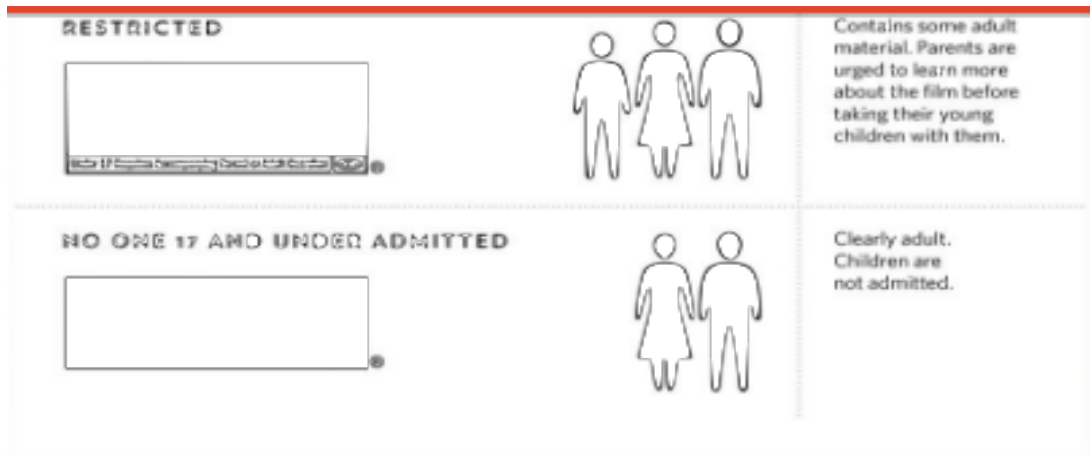


AMS-ANT 245-01 *Jews, Diaspora, Antisemitism* (Spring 2022)  
Prof. K. Gibel Mevorach, HSSC S2362 (xxx 4324)

Professor Katya Office Hours – Tues and Thurs 10-11  
[If I am in my office after 11, please do knock and enter – I'll let you know if I am busy]  
Individual scheduled appointments - MWF (Webex, FT and Whatsap)

**NOTE: Rating “R” – The course content for this class is designed for Mature Audiences over the age of 17 willing to view, discuss and engage with complex, messy, sometimes violent subject matter and material. This may include ideas and/or language which some people might find offensive. Free inquiry and open debate, deliberation and discussion is encouraged and expected.**



**Course Description:** Guidelines should be read and referred to periodically (*\*Prof reserves right to revise this syllabus*)

**Course Description** This course examines Jews and Jewish diversity as an interruption to discussions of multiculturalism and specifically examines the persistence of antisemitism over time and space. Cumulatively, the readings provide a loose overview of theological antisemitism, racial antisemitism, social antisemitism and political antisemitism. Political antisemitism offers up important corollary questions concerning the relationship(s) between identities, power and knowledge, the consequences of globalization on stereotypes and (mis)representation of people and places and, importantly, the role of academic activism and its political consequences.

**Course Objectives** The goals of the course are complex and nuanced precisely because the subject itself has invited discussions which slip and slide along a continuum of propaganda and partisanship. Questions about who are the Jews and Jewish identities raise questions about assimilation, difference and belonging. New antisemitism has confused criticism of government policies with questioning the right of a country to exist.

- (i) The written texts selected are both informational and analytic; the intent is to highlight key themes and sketch an historical context from the readings and various films (feature films, documentaries and internet). The format of close reading and discussion will sharpen attention to identifying slippage into prescriptive premises as well as highlighting ways in which opposition to prejudice and racism redirect enlightenment values against

- itself.
- (ii) There are a significant number of films selected to be screened in class or watched independently (on your own) –
  - (iii) the goal is to become attentive to (i) content, (ii) representation, (iii) information, and (iv) the cumulative effect of associations we make between people and ideas about groups, identities and politics.

### ***Course Requirements***

“*Jews, Diaspora, Antisemitism*” aims to sharpen skills of critical reading and thinking in order to identify and evaluate issues related to antisemitism and the implications of diasporic experiences.

