



Reverend Katz Library

New Book Reviews

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Now that it is winter, what a wonderful opportunity to spend some time indoors with a good book. We invite you to come to The Reverend Katz Library, make your selection from our wonderful collection of varied and interesting books with Jewish content.

Joel Chasnoff and Benji Lovitt, Israel 201: your next-level guide book ISR CHA

Israel is in the news a lot, and almost always for the same things: conflict, elections, or the occasional start-up that sells for a billion dollars.

In Israel 201, Joel Chasnoff and Benji Lovitt pull back the curtain and show you the people, places, and phenomena that make the country truly unique, and that can happen “only in Israel.” From Yom Kippur bike sales to Jerusalem’s cat conundrum, shomer Shabbos car insurance to LGBTQ combat soldiers in the IDF, this is the Israel you haven’t heard about.

Based on the authors’ own experiences living in Israel a combined twenty-five years and interviews with Israeli A-listers like Fauda cocreator Avi Issacharoff, Olympian Yael Arad, and others, Israel 201 is a behind-the-scenes look at the magic, mystery, and chaos of one of the most fascinating, and misunderstood, countries on earth.

Simon Schama, Foreign bodies: Pandemics, Vaccines and the health of nations HIS SCH

Characteristically, with Schama the message is delivered through gripping, page-turning stories set in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries: smallpox strikes London; cholera hits Paris; plague comes to India. Threading through the scenes of terror, suffering and hope – in hospitals and prisons, palaces and slums – are an unforgettable cast of characters: a philosopher-playwright burning up with smallpox in a country chateau; a vaccinating doctor paying house calls in Halifax; a woman doctor in south India driving her inoculator-carriage through the stricken streets as dead monkeys drop from the trees. But we are also in the labs when great, life-saving breakthroughs happen, in Paris, Hong Kong and Mumbai.

At the heart of it all, an unsung hero: Waldemar Haffkine. A gun-toting Jewish student in Odesa turned microbiologist at the Pasteur Institute, hailed in England as ‘the saviour of mankind’ for vaccinating millions against cholera and bubonic plague in British India while being cold-shouldered by the medical establishment of the Raj. Creator of the world’s first mass production line of vaccines in Mumbai, he is tragically brought down in an act of shocking injustice.

Foreign Bodies crosses borders between east and west, Asia and Europe, the worlds of rich and poor, politics and science. It’s thrilling story carries with it the credo of its author on the interconnectedness of humanity and nature; of the powerful and the people. Ultimately, Schama says, as we face the challenges of our times together, ‘there are no foreigners, only familiars.’

David Cohen, *The terrible event: stories* LIT COH

From the winner of the Russell Prize for Humour Writing. David Cohen's most wryly humorous and disturbing work of fiction yet.

A public memorial's name is changed to avoid any mention of the tragedy it has been set up to commemorate. Two attention-seeking activists' campaign against exclusionary policies adopted by the gift shop at a suburban shopping mall. A customer service representative becomes obsessed with a colleague who has worked from home for so long, nobody in the company remembers her. A middle-aged father loses his marriage and falls in love again with a cherished but damaged childhood toy. An academic's research into roadside memorials takes a peculiar turn.

David Cohen's sometimes bizarre yet pitch-perfect stories capture everyday horrors but are always shot through with a profound empathy and generosity.

The Terrible Event delivers not just one terrible event, but many events of varying degrees of terrible-ness. Death, destruction, disappearance, decline, defeat – it has something for everyone.

'These are not the stand-up comedian's one-liners; they have an awareness of the absurd, the surreal, the comic, in everyday life; the true comic's unsettling serious gaze at the strange ways we make sense of existence.' Judges, Russell Prize for Humour Writing.

Natasha Solomons, *House of Gold* F SOL

The start of a marriage. The end of a dynasty.

It's 1911 and Greta Goldbaum is forced to move from glittering Vienna to damp England to wed Albert, a distant cousin. The Goldbaum family are one of the wealthiest in the world, with palaces across Europe, but as Jews and perpetual outsiders they know that strength lies in family. At first defiant and lonely, slowly Greta softens toward Albert, and as the wild paths and untamed beauty of Greta's new English garden begin to take shape, so too does their love begin to blossom. But World War I loom and even the influential Goldbaums cannot alter its course. For the first time in two hundred years, the family will find itself on opposing sides, and Greta will have to choose: the family she's created, or the one she left behind.

Buzzy Jackson, *The girl with the red hair* F JAC

An unputdownable debut charting the thrilling life and heroism of Hannie Schaft, a young-woman-turned-Dutch-Resistance-fighter in Nazi-occupied Netherlands.

Hannie Schaft didn't train to be a soldier: she had dreams of her own. But dreams die in wartime, and her friends are no longer safe.

Hiding them is not enough. Hannie is young but she won't stand aside as the menace of Nazi evil tightens its grip on her country. Recruited into the Resistance, she learns to shoot and is notorious for not missing her targets.

As she draws deeper into a web of plots, disguises and assassinations, whispers spread like wildfire amongst enemies and friends alike. They know her name. She's "the Girl with Red Hair." A match for any Nazi soldier, a true threat, a target.

Buzzy Jackson's debut is an unputdownable novel of love, loyalty, and the limits we confront when our deepest values are tested.

Lynn Cullen, *The woman with the cure* F CUL

A riveting novel based on the true story of the woman who stopped a pandemic, from the bestselling author of *Mrs. Poe*.

In 1940s and '50s America, polio is as dreaded as the atomic bomb. No one's life is untouched by this disease that kills or paralyzes its victims, particularly children. Outbreaks of the virus across the country regularly put American cities in lockdown. Some of the world's best minds are engaged in the race to find a vaccine. The man who succeeds will be a god.

But Dorothy Horstmann is not focused on beating her colleagues to the vaccine. She just wants the world to have a cure. Applying the same determination that lifted her from a humble background as the daughter of immigrants, to becoming a doctor –often the only woman in the room–she hunts down the monster where it lurks: in the blood.

This discovery of hers, and an error by a competitor, catapults her closest colleague to a lead in the race. When his chance to win comes on a worldwide scale, she is asked to sink or validate his vaccine and to decide what is forgivable, and how much should be sacrificed, in pursuit of the cure.

Joel Alexandra, *The artist's secret* F JOE

The sweeping new saga of strong heroines and family secrets from the bestselling author of *The Paris Model*. While searching for her lost sister, art historian Wren Summers takes on the glittering world of New York's auction houses.

A missing girl, a hidden masterpiece, and the search for the truth

1965: After escaping from anti-war turmoil and the suffocating weight of family expectations, a beautiful young couple embrace a life free of materialism and tradition by a sapphire lake in Italy. But the past does not always let go so easily ...

1987: When talented art historian Wren Summers lands her dream job at the Sydney Art Museum, it seems she can finally leave her wildly unconventional background behind – until a treacherous act threatens everything she has strived for.

The revelation of a monstrous family secret sees Wren head to New York, compelled to find the missing girl who holds the key to this shocking mystery – and to make a fresh start in the glittering realm of international art auctions. As she struggles to fulfil her quest, can she navigate this new, high-stakes world of swirling temptation, romance and deceit, danger, and betrayal, while staying true to what she knows is right?