

Bard College
HIST 190: Understanding the 'Jewish Question' In History
Spring 2024

This course is designed for any undergraduate and has no prerequisites. The course consists of readings on images of Jews, the self-image of Jews, and the attitude and treatment of Jews in Europe and North America taken primarily from the years between the middle of the 18th century until 1948. The texts will be, for the most part, "primary" source texts and novels. As this is a newly formed course, we will be working in units of two weeks, and the syllabus will be updated before each unit. All materials for this course will be provided to the students either via PDFs or actual books.

Section Details:

Instructor: Leon Botstein
Email: president@bard.edu

Class Meeting Time and Location: Tue & Thurs 10:10am-11:30am at RKC 110.

Nesrin Ersoy McMeekin nmcmeekin@bard.edu
Office: Aspinwall 307
Office Hours: Tue & Thurs from 1:30pm-3:30pm and/or by appointment.

Course requirements:

Students will be asked to write a short essay after each unit comparing the readings:

- Total of six essays, 10% each-----→ 60%
- Regular attendance and in-class participation -----→ 20%
- Oral discussion at the end of the semester -----→ 20%

READING LIST:

- Arendt, Hannah. *Rahel Varnhagen: The Life of A Jewish Woman*, trans. Richard and Clara Winston (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1974).
- Arendt, Hannah. *The Origins Of Totalitarianism* (Cleveland and New York: Meridian Books, 1962).
- Arendt, Hannah. "The Jew As Pariah: A Hidden Tradition," Published in *Jewish Social Studies*, Vol.6, No.2 (Apr., 1944), text from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4464588>.
- Brandeis, Louis D. "The Jewish Problem: How to Solve It" published in *Zionist Essays*, No.1 (1915).
- Deutscher, Isaac. *The Non-Jewish Jew: And Other Essays* (London, New York, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1968).
- Eliot, George. *Daniel Deronda* (Ware: Wordsworth Classics, 1996).
- Herzl, Theodor. *A Jewish State: Proposal of a Modern Solution For The Jewish Question* (North Haven, 2024).
- Hitler, Adolf. *Mein Kampf*, trans. Ralph Manheim.
- Kaplan and Penslar. *The Origins of Israel: 1882-1948. A Documentary History. Sources in Modern Jewish History*. (University of Wisconsin Press, 2011).
- Kohl, J. G. *Austria: Vienna, Prague, Hungary, Bohemia, and The Danube; Galicia, Styria, Moravia, Bukovina, and The Military Frontier* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1843).
- Lazare, Bernard. *Job's Dingheap* (New York: Schocken Books Inc., 1948).
- Nirenberg, David. *Anti-Judaism: The Western Tradition* (New York: Norton & Company, 2013).
- Marx, Karl. *Selected Writings*, ed. Lawrence H. Simon (Indiana: Hackett, 1994).
- Moss, Kenneth B. *An Unchosen People: Jewish Political Reckoning in Interwar Poland* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 2021).
- Sartre, Jean-Paul *Anti-Semite and Jew* (New York: Schocken Books Inc., 1948).
- Schnitzler, Arthur. *The Road Into The Open* (Whithorn: Anodos Books, 2019).

- Singer, Israel J. *The Family Carnovsky*, trans. Joseph Singer (New York: Schocken Books, 1988).
- “The International Jew: The World’s Foremost Problem,” published in *The Dearborn Independent*, November (1920).
- *The Jew In The Modern World: A Documentary History*, eds. Paul R. Mendes-Flohr and Jehuda Reinharz. Sources in *Modern Jewish History*, University of Wisconsin Press, 2011.
- *The Origins of Israel: 1882-1948: A Documentary History*. eds. Eran Kaplan Derek J. Penslar.
- *The Jewish Peril: Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion*, 5th edition (London: The Britons, 1921).
- Wagner, Richard. *Judaism in Music*, trans. William Ashton Ellis.
- Wasserstein, Bernard. *On The Eve: The Jews of Europe Before The Second World War* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2012).
- Whitman, James Q. *Hitler’s American Model: The United States and the Making of Nazi Race Law* (Princeton University Press) 132-161. JSTORE. Web. 02 April 2024.

