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Office Hours: 1-3 TH

American Studies 3632
Jewish Studies 3632
Women's Studies 3403
Jewish Women in the United States
Tuesday and Thursday 11:15-12:30
Scott Hall 4

Course Description

Jewish Women in the United States is designed to analyze the lives of American Jewish Women in the 19th and 20th centuries. Historically, we will learn about the transformations experienced by European Jews as they acculturated to American life, and how German, East European, and to a lesser extent Sephardic women and their descendants became American Jewish women. We will explore how American Jewish women pursued that womanhood as workers, activists, family members, writers, and as practitioners and transformers of Judaism. We will study not only what Jewish women did, but the ways in which they served as "cultural representations" of Americanization and Jewishness. We will also learn about the social, economic, and culture forces which shaped Jewish women's lives.

Historical Perspectives

Jewish women were not a subject of historical inquiry in the study of modern Jewish history until the 1970s. Since the rise of women's history, Jewish women's participation in religion, immigration, work, American politics, and the culture industry has been far better documented. Indeed, it has led to a significant rewriting of American Jewish history, and to some extent American history. The class focuses on those historical issues and how they have led to a rethinking of the history of Jews in the United States. In addition, the class uses a variety of sources—literature, memoirs, sociological studies, and religious debates to illuminate that history

Required Readings

Books available at Coffman Union bookstore

Rose Cohen *Out of the Shadow: A Russian Jewish Childhood*

Dorothy Gallagher *How I Came into My Inheritance*

Stephanie Levine *Mystics, Mavericks and Merrymakes: An Intimate Journey Among Hasidic Girls*

Pamela S. Nadell *American Jewish Women's History a Reader*

Riv-Ellen Prell *Fighting to Become Americans: Assimilation and the Trouble between Jewish Women and Jewish Men*

A packet of readings that will be marked by an * (asterisk) are available no later than 9/12/05 from Paradigm Course Resource, 1501 University Ave. SE (Dinkydome) 612 379-4590. (My previous experience with online reserve was that it made most students miserable.)

Website

- 1) Go to <http://vista.umn.edu>
- 2) Under Institution Listing, click University of Minnesota
- 3) Click the Login button
- 4) Enter your UMN Internet ID and password in the boxes that appear
- 5) Your sites will appear in the Vista myWebCT listing.

What Do I Do If I Want to Get More Background in Understanding Judaism and Jewish history?

There are very good websites that can provide you with a basic introduction to Judaism and Jewish history—its holidays, key ideas and concepts. A non-denominational website that assumes no prior knowledge is www.myjewishlearning.com. You do not have to make use of this source to succeed in the course, but you may want to if you would like quick access to a fuller understanding of Judaism.

Writing Intensive Course

This course is designated as Writing Intensive. Writing is therefore a part of the learning process and the focus on writing will be integrated into the content of the course. You will have the opportunity to write a draft, to undertake different types of writing, and to discuss writing strategies in the class. During the class you will regularly take quizzes based on questions handed out on the reading to help keep you on track with your reading.

Students with Disabilities

If you have a physical, visual, hearing, learning or other disability for which we should discuss accommodation, please see the instructor immediately. Suitable arrangements can be worked out, but these often require advance planning in conjunction with the Office for Disabilities Services. Please ask for help if you need it. Further information is available from Disabilities Services, 30 Nicholson Hall.

Late Papers

All papers must be handed in on time. Because of the number of papers required in the class I cannot accept late papers. If you are ill and have a doctor's excuse I will accept them without penalty. On occasion, because of personal difficulties, it may be hard to complete work on time. In that case, and only if you contact me immediately, the paper will be accepted **with a late penalty**. This will be the exception and not the rule.

Plagiarism

You violate university regulations when your work is plagiarized. Not citing the source of text that you use and using the work of others will result in you receiving a 0 on written work. Students are then reported to the Provost's office. This may result in discipline or expulsion. We take this matter very seriously. The internet makes it easier to plagiarize and to catch offenders.

Grading and Expectations

You may take this class on one of two systems: A-F or S/N. In order to pass the course you must have a C average. On either scale you will be expected to complete all of the work in order to pass. No incompletes will be given, with the exception of circumstances of illness or injury verified by a doctor.

