

Welcome to the youth curriculum for *Race, Religion, and American Judaism*. This curriculum brings together three broad topics that interact in complex and life-altering ways. For all their impact on society and on people's lives, most of us have not had opportunities to engage in focused study and discussion of what these topics mean and how they shape our history, identities, institutions, and experiences.

This curriculum provides youth and their families an opportunity to explore, discuss, and gain greater understanding of race, religion, and Judaism, and of their interactions and impact. Due to the vastness and complexity of these three topics, these lessons can engage only a sliver of the many ways that race, religion and Judaism have played out in history and in our lives. This curriculum is based on new research by leading scholars working in an array of academic fields.

These lessons were designed for students sixth grade and up, in formal or informal educational settings, or in family education programs. While these lessons are appropriate for high school students, high school teachers might also consult the adult curriculum for more complicated engagements with similar content.

Each lesson is designed to be 60-70 minutes in length. The majority of lessons follow the same pattern: a warm-up, a framing of the content and introduction of the scholar, a mini-lesson with discussion and video support, an activity, and a closing. Regardless of where you start within this curriculum, at the first session and in all subsequent sessions, please add in 3-5 minutes to go over the community care guidelines. Language and framing can be found at the end of this introduction.

Before facilitating these lessons, it will be helpful to become familiar with all of the material provided by each scholar on our website jewsandrace.com. The video support will be most useful when watched in its entirety. There is also an imperative that facilitators be familiar with the broader history of race and racism in the United States and with the systemic and individual impacts that racism continues to have on the daily lives of people of color and especially on Jews of color.

Suggested Order

While each lesson can stand alone, facilitators may group them by themes including **Culture**, **Confronting History**, and **Ethical Challenges**.

Culture includes two lessons: the first explores Jewish identity and diversity in the United States and the second is a deep dive into the meaning and origins of Sigd, a celebration originating from the Beta Israel, also known as the Jews of Ethiopia.

The three lessons within **Confronting History** uncover seldom-told stories from the history of the United States. These lessons investigate which people were and were not protected—and at what cost—as the United States was formed and until today. They explore the deep connections among the violent history of indigenous peoples, the enslavement of African and African Americans, and the experiences of Jews who immigrated to the United States. The lessons weave these narratives in what are possibly new and most definitely complicated ways.

The last three grouped lessons dedicated to **Ethical Challenges** explore the harmful impacts of being othered and what we can do about them. The harms and potential harms we explore are not equivalent to each other in their impact or gravity. While remembering not to engage in “harm olympics,” we can draw parallels among different experiences of being othered and of the dangers that brings (e.g., emotional, physical, collective loss, etc.). Each lesson provides an opportunity for participants to gain knowledge that can be used to disrupt the harmful impacts of racism.

Taken as a whole, these sessions are in dialogue both within the groupings and among the groupings. *Race, Religion and American Judaism* provides a structure and foundation for youth and families to discover, discuss, and reflect on how people, places, and ideas are connected in powerful and complicated ways.

Lesson Titles and Relevant Scholars

Culture

- Exploring "Ashkenormativity," Devin Naar
- Sigd: a Celebration for All, Bezawit Abebe and Ruth Abusch-Magder

Confronting History

- Our Own Worst Enemies, Devin Naar
- Repairing Jewish Pioneer Memory, Maxwell Greenberg
- Double Diasporas, Mark Goldberg

Ethical Challenges

- Countering White Nationalism and Antisemitism, Sophie Bjork-James
- Responding to Racial Microaggressions, Buffie Longmire-Avital
- Jewish Perspectives on Reparations, Jonathan Crane

Creating Community and Establishing Trust

[Regardless of where you begin, the following “Initial Introduction” can be used as a way to begin your time together.]

Introductions 5 mins

Share name, what led you to participate and something unique/fun (e.g., favorite thing to do on the weekend, best thing about being an adult/teen/tween/kid, your favorite thing about being Jewish, etc...)

Exploring “Ashkenormativity”

Who and what are we missing when we equate Jewishness with White European ancestry?

This foundational session offers participants learning and facts around the many identities of Jews including Ashkenazi, Mizrahi, Sepharadim, and Jews of Color. The focus is on Jews in the United States. In this session diversity focuses on racial and cultural identity with an exploration of how Jewish identity goes beyond Ashkenazi Jews.

This lesson is informed by the scholarship of Professor Devin Naar, who studies the history of Sepharadim in the United States. His research shows how the racial hierarchies of the U.S. imposed hierarchies within the American Jewish world, damaging relations among Jewish groups. Until today, “Jewish” is presumed to refer to White, Ashkenazi Jews, while Jews of other backgrounds and identities are treated as “others,” and need to use additional descriptors, like “Sephardic Jews,” or “Jews of Color.” A new term for the presumption that Ashkenazi identity is the default identity of American Jews is “Ashkenormative.” This is a presumption that renders lots of Jews and Jewish cultures invisible. It reflects a history in which racist ideas penetrated Jewish life, so that certain Jewish identities gained the power and prestige to speak for the Jewish community as a whole, while other Jewish communities were pushed to the margins.

GOALS

- Participants will understand that the Jewish community is and always has been multiracial and multicultural.
- Participants will understand the term “Ashkenormative”
- Participants will increase their knowledge of who comprise the Jewish people.

MATERIALS

- “Types of Jews: Ashkenazi, Sephardi, Mizrahi and More,” My Jewish Learning <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZUHP6ot-JPg>
- “Sephardic Jews” video Devin Naar <https://vimeo.com/784631590/43d15a8d34>
- “Racism in the Jewish Community: An Uncomfortable Truth,” Ilana Kaufman <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QCtBqbsZPLo>
- “JIMENA Celebrates Mizrahi Culture,” https://vimeo.com/772273065?embedded=true&source=vimeo_logo&owner=3434288
- Phones or electronic devices with internet access

LESSON

Warm-up: 5 minutes

Close your eyes and imagine a room full of Jewish people. [Give 5 seconds of quiet.] Keep imagining that room and the people.... What do you see? What does the room look like? What are the people doing? What ages do you see? What are the people wearing? What language is being spoken? What skin tones do you see?

- What and who did you imagine initially?
- What and who did you imagine as more questions were asked?

[Facilitator: After sharing is complete, the facilitator can use some of what was shared to frame the broader lesson of how we think about the Jewish people. Themes that may come up are American Jewry that is primarily Ashkenazi with European ancestry. Depending on the conversation you may explain that some of what we will discuss is meant to broaden our assumptions or may confirm what others imagined, that we are and always have been a multiracial, multicultural, multiethnic Jewish people who have been impacted by policies and decisions in the United States.]

