The Sophie Brody Award
The Sophie Brody Award is funded by Sophie and Arthur Brody Foundation, and is given to encourage, recognize and commend outstanding achievement in Jewish literature.

2016
THE BOOK OF ARON: A NOVEL by Jim Shepard
FICTION SHE
The Warsaw Ghetto during the darkest days of World War II is the setting of this important, heartbreaking but also inspiring new novel from National Book Award nominee Shepard. Told from the perspective of Aron, a Jewish boy in the ghetto, it is the study of the sadistic and systematic deprivation and dehumanization of a people. – Library Journal

Honorable Mentions:

THE HOUSE OF TWENTY THOUSAND BOOKS by Sasha Abramsky
381.45 ABR
Memoir of Jewish intellectual life and universal history alike, told through a houseful of books, their eccentric collectors, and the rooms in which they dwelled. If you finish this brilliant, realized book thinking you need to own more books, you're to be forgiven. A wonderful celebration of the mind, history, and love. – Kirkus Reviews

KILLING A KING: THE ASSASSINATION OF YITZAK RABIN AND THE REMAKING OF ISRAEL by Dan Ephron
956.9405 EPH
Ephron’s book is the best account to date of the Rabin assassination and its aftermath. – Publishers Weekly

2015
A REPLACEMENT LIFE by Boris Fishman
FICTION FIS
An ambitious young writer compromises his integrity for the sake of his Russian forebears in Fishman's darkly comic, world-wise debut. – Kirkus Reviews

2014
LIKE DREAMERS: THE STORY OF THE ISRAELI PARATROOPERS WHO REUNITED JERUSALEM AND DIVIDED A NATION by Yossi Klein Halevi
356.16 KLE
The story of the Israeli 55th Paratroopers Reserve Brigade, which was instrumental in the victory in the 1967 Six-Day War. An artful, affecting blend of history, biography, political science, and religion and an illustration of how small lights can illuminate a large landscape. – Kirkus Reviews
**Honorable Mention:**

**MY PROMISED LAND: THE TRIUMPH AND TRAGEDY OF ISRAEL** by Ari Shavit
956.05 SHA, CD AUDIOBOOK, OVERDRIVE EBOOK

Israeli journalist Shavit (editorial board, Haaretz) presents a history of and meditation on Zionism’s successes and failures since his great-grandfather’s arrival at Jaffa in 1897. – Library Journal

**2013**

**THE ALEPPO CODEX: A TRUE STORY OF OBSESSION, FAITH, AND THE PURSUIT OF AN ANCIENT BIBLE** by Matti Friedman
221.44 FRI

Friedman gives a masterful account of a major religious document, housed with the better known Dead Sea Scrolls in Jerusalem’s Shrine of the Book. Facing missing court documents and the “conspiracy of silence” surrounding the codex, AP reporter Friedman sleuths out the answers, revealing a highly disturbing tale. Friedman delivers an atmospheric, tense story about the destruction of a sacred relic, raising inevitable questions about who owns a people’s historical treasures. – Publishers Weekly

**Honorable Mentions:**

**I AM FORBIDDEN** by Anouk Markovits
FICTION MAR, LARGE PRINT, CD AUDIOBOOK

Orphaned during the Holocaust, two ultra-orthodox Jews bound by love and faith are driven apart by the same forces in a sensitive consideration of tradition and commitment. – Kirkus Reviews

**WHAT WE TALK ABOUT WHEN WE TALK ABOUT ANNE FRANK** by Nathan Englander
FICTION ENG

In fluid prose, Englander takes on tough topics like Jewish belief, the consequences of the Holocaust, inane suburbia, and contemporary social mores and gives us unexpected answers. – Library Journal

**THE LAWGIVER** by Herman Wouk
FICTION WOU, LARGE PRINT, CD AUDIOBOOK

Sixty-four years after the publication of his first novel, Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist and American treasure Herman Wouk tackles, at age 97, what he calls an "impossible novel": the story of Moses. He succeeds in an artfully oblique, amazing, and modern way. – Library Journal
2012
SACRED TRASH: THE LOST AND FOUND WORLD OF THE CAIRO GENIZA
by Adina Hoffman and Peter Cole
296.09 HOF
Poet and essayist Hoffman and poet and translator Cole chronicle the
disinterment of an ancient stash of Hebrew scholarship. An accessible, neatly
narrated story of hallowed detritus and the resurrection of nearly 1,000 years of
culture and learning. – Kirkus Reviews

