

# In Pursuit of Visibility

Essays in Archaeology, Ethnography, and Text  
in Honor of Beth Alpert Nakhai

edited by  
Jennie Ebeling and Laura Mazow

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# List of Authors

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## **Norma Dever (z"l)**

Norma Dever earned an MA in History from the University of Arizona and was Adjunct Faculty at Pima Community College in Tucson. She spent many years contributing to excavations in Israel, including as a core staff member at Gezer and a registrar at Ashkelon, and served the W.F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research in Jerusalem in many capacities. She was an Editorial Assistant for *BASOR*, a Trustee of the Albright for many years, and raised money for Albright projects as the head of the Alumni and Friends Campaign. Together with Bill, Norma established the Sean William Dever Memorial Prize for pre-PhD students of archaeology and related subjects in honor of their son, who died in 2001. Norma passed away on June 7, 2018 and is dearly missed by a generation of U of A alumni who remember her friendship and hospitality. She had a particularly close relationship with Beth.

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William G. Dever is Professor Emeritus of Near Eastern Archaeology and Anthropology at the University of Arizona. He has served as director of the Nelson Glueck School of Biblical Archaeology in Jerusalem, as director of the W.F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research in Jerusalem, and as a visiting professor at universities around the world. He has spent thirty years conducting archaeological excavations in the Near East, resulting in a large body of award-winning work. He was Beth Alpert Nakhai's PhD advisor at the University of Arizona.

## **Jennie Ebeling, University of Evansville**

Jennie Ebeling earned the MA and PhD from the University of Arizona and is Associate Professor of Archaeology at the University of Evansville. She co-directed the Jezreel Expedition in Israel with Norma Franklin and specializes in the study of ancient food and drink technology. She is the co-editor of four other volumes and the author of *Women's Lives in Biblical Times* (T&T Clark, 2010). Beth has been a mentor, colleague, and friend to Jennie for more than 25 years.

## **Mark Elliott, University of Arizona**

Mark Elliott received his PhD from the University of Arizona. He has taught for the Arizona Center for Judaic Studies at the University of Arizona, is editor of *The Bible and Interpretation*

([bibleinterp.arizona.edu](http://bibleinterp.arizona.edu)), and is co-editor of *The Old Testament in Archaeology and History* (Baylor, 2017). He has known Beth since 1992 and she has published a number of articles for *The Bible and Interpretation*.

### **Alysia Fischer, Independent Scholar**

Alysia Fischer earned both an MA and PhD from the University of Arizona. She spent a decade excavating at the sites of Sepphoris and Khirbet Cana in Israel and specializes in both modern and ancient glass and glass technology. She is the author of *Hot Pursuit: Integrating Anthropology in Search of Ancient Glass-blowers* (Lexington Books, 2008). Beth served as both her Hebrew professor and a member of her dissertation committee.

### **James W. Hardin, Mississippi State University**

Jimmy Hardin earned the MA and PhD at the University of Arizona. He is an Associate Professor in the Department of Anthropology and Middle Eastern Cultures at Mississippi State University and Director of its Cobb Institute of Archaeology. He was a longtime senior staff member of the Lahav Research Project and currently co-directs the Hesi Regional Survey and the Khirbet Summeily Archaeological Expedition in southern Israel with Jeffrey A. Blakely. Beth has been a teacher and colleague since 1994, and she taught Jimmy to look for the under investigated, but not invisible, in household archaeology.

### **Kara Larson, University of Michigan**

Kara Larson is a PhD student at the University of Michigan studying in the Museum of Anthropological Archaeology. She earned an MA in Applied Anthropology from Mississippi State University under the guidance of Jimmy Hardin and is a staff archaeologist and Research Associate with the Cobb Institute of Archaeology. She specializes in pastoralism, herd management, food provisioning, and urbanism through zooarchaeology, isotopic analyses, and paleoproteomics in the Southern Levant. Kara also has a passion for the status of women in Levantine archaeology and is constantly inspired by Dr. Beth Alpert Nakhai's scholarship and advocacy for women in the field.

### **Abigail S. Limmer, University of Arizona**

Abigail Limmer earned her MA and PhD from the University of Arizona and is now the Assistant Director for Educational Outreach at the Center for Middle Eastern Studies there. She has excavated at Tel Miqne-Ekron and Tell es-Safi in Israel and specializes in the study of ancient jewelry. She is honored to have had Beth as a member of her dissertation committee and to have worked with Beth in the Arizona Center for Judaic Studies for many years.

