



JEWISH STUDIES 4790F (550) SPECIAL TOPICS IN JEWISH STUDIES: JEWISH RELIGION, JEWISH ART

Hernan Tesler-Mabé

Class Hours: Mondays, 2.30-5.30pm

HURON-HC-H227

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Office Hours: Office Hours: Mondays. 5.30-6.30pm or by appointment

Office: A214

Official Course Description

This seminar explores topics in Jewish Art and Literature. Consult the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences for current offerings. Extra information: 3 hours.

Course Description

At the threshold of a new millennium, the institutional base of Jewish memory has shifted back from the secular to the sacred realm.

David Roskies, *The Jewish Search for a Usable Past* (p16)

In 1913 Sigmund Freud wrote *Totem and Taboo* wherein he postulated that God and religion had been created by man to assuage their guilt (Freud would go on to elaborate on this theory in *Moses and Monotheism*, illustrating just how deeply compelling he felt this theory to be). Yet one could argue that religion has nevertheless persisted as the centerpiece of identity for modern Jews who have often expressed their spiritual identities via art. But does religion still serve as the basis of Jewish identity? And is art a meaningful place to search for this answer? In this course, we will engage in a multi-disciplinary exploration of art produced during the 19th and 20th centuries that connects to Jewish subjects, themes or tropes so as to explore the relationship between Jewish art (or art about Jews) and some – but not all – of the key contours and animating tensions of the modern Jewish experience and identity. Via this study, we will hopefully answer whether religion underpins recent articulations of *Yiddishkeit* (Jewishness) and anti-Jewish discourses or whether religion has been rendered redundant in the modern age.

Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course students should have developed an appreciation for how art has buttressed and articulated expressions of Jewish identity in the modern period. Students should also complete the course with a richer understanding of how religion plays an integral role in

forging identity in the modern period.

Students will also gain abilities in critical thinking and analysis, while also developing their university-level writing skills.

Readings and viewings

As you will no doubt see in the schedule of classes below, this course relies upon an intensive engagement with artistic material that must be read or viewed in a timely fashion. Failure to do so will profoundly compromise your success in the course as well as deprive you of the benefit of having taken this course.

Grades Breakdown

| | |
|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Attendance/Participation |25% |
| Viewing/Reading reflections |45% (3 x 5 pages (1250 words each)) |
| Final Take-home exam (due December 15) |30% |

Attendance/Participation

As this is a small senior-level undergraduate class, students are required to come to class with all the assigned readings/viewings completed and ready to participate in discussion. Students will also be obliged to notify the professor *in advance* if they are unable to attend class. Any student who misses more than three classes without the professor's approval *in advance* will receive an automatic INC (incomplete) in the course.

Viewing Reflections

Students select any three movies or pieces of fiction shown during the course and submit a short paper (approximately 5 pages or 1250 words in length) discussing its context and main themes, as well as their thoughts on the work.

Final Take Home Exam

Details will be provided over the course of the term.

Schedule of Classes (Subject to Change):

Part I Foundations

Monday September 12

Introduction to course (Basic concepts and definitions; the Sweep of Jewish History, to 1500 AD)

Monday September 19

Lecture 1: Jews in early modern Europe; Performing the Old Testament in the age of the New Testament

Readings:

Martin Luther, "On the Jews and their Lies" Pt I, Pt. XI (1543)

https://web.archive.org/web/20050103042654/http://jdstone.org/cr/pages/sss_mluther.html

Kevin J. Wetmore, Jr., "What's a nice Jewish boy like you doing in a Catholic play like this?" Oberammergau 2010 and Religious Identity," in *The Oberammergau Passion Play: Essays on the 2010 Performance and the Centuries-Long Tradition*, ed. Kevin J. Wetmore, Jr., (Jefferson NC: McFarland, 2017), 35-52.

Don Harran, "On a Jewish Musical Renaissance," in *Daedalus*, 137,1 (2008) 96-100.

Viewings:

The Passion Play of Oberammergau 2020

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kV9mTBikIeM> (23 minutes)

"The 400th anniversary of Salomone Rossi's Hashirim Asher LiShlomo" (1622)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5y5aE1320uk>

Part II Where does Jewish reside?

Monday September 26

Lecture 1: Leaving the Shtetl

Readings:

Monica Bohm-Duchen. "Marc Chagall: Wandering Jew or Citizen of the World?," *Jewish Quarterly*, 01 January 1985, Vol.32(2), pp.27-32.

