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Noah J. Efron

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Rejecting the idea that Jews have done well in science because of uniquely Jewish traits, Jewish brains, and Jewish habits of mind, historian of science Noah J. Efron approaches the Jewish affinity for science through the geographic and cultural circumstances of Jews who were compelled to settle in new worlds in the early twentieth century. Seeking relief from religious persecution, millions of Jews resettled in the United States, Palestine, and the Soviet Union, with large concentrations of settlers in New York, Tel Aviv, and Moscow. This shared experience—of facing the future in new worlds, both physical and conceptual—provided a generation of Jews with opportunities unlike any their parents and grandparents had known. Science was central to their dreams of creating new worlds—welcoming worlds—for a persecuted people.

"Noah Efron's *A Chosen Calling* is a fresh and ambitious exploration of the enthusiasm with which Jews have celebrated science, and of the legendary distinction with which they have practiced science in three major domains . . . Efron shows that in all three cases, Jews brought to their novel circumstances a drive for full participation in a world where they had been denied that participation, and he shows, further, that the universalist ethos of science provided a uniquely powerful means of participating."—David A. Hollinger, University of California, Berkeley

**Noah J. Efron** teaches at Bar-Ilan University, where he was the founding chair of the Program in Science, Technology, and Society. He served as president of the Israel Society for the History and Philosophy of Science and on the Executive Committee of the International Society for Science and Religion.

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