### **Gloria London, Scientific Advisor, Heritage Collection of Agios Demetrios (Marathasa), Cyprus**

Gloria London trained as an archaeologist (BAs and MA at Tel Aviv University; PhD at the University of Arizona). She joined surveys of Sinai and excavations in Israel and Jordan and met Beth in Israel at Hebrew Union College (HUC). Since 1981, field work among potters in the

Philippines, Cyprus, and Jordan has guided Gloria's research on pottery technology and the roles of women in society. She is the author of six books, including *Ancient Cookware from the Levant* (Equinox, 2016) and *Wine Jars and Jar Makers of Cyprus* (Astrom, 2020).

### **Lisa Marsio, Scottsdale Community College**

Lisa Marsio earned the BA, MA, and PhD from the University of Arizona and is a Professor of Archaeology and Biological Anthropology at Scottsdale Community College. She has participated in archaeological fieldwork as a square supervisor at Tel Rehov and Abel Beth Maacah in Israel. Beth has served as an inspiration to Lisa as a woman in the field of Near Eastern Archaeology.

### **Laura Mazow, East Carolina University**

Laura Mazow is Associate Professor in Anthropology at East Carolina University, with a research focus on ancient technologies in the Near East and eastern Mediterranean. Laura earned her MA and PhD in Near Eastern Studies at the University of Arizona. During that time, she was Beth's teaching assistant and Beth served on her dissertation committee, helping to steward the dissertation to completion! In the years since, Laura has greatly appreciated and directly benefited from Beth's forceful presence at ASOR, particularly in bringing gender issues to the forefront in the profession.

### **Steven M. Ortiz, Lipscomb University**

Steve Ortiz earned the MA and PhD from the University of Arizona and is Professor of Archaeology and Biblical Studies at Lipscomb University and the Director of the Lanier Center for Archaeology. He and Sam Wolff were co-directors of the Tel Gezer Excavation Project. He is currently co-director with Itzick Shai of the Tel Burna Excavations. Beth was a member of his PhD committee.

### **Nava Panitz-Cohen, Hebrew University of Jerusalem**

Nava Panitz-Cohen holds her PhD from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and has worked as field supervisor at Tel Batash, Tel Beth-Shean, and Tel Rehov, having participated in the publication of these sites with Prof. Amihai Mazar. She currently is co-director of the Tel Abel Beth Maacah excavations and works as senior researcher, adjunct lecturer, and editor of the Qedem Monograph Series in the Institute of Archaeology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Her main research interests include Bronze and Iron Age ceramics and ceramic technology as well as household and gender archaeology. Beth is an esteemed colleague and has been a cherished friend ever since a memorable Yom Kippur shared while sequestered at the Albright Institute in Jerusalem, shopping for spices and sharing our worlds.

### **Alan W. Todd, Coastal Carolina University**

Alan W. Todd earned the MA and PhD from Duke University and is a Lecturer in Religious Studies at Coastal Carolina University. He has participated in several excavations in Galilee and was most recently a contributor to the final reports of Duke University's Sepphoris

Regional Project (Eisenbrauns/Penn State University, 2018). He specializes in the study of ancient dining customs with a focus on how Jews living throughout the Greco-Roman world employed feasts to maintain individual and communal identities. Alan first met Beth in 1996 when she taught him as an undergraduate at the University of Arizona and she has helped him at various stages of his career and life ever since.

#### **Daphna Tsoran, Hebrew University of Jerusalem**

Daphna Tsoran holds her MA from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and serves as chief curator of the Collection Room of the Institute of Archaeology, where her work entails curating the rich study collections and archaeological exhibitions. Her research interests focus on iconography, specifically on female figurines in the Iron Age and Late Bronze Age; the latter is the topic of her PhD dissertation. Her studies delve into issues of gender and identity and, as such, Beth's work comprises a major contribution to her research.

#### **Elizabeth Ann R. Willett, SIL International**

Elizabeth Willett earned the MA and PhD from the University of Arizona and is Senior Translation Consultant for SIL International, specializing in the translation of the Hebrew Bible into the indigenous languages of Latin America. She appreciated Beth as a professor and dissertation advisor and worked with her as a Graduate Teaching Associate.

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Charles Wilson is a PhD candidate at the University of Chicago in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations. His research interests include ancient daily life, economy, household archaeology, and city planning in the Bronze and Iron Age southern Levant.

#### **Sam R. Wolff, W.F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research**

Samuel R. Wolff, PhD (University of Chicago 1986), served as Director of the Carthage Research Institute and excavated at the Commercial Harbor and Tophet (1975-1979) and at Ashkelon, Israel (1985-1989). He was an archaeologist for the Israel Antiquities Authority (1991-2017), directing significant excavations at En Hagit, Tel Megadim, and Tel Hamid and from 2006 to 2017 he co-directed the Tandy Institute's excavations at Tel Gezer. Academic interests include Phoenician and Punic archaeology, amphoras of the Persian period, and olive- and wine-producing technologies.