Close attention will be given to information presented in a text (written, visual and audio) and how it is presented. This means becoming more attentive to the framing of ideas and the ways interpretations shape the way we think about the past and its impact on the present. There are no exams – instead, maintaining a reading journal, active participation in class discussion and several collaborative projects will be graded. In order to facilitate this process, students will be expected to adhere to the following requirements:

**1. Attendance (5%)** is required and therefore if you are absent, you are still expected to contribute comments either by email to the class or in class at the next meeting; students who miss more than three classes without urgent reason will receive an automatic reduction in the final grade.

*\* Please notify me by email or text message if you will be absent or by the end of the day of an absence.*

**2. Reading Journal (40%): purposeful comprehension, retention, application**

Every student must outline reading assignments and keep a reading journal. Reading notes should be brought to class (bring copy of readings class meetings)– think of them as your GPS for class discussion.

What are journal entries?

- Each journal entry consists of notes from each reading assignment(s), films assigned for individual viewing, as well as periodic in-class requests for fact-gathering and information searches.
- Weekly entries may incorporate comments or reflections about insights & ideas provoked by what you have learned from class discussion, other classes, and conversations on which you want to ruminate. Occasionally prompts to include responses to specific questions or assignments may be provided during class.
- Weekly journal entries combine outlines, reading notes and may include reflections – but they are **not** composed essays). **Note: estimate writing is 4-8 pages a week. As with any journal, date each entry.**

Format of entries:

- Upload only in Word doc.
- Standard 12 pt Font, 1-inch Margins, number pages (p. 1, p.2; ...until the last page for the semester).
- Please name files: Last name date journal: (for example) Mevorach 29 Jan 22
- Do not include any special characters in the file name. *Print Out All Your Returned Journals - They Will Be Due In Your Stamped Self-Adressed Packet At The End Of The Semester: (n.b. it will be easier to print on a regular basis – that will avoid a printing crunch in May)*

**Weekly Deadlines:** Journals for the week are to be uploaded according to the posted p-web assignments no later than Saturday 7:00pm.

What to do with Professor Comments? *You are in charge of your education and therefore you are responsible* for carefully reading feedback and addressing questions or invitations for further comment in the next journal.

Journals may be resubmitted in response to comments; references to earlier journals may also be included as an addendum (add the date to which you are referring)

### 3. **Active Participation in Class Discussion: be an active learner**

Preparation for class is an absolute prerequisite for discussion; and discussion represents an *exchange of ideas* including review of the assigned text(s). This is also an active cumulative acquisition of information and analytic approaches. It is a conversation among peers.

Each student is responsible for coming prepared to lead class discussion (pro-active). To this end, it is important to remember: **intellectual collaboration represents a conversation not consensus;**

Shared perspectives as well as differences of opinion further our own understanding of a topic. Critical thinking and an engaging exchange of ideas depends on listening carefully to another person's perspective and responding respectfully. The focus should be specifically on what and why there are points of agreement or disagreement -- how is one interpretation different and in what ways should it be valued as more or less persuasive?

**Differentiate *I think because* from *I believe that***

***Uncertainty, not knowing, double-checking, asking questions = part of the learning process.***

All discussions need to be situated within or grounded by the context of assigned readings. These may be supplemented with (not substituted by) outside sources (full reference preferred).

**Always come prepared to lead a class discussion or to discuss one or more passages: this is why *bringing reading notes is very important – they act as prompts and reminders.***

reading notes should include

- (1) What are the main points?
- (2) Identify key passages.
- (3) What is the significance of the work?
- (4) What is the logic behind the author's discussion?
- (5) What should we remember from the materials and why?
- (6) How does the reading relate to previous readings, events in the news, and themes of this course?

5. **A Workshop Project (20%)** In-class activity: a workshop for college students on the endurance of antisemitism based on a particular theme (see syllabus) -- this is a team/collaborative project.

6. **Closure Reflection Paper 6-8 page (20%):** At the beginning of the semester, you will identify questions that you hope to learn more about. Not all your questions will be addressed during class meetings. As closure to this course, you will be able to consider how you have addressed or revised your preliminary questions, reflect on what you have learned, and how your knowledge has broadened throughout the semester. How what you have learned during the semester integrates and is integrated in your undergraduate studies? (These questions are intentionally introspective)

#### **NOTES: -**

- Planning your time Reading time in preparation for class is individual – in general plan on 3-4 hours for Tues meetings and 2 hours for Thurs meetings. Journal entries will vary and depending on your weekly preparation, may take up to three hours a week.

