

JWST 310: African Americans and Jews from Slavery to Civil Rights Spring 2011

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Course description

This course will examine the complex interactions between Jews and African Americans over the course of American history. We will approach our topic thematically, focusing on several episodes and time periods that demonstrate the changing nature of the relationship between the two groups. Among the themes we will discuss are Jewish responses to slavery, the Civil War and Reconstruction, and efforts by both groups to forge an effective alliance to fight for civil rights in the Twentieth Century. We will conclude by examining the collapse of this coalition, and the sometimes troubled interactions between the two groups in its aftermath.

Course Requirements:

Completion of All Readings and Class Participation

You are required to attend every class. Regular class attendance and careful preparation of all assigned readings - in advance of each class - are absolutely essential to success. (For example, readings under January 19 must be read before class on January 19.) In addition to chapters assigned from the textbook, I have scanned a variety of articles and placed them on WebCT. You are expected to be in class with the readings completed and prepared to contribute to class discussion in a meaningful way. Nearly every class will include some discussion of sources read for the day. Please bring all assigned readings to class.

Active participation in the class extends beyond discussion. It also means active listening and note-taking during lectures. It means asking questions during class to clarify issues that are unclear (if you are confused about an issue, other students probably are as well). It means coming to office hours and/or communicating via email if further clarification is needed. Naturally your participation grade will also suffer if you are not in class to participate, and inevitably the material you miss will hurt your work as well. Any student who fails attendance will automatically fail this class – absolutely no exceptions. Students who miss an excessive number of classes due to medical or other emergency should see me to arrange a medical withdrawal.

Attendance of Monday evening lecture series

You will be required to attend at least four public lectures on Monday evenings over the course of the semester. If you attend more than four lectures, you will receive extra credit. The lectures will be given by visiting scholars, and will start at 7pm.

February 7: Marni Davis (Georgia State University), Jewish Whiskey Men in the Jim Crow South

February 14: Eric Goldstein (Emory University), Choosing Sides, Again: Jews in the

Reconstruction South

February 28: Hasia Diner (New York University), The Business of Jews and African Americans

March 21: Dale Rosengarten (College of Charleston), Ladies of the Lost Cause

March 28: Stuart Rockoff (Institute of Southern Jewish Life), The Promised Land? Slavery, Freedom, and Southern Jews

April 4: Saskia Coenen Snyder (University of South Carolina), The Civil War and the Jews of Europe

April 11: Leonard Rogoff (Jewish Heritage Foundation of North Carolina), Who is True Israel? Yankees, Confederates, Jews and African-Americans

Absences

If you miss class during the semester for health, personal or emergency reasons, you will be required to provide an absence memo from the Absence Memo Office. If you are absent for legitimate reasons, you should bring your documentation to the Office of Student Affairs (67 George Street) who will send a confirmation email to all of your professors. I will pass a sign-up sheet around the room each day – be sure to sign it. For additional information and forms go to

http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/general_info/absence/. Students who are frequently absent without valid explanation risk automatically failing the course.

Written Assignments

Evaluations will be based on attendance, participation in class discussion and two major writing assignments. There will be no midterm or final exam.

Late assignments will be penalized one full grade (e.g. A to B, B to C) if submitted within one week of the due date, and thereafter two full grades until the end of the semester.

Grades

Attendance and participation	15%
Medium paper	25%
Prospectus of research project	10%
Draft of research project	15%
Final research project	35%

Grading Scale

Letter:	Range:	Quality Points:
A Superior	93-100	4.00
A-	90-92	3.70
B+ Good	87-89	3.30
B Good	83-86	3.00
B-	80-82	2.70
C+ Fair	77-79	2.30
C Acceptable	73-76	2.00
C-	70-72	1.70

D+	67-69	1.30
D Barely Acceptable, Passing	63-66	1.00
D-	60-62	0.70
F Failure	00-59	0.00
WA Withdrawn Excessive Absences		0.00

Students with disabilities

Any student eligible and needing accommodations because of a disability should notify me during the first two weeks of class or as soon as the student has been approved for services from the Center for Disability Services / SNAP (located on the first floor of the Lightsey Center, Suite 104; telephone 843-953-1431). You will be required to present me with an official notification from the Center, and remind again me one week before any accommodation is needed.