## Introduction

# An Appreciation of Beth Alpert Nakhai

Jennie Ebeling, Laura Mazow, Mandana Nakhai,  
Abbe Alpert, and J. Edward Wright

### Jennie Ebeling and Laura Mazow

This volume celebrates Beth Alpert Nakhai, a truly exceptional teacher, mentor, colleague, scholar, and friend. Most of the essays were authored or co-authored by alumni of the University of Arizona who were mentored by Beth and the rest were contributed by Beth's close colleagues and friends. Given that the final work on this volume was carried out during the COVID-19 pandemic with the hope that it would be published and presented to Beth



Figure 1: Beth at a pottery studio in Hebron in 1976.  
Photo courtesy Farzad and Mandana Nakhai.

during her 70th year, we, the editors, are truly grateful to our colleagues for helping us make this a reality.

Beth was born in 1951 in New York to Esther Racoosin and Seymour Alpert and is the oldest of three sisters. She attended P.S. 108 and Mamaroneck High School and some of her childhood activities included playing cello and flute, creating and editing a high school satirical magazine, participating in high school theater, and attending Hebrew School. She earned a BA in Government from Connecticut College in 1972 and spent the next decade in Boston, where she held various jobs and became a proficient potter. She enrolled in the MTS program at Harvard Divinity School, worked for Charles Berlin in the Judaica Division of the Widener Library, and studied scientific illustration with S. Whitney Powell of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology. After earning her degree from Harvard in 1979, she took multiple trips to Israel to gain archaeological field experience and develop her skills in artifact illustration and cartography.

In 1982 Beth moved to Tucson to study Syro-Palestinian Archaeology with William G. Dever; she was one of Bill's first graduate students at the University of Arizona. During this period, she served as an archaeological illustrator and cartographer for numerous excavations in Israel, including Tel Dan, Tel Gezer, and Tel Miqne-Ekron, and co-directed excavations at Tel el-Wawiyat with J.P. Dessel and Bonnie Wisthoff in 1986 and 1987. She married Farzad Nakhai in 1986 and their daughter Mandana was born two years later. Beth was awarded the MA in 1985 and the PhD in 1993; her dissertation, which was published as *Archaeology and the Religions of Canaan and Israel* by the American Schools of Oriental Research (ASOR; now the American Society of Overseas Research) in 2001, won ASOR's G. Ernest Wright Award for Excellence in Archaeological Publication in 2003. She has taught at the University of Arizona since 1994 and is an Associate Professor in the Arizona Center for Judaic Studies.

Beth's essay in the edited volume *Women in the Society of Biblical Literature* published in 2019 (see list of publications below) provides much more specific biographical information and context for her service activities and research trajectory over the past forty years. We would like to briefly highlight here the contributions that were particularly important to us when we were early career scholars and those that are proving to have a lasting impact on the field.

Beth has done a tremendous amount of service for the profession, the University of Arizona, and the Tucson community. She currently serves as Secretary of the W.F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research in Jerusalem (AIAR) and has been a member of the AIAR Board since 2015; she also co-chaired AIAR's Sean W. Dever Memorial Prize Committee 2004-2021. Beth served on the Board of Trustees of ASOR (2002-2015) and has chaired the Initiative on the Status of Women Committee since 2011. Although she was awarded the ASOR Membership Service Award in 2013, in our opinion Beth has made some of her most valuable contributions to the Society in the years since.

Beth's service to ASOR shows her sincere commitment to raising awareness about women in the profession and providing opportunities for women to mentor women. It was in 2013 that she organized the first Initiative on the Status of Women Mentoring Lunch at the ASOR Annual Meeting, an event for which Beth solicits speakers and often covers the cost of lunch out of her own pocket. She has also organized and chaired numerous special sessions and workshops



Figure 2: Beth convenes the Initiative on the Status of Women Mentoring Lunch at the 2017 Annual Meeting of ASOR. Photo courtesy American Society of Overseas Research.

at the Annual Meeting on issues of particular relevance to women in the profession. She established the Initiative on the Status of Women Facebook group to raise and discuss issues facing women in archaeology and Near Eastern studies and created a digital map, the *Women of ASOR Map*, that documents the professional work of women around the globe and serves as a networking tool for early career scholars and others. As the record clearly shows, Beth has done more than anyone within ASOR to raise awareness about women's status in the discipline and create mentoring opportunities for those at every age and stage.