Closure Reflection Paper **and** Blackboard uploaded journal entries are due by **Tues 10 May 10:00am -- without exception** (exceptions *only* for documented medical emergency)

- **[Attention] by Tues 10 May 10:00am:** Submit *all* your Journals (those with our comments) **and** Final Reflection Paper (which will not yet have comments) inside a ***pre-stamped, self-addressed, unsealed envelope!*** Envelopes should be placed in designated box in Academic Support Office HSSC S2321

**Envelope** center: To: ..... your name and address /upper left-hand corner: From.... Grinnell College, Grinnell IA 50112

Do **not** use campus mail envelopes as your packets will be returned from off campus via US Postal Service. [Priority Flat Rate – make sure to take your tracking receipt!!]



### Accommodations

If formal accommodations need to be made to meet your specific learning or physical abilities, please meet with me as soon as possible to discuss appropriate accommodations. Please also contact the Coordinator for Disability Resources, Jae Hirschman, located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of Steiner Hall (x3089) and discuss your needs.

### ASSIGNMENTS (\*subject to change)

Before the first day Pre-assignment due on Blackboard at start of class Tues 25 Jan

#### (Week 1)

Tues 25/1

**Introductions** (Prof Katya will frame the course, review and answer questions about the syllabus and navigating the semester)

Thurs 27/1

In class: “*America and the Holocaust*” (database Films on Demand; 90 min)

#### Week 2

Tues 1 Feb **On the Hyphen**

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/whats-in-a-hyphen-why-writing-antisemitism-with-a-dash-distorts-its-meaning/>

Marshall Grossman. "The Violence of the Hyphen in Judeo-Christian" Social Text, 22 (1989)  
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/466523>

James Loeffler, “The Problem With the ‘Judeo-Christian Tradition’” in The Atlantic (1 August 2020) [https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/08/the-judeo-christian-tradition-is-over/614812/?utm\\_source=copy-link&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_campaign=share](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/08/the-judeo-christian-tradition-is-over/614812/?utm_source=copy-link&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=share)

*Read In Class:* James M. Christie, "The Cinematic Power of Night and Fog." *Cinesthesia*: Vol. 3, Iss. 1 Article 3 (2014) <https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1031&context=cine>  
*View In Class:* *Night and fog /Nuit et brouillard* dir. Alain Resnais (1955, 33 min)  
[<https://vimeo.com/189672641>]

**Thurs 3 Feb**

In Class *Anti-Semitism in the 21st Century: The Resurgence—Educator's Edition. Films On Demand.* (2007, 58 min) <https://digital.films.com/PortalPlaylists.aspx?wID=79621&xtid=37555>

**Week 3 Jews, Race, Assimilability – Europe and United States**

**Tues 8 Feb**

Two different viewpoints in 1886 – skim very carefully in order to identify differences in approach to the “Jewish question” and racial *purity*-

A. Neubauer “Notes on the Race-Types of the Jews”  
*The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*  
Vol. 15 (1886), pp. 16-23 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2841905>  
Joseph Jacobs. “On the Racial Characteristics of Modern Jews”  
*The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*  
Vol. 15 (1886), pp. 23-62 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2841906>

**Thurs 10 Feb**

- (1) De Sola Pool, D. "The Levantine Jews In The United States." *The American Jewish Year Book* 15 (1913): 207-20. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23600749>
- (2) Ethel S. Beer. “The Americanization of Manhattan's Lower East Side.” *Social Forces*, Vol. 15, No. 3 (Mar., 1937), pp. 411-416. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2570609>
- (3) U.S. Supreme Court; *Shaare Tefila Congregation v. Cobb*, 481 U.S. 615 (1987) [*click on the sidebar for Oral Argument*: then **listen while reading on screen the transcript of oral argument** <https://www.oyez.org/cases/1986/85-2156>]
- (4) Bring your notes to class – *be very attentive to the Justices’ questions (and their tone of voice) re Jews as a racial category?*
- (5) Do the words “*ethnic*” or “*ethnicity*” appear in the oral argument or transcript? What is the relevance of this question?
- (6) *In sum: what did you learn from these documents about how Jews were represented as a group – history, socio-culture, political, spiritual? (1886, 1913, 1937, 1987)*

**Week 4 & 5 – Assimilating Jews on Screen – from “race” to “ethnic group”**

– **Focus** → In these three (3) films, how are Jews reimagined on screen as *ethnic white Americans with a different religion from White Protestants*? How was this a strategy to combat antisemitism? How are antisemitism and racism differentiated? How do these films resonate with your experiences: anecdotal, personal, surprising, unfamiliar?