Introduction: 7 minutes

Let’s watch this short video “Types of Jews: Ashkenazi, Sephardi, Mizrahi and More” from My Jewish Learning about Jews in Israel.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZUHP6ot-JPg>

Many of the people in the video we just watched are also represented and live in the United States. It's also worth knowing that the makeup of the Jewish population in the U.S. has been debated. According to the Pew Research Center 92% of Jews in the U.S. identify as White and 8% identify as something other than White. At the same time, a report completed by the Jews of Color Field Building Initiative contends that the methods including those used by the Pew study are flawed. When that method was changed, JOCI estimated that 12-15% of Jews are Jews of Color or Jews who do not identify as White. The findings from JOCI are different from those of other demographic studies after being conscious of counting those who had not been counted in the past. Regardless, we know that the Jewish people are only becoming more diverse by the year.

Part of understanding who we are as a large Jewish community in the U.S. is understanding the many backgrounds that Jews have.

- Scholar Devin Naar, who we will meet in the next video, points out that until today, “Jewish” is presumed to refer to White, Ashkenazi Jews, while Jews of other backgrounds and identities are treated as “others,” and need to use additional descriptors, like “Sephardic Jews,” or “Jews of Color.”
- Has anyone heard the term “Ashkenormative”?
- [Ask or provide a definition. Make sure to make the point that Jews of Color can also be Ashkenazi.]
- What is the difference between “Ashkenazi” and “Ashkenormative?”

Rabbi Rachel Solomin defines Ashkenazi Jews as the Jewish ethnic identity most readily recognized by North Americans – the culture of matzah balls, black-hatted Hasidim and Yiddish. This ethnicity originated in medieval Germany. Although strictly speaking, “Ashkenazim” refers to Jews of Germany, the term has come to refer more broadly to Jews from Central and Eastern Europe. As an example, the Reform movement is based on Ashkenazi norms. What is more, there are many Jews of Color who are also Ashkenazi.

There is a lot to learn and value about the history and culture of Ashkenazi Jews. The problem is when we assume that all American Jews are Ashkenazi (that is called “Ashkenormativity”).

Discussion: 20 minutes

We are going to watch a series of three video clips back to back to back. Taken together, these videos start to tell a story of our community.

[Play the videos back to back without breaking for discussion or comment.]

- “Sephardic Jews” Devin Naar from 5:40-end
<https://vimeo.com/784631590/43d15a8d34>
- “Racism in the Jewish Community: An Uncomfortable Truth,” Ilana Kaufman <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QCtBqbsZPLo> From :00-1:55
- “JIMENA Celebrates Mizrahi Culture” https://vimeo.com/772273065?embedded=true&source=vimeo_logo&owner=3434288 6:58-8:37

The videos are good reminders of the vastness of Jewish people and the community. The videos also do not include all who are part of our community and the many identities people hold.

Discussion

- What is meant by “Jewish history, without Mizrahi history, is like a book missing half of the chapters”?
- Can we expand the idea of not just Mizrahi history being ½ of a missing story and think of how we can be more inclusive? Who ALL needs to be included that makes up the totality of the Jewish community?
- Have you ever experienced surprise or disbelief when you’ve seen someone who does not fit the White Ashkenazi Jewish phenotype assert their Jewish identity? If so, where did that come from?
- How do diversity and belonging within our Jewish community make us stronger?

Small group Activity: 17 minutes

With your phones, research one aspect of Jewish diversity that interests your groups. Topics can vary. A few examples might include migration patterns, specific groups focusing on Jews of Color in the United States (e.g., Jewpanese, Jewtina, JIMENA, Black Jewish Liberation Collective, etc...), foods popular in different cultures, melodies used for prayers, etc....

Share out: 7 minutes

- What did you research?
- What interesting fact did you find?
- What's one takeaway from your research?

Closing (1 min)

Thank you for taking the time to be together and learn together. It's a very important thing for us to remember that the Jewish community is mutiracial, multicultural, multiethnic and always has been. We can remember that Jewishness includes the cultures from every continent. Our mandate is to remember how we are a community of many and we can remind people of this.

RESOURCES

- “Pew’s 2020 Survey Shows a Diverse and Divided American Jewry” Helen Chernikoff <https://ejewishphilanthropy.com/pews-2020-survey-shows-a-diverse-and-divided-american-jewry/>
- “Counting Inconsistencies: An Analysis of American Jewish Population Studies with a Focus on Jews of Color” Jews of Color Initiative <https://jewsofcolorinitiative.org/research-article/counting-inconsistencies-an-analysis-of-american-jewish-population-studies-with-a-focus-on-jews-of-color/>
- “Beyond the Count: Perspectives and Lived Experiences of Jews of Color” Jews of Color Initiative https://jewsofcolorinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/BEYONDTHECOUNT.FINAL_8.12.21.pdf
- Ashkenazi Jews are the Jewish ethnic identity most readily recognized by North Americans – the culture of matzah balls, black-hatted Hasidim and Yiddish. This ethnicity originated in medieval Germany. Although strictly speaking, “Ashkenazim” refers to Jews of Germany, the term has come to refer more broadly to Jews from Central and Eastern Europe. (Definition from Who are Ashkenazi Jews by Rabbi Rachel M. Solomin <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/who-are-ashkenazi-jews/>)

Sigd: A Celebration for All

How might Jews in the U.S. celebrate Sigd while honoring the history and culture of the Beta Israel community?

Sigd is an ancient Jewish holiday preserved by the Beta Israel community, the Jewish community of Ethiopia. It is now a national holiday in Israel. This lesson explores the research of Scholars Ruth Abusch-Magder and Bezawit Abebe and provides an opportunity to learn more about the holiday and explore what celebrating Sigd with intention in the United States might look like.

GOALS

- Participants will explore the meaning and celebration of Sigd.
- Participants will learn about Beta Israel's move to Israel.
- Participants will understand how to be intentional about planning to celebrate Sigd in ways that honor the culture of Beta Israel.

MATERIALS

- Introduction video by Bezawit Abebe
<https://vimeo.com/784604281/4da13aa344>
- The Festival of Sigd Video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MofKd9YjQgs>
- What is Sigd? Infographic https://globaljews.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Sigd_infographic-1.pdf (if possible, provide a hard copy)
- Paper and pens/pencils

LESSON

Warm-up and Introduction: 10 minutes

- Who has heard of Sigd?
- Do you celebrate Sigd? Why or why not?
- Are there any holidays that your family celebrates that are not well-known in your larger community?

If you haven't guessed already, we will be talking about the religious holiday, Sigd. But before we dive into the meaning and celebration of Sigd, let's first get some background information on Beta Israel from scholar Bezawit Abebe.

Watch Introduction [video](#)

- Do you have any reactions or questions about what we just heard on the video?
- For those who knew of the Beta Israel or Jews from Ethiopia before today, does information about Beta Israel taking the main active role in the decision to move to Israel confirm or refute what you learned in the past?

