dues-paying Shomrim member—paying the \$20 annual membership fee—and regularly attended important Shomrim functions, including breakfasts and its annual oneg Shabbat.

*Yet relations were not entirely satisfactory. Former Shomrim president Sgt. Eric Finkelstein complained that Safir took more than eight months to respond to a 1998 letter concerning alleged antisemitic incidents within the NYPD. Safir maintained that he had never received the letter and eventually met Finkelstein after *The Jewish Week* published articles about the issue. Finkelstein nevertheless regretted*

that Shomrim had not developed the close relationship with the city's first Jewish commissioner that its members had hoped for.

That contrast makes the article particularly revealing: Safir was personally and publicly comfortable with Jewish identification, but Jewish officers did not necessarily believe that having a Jewish commissioner gave their organization greater institutional influence.

Safir himself regarded his appointment as breaking a barrier. He told Dickter that he was proud to have helped dispel the notion that law enforcement was somehow not a Jewish vocation. He emphasized that Jews had a long history in the NYPD even though none had previously reached the commissioner's office.

He also supplied an interesting personal explanation for his career. His role model had been his uncle, Louis Weiner, whom Safir described as an important early Jewish NYPD detective. Safir recalled that people still asked how a "nice Jewish boy" had become a policeman; his answer was essentially that he was following his uncle's example and regarded police work as an honorable profession.

NYPD Jewish chaplain Rabbi Alvin Kass offered perhaps the strongest favorable judgment, calling Safir one of New York's greatest commissioners and praising his efforts in difficult intergroup disputes. Kass also connected Safir's career—and the retirement of another senior Jewish NYPD official, personnel chief Michael Markman—to the broader history of Jewish participation in the department and argued for stronger efforts to recruit Jews into police service. - ChatGPT

Winsey, Valentine Rossilli, "My Son, the Policeman," *Jewish Life* (New York: Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America), ca. 1972–73. [Exact issue and pagination not located.] *A secondary article based on Winsey's: Gallob, Ben, "The Jewish Cop: Economics Influenced His Career Decision,"* *Detroit Jewish News*, January 5, 1973. [Gallob reports on Winsey's research into the occupational motivations and experiences of Jewish New York police officers. In 1973 anthropologist Valentine Rossilli Winsey conducted interviews with Jewish members of the NYPD, asking why Jews chose police work. Her research found that economic security had historically been an important attraction, particularly for the Depression generation, but that Jewish recruitment was declining as higher education and other occupations became more accessible and police work retained relatively low status and pay.]

Jewish Telegraphic Agency, "Behind the Headlines: Drive on for More Jewish Cops," *Jewish Telegraphic Agency Daily News Bulletin*, August 30, 1973. [The article concerns the NYPD's 1973 campaign to recruit more Jewish officers, particularly the work of Lewis A. Berns, Barry J. Lichtenstein, and George Drucker, and discusses the historically low Jewish representation in the NYPD. The very existence of such a campaign is useful evidence for the perception, by the early 1970s, that Jewish participation in policing was declining and complements the findings of Winsey's research. – ChatGPT]

Levitt, Leonard. "Jews, Hasidic Jews and the NYPD." *NYPD Confidential*, November 5, 2018. [A revealing journalistic commentary on Jews within the NYPD and the department's complicated relationship with New York's Hasidic communities. Levitt argues that overt institutional antisemitism had largely ceased to be significant at senior levels of the department, citing Jewish advancement, Howard Safir's tenure as police commissioner, and the longstanding role of Jewish chaplain Rabbi Alvin Kass. At the same time, he describes resentment among some rank-and-file officers toward the

*perceived political influence and preferential treatment of Hasidic communities, using confrontations at Brooklyn's 66th Precinct and contemporary corruption investigations as examples. Particularly useful for distinguishing the experience of **Jewish officers within the NYPD** from the politically sensitive relationship between the department and Orthodox/Hasidic communal organizations.]*

Tress, Luke. "Jessica Tisch, Jewish public servant, appointed as commissioner of NYPD." New York Jewish Week, November 20, 2024. *[This is probably the best starting source specifically on **Tisch as a Jewish police commissioner**. It appeared immediately after Mayor Eric Adams announced her appointment. Tress identifies her as coming from a prominent Jewish family and discusses both the family's communal activities and Tisch's own Jewish connections. Tisch was born in 1981 into the extraordinarily prominent Tisch family, whose wealth derives principally from Loews Corporation. Her father is James S. Tisch, longtime president/CEO of Loews; her mother, Meryll H. Tisch, is a major figure in New York education and Jewish philanthropy, formerly chancellor of the New York State Board of Regents.*

Kornbluh, Jacob, "Who Is Jessica Tisch, the Jewish NYC Police Commissioner Who Will Serve in Mayor-Elect Mamdani's Administration?" The Forward, November 19, 2025. *This is probably the most useful single article for the intersection of Tisch's Jewishness, policing, Israel and Mamdani. It reports that Tisch grew up on Manhattan's Upper East Side, attended Dalton and then Harvard, and was involved with Chabad while at Harvard. Her Jewish identity therefore isn't simply genealogical or a consequence of belonging to the Tisch family. The article describes her as widely respected within New York's Jewish community, both for her policing record and for her support of Israel. Interestingly, it also notes that five of her deputy commissioners were Jewish at the time. This became politically significant precisely because Mamdani's views on Israel are so different from Tisch's. For some Jewish New Yorkers anxious about a Mamdani administration, keeping Tisch at the head of the NYPD was regarded as a source of reassurance. A particularly nice example occurred on January 28, 2026. Tisch installed a mezuzah on the doorpost of her office at NYPD headquarters, One Police Plaza. Tisch recited the blessing and affixed the mezuzah in a ceremony attended by Jewish members of the NYPD. She subsequently described it publicly as a "small but meaningful symbol of faith and resilience." She does not merely happen to have Jewish parents; she publicly identifies herself with Jewish religious symbolism while serving as police commissioner.*

Strauss, Joseph. "Jessica Tisch to stay on as Mamdani's NYPD commissioner, reassuring some Jewish leaders." Jewish Telegraphic Agency/New York Jewish Week, November 19, 2025. *[The title itself captures the significance. Tisch's retention was interpreted by some Jewish leaders not merely as continuity in policing but as a **reassuring appointment for Jewish New Yorkers concerned about Mamdani's politics concerning Israel and antisemitism**. The Forward similarly described Tisch as someone many Jews viewed as a **protector**. This makes Tisch's case quite different from Albert Seedman's. Seedman was a pioneering Jewish NYPD leader at a time when the central Jewish issue within policing was substantially whether a Jew could overcome institutional barriers and reach the NYPD's upper command. Tisch operates in an NYPD where being Jewish no longer presents that sort of exceptional institutional barrier. Instead, her Jewish significance involves antisemitism, Jewish physical security, Israel/Zionism and the relationship between the police and an increasingly polarized New York Jewish community.]*

New York Jewish Week Staff. “Who will run Mamdani's Office to Combat Antisemitism? These names are in the mix.” *New York Jewish Week*, January 28, 2026. [The names of the candidates are less important for our summary than Tisch's public approach to combating anti-Semitism in New York City. She has repeatedly described antisemitic violence and threats as a significant NYPD concern. This is not surprising institutionally—the commissioner has responsibility for all hate crimes—but her public statements sometimes have an unmistakably personal dimension. One especially revealing incident occurred at Park East Synagogue on the Upper East Side in November 2025. After an anti-Israel demonstration outside the synagogue produced inflammatory chants and problems for people entering and leaving, Tisch concluded that the NYPD had failed adequately to protect congregants. She did something unusual for a police commissioner: she went to the synagogue during Shabbat services and personally apologized to the congregation. Her point was that whatever the protesters' First Amendment rights, the police had an obligation to ensure that Jews could enter and leave their synagogue safely. This incident is worth examining in full because Tisch's response was noticeably stronger than the initial response coming from Mamdani's camp.]

Tisch, Israel and Zionism: The evidence indicates that Tisch's connection with Israel is not merely inferred from her Jewish background. She has been publicly identified as a strong supporter of Israel. That produces an extraordinary political configuration: Jewish, pro-Israel NYPD Commissioner Jessica Tisch serving under Muslim, strongly pro-Palestinian Mayor Zohran Mamdani. Yet it would be misleading to portray their relationship simply as Jewish commissioner versus Muslim mayor. Their professional relationship has proved considerably more pragmatic. The most symbolically revealing example came with **the 2026 Israel Day Parade**. Mamdani declined to participate, consistent with his political position on Israel. Tisch did exactly the opposite: she represented the city and served as an honorary grand marshal, while the NYPD mounted the security operation protecting the parade. That episode almost encapsulates their arrangement: Mamdani did not disguise his political disagreement with the parade's message, but his police commissioner—Jewish and publicly supportive of Israel—participated prominently, while his administration provided police protection. - ChatGPT

Chicago:

Miller, Robert Nagler, “**My Son, the Jewish Policeman.**” *Chicago Jewish History*, vol. 48, no. 2 (Spring 2024). [Interview subjects: Elliot Cohen, Marc Buslik, and Harold “Sonny” Lukatsky, all associated with the Shomrim Society/Jewish Police Association of Illinois]

Miller, Robert Nagler, “**My Son, the Policeman: More Tales from the Shomrim Society.**” *Chicago Jewish History*, vol. 48, no. 3 (Summer 2024), pp. 4–5. [Interview subject: Bruce Rottner, retired/high-ranking Chicago Police Department officer and longtime Shomrim member. Rottner discusses entering the CPD in the early 1970s, when Jewish officers were comparatively unusual; his Jewish upbringing; Jewish concepts of social justice, charity and care for strangers; his decision not to conceal his Jewish identity; antisemitism and racial attitudes within the police environment; and his first Shomrim meeting in 1972. He also identifies Elliot Cohen as one of the few other Jewish law-enforcement officers he knew when beginning his career.]

Miller, Robert Nagler, “**My Daughter, the Policewoman: More Tales from the Shomrim Society.**” *Chicago Jewish History*, vol. 48, no. 4 (Fall 2024), pp. 18–19 and continuation. [Interview subject: Joanna Benjamin, sergeant, Chicago Police Department. Benjamin is especially interesting because she represents a younger generation and a Jewish woman in the CPD. She had studied law and urban

planning and actually became an attorney before following her longstanding ambition to become a police officer. Her father, Milton Benjamin, had served 43 years with the Chicago Police Department; father and daughter became the first father-daughter pair to serve on the board of the Shomrim Society of Illinois. The interview explicitly asks her how Jewish values informed her law-enforcement career. She identifies Jewish ethical teachings concerning saving life and “Justice, justice you shall pursue” as guiding principles in her police work.]

Miller, Robert Nagler, “**My Son, the Policeman: More Tales from the Shomrim Society — David Welbel, Part I.**” *Chicago Jewish History*, vol. 49, no. 1 (Winter 2025), pp. 8ff. [*David Welbel was a retired Chicago Police Department sergeant and son of two Holocaust survivors. In his interview he talks explicitly about Holocaust memory and Jewish identity in relation to police service.*]

Knight, Meribah, “**How a Top Jewish Cop in Chicago Wound Up Managing Its Explosive Police Scandal,**” *The Forward*, May 9, 2016 [*Profile of **Bruce Rottner**, retired Chicago Police deputy chief and former president of the Shomrim Society. Rottner recalled that before entering the department he had essentially never encountered a Jewish policeman; joining Shomrim connected him to a network of fellow Jewish officers.*]

Haller, Mark H, “**Historical Roots of Police Behavior: Chicago, 1890–1925,**” *Law & Society Review* (1976) [*Not a Jewish-history article as such, but important because Haller explicitly references Jewish detectives dealing with Jewish criminals in his discussion of Chicago policing, i.e. Jewish policemen confronting the immigrant underworld.*]

Jewish Police inspectors in other American cities: Various articles and archival references can be found regarding **Benjamin Alexander** and **Morris Wolf** of the Boston Police Department; **Jacob H. Gomborow** of the Philadelphia Police Department; and **David Kalish** and **Ivan Wolkind** of the Los Angeles Police Department.

Federal Agents: Isidor “Izzy” Einstein (1880–1938) and Moe Smith (1887–1960), the Jewish “Hooch Hounds” of Prohibition

Einstein, Isidor, (**Prohibition Agent No. 1**, [unknown binding, Frederick A. Stokes Company, 1932]) B00085LSUI [*This firsthand autobiography is the definitive volume on their exploits. Einstein’s account of his time as Prohibition Agent No 1 was dedicated to the 4,932 persons he arrested, “Hoping they bear me no grudge for having done my duty.” Einstein and his fellow Prohibition agent, Moe Smith, were the best known Prohibition agents in the country. National Prohibition went into effect in January of 1920, and Einstein applied for a job as a Prohibition agent because it sounded like more fun than sorting mail. He had no training in law enforcement and clearly didn’t conform to the stereotype of one at five feet and five inches in height and 225 pounds. He listed from side to side as he walked. Einstein enlisted his friend, Moe Smith, to become a Prohibition agent. Both were members of the Masonic order and that is where they may have met.*

Izzy Einstein’s success was based on his skill in disguising himself. His ability to speak German, Polish, Hungarian, Bohemian, Yiddish and some Italian and Russian helped him deceive his victims. The human chameleon disguised himself as a German pickle packer, a Polish count, a Hungarian violinist,

a Jewish gravedigger, a French maitre d', an Italian fruit vendor, a Russian fisherman and a Chinese launderer. His disguises included a streetcar conductor, an ice deliverer, an opera singer, a truck driver, a judge, a traveling cigar salesman, a street cleaner, a Texas cattleman, a movie extra, a football player, a beauty contest judge, a grocer, a lawyer, a librarian, a rabbi, a college student, a musician, a plumber and a delegate from Kentucky to the Democratic National convention. "OB[scure] In Coney Island, he entered a drinking joint in a wet bathing suit, shivering and gasping for aid. Wearing an attendant's white jacket, he shut another saloon near a hospital." He even disguised himself as an African-American man in Harlem.

Izzy became popular across the country and he was permitted to visit other cities. He posed as a Mexican laborer in El Paso, as an unemployed auto worker in Detroit and as a member of a construction crew in Providence. [Amazon]

Asbury, Herbert, **"The Great Illusion: An Informal History of Prohibition"** [hc, Doubleday, 1950, reprinted by Praeger, 1968] 978-0837100081 [pb, Dover Publications, 2018] 978-0486824680]) *Asbury, a premier crime and social historian of the era, dedicates substantial text to documenting the pair's theatrical undercover operations. He memorably described Izzy's round, heavy frame as moving "majestically ahead like the breast of an overfed pouter pigeon."*

Okrent, Daniel, **"Last Call: The Rise and Fall of Prohibition"** [hc, Scribner, 2010]) 978-0743277020 [pb, Scribner, 2011] 978-0743277044 *[This definitive, widely acclaimed history of the 18th Amendment positions Izzy and Moe as the most successful and clever federal enforcers of the era, highlighting how their working-class immigrant backgrounds and multi-lingual skills outmaneuvered New York's vast speakeasy network.]*

Thurber, James, **"Where Are They Now? Premier Hooch Hounds,"** *The New Yorker*, vol. 11, no. 27, August 17, 1935, pp. 20–25. *Writing under the pseudonym Jared L. Manley, legendary humorist James Thurber published a famous retrospective profile tracing their post-Prohibition lives as successful insurance agents for the New York Life Insurance Company.*

King, Gilbert, **"Prohibition's Premier Hooch Hounds"** *Smithsonian Magazine*, March 15, 2012. *A highly detailed biographical article published online by Smithsonian Magazine that explores their vast inventory of disguises (from gravediggers to trombone players) and analyzes why they were abruptly fired due to bureaucratic jealousy.*

History.com Editors, **"The Improbable Prohibition Agents Who Outsmarted Speakeasy Owners."** *History Channel History Stories*, June 14, 2018. *A deeply researched article featured on History.com showcasing how these two unlikely, weapon-free agents utilized regional dialects and psychological strategy to dismantle thousands of illegal liquor caches.*

U.S. Jewish Prosecutors:

Broyde, Michael J., "Practicing Criminal Law: A Jewish Law Analysis of Being a Prosecutor or Defense Attorney," *Fordham Law Review*, 66(4), pp. 1141–1182 (1998). [*This comprehensive academic paper examines the distinct ethical challenges Jewish prosecutors face through the lens of the Talmud and Jewish legal tradition.*]

Schachter, Hershel, "Dina DeMalchusa Dina: Secular Law As a Religious Obligation." *Journal of Halacha and Contemporary Society*, 1(1), pp. 103–132 (1981). [*This article explores the theological foundations under which American Jewish attorneys and prosecutors operate within a secular criminal justice system.*]

Ferencz, Benjamin B., (**Less Than Slaves: Jewish Forced Labor and the Quest for Compensation**, [hc, Harvard UP, 1979]) 978-0674525252 [pb, Indiana UP, 2002] 978-0253215307 [*As a United States war crimes investigator during World War II, Benjamin B. Ferencz participated in the liberation of Nazi concentration camps. He returned to Germany after the war to help bring perpetrators of war crimes to justice and remained to direct restitution programs for Nazi victims. In Less Than Slaves, Ferencz describes the painstaking efforts that were made to persuade German industrial firms such as I. G. Farben, Krupp, AEG, Rheinmetall, and Daimler-Benz to compensate camp inmates who were exploited as forced laborers. The meager outcome of these efforts emerges from searing pages that detail the difficulties confronted by Ferencz and his dedicated colleagues. This engrossing narrative is a vital resource for all who are concerned with the moral, legal, and practical implications of the recent significant increase in the number of compensation claims by victims of persecution. First published in 1979, Ferencz's penetrating firsthand account returns to print with the author's evaluation of its historical significance and current relevance.* – Amazon]

Taylor, Telford, (**Courts of Terror: Soviet Criminal Justice and Jewish Emigration** [hc, Alfred A. Knopf, 1976]) 978-0394405094 [pb, Knopf, 1976] 978-0394717586 [*The Amazon description following is limited to the book's 1976 perspective, but well dramatizes the struggle of Taylor and his Jewish legal colleagues on behalf of Soviet Jewry:*

Working in secret for the past several years, a group of distinguished American attorneys has mounted an intensive campaign to secure the release of a score of Russians, most of them Jews attempting to emigrate to Israel, who have been incarcerated in Soviet prisons on a variety of trumped-up charges.

*Telford Taylor, prosecutor at the Nuremberg war trials and now professor of law at Columbia University, is one of them. In this book he makes public how he and his colleagues—among them **Alan Dershowitz, Leon Lipson, George Fletcher, and Melvin Stein**—have challenged the Soviet judicial system on its own legal grounds, and how the Soviet Union has subverted its own rules for the conduct of trials and the confinement of prisoners in order to accommodate a government policy of discouraging emigration without appearing to prohibit it.*

The author tells how he and his fellow attorneys prepared and presented to Russian officials petitions containing documentation of false indictments and twisted trial procedures. In one case, a factory mechanic, Isaac Shkolnik, accused of spying for the British, was brought to trial—when the British government denied the accusation—on charges of spying for Israel. In another, a carpenter, Pinkhas Pinkhasov, was tried and imprisoned for overpricing his services after his emigration permit had been issued. Taylor discloses how in case after case, trial after trial, charges have been fabricated,

defendants have been denied counsel of their choice, and witnesses requested by the defense have been barred from testifying—all in clear defiance of Soviet law.

And—perhaps the most appalling of his revelations—he brings to light the shocking abuse of Jewish prisoners in the camps at the hands of long-time inmates who were sentenced at the end of World War II for Nazi activities and who by virtue of seniority have become trustees with power to discipline the newcomers.

As of early 1976, despite the arduous labors of the American attorneys, despite their visits to Moscow to make personal appeals to Soviet officials (highlighted in Taylor's account of his dramatic meeting with Roman Rudenko, now the Kremlin's Procurator General, who served with him as a prosecutor at Nuremberg thirty years ago), only two of the prisoners had achieved early release in possibly unrelated actions. Courts of Terror documents with stinging force how a judicial system can be—and has been—perverted to serve the political purposes of totalitarian state. It is published to set forth the facts, and in hope of opening up new ways to action on behalf of the men who are still unjustly held prisoner. – Amazon]

Mermelstein, Ari, Victoria Saker Woeste, Ethan Zadoff, and Marc Galanter, eds., (**Jews and the Law** [hc, Quid Pro, LLC, 2014]) 978-1610272292 [pb, Quid Pro, LLC, 2014] 978-1610272278 [A scholarly collection examining the historical relationship between Jews, Jewish identity, and the legal profession, especially in the United States, while also treating Germany and Israel. Originating in a 2006 conference at Cardozo Law School, the essays ask how Jews entered and reshaped secular legal institutions while negotiating the sometimes competing claims of Jewish tradition, professional identity, assimilation, and public service.

The volume traces the rise of Jewish lawyers from an often-excluded minority to a major presence in American law. Topics include antisemitism and professional exclusion; Jewish law firms; Louis Marshall, Julius Henry Cohen, and Benjamin Cardozo; Jewish lawyers associated with both liberal and conservative causes; Jewish participation in Legal Realism; and Jewish attitudes toward law and "legalism." Eli Wald's substantial chapter, "The Jewish Law Firm: Past and Present," pp. 65–123, is especially useful for the sociology and history of Jewish participation in American legal practice.

The collection's broader argument is that Jewish lawyers should not simply be understood through an assimilation narrative—Jews gaining admission to a previously WASP-dominated profession. Jewish lawyers also helped change American legal culture and institutions, bringing differing commitments to social justice, public-interest advocacy, Jewish communal concerns, and legal reform. Other essays broaden the discussion to Jewish legal experience in Germany and Israel and to the intellectual relationship between Jewish law and secular jurisprudence. – ChatGPT]

Mitchell, Dalia Tsuk, (**Architect of Justice: Felix S. Cohen and the Founding of American Legal Pluralism** [hc, Cornell UP, 2007]) 978-0801439568 [A major figure in American legal history during the first half of the twentieth century, Felix Solomon Cohen (1907–1953) is best known for his realist view of the law and his efforts to grant Native Americans more control over their own cultural, political, and economic affairs. A second-generation Jewish American, Cohen was born in Manhattan, where he attended the College of the City of New York before receiving a Ph.D. in philosophy from Harvard University and a law degree from Columbia University. Between 1933 and 1948 he served in the Solicitor's Office of the Department of the Interior, where he made lasting contributions to federal Indian law, drafting the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, the Indian Claims Commission Act of 1946, and, as head of the Indian Law Survey, authoring *The Handbook of Federal Indian Law* (1941), which promoted the protection of tribal rights and continues to serve as the basis for developments in federal Indian law.

In Architect of Justice, Dalia Tsuk Mitchell provides the first intellectual biography of Cohen, whose career and legal philosophy she depicts as being inextricably bound to debates about the place of political, social, and cultural groups within American democracy. Cohen was, she finds, deeply influenced by his own experiences as a Jewish American and discussions within the Jewish community about assimilation and cultural pluralism as well the persecution of European Jews before and during World War II.

Dalia Tsuk Mitchell uses Cohen's scholarship and legal work to construct a history of legal pluralism—a tradition in American legal and political thought that has immense relevance to contemporary debates. She traces the many ways in which legal pluralism informed New Deal policymaking and demonstrates the importance of Cohen's work on behalf of Native Americans in this context, thus bringing federal Indian law from the margins of American legal history to its center. By following the development of legal pluralism in Cohen's writings, Architect of Justice demonstrates a largely unrecognized continuity in American legal thought between the Progressive Era and ongoing debates about multiculturalism and minority rights today. A landmark work in American legal history, this biography also makes clear the major contribution Felix S. Cohen made to America's legal and political landscape through his scholarship and his service to the American government. – Amazon]

Turkus, Burton B., and Sid Feder, (**Murder, Inc.: The Story of “The Syndicate.”** [hc, Tenacity Media Group, 2015] 978-0996285537 [pb, Tenacity Media, 2012] 978-0615643021 [[See related film](#)] [- originally published by Farrar, Straus & Young in 1951. Murder Inc. by former Brooklyn D.A. Burton B. Turkus and veteran A.P. war correspondent Sid Feder is the riveting true crime classic that rips the lid off the national crime Syndicate's "killing machine" that took 1,000 lives nationwide during the 1930's and 40's. In a page-turning non-fiction account that reads like a crime thriller, Turkus and Feder take us behind the scenes with the untold story of how Sicilian gangsters Lucky Luciano, Albert Anastasia and Joe Adonis partnered with Jewish gangsters Meyer Lansky, Bugsy Siegel and Louis "Lepke" Buchalter to create a multi-million rackets enterprise that included, gambling, prostitution, union corruption and the lucrative murder-for-hire scheme that operated out of the back of a Brooklyn Candy Store. After he was able to turn, Murder Inc.'s chief killer, Abe "Kid Twist" Reles, Turkus eventually sent Lepke and six other mobsters to the electric chair. This 1951 best seller by Turkus & Feder which has sold more than a million copies worldwide is now available in a new updated edition complete with mug shots and bios of the original gangsters who spilled so much blood from coast to coast. – Amazon]

Meier, Andrew, (Morgenthau: Power, Privilege, and the Rise of an American Dynasty [hc, Random House, 2022]) 978-1400068852 [pb, Random House, Trade Paperbacks, 2023] 978-0812981049 [- a sweeping history of four generations of the prominent German-Jewish American Morgenthau family, using the family to trace more than a century of American political, legal, and Jewish history.

The book begins with Henry Morgenthau Sr. (1856–1946), a successful New York real-estate investor who became U.S. ambassador to the Ottoman Empire under Woodrow Wilson. He is especially remembered for documenting and protesting the Armenian genocide. His son, Henry Morgenthau Jr. (1891–1967), became Franklin D. Roosevelt's longtime Secretary of the Treasury and one of the most influential Jews in the New Deal administration. During World War II he pressed the Roosevelt administration to do more to rescue European Jews and was instrumental in establishing the War Refugee Board in 1944.

*For a study of Jews and law enforcement, however, the most relevant figure is the next generation: **Robert M. Morgenthau (1919–2019)**. After serving as U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New*

York, he became Manhattan District Attorney, holding that office from 1975 to 2009. He developed a formidable reputation for prosecuting organized crime, corruption, financial fraud, tax evasion, and homicide. Meier portrays him as an exceptionally powerful prosecutor whose conception of public service was deeply connected to the Morgenthau family's tradition of civic responsibility.

Meier also follows the family's complicated relationship with Jewish identity. The Morgenthau family belonged to an assimilated, wealthy German-Jewish elite and were far removed from the Eastern European immigrant Jewish experience that came to dominate New York Jewish life. Yet Jewish identity repeatedly became important at moments of crisis—particularly the Armenian genocide, the Holocaust, Israel, antisemitism, and questions of Jewish public responsibility.

The book is therefore considerably more than a biography of Robert Morgenthau. It is a family saga about wealth, assimilation, political power, public service, and Jewish identity, showing how successive Morgenthau families moved from private wealth into diplomacy, national government, and criminal justice. The sections on Robert Morgenthau's career as federal prosecutor and Manhattan DA make it an especially valuable source on the history of Jews in American prosecution and law enforcement. – ChatGPT]

Specter, Arlen, with Charles Robbins, (**Passion for Truth: From Finding JFK's Single Bullet to Questioning Anita Hill to Impeaching Clinton** [hc, HarperCollins, 2000]) 978-0060198497 [pb, HarperPerennial, 2001] 978-0060958107 [*Before his 30-year career as Senator for Pennsylvania, Arlen Specter (1930-2012) was **Philadelphia district attorney** (1966–74), so he provides a substantial example of Jewish involvement in prosecution and law enforcement. He possessed a strong Jewish identity but expressed it primarily in ethnic, historical, ethical and political rather than Orthodox religious terms. Growing up in the only Jewish family in a small Kansas town, memories of his immigrant parents and Russian pogroms, encounters with professional antisemitism, and concern for Israel and Soviet Jewry all contributed to that identity. Passion for Truth is principally a legal-political memoir rather than a Jewish memoir, but its account of Specter's background helps explain the Jewish consciousness underlying the career of one of the most important Jewish prosecutors and U.S. senators of his generation. – ChatGPT]*

Roy Cohn (1927-1986):

The life of Roy Cohn—the notorious political fixer, McCarthyite counsel, and aggressive defense attorney—has been the subject of deeply researched biographies, academic histories, and explosive journalistic exposés. The definitive books and articles on Roy Cohn are organized below by category with full bibliographic details.

Bird, Kai & Susan Goldmark, (**American Scoundrel: Roy Cohn's Dark Journey from Joe McCarthy to Donald Trump** [hc, Scribner, 2026]) 978-1668031575 [*A major new biography of Roy Cohn, the controversial Jewish-American lawyer, prosecutor, political fixer, and power broker. Relying on over 10,000 pages of unclassified FBI files, Bird and Goldmark trace Cohn from his privileged New York Jewish upbringing through his role in the prosecution of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, his notoriety as chief counsel to Senator Joseph McCarthy, and his later career representing Mafia figures, wealthy businessmen, politicians, and celebrities.*

A central theme is Cohn's consistent method of exercising power: cultivating influential connections, aggressive attacks on opponents, manipulation of publicity and gossip, disregard for conventional legal

and ethical restraints, and an insistence on never admitting defeat. The authors also explore the contradictions between Cohn's public persona and his private life, particularly his homosexuality, which he fiercely refused to acknowledge publicly even while participating in an intensely homophobic political culture.

The book gives considerable attention to Cohn's Jewish background and the Rosenberg case, making it particularly relevant to a study of Jews, crime, and law enforcement. Cohn presents an unusual convergence of categories: Jewish prosecutor, anti-Communist investigator, defense lawyer for alleged and convicted criminals, politically connected fixer, and eventually a lawyer repeatedly investigated and prosecuted himself. He was indicted three times on charges including bribery, extortion, and perjury but was acquitted; shortly before his death he was disbarred.

The biography's larger argument concerns Cohn's political legacy. Bird and Goldmark depict his mentorship of the young Donald Trump as especially consequential: Trump absorbed Cohn's combative approach to opponents, publicity, litigation, and personal loyalty. Thus the book treats Cohn not simply as a colorful and unscrupulous figure of mid-century New York, but as an important link between McCarthyism and the political culture of the twenty-first century. – ChatGPT]

Von Hoffman, Nicholas, (**Citizen Cohn: The Life and Times of Roy Cohn** [hc, Doubleday, 1988] 978-0385236904 [pb, War Room Books, 2023, with a new foreword by Stephen K. Bannon] 978-1648210266 [Citizen Cohn is a highly critical, lively biography of Roy Cohn, tracing his career from his privileged New York Jewish upbringing through his emergence as one of the most notorious lawyers and political operators in postwar America.

The book gives particular attention to Cohn's early fame as a federal prosecutor involved in the Julius and Ethel Rosenberg espionage case, and especially to his subsequent role as chief counsel to Senator Joseph McCarthy's investigations in the early 1950s. Von Hoffman portrays Cohn as an extraordinarily aggressive political and legal tactician who learned early how publicity, intimidation, personal connections, and threats of litigation could be used as effectively as conventional legal argument.

After McCarthy's downfall, Cohn returned to New York and built a lucrative practice representing wealthy businessmen, celebrities, politicians, organized-crime figures, and others needing a lawyer with political connections. The biography emphasizes the remarkable breadth of Cohn's network and his ability to cultivate judges, politicians, journalists, and powerful clients. His associations with controversial figures—including Mafia clients—make the book particularly relevant to the intersection of law enforcement, lawyers, politics, and organized crime.

Von Hoffman also explores Cohn's complicated relationship with Jewish identity. Cohn came from a prominent Jewish family—his father, Albert Cohn, was a New York judge—and remained socially embedded in Jewish New York, yet the book does not portray him as possessing a strong religious or ideological Jewish consciousness. His Jewishness functions more as family, social background, and ethnic identity than as an ethical or religious framework. This makes the contrast between Cohn and the Rosenbergs—Jewish defendants whose prosecution helped launch his career—especially striking.

The later chapters describe Cohn's flamboyant lifestyle, his refusal publicly to acknowledge his homosexuality, his political alliances, his relationship with the young Donald Trump, his repeated battles with professional disciplinary authorities, and finally his 1986 disbarment and death from AIDS-related complications.

Overall, Citizen Cohn is less detached than a conventional scholarly biography. Von Hoffman writes with considerable wit, sarcasm, and moral disapproval, presenting Cohn as both a fascinating individual and an embodiment of a particular kind of American power politics: personal influence, legal aggression, publicity, political patronage, and contempt for conventional restraints. – ChatGPT]

Cohn, Roy M. & Sidney Zion, (**The Autobiography of Roy Cohn** [hc, Lyle Stuart, 1988]) 978-0818404719 [pb, St. Martin's Press, 1988] 978-0312914028 [*Published posthumously, this book was compiled from extensive interviews by journalist Sidney Zion, offering Cohn's defensive perspective on his legal exploits and post-1950s scandals.*]

Brenner, Marie, "**The Desperate Hours of Roy Cohn**," Vanity Fair (August 1986) [*A legendary piece of long-form journalism published right around the time of Cohn's death from AIDS complications. It documents his final weeks, his disbarment for fraud and deceit, and the abandonment he faced from high-society elites.*]

Zirin, James D., "**The Man Who Taught Donald Trump How to Exploit the Legal System**," Time Magazine / BillMoyers.com (April 2020). [*A legal analysis exploring Cohn's distinct strategy of counter-suing, media manipulation, and absolute defiance, demonstrating how his aggressive courtroom blueprint shifted into 21st-century politics.*]

Prominent U.S. Jewish Criminal Defense Lawyers:

Reynolds, Quentin, (**Courtroom: The Story of Samuel S. Leibowitz** [hc, Farrar, Straus, 1950] and [pb, [Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1999] 978-0374527426 [*Biography of the celebrated Jewish criminal defense lawyer, most famous for defending the Scottsboro Boys. Leibowitz later became a judge.*]

Nizer, Louis, (**My Life in Court** [hc, Doubleday, 1961] 978-9997500175 [pb, Kessinger Publishing, 2007] 978-1430462569 [*Classic memoir/casebook by one of the most famous Jewish-American trial lawyers of the twentieth century.*]

Hays, Arthur Garfield, (**City Lawyer: The Autobiography of a Law Practice** [hc, Simon & Schuster, 1942]) [*Major Jewish civil-liberties lawyer; counsel in many politically and socially significant cases.*]

Kunstler, William M., with Sheila Isenberg, (**My Life as a Radical Lawyer** [hc, Birch Lane Press, 1994] 978-1559722650 [pb, Citadel Press, 1996] 978-0806517551 [*Important Jewish radical/criminal-defense lawyer: Chicago Seven, civil-rights cases, Attica defendants and numerous controversial clients.*]

Dershowitz, Alan M., (**The Best Defense: The Courtroom Confrontations of America's Most Outspoken Lawyer of Last Resort** [hc, Random House, 1982] 978-0394507361 [pb, Vintage, 1983] 978-0394713809

Dershowitz, Alan M. (**Chutzpah** [hc, Little, Brown, 1991]) 978-0316181372 [pb, Touchstone, 1992] 978-0671760892 [*Dershowitz explicitly relates his legal career to his Brooklyn Jewish upbringing and Jewish identity.*]

Dershowitz, Alan M., (**Taking the Stand: My Life in the Law** [hc, Crown, 2013]) 978-0307719270 [pb, Crown, 2019] 978-0307719287 [*Dershowitz reveals the evolution of his own thinking on such fundamental issues as censorship and the First Amendment, Civil Rights, Abortion, homicide and the increasing role that science plays in a legal defense. He recounts his legal biography, describing his struggles academically at Yeshiva High School growing up in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, his successes at Yale, clerking for Supreme Court Justice Arthur Goldberg, his appointment to full professor at the Harvard at age 28, the youngest in the school's history. Dershowitz went on to work on many of the*

most celebrated cases in the land, from appealing (successfully) Claus Von Bulow's conviction for the murder of his wife, to the O.J. Simpson trial, to defending Mike Tyson, Leona Helmsley, Patty Hearst, and countless others. – Amazon]

Abramson, Leslie, with Richard Flaste, (**The Defense Is Ready: Life in the Trenches of Criminal Law** [hc, Simon & Schuster, 1997]) 978-0684814032 [pb, Pocket, 1998] 978-0671023263 [*Memoir of the prominent Jewish criminal defense attorney, best known for the Menendez case.*]

Rabinowitz, Victor, (**Unrepentant Leftist: A Lawyer's Memoir** [hc, University of Illinois Press, 1996] 978-0252022531 [*Useful memoir connecting Jewish identity, radical politics, civil liberties and law*]

Neier, Aryeh, (**Taking Liberties: Four Decades in the Struggle for Rights** [hc, PublicAffairs, 2003]) 978-1891620829 [pb, PublicAffairs, 2005] 978-1586482916 [*Jewish refugee background; ACLU, Human Rights Watch and international human-rights law*]

Abrams, Floyd, (**Speaking Freely: Trials of the First Amendment** [hc, Viking, 2005]) 978-0670033751 [pb, Penguin Publishing Group, 2006] 978-0143036753 [*Important Jewish-American First Amendment lawyer*]

Prominent U.S. Jewish Judges:

Dalin, David G., (**Jewish Justices of the Supreme Court: From Brandeis to Kagan** [hc, Brandeis University Press, 2017]) 978-1611682380 [*- examines the lives, legal careers, and legacies of the eight Jews who have served or who currently serve as justices of the U.S. Supreme Court: Louis D. Brandeis, Benjamin Cardozo, Felix Frankfurter, Arthur Goldberg, Abe Fortas, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Stephen G. Breyer, and Elena Kagan. David Dalin discusses the relationship that these Jewish justices have had with the presidents who appointed them, and given the judges' Jewish background, investigates the antisemitism some of the justices encountered in their ascent within the legal profession before their appointment, as well as the role that antisemitism played in the attendant political debates and Senate confirmation battles. Other topics and themes include the changing role of Jews within the American legal profession and the views and judicial opinions of each of the justices on freedom of speech, freedom of religion, the death penalty, the right to privacy, gender equality, and the rights of criminal defendants, among other issues. – Amazon]*

Urofsky, Melvin I., (**Louis D. Brandeis: A Life** [hc, Pantheon Books, 2009] 978-0375423666 [pb, Schocken, 2012] 978-0805211955 [*As a young lawyer in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Louis Brandeis, born into a family of reformers who came to the United States to escape European anti-Semitism, established the way modern law is practiced. He was an early champion of the right to privacy and pioneer the idea of pro bono work by attorneys. Brandeis invented savings bank life insurance in Massachusetts and was a driving force in the development of the Clayton Antitrust Act, the Federal Reserve Act, and the law establishing the Federal Trade Commission.*

Brandeis witnessed and suffered from the anti-Semitism rampant in the United States in the early twentieth century, and with the outbreak of World War I, became at age fifty-eight the head of the American Zionist movement. During the brutal six-month congressional confirmation battle that ensued when Woodrow Wilson nominated him to the Supreme Court in 1916, Brandeis was described as “a disturbing element in any gentlemen's club.” But once on the Court, he became one of its most influential members, developing the modern jurisprudence of free speech and the doctrine of a constitutionally protected right to privacy and suggesting what became known as the doctrine of incorporation, by which the Bill of Rights came to apply to the states. – Amazon]

Kaufman, Andrew L., (**Cardozo** [hc, Harvard UP, 1998]) 978-0674096455 [pb, Harvard UP, 2000] 978-0674001923 [*Benjamin Nathan Cardozo, unarguably one of the most outstanding judges of the twentieth century, is a man whose name remains prominent and whose contributions to the law remain relevant. This first complete biography of the longtime member and chief judge of the New York Court of Appeals and Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States during the turbulent years of the New Deal is a monumental achievement by a distinguished interpreter of constitutional law.*

Cardozo was a progressive judge who understood and defended the proposition that judge-made law must be adapted to modern conditions. He also preached and practiced the doctrine that respect for precedent, history, and all branches of government limited what a judge could and should do. Thus, he did not modernize law at every opportunity.

In this book, Andrew Kaufman interweaves the personal and professional lives of this remarkable man to yield a multidimensional whole. Cardozo's family ties to the Jewish community were a particularly significant factor in shaping his life, as was his father's scandalous career—and ultimate disgrace—as a lawyer and judge. Kaufman concentrates, however, on Cardozo's own distinguished career, including twenty-three years in private practice as a tough-minded and skillful lawyer and his classic lectures and writings on the judicial process. From this biography emerges an estimable figure holding to concepts of duty and responsibility, but a person not without frailties and prejudice. - Amazon]

Hirsch, H. N., (**The Enigma of Felix Frankfurter** [hc, Basic Books, 1981]) 9780465019793 [pb, Quid Pro, LLC,] 978-1610272568 [*Frankfurter was perhaps the most influential jurist of the 20th century—and one of the most complex men ever to sit on the U.S. Supreme Court. Mysteries and apparent contradictions abound. A vibrant and charming friend to many, why are his diaries so full of vitriol against judicial colleagues, especially Douglas and Black? An active Zionist, why did he so zealously enjoy the company of Boston Brahmins, whose snobbery he detested? Most puzzling of all: why did someone known before his appointment to the Court as a civil libertarian—even a radical—become the most famous and persistent advocate for austere judicial restraint? In answering these and other questions, this biography explores the personality of the man as a key to understanding the Justice. Hirsch sees in Frankfurter's fascinating and complex persona a clue to the biggest mystery of all: the contrast between the brilliant and ambitious young immigrant rising by his intellect and charm to leadership in U.S. academic and political life; and the judge, equally brilliant, but increasingly isolated, embittered, and ineffective. "Hirsch's well-written book ... dispels the contradictory image that has long mystified students of Felix Frankfurter. His portrait is unvarnished, yet scrupulously fair. Revealed is a consummate manipulator of public men and policy. No future biographer can safely ignore the brilliant biographical work." - Alpheus Thomas Mason, Princeton University. - Amazon]*

Parrish, Michael E., (**Felix Frankfurter and His Times: The Reform Years** [hc, Free Press, 1982]) 978-0029237403 [*Explores the years before Frankfurter's Supreme Court appointment and details such subjects as his tenure as a Harvard Law professor and his advisory relationship with Wilson and Roosevelt]*

Stebenne, David L., (**Arthur J. Goldberg: New Deal Liberal** [hc, Oxford UP, 1996]) 978-0195071054 [*This book is the first biography ever written of Goldberg, the former labor lawyer, Secretary of Labor under Kennedy, and Supreme Court justice (which post he resigned at the request of Lyndon Johnson to become U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations), who played a leading role in American political life from World War II until the end of the 1960s. Goldberg, who never wrote memoirs himself, shared his thoughts about his life and work with Stebenne in a series of conversations, which took place occasionally from the fall of 1981 through to Goldberg's death in 1990. He also allowed Stebenne access to his papers, including those held under seal in presidential*

libraries and at the Library of Congress. Based upon these unique sources and written to be accessible to a wide audience, Arthur J. Goldberg is both the story of a leading American liberal and a history of modern American liberalism. – Amazon]

Kalman, Laura, (**Abe Fortas: A Biography** [hc, Yale UP, 1990]) 978-0300046694 [pb, Yale UP, 1992] 978-0300052589 [*Nominated by Johnson to be Chief Justice he was rejected by Congress and resigned from the Court early in the Nixon administration under a cloud of impending scandal. This first full biography of Fortas tells his dramatic story. Drawing on Fortas's previously unavailable personal papers on numerous archives and on extensive interviews with his family and associates, Laura Kalman illuminates his evolution from New Dealer to Washington lawyer to Great Society liberal and in so doing also provides a unique view of American liberalism from the 1930s through the 1960s. "There was no single Abe Fortas " writes Kalman. "There was a variety of personae and Fortas moved comfortably from one to another." Kalman describes Fortas's various personae: The boy who as "Fiddlin' Abe" played the violin in dance bands to earn spending money and who grew to consider chamber music the love of his life; The Jew who cared more about Israel than Judaism; The civil libertarian who worked for irascible Harold Ickes as Under Secretary of the Interior during the New Deal, who defended those charged with disloyalty by Joseph McCarthy, and who promoted social justice on the Court; The brilliant legal tactician who secured Lyndon Johnson's Senate seat in 1948 and whose successful defense of the Gideon case was described by William O. Douglas as "the best single argument" he heard in all his years on the Supreme Court; The Supreme Court justice who willingly risked compromising his judicial integrity to advise President Johnson; The man who hobnobbed with the powerful yet was powerless to combat the attacks against him when he was a Supreme Court justice and whose resignation from the Court contributed to the destruction of the liberal agenda for social reform. Reflecting on the various aspects of Fortas's enigmatic personality and the events of his life Kalman creates a new, authoritative portrait of the man. – Amazon]*

De Hart, Jane Sherron, (**Ruth Bader Ginsburg: A Life** [hc, Alfred A. Knopf, 2018]) 978-1400040483 [pb, Vintage, 2020] 978-1984897831 [*In this comprehensive, revelatory biography—fifteen years of interviews and research in the making—historian Jane Sherron De Hart explores the central experiences that crucially shaped Ginsburg's passion for justice, her advocacy for gender equality, and her meticulous jurisprudence. At the heart of her story and abiding beliefs is her Jewish background, specifically the concept of tikkun olam, the Hebrew injunction to "repair the world," with its profound meaning for a young girl who grew up during the Holocaust and World War II.*

Ruth's journey begins with her mother, who died tragically young but whose intellect inspired her daughter's feminism. It stretches from Ruth's days as a baton twirler at Brooklyn's James Madison High School to Cornell University to Harvard and Columbia Law Schools; to becoming one of the first female law professors in the country and having to fight for equal pay and hide her second pregnancy to avoid losing her job; to becoming the director of the ACLU's Women's Rights Project and arguing momentous anti-sex discrimination cases before the U.S. Supreme Court.

All this, even before being nominated in 1993 to become the second woman on the Court, where her crucial decisions and dissents are still making history. Intimately, personably told, this biography offers unprecedented insight into a pioneering life and legal career whose profound mark on American jurisprudence, American society, and our American character and spirit will reverberate deep into the twenty-first century and beyond. – Amazon]

Ginsburg, Ruth Bader, Mary Hartnett and Wendy W. Williams, (**My Own Words** [hc, Simon & Schuster, 2016]) 978-1501145247 [pb, Simon & Schuster, 2018]) 978-1501145254 [- "showcases Ruth Ginsburg's astonishing intellectual range" (*The New Republic*). In this collection Justice

Ginsburg discusses gender equality, the workings of the Supreme Court, being Jewish, law and lawyers in opera, and the value of looking beyond US shores when interpreting the US Constitution.

Throughout her life Justice Ginsburg has been (and continues to be) a prolific writer and public speaker. This book's sampling was selected by Justice Ginsburg and her authorized biographers Mary Hartnett and Wendy W. Williams, who introduce each chapter and provide biographical context and quotes gleaned from hundreds of interviews they have conducted. – Amazon]

The Jewish Defense League (JDL):

The JDL is a unique case in American Jewish history of an organization, with a charismatic leader, which arose in 1968 as a neighbourhood security/self-defense initiative to protect Jewish elderly people, shopkeepers and institutions in Brooklyn from mugging, vandalism and other forms of physical attack, i.e. to supplement insufficient law-enforcement. Its later trajectory as a militant component of the "Free Soviet Jewry" movement in the U.S. and still later as an extreme-right political party in Israel are subjects of great controversy. I will here list significant books and articles with various perspectives on its history.

Dolgin, Janet L., (**Jewish Identity and the JDL** [hc, Princeton UP, 1977]) 978-0691093680; reissued by Princeton UP in 2016 - 978-0691643953] – [pb, Princeton UP, 2015] 978-0691616711 [- an anthropological study that examines the internal mechanics, relationships, and cultural context of the JDL. Dolgin spent 14 months conducting intensive fieldwork with JDL members in both New York City and Jerusalem. The text analyzes how group members interact with one another and how they relate to outside communities. It places the militant ideology and behavior of the JDL within the broader framework of American society and shifting Jewish-American identities during the 1970s. – Princeton UP]

Friedman, Robert I., (**The False Prophet: Rabbi Meir Kahane—From FBI Informant to Knesset Member** [hc, Faber & Faber, 1990] ISBN 978-0571148424 [pb, Lawrence Hill Books, 1992] 978-1556521645 [*Friedman traces Kahane from his pre-JDL activities through the creation of the League, its street activities, Soviet-Jewry campaign, bombings and other illegal activities, Kahane's legal difficulties, and finally Kach in Israel. The book also investigates Kahane's earlier relationship with the FBI, his contacts with organized-crime figure Joseph Colombo, JDL finances, and alleged connections with later terrorist activity. Friedman was an investigative journalist who did considerable original research. The book is decidedly hostile to Kahane, which should be taken into account in using it as source material on the JDL. Friedman, among others, details the **January 26, 1972 bombing of impresario Sol Hurok's Manhattan office.** Hurok was Jewish, but because he brought Soviet artists to the United States he became a target of militant anti-Soviet activism. The bombing killed **Iris Kones, his 27-year-old Jewish secretary,** and injured Hurok and others. The episode dramatically exposed the contradiction inherent in committing violence supposedly to protect Jews when the victim was herself Jewish.]*

Klein Halevi, Yossi, (**Memoirs of a Jewish Extremist: An American Story**, [hc, Little, Brown and Company, 1995] 978-0316498609. The book was substantially reissued by Little, Brown in 2014 as: **Memoirs of a Jewish Extremist: The Story of a Transformation – A Wry and Moving Memoir of Extremism, Holocaust Legacy, and Hope** [New introduction] 978-0062362322. [The 2014 edition explicitly states that the work was originally published "in a different form" by Little, Brown in 1995.

This is Halevi's autobiographical account of his journey into and eventually out of the orbit of Meir Kahane and the Jewish Defense League (JDL). Born in Brooklyn in 1953, Halevi was the son of a

Hungarian Jewish Holocaust survivor. His father's experiences profoundly shaped his childhood worldview: Jewish history appeared to demonstrate that Jews were perpetually endangered and that reliance on non-Jews was potentially fatal.

As an adolescent Halevi became intensely involved in militant Jewish politics, especially the campaign for Soviet Jewry, and was attracted to Kahane and the JDL. The memoir is particularly valuable because it describes the psychology of Jewish militancy from the inside: Holocaust memory, fear of antisemitism, contempt for what militants regarded as the passivity of mainstream Jewish organizations, fascination with physical self-defense, and the attraction of direct action.

While describing his membership in the JDL and the organization's violent tactics, Halevi specifically says that he did not himself participate in terrorist acts. One of his most dramatic actions was organizing an effort in the Soviet Union designed to get himself and fellow American activists arrested, thereby generating publicity for Soviet Jewry. The book complements histories of the JDL by supplying a participant's retrospective account of how an otherwise conventional Jewish adolescent could be drawn toward a movement some of whose members and activities crossed into violence and illegality.

But the book is ultimately a de-radicalization memoir. Halevi gradually becomes disillusioned with Kahane's absolutist division of the world into Jewish friends and enemies. His later career—culminating in work emphasizing Jewish-Muslim and Jewish-Christian dialogue—makes the memoir a study of political and spiritual transformation rather than an apologia for militancy. Halevi himself describes the book as the story of his teenage years following Kahane and his subsequent “disillusionment with Jewish radicalism.” – ChatGPT]

Magid, Shaul, (**Meir Kahane: The Public Life and Political Thought of an American Jewish Radical** [hc, Princeton UP, 2021]) 978-0691179339 [pb, Princeton UP, 2023] 978-0691254692 [*This is less a conventional biography of Meir Kahane than an intellectual and political study of Kahanism. Magid argues that Kahane should not be dismissed as a marginal extremist; rather, he needs to be understood as a product of postwar American Jewish life and the radical politics of the 1960s. Kahane borrowed the rhetoric, confrontational style, identity politics, and even some of the tactics of contemporary left-wing and Black radical movements and redirected them toward militant Jewish nationalism.*

Central to the book is Kahane's founding of the JDL in 1968. Magid examines Kahane's argument that Jews could not rely upon governments or liberal principles for their security and therefore had to be willing to defend themselves, including through violence. Jewish physical toughness, pride, and willingness to retaliate became, in Kahane's thinking, antidotes both to antisemitism and to the supposed passivity and assimilationism of mainstream American Jewry.

Magid devotes considerable attention to Kahane's views of race, antisemitism and liberalism. He describes a kind of “Judeo-pessimism” in Kahane's thinking: antisemitism was not a temporary social prejudice that education and liberal reform could eliminate but an enduring feature of Jewish existence. Consequently, Kahane increasingly regarded liberal democracy, Jewish assimilation and universalism as dangerously inadequate responses to Jewish vulnerability.

*The book follows Kahane after his 1971 immigration to Israel, where he founded Kach and advocated policies including the removal of Arabs from Israel and the occupied territories. But one of Magid's more interesting arguments is that Kahane eventually became deeply disillusioned with conventional Zionism itself. In his later thought—especially *The Jewish Idea*—Jewish sovereignty had value only insofar as Israel became an authentically Jewish state governed by Jewish religious and nationalist principles. Thus Kahane evolved from an ardent Zionist into what Magid characterizes as a form of militant religious post-Zionism.*

Perhaps Magid's most important conclusion is that Kahane's significance extends well beyond the JDL and Kach. Although mainstream Jewish organizations repudiated him, some themes he championed—Jewish assertiveness, distrust of liberal universalism, heightened concern with antisemitism, and the

legitimacy of Jewish self-defense—subsequently entered broader Jewish discourse in considerably less extreme forms. Magid therefore treats Kahane as an uncomfortable lens through which to examine changes within American Jewish politics rather than simply as an aberration. - Los Angeles Review of Books]

The Soviet Jewry movement marked a key transition-point for the JDL. It gave Kahane a much larger and more emotionally compelling issue than neighborhood crime. The JDL's argument was essentially that conventional Jewish organizations—petitions, diplomacy, quiet lobbying—had failed Soviet Jews. The USSR therefore had to be made to pay a price for persecuting Jews.

That led to demonstrations and civil disobedience, but also vandalism, assaults, shootings, bombings and threats against Soviet diplomatic and cultural targets. Magid explicitly discusses JDL members bombing Soviet cultural institutions as part of the campaign.

Kahane, Meir, [**The Story of the Jewish Defense League** [hc, Chilton Book Company, 1975] 978-0801962479 [pb, Institute for Publication of the Writings of Rabbi Meir Kahane, 2000] 978-9657044049 *[Kahane here gives his own explanation of why the JDL was created and presents the progression from neighborhood protection to militancy as morally coherent rather than as a descent into criminality. The original concern was real enough: Jewish shopkeepers, elderly Jews, teachers and Jewish institutions in deteriorating New York neighborhoods were experiencing robberies, assaults, harassment and vandalism. Kahane argued that established Jewish organizations were incapable of protecting ordinary Jews.*

The JDL therefore organized patrols and promoted the idea that Jews should physically defend themselves rather than depend entirely upon the police. That is the seed from which the later philosophy of "Never Again" and armed Jewish self-defense developed. – ChatGPT

Beckerman, Gal, (**When They Come for Us, We'll Be Gone: The Epic Struggle to Save Soviet Jewry** [hc, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010]) 978-0618573097 [pb, Mariner Books, 2011] 978-0547577470 *[This is not a book about the JDL. It examines Kahane and the JDL in the much larger context of the Soviet-Jewry movement, highlighting how atypical their tactics were. He shows that militant activism had an important function in pushing Soviet Jewry onto the public agenda, but that the JDL's violence also frightened mainstream Soviet-Jewry activists, who feared that it could discredit the cause or provoke Soviet retaliation against Jews inside the USSR.]*

Lazin, Fred A., (**The Struggle for Soviet Jewry in American Politics: Israel versus the American Jewish Establishment** [hc, Lexington Books, 2005] 978-0739108420 [pb, Lexington Books, 2005] 978-0739113431 *[This is a scholarly political history rather than a JDL study, useful for placing the League within the complicated network of American Jewish organizations, Israel and the Soviet-Jewry movement. It provides the academic institutional context.]*

Rosenthal, Richard, (**Rookie Cop: Deep Undercover in the Jewish Defense League** [pb, Leapfrog Press, 2000] 978-0965457880 *[- a true-crime memoir detailing Rosenthal's high-stakes assignment as an untrained NYPD recruit secretly sent to infiltrate the militant Jewish Defense League) in the early 1970s. Fresh out of the Air Force as a Russian language specialist, Rosenthal was accepted into the NYPD in 1969. Before receiving any standard police academy training, badge, or firearm, he was secretly sworn in and ordered to go deep undercover. The NYPD's intelligence division viewed the JDL—led by the charismatic and radical **Rabbi Meir Kahane**—as a dangerous "black cloud" capable of urban terrorism. Rosenthal used driving a cab as his cover story to seamlessly blend in. Rosenthal rapidly rose through the ranks of the JDL. He eventually became the group's firearms instructor and*

Kahane's personal bodyguard. From this inner circle, he witnessed the group transition from neighborhood street intimidation to plotting international airline hijackings and acquiring bomb-making materials. Armed with Rosenthal's intelligence, law enforcement successfully intercepted the group's dangerous activities, culminating in the arrest of Kahane and other top JDL figures following the bombing of a Soviet trade office. Note: Richard Rosenthal is another example of a Jewish officer in the NYPD. – Google/AI]

Sprinzak, Ehud, “**Kach and Meir Kahane: The Emergence of Jewish Quasi-Fascism I: Origins and Development,**” *Patterns of Prejudice* 19, no. 3 (1985): 15–21. DOI: 10.1080/0031322X.1985.9969820.

Sprinzak, Ehud, “**Kach and Meir Kahane: The Emergence of Jewish Quasi-Fascism II: Ideology and Politics,**” *Patterns of Prejudice* 19, no. 4 (1985): 3–13. DOI: 10.1080/0031322X.1985.9969834.

Sprinzak, Ehud, (*The Ascendancy of Israel's Radical Right* [hc, Oxford UP, 1991] 978-0195050868 [*Sprinzak's book is a major scholarly study of the emergence of Israel's radical nationalist and religious right after 1967, treating it not as a collection of marginal extremists but as an increasingly influential political and ideological current. He traces its roots through Revisionist Zionism, territorial maximalism and religious messianism, and then examines Gush Emunim, the Jewish Underground, Tehiya, Tzomet, Moledet, Meir Kahane's Kach, and related movements. His central argument is that ideas originating on the radical fringe were gradually penetrating the broader Israeli political establishment, particularly Likud and the National Religious Party.*

Kahane occupies an important but distinctive place in Sprinzak's analysis. Sprinzak regarded Kach as a form of “Jewish quasi-fascism,” a characterization he had developed at length in two earlier articles devoted specifically to Kahane and Kach. He emphasizes Kahanism's combination of militant Jewish nationalism, religious absolutism, hostility toward liberal democracy, insistence upon the incompatibility of Jewish and Arab national existence within the same state, and advocacy of removing Arabs from Israel and the territories.

Crucially, however, Sprinzak does not equate the entire Israeli radical right with Kahanism. Gush Emunim, the religious-settler movement, secular territorial maximalists and Kach had different ideological origins and different attitudes toward political violence and democracy. Kahane represented an especially extreme synthesis of Jewish exclusivism, anti-Arab politics and authoritarianism.

What makes the book particularly significant in retrospect is Sprinzak's argument that the importance of radicalism should not be measured simply by the electoral strength of explicitly extremist parties. Radical-right ideas could migrate into respectable politics even while organizations such as Kach remained ostracized. Sprinzak was already arguing in 1991 that the radical right exercised influence disproportionate to its numbers because of its settlement presence and penetration of established political institutions.

This makes The Ascendancy remarkably prescient when read three decades later. Kach itself was banned from Israeli elections in 1988 and Kahane was assassinated in 1990, but Kahanism did not disappear with either. Rather, some ideas once identified almost exclusively with Kahane—Arab “transfer,” categorical Jewish sovereignty over the whole Land of Israel, deep suspicion of Jewish-Arab coexistence, hostility toward liberal restraints on majority rule, and the presentation of territorial compromise as betrayal—continued circulating on the far right.

One should be careful about claiming that everything on today's Israeli radical right derives from Kahane. Much comes independently from Gush Emunim, Religious Zionism, Revisionism and the settler movement. That distinction is very much consistent with Sprinzak's analytical framework. But subsequent developments have strengthened his larger thesis: ideas can migrate from a stigmatized

extremist fringe into the political mainstream without the mainstream formally adopting the original movement as a whole.

The most conspicuous contemporary example is Itamar Ben-Gvir, whose political biography emerged from the Kahanist milieu and who eventually reached cabinet office. The striking historical development is therefore not a straightforward resurrection of Kach but the partial normalization of concepts and rhetoric that in Sprinzak's period were sufficiently extreme to place Kahane beyond the legitimate parliamentary consensus. A recent historical assessment similarly describes the trajectory from Kahane's political marginalization to the much greater prominence of Kahanist-derived politics in the 2020s.

The book explains Kahanism not in isolation but as one particularly radical branch of a much larger transformation of Israeli nationalism. Its enduring relevance lies in Sprinzak's warning that the greater historical significance of extremist movements may lie less in their own electoral success than in their ability to change the vocabulary, assumptions and permissible policy choices of mainstream politics. His later Brother Against Brother (1999), extending the story through Baruch Goldstein and the Rabin assassination, is an important companion volume. – ChatGPT]

Mergui, Raphaël, and Philippe Simonnot, (**Israel's Ayatollahs: Meir Kahane and the Far Right in Israel** [hc, Saqi Books, 2001] 978-0863561429 [*The book contains an extended interview with Kahane as well as discussions with other figures on the Israeli radical right. It catches Kahanism at an important moment—after Kahane's election to the Knesset in 1984 but before Kach was excluded from the 1988 election.*])

Pedahzur, Ami, and Arie Perliger, (**Jewish Terrorism in Israel** [hc, Columbia UP, 2009] 978-0231154468 [pb, Columbia UP, 2011] 978-0231154475 [- *treats Jewish political violence analytically rather than simply as biography or Israeli politics. The authors examine the historical and sociological development of Jewish terrorism and the belief among some extremists that illegal violence can legitimately alter political reality. It takes the story beyond Kahane himself into the networks, ideologies and individuals influenced by this political culture.*])

Israeli Secret Agents, Spies, Detectives, Criminals, etc. – Fiction & Non-Fiction [translated from Hebrew (or other language) or written originally in English; the first section deals with fiction and the second with non-fiction books and articles]

Fiction Authors

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|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Stephan Abarbanell | 6. Yiftach Reicher Atir |
| 2. Shimon Adaf | 7. Avraham Azrieli |
| 3. Uri Adelman | 8. Mishka Ben-David |
| 4. Dov Alfon | 9. Michael Ian Benjamin |
| 5. Aharon Appelfeld | 10. Jane Berman |

- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| 11. Rawya Jarjoura Burbara | 43. Hesh Kestin |
| 12. Haggai Carmon | 44. Daniel (Daniil) Kluger |
| 13. Jonathan de Shalit (pseudonym) | 45. Shulamit Lapid |
| 14. Miriam Drori | 46. Simon Louvish |
| 15. Jonathan Dunskey | 47. Avner Mandelman |
| 16. Uzi Eilam | 48. Kate McVaugh |
| 17. Maayan Eitam | 49. Dror Mishani |
| 18. Chaim Eliav (pseudonym of
Rabbi Moshe Grylack) | 50. Limor Nachmias |
| 19. Eli Evron | 51. Eshkol Nevo |
| 20. Adi Fishman | 52. Avichai Nizri |
| 21. Ellen Frankel | 53. Ofra Offer Oren |
| 22. Noah S. Friedland | 54. Ram Oren |
| 23. Assaf Gavron | 55. Amos Oz |
| 24. Adiva Geffen | 56. Naomi Ragen |
| 25. Stephen J. Gordon | 57. Matt Beynon Rees |
| 26. David Grossman | 58. Joel C. Rosenberg |
| 27. Ayelet Gundar-Goshen | 59. Robert Rosenberg |
| 28. Batya Gur | 60. Davidy Rosenfeld |
| 29. Amir Gutfreund | 61. Gidon Rothstein |
| 30. David Haddad | 62. Yonatan Sagiv |
| 31. Yoav Levitas Halevy | 63. Meir Shalev |
| 32. Janet Hannah | 64. Ora Shem-Ur |
| 33. Michal Hartstein | 65. Liad Shoham |
| 34. Todd Hasak-Lowy | 66. Daniel Silva |
| 35. Spencer Hawke | 67. Alex J. Sinclair |
| 36. Nir Hezroni | 68. Gadi Taub |
| 37. Yariv Inbar (pseudonym) | 69. Lavie Tidhar |
| 38. Tali Isarov | 70. Haggai Tiomkin |
| 39. Amnon Jackont | 71. Yair Weinstock |
| 40. Howard Kaplan | 72. Jonathan Wilson |
| 41. Yoram (Yoav) Katz | 73. A.B. Yehoshua |
| 42. Etgar Keret | 74. Isaac (Zepel) Yeshurun |
| | 75. Yigal Zur |

[Note on Translations from Hebrew to English: *The best-known translators of modern Hebrew fiction to English include Hillel Halkin, Nicholas de Lange, Dalya Bilu, Jessica Cohen, Philip Simpson, Sondra Silverston, Stuart Schoffman and Jeffrey M. Green. Among the translators of the present sample of Israel authors, and the authors they translated, are:*

- *Hillel Halkin (Oz, Yehoshua, Shalev)*

- *Dalya Bilu* (Appelfeld, Gur, Oz, Yehoshua);
- *Yardenne Greenspan* (Adaf, Eitan, Gutfreund, Keret/Gavron);
- *Sondra Silverston* (Gundar-Goshen, Nevo);
- *Steven Cohen* (de Shalit, Hezroni, Mishani);
- *Evan Fallenber*g (Ben-David, Gur, Gutfreund);
- *Sara Kitai* (Shoham, Zur);
- *Stuart Schoffman* (Shalev, Yehoshua);
- *Todd Hasak-Lowy* (Mishani, and he also wrote a book himself – see his listing below)

At least five of the Israeli-born Hebrew authors write their novels directly in English, i.e. Azrieli, Carmon, Dunsky, Mandelman and Tidhar. Another five – Gavron, Hartstein, Yoram Katz, Ofra Oren and Rosenfeld – translate their own works into English.]

Stephan Abarbanell (born 1957 in Brunswick, Germany, and grew up in Hamburg) - studied Protestant theology and general rhetoric. While Abarbanell is a Protestant minister, his extended family has a Jewish branch, and some members were affected by the Holocaust, which likely informs his writing on these topics.

His novel, **Displaced** (originally titled *Morgenland* in German), the main character, **Lilya Wasserfall**, is a young Jewish woman and a member of the Haganah. The novel is set in Jerusalem in 1946 and war-ravaged Europe, focusing on the immediate aftermath of World War II and the situation of Jewish displaced persons (DPs). The book explores themes of loss, homelessness, the search for identity, and the efforts to establish a new Jewish state. It delves into the plight of Jewish survivors who have no family or home to return to in Europe. The core plot involves Lilya's mission to find a missing Jewish scientist, Raphael Lind, whose brother (an author living in Jerusalem) believes he is still alive despite reports he died in a concentration camp. She travels as a member of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, an aid organization for Jewish survivors. Abarbanell has published several other German-language novels touching on Jewish/Israeli themes – including a biographical novel about Paula Ben-Gurion – which have not been translated into English. [Google/AI]

Abarbanell, Stephan, (**Displaced: A WWII Holocaust Literary Thriller – The Hunt for a Missing Scientist**) [hc, Harper, 2017] 978-0062484475 [pb, Harper Paperbacks, 2018] 978-0062484499

Shimon Adaf (born 1972, Sderot, Israel) – a poet, novelist, and musician known for his innovative blend of Hebrew literary traditions with contemporary genres like science fiction and detective fiction. Born to parents of Moroccan heritage, Adaf grew up in the working-class town of Sderot, an environment that significantly influences his exploration of identity and cultural friction. He served as the chief literary editor at Keter Publishing House and currently heads the creative writing program at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. In the 1990s, he was a member of a popular rock band and continues to incorporate music into his literary projects, such as the *Lost Detective Trilogy* companion album.

The Lost Detective Trilogy: This series features a main character, **Elish Ben Zaken**, who is a music critic turned private investigator (and later, a detective novelist). The books blend elements of literary fiction, mystery, supernatural, and science fiction into a unique hybrid genre that explores themes of identity, memory, and reality.

One Mile and Two Days Before Sunset: *This is the first novel in the series and is described as a literary murder mystery. The plot follows Elish Ben Zaken as he investigates the murder of a rock singer named Dalia Shushan in 1990s Tel Aviv.*

A Detective's Complaint: *The second book finds Elish retired from private investigation and writing detective novels, but a new, unusual case involving his niece draws him back in. The mystery involves a young woman who experiences a three-day bus ride that she perceives as lasting only an hour.*

Take Up and Read (2014; English translation 2022) *is the concluding novel in the trilogy. It blends detective noir with speculative fiction and Jewish mysticism. The story follows Nahum Farkash, a librarian and poet who tries to protect the legacy of the late singer Dalia Shoshan. It also features the niece and nephew of the trilogy's original detective, Elish Ben Zaken, who is now believed dead by suicide. The narrative jumps fourteen years into a dystopian future where Israel and Palestine have been devastated and reshaped by catastrophic war. The title refers to a corporate literacy program that mines data from readers. As the characters investigate old cases, they uncover a conspiracy involving parallel universes and futuristic biotechnology. Adaf explores the fragility of consciousness, the weight of the Holocaust on Israeli society, and the idea that all realities are connected across time.* [Google/AI]

Adaf, Shimon, [*The Lost Detective Trilogy*, #1] (**One Mile and Two Days Before Sunset** [pb, Picador, transl. by Yardenne Greenspan, 2022] 978-0374227036

Adaf, Shimon, [*The Lost Detective Trilogy*, #2] (**A Detective's Complaint** [pb, Picador, transl. by Yardenne Greenspan, 2022] 978-0374139650

Adaf, Shimon, [*The Lost Detective Trilogy*, #3] (**Take Up and Read** [pb, Picador, transl. by Yardenne Greenspan, 2022]) 978-0374277970

Uri Adelman (born 1958, Ramat Gan - 2004) - *was a prominent Israeli writer, musician, and academic known primarily for his bestselling suspense novels. He was a multi-talented figure who bridged the worlds of literature, music, and technology. He studied and later taught musicology at Tel Aviv University. He was also a composer and musician. He served as the editor of suspense fiction at Keter Publishers. He is best known for his four thriller novels, which were major bestsellers in Israel. He was also a computer expert who wrote a weekly column for a local newspaper and published four books on the subject. Unfortunately, his four thriller novels - **Concerto for Spy and Orchestra** (1993); **Lost and Found** (1998); **Tropic of Venus** (2000); and **Dead Hours** (2004) have not so far been translated into English. German, Greek and Japanese translations have been published.* [Google/AI]

Dov Alfon (born in Sousse, Tunisia in 1961) – *he was raised in Paris before his family moved to Israel on his 11th birthday. He served as an intelligence officer in Unit 8200, the IDF's elite technological and signal intelligence arm, which heavily influences his writing. Served as the Editor-in-Chief of Haaretz from 2008 to 2011. Also held the position of chief editor at Kinneret Zmora-Bitan Dvir, Israel's largest publishing house. In September 2020, he was appointed editor-in-chief of the major left-wing French daily newspaper **Libération**. He stepped down from this position in April 2026 in order to return to full-time novel-writing. His novel, **A Long Night in Paris**, was written in Hebrew and translated into English and French. It follows **Colonel Zeev Abadi**, the new head of an elite intelligence section, and his brilliant deputy **Oriana Talmor**, as they unravel a kidnapping at Charles de Gaulle Airport in Paris over a frantic 24-hour period.* [Google/AI]

Alfon, Dov, (**A Long Night in Paris** [pb, Maclehose Press Quercus, translated by Daniella Zamir, 2019] 978-0857058812 [hc, Pegasus Crime, 2020]) 978-1643134369

See also: J.P. O'Malley, "Israeli ex-agent's thriller reflects hi-tech spy world where enemies never meet", *The Times of Israel*, May 25, 2019. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/israeli-ex-agents-thriller-reflects-hi-tech-spy-world-where-enemies-never-meet/>

Aharon Appelfeld (1932–2018, born Czernowitz, Kingdom of Romania [now Chernivtsi, Ukraine], died in Petach Tikva, Israel) *[He grew up as an only child in a wealthy, German-speaking, upper-middle-class Jewish family. His parents viewed themselves primarily as Europeans rather than Jews. In 1941, when Appelfeld was eight years old, Nazi and Romanian troops seized his hometown. His mother was murdered. He and his father were forced onto a cattle train and sent to a labor camp in Transnistria. He escaped the camp alone around age eight or nine. For the next three years, he survived by wandering the Ukrainian forests, blending in with marginalized outlaws, and working for peasants. He later served as a field cook for the Soviet Red Army. After World War II, he traversed Europe to a displaced persons camp in Italy. He immigrated to mandatory Palestine alone in 1946. He was miraculously reunited with his father in Israel in 1957 after seeing his name on a survivor registry. Despite completing only the first grade before the war, he learned Hebrew, completed his education in Israel, and earned degrees from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He served as a Professor of Hebrew Literature at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev and published over 40 books. He won the prestigious Israel Prize in 1983. Main Works of Relevance:*

Appelfeld, Aharon, (**Badenheim 1939** [transl. by Dalya Bilu, hc, Littlehampton Book Services, 1968] 978-0460045483 [pb, Penguin Classics, 2024] 978-0241681183 [*Perhaps his best-known novel. No conventional crime occurs on stage. Instead the novel depicts the gradual bureaucratic organization of deportation. The "crime" is administrative evil. Officials remain polite while preparing mass destruction. The novel anticipates later discussions of the "banality of evil."*])

Appelfeld, Aharon, (**The Age of Wonders** [transl. by Dalya Bilu, hc, David R. Godine, 1981]) 978-0879234027 [pv, Verba Mundi, 1994] 978-0879237981 [*Shows the gradual exclusion of Jews from society. Violence begins with insults, discrimination, and social exclusion before escalating. Crime develops incrementally through normalization.*]

Appelfeld, Aharon, (**Tzili: The Story of a Life** [transl. by Dalya Bilu, hc, Dutton, 1983] 978-0525241874 [pb, Knopf/Doubleday, 2012] 978-0805212495 [*a young Jewish girl abandoned by her family survives alone in the forests of Eastern Europe during World War II. She endures persecution, exploitation, sexual violence, hunger, and displacement before joining other survivors after the war. The novel contains no conventional crime plot; rather, it portrays the Holocaust as a landscape of pervasive criminality in which theft, rape, betrayal, and murder have become ordinary features of existence. Crime serves as a backdrop for exploring survival, innocence, resilience, and the preservation of human dignity amid the moral collapse of European civilization.*])

Appelfeld, Aharon, (**The Immortal Bartfuss** [transl. by Jeffrey M. Green, hc, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1988] 978-1555841522 [pb, Grove Press, 1994] 978-0802133588 [*The protagonist, a deeply hardened survivor, hoards gold and operates on the fringes of legitimacy. Post-war crime in Appelfeld's world is not driven by simple greed; it is a manifestation of existential wreckage. Having survived a lawless universe, the characters are permanently uncoupled from civilian society. They view authority with total suspicion and use smuggling as a coping mechanism—a way to retain a desperate sense of control and self-reliance.*])

Appelfeld, Aharon, (**For Every Sin** [transl. by Jeffrey M. Green, hc, Trafalgar Square, 1989] 978-0297797005 [pb, Grove Press, 1996] 978-0802134462 [*Examines guilt, religious identity, and moral responsibility. Although not centered on crime, the novel asks how individuals respond after catastrophic wrongdoing.*])

Appelfeld, Aharon, (**The Story of a Life** [transl. by Aloma Halter, hc, Schocken, 2004]) 978-0805241785 [pb, Schocken 2006] 978-0805211269 [*His autobiographical memoir contains the most direct descriptions of actual criminal violence. It recounts: murder, deportation, theft, extortion, forced labor, arbitrary violence. Yet even here Appelfeld avoids sensationalism, emphasizing how systematic violence became normalized.*]

Appelfeld, Aharon, (**Blooms of Darkness** [transl. by Jeffrey M. Green, hc, Schocken, 2010]) 978-0805242805 [pb, Knopf/Doubleday, 2012] 978-0805212341 [*Depicts a hidden Jewish boy surviving under false identity. Forgery, concealment, black-market exchanges, and deception become necessary tools of survival rather than evidence of criminal character.*]

Aharon Appelfeld is not a conventional crime author. He is much less interested in legal guilt than in moral guilt. His novels repeatedly ask: How does an ordinary person become capable of evil? How do respectable citizens become thieves or murderers? How does indifference become complicity? his criminality functions as a symptom of the collapse of ethical civilization.

Rather than viewing crime through a traditional moral or legal lens, Appelfeld uses it to explore the psychological and existential transformation of European Jews before, during, and after the Holocaust. His fiction is overwhelmingly concerned with the moral collapse of European civilization, Jewish identity, memory, assimilation, the raw mechanics of survival, and the long shadow of the Holocaust. In Appelfeld works demonstrate how modern Jewish literature can treat crime not as entertainment or mystery but as a lens for examining genocide, persecution, ethical collapse, and the resilience of the human spirit.

1. The Underworld as a Sanctuary of Survival: For Appelfeld, who survived the war as a young boy wandering Ukrainian forests and interacting with outlaws, the criminal underworld represents a dark sanctuary. In a world where the “law” of the state is genocide, traditional morality is inverted: the legal state is evil, and the outlaw becomes a protector. See **Tzili** and **Blooms of Darkness**.

2. The Rejection of Bourgeois Delusion: Appelfeld frequently uses Jewish criminals to contrast against the tragic, self-deceiving assimilation of the Jewish bourgeoisie. He often highlights how assimilated European Jews looked down on Jewish horse thieves, smugglers, and underworld figures, completely blind to the fact that their own “civilized” world was about to murder them.

The Age of Wonders (1978) and Badenheim 1939 (1975): These novels capture the paralyzing etiquette and cultural obsession of middle-class Jews. By implicitly juxtaposing their passive, law-abiding refinement against the raw vitality of the underclass, Appelfeld critiques the bourgeois faith in European laws that ultimately functioned as traps.

3. Post-War Lawlessness as Existential Trauma: In his narratives tracking life immediately after liberation, Appelfeld focuses intensely on the black-market economies, smuggling rings, and displaced person (DP) camps in Italy and Europe. See **The Immortal Bartfuss**.

4. Metaphorical Guilt: “Total Guilt with No Sin”: Appelfeld openly discussed how the psychological architecture of crime—the feelings of being hunted, hiding, and carrying a heavy secret—became the defining Jewish condition under fascism. Influenced deeply by Franz Kafka, Appelfeld noted that European Jews were treated like criminals who had done no wrong. They were hunted, arrested, and hidden in cellars as if they were fugitives guilty of a capital offense, internalizing a profound sense of psychological guilt simply for existing.

*Crime in Appelfeld’s universe is thus the ultimate vehicle for exposing the **fragility of human culture**. When civilization strips Jews of their legal rights, the criminal underworld becomes both a literal hiding place and a metaphor for the raw, stripped-down animal instinct required to keep breathing.*
[Google/AI & ChatGPT]

Yiftach Reicher Atir (born 1949 on Kibbutz Shoal, now living in Tel Aviv) - As a young commando officer, he participated in notable missions, including the 1976 operation to liberate the

*Israeli captives at Entebbe airport. He spent much of his career in military intelligence before retiring with the rank of Brigadier General. He is best known internationally for his thriller, **The English Teacher**, but has also written several other books, both fiction and non-fiction, not yet translated.*

Atir, Yiftach Reicher, (**The English Teacher** [transl. by Philip Simpson, pb, Penguin Books, 2016] 978-0143129189 [hc, Center Point Publishing – LARGE PRINT, 2017] 978-1683243021 [[See related film](#)] [*Rachel Goldschmitt, a retired Mossad operative of British origin, empties her bank account and vanishes after attending her father's funeral in London. Fearing she may be unstable or compromised, the Mossad assigns her former handler and secret admirer, **Ehud**, to track her down. As Ehud retraces her career, the novel shifts between the present-day hunt and flashbacks of Rachel's decade-long undercover assignment in an Arab capital (likely Amman or Damascus). There, she lived as an unassuming English teacher, performing daring missions and assassinations by night. The central narrative arc focuses on Rachel's forbidden love for Rashid, a Middle Eastern man she met while undercover. Her real identity and her assumed one began to blur, eventually leading to the regret and remorse that triggered her disappearance. The novel examines the "controlled schizophrenia" required to maintain a cover and how constant lying erodes an operative's true sense of self. It highlights the morally dubious deeds operatives perform and the ethical dilemmas faced by handlers who must exploit the people they are responsible for protecting. The book was heavily vetted and censored by Israeli military and civilian committees before its release to ensure no classified methods were exposed.* – Google/AI]

Avraham Azrieli (born 1962 in Tel Aviv) - author of eight novels and two nonfiction books. He served as an intelligence officer in the Israel Defense Forces and later clerked for the Israeli Supreme Court. After moving to the United States in 1990, he graduated from Columbia Law School and practiced law for several years before transitioning to full-time writing (in the English language). He resides near Washington, D.C., with his family. His books of relevance to this bibliography:

The Masada Complex: A political thriller centered on Masada El-Tal, a beautiful Israeli expatriate and IDF veteran living in Arizona. She uncovers a global conspiracy involving a U.S. senator that threatens to end American military aid to Israel.

The Jerusalem Inception: Follows a young Talmudic scholar who breaks from his religious life to become a Mossad agent during the 1967 Six-Day War.

The Jerusalem Assassin: A direct sequel set in the 1990s, centering on the real-life assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and the tensions between Israeli and Palestinian factions.

[Google/AI]

Azrieli, Avraham, (**The Jerusalem Inception** [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2011]) 978-1451549515

Azrieli, Avraham, (**The Jerusalem Assassin** [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2011]) 978-1460906552

Azrieli, Avraham, (**The Masada Complex** [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2011]) 978-1450544108

Mishka Ben-David (born 1952 in Givat Shmuel, Israel) is a prominent Israeli author and former senior Mossad officer. He served in the Mossad for 12 years (1987–1999) in intelligence and field command roles. He is famously known for his involvement in the 1997 failed assassination attempt on Hamas leader Khaled Mashal in Jordan, where he carried the antidote that ultimately saved Mashal's life under orders from his commanders. He holds a PhD in Hebrew Literature from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, where he wrote his dissertation on Israeli war novels. He has authored over 20 books, including best-selling espionage thrillers such as *Duet in Beirut*, *The Beluga File*, and *Final Stop, Algiers*. While his 2017 novel *The Shark*—which eerily predicted a Hamas raid on

Israeli kibbutzim—has gained significant international press, an official full English translation is often cited as forthcoming or available in limited markets. [Google/AI]

Ben-David, Mishka, (**Duet in Beirut** [translated by Evan Fallenberg]) [pb, Halban Publishers, 2013] 978-1905559589 [hc, Overlook Press, 2015] 978-1468310207

Ben-David, Mishka, (**Forbidden Love in St. Petersburg** [translated by Dan Gillon]) [pb, Halban, 2015] 978-1905559770 [hc] Overlook, 2016] 978-1468310214

Ben-David, Mishka, (**Final Stop, Algiers** [translated by Ronnie Hope]) [hc, Overlook, 2017] 978-1468310221 [pb, Overlook, 2018] 978-1468316667

Ben-David, Mishka, (**The Beluga File** [translated by Michael Waisfeld] [pb, independently published, 2025] 979-8313979939

Michael Ian Benjamin (*est. birth 1944 in Leeds, England*) - a retired Israeli psychiatrist and author, best known for his **Oranit Trilogy**. He immigrated to Israel in 1969, where he trained as a psychiatrist and psychotherapist. Served as a Major in the Israeli Defense Forces, specializing in the treatment of shell shock (PTSD) during the Yom Kippur War and seeing active duty in Lebanon. A founder and former member of the local council for the settlement of Oranit, which serves as the primary setting for his fiction. His books:

Crossed Lines - a politically-charged murder mystery set during the Second Intifada. It follows a Shin Bet investigator tasked with solving the two-year-old murder of an Arab collaborator near the Oranit settlement, unearthing a web of smuggling, forgery, and wartime trauma.

Sins and Lovers: Continues the series' blend of black humor and political suspense, focusing on personal and historical secrets that threaten the delicate social fabric between the settlement and nearby Arab villages.

Shadow in the Woods: During a local election, a vital witness goes missing as Oranit prepares to host visitors from a Polish village—the same village where many of Oranit's founders survived the Holocaust. The discovery of two corpses in the woods linking the 1956 Kfar Kassem massacre to secrets from Nazi-occupied Poland. It delves into the divisions within Israel between religious and secular Jews. [Google/AI & Amazon]

Benjamin, Michael Ian, (**Crossed Lines** [Oranit: Volume 1]) [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2015] 978-1508804178

Benjamin, Michael Ian, (**Sins and Lovers** [Oranit, Vol. 2]) [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2016] 978-1523628124

Benjamin, Michael Ian, (**Shadow in the Woods** [Oranit, Vol. 3]) [pb, Wise Media Group 2020] 978-1629671772

Jane Berman, [There is almost no published biographical information about the author beyond the fact that she taught English at the Leo Baeck Education Center in Haifa, Israel, for 32 years (from 1982 to 2014).]

(Berman, Jane, **Unkosher Slaughter** [pb, Pardes Publishing, 2016] 978-1618382153 [Follows Rachel Shine, a newly divorced psychologist recovering from the trauma of a terrorist bombing, who returns to her childhood kibbutz. She gets pulled into investigating the mysterious Pesach Eve murder of the community's beloved spiritual leader (Rebbe), uncovering a web of deep-seated secrets and social tensions.- Google/AI]

Rawya Jarjoura Burbara [ed], (born 1969, Nazareth, Israel, a Palestinian author, academic, and educator who serves as the Chief Inspector of Arabic at the Israeli Ministry of Education) **East Jerusalem Noir** [hc, Akashic Books, 2023] 978-1636140889 [pb, Akashic Books, 2023] 978-1617759857 [Note: 13 stories by Palestinian Jerusalemites, published simultaneously with *West Jerusalem Noir*; edited by Maayan Eitan – see details under her name in this bibliography. All the stories were written in Arabic and translated by a team including Roger Allen, Marilyn Booth, Catherine Cobham, Raphael Cormack, Sawad Hussain, Dr. Nazih Kassis, Nancy Roberts, and Max Weiss.]

Haggai Carmon (born 1944 in Tel Aviv) - an Israeli-American attorney, intelligence operative, and author known for his **Dan Gordon** espionage thriller series. For 20 years (1985–2005), Carmon performed sensitive undercover intelligence-gathering for various U.S. federal agencies in over 30 countries, specializing in money laundering and asset recovery. He is a partner at the international law firm Carmon & Carmon, with offices in New York and Tel Aviv. He served as counsel for the U.S. Department of Justice in Israeli civil litigation from 1985 to 2016. His books focus to a great extent on the conflict with Iran and are written originally in English. Summaries:

Triple Identity (2005). his debut novel, introduces Dan Gordon, a fictionalized version of the author, who investigates international fraud and nuclear proliferation involving Iran. A seemingly routine money laundering case for the U.S. Department of Justice quickly escalates into a complex international conspiracy involving a failed California bank, a missing \$90 million, and Iran's efforts to acquire nuclear materials. Gordon uses his Mossad training to track the money trail and uncover the true identities of the culprits.

The Red Syndrome (2006): Gordon's investigation of Russian mob money transfers is assigned to the CIA, leading to the discovery of a plot by an Iranian-backed Islamic fundamentalist group and the Belarus mafia to launch a devastating biological weapon attack in the United States. The race against time involves murder, kidnapping, and high-stakes chases across multiple continents.

The Chameleon Conspiracy (2009): Gordon is determined to capture the "Chameleon," a master criminal, con man, and sleeper agent who has eluded international law enforcement for two decades. The investigation leads Gordon undercover to Iran, where he uncovers a conspiracy that could upset the global balance of power.

Triangle of Deception (2009): Gordon goes undercover in a joint CIA/Mossad mission to infiltrate a Lebanese network in Paraguay that is funding Hezbollah. He uncovers a wider conspiracy, which lands him in a Romanian prison with no easy way out, forcing him to maneuver in a world where allegiances constantly shift.

Defection Games (2012): Gordon is assigned a dangerous mission to extract a defecting general with critical intelligence from behind enemy lines in Iran. Operating in hostile territory, he realizes he is being manipulated by others and must question his mission, target, and even his superiors to survive.

By Deceit: An Intelligence Thriller: This novel features **Daniella Gordon** (Dan Gordon's daughter or sister? Some ambiguity), a cynical and highly skilled Mossad-CIA operative with Machiavellian instincts. Embedded in New York under deep cover as a disillusioned former agent, she is recruited by an elite Iranian training unit. Daniella manipulates her way through the Iranian spy network, using a covert ATM-based communication system to feed intelligence to the Mossad, while simultaneously hunting for a high-level mole within her own agency.

Titan Rain: CIA vs. Iranian Mole: This thriller centers on the high-stakes shadow war between the CIA and Iranian intelligence. The plot focuses on the detection and neutralization of a deep-cover Iranian mole embedded within Western intelligence frameworks. Like Carmon's other works, it utilizes his professional background in asset recovery and global intelligence to depict realistic espionage tactics.

The Russian Dossier: Following the discovery of a dead SVR courier in Vienna, a secret dossier codenamed “Volkov” surfaces, exposing a network of double agents buried deep within Western institutions. The encrypted data on the courier’s phone leads to Daniella Gordon, who must race across Europe to recover the truth while evading both Russian operatives and internal threats. When her brother, retired counter-espionage legend Dan Gordon, is forced back into action to save her, the two become trapped in a shadow war involving deepfakes and cyber-sabotage.

Carmon, Haggai [*Dan Gordon #1*] (**Triple Identity**) [hc, Steerforth, 2005] 978-1586420901 [pb, Thomas & Mercer, 2013] 978-1477806173

Carmon, Haggai [*Dan Gordon #2*] (**The Red Syndrome**) [hc, Steerforth, 2006] 978-1586421052 [pb, Thomas & Mercer, 2013] 978-1477806159

Carmon, Haggai [*Dan Gordon #3*] (**The Chameleon Conspiracy** [pb, Thomas & Mercer, 2013]) 978-1477806142

Carmon, Haggai [*Dan Gordon #4*] (**Triangle of Deception** [pb, Thomas & Mercer, 2013]) 978-1477806166

Carmon, Haggai [*Dan Gordon #5*] (**Defection Games** [pb, Thomas & Mercer, 2013]) 978-1477848432

Carmon, Haggai, [*Daniella Gordon*] (**By Deceit: An Intelligence Thriller** [pb, independently published, 2025] 979-8267435345

Carmon, Haggai [*Dan Gordon #6?*] (**Titan Rain: CIA vs. Iranian Mole** [pb, independently published, 2025] 979-8267433433

Carmon, Haggai, [*Daniella Gordon*] (**The Russian Dossier** [Kindle edition only listed on Amazon as of Jan. 2026] ASIN code: B0FWSNJR62

“Jonathan de Shalit” is a pseudonym for a former high-ranking member of the Israeli intelligence community, so his actual birth year and place are not publicly disclosed to protect his identity. Because of his former rank, all of his manuscripts must be vetted and approved by a special Israeli Governmental Ministers’ Committee before publication. He has translated several notable English works into Hebrew, including John le Carré’s autobiography, *The Pigeon Tunnel*.

Jonathan de Shalit’s books are described as “cerebral, slow-burning thrillers” that prioritize tradecraft and intellect over high-octane action. [Google/AI].

Traitor (2018): In 1983, a young Israeli man named Alon offers to spy for the Americans at an embassy in Rome. Unbeknownst to him, his recruiter is actually a Russian mole, leading Alon to spend decades unintentionally funneling Israeli secrets to the Kremlin as he rises to become a high-level government advisor. The story jumps to 2013, when a secret team - code-named “**Cobra**” - is assembled to hunt down this high-ranking mole.

A Spy in Exile (2019): This novel introduces **Ya’ara Stein**, a former Mossad agent forced out for being too aggressive. She is personally recruited by the Israeli Prime Minister to lead a deniable, top-secret unit that operates outside of government oversight. The team’s first mission involves a Russian-orchestrated terrorist plot in Europe involving remnants of the Red Army Faction and radical Islamist splinter groups.

Revelation (Forthcoming/Hebrew: Madagascar): This work continues the story of Ya’ara Stein. While details of the English translation are sparse, it reportedly follows her team as they navigate further high-stakes operations that require clearance from multiple Israeli governmental agencies.

[Google/AI]

de Shalit, Jonathan, (**Traitor: A Thriller** [Atria/Emily Bestler Books, 2018, trans. from the Hebrew by Steve Cohen] [hc] 978-1501170485 [pb] 978-1501170492

de Shalit, Jonathan, (**A Spy in Exile** [Atria/Emily Bestler Books, 2019, trans. from the Hebrew by Steve Cohen] [hc] 978-1501170560 [pb] 978-1501170577

Miriam Drori (birth est. 1958, in London England) – She lived in Jerusalem for over 20 years, working as a computer programmer and technical writer, turning to full-time literary fiction in 2004. Recently moved to Tel Aviv. Has two crime-fiction Cozy mysteries of relevance to this bibliography:

Drori, Miriam [*Jerusalem Murder Mystery #1*], (**Style and the Solitary** [pb, self-published, 2022]) 978-9659303106 [*This first book introduces **Asaf Lavi**, a socially anxious office worker who prefers to remain invisible. His life is upended when he discovers a corpse in his office building early one morning and becomes the prime suspect. Languishing in a jail cell, Asaf is too paralyzed by fear and social anxiety to defend himself to the authorities. His colleague, **Nathalie Gautier**, a recent French immigrant, is the only one who believes in his innocence. Inspired by the moral of Beauty and the Beast, she enlists her flatmates to investigate the crime themselves. The story follows their amateur investigation as they navigate the streets and culture of Jerusalem to clear Asaf's name.*]

Drori, Miriam [*Jerusalem Murder Mystery #2*], (**Loyalty and the Learner** [pb, self-published, 2024]) 978-9659303120 [*The sequel continues the story of Asaf and Nathalie, who are now engaged. Once again, a murder occurs, and suspicion initially falls on Asaf before shifting to **Lihi**, the victim's wife. Convinced of Lihi's innocence, Nathalie and Asaf set out to find the real killer. Their journey takes them beyond Jerusalem, venturing "west and north" across Israel. The book is described as maintaining the series' signature blend of humor and emotional depth, with the characters using inspiration from historical figures and literature to solve the mystery.*] [Google/AI – Amazon]

Jonathan Dunsky (born 1978 in Tel Aviv) - As a teenager, Dunsky committed to mastering English by reading books in the language with a dictionary at his side to look up every unfamiliar word. He has never lived in an English-speaking country, but writes directly in English rather than in in Hebrew, his native language.

His **Adam Lapid** series protagonist is a hard-boiled private investigator on the "dusty streets" of Tel Aviv and Jerusalem during the austerity period of the late 1940s and early 1950s. Lapid was formerly a police detective in Hungary whose wife and two young daughters were murdered in Auschwitz. He is characterized as a "haunted" loner who suffers from survivor's guilt and chronic nightmares. He has a near-obsession with chess, often playing against himself at a local café to stimulate his deductive reasoning. Although he operates in the shadows of Israeli society, he maintains a strict, if "morally gray," personal code. He frequently takes cases that the regular police refuse to investigate, especially those involving marginalized victims or fellow survivors. Dunsky explores the social tensions of the era, including the divide between Ashkenazi and Mizrahi Jews, the treatment of Arab citizens in the new state, and the deep emotional trauma shared by the immigrant population. Renowned mystery author Lawrence Sanders has compared Dunsky's portrayal of 1949 Tel Aviv to Raymond Chandler's Los Angeles. [Google/AI]

Dunsky, Jonathan, (**Ten Years Gone** [*Adam Lapid* #1]) [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2017] 978-1546633792 [hc, Lion Cub Publishing, 2021] 978-9657795071

(**The Dead Sister** [*Adam Lapid* #2]) [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2016] 978-1539131885 [hc, Lion Cub Publishing, 2024] 978-9657795088

(**The Auschwitz Violinist** [*Adam Lapid* #3] [Lion Cub Publishing, 2016]) [hc] 978-9657795095 [pb] 978-9657795026

(**The Unlucky Woman** [*Lapid* short story, pb, independently published, 2018]) 978-1731028983

(**A Debt of Death** [*Lapid* #4]) [Lion Cub Publishing, 2021]) pb, April 2021] 978-9657795033 [hc] 978-9657795101

- (**A Deadly Act** [*Lapid #5*, Lion Cub Publishing, 2021]) [hc] 978-9657795118 [pb] 978-9657795040
- (**The Auschwitz Detective** [*Lapid #6*]) {Lion Cub Publishing, 2021} [pb] 978-9657795057 [hc] 978-9657795125 [*Note: a prequel to the series, but published as book 6*]
- (**A Death in Jerusalem** [*Lapid #7*]) [Lion Cub Publishing, 2022] [pb] 978-9657795217 [hc] 978-9657795231
- (**In That Sleep of Death** [*Lapid #8*]) {Lion Cub Publishing, 2024} [hc] 978-9657795491 [pb] 978-9657795477
- (**The Jewish Policeman** [*Lapid #9*] [hc, Lion Cub Publishing, 2026] 978-9657795545 [pb, Lion Cub Publishing, 2026] 978-9657795521

Uzi Eilam (born 1934, Kibbutz Tel Yossef) – a former Brigadier General in the IDF and a key figure in Israel's defense R&D, writes the **International Espionage** series featuring protagonist **Dr. Gideon Ben-Ari**. The books blend realistic technological detail with global counter-terrorism operations.

White Smoke Over the Vatican: Now eyeing retirement, Gideon Ben-Ari discovers that his childhood-friend-turned-terrorist, Nimer el-Haladi, has become a Mossad collaborator. The two former enemies must join forces to stop an assassination attempt on Pope Francis involving cyber technology and AI.

Trail of Blood: Dr. Ben-Ari is forced out of his peaceful life after a horrific terror attack kills dozens of children. He hunts the perpetrator, Nimer Al Khaladi, who is working with Iran and North Korea to develop nuclear-armed long-range missiles.

California Triangle: Gideon becomes entangled in a complex web of espionage involving the FBI, Mossad, and the Iranian Revolutionary Guards. The plot features a passionate affair and a struggle between powers trying to either protect or overturn the Iranian government.

A Trap in Paris: Recruited back into service, Gideon is tasked with blocking Iranian efforts to develop nuclear weapons and missiles in Europe. He must navigate a battlefield of intrigue in Paris where an old friend is revealed to be a dangerous foe.

Singapore Under Attack: While in Singapore, Gideon is caught in a massive cyber-attack targeting Israeli and American embassies. He must use his technological expertise to combat a sophisticated plot orchestrated by Iranian operatives.

Red Vengeance: In this political thriller, the retired Gideon Ben-Ari returns to action to thwart a joint Iranian-Russian plot aimed at assassinating high-ranking leaders within the CIA and Mossad.

Eilam, Uzi, (**California Triangle** [pb, CreateSpace Independent, transl. by Yael Schonfeld Abel, 2017] 978-1978391376

Eilam, Uzi, (**A Trap in Paris** [pb, CreateSpace Independent, transl. by Jeremy Forman, 2017] 978-1976205248

Eilam, Uzi, (**Singapore Under Attack** [pb, CreateSpace Independent, transl. by Yael Schonfeld Abel, 2017] 978-1977931559

Eilam, Uzi, (**Trail of Blood** [pb, independently published, transl. by Jeremy Forman, 2019] 978-1077593633

Eilam, Uzi, (**White Smoke Over the Vatican** [pb, independently published, transl. by Grace Michaeli, 2022] 979-8416640187 [pb, independently published, 2022] 979-8416640187

Eilam, Uzi, (**Red Vengeance: A Slow-Burning Mossad Political Thriller** [pb, independently published, transl. by eBookPro Publishing, 2023] 979-8397485999

Maayan Eitan [ed], (born 1986, Jerusalem, Israeli author and translator) - **West Jerusalem Noir** [hc, Akashic Books, 2023, translated by Yardenne Greenspan] 978-1636141879 [pb, Akashic Books, 2023] 978-1636141879 [**Note:** 15 stories by Jewish Jerusalemites, published simultaneously with *East Jerusalem Noir*, edited by Rawya Jarjoura Barbara – see details under her name in this Bibliography]

Chaim Eliav (1956 – 2020, born in Israel, lived in Jerusalem, the pen name of **Rabbi Moshe Grylack**, who was a prominent journalist – editor-in-chief of the popular Haredi weekly magazine, *Mishpacha* (“Family”) - and author. He is widely considered a pioneer of the Haredi (Ultra-Orthodox) thriller genre. He was a renowned author within the Orthodox Jewish community, particularly known for his fast-paced thriller and suspense novels. Eliav specialized in “kosher” thrillers that blended espionage, historical intrigue, and Jewish themes. Many of his works were published by **ArtScroll/Shaar Press**, becoming staples in Haredi and religious Zionist libraries. He is often credited with helping to pioneer the modern adventure-novel genre for religious readers, providing high-stakes plots that remained consistent with Orthodox values. His books are written in Hebrew and translated; the settings are international, including Israel, Brazil, Switzerland, Portugal, etc. [Google/AI]

See also the entry on **Yair Weinstock** in this Bibliography.

See Benjamin Weiner, “The Rise and Rise of Haredi Thrillers”, **The Forward**, May 13, 2009. Link: <https://forward.com/culture/105932/the-rise-and-rise-of-haredi-thrillers/#:~:text=Though%20popular%20Haredi%20publishing%20originated,and%20a%20number%20of%20imitators.>

Eliav, Chaim, (**In the Spider’s Web: Decades After the War, a Jew Is Enmeshed in International Nazi Intrigue** [trans. from the Hebrew by Miriam Zakon]) [hc, Mesorah Publications, 1996] 978-0899065755 [pb, Shaar Press, 1996] 978-0899065762

Eliav, Chaim, (**The Persecution: Intrigue and Suspense and a City Entangled in Danger**) [hc, Mesorah Publications, transl. by Libby Lazewnik, 1997] 978-0899066684 [pb, Mesorah Publications, 1997] 978-0899066691

Eliav, Chaim, (**The Runaway: A Frightening Disappearance, a Cult, and a Desperate Search** [hc, Mesorah, transl. by Libby Lazewnik, 1998]) 978-1578195237

Eliav, Chaim, (**The Mission** [hc, Mesorah, [transl. by Miriam Zakon, 2000]) 978-1578195237

Eliav, Chaim, (**The Envelope** [hc, Mesorah, transl. by Libby Lazewnik, 2002]) 978-1578197804

Eliav, Chaim, (**The Four** [hc, Mesorah, [transl. by Miriam Zakon, 2019]) 978-1422623770

Eli Evron (est. birth 1960, Jerusalem) – a former senior Israeli intelligence officer turned successful espionage thriller author. He holds multiple degrees in Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies, Geography, and Law. He is fluent in Arabic, a skill vital to his former intelligence roles. He has published several highly successful espionage thrillers. His debut novel available in English, **Triple Strike**, and subsequent works like **The Target** and **Deep Cover** are known for weaving true operational knowledge into fictional narratives.

The Rome Assignment: Ben Gal, the veteran Mossad station chief in Rome, is nearing the end of a career marked by internal politics and personal loss. When an unexpected Iranian informant appears, Gal is pulled into a high-stakes game between nuclear powers. The investigation reveals a sprawling conspiracy involving a long-hidden Nazi war criminal, international art theft, and an imminent terror threat in a major European city.

Triple Strike: Following a severe injury, Mossad agent Oren is assigned to Italy as a case officer. His mission to recruit assets leads him to uncover a “dangerous alliance” in the Middle East. He discovers

that a drug smuggling ring is actually a cover for a massive narco-terrorism operation aiming to launch three synchronized, catastrophic attacks against civilian targets. [Google/AI]

Evron, Eli, (**The Rome Assignment** [pb, eBookPro Publishing, transl. by Grace Michaeli, 2022] 979-8368000763

Evron, Eli, (**Triple Strike: A Narco Terrorism Spy Thriller** [pb, eBookPro Publishing, transl. by Jerry Hyman, 2022] 979-8442731897

Adi Fishman (est. birth 1988, possibly in Gush Katif, Gaza) – from a religious Zionist background, graduate of “Ma’alah” School of Film in Jerusalem, famous for bridging between film arts and traditional Judaism. Her first book, whose title translates as “All the Roads Home” (late 2025-early 2026), gives expression to the severe trauma experienced in the religious-Zionist community in Israel by the forced exit from the Israeli settlements in the Gaza disengagement of 2005, and to its lingering after-effects. In this book, **not yet translated** into English, **Natali Rashavsky**, a 16-year old girl from this community goes missing without explanation. It turns out she has stolen into Gaza in an effort to revisit the home in which she grew up, leading to a tense family drama. The book was written before the events of Oct. 7, 2023. [Google/AI]

Ellen Frankel (born 1951 in New York City) - a scholar, author, and storyteller who currently resides in Sarasota, Florida, and Maine. She served for 18 years as the Editor-in-Chief and CEO of the Jewish Publication Society (JPS) before retiring in 2009. Author of over ten books, including *The Five Books of Miriam* and *The JPS Illustrated Children’s Bible*. An accomplished librettist, she has written lyrics for several operas and chamber pieces. She is included in this bibliography because her main protagonist is Israeli and so are the settings of all her books. Her *Jerusalem Mysteries* series (3 so far) feature **Maya Rimon** as the protagonist. Rimon is a high-level Israeli intelligence agent working for “The Service” (a fictionalized version of Israel’s elite domestic security agency, similar to the Shin Bet). She is portrayed as a daring, “maverick” intelligence officer tasked with handling cases that threaten national security, often involving religious or political extremism. Beyond her career, she is characterized as a single mother struggling to balance her high-stakes profession with a contentious custody battle over her young daughter.

The Deadly Scrolls (2022) begins with the murder of an American professor which reveals his discovery of a lost Dead Sea Scroll, a genuine historical artifact also known as the **Copper Scroll**. The text on this scroll reportedly encodes the secret hiding places of the lost **Second Temple treasures**. Maya Rimon races against time to locate the scroll’s secrets and stop a religious extremist from using the information to launch a terrorist attack on the Temple Mount, which would trigger an apocalypse in Jerusalem. The book explores themes of religious fanaticism and the challenges Maya faces as a single mother in the male-dominated world of Israeli intelligence.

In **The Hyena Murders** (2022), a serial killer targets the family of a prominent Ethiopian member of the Israeli Knesset. The murderer leaves cryptic clues at the crime scenes, including slash wounds made by a ceremonial knife and images of hyenas, linking the killings to Ethiopian folklore and the experiences of the Jewish community in Ethiopia. As Maya investigates the case with her rival, Police Chief Inspector Sarit Levine, she uncovers a buried diary that holds the key to solving the murders and confronting the underlying issues of discrimination and racism faced by Ethiopian Jews in Israel.

The Passover Protocols (2024): Just before Passover, a boy’s blood-drained body is found at a Jerusalem synagogue, sparking fears of a “blood libel”. Maya Rimon and Inspector Sarit Levine must stop an American neo-Nazi group, the Aryan Vanguard, from attacking Yad Vashem. [Google/AI]

Frankel, Ellen, (**The Deadly Scrolls** [Maya Rimon/The Jerusalem Mysteries Book I, Wicked Son, 2022] [hc] 978-1637583586 [pb, 2023] 978-1637589342

Frankel, Ellen, (**The Hyena Murders** [Maya Rimon/*The Jerusalem Mysteries Book 2*, Wicked Son, pb, 2023] 978-1637589359

Frankel, Ellen, (**The Passover Protocols** [Maya Rimon/*The Jerusalem Mysteries Book 3*, Wicked Son, pb, 2023] 979-8888454480

Noah S. Friedland (est. born 1961) – *A Seattle-based technologist who has worked as a scientist, researcher, manager, and entrepreneur; authoring dozens of peer-reviewed scientific papers. He is currently the CEO of The Friedland Group, Inc. and co-founder of ImageSleuth, both focused on video analytics technologies. Served in the IDF and completed his Ph.D. in computer science in the US. In **A House Divided**, an Israeli expatriate returns to Israel after his brother is killed in an army training accident, and becomes embroiled in the country's deep internal conflicts in the course of investigating it.*

Friedland, Noah S., (**A House Divided** [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2010] 978-1449976798

Assaf Gavron (born 1968 in Arad, Israel) – *prominent Israeli novelist, translator and musician. He has published eight novels, including the acclaimed satirical work *The Hilltop* (2013), and *Almost Dead* (2006). A prolific translator, he has translated over 20 major works from English to Hebrew, including books by J.D. Salinger, Philip Roth, and Jonathan Safran Foer.*

Almost Dead (aka ***CrocAttack!***): *This novel is described as a “fast-paced tragicomedy” and a “virtuoso work” that uses elements of a thriller. It alternates between the perspectives of Eitan “Croc” Enoch, an Israeli man who inadvertently becomes a national hero after surviving multiple terrorist attacks, and Fahmi Sabih, a young Palestinian man drawn into a terrorist cell. It is described as “fast as a thriller” and incorporates a “sense of suspense” through its dual storyline and exploration of the chaos and terror of life during the second Intifada.*

Eighteen Lashes: *This novel (not yet translated into English) is explicitly described on the author's website as a “historical literary thriller”. A modern-day Uber-like cab driver in Tel Aviv gets drawn into a “detective journey” involving four octogenarian protagonists, two potential murder cases, and a complex web of historical and personal blame related to the violent 1940s in Israel. It features “thrilling twists” and is structured as a “detective story” with an amateur sleuth. [Google/AI]*

Gavron, Assaf, (**Almost Dead: A Witty and Provocative Tragicomic Tale of Terror and Identity in Israel** [pb, Harper Perennial, transl. by Assaf Gavron & James Lever, 2010] 978-0061984044

Adiva Geffen (born 1946, Haifa) – *Israeli author, educator and playwright who has published over 20 books across various genres, including children's literature, reference books, and novels. Geffen is highly regarded as a top suspense writer in Israel and her plays have appeared on major stages. She has authored several books in the “World War II Brave Women Fiction” series and is working actively today, writing and leading writing workshops. She also serves as the head of The Gnazim Institute of the Hebrew Writers Association, the world's largest Hebrew literature archive.*

*Only one of Geffen's suspense novels has so far been translated into English - “**Missing**” features detective duo, **Sammy and Dikla**, who investigate cases involving cults, con artists, and suspicious deaths in Israel. They find a young runaway named Daria, who later turns up dead. While local police quickly classify the death as an open-and-shut suicide, the detectives are suspicious that a far more sinister plot is involved. The story follows Sammy and Dikla as they navigate a world of “heaven-sent cults” and con artists to uncover the truth, all while dealing with their own complex personal and professional relationships. [Google/AI]*

Geffen, Adiva, (**Missing, aka The Girl Behind the Secrets** [pb, CreateSpace Independent, transl. by eBookPro, 2017] 978-1545480069

Stephen J. Gordon (est. birth 1951) – Baltimore-based educator and author of 3-volume thriller series featuring **Gidon Aronson**, a former IDF special forces operative. American-born Aronson served in an elite IDF special operations unit. He subsequently returned to the US as an “emotional wreck” struggling with severe PTSD from his military service. He is a reluctant hero who values his solitude but is repeatedly drawn into conspiracies that threaten people he cares about. The novels typically begin in the US (often Baltimore) and migrate to Israel or the Middle East for the final third of the story. Notable recurring elements include Gidon’s Shin Bet contacts and his close friendship with a Palestinian security officer, highlighting cross-cultural cooperation. Gordon appears on the Israeli list of authors, though he could just as easily have been included in the American list.