FILMS:

- *Mr. Skeffington*. Directed by Vincent Sherman, Warner Brothers, 1944.
- *Crossfire*. Directed by Edward Dmytryk, RKO Radio Pictures, 1947.
- *Gentleman’s Agreement*. Directed by Elia Kazan, 20th Century Fox, 1947.
- *The Pianist*. Directed by Roman Polanski, 2002.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE:

UNIT 1: Tuesday, February 6 – Thursday, February 15, 2024:

Tuesday, Feb 6th: Marx, Karl. *Selected Writings*, “On the Jewish Question” pp. 1 – 26.

Thursday, Feb 8th: Wagner, Richard. *Judaism in Music*. Full Essay.

Tuesday, Feb. 13th: Lazare, Bernard. “Jewish Nationalism” pp. 54 – 79.

Thursday, Feb. 15th: Sartre, Jean-Paul *Anti-Semite and Jew*, pp. 143 – 153.

UNIT 2: Tuesday, February 20 – Thursday, February 29, 2024:

Tuesday, Feb 20th: Arendt, Hannah. *Rahel Varnhagen: The Life of A Jewish Woman*, pp. 199-228.

Thursday, Feb 22nd: Arendt, Hannah. *The Jew as Pariah: A Hidden Tradition*, pp. 99-122.

Tuesday, Feb 27th: Arendt, Hannah. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, pp. 3 – 120.

Thursday, Feb 29th: *The Jewish Peril: Protocols of the Elders of Zion*.

UNIT 3: Tuesday, March 5 – Thursday, March 14, 2024:

Tuesday, March 5th: Theodor Herzl, *A Jewish State*.

Thursday, March 7th: Theodor Herzl, *A Jewish State*.

Tuesday, March 12th: Arthur Schnitzler, *The Road Into The Open*.

Thursday, March 14th: Arthur Schnitzler, *The Road Into The Open*.

UNIT 4: Tuesday, March 26-Thursday, April 4, 2024:

Tuesday, March 26th: Deutscher, Isaac. *The Non-Jewish Jew: And Other Essays*, pp.25-59.

Thursday, March 28th: Brandeis, Louis D. “The Jewish Problem: How to Solve It.”

Tuesday, April 2nd: “The International Jew: The World’s Foremost Problem,” published in *The Dearborn Independent* pp.9-67.

Thursday, April 4th: Discussion of Films:

-*Mr. Skeffington*. Directed by Vincent Sherman, Warner Brothers, 1944.

-*Crossfire*. Directed by Edward Dmytryk, RKO Radio Pictures, 1947.

-*Gentleman’s Agreement*. Directed by Elia Kazan, 20th Century Fox, 1947.

UNIT 5: Tuesday, April 9-Thursday, April 18, 2024:

Tuesday, April 9th: Hitler, Adolf. *Mein Kampf*, trans. Ralph Manheim. "Nation and Race," pp. 177-205.

Thursday, April 11th: Wasserstein, Bernard. *On The Eve: The Jews of Europe Before The Second World War*. pp. 428-436.

Tuesday, April 16th: Moss, Kenneth B. *An Unchosen People: Jewish Political Reckoning in Interwar Poland*. pp. 306-328.

Thursday, April 18th: Whitman, James Q. *Hitler's American Model: The United States and the Making of Nazi Race Law*. pp.132-161.

UNIT 6: Tuesday, April 23- Thursday, May 2, 2024:

Tuesday, April 23rd: Trunk, Isaiah. *Lódź Ghetto: A History*. Trans. Robert Moses Shapiro.

Thursday, April 25th: Hayes, Peter edit. *How Was It Possible? A Holocaust Reader*. "Jews In The Nazi Grip" pp.331-424.

Tuesday, April 30th: **NO CLASS: ADVISING DAY**

Thursday, May 2nd: Hayes, Peter edit. *How Was It Possible? A Holocaust Reader*. "The German Killers and Their Methods," pp.425-526.

- *The Pianist*. Directed by Roman Polanski, 2002.

