Scholar-in-Residence Dr. David Kaufman
3-Part Seminar: April 22, 24 & 25

"The Jerusalem of America" - NYC in Jewish History
Wednesday, April 22 | 7:00 PM
ZOOM ONLY

In 1972, author Harry Golden called New York “the greatest Jewish city in the world.” While the city may have competition in that regard from Israel’s own metropolises, it is indisputable that New York has been the greatest urban community in the history of the Jewish diaspora, truly the ‘Jerusalem of America.’ In this illustrated Zoom talk, historian Dr. David Kaufman will consider the long tradition of “new Jerusalems” in Jewish history, then demonstrate why New York City is the quintessential example—and in the process, weigh the growing concern that the ‘golden age’ is over for New York Jews.

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History and Memory in the Jewish Experience
Friday, April 24 | 5:30 PM
IN PERSON & ON ZOOM

In 1982, the renowned historian Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi published what became an instant classic, Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory. "History" here refers to Yerushalmi’s own profession, the modern study of the Jewish past; whereas "memory" refers to the Jewish tradition of narrating our collective origins in our sacred literature and religious ritual. In his talk, Dr. Kaufman will further explain the dichotomy between history/memory and why understanding it is vital to the modern Jew.

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Revisiting "The Zionist Idea" in Troubled Times -- an historical overview of the ideology of Zionism
Saturday, April 25 | 1:00 PM
IN PERSON & ON ZOOM

The term “Zionism” is often contested nowadays as many flatten it to express one basic idea or another, whereas the history of Zionist ideology (what Arthur Hertzberg called “the Zionist idea”) is far more diverse and varied. In this Shabbat afternoon lecture Dr. Kaufman will review the larger history of Zionism in all its complexity to enable better understanding of the phenomenon and thus, it is hoped, help better navigate the current intracommunal tensions between Zionist and anti-Zionist Jews.

Dr. David Kaufman is an American Jewish historian who has served on the faculties of Hebrew Union College and Hofstra University, and authored two books, Shul with a Pool: The Synagogue-Center n American Jewish History (1999) and Jewhooing the Sixties: American Celebrity and Jewish Identity (2012). Now living on the Upper West Side, David works as an independent scholar and public historian teaching Jewish history and writing primarily on the subject of Jewish New York.