

## RELS 120: RELIGION, ART, CULTURE

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(**do not use** my [g.cofc.edu](mailto:g.cofc.edu) email)

Spring II 2021  
Monday, Wednesday

Office hours: By appointment

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** In this course we will discuss art both by and about Jews, representations of Jews in art, media, and propaganda, including derogatory depictions and the stereotypes about Jews that show up in art. This class will be bookended by units called "What is Jewish Art?" We will start the semester thinking about what it means for art to be Jewish, and we will end the semester recalling, reconsidering, and reshaping our understanding of Judaism's relationship to art, media, and cultural depictions created by and about Jews.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:** The following course objectives echo the learning outcomes established by the RELS department: Students will understand the implications of a text's rhetorical strategy and recognize meanings beyond the author's explicit message. Students will recognize that the development of women's roles in the particular religion under study is linked to specific identities; historical and cultural gender expectations and, issues of power. Students will become aware of their own judgments in their encounters with diverse traditions. These competencies will be assessed through the student's ability to articulate an academic approach to the study of religion in their discussions, written work, and final presentations.

### REQUIRED TEXT:

- **Purchase or Rent:**
  - Art Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1996).
- **AJS Perspectives: The Art Issue (available [online](#))**
- Short-readings, assigned and available through links in OAKS/library proxy links
- Films, assigned and available through the library website (unless otherwise stated)
- YouTube videos, assigned and available through links in OAKS

In this course, will use a variety of different mediums to effectively communicate and examine the role of women and religion. We all learn differently, communicate our learning experiences differently, and therefore, we all require different learning tools. I hope that by using videos, movies, readings, podcasts, and visual media, you all will leave this class with a more robust understanding of the ways in which women have been in religion, outside of religion, influencing religion, and ultimately, .... and religion.

## Course Requirements and Assignments:

**Syllabus Contract (0%)** Signed and returned to OAKS in the Dropbox for the Assignment

**Participation & Attendance (10%):** This class, while online, will require ample participation and attendance. On days with lectures, I expect tentative listening and engaged participation when necessary. On days that are discussion based, I expect all students to engage with their classmates in a thoughtful, kind, and curious manner. If you have something that precludes you from actively participating in discussion, please let me know and an **accommodation** can be made. If you are an athlete, please let me know on the first day of class of any impending travel dates. **Five or more unexcused class absences, may result in a lower grade. The chat feature does count as participation so long as it does not become the only discussion point.**

**500 Word Essays (80%):** Over the course of the semester, you will turn in **five** short essays. These will be double-spaced, reflecting on the assigned readings and/or materials. These papers are open-ended, but you must have an introduction, an argument or critique, a few supporting pieces of evidence, and a conclusion. There will be sign-ups for which unit you will do, so that you and I can both be accountable for your assignment.

A standard format of a 500-word essay has the following [components](#):

### **Introduction**

- The introduction is responsible for keeping the reader engaged. It provides a brief overview of the overall essay and contains the **thesis** statement for the essay topic.
- It provides background information about your essay's topic and mentions why you chose this topic in particular.

### **Body Paragraphs**

- After the introduction, the body of the essay starts. For a 500-word essay, particularly, there are usually **3-4 paragraphs of 3-4 sentences in length**
- Each paragraph discusses a key element and provides the required **evidence** to give it a logical sense (**minimum of two readings per unit, per essay**)

### **Conclusion**

- Writing the conclusion is the most complicated part of essay writing. To write a good conclusion, the writer must logically summarize all the key elements and **reiterate the thesis statement.**

Rules of the paper:

- **EACH PAPER SHOULD BRING TOGETHER AT MINIMUM 3 OF THE READINGS FROM THE UNIT.**
- You must use **evidence (citations)** from the readings, good syntax, grammar, and spelling, and your paper must be clear and concise. (citations can be direct or indirect)
- Each essay will be worth 10% of your overall essay grade, 80% total of your final grade.
- Your papers will be due the **Wednesday** of the unit you are reflecting on

**Final Essay (10%):** For your final essay, you will add an additional 1-2 pages that is an expansion of **one** of your 500 word essays. This expansion should include any comments I gave in your initial grade, more expansive paragraphs, more evidence from the readings, and a well-developed thesis and conclusion. This final essay should include (1-2) additional readings for evidence from the earlier essay.