Discussion: 10 minutes

Watch The Festival of Sigd

The scholars Bezawit Abebe and Ruth Abusch-Magder bring up concerns about how people in the U.S. will celebrate the holiday. The concerns include how few Beta Israel live in the U.S. which might lead to people celebrating the holiday in artificial and inauthentic ways or appropriating the holiday. Cultural appropriation is the theft of cultural elements—including symbols, art, language, customs, etc.—for one's own use without understanding, acknowledging, or respecting the value from the original culture. Why do you think those are valid concerns?

Planning Sigd Celebration Activity: 20 minutes

Provide the infographic (https://globaljews.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Sigd_infographic-1.pdf) for support and written prompts

In small groups, use the following prompts to plan the planning of a Sigd celebration in your Jewish community.

- Who might you invite for the planning?
- What elements might you want to include? Food, prayers, gathering, etc? How will it look and feel? Where might you hold the festivities?
- What will you need to pay special attention to?
- What concerns would you have about planning and executing the celebration?
- What additional information or questions do you need to research to be able to plan?

Debrief: 15 minutes

Discuss the group's ideas as a way to allow each group to build on the other group's answers. Make certain that the planning includes an attempt to include Beta Yisrael either physically or through consultation and make sure the discussion explicitly explores why representation is needed when beginning to celebrate something that did not originate from your own culture and practices. Provide an in-depth explanation of the importance of representation.

What came up for the groups around their thinking and decision-making regarding the questions?

Close

There is tension in recognizing that Sigd is a Jewish holiday and celebrating it widely and authentically to ensure that celebrations do not cross the line into cultural appropriation or folklore. By being intentional about planning, there is greater opportunity for authenticity.

I hope that you might consider taking this learning to your synagogue and larger Jewish community.

RESOURCES

Sigd: What's it all About? Josh Traulsen

<https://www.moishehouse.org/resources/sigd-whats-it-all-about/>

Have you ever heard of the Sigd holiday? Government Press Office

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gCYia7Pegaw>

The Festival of Sigd, UJS and UK

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MofKd9YjQgs>

Learn about Ethiopian Jewish Holiday Sigd with the Flavors of Ethiopia
Faith Kramer, The Jewish News of Northern California.

<https://jweekly.com/2020/11/12/learn-about-ethiopian-jewish-holiday-sigd-with-the-flavors-of-ethiopia/>

Context and history

Why Ethiopian Jews are building a movement against Racism, Vice News

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ki-6IK5NCdQ>

Definition of Cultural Appropriation

Theft of cultural elements—including symbols, art, language, customs, etc.—for one's own use, commodification, or profit, often without understanding, acknowledgment, or respect for its value in the original culture. Results from the assumption of a dominant (i.e. white) culture's right to take other cultural elements.

Source: Colours of Resistance Archive, "Cultural Appropriation" (accessed June 2013). As found in Racial Equity Tools Glossary.

Our Own Worst Enemies

How does the history of American racism reverberate in the cultures and hierarchies of the American Jewish community?

Scholar Devin Naar provides the historical context for Jewish participation in the United States that goes back to the founding of the country. This lesson highlights various moments in the history of U.S. Jewish immigration and Jewish interaction with American power structures in order to foster a nuanced conversation about how people were legally racialized in the United States and the structures of a racial hierarchy.

GOALS

- Participants will understand that Jews' acceptance in the U.S. came with conditions.
- Participants will explore the conditions set by the colonizers of the U.S.
- Participants will explore historical Whiteness in the U.S.

MATERIALS

- "White by Law," Devin Naar <https://vimeo.com/784632190/e988f8ded6>
- "Between Privilege and Peril," Devin Naar <https://vimeo.com/784631071/99613aab59>

LESSON

Warm-up: 5 minutes

- In the United States, who are White people?

Share your answer with a partner and jot down your shared definition. Put your answers somewhere to come back to them later.

Watch “Between Privilege and Peril”: 10 minutes

Scholar Devin Naar provides a historical context for Jews immigrating to the United States. This short video introduces the development of Jewish racial identity in 18th and 19th century North America.

[Facilitator note: Watch from :00-3:51 stopping after “useful to the state's objectives” then continue at 6:20 to the end.]

Similar age small group discussion: 15 minutes

- Why were Jews welcomed in New Amsterdam? What was “useful” about them?
- How does the sense that Jews must be “useful” affect Jews’ sense of security and behavior?
- As European Jews came to North America, they switched from being “the” racial other (as they were in the European contexts) to being one among several racial others (including African Americans, Native Americans). What behaviors does Naar suggest that Jews must do in order to be accepted as White?
- How does Washington’s letter to the Jews of Newport exemplify both the privilege and the peril of Jewish identity in North America?

Watch and discuss “White by Law”: 25 minutes

Devin Naar states that “From the beginning [of United States history], whiteness and Americanness was inextricably linked.”

- How did your definition of who is White compare to what was said in the videos?
- What makes sense to you about how Whiteness was determined in early United States history? What doesn’t make sense? In our world today, when it comes to racial identity, what makes sense to you and what doesn’t?
- What did you think about the early recognition that Jews were a part of the people they came from? How does that influence your thoughts about Jewish peoplehood?

Final Questions

- Was anyone surprised by the learning today?
- Was there anything that was confusing or unresolved in your groups?
- What made sense and what didn't with how race was decided?

Close: 5 minutes

Ask each participant to share one question about the topic that remains with them.

There was a lot of information that we learned and discussed in today's session. I encourage people to continue to think about what we learned and think about how experiences from the 18th and 19th century continue to impact our lives today. Thank you for the opportunity to learn and grow together.

Repairing Jewish Pioneer Memory

What kind of *teshuvah*, repentance, and repair, is appropriate for our communal role in colonizing America?

Scholar Maxwell Greenberg's research examines how Jewish people participated in the westward expansion which includes taking and using the land from the indigenous people who lived there previously. This conversation is about remembering history in context and not just in myth or the stories we tell.

GOALS

- Participants will explore the history of U.S. policy for taking indigenous people's land
- Participants will grapple with what it means to be on stolen land
- Participants will consider how to apply Teshuva to land ownership

MATERIALS

- Images in Appendix A
- Images in Appendix B
- "Jews of the West" movie trailer <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EX00KWGgn2w>
- "The 'Indian Problem'" National Museum of the American Indian <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=if-BOZgWZPE>
- Art supplies including fine point markers and colorful fine point pens, colored pencils, and paper
- "Whose land is it?" www.native-land.ca

LESSON

Introduction: 2 minutes

History continues to impact our lives from the stories we tell about our nation, to the stories we tell about our Jewish history, to the places where ancestors are buried and how those stories have been told. Professor Maxwell Greenberg's research is a conversation about how Jewish people participated in westward expansion in the United States, which includes taking and using the land from the indigenous people who previously lived on the land. This conversation is about remembering history in context and not just in myth or the stories we tell.

Warm-up: 5 minutes

Small groups discussion

Do you remember how old you were when you learned that most land we are on, including your house, synagogue, and cemeteries, are built on land that was taken from indigenous people?

-OR-

How old were you when you learned more about Thanksgiving?

