

MODERN JUDAIC THOUGHT: AMERICAN JUDAISM  
Rel/JSP/PHI 435  
Fall 2009  
Tues 3:30-6:15  
Maxwell 111

office: HL 509  
office hours: T/TH 11:00-12:00  
(or by appointment)  
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## Syllabus

This course examines the formation of American Jewish thought. Our primary focus will be the dynamic relation between culture and religion. What is Judaism in the United States? Readings and discussions combine social markers (acculturation and assimilation, liberalism, tradition) with theological topoi (revelation, law, and the problem of suffering). In the second half of the course, special note will go to topics related to Judaism and postmodern culture (gender, material culture, and the culture of kitsch, fakes, and copies).

### Required Texts

Heschel, *The Sabbath*  
Heschel, *Man is Not Alone*  
Soloveitchik, *Halachic Man*  
Soloveitchik, *Lonely Man of Faith*  
Plaskow, *Standing Again At Sinai*  
Rosen: *Talmud and the Internet*

### requirements:

weekly 1 page reading-critiques  
class attendance and participation  
1 five page paper  
1 ten-twelve page paper

### READINGS

9/2 Introduction (no assignment)

9/9 Mordecai Kaplan,  
*Judaism as a Civilization* Glazer. p.79-105.  
*Judaism as a Civilization* p.108-25, 151-9, 209-24, 173-85, 431-59 in Course Reader

9/16 Heschel

Glazer p.106-28.

*Man is Not Alone*. Chapters 1, 3, 7, 8, 9

*Man is Not Alone* Chapters 23-26

9/23 Shabbat

Kaplan. *The Meaning of God in Modern Jewish Religion* in Course Reader

Heschel. *The Sabbath*

9/30 Soloveitchik

*Halakhic Man*

10/7 Soloveitchik

*Lonely Man of Faith* and "Confrontation"

10/14 The Holocaust:

Richard Rubenstein, "Dean and the Chosen People" in After Auschwitz in COURSE  
READER and Eliezer Berkovits, "Faith" in COURSE READER

Selections from Levett and Braiterman

10/28 Critical and Cultural interludes

Neusner "Vicarious Judaism" Clement Greenberg, Kitsch, and Jenna Joselitt Weisman

11/4 Feminism

Plaskow, *Standing Again at Sinai*

11/11

Feminism

Blu Greenberg and Adler

11/18 Postmodernism

Selection from Ochs and Kepnes on prayer; Revelation after Reason

12/2 Media and Art

Something from Too Jewish

Rosen Talmud and Internet

12/9 Conclusion

Selections from Koltun-Fromm on American Judaism and Braiterman on the siddur