

Modern Jewish History/JUS 370a-001

The Jewish People in America

The University of Arizona/Fall 2011

Monday/Wednesday/Friday, 1:00-1:50PM, Chavez Building,
Room 104

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Judaic Studies Office: Marshall Building, Suite 420

Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 2:30-3:30PM, or by appointment

Description:

Once considered on the periphery of the Jewish world, American Jewry has become the largest (until recently) and arguably the most prosperous and influential Jewish community in the world after 1945. The course traces the history of Jews in America from their humble beginnings to what is often described as a blissful present. The course explores major themes in American Jewish history like religion, immigration, assimilation, antisemitism, patterns of political behavior, social mobility, inter-ethnic relations, and internal divisions.

The course looks at different ideologies that have regenerated and revised Jewish life, such as Reform and Conservative Judaism, Zionism, Jewish socialism. It also deals with questions of Jewish self-definition in America's ethnic and racial matrix and the profound influence of predominant American conceptions of group identity, ethnic pride and survival. Finally, we will also examine the contemporary debate regarding the future of Jews in America, in which some observers see decline and danger, while others see change and renaissance.

Course Format, Requirements, and Attendance Policy

This class is structured as a lecture which requires attendance and preparation. I cannot overemphasize the importance of your reading assignments. A failure to read the assigned

materials will affect not only your quizzes grades, but also your ability to deal with the written assignments. Students are expected to read ALL the assigned materials in advance of class. Attendance in lecture is required and constitutes 10% of your final grade. I will take attendance each time and any student who misses FOUR or more lectures throughout the semester will get an “E” grade (for those 10% of the final grade). Any student who misses **25% or more** of the course’s total number of lectures will FAIL the class. If extenuating circumstances such as illness force a student to miss one or more classes, the student remains responsible for the material covered during her/his absence. A physician’s note is required in such a case. **Tardiness** is disruptive to the class and unacceptable. If a student is tardy (arriving more than TWO minutes after the beginning of class) THREE times, it will constitute one unexcused absence. The same goes for leaving class before it ends. In keeping with University policy I will provide reasonable accommodation of any student’s religious beliefs with regard to the scheduling of examinations and other academic requirements for this course. Please consult with the professor at least two weeks in advance of any such scheduling issues.

Final Grade Breakdown:

- Attendance – 10%
- Two pop quizzes (at least) – 15% (combined)
- Midterm exam: 25%
- Term paper – 20%
- Final exam: 30%.

Please note: late papers will lose 10 points for every day late.

92% and above.....	A
82-91.99%	B
72-81.99%	C
61-71.99%	D
Below 61%	E

Standards of Student Conduct

The use of computers in class is STRICTLY FORBIDDEN. The ONLY exception would be students who can provide a formal authorization from the Disability Resources Center (DRC). The use of texting, cell phones and pagers is also strictly forbidden. Students violating these rules will be asked to leave the class for the day, and will have an absence recorded for that date.

Plagiarism and other forms academic misconduct are strictly forbidden according to the Student Code of Academic Integrity. Students may not plagiarize or represent the work of others as their own, nor modify academic work. Plagiarism is defined as using the ideas and words of others without indicating whose ideas and whose words they are. Do not plagiarize, even inadvertently. If you quote as few as three words, use quotation marks

and provide the reference. If you use someone's ideas but not their actual words, provide the reference but do not use quotation marks. For the UA Code on Academic integrity see: <http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/codeofacademicintegrity>. For further information on how to avoid plagiarism see <http://www.library.arizona.edu/help/tutorials/plagiarism/index.html>

Behavior that could be considered threatening is strictly forbidden according to UA policy (see policy.web.arizona.edu/~policy/threaten.shtml).

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The information contained in the course syllabus, other than the grading policy, may be subject to change with reasonable advance notice as deemed appropriate by the professor.

Required Books

Hasia R. Diner, The Jews of the United States, 1654-2004

Samuel C. Heilman, Portrait of American Jews: The Last Half of the 20th Century

Jonathan D. Sarna, (ed.), The American Jewish Experience

All the assigned books are available for purchase at the campus bookstore. There is also a copy of each book at the Center for Judaic Studies that you can read there (but not borrow). The other readings are available online via D2L.

* Primary documents (online)

Scholarly readings (online)

Lectures and Readings

(Note: the weekly readings are due on the first meeting of the week)

Week 1 (Aug. 22-26): Introduction and Jews in Colonial, Revolutionary, and Early America

Diner, The Jews of the United States, pp. 1-9, 13-67

From Sarna, The American Jewish Experience:

“Introduction,” pp. xiii-xix.

Jacob R. Marcus, “The American Colonial Jew: A Study in Acculturation,” pp. 6-17.

Malcolm H. Stern, “The 1820s: American Jewry Comes of Age,” pp. 31-37.