<b>COURSE SCHEDULE</b>		
<b>The readings should be ahead of the class (i.e. March 14<sup>th</sup>, we'll discuss Sara Lipton)</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Assignment</b>
<b>Unit 1: What is Jewish Art, pt.1</b>		
Monday, February 28	Samantha Baskind & Larry Silver, "Introduction," in <i>Jewish Art: A Modern History</i> (London: Reaktion, 2011). <b>(OAKS)</b>  We will discuss this <b>IN CLASS</b> .	Read Baskind <b>BEFORE</b> the FDOC.
Wednesday, March 2	Kalman Bland, "Introduction," <i>The Artless Jew: Medieval and Modern Affirmations and Denials of the Visual</i> ,	No essay for Unit 1
Monday, March 7	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>
Wednesday, March 9	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>
<b>Unit 2: Medieval Art</b>		
Monday, March 14	Sara Lipton, "The First Anti-Jewish Caricature?," <i>The New York Review of Books</i> . <a href="https://www.nybooks.com/daily/2016/06/06/the-first-anti-jewish-caricature/">https://www.nybooks.com/daily/2016/06/06/the-first-anti-jewish-caricature/</a> <b>(OAKS)</b>  Sara Lipton, "What's in a Nose?: The Origins, Development, and Influence of Medieval Anti-Jewish Caricature," 2018. <b>(OAKS)</b>  Barbara Drake Boehm & Melanie Holcomb, "Jews and the Arts in Medieval Europe," The Met. <a href="https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/jewm/hd_jewm.htm">https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/jewm/hd_jewm.htm</a> <b>(OAKS)</b>	Readings
Wednesday, March 16	Danny Smith "Painted into a Corner: Seeing Jews in Medieval Rome," in <i>AJS Perspectives</i> , Fall 2021. 54 – 55 <b>(OAKS)</b>  Nina Rowe, "Idealization and Subjection at the South Façade of Strasbourg Cathedral," in <i>Beyond the Yellow Badge: Anti-Judaism and Antisemitism in Medieval and Early Modern Visual Culture</i> , ed. Mitchell Merback (Leiden ; Boston: Brill, 2007). <b>(OAKS)</b>	<b>Unit #2 Essay Due @ 11:59 PM</b>
<b>Unit 3: Holocaust Propaganda &amp; Americanization of the Holocaust</b>		
Monday, March 21	Art Spiegelman, <i>The Complete Maus</i> , (New York: Pantheon Books, 2011), volume I.	Maus V.I

<p>Wednesday, March 23</p>	<p>Art Spiegelman, <i>The Complete Maus</i>, (New York: Pantheon Books, 2011), volume II.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>No Class</u></b></p> <p><b>Failure to participate in group assignment will count as 2 unexcused absences</b></p>	<p>Group Discussions/Collab – assignment will be in OAKS Module</p>
<p>Monday, March 28</p>	<p>Presiado, Mor. ““These Threads Capture Shadows’: Sewing and Embroidery in Holocaust Art Works of Contemporary Jewish Women Artists.” <i>Ars Judaica : the Bar-Ilan Journal of Jewish Art</i>, no. 8 (2012): 99–118.</p> <p>Sarah Phillips Casteel, “Josef Nassy’s <i>Tittmoning</i> (1944): Blackness, Jewishness, and Holocaust Art. <i>AJS Perspectives</i>. 66-67</p>	<p><b>Unit #3 Essay due @ 11:59 PM</b></p>
<p><b>Unit 4: Judaism, Superheroes, &amp; Film</b></p>		
<p>Wednesday, March 30</p>	<p>Kaplan, Arie. “Introduction.” <i>From Krakow to Krypton : Jews and Comic Books</i>, The Jewish Publication Society, 2008. <i>ProQuest Ebook Central</i>, <a href="https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/cofc/detail.action?docID=1062352">https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/cofc/detail.action?docID=1062352</a>. <b>(OAKS)</b></p> <p>Tabachnick, Stephen E. “The Quest for Jewish Belief and Identity in the Graphic Novel.” In <i>The Quest for Jewish Belief and Identity in the Graphic Novel</i>. University of Alabama Press, 2014. <b>(OAKS)</b></p> <p>Fingeroth, Danny. <i>Superman on the Couch: What Superheroes Really Tell Us about Ourselves and Our Society</i>. New York &amp; London: Continuum, 2004. <b>(OAKS)</b></p>	
<p>Monday, April 4</p>	<p>Art Spiegelman, “Art Spiegelman: Golden Age Superheroes Were Shaped by the Rise of Fascism,” <i>The Guardian</i>, August 17, 2019, sec. Books, <a href="https://www.theguardian.com/books/2019/aug/17/art-spiegelman-golden-age-superheroes-were-shaped-by-the-rise-of-fascism">https://www.theguardian.com/books/2019/aug/17/art-spiegelman-golden-age-superheroes-were-shaped-by-the-rise-of-fascism</a>. <b>(OAKS)</b></p> <p>Kaplan, Arie. “The Maus that Art Built.” <i>From Krakow to Krypton: Jews and Comic Books</i>, The Jewish Publication Society, 2008. <i>ProQuest Ebook Central</i>, <a href="https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/cofc/detail.action?docID=1062352">https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/cofc/detail.action?docID=1062352</a>. <b>(OAKS)</b></p>	<p><b>Unit #4 Essay due @ 11:59 PM</b></p>

