

## History of American Jews

History 387/Judaic Studies 387/American Culture 387

Course # 26183, 26173, 26182

Mason 3437

M/W 4:00-5:30

WINTER 2013

Prof. D. Dash Moore [ddmoore]

Office Hours: Thursdays 2-3, Haven 1703, and by appointment

This course asks how Jews resolved the tensions between being Jewish and American by exploring the history of American Jews with a focus on several important themes: immigration, politics, cultural creativity, religious change, and the establishment of a diasporic community with ties to Jews throughout the world.

**Required Reading:** Each student is responsible for obtaining and completing all assigned readings on time. Books to be assigned are available from campus area bookstores. Purchasing all readings is strongly recommended; however, all required readings also will be available either on reserve at the Undergraduate Library or online at the C-Tools website. The books available for purchase, in the order we will use them, are:

Jonathan Sarna, *American Judaism: A History* (Yale University Press, 2004).

Hasia Diner, *The Jews of the United States* (University of California Press, 2004)

Emily Bingham, *Mordecai: An Early American Family* (Hill & Wang, 2004).

Gerald Gamm, *Urban Exodus: Why the Jews Left Boston and the Catholics Stayed* (Harvard University Press, 1999).

Gertrude Berg, *The Molly Goldberg Cookbook* (Ivyland Press, 1999).

### Required Films:

"Hester Street"

"From Philadelphia to the Front"

"America and the Holocaust"

"A Serious Man"

### Optional books to purchase:

*American Jewish Identity Politics*, ed. Deborah Dash Moore (University of Michigan Press, 2008).

Richard Nagler, *My Love Affair with Miami Beach*

Jocelyn Cohen and Daniel Soyer, ed. *My Future is in America* (NYU Press, 2006)

Hasia Diner, *Hungering for America: Italian, Irish and Jewish Foodways in the Age of Migration* (Harvard University Press, 2001).

### Course requirements:

Read, think, consider, compare, discuss, write, question, and come to class. Lectures will build upon required reading and viewing. To learn students will need to engage the material before they come to class and be ready to question and consider alternative interpretations. There will be three short (500 words) response papers that address thematic questions. These papers will address diverse historical texts: reading or film or photographs. They are due on January 30<sup>th</sup>, February 13<sup>th</sup>, and April 3<sup>rd</sup>. In addition, students will be required to attend special guest lectures.

**Grading:**

Class preparation and participation (15%)

Three response papers (15% or 5% each)

Class presentation (10%)

Research paper (10%) on specific text due April 22nd.

Midterm Take-Home Exam (20%) due March 1.

Final Exam (30%) on May 2<sup>nd</sup> 8-10AM.

**Lectures:** Lectures will not repeat the reading assignments but will presume that students have read and thought about them beforehand. Lectures will focus on supplementing, integrating, or challenging the readings, and will present crucial ideas and information not found in the readings. Each class will include time for questions and discussion. Audiovisual sources will also be presented in class, especially during the second half of the term. IF YOU MISS A CLASS for health or academic reasons, arrange to borrow a friend's notes, and AFTER READING THEM, if you have questions, schedule an appointment with me.

**Students with Disabilities:** The University of Michigan is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. Request for accommodations by persons with disabilities may be made by contacting the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) Office located at G 664 Haven Hall. The SSD phone number is 734-763-3000. Once your eligibility for an accommodation has been determined you will be issued a verified individual services accommodation (VISA) form. Please present this form to me at the start of the term or at least two weeks prior to the accommodation date (test, project, etc.). We are committed to making this course accessible to all students. Please inform me as soon as possible of any short or long-term accommodation you anticipate that you might require. Documentation of the need for accommodation may be requested.

**Electronic Devices:** Laptop computers may be used in class ONLY for notes and readings for this course. All other electronic devices must be turned off and put away. During exams, all electronic devices must be turned off and placed out of reach. Use a watch or the wall clock, not your phone, for exam timekeeping. (Prof. Dash Moore will leave her cellphone on to receive official emergency notices.)