Discussion: 25 minutes

We're going to consider some media around Jewish migration to the American West. Look at and consider the book titles and covers (Appendix A) about Jews migrating west. Just take a few minutes to notice what you see.

Now, we are going to watch a brief movie trailer about Jews moving to the West. Pay close attention to the story that is being told. Think about what is being said and what is not being said. Watch: Jews of the Wild West Trailer

- What are the stories of the “Jewish pioneer” trying to tell us?
- Who is present on the book covers and the trailer and who is invisible?
- What language is erasing the presence of the people who already lived there?

When people migrated to the West, they did their best to live full and vibrant lives and part of living life is also taking care of the dead. Burial rituals are an important part of people's culture.

[At this point, the facilitator shares slides and images of the Jewish memorial and graveyards from Douglas and Tombstone in Appendix B]

Right now there is a project underway to preserve this Jewish gravesite. At the same time, a few miles away, land is being destroyed against the will of Indigenous people. When we think about who has the ability to influence the rules that the U.S. government makes, we can look back to advantages that began a long time ago.

We're going to watch one more video that talks about the rules and policies the United States government made so that Western expansion could happen. Those policies impacted lives at that time and now. Watch: The "Indian Problem" through 2:25 "We were to be taken away. Never to return." AND from 10:23 -11:43

Teshuvah (repentance, repair):

As Jews, we are asked to think about what it means to make Teshuva—repentance, or repair.

As we discuss each year at Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, "Teshuva," literally "return," is the idea that we can take account of where we fell short or made mistakes, make internal changes, repent, and have a new beginning. Generally, teshuva is a very personal process that each individual does alone. Professor Greenberg raised the possibility of applying "teshuva" to whole communities, asking us to make an account of the way we participate or benefit from the harm caused to the peoples who lived in North America before settlers arrived from Europe.

When we think about Teshuva we want to be accountable for healing harm after benefiting in some kind of way from the harm.

Activity: 20 minutes

What land are you on, what land are the places you frequent and the places you consider sacred? You can use native-land.ca to learn out the indigenous people who lived on the land before people migrated from Europe and other parts of the world. As a way to give homage and respect to indigenous people and raise awareness in your community, working alone or with your family you are going to make art, poetry or what comes to your heart and mind to symbolize Teshuva for land being stolen. Maybe you will create something to place in your window at home or in your synagogue to provide context and honor those who first lived on the land that we are on.

Closing: 7 minutes

In two sentences please share one thing that you learned today or one thing that is on your mind/heart and how you feel about it?

Facilitator notes and takeaways

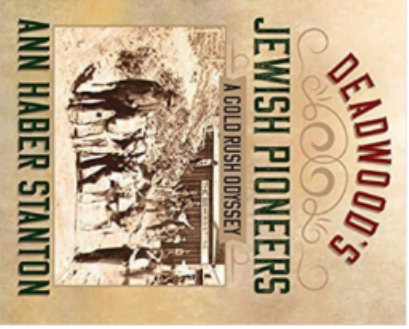
Video support from the scholars is important. When possible, please watch the videos in their entirety. You will note that at time marker 20:38 Professor Greenberg lists three takeaways that are important framing for this lesson. At the marker 44:19 you will find the practice of Teshuva.

https://www.democracynow.org/2020/10/12/organ_pipe_national_monument_border_wall



COMMISSION FOR THE PRESERVATION OF PIONEER JEWISH CEMETERIES AND LANDMARKS IN THE WEST
 ABOUT THE CEMETERIES STORE JOIN CONTACT HOME

Takeaway #2: Jewish Pioneer Myths...
 Remembering Jewish "western" history as single, colonial narrative





The Jewish "pioneer" myth confines Jewish history and memory to a narrative of white, Protestant supremacy in the American West.





Appendix B





Double Diasporas

How might the Cuban Jewish story shape our attitudes to new immigrants today?

Like most immigrant communities, when Jews moved from Cuba to the United States they sought integration, seeking acceptance into both the Jewish and broader American communities. However, they found themselves needing to follow the racist laws of Florida and not being fully accepted by the Jewish community already present in Miami. Their story is one of creating a community within societal boundaries that were both hostile to Black Americans and unwelcoming to Jews who were not from the established Ashkenazi or Sephardic communities.

GOALS

- Participants will understand the societal boundaries that existed when Cuban Jews arrived in Florida.
- Participants will explore how different identities, cultures, and views divide the Jewish community.
- Participants will think about what it would mean to welcome new immigrants into an established community.

MATERIALS

- Appendix A: “A Cold Day” with bracketed portions
- “Double Diasporas: Researchers Bio” video Mark Goldberg
<https://vimeo.com/784642127/c059b827bb>
- “Double Diasporas: Main Video” from 9:59 to 12:10
<https://vimeo.com/784641459/0a2ecb41e0>
- Paper/pens/pencils

LESSON

Introduction: 5 minutes

We are going to let the scholar Mark Goldberg introduce himself and the work that he has done on Cuban Jews migrating to the Miami area. As you watch the introductory video, pay attention to what he shared about himself and his identity and the questions he asked himself for the project. Latin/x/e* and Jewish peoples in America have complicated histories with the racial system in the U.S. Today we are going to explore one of those stories and some of that history.

Watch “Double Diasporas: Researchers Bio” video Mark Goldberg

Warm-up: 5 minutes

Tell your ancestors' United States origin story with one other family or a partner. If you are aware of any hardships your family faced or what made them decide to live where they did once they came to the U.S., please share.

Discussion: 12 minutes

This video provides background about Jews moving from Cuba to Miami Florida. Watch “Double Diasporas: Main Video” from 9:59 to 12:10

- What would you say are the main takeaways?

Small Group Work: 15 minutes

We will discuss more after you spend some time reading selected portions of “A Cold Day” and discussing the primary source along with the video. Answer the following questions in your small group:

- What do you see as the problems from the point of view of the people who just arrived in Miami?
- What do you see as the problems from the point of view of the people who had been in Miami before the 1960's?
- Is there a middle ground?

Race, Religion & American Judaism

- In what ways did choices made by the Ashkenazi and Sephardic Jewish communities and by the Cuban Jewish community perpetuate racial discrimination and White supremacy?

Would any group like to share what you talked about?: 5 minutes

It's clear from what we learned today that many Cuban Jews did not feel welcomed and could not find a home in the existing community.

Activity: 20 minutes

In the same small groups, you will either write a welcome Public Service Announcement (PSA) to a newly immigrating group of people or a PSA to the existing community to remind them to deeply welcome the new arrivals. Your PSA might be on social media, might be printed in a newspaper, be a commercial on visual or audio streaming platforms, etc... Part of the project is choosing how to get your message out. Once you pick the platform, determine the main points of your message, create text and/or graphics, and be prepared to share.

Welcome PSA: Create a message that conveys deep welcoming to the newcomers.