Honorable Mentions:
JERUSALEM: THE BIOGRAPHY by Simon Sebag Montefiore
956.9405 SEB
Popular historian Montefiore presents a panoramic narrative of Jerusalem,
organized chronologically and delivered with magisterial flair. Spanning eras
from King David to modern Israel with rich anecdotes and vivid detail, this
exceptional volume portrays the personalities and worldviews of the dynasties
and families that shaped the city throughout its 3,000-year history. – Publishers
Weekly

METAMAUS by Art Spiegelman
741.5 SPI
In this new volume of prose, Spiegelman reveals the arduous process that took
him from his inspiration for the book to its impact on literary history. Where other
books of this kind tend toward self-indulgence, Spiegelman takes a profoundly
intimate approach, laying bare piles of concept art, family photographs,
genealogies, Holocaust propaganda, rejection letters, and interviews with his
wife and children. The result is an extraordinary look at the history of comics and
Spiegelman’s life through the lens of Maus. – Publishers Weekly

2011
THE SABBATH WORLD: GLIMPSES OF A DIFFERENT ORDER OF TIME
by Judith Shulevitz
296.41 SHU
Journalist Shulevitz presents a sometimes intriguing, sometimes tortured,
exposition on the idea of the Sabbath, from both Jewish and Christian
perspectives. Most readers will be challenged to rethink what Saturday or
Sunday really means to them. A worthwhile discussion of a day we take for
granted. – Kirkus Reviews
Honorable Mention:
HOMESICK by Eshkol Nevo
FICTION NEV
Noa and Amir are a young couple—he a psychology student and she a photography student—adjusting to life together under the same roof; landlords Moshe and Sima in the apartment next door clash over the appropriate religious upbringing of their children. Across the lot a family mourns the loss of a son to the war in Lebanon, and nearby, the Arab Madmonis family faces prejudice on a daily basis. While death and social isolation hover over many scenes, Nevo masterfully explores the dualities of life in Israel, and delicately draws out the hope and love submerged in the hearts of its citizens. – Publishers Weekly

2010
THE BOOK OF THE UNKNOWN: TALES OF THE THIRTY-SIX by Jonathon Keats
FICTION KEA
Keats seizes upon the idea of the 36 righteous ones who preserve the world from destruction by their goodness—the Tzadikim Nistarim—to offer an allegory of blessedness in a troubled world. He brilliantly turns the concept on its head, with righteous ones including a golem, a prostitute, a thief, and others whose virtues transform and surprise. All the pleasures of fiction and the advantages of spiritual reflection. – Library Journal

Honorable Mentions:
A LUCKY CHILD: A MEMOIR OF SURVIVING AUSCHWITZ AS A YOUNG BOY by Thomas Buergenthal
940.5318 BUE
A powerful Holocaust memoir from an International Court Judge in The Hague. The author's story is astonishing and moving, and his capacity for forgiveness is remarkably heartening. An important new voice joins the chorus of survivors. – Kirkus Reviews

THE JEWISH BODY by Melvin Konner
296.32 KON
Anthropology professor and author Konner exudes passion and knowledge while gamely evaluating the history of the body Judaic, including customs like circumcision and the way outsiders' ignorant or malicious portrayal - in all manner of historical art and propaganda (from Michelangelo’s Horned Moses to children’s picture book The Poison Mushroom) - have come to impact Jewish identity and physical awareness. – Publishers Weekly
Polish-born Kramer, president of the Holocaust Resource Foundation at Kean University, was a teenager when her family and others hid from the Nazis in a secret bunker, rescued by a former housekeeper and her husband, a reputed drunken anti-Semite who turned out to be an avenging angel. Kramer's extensive recollections range from a liaison that threatened the household and daily squabbles in the tomblike underground quarters where food was scarce to their fear of discovery by the Nazis and the shock and desperation of learning about relatives and friends who had been killed. Her sister was sold out by a neighbor boy for a few liters of vodka. This vividly detailed and taut narrative is a fitting tribute to the bravery of victims and righteous gentiles alike. – Publishers Weekly

2009
SONGS FOR THE BUTCHER’S DAUGHTER by Peter Manseau
FICTION MAN
A young translator delivers an old man's last testament, the untold story of a talented Yiddish poet. In his debut novel, Manseau reaches across cultures to compose a living, breathing portrait of a bad-tempered but charmingly eloquent poet and the young man chosen to bring his words forward in time. – Kirkus Reviews

