

## NEJS 162a AMERICAN JUDAISM Spring 2006

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Office hours: Wednesday 2-4 and anytime by appointment

### Course Requirements:

- (1) Assigned Reading; (2) Brief analysis (2-page) paper – due **February 2, 2006** (3) Midterm book report – due **March 1, 2006**; (3) Research Paper – one page prospectus due **March 9, 2006**; draft for first reading (optional) due **April 6, 2006**; papers received by **April 24, 2006** receive a five point bonus; **last date to submit papers is May 1, 2006; please submit electronically and in hard copy**); (4) Final exam is at 9:15 on **May 8, 2006**

*Note: Regular attendance at lectures and at sections is necessary to obtain a good grade in this course. Attendance and participation will be considered when figuring the grade.*

### Grading Scale:

Brief analysis paper – 10%; midterm – 20%; lower of research paper & final – 30%; higher of research paper and final – 40% Attendance & participation will determine the grade, up or down, for students who are “on the line” between two grades.

### Attention:

**If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please see me immediately.**

### Major Texts (available for purchase in bookstore):

Jonathan D. Sarna American Judaism: A History (2004) [=AmJud]

Jacob R. Marcus, The Jew in the American World (1996) [=Marcus]

Jonathan D. Sarna, The American Jewish Experience [=AJE], 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 1997

Electronic Reserves [=ER]

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Edith Gelles, Letters of Abigail Franks – possible book report - not required

Lance Sussman, Isaac Leeser (1995) – possible book report book - not required

Emily Bingham, Mordecai: An Early American Family (2003) – not required

Leonard Dinnerstein, Antisemitism in America -- not required

### Brief Analysis, Midterm Book Report and Required Research Paper

See attached assignment sheets

### Required Reading

All books and articles should be on reserve. Articles are also on webct. For additional bibliography, see Sarna, *AJE; Modern Judaism*, 10 (1990), pp. 343-365; and B.Holtz (ed.) *The Schocken Guide of Jewish Books* (1992), pp.108-127.

*Note: Students without background may want to read a one-volume introduction to Judaism (see M.Fishbane, *Judaism*) or an encyclopedia article.*

#### I. 1/18 From Spain to Recife to New Amsterdam

1. Yosef Kaplan, "The Sephardim in North-Western Europe and the New World," *The Sephardi Legacy*, ed. H. Beinart (Jerusalem 1992), II, 240-287 [ER]
2. Sarna, *AmJud*, 1-8

#### II. 1/19 Colonial American Judaism

1. Sarna, *AmJud*, 8-30
2. Marcus, 30-33, 42-43 [rest of part I is optional]
3. Holly Snyder, "Queens of the Household: The Jewish Women of British America, 1700-1800" [ER]
4. Edith B. Gelles, "Introduction to *The Letters of Abigail Levy Franks*," xv-1 [ER] [optional]

#### III. 1/26 The Revolution and Its Impact

1. Sarna, *AmJud*, 31-61
2. Marcus, 93-110, 125-126, 136-46
3. Sarna, *AJE*, 29-37
4. Richard Morris, "The Role of the Jew in the American Revolution in Historical Perspective," in G. Rosen, *Jewish Life in America* (1987), pp.8-27. [optional]
5. S.Chyet, "The Political Rights of the Jews in the United States," *American Jewish Archives* 10 (April 1958), 14-75. [optional]
6. E.Eitches, "Maryland's Jew Bill," *American Jewish Historical Q.* 60 (March 1971), pp.258-280. [optional]
7. Sarna & Dalin, *Religion and State in the American Jewish Experience*, 61-97. [optional]

**Brief Analysis Paper: What was the most important impact of the American Revolution on American Jews or American Jewish Life? (2 pages – due February 2, 2006)**

#### IV. 2/6 Central European Immigrants and their Strategies for Preserving Judaism

1. Sarna, *AmJud*, 62-102
2. Sarna *AJE*, 41-81
3. Diane Ashton, "The Lessons of the Hebrew Sunday School" [ER]
4. Lance Sussman, "Isaac Leeser and the Protestantization of American Judaism," *American Jewish Archives* 38 (April 1986), 1-21 [optional]
5. Israel Tabak, "Rabbi Abraham Rice of Baltimore," *Tradition* 7 (Summer 1965), 100-120 [optional]

#### V. 2/13 Union & Disunion

1. Sarna, *AmJud*, 103-124

2. Dianne Ashton, “Shifting Veils: Religion, Politics and Womanhood in the Civil War Writings of American Jewish Women” [ER]
3. Marcus, 198-202