Be Welcoming PSA: Create a reminder for the existing community to be welcoming of the newcomers.

Share out: 10 minutes

Close: 2 minutes

We discovered that race in the U.S. impacted Cuban Jews' experience from the moment they arrived in the U.S. and had to choose where to live. This topic has a lot of layers because our identities are layered and experiences are impacted by race in the U.S. We also discovered that Cuban Jews felt othered in the new community and many never did gain a sense of belonging within the previously existing Jewish community. With intention, we can help to ensure that Jews will find our communities welcoming. Thank you for sharing your ideas with the group.

RESOURCES

“Miami’s Lesser Known Community of Cuban Jews” i24 News

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r8-nRkA6G44&t=7s>

Latine originated within the Latine genderqueer community, because it's easier to conjugate in Spanish and due to criticisms of the anglicization of “Latinx.” Like identity, language is constantly evolving, and we look forward to seeing how this conversation continues.

A COLD DAY IN MIAMI

Cuban refugees arrive in Florida. In the photograph, the bedding used by evacuees for the overnight trip from Havana.



WHEN the Jews in Cuba looked at Fidel Castro they decided that, despite the beard, this was no prophet for them. His words fell like hail on tombstones. The Jews listened and remembered other torrents, other graveyards. So they fled.

Many landed on the nearby shores of Miami, Florida, where together with their companions in exile, the Christian Cubans, they imagined life would be similar to what they'd known. The Cuban Jews couldn't know that these old friends would shrivel away, turned cold and ugly in sunny Miami, a neon fringed city where even warmth is a commodity.

And they couldn't know that the Jewish residents of the tourist-hungry cities of Miami and Miami Beach would forget their traditional role and respond with — indifference.

Of the four to five thousand Jewish families living in Cuba, eighty per cent left. Some boarded the chartered planes provided by Israel. A few families went to Puerto Rico and Venezuela. But the majority of the Jewish colony headed for the city only a few score miles distant — Miami. Most then migrated on to other United States cities, but today there are approximately four hundred Cuban Jew-

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ish families living in the Great Miami area.

They were prepared for the feelings of displacement, for the language barrier, for the disappointing search for work, for the need of compromise and adjustment. The older people expected the trauma of exile and the hardship of starting all over again. The young knew the problems implicit in beginning in a strange land were before them. What came as a surprise was the lack of empathy between the Jewish community in Miami and the exiles fleeing tyranny.

In Cuba, the Jews comprised a compact, closely knit group characterized by strong Zionist feelings. Some were the direct descendants of the Jews who were expelled from Spain in 1492. Others had immigrated from Eastern Europe — Russia, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, in the 1920s. In 1932 and until the outbreak of World War II, small groups of Jews came from Germany and Austria. After the war, many Jews came to Cuba from the concentration camps of Europe. Perhaps it was because they thought of themselves as part of a worldwide community that they expected a warm welcome in Miami.

"The Miami Jews think of us only as Cubans," said Saul Ginzburg, "they don't consider us Jews."

Tall, with black patent leather hair and an old world air of courtliness about him, Mr. Ginzburg is now a traveling salesman. He sells shoes to chain outfits throughout the South. In Havana he owned a textile factory.

Reflecting on the implications of his experience in Miami, he said, "My father was the first of our family to come to Miami. He lived here for three and a half years and he suffered here. He suffered from indifference."

When Saul Ginzburg's father died a few months ago, in Miami, two hundred people came to his funeral.

"But not one," said Mr. Ginzburg, "was a Miami Jew."

There are many cases that illustrate shades of reactions in the Miami-Jewish community. For instance, while Mr. Jaime Schuchinsky is more fortunate than most, he still wonders why Miami failed him.

When Mr. Schuchinsky arrived in Miami about three years ago, he spoke no English. In Cuba he'd been a successful and somewhat affluent businessman. In Miami he couldn't find a job. Finally, in desperation, he went to New York where he found work as a salesman for a vinyl plastic fabric firm. Now, six months later, his employer has pressed a three-year contract upon him. Now he speaks English.

"In Miami," said Mr. Schuchinsky, "they don't seem to understand why the Jews had to leave Cuba. After all, we had a good life there. We Jews were all like one big family. What they don't understand is that everything was taken away from us at the point of a gun."

Groping for reasons for indifference, Mr. Schuchinsky speculated that perhaps its basis was fear. Historically, dif-

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A COLD DAY IN MIAMI

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ference and discrimination have usually been linked. The Cuban refugees, with a different culture and language, are resented by many Miami Jews. For the Miami Jews to identify with their Cuban co-religionists might jeopardize their cozy sun-dappled niche.

"Then too," he said, "Cuban Jews stood in Miami with one foot on its handy shore and one foot poised for the leap back to Cuba. One encouraging word out of Washington and we were ready to go back. The impermanent status we consoled ourselves with could hardly encourage involvement."

Nevertheless Mr. Schuchinsky left Miami because he could find no one to speak with — no one, that is, who was interested in his situation. His memories of Cuba are bittersweet but he recalls the time when thousands of German refugees arrived in Cuba. He remembers what the Jewish colony there did about the refugees.

"We sought them out. It would have been a gross default of hospitality not to have welcomed them, not to have assisted them in finding a home or a job or a school for learning the language. There was not one Jewish family that didn't have a refugee staying with them for some time. This is the reception we expected in Miami."

Much rancor has stemmed from the housing situation. On Miami Beach many of the apartment houses are owned by elderly Jewish couples. Initially, they were glad to rent to Cuban Jewish families. But when these families opened their homes to displaced relatives and friends, the friction began.

There were too many noisy children, too many cars usurping the limited parking spaces in front of the buildings. Apartments designed for families of three or four were soon accommodating as many as six and eight people. The Jewish landlords forgot that they or their parents were once refugees. Soon the Jewish landlords were shouting, "Why don't you go back where you came from?"

Reeling under the barbs of their Jewish hosts, the Cuban Jews turned to face still another unexpected reaction. Miami has spawned another area of anti-Semitism. Whereas in Cuba the Christian community never harbored any ill feelings toward their Jewish countrymen, here in Miami they succumbed to the disease. Zealous to immerse themselves in Americana, the Christian Cubans are taking to anti-Semitism as the Cuban peasants are to Communism. In Cuba the appellation for a Jew was "Polaco." It is in Miami that the word has acquired a derisive connotation.

Perhaps it is Rabbi Abramowitz of Temple Menorah of Miami Beach who best understands the Cuban Jews. Formerly a director of the Joint Distribution Committee in Italy, he is well versed on refugee problems. He visited Cuba in 1960 and met many Jewish families there. Now he has opened his house and temple to them. But, he asks, who in Miami has concerned himself with the basic problems of the refugees: where am I going to live, what are my legal rights, where can I find a job? And what confuses the Cuban Jew, like Saul Ginz-

burg, who has been welcomed in the temple, is that he and his wife have yet to make a close personal friend there. Not one Miami Jew has invited them to his home.