Honorable Mentions:
BEAUFORT by Ron Leshem
FICTION LES
In this gritty war novel, Leshem chronicles the tumultuous year leading up to Israel’s 2000 withdrawal from Southern Lebanon. The story is told through the eyes of 21-year-old squadron leader, Liraz Liberti (aka Erez), who is tasked with shepherding a motley group of 13 "kids" through their military tours at the historic Israeli outpost, Beaufort. – Publishers Weekly

FRIENDLY FIRE: A DUET by A.B. Yehoshua
FICTION YEH
An Israeli family's cohesiveness is endangered when one member, distraught over his son's death from friendly fire, sheds his Jewish identity. – Kirkus Reviews
2008
THE MINISTRY OF SPECIAL CASES by Nathan Englander
FICTION ENG
This debut novel describes in painful detail the disappearance of dissidents during Argentina’s Dirty War (1976–83), focusing on the tribulations of one innocent Jewish family in Buenos Aires. This chilling book of intrigue examines the slow obliteration of culture and families perpetuated by forces seeking absolute political power. – Library Journal

Honorable Mentions:
FORESKIN’S LAMENT: A MEMOIR by Shalom Auslander
B AUSLANDER, S.
Generation Xer Auslander, raised an Orthodox Jew but trying to extricate himself from his dysfunctional web of family and religion, has a self-described problem: he believes in God, but it’s not working for him. Auslander traces his adversarial relationship with the Almighty through a series of hilarious but gut-wrenching episodes from his childhood and adolescence. – Library Journal

THE ZOOKEEPER’S WIFE: A WAR STORY by Diane Ackerman
940.5318 ACK, LARGE PRINT, CD AUDIOBOOK, BOOK CLUB TO GO
A little-known yet profoundly moving story: how Warsaw’s zookeeper (and his wife) kept their few remaining animals alive during the Nazi occupation while hiding Jews at the zoo. – Library Journal

YOU NEVER CALL! YOU NEVER WRITE!: A HISTORY OF THE JEWISH MOTHER by Joyce Antler
306.874 ANT
More than a history of Jewish motherhood, this book offers a fresh perspective on Jewish history, women’s history, and the history of popular culture that is both informative and entertaining. Antler provides a distinctive look at the formation of the stereotype as well as at the benevolent and loving traits of Jewish mothers. Readers will finish the book with a fuller and more nuanced understanding of the history of the Jewish mother—and mothers in general. – Library Journal

2007
THE LOST: A SEARCH FOR SIX OF SIX MILLION by Daniel Mendelsohn
B MENDELSOHN, D.
An American Jew undertakes a quest to find out what happened to six of his own relatives who died in the Holocaust. A forceful meditation touching on loss, memory, Jewishness and the vagaries of chance in human life. – Kirkus Reviews
Honorable Mentions:
THE WORLD TO COME by Dara Horn  
FICTION HOR  
A heist with a twist, Horn's engaging second novel explores the history behind a stolen painting as well as the saga of the family that owned it for nearly a century. – Kirkus Reviews

THE LEMON TREE: AN ARAB, A JEW, AND THE HEART OF THE MIDDLE EAST  
by Sandy Tolan  
956.9405 TOL, CD AUDIOBOOK  
Journalist Tolan captures the Arab-Israeli struggle in this story of a house and the two families, first Palestinian and then Jewish, who successively lived in it. Members of both families came to know one another and to seek dialog between Arabs and Jews. This wonderful human story vividly depicts the depths of attachment to contested ground. – Library Journal

THE BOOK THIEF by Markus Zusak  
FICTION ZUS, OVERDRIVE EBOOK  
Liesel Meminger is a young girl growing up outside of Munich in Nazi Germany, and Death tells her story as “an attempt—a flying jump of an attempt—to prove to me that you, and your human existence, are worth it.” When her foster father helps her learn to read and she discovers the power of words, Liesel begins stealing books from Nazi book burnings and the mayor’s wife’s library. This big, expansive novel is a leisurely working out of fate, of seemingly chance encounters and events that ultimately touch, like dominoes as they collide. The writing is elegant, philosophical and moving. Even at its length, it’s a work to read slowly and savor. Beautiful and important. – Kirkus Reviews