Course:  
This course meets T/Th 9:30-10:45 in Ingraham 222.

Course Description:
What does it mean to argue for something passionately? What does it mean to channel anger into the written word? And what does it mean to develop an opinion that grows out of one’s experience as an ethnic minority? This course, which fulfills the Ethnic Studies General Education Requirement, considers these questions by examining a series of essays, creative texts, and films in which a writer argues—and argues angrily—for a particular vision of Jewish culture and politics. Of particular importance will be the literary record of the so-called New York Intellectuals, several of whose leaders would shift ideologically from left to right from the 1920s to 1980s. We will also turn our attention to the work of a series of angry first and second-generation Jewish American writers, including Saul Bellow, Philip Roth, Isaac Bashevis Singer, Cynthia Ozick, and Elie Wiesel. We will touch on such subjects as: the history of Jewish socialism and communism in America; the sexual revolution; the role of the Holocaust in Jewish American identity; and the changing dynamics of Black-Jewish relations in multi-ethnic America over the course of the twentieth-century.

Learning Objectives

- To acquire a deeper understanding of multi-ethnic intellectual life in America and to better prepare students for life and careers in multicultural America
- To trace the literary and political trajectory of Jewish cultural production in the twentieth century
- To develop close-readings skills with which to analyze the rhetoric of anger and the genre of the polemical essay
- To produce a series of argumentative close readings that are coherent, convincing, and responsibly-sourced

Course Requirements
See Appendix

Grade breakdown
Class Presence and Participation 10%
Response Papers 10%
Paper #1 10%
Paper #2 25%
Final Exam 25%

Academic Honesty and Student Accommodation
I hope that you’ll meet with your fellow students to discuss course readings and to continue class discussions. All submitted work, however, must be your own. If you choose to bring in outside sources, such as internet sources, please be sure to cite your references! Please also refer to the University of Wisconsin-Madison’s policies regarding Academic Honesty and Plagiarism:
For information on the university’s policies regarding Student Accommodations, please see the resources of the McBurney Disability Resource Center.

Auditors
All those interested in auditing the course must speak to the instructor. Note that the course is not open to undergraduate auditors.

Computers and Phones
Like the offices of Partisan Review in the 1930s, this course will be a computer-free and cell phone-free environment. The use of cell phones or computers during class will result in the lowering of the class participation grade by a 2 full grades at the discretion of the instructor. It is highly recommended that you come to class with a physical copy of the text. You may avail yourself of the various services (e.g. UBorrow, Interlibrary Loan) offered by the library to procure copies of the longer texts. All novels and books will also be on reserve at the library. If you have trouble procuring a copy of the texts, please do not hesitate contact me. Finally, Kindle and E-Reader versions of the texts are permissible in class; please note, though, that all papers must reference page numbers that can only be found in physical books. If you choose to use an E-Reader or Kindle, please make sure to access a physical copy of the book for the writing assignments (note: this includes weekly postings).

Statement on Inclusion
Speaking about Jewish identity, anger, and questions concerning persecution, race, and minoritized groups demands a sensitivity to language and tone. This class supports the free exchange of ideas and intense discussion in an open and supportive environment. You may find yourself disagreeing with some texts and puzzled by others. The goal is to come to class ready to engage with the material in a respectful and civil manner. To that end, you may find yourself disagreeing with your fellow students who will likely arrive to class with opinions and points of reference different from your own. I ask that you come to class ready to listen to your peers as well as to engage in empathetic debate about the cultural history and literary output of an ethno-religious minority group. Please note that this class does not assume any prior familiarity with the subject of Jewish history or literature.

Email Etiquette:
I welcome the chance to hear from students as well as to answer any questions you might have. Please note that I will respond to all emails received Monday to Thursday within 36 hours. All emails received between Friday and Sunday will be answered within 48 hours. I will also review my preferred form of email address and salutation on the first day of class.

Required Texts (Available at the University Bookstore)
Course Schedule

* = pdf on Learn@UW
(hyperlink) = link available through online syllabus

Introduction: Writing, Rage, and Jewish Identity in the Twentieth Century

Tuesday Translating Anger
Jan 17: Yankev Glatshteyn, “Good Night, World”* (Multiple Translations)

Anger and the Isms (1920s-1940s)

Thursday Socialism and Communism
Jan 19: Irving Kristol, “Memoirs of a Trotskyite”*
Irving Howe, “New York in the 1930s”*
Morris Rosenfeld, “The Sweatshop”* and “Corner of Pain and Anguish”*

Tuesday New York Intellectualism
Jan 24: Partisan Review, Editor Statement: 1937*
Delmore Schwartz, “In Dreams Begin Responsibilities”*

Thursday Elitism
Jan 26: Saul Bellow and Isaac Rosenberg, “The Song of Songs of Mendl Pumshtok”*
T.S. Eliot, “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” (hyperlink)

Tuesday Anti-Semitism
Jan 31: Leslie Fiedler, “What Can We Do About Fagin?”*

Anger and Race (1920s-1960s)

Thursday No class. Class rescheduled for evening of Wednesday, April 5th at 7pm
Feb 2: First response paper due!