This is what is so unexpected. This is what the Cuban Jews miss. In Havana their social life evolved out of their relationships in their temple, the magnificent Patronato in the Vadado section. Some, of course, belonged to the El Centro Israelita in Old Havana. But even there, all the people attended the social functions and festivities.

The Secretary of the Patronato was Dr. Bernardo Benes, aged twenty-nine, round of face and red haired. Son of parents who immigrated to Cuba in 1926, Bernardo Benes fought in the streets of Havana against Batista's forces. As a young law student he was concerned with politics. In 1959 he became convinced that Castro had betrayed the revolution, that he was a Communist. Impelled by the realization that totalitarianism, whether of the right or left, is an unhealthy climate for a Jew, he fled the country with his family.

Dr. Benes found employment with the Washington Federal Savings and Loan Association of Miami Beach. Starting as a clerk, he has now graduated to the position of a vice-president. With his wife and three children, he is slowly carving out a life in the new land. But, as Dr. Benes points out, for the older people it is not as easy.

His father owned a wholesale leather factory in Cuba. In Miami he wasn't able to find work. Recently Dr. Benes was able to bring over his wife's parents who now have to live with them in their small Miami Beach apartment.

What Dr. Benes decries is the lack of community effort in Miami. So many of the employers in Miami are Jewish. So few volunteered their efforts in finding work for the refugees. Through his position and the cooperation of Washington Federal, Dr. Benes has been able to place a few refugees with his institution.

"We are just too unimportant for the Miami Jews to bother with," Dr. Benes said. "What we cannot adjust to is the lack of warmth. People here seem afraid of close relationships. All they're interested in is money."

Now the transplanted colony has organized itself. The Cuban Hebrew Social Circle of Miami has a program of cementing contacts within the group. The feeling was that the young people, the teen-agers especially, need to feel they belong.

"We want to celebrate Jewish Holidays together like we did in Cuba," said Dr. Benes.

When the Social Circle tried to find a meeting place they turned to a Miami Beach Y.M.H.A.; they were turned away. To the refugee group who had lost everything in Cuba, the Miami Beach Y complained of money problems. If they made their facilities available to the group in the evenings, who would meet the light bill?

"We are a naive people," said Dr. Benes. "We expected to be greeted with love, not with its opposite—indifference."

Sometimes it is not what men do and feel that is wrong. Often it is what they leave undone, what they cannot feel. ■

Countering White Nationalism and Antisemitism

What role do antisemitic conspiracy theories play in White nationalist thinking?

White nationalism is a growing problem in the United States. In particular, the anti-Jewish and racist replacement conspiracy theory has gained notoriety in recent years. This lesson builds on the work of Scholar Sophie Bjork-James and helps our understanding of how conspiracy theories, anti-Jewish hate, and other oppressions are spread through social media and why it is important to combat the spread of these dangerous ideas.

GOALS

- Participants will understand why the Great Replacement Theory is an antisemitic and racist conspiracy theory.
- Participants will understand that YouTube and social media is a powerful tool in spreading conspiracy theory.
- Participants will explore current immigration myths and facts in the U.S.

MATERIALS

- “Great Replacement Theory” video, Dr. Sophie Bjork-James
<https://vimeo.com/784649966/ea162970e8>
- “Understanding the Great Replacement Network: Define America” video
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V2spdl5OUj4>
- Appendix A: Immigration Quiz

LESSON

Introduction: 2 minutes

Overt, explicit racial hate is a growing force within White nationalist movements. White nationalism continues to grow, in part due to fear about the U.S. growing more diverse and social media platforms. Today we will explore the “great replacement” theory and how media including social media is used to recruit and miseducate people to buy into the theory and join White nationalist thinking and movements.

Warm-up: 6 minutes

Take three minutes and discuss with your adult (or a partner) when, from where, and how your ancestors arrived in the United States. Tell a 90-second version of their story, remembering that their being in the U.S. has and continues to impact your life greatly.

Discussion: 25 minutes

We will watch two videos focusing on the conspiracy of the “great replacement” theory. Our first video is from Dr. Sophie Bjork-James who provides foundational information on replacement theory and its antisemitic roots.

Watch “Great Replacement Theory” Dr. Sophie Bjork-James

Before we continue, I want to make sure that we all understand that the “great replacement” theory is an anti-Jewish conspiracy theory, it's a myth based on antisemitic and racist ideas.

- Has anyone heard of the replacement theory before today?
- What does Dr. Bjork-James mean when she talks about diversity being a plus and states that “Increasing racial equality instead of believing that one group will need to be on the top and another group on the bottom” is important for everyone?

- Can you think of ways racial diversity in your own life enhances and is a net positive for you? If you do not encounter significant racial diversity in your life, can you think of what you might be missing and how you might be able to increase racial diversity in your life?

In other materials available for you to watch, Dr. Bjork-James talks about how White nationalists recruit people to join their thinking and movement using social media. This next video found on YouTube is about how social media and popular news outlets have been used to spread the “great replacement” conspiracy theory. It is also important to mention that according to the Pew Research Center, 26% of people in the U.S. get their news from YouTube.

Watch “Understanding the Great Replacement Network: Define America”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V2spdl5OUj4>

While this video did not explicitly state it, the replacement conspiracy theory is often tied to antisemitism. Dr. Bjork-James, and many others including a former White nationalist, Derek Black, and Eric K. Ward, a civil rights activist, understand that those who buy into the replacement theory believe Jews are controlling the people moving to the U.S. from other countries. In fact, they argue that antisemitism is THE backbone and central organizing principle for White nationalism.

- What do you think teens your age are hearing about immigration?
- Did the explainer video give you insight into how videos might be used to persuade and manipulate people?
- Do you see parallels in other media platforms you use?
- Why do you think living and thinking about issues of social justice in multiracial and multicultural groups is important?

Activity: 15 minutes

Let’s talk about some steps each of us can take to resist this type of hateful thinking. A first step might be for us to understand the facts about immigration. Let’s see how well you do on this quiz about immigration (Appendix A)

[Facilitator may decide to use an online quiz resource like Kahoot! to make it more technology and teen-friendly or break the participants into groups to discuss before having an answer.]

Another step is to make sure that you are thinking about how to make sure your social circle is diverse and that you are being critical viewers and consumers of social media. As talked about in the second video, social media must be a big part of the solution which means you and your friends might already be taking part in the solution. It's easier to do that when we are working in diverse groups and coalitions not only because hate impacts everyone but also because a diverse group of people and experiences really does lead to better thinking and problem solving.

Closing: 10 minutes

Thank you each for participating. Antisemitism and hate groups are a tough conversation. I'd like to go around the room and ask each person if you have any unanswered questions right now and, if you do, please share.

[Once shared, thank participants again. Be prepared to say something like, "Many questions will take time to answer and some answers to our questions may never be satisfying" provide resources and remind the youth that their parents are an important resource.]