In *In the Name of God* (2011), Gidon uncovers a conspiracy by the “Guardians of Heaven” targeting an Israeli diplomat, leading him from Baltimore to the West Bank. In *Confluence* (2013), Aronson protects a young rabbi’s family from assassins, uncovering a plot involving the theft and “mitzvah” of saving Torah scrolls that leads him into the Gaza Strip. In *The Student* (2022), as a favor to a Mossad officer, Gidon monitors a college student in Baltimore facing anti-Israel sentiment on campus. The situation escalates into a murder investigation and a risky undercover mission in the Middle East. [Google/AI]

Gordon, Stephen J. [*Gidon Aronson* #1], (*In the Name of God* [hc, Apprentice House, 2011]) 978-1934074633 [pb, Apprentice House, 2011] 978-1934074626

Gordon, Stephen J., [*Gidon Aronson* #2], (*Confluence* [pb, Apprentice House, 2013]) 978-1934074862

Gordon, Stephen J., [*Gidon Aronson* #3], (*The Student* [hc, Loyola College/Apprentice House, 2022]) 978-1627203548 [pb, Loyola College/Apprentice House, 2022] 978-1627203555

David Grossman (born 1954 in Jerusalem) [- Israeli novelist, essayist, and prominent peace activist whose literary works explore the complex realities of Israeli identity, family ties, the trauma of war, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Born to a modest family; his father was a bus driver turned librarian who introduced him to the classic tales of Sholem Aleichem. Worked as a child actor and radio broadcaster for Israel Radio starting at age 10, a career he maintained for nearly 25 years. Served in Unit 8200 of the IDF Intelligence Corps. Completed a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy and Theater at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. His literature frequently addresses coming-of-age, systemic violence, and the emotional vulnerabilities of human relationships. Authored highly celebrated novels including *See Under: Love* (grappling with the Holocaust), *The Book of Intimate Grammar*, *Someone to Run With*, and *A Horse Walks into a Bar*. Published seminal political and social commentary, including *The Yellow Wind* (1987), which anticipated the first Palestinian Intifada. Wrote numerous children’s books and plays, finding massive success with both young and adult audiences. He is a leading intellectual voice for the Israeli peace movement, advocating for mutual dialogue and a two-state solution. In August 2006, his son Uri was killed in action during the Second Lebanon War. This profound grief heavily influenced his subsequent masterpiece, *To the End of the Land*, and his experimental novel *Falling Out of Time*. Recipient of the prestigious International Booker Prize (2017), the Israel Prize (2018), and the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade (2010). **Main Works of Relevance:**

Grossman, David, (*The Yellow Wind* [transl. by Haim Watzman, hc, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1988]) 978-0374293451 [pb, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1998] 978-0374525613

Grossman, David, (*The Smile of the Lamb* [transl. by Betsy Rosenberg, hc, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1991]) 978-0374266394 [pb, Washington Square Press, 1992] 978-0671750251 [*The focus here is not criminality but the corrupting effects of military occupation. Israelis and Palestinians become trapped in relationships of domination, deception, and violence. Grossman treats political power itself as a kind of moral transgression.*]

Grossman, David, (**See Under: Love** [transl. by Betsy Rosenberg, hc, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1989] 978-0374257316 [pb, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1997] 978-0374525194

Grossman, David, (**The Zigzag Kid** [transl. by Betsy Rosenberg, hc, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1997] 978-0374296926 [pb, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1998] 978-0374525637

Grossman, David, (**Someone to Run With** [transl. by Vered Almog and Maya Gurantz, hc, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2004]) 978-0374266578 [pb, Bloomsbury Publishing, 2004] 978-0747568124

Grossman, David, (**More Than I Love My Life** [transl. by Jessica Cohen, hc, Knopf, 2021]) 978-0593318911 [pb, Vintage, 2022] 978-0593312599

Grossman is not a crime author per se, but rather uses elements of crime, delinquency, and transgressive behavior as a crucial vehicle for exploring deeper psychological, historical, and national anxieties. For Grossman, crime is rarely about the violation of state laws; it is an entry point to discuss the vulnerability of youth, the erosion of the idealized “Zionist muscle Jew,” and the moral degradation that stems from trauma and political occupation. Grossman effectively subverts traditional notions of Jewish criminality through several distinct thematic frameworks in his major works:

1. The Underworld as a Sanctuary for Vulnerable Youth

*In his urban adventure novel, **Someone to Run With** (2000), Grossman directly addresses the criminal underworld of Jerusalem. The novel features street-level drug rings, exploitation, and theft operated by a criminal mastermind who preys on runaway youth. [Almost recalls Fagin.] Grossman uses this criminal backdrop to explore the isolation and profound loneliness of teenagers who do not fit into the rigid, militarized mainstream Israeli society. The “crime” is a symptom of a society failing its youth. Here, survival in the criminal underworld requires empathy, art (busking/singing), and emotional connection, contrasting the clinical, cold reality of the criminal syndicate.*

2. Deconstructing the Myth of the “New Jew”

Historically, early Zionist philosophy celebrated the “New Jew” (Sabra)—an agrarian, heroic figure intended to be the antithesis of the legally fragile, urban, or oppressed Diaspora Jew. Grossman deliberately reintroduces the archetype of the Jewish trickster or criminal to dismantle this myth.

***The Zigzag Kid** (1994): The story follows thirteen-year-old Nonni, the son of a deeply rigid, law-abiding Israeli police detective. Nonni is hijacked into an adventure by Felix Glick, a legendary Jewish master thief. Felix Glick represents creativity, fluidity, and absolute freedom—traits suppressed by the strict, regimented rule-following of the Israeli state apparatus represented by Nonni’s father. By framing the master criminal as a warm, imaginative mentor, Grossman suggests that embracing a “zigzag,” slightly transgressive nature is necessary to survive the suffocating conformity of official national narratives.*

3. Historical Trauma and Moral Metamorphosis

*In **See Under: Love** (1986), Grossman addresses the ultimate crime—the Holocaust—and looks at how it warped human behavior. The novel features a Jewish writer, Wasserman, who is trapped in a concentration camp and forced to tell bedtime stories to the Nazi commandant, Neigel. Rather than settling for a simple binary of “pure victim” versus “monstrous criminal,” Grossman introduces deep moral ambiguities. Wasserman’s storytelling forces the Nazi perpetrator to confront his own humanity, subtly shifting the power dynamic. Simultaneously, the novel’s first section portrays Momik, a young Israeli boy who behaves erratically, attempting to “breed” the “Nazi Beast” in his cellar to destroy it. Grossman uses this bizarre mental delinquency to show how unaddressed historical trauma can turn victims into obsessive, emotionally crippled perpetrators themselves.*

Summary of Grossman’s Literary Use of Crime

Novel	Criminal Element / Vehicle	Core Insight Developed
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<i>Someone to Run With</i>	<i>Drug rings, exploitation of street youth</i>	<i>The failure of institutional society to harbor sensitive, non-conformist individuals.</i>
<i>The Zigzag Kid</i>	<i>Master-thievery and deception</i>	<i>The necessity of imagination, fluid boundaries, and emotional truth over rigid state laws.</i>
<i>See Under: Love</i>	<i>Genocide, domestic psychological abuse</i>	<i>How inherited historical trauma corrupts the soul, blurring the lines between victim and victimizer.</i>

Ultimately, David Grossman utilizes crime to critique the moral cost of absolute law enforcement and state-sanctioned toughness. By aligning his most human, vibrant characters with the fringes of the law or outright delinquency, he argues for a return to nuance, empathy, and personal vulnerability over structural stiffness. [Google/AI]

Grossman is interested less in crime as such than in the lingering effects of historical injustices and personal betrayals. He asks, in **More Than I Love My Life**, how people live after committing, witnessing, or surviving acts of cruelty. Grossman's contribution lies in examining what might be called **collective moral culpability**. His fiction repeatedly asks whether nations, communities, and ordinary citizens become implicated in systems of violence. His focus is thus not "Jews and crime" but rather **Jews, power, violence, guilt, and moral responsibility**. [Wikipedia] He transforms the language of guilt, wrongdoing, confession, punishment, and responsibility into a means of examining the moral consequences of Jewish sovereignty, war, memory, and human relationships. Crime in Grossman is generally metaphorical—a way of thinking about ethical responsibility rather than a subject in its own right. [ChatGPT]

Ayelet Gundar-Goshen (born 1982 in Tel Aviv) – Prominent Israeli novelist as well as a practicing clinical psychologist, an award-winning screenwriter, and a regular contributor to major outlets like the BBC, the Financial Times, and Time Magazine. Two of her translated novels broadly fit the military/thriller genre:

Waking Lions: Dr. Eitan Green, a neurosurgeon, hits an Eritrean migrant while speeding through the desert after a long hospital shift. Realizing the man is beyond help, Eitan panics and flees to protect his reputation and family. The next day, the victim's widow, Sirkit, appears at his door with his wallet. Her price for silence is not money; she blackmails Eitan into running an underground medical clinic for refugees in a deserted garage. The tension is amplified because Eitan's wife, Liat, is the police detective assigned to investigate the very hit-and-run he committed.

The Wolf Hunt: Lilach and Mikhael, Israeli expats living in Silicon Valley, enjoy a privileged life until a local synagogue is brutally attacked. To help their shy son Adam build confidence, they enroll him in a self-defense class run by a charismatic former Israeli Special Forces officer. A Black classmate, Jamal, dies at a house party from a suspected overdose. Rumors quickly spread that Jamal had bullied Adam and that Adam might be involved in his death. Lilach becomes an unreliable narrator as her suspicion grows. She begins to wonder if her son is a victim or a killer, and whether she ever truly knew him at all. [Google/AI]

Gundar-Goshen, Ayelet, (**Waking Lions** [hc, Little, Brown & Co., transl. by Sondra Silverston, 2017]) 978-0316395434 [pb, Pushkin Press, 2016] 978-1782272984

Gundar-Goshen, Ayelet, (**The Wolf Hunt** [hc, Little Brown & Co., transl. by Sondra Silverston, 2023]) 978-0316423472 [pb, Pushkin Press, 2024] 978-1782279907

Batya Gur (1947–2005) was a prominent Israeli novelist, literary critic, and educator, best known for pioneering the detective genre in modern Hebrew literature. Born Batya Mann in Tel Aviv to Holocaust survivor parents, she was raised in Ramat Gan. Before her literary career took off, she

*taught high school literature and history for nearly 20 years, including a period teaching Hebrew in North Carolina from 1972 to 1975. Gur began writing detective fiction at age 39 to “provide a structure” for her first novel. She is credited with introducing the “intellectual detective” to Israeli readers through her protagonist, **Chief Superintendent Michael Ohayon**. Her mysteries were characterized by their deep exploration of “closed worlds” or isolated societies, such as the psychoanalytic community, academic circles, or a kibbutz. Beyond fiction, she was a prolific literary critic for the Haaretz newspaper and taught at the Sam Spiegel Film and Television School in Jerusalem. [Google/AI]*

Gur (Goor), Batya, [*Michael Ohayon #1*] (**The Saturday Morning Murder: A Psychoanalytic Case [this and the next 3 translated by Dalya Bilu]**) [hc, HarperCollins, 1992] 978-0060190248 [pb, Harper Perennial, 1993] 978-0060995089

Gur (Goor), Batya, [*Michael Ohayon #2*] (**The Literary Murder: A Riveting Crime Novel of Murder and Morality in Israeli Academia**) [hc, HarperCollins, 1993] 978-0060190231 [pb, HarperCollins, 1993] 978-0060190231

Gur (Goor), Batya, [*Michael Ohayon #3*] (**Murder on a Kibbutz: A Communal Case**) [hc, HarperCollins, 1994] 978-0060190262 [pb, Harper Paperbacks, 1995] 978-0060926540

Gur (Goor), Batya, [*Michael Ohayon #4*] (**Murder Duet: A Musical Case**) [hc, Harper, 1999] 978-0060172688 [pb, Harper Perennial, 2000] 978-0060932985

Gur (Goor), Batya, [*Michael Ohayon #5*] (**Bethlehem Road Murder**) [hc, Harper, 2004, translated by Vivian Eden] 978-0060195731 [pb, Harper Perennial, 2006] 978-0060954925

Gur (Goor), Batya, [*Michael Ohayon #6*] (**Murder in Jerusalem: The Final Michael Ohayon Mystery**) [hc, HarperCollins, 2006, translated by Evan Fallenberg] 978-0060852931 [pb, Harper Paperbacks, 2007] 978-0060852948

Amir Gutfreund (1963–2015) – Popular Israeli novelist, born in Haifa, who died tragically young from cancer. Most of his works are historical or literary fiction, often exploring Israeli identity and the legacy of the Holocaust. His last published book was his only venture into crime fiction, as follows:

Gutfreund, Amir, (**Last Bullet Calls It**) [pb, Amazon Crossing, 2017, translated by Yardenne Greenspan and Evan Fallenberg] 978-1477818046

Coupon-clipping police superintendent Jonah Merlin thinks he has an open-and-shut case on his hands after the body of a beautiful woman is found discarded in a run-down building in Tel Aviv. All evidence points to two suspects, but finding them will require unorthodox methods to decode the cryptic words sprayed at every crime scene.

As the body count rises, graffiti expert Rai Zitrin and precocious seventeen-year-old Zoe Navon agree to help Merlin uncover the connection between the killing spree and the words of Polish writer Bruno Schulz, who was murdered by Nazis seventy years ago.

Why would a serial killer quote the famous author’s poetic words of unrequited love? The search leads this unlikely trio on a race against the clock to solve the case before the killer has the last laugh...and the last bullet. [Amazon]

David Haddad, (**The Secret History of Mossad: “Top Secret” Operations from 1948 to Today/Agent Adam Rosenberg**) [pb, independently published, 2024] 979-8340697035 [fiction, no personal details on author available]

Yoav Levitas Halevy (1939–2019, born and lived his life at Kibbutz Beit-Zera) –Israeli author and translator. He translated books in English, French and Spanish into Hebrew, but **none of his 6 published Hebrew works was translated** into English. He wrote in several fiction genres, including short stories, as well as autobiography. His notable contribution to the mystery genre was **The Ransom** (*Kofer Nefesh* in Hebrew, 1995), a complex thriller involving a murder mystery and an unexplained ransom demand centered on the estate of a wealthy tycoon. [Google/AI]

Janet Hannah (est. birth 1940, in Toronto, resides in Jerusalem) is a biochemist who has worked at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, bringing professional expertise to her fictional characters. Her work typically blends international academic settings—such as Prague, Toulouse, and Jerusalem—with scientific themes like microbiology and genetically engineered bacteria. Her protagonist is **Alex Kertész**, a Hungarian-born microbiologist and DNA researcher based at the Hebrew University. Kertész is described as a “dashing” and “sympathetic” hero who uses his rational scientist’s mind to solve puzzles that often border on the parapsychological. Despite his scientific training, he is also willing to explore premises that his colleagues might find irrational—such as the power of a “wish to kill” or family curses—which sometimes subtly connect back to Old World superstitions or folklore from his heritage. The series currently includes four titles:

The Wish to Kill (1999/2002):

Murder with a French Accent (2009)

Mystery Time (2012)

Death of a Gypsy (2015)

Hannah, Janet, [Alex Kertész #1] (**The Wish to Kill** [hc, Soho Press, 1999] 978-1569471777 [pb, Soho Press, 2002] 978-1569472705 [Alex discovers the body of a hated professor after a lab explosion. He is forced to investigate whether malicious thoughts or wishes can actually cause physical death.]

Hannah, Janet, [Alex Kertész #2] (**Murder with a French Accent** [pb, Outskirts Press, 2009] 978-1432743512) [Alex travels to Toulouse, France, to help a biotech company with a genetically engineered bacteria he created, only to face sabotage and danger.]

Hannah, Janet, [Alex Kertész #3] (**Mystery Time** [pb, Outskirts Press, 2012]) 978-1432788445 [While attending a scientific congress in Prague, Alex and a German colleague investigate the sudden death of an American colleague and the theft of a mysterious family watch.]

Hannah, Janet, [Alex Kertész #4] (**Death of a Gypsy** [Kindle edition only, 2015] B012FYUQNE [Alex is looking forward to a family vacation in Paris with his wife, Sylvie. Plans change when Sylvie’s beloved grandmother, an old Gypsy woman, asks for his help in re-uniting with her brother in Transylvania. She wants Alex to travel there and bring the old man back to Paris. Alex is well suited for the job because he speaks Hungarian. Upon arriving, Alex learns that the brother refuses to leave until his grandson, Zoli – missing on a business trip to Albania - is found. To solve the mystery, Alex puts together an unlikely rescue team to find him. Tensions rise among the search party because of family connections and past conflicts. The book explores intense family dynamics, long-held jealousies, cultural identity, and the heavy impact that past choices have on the present.] [Google/AI]

Michal Hartstein (born 1974, Israel, resides in Ness Ziona) an Israeli author who has two novels in the mystery genre featuring **Detective Hadas Levinger**. The novels are police-procedurals which balance crime-solving with deep explorations of Israeli social dynamics and the protagonist’s personal history. Hadas is described as a renegade atheist who was raised in a religious family. This background allows her to explore both secular and orthodox Israeli communities with a unique, often

critical perspective. She is portrayed as smart, witty, sharp, and fiercely independent. Her character often clashes with a society that demands conformity. She possesses top-tier investigative and interrogation skills, noted for her ability to draw voluntary confessions out of suspects. Books in the series:

Hill of Secrets: *Set in the quiet suburb of Givat Shmuel, Hadas investigates the murder-suicide of an entire religious family. To solve the case, she must peel back the layers of a closed religious community, uncovering painful secrets that mirror her own past.*

The Hit: *The story begins with a hitman firing on a Tel Aviv café, killing Hadas's confidential informant. The investigation leads her through the Israeli underworld, uncovering a massive fraud scheme and murder-for-hire plot.*

The author has indicated that two more books are planned for the series. No translators are indicated for these two books, and it appears likely the author translated them herself. [Google/AI]

Hartstein, Michal [*Hadas Levinger #1*], (**Hill of Secrets** [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2014] 978-1500577889

Hartstein, Michal [*Hadas Levinger #2*], (**The Hit** [pb, Independently published, 2018] 978-1730713606

Todd Hasak-Lowy (born 1969, Detroit, Michigan) - author, professor, and translator known for his fiction for both adults and young readers. He lived in Israel for a year on a kibbutz after high school. He is currently a professor of Creative Writing and Literature at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Previously, he taught Hebrew language and literature at the University of Florida. He has translated 5 or more books of current leading Israeli authors, including a number in the mystery/crime genre. His own first novel, **Captives**, was published in 2008. Other notable books include the story collection **The Task of This Translator** and young adult titles like *33 Minutes* and *Me Being Me Is Exactly as Insane as You Being You*. He is married to an Israeli-American and has in-laws in Israel, leading him to describe himself as an “insider” who “inhabits two different worlds”. He feels a specific, intense connection to Tel Aviv, keeping a map of the city on his office wall. In *Captives*, this familiarity allows him to move beyond a tourist's perspective, instead depicting the city as a complex, modern space that mirrors the protagonist's internal “spiritual barrenness” and search for meaning.

Captives follows the midlife and spiritual crisis of a Hollywood screenwriter who impulsively travels to Tel Aviv in search of answers. The novel explores the intersection of personal failure and global politics, the “spiritual barrenness” of success, and the seductive, destructive nature of violent fantasies, played out in a Tel Aviv setting. [Google/AI]

Hasak-Lowy, Todd, (**Captives** [hc, Spiegel & Grau, 2008]) 978-0385527736

Spencer Hawke (pseudonym – est. birth 1950, born and raised in the UK, resides in Albuquerque, New Mexico) is the author of the **Ari Cohen** thriller series, which follows the missions of a “plays-by-his-own-rules” Mossad agent who becomes an operative for a secret American organization. **Cohen**, an elite Mossad assassin, is recruited into the “Eyes of Athena,” a clandestine society founded by the U.S. Founding Fathers to protect American freedom outside of government constraints. Though grounded in Israel by his origins and family ties, Cohen transitions during the series from a patriotic defender of the Jewish state to a global operator working to protect the wider free world. Ultimately, the books read as a hybrid of Israeli tradecraft and American-focused global conspiracies. [Google/AI]

Key titles in the series include:

- **The Arrows of Islam (Book 1):** Ari must recover stolen U.S. stealth technology from international terrorists.

- **The Swiss Conspiracy (Book 2):** Also known as *The Orthus Conspiracy*, Cohen faces a rival known as “The Raven” to stop a global financial plot.
- **The Forgotten (Book 3):** Ari embarks on a final mission to rescue his niece from terrorists.
- **The Journey of the Bell (Prequel/Book 4):** A story set in the 18th century detailing the origins of the secret society. [Google/AI]

Hawke, Spencer, (**The Complete Ari Cohen Box Set** - Book 1 – **The Arrows of Islam**; Book 2 – **The Swiss Conspiracy**; Book 3 – **The Forgotten**; Book 4 - **The Journey of the Bell** – independently published - available from author’s website [pb, 2016]) 978-1519086730

Nir Hezroni (born 1968 in Jerusalem) is an Israeli author, former Israeli military intelligence soldier and high-tech executive. He currently serves as the IT Global Compute Director at Verint. He is best known for his dark, psychological espionage thrillers that leverage his background in military intelligence. His first two books feature **Agent 10483**, a psychopathic and meticulously efficient operative. **Three Envelopes** introduces this rogue agent of “The Organization” who was believed dead for a decade. The plot is driven by a mysterious notebook that reveals his past missions—some of history’s most notorious unsolved crimes—and hints at his survival and quest for vengeance. In **Last Instructions**, Agent 10483 attempts to dismantle the spy agency that trained him. He hunts for a hidden nuclear warhead while being pursued by multiple teams, including assassins and the psychologist who “rewired” his brain. **Pressure Chamber** (2021) is a standalone psychological thriller set in Tel Aviv that intertwines a disturbing criminal case with the protagonist’s descent into her own mind. [Google/AI]

Hezroni, Nir [*Agent 10483*], (**Three Envelopes: A Thriller** [hc, Thomas Dunne Books, 2017, transl. by Steven Cohen]) 978-1250097590 [pb, Oneworld Publications, 2018] 978-1786073792

Hezroni, Nir [*Agent 10483*], (**Last Instructions** [hc, St. Martin’s Press, 2018, transl. by Steven Cohen]) 978-1250097613

Hezroni, Nir, (**Pressure Chamber** [pb, Legend Press, 2022, transl. by Steven Cohen]) 978-1789559033

Yariv Inbar (born 1977) – he writes using the pseudonym “Yariv Inbar” as his real identity is still classified. He grew up in a small town in northern Israel and attended a prestigious military command college during his youth. He enlisted in the Paratroopers Brigade in 1995 and served for over 15 years in sensitive intelligence roles until 2011. He continues to serve as a lieutenant colonel in the reserves. Two other books of his are being translated into English.

Inbar’s novels are known for combining the thrills of espionage with a deep exploration of the human, emotional, and psychological aspects of spycraft. **Operation Bethlehem** follows an ex-Mossad field agent who, after a tumultuous personal life, embarks on a private mission under a fake Palestinian identity to locate an ancient Hebrew treasure believed to be hidden at a psychiatric hospital near Bethlehem. This personal quest leads him into a complex web of international terrorism and a much larger, global mission. The novel explores existential questions of personal and national identity, the moral complexities of espionage, and whether intelligence resources should be used for non-security issues like retrieving historical artifacts.

In **Behind the Trigger**, a skilled Mossad agent named **Irit** is tasked with a black bag operation targeting a senior Syrian security figure. A split-second decision in a hotel room in Minsk, Belarus, brings her face-to-face with the target’s wife, **Noor**, who is struggling in an abusive marriage. Mossad uses the women’s developing (and increasingly personal) friendship to recruit Noor as an agent. This

novel delves into trauma, memory, friendship, and the internal battles of both case officers and agents. It highlights the idea that espionage is an intimate, flawed, and deeply human business. [Google/AI]

Inbar, Yariv, (**Operation Bethlehem: An Espionage Thriller** [Genera Ventures, 2023, transl. by Dalit Shmueli]) [hc] 978-9659310623 [pb] 978-9659310616

Inbar, Yariv, (**Behind The Trigger: A psychological spy novel about two women on opposite sides of deception** [Genera Ventures, 2025, transl. by Dalit Shmueli] [hc] 978-9659310654 [pb] 978-9659310647

Tali Isarov (est. birth 1973) – Author and clinical psychologist in Ra'anana, Israel. Her two recent thriller novels – roughly rendered by me as **To Be Tom Ringer (2023)** and **To Be Tomer Cohaner (2025)**, have **not yet been translated** into English. [Google/AI]

Amnon Jackont (born 1948 in Ramat Gan) – an Israeli author of thrillers, a historian and a literary editor. Jackont studied law at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem doing his military service in the summer breaks. After working in real estate, investments and insurance, he began to write. Many of his books became bestsellers.

The Rainy Day Man: Danny Simon, a retired Israeli secret agent, is recalled to service and sent to Israeli-occupied South Lebanon to collect data. However, the mission turns into a complex, suspenseful conspiracy where Simon finds himself surrounded by lies and deception. This novel is a tense, psychological spy thriller focusing on themes of trust, betrayal, and self-identity. It explores the life of a man whose work brings danger to himself and those around him, forcing him to confront the true nature of his, and his country's, actions.

The Last Of The Wise Lovers: The story follows Ronnie Levin, the adolescent son of an Israeli diplomat living in New York. As Ronnie uncovers strange events surrounding his parents, he discovers that his mother is living a double life involving an extramarital affair and a dangerous, clandestine conspiracy. The novel focuses on a young man's journey into maturity, exploring the loss of innocence as he realizes his adored parents and uncle are not who he believed them to be. It is described as a coming-of-age story wrapped in a thriller. [Google/AI]

Jackont, Amnon, (**The Rainy Day Man** [pb, CreateSpace Independent, transl. by Dorothea Shefer-Vanson, 2014] 978-1496035790

Jackont, Amnon, (**The Last Of The Wise Lovers** [pb, CreateSpace Independent, transl. by M. Weinstein, 2014] 978-1491244081

Howard Kaplan (born 1950 in Los Angeles, and resides there) – has lived in Israel and traveled extensively throughout Lebanon, Syria, and Egypt, which heavily informs his writing. He holds a B.A. in Middle East History from UC Berkeley and an M.A. in the Philosophy of Education from UCLA. A notable event in his youth was being sent on a mission into the Soviet Union at age 21 to smuggle a dissident's manuscript on microfilm to London. While his first trip was a success, he was arrested on his second mission and interrogated by the KGB before being expelled from the USSR. This real-world experience adds a layer of authenticity to his espionage novels.

Howard Kaplan's "Jerusalem Spy Series" consists of fast-paced, historical thrillers that move fictional characters through actual historical events in the Middle East.

The Damascus Cover: Set in 1977, the novel follows washed-up Israeli agent Ari Ben-Sion, who takes a seemingly simple mission to smuggle a group of Jewish children out of the Damascus ghetto. The mission quickly devolves into a more dangerous game involving a mysterious American photographer and a larger intelligence plot, forcing Ari to risk everything to succeed.

Bullets of Palestine: This book, set around the time of the 1978 Camp David Accords, explores an uneasy alliance between an Israeli agent and a former Palestinian terrorist. They must work together to locate and stop the infamous terrorist Abu Nidal, testing their loyalties and providing a look at the complexities of the Palestinian conflict and the human side of the deep-seated animosity.

To Destroy Jerusalem: The story is set in 1990 during the First Palestinian Intifada (uprising). Legendary Mossad field agent Shai Shaham is called in by the CIA to trace a stolen neutron source, a necessary component for a nuclear explosion. His search takes him across the globe, from New York to Amsterdam and Beirut, forcing him to collaborate with the Palestinian agent Ramzy Awwad, whom he was previously ordered to kill.

The Spy's Gamble: Another tale of Israel-Palestine reconciliation, moving through actual events in the region and delving into the complexities and moral ambiguities of the conflict. It further explores the difficult relationship and mutual dependency between Shai Shaham and Ramzy Awwad as they navigate dangerous political landscapes.

The Syrian Sunset: Explores the devastating consequences of the Syrian civil war and the geopolitical shifts that followed. It highlights the 2012 "red line" regarding chemical weapons and the subsequent 2013 sarin gas attack in East Damascus. Kaplan argues that Western inaction during these events emboldened Russia to expand its military presence in Syria and ultimately paved the way for Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine. [Google/AI]

Kaplan, Howard, (**The Damascus Cover:** The Jerusalem Spy Series #1, Agent Ari Ben-Sion [hc, Dutton, 1977]) 978-0525088509 [pb, Kaplan, Inc., 2014] 978-0990526308

Kaplan, Howard, (**Bullets of Palestine** (The Jerusalem Spy Series #2, Agent Shai Shaham) [pb, Kaplan, Inc., 2014])

Kaplan, Howard, (**To Destroy Jerusalem** (The Jerusalem Spy Series #3, Agent Shai Shaham) [pb, Independently published, 2018] 978-1723912351

Kaplan, Howard, (**The Spy's Gamble** (The Jerusalem Spy Series #4, Agent Shai Shaham) [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2018] 978-1720606215

Kaplan, Howard, (**The Syrian Sunset** (The Jerusalem Spy Series #5) [pb, independently published, 2022] 979-8363111983

Yoram (Yoav) Katz (born in 1954 in Haifa, Israel - studied Psychology, Philosophy and Computer Engineering. Worked as a journalist, writer and translator and in the Israeli hitech industry.

Lethal Scripture is a historical mystery that alternates between Napoleon's 1798 campaign in Egypt and a 2010 investigation in Israel involving lost Kabbalistic scrolls.

Katz, Yoram, (**The Kabbalist** [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2013] 9781484946442 [In 1270, the Book of Zohar, a foundational book of Kabbalah, is published amidst a controversy. Is it an ancient text or an elaborate forgery? When Crusaders' Acre falls to the Sultan in 1291, a remarkable chain of events brings two ancient scrolls into the possession of Yaakov Ben Shlomo, a Jewish refugee. In Revolutionary France, 1798, before a young cavalry officer sails with General Bonaparte to the Middle East, he is assigned a secret mission by his father. In 2006, when **Superintendent Yossi Luria** of Haifa Police is assigned to handle a homicide of a monk, he is not yet aware that this case is going to

change his life and career. Four years later, a young Frenchwoman steps into the office of Luria, by now a disillusioned private detective. **Jeanne de Charney** has found a 200-year old letter in the basement of her family's Normandy estate and has come to Israel to pursue an intriguing family mystery. The two quickly find out that the ancient mystery is still claiming lives in the 21st century. Their quest leads them through twists and turns, and acquaints them with the mystical doctrine of Kabbalah. What they discover affects their personal lives as well as puts commonly accepted truths in a completely new perspective. "The Kabbalist" is set against a rich historical tapestry, spanning 2,000 years in old and new Israel – a birthplace of religious and mystical doctrines, and the arena for numerous events which have shaped civilization. "The Kabbalist" puts the history and meaning of Kabbalah in a new context, much like "The Da Vinci Code" did to Christianity. - BookFinder.com]

Katz, Yoram (Yoav), (**Lethal Scripture: A Historical Mystery** [pb, independently published, transl. by the author, 2020] 979-8649093590 [**Note:** This is a reissue of *The Kabbalist* – it's the same book]

Etgar Keret (born 1967, Ramat Gan, Israel) & **Assaf Gavron** (born 1968, Arad, Israel) [eds], **Tel Aviv Noir** [hc, Akashic Books, 2014 - most of the stories translated by Yardenne Greenspan] 978-1617753152 [pb, Akashic Books, 2014] 978-1617753152 [**Note:** 14 stories about what lovely Tel Aviv has to hide. *From the introduction by Etgar Keret:* "At any club, most of the people dancing around you to the sounds of a deep-house hit dedicated to peace and love have undergone extensive automatic-weapons training and a hand-grenade tutorial. The workers washing the dishes in the fluorescent-lit kitchen of that same club are Eritrean refugees who have crossed the Egyptian border illegally, along with a group of bedouins smuggling some high-quality hash, which the deejay will soon be smoking on his little podium, right by the busy dance floor filled with drunks, coked-up lawyers, and Ukrainian call girls whose pimp keeps their passports in a safe two streets away. Don't get me wrong—Tel Aviv is a lovely, safe city. Most of the time, for most of its inhabitants. But the stories in this collection describe what happens the rest of the time, to the rest of its inhabitants. From one last cup of coffee at a café targeted by a suicide bomber, through repeat visits from a Yiddish-speaking ghost, to an organized tour of mythological crime scenes that goes terribly wrong, the stories of Tel Aviv Noir reveal the concealed, scarred face of this city that we love so much."

Hesh Kestin (born 1943, Brooklyn, NY, emigrated to Israel in 1970) - an American-Israeli author, former foreign correspondent, and military veteran. He lived in London while serving as a European correspondent and eventually settled back in the US, currently residing near New York City. An 18-year veteran of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), often transitioning directly from active duty to reporting from the same battlefields in civilian clothes. Known for high-stakes fiction including:

Kestin, Hesh, (**The Iron Will of Shoeshine Cats** [pb, independently published, 2009] 979-8376985274 [*A noir coming-of-age novel about Jewish gangsters in 1960s New York*]

Kestin, Hesh, [**The Lie** [hc, Scribner, 2014]) 978-1476740096 [pb, Scribner, 2015] 978-1476740102 [*This thriller explicitly immerses itself in the inner workings of Israel's security infrastructure. The protagonist, an Israeli human rights lawyer, is recruited by national security forces to oversee the legality of harsh interrogation methods used on terror suspects. The plot directly involves intelligence gathering, kidnappings by Hezbollah, and high-stakes operations. It is widely cataloged in literature groups as an essential read for fiction regarding the Mossad and Israeli special operations – Google/AI]*

Kestin, Hesh, (**The Siege of Tel Aviv** [hc, Dzanc Books, 2019]) 978-1945814839 [pb, Shoeshine Press, 2019] 978-0578510514 [*A controversial thriller imagining a fictional Islamist conquest of Israel. This*

book was previously withdrawn from its original publisher (Dzanc Books) due to Islamophobia allegations and is now being released in an author's edition. Same book, new publisher" (Amazon)]

Daniel (Daniil) Kluger (1951 – 2025) – *Writer, journalist, and publicist. Born in Simferopol, Ukrainian SSR, Soviet Union and died in Rehovot, Israel. Began publishing his literary work and news articles in the 1970s and emigrated from Russia to Israel in 1994. Continued writing prolifically there, in the Russian language. He is best known for his science fiction, detective novels, and historical essays. Several of his detective novels feature **Nathaniel (Nataniel) Rozovsky**, a former Soviet police officer who moves to Israel and runs a private detective agency, and are set in Israel. Among them are:*

- **Death in Caesarea** (Смерть в Кесарии) — *set primarily in Caesarea, Israel.*
- **Unpredicted Murder** (Непредсказанное убийство) — *another Rozovsky investigation in contemporary Israel.*
- *Other Rozovsky novels also generally take place in Israel, although individual cases may involve international elements.*

The Israeli setting is important because Rozovsky is an Israeli detective (and a distinctly Jewish protagonist), allowing Kluger to combine classic detective plotting with Israeli society and Jewish cultural themes. Only two of his detective novels are so far available in English translation:

The Shtetl Book: Jewish Horror Stories [hc, independently published, 2024] - 979-8336545449 [pb, independently published, 2024] 979-8332427558 (This “novel in stories” is a collection exploring supernatural elements within a Jewish community.)

Shylock's Last Act - [hc, independently published, 2025] 979-8315382829 [pb, independently published, 2025] 979-8333663245 [A detective story set in a Jewish ghetto during WWII, leading to Auschwitz.]

No third-party translator is indicated, suggesting that Daniel Kluger translated the works himself and/or in cooperation with a freelance translator. Daniel Kluger's work is deeply rooted in Jewish history, mysticism, and folklore, often set against historical backdrops ranging from the Middle Ages to the Holocaust.

Recurring Jewish Content:

- **Folklore & Mysticism:** *Frequent use of dybbuks, golems, and supernatural forces as allegories for historical trauma.*
- **Ethical Dilemmas:** *His detective novels often place Jewish characters in impossible moral positions, such as collaborating with authorities to protect their community or solving “internal” crimes while external existential threats loom. [Google/AI]*

Shulamit Lapid (born 1934, Tel Aviv) - *one of the best-known Israeli novelists of her generation who has written fiction, historical novels, detective novels, plays, children's books, poetry, and essays. While historical fiction, social novels and plays are her best-known works, crime and mystery fiction form a significant and influential part of her career. She has been credited with helping to popularize modern Israeli detective fiction in the late 1980s and 1990s. Her crime fiction is centered on the character **Lizzy Badihi**, a Beersheba journalist who repeatedly becomes involved in investigations. Lapid's mysteries are often described as combining crime plots with social observation, especially concerning ethnic tensions, gender roles, and life in Israel's periphery rather than in Tel Aviv or Jerusalem.*

*The Badihi series includes six crime novels: **Mekomon** (Local Paper, 1989); **Pityon** (Bait, 1991); **HaTakhshit** (The Gem, 1992); **Hol Ba-Einayim** (Sand in the Eyes, 1997); **Pilegesh Ba-Giv'a** (Concubine on the Hill, 2000); and **Sof Onat Ha-Limonim** (End of the Season, 2007). While the series has been translated into German, no English translations have appeared. Other novels by Lapid have been translated into English. “Cozy” mysteries are rare in Israeli crime fiction, and Lapid is as close as any major author comes to that designation. Like cozy protagonists, Lizzy Badihi is an amateur sleuth operating almost haphazardly to solve mysteries which cross her path by chance, with minimal violence and “noir” elements, and lots of humour and local social networks. Nonetheless, Lapid’s novels feature more hard-edged social criticism and contemporary controversies than is common in the “cozy” genre. [based on ChatGPT]*

Simon Louvish (born 1947 in Glasgow) is a Scots-born British-Israeli author, filmmaker, and film historian, residing in London. He is best known for his and “Blok” trilogy of novels — *The Therapy of Avram Blok*, *City of Blok*, and *The Last Trump of Avram Blok*—which explore Israeli life through a satirical lens. The main protagonist is caught in a landscape of espionage, corrupt politicians, and “Department of Apocalyptic Affairs” intrigue. Blok is a “failed émigré” and “useless citizen” navigating the chaotic social and political landscape of Israel and the Middle East, frequently moving between the outside world and the relative sanity of a Jerusalem mental institution. While often referred to as the **Blok Saga** or **Blok Trilogy**, Louvish expanded the story with additional volumes:

***The Days of Miracles and Wonders** (1997): Labeled as Volume 4, this epic continues the satirical exploration of what Louvish calls the “New World Disorder”.*

***The Fundamental Blok** (2013): Originally listed as unpublished in some collections, it was eventually released under Louvish’s own imprint, Margaret Macdonald Books.*

***The Chinese Smile** (2013): Listed as the sixth volume in the Blok Saga. The series is noted for its inventive, “madcap” prose and its ability to blend grand themes—like the Jewish condition, the Holocaust, and mental illness—with biting humor.*

Louvish, Simon [*Blok #1*], (**Therapy of Avram Blok**) [hc, William Heinemann Ltd., 1985] 978-0434429707 [pb, Margaret MacDonald Books, 2012] 978-0957243101

Louvish, Simon [*Blok #2*], (**City of Blok**) [hc, HarperCollins, 1988] 978-0002233958 [pb, Flamingo, 1989] 978-0006543237

Louvish, Simon [*Blok #3*], (**The Last Trump of Avram Blok**) [hc, HarperCollins, 1990] 978-0002234627 [pb, Flamingo, 1991] 978-0006543404

Louvish, Simon [*Blok #4*], (**The Days of Miracles and Wonders**) [hc, Somerville House Publishing, 1997] 978-1895897753 [pb, Interlink Publishing Group, 1999] 978-1566563161

Louvish, Simon [*Blok #5*], (**The Fundamental Blok**) [pb, Margaret MacDonald Books, 2013] 978-0957243149

Louvish, Simon [*Blok #6*], (**The Chinese Smile**) [pb, Margaret MacDonald Books, ?] [**Note:** Wikipedia lists Blok #5 and Blok #6 as “unpublished editions”. Blok #5 registers an ISBN number and comes up on Amazon, while Blok #6 does not, on Amazon or anywhere else I could find.]

*Louvish has another Israeli series that runs parallel to “Blok”, featuring the protagonist **Joe Dekel**. He is a cynical former Israeli intelligence officer turned television critic. The Dekel books are framed as political noir thrillers. Dekel is a “reluctant detective” and journalist whose investigations into murders and conspiracies serve as a lens for Louvish to critique Middle Eastern politics. As Joe navigates the West Bank and Israeli political circles, the books use his “stream-of-consciousness” voice and black humor to critique the absurdity of the region’s perpetual conflicts and the “skulduggery” of international espionage. In his work, Louvish targets national loyalties and “magic*

peace formulas,” presenting a world where human survival defies absurd challenges. While Blok and Dekel rarely cross paths directly, both series are housed in what critics call Louvish’s “satirical map of Israel,” sharing the same biting humor and deep cynicism toward the state’s military and religious establishments.

Louvish, Simon, [Joe Dekel #1] (**The Death of Moishe-Ganef**) [hc, Heinemann, 1986] 978-0434431007 [pb, Black Swan, 1987] 978-0552992862 [*Introduces Dekel as he investigates the death of a childhood friend, leading him into the murky world of Israeli-Palestinian relations.*]

Louvish, Simon, [Joe Dekel #2] (**The Silencer**) [hc, Interlink Books, 1993] 978-1566561167 [pb, Interlink Books, 1993] 978-1566561082 [*Follows Dekel into a web of religious extremism and political assassinations.*]

Louvish, Simon, [Joe Dekel #3] (**What’s Up, God?**) [hc, Weidenfeld & Nicolson/Gollancz, 1995] 9780575059948 [pb, Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1996] 978-0575400252 [*Dekel finds himself entangled in a world where religious fervor has reached a breaking point. The “End of Days” is no longer just a theological concept but a looming political reality. Various factions—including Jewish zealots, Christian fundamentalists, and Muslim extremists—are all maneuvering for control as the “arrival” of the Messiah appears imminent. Dekel must operate in a landscape of bizarre conspiracies, secret societies, and supernatural occurrences that blur the line between divine intervention and human madness. True to Louvish’s style, the book uses **noir tropes** to critique the volatility of Middle Eastern politics. It portrays a society so consumed by its own myths that it cannot distinguish between salvation and total destruction. This book serves as the “absurdist conclusion” to the Dekel trilogy, shifting from the grounded political mystery of the first two books into a full-scale apocalyptic satire. – Google/AI]*]

In addition to all this, Louvish has authored biographies of numerous film and Hollywood iconic figures, including W.C. Fields, the Marx Brothers, Mae West, Laurel & Hardy, Cecil B. DeMille and Charlie Chaplin. Given his Blok and Dekel series, I chose to include him in the Israeli bibliography list.

Avner Mandelman (born 1947 in Tel Aviv) - an Israeli-Canadian author and businessman. He writes in English but his fiction is mostly set in Israel. He is best known for his award-winning literary thriller, **The Debba**, and its sequel, **The Undertaker’s Daughter**. He served in the Israeli Air Force during the Six-Day War before moving to Canada in 1973. He is a former hedge fund manager and founder of Giraffe Capital Corporation in Toronto. He has also published two short story collections and two investment guides, *The Sleuth Investor* and *The Advanced Sleuth Investor*.

The Debba (2010) follows **David Starkman**, a former elite Israeli special forces assassin who has renounced his citizenship to live in Toronto. His self-imposed exile is shattered when his father, **Isser**, a legendary Israeli war hero, is brutally murdered in Tel Aviv. David returns to Israel for the funeral and finds his father’s estate comes with a bizarre condition: to inherit his legacy, David must stage a play his father wrote, titled *The Debba*, within 45 days. As David attempts to produce the play, he is met with violent opposition from mysterious forces, including government authorities and radical protesters. He begins to suspect his father’s murder and the forbidden play are linked to secrets from the 1948 War. The story unfolds against the high-tension atmosphere of the 1977 Israeli elections, which marked a major political shift toward the Right. He is ably assisted by **Amnon Amzaleg**, a gritty, no-nonsense police detective. The investigation forces him to confront his own violent past and the “double soul” of Israel—a nation caught between its artistic ideals and the brutal necessities of survival.

The novel explores how the actions of one generation haunt the next. Mandelman draws parallels to John le Carré, questioning the moral cost of “dirty jobs” like assassination that society relies on but refuses to acknowledge. The “Debba” itself—a mythical hyena from folklore—serves as a metaphor for the tangled, often violent relationship between Jews and Arabs whose lives are inseparably intertwined. [Google/AI]

Mandelman, Avner, (**The Debba** [pb, Other Press, 2010]) 978-1590513705

Mandelman, Avner, (**The Undertaker's Daughter: Tel Aviv Noir** [hc, self-published, 2023] 978-1738804450 [pb, self-published, 2023] 978-1738804436 [*This sequel to The Debba is set 4 years later, and serves as the second installment of Mandelman's planned "Undertaker" trilogy. The main protagonist is the police detective, Amnon Amzaleg, who is hunting a dangerous, racist serial killer determined to "cleanse" Israel of dark-skinned Mizrahi ("Eastern") Jews. When state agents temporarily sideline and neutralize Amzaleg, his fierce daughter, Zohara, takes over the investigation, plunging headfirst into a high-stakes, highly dangerous hunt. The third volume of the trilogy, Death of an Undertaker, is in the works.* – Google/AI])

Kate McVaugh (est. birth 1952, San Francisco Bay area and lives there now) – former Peace Corps volunteer, educator, bartender.

Murder, Jaz, & Tel Aviv: The novel is set in Tel Aviv, Israel, where the protagonist, **Jazmine Davidson**, goes to live with her cousin Sara who is on a kibbutz. The story is rooted in the Israeli setting, with descriptions of the hot sun, beautiful beaches, and nightlife, as well as the challenges of being a stranger in a land where she can't read the street signs. Her plans for a quiet life teaching English and enjoying the Mediterranean sun are upended when she arrives at her first private student's office only to find him dead at his desk with a bullet hole in his forehead. Jaz is thrust into a dangerous world involving the **local mob, the CIA, and the Mossad**. Unable to speak or read Hebrew, she must handle interrogation by a handsome detective, frantic calls from her cousin on a kibbutz, and cryptic faxes from her psychic aunt back in California.

Jaz, Tall Men, & Mayhem: Now gainfully employed as a bartender at **Max's Place**, a popular Tel Aviv nightclub, Jaz is finally settling in—until another body drops. A star basketball player is murdered right at the nightclub's entrance. Jaz finds herself as a prime witness, leading her to infiltrate locker rooms and high-end parties to find the killer. As she gets closer to the truth, she faces anonymous threats and is stalked by individuals connected to organized crime who want her silent.

McVaugh, Kate, (**Murder, Jaz, & Tel Aviv** [Jazmine Davidson Adventures #1]) [pb, BookSurge Publishing, 2009]) 978-1439222287

McVaugh, Kate, (**Jaz, Tall Men, & Mayhem** [Jazmine Davidson Adventures #2]) [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2013]) 978-1517288075

Dror A. Mishani (born 1975 in Holon, Israel) is a celebrated Israeli crime novelist, editor and literary scholar. He served as the editor-in-chief of the Haaretz Book Review (2005–2008) and has translated works by renowned French thinkers like Roland Barthes and Michel Foucault. He is best known for his internationally acclaimed detective series featuring **Inspector Avraham Avraham** (4 volumes so far) and his psychological thriller, **Three**. Mishani's writing is often praised for its subversion of traditional detective tropes—particularly through Avraham, a detective who initially believes there are "no crimes in Israel". Beyond his novels, Mishani is a leading expert on the history of detective fiction. He heads the creative writing program and lectures on literature at Tel Aviv University. He has served as an editor for international fiction and crime literature at Keter Books in Israel. [Google/AI]

Inspector Avraham Avraham is a detective in the Tel Aviv suburb of Holon, who often struggles with his own professional intuition and the moral weight of his cases.

The Missing File (2011): When a 16-year-old boy vanishes on his way to school, Avraham initially dismisses the case as a routine runaway situation. As the search intensifies, he becomes consumed by

guilt and the baffling involvement of a local schoolteacher who seems desperate to insert himself into the investigation.

A Possibility of Violence (2013): *A fake suitcase bomb is found near a daycare center, followed by a threat that this is “only the beginning”. Avraham, still reeling from his previous case, focuses on a father of two whose wife has mysteriously disappeared to the Philippines—a story that doesn’t quite add up.*

The Man Who Wanted to Know Everything (2015): *Now Head of Investigations, Avraham handles his first murder case: a woman named Leah Yezer, whom he remembers as a rape victim from years prior. Despite the rapist still being in prison, a neighbor reports seeing a policeman leave the scene, leading Avraham to suspect one of his own.*

Conviction (2021): *Avraham juggles two seemingly unrelated cases—a newborn found abandoned outside a hospital and a mysterious Swiss tourist who vanished from a hotel. The investigations take him to Paris and force him to confront people he thought he knew.*

Standalone Thriller - Three (2018): *This novel follows three different women in Tel Aviv: Orna (a divorcee), Emilia (a Latvian immigrant), and Ella (a graduate student). All three become involved with the same man, Gil, a seemingly “banal” individual who hides a dark and predatory nature. The book explores how the “normalization of violence” can trap people in plain sight. [Google/AI]*

Mishani, D. A. [*Avraham Avraham #1*], (***The Missing File*** [hc, Harper, transl. by Steven Cohen, 2013]) 978-0062195371 [pb, Harper Paperbacks, 2014] 978-0062195388

Mishani, D. A. [*Avraham Avraham #2*], (***A Possibility of Violence*** [hc, Harper, transl. by Todd Hasak-Lowy, 2014]) 978-0062195401 [pb, Harper Paperbacks, 2015] 978-0062195425

Mishani, D. A. [*Avraham Avraham #3*], (***The Man Who Wanted To Know Everything*** [hc, Riverrun, transl. by Todd Hasak-Lowy, 2016]) 978-1784296902 [pb, Harper Paperbacks, 2016] 978-0062447906

Mishani, D.A., [*Avraham Avraham #4*], (***Conviction: It’s a matter of life - and death*** [hc, Riverrun, transl. by Jessica Cohen, 2022]) 978-1784297473 [pb, Riverrun, 2023] 978-1784297497

Mishani, D.A., ***Three*** [hc, Quercus Books/Riverrun, transl. by Jessica Cohen, 2020]) 978-1529400090 [pb, Hachette International, 2021] 978-1529400120

Mishani, D.A., (***The Little Picture*** (2024/2025) – *A war diary written following the October 7th events, titled Hatmuna Haktana in Hebrew. - forthcoming*

Limor Nachmias (born 1964, Haifa, and resides in Tel Aviv) – *Israeli author and screenwriter. Before her literary career, Nachmias studied acting and psychology and worked as a private investigator, a background that often informs her gritty and humorous crime novels. She transitioned into writing in the mid-1990s and has since become a major figure in Israeli television, creating and writing for popular “telenovelas” and dramas. Her literary work often features female protagonists in dark, satirical, or criminal setting. She has published more than 7 books, including crime novels, screenplays and children’s literature, but **none of them has so far been translated** into English. Her crime novels include:*

Ima Hayetah Zohalet (*Mother was Crawling*, 1995): *Her debut novel, which established her reputation for creating “bad-girl” protagonists and exploring the darker underbelly of Israeli urban life.*

Tzvutoti (*Pinch Me*, 1996): *This is arguably her most famous novel. It is a hard-boiled crime thriller following a young woman who works as a private investigator, directly drawing from Nachmias’s own professional background. It was adapted into the popular comic thriller film Mars Turkey (or Clean Sweep) in 2001.*

Seret Lavan Al Kipa Aduma (*White Ribbon on Little Red Riding Hood*, 2003): While frequently categorized as literary fiction due to its dark humor, it contains significant criminal elements and is a favorite among readers of Israeli suspense.

HaRotzeach HaAcharon BePetah Tikva (*The Last Killer in Petah Tikva*, 2024): A highly-rated crime novel on Goodreads that blends suspense with the author's signature sharp social satire. [Google/AI]

Eshkol Nevo (born 1971 in Jerusalem) - one of Israel's most prominent contemporary writers. His debut novel, *Homesick* (2004), became a bestseller and won several international awards. He co-manages Sadnaot Habayit, the largest private creative writing school in Israel, and continues to publish internationally acclaimed novels like *Three Floors Up* and *The Last Interview*. Two of his novels feature prominent mystery/thriller elements:

Three Floors Up: While primarily a literary novel focusing on the interconnected lives of residents in a Tel Aviv apartment building, it features significant elements of suspense and mystery. Each of the three novellas in the book touches upon potential dark secrets and problematic decisions. One story involves a father's suspicion of an elderly neighbor's actions with his daughter and a resulting obsession, while another features an isolated wife hiding her con-man brother-in-law from loan sharks and the police, creating tension and an air of uncertainty. The original Hebrew title can be translated as "The Reasonable Person", and reviewers note the characters' unreliable confessions and secrets add layers of intrigue.

Inside Information: Described as a "psychological thriller" and a novel of "suspense" by various sources. Amazon categorizes it under both Psychological Thrillers and Suspense Thriller. The novel is comprised of three interconnected stories focusing on the dark and enigmatic aspects of human intimacy. The third story, in particular, involves a husband/father who vanishes without a trace, leaving behind cryptic fragments, which adds a significant mystery element as his wife and children search for answers. Reviewers note that it has twists and an "unreliable narrator" in the first story, adding to the suspense. [Google/AI]

Nevo, Eshkol, (**Three Floors Up** [*Shalosh Komot* in Hebrew, pb, Other Press, transl. by Sondra Silverston, 2017] 978-1590518786

Nevo, Eshkol, (**Inside Information** [*Gever Nichnas Bapardes* in Hebrew, literally "A Man Enters an Orchard", pb, Other Press, transl. by Sondra Silverston, 2023] 978-1635423235

Avichai Nizri (born 1982, in Bat-Galim near Haifa) – author, screenwriter and graphic designer, one of the writers for the leading Israeli satirical program, *Eretz Nehederet* (akin to "Saturday Night Live"). Grew up in a tough neighbourhood and writes coming-of-age novels reflecting the conflicts that entails. Two suspense novels of his have been published, in 2023 and 2024, but **not yet translated** into English.

Ofra Offer Oren (born 1951, Tel Aviv) – Israel writer, poet, translator, educator, editor and blogger. Authored ten books of prose and one of poetry. Her only translated book is **The Truths We Never Told**. Another book of interest for this Bibliography (in Hebrew: "Murder in the School for the Arts") has not been translated. She taught English for matriculating students for decades at the well-known High School for the Arts in Givatayim. She translated over 40 works of English prose and poetry into Hebrew. She also translated one of her own books from Hebrew to English (see below).

The Truths We Never Told follows an Israeli family under surveillance by an unknown entity (later revealed to be related to the CIA) that is documenting their every move to expose their "web of deceit". The family's picture-perfect facade hides deep cracks, including a mother haunted by her past and multiple instances of infidelity. Characters attempt to reinvent themselves but are constantly pulled

back by “long-lost memories” and historical traumas. The narrative explores the fragility of identity and how the terrible and the painful are often buried but never truly gone.

The novel uses the Kastner Trial—one of the most controversial legal episodes in Israeli and Holocaust history—as a critical historical landmark to ground its fictional narrative. Kastner was later accused of collaborating with the Nazis by keeping the truth of the gas chambers from other Hungarian Jews in exchange for the rescue of 1,684 specially selected individuals. The novel mirrors the “grey zones” and “dirty hands” of the Kastner case. Just as Kastner was accused of selling his soul to the devil to save some at the expense of others, the characters in the book make agonizing moral compromises that leave lasting scars on future generations. **[Disclosure:** Like many, but not all others, I regard Kastner as a heroic victim – he was later assassinated in Israel – and certainly no villain. Later research went a long way to vindicating him] [Google/AI]

Oren, Ofra Offer, (**The Truths We Never Told** [pb, independently published, translated by the author, 2023] 979-8853902923

Ram Oren (born 1938, Tel Aviv) - a prominent Israeli author, publisher, and journalist known for his gripping thrillers and historical novels. Often referred to as the “John Grisham of Israel,” he has authored numerous (30+) bestsellers that have been translated into multiple languages (but hardly any into English). In **The Mark of Cain**, a Holocaust survivor whose wife and son were killed in a concentration camp is freed by an American air raid. As he flees, he comes across a crying baby near the ruins of the camp commander’s car. Certain that the child is a gift from god, he picks him up and raises him as his own, in Israel. The child excels in school and in his army service. Over time, he rises to the position of Mossad chief. Looking to crack a tough German terrorist ring in Argentina, he makes a tormenting discovery. [Amazon]

Oren, Ram, (**The Mark of Cain** [transl. by L. Melmoth, pb, Keshet Publications, 1998]) 978-9659013050

Oren, Ram & Moti Kfir, (**Sylvia Rafael: The Life and Death of a Mossad Spy** [transl. By Ronna Englesberg, hc, University Press of Kentucky, 2014]) 978-0813146959

Amos Oz (1939–2018, born in Jerusalem, died in Petach Tikva) [- he grew up in an intensely intellectual, right-wing Zionist household. His family consisted of Eastern European immigrants who spoke multiple languages but raised him strictly in Hebrew. When Oz was 12 years old, his mother suffered from severe depression and committed suicide, a seminal event that fundamentally shaped his life and literature. At age 15, he rebelled against his father’s world. He left Jerusalem, changed his last name to “Oz” (the Hebrew word for strength), and moved to Kibbutz Hulda. He lived, farmed, and taught on the collective kibbutz for over two decades. He studied philosophy and literature at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. As an army reservist in a tank unit, Oz fought on the front lines of two major regional conflicts: the 1967 Six-Day War and the 1973 Yom Kippur War. Oz became Israel’s most widely translated author, publishing 40 books including novels, essays, and children’s literature. His masterwork is generally considered to be **A Tale of Love and Darkness**, an autobiographical novel detailing his family history and childhood. He later served for decades as a Professor of Hebrew Literature at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. Oz was one of the earliest and most vocal proponents of a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, advocating for it immediately following the 1967 war. He was a co-founder and leading figure in Israel’s Peace Now movement. **Major Works of Relevance:**

Oz, Amos, (**My Michael** [transl. by Nicholas de Lange, hc, Alfred A Knopf, 1972]) 978-0394471464 [pb, Vintage Classic, 2011] 978-0099529057

Oz, Amos, (**Where the Jackals Howl** [transl. by Nicholas de Lange & Philip Simpson, hc, Vintage/Ebury, 1981]) 978-0701125714 [pb, Harcourt, 1981] 978-0151960385

Oz, Amos, (**In the Land of Israel** [transl. by Maurie Goldberg-Bartura, hc, Harcourt, 1983]) 978-0151446445 [pb, Vintage, 1984] 978-0394727288

Oz, Amos, (**Black Box: An Epistolary Novel of Divorce, Family Rivalry, and Passion in the Heart of Israeli Life** [transl. by Nicholas de Lange, hc, Harcourt, 1988]) 978-0151128884 [pb, Vintage, 1989] 978-0679721857

Oz, Amos, (**Under This Blazing Light** [transl. by Nicholas de Lange, hc, Cambridge, UP, 1995]) 978-0521443678 [pb, Cambridge UP, 1996] 978-0521576222

Oz, Amos, (**How to Cure a Fanatic** [no transl., transcribed directly from English-language lectures, hc, Princeton UP, 1996] 978-0691126692 [pb, Vintage, 2012] 978-0099572725

Oz, Amos, (**Panther in the Basement** [transl. by Nicholas de Lange, hc, Houghton, Mifflin, Harcourt, 1997]) 978-0151002870 [pb, Harcourt, 1997] 978-0156006309

Oz, Amos, (**A Tale of Love and Darkness** [transl. by Nicholas de Lange, hc, Mariner Books, 2004] 978-0151008780 [pb, Mariner books, 2005] 978-0156032520

Oz, Amos, (**Judas** [transl. by Nicholas de Lange, hc, HarperVia, 2016]) 978-0544464049 [pb, Mariner, 2017] 978-1328745491

Oz is not a crime fiction author dealing with detectives, criminals and their interactions. He handles the concept of crime by redefining it as a psychological, ideological, and socio-political phenomenon. He uses moral transgressions, political fanatical behavior, and the friction between different Jewish socioeconomic classes as a primary vehicle to analyze the fractures in Israeli society and the broader human condition.

1. Crime as Socio-Political Stigma and Bourgeois Anxiety: *Oz frequently uses the perception or accusation of crime to explore the deep-seated cultural anxieties of the Ashkenazi, Labor Zionist elite who founded the state.*

The Mizrahi-Ashkenazi Divide: *In his epistolary novel **Black Box**, the character of Michael Sommo—a religious, Moroccan-born Sephardic Jew—is viewed by the old-guard Ashkenazi elite with a mixture of contempt, jealousy, and a distinct presupposition of criminality or primitive rule-breaking. Oz uses this dynamic to illustrate how the dominant social class stigmatized North African and Middle Eastern immigrants as being “inclined to petty crime,” highlighting a profound internal societal fracture rather than an actual criminal underclass.*

The “Delinquent” Rebel: *In the same novel, Boaz, the wild and rebellious son of the elite academic Alec Gideon, engages in destructive behavior that edges on delinquency. However, Oz uses Boaz’s literal misconduct not to condemn him, but to symbolize a generational rebellion against the rigid, suffocating expectations of the founding “princes” of Zionism. .*

2. Betrayal and Ideological “Crimes”: *For Oz, the most compelling crimes are not violations of statutory law, but violations of trust, loyalty, and language. He frequently interrogates the ultimate ideological crime in Jewish history: **treason**.*

Judas: *In this late work Oz directly addresses the archetype of the Jewish criminal via the story of Judas Iscariot. Oz uses the ultimate “crime” of betrayal to invert its meaning. He reframes the traitor as the only individual who truly understands the radical potential of a visionary idea, thereby offering a defense of those (like Oz himself) who were branded “traitors” by their own community for advocating political compromise.*

Panther in the Basement: *Set in British-mandate Jerusalem, a young boy named Proffi is accused of “treason” by his friends for befriending a British policeman. Oz uses this youthful transgression to*

explore how fanaticism criminalizes innocent human empathy, turning standard childhood curiosity into an existential offense against the collective tribe.

3. The Crime of “Erotic and Primal Violence”: In Oz’s early works, crime and violence are treated as elemental, psychological forces that erupt when characters feel suffocated by their environments.

My Michael: The protagonist, Hannah Gonen, feels intensely trapped by her mundane, bourgeois life in 1950s Jerusalem. Her internal psychological disintegration manifests as vivid, taboo fantasies involving twin Arab boys she knew in her childhood. These fantasies are filled with themes of violent intrusion and domination. Oz uses these imagined transgressions to explore the dark, unacknowledged psychological currents of fear and repressed desire that run beneath early Israeli statehood.

Where the Jackals Howl: In his early short stories, Oz portrays the kibbutz as a highly disciplined community constantly threatened by an external, primal lawlessness—embodied by nomadic Bedouins or the howling jackals outside the fence. The “crimes” here are violations of the kibbutz’s strictly manufactured social order by untamable, natural human impulses like raw eroticism or sudden violence.

4. The Contamination of Language as a Collective Sin: Finally, Oz viewed the perversion of language by political leadership as a foundational moral crime. In his novels and essays, he argues that the worst atrocities begin when a society pollutes words to justify suffering. Oz’s single, self-made moral commandment—**“Don’t Hurt Others!”**—serves as the benchmark for his characters. The ultimate criminals in his literary universe are not those who rob banks, but the fanatics who lose their capacity for empathy and compromise, transforming idealistic dreams into nightmares. [Google/AI] Perhaps the closest thing to a criminal theme running throughout Oz’s entire oeuvre is fanaticism. In *How to Cure a Fanatic*, fanaticism is treated almost as a social pathology that leads individuals and nations toward violence. Its characteristic ideological extremism, political absolutism and moral certainty become the sources of collective crimes.

5. Zionism and the accusation of collective crime: A recurring concern in Oz’s non-fiction essays (*In the Land of Israel*, *Under This Blazing Light*) is whether the Zionist project should be understood as a form of historical justice, historical necessity, or historical wrongdoing. He repeatedly confronts accusations that Israel’s creation involved crimes against Palestinians. His characteristic response is neither outright denial nor acceptance of a simple criminal narrative. Instead he argues that both Jews and Arabs possess legitimate historical claims; tragic conflicts cannot always be reduced to villains and victims; and nationalist conflicts resemble family disputes more than detective stories.

6. Jewish victimhood and Jewish wrongdoing: Oz rejected the traditional image of the Jew-as-victim. In books such as *A Tale of Love and Darkness* and *Panther in the Basement*, he portrays Jews as fully human actors capable of heroism, cruelty, prejudice, betrayal and vengeance. This was important in post-1948 Hebrew literature because it challenged older stereotypes that idealized Jews as morally exceptional. For Oz, normal nationhood means accepting that Jews, like all peoples, can commit wrongs.

7. Biblical crime stories: He was fascinated by the Hebrew Bible’s treatment of wrongdoing. His essays and lectures frequently return to Cain and Abel, David and Bathsheba, Joseph and his brothers. Saul and David. The point is that Judaism’s foundational texts do not hide the crimes of their heroes. Unlike many national mythologies, the Bible openly depicts murder, adultery, deception, abuse of power. Oz often suggested that this self-critical tendency became a defining feature of Jewish culture.

In summary, Amos Oz repeatedly uses ideas of **guilt, wrongdoing, violence, betrayal, terrorism, fanaticism, and collective responsibility** as vehicles for thinking about Jewish history, Zionism, Israeli society, and human nature. In his work, crime functions primarily as a **moral and political metaphor**, not as a genre or social subject. [ChatGPT]

Naomi Ragen (born 1949) is a prominent American-Israeli novelist, playwright, and women's rights activist living in Jerusalem. Her work frequently explores the lives of Haredi (ultra-Orthodox) women, often highlighting issues of domestic struggle, injustice, and the tension between religious tradition and modern life. Ragen is a vocal advocate for gender equality and was notably involved in the legal battle against gender-segregated buses in Israel. Two of her many novels may be included in the "mystery" genre:

***The Covenant* (2004):** While primarily a political thriller dealing with Islamic terrorism and a family kidnapping, the book uses elements of suspense and intrigue as an alliance of three women works to rescue the captives against time.

***The Devil in Jerusalem* (2015)** is based on a true event involving a corrupt Haredi cult rabbi. It features the protagonist **Detective Bina Tzedek**, who investigates a horrifying case of child abuse within an ultra-Orthodox cult in Jerusalem. The story unfolds as a mystery, with the detective peeling back layers of secrets and lies to uncover the truth behind the traumatic injuries of two young children whose mother refuses to cooperate with police. [Google/AI]

Ragen, Naomi, (***The Covenant*** [hc, St. Martin's Press, 2004]) 978-0312291198 [pb, St. Martin's Griffin, 2005] 978-0312335069

Ragen, Naomi, (***The Devil in Jerusalem*** [hc, St. Martin's Press, 2015] 978-1250043139 [pb, St. Martin's Griffin, 2016] 978-1250109439

Matt Beynon Rees (born 1967, Newport, Wales) – a Welsh novelist and journalist best known for his crime fiction set in the Middle East. A former Jerusalem bureau chief for *TIME* magazine, he spent over two decades in the region, which heavily influences his work. Originally from Cardiff, Wales, he converted to Judaism in the 1990s. This, together with his long residence in Jerusalem and deep ties to the region have led some to describe him as having a dual identity, often being recognized in both Jewish and Welsh cultural contexts. He resides in Luxembourg with his wife, Devorah Blachor (an author who writes under the pen-name of Jasmine Schwartz - see her listing in the U.S. fiction authors bibliography) and their two children.

His 4-volume **Omar Yussef** series features a modest, aging Palestinian history teacher at a UN school in Bethlehem who becomes an amateur sleuth. The books explore the gritty realities of Palestinian society—corruption, religious tension, and the influence of rival militias—rather than focusing on the broader Arab-Israeli conflict. The four books:

The Collaborator of Bethlehem (also titled *The Bethlehem Murders*): Omar must clear a former student, a Palestinian Christian, who is framed as a collaborator for the Israelis and faces execution.

A Grave in Gaza (also titled *The Saladin Murders*): While inspecting UN schools in Gaza, Omar investigates the arrest of a colleague accused of spying for the CIA amidst local power struggles.

The Samaritan's Secret: Set in Nablus, Omar investigates the murder of a member of the tiny Samaritan community who controlled millions in government aid money.

The Fourth Assassin: Omar travels to New York for a UN conference to visit his son, only to find a beheaded body in his son's apartment and an international assassination plot.

While these novels have minimal Israeli or Jewish characters (as the focus is on the nuances of Palestinian society through the eyes of the Muslim protagonist, Omar Yussef), they deal heavily with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Rees also co-authored ***The Ambassador*** with the late **Yehuda Avner** (a former adviser to Israeli Prime Ministers). It is an alternate history thriller that explores what might have happened if the state of Israel had been founded in 1938. The story's main character is **Dan Lavi**, Israel's ambassador to

Hitler's Berlin, and the entire narrative revolves around the premise of saving Jews during the Holocaust. The book explores the fundamental rationale behind Israel's existence as a sanctuary for the Jewish people. [Google/AI]

Rees, Matt Beynon, (**The Collaborator of Bethlehem** [hc, Soho Crime, 2007]) 978-1569474426 [pb, Soho Crime, 2018] 978-1616959791

Rees, Matt Beynon, (**A Grave in Gaza** [hc, Soho Crime, 2008]) 978-1569474723 [pb, Soho Crime, 2019] 978-1616959807

Rees, Matt Beynon, (**The Samaritan's Secret** [hc, Soho Crime, 2009]) 978-1569475454 [pb, Soho Crime, 2019] 978-1616959814

Rees, Matt Beynon, (**The Fourth Assassin** [hc, Soho Crime, 2010]) 978-1569476192 [pb, Soho Crime, 2011] 978-1569478851

Yehuda Avner & Matt Beynon Rees, (**The Ambassador** [hc, Toby Press, 2015]) 978-1592643882

Joel C. Rosenberg (born 1967 in Syracuse, NY) - an American-Israeli author, political strategist, and philanthropist. He is best known for writing political thrillers based on Middle Eastern geopolitical themes and biblical prophecy. He is an evangelical Christian of Jewish heritage (often identifying as a Messianic Jew). In 2014, he moved to Jerusalem. He founded The Joshua Fund, a non-profit dedicated to humanitarian aid in Israel and neighboring countries, and is the editor-in-chief of news sites All Israel News and All Arab News. He is the author of a 6-volume (so far) series featuring CIA Special Agent **Marcus Ryker** (a practicing evangelical Christian), which often deals with issues of Israeli security.

The Persian Gamble (2019) tracks a terrifying nuclear alliance among Russia, Iran, and North Korea—and the deadly mission former US Secret Service Agent Marcus Ryker must risk to halt their deadly strategy. Shot out of the air in enemy territory in the middle of the greatest international crisis since the end of the Cold War, Ryker finds himself facing an impossible task. Not only does he have to somehow elude detection and capture by Russian special forces, but he must convince his own government to grant safe harbor to the one man responsible for the global mayhem—Russian double agent and assassin Oleg Kraskin. While frantically negotiating with his contacts in the White House, Marcus learns that the unstable North Korean regime plans to use the international chaos as a smokescreen to sell nuclear weapons to Iran. With the fate of the entire free world on the line, Marcus makes a deal with the U.S. government—he will go back to work as an international operative and track down the WMDs before they end up in the hands of those with the determination and the means to use them. Marcus and Oleg worked together once before to avert a world war. Can they now find a way to stop world destruction? – Amazon]

In **The Jerusalem Assassin** (2020), U.S. President Andrew Clarke is determined to announce a historic Middle East peace plan from the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. But when senior American officials who support the plan begin violently dying, Clarke orders Ryker and his team of CIA operatives to hunt down those responsible and bring the killing spree to an end. When the Palestinians denounce the American plan, the Saudis signal they may be ready to forge a historic treaty with Israel. Could the Saudi king's support be the missing ingredient that will lead to peace in the Middle East at long last? Ryker soon uncovers a chilling plot to kill the American president. A well-resourced international alliance is dead set against the peace plan. They will stop at nothing to strike a blow against the Americans and seize leadership of the Muslim world. Ryker has 48 hours to stop them. - Amazon]

The Beirut Protocol (2021): A groundbreaking peace treaty between Israel and Saudi Arabia is nearing completion. Marcus Ryker leads an advance security team along the Israel-Lebanon border to prepare for the arrival of the U.S. Secretary of State. Ryker's team is ambushed by a rogue Hezbollah special forces unit. During a brutal firefight, Ryker, CIA agent Kailea Curtis, and Yigal Mizrahi (an IDF intelligence officer and nephew of the Israeli Prime Minister) are taken

hostage. The captors intend to transfer the prisoners to Beirut and eventually to Tehran for a televised execution. Such an event would likely ignite a regional war, effectively destroying the peace treaty. Captured and brutalized behind enemy lines, Ryker must rely on his training and faith to survive. He faces a critical dilemma: wait for an increasingly unlikely rescue by U.S. and Israeli forces, or attempt a nearly impossible escape while protecting his severely wounded colleagues. He goes for the daring escape. – Amazon.]

Rosenberg, Joel C., (**The Persian Gamble** [hc, Tyndale Fiction, 2019]) 978-1496406187 [pb, Tyndale Fiction, 2019] 978-1496406224

Rosenberg, Joel C., (**The Jerusalem Assassin** [hc, Tyndale Fiction, 2020]) 978-1496437846 [pb, Tyndale Fiction, 2021] 978-1496437853

Rosenberg, Joel C., (**The Beirut Protocol** [hc, Tyndale Fiction, 2021]) 978-1496437891 [pb, Tyndale Fiction, 2022] 978-1496437907

Robert Rosenberg (1951–2006) was a Boston-born Israeli journalist and novelist, best known for creating the **Avram Cohen** mystery series. After moving to Israel in 1973, he became a prominent journalist. He worked as a correspondent for UPI, spent over a decade at *The Jerusalem Post*, and served as an Israel correspondent for *Time Magazine* and *U.S. News & World Report*. His acclaimed mystery series features **Avram Cohen**, a Holocaust survivor and veteran detective in the Jerusalem police force. Cohen is described as a “deeply complicated man” with a long memory and a strong, albeit conflicted, moral compass. His past as a Dachau concentration camp survivor and a post-war “avenger” who hunted Nazis heavily influences his character and motivations, bringing a profound personal depth to his investigations.

The series is primarily set in the volatile, “powder keg” atmosphere of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, with the author using his experience as a journalist to provide a “revelation” of the region’s social and political subtleties. Key themes include:

Political and Religious Tensions: The backdrop of the novels often features real-world events like the Intifada, the Hebron massacre, and the Rabin assassination, exploring the rage of religious zealots (both Jewish and Muslim) and the pressures from politicians and international entities like the KGB.

Moral Complexity: The stories often involve characters trying to be moral in a world where greed and extremism rule, with Cohen often confronting his own guilt and past failures.

“Jerusalem Syndrome”: In *House of Guilt*, Cohen explores the idea that some crimes are motivated by “Jerusalem Syndrome,” where neurotics confuse their identities with biblical figures, adding a unique psychological layer to the mysteries.

Contrasting Worlds: The novels effectively contrast the “funky, bustling, Western-looking Tel Aviv” with the intense, complicated realities of Jerusalem.

The four books in the Avram Cohen series, are:

Crimes of the City (1991): In his debut, Avram Cohen, a Jerusalem police detective, investigates the double murder of two Russian nuns in a case that involves significant political and international pressure.

The Cutting Room (1993): Cohen travels to the United States to investigate the apparent suicide of a Hollywood director friend, a case that uncovers Nazi secrets from the past.

House of Guilt (1996/2000): Reluctantly retired, Cohen is coerced into searching for a missing, psychologically disturbed banking heir, leading him into Tel Aviv's nightlife and the dangerous underworld of Jewish extremists on the West Bank.

An Accidental Murder (2002): After publishing his memoir, Cohen is targeted, and his longtime assistant is murdered. The investigation leads him to the Russian mafia in Israel and forces him to confront his own past as an avenger. [Google/AI]

Rosenberg, Robert [Avram Cohen #1], (**Crimes of the City** [hc, Simon & Schuster, 1991]) 978-0671702229 [pb, Poisoned Pen Press, 1997] 978-1890208035

Rosenberg, Robert [Avram Cohen #2], (**The Cutting Room** [hc, Simon & Schuster, 1993]) 978-0671743444 [pb, Penguin Books, 1993] 978-0140231120

Rosenberg, Robert [Avram Cohen #3], (**House of Guilt** [hc, Scribner, 1996]) 978-0684826547 [pb, Poisoned Pen Press, 2000] 978-1890208417

Rosenberg, Robert [Avram Cohen #4], (**An Accidental Murder** [hc, Scribner, 1999]) 978-0684850320 [pb, Scribner, 2002] 978-0743244169

Davidy Rosenfeld (birth est. 1980 in Israel, resident in Ra'anana and in addition to writing, works as a teacher for at-risk high school students. Published 4 books in Hebrew, one of them a children's book. His books are set in contemporary Tel Aviv and feature **Erez Brown**, a cynical, "hard-boiled" private investigator who typically handles low-stakes cases like insurance fraud and unfaithful spouses until he is drawn into deeper, more dangerous mysteries.

Rosenfeld, Davidy, (**Farewell, My Babylon: A Hardboiled Detective Mystery Novel**) [pb, translated by author, independently published, 2023] 979-8373493772 [*Erez is hired by Orthodox Jewish parents to find their daughter, Lea Rubinstein, who has been missing for three years. While Erez initially suspects she simply fled her strict religious upbringing, the investigation turns violent after he is brutally beaten and discovers the murder of a prostitute. The story explores the diverse, multi-cultural backdrop of Tel Aviv as Erez unravels layers of deception to find Lea.*

Rosenfeld, Davidy, (**The Dreams That Kill Us**, published in Hebrew in 2015, not yet translated into English) [*The story follows **Erez Brown** as he takes on two seemingly separate cases that lead him through the diverse social strata of Israel. Firstly, he is hired to find a wealthy young woman who has vanished. Curiously, her husband claims to have no idea why she would leave or where she might be. Simultaneously, Erez is tracking a man who absconded with his clients' money and left no forwarding address. The narrative of his search shifts between the luxury of the Azrieli Towers in Tel Aviv and a radical Breslov Hasidic organic farm in the West Bank and from unrecognized Arab villages near Lod to the Beer Sheva prison. Alongside the investigation, Erez continues to grapple with his own cynical nature and attempts to repair his strained personal relationships.* – Google/AI]

Gidon Rothstein (est. born 1967) - Jewish scholar; author; and educator; born in US and living in Israel. He has served as a synagogue rabbi, a high school teacher, and the Rosh Kollel for the YU_Community Kollel. **Murderer in the Mikdash** is a unique theological murder mystery that explores how a functioning Messianic society might look through the lens of a detective novel.

The story follows **Rachel Tucker**, an ABC News anchorwoman living in Israel. After her best friend dies of what is officially labeled "sudden respiratory distress," Rachel becomes suspicious of the cause. Her investigation leads her into the heart of a newly established Third Temple (Mikdash) society, where she uncovers corruption and uncomfortable truths about the world she inhabits.

The book's most distinctive feature is its "Hyper-Maimonidean" setting:

A Natural Messiah: Based on Maimonides' (Rambam) view, the Messianic era is not magical or supernatural; it is a rational world where political sovereignty has returned to Israel, but human nature remains the same.

Theocratic Monarchy: Israel is depicted as a functioning theocracy with a Sanhedrin and a Temple. The police (e.g., Officer Yoshor) monitor Torah law infractions, and Levites act as educators and public relations officers on the Temple Mount.

Persistence of Human Vice: Despite the arrival of the Messiah, the society still struggles with religious elitism, political maneuvering, and criminal intent, which provides the groundwork for the murder mystery.

Halakhic Realism: Rothstein integrates obscure Jewish laws (such as the eglah arufah ceremony for an unsolved murder) into the narrative to show how they would function in a modern, practical setting. [Google/AI]

Rothstein, Gidon, (**Murderer in the Mikdash** [pb, BookSurge Publishing, 2005]) 978-1419607561

Yonatan Sagiv (1979–2025) – Brilliant Israeli literary scholar and critic and author of three unique detective novels. Was an expert in studies of Shai Agnon and Biblical literature and spent extended periods in New York and London, before returning to Israel in 2021. The protagonist of his popular series was a gay, private detective, **Oded Hefer**, who solved his classic "whodunit" cases with humour and class. Hefer is often described as a "flamboyant, foul-mouthed," and unapologetic character who frequents Tel Aviv's social circles while subverting traditional detective tropes. Sagiv also penned a biography which included a dramatic description of his loss of voice due to a medical condition, an especially serious matter for a lecturer and public intellectual. He suffered a fatal heart attack while walking on the campus of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. **None of his books have so far been translated** into English. [Google/AI]

Meir Shalev (1948–2023, born in Nahalal and died in Alonei Abba, Israel) [- born into a literary family including poets and novelists. Moved from Nahalal to Jerusalem during his childhood giving him the two landscapes that would dominate much of his fiction: the Jezreel Valley and Jerusalem. Served in the IDF Golani Brigade beginning in 1966, fought in the Six-Day War, studied psychology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Worked in Israeli radio and television as a producer, presenter, and satirical commentator. He also became a well-known columnist for the newspaper Yedioth Ahronoth. His first novel, **The Blue Mountain**, appeared in 1988 and immediately established him as a major literary figure.

He was not a crime author. His recurring themes are rather family mythology, love, memory, the Zionist pioneering experience, biblical archetypes, desire, loss, and the comic absurdities of Israeli life. He uses some crime and violence themes as a **literary vehicle and potent metaphor** to deconstruct the myths of Zionism, explore the limits of human morality, and examine the raw, cyclical nature of memory and vengeance. His writing was noted for his deep attachment to the Hebrew language and the landscapes of Israel.

Major Works of Relevance:

Shalev, Meir, (**The Blue Mountain** [transl. by Hillel Halkin, hc, HarperCollins, 1991]) 978-0060166915 [pb, Perennial, 1994] 978-0060995034

Shalev, Meir, (**Esau** [transl. by Barbara Harshav, hc, HarperCollins, 1994]) 978-006019040

Shalev, Meir, (**Two She-Bears** [transl. by Stuart Schoffman, hc, Schocken, 2016] 978-0805243291 [pb, Schocken, 2016] 978-0805212716

1. For Shalev, crime is usually symbolic rather than sociological: *Shalev rarely explores social deviance, criminal subcultures, corruption, or Jewish criminality as a communal phenomenon. When wrongdoing appears, it is generally a family secret, a betrayal, an act of passion, a biblical transgression, or a hidden violence embedded in personal relationships. In other words, he is interested in **moral trespass** more than criminal behavior.*

2. The major exception: *Two She-Bears* (2013): *This is Shalev's darkest novel and revolves around murder, revenge, concealed crimes, intergenerational guilt, and the destructive consequences of violence within a small Jewish agricultural community. The title alludes to the biblical story in which two bears kill children who mock the prophet Elisha. The novel uses that biblical image to explore how violence reverberates through generations. Here crime functions as a mechanism for exposing buried family histories, a metaphor for inherited trauma, and an exploration of the tension between justice and vengeance. It becomes a vehicle for examining the darker underside of the idealized Zionist pioneer community.*

3. *Esau* (1991): Rivalry, deception, and moral wrongdoing: *Esau reworks the biblical Jacob–Esau story within a Jewish family saga. The novel contains deception, betrayal, manipulation, emotional cruelty, and struggles over inheritance. These are not crimes in the legal sense, but they are forms of moral transgression. Shalev uses biblical archetypes to suggest that ancient patterns of sibling rivalry continue into modern Jewish life. Here the “crime” is existential and familial rather than criminal.*

4. Pioneer society and suppressed violence: *In novels such as *The Blue Mountain*, *Fontanelle*, and *His House in the Desert*, Shalev repeatedly undermines nostalgic myths about the founders of Jewish settlement in Palestine. His pioneering communities contain feuds, grudges, sexual scandals, vendettas, concealed acts of cruelty, and occasional violence. One could say that Shalev's fiction often reveals the “crimes beneath the myth” of Zionist settlement. The offense is usually against family, love, or memory rather than against the criminal code.*

5. Biblical influence: sin rather than crime: *A useful way to understand Shalev is that he thinks in biblical categories. His fiction repeatedly returns to Cain and Abel, Jacob and Esau, David and Bathsheba, jealousy, revenge, forbidden desire, and family conflict. Thus he is often interested in what the Bible would call **sin, guilt, or transgression**, rather than what a modern criminologist would call crime.*

*Shalev's contribution is not the depiction of Jewish criminals, organized crime, policing, or detective work. Rather, he uses murder, violence, revenge, and hidden wrongdoing as metaphors for family memory, biblical destiny, and the shadow side of Jewish collective and personal history. His closest approach to crime fiction is **Two She-Bears**, though even that novel is best understood as a literary family saga with crime elements rather than a crime novel proper. [Google/AI]*

Ora Shem-Ur (born 1921 in Chortkiv, then in Poland, came on aliya to Mandatory Palestine, becoming a journalist, novelist, and public intellectual who is best remembered as one of the early women writers of Israeli detective fiction, died in 1995). Her principal contribution to crime fiction was her series featuring the female private investigator **Ali (Aliya/“Ali”) Honigsberg**. Literary scholars regard the series as one of the foundational works of the “new wave” of Israeli detective fiction that emerged in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Ali's gender was exceptional in Hebrew crime fiction of the time. Shem-Ur's novels used criminal investigations to explore Israeli social and political

issues, including corruption, power relations, gender, and class, and. helped establish women writers as leading figures in the development of modern Israeli crime fiction. Although less well-known than Batya Gur or Shulamit Lapid, she was an important pioneer of the genre in Israel. The main novels of the series are:

1. **רצח בקצב כרמל (Murder to a Carmel Rhythm)** (1990)
2. **קונצ'רטו לפסולת ולתזמורת (Concerto for a Pistol and Orchestra)** (1991)
3. **מותה של דודה עליזה (The Death of Aunt Aliza)** (1992)

Unfortunately, **none of them have been translated into English**. Outside crime fiction, Shem-Ur wrote journalism and nonfiction, including political and historical works such as *Israel: The Challenge of Survival* (1978). [ChatGPT]

Liad Shoham (born 1971, Givatayim, Israel) - a prominent Israeli crime novelist and practicing attorney. He has authored 11 legal thrillers, of which the two listed below were translated into English. They are gritty police procedurals set in Tel Aviv that intertwine legal expertise with social commentary. Wikipedia refers to him as “Israel’s John Grisham”.

Lineup (2013): After a brutal rape in a quiet neighborhood, the police have no leads until the victim’s father takes matters into his own hands. He identifies a suspicious man, Ziv Nevo, lurking near the crime scene. Nevo appears guilty and is identified in a lineup, but he remains silent during interrogation. He is actually a low-level worker for the Israeli mafia; revealing his true reason for being there—a mob assignment—could get him killed by his bosses. The story follows veteran detective **Eli Nahum** as he contends with pressure from superiors and the media to close the case, eventually discovering that the quest for a quick conviction may have allowed the real criminal to remain at large.

Asylum City (2014): Social activist **Michal Poleg** is found murdered in her apartment. The investigation is led by **Anat Nachmias**, a young officer on her first major murder case. An African asylum seeker, **Gabriel**, is seen fleeing the scene and quickly confesses to the crime. While her commanders are eager to close the case, Anat is unconvinced by the confession and suspects Michal’s activism made her enemies far more powerful than a refugee. The investigation exposes a “shadow world” of illegal banking, corrupt politicians, and criminal syndicates that exploit Tel Aviv’s refugee population.

Both novels are noted for using multiple character perspectives—including lawyers, journalists, and criminals—to build a comprehensive view of the Israeli legal system. [Google/AI]

Another of Shoham’s numerous novels, referred to in the Wikipedia article, is **Blood Oranges** (2014), but it does not appear to have been published in any English translation that I could locate.

Shoham, Liad, (**Lineup: A Gripping Tale of Detective and Mafia Suspect in Tel Aviv** [hc, Harper, translated by Sara Kitai, 2013] 978-0062237446 [pb, Harper Paperbacks, 2014] 978-0062237453

Shoham, Liad, (**Asylum City: A Tense Israeli Crime Thriller – A Cop’s Murder Investigation Exposes the Dangerous Underworld of Tel Aviv** [hc, Harper, transl. by Sara Kitai, 2014]) 978-0062237538 [pb, Harper Paperbacks, 2015] 978-0062237545

Daniel Silva (born 1960) – in Kalamazoo, Michigan, and moved to California at age seven, now residing in Florida. He was raised Catholic but later converted to Judaism as an adult. He began his career at United Press International (UPI) in 1984, eventually serving as a Middle East correspondent in Cairo and the Persian Gulf. He later moved to CNN, where he became an executive producer for public policy programs like *Crossfire* and *Reliable Sources*. Silva transitioned to full-time writing in 1997 following the success of his debut novel, *The Unlikely Spy* (1996). He created a long-running

series of novels (26 so far) featuring Gabriel Allon, a master art restorer and legendary Israeli intelligence operative. While studying at the Bezalel Academy of Art in Jerusalem, the fictional Allon was recruited to participate in the mission to assassinate the terrorists responsible for the Munich Olympics Massacre. He went on to become one of the most effective assassins and spies for Israel's intelligence services. Now ostensibly retired, he lives in Venice, working at fine art restoration, and taking on high-stakes cases as a private citizen at the request of his former colleagues. [Google/AI]

Daniel Silva's Gabriel Allon series:

1. **The Kill Artist** [hc, Random House, 2000] 978-0375500909 [pb, Orion, 2002] 978-0752847856
2. **The English Assassin** [hc, Putnam, 2002] 978-0399148514 [pb, Berkley, 2003] 978-0451208187
3. **The Confessor** [hc, Putnam Adult, 2003] 978-0399149726 [pb, Berkley, 2004] 978-0451211484
4. **A Death in Vienna** [hc, Putnam Adult, 2004] 978-0399151439 [pb, Berkley, 2005] 978-0451213181
5. **Prince of Fire** [hc, Putnam Adult, 2005] 978-0399152436 [pb, Signet, 2006] 978-0141024158
6. **The Messenger** [hc, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2006] 978-0399153358 [pb, Berkley, 2007] 978-0451221728
7. **The Secret Servant** [hc, Putnam Adult, 2007] 978-0399154225 [pb, Berkley, 2008] 978-0451224507
8. **Moscow Rules** [hc, Putnam Adult, 2008] 978-0399155017 [pb, Berkley 2009] 978-0451227386
9. **The Defector** [hc, Putnam, 2009] 978-0399155680 [pb, Berkley, 2010] 978-0451230669
10. **The Rembrandt Affair** [hc, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2010] 978-0399156588 [pb, Berkley, 2011] 978-0451233998
11. **Portrait of a Spy** [hc, Harper, 2011] 978-0062072184 [pb, Harper Paperbacks, 2011] 978-0062287328
12. **The Fallen Angel** [hc, Harper, 2012] 978-0062073129 [pb, Harper, 2013] 978-0007433360
13. **The English Girl** [hc, Harper, 2013] 978-0062270924 [pb, Harper, 2014] 978-0062073181
14. **The Heist** [hc, Harper, 2014] 978-0062320056 [pb, Harper Paperbacks, 2015] 978-0062320087
15. **The English Spy** [hc, Harper, 2015] 978-0062320131 [pb, Harper Paperbacks, 2016] 978-0062320162
16. **The Black Widow** [hc, Harper, 2016] 978-0062320223 [pb, Harper Paperbacks, 2017] 978-0062320254
17. **House of Spies** [hc, Harper, 2017] 978-0062354341 [pb, Harper Paperbacks, 2018] 978-0062354372
18. **The Other Woman** [hc, Harper, 2018] 978-0062834829 [pb, Harper Paperbacks, 2019] 978-0062834942
19. **The New Girl** [hc, Harper, 2019] 978-0062834836 [pb, Harper Paperbacks, 2020] 978-0062834959
20. **The Order** [hc, Harper, 2020] 978-0062834843 [pb, Harper Paperbacks, 2021] 978-0062834966
21. **The Cellist** [hc, Harper, 2021] 978-0062834867 [pb, Harper Paperbacks, 2022] 978-0062834973
22. **Portrait of an Unknown Woman** [hc, Harper, 2022] 978-0062834850 [pb, Harper Collins, 2023] 978-0008620127
23. **The Collector** [hc, Harper, 2023] 978-0062834874 [pb, Harper Paperbacks, 2024] 978-0062834997
24. **A Death in Cornwall** [hc, Harper, 2024] 978-0063384200 [pb, Harper Paperbacks, 2025] 978-0063384408

25. **An Inside Job** [hc, Harper, 2025] 978-0063384217 [pb, Harper Perennial, 2026] 978-0063384415
26. **Ransom** [hc, Harper, 2026] 978-0063384224 [pb, Harper, 2027] 978-0063384422

Alex J. Sinclair [born 1972] is a Jewish educational thinker, author, academic and consultant, currently an adjunct lecturer at Hebrew University and education director of the Maimonides Jewish Leadership Institute. Born in North London, he lives with his family in Modi'in, Israel. Summaries of his two books of relevance here:

Perfect Enemy (2023): In a clandestine lab beneath Tel Aviv, Israeli scientist **Akiva Cohen** successfully clones Adolf Hitler using old DNA samples. While Akiva intends to use the clone for a “redemptive” purpose, he is betrayed by extremists who seek to use this new Hitler to incite global terror and chaos. The story serves as a political thriller that addresses communal trauma, revenge, and the fragility of peace in the Middle East. The narrative includes a trail of murders, uneasy collaborations with Hamas, and conspiracies reaching the highest levels of the Israeli Knesset.

Everybody's Hero (2025) is a darkly satirical psychological thriller that explores the thin line between sociopathy and celebrity culture. The story follows Zeke Stein, a seemingly ordinary and devoted family man who secretly moonlights as a serial killer. Zeke's unique mission—or “project”—is to hold society accountable for small moral failings. Specifically, he targets dog owners who do not clean up after their pets, viewing their neglect as a crime against communal order. After three successful killings, Zeke's plans are derailed when he happens to save a young woman from an attack. Overnight, he is rebranded as a national hero, appearing on talk shows and gaining public adoration. In an ironic turn, **Detective Yael Waldman**, a fan of Zeke's heroic act, recruits him to help her catch the very serial killer she is hunting—not realizing the man standing beside her is her target. The novel examines “weird redemptive justice” and the human urge to rid the world of behavior that outrages or disgusts them. It serves as a critique of how media-driven fame can sanitize or completely overlook an individual's true character. Though set in Israel, the author has noted that the themes of urban irritations and moral fragmentation are universally applicable to modern Western societies. [Google/AI]

Sinclair, Alex J., (**Perfect Enemy** [pb, Different Angle Books, 2023] 978-9659310104

Sinclair, Alex J., (**Everybody's Hero** [pb, Different Angle Books, 2025]) 978-9659310128

Gadi Taub (born 1965, Jerusalem) - an Israeli right-wing pundit and political commentator (in Wikipedia's description). He is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Public Policy and the Department of Communications at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Taub is also an internationally recognized voice in the discourse on Zionism. In 2009, he published a novel named “*Allenby Street*” about late-night bars and strip clubs in Tel Aviv. Taub was both creator and co-screenwriter of a TV series based on his novel. The series was broadcast on Israel's Channel 10 in 2012. He was also a co-screenwriter and co-director of a prime time series for Channel 13, entitled *Harem*, about a polygamous cult.

Allenby Street is a work of gritty realism set in the underbelly of Tel Aviv's nightlife, focusing on the lives of bouncers, strippers, and patrons in a dive bar and strip club known for its “sleazy” reputation. The narrative, which served as a microcosm of Israeli society's margins, explores themes of violence, drugs, sexuality, and the exploitation of women, while also highlighting the characters' underlying humanity and search for redemption. The book **has not been translated** into English. [Google/AI]

Lavie Tidhar (born 1976 in Afula and raised on Kibbutz Dalia, living primarily in London since 2013) – an idiosyncratic writer who works across multiple genres. Tidhar is known for his “genre-bending” style, often blending elements of science fiction, fantasy, historical fiction, and crime fiction. This means his works, even those primarily categorized otherwise, often contain strong mystery

or thriller components. While he debuted as a Hebrew poet in 1998 with *She'erot Me'elohim* (Remnants of God), he adopted English as his primary creative language after moving to South Africa as a teenager. Some of his novels are set in Israel, others are set in Europe, England and elsewhere. His versatility makes classifying him among Israeli writers somewhat arbitrary, but so would calling him a U.K. or "international" writer. Brief summaries of relevant books:

Central Station: Set in a futuristic Tel Aviv built around a spaceport, featuring characters like "robotniks" (cyborg war veterans) and exploring diverse Tel Aviv subcultures.

A Man Lies Dreaming: Combines a narrative about a Jewish pulp writer in Auschwitz with an alternative history dream where Hitler is a private investigator in 1930s London. While a work of alternate history/speculative fiction, it heavily employs the tropes and structure of a noir detective novel.

The Tel Aviv Dossier: A surreal apocalypse novel co-authored with Nir Yaniv, set entirely within a collapsing Tel Aviv.

Unholy Land: An alternative history novel where the Jewish state was established in East Africa (the "Uganda Scheme") instead of Palestine.

Maror is a work of political crime fiction, or "Israeli noir", that starts with a bombing and follows a scummy, deadbeat cop as he unravels a case involving organized crime. It's a complex, multi-perspective story where, according to Tidhar, "all the events in the book are true" in inspiration.

Adama is the second book in the series. It continues the multi-generational crime saga set against the backdrop of Israeli history.

Six Lives (2024) is another standalone literary/historical fiction work from Tidhar, also part of the general crime/literary oeuvre.

HebrewPunk: A collection of short stories that re-imagines classic horror tropes (vampires, werewolves) through the lens of Jewish mythology and folklore.

Golgotha: Part of the Maror trilogy, set in Ottoman Palestine and the final days of the British Mandate, involving a search for Second Temple treasures. .

No One Hears the Last Shot (2025): This is a collection of ten crime and noir short stories, gathering some of Tidhar's best work in the genre. [Google/AI]

Tidhar, Lavie & Nir Yaniv, (**The Tel Aviv Dossier** [pb, Chizine Publications, 2009] 978-0980941043

Tidhar, Lavie, (**Central Station** [pb, Tachyon Publications, 2016] 978-1616962142

Tidhar, Lavie, (**A Man Lies Dreaming** [hc, Melville House, 2016] 978-1612195049 [pb, Head of Zeus, 2021] 978-1801100632

Tidhar, Lavie, (**Unholy Land** [pb, Tachyon Publications, 2018] 978-1616963040

Tidhar, Lavie, (**HebrewPunk** [pb, Jabberwocky Literary Agency, Inc., 2023] 978-1625676252

Tidhar, Lavie, (**Maror** [pb, Bloomsbury, written originally in English – as are most of his books, 2023] 978-1838931377

Tidhar, Lavie, (**Adama** [hc, Head of Zeus - Apollo, 2024] 978-1804543467 [pb, Apollo, 2024] 978-1804543481

Tidhar, Lavie, (**Six Lives** [hc, Apollo, 2024] 978-1804543511 [pb, Apollo, 2025] 978-1804543535

Tidhar, Lavie, (**Golgotha** [hc, Apollo, 2025] 978-1804543566

Tidhar, Lavie, (**No One Hears the Last Shot** [hc, PS Publications, 2025] 978-1803944975

Haggai Tiomkin (born 1954 in Tel Aviv, resides in Givatayim, Israel) – Israeli lawyer and novelist. Published 4 books between 1992 and 2014, three of them in the espionage/thriller genre. *None of them has yet been translated into English.* [Google-AI]

Yair Weinstock (born 1959 in Jerusalem, Israel and resides there today) - a highly prolific Israeli Haredi novelist, journalist, and Torah scholar. He is a pioneer of the Haredi thriller genre, often writing under the pseudonym **M. Arbel**. His works are known for their Haredi protagonists and for blending suspense, Jewish history, and spiritual themes. This Bibliography lists “only” his twelve (and counting) thrillers, set in Israel and multiple locations around the world, as well as in different historical periods. In addition, his multi-volume series, **Tales for the Soul**, is a widely read collection of Chassidic stories and moral lessons where he retells classic Chassidic stories with modern narrative flair. Born into a distinguished Jerusalem family, he was educated at the Hevron Yeshiva and was a student of notable figures such as Rabbi David HaLevi Soloveitchik and the Lelover Rebbe.

His style is noted for “painting a compelling picture” of historic settings, from old Jerusalem’s stone streets to the snowy towns of Eastern Europe. His writing reflects the intellectual rigor of his Brisker Torah training and the warmth of his Chassidic heritage. He often focuses on the hidden greatness of “plain folks” and the miraculous intervention of tzaddikim (righteous leaders). Researchers have noted that while his thrillers are popular entertainment, they also serve as a medium for social and religious criticism within the Haredi community, advocating for unity and internal reflection. [Google/AI]

See also the note on **Chaim Eliav** in this Bibliography.

Weinstock, Yair, (**The Gordian Knot** [hc, Mesorah Publications, 1997, transl. from the Hebrew by Miriam Stark Zakon & Shaindel Weinbach]) 978-0899062853

Weinstock, Yair, (**Blackout** [hc, Shaar Press, 1997, transl. by Miriam Stark Zakon]) B00SB5GTC4

Weinstock, Yair, (**Eye of the Storm** [hc, Mesorah Publications, 1999, transl. by Libby Lazewnik]) 978-1578192922

Weinstock, Yair, (**Calculated Risk**, [hc, Shaar Publications, 2000, transl. by Avigdor Cohen]) 978-1578195718

Weinstock, Yair, (**Time Bomb** [hc, Shaar Press, 2002, transl. by Miriam Stark Zakon]) 978-1578197705

Weinstock, Yair, (**Dual Allegiance** [hc, Mesorah Publications, 2005, transl. by Esther Van Handel]) 978-1578190539

Weinstock, Yair, (**Borrowed Time** [hc, Mesorah Publications, 2006, transl by Libby Lazewnik]) 978-1422600733

Weinstock, Yair, (**Delayed Reaction** [hc, Shaar Press, 2012, transl. by Libby Lazewnik]) 978-1422611920

Weinstock, Yair, (**Burning Questions** [hc, Tfutza Publications, 2021, transl. by Esther Van Handel]) 978-1600918988

Weinstock, Yair, (**Shattered Worlds** [hc, published by the author, 2022, transl. by Esther Van Handel]) 979-8886730142

Weinstock, Yair, (**30 Hours** [hc, Tfutza Publications, 2023, transl. by Shira Yehudit Djalilmand]) 979-8886731064

Weinstock, Yair, (**Driving Force** [hc, Tfutza Publications, 2024, transl. by Rosally Saltsman] 979-8886731897

Jonathan Wilson (born 1950 in Willesden/London, England and residing in Newton (Boston suburb) MA since 1981) [- *Grew up in post-war London. He pursued an academic path in literature, attending the University of Essex and Oxford University, where he became fascinated by American-Jewish literature. In 1976, he visited New York City to research the novelist Saul Bellow, a formative trip that sparked his love for the freedom of American-Jewish cultural life. He lived in Israel for four years, earning a Ph.D. from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in 1982. He permanently immigrated to the United States in 1981, becoming a naturalized citizen. That same year, he joined the faculty at Tufts University in Medford, Massachusetts. He spent decades there as a Professor of English, the Fletcher Professor of Rhetoric and Debate, and the founding Director of the Center for the Humanities. Wilson's literary work often tackles the "blurring of identity" shaped by his own lived experiences as a British-born, American-naturalized Jew who spent key years in Israel. Over his career, he has published nine books, including short story collections set in different locales, literary analyses of Saul Bellow's work, a biography of Marc Chagall, and a memoir of his growing-up in North London. – Wikipedia]*

Jonathan Wilson's Jewish fiction directly approaches the mystery and thriller genres, frequently using true-crime cases and political assassinations as central narrative drivers. Rather than writing traditional "whodunits", Wilson crafts atmospheric historical legal thrillers and political mysteries set primarily against the volatile backdrop of British Mandatory Palestine. His work explores the friction of "Jews and crime" not through stereotypical underworld tropes, but through the lenses of ideological political violence, murder, wartime espionage, and colonial justice. He has also authored Wilson weaves Jewish crime motifs and thriller conventions into his major Jewish fiction through several key works:

Wilson, Jonathan (**The Hiding Room** [hc, Viking, 1995]) 978-0670856039 [pb, Penguin Books, 1997] 978-0140238266 [*This debut novel operates partly as a wartime espionage mystery. Set in Cairo and Palestine during World War II, it deals with the mystery of a Jewish refugee woman, an intelligence officer, and themes of betrayal, hidden identities, and political assassinations carried out by underground Jewish paramilitary groups against British authorities.*

Wilson, Jonathan (**A Palestine Affair** [hc, Pantheon, 2003]) 978-0375422096 [pb, First Anchor Books Edition, 2004] 978-1400031221 [*A combination political thriller and literary romance set in 1924 Jerusalem. The plot is driven forward by the murder of an anti-Zionist Orthodox Jew, Jacob de Haan. The ensuing murder investigation serves as the engine that pulls the expatriate characters into a web of conspiracy, surveillance, and escalating tribal violence.*

Wilson, Jonathan (**The Red Balcony** [hc, Schocken, 2023]) 978-0805243697 [pb, Schocken, 2024] 978-0805212860 [*This novel is a sophisticated historical legal thriller explicitly structured around a real-life Jewish true-crime mystery—the unsolved 1933 assassination of **Haim Arlosoroff**. The narrative follows an Oxford-educated Jewish lawyer who arrives in Palestine to assist the defense of two Jewish Revisionists accused of the murder. Wilson uses the mechanics of a courtroom thriller and a murder investigation to dissect deep internal Jewish ideological divides and political corruption.*

Instead of conventional detective formulas, Wilson utilizes specific narrative subversions to drive his Jewish fiction:

Intra-Jewish Political Crime: *His thrillers focus heavily on "brother against brother" crimes. The primary narrative tension usually arises from Jews committing crimes against other Jews for ideological reasons (e.g., Labor Zionists vs. Revisionists), challenging the historical myth of monolithic Jewish solidarity.*

***The Flawed Outsider Sleuth:** Wilson's protagonists are typically secular, assimilated Diaspora Jewish men (such as British-Jewish lawyers or academics) who act as amateur sleuths. They enter a highly charged environment, completely out of their depth, trying to apply objective Western rule of law to deeply tribal, politically motivated crimes.*

***The Ambiguity of Justice:** A recurring motif in his work is the subversion of the standard mystery ending. The crimes are rarely cleanly solved; instead, judicial proceedings are compromised by political agendas, shifting alliances, and colonial British manipulation, leaving the characters and readers with lingering moral ambiguity. [Google/AI]*

Avraham Gabriel “Boolie” Yehoshua (1936–2022, born in Jerusalem and died in Tel Aviv after living most of his life in Haifa) [- a central pillar of the “New Wave” generation of Israeli literature. Born into a prominent, fifth-generation Sephardi family in Jerusalem. Served as an IDF paratrooper from 1954 to 1957, participating in the Suez War. Studied Hebrew literature and philosophy at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Lived and taught in Paris from 1963 to 1967, acting as General Secretary of the World Union of Jewish Students. Joined the Haifa U. faculty in 1972, spending decades teaching Comparative and Hebrew Literature. Published 11 novels, alongside essays, short stories, and plays. Awarded Israel's top cultural honor, the Israel Prize for Literature, in 1995. His psychological, multi-perspective narratives frequently explored Israeli identity, the diaspora, and intergenerational conflict. A highly visible, left-wing peace activist who fiercely criticized the Israeli occupation of the West Bank. Famously polemical, he argued that a full Jewish life could only be lived in the State of Israel, viewing Diaspora Judaism as neurotic and incomplete. Late in life, believing Jewish settlement in the West Bank to have rendered a two-state solution impossible, he reluctantly advocated a single state with equal rights for Israelis and Palestinians. **Major Works of Relevance:**

Yehoshua, A.B., (**The Lover** [transl. by Philip Simpson, hc, Doubleday, 1978]) 978-0385121347 [pb, HarperVia, 1993] 978-0156539128

Yehoshua, A.B., (**A Late Divorce** [transl. by Hillel Halkin, hc, Doubleday, 1984] 978-0385155748 [pb, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1993] 978-0156494472

Yehoshua, A.B., (**Mr. Mani** [transl. by Hillel Halkin, hc, Doubleday, 1992]) 978-0385267922 [pb, Houghton Mifflin, Harcourt, 1993] 978-0156627696

Yehoshua, A.B., (**A Journey to the End of the Millennium** [transl by Nicholas de Lange, hc, Doubleday, 1999] 978-0385488822 [pb, HarperVia, 2000]) 978-0156011167

Yehoshua, A.B., (**The Terrible Power of a Minor Guilt: Literary Essays** [transl. by Ora Cummings, hc, Syracuse UP, 2000])

Yehoshua, A.B., (**The Liberated Bride** [transl. by Hillel Halkin, hc, Houghton Mifflin, 2003]) 978-0151006533 [pb, HarperVia, 2004] 978-0156030168

Yehoshua, A.B., (**A Woman in Jerusalem** [transl. by Hillel Halkin, hc, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2006] 978-0151012268 [pb, HarperVia, 2007] 978-0156031943

Yehoshua, A.B., (**The Tunnel** [transl. by Stuart Schoffman, hc, HarperVia, 2020] 978-1328622631 [pb, HarperVia, 2021] 978-0358555629

A.B. Yehoshua does not write conventional crime fiction, but he frequently uses crime, legal transgressions, and moral violations as a vital vehicle for exploring Jewish and Israeli identity. For Yehoshua, a Zionist thinker who argued that a fully realized Jewish existence is only possible within a sovereign state, the presence of crime among Jews is a symptom of normalcy. In his view, a “total” Jewish identity must encompass everything a sovereign nation entails—including taxes, courts, and its own criminals. He incorporates issues of transgression and law into his work through several core thematic approaches:

1. Crime as a Measure of Zionist “Normalcy”: Historically, early Zionist philosophy sought the “productivization” and normalization of the Jewish people, which included the idea that a normal nation must have its own thieves and police officers. Yehoshua embraces this paradox.

***The Lover (1978)*:** The novel features theft, garage scams, and the exploitation of Arab workers. Transgressions are woven into everyday Israeli life, showing a society slipping away from pioneering ideals into bourgeois materialism and casual corruption.

***The Tunnel (2020)*:** The plot involves an aging engineer who becomes complicit in an illegal, secret construction project designed to preserve an undocumented Palestinian family’s home. Here, the “crime” is a humanitarian transgression against state bureaucracy, highlighting the moral friction between Israeli law and human empathy.

2. Legal Systems and Collective Guilt: Yehoshua often uses bureaucratic or institutional responses to death and moral failing to examine societal flaws.