Preparation for class – search for information: Elia Kazan, Edward Dmytryk, and main actors and their background (including any name changes);

**Tuesday 15 Feb**

In Class: “*Gentleman’s Agreement*” (dir Elia Kazan, 1947);

**17 Feb – no class meeting – 2 independent viewings –access on Blackboard**

“*Crossfire*” (dir Directed by Edward Dmytryk, 1947)

Leonard J. Leff and Jerold L. Simmons “Film into Story: The Narrative Scheme of ‘Crossfire.’” *Literature/Film Quarterly*, Vol. 12, No. 3 (1984), pp. 171-179.  
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/43797408>

*School Ties* (dir Robert Mandel Sch6284)

Bernard Weinraub, "The Talk of Hollywood; Anti-Semitism Film Strikes a Chord With Its Producers" (14 Sept. 1992)

<https://www.nytimes.com/1992/09/14/movies/the-talk-of-hollywood-anti-semitism-film-strikes-a-chord-with-its-producers.html?smid=em-share>

**Week 5 Jews, Jewish Studies and Multiculturalism**

**Tues 22 Feb**

Blackboard:

- Sara R. Horowitz, "The Paradox of Jewish Studies in the New Academy."
- Susannah Heschel, "Jewish Studies as Counter History" IN *Insider/Outsider: American Jews and Multiculturalism* (eds), David Biale, Michael Galchinsky, and Susannah Heschel. (Univ of CA Press, 1998)

**Thurs 24 Feb**

- Forman, Seth, "Whiteness Scholars vs. the Jews." *Academic Questions*, Vol. 13, Issue 4 Fall 2000, pp52-58
- *Review documents on Blackboard from Des Moines Register 1976*
- In Class: *Yidl in the Middle* (dir Marlene Booth) Kanopy, 60 min

**Class Discussion for Journal reflection : weeks 4 & 5**

**Journal week 4 & 5: - bringing the readings and reflection questions together**

How do the films *Crossfire*, *Gentleman's Agreement* and *School Ties* contribute to the concerns raised by readings (Forman, Heschel, Horowitz,)? (identify whether the discussion will be conducted with students, family or friends). How would you use these films for a discussion about antisemitism and whiteness? How does discussion of Jews "becoming white," "becoming "ethnic," "religious group" make discussion of antisemitism as racism more challenging? What do the films teach their American Christian audiences? What do they teach American Jewish viewers?

Linking to *Shaare Tefila Congregation v. Cobb*: What links can you find in the films and readings which clarify or highlight specific points in the exchanges between the Justices and Patricia A. Brannan, the attorney for Shaare Tefila Congregation. (For instance: why did the Justices Marshall and Scalia seem to become impatient with Brannan at several points?)

A question to ponder: Why is the case of *Shaare Tefila Congregation v Cobb* is not well known or not known at all?

**Week 6 Jews and European Antisemitism**

**Tue 1 March -No Class Meeting**

– College determined Working Differently Day

**Thurs 3 March**

In class we will watch the first 90 minutes [from 2-3:30] of "*Sunshine*" (dir István Szabó)

Reading Assignment

Matteoni, Francesca. "The Jew, the Blood and the Body in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe." *Folklore* 119, no. 2 (2008): 182-200. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40646449>



[EBSCO] van Court, Elisa Narin. "Invisible in Oxford: Medieval Jewish History in Modern England." *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies*, Spring 2008, Vol. 26 Issue 3, p1-20, 20p,

**Journal for Week 6** – notes on the Matteoni and van Court

**Week 7.**

**Tues 8 March** –

*In class we will watch the last 90 minutes (2-3:30) Sunshine* dir. István Szabó (1999)  
Skim specifically for comments on film "Sunshine"

Cunningham, John. "'The Man Reading Assignment: Who Comes from Somewhere Else Is Always Suspect'; Sunshine." In *The Cinema of István Szabó: Visions of Europe*, 95-106. Columbia University Press, 2014 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7312/> on your own

- Watch on your own: Hannah Arendt "Zur Person"  
<http://www.arendtcenter.it/en/tag/gunter-gaus/cunn17198.11>