[2/20-24 – February Vacation]

VI. 2/27 A New Era, A Great Awakening, A Redefinition of Reform

1. Sarna, *AmJud*, 124-151
2. Sarna, *A Great Awakening* [ER]
3. Sarna, *AJE*, 84-112
4. Marcus, 240-243

**3/1 – Book Report Due**

VII. 3/6 East European Immigrant Judaism

1. Sarna, *AmJud*, 151- 207
2. Sarna, *AJE*, 117-82
3. Shelly Tenenbaum, “Borrowers or Lenders Be: Jewish Immigrant Women’s Credit Networks” [ER]
4. Alice Kessler-Harris, “Organizing the Unorganizable” [ER]

**3/9 One page prospectus for research papers due**

VIII. 3/20 The Great War and Its Aftermath in American Judaism

1. Sarna, *AmJud*, 208-223
2. Sarna, *AJE*, 197-216, 258-267

IX. 3/27 The Spectrum of Judaism During the Interwar Years

1. Sarna, *AmJud*, 223-258
2. Sarna, *AJE*, 217-244
3. Regina Stein, “The Road to Bat Mitzvah in America” [ER]
4. Jenna W. Joselit, “The Jewish Priestess and Ritual” [ER]
5. Beth Wenger, “Budgets, Boycotts, and Babies: Jewish Women in Great Depression” [ER]
6. Charles Liebman, “Reconstructionism in American Jewish Life,” *American Jewish Year Book* (1970) [ER] [optional]

X. 4/3 Confronting the Holocaust

1. Sarna, *AmJud*, 258-271
2. Sarna, *AJE*, 273-292

**First draft of research papers due for optional first reading by April 6**

XI 4/10 Postwar Judaism

1. Sarna, *AmJud*, 272-374
2. Sarna, *AJE*, 293-355
3. Paula Hyman, “Jewish Feminism Faces the American Women’s Movement [ER]

4. Deborah E. Lipstadt, “Feminism and American Judaism” [ER]

**April 24 – Research Papers submitted by this day receive 5 point bonus.**

**May 1 - Research Papers due (electronic and hard copy)**

**May 8 – Final Exam**

#### BRIEF ANALYSIS PAPER

**Due February 2, 2006**

Read all of the required reading and as much of the optional reading as you need concerning the American Revolution and its impact.. Write a brief (2 double-spaced pages) analysis focusing on what you see as the Revolution’s most important impact upon Jews. Do *not* summarize the articles or attempt to be all-inclusive. Instead, focus on shaping a coherent, well-conceptualized argument supported by your reading. *Be sure to use quotation marks around any direct quotes and to footnote them appropriately.*

#### MIDTERM BOOK REPORT

**Due March 1, 2006**

Read and review (ca. 5 pp.) any book dealing primarily with American Judaism prior to 1881. A selected list of books follows; others are acceptable with permission of the instructor. Note that books by Gelles, Sussman, Bingham and Dinnerstein are on sale at the bookstore.

Your review should (1) summarize the narrative and central arguments of the book (its thesis, content and scope) with special emphasis on the themes of the course; and (2) evaluate the book based on published book reviews and/or comparisons with other sources (like the textbooks for this course). Your own opinion concerning the book’s credibility and style is also a necessary part of the review, but it is not sufficient. *You must also use and cite additional sources.*

**WARNING:** These books are not on reserve, and are therefore available on a first-come, first-served basis from the library. Do not wait until the last minute to select your book. If you are interested in reviewing a book that is not on the list, check with the instructor to ensure that it is suitable.

#### **Biographies**

Dianne Ashton, REBECCA GRATZ

James G. Heller, ISAAC M. WISE

Jonathan D. Sarna, JACKSONIAN JEW: THE TWO WORLDS OF MORDECAI M. NOAH

H. Scharfman, THE FIRST RABBI [ABRAHAM RICE]

Lance Sussman, ISAAC LEESER

Sefton Temkin, ISAAC M. WISE

Gary P. Zola, ISAAC HARBY

### **Memoirs & Letters**

S.N.Carvalho, INCIDENTS OF TRAVEL  
E. Gelles (ed.) THE LETTERS OF ABIGAIL LEVY FRANKS  
E. Ashkenazi (ed.), THE CIVIL WAR DIARY OF CLARA SOLOMON  
J.R.Marcus, MEMOIRS OF AMERICAN JEWS (any volume)  
I.M. Wise, REMINISCENCES  
M. Young (ed.) LAST ORDER OF THE LOST CAUSE [R.J.Moses memoir]