Two conditions for successful completion of this course are that you attend all classes and that you keep up with reading assignments, coming to class prepared to discuss. You may have two absences without penalty.

The components of your grade will be based on the following

1. Class Participation (based on attendance and participation) -35 points
2. Two Critical Papers that draw on multiple sources -65 points
3. Two Reaction Papers—40 points
4. Five Quizzes (you may drop one)-40 points

A=90%

B=80%

C=70%

D=60%

Getting Help

I am eager to work with you, provide feedback, and read drafts of all of your work. I invite you to office hours in person, or if necessary electronically, to talk about your questions and concerns. If writing has been difficult for you I am especially eager to be of help.

The Composition Program offers a drop in center for help with writing in Lind Hall. The number is 612 625-1893. The location is 306B Lind Hall

Writing Assignments

Critical Writing—You will receive two writing assignments that ask you to answer a question. The essay will draw on multiple resources. The first Critical Writing will require a draft and a rewrite. The second will not require a draft. This form of writing will encourage you to evaluate the different types of sources you have read and to solve a problem presented.

Reaction Papers—You will receive three Reaction Paper assignments that will ask you to respond to a particular work. You may well draw on articles and lecture to respond to the question, but you will primarily engage with the text about which you are writing. This form of writing will develop your ability to engage closely with the arguments and rhetorical forms of the text.

Quizzes—You will be given questions to guide your reading most weeks of the semester. On five occasions you will be asked to answer one of those questions in the form of an in-class quiz. Only four quizzes will count in your final grade. This form of writing will encourage you to stay on track with reading and to demonstrate your understanding of what you are reading.

Dates of Writing Assignments

9/27/05 Reaction Paper #1 Topic Handed Out
10/6/05 Reaction Paper #1 Due

10/11/05 Critical Paper # 1 Topic Handed out
10/20 Paper Draft Due
10/25 Paper Draft Returned
11/1/05 Final Draft Due

11/1/05 Reaction Paper #2 Handed Out
11/10/05 Reaction Paper #2 Due

11/29/05 Critical Paper #2 Topic Handed Out
12/13/05 Critical Paper #2 Due

Course Schedule

(Note that reading assignments are in bold print)

Week 1 September 6-8
Introduction to Course

9/6 Introductions; Modern Jewish History/American History and the Study of Women. How did it create a revolution? An overview of the key debates

9/8 Key Concepts for the study of Jews and Judaism

Read "Introduction," Nadell, *American Jewish Women's History*, pp. 1-5

halakha/mitzvot, normative Judaism, patriarchy, diaspora and the relevance of gender

Week 2 September 13-15

9/13 *The History of American Jews in the United States; 18th and 19th Century-Gender, Judaism, and the New World*

Read: Ellen Smith "Portraits of a Community," in Nadell, pp. 13-25

Jonathan Sarna, "A Great Awakening: the Transformation that shaped Twentieth-Century American Judaism." In Nadell, pp. 43-63

*** Karla Goldman, "Jewish Women: Acculturation in Old and New Worlds" in Beyond the Synagogue Gallery (2000), pp 17-37.**

9/15 *The Two Sides of Immigration: Cultures of Eastern Europe Jewry*

***Read: Gerald Sorin, "Eastern European Cultural Heritage and Mass Migration," pp. 34-60, Tradition Transformed (1997)**

Begin Rose Cohen, Out of the Shadow, Introduction, and pp. 9-65

Week 3 September 20-22

9/20 *The Two Sides of Immigration--Immigration and How Gender Shaped it*

Read: Continue, Rose Cohen, Out of the Shadow, Introduction, and pp. 9-65; 69-145

9/22 *Encounter between Acculturated and Immigrant Jews*

Read: Faith Rogow, "Gone to Another Meeting: The National Council of Jewish Women, 1893-1993 in Nadell, pp 64-74

