

Samuel Joseph Kessler

Religion and Culture (0227)
 211 Major Williams
 220 Stanger St.
 Blacksburg, VA 24061
 kessler@vt.edu
 (315) 256-2908
 samueljkessler.com

Education

Ph.D., Religious Studies (Religion and Culture) The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	2016
M.A., Religious Studies (Religion and Culture) The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	2013
B.A., History (High Honors) New York University	2010

Employment

Postdoctoral Fellow in Judaic Studies Department of Religion and Culture Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University	2016-present
--	--------------

Book Manuscript

- *Jews in the City: Rabbis, Synagogues, and Sermons in Nineteenth-Century Central Europe* (In preparation)

Peer-Reviewed Articles

- “‘Garrulous, lamenting, whiney, but always interesting’: Heinrich Graetz’s Evolving Characterization of his Contemporaries from the *Diary* to the *History of the Jews*.” *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book*. (In press.)
- “‘My Father’s Face’: Judaism, God, and Ritual Practice in Philip Roth’s *Nemesis, Indignation, and Everyman*.” *Religion & Literature*. (In press.)
- “‘A Mighty Shifty Strangeness’: Time, Memory, and Narrative in Lawrence Durrell’s *Avignon Quintet*.” *Deus Loci: The Lawrence Durrell Journal*. (In press.)
- “Systematization, Theology, and the Baroque *Wunderkammern*: Seeing Nature After Linnaeus,” *Heythrop Journal* 58, no. 3 (May 2017): 432-445.
- “Bernard Malamud in Italy: The Moral Choice of Being Jewish in ‘The Lady of the Lake,’” *Studies in American Jewish Literature* 36, no. 1 (2017): 40-60.
- “Translating Judaism for Modernity: Adolf Jellinek in Leopoldstadt, 1857-1865,” *Simon Dubnow Institute Yearbook* 14 (2015): 393-419.
- “Foucault and the Holocaust: Epistemic Shift, Liminality, and the Death Camps,” *Dapim – Studies on the Holocaust* 28, no. 3 (Nov. 2014): 139-154.
- “Religion and the Public University,” *Philosophy and Public Policy Quarterly* 31, no. 1 (Spring 2013): 19-27.
- “The Sacredness of ‘Secular’ Literature: A Case Study in Walter Benjamin,” *Journal for Cultural and Religious Theory* 12, no. 1 (Spring 2012): 100-114.

Under Review

- “Rediscovering the Study of Spanish Kabbalism in *Wissenschaft des Judentums*: Adolf Jellinek in Leipzig, 1842-1856.” *Zeitschrift PaRDeS* (Journal of the German Association for Jewish Studies).
- (Co-authored with Dennis D. Gilbride and Laura R. Shannonhouse) “Utilizing Religious Studies Theory to Access the Sacred in Counseling.” *Counseling and Values*.

In Progress

- “Rebuilding Judaism: Constructing the Urban Synagogue in Nineteenth-Century Central Europe.”
- “The Scholem-Heschel Correspondence.” (Co-authoring with Emanuel Fiano [Fordham])
- “Patrick Leigh Fermor and the Pursuit of the Joy of Religion.”

Dissertation

- “A New Shoot from the House of David?: Adolf Jellinek and the Creation of the Modern Rabbinate.”
Committee: Randall Styers, Chair (UNC Chapel Hill, Religious Studies), Yaakov Ariel (UNC Chapel Hill, Religious Studies), Malachi Hacohen (Duke, History), Susannah Heschel (Dartmouth, Jewish Studies), Jonathan Hess (UNC Chapel Hill, Germanic & Slavic Languages & Literatures), Lloyd Kramer (UNC Chapel Hill, History)

Book Reviews

- Vreni Amsler, *Veža Canetti im Kontext des Austromarxismus*, *Journal of Austrian Studies*. (Submitted.)
- Lutz C. Klevevan, *Lemberg: Die vergessene Mitte Europas*, *German Studies Review*. (Submitted.)
- Katja Garloff, *Mixed Feelings: Tropes of Love in German Jewish Culture*, *German Studies Review*. (Forthcoming.)
- Jan Láníček, *Arnošt Frischer and the Jewish Politics of Early 20th-Century Europe*, *German Studies Review*. (Forthcoming.)
- Christoph Mick, *Lemberg, Lwów, L’viv, 1914-1947: Violence and Ethnicity in a Contested City*, *German Studies Review* 40, no. 3 (2017): 661-3.
- Harald Höbusch, *Mountain of Destiny: Nanga Parbat and Its Path Into the German Imagination*, *Journal of Austrian Studies*. (Forthcoming.)
- Steven Krause, *The Process of Research Writing* (Review in collaboration with the Open Textbook Library, <http://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/>).