* A letter by Abigail Franks (1743), “The Dread of Intermarriage”, in Jacob R. Marcus, The Jew in the American World, pp. 42-43

* The Hebrew Congregation of Newport, Rhode Island, “A Message of Welcome to George Washington” (1790), and Washington’s “Reply” in Paul Mendes-Flohr and Jehuda Reinharz, The Jew in the Modern World, pp. 457-459

* “Philadelphia Jewry protests against Persecution of Jews in Damascus” (1840), in Jacob R. Marcus, The Jew in the American World, pp. 185-187

Weeks 2 (Aug. 29-Sep. 2): The “Germans” Are Coming

Diner, The Jews of the United States, pp. 71-88, 99-103, 140-147

The American Jewish Experience:

Stephan Rohrbacher, “From Wuerttemberg to America: A Nineteenth Century Village on Its Way to America”, pp. 44-58

Barry E. Supple, “A Business Elite: German-Jewish Financiers in Nineteenth-Century New York,” pp. 99-112

* Letters from immigrants (1853-1880), in Marcus, The Jew in the American World, pp. 192-195

* Louis Gratz, “From Peddler to Regimental Commander” (1861-1862), ibid, pp. 220-224

Weeks 3-4 (Sep. 7-16): The Emergence of Reform Judaism in America

Class is cancelled on Sep. 5 – Labor Day

Diner, The Jews of the United States, pp. 117-122, 128-133

The American Jewish Experience:

Michael A. Meyer, “America: The Reform’s Movement Land of Promise”, pp. 60-81

Karla Goldman, Beyond the Synagogue Gallery, pp. 78-120

Dianne Ashton, “The Lessons of the Hebrew Sunday School,” in Pamela Nadell (Ed.), American Jewish Women’s History, pp. 26-38

* Conference of Reform Rabbis, “The Pittsburgh Platform” (1885), Mendes-Flohr and Reinharz The Jew in the Modern World, pp. 468-469

* Statement by the Orthodox Congregational Union of America (1898), ibid, pp. 469-470

* “The Trefah – Unkosher – Banquet” (1883), in Marcus, The Jew in the American World, pp. 240-241

Week 5 (Sep. 19-Sep. 23): Life in America of the Mid-19th Century

Diner, The Jews of the United States, pp. 155-160, 162-169

The American Jewish Experience:

Naomi W. Cohen, “The Christian Agenda”, pp. 82-97

Gary L. Bunker & John Appel, “‘Shoddy’, Anti-Semitism, and the Civil War”, American Jewish History 82 (1994), pp. 43-71

* I. J. Benjamin, “The Education of Jewish Women in America” (1859-1862), in Marcus, The Jew in the American World, pp. 253-255

* "The Manhattan Beach Affair" (1879), Mendes-Flohr and Reinhartz, The Jew in the Modern World, pp. 465-466

Weeks 6-7 (Sep. 26-Oct. 5): The Immigrants from Eastern Europe
Class is cancelled on Sep. 28-30 (Rosh Hashanah) and Oct. 7 (Yom Kippur)
In-class midterm exam on Wednesday, Oct. 5

Diner, The Jews of the United States, pp. 88-99, 103-111, 122-128, 147-154

The American Jewish Experience:

Deborah Dwork, "Immigrant Jews on the Lower East Side of New York: 1880-1914," pp. 120-135

Moses Rischin, "Germans versus Russians," pp. 138-150.

Irving Howe, World of Our Fathers, 26-63

* M. E. Ravage, An American in the Making, pp. 70-83

* Irving Howe and Kenneth Libo, How We Lived (excerpts from memoirs and the Yiddish press), pp. 26-35

Week 8 (Oct. 10-12): Life in Progressive America, World War I and Intra-Jewish disputes

Class is cancelled on Oct. 14 (Sukkot)

Diner, The Jews of the United States, pp. 160-161, 169-202

The American Jewish Experience:

Melvyn I. Urofsky, "Zionism: An American Experience," pp. 245-255

Andrew R. Heinze, "Adapting to Abundance: Luxuries, Holidays, and Jewish Identity," pp. 165-182

Eric L. Goldstein, The Price of Whiteness, pp. 51-85

* Morris Winchevsky, "A Socialist Parodies the Ten Commandments" (1895), Marcus, The Jew in the American World, pp. 346-347

* "Resolutions of the American Jewish Congress" (1918), ibid, pp. 337-339

* Israel Friedlaender, "The Division Between German and Russian Jews" (1915), Mendes-Flohr and Reinhartz, The Jew in the Modern World, pp. 486-487

* Anti-Defamation League, "A Statement of Policy" (1915), ibid, pp. 507-509

Week 9 (Oct. 17-19): The Jewish "Problem" in the Interwar Period

Class is cancelled on Oct. 21 (Simchat Torah)