These efforts came on the heels of some two decades of work Beth devoted to researching the history of women's representation and involvement in ASOR. In 2000, she introduced The World of Women: Gender and Archaeology session at ASOR after her review of ASOR Annual Meeting programs through the 1990s revealed no presentations about women. She chaired this academic session through 2012 and co-chaired it in 2013 and 2014; it is now the standing session Gender in the Ancient Near East. Presentations from the 2000 session were published in an issue of *Near Eastern Archaeology* in 2003 and others were published in her edited volume *The World of Women in the Ancient and Classical Near East* in 2008. She is currently finishing a monograph entitled *Women in Near Eastern Archaeology: Why the Present Matters, and How it Affects Our Knowledge of the Past* that will consolidate her research into the challenges faced by women in the profession and how this impacts our understanding of the past. Beth deserves tremendous credit for helping bring the lives of ancient women into focus while also bringing greater recognition to female scholars in the modern era.



Figure 3: Beth presents at the third Workshop on Gender, Methodology and the Ancient Near East (GeMANE 3) at Ghent University in April 2019. Photo courtesy Katrien De Graf.

In our opinion, Beth’s most important contributions to the discipline surround her efforts to educate ASOR members and others about field safety, particularly in the areas of gender discrimination, and gender-based harassment, intimidation, and violence. After a period of extensive research and preparation, Beth took the initiative to create the *Survey on Field Safety: Middle East, North Africa, and Mediterranean Basin* and disseminate it widely in 2014 and 2015 to document people’s experiences in the field and the lab. The ultimate objective of this project is collaboration and education through the creation of trainings, standardized policies, and essential procedures to make field projects safer for everyone involved. Beth reported on her findings in multiple presentations and publications and was featured in an episode of the Bloomberg podcast *Game Plan* entitled ‘The Harvey Weinstein in Your Industry.’ A generation of scholars admires Beth for these efforts and is indebted to her for challenging ASOR to confront its past and do the work of making it a more welcoming and inclusive organization.

Thank you, Beth, for all you did for us while we were students at the University of Arizona and for all you continue to do to support the collective ‘us’ in the discipline. We have learned so much from your leadership, passion, and dedication to the field and your brilliant scholarly work that has inspired all the contributors to this volume. It is our pleasure to celebrate this milestone with you!

## **Mandana Nakhai**

The imperative to create an effortless illusion of separate silos of ‘work’ and ‘life’ seems to me one of the higher and more unreasonable bars we ask individuals, and particularly women, to clear. As a young-ish adult striving to do meaningful work and resist the normative value of career as total identity, I’ve considered numerous influences on how I approach the infamous ‘balance.’ My mother’s philosophy of work, and the life that has flowed through and around it, substantially informs my own evolution in constructing and operationalizing the meanings of effort, passion, and commitment in the professional and personal. I believe it has also opened many eyes, beyond mine, to the multitude of ways to integrate both into a full, meaningful life.

My earliest memory of my mom as a professional archaeologist and scholar is fittingly placed in the first home we shared. The house was a cozy, historic bungalow in one of Tucson’s quirkiest and most charming neighborhoods. While it wasn’t large, it held more than enough space for imaginative play and adventure. My bedroom was also her office, where she was writing her dissertation on an old-school ‘word processor.’ Maybe it was because of this computer’s persistence in the household even after the PC first hit the market that I later made career choices centered on professional writing. With only word processing capabilities, I entertained myself by writing short vignettes long before computer games were available to me. Beth’s late night dissertation writing sessions felt like a lucky benefit, as a child who preferred not to be alone in the dark. Any frightening night creatures were surely warded away by the bright green glow emanating from that boxy screen, and by the reassuring presence of my mom, typing away about subjects mysterious and faraway.

I also recall, from early childhood, many experiences of accompanying Beth to meetings, to the library, and to professional gatherings. I felt comfortable around adults and had no problem entertaining myself quietly while important business was conducted (although I could not figure out why the University of Arizona library held so many fewer ‘fun’ books than did the public library). Sometimes I came to her classes at the University and thought her teenage or barely adult students to be unbelievably mature, though their term papers sometimes came back to them with a few precocious comments written in my red pen.

