

WGSS/AAS 370: Special Topics

*Insider/Outsider: Black and Jewish Interactions in Southern Port Cities,
Slavery-Jim Crow*

Spring 2020

Tuesday/Friday 2:00-3:20

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Office Location: Social Science Building 309

Office Hours: Tuesday and Friday 10:30-10:50 & 12:30-1:30 (also available for virtual meetings)

Course Description

Jews arrived in colonial America and establish communities throughout many of the major port cities. In addition to northern port cities Jews also set up communities in southern port cities. Southern port cities were significant locations for trans-oceanic commerce and the trafficking of human bodies also known as the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Though small in number Jews participated in every aspect of slavery, the American Civil war and Jim Crow segregation. At every point Jews and blacks interacted. As slavers, merchants and sometimes allies the interactions between Jews and blacks in the south were dynamic.

This advanced level special topics seminar will focus on tracing the historical, socio-political and economic interactions between black Americans and Jews in Southern Port Cities. This class will provide a historical overview of the diverse experiences of Jews in the south from slavery through Jim Crow. Through readings, lectures, class discussions and films students will be exposed to the varied experiences of Jews in the south and of the interactions between Jews and black Americans. Assignments will provide students with an opportunity to reflect on the major aspects of the southern Jewish experience, students will also be challenged to interpret and analyze constructions of gender, whiteness and the interactions between religion and racism. Lastly students will be able to chart the evolution of Jewish and black interactions in the south.

Required Course Readings

Articles & Chapters (All Posted to Course Website in Corresponding Module)

- Sina Rauschenbach and Jonathan Schorsch, "The Sephardic Atlantic: Colonial Histories and Postcolonial Perspectives"
- Brian Ward, "Introduction" *The American South and the Atlantic World*
- Bertram W. Korn, "Taking Up the Cross, Conversion Among Black and White Jews in the Civil War South"
- Joshua D. Rothman, "Notorious in the Neighborhood: An Interracial Family in Early National Antebellum Virginia"
- Hieke A. "Jewish Identity in the Reconstruction South"
- Higginbotham, "Race As a Meta-Language"
- Webb, "Jewish Merchants and Their Black Customers"

- Davis, Marni “Despised Merchandise American Jewish Liquor Entrepreneurs and Their Critics”
- Leffler, Phyllis, “Insiders or Outsiders: Charlottesville’s Jews, White Supremacy, and Antisemitism”
- Leonard Rogoff “Is the Jew White? The Racial Place of the Southern Jew”
- Kruse, “The City Too Busy to Hate: Atlanta and the Politics of Progress”
- Webb, “Jewish Segregationists”

Required Course Books (All books are available for purchase at the college bookstore. Texts should be purchased prior to the start of class)

1. Michele Mitchell (2008) *Righteous Propagation: African Americans and the Politics of Racial Destiny After Reconstruction*
2. Roshauna Johnson (2018) *Slavery’s Metropolis: Unfree Labor in New Orleans During the Age of Revolutions*
3. Cecil Vidal (2019) *Caribbean New Orleans: Empire, Race and the Making of a Slave Society*

Assignments

10 Online Discussion Posts
 4 Critical Reflection on Readings Essays
 Annotated Bibliography
 Final Research Paper (10-12 pages)
 Group Presentation