

CALIFORNIA STATE LIBRARY

CALIFORNIA HISTORY SECTION

RESEARCH GUIDES

JEWISH AMERICANS IN CALIFORNIA



[VISIT US](#)

California History Section

900 N Street Room 200

9:30-4 Monday-Friday

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Are you researching your Jewish American ancestry? Are you curious about the Jewish contribution to California's farming, medical, theatrical or business history? Maybe you're writing a paper on Levi Strauss, Adolph Sutro or Isaias Hellman. Regardless of your interests, you can explore the extensive history of Jewish Americans in California via the [California History Section's](#) rich collections.

Digitized Resources	3
<u>Reference Works:</u>	
Books	4
Periodicals and newspapers	8
<u>Search:</u>	
General Research Tips	9
Subject-specific resources in our Catalog	11
County-specific resources in our Catalog	12
On-site Research Resources	13
Other On-site Resources	14
Other Places to Look	15

ENJOY YOUR RESEARCH!

DIGITIZED RESOURCES

Can't come to the library just yet? There are a number of online resources you can explore related to California's Jewish Americans.



[Digitized Images](#)

We have scanned and digitized a portion of our extensive photograph collection, including images related to California's Jewish Americans. You can see them on Calisphere!



URL: <https://calisphere.org/institution/51/items/>

Type in Subject Box: (Jewish OR Jews OR Judaism)



[Digitized Publications](#)

A few years ago we digitized some of our more fragile resources on California's Jewish Americans. You can see them on Internet Archive!



URL: <https://archive.org/>

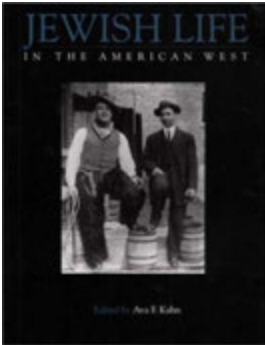
Type in Search Box: (Jewish OR Jews OR Judaism) AND collection:

(californiastatelibrary)&sin=TXT

Select Option: "Search full text of books"

BOOKS

Unsure about where to start? Consult a book! These works provide overviews of Jewish American history in California and the wider west.

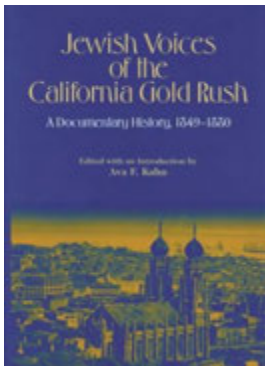


Kahn, Ava Fran. (2002). [Jewish Life in the American West](#). Los Angeles: Autry Museum of Western Heritage.

Covering 1850 to 1920, this edited collection details the richly varied Jewish American experience in the American West by covering multiple social classes and settlement regions.



URL: https://csl.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/search?vid=01CSL_INST:CSL
SEARCH: 990011793470205115

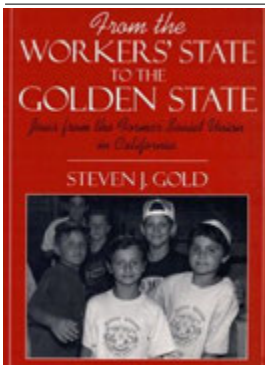


Kahn, Ava Fran. (2002). [Jewish Voices of the California Gold Rush](#). Detroit: Wayne State University Press.

This edited collection of newspaper accounts, letters and other primary sources provides a thorough look at Jewish American settlement in California between 1849 and 1880 .



URL: https://csl.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/search?vid=01CSL_INST:CSL
SEARCH: 990012253180205115



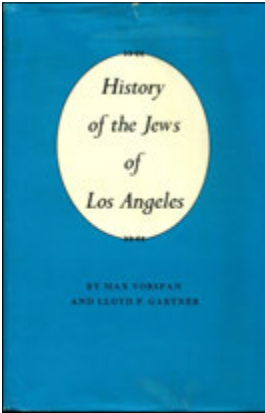
Gold, S. (1995). [From the Workers' State to the Golden State](#). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

This book provides an overview of how the Jewish American community worked to settle a recent wave of new immigrants from the former Soviet Union in California.



