JUDAISM IN PUBLIC LIFE: COMMUNITY

Prof. Shawna Dolansky
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Office hours: 9:30-11:30AM Tuesday

What is the Jewish concept of “community,” and what’s “Jewish” about it? This course will examine the ways in which "community" in Judaism has been constituted historically - from the concept of a community of the covenant, a "chosen" community, through diaspora, when the Jews defined themselves as a community both in terms of covenant and in relation to the larger communities in which they lived; first Greco-Roman, then Christian and Muslim, and lastly as immigrants to a new and changing world. What did they learn from other communities, and how did they continue to understand their communities as distinct? Who led their communities, and by what virtues? How were communities structured, both formally and purposely, and informally as they developed and adapted to new circumstances? To what extent did Jewish ritual, beliefs, ethics and practices help shape, guide, and determine the make-up of communities, and the qualifications of their leaders? What issues and concerns helped construct, inform, and sustain Jewish communities? Once we have some answers to these questions for antiquity and the medieval periods, we'll follow these trends and themes into the formal and informal community-building that took place as a response to modernity, both in Europe and North America, with a focus on Canada, and Ottawa as the case study.

Seminar: Mondays 6:05PM-8:55PM, Paterson 2A46

Required Texts:


- OR -


Grades for the course will be assigned as follows:

4851B: Attendance and participation: 30%  *note: 3 or more absences will not receive course credit*

Weekly reading responses: 40%
Group book report – presentation (5%) and write-up (5%) (Dec 5): 10%
Final Exam: 20%

5851H: Attendance and participation: 20% *note: 3 or more absences will not receive course credit*
Weekly reading responses: 30%
Presentation (Oct 24): 10%
Prospectus (Nov 14): 10%
Final Research Paper (Dec 5): 30%

COURSE SCHEDULE

Sept 12  Introduction to the Course
         Biblical Constructions of Community and Group Identity
         "we will be looking at selections from the Hebrew Bible in class, so bring one*

Sept 19  The Chosen People
         • What did being "chosen" mean to the biblical authors? How did this concept help them
           define their community and identify with it, and what do we learn here about the Israelite
           concept of community?
         READ: Exodus 19; Deuteronomy 7, 32; Isaiah 41, 42, 44, 49, 53; Psalms 105, 106, 135; and Satlow ch. 2
         HAND IN: 1 page Reading Response on Satlow ch2, and 1 page on Elazar

Sept 26  Jewish Communities in the 2nd Temple Period
         • What were the impacts of exile and diaspora on the concept of Jewish “community” and
           the Jews’ self-identification? What changed, and what remained the same?
         READ: Satlow ch. 3; Judith (in the biblical “apocrypha”)
         Discussion: Satlow Introduction and Chapter 1
         • How does Satlow define “Judaism,” “community,” and “Jewish identity”? What are the
           goals and the assumptions of his study, and how might they impact his selection of
           historical data, his arguments, and his final conclusions?
         HAND IN: 1 page RR on each bullet question above, total 2 pages

Oct  3  Guest Lecture: Rabbi Dr. Reuven P. Bulka
         Rabbinic Communities
         • How did the Rabbis re-define the concepts of covenant and community, and what was the
           impact on Jewish constructions of self-identity and community?
         READ: Satlow chapters 4-6
         HAND IN: 2 page RR on Satlow 4-6, and 3 discussion questions for Rabbi Bulka on
         Rabbinic concepts of community

Oct 10  NO CLASS (Thanksgiving)

Oct 17  Medieval Jewish Communities
         • What impact did cultural and historical factors have on the development of a variety of
medieval Jewish communities?
- What continuities and discontinuities do these communities show with earlier Jewish communities?

READ: Satlow chapters 7-9

Discussion: Constructing Jewish Identities
- Students will be divided into 4 groups: Rationalists, Mystics, Ashkenazim and Sephardim
- Each group will present their community’s responses to the particular places and times in which they are situated, explaining to the others how their community is defined, both intrinsically and extrinsically, and how they understand their communal identity as “Jewish” in historical, cultural, religious and practical terms.

HAND IN: 2 page RR on Satlow 7-9, with special consideration of the discussion details above

Oct 24  Modernity – 18th-20th Century Communities
- Major cultural and historical upheavals in this period lead to the development of a variety of Jewish responses. How is “community” re-defined here? Is this the same type of re-definition we saw in earlier historical periods, or is something different?

