Name of the course: "Obscene" Jews in American Popular Culture
Lecturer name: Dr. Noam Gil
Course number:
Office hours: Tuesday – 12:00 – 13:00

Short course description (5-10 lines) with key words at the end of the paragraph

The course will focus on the way social identities are constructed and deconstructed in literary, cinematic and televised texts. Our case study will be primarily Jewish identity in America since the 1960s until the early years of the 21st century. More specifically, we will explore texts by Jewish "renegades" who were involved in endless cultural scandals regarding their depiction of the community from which they emerged in America. By focusing on the works of several artists (such as Isaac Bashevis Singer, Philip Roth, Mel Brooks, Woody Allen, Lenny Bruce, Joan Rivers, Larry David, Sarah Silverman, The Coen Brothers and David Mamet) from an aesthetic perspective of poetic transgression, we will discuss the subversive nature of each text and its impact on American culture throughout the 20th century and the early years of the 21st century.

Course requirements:
Attendance required: yes
Papers: _50_ %
Midterm: _40_ %
Participation: 10%

1. Introduction – Drawing the basic perimeters
Reading materials for this introductory session will be handed out in class.

2. Otto Weininger and Isaac Bashevis Singer - Jews and other Differences

3. Isaac Bashevis Singer – "In Praise of Vulgarity."

4. Woody Allen and Philip Roth - "'Self-Hatred' or Reclaiming the Self?"


Lambert, Joshua N. Unclean lips : obscenity, Jews, and American culture.

"Introduction," (1-24), "Otherfuckers and Motherfuckers : Reproduction an Allegory in Philip Roth and Adele Wiseman" (99-140).

5. Vulgarity and "'the Feminine Mystique.'"


7. The Coen Brothers - "Jews out of Focus."


8. Jerry Seinfeld, Larry David and Joan Rivers – "Radical Indifference."
"The Special Section." *Curb Your Enthusiasm* HBO. 2002.
"Palestinian Chicken." *Curb Your Enthusiasm* HBO. 2011.

9. Sarah Silverman and Amy Schumer - Performing "Choseness."
"Sarah Silverman: Jesus is Magic". 2005.