Tuesday The Yiddish Poet and the African-American Subject
Feb 7: Selected Yiddish poems by A.G. Leyeles* and Moyshe-Leyb Halpern*
PAPER #1 TOPICS DISTRIBUTED IN CLASS

Thursday Race and the Holocaust Survivor
Feb 9: Film: The Pawnbroker (dir. Sidney Lumet, 1965)—available via Kanopy (be sure to watch before coming to class)

Tuesday Race and the Intellectuals (I)
Feb 14: Norman Podhoretz, “My Negro Problem—and Ours”*
Harold Cruse, “My Jewish Problem and Theirs”*
PAPER #1 THESIS AND OUTLINE – PEER REVIEW IN CLASS

Thursday Race and the Intellectuals (II)
Feb 16: Abraham Joshua Heschel, “What Happens to Them Happens to Me”*
Martin Luther King, Jr., “What Happens to Them Happens to Me”*
James Baldwin, “Negroes are Anti-Semitic Because They’re Anti-White”*
PAPER #1 MEETINGS WITH PROFESSOR (SIGN-UP SHEET DISTRIBUTED IN CLASS)
Sex, Race, and Repressed Anger (1960s)

Note: Long reading ahead!

Tuesday  Sex
Feb 21: Philip Roth, *Portnoy’s Complaint*, beginning to 100
Roth, “Writing About Jews”*

Thursday  Race
Feb 23: Philip Roth, *Portnoy’s Complaint*, beginning to 101-200

Friday  PAPER #1 DUE BY NOON BY EMAIL
Feb 24:

Tuesday  Religion
Feb 28: Philip Roth, *Portnoy’s Complaint*, 200-end
Yankev Glatshteyn, “Yiddish or Jewish Books”*

Post-War Anger (1950s-1960s)

Thursday  Calm
March 2: Elie Wisel, *Night*

Tuesday  Rage
March 7: Naomi Seidman, “The Holocaust in Every Tongue”* Pay specific attention to the section, “Elie Wiesel and the Scandal of Jewish Rage”

Thursday  Eichmann on Trial
March 9: Hannah Arendt, “Note to the Reader,” “The House of Justice,” “The Accused,” “The Expert on the Jewish Question” in *Eichmann in Jerusalem* *

Tuesday  Arendt on Trial

Thursday  Humor and Anger
March 16: Isaac Bashevis Singer, “A Party in Miami Beach”*

[ENJOY SPRING BREAK! MARCH 18-26]

Anger and Bilingualism (1960s-1970s)

Tuesday  Between English and Yiddish (I)
March 28: Cynthia Ozick, “Envy, or Yiddish in America”*

Thursday  Between English and Yiddish (II)
March 30: Cynthia Ozick, “America: Towards Yavneh”*
Giles Harvey, “Cynthia Ozick’s Long Crusade”*
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<th>Day</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Between Chicana/o Activism and Yiddish Activism</td>
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<td>April 4</td>
<td>Irena Klepfisz, “A Few Words in the Mother Tongue”*</td>
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<td>Gloria Anzaldúa, “To Live in the Borderlands”*</td>
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**Culture Wars (1980s-2000s)**

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<th>Day</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>The Intellectuals</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 5th</td>
<td>Class rescheduled: Film screening, <em>Arguing the World</em>, at 7pm, Room TBD</td>
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<td>Thursday</td>
<td>The Intellectuals</td>
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<td>April 6</td>
<td>Film: <em>Arguing the World</em> (directed by Joseph Dorman, 1998)</td>
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**A Turn from Anger (1990s)**

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<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Between Black and Jewish (I)</td>
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<td>April 20</td>
<td><em>The Color of Water</em>, 1-78</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Between Black and Jewish (II)</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 25</td>
<td><em>The Color of Water</em>, 78-191</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>The Residue of Anger</td>
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<td>April 27</td>
<td><em>The Color of Water</em>, 193-end</td>
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**A Return to Anger (2000s)**

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<th>Day</th>
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<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Class screening of <em>Inglorious Basterds</em> (Basterds (dir. Quentin Tarantino, 2009), screening time and place TBD). Please note that this film has extremely violent content.</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 1</td>
<td><em>Inglorious Basterds</em> (dir. Quentin Tarantino, 2009). Please note that this film has extremely violent content.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Revenge</td>
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<td>May 2</td>
<td><em>Inglorious Basterds</em> (dir. Quentin Tarantino, 2009). Please note that this film has extremely violent content.</td>
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<td>Thursday</td>
<td>The Angry Old Man and the Jewish Community</td>
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<td>May 4</td>
<td>Bernie Sanders, <em>Speech on Democratic Socialism</em></td>
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Appendix: Requirements

