This semester we explore the history of Jewish women in America from the colonial era to the beginning of the twenty-first century. This course uses the prism of gender to refine our understanding of American Jewish history and of United States women’s history. Topics include migration, domesticity, economic life, voluntarism, political activism, religion, Zionism, and feminism.

**Required texts:**

1. Pamela S. Nadell and Jonathan D. Sarna, eds. *Women and American Judaism: Historical Perspectives*.
2. Pamela S. Nadell, ed. *American Jewish Women’s History*.
3. Dara Horn, *In the Image*. (Will arrive late at the bookstore.)
4. Additional readings — see the syllabus and also note the location for these readings. Some are available on Blackboard, either under e-reserves or under assignments. Some are accessed through Google Books.

**Undergraduate Student responsibilities:**

1. Class attendance and participation, 15 percent of final grade.  
   *If you are not in class, you cannot participate. More than 6 absences constitute grounds for failure. If you do not keep up with the readings, your participation grade will reflect this.*
2. Two book critiques, each 20 percent of the final grade. See assignment. Due dates: February 11 and March 24.
3. Research term paper: 10 percent of the final grade for process; 35 percent of final grade for final paper. Papers due April 21st. In-class presentations: April 28th during the exam hour. See assignment

**Graduate Student responsibilities:**

All of the above, PLUS two additional book critiques. Graduate student research papers will also be longer and more deeply researched.

**OFFICE HOURS:** Battelle-Tompkins 155; Mondays and Thursdays, 11:00-2:00
ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Standards of academic conduct are set forth in the University's Academic Integrity Code. By registering, you have acknowledged your awareness of the Academic Integrity Code, and you are obliged to become familiar with your rights and responsibilities as defined by the Code. Violations of the Academic Integrity Code will not be treated lightly, and disciplinary actions will be taken should such violations occur. Please see me if you have any questions about the academic violations described in the Code in general or as they relate to particular requirements for this course.

General Sources:

This takes you to the 2004 supplement to Dr. Weisbard’s 1997 bibliography.
The Jewish People in America, 5 volumes published by the American Jewish Historical Society and Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993.
Lilith: The Jewish Women's Magazine
Jacob Marcus, ed. The American Jewish Woman: A Documentary History
Jewish Women’s Archive, www.jwa.org — An on-line virtual archive of American Jewish women’s history
Paula Hyman and Deborah Dash Moore, eds., Jewish Women in America: An Historical Encyclopedia

SYLLABUS

1-14 Introduction

1-17 “An Angle of Vision”: Gender as a Category of Analysis in American History and Jewish History
“Introduction,” in Women and American Judaism, eds. Pamela S. Nadell and Jonathan D. Sarna, 1-14
“Introduction,” in American Jewish Women’s History, ed. Pamela S. Nadell, 1-7

Creating a Sense of Place

1-24 Jewish Women in Colonial America and the Early Republic
Holly Snyder, “Queens of the Household: The Jewish Women of British America, 1700-1800,” in Women and American Judaism, 15-43

1-28 B. Jewish Women, Republican Motherhood, and the Age of Association
Dianne Ashton, The Lessons of the Hebrew Sunday School in American Jewish Women’s History, 26-42

1-31 C. Women and American Judaism in the Nineteenth Century
Karla Goldman, Beyond the Synagogue Gallery: Finding a Place for Women in American Judaism, pp. 38-99; on Blackboard under e-reserves
Felicia Herman, “From Priestess to Hostess: Sisterhoods of Personal Service in New York City, 1887-1936,” in Women and American Judaism, 148-81

2-4 D. Self-Definition
Faith Rogow, Gone to Another Meeting: The National Council of Jewish Women, 1893-1993,” in American Jewish Women’s History, 64-74
Worlds of Difference: East European Immigrant Women Make Their Way to America

2-7  A. *Der Heym*: The East European Background
Paula Hyman, *Gender and Assimilation in Modern Jewish History*, 50-92, on Blackboard at e-reserves

2-11 FIRST BOOK CRITIQUE DUE

B. Coming to America
*In class* viewing of the film *Hester Street* (89 minutes) starts at 12:35 (not 12:45)

2-14  C. Migration and Settlement
Kate Simon, *Bronx Primitive*, 1-8, 44-54, on Blackboard at e-reserves
Shelly Tenenbaum, “Borrowers or Lenders Be: Jewish Immigrant Women’s Credit Networks,” in *American Jewish Women’s History*, 79-90

2-18  D. Work
Linda Mack Schloff, “‘We Dug More Rocks’: Women and Work,” in *American Jewish Women’s History*, 91-99
Alice Kessler-Harris, “Organizing the Unorganizable: Three Jewish Women and their Union,” in *American Jewish Women’s History*, 100-15
Susan A. Glenn, *Daughters of the Shtetl: Life and Labor in the Immigrant Generation*, 132-73; on Blackboard, under e-reserves