*** Elizabeth Ewen, "Agents of Assimilation," in, Immigrant Women in the Land of Dollars (1985) pp. 76-91**

Week 4 September 27-29

Jewish Immigrants in North America

9/27 Jewish Immigrant life in North America: Community and Family

9/29 Youth Culture and Acculturation

***Read: Susan Glenn, "All of Us Young People: The Social and Cultural Dimensions of Work in Daughters of the Shtetl (1990). Pp. 132-166**

Riv-Ellen Prell "Ghetto Girls and Jewish Immigrant Desire," Fighting to Become Americans, pp. 21-57

Week 5 October 4-6

10/4 Hester Street

10/6 *Jewish Immigrant Life in North America: Work*

Read: Rose Cohen, Out of the Shadow 149-181

Paula Hyman, "Immigrant Women and Consumer Protest: City Kosher Meat Boycott of 1902." In Nadell pp.116-129

*Hadassa Kosak, "Jewish Immigrants and the New York Clothing Industry," Cultures of Opposition. pp. 61-80

Week 6 October 11-13
Jewish Immigrant Life in North America

10/ 11 Immigrant Jews and Work, Unionization

* Read: Annalise Orleck, Common Sense and a Little Fire (1995), "The Emergence of Industrial Feminism," pp. 53-80; "From the Picket Line to the Ballot Box" pp. 87-113

Alice Kessler-Harris "Organizing the Unorganizable: Three Jewish Women and Their Union in *Nadell* pp. 100-115

10/13 film

Week 7 October 18-20

10/18 The Labor Movement and Unionization
The Uprising of the 20,000—

10/20 Gender, Work and Love
Read: Riv-Ellen Prell, Fighting to Become Americans, Chapters 2-3 pp. 58-123

Week 8 October 25-27

10/25 **Read: Rose Cohen, Out of the Shadow, pp.199-232; pp. 233-305**

10/27 *Women and Judaism in the interwar years*
Read: "The Jewish Priestess and Ritual: the Sacred Life of American Orthodox Women." Jenna Joselit In Nadell pp. 153-174.

Week 9 November 1-3
Secular Jewish Radicalism Family and memory: The

11/1 lecture

11/3 Discuss the memoir
Read: Dorothy Gallagher How I Came into My Inheritance (first half)

Week 10 November 8-10

11/8 second half of memoir
Read: Dorothy Gallagher How I Came into My Inheritance

11/10 *Transitions Post War Jewish Life Judaism, -Domestication and Politics*

- Week 11** November 15-17
Transitions Post War Jewish Life Judaism, -Domestication and Politics
- 11/15 Post War Jewish Life and its impact on women and girls
 Representing Jewish women and Jewish mobility
- Read: "Strangers in Paradise," Riv-Ellen Prell ,Fighting to Become Americans, pp. 142-176; "The Jewish American Princess," pp177-208.**
- Debra Schultz, "Going South: Jewish Women In the Civil Rights Movement," in Nadell pp. 281-296**
- 11/17 Jewish Feminism
- *Read: Ann Braude "Women and Religious Practice in American Judaism, In Our Own Voices: Four Centuries of American Women's Religious Writing. Rosemary Ruether and Rosemary Keller eds.(1995) Pp 111-123**
- Week 12** November 22-24
The American Counter Culture and Transformations and Reactions:
- 11/22 Jewish Feminism
- Read: Paula Hyman, "Jewish Feminism Faces the American Women's Movement Convergence and Divergence," in Nadell, pp. 297-312**
- Pamela Nadell, "The Women Who Would be Rabbis," in Nadell, pp.175-184**
- Rebecca Alpert, Elwell and Idelson, " Introduction," Lesbian Rabbis: the First Generation, pp 1-12.**
- 11/24 Thanksgiving
- Week 13** November 29-December 1
Feminist Transformations and Reactions
- 11/29 film
- 12/ 1 Introduction to Orthodox Judaism and its feminism
- Week 14** December 6-8
Orthodox Judaism, Women and Feminism
- 12/6 The Case of Lubavitch Hasidim
Read: Mystics, Mavericks, Merrymakers, Stephanie Levine pp1--86
- 12/8 Continue Case Study
Read: Mystics... 87-221
- Week 15** December 13-15

12/ 13 Conclusions

Read: Prell, "Talking Back through Counter Representations," pp. 209-244

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