

NEJS 162a AMERICAN JUDAISM SPRING 2009

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Office hours: Wed 2-4 and anytime by appointment

Course Requirements:

- (1) Assigned Reading; (2) Brief analysis (2-page) paper – due **February 2, 2009** (3) Midterm primary source paper – due **Feb 12, 2009** if you want chance to rewrite otherwise, **February 23, 2009**; (4) Research Paper – one page prospectus due **March 2, 2009**, draft for first reading (optional) due **April 8, 2009**; papers due **April 23, 2009**; (5) Final exam

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], 2nd edition, 1997

Electronic Reserves [=ER]

Brief Analysis, Midterm Primary Source Papers, and Required Research Paper

See attached assignment sheets

Required Reading

All books and articles should be on reserve. Articles are also on Latte. For additional bibliography, see Sarna, *AmJud & 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. 1/14 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
3. Marcus, 29-33
4. Paul Finkelman, "A Land That Needs People for its Increase" [ER]
5. James Homer Williams, "An Atlantic Perspective on the Jewish Struggle for Rights and Opportunities in Brazil, New Netherland and New York" [ER]
6. Samuel Oppenheim, "Early History of the Jews in New York, 1654-1664," online at Google Books
http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&id=jJEvn6AoYa8C&dq=Samuel+Oppenheim+New+York&printsec=frontcover&source=web&ots=hfeZdTYsHd&sig=tUKgYD-4f43NaCdAJp-zHDSvLg&sa=X&oi=book_result&resnum=4&ct=result#PPP1,M1
7. Dutch West India Company and the Jews – email exchange [ER]

II. 1/20 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 Abigaill Levy Franks*," xv-l [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.Chyetz, "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: Why did the Dutch West India Company overrule Peter Stuyvesant and decide to allow Jews to remain in New Amsterdam? (2 pages – due February 2, 2009)

IV. 2/2 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]

[Midterm Paper due Feb 12 1 if you want chance to rewrite; otherwise Feb 23rd]

V. 2/23 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

3/2 one-page prospectus for final research paper due

VI. 3/2 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

VII. 3/9 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]

VIII. 3/23 The Great War and Its Aftermath in American Judaism

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

IX. 3/30 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. 4/6 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 8

XI 4/20 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]

Final draft of research paper due April 23rd.

XII 4/29 A Look Ahead

BRIEF ANALYSIS PAPER

Due February 2, 2009

Write a 2 page paper answering this question: **Why did the Dutch West India Company overrule Peter Stuyvesant and decide to allow Jews to remain in New Amsterdam?** Use the material under week 1, and any additional reading you decide to undertake, to understand various views on this question. Write a brief (2 double-spaced pages) analysis offering your view, making sure to support it with *footnoted* references to primary and secondary sources. 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 PRIMARY SOURCE PAPER

Due February 12, if you are submitting draft; final paper on February 23. [Be sure to submit both first draft and final draft if you wrote both.]

There are now several data bases that make available 19th century American newspapers, magazines and other primary sources including the *New York Times*, 19th Century US Newspapers (available on Louis), the *Occident* (<http://theoccident.com/Occident/index.html>), and the *American Jewess* (available at www.jwa.org). Use one or more of these data bases to find newspaper articles dealing with American Jews or Judaism (words such as Jews, Judaism, Hebrew, Israelite, synagogue, temple will yield hundreds of articles; proper names like Noah, Cohen, Levi, Benjamin etc. will also yield many hits.) There are thousands of wonderful references on "19th Century Masterfile" on the library's data base website. **Create a primary source reader containing not more than five documents that shed light on any significant or unusual aspect of nineteenth century American Jewish life. Be sure to introduce your document(s), providing suitable background and context, and add footnotes where you explain anything in your document that requires an explanation.** Do not use any document

found in Marcus, *The Jews in the American World* or in other published collections of documents, but you can use Marcus' primary source reader as a model for what you will produce (except that Marcus puts explanations in square brackets, while you should use footnotes.) For example, you might supply examples of articles on the depiction of Jewish holidays in America, with an analytic explanation and footnotes; or you might look at Jewish charity balls; or you might look at articles on the Maryland Jew Bill or on Mordecai Noah or on the response to pogroms. Unusual and historically revealing documents are more likely to succeed than routine boring ones. *Be sure to submit the primary sources as well as your introduction and notes!*

RESEARCH PAPER

Select one of the following research projects. You must report your choice, in writing, by **March 2nd**. 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 8th** if they want preliminary comments. **Last day to submit papers is April 23rd.** **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 based on materials in the 19th Century Masterfile, the on-line edition of *The Occident* (www.theoccident.com), or other primary sources. Possible topics include: “Jewish-Christian Relations,” “Jews and Christian Missionaries,” “Jewish Religious Life,” “Jewish Women,” “Southern Jewish Life,” and “American Jewish Culture,” but many other topics are possible; use your imagination. Make sure 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*. [Note: Do not use material from midterm paper. This paper must be in narrative form.]

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> or other data bases (see civil war data bases on library website). 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). 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*.

Option #4—Trace any theme in American Jewish life using Jewish newspapers and periodicals. Be sure 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 #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*.

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, Louis Marshall etc.) available at Brandeis, 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? [For a list of microfilm collections of American Jewish manuscripts in the Brandeis library, see the library’s home page].

Option #8 – Use one of the volumes of American Hebrew responsa or sermons or related works to shed light on American Jewish life. Y. Goldman, *Hebrew Printing in America* is a fine guide to this material. Full texts of many primary sources are available at www.Hebrewbooks.org. Only those with good Hebrew skills and some familiarity with rabbinic texts should select this option.

Option #9 – 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 19th 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.ajcarchives.org/> - American Jewish Committee on-line archives. Contains wonderful documents and sound archives, as well as the full text of all volumes of the *American Jewish Year Book* (1899-present)

<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://proquest.umi.com/login/refurl> 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 350th 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/ - 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 - Bibliography re American Jewish Labor Movement

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)

<http://pjn.library.cmu.edu/> - Pittsburgh Jewish newspaper project (1895- present) newspapers with some search capacity.

<http://dlg.galileo.usg.edu/israelite/> - Southern Israelite (1929-1986) - Atlanta newspaper with good search engine

http://www.spertus.edu/asher_cja/chicagojewisharchives.php - Chicago Jewish Sentinel online (1911-1949) – works only sporadically.

http://jhssc.org/Jews_of_SC_in_Print.html - Bibliography on Jews of South Carolina with some full texts.

<http://lowcountrydigital.library.cofc.edu/web/browse/all/index.php> - Zionism in Charleston and other collections.

<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/> - Library of Congress site on American newspapers 1880-1925.