

# JONATHAN WYN SCHOFER

Associate Professor of Comparative Ethics  
Harvard Divinity School  
45 Francis Avenue  
Cambridge, MA 02138

## ACADEMIC POSITIONS

- 2008 – Associate Professor of Comparative Ethics, Harvard Divinity School.
- 2006 – 2008 Assistant Professor of Comparative Ethics, Harvard Divinity School.
- 2000 – 2005 Belzer Assistant Professor of Classical Rabbinic Literature, Department of Hebrew and Semitic Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison.
- 2003 – 2004 Fellow, Stanford Humanities Center, Stanford University.
- 1999 Visiting Instructor, Department of Religious Studies, DePaul University.

## EDUCATION

- 2000 Ph.D. with distinction, History of Religions / History of Judaism  
University of Chicago Divinity School.
- 1997 – 1998 Talmudic studies, Shalom Hartman Institute, Jerusalem.
- 1994 M.A., University of Chicago Divinity School.
- 1991 M.A., Social Science Research of Education, Stanford University.
- 1991 B.A. with distinction, Philosophy and Religious Studies, Stanford University.

## BOOKS

*Confronting Vulnerability: The Body and the Divine in Rabbinic Ethics*  
Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, Forthcoming.

*The Making of a Sage: A Study in Rabbinic Ethics.*

Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2005.

Notable Selection, Jordan Schnitzer Book Award, Jewish Thought and Philosophy (2008)

## JOURNAL ARTICLES

- “Theology and Cosmology in Rabbinic Ethics: The Pedagogical Significance of Rainmaking Narratives.” *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 12/3 (2005): 227-259.
- “Self, Subject, and Chosen Subjection: Rabbinic Ethics and Comparative Possibilities.” *Journal of Religious Ethics* 33/2 (2005): 255-291.
- Thomas A. Lewis, Jonathan Wyn Schofer, Aaron Stalnaker, and Mark A. Berkson, “*Anthropos* and Ethics: Categories of Inquiry and Procedures of Comparison.” *Journal of Religious Ethics* 33/2 (2005): 177-185.
- “Protest or Pedagogy? Trivial Sin and Divine Justice in Rabbinic Narrative.” *Hebrew Union College Annual* 74 (2003): 243-278.
- “Spiritual Exercises in Rabbinic Culture.” *Association for Jewish Studies Review* 27/2 (2003) : 203-225.
- “The Redaction of Desire: Structure and Editing of Rabbinic Teachings Concerning *Yetzer* (‘Inclination’).” *Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy* 12/1 (2003): 19-53.
- “Virtues in Xunzi’s Thought.” *The Journal of Religious Ethics* 21/1 (1993): 117-136. Reprinted in *Virtue, Nature, and Moral Agency in the Xunzi*, edited by T. C. Kline and P. J. Ivanhoe. 69-88. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Co., 2000.

## BOOK CHAPTERS

- “Abot de Rabbi Natan” and “Rabbinic Ethics.” In *The Cambridge Dictionary of Jewish Religion, History, and Culture*, edited by Judith Baskin (forthcoming).
- “From Childhood to Old Age.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Jewish Daily Life in Roman Palestine*, edited by Catherine Hezser (forthcoming).
- “Rabbinic Ethical Formation and the Formation of Rabbinic Ethical Compilations.” In *The Cambridge Companion to the Talmud and Rabbinic Literature*, edited by C. Fonrobert and M. Jaffee, 313-335. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- “Self-Cultivation and Relations with Others in Classical Rabbinic Thought.” In *Moral Cultivation: Essays on the Development of Character and Virtue*, edited by B. Wilburn, 85-100. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2007.
- “The Bestly Body in Rabbinic Self-Formation.” In *Religion and the Self in Antiquity*, edited by D. Brakke, M. Satlow, and S. Weitzman, 197-221. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2005.

Frank Reynolds and Jonathan Schofer, "Cosmology." In *A Companion to Religious Ethics*, edited by W. Schweider, 120-128. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2004.

## REVIEWS AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS

"Ethics and Vulnerability in *Watchmen*," *Harvard Divinity Bulletin* 37/2-3 (2009): 64-69.

"Comment: Virtues and Vices of Relativism," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 36/4 (2008): 763-769.

"Book Discussion: Embodiment and Virtue in a Comparative Context," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 35/4 (2007): 713-728.

"The Image of God: A Study of an Ancient Sensibility," *Journal of the Society for Textual Reasoning* 4/3 (2006).

"In the Image of God," *Shema* 34 (2003): 5.

