



THE LAURA & ALVIN SIEGAL  
LIFELONG LEARNING  
PROGRAM

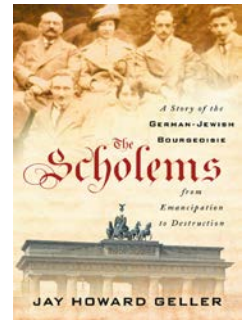
## Jewish Explorations Lectures • Programs • Views

Dear Friends,

As always, the new season of Jewish learning at CWRU-Siegal showcases a great line-up of visiting scholars. But I want to draw attention to our **local talent** who will be teaching for us this semester. In this column and the one that will follow next week, I present you with a few behind-the-scenes notes.

**Jo Bruce** – New to our teaching faculty, Jo moved here with her family just a few months ago from West Hartford, Connecticut, and will be teaching “[Reading the Bible with Midrash: Filling in the Gaps and Digging for Meaning](#).” Jo was born and grew up in London, studied at the University of Leeds, and went on to teaching and administrative positions at the London School of Jewish Studies, an institution that bears many resemblances to CWRU-Siegal. Jo’s teaching is dynamic and interactive, a style she developed out of her understanding of the Bible as a text that “has something to say to all of us; if we are prepared to listen to its voice and argue with it.”

**Jay Geller** – Jay is the Samuel Rosenthal Professor of Judaic Studies, and Associate Professor of History at CWRU. His newest book is about to be published, *The Scholems: A Story of the German-Jewish Bourgeoisie from Emancipation to Destruction*. It takes a long time and tremendous effort to gestate and birth this sort of work, and I’m excited to partner with the Maltz Museum to help Jay introduce his book to the world [this April](#).



**Matt Goldish** – Matt holds the Melton Chair in Jewish History at Ohio State University. Lucky for Siegal, he recently moved to Beachwood, and has been teaching for us on mysticism, [messianism](#), and Kabbalah. This semester, he also turns his attention to another magical aspect of Jewish heritage: the tale of [the Golem](#), a creature formed of mud, and brought to life by a 16<sup>th</sup> century Prague rabbi. How appropriate to study this story - about the power of human creativity, and the fuzzy boundary between spirit and matter – as the world [marks the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Frankenstein!](#)

**Rosette Haim** – A long time rabbi in the Cleveland Jewish community, Rosie is teaching for us for the first time this spring. As an outgrowth of her new project [Celebrating Jewish life](#). She offers “[Jewish Foundations](#),” a course that explores the way God, Torah and Israel offer an organizing principle for understanding Jewish practice and belief.



**Carol Salus** – Carol recently retired after an accomplished career as a Professor at Kent State University’s School of Art. She has published on Picasso, Degas, R. B. Kitaj, Andy Warhol, and Roy Lichtenstein, and has taught Art History and American Art and Architecture. This

semester, Carol will combine her broad expertise in art, together with her interest in Jewish history, teaching for the first time on [artists’ responses to the Holocaust](#).

**Anthony Wexler** – Soon after Philip Roth died this past May, I reached out to Anthony, who teaches English literature at CWRU, and who is writing a book that deals with Roth’s work. “So, why is his fiction so popular?” I wanted to know. Our conversation was the seed for a lively lecture that Anthony delivered at Siegal last spring. What stood out for me at the event was the very interesting interchange that unfolded. While Anthony offered an insightful scholarly view of Roth’s writing, audience members – many of whom had been contemporaries’ of Roth - had a more intimate perspective on his depiction of post-War Jewish America. The conversation will continue this spring with Anthony’s course “[America’s Great Jewish Writers: Philip Roth and Cynthia Ozick](#).”



**Ezra Blaustein** – This spring Ezra will be wrapping up his doctoral dissertation and is taking a break from teaching. But I want to draw your attention to this wonderful article on “Historical Agency,” which he just had published in the [Jewish Review of Books](#). Ezra has been living in Cleveland with his family as he finishes his Ph.D. at the University of Chicago. He has been teaching a series of popular courses for us for the past few years, which focus on Muslim-Jewish relations in the Medieval world, and we look forward to having him back in our schedule soon.



*In short, we’ve gathered together a wonderful pool of teachers and scholars at CWRU-Siegal’s Jewish Studies program! I know you will enjoy learning with them and from them. Stay tuned next week on notes about several of our other instructors.*

**Want to read more of my columns? Previous Jewish Explorations editions can be found [here](#)**