Immigration Quiz

1. True or False: Most immigrants are here illegally.

False. Most of the foreign-born people living in the United States followed the rules and have permission to be here

(<http://www.pewhispanic.org/2016/04/19/statistical-portrait-of-the-foreign-born-population-in-the-united-states-key-charts/#2013-fb-authorized-pie>).

Of the more than 43 million foreign-born people who were living in the United States in 2014, around 44 percent were naturalized U.S. citizens . Twenty-five percent of all foreign-born people did not have documentation to be in the U.S. And of those 25% who do not have documents, it is estimated that 40 percent (<http://www.pbs.org/newshour/rundown/forty-percent-non-citizens-living-in-us-on-expired-visitor-student-visas/>) came to the country legally. It is known that—by far—the nation with the most visitors who do not leave at the end of their authorized stays is Canada (<http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/02/03/homeland-security-produces-first-estimate-of-foreign-visitors-to-u-s-who-overstay-deadline-to-leave/>).

2. True or False. It's easy to enter the country legally. My ancestors did; why can't immigrants today?

False. For about the first 100 years, the United States had an "open immigration system (<https://www.uscis.gov/history-and-genealogy/our-history/agency-history/early-american-immigration-policies>) for that allowed any able-bodied immigrant in," according to immigration historian David Reimers. Any White person was eligible to be a citizen of the United States. Back then, the biggest obstacle that would-be immigrants faced was getting here. Some even sold themselves into indentured servitude to do so. Under the current system many ancestors who arrived between 1790 and 1924 would not have met the rigorous process (<https://travel.state.gov/content/visas/en/immigrate/immigrant-process.html>) for obtaining documentation to enter the United States as a resident. Generally, permission to enter and stay in the country as a documented immigrant is limited to people who are highly trained in a skill that is in short supply, are escaping political persecution, are joining close family already here or are winners of the green-card lottery.

3. True or False: The largest group of incoming immigrants in recent years are from Mexico.

False. While Mexicans make up the largest proportion of immigrants currently living in the US (25%), the majority of immigrants entering the US over the last several years have been from Asia. According to the Migration Policy Institute, 179,800 Indians emigrated to the United States in 2015, making India the top country of origin that year. Next was China, with 143,200 immigrants; Mexico, with 139,400; the Philippines, with 47,500; and Canada, with 46,800. The Pew Research (<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/08/20/key-findings-about-u-s-immigrants/>) study in 2018 found 149,000 immigrants from China, 129,000 from India, and 120,000 from Mexico.

4. How many of the 2017 Fortune 500 companies—the largest U.S. companies by revenue—were founded by immigrants or children of immigrants?

- A. About 5%
- B. About 25%
- C. About 50%
- D. 80%

C. According to the Center for American Entrepreneurship, 43 percent of the companies listed on the 2017 edition of the Fortune 500 were founded by immigrants or children of immigrants. The proportion among the twenty-five largest firms—52 percent—was even higher. Examples range from Amazon, Apple, and Google to McDonald's and AT&T.

5. True or False. Immigration increases crime and violence.

False. Immigrants come to this country for a few primary reasons: to work, to be reunited with family members or to escape a dangerous situation. Most are couples, families with children, and workers who are integral to the U.S. economy. Statistics show that immigrants are less likely to commit serious crimes. This holds true for immigrants who are documented and undocumented, regardless of their country of origin or level of education. In other words, the overwhelming majority of immigrants are not “criminals.”

According to the American Immigration Council: “Between 1990 and 2013 (<https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/criminalization-immigration-united-states>) the foreign-born share of the U.S. population grew from 7.9 percent to 13.1 percent and the number of unauthorized immigrants more than tripled. ... During the same period, FBI data indicate that the violent crime rate and property crime rate declined 48 percent ... [and] 41 percent [respectively].”

“In Texas (<https://www.cato.org/sites/cato.org/files/2020-10/working-paper-60.pdf>) [the only state that specifically tracks immigration status in its crime reporting statistics], in 2018, the illegal immigrant criminal conviction rate was 782 per 100,000 illegal immigrants, 535 per 100,000 legal immigrants, and 1,422 per 100,000 native-born Americans.”

6. True or False: Undocumented immigrants don’t pay taxes and burden the national economy.

False. Immigrants who are undocumented pay taxes every time they buy taxable goods such as gas, clothes or new appliances (depending on where they reside). They also contribute to property taxes—a main source of school funding—when they buy or rent a house or apartment. A 2017 report (http://itep.org/itep_reports/2017/03/undocumented-immigrants-state-local-tax-contributions-2.php) from the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy highlights that undocumented immigrants pay an estimated \$11.74 billion in state and local taxes a year.

The U.S. Social Security Administration estimated that in 2010 undocumented immigrants—and their employers—paid \$13 billion in payroll taxes (https://www.ssa.gov/oact/NOTES/pdf_notes/note151.pdf) alone for benefits they will never get. They can receive schooling and emergency medical care but not welfare or food stamps.

7. True or False. Current immigration laws in the United States separate families.

True. Since the start of the recession in 2008, the number of immigrants without documentation coming into the country has fallen each year and, in more recent years, the number has stabilized (<http://www.pewhispanic.org/2016/09/20/overall-number-of-u-s-unauthorized-immigrants-holds-steady-since-2009>). Many people claim that immigrants have “anchor babies”—an offensive term for giving birth to children in the United States so that the whole family can stay in the country (and a narrative that contributes to the myth that the immigrant population is exploding).

According to the 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, a child born on U.S. soil is automatically a U.S. citizen. However, immigration judges will not keep immigrant parents in the United States just because their children are U.S. citizens. The vast majority of the 4 million immigrant adults (<http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/09/21/unauthorized-immigrant-population-stable-for-half-a-decade>) without documentation who live with their children who were born in the United States have no protection from deportation.

Sources:

<https://www.learningforjustice.org/magazine/spring-2011/ten-myths-about-immigration>

<https://www.cfr.org/quiz/see-how-much-you-know-about-immigration-united-states>

Appendix A

Responding to Racial Microaggressions

How do we prepare ourselves and our children to respond to racial harm?

Scholar Buffie Longmire-Avital's research investigates parent perceptions and parent experiences around talking and thinking about race and racism in the Jewish community. She focuses on a number of areas including representation in media, microaggressions or racial harm, and how parents are and are not speaking with their children about race. Here we explore some of her conclusions and the implications for conversations about race within the Jewish community.

GOALS

- Participants will explore why representation is important.
- Participants will discuss how to increase representation in their homes.
- Participants will have a working knowledge of microaggressions or racist harm.
- Participants will consider ways to disrupt racist harm.