**Academic Honesty:** Academic integrity is expected and required. Using or providing unauthorized assistance on exams, using inadequately acknowledged ideas or words of others in your papers, or other forms of dishonesty in your work, may be grounds for failing this course and disciplinary action. If in any doubt about what is permitted, **ask**. Also see the LSA Academic Integrity website: <http://www.lsa.umich.edu/academicintegrity/>

**Use of Wikipedia and other web resources:** Please see handout for guidelines on use of Wikipedia for research paper. Beware of use of websites on Jews; they are often anti-Semitic sites that purport to convey “true” or “useful” information. If in any doubt about a website, **ask**. You will be responsible for citing **all** sources in your work.

**Course Schedule:**

Jan. 9                      Introduction: What is American Jewish History?

- Jan. 14        Interpreting Early American Jews  
Reading: Sarna, pp. 1-61; Diner, pp. 13-67.
- Jan. 16        Family Culture  
Reading: Bingham, part 1, pp. 3-74.  
Portraits of Early American Jews.
- Jan. 21        NO CLASS: MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY**
- Jan. 23        NO CLASS**
- Jan. 28        Gender and Religious Scruples  
Reading: Bingham, part 2, pp. 75-126.
- Jan. 30        Conversion and Conflict  
Reading: Bingham, part 3, pp. 127-190; 263-68.  
Pittsburgh Platform, 1885.  
Sarna, pp. 144-151.  
**First Response paper due**
- Feb. 4        Immigration: Family Economy  
Reading: Diner, "A Set Table: Jewish Food and Class in Eastern Europe,"  
in *Hungering for America*, pp. 146-177.  
"Minnie Goldstein," and Ben Reisman, "Why I Came to America," in Jocelyn  
Cohen & Daniel Soyer, ed. *My Future is in America* pp. 18-105.  
Lewis Hine and Jacob Riis photographs  
Emma Lazarus, "The New Colossus"
- Feb. 6        Gender Matters  
Reading: Diner, "Food Fights: Immigrant Jews and the Lure of America," in  
*Hungering for America*, pp. 178-219.  
"Chaim Kusnetz" & "Minnie Kusnetz" in Jocelyn Cohen & Daniel Soyer, ed.  
*My Future is in America* pp. 233-310.
- Feb. 11        Labor, Gender, and Jewish Politics  
Reading: Diner, "A Century of Jewish Politics," pp. 155-202.  
Paula Hyman, "Immigrant Women and Consumer Protest," American Jewish  
History 70 (September 1982), 91-105.
- Feb. 12        **Lecture: Marian Krzyzowski, "The Jewish Presence on Detroit's  
Chene Street," 202 S. Thayer St., room 2022, 4 pm.**
- Feb. 13        Interpreting Urban Acculturation  
Film: "Hester Street"  
**Second Response Paper Due**
- Feb. 18        Suburban Dreams, Jewish Realities

- Reading: Gamm, pp.11-95;
- Feb. 20      **Second Generation Struggles**  
 Reading: Gamm, pp. 113-171.  
 Beth Wenger, "From Neighborhood to New Deal," in *New York Jews and the Great Depression: Uncertain Promise*, pp. 103-135.
- Feb. 25      **Interpreting Religious Change**  
 Reading: Gamm, pp. 175-260.  
 Jeffrey Gurock, "From Fluidity to Rigidity: The Religious Worlds of Conservative and Orthodox Jews in Twentieth-Century America," in *American Jewish Identity Politics*, ed. Deborah Dash Moore, pp. 159-204.  
 Arthur Goren, "Rites of Community," in *Politics and Public Culture of American Jews*, pp. 48-82.
- Feb. 27      **Anti-Semitism in America**  
 Reading: Leonard Dinnerstein, "A History of American Anti-Semitism," in *From Haven to Home*, ed. Michael Grunberger, pp. 162-177.  
 Henry Ford, "The International Jew," and selected articles in the *Dearborn Independent*.  
 Film: "The Jewish Americans," excerpts.
- Mar. 1      Midterm Exam Due**
- Mar. 4-6      B R E A K**
- Mar. 11      **America, World War II and the Holocaust**  
 Reading: Henry L. Feingold, "Who shall bear guilt for the Holocaust?" in *Bearing Witness* pp. 255-276;  
 Hasia Diner, "Before 'The Holocaust': American Jews Confront Catastrophe, 1945-1962, in *American Jewish Identity Politics*, ed. Deborah Dash Moore, pp. 83-116.  
 Film: "America and the Holocaust"  
 Film: "From Philadelphia to the Front," excerpts
- Mar. 12      LECTURE: Jack Kugelmass, "Sifting the Ruins," Palmer Commons, 7 pm (reception 6:30)**
- Mar. 13      **Postwar American Jews**  
 Reading: Riv-Ellen Prell, "Triumph, Accommodation, and Resistance: American Jewish Life From the End of World War II to the Six Day War," in *History of Jews and Judaism in America*, ed. Marc Lee Raphael, pp. 114-141.  
 Jack Wertheimer, "American Jewry since 1945," in *From Haven to Home*, ed. Michael Grunberger, pp. 113-137.  
 Film: "A Serious Man"
- Mar. 18      **Jewish Mothers**

