About the Contributors

LISA ANSELL is Associate Director of the Casden Institute for the Study of the Jewish Role in American Life at the University of Southern California. She received her BA in French and Near East Studies from UCLA and her MA in Middle East Studies from Harvard University. She was the Chair of the World Language Department of New Community Jewish High School for five years before coming to USC in August, 2007.

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FRANCES DINKELSPIEL is a fifth-generation Californian who grew up in San Francisco. A graduate of Stanford University and the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, Frances spent more than twenty years working as a newspaper reporter. Her freelance work has appeared in the New York Times, Los Angeles Times, People Magazine, and the San Francisco Chronicle. She has also taught at the Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism. Towers of Gold: How One Jewish Immigrant Named Isaias Hellman Created California, was a San Francisco Chronicle bestseller and notable book of 2008.

DAVID EPSTEIN, co-editor of the Western States Jewish History Journal, is a graduate of Wesleyan University. He majored in economics and history. He has lectured throughout the country on the history of the Jews of the West. He is also the publisher of The American Rabbi journal and website.

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GLADYS STURMAN, co-editor of the Western States Jewish History Journal, is a graduate of the University of Judaism (now the American Jewish University), majoring in History. She has been a Jewish community activist in the Los Angeles area for fifty years. She lectures and teaches extensively throughout the area on Jewish topics.

KAREN S. WILSON is a doctoral candidate in US History at the University of California, Los Angeles, expecting to obtain her degree in 2010. Her dissertation project, entitled “On the Cosmopolitan Frontier: Jews in Nineteenth-Century Los Angeles,” examines the ways in which social networks shaped the incorporation and distinctiveness of Jewish settlers in post-Gold Rush society. Her research interests center on immigrants to the American West and urbanization in nineteenth-century frontiers and borderlands. She also is serving as curator for an exhibition on the history of Jews in Los Angeles to be mounted at the Autry National Center.

BRUCE ZUCKERMAN is the Myron and Marian Casden Director of the Casden Institute and a Professor of Religion at USC, where he teaches courses in the Hebrew Bible, the Bible in western literature, the ancient Near East, and archaeology. A specialist in photographing and reconstructing ancient texts, he is involved in numerous projects related to the Dead Sea Scrolls. On ancient topics, his major publications are Job the Silent: A Study in Biblical Counterpoint and The Leningrad Codex: A Facsimile Edition, for which he and his brother Kenneth did the principal photography. Zuckerman also has a continuing interest in modern Jewish thought, often looking at modern issues from an ancient perspective. He most recently co-authored Double Takes: Thinking and Rethinking Issues of Modern Judaism in Ancient Contexts with Zev Garber and contributed a chapter to Garber’s book, Mel Gibson’s Passion: The Film, the Controversy, and Its Implications.