Far from feeling burdened by these inclusions of my mom’s work into my daily life, I felt proud from a young age to have a mom who had places to go and responsibilities outside of taking me to music lessons or sports games. Yes, she graciously did those things, and made ample time to play games, host sleepovers, watch movies, take bike rides, and go on trips around the world. But the way she approached her work indicated to me that its centrality in our lives was the result of its deep meaning for her. Being involved made me feel special and adult. Over many summers in the renowned museums of New York, Boston, Paris, and London, I learned firsthand about the great civilizations of the ancient Near East. In the hush of darkened exhibit halls, she would gesture authoritatively at ancient objects shimmering in display cases, telling me about the lives of the people who made them in a tone I would come to know as her ‘lecture voice.’ What I gleaned most from my privileged encounters with these treasures was not, to be honest, detailed understanding of exactly when the Iron Age (or Iron Age II) took place or what the Code of Hammurabi said. What I really remember was my mom’s own ability to vividly connect stones, pots, and inscriptions with powerful narratives

and ideas about the people who preceded us in history and what these long-lost lives mean to us now.

Unlike many children whose parents go away to an office all day, my understanding of my mother's personality, skills, interests, and relationships was expansive. She wasn't 'just' mom to me, as I regularly saw her perform the roles of teacher, advisor, learner, scholar, and community leader. As time went on, her world of colleagues became our constellation of family. During long dinner parties in Tucson, my godmother, Norma Dever, expertly recounted endless and occasionally scandalous stories about archaeology adventures around the world. I experienced what I consider to be a seminal moment in the life of any Near Eastern archaeology hanger-on of 'running into' my mother's mentor and dear friend, Bill Dever, on my brief pilgrimage to the famed Albright Institute in Jerusalem. As a fourth grader, I thought it was the coolest thing in the world to have a 'grad student' take up residence in my house and help plan my birthday party—over 20 years later, Jennie Ebeling and her family attended my wedding, along with Bill, and Ed and Keeley Wright, who, along with their children, have been present for many more milestones.

In reviewing these memories, I see an individual story that reflects a societal one about the heavy weight placed on working mothers to keep it all afloat. I also believe that the challenges and joys of simultaneously building a career and family influenced Beth's interest in and unique capacity for elevating and illuminating the overlooked nuances of the lives of women in ancient societies. Not afraid to speak up and redefine a gendered norm that needs updating, Beth's insistence on having a multifaceted life and career challenges the outdated notion, normative in male-dominated fields, that the great storyline must rest solely on professional accomplishment, that other passions and pursuits, like family, either play a supporting role or diminish the impact of one's work. Inherent to her successful efforts to make more visible women's roles in ancient religious and community life is the bold assertion that these lives and choices, as bound with care and motherhood as they were, have as much of value to teach us as those of the men whose narratives of creation and building we are more familiar with.

Sometime in the early 2000s, Angelina Jolie starred in the ridiculous movie *Lara Croft: Tomb Raider*, which combined mythology about and exploration of ancient sites with saving the world from an existentially threatening robot. I watched it repeatedly and purchased a poster of the actress dressed for combat archaeology, which my mom gamely hung in her campus office. While initially a joke, the poster still hangs there today. In fact, I see it now as more relevant—and prescient—than ever, the art a metaphor for the owners' own successful journey to pursue courageously, powerfully, and clearly what's just, for family, community, and scholarship.

### **Abbe Alpert**

Beth is my older sister. As a child, I was in awe of her brilliance, talents, and generosity. I envied her organizational skills and the fact that she always got the new clothes which were then handed down to me. Now, many years later, I am convinced that the awe I felt as a child was not related to our birth positions but a natural response to the special nature of my dear sister.

In our family, along with expectations too numerous to name, two skills were highly valued: the ability to tell a good story, and the ability to read between the lines. My sisters and I understood that a condition to joining in adult conversations was a competent enough display of these skills, so we practiced a lot. Both of our parents were raconteurs. Our mother grew up with an extended family focused on issues related to Jews; our maternal relatives rescued Jewish families from the Holocaust and were instrumental in the founding of the state of Israel. Many of the stories she told us were about these topics. They were serious, framed by historical context, had activists as protagonists, and led to signposts for her vision of living a proper Jewish life. Our father's stories were very different. He grew up poor during the depression in Yiddish-speaking neighborhoods in Brooklyn, NY. He began working at age five in his grandfather's fish store where, according to him, he was filleting fish before other children had learned to tie their shoes. Our father's stories were situated locally, they were family-centered and funny, and usually interactive (he and his older brother engaged in a lifetime of arguments about the accuracy of each story). His stories connected us to a celebrated New York Jewish culture.