Reading: Riv-Ellen Prell, "Strangers in Paradise," in *Fighting to Become Americans*, pp. 142-176.  
 Berg, pp. 5-70.  
 TV: "Molly Goldberg," excerpts

Mar. 20 Kitchen Judaism  
 Reading: Joselit, "Kitchen Judaism," in *The Wonders of America*, pp. 171-218;  
 Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, "Kitchen Judaism," in *Getting Comfortable in New York* ed. Susan L. Braunstein and Jenna Weissman Joselit, pp. 75-105.

**Mar. 25-27 No Class: Passover**

Apr. 1 Civil Rights  
 Reading: Michael Staub, "Introduction," *The Jewish 1960s*, pp. xv-xxiii.  
 Michael Walzer, "A cup of Coffee and a Seat," pp. 3-11; Betty Alshuler, "Notes from the American Revolution, 1962," pp. 12-19; Richard Rubenstein, "The Rabbis Visit Birmingham," pp. 23-30; Joachim Prinz, "America Must Not Remain Silent," pp. 90-91; Myron Fenster, "The Princeton Plan Comes to Jackson Heights," pp. 92-98; Albert Vorspan, "Ten Ways Out for Tired Liberals," pp. 99-104, in *The Jewish 1960s*, ed. Staub.  
 Ballad for Americans with Paul Robeson.  
 Bob Dylan and the Folk Music Revival  
 Film: "No Way Home," excerpts.

Apr. 3 Picturing Jews  
 Richard Nagler, *My Love Affair with Miami Beach*  
**Third Response Paper Due**

Apr. 8 Zionism and Ethnic Identity  
 Reading: Arthur Goren, "Americanizing Zionist Pioneers," in *Politics and Public Culture of American Jews*, pp. 165-85.  
 M. Jay Rosenberg, "My Evolution as a Jew," and "To Jewish Uncle Toms," pp. 167-72, 232-36; Sharon Rose, "Zionism in the Middle East," pp. 180-83; Aviva Cantor Zuckoff, "Oppression of Amerika's Jews," pp. 248-55; Steven Cohen, "The JDL Politics of Experience," pp. 268-71, in *The Jewish 1960s*, ed. Staub.  
 Film: "Exodus," excerpts.

Apr. 10 Jewish American Feminism  
 Reading: Paula E. Hyman, "Jewish Feminism Faces the American Women's Movement: Convergence and Divergence," in *American Jewish Identity Politics*, ed. Deborah Dash Moore, pp. 221-240.

Apr. 15 Popular Culture  
 Reading: Jeffrey Shandler, "American Jewish Popular Culture," pp. 194-211;  
 Jeffrey Shandler, "What is American Jewish Culture?" in *Columbia History of Jews and Judaism in America* (2008), pp. 337-365.  
 Television: "Seinfeld," excerpt  
 Sports: Film: "The Life and Times of Hank Greenberg."

- Apr. 16      **Panel Discussion: Black Harlem and the Lower East Side, with Catherine Rottenberg, 202 S. Thayer St., room 2022, 4 pm.**
- Apr. 17      **Guest lecture and exhibit: Lynne Avadenka, 202 S. Thayer St.**
- Apr. 22      Interpreting Recent American Jewish History  
Reading: Sarna, pp. 356-374; Diner, pp. 305-358.  
**Research paper due**
- May 2      Final Exam: 8:00-10:00 am**