Lamed Shapiro (trans. Heather Valencia), "Pour Out Thy Wrath," in *The Cross and Other Jewish Stories*, ed. Leah Garrett (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), 19-26 <https://www-jstor-org.proxy.bib.uottawa.ca/stable/j.ctt1npntv>

Viewing:

Maurice Schwartz, dir. *Tevye* (USA, 1939, 95 minutes)

Monday October 3

Lecture 2: Dancing Outside of the Shtetl

Readings:

Zvi Idelsohn, "Musical Characteristics of East-European Jewish Folk-Song," *The Musical Quarterly* Vol. 18, No. 4 (Oct., 1932), pp. 634-645.

Richard Wagner (trans. William Ashton Ellis) *Judaism in Music (1850/1894)*
<http://users.belgacom.net/wagnerlibrary/prose/wagjuda.htm>

Henry A. Lea, "Mahler's extraterritoriality," in *The Massachusetts review*, 1990, Vol.31 (3), p.341.

Viewings:

Gustav Mahler (selections)

Monday October 10

Thanksgiving No Class

Monday October 17

Lecture 3: *Der Neue Shtetl in the New World: North*

Reading:

Edna Nahshon, "Temple of art on Second Avenue," *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies: Special Section: The Art of Cultural Translation: Performing Jewish Traditions in Modern Times*, 2017-09-02, Vol.16 (3), p.481-497.

Viewing:

Alan Crosland, dir., *The Jazz Singer* (USA, 1927, 88 min.)

Monday October 24

Lecture 3: *Der Neue Shtetl in the New World: South*

Reading:

LLoica Czackis, "Yiddish Tango: A Musical Genre?," *European Judaism*, 42,2 (2009) 107-121.

Viewing:

Daniel Burman, Dir. *The Tenth Man* [El Rey del Once] (Argentina, 2016, 82 min.)

October 31-November 6

Fall Reading Week – no classes

Part III The Holocaust

Monday November 7

Lecture 1: *Art in the Holocaust*

Reading:

Juliane Brauer, "How Can Music Be Torturous?: Music in Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camps," *Music & Politics*, [Volume X, Issue 1](#), Winter 2016
<https://doi.org/10.3998/mp.9460447.0010.103>

Viewing:

Daniel Mann, Joseph Sargent, dir. *Playing for Time* (USA, 1980, 150 min.)

Aaron Liebeskind (sung by Aleksander Kulisiewicz), "Lullaby for my Little Son in the Crematorium" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FqgBbbL4DXU>
<https://www.antiwarsongs.org/canzone.php?lang=en&id=3662>

Hans Krása, *Brundibar*

Monday November 14

NOTE: NO IN-PERSON MEETING – ALL MATERIAL TO BE DISCUSSED THE FOLLOWING WEEK

Reading:

Art Spiegelman, *Maus: A Survivor's Tale (Part I: My Father Bleeds History)*, (Pantheon Books, New York, NY, 1991)

Viewings:

Marcin Wrona, dir. *Demon* (Poland, 2015, 94 min.)

Arthur Hiller, dir. *The Man in the Glass Booth* (USA, 1975, 117 min.)

Monday November 21

Lecture 2: Remembering or Forgetting the Holocaust?

Reading:

Simon Lichman, "Parts of Myself I Didn't Know Were Missing: A Personal Encounter with the Holocaust" *The Journal of American Folklore* Vol. 130, No. 518 (Fall 2017), pp. 457-472.

Joan Gordon, "Surviving the Survivor: Art Spiegelman's *Maus*," *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts* Vol. 5, No. 2 (18), Special Issue on The Holocaust (1993), pp. 81-89.

Part IV Survival and Rebirth

Monday November 28

Lecture 1: Jewish Triumph? Jewish Art and Religion in Israel and the New Europe

Reading:

Christopher Page, *Leonard Bernstein and the Resurrection of Gustav Mahler* (dissertation) Ch.4: "The Israel Philharmonic: New Meaning in Mahler," pp. 80-98.

Steven Saxonberg ; Magdalena Waligórska, "Klezmer in Kraków: Kitsch, or Catharsis for Poles?" *Ethnomusicology*, 2006-10-01, Vol.50 (3), p.433-451

Viewing:

Yale Strom, dir., *The Last Klezmer* (USA, 1994, 85 min.)