<b>Unit 5: Contemporary Jewish Art</b>		
Wednesday, April 6	<p>Ben Schachter, “Contemporary Jewish Art and Action,” <i>Ars Judaica The Bar Ilan Journal of Jewish Art</i> 13 (2017): 65–72. <b>(OAKS)</b></p> <p>Silver, Larry, and Samantha Baskind. “Looking Jewish: The State of Research on Modern Jewish Art.” <i>The Jewish quarterly review</i> 101.4 (2011): 631–652 <b>(OAKS)</b>— You can skim this</p>	
Monday, April 11	<p>Pick 4 of the artists’ art and explanation to read—we will discuss these in class. All are from AJS Perspectives Magazine <b>(OAKS)</b></p> <p>Siona Benjamin, <i>Finding Home</i> #80, pp. 16-17</p> <p>Tobi Kahn, <i>Patuach, Sagur, Patuach</i>, pp. 18-19</p> <p>Douglas Rosenberg, <i>Song of Songs</i>, pp. 19-21</p> <p>Sara Benninga, <i>Around the Table</i>, pp. 24-25</p> <p>Jeffery Abt, <i>Traveling Homeland</i>, pp. 26-27</p> <p>Heddy Breuer Abramowitz, <i>Lost in Conversation</i>, pp. 30-31</p> <p>Lynne Heller, <i>Suspended—An Art Installation</i>, pp. 32-33</p> <p>Jennifer McComas, <i>Decanonization, Jewishness, and American Art Museums</i>, AJS Perspectives 2021, pp. 72-73</p>	<b>Unit #5 Essay due @ 11:59 PM</b>
<b>Unit 6: What is Jewish Art (pt. 2)</b>		
Wednesday, April 13	<p>Harold Rosenberg, “Is There Jewish Art?” <i>Commentary Magazine</i>, July 1966, 57-59. <b>(OAKS)</b></p> <p>Archie Rand, “Protective Illusion: Thoughts on Jewish Visual Assimilation by a “Jewish” American Artist, AJS Perspectives 2021, pp. 68-69 <b>(OAKS)</b></p>	
Monday, April 18	<p>Silver, Larry. “Jewish Art and Modernity.” <i>Ars Judaica : the Bar-Ilan Journal of Jewish Art</i> 13, no. 13 (2017): 49–64 <b>(OAKS)</b></p>	<b>Unit #6 Essay due @ 11:59 PM</b>
Monday, April 27 <sup>th</sup>	<p>Last day for Expansion Essay is April 27<sup>th</sup> (our final exam date is May 2<sup>nd</sup>)</p>	

	<p><b>Final Essay (10%):</b> For your final essay, you will add an additional 1-2 pages as an expansion of <b>one</b> of your 500 word essays. This expansion should include any comments I gave in your initial grade, more expansive paragraphs, more evidence from the readings, and a well-developed thesis and conclusion. This final essay should include (1-2) additional readings for evidence from the earlier essay.</p>	
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**ADDITIONAL COURSE NOTES & COLLEGE POLICIES**

**SNAP:** If you have a disability that qualifies you for academic accommodation, please present a letter from the Center for Disability Services at the beginning of the semester. For more information regarding accommodation and the SNAP program, see: <http://www.cofc.edu/~cds/index.htm>.

**Academic Integrity Statement:** Lying, cheating, attempted cheating, and plagiarism are violations of our Honor Code that, when suspected, are investigated. Each incident will be examined to determine the degree of deception involved.

Incidents where the instructor determines the student's actions are related more to misunderstanding and confusion will be handled by the instructor. The instructor designs an intervention or assigns a grade reduction to help prevent the student from repeating the error. The response is recorded on a form and signed both by the instructor and the student. It is forwarded to the Office of the Dean of Students and placed in the student's file.

Cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be reported directly by the instructor and/or others having knowledge of the incident to the Dean of Students. A student found responsible by the Honor Board for academic dishonesty will receive a XXF in the course, indicating failure of the course due to academic dishonesty. This status indicator will appear on the student's transcript for two years after which the student may petition for the XX to be expunged. The F is permanent.

Students can find the complete Honor Code and all related processes in the Student Handbook at: <http://deanofstudents.cofc.edu/honor-system/studenthandbook/>."

**OAKS:** OAKS, including Gradebook, will be used for this course throughout the semester to provide the syllabus and class materials and grades for each assignment, which will be regularly posted.

**CLASS RECORDINGS:** Class sessions will be recorded via both voice and video recording. By attending and remaining in this class, the student consents to being recorded. Recorded class sessions are for instructional use only and may not be shared with anyone who is not enrolled in the class

**NETIQUETTE:** For this course, your participation is expected and required. There are circumstances where I may allow alternative assignments to class participation if necessary. The chat feature does count as participation so long as it does not dominate the conversation. Regarding cameras: your cameras are to be **ON** if we are having a discussion or sharing in thoughts and ideas. If I am sharing a PowerPoint, video, etc. you are allowed to have your cameras **OFF**. Although this is an online class, you are still required to carve out time in your schedule to attend. If you are at work, commuting to campus, or at an activity that precludes you from full participation, you will be docked attendance and participation points for that day.

**MENTAL AND PHYSICAL WELLBEING:** At the college, we take every student's mental and physical wellbeing seriously. If you find yourself experiencing physical illnesses, please reach out to student health services (843.953.5520). And if you find yourself experiencing any mental health challenges (for example, anxiety, depression, stressful life events, sleep deprivation, and/or loneliness/homesickness) please consider contacting either the Counseling Center (professional counselors at <http://counseling.cofc.edu> or 843.953.5640 3<sup>rd</sup> Robert Scott Small Building) or the Students 4 Support (certified volunteers through texting "4support" to 839863, visit <http://counseling.cofc.edu/cct/index.php>, or meet with them in person 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Stern Center). These services are there for you to help you cope with difficulties you may be experiencing and to maintain optimal physical and mental health.

#### **FOOD AND HOUSING RESOURCES:**

Many CofC students report experiencing food and housing insecurity. If you are facing challenges in securing food (such as not being able to afford groceries or get sufficient food to eat every day) and housing (such as lacking a safe and stable place to live), please contact the Dean of Students for support (<http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/about/salt.php>). Also, you can go to <http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/student-food-housing-insecurity/index.php> to learn about food and housing assistance that is available to you. In

addition, there are several resources on and off campus to help. You can visit the Cougar Pantry in the Stern Center (2nd floor), a student-run food pantry that provides dry-goods and hygiene products at no charge to any student in need. Please consider reaching out if you need more assistance.

**Syllabus Contract and Expectations:**



While I expect certain things of you in the course, participation, attendance, timeliness, and good engagement, you also should and could expect certain things of me. Think of the syllabus as a **tool** and also a **contract**. First, the syllabus is a tool. It can offer answers and solutions to problems. The syllabus can help you piece together the course to create an entire picture of what the final product will look like. Look to the syllabus first. Second, the syllabus is a contract. The syllabus says, to you, “This is what Professor Tarleton expects of you.” There’s nothing sneaky, tricky, or underhanded about it. But, the syllabus also holds me accountable to you. You know what to expect of me with regard to office hours, email response time, assignment expectations, and grade performance. Your first assignment will be to return this page to me, uploaded as an assignment (Syllabus Contract), and signed (typed name is fine).

I can expect you:

- To show up to class on time and ready to participate/listen.
- To be attentive and engaged for lectures and discussions
- To spend an appropriate amount of time on our readings, podcasts, videos, assignments, etc. each week.
- To show up prepared when it is your turn to discuss your essay
- To engage with all parts of the material even if you may disagree
- To **ASK FOR HELP**.

You can expect me:

- To start and end class on time
- To answer emails within 24-48 hours during weekdays, and within 72 hours of weekends
- To assign readings, videos, movies, or podcasts that cover the material, are the appropriate reading level, and that are informative and engaging
- To give assignments that are fruitful, reflective of the material, and helpful to your overall construction of the course.
- Be available during the week to offer help

Signed (by professor): Madison E. Tarleton (she/her)

Signed (by student):