2-21  D. Politics: In the Neighborhood and for Suffrage
Elinor Lerner, "Jewish Involvement in the New York City Woman Suffrage Movement," *American Jewish History* (June 1981): 442-61; on Blackboard under e-reserves

2-25  E. Turning to Zion
Joyce Antler, “Zion in Our Hearts: Henrietta Szold and the American Jewish Women’s Movement,” in *American Jewish Women’s History*, 129-50
Erica Simmons, “Playgrounds and Penny Lunches in Palestine: American Social Welfare in the Yishuv,” *American Jewish History* 92, 3 (September 2004), 263-297; on Blackboard under Assignments
A Wider World for Immigrant Jewish Women and Their Daughters

2-28 A. At Home in American Judaism
   Regina Stein, “The Road to Bat Mitzvah,” in *Women and American Judaism*, 223-34

3-3 B. Confronting the Great Depression and Antisemitism
   Beth S. Wenger, “Budgets, Boycotts, and Babies: Jewish Women in the Great Depression,” in *American Jewish Women’s History*, 185-200
   Julia L. Foulkes, “Angels ‘Rewolt!’” Jewish Women in Modern Dance in the 1930s,” in *American Jewish Women’s History*, 201-18
   Rona Sheramy, “There are Times When Silence is a Sin”: The Women's Division of the American Jewish Congress and the Anti-Nazi Boycott Movement,” *American Jewish History*, 89, 1 (2001) 105-121; on Blackboard under Assignments

3-6 C. New Occupations: “My Daughter, the Teacher”
   Ruth Jacknow Markowitz, *My Daughter, the Teacher: Jewish Teachers in New York City Schools*, 1-17, 75-92; on Blackboard under e-reserves

Fierce Attachments

3-17 A. Private Lives and Public Representations
   Riv-Ellen Prell, “Rage and Representation: Jewish Gender Stereotypes in American Culture,” in *American Jewish Women’s History*, 238-55

3-20 B. We Are What We Eat
   Marcie Cohen Ferris, “‘From the Recipe File of Luba Cohen’: A Study of Southern Jewish Foodways and Cultural Identity,” in *American Jewish Women’s History*, 256-80
   Hasia Diner, *Hungering for America: Italian, Irish, and Jewish Foodways in the Age of Migration*, pp. 178-219; on Blackboard under e-reserves
3-24  SECOND BOOK CRITIQUE DUE; *Class does not meet*

3-25 and 3-26 “With Vision Flying”: New Perspectives on Women’s and Gender History

Students are required to attend the follow two conference sessions. Please attend additional sessions if possible.

**Tuesday March 25th, 7:30 pm, Butler Board Room**

*Keynote: Beyond the Gender Turn*

**Kathy Peiss**, Roy F. and Jeannette P. Nichols Professor of History, University of Pennsylvania

**Wednesday, March 26th, 3:30, Mary Graydon Center 200**

*History and Film*

“Yoo-hoo, Mrs. Goldberg”: Narrating Women’s History through Documentary Film

**Aviva Kempner**, Independent Filmmaker

3-27  D. Jewish Women as Religious Leaders


Pamela S. Nadell, “The Women Who Would Be Rabbis,” in *American Jewish Women’s History*, 175-84

*In class* viewing of And the Gates Opened: Women in the Rabbinate

3-31  H. The View from Orthodoxy

Lynn Davidman, *Tradition in a Rootless World: Women Turn to Orthodox Judaism*, 1-25, 136-73, [on Blackboard under e-reserves](#)

Stephanie Wellen Levine, *Mystics, Marvericks, and Merrymakers*, 1-66, [on Blackboard under e-reserves](#)

4-3  E. Inventing Fictions

Dara Horn, *In the Image* (all)

4-7  E. Political Commitments I


Debra L. Schultz, “Going South: Jewish Women in the Civil Rights Movement.”
4-10 F. Political Commitments II: Feminism

4-14 G. Feminist Judaism
Deborah E. Lipstadt, “Feminism and American Judaism: Looking Back at the Turn of the Century,” in *Women and American Judaism*, 291-308
Paula E. Hyman, “Jewish Feminism Faces the American Women’s Movement: Convergence and Divergence,” in *American Jewish Women’s History*, 297-312
“JOFA: Jewish Orthodox Feminist Alliance,” browse the website at http://www.jofa.org/

4-17 Papers Due

4-21 No Class – Second Day of Passover (Your attendance at the conference “With Vision Flying” makes up for missing this class.)

4-24 G. Jewish Families Today
Sylvia Barack Fishman, *Double or Nothing?: Jewish Families and Mixed Marriage*, pp. 1-54; on Blackboard under e-reserves

4-28 Paper Presentations

5-5 Paper Presentations (during the final exam hour, Monday, May 5th, 2:10-4:40)

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