



Rainbow Jews: Jewish and Gay Identity in the Performing Arts

Jonathan C. Friedman

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Rainbow Jews deals with the intersection of gay and Jewish identity in American and Israeli film and theater, from the 1960s to the present. Its main area of interest is the extent to which Jewish creative voices in the performing arts have constructed multidimensional images of, and a welcoming public space for, the gay, lesbian, and transgendered community as a whole. Through a close reading of the texts of numerous American and Israeli plays and films (some famous, but mostly lesser known), the author evaluates some of the key conventions and tropes that have been employed to construct, critique, and reflect the social reality of the connection between Jewishness and gay identity in the United States and Israel. Secondly, the author explores ways in which gay-Jewish playwrights and filmmakers have assisted the re-evaluation of sexual norms within Judaism over the past three decades, inspiring and reinforcing measures across the spectrum of belief geared towards integrating Jewish members of the GLBT community into the overall Jewish historical narrative.

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