Monday December 5

Lecture 3: If we weren't laughing, we'd be crying

Readings:

Roberta Rosenberg, "Larry David's "Dark Talmud"; or Kafka in Prime Time," *Studies in American Jewish Literature* (1981-), 2013-09-01, Vol.32 (2), p.167-185.

Woody Allen, "Mr. Big," in *Getting Even* (1971, Random House, New York, NY)
<http://www.wepsite.de/Mr. Big, Woody Allen.htm>

Viewings:

YidLife Crisis <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yh5uWajtPtA;>

Keith Truesdell, *Curb Your Enthusiasm* ("The Baptism") (USA, 2001, 30 min.)

Woody Allen, dir., *Annie Hall* (USA, 1977, 93 min., excerpt only)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WYY9Epog0rs>



Appendix to Course Outlines: Academic Policies & Regulations Fall 2022

Pandemic Contingency

Huron will continue to follow the guidance of public health and government officials. It is anticipated that there will be no further disruptions to in-person instruction. This is subject to change.

Student Code of Conduct

Membership in the community of Huron University College and Western University implies acceptance by every student of the principle of respect for the rights, responsibilities, dignity and well-being of others and a readiness to support an environment conducive to the intellectual and personal growth of all who study, work and live within it. Upon registration, students assume the responsibilities that such registration entails. While in the physical or online classroom, students are expected to behave in a manner that supports the learning environment of others. Please review the Student Code of Conduct at: <https://huronatwestern.ca/sites/default/files/Res%20Life/Student%20Code%20of%20Conduct%20-%20Revised%20September%202019.pdf>.

Prerequisite and Antirequisite Information

Students are responsible for ensuring that they have successfully completed all course prerequisites and that they have not completed any course antirequisites. Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Attendance Regulations for Examinations

A student is entitled to be examined in courses in which registration is maintained, subject to the following limitations:

- 1) A student may be debarred from writing the final examination for failure to maintain satisfactory academic standing throughout the year.
- 2) Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course (after due warning has been given). On the recommendation of the Department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course. The Dean of the Faculty offering the course will communicate that decision to the Dean of the Faculty of registration.

Review the policy on Attendance Regulations for Examinations here: [Academic Calendar - Western University \(uwo.ca\)](#)

Statement on Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following website: [Academic](#)

[Calendar - Western University \(uwo.ca\)](#) .The appeals process is also outlined in this policy as well as more generally at the following website:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/appealsundergrad.pdf.

Turnitin.com

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

It is not appropriate to use electronic devices (such as, but not limited to, laptops, tablets, cell phones) in the classroom for non-classroom activities. Such activity is disruptive and distracting to other students and to the instructor, and can inhibit learning. Students are expected to respect the classroom environment and to refrain from inappropriate use of technology and other electronic devices in class.

Statement on Use of Personal Response Systems (“Clickers”)

Personal Response Systems (“clickers”) may be used in some classes. If clickers are to be used in a class, it is the responsibility of the student to ensure that the device is activated and functional. Students must see their instructor if they have any concerns about whether the clicker is malfunctioning. Students must use only their own clicker. If clicker records are used to compute a portion of the course grade:

- the use of somebody else’s clicker in class constitutes a scholastic offence
- the possession of a clicker belonging to another student will be interpreted as an attempt to commit a scholastic offence.

Academic Consideration for Missed Work

All students pursuing academic consideration, regardless of type, must contact their instructors no less than 24 hours following the end of the period of absence to clarify how they will be expected to fulfill the academic responsibilities missed during their absence. **Students are reminded that they should consider carefully the implications of postponing tests or midterm exams or delaying submission of work, and are encouraged to make appropriate decisions based on their specific circumstances.**

Students who have conditions for which academic accommodation is appropriate, such as disabilities or ongoing or chronic health conditions, should work with Accessible Education Services to determine appropriate forms of accommodation. Further details concerning policies and procedures may be found at: <http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/>.