### **Community Studies**

H.Grinstein, THE RISE OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF NEW YORK  
J.W.Hagy, THIS HAPPY LAND: THE JEWS OF COLONIAL AND ANTEBELLUM  
CHARLESTON  
B.W.Korn, THE EARLY JEWS OF NEW ORLEANS  
E. Wolf and M. Whiteman, THE HISTORY OF THE JEWS OF PHILADELPHIA

### **Period Studies**

Avraham Barkai, BRANCHING OUT: GERMAN-JEWISH IMMIGRATION TO THE US  
Naomi W. Cohen, ENCOUNTER WITH EMANCIPATION: THE GERMAN JEWS IN THE  
US  
Hasia Diner, A TIME FOR GATHERING: THE SECOND MIGRATION  
Josephine Goldmark, PILGRIMS OF '48  
B.W.Korn, AMERICAN JEWRY AND THE CIVIL WAR  
J.R.Marcus, THE COLONIAL AMERICAN JEW  
Samuel Reznick, UNRECOGNIZED PATRIOTS [ on Jews and Revolutionary War]

### **Topical Studies**

Stephen Birmingham, OUR CROWD  
Moshe Davis, THE EMERGENCE OF CONSERVATIVE JUDAISM  
Leonard Dinnerstein, ANTISEMITISM IN AMERICA [covers all of US history]  
Leon Jick, THE AMERICANIZATION OF THE SYNAGOGUE  
Robert Rosen, THE JEWISH CONFEDERATES  
Alan Silverstein, ALTERNATIVES TO ASSIMILATION

## **RESEARCH PAPER**

Select one of the following research projects. You must report your choice, in writing, by **March 9th**. Spell out in your prospectus what you plan to research, what questions you plan to ask, and what sources you plan to consult. Students may submit a draft of their paper to their TA by **April 6th** if they want preliminary comments. Research papers handed in by **April 24th** receive a five point bonus. **Last day to submit papers is May 1st. Please submit both in hard copy and in electronic form.** *Be sure to use quotation marks around any direct quotes and to footnote your sources appropriately.*

**Option #1** – Trace any theme in American Jewish life (1843-1850) based on the on-line edition of *The Occident* ([www.theoccident.com](http://www.theoccident.com)). Possible topics include: “Jewish-Christian Relations,”

“Jews and Christian Missionaries,” “Jewish Religious Life,” “Jewish women,” “Southern Jewish Life,” and “American Jewish Culture,” but an infinite number of other topics are possible. While *The Occident* will be your main source, you certainly want to use secondary sources to provide context and background.. Remember that your job is both to present your primary data and to analyze it based upon close reading of the texts. The point is to develop a theme in American Jewish history based on a careful study of *original sources*.

**Option #2** – Trace any theme dealing with American Jewry and the Civil War based on the primary materials available at: <http://www.theoccident.com/civilwar.htm>. For background, be sure to look up B.W.Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War*, and R.Rosen, *The Jewish Confederates*. Remember that your job is both to present your primary data and to analyze it based upon close reading of the texts. The point is to develop a theme in American Jewish history based on a careful study of *original sources*.

**Option #3** – Trace any theme in American Jewish life (1895-1899) using the on-line edition of *The American Jewess* (available at [www.jwa.org](http://www.jwa.org)). This was the first English-language Jewish periodical aimed at women, and it is full of interesting material bearing on women’s history. While *The American Jewess* will be your main source, you certainly want to use secondary sources to provide context and background.. Remember that your job is both to present your primary data and to analyze it through close reading of the texts. The point is to develop a theme in American Jewish history based on a careful study of *original sources*. **NOTE:** *The Jewish Women’s Archive is offering a \$350 prize for the best undergraduate essay (8-25 pages) utilizing substantial material from The American Jewess. See their website for details.*

**Option #4**– Analyze American antisemitic literature. A good deal of antisemitica, including Henry Ford’s THE INTERNATIONAL JEW, is available on the World Wide Web; there are also many volumes in the library. Be sure to consult Leonard Dinnerstein’s *Antisemitism in America* and Leo Ribuffo’s article in Sarna, *AJE*, 201-216 for context and methodology.

**Option #5** – Compare the published histories of several American synagogues (the library has many such histories in its collection; for a bibliography see J.D. Sarna & A.S.Korros, *American Synagogue History*; see also K.Olitzky, *The American Synagogue: A Historical Dictionary & Sourcebook*). Try to explain why changes took place, what influenced the different synagogues, who the agents of change were, and so forth, making sure to note and explain both similarities and differences. For background on the study of congregations, see J.Wind and J.Lewis, *American Congregations* (2 vols.)