***A Woman in Jerusalem (2006)*:** When a foreign worker is killed in a terrorist bombing and her body lies unclaimed, a human resources manager is tasked with investigating the corporate negligence that allowed her to be forgotten. The novel operates as a procedural investigation into moral failure, analyzing the collective guilt of Israeli society and the loss of baseline human solidarity

***The Terrible Power of a Minor Guilt (2000)*:** Though a collection of literary essays rather than a novel, this work explicitly outlines Yehoshua’s obsession with how literature unpacks moral and legal culpability. He analyzes how small, seemingly minor transgressions snowball into profound ethical crises.

3. Historical Crimes and Inter-Communal Transgression: In his broader historical epics, Yehoshua shifts the focus to crimes of religious or cultural identity.

***A Journey to the End of the Millennium (1999)*:** Set in the year 999, the novel centers on a legal and religious conflict over bigamy. A Sephardic merchant’s practice of polygamy is deemed an unacceptable moral crime by his Ashkenazic relatives in Europe. Yehoshua uses this ancient legal dispute as a vehicle to critique how different factions of Jews historically judged, criminalized, and alienated one another.

4. The Crime of the Occupation: On a political level, Yehoshua frequently asserted that Israel’s military governance over Palestinians is a structural transgression that corrupts the country’s legal fabric. In works like ***The Liberated Bride (2001)***, characters navigate an environment permeated by political violence, security breaches, and deep suspicion. The systemic dual legal system of the West Bank is treated by Yehoshua as a slow-moving moral poison that erodes domestic Israeli rule of law. [Google/AI]

Conclusion: For Yehoshua, crime is generally **metaphorical rather than literal**. He does not significantly contribute to the tradition of Jewish gangster fiction or Jewish detective fiction. Instead, he uses investigative structures, hidden transgressions, and questions of guilt to examine larger issues of Jewish existence: family responsibility, Zionism, Jewish-Arab relations, historical memory, and the ethical burdens of collective life. He thus belongs less to the tradition of Jewish criminals or detectives and more to a tradition of **Jewish moral inquiry in which guilt, accusation, and responsibility function as the equivalents of crime and punishment**. [ChatGPT]

Isaac (Zepel) Yeshurun (born 1936, Tel Aviv) – outstanding Israeli screenwriter, film director and author who has produced several best-selling books in the Mossad/espionage genre. He wrote a series of thrillers in which the phrase “In the service of the Mossad” is part of the title. Unfortunately, **none of them has so far been translated into English**. [Google/AI]

Yigal Zur (born 1955, resides in Jaffa, Israel) - a prominent Israeli mystery and thriller author, best known for his series featuring ex-Mossad agent **Dotan Naor**. His work often blends high-stakes suspense with deep cultural exploration, drawing on his extensive background as a travel guide and journalist.

His most famous mystery/thriller series follows ex-intelligence officer Dotan Naor through various international settings:

- **Death in Shangri-La:** Set in Northern India, Naor searches for a missing young man while dodging terrorists.
- **Passport to Death:** Takes place in Thailand and explores the dark underbelly of the arms industry.
- **Child of Dust:** A newer release (2024) spanning Tel Aviv, Thailand, and Cambodia, centered on a child abduction and family secrets.
- **Deadly Secrets, Dangerous Ties:** A scheduled release (September 2025) involving elite units and international secrets.

Beyond his thrillers, Zur has written 14 books in total, including literary novels and travel guides. His Dotan Naor series books were all translated into English by **Sara Kitai**. [Google/AI]

Zur, Yigal, [*Dotan Naor #1*] (**Death in Shangri-La** [hc, Oceanview Publishing, 2018]) 978-1608092994 [pb, Oceanview Publishing, 2019] 978-1608093540

Zur, Yigal, [*Dotan Naor #2*] (**Passport to Death** [hc, Oceanview Publishing, 2019]) 978-1608093649 [pb, AmazonUs/INDPB, 2021] 978-1608094059

Zur, Yigal, [*Dotan Naor #3*] (**Child of Dust** [pb, Level Best Books, 2024, also known as *Lost in Lotusland* or *Avuda* in Hebrew] 978-1685126865

Zur, Yigal, [*Dotan Naor #4*] (**Deadly Secrets, Dangerous Ties**) - forthcoming

Non-fiction Books and Articles on Israelis and Crime/Espionage

Uri Bar-Joseph, (**The Angel: The Egyptian Spy Who Saved Israel - A Netflix Original: The True Story of Mossad Espionage and the Yom Kippur War** [hc, Harper, 2016]) 978-0062420107 [pb, HarperPb, 2017] 978-0062420138 [\[See related film\]](#) [- chronicles the true story of **Ashraf Marwan**, a high-ranking Egyptian official who acted as a top-secret spy for Israel's Mossad under the codename "The Angel". Bar-Joseph, a former Israeli intelligence analyst, uses meticulous research to prove how Marwan's warnings prevented the absolute destruction of Israel during the 1973 Yom Kippur War. Marwan was the son-in-law of Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser and later became a close advisor to his successor, Anwar Sadat. This positioning gave him access to Egypt's most sensitive state and military secrets. Driven by complex psychological motives—partially rooted in resentment toward his father-in-law—Marwan approached the Mossad and turned Egypt's war plans into an "open book" for Israeli intelligence. Just hours before Egypt and Syria launched a massive, coordinated surprise attack on October 6, 1973, Marwan delivered a definitive warning to Israel. Though Israeli military intelligence famously downplayed the threat due to cognitive biases, Marwan's urgent alert allowed Israel to mobilize its reserves at the last possible moment, narrowly saving the nation from a catastrophic defeat. Bar-Joseph heavily details the internal Israeli blame-game after the

war. He strongly debunks claims made by some officials that Marwan was an Egyptian double agent, arguing his leaked information was too damaging to Egypt to be a ruse. Marwan lived out his later years as a wealthy businessman in London. His identity was eventually leaked to the public by a former chief of Israeli Military Intelligence. In 2007, Marwan died mysteriously after falling from his fifth-floor balcony in London. The book explores the conspiracy theories surrounding his death, pointing to assassination by entities who wanted his secrets silenced. – Google/AI] See entry on movie version of “The Angel” in the companion list of Movie, Films & TV Series.

Michael Bar-Zohar & Nissim Mishal, (**Mossad: The Greatest Missions of the Israeli Secret Service** [Ecco, 2014, translated by Bar-Zohar himself and Nathan K. Burstein]) [hc] 978-0062123411 [pb] 978-0062123411

Bar-Zohar, Michael & Nissim Mishal, (**No Mission Is Impossible: The Death-Defying Missions of the Israeli Special Forces** [hc, Ecco, 2015, translated by Bar-Zohar himself and Nathan K. Burstein] 978-0062378996 [pb, Ecco, 2016] 978-0062379009

Bar-Zohar, Michael & Nissim Mishal, (**The Mossad Amazons - The Amazing Women in the Israeli Secret Service** [hc, Ktav Publishing House, 2021, translated by Bar-Zohar himself and Nathan K. Burstein] 978-1602804463

Bar-Zohar, Michael, (**Iron Swords, Bleeding Hearts** [hc, Ktav, 2024]) 978-0062379009

Bar-Zohar, Michael, (**Spies in the Promised Land: Iser Harel and the Israeli Secret Service** [hc, Davis-Poynter Ltd., 1972, translated from the French by Monroe Stearns] 978-0706700336

Sarah Ben-David & Leonard Weller, “**Religiosity, Criminality and Types of Offences of Jewish Male Prisoners in Israel**”, Medicine and Law, Volume 14, Issue 7–8, pages 509–519, February 1995. [*The research investigated the correlation between religious adherence and criminal behavior among Jewish men, specifically analyzing crime rates and offense categories. Key Findings:*

Significantly Lower Incarceration Rates: *The percentage of religious individuals among the prison population was drastically lower than their representation in the general public. At the time of the study, religious inmates made up only 3.7% of the studied Jewish male prison population, compared to roughly 20% of the general Israeli population.*

Overrepresentation in Sex and White-Collar Crime: *While religious and non-religious prisoners generally committed similar types of crimes, religious inmates committed **proportionately more sex crimes and white-collar crimes** than their secular counterparts.*

Underrepresentation in Security Crimes: *Religious Jewish inmates were found to commit **significantly fewer security-related offenses** compared to non-religious prisoners.*

Objective: *The paper evaluated the broad sociolinguistic and criminological theory that consistent religious observance acts as a deterrent to typical antisocial and criminal behavior (it does, but not completely), while documenting the specific sub-types of deviations that still occur within highly observant communities [more sex and white-collar crimes].- ChatGPT]*

Eli Ben-Hanan, (**Our Man in Damascus: Elie Cohn** [hc, Crown, 1969]) B000KA3AJI [pb, Steimatzky, 1969] B0006CP9UI

Raffi Berg, (**Red Sea Spies: The True Story of Mossad’s Fake Diving Resort** [hc, Icon Books, 2020]) 978-1785786006 [pb, Icon Books, 2020] 978-1785786419 [[See related film](#)] [*To rescue*

thousands of Ethiopian Jews stranded in refugee camps in Sudan, the Mossad established a fake luxury diving resort called the Arous Holiday Village on the Sudanese Red Sea coast. By day, Mossad agents lived as diving instructors and hotel staff, hosting real international tourists who were completely unaware of the staff's true identities. Under the cover of night, the team smuggled refugees from the camps to the coast. From there, the refugees were transported to Israel via Israeli naval vessels and, later, secret airlifts from improvised desert airstrips. Berg wrote the account in collaboration with the operatives involved, including commander Dani Limor and former Mossad head Efraim Halevy. Raffi Berg, born around 1971 in Southport England, is the Middle East editor for the BBC News website. He has been a journalist for over 30 years and has reported extensively on events in Israel and the surrounding region. – Google/AI] [See movie presentation of this story - The Red Sea Diving Resort (2019) – in the companion Filmography.]

Ronen Bergman, (born 1972 and raised in Kiryat Bialik, Israel) - (**Rise and Kill First: The Secret History of Israel's Targeted Assassinations** [hc, Random House, 2018, translated by Ronnie Hope] 978-1400069712 [pb, Random House, 2019] 978-1473694743

Ian Black (born in Sheffield, England, 1953–2023) & **Benny Morris** (born in 1948 at Kibbutz Ein HaChosh, Israel), (**Israel's Secret Wars: A History of Israel's Intelligence Services** [hc, Grove Weidenfeld, 1991]) 978-0802111593

Yossi Cohen, (born 1961 in Jerusalem, Director of the Mossad [2016–2021]) - (**The Sword of Freedom: Israel, Mossad, and the Secret War** [Broadside Books, 2025, no translator specified] [hc, 978-0063259607 [pb] 978-0063479173

Gabriel Dayan, (**Mossad: The Secret History of Israel** [pb, independently published, 2025, no translator specified]) 979-8309106592

Meir Elran, Ephraim Kavie, Meni Itzhaki & Mohammed S. Wattad, “Curbing Violence and Crime in the Arab Sector in Israel: Policy Recommendations”, The Institute for National Security Studies, Tel Aviv University, November 9, 2021.

Anita Engle, (**The Nili Spies** [pb, Routledge, 1997]) 978-0714642932

Matti Friedman, (born 1977, Toronto, Canadian-Israeli journalist and author: resident of Jerusalem) - (**Spies of No Country: Secret Lives at the Birth of Israel** [Algonquin Books] [hc, 2019] 978-1616207229 [pb, 2020] 978-1643750439

Robert R. Friedmann [ed], **Crime and Criminal Justice in Israel: Assessing the Knowledge Base Toward the 21st Century** [hc, SUNY Press, 1998] 978-0791437131 [pb, SUNY Press, 1998] 978-0791437148

Assaf Gur, “A Field Guide to Israeli Organized Crime”, *Tablet*, February 5, 2019. [*This article details the rise of figures like Itzhak Abergil and the expansion of Israeli syndicates into international narcotics and money laundering.* – Google/AI]

Aviva Guttman, (est. born in 1986, in Basel, Switzerland) - (**Operation Wrath of God: The Secret History of European Intelligence and Mossad’s Assassination Campaign** [hc, Cambridge UP, 2025] 978-1009503075

Ben Hartman, “The Israeli Gangster’s Reading List”, *The Tel Aviv Review of Books*, Autumn, 2019. [*Ben Hartman’s article examines the life and trial of Israeli crime boss Yitzhak Abergil, focusing on the contrast between his brutal criminal career and his unexpected engagement with philosophy.*

Abergil, the central figure in the massive “Case 512” trial, is accused of leading a global crime network responsible for drug trafficking, bombings, and multiple murders. His testimony recounts a childhood in extreme poverty in Lod, where he was immersed in crime from an early age and committed serious offenses as a teenager, eventually receiving a long prison sentence.

*While in prison, Abergil learned to read and became deeply influenced by books such as Ayn Rand’s *The Fountainhead* and the works of Friedrich Nietzsche. He claimed these ideas helped shape his thinking and sense of individuality. However, prosecutors argued that he distorted these philosophies to justify violence and selfishness.*

The article presents Abergil as highly intelligent and charismatic, suggesting that under different circumstances he might have succeeded in legitimate society. Ultimately, it questions whether his exposure to literature truly rehabilitated him, noting that he returned to crime and remained one of Israel’s most powerful and dangerous criminals. – ChatGPT]

Hermon, Zeev, Crime Among Jews: A Comparative Study of Criminality Among Minorities and Dominant Groups, monograph (43pp), National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS) Number: 18204, (1974) [- *examines how minority status, social integration, and national sovereignty impact criminal behavior patterns among Jewish populations. Hermon argues that there is an inverse correlation between Jewish involvement in crime and their participation in the broader social, economic, political, and cultural life of their country of residence. The study shows that under conditions of discrimination, Jewish minority crime differed significantly in character from the dominant population. However, as Jews achieved legal emancipation and integrated into majority societies, their types of crime became more similar to those of the dominant groups. Hermon presents a detailed review of crime in the Palestinian region both before and after 1948. He documents a sharp increase in Jewish crime following the establishment of Israel. He uses this to illustrate the theory that when a people’s national life is “normalized” (moving from a minority to a sovereign majority), the amount of deviant and criminal behavior in their society also normalizes to match typical majority rates. The text includes comparative data on Jewish participation in various crime categories versus majority populations across multiple countries. It also provides an analysis of Israeli crime rates categorized by immigrant origin groups, juveniles, and female offenders.* – ChatGPT]

Hertzog, Esther & Erella Shadmi [eds], Prostitution, Pornography and Trafficking in Women: Israel’s Blood Money [hc, Routledge, 2019] 978-1138364585 [pb, Routledge, 2020] 978-0367582029 [*This book critically*

analyzes the sex industry in Israel, using feminist concepts and scholarship to elaborate on the power of prostitution to shape a world in which women are objects for fulfilling men's desires. A comprehensive collection of research-based articles that examine prostitution, trafficking in women and pornography from divergent disciplinary angles, it reveals the interconnectedness of these three aspects of the sex trade which objectifies, commercializes and exploits human – and in particular women's – sexuality. Showing these practices to be embedded in a capitalist and patriarchal oppressive context that is accommodated by state institutions, this volume rejects the argument that it is possible to choose prostitution, and that feminist pornography is possible.

With case studies including the conspicuous context of migration that attracts sex traffickers, the liberal discourse introduced by cinema, the media and the arts that serve to legitimate prostitution and pornography, the chauvinist-macho culture that perceives and treats women as sex objects, and the issues of male prostitution and men as clients, Prostitution, Pornography and Trafficking in Women: Israel's Blood Money constitutes a study of Israel as a unique context in which the sex trade can prosper, in spite of geographical, religious and institutional constraints. As such, it will be of interest to scholars of sociology, anthropology, history, cultural studies and gender and women's studies. – Amazon]

Israel Democracy Institute (IDI) – *The website of this Israeli think tank (<https://en.idi.org.il/tags-en/1929>) offers numerous analyses, articles, op-ed pieces and book references to issues of governance, corruption and civil liberties in contemporary Israeli society.*

Samuel M. Katz, (born 1963) - (**The Ghost Warriors: Inside Israel's Undercover War Against Suicide Terrorism** [hc, Berkley Caliber, 2016] 978-1592409013 [pb, Diversion Books, 2025] 979-8895150108

Katz, Samuel M., (**The Architect of Espionage: The Man Who Built Israel's Mossad into the World's Boldest Intelligence Force** [hc, Scribner, 2025] 978-1668059746 [*Biography of Meir Dagan*]

Katz, Samuel M. (**Guards without Frontiers: Israel's War against Terrorism** [hc, Arms and Armour Press, 1990] 978-0853689300

Yaakov Katz & Amir Bohbot, (**While Israel Slept: How Hamas Surprised the Most Powerful Military in the Middle East** [hc, St. Martin's Press, 2025]) 978-1250345684 [- *tells the inside story of how Hamas, Israel's weakest enemy, succeeded in launching a surprise attack on one of the world's most powerful militaries. Through a detailed examination of the events leading up to October 7, 2023, the book exposes the intelligence and strategic failures that enabled this devastating invasion. It takes readers back in time, showing how years of complacency, mistaken intelligence analysis, and a misguided policy of containment enabled Hamas to prepare for an assault that Israel did not believe was possible and that would change the Middle East.*

The book unveils the dramatic events of the night before the attack, highlighting the cracks in Israel's military and political leadership. It provides unprecedented details on how key warnings were missed, and how Israel ignored the growing threat from Hamas, believing that the group was weak and deterred. By exposing these failures, While Israel Slept offers a stark, sobering account of how overconfidence and complacency paved the way for disaster, while underscoring the critical lessons Israel must embrace to safeguard its future. – Amazon]

Aaron J. Klein, (1960–2016, American-Israeli journalist and author) - (**Striking Back: The 1972 Munich Olympics Massacre and Israel's Deadly Response** [hc, Random House, 2005] 978-1400064274 [pb, Random House, 2007] 978-0812974638

Lotz, Wolfgang [1921–1993], (*The Champagne Spy: Israel's Master Spy Tells His Story* [hc, St. Martin's Press, 1972]) 978-1299261235 [pb, Corgi, 1974] 978-0552095235 [[See related film](#)] [- *autobiography of the German-born Mossad operative who penetrated the highest levels of Egyptian society during the 1960s. Posing as a wealthy, horse-breeding ex-Nazi officer, Lotz threw lavish, champagne-fueled parties to gather critical military intelligence that later helped Israel win the Six-Day War. He and his wife were eventually exposed and imprisoned, and returned to Israel in the prisoner exchanges following the Six-Day War. See the companion list of movies/films for the documentary about Lotz – "The Champagne Spy".*]

Dan Porat, (born 1964, Israel, Hebrew U. Professor of History) - (*Bitter Reckoning: Israel Tries Holocaust Survivors as Nazi Collaborators* [hc, Bellknap/Harvard UP, 2019]) 978-0674988149

Aryeh Rattner (born 1950, Israel) & **Gideon Fishman**, (est. born 1942, in Israel) - (*Justice for All?: Jews and Arabs in the Israeli Criminal Justice System* [Praeger, 1998]) 978-0274662746

Dan Raviv [born 1954, New York City] & **Yossi Melman** [born 1950 in Zabrze, Poland, arrived in Israel 1957] - (*Spies Against Armageddon: Inside Israel's Secret Wars: Updated & Revised* [pb, Levant Books, 2014]) 978-0985437893 [*Updated version of Every Spy a Prince: The Complete History of Israel's Intelligence Community (1990) by same authors*]

Zeena Saiffi & Jeremy Diamond, "A killing a day: How a crime epidemic is spotlighting inequality in Israeli society", [CNN](#), Feb. 15, 2026.

The [Jerusalem Institute for Strategy and Security \(JISS\)](#) and the [Institute for National Security Studies \(INSS\)](#) provide ongoing analysis on why clearance rates for murders in the Arab sector remain as low as **10–15%** compared to over **70%** in the Jewish sector

Mor Shimoni, "This story will never end': The chronicles of organized crime in Israel" [Ynet](#), 07.08.23.

Gad Shimron, (*Mossad Exodus: The Daring Undercover Rescue of the Lost Jewish Tribe* [transl. by Uriel Masad, pb, Gefen Publishing House, 2007] 978-9652294036 [[See related film](#)] [*In 1977, the Mossad spy agency was ordered by then Prime Minister Menachem Begin to rescue thousands of Ethiopian Jewish refugees in Sudan and deliver them to Israel. The agency established a covert forward base in a deserted holiday village in Sudan, and deployed a handful of operatives to launch and oversee the exodus of the refugees by sea and by air, in the early 1980s. First published in Hebrew in 1998, this updated English version offers a firsthand account of how the operation was put in place, and how the Mossad team in Sudan brought it off, despite great personal risk, running a partying vacation spot for wealthy tourists by day as they stole through the Sudanese desert to rescue desperate refugees by night. The book sheds light on American involvement in the latter stages of the operation, when the White House facilitated an airlift of Ethiopian Jews and the CIA station in Khartoum sheltered the last Mossad operatives, on the run from Libyan secret service agents, and spirited them out of Sudan in special boxes labeled "Diplomatic Mail". – Amazon*] **Gad Shimron** (born 1950, Tel Aviv) served in the Mossad for over a decade and was a key member of the team that

*ran the secret diving resort in Sudan. Following his intelligence career, he became a prominent journalist. He served as the European correspondent for the daily newspaper **Ma'ariv** and was an anchorman for the "Good Morning Israel" show on TV Channel 1. He currently lives in the **Tel Aviv** area, where he continues to work as a defense commentator and senior editor for the **Ma'ariv** daily. [Google/AI] [See movie presentation of this story - **The Red Sea Diving Resort (2019)** – in the companion Filmography.] Shimron also co-authored the following:*

Kuenzle, Anton & Gad Shimron, (**The Execution of the Hangman of Riga: The Only Execution of a War Criminal by the Mossad** [transl. from the Hebrew by Uriel Masad, hc, Vallentine Mitchell, 2004] 978-0853035336 [pb, Vallentine Mitchell, 2004] 978-0853035251 [- an account of the operation carried out in 1964-65 to identify, locate and execute the notorious Nazi war criminal, Herbert Cukurs, who was personally responsible for the murder of over 30,000 Latvian Jews. Note: "Anton Kuenzle" was a pseudonym for Yaakov Meidad, who passed away in Tel Aviv in 2012.]

Efrat Shoham, (**Prison Tattoos: A Study of Russian Inmates in Israel** [pb, Springer, 2015] 978-3319158709

Dina Siegel, (**The Israeli Mafia: A Cultural Journey into Israeli Organized Crime** [hc, Springer, 2024] 978-3031735608 [pb, Springer, 2025] 978-3031735639 [*This book undertakes a comprehensive examination of the intricate socio-economic and cultural landscapes that have shaped the criminal operations of a diverse array of Jewish and non-Jewish criminal entities, spanning 1948–2024.*

Drawing upon meticulous ethnographic fieldwork conducted in Israel between 2020 and 2024, alongside rigorous media analysis, interviews conducted both domestically and internationally, and a wealth of visual material captured by the author during fieldwork, this study offers unparalleled insights into the dynamics of Israel's underworld. It examines the multifaceted activities of various criminal organizations, including but not limited to drug and human trafficking, protection rackets, gambling enterprises, and contract killings.

Moreover, this book critically examines the responses of authorities and law enforcement agencies to the escalating influence of organized crime amidst the backdrop of major socio-political upheavals in Israel, ranging from wars and waves of immigration to terrorist attacks. By contextualizing these criminal phenomena within broader historical and contemporary narratives, this work not only fills a significant gap in scholarly discourse but also provides a nuanced understanding of the intersections between crime, society, and governance in the Israeli context. – Amazon]

Gordon Thomas, (1933–2017, born in Wales) - (**Gideon's Spies: The Secret History of the Mossad** [pb, St Martin's Press, 2015, revised edition] 978-1250056405

Marc E. Vargo, (born 1954, US) - (**The Mossad: Six Landmark Missions of the Israeli Intelligence Agency, 1960–1990** [McFarland, 2015]) 978-0786479146

Historical: The Militant Struggle between the Irgun (Etzel) and Lehi (Stern Gang) Organizations and the British Mandatory Government in Palestine and the British Army Prior to 1948

This is included because it illustrates how political struggles are defined as “heroic” or “criminal/terrorist”, depending on which side you are on. Can no distinctions be made, depending for example on whether hostilities are directed at military or civilian targets? Yes, I believe so, but will not address such issues here, restricting this treatment to listing a few significant published works on the pre-1948 era, assisted by Google/AI:

Essential Memoirs and Primary Accounts

Begin, Menachem (*The Revolt: Story of the Irgun* [hc, Nash Publishing, 1977] 978-0840213709 [pb, Dell Publishing, 1978] 978-0440175988 [*This classic memoir is the most famous account of the Irgun’s campaign. Written by the man who led the organization starting in 1943, it details the 1944 proclamation of revolt, the bombing of the King David Hotel, and the tactical philosophy of the underground. It is widely considered a foundational text for understanding the “fighting spirit” of the Revisionist movement.*]

Golan, Zev, (*Stern: The Man and His Gang* [pb, Yair Publishing, 2018] 978-9659172405 [*Published by the Lehi Heritage Association, this is a primary English-language biography of Avraham “Yair” Stern. It explores the “Revolutionary Zionism” ideology and includes a complete list of Lehi’s military operations against the British.*]

Bishop, Patrick, (*The Reckoning: Death and Intrigue in the Promised Land* [pb, William Collins, 2015] 978-0007506194 [*On a cold, bright morning in February 1942, fugitive Avraham Stern was cornered in a flat in Tel Aviv and shot dead. His killer, Assistant Superintendent Geoffrey Morton, claimed Stern was trying to escape. But Stern was no ordinary criminal. And witnesses insisted he was executed in cold blood. Stern was a militant Zionist, self-proclaimed Jewish liberator of British Palestine and mastermind of bloody terrorist attacks targeting and killing policemen. On the run from Morton, a British colonial policeman assigned to capture him, his shooting inspired a cult of martyrdom that would ignite enmities between Jews, British and Arabs in the future hotbed of Israel. The Reckoning is the first book to tell the tale of a rebel who terrorized Palestine, the lawman determined to stop him and the events that led to their fatal meeting.* – Amazon]

Hoffman, Bruce, (*Anonymous Soldiers: The Struggle for Israel, 1917–1947* [hc, Knopf, 2015] 978-0307594716 [pb, Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2016] 978-0307741615 [*Often cited as the definitive modern account, this book uses newly opened archives to show how Irgun and Lehi tactics eventually forced the British out of Palestine. It provides a detailed look at the methodology of their guerrilla campaigns and the leadership of Begin and Stern.*]

Bell, J. Bowyer, (*Terror Out of Zion: The Fight for Israeli Independence* [hc, Routledge, 2017] 978-1138533967 [pb, Routledge, 1996] 978-1560008705 [*A detailed study of the military origins of modern Israel. Bell interviewed many surviving members of the Irgun and Lehi to chronicle their assassinations, bombings, and prison escapes, framing them as a “primer” for understanding contemporary Israeli political divisions.*]

Heller, Joseph, (*The Stern Gang: Ideology, Politics and Terror, 1940–1949* [hc, Routledge, 1995] 978-0714645582 [pb, Routledge, 1995] 978-1138982949 [*This is a rigorous scholarly work that examines the specific political and ideological schisms that led Lehi to split from the Irgun. It is particularly noted for its thoroughness in tracking the group’s radical anti-imperialist stance. Author not to be confused with American fiction author by the same name.*]

Segev, Tom, (One Palestine, Complete [hc, Metropolitan Books, 2000] 978-0805048483 [pb, Picador, 2001] 978-0805065879 [*While broader in scope, this acclaimed history provides a detailed look at the interactions between Jews, Arabs, and the British during the Mandate, placing the underground struggles within the wider geopolitical context.*]

Van Tonder, Gerry, (Irgun: Revisionist Zionism, 1931–1948) [pb, Pen and Sword Military, 2019] 978-1526728692 - *Part of the “History of Terror” series, this book serves as an introductory guide. It uses contemporary newspaper clippings and sources to explain the ideological roots of Revisionist Zionism and the group’s transition from pro-British to anti-British activities.*]

Zadka, Saul, (Blood in Zion: How the Jewish Guerrillas Drove the British Out of Palestine [hc, Brassey’s, 2003] 978-1857531367 [*This work specifically focuses on the guerrilla tactics of these groups and their role in undermining the British administration’s ability to govern the territory.* – Google/AI]

Israeli Law Enforcement (focus on Israel Police):

[Note: The Israel Police has been become controversial in recent years due to domestic political factors. The literature cited below, which ChatGPT provided in an inquiry about the Israel Police, emphasizes the professional aspects of the Israel Police, and its interaction with international police organizations and researchers. It is hoped that these aspects of its activity and organizational culture will again characterize the activities of the Israel Police in the coming period.]

Jonathan-Zamir, Tal, David Weisburd, and Badi Hasisi, eds., **(Policing in Israel: Studying Crime Control, Community, and Counterterrorism** [hc, Routledge, 2015]) 978-1498722568 [pb, Routledge, 2020] 978-0367873042 [*- a substantial collection devoted specifically to Israeli policing rather than Israeli security generally. Topics include crime concentrations in Tel Aviv-Jaffa, traffic enforcement, police organization, relations with minorities, victims’ attitudes toward police, police legitimacy, counterterrorism, and police-community relations. - Policing in Israel presents important advances in Israeli police science during the past decade. It demonstrates how empirical research in countries outside the traditional research domains of the United States, Europe, and Australia can provide comparative legitimacy to key concepts and findings in policing. It also addresses innovative questions in the study of police, showing that there is much to learn about the police enterprise by looking to Israel.*

The studies included in this book contribute to the policing literature in three significant ways. They replicate findings from English-speaking countries on key issues such as hot-spots policing, thereby supporting the validity of the findings and enabling a wider scope of generalization. Also, they utilize unique Israeli conditions to address questions that are difficult to test in other countries, such as in counterterrorism. Finally, they ask innovative questions in the study of policing that are yet to be addressed elsewhere. – Amazon]

Jonathan-Zamir, Tal, David Weisburd, and Badi Hasisi, **(Policing Terrorism, Crime Control, and Police-Community Relations: Learning from the Israeli Experience** [hc, Springer, 2014]) 978-3319081250 [pb, Springer, 2016] 978-3319362762 [*This timely and important work takes a critical*

look at the shifting role of police, who are becoming increasingly responsible for handling terrorism threats on top of their regular responsibilities. With an unprecedented empirical study, the authors of this book examine whether this increased focus on security-related threats may come at the expense of addressing “classic” police responsibilities, such as fighting crime and dealing with local, day-to-day community problems. They also examine whether this shift has had a detrimental effect on police-community relationships and perceptions of police legitimacy, as their role changes from “service” to “suspicion.” Through a four-year, multi-method study specifically focused on the Israel National Police, the authors of this work have examined the effects of this shifting role on a number of key areas of policing concern, namely: police effectiveness at fighting crime and police legitimacy, drawing conclusions applicable to any democratic police force. The results of the study provide a number of concrete recommendations for maintaining effectiveness and community relationships of the police, with increasing responsibilities, challenges, and limited resources.

*An important empirical study of what happens when an ordinary civilian police force also assumes major counterterrorism responsibilities. Particularly valuable for the tension between **normal crime control and security policing**, and the effects on police-community relations, especially Arab-Jewish relations. – Amazon]*

Ben-Porat, Guy, and Fany Yuval, (**Policing Citizens: Minority Policy in Israel** [hc, Cambridge UP, 2019]) 978-1108417259 [pb, Cambridge UP, 2020] 978-1108404747 [*What does police violence against minorities, or violent clashes between minorities and the police tell us about citizenship and its internal hierarchies? Indicative of deep-seated tensions and negative perceptions; incidents such as these suggest how minorities are vulnerable, suffer from or are subject to police abuse and neglect in Israel. Marked by skin colour, negatively stigmatized or rendered security threats, their encounters with police provide a daily reminder of their defunct citizenship. Taking as case studies the experiences and perceptions of four minority groups within Israel including Palestinian/Arab citizens, ultra-Orthodox Jews and Ethiopian and Russian immigrants, Ben-Porat and Yuval are able to explore different paths of citizenship and the stratification of the citizenship regime through relations with and perceptions of the police in Israel. Touching on issues such as racial profiling, police brutality and neighbourhood neglect, their study questions the notions of citizenship and belonging, shedding light on minority relationships with the state and its institutions. – Amazon]*

Saunders, Jessica, Steven W. Popper, Andrew R. Morral, Robert C. Davis, Claude Berrebi, Kristin J. Leuschner, Shira Efron, Boaz Segalovitz, and Jack Riley. (**Effective Policing for 21st-Century Israel** [pb, RAND Corporation, 2013] 978-0833080936 [*The Israel Police and the Ministries of Public Security and Finance commissioned RAND to examine the force. Their report covers public confidence, organizational performance, benchmarking against foreign police organizations, crime prevention, deterrence and performance measurement. It is particularly helpful in providing a concise institutional description of the modern Israel Police.*]

Particularly useful articles and chapters

Hovav, Meir, and Menachem Amir, “**Israel Police: History and Analysis**,” *Police Studies* 2, no. 2 (1979): 5–31 [*An older but important English-language overview of the history and development of the Israel Police.*]

Gamson, William A., and Ephraim Yuchtman, “**Police and Society in Israel**,” In David H. Bayley, ed., **Police and Society**, 195–218. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1977. [*One of the earliest substantial English-language scholarly treatments of the police in Israeli society. The volume grew out of a 1976 conference on the social determinants of police behavior.*]

Herzog, Sergio, “**Militarization and Demilitarization Processes in the Israeli and American Police Forces: Organizational and Social Aspects**,” *Policing and Society* 11, no. 2 (2001): 181–208. DOI:

10.1080/10439463.2001.9964861. [*Very useful on one of the distinctive features of Israeli law enforcement: the boundary between the civilian police model and military/security culture. Herzog compares developments in Israel and the United States and discusses attempts to make Israeli policing more civilian and community-oriented.*]

Hasisi, Badi, and Ronald Weitzer, **“Police Relations with Arabs and Jews in Israel,”** British Journal of Criminology 47, no. 5 (September 2007): 728–745. DOI: 10.1093/bjc/azm027. [*One of the key articles on majority/minority relations and policing. It compares Arab and Jewish assessments of the police and places Israel in the comparative literature on policing ethnically divided societies.*]

Hasisi, Badi, **“Police, Politics, and Culture in a Deeply Divided Society,”** Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology 98, no. 3 (2008): 1119–1145. [*An important theoretical and empirical discussion of Israeli police-minority relations. Hasisi argues that political conflict alone does not adequately explain minority attitudes toward police; cultural differences must also be considered.*]

Weisburd, David, Badi Hasisi, Tal Jonathan [Jonathan-Zamir], and Gali Aviv, **“Terrorist Threats and Police Performance: A Study of Israeli Communities,”** British Journal of Criminology 50, no. 4 (July 2010): 725–747. DOI: 10.1093/bjc/azp064. [*Especially interesting because it asks whether counterterrorism responsibilities undermine ordinary police work. It uses the Second Intifada as a natural setting for examining police clearance rates and differences between Jewish and Arab communities.*]

Jonathan, Tal [Tal Jonathan-Zamir], **“Police Involvement in Counter-Terrorism and Public Attitudes Towards the Police in Israel—1998–2007,”** British Journal of Criminology 50, no. 4 (July 2010): 748–771. DOI: 10.1093/bjc/azp044. [*This belongs immediately alongside Weisburd et al. It examines how the Israel Police's counterterrorism role affected public attitudes toward the force over roughly a decade. The two articles appeared together in the BJC's section on policing conflict zones.*]

Jonathan-Zamir, Tal, and Amikam Harpaz, **“Police Understanding of the Foundations of Their Legitimacy in the Eyes of the Public: The Case of Commanding Officers in the Israel National Police,”** British Journal of Criminology 54, no. 3 (May 2014): 469–489. [*An unusually interesting study because it approaches policing from the police officers' own perspective: what senior Israeli police commanders think gives the police legitimacy. One significant finding is the gap between commanders' emphasis on effectiveness/crime fighting and citizens' greater concern with procedural fairness.*]

Aviv, Gali, **“Crime Victims and Attitudes Towards the Police: The Israeli Case,”** Police Practice and Research 15, no. 2 (2014): 115–129. DOI: 10.1080/15614263.2013.874170. [*Based on a large Israeli community survey; examines how crime victims evaluate police treatment, effectiveness and trustworthiness compared with non-victims.*]

Hasisi, Badi, and David Weisburd. **“Policing Terrorism and Police–Community Relations: Views of the Arab Minority in Israel,”** Police Practice and Research 15, no. 2 (2014): 158–172. DOI: 10.1080/15614263.2013.874173. [*Important on the intersection of ordinary law enforcement, counterterrorism and Arab citizens' relationship with the police. Interestingly, the research found considerable Arab recognition of a legitimate police counterterrorism role alongside greater concern about its consequences for Arab-police relations.*]

Perry, Simon, and Tal Jonathan-Zamir, **“Lessons from Empirical Research on Policing in Israel: Policing Terrorism and Police–Community Relationships,”** Police Practice and Research 15, no. 2 (2014): 173–187. [*A particularly useful synthesis. In fact, volume 15, no. 2 of Police Practice and Research (2014) is worth treating almost as a mini-book: the entire issue is entitled “Trends in Israeli Policing: Terrorism, Community, Victimization and Crime Control.”*]

Ater, Itai, Yehonatan Givati, and Oren Rigbi, **“Organizational Structure, Police Activity and Crime,”** *Journal of Public Economics* 115 (July 2014): 62–71. [*A clever empirical study of an Israeli reform that transferred responsibility for holding arrestees from the police to the prison authority. The authors found that relieving police of this cost increased arrests and reduced reported crime, while also reducing the average quality of arrests as measured by subsequent indictments. It is a useful piece on the nuts and bolts of Israeli law enforcement rather than terrorism or ethnic relations.*]

Ben-Porat, Guy, and Tehila Gado. [**“Were It Not for Fear of the Government”:** Haredi (Ultra-Orthodox) Citizens and the Police] Policy Paper 196. Jerusalem: Israel Democracy Institute, 2024. [978-0833080936 [*This is highly pertinent because it deals specifically with the complicated relationship between Haredi Jews and the Israeli police.*]

Relevant Publications by Israeli Lawyers and Judges:

Sheftel, Yoram, **The Demjanjuk Affair: The Rise and Fall of a Show-Trial**, [Translated from the Hebrew by Haim Watzman, hc, Victor Gollancz, 1994]) 978-0575057951 – Expanded American edition: Sheftel, Yoram. **Defending “Ivan the Terrible”: The Conspiracy to Convict John Demjanjuk.** [hc, Regnery Publishing, 1996] 978-0895264589 [*- an intensely personal legal memoir. Sheftel was Demjanjuk's Israeli defense attorney, and the narrative recounts his own participation in one of Israel's most sensational criminal trials.*]

Langer, Felicia, **(With My Own Eyes: Israel and the Occupied Territories, 1967-1973** [pb, Ithaca Press, 1975]) 978-0903729116 [[Langer (1930–2018) was an Israeli lawyer who became particularly prominent for representing Palestinians in Israeli military courts. This is really autobiographical scholarly literature built around Langer's experiences as counsel beginning in 1968. It gives a defense lawyer's first-person view of the Israeli military-justice and security system,

Lahav, Pnina, **(Judgment in Jerusalem: Chief Justice Simon Agranat and the Zionist Century.** [hc, University of California Press, 1997] 978-0520205956 [*Simon Agranat (1906-1992) was the third chief justice of the Israeli Supreme Court and a founding father of Israeli law. Born in Louisville, Kentucky, and educated at the University of Chicago, Agranat brought U.S. progressivism and constitutionalism to Israeli legal soil. Agranat laid the foundation for Israel's bill of rights and took part in nearly every important Israeli legal and political issue of this century. Pnina Lahav's rewarding study of Simon Agranat portrays Israeli history through the lens of judicial opinions. It is based on her extensive interviews with the justice before his death and a close examination of his papers. A major theme in her book is the relationship between Agranat's world view and landmark Israeli Supreme Court opinions, and she tells the compelling story of a visionary jurist and an American pursuing his Zionist dream in Palestine. Here, too, is an illuminating view of Israeli history and legal culture that includes the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Holocaust, the symbiosis between religion and the Jewish state, and the tensions within Zionism itself. Lahav also details the thinking behind Agranat's 1962 decision to convict Adolph Eichmann and the justice's dissent in the "Who Is a Jew?" case in 1970 – Amazon]*

Cohn, Haim H., **(Mevo Ishi: Otobiografyah [A Personal Introduction: Autobiography]** – Hebrew, not translated [pb, Kinneret, Zmora-Bitan, Dvir, 2005, *unfinished manuscript supplemented by Justice Cohn's widow, Michal Zamora-Cohn and by his fellow Supreme Court Justice , Yitzhak Zamir. An unusually reflective autobiography by one of Israel's foundational jurists, tracing Cohn's journey from Orthodox German-Jewish youth to secular Zionist, Attorney General and Supreme Court justice, with*

*particularly valuable reflections on prosecutorial independence, the Kastner affair, Jewish law, state security and the development of his increasingly liberal conception of individual rights. It is one of the relatively rare genuinely autobiographical accounts by a senior Israeli figure who actually participated in **criminal prosecution and the construction of Israel's law-enforcement system**, rather than merely adjudicating cases later.- ChatGPT]*

Barak, Aharon, “**Foreword: A Judge on Judging: The Role of a Supreme Court in a Democracy,**” Harvard Law Review 116, no. 1 (November 2002): 16/19–162/165. [*This is not an autobiography, but it is highly personal professional reflection: after 24 years on the Israeli Supreme Court, Barak asks what makes someone a “good judge” and discusses his own judicial experience and philosophy. Much of The Judge in a Democracy grew from this material.*]

Barak, Aharon, “**The Role of a Supreme Court in a Democracy,**” Hastings Law Journal 53, no. 5 (2002): 1205–1216. [*This originated as his 2001 Justice Matthew O. Tobriner Memorial Lecture and contains first-person reflections on judicial lawmaking, balancing values and judicial fallibility.*]

Barak, Aharon, “**The Role of a Supreme Court in a Democracy and the Fight Against Terrorism,**” University of Miami Law Review 58 (2003): 125–146. [*Barak here discusses, from a judge's perspective, the Israeli Court's encounters with terrorism and governmental security measures.*]

Barak, Aharon, “**Human Rights in Times of Terror—A Judicial Point of View,**” Legal Studies 28, no. 4 (December 2008): 493–505. DOI 10.1111/j.1748-121X.2008.00096.x. [*Particularly useful - he explains what it was like for the Israeli Supreme Court to review interrogation, detention and other counterterrorism measures while terrorism was actually occurring.*]

Barak, Aharon, “**Human Rights in Israel,**” Israel Law Review Vol. 39 (2006). [*This is another retrospective treatment of Israel's constitutional revolution, human rights in the occupied territories and judicial responses to terrorism.*]

Rubinstein, Elyakim, “**The Attorney General in Israel: A Delicate Balance of Powers and Responsibilities in a Jewish and Democratic State,**” Israel Affairs 11, no. 2 (2005): 417–433. DOI 10.1080/1353712042000326533. [*Rubinstein writes out of his own experience as Attorney General and describes the office's four functions: chief criminal prosecutor, representative of the government in litigation, legal adviser to government, and protector of the public interest. He discusses actual governmental decision-making and the tensions between law enforcement, security, civil rights and politics.*]

Rubinstein, Elyakim, “**From the Heart,**” Philadelphia Jewish Exponent, April 2, 2025. [*This is explicitly autobiographical in passages: Rubinstein looks back over nearly half a century of public service, including roughly fifteen years around the cabinet table and fifteen years as a judge, and connects that experience to his concerns about Israeli democracy.*]

Zamir, Yitzhak, (Parashat ha-Otobus be-Kav 300 [The Bus 300 Affair]) Edited by Yuval Gilad. [Kinneret Zmora Dvir, 2026.] 978-9655851489. [Hebrew.] [*Zamir, Israel's Attorney General from 1978 to 1986 and later a Supreme Court justice, gives his first-person reconstruction of one of the gravest scandals in Israeli law enforcement and national security. Importantly, the book rests on an account Zamir wrote contemporaneously during the affair; subsequently misplaced among his papers and rediscovered decades later. He has supplemented and rewritten that record in light of later evidence and the present Israeli political-legal situation.*

The story begins with the April 12, 1984 hijacking of Egged bus 300 by four Palestinian terrorists. Israeli forces stormed the bus. Two hijackers were killed during the rescue, but the other two were captured alive and subsequently killed while in Shin Bet custody. The scandal that followed concerned

not only the killings but an elaborate effort by senior Shin Bet personnel to conceal what had happened, coordinate false testimony and divert responsibility.

For Zamir, the heart of the story is therefore not the hijacking itself but the struggle over whether the security services are subject to ordinary law. As Attorney General, he became increasingly convinced that allegations against the Shin Bet required a proper criminal investigation. He found himself confronting Shin Bet director Avraham Shalom, the government, and ultimately both Prime Ministers Yitzhak Shamir and Shimon Peres, who preferred to contain or terminate the affair rather than risk the damage that a full investigation might cause the security service.

The book has something of a detective-story structure. Zamir gradually pieces together what occurred while facing conflicting accounts, censorship, investigative commissions and institutional resistance. He also incorporates other participants' later testimony—including that of the three Shin Bet officials who exposed the cover-up—so that the book is not merely his recollection but a multi-perspective reconstruction of the affair.

The table of contents is revealing. Zamir first explains the three institutions whose collision produced the crisis—the government, Shin Bet and Attorney General—then examines Shin Bet discipline and interrogation practices before turning to the hijacking, the Shin Bet investigation, military censorship, the Zorea Commission and the subsequent cover-up.

*The larger theme is **the rule of law versus raison d'état**. Zamir argues, in effect, that security institutions may sincerely believe that they are protecting the country while coming to identify their own institutional interests with the national interest. The danger becomes acute when government itself is willing to shield the security service from legal accountability. Zamir sees Bus 300 as a warning about what happens when institutions place their own prestige or perceived security needs above legal restraints.*

This also makes the book more than a historical memoir. Zamir explicitly regards the affair as relevant to the current tension between Israel's political/security institutions and its legal system. It is therefore both retrospective testimony and a defense of the institutional independence of the Attorney General and the principle that national-security agencies remain subject to law. – ChatGPT]

Cohn, Haim, “**Twenty-Five Years of Criminal Procedure in Israel**,” *Israel Law Review* 10 (1975): 225–241 — excellent historical/professional perspective.

Cohn, Haim, “**The Immorality of Punishment**,” *Israel Law Review* 25 (1991): 28 ff. — particularly pertinent to crime and punishment.

Note: The leading justices of Israel’s judicial system have been brilliantly prolific in their writing and this list could go on infinitely, including publications of Meir Shamgar, Menachem Elon, Yitzhak Kahan, Moshe Landau, Moshe Silberg, Edna Arbel, Miriam Ben-Porat, Jacob Turkel, Dalia Dorner, Moshe Bejski and many others, going far beyond the mandate of this bibliography. Future researchers will navigate this massive body of knowledge and opinion for a wider public. As for me, I rest my case here.

Israeli Organized Crime

The landscape of Israeli organized crime has shifted significantly as traditional Jewish syndicates have been weakened by high-profile prosecutions, making way for the “Big Five” Arab-Israeli crime families that now dominate much of the underworld.

Key Israeli Crime Families (2024–2026 Status)

Criminal operations in Israel are currently characterized by a “strategic threat” from powerful clans utilizing military-grade weaponry and sophisticated financial extortion networks.

- **Abergil Family (Jewish Sector):** Historically Israel’s most powerful syndicate, its leadership has effectively collapsed following **Case 512**. In **November 2024**, the Supreme Court rejected the final appeal of **Yitzhak Abergil**, upholding his sentence of **three life terms plus 30 years** for murder and drug trafficking.
- **The Jarushi Family (Arab Sector):** Based in Ramla’s Jawarish neighborhood, they are known for their massive wealth generated through **extortion, arms trafficking, and “gray market” loans**. They are currently embroiled in a violent feud with the **Musrati family**.
- **The Hariri Family (Arab Sector):** One of the “Big Five,” this clan dominates the northern and central regions. Recent **April 2026** raids led to multiple arrests for **extortion and threats**, following a year-long undercover investigation by the.
- **The Abu Latif Family (Arab Sector):** Operating primarily from the village of Rama in the North, they were targeted in a massive **February 2025** operation where **38 members** were detained for racketeering and tax evasion.
- **Other Notable Groups:**

Domrani and Musli Organizations: Identified by police as the two remaining dominant national Jewish criminal organizations.

Bakri and Karaja Clans: Major players in the northern “Big Five” hierarchy.

Detectives, Police, and Specialized Units

Law enforcement in Israel is centralized under the Israel Police.

Lahav 433: Often called the “Israeli FBI,” this is the national umbrella unit for fighting **organized crime and corruption**. It includes several specialized subunits:

Yahal (National Fraud Investigation Unit)

Yakhbal (International Crime Investigations)

Etgar (Vehicle Theft Prevention) – regarded as rampant and poorly controlled by police measures.

The connection between the **Israel Police** and the **Shin Bet** (Israel Security Agency, acronym of **Sherut Bitachon Klali**) is a partnership between civil law enforcement and internal intelligence that has recently become highly controversial due to shifting government policies and rising crime.

The Functional Division of Labor

Israel Police: Responsible for maintaining public order, investigating standard civil crimes (theft, domestic violence, etc.), and managing the Prosecution Department for less severe offenses.

Shin Bet: A clandestine intelligence service answering directly to the Prime Minister. Its primary mandate is counter-terrorism, counter-espionage, and protecting state symbols.

Operational Overlap & Cooperation: The two organizations frequently collaborate in several “gray areas”:

Nationalistic Crime: The Shin Bet regularly assists police in cases with nationalistic or ideological motives, such as “Jewish terror” in the West Bank or internal riots. This issue has become particularly explosive as attacks by vigilante groups drawn from Israeli West Bank settlements and other areas have increased in frequency, violence and lethality, attracting strong international condemnation and even the opposition of some rabbinic and settlement leaders.

Shared Task Forces: Units like **Lahav 433** (the “Israeli FBI”) often run joint operations with Shin Bet personnel, particularly when criminal activities—like weapons smuggling—threaten national security.

New Special Units: *As of April 2026, the police are forming a new unit under Lahav 433 specifically to tackle Iranian espionage cases, which will be staffed and run in coordination with Shin Bet.*

Recent Controversies (2024–2026)

The relationship has been strained by political efforts to blur the lines between their duties:

Combating Arab-Sector Crime: *Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir have pushed for the Shin Bet to be deployed against criminal clans. While previous Shin Bet leadership resisted this as a move toward a “police state,” current chief **David Zini** (appointed late 2025) has shown more alignment with the government’s stance.*

Resource Reallocation: *In December 2025, the government approved redirecting \$68 million from social programs to both the police and Shin Bet to bolster their joint fight against organized crime.*

Legal & Ethics Concerns: *Organizations like the Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI) have petitioned the Supreme Court to limit Shin Bet’s involvement in civil matters, arguing that the agency’s use of covert surveillance and specialized interrogation violates due process. [Google/AI]*

Yigal Amir:

There might be some objection to classifying a politically motivated assassin among criminals. To regard as criminal someone who fired two bullets into the Prime Minister of Israel, is a no-brainer for me. Note: The assassination was not completely unprecedented. Pre-State Jewish history in Palestine included some other assassinations - Jacob de Haan in 1924, Haim Arlozorov in 1933, Eliahu Giladi in 1943, and various other Jews deemed collaborators or traitors. Israel Rezső Kasztner was gunned down in Ramat Gan in 1957 for alleged collaboration with the Nazis during the Holocaust. In his case, unlike the others, Jews were both arrested and convicted for the murder.

Amir’s public execution of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, for which he has never expressed any remorse – on the contrary, his only expressed regret was not to have done it two years earlier, before Rabin signed the Oslo Accords - was in a category of its own. Surprisingly, perhaps, there is no detailed biographical publication about Amir in English, and I will make do with an edited version of the Wikipedia article about him, followed by details of various books and articles about the assassination and its aftermath. It is worth reviewing some of the details of Amir’s background and robust insistence on his full prisoner rights, following his conviction and sentencing.

Amir was born in Herzliya in 1970 to an Israeli Orthodox Yemenite Jewish family, the second of eight children. After graduating high school in 1989, he served 20 months of military service in the Israel Defense Forces as a Hesder student, combining army service in a religious platoon of the Golani Brigade, with religious study at Yeshivat Kerem B’Yavneh between 1991 and 1993.

In early 1993, Amir successfully applied for a handgun permit, listing the reason as self-defense while providing a false residence in Shavei Shomron, a Jewish settlement in the West Bank. In summer 1993, shortly after his graduation from Kerem B’Yavneh, Amir was nominated by the religious-Zionist youth movement Bnei Akiva to teach Judaism in Riga, Latvia, for two months.

After returning to Israel in October 1993, Amir began studying law, Jewish law and computer science at Bar-Ilan University. He was known for his argumentative nature during debates with his rabbis, including Bar-Ilan University Dean Moshe Razel, holding the view that Jewish laws took priority over the secular laws of Israel.

Amir strongly opposed to the Oslo Accords between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization. He participated in protest rallies against the accords on campus, was active in organizing weekend bus outings to support Israeli settlers, and helped found an illegal settlement outpost. He was especially active in Hebron, where he led marches through the streets. After the accords, Amir reasoned in discussions with friends that the commandment “thou shalt not kill” did not apply to Rabin because he

had “hand[ed] over Jewish holy lands to the Arabs, [thus] blocking the redemption of the Jewish people.”^[6]

On November 4, 1995, after a demonstration in Tel Aviv’s Kings of Israel Square (now Rabin Square) in support of the Oslo Accords, Amir waited for Rabin in a parking lot adjacent to the square, close to Rabin’s official limousine. There, he shot Rabin twice and injured Yoram Rubin, a security guard, with a third shot. Amir was immediately seized by Rabin’s bodyguards. Rabin was rushed to Ichilov Hospital where he died 40 minutes later. According to the court, Yigal Amir’s brother Hagai and his friend Dror Adani were his accomplices in the assassination plan. Upon hearing that Rabin was dead, Amir told the police that he was “satisfied” and was acting on the “orders of God”. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yigal_Amir_-_cite_note-cnn.com-12 At his trial, Amir said he did not care if the outcome was death or paralysis as long as Rabin was “out of the way”. He expressed no regret for his actions.

Prior to Amir’s trial, his judges ordered a mental examination by three district psychiatrists and a clinical psychiatrist, who all agreed that he understood the meaning of his actions and was fit to stand trial.

Amir admitted to shooting Rabin and justified” his actions on religious grounds, claiming that shooting Rabin was an act of *din rodef* (“law of the pursuer”), which would allow killing to prevent the deaths of innocent Jews. He also claimed he had only intended to paralyze Rabin and not kill him. The court rejected his arguments, and he was found guilty of murder and inflicting injury under aggravating circumstances over the wounding of Yoram Rubin. He was sentenced to life imprisonment for the murder of Rabin plus six additional years in prison for injuring Rubin. In their verdict, the three judges wrote:

“Every murder is an abominable act, but the act before us is more abominable sevenfold, because not only has the accused not expressed regret or sorrow, but he also seeks to show that he is at peace with himself over the act that he perpetrated. He who so calmly cuts short another’s life, only proves the depth of wretchedness to which [his] values have fallen, and thus he does not merit any regard whatsoever, except pity, because he has lost his humanity.”

Amir’s claim that he was acting in accordance with Jewish law was rejected by the judges: “The attempt to grant religious authority to the murder ... is completely inappropriate and amounts to cynical exploitation of Jewish law for goals that are alien to Judaism.”

Rabin’s assassination was condemned by Bar-Ilan University. Daniel Sperber, a professor of Talmud at the university, said that the assassination “in no way represents the university or the policy of the university”

Amir was later sentenced to an additional five years, and after an appeal on behalf of the state, eight years, for conspiring to commit the assassination with his brother Hagai Amir and Dror Adani. All of the sentences were cumulative. In Israel, a sentence of life imprisonment is usually reduced to a period of 20–30 years by the president, with the possibility of further reduction for good behaviour. However, President Moshe Katsav did not reduce the sentence, saying that there is “no forgiveness, no absolution, and no pardon” for Yigal Amir. Prime ministers Benjamin Netanyahu and Ehud Olmert have also said that Yigal Amir will never be released from prison.

In 2001 the Knesset approved the Yigal Amir Law which prohibits a parole board from recommending pardon or shortening time in prison for a murderer of a prime minister. His legal team and supporters deride the law as being tailor made to punish Amir, being applied retroactively.

Amir was held in solitary confinement in Beersheba’s Eshel Prison, and moved in 2003 to the Ayalon Prison in Ramla, where a solitary confinement wing was built especially for him. In 2006, he was transferred to Rimonim Prison in Tel Mond, near Netanya. He was also granted the privileges of having no surveillance cameras in his cell, the right to receive visitors in the visiting room, rather than in his cell, and the right to speak with other prisoners. Amir was interviewed by the Israeli press in

2008, but the planned broadcast was controversial and subsequently cancelled. As punishment for giving the interview, Amir was moved to Ramon Prison, and had a number of privileges withdrawn, including the removal of his TV and DVD player and the refusal of family visits; Amir went on a hunger strike in protest.^[22] In February 2010, the Nazareth District Court permitted the Ynet internet news service to interview him.

In July 2010, after 15 years of solitary confinement, Amir appealed to the Petah Tikva District Court to be permitted to participate in group prayers in accordance with Jewish law. He claimed that the terms of his imprisonment were worse than any other prisoner in the history of the State of Israel, on the grounds that no other prisoner had been in solitary for this amount of time. He said that failure to allow him to pray in synagogue would be a violation of his right to freedom of worship. In August 2010, the court ruled that Amir would be allowed to meet another prisoner for prayer three times a week, and that he would be allowed to study Torah with another prisoner once every two weeks.

In July 2012, it was announced that Amir would no longer be held in solitary confinement. Under his new prison conditions, he would be allowed to watch television and use a phone more frequently. Though he was not moved to an open cell block, where prisoners are allowed to spend most of the day outside their cells, he was given the right to meet other prisoners during his two hours' exercise in the prison yard.

In 2019, Amir's telephone was confiscated by prison authorities for two months after he used it for political purposes in violation of prison regulations. He had called rapper and right-wing political activist Yoav Eliasi and urged him to fight for his release, a request which Eliasi rejected. In protest, Amir launched a hunger strike and was subsequently penalized with seven days in solitary confinement in a cell with downgraded amenities.

Amir's appeals of both sentences were rejected. Subsequently, a law was passed by the Knesset barring the pardon by the President of Israel for any assassin of a prime minister. Amir has never expressed regret for his actions. In 2007, the "Committee for Democracy" was formed by Itamar Ben-Gvir and Baruch Marzel to free Amir.

From time to time, radical Israeli right-wing organizations carry out campaigns (via posters or videos) that call for Amir to be released. Such a campaign was held in October 2007 in which the prominent Israeli singer Ariel Zilber also participated. In response to this campaign, the Israeli Internal Security Minister Avi Dichter stated: "This man is in the closest status a person can be to a death sentence", and also added that, "A reduction of his sentence is impossible and illogical, and it will surely accompany him until his demise."

Amir is married to Larisa Trembovler, who was born in Russia. She met Amir in Latvia, where he was teaching Judaism. After her immigration to Israel, she visited him with her then-husband, Benjamin (with whom she has four children), for humanitarian reasons. She expressed ideological support for Amir, and they began to correspond and speak on the phone. She divorced Benjamin in 2003.

Trembovler announced that she was engaged to Amir and wanted to marry him, while he was in jail. After various legal wrangles, they were eventually allowed to marry and enjoy conjugal visits. Their son was born in October, 2007. The circumcision ceremony was held in prison on November 4, 2007, the 12th anniversary of Rabin's assassination. In 2020, Amir requested a furlough from prison to attend his son's bar mitzvah, which the Israel Prison Service denied. Amir appealed the decision to the Beersheba District Court, which upheld the refusal.

During the last decade, there have been repeated legal attempts to obtain Amir's release from prison, including by attempting to prove that it was not the bullets from his gun which caused Rabin's death! For some on Israel's extreme right, Amir remains a revered figure. None of these attempts have borne fruit and Amir remains incarcerated without parole or furloughs.

Films: See Filmography for details.

Beyond the Fear (2015) ([see p. 528](#))

Incitement (2019) (see p. 532)**Significant Books and Articles:**

Ephron, Dan, (**Killing a King: The Assassination of Yitzhak Rabin and the Remaking of Israel** [hc, W.W. Norton, 2015]) 978-0393242096 [pb, W.W. Norton, 2016] 978-0393353242 [*This is generally regarded as the best English-language account of the assassination. It reconstructs the parallel lives of Rabin and Yigal Amir during the two years preceding the murder. The book avoids portraying Amir as insane, instead presenting him as a rational ideological extremist acting within a broader climate of radicalization.*]

Karpin, Michael, and Ina Friedman, (**Murder in the Name of God: The Plot to Kill Yitzhak Rabin** [hc, Metropolitan Books, 1998]) 978-0805057492 [pb, Granta Books, 1999] 978-1862072411 [*This remains the classic investigative account and includes extensive interviews, reconstruction of Amir's planning, Shin Bet failures, examination of extremist rabbis, religious-nationalist ideology and the conspiracy involving Hagai Amir and Dror Adani. It argues that Amir emerged from a political and religious milieu that increasingly legitimized violence against Rabin.*]

Peri, Yoram [ed], (**The Assassination of Yitzhak Rabin** [hc, Stanford UP, 2000]) 978-0804738354 [pb, Stanford UP, 2000] 978-0804738378 [*Probably the most important scholarly collection. Contributors include leading Israeli political scientists, sociologists and historians discussing Amir's ideology, Israeli political culture, religious Zionism, democratic crisis, political incitement, media and collective memory. Rather than focusing solely on Amir, the volume asks why Israeli society produced someone like him.*]

Alexander, Mark C., "**Religiously Motivated Murder: The Rabin Assassination and Abortion Clinic Killings.**" Arizona Law Review 41 (1999). *This is perhaps the single most important academic study devoted specifically to Amir's religious justification. It analyzes din rodef, halakhic misuse, Amir's legal defense, comparisons with American anti-abortion violence and when religious law is invoked to justify political murder. It is still widely cited in legal and religious studies.*

Beker, Avihai and Lavi, David "**Portrait of a Jewish Murderer**" [Hebrew: *Diyokno shel Rotzeach Yehudi* - "דיוקנו של רוצח יהודי"]. Maariv Weekend Supplement, 10 November 1995. [*Released less than a week after the November 4, 1995 assassination, capturing the immediate, raw shock of the nation. It relies on direct, fresh testimonies from Amir's Golani Brigade military comrades, childhood peers, and university classmates. Because of its exhaustive depth, this specific profile remains a primary text heavily cited by sociologists and historians—such as Michael Feige in his seminal research on the fringes of religious nationalism—to analyze the radicalization and social environment that produced Amir.*]

Rabinovich, Itamar, (**Yitzhak Rabin: Soldier, Leader, Statesman** [hc, Yale UP, 2017] 978-0300212297 [pb, Yale UP, 2018] 978-0300234633 [- *authoritative historical perspective on the assassination's impact.*]) [ChatGPT]

John Kifner, "**Belief to Blood: The Making of Rabin's Killer.**" The New York Times, 19 November 1995 [*Still probably the finest contemporary profile of Amir's development from ordinary religious student to assassin.*]

Bilsky, Liora, "Law and Politics: **The Trial of Rabin's Assassin**" Plilim - The Tel Aviv University Law Review on Criminal Law, Volume 8, pp. 1–62 (alternatively cited as pp. 13–75 in some indices), published in 1999 in Hebrew. [- *analyzes the historic judgment and conviction of Yigal Amir. Rather than treating the case purely as a standard criminal trial, Bilsky explores the unusual and highly charged rhetoric that the court chose to deploy in its final verdict. The core thesis posits that at a moment of profound national and constitutional crisis, the court felt compelled to look beyond narrow, technical legal considerations. It did this to actively engage with the ideological defense advanced by Amir, who argued his actions were justified under the religious Jewish legal principle of din rodef (the duty to kill a pursuer). The trial forced the court to confront a radical challenge to Israel's foundational*

*identity: the perceived conflict between its “Jewish” and “democratic” values. Bilsky argues that through its specific narrative and rhetorical choices, the court actively attempted to construct and reinforce a **new collective identity** to heal and stabilize a fractured Israeli society.]*

Frenkel, Sheera Claire ([The Jerusalem Post](#), November 2, 2006). **“Olmert: Yigal Amir will never go free”**. [‘... According to law, the murderer of the prime minister cannot ever go free – and it is impossible to grant him clemency, not now and not in the future’, said Olmert of the survey, taken last week, during his remarks at a special Knesset session to mark the 11th anniversary of the Rabin assassination. [...] Olmert’s position was echoed by opposition leader Benjamin Netanyahu and Knesset Speaker Dalia Itzik, both of whom stressed that Amir never be allowed to walk free.]

Yoaz, Yuval, **“AG orders state to recognize marriage of Rabin assassin Yigal Amir”**, [Haaretz](#), May 21, 2011.

Times of Israel Staff. 2020. **“25 Years on, Rabin’s Jailed Assassin Still a National Threat: Security Service.”** [The Times of Israel](#), October 29, 2020. timesofisrael.com. [*Shin Bet security officials deemed Yigal Amir, the assassin of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, a continued national threat 25 years after the murder. The intelligence assessment highlighted that Amir, despite his life sentence, maintains dangerous connections to radicalized right-wing youth, posing a risk of inciting violence from prison.*]

Shindler, Colin, **“OPINION: Rabin’s assassin is fêted in many Israeli circles”**. [Jewish News](#). June 2, 2023 [- argues that while Yigal Amir remains jailed for the 1995 assassination of Yitzhak Rabin, the far-right ideologies that inspired him have entered the Israeli political mainstream. The piece highlights that figures associated with that extremist community now hold high government positions.]

Note:

- **Presidential Consensus:** Every Israeli president since the assassination has firmly stated they will never grant Amir a pardon or commute his life sentence.
- **Public and Political Taboo:** While fringe right-wing extremist groups still occasionally advocate for his release, any mainstream public push remains a massive national taboo. Public figures or media figures who have publicly suggested it is “time to free Amir” face immediate professional termination, widespread condemnation, and deep public backlash. [Google/AI]

Canadian Jews and Crime/Espionage – Fiction and Non-Fiction

Fiction Authors

1. Alvin Abram
2. David Bezmozgis
3. Howard Engel
4. Barbara Fradkin
5. Dietrich Kalteis
6. Allan Levine
7. Carol Novis
8. Louise Penny
9. Mordecai Richler
10. Robert Rotenberg
11. Howard Shrier
12. Aren X. Tulchinsky
13. Sylvia Maultash Warsh
14. Deborah Wilde

Alvin Abram (1936–2021, born and died in Toronto) - was a Canadian author, storyteller, and graphic designer based in Toronto. After a long career in the printing industry, he dedicated his later years to writing fiction and chronicling Jewish history and survival. Authored the 4-volume series featuring **Gabe Garshowitz**, a Jewish homicide detective in Toronto. [Google/AI]

Abram, Alvin [*Gabe Garshowitz #1*] (**The Unlikely Victims** [pb, Ama Graphics, 2002] 978-0969239864 [*Garshowitz and his partner, Iris Forester, investigate a series of deaths that initially appear to be accidents or natural causes. As they dig deeper, they realize these “unlikely victims” are connected, leading them into a complex web of murder.*])

Abram, Alvin [*Gabe Garshowitz #2*] (**An Eye for an Eye** [pb, Ama Graphics, 2004] 978-0973348033 [*Continuing the series’ themes of justice and retribution, this novel sees Garshowitz entangled in another case where the past refuses to stay buried. Like its predecessors, it leans heavily on Abram’s extensive research into Holocaust history.*])

Abram, Alvin [*Gabe Garshowitz #3*] (**The Minyan** [pb, Ama Graphics, 2006] 978-0973348057 [*Garshowitz and Forester are called to a home on Euclid Avenue in Toronto that is slated for demolition. Workers have discovered 30-year-old human remains (bones) buried on the property. Parallel to the investigation, a reporter named Rachel Ackerman comes into possession of a mysterious journal which describes a “minyan” composed of ten Holocaust survivors. The journal reveals a chilling vow made by the survivors: to track down and kill ten specific individuals who were stationed at the Birkenau concentration camp. According to the journal, these targets do not deserve to live because of their past actions. The novel is noted for its “hard-boiled” style and Abram’s use of local Toronto settings. Drawing from his experience as a volunteer for Steven Spielberg’s Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation, Abram weaves authentic survivor experiences into the fictional mystery.*])

Abram, Alvin [*Gabe Garshowitz #4*] (**The Dead Don't Weep** [pb, Ama Graphics, 2008] 978-0973348071 [*The duo is assigned a murder case that initially appears to be a standard street killing. However, the investigation takes a complex turn when it is linked to deception and hidden motives that mirror the broader themes of the series—specifically, how past secrets and the need for retribution can bleed into the present. As a 30-year veteran, Gabe continues to struggle with modern police bureaucracy and evolving technology. He relies heavily on his instincts and “old-school” interrogation methods, which often clash with the younger officers’ approaches but prove vital for this specific case. The narrative emphasizes Gabe’s physical decline, particularly his chronic arthritis, which he pushes through to see the case to its conclusion. The emotional weight of his late wife’s memory remains a subtext, influencing his empathy toward those caught in the case’s crosshairs. True to Alvin Abram’s style, the novel explores justice versus law. It examines the moral ambiguity of characters who feel they have been wronged by a system that has forgotten them, a theme consistent with the earlier novels that dealt with Holocaust survivors and long-buried grievances.* - Google/AI]

David Bezmozgis (born in Riga, Latvia in 1973, immigrated with his family to Toronto in 1980) – [*He grew up within a vibrant Russian-Jewish immigrant community in North York, speaking Russian at home and interacting with grandparents who spoke Russian and Yiddish. Earned his B.A. in English Literature from McGill U. in Montreal and his MFA at the USC School of Cinematic Arts in Los Angeles. He broke out into the international literary scene with his 2004 debut story collection, **Natasha and Other Stories**. He has since published acclaimed novels, including **The Free World** (2011) and **The Betrayers** (2014), alongside his 2019 short story collection, **Immigrant City**. His fiction focuses intensely on the modern Jewish diaspora, Soviet memory, and displacement. Parallel to his writing career, Bezmozgis is an accomplished filmmaker who wrote and directed the feature film **Victoria Day** (which premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in 2009) and directed a feature-length cinematic adaptation of his own story, **Natasha**. He works as the Creative Director for the Humber School for Writers in Toronto.*

Bezmozgis does not write traditional mystery thrillers, but he frequently uses crime, blackmail, and noir-inspired motifs involving Soviet-Jewish immigrants as central narrative drivers in his fiction. Rather than typical whodunits, his works are structured as high-stakes moral and political thrillers that explore the desperate, sometimes illicit lengths to which immigrants go to survive or gain leverage. His use of Jewish crime and thriller elements appears prominently across several of his books:

Bezmozgis, David, (**The Betrayers** [hc, Little, Brown & Co., 2014]) 978-0316284332 [pb, Little, Brown & Co., 2015] 978-0316284356 [*While the book is a quiet, philosophical character study rather than an action film, it borrows heavily from John Le Carré-style political and spy thriller tropes. The entire plot is set in motion by an act of political blackmail. A Mossad agent tries to silence the protagonist, an Israeli politician and former Soviet dissident, by threatening to expose his extramarital affair. The core of the novel hinges on a historical crime of betrayal: the protagonist accidentally rents a room from the exact fellow Soviet Jew who denounced him to the KGB decades earlier, which originally sent him to the Gulag.*

Bezmozgis, David, (**Natasha and Other Stories** [hc, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2004] 978-0374281410 [pb, Picador, 2005]) 978-0312423933 [*This debut collection explores the grit and moral compromises of the post-Soviet Jewish diaspora settling in Toronto. The title story, **Natasha**, utilizes dark, transgressive themes centered around a 14-year-old immigrant girl who has already been exposed to a troubled life of promiscuity and underground*

pornography in Moscow. Her arrival disrupts a Jewish-Canadian family, driving a plot filled with taboo relationships and tragic consequences. Other stories in the collection deal with the minor, desperate crimes – shoplifting and petty theft – of new immigrants navigating survival in an unfamiliar capitalist world.

Bezmozgis, David, (**Immigrant City** [hc, HarperCollins, 2019] 978-1443457798 [pb, Haper Perennial, 2020] 978-1443457811 [*This short story collection features Bezmozgis's most direct leanings into the noir and crime fiction genres: "The Russian Riviera". This story is explicitly noir-inspired. It follows a former Russian boxer who moves to Canada only to find himself sucked into the criminal underbelly while working as a doorman at a garish, corrupt suburban Toronto nightclub. "Roman's Song" - In this piece, a well-meaning character trying to assist a new immigrant is unwittingly dragged into a sordid criminal underworld, making immediate contact with post-Soviet syndicates operating abroad.*

Bezmozgis, David, (**The Free World** [hc, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2011]) 978-0374281403 [pb, Picador, 2012] 978-1250002518 [*Set in Rome in 1978, The Free World follows Soviet-Jewish refuseniks waiting for visas. Bezmozgis uses the character of Karl to embody a "repressed capitalist spirit". Trapped in bureaucratic limbo, the characters frequently rely on black-market dealing, smuggling, and illicit trade to survive, previewing the rise of the post-Soviet Jewish oligarch class. – Google/AI]*

Howard Engel (1931–2019, born St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada) was a pioneering Canadian mystery and non-fiction author. Best known for his **Benny Cooperman** private-eye series (12 volumes + 2 novellas), set in the Niagara Region of Ontario. **Cooperman** is often cited as the first distinctly Jewish-Canadian private investigator in crime fiction. The Jewish content in his novels is primarily character-driven, blending cultural identity with the "soft-boiled" detective genre.

Core Jewish Elements

The Protagonist's Identity: Benny Cooperman is a bachelor from the fictional town of Grantham, Ontario (a stand-in for St. Catharines). Unlike classic hard-boiled detectives, Benny is a "nice Jewish guy" who is gentle, avoids guns, and turns sick at the sight of blood.

Family Dynamics: A recurring theme is Benny's relationship with his elderly parents, with whom he has dinner at least once a week. This portrayal emphasizes traditional Jewish family ties and domesticity.

The "Schlemiel" Archetype: Critics often describe Benny as a quintessential "nebbish" or "schlemiel"—a clumsy but well-meaning character who succeeds through intelligence and persistence rather than physical toughness.

Cultural Humor: The novels are known for their self-deprecating humor and specifically Jewish linguistic markers, such as the title of his novella *The Whole Megillah*.

Small-Town Jewish Life: Engel explores the experience of being Jewish in a non-urban Canadian setting, contrasting the "minority" experience in small-town Ontario with the larger Jewish communities in cities like Toronto. [Google/AI]

Engel, Howard [*Benny Cooperman #1*], (**Suicide Murders** [hc, St. Martin's Press, 1980]) 978-0312775278 [pb, Penguin, 1985] 978-0140077407

Engel, Howard [*Benny Cooperman #2*], (**Ransom Game** [hc, St. Martin's Press, 1981]) 978-0312663834 [pb, Penguin, 1986] 978-0140077414

Engel, Howard [*Benny Cooperman* #3], (**Murder on Location** [hc, Irwin Pub1982]) 978-0772013842 [pb, Penguin Canada, 1986] 978-0140077421

Engel, Howard [*Benny Cooperman* #4], (**Murder Sees the Light** [hc, 1984, St. Martin's]) 978-0670803040 [pb, Penguin Books, 1986] 978-0140089752

Engel, Howard, [*Benny Cooperman* #5], (**A City Called July** [hc, Viking Penguin, 1986]) 978-0670812684 [pb, Penguin Books, 1988] 978-0140104547

Engel, Howard [*Benny Cooperman* #6], (**A Victim Must be Found** [hc, St. Martin's Press, 1988]) 978-0312023157 [pb, Penguin Canada, 1989] 978-0140112054

Engel, Howard, [*Benny Cooperman* #7], (**Dead and Buried** [hc, Penguin Books, 1990]) 978-0670831166 [pb, Penguin Canada, 1991] 978-0140129205

Engel, Howard, [*Benny Cooperman*] (**The Whole Megillah**) [pb, novella, sometimes listed as #7A in the sequence, privately published in 2000-print run, 1991 - *ASIN code*: B0000CPFUX]

Engel, Howard, [*Benny Cooperman* #8], (**There Was an Old Woman** [hc, originally published by Viking in 1993; Overlook Books, 2000]) 978-1585670444 [pb, Overlook, 2002] 978-1585672554

Engel, Howard, [*Benny Cooperman* #9], (**Getting Away with Murder** [hc, originally by Viking in 1995; Overlook, 1998]) 978-0879518295 [pb, Overlook, 2001] 978-1585671830

Engel, Howard, [*Benny Cooperman* #10], (**The Cooperman Variations** [pb, Penguin, 2001] 978-0140297447 [hc, Overlook Books, 2002] 978-1585672332

Engel, Howard, [*Benny Cooperman* #11], **Memory Book** [pb, Da Capo Press, 2005] 978-0786717170 [hc, Carroll & Graf Pub, 2006] 978-0786716449

Engel, Howard [*Benny Cooperman* #12], (**East of Suez** [pb, Penguin Canada, 2008]) 978-0143053323

Engel, Howard, [*Benny Cooperman*] (**Over the River** – a Novella [pb, Cormorant books, 2018] 978-1770864580 [*Note*: This book was publicized but never actually published. Author Howard Engel passed away in 2019, leaving the draft preserved only as an archival piece. - Google/AI])

Barbara (Currie) Fradkin (born 1947, Montreal, resides in Ottawa, Canada) – veteran child psychologist before becoming a full-time novelist, best-known for her 12-volume Ottawa Homicide **Inspector Michael Green** series. Green's Jewish identity is primarily explored through his family history and occasional cultural references:

Holocaust Heritage: He is the son of a Holocaust survivor, which often draws him into cases involving World War II secrets, Nazi atrocities, and unhealed emotional wounds.

Family Life: His Jewish identity appears in domestic scenes, such as references to his children having “dark curls” and “chocolate brown eyes,” or his father using Yiddish terms like “Zaydie” (grandfather) and “alter kakers” (old men).

Cultural Knowledge: Green is occasionally called upon to interpret documents or cover community spaces related to Jewish history, such as visiting a synagogue to track down information or investigating leads involving the Holocaust.

Complex Faith: *The series portrays a complicated relationship with faith; for instance, Green's father is described as having "tossed his faith... on the funeral pyres of Auschwitz," yet he still suggests seeking information at a local synagogue.*

Inspector Michael Green Series Bibliography:

Fradkin, Barbara [*Michael Green Series #1*], (**Do or Die** [mass mkt pb, Napoleon & Co., 2000] B01F9FUBTK [pb, Dundurn Press, 2022] 978-1459751026 [*Ottawa Homicide Inspector Michael Green is absolutely obsessed with his job, a condition which has almost ruined his marriage several times. When the biggest case of his career comes up, his position, his relationships and several lives are put into grave danger. A young graduate student and scion of a rich family is found expertly stabbed in the stacks of a university library, but no one seems to have the slightest idea why. But as Green probes into the circumstances of the young man's life, a tangled web of jealousy and intrigue is revealed. Green finds himself in the middle of a rivalry in the delicate arena of university politics, where gigantic egos regularly collide. Was it the diligent but socially inept researcher, or the macho ladies-man golden boy of the laboratory? Or was it a crime of passion involving the over-protective family of his beautiful new girlfriend? When the murderer strikes again, Green realizes that he must waste no time in solving the case, no matter what the consequences may be.* - Amazon]

Fradkin, Barbara [*Michael Green Series #2*], (**Once Upon a Time** [mass mkt pb, Napoleon & Co., 2002] B01FKTCU2Q [pb, independently published, 2020] 979-8579710499 [*When an old man is found frozen to death in a hospital parking lot, Green refuses to accept the verdict of natural causes, eventually uncovering secrets tied to WWII war crimes.*]

Fradkin, Barbara [*Michael Green Series #3*], (**Mist Walker** [pb, Napoleon & Co., 2003] 978-1894917032 [pb, ReadHowYouWant, 2013] 978-1459664241 [*Innocent scapegoat or monster manipulator? Matthew Fraser was an idealistic young teacher accused of molesting a young schoolgirl and acquitted in a sensational case that left the truth hidden and the young teacher's life in tatters. Ten years later, his distraught confidante walks into Ottawa Police Inspector Michael Green's office insisting that Fraser has vanished. Green's curiosity is piqued when he discovers that Fraser left behind his beloved dog, a half-eaten dinner and an apartment crammed with research related to his case. Has Fraser fled to escape the wrath of victims, new or old? Or was he innocent all along and spent the last ten years trying to clear his name? And who is Fraser's mysterious email correspondent with the user name Mistwalker?* - Amazon]

Fradkin, Barbara [*Michael Green Series #4*], (**Fifth Son** [pb, Napoleon & Co., 2004] 978-1894917131 [pb, Dundurn Press, 2022] 978-1459751057 [*Accident or suicide? That's the simple question put to Inspector Michael Green when a derelict stranger falls to his death from an abandoned church tower in a quiet river village at the edge of his jurisdiction. But when the victim turns out to be a long lost son of a local farm family cursed in recent years by tragedy, madness and death, Green begins to suspect something far more sinister is at work. Probing the family's past, he uncovers a toxic mix of rigid fundamentalism, teenage rebellion and a family secret so horrific that twenty years later, someone is still desperate to prevent the truth from coming to light.* - Amazon]

Fradkin, Barbara [*Michael Green Series #5*], (**Honour Among Men** [pb, Napoleon & Co., 2006] 978-1894917360 [pb, ReadHowYouWant, 2013] 978-1459664111 [*Inspector Green is coping with an office job, still eager to get back into the day - to - day fray of policing. His chance comes when an unidentified woman is drowned in the Ottawa River. In her possession is a Medal for Bravery from a peacekeeping mission. As Green and his team dig deeper into*

the military past, Green finds himself sucked not only into the murky past of a peacekeeping unit but into the high-stakes present of a federal election race. What crime was committed in Yugoslavia more than a decade ago? Is someone still killing to prevent that secret from coming to light? And does the diary of a dead soldier hold the key? - Amazon]

Fradkin, Barbara [Michael Green Series #6], (**Dream Chasers** [pb, Napoleon & Co., 2007] 978-1894917582 [pb, Dundurn Press, 2024] 978-1459753877 [*A seventeen-year-old sets out to meet her secret lover by an Ottawa waterfall. Three days later, her body washes up in the shallows. The public fears a sexual predator is on the loose, but Inspector Green suspects a more personal connection. His search for answers draws him into the world of elite young athletes, drugs and teenage sexuality. Then a social worker who knows too much disappears, and blood is found in the house of a star with NHL prospects. Unless Green can unravel the truth, how many others will pay the ultimate price for a young man's dreams? - Amazon]*

Fradkin, Barbara [Michael Green Series #7], (**This Thing of Darkness** [pb, Dundurn Press, 2009] 978-1459703773 [pb, Dundurn Press, 2024] 978-1459753907 [*In the seventh book in the acclaimed Inspector Green series, an old man is found beaten to death on a street corner in Ottawa's Byward Market. Initially, the killing appears to be a mugging gone wrong. However, the mystery deepens when the victim is identified as Dr. Samuel Rosenthal, a retired psychiatrist with a contentious approach to life and treatment. Green discovers that the doctor recently changed his will to disinherit his estranged son and to benefit several former patients whom he believed he had failed. But who is the young mystery woman seen visiting Rosenthal's home every Saturday night? And more importantly, what does she know about the doctor's death? Green races to track down the young visitor, but he is unprepared for the final resolution, which leaves him grappling with the ultimate meaning of justice. - Amazon]*

Fradkin, Barbara [Michael Green Series #8], (**Beautiful Lie the Dead** [pb, Napoleon & Co., 2010] 978-1926607085 [pb, ReadHowYouWant, 2013] 978-1459664173 [*Inspector Green explores a web of betrayal and deceit. In the dead of night, the phone rings in the missing persons unit of the Ottawa Police. A brutal blizzard is howling, and a wealthy social activist has not heard from his fiancée in over twenty-four hours. Friends, family and police are mobilized to search the snowbound city. He comes to believe that his partner is fleeing for her life, possibly from his own family. When a frozen body is found in the snow, just blocks from the man's home, Green knows that someone is conspiring to keep the truth hidden. - Amazon]*

Fradkin, Barbara [Michael Green Series #9], (**The Whisper of Legends** [pb, Dundurn Press, 2013] 978-1459705678 [pb, ReadHowYouWant, 2013] 978-1459664036 [*When his teenage daughter goes missing on a summer wilderness canoe trip to the Nahanni River, Inspector Michael Green is forced into unfamiliar territory. Unable to mobilize the local RCMP, he enlists the help of his long-time friend, Staff Sergeant Brian Sullivan, to accompany him to the Northwest Territories to look for themselves. Green is terrified. The park has 30,000 square kilometres of wilderness and 600 grizzlies. Even worse, Green soon discovers his daughter lied to him. The trip was organized not by a reputable tour company but by her new boyfriend, Scott, a graduate geology student. When clues about Scott's past begin to drift in, Green, Sullivan, and two guides head into the wilderness. After the body of one of the group turns up at the bottom of a cliff, they begin to realize just what is at stake. - Amazon]*

Fradkin, Barbara [Michael Green Series #10], (**None So Blind** [pb, Dundurn Press, 2014] 978-1459721401 [*Twenty years ago, a raw and impressionable Detective Michael Green helped convict a young professor for the murder of an attractive co-ed. From behind bars, the*

man continued to hound Green with letters protesting his innocence. Shortly after being paroled, he is found dead. Is it suicide? Revenge? Or had Green made the biggest mistake of his career — a mistake which cost an innocent man his liberty and ultimately his life? To determine the truth, Green is forced to re-examine old evidence and open up old wounds to stare down a far greater evil hiding in plain sight. – Amazon]

Fradkin, Barbara [*Michael Green Series #11*], (**The Devil to Pay** [pb, Dundurn Press, 2021] 978-1459743847 [pb, ReadHowYouWant, 2022] 978-0369376978 [*Impetuous, exasperating Ottawa Police Inspector Michael Green returns and unwittingly puts his daughter, a rookie patrol officer, in the line of fire. Sidelined to administrative duties, Inspector Michael Green misses the thrill of the chase. – Amazon]*

Fradkin, Barbara [*Michael Green Series #12*], (**Shipwrecked Souls** [pb, Dundurn Press, 2025] 978-1459753815 [*When Anya Kurchenko, a woman recently arrived in Ottawa from Ukraine, is found murdered in an obscure alleyway, the only clue is a scrap of paper in her pocket with the name “Symkha Grunstein” written in three different alphabets. No such person seems to exist. While the police try to trace her past movements, an elderly man named Simon Stone, who lives nearby, is also murdered, and Inspector Michael Green is called in to interpret the mass of documents about the Second World War and the Holocaust stored in Stone’s basement.*

What is the link between the two victims? Who is Symkha Grunstein? And could the murders be connected to something that happened during the war? As the police unravel the threads of betrayal and cover-up, Green finds himself on an emotional journey into his own past, where he uncovers long-hidden secrets and makes a startling discovery. – Amazon]

Barbara Fradkin is currently working on a thirteenth volume in the Inspector Green series for publication in 2027. Tentative title: **Sins of the Father**.

Dietrich Kalteis (birth est. 1953 in Toronto, Canada, now residing in Vancouver) – a prominent and prolific Canadian crime novelist, notable for his “gritty”, noir style. His one book which deals specifically with Jewish criminals in Toronto is **The Get**.

Kalteis, Dietrich, (**The Get** [pb, ECW Press, 2023]) 978-1770416840 [*Set in historically Jewish areas of Toronto, such as the immigrant storefronts and alleyways near Kensington Market, Spadina Avenue, and University Avenue. The story follows Lenny Ovitz and Gabe Zoller, two street-wise Jewish “hoods” and extortionists working protection rackets in Toronto’s Ward Six neighborhood. Lenny works for a ruthless gangster running a collections racket out of a travel agency in Kensington Market. He and Gabe are drowning in debt after using “dirty money” to buy a tenement block they hope will be rezoned for high-rises. Lenny’s wife, Paulina Levine (whom he disparagingly calls “the princess”), demands a divorce and is waiting for him to provide her with the Get [Jewish writ of divorce] so she can be religiously free to move on. Lenny, fears she will take his assets in the divorce, leaving him exposed to his murderous creditors. He decides that the only way to solve both his money and marriage problems is to have Paulina killed. The plot escalates into a “chaotic bounce” of unpredictable directions and eruptions of violence involving crooked cops, trigger-happy criminals, and Paulina’s father—a crafty watchmaker whom others mistakenly underestimate. Reviewers have referred to the book as “darkly comic”, noting that Kalteis peppers the story with Jewish jokes and slang to lighten the mood of the crime-focused plot. Far from being seen as offensive, these additions have been described as providing a “deadpan humour” that complements the 1960s Toronto setting. The book is often viewed as an “ode to the hardscrabble life” of immigrant families in Canada. It accurately reflects the atmosphere of*

Kensington Market during that era, which was a hub for Jewish life and small businesses. [Google/AI]

Allan Levine (born in 1956 in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada) – Canadian historian, journalist and author specializing in historical mysteries and non-fiction. Author of the 4-volume **Sam Klein Mystery Series**, set in early 20th-century Winnipeg, Manitoba. Sam Klein is a street-wise Jewish immigrant who transitions from a brothel bouncer and “minder” to a private investigator. The books are noted for their meticulous historical accuracy, blending real-life events and figures—such as activist **Nellie McClung**—with fictional detective work. They explore the “wicked” side of early Winnipeg, focusing on the tension between the city’s rough North End immigrants and the wealthy WASP elite.

Levine, Allan [Sam Klein Mystery Series #1] (**The Blood Libel** [pb, Great Plains Fiction, 2001] 978-0969780458 [Winnipeg, 1911: Sam Klein is introduced as a bouncer at a local brothel who must solve a murder involving a “blood libel” accusation—a false claim used to incite violence against the Jewish community.]

Levine, Allan [Sam Klein Mystery Series #2] (**Sins of the Suffragettes** [pb, Great Plains Fiction, 2001] 978-1894283168 [Winnipeg, 1914: Klein investigates the murder of Emily Powers (or Emily Munro), a suffragette with a hidden, controversial past. The case takes him from the local streets to New York City as he navigates drug conspiracies and political corruption.]

Levine, Allan [Sam Klein Mystery Series #3] (**The Bolshevik’s Revenge** [pb, Great Plains Fiction, 2002] 978-1894283335 [Winnipeg, 1919: Set against the backdrop of the Winnipeg General Strike, a now-married Klein is pulled into a maelstrom of labor unrest and Bolshevik fears. He must investigate a death linked to the strike while balancing his role as a family man.)

Levine, Allan [Sam Klein Mystery Series #4] (**The Bootlegger’s Confession**) [pb, Great Plains Fiction, 2016] 978-08880159903 [Winnipeg, 1922: In this “reboot,” Klein investigates the death of a man connected to bootleggers in a border town. The story is inspired by the real-life 1922 unsolved murder of Paul Matoff during the prohibition era.]

Sam Klein’s Jewishness is a foundational element of the series. His identity as an outsider—a “foreigner” in a city dominated by a British-descended elite—drives his perspective as a private investigator. The Jewish immigrant experience, facing poverty, social exclusion and anti-Semitism, is depicted throughout. Klein has to contend with one of the oldest anti-Semitic tropes – the blood libel – in the first volume of the series. The series highlights the ethnic intolerance of turn-of-the-century Canada, where Jewish characters must deal with a justice system often biased against them. Because Klein exists on the fringes, he acts as a bridge between the “raw and ribald” immigrant world and the official authorities. His Jewishness provides him with the motivation to seek justice for those the mainstream system ignores or actively targets. [Google/AI]

Note: Allan Levine’s book on Canadian Jewish history, **Seeking the Fabled City: The Canadian Jewish Experience**, is discussed in the non-fiction section of this Bibliography.

Carol Novis (birth est. 1944, Winnipeg, Canada – moved to Israel in 1976, having worked as a journalist in Winnipeg, Boston, Cape Town and latterly for the Jerusalem Post, now residing in Kfar Saba). Her 3-volume (so far) “Tension on a Pension” cozy mystery series is set in the fictional Menorah Retirement Home in Aurora, Minnesota. The primary

protagonist of the series is **Ellie Shapiro**, a 73-year-old resident who is an amateur sleuth and an avid baker who often finds herself investigating mysterious deaths that others dismiss as accidents. Ellie is supported by a “motley detection team” of recurring characters, including:

Riva: Ellie’s best friend and a blunt, down-to-earth octogenarian Holocaust survivor who assists in her investigations.

Hal: A bookish volunteer at the Jewish Community Archive and Ellie’s “hunky” love interest.

Noah: The teenage grandson of a fellow resident who helps Ellie with her sleuthing.

Shultz: An energetic Jack Russell Terrier who often accompanies the group.

Carol Novis utilizes elderly women as detectives to highlight the overlooked value and vitality of seniors. Her purpose is to challenge the societal tendency to marginalize the elderly by showing they can remain active, humorous, and sharp-witted even in a retirement setting. The series was specifically inspired by the author’s mother and the Jewish retirement home where she lived, providing an authentic foundation for the characters’ experiences. By placing her characters in a retirement home, Novis explores the genuine “downside” of aging and institutional living but balances it with warmth and humor. Jewish identity is the core cultural fabric of the series, serving several functions:

Atmosphere and Humor: The series is described as “wickedly funny” with a cast of “Jewish senior sleuths” whose interactions and “yenta” behavior drive the comedic tone.

Cultural Markers: Jewish life is integrated through specific details, such as the plot-driving “poisoned knish” in **Long in the Sleuth** and the setting of a specifically Jewish-affiliated retirement home. [Google/AI]

Novis, Carol, [Tension on a Pension series #1] (**Long in the Sleuth** [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2017]) 978-1546402411

Novis, Carol, [Tension on a Pension series #2] (**Knock Off the Old Block** [pb, independently published, 2020]) 979-8640120141

Novis, Carol, [Tension on a Pension series #3] (**Murder, She Fried** [pb, independently published, 2024]) 979-8345697016

Louise Penny (born 1958 in Toronto) – [**Disclosure:** before writing anything about Louise Penny, I must disclose that my wife and I – both of us Montrealers – are devoted fans of her books.- SS] She grew up living between Toronto and Montreal and completed her university studies in Toronto. She then embarked on an 18-year career with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), including stints in Thunder Bay, Winnipeg, and Quebec City before eventually settling in Montreal. Upon retiring from broadcasting to pursue a writing career, she and her hematologist husband, Michael Whitehead, moved to the small town of Knowlton in the Eastern Townships, about 100 kilometers southeast of Montreal. She often describes her novels as “love letters to Quebec”. In Knowlton, she found a bilingual community where nature and shared country living bridged linguistic divides, even when her own French was still rudimentary. The 20-volume (21 by next fall) series she has produced, featuring Chief Inspector of the Quebec Sureté, **Armand Gamache**, has established her as Canada’s outstanding crime fiction author. The series has achieved international prominence and been translated into 32 languages. Jewish elements in the series are primarily centered around Gamache’s backstory and his family connections. While it is predominantly set in a

French-Canadian Catholic cultural context, these details add significant depth to Gamache's moral foundation.

Key Jewish Characters and Elements in the Armand Gamache Series:

Zora (family name never stated): A Jewish woman who survived the Holocaust and was liberated by Armand's father at Bergen-Belsen. She came to Montreal to live with the Gamache family and raised Armand after his parents died in a car crash.

Yiddish Expressions: Because he was raised by Zora, Gamache often uses Yiddish words and phrases in his daily life and internal monologues.

Stephen Horowitz: Gamache's godfather, a billionaire and key figure in several novels (most notably *All the Devils Are Here*), is also a central part of this family network.

Naming Conventions: Gamache's grandchildren continue this Jewish practice. His grandson is named **Honoré** after Armand's father, and his granddaughter is named **Zora**.

Adam Cohen: Introduced in later books like *The Nature of the Beast*, Adam is a *Sûreté du Québec* trainee and protégé of Gamache.

Gamache Themes and Philosophy: While not explicitly "Jewish fiction," the novels often explore universal moral questions through a lens that readers have noted aligns with Jewish values, such as *Tikkun Olam* (repairing the world). Gamache's investigative philosophy is famously built on four questions—"I don't know," "I need help," "I'm sorry," and "I was wrong"—which reflect a humble, introspective approach to justice.

Connection to Leonard Cohen: The title of Louise Penny's ninth novel, *How the Light Gets In*, is taken from a verse in Leonard Cohen's 1992 song "*Anthem*". The specific stanza featured in the novel's title and recurring throughout the series is:

"Ring the bells that still can ring,
Forget your perfect offering,
There's a crack in everything,
That's how the light gets in."

In the acknowledgments of *How the Light Gets In*, Penny expresses deep gratitude to Cohen for the use of the excerpt, which he granted free of charge. She described being "astounded" by his generosity, noting, "I cannot begin to imagine the light that floods into that man." Penny has stated that the theme of finding light in brokenness is a cornerstone of her entire series. The quote first appeared in book two, *A Fatal Grace*, where Gamache reads it aloud from a wall. It has since become a guiding philosophy for the series, representing the "cracks" in characters that allow for healing and resilience. Penny was a vocal admirer of Cohen's poetry and music, often citing him as a major cultural inspiration.

Penny, Louise (Gamache series #9), (*How the Light Gets In* [hc, Minotaur Books, 2013] 978-0312655471 [pb, Minotaur Books, 2014] 978-1250047274

Penny, Louise (Gamache series #11), (*The Nature of the Beast* [hc, Minotaur Books, 2015] 978-1250022080 [pb, Griffin, 2016] 978-1250022103

Penny, Louise (Gamache series #16), (*All the Devils Are Here* [hc, Minotaur Books, 2020] 978-1250145239 [pb, Minotaur Books, 2021] 978-1250145246 [*The story takes place in Paris, specifically the Marais district, the historic Jewish quarter. Gamache inherits an apartment here, and the location serves as a physical link to his heritage. The plot centers on a deliberate attempt on 93-year-old Stephen's life. As Gamache investigates, he uncovers that Stephen was a member of the French Resistance during World War II. It is revealed that*

Gamache's grandmother, Zora, and Stephen met in Paris during the war. This history explains the deep, quasi-parental bond between the two men and why Gamache was raised in a household infused with Jewish culture and Yiddishkeit. – Google/AI]

*The next installment in the Gamache series, entitled **Miss Wolcott's Ghost**, is scheduled for publication in October, 2026.*

Mordecai Richler (1931–2001) – born and died in Montreal, Quebec, lived in London, England during 1954–1972, where he published seven of his ten novels. He was one of Canada's most celebrated and controversial literary figures, renowned for his satirical novels and sharp cultural criticism, as well as several works of children's literature. Raised in an Orthodox Jewish household on St. Urbain Street in downtown Montreal. His grandfather was the prominent rabbi Yehudah Yudel Rosenberg. He attended Baron Byng High School and later enrolled at Sir George Williams College (now Concordia University) but dropped out after one year to pursue a writing career. Achieved international fame with **The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz** (1959). His later works, including **St. Urbain's Horseman** (1970) and **Solomon Gursky Was Here** (1989), were shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize. Known as a fierce critic of Quebec nationalism, particularly in his essay collection **Oh Canada! Oh Quebec!** (1992), which sparked intense debate regarding language laws and anti-Semitism.

In his novels, the intersection of the Jewish community and crime is a central, often satirical theme used to explore ambition, survival, and the moral complexities of the "immigrant hustle". Richler's fiction frequently portrays Jewish characters who engage in criminal or morally ambiguous acts not out of innate malice, but as a ruthless means of escaping the "ghetto" and achieving the "American (Canadian?) Dream".

Richler, Mordecai, (**The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz** [hc, Little, Brown, 1959] 978-0771074974 [pb, Gallery Books, 1999] 978-0671028473 [\[See related film\]](#) *[a biting satire and coming-of-age story set in the Jewish ghetto of Montreal during the 1940s. Duddy Kravitz is the direct literary descendant of the ruthless, hyper-ambitious American Jewish antiheroes in the works of Jerome Weidman, Budd Schulberg, and Albert Halper in the late 1930s and 1940s. [See the listings on these three authors in the companion bibliography on American crime fiction.]*

The story follows the young, amoral Duddy Kravitz who is determined to "be somebody". He is obsessed with a maxim from his grandfather, Simcha: "A man without land is nobody". Like Weidman's Harry Bogen and Schulberg's Sammy Glick, Duddy starts out as a working-class hustler working small-scale crimes before transitioning into ever-larger financial scams. To acquire land in the Laurentian Mountains, Duddy engages in a relentless series of schemes, including filming Bar Mitzvahs, selling liquid soap, and eventually committing forgery. While often charming and funny, Duddy is a ruthless anti-hero who exploits those closest to him.

Note that Duddy does not run fraud schemes against the Anglo-Saxon elite of Westmount (the wealthy Montreal Gentiles). Instead, like Harry Bogen in the Garment District, Duddy's scams are entirely intra-communal and lateral. He preys on working-class Jewish taxi drivers, scrap metal dealers, and his own family, demonstrating that economic desperation overrides communal solidarity.

Though he ultimately acquires the land, his victory is hollow; his grandfather refuses the gift after learning of Duddy's crimes, and those who loved him abandon him. Like his American

predecessors, Richler earned intense criticism and hostility from the Canadian Jewish establishment for laundering dirty linen in public.

A recurring figure in Richler's Montreal-based fiction is Jerry Dingleman, the **"Boy Wonder"**, a Jewish gangster and drug dealer who is paradoxically idealized by the community as a "local messiah" because of his wealth and power. [Google/AI] A movie version of the book was made in 1974 – see entry in the companion list of Movies-Films-TV Series.

Richler, Mordecai, (**St. Urbain's Horseman** [hc, Alfred A. Knopf, 1971] B001CK0U3O [pb, Penguin Books, 1992] 978-0140167696 [explores themes of guilt, identity, and the legacy of the Holocaust. The narrative is primarily set in London during the late 1960s, though it frequently uses flashbacks to the protagonist's childhood in Montreal. The protagonist, Jake Hersh is a moderately successful Canadian film director living in London with his family. When the novel opens, he is awaiting trial for a scandalous sexual offense involving a German au pair. Paralyzed by his trial and middle-aged anxieties, Jake becomes obsessed with his long-lost cousin, Joey Hersh. In Jake's mind, Joey is the "Horseman"—a heroic Nazi-hunter and Spanish Civil War veteran who serves as an avenging alter ego to Jake's own "unadventurous" life. Jake's legal troubles stem from his association with Harry Stein, a bitter, resentful accountant who represents the underprivileged and disenfranchised. Harry manipulates Jake's guilt to entangle him in the sordid incident that leads to their arrest. At the trial, Harry is sentenced to seven years in prison, while Jake is acquitted of the major charges and given only a minor fine. Harry Stein is a "villainous and politically incorrect" character based on a real-life criminal acquaintance of Richler's, and represents the darker, more pathetic side of the criminal impulse within the community. Jake later learns that Joey has died in a plane crash in Paraguay—a known hideout for Nazi war criminals—allowing Joey to remain a mythic, heroic figure in Jake's memory. Duddy Kravitz of Richler's earlier novel reappears here as a self-made millionaire who supports Jake during his disgrace. – Google/AI]

Richler, Mordecai, (**Solomon Gursky Was Here**) [hc, Knopf, 1989] 978-0670825264 [pb, Arrow Random House, 1991] 978-0099877301 [Loosely based on the real-life Bronfman family, the Gursky empire is built on bootlegging during Prohibition, exploring how criminal origins can evolve into dynastic respectability.]

Richler's non-fiction and memoirs provide the factual backdrop for his fictional underworld, detailing a Montreal where the lines between the "legitimate" and "illegitimate" were often blurred. In his essays, Richler describes Saint Lawrence Boulevard as a place where one could simultaneously "talk with a miracle-working rabbi" and "bet on a horse" or "shoot a game of snooker with a stranger". He notes that the Jewish "ghetto" was often characterized by reformers as a breeding ground for juvenile delinquency and Communism, though he counters this with nostalgic descriptions of the community's rich cultural and religious life. While many of his stories were invented, Richler acknowledged a deep emotional identification with the "hustler" spirit of his neighborhood, where survival often required navigating the seedy underbelly of the city.

Richler is thus not a straight crime or mystery author; but his work shares the following characteristics with comic and satirical crime fiction:

- Criminals are often rogues, hustlers, smugglers, bookmakers, or con men.
- Official institutions (courts, police, media, governments) are mocked.
- Investigations frequently uncover absurdity rather than truth.

- *Moral ambiguity is preferred over clear solutions.*
- *Humor and satire dominate over suspense.* – Google/AI]

See also listing of film version of Richler's 1997 novel, **Barney's Version (2010)**, in the companion Filmography.

Robert Rotenberg (born 1953 in Toronto, Canada, veteran criminal defense lawyer, television screenwriter and producer, and author of the 7-volume **Ari Greene** series) – Detective Ari Greene is a high-ranking homicide officer in the Toronto Police Force – the only Jewish one - and the son of a Holocaust survivor. He is portrayed as a secular but culturally deeply Jewish man. His Jewishness often places him as an outsider who is uniquely observant of the city's various subcultures. Rotenberg describes Greene as having a "rabbinical light"—he is a quiet, measured listener who treats people with immense respect, a trait the author likens to the way a rabbi handles those dealing with loss. He is a regular at **Gryfe's Bagel Bakery**, a real-life landmark in Toronto's historic Jewish neighborhood where the author himself grew up. Greene's survivor father, Yitzhak, often provides him with historical or philosophical insights that help solve modern cases. The books frequently grapple with the line between legal justice and moral revenge, a conflict often framed by the Jewish experience of the 20th century. While the earlier books (like *Old City Hall*) have "light touches" of Jewishness, the later novels have increasingly centered on Jewish historical atrocities and their modern repercussions. [Google/AI] Series Chronology:

Rotenberg, Robert [*Ari Greene Series #1*], (**Old City Hall**) [hc, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2009] 978-0374225421 [pb, Touchstone, 2012] 978-1451673494 [*Rotenberg's debut and an international bestseller.*]

Rotenberg, Robert [*Ari Greene Series #2*], (**The Guilty Plea**) [hc, Sarah Crichton Books, 2011] 978-0374278496 [pb, Scribner, 2012] 978-1451673500

Rotenberg, Robert [*Ari Greene Series #3*], (**Stray Bullets**) [pb, Touchstone, 2012] 978-1451642360 [hc, Touchstone, 2013] 978-1476757773

Rotenberg, Robert [*Ari Greene Series #4*], (**Stranglehold**) [pb, Touchstone, 2013] 978-1451642414 [hc, Scribner, 2013] 978-1476757766

Rotenberg, Robert [*Ari Greene Series #5*], (**Heart of the City**) [pb, Touchstone, 2017] 978-1476740577

Rotenberg, Robert [*Ari Greene Series #6*], (**Downfall**) [pb, Touchstone, 2021] 978-1476740607 - [*Focuses heavily on the homelessness crisis in Toronto.*]

Rotenberg, Robert [*Ari Greene Series #7*], (**What We Buried**) [pb, Simon & Schuster, 2024] 978-1982179649 - *dives deeper into the family's past, exploring Yitzhak's secrets of post-war revenge and the persistence of antisemitism in present-day Ontario. The plot revolves around a Toronto homicide detective – Ari Greene is one of his mentors – investigating his brother's murder 10 years previously, in connection with a WW2 Nazi atrocity in an Italian village. As the younger detective uncovers long-hidden secrets in Italy, Ari Greene is seeking a killer much closer to home.* [Google/AI & Amazon]

Rotenberg, Robert [*Ari Greene Series prequel*], (**One Minute More**) [pb, Simon & Schuster, 2025] 978-1668078778 [*Set during the 1988 G7 Summit in Toronto, featuring a younger Ari*

Greene. The series uses Jewish identity to anchor its themes of memory and justice.] [Google/AI]

Howard Shrier (born 1956, Montreal, now resides in Toronto, former journalist, novelist best known for his 4-volume **Jonah Geller** series, more recently publishing historical fiction). Geller is a Toronto-based private investigator described as a “secular Jew” or “Jewish atheist”. While he does not practice the religion, he feels deep cultural ties to the Jewish community. His investigative agency, **World Repairs**, is a direct reference to the Hebrew concept of *tikkun olam*. Geller views his work—helping those whom the system fails—as his way of “repairing the world”. The books often touch on classic Jewish cultural archetypes, such as Jonah’s relationship with his mother, who wishes he had a “respectable” profession like his overachieving lawyer brother. Shrier’s work explores the “complex cultural textures” of cities like Montreal, specifically highlighting Arab-Jewish tensions and the internal dynamics of the Jewish community. Shrier intentionally created Geller to offer a “uniquely sincere” Jewish voice in a genre typically dominated by “ex-cop, heavy-drinking” clichés.]

Shrier, Howard [*Jonah Geller series #1*], (**Buffalo Jump** [pb, Vintage Canada, 2008]) 978-0307356062 [*Jonah Geller is approached by Dante Ryan, a hitman who refuses to carry out a contract on a family that includes a young boy. Jonah investigates the boy’s father, a pharmacist, and uncovers a dangerous cross-border pharmaceutical smuggling ring. The investigation takes Jonah and Dante to Buffalo, New York, where they must survive attacks from mob-linked enemies.]*

Shrier, Howard [*Jonah Geller series #2*], (**High Chicago** [pb, Vintage Canada, 2008]) 978-0307356086 [*After opening his own agency, World Repairs, Jonah is hired to investigate the alleged suicide of a young woman who fell from a high-rise balcony. The trail leads to a massive, corrupt waterfront development project in Toronto and a ruthless real estate tycoon based in Chicago. Jonah travels to the Windy City to take on the developer, facing off against professional bodyguards and corrupt officials.]*

Shrier, Howard [*Jonah Geller series #3*], (**Boston Cream** [pb, Vintage Canada, 2012]) 978-0307359568 [*Jonah travels to Boston to find David Fine, a brilliant Orthodox Jewish transplant surgeon who has gone missing. He and Jenn discover that Fine was coerced into performing illegal organ transplants for an Irish crime boss. The stakes escalate when Jenn is abducted by the mob, forcing Jonah to call in Dante Ryan for a high-stakes rescue mission.]*

Shrier, Howard [*Jonah Geller series #4*], (**Miss Montreal** [pb, Vintage Canada, 2013]) 978-0307359582 [*Unable to return to the U.S. after the events in Boston, Jonah takes a case in his hometown of Montreal. A childhood friend, Sammy Adler, has been found murdered with a Star of David carved into his chest. Jonah and Dante navigate the city’s complex linguistic and political tensions to uncover a conspiracy involving religious fanatics and a powerful political dynasty. – Google/AI]*

Aren X. Tulchinsky (born 1958 in Toronto, now resides in Vancouver, B.C.) [*He holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A.) from York University (1982) and studied at the Banff School of Fine Arts. He is also a graduate of the professional screenwriting program at the prestigious Canadian Film Centre. Formerly publishing under the name Karen X. Tulchinsky, Aren is a transgender man and an open advocate within the LGBTQ2S+ and Jewish*

communities. He frequently writes from a working-class perspective to elevate historically marginalized narratives in Canadian fiction

n. Has published several books, including ***In Her Nature***, a short-story collection, and the queer fiction duology, ***Love Ruins Everything*** (1998) and ***Love and Other Ruins*** (2002). Tulchinsky has written and edited for several television series, including CBC's *The Nature of Things*, *Robson Arms*, and Global TV's *The Guard*. His award-winning short film debut, *Ms. Thing*, has screened at over 50 international film festivals. ***The Five Books of Moses Lapinsky*** is Tulchinsky's most celebrated work, winning various awards.