Honor Code

Students are expected to abide by the Honor Code of the College of Charleston. The Honor Code of the College of Charleston forbids cheating, attempted cheating and plagiarism. A student found guilty of any of these offenses will receive a grade of “XF” in the course, and may be subject to additional penalties such as suspension or expulsion from the College, at the discretion of the Honor Board. See the *College of Charleston Student Handbook*, for definitions of these offenses (www.cofc.edu/generaldocuments/handbook.pdf).

Plagiarism is defined by the Student Honor Code as:

1. The verbatim repetition, without acknowledgment, of the writings of another author. *All significant phrases, clauses, or passages, taken directly from source material must be enclosed in quotation marks* and acknowledged either in the text itself or in footnotes/endnotes.
2. Borrowing without acknowledging the source.
3. Paraphrasing the thoughts of another writer without acknowledgment.
4. Allowing any other person or organization to prepare work which one then submits as his/her own his/her own.

Required Texts (available in the College Bookstore)

Maurianne Adams and John Bracey, *Strangers & Neighbors: Relations Between Blacks & Jews in the United States* (University of Massachusetts Press, 2000)

Schedule
(subject to change with notice)

Monday January 10

Introduction and review of the syllabus

Wednesday January 12

Jews and New World Slavery

Strangers & Neighbors: Seymour Drescher, “The Role of Jews in the Transatlantic Slave Trade,” 105-115 [required]

Strangers & Neighbors: Virginia Bever Platt, “‘And don’t forget the Guinea Voyage’: The slave Trade of Aaron Lopez of Newport,” 116-130 [required]

David Brion Davis, “The Slave Trade and the Jews,” *New York Review of Books* (December 22, 1994) [optional]

Monday January 17

No class: MLK Day

Wednesday January 19

The position of Jews in Colonial society

Jonathan Sarna, “The Jews in British America” in Paolo Bernadini and Norman Fiering (eds.) *The Jews and the Expansion of Europe to the West, 1450 to 1800* (New York, 2001): 519-531 [required]

Gemma Romain, “Ethnicity, identity and ‘race’: the port Jews of nineteenth-century Charleston,” *Jewish Culture and History* 7,1-2 (2004): 123-140 [optional]

Monday January 24

Jews and Slavery in the United States

Strangers & Neighbors: Bertram W. Korn, “Jews and Negro Slavery in the Old South, 1789-1865,” 147-182 [required]

Strangers & Neighbors: Schappes, “Four Documents concerning Jews and Slavery”, 137-146 [required]

Ralph Melnick, “Billy Simons; the Black Jew of Charleston”, *American Jewish Archives* 32, 1 (1980), 3-8 [optional]

Wednesday January 26

Walking tour of Jewish and Slave sites around Campus

Monday January 31
Jews and Abolitionism

Strangers & Neighbors: Jayme A. Sokolow, “Revolution and Reform: The Antebellum Jewish Abolitionists,” 183-197 [required]

Louis Ruchames, “The Abolitionists and the Jews: Some Further Thoughts,” in Bertram Korn, ed., *A Bicentennial Festschrift for Jacob Rader Marcus* (New York, 1976): 505-516 [optional]

Introductions by Maxwell Whiteman and Nancy L. Grant to Kate E.R. Pickard, *The Kidnapped and the Ransomed: The Narrative of Peter & Vina Still after Forty Years of Slavery* (University of Nebraska Press, 1995) [optional]

Wednesday February 3
Jewish supporters of slavery

John A. Forman, “Lewis Charles Levin, Portrait of an American Demagogue,” *American Jewish Archives* 12 (October 1960), 150-194 [required]