READ: Satlow chapter 10

Discussion: The American Jewish Community

Grad Student Presentations on the following choices:

HAND IN: 2 page RR on Satlow ch 10 and bullet question above

Oct 31  NO CLASS

READ: Tulchinsky, Introduction and chapters 1-7

HAND IN: 2 page RR (email submission by 6 PM)

Nov 7  Guest Lecture: Gerald Tulchinsky, Professor Emeritus, Queen’s University
The Canadian Experience
READ: Tulchinsky, chapters 8-10
HAND IN: 2 page RR and 2 discussion questions for today’s seminar

Nov 14

**Guest Lecture: Bernard Dolansky, Past President Ottawa Va’ad Ha’Ir**
The Jewish Community of Ottawa – governance; and the building of the JCC campus in 1998

READ: Tulchinsky chapters 11-12
HAND IN: 2 page RR and 2 discussion questions for today’s seminar

and 5851H HAND IN: 2 page Prospectus for Final Research Paper

Nov 21

**Guest Lecture: Rebecca Margolis, Professor, University of Ottawa**
Yiddish Culture and Community Identity in Montreal

READ: Tulchinsky chapters 13-14 and Epilogue
HAND IN: 2 page RR and 2 discussion questions for today’s seminar

Nov 28

**Guest Lecture: Mitchell Bellman, Executive Director, Jewish Federation of Ottawa**
The Jewish Community of Ottawa – contemporary issues; the community since 1998; and looking to the future

ALL HAND IN: 3 questions for guest lecturer on Ottawa’s Jewish Community

5851H READ: either:
*The Defining Decade: Identity, Politics, and the Canadian Jewish Community in the 1960s*

or
*Delayed Impact: The Holocaust and the Canadian Jewish Community*

5851H HAND IN: 3-5 page RR to one of the above books

Dec 5

Undergraduate presentations/discussions on:
*The Defining Decade: Identity, Politics, and the Canadian Jewish Community in the 1960s* and
*Delayed Impact: The Holocaust and the Canadian Jewish Community*

4851B HAND IN: 5 page RR to one of the above books, and 3 discussion questions
5851H HAND IN: 20 page Final Research Paper
REGULATIONS COMMON TO ALL HUMANITIES COURSES

COPYES OF WRITTEN WORK SUBMITTED
Always retain for yourself a copy of all essays, term papers, written assignments or take-home tests submitted in your courses.

PLAGIARISM
The University Senate defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in “substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.”

Plagiarism is a serious offence which cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They may include a final grade of “F” for the course.

GRADING SYSTEM
Letter grades assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

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Failing to submit work on time is not considered academic dishonesty if the student has personal circumstances that are beyond control, such as illness. Please contact the Registrar’s Office directly for information on other forms of documentation that we accept.

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean.

WITHDRAWAL WITHOUT ACADEMIC PENALTY
The last day to withdraw from FALL TERM courses is DEC. 5, 2011. The last day to withdraw from FALL/WINTER (Full Term) and WINTER term courses is APRIL 5, 2012.

REQUESTS FOR ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION
You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term because of disability, pregnancy or religious obligations. Please review the course outline promptly and write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at: carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/

Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Documented disabilities could include but not limited to mobility/physical impairments, specific Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/psychological disabilities, sensory disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and chronic medical conditions. Registered PMC students are required to contact the PMC, 613-520-6608, every term to ensure that your Instructor receives your Letter of Accommodation, no later than two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm requiring accommodations. If you only require accommodations for your formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your request for accommodations to PMC by Nov.11, 2011 for the Fall term and March 7, 2012 for the Winter term. For more details visit the Equity Services website: carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/

PETITIONS TO DEFER
If you miss a final examination and/or fail to submit a final assignment by the due date because of circumstances beyond your control, you may apply a deferral of examination/assignment.

If you are applying for a deferral due to illness you will be required to see a physician in order to confirm illness and obtain a medical certificate dated no later than one working day after the examination or assignment deadline. This supporting documentation must specify the date of onset of the illness, the degree of incapacity, and the expected date of recovery.

If you are applying for a deferral for reasons other than personal illness, please contact the Registrar’s Office directly for information on other forms of documentation that we accept.

Deferrals of assignments must be supported by confirmation of the assignment due date, for example a copy of the course outline specifying the due date and any documented extensions from the course instructor.

Deferral applications for examination or assignments must be submitted within 5 working days of the original final exam.

ADDRESSES: (Area Code 613)
College of the Humanities 520-2809 300 Paterson
Greek and Roman Studies Office 520-2809 300 Paterson
Religion Office 520-2100 2A39 Paterson
Registrar's Office 520-3500 300 Tory
Student Academic Success Centre 520-7850 302 Tory
Paul Menton Centre 520-6608/TTY 520-3937 501 Uni-Centre
Writing Tutorial Service 520-2600 Ext. 1125 4th Floor Library
Learning Support Service 520-2600 Ext. 1125 4th Floor Library