Tulchinsky, Aren X., (***The Five Books of Moses Lapinsky*** [hc, Raincoast Book Dist. Ltd., 2003]) 978-1551925561 [pb, Raincoast, 2005] 978-1551927251 [- an expansive, multi-generational family saga following a Jewish immigrant family living in Toronto, Ontario, from the Great Depression through World War II and into the 1950s.

In 2003, a mild-mannered historian named Moses Lapinsky begins researching and writing a biography about his father, Yacov. The narrative shifts back in time across **five distinct sections**. The story centers around a working-class family living in Toronto's immigrant neighborhood near Spadina and Bloor each narrated by a different third-person perspective. It explores the lives of the Lapinsky family members as they navigate identity, trauma, and prejudice. The central protagonist of the historical timeline and fourth son of the Lapinsky family is **Sonny "The Charger" Lapinsky**. He is a fierce, heterosexual Jewish youth who rises to become a champion middleweight boxer.

The Christie Pits Riot (1933): The defining catalyst of the book occurs on a sweltering August night in 1933. Nazi sympathizers (the "Swastika Club") unfurl a swastika flag at a baseball game in Toronto's Christie Pits Park. A massive four-hour race riot erupts between Anglo-Canadians and Jewish/immigrant youth. The Lapinsky brothers are caught in the chaos. Five-year-old Izzy is brutally injured, leaving him with permanent brain damage. This local trauma mirrors the violence Yacov fled in Europe.

As the years progress, the family faces the hardships of the Depression and the onset of World War II. Two older brothers head overseas to fight in major battles, including the raid on Dieppe. Meanwhile, internal friction tears the family apart. Sonny falls in love with and marries an Italian girl. Adhering strictly to orthodox tradition, Yacov sits Shiva (the prayer for the dead) for Sonny, casting him out despite secretly admiring his son's fighting spirit. Sonny achieves immense success, culminating in a high-stakes match in the boxing ring at Madison Square Garden. Amid the roar of the arena, Sonny faces his ultimate challenge: deciding whether to reconcile with his traditionalist father and heal a family fractured by decades of grief, war, and cultural division.

The novel highlights a frequently overlooked era of Canadian history, capturing the overt racial tensions and political unrest in pre-war Toronto. It illustrates how old-world trauma (European pogroms) shapes how the family reacts to new-world challenges (the Christie Pits Riot and intermarriage). The core friction rests on Sonny trying to forge his own identity as a modern, secular athlete while fighting for the acceptance of a father committed to Jewish continuity. – Google/AI]

Sylvia Maultash Warsh (est. birth 1947?) - an award-winning Canadian (Toronto) crime and historical fiction writer best known for her ***Dr. Rebecca Temple*** (a family practice physician) mystery trilogy. The daughter of Holocaust survivors (born in Stuttgart, Germany, brought to Canada at the age of 4), her writing is deeply influenced by her parents' wartime experiences. The series explores how WWII-era traumas continue to

affect the present. In **To Die in Spring**, a patient named Goldie Kochinsky brings a mystery rooted in 1940s Poland into Rebecca's clinic. Rebecca's mother-in-law, Sarah, is a Holocaust survivor from occupied Poland. Their relationship is depicted as emotionally complex and "stilted," shaped by Sarah's ongoing nightmares and past horrors. In **Season of Iron**, alternating chapters follow the Eisenbaums, a Jewish family in 1930s Berlin. The narrative tracks the youngest child, Frederika, as she battles anti-Semitic laws to become a doctor before ultimately being sent to a concentration camp. Beyond the series, her novel **The Queen of Unforgetting** (2010) explicitly examines the parallels between the Holocaust and the history of the Wyandot (Huron) people, reflecting her broader focus on Jewish themes of memory and racism.

Core Mystery Motifs:

Her novels frequently use alternating time periods to show how past crimes bleed into the present. For example, **Season of Iron** juxtaposes 1979 Toronto with 1930s Berlin, linking a modern murder to a family's struggle under the Nazi regime. A central motif is the "cold case" nature of her mysteries. In **To Die in Spring**, the murder of a patient is revealed to have roots in World War II Poland, exploring how secrets kept for decades eventually turn violent. Warsh often employs the trope of hidden identities and unreliable characters. In her work, mundane figures like a fencing instructor or a doctor often conceal dark histories or connections to international conspiracies. Leveraging her physician-protagonist, Rebecca Temple, Warsh uses medical deceptions and psychiatric conditions (such as paranoia or schizophrenia) as plot drivers. These conditions often mask real threats, as seen when Rebecca's "paranoid" patient is actually being targeted. A recurring thematic motif is the emotional distance between survivors and their children. This "stilted" relationship often creates the emotional tension that fuels the protagonist's drive to uncover the truth.

[Google/AI]

Warsh, Sylvia Maultash [*Rebecca Temple* #1], (**To Die in Spring** [pb, Dundurn Press, 2000]) 978-0888822161

Warsh, Sylvia Maultash [*Rebecca Temple* #2], (**Find Me Again** [pb, Dundurn Press, 2003]) 978-1550024746

Warsh, Sylvia Maultash [*Rebecca Temple* #3], (**Season of Iron** [pb, Dundurn Press, 2006]) 978-1550026160

Warsh, Sylvia Maultash, (**The Queen of Unforgetting** [pb, Cormorant Books, 2010]) 978-1897151723

Deborah Wilde (est. birth 1972? near Vancouver) – native and resident of British Columbia, Canada, with a very versatile writing career. She began in screenwriting and young adult fiction and transitioned to three ongoing series. **The Jezebel Files** (the main focus of this Bibliography) feature private investigator, **Ashira Cohen**, who "combines hardboiled noir and Jewish folklore in this action-packed, paranormal romp". In her two additional series, the leading characters are called **Nava Katz** (the "**Unlikeable Demon Hunter**" series) and **Miriam Feldman** (the "**Magic After Midlife**" series), offering an eclectic combination of fantasy/supernatural/noir detective/romance genres, with Jewish associations.

The Jezebel Files series are urban fantasy detective novels with an integrated magic system rooted in Jewish mythology. The protagonist is a private investigator who solves both magical and "mundane" crimes. The series is described as a "snarky urban fantasy detective

*series” with “clever mysteries”. The heroine, **Ashira Cohen** (Ash), is a dedicated private investigator who built her agency from the ground up. She initially takes on non-magical cases in a world where magic users (Nefesh) are a known, albeit separate, part of society. While there is an overarching series plot involving a grand conspiracy and Ash’s lineage, each book typically presents a central mystery that Ash must solve, such as a missing persons case or a murder investigation involving magical artifacts. Ash is a strong, smart Jewish woman, a deliberate choice by Wilde, who wanted heroines who have adventures and are objects of desire, not just victims in Holocaust narratives. Ash unexpectedly gains powerful, rare “Jezebel” blood magic, which was previously suppressed by a hidden tattoo. The world-building incorporates concepts beyond the commonly known golem mythology, delving into more complex ideas like the Lost Tribes of Israel as part of the overarching magical backstory. [Google/AI]*

Wilde, Deborah, [*Ashira Cohen* #1] (**Blood & Ash** [pb, Te Da Media, 2020]) 978-1988681351

Wilde, Deborah, [*Ashira Cohen* #2] (**Death & Desire** [pb, Te Da Media, 2020]) 978-1988681405

Wilde, Deborah, [*Ashira Cohen* #3] (**Shadows & Surrender**) [pb, Te Da Media, 2020] 978-1988681450

Wilde, Deborah, [*Ashira Cohen* #4] (**Revenge & Rapture**) [pb, Te Da Media, 2020] 978-1988681481

Wilde, Deborah, [*Ashira Cohen* #5 & *Dr. Raisa Montefiore*] (**Howl at the Moon**) [pb, Te Da Media, 2023] 978-1998888016

Wilde, Deborah, [*Ashira Cohen* #6 & *Dr. Raisa Montefiore*] (**Lost in the Woods**) [pb, Te Da Media, 2023] 978-1998888146

Non-fiction Books and Articles on Canadian Jews and Crime

Montreal

Chouinard, Denys, “Fifty years ago, a turning point in municipal political life: The Caron Inquiry, 1950–1954,” *Archives de Montréal*, September 16, 2004. Fifty Years Ago, A Turning Point in Municipal Political Life: The Caron Inquiry, 1950–1954 | Archives of Montreal (archivesdemontreal.com)

Levine, Allen, “Not your typical Jewish boys”, *Winnipeg Free Press*, November 3, 2018, adapted from his book, **Seeking the Fabled City: The Canadian Jewish Experience** [hc, McClelland & Stewart, 2018] 978-0771048050. [*Levine explores the complex relationship between these criminal elements and the wider Jewish community, which was deeply embarrassed by these “notorious” figures and their public visibility, such as the large crowds at their funerals. Jewish involvement in illegal activities was frequently used by antisemites to justify broad hostility toward the entire community. Organizations like the Canadian Jewish Review made concerted efforts to distance the “legitimate” community from “Jewish gangsters,” labeling them as “undesirable citizens” who lacked moral education. **Bill***]

Brownstein, veteran columnist of the *Montreal Gazette*, reviewed Levine's book favourably for its "warts-and-all"

presentation of the Canadian Jewish story. His columns over the years have frequently referred to the Jewish mobsters mentioned above.

Levine's book also discusses the Montreal Jewish criminals and focuses on the bootlegging of liquor to the US during the Prohibition era (1920–1933).

Saul Bellow's Father: Levine notes that **Abraham Bellow** in Montreal turned to bootlegging out of debt, though he was ultimately unsuccessful and was robbed while transporting whiskey.

Large-scale success: Samuel Bronfman, founder of Seagrams, famously profited from the high demand for alcohol during Prohibition (more on this below). Levine characterizes Samuel Bronfman as a visionary who saw Prohibition not just as a legal hurdle, but as a massive business opportunity. While the Bronfmans often tried to "scrub" this part of their history to maintain a respectable public image, Levine and other historians highlight it as the bedrock of their multibillion-dollar empire. Further books on the Bronfmans include:

Newman, Peter C., (**Bronfman Dynasty: The Rothschilds of the New World** [hc, McClelland & Stewart, 1978] 978-0771067587 [pb, Bantam Seal, 1979] 978-0770415600 [This is the classic, investigative look at the family. Newman was one of the first to extensively document how they used small Saskatchewan towns near the U.S. border as staging grounds for smuggling.]

Faith, Nicholas, (**The Bronfmans: The Rise and Fall of the House of Seagram** [hc, Thomas Dunne Books, 2006] 978-0312332198 [pb, St. Martin's Griffin, 2007] 978-0312332204 [Faith provides a detailed analysis of the "international booze business" and the "backroom shenanigans" that built the Seagram empire.]

Marrus, Michael R., (**Samuel Bronfman: The Life and Times of Seagram's Mr. Sam** [hc, Brandeis UP, 1991] 978-0874515718 [A more academic but thorough biography that explores Sam Bronfman's correct judgment of the U.S. market during the temperance movement.]

O'Connor, D'Arcy, (**Montreal's Irish Mafia: The True Story of the Infamous West End Gang** [pb, HarperCollins, 2014] 978-1443427814 [While focused on the West End Gang, this book provides essential context on the power vacuum Harry Ship left behind and how the city's underworld transitioned]

Palmer, Al, (**Montreal Confidential: The Low Down on the Big Town** [pb, Véhicule Press, originally published in 1950, 2010 reprint] 978-1550652604 [a gritty, "tell-all" chronicle of the city's nightlife and criminal underbelly during its mid-century peak. Written by the veteran police and entertainment reporter **Al Palmer** [1913–1971], the book serves as both a historical record and a "how-to guide" to Montreal's most colorful and dangerous locales. Leveraging his "Man About Town" column persona, Palmer introduces readers to the "demons and demigods" of the era—including singers, dancers, and various underworld figures. – Google/AI]

Séguin, Félix and Eric Thibault, (**Inside the Montreal Mafia: The Confessions of Andrew Scoppa** [pb, PCW Press, 2022] 978-1770416673 [While primarily about the modern Rizzuto family, the book explores the historical foundations of organized crime in Montreal, including the era when Harry Ship was the "czar" of the city's vice.]

Usher, Catherine, "Under the Reign of the Underworld:" Montreal's Jewish Gangsters of the 1920s & 1930s" [April, 2023]

https://ontariojewisharchives.org/cms_uploads/pdf/Usher_Under_Reign_Underworld.pdf

Weintraub, William, "Wide-Open Town: Girls, Gambling, Graft," in Weintraub, William, (**City Unique: Montreal Days and Nights in the 1940s and '50s**) [hc, McClelland & Stewart, 1996] 978-0771089916 [pb, McClelland & Stewart, 1996] 978-0771089749 [*Montreal in the 1940s and '50s was Canada's largest, richest, most vibrant and colourful city. It was, at the end of those prosperous decades, "bursting at the seams," still growing, still far ahead of Toronto. No one then could foresee the rise of Quebec separatism, which would cripple the city, and send it into its long decline.*

William Weintraub (1926–2017) was a prominent Canadian journalist, author, and filmmaker who spent his career documenting the social and political life of Montreal. He had a long and distinguished career with the National Film Board of Canada (NFB), where he wrote, produced, or directed over 150 documentary films.

In **City Unique**, Weintraub introduces the reader to many of the extraordinary characters who gave Montreal its singular flavour. They include Camillien Houde, the mayor who was interned during the war for advocating treason; Lili St. Cyr, the ultimate striptease artiste, who mesmerized men and boys; Maurice Duplessis, the dictatorial premier who could evict individuals from their homes if he suspected they were communist; and Anna Beauchamp, the flamboyant madam who operated a string of at least a dozen brothels.

The geography of the book is centered around the invisible boundaries that separated Montreal's ethnic and social groups:

The Main (Saint-Laurent Boulevard): The literal and figurative dividing line between the English (West) and French (East). It was the heart of the "third solitude"—the Jewish community—and packed with gambling joints, nightclubs, and deli shops.

Downtown (Ste. Catherine Street): The hub of nightlife and neon lights. Weintraub describes a time when this area was even more vibrant than it is today, filled with iconic venues like Ruby Foos and Bill Wong's.

Westmount: Portrayed as the enclave of the rich, "fading" Anglo-Scots moneyed class and the newer English-speaking elite.

Plateau Mont-Royal: Mentioned in the context of the French-speaking working-class community that would eventually lead the "Quiet Revolution" following this era.

Montreal was a "wide-open town," the vice capital of Canada, where the amply bribed police and politicians connived to resist all attempts at reform. The city was filled with illegal gambling dens, bookmaking operations and brothels that flourished long after the repeal of Prohibition. But two crusaders, Pacifique Plante and Jean Drapeau (later to be elected mayor), were determined to clean up the city and Weintraub gives a lively account of their battle with the vice lords.

During the era, far-reaching changes took place within the communities that comprised Montreal's three solitudes - the English, the French, and the Jewish - and the author examines their effects. The Jewish community was characterized by a vibrant Yiddish culture, including its own newspapers like the **Keneder Adler** and institutions like the **Jewish Public Library**. Many residents worked in the burgeoning garment industry ("needle trades") as

manufacturers and union organizers. Weintraub expresses a particular “open affection” for the iconic delicatessens along The Main, which served as social anchors for the community.

He also describes the city’s passionate ideologues, both communist and fascist, their struggles and changing fortunes in the aftermath of the Second World War. He examines, too, the emergence of a generation of novelists, playwrights and poets, including Hugh MacLennan, Gabrielle Roy, Irving Layton, Mordecai Richler and others who set a new standard for Canadian literature.

The 1940s and ’50s were a unique period, different from everything that came before - the Great Depression, the lingering stuffiness of the Edwardian era - and different from the period that followed - signaled by Quebec’s Quiet Revolution. It was a pivotal, momentous time. – Amazon & Google/AI]

The most prominent Jewish gangsters of the 1930s-50s who emerge from Weintraub’s and other accounts, including the “Juifs d’ici” web-pages of the CJA (Canadian Jewish Appeal) and CJC (Canadian Jewish Congress) were:

Harry Davis (Né Chaskel Lazarovitch - 1898–1946) – born in Romania and emigrated to Montreal with his family at the age of 10. He rose as a “vice lord” in Montreal’s gambling, narcotics and prostitution industries and became a leading “edge man”, the term used for the figure responsible for “mediating” between the city’s organized criminal enterprises and its elected officials and police. He ran the Mount Royal Bridge Club, the city’s most lucrative gambling den, and was heavily involved in smuggling morphine, heroin, and cocaine from Europe. His first major setback was a 14-year prison sentence in 1933 for drug trafficking, largely due to an informant’s testimony. He was regarded as being behind the 1934 assassination of the informant, Charlie Feigenbaum. Davis was himself shot to death in 1946 at his gambling house, at 1244 Stanley Street near the corner of Ste. Catherine West. (see note on Louis Bercovitch below).

“Fat Charlie” Feigenbaum (1891–1934) - A former associate of Harry Davis who turned police informant. In retaliation, he was shot dead “in broad daylight” on Esplanade Avenue, in what was considered Montreal’s first gangland slaying.

Pincus “Pinky” Brecher (1898?-1934) – American-born associate of Davis and Feigenbaum whose expertise was in smuggling narcotics from Montreal into the US. He was referred to as “the New York connection”. He was arrested in 1933 for these activities, and incriminated by Feigenbaum’s testimony. Following his conviction in September 1934, he committed suicide in his jail cell, according to the New York Times. According to an alternative account in the Winnipeg Free Press, he broke free from his guards at the courthouse and was killed in a fall when attempting to leap over an open passageway.

Harry Ship (Né Shipshovitz - 1913 – 1998) – known as the “Gentleman Gambler” and “King of the Montreal Gamblers”. He studied mathematics at Queen’s University in Kingston, Ontario (though he did not bother graduating), acquiring skills which he used to professionalize and modernize his bookmaking operations. He controlled a network of “white houses” on Ste-Catherine Street (high-tech booking parlors equipped with multiple phone lines and headsets to manage thousands of dollars in bets daily) and illegal casinos in Lachine, Greenfield Park, and Côte St. Luc. Unlike Harry Davis, who was known for narcotics smuggling and the city’s first underworld killing, Ship focused on high-volume gambling and maintained a more “gentlemanly” public persona, even carrying a business card and address book that included the mayor’s name. Unlike his predecessors, Ship was

relatively polished and preferred bribery over violence, admitting to making roughly \$1 million annually in the mid-1940s. His dominance waned after the Caron Inquiry (1950–1954), a massive public investigation into police corruption that targeted his gambling syndicate and eventually paved the way for the Cotroni crime family to take control.

Max Shapiro (1891–1962 est.) - *a contemporary and partner of Harry Ship in the illegal gambling industry. He ran some of the city's most successful gambling houses starting in the 1920s. He was less flamboyant than Davis and eventually pivoted toward legitimate business interests. With several partners, he opened the famous Ruby Foo's hotel and restaurant. While his illegal operations were curtailed by the same cleanup efforts that targeted Ship, he is often remembered for his successful transition into the Montreal hospitality industry.*

Louis Bercovitch, alias “Joe Miller”, est. 1910–1961, *was a Montreal gambler and underworld figure who gained notoriety for the 1946 assassination of the city's vice king, Harry Davis. He was also the alleged driver during the 1934 assassination of Charlie Feigenbaum. Bercovitch was seeking to open his own gambling parlour, for which Harry Davis' approval was required. Davis refused. The two met and argued vehemently. Bercovitch alleged that Davis threatened to kill him (“as had happened to Feigenbaum”), whereupon he drew his weapon and shot Davis in self-defence. He was convicted of manslaughter and served eleven years of a sentence before his release in 1958.*

Harry Feldman (1900–1980) - *He owned a three-story building at the central corner of Bleury Street and Ste-Catherine Street in downtown Montreal. While the ground floor was a legitimate business, the upper floors housed sophisticated bookmaking operations. He was a part-owner of several high-profile Montreal venues, including the famous nightclub, Chez Parez. Unlike many of his contemporaries in organized crime, Feldman was known as a “good family man” who lived quietly and avoided involvement in the drug trade. He was never apprehended despite a 14-year criminal career.*

Barney Shulkin (1898–1981) – *[a contemporary and associate of Harry Ship and also associated with Harry Davis and Harry Feldman in running the Montreal vice scene of the 1930s and 40s, especially the illegal gambling industry. Shulkin was a notable witness and subject during the **Caron Inquiry** (Public Inquiry into the Police Department of Montreal). This massive investigation, led by Pacifique Plante and Judge François Caron, aimed to dismantle the corruption and illegal gambling networks protected by the police.] [Google/AI, Amazon & a bit of Wikipedia]*

Toronto – Hamilton - Ontario

Ainsworth, Amelia & Rick Halpern, “**Jews with Knives: Toronto's Depression-Era Kosher-Slaughter Infrastructure and the Kehilla Enquiry of 1932,**” American Review of Canadian Studies 50, no. 2 (2020)

Halpern, Monda, (**Alice in Shandehland: Scandal and Scorn in the Edelson/Horwitz Murder Case** [hc, McGill-Queen's UP, 2015] 978-0773545595 [By 1931, Ben and Alice Edelson had been married for two decades and had seven children, but for years Alice had been having an affair with the married Jack Horwitz. On the night of 24 November, Ben, Alice, and Jack met at Edelson Jewellers to “settle the thing.” Words flew, a brawl erupted, and Jack was shot and killed. The tragedy marked the start of a sensational legal case that captured Ottawa headlines, with the prominent jeweller facing the gallows. Through a detailed examination of newspaper coverage, interviews with family and community members, and evocative archival photographs, Monda Halpern's **Alice in Shandehland** reconstructs a long-silenced murder case in Depression-era Canada. Halpern contends that

despite his crime, Ben Edelson was the object of far less contempt than his adulterous wife whose shandeh - Yiddish for shame or disgrace - seemed indefensible. While Alice endured the censure of both the Jewish community and the courtroom, Ben's middle-class respectability and the betrayal he suffered earned him favoured standing and, ultimately, legal exoneration. Revealing the tensions around ethnicity, sexuality, gender, and class, Alice in Shandehland explores the divergent reputations of Ben and Alice Edelson within a growing but insular and tenuous Jewish community, and within a dominant culture that embraced male success and valour during the emasculating 1930s. – Amazon]

Hamilton (Bessie Starkman) Figures:

While Montreal was the hub, other regions had notable Jewish figures intertwined with the Italian mob. **Community Stigma:** *These figures were often viewed with a mix of fear and “perverse pride”. While the official community leadership (like the Canadian Jewish Congress) tried to distance themselves, the massive turnout for gangsters’ funerals suggested a complex social reality.*

Bessie Starkman(1890–1930) **(and Rocco Perri):** Based in Hamilton, Starkman was the Jewish common-law wife and business partner of the “King of the Bootleggers,” Rocco Perri. She was the “brains” of their massive bootlegging empire during the 1920s. She was assassinated in 1930 in a targeted gangland hit. See:

Monda Halpern, “A ‘Ghoulis Jamboree’: The Not-So-Jewish Jewish Funeral of Mob Boss Bessie Starkman” **Canadian Jewish Studies / Études juives canadiennes**, Vol. 36, 2023, pp. 51-78 [*A detailed article about Bessie Starkman’s criminal career and sensational funeral, following her murder in Hamilton, Ontario in 1930. Despite Starkman’s radical deviation from the life patterns typical of Polish Jewish immigrants to Canada, the author contends that she retained significant elements of her Jewish identity. Her ostentatious public funeral was a mass event, widely covered in the press, which provided an often-bizarre and conflicting juxtaposition of Jewish and Italian burial customs. Prof. Halpern is in the process of completing a book on Bessie Starkman.*]

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bessie_Starkman#:~:text=In%201912%2C%20Starkman%20met%20Rocco,immigrants%2C%20were%20already%20marginalized%22. – Wikipedia article on Bessie Starkman

Cole, Trevor, (**The Whisky King: The remarkable true story of Canada’s most infamous bootlegger and the undercover Mountie on his trail** [hc, HarperCollins, 2017] 978-1443442237 [pb, Harper Perennial, 2018] 978-1443442244 [*The story of Rocco Perri, Bessie Starkman’s criminal partner and common-law husband.*]

Dubro, James and Robin F. Rowland. (**King of the Mob: Rocco Perri and the Women Who Ran His Rackets**) [hc, Viking, 1987] 978-0670815333 [pb, Penguin Books Australia, 1988] 978-0140098235

Keefe, Rose, (**Bessie Perri: Queen of the Bootleggers** [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2014] 978-1503216112

Nicaso, Antonio. (**Rocco Perri: The Story of Canada’s Most Notorious Bootlegger** [pb, Wiley, 2004]) 978-0470835265

Steinke, Gord, (**Mobsters & Rumrunners of Canada** [pb, Folklore Publishing, 2004]) 978-1894864114 [*Includes material on Rocco Perri, the Purple Gang, Dutch Schulz and the Bronfman family* – Google/AI]

Gertrude Schumacher: *In Toronto's "The Ward" neighborhood, Schumacher operated a small-scale but notorious bootlegging business out of her home grocery store, reflecting the "survivalist" nature of Jewish crime in high-poverty areas. [Note: I was unable to find any other references to Schumacher or her criminal activities.]*

Pre-Mafia Dominance: *Levine emphasizes that these Jewish syndicates were the primary controllers of gambling and vice until the arrival of New York's Cosa Nostra (via the Cotroni family) in the early 1950s.*

Toronto – Christie Pits Riot

Levitt, Cyril & William Shaffir, (**The Riot at Christie Pits**) [hc, Lester & Orphen Dennys, 1987] 978-0886190934 [pb, New Jewish Press, 2018] 978-1988326085 [*The foreword to this book is a story about the riot by the prominent Canadian author, Morley Callaghan. It is remembered as one of the worst outbreaks of ethnic violence in Canadian history. The conflict involved more than 10,000 participants and spectators and lasted approximately six hours. It was triggered on August 16, 1933 after an amateur softball game at Willowvale Park (now Christie Pits) between a predominantly Jewish team and a non-Jewish team, who included a group of Nazi-inspired youths known as the "Pit Gang" and who displayed a white banner with a black swastika. As the game ended, the group unfurled the banner and shouted "Heil Hitler". Jewish players and spectators, along with supporters, rushed to destroy the symbol, sparking a massive brawl that quickly spread from the ballpark into the surrounding streets.*

The event took place against the backdrop of the Great Depression and the recent rise of Adolf Hitler in Germany. In Toronto, "Swastika Clubs" had formed earlier that summer, particularly in The Beaches area, to protest and intimidate Jewish residents. At the time, Toronto was overwhelmingly British and Protestant, and Jewish residents—the city's largest minority—faced significant systemic discrimination in employment, housing, and social life.

*The fighting involved Jewish and Italian youths (who allied with the Jews against a shared history of marginalization) facing off against members of the "Pit Gang" and other Anglo-Canadian Nazi sympathizers. Only a handful of police were initially on duty; reinforcements eventually arrived on horseback and motorcycles to quell the violence by roughly 2:00 AM. Dozens were seriously injured by weapons like baseball bats, lead pipes, and broomsticks, though no fatalities were reported. Following the riot, the public display of the swastika was banned in Toronto, marking one of Canada's first policies against hate speech. The event led to a revival of the Canadian Jewish Congress in 1934 and is now cited as a turning point that eventually helped shape Toronto's transition into a more inclusive, multicultural city. - Google/AI]. See also the entry in the Canadian Jewish fiction section above on Aren X. Tulchinsky and his novel, **The Five Books of Moses Lapinsky**.*

Halpern, Monda, "**The 'Maelstrom' at Christie Pits: Jewish Masculinity and the Toronto Riot of 1933.**" *Canadian Jewish Studies*, 28 (2019): 12-33.

Michaels, Jamie (Author) and Doug Fedrau (Illustrator), **Christie Pits** [Graphic Novel, pb, Dirty Water Comics, 2019] 978-0995294615 [- *An exceptional graphic novel that serves as a visceral, visual history of the riot. It traces several distinct characters on both sides of the conflict leading up to the fateful baseball game. It brilliantly illustrates the gritty street-level tensions of 1933 Toronto and the aftermath that led the city to pass Canada's first anti-hate legislation.*

Maxie Bluestein (1912–1984) first came to prominence as one of the sons of East European Jewish immigrants, who fought on the Jewish side of the Christie Pits riot. He symbolized the “tough” Jewish youths of the 1930s, like Sammy Luftspring, who were willing to physically defend their community against antisemitic groups like the Swastika Clubs. He later emerged as a bridge between the street-level resistance of the 1930s and the structured gambling underworld of the 1950s and 60s. He was a high-stakes, independent gambler who operated outside the control of major crime syndicates. He ran the lucrative Lakeview Club, an illegal gambling den that reportedly earned more than \$13 million a year at its peak. For years, he resisted efforts by the American Mafia and Canadian crime families to “muscle in” on his operations, particularly rebuffing a 1955 attempt to bring him into a larger syndicate. The defining moment of his public life occurred on March 21, 1961, at the Town Tavern (located at Queen and Yonge Streets when he was severely beaten by members of the Hamilton Mafia, who were contending for domination of illegal gambling in Toronto. He subsequently stepped away from his high-profile gambling activity, as the American and Mafia elements took over. A Jewish contemporary of his in the Toronto gambling underworld was **Davy Bossin** (“Davy the Punk”, 1905–1963), whose life and activities were memorialized in a biography by his son, Bob Bossin.

Bossin, Bob, (**Davy the Punk: A Story of Bookies, Toronto the Good, the Mob and My Dad** [pb, Porcupine’s Quill, 2014]) 978-0889843691 [*This provides a detailed look at the 1930s–60s gambling scene in Toronto and features figures like Maxie Bluestein.*]

Davy Bossin and Maxie Bluestein were contemporaries and fellow Jewish figures in Toronto’s underworld, but they typically operated in different niches of the gambling industry. While they were not close “business partners” in a formal sense, they were professional associates within the same tight-knit network of Jewish bookmakers. They both inhabited the same social world of Spadina Avenue and the “Ward,” where the Jewish underworld maintained a united front against outside “muscle,” particularly the Italian Mafia. Despite his notoriety as “Davy the Punk” in the gambling world, Bossin was considered a respected and generous member of Toronto’s Jewish community. – Google/AI]

Luftspring, Sammy, (**Call Me Sammy** [hc, Prentice-Hall, 1975] 978-0131126497 [*In his memoir, Luftspring characterizes his family’s involvement in bootlegging as a common means of survival in Toronto’s immigrant neighborhoods during the Prohibition era. It was a widespread practice among his neighbors in St. John’s Ward and Kensington Market. Because it was so common for working-class families struggling in poverty, many such small-scale operations often went unprosecuted or were ignored by local authorities unless they reached a certain scale. The family’s bootlegging was actually successful enough to facilitate their move from the impoverished “Ward” to the slightly more affluent Kensington Market area, suggesting they operated without significant legal disruption. There is no record of them ever being arrested or prosecuted for these activities. Luftspring (1916–2000), by the way, was a successful professional boxer who won the Canadian welterweight title in 1938, retiring in 1940, and becoming a professional boxing referee for many years thereafter. He participated in the 1933 Christie Pits riot.* – Google/AI]

Staunton, Ted (Author) and Josh Rosen (Illustrator), (**The Good Fight** (Graphic Novel, pb, Scholastic Canada, 2021) 978-1443163835 [*Another highly regarded graphic novel treatment of the era. It explores the depression-era street politics of Toronto through the eyes of a young boy navigating neighborhood gangs, culminating directly in the chaos of the Christie Pits clash.*]

Idsinga, Hank, (The High Road: Confessions of a Homicide Cop [pb, Simon & Schuster, 2026] 978-1668076408 [- primarily a memoir about homicide investigations and Hank

Idsinga's 34-year career with the Toronto Police Service (TPS). He spent 18 of those years working specifically within the Homicide squad, serving as the unit's top inspector for his final five years. One of its most controversial themes is his allegation that antisemitism—and other forms of prejudice—persisted within the senior ranks of the Toronto Police Service. Those allegations received extensive media attention upon the book's publication and prompted calls for an independent review by the Toronto Police Service Board.

*Idsinga is careful **not** to portray the Toronto Police Service as institutionally or uniformly antisemitic. In fact, he repeatedly emphasizes that the overwhelming majority of officers are honest, decent professionals. His concern is that a relatively small number of senior officers wield disproportionate influence, creating a culture in which overt prejudice can flourish without meaningful consequences.*

The most serious allegations concern a senior officer whom Idsinga does not identify. According to the memoir, this officer repeatedly made openly antisemitic remarks. He presents these not as isolated slips of the tongue but as evidence of deeply held prejudice.

Idsinga reveals that his own grandfather was murdered during the Holocaust. Many colleagues apparently did not know of his Jewish heritage. He writes that hearing such remarks from a superior left him "feeling physically ill." The irony, he notes, was profound: he had entered policing partly because of his family's Holocaust history, only to encounter antisemitism near the end of a career he otherwise regarded with pride.

*The memoir does **not** single out antisemitism as the only form of prejudice. Idsinga argues that the same dysfunctional leadership culture also tolerated anti-Black racism, misogyny, homophobia, cronyism, favouritism and failures of accountability. His broader thesis is that organizations inevitably reflect prejudices existing in society, but leadership determines whether those prejudices are challenged or permitted to flourish.*

A recurring theme is that inappropriate behaviour by influential officers often went unchallenged. Idsinga suggests that officers who objected to such behaviour risked professional consequences, contributing to a culture in which offensive remarks were normalized or dismissed as jokes rather than treated as misconduct.

*One of Idsinga's strongest qualifications is that he does **not** accuse the entire Toronto Police Service of antisemitism. He explicitly states that most officers are ethical; he loved his career; he retains many close friendships within the service. His concern is that "a few bad apples" occupying positions of authority can damage both morale and public confidence in an organization of thousands.*

Idsinga argues that prejudice among police leaders has consequences beyond offensive language. He suggests that citizens deserve confidence that investigations and police discretion are exercised free from personal bias. Even if only a minority of officers exhibit prejudice, he contends, tolerance of such attitudes by leadership undermines trust in the institution.

The allegations sparked immediate public controversy. The Toronto Police Service Board requested Ontario's Inspectorate of Policing to consider an independent inspection into the allegations and broader organizational culture within the service. TPS leadership stated that the allegations were being taken seriously.

*The discussion of antisemitism occupies only a relatively small portion of *The High Road*, but it became the book's most consequential public revelation. Idsinga's central message is nuanced:*

- ***the Toronto Police Service is not portrayed as broadly antisemitic;***

- *most officers are portrayed positively;*
- *however, he alleges that a small number of influential senior officers expressed overt antisemitic views and that organizational culture failed to confront them adequately.*

The memoir therefore uses antisemitism not simply as a personal grievance but as an illustration of a larger argument about leadership, accountability, and institutional culture within one of Canada's largest police services. – ChatGPT] **Note:** The Amazon blurb on this book – typically the one issued by the publisher – sticks to highlighting the most prominent cases solved during Idsinga's career. None of the above on anti-Semitism is mentioned.

Additional note: Thanks to my old friend, **David Kaufman**, a Toronto resident, for bringing this important recent book to my attention.

Prominent Canadian Jewish Lawyers and Judges:

Girard, Philip, (**Bora Laskin: Bringing Law to Life** [hc, University of Toronto Press for the Osgoode Society for Canadian Legal History, 2005] 978-0802090447 [*In any account of twentieth-century Canadian law, Bora Laskin (1912-1984) looms large. Born in northern Ontario to Russian-Jewish immigrant parents, Laskin became a prominent human rights activist, university professor, and labour arbitrator before embarking on his 'accidental career' as a judge on the Ontario Court of Appeal (1965) and later Chief Justice of Canada (1973-1984). Throughout his professional career, he used the law to make Canada a better place for workers, racial and ethnic minorities, and the disadvantaged. As a judge, he sought to make the judiciary more responsive to modern Canadian expectations of justice and fundamental rights.*]

In Bora Laskin: Bringing Law to Life, Philip Girard chronicles the life of a man who, at all points of his life, was a fighter for a better Canada: he fought antisemitism, corporate capital, omnipotent university boards, the Law Society of Upper Canada, and his own judicial colleagues in an effort to modernize institutions and re-shape Canadian law. Girard exploits a wealth of previously untapped archival sources to provide, in vivid detail, a critical assessment of a restless man on an important mission. -Amazon]

Jonas, George, (Greenspan: The Case for the Defence [hc, Macmillan of Canada, 1987] 978-0771594953 [*Major portrait of **Edward "Eddie" Greenspan**, Canada's most celebrated Jewish criminal defense lawyer. Greenspan belongs in the same lineage as Nizer, Leibowitz and Dershowitz: the highly visible Jewish courtroom advocate, sometimes representing extremely unpopular or notorious defendants.*]

MacDonnell, Vanessa A., Stephen Bindman, and Gerald Chan, [eds]. (**Justice Rosalie Silberman Abella: A Life of Firsts** [pb. Irwin Law, 2025] 978-1552216712 [*Justice Abella was appointed to the Supreme Court of Canada in 2004, making history as the first Jewish woman appointed to Canada's top court. Born in a displaced persons camp in Stuttgart, Germany, she had a storied career before joining Canada's top court as a practicing lawyer, a family court judge, law reformer (Chair of the Ontario Law Reform Commission), labour adjudicator, law professor, appeal court justice, and commission of inquiry head (her 1984 federal Royal Commission on Equality in Employment created the term and concept of "employment equity.") She was elected to the Royal Society of Canada in 1997, to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2007, and to the American Philosophical Society in 2018. In 2020, she was awarded the Knight Commander's Cross of the Order of Merit by the President of Germany. She is a graduate of the Royal Conservatory of Music, has judged the Giller Literary Prize, moderated a Prime Ministerial Leader's*]

Debate, and spellbound audiences around the globe with her oratory. – Amazon] The book is a comprehensive multidisciplinary anthology exploring her early life, labor law contributions, and global human rights impact.] See in particular the following essay in the collection: **Cameron, Jamie.** "Her Fundamentals: Justice Abella and Section 2(b) of the Charter."

Agocs, Carol, editor, (**Employment Equity in Canada: The Legacy of the Abella Report** [hc, University of Toronto Press, 2014] 978-1442647565 [pb, U. of Toronto Press, 2014] 978-1442615625 [*In the mid-1980s, the Abella Commission on Equality in Employment and the federal Employment Equity Act made Canada a policy leader in addressing systemic discrimination in the workplace. More than twenty-five years later, Employment Equity in Canada assembles a distinguished group of experts to examine the state of employment equity in Canada today.*

Examining the evidence of nearly thirty years, the contributors – both scholars and practitioners of employment policy – evaluate the history and influence of the Abella Report, the impact of Canada's employment equity legislation on equality in the workplace, and the future of substantive equality in an environment where the Canadian government is increasingly hostile to intervention in the workplace. They compare Canada's legal and policy choices to those of the United States and to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and examine ways in which the concept of employment equity might be expanded to embrace other vulnerable communities. Their observations will be essential reading for those seeking to understand the past, present, and future of Canadian employment and equity policy. - Amazon]

Justice Harry Batshaw (1902–1984) was the first Jewish person appointed to a superior court bench in Canada, serving on the Quebec Superior Court from 1950 onward. Because he primarily wrote legal decisions, worked within international committees, and gave public addresses, most materials published by or about him are captured in legal histories, specialized collections, or archive papers rather than mainstream commercial books.

The published references and archival bibliographies for Judge Harry Batshaw are detailed below.

Works/Papers Written by Judge Harry Batshaw

Batshaw, Harry. "The Jew in the Judiciary," Canadian Jewish Historical Society address (published/presented February 28, 1968). Batshaw, Harry. "Human Rights Committee Report / International Law Association Activities." Featured in *Editions de l'Institut de Sociologie de l'Université Libre de Bruxelles* (Reviewed in *International Affairs*, Vol. 46, No. 4, 1970, p. 801). [[1](#)]

Batshaw, Harry (Justice), **Legal Judgment in *Emilien Morin v. Bellarmin Gregoire*, S.C. Joliette**, No. 19,539 (January 4, 1967). Reproduced in "Unreported Judgments," McGill Law Journal, Vol. 13, No. 3 (1967): 503. [[1](#), [2](#)]

Batshaw, Harry (Justice), **Legal Judgment in *Globe Parking Ltd.*, S.C.M.** No. 494,952 (May 13, 1963). Reproduced in "Unreported Judgments," McGill Law Journal, Vol. 15, No. 1 (1969): 103. [[1](#), [2](#)]

Primary Archival Collections & Published Bibliographies

Harry Batshaw Fonds (1923–1973). Reference No. R4396-0-5-E / MG31-E33. Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa. [*Consists of 15 cm of textual records, including three*

comprehensive scrapbooks of legal clippings, speeches on the judiciary, and correspondence with Nobel Peace Prize laureate René Cassin regarding the Alliance Israélite Universelle.

John Peters Humphrey Fonds (1964–1966). Reference No. MG4127, File 467. McGill University Archives, Montreal. [*Contains explicit correspondence with and draft reports by Harry Batshaw in his capacity as Superior Court Judge and Chairman of the International Committee on Human Rights.*]

Books and Articles About Judge Harry Batshaw

Betcherman, Lita-Rose, [**Ernest Lapointe: Mackenzie King's Great Quebec Lieutenant** [hc, U. of Toronto Press, 2002] : **Mackenzie King's Great Quebec Lieutenant** [*Used as a historical source for the political lobbying efforts leading up to Batshaw's breakthrough 1950 appointment.*]

Burelle, Julien, "**St-Laurent, Judging, Justice, and the Death Penalty in the Shadow of the Cold War.**" Osgoode Hall Law Journal, Vol. 60, No. 1 (2023). [*Focuses heavily on Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent's calculation behind appointing Batshaw to appease Montreal's Jewish community following diplomatic friction regarding Israel's UN admission.*]

Kay, Zachariah, **Canada & Palestine: The Politics of Non-Commitment** Jerusalem: Israel Universities Press, 1978, p. 119 (*details Batshaw's aggressive lobbying as vice-president of the United Zionist Council*).

Nigro, Mario and Clare Mauro, "**The Jewish Immigrant Experience and the Practice of Law in Montreal, 1830–1990.**" McGill Law Journal, Vol. 44 (1999): 999 at 1016 [*details the history of The Lord Reading Law Society pushing for Batshaw's breakthrough appointment*].

Walker, David, "**Jews and the Criminalization of Hate Speech in Canada.**" Osgoode Hall Law Journal, Vol. 59, No. 1 (2022). [*Outlines Batshaw's representation of the United Nations Association and his leadership within early Canadian civil rights campaigns.*]

Harvey, Cameron, ed., (**Chief Justice Samuel Freedman: A Great Canadian Judge: A Collection of the Reasons for Judgment of the Honourable Samuel Freedman, Justice of the Court of Queen's Bench of Manitoba (1952–60), Justice of the Court of Appeal of Manitoba (1960–83), and Chief Justice of Manitoba (1971–83)**), With a biographical note by Vivian Rachlis. Winnipeg: The Law Society of Manitoba, 1983] 978-0969130703 [*The book is principally a selection of Freedman's judicial opinions, rather than a conventional biography. It also includes the Rachlis biography, illustrations/portraits and appendices. A later Manitoba legal-history source describes it as containing a list of Freedman's judgments and summaries of roughly 70 decisions. Freedman (1908–1993) was an important Jewish Canadian jurist, and the volume is particularly useful because it combines biographical material with primary-source evidence of his actual work as a judge. His career ran from the Manitoba Court of Queen's Bench (1952–60), to the Court of Appeal (1960–83), and Chief Justice of Manitoba (1971–83). He was also notably involved in Winnipeg Jewish communal life, including B'nai B'rith and the Canadian Friends of the Hebrew University.* – Google/AI]

Morris J. Fish (1938–) provides the unusual trajectory criminal defence lawyer → Quebec Court of Appeal → Supreme Court of Canada. He practised in Montreal from 1964 to 1989,

becoming a partner in Cohen, Leithman, Kaufman, Yarosky & Fish and successor firms, and taught criminal evidence/procedure and advanced criminal law at McGill.

Dugré, Mélanie, “**The Honourable Morris J. Fish, Q.C.: The Judge with the Golden Pen.**” Barreau de Montréal, <https://www.barreaudemontreal.qc.ca/en/honourable-morris-j-fish-cr/> [An unusually good substantial biographical profile based heavily on Fish's own recollections. It covers his Montreal upbringing, McGill, journalism for the Montreal Star, entry into criminal practice, Yarosky and the firm, teaching, commissions of inquiry and his judicial career. Particularly useful for understanding Fish as a practising criminal defence lawyer before becoming a judge.]

Fish, Morris J., “**The Effect of Alcohol on the Canadian Constitution ... Seriously.**” *McGill Law Journal / Revue de droit de McGill* 57, no. 1 (2011): 189–202. [Published version of Fish's F. R. Scott Lecture. It is partly humorous but substantively discusses alcohol, federalism, criminal law and constitutional doctrine, as well as Fish's memories of F. R. Scott.]

Fish, Morris J., “**The Art of the Advocate: From Cicero to Erskine to Martin.**” *The Honourable Charles L. Dubin Lecture on Advocacy, Osgoode Hall, Toronto, October 4, 2012.* [Fish discusses great advocacy and devotes substantial attention to **G. Arthur Martin and Charles Dubin**, including criminal-defence ethics and courtroom technique. He describes Dubin as one of Canada's finest advocates.]

Charles Leonard Dubin (1921–2008) was a formidable criminal and civil trial lawyer before becoming a judge, and the Law Society describes him as one of the first Jewish judges in Ontario and the first Jewish Chief Justice of Ontario.

The outstanding source is:

Kates, Christine J. N., **interviewer.** *Oral History Interview with the Honourable Charles Dubin.* Toronto: Osgoode Society for Canadian Legal History, 2006. 72 pp. Transcript and recordings, Osgoode Society Oral History Programme. [Dubin talks about **antisemitism in the legal profession**, his early criminal practice, murder trials, major cases, the development of criminal law and leading advocates such as Arthur Martin.]

Friedland, Martin L., (**My Life in Crime and Other Academic Adventures** [hc, U. of Toronto Press, 2007, 2nd rev. ed.] 978-0802097903 [pb, U. of Toronto Press, 2015] 978-1442629776 [Friedland articulated at Kimber & Dubin and gives a wonderfully vivid first-hand portrait of Dubin, whom he describes as one of the most brilliant lawyers ever to practise in Ontario. Particularly valuable because Friedland also describes the division between Jewish and non-Jewish legal social networks in Toronto at the time. – Google/AI]

Two useful obituaries/profiles are:

Martin, Sandra, “**Judge Who Probed Use of Drugs in Sports Was ‘a Complete Man of the Law,’**” *The Globe and Mail*, October 28, 2008.

Tyler, Tracey, “**Charles Dubin, 87: Legal Giant Became National Icon,**” *Toronto Star*, October 27, 2008.

The book contains a section on the “Dubin–McMurtry Courts” and discusses Dubin's judicial personality and leadership of the Court.

Raphaël H. Schachter (b. 1940 in Sherbrooke, Quebec) - *called to the Quebec bar in 1968, served as both provincial and federal Crown counsel, and subsequently specialized exclusively in criminal, penal and competition-related penal law. He became Q.C. in 1986 and a Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers in 1994.*

Schachter, Raphaël H., **“Taking the Law Into Your Own Hands: Child Abduction and the Defence of Necessity”**, Windsor: Faculty of Law, University of Windsor. *This is a standalone chapter on criminal-law ethics in* Edward L. Greenspan, ed., **Counsel for the Defence: The Bernard Cohn Memorial Lectures in Criminal Law**. Toronto: Irwin Law, 2005, pp. 149–156. ISBN 978-1459313583

Another documented lecture is:

Schachter, Raphaël H., **“How Does a Criminal Lawyer Defend a Client that He Knows is Guilty.”** Québec/Jewish Law Symposium, Montreal, 2010.

*The lecture was delivered at a Chabad of Westmount legal symposium chaired by former Quebec justice minister and Superior Court Justice Herbert Marx. Significantly, **Harvey Yarosky** was another speaker.*

Useful biographical pieces:

Lavery. **“Another Lavery Partner Has Been Awarded the Title of Avocat émérite (Ad. E.).”** June 6, 2011.

A concise but valuable professional biography.

Lavery. **“The Faculty of Law of the Université de Montréal Creates the Raphaël Schachter, Q.C., Scholarship Fund.”** April 14, 2011.

Useful because the scholarship specifically supports criminal-law work, including initiatives concerning miscarriages of justice.

Harvey W. Yarosky (1934–2022) *graduated from McGill Law School and was admitted to the Quebec Bar in 1962. His principal fields were criminal law, administrative law, constitutional/civil-rights law, competition/antitrust law and white-collar crime. He became Queen's Counsel (Q.C./c.r.) and a Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers.*

He taught criminal law at the Université de Montréal (1970–71), University of Ottawa (1970–72), and McGill University (1971–77 and later). He held numerous positions in the Montreal, Quebec and Canadian bar associations, including chairmanships concerned with the administration of criminal justice. He practised in partnership and close friendship with Morris Fish together for decades. His publications included:

Yarosky, Harvey, **“The Criminal Liability of Corporations,”** McGill Law Journal **10, no. 2 (1964): 142–157.** *[This is his principal scholarly article. The Supreme Court of Canada later cited it in the important corporate-criminal-liability case Canadian Dredge & Dock Co. v. The Queen. He was not merely a courtroom defence lawyer but contributed to the academic development of Canadian corporate criminal responsibility.]*

Yarosky, Harvey W.. (“**The Criminal Lawyer and Professional Ethics,**” in Droit pénal—Orientations nouvelles, 163–177. Cowansville, Québec: Les Éditions Yvon Blais, 1987.

Formation permanente du Barreau du Québec. *Droit pénal—Orientations nouvelles.* Cowansville, Québec: Les Éditions Yvon Blais Inc., 1987. 302 pp. ISBN 2-89073-640-7. [*It presents the thinking of an eminent Montreal defence lawyer on the ethical obligations of criminal counsel.*

Yarosky, Harvey W., “**Right to Silence.**” Apparently published by the **Barreau du Québec / Éditions Yvon Blais in 1990.**

Yarosky, Harvey W., (**Coroner's Report following an Inquest into the Death of Mr. Marcellus François**) Québec: Bureau du coroner, 27 April 1992. [*François, an unarmed 24-year-old Black man, had been mistakenly identified as a suspect and fatally shot during a Montreal police operation. Yarosky's inquiry sharply criticized police conduct and racism. Contemporary reporting described his conclusion that ingrained racism within the force had contributed to the killing. The inquiry lasted more than 21 days, heard 46 witnesses and received 106 exhibits. It led to calls for broader examination of Montreal police practices; a subsequent Quebec inspection under retired judge Albert Malouf followed. Yarosky thus weighed in directly on police accountability, racism and reform of law enforcement.*]

Grad, Kenneth, “**Jews and the Criminalization of Hate Speech in Canada,**” Osgoode Hall Law Journal 59, no. 3 (2022) [*Grad discusses the origins of Canada's hate-propaganda legislation and specifically identifies Yarosky as a young criminal lawyer, former student of Maxwell Cohen, and Cohen's executive assistant on the federal Special Committee on Hate Propaganda. Even better, Grad conducted an interview with Harvey Yarosky on November 30, 2020, which he cites in the article. Background: In 1965 the federal government established the **Special Committee on Hate Propaganda in Canada**, chaired by Maxwell Cohen. Its membership included Saul Hayes of the Canadian Jewish Congress, Pierre Elliott Trudeau, Mark MacGuigan and others; Yarosky became Cohen's executive assistant. The committee's 1965 report was instrumental in the eventual adoption of Canada's Criminal Code provisions against advocacy of genocide and hate propaganda.*]

In sum, Yarosky's career combined the following elements: Jewish legal communal life; elite criminal defence; development of Canadian criminal law; and oversight/reform of law enforcement. His Cohen Committee work and the Marcellus François coroner's report make the last two connections especially strong.

Sydney Lewis Robins (1923–2014):

Kates, Christine J. N., interviewer, **Interviews with Sydney Robins.** Osgoode Society for Canadian Legal History Oral History Programme, April–July 1997. Transcript, 457 pp.; 12 audio cassettes, approximately 690 minutes. Archives of Ontario, C 81-1-0-132. [*This covers his childhood as the son of Russian Jewish immigrants, University of Toronto, Osgoode, Harvard, teaching, litigation practice, Law Society career, judicial appointments and important cases.*]

Batten, Jack, (**Learned Friends: A Tribute to Fifty Remarkable Ontario Advocates, 1950–2000**. Toronto: Irwin Law, 2005, pp. 60–61. *The Law Society specifically cites Batten's portrait of Robins as a source on his career.*

*The archival collection is: Law Society of Upper Canada Archives [now Law Society of Ontario Archives]. **Sydney Robins fonds**, PF188. 1944–1948, 1960, 1973–2006. It contains press clippings, speeches, correspondence and photographs.*

The Law Society's biographical entry is also quite useful. Robins practised corporate, commercial and labour litigation; became the first Jewish Treasurer of the Law Society of Upper Canada (1971–74); was appointed to the Supreme Court of Ontario in 1976 and Ontario Court of Appeal in 1981.

Marshall E. Rothstein (1940–)

Kelly, Lisa M., and Ivo Entchev, eds., (**Judicious Restraint: The Life and Law of Justice Marshall E. Rothstein** [pb, LexisNexis Canada, 2016] ISBN 978-0433490654 [*an edited scholarly assessment of Rothstein's judicial philosophy and contribution to Canadian law. Chapters cover administrative law, labour law, intellectual property, taxation, Charter adjudication and competition law. Of particular interest are chapters including:*

Fenrick, Michael, Jodi Martin, and Daniel Rosenbluth, “**Parliamentary Supremacy and the Rule of Law: Reflections on Justice Rothstein's Administrative Law Jurisprudence in an Age of Deference.**”

Sossin, Lorne, “**The Humility of Administrative Law: Marshall Rothstein's Prudent Vision.**”

Vaver, David, “**The Intellectual Property Opinions of Mr. Justice Rothstein.**”

Klinck, Jennifer, “**Fostering Legitimacy: Justice Rothstein's Principled Resolve and Restraint in Charter Adjudication.**”

Rothstein himself published:

Rothstein, Marshall, “**The Role of Dissenting and Concurring Reasons in the Supreme Court of Canada's Charter Jurisprudence,**” National Journal of Constitutional Law 27 (2010): 1 ff.

Rothstein, Marshall, “**Mr. Justice Marshall Rothstein, Supreme Court of Canada, Address to the American Bar Association, Section of Administrative Law and Regulatory Practice,**” Administrative Law Review 63, no. 4: 961 ff. [*A substantive discussion of justiciability and judicial review of executive action in Canadian law.*]

Malyk, Lauren, “**Marshall Rothstein Casts an Eye to Supreme Court Docket, Including Standard of Review,**” Canadian Lawyer, 2018. [*A lengthy interview in which Rothstein discusses his philosophy of administrative-law review, his Supreme Court appointment and his earlier legal career.*]

Alan B. Gold (1917–2005) was Chief Justice of the Superior Court of Quebec from 1983 to 1992, but *his importance goes considerably beyond judging: he was a major Canadian labour arbitrator, mediator and conciliator, and was called upon in exceptionally difficult*

public disputes, most famously during the 1990 Oka Crisis. He was also quite explicit in interviews about his experience as a Jewish lawyer in Montreal.

Gold, Alan B., **“Lawyers and Judges Are Just a Family for Better or for Worse,”** in Bryan M. Knight and Rachel Alkallay, **Voices of Canadian Jews: Thirty-Six Accomplished Men and Women Speak Out on Politics, Patriotism, Religion and Sex**, Montreal: The Chessnut Press, 1988, pp. 63 ff. ISBN 978-0919848023. [- *an extended first-person/interview contribution by Gold dealing with his career and his experience as a Jewish lawyer and judge in Quebec. Later scholarship quotes it extensively. Gold discusses admission to law school, the position of Jews in the Montreal legal profession, and discrimination against Jewish lawyers by the established English law firms.*]

Gold, Alan B., **“Fireside Chat: ‘Ever Paddling Madly Underneath,’”** in Arbitration 1996: Proceedings of the Forty-Ninth Annual Meeting, National Academy of Arbitrators.

Washington, D.C.: Bureau of National Affairs / National Academy of Arbitrators, 1996, pp. 342 ff. [Chapter 13, “Reminiscences.”] – [Gold is here looking back over his own career as arbitrator, mediator and judge. Frances Bairstow introduces him, specifically noting the unusual fact that even after reaching the office of Chief Justice he continued to involve himself in exceptionally difficult labour and public disputes: the Montreal docks, postal disputes, Indigenous-government negotiations and Quebec electoral controversies. Gold then gives an autobiographical “fireside chat.”]

Major published material about Gold

Pathy, Alexander C., **(Waterfront Blues: Labour Strife at the Port of Montreal, 1960–1978.** [hc, U. of Toronto Press, 2004] 978-0802089809 [the most substantial book treatment of Gold's actual work. Pathy recounts Gold's role in attempting to stabilize the extremely contentious Montreal waterfront labour situation. Gold was appointed chairman of the federal conciliation board in March 1968 and remained a crucial mediator/arbitrator for years. It gives an unusually vivid portrait of him: at one point the longshoremen regarded him almost as their protector or “father”; during the bitter 1975 dispute, however, they hanged Gold in effigy. The book therefore provides something much more substantial than ceremonial biography—it shows his mediation methods under severe pressure. – ChatGPT]

Nigro, Mario, and Clare Mauro, **“The Jewish Immigrant Experience and the Practice of Law in Montreal, 1830 to 1990,”** McGill Law Journal / Revue de droit de McGill 44 (1999): 999–1023. [This isn't a biography of Gold, but he is one of its important firsthand sources. The authors use his recollections to document the barriers facing Jewish lawyers in Montreal, including the unwillingness of major Anglo-Montreal firms to employ Jewish articling students and lawyers. It also places Gold in the broader historical progression of Jews entering Quebec's legal establishment. For comparison, **Harry Batshaw** became Quebec's first Jewish Superior Court judge in 1950; Gold's own judicial career began in 1961.]

National Academy of Arbitrators, **“Alan B. Gold,”** in “In Memoriam,” Proceedings of the National Academy of Arbitrators (2005 proceedings; published 2006), pp. ix–x. [

“Jewish Judge Named Chief Justice.” *Jewish Telegraphic Agency, August 17, 1983.* [A particularly useful contemporary Jewish source on Gold's appointment. It identifies him as a prominent labour mediator and arbitrator and reports Trudeau's appointment of him as Chief Justice of the Quebec Superior Court. It also summarizes his earlier career as Provincial Court chief judge and government/civil-service arbitrator.]

All these sources together reveal something important about Gold's place in Canadian Jewish legal history. He was not simply a Jewish judge who happened eventually to become Chief Justice. His career illustrates the transformation of the Montreal Jewish bar from a profession in which Jewish lawyers were largely excluded from the major establishment firms into one in which a Jewish lawyer could become Quebec's senior trial-court judge and then be entrusted by governments, unions, employers and Indigenous parties with extraordinarily sensitive disputes. – Chat GPT]

Herbert Marx (1932–2020), who served as the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Quebec from 1985 to 1988, was a prominent legal scholar, politician, and Superior Court judge. He wrote extensively on constitutional law, human rights, and the intersection of law and poverty.

Marx, Herbert, (**My Story**. Montréal: Éditions Thémis, 2018 (180 pages). ISBN: 978-2894004111 [This autobiography covers his transition from a law professor to a politician, detailing his dramatic 1988 cabinet resignation over Quebec's language signage laws. A French version was published concurrently under the title *Herbert Marx, mon histoire*.]

Chevrette, François, and Herbert Marx, (**Droit constitutionnel : notes et jurisprudence**. Montréal: Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 1982.

Cotler, Irwin, and Herbert Marx, eds., (**The Law and the Poor in Canada**) Montreal: Black Rose Books / Les Éditions Thémis, 1977. [This text evaluates systemic barriers and legal aid frameworks in Canada]

Marx, Herbert, and Jean Hétu, (**Droit et pauvreté au Québec**. Montréal: Les Éditions Thémis, 1974. [A foundational compilation examining provincial statutes, welfare systems, and case law impacting low-income citizens.]

Marx, Herbert, (**Les grands arrêts de la jurisprudence constitutionnelle au Canada**) Montréal: Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 1974.

Arnold, Janice, "New memoir shines light on Quebec's 1980s language crisis." *The Canadian Jewish News*, October 18, 2018. [An analytical piece reviewing Marx's political paradoxes and his stand on the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.]

Cherry, Paul, "Former justice minister Herbert Marx remembered as a principled man." *Montreal Gazette*, March 20, 2020.

Fitterman, Lisa, "Deeply principled jurist Herbert Marx was ‘the ultimate mensch on the bench’," *The Globe and Mail*, April 6, 2020. [An extensive obituary detailing his early life

failing grade 9 at Baron Byng High School, his Harvard Law training, and his transition to the Quebec Superior Court.]

Jedwab, Jack, "**Appreciation: Herbert Marx was a great Quebecer and Canadian.**" *Montreal Gazette*, March 20, 2020. [*Focuses on his status as Quebec's first Jewish justice minister and his subsequent cross-cultural peace-building initiatives at McGill University.*]

Cotler, Irwin (1940–). *Montreal-born Jewish Canadian constitutional and human-rights lawyer, McGill law professor, MP (1999–2015), and federal Minister of Justice and Attorney General (2003–06).* (**Disclosure:** *I have known and admired my fellow-Montrealer Irwin Cotler for most of my life – SS*) *A former president of the Canadian Jewish Congress, Cotler brought a strongly Jewish and Holocaust-informed conception of tzedek ("justice") to human-rights and justice advocacy. His Canadian criminal-justice impact included initiatives against hate crime and Internet hate, human trafficking legislation, prosecution of crimes against humanity and war crimes, attention to wrongful convictions, and judicial-appointment reform. Earlier, as counsel associated with the Canadian Jewish Congress, he was prominent in efforts to bring alleged Nazi war criminals living in Canada to justice.*

Cotler, Irwin, "**Bringing Nazi War Criminals in Canada to Justice: A Case Study,**" *Proceedings of the American Society of International Law Annual Meeting* **91** (1997): 262–269. DOI: 10.1017/S0272503700065836. [*Cotler examines Canada's legal response to alleged Nazi war criminals and the difficulties of prosecuting crimes committed abroad decades earlier. This connects his Jewish communal activity directly with Canadian criminal prosecution and international criminal law. Cotler had been chief counsel for the Canadian Jewish Congress in connection with the Deschênes Commission of Inquiry on War Criminals.*]

Cotler, Irwin, "**Jewish NGOs, Human Rights, and Public Advocacy: A Comparative Inquiry,**" *Jewish Political Studies Review* **11**, nos. 3–4 (Fall 1999): **61–95** [some bibliographies give 61–96]. [*Cotler compares American and Canadian Jewish organizations' approaches to human rights, constitutional litigation, religious liberty and hate speech. He argues that the differing approaches reflect both different legal cultures and different Jewish institutional sensibilities. This is useful for showing that Cotler's legal career cannot really be separated from his conception of Jewish public responsibility through law.*]

Cotler, Irwin, "**The Human Rights Revolution and Counter-Revolution: Dance of the Dialectic,**" *University of New Brunswick Law Journal* **44** (1995): **357 ff.** [*A broad statement of Cotler's philosophy of human rights and law. He explicitly places the postwar human-rights revolution in the shadow of the Holocaust. It helps explain the intellectual background behind his later activities as Justice Minister.*]

Cotler, Irwin, "**Towards a National Justice Initiative Against Racism & Hate,**" *Address at Saint Paul University, Ottawa, May 9, 2005.* Department of Justice Canada. [*This belongs very squarely in the crime/law-enforcement section. Cotler explains his government's 13-point National Justice Initiative Against Racism and Hate, including hate crimes, vandalism of religious institutions, hate propaganda, Internet hate, prosecution and restorative justice.*]

Cotler, Irwin, "**The Constitutional Revolution, the Courts, and the Pursuit of Justice,**" *Address to the Canadian Bar Association Canadian Legal Conference, Calgary, August 14, 2005.* Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada, 2005. [*Very useful for assessing what Cotler*

himself believed he had accomplished as Attorney General. Among other matters, he discusses his government's response to racism, hate speech **and hate crime**, the National Justice Initiative Against Racism and Hate, Internet hate, international criminal justice and mass atrocities.]

Irwin Cotler's impact on Canadian criminal justice

Cotler was Minister of Justice and Attorney General from December 2003 to February 2006. Several of his initiatives touched criminal law or its enforcement directly. The federal government's retrospective account credits him with launching Canada's first National Justice Initiative Against Racism and Hate, initiating Canada's first legislation specifically combating trafficking in women and children, and initiating the first Canadian prosecution concerning the Rwandan genocide under the Crimes Against Humanity and War Crimes Act.

He was also unusually active concerning wrongful convictions. Contemporary/retrospective institutional accounts credit him with quashing more wrongful convictions in a single year than any previous Justice Minister. That aspect makes him relevant to the administration of criminal justice in much the same way as a prosecutor or judge would be, even though Cotler himself was neither a police officer nor primarily a criminal prosecutor.

Another important strand is hate crime and antisemitism. Cotler's thinking about antisemitism eventually had consequences for how Canadian institutions—including law enforcement—conceptualized antisemitic incidents. The Government of Canada's later Canadian Handbook on the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism credits Cotler with an important role in the antecedents of the IHRA definition and explicitly discusses its possible use in police training, recognizing and recording hate incidents, police reports and investigations.

There is some controversy involved. Cotler's approach to the “new antisemitism” and the IHRA definition is contested by critics who argue that expansive definitions can blur the distinction between antisemitism and criticism of Israel. Cotler has staked out a principled position on the boundary between hate speech, protected political expression and criminal/legal intervention.

Human Rights Activism

Irwin Cotler's international human-rights work is really the thread that connects his careers as a McGill law professor, lawyer, parliamentarian and Minister of Justice. Long before entering federal politics, he became known for taking up the cases of political prisoners and prisoners of conscience, often combining legal representation with international political and public-pressure campaigns.

*Among the best-known cases were **Natan (Anatoly) Sharansky**, the Soviet Jewish dissident whom Cotler sought to represent after Sharansky's 1977 arrest; Soviet physicist and dissident **Andrei Sakharov**; Argentine journalist **Jacobo Timerman**; Egyptian democracy advocate **Saad Eddin Ibrahim**; and **Nelson Mandela** and the anti-apartheid cause in South Africa. Cotler's 1981 South African visit became famous for his public challenge, “**If Sharansky, Why Not Mandela?**” He was detained after the speech and subsequently became a prominent Canadian advocate for Mandela and against apartheid.*

*A recurring Cotler method was what might be called **internationalizing the political-prisoner case**: treating an imprisoned dissident not simply as an individual client but as the focus of diplomatic, parliamentary, media and human-rights pressure. He has said that the Sharansky*

experience taught him that freeing a political prisoner often requires making continued imprisonment politically costly for the imprisoning government.

*His concerns became correspondingly broad. He was an early advocate of the **International Criminal Court**, worked on accountability for the Rwandan genocide, campaigned over **Darfur**, human rights in **Iran**, the persecution of dissidents in Russia and China, and the adoption of **Magnitsky-style sanctions** against individual human-rights violators. As Justice Minister (2003–06), he made international justice a governmental priority and initiated Canada's first prosecution for the Rwandan genocide under the Crimes Against Humanity and War Crimes Act.*

After leaving Parliament

*After retiring from Canadian politics in 2015, Cotler focused his activity on human rights. He founded the Montreal-based **Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights** and remains its International Chair. The Centre brings together lawyers, parliamentarians, academics, students and human-rights activists and concentrates particularly on political prisoners, combating authoritarianism and impunity, atrocity prevention, democratic renewal, women's rights and combating antisemitism.*

*The name reflects another longstanding Cotler cause: he chaired the **International Commission of Inquiry into the Fate and Whereabouts of Raoul Wallenberg**, the Swedish diplomat who rescued thousands of Hungarian Jews during the Holocaust and disappeared after being taken into Soviet custody in 1945.*

*Through the Wallenberg Centre and independently, Cotler has continued the kind of individual political-prisoner advocacy he began with Sharansky. More recent clients or causes have included Iranian human-rights lawyer **Nasrin Sotoudeh**, Saudi blogger **Raif Badawi**, Venezuelan opposition leader **Leopoldo López**, Swedish-Eritrean journalist **Dawit Isaak**, Chinese Nobel laureate **Liu Xiaobo**, Hong Kong democracy advocate **Jimmy Lai**, and Russian opposition figure **Vladimir Kara-Murza**.*

He has also served on the Organization of American States' Independent Panel of Legal Experts on Venezuela and the High Level Panel of Legal Experts on Media Freedom. In 2020 the Canadian government appointed him Canada's first Special Envoy on Preserving Holocaust Remembrance and Combatting Antisemitism, extending his human-rights work into a formal international campaign against antisemitism and Holocaust distortion.

Thus Sharansky → Mandela → Wallenberg → today's political prisoners is a useful shorthand for Cotler's career. The underlying principle has remained remarkably consistent: use law, publicity, parliamentary action, diplomacy and international institutions together to turn an individual's persecution into an international human-rights issue.

*In 2022, Tel Aviv University established the **Irwin Cotler Institute for Democracy, Human Rights and Justice** to carry forward Cotler's intellectual and human-rights legacy through research, publications and ongoing public advocacy. Cotler remains actively involved both in the Montreal-based Wallenberg Centre and in the Tel Aviv U. Institute named for him – an utterly remarkable human being! – ChatGPT]*

Canada – General Non-Fiction

Bessner, Ellis, **Double Threat: Canadian Jews, the Military, and World War II** [pb, New Jewish Press, 2019] 978-1988326047 [*While primarily about military service, it explores how*

Jewish soldiers often had to overcome the “tough guy” or “gangster” stereotypes prevalent in Canadian cities at the time.]

Koffman, David S. [ed], (**No Better Home? Jews, Canada and the Sense of Belonging** [hc, U. of Toronto Press, 2021]) 978-1487504892 [pb, U. of Toronto Press, 2021]) 978-1487523572

Morton, Suzanne, (**At Odds: Gambling and Canadians, 1919–1969** [hc, U. of Toronto Press, 2003] 978-0802035646 [pb, U. of Toronto Press, 2003] 978-0802084415 [*A historical examination of how gambling shaped Canadian social mores, including the transition from independent operators like Bluestein to organized syndicates.* – Google/AI])

Penner, Norman & Roland Larsen, (**Tales from the Underworld and Other Stories** [pb, self-published, 2009] B00AR8A6TK [*This collection focuses on the legal and criminal history of Manitoba, including anecdotes and biographies related to the Jewish criminal element in the Winnipeg underworld.*])

Rabinovitch, David, (**Jukebox Empire: The Mob and the Dark Side of the American Dream** [hc, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2023] 978-1538172599 [pb, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2025] 979-8216369189 [*Tells the story of the author’s uncle, William “Wolfe” Rabin, a self-taught electronics genius who became a central figure in the corrupt jukebox industry. Wolfe was born in Morden, Manitoba, the son of Jewish immigrant parents and was considered the “black sheep” of the Rabinovitch family. Post-World War II, he designed a jukebox that became an icon of popular culture, leading to his status as an aspiring tycoon in Chicago. To protect his business from street wars, extortion, and the kidnapping of his brother, Wolfe partnered with a coin machine racketeer and the Mafia. The Mob used his jukeboxes to evade taxes and launder money because they could easily falsify record sales. Wolfe masterminded a massive money-laundering scheme involving stolen bonds to help finance Mob-controlled casinos in Havana during the Cuban Revolution. In 1958, Wolfe and the jukebox industry’s underworld were exposed during nationally televised Senate hearings led by committee counsel, Robert Kennedy. Following a sensational trial where his associates were acquitted, Wolfe “took the fall” for the conspiracy.*])

At a time when there was a jukebox in every restaurant, diner, bar, barracks, arcade, and canteen, Rabin’s trajectory from inventor to promoter to outlaw is set against the Mob’s growing infiltration of the jukebox industry. In a world of music, machines, and money, popular culture and organized crime collide in an epic drama of invention and greed. David Rabinovitch’s investigation into his own family history pieces together an epic puzzle that begins in Chicago with the invention of the jukebox and spans the casinos of Havana and the financial giants of Europe, leading to what the FBI called “the biggest bank robbery in the world,” the 1958 heist of a bank in Brockville, Ontario. Wolfe died in 1967 and is believed to be buried in Chicago. – Google/AI and Amazon]

Schneider, Stephen. (**Iced: The Story of Organized Crime in Canada** [pb, Wiley, 2009]) 978-0470835005

Tulchinsky, Gerald, (**Canada’s Jews: A People’s Journey** [hc, U. of Toronto Press, 2008] 978-0802090621 [pb, U. of Toronto Press, 2008] 978-0802093868 [*a 240-year history, examining the search for a livelihood and the struggle against antisemitism, which sometimes led to involvement in marginal or illicit activities as part of the immigrant struggle.*])

Weinfeld, Morton, (**Like Everyone Else but Different: The Paradoxical Success of Canadian Jews** [hc, McGill-Queen's UP, 2nd edition, 2018] 978-0773552807 [pb, McGill-Queen's UP, 2nd edition, 2018] 978-0773552814 [- *notes that while Canadian Jews exhibit low rates of violent crime, they are the demographic most targeted by hate crimes in Canada, contributing to a "paradoxical" sense of insecurity. Weinfeld further indicates that when Jewish involvement in crime occurs today, it is generally concentrated in white-collar offenses, in contrast to the more violent patterns of crime in the immigrant generation in the context of lower social status, economic hardship and more confrontational anti-Semitism.*]

The Fred Rose Affair

*This survey of Canadian Jews and Crime/Espionage cannot omit the **Fred Rose** case. Born Fishel Rosenberg in Poland in 1907, he emigrated to Canada with his family in 1920. He became a member of the Communist Party of Canada and was elected to the Federal Parliament in 1943 as the representative of a working class constituency (Cartier) in Montreal with a large Jewish immigrant population. As a Member of Parliament, Rose proposed the first federal medicare legislation and the first anti-hate legislation in Canada.*

In September, 1945, the defection of a Soviet employee of the Russian Embassy in Canada (Igor Gouzenko) with numerous documents resulted in Rose's incrimination as an active Soviet spy. He was expelled from Parliament in 1947, tried and sentenced to 6 years in prison. Released in 1951, he was unable to find work in Montreal and returned to Poland in 1953. His Canadian citizenship was subsequently revoked, barring his return to Canada. He remained in Poland until his death in 1983.

The Rose case is cited by many historians as the symbolic beginning of the Cold War in North America. It also significantly affected the Canadian Jewish community, as Rose's popularity in his Montreal-Cartier riding was partly due to the belief that the Soviet Union was the primary force capable of stopping the Nazis in Europe. [Wikipedia] See further:

Hoffman, Matthew B. & Henry Srebrnik [eds], (**A Vanished Ideology: Essays on the Jewish Communist Movement in the English-Speaking World in the Twentieth Century** [hc, SUNY Press, 2016] 978-1438462196 [pb, SUNY Press, 2017] 978-1438462189

Levy, David, (**Stalin's Man in Canada: Fred Rose and Soviet Espionage** [hc, Enigma Books, 2011] 978-1936274277 [pb, Enigma Books, 2011] 978-1936274543

Srebrnik, Henry Felix, (**Jerusalem on the Amur: Birobidzhan and the Canadian Jewish Communist Movement, 1924–1951** [hc, McGill-Queen's UP, 2008]) 978-0773534285

Wayne, Joyce. "The Cold War's Canadian Jewish Spies," Moment Magazine, November/December 2018 (online April 2019)

Weisbord, Merrily, (**The Strangest Dream: Canadian Communists, the Spy Trials, and the Cold War** hc, Lester & Orpen Dennys, 1983] 978-0886190293 [pb, Véhicule Press, 3rd edition, 2022] 978-1550655995

Dr. Henry Morgentaler (1923-2013):

This survey of Canadian Jews and crime/espionage will conclude with a person who repeatedly and demonstratively broke the law prohibiting abortion, with a permanent impact on Canadian law and practice on this vexed issue.

Morgentaler was born in Łódź, Poland, to Jewish socialist, union-organizing parents (members of the General Jewish Labour Bund). He was deported to Auschwitz in 1944, where his parents and sister were murdered, and later transferred to Dachau. After the War, he finished medical school prerequisites in Germany and Belgium before moving to Canada in 1950. He earned his medical degree from the Université de Montréal in 1953.

Having survived the Holocaust, Morgentaler developed an intense, lifelong aversion to state control over individual bodies. He viewed the Canadian government's criminalization of abortion as a form of state-sanctioned cruelty that forced women into dangerous back-alley procedures. Having witnessed the ultimate breakdown of legal morality under the Nazi regime, he believed it was his ethical duty as a physician to actively break unjust laws to save human lives. To cope with his survivor's guilt, he felt a fierce obligation to make his survival "meaningful" by actively protecting others. In his view, providing safe reproductive healthcare was a tangible way to preserve the health, dignity, and lives of living women, thereby paying a debt to the lives lost in the camps. His secular Jewish humanism heavily influenced his definition of life. While his anti-abortion detractors focused on the sanctity of the fetus, Morgentaler's ethics prioritized the conscious, suffering human beings already here—the women who were dying from botched illegal abortions.

Morgentaler systematically used civil disobedience to dismantle restrictive Canadian laws. In 1969, Canada allowed abortions only if approved by a Therapeutic Abortion Committee at an accredited hospital. Access was highly unequal and slow. Morgentaler opened illegal clinics to offer safe services. He was arrested multiple times. Quebec juries repeatedly acquitted him, refusing to convict a doctor providing safe medical care.

In 1974, an appeals court overturned a jury acquittal and jailed him. This prompted the federal "Morgentaler Amendment," preventing appeal courts from replacing jury acquittals with convictions. His legal battle culminated in the landmark Supreme Court of Canada case R. v. Morgentaler (1988). The Court struck down Canada's abortion law as unconstitutional, ruling that restricting access violated a woman's right to "life, liberty and security of the person" under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Because the 1988 ruling struck down the old law and no new law replaced it, Canada became—and remains—one of the few nations with no criminal laws governing abortion. It is treated purely as a medical procedure. Morgentaler opened 20 independent clinics nationwide, securing access outside hospitals.

*He was the first doctor in North America to use vacuum aspiration, making abortions faster and significantly safer than old scraping methods. He personally trained over 100 doctors in safe abortion techniques, establishing standards of practice for reproductive healthcare. Early in his practice, he was an isolated pioneer providing vasectomies, intrauterine devices (IUDs), and birth control pills to unmarried women. For his immense, country-altering activism, he was appointed to the **Order of Canada** in 2008. – Google/AI*

*Morgentaler, Henry, (**Abortion and Contraception** [hc, Beaufort Books, 1982]) 978-0825300936 [Morgentaler's own written manifesto and medical defense, published just a few years before his final Supreme Court victory. It outlines his philosophy on reproductive freedom and the medical necessity of safe access.]*

Dunphy, Catherine, (**Morgentaler: A Difficult Hero** [hc, Random House Canada, 1996] 978-0394223919 [pb, Wiley, 2003] 978-0470833568 [*Dunphy is sympathetic to the importance of what he accomplished but decidedly not hagiographic: she deals with his ego, difficult personal relationships, womanizing, combativeness, Holocaust experience, medical career, and almost obsessive willingness to fight the abortion laws. It is also very good on the successive trials.*

Stettner, Shannon, Kristin Burnett, and Travis Hay, eds., (**Abortion: History, Politics, and Reproductive Justice After Morgentaler** [hc, U. of British Columbia Press, 2017] 978-0774835732 [pb, UBC Press, 2018] 978-0774835749 [*A multidisciplinary anthology evaluating the broader sociopolitical impact of the ruling, moving the conversation beyond legal definitions of "choice" to real-world medical accessibility.*]

U.K. Jews and Crime/Espionage - Fiction & Non-Fiction

Fiction Authors

1. Libi Astaire (pseudonym of Linda Feinberg)
2. Sam Bourne (pseudonym of Jonathan Freedland)
3. Charles Dickens
4. Benjamin Disraeli
5. Robert L. Fish
6. Ian Fleming
7. Margaret Frazer (pseudonym of Gail Lynn Brown)
8. Robert Goddard
9. A.E. Goldin
10. S. T. Haymon (pseudonym of Sylvia Haymon)
11. Anthony Horowitz
12. Cynthia Hurst
13. Howard Jacobson
14. Laurie R. King
15. John LeCarré (pseudonym of David John Moore Cornwall)
16. David Liss
17. Nicholas Meyer
18. Barbara Nadel
19. Ian Sansom
20. Guy Saville
21. Israel Zangwill

See also abstracts of Turnbull's "Villains or Victims" and Fox's "Conan Doyle for the Defense" at the end of the non-fiction section below.

Libi Astaire (born 1976 in Prairie Village, Kansas) is the author of the *Jewish Regency Mystery Series*, a humorous historical mystery series in which wealthy-widower-turned-sleuth Mr. **Ezra Melamed** teams up with General Well'ngone and the Earl of Gravel Lane - the lovably quirky leaders of a gang of young Jewish pickpockets - to solve crimes involving Regency London's Jewish community. "**Regency**" refers broadly to the period 1795–1837. "Libi Astaire" is the pen name for **Linda Feinberg**, and she has lived in Jerusalem since around 2009. She identifies as a religiously observant Jew, and writes for a religious audience. Her work is frequently published in ultra-Orthodox outlets like *Mishpacha Magazine*. To ensure her books are appropriate for observant readers, she adheres to specific content restrictions, such as having no murders, no inappropriate language, and no unredeemable characters in her mysteries. Much of her writing focuses on Torah values and Jewish history, including retellings of Chassidic Tales and explorations of the Law of Return and Jewish law. While she has written some standalone novels set in Germany, eastern Europe or Spain, her main literary output is set in Regency Britain, which is why she is included here in the UK bibliography. [Google/AI]

Astaire, Libi (**Tempest in the Tea Room** [7-volume Jewish Regency Mystery Series #1/*Ezra Melamed*]) [pb, Aster Press, 2012] 978-0983793168 [hc, independently published, 2021] 979-8724348928

Astaire, Libi, (**The Doppelganger's Dance** [Jewish Regency Mystery Series #2/*Ezra Melamed*]) [pb, Aster Press, 2013]) 978-0988580961

Astaire, Libi, (**The Moon Taker** [[Jewish Regency Mystery Series #3/*Ezra Melamed*]) [pb, CreateSpace Independent. 2015]) 978-1508441625

Astaire, Libi, (**The Vanisher Variations** [Jewish Regency Mystery Series #4/*Ezra Melamed*]) [pb, CreateSpace Independent. 2016]) 978-1537240206

Astaire, Libi, (**Matzah Mia!** [Jewish Regency Mystery Series #5/*Ezra Melamed*]) [pb, independently published, 2020]) 979-8624302747

Astaire, Libi, (**The Wreck of Two Brothers** [Jewish Regency Mystery Series #6]) /*Ezra Melamed*]) [pb, independently published, 2020]) 979-8571631488

Astaire, Libi, (**Fancy's Favorite** [Jewish Regency Mystery Series #7]) /*Ezra Melamed*]) [pb, independently published, 2023]) 979-8398992090

Astaire, Libi, (**The Disappearing Dowry: An Ezra Melamed Mystery #1** [mass mkt pb, Targum Press, 2009]) 978-1568715018

Astaire, Libi, (**The Ruby Spy Ring: An Ezra Melamed Mystery #2** [pb, Targum Press, 2011]) 978-1568715513

Astaire, Libi, (**The Latke in the Library & Other Mystery Stories for Chanukah** (Agatha Krinsky Mystery Series #1) [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2016] 978-1540540966

Astaire, Libi, (**Dying for Chametz & Other Mystery Stories for Passover** (Agatha Krinsky Mystery Series #2) [pb, Independently published, 2024] 979-8878896283

Sam Bourne (born in London, 1967) – “Sam Bourne” is the literary pseudonym of **Jonathan Freedland**, a prominent British journalist and thriller author. B.A. Oxford U. (1989). He is a columnist for *The Guardian* and a presenter for BBC Radio 4's *The Long View*. He co-hosts the popular international podcast, “Unholy: Two Jews on the News”, with Israeli journalist Yonit Levi, and hosts *Politics Weekly America*. Supports and frequently hosts major fundraising and community events for the New Israel Fund UK, an organization dedicated to civil rights, democracy, and equality for all Israelis. Under the pen name Sam Bourne, he has written several best-selling political and religious thrillers, including *The Righteous Men* and *The Last Testament*. Themes:

Lamed Vavniks (The 36 Righteous Men): In his debut, *The Righteous Men*, Bourne explores the Jewish legend that there are always 36 righteous people on Earth whose existence justifies humanity to God. The mystery centers on a series of murders targeting these individuals to trigger the end of the world.

Holocaust Memory and Retribution: Several novels deal with the “mystery” of hidden history. *The Final Reckoning* centers on a secret group of Holocaust survivors—the “Jewish Avengers”—seeking vengeance for wartime crimes. Similarly, *The Boy Who Saw* utilizes the backdrop of Nazi death camps and family secrets to drive its plot.

The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: Bourne frequently incorporates the geopolitics of Israel as a source of suspense. *The Last Testament* revolves around a lost archaeological treasure that could fundamentally change the religious and political landscape of the Middle East.

Kabbalah and Occult Mysticism: *Elements of Jewish Occult Mysticism and ancient traditions are often used as “codes” or cryptic messages that the protagonist must solve.*

The Jewish Identity in Secular Worlds: *His characters often contend with the friction between modern secular life and traditional religious roots. For example, his **Maggie Costello** series sometimes features Jewish characters like Dr. Frenkel or Goldstein who act as outsiders in the “gentile” world of Washington D.C..*

Holocaust Denial and Historical Records: *In **To Kill the Truth**, the mystery involves a conspiracy to erase the physical and digital evidence of historical atrocities, including the Holocaust, posing a threat to the very existence of history itself. [Google/AI]*

Bourne, Sam, (**The Righteous Men** [hc, Harper, 2006]) 978-0061138294 [pb, Harper, 2006] 978-0007834020

Bourne, Sam, (**The Final Reckoning** [hc, Harper, 2010] 978-0061875748 [pb, HarperCollins, 2010] 978-1554689002

Bourne, Sam, (**The Last Testament** [hc, Harper, 2009] 978-0061470868 [pb, HarperCollins Canada, 2009] 978-1554680740

Bourne, Sam, (**To Kill the Truth** [hc, Quercus Publishing, 2019] 978-1787474918 [pb, Hachette International, 2019] 978-1529403190

Charles Dickens (1812–1870) – *Arguably the most famous Jewish criminal/villain in English literature is **Fagin**, a central character and the secondary antagonist in Dickens’ 1838 novel, **Oliver Twist**. He is portrayed as an elderly “receiver of stolen goods” who leads a gang of child pickpockets in London’s criminal underworld.*

Dickens, Charles, (**Oliver Twist** [originally published in 1838, pb, Penguin Classics, 2003] 978-0141439747

Key Characteristics

Role: *He acts as a “fence,” buying and reselling stolen items, and as a mentor to young thieves like the **Artful Dodger** and **Charley Bates**.*

Personality: *Fagin is depicted as manipulative, miserly, and cunning. He often addresses others with the insincere endearment “my dear”.*

Physical Description: *Dickens initially described him as a “shrivelled” old man with “matted red hair” and a “repulsive face”.*

Outcome: *At the end of the novel, Fagin is apprehended and executed by hanging for his complicity in a murder.*

Controversy and Antisemitism

*Fagin remains one of the most controversial figures in English literature due to his portrayal as a Jewish caricature. See **Will Eisner** in the U.S. fiction bibliography (pp.83-85) , for his reinterpretation of Fagin.*

Original Portrayal: *In early editions, Dickens referred to him as “the Jew” over 250 times. After receiving criticism from a Jewish reader, Eliza Davis, in 1863, Dickens expressed regret. He revised later editions of **Oliver Twist** (notably the 1867–68 version) to remove many references to “the Jew,” substituting it with “Fagin” or “he”.*

Rehabilitation: To atone for the character, Dickens later created the character **Mr. Riah** in *Our Mutual Friend* (1865), a kind and dignified Jewish man.

Real-Life Inspiration

Fagin is widely believed to be based on **Ikey Solomon**, a real-life London criminal and receiver of stolen goods who was famously tried and transported to Australia in the early 19th century. See non-fiction section below in this bibliography for more on Solomons.

Notable Adaptations

The character has been reimagined in numerous stage and screen productions:

Alec Guinness in the 1948 film *Oliver Twist*.

Ron Moody in the 1968 musical film *Oliver!*, who portrayed a more sympathetic, comedic version of the character,

Will Eisner published a graphic novel, *Fagin the Jew* (2003), which retells the story from Fagin's perspective to address the character's stereotypical roots.

Allison Epstein released a prequel novel, *Fagin the Thief* (2025), which explores his backstory. [Google, AI]

See also “**Rewriting Fagin: A Conversation with Allison Epstein and Nancy Churnin**”, by **Becca Kantor** in the 2025-26 issue of *Paper Brigade* (Volume 9), published by the Jewish Book Council. This article can be Googled as follows: [Rewriting Fagin: A Conversation with Allison Epstein and Nancy Churnin | Jewish Book Council](#)

Dickens, (*Our Mutual Friend* [originally published in 1865, pb, Penguin Classics, 1998] 978-0140434972 [“*Mr. Riah*”, an elderly Jewish gentleman, is a central, sympathetic character who serves as a moral counterpoint to the novel's themes of greed and prejudice. He becomes a devoted friend and “protector” to various characters in the book, saving them from other unscrupulous characters. Historically, Dickens created Mr. Riah as a deliberate “act of atonement” following criticism regarding the anti-Semitic portrayal of **Fagin** in *Oliver Twist*. Riah is intentionally depicted as saintly and honorable to challenge the “stage Jew” stereotypes of the Victorian era. Some scholars have suggested the name is derived from the Hebrew word for “**friend**” (re’a - רֵעָה), directly linking him to the novel's title and its central theme of social interconnectedness. [Google/AI]

Benjamin Disraeli (1804–1884, born and died in London) – the famous statesman and prime minister of Britain during Victoria's reign was also a lifelong novelist. His writings did not treat Jewish criminals or immigrants like Israel Zangwill's. Instead, his work often features powerful, high-status Jewish figures who operate through “subterranean agencies” and secret global networks, a portrayal that critics argue unwittingly fueled modern conspiracy myths. : Rather than associating Jews with low-level crime, Disraeli's novels often argue for the racial superiority of the “Hebrew” race. He used his fiction to counter contemporary stereotypes of Jewish “vulgarity and greed” with an idealized vision of Jewish talent and aristocratic lineage. While he usually exalted Jews, some of his novels included stereotypical depictions, such as the “vulgar” Jewish moneylender

Levison (in the 1837 novel *Henrietta Temple*), which drew on common anti-Semitic tropes of the time. Disraeli's idealized Jewish characters were often far removed from the actual condition of poor, immigrant Jews of his era. He tended to identify with a “noble ancient Jewish race” while largely ignoring or distancing himself from the struggles and occasional legal issues of the contemporary Jewish community.

Disraeli, Benjamin, (**Coningsby; or, The New Generation** [originally published in 1844, hc, Wentworth Press, 2016] 978-1360818009 [pb, Wentworth Press, 2015] 978-1519319876 [*The protagonist of the novel, Harry Coningsby, represents a new generation of visionary British leaders. He is mentored by the enigmatic character called “Sidonia”, widely seen as a blend of Disraeli himself and Baron Lionel de Rothschild. A fabulously wealthy Jewish banker of Spanish Sephardic descent, Sidonia is portrayed as almost superhuman in his intelligence, worldly knowledge, and cool detachment. Through Sidonia, Disraeli expresses his views on “natural aristocracy” and Jewish racial superiority. Sidonia teaches Harry to look beyond rigid institutions and find England’s future in its “national character” and the power of youth. While he is a subordinate figure in the plot, he is the philosophical core of the book. He encourages Harry to have faith in himself and “to believe in the heroic”.*]

Disraeli, Benjamin, (**Tancred; Or, The New Crusade** [originally published in 1847, hc, Wentworth Press, 2016] 978-1373092229 [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2015] 978-1519319890 [*This is the final volume of Disraeli’s “Young England” trilogy – the middle volume titled **Sybil** – in which Sidonia evolves from a mysterious mentor to a critical intellectual and spiritual guide. He acts as the trilogy’s philosophical bridge, appearing in all three works to promote the idea that “all is race” and that societal salvation lies in spiritual and racial origins rather than modern political institutions. He continues to represent the “natural aristocracy” that Disraeli believed should lead the nation. When the main protagonist, Tancred, becomes disillusioned with English society, Sidonia encourages his pilgrimage to the Holy Land to “penetrate the great Asian mystery” and rediscover the roots of Western civilization. When Tancred is abducted in Jerusalem, Sidonia serves as a negotiator to secure his release. In this novel, Sidonia’s teachings reach their peak. He argues that Jews produced the world’s greatest leaders and reformers—including Moses and Jesus—and that Christianity is essentially “completed Judaism”. Sidonia serves as the vehicle for Disraeli’s belief that race is the primary driver of history. He argues that the “Semitic principle” represents the spiritual element in humanity and that the Jewish race is the “trustee of tradition”. Literary critics often view Sidonia as an idealized version of Disraeli himself—a figure of immense power and wisdom who commands respect from the highest levels of the British aristocracy despite being an outsider. [Google/AI]*]

Robert L. Fish (1912–1981, born in Cleveland, OH, died in Trumbull, CT) was an American writer of crime and mystery fiction, known for his clever plots and authentic settings. He authored numerous short-story parodies of Conan Doyle’s Sherlock Holmes in a series called *Schlock Homes*, incorporating a distinct Jewish and Yiddish subtext primarily through wordplay, setting, and nomenclature. The stories are all set in England, mainly in London. [Google/AI]. [Note: See also the James Bond parodies of **Sol Weinstein** in the U.S. crime fiction Bibliography]

Jewish Elements in the Schlock Homes Series

Bagel Street: Instead of the canonical 221B Baker Street, Homes and his companion Dr. Watney reside at **211B Bagel Street**.

The Protagonist’s Name: The name “**Schlock**” is derived from the Yiddish word *shlak*, meaning something of poor quality or “junk,” immediately signaling the satirical and “low-rent” nature of the detective’s deductions.

The “Bagel Street Regulars”: In a nod to Holmes’s “Baker Street Irregulars,” Homes is assisted by a group called the **Bagel Street Regulars**.

Humor and Perspective: The series is frequently described as having a **Yiddish perspective**, using Jewish humor—characterized by irony, absurdity, and self-deprecation—to deconstruct the logic of the original Conan Doyle stories.

Puns and Wordplay: Fish uses Yiddish-inflected humor to name secondary characters and villains, such as **Inspector Balustrade** (a pun on Lestrade) and **Professor Marty** (a pun on Moriarty).

Publication History: The stories originally appeared in *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine* starting in 1959 and were later collected as follows: [Google/AI]

Fish, Robert L., (**The Incredible Schlock Homes: 12 Stories from Bagel Street**) [hc, Simon & Schuster, 1965-66] 978-9997533999 [pb, Avon Books, 1976] 978-0380006366

Fish, Robert L., (**The Memoirs of Schlock Homes: a Bagel Street dozen**) [hc, Bobbs-Merrill, 1974] 978-0672519871 [pb, Avon, 1975] 978-0380003679

Fish, Robert L., (**Schlock Homes: The Complete Bagel Street Saga** [hc, Gaslight Publications, 1990]) 978-0934468169

Ian Fleming (1908–1964) – *As long as I was at this, I thought of asking Google about the Jewish characters appearing in Fleming's James Bond series. Its answer: In Ian Fleming's original James Bond novels, there are several characters described with Jewish heritage or who are widely analyzed as Jewish archetypes, primarily among the villains.*

Primary Villains

Le Chiffre (Casino Royale): The first Bond villain is described as having “small ears with large lobes,” which the narrator explicitly notes as “indicating some Jewish blood”. He is also discovered in a displaced persons camp at Dachau with amnesia.

Auric Goldfinger (Goldfinger): While Bond eventually concludes Goldfinger is a “Balt” (Latvian), his name and obsession with gold are frequently cited by critics as playing into antisemitic stereotypes of the era. Fleming named the character after his real-life Jewish neighbor, architect Ernő Goldfinger, whom he personally disliked.

Tov Kronsteen (From Russia, with Love): A high-ranking SMERSH chess master and strategist whose first name, “Tov,” is Jewish.

Secondary Villains and Gangsters

Sol “Horror” Horowitz (The Spy Who Loved Me): A mobster whose Jewish identity is explicit in the novel.

Spang Gang Members (Diamonds Are Forever): Several gangsters in this novel are described or implied to be Jewish.

Scaramanga's Investors (The Man with the Golden Gun): One of the primary antagonist's financial backers is identified as Jewish.

Non-Villainous Characters

Dr. Stengel (Thunderball): A German Jewish refugee who acts as a physician and treats Bond at the end of the novel.

Kenneth Snowman (The Property of a Lady): A real-life Jewish jeweler and Fabergé expert whom Bond consults; he is depicted positively as an authentic expert.

Dankowitz (Diamonds Are Forever): A Scotland Yard policeman mentioned in the novel.

Protagonist Inspiration: While the character James Bond himself is not Jewish in the books, scholars often note that one of Fleming's primary real-life inspirations for the "secret agent" archetype was **Sidney Reilly** (born Shlomo Rosenblum), a Russian-Jewish ace of spies. [Google/AI] [**Note:** See books and articles about Reilly by Cook, Morris and others in non-fiction section of this bibliography below.]

Margaret Frazer (1946–2013, born in Kewanee, Illinois, lived much of her life in and near Elk River, Minnesota, and died in Elk River, Minnesota) - American historical mystery novelist **Gail Lynn Brown**, who used the pseudonym of "Margaret Frazer". She developed a lifelong interest in medieval England through historical research and participation in the Society for Creative Anachronism. Although she studied archaeology briefly, she devoted herself to historical fiction, aiming to recreate fifteenth-century English life with exceptional authenticity. Her fiction is widely praised for combining carefully constructed mysteries with an unusually accurate portrayal of everyday life, law, religion, commerce, and politics in fifteenth-century England.

Frazer, Margaret, (**The Sempster's Tale: A Dame Frevisse Medieval Mystery** [hc, Berkley Hardcover, 2006]) 978-0425207666 [pb, Berkley, 2007] 978-0425210499 [*This is the fifteenth Dame Frevisse medieval mystery, set in London during the summer of 1450, amid severe political disorder. Dame Frevisse is a Benedictine nun whose intelligence, education, and moral authority repeatedly draw her into solving murders. She has left St. Frideswide's Priory on a confidential mission connected with her cousin, **Lady Alice**, widow of the recently murdered Duke of Suffolk. Frevisse must help recover and transfer a quantity of the late duke's gold, which needs to be moved discreetly before political enemies or government officials can seize it. Her intermediary is **Anne Blakhall**, a prosperous London sempster—here meaning a seamstress, tailor and embroiderer—who continues to operate the business she once shared with her deceased husband. The gold is to be smuggled through Anne's shop with the assistance of her lover, **Daved Weir**, a foreign merchant.*

Daved is secretly Jewish. Since Jews had been officially expelled from England in 1290, he lives under a Christian identity and outwardly conforms to Christianity while privately maintaining his Jewish faith. Anne knows his true identity and understands that discovery could place not only Daved but also herself in mortal danger. Their relationship therefore combines genuine affection with constant secrecy and vulnerability. The clandestine transfer of the gold is interrupted when the body of a young man is discovered in a church crypt. The corpse appears to have been crucified or deliberately posed in imitation of the Crucifixion, and supposed Hebrew characters have been cut or marked upon it. Some clergy and townspeople immediately interpret the killing as evidence of a Jewish ritual murder. The

accusation is especially explosive because England supposedly has no Jews. Rumour nevertheless spreads that Jews may be living secretly in London, placing Daved in immediate danger. The murder also threatens Anne, whose association with him could expose both their relationship and their role in moving the duke's gold. The political instability surrounding London makes mob violence and opportunistic denunciation increasingly likely.

Frevisse becomes involved when she accompanies Anne to identify the victim. She doubts that the marks on the body prove a Jewish ritual killing and begins examining who might benefit from creating such an appearance. The investigation gradually brings together several kinds of concealment: the hidden gold, Daved's hidden religion, Anne's secret relationship and the murderer's attempt to disguise an ordinary human crime as an act of Jewish sacrilege. The central mystery therefore concerns not simply who killed the young man, but why the body was arranged to provoke antisemitic fear. Frevisse must separate the actual motives—personal, financial and political—from the religious hatred being deliberately encouraged

around the death. At the same time, she must protect Daved without revealing that a Jew is indeed living secretly among London's Christians.

Daved is not presented as a criminal villain. Rather, he is forced into illegality and deception because English law and Christian prejudice make open Jewish existence impossible. The murder plot exploits the medieval blood-libel tradition, falsely associating Jews with ritual killing in order to redirect suspicion and endanger an innocent outsider. Frevisse gradually confronts the difference between inherited anti-Jewish teachings and the Jewish person she actually encounters. – ChatGPT]

Robert Goddard (born 1954, Fareham, Hampshire, England) - British master of the historical mystery and suspense thriller. His work is known for its "labyrinthine" plotting, historical themes, and atmospheric settings. While his novels primarily focus on English provincial life and historical espionage, several of his works feature significant Jewish characters or themes, typically woven into historical plotlines involving World War II or the Middle East:

Long Time Coming (2010): This thriller features a major subplot involving a Jewish diamond trader who flees Nazi-occupied Europe in 1939, leaving behind a collection of Picasso paintings and diamonds that become the center of a mystery decades later. The novel also touches on the historical role of Belgian Jewish merchants in the Congo diamond trade.

The James Maxted Trilogy (2013–2015): Set during the 1919 **Paris Peace Conference**, this series—starting with **The Ways of the World** - explores the geopolitical landscape following WWI. It touches on the "mood and atmosphere" of the era for both Jews and non-Jews as they operated in a changing Europe.

Sight Unseen (2005): A portion of this novel is set in Prague, where characters visit the Jewish Quarter, including its synagogues and cemetery, as part of the unfolding mystery. [Google/AI]

Goddard, Robert, (**Sight Unseen** [hc, Bantam Press, 2005] 978-0593053638 [pb, Delta, 2006] 978-0440242802

Goddard, Robert, (**Long Time Coming** [hc, Bantam, 2010] 978-0593060254 [pb, Bantam, 2010] 978-0385343619

Goddard, Robert, (**The Ways of the World** [hc, Mysterious Press, 2015] 978-0802123596 [pb, Mysterious Press, 2016] 978-0802125064

A.E. Goldin [est. born 1998] is Aron Goldin, British screenwriter, lawyer, and classical pianist. He read English Literature at Trinity College, Cambridge, studied classical piano at the Royal Academy of Music in London and trained in Law as a barrister at the Inns of Court in London. His protagonist, **Ben Canaan**, is a 21-year-old Jewish detective from the Whitechapel, London East End ghetto of 1850s London, the wayward son of a working-class Jewish tailor. His family expects him to be a "good Jewish son" by working in the family business, a life he resists in favor of adventure with his group of "Good-for-Nothings". In **Murder in Constantinople**, he explores his role as a "prototypical modern Jew," caught between his cultural identity and the pressures of assimilation in 19th-century Britain. This struggle is a recurring subplot that reflects the broader era of Jewish emancipation and lingering prejudice. His journey to Constantinople brings him into contact with the local Jewish community under the Sultanate. Early in his stay, he meets **Shoshanna Carmino**, the heiress of a powerful Jewish banking dynasty, and becomes a de facto detective to help clear her father's name after he is framed for treason. In the forthcoming sequel, **Death on the**

Pearl River, Ben - now a London-based detective for Her Majesty's Executive, is sent to 1856 Hong Kong to investigate a string of brutal murders targeting powerful figures in the global opium trade. [Google/AI]

Goldin, A.E. [*Ben Canaan #1*], (**Murder in Constantinople** [hc, Pushkin Vertigo Pub, 2025]) 9781782279181 [pb] 978-1782279198

Goldin, A.E. [*Ben Canaan #2*], (**Death on the Pearl River** [pb, Pushkin Vertigo Pub, forthcoming Oct. 2026]) 978-1782279211

S. T. Haymon (1918–1995, born in Norwich, England) was the pen name of British author Sylvia Haymon, best known for her acclaimed police procedural series featuring Detective Inspector Ben Jurnet (eight novels published between 1980 and 1996). The Ben Jurnet Character:

Background: Ben Jurnet is a detective inspector with the Angleby CID (a fictionalized version of Haymon's birthplace, Norwich). Ben Jurnet is not ethnically Jewish by birth but identifies with Judaism through both suspected ancestry and a formal process of conversion. His connection to Judaism is defined by several key factors:

Suspected Ancestry: Jurnet was raised as a Unitarian in Norfolk, England, but he believes he may be of Jewish descent. This is reinforced by the historical significance of his name in his home city; in real-world history, Jurnet of Norwich was one of the wealthiest and most prominent Jews in 12th-century England.

Formal Conversion: Throughout the series, Jurnet is in the "slow process" of formally converting to Judaism. His religious journey is a central theme in his character development, often influencing his worldview and his approach to investigations.

Personal Motivation: His conversion is primarily motivated by his deep love for his fiancée, Miriam, who is Jewish.

Thematic Significance: His dual identity—feeling Jewish yet not being recognized as such by traditional standards—often places him in an "outsider" position, which Haymon uses to explore themes of faith, ritual, and belonging. [Google/AI]

Haymon, S.T. [*Ben Jurnet #1*] (**Death and the Pregnant Virgin** [hc, St. Martin's Press, 1980]) 978-0312185923 [pb, Bantam, 1984] 978-0553237030

Haymon, S.T. [*Ben Jurnet #2*] (**Ritual Murder** [hc, St. Martin's Press, 1982]) 978-0312684785 [pb, Bantam, 1991] 978-052342175

Haymon, S.T. [*Ben Jurnet #3*] (**Stately Homicide** [hc, St. Martin's Press, 1984]) 978-0312757083 [pb, Popular Library, 1985] 978-0445201613

Haymon, S.T. [*Ben Jurnet #4*] (**Death of a God** [hc, St. Martin's Press, 1987]) 978-0312001193 [pb, Random House UK, 1988] 978-0099583707

Haymon, S.T. [*Ben Jurnet #5*] (**A Very Particular Murder** [hc, St. Martin's Press, 1989]) 978-0312029982 [pb, Random House UK, 1992] 978-0099716006

Haymon, S.T. [*Ben Jurnet #6*] (**Death of a Warrior Queen** [hc, St. Martin's Press, 1989]) 978-0312069506

Haymon, S.T. [*Ben Jurnet #7*] (**A Beautiful Death** [hc, St. Martin's Press, 1994]) 978-0312104207 [pb, Bello, 2012] 978-1447225195

Haymon, S.T. [*Ben Jurnet* #8] (**Death of a Hero** [hc, St. Martin's Press, 1996]) 978-0312145828

Anthony Horowitz (born in 1955 in Stanmore, Middlesex, a suburb of London) – prolific British author and screenwriter known for his work across children's, young adult, and adult mystery genres. He was raised and identifies as Jewish, but notes that he does not “dive into too many Jewish themes” in his writing. He has mentioned a deep personal connection to Jewish culture through food, specifically his mother's recipes for chicken soup, latkes, and chopped liver. He has written about the emotional impact of his father's orthodox funeral, where he had to read the Kaddish prayer for the dead despite not being religious himself at the time. Jewish identity and culture appear in several of his works through specific characters and meta-fictional elements.

His most prominent Jewish character is **Atticus Pünd** in the **Magpie Murders Series**. He is a 1950s private detective of **German-Greek Jewish descent** who survived the Holocaust. Horowitz created him as a “serious” figure whose firsthand experience with the evil of the concentration camps gives him a unique perspective on the evil of murder.

Horowitz, Anthony, (**Magpie Murders** [hc, Harper, 2017]) 978-0062645227 [Susan Ryeland is editing the latest manuscript by best-selling (but unpleasant) author Alan Conway. The book, set in 1955, follows Atticus Pünd as he investigates a death at a sleepy English manor. However, Susan realizes the final chapter is missing—and soon discovers that Conway has died under suspicious circumstances. You effectively read two mysteries at once, looking for clues in the “fictional” Pünd story that explain the “real” murder of the author.]

Horowitz, Anthony, (**Moonflower Murders** [hc, Harper, 2020] 978-0062955456 [pb, Harper Perennial, 2026] 978-0063305694 [Susan Ryeland has retired to run a hotel in Crete, but she is pulled back to England when a young woman disappears. The disappearance is linked to a murder that occurred years earlier at a British country hotel—a murder that Alan Conway used as the basis for one of his Atticus Pünd novels, **Atticus Pünd Takes the Case**. Susan must re-read Conway's old novel to find the hidden truth that the police missed years ago.]

Horowitz, Anthony, (**Marble Hall Murders: A Mindbending Metafictional Murder Mystery** [hc, Harper, 2025] 978-0063305700 [pb, Harper Perennial, 2026] 978-0063305694 [Susan Ryeland returns from Crete to England and becomes involved in solving another complex murder case, to complete the trilogy. Once again, the plot focuses on a mystery novel featuring Atticus Pünd, entitled **Pünd's Last Case**.

It is the fascinating persona of the fictional Pünd which permeates this trilogy. He is deliberate, cerebral, and dying of a terminal illness, which adds a layer of urgency to his cases. His background as a concentration camp survivor gives him a profound, somber understanding of human cruelty.

Amongst Horowitz's other works are official continuations of both Sherlock Holmes and James Bond episodes. He also authored the **Hawthorne & Horowitz Mystery Series**, a 6-volume, meta-fictional series featuring himself as a character within his own novels, serving as a bumbling “Watson” to an eccentric, abrasive private investigator named **Daniel Hawthorne**.

The Premise: Hawthorne, a disgraced ex-detective, approaches “Horowitz” to shadow him on investigations and write books about his cases, splitting the royalties.

The Dynamic: The series blurs reality and fiction; “Horowitz” includes real-life details (like his wife Jill) while struggling with Hawthorne's secretive and often insulting personality.