Eli Evans, *Judah P. Benjamin: Jewish Confederate* (Free Press, 1988) [optional]

Monday February 7
Visit to Special Collections

Wednesday February 9
Rabbis and Slavery on the eve of the Civil War

Strangers & Neighbors: Bertram W. Korn “The Rabbis and the Slavery Question,” 198-218 [required]

William Warren Rogers, “In Defense of our Sacred Cause: Rabbi James K. Gutheim in Confederate Montgomery,” *Journal of Confederate History* 7 (1991), 112-122 [optional]

Monday February 14
The Civil War

Eli N. Evans, “The War Between Jewish Brothers in America,” in Michael Grunberger, ed., *From Haven to Home: 350 Years of Jewish Life in America* (New York, 2005): 47-67 [required]

Robert Rosen, “Jewish Confederates,” *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil*, ed. Marcie Cohen Ferris and Mark I. Greenberg (2006): 109-133 [optional]

Wednesday February 16
The Home Front

Lauren F. Winner, "Taking Up The Cross: Conversion Among Black and White Jews in the Civil War South," in Catherine Clinton, ed., *Southern Families at War: Loyalty and Conflict in the Civil War South* (New York, 2000): 193-209 [required]

David T. Morgan, "Eugenia Levy Phillips: The Civil War Experiences of a Southern Jewish Woman" in Samuel Proctor and Louis Schmier, eds., *Jews of the South*, (Macon, GA, 1984): 95-106 [optional]

Monday February 21

"Jews as a class"

Bertram Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War*: "American Judaeophobia," 156-188. [required]

G.L. Bunker and John J. Appel, "'Shoddy' Antisemitism and the Civil War," *American Jewish History* 82 (1994), 43-71 [optional]

Wednesday February 23

Jews and African Americans during Reconstruction

Strangers & Neighbors: Documents concerning Lynching, 219-22 [required]

Bertram Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War*: "American Judaeophobia," 156-188. [required]

Benjamin Ginsburg, *Moses of South Carolina: A Jewish Scalawag during Radical Reconstruction* (Baltimore, 2010) [optional]

Thomas Clark, "The Post-Civil War Economy in the South," *American Jewish Historical Quarterly* 55 (June 1966), 424-432 [required]

Monday February 28

Jews and African Americans in the age of Jim Crow

Strangers & Neighbors: Louis Schmier, "A Jewish Peddler and his Black Customers Look at Each Other," 223-236 [required]

Strangers & Neighbors: Philip Foner, "Black-Jewish Relations in the Opening Years of the Twentieth Century," 237-244 [required]

Wednesday March 2

The Racial place of Jews in the post-Civil War South

Eric Goldstein, “‘Now is the Time to Show Your True Colors’: Southern Jews, Whiteness and the Rise of Jim Crow” in Marcie Cohen Ferris and Mark Greenberg (eds.) *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil* (Hanover, NH, 2006): 134-155 [required]

Eric Goldstein. “‘Different Blood Flows in Our Veins’: Race and Jewish Self Definition in Late Nineteenth Century America,” *American Jewish History* 85:1 (1997): 29-55 [optional]

Leonard Rogoff, “‘Is the Jew White?’ The Racial Place of the Southern Jew,” *American Jewish History* 85:3 (1997): 195-230 [required]

Monday March 7
No class – Spring Break

Wednesday March 9
No Class – Spring Break

Monday March 14
The Leo Frank Case

Strangers & Neighbors: “‘Is the Jew a White Man?’ Press Reaction to the Leo Frank Case, 1913-1915,” 261-270 [required]

Strangers & Neighbors: Leonard Dinnerstein, Leo M. Frank and the Jewish Community,” 271-282 [required]

Wednesday March 16
Jews, African Americans and the rise of Ku Klux Klan

Strangers & Neighbors: David Levering Lewis, “Parallels and Divergences: assimilationist Strategies of Afro-American Elites from 1910 to the Early 1930s,” 331-334 [required]

Deborah Dash Moore, “Separate Paths: Blacks and Jews in the Twentieth-Century South” in Jack Salzman and Cornel West, eds., *Struggles in the Promised Land* (New York, 1997) [optional]

Leonard Dinnerstein, “Antisemitism and Jewish Anxieties in the South”, *Antisemitism in America* (New York, 1994): 175-196 [optional]

Monday March 21
Was there a Black – Jewish Civil Rights alliance?