There are five main requirements for this course:

Grade breakdown

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<th>Requirement</th>
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<tr>
<td>Class Presence and Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Response Papers</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper #1</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper #2</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>25%</td>
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1. **Class Presence and Participation**
   This class runs as both a lecture and discussion-based course. Students are required to attend all classes and to participate fully. Three absences or more will result in the reduction of your attendance grade by two whole grades (A to C). Two or more late arrivals will also result in the lowering of the participation grade by a full grade (A to B). Please come to class having read the material in advance of the course meeting and be ready to engage the texts or films, to ask questions about the material, to have conversations with your peers about the major and subtle themes of the works, and to answer the who/what/where/when/why of each text. Students who tend not speak in class should make an appointment to talk with me during office hours.

2. **Response Papers (5 total)**
   A key element of reading a text closely is recognizing when you are left with questions or when you do not understand a term. A goal of this course is to practice asking questions and developing our skills necessary to conduct close readings. To that end, students will be required to submit 5 response papers over the course of the semester. Each response paper should be 500 words and submitted to me as a word document (Times New Roman, 12-pt. font, double-spaced, 1” margins). The first response paper is due in Week 3 of the semester (see syllabus above). All students should submit 2 additional response papers before spring break and 2 after spring break. All papers should be submitted to me by email by the Monday evening before class by 5pm.

Please choose from the following 2 prompts when writing your response papers:

a) Anger can be expressed in literature through a variety of literary styles and figurative choices. In the following response paper, choose a passage of 2-3 sentences in which the author exhibits literary anger. Then, in 500 words, explain what stylistic devices and literary choices the author draws on to convey that anger. You are welcome to compare this passage to other passages in the chosen text. The primary goal of the assignment is to refine your close reading skills by attending to the question: How does the author convey anger? (Note that you may also wish to focus on a passage that conveys a type of anger, such as: passion, hatred, annoyance, etc.). Be sure to include the passage and page number in your post.
b) The authors whom we will read this semester often elicited strong reactions in their readers and reviewers. In the following paper, you are invited to respond to the week’s reading by taking up a position in opposition to that proposed by the author. Alternatively, in the case of a literary text, you are invited to argue for why that text is either a great success or clear failure. The goal of this response paper is to develop your analytical skills to dissect an argument or to present a strong critique of a chosen text. In either case, your response paper should argue persuasively for the position it takes.

3. **Paper #1**

   The first paper will ask you to produce an argument-driven close reading of one of the literary texts we have encountered. No paper prompts will require external research and **late papers will be deducted by a whole grade (A to B) for each day late**. All papers should be 4-5 pages (Times New Roman, 12-pt. font, double-spaced, 1” margins).

   When deciding between prompts, I recommend choosing to write about a text that has left you with questions and that you want re-read. A goal of these writing assignments is to offer you the chance to return to a text that has captured your attention, frustrated you, or that has provoked an unexpected response in you. This may or may not be your favorite text!

   A rubric for the final grade on the paper will also be made available online.

4. **Paper #2**

   The second paper will ask you to produce an argument-driven close reading of one of the literary texts we have encountered. **Late papers will be deducted by a whole grade (A to AB) for each day late**. The second paper will also ask you to work comparatively as well as to incorporate three outside sources in your work. Specific instructions for this paper will be provided. All papers should be 6-7 pages (Times New Roman, 12-pt. font, double-spaced, 1” margins).

   When deciding between prompts, I recommend choosing to write about a text that has left you with questions and that you want re-read. A goal of these writing assignments is to offer you the chance to return to a text that has captured your attention, frustrated you, or that has provoked an unexpected response in you. This may or may not be your favorite text!

   A rubric for the final grade on the paper will also be made available online.

5. **Final**

   The final exam, scheduled for Monday, May 8th 12:25-2:55 p.m. (Room TBD), will consist of three parts. In the first, you will be asked to identify key passages from the texts and films as well as their significance. In the second, you’ll be asked to answer a series of questions from the perspectives of key characters and historical figures. In the third, you will be asked to complete a short essay assignment. The goal of this exam is to bring the assigned course materials into conversation.

**Resources**

- Encyclopedia Judaica
- The Hebrew Bible (English translation, 1917): [http://www.mechon-mamre.org/e/et/et0.htm](http://www.mechon-mamre.org/e/et/et0.htm)
- Jewish Women’s Archive: [http://jwa.org/](http://jwa.org/)