Horowitz, Anthony [Hawthorne/Horowitz series #1], (**The Word Is Murder** [hc, Harper, 2018] 978-0062676788 [pb, Harper Perennial, 2019] 978-0062676801 [*Horowitz reinvents the classic crime novel, writing a fictional version of himself as the Watson to a modern Sherlock Holmes. A woman crosses a London street. It is just after 11 a.m. on a bright spring morning, and she is going into a funeral parlor to plan her own service. Six hours later the woman is dead, strangled with a crimson curtain cord in her own home. Enter disgraced police detective Daniel Hawthorne, a brilliant, eccentric man as quick with an insult as he is to crack a case. And Hawthorne has a partner, the celebrated novelist Anthony Horowitz, curious about the case and looking for new material. As brusque, impatient, and annoying as Hawthorne can be, Horowitz- a seasoned hand when it comes to crime stories - suspects the detective may be on to something, and is irresistibly drawn into this witty mystery. As this meta mystery unfolds, Horowitz realizes that he's at the center of a story he can't control, and his brilliant partner may be hiding dark and mysterious secrets of his own.*— Amazon-Google/AI]

Horowitz, Anthony [Hawthorne/Horowitz series #2], (**The Sentence Is Death** [hc, Harper, 2019]) 978-0062676832 [pb, Harper Perennial, 2020] 978-0062676849 [*A celebrity divorce lawyer is bludgeoned to death with an expensive bottle of wine.*]

Horowitz, Anthony [Hawthorne/Horowitz series #3], (**A Line to Kill** [hc, Harper, 2021] 978-0062938169 [pb, Harper Perennial, 2022] 978-0062938152 [*The duo attends a literary festival on the island of Alderney where a murder occurs.*]

Horowitz, Anthony [Hawthorne/Horowitz series #4], (**The Twist of a Knife** [hc, Harper, 2022]) 978-0062938183 [pb, Harper Perennial, 2023] 978-0062938190 [*Horowitz himself becomes the prime suspect after a theater critic who panned his play is murdered.*]

Horowitz, Anthony [Hawthorne/Horowitz series #5], (**Close to Death: A Literary Whodunnit about a Murder in a Gated Community** [hc, Harper, 2024] 978-0063305649 [pb, Harper Perennial, 2025] 978-0063305656 [*A "locked-room" style mystery involving a gated community and an unpopular neighbor.*]

Horowitz, Anthony [Hawthorne/Horowitz series #5], (**A Deadly Episode** [hc, Harper, 2026] 978-0063305748 [pb, Harper LARGE PRINT edition, 2026] 978-0063567368 [*Ex-Detective Inspector Daniel Hawthorne is dead. Or, rather, the actor playing him in the film adaptation of The Word is Murder is. Rising star David Caine has been stabbed, and it seems that everyone on the set had a motive. But what if Caine's murderer had made a mistake? What if it was the real Hawthorne who was the intended victim? For it turns out that the brilliant detective may have got it wrong ten years earlier. An innocent man has died in jail. And perhaps someone has decided that Hawthorne must pay the price.*]

*From the film set on the south coast of England, the story moves to Reeth, in Yorkshire, the village where Hawthorne grew up. A burned-down school, a car accident that isn't what it seems, blackmail and murder in an Elizabethan country house....somehow they combine to unlock the secret of what has happened in Hastings. For once, the local police are helpful. DS Sarah Milnes gives Hawthorne carte blanche to investigate and there may even be a hint of romance in the air. Which leaves his hapless sidekick, **Horowitz**, on his own, stumbling his way to the truth.* [Amazon and Google/AI]

Cynthia E. Hurst (born around 1950 and raised in Seattle, WA) - Before writing fiction, she worked as a reporter, copy editor, and columnist for various newspapers and magazines in both the United States and the United Kingdom. She currently divides her time between Seattle and the English Cotswolds (Oxfordshire), which serves as the setting for her 22-volume **Silver and Simm Victorian Mysteries** series. The main protagonists of the series

are **Jacob Silver**, a Jewish clock and watch repairer living in a Cotswold market town in the 1860s, and **Sarah Simms**, his housemaid-turned-partner (a former thief and later his wife). Both are outsiders on the fringes of the fairly rigid Victorian society. Jacob is specifically described as being mistrusted and considered a heretic by the local residents and by the police, reflecting the social prejudices and antisemitism of the Victorian era, and even though his intelligence and skills often make him an essential asset to their investigations. His outsider status allows him to observe the townspeople with a level of detachment that aids his investigative work.

*Jacob has settled in a Cotswolds market town, rather than in the East End of London, for example, because there is a demand for his specialized technical skills there. By placing a Jewish tradesman in a provincial Oxfordshire town, Hurst creates a character who is intrinsically distinct from his neighbors, allowing for a unique lens on 19th-century prejudice and community dynamics. Jacob's profession as a clock and watch repairer leans into the historical presence of Jewish artisans in precision trades. His religion often puts him at odds with the local establishment. For instance, in **Writing on the Wall**, Jacob is specifically targeted by a venomous newspaper columnist, highlighting the vulnerability of a Jewish man in a position that requires public trust. The series does not shy away from the casual and structural antisemitism of the 1860s, using Jacob's experiences to reflect the genuine difficulty a Jewish person would face trying to build a respectable life in a small English town.*

[Google/AI]

*Hurst is exceptionally prolific and has several other series in progress. The 22 **Silver and Simm Victorian Mysteries** were all published between 2017–2024:*

Hurst, Cynthia E. [Silver/Simms #1], (**Tools of the Trade**) [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2017] 978-1546902201 [hc, independently published, 2022] 979-8795758817

Hurst, Cynthia E. [Silver/Simms #2], (**Forged in the Fire**) [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2017] 978-1548612177 [hc, independently published, 2022] 979-8404763188

Hurst, Cynthia E. [Silver/Simms #3], (**Writing on the Wall**) [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2017] 978-1977597168 [hc, independently published, 2022] 979-8406419441

Hurst, Cynthia E. [Silver/Simms #4], (**Stitched Up In Style**) [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2017] 978-1981412358 [hc, independently published, 2022] 979-8407862420

Hurst, Cynthia E. [Silver/Simms #5], (**Ghost on the Green**) [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2018] 978-1984942746 [hc, independently published, 2022] 979-8410533003

Hurst, Cynthia E. [Silver/Simms #6], (**Pound to a Penny**) [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2018] 978-1720461326 [hc, independently published, 2022] 979-8411954210

Hurst, Cynthia E. [Silver/Simms #7], (**Bolt from the Blue**) [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2018] 978-1725580145 [hc, independently published, 2022] 979-8413760413

Hurst, Cynthia E. [Silver/Simms #8], (**Spirit of the Season**) [pb, independently published, 2018] 978-1790965892 [hc, independently published, 2022] 979-8416187460

Hurst, Cynthia E. [Silver/Simms #9], (**Nothing But Her Name**) [pb, independently published, 2019] 978-1798188538 [hc, independently published, 2022]

Hurst, Cynthia E. [Silver/Simms #10], (**Sins of the Sisters**) [pb, independently published, 2019] 978-1070553856 [hc, independently published, 2022] 978-1070553856

Hurst, Cynthia E. [Silver/Simms #11], (**Letter of the Law**) [pb, independently published, 2019] 978-1696888639 [hc, independently published, 2022] 979-8421734758

- Hurst, Cynthia E. [Silver/Simms #12], (**Because of the Bees**) [pb, independently published, 2020] 979-8616026477 [hc, independently published, 2022] 979-8424898358
- Hurst, Cynthia E. [Silver/Simms #13], (**There for the Taking**) [pb, independently published, 2020] 979-8652573881 [hc, independently published, 2022] 979-8426581708
- Hurst, Cynthia E. [Silver/Simms #14], (**Diamond in the Dust**) [pb, independently published, 2020] 979-8698004097 [hc, independently published, 2022] 979-8430007942
- Hurst, Cynthia E. [Silver/Simms #15], (**Proof of the Pudding**) [pb, independently published, 2021] 979-8707379802 [hc, independently published, 2022] 979-8431984501
- Hurst, Cynthia E. [Silver/Simms #16], (**Grains in the Glass**) [pb, independently published, 2021] 979-8511492308 [hc, independently published, 2022] 979-8434411653
- Hurst, Cynthia E. [Silver/Simms #17], (**Out of the Ordinary**) [pb, independently published, 2022] 979-8424399565 [hc, independently published, 2022] 979-8439533114
- Hurst, Cynthia E. [Silver/Simms #18], (**Ends of the Earth**) [pb, independently published, 2022] 979-8842181780 [hc, independently published, 2022] 979-8842388035
- Hurst, Cynthia E. [Silver/Simms #19], (**Cream of the Crop**) [pb, independently published, 2023] 979-8386750947 [hc, independently published, 2023] 979-8386752774
- Hurst, Cynthia E. [Silver/Simms #20], (**Last Seen in London**) [pb, independently published, 2023] 979-8865616443 [hc, independently published, 2023] 979-8865618669
- Hurst, Cynthia E. [Silver/Simms #21], (**Fit as a Fiddle**) [(pb, independently published, 2024)] 979-8323256297 [hc, independently published, 2024] 979-8323258031
- Hurst, Cynthia E. [Silver/Simms #22], (**Return of a Rascal**) [pb, independently published, 2024] 979-8340258410 [hc, independently published, 2024] 979-8340306685

Howard Jacobson (born 1942 in Manchester) – *prominent comedic-satirical British author and columnist, winner of Man Booker Prize in 2010 for The Finkler Question. Somewhat like Canadian author, Mordecai Richler, Jacobson does not write crime fiction with perpetrators and detectives and the struggle between them. The treatment of crimes in his work is rather a vehicle to explore victimhood, identity and the lingering threat of racial violence. Several of his books are relevant to this discussion:*

Jacobson, Howard, (**The Finkler Question** [hc, Bloomsbury USA, 2010] 978-1608196425 [pb, Bloomsbury USA, 2010] 978-1608196111 [*Explores the psychological impact of perceived hate crimes. The plot centers on a misunderstood street mugging, and connects to the rising tide of antisemitism in modern Britain. The non-Jewish victim of a mugging is mistakenly convinced that he was attacked for appearing to be Jewish, and reacts by becoming totally attached to Jewish culture. The novel satirizes self-hating Jews who adopt anti-Zionism and regard Israel's very existence as a moral crime against the Palestinians. They are in turn condemned by loyal Jews who view them as traitors, guilty of moral crimes. Jacobson winds up leading his Jewish anti-Zionist (Finkler) into a realization of the hypocrisies he has indulged in, and being pulled back into the inescapable embrace of tribal loyalty and shared grief.*])

Jacobson, Howard, (**Kalooki Nights** [hc, Simon & Schuster, 2007]) 978-1416543428 [pb, Simon & Schuster, 2008] 978-1416543435 [*The bizarre plot focuses on a Holocaust-obsessed British Jewish youth with a psychological fixation on Jewish suffering. He winds up murdering his own parents by gassing them. The rest of the novel deals with attempts to understand the motive for this catastrophic act. Jacobson contrasts those who cope by*

forgetting through triviality (like the card game Kalooki) versus those who are entirely destroyed by their inability to stop remembering (like the deranged youth who gassed his parents to death. The book pioneered Jacobson's "seriously funny" style, arguing that Jewish comedy is fundamentally rooted in the knowledge that life is not funny, serving as the ultimate coping mechanism for historical terror.]

Jacobson, Howard, (**J: A Novel** [hc, Hogarth, 2014] 978-0553419559 [pb, Random House, 2015] 978-0553419566 [*A bleak dystopian depiction of a near-future Britain where almost the entire Jewish population has been wiped out in a national Government-inspired massacre, which is then systematically erased from memory. The plot focuses on an initiative to manipulate the last two remaining Jews to propagate, so as to lead to a regeneration of Jews in the population. The sinister motive is the realization that society requires a scapegoat for its ills, a role the Jews are intended to fill, ad infinitum.* – Google/AI])

Laurie R. King (born 1952 in Oakland, CA) – prolific detective fiction author based in California. Her longest-running series (19 volumes) features **Mary Russell**, who is mentored throughout by Sherlock Holmes. The series is primarily based in Sussex, England, but the “memoirs” eventually span the globe as Mary Russell and Sherlock Holmes travel for their cases. Russell is half-Jewish by birth (through her mother, which makes her halachically Jewish)) and identifies Jewishly. Jewish identity and theology are central to Laurie R. King's most famous works, largely because she holds a Master's degree in Old Testament Theology. She frequently deploys her knowledge of Hebrew and theology in solving cases. However, King is not herself Jewish: she has noted that while she and her character Mary Russell share “extraordinarily” similar tastes and interests in theology, the choice to make Russell Jewish was a creative decision to mirror the isolated situation of the Jewish community in England during the early 20th century.

Key Books with Jewish Themes:

The Beekeeper's Apprentice (1994): In the series debut, Sherlock Holmes's first observation about Mary is that she is Jewish and reads Hebrew, establishing her identity as a core element of her character from the very beginning.

A Monstrous Regiment of Women (1995): King uses this book to explore the feminine aspects of the Old Testament God, a topic that was the focus of her master's thesis. Russell engages with these theological concepts while investigating a charismatic cult.

A Letter of Mary (1997): This installment features a heavy focus on feminist theology, specifically a lost letter from Mary Magdalene that challenges traditional Christian and Jewish interpretations of early religious history.

O Jerusalem (1999): This novel is the most focused on Jewish content. It follows Mary Russell and Sherlock Holmes as they travel through British-occupied Palestine in 1918. The plot weaves through the religious tensions of the era and highlights Russell's ability to speak Hebrew and her personal connection to the Holy Land.

Garment of Shadows (2012): In this novel, Mary Russell reflects on her Jewish identity, noting that “her people” traditionally wear wedding rings on the right hand. [Google/AI]

King, Laurie R., (***The Beekeeper's Apprentice*** [hc, Minotaur Books, 1994] 978-0312104238 [pb, Picador – 20th anniversary special edition – 2014] 978-1250055705)

King, Laurie R., (***A Monstrous Regiment of Women*** [hc, Minotaur Books, 1995] 978-0312135652 [pb, Picador, 2007] 978-0312427375)

King, Laurie R., (**A Letter of Mary** [hc, St. Martin's Press, 1997] 978-0312146702 [pb, Picador, 2007] 978-0312427382)

King, Laurie R., (**O Jerusalem** [hc, Bantam, 1999] 978-0553110937 [pb, Random House, 2009] 978-0553383249)

King, Laurie R., (**Garment of Shadows** [hc, Bantam, 2012] 978-0553807998 [pb, Allison & Busby, 2013] 978-0749013776)

John le Carré (pseudonym for David John Moore Cornwell, born in Poole in 1931 died in Truro in the south of England in 2020) – *master spy novelist of the Cold War era and beyond. Jewish characters and Jewish themes appear intermittently but significantly in the work of John le Carré. They are rarely the central subject of his fiction in the way espionage, betrayal, bureaucracy, and moral ambiguity are, but Jewishness often functions as:*

- *a marker of exile, displacement, or outsider status;*
- *a lens on postwar Europe and the Holocaust;*
- *a way of exploring Israel, Zionism, and intelligence work;*
- *a contrast between cosmopolitan liberalism and nationalism;*
- *a moral touchstone regarding memory and persecution.*

Le Carré was deeply interested in statelessness, divided loyalties, and hidden identities — themes that naturally intersected with Jewish historical experience. By far the most significant novel in his oeuvre touching on Jewish/Israeli themes is:

Le Carré, John, (**The Little Drummer Girl** [hc, Alfred A Knopf, 1983]) 978-0394530154 [pb, Penguin Books, 2018] 978-0143134206

The novel centers on:

- *Israeli intelligence (modeled on Mossad),*
- *Palestinian militancy,*
- *terrorism and counterterrorism,*
- *questions of Jewish survival after the Holocaust.*

Important themes:

- *Holocaust memory as justification for Israeli actions;*
- *moral costs of counterterrorism;*
- *whether victimhood can produce new forms of ruthlessness;*
- *Europe's uneasy relationship with both Jews and Palestinians.*

Le Carré treats the Israelis sympathetically but critically. He admired their intelligence professionalism and historical predicament while questioning manipulation, violence, and ideological certainty.

Le Carré, John, (**A Perfect Spy** [hc, Knopf, 1986]) 978-0394551418 [pb, Penguin Books, 2011] 978-0143119760

Jewishness is not central in this novel, but Central European Jewish exile culture strongly informs the atmosphere. The protagonist Magnus Pym moves through postwar European worlds shaped by émigrés, survivors, displaced intellectuals, and Cold War refugees. The novel reflects le Carré's fascination with Mitteleuropa — the vanished cosmopolitan world destroyed by fascism and Stalinism, much of it heavily Jewish in character. [ChatGPT]

Le Carré was fascinated by Israeli intelligence services, especially Mossad.

Unlike many Western writers of his generation:

- he neither romanticized nor demonized Israel entirely;
- he viewed Israeli operatives as exceptionally capable, historically traumatized, and morally hardened.

In interviews, he often linked Israeli state behavior to the long shadow of European antisemitism and the Holocaust, while also criticizing occupation policies and nationalism.

How Jews function in le Carré's fictional world

Jewish characters in le Carré tend to fall into several recurring types:

Type	Function
Survivors/exiles	Embody Europe's historical trauma
Intellectual cosmopolitans	Represent lost liberal Europe
Israeli intelligence officers	Explore ethics of survival and state power
Refugees/dissidents	Illustrate statelessness and divided identity

Unlike some earlier British thriller writers, le Carré generally avoided crude antisemitic stereotypes. His Jewish characters are usually psychologically serious, morally complex, and historically burdened.

Influence of postwar Europe

Le Carré belonged to the first British literary generation fully shaped by:

- World War II,
- revelations of the Holocaust,
- the Cold War division of Europe.

Even when Jews are not visible in a novel, the destruction of European Jewry often haunts the atmosphere:

- ruined Central Europe,
- displaced persons,
- suspicion of nationalism,
- distrust of ideology,
- obsession with memory and betrayal.

This is one reason Jewish readers and critics have often found resonance in his work despite Judaism not being a primary subject. [ChatGPT]

David Liss (born in 1966 in New Jersey, raised in South Florida, residing today in San Antonio, Texas) is a prominent historical mystery novelist whose work frequently explores the intersection of Jewish identity, high finance, and the criminal underworld in the 18th century. His most notable exploration of these themes is through the **Benjamin Weaver** series, which begins with the Edgar Award-winning novel ***A Conspiracy of Paper***. The series follows Benjamin Weaver, a character who embodies the “Jew as an outsider” in 1720s London.

Background: Weaver is a Portuguese Jew, a former prizefighter) and a “thief-taker”—a precursor to the modern private detective who operates within London’s criminal underbelly. [See also the article by Karen Macfarlane in the UK non-fiction section immediately following.]

Crime and Finance: Liss uses Weaver to bridge the gap between “low” crime (thievery, violence) and “high” crime (stock manipulation, fraud). The novels often revolve around real historical events, such as the South Sea Bubble.

Jewish Identity: *Being Jewish is central to Weaver's character. His environment often views him with suspicion or outright antisemitism. Liss depicts how Jewish characters were frequently scapegoated for financial crimes or marginalized even when they were the victims.*

Liss continues to examine the Jewish experience in historical crime contexts:

The Day of Atonement: *Set in 18th-century Lisbon, this novel follows Weaver seeking revenge against the Inquisition. It explores the "crime" of being a secret Jew (Crypto-Jew) and the moral complexities of vigilante justice.*

The Coffee Trader: *Set in 17th-century Amsterdam, it focuses on a Jewish merchant navigating the cutthroat world of the early commodities market, where the line between savvy business and criminal conspiracy is thin. [Google/AI]*

Liss, David [*Benjamin Weaver #1*], (**A Conspiracy of Paper** [hc, Random House, 2000]) 978-0375502927 [pb, Random House, 2001] 978-0804119122 – *The debut novel that won the Edgar Award for Best First Novel. It centers on 1719 London and the South Sea Bubble.*

Liss, David [*Benjamin Weaver #2*], (**A Spectacle of Corruption** [hc, Random House, 2004]) 978-0375508554 [pb, Random House, 2004] 978-0375760891 – *The sequel involving political corruption and election fraud.*

Liss, David [*Benjamin Weaver #3*], (**The Devil's Company** [hc, Random House, 2009] 978-1400064199 [pb, Random House, 2010] 978-0812974522 – *Focuses on Weaver's infiltration of the British East India Company.*

Liss, David [*Benjamin Weaver #4*], (**The Day of Atonement** [hc, Random House, 2014] 978-1400068975 [pb, Random House, 2015] 978-0345520197 – *Follows Weaver to Lisbon for a tale of revenge against the Inquisition.*

Standalone Novels

Liss, David, (**The Coffee Trader** [hc, Random House, 2003] 978-0375508547 [pb, Random House, 2004] 978-0375760907 – *Set in 17th-century Amsterdam, focusing on the early coffee trade and commodities markets.*

Liss, David, (**The Ethical Assassin** [hc, Ballantine Books, 2006] 978-1400064212 [pb, Random House, 2007] 978-0812974546 – *A departure from his usual historical settings, this is a modern-day thriller set in Florida.*

Liss, David, (**The Whiskey Rebels** [hc, Random House, 2008] 978-1400064205 [pb, Random House, 2009] 978-0812974539 – *A thriller set in the early post-Revolutionary United States, involving the Whiskey Rebellion.*

Nicholas Meyer (born 1945 in New York City) - *an active American screenwriter, director, and novelist best known for his influential Sherlock Holmes pastiches and his work on the Star Trek film franchise. Career Breakthrough: He gained international fame with his 1974 novel The Seven-Per-Cent Solution, which reimagined Sherlock Holmes seeking treatment for cocaine addiction from Sigmund*

*Freud. Meyer's Holmes novels are presented as "discoveries" of lost manuscripts by Dr. John H. Watson, which Meyer has merely "edited". The 4th installment of the 7-book series, "**The Adventures of the Peculiar Protocols**", has Holmes and Watson investigating the origins of The Protocols of the Elders of Zion, a real-life fraudulent document created by the Tsar's secret police, that purported to be minutes from a secret meeting of powerful Jews plotting world domination. As part of their investigation, Holmes and Watson interact with real historical Jewish figures, including Israel Zangwill and Chaim Weizmann. The novel is a*

commentary on the persistence of hate speech and “fake news,” and it details the horrific conditions of Jewish life in Russia, including descriptions of the brutal Kishinev pogroms of 1903 and 1905. Meyer is Jewish and has discussed how his heritage influenced his writing, including his work on Star Trek films. [Google/AI]

Meyer, Nicholas, (**The Adventure of the Peculiar Protocols: Adapted from the Journals of John H. Watson, M.D.**) [hc, Minotaur Books, Oct 2019] 978-1250228956 [pb, Minotaur, 2020] 978-1250754417

Barbara Nadel (birth est. 1958?) is an English crime writer best known for her long-running (27-volume) **Inspector İkmén** mystery series. **Belshazzar’s Daughter** (1999) is the debut novel in the **Cetin İkmén** series. It introduces Inspector İkmén, a Turkish detective, as he investigates the brutal murder of an elderly Russian Jew in a decrepit neighborhood of Istanbul. The plot involves a swastika daubed in blood and explores the history of Jewish and Russian refugees who fled European conflicts to find refuge in Turkey. The series features **Balthazar Cohen**, a Jewish police officer and colleague of Inspector İkmén.

Though not herself Jewish, Barbara Nadel’s novels frequently incorporate Jewish themes, characters, and historical contexts, drawing both from the Jewish community in Istanbul and the history of London’s East End (where she was born and raised). Her novels often delve into the secrets of the past, including the legacies of Nazism, Russian revolution history, and the intermingling of Jewish, Turkish, and Orthodox cultures in the city. Her **Hakim & Arnold Series (9 volumes)** is set in London’s East End, and draws on Nadel’s upbringing in a “melting pot” where Yiddish words like “nosh” were part of the local dialect.

An Act of Kindness: Features a discovery of a murder victim in a **Jewish cemetery** and traces the mystery back to historical events.

Displaced: Centers on an elderly Orthodox Jew, Irving Levy, who discovers through a DNA test that he may not be Jewish by religious law, leading to a search for his true heritage.

The East Ham Golem: A 2025 release that uses the Jewish mystical concept of a **Golem** as a central plot device in a mystery involving Jewish mysticism and Far Right politics.

[Google/AI]

Nadel, Barbara, (**Belshazzar’s Daughter**) [hc, Minotaur Books, 2004] 978-0312316532 [pb, Felony & Mayhem Press, 2006] 978-1933397498

Nadel, Barbara, (**An Act of Kindness**) [hc, Quercus, 2013] 978-0857387776 [pb, Quercus Publishing, 2014] 978-0857387806

Nadel, Barbara, (**Displaced**) [hc, Allison & Busby, 2018] 978-0749022426 [pb, Allison & Busby, 2019] 978-0749022525

Nadel, Barbara, (**The East Ham Golem**) [hc, Allison & Busby, 2025] 978-0749031350 [pb, Allison & Busby, 2025] 978-0749031459 [uses Jewish folklore as a central plot device to explore the multicultural tensions of London’s East End. After a desecration of graves in a Jewish cemetery in East London, detectives find a clay sculpture of a man—a golem—instead of human remains. The mystery deepens when the golem is stolen from a police storage facility during a violent armed raid that leaves a man dead. The investigation uncovers links to the Maharal of Prague and the original Golem legend, and to a priceless jewel. The narrative plays with the tension between ancient folklore and modern crime, as whispers of the golem stalking the neighborhood cause fear to turn “neighbor against neighbor”. [Google/AI]

Ian Sansom (born 1966 in Essex, England) - a prominent English novelist, academic (English Professor at the U. of Warwick), and broadcaster. He lives with his family in Northern Ireland. While Ian Sansom is not Jewish, he is frequently associated with Jewish identity because his most famous fictional character, **Israel Armstrong** from the 4-volume *Mobile Library Mystery Series*, is a Jewish librarian from London. Armstrong's Jewish identity serves as a key aspect of the character's personality and the humorous culture clash when he moves to a small, largely Protestant, Northern Irish village.

Portrayal of Jewish Identity:

“Fish out of Water” Scenario: Israel Armstrong is a self-described “North London Jewish vegetarian liberal freethinker” who finds himself working as a mobile librarian in the remote, “dour, largely Presbyterian” town of Tumdrum, Northern Ireland. His Jewish background, along with his vegetarianism and urban sensibilities, creates a constant source of humor and friction with the local, eccentric Irish characters.

Cultural & Dietary Differences: The books highlight the everyday difficulties and social awkwardness Israel faces due to his background, such as the constant struggle to find a “proper cappuccino and a decent newspaper” or suitable vegetarian food in rural Ireland.

Identity, not Religion: While Israel is explicitly Jewish by background and ethnicity, the books focus less on the specifics of religious practice or theology and more on the social and cultural markers of his identity. His Jewishness is a core part of his character that makes him an outsider and an unlikely detective in a place largely unfamiliar with his way of life.

Themes of Otherness: The Jewish content is used to explore broader themes of being an outsider, cultural misunderstanding, and the search for belonging in a closed community. In short, the Jewish content is central to the character's dynamic and the series' humor, emphasizing the cultural dislocation of a London Jew in rural Northern Ireland. [Google/AI]

Sansom, Ian [*Mobile Library Mystery Series #1*], (**The Case of the Missing Books**) [pb, Harper Perennial, 2006] 978-0007206995

Sansom, Ian, [*Mobile Library Mystery Series #2*], (**Mr Dixon Disappears**) [pb, Harper Perennial, 2007] 978-0060822538

Sansom, Ian, [*Mobile Library Mystery Series #3*], (**The Book Stops Here: A Quirky British Mystery About a Stolen Library and a Librarian's Countryside Hunt**) [hc, Harper, 2008] 978-1607511168 [pb, William Morrow Paperbacks, 2008] 978-0061452000

Sansom, Ian, [*Mobile Library Mystery Series #4*], (**The Bad Book Affair: A Hilarious Irish Bibliomystery**) [pb, William Morrow Paperbacks, 2010] 978-0061452017

Guy Saville (born 1973) – In ***The Afrika Reich* (2011)**, his debut novel, he presents an *alternate history* where Nazi Germany successfully conquered Africa. In the sequel, ***The Madagaskar Plan* (2015)**, he continues the story in an alternative 1953 Britain.

In ***The Afrika Reich* (2011)**, the Holocaust was averted because Britain surrendered early. Instead of extermination camps in Europe, the Nazis opted for “territorial solutions,” primarily the mass deportation of Jews to Africa. In ***The Madagaskar Plan* (2015)**, five million European Jews have been exiled to a slave plantation on Madagaskar (based on a real historical Nazi proposal). **Key Jewish Characters:**

Reuben Salois: A leader of the Jewish resistance and the only person to have successfully escaped the island's ghetto. He becomes a central figure as British intelligence recruits him to return and incite a revolt.

Madeleine Cranley: *An Austrian Jew and the lover of the protagonist, Burton Cole. She is a prisoner on the island, having been sent there by her spiteful British husband.*

Jewish Scientists: *The plot involves a group of imprisoned Jewish physicists who are being forced by the SS to develop a “super-weapon” for the Reich.*

Internal Jewish Politics: *The book depicts various factions within the Jewish community on the island, ranging from those attempting to collaborate with the authorities to those planning a violent revolution.*

Metaphorical Subtext: *Saville has stated that the portrayal of the Jews in the Nazi-ruled Madagascar serves as a metaphor for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, exploring themes of exile, resistance, and the struggle for a homeland.*

Saville’s research for these themes included original Nazi blueprints for the island’s administration and the actual logistics of pre-war deportation proposals. [Google/AI]

Saville, Guy, (**The Afrika Reich**) [hc, Henry Holt & Co., 2013] 978-0805095937 [pb, St. Martin’s Griffin, 2015] 978-1250042576

Saville, Guy, (**The Madagaskar Plan** [2015]) [hc, Henry Holt & Co., 2015] 978-0805095951 [pb, Hodder Paperbacks, 2016] 978-1444710700

Israel Zangwill (born London, 1864–1926) – *a prominent author, playwright, public intellectual and humorist. Initially a close associate of Theodor Herzl in the Zionist movement, he later founded the Jewish Territorialist Organization (ITO) to seek a Jewish homeland outside of Palestine. He was also a passionate advocate for women’s suffrage and pacifism. His writings address Jewish involvement in crime, though his treatment of the subject varies between realistic social commentary and genre-defining detective fiction. While he is often celebrated for his sympathetic portrayals of Jewish immigrant life, Zangwill did not shy away from the gritty realities of the London slums, including their criminal elements. In his most famous work, **Children of the Ghetto** (1892), Zangwill provides a “Dickensian” look at the impoverished Jewish community in Whitechapel. Researchers note that Zangwill faced pressure to present an uplifting account of the community to combat antisemitism. As a result, he deliberately left out more extreme criminal subcultures like gang violence, prostitution, and gambling clubs from this particular novel to emphasize the pious, law-abiding nature of most immigrants. He used his writing to challenge the popular Victorian association of Jewish markets, like Petticoat Lane, with “danger and dodgy dealing”.*

Zangwill, Israel, (**Children of the Ghetto: A Study of a Peculiar People**, [originally published in 1892, hc, Aegypan, 2008] 978-1606649411 [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2017] 978-1974696017 [This was the first Anglo-Jewish bestseller, which introduced the British public to the internal life of the immigrant Jewish community. It depicts the daily lives, rituals, and intense poverty of orthodox immigrant families. And it follows characters who have moved into middle-class life in the West End, exploring the challenges of assimilation and the distance they feel from their heritage. **Esther Ansell** is a child of the slums who achieves success as an author and struggles with her identity, torn between her traditional roots and the modern, secular life she finds beyond her background. Her religious father represents the old, poverty-stricken world she is distancing from. **Hannah Jacobs** is a rabbi’s daughter who is tragically prevented from marrying her lover, because she is technically a divorcee and he is a “Cohen”, a descendant of the priestly class forbidden under religious law to marry a divorcee. **Raphael Leon** is a morally upright journalist from a wealthy background who admires and eventually falls in love with Esther. The novel works through the tension between

assimilation to modern British society versus loyalty to ancestral faith, which overlaps social class conflicts between established British Jews and immigrant newcomers. The novel's blend of sharp humor, ethnographic detail, and poignant tragedy earned Zangwill the nickname "the Jewish Dickens".

Zangwill, Israel, (**The Big Bow Mystery** [originally published in 1892, hc, Mint Editions, 2022] 978-1513134017 [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2015] 978-1515314295

[While Zangwill is primarily known as the "Dickens of the Ghetto" for his portrayals of Jewish life, his major detective works are notably secular and satirical, often moving away from the overtly Jewish themes found in his other novels. This novella is famous for establishing the "locked-room" mystery genre but is largely devoid of significant Jewish elements. The story is set in the district of Bow in London's East End, but it focuses on broader Victorian social issues rather than Jewish identity. Zangwill uses the story to satirize the British legal system, the sensationalist press, and the ineptitude of the police force (Scotland Yard). He wrote it to establish his reputation in the general English literary and journalistic scene, rather than being limited only to the Jewish niche.]

Zangwill, Israel, (**Cheating the Gallows** [originally published in 1893 in The Idler magazine and later included in **The King of Schnorrers: Grotesques and Fantasies** [hc, Mint Editions, 2022] 978-1513134000 [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2015] 978-1517401948

*[Cheating the Gallows plays on the competition between two flatmates for the affections of the same young woman. The story explores dual identities and the "cheating" of the legal system, reflecting Zangwill's interest in how perceptions of respectability can mask criminal behavior. King of the Schnorrers, set in late 18th-century London is one of Zangwill's most celebrated comedic works, centered on the figure of the **schnorrer** (a professional beggar). **Manasseh Bueno Barzillai Azevedo da Costa** is a Sephardic Jew who treats begging not as a misfortune but as a high art and a spiritual privilege. He is insolent, aristocratic, and possesses a "Hidalgo pride" that allows him to dominate his wealthy benefactors. Manasseh's primary "victim" is **Joseph Grobstock**, a nouveau riche philanthropist. Manasseh masterfully manipulates Jewish traditions of charity to treat Grobstock's money as if it were already his own. A major subplot involves the cultural friction between the **Sephardic** and **Ashkenazi** communities. Manasseh is horrified when his daughter falls in love with an Ashkenazi beggar, leading to a satirical battle against the rigid Jewish governing council. Zangwill highlights the unique Jewish concept of communal responsibility, where the beggar is not a social failure but a necessary partner who allows the rich to perform the commandment of charity. The genre and thrust of the narrative is humorous, but the stereotype of the Jew as a type of rogue, con artist is reinforced. [Google/AI]*

Non-fiction Books and Articles on UK Jews and Crime/Espionage

Bristow, Edward, "**British Jewry and the fight against the international white-slave traffic, 1885–1914,**" Immigrants & Minorities 2, no. 2 (1983)

Cook, Andrew, (**Ace of Spies: The True Story of Sidney Reilly** [pb, Tempus, 2004]) 978-0752429595

Englander, David, "**Policing the Ghetto: Jewish East London, 1880–1920,**" Crime, Histoire & Sociétés / Crime, History & Societies 14, no. 1 (2010): 29–50. [- examines everyday relations between the Metropolitan Police and the overwhelmingly immigrant Jewish population of London's East End during the great migration from Eastern Europe. It avoids a simple "antisemitic police versus Jewish victims" model. The Jewish immigrant community depended upon police protection and generally valued impartial enforcement of the law, while

simultaneously objecting to discriminatory or heavy-handed policing. Englander explores cultural misunderstandings, language difficulties, perceptions of immigrant criminality, street life and public order.]

Frazer, Jenni, **“Want a New Job? Join the Police,”** The Jewish Chronicle, January 2, 2020 [*Frazer examines why policing has historically been an unusual career choice among British Jews and describes efforts to recruit more Jews into the service. At the time, the Metropolitan Police recorded 117 officers who voluntarily identified themselves as Jewish—89 men and 28 women—with the actual number probably somewhat higher because disclosure of religion was voluntary. Frazer notes the striking contrast with Israel, where police service is obviously commonplace: in Britain, policing simply had not become a conventional Jewish occupational path. The article discusses recruitment and the experiences of Jewish officers and is useful for explaining why there appears to be so little British equivalent of the substantial American literature on Jewish policemen.]*

Jewish Chronicle Staff, **“Jewish police who face baying anti-Israel activists reveal reality of the job,”** The Jewish Chronicle, July 8, 2026. [*- reports anonymously on serving Jewish British police officers and their experiences policing anti-Israel demonstrations and operating in the post-October 7 environment. The Jewish identity of the officers is not incidental: the subject is precisely what it means to be both Jewish and a British police officer when police are required to manage demonstrations at which anti-Israel and sometimes antisemitic rhetoric occurs.]*

Granot-Bein, Yael, **“An Urgent Social Problem? Jewish Juvenile Delinquents in Turn-of-Twentieth-Century London,”** Journal of Modern Jewish Studies, 9, no. 3 (2010)

Jones, Thomas, **“Lives of Reilly,”** London Review of Books, August 10, 2023 [<https://www.lrb.co.uk/the-paper/v45/n16/thomas-jones/lives-of-reilly>] – or LRB website, not paywall restricted – an extensive review of the Benny Morris biography of Reilly.

Knepper, Paul, **“British Jews and the Racialisation of Crime in the Age of Empire,”** British Journal of Criminology 47, no. 1 (2007)

Kushner, Tony, (**Journeys from the Abyss: The Holocaust and Forced Migration from the 1880s to the Present** [pb, Liverpool University Press, 2017]) 978-1786940636

Kushner, Tony, (**The Jewish pedlar: An untold criminal history** [hc, Manchester UP, 2025]) 978-1526178022 [*In 1734 a pedlar turned smuggler named Jacob Harris slit the throats of three people in a pub in Sussex. This triple-murder, for which he was hanged and gibbeted, remains the most violent crime ever committed by a British Jew. Yet today it is all but forgotten. In The Jewish pedlar, Tony Kushner goes in search of the enigmatic Harris. Digging into a remarkable range of sources, from law records and newspaper reports to ballads and folktales, he follows the traces of Harris’s legend across three hundred years of British history. In doing so, he reconstructs the world of Jewish pedlars and criminals across many continents. The lives these figures eked out at the margins of society paint a picture of persistent antisemitism – but also of remarkable integration. - Amazon]*

Macfarlane, Karen A., **“The Jewish Policemen of Eighteenth-Century London,”** Journal of Modern Jewish Studies 10, no. 2 (July 2011): 223–244. DOI: 10.1080/14725886.2011.580981 [*Macfarlane challenges the conventional historical picture in which London's Jews appear primarily as objects of criminal suspicion. Eighteenth-century commentators such as Henry Fielding and Patrick Colquhoun frequently associated Jews with crime, but historians have paid remarkably little attention to Jews working on the other side of the law. Macfarlane documents Jewish men serving as **peace officers and thief-takers** before the creation of the modern Metropolitan Police in 1829. They participated in apprehending offenders and*

recovering stolen property and worked alongside non-Jewish officers. She argues that policing offered Jewish men an unusual avenue into the wider civic world of London: Jewish and Christian officers could cooperate professionally in circumstances in which occupational and social barriers otherwise separated them. **Note:** See also the novels of David Liss featuring Benjamin Weaver, a Jewish “thief-taker”, above in this UK fiction bibliography]

Mendelsohn, Adam D., (**The Rag Race: How Jews sewed their way to success in America and the British Empire**) [hc, NYU Press, 2014] 978-1479847181 [pb, NYU Press, 2016] 978-1479814381

Morris, Benny, (**Sidney Reilly: Master Spy** [hc, Yale UP, 2022]) 978-0300248265

Mulley, Claire, “**Sidney Reilly, Ace of Spies, remains an enigma**”, *Spectator*, Jan. 21, 2023, review of Benny Morris biography of Reilly (unfortunately behind a paywall).

Reilly, Sidney, (**Adventures of a British Master Spy: The Memoirs of Sidney Reilly**, Edited by his wife, Pepita, 1931 [pb, revised edition, *Dialogue*, 2015]) 978-1849547185 [In September 1925, Sidney Reilly journeyed across the Russian frontier on a mission to overthrow the Bolsheviks and restore the Czar. He vanished without a trace. The circumstances surrounding his death remain a mystery. This is a collection of Reilly’s own notes alongside his wife’s desperate search to find out what happened to him after he vanished in Russia. It is highly entertaining, though historians warn that Reilly exaggerated many of his own feats. [Amazon & Google/AI]

Lockhart, R.H. Bruce, (**Memoirs of a British Agent** [1932 original edition, reprinted edition hc, Folio Society, 2003]) B0000CP13X [pb, Pan Macmillan, 1985] 978-0333386026 [Written by the British diplomat who partnered with Reilly in the famous 1918 “Lockhart Plot” to overthrow Vladimir Lenin. This international bestseller is what originally made Reilly a household name. – Google/AI]

Spence, Richard B., (**Trust No One: The Secret World of Sidney Reilly** [hc, Feral House, 2002]) 978-0922915798

Stevenson, William, (**Spymistress: The Life of Vera Atkins, the Greatest Female Secret Agent of World War II** [hc, Arcade Publishing, 2006] 978-1559707633 [pb, Arcade, 2011] 978-1611452310 [She was stunning. She was ruthless. She was brilliant and had a will of iron. Born **Vera Maria Rosenberg** in Bucharest, she became Vera Atkins. William Stephenson, the spymaster who would later be known as “Intrepid”, recruited her when she was 23. Vera spent most of the 1930s running too many dangerous espionage missions to count. When World War II began in 1939, her many skills made her one of the leaders of the Special Operations Executive (SOE), a covert intelligence agency formed by, and reporting to, Winston Churchill. She trained and recruited hundreds of agents, including dozens of women. Their job was to seamlessly penetrate deep behind the enemy lines. As General Dwight D. Eisenhower said, the fantastic exploits and extraordinary courage of the SOE agents and the French Resistance fighters “shortened the war by many months.” - Amazon]

Summerson, Henry, “Jews and felony in English communities and courts, 1190–1290”, *Jewish Historical Studies* (Volume 52, Issue 1) by UCL Press on June 3, 2021. The open-access article, spanning pages 70–117, examines legal records to analyze the involvement of Jewish individuals in felony cases.

Tilles, Daniel, (**British Fascist Antisemitism and Jewish Responses, 1932–40. A Modern History of Politics and Violence** [hc, Bloomsbury Academic, 2015] 978-1472510570 [pb, Bloomsbury Academic, 2016] 978-1474286428 [This book explores the use of antisemitism by Britain’s interwar fascists and the ways in which the country’s Jews reacted to

this, examining the two alongside one another for the first time and locating both within the broader context of contemporary events in Europe.

Daniel Tilles challenges existing conceptions of the antisemitism of Britain's foremost fascist organisation, the British Union of Fascists. He demonstrates that it was a far more central aspect of the party's thought than has previously been assumed. This, in turn, will be shown to be characteristic of the wider relationship between interwar European fascism and antisemitism, a thus far relatively neglected issue in the burgeoning field of fascist studies. Tilles also argues that the BUF's leader, Sir Oswald Mosley, far from being a reluctant convert to the anti-Jewish cause, or simply a cynical exploiter of it, as much of the existing scholarship suggests, was aware of the role antisemitism would play in his fascist doctrine from the start and remained in control of its subsequent development. These findings are used to support the notion that, contrary to prevailing perceptions, Jewish opposition to the BUF played no part in provoking the fascists' adoption of antisemitism. Britain's Jews did, nevertheless, play a significant role in shaping British fascism's path of development, and the wide-ranging and effective anti-fascist activity they pursued represents an important alternative narrative to the dominant image of Jews as mere victims of fascism. – Amazon]

Tilles shows that the fascist threat was not merely ideological. Jews in the East End experienced intimidation, vandalism and physical assaults. Jewish organisations consequently employed a combination of political lobbying, intelligence gathering, monitoring of fascists and communal organisation. Especially relevant are the discussions of the Board of Deputies' efforts to obtain government and police intervention and its own intelligence operations.

Tilles, Daniel, “**‘Some Lesser Known Aspects’: The Anti-Fascist Campaign of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, 1936–40,**” in Geoffrey Alderman, ed., ***New Directions in Anglo-Jewish History***, pp. 135–162 [hc, Academic Studies Press, 2010] 978-1936235131 [The Board of Deputies developed what amounted to a Jewish intelligence and crime-prevention operation against British fascists. It collected information, monitored fascist organisations and even infiltrated them. The intelligence was used politically and was sometimes passed to authorities. The Board's archival records show that this intelligence operation was much more sophisticated than is usually appreciated. – Google/AI]

Tobias, J.J., ***Prince of Fences: The Life and Crimes of Ikey Solomons*** [hc, Vallentine-Mitchell, 1975] 978-0853031741 [1787–1850 – notorious British-Jewish criminal who was eventually deported to Australia; alleged to be the inspiration for Fagin in Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist*]

Tolan, John, ***(England's Jews: Finance, Violence, and the Crown in the Thirteenth Century*** [hc, U. of Pennsylvania Press, 2023] 978-1512823899 [While primarily a political history, it examines the “felonies” (such as coin-clipping) for which Jewish communities were often arrested and imprisoned prior to their expulsion in 1290.

The history of Jewish criminal activity in the UK is primarily a historical phenomenon centered in **London's East End** during the early to mid-20th century. During this era, Jewish gangs—often referred to as the **“Kosher Nostra”**—played a significant role in the city's underworld, particularly in gambling, protection rackets, and anti-fascist street militancy.

The “Kosher Nostra” and Inter-War Gangs (1920s–1930s)

Impoverished immigrant communities in Whitechapel and Aldgate (London) produced several notorious gangs that controlled local rackets and racecourse betting.

The Yiddishers** (aka **The Whitechapel Mob**): Led by **Alfred (Alfie) Solomon**, this was one of the most prominent Jewish street gangs in Whitechapel. Solomon became the inspiration for the character of the same name in the TV series **Peaky Blinders** (2013–2022). (See the description of the television series in the companion *Filmography*.) ([see p. 526](#)) They were known for their fierce street-fighting abilities. **Other Notable Jewish Gangs: the Aldgate Mob, the Bessarabian Tigers, and the Odessians.

***Jack “Spot” Comer** (1912–1996, born Jacob Colmore, the “King of the Underworld”, was the most influential Jewish gangster in British history, ruling London’s underworld from the 1930s through the mid-1950s. Starting with the Yiddishers, Comer eventually controlled protection rackets at major English racecourses and ran illegal gambling clubs (“spielers”) in Soho. Unlike many modern gangsters, Comer was a self-proclaimed defender of the Jewish community. He famously fought in the **Battle of Cable Street (October 4, 1936)** against Oswald Mosley’s British Union of Fascists [See Daniel Tilles articles above in this section] and later funded the **43 Group**, a militant post-WWII organization of Jewish ex-servicemen dedicated to hunting down and violently disrupting neo-fascist rallies [See Beckman, Sonabend and Rosenberg publications immediately below]. His reign ended in the mid-1950s following a violent feud with rival **Billy Hill** and a high-profile knife fight with **Albert Dimes**. Historical Jewish crime in the UK was typically concentrated in specific sectors:.*

- ***Illegal Gambling:** Running unlicensed betting shops and gaming rooms was a staple of the East End and Soho underworlds.*
- ***Protection Rackets:** Gangs charged Jewish bookmakers and local businesses “protection” fees to operate safely.*
- ***The “White Slavery” Panic:** In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, there were concerns regarding Jewish involvement in prostitution rings, notably the international **Zvi Migdal** organization, though this was often sensationalized.*

Today, there is no organized “Jewish crime” element in the UK comparable to the mid-20th-century syndicates. Research into this topic is now primarily the domain of social historians exploring the immigrant experience and the Jewish East End. Recent crime data in the UK focuses on the Jewish community as victims of crime, specifically recording high rates of antisemitic hate crimes, which has seen significant spikes in recent years. The most widely read books focus on the mid-20th-century “Kosher Nostra” and the rivalry between Jewish and Italian-British syndicates. [Google/AI]

*Beckman, Morris, (**The 43 Group: The Untold Story of Their Fight Against Fascism**) London: Centerprise Publications, 1992; 2nd ed., London: Centerprise, 1993. Re-issued by Spellmount, pb, 2013] 978-0752499420 [Oswald Mosley decided he could carry on where Hitler and Mussolini had left off. On street corners his fascist speakers would proclaim ‘not enough Jews were burned at Belsen’. Enter the 43 Group. In a ferocious, bloody and brilliantly covert five-year campaign, they destroyed the Mosleyites. The membership of the Group was almost entirely made up of British servicemen, the original 43 members quickly swelling to more than 300 and including a Battle of Britain ace, a VC winner – and Vidal Sassoon! The Groups philosophy of the ‘3 D’s’ - Discuss, Decide and Do it – were quickly manifested on the streets of London, with thousands of fascist meetings and rallies sent packing. The Group was organised in ‘wedges’ of a dozen or so. These wedges would attend a BUF rally and at a given signal would storm the speaker’s platform, attacking BUF stewards and speaker. The members’ military background ensured tight discipline and brutally effective*

actions. This, combined with a number of spies within the fascist ranks, ensured the 43 Group almost always came out on top, closing down two-thirds of all fascist activity in the UK until its simultaneous demise with organised fascism in Britain in 1950] - Amazon

*The group represents an unusual borderland between **crime prevention, community defence, intelligence work and vigilantism**. Its members protected Jewish neighbourhoods, infiltrated fascist organisations, disrupted meetings and sometimes engaged in deliberate street violence.*

Beckman's account is partisan—he strongly defends the Group—but indispensable as an insider memoir. CST itself has described the book as an essential contribution to Anglo-Jewish and anti-fascist history.]

Sonabend, Daniel, **We Fight Fascists: The 43 Group and Their Forgotten Battle for Post-War Britain** [hc, Verso, 2019] 978-1788733243 [pb, Verso, 2021] 978-1788733250

[Returning to civilian life, at the close of the Second World War, a group of Jewish veterans discovered that, for all their effort and sacrifice, their fight was not yet done. Creeping back onto the streets were Britain's homegrown fascists, directed from the shadows by Sir Oswald Mosley. Horrified that the authorities refused to act, forty-three Jewish ex-servicemen and women resolved to take matters into their own hands. In 1946, they founded the 43 Group and let it be known that they were willing to stop the far-right resurgence by any means necessary.

*Their numbers quickly swelled. Joining the battle-hardened ex-servicemen in smashing up fascist meetings were younger Jews, including hairdresser Vidal Sassoon, and gentiles as well, some of whom volunteered to infiltrate fascist organizations. The Group published its own newspaper, conducted covert operations, and was able to muster a powerful force of hundreds of fighters who quickly turned fascist street meetings into mass brawls. The struggle peaked in the summer of 1947 with **the Battle of Ridley Road**, where thousands descended on the Hackney market to participate in weekly riots.- Amazon*

A somewhat more detached historical account than the Beckman book. Highlights the ambiguous relationship with the police - members were themselves sometimes arrested for violence, yet their intelligence-gathering and disruption of fascist networks performed functions that resembled policing.]

Rosenberg, David, **(Battle for the East End: Jewish Responses to Fascism in the 1930s**

[pb, Five Leaves Publications, 2011] 978-1907869181 *[A readable history of Jewish and working-class resistance to Mosley's fascists, culminating in the Battle of Cable Street.*

*Particularly useful for the **policing dilemma**. Jewish residents wanted protection from fascist intimidation but frequently believed the authorities were protecting the fascists' legal right to march rather than protecting Jews. At Cable Street itself police attempted to clear a route through the East End for Mosley's marchers, producing violent confrontations between police and anti-fascists. Thus Rosenberg provides important background to the subsequent emergence of explicitly Jewish self-defence organisations. The Amazon description of this book says about Cable Street that 100,000 people, mainly from the local Jewish and Irish communities, prevented Mosley's troops marching through the East End.]*

Copsey, Nigel, **(Anti-Fascism in Britain** [hc, 2nd ed. revised, Routledge, 2016] 978-

1138926493 [pb, Routledge, 2016] 978-1138926509 *[Fully revised and updated from its*

earlier edition, this book continues to provide the definitive account of anti-fascism in Britain from its roots in the 1930s opposition to Oswald Mosley and the British Union of Fascists, to

the street demonstrations and online campaigns of the twenty-first century. The author draws on an impressive range of sources including official government, police and security services records, the writings and recollections of activists themselves, and the publications and propaganda of anti-fascist groups and their opponents.

The book traces the ideological, tactical and organisational evolution of anti-fascist groups and explores their often complicated relationships with the mainstream and radical left, as well as assessing their effectiveness in combating the extreme right. - Amazon

A broader academic history rather than a specifically Jewish book, but substantial portions concern Jewish resistance to fascism, including the 43 Group and 62 Group. Copsey is useful in placing Jewish self-defence in the larger history of British anti-fascism and assesses the tension between state policing/public-order policy and militant private action.

Moisha Blueball (or Bluebell, born Morris Goldstein) - *A legendary figure from the 1920s and 1930s Aldgate and Whitechapel street gangs. Goldstein was a “heavy” in the protection rackets of the 1930s, often operating in areas like Petticoat Lane. He specialized in racetrack protection and was known for violent intimidation tactics against rivals. He was one of Comer’s “closest comrades” alongside other colorful underworld figures like Bernard “Sonny the Yank” Schack. He gained notoriety for his role in persuading a witness—a destitute clergyman—to commit perjury during a high-profile court case involving Jack Spot. He largely disappeared from the public eye after the mid-1950s, following the decline of Jack “Spot” Comer’s influence and the rise of the Kray Twins. - Google/AI]*

Morton, James & Gerry Parker, (**Gangland Bosses: The Lives of Jack Spot and Billy Hill** [hc, Little, Brown, 2005]) 978-0316859912 [pb, Little, Brown, 2004] 978-0751533200 [*a definitive account of the rise and fall of **Jack Spot**, the self-proclaimed defender of the Jewish community, and his rivalry with Billy Hill.*]

Clarkson, Wensley, (**Hit ‘Em Hard: Jack Spot, King of the Underworld** [hc, Harper Collins UK, 2002] 978-0007124404 [pb, Harper Collins UK, 2003] 978-0007124411 [*chronicles the rise and fall of Jack “Spot” Comer, the dominant Jewish gangster controlling London’s underworld in the 1940s and 1950s. Based on interviews, the book details Comer’s journey from Whitechapel to running protection rackets, his rivalry with Billy Hill, and his influence on later figures like the Kray twins. – Google/AI]*

Morton, James, (**East End Gangland** [hc, Little, Brown, 2000] 978-0316853248 [pb, Sphere, 2021] 978-0751584486 [*A broader history that tracks the changing face of East End crime from the 1870s to the 1960s, including Jewish involvement in racecourse gangs and illegal gambling. – Google/AI]*

Englander, David, “**Policing the Ghetto: Jewish East London, 1880–1920**” (revised and updated posthumously by Clive Emsley), *Crime, Histoire & Sociétés*, 14:1, May 1, 2010, pp.29-50. [*Between 1880 and 1914, approximately **150,000** Jewish refugees arrived in the UK, with up to 70% settling in London’s East End. Police largely viewed the Jewish community as “peaceable, sober, and relatively free from criminality”. While “Jew thieves” and gambling dens existed, Jewish crime was considered petty and “containable” compared to other groups. The primary policing challenge was often peace-keeping between Jewish immigrants and the indigenous population, particularly as Jewish territoriality was contested street by street. Disorder sometimes erupted from within the community, such as the “**Yom Kippur 1904 incident**,” where Jewish radicals/socialists intentionally provoked Orthodox Jews by driving a van of food through the streets during the fast. As concerns about political extremism and anarchism grew, and with the onset of World War I, the state intensified covert*

*surveillance and administrative control over the community. The **Aliens Act of 1905** was passed specifically to restrict the entry of “undesirable” and “pauper” immigrants, reflecting rising anti-alien sentiment of the era. – Google/AI]*

Fishman, William J., **East End Jewish Radicals, 1875–1914** [hc, Duckworth, 1975] 978-0715608852 [pb, Five Leaves, 2005] 978-0907123453 [*Professor William Fishman, son of an immigrant tailor; describes London’s East End at a time of mass immigration from Eastern Europe to the shabby tenements of Stepney and Whitechapel. He describes the spread of libertarian and socialist ideals among the Jewish community culminating in the great strikes of 1889 and 1912. It was in London’s East End that Rudolf Rocker taught himself Yiddish and helped politicize a generation. An extraordinary period of Jewish, immigrant and radical history, described by an inspired storyteller. – Amazon]*

Rocker, Rudolf, (**The London Years** – an abridgement of the memoirs of Rudolf Rocker [hc, Robert Anscombe & Co. 1956, transl. from the Yiddish by Joseph Leftwich]) ASIN : B0006EBQHG [*Rocker was a German Catholic who moved to London to become the acknowledged leader of the Yiddish-speaking Jewish anarchists. Rocker introduced this mass movement to world literature, lecturing on Shakespeare, Cervantes and Tolstoy; organised demonstrations of up to 25,000 against the contemporary Russian pogroms, edited Yiddish political and cultural journals; set up properly instituted Jewish trade unions. Rocker established the Jewish Bakers’ union in a community action where housewives would only buy bread with a union label. In 1912 he organised a famous general strike of Jewish tailors which abolished the sweatshop system. This happened at a time of mass immigration by impoverished Jews, who were persecuted by a right-wing press and an ‘anti-alien’ movement which brought in the first anti-immigration controls. The London Years chronicles this vanished world. The Jewish anarchist movement came to an end in 1914, Rocker was arrested as an ‘enemy alien’ and his journals were closed down. After the war Rocker was active in the ferment of Weimer Germany before leaving for the USA where he was active in the Jewish anarchist movement until his death in 1958. In the USA Rocker was mainly involved with the Yiddish anarchist magazine *Frei Arbeter Shtimme* which lasted until the 1970s and whose adherents included the young Noam Chomsky. – Amazon]*

Jones, Jeff, (**Stars and Scars: The Story of Jewish Boxing in London** [pb, Amberley Publishing, 2024] 978-1398109568 [- *boxing served as a tool for social mobility and combating anti-Semitic stereotypes, with complex ties to criminal elements and gambling in London’s East End. The work positions fighters like Daniel Mendoza within a, often contentious, relationship with the law, mirroring broader historical trends of marginalization and community criminalization. Starting with the first Jewish boxing stars of the bare-knuckled days, the story winds its way through the bare-knuckled prize fighting of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and its links to the infamous Jewish street gangs of the era. It chronicles the rise of the great London Jewish boxers at the turn of the twentieth century and the many Jewish boy’s clubs, boxing clubs and gyms that produced a huge number of fine boxers through the first half of the twentieth century, including many who participated robustly in street battles with members of the British fascist movement of the 1930s. This paralleled similar events among young American and Canadian Jews, sons of Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe, during the 1930s. – Google/AI & Amazon]*

Knepper, Paul, “**British Jews and the Racialisation of Crime in the Age of Empire**”, British Journal of Criminology in January 2007 [*This paper discusses how Jewish immigrants in London’s East End were frequently criminalized by the press and politicians. It provides the socio-political backdrop of how the concept of the “Jewish criminal” was formed in the British public consciousness. – Google/AI]*

*The **Bessarabian Tigers** (also known as the "**Stop at Nothing Gang**") were a real-life gang of Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe who operated in the Whitechapel district of London's East End during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.*

*Named after their homeland on the Russian-Romanian border (modern-day Moldova), they were infamous for running violent protection rackets against local Jewish businesses and rivaling another immigrant gang, the **Odessians**.*

*Because they operated on a highly localized level prior to the era of massive tabloid fascination with syndicated crime, there are no full books written exclusively about them. However, their history is extensively documented in educational curricula, academic papers, and broad historical books about the London underworld. In-depth accounts of the Bessarabian Tigers and their leader, **Max Moses** (alias "Kid McCoy"), are found in these texts:*

Glinert, Ed, (**East End Chronicles** [hc, Allen Lane, 2005] 978-0713997743 [pb, Penguin UK, 2006] 978-0141017181 [*explores the dark history of the East End, including the notorious reputation of the Bessarabian Tigers, whom one contemporary police inspector called the "greatest menace ever known to London".*]

Belovski, Rabbi Dr. Harvey, "**We Jews Can Be Rough, Tough and Dangerous Too**", The Jewish Chronicle, August 31, 2023. [*explores the legacy of early 20th-century London Jewish gangs like the Bessarabian Tigers, the Aldgate Mob, and the Yiddishers in combating anti-Semitism. It argues for embracing this history of "muscular Judaism" and physical resistance as a crucial, often overlooked part of Jewish identity, with connections to the creation of Krav Maga – Google/AI*]

Bennett, John, (**Mob Town: A History of Crime and Disorder in the East End** [hc, Yale UP, 2017] 978-0300221954 [*examines the social and economic conditions of London's East End that fostered immigrant street gangs - Google/AI*]

McDonald, Brian, (**Gangs of London: 100 Years of Mob Warfare** [pb, Milo, 2010] 978-1903854914 [*the definitive text on the 1920s and 1930s era. It details the real street battles between the Bethnal Green Boys, the Hoxton Mob, and the Yiddishers. - Google/AI*]

Shore, Heather, (**London's Criminal Underworlds, c. 1720 - c. 1930: A Social and Cultural History** [hc, Palgrave Macmillan, 2015] 978-0230304048 [pb, Palgrave Macmillan, 2015] 978-1349338450

Post-War U.K. Jewish Self-Defense

From the 43 Group to the 62 Group to the C.S.T.

*The transition from the **43 Group** to the **62 Group** marks a crucial evolution in British anti-fascist history, moving from a post-WWII movement led by Jewish combat veterans to a multi-generational, broader coalition tackling the neo-Nazism of the 1960s. While the groups shared a common mission and militant tactics, they were separated by a twelve-year gap and a changing demographic landscape.*

The 43 Group Era (1946–1950): Founded by 43 Jewish ex-servicemen returning from WWII, they used direct action, street fighting, and intelligence gathering to shut down a resurgence of Oswald Mosley's pre-war fascists. Believing the immediate fascist threat had passed, they voluntarily disbanded in 1950. **The Dormant Years (1950–1962):** Organized street-level anti-fascist resistance remained largely quiet throughout the 1950s. **The Catalyst for the 62 Group**

(1962): In July 1962, neo-Nazi Colin Jordan and his National Socialist Movement (NSM) held a massive rally in Trafalgar Square, unfurling a banner reading "Free Britain from Jewish Control". **The Transition:** Horrified by this blatant revival, former leaders of the 43 Group (such as Harry Bidney) reunited and recruited a new generation of younger activists. They formed the **62 Group** (initially the 62 Committee) in their predecessor's exact militant image.

Key Differences Between the Groups

Feature	The 43 Group (1946–1950)	The 62 Group (1962–1970s)
Primary Targets	Oswald Mosley and his Union Movement.	Colin Jordan's National Socialist Movement, the British National Party, and the National Front.
Demographics	Dominated by WWII military veterans who applied actual combat experience to street clashes.	A mix of older 43 Group veterans, younger British-born Jews, and local working-class professionals (cabbies, businessmen).
Scope of Advocacy	Strictly focused on protecting the UK Jewish community from antisemitism.	Expanded to defend new waves of Black, Irish, and West Indian Commonwealth immigrants who were also being targeted by 1960s fascists.
Alliances	Operates as a fiercely insular, highly guarded unit.	Formed broader coalitions with Black and minority ethnic activist organizations across London.
Institutional Legacy	Set the blueprint for modern, militant underground anti-fascism.	Founded the anti-fascist publication <i>Searchlight</i> and laid the groundwork for today's Community Security Trust (CST) .

What Remained the Same?

Despite the decade-long gap, the 62 Group carried forward the exact operational methodology of the 43 Group:

Physical Confrontation: Both groups rejected the peaceful, non-interventionist approach of mainstream British Jewish leadership (like the Board of Deputies), choosing instead to violently break up fascist platforms directly on the streets.

Infiltration & Espionage: Both utilized sophisticated networks of undercover "spies" to infiltrate far-right headquarters, steal membership lists, and disrupt planned attacks before they could happen.

Geography: London's East End—specifically **Ridley Road** in Dalston—remained the fierce physical epicenter of the battle for both groups.

Since the 1960s, the **62 Group** underwent a profound institutional evolution. As the street-level threat of overt neo-Nazism shifted in the 1970s, the group moved away from vigilante street fighting and decentralized into highly sophisticated investigative and security organizations.

The 62 Group's operations transformed the landscape of British anti-fascism and community defense through three distinct pillars.

1. The Pivot from Fists to Intelligence: *Searchlight* Magazine - By the late 1960s and early 1970s, the emergence of the National Front shifted the far-right strategy from rowdy street rallies to electoral politics and covert arson attacks. The 62 Group realized that physical brawling was no longer the most effective weapon. In 1965, 62 Group members—most notably **Gerry Gable**—leveraged the group's extensive underground networks to establish ***Searchlight***, an anti-fascist investigative magazine. The publication became the premier intelligence hub exposing British fascists. Its deep-cover infiltrations severely disrupted the National Front and the British National Party (BNP). The expansive physical 62 Group espionage files were eventually preserved as a historical resource, now housed in the Searchlight Archive at the University of Northampton.

2. Transition into the Anti-Nazi League & *Hope Not Hate*

By the late 1970s, the 62 Group began fading into the background as broader, mass-movement anti-fascist coalitions took over the physical defense of British streets. **The Anti-Nazi League (ANL)**: Founded in 1977, the ANL absorbed many street-level anti-fascist efforts, shifting the counter-movement into a massive cultural phenomenon (pioneering initiatives like *Rock Against Racism*). ***Hope Not Hate***: Decades later, the research and campaign traditions pioneered by the 62 Group and *Searchlight* evolved into *Hope Not Hate*, which remains the UK's largest modern third-party organ tracking and actively campaigning against far-right extremism.

3. Institutionalizing Security: The Community Security Trust (CST)

Perhaps the most lasting, mainstream legacy of the 62 Group is the professionalization of British Jewish community defense. Mainstream Anglo-Jewry initially condemned the 62 Group's violent tactics, but they eventually recognized that the state could not always provide adequate security for Jewish institutions. **The Successor Iterations**: Prominent young 62 Group members—including British businessman and philanthropist **Gerald Ronson**—realized the community needed a permanent, highly disciplined, and legal security apparatus.

The Creation of CST: Following several organizational iterations throughout the 1970s and 1980s, these efforts culminated in the official founding of the Community Security Trust (CST) in 1994. Today, the CST is a recognized charity that works closely with the UK Home Office and police, providing professional defense, surveillance, and security personnel for thousands of synagogues, Jewish schools, and community events across the UK.

Summary of the Current State - The 62 Group no longer exists as a street-fighting unit. However, its DNA directly shaped the modern UK establishment: its **espionage tactics** birthed modern investigative anti-fascism (*Hope Not Hate*), and its **street defense** evolved into the officially recognized, professionalized infrastructure that protects British minority communities today (CST) – Google/AI

Cohen, Joshua, “‘Somehow Getting Their Own Back on Hitler’: British Antifascism and the Holocaust, 1960–1967,” *Fascism: Journal of Comparative Fascist Studies* **9** (2020): 121–145. [The article concerns post-war, post-Holocaust Britain. Cohen examines the **62 Group**, the Board of Deputies, the Yellow Star Movement and other Jewish responses to renewed neo-Nazism in the 1960s. Particularly relevant is the contrast between the Board's language of communal “defence” and the 62 Group's militant anti-fascism. The 62 Group combined physical intervention with intelligence operations and infiltration of neo-Nazi organisations. This is one of the best scholarly articles for understanding the transition between the 43 Group era and later institutionalised Jewish security.]

Whine, Michael, “**The CST: A Vital Partnership**,” *Journal for the Study of Antisemitism* 3, no. 2 (2011): 695–709. [*Whine traces the institutional genealogy: 43 Group → 62 Committee/Group → AJEX and Board of Deputies defence work → Community Security Organisation (1986) → Community Security Trust (1994). More importantly, he explains CST as an unusual public-private crime-prevention partnership, which*

- *provides security advice and trains volunteers at Jewish institutions;*
- *conducts threat assessments;*
- *assists victims of antisemitic crime;*
- *gathers intelligence on threats;*
- *records antisemitic incidents;*
- *exchanges information with police;*
- *assists third-party reporting of crimes;*
- *participates in police and government advisory structures;*
- *provides training concerning hate crime and security.*

*Whine reports that Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir John Stevens described CST in 2005 as one of the world's outstanding examples of an effective **crime-prevention partnership**, while Assistant Commissioner David Veness said that if CST did not exist something like it would have to be created.]*

Whine, Michael, “**Best Practice in Combating Antisemitic Hate**,” *Journal of Hate Studies* 9, no. 1 (2011). [*Closely related to the preceding article and based partly on the same research. Whine explains how British Jewish communal security evolved from direct street defence into a much more sophisticated model combining crime reporting, intelligence, victim assistance, police cooperation, legislation and prevention. Especially valuable comparatively: Whine treats the British Jewish experience as a model that can be adapted by other minority communities facing hate crime.*]

Community Security Trust, (*Working with the Police to Protect the Jewish Community*. London: Community Security Trust, Spring 2005. Video and accompanying leaflet. [*This is cited by Whine as a CST publication and is important primary-source material. It documents the operational partnership between Jewish community security volunteers and British police. Although not a conventional scholarly publication, it is valuable evidence of the institutionalisation of Jewish communal crime prevention.* – Google/AI

Shomrim — Jewish neighbourhood patrols

Vice UK, “**On Patrol with North London's Crime-Fighting Orthodox Jews**,” *VICE*, June 3, 2014 [*A substantial journalistic profile of **Shomrim**, the Orthodox Jewish volunteer neighbourhood patrol operating in Stamford Hill, London. Shomrim volunteers are not police officers. They patrol streets, respond to calls from residents, assist victims, locate suspects or missing persons, preserve information useful to police and summon police where arrest or formal enforcement is necessary. They constitute a good example of a vital relationship between a culturally distinctive Jewish community and conventional policing. Shomrim serves partly as an intermediary between Haredi residents and the Metropolitan Police. Police have publicly acknowledged the organisation's assistance in arrests and community safety. This is*

probably the clearest British analogue to Jewish neighbourhood crime-prevention organisations in North America.]

Pesin, Daniel, “**On Patrol with the Shomrim, the Volunteers Fighting Antisemitism.**” *The Times* (London), May 19, 2024 [A useful recent profile of the Stamford Hill patrol. It describes approximately 38 volunteers handling everything from antisemitic hate crime to searches and general community assistance. One practical advantage is their ability to arrive very quickly because volunteers live locally. They assist victims, coordinate searches, deter crime and liaise with police. – Google/AI]

Stamford Hill Shomrim Update (August 2026): *According to internet updates, it continues to function as a highly active, professionalized neighborhood watch and first-responder group. In response to an unprecedented, sharp rise in antisemitic incidents, arson, and physical assaults targeting the strictly Orthodox Charedi community (euphemistically called “visible Jews”) since Oct. 7, 2023, the group has dramatically escalated its visible presence, technology use, and volunteer numbers.*

Following the initial post-Oct 7 explosion in 2023 (which saw a record 4,298 UK incidents), the threat level remained unprecedentedly elevated. The CST recorded 3,556 incidents in 2024 and 3,700 incidents in 2025

Doubled Base Rate: *In the first half of 2026, the CST logged 1,926 anti-Jewish hate incidents, a 20% increase from the same period prior. The monthly baseline of antisemitic hate crimes has officially doubled compared to pre-October 2023 averages. The UK's Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation categorized the severe volume of physical targeting against the Jewish community as “the biggest national security emergency” in nearly a decade.*

The organization operates a 24-hour emergency line and utilizes marked patrol cars to monitor the area, deter attackers, and track fleeing suspects. Shomrim maintains an extensive network of mobile and static CCTV cameras. They heavily leverage their social media presence (such as [Shomrim X/Twitter](#)) to release clear footage of suspects—such as vehicle details from drive-by egging attacks—to directly aid Metropolitan Police hate crime detectives in making arrests.

The unit consists today of roughly 40 to 50 active, unpaid male and female volunteer responders and operators drawn directly from the local community. While initially viewed with skepticism decades ago, Shomrim is fully integrated into the local security apparatus. Volunteers complete Metropolitan Police counter-terrorism training courses, undergo strict background checks, and sign official codes of conduct. The group maintains a close, collaborative relationship with the [Metropolitan Police Hackney Division](#).

The Funding Picture: *Historically, and predominantly today, the group relies almost entirely on community crowdfunding and private donations to fund its vehicles, radios, and operations. However, following a string of severe attacks across London, the Home Office confirmed that Shomrim groups would begin receiving a share of government funding via an expanded £25 million Jewish community security uplift. – Google/AI*

Turnbull, Malcolm J., (**Victims or Villains: Jewish Images in Classic English Detective Fiction** [hc, Popular Press, 1998]) 978-0879727833 [pb, Popular Press, 1998] 978-0879727840 [- a scholarly study of the portrayal of Jews in British detective fiction from the late nineteenth century through the post–World War II period. It examines how English crime writers reflected, reinforced, and occasionally challenged antisemitic assumptions circulating

in British society, especially during the “Golden Age” of detective fiction between the two world wars.

Turnbull’s central argument is that detective fiction—often dismissed as merely popular entertainment—serves as a revealing cultural document. Because crime fiction depended heavily on recognizable stereotypes and “types,” Jewish characters frequently appeared as shorthand symbols of alienness, greed, conspiracy, cosmopolitanism, or moral ambiguity. Turnbull contends that these portrayals were not accidental but deeply connected to broader British anxieties about immigration, finance capitalism, urbanization, Bolshevism, and national identity. He argues that detective fiction mirrored mainstream social prejudices while also helping normalize them for mass readerships.

The book begins with early detective fiction, especially the work of Arthur Conan Doyle and other late Victorian and Edwardian writers. Turnbull shows how Jewish figures were commonly depicted as pawnbrokers, financiers, fence operators, or mysterious foreign intermediaries. Such characters were often marked through exaggerated physical descriptions—hooked noses, dark eyes, oily manners—or through associations with secrecy and underground networks. Even when not overtly villainous, they were portrayed as fundamentally “other” within English society. These depictions reflected older European stereotypes inherited from nineteenth-century literature and political discourse.

Turnbull devotes much attention to the interwar period, when detective fiction became enormously popular in Britain. He argues that the rise of fascism, fears of communism, economic instability, and debates over Jewish refugees intensified antisemitic undertones in crime fiction. Writers frequently connected Jewishness with international conspiracies, financial manipulation, profiteering, or revolutionary politics. In thrillers and spy fiction, Jews sometimes appeared as shadowy cosmopolitan figures undermining British stability from behind the scenes. Turnbull analyzes authors such as Sydney Horler, R. Austin Freeman, and Baroness Orczy, demonstrating how their work drew on fears of racial degeneration and foreign infiltration.

A substantial section examines canonical Golden Age writers including **Agatha Christie, Dorothy L. Sayers, and Anthony Berkeley Cox**. Turnbull’s treatment is nuanced rather than accusatory. He argues that even sophisticated and liberal-minded authors often relied unconsciously on cultural stereotypes about Jews. Christie’s novels, for example, occasionally invoke Jewishness as a marker of vulgarity, foreignness, or suspect commercial behavior. Sayers presents somewhat more sympathetic Jewish characters, yet still reproduces assumptions about Jewish distinctiveness and social separateness. Turnbull emphasizes that these writers reflected widespread attitudes rather than uniquely extremist views.

The title “Victims or Villains” captures the book’s major thematic tension. Jewish characters in detective fiction were frequently represented in two contradictory ways: either as sinister manipulators threatening English society, or as weak, persecuted outsiders vulnerable to violence and prejudice. Turnbull argues that the coexistence of these images reflected British ambivalence toward Jews in the twentieth century. Jews could be imagined simultaneously as powerful and powerless, dangerously influential yet socially excluded. Detective fiction dramatized these contradictions by placing Jewish characters at the center of plots involving blackmail, espionage, finance, or social scandal.

The study also traces gradual shifts after 1945. Following the Holocaust, openly antisemitic caricatures became less socially acceptable, and British crime fiction increasingly abandoned crude racial stereotypes. Jewish characters began to appear more individualized and sympathetic, though older assumptions did not disappear entirely. Turnbull notes lingering

stereotypes in postwar detective fiction, but he argues that the moral shock of Nazi genocide transformed the cultural framework within which Jewishness could be represented.

Methodologically, Turnbull combines literary criticism with cultural history. He situates detective fiction within broader discussions of British antisemitism, drawing connections to immigration debates, fascist movements, and public discourse during the interwar years. The book argues that popular fiction should be studied seriously because it reveals everyday assumptions and prejudices more clearly than elite literary texts often do. Crime fiction's reliance on instantly recognizable character types made it particularly susceptible to racial coding and ethnic stereotyping.

Overall, Turnbull concludes that classic English detective fiction offers a valuable lens through which to examine British attitudes toward Jews across the twentieth century. The genre simultaneously reflected social fears and shaped readers' perceptions, embedding antisemitic images within entertaining narratives of mystery and detection. Yet the book also highlights moments of sympathy, complexity, and change, showing that representations of Jews in detective fiction evolved alongside wider transformations in British political and cultural life. – ChatGPT]

Fox, Margalit, (Conan Doyle for the Defense: The True Story of a Sensational British Murder, a Quest for Justice, and the World's Most Famous Detective Writer) [hc, Random House, 2018] 978-0399589454 [pb, Random House, 2019] 978-0399589478 [- a nonfiction book detailing the real-life investigation by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle to overturn the wrongful murder conviction of **Oscar Slater, a German Jewish immigrant**. Dubbed the **"Scottish Dreyfus affair,"** the book serves as a historical examination of systemic xenophobia and the dangerous "racialization" of crime. In 1908, Marion Gilchrist, a wealthy 82-year-old spinster, is brutally bludgeoned to death in her Glasgow home, and a diamond crescent brooch is stolen. Glasgow police completely overlook evidence pointing to a potential culprit within Gilchrist's own family. Instead, they fixate on Oscar Slater, a local German Jewish gambler, because he pawned a brooch and departed for New York shortly after the murder. Even after proving Slater's pawned brooch belonged to someone else and his travel was planned weeks prior, authorities proceed with a highly prejudiced trial. Relying on coerced eyewitness testimony, Slater is convicted and sentenced to death, which is narrowly commuted to life at hard labor in Peterhead Prison. Eighteen years into Slater's sentence, a smuggled message reaches Arthur Conan Doyle. Outraged by the clear miscarriage of justice, the creator of Sherlock Holmes applies his own methods of logical deduction—scouring trial transcripts and exposing fabricated evidence—to spearhead a massive public crusade. Conan Doyle successfully secures Slater's release and an official exoneration. However, the book ends on a bittersweet, complicated note: the high-principled British author and the cynical immigrant publicly clash over legal expenses and compensation money, fracturing their alliance.

Fox utilizes the Slater case to illustrate how early Edwardian law enforcement weaponized the "racialization of crime" against marginalized groups, specifically targeting Eastern and Central European Jewish immigrants. Fox highlights that early 20th-century criminology was in a primitive, transitional phase. Instead of focusing on forensic science (like fingerprints), police relied heavily on profiling. Driven by the theories of criminologists like Cesare Lombroso, authorities believed criminal traits could be read directly off a person's lifestyle, ethnicity, and physical characteristics. Slater's identity as a foreign Jewish man who lived

with a prostitute and frequented gambling dens made him a “textbook degenerate” in the eyes of the uptight, puritanical Scottish justice system.

Anti-Semitic tropes deeply infected the prosecution’s narrative. Fox explains how the ancient stereotype of the “rootless, wandering Jew” was used to justify a transatlantic manhunt. Because Slater changed names and traveled to New York, the police painted him as “slippery” and evasive, choosing to interpret standard immigrant mobility as an admission of criminal guilt.

*The book places the trial against the backdrop of the **Aliens Act of 1905**, Britain’s first modern immigration control law. Fox shows how British nativists systematically stoked fears by spreading rumors that Jewish immigrants were bringing a wave of vice and crime into the country. Slater became the perfect, highly convenient scapegoat to validate the public’s anti-immigrant hysteria.*

The theme of Jews and crime reaches a chilling conclusion in the book’s epilogue. While Slater survived his 18 years in “Scotland’s gulag,” his elderly sisters back in Germany did not. Decades after Slater’s release, his loyal sisters were swept into the ultimate manifestation of the “Jews as subhumans/criminals” ideology, being rounded up by the Nazi regime and murdered in the Treblinka and Terezín concentration camps. - Google/AI]

Prominent U.K. Jewish Barristers, Solicitors and Judges: [ChatGPT]

Cooper, John, **Pride Versus Prejudice: Jewish Doctors and Lawyers in England, 1890–1990**. [hc, The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization in association with Liverpool University Press, 2003] 978-1874774877 [pb, Littman Library, 2013] 978-1906764425 [This pioneering study is a treasure trove of new information, illustrating the lives and professional experiences of the people involved in such a way as to demonstrate clearly both the obstacles they faced and the status they achieved. Its wealth of detail, in many cases fleshing out the careers of leading Jewish professional figures for the first time, makes engaging reading. All the legal personalities mentioned below are reviewed in the Cooper volume. See especially chapters 12, “**Jewish Solicitors, 1945–1990**,” 14, “**Jewish Barristers, 1945–1990**,” and 15, “**Jews in the Judiciary, 1945–1990**,” pp. 369–396.

The narrative proceeds chronologically with careful attention to social context, starting with the Victorian and Edwardian eras. For the medical profession, the account of subsequent changes begins with the influx of Jews into medical schools after 1914. John Cooper goes on to describe the problems these Jewish medical students, most of them from immigrant families, encountered. Finding employment even as general practitioners was problematic, and almost insurmountable barriers confronted aspirants to consultant status. Afraid of antisemitic claims that Jews were flooding the market, the leaders of Anglo-Jewry even tried in the 1930s to dissuade young Jews from becoming doctors and lawyers. In this context, Cooper also considers the position of refugee doctors before and during the Second World War. The establishment of the National Health Service in 1948 resulted in fundamental changes, particularly in the way in which consultants were selected, and Cooper shows how this permitted Jewish doctors to enter specialties from which they had previously been

excluded and to climb to the highest rungs within the medical hierarchy. He summarizes the careers of many prominent Jewish doctors.

*The experience of **Jews in the legal profession**, both as solicitors and barristers, is examined in similar detail. Cooper sets the context with a discussion of the treatment of Jewish litigants in the early years of the twentieth century in the Whitechapel County Court and the criminal courts. He shows how the persistence of an anti-Jewish bias in the inter-war period limited opportunities for Jews and dissuaded them from entering the law; he also considers the position of Jewish refugee lawyers who came to England during the 1930s and 1940s. After the war, major changes in the economy and legal system allowed Jewish law firms to expand rapidly, challenging the dominance of the City law firms in the commercial world. Many of these firms consequently began to admit Jewish partners for the first time, and Jewish barristers, hitherto confined to the less remunerative areas of civil and criminal law, were likewise able to enter the more lucrative pastures of company and tax law. From the late 1960s, Jews were also promoted in increasing numbers to position on the High Court Bench. As well as giving a detailed picture of these mainstream developments the book also looks at the careers of Jewish communist, socialist, and maverick lawyers.*

The story John Cooper tells will appeal not only to readers with a general interest in the subject but also to social historians. It is based on a wide range of sources, including newspapers and professional journals, archival material, law reports, and interviews conducted by the author, and there are detailed indexes of names and subjects. As well as providing an illuminating account of recent Jewish social history, the book makes a valuable contribution to the history of the medical and legal professions and to the scholarly debate as to whether or not antisemitism was of peripheral or central importance in Anglo-Jewish history. – Amazon]

Dame Rose Heilbron (1914–2005)

Heilbron, Hilary, (**Rose Heilbron: The Story of England's First Woman Queen's Counsel and Judge** [hc, Hart Publishing, 2012] 978-1849464017 [pb, Hart Publishing, 2019] 978-1509933631 [- by Heilbron's daughter, herself a QC/KC. Probably the single most important Jewish criminal advocate of the early postwar period. Liverpool-born daughter of a Jewish hotelier, she became one of Britain's first two female KCs (1949), the **first woman to lead the defence in a murder trial**, and one of the leading criminal defenders on the Northern Circuit. She later became the first woman judge to sit at the Old Bailey and, in 1974, the second woman appointed to the High Court. A large part concerns Rose Heilbron's career as a criminal defence advocate, including the Cameo murder trials and other celebrated murder cases, before turning to her judicial career.]

Morton, James, "**Dame Rose Heilbron**," The Guardian, December 13, 2005 [Obituary emphasizing her pioneering career and major cases.]

"**Dame Rose Heilbron: The First Woman to Sit as a Judge at the Old Bailey.**" The Times (London), December 13, 2005. Obituary.

Sir Ivan Lawrence (b. 1936)

Lawrence, Ivan, (**My Life of Crime: Cases and Causes** [hc, Book Guild Publishing, 2010] 978-1846244674 [pb, Book Guild Publishing, 2012] 978-1846247781 [*Lawrence recounts decades as a leading criminal defence barrister—the Kray twins, serial killer Dennis Nilsen and other London underworld figures, murder trials, legal aid, judges, advocacy and miscarriages of justice—as well as his parliamentary career as Conservative MP for Burton (1974–97).. Of particular Jewish interest, he describes encountering professional antisemitism: according to James Morton's discussion of the memoir, Lawrence was refused a tenancy in chambers because it already had a Jewish member.*]

Morton, James, "**Life of Crime,**" Law Society Gazette, September 30, 2010. [Review/profile accompanying publication of Lawrence's autobiography.]

Sir Geoffrey Bindman (1933–2025)

Bindman, Geoffrey, "**Aid Memoirs,**" New Law Journal, no. 7294, October 25, 2007. [*It recounts his involvement with legal aid and access to justice from the beginning of his career.*]

Bindman, Geoffrey, "**Days of Yore Revisited,**" New Law Journal, no. 7982, June 10, 2022. [*An autobiographical reflection on entering the profession in the 1950s, articles, solicitors' practice and the changing legal profession.*]

*Solicitor rather than barrister and enormously important to postwar British civil-liberties law. He qualified in 1959 after encountering explicit anti-Jewish discrimination when seeking articles, founded **Bindman & Partners** in 1974, and became one of Britain's leading human-rights and civil-liberties solicitors. His cases involved race discrimination, press freedom, government secrecy and human rights, and he represented Amnesty International in proceedings connected with Augusto Pinochet. He is most significant for civil liberties, human rights, legal aid and challenges to governmental authority, rather than ordinary criminal defence. – ChatGPT*

Anthony Julius (b. 1956) — Solicitor-advocate at Mishcon de Reya. Best known publicly as **Diana, Princess of Wales's divorce lawyer**, but much more relevant to a Jewish-law bibliography for representing **Deborah Lipstadt in David Irving's libel action**, one of Britain's landmark cases concerning Holocaust denial. Julius is also a scholar of antisemitism and Jewish culture. His principal books are not autobiographical, but several are important in terms of their Jewish content:

Julius, Anthony, **T. S. Eliot, Anti-Semitism, and Literary Form** [hc, Cambridge UP, 1995] 978-0521470636 [pb, Cambridge UP, 1996] 978-0521586733

Julius, Anthony, (**Transgressions: The Offences of Art** [U. of Chicago Press, 2003]) 978-0226415369

Julius, Anthony, (**Trials of the Diaspora: A History of Anti-Semitism in England** [hc, Oxford UP, 2010] 978-0199297054

For Julius as a practising lawyer, however, the indispensable book is by his client:

Lipstadt, Deborah E., (**History on Trial: My Day in Court with a Holocaust Denier** [hc, Ecco, 2010] 0060593768 [pb, Ecco, 2006] 978-0060593773 [- gives a detailed inside account of

Irving v. Penguin Books and Deborah Lipstadt, including Julius's role in devising the defence strategy.]

Henry Milner

Milner, Henry, (**No Lawyers in Heaven: A Life Defending Serious Crime** [hc, Biteback Publishing, 2020] 978-1785906442 [*Milner spent more than forty years as a criminal defence solicitor and represented Kenneth Noye, figures involved in the Brink's-Mat robbery, Freddie Foreman, John "Goldfinger" Palmer and participants in the Millennium Dome robbery. It is a rare modern memoir specifically from the perspective of a British criminal solicitor, rather than a barrister.*]

Nigel Lithman KC

Lithman, Nigel, (**Nothing Like the Truth: The Trials and Tribulations of a Criminal Judge** [pb, Whitefox Publishing, 2021]) 978-1913532727 [*Lithman had spent decades as a criminal barrister before becoming a Circuit Judge, so the book provides perspectives from both Bar and bench. It is anecdotal rather than scholarly but directly relevant to criminal justice.*]

Sir Richard Henriques (b. 1943)

Henriques, Richard, **From Crime to Crime: From Doctor Shipman to Operation Midland—17 Cases That Shocked the World** [hc, Hodder & Stoughton, 2020 978-1529333480 [pb, Hodder Paperbacks, 2021] 978-1529333497 [*Henriques recounts his involvement in major British criminal cases as prosecutor and judge: the James Bulger murder, Harold Shipman, the Morecambe Bay cockle-picker deaths, the transatlantic aircraft bomb plot, Jean Charles de Menezes, and his later investigation of Operation Midland. He appeared in 106 murder trials. Henriques's career bridges prosecution, judiciary, police investigation and criminal-justice review.*]

Lord Harry Woolf (b. 1933)

Woolf, Harry, (**An Uncommon Lawyer: Autobiography of the Rt Hon Lord Woolf, CH.** Oxford: Hart Publishing, 2022. xii + 178 pp. ISBN 978-1509958429. [*Woolf begins with his grandparents' arrival in England as Jewish immigrants and discusses his Jewish background and faith, as well as his career as barrister, Treasury Devil, judge, Law Lord, Master of the Rolls and Lord Chief Justice. It covers Strangeways, prison reform, sentencing, the Bulger killers, civil-justice reform and his later interfaith work through the Woolf Institute.*]

Woolf, Harry, Lord Woolf. (**The Pursuit of Justice.** Edited by Christopher Campbell-Holt. [hc, Oxford UP, 2008] 978-0199217090 [*A collection of 26 major lectures and papers. Part III addresses crime and penal reform, including the Strangeways Prison Report, penal policy and sentencing.*]

Sir Stephen Sedley (b. 1939)

Sedley, Stephen, **Freedom, Law and Justice** [pb, Sweet & Maxwell, 1999] 978-0421680906

Sedley, Stephen, (**Ashes and Sparks: Essays on Law and Justice** [hc, Cambridge UP, 2011] 978-1107000957 [pb, Cambridge UP, 2011] 978-0521170901 [*As a practicing barrister, the Rt. Hon. Lord Justice Sedley wrote widely on legal and non-legal matters, and continued to do so after becoming a judge in 1992. This anthology contains classic articles, previously unpublished essays and lecture transcripts. To each, he has added reflections on what has transpired since or an explanation of the British legal and political context that originally prompted it. Covering the history, engineering and architecture of the justice system, their common theme relates to the author's experiences as a barrister and judge, most notably in relation to the constitutional changes which have emerged in the last twenty years in the United Kingdom.* – Amazon])

Sedley, Stephen, **Lions Under the Throne: Essays on the History of English Public Law**. [hc, Cambridge UP, 2015] 978-1107122284 [pb, Cambridge UP, 2015] 978-1107559769 [*Francis Bacon wrote in 1625 that judges must be lions, but lions under the throne. From that day to this, the tension within the state between parliamentary, judicial and executive power has remained unresolved. Lions under the Throne is the first systematic account of the origins and development of the great body of public law by which the state, both institutionally and in relation to the individual, is governed.* – Amazon]

Sedley, Stephen, (**Law and the Whirligig of Time** [hc, Hart Publishing, 2018] 978-1509917099 [pb, Hart Publishing, 2023] 978-1509974221 [*Another collection of essays on law, judging, politics, history and culture. The scholarly literature treats these books as important expressions of Sedley's conception of public law and the judicial role.*])

Lord Cyril Salmon (1903–1991)

Evans, Sir Anthony, “**Salmon, Cyril Barnet, Baron Salmon (1903–1991),**” Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. Oxford UP, 2004; online ed., updated 2016. DOI: 10.1093/ref:odnb/49957. [This is probably the best single biographical source on Salmon: bringing in the prosperous Salmon/Gluckstein Jewish family, Cambridge and the Bar, wartime service as a judge advocate, judicial career, personality, jurisprudence, and elevation to the Lords.]

Cooper, John, **Pride vs. Prejudice**, op. cit., article on Lord Salmon [*Salmon is treated not simply as an individual judge but as part of the social history of Jews entering the upper reaches of the English legal profession. Cooper emphasizes the contrast between Salmon's established Anglo-Jewish background and the later generation represented by Shaw. Cooper notes that Salmon became a High Court judge in 1957 and Lord Justice in 1964, whereas the real social broadening of Jewish judicial appointments came later.*]

Finestein, Israel, “**Salmon, Cyril Barnet, Baron,**” **Encyclopaedia Judaica**, 2nd ed., vol. 17. Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA/Thomson Gale, 2007, p. 692 [*Short but useful specifically because it places Salmon explicitly in Anglo-Jewish history. It mentions his Hebrew University lecture, his chairmanship of major royal commissions and his reputation for liberal values.*]

Salmon, Cyril, **Tribunals of Inquiry**, Jerusalem: Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1967[*- a work by Salmon himself. It arose from lectures he delivered at the Hebrew University and concerns the difficult relationship between public inquiries, procedural fairness and individual rights. His expertise was especially important because he chaired the Royal Commission on Tribunals of Inquiry.*]

“Lord Salmon (obituary)” *The Times*, 9 November 1991, p. 16.

Judge Myrella Cohen QC (1927–2002) - Unlike some Jewish judges whose Jewish identity was largely incidental to their professional careers, **Cohen's Jewish identity was conspicuous and consequential**: she was Orthodox/observant, active in Jewish organizations, chaired the British branch of the International Association of Jewish Lawyers and Jurists, and devoted considerable effort to changing the interaction between English divorce law and the Jewish get. At the same time, she had a substantial **criminal-law-enforcement dimension**, having spent many years as a Crown Court judge with a notably tough reputation and sitting at the Old Bailey. - ChatGPT

Freedman, Dawn, “Her Honour Myrella Cohen QC.” *First 100 Years* (Women in Law), 2019 [*Biographical memoir of Cohen by her friend and fellow judge.*]

“Her Honour Judge Myrella Cohen.” *The Times*, November 6, 2002. [*A substantial obituary and an important contemporary source.*]

Wright, Rosalind, “The Jewish Women Who Were Among the First to Seize the Opportunity to Be Lawyers.” *The Jewish Chronicle*, January 3, 2020. [*A very useful retrospective placing Cohen alongside other pioneering British Jewish women lawyers. Wright notes that Cohen was the second Jewish woman to take silk, after Rose Heilbron, became a circuit judge in 1972, sat at the Old Bailey, and developed a formidable reputation in criminal cases. It also discusses her Orthodox observance and agunah activism.*]

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Brief mentions from a long list of potential outstanding U.K. Jewish legal personalities:

Lord Lionel Cohen (1888–1973) —became the **first Jewish Lord of Appeal in Ordinary (Law Lord) in 1951**, after having been the first Jewish High Court judge and first Jewish Lord Justice of Appeal. An eminent authority on company law.

Lord Peter Goldsmith (b. 1950) — Liverpool-born and of Jewish background; one of Britain's leading commercial advocates before becoming **Attorney General for England and Wales and Northern Ireland, 2001–07**. As Attorney General he was the government's senior law officer and superintended the prosecution authorities, although he was not a career prosecutor. His tenure became especially famous—and controversial—because of his advice on the legality of the Iraq War.

Sir Sebag Shaw (1906–1982) —Appointed to the High Court in 1968 and Court of Appeal in 1975, he came from an East End Jewish background rather than the older Anglo-Jewish elite and became particularly associated with difficult **criminal cases**. Cooper regards his appointment as symbolic of the breaking-down of earlier class barriers.

Sir Philip Wien (1913–1981) — High Court judge from 1970, another important member of the first substantial postwar generation of Jewish judges.

Lord Leonard Hoffmann (b. 1934) — South African-born British Jewish jurist and one of the most intellectually influential Law Lords of his generation. Particularly important in commercial, intellectual-property, public and human-rights law.

Lord John Dyson (b. 1943) — Of East European Jewish ancestry; High Court judge, Lord Justice of Appeal, UK Supreme Court Justice (2010–12) and Master of the Rolls (2012–16).

Lord Lawrence Collins of Mapesbury (b. 1941) — Especially interesting because he began as a **solicitor**, becoming one of the first practising solicitors appointed QC, before being appointed to the High Court and eventually becoming a **Justice of the UK Supreme Court**. An important specialist in international law and conflict of laws.

Lord David Neuberger (b. 1948) — One of the outstanding British judges of the twenty-first century: High Court, Court of Appeal, Law Lord, Master of the Rolls and finally **President of the UK Supreme Court, 2012–17**. He has spoken publicly about the Jewish history of the British judiciary and has chaired the Advisory Committee on Holocaust-era art spoliation.

Lord Terence Etherton (1951–2025) — High Court judge, Lord Justice of Appeal, Chancellor of the High Court and **Master of the Rolls, 2016–20**. His Jewish identity was unusually visible: grandson of immigrants from the Russian Pale, Hebrew speaker, warden of West London Synagogue and married there in a Jewish ceremony. He was also Britain's first openly gay senior judge.

Lady Hazel Cosgrove (b. 1946) is worth adding so that the list is genuinely British rather than simply English. A Scottish Jewish lawyer, she became the **first woman appointed permanently to Scotland's Court of Session** in 1996, after serving as sheriff and temporary judge.

There are numerous other Jewish senior judges who merit inclusion in a fuller list—among them **Sir John Balcombe, Sir Bernard Rix, Sir Robert Jacob, Sir Gavin Lightman, Sir Hugh Laddie, Sir Michael Burton, Sir Stephen Silber, Sir Bernard Eder** and others—but they are somewhat less central to a crime/law-enforcement bibliography because much of their distinction lies in commercial, chancery or specialist civil law.

The striking historical pattern is that **Jewish prominence is much stronger in criminal defence and especially the senior judiciary than in the professional prosecution service**. There was also a dramatic generational change: Cooper shows that before the late 1960s Jewish High Court appointments were largely confined to the highly assimilated Anglo-Jewish elite; from 1968 onward judges of East European immigrant and middle-class Jewish backgrounds increasingly reached the senior bench. – ChatGPT

International - Jewish Detectives, Spies, Criminals, et al - Fiction and Non-Fiction — pertaining to works available in English translation, and primarily set outside North America, Israel or the UK. The main settings of the author's books are indicated in the squared brackets.]

Fiction Authors

1. Sholem Aleichem (pseudonym of Solomon Naumovich Rabinovich) [Yiddish]
2. Sholem Asch [Yiddish]
3. Isaac Babel [Russian]
4. Armando Bezés [Ladino]
5. Cara Black [Paris]
6. Jonathan Bockian [17th-cent. Venice Ghetto]
7. Kenneth Bonert [South Africa]
8. John Brady [Ireland]
9. Héctor Camargo [Argentina]
10. Edgardo Cozarinsky [Argentina]
11. Wessel Ebersohn [South Africa]
12. Umberto Eco [Paris-Turin]
13. Lion Feuchtwanger [Germany]
14. Alan Furst [Europe-Balkans]
15. Romain Gary [France]
16. G.K. George (pseudonym of Alfred J. Rieber) [Russia]
17. Harald Gilbers [Germany]
18. Kerry Greenwood [Australia]
19. Paul Grossman [Germany]
20. Robert Harris [France]
21. Douglas Jackson [Poland]
22. Franz Kafka
23. Joseph Kanon [post-WW2 Europe]
24. A.J. Kazinski (pseudonym of Anders Rønnow Klarlund and Jacob Weinreich) [Copenhagen-Venice]
25. Philip Kerr [Weimar Germany]
26. Imre Kertész [Hungary-S. America]
27. Danilo Kiš [Yugoslavia/Serbia]
28. Arthur Koestler [Hung.-Germ.-UK]
29. Jonas Kreppel [Yiddish]
30. Stieg Larsson [Sweden]
31. Adam LeBor [Budapest]
32. Juliana Maio [Cairo]
33. Ernesto Mallo [Argentina]
34. Sasha Margolis [Russia, 1871]
35. William Mesusan [10th-cent. Spain]
36. Zygmunt Miłoszewski [Poland]
37. Karim Miské [France]
38. Patrick Modiano [France]
39. Harri Nykänen [Finland]
40. Sergio Olguin [Argentina]
41. Joseph Opatoshu [Yiddish]
42. Leonardo Padura [Cuba]
43. Sara Poole [pseudonym of Maura Seger] [Renaissance Rome]
44. Jonathan Rabb [Weimar Germany]
45. Israel Rabon [Yiddish]
46. Caroline Medora Sale Roe [14th - cent. Spain]
47. Dina Rubina [Russian-Israeli]
48. Nokhum-Meyer Shaykevitch [Yiddish]
49. Javier Sinay [Argentina]
50. Isaac Bashevis Singer [Yiddish]
51. Israel Joshua Singer [Yiddish]
52. Benjamin Stein [Germany]
53. Frank Tallis [Vienna]
54. June Trop [legal name: June Trop Zuckerman] [1st-cent. Alexandria]
55. Oyzer Warshawsky [Yiddish]
56. Lewis M. Weinstein [Spain, Germany, Israel]
57. Elie Wiesel [universal]
58. Richard Zimler [Sefardi cycle]

Sholem Aleichem (Solomon Naumovich Rabinovich, 1859–1916) -*Sholem Aleichem*, the giant of Yiddish literature, typically wrote about pious or struggling “ordinary folk,” but he

occasionally explored the darker side of Jewish life through the following works: *Moshkeleh the Thief* (Moshkele Ganev): This 1903 novella is his most direct exploration of the Jewish underworld. It features a horse thief as its hero and was the first Yiddish work to use authentic “thieves’ argot” (slang). It was notably excluded from his 28-volume collected works for decades, possibly due to its “unrefined” subject matter.

The Bloody Hoax (*Der Blutiker Shpas*): A novel based on the real-life 1911 Beiliss blood libel case. It deals with legal injustice and false accusations of murder against Jews in the Russian Empire.

The Knife (*Dos Messer*): A short story that delves into the psychological guilt and fear of a young boy who steals a knife.

Yaknez: An unpublished satire that portrays a world of fraudulent brokers and financial scams in the big city of Yehupetz.

Eternal Life (*Oylem Haba*): This story touches on petty corruption and the “amoral” behavior of a shtetl when a naive young scholar encounters the Russian police. [Google/AI]

His portrayal of these “marginal” characters paved the way for later Yiddish writers like Sholem Asch and Isaac Bashevis Singer to write more explicitly about Jewish crime. [Google/AI]

Aleichem, Sholem, (**The Bloody Hoax** [hc, transl. by Aliza Shevrin, Indiana UP, 1991]) 978-0253304018

Aleichem, Sholem, (**Moshkeleh the Thief: A Rediscovered Novel** [pb, translated by Curt Leviant, 1903, Jewish Publication Society, 2021] 978-0827615151

Aleichem, Sholem, “**The Knife: A Story**”, trans. by Eliezer Greenberg and Isaac Rosenfeld, *Commentary Magazine*, February 1950.

Aleichem, Sholem, “**Yaknez**”, tr. by Curt Leviant, in Sholom Aleichem, *Stories and Satires*, [hc, Thomas Yoseloff, 1967], B000E2ZBWG

Aleichem, Sholom, “**Eternal Life**”, in Howe, Irving & Eliezer Greenberg. (A Treasury of Yiddish Stories) [hc, Viking Adult, revised ed., 1989] 978-067083 0374 [pb, Penguin, 1990] 978-0140144192

Sholem Asch (1880–1957) - was a pioneer in Yiddish literature for his unflinching portrayal of the Jewish “underworld,” often focusing on characters like thieves and brothel owners who existed on the margins of traditional society. His most significant works dealing with Jews and crime include:

God of Vengeance (*Got fun nekome*, 1907): Perhaps his most famous and controversial play, it centers on **Yankl Chapchovich**, a Jewish brothel owner. Yankl attempts to buy respectability and protect his daughter’s “purity” by commissioning a holy Torah scroll, but his plans are upended when his daughter enters a lesbian relationship with one of the prostitutes. The 1923 Broadway production resulted in the cast being arrested and convicted of obscenity.

Motke the Thief (*Motke Ganev*, 1916): This novel (later adapted into a play) follows the life of a Jewish vagabond and criminal. It depicts Motke’s journey from a childhood of poverty in a Polish shtetl to a life of crime in the Warsaw underworld. The work was praised for its gritty realism and its challenge to “degenerate” stereotypes.

The Dead Man (*Der Toyter Mensch*, 1922): Part of what is now called his “**Underworld Trilogy**,” this drama continues his exploration of characters living on the moral and social margins of society.

Uncle Moses (Onkl Mozes, 1918): *While primarily a social novel about immigrant life in New York, it features a ruthless Jewish sweatshop owner who uses exploitative and quasi-criminal tactics to maintain power over his workers, reflecting the “crimes” of industrial exploitation.* [Google/AI]

Asch Sholem, (**The God of Vengeance: A Drama in Three Acts**) [hc, transl. by Isaac Goldberg, Legare Street Press, 2023] 978-1019372487 [pb, Lulu.com, 2019] 978-0359746767

Asch, Sholem, (**Mottke the Thief** [hc, translated from the Yiddish by Willa and Edwin Muir, G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1935]) [reprinted hc, Praeger, 1970] 978-0837129532

Asch, Sholem, “**The Dead Man**” [a play], in **Underworld Trilogy** [spiral-bound, White Goat Press, 2023]) 979-8987160992

Asch, Sholem, (**Uncle Moses**) [hc, transl. by Isaac Goldberg, Palala Press, 2016] 978-1358883774 [pb, Legare Street Pres, 2023] 978-1021174444

Isaac Babel (1894–1940) - *In 1920, he served as a war correspondent with the **Red Cavalry** during the Russo-Polish War, an experience that provided the raw material for his most famous collection. **Major Works: Red Cavalry (1926):** A collection of stories detailing the brutal reality of war; and **Odessa Stories (1931):** Vivid tales featuring the legendary Jewish gangster Benya Krik. As Stalin’s purges intensified, Babel was arrested by the NKVD in May 1939 on fabricated charges of espionage and terrorism. He was executed by firing squad in 1940. See also Rachel Rubin’s comments on Babel in her **Jewish Gangsters of Modern Literature** (Jewish Crime Non-Fiction bibliography, p.222).*

Babel, Isaac, (**Benya Krik, the Gangster** [hc, Schocken, 1948, B0007DKUY6, transl. from the Russian by Avrahm Yarmolinsky])

Babel, Isaac, (**Odessa Stories** [pb, Pushkin Press, 2019, trans. from the Russian by Boris Dralyuk]) 978-1782274735 [\[See related film\]](#)

Armando Bezés (1915- ?) –*There is a story to tell here, courtesy of “Claude”, of a search for detective or crime fiction in **Ladino**. Around the turn of the 20th century, as the crime/detective genre swept Europe and the US (Sherlock Holmes being the most famous export), Sephardic Jewish readers in the Ottoman Empire were avid consumers of it too. As with much of Ladino print culture at the time, these were mostly translations or adaptations from other languages rather than original Ladino compositions. They were published as aljamiado texts — Ladino written in Hebrew script — mostly out of **Salonica** (today’s Thessaloniki, Greece), then one of the great hubs of Ottoman Sephardic publishing. Typically each novel ran about forty pages and was issued as a standalone booklet, though some appeared in installments in the Ladino press of the day.*

*The most-studied case is a Ladino series built around a recurring detective character named **Nat Pinkerton** — the same dime-novel-style American detective character popular across European pulp translations at the time (not Allan Pinkerton, but a fictional pulp hero loosely riffing on his name/fame). Ten of these Ladino Nat Pinkerton novels were studied and translated into modern Spanish by scholar **Julie Scolnik** in her 2014 book **Nat Pinkerton: Diez Novelas Policiacas en Lengua Sefardí**, which also includes a glossary of the Ladino vocabulary used in them.*

*This all traces to the **Haskalah** (the Jewish Enlightenment movement), which by the second half of the 19th century had reached Sephardic communities in the Ottoman Empire and spurred a wave of secular Sephardic literature — narrative fiction, theater, and press — much of it built on*

translations/adaptations of Western classics (Ladino versions of Robinson Crusoe, Gulliver's Travels, even Romeo and Juliet circulated). Detective fiction rode in on that same wave. This flourishing was short-lived: the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the rise of new nation-states after World War I led to a broader decline of Ladino print culture generally, and detective fiction went down with it.

There is no individual author listed on these Ladino Nat Pinkerton booklets. The "Nat Pinkerton" byline is essentially a house pseudonym/brand, not a real person — same model as a lot of pulp-fiction dime-novel series of that era. However, Most of the Ladino Nat Pinkerton novels — over twenty of them — were published in Salonica by Biblioteka Betsalel and edited by publisher Besalel Sa'adi Halevi, son of the well-known publisher and journalist Sa'adi Besalel Halevi (1819–1903). The father, incidentally, is a notable figure in his own right in Ladino literary history — his own memoir was translated into English by scholars Aron Rodrigue, Sarah Abrevaya Stein, and Isaac Jerusalmi. So, we keep searching (or letting Claude do it).

One of the search results points to a separate scholarly paper titled "Bezes desconocido y su obra: El detektive kriminal (Salónica, 1935)" — about an author named **Bezes**, described as "unknown," and his work **El detektive kriminal (Salonica, 1935)**. This looks like a case of a detective novel actually written (not just translated) in Ladino, by an identifiable — if now obscure — named author, rather than an adaptation of the German Pinkerton franchise. That in turn leads eventually to a Ladino print industry family: the Salonika printer and translator **Baruj David Bezés**, who published religious books, popular novels, and the satirical newspaper *El Bourlon*, and his two sons, **Benedeto and Armando**. It turns out that **El detektive kriminal** is not a standalone book — it's one of four stories collected inside a 1935 volume called **El Buketo de Pesah** ("The Passover Bouquet"), published by the Bezes press in Salonica. The title itself mixes Ladino with the borrowed international word "detektive" — typical of how the genre's vocabulary got absorbed into Judeo-Spanish. There was a question of which of the two brothers was the likeliest author, and the conclusion points to the younger one, Armando. The significance of this case is that this was not an adaptation of a foreign detective novel, but an original composition in Ladino.

An exhibition at the Jewish Museum of Greece on wartime resistance adds further information about Armando. It is necessary to access the exhibition catalogue - *Synagonistis: Greek Jews in the National Resistance* (Jewish Museum of Greece, 2013–2014) – to dig deeper. There is also **Sefardiweb** — a Spanish research database of Sephardic biographical entries (proyectos.cchs.csic.es/sefardiweb).

The wartime story unfolds. During the German occupation, Armando took to the mountains to join the partisans, carrying a manual printing press at great personal risk. Under the pseudonym "Antonis Bezezis," he became a printer for **EAM** (the National Liberation Front) in Thessaly. His bulletins and newspapers informed and inspired the villagers, who would anxiously wait for "Antonis" to deliver news. He personally hauled the printing equipment across a vast stretch of territory — from the Agrafa mountains to Mount Olympus — distributing publications and *Rizospastis* (the Communist Party's newspaper). In his own words, recalled in a short memoir: "Once we made two whole dug-outs on Mt Olympos. We were alerted that a sweep operation was underway and we had to hide the printing machine on the mountain or underground." He also worked in the printing press of the PEEA (the "government of the mountain" — EAM's provisional wartime administration).

After the liberation, he settled in Athens and continued working as a printer. Greek Jewry had been almost completely liquidated: around 96% of Salonica's Jews, some 50,000+ people, were murdered in the Holocaust. Armando lost his entire family in the camps — with the exception of one sister.