URL: https://csl.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/search?vid=01CSL_INST:CSL
SEARCH: 990011810860205115

BOOKS: LOS ANGELES



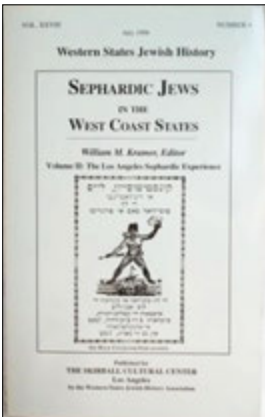
Vorspan, Max., and Gartner, Lloyd P. (1970.) [History of the Jews of Los Angeles](#) . San Marino: Huntington Library.

Though an older publication, this ambitious book tracking Jewish Americans in Los Angeles from 1841-1960 still provides a good overview of the events and people that define this community.



URL: https://csl.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/search?vid=01CSL_INST:CSL

SEARCH: 990004452660205115



Kramer, William M. (1996). [Sephardic Jews in the West Coast States](#). Los Angeles: Western States Jewish History Association.

This work highlights diversity within the Jewish American community in California by looking at the Sephardic Jews who settled in Los Angeles during the second migration wave, starting in the late 19th century and ending in 1924.



URL: https://csl.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/search?vid=01CSL_INST:CSL

SEARCH: 990010524880205115



Leonard, David. (2002) [“No Jews and No Coloreds Are Welcome in This Town.”](#) Berkeley: University of California, Berkeley.

Taking a close look at post-war Los Angeles, this book highlights how Jewish Americans and African Americans reacted to and overcame entrenched racism in the region.



URL: https://csl.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/search?vid=01CSL_INST:CSL

SEARCH: 990012236520205115

BOOKS: SAN FRANCISCO



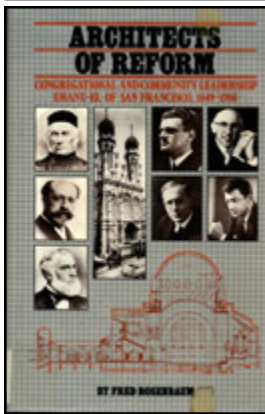
Zarchin, Michael M. (1964). [Glimpses of Jewish Life in San Francisco](#). San Francisco : Distributed by the author.

An early but ambitious work, this book chronicles the history of San Francisco's Jewish American community from 1850-1960, highlighting prominent individuals as well as important cultural organizations .



URL: https://csl.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/search?vid=01CSL_INST:CSL

SEARCH: 990004031050205115



Rosenbaum, Fred. (1980). [Architects of Reform](#). Berkeley: Western Jewish History Center.

This book traces the history of the Emanu-el synagogue from its founding in the 1850s to 1980. In doing so it highlights the many challenges its members met head-on including the 1906 earthquake, refugee arrivals and more.



URL: https://csl.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/search?vid=01CSL_INST:CSL

SEARCH: 990003825330205115

Meyer, M. & Voorsanger, A. W. (1916). [Western Jewry](#). San Francisco: Emanu-el.

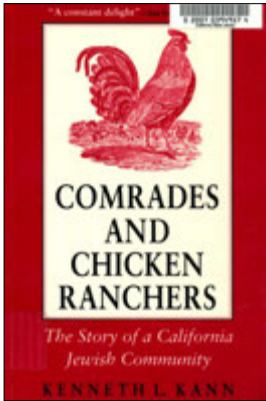
Though focused primarily on San Francisco, this book covers a variety of prominent Jewish American organizations and people throughout California.



URL: https://csl.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/search?vid=01CSL_INST:CSL

SEARCH: 990005930190205115

BOOKS: OTHER AREAS



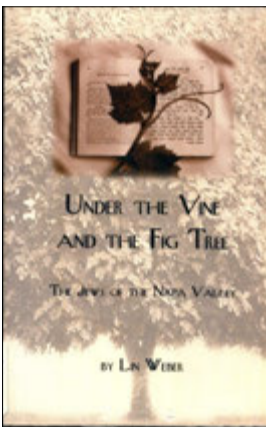
Kann, Kenneth. (1993). [Comrades and Chicken Ranchers](#). Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993.