Review of Jeffrey Rubenstein, *Talmudic Stories: Narrative Art, Composition, and Culture*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1999. *Hebrew Studies* XLII (2001): 382-385.

Review of David Kraemer, *The Meanings of Death in Rabbinic Judaism*. New York: Routledge, 2000. *Journal of Religion* 81/3 (2001): 501-502.

Philip J. Ivanhoe and Jonathan Schofer, Index. In A.C. Graham, *Two Chinese Philosophers*. La Salle, IL: Open Court Press, 1992.

## PRESENTATIONS AT PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

"Excretion and Rabbinic Ethics." Annual Meeting of the Society for Biblical Literature, Boston, 2008.

"The Aging Body, God's Justice, and the Authority of Rabbinic Instruction: Midrashic Treatments of Ecclesiastes 12:1-7." Organizer of panel, "Embodying Authority in Rabbinic Midrash: Law, Theology, and Ethics." Annual Meeting of the Association for Jewish Studies, Toronto, 2007.

"False Fixities, Confronting Vulnerability, and the Genres of Rabbinic Midrash." Organizer of panel, "Exploring 'Odd' Ethical Genres: Poetry, Midrash, and Weblogs." Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, San Diego, 2007.

Response to Aaron Gross, "Being a Mench and not an Animal: The Imagination of Ethics and the Question of the Animal." Annual Meeting of the Society of Jewish Ethics, Dallas, 2007.

"The Ages of a Rabbinic Sage: 'Avot 5:21 as a Selective and Synthetic Compilation." Annual Meeting of the Association for Jewish Studies, San Diego, 2006.

"Comparative Reflections on Material Virtue." Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, Washington, DC, 2006.

"Rabbinic Bodies in Everyday Space." Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, Washington, DC, 2006.

- “Part Animal, Part Angel: Embodiment and Classical Rabbinic Ethical Instruction.” Annual Meeting of the Society of Jewish Ethics, Phoenix, 2006.
- Breakfast with an Author, *The Making of a Sage: A Study in Rabbinic Ethics*. Annual Meeting of the Society of Jewish Ethics, Phoenix, 2006.
- “Which Logos for Whose Psyche? Psychology of Religion Meets Comparative Studies of the Self.” Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, Philadelphia, 2005.
- “The Ages of a Rabbinic Sage: ‘Avot 5:21 as a Selective and Synthetic Compilation.” Annual Meeting of the Society for Biblical Literature, Philadelphia, 2005.
- “Theology and Cosmology in Rabbinic Ethics: The Pedagogical Significance of Rainmaking Stories.” Annual Meeting of the Association for Jewish Studies, Chicago, 2004.
- “From Rabbinic Text to Rabbinic Thought.” Annual Meeting of the Society for Biblical Literature, San Antonio, 2004.
- “Rabbinic Ethics and Rabbinic Authority: Tropes for Transformation through Torah.” Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, San Antonio, 2004.
- “Temporality and Rabbinic Character Ethics.” Annual Meeting of the Society of Jewish Ethics, Chicago, 2004.
- “The Boundaries of Divine Justice: The Trivial Sin and the Absence of Theodicy.” Annual Meeting of the Association for Jewish Studies, Boston, 2003.
- “The Play of Tropes in Rabbinic Culture: Metaphor Theory and *The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan*.” Annual Meeting of the Society for Biblical Literature, Atlanta, 2003.
- “Classical Rabbinic Character Ethics.” Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, Atlanta, 2003.
- “Good Fences Make Good Sages: The Concept of ‘Hedge’ in *The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan*.” Annual Meeting of the Association for Jewish Studies, Los Angeles, 2002.
- Respondent to Peter Ochs, “The Transportation and Transformation of Values: A Study in Rabbinic Pragmatism.” Annual Meeting of the Association for Jewish Studies, Los Angeles, 2002.
- “Spiritual Exercises in *The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan*.” Annual Meeting of the Society for Biblical Literature, Toronto, Canada, 2002.
- “Self, Subject, and Chosen Subjection: The Case of Rabbinic Ethics.” Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, Toronto, Canada, 2002.
- “Law and Rabbinic Self-Cultivation.” XXVIIth International Congress on Law and Mental Health, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, 2002.
- “The Body and Self Cultivation in *Abot de Rabbi Natan*.” Upper Midwest Meeting of the Society for Biblical Literature, Minneapolis, MN, 2002.
- “Structure and Editing of Rabbinic Traditions Concerning *Yetzer* (Inclination).” Annual Meeting of the Association for Jewish Studies, Washington, DC, 2001.
- “Virtues in Xunzi’s Thought: Issues in Comparative Analysis.” Asian Studies on the Pacific Coast Conference, Western Washington University, Bellingham, Washington, 1991.