***A remarkable postscript:** In 1948, he printed a book by Thessaloniki doctor Zak Matarasso, **Ki omos olio tous den pethanan** (“Yet, Not Everyone Died”) — described as the first account of the Holocaust published in the Greek language. So the son of a Salonica Ladino printer, who himself may have written a Ladino detective story, ended up printing the very first Greek-language Holocaust testimony. The circle from *El detektive kriminal* to that book is a striking one.*

*Personal life confirmed by photo captions on the same page: there’s a 1945 photograph of “Armando Bezes with his wife Maria Vagena,” and a document from November 1944 — a travel permit from the PEEA printing offices made out to “Armando Bezes, alias Antonis Bezezis” — both preserved in the personal collection of **Eleni Bezes**, presumably his daughter or another descendant, which is how the museum obtained these documents and photos.*

So: he survived the war, lost his whole immediate family except one sister, married, continued as a printer in Athens, and left a personal archive that’s now with a descendant named Eleni Bezes — meaning there’s a family line to trace further if you ever wanted to. – Claude]

*Synopsis of **El detektive kriminal**, the only known original Ladino-language detective story with an identifiable (if barely-known) author: It’s a short story (about 8 pages), subtitled by the scholars “a tragedy of jealousy,” and the plot is a tight little irony piece:*

The murder: Sam Benardizo returns from a long trip and gets a telegram from his beloved, Titnit Benevaske, telling him she never wants to see him again. Devastated, he rushes to her house — and finds her stabbed to death in her bed, discovered along with her maid, Palomba.

The investigation: Four detectives arrive, including the story’s star, the celebrated Hamed Sas — a name the scholars argue is a sly nod to hardboiled American author Dashiell Hammett (Hamed Sas ≈ “Hammett” + “Sam”). Sas finds the murder weapon — an antique knife engraved with the initials “S.B.” — and it’s Sam’s own knife. Sam is arrested and brought before the judge, Mr. Ledanyer.

The false confession and suicide: Facing accusation and seeing no way to prove his innocence, Sam hangs himself in his cell with his belt, leaving a note swearing his innocence but accepting he can’t fight the charge.

The twist: After both are buried, Ledanyer receives a letter — from Hamed Sas himself. It turns out Sas was secretly in love with Titnit. Consumed by jealousy that she loved Sam instead, he murdered her, stole Sam’s knife from his house to frame him, sent the fake breakup telegram in Titnit’s name, and then accused Sam himself. Racked by guilt, Sas shoots himself at the funeral procession, and his confession letter reveals the whole scheme. – Claude]

Cara Black (born 1951 in Chicago) - an American crime and mystery writer best known for her long-running **Aimée Leduc** detective series set in successive neighbourhoods of Paris (21 volumes so far). She studied at San Francisco State University and has lived for many years in San Francisco.

Black, Cara, (**Murder in the Marais** [pb, Soho Crime, 1999] 978-7777470014 [Black set the first volume of her series in the traditional Jewish neighbourhood of Paris (le Marais). Aimée is a stylish young Parisian private investigator and computer-security expert. She is hired by an elderly Jewish man who claims to possess information connected to events during the Nazi Occupation of France. Shortly afterward, he is murdered before he can explain what he knows. Aimée is drawn into an investigation involving hidden wartime records, collaborators from the Vichy era, deportations of Jews during the Holocaust, stolen identities, and long-suppressed secrets in Paris’s historic Marais district. As Aimée traces clues through cafés, synagogues, archives, and old family networks, she uncovers links between contemporary murders and crimes

committed during World War II. The novel combines noir detective fiction with historical memory, focusing on how unresolved wartime collaboration and guilt still shape modern France. The investigation gradually reveals how people benefited from Jewish dispossession during the Occupation and then concealed their actions after the war. The novel addresses both historical and contemporary antisemitism, specifically Vichy-era complicity, postwar denial, and lingering far-right sympathies among some characters. Rather than presenting antisemitism as confined to the Nazi period, the novel suggests continuities into contemporary French society.] [ChatGPT]

Jewish themes, characters, Holocaust memory, Vichy collaboration, antisemitism, and Jewish Paris continue to appear intermittently throughout the later Aimée Leduc books as part of Cara Black's broader interest in the hidden histories of Paris. For example:

Black, Cara, (**Murder in the Sentier** [hc, Soho Crime, 2002]) 978-1569472781 [pb, Soho Crime, 2003] 978-1569473313 [*Probably the strongest Jewish-related entry after Murder in the Marais. The Sentier district historically had a major Jewish garment-industry population, especially North African and Ashkenazi Jewish textile families. The novel involves the rag trade, hidden wartime histories, and tensions connected to immigration and old Parisian Jewish networks. It also touches indirectly on Vichy-era betrayals and deportations.*

What is distinctive is that Black generally does not write "Jewish detective fiction" in the American sense (where the detective is Jewish or Jewish identity is central to the protagonist). Aimée herself is not portrayed as Jewish. Rather, the series uses Parisian noir to explore the moral afterlife of Occupation-era France, in which Jewish history is one recurring and important strand. [ChatGPT]

Jonathan Bockian (born 1949 in Brooklyn, NY) - After retiring from law in 2019, Bockian transitioned to writing. He published his debut novel, **What Was Forbidden: a Venice Ghetto mystery**, in late 2025. The book is a historical mystery set in the 17th-century Venice Ghetto, inspired by a real memorial he discovered at the Scola Canton synagogue. Mordechai Baldosa, the murder victim, a disaffected Jewish merchant and outspoken skeptic, was involved in a forbidden love affair with a gentile (Christian) high-society courtesan. This illicit interfaith relationship is one of the central, dangerous secrets driving the murder mystery. [Google/AI]

Bockian, Jonathan, (**What Was Forbidden** [pb, Kunraht Press, 2025]) 979-8218667931

Kenneth Bonert (born 1972, Johannesburg). Residing in Toronto since age of 17) - a South African-Canadian novelist and former journalist best known for his historical fiction exploring Jewish experiences in South Africa. [Google/AI]

Bonert, Kenneth, (**The Lion Seeker** [hc, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2013]) 978-0547898049 [pb, Harper Perennial, 2014] 978-0544334519 [*Follows Isaac Helger, the son of Lithuanian Jewish immigrants, as he struggles to escape the slums. Driven by his mother's fierce demand that he be "clever" rather than "stupid," Isaac becomes a street-tough striver, eventually clawing his way into the car repair business and the diamond trade. The story is a gritty exploration of his moral descent, as his obsession with wealth and family survival forces him to make ruthless choices while the Holocaust looms over his relatives back in Europe.* -Google/AI]

Bonert, Kenneth, (**The Mandela Plot** [hc, Mariner 2018] 978-1328886187 [pb, Harper Perennial, 2019] 978-1328585073 [- a literary thriller set in late-1980s South Africa during the final, violent years of Apartheid. The story follows **Martin Helger**, a socially awkward teenager at a private school in Johannesburg, whose life changes when a mysterious and beautiful American cousin, **Annie**, comes to stay with his family. As Martin falls for her, he is pulled into her world of

dangerous anti-Apartheid activism. He soon discovers that his father—a wealthy scrap-metal dealer—is hiding dark secrets about the family’s involvement in the regime’s brutality. - Google/AI]

John Brady (born 1955, Dublin, Ireland) - Irish-Canadian novelist best known for his *Inspector Matt Minogue* mystery series set in Dublin. Jewish content is central to the plot of his 1991 novel **Kaddish in Dublin** and serves as a lens to explore the social and political landscape of Ireland. While Brady himself is of Irish-Catholic background, his work is noted for its sensitive portrayal of Dublin’s small Jewish community. [Google/AI]

Brady, John, (**Kaddish in Dublin**) [hc, Constable, 1990] 978-0002235860 [pb, HarperCollins, 1991] 978-0006471417

Héctor Camargo is an indie fiction author. Because he publishes independently via Amazon, verified public records detailing his specific city and year of birth are not available.

The Jewish Girl from Buenos Aires: Short Stories [hc, independently published, LARGE PRINT, 2023] 979-8871488461 [pb, independently published, LARGE PRINT, 2023] 979-8867488673 [*A 290-page collection of fictional prose stories set in Buenos Aires, Argentina, characterized by a strong detective novel tone. It is available in both English and Spanish editions (La Chica Judía de Buenos Aires). It explores the urban Jewish community, focusing on themes of memory, crime, and cultural vibrancy in Argentina. The stories are written with a suspenseful, noir-inspired, or “detective” aesthetic, often exploring the shadowy aspects of city life. - Amazon]*

Edgardo Cozarinsky (1939–2024, born Buenos Aires, Argentina) - was a prolific Argentine filmmaker, who lived for nearly 30 years in Paris. In **The Moldavian Pimp**, set in the 1920s, he investigates the infamous “white slave trade” in Buenos Aires run by the **Zwi Migdal**, a criminal organization of Jewish pimps who trafficked Jewish women from Europe. In **The Bride from Odessa** (2001), he traces the Jewish diaspora from the Old World to Argentina. The title story follows a young woman leaving Ukraine for South America, touching on the “Jewish gaucho” agricultural colonies. [Google/AI]

Cozarinsky, Edgardo, (**The Moldavian Pimp** [hc, Random House UK, 2006]) 978-1843432340 [pb, Vintage Books, 2007] 978-1843432340

Cozarinsky, Edgardo, (**The Bride from Odessa: Stories**) [hc, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2004] 978-0374116736 [pb, Harvill Press, 2004] 978-1843430513

Wessel Ebersohn (born 1940, Cape Town, S. Africa) - a prominent South African novelist and magazine editor known for his gritty crime thrillers and anti-apartheid themes. **Yudel Gordon**, an unconventional Jewish prison psychologist, appears in many of his books. [Google, AI]

Ebersohn, Wessel [*Yudel Gordon*, #1], (**A Lonely Place To Die** [hc, Pantheon Books, 1981]) 978-0394520766 [pb, Littlehampton Book Services, 1983] 978-0600207191 [*Published in 1979, the novel is set in apartheid-era South Africa and uses a crime plot to expose the racial and class tensions of the period. The son of a politician dies after eating poisoned mushrooms on a farm. Muskiet Lesoro, a Black farmworker, is accused of poisoning him, and the authorities treat it as an open-and-shut case — the “obviously mad” suspect is convicted with little further inquiry.*

Yudel Gordon is a Jewish psychologist employed by the Department of Prisons in Pretoria, brought in not as a detective but in his official capacity—to assess whether the accused is mentally fit to stand trial. Yudel finds the farmhand “obviously mad”, but that’s where his job should end. Instead, because he’s fascinated by “the intricacies of the criminal mind,” he goes beyond the boundaries of his job and starts investigating the crime itself—he’s convinced a poisoning requires a level of planning and control the accused man simply doesn’t have, meaning the real killer is still free.

Yudel travels to the small country town where the crime took place—a closed, fearful community where the truth is being carefully guarded. As he questions the friends and family of both victim and accused, he runs into hostility on all sides and eventually becomes a target himself, with his life at risk as he keeps asking questions no one else dared to ask. Things come to a head when he’s savagely beaten and has to survive a harrowing night pursued through the veld before uncovering the truth. The ending isn’t a tidy one—Yudel eventually exposes a disturbing tangle of guilt, rape, and incest behind the killing, and the solution is one he wouldn’t have chosen, if he’d had a choice

This book introduces Yudel as a more introspective, psychology-driven detective figure than his South African crime-fiction contemporaries—an outsider (a Jewish civil servant working inside the apartheid prison system) whose sympathy for the powerless and stubborn curiosity about the human mind repeatedly pull him into moral territory well beyond his actual job description. It set the template for six further Yudel Gordon novels across the decades that followed, tracking South Africa’s political changes right up through the post-apartheid era. - Kirkus Reviews]

Ebersohn, Wessel [*Yudel Gordon*, #2], (**Divide The Night** [hc, Pantheon Books, 1981]) 978-0394520766 [pb, Littlehampton Book Services, 1983] 978-0600207191

Ebersohn, Wessel [*Yudel Gordon*, #3], (**Closed Circle** [hc, Victor Gollancz, 1992]) 978-0575048485

Ebersohn, Wessel [*Yudel Gordon*, #4], (**The October Killings** [hc, Minotaur Books, 2011]) 978-0312655952 [pb, Minotaur Books, 2011] 978-0312552732

Ebersohn, Wessel [*Yudel Gordon*, #5], (**Those Who Love Night** [hc, Minotaur Books, 2012]) 978-0312655969 [pb, Minotaur Books, 2012] 978-1250013385

Ebersohn, Wessel [*Yudel Gordon*, #6], (**The Top Prisoner of C-Max** [pb, Umuzi, 2012]) 978-1415201794

Ebersohn, Wessel [*Yudel Gordon*, #7], (**Deluge** (2022) [self-published ebook]) 9780639715001

Forthcoming Yudel Gordon thrillers (from Wessel Ebersohn web-site):

The Robben Island List #8 African Aftermath #9

Umberto Eco (1932–2016) was an Italian novelist, medieval historian, philosopher, semiotician, literary critic, and public intellectual. Internationally renowned for combining scholarship with popular fiction, he was one of the most influential European writers of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Studied medieval philosophy and literature at the University of Turin, receiving a doctorate in 1954 with a dissertation on the medieval philosopher and theologian Thomas Aquinas. Although raised Roman Catholic, his academic study of medieval theology contributed to his eventual departure from the Church, and he later described himself as a secular intellectual. After graduation, Eco worked as a cultural editor for the Italian broadcasting service **RAI**, while publishing pioneering studies in aesthetics, communication, and semiotics. During the 1960s and 1970s he emerged as one of Europe’s leading theorists of signs, language, and interpretation. Among his most influential scholarly works are *Opera aperta* (The

Open Work, 1962), *A Theory of Semiotics* (1975), and *Semiotics and the Philosophy of Language* (1984).

He joined the University of Bologna in 1975 as Professor of Semiotics, a position he held until his retirement. He became internationally respected as both a scholar and lecturer, serving as a visiting professor at universities including Columbia, Yale, Harvard, and Cambridge. His literary reputation rests chiefly on a series of intellectually ambitious novels that combine historical research with mystery, philosophy, religion, and political history including *The Name of the Rose* (1980), *Foucault's Pendulum* (1988), *Baudolino* (2000), and *The Prague Cemetery* (2010) among others. His fiction is distinguished by its dense historical detail, erudition, intertextuality, and fascination with libraries, manuscripts, codes, conspiracies, and the nature of truth. His novels often blend detective fiction, historical fiction, philosophical inquiry, and political satire.

In relation to Jewish themes, Eco was deeply interested in the history of antisemitism, biblical interpretation, medieval Judaism, and the origins of modern conspiracy theories. His most significant contribution in this area is *The Prague Cemetery*, which examines the fabrication of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion and the political uses of antisemitic myths. Although Jewish characters appear in several of his novels, Judaism itself is generally treated as a historical and intellectual subject rather than a religious one. – ChatGPT]

Eco, Umberto, (**The Prague Cemetery** [translated from the Italian by Richard Dixon, hc, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2011] 978-0547577531 [pb, Vintage, 2012] 978-0099555988 [Eco's most overtly political novel and his principal exploration of antisemitism, espionage, forgery, and conspiracy. The novel is narrated by **Captain Simone Simonini**, a cynical, amoral Piedmontese notary, master forger, spy, and professional provocateur. Simonini is the only major fictional character in a cast otherwise composed largely of real historical figures.

The story opens in Paris in 1897, where Simonini recounts a career spanning the turbulent political landscape of nineteenth-century Europe. Raised by a fiercely antisemitic grandfather, Simonini learns from childhood to despise Jews, Freemasons, Jesuits, and virtually every other group. Possessing exceptional skill as a calligrapher and document expert, he becomes a professional forger, manufacturing wills, letters, diplomatic correspondence, and political documents for anyone willing to pay. His talents attract the attention of successive intelligence organizations. Over several decades he works, formally or informally, for various police, intelligence and conspiratorial organizations. His work consists of espionage, infiltration, blackmail, fabrication of evidence, and political manipulation.

The novel's central plot concerns the gradual creation of the **Protocols of the Elders of Zion**. Simonini assembles this forgery by plagiarizing and combining numerous earlier texts, including political satires, anti-Masonic tracts, and sensational conspiracy literature. What begins as a profitable fabrication ultimately becomes one of history's most destructive propaganda documents, falsely portraying Jewish leaders as plotting world domination. Eco painstakingly demonstrates that the Protocols were not the product of a genuine secret meeting but a patchwork of stolen passages, invented dialogue, and deliberate falsification created to satisfy political demand for a scapegoat.

As Simonini's career progresses, his greed, paranoia, and moral emptiness deepen. Having spent his life inventing conspiracies, he eventually becomes trapped within his own web of deception, unable to distinguish fabrication from reality.

Although Jews occupy the thematic center of the novel, there are remarkably few important Jewish characters. Instead, Jews function primarily as the objects of fabricated accusations. Eco's purpose is not to depict Jewish life but to expose the historical roots of modern antisemitism; the manufacture of political myths; how forged documents can acquire the status of historical

“truth”; and the relationship between secret services, propaganda, and conspiracy theories. The novel also explores nineteenth-century European attitudes toward Jews, Freemasons, Jesuits, revolutionaries, and other minorities, showing how prejudice could be manipulated for political ends.

Unlike conventional historical thrillers, *The Prague Cemetery* is less a detective story than a **history of political forgery**. Eco argues that some of the most consequential “crimes” in modern history were not robberies or murders but **the deliberate manufacture of false documents and conspiracy narratives**. By tracing the fictional career of Simone Simonini alongside real historical events, he offers a powerful meditation on the origins of modern antisemitic propaganda and the enduring dangers of disinformation. – ChatGPT]

Lion Feuchtwanger (1884–1958) [*a Bavarian-Jewish novelist and playwright, one of the best-selling German authors of the Weimar era. Born and raised in an observant Jewish and patriotic German household in Munich, he studied German history, and began writing plays and stories at age 19. He trained as a theatre critic before turning to historical fiction. His outspoken anti-Nazi views and Jewish background made him an early target of the regime — his works were burned in the May 1933 book burnings and the Nazis declared him “enemy of the state.” He fled to southern France in 1933, was interned by Vichy France in 1940, escaped disguised as a woman, and eventually settled in Los Angeles, where he remained part of the émigré circle that included Bertolt Brecht and Thomas Mann until his death in 1958. His works included Jewish historical novels about Josephus Flavius and Jews in medieval Spain, but the two most relevant to this survey were:*

Feuchtwanger, Lion, (**Jew Süß** [hc, Viking Press, 1926, transl. by Willa and Edwin Muir under the title, “**Power**”, hc, Tradd Street Press, 2026] 978-1025919225 [pb, Tradd Street Press, 2026] 978-1025921167 [*Set in 18th-century Württemberg, it follows Joseph Süß Oppenheimer, a Jewish financial advisor who rises to power at the court of Duke Karl Alexander. Süß becomes the Duke’s indispensable court financier and, in effect, chief tax-farmer — a role that draws the resentment of the Christian nobility and populace. After the Duke’s sudden death, Süß is arrested and tried, with the charges against him (financial malfeasance, illicit relations with a Christian woman, etc.) functioning in the novel as a pretext for what is really a purge driven by antisemitic scapegoating. So the “crime” plot is really about the manufacture of Jewish criminality by a threatened establishment — this is the book’s real subject, and it’s why the Nazis (grotesquely) later adapted the same historical material into the 1940 propaganda film *Jud Süß*, inverting Feuchtwanger’s sympathetic treatment into an antisemitic caricature.* - Project Gutenberg]

Feuchtwanger, Lion, (**The Oppermanns - Die Geschwister Oppermann**) [English translation: by James Cleugh, published in 1933 – pb, McNally Editions, 2022] 978-1946022332 [*This is the second novel in Feuchtwanger’s Wartesaal (“The Waiting Room”) trilogy about the rise of Nazism, following *Success* (1930) and preceding *Exil* (1940). It follows a Jewish family in Berlin who own a furniture business, and traces their dispossession as the Nazis come to power in 1932–33 — the family patriarch Martin is forced to merge the business with an “Aryan” partner under escalating pressure. This is less “crime/espionage” in plot terms and more a study of legalized dispossession and the criminalization of Jewish economic life by the state — relevant as a companion piece to *Jud Süß*’s theme (false or coerced “criminality” imposed on Jews), rather than as a crime or spy novel proper.* -Wikipedia]

Alan Furst (born 1941, New York City) - a renowned American author celebrated as a master of the historical spy novel, focusing on the period 1933–1945. While regarded primarily as

a historical spy novelist, his work is steeped in noir mystery motifs and the structural tropes of hard-boiled detective fiction. Rather than solving a single crime, his characters often navigate a “mystery of survival” within the moral fog of pre-WWII Europe. His novels are set overwhelmingly at different sensitive European locations, especially Paris, the Balkans, Turkey and Eastern Europe.

Key Mystery & Noir Motifs: *His protagonists—often film producers, journalists, or aristocrats—are not professional spies but ordinary men “deputized” by circumstance to uncover secrets or navigate dangerous conspiracies. His plots frequently revolve around a mysterious object—such as military blueprints or an encrypted document—that drives the action, much like a classic detective’s “missing piece”. He often includes a femme fatale-adjacent trope where a love affair is inextricably linked to danger or betrayal. His world is populated by “half-devils and half-angels,” where the mystery lies in determining who can be trusted and where shifting alliances mirror the complexity of a hard-boiled murder mystery. Unlike the stereotypical hard-boiled detective, Furst’s heroes are often using their intellect rather than their fists to solve problems. While he uses noir motifs, Furst often maintains a clearer sense of moral responsibility than authors like John le Carré, framing the struggle as a definitive battle of good vs. evil.*

Jewish Elements: *Furst frequently includes Jewish content in his historical spy novels, ranging from central protagonists to background themes of escape and resistance. In **Dark Star** (which Furst explicitly called his “Jewish novel”, the protagonist, **André Szara**, is a Polish Jew and Soviet journalist who becomes entangled in espionage, eventually passing secrets to help Jews escape to Palestine. In **Spies of the Balkans**, the plot follows a Greek police official in Salonika who helps organize an “underground railway” for German Jews fleeing the Nazis through Greece to Turkey. **Blood of Victory** features a character modeled after the real-life Jewish-Russian writer **Isaac Babel**, exploring themes of mixed identity and heritage. **A Hero of France** includes a Jewish character who, after losing his teaching job and family business due to anti-Jewish laws, joins the resistance specifically seeking revenge.*

Furst’s work often depicts Jews as “tough Jews” to counteract historical stereotypes. He explores the impossible choices individuals faced during the rise of Fascism, such as the dilemma of whether to resist, collaborate, or flee. While he does not write “Holocaust novels” in the traditional sense, he integrates the persecution of Jews into his broader narratives of 1930s-40s Europe to ensure their experience is acknowledged as part of history. [Google/AI]

Furst, Alan, (**Dark Star** [hc, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1991] 978-0395510643 [pb, Random House, 2002] 978-0375759994

Furst, Alan, (**Blood of Victory** [hc, Random House, 2002] 978-0375505744 [pb, Random House, 2003] 978-0812968729

Furst, Alan, (**Spies of the Balkans** [hc, Random House, 2010] 978-1400066032 [pb, Random House, 2011] 978-0812977387

Furst, Alan, (**A Hero of France** [hc, Random House, 2016] 978-0812996494 [pb, Random House, 2017] 978-0812986464

Romain Gary (born **Roman Leibovich Kacew**, 1914, Vilnius, Russian Empire [now Lithuania], to a Lithuanian Jewish family, and died 1980, Paris, France) [novelist, war hero, diplomat, film director, and the only writer ever to win France’s Prix Goncourt twice—first under his own name (1956, **The Roots of Heaven**), and again in 1975 under the pseudonym Émile Ajar,

whose true identity he concealed until after his death, for **La Vie Devant Soi**, translated as **Madame Rosa**.

*The upheavals of World War I forced Gary and his mother into central Russia before they returned to Vilnius and later Warsaw. In 1928 they emigrated to Nice, France, where Gary was educated, studied law in Aix-en-Provence and Paris, and became a naturalized French citizen in 1935. During World War II he served as a pilot with the Free French Air Force under Charles de Gaulle, earning some of France's highest military decorations. After the war he entered the French diplomatic service, serving in Bulgaria, Switzerland, the United Nations, and as French Consul General in Los Angeles, 1956-60. While serving in Los Angeles he became closely connected with Hollywood, married the American actress Jean Seberg in 1962 (his second marriage), directed two feature films, and increasingly devoted himself to writing after leaving the diplomatic service in the early 1960s. He claimed that he adopted the pseudonym of Emile Ajar in his later years in order to prove that books were judged more on biases concerning their authors than on their merits. The huge success of *La Vie Devant Soi* (*Madame Rosa*) tended to vindicate him.*

Gary, Romain, (**The Dance of Genghis Cohn** [hc, World Publishing Co., 1968, transl. by the author with Camilla Sykes] B0006BVZ5C [pb, Signet Book, 1969] B000H4I1RS [mass mkt pb, Signet, 1969] 978-0451039293 [*Set in postwar West Germany, The Dance of Genghis Cohn is a darkly comic, surreal novel that blends detective fiction, fantasy, satire, and Holocaust remembrance. Its central figure is Moishe "Genghis" Cohn, a Jewish cabaret comedian who was executed by the SS during the Holocaust. Refusing to disappear after death, Cohn returns as a dybbuk—a spirit from Jewish folklore—and takes possession of the man who killed him, former SS officer Otto Schatz.*

Years after the war, Schatz has become a respected West German police commissioner investigating a baffling murder case. As he attempts to solve the crime, he is constantly tormented by Cohn's irrepressible presence. The ghost mocks him, comments sarcastically on his every action, forces him to relive his wartime crimes, and even compels him to perform absurd routines from Cohn's former life as a comedian. The resulting struggle is by turns hilarious, grotesque, and deeply unsettling.

Although structured around a police investigation, the novel's true mystery concerns guilt, memory, justice, and the moral aftermath of the Holocaust. Gary uses the detective-story framework to ask whether ordinary legal institutions can ever adequately confront crimes of genocide, and whether perpetrators can ever escape the voices of their victims. The dybbuk becomes the embodiment of historical memory, ensuring that the murdered Jew cannot simply be forgotten as postwar Germany seeks to return to normality.

Rich in Jewish humor, folklore, and philosophical reflection, The Dance of Genghis Cohn is widely regarded as one of Gary's greatest novels and one of the most original literary treatments of the Holocaust. While not a conventional crime novel, it makes effective use of police-procedural elements to explore the enduring consequences of Nazi crimes and the impossibility of separating justice from memory. – ChatGPT]

Ajar, Emile/Romain Gary, (**The Life Before Us/Madame Rosa** [pb, New Directions, 1986, transl. from the French by Ralph Manheim] B00DIL1O30 [[See related film](#)] [*a poignant, often humorous novel narrated by Momo (Mohammed), an orphaned Arab boy growing up in the impoverished Belleville district of Paris. Momo is raised by Madame Rosa, an elderly, retired Jewish prostitute and Holocaust survivor who makes a meager living caring for the children of other prostitutes. Although she is physically frail, emotionally scarred by Auschwitz, and*

increasingly ill, she forms a deep, unconventional bond with Momo. Their relationship transcends differences of age, religion, and ethnicity, becoming the emotional center of the novel.

As Madame Rosa's health and memory deteriorate, Momo gradually assumes responsibility for caring for her. The novel explores themes of love, abandonment, aging, dignity, identity, racism, immigration, and the lingering trauma of the Holocaust. Madame Rosa's Jewish identity is central to her character: she lives with the psychological scars of Nazi persecution and fears being taken to a hospital, which she associates with deportation.

The story culminates in Momo's determination to honor Madame Rosa's wishes to die in the hidden basement room where she feels safe, rather than in an institution. The ending is deeply moving, emphasizing compassion and loyalty among society's marginalized people.

Madame Rosa has lived on society's margins. Her prostitution is neither sensationalized nor treated as a moral failing. Instead, it reflects the limited options available to a poor immigrant Jewish woman after surviving catastrophe. Her profession never defines her character; what defines her is her extraordinary capacity for compassion and sacrifice. Thus the novel explores Jewishness in proximity to criminalized or stigmatized social worlds, rather than Jewish criminality itself. Gary deliberately juxtaposes social marginality with moral greatness. He rejects simplistic notions of virtue and respectability.

In conclusion, Gary is **not** a crime or espionage writer in the conventional sense. His most relevant work lies in *The Dance of Genghis Cohn*, where the investigation of crime becomes a vehicle for confronting the Holocaust. *The Life Before Us* is relevant because it places a profoundly Jewish character within a marginalized social milieu that includes prostitution and petty crime, but it is fundamentally a literary novel about human dignity rather than about crime. Romain Gary died in Paris in 1980 from a self-inflicted gunshot wound. In a note left behind, he emphasized that his death was unrelated to the recent suicide of Jean Seberg. - ChatGPT] See also the entry on the film adaptation of *Madame Rosa* in the companion *Filmography*.

G.K. George (1931–2025) – born in Mt. Vernon, NY, pseudonym of the distinguished, U. of Penn. scholar of Russian and Soviet history, **Alfred J. Rieber**. His books frequently center on the **Pogrom Era**, exploring the intersection of state-sanctioned violence, revolutionary fervor, and the lived experience of Jewish communities under the Tsars. He used the pseudonym to distinguish his academic writings from his historical fiction. The author is noted for portraying Jewish characters with historical depth and nuance.

George, G.K., (**To Kill a Tsar**) [pb, [pb, Nap/Scarith, 2010] 978-0984406272 [Set in 1880–1881, this novel follows the eccentric and fiercely independent **Inspector Vasiliev** of the Moscow Police.

The Plot: A tragic explosion destroys the coach of the reformist Count Ushakov, killing his wife. While the secret police (Third Section) are quick to blame typical terrorists, reformers in the government suspect a deeper conspiracy or a cover-up. Vasiliev uncovers a plot involving high-ranking noblemen and top officials within the secret police who intend to assassinate **Tsar Alexander II**. [Google/AI] **Jewish Subtext:** The book highlights the presence of Jewish radicals like **Gesia Gelfman** in the *Narodnaya Volya* (People's Will) movement and examines how their involvement was used to fuel state-sponsored anti-Semitism.

George, G.K., (**The Kiev Killings** [pb, Nap/Scarith, 2011] 978-0983245193 [“In *The Kiev Killings*, Alfred Rieber intermingles multiple subcultures, from ex-convicts embittered by Siberian exile to Jewish radicals avenging pogrom victims to officials eager only for gain and glory. The city of Kiev in 1881, populated by these types and many more, comes alive in this book with remarkable detail and density. Rieber's skillful plotting keeps us in suspense as we follow

Inspector Vasiliev following leads that take him to unexpected corners of a cultural crossroads tense with upheaval.” -Carol Avins, Associate Professor, Department of Germanic, Russian and East European Languages and Literatures, Rutgers University. - Amazon]

George, G.K., (**Siberian Secrets** [pb, Nap/Scarith, 2014] 978-0990693901 [*This is the final volume of the trilogy, centering on the brutal Siberian exile system of the late 19th century.*

The Mission: *Inspector Vasiliev and his faithful partner, Sergeant Serov, embark on a dangerous rescue mission to the depths of Siberia.*

Themes of Injustice: *The story focuses on the “deep-lying injustice” of the tsarist penal system, where political dissidents, including many Jewish revolutionaries and intellectuals, were sent to suffer in isolation.*

Jewish Experience: *The novel explores themes previously rare in English-language fiction, such as the plight of Jewish political exiles and the complex social structures within the Siberian prison camps.*

Resolution: *The narrative serves as a “rich resolution” to the overarching themes of the trilogy—authenticity, affection, and steadfastness in the face of an oppressive imperial regime. [Amazon]*

Harald Gilbers (born 1969 in Moers, Germany) – worked as television director and freelance theater director before turning to writing thrillers. He is best-known for his 9-volume (so far) series featuring **Richard Oppenheimer**, a Jewish detective on the Berlin police force, who keeps solving murders throughout the Nazi era and into the 1950s. His Jewish identity is primarily secular rather than religious. Ultimately, his identification is defined by his persistence—maintaining his humanity and professional integrity in a world that has officially classified him as “sub-human.” How is it possible for him to continue working? Through a precarious, coerced arrangement with the SS. His “protection” and ability to investigate are based on these key plot points:

Expertise Over Ideology: *Before the Nuremberg Laws, Oppenheimer was a star detective in the Berlin police (Kripo). When a serial killer begins targeting high-ranking Nazis or posing a PR threat to the Party, the SS realizes their “Aryan” detectives lack the specific skills to solve the case.*

The “Honorary” Protection: *He is pulled from a “Judenhaus” (a crowded house for Jews) by SS Hauptsturmführer Vogler. Vogler acts as his handler, providing him with a temporary reprieve from deportation as long as he is useful.*

A “Ghost” Investigator: *Oppenheimer has to work in the shadows. He cannot officially arrest anyone or carry a weapon. He investigates the clues, and the SS takes the credit for his findings.*

The Mixed-Marriage Shield: *His survival is also tethered to his “privileged” status because his wife, Lisa, is an Aryan. While this didn’t stop the Nazis from stripping his rights, it provided a thin layer of bureaucratic protection that the SS exploited to keep him in Berlin.*

*Essentially, his life is the **bargaining chip**. If he fails to solve a case, he and his wife face immediate deportation to a concentration camp. After the War, he continues working in Cold War Berlin based on his acknowledged professional excellence.*

*As of 2026, only the first volume in the series, **Germania**, has been translated into English, though others have been translated into French and Italian. [Google/AI]*

Gilbers, Harald, (**Germania: A Novel of Nazi Berlin** [hc, Thomas Dunne Books, 2020] 978-1250246936

Kerry Greenwood (1954–2025, Melbourne, Australia) – was a prolific Australian author and lawyer best known for creating the stylish 1920s Melbourne detective, **Phryne Fisher**. Her writing is celebrated for its meticulous historical research, feminist undertones, and vibrant depictions of Melbourne society. There are 23 volumes in the Fisher series, and the ninth (**Raisins and Almonds**) is set in the local Jewish community. A young devout student is found dead from strychnine poisoning in a bookshop. After the bookshop owner, Miss Sylvia Lee, is wrongfully arrested, Phryne is hired by her landlord, Mr. Abrahams, to find the real killer. The mystery immerses Phryne in a world of Yiddish culture, Zionism, alchemy, and the study of the Kabbalah. The novel explores anti-Semitism in 1920s Australia, the lives of Jewish refugees, and ancient chemical formulas. [Google/AI]

Greenwood, Kerry, (**Raisins and Almonds** [hc, Poisoned Pen Press, 2007] 978-1590581681 [pb, Poisoned Pen Press, 2017] 978-1464207686

Paul Grossman (est. birth 1955, New York City) – in his 3-volume Willi Kraus series, the Jewish content is central to both the protagonist's identity and the historical tension of the narrative. The series explores the precarious position of a high-achieving Jewish professional in a society rapidly descending into antisemitism – **Weimar Germany**. [N.B. See also the entry on **Jonathan Rabb**, below in this bibliography.]

The Dual Identity of Willi Kraus

- **A “German First” Jew:** Willi Kraus is a decorated World War I hero and a celebrated detective in Berlin's homicide department. He initially believes his status and military service (earning an Iron Cross, First Class) will protect him from the rising Nazi threat.
- **The “Inside/Outside” Dynamic:** Despite his professional fame, Kraus increasingly feels the isolation of being a Jew in an “overwhelmingly Aryan environment”. His Jewishness makes him a target for both institutional and street-level antisemitism as the series progresses.

Key Historical and Cultural Themes

- **The Weimar Twilight:** The series captures the 1929–1933 period, showing the contrast between the “giddy rush” of Berlin's cultural life and the ominous “handwriting on the wall” for German Jews.
- **Rising Antisemitism:** Grossman depicts the daily realities of the era, including Brownshirts marching through streets, antisemitic caricatures in newspapers, and the beating of Jewish children in schools while authorities ignore the violence.
- **Refugee Experience:** In *Brotherhood of Fear*, the series follows Kraus as he flees to Paris in 1933, living as a stateless refugee. It details the loss of status, the fear of deportation, and the reliance on Jewish refugee networks for survival and work.
- **Symbolism and Biblical Allusions:** In *Children of Wrath*, Kraus investigates a case involving children's bones and a Bible with the phrase “children of wrath” circled, weaving darker theological or prophetic undertones into the crime narrative.

Role of the Jewish Community

- **Family and Duty:** Kraus is a widower struggling to protect his two sons. His struggle is shared by family members and other Jewish refugees who are initially reluctant to leave their homeland, believing German laws and reason will eventually prevail. [Google/AI]

Grossman, Paul, [*Willi Kraus #1*] (**The Sleepwalkers** [hc, St. Martin's Press, 2010]) 978-0312601904 [pb, St. Martin's Griffin, 2011] 978-0312602796

Grossman, Paul, [*Willi Kraus #2*] (**Children of Wrath** [hc, St. Martin's Press, 2012]) 978-0312601911 [pb, St. Martin's Press, 2013] 978-1250020819

Grossman, Paul, [*Willi Kraus #3*] (**Brotherhood of Fear** [hc, St. Martin's Press, 2014]) 978-1250011596

Robert Harris (born 1957, Nottingham, UK) [*- first became known as a journalist and political commentator before turning to historical thrillers and alternate-history fiction. His meticulously researched and highly-praised novel about the Dreyfus case earns his inclusion in this bibliography:*

Harris, Robert, (**An Officer and a Spy** [hc, Knopf, 2014]) 978-0385349581 [pb, Vintage, 2014] 978-0345804853 [\[See related film\]](#) [*The focus of the book is not primarily on Captain Alfred Dreyfus himself, but on Colonel Georges Picquart, the French intelligence officer who gradually discovers that Dreyfus — a Jewish officer falsely convicted of treason and exiled to Devil's Island — is innocent.*

The novel opens in Paris in 1895 during Dreyfus's public degradation ceremony, where crowds scream antisemitic insults as his insignia are torn from his uniform. Picquart initially believes in Dreyfus's guilt and is rewarded with promotion to head of French military intelligence. But while examining intercepted documents and intelligence reports, he realizes that the real spy is another officer, Ferdinand Walsin Esterhazy. As Picquart pushes deeper into the evidence, he uncovers forged documents, institutional corruption, military cover-ups, and an entrenched culture of antisemitism within the French Army and government. His pursuit of truth gradually derails his own career and threatens his life, though he did achieve final vindication and promotion..

The book was translated into French by Natalie Zimmermann and published to wide acclaim in France in 2015. There and elsewhere it served to revive interest in and familiarity with the Dreyfus case and its issues of anti-Semitism, establishment suppressions of inconvenient facts, miscarriage of justice and the important role of whistleblowers in democratic society. Critics widely praised the novel for combining documentary precision with suspense-novel pacing. Harris structures the story almost like a spy procedural, using Picquart's gradual discovery of hidden evidence to create mounting tension.

*The novel won several major prizes, including the Walter Scott Prize for Historical Fiction. It was later adapted into the 2019 film *An Officer and a Spy* (French title: *J'Accuse*), directed by Roman Polanski, with Harris co-writing the screenplay. See the entry on this film in companion list of *Movies-Films-TV Series*. [ChatGPT]*

Douglas Jackson (born 1956, Jedburgh, Scotland, now residing in Stirling, Scotland) — *spent 36 years in local and national Scottish journalism before turning full-time to writing historical thriller fiction. In 2026, he is publishing the fourth novel in his Warsaw Quartet featuring Jan Kalisz, a character described as the “natural heir” to the Bernie Gunther detective protagonist of Philip Kerr's Berlin Noir trilogy [see Philip Kerr entry below in this bibliography]. Like Gunther, Kalisz is a non-Jewish detective trying to pursue justice and apprehend murderers under a regime he deeply opposes and in a historical setting where he interacts intensively with local Jews suffering terrible oppression. He speaks fluent German and acts as a reluctant collaborator while working for the Polish underground. And like Kerr, Douglas Jackson is a non-Jewish, Scottish thriller author.*

Of particular Jewish interest is **Blood Sacrifice**, the second book in the series, set in January 1943, a “historical noir” that blends a murder mystery with the tragic reality of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. The story begins with the murder of a high-ranking German officer. The victim is found to have had three separate identities, one of which was a wealthy Jew. This discovery forces Kalisz to enter the heavily policed Warsaw Ghetto. Kalisz, a secret double agent for the Polish Resistance, is under pressure to fulfill a promise to supply the 50,000 remaining Jews in the ghetto with weapons. Amidst the chaos of SS death squads, a new threat emerges: a mysterious figure known as “**the Golem**” is stalking the ruined streets and kidnapping orphaned children. Kalisz must track down this killer before he strikes again. He interacts with **Sol Goldberg**, an old acquaintance and former ruthless gangster who now leads a group of Jews determined to fight back against the Nazis.

Blood Enemy, the final installment in the **Warsaw Quartet**, is scheduled for publication in **July, 2026**. This concluding novel follows Kalisz as he faces his most harrowing mission yet, taking him into the heart of the Nazi death machine. The search for a key witness forces Kalisz to enter the Auschwitz concentration camp. There, he is reacquainted with a terrifying “old acquaintance”—Dr. Josef Mengele.

Jackson, Douglas [Warsaw Quartet #2], (**Blood Sacrifice**: The gritty, gripping World War 2 historical crime thriller [hc, Canelo, 2024] 978-1804367490 [pb, Canelo Action, 2025]) 978-1804366141

Jackson, Douglas [Warsaw Quartet #4], (**Blood Enemy** [hc, Canelo, July 2026] 9781835983690

Franz Kafka (born 1883 in Prague, then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire [now the Czech Republic], and died in Kierling, near Klosterneuburg, Austria, from complications of tuberculosis at the age of forty. Born into a middle-class, German-speaking Jewish family. Kafka’s often difficult relationship with his domineering father profoundly influenced his writing, most famously in his long autobiographical essay *Letter to His Father*. He attended German-language schools in Prague before studying law at the German Charles-Ferdinand University (now Charles University), receiving his doctorate in 1906. After completing legal training, he worked for the Workers’ Accident Insurance Institute for the Kingdom of Bohemia, where he became an expert in industrial accident prevention and workers’ compensation. Although he regarded his office work as secondary to literature, the experience of bureaucracy and legal administration deeply informed his fiction.

Kafka wrote almost entirely in **German**, despite living in predominantly Czech-speaking Prague. During his lifetime he published only a small number of works, including **The Judgment** (1913), **The Metamorphosis** (1915), **In the Penal Colony** (1919), **A Country Doctor** (1919), and **A Hunger Artist** (1924). His major novels—**The Trial**, **The Castle**, and **Amerika**—remained unfinished and were published only after his death.

Although Kafka was not religiously observant, his Jewish identity became increasingly important to him during adulthood. He developed a strong interest in Yiddish theatre, studied Hebrew, formed friendships with Eastern European Jews living in Prague, and expressed sympathy for Zionism, though he never emigrated to Palestine. His notebooks and correspondence reveal a complex engagement with Jewish culture and identity rather than strict religious commitment. Suffering from tuberculosis from 1917 onward, Kafka spent his last years in sanatoria before dying in Kierling in 1924. He asked his close friend and literary executor, **Max Brod**, to destroy his unpublished manuscripts. Brod ignored these instructions, editing and publishing Kafka’s unfinished novels after his death, thereby securing Kafka’s reputation as one of the central figures of modern world literature. Kafka’s works explore themes of alienation, guilt, bureaucracy,

inaccessible authority, and the individual's struggle against incomprehensible systems of power. The adjective “Kafkaesque” has entered many languages to describe situations characterized by absurd, oppressive, and labyrinthine bureaucratic authority. – ChatGPT]

Kafka, Franz, (**The Trial** [written in 1914-15 and first published in 1925, pb, Schocken, 1999, transl. by Breon Mitchell] 978-0805209990

Kafka, Franz, (**The Castle** [transl. by Edwin and Willa Muir, pb, Penguin Classics, 2010]) 978-0141197555

*[Kafka is not a conventional crime writer and does not portray Jews as criminals. Instead, his protagonists are often treated as if they are guilty, although neither they nor the reader ever learns what crime has supposedly been committed. In **The Trial**, Josef K. is arrested without explanation and prosecuted by a mysterious judicial bureaucracy. The novel examines **presumed guilt**, arbitrary justice, secret courts, and the psychological effects of accusation. Although Josef K. is not explicitly Jewish, many scholars have argued that the atmosphere anticipates the vulnerability later experienced by European Jews under totalitarian regimes. The work has become one of the foundational literary explorations of the relationship between the individual and an opaque criminal justice system.*

*Kafka's Jewish background is highly relevant, though often indirectly. He is the quintessential outsider, Jewish in a mostly Catholic society, German-speaking in Czech-language city, and religiously and culturally ambivalent rather than traditionally observant. Many critics see his recurring themes of exclusion, insecurity, and incomprehensible authority as reflecting this position of perpetual outsiderhood. His unfinished novel **The Castle** likewise portrays a protagonist endlessly attempting to gain access to inaccessible authority. Kafka wrote before Nazism and Stalinism, yet many readers have viewed his fiction as prophetic. His anonymous officials, secret procedures, and inaccessible bureaucracies have frequently been compared to the Gestapo, the NKVD/KGB, other modern security services, and the surveillance states of the twentieth century. For this reason Kafka is often cited in discussions of literature dealing with political repression and state control.*

Kafka's work is fundamentally concerned with accusation, guilt, law, punishment, and criminal justice, though not with conventional criminal activity. While he wrote no spy fiction, his depictions of secret bureaucracies, surveillance, hidden power, and anonymous investigators anticipated many themes later developed in espionage literature. Kafka's Jewish background is widely considered essential to understanding his sense of alienation and marginality, but Jewish identity is generally implicit rather than explicit in his fiction. – ChatGPT]

Joseph Kanon (born 1946, Nanticoke, PA) - an American novelist renowned for his meticulous historical thrillers and spy fiction, set mainly in European locations in the aftermath of World War II. His work is deeply layered with both Jewish themes and classic mystery elements, often centered on the moral fallout of World War II and the Holocaust.

Jewish Motifs: While Kanon was not raised in a religious Jewish household, he views the Holocaust as a pivotal moral event that fundamentally changed the world.

Displacement and Statelessness: Many of his protagonists are Jewish refugees or “outsiders” caught between shifting political borders.

Holocaust Survival & Trauma:

Alibi: Features a young Jewish woman, Claudia Grassini, who survived the Fossoli concentration camp.

***The Accomplice:** Centers on a survivor, Max Weill, who hunts a Nazi doctor from Auschwitz.*

***Istanbul Passage:** Explores the illegal transport of Jewish refugees to Palestine.*

***Assimilation & Identity:** Characters often grapple with having been “Germans first” before being targeted by the Nazis, highlighting the tragedy of lost identity.*

***Shanghai** focuses on the only port that did not require a visa for Jewish refugees in 1938.*

Mystery Motifs

Kanon uses a “peeling-an-onion” narrative style, where small crimes mask massive historical secrets.

***The “Whodunit” as a Gateway:** Murder investigations often serve as the entry point for larger political or moral inquiries.*

***Moral Ambiguity:** He draws on the “Third Man” style of mystery—nothing is as it seems, and the line between hero and villain is frequently blurred.*

***Noir Tropes:** Common motifs include deception, betrayal, and atmospheric settings like the ruins of post-war Berlin or the canals of Venice.*

***Nazi Hunting:** Several plots revolve around the mystery of hidden identities, as characters search for war criminals living under aliases in South America or Europe. [Google/AI]*

Kanon, Joseph, (**Alibi** [hc, Henry Holt & Co., 2005] 978-0805078862 [pb, Picador, 2006] 978-0312425906

Kanon, Joseph, (**The Accomplice** [hc, Atria Books, 2019] 978-1501121425 [pb, Simon & Schuster, 2020] 978-1471162688 [*This novel is Kanon’s most explicit “Jewish book,” focusing entirely on the hunt for Nazi war criminals. Max Weill, a survivor of Auschwitz, has spent his life trying to track down Otto Schramm, a fictional doctor modeled after Josef Mengele. The story follows Max’s nephew, Aaron Wiley (a CIA analyst), who travels to Argentina to find Schramm. It explores the conflict between the Mossad’s shift toward modern counter-terrorism and the survivors’ need for nakam (vengeance) or formal justice. The narrative delves into how the Nazis co-opted Jewish prisoners to assist in atrocities and the lasting “burden” this placed on the survivors and their children.* – Google/AI]

Kanon, Joseph, (**Istanbul Passage** [hc, Atria Books, 2012] 978-1439156414 [pb, Atria Books, 2013] 978-1439156438

Kanon, Joseph, (**Leaving Berlin** [hc, Atria Books, 2015] 978-1476704647 [pb, Atria books, 2016] 978-1476704654 [*Berlin, 1948. Almost four years after the war’s end, the city is still in ruins, a physical wasteland and a political symbol about to rupture. In the West, a defiant, blockaded city is barely surviving on airlifted supplies; in the East, the heady early days of political reconstruction are being undermined by the murky compromises of the Cold War. Espionage, like the black market, is a fact of life. Even culture has become a battleground, with German intellectuals being lured back from exile to add credibility to the competing sectors.*]

Alex Meier, a young Jewish writer, fled the Nazis for America before the war. But the politics of his youth have now put him in the crosshairs of the McCarthy witch-hunts. Faced with deportation and the loss of his family, he makes a desperate bargain with the fledgling CIA: he will earn his way back to America by acting as their agent in his native Berlin. But almost from the start things go fatally wrong. A kidnapping misfires, an East German agent is killed, and Alex finds himself a wanted man. Worse, he discovers his real assignment—to spy on the woman he left behind, the only woman he has ever loved. Changing sides in Berlin is as easy as crossing a

sector border. But where do we draw the lines of our moral boundaries? At betrayal? Survival? Murder? Joseph Kanon's compelling thriller is a love story that brilliantly brings a shadowy period of history vividly to life. – Amazon]

Kanon, Joseph, (**Shanghai** [hc, Scribner, 2024] 978-1668006429 [pb, Scribner, 2025] 978-1668006436 [*The story follows **Daniel Lohr**, a young Jewish refugee and former resistance fighter who flees Berlin after the Kristallnacht violence. On the ship from Trieste to Shanghai, he enters into a passionate affair with a fellow exile, **Leah Auerbach**. Also on board is **Colonel Yamada**, a high-ranking official in the Japanese military police, who serves as a menacing presence throughout the voyage. Daniel reunites with his **Uncle Nathan**, a well-connected gangster running nightclubs, casinos, and brothels in the city's underbelly. When Nathan is wounded in a gang-related shooting, Daniel is thrust into managing the business. He quickly adapts, navigating a dangerous landscape of Chinese gangs, the Japanese occupation, and shifting political loyalties. **Leah's Struggle**: Leah finds herself in the crowded Hongkou Jewish ghetto. To survive, she is eventually forced into a compromising position as the mistress of Colonel Yamada, who "flaunts" her as a possession to taunt Daniel. The novel focuses on the "smart plays" and moral lines refugees must cross to survive a city dancing on the rim of a volcano. Kanon uses the real-world historical backdrop of the 20,000 European Jews who found an "escape hatch" in Shanghai just before the Japanese fully took over the city. – Google/AI]*

A.J. Kazinski - pseudonym of Anders Rønnow Klarlund (born 1971) and Jacob Weinreich (born 1972), translated from the Danish), (**The Last Good Man** [hc, Scribner, 2012]) 978-1451640755 [pb, Scribner, 2013] 978-1451640762 [*According to Jewish legend, there are thirty-six righteous people alive on earth at any given time — the Lamed Vovniks — and without them, humanity would perish. The catch: the thirty-six do not know that they are the chosen ones.*

In Beijing, a monk collapses in his chamber, a fiery mark spreading across his back and down his spine. In Mumbai, a man who served the poor dies suddenly, his body showing the same mark. More deaths follow around the world, and in every case the victims are humanitarians, all bearing the same death mark. An Italian policeman in Venice is the one who first spots that these scattered deaths are connected.

In Copenhagen, it falls to veteran detective Niels Bentzon to investigate. He's an unusual lead for the genre — a hostage negotiator who is manic-depressive and can't bring himself to shoot anyone — so when he's told to find eight "good people" of Denmark and warn them of the threat, he's skeptical, since he's trained to see the worst in people, not the best, and starts to realize that not everyone assumed to be good actually is. His skepticism starts to lift once he teams up with Hannah, a brilliant astrophysicist mourning the death of her husband (other summaries describe it as her son) — together they begin to piece the puzzle together and a pattern starts to emerge.

*There have been thirty-four deaths, with two more to come if the legend holds true — and based on the pattern, Bentzon and Hannah can predict the time and place of the final two murders, in Venice and Copenhagen. It becomes a race against the clock to stop the killer before the last of the thirty-six are gone. It's a globe-trotting thriller — taking readers to Africa, China, Venice, Copenhagen and more — but reviewers note it goes deeper than a typical airport thriller, exploring the nature of good and evil and the existence of God, with the plot rooted in Jewish mystical texts. It's often compared to *The Da Vinci Code* in structure, though several reviewers consider it the sharper, more grounded book of the two. - Claude]*

Philip Kerr (1956–2018, born in Edinburgh, Scotland) was a prominent British novelist best known for the *Bernie Gunther* series, a collection of hard-boiled historical thrillers set in

Nazi Germany and the Cold War era. His most famous work began with the Berlin Noir trilogy (1989–1991), featuring a cynical private investigator navigating the moral complexities of the Third Reich. The Gunther series extensively addresses Jewish themes through the lens of historical crime fiction set during and after the Third Reich. While Kerr himself was not Jewish, his work meticulously documents the systematic persecution of Jews as a core narrative element.

Jewish Themes and Content

Protagonist's Heritage: In later novels, it is revealed that Bernie Gunther has a Jewish grandparent, making him “one-quarter Jewish”. This revelation shifts his perspective from a cynical observer to someone personally threatened by Nazi racial laws, according to which he was considered Jewish (i.e. fair game).

The Holocaust as Background: While not always the central plot, the Shoah is a “pervasive undercurrent” in the series. Bernie often finds himself as an unwilling witness or “unwilling perpetrator” to atrocities, such as when he is forced to lead an SS police battalion in Minsk in 1941.

Key Historical Events:

Kristallnacht: The Pale Criminal (1990) concludes with a graphic description of the aftermath of the “Night of Broken Glass,” capturing the destruction of synagogues and Jewish property.

The Greek Shoah: Greeks Bearing Gifts (2018) explores the Nazi extermination of the long-standing Jewish community in Thessaloniki.

Rosenstrasse Protests: A Man Without Breath (2013) features the 1943 Berlin protests where non-Jewish wives successfully demonstrated for the release of their Jewish husbands.

Post-War Jewish Vengeance: In *The One from the Other* (2006), Bernie is pursued by Jewish revenge squads roaming post-war Europe seeking justice against war criminals.

Argentina's Anti-Semitism: A Quiet Flame (2008) examines Argentina's complicity in harboring Nazis and its own domestic anti-Jewish policies, including the historical Directive 11, which forbade Jewish immigration.

Jewish Characters: In the early books of the series, Bernie's clients are frequently Jewish individuals seeking his help to find missing loved ones or to help them emigrate safely amidst rising persecution. [Google/AI]

Kerr, Philip, [Bernie Gunther], (**The Pale Criminal** [hc, Viking, 1990] 978-0670824335 [pb, Penguin Publishing Group, 2005]) 978-0142004159

Kerr, Philip, [Bernie Gunther], (**If the Dead Rise Not**) [hc, Marian Wood Books/Putnam, 2010] 978-0399156151 [pb, Penguin, 2011] 978-0143118534

Imre Kertész (1929–2016) was a Hungarian-Jewish author, translator, and Holocaust survivor. In 2002, he became the first and only Hungarian writer to win the Nobel Prize in Literature. The Nobel committee praised his work for upholding “the fragile experience of the individual against the barbaric arbitrariness of history.” He was born into a secular, non-observant Jewish family in Budapest. His parents divorced when he was young, and his youth was defined by growing wartime antisemitism. At the age of 14, he was swept up in a police dragnet and deported. He survived Auschwitz and was later transferred to Buchenwald, where he was liberated in 1945. He famously stated that his internment “obliged” him to be Jewish. The camp system permanently anchored his identity and creative obsession. He returned to Budapest after the war and worked for the newspaper *Világosság*. He was promptly fired in 1951 when the

publication adopted the strict Communist Party line. Supported himself through factory work, writing musical comedy librettos, and translating German philosophy. He translated heavyweights like Nietzsche, Freud, Wittgenstein, and Kafka. Spent over a decade writing his masterpiece, *Sorstalanság* (*Fatelessness*). The manuscript was initially rejected by Communist censors before finally being published to quiet indifference in 1975. *Fatelessness* eventually grew into an acclaimed semi-autobiographical trilogy. It includes *A kudarc* (*Fiasco*, 1988) and *Kaddis a meg nem született gyermekért* (*Kaddish for an Unborn Child*, 1990). Frustrated by ongoing Hungarian nationalism and historical denial, he moved to Germany. He spent much of his later life in Berlin, where his literary voice was widely celebrated. Returned to Budapest in his final years while battling Parkinson's disease. He passed away at his home in 2016 at the age of 86. [Google/AI]

Kertész, Imre, (**Detective Story** [hc, Knopf, 2008, transl. from the Hungarian by Tim Wilkinson] 978-0307266446 [pb, Vintage Classics, 2017] 978-1784872182

Kertész, Imre, (**Fatelessness** [hc, The Harvill Press, 2005, transl. by Tim Wilkinson] 978-1843432517 [pb, Vintage Classics, 2017] 978-1784872151 [An earlier edition transl. by Christopher and Katharina Wilson was published by Northwestern UP in 1992] under the title "Fateless"]

While Kertész is globally celebrated for his stark, semi-autobiographical Holocaust narratives like *Fatelessness*, *Detective Story* represents his most direct and unique intersection with the tropes of the noir, thriller, and police procedural genres. The novella operates as a prison confession narrated by a former interrogator for the secret police ("the Corps") under a recently collapsed Latin American dictatorship. He documents the systematic surveillance, framing, and eventual murder of a wealthy department store tycoon, Federico Salinas, and his son, Enrique. Though transposed to a nameless South American setting, the two victims, the Salinases, are clearly established as wealthy, assimilated Jewish citizens. Kertész explicitly links the mechanics of the South American secret police to the atrocities of the Holocaust.

The thriller aspect is driven entirely from the perspective of the perpetrator. The secret police use classic espionage tactics—wiretapping, psychological manipulation, and tailing suspects—to actively create a "crime". They position the aimless Enrique as a subversive element simply because the state apparatus requires a victim to justify its own terror.

Kertész connects the genre elements to state-sponsored hatred through the secret police. They read contraband literature about Auschwitz and declare that "anyone who wants something else is Jewish," using antisemitism as an all-encompassing ideological weapon to hunt dissidents, regardless of geography. Reviewers and literary scholars often note that Kertész treats totalitarian state violence like an unyielding noir narrative. Even in his debut masterpiece *Fatelessness*, the young protagonist Gyuri searches for clues and attempts to make sense of his arrest like an investigator trying to solve a crime. The "crime" is the arbitrary brutality of history itself. [Google/AI]

Danilo Kiš (born 1935 in Subotica, Yugoslavia [now Serbia] and died in Paris in 1989) [first degree in comparative literature from the University of Belgrade [1958]. Born to a Hungarian Jewish father (Eduard Kiš, originally named Kon) and a Montenegrin Eastern Orthodox mother. Kiš famously viewed himself as a unique, vanishing hybrid of Central European Jewish anxiety and Balkan warrior heritage. Baptized into the Eastern Orthodox church in 1939 by his mother, a move that legally shielded him from Nazi persecution during the war. Dealt with profound generational trauma when his father was deported and murdered at Auschwitz in 1944. Claimed no formal religion for himself but maintained a deep, lifelong artistic connection to

Jewish themes. Critics frequently point to his meticulous, archival writing style as having “quasi-Talmudic” literary proclivities, utilizing his absent father as a permanent symbol for the broader destruction of European Jewry.

Lived as an impoverished, urban cosmopolitan in postwar Belgrade, famously spending his nights as a chain-smoking guitar player in bohemian cafes. Worked prominently as an editor for the cultural and literary magazine Vidici (Views) until 1960. Published his first two novels simultaneously in 1962—The Attic (Mansarda) and Psalm 44. Served as a dramaturge at Belgrade’s influential Atelje 212 theatre and translated French, Hungarian, and Russian poetry. Spent several years abroad working as a lecturer of Serbo-Croatian at various French universities, including the University of Bordeaux. Released Garden, Ashes (1965) and Early Sorrows (1969), solidifying his reputation.

Faced aggressive, coordinated attacks from nationalist Yugoslav critics following his 1976 anti-totalitarian work, A Tomb for Boris Davidovich. Confronted malicious, politically-motivated claims of plagiarism designed to destroy his credibility. Fought back fiercely in 1978 by publishing Čas anatomije (The Anatomy Lesson), a legendary polemic defending artistic freedom that ultimately got the court cases dismissed. Left Yugoslavia in disgust following the scandal, settling permanently in Paris for the remainder of his life. – Google/AI]

Kiš, Danilo, (**A Tomb for Boris Davidovich** [originally published in 1976, pb, transl. from the Serbo-Croatian by Duška Mikić-Mitchell, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978] 978-0151904860 [Re-published by Penguin Books in 1980 as part of the “Writers from the Other Europe” series, introduced by Philip Roth, pb] 978-0140054521 [and again, pb, in 2001 by the Dalkey Archive Press] 978-1564782731

A Tomb for Boris Davidovich (1976) is a collection of seven interlinked, fictionalized biographies that read like historical police archives, court records, and investigative journalism. Set primarily against the backdrop of the early 20th-century communist movement, the Comintern, and the Soviet Gulag, the book serves as a post-modern monument to the anonymous victims of Stalin’s Great Purge. The seven stories follow distinct revolutionary figures who are systematically destroyed by the very ideological machine they helped build:

1. **“The Knife with the Rosewood Handle”**: A young Jewish apprentice named Miksha becomes an absolute ideologue, brutally murders a suspected police informant to prove his loyalty, and is swallowed by the Soviet camp system.
2. **“The Sow That Eats Her Farrow”**: Follows an Irish republican who escapes to Soviet Russia out of ideological passion, only to be abducted by the secret police for “deviant” views and sent to the Gulag.
3. **“The Mechanical Lions”**: Details a Soviet official tasked with orchestrating a fake, propaganda-fueled religious service to deceive a visiting Western politician (Edouard Herriot), highlighting the regime’s absolute commitment to simulation.
4. **“The Magic Card Dealing”**: Dr. Karl Taube, a dedicated German communist intellectual, is imprisoned in a labor camp where he is eventually murdered by a brutal, non-political criminal gang over a card game.
5. **“A Tomb for Boris Davidovich”**: The centerpiece of the novel. **Boris Davidovich Novsky**, a legendary Jewish Bolshevik revolutionary and diplomat, is arrested during the purges. A tense psychological battle ensues between Novsky and his Stalinist interrogator, Fedukin. Novsky fiercely resists confessing to absurd, fabricated crimes because he wants to preserve the truth of his historical biography. He ultimately submits to a false confession only when threatened with the execution of innocent young hostages.

6. **“From a Velvet Album”**: Reconstructs the life of a young, artistic revolutionary who vanishes without a trace into the administrative machinery of the secret police.
7. **“The Short Biography of A.A. Darmolotov”**: Focuses on a mediocre, state-approved poet who survives the purges by remaining silent, only to suffer from a horrific psychosomatic illness (elephantiasis of the scrotum), symbolizing the grotesque, heavy burden of survival and complicity.

While the book is universally recognized as a devastating critique of totalitarianism, Jewishness forms its primary spiritual, psychological, and historical undercurrent:

- **The Jewish Revolutionary Archetype**: Most of the book’s protagonists (such as Novsky and Miksha) are Jews. Kiš captures a distinct historical phenomenon: marginalized Central and Eastern European Jews who abandoned religious Judaism to embrace Communism as a secular, universal promise of equality.
- **The Double Betrayal**: Kiš highlights the tragic irony of these Jewish idealists. After fleeing the antisemitic pogroms of the Russian Empire to build a communist utopia, they are ultimately hunted down, branded as “Zionist spies” or “cosmopolitans,” and executed by the Soviet state.
- **A Secular Kaddish (The Title’s Meaning)**: In Jewish tradition, a Kaddish is a prayer for the dead, and placing a stone on a grave is a crucial act of remembrance. Because Stalin’s victims were shot in secret basements or died anonymized in Siberia, they have no known graves. The book itself acts as a metaphorical “tomb” or cenotaph for Boris Davidovich and millions of others, ensuring they are not erased from human memory.
- **The Meticulous, “Talmudic” Style**: Kiš uses a dense, archival narrative technique that mimics religious text commentary. He references real historical documents, footnotes, and overlapping accounts. This obsession with textual preservation mirrors the traditional Jewish reliance on the written word to preserve identity in the face of physical destruction. [Google/AI]

Arthur Koestler (1905–1983) was a Hungarian-born British author, journalist, and political activist. He became one of the 20th century’s most influential and polarizing intellectuals, famously shifting from a devout Communist to an iconic anti-totalitarian voice. Born to a Jewish family in Budapest, he studied science and psychology at the University of Vienna. He abruptly left university in 1925 to join a kibbutz in Palestine, working as a Middle East correspondent. Disillusioned with Zionism, he moved to Berlin and joined the Communist Party in 1931, operating as a Soviet propagandist. Covering the Spanish Civil War as a journalist, he was captured by Franco’s forces and spent months under a death sentence. The harrowing psychological ordeal was detailed in his memoir [Spanish Testament](#). In 1938, horrified by Stalin’s brutal purge trials, he permanently quit the Party. He channeled his ideological betrayal into his masterpiece, [Darkness at Noon](#), a brilliant psychological critique of totalitarianism that brought him global fame. He fled Nazi-occupied France by joining the French Foreign Legion, eventually making his way to England where he became a naturalized British citizen. After World War II, he largely abandoned politics to write complex books on science, creativity, and psychology, such as *The Sleepwalkers*. In his later years, he faced intense posthumous polarization over allegations of misogynistic behavior and sexual assault. Suffering from terminal leukemia and Parkinson’s disease, he and his healthy third wife, Cynthia, died by a joint barbiturate overdose in London in 1983.

Koestler, Arthur, (**Thieves in the Night** [originally published in 1946, hc, Hutchinson, 1965] 978-0090757800 [Set in Mandatory Palestine between 1937 and 1939, this novel serves as Koestler’s most direct exploration of Jewish clandestine operations. The protagonist, **Joseph**, is a half-

English, half-Jewish intellectual who moves to Palestine and joins a communal kibbutz named Ezra's Tower. Devastated by British policy and the lack of response to European Jewish suffering, Joseph eventually transitions from peaceful farming to joining a radical, deep-cover militant underground group modeled on the real-world Irgun. Koestler treats the underground group's activities—such as smuggling weapons, manufacturing explosives, forging identity documents, and carrying out targeted political assassinations—through a hyper-pragmatic lens. The characters view these illegal, covert acts not as standard crimes, but as a survival mechanism in a world that has structurally abandoned them.

Koestler, Arthur, (**Arrival and Departure** [hc, Macmillan, 1943] 978-0025650107 [pb, Vintage Classics, 2000] 978-0099515418 [*Though the central protagonist, Peter Slavek, is a non-Jewish European resistance fighter; Jewish persecution and secret state police crimes form the moral core of the novel. The plot focuses on refugees navigating a neutral European city (resembling Lisbon) filled with international spies, handlers, and underground escape lines. Koestler includes harrowing, graphic accounts of Nazi crimes against European Jews, functioning as the driving trauma behind the characters' desperation to flee or fight. The novel mirrors Koestler's own real-life experience as a Jewish refugee escaping France via false identities and clandestine avenues.*]

Koestler, Arthur, (**The Thirteenth Tribe** [hc, Random House, 1976] 978-0394402840 [pb, G S G & Associates Pub, 1976] 978-0945001423 [- *argues that Ashkenazi Jews are not racially Semitic but are primarily descended from the Khazars. The Khazars were a Turkic nomadic group that established a major empire between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea from the 7th to the 11th centuries. Koestler frames the ancient Khazar Empire as a powerful "Third World" buffer state caught directly between the Christian Byzantine Empire and the expanding Muslim Caliphates. To maintain political independence and avoid submission to either neighbor, the Khazar king and the ruling elite strategically converted to Judaism in the 8th century. When the Khazar Empire collapsed in the 12th and 13th centuries due to Mongol invasions and the rise of Kievan Rus', its Jewish-Turkic populations migrated west into Poland, Hungary, and Ukraine. Koestler asserts that these migrated Khazars formed the foundational cradle of Eastern European (and subsequently modern world) Jewry, challenging the mainstream narrative of a massive migration from the Mediterranean. Koestler stated his intent was to eradicate antisemitism by disproving its racial foundations; if European Jews were not Semitic, the concept of racial antisemitism would lose its meaning. Despite his motivations, the book's thesis has been widely discredited by modern geneticists and mainstream historians, who point out that genetic evidence strongly aligns Ashkenazi ancestry with Middle Eastern and Mediterranean populations rather than Central Asian or Turkic peoples. Moreover, the Khazar thesis has been extensively weaponized by anti-Israel groups to delegitimize the State of Israel and its claimed relationship to the Jewish people, as their ancestral homeland.* [Google/AI]

Jonas Kreppel (1874–1940) was a multifaceted Austrian-Jewish writer, journalist, and civil servant known for his prolific literary output and high-ranking career in the Austrian government. Born in Drohobycz, Galicia (now Ukraine) with a Hasidic background and Talmudic education and became a self-taught intellectual and polyglot. Authored many books on a wide range of Jewish topics, including the "Yiddish Sherlock Holmes", a legendary Jewish private eye and "superhero" who defended the Jewish people using intellect and bravery. He was arrested in 1938 following the Nazi annexation of Austria and died in the Buchenwald concentration camp in July, 1940. His pulp fiction stories were widely read in the Yiddish world and notably influenced writers like Nobel laureate Isaac Bashevis Singer. [Google/AI] See Eddy Portnoy's highly informative review of "Adventures of Max Spitzkopf" in the Jewish Review of Books, Winter 2026.

Kreppel, Jonas. (**Adventures of Max Spitzkopf: The Yiddish Sherlock Holmes** [pb, White Goat Press, 2025, transl. by Mikhl Yashinsky]) 979-8990998056

Stieg Larsson (1954–2004, born near Skellefteå in northern Sweden) – Swedish journalist and author of the Millennium Trilogy. He was a masterful mystery writer in whose novels, set in Sweden, Jewish elements were almost non-existent – with one major exception, which is why he appears in this Bibliography. He chose to make one secondary character in the trilogy, Detective Jan Bublanski (nicknamed “Officer Bubble”) of the Stockholm Police Force, a Jew. Moreover, a Jew who visits his rabbi and who “ate vegetarian food if kosher fare was unavailable. But he was not so Orthodox that he refused to work on the Sabbath.” (*The Girl Who Played With Fire*, p.190) Known for his integrity and calm demeanor, Bublanski is often described as the “ideal” officer because he maintains an open mind, eventually becoming one of the few officials to believe in the main protagonist’s innocence. His wife of 23 years (from whom “he had never strayed”) is the daughter of Hungarian Holocaust survivors. He is described as a Polish Jew, i.e. a son of the approximately 22,000 European Jews who passed through Sweden after World War II, some 7000 of whom wound up settling there permanently.

Larsson, Stieg, (**The Girl Who Played With Fire** [hc, Knopf, 2009] 978-0307269980 [pb, Vintage Crime/Black Lizard, 2010] 978-0307454553

Adam LeBor (born 1961, London, England) – [author of two series relevant to this bibliography, one set in Hungary and the other following a United Nations special negotiator. The “International” category seemed the most appropriate in this case. He is a British author, journalist, and writing coach known for his deep expertise in international politics, history, and global finance. In 1991, LeBor moved to Budapest to cover the collapse of Communism. He spent years reporting from Central Europe and the Balkans, including serving as a war correspondent during the Yugoslav conflicts for *The Times* and *The Independent*. LeBor studied Arabic, International History, and Politics at the University of Leeds and also attended the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He currently divides his time between London and Budapest, where he lives with his Hungarian wife and children. He writes thriller reviews for the *Financial Times* and contributes regularly to *The Times*, *The Economist*, and *The Critic*. He also works as an editorial trainer and writing coach for major financial and news institutions. LeBor writes both gripping fiction and highly researched non-fiction, typically drawing on his real-world experiences in active conflict zones. His fiction works are described below. He has published nine non-fiction books. His most prominent work, **Hitler’s Secret Bankers**, exposed Swiss complicity with the Nazis. He also authored **Milosevic**, a biography of the former Serbian president, and **Tower of Basel**, an investigative look into the secretive Bank for International Settlements.

LeBor, Adam, (**The Budapest Protocol** [hc, Reportage Press, 2009]) 9781906702205 [pb, Reportage Press, 2020] 978-1906702120 [*This dual-timeline political thriller explores a chilling “what if” scenario: that the Nazi party did not truly vanish after WWII, but instead went underground to orchestrate a long-term plan for the economic and political domination of Europe. In Budapest in 1944, Miklos Farkas escapes the Jewish ghetto in a desperate search for food. While at Nazi headquarters, he is accidentally handed a document known as “The Budapest Protocol”—a secret blueprint detailing the Nazi party’s plans for post-war survival and eventual resurgence. Miklos hides the document, knowing its existence is a death sentence. Coming back to the present, the European Union is in the midst of a historic election for the first-ever “President of Europe”. Amidst the political tension, an elderly Miklos Farkas is brutally murdered in Budapest. His grandson, Alex Farkas, a British journalist working in Budapest, begins investigating the murder. As Alex digs deeper, he uncovers the existence of the Protocol and a*

*massive conspiracy involving high-level EU politicians, corporate interests, and a shadowy alliance with roots in the Third Reich. Alex realizes the modern election is being manipulated to fulfill the Protocol's goals: Nazi economic control over Europe and the commencement of a "new Gypsy Holocaust" targeting the Roma community. He must find the original document and expose the conspiracy before the new European order is permanently established. The novel was inspired by LeBor's non-fiction research for his book **Hitler's Secret Bankers**, which examined real-world Nazi plans for post-war economic influence. – Google/AI]*

LeBor Adam [*Balthazar Kovacs #1*] (**District VIII** [hc, Pegasus Crime, 2018] 978-1681777344 [pb, Pegasus Books, 2019] 978-1643132587

LeBor Adam [*Balthazar Kovacs #2*] (**Kossuth Square** [hc, Head of Zeus, 2019] 978-1786692740 [pb, Head of Zeus, 2019] 978-1786692740

LeBor Adam [*Balthazar Kovacs #3*] (**Dohany Street** [hc, Head of Zeus, 2022] 978-1786692764 [pb, Head of Zeus/Aries Book, 2022] 978-1786692771

*See also Adam LeBor's recent non-fiction account of the final months of the Nazi occupation of Budapest: LeBor, Adam, (**The Last Days of Budapest: Spies, Nazis, Rescuers and Resistance, 1940–1945** [hc, Apollo, 2025] 978-1801100779 [Although Hungary was a German ally in 1941, two years into World War II, it was still possible for Allied prisoners of war, French and Polish refugees, spies of every kind, and the city's large Jewish population to live freely and openly, enjoying the cafes and boulevards that made Budapest one of the great European capitals. While the other multicultural centers of Europe had fallen to the almost all-consuming conflict, Budapest remained intact, a shining reminder of what middle European high culture could be.*

In September 1944, three months after D-Day, life in the city seemed idyllic. But under the guise of peace existed an undercurrent of tension and anxiety: British and American troops advanced from the west and Soviet troops from the east. Who would reach the capital first? By mid-October 1944, Budapest had collapsed into anarchy: death squads roamed the streets, the city's remaining Jews were funneled into ghettos, Russian shells destroyed city blocks, and everyone struggled to find food and survive the winter.

Using newly uncovered diaries and archives, Adam LeBor brilliantly recreates the increasingly desperate efforts of Hungary's leaders to avoid being drawn into the cataclysm of war, the moral and tactical ambiguity they deployed in the attempt, and the ultimate tragedy that befell Hungary and, in particular, its Jewish population. Told through the lives of a glamorous aristocrats, SS Officers, a rebellious teenage Jewish school student, Hungary's most popular singer and actress, and a housewife trying desperately to keep her family alive, the story of how Budapest is threatened from all sides as the war tightens its noose is highly dramatic and utterly compelling. – Amazon]

***Yael Azoulay** is a former Israeli intelligence operative and army veteran who now does the UN's "dirty work". Her role involves brokering secret deals in global "corridors of power," ranging from the caves of Afghanistan to corporate boardrooms in Manhattan. The series is heavily informed by LeBor's own background as a foreign correspondent and his investigative work into the UN's failures to stop genocide.*

LeBor, Adam [*Yael Azoulay #1*], (**The Geneva Option: A Pulse-Racing Espionage Thriller of a UN Operative Hunted by a Global Conspiracy** [pb, Telegram Books, 2013] 978-1846591556 [*- Sent to eastern Congo to negotiate with a Hutu warlord wanted for genocide, Yael offers a plea bargain to ensure regional stability for Western mineral interests. She soon discovers a deep-*

rooted conspiracy where the UN is willing to overlook mass murder for profit. Hunted by international agencies, she goes rogue to confront both the conspirators and her own past.]

LeBor, Adam [Yael Azoulay #2], (**The Washington Strategem: A Taut International Thriller of a Covert Negotiator, a Chilling Conspiracy, and Powerful Enemies** [pb, Harper Paperbacks, 2014]) 978-0062330017 [- *Recovering from the events in Congo, Yael is sent to investigate The Prometheus Group, a powerful lobbying firm with ties to the Pentagon. She uncovers a conspiracy to trigger a lucrative new war in the Middle East. As she digs deeper, she realizes the plot involves someone from her past, exposing her to powerful enemies who “neither forgive nor forget”.*

LeBor, Adam [Yael Azoulay #3], (**The Reykjavik Assignment: A Riveting Political Spy Thriller – The Final Yael Azoulay Adventure** [hc, Head of Zeus, 2016] 978-1784970291 [pb, Harper Paperbacks, 2016]) 978-0062330031 [*Yael is tasked with secretly brokering a historic peace summit in Reykjavik between the US and Iranian presidents. However, a powerful, corrupt lobbying syndicate called the **Prometheus Group** is desperate to destroy the peace talks to protect their wartime profits. As Yael coordinates the summit, she is hunted across Europe by vengeful operatives, untangles a human trafficking ring linked to recent terror attacks, and confronts dark secrets about her brother’s death. Ultimately, she must use her lethal field skills to stop a violent sabotage attempt in the icy landscapes of Iceland and save the international peace accords.]* [Google/AI]

Juliana Maio (born in Heliopolis/Cairo, Egypt in 1953, expelled from there with her family during the 1956 Suez crisis and moved to L.A.) – *Raised and educated in France after her family’s exile. The family later emigrated to the United States, where Maio completed her higher education: B.A., University of California, Berkeley and J.D., UC Hastings College of the Law (now the University of California College of the Law, San Francisco. Practising lawyer (entertainment law) and studio executive in Los Angeles. She worked for 10 years on this one book, going through many drafts.*

***City of the Sun** takes place in Cairo during WW2, with competition between American and Nazi operatives seeking a Jewish nuclear scientist hiding out in the city’s Jewish community. Key protagonist named **Maya Blumenthal**. For a study of Jews and espionage in fiction, *City of the Sun* is an unusual example because it places Jewish characters and refugee scientists at the center of an intelligence thriller set in the Arab world rather than in Europe or the United States.* [Google/AI]

Maio, Juliana, (**City of the Sun**) [hc, Greenleaf Book Group Press, 2014] 978-1626340671 [pb, Greenleaf Book Group Press, 2014]) 978-1626340510

Ernesto Mallo (born in 1948 in La Plata, Argentina) [- *a former anti-Junta militant who was pursued by the dictatorship and lives between Buenos Aires and Barcelona. He is a published essayist, newspaper columnist, screenwriter, and playwright. The first volume of his **Superintendent Venancio “Perro” Lascano** crime trilogy contains significant, explicit Jewish content, particularly tied to the dark history and cultural landscape of Argentina. Mallo is not himself Jewish though there is vital Jewish content in his other writing, most notably in *La conspiración de los mediocres* (*The Conspiracy of the Mediocre*), which is the chronological prequel to the Lascano series. Set in the tense months of 1975 leading up to Argentina’s military coup, this novel explores how Lascano met his beloved wife, Marisa, whose tragic death haunts him for the rest of the series. Marisa is introduced as a translator who is the orphaned daughter of Jewish parents. The narrative explicitly identifies her background, and she functions as Lascano’s gateway into a deeper understanding of political and cultural identity. Marisa’s*

presence is used to guide Lascano through a plot involving real-world clandestine Nazi networks operating in Argentina right before the 1976 coup. By linking Lascano's romance with a Jewish woman to an investigation into fascism, Mallo deepens the "Jews vs. Nazis" overarching metaphor of the series.]

Mallo, Ernesto (**Needle in a Haystack** [transl. from the Spanish by Jethro Soutar, pb, Bitter Lemon Press, 2010] 978-1904738565 [- set in *El Once*, the historic Jewish neighborhood of Buenos Aires. Mallo utilizes the distinct cultural landscape of the neighborhood—its synagogues, specific local businesses, and unique urban atmosphere—to ground his noir narrative. Lascano is called to investigate the bodies of two executed left-wing militants during the military dictatorship. Dumped right alongside them is a third body, that of the wealthy Jewish pawnbroker/businessman, Elias Biterman. Lascano realizes that while the military junta executed the first two victims, Biterman's murder was an ordinary, greedy crime disguised as a political execution. His refusal to look the other way forces him to investigate the local Jewish community as well as the corrupt military regime. Literary critics and reviewers have noted that Mallo uses the Jewish subplot to explicitly draw parallels between the Argentine Military Junta and the German Nazi state. In the novels, right-wing military commanders are often styled with traits reminiscent of Nazi officers (e.g., arrogant, blond captains supervising the looting of arrested citizens' homes). The systemic violence, disappearance of citizens, and state-sanctioned theft of property are framed alongside Argentina's historical undercurrents of anti-Semitism. When Lascano digs too deep, he must confront Giribaldi, an army major, quick to help old friends but ruthless in dealing with dissenters. – Google/AI]

Sasha Margolis (est. birth 1990?) - Sasha Margolis is an American violinist, singer, actor, and author; currently active in the classical and Jewish music scenes as of 2026. He serves as the violinist, vocalist, and storyteller for **Big Galute**, an eclectic Jewish music band. His immersion in the Klezmer music they perform directly inspired him to write his debut novel. He has toured across the US, Italy, and Japan. He has written theatrical pieces (such as *The Tale of Monish*), award-recognized short stories, and nonfiction essays on classical music, but no other novels so far.

Has one published book, **The Tsimbalist**, set in a Russian shtetl in 1871, in which a local barber-turned-detective has to solve a Russian aristocrat's murder in order to avert a pogrom.

Margolis, Sasha, (**The Tsimbalist** [pb, self-published, 2016]) 978-0997060102 [a 340-page historical whodunit, romance, and cultural exploration set in 1871 Imperial Russia. Avrom is an unpretentious town barber, musician (a player of the tsimbl, or hammered dulcimer), local mensch, and accidental detective. In the small lakeside village of Balativke, the delicate social balance between Russian Orthodox Christians and Jewish residents is shattered when a young Russian aristocrat, Arkady Olegovich Efimovski, is found murdered. The body is discovered near the home of Koppel, a poor local Jew. As local police flounder and a rising tide of anti-Jewish scapegoating threatens the community, Avrom steps in to search out the true killer himself. Avrom's investigation forces him to explore complex alliances, class divides, religious oppression, and secret romances. The case exposes deep-seated fault lines between neighbors, ultimately revealing that very few people in the town are who they seem. [Google/AI]

William Mesusan (est. birth 1958 in Berkeley, CA, now resides in the American southwest) – author of *The Andalusian Trilogy*, a series of historical detective novels set in 10th-century Islamic Spain during the Umayyad Caliphate of Córdoba. Two research trips to Spain, together with an interest in medieval Iberian history, inspired him to write the Andalusian

Trilogy. Outside writing, his interests include organic gardening, guitar, and songwriting; he has also collaborated musically with the Serbian singer Jovana, with recordings released online.

The series follows the investigations of Solomon Levy, a translator and amateur sleuth who works alongside his cousin, Hasdai Shaprut, the Caliph's Foreign Minister. The novels emphasize:

- *Jewish participation at the highest levels of the Caliphate.*
- *Relations among Jewish, Muslim, and Christian communities.*
- *Political intrigue, espionage, and murder investigations within the court of Córdoba.*
- *The cultural flowering of Sephardic Jewry during the so-called Golden Age of al-Andalus.*

Mesusan, William [The Andalusian Trilogy #1], (**The Galician Woman** [pb, self-published by author, 2021] 978-1736460719 [*Solomon Levy is tasked with finding a missing suspect after the murder of the Caliph's nephew, Umar abd-Rahman. His search leads him to far-away, Catholic Galicia in pursuit of a mysterious entertainer.*])

Mesusan, William [The Andalusian Trilogy #2], (**The Bone Relic** [pb, self-published by author, 2022] 978-1736460733 [*When the arm bone of the prophet Muhammad is stolen from the Great Mosque of Cordoba, Solomon must recover it. His investigation takes him through Cordoba, Seville, and Cadiz as he navigates a world of holy artifacts.*])

Mesusan, William [The Andalusian Trilogy #3], (**The Missing Vizier** [pb, self-published by author, 2025] 978-1736460795 [*The Grand Vizier and Foreign Minister Hasdai Shaprut vanishes, threatening the stability of the kingdom. Caliph Abd-al-Rahman III enlists Solomon to find him and protect Cordoba's future.*])

Note: Mesusan has also stated that he is working on a prequel to the Andalusian Trilogy, tentatively titled **The Lost Manuscript**. Originally intended as the trilogy's third volume, he decided to complete the trilogy with *The Missing Vizier* instead and reserve the prequel as a separate project. As of the latest information available, the prequel has not yet been published. – ChatGPT]

This series belongs to the genre of “historical who-dunnits”, and highlights the Convivencia, a period in 10th-century Islamic Spain characterized by a “culture of tolerance” where Muslims, Jews, and Christians lived together in a relatively harmonious society. The series features actual figures such as Caliph Abd-al-Rahman III and his advisor, Hasdai ibn Shaprut. Descriptions of cities like Córdoba, Seville, and Cádiz, as well as the Great Mosque of Córdoba, are based on historical and geographical reality. Google/AI offers the following reservation: “Readers and reviewers generally describe the series as an ‘evocative tale’ that brings a little-known time in history to life. However, historians often debate the extent of the “Andalusian Paradise,” noting that while it was enlightened for its time, it still faced significant political and religious complexities that fiction sometimes simplifies.” [Google/AI] In other words, it may not have been quite as harmonious and tolerant as all that.

Zygmunt Miłoszewski (born 1976 in Warsaw, Poland) is a bestselling Polish crime novelist and screenwriter. He is most famous for his crime trilogy featuring state prosecutor **Teodor Szacki**. The second book of that trilogy (**A Grain of Truth**) follows Prosecutor Szacki after he moves from Warsaw to the town of Sandomierz. He investigates a series of murders that mimic “blood libel” myths, forcing the character and readers to confront historical Polish-Jewish relations and deep-seated anti-Semitic prejudices.

The plot is inspired by actual anti-Semitic paintings still found in the Sandomierz Cathedral. The author uses the crime genre to provide social criticism of both historical and modern anti-

Semitism in Poland. The investigation forces characters to face “uncomfortable scabs” from centuries of Jewish life and the re-emergence of prejudices.

In his narratives, characters often encounter the remnants of Jewish culture, such as bodies found near former synagogues or characters discovering unexpected Jewish ancestry in their genealogical research. Prosecutor Szacki’s investigation includes interactions with a local rabbi, which serves as a vehicle for the author to discuss the shared “oversensitivity” and complex collective identities of both Poles and Jews.

Miloszewski has been credited with pioneering a style often called “Polish-Jewish noir,” using the “whodunnit” format to explore the dark undercurrents of national history. N.B. Miloszewski is not Jewish. [Google/AI] [See the entry on the 2015 movie version of this book in the companion list of Movies-Films-TV Series.]

Miloszewski, Zygmunt, (**A Grain of Truth: Polish State Prosecutor Szacki Investigates** [pb, Bitter Lemon Press, 2013]) 978-1908524027 [[See related film](#)]

Karim Miské (born 1964 in Abidjan, Ivory Coast) is a French-Mauritanian writer, documentary filmmaker, and novelist best known internationally for **Arab Jazz**. His background is notably transnational, the son of a Mauritanian diplomat and a French/Breton mother, who spent parts of his formative years in Côte d’Ivoire, Mauritania, Senegal, and France. This strongly influenced his later interest in multicultural identity, migration, religion, postcolonial politics, and hybrid urban cultures. He later settled in France and became known first for documentary filmmaking before publishing fiction.

Miské, Karim, (**Arab Jazz** [translated from the French by Sam Gordon, hc, MacLehose Press, 2016]) 978-1681446141 [pb, MacLehose Press, 2017] 978-1681446059 [*The novel is set in Paris’s multicultural 19th arrondissement and combines noir, police procedural, and social commentary about Muslim-Jewish relations, radicalism, immigration, and identity. The murder at the center of the plot appears to have ritual or sectarian overtones: a young woman is found mutilated with pork placed near the body, immediately provoking speculation about religious motives. It is virtually the only widely recognized French crime novel where a Jewish detective is part of the main investigative team. She is **Rachel Kupferstein** — a Jewish police lieutenant investigating the murder alongside her partner, Jean Hamelot.*]

Rachel is one of the more distinctive elements in the book because Miské deliberately uses her character to explore contemporary French Jewish identity in a multicultural and increasingly polarized Paris. Reviews and summaries describe her as intellectually inclined, emotionally complex, and deeply aware of the tensions between secular France, Jewish communal life, and rising Islamist radicalism. She is portrayed as culturally Jewish rather than stereotypically religious. Her surname and background place her within Ashkenazi/French-Jewish Parisian society. She operates in a world where Jewish and Muslim communities interact uneasily but constantly. Miské avoids making her merely symbolic; she functions as a competent noir investigator while also embodying anxieties about antisemitism and communal fragmentation in contemporary France. The novel includes encounters with Hasidic and neo-Lubavitch milieus, as well as Salafist networks, creating a parallel examination of Jewish and Muslim fundamentalisms. Her investigative partnership with Jean Hamelot also follows a classic “odd-couple detective duo” structure common in neo-noir police fiction, but refracted through France’s postcolonial ethnic and religious tensions.

Note that the novel is a “one-off”: neither Rachel nor any other Jewish character features in any other books or films of Miské’s. As far as English translation goes, Arab Jazz appears to be the

only one of Miské's novels widely available in English at present. Most of his other work has been documentary filmmaking rather than translated fiction.

What makes Rachel unusual in crime fiction is that she is not written in the older "Jewish intellectual detective" mold associated with figures like Rabbi David Small (in Harry Kemelman's series) or Ariel Kafka (in Harri Nykänen's Helsinki police novels). Instead, Rachel belongs to a newer European noir tradition where Jewish detectives are embedded in multicultural urban conflict zones. Her Jewish identity becomes one axis among many — alongside Arab identity, secularism, race, immigration, and religious extremism.] [ChatGPT]

*See comments on Claire Gorrara's book, **French crime fiction and the Second World War**, in the non-fiction section below; and on the 2006 movie, **Tell No One**, in the companion Movies-Films list.*

Patrick Modiano (born 1945, near Paris, where he resides today) — prominent French novelist, winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2014, best known for his haunting explorations of memory, identity, disappearance, and life in Nazi-occupied France. He is generally not interested in "Jewish crime" in the gangster/noir sense. Rather, he explores how Jews were entangled in clandestinity, illegality, survival economies, and persecution during and after the Nazi occupation. In his novels, the Occupation often appears less as a conventional wartime setting than as a morally ambiguous noir universe where legality itself has collapsed. His occupied Paris is a world of black marketeers, collaborators, smugglers, pimps, corrupt policemen, stateless wanderers and Jews living with false papers and identities. The emphasis is thus less on overt Jewish identity than on disappearance, uncertainty, memory gaps, archival traces, police files and the fear of arrest. This creates a strong overlap between detective fiction and Holocaust memory.

Modiano, Patrick, **Dora Bruder** [translated from the French by Joanna Kilmartin, hc, U. of California Press, 1999] 978-0520214262 [pb, U. of California Press, 2014] 978-0520218789

[This is the clearest example of Modiano's general trajectory. The clearest example is Dora Bruder. The book reconstructs the life of a Jewish teenage girl who disappeared in occupied Paris and was eventually deported to Auschwitz. The recurring plot elements are police records, missing-person notices, bureaucratic tracking, arrests and internment, and collaborationist policing. The book reads partly like a detective investigation and partly like an inquiry into how states criminalize vulnerable people — especially Jews.]

Modiano, Patrick, (**The Occupation Trilogy: La Place de l'Étoile - The Night Watch - Ring Roads** [translated from the French by Frank Wynne, pb, Bloomsbury USA, 2015]) 978-1632863720 [hc, Bloomsbury, 2015] 978-1408867907 *[Modiano's first three novels, published between 1968 and 1972, established the central themes that would dominate his career: occupied Paris, collaboration and black-market networks, Jewish identity, moral ambiguity, missing or unstable identities, memory and guilt. The epigraph to his first novel, among the first to seriously question Nazi collaboration in France, reads: "In June 1942 a German officer goes up to a young man and says: 'Excuse me, monsieur, where is La Place de l'Étoile?' The young man points to the star on his chest." The second novel, The Night Watch, tells the story of a young man caught between his work for the French Gestapo, his work for a Resistance cell, and the black marketeers whose milieu he shares. Ring Roads recounts a son's search for his Jewish father who disappeared ten years earlier, whom he finds trying to weather the war in service to unsavory characters. Together these three brilliant, almost hallucinatory evocations of the Occupation attempt to exorcise the past by exploring the morally ambiguous worlds of collaboration and resistance.] [Amazon & ChatGPT]*

Modiano, Patrick, **Missing Person** (French title: **Rue des Boutiques Obscures**, translated from the French by Daniel Weissbort, hc, Vintage/Ebury, 1980] 978-0224017893 [pb, Penguin UK, 2019] 978-0241402184 [*'I am nothing. Nothing but a pale shape, silhouetted that evening against the café terrace, waiting for the rain to stop.'* Guy Roland, a private detective in Paris, is trying to solve the mystery of his own past. His memories erased by amnesia, he has no idea where he is from, or even his real name. As he searches for clues through the city's shadowy streets and smoky bars, latching on to strangers, accumulating mementoes, photographs, scraps and stories, he starts to piece together the events that brought him here, all leading back to the murky days of wartime occupation. Again, the detective form becomes a mechanism for investigating erased Jewish memory.

Modiano is often described as adjacent to noir or anti-detective fiction. In his novels, investigations rarely resolve cleanly, archives are incomplete, identities remain unstable; guilt is collective and diffuse. The the mystery is historical memory itself and the "crime" is often collaboration, betrayal, denunciation, disappearance, or forgetting. In sum, Modiano is less interested in Jewish detectives or gangsters than in the blurred zone where persecuted Jews, criminals, collaborators, and survivors moved through wartime Paris under conditions of fear and moral ambiguity. [Amazon & Chat GPT]

Harri Nykänen (1953–2023, born in Helsinki, Finland) was a prominent Finnish crime writer and journalist, best known for creating the popular **Raid** book series, which follows a professional hitman. His fiction typically explores the local underworld from the perspectives of criminals, terrorists, and unconventional police inspectors, such as the character **Ariel Kafka**. *Kafka* is a middle-aged lieutenant in the Helsinki Police's Violent Crime Unit. His Jewish identity is a central element of the narratives, often intersecting with his investigations in a secular Finnish society.

*Kafka identifies himself as "a police officer first, a Finn second, and a Jew third". His perspective provides a window into the small Finnish-Jewish community, which consists of roughly 1,500 people. Several novels are timed around significant Jewish holidays or utilize religious themes. For example, **Nights of Awe** is set during the **Days of Awe** (the period between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur), forcing the secularized Kafka to reflect on themes of sin and repentance. The plots often involve clashes between Kafka's professional duties and his heritage, such as investigations involving Arab-Finnish relations, the Mossad, and local Jewish congregants. The series features Kafka's brother, Eli, and explores the social pressures within the close-knit Helsinki Jewish community, including sardonic commentary on Kafka's status as a perpetual bachelor.*

Nykänen, who is not Jewish himself, conducted extensive research and interviewed members of the Helsinki Jewish community to ensure an authentic portrayal. The three books in the series translated into English are listed below. Two other books in the series have not so far been translated. [Google/AI]

Nykänen, Harri [*Ariel Kafka* #1], (**Nights of Awe** [pb, translated from the Finnish by Kristian London, Bitter Lemon Press, 2012]) 978-1904738930

Nykänen, Harri [*Ariel Kafka* #2], (**Behind God's Back** [pb, translated from the Finnish by Kristian London, Bitter Lemon Press, 2014]) 978-1908524423

Nykänen, Harri [*Ariel Kafka* #3], (**Holy Ceremony** [pb, translated from the Finnish by Kristian London, Bitter Lemon Press, 2019] 978-1908524898

Sergio Olguin [born 1967 in Buenos Aires, Argentina] – prominent Argentinian author, journalist and literary critic, creator of the 4-volume **Verónica Rosenthal Mystery series**. A fifth volume has been published and is being translated into English. Verónica is a “brazen, openly flawed” Jewish investigative journalist in Buenos Aires who is known for her sexual adventurousness and relentless pursuit of justice regardless of the danger to herself. The series explores themes of corruption, social inequality, and political power in Argentina. Verónica is a secular Jewish woman whose father, **Aaron Rosenthal**, is a powerful and prestigious lawyer in Buenos Aires, and the series occasionally explores their family history and childhood memories. Her maternal grandfather was an Eastern European Jew and a communist militant who lived in Palestine before moving to Argentina in the late 1940s. This backstory highlights her family’s roots in the 20th-century Jewish diaspora. Her identity is closely tied to her status as a member of the Jewish middle-to-upper class in Buenos Aires. Reviews often contrast her privileged upbringing with the “gritty desperation” of the impoverished neighborhoods she investigates. Miranda France translated the series from Spanish to English. [Google/AI]

Olguin, Sergio [Verónica Rosenthal #1], (**The Fragility of Bodies** (pb, Bitter Lemon Press, 2019) 978-1912242191 [Verónica investigates the suicide of a train driver, leading her to uncover a horrific “game” where young boys are paid to play chicken with trains while wealthy adults bet on the outcome.]

Olguin, Sergio [Verónica Rosenthal #2], (**The Foreign Girls** (pb, Bitter Lemon Press, 2021) 978-1913394387 [While on holiday in northern Argentina, Verónica’s friends—two European backpackers — are murdered in what appears to be a ritual killing. She uncovers a conspiracy involving the local elite and political cover-ups.

Olguin, Sergio [Verónica Rosenthal #3], (**There Are No Happy Loves** (pb, Bitter Lemon Press, 2022) 978-1913394714 [Verónica investigates a car accident survivor who believes his “dead” family was actually abducted. This leads into a dark web of illegal adoptions and human body parts trafficking involving religious and political figures.]

Olguin, Sergio [Verónica Rosenthal #4], (**The Best Enemy** (pb, Bitter Lemon Press, 2025) 978-1916725096 [The story takes an international turn, connecting Buenos Aires corruption to events in the Middle East, specifically Gaza, while exploring Verónica’s childhood and her family’s past.] [Google/AI]

Joseph Opatoshu (born in 1886 near Mława, Poland, then part of the Russian Empire, died in 1954 in New York City) [- His father came from a Hasidic family but embraced the Jewish Enlightenment (Haskalah), giving Joseph both a traditional Jewish education and access to Polish secular schooling. Emigrated to New York in 1907, where he became associated with the Di Yunge (“The Young Ones”) literary movement, which emphasized artistic quality over ideological or didactic writing. He wrote for the Yiddish press throughout his career, while publishing novels, historical fiction, and hundreds of short stories.

Opatoshu, Joseph, (*In Polish Woods - In Poylishe Velder* [אין פוילישע וועלדער] [hc, New York: M. N. Mayzel, 1921; translated from the Yiddish by Isaac Goldberg, Jewish Publication Society, 1938; reprinted by Literary Licensing LLC, 2012] 978-1258453060 [pb, Literary Licensing LLC, 2012] 978-1258454425 [Generally regarded as his masterpiece. Set during the decades preceding the Polish uprising of 1863, it follows a young Jewish intellectual torn between Hasidic tradition, Polish nationalism and modern secular culture. The novel paints an extraordinarily rich portrait of Jewish life in rural Poland while examining the attraction of Polish revolutionary ideals. The book became one of the most widely read historical novels in Yiddish literature and went through numerous editions and translations.

Opatoshu, Joseph, (Romance of a Horse-Thief - A Roman fun a Ferd-Ganef (-רומאן פֿון אַ פֿערד-גאַנעף) (גנב). [1912 novella translated from the Yiddish by David G. Roskies and appearing as a chapter in Ruth Wisse, A Shtetl and Other Novellas [hc, Behrman House, 1973] and reprinted by Wayne State UP, 1986] 978-0814318485 [See related film]. [- follows a charismatic Jewish horse thief who lives beyond the boundaries of respectable Jewish society. Rather than presenting crime simply as moral failure, Opatoshu portrays the outlaw world as possessing its own codes of loyalty, courage, and tragedy. This depicts pre-modern rural Jewish criminality, showing that criminal figures existed inside Jewish society long before modern organized crime and were not just an external aberration. See also the entry on the 1971 movie version in the companion Filmography.]

Opatoshu, Joseph, (A Day in Regensburg [lead novella - A tog in Regensburg un Eliyahu Boher (א טאג אין רעגענסבורג און אליהו בחור) – originally published in 1933 - hc, transl. from the Yiddish by Jacob Sloan Opatoshu, together with 20 additional short stories, Jewish Publication Society, 1968] B0006BULJI [A historical novella set in sixteenth-century Germany. The narrative depicts Jewish life under severe legal restrictions while exploring relations between Jews and Christians in the Holy Roman Empire.

Opatoshu wrote numerous other works, including treatments of Jewish immigrant life and anti-black racism in America and a novel about Rabbi Akiva, Bar Kochba and the revolt against Rome. These and many other of his significant works—such as his 1863 Polish uprising sequels or his American novel Lost People (Ferloyrene Menshn)—remain untranslated or restricted to academic anthologies. He is noted for exploring the porous boundaries between respectable society, poverty, crime, and rebellion. His fiction broadens the history of “Jewish crime literature” beyond the twentieth-century urban gangster to include rural thieves, smugglers, and other social outcasts. In that respect, Opatoshu stands almost alone among major Yiddish novelists. While writers such as Bergelson, Der Nister, or Grade occasionally depict deception, black markets, or morally compromised individuals, Opatoshu repeatedly places criminal or marginal figures at the center of his narratives and treats them with literary seriousness rather than as mere villains. – ChatGPT]

Leonardo Padura (born 1955 in Havana, Cuba) - prominent Cuban novelist, journalist, and screenwriter. He authored a series featuring **Detective Mario Conde** operating in Cuba. He is widely credited with renovating Cuban crime fiction in the 1990s, after the Soviet collapse gutted the island's economy, by writing morally complex, ironic novels where “even the police are savagely policed” — using genre fiction to portray corruption, repression, hypocrisy, and daily hardship in Cuba more honestly than earlier state-sanctioned literature had allowed. He chose to stay in Cuba through the hardest years of the 1990s rather than emigrate, and continues to live and write there.

Padura, Leonardo, (**Heretics** [hc, Farrar & Giroux, 2017]) 978-0374168858 [pb, Bitter Lemon Press, 2017] 978-1908524782 [In 1939, the ship Saint Louis sails from Hamburg into Havana's port carrying 937 Jewish refugees seeking asylum from the Nazi regime. Nine-year-old Daniel Kaminsky watches from the docks as the passengers — including his own mother, father, and sister — become caught up in Cuban political corruption. (He had been sent ahead earlier, to live with an uncle.) The Kaminsky family is pinned to a fragile hope: a small Rembrandt portrait of Christ that they believe can help save them. But six days later the ship is forced back out of the harbor with the family still aboard, sent back toward the horrors unfolding in Europe, and the Kaminskys — along with their priceless heirloom — vanish. Almost seventy years later, the Rembrandt resurfaces at a London auction house, prompting Daniel's son to travel to Cuba to trace what happened to his family's lost painting. He hires down-on-his-luck ex-cop turned rare-

book dealer Mario Conde to help him unravel it. Conde is Padura's long-time protagonist, worn down, torn between numbing himself with routine, friends, and drink, and a restless mind that keeps chasing bigger questions. Hired to trace the painting and, in a related thread, a missing girl in present-day Havana, Conde ties together the novel's many threads of history, religion, politics, and philosophy in his search for the missing Rembrandt and the missing girl, moving across generations and locations — from 1939 Havana to the present day, and back to seventeenth-century Poland and the Netherlands to trace the Jewish diaspora.

The novel also flashes back to Rembrandt's own studio in Amsterdam, weaving in the story of the painting's creation and its journey through the hands of people — including Jewish subjects and associates — caught between religious conviction and worldly pressures.

The title reflects the book's true subject, not one heresy but many: the story of people forced to choose between the tenets of their faith and the realities of the world, between their personal desires and the demands of their times. One reviewer summarized it as populated by "heretics" of many sorts — religious, artistic, political and social. The novel folds in a present-day subplot about Havana's "Emo" youth subculture, kids who cut themselves off from society and self-harm, giving Padura another lens on rebellion and nonconformity.

The core crime in the book is the 1939 turning-away of the Saint Louis, an act of state and bureaucratic corruption that condemns the Kaminsky family to the Holocaust. Cuban officials extract bribes, break promises, and send refugees back to Europe knowing what likely awaits them. Padura frames anti-Semitism itself as the crime, and the theft of the Rembrandt (and the family's disappearance) as its direct downstream consequence.

Mario Conde is not Jewish — he's a lapsed-everything Havana ex-cop — so when he's pulled into the Kaminsky family's story, Padura uses him as a vehicle for the reader's own outsider perspective on Jewish history and diaspora. The "crime" he's solving requires him to learn Jewish history (Amsterdam, Poland, the diaspora) rather than bring it with him, which lets Padura do more explaining and mourning of that history than a Jewish

Padura pushed back against reading the book as narrowly "a Jewish novel," saying he wanted it to be a reflection that went beyond a perspective locked into a single context and became as universal as the issues of freedom, free will, and heresy are — using Jewish historical experience (persecution, exile, religious dissent) as the sharpest available lens for a broader argument he's also making about Cuba: dissent from the Revolution, disillusionment, and the cost of nonconformity under any orthodoxy. — Claude]

Sara Poole (born 1951) - "Sara Poole" is a pseudonym for the well-known Romance author, **Maura Seger**. She adopted it when she began a series of historical thrillers based on the Borgia family in Renaissance Italy. The main protagonist, **Francesca Giordano**, is the non-Jewish official Poisoner of the Borgia family (what can you say? It's a living) in Rome, who becomes involved in saving the Jewish community of Rome from expulsion by the aging Pope. She is deeply connected to the Jewish community through her late father's contacts and her own empathy for their plight. Her investigation frequently takes her into the labyrinthine Jewish ghetto, many of whose inhabitants are recent refugees from the Spanish Inquisition. The novel is set in summer, 1492. **Rocco** is a talented Jewish glassblower living in Rome's ghetto. He is Francesca's "old friend" and develops into a romantic interest. He holds "secrets to hide" and provides Francesca with critical support and information during her investigation into her father's murder.

Poole, Sara, (**Poison: A Novel of the Renaissance** [pb, St. Martin's Griffin, 2020] 978-0312609832

Jonathan Rabb [born 1964 in Boston, MA] - an American author, essayist, and actor, currently professor of writing at the Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD). He has written six novels, including his acclaimed “Berlin Trilogy,” which follows Detective **Nikolai Hoffner** through pre-war Germany in a 3-book series:

Rosa: Centers on the investigation into the murder of **Rosa Luxemburg**, the real-life Jewish socialist revolutionary

The Second Son: The protagonist, Detective Inspector Nikolai Hoffner, is **half-Jewish**, which leads to him being dismissed from the police force by the Nazi regime in 1936.

Rising Antisemitism: The trilogy serves as a “metaphorical confrontation” against the rising tyranny of the Nazi party. [See entries on **Paul Grossman** and **Philip Kerr** in this Bibliography.] [Google/AI]

Rabb, Jonathan, [*Nikolai Hoffner #1*], (**Rosa** [hc, Crown Publishers, 2005]) 978-1400049219 [pb, Picador, 2012] 978-1250008725

Rabb, Jonathan [*Nikolai Hoffner #2*], (**Shadow and Light** [hc, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2009]) 978-0374261948 [pb, Picador Paper, 2010] 978-0312429416

Rabb, Jonathan [*Nikolai Hoffner #3*], (**The Second Son** [hc, Sarah Crichton Books, 2011]) 978-0374299132

Isaac Rabon (born 1900 in Gowarczów (then Russian Poland) and raised in Łódź, especially the impoverished Jewish district of Baluty (Balut), which later became the setting of his best-known fiction. His father died while Rabon was young, leaving the family in severe poverty. He worked at various menial jobs, including painting signs and posters. He served as a soldier during the Polish-Soviet War, an experience that profoundly influenced his writing. During the 1920s and 1930s became one of the leading Yiddish modernists in Poland, publishing in major literary journals. Following the German invasion of Poland, he fled first to Białystok and later to Vilnius. In 1941 he was murdered by the Nazis, probably at **Ponary (Paneriai)** near Vilnius. Although he produced a relatively small body of work—two novels, several poetry collections, and short fiction—his reputation has steadily risen over the last few decades. Unlike writers such as Sholem Asch or Joseph Opatoshu, Rabon presents Jewish life not through family sagas or ideological conflicts but through alienation, urban poverty, violence, and psychological dislocation. His writings focus on criminal underworlds, urban marginality, prostitution, theft, violence, homelessness, social exclusion and the criminalization of poverty. Unlike detective fiction, Rabon’s novels depict crime as a natural product of social collapse rather than as a puzzle to be solved.

Rabon, Isaac, (**Balut: Novel of a Suburb - Balut: Roman fun a Forshtot**) (1934) – no English translation. The novel portrays an entire social ecosystem of this slum district, whose inhabitants include thieves, fences, smugglers, prostitutes, pimps, unemployed workers, beggars, petty swindlers and religious Jews struggling alongside criminals. Crime is not sensationalized. Instead Rabon shows how poverty, overcrowding and hopelessness create an environment in which criminal behaviour becomes almost inevitable. Unlike gangster novels in which Jewish criminals appear as exceptional individuals, **Balut** depicts crime as embedded within everyday Jewish communal life. Its value lies in its sociological realism rather than detective plotting.

Rabon, Isaac, (**Di Gas - The Street**) (Warsaw, L. Goldfarb, 1928) [hc, transl. from the Yiddish by Leonard Wolf, Schocken, 1985] 978-0805239812 [pb, Four Walls Eight Windows, 1990] 978-0941423458 [*The anonymous narrator, a discharged Jewish soldier, wanders through Łódź*

searching for work. He encounters circus performers, drifters, prostitutes, criminals, exploitative employers, beggars and people living on the margins of legality. The novel is essentially an existential journey through the underside of Jewish urban life, marked social disintegration, black-market survival and moral ambiguity. Crime functions as an aspect of everyday existence rather than the novel's plot.

Rabon, Isaac, (**Di Klöle fun Blut (The Curse of Blood) (1926)** – no English translation. Published under the pseudonym **Y. Rozental**. [Although less well known today, it includes themes of violence, social conflict and moral corruption within Jewish society rather than conventional crime fiction.