Tuesday, May 7th: Hayes, Peter edit. *How Was It Possible? A Holocaust Reader*. "Collaboration and Its Limits" pp.527-641.

Thursday, May 9th: Kaplan and Penslar. *The Origins of Israel: 1882-1948. A Documentary History*. Sources in Modern Jewish History. pp.218-228, 257-267, 304-317.

Tuesday, May 14th: Nirenberg, David. *Anti-Judaism: The Western Tradition*. pp.1-12, 423-459.

Thursday, May 16th: Singer, Israel J. *The Family Carnovsky*, trans. Joseph Singer.

Completion Day.

Further resources at Bard

Stevenson Library

www.bard.edu/library

Library Hours: www.bard.edu/library/hours.php

The Library offers research and writing support, group and individual study spaces, and physical and electronic resources to support the intellectual and creative work of the Bard community.

Librarians are always happy to help you with research, citations, and more. If you have questions about using the library, finding or accessing sources, or formatting citations and bibliographies, you can:

- Walk up to the Research Help Desk on the first floor of the library. Librarians are on duty Monday - Thursday 11 am - 7 pm, Friday 11 am - 3 pm, and Sunday from 12 - 5 pm.
- Click [Ask a Librarian](#) from anywhere on our website to send us your question via email or request a 1:1 appointment. (www.bard.edu/library/ask-a-librarian)
- Contact your [House Librarian](#). (www.bard.edu/library/contact)

Disability Accommodations

Bard College is committed to providing equal access to all students. If you anticipate issues related to the format or requirements of this course, please contact me. I would like us to discuss ways to ensure your full participation in the course. Together we can plan how best to support your learning and coordinate your accommodations. Students who have already been approved to receive academic accommodations through disability services should share their accommodation letter and make arrangements to communicate with me as soon as possible.

Have a learning difference or disability—including mental health, medical, or physical disability—and are not yet registered? Please contact Disability Support Services at disabilityservices@bard.edu. The coordinator will confidentially discuss the process to establish reasonable accommodations. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and require advance notice to implement.

Dean of Student Affairs Office (DOSA)

In addition to your faculty advisor, whom you were assigned at the beginning of the year, members of the Dean of Students Office provide supplemental advising to students in need of academic, social, or emotional support. Deans meet with students who seek to improve their academic skills and time-management strategies, are unsure about their program of study, or want help with the registration process, and support students as they navigate personal, social, community, and campus life. The deans work closely with the faculty adviser to provide comprehensive support for students and provide referrals to other offices such as the Health and Counseling Center, the Learning Commons, and the Career Development Office.

Contact the Dean of Students Office in Sottery Hall at dosa@bard.edu or 845-758-7454

Learning Commons

<http://www.bard.edu/learningcommons>

For our Online Learning Web Page, visit <https://sites.google.com/bard.edu/bard-college-learning-commons/home>

The Learning Commons is Bard's inclusive, socially-structured space for sharing your learning process with peers and extending learning beyond the classroom. We are home to **Bard's writing center**, and our tutors can coach you in person in the related practices of reading, writing, and revision. The fellow will work with you one-on-one at any stage of your writing process to help take your writing to the next level and to develop your skills in college composition and revision.

Your friends at the Learning Commons also provide collaborative supplemental instruction in every subject taught at the college, in tutor training, and in learning strategies. We host our weekly "Shut Up and Write!" sessions virtually, and we field **college writing and academic skills** hours and workshops for all Bard students. We meet with students seeking disability accommodations, compliant with the ADA, and our faculty teach credit-bearing courses in academic writing, research, mathematics, English as a second language, information literacy, inclusive pedagogy, and public speaking. **Ask us about employment opportunities as a paid Bard writing tutor!**

To learn more about the Learning Commons or to make in-person appointments with a friendly tutor-consultant, contact blc@bard.edu / 845 758 7812 or Learning Commons Director Dr. Jim Keller at keller@bard.edu / 845 758 7051.

For **Learning Commons ESL support**, please contact Denise Minin, our ESL coordinator / 845 758 7883 / dminin@bard.edu