Policy on Academic Consideration for a Medical/ Non-Medical Absence

- (a) Consideration on Medical Grounds for assignments worth *less than 10%* of final grade:
Consult Instructor Directly and Contact Academic Advising**

When seeking consideration on **medical grounds** for assignments worth *less than 10%* of the final course grade, the student should contact the instructor directly. The student need only share broad outlines of the medical situation. The instructor **may** require the student to submit documentation to the academic advisors, in which case she or he will advise the student and inform the academic advisors to expect documentation. If documentation is requested, the student will need to complete and submit the [Student Medical Certificate](#). The instructor may not collect medical documentation. The advisors will contact the

instructor when the medical documentation is received, and will outline the severity and duration of the medical challenge as expressed on the Student Medical Certificate and in any other supporting documentation. The student will be informed that the instructor has been notified of the presence of medical documentation, and will be instructed to work as quickly as possible with the instructor on an agreement for accommodation.

b) Medical Grounds for assignments worth 10% or more of final grade: Go Directly to Academic Advising

University Senate policy, which can be found at [Academic Calendar - Western University \(uwo.ca\)](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf) requires that all student requests for accommodation on medical grounds for assignments worth 10% or more of the final grade be made directly to the academic advising office of the home faculty (for Huron students, the “home faculty” is Huron), with supporting documentation in the form (minimally) of the Senate-approved Student Medical Certificate found at:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf.

The documentation is submitted in confidence and will not be shown to instructors. The advisors will contact the instructor when the medical documentation is received, and will outline the severity and duration of the medical challenge as expressed on the Student Medical Certificate and in any other supporting documentation. The student will be informed that the instructor has been notified of the presence of medical documentation, and will be instructed to work as quickly as possible with the instructor on an agreement for accommodation. The instructor will not normally deny accommodation where appropriate medical documentation is in place and where the duration it describes aligns with the due date(s) of assignment(s). Before denying a request for accommodation on medical grounds, the instructor will consult with the Dean. The instructor’s decision is appealable to the Dean.

c) Consideration on Non-Medical Grounds: Consult Huron Support Services/Academic Advising, or email huronsss@uwo.ca.

Students seeking academic consideration for a **non-medical** absence (e.g. varsity sports, religious, compassionate, or bereavement) will be required to provide appropriate documentation. All consideration requests must include a completed [Consideration Request Form](#). Late penalties may apply at the discretion of the instructor.

Please review the full policy on Academic Consideration for medical and non-medical absence at: [accommodation medical.pdf \(uwo.ca\)](#). Consult [Huron Academic Advising](#) at huronsss@uwo.ca for any further questions or information.

Support Services

For advice on course selections, degree requirements, and for assistance with requests for medical accommodation, students should email an Academic Advisor in Huron’s Student Support Services at huronsss@uwo.ca. An outline of the range of services offered is found on the Huron website at: <https://huronatwestern.ca/student-life/student-services/>.

Department Chairs, Program Directors and Coordinators are also able to answer questions about individual programs. Contact information can be found on the Huron website at: <https://huronatwestern.ca/contact/faculty-staff-directory/>.

If you think that you are too far behind to catch up or that your workload is not manageable, you should consult your Academic Advisor. If you are considering reducing your workload by dropping one or more

courses, this must be done by the appropriate deadlines. Please refer to the Advising website, <https://huronatwestern.ca/student-life/student-services/academic-advising/> or review the list of official Sessional Dates on the Academic Calendar, available here: <http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/SessionalDates.cfm>.

You should consult with the course instructor and the Academic Advisor who can help you consider alternatives to dropping one or more courses. Note that dropping a course may affect OSAP and/or Scholarship/Bursary eligibility.

Huron Student Support Services: <https://huronatwestern.ca/student-life/student-services/>
Office of the Registrar: <https://registrar.uwo.ca/>
Student Quick Reference Guide: <https://huronatwestern.ca/student-life/student-services/#1>
Academic Support & Engagement: <http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/>
Huron University College Student Council: <https://huronatwestern.ca/student-life/beyond-classroom/hucsc/>
Western USC: <http://westernusc.ca/your-services/#studentservices>

Wellness and Health Supports at Huron and Western

University students may encounter setbacks from time to time that can impact academic performance. Huron offers a variety of services that are here to support your success and wellbeing. All Huron staff and faculty have received training on responding to disclosures of Gender-Based Sexual Violence (GBSV); students should know that the Community Safety Office is a resource for survivors, providing support and, if desired, guidance while referring them to the further supports that they may require. Please visit <https://huronatwestern.ca/student-life-campus/student-services/wellness-safety> for more information or contact staff directly:

Wellness Services: huronwellness@huron.uwo.ca
Community Safety Office: safety@huron.uwo.ca
Additional supports for Health and Wellness may be found and accessed at Western through, <https://www.uwo.ca/health/>.

Western Calendar - Policy Pages -

[Academic Calendar - Western University \(uwo.ca\)](#)