Unlike writers who focus on individual Jewish criminals (such as Isaac Babel's *Benya Krik* cycle), Rabon's distinctive contribution is his portrayal of an entire Jewish urban environment in which crime is woven into the fabric of everyday survival. That makes *Balut* one of the most valuable Yiddish novels for understanding representations of Jewish poverty, criminality, and social marginality in interwar Eastern Europe. – ChatGPT]

Caroline Medora Sale Roe (1943–2021, born in Windsor, Ontario, Canada) was an award-winning Canadian novelist recognized for her work in the mystery and detective genres. She earned a Ph.D. in Medieval Studies in the early 1970s. Her doctoral research focused on religious diversity during the Medieval Era, a theme that heavily influenced her later fiction. She published work under two distinct names:

Medora Sale: Used for contemporary police procedurals set in Toronto, featuring **Detective John Sanders** and architectural photographer **Harriet Jeffries**.

Caroline Roe: Used for historical mysteries, specifically the **Chronicles of Isaac of Girona**, which follow a 14th-century blind Jewish physician.

The **Chronicles of Isaac of Girona** series is deeply rooted in 14th-century Jewish life in Spain, leveraging Caroline Roe's PhD in Medieval Studies to create a meticulously researched portrayal of the period.

The Jewish content is central to the series in the following ways:

- **Protagonist & Perspective:** The main character, **Isaac of Girona**, is a blind Jewish physician. His blindness makes him a “double outsider”—both as a Jew in a Christian society and as a man who cannot see—which allows him to observe social nuances others miss.
- **The “Call” (Jewish Quarter):** The stories are primarily set in Girona's medieval Jewish quarter, known as the **Call**. Roe uses her knowledge of its well-preserved streets, like **Carrer de la Força**, to depict a vibrant community of scholars, shopkeepers, and doctors.
- **Interfaith Relations:** A recurring theme is the complex relationship between the Jewish community and the Christian authorities. Isaac frequently serves as the personal physician and confidant to the Bishop of Girona, illustrating the “convivencia” (coexistence) and the underlying tensions of the era.
- **Medical & Scientific Knowledge:** The series explores the high regard for Jewish medical expertise in the Middle Ages. Isaac utilizes his heightened senses and knowledge of herbal remedies to solve crimes, reflecting the historical role of Jewish healers.
- **Kabbalistic & Scholarly History:** While Isaac is a fictional creation, the series is set in the historical home of renowned Jewish figures like Nahmanides and the Girona School of

Kabbalah, subtly weaving this intellectual atmosphere into the narrative backdrop.

[Google/AI]

Roe, Caroline Medora Sale [*The Chronicles of Isaac of Girona #1*], (**Remedy for Treason** [mass mkt pb, Berkley, 1998]) 978-0425162958 [library binding, Bt. Bound, 2001] 978-0613293327

Roe, Caroline Medora Sale [*The Chronicles of Isaac of Girona #2*], (**Cure for a Charlatan** [mass mkt pb, Berkley, 1999]) 978-0425167342

Roe, Caroline Medora Sale [*The Chronicles of Isaac of Girona #3*], (**An Antidote for Avarice** [mass mkt pb, Berkley, 1999]) 978-0425172605

Roe, Caroline Medora Sale [*The Chronicles of Isaac of Girona #4*], (**Solace for a Sinner** [mass mkt pb, Berkley, 2000]) 978-0425177761

Roe, Caroline Medora Sale [*The Chronicles of Isaac of Girona #5*], (**A Potion for a Widow** [mass mkt pb, Berkley, 2001]) 978-0425183656

Roe, Caroline Medora Sale [*The Chronicles of Isaac of Girona #6*], (**A Draught For a Dead Man** [hc, Berkley Hardcover, 2002]) 978-0425186480 [mass mkt pb, Berkley, 2003] 978-0425193082

Roe, Caroline Medora Sale [*The Chronicles of Isaac of Girona #7*], (**A Poultice For A Healer** [hc, Berkley, 2003]) 978-0425191927 [mass mkt pb, Berkley, 2004] 978-0425198667

Roe, Caroline Medora Sale [*The Chronicles of Isaac of Girona #8*], (**Consolation for an Exile** [hc, Berkley, 2004]) 978-0425198377 [mass mkt pb, Berkley, 2005] 978-0425201817

Dina Rubina (born 1953 In Tashkent, Uzbek SSR [then USSR], now residing in Mevasseret Tsiyon, Israel) [*Her parents were both Ukrainian Jews, her mother having been evacuated from Poltava to Tashkent, and her father having served as a front-line soldier in the Soviet army during the war. She began publishing short stories as a teenager, studied music at Tashkent Conservatory, and moved to Moscow in the mid-1980s after some years writing for stage and screen. She made aliyah to Israel in 1990. She is considered one of the most prominent Russian-language Israeli writers, with books translated into 30 languages. Her major themes are Jewish and Israeli history, migration, and the interplay between Israeli and Russian Jewish cultures and languages. She continues to write exclusively in Russian, describing her Israeli environment as adding new “auditory and associative overtones” to her Russian prose rather than replacing it. Note: I classified Daniil Kluger, another Russian-language Israeli author, in my Israeli authors category and Dina Rubina among the International authors, only because more of Kluger’s novels are set in Israel. Kluger moved to Israel in 1994, Rubina in 1990. The distinction is technical and a bit arbitrary. Books of relevance:*

Rubina, Dina, **Liubka (Любка), 1989** - novella translated from the Russian by Marian Schwartz, published in the literary journal “Story”, no. 25 (1991): 25–37. [*The head of a gang, professional thief and criminal, Liubka turns out to be the only honest person, the only one who does not betray Irina Mikhailovna, the young Jewish doctor who becomes subject to alienation and persecution because of the “Doctors’ case” in the mid-50s. The “Doctors’ Plot” was the real 1953 Stalin-era antisemitic conspiracy campaign against Jewish physicians. Critics consider it Rubina’s most socio-political story, reflecting the atmosphere of the first perestroika years, with the doctor’s Jewishness serving as a marker of social alienation. Crime (organized theft) and Jewish persecution are directly interwoven here.*

Rubina, Dina, **The White Dove of Cordova (Белая голубка Кордовы), 2009** – not available in English translation. [*The protagonist, Zakhar (Zakhar) Kordovin, is a charismatic Russian-born Israeli art historian, painter, and internationally respected authority on European art. Publicly he*

lectures, authenticates Old Master paintings, and advises museums and collectors. Secretly, however, he is one of the world's greatest art forgers, capable of reproducing the techniques of artists from El Greco to Modigliani with astonishing precision. His double life allows him to deceive collectors while preserving what he sees as a higher artistic truth.

Rubina gradually reveals that Zakhar's criminal career grew out of tragedy. As a young man in Leningrad he and his gifted friend **Andrei** inherited access to a cache of masterpieces hidden before the Second World War. Their remarkable talents attracted the attention of unscrupulous art dealers and organized criminals. Betrayal followed: the collection disappeared, Andrei was brutally murdered, and Zakhar dedicated his life both to mastering forgery and to finding those responsible.

Years later, while attending an academic conference in Spain, Zakhar discovers what appears to be an insignificant old painting. His trained eye recognizes clues suggesting that it conceals a forgotten work connected with the circle of **El Greco**. The discovery sets in motion an international intrigue involving museum experts, Vatican officials, collectors, art traffickers, and organized criminals. At the same time, Zakhar continues his decades-long search for the man who destroyed his friend's life.

The investigation unexpectedly becomes a journey into Zakhar's own ancestry. In Córdoba he uncovers evidence that his family descends from **Sephardic Jews expelled from Spain in 1492**. The mysterious painting, together with family heirlooms and Hebrew inscriptions, reveals links to forgotten ancestors named **Cordova**, suggesting that the work he had manipulated for profit was actually the creation of one of his own forebears rather than an El Greco masterpiece. This realization forces him to confront the irony that he has erased his own family's artistic legacy in pursuit of wealth and revenge.

In the novel's climax, Zakhar abandons his lucrative fraud, rejects the enormous financial rewards attached to the forged attribution, and attempts to restore the painting's true authorship. By doing so he symbolically restores his family's historical identity as well. Pursued by gangsters whose interests he has betrayed, he sacrifices himself so that others may survive, bringing together the novel's themes of redemption, ancestry, and moral responsibility.

Rubina, Dina, **The "Russian Canary" trilogy (Русская канарейка) — Zheltukhin (2014), Voice/Golos (2014), Prodigal Son/Bludny Syn (2015)** - not available in English translation. [This is a multi-generational Jewish family saga [the Etinger family] spanning Odessa, Vienna, Kazakhstan and beyond, which — as one reader review put it — turns into a spy novel... with the plot twisting through a dozen or so countries and dwelling on the sacrifices of intelligence agents. Notably, the trilogy isn't particularly preoccupied with identity politics — there's no tortured musing about what it means to be Israeli, Russian, or Western despite the intelligence-agency backdrop, which makes it read more as a genre spy story riding on top of the family saga than as an ideological novel. It was released as an audiobook, narrated by Rubina herself in Russian.

Rubina, Dina, **Here Comes the Messiah!** (Вот идёт Мессия!, Russian original 1996) [translated by Daniel M. Jaffe, Zephyr Press, 2000] – hc - 978-0939010622 and pb - 978-0939010608 [- Considered one of Rubina's most important works, it is structured as a story within a story. It follows Ziama, a Russian Jewish émigré woman living in Israel, whose life is being written by a character called "Writer N." — herself also a Russian émigré. The narrative moves back and forth between Writer N.'s own life and the fictional life of Ziama that she's creating, with hints that even Writer N. may be a construct of yet another narrator layered above her.

Through this frame, Rubina populates the book with people claiming to be the Messiah, con artists and their victims, Jewish and Christian pilgrims, Holocaust survivors, Palestinian Arabs, journalists, gay characters, children, and even pets — all negotiating the absurdities and dangers

of daily life in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, and the West Bank. It's been described as both a satire of Russian émigré life in Israel and an exploration of the spiritual, messianic undercurrents running through the region's multi-ethnic population — essentially a modern, postmodern retelling of a biblical story about a people gone astray and searching for redemption, told with a mix of comedy and genuine sorrow. – Claude]

Nokhum-Meyer (Nahum Meir) Shaykevitsh (pen name: “Shomer”, meaning guardian or watchman, born between 1846 and 1850 [the sources differ], in Nesvizh, Minsk Governorate, Russian Empire (today Belarus) and died in 1905 in New York City) [*Born into a relatively prosperous family which experienced financial instability. Received a traditional Jewish education in heder and yeshiva, displaying an exceptional memory and mastery of biblical texts. At the same time, he secretly read works outside the traditional curriculum, including Josephus, Moses Mendelssohn's German translation of the Bible, Avraham Mapu's Hebrew novels, and Kalman Schulman's Hebrew adaptation of Eugène Sue's The Mysteries of Paris. These readings profoundly influenced his later style, especially his fascination with melodrama and serialized fiction.*

During the Russo-Turkish War (1877–1878) he worked as a military contractor in Bucharest, where he met Abraham Goldfaden. Goldfaden's theatrical innovations inspired Shaykevitsh to write plays and organize theatrical companies.

*His literary output was extraordinary: over **200 Yiddish novels and novellas**, about **50 plays**, approximately **15 Hebrew novels**, and hundreds of poems, stories, essays, and practical manuals. His novels appeared rapidly in inexpensive pamphlet editions and were read throughout Eastern Europe and, later, among Jewish immigrants in America. They were especially popular among newly literate readers. His fiction drew heavily on adventure novels, melodrama, historical romance, crime stories, mistaken identities, family secrets, kidnappings, aristocratic villains, courtroom scenes, and sensational revelations. Many plots were adapted or freely reworked from French, German, Russian, and English popular fiction—especially the works of Eugène Sue and Alexandre Dumas. Because of this, Shomer became the leading representative of **shund (trash) literature**, a label that originally meant inexpensive popular entertainment rather than necessarily poor writing. Modern scholars increasingly regard him as a pioneer of Jewish mass-market literature.*

For a small taste of his style, here are a few of his titles, in transliterated Yiddish and English translations:

Der frumer morder – The Pious Murderer;

Der katorzhnik – The Convict/The Exile/The Penal Servitude prisoner;

Der blutiker adye – The Bloody Farewell;

Der bal-tshuve (play) – The Penitent;

Trefnyak (play) – The Non-Kosher or Impure One.

*In 1888, Sholem Aleichem published **Shomer's Mishpat** (“The Trial of Shomer”), a satirical attack accusing Shomer of corrupting Yiddish literature through sensationalism and artistic carelessness. Shomer later defended himself in his pamphlet **Yehi Or** (“Let There Be Light,” 1898), arguing that he consciously wrote for ordinary readers who were not yet ready for more sophisticated literature. He believed popular fiction served as a bridge to higher literary culture.*

In 1889 Shaykevitsh emigrated to New York City, joining the flourishing Yiddish literary and theatrical community on the Lower East Side. He continued churning out novels, plays and

newspaper articles and remained one of the best-selling Yiddish authors until his death. His **1905 funeral** drew tens of thousands of mourners in New York, demonstrating his immense popularity among ordinary Yiddish readers despite the disdain of literary critics. His later reputation suffered from this widespread disdain and influenced the fact that no English translations of his novels are available, or were ever apparently undertaken. His writings are known in English primarily through biographical and critical discussions, brief translated excerpts, and contemporary memoirs. Today he is increasingly regarded as the founder of modern popular Yiddish fiction and an important precursor to Jewish crime fiction in Yiddish. – ChatGPT]

Javier Sinay (born 1980 in Buenos Aires) [- a contemporary Argentine writer and investigative journalist living in Buenos Aires. Sinay specialized in narrative journalism and true crime (known in Spanish as *crónica*). He has worked extensively across Latin America, serving as the editor of *Rolling Stone* (Argentina) and a South American correspondent for Mexico's *El Universal*. His work frequently appears in prominent publications like *La Nación*, *Clarín*, and international outlets including *Gatopardo* and *Tablet Magazine*. In 2015, he won the prestigious *Gabriel García Márquez Award* for his narrative journalism, and his book *Sangre joven* won the *Rodolfo Walsh Prize* for crime writing. Sinay has profoundly enriched Latin American Jewish literature by bridging the gap between forgotten **Yiddish-language history** and modern Spanish/English readership. In his 2021 work, *La caja de letras* ("The Box of Letters"), Sinay translated and resurrected a nearly century-old text tracking the history of early 20th-century Jewish-Argentine journalism. His work provides deep historical context on the early agricultural *shtetls* of Argentina, exploring the unique intersection of Jewish immigrants adapting to the rugged life of the South American pampas.]

Sinay, Javier, (**The Murders of Moisés Ville: The Rise and Fall of the Jerusalem of South America** [originally published in Spanish in 2013 and translated by Robert Croll, hc, Restless Books, 2022] 978-1632062987 [- Javier Sinay discovers an article from 1947 by his great-grandfather, Mijl (Mihl) Hacohen Sinay, a pioneering Yiddish journalist and editor, detailing twenty-two unsolved murders in Moisés Ville at the end of the 19th century. He launches his own investigation that soon turns into an exploration of the history of Moisés Ville, one of the first Jewish agricultural communities in Argentina, and Sinay's own connection to this historically thriving Jewish epicenter.

Seeking refuge from the pogroms of Czarist Russia, a group of Jewish immigrants founded Moisés Ville in the late 1880s. Like their town's prophetic namesake, these immigrants fled one form of persecution only to encounter a different set of hardships: exploitative land prices, starvation, illness, language barriers, and a series of murders perpetrated by roving *gauchos* who preyed upon their vulnerability. Sinay, though a descendant of these immigrants, is unfamiliar with this turbulent history, and his research into the spate of violence plunges him into his family's past and their link to Moisés Ville. He combs through libraries and archives in search of documents about the murders and hires a book detective to track down issues of *Der Viderkol*, the first Yiddish newspaper in Argentina started by his great-grandfather. He even enrolls in Yiddish classes so he can read the newspaper and other contemporaneous records for himself. Through interviews with his family members, current residents of Moisés Ville, historians, and archivists, Sinay compiles moving portraits of the victims of these heinous murders and reveals the fascinating and complex history of the town once known as the "Jerusalem of South America." – Amazon]

Isaac Bashevis Singer (1903–1991) – Polish-born Yiddish author, winner of 1978 Nobel Prize for Literature. He is celebrated for his vivid depictions of the vanished world of

Eastern European Jewry and for his exploration of the tension between Jewish tradition and modern secularism. After emigrating to the U.S. in 1935 to escape the rise of Nazism, he settled in New York and spent the rest of his career writing for the Yiddish newspaper **The Jewish Daily Forward** (Forverts), where most of his work was first serialized. He integrated crime and mystery motifs into his writing by blending psychological realism with Jewish mystical traditions, often using transgression as a vehicle to explore the “riddle of existence”.

Transgression as Spiritual Mystery: Crime in Singer’s work is rarely just about law-breaking; it is a manifestation of the **Yeytser-hore** (the Evil Inclination). In stories like *Under the Knife*, he plumbs the psyche of murderers not to solve a “whodunit,” but to examine the moral chaos and absence of remorse in the human soul.

- **The “Grotesque Underworld”:** He often satirized society as a “grotesque underworld” where violence, rape, and betrayal are portrayed unflinchingly to reveal the “abyss of cruelty”. This atmosphere creates a noir-like tension where the “mystery” is often the **inscrutability of God** or the “cosmic silence” in the face of evil.
- **Detective-like Metaphysics:** His characters—such as the skeptics and seekers in *The Magician of Lublin*—often act as metaphysical detectives trying to solve the “riddle of time and change” or searching for “eternal truths” amidst deception and heartbreak.
- **Mystical “Concealment”:** Singer utilized the Kabbalistic concept of *Zimzum* (divine contraction) to frame a world defined by concealment and mystery, where truth is hidden behind layers of irony and supernatural interference.

Singer frequently blends the sacred with the profane, often utilizing the gritty underworld of early 20th-century Poland as a backdrop for moral and spiritual crises. The following books feature prominent crime or mystery motifs:

Scum: This novel is his most direct dive into the criminal underworld. It follows **Max Barabander**, a former petty thief who returns to Warsaw after years in Argentina. The plot centers on his involvement with a criminal gang, a plan to sell young girls into human trafficking (“white slavery”), and his interactions with various shady characters in the city’s backstreets.

The Magician of Lublin: While primarily a philosophical tale, it moves with the pace of a thriller. The protagonist, Yasha Mazur is not primarily a professional criminal, but he is an illusionist, seducer, burglar and habitual deceiver. An attempted robbery becomes the turning point of the novel. Crime is connected with performance, divided identity and the fantasy of escaping moral accountability.

Grandfather and Grandson (Short Story): This story contains a political mystery element, focusing on a grandson who is a Communist fugitive sought by authorities for subversion. It features the presence of a revolver and the tension of hiding a criminal in a pious household.

The Smuggler (Short Story): Set in New York, the narrator is visited by a man who previously made a living as a smuggler in Poland. The story explores the “intrinsic corruptibility” of human beings and the thin line between victim and perpetrator.

The Manuscript (Short Story): This story features a theft motif where a critical manuscript is lost or replaced, leading the protagonist on a perilous journey through wartime Warsaw to retrieve it. [Google/AI]

Enemies: A Love Story: Not crime fiction, but deeply concerned with false identities, concealed marriages and the moral afterlife of underground survival. Herman Broder’s wartime concealment and postwar duplicity make him a kind of anti-detective figure: his life depends upon keeping incompatible stories in operation.

Singer, Isaac Bashevis, (**Scum** [hc, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1991]) 978-0374255114 [pb, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2003] 978-0374529079

Singer, Isaac Bashevis, (**The Magician of Lublin** [hc, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1979]) 978-0374196332 [pb, Penguin Books, 2012] 978-0141197609

Singer, Isaac Bashevis, (“**Grandfather and Grandson**”, in *A Crown of Feathers and Other Stories* [hc, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1973] 978-0374132170 [pb, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1981] 978-0374516246

Singer, Isaac Bashevis, (“**The Smuggler**”, in *The Death of Methuselah and Other Stories* [hc, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1988] 978-0374135638 [pb, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2003] 978-0374529109

Singer, Isaac Bashevis, (“**The Manuscript**”, in *The Collected Stories of Isaac Bashevis Singer* [hc, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1982] 978-0374126315

Singer, Isaac Bashevis, (**Enemies: A Love Story** [hc, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1972] 978-0374148300 [pb, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1988] 978-0374515225

Singer, Isaac Bashevis, (**The Golem** [hc, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1983]) 978-0374327415 [pb, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1996] 978-0374427467 [*Singer retells the classic Prague folklore through a deeply philosophical lens. The narrative directly tackles a historical “crime”—the malicious fabrication of Jewish ritual criminality—while exploring how a manufactured savior can descend into its own destructive lawlessness. In 17th-century Prague, a bankrupt and corrupt nobleman, seeks to erase his debts to a wealthy Jewish banker named Reb Eliezer. To destroy the banker, Count Albert fabricates a **blood libel**—the ancient antisemitic conspiracy theory claiming Jews murder Christian children to use their blood for Passover matzah. He hides his own daughter and frames Reb Eliezer for her murder.*

*Facing an imminent pogrom and the execution of the community’s leaders, the saintly Kabbalist **Rabbi Leib** receives a heavenly directive to fashion a giant out of clay. By inscribing one of God’s holy names onto its forehead, he brings the creature to life. The Golem, named Joseph, possesses immense strength but lacks the human soul or the capacity to speak. Rabbi Leib dispatches Joseph into Prague to solve the crime. The Golem easily locates the hidden count’s daughter, carries her directly into the courtroom mid-trial, and exonerates the falsely accused banker, completely exposing the Count’s conspiracy. Once his defense mission is complete, trouble begins. Yielding to practical and domestic requests, the Rabbi keeps the Golem active. Over time, Joseph develops human desires; he wants to eat, drink, carouse, and even falls in love. He begins to rebel against his master, refusing to let the Rabbi erase the holy letters to return him to clay. Growing to gargantuan proportions, the Golem rampages through Prague in a state of existential confusion. Finally, an orphan girl who befriended him manages to lull him into a stupor, allowing Rabbi Leib to remove the Divine Name and reduce him to dust.*

Singer heavily infuses this traditional myth with the intersection of Jewish identity and crime, examining it from three distinct thematic angles:

1. The “Crime” as a Weapon of Persecution: *In the book, the initial crime is a hoax explicitly designed to target Jews. Singer frames Jewish criminality not as a reality, but as a malicious legal trap engineered by the gentile ruling class to justify asset seizure and state-sanctioned violence. The true criminals are the debtor noblemen who weaponize the justice system to commit state-sponsored theft.*

2. The Golem as Vigilante Justice: *Because the secular legal system of Prague is inherently corrupt and rigged against them, the Jewish community cannot rely on standard law enforcement. The Golem represents a temporary detour into extrajudicial vigilante justice. He acts outside*

human law to break the conspiracy, physically overpowering the real conspirators when evidence and logic fail to sway the court.

3. Power, Lawlessness, and Morality: *Singer's unique literary signature is his skepticism toward pure physical force. Once the Golem is no longer bound by his specific mandate to fight anti-Jewish oppression, his lack of a human soul makes him inherently lawless. He does not understand human boundaries or commandments, ultimately committing acts of chaos and violence because raw physical power cannot be easily governed by moral law. Singer uses this to warn that when marginalized groups resort to an unbridled mechanism of force for self-defense, that force can easily mutate into an unmanageable threat to the community itself.* [Google/AI]

Israel Joshua Singer (1893–1944) - *one of the greatest modern Yiddish novelists and arguably the foremost writer of large-scale social and historical fiction in Yiddish before the Holocaust. Although today he is often overshadowed by his younger brother, Isaac Bashevis Singer, many critics regard Israel Joshua as the more accomplished realist and epic novelist. His works depict Jewish society in Poland, Russia, Germany, and America during periods of profound political upheaval, examining revolution, industrialization, assimilation, war, nationalism, socialism, and religious decline. His themes include organized violence and criminality during war and revolution; political policing and surveillance; revolutionary undergrounds and secret organizations; corruption within modernizing Jewish society; and the moral ambiguity of violence committed in the name of ideology. Unlike Joseph Opatoshu, whose fiction occasionally approaches outright gangsterism or criminal underworlds, Israel Joshua Singer is primarily interested in how political and social systems generate crime rather than in conventional detective or thriller plots.*

*Born in Bilgoraj, Congress Poland (then part of the Russian Empire), Singer was raised in an intensely traditional rabbinic household. His father was a Hasidic rabbi while his mother came from a more Mitnagdic scholarly tradition. This tension between Hasidism, rationalism and modernity became one of the central themes of his fiction. Rather than follow a rabbinic career, Singer gravitated toward journalism and literature. During and after World War I he lived in **Kiev** and **Moscow**, witnessing revolution, civil war and Bolshevik rule firsthand. Initially sympathetic to revolutionary ideals, he became profoundly disillusioned by Communist authoritarianism and ideological fanaticism. Returning to Warsaw in 1921, he joined the modernist Yiddish literary circle **Di Khalyastre** alongside writers such as Joseph Opatoshu, Peretz Markish and Uri Zvi Greenberg. He became Warsaw correspondent for the Jewish Daily Forward before emigrating permanently to New York in 1934, where he continued writing until his death from a heart attack in 1944. Major works of relevance:*

Singer, Israel Joshua, (**Steel and Iron** (Shtetl un Ayzn, 1927) [hc, Funk and Wagnalls, 1969] 978-1135281502 [**Note:** *this and his other writings were reissued in a 3-volume collected works edition in 2026 by The Library of the Jewish People/Koren Publishers/Toby Press, edited by Anita Norich*] - *Set in Warsaw during the First World War under German occupation, the novel follows ordinary Jews whose lives are shattered by military invasion, economic collapse and political turmoil. Occupation authorities, military officials, profiteers and black marketeers all compete for power. Honest survival increasingly becomes impossible, forcing characters into smuggling, fraud and morally compromised behaviour. Rather than presenting individual villains, Singer portrays war itself as creating criminality. Espionage is present indirectly through military intelligence and suspicion of collaborators rather than professional spies.*

Singer, Israel Joshua, (**East of Eden** (Khaver Nachman, which means "Comrade Nachman", 1938) [hc, transl. by Maurice Samuel, Knopf and Putnam's, 1939] [*The protagonist becomes deeply involved with revolutionary socialism before witnessing the realities of Bolshevik rule. The*

novel follows underground activists, political conspiracies, revolutionary cells, secret meetings and ideological struggles across revolutionary Russia. Singer gradually exposes how revolutionary idealism degenerates into repression and dictatorship. This is the closest Singer comes to an espionage novel. Important themes include: underground political organizations, clandestine meetings, secret police, surveillance, revolutionary conspiracies, ideological betrayal, political infiltration and Communist authoritarianism. The novel illustrates how revolutionary politics and intelligence work merge into systems of coercion.

Singer, Israel Joshua, (**The Brothers Ashkenazi** (Di Brider Ashkenazi, 1936) [hc, Alfred A. Knopf, 1936] 978-9997408853 [hc, Atheneum, 19809] 978-0689111020 [*Set in Łódź from the late nineteenth century through the First World War, it chronicles the lives of twin brothers Max and Jacob Ashkenazi against the explosive growth of Jewish industrial capitalism. The novel depicts: textile factories, labour unrest, strikes, socialist movements, ruthless business competition, family rivalries, antisemitism, industrial expansion. Although not a crime novel, it contains numerous criminal dimensions: industrial corruption, labour violence, strike-breaking, commercial fraud, bribery, financial manipulation, organized political intimidation, and underworld figures associated with rapidly growing industrial cities. The atmosphere resembles that of Balzac or Zola, where business crime becomes almost inseparable from respectable capitalism.*

Singer, Israel Joshua, (**The Family Carnovsky** (Di Mishpokhe Karnovski, 1943) [*This sweeping family chronicle follows three generations of the affluent Carnovsky family from imperial Germany to Nazi persecution and eventual exile. The novel traces increasing assimilation, intermarriage, professional success and gradual disintegration under rising antisemitism. The final sections portray the destruction of German Jewry under Hitler. The principal “criminal” is the modern totalitarian state itself.*

Unlike later writers such as Joseph Kanon or Daniel Silva, Singer does not write about professional intelligence services. Instead, he depicts the pre-history of twentieth-century espionage: revolutionary undergrounds, military occupations, informers, political surveillance and secret policing.

Taken together, Israel Joshua Singer forms an important bridge between writers such as Joseph Opatoshu, who often portrayed violence at the individual level, and later political novelists who explored the criminality of totalitarian states. His fiction suggests that the gravest crimes of the twentieth century arose not from ordinary criminals but from the intersection of ideology, bureaucracy, war and political power.

Benjamin Stein (born 1970 in East Berlin, now residing with his family in Munich)

*[After finishing school he worked until the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 as a night porter in a retirement home, and later studied Jewish studies and Hebrew studies at the Free University of Berlin. He had already begun publishing poetry and short prose in 1982. In 2010 he published the novel *Die Leinwand* (The Canvas), an intricately structured book readable from either end, with two interlocking narratives meeting in the middle, dealing with memory, identity, and Jewish life in the shadow of the Wilkomirski affair, in which a celebrated Holocaust memoir was exposed as fabricated. Beyond fiction, he worked as an editor and correspondent for various German and American computer magazines between 1994 and 2000, and since 1998 has worked as an information technology consultant. Since 2008, he has run his own small press, Edition Neue Moderne. He is often described as a distinctive voice in contemporary German-Jewish literature — not defining his Jewishness primarily through the Holocaust, but exploring Orthodox Jewish identity, memory, and authorship in a broader, more pluralistic way within German letters.*

Stein Benjamin, (**Die Leinwand** (2010) / English: **The Canvas** [pb, Open Letter Books, 2012, translated from the German by Brian Zumhagen]) 978-1934824658 [- a fictional reworking of the real *Wilkomirski affair* — the 1998 scandal in which Benjamin Wilkomirski's celebrated 1995 Holocaust memoir "Fragments" was exposed as fabricated by a man with no Jewish or camp background. Stein's novel is a genuine literary-fraud/crime story: it's built as two interlocking novellas printed back-to-back (you flip the book over to read the second half), one narrated by Amnon Zichroni, a psychoanalyst who encourages a patient, "Minsky," to write his childhood-camp memoir; and the other by Jan Wechsler, an Orthodox Jewish writer who sets out to expose Minsky's memoir as a forgery — and then finds a suitcase and evidence suggesting his own memories may be equally unreliable. Reviewers have explicitly called it "a literary detective story as well as a subtle psychological novel." The "crime" is testimonial fraud rather than violent crime or state espionage, but it's a Jewish author using a real Jewish-memory scandal as the engine of a mystery/detective plot about identity, deception, and who has the right to claim a Jewish victim's history. – Claude]

Frank Tallis (born 1958, London, England, birth name: Francesco de Nato Napolitano) - an acclaimed British clinical psychologist and author renowned for his expertise in obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) and his historical crime fiction. He is most famous for **The Liebermann Papers**, a 7-volume series of historical mystery novels set in turn-of-the-century Vienna featuring psychoanalyst Max Liebermann. The series was adapted into the popular television show, "Vienna Blood" (2019–2025) – see description in companion Filmography.

Core Jewish Themes

- **The Protagonist's Identity: Dr. Max Liebermann** is a young Jewish psychoanalyst (of British origin) and student of Sigmund Freud, making him an outsider in the conservative, often antisemitic environment of the Viennese police force. [Note: While the books emphasize his Austrian roots, the TV adaptation portrays the Liebermanns as British-Jewish emigrés who moved to Vienna, which adds an extra layer of "outsider" status to his character.]
- **The Liebermann Family:** The books depict a prosperous, liberal British-Jewish family living in the Leopoldstadt district. Subplots often focus on Max's father, Isaac, navigating business deals with antisemitic power brokers and his membership in B'nai B'rith.
- **Jewish Mysticism: In Darkness Rising** (Book 4), the plot delves into Jewish mysticism, including the Kabbalah, Golem legends, and demonology, which are used as political tools by those resisting persecution.
- **Rising Antisemitism:** A constant background thread is the alarming rise of right-wing nationalism and figures like Karl Lueger, whose populist antisemitism foreshadows the 20th century's later horrors.
- **Social & Political Friction:** The books highlight the friction between different Jewish groups, such as wealthy assimilated Jews and Hasidic communities or refugees fleeing pogroms in Russia.

Key Locations & Symbols

- **Leopoldstadt:** The traditional Jewish district of Vienna serves as a primary setting. [Note: "Leopoldstadt" is also the title of Tom Stoppard's recent [2020] play about his Viennese Jewish origins]
- **Sigmund Freud's Office:** Located at Berggasse 19, it is a recurring site where Max seeks guidance from Freud, who Tallis portrays as deeply influenced by Jewish humor and culture. [Google/AI]

Tallis, Frank [*Dr. Max Liebermann #1*], (**A Death in Vienna** [hc, Grove Press, 2006/British edition: *Mortal Mischief*, 2005] 978-0802118158 [pb, Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2007] 978-0812977639

Tallis, Frank [*Dr. Max Liebermann #2*], (**Vienna Blood** [hc, Century, 2006]) 978-1844136049 [pb, Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2006] 978-0812977769

Tallis, Frank [*Dr. Max Liebermann #3*], (**Fatal Lies** [hc, Century, 2008] 978-1844136032 [pb, Random House] 978-0812977776

Tallis, Frank [*Dr. Max Liebermann #4*], (**Darkness Rising**/ aka *Vienna Secrets* [hc, Century, 2009]) 978-1846053603 [pb, Arrow, 2009] 978-0099519744

Tallis, Frank [*Dr. Max Liebermann #5*], (**Deadly Communion**/aka *Vienna Twilight* [pb, Random House, 2011] 978-0812981001

Tallis, Frank [*Dr. Max Liebermann #6*], (**Death and the Maiden** [pb, Random House, 2012]) 978-0812983340

Tallis, Frank [*Dr. Max Liebermann #7*], (**Mephisto Waltz** [hc, Pegasus Crime, 2018]) 978-1681776439 [pb, Pegasus Books, 2019] 978-1643130507 [\[See related film\]](#)

June Trop (est. birth 1945 in rural New Jersey) – *veteran educator and Professor of Teacher Education (emerita) at SUNY New Paltz, author of the Miriam bat Isaac mystery novels. This 6-volume (soon to be 7) series is deeply rooted in the Jewish historical experience of first-century Alexandria, a period when the city was a global center for both Hellenistic culture and Jewish intellectual life. The protagonist is based on Maria Hebraea (also known as Mary the Jewess), a real historical figure credited as the founder of Western alchemy.*

Historical Inspiration: Jewish Identity: Miriam is a young Jewish woman navigating a male-dominated field. Her identity is central to her character, influencing her moral compass and her commitment to justice and protecting the innocent.

Sociopolitical Setting: The books explore the Jewish Quarter of Alexandria and the tension between the Jewish population and the Roman authorities. This includes depictions of historical events like the Alexandrian riots, which left a lasting impact on Miriam's worldview.

Cultural Intersection: The series depicts the complex intersection of Jewish tradition and Hellenistic science, showing how Miriam uses her alchemical knowledge—often associated with mystical or pagan traditions—while maintaining her Jewish heritage.

*Regional Context: Some installments, such as *The Deadliest Hate*, expand the setting to Judea and Caesarea, involving Judean political factions and regional conflicts.*

Mystery Components:

Protagonist Sleuth: Miriam acts as a “natural sleuth” and “super-sleuth,” using her skills as an alchemist to solve crimes through deduction and analysis similar to Sherlock Holmes.

Crime Solving: The plots revolve around investigating murders, heists, kidnappings, and missing persons.

*Classic Tropes: The author utilizes classic mystery structures, such as the “locked-room mystery” in *The Deadliest Sport*, where a crime occurs in a seemingly inaccessible place.*

[Google/AI]

Trop, June, [*Miriam bat Isaac #1*] (**The Deadliest Lie** [pb, Bell Bridge Books, 2013,]) 978-1611943672

Trop, June, [*Miriam bat Isaac* #2] (**The Deadliest Hate: A Miriam bat Isaac Mystery in Ancient Alexandria** [pb, Bell Bridge Books, 2015]) 978-1611946673

Trop, June, [*Miriam bat Isaac* #3] (**The Deadliest Sport** [pb, Black Opal Books, 2017]) 978-1626947559

Trop, June, [*Miriam bat Isaac* #4] (**The Deadliest Fever** [pb, Black Opal Books, 2018]) 978-1626948754

Trop, June, [*Miriam bat Isaac* #5] (**The Deadliest Thief** [pb, Black Opal Books, 2019]) 978-1644372012

Trop, June, (**The Deadliest Deceptions: A Collection of Nine Miriam bat Isaac Short Mysteries** [pb, Level Best Books, 2023] 978-1685122751

Trop, June, [*Miriam bat Isaac* #6] (**The Deadliest Returns: A Collection of three Miriam Bat Isaac Novelettes** [pb, Level Best-Historia, 2024] 978-1685125851

Trop, June, [*Miriam bat Isaac* #7] (**Sweet Revenge** – forthcoming, according to author’s website)

Oyzer Warshawsky (1898–1944) - was a prominent Yiddish writer and painter known for his gritty depictions of Jewish life. He gained instant fame at age 21 with his debut novel **Smugglers** (*Shmuglars*, 1920). The book depicts the moral and physical disintegration of a Polish shtetl during World War I. Warshawsky was a key figure in the **Khalyastre** (*The Gang*), a radical group of Yiddish avant-garde writers that included Peretz Markish. He moved to Paris in 1924, joining the Montparnasse artistic community. After his second novel, **Harvest Time** (1926), received a cool critical reception, he largely turned his focus to art and art criticism. During WWII, he fled Nazi-occupied Paris for southern France and eventually Rome. He was captured there by the Gestapo and murdered in Auschwitz.

Smugglers is set in a small town in Congress Poland during the German occupation. The story captures a community pushed to the brink by famine, typhus, and economic collapse. To survive, the once-pious and traditional townspeople—tailors, cobblers, and craftsmen—abandon their trades to become smugglers, transporting food and goods across the border. The novel tracks the town’s descent into lawlessness, where the scramble for survival erodes religious values, traditional family structures, and community solidarity. Unlike the sentimentalized shtetls often found in Yiddish literature, Warshawsky uses a raw, naturalistic style to show the “underside” of Jewish life. [Google/AI]

Warshawsky, Oyzer, (**Smugglers: A Novel in Three Parts** [original published in 1920, translation from the Yiddish by Golda Werman in 2008/5769, hc, Gefen Publishing House] 978-9652294265

Lewis M. Weinstein (born 1940, Camden, NJ) - Princeton University -BSE, 1962 and Harvard Business School - MBA, 1965. An American author known for historical thrillers and mysteries. Became an author at the age of 60, after a successful management career, during which he served as CEO of public, private, and not-for-profit organizations, and was also a candidate for US Congress. Weinstein often investigates the origins of Christian anti-Judaism. In his books, he explores how Church teachings and historical “blood libels” created a climate that eventually allowed for the Holocaust. He frequently blends Jewish historical themes with the tension of mystery and thrillers. While he is primarily recognized for meticulously researched **historical fiction**, several of his works lean heavily into religious intrigue and investigative plots. Weinstein has spoken about his motivations for writing: as a Jew, he wanted to explore why Jews are hated, and his family background — his mother’s side from Poland, his father’s side from Germany —

shaped his interest in developing characters and perspectives from both countries. He's also mentioned working on a newer book set in Germany and Poland during the Nazi years, revisiting themes he originally found too difficult to tackle when he started writing.- Claude]

His notable works that combine these elements include:

The Heretic: *A historical thriller centered on a family of “secret Jews” (Conversos) in 15th-century Spain. It follows their struggle to hide their Jewish identity from the Spanish Inquisition, combining religious history with the suspense of being hunted.*

The Pope's Conspiracy: *This sequel to The Heretic is categorized as a historical thriller and “religious intrigue,” diving into high-stakes political and religious plots in Renaissance Florence.*

A Good Conviction: *A legal mystery/thriller about a young man wrongly convicted of murder.*

A Holocaust Trilogy: *Comprised of A Flood of Evil, A Promise Kept, and After Auschwitz - these books follow a Polish Jew and a German Catholic. While more epic historical fiction than traditional mystery, they feature heavy elements of espionage, political intrigue, and the search for truth. [Google /AI]*

Weinstein, Lewis M., (**The Heretic** (hc, Good New Fiction, 2000) 978-0967134802 [pb, U. of Wisconsin Press, 2003] 978-0299187941

Weinstein, Lewis M., (**The Pope's Conspiracy** [pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2012] 978-1475058413

Weinstein, Lewis M., (**A Good Conviction** (pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2012) 978-1475119794

Weinstein, Lewis M., (**A Flood of Evil** (pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2016) 978-1494295783

Weinstein, Lewis M., (**A Promise Kept: 1934 to 1936** (pb, CreateSpace Independent, 2020) 978-1979364409

Weinstein, Lewis M., (**After Auschwitz** (pb, independently published, 2021) 979-8577096250

Elie Wiesel (1928–2016) – *While Elie Wiesel is most famous for his Holocaust memoirs and writings on Biblical and Hasidic topics, he did write several novels that incorporate mystery, thriller, and suspense elements to explore philosophical and moral questions.*

The Fifth Son (1985): *While primarily historical fiction, it centers on a son's discovery of a secret regarding his father's past and the pursuit of a Nazi officer who was thought to be dead.*

The Judges (2002): *A gripping novel of guilt and innocence where five air passengers are held captive by an enigmatic man who forces them to face an interrogation with life-or-death stakes.*

The Sonderberg Case (2010): *Specifically described as a psychological mystery, this novel follows a theater critic covering a murder trial where the defendant's plea of “guilty... and not guilty” leads to a revelatory investigation into the past.*

Hostage (2012): *This work is categorized as a masterly thriller involving a professional storyteller who is abducted in Brooklyn and held for ransom.*

Wiesel did not view “mystery” as a commercial category, but rather as a theological and existential necessity for his storytelling. He frequently argued that the traditional literary forms of the past lacked the validity to address the “radical distortion” of reality seen in the 20th century.

His perspective on using mystery and suspense elements includes:

The Holocaust as the “Ultimate Mystery”: Wiesel described the Holocaust as a “religious mystery with theological implications”. He believed it was an event that could never be fully comprehended or transmitted, making the “mystery” an inherent part of its testimony.

Questions Over Answers: He often stated that he had “no answers, only questions”. By using mystery-like structures—such as the interrogation in ***The Judges*** or the trial in ***The Sonderberg Case***—he forced readers to engage in the “true dialogue” of asking questions of God and humanity.

The Power of the “Secret”: In novels like ***The Oath*** and ***The Sonderberg Case***, Wiesel used a “story within a story” format where a revelation or secret must be uncovered. He used this technique to illustrate the tension between the “moral and psychological need to carry on” and the “foreboding of its own futility”.

Biblical Conciseness: Wiesel attributed his sparse, suspenseful style to biblical methods, where a single sentence might summarize a generation. This “condensed” style naturally creates a sense of tension and mystery, leaving the reader to reflect on the unspoken horrors. [Google/AI]

Wiesel, Elie, (***The Oath*** [hc, Random House, 1973]) 978-0394487793 [pb, Knopf Doubleday, 1986] 978-0805208085

Wiesel, Elie, (***The Fifth Son*** [hc, Summit Books, 1985]) 978-0671523312 [pb, Knopf Doubleday Publishing, 1998] 978-0805210835

Wiesel, Elie, (***The Judges*** [hc, Knopf, 2002]) 978-0375409097 [pb, Schocken, 2004] 978-0805211214

Wiesel, Elie, (***The Sonderberg Case*** [hc, Knopf, 2010]) 978-0307272201 [pb, Random House, 2010] 9780307272201

Wiesel, Elie, (***Hostage*** [hc, Knopf, 2012]) 978-0307599582

Richard Zimler (born 1956, Roslyn Heights, NY) – American-Portuguese Richard Zimler’s work is profoundly rooted in Jewish history and mysticism, particularly focusing on the Sephardic diaspora. His 5-volume ***Sephardic Cycle*** follows generations of the **Zarco** family, exploring their survival through various periods of persecution. These novels explore such themes as Jewish mysticism; slavery; the devastating effect of the Inquisition on Portugal and its colonies; and the psychological conflict created in people who are forced to hide their faith. The novels are independent works and, according to Zimler, none of them should be considered a sequel. The books that make up the *Sephardic Cycle* are: ***The Last Kabbalist of Lisbon***, set in sixteenth century Portugal; ***Hunting Midnight***, which takes place in **Porto**, London, New York and South Carolina in the early nineteenth century; ***Guardian of the Dawn***, in which the main action takes place in Goa in the seventeenth century; ***The Seventh Gate***, set in Nazi-controlled Berlin in the 1930s; and ***The Incandescent Threads***, set mainly in New York and Montreal from 1970 to the present but also with two long chapters that take place in Poland during and right after World War II.

Key Jewish elements in his books include:

Kabbalah and Mysticism: Mystical teachings are central to his narratives. In ***The Last Kabbalist of Lisbon***, Kabbalah is a tool for understanding a world broken by violence. His most recent book in the cycle, ***The Incandescent Threads***, features a character obsessed with finding “incandescent threads”—mystical fibers he believes link the universe.

***The Experience of “New Christians”:** Many of his novels, such as **Guardian of the Dawn**, depict the lives of Conversos or New Christians—Jews forced to convert to Catholicism who practiced their faith in secret while facing the Inquisition.*

***The Holocaust and Survivor Guilt:** Zimler explores the trauma of the Holocaust in **The Warsaw Anagrams**, which features a Jewish psychiatrist in the Warsaw Ghetto. Later books like *The Incandescent Threads* examine how survivors and their descendants cope with generational trauma and guilt.*

*The following books by Zimler are widely categorized as mysteries or thrillers: **The Last Kabbalist of Lisbon** (a historical “locked-room” mystery set during the Lisbon massacre of 1506, following Berekiah Zarco as he hunts for his uncle’s killer); **The Warsaw Anagrams** (a dark murder mystery and noir thriller set in the Warsaw Ghetto in 1940, involving the investigation of mutilated children’s bodies); **The Night Watchman** (a contemporary psychological mystery centered on a Portuguese police inspector investigating a construction magnate’s murder); **The Seventh Gate** (a suspenseful historical thriller set in 1930s Berlin, featuring a race against time to uncover a Nazi traitor); and **Guardian of the Dawn** (a historical mystery set in colonial India during the Goa Inquisition, focusing on a young man’s quest to find the person who betrayed his family). [Google/AI]*

Zimler, Richard, (**The Last Kabbalist of Lisbon** [hc, The Overlook Press, 1998] 978-0879518349 [pb, The Overlook Press, 2000] 978-1585670222

Zimler, Richard, (**Guardian of the Dawn** (pb, Delta, 2005) 978-0385338813

Zimler, Richard, (**The Seventh Gate** (pb, Constable, 2007) 978-1845294878 [hc, Overlook Books, 2012] 978-1590207130

Zimler, Richard, (**The Warsaw Anagrams** (hc, The Overlook Press, 2011) 978-1590200889 [pb, The Overlook Press, 2012] 978-1590208472

Zimler, Richard, (**The Night Watchman** (pb, Corsair, 2014) 978-1472109309

Zimler, Richard, (**The Incandescent Threads** (hc, Parthian Books, 2022) 978-1913640644 [pb, Parthian Books, 2023] 978-1914595332 [featuring survivors Benni and Shelly Zarco]

Non-Fiction - International Works on Jews and Crime, Espionage, etc.

Note: The coverage of the different countries in this section is less comprehensive than in the previous chapters on the U.S., Canada, Israel and the U.K., due to limitations of language, available materials, and time. My hope is that others will treat this as a challenge to be met by further research and effort. – SS

General and Miscellaneous:

Berkowitz, Michael, (**The Crime of My Very Existence: Nazism and the Myth of Jewish Criminality** [hc, U. of California Press, 2007] 978-0520251120 [pb, U. of Cal. Press, 2007] 978-0520251144 [- argues that one of the central ideological foundations of Nazi antisemitism was the claim that *being Jewish was itself a form of criminality*. Rather than portraying Jews simply as a religious or racial “other,” Nazi propaganda increasingly depicted them as an international criminal conspiracy whose very existence threatened Germany and civilization. Berkowitz

demonstrates that this stereotype was not an accidental feature of Nazi rhetoric but one of its organizing principles, influencing law, policing, propaganda, and ultimately genocide.

The book traces the long history of the association between Jews and crime in European thought. Medieval accusations of ritual murder, host desecration, and poisoning wells evolved during the nineteenth century into supposedly “scientific” claims that Jews were naturally inclined toward fraud, usury, prostitution, black-market activity, revolutionary politics, and financial manipulation. Modern criminology, racial anthropology, and conspiracy theories all contributed to this narrative. By the time the Nazis came to power, they inherited an intellectual tradition that portrayed Jews as simultaneously capitalist exploiters, communist revolutionaries, sexual predators, and corrupting cosmopolitans—contradictory accusations united by the assumption that Jews constituted an inherently criminal people.

Berkowitz shows how the Nazi state systematically institutionalized this myth. Police forces, courts, criminologists, racial theorists, and propaganda agencies collaborated in constructing the image of the “criminal Jew.” Crime statistics were manipulated, isolated offenses were generalized to an entire population, and Jewish economic activity was routinely redefined as criminal behavior. The regime’s anti-Jewish laws then created a vicious circle: once ordinary Jewish activities were criminalized, arrests and prosecutions appeared to confirm the original stereotype. The Nazis thus manufactured evidence for their own ideology.

*A major contribution of the book is its examination of visual propaganda. Berkowitz analyzes newspapers such as *Der Stürmer*, police exhibitions, photographs, caricatures, films, and museum displays that portrayed Jews as gangsters, smugglers, pimps, black marketeers, and swindlers. Criminal imagery was often blended with racial stereotypes: hooked noses, furtive expressions, and images of hidden wealth reinforced the notion that criminality was biologically encoded. This visual language normalized persecution by persuading ordinary Germans that Jews represented a public safety threat rather than merely a disliked minority.*

The Holocaust itself, Berkowitz argues, cannot be fully understood without recognizing this criminalization process. Nazi leaders frequently justified increasingly radical measures—including deportation and mass murder—not only in racial terms but also as a form of crime prevention or public protection. Jews were treated not simply as racial enemies but as permanent offenders whose elimination supposedly constituted legitimate policing. The transformation of genocide into an apparent exercise in law enforcement was one of the regime’s most dangerous ideological achievements.

The book also demonstrates that Jewish responses varied considerably. Some Jewish organizations attempted to counter antisemitic stereotypes by emphasizing exceptionally low rates of criminality among Jews, while others rejected the premise entirely, insisting that an entire people could not be judged collectively by the actions of individuals. Berkowitz highlights how impossible it was to refute a propaganda system whose conclusions had been predetermined.

One of the book’s broader historical lessons is that myths of collective Jewish criminality have repeatedly resurfaced in new forms after 1945. Although the specific racial language of Nazism became discredited, many underlying narratives survived, often detached from explicitly biological theories. Rather than accusing Jews as individuals, critics increasingly directed analogous allegations toward the Jewish collective represented by the State of Israel.

This historical continuity provides a useful framework—but one that should be applied carefully—for understanding certain contemporary manifestations of antisemitism that appear in anti-Israel discourse. Legitimate criticism of Israeli governments, military operations, or policies is not inherently antisemitic and is a normal feature of democratic debate. However, scholars of contemporary antisemitism have noted that some rhetoric goes beyond policy criticism by

attributing uniquely criminal or inherently malevolent characteristics to Israel or to Jews collectively.

Examples include claims that Israel is uniquely genocidal while comparable conflicts are ignored; portrayals of Zionism as a uniquely evil or criminal ideology; allegations that Israel operates as the central source of global instability; conspiracy theories about Jewish control of governments, media, or finance through support for Israel; or assertions that Jews worldwide bear collective responsibility for Israeli actions. Such narratives can echo earlier patterns by treating Jewish collective existence itself as intrinsically illegitimate or criminal rather than evaluating specific actions or policies on their merits.

*Berkowitz himself is primarily a historian rather than a polemicist, and **The Crime of My Very Existence** is fundamentally a work of historical scholarship rather than a direct analysis of twenty-first-century politics. Nevertheless, its central insight remains highly relevant: antisemitism has often operated by transforming Jewish identity into evidence of inherent criminality. Whether directed at individual Jews or, in some contemporary contexts, at the Jewish state, this pattern of collective criminalization has proven remarkably adaptable across different historical periods. The book therefore serves as both a detailed study of Nazi ideology and a broader warning about how conspiracy theories, collective guilt, and the language of criminality can be mobilized against Jews in changing political and cultural circumstances. – ChatGPT]*

Berkowitz, Michael, “A Hidden Theme of Jewish Self-Love: Eric Hobsbawm, Karl Marx, and Cesare Lombroso on “Jewish Criminality,” in **The Cesare Lombroso Handbook**, ed. Paul Knepper and PJ Ystehede (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 255

Bristow, Edward, (**Prostitution & Prejudice: The Jewish Fight Against White Slavery, 1870–1939** [Schocken Books, 1983]) 978-0805238662

Goldsmith, Arnold, (The Golem Remembered, 1909–1980: Variations of a Jewish Legend**** [hc, Wayne State UP, 1981] 978-0814316832 [- a scholarly study of the modern literary afterlife of the golem legend rather than a retelling of the story itself. Goldsmith examines how writers between 1909 and 1980 repeatedly reinterpreted the ancient Jewish tale of the artificial man fashioned from clay, especially the version associated with Rabbi Judah Loew (the Maharal) of Prague.

Goldsmith traces the golem’s transformation from a figure in Jewish folklore into a versatile symbol in modern literature. He compares numerous versions of the legend in Hebrew, Yiddish, German, English, and other European literatures, showing how each reflects the concerns of its own historical and cultural setting. The book discusses major treatments by authors such as Gustav Meyrink, H. Leivick, and Isaac Bashevis Singer, among others.

A central argument is that the golem evolved into a powerful metaphor for a range of modern issues, including: the relationship between creator and creation; the ethical limits of human knowledge and power; Jewish persecution, exile, and survival; the tension between mysticism and rationalism; and questions of identity and responsibility in the modern world. Goldsmith also explores the influence of the golem on drama, fiction, and popular culture, demonstrating how the legend gradually moved beyond specifically Jewish contexts to become an international literary and cultural motif.

For anyone studying Jewish literature, folklore, or mythology, the book serves as both a literary history and a critical survey of one of Judaism’s most enduring legends. It remains a useful reference because of its extensive bibliographical coverage of twentieth-century golem literature. – ChatGPT]

Hyman, Elizabeth R., (**The Girl Bandits of the Warsaw Ghetto: The True Story of Five Courageous Young Women Who Sparked an Uprising – The Holocaust Biography of Female Resistance Leaders** [pb, Harper, Perennial, 2025] 978-0063355019 [*The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising is one of the most storied events of the Holocaust, yet previous accounts of have almost entirely focused on its male participants. In The Girl Bandits of the Warsaw Ghetto, Holocaust historian Elizabeth Hyman introduces five young, courageous Polish Jewish women—known as “the girls” by the leadership of the resistance and “bandits” by their Nazi oppressors—who were central to the Jewish resistance as fighters, commanders, couriers, and smugglers. They include:*

Zivia Lubetkin, the most senior female member of the Jewish Fighting Organization Command Staff in Warsaw and a reluctant legend in her own time, who was immortalized by her code name, “Celina”

Vladka Meed, who smuggled dynamite into and illegal literature out of the Warsaw Ghetto in preparation for the uprising

Dr. Idina “Inka” Blady-Schweiger, a young medical student who became a reluctant angel of mercy

Tema Schneiderman, a tall, beautiful and fearless young woman who volunteered for smuggling and rescue missions across Nazi-occupied Eastern Europe

Tossia Altman, a heroic courier with a poetic soul, who helped bring arms into the Warsaw Ghetto, fought in the Uprising, and ferried communiques to the outside world. – Amazon]

Kritzler, Edward, (**Jewish Pirates of the Caribbean: How a Generation of Swashbuckling Jews Carved Out an Empire in the New World in Their Quest for Treasure, Religious Freedom--and Revenge** [hc, Doubleday, 2008] 978-0385513982 [pb, Vintage, 2009] 978-0767919524 [*At the end of the fifteenth century, the Spanish Inquisition forced many Jews to flee the country. The most adventurous among them took to the high seas as freewheeling outlaws. In ships bearing names such as the Prophet Samuel, Queen Esther, and Shield of Abraham, they attacked and plundered the Spanish fleet while forming alliances with other European powers to ensure the safety of Jews living in hiding. This is the entertaining saga of a hidden chapter in Jewish history and of the cruelty, terror, and greed that flourished during the Age of Discovery. Readers will meet such daring figures as “the Great Jewish Pirate” Sinan, Barbarossa’s second-in-command; the pirate rabbi Samuel Palache, who founded Holland’s Jewish community; Abraham Cohen Henriques, an arms dealer who used his cunning and economic muscle to find safe havens for other Jews; and his pirate brother Moses, who is credited with the capture of the Spanish silver fleet in 1628--the largest heist in pirate history. - Amazon]*

Ronel, Natti & Y. Ben Yair, “**Spiritual Criminology: The Case of Jewish Criminology,**” International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology, 62, no. 7 (2018)

Shoham-Steiner, Ephraim, (Jews and Crime in Medieval Europe) [hc, Wayne State UP, 2020] 9780814345597 [pb] 9780814348239 [- a groundbreaking historical study written by a professor of medieval Jewish history at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. It challenges traditional, sanitized narratives of medieval Jewish history by exploring the neglected reality of internal Jewish criminality. Historically, both Jewish collective memory and academic movements (like the 19th-century *Wissenschaft des Judentums*) avoided the topic of Jewish crime. Historians often dismissed criminal allegations as antisemitic fabrications or attributed actual misdeeds entirely to the corrupting influence of the surrounding Christian society. Shoham-Steiner shatters this myth of universal moral exceptionalism. He demonstrates that medieval Ashkenazic communities (primarily between the 11th and 13th centuries) were complex, fully functional societies that

*naturally included their own share of transgressors, including thieves, murderers, brawlers, and domestic abusers. The book relies heavily on **rabbinic responsa** (case law and legal correspondence), liturgical texts, and archival data to analyze daily life from the perspective of community misconduct. It is organized into three main thematic sections:*

Theft and Economic Crime: *Examines how Jewish thieves operated within and outside the community, looking at property crimes like home robberies and fenced plundered goods.*

Violence and Murder: *Investigates instances of physical assaults, domestic abuse (such as wife-beating), and homicides committed by Jews.*

Women and Crime: *Explores gender dynamics, tracking how women were involved in criminal behavior both as victims and perpetrators (including cases involving infidelity, sex work, and child abandonment).*

Shoham-Steiner argues that a society's attitude toward its criminals serves as a "window" into its core values, mores, and internal hierarchies. The book highlights the communal mechanisms—such as rabbinic courts, social ostracization, and the threat of religious bans—used by the autonomous Jewish leadership to maintain social order and manage transgressors. [Google/AI]

An expanded Hebrew version of the book was published in 2026 by the Magnes Press of the Hebrew University. A reviewer (Ofri Ilany, "Violent? Us?", Ha'aretz English edition, June 12, 2026) observed that the book deviates from the apologetic bias of much Jewish historiography in minimizing such phenomena, for fear of reinforcing anti-Semitic stereotypes. Ilany concludes: "Jews are no worse than other groups, but they are also far from being a purely holy flock. Strange as it may sound, we are human beings. And human beings are capable of the most horrendous atrocities."

Simon, Rachel, "**Jewish Defense in Libya**," Jewish Political Studies Review 13, nos. 3–4 (Fall 2001): 107–141. *[Simon traces Jewish protection in Libya over a long period. Because Jews frequently doubted whether Ottoman, Italian or local authorities could protect them, they developed informal protective mechanisms involving Jewish strongmen, communal organizations and alliances with local political figures.]*

After the violent Tripoli pogrom of 1945, Jewish defense became much more systematic; by 1946 emissaries from Palestine helped establish and train an organized defense framework. Simon emphasizes that these security organizations were deliberately kept somewhat separate from the official communal leadership, allowing Jewish leaders plausible deniability when authorities objected. – ChatGPT]

Teter, Magda, (**Sinners on Trial: Jews and Sacrilege after the Reformation** [hc, Harvard UP, 2011]) 978-0674052970 *[An examination of the criminalization of Jews in post-Reformation Poland for the alleged offense of defamation of the eucharist, as part of the Catholic Church's struggle to retain dominance]*

Van Onselen, Charles, "**Jewish Marginality in the Atlantic World: Organised Crime in the Era of the Great Migrations, 1880–1914**," South African Historical Journal 43, no. 1 (2000)

Van Onselen, Charles, "**Jewish Police Informers in the Atlantic World, 1880–1914**," The Historical Journal, 50, no. 1 (2007)

Weinreich, Gil, (**Who Killed Rav Adda bar Abba?: A Talmudic Murder Mystery** [pb, published independently, 2025] 979-8299485356

France:

Cohen, Marthe with Wendy Holden, (**Behind Enemy Lines: The True Story of a French Jewish Spy in Nazi Germany** [hc, Harmony, 2002] 978-0609610541 [pb, Renaissance Literary & Talent, 2021] 978-1950369317 [\[See related film\]](#) [*Marthe Cohn was a young Jewish woman living just across the German border in France when Hitler rose to power. Her family began sheltering fellow Jews fleeing the Nazis, including Jewish children sent away by their terrified parents. But soon France also fell under Nazi rule. As the French Jews' basic human rights were stripped away under German occupation, Marthe's sister Stéphanie was arrested and deported to Auschwitz, where she was never heard from again. The rest of her family fled safely to the south of France, but Marthe joined the French Army to help rid her country of the Nazis.*

As a member of the intelligence service of the French First Army, Marthe risked her life to retrieve crucial information about Nazi troop movements by slipping behind enemy lines, utilizing her perfect German accent and blond hair to pose as a young German nurse desperately trying to obtain word of a fictional fiancé. By traveling throughout the countryside and approaching troops sympathetic to her plight, chancing exposure every time she did so, she learned where they were going next and alerted Allied commanders.

*When, at the age of eighty, Marthe Cohn was awarded the Médaille Militaire, France's highest military honor, not even her children knew to what extent this modest woman had faced death daily while helping defeat the Nazi empire. At its heart, this remarkable memoir is the tale of an ordinary human being who, under extraordinary circumstances, became the hero her country needed her to be. – Amazon] See the entry on the documentary film about her - **Chichinette: The Accidental Spy** [2019] – in the companion list of Movies, Films and TV series.*

Goldman, Pierre, (Dim Memories of a Polish Jew Born in France [French title: Souvenirs obscurs d'un juif polonais né en France] [translated by Joan Pinkham, pb, Viking, 1977]) 978-0670272730 [\[See related film\]](#) [*- the autobiographical memoir of **Pierre Goldman** (born 1944 in Lyon and assassinated in Paris, 1979) — militant, intellectual, criminal defendant, and eventually cult figure of the French radical left. The book mixes political confession, psychological self-analysis, Jewish memory, and crime narrative.*

Goldman was the son of Polish Jewish communist Resistance fighters who survived Nazi occupation in France. Raised after the war in Paris, he grew up with a powerful sense of displacement and inherited trauma: Jewish, immigrant, leftist, and marked by the Holocaust without directly experiencing it himself. The memoir explores how this background shaped his identity and attraction to revolutionary politics.

The book's central drama concerns Goldman's descent into marginality and violent crime during the 1960s. After involvement with leftist causes — including sympathy for Latin American guerrilla movements — he drifted into robberies and underworld life. He was arrested and convicted for several armed robberies and, most controversially, for the 1969 murder of two pharmacists during a Paris holdup. Goldman admitted participating in some robberies but always denied the murders.

The memoir was written while he was imprisoned awaiting retrial. It became famous because it combined a fierce critique of French society and policing, reflections on Jewishness and postwar identity, existential guilt and self-destruction, and a passionate defense against what Goldman portrayed as a miscarriage of justice.

A major theme is the burden of being a post-Holocaust Jew in France. Goldman describes feeling haunted by the destruction of European Jewry and by the heroic myth of his Resistance-fighter parents, while simultaneously feeling incapable of living up to that legacy. Crime, in the memoir, often appears less as greed than as nihilism, alienation, and a search for intensity or identity.

The book became a sensation among French intellectuals. Figures including Jean-Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, and Michel Foucault supported Goldman's campaign for retrial, seeing the case as bound up with antisemitism, class prejudice, and state repression. Goldman ultimately won a retrial and was acquitted of the murder charges in 1976, though convicted on lesser robbery counts. Stylistically, the memoir is intense, fragmented, intellectual, and emotionally raw — part political testimony, part noir confession, part meditation on Jewish identity and violence.

Goldman was assassinated in Paris in 1979 by unknown gunmen, probably linked either to far-right networks or shadowy security circles; the murder has never been definitively solved.

[ChatGPT] See the entry on the 2023 film about Goldman's trial (**The Goldman Case/ Le Procès Goldman**) in the companion Filmography (immediately following)..

Gorrara, Claire, (**French crime fiction and the Second World War: Past crimes, present memories** [hc, Manchester UP, 2012] 978-0719082658 [pb, Manchester UP, 2014] 978-0719095498 [*This study explores France's preoccupation with memories of the Second World War through an examination of popular culture and one of its more enduring forms: crime fiction. It examines what such popular narratives have to tell us about past and present perceptions of the war years in France and how they relate to post-war debates over memory, culture and national identity.*

Starting with narratives of the Resistance in the late 1940s and concluding with contemporary crime fiction for younger readers, Gorrara examines popular memories of the Second World War in dialogue with the changing social, cultural and political contexts of remembrance in post-war France. From memories of the persecution of Jews and French collaboration to the legacies of the concentration camps and the figure of the survivor-witness, all the crime novels discussed grapple with the challenges of what it means to live in the shadow of such a past for generations past, present and future. – Amazon]

Note: This does not contradict the assertion, as in the listing of the 2006 film “Tell No One” in the companion Movies-Films list, that Jewish detectives are rare in French crime fiction, or that their Jewish identities are not highlighted. Rachel Kupferstein, the Jewish detective in *Arab Jazz* by Miské, is actually the lone exception who proves the rule. Gorrara is focusing on a different issue: how French crime fiction engages with **memory of Occupation, Vichy, collaboration, deportation, anti-Semitism, and the Holocaust**. In that framework, Jews may be central even when there are no explicitly Jewish detectives at all. The gradual change in French attitudes toward the German WW2 occupation, the Vichy regime and the narrative of French resistance during the 1970s, impacted crime fiction as well. More attention was paid to collaboration, anti-Semitism, the myth of the Resistance and suppressed wartime guilt. This does not necessarily generate Jewish detectives, but it does make Jews and Jewish memory highly significant to the moral architecture of the genre. Gorrara is focusing on the function of crime fiction as a national memory vehicle, and asking how it processes unresolved WW2/Vichy memories. In that framework, Jews become central symbols of historical truth, deportation becomes a hidden crime, collaboration becomes an unsolved case, and archives and missing identities become detective structures. So even if the detective is not Jewish, Jewish history may be central to the narrative.

This illustrates a major difference between American and French crime fiction. Jewish detectives appear frequently in American crime fiction, embodying questions of assimilation, outsiderhood, ethnic identity, urban mobility and moral anxiety. In French crime fiction, Jewishness more often appears through historical trauma, memory politics, Vichy, Holocaust aftermath and national guilt., American Jewish detective fiction tends more toward identity narrative, while French Jewish-inflected crime fiction tends toward historical-memory narrative. Thus, French crime fiction may contain relatively few overtly Jewish detectives while still being profoundly shaped by Jewish history, especially through narratives of Vichy, deportation, memory, and hidden wartime crimes. [ChatGPT]

It will be interesting to see how recent fluctuations in French attitudes to Jews, Judaism and especially Israel play out in French crime fiction and film trends.

Kaminsky, Sarah & Adolfo, (**Adolfo Kaminsky: A Forger's Life** [translated from the French by Mike Mitchell, hc, Doppel House Press, 2016] 978-0997003406 [pb, DoppelHouse Press, 2016] 978-0997003475 (born in Buenos Aires in 1925, died in Paris in 2023) [*"Every resistance movement had its forgers, but few have told their tales. Many, like Kaminsky, were very young technicians and chemists when they began their work. Sarah Kaminsky's affectionate rendering of her father's life, with all the intricacies of his trade, is a book not just about a remarkable craftsman, but a man who strove to save 'every life that was in danger.'"* –Times Literary Supplement

Best-selling author Sarah Kaminsky takes readers through her father Adolfo Kaminsky's perilous and clandestine career as a forger for the French Resistance, the FLN, and numerous other freedom movements of the twentieth century. Recruited as a young Jewish teenager for his knowledge of dyes, Kaminsky became the primary forger for the French Resistance during the Nazi occupation of Paris. Then, as a professional photographer, Kaminsky spent the next twenty-five years clandestinely producing thousands of counterfeit documents for immigrants, exiles, underground political operatives, and pacifists across the globe. Kaminsky kept his past cloaked in secrecy well into his eighties, until his daughter convinced him to share the details of the life-threatening work he did on behalf of people fighting for justice and peace throughout the world. [Amazon]

While not a detective chasing criminals, Kaminsky was a forensic investigator in reverse. He used his background in chemical dyeing to analyze official French and German identity papers, figuring out exactly how watermarks, stamps, and inks were manufactured. He ran a secret laboratory in Paris that manufactured flawless fake documents, systematically tracking German round-up schedules to warn and hide Jewish families before the police arrived. He estimated that his forensic forgery directly saved roughly 14,000 lives. [ChatGPT]

Klarsfeld, Serge & Beate, (*Hunting the Truth: Memoirs of Beate and Serge Klarsfeld* [hc, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2018] 978-0374279820 [pb, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2019] 978-0374538170 [*This dual autobiography by the Nazi-hunter couple is written in alternating first-person chapters, recounting more than fifty years of activism devoted to exposing Nazi war criminals, documenting the Holocaust in France, and fighting antisemitism and historical amnesia. It begins with the sharply contrasting wartime backgrounds of its authors. Beate was born in Berlin in 1939 into a German family whose world had been shaped by Nazism. Serge was born in 1935 into a Jewish family in Romania and raised in France. His father was deported to Auschwitz and murdered there, while Serge was a hidden child survivor.*

Much of the memoir chronicles their dramatic campaigns against former Nazis living freely in Europe and Latin America. The Klarsfelds investigate and publicize the whereabouts of figures such as Klaus Barbie, Kurt Lischka, and Maurice Papon. They combine archival research, legal activism, journalism, public protests, and media spectacle to pressure governments into prosecutions. One of the memoir's most famous episodes is Beate's 1968 public slap of West German Chancellor Kurt Georg Kiesinger, whom she denounced as a former Nazi propagandist.

Alongside these dramatic confrontations, the memoir also emphasizes painstaking memorial work. Serge Klarsfeld devoted decades to compiling exhaustive records of Jews deported from France, especially children murdered in the Holocaust. The couple portray historical documentation itself as a form of justice and resistance against denial.

The tone of the memoir is both personal and political. It presents the Klarsfelds not simply as "Nazi hunters," but as activists who believed democratic societies had a moral obligation to expose complicity, reject forgetting, and preserve memory across generations. The book therefore functions simultaneously as autobiography, Holocaust testimony, political history, and a chronicle of postwar European memory struggles. [ChatGPT]

Leff, Lisa Moses, (*The Archive Thief: The Man Who Salvaged French Jewish History in the Wake of the Holocaust* [hc, Oxford UP, 2015]) 978-0199380954 [pb, Oxford UP, 2018] 978-0190690588 *[In the aftermath of the Holocaust, the Jewish historian Zosa Szajkowski stole tens of thousands of archival documents related to French Jewish history from public archives and collections in France and moved them, illicitly, to New York. Why did this respectable historian become a thief? And why did librarians in the United States and Israel accept these materials from him, turning a blind eye to the signs of ownership they bore?]*

*With her award-winning book, *The Archive Thief*, Lisa Moses Leff reconstructs Szajkowski's gripping story in all its ambiguity. Born into poverty in Russian Poland in 1911, Szajkowski was a self-made man who managed to make a life for himself as an intellectual, first as a journalist in 1930s Paris, and then, after a harrowing escape to New York in 1941, as a scholar. Although he never taught at a university or even earned a PhD, Szajkowski became one of the world's foremost experts on the history of the Jews in modern France, publishing in Yiddish, English, and Hebrew. His work opened up new ways of thinking about Jewish emancipation, economic and social modernization, and the rise of modern anti-Semitism.*

But beneath Szajkowski's scholarly accomplishments lay his shameful secret: his pathbreaking articles were based upon documents that he moved illicitly to New York. Eventually, he sold these documents, piecemeal, to American and Israeli research libraries where they still remain. Leff takes us into the backstage of the archives, revealing the powerful ideological, economic, and psychological forces that made Holocaust-era Jewish scholars care more deeply than ever before about preserving the remnants of their past. As Leff shows, it is only when we understand the issues at the heart of his story, in all their ambiguity and complexity, that we can begin to address the larger questions of the rightful ownership of Jewish archives, as well as other contested archives, that are still at issue today. – Amazon]

Loinger, Georges, with Kathy Hazan and Michèle Schlanger-Merowka, (*L'odyssée d'un résistant: témoignage d'un centenaire, enfant d'Alsace* ("The Odyssey of a Resistance Fighter: Testimony of a Centenarian from Alsace") [pb, OVADIA, 2013] 978-2363920881 [Loinger (1910–2018), from a prominent Jewish family in Strasbourg, was an athlete and soldier who was captured by the Germans, escaped from a POW camp, and joined Jewish rescue networks connected to the OSE (Œuvre de secours aux enfants), a Jewish children's aid organization. He

also became a key operative in the *Armée Juive* (Jewish Army), a resistance network operating in southern France. He functioned as a tactical intelligence investigator, mapping out German and Vichy checkpoint patterns, border-guard shifts along the Swiss frontier, and train schedules. Using this precise, gathered intelligence, he orchestrated the escape of hundreds of Jewish children, often disguising them as sports clubs out for a day of exercise near the border before slipping them across. To assist in keeping the children calm, quiet and focused during these activities, Loinger recruited his cousin, the mime artist **Marcel Marceau** (original name: Marcel Mangel). See the entry on the biographical movie about Marceau and his participation in these child-saving operations (**Resistance, 2020**) in the companion lists of Movies-Films. After the war, Loinger remained active in Jewish communal life and memory work. He also played a role in the development of Jewish sports organizations in France and was active in commemorating Resistance and Holocaust history.] [Google/AI and ChatGPT]

France: Service de Protection de la Communauté Juive (SPCJ)

The SPCJ was established in **1980**, immediately following the **3 October 1980 bombing of the rue Copernic synagogue in Paris**. Its declared purpose is the protection of Jewish communal life rather than political activism. It occupies an unusual position between **communal self-protection, private/community security, monitoring of antisemitic crime, victim assistance, and cooperation with the French police and Interior Ministry**.

Its work now includes security audits of synagogues, schools and communal institutions; training volunteers and professionals; protecting religious services and communal events; advising Jewish schools; assisting victims; operating reporting mechanisms; and compiling statistics on antisemitic incidents. Its statistical work is conducted in cooperation with French state services, currently including the **Direction Nationale du Renseignement Territorial (DNRT)**. It is regarded as the French counterpart to the Community Security Trust (C.S.T.) in Great Britain.

An especially interesting development has been the **"Parents Protectors"** program, in which Jewish parents receive training in vigilance around schools. This represents a genuine form of civilian/community self-protection, but one based on observation, alerting and cooperation with authorities rather than vigilantism.

The state relationship is unusually close. For example, the Interior Ministry reported that a government-supported security program for Jewish institutions involved **€15 million** and security improvements to 349 buildings—schools, community centers and synagogues—with the SPCJ overseeing implementation on behalf of the FSJU.

Ghiles-Meilhac, Samuel, (**Le CRIF: De la Résistance juive à la tentation du lobby, de 1943 à nos jours**) Paris: Robert Laffont, 2011. 353 pp. ISBN 978-2221123843 [Probably the most useful book for placing the SPCJ in its **institutional context**. It is a history of the CRIF rather than the SPCJ, but because the SPCJ emerged from the organized communal establishment, the book provides valuable background on Jewish institutional responses to antisemitism, relations with the French state, and especially the transformation produced by the second Intifada and the post-2000 surge in antisemitic violence. It is based on archives and extensive interviews.]

Wieviorka, Michel, (**La Tentation antisémite: Haine des Juifs dans la France d'aujourd'hui**) Paris: Robert Laffont, 2005. [This is not a history of the SPCJ but is important background for understanding **why the SPCJ's role expanded dramatically after 2000**. It arose from a major field investigation into the renewed antisemitism of the early 2000s commissioned with support from the *Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah*—the same foundation that became an important financial supporter of the SPCJ.]

Service de Protection de la Communauté Juive. *Annual Report on Antisemitism in France 2010.* Paris: SPCJ, 2011. [The report contains a special "**30 Years of SPCJ: Testimonials**" section commemorating the organization's creation after the Copernic bombing and discussing its protection of communal buildings, assistance to victims and cooperation with public authorities. An English version survives online.]

Service de Protection de la Communauté Juive. "Comment sont comptabilisés les actes antisémites recensés?" SPCJ. [This explains that the SPCJ's official count of antisemitic acts is produced in cooperation with state services and generally requires a complaint, main courante, referral to the prosecutor, or official police/judicial finding.]

Couvelaire, Louise, "**Deux ans après l'Hyper Cacher, la communauté juive condamnée à la vigilance.**" *Le Monde*, 9 January 2017 [One of the best pieces for seeing the SPCJ in actual operation after the 2015 Hyper Cacher murders. Particularly valuable on the "Parents Protectors" program and the shift toward community members taking a greater role in vigilance after static military protection of Jewish institutions was reduced in 2016.]

Monnot, Caroline, "**La Ligue de défense juive menacée de dissolution.**" *Le Monde*, 31 July 2014. [Useful in clarifying the distinction between the **institutionally sanctioned SPCJ** and **militant Jewish self-defence groups such as the LDJ**, the French version of the JDL. It cites sociologist Samuel Ghiles-Meilhac and describes clashes in which SPCJ members attempted to restrain LDJ militants.]

Ghozlan, Sammy, "**Une lettre de Sammy Ghozlan.**" *Le Monde*, 13 November 2004. [An interesting primary testimony by former police commissioner **Sammy Ghozlan**. He states that at the beginning of the new wave of antisemitic attacks in September 2000 he was asked to address the problem and "**reactivated**" the SPCJ, before creating the Bureau de Vigilance in 2002. This is useful evidence for the institutional response to the dramatic post-2000 change in French antisemitism.] [See below following for more details on Ghozlan]

Faye, Olivier, "**Inside France's Jewish Community Protection Service,**" *Le Monde*, November 20, 2023. [one of the best journalistic accounts of the SPCJ]

Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah, (Rapport d'activité 2017. Paris: Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah, 2018, p. 57. [This gives considerably more operational detail: security audits, financial assistance for security improvements, a training department dating from 2002, recruitment/training of professional security personnel, and the combination of professionals with trained volunteers.]

*The post–October 7 period has substantially increased the importance of the SPCJ. Its current website defines its mission as exclusively the protection of Jewish life and lists six principal areas: **security audits/advice, training, emergency assistance, legal assistance, an incident-reporting platform, and recording antisemitic acts.***

*October 7 transformed the environment in which it operates. France recorded **1,676 antisemitic acts in 2023**, compared with only **436 in 2022**; the great majority of the increase occurred after October 7. The level then remained extraordinarily high: **1,570 in 2024 and 1,320 in 2025**. Thus, 2025 was somewhat lower than the two immediately preceding years, but still roughly **three times the pre–October 7 level of 2022**. Moreover, physical violence actually increased in 2025, to **126 assaults**, the highest recent figure.*

*This means that the SPCJ has not reverted to its pre-2023 posture. Its 2025 assessment explicitly says that France has reached a new, persistently high plateau of antisemitism. It reports incidents in **88 of France's 101 departments and 431 municipalities**. Jewish communal sites—synagogues, schools, communal organizations and related locations—remain important targets.*

*The SPCJ's function now goes considerably beyond putting guards outside synagogues. It operates in a kind of **public-private/community security partnership with the French state**. The post-October 7 reports also increasingly emphasize **schools, universities, workplaces, private residences and online environments**, rather than treating the threat as primarily one of attacks upon synagogues. In 2024, for example, SPCJ counted **192 antisemitic acts in educational settings that resulted in complaints**, while noting that Education Ministry figures were far higher because many school incidents never result in police complaints.*

*CST and SPCJ represent a significant development in postwar Jewish history: neither conventional police agencies nor vigilante organizations, but **organized communal security bodies occupying an intermediate space between civil society, private security, hate-crime monitoring and state law enforcement**. Both organizations had been built over decades in response to terrorism and antisemitism; after October 7, the infrastructure was suddenly required on a scale for which it had never previously been used. The French figures—**436 incidents in 2022 → 1,676 in 2023 → 1,570 in 2024 → 1,320 in 2025**—show why SPCJ has become a continuing security institution rather than an emergency response organization. – ChatGPT*

France: Sammy Ghozlan (1942–2023)

*He was a **Jewish French career police officer who rose to commissaire de police**, worked extensively in the difficult Paris suburbs, became involved in terrorism investigations, and after retiring transferred his police experience into organized Jewish crime prevention and anti-antisemitism work. His Jewish identity is explicitly documented in mainstream French sources.*

He was born into a Jewish family in Constantine, French Algeria, in 1942 and moved to metropolitan France after Algerian independence. His father had been a senior police detective in Constantine, making Ghozlan part of a two-generation French policing family. He eventually became a senior officer in the Police nationale in Paris.

*Belleret, Robert, “Jours de fièvre chez les juifs de France.” Le Monde, 31 May 2002 [print ed., 1 June 2002], p. 17. [One of the best concise profiles of Sammy Ghozlan. It describes him as a Jew from Constantine, a retired police commissioner who had worked successfully in difficult housing estates in Pantin and Aulnay-sous-Bois and had undertaken a special mission following the 1982 rue des Rosiers terrorist attack. This is particularly useful for demonstrating that Ghozlan was not primarily a “Jewish security activist who happened once to have been a policeman.” He had a substantial **ordinary** French policing career first. – ChatGPT]*

*France, Assemblée nationale, Commission d'enquête chargée de rechercher d'éventuels dysfonctionnements de la justice et de la police dans l'affaire dite Sarah Halimi. Compte rendu no. 12, audition de Sammy Ghozlan, October 26, 2021. [Ghozlan's parliamentary testimony at the inquiry into the Sarah Halimi murder case introduces him as a retired **commissaire de police**; a specialist in difficult suburban policing; an expert in community/neighborhood policing; a policeman mobilized to assist investigators after the rue des Rosiers attack; and as the founder of the Bureau national de vigilance contre l'antisémitisme (BNVCA). He evaluates the Sarah Halimi police response explicitly as a **former professional police officer**, discussing intervention doctrine, duty to protect life and investigative failures.*

*Langewiesche, William, “**Paris en flammes**” / “**Paris Is Burning**,” Vanity Fair, July 2015. [This is probably the richest journalistic portrait of Ghozlan. Langewiesche reconstructs his policing career in considerable detail. Ghozlan worked in rough multicultural suburbs, dealt with juvenile delinquency and became involved in antiterrorism; after retirement he created the **Bureau National de Vigilance Contre l'Antisémitisme (BNVCA)**. There is also a fascinating family*

*detail: Langewiesche reports that **Ghozlan's father had been a senior detective in Constantine** and influenced Sammy's own direct investigative style. The article also shows how Ghozlan's second career effectively adapted police methods to Jewish communal protection: collecting reports, checking evidence, dealing with victims, pressing police and prosecutors to recognize antisemitic motivation, and transmitting information to authorities.*

Prominent Post-War French-Jewish Legal Personalities:

Robert Badinter (1928–2024) — lawyer, Minister of Justice, constitutional judge

[Born into a Jewish family of Bessarabi an origin; his father was deported and murdered at Sobibor. Badinter became one of France's leading criminal lawyers, especially associated with opposition to the death penalty. As **Garde des Sceaux/Minister of Justice, 1981–1986**, he secured abolition of capital punishment in 1981 and promoted major reforms affecting prisons, criminal justice and civil liberties. He subsequently served as **President of the Conseil constitutionnel, 1986–1995**.

Principal works by Robert Badinter:

L'Exécution, Paris: Grasset, 1973 [His classic account of the Buffet-Bontems case and of representing Roger Bontems, whose execution profoundly shaped Badinter's abolitionist campaign. Later editions include Paris: Fayard, 1998]

L'Abolition, Paris: Fayard, 2000 [Probably the single most useful Badinter book for a law-enforcement bibliography: memoir/history of the struggle culminating in the abolition of the death penalty in 1981.]

Contre la peine de mort: écrits 1970–2006. Paris: Fayard, 2006. 330 pp. ISBN 978-2-213-63052-6 [Speeches, essays and interventions documenting decades of abolitionist work]

ed., Une autre justice, 1789–1799: Contributions à l'histoire de la justice sous la Révolution française, Paris: Fayard, 1989. 408 pp. ISBN 978-2-213-02428-8.

La Prison républicaine, 1871–1914, Paris: Fayard, 1992 [*Important for Badinter's thinking about imprisonment and the relationship between republican ideals and penal institutions*]

Un antisémitisme ordinaire: Vichy et les avocats juifs, 1940–1944, Paris: Fayard, 1997. [directly links **Jewish history and the legal profession**, examining exclusion of Jewish lawyers under Vichy]

Les Épines et les roses, Paris: Fayard, 2011 [Political/legal memoir covering his years as Minister of Justice]

Idiss, Paris: Fayard, 2018 [*Family memoir centred on his Jewish grandmother; useful for understanding the Jewish background underlying Badinter's republican and human-rights commitments*]

Cassia, Paul, (**Robert Badinter: un juriste en politique**), Paris: Fayard, 2009. 547 pp. + plates. ISBN 978-2-213-65139-2 [- best serious study of Badinter as a jurist; covers the lawyer, professor, Minister of Justice, constitutional judge and senator rather than merely the abolition campaign.]

Dreyfus, Pauline, (**Robert Badinter: l'épreuve de la justice**), Boulogne-Billancourt: Éditions du Toucan, 2009. 364 pp.

Missika, Dominique & Maurice Szafran, (**Robert Badinter: l'homme juste**) Paris: Tallandier, 2021. 269 pp. + 8 pp. plates.

Lyon-Caen, Antoine & Jean-Marc Sauvé, eds. (**Robert Badinter: l'œuvre d'un juste**) Paris: LexisNexis, 2025. 377 pp. [*Particularly valuable for assessing his legal legacy.*]

Pierre Draï (1926–2013) — one of the outstanding post-war French judges

[Draï deserves much more attention than he usually receives in accounts of French Jewry. Born in Constantine into a Sephardi Jewish family, he pursued an almost entirely judicial career and became First President of the Cour de cassation, 1988–1996—in effect France's highest-ranking ordinary-court judge. Before that he headed the Paris Tribunal and the Paris Court of Appeal. Draï was particularly associated with the dignity and ethical responsibilities of the judge, access to justice, judicial efficiency and the humanization of legal institutions. Contemporary assessments describe him as one of the defining magistrates of his generation.]

Guinchard, Serge & Gérard Pluyette, eds., (**Le juge entre deux millénaires: Mélanges offerts à Pierre Draï**), Paris: Dalloz, 2000. xx + 708 pp. ISBN 2-247-03629-5. (*This is the essential scholarly volume. It includes a **bibliography of Draï's writings** and essays on judging, criminal procedure, judicial ethics, relations between judges and lawyers, and the administration of justice.*)]

Johannès, Franck, “**Pierre Draï, grand magistrat et ancien président de la Cour de cassation, est mort.**” *Le Monde*, 18 April 2013; updated 21 April 2013.

Benhamou, Yves, “**Hommage d'un juge à Pierre Draï: En manière d'exercice d'admiration.**” *Gazette du Palais*, no. 134, 14 May 2013, ref. Gaz. Pal. 2013, no. 130h6.

Myriam Ezratty (1929–2017) — magistrate, prisons and juvenile justice

Born **Myriam Bader** into an Alsatian Jewish family, she survived the Vichy period in hiding. She entered the magistracy soon after it was opened to women. She was:

- Director of **Éducation surveillée**, 1981–1983;
- first woman to become **Director of the French Prison Administration**, 1983–1986;
- **First President of the Paris Court of Appeal**, 1988–1996—the first woman to hold the position.

At the prison administration she promoted rehabilitation, health and education in prisons and experimented with family-visiting facilities. Unlike Badinter or Kiejman, Ezratty did not leave a large corpus of books, so the bibliography consists chiefly of institutional and historical material.

Ministère de la Justice, “**Décès de Myriam Ezratty.**” Communiqué de presse, 11 September 2017. [*An authoritative concise account of her work in juvenile justice, prisons and the Paris Court of Appeal*]

“**Myriam Ezratty, première directrice de l'administration pénitentiaire, première Première présidente de la cour d'appel de Paris.**” *Journal Spécial des Sociétés*, 4 April 2020.

Yvorel, Jean-Jacques, Sylvie Humbert, Gisèle Fiche, Odile Maillard, Nathalie Le Louarn, Jean-Pierre Jurmand, Marc Brzégowy, and Sylvie Perdriolle, Pour l'histoire: Bulletin de l'Association pour l'histoire de la protection judiciaire des mineurs, no. 76 (Winter 2017).

Includes an homage to Ezratty and material on the history of Éducation surveillée.

Ezratty is particularly notable on law-enforcement, because she actually administered the prison system, rather than merely practising law. – ChatGPT]

Simone Veil (1927–2017) - magistrate and justice administrator before becoming a political figure. *Veil is remembered chiefly for the Holocaust, the abortion law and European politics, but her first major career was in the Ministry of Justice. She entered the magistracy in the 1950s and worked in the Administration pénitentiaire from 1957 to 1964, inspecting prisons and advocating improved conditions, especially for women. She later worked on civil-law reform and became Secretary-General of the Conseil supérieur de la magistrature.*

Veil, Simone, (**Une vie**), Paris: Stock, 2007. 397 pp. ISBN 978-2-234-05817-0. [*Her autobiography contains valuable material on her years in the magistracy and prison administration as well as on her Jewish identity, deportation and subsequent public life.*]

Georges Kiejman (1932–2023) — major criminal and civil-liberties advocate

[One of France's great post-war *avocats*. Born in Paris to impoverished **Polish Jewish immigrant parents**; his father was murdered at Auschwitz. Kiejman entered the Paris bar in 1953 and .

Kiejman, Georges, with Vanessa Schneider (**L'homme qui voulait être aimé**), Paris: Grasset, 2021. 256 pp. ISBN 978-2-246-82858-7. [*The indispensable autobiographical source. It covers his Jewish childhood, the murder of his father at Auschwitz, rise at the Paris bar, the Goldman case and his involvement in major criminal and political trials*]

Kiejman, Georges and Richard Malka, (**Éloge de l'irrévérence**), Paris: Grasset, 2019. [*Dialogue between two generations of Jewish French advocates, focused especially on freedom of expression, secularism and the lawyer's role.*]

Serge Klarsfeld (b. 1935) — lawyer, investigator and prosecutor of crimes against humanity

[*Klarsfeld is unusual because he operated at the boundary of lawyer, historical investigator, activist and “Nazi hunter.” Born in Bucharest, he lost his father in the Holocaust. As an attorney and researcher, with his wife Beate, he played a decisive role in bringing attention and legal pressure to bear on Klaus Barbie, René Bousquet, Jean Leguay, Paul Touvier and Maurice Papon. His work helped transform French judicial treatment of crimes against humanity, Vichy collaboration and Holocaust-related prosecutions.*]

Klarsfeld, Serge, (**Le Mémorial de la déportation des Juifs de France**). Paris: Association des Fils et Filles des Déportés Juifs de France, 1978; subsequent revised editions. [*Foundational documentary work identifying deportees*]

Klarsfeld, Serge, (**Vichy-Auschwitz: Le rôle de Vichy dans la solution finale de la question juive en France**) 2 vols. Paris: Fayard, 1983–1985.

Klarsfeld, Serge, (**Klaus Barbie: un procès pour mémoire**) Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1994.
[*Directly relevant to the relationship between historical investigation and criminal prosecution.*]

Klarsfeld, Serge, **La Shoah en France**. 4 vols. Paris: Fayard, 2001. [*The mature synthesis of his documentary research.*]

Klarsfeld, Beate, and Serge Klarsfeld. *Mémoires*. Paris: Flammarion, 2015; Paris: Le Livre de Poche, 2016. [*Essential autobiographical account of their investigations, campaigns and judicial battles.*]

Alain Jakubowicz (b. 1953) — criminal lawyer, Holocaust trials and LICRA

[Born near Lyon to parents who were **Jewish immigrants from Poland and Austria**, Jakubowicz became an important criminal advocate and later president of **LICRA (Ligue internationale contre le racisme et l'antisémitisme)**. His strongest relevance lies in his participation, representing Jewish interests and civil parties, in the historic trials of: Klaus Barbie, 1987; Paul Touvier, 1994; and Maurice Papon, 1997–98. He has also defended defendants in major contemporary criminal cases, including **Nordahl Lelandais**, making him interesting as someone who moved between memory/antisemitism cases and ordinary high-profile criminal defense. – ChatGPT]

Jakubowicz, Alain & René Raffin, (**Touvier: histoire du procès**), Paris: Julliard, 1995. [- an advocate's account of one of France's central crimes-against-humanity trials.]

Jakubowicz, Alain, [**Soit je gagne, soit j'apprends**] Paris: Plon, 2019 [*Autobiographical reflections on his legal career and major cases*]

Francis Szpiner (b. 1954) — criminal lawyer and terrorism specialist

[Szpiner is especially relevant to “law-enforcement” rather than simply Jewish legal history. Born to **Polish Jewish parents**, he studied at Panthéon-Assas and the Institut de criminologie and has practised at the Paris bar since 1975. His career has included major criminal trials and extensive work involving terrorism. He represented victims of **Carlos and Action Directe**, families of murdered DST officers, terrorism victims and the family of **Ilan Halimi**. He also helped shape French thinking about the centralization of terrorism prosecutions.]

Books by Szpiner:

Szpiner, Francis, (**Une affaire de femmes - Paris 1943, exécution d'une avorteuse**. Paris: Balland, 1986. [*Historical-judicial reconstruction of the Marie-Louise Giraud case and Vichy penal justice*]

Szpiner, Francis, (**Mat d'échec**) Paris: Balland, 1990.

Szpiner, Francis, (**Fantôme de papier**) Paris: La Table Ronde, 2006.

Szpiner, Francis, (**Les Moutons de Panurge: contre les sondages**) Paris: Plon, 2015.

Szpiner, Francis, (**Une affaire si facile**) Paris: Le Cherche Midi, 2020.

Richard Malka (b. 1968) — free-expression and terrorism-era lawyer

[Malka represents the younger generation. Born in Paris to a Sephardi Jewish family from Meknes, Morocco, he trained in Georges Kiejman's office and became closely identified with Charlie Hebdo, eventually representing the newspaper in major freedom-of-expression cases and in litigation arising from the 2015 terrorist attacks. He is relevant less for conventional criminal defense than for the intersection of law, terrorism, blasphemy, antisemitism, secularism and freedom of expression.

Malka, Richard & Catherine Meurisse, (*La Vie de palais: Il était une fois les avocats...*) Paris: Marabout, 2014.

Malka, Richard, and Georges Kiejman, (*Éloge de l'irrévérence*) Paris: Grasset, 2019.

Malka, Richard, (*Le droit d'emmerder Dieu*) Paris: Grasset, 2021. 92 pp. [*His celebrated courtroom plea associated with the Charlie Hebdo controversy and defence of freedom of expression*]

Malka, Richard, (*Traité sur l'intolérance*) Paris: Grasset, 2023. 96 pp.

Malka, Richard, (*Après Dieu*) Paris: Stock, 2025. 213 pp.
Meditation on freedom, secularism and religious intolerance.

Malka, Richard, (*Passion antisémite*) Paris: Grasset, 2025. 144 pp. - ChatGPT

Argentina-Uruguay:

Glickman, Nora, (*The Jewish White Slave Trade & the Untold Story of Raquel Liberman* [Routledge]) [hc, 1999] 978-0815333005 [pb, 2015] 978-1138864443

Miller, Carina J., “**Protecting the Argentine Jewish Community and Jewish Identity in Times of Crisis: Local Efforts, Global Community, and Foreign Support.**” *Florida Journal of International Law* 16, no. 3 (2004), Article 11. [*A useful complement to Raanan Rein's articles. It studies the protective response of the Argentine Jewish community, especially in the shadow of the Israeli Embassy bombing of 1992 and AMIA bombing of 1994, and the relationships among local Jewish institutions, international Jewish organizations and outside governmental support.*]

Rein, Raanan, (*Jewish Self-Defense in South America: Facing Anti-Semitism with a Club in Hand*. [Translated by Erna von der Walde, hc, Routledge, 2022] 978-0367724887 [pb, Routledge, 2024] 978-0367724894 [*Rein examines the **Jewish self-defense networks created in Argentina and Uruguay during the 1960s**, particularly following the Mossad's capture of Adolf Eichmann in Buenos Aires in 1960. Eichmann's abduction produced a nationalist and antisemitic backlash, including attacks on Jews and Jewish institutions. The 1965 killing of Latvian Nazi war criminal Herberts Cukurs in Montevideo produced further tensions.*

Jewish young people therefore organized clandestine or semi-clandestine security formations—variously called Irgun, Bitachon, Misgeret, or simply La Orga. They guarded synagogues, schools and communal institutions, gathered intelligence about antisemitic organizations, trained in physical combat and sometimes retaliated against attackers.

*Especially interesting is Rein's treatment of the **relationship between communal security and the Israeli state**: Israeli diplomats, Mossad personnel and security specialists helped train and organize some of these groups. Rein bases the book on archival research and more than 120 interviews with activists, diplomats and former Mossad personnel.]*

Raanan Rein and David M. K. Sheinin, eds., (**Armed Jews in the Americas** [hc, Brill, 2021] 978-9004462533 [*This collection has a broad scope, including the United States and Canada, as well as South America, but it is an important collection for understanding the general phenomenon of Jews taking responsibility for security, weapons and law-and-order functions. The editors deliberately challenge the stereotype of Jews as either passive victims or people historically detached from weapons and physical security. – ChatGPT*]

Raanan Rein, “**‘We Had Our Own Problems and So We Had Our Own Bitachon’: Jewish Self-Defense in Uruguay, 1960–1987**” in Rein and Sheinin, eds., **Armed Jews in the Americas**, Chapter 8. [*A concentrated study of **Jewish communal policing/security in Uruguay**. Rein follows three phases: the repercussions of the Eichmann capture; the Mossad operation against Cukurs in 1965; and the expansion of Jewish security concerns after the 1967 Six-Day War. The organization guarded Jewish schools, synagogues and events, conducted surveillance and intelligence gathering, and maintained links with Israeli security personnel. This comes unusually close to a privately organized Jewish **crime-prevention and protective-security service**, rather than simply a political militia.*]

Rein, Raanan, “**An Anti-Fascist Struggle Conditioned by Ethnic Concerns: Jewish Self-Defense Groups in 1960s South America,**” Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies 48, no. 3 (2023): 453–470. DOI 10.1080/08263663.2023.2223878. [- compares Argentina and Uruguay and argues that these organizations should be understood not merely as Zionist groups but as an ethnic minority's response to the perceived inability—or unwillingness—of ordinary state law-enforcement institutions to provide adequate protection.]

Stavans, Ilan, “**Normal Jews?**” Latin American Research Review 57, no. 3 (September 2022): 695–707. DOI 10.1017/lar.2022.37. [*This is a long review essay rather than a primary historical study, but it is useful because Stavans discusses the emerging scholarship on armed Jews in Latin America and gives an unusually thoughtful consideration of why minority communities create their own security structures when they distrust the police. He discusses Raanan Rein's Uruguay research at length and even recalls his own youthful participation in Bitachon in Mexico.*]

Vincent, Isabel. (**Bodies and Souls: The Tragic Plight of Three Jewish Women Forced into Prostitution in the Americas** [hc, William Morrow, 2005] 978-0060090234 [pb, Harper Perennial, 2006] 978-0060090241

Yarfitz, Mir, (**Impure Migration: Jews and Sex Work in Golden Age Argentina** [hc, Rutgers UP, 2019]) 978-0813598154 [- investigates the period from the 1890s until the 1930s, when prostitution was a legal institution in Argentina and the international community knew its capital city Buenos Aires as the center of the sex industry. At the same time, pogroms and anti-Semitic discrimination left thousands of Eastern European Jewish people displaced, without the resources required to immigrate. For many Jewish women, participation in prostitution was one of very few ways they could escape the limited options in their home countries, and Jewish men facilitate their transit and the organization of their work and social lives. Instead of marginalizing this story or reading it as a degrading chapter in Latin American Jewish history, *Impure Migration* interrogates a complicated social landscape to reveal that sex work is in fact a critical part of the histories of migration, labor, race, and sexuality. – Amazon]

Alberto Nisman (1963–2015):

Perednik, Gustavo D., (**Matar sin que se note: El ataque de los ayatolás a la Argentina, el encubrimiento del caso AMIA y el fiscal**) Buenos Aires: Planeta, 2009. 324 pp. ISBN 978-950-49-2091-5. A revised/expanded edition appeared in 2015; the Uruguayan Planeta edition carries ISBN 978-9974-729-08-7. [*Perednik knew Nisman personally, and the original edition appeared six years before Nisman's death. It reconstructs the AMIA investigation, Iranian/Hezbollah involvement as argued by the prosecution, and Nisman himself. Perednik describes it as a "crónica novelada"—nonfiction presented with literary techniques. Nisman assisted Perednik with sources while it was being written.*]

Perednik, Gustavo D, (**Morir por la Argentina. 2017**) [*This is effectively the sequel to Matar sin que se note, concentrating on the Iran memorandum, Nisman's final investigation and accusation, and his death. Perednik was a close personal friend and presents Nisman in strongly sympathetic—indeed heroic—terms. The two Perednik books are particularly useful because Perednik places Nisman within the broader AMIA/Iran/antisemitic-terrorism context rather than treating his death simply as an Argentine political scandal.*]

Pastor, Facundo, (**Nisman: ¿Crimen o suicidio? ¿Héroe o espía?**) Buenos Aires: Planeta, 2015. 200 pp. ISBN 978-950-49-4871-1. [*An important counterweight to Perednik. Journalist and lawyer Facundo Pastor reconstructs Nisman's career, intelligence connections, relationship with Jaime Stiuso, FBI contacts, reported contacts with Israeli intelligence, and his final days. It is much less hagiographic and asks how far Nisman became entangled with Argentina's intelligence establishment.*]

Santoro, Daniel, (**Nisman debe morir: La trama secreta de Cristina Kirchner, el pacto con Irán y la muerte violenta del fiscal**) Buenos Aires: Ediciones B, 2015. ISBN 978-9876279925. [*Investigative journalism, strongly critical of the Kirchner government. Useful especially for the intersection of prosecution, intelligence services, Iranian terrorism, and Argentine politics, but its thesis should be read alongside opposing accounts.*]

Duggan, Pablo, (**¿Quién mató a Nisman?**) Buenos Aires: Planeta, 2019. 564 pp. ISBN 978-950-49-6521-3 [*A large-scale investigation into the circumstances of the death. Duggan challenges the dominant murder narrative and is therefore another useful counterweight to Santoro and Perednik. The book covers Nisman's biography as well as the forensic and judicial investigations.*]

Filkins, Dexter, (**"Death of a Prosecutor."** *The New Yorker*, July 20, 2015. [*This is probably the best English-language magazine treatment. Filkins provides an unusually detailed reconstruction of the AMIA bombing, Nisman's investigation, his relations with Argentine intelligence, the Iran accusations, the Kirchner government and the circumstances of his death.*]

Rotella, Sebastian, "Alberto Nisman and Argentina's History of Assassinations and Suspicious Suicides." *ProPublica*, February 11, 2015 [*Rotella had interviewed Nisman before his death and had considerable prior experience reporting on the AMIA investigation. Shorter than Filkins but useful because of the author's direct contact with Nisman.*]

Perednik, Gustavo D., "Iranian Terror and Argentinian Justice: The Case of Alberto Nisman, the Prosecutor Who Knew Too Much." *Jewish Political Studies Review*, 27, nos. 3–4 (Fall 2016) [*Perednik discusses Nisman as a prosecutor confronting Iranian-sponsored terrorism and explicitly presents him as a legal and moral figure. Because Perednik was his friend, it is simultaneously valuable testimony and a partisan/sympathetic account.*]

Sinay, Javier. “AMIA, 29 años. La era de Nisman y una causa que se muerde la cola.” *La Nación*, July 29, 2023. [This is an edited extract from Sinay's longer “**The AMIA Bombing**” in *Jewish Quarterly*. It is particularly useful for placing Nisman back into the history of the AMIA investigation rather than concentrating exclusively on the mystery of his death. Sinay, by the way, is one of the authors in our International bibliography.]

Works by Nisman himself – the central document:

Nisman, Alberto, et al., (**Requerimiento de instrucción / AMIA indictment, Unidad Fiscal de Investigación del Atentado contra la AMIA, 25 October 2006**) [*The massive prosecutorial report laid out the case that senior Iranian officials had ordered the AMIA attack and Hezbollah had executed it. The full indictment and an English-language opinion summary are preserved online.*

*Also essential is Nisman's **January 14, 2015 criminal complaint** accusing President Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, Foreign Minister Héctor Timerman and others of attempting to cover up Iranian responsibility through the Argentina-Iran Memorandum. This was the complaint he was scheduled to explain before Congress immediately after the weekend on which he died.]*

Australia:

Historical Works:

“**Israel Chapman (1794–1868), Australia's First Police Detective and Noel Chapman, Chief Constable.**” *Australian Jewish Historical Society Journal* 6, no. 7 (1969): 392–410 [author unidentified]

Kaplan, Robert M., “**The Last Peruvian: The Jewish Criminal Links to Abraham Gilbert Saffron,**” *Australian Jewish Historical Society* 19 (2008) [- analyzes the history of Jewish criminal involvement in Australia, tracing a lineage from early convicts like, Ikey Solomon and Edward Davis to notorious Sydney figure Abraham Gilbert (Abe) Saffron. The paper highlights Saffron, or “Mr. Sin,” as the culmination of this era, building an empire on vice through systemic corruption before his tax fraud conviction. Saffron was a prominent figure in organized crime in Australia during the 1950s and 60s. The article chronicles his early convictions, his establishment in the nightlife and liquor business, and his reputation being tarnished by associations with various scandals, including the death of Juanita Neilsen. – ChatGPT]

Levi, John S. & George F. J. Bergman, (**Australian Genesis: Jewish Convicts and Settlers, 1788–1850**), Adelaide: Rigby, 1974. Second ed., Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2002. [The Australian Jewish story literally begins with **Jewish convicts and the criminal-justice/transportation system**. It contains substantial material on Jewish offenders, transportation, courts, punishment and the emergence of the free Jewish community.]

Levi, John S., (**The Forefathers: A Dictionary of Biography of the Jews of Australia, 1788–1830**) Sydney: Australian Jewish Historical Society, 1976. ISBN 0-9599959-1-9.

Rubinstein, Hilary L. & William D. Rubinstein, (**The Jews in Australia: A Thematic History**) 2 vols. Melbourne: William Heinemann Australia, 1991. [*Probably the major general reference work. It should be mined for lawyers, judges, political/legal emancipation, antisemitism and Jewish relations with government.*]

Levey, Geoffrey Brahm, and Philip Mendes, eds., (**Jews and Australian Politics**) Brighton, UK: Sussex Academic Press, 2004. [*Especially useful for the intersection of Australian Jewry with government, public policy, civil rights and state institutions.*]

Bergman, George F. J., "**Edward Davis: Life and Death of an Australian Bushranger**," *Australian Jewish Historical Society Journal and Proceedings* 4, pt. 5 (1956): 205–240. [*Davis—also known as George Wilkinson—was the Jewish convict who became leader of the so-called "Jewboy Gang." Bergman explicitly places Davis within the history of Jewish criminality, transportation, policing and bushranging.*]

Australian Jewish lawyers, prosecutors and judges

One particularly striking figure is **Sir Albert Asher Wolff (1899–1977)**. He was from an Orthodox Jewish family, became **Crown Prosecutor in Western Australia in 1926**, later a Supreme Court justice and ultimately **Chief Justice of Western Australia**. The authoritative biographical entry is:

Birman, Wendy, "**Wolff, Sir Albert Asher (1899–1977)**," *Australian Dictionary of Biography, Supplementary Volume*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2005. [*His career runs directly from criminal prosecution into the senior judiciary.*]

Another is **Trevor George Rapke (1909–1978)**, apparently the **first Jewish judge in Victoria**. He became a County Court judge in 1958 and was particularly outspoken about sentencing, prison discipline, juvenile detention and criminal justice.

"**Rapke, Trevor George (1909–1978)**," *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, vol. 16. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2002. [*The biography is valuable because Rapke was not merely a judge who happened to be Jewish: his career involved unusually strong engagement with criminal justice, prisons, sentencing and civil liberties.*]

William Kaye (1919–2012) was the first Jew appointed to the Supreme Court of Victoria (1972). He had substantial experience in **criminal law** before appointment and was active in the International Association of Jewish Lawyers and Jurists.

Falk, Barbara. "**Rosanove, Joan Mavis (1896–1974)**," *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, vol. 16, Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2002. [*Rosanove, born Joan Lazarus to non-practising Jewish parents, became a pioneering Victorian barrister.*]

There is also a valuable new research stream on **Jewish refugee jurists**. Katherine Biber, Sara Dehm, Ana Vrdoljak and Eloise Chandler at UTS have been studying the roughly 300 European-trained jurists who arrived in Australia between 1930 and 1960, **many of them Jewish refugees**. Their work covers professional exclusion, admission to the bar; legal education, restitution and human-rights law. For the period before Bondi, the indispensable continuing source is:

Executive Council of Australian Jewry, (**Report on Antisemitism in Australia**. Sydney: ECAJ, annual, 1990). The **2025 report** is especially important:

Executive Council of Australian Jewry, **ECAJ Report on Anti-Jewish Incidents in Australia 2025**, Sydney: Executive Council of Australian Jewry, 2025 [*It covers the twelve months ending 30 September 2025 and categorizes assaults, vandalism, abuse, threats/messages, graffiti and other incidents. The ECAJ methodology distinguishes incidents involving threats requiring referral to police, making these reports a longitudinal record of Jewish victimization and interaction with law enforcement. Another important document immediately preceding Bondi is:*

Segal, Jillian, (**Plan to Combat Antisemitism**. Canberra: Office of the Special Envoy to Combat Antisemitism, July 2025 [*Its recommendations include law reform, enforcement and institutional responses. The government's subsequent response specifically addresses law reform, training and enforcement, hate-crime legislation, extremist organizations and counter-terrorism measures.*]

The issue of law-enforcement and Australian Jewry was dramatically highlighted by the Bondi Beach Chanukah massacre of Dec. 14, 2025, in which 15 people were killed and about 40 wounded. The resulting Royal Commission is explicitly examining whether police/intelligence agencies performed effectively, information-sharing, protection of Jewish institutions and events, police training concerning antisemitism, and cooperation with Jewish Community Security Groups (CSGs).