Beth was quick to develop her own storytelling chops. As a young person she had a marvelous ability to recount the most mundane encounters as adventures rich with human drama. She still does. Anyone who has heard her describe vacuuming her house, or the turtles living in her backyard, would agree. Over the years I have travelled with Beth to conferences around the world, where I've attended her lectures on archaeology, gender, and the ancient Near East. Sometimes she begins her lectures on women in antiquity with a story about our parents. Usually the story is funny, a catchy intro. But when she does that, I think she is also pointing out how one generation keeps alive the stories of the previous generation (like my parents did), as well as of generations long gone. How wonderful that this might be a shared goal of archaeologists and daughters.

I've often heard Beth extract stories from objects, both in her lectures and her personal life. That is a gift, born out of scholarship professionally, but also out of empathy and imagination. Right after my mother died, Beth and I went to the apartment where my mother had lived first with my father and, after he died, alone. Quietly, we walked through the rooms together, absorbing her absence. In the guest bathroom, Beth said, 'mom hung the towels' and began to cry. Later I wondered why of all we had seen and felt that day it was the towels that had brought her to tears. I have a theory. These faded and frayed hand towels, embroidered with our last name, were a wedding present to our parents. As long as I can remember, they were hung whenever my mother entertained. The day she died, despite not being well, my mother had been planning on having a few women over for lunch. She hung the towels. In them, I think Beth saw an emblem of our mother's life: the promise of her marriage, her love of people and social gatherings, the elegance of her lifestyle, her drive to have a full life despite the difficulties of aging. And because Beth saw so much in old towels hanging on a towel rack, I was able to see it too and be deeply touched.

A focus of Beth's career is her 'commitment to ensuring that women past and present are seen and heard.' In her work she tells the stories of women in antiquity and of the narrative thread tying the decades-long invisibility of these women to the generations of women archaeologists whose efforts have also often been unrecognized. As an activist she creates safe spaces for colleagues to talk about their experiences of gender-based harassment,

intimidation, and violence during excavations abroad and she is developing processes for remediating these problems. During the last several years, Beth and I have been working together to bring attention to the issue of clergy sexual abuse and gender-based harassment in Jewish institutions. We know, from personal experience, how easy it is for institutions (or families) to ignore what is happening if it conflicts with the narrative they want to tell about themselves. We believe that it's extremely important to confront this narrative when it is wrong and advocate for change.

As children Beth and I learned to read between the lines, and as adults we recognize the power and the pleasure of making the invisible visible. Personally, I feel that one of Beth's most important achievements is her success moving women from 'between the lines' to the heart of the story.

### **J. Edward Wright**

In addition to her accomplishments as a scholar, my friend and colleague Professor Beth Alpert Nakhai has also shown herself to be an outstanding educator and mentor. She arrived at the University of Arizona in 1982 to study in William G. (Bill) Dever's graduate program in Near Eastern Archaeology. Following her first year as a graduate student, she was asked to teach in the Near Eastern Studies Department's Hebrew program. After completing her PhD in 1993, she continued to teach as an adjunct in the Judaic Studies Program. That program became the Arizona Center for Judaic Studies in 2000, and Beth was promoted to a tenure-track line in 2003, and ultimately promoted to Associate Professor with tenure in 2006. Thus, for nearly



Figure 4: Beth teaching Biblical Hebrew at the University of Arizona. Photo courtesy the Arizona Center for Judaic Studies.

## AN APPRECIATION OF BETH ALPERT NAKHAI

forty years she has been teaching a wide range of undergraduate and graduate courses at the university, notably Biblical Hebrew, Archaeology of the Bible, Women in Ancient Israel, Women in Judaism, Introduction to Judaism, and The History and Religion of Ancient Israel. Several of these Judaic Studies courses are cross-listed in the Anthropology, History, Religious Studies, and Women's Studies departments. This has allowed her to have an impact on the education of a wide range of students.

A university and the Academy depend on and are guided by the work of scholars, and in this regard Beth Nakhai has been a model colleague whose service has had tremendous impact on the Arizona Center for Judaic Studies, the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, and many departments and programs at the University of Arizona. Moreover, she has long served on committees for the American Society of Overseas Research (formerly the American Schools of Oriental Research) and as a board member for the W.F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research in Jerusalem. She has also served as a grant reviewer for several organizations and foundations, an external promotion and tenure reviewer for several universities, and a manuscript reviewer for several publishers. Thus, she has been a model member of the Academy in terms of the service she has given throughout her career. But it seems to me that it is in her capacity as a teacher that her impact has been perhaps the most profound.