Teaching*Professor, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University*

- Judaism: A Survey of History, Culture, and Heritage
- The Holocaust: History, Memory, Shadows
- Torah and Tradition: Jewish Responses to Contemporary Moral Questions
- Judaism, Christianity, Islam

Instructor of Record, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

- Religion and Science
- Introduction to Religious Ethics
- Philosophical Approaches to Religion
- Introduction to Christian Traditions

Teaching Assistant, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

- Introduction to Early Judaism

- Classic Jewish Texts
- Judaism in Our Time
- Introduction to the Hebrew Bible
- History of Religion in America
- Heaven & Hell

Grants and Fellowships

Research Grants & Fellowships

- Invited Guest Researcher, Center for Urban History of East Central Europe, Lviv, Ukraine, December 25, 2017-January 13, 2018. (Declined.)
- Eighth Session of the International Forum of Young Scholars on East European Jewry, Prague, Czech Republic, July 3-6, 2017. (\$600 plus room & board)
- NEH Institute on “Problems in the Study of Religion,” The University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA, May 31-June 17, 2016. (\$2,700)
- Dissertation Research Fellowship, The Graduate School, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Spring 2016. (\$9,000, including coverage of tuition, fees, and healthcare)
- Leo Baeck Institute-DAAD (Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst), Fall 2015. (\$2,000)
- Society of Fellows, Counsel for European Studies, Duke University, June 2015. (\$2,000)
- American Academy for Jewish Research, July 2015. (\$2,500)
- Title VIII Short-term Research Grant (for East European Studies), Global Europe Program, The Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, June 2015. (\$3,200)
- Research Fellowship, Simon-Dubnow-Institut, Leipzig, June and July 2013. (1,750€)

Travel Grants

- International Transportation Grant, The Graduate School, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, October 2015. (\$1,000)
- Jewish Studies Graduate Student Research and Travel Grant, Carolina Center for Jewish Studies, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, July 2015. (\$1,500)
- Robert Miller Fund for Graduate Student Excellence, Department of Religious Studies, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, October 2014. (\$1,000)
- Jack O. Spies and Family Jewish Studies Fund Research Grant, Carolina Center for Jewish Studies, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, June and July 2014. (\$5,000)
- Graduate and Professional Student Association, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, October 2014. (\$400)
- Jewish Studies Graduate Student Research and Travel Grant, Carolina Center for Jewish Studies, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, July 2013. (\$2,000)
- Graduate Student Caucus, Northeast Modern Language Association, March 2013. (\$200)
- Summer Research and Travel Grant, Department of Religious Studies, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, June and July 2011. (\$3,500)
- Graduate and Professional Student Association, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, April 2011. (\$400)

Internal Sponsorship Grants

- College Film Screening Fund (in support for a showing of *Ida* at the Lyric Theatre, Blacksburg), College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, Office of the Dean, Virginia Tech, September 2017. (\$750)
- College Advisory Committee on International Initiatives (in support of a visit by A. Asa Eger), College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, Office of the Dean, Virginia Tech, September 2017. (\$750)

- Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) Distinguished Lecturer Program (in support of a visit by Dr. Jodi Magness), ACC Academic Consortium, Office of the Provost, Virginia Tech, November 2016. (\$2,500)
- College Advisory Committee on International Initiatives (in support of a visit by Maya Benton), College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, Office of the Dean, Virginia Tech, September 2016. (\$450)