*Australia. Royal Commission on Antisemitism and Social Cohesion, **(Interim Report)** Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia, 30 April 2026. [This is not merely a report on antisemitism. Large portions concern: the relationship between Australian Jews, communal security, police, intelligence and counter-terrorism agencies following the Bondi massacre.*

*Chapter 4 is actually titled "**Community Security Groups, intelligence and law enforcement agencies.**" It discusses the Australian CSGs and compares the model with organizations such as Britain's CST and France's SPCJ. The Commission made 14 interim recommendations, including changes intended to strengthen counter-terrorism capability.*

Community Security Group Australia, (From Hate to Violence: A National CSG Assessment of Antisemitism and Security Threats in Australia in 2025. 2026)

CSG describes the 2025 development as a transition from antisemitic hostility and isolated hate incidents toward a sustained security threat, culminating in the Bondi attack.

What has changed after Bondi?

*Quite dramatically. Before December 2025 the Australian model was already based on close cooperation between Jewish **Community Security Groups (CSGs)** and state police. Since the massacre, the question has become whether that relationship is adequate.*

*The Royal Commission found enough problems to recommend that NSW Police's special **Operation Jewish High Holy Days** procedures be extended to other high-risk Jewish festivals and public events. Evidence also showed that CSG had warned police of heightened terrorism risk before the Chanukah event, while the ASIO holiday assessment did not specifically identify an elevated Hanukkah threat.*

*A major controversy now concerns **armed Jewish communal security**. Steven Lowy argued before the Commission that armed CSG protection could have reduced the Bondi death toll; senior NSW Police officials have expressed substantial reservations about giving a communal organization special armed-security powers. As recently as July, the Commission was still taking evidence about armed private security at Jewish events.*

*Meanwhile police deployments around Jewish institutions have greatly increased. Victoria Police testified in July 2026 that it had deployed substantially more resources for Jewish-community protection after October 7, and still more after Bondi. In NSW, CSG and police have operated together under **Operation Shelter**, with increased patrols and physical security at Jewish sites.*

*There is also a significant legislative dimension: the post-Bondi **Combating Antisemitism, Hate and Extremism** legislation addressed hate/extremism offences, immigration, extremist material and firearms regulation.*

The Netherlands:

Rädecker, Tsila, (**Voor vrouw en kind: Dina Sanson, de eerste politievrouw**) (1868–1929). Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2025. 280 pp. ISBN 978-94-6456-517-1. [*Dina Sanson (1868–1929) was Jewish and in 1911 became the first woman employed by a Dutch police force with investigative authority. She joined the Rotterdam municipal police as a politieassistente. The authoritative Dutch Digitaal Vrouwenlexicon explicitly identifies her as the first Dutch policewoman with opsporingsbevoegdheid—power to investigate offenses.*

Rädecker's biography is not simply a women's-history book. It places Sanson's police work within Jewish Rotterdam, social reform, feminism, poverty, prostitution, child protection and crime prevention. Sanson came from a prosperous Jewish family and had already been active in Jewish charitable organizations before entering the police. Her police work concentrated particularly on: endangered or abused children; young women regarded as vulnerable to prostitution; illegal or dangerously negligent foster-care arrangements; the notorious engeltjesmakerij (“angel-making”) system in which infants placed with paid foster mothers suffered neglect and sometimes died; investigation and prevention rather than merely punishment. Her policing work is credited with helping end the engeltjesmakerijen.

What makes Sanson especially interesting is that her Jewishness was not incidental. She had deep connections with Jewish social welfare, including Jewish children's and women's organizations, and Rädecker devotes substantial attention to the Jewish bourgeois environment from which she emerged. - ChatGPT]

Ruis, Edwin, “**Dina Sanson, de eerste Nederlandse politievrouw.**” *Historiek*, April 7, 2025. [*A substantial review/biographical essay prompted by Rädecker's book. It gives a particularly useful summary of Sanson's actual crime-prevention philosophy. Rotterdam's progressive police chief believed traditional repression was ineffective when dealing with endangered girls and prostitution; a woman could establish relationships with victims and potential offenders that male officers could not. Sanson therefore represented an early conception of policing based on prevention, social intervention and victim protection.*

*Ruis also notes an intriguing international connection: one of Sanson's models was **Henriette Arendt**, the Jewish German policewoman and aunt of Hannah Arendt. That suggests a wider European Jewish-police connection worth following separately.]*

The modern Dutch police

Voet, Esther, “**‘Je voelt je weleens een roepende in de woestijn’ [‘Sometimes You Feel Like a Voice Crying in the Wilderness’]**.” *Nieuw Israëlietisch Weekblad (NIW)*, September 29, 2024. [*This is probably the best article presently available on Jewish police officers collectively in the Netherlands. It is an extended interview with veteran police officers **Marcel de Weerd** and **Michel Theeboom**, then leaders of the **Joods Politie Netwerk (JPN—Jewish Police Network)**. Both had long police careers. They explicitly describe themselves not as Jewish communal guards but as ordinary professional Dutch police officers who also provide the force with expertise concerning Jewish communities. In 2024 they attracted attention by reporting that some Dutch police colleagues were objecting to assignments protecting Jewish institutions and events.*

Their activities include: advising police commanders on demonstrations and public order; educating fellow officers about Judaism and Jewish communal concerns; acting as a resource for Jewish police employees; improving police relations with the Jewish community; providing operational cultural knowledge; advising colleagues about antisemitism and the reporting of hate

*The Joods Politie Network as an official police employees' network : The JPN is not merely an informal Jewish association outside the police. Dutch National Police documentation lists the **Joods Politie Network** among the nationally operating police employee networks within the *Netwerk Divers Vakmanschap*. The same documentation identifies it as one of four nationally organized networks that receive particularly substantial operational inquiries, together with the Caribbean, Indo-Moluccan and LGBT police networks.*

Max Engeland, a former Dutch police inspector and **founder of the Joods Politie Network**. By 2025 he was retired, but he continued participating publicly in debates concerning police neutrality, antisemitism and Jewish officers. See:

“Hetze tegen Joodse agent.” *Nieuw Israëlietisch Weekblad*, April 3, 2018. [It describes an online campaign directed against Engeland specifically as a **Jewish police officer**, including insinuations that he belonged to an “Israeli police force” operating in Amsterdam. Police Amsterdam-Amstelland treated the Jewish dimension of the harassment as potentially relevant to discrimination procedures. Engeland provides a well-documented contemporary example of a **Dutch policeman whose Jewish identity was public and professionally relevant**].

Gischler, Ruben, **“‘We hebben geen zin meer in politiek’ [‘We Don't Want Politics Any More’].”** *Nieuw Israëlietisch Weekblad*, August 20, 2025. [This article is valuable because it supplies the JPN's leadership succession: founders/earlier leaders included Max Engeland; later leaders included Marcel de Weerd and Michel Theeboom; by 2025 **Patricia Galit Bakker** was chair of the JPN. It also contains the Dutch National Police leadership's own characterization of the network: the police value the JPN both for its **professional expertise** and for maintaining police contact and trust with the Jewish community. – ChatGPT]

Germany/Austria:

Kord, T.S., (**Lovable Crooks and Loathsome Jews: Antisemitism in German and Austrian Crime Writing Before the World Wars** [pb, McFarland & Co., 2018] 978-1476670126 [In the years leading up to the World Wars, Germany and Austria saw an unprecedented increase in the study and depiction of the criminal. Science, journalism and crime fiction were obsessed with delinquents while ignoring the social causes of crime. As criminologists measured criminals' heads and debated biological predestination, court reporters and crime writers wrote side-splitting or heart-rending stories featuring one of the most popular characters ever created--the hilarious or piteous crook. The author examines the figure of the crook and notions of “Jewish” criminality in a range of antisemitic writing, from Nazi propaganda to court reporting to forgotten classics of crime fiction. - Amazon])

Vyleta, Daniel, (**Crime, Jews and News: Vienna, 1895–1914** [Bergahn Books]) [hc, 2007] 978-1845451813 [pb, 2011] 978-0857455932

Dr. Bernhard Weiss, Senior Berlin Policeman:

Rott, Joachim, (**Ich gehe meinen Weg ungehindert geradeaus“: Dr. Bernhard Weiß (1880–1951). Polizeivizepräsident in Berlin. Leben und Wirken.** Aus Religion und Recht, vol. 16. Berlin: Frank & Timme, 2010. 224 pp. ISBN 978-3-86596-307-9. [Bernhard Weiss (1880–1951) was a lawyer, decorated German army officer, head of Berlin's Political Police, chief of the Criminal Police (Kriminalpolizei), and from 1927 to 1932 vice-president of the Berlin Police. He

was openly Jewish and active in liberal Jewish organizations. Rott gives detailed attention to Weiss as a professional policeman rather than merely as a Jewish victim of Nazism. He was involved in criminal investigation, political policing, public-order questions and modernization of the Berlin police. He became one of Joseph Goebbels's favorite targets; Goebbels repeatedly called him "Isidor" in an effort to turn the Jewish police official into a symbol of the allegedly "Jewish" Weimar Republic.]

Bering, Dietz, (**Kampf um Namen: Bernhard Weiß gegen Joseph Goebbels**) Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1991. ISBN 3-608-91350-5. [*This is more narrowly focused than Rott. Bering examines the extraordinary propaganda duel between Goebbels and Weiss and particularly the campaign to undermine Weiss through antisemitic naming and ridicule. Weiss's Jewish identity became inseparable from his position as a senior law-enforcement official. The Nazis were not merely attacking a Jew; they were attacking a Jew who exercised legitimate police power over Nazis and could order arrests and investigations against them.*]

Weigel, Björn, "Bernhard Weiß." In Wolfgang Benz, ed., **Handbuch des Antisemitismus: Judenfeindschaft in Geschichte und Gegenwart**, vol. 2, **Personen**, pp. 880–882. Berlin/New York: de Gruyter/Saur, 2009. ISBN 978-3-598-24072-0. [*A concise scholarly biographical entry. Useful as a short authoritative reference for Weiss's career and the antisemitic campaign against him.*]

Berger, Michael, "Dr. Bernhard Weiß. Sein Kampf für Demokratie und Rechtsstaat in der Weimarer Republik," in Berger, **Eisernes Kreuz – Doppeladler – Davidstern: Juden in deutschen und österreichisch-ungarischen Armeen**. Berlin: trafo Verlag, 2010, pp. 146–150. ISBN 978-3-89626-962-1. [*Brief, but useful because it explicitly presents Weiß as a Jewish German patriot, soldier and defender of the constitutional state.*]

See also the fictional portrayals of Jewish or partially Jewish-German police officers in the novels of four authors in the International bibliography (chapter 8): Philip Kerr, Jonathan Rabb, Paul Grossman and Harald Gilbers.

Yiddishland/Pale of Settlement/Russia/Ukraine:

Cohen, Nathan. "Sherlock Holmes in the Pale of Settlement: Yiddish Crime Stories 1860–1914." In **Leket: Yidishe Shtudyes Haynt / Jiddistik heute / Yiddish Studies Today**, edited by Marion Aptroot, Efrat Gal-Ed, Roland Gruschka, and Simon Neuberger, pp. 253–278. Düsseldorf: Düsseldorf University Press (Heinrich Heine University Düsseldorf), 2012. ISBN 978-3-943460-09-4. ISSN 2194-8879.

Goldis, Mikhail, (**Memoirs of a Jewish District Attorney from Soviet Ukraine** [Academic Studies Press, 2024, translated from the Russian by Marat Grinberg]) [h c] 979-8887195896 [pb] 979-8887195902

Portnoy, Eddy, (**Bad Rabbi: And Other Strange but True Stories from the Yiddish Press** [hc, Stanford UP, 2017]) 978-0804797610 [pb, Stanford UP, 2017] 978-1503604117 [*a collection of historical essays drawn from the the Yiddish-language press from the late nineteenth century through the mid-twentieth century. Rather than presenting the familiar narrative of Jewish intellectuals, religious leaders, or victims of persecution, Portnoy uncovers the colorful, scandalous, and frequently humorous underside of Jewish life. The book demonstrates that Jews, like every other people, have always had their share of criminals, eccentrics, con artists, sexual scandals, political radicals, gangsters, and corrupt rabbis. By mining thousands of forgotten newspaper stories, Portnoy challenges the sanitized image of traditional Jewish society. His*

central argument is that the Yiddish press recorded the full spectrum of Jewish experience—much of which has been ignored because it conflicted with idealized communal self-images.

The book consists of approximately three dozen short essays, each built around one or more authentic newspaper stories including fraudulent rabbis, murder cases, Jewish gangsters, prostitution and white slavery, counterfeiters, sexual scandals, bizarre lawsuits, religious fraud, failed messiahs, political extremists, circus performers and strongmen, unusual deaths, eccentric inventors and impostors.

One of the book's strongest contributions is its documentation of ordinary and organized crime among Jews, including burglary, forgery, embezzlement, murder, confidence schemes, gang activity, insurance fraud and smuggling. Portnoy shows that Jewish newspapers reported these crimes openly, often in remarkable detail. He offers numerous accounts of misbehaving rabbis, sexual crimes, dramas posed by the challenges of immigration and modernization, and humorous misadventures of everyday life. The book demonstrates how Jewish communities represented and debated crime in their own newspapers rather than suppressing it; illuminates the interaction between crime, migration, poverty, urbanization, and modernization; and highlights the diversity of Jewish social experience beyond elite intellectual and religious histories. Portnoy's work occupies a distinctive place in modern Jewish social history. Rather than presenting Jews solely as victims or moral exemplars, he reconstructs the ordinary, messy realities of Jewish life as reflected in the daily press. His approach aligns with the "history from below" tradition, using newspapers to recover voices and incidents largely absent from official communal records.

Bad Rabbi is an excellent sourcebook of primary material and a corrective to idealized narratives. It does not argue that Jews were unusually criminal; rather, it demonstrates that Jewish communities experienced—and publicly discussed—the same range of crime, scandal, and human frailty found in other societies, making it a valuable resource for understanding how crime functioned within modern Jewish history. – ChatGPT]

Sylvester, Roshanna, (**Tales of Old Odessa: Crime and Civility in a City of Thieves** [hc, Northern Illinois UP, 2005] 978-0875803463

Tanny, Jarrod, (**City of Rogues and Schnorrers: Russia's Jews and the Myth of Old Odessa** [pb, Indiana UP, 2011]) 978-0253223289

Filmography – Movies, Films, TV Series About Jews, Crime and Espionage (listed in chronological order of release)

The central theme throughout is less “crime” itself than the tension between **justice, survival, assimilation, memory, and moral responsibility**. Unlike classic gangster traditions, Jewish crime cinema often asks not how criminals gain power, but how individuals and communities respond to wrongdoing—whether as perpetrators, victims, investigators, or seekers of restitution. [Google/AI]

1. **Benya Krik (1927)** — Soviet Union. *This silent film classic, directed by Vladimir Vilner, explores the seamy Jewish underworld of the Moldavanka neighborhood in Odessa. Based on Isaac Babel’s stories, it follows the rise and fall of the legendary fictional gangster king Benya Krik (inspired by the real-life figure Mishka Yaponchik). [\[See related book\]](#)*
2. **The Illegals (1948)** – *one of the most important and historically valuable films ever made about the postwar movement of Holocaust survivors toward Palestine. Directed by author/journalist Meyer Levin, it was largely filmed in 1947 while the events it depicts were actually unfolding. A 77-minute documentary/docudrama, it is primarily in English, with dialogue in several European languages and Yiddish. Rather than using professional actors, Levin recruited actual Holocaust survivors living in displaced persons (DP) camps to reenact their own experiences. The film follows the clandestine journey of the survivors from the DP camps in Germany and Austria through to Italian ports, with the aid of the Zionist Bricha (“flight”) network. There they boarded overcrowded ships and sailed toward British Mandatory Palestine. Before they could get there, they are intercepted by British naval forces who board the ships by force and deport the survivor-passengers to detention camps in Cyprus. The film is particularly significant because it presents “crime” from the opposite moral perspective. Everything the refugees do is technically illegal including crossing borders without authorization and using forged documents, bribing officials, and blatantly violating British immigration regulations. Yet the film portrays these actions not as criminality but as moral necessity in the aftermath of the Holocaust. It argues that the British restrictions on Jewish immigration to Palestine were morally indefensible. Although it never achieved the fame of later Hollywood productions, *The Illegals* strongly influenced later depictions of postwar Jewish immigration, especially *Exodus*, whose refugee-ship sequences and overall narrative owe much to Levin’s earlier work. Levin himself later maintained that his film had inspired aspects of both *Exodus* and its film adaptation. In highlighting the tension between legal authority and moral justice, *The Illegals* is a foundational film for understanding how postwar Jewish cinema reframed “illegality” as an act of survival and national redemption rather than criminality.* [ChatGPT]
3. **City Across the River (1949)** – *The movie adaptation of Irving Shulman’s *The Amboy Dukes* (1947 – see description of book under Shulman listing in the companion bibliography on American Jewish crime fiction), marking the screen debut of Tony Curtis. The Jewish dimension was entirely erased to broaden the film’s appeal and appease industry censors. The characters were given generic, anglicized, or Irish-Catholic names. For example, Frank Goldfarb became Frank Cusack. The neighborhood of Brownsville was transformed into a generic “any-slum” in Brooklyn. The film repositioned juvenile delinquency as a universal, colorblind social disease of the urban working class, rather than an affliction impacting a specific immigrant subculture. The radical rewriting of the film version reflects the broader cultural anxieties of 1949. In the immediate wake of the Holocaust and amid sensitive*

conversations about American antisemitism (captured in films like 1947's *Gentleman's Agreement*), Hollywood studios were profoundly uncomfortable projecting images of violent, murderous Jewish youths onto American screens. De-ethnicizing the *Amboy Dukes* was deemed necessary to protect the community's fragile, hard-won postwar social standing.

[\[See related book\]](#)

4. **The Rise and Fall of Legs Diamond (1960)** – an American crime film that chronicles the ruthless ascent and violent demise of real-life Prohibition-era gangster Jack “Legs” Diamond. Directed by acclaimed B-movie veteran Budd Boetticher and distributed by Warner Bros. Pictures, the film is highly regarded for its stark, minimalist black-and-white cinematography and its fast, “machine-gun” narrative pacing. Starring Ray Danton, Warren Oates and Karen Seele. The Diamond brothers arrive in a bustling, Prohibition-era New York City. Initially working as small-time “snatch and run” jewelry thieves, Jack is quickly caught and sent to prison. Upon his release, Jack hatches a brilliantly cynical business model: rather than dealing with the logistics of smuggling, he decides to steal directly from other thieves. He uses his smooth charm to work his way into the inner circle of kingpin Arnold Rothstein, acting as a bodyguard while secretly plotting to take over Rothstein's massive bootlegging, gambling, and narcotics networks.

As Jack ruthlessly double-crosses friends, rivals, and mentors alike, he builds an empire. His astonishing ability to survive six separate assassination attempts earns him national media fame and the underworld moniker “**The Clay Pigeon**”. Believing his own myth that he is entirely invincible, Jack pushes his luck too far. When the criminal syndicate turns heavily against him, he finds himself abandoned, ultimately learning that he is no match for a final, lethal betrayal. [Google/AI]

5. **Murder, Inc. (1960)** - an American gangster film based on the notorious 1930s Brooklyn crime syndicate. The film is best known for its realistic, quasi-documentary style and for providing actor **Peter Falk** with his breakthrough, Oscar-nominated role, as the Jewish hitman, **Abe Reles**. . [\[See related book\]](#)
6. **Portrait of a Mobster (1961)** - American crime film produced and distributed by Warner Bros., adapted directly from Harry Grey's 1958 novel of the same name (See Harry Grey entry in the companion bibliography of American Jewish crime fiction.) **Dutch Schultz** starts out by aligning himself with the established “Legs” Diamond gang. During a turf dispute, Schultz murders a bootlegger named John Murphy. He subsequently falls in love with the dead man's daughter, Iris, who has no idea Schultz killed her father. Iris marries a clean police detective, Frank Brennan. Exploiting the young couple's need for money, Schultz begins paying off Brennan, effectively corrupting him and absorbing him into his criminal syndicate. Schultz violently eliminates “Legs” Diamond, Mad Dog Coll, and anyone else standing in his way, seizing absolute control over the Bronx bootlegging and gambling rackets. The empire crumbles when Iris finally discovers Schultz murdered her father, driving her to alcoholism. Brennan vows to reform his life and win her back. Paranoid and surrounded by enemies, Schultz is informed that a hit has been put out on his life, and he is ultimately killed in a chaotic, accidental shooting by his own associate. The film was part of a larger trend in the late 1950s and early 1960s where Hollywood studios pumped out biographical crime pictures profiling real-life Great Depression gangsters. Critics noted that the movie felt very similar to the gritty, black-and-white television crime procedurals Warner Bros. was making at the time (like *The Untouchables*). It

was criticized for taking heavy creative liberties with real history, but praised for Vic Morrow's intense, unhinged depiction of Schultz. – Google/AI] [\[See related book\]](#)

7. **King of the Roaring '20s: The Story of Arnold Rothstein** (also known as *The Big Bankroll*) (1961) [- biographical crime drama directed by Joseph M. Newman and starring David Janssen. The film serves as a highly stylized look into the life of the notorious real-life gambling kingpin and organized crime architect who allegedly orchestrated the fixing of the 1919 World Series. The narrative portrays Rothstein's life as a journey of unchecked obsession with statistics, wealth, and the ultimate gambling payout.

Born into a traditional middle-class Jewish family, young Arnold rejects his father's upright lifestyle to hustle on the streets of New York. His mathematical genius quickly catches the eye of corrupt political boss "Big Tim" O'Brien, who helps install him in major illicit gambling operations. As his financial empire expands, so does his ruthlessness. He manipulates his alcoholic business partner Jim Kelly into giving up his share of their business and pushes away those close to him. Rothstein's ultimate undoing stems from his lifelong feud with a corrupt police detective named Phil Butler. Rothstein tricks his childhood best friend, Johnny Burke, into leaking Butler's blackmail records to the media. This prompts underworld thugs to execute Burke. Though Rothstein successfully manages to use lawyer Tom Fowler to legally destroy Butler, his cutthroat tactics alienate his wife and anger the mob syndicate. He is eventually assassinated during a high-stakes poker game.] [\[See related book\]](#)

8. **A House Is Not a Home (1964)** – Biopic on Polly Adler, based on her autobiography (*A House Is Not A Home*, listed in the companion U.S. Jewish crime non-fiction bibliography), starring Shelley Winters. The film is noteworthy because it dramatizes the life of one of the most famous Jewish figures associated with American organized vice. In that sense, Adler's Jewishness is historically significant, but within the narrative itself it is largely secondary and not a major theme. The movie treats her primarily as an immigrant woman and a successful madam rather than as a specifically Jewish character. [ChatGPT] [\[See related book\]](#)

9. **The Pawnbroker (1964)** - Directed by Sidney Lumet - a landmark American drama film based on the 1961 novel by Edward Lewis Wallant, starring Rod Steiger as Sol Nazerman. The film holds a monumental place in cinematic history for two primary reasons: It was one of the first major American feature films to directly confront the psychological trauma of a Holocaust survivor living in contemporary society. It was also a crucial film in breaking down the restrictive Hollywood Production Code (Hays Code). By including brief, non-erotic nudity during a traumatic flashback, it successfully challenged censorship boards, accelerating the birth of the modern MPAA film rating system. Stylistically, the film is famous for its gritty, on-location cinematography in East Harlem and its groundbreaking use of subliminal flash-frame editing. These rapid, micro-second cuts visually mimic the intrusive nature of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), seamlessly blending the harsh realities of 1960s New York with Nazerman's horrific memories of the concentration camps. Sol Nazerman is an embittered, emotionally numb German-Jewish scholar who survived Auschwitz but lost his entire family to the gas chambers. Twenty years later, he operates a grim pawnshop in East Harlem, New York. Sol has completely detached himself from humanity, viewing his impoverished Black and Puerto Rican customers with icy indifference and cynicism. He believes only in money, stating that it is the only thing that never fails a man. Unbeknownst to the neighborhood, Sol's pawnshop is a front for a powerful Black

racketeer named Rodriguez. Sol accepts a comfortable lifestyle in suburban Long Island while quietly laundering the mobster's illicit cash, completely indifferent to the illegal activities funding his livelihood. Meanwhile, Sol employs a young, ambitious Puerto Rican assistant named Jesus Ortiz. Jesus looks up to Sol as a mentor and wants to learn the business, but Sol treats him with cold detachment.

As the anniversary of his family's deaths approaches, Sol's carefully constructed emotional walls begin to crumble. Everyday urban events in Harlem trigger overwhelming, violent flashbacks to the camps: A ride on a crowded New York subway morphs into a memory of a packed cattle car. A chain-link fence in a playground reminds him of the electrified fences of Auschwitz. A local prostitute offering herself to Sol in exchange for money triggers a devastating memory of being forced to watch Nazi officers assault his wife in a camp brothel.

The revelation about the brothel shatters Sol's apathy. Realizing that his mob boss, Rodriguez, makes his money from prostitution, Sol confronts the gangster. Sol refuses to launder the money any longer, declaring that he no longer fears death. Intimidated by Sol's absolute lack of fear, Rodriguez threatens to have him killed but leaves him to stew. Simultaneously, Jesus Ortiz—feeling rejected by Sol's coldness—joins a local street gang to rob the pawnshop. During the heist, the gang pulls a gun on Sol. Sol, actively welcoming death, refuses to hand over the money and provokes the gunmen. At the last second, a remorseful Jesus leaps in front of the bullet meant for Sol.

The gang flees, and Jesus dies on the pavement outside the shop. Sol is left physically unhurt but utterly devastated. The sacrifice of the young man violently breaks through Sol's decades of emotional numbness. In a famous, silent, agonizing close-up, Sol pierces his own hand on a metal spindle on his desk—using physical pain to anchor himself to the crushing weight of his rediscovered grief and humanity. He walks out into the Harlem streets, finally mourning his past and the loss of Jesus. [Google/AI] [\[See related book\]](#)

10. **The Plot Against Harry (1969)** - The "plot" in Michael Roemer's (original screenplay and direction) 1969 deadpan comedy classic, is not a malicious criminal conspiracy, but rather the surreal, overwhelming forces of middle-class family life and changing urban demographics that pressure an aging, small-time Jewish gangster into going straight. The narrative functions as an existential satire of American Jewish assimilation, chronicling a schlemiel's unwitting transformation into a mensch. Our numbers racketeer **Harry Plotnick** (played by Martin Priest) is released from a nine-month prison sentence. He steps out into a drastically changed Manhattan. Black and Latino operators have successfully taken over his old neighborhood gambling circuits. Meanwhile, a former underling is trying to muscle in on his remaining territory. While trying to coordinate his illegal numbers operation from the back of his luxury car, Harry's chauffeur, Max, accidentally rear-ends another vehicle. The car Harry hits belongs to his long-lost ex-wife, Kay, and his brother-in-law, Leo. Through this literal collision, Harry is suddenly thrust into the middle-class suburban lives of the family he abandoned decades ago. Harry discovers he has a pregnant adult daughter (Margie) and another adult daughter (Millie) who is currently planning her wedding.

Desperate for cash and cajoled by his family, Harry is persuaded to invest his money into becoming a partner in Leo's legitimate, suburban kosher catering business. As Harry tries to balance his illegal bookmaking with suburban family duties—attending bar mitzvahs, dog

training classes, and lingerie fashion shows—the law begins to close in: The government initiates a tax audit on Harry's financial books. In a panicked attempt to protect Harry, his loyal but foolish flunky, Max, burns the financial ledger containing twelve years of illegal payoffs to local police officers. Max is promptly arrested for arson. Overwhelmed by stress and believing he is suffering from a terminal heart condition, Harry collapses on live television while wandering into a musical number at a "Have-a-Heart" charity telethon. Convinced he is dying on the hospital stretcher, Harry decides to clear his conscience. He officially confesses to the police that he ordered the destruction of his financial books to protect Max. He also attempts to buy his way into heaven by donating \$20,000 to the charity telethon.

Doctors evaluate Harry and inform him that his heart is perfectly healthy—he is actually just suffering from a severe, acute case of constipation. Because of his public confession, Harry is sentenced to an additional year in prison. However, his willingness to take the fall and his charitable act earn him the respect of his family. At Millie's wedding, just before he begins his sentence, Kay embraces him and promises that the family will visit him every single Sunday. Harry is finally brought into the warm fold of the family he spent his life avoiding.

[Google/AI]

11. **The Policeman (Ha-Shoter Azoulay [Hebrew - השוטר אזולאי] (1971) - A beloved cinematic landmark nominated for an Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film.** Written and directed by Ephraim Kishon, it stars Shaike Ophir as a kind-hearted but bumbling beat cop in Jaffa who is more respected by the local criminals than by his superiors. **Plot:** Officer Avraham Azoulay is an honest man, though extremely naive, and because of his character, has never been promoted during his twenty years on the force. He is married to a dull woman (played by veteran actress Zaharira Harifai); the couple have no children.

His superiors, Captain Levkovich and First Sergeant Bejerano, decide not to renew his contract, though they feel sorry for him. Azoulay falls in love with the simple but charming prostitute Mimi, and removes her photograph from the arrests billboard. His wife finds the photo and tears it to pieces, which Azoulay secretly glues together again. Nevertheless, this love will not be realized as Azoulay refuses to divorce his wife, claiming that "it will destroy her". In addition, being a Kohen, he cannot marry a prostitute according to Halakha.

Azoulay shows some success at dispersing a haredi demonstration without resorting to violence because of his knowledge of the Bible and of Yiddish; he also charms a group of visiting French policemen who adore the French-speaking policeman. In an Arab-speaking club house he gives a speech in Arabic. Azoulay is able to see people for what they are and not what they represent. None of these events, however, helps to change his superiors' decision to dismiss him. Azoulay strikes up a friendship with Amar, unaware that he is a notorious criminal. The criminal and his associates decide to fake a crime and allow Azoulay to catch them in the act so that he receives a promotion and regains his contract. They finally decide upon stealing ritual objects, including a large golden cross, from a monastery in the neighbourhood. Azoulay manages to catch the criminal in the act and is finally promoted to the rank of a sergeant, but his contract is not renewed and he is forced to retire from the police.

In the final scene, Officer Azoulay leaves the precinct with his new rank and policemen practising marches in the courtyard are being ordered to salute in his general direction by Bejerano. The final shot of the film presents Azoulay saluting the marching policemen,

thinking that they are saluting him, as his eyes fill with tears. This image became one of the most memorable in Israeli cinema. [Wikipedia]

12. **Romance of a Horse-Thief (1971)** – screenplay by David Opatoshu, based on the novel by his father, Yiddish author Joseph Opatoshu. The film is set in 1904 in Malava, a small Jewish village located in Russian-occupied Poland, right near the German border. It directly captures the period of geopolitical tension surrounding the Russo-Japanese War. The main community is explicitly comprised of Jewish peasants and outlaws. **Eli Wallach** stars as Kifke, a cynical, clever Jewish horse thief who leads the town's operations. **David Opatoshu** also co-stars as Schloime Kradnik, an elder in the village's trading network. The plot revolves entirely around these Jewish horse smugglers resisting **Yul Brynner's** character, Captain Stoloff, an imperial Cossack officer who occupies the village and demands all their horses for the Czar's army. Instead of portraying pious, passive shtetl life, the film captures Joseph Opatoshu's unique "naturalist" literary voice. It highlights robust, illiterate, and highly aggressive Jewish criminals who rely on their wits and muscle to survive. Critics and film historians often describe it as an awkward but rollicking "folk tale" or a Western-style adventure with a distinct Yiddish flavor. – Google/AI] [\[See related book\]](#)

13. **The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz (1974)** - a landmark 1974 Canadian drama film directed by Ted Kotcheff. The movie is based on the acclaimed 1959 semi-autobiographical novel by Mordecai Richler, who also co-wrote the screenplay. Starring **Richard Dreyfuss**, Micheline Lanctôt, Jack Warden and Randy Quaid. Set in post-WWII 1948 Montreal, the narrative follows David "Duddy" Kravitz, a brash and aggressive 18-year old, in his obsessive drive to acquire land in Quebec's Laurentian tourist region. He cuts very close to the line of law violation, occasionally crossing it. See synopsis of the book in the entry on Mordecai Richler in the companion Canadian bibliography. [\[See related book\]](#)

14. **The Godfather Part II (1974)** - The character Hyman Roth (played by Lee Strasberg) is famously based on Meyer Lansky. Lansky reportedly once called Strasberg to compliment the performance but noted, "You could've made me more sympathetic".

15. **Judgment: The Trial of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg (1974)**: A made-for-television movie directed by Stanley Kramer as part of an ABC television event series. It stars Allan Arbus as Julius Rosenberg and Brenda Vaccaro as Ethel Rosenberg. The film functions as a courtroom drama detailing the highly controversial trial and the aggressive tactics used by prosecutor Roy Cohn.

16. **The Unquiet Death of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg (1974)**: An early, ground-breaking documentary by Alvin Goldstein that analyzed the strict anti-Communist McCarthy-era environment surrounding the 1951 trial. It features interviews with jurors, FBI agents, and the co-defendant Morton Sobell.

17. **Lepke (1975)** - Focuses on Louis "Lepke" Buchalter, the only American mob boss ever executed by the state, who led the notorious contract-killing squad known as Murder, Inc. Produced by Menachem Golan and starring Tony Curtis as Lepke.

18. **Mr. Klein (1976)** - Directed by Joseph Losey. Though technically a psychological mystery and neo-noir thriller, it is arguably the most definitive French film examining the dark economics of the Holocaust, specifically the profiteering off Jewish property. Alain Delon

plays Robert Klein, a wealthy, indifferent Gentile art dealer in 1942 Paris who buys masterpieces on the cheap from desperate Jews fleeing the country. His life spirals into a Kafkaesque nightmare when a mysterious Jewish man with the exact same name (Robert Klein) begins using his identity, leading the French police to suspect the art dealer is actually Jewish. The film tracks his obsessive search for his criminal doppelgänger, culminating in a bleak look at systemic persecution.

19. **Marathon Man (1976)** - thriller directed by John Schlesinger, based on the novel by William Goldman. Set in the mid-1970s, the story follows **Thomas “Babe” Levy** (Dustin Hoffman), a graduate student and avid long-distance runner in New York City. His father committed suicide after being investigated during the anti-Communist hearings of the 1950s, and Babe remains haunted by questions about his family’s past. Babe’s older brother, **Henry “Doc” Levy** (Roy Scheider), appears to work in the oil business but is actually a covert government operative. Doc becomes involved in a dangerous international intrigue connected to a notorious former Nazi war criminal, **Dr. Christian Szell** (Laurence Olivier), an Auschwitz dentist known as “the White Angel.” Szell has been living in hiding in South America since the war. When a series of events threatens his access to a cache of diamonds stolen from Holocaust victims, he travels to the United States. At the same time, Doc is murdered, leaving Babe unknowingly entangled in the conspiracy. Believing Babe may know the location of the diamonds, Szell’s associates kidnap him. Babe is subjected to one of cinema’s most famous torture scenes, in which Szell repeatedly asks, “Is it safe?”, while drilling into his teeth without anesthesia. Babe has no idea what Szell is referring to, making the interrogation both terrifying and futile.

As the plot unfolds, Babe discovers that people he trusted may not be who they seem. He must uncover the truth about his brother’s activities, survive repeated assassination attempts, and confront Szell directly. The story culminates in a tense showdown in which Babe turns the tables on the former Nazi and forces a reckoning with the crimes of the Holocaust. *Marathon Man* links the thriller genre to Holocaust memory, portraying a Jewish protagonist who confronts a Nazi criminal decades after World War II. It helped establish the Nazi-hunter/postwar-war-criminal thriller as a major subgenre of popular fiction and cinema. [ChatGPT]

20. **Madame Rosa (1977)** – based on Romain Gary’s *La Vie Devant Soi*. Directed by Moshé Mizrahi and starring **Simone Signoret** and Michal Bat-Adam. Set in the working-class Belleville district of Paris, the film tells the story of **Madame Rosa**, an elderly Jewish Holocaust survivor and former prostitute who earns a living by caring for the children of prostitutes. Her closest relationship is with **Momo**, an orphaned Algerian Muslim boy whom she has raised from infancy. As Madame Rosa’s physical and mental health deteriorate, Momo struggles to fulfill her wish to avoid dying in a hospital. Against the backdrop of a multicultural neighborhood of Jews, Arabs, Black Africans, and immigrants, the film explores compassion, memory, prejudice, aging, and the enduring effects of the Holocaust.

Madame Rosa is an Auschwitz survivor; and memories of the Holocaust profoundly shape her character. Her Jewish identity is explicit and central to the narrative rather than incidental. The relationship between the Jewish Madame Rosa and the Muslim Momo serves as a humanistic bridge across ethnic and religious divisions. Although there is no detective or espionage plot, the film portrays the lives of social outsiders—including former prostitutes, immigrants, and marginalized communities—and reflects on the long shadow of Nazi

persecution. The film won the Academy Award (Oscar) for Best Foreign Language Film in 1977. [ChatGPT]

A second adaptation, also titled *The Life Ahead* (*La vita davanti a sé*), was released in 2020, starring 86-year old **Sophia Loren** as Madame Rosa, and directed by her son, Edoardo Ponti. The story was relocated the story from Paris to contemporary Bari, Italy. The film was received as a lesser achievement than the first adaptation in 1977, though Loren's performance was highly praised. See also the entry on **Romain Gary** in the companion International bibliography. [\[See related book\]](#)

21. **The Boys from Brazil (1978)** – adapted from the novel by Ira Levin. set in the mid-1970s, and starring Gregory Peck and Sir Lawrence Olivier; it follows **Yakov Liebermann**, an aging Nazi hunter modeled loosely on Simon Wiesenthal. He receives a disturbing report from a young investigator in Brazil who has secretly recorded a meeting led by the infamous Nazi war criminal **Josef Mengele**. The investigator learns that former SS officers have been ordered to murder 94 seemingly ordinary civil servants living in Europe and North America. As Liebermann investigates, he discovers a bizarre pattern: each victim has an adopted teenage son, and the circumstances of the murders are carefully designed to replicate a key event from the childhood of Adolf Hitler. The shocking truth is that Mengele has used advanced genetic techniques to create numerous clones of Hitler and has placed them with carefully selected families whose environments resemble Hitler's own upbringing. The murders are intended to reproduce the death of Hitler's father at the same stage in the boys' lives, in the hope that one or more clones will develop into a new Führer. The novel builds toward a confrontation between Liebermann and Mengele in the United States. Although Mengele's scheme is largely thwarted, many of the cloned boys remain unidentified. In the novel's unsettling conclusion, Liebermann destroys the list of their names, refusing to condemn innocent children for the crimes or ambitions of their creator. Yet the ending hints that heredity and environment may still combine to produce dangerous outcomes. The film sheds light on the overlap between Holocaust literature, political thrillers, and crime fiction. [ChatGPT]
22. **Daniel (1983)**: This is the most famous cinematic adaptation related to the Rosenberg case. Directed by Sidney Lumet, the film is based on E.L. Doctorow's historical fiction novel, *The Book of Daniel*. It follows the children of "Paul and Rochelle Isaacson" (thinly veiled stand-ins for the Rosenbergs) as they try to come to terms with their parents' execution amidst the radical politics of the 1960s. [\[See related book\]](#)
23. **Reilly, Ace of Spies (1983, ITV)** – 12-part British television miniseries starring Sam Neill, Leo McKern and Jeananne Crowley, chronicling his deep-cover infiltration of the German General Staff in 1917, his attempt to help overthrow Lenin and the Bolshevik regime, and his dramatic espionage exploits across Europe during the early 20th century.
24. **Once Upon a Time in America [1984]** - Directed by Sergio Leone, this epic follows a group of Jewish youths in New York's Lower East Side who rise to power as bootleggers during Prohibition. It is widely considered a masterpiece of the genre, exploring deep themes of lifelong friendship and betrayal. In 1968, the elderly David "Noodles" Aaronson (Robert De Niro) returns to New York, where he had a career in the criminal underground in the '20s and '30s. Most of his old friends, like longtime partner Max (James Woods), are long gone, yet he feels his past is unresolved. Told in flashbacks, the film follows Noodles from a tough kid in a Jewish slum in New York's Lower East Side, through his rise to bootlegger and then Mafia boss -- a journey marked by violence, betrayal and remorse. [\[See related book\]](#)

25. **Beyond the Walls** [Me’Ahorei HaSoragim – Hebrew: **מֵאַהֲרֵי הַסּוֹרָגִים**] (1984) - Directed by Uri Barbash and written by his brother Benny Barbash and Eran Preis. It was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film. **Plot:** In Israel’s Central Prison, the security officer is corrupt, supplying drugs and stirring the hatred between Jewish and Arab prisoners to his advantage. Uri, in for 12 years for armed robbery, and Issan, in for 50 years for PLO violence, command the respect of their cells. When the Arabs are framed for the murder of a Jewish prisoner and a young inmate commits suicide rather than lie about what happened, Uri and Issan form an unlikely partnership, leading the security block on a strike. Prison officials try to break it. In the background are Uri’s daughter and Issan’s wife, women of beauty and passion who embody the distance from inside a cell to the outside.

26. **Wall Street (1987):** Directed by Oliver Stone, this classic feature film is the definitive cinematic response to the Boesky and Milken affairs. The iconic villain **Gordon Gekko** (played by Michael Douglas) is a direct composite character heavily modeled after **Ivan Boesky** and **Michael Milken** (as well as corporate raider Carl Icahn). Gekko’s famous “Greed is good” speech was lifted directly from a real-life commencement address given by Ivan Boesky at the University of California, Berkeley in 1986, where he stated that “greed is healthy”. Gekko’s focus on merger arbitrage mirrored Boesky’s real illicit network. The film also heavily incorporates the high-yield “junk bond” financing structures pioneered by Michael Milken at Drexel Burnham Lambert to fund hostile corporate takeovers.

27. **L’Union Sacrée (1989)** -This is a foundational “modern” French crime thriller. It features a Jewish police inspector (Simon Atlan, played by Patrick Bruel) and a Muslim military intelligence agent who must overcome their mutual prejudices to stop a terrorist network.

28. **Miller’s Crossing (1990)** - an American neo-noir gangster film written, directed and produced by Joel and Ethan Coen, and starring Gabriel Byrne, Marcia Gay Harden, John Turturro, Jon Polito, J. E. Freeman, and Albert Finney. A double-dealing bookie named Bernie Bernbaum (Turturro) and his sister, Verna, are pivotal characters in the 1929 power struggle between two rival criminal gangs.

29. **Bugsy (1991)** – Explores the life of Bugsy Siegel and his pivotal role in developing the Las Vegas strip. Directed by Barry Levinson, with Warren Beatty (Bugsy), Ben Kingsley (Meyer Lansky) Harvey Keitel (Mickey Cohen), and Annette Bening (Virginia Hill). [\[See related book\]](#)

30. **Homicide (1991)** - Written and directed by David Mamet, this film follows Bobby Gold (Joe Mantegna), a Jewish homicide detective who feels disconnected from his heritage. This neo-noir police thriller serves as Mamet’s most direct exploration of Jewish identity intersecting with crime. Bobby Gold is tracking a violent, cop-killing Black gangster. He is reluctantly pulled off the high-profile case to investigate the seemingly minor murder of an elderly Jewish shopkeeper in a ghetto. Gold stumbles into clues indicating a massive, underground neo-Nazi conspiracy and an armed Zionist counter-resistance group operating in the shadows. In classic Mamet thriller fashion, the “Zionist conspiracy” and the “anti-Semitic plot” are exposed as a complete narrative trap. The shopkeeper’s murder was actually a random, apolitical crime of greed. Gold’s desperation to find a grand, tribal meaning blinds his detective instincts, ultimately destroying his career and his partner. [Google/AI] See

additional comments on Homicide in the entry for David Mamet in the companion bibliography on U.S. Jewish crime fiction.

31. **Billy Bathgate (1991)** – Based on the 1989 novel by E.L. Doctorow (see entry for his name in companion Bibliography on American Jewish crime fiction). Set in 1935 New York, **Billy Behan** (Loren Dean) is a poor Irish-American teenager from the Bronx. He catches the eye of infamous mob boss **Dutch Schultz** (Dustin Hoffman) with his street smarts and juggling skills. Billy changes his name to Billy Bathgate and joins the gang as a gofer. He quickly climbs the ranks to become Schultz's protégé, entering a world of immense wealth and brutal violence.

Billy witnesses Schultz murder his former lieutenant, Bo Weinberg (Bruce Willis), by putting him in cement shoes. He is then tasked with protecting Bo's upper-class mistress, **Drew Preston** (Nicole Kidman). Billy falls in love with Drew and secretly helps her escape Schultz's lethal grasp. As the government—led by prosecutor Thomas Dewey—closes in on Schultz's crumbling empire, rival Italian mobsters ambush and assassinate Schultz. Billy barely survives, inheriting the location of Schultz's hidden fortune to start a new, legitimate life.

The film operates as a major window into Jewish-American organized crime during the 1920s and 1930s, a period when Jewish mobs rivaled and collaborated with the Italian Mafia. Billy's birth name is Billy Behan. In the original text and film subtext, he takes the name "Bathgate" (after a Bronx street) to distance himself from his Irish roots and better blend into a Jewish-dominated criminal enterprise. Born Arthur Flegenheimer, Dutch Schultz was one of the era's most notorious Jewish mobsters. The character showcases the intense paranoia, volatility, and ruthless ambition often explored in stories about first-generation immigrant crime lords. (Note: In a historical twist, the real Schultz actually converted to Catholicism on his deathbed, which is briefly weaponized as a cynical public relations stunt during his tax trial in the film).

Otto "Abbadabba" Berman (played by Steven Hill): He is the mathematical wizard and accountant behind Schultz's numbers racket. He serves as the intellectual anchor of the mob. Berman represents the stereotype of the calculating, highly organized Jewish "brains" behind the muscle of early 20th-century street gangs.

The "Kosher Nostra" Dynamic: The movie highlights the organizational structure of Jewish-American syndicates working in New York. It features other legendary Jewish mob figures (like Bo Weinberg) and details their complex, often fatal friction with Italian syndicates led by figures like Lucky Luciano. – Google/AI] [[See related book](#)]

32. **Don't Call Me Bugsy (1992)** – a 70-minute true-crime documentary that chronicles the life of Bugsy Siegel. The title stems from Siegel's intense hatred of his nickname "Bugsy," which was given to him due to his notoriously wild and erratic temper. Features a blend of authentic archival newsreel footage, historic still photographs, and graphic crime scene images. The film covers his youth shaking down vendors in Brooklyn, his bootlegging operations during Prohibition, and his alliance with Meyer Lansky and Charles "Lucky" Luciano to modernise organized crime. It also notes his role as a lethal enforcer for the infamous hit squad "Murder, Inc."; his migration to the West Coast, where he used his friendship with movie star George Raft to mingle with A-list actors, producers, and starlets; and his vision to transform a quiet Nevada "cowtown" into a gambling mecca by borrowing millions from the syndicate to construct the Flamingo Hotel—the first true luxury resort on the Las Vegas Strip. The documentary gathers testimony from a unique mix of authors, entertainment figures, law

enforcement, and personal associates, including Max Allan Collins, an author included in our companion bibliography on American Jewish crime, fiction, above. - ChatGPT]

33. **A Stranger Among Us (1992)** – an American crime drama film directed by Sidney Lumet and starring Melanie Griffith. It tells the story of an undercover police officer's experiences in a Hasidic community, as she investigates the murder of a Hasidic diamond dealer.
34. **Shining Through (1992)** - an American World War II drama film written and directed by David Seltzer and based on the 1988 novel by Susan Isaacs. It stars Michael Douglas, Melanie Griffith, Liam Neeson, Joely Richardson and John Gielgud. Exploits of an American woman of German-Jewish parentage who goes undercover in Berlin in search of the Nazi V-1 missile plans. [\[See related book\]](#)
35. **Legacy of Lies (1992)** – an American made-for-television crime drama that exemplifies author and executive producer David Black's penchant for weaving generational Jewish identity with the grit of procedural crime fiction. {See also the listing for him on the companion U.S. fiction bibliography.] Produced for and broadcast on the USA Network; not easily accessible today. The cast included Martin Landau, Eli Wallach and Michael Ontkean. The film is a neo-noir crime thriller deeply rooted in family legacy, generational divides, and Jewish cultural ties within Chicago. **Zach Resnick** is an honest, dedicated homicide detective for the Chicago Police Department. The plot kicks off when Zach is assigned to investigate the murder of a man gunned down outside a restaurant. The investigation quickly reveals that the victim was actually a prominent, heavily corrupt politician. As Zach digs deeper into the systemic bribery and violence sustaining the city's underbelly, the case hits painfully close to home. He uncovers a web of corruption implicating his own family across three generations: His father, **Abraham Resnick**, is a veteran, respected Chicago police officer who Zach discovers is actually a "dirty" cop embedded in the criminal conspiracy. His grandfather, **Moses**, is a retired, old-school Jewish racketeer and gangster who has spent years trying to distance himself from his criminal past. Zach is thrown into a massive moral dilemma. He is forced to choose between his sworn duty to uphold the law and his loyalty to a flawed family legacy built on a complex history of street crime, institutional corruption, and survival. [Google/AI]
36. **Little Odessa (1994)** follows a professional hitman who returns home to his estranged family. Directed and written by **James Gray**, and starring Tim Roth, Edward Furlong, Moira Kelly, Maximilian Schell and Vanessa Redgrave.^[2] The title is a reference to Brighton Beach, a Russian immigrant Jewish community in Brooklyn nicknamed "Little Odessa".
37. **Casino (1995)** - Features Robert De Niro as Sam "Ace" Rothstein, a Jewish gambling expert managing a casino for the Italian Mafia. The character is based on real-life figure Frank "Lefty" Rosenthal. Ace comes from the world of Jewish bookmakers and gambling operators who worked alongside Italian-American organized crime figures. His expertise as a handicapper and bookmaker is portrayed as the reason the Midwestern Mafia trusts him to run casinos in Las Vegas.
38. **La Haine (1995)** – "Hate" - Written and directed by Mathieu Kassovitz. This gritty, black-and-white film centers on a diverse trio of friends from a disenfranchised Parisian housing project. The volatile, aggressive protagonist of the group is Vinz (played by Vincent Cassel), an explosive working-class Jewish youth who finds a misplaced police revolver and vows to

shoot a cop if their hospitalized friend dies. The film highlights how class alienation and urban decay cross cultural lines, showing a distinctly raw, non-traditional side of French-Jewish identity.

- 39. Liberty Heights (1999)** - In Barry Levinson's semi-autobiographical film, set in 1954 Baltimore, the intersection of Jews and crime is presented not through violent gangster tropes, but through a lens of mid-century community integration, survival, and family provider dynamics. The non-violent patriarch, Nate Kurtzman, is an observant Jew, a loving father, and a well-regarded pillar of his local community. However, his fading burlesque house serves as a front for his actual primary income: running a local illegal numbers game. His criminal enterprise is a localized, gentler version of a crime family, unlike *The Godfather* or *The Sopranos*. Crime is treated merely as a trade to guarantee financial stability for his upper-middle-class household.

The narrative's main criminal conflict arises when Little Melvin (Orlando Jones), a Black drug dealer, unexpectedly hits a massive 50-to-1 payout bonus on Nate's numbers game. Unable to pay out the \$100,000 cash prize immediately, Nate is forced to form an uneasy business alliance with Melvin, setting off a chain reaction of cross-cultural tensions. When Melvin retaliates against Nate's financial stalling, he kidnaps Nate's son Ben and his friends. Instead of escalating into an expected Hollywood shootout or bloody mob war, the conflict is resolved peacefully, reinforcing the film's theme that these are fundamentally regular people caught in difficult circumstances.

*The law eventually catches up with Nate's operation. He and his crew are arrested and booked for tax evasion, prostitution, and racketeering. True to his characterization as a family man first, Nate goes to prison with a calm, dignified acceptance of his fate after getting permission to attend his son's high school graduation. Ultimately, *Liberty Heights* offers a nostalgic, bittersweet perspective. It reframes mid-century Jewish minor-league crime not as a threat to societal morals, but as an integrated facet of immigrant and second-generation survival as the insular neighborhood boundaries of Baltimore began to dissolve. [Wikipedia]*

- 40. Lansky (1999)** - HBO movie written by David Mamet and starring Richard Dreyfuss. It chronicles Lansky's life from his childhood as a Jewish immigrant through his years as the brain behind the National Crime Syndicate. It emphasizes his intellectual approach to crime and his later attempts to find safe harbor in Israel to avoid U.S. prosecution. [\[See related book\]](#)
- 41. Summer of Sam (1999):** Directed by Spike Lee, this is the most famous feature film centering on the 1977 terror in New York City. While the movie focuses heavily on an Italian-American neighborhood in the Bronx, Berkowitz (played by Michael Badalucco) appears as a looming, symbolic entity. The film highlights his name and his acute isolation as an outsider, but it focuses more on his psychological delusions and the community's paranoia than an explicit exploration of his heritage.
- 42. The Investigation Must Go On (Hebrew: הבולשת חוקרת, translit. Haboleshet Hokeret)** is a 2000 Israeli drama film directed by Marek Rozenbaum, which was nominated for 8 Israeli Film Academy Awards. **Plot:** Police investigator Micha Stein receives a tip that a singer, Shalom Shalom, is responsible for a recent robbery. Stein, who is excessively ambitious, arrests Shalom. A cat-and-mouse situation follows, with two equally stubborn men

playing off the contradictions of the characters. A wedding photographer with a crush on Shalom, Shalom's unconventional relationship with his wife, his line of work, his sliding moral compass - all work against the inflexible Stein, who becomes captivated by Shalom's wife. [Wikipedia]

43. **Snatch (2000)** - *This iconic British crime comedy is heavily driven by Jewish characters and motifs centered around London's Hatton Garden diamond district. The film kicks off with a heist where thieves disguise themselves as Orthodox Hasidic Jews to steal an 84-carat diamond. The plot features Cousin Avi (played by Dennis Farina), a New York Jewish mob boss who flies to London to secure the stone, and Doug "The Head" (Mike Reid), a local gold-and-diamond fence who isn't actually Jewish but aggressively pretends to be because he believes it is "good for business".*
44. **Requiem for a Dream (2000)** – *film adaptation of the Hubert Selby novel (see synopsis in the US Fiction Bibliography) by Director Darren Aronofsky. The Jewish characteristics of the three Jewish protagonists are significantly downplayed in order to make them more universally American and to focus greater attention on their disastrous addictions. Starring are Ellen Burstyn (Sara Goldfarb), Jared Leto (Harry Goldfarb), Jennifer Connelly (Marion Silver, her surname changed from "Kleinmitz" in the book) and Marlon Wayans (Tyrone C. Love).* [\[See related book\]](#)
45. **The Yards (2000)** – *A Jewish family network entangled in bribery, contract-rigging, sabotage, and cover-ups. Frank Olchin (James Caan) is a morally compromised Jewish businessman who controls a corrupt transportation-contract empire. The film's criminality is largely white-collar and political rather than ethnic-mob related. Also starring Mark Wahlberg, Ellen Burstyn and Faye Dunaway.*

*The film was written and directed by **James Gray**, who comes from a Jewish family in Queens. Much of his early work—including Little Odessa (1994), The Yards, and We Own the Night (2007) [see comments on these other two films in this Filmography]—draws on Jewish and immigrant New York family networks. The corruption plot of The Yards was reportedly inspired in part by scandals connected to Gray's father's business world. These works shift attention away from the Jewish gangster of the early twentieth century and toward Jewish businessmen, contractors, politicians, and families operating in morally ambiguous urban environments. Frank Olchin's business empire depends not on ethnic gangs but on access to politicians, regulators, and government contracts. The film thus reflects the sociological shift from street-level and underworld crime toward economic and institutional forms of illegality. In this sense, The Yards belongs to a tradition of Jewish-American fiction in which crime serves as a lens for examining ethical failure within successful Jewish communities. Upward Jewish mobility may have transcended an older generation of mobsters and violent criminals, but Jewish criminality has hardly disappeared, it has just "upgraded" and altered its format. In that sense, The Yards is one of the clearest cinematic examples of the evolution of Jewish crime narratives from the underworld of the immigrant era to the white-collar and political corruption of contemporary America.* [ChatGPT]

46. **Heir to an Execution: A Granddaughter's Story (2004)**: *This deeply personal HBO documentary was directed by Ivy Meeropol, the granddaughter of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg. The film focuses on the human element, featuring interviews with the Rosenbergs' surviving sons (Michael and Robert) and tracking the multigenerational trauma left behind by the execution.*

47. **Munich (2005)** – *an epic historical drama film produced and directed by Steven Spielberg, co-written by Tony Kushner and Eric Roth. It is based on the 1984 book **Vengeance** by George Jonas, an account of Mossad assassinations following the Munich massacre of 11 members of the Israeli Olympic team. The film chronicles the pursuit and execution of most of the Palestinian terrorists behind the massacre by a covert Mossad squad, at major psychological and moral costs to its members.*
48. **The Lost City (2005)** - **Dustin Hoffman** portrays Lansky in a fictionalized account of his gambling interests in pre-revolutionary Cuba.
49. **Lucky Number Slevin (2006)** - *a black comedy neo-noir crime thriller film about a man named Slevin (Josh Hartnett) who, due to mistaken identity, becomes entangled in a war between two rival New York crime bosses, “The Boss” (Morgan Freeman) and “The Rabbi” (Ben Kingsley). Directed by Paul McGuigan, the film features a star-studded cast including Bruce Willis as a hitman and Lucy Liu as Slevin’s neighbor; and is known for its intricate plot, witty dialogue, and a major twist revealing Slevin’s true motive for revenge. Directed by Paul McGuigan and written by Jason Smilovic.*
50. **Black Book (Zwartboek) (2006)** - *Directed by Paul Verhoeven, this intense, fictionalized thriller is heavily inspired by real events in the Dutch Resistance. It follows **Rachel Stein**, a young Jewish singer who dyes her hair blonde and takes on a false identity to infiltrate the German Gestapo headquarters in the Netherlands to help the underground movement.*
51. **Tell No One (French title: Ne le dis à personne, 2006)** - *a French thriller directed by Guillaume Canet, adapted from the novel by Harlan Coben. The narrative deals with a pediatrician whose wife was murdered 8 years ago, the facts of which are called into doubt by the sudden reappearance of video evidence that she is in fact still living. Police begin to suspect foul play by the pediatrician, who goes on the run while trying to prove his innocence. Police investigator **Eric Levkowitch** slowly and methodically works through the case and gradually realizes that the facts do not point to the pediatrician’s guilt. His clearly Jewish name does not correspond to any specific expressions of his Jewish identity. This is actually fairly typical of French thrillers, in which Jewish-coded surnames often appear, but identity is treated as assimilated/background rather than thematic. There is no overt exploration of his presumed Jewishness. Levkowitch’s likely Jewish background is mostly part of the texture of cosmopolitan Parisian elite/professional society rather than a distinct feature of the police procedural narrative.*

*In adapting Coben’s novel from a New Jersey to a Parisian setting, the screenwriters (including the Director, Canet) changed the main police protagonist from a Chinese-American (Eric Wu) to an Ashkenazi-background French Jew. This was not to spotlight his Jewishness because, unlike American genre fiction, French thrillers usually do **not** foreground ethnicity explicitly unless it is central to the plot. ChatGPT rather attributes this to French Jewishness functioning, on the stereotypic level, as a marker of urban cosmopolitanism, intellectual or professional class, Parisian establishment background, or Eastern-European immigrant ancestry. [ChatGPT]*
52. **The Counterfeiters (Die Fälscher) (2007)** - *An Oscar-winning drama based on Operation Bernhard, a secret Nazi espionage plot to destabilize the Allied economy using counterfeit currency. The film centers on **Salomon Sorowitsch**, a brilliant Jewish master forger*

imprisoned at Sachsenhausen concentration camp, forced to run the operation while covertly trying to sabotage the German war effort.

53. **American Gangster (2007)** - Russell Crowe plays real-life detective Richie Roberts, a Jewish lawman known for his uncompromising honesty, who works to take down drug kingpin Frank Lucas.
54. **The Champagne Spy (2007)** – Directed by Nadav Schirman, this feature-length documentary explores the extraordinary dual life of Ze'ev Gur-Arie, who operated under his real birth name, **Wolfgang Lotz**. See his autobiography in the Israeli non-fiction companion bibliography. Rather than a standard espionage thriller, the film focuses heavily on **Oded Gur-Arie**, Lotz's son. Oded was 12 years old when his father swore him to absolute secrecy before vanishing into Egypt. The documentary covers the psychological toll, estrangement, and profound family heartbreak hidden behind the glamour of espionage. The film incorporates rare 8mm home movies shot by Oded during secret family visits to Paris, original footage from Lotz's 1965 public show trial in Cairo, and unprecedented on-camera interviews with veteran Mossad handlers. [Google/AI] [\[See related book\]](#)
55. **We Own the Night (2007)** – a crime drama centered on a clash between a family of NYPD officers and the Russian mafia in late-1980s Brooklyn. In 1988, Bobby Green (Joaquin Phoenix) is the successful manager of the El Caribe nightclub in Brighton Beach, Brooklyn. The club is owned by a Russian immigrant, Marat Buzhayev, whose nephew Vadim is a ruthless drug lord using the club to traffic heroin. To protect his career and lifestyle, Bobby uses his mother's maiden name to hide a massive secret: his father Burt (Robert Duvall) is an NYPD Deputy Chief and his brother Joseph (Mark Wahlberg) is a rising star on the police force. When Joseph leads a high-profile narcotics raid on the club, Bobby's two worlds violently collide. The Russian mob retaliates by shooting Joseph and later assassinating Burt. Devastated and forced to choose a side, Bobby abandons his neutral stance, joins forces with his brother, goes undercover with a wire, and eventually joins the police department to take down the syndicate from within.

*The entire film takes place in Brighton Beach, Brooklyn, a neighborhood famous for its massive population of Soviet and Russian-Jewish immigrants who arrived in the late 20th century. The "Russian Mafia" portrayed in the film is specifically representative of the **Russian-Jewish mob** that operated out of Brighton Beach during that era. The club owner, Marat Buzhayev, is played by the prominent Israeli-Jewish actor Moni Moshonov. Characters in the syndicate speak Russian and exhibit the distinct cultural mannerisms of Soviet-era Jewish immigrants. Writer-director **James Gray** is Jewish and the grandson of Russian-Jewish immigrants. Critics and film scholars frequently note that Gray's crime films - including Little Odessa [1994] and The Yards, listed in this Filmography - use the genre to explore deep Jewish immigrant experiences, generational alienation, and themes of destiny heavily influenced by Old Testament narratives.*

56. **Ajami** (Arabic: **عجمي**, romanized: 'Ajamiyy; Hebrew: **ענ'מי**) is a 2009 Palestinian Israeli Arab drama film directed by Scandar Copti and Yaron Shani. Its plot is set in the Ajami neighborhood of Jaffa, Tel Aviv, Israel.
57. **Holy Rollers (2010)** - an American independent crime drama film starring Jesse Eisenberg and Justin Bartha, directed by Kevin Asch. Inspired by actual events from the late 1990s, the

film follows a young Hasidic man from Brooklyn who is lured into the dangerous world of international drug smuggling.

58. **The Debt (2010)** - *an espionage thriller film directed by John Madden. It stars Helen Mirren, Jessica Chastain, and Sam Worthington. The movie focuses on three Mossad secret agents who lied about successfully completing a 1965 mission to capture a notorious Nazi war criminal, only for their dark secrets to catch up with them 30 years later. It is a British-American remake of the 2007 Israeli film Ha-Hov.*
59. **Barney's Version (2010)** – *a Canadian comedy-drama film directed by Richard J. Lewis and adapted from Mordecai Richler's 1997 novel. The film offers a messy, sprawling portrait of Barney Panofsky, played by **Paul Giamatti** in a role that earned him a Golden Globe. Spanning four decades and two continents, the story details his career as a cynical television producer, a lifelong murder mystery involving his best friend, and his relationships with three distinct wives. The film functions as a candid, bittersweet confessional narrated by Barney as he begins to suffer the early stages of Alzheimer's disease. The primary timeline shifts between his past memories and his present-day attempts to look back on his tumultuous adult life. Barney's best friend, Boogie (Scott Speedman), mysteriously disappears after an argument at a lake house, leaving Barney as the prime suspect in a murder investigation that haunts him for decades. **Dustin Hoffman** plays Izzy Panofsky, Barney's fiercely loyal, foul-mouthed, and deeply loving father. A retired Montreal police detective, Izzy serves as the emotional anchor of the film and Barney's closest confidant. Izzy accepts Barney unconditionally, providing a warm, grounded contrast to Barney's cynical and chaotic lifestyle. He is unapologetically vulgar, hyper-sexual in his humor, and frequently tells inappropriate, colorful stories from his days on the police force. Despite his rough exterior, Izzy holds a strict moral code and offers Barney genuine, unfiltered wisdom about love and family.*
60. **Boardwalk Empire (HBO, 2010–2014)** - *Probably the finest screen portrayal of **Arnold Rothstein**, played by Michael Stuhlbarg. He appears throughout the first four seasons as the calculating financial genius behind much of organized crime during Prohibition. The series depicts his relationships with Charles "Lucky" Luciano, Meyer Lansky, Al Capone, and Enoch "Nucky" Johnson (fictionalized as Nucky Thompson). It also explores his reputation as a gambler, strategist, and mentor to younger gangsters.*
61. **Drive (2011)** - *Features Albert Brooks as Bernie Rose, a ruthless and pragmatic Jewish gangster in Los Angeles who serves as the film's protagonist.*
62. **Policeman (Ha-shoter - השוטף) (2011):** *Directed by Nadav Lapid, this modern drama explores the life of an elite anti-terrorist unit officer whose worldview is challenged by an encounter with a group of young anarchist revolutionaries.*
63. **The Gatekeepers (2012)** – *(Hebrew: שומרי הסף, Shomrei HaSaf) is a 2012 internationally co-produced documentary film by director Dror Moreh that tells the story of the Israeli*

internal security service, Shin Bet (known in Hebrew as 'Shabak'), from the perspective of six of its former heads. The film combines in-depth interviews, archival footage, and computer animation to recount the role that the group played in Israel's security from the Six-Day War to the present. The film was nominated for Best Documentary Feature at the 85th Academy Awards.

The problem with making the film, according to Moreh, was getting the "Gatekeepers", or former heads of the Shin Bet, to agree to appear on camera and discuss their work and opinions. Given the secretive nature of the organization, none of them had ever done this before, and many of the topics he hoped to discuss with them were either classified or highly sensitive.

*Despite this initial difficulty, Moreh contacted one of the "Gatekeepers", **Ami Ayalon**, who had since been elected to the Knesset for the Labor Party and was serving as a Minister without Portfolio in the Security Cabinet. Much to his surprise, Ayalon not only agreed to participate, he also helped Moreh contact the other surviving former heads of the Shin Bet: **Avraham Shalom**, **Yaakov Peri**, **Carmi Gillon**, and **Avi Dichter**. The sixth participant in the film, **Yuval Diskin**, was still serving as head of the Shin Bet at the time.*

Though all of them agreed to participate, some were reluctant initially to discuss various incidents associated with their careers. Shalom, for instance, did not want to discuss his role in the hijacking of the 300 bus and summary execution of two of the terrorists, though the ensuing scandal ultimately led to his resignation. Over time, however, and with careful prodding, he agreed to discuss even that, and it now features as one of the film's seven segments. The Gatekeepers "gave me an unprecedented, intimate opportunity to enter the inner sanctum of the people who have steered Israel's decision-making process for almost half a century," Moreh has said.

Moreh told The Economist that after interviewing the Shin Bet heads, he decided that Netanyahu "poses a great threat to the existence of the state of Israel." He said that he seeks "to change the point of view of young Israelis. To tell them a story of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that has not been told before."

He told The Times of Israel that making the film "changed me a lot [...]. It made me more desperate, more bleak. I saw from their eyes how our leaders really don't want to solve this problem. They do not have the audacity, the temerity, the will, the courage that we need from a leader." He added, "I am not putting the blame only on the Israeli leaders. I think the Palestinian leaders suffer from the same horrible disease. I think that what [former Israeli foreign minister] Abba Eban said about how the Palestinians never miss an opportunity to miss an opportunity applies to both sides. The film achieved generally high marks from foreign critics. Not surprisingly, it aroused considerable controversy among Israeli commentators, both for and against. [Wikipedia]

64. **Jews and Money: Investigation of a Myth (2013)** – Canadian documentary film directed and written by Lewis Cohen. The 90-minute film explores the origins, history, and real-world consequences of the anti-Semitic stereotype that links Jewish people with immense wealth and greed. It focuses on the tragic 2006 kidnapping and murder of Ilan Halimi in Paris. Halimi, a 23-year-old Jewish cell phone salesman from a modest working-class background, who was targeted by a criminal gang called "The Barbarians." The gang held him for a 500,000 Euro ransom under the false assumption that because he was Jewish, his family must be wealthy. The case exposed severe undercurrents of modern anti-Semitism and tension

within France. Includes interviews with **Ruth Halimi**, the mother of the victim; **Abraham Foxman**, former National Director of the Anti-Defamation League; **Jacques Le Goff**, a renowned French historian; **Francis Szpiner**, a prominent French lawyer involved in the Halimi trial; and **Jerry Z. Muller**, author of *Capitalism and the Jews*.

65. **Big Bad Wolves (2013)** (Hebrew: מי מפחד מהזאב הרע? - *Mi Mefakhed MeHaZeev HaRa* – “Who’s Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf?”) an Israeli black-comedy thriller/horror film directed by Aharon Keshales and Navot Papushado. It combines crime, revenge, dark humor, and moral ambiguity. A series of brutal child murders has shocked Israel. The prime suspect is **Dror**, a quiet religious-studies teacher who has been arrested but released because the police lack sufficient evidence. A hot-headed detective, **Micki**, is convinced that Dror is guilty and is suspended after using illegal violence during the investigation. At the same time, **Gidi**, the grieving father of one of the murdered girls, becomes obsessed with obtaining a confession. Convinced that the legal system has failed, he kidnaps Dror. Circumstances soon bring Micki into the plot as well, and the three men find themselves trapped together in an isolated house. Most of the film unfolds as Gidi and Micki torture and interrogate Dror, trying to force him to reveal the location of the victim’s missing head and to confess to the murders. As the ordeal continues, the audience is repeatedly led to question whether Dror is actually guilty or whether the two avengers have become monsters themselves. The film mixes shocking violence with absurdly comic situations, creating an unsettling blend of horror, suspense, and black humor. In an ambiguous conclusion, it is implied that Dror really was guilty, but that Micki and Gidi’s vigilantism may have backfired terribly and undermined the chance of saving the last victim. The ending is deliberately unsettling: the “monster” is real, but the men hunting him have themselves become wolves. [ChatGPT]
66. **Gangster Squad (2013)** - chronicles a secret team of Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) officers trying to dismantle the powerful criminal empire of real-life mob boss **Mickey Cohen** (played by Sean Penn) in 1949. Directed by Ruben Fleischer, the movie is loosely based on a non-fiction book by Paul Lieberman. Set in 1949 Los Angeles, the narrative centers on Brooklyn-born mobster Mickey Cohen, who holds the entire city in a tight grip. He profits massively from drugs, guns, prostitution, and illegal gambling operations west of Chicago. Because Cohen has paid off corrupt judges, politicians, and police officers, he operates with near total immunity. In response, LAPD Police Chief William Parker forms an underground, off-the-books unit tasked not with arresting Cohen, but with waging guerrilla warfare to violently destroy his operations.
67. **Peaky Blinders (2013–2022)** – Extraordinary British television crime series following the Shelby crime family’s violent ascent from Birmingham bookmakers to powerful political figures, prominently featuring Jewish elements through the iconic character Alfie Solomons. The narrative spans six seasons and concludes its storyline in the 2026 feature-length film, **Peaky Blinders: The Immortal Man**. Led by World War I veteran, Thomas “Tommy” Shelby, the Birmingham Peaky Blinders gang start as an illegal betting business and expand their empire to London, through conflicts with rival Italian and Jewish syndicates. Tommy enters Parliament as a Labour MP, operating to undermine the rising British fascist leader, Sir Oswald Mosley. In the 2026 film conclusion (“The Immortal Man”), set years later, Tommy and the surviving Blinders dismantle a high-stakes Nazi counterfeiting plot trying to destabilize the British economy.

The Jewish component of the series is **Alfie Solomons** (portrayed by Tom Hardy), the leader of a powerful Jewish crime syndicate based in Camden Town. Alfie is an eccentric, highly

intelligent, and unpredictable operator who balances absolute brutality with sharp theological and philosophical humor. He dresses in a distinct, semi-religious aesthetic resembling Hasidic attire. Despite his cutthroat nature, Alfie is fiercely protective of his community. He enforces strict rules regarding the protection of Jewish women, donates heavily to Jewish charities, and explicitly references his mother's history as a refugee fleeing Tsarist persecution in Russia.

*The series parallels the experiences of the Jewish community with those of the Shelby family, who are of Romani descent. Both factions operate as societal outsiders in post-war Britain, fighting systemic prejudice. This mutual baseline of cultural displacement creates a fragile, transactional, yet uniquely enduring alliance between Shelby and Solomons through years of mutual betrayals. In the later seasons, the Jewish narrative shifts from street-level racketeering to political survival as the timeline approaches World War II. Alfie willingly finances and facilitates Tommy's undercover plot to assassinate Oswald Mosley, driven purely by the existential threat posed by the British Union of Fascists' virulent antisemitism. In Season 6, the narrative expands to include the "Solomon family" of Boston's Eastern Jewish community, who are locked in a proxy gang war against Jack Nelson, an influential, fascist-sympathizing Irish-American broker. The 2026 film directly integrates **Operation Bernhard**, a historical Nazi plot that forced over 140 Jewish concentration camp prisoners to forge British banknotes. The film depicts the weaponization of these fake pounds by fascist sympathizers in England, grounding the climax of the franchise heavily in the grim realities of Holocaust history. [Wikipedia]*

68. **Sidney Korshak, Hollywood's Fabled Fixer (2014)** - originally titled "*Sidney Korshak, la face cachée d'Hollywood*", was written, directed, and produced by the acclaimed filmmaking sister duo, Clara and Julia Kuperberg. The project was produced by the French production house Wichita Films and was a 52-minute television documentary. Although it was a French-commissioned production, it was filmed entirely in English on-location in Los Angeles, California. The film functions as an investigative dive into how the Chicago Outfit successfully infiltrated the movie business. It heavily centers on how **Sidney Korshak** used his background as a labor lawyer to weaponize Hollywood's unions. By controlling the unions, Korshak could instantly freeze or greenlight movie sets, making himself indispensable to legendary studio heads (like Lew Wasserman) while keeping massive profits flowing back to mob bosses in Chicago.
69. **24 Days** (French: *24 jours, la vérité sur l'affaire Ilan Halimi* — lit. 24 Days: The True Story of the Ilan Halimi Affair- **2014**) is a French drama film directed by Alexandre Arcady released in 2014. It examines The Affair of the Gang of Barbarians of January 2006. [Wikipedia]
70. **A Grain of Truth (2015)** – a Polish crime thriller film directed by Borys Lankosz. It is a direct cinematic adaptation of the bestselling detective novel of the same name written by Zygmunt Miłoszewski. [See the entry for this book in the companion bibliography on International Jewish Detectives, Spies, Criminals, etc.] The film stars prominent Polish actor Robert Więckiewicz as the brilliant but cynical state prosecutor Teodor Szacki, who leaves Warsaw following a messy divorce and a ruined career to start fresh in the picturesque, provincial town of Sandomierz. His quiet new life is quickly upended when a local woman is found brutally murdered outside a former synagogue. The killer uses a specialized knife meant for kosher slaughter, draining the victim's body of blood. As the bodies pile up, the bizarre clues appear to mimic ancient, anti-Semitic legends of blood libel—historical myths

claiming Jews used Christian blood for religious rituals. Szacki must navigate a wave of rising hysteria, deep-seated local prejudices, and a toxic mix of modern politics and historical ghosts to uncover the actual human culprit before the town tears itself apart.

[Google/AI] [\[See related book\]](#)

71. **Woman in Gold (2015)** – a biographical drama film directed by Simon Curtis and written by Alexi Kaye Campbell. The movie stars Helen Mirren and Ryan Reynolds, chronicling the story of an elderly Jewish refugee's decade-long legal battle against the Austrian government to reclaim iconic family artwork stolen by the Nazis. The story follows Maria Altmann (Mirren), an octogenarian living in Los Angeles who fled Nazi-occupied Vienna during World War II. Following her sister's death, Maria discovers documents detailing her family's past ownership of several priceless paintings by Gustav Klimt. The crown jewel among them is the *Portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer I*, a breathtaking gold-leaf depiction of Maria's beloved aunt. The painting, dubbed the "Mona Lisa of Austria," was hanging in Vienna's famous Belvedere Gallery, where the Austrian establishment considered it a national treasure. Backed by a young, inexperienced but determined lawyer named Randy Schoenberg (Reynolds)—the grandson of the famous Austrian composer Arnold Schoenberg—Maria embarks on an audacious legal campaign. The journey forces her to confront painful memories of her escape and eventually takes them all the way to the United States Supreme Court. [Google/AI]
72. **Beyond the Fear (2015)** - a highly controversial biographical documentary directed by Herz Frank and Maria Kravchenko that explores the private life, marriage, and family built by **Yigal Amir**, the radical right-wing extremist who assassinated Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in 1995. Rather than focusing strictly on the political fallout of the assassination, the 80-minute film examines the complex, real-life drama surrounding **Larisa Trembovler**, a Moscow-born intellectual and divorced mother of four. Moved by pity for Amir, she began visiting him, eventually marrying him in 2005 while he served a life sentence. Following a high-profile legal battle for conjugal visits, she gave birth to their son, **Yinon Amir**, in 2007. The documentary centers heavily around this child, exploring the moral and emotional reality of growing up as the son of Israel's most notorious prisoner.

The documentary ignited fierce public outrage across Israel. Critics and public figures heavily condemned it for humanizing an assassin, with Yitzhak Rabin's granddaughter publicly calling the film a "cynical use of freedom of expression with intent to harm it". The intense backlash led to official threats of defunding and political pressure regarding its screening at local festivals [Wikipedia]
73. **Madoff (2016)** - ABC television miniseries aired as a highly publicized, two-night television event. It adapted the Shakespearean downfall of the Madoff family into a fast-paced, stylized crime drama. Adapted from **The Madoff Chronicles: Inside the Secret World of Bernie and Ruth**, written by ABC News Chief Investigative Correspondent Brian Ross. Ross was one of the lead journalists on the ground when the scandal broke in December 2008. Directed by indie filmmaker Raymond De Felitta, the show mirrors the flashy, fast-tempo energy of *The Wolf of Wall Street* and stars **Richard Dreyfuss as Bernie** and **Blythe Danner as Ruth** (with Ben Dreyfuss, Richard's son, playing the younger Bernie in flashbacks). It frequently breaks the fourth wall, featuring Dreyfuss speaking directly to the camera in voiceover to explain complex financial concepts and reveal his sociopathic inner thoughts. The four-hour broadcast is broken down into a tight, four-episode narrative arc:

"Millions to Billions": Focuses on Madoff's institutional rise, building his immense wealth, and cementing his elite social status.

“Catch Me If You Cancer”: Chronicles the early warning signs of the fraud and the internal health and stress crises within the firm.

“Redemptions”: Explores the onset of the 2008 global financial crisis, which triggered an avalanche of client withdrawal requests that Madoff could not fulfill.

“Fallout”: Covers the final collapse, where Madoff’s sons discover the trading firm is a front and turn him in to the FBI, leading to total family estrangement.

Charles Grodin appears as Carl Shapiro: A powerful multi-millionaire, philanthropist, and one of Madoff’s earliest, most fiercely loyal real-life investors who lost vast fortunes in the crash. [\[See related book\]](#)

74. **Fauda (2016–2026)** - an Israeli political thriller series that centers on an elite, undercover counter-terrorism unit of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) known as the Mista'arvim. The show follows Doron Kabilio, a veteran commander who repeatedly finds his personal life shattered as he is drawn back into active duty to combat high-stakes terrorist threats. The series explores the brutal reality of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, depicting how the cycle of violence traps and humanizes individuals on both sides of the fence. The series offers no pure heroes or good guys vs. bad guys simplistic scenarios: It portrays the moral decay, mental trauma, and ruthless tactics utilized by both sides. It gives deep emotional backplots, family dynamics, and romantic layers to characters on both sides, revealing how everyone loves their families but keeps their hands dirty. A recurring theme is that every action has an immediate, violent reaction. Operational successes for the IDF usually trigger a devastating personal loss for Doron or his teammates. [Google/AI]
75. **The Wizard of Lies (2017)** - biographical drama television film produced by HBO Films. It chronicles the rise and devastating fall of financier Bernie Madoff, the mastermind behind the largest Ponzi scheme in U.S. history. Directed by Barry Levinson and starring **Robert De Niro as Bernie** and **Michelle Pfeiffer as Ruth Madoff**. Primarily based on the 2011 non-fiction book *The Wizard of Lies* by journalist Diana B. Henriques, with additional material from *Truth and Consequences* by Laurie Sandell. Rather than solely focusing on the financial mechanics of Wall Street, the film serves as an intimate family tragedy. It explores the psychological toll and absolute destruction left in Madoff’s wake. The narrative highlights the intense blind trust and family dynamics between Bernie and his childhood sweetheart, Ruth, as the family is catapulted into an unrelenting global spotlight. It heavily examines the question of how much his immediate family truly knew about his multibillion-dollar fraud. [\[See related book\]](#)
76. **Maktub [מכתוב] (2017)** - an Israeli comedy film directed by Oded Raz and co-written by Guy Amir and Hanan Savyon, the latter two also starring in it. The plot revolves around two gangsters, Steve (Hanan Savyon) and Chuma (Guy Amir) attempt to fulfill wishes they find in notes left in crevices of the Jerusalem Western Wall. [Wikipedia]
77. **Street Justice: The Bronx (2017)** - an American Discovery Channel true-crime documentary/docudrama television series built around retired NYPD detective **Ralph Friedman** and his experiences policing the Bronx during the exceptionally violent 1970s and early 1980s. The series is the television companion to Friedman's memoir, **Street Warrior**, also published in 2017. [See the book synopsis in the Law-Enforcement section of the companion Jewish Crime non-fiction bibliography.] Friedman appears as himself, looking back on actual cases from his NYPD career. His interviews and narration are combined with dramatic reenactments and period material to reconstruct arrests, investigations, shootouts,

confrontations with violent street gangs and rapists, riot control and other incidents. Actor Timothy Weinert portrays the younger Friedman in the dramatizations. [\[See related book\]](#)

78. **Mindhunter - Netflix Series (2017–2019):** *In Season 2 of this critically acclaimed series, FBI agents interview **David Berkowitz** (played by Oliver Cooper). The show highlights his psychological fabrications—specifically how he made up the “dog demon” story—but also contextualizes his background and demeanor as a troubled youth from New York.*

79. **Operation Finale (2018)** - *an American historical drama thriller film directed by Chris Weitz about a 1960 clandestine operation by Israeli commandos to capture former SS officer Adolf Eichmann, and transport him to Jerusalem for trial on charges of crimes against humanity. The film stars Oscar Isaac (who also produced) as the Mossad officer Peter Malkin, and Ben Kingsley as Eichmann, with Lior Raz, Mélanie Laurent, Nick Kroll, and Haley Lu Richardson. Several source materials, including *Eichmann in My Hands*, by Peter Malkin and Harry Stein, provided the basis for the story.*

80. **The Angel (2018)** - *an Israeli spy thriller film directed by Ariel Vromen and starring Marwan Kenzari and Toby Kebbell among others. It is an adaptation of the non-fiction book **The Angel: The Egyptian Spy Who Saved Israel** by Uri Bar-Joseph (see listing in companion Israeli bibliography). It is a fictional account of **Ashraf Marwan**, a high-ranking Egyptian official who became a double agent for both countries and helped achieve peace between the two.* [\[See related book\]](#)

81. **The Catcher Was A Spy (2018)** – *directed by Ben Lewin and starring Paul Rudd, Jeff Daniels and Paul Giamatti. telling the story of Moe Berg, a professional baseball catcher with the Boston Red Sox. On a goodwill baseball exhibition tour of Japan in 1936, Berg sneaks onto the roof of a Tokyo hospital to covertly film Tokyo’s harbor and Navy shipyards. The Office of Strategic Services Chief to whom he presents the film is impressed by Berg’s enterprise, as well as the extensive language skills that Berg has picked up at Princeton and elsewhere, and Berg is hired in 1943. He is subsequently smuggled into Europe on a mission to discover how far the Nazis have progressed in their work on developing the atomic bomb, and hopefully to assassinate their leading scientist.*

82. **The Reckoning: Hollywood’s Worst-Kept Secret (2018)** - *Feature-Length Documentary. Examines the immediate cultural shockwaves of the October 2017 exposes. Directed by Barry Avrich, this film uses the Weinstein scandal as a launchpad to analyze systemic sexual harassment across the entertainment industry. It highlights how the initial breakthrough regarding his behavior catalyzed a broader domino effect, exposing predatory behavior by other powerful men globally.*

83. **Citizen Harvey (2018)** - *Television Documentary (BBC Panorama) - A British investigative perspective on Weinstein’s operations overseas. Reporter Jane Corbin details how Weinstein utilized the UK film industry and the London legal system to silence victims using aggressive British libel laws and restrictive NDAs.*

84. **Untouchable (2019)** – *documentary on the rise, absolute dominance, and ultimate legal ruin of **Harvey Weinstein**. Directed by Ursula Macfarlane, this Hulu-backed documentary serves as the definitive macro-view of his career. It charts how he weaponized his status as an indie-cinema kingmaker to abuse women. It relies heavily on emotional, raw camera interviews*

with high-profile accusers (such as Rosanna Arquette and Hope d'Amore) alongside former Miramax employees who detail the psychological toll of working under his volatile regime.

85. **The Assistant (2019)** - A direct, fictionalized look at the systemic enabling environment inside a company heavily modeled after **Miramax**. Written and directed by Kitty Green, the film stars Julia Garner as Jane, an entry-level junior assistant to a powerful, unseen media mogul. Instead of focusing on the physical acts of abuse, the narrative meticulously tracks the soul-crushing routine of a single day—cleaning stains off the boss's couch, organizing hotel bookings for young women, and being systematically gaslit by Human Resources when trying to report the misconduct.

86. **Chichinette: The Accidental Spy (2019)** - a French-German biographical documentary film directed by Nicola Hens that chronicles the extraordinary life of **Marthe Cohn**, a 98-year-old French-Jewish woman who operated as an undercover spy in Nazi Germany during World War II.

The documentary highlights how Cohn, standing barely 4.5 feet tall with blonde hair and blue eyes, utilized her fluent, bilingual German upbringing to slip behind enemy lines. Enlisting in the French Secret Service after the 1944 liberation of Paris, she successfully infiltrated Nazi Germany on her 14th attempt. Posing as a German nurse looking for her missing fiancé, she gathered critical intelligence on German troop movements and uncovered a secret military encampment in the Black Forest, ultimately saving countless Allied lives.

The film's title, "Chichinette," stems from the affectionate French slang nickname given to her, which translates roughly to "little pain in the neck". For over 60 years, Cohn kept her harrowing espionage past a complete secret, even from her own close family. The documentary follows her later in life as a feisty, vibrant grandmother who travels the globe to share her incredible story and promote a message of courage to younger generations.

[Google/AI] See the listing of her memoir - Cohen, Marthe with Wendy Holden, **Behind Enemy Lines: The True Story of a French Jewish Spy in Nazi Germany [2002]** - in the companion bibliography on International Jewish Detectives, Spies, etc. [\[See related book\]](#)

87. **Vienna Blood (2019–2024)** (BBC/PBS series based on the Liebermann novels by Frank Tallis – see entry on Frank Tallis in the companion International Jewish crime bibliography) - a British-Austrian historical crime drama set in early 1900s Vienna, following a psychological doctor and a police detective as they investigate complex, disturbing murders. The show centers on the birth of modern psychiatry and neurology. It juxtaposes traditional, old-school police work with early psychoanalysis. Dr. Max Liebermann, a young British-Jewish student of Sigmund Freud, applies psychological profiles and forensic insights to catch killers. He works alongside Detective Inspector Oskar Reinhardt, a gruff, lapsed Catholic detective who initially dislikes Max's methods but grows to respect them. The series is deeply anchored in the vibrant, high-culture world of Vienna's grand cafés, opera houses, and elite academic circles. It highlights a clash of cultures and features a recurring sub-theme tracking the rise of anti-Semitism targeting Max's liberal family. [\[See related book\]](#)

88. **Uncut Gems (2019)**: A high-tension modern thriller starring Adam Sandler as Howard Ratner, a Jewish diamond dealer in New York City whose gambling addiction leads him into increasingly dangerous criminal situations.

89. **The Spy (2019)** - *A six-part Netflix mini-series starring Sacha Baron Cohen. It depicts the exploits of **Eli Cohen**, a Mossad spy. The story takes place during the years leading to the 1967 Six-Day War between Israel and Syria. It follows Cohen's recruitment into Mossad after previously being rejected twice, to his infiltration of the Syrian government. He assumes the identity of Kamel Amin Thaabet and establishes himself in Syrian high society, first in Buenos Aires, then in Damascus. After having befriended people who would eventually take over Syria, Cohen is appointed as the country's Deputy Defense Minister and becomes a close confidant to the future president, Amin al-Hafiz Assad, before his cover is blown and he is publicly executed.*

90. **The Operative (2019)** - *written and directed by Israeli filmmaker Yuval Adler, based on the Hebrew novel *The English Teacher* (המורה לאנגלית) by Yiftach Reicher-Atir, a former intelligence officer. It stars Diane Kruger, Martin Freeman and Cas Anvar. A Mossad agent operating as an English teacher in Teheran becomes romantically involved with her target, a player in the Iranian nuclear-development program. She goes rogue, leading to numerous complications when she later tries to resume her former identity. [\[See related book\]](#)*

91. **An Officer and a Spy (2019)** – *French title: **J'Accuse**. A historical drama focused on the infamous Dreyfus Affair in late 19th-century France. It follows the wrongful conviction and political conspiracy surrounding Alfred Dreyfus, a French-Jewish artillery officer falsely accused of spying for the German Empire. The film was directed by Roman Polanski, with a screenplay by Polanski and Robert Harris based on Harris's 2013 novel (first UK edition) of the same name. See the entry on Robert Harris in the companion Bibliography on international fiction on Jews and crime/espionage. The French title has its origins in the "J'Accuse...!" open letter Émile Zola wrote in 1898 in which the author accused many people in France of continuing to support the increasingly blatantly erroneous accusations against Dreyfus. [\[See related book\]](#)*

92. **The Red Sea Diving Resort (2019)** – *espionage thriller based on the real Israeli covert missions known as Operation Brothers, Operation Moses, and Operation Joshua, in which Mossad agents helped rescue Ethiopian Jews (the Beta Israel community) from refugee camps in Sudan and bring them to Israel in the early 1980s. The film stars Chris Evans, Michael K. Williams, and Ben Kingsley. It was written and directed by Gideon Raff. Set mainly in Sudan in 1980–84, the film follows Mossad agent Ari Levinson (Chris Evans), who devises an audacious cover operation: reopening an abandoned Red Sea diving resort as a fake tourist hotel while secretly smuggling Ethiopian Jewish refugees out of Sudan by night. The agents pose as resort staff and diving instructors while coordinating clandestine evacuations by sea and later by air. Major themes include: Rescue and ingathering of endangered Jewish communities; Ethiopian Jewish identity and persecution; Jewish solidarity across racial and geographic lines; and Mossad operations and Israeli intelligence culture. See two books in the companion Israeli bibliography, **Raffi Berg, (Red Sea Spies: The True Story of Mossad's Fake Diving Resort [2020])** and **Gad Shimron, (Mossad Exodus: The Daring Undercover Rescue of the Lost Jewish Tribe [2007])**. [\[See related book: Red Sea Spies\]](#) [\[See related book: Mossad Exodus\]](#)*

93. **Incitement** (Hebrew title: *Yamim Noraim*, ימים נוראים, translating to "Days of Awe") **2019** - *Israeli thriller film that explores the psychological and societal forces leading to the November 1995 assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. Directed by Yaron Zilberman, the movie shifts standard historical narratives by unfolding entirely from the*

worldview and perspective of the assassin, **Yigal Amir**. The film acts as a meticulous “tick-tock” chronicle documenting the single year leading up to the assassination. It opens in September 1993 with Prime Minister Rabin announcing the Oslo Accords, which aimed to establish peace between Israelis and Palestinians. Yigal Amir, an Orthodox Yemenite Jewish law student, views ceding any biblical land as a betrayal of God. Driven by personal rejection—such as being dumped by his Ashkenazi girlfriend due to ethnic disparities—he becomes increasingly isolated and bitter. Amir attempts to establish a vigilante militia and deep-dives into ancient religious texts. He ultimately interprets the “**Law of the Pursuer**” (Din Roder) to justify that Rabin is a traitor whose execution is mandated to save the Jewish people. The film fluidly blends narrative drama with real historical archival footage from 1994–1995 anti-peace rallies. It depicts how right-wing politicians, aggressive rhetoric, and ambiguous interpretations by local rabbis passively validated Amir’s escalating extremism. Run Time & Language: 123 minutes, completely in Hebrew with English subtitles.

94. **The HBO alternate-history miniseries The Plot Against America (2020)** – 6 episodes, directed by Minkie Spiro and Thomas Schlamme. The television adaptation was created and written by David Simon and Ed Burns, **based on Philip Roth’s 2004 novel**. (See the entry on this novel in the U.S. fiction bibliography.) The series features an ensemble cast depicting a working-class Jewish family in New Jersey experiencing the rise of a fascist political regime: Morgan Spector as Herman Levin, the fiercely principled, opinionated father and insurance agent; Zoe Kazan as Elizabeth “Bess” Levin, the protective, increasingly fearful mother; Winona Ryder as Evelyn Finkel, Bess’s impressionable older sister who becomes romantically entangled with the administration; John Turturro as Rabbi Lionel Bengelsdorf, a conservative rabbi who aligns with and legitimizes the new populist president. The miniseries was highly praised by critics for its production values, acting, and structural relevance. Most critics, including writers for *The Guardian* and *Vanity Fair*, noted that the show felt chillingly prescient. They highlighted how easily a democratic society could slide toward totalitarianism, making direct comparisons to modern-day populist landscapes. [\[See related book\]](#)
95. **Jeffrey Epstein: Filthy Rich (2020)** - 4-part Netflix docuseries. Based on a 2016 book by James Patterson, this high-profile series is directed by Lisa Bryant. It primarily centers on first-hand accounts from survivors like Virginia Giuffre and Maria Farmer. The series tracks how Epstein constructed a “pyramid scheme” of abuse, his 2008 lenient plea deal, and his ultimate arrest and suspicious death in 2019. [\[See related book\]](#)
96. **Surviving Jeffrey Epstein (2020)** - 4-part Lifetime documentary miniseries. Directed by Anne Sundberg and Ricki Stern, this series emphasizes the systemic failures of law enforcement and the justice system. It focuses heavily on how female recruiters lured underage victims to Epstein’s private Caribbean island, while also tracking the subsequent arrest of Ghislaine Maxwell.
97. **Epstein: Behind the Facade (2020)** - Brief documentary film (40 minutes). This film provides a timeline-driven overview of Epstein’s life, mapping his sudden rise into elite social circles and concluding with the conspiracy-laden details of his death at age 66.
98. **Tehran (2020–2025)** – An international Emmy Award-winning espionage thriller on Apple TV+ that follows Tamar Rabinyan, a young Jewish Mossad hacker-agent born in Iran but raised in Israel. She is sent on a mission to Tehran to hack into the Iranian power grid and

disable the military's air defense systems. The series follows her exploits season by season as she liaises with family members and local resistance militants while evading capture by the regime's Revolutionary Guards. The series is widely praised for its moral ambiguity. It portrays both the Mossad and the Iranian intelligence agencies as ruthless entities, leaving regular civilians, student activists, and low-level agents caught in the dangerous crossfire.

99. **Lansky [2021]** – directed by Eitan Rockaway, son of researcher Robert Rockaway, who co-wrote the screenplay with Eitan), and **starring Harvey Keitel as an aging Meyer Lansky**, this film uses interviews with a biographer to recount his life story. It highlights his role in building modern organized crime, his involvement in brawling with Nazi sympathizers in pre-WWII America, and his complex relationship with the early State of Israel. A powerful flashback sequence shows Lansky and his crew violently raiding a pro-Nazi meeting in New York City. Keitel explicitly speaks to this history in the film's press interviews.
100. **The Crime of the Century (2021)**: A comprehensive, two-part HBO documentary directed by Alex Gibney. It details how corporate forces, political operatives, and government regulations enabled the epidemic, with a heavy spotlight on the **Sackler family** and Purdue Pharma.
101. **Dopesick (2021)**: This acclaimed Hulu series stars Michael Stuhlbarg as **Richard Sackler** and Michael Keaton as a small-town doctor. It traces how Purdue Pharma launched OxyContin and heavily examines the corporate decisions of the Sackler family. [\[See related book\]](#)
102. **The Sons of Sam: A Descent Into Darkness (2021)**: This multi-part Netflix docuseries tracks journalist Maury Terry's obsessive investigation into the theory that Berkowitz did not act alone. The series details Berkowitz's upbringing. It covers how he was born Richard David Falco to a Jewish mother (Betty Broder) following an affair with a Jewish man (Joseph Kleinman), and was subsequently adopted by Nathan and Pearl Berkowitz, a working-class Jewish couple in the Bronx. [\[See related book\]](#)
103. **Conversations with a Killer: The Son of Sam Tapes (2021)**: Another definitive Netflix documentary directed by Joe Berlinger that uses archive audio of Berkowitz. It directly addresses how his identity as an adopted child in a Jewish household shaped his early feelings of alienation, resentment, and a deep-seated inferiority complex.
104. **All the Beauty and the Bloodshed (2022)**: Directed by Laura Poitras, this Oscar-nominated film chronicles the life of photographer Nan Goldin and her activist group, P.A.I.N.. It focuses directly on her targeted fight to shame major museums into removing the Sackler family name from their wings.
105. **Pollard (2022 Docuseries)**: Directed by Shany Haziza and Gilad Tocatly, and created by Israeli investigative journalist Omri Assenheim, this four-part project is the most complete screen treatment of the scandal. It features exclusive interviews with high-ranking U.S. and Israeli officials, including former Israeli Prime Ministers Ehud Barak and Ehud Olmert, former U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz, and the FBI agents who arrested him. It explores his childhood, his motivations, the intelligence breach, and the diplomatic fallout. In the United States, it is available to stream on the Jewish-focused platform ChaiFlicks.

106. **She Said (2022)** - Based on the non-fiction book by New York Times reporters Jodi Kantor and Megan Twohey, the movie stars Zoe Kazan and Carey Mulligan and chronicles the investigative journalism that exposed **Harvey Weinstein's** decades of sexual abuse. Directed by Maria Schrader, the film acts as a procedural newsroom thriller. It painstakingly recreates the timeline of tracking down terrified sources, navigating corporate non-disclosure agreements (NDAs), and convincing actresses like Ashley Judd (who plays herself) to go on the record. Weinstein is kept intentionally off-camera or shown only from behind, framing him as an institutional force of terror rather than the protagonist.

Regarding references to his Jewish origins, these elements appear directly in She Said and are presented through a highly specific cultural lens rather than as a central focus of his crimes: Weinstein and his legal team attempt to leverage his shared Jewish heritage with reporter Jodi Kantor to influence the investigation. Kantor later confirmed that Weinstein explicitly put their shared background “on the table,” seemingly expecting a sense of “tribal loyalty” to protect him—an expectation she firmly rejected.

The film features subplots where Kantor's Jewish identity—such as a scene showing her family lighting Shabbat candles—serves as a bridge to crack the case. A critical investigative breakthrough occurs because Kantor is able to build an authentic connection with Irwin Reiter, a whistleblower and accountant for The Weinstein Company, based on their shared Jewish background and family connections to the Holocaust. [\[See related book\]](#)

107. **Ghislaine Maxwell: Filthy Rich (2022)** - Netflix documentary film. A direct, feature-length follow-up to the 2020 series. It focuses entirely on Epstein's primary accomplice, exploring how her high-society upbringing, class, and privilege allowed her to facilitate and conceal a massive sex-trafficking operation.
108. **Painkiller (2023)**: A Netflix scripted limited series directed by Peter Berg. It features Matthew Broderick portraying **Richard Sackler** and explores the origins, victims, and legal investigations surrounding the crisis. [\[See related book\]](#)
109. **Pain Hustlers (2023)**: A Netflix crime drama starring Emily Blunt and Chris Evans. It does not focus on the Sackler family directly, but rather targets a different part of the crisis, loosely basing its story on the corrupt pharmaceutical practices of Insys Therapeutics.
110. **Last Man Standing: The Chronicles of Myron Sugerman (2023)** - Available on Amazon Prime, this film follows the life of second-generation gangster Myron Sugerman. It details his activities as the “godfather of illegal slot machines” while highlighting his clandestine work funding efforts to hunt down Nazis. [**Note:** See reference to Sugerman's memoir, above in this bibliography] [\[See related book\]](#)
111. **The City** [better translated as “This City” - **Ha’Ir Hazot - העיר הזאת**] (2023) - The first ever Hebrew rap musical inspired by black music, film noir, and detective films, the plot focuses on the character of Joe, a cynical and bitter detective working in a corrupt, decaying city. One stormy night, a young woman named Sarah Bennett comes to Joe's office and tells him about the mysterious disappearance of her sister. Joe decides to take the case, a decision that could cost him his life.

112. **The Goldman Case (French: *Le Procès Goldman*, 2023)** - A courtroom thriller focused on the 1976 retrial of Pierre Goldman, a Jewish revolutionary and small-time criminal. The film explores his refusal to accept an antisemitic justice system while maintaining his innocence regarding a double murder, despite admitting to several armed robberies. [\[See related book\]](#)

113. **Blood Coast (French: *Pax Massilia*, 2023)** - In this Netflix series, the Jewish content is subtle and integrated into the multi-ethnic landscape of Marseille. The series reflects Marseille's reality as home to France's second-largest Jewish community (70-80,000 in number), many of whom are of North African, Sephardic descent. The narrative is "cops vs. drug lords". **Arno Cabella** is a core member of the "Crazies" police unit. While the show focuses on his role as a gritty, rule-breaking detective, his character adds to the diverse cultural fabric of the team, which includes officers of North African, African-French, and Arab descent. The portrayal of Marseille highlights the city's cosmopolitan nature, where Jewish, Muslim, and Christian communities live in close proximity, a dynamic that often surfaces in French crime dramas. The city has a deep history, from serving as a 6th-century refuge to being a major transit port for Holocaust survivors and North African immigrants. The focus is on the "grey zone" where the methods of the police and criminals overlap. The Jewish presence is part of this "street-level" realism, representing the integrated yet distinct identity of the local population. – Google/AI]

114. **Madoff: The Monster of Wall Street (2023)** - his comprehensive, four-part Netflix true-crime documentary series was directed by acclaimed filmmaker Joe Berlinger. It uses real financial forensics, whistleblower testimonies, and Madoff's own video depositions to reveal how the \$64 billion Ponzi scheme functioned. Crucially, it highlights how regulators and competitors deliberately ignored massive red flags. Includes interviews with Diana B. Henriques, author of the book on which the documentary series is based (***The Wizard of Lies: Bernie Madoff and the Death of Trust***), and forensic accountant Harry Markopolos, who blew the whistle on Madoff many years before his downfall – and was ignored. [\[See related book\]](#)

115. **RUIN: Money, Ego and Deception at FTX (Bloomberg Originals, 2023)**: This is widely considered the most authoritative and comprehensive feature-length documentary on the **Bankman-Fried** scandal. Directed by Shern Sharma, the 1-hour and 48-minute film leverages Bloomberg's entire investigative newsroom. It features extensive commentary from central figures in the digital asset sector and details the structural math SBF used to siphon customer capital.

116. **The Collapse of FTX: Insiders Tell All (CNBC Digital, 2023)**: Led by CNBC technology reporter Kate Rooney, this investigative special centers on a single tweet that catalyzed the global bank run. It features exclusive interviews with high-level corporate insiders, including former FTX US President Brett Harrison and high-profile investor Anthony Scaramucci, who recount their direct dealings with **Bankman-Fried** as his empire imploded.

117. **FRONTLINE: Weinstein (2018 / Updated 2023)** – an Investigative Television Documentary (PBS). Focuses on the elaborate, legally backed machinery Weinstein built over four decades to enforce silence. Produced by Jane McMullen and Dan Edge, this deep-dive journalistic piece investigates how a vast network of high-priced lawyers, private investigators (including former Mossad agents), and complicit corporate executives actively

helped suppress allegations dating back to Weinstein's early music promotion days in Buffalo, NY.

118. **Downfall of the Crypto King (BBC / Fulwell 73, 2024):** *A theatrical, feature-length British documentary mapping out the inside story of the collapse. It focuses heavily on the psychological profile of **Bankman-Fried**, the frantic nature of the 10-day bank run, and firsthand accounts from the international retail investors who lost their life savings.*
119. **Highway 65 (Hebrew: Kvish HaSargel - כביש הסרגל) (2024) -** *An Israeli noir thriller that follows Daphna, a gifted detective in the town of Afula who investigates the disappearance of a former beauty queen. An Israeli-French drama film written and directed by Maya Dreifuss and starring Tali Sharon and Idan Amedi.*
120. **Caught Stealing (2025) -** *Directed by Darren Aronofsky, this thriller features unique protagonists in the form of two Hasidic Jewish drug-dealing killers known as the Hebrews.*
121. **Lansky: The Zionist Gangster (2025) -** *A multi-part miniseries exploring Meyer Lansky's deep ties to the founding of Israel and his role as the financial architect of the National Crime Syndicate. Director and screenwriter: Avi Maor-Marzuk. Documentary, based on archival footage, so no leading actors. Spotlights Lansky's heavily overlooked contributions to Israel's founding, detailing how he and fellow Jewish mobsters used their underground networks to raise massive funds and illegally procure weapons for the nascent state. It tracks his dramatic escape and short-lived attempt to seek asylum in Israel under the Law of Return to evade American tax evasion charges. The series challenges standard definitions of heroism and morality, examining how a brutal Prohibition-era crime boss simultaneously acted as a covert benefactor to a geopolitical movement [Google/AI]*
122. **Guns & Moses (2025) (formerly titled *Man in the Long Black Coat*) -** *an American crime thriller film written by Nina Davidovich Litvak and Salvador Litvak. [The philanthropist-benefactor of a Jewish synagogue community in a small California town is murdered by an unknown assailant. The local police arrest Clay Gibbons, who has a history of Nazi-like threatening of the Jewish community. Everyone except Rabbi Moses (Moyshe) Zaltzman, the community's leader, thinks Clay is guilty. The Rabbi had an experience of welcoming Clay when he was threatening the community, and teaching him about the Holocaust and Jewish history. After additional murders of key characters, the issue appears to be about a land deal. The synagogue's security person insists that the Rabbi carry a gun and get training in how to shoot. In the end, the local police and mayor, who had been in the military together, had framed Clay and they try to kill the Rabbi and his family. With the help of allies including Clay and his father, the Rabbi and his family win out in the end, and the bad guys are killed. [Google/AI]*
123. **The Rosenbergs: Atomic Spies (2025):** *A comprehensive French-American documentary directed by Julia Bracher. Built using archival footage and animated illustrations, it analyzes declassified FBI files to outline how Julius acted as an espionage recruiter, while highlighting evidence that Ethel was largely innocent of the spying charges.*
124. **Jeffrey Epstein: The Unredacted Story (2025) -** *Documentary feature film (45 minutes) Written by Macready Massey, this project uses newly unsealed court records, investigative*

journalism, and survivor interviews to pull back the curtain on the broader networks of money and power that shielded Epstein for decades

125. **The Last Spy (2025/2026)** - documentary film directed by Katharina Otto-Bernstein. A riveting biographical portrait of Peter Sichel (a German-Jewish refugee who fled Nazi Germany and became a top CIA spymaster). The film follows Sichel's fascinating life from his intelligence work during World War II to the beginnings of the CIA and his pivotal operations during the Cold War, as the first CIA station chief in Berlin. Often affectionately referred to as the "Jewish James Bond", Peter Sichel sat down to recount his extensive history before his passing at the age of 102. The documentary (running 106 minutes) is part historical drama, part political thriller, and part personal biography.

126. **The Secret Story of FTX's Rise and Ruin (Reveal / Mother Jones, 2026)**: A multi-part investigative broadcast series that aired in July 2026. It provides a retrospective of the trial and features exclusive prison interviews and fresh, legal post-mortems of the asset recovery saga, tracking where the final billions went.

127. **The Altruists (Netflix, In Production/Upcoming- 2026-27)**: Netflix formally ordered an eight-episode limited dramatic series about the multi-billion-dollar fraud. Formatted as a high-stakes psychological drama, it is executive-produced by Barack and Michelle Obama's Higher Ground Productions. It stars **Anthony Boyle** as Sam Bankman-Fried and **Julia Garner** as Caroline Ellison, tracking their personal relationship, their shared obsession with effective altruism, and the final panic of stealing \$8 billion. Filming wrapped in late 2025, with final casting updates locked in early 2026.]

128. **Dust Bowls and Jewish Souls: Another Side of Woody Guthrie (2026)** [- directed and produced by Steven Pressman, it explores the little-known, deep connection between the legendary American folk singer **Woody Guthrie** and Jewish culture. While Guthrie is famously recognized as the Oklahoma "Dust Bowl balladeer" who wrote "This Land Is Your Land", the documentary recasts his legacy by focusing on his life in New York City during the 1940s. After marrying his second wife, Marjorie Greenblatt, Guthrie moved to the vibrant Jewish neighborhood of Coney Island, and later, Queens. The central narrative anchors around Guthrie's close relationship with his mother-in-law, Aliza Greenblatt, a prominent Yiddish poet. Despite different backgrounds, they shared a deep bond over storytelling, humor, and social justice. Guthrie extensively integrated Jewish history, holidays, and folklore into his work. He wrote songs about Hanukkah, latkes, borscht, and even the Holocaust.

Decades later, his daughter Nora discovered these forgotten lyrics, which were eventually recorded by the modern klezmer group, **The Klezmatics**, on the Grammy-winning album, *Wonder Wheel*. The film illustrates how Guthrie found striking parallels and "kinship" between the displaced American migrant workers of the Dust Bowl and Jewish refugees fleeing Europe. It also details his collaborations with key Jewish figures in music, such as Moses "Moe" Asch (founder of Folkways Records and son of Yiddish author Sholem Asch) and the legendary folk manager, Harold Leventhal.

In truth, the film has no connection to Jews and crime or espionage, but I wanted to end this survey on a positive note. It also includes the fact that Arlo had a Bar Mitzvah in 1960, attended by many of his father's folk-music friends. His Bar Mitzvah teacher was a young rabbi at the Howard Beach Jewish Center in Queens, by the name of **Meir Kahane**! This was long before Kahane's founding of the Jewish Defense League (in 1968) and later political

activities. Arlo Guthrie later converted to Roman Catholicism (1977) and eventually developed a broad inter-faith credo combining his Jewish upbringing, Catholic faith, and elements of Eastern mysticism and Christian Gospel tradition. – Google/AI]

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