As the Director of the Arizona Center for Judaic Studies, I review the university-mandated teaching evaluations of the Center's nine teaching faculty every year. Those evaluations attest that Beth's teaching is highly regarded by our university's undergraduates. Two of the most common remarks are that 'I enjoyed the museum visits she arranged,' and 'she makes herself

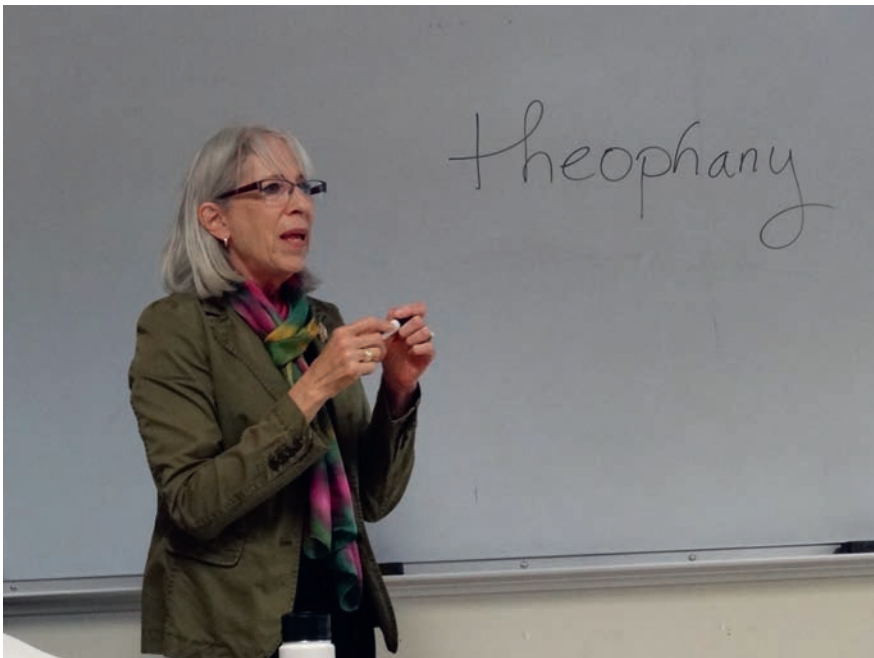


Figure 5: Beth in the classroom at the University of Arizona. Photo courtesy the Arizona Center for Judaic Studies.

available to help people outside of class.’ Another indicator of her success as a teacher is the number of her students who have gone on to prestigious graduate programs in Classics, Near Eastern Archaeology, or Biblical Studies.

In addition to her regular undergraduate courses, Beth has also taught many honors and graduate courses at the University of Arizona. I have served on the advisory board of the university’s Honors College for many years, and both the current and the former dean of the Honors College have had only praise for Beth’s many contributions as a skilled teacher and committed mentor to our honors students. Her work with graduate students is equally impressive. She has chaired one dissertation committee herself, and she also has been a reader and examiner on twenty-three other dissertation committees, most of which were in Bill Dever’s Near Eastern Archaeology program at the University of Arizona. In fact, the editors of this *Festschrift* are two of the scholars on whose dissertation committees Beth served. Moreover, many of the next generation of leaders involved in the American Society of Overseas Research are among the students that Beth taught or served as a reader on their dissertations. Thus, her impact on not just the Academy but on the lives and professions of many people is quite impressive. This *Festschrift*, therefore, is a fitting tribute to Professor Beth Alpert Nakhai’s career as an accomplished scholar, a dedicated teacher, and a valued member of the Academy.

### **Acknowledgements**

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### **Selected Publications**

#### ***Monographs***

2001. *Archaeology and the Religions of Canaan and Israel* (ASOR Books 7). Atlanta: American Schools of Oriental Research.

#### ***Edited and Co-Edited Volumes***

2015. *Celebrate Her for the Fruit of Her Hands: Studies in Honor of Carol L. Meyers*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns. Co-edited with S. Ackerman and C. Carter.

2014. *Family and Household Religion: Toward a Synthesis of Old Testament Studies, Archaeology, Epigraphy, and Cultural Studies*. Proceedings of the International Conference at Westfälisches Wilhelms-Universität Münster, April 1st-3rd, 2009. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns. Co-edited with R. Albertz, S.M. Olyan, and R. Schmitt.

2013. *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Bible and Archaeology*. New York: Oxford University Press. Editor-in-Chief D. Master. Area Editor.

2008. *The World of Women in the Ancient and Classical Near East*. Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing. Editor.

2003. *The Near East in the Southwest: Essays in Honor of William G. Dever* (Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research 58). Atlanta: American Schools of Oriental Research. Editor.