A multi-generational oral history of an eastern European Jewish community in rural Petaluma, this microcosm of the 20th century immigrant experience covers both the challenges of migration and the cultural adaptations of later generations.



URL: https://csl.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/search?vid=01CSL_INST:CSL

SEARCH: 990010180380205115



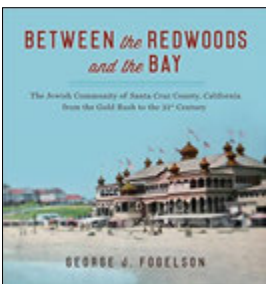
Weber, Lin. (2003). [Under the Vine and the Fig Tree](#). St. Helena, CA: Wine Ventures Publishing.

The product of painstaking research in local newspapers and archives, this book identifies and traces the lives of Jewish Americans who settled in the Napa region of California from the Gold Rush through to 2003.



URL: https://csl.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/search?vid=01CSL_INST:CSL

SEARCH: 990003825330205115



Fogelson, George J. (2017). [Between the Redwoods and the Bay](#). Santa Cruz: Santa Cruz Museum of Art & History

Tracing the history of Jewish Americans in Santa Cruz, this book touches on the ebb and flow of settlement patterns in rural California.



URL: https://csl.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/search?vid=01CSL_INST:CSL

SEARCH: 990016293430205115

PERIODICALS AND NEWSPAPERS

Want real-time accounts of California history? At our library, you can read newspapers and periodicals documenting California history from a Jewish American point of view.

[Western States Jewish Historical Quarterly](#)

Spanning 15 years, this scholarly publication examines the lives of Jewish Americans in the west, and their impacts on western American culture.



URL: https://csl.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/search?vid=01CSL_INST:CSL
SEARCH: 990001346370205115



[Emanu-el](#)

A long-running San Francisco-based publication, this newspaper covers almost 100 years of Jewish American history, particularly events in the San Francisco area.



URL: https://csl.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/search?vid=01CSL_INST:CSL
SEARCH: (Jewish community bulletin) OR (Emanu el)



[Heritage Southwest Jewish press](#)

Covering 50 years of events, activities and opinions, this resource is useful to researchers studying mid-century Los Angeles based Jewish Americans.



URL: https://csl.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/search?vid=01CSL_INST:CSL
SEARCH: 990010072850205115

GENERAL RESEARCH TIPS

While many of our materials are online, even more are only in hard-copy. You can use the following resources to learn about our books, articles, and manuscripts on Jewish Americans



[Catalog](#)

If you are looking for [images](#), [books](#) and [articles](#) on Jewish Americans, your best source is our [catalog](#).



URL: <https://csf.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/search?>

[vid=01CSL_INST:CSL&lang=en&sortby=rank](#)

Type in Search Box: (Jewish OR Jews OR Judaism)

Limit: By place



[California Information File II](#)

Sometimes the catalog doesn't provide as much detail as you might like. This is why we created the California Information File II. In this resource, you can find catalog records on individual articles, pamphlets and more.



URL: http://dbs.library.ca.gov/dbtext_html/QueryCalinfo.htm

Type in Search Box: (Jewish OR Jews OR Judaism)

For a narrower search: Add a place to your keyword search

GENERAL RESEARCH TIPS



The screenshot shows a search interface titled "City and County Directories". It includes a header with a blue background and a search bar. Below the search bar, there are several input fields: "County", "City", "Year", "Title", "Author", "Publisher", and "Material type". Each field has a small "v" icon to its right. At the bottom, there is a "Search Query" button and a "Go" button.

City Directories

Looking for a person? You can trace this information via our city directories. See what we have by checking our specialized database.



URL: http://dbs.library.ca.gov/dbtext_html/QueryCityDir.htm

Type in Search Box:

1. Location



The screenshot shows a search interface titled "Telephone Directories". It includes a header with a blue background and a search bar. Below the search bar, there are several input fields: "Location-White Pages", "Location-Yellow Pages", "Year", and "Material type". Each field has a small "v" icon to its right. At the bottom, there is a "Search Query" button and a "Go" button.