## **INVITED PRESENTATIONS AT CONFERENCES**

- Response to Maria Heim, "Buddhist Thoughts on Intention." Moral Worlds and Religious Subjectivities, Center for the Study of World Religions, Harvard University, 2009.
- "Vulnerability in Rabbinic Thought and Contemporary Ethics." Princeton Workshop on Jewish Thought, Princeton University, 2008.
- Response to Ben Pollack, "Testing the Limits: Salomon Maimon on the Secrets of Being Human." Princeton Workshop on Jewish Thought, Princeton University, 2008.
- "Exegesis, Divination, and the Foundations of Knowledge."  
Organizer and Chair of panel, "Knowledge within Religion." Conference on Knowledge and Religion, Stanford Humanities Center, Stanford, CA, 2005.
- "The Body and Self Cultivation in Rabbinic Literature." Conference on The Religious Self in Antiquity, University of Indiana, 2003.
- "Local Spaces of Ethical Significance." Conference on Jewish Conceptions and Practices of Space, Stanford University, 2003.

## **OTHER INVITED PRESENTATIONS**

- "Rabbinic Approaches to Death, Dying, and Vulnerability." Harvard Divinity School Bioethics Society, 2009.
- "Confronting Vulnerability in Rabbinic Ethics and Today." University of Virginia, 2008.
- "Vulnerability, Ethics, and Rabbinic Thought." Brown University, 2008.
- "Sacred Scripture in Judaism." Symposium on "Sacred Scriptures" in the Abrahamic Religions, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, Wisconsin, 2007.
- "Confronting Mortality: Life, Aging, and Death in Rabbinic Ethics." Hammond Lectureship, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia, 2007.
- "Stewardship or Vulnerability: Ancient Jewish Rainmaking and the Foundations of Environmental Ethics." Hammond Lectureship, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia, 2007.
- "Midrashic Treatments of Ecclesiastes 12:1-7." Colgate University, Hamilton, NY, 2007.
- "The Ages of a Rabbinic Sage: 'Avot 5:21 as a Selective and Synthetic Compilation." Judaism in Antiquity Workshop, Harvard University, 2006.
- "Rabbis and Other Jews in the time of 'Classical' Judaism." Greenfield Summer Institute, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI, 2006.
- "Jews and Judaism in the Ancient World: Relations between Religion and Ethnicity." Greenfield Summer Institute, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI, 2006.
- "Rainmaking and Rabbinic Ethics." Temple Beth Israel Sinai, Racine, WI, 2005.
- "Same Gender Erotic and Sexual Relations in the Bible and Jewish Tradition." Institute for Legal Studies, Madison, WI, 2005.
- "Monotheism and Monstrosity: Leviathan in the Bible and Talmud." Workshop on Monsters and Alterity, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2005.
- "Rainmaking and Rabbinic Ethics." Stanford Humanities Center, Stanford, CA, 2004.
- "Torah as Exercise, Torah as Asceticism." Workshop on Configuring Late Antiquity, Stanford University, 2003.
- "The Body and Self-Cultivation in Rabbinic Literature." Center for Jewish Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2000.

## **COURSES: HARVARD UNIVERSITY**

### *Rabbinics and Judaism, Sources in Translation*

Rabbinic Ethics and Self-Cultivation (2006)  
Time and Space in Rabbinic Judaism (2007)  
Rabbinic Literature in Translation (2008)

### *Rabbinics and Judaism, Sources in Original Languages*

Seminar: Rabbinic Stories and Rabbinic Thought (2006)

### *Comparative Ethics*

Introduction to Comparative Religious Ethics: Character and a Good Life (2009)  
Psychoanalysis and Character Ethics (2006)  
Seminar: The Self and Virtue in a Comparative Perspective (2006)  
Seminar: Topics in Comparative Religious Ethics: Vulnerability (2007)  
Seminar: Methods in Comparative Religious Ethics (2008)

### *Study of Religion*

Doctoral Seminar: Contemporary Conversations in the Study of Religion (2009)

## **COURSES: UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN**

### *Rabbinics and Judaism, Sources in Translation*

Introduction to Judaism (2000, 2001, 2002, 2004, 2005)  
Classical Rabbinic Literature in Translation (2001, 2003)  
Ancient Jewish Psychology and Ethics (2000, 2002, 2005)  
Holy Times and Places in Rabbinic Literature (2003, 2005)