### Articles

2019. Baby Burials in the Middle Bronze Age. *Biblical Archaeology Review* 45(4–5): 41–44, 90.
2019. Archaeology/History, in N.L. Tilford (ed.) *Women and the Society of Biblical Literature* (Biblical Scholarship in North America 29): 115–128. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature Press.
2019. Women in Israelite Religion: The State of Research Is All New Research. *Religions* 10(2): 122. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel10020122>
2018. A World of Possibilities: Jerusalem’s Women in the Iron Age (1000–586 BCE), in S.L. Budin, M. Cifarelli, A. Garcia-Ventura, and A. Millet Albà (eds) *Gender and Methodology in the Ancient Near East: Approaches from Assyriology and Beyond* (Barcino Monographica Orientalia 10): 369–392. Barcelona: Universitat de Barcelona.
2018. Factors Complicating the Reconstruction of Women’s Lives in Iron Age Israel (1200–587 B.C.E), in S. Svärd and A. Garcia-Ventura (eds) *Studying Gender in the Ancient Near East*: 289–313. State College, PA: Eisenbrauns.
2018. When Considering Infants and Jar Burials in the Middle Bronze Age Southern Levant, in I. Shai, J.R. Chadwick, L. Hitchcock, A. Dagan, C. McKinney, and J. Uziel (eds) *Tell It in Gath: Studies in the History and Archaeology of Israel. Essays in Honor of A.M. Maier on the Occasion of His Sixtieth Birthday* (Ägypten und Altes Testament 90): 100–128. Münster: Zaphon.
2015. Where to Worship? Religion in Iron II Israel and Judah, in N. Laneri (ed.) *Defining the Sacred: Approaches to the Archaeology of Religion in the Near East*: 90–1010. Oxford, UK: Oxbow Books.
2015. Plaque and Recumbent Figurines of the Late Bronze II, in S. Ackerman, C. Carter, and B. Alpert Nakhai (eds) *Celebrate Her for the Fruit of Her Hands: Studies in Honor of Carol L. Meyers*: 327–356. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns.
2014. The Household as Sacred Space, in R. Albertz, B.A. Nakhai, S.M. Olyan, and R. Schmitt (eds) *Family and Household Religion: Toward a Synthesis of Old Testament Studies, Archaeology, Epigraphy, and Cultural Studies*. Proceedings of the International Conference at Westfälisches Wilhelms-Universität Münster, April 1st–3rd, 2009: 53–71. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns.
2014. Mother-and-Child Figurines in the Late Bronze–Persian Period Levant, in J. Spencer, R. Mullins, and A. Brody (eds) *Material Culture Matters: Essays on the Archaeology of the Southern Levant in Honor of Seymour Gitin*: 165–198. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns.
2011. Varieties of Religious Expression in the Domestic Setting, in A. Yasur-Landau, J.R. Ebeling, and L.B. Mazow (eds) *Household Archaeology in Ancient Israel and Beyond* (Culture and History of the Ancient Near East 50): 347–360. Leiden: Brill.
2008. Female Infanticide in Iron II Israel and Judah, in S. Dolansky (ed.) *Israel in Transition: From Late Bronze II to Iron IIa (c. 1250–850 BCE). Volume 1: The Archaeology* (Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 491, European Seminar in Historical Methodology 7): 121–137. London: Continuum.
2008. Contextualizing Village Life in the Iron Age I, in L.L. Grabbe (ed.) *Israel in Transition: From Late Bronze II to Iron IIa (c. 1240–850 BCE). Volume 1: The Archaeology* (Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 491; European Seminar in Historical Archaeology 7): 121–137. London: Continuum.

2008. Central Commentary: *R'eih*, in T.C. Eskenazi and A.L. Weiss (eds) *The Torah: A Women's Commentary*: 1115–1133. New York: URJ Press and Women of Reform Judaism.
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2005. Daily Life in the Ancient Near East: New Thoughts on an Old Topic. *Religious Studies Review: A Quarterly Review of Publications in the Field of Religion and Related Disciplines* 31(3–4): 147–153.
2003. Israel on the Horizon: The Galilee in the Iron I, in B. Alpert Nakhai (ed.) *The Near East in the Southwest: Essays in Honor of William G. Dever* (Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research 58): 131–151. Atlanta: American Schools of Oriental Research.
1999. Israelite Religion beyond the Temple: The Archaeological Witness. *The World of the Bible* 1: 38–43.
1999. A Landscape Comes to Life: The Iron I Period. *Near Eastern Archaeology* 62(2): 62–92, 101–127, with E. Bloch-Smith.
1994. What's a Bamah? How Sacred Space Functioned in Ancient Israel. *Biblical Archaeology Review* 20: 18–29, 77–78.
1993. Tell el-Wawiyat, in E. Stern (ed.) *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*, vol. 4: 1500–1501. Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, with J.P. Dessel and B.L. Wisthoff.
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