One semester course focusing on moving images of Jews and Jewish life in America. Since the creation of moving images at the end of the 19th century Jewish characters, themes, life and customs have been depicted in a wide range of films. This course explores depictions of Jews in fiction and documentary films, from early silent shorts to Hollywood blockbuster movies.

Class Format: Each week is devoted to a specific topic. Tuesday classes will include illustrated lectures with the expectation that students will have read the assignments and viewed any assigned films prior to the class. Attendance at all classes is required. Articles and books will be available at the library reserve desk and on-line through LATTE. DVDs of all films will be available in the Reserve Room of the Library and placed on the server with password access.

Grades: Midterm grades will be determined by a short paper (topic to be approved) plus an in-class essay. Intermittently during the course, a number of short film critiques will be assigned. The final will consist of a term paper. Depending upon the size of the class and the progress of the course, a final exam (consisting of 3 essay questions based on the screenings and readings) may be given.

Preparation Time: Success in this 4 credit hour course is based on the expectation that students will spend a minimum of 9 hours study time per week in preparation for the class (readings, viewing films, preparation for exams and writing papers).

Note: The reading assignments are listed with the topics and films they augment. They are to be read in preparation for each class.

**Week 1**
**Tues Jan 17**
**Introduction – The invention of Film & What is a Jewish Film?**
In Class: Ellis Island (1903 & 1906), 1 min; Ghetto Fishmarket (1903), 1 min; Levi and Cohen: The Irish Comedians. (1903), 1 min; Cohen’s Advertising Scheme (1904), 1 min; Cohen’s Fire Sale (1907), 10 min; Cohen on the Telephone (1929), 9 mins; Advice and Dissent (2002), 21 min.
Read: Part One and Part Two pp 3-63 & glossary of terms pp 192-197 (Bordwell)

**Week 2**
**Tues Jan 24**
**The Immigrant Experience**
In Class: Old Isaac the Pawnbroker (1908), 10 min; Hungry Hearts (1922) and Breaking Home Ties (1922) clips.
Week 3
Jan 31 Tues  Assimilation & Acculturation
In Class:  Child of the Ghetto (1910), 10 min; The Jazz Singer (1927), 90 mins.
Read:  Hoberman chapter 9 “Making it in America” pp 113-121.
Sachar, Chap 16 pp 382 – 413.
Saposnik, “Jolson, the Jazz Singer and the Jewish Mother” Judaism . Fall 1994 pp 432 – 442.
Assignment: Write critique of Child of the Ghetto due Friday February 3.

Week 4
Feb 7 Tues  Yiddish Cinema
Illustrated lecture w clip reel of history of Yiddish Cinema;
A Cantor on Trial (1931), 10 min.
Read:  Hoberman, Bridge of Light - Intro pp 3-11, Chapters 8 & 9 pp 103-121.

Week 5
Feb 14 Tues  Love Conquers All
In Class:  Romance of a Jewess (1908), 10 min; Tevye (1939), 92 min.
Read:  Sholem Aleichem, Tevye The Dairyman Chap 3, 4, 5, 8
Be prepared to discuss and compare the “Chava” short story, Tevye and Fiddler on the Roof

Week 6
Vacation week Feb 21
View Gentleman’s Agreement and Schindler’s List

Week 7
Feb 28 Tues  The Golden Age of Yiddish Film
In Class:  The Dybbuk (1937) Waszynski
The most widely produced play in the history of Jewish theater.
Read:  S. Ansky, The Dybbuk and Other Writings (ed Roskies)
Hoberman, Bridge of Light - Intro pp 3-11 & Chap 20 pp 275 - 285
*quiz and discussion of The Dybbuk – be sure to read the play.

Week 8
Mar 7 Tues  Hollywood
Illustrated lecture “Images of Jewish Power in Hollywood films
Gabler, An Empire of Their Own

Week 9
Mar 14 Tues  Hollywood & Humor
In Class:  Crimes and Misdemeanors (1990) Woody Allen
“Springtime for Hitler” clip and Mel Brooks
American-Jewish Filmmakers, Chapter 2 Woody Allen & Chapter 3 Mel Brooks

The Producers (1968) Mel Brooks

Week 10
Mar 21 Tues Hollywood & the Holocaust
In Class: Pawnbroker (1965) 114 mins.
Read: Rosenfeld, “The Americanization of the Holocaust”.
View: Mortal Storm (1040) 100 mins.; An American Tail (1986) 80 mins

Week 11
Mar 28 Tues Documentaries
Read: Bordwell on Documentary filmmaking pp 406-417

Week 12
April 4 Tues Coan Brothers
In Class: A Serious Man (2009) Coen Brothers
Read: Bordwell on Documentary films pp 406 – 417
“A Serious Film” by Ruth R. Wisse, Commentary, December 2009

Week 13 and 14 Passover vacation April 11 & 18

Week 15
April 25 Tues Guest filmmaker Ron Blau
Our Time in the Garden (1981) and new film in production

Week 16
May 2 Tues Barry Levinson
Reading: Stephen Whitfield, Making Fragmentation Familiar: Barry Levinson’s Avalon”

May 5 Senior final papers due

May 10 All other final papers due

Required reading: On sale at bookstore and on reserve at the Library

Books
Purchase at Bookstore or The Strand or Amazon
Anzia Yezierska, Hungry Hearts, Penguin/20th Century Classics, 1997 (3 short stories)
The Dybbuk & Other Writings, ed Roskies, Yale University Press, 2002.
Selected Chapters.
J. Hoberman, Bridge of Light:Yiddish Film Between Two Worlds, UPNE 011. ISBN 9 78184 658702 (selected chapters).
On reserve with articles on line – password – Dybbuk

D. Bordwell & K Thompson *Film Art: An Introduction*


Rosenfeld, Alvin, “The Americanization of the Holocaust” reprint

Irv Saposnik, “Jolson, the Jazz Singer and the Jewish Mother” *Judaism*. Fall 1994 pp 432 - 442


Neal Gabler, *An Empire of Their Own*


Ruth R. Wisse, “A Serious Film” *Commentary*, December 2009