

Professor Harvey Goldberg
Life Cycle Celebrations in Judaism
Tu 3:00pm-4:55pm &
Th 4:05pm-4:55pm
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Spring Semester 2008
JST 3930, Sect 2089
(Also listed under Anthro-9629,
Religion-6971, Sociology-1158)
Office Hours: Tu-Thu- 4th period
in Turlington B378

Life Cycle Celebrations in Judaism

The course will survey Jewish life-cycle celebrations relating to birth, education, marriage, and death, as the individual moves through various social phases and identities. The ritualization of these passages will be examined as they appear in textual sources and as they have been recorded and analyzed by ethnographers. The readings and class materials will reflect changes in these celebrations that have taken place over time, as well as how they fit into Jewish life in different parts of the world, including recent developments in the contemporary USA and Israel. Discussions will also show how celebrations are linked to communal institutions and to other practices such as pilgrimages. There will also be a consideration of the growing place of women in life-cycle rituals, and the emergence of the individual in Jewish consciousness.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS (to be completed on dates outlined in Calendar, below)

An ethnographic exercise (15%)
A mid-term examination on basic concepts (25%)
An analytic paper (30%)
A final essay - due on the last day of class (30%)

REQUIRED READINGS

Required Text: Ivan Marcus, The Jewish Life Cycle: Rites of Passage from Biblical to Modern Times (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2004). [ordered at Goerings Book Store]

On Reserve: Harvey E. Goldberg, Jewish Passages: Cycles of Jewish Life (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003). [located in Reference Shelves of Judaica Section of Library West – 1st floor - BM700 .G613 2003]

Articles and chapters from books: these items are on electronic reserve- **Ares** [they may appear in Ares in a different alphabetical order from the list below]

Abramovitch, Henry. "The Jerusalem Funeral as a Microcosm of the 'Mismeeting' Between Religious and Secular Israelis," in Tradition, Innovation, Continuity: Judaism and Jewishness in

Contemporary Israel, ed. B. Beit-Hallahmi and Z. Sobol (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), pp. 71-99.

Bilu, Yoram. "From Milah ("Circumcision") to Milah ("Word"): Male Identity and Rituals of Childhood in the Jewish Ultraorthodox Community," Ethos 32: 172-203, 2003.

Cohen, Erik. Youth Tourism to Israel (Clevedon: Channel View, 2008), Chap 13.

Gamliel, Tova. "'Wailing Lore' in a Yemenite-Israeli community: Bereavement, expertise, and therapy," Social Science & Medicine 65:1501-1511, 2007.

Goldberg, Harvey E. "Coming of Age in Jewish Studies, or Anthropology Is Counted in the Minyan," Jewish Social Studies (n.s.) 4:29-64, 1998.

_____. Ethnography of Ritual Hebrew (See Ares)

_____. "Marriage" (excerpt from Jewish Passages) (See Ares).

Goldberg, Sylvie-Anne. Crossing the Jabbok: Illness and Death in Ashkenazi Judaism in Sixteenth-through-Nineteenth-Century Prague, trans. Carol Cosman (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), chap 4, pp. 75-98.

Horowitz, Elliot. "The Eve of Circumcision: A Chapter in the History of Jewish Nightlife," Journal of Social History 23 (1989):45-69.

Liefer, Daniel I. and Myra Liefer, "On the Birth of a Daughter," in The Jewish Woman: New Perspectives, ed. Elizabeth Koltun (New York: Schocken, 1976), pp. 21-30.

Lomsky-Feder, Edna. "The Bounded Female Voice in Memorial Ceremonies," Qualitative Sociology 28:293-314, 2005.

Maoz, Darya. "Backpackers' Motivations: the role of culture and nationality," Annals of Tourism Research 34:122-140, 2007

Myerhoff, Barbara. Number Our Days (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978), chap. 1, pp. 1-39.

Perez, Danielle Storper and Goldberg, Harvey E. "Meanings of the Western Wall" in The Life of Judaism, (ed.) H. E. Goldberg (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), pp. 173-193.

Rosen, David and Victoria Rosen. "New Myths and Meanings in Jewish New Moon Rituals," Ethnology 39 (2000): 263-77.

Schoenfeld, Stuart. "Integration into the Group and Sacred Uniqueness: An Analysis of Adult Bat-Mitzvah," in Persistence and Flexibility: Anthropological Perspectives on the American Jewish Experience, ed. Walter P. Zenner (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988), pp. 117-35.

Wasserfall, Rahel. "Niddah among Moroccan Women Immigrants to Israel: Menstruation in relation to Identity, Status, and Domestic Power" in Local Anthropology: Readings in Israeli Anthropology, ed. E. Hertzog, O. Abuhav, H. Goldberg and E. Marx (Wayne State University Press, forthcoming)

Zborowski, Mark. "The Place of Book-Learning in Traditional Jewish Culture" in Childhood in Contemporary Cultures, ed M. Mead and M. Wolfenstein (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955), chap. 8.

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Website: Jewish Encyclopedia (published 100 years ago in New York) -

www.jewishencyclopedia.com See article on Circumcision -

<http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/view.jsp?artid=514&letter=C&search=circumcision#3>

CALENDAR, TOPICS, AND READINGS

- Jan. 8-10 (1) *Introduction: Anthropology and the Study of Jewish Culture*; Marcus, pp. 3-29; H. Goldberg, "Ethnography."
- Jan. 15-17 (2) *Circumcision: the Biblical Period and Comparison*; Jewish Encyclopedia (web site), Marcus, pp. 30-59.
- Jan. 22-24 (3) *Circumcision, naming, and related ceremonies: Rabbinic and Recent developments*; Marcus, pp. 59-68; Horowitz, Liefer and Liefer
- Jan. 29-31 (4) *Rituals of Childhood: Medieval Ashkenaz*; Marcus, pp. 68-81; Bilu. **Lecture by Ruth Behar Jan 29-4:00 PM-Ulster Hall; 1st assignment due on Jan 31.**
- Feb. 5-7 (5) *Valuing knowledge of Torah*; Marcus, pp.82-123; Zborowski.
- Feb. 12-14 (6) *Travel and Identity: contemporary developments*; Maoz. **In-class mid-term test on concepts, Feb. 12.**
- Feb. 19-21 (7) *Marriage: ancient and medieval aspects*; Marcus, pp. 124-156; H. Goldberg. "Marriage".
- Feb.26-28 (8) *Marriage: contemporary contexts*; Marcus, pp. 156-192. Wasserfall; Rosen and Rosen.
- Mar. 4-6 (9) *Pilgrimage: traditional patterns*; Storper and Goldberg; Cohen.
- Mar. 18-20 (10) *Old Age and Death*: Marcus, pp.193-221; S.-A. Goldberg, Myerhoff. **3rd exercise due on March 18.**
- Mar. 25-27 (11) *Commemorations*: Marcus, pp. 221-248; Abramovitch; Gamiliel.
- Apr. 1-3 (12) *Death and Memory: Individual and Collective Aspects*; Lomsky-Feder.
- Apr. 8-10 (13) *Communities in the making*: Schoenfeld.
- Apr. 15-17 (14) *Review – Guidance on Papers* Marcus, pp.249-253; Goldberg, "Coming of age"
- Apr. 22 **Final Essay due**