

University of Pennsylvania  
College of Arts and Sciences  
Department of History

Fall 2023

**Neighbors and Strangers: Jews and Christians in Premodern Europe**

**Thursdays 10:15am-1:15pm**

Instructor: Joshua Teplitsky

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Office Hours: Wednesdays, 11am-1pm, or by appointment, College Hall 309C

The history of Christians and Jews—and of Judaism and Christianity—is an entangled one. From antiquity the two groups gained understandings of themselves in relation to the other, and that story defined much of the lives of each throughout the Middle Ages and into the modern period. At times this relationship was a hostile one, but it was also a force for creativity and a basic fact of life. This course approaches the history of relations between Christians and Jews in Medieval and Early Modern Europe (ca. 1000-1800), exploring both the bases of hatred and the possibilities of coexistence. We will look at episodes of crusader violence, mass expulsion, and religious polemic alongside exchanges in taverns, shared child-rearing, and sexual encounters. We will examine sources from *both* Christians and Jews, recovering voices from across this seeming divide, encountering the ideals imagined by elites and intellectuals, as well as the messy—and more interesting!—realities of living side-by-side for centuries. Class meetings will involve dedicated discussion of a combination of primary and secondary sources, and assessment will be based on writing assignments.



Assessment:

- 30% Class Participation
- 40% Primary Source Analyses
- 30% Brief independent research paper (10-12 pages)

Schedule of Meetings and Assigned Readings:

Readings are indicated for the date on which they will be discussed in class. Make sure you have read them in advance of class and have the text with you for direct discussion. Unless otherwise indicated, all readings are available as files or links on Canvas. If something is missing, please do not assume that it is not going to be discussed. Contact the instructor and graders for more information.

<b>Thurs, Aug 31</b>	<b>Introduction to the Course</b>
<b>Thurs, Sept 7</b>	<b>Ancient Foundations</b>
<b>Thurs, Sept 14</b>	<b>Biblical Re-Readings</b>
<b>Thurs, Sept 21</b>	<b>Crusades and Disputations</b>
<b>Thurs, Sept 28</b>	<b>Representing the Other, Understanding the Self: Medieval Jews and Christians in Each Other's Eyes</b>
<b>Thurs, Oct 5</b>	<b>Family Life: Mothers and Children</b>
<b>Thurs, Oct 12</b>	<b>No Class, Fall Term Break</b>
<b>Thurs, Oct 19</b>	<b>Seeing Like a Jew: Jews in Christian Art</b>
<b>Thurs, Oct 26</b>	<b>Separations and Segregations (Expulsions and Ghettos)</b>
<b>Thurs, Nov 2</b>	<b>Reformations: Martin Luther on the Jews, Jews on the Reformation</b>
<b>Thurs, Nov 9</b>	<b>Spaces of Interaction: Inns, Roads, Markets, and Fairs</b>
<b>Thurs, Nov 16</b>	<b>Cultural Connections: Books, Blood, and Bodies</b>
<b>Tues, Nov 21</b>	<b>Follows a Thursday Schedule: Conversion and Crossing Boundaries</b>
<b>Thurs, Nov 30</b>	<b>Daily Exchanges: Memoirs and Diaries</b>
<b>Thurs, Dec 7</b>	<b>Student Presentations</b>