### *Rabbinics and Judaism, Sources in Original Languages*

Classical Rabbinic Texts in Hebrew (2001, 2002, 2004)  
Graduate Seminar: Early Biblical Interpretation (2001, 2005)

### *Comparative Religion*

Time, Space, and the Construction of the Holy (2002)

## **COURSES: DEPAUL UNIVERSITY**

### *Rabbinics and Judaism, Sources in Translation*

The Jewish Experience (1999)

## **AWARDS**

### *Research*

University of Wisconsin Graduate School Summer Stipend, 2005.  
Stanford Humanities Center External Faculty Fellowship, 2003 – 2004.  
University of Wisconsin Graduate School Summer Stipend, 2003.  
University of Wisconsin Graduate School Summer Stipend, 2002.  
William Rainey Harper Fellow, University of Chicago, 1999 – 2000.  
Junior Fellow, Institute for the Advanced Study of Religion, University of Chicago, 1998 – 1999.  
University of Chicago Divinity School Hartman Scholar, 1997 – 1998.  
University of Chicago Divinity School Fellowship, 1994 – 1997.  
Title VI Summer Fellowship for Modern Hebrew, 1995.  
Andrew W. Mellow Fellowship in Humanistic Studies, 1993 – 1994.  
Phi Beta Kappa, 1991.

### *Teaching*

Exceptional Professor, University of Wisconsin CSS Residence Hall Community, 2004.  
Outstanding Educator, University of Wisconsin Panhellenic Association, 2002.

## **PROFESSIONAL SERVICE**

Associate Editor, *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 2006 – 2010.  
Editorial Board, *Journal of Religious Ethics*  
Editorial Board, *Graven Images*, Lexington Press.  
Board Member, Society of Jewish Ethics, 2008 – present  
Chair, Comparative Religious Ethics section of the American Academy of Religion, 2008 – present.  
Steering Committee, Comparative Religious Ethics section of the American Academy of Religion, 2005 – 2008.  
Steering Committee, Study of Judaism section of the American Academy of Religion, 2004 – 2005.  
Book manuscript referee:  
    Cambridge University Press  
    Palgrave Macmillan  
    University of Wisconsin Press  
    Yale University Press  
Article referee:  
    *Association for Jewish Studies Review*  
    *Harvard Theological Review*  
    *History of Religions*  
    *Jewish Quarterly Review*  
    *Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy*  
    *Journal of Chinese Religions*  
    *Journal of Religious Ethics*  
    *Journal of Religion*  
    *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*

*Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics*  
*Philosophy East & West*

Member: American Academy of Religion, Association for Jewish Studies,  
Society for Biblical Literature, Society of Jewish Ethics

### **OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

Board President, Southeast Asia Development Program, 2009 – present  
Board Member, Southeast Asia Development Program, 2007 – present  
Office Manager, Midpeninsula Citizens for Fair Housing, Palo Alto, CA, 1991 – 1993.  
Program Manager, Downtown Environmental Action Project, Palo Alto, CA, 1990.  
English Teacher, Indonesian Institute of Sciences, Bandung, West Java, 1988 – 1989.

### **SERVICE: HARVARD DIVINITY SCHOOL**

Search Committee, Science and Religion, 2009 – present  
Standing Committee, Committee on the Study of Religion, 2008 – present  
Advisory Board, Center for the Study of World Religions, 2006 – present  
Search Committee, American Religious History, 2008 – 2009  
Admissions Committee, Committee on the Study of Religion, 2009  
Loeb Fellowship Committee, 2008 – 09  
Organizer, Center for the Study of World Religions lunch discussions, 2007  
Search Committee, Emerson Chair, 2006 – 2007  
Admission and Financial Aid Committee, 2007  
Library Advisory Committee, 2006

### **SERVICE: HARVARD UNIVERSITY**

Executive Committee, Center for Jewish Studies, 2007 – present  
Center for Jewish Studies Undergraduate Prize Committee, 2007  
Committee on Rights and Responsibilities, 2006 – 2007

### **SERVICE: DEPARTMENT OF HEBREW AND SEMITIC STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN**

50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee  
Faculty Senate  
Search Committee, Medieval Hebrew literature

### **SERVICE: UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN**

Member, Program in Religious Studies  
Member, Center for Jewish Studies  
Steering Committee, Lubar Institute for the Study of Abrahamic Religions (LISAR)  
Curriculum Committee, Center for Jewish Studies  
Scholarship Committee, Center for Jewish Studies  
Distinguished Graduate Fellowship Committee, Center for Jewish Studies

Speakers Committee, Center for Jewish Studies