**Option #6** – Compare any issue or period in American Judaism with a parallel issue or period in the history of at least one other American faith. (For example: religious challenges faced by immigrant Jews and immigrant Catholics or Muslims; the limits of religious liberalism in Reform Judaism and Unitarianism; the problem of “Americanization” in Judaism and Catholicism; the issue of Women’s ordination in Judaism and Protestantism.)

**Option #7** – Use one of the microfilm collections of documents (letters of Louis Brandeis, Henrietta Szold etc.) available at Brandeis, or documents and newspapers available on-line at [www.jewish-history.com](http://www.jewish-history.com) (see also links there) and analyze in terms of the themes of the course.

What can you learn from this material about American Judaism? How does the correspondence illuminate an era or a theme? It is often helpful to provide photocopies of the primary sources letters in an appendix. You may also elect to create a “reader” based on this material. You need to write a critical introduction, analyze the letters, supply relevant footnotes, and provide copies or typed transcripts of the letters themselves. [For a list of microfilm collections of American Jewish manuscripts in the Brandeis library, see the library’s home page].

**Option #8** – Select a research project of your own choosing. The project must utilize primary sources, ask significant questions, and be doable in one semester. Students are advised to discuss these projects with their instructor. Approval of the one-page prospectus outlining the subject is essential.

## USEFUL WEBSITES

<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/haventohome/> - on-line exhibit covering all of American Jewish history with excellent pictures and some primary documents

<http://www.jewish-history.com/Default.htm> - fine collection of materials on 19<sup>th</sup> century, particularly Civil War and Westward expansion; also seven volumes of *The Occident* on-line.

<http://www.americanjewisharchives.org> – home page of American Jewish Archives

<http://www.ajhs.org/> - homepage of the American Jewish Historical Society

<http://www.cjh.org/academic/findingaids/ajhs/> -- Selected finding aids of the American Jewish Historical Society's archival collections

<http://www.ajhs.org/research/adaje.cfm> on-line edition of *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society*

<http://www.jwa.org/> - home page of Jewish Women’s Archive (and access to *The American Jewess*).

<http://www.hebrewbooks.org/> - excellent collection of American Hebraica all digitized, including some English language Orthodox texts and magazines

<http://sceti.library.upenn.edu/morais/index.cfm> - The ledger of Sabato Morais, first President of Jewish Theological Seminary. Excellent primary source.

<http://www.jtsa.edu/library/digitalcollections.shtml> - two excellent digital collections: 100 rare American Jewish pamphlets and images of Jews in American newspapers. Excellent primary sources

<http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/trianglefire/> - important collection of sources concerning the 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire. See also *Triangle*, by David Von Drehle.

<http://www.celebrate350.org/> - contains useful material bearing on American Jewish history and life, compiled for 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Jews in America. See especially the listing of “traveling and online exhibits.”

<http://www.nyu.edu/library/bobst/collections/exhibits/tam/JLC/opener.html> - Deals with the Jewish Labor Committee and the battle against Naziism. Brandeis has both microfilms and published primary sources from the Jewish Labor Committee fully documenting its activities

[http://www.brown.edu/Facilities/University\\_Library/exhibits/yiddish/](http://www.brown.edu/Facilities/University_Library/exhibits/yiddish/) - exhibit of American Yiddish sheet music

<http://www.jewishwomenexhibit.org/journey.asp> - Exhibit on East European Jewish immigrant women's lives in Midwest [see L.Schloff, *And Prairie Dogs Weren't Kosher*]

<http://www.fathom.com/course/21701756/index.html> - Illustrated on-line course based on Deborah Dash Moore's *G.I.Jews*

<http://www.library.wisc.edu/libraries/WomensStudies/jewwom/jwmain.htm> - Annotated Bibliography and Guide to Archival Resources on the History of Jewish Women in America, compiled by Phyllis Holman Weisbard. This takes viewers to the 2004 update to Weisbard's 1997 bibliography which first appeared in *Jewish Women in America: An Historical Encyclopedia*.

[http://www.jewishlaborcommittee.org/2006/01/readings\\_on\\_the\\_american\\_jewis.html](http://www.jewishlaborcommittee.org/2006/01/readings_on_the_american_jewis.html) - Bibliography re American Jewish Labor Movement

[www.loc.gov/ammem](http://www.loc.gov/ammem) - American memory site of Library of Congress. A search under "Jews" and "Judaism" will turn up hundreds of items (many hundreds more are listed under separate headings – e.g. Brandeis)