Professional Presentations

- Round-Table Discussant, “In the Heschel Archives: Material Culture and the Study of Jewish Social Justice Engagement,” Association for Jewish Studies, Washington, D.C., December 17-19, 2017. (*Accepted*)
- Paper, “The Disputes of Rav Ashi and Ravina in Vienna: Adolf Jellinek and the Place of the Talmud in Jewish Modernity,” Conference on Sermon Studies, Marshall University, October 20, 2017.
- Paper, “The Rabbi as Historian: Writing the Bridge from Yeshiva to Academia in Nineteenth-Century Central Europe,” Southeast Commission for the Study of Religion, Raleigh, NC, March 4, 2017.
- Paper, “Between Pulpit and Professor: Three Case Studies on Adolf Jellinek,” The Persona of the Historian: Repertoires and Performances, 1800-2000, Institute for History, Leiden University, The Netherlands, January 27, 2017.
- Paper, “The *Geschichte der Juden* as *Zeitgeschichte*: Heinrich Graetz’s Evolving Characterization of His Contemporaries,” Association for Jewish Studies, San Diego, CA, December 20, 2016.
- Paper, “City of the Popes: Archetype, Storytelling, and the Mystical Power of Time in the Novels of Lawrence Durrell,” American Academy of Religion, San Antonio, TX, November 19, 2016.
- Paper, “Midrash and Mysticism in Wissenschaft des Judentums: The Case of Adolf Jellinek,” Southeast Commission for the Study of Religion, Atlanta, GE, March 4-6, 2016.
- Paper, “A Myriad Languages of Emancipation: The Tower of Babel in the Early Writings of Jewish Modernity,” The 10th International Scientific Conference on Literature and Religion: The Tower of Babel—in Film, Theatre, Art and Music, University of Latvia, December 4-5, 2015.
- Invited Paper, “‘The Courage in Science to Sincerity and Truth’: Adolf Jellinek and the Jewish Scholarly Tradition in Leipzig,” Triangle Intellectual History Seminar, Durham, NC, November 22, 2015.
- Seminar Participant, “Science, Nature, and Art: From the Age of Goethe to the Present” German Studies Association, Washington DC, October 2-4, 2015.
- Public Lecture, “Religion and the Encounter with Modernity: What Can We Learn from Jewish Urbanization,” The Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington, DC, June 30, 2015. (Available on iTunes; search: “Samuel Kessler”)
- Paper, “At the Temple in Leopoldstadt: Adolf Jellinek and the Politics of Jewish Immigration in 1850s Vienna,” Southeast Commission for the Study of Religion, Nashville, TN, March 8, 2015.
- Paper, “The Story in Future Retrospect: *Monsieur* and the Idealization of Memory in Lawrence Durrell’s *Avignon Quintet*,” Louisville Conference on Literature and Culture Since 1900, Louisville, KY, February 26-28, 2015.
- Paper, “The Efficacy of the Past in a Changing Present: Adolph Jellinek’s 1864 Talmud Speeches,” German Studies Association, Kansas City, MO, September 21, 2014.
- Paper, “Roth and Jewish Ritual in *Nemeses: Four Novels*,” Philip Roth: Across Cultures, Across Disciplines, University of St. Gallen, Switzerland, June 13, 2014.
- “History of Religion and Science: The Evolution of Conflict”, Religion and Science Symposium, UNC Chapel Hill and Duke University, Saturday, March 29, 2014.

- Paper, “Adolf Jellinek’s Talmud: Tradition and Acculturation in Nineteenth-Century Vienna,” Southeast Commission for the Study of Religion, Atlanta, GE, March 9, 2014.
- Paper, “Jewish Identity as Moral Choice: A Reading of Malamud’s “The Lady of the Lake,”” American Academy of Religion, Baltimore, MD, November 24, 2013.
- Paper, “Systematization, Theology, and the Baroque *Wunderkammern*: Seeing Nature After Linnaeus,” Southern Historical Association, Saint Louis, MO, November 3, 2013.
- Paper, “Enlightenment as Totalitarian and the World After the Holocaust,” MTSU 2013 International Holocaust Studies Conference, Murfreesboro, TN, October 16, 2013
- Paper, “Erasmus Darwin & Henry Fuseli: Poetry, Art, and Nature at the turn of the Nineteenth Century,” Northeast Modern Language Association, Boston, MA, March 23, 2013.
- Paper, “Nemesis Divine; or, An Analysis of the Specter of God in Philip Roth’s Late Fiction,” Roth@80, Newark, NJ, March 18, 2013.
- Paper, “Malamud in Italy: The Moral Choice of Being Jewish in “The Lady of the Lake,”” Southeast Commission for the Study of Religion, Greenville, SC, March 15, 2013.
- Paper, “The Silverman Prayer Book, Political Zionism, and the Jewish Theological Seminary of America,” Southeast Commission for the Study of Religion, Atlanta, GA, March 3, 2012.
- Paper, “Nietzsche and the Poetical Imperative for Philosophy.” Florida State University Graduate Conference in Religion, February 18, 2012.
- Paper, “Walter Benjamin and the Material Sacred,” Society for the Anthropology of Religion Conference, Santa Fe, NM, April 30, 2011.
- Invited Response, “European Jewish Émigrés and the Shaping of Postwar Culture Conference,” National Humanities Center, Duke University, April 3, 2011.

