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Noted Author to Tour Mississippi

Marcie Cohen Ferris featured in the Southern States Literary Series

February 7, 2006, Jackson, MS -- The Goldring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life is pleased to announce that Marcie Cohen Ferris will launch the 2006 Southern States Literary Series with three presentations in Mississippi. Ferris will discuss her new book, *Matzoh Ball Gumbo*.

Since early colonial times in America, Jewish southerners have been tempted by delectable regional foods, though some of these, such as pork and shellfish, have been traditionally forbidden to Jews by religious dietary laws. In a culinary journey through the Jewish South, *Matzoh Ball Gumbo* explores how southern Jews embraced, avoided, and adapted southern food and, in the process, have found themselves at home. Featuring a trove of photographs, *Matzoh Ball Gumbo* also includes anecdotes, oral histories, and more than thirty recipes to try at home.

Raised in Blytheville, Arkansas, Marcie Cohen Ferris was the first project director of the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience. She received her Ph.D. in American Studies from George Washington University in 2003. She is currently the associate director of the Carolina Center for Jewish Studies and assistant professor of American studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She is a board member of the Southern Jewish Historical Society and the Vice President of the Southern Foodways Alliance.

The tour begins in Jackson on Friday, February 24, 7:30 p.m., at Beth Israel Congregation, 5315 Old Canton Road. On Saturday, February 25, the tour stops at Dancing Rabbit Books, 311 Howard Street, in Greenwood at 6:00 p.m. On Sunday, February 26, Ferris will be at the historic Union Station in downtown Meridian at 1:30 p.m.

The ISJL'S Southern States Literary Series features discussions and book signings with leading authors of newly released works on the Jewish experience. Each author in the series travels to several cities, creating a vibrant literary circuit throughout the Institute's twelve-state region. Marcie Cohen Ferris's lecture is part of a series of programs celebrating the 350th anniversary of Jewish settlement in America.

This program is sponsored in part by the Mississippi Humanities Council. Co-sponsors include Beth Israel Congregation, Jackson; Meridian Jewish Welfare Fund; and the Congregation Ahavath Rayim, Greenwood.

The Goldring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life has its roots in the work of the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience. The organization is dedicated to providing educational and rabbinic services to small Jewish communities, documenting and preserving the rich history of the Southern Jewish Experience, and promoting a strong Jewish cultural presence throughout a twelve-state region.

All of the events are free and open to the public. For further information contact the Institute of Southern Jewish Life at (601) 362-6357.