Telephone Books

Are you not finding what you need in our city directory collection? You might find it in our telephone book collection. See what we have by checking our phone book database.



URL: http://dbs.library.ca.gov/dbtext_html/QueryPhonebk.htm

Type in Search Box:

1. Location

SUBJECT-SPECIFIC RESOURCES IN OUR CATALOG

California's Jewish Americans contribute in a myriad of ways to this state. While these catalog links barely scrape the surface of this history, they provide a good overview.

Subject

[Agriculture](#)

[Art](#)

[Business](#)

[Cooking](#)

[Earthquakes](#)

[Education](#)

[Environment](#)

[Fiction](#)

[Legislature](#)

[LGBTQ](#)



[Migration](#)

[Mining](#)

[Poetry](#)

[Politics](#)

[Railroads](#)

[Religion](#)

[Vital Statistics](#)

[Water](#)

[Wine](#)

[Women](#)

Type

[Books](#)

[Images](#)

[Manuscripts](#)

[Newspapers](#)

[Periodicals](#)

ON-SITE RESEARCH RESOURCES

Our collection predates computers and so do some of our access points! If you are in the library, be sure to check the following analog files for leads on more resources.



California Information File

In the library? Check the California Information File before you do anything else. This file indexes over 130 years of California articles, books, and manuscript collections related to individuals active in California.



Subject Headings:

- Jews in California
- Individuals by Name



Photographic File

Sometimes a picture is worth a 1000 words, and not all of our pictures are online. To check the rest of the collection, search our picture file.



Subject Headings:

- Portraits: Individuals by Name
- Jews in California

OTHER ON-SITE RESOURCES

Despite our best efforts, some of our resources defy complete description. We suggest that you ask a librarian about any information related to Jewish Americans in the following files:



Vertical Files

Our massive collection of vertical files covers a wide variety of topics including Jewish Americans. You can check them for information on organizations, event pamphlets and more.



Subject Headings: Jews in California



Postcard Files

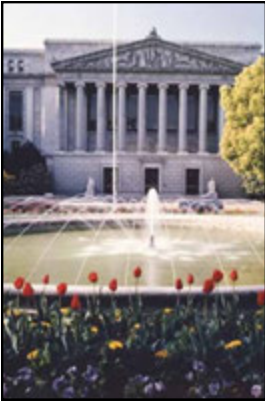
Separate from our photo collection, our postcard collection contains a number of images related to Jewish Americans. Most are not online.



Subject Headings: Check with librarians

OTHER PLACES TO LOOK

Of course the California History Section doesn't have everything, so we suggest that in addition to looking at our collections, you contact the following organizations



Other California State Library Sections

[Government Publications Section](#)
[Witkin Law Library](#)
[Sutro Library](#)
[General Information](#)



URLs:

- <http://www.library.ca.gov/government-publications/>
 - <http://www.library.ca.gov/law/>
 - <http://www.library.ca.gov/sutro/>
 - <http://www.library.ca.gov/services>
-



Other Government Agencies

[California State Archives](#)
[California Museum](#)
[California State Parks](#)

Local California libraries or archives



URLs:

- <http://www.sos.ca.gov/archives/>
 - <http://www.californiamuseum.org/>
 - <https://www.parks.ca.gov/>
-



Other Organizations

[Los Angeles Museum of the Holocaust](#)
[Magnes Collection of Jewish Art and Life](#)
[Museum of Tolerance](#)



URLs:

- <http://www.lamoth.org>
 - <https://magnes.berkeley.edu/>
 - <http://www.museumoftolerance.com/>
-



CALIFORNIA STATE LIBRARY
CALIFORNIA HISTORY SECTION

California History Section
900 N Street Room 200
Sacramento CA 95814

Phone: (916) 654-0176
E-mail: cslcal@library.ca.gov
Hours: 9:30-4 Monday-Friday

This guide is also available online at:
<http://www.library.ca.gov/california-history/research-guides/>