Strangers & Neighbors: Clayborn Carson Jr., “Blacks and Jews in the Civil Rights Movement,” 574-589 [required]

Strangers & Neighbors: Cheryl Greenberg, “Negotiating Coalition: Black and Jewish Civil Rights Agencies in the Twentieth Century,” 476-494 [required]

Wednesday March 23

Southern Jewish struggles with Civil Rights:

Cheryl Greenberg, “The Southern Jewish Community and the Struggle for Civil Rights” in *African Americans and Jews in the Twentieth Century: Studies in Convergence and Conflict* (Columbia, Missouri, 1998) [required]

Clive Webb, *Fight Against Fear: Southern Jews and Black Civil Rights* (Athens, Georgia, 2001), 114-216 [optional]

Clive Webb, “Closing Ranks: Montgomery Jews and Civil Rights, 1954-1960,” *Journal of American Studies*, 32:3, 1998 [optional]

Monday March 28

Jews and the Freedom Rides

Clayborne Carson, ‘Blacks and Jews in the Civil Rights Movement: the Case of SNCC’ in Jack Salzman, Adina Back and Gretchen Sorin, eds., *Bridges and Boundaries: African Americans and American Jews* (New York, 1992) [required]

Debra Schultz, *Going South: Jewish Women and Civil Rights Movement* (New York, 2001) [optional]

Wednesday March 30

Jewish Segregationists

Clive Webb, *Fight Against Fear: Southern Jews and Black Civil Rights* (Athens, Georgia, 2001), 114-146 [required]

David Chappell, “The Divided Mind of Southern Segregationists,” *Georgia Historical Quarterly*, 82 (:1) (1998) [required]

Anonymous, *A Jewish View on Desegregation* (Greenville, Mississippi), p.12;

Monday April 4

Rabbis and Civil Rights:

Strangers & Neighbors: Allen Krause, “Rabbis and Negro Rights in the South, 1957-1967,” 540-558 [required]

Gary Zola, “What Price Amos? Perry Nussbaum’s Career in Jackson, Mississippi” in Mark Bauman and Berkley Kalin (eds.), *The Quiet Voices: Southern Rabbis and Black Civil Rights, 1880s-1990s* (Tuscaloosa, Alabama, 1997), 230-257 [optional]

Clive Webb, “Big Struggle in a Small Town: Charles Mantinband in Hattiesburg, Mississippi” in Bauman and Kalin, *The Quiet Voices*, 213-229 [optional]

Wednesday April 6

Explaining Southern Jewish responses to Civil Rights: the “Fear Thesis”

Clive Webb, *Fight Against Fear: Southern Jews and Black Civil Rights* (Athens, Georgia, 2001), 43-68 [optional]

Strangers & Neighbors: Murray Friedman, ‘One Episode in Southern Jewry’s Response to Desegregation: An Historical Memoir,’ 528-539 [required]

Monday April 11

The Struggle Heads North

Jonathan Kaufman, “Blacks and Jews: The Struggle in the Cities,” in Jack Salzman and Cornel West, eds., *Struggles in the Promised Land* (New York, 1997), 107-21 [required]

Wednesday April 13

The acrimonious Collapse of the Black-Jewish Alliance

Murray Friedman, *What Went Wrong? The Creation and Collapse of the Black-Jewish Alliance* (New York, 1995) [optional]

Jonathan Sarna, ‘The Elusive Alliance’, *CommonQuest*, Winter 1998 [required]

Monday April 18

African American – Jewish relations since the 1980s

Taylor Branch, “Blacks and Jews: The Uncivil War,” in Jack Salzman et al., *Bridges and Boundaries* (New York, 1992), 50-69 [required]