Professional Service

Present

- Sermon Studies Center, Marshall University
Advisory Board Member
Conference Program Committee Member
Sermon Studies, Journal Editorial Board
- Journal Manuscript Peer-Reviewer
Religions; *Journal of Politics*, *Religion & Ideology*
- Departmental Religion and Culture, Virginia Tech
Coordinator, Jewish Studies Minor
Coordinator, Jewish Studies Endowment Public Lecture Series

Past

- College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, Virginia Tech
Undergraduate Scholarship Reviewer, Office of the Dean, Spring 2017
- Southeast Commission for the Study of Religion
Judaism Section Co-Chair, 2012-2017
- Carolina Center for Jewish Studies, UNC Chapel Hill
Graduate student representative to the Board of Directors, 2013-2015
Coordinator, Second Annual Graduate Student Speaker Series, Fall 2015
- Rubenstein Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Duke University
Hebrew-language materials intern for Abraham J. Heschel Archive, Spring 2013
- Graduate and Professional Student Federation, UNC Chapel Hill,
Religious Studies Department Senator, 2012-2014
- Triangle Intellectual History & Triangle Jewish Studies Seminars
Official rapporteur, 2011-2015

Hosted Lectures

- Conceptualize, organize, facilitate, and manage budget for Judaic Studies Endowment lecture series. For 2016-present, hosting:
 - Maya Benton (International Center for Photography), “Roman Vishniac Rediscovered.”
 - Aimee Pozorski (Central Connecticut State) and Maren Scheurer (Goethe University Frankfurt), “A Conversation on the Writings of Philip Roth.”
 - Jodi Magness (UNC Chapel Hill), “New Discoveries at Huqoq.”
 - Peter Saulson (Syracuse), “Judaism, Science, and the Search for Meaning.”
 - Ruth Messenger (American Jewish World Service), “Justice, Justice You Shall Pursue.”
 - Asa Eger (UNC Greensboro) (*Invited for February 15, 2018*)
 - Jenna Weissman Joselit (George Washington) (*Invited for March 12-14, 2018*)

Selected Honors

- Fellow, Society of Scholars, Council for European Studies, Duke University, Academic Year 2015-16
- Peer Recognition Teaching Award 2014
In acknowledgement of exceptional teaching within UNC Chapel Hill’s Department of Religious Studies

Community Outreach

- “Torah Talks”: Monthly Learning Sessions with the Staff of Hillel @ Virginia Tech, 2017-18
- Public Q&A moderator, Dr. Librescu Memorial Lecture, featuring Rabbi Nissen Mangel, April 24, 2017.
- Invited Speaker (Jewish Community)
 - “‘Love the Stranger!’ Jewish Practice and Theology after the Enlightenment,” Blacksburg Jewish Community Center, May 3, 2017.
- Invited Speaker (Church Communities)
 - “Introduction to Judaism,” Christ Episcopal Church, Blacksburg, VA, October 16, 2016.
 - “Introduction to Judaism,” Chapel in the Pines, Chapel Hill, NC, October 27, 2015.
- Panelist following movie screening, “Munich ’72 and Beyond,” The Lyric Theater, Blacksburg, VA, November 9, 2016.
- Devil’s Tale Blog contributor, “Abraham Joshua Heschel: The Voice on the Back of the Page,” Rubenstein Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Duke University, March 12, 2014. [<http://blogs.library.duke.edu/rubenstein/2014/03/12/heschel-highlights-part-6/>]
- Bar/Bat Mitzvah Tutoring, Chapel Hill Kehillah Synagogue, 2012-2014.

Languages

French
German
Hebrew

Memberships in Profession Organizations

American Academy of Religion
Association for Jewish Studies
Austrian Studies Association
German Studies Association
Nineteenth Century Studies Association
Philip Roth Society
The International Lawrence Durrell Society
Bibliographic Society of America