**Thurs 10 March** – **"Jews & Muslims: Intimate Strangers"**

(each film is 52 min so this will take most of the class period)

*Film In Class (database Films on Demand) Jews & Muslims: Origins (610-721)*

*Film In Class (database Films on Demand) Jews & Muslims: The Place of the Other (721-1789)*

**Journal for week 7 – reflections on Sunshine and Hannah Arendt interview**

**Week 8 Jews, Arabs, Antisemitism** - *FOCUS* - How sifting through archives and memories of the past shape the political perspectives of the present

**Tues 15 March**

\* *Film In Class (database Films on Demand) Jews & Muslims The Separation (1789-1945)*

*Discussion (3-3:50pm)*

Read in the order:

- Albert Memmi, "What is an Arab Jew?" in *Jews and Arabs* (1975) See Blackboard
- Gottreich, Emily Benichou. "Historicizing the Concept of Arab Jews in the Maghrib." *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 98, no. 4 (2008): 433-51. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25470274>
- Levy, Lital. "Historicizing the Concept of Arab Jews in the "Mashriq"." *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 98, no. 4 (2008): 452-69. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25470275>

**Thurs 17 March** – "Diaspora" - **Class will not meet to give time for a reading afternoon** (please do not squander these 10 minutes) -

Cohen, Robin. "Diasporas and the Nation-State: From Victims to Challengers." *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)* 72, no. 3 (1996): 507–20.  
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/2625554>

Safran, William. "The Jewish Diaspora in a Comparative and Theoretical Perspective." *Israel Studies* 10, no. 1 (2005): 36-60. [muse.jhu.edu/article/180371](http://muse.jhu.edu/article/180371).

Briefly reflect – What are the criteria Cohen and Safran identify for diaspora? How do they consider the relevance or significance of the concept? Does their discussion of the experience of Diaspora resonate with you? Do you find the arguments to be persuasive? Why?

## Spring Break

### Week 9

#### Tues 5 April

Michael M. Laskier. "Between Vichy Antisemitism and German Harassment: The Jews of North Africa during the Early 1940s." *Modern Judaism*, Vol. 11, No. 3 (Oct., 1991), pp. 343-369

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/1396112>

Marcy Brink-Danan "Names That Show Time: Turkish Jews as "Strangers" and the Semiotics of Reclassification." *American Anthropologist*, New Series, Vol. 112, No. 3 (SEPTEMBER 2010), pp. 384-396 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40801596>

In Class: *400 Miles to Freedom* <https://vimeo.com/27181517> (60 min)

"That night I just remember running. No time to catch your breath, just running, because you want to be gone from the village before the sun comes up." -Avishai Mekenon,

#### Thurs 7 April

"We disappeared." *The story of Jewish refugees from the Middle East and North Africa*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OSjhQVtAZ9o&t=87s>

- Michael M. Laskier. "Between Vichy Antisemitism and German Harassment: The Jews of North Africa during the Early 1940s." *Modern Judaism*, Vol. 11, No. 3 (Oct., 1991), pp. 343-369 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1396112>
- Bensoussan, Georges, and Andrew Halper. "Between Europeans and Arabs: Finding a Space?" In *Jews in Arab Countries: The Great Uprooting*, 228-54. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2019. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvd58t48.11>

### Journal week 9:

What preliminary understanding and/or reflections do you have about the meanings and significance of "labels": "Arab Jew" and "European Jew" and "American Jew"? How do the readings and films of this week help or challenge your understanding of *assimilation* and *difference*?

### Week 10 Disruption and Nostalgia

#### Tues 12 April

Assignment - Roumani-Denn, Vivienne. "Life Interrupted: Interviews with Jews of Libyan Origin." In *Jewish Libya: Memory and Identity in Text and Image*, edited by Roumani Jacques, Meghnagi David, and Roumani Judith, 185-202. Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 2018.

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt20p574k.19>

Libya: The Last Exodus <https://www.chaiflicks.com/last-exodus> Directed by Ruggero Gabbai Italy, 2017 (65 min)

#### Thurs 14 April

See Blackboard for Kfar Todra

In Class: *Tinghir - Jerusalem echoes from the Mellah* (dir Kamal Hachkar, Kamal, film director) 2011 (86 min)

### Week 11 Jews and Antisemitism in South Asia

#### Tues 19 April

Aafreedi, Navras Jaat. "Muslim Antisemitism and Anti-Zionism in South Asia: A Case Study of Lucknow." In *Anti-Zionism and Antisemitism: The Dynamics of Delegitimization*, edited by Rosenfeld Alvin H., 454-80. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2019.