Wednesday April 20

No class - Passover

Monday April 25

Review

Assignments

Medium Essay

You will write a historiographic essay of ~2,000 words that *critically analyzes* a dimension of the existing scholarship on the encounter between African Americans and Jews in the United States. Since the literature on the subject is broad, you will need to choose one time period or theme to focus on. Some possibilities include Jews and the Atlantic Slave Trade, Jews and slavery in the United States, Jews and Abolitionism, African Americans and Jews during Reconstruction, the Leo Frank trial, Jews and Jim Crow, Civil Rights etc.

Begin by identifying and reading as many appropriate articles and books on the topic as you can find. (Search the library catalogue, as well as relevant online databases such as Rambi. The suggested readings in the syllabus are a useful starting point). Read these texts carefully.

Your essay must do two things. Firstly, it must provide a literature review: an overview of what has been written on the subject. Describe how different historians have grappled with the subject. What have they chosen to focus on? What evidence do they draw on? What are their arguments? How do you account for the differences in interpretation? How have approaches to the subject shifted over time? Secondly, you must engage critically with the literature, analyzing its strengths and weaknesses. Has the subject been treated in a comprehensive and successful way? Were you convinced by the historians' arguments? What questions were you left with after reading the literature? What aspects of the topic need to be examined further?

The paper is due on **Monday February 21**.

Final Research Project

You will create an itinerary for a self-guided walking tour of historic sites (buildings, museums, parks, monuments etc.) in Charleston on a theme of your choice that relates to African Americans and/or Jews. The itinerary must be presented as a tour booklet containing a short (1,000 word) introductory essay, a detailed route map, interpreted photographs of the sites on the route, and pertinent historical information about each site. Your introductory essay must provide a historical overview and explanation of the theme of the tour, and demonstrate a familiarity with the scholarly literature on the subject.

Select and describe at least six sites. Ensure that you interpret each site for your readers, explaining in detail their histories and historical importance for the theme of the tour. Provide information that places the site within its relevant historical context. Provide footnotes that correctly cite the sources of information you have drawn upon.

Consider practicalities when designing your tour. Make sure that the sequence of sites is logical in terms of location and your tour narrative. Make sure your tour is not too long or

short, and that the sites are within close walking distance. The booklet must be attractively presented with engaging content intended for a general audience. The best itineraries will be printed and distributed at the Charleston Visitors Center.

You are free to choose the theme of your tour. Remember that the content of the tour must relate to African Americans and/or Jews. Here are some suggestions:

Artists and art
Scandal
Crime
Slavery
Free People of Color
Education
Civil Rights
Civil War
Food
Entertainment (theaters, bars, etc.)
Religion
Commerce

I encourage you to meet with me as soon as possible to discuss topics, resources and strategies for preparing your research paper.

Your tour guide must reflect a familiarity with the scholarship on the theme you have selected. There is an extensive bibliography of works written on Charleston and its history, as well as on Jews and African-Americans in the South. I recommend that you start by consulting Jonathan Poston, *The Buildings of Charleston*. Other key sources include histories of Charleston (e.g. Maurie McInnis, *The Politics of Taste in Antebellum Charleston*; William Fraser, *Charleston! Charleston!*), South Carolina (e.g. Robert Weir, *Colonial South Carolina*; Walter Edgar, *South Carolina: A History*), and African-Americans and Jews in the Lowcountry (Bernard Powers, *Black Charlestonians*; James Hagy, *This Happy Land*). These should only be a starting point. You will be rewarded for the depth of your research.

You will be required to hand in a two -page (~750 word) prospectus that outlines and explains your chosen theme, identifies potential sites for the tour, and identifies the sources you plan to use. This is due on **Wednesday March 2**.

You are required to hand in a first draft of your project on **Monday March 21**. The draft must include working versions of your introductory essay, tour map, and site descriptions.

The final version must be handed in on **Monday April 25**.