Diner, The Jews of the United States, pp. 205-215, 222-246

The American Jewish Experience:

Leo P. Ribuffo, "Henry Ford and *The International Jew*", pp. 199-218

Lloyd P. Gartner, "The Midpassage of American Jewry", pp. 256-267

Jonathan Pollack, "Jewish Problems: Eastern and Western Jewish Identities in

Conflict at the University of Wisconsin, 1919-1941," American Jewish History (2001), pp. 161-180

Ruth Gay, Unfinished People, pp. 56-61

* Henry Ford, "The International Jew: The World's Problem" (1920), Mendes-Flohr and Reinharz, The Jew in the Modern World, pp. 512-514

* "A Protest Against Antisemitism" (1921), ibid, pp. 514-515

Week 10 (Oct. 24-28): Revisiting Reform and the Changing Face of Jewish Tradition

Diner, The Jews of the United States, pp. 246-258

Jeffrey Gurock, "The Winnowing of American Orthodoxy", American Jewish Orthodoxy in Historical Perspective, pp. 299-312

David Kaufman, Shul With a Pool: The Synagogue-Center in American Jewish History, pp. 242-274

*Mordecai Kaplan, "The Reconstruction of Judaism" (1920), Mendes-Flohr and Reinharz, The Jew in the Modern World, pp. 499-502

*Bernard Revel, "The American Yeshiva" (1926), ibid, pp. 504-507

**"The Columbus Platform," (1937), ibid, pp. 517-518.

Week 11 (Oct. 31-Nov. 4): American Jewry and the Holocaust

Term paper is due on Monday, Oct. 31

Diner, The Jews of the United States, pp. 215-222

The American Jewish Experience:

Henry L. Feingold, "Who Shall Bear Guilt for the Holocaust? The Human Dilemma", pp. 273-292

Stephen H. Norwood, "Marauding Youth and the Christian Front: Antisemitic Violence in Boston and New York During World War II", American Jewish History 91 (2003), pp. 233-267

* The American Jewish Conference (1943), Mendes-Flohr and Reinharz, The Jew in the Modern World, pp. 519-522

*American Council for Judaism, "A Statement of Policy" (1944), ibid, pp. 523-524

Week 12 (Nov. 7-Nov. 9): The Beginning of a "Golden Era"?

Class is cancelled on Nov. 11 (Veterans Day)

Diner, The Jews of the United States, pp. 259-265

The American Jewish Experience:

Arthur Goren, "A 'Golden Decade' for American Jews: 1945-1955," pp. 294-311.

* "Jewish Unemployment Problem, Chicago" (1954), Marcus, The Jew in the American World, 411-412

* Mrs. Allen I. Edles, “The American Jewish Woman of Tomorrow” (1958), ibid, 455-456

Week 13 (Nov. 14-18): Content and Discontent in the 1950s

Diner, The Jews of the United States, pp. 276-304

Samuel C. Heilman, Portrait of American Jews, pp. xi-46

The American Jewish Experience:

Deborah Dash Moore, “Jewish Migration in Postwar America: The Case of Miami and Los Angeles”, pp. 312-327

Bernard Malamud, “The Jewbird” (1963)

Philip Roth, “Eli the Fanatic” (1959), Goodbye Columbus, pp. 180-216

* J. Alvin Kugelmass, “Name-Changing – and What It Gets You”, Commentary 14 (1952), pp. 145-150

Week 14-15 (Nov. 21-30): In the Eye of the Storm – the 1960s

Class is cancelled on Nov. 23-25 (Thanksgiving Day)

Heilman, Portrait of American Jewry, pp. 47-100

The American Jewish Experience:

Jack Wertheimer, “The Turbulent Sixties”, pp. 330-347

Deborah Dash Moore, “From David to Goliath: American Representations of Jews around the Six-Day War”, Eli Lederhendler (Ed.), The Six-Day War and World Jewry, pp. 69-80

* Albert Vorspan, “The Freedom Rides” (1962), Michael E. Staub (Ed.), The Jewish Sixties, pp. 19-22

* M. Jay Rosenberg, “To Jewish Uncle Toms” (1969), ibid, pp. 232-236

* Balfour Brickner, “My Zionist Dilemmas” (1970), ibid, pp. 184-187

Week 16 (Dec. 2-7): The Vanishing American Jews?

Diner, The Jews of the United States, pp. 305-354

Heilman, Portrait of American Jewry, pp. 101-164.

The American Jewish Experience:

Arthur Hertzberg, “United States Jewry—A Look Forward,” pp. 348-355

Samuel G. Freedman, Jew vs. Jew: The Struggle for the Soul of American Jewry, 284-337

Final Exam: Monday, December 12 @ 10:30AM, location TBA

No early or late exams will be permitted.