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvbnm283.20>



Look up information on journalist Daniel Pearl (include international sources on news database) and on the 2008 Mumbai attacks (specifically the Nariman House, Sandra Samuel and Moshe Holtzberg)

In Class (Kanopy) *Shalom Bollywood*

**Thurs 21 April** - **Class time of 110 minutes is allocated for individual teams to begin working on reports.**

***Individual Teams meet to work on Reports:***

Jews of North Africa and Middle East from World War II and into 2000s  
Egypt, Iraq, Iran, Yemen, Algeria, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia,

**Week 12 Presentations:**

Tues 26 & Thurs 28 April

Jews of North Africa and Middle East during World War II and into 2000s

- **Thurs 28 April- In Class** – *I'm from the Jews/ Ana Min Al Yahud* (2017) [IZZY 17 min] Directed by Niv Hachlili, Aharon Shem Tov. With Oded Amit, Deborah Aroshas, George Iskandar, Ella Kanevsky

**Week 13 “Uncut Gems” – Jews on screen and the question of representation**

**On your own watch on Amazon** (If you do not have a subscription, you may pair up and watch in a common room): **Uncut Gems** (Dir. Benny Safdie, Josh Safdie; with Adam Sandler) – this is not intended as an entertaining assignment but a learning one.

Look up info on the film, the directors, the actors, the interviews – I have also added links to review on Blackboard “Documents” and you may search for more;

**Tues 3 May**

*The questions on “Uncut Gems” to prepare for class discussion:*

- (1) *What do you make of the Safdie brothers use of stereotype and defiance against antisemitism as well as disrupting the stereotype of Ashkenazi Jewish diamond dealers?*
- (2) *Comment on what you learn about the reviewers from their representation/reviews of the film, the cast, the setting, the directors.*
- (3) *In addition to links on Blackboard, please find additional reviews.*

**Thurs 5 May – New Antisemitism, Anti-Zionism and differentiations**

- Ilan Greilsammer. "The Appropriation of the Israeli “New Historians” Work by Anti-Zionists (pp. 281-301) In *Anti-Zionism and Antisemitism: The Dynamics of Delegitimization*, edited by Rosenfeld Alvin H., 281-301. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2019. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvbnm283.14>
- Emily Tamkin, author of *The Influence of Soros: Politics, Power, and the Struggle for Open Society*, on why the Jewish billionaire philanthropist has become a political target and an easy mark for antisemitism. <https://www.ajc.org/news/podcast/people-of-the-pod-the-george-soros-saga-antisemitismconspiracies-and-influence>

**Class Discussion What is the slippage between criticism of Israelis, Israeli government and policies? How does this slippage connect to ideas about Jewish otherness and Jewish power?**

**Week 14 Workshop proposals & general discussion**

**Tues 7 May** *Crafting a workshop for peers on antisemitism*

**Teams will prepare workshop proposal**

- How does antisemitism endure and in what forms does it manifest itself? Choose a theme of antisemitism (focused on one of the topics below or suggest one of your own) and map out a plan for a workshop with college-students: why did you choose your topic? what questions would you raise and why? what material would you bring? How will it contribute to an understanding of the antisemitism as a form or racism?

- religious or theological motif, texts or image
- historical event or series of events in a particular time period
- new Antisemitism manifested in web, media, political, academic setting, group

**Thurs 9 May** **Last Class**

**Prepare a written statement of appreciation to read in class (paragraph): what did you gain and what did you contribute to your peers learning experience this semester?**

**DUE 10 May 10:00am - Closure Reflection Paper 6-8 page (20%):**

what you have learned, and how has your knowledge broadened throughout the semester. How what you have learned during the semester integrates and is integrated in your undergraduate studies? (These questions are intentionally introspective)

**REMINDER**

- Submit *all* your Journals (those with our comments) *and* Reflection Paper (which will not yet have comments) inside a **pre-stamped, self-addressed, unsealed envelope!** Envelopes should be placed in designated box in Academic Support Office HSSC S2321

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