MATERIALS

- "What's in Your Library?" Buffie Longmire-Avital
<https://vimeo.com/825277678/8b50f571c6>
- "Teenagers Discuss Microaggressions and Racism" Hatchkids
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8RfwnibEd3A>

LESSON

Introduction: 1 minute

Buffie Longmire-Avital's research investigates parent perceptions and parent experiences around talking and thinking about race and racism in our Jewish community. She focuses on a number of areas including representation in media, microaggressions or racial harm, and how parents are and are not speaking with their children about race. Today, we will focus on representation and microaggressions or racial harm.

Warm-up: 5 minutes

- Adults share a favorite book you had at about your child's age
- Youth share a favorite book

Discussion: 15 minutes

- Watch "[What's in Your Library?](#)"
 - What does representation mean?
 - Have you experienced a time when you were surprised that a part of your identity and who you are was represented well in the media?
 - If it was a part of your identity that is rarely spoken about, how did you feel?
- With a parent or peer, think about the books that you've read and owned (these books can also include books that you've read for school) and the shows that you watch, take notes if wanted.
 - Who is represented?
 - Are there any questions about who or how that person is being represented?
 - Do you think there are groups that are not well represented?

Discussion: 10 minutes

Another big part of Dr. Longmire-Avital's work focused on microaggressions or harmful incidents in the Jewish community. Let's first watch a video with teens about microaggressions.

- Watch “Teenagers Discuss Microaggressions and Racism” Hatchkids
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8RfwnibEd3A>
 - What stood out to you?
 - Was there anything that just seemed inaccurate?
 - Have you experienced microaggressions?
 - Have you said or acted out a microaggression?

Activity: 20 minutes

Once we understand what microaggressions are and the harmful impacts they cause, we can first work on not doing them ourselves and then think about how to intervene when they do happen in front of us. We have two scenarios for two small groups to work on. Please write a script for one of the scenarios that includes a solution. **[Do not let the students act out the scenarios because that increases the likelihood of insensitivity and harm for JOC in the space.]**

Scenario 1

You attend a predominately White Jewish day school and/or synagogue. You’ve become friendly with another student who has dark skin and appears to be Latin/x/e*. One day you and a few friends are talking and you ask the student if both of their parents converted to Judaism or just one. What about the question makes it a microaggression? Write a script that includes a solution and an acknowledgment of the harm that was caused.

Scenario 2

A group of teens is in their cabin at summer camp getting ready when a White camper tells a Black camper that her hair is so cool and reaches to touch it. What is it about this scenario that is wrong? What can the campers do? Write a script that includes a resolution and an acknowledgment of the harm that was caused.

Share out both scenarios in discussion.

Close: 5 minutes

Have each person share one thing that they can or will do when thinking about racial harm.

RESOURCES

- “What exactly is a microaggression?” Jenee Desmond-Harris Vox News
<https://www.vox.com/2015/2/16/8031073/what-are-microaggressions>

*Latine originated within the Latine genderqueer community, because it’s easier to conjugate in Spanish and due to criticisms of the anglicization of “Latinx.” Like identity, language is constantly evolving, and we look forward to seeing how this conversation continues.

Jewish Perspectives on Reparations

How do we reckon with the ways our holy texts both limit and countenance slavery?

Scholar Jonathan Crane uses Jewish texts to understand the moral imperative for reparations for Black enslaved people in the United States and their descendants. This session introduces a number of key concepts for this discussion through a Jewish lens, including generational wealth and the implications of acquiring wealth in unethical ways.

GOALS

- Participants will understand historical reasons why there are wealth disparities in the U.S.
- Participants will begin to explore generational wealth.
- Participants will discuss Jewish texts and concepts that support reparations as U.S. policy.

MATERIALS

- 3 small pieces of paper or sticky notes for half of the participants.
- Pens/pencils
- “Explained Racial Wealth Gap” video, Vox Media and Netflix
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mqrrhn8khGLM>
- Appendix A: Text handouts

LESSON

Framing 2 minutes:

Over the past 10 years, the question of what is owed to the descendants of Black enslaved people in the United States has gained greater national attention. This lesson draws on ancient Jewish teachings to make a Jewish ethical argument about reparations. Before we think about what our Jewish response might be, let’s first take a look at the impact slavery and discrimination has had on people in the United States.

Warm-up: 5 minutes

Divide the participants into four groups. When possible, make two groups with adults and two groups with youth. The second group for each should have fewer people. The groups will represent the generational wealth gap in the U.S. between a marginalized group and a privileged group.

The four groups called Gen 1A and Gen 1B (for adults) and Gen 2A and Gen 2B (for youth) are provided 3 pieces of paper. Direct everyone in Gen 1 to draw a house on one sheet, money on another and clothes on a third.

Background Lesson: 7 minutes

Watch “Explained Racial Wealth Gap,” Vox Media and Netflix
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mqrhn8khGLM>

:00- 4:08 STOP after “across generations.” The next sentence contains explicit language. Continue at 4:27 and end at 7:40.

- What was new or thought provoking for you in this video?

Instruct Gen 1B to hand over the paper with the house and money to Gen 1A.

Text Study: 30 minutes

Keep in mind the history of BOTH slavery and racism within institutions from the 1600s until now. The institution part is key, we aren’t talking about racism between people but policies that provide advantages to White people that were and are built into government policies and laws.

We will now turn to the framework scholar Jonathan Crane uses to think about reparations. He uses both biblical and rabbinic texts to consider moral imperatives and rationales to explore reparations for slavery. Imperatives are what should or should not be done while rationales are the reasons why we should or should not do something.

This lesson explores the imperative that enslaved people or their descendants are owed reparations for their forced back-breaking work and two rationales that Crane puts forward. The rationales come from biblical and rabbinic Jewish texts. Each offers an opportunity to discuss a Jewish ethical framework for the moral imperative to make reparations for slavery.

Who can give us the quick version of the Exodus story that we tell at Passover? [Fill in any necessary gaps of the story. If short on time, the facilitator may tell the quick version of the story.]

After the Passover retelling, ask someone familiar with the song “Dayeinu” which appears in most haggadot, to explain what it’s about.

- Read Text 1, Appendix A.
 - What does it mean to you to sing of wealth taken from the Egyptians as a form of reparations for the Israelites’ slavery?
 - What does it mean for the core mythic story of the Jewish people to be grounded in reparations?
 - SAY: The giving of money comes from the Torah. It is well documented that the Israelites took wealth from the Egyptians.
- Read Text 2, Appendix A, together.
 - What is the meaning of the last phrase, “and you will despoil Egypt”? What is going on there?
 - Why do you think the Torah includes the taking of spoils as an element of the Exodus story?
 - How can this text provide a rationale for reparations?
 - What can we take from this text in our learning and thinking about U.S. slavery, the racial wealth gap, and possibilities for repair? If the reparations of 40 acres and mule had actually been provided, would that have satisfied the moral imperative to seek repair? How is that complicated when we think of the land as stolen from the indigenous peoples?

For our last text study, we are considering a portion of the Talmud, a work that reflects the discussions of Rabbis who lived during the first to sixth centuries CE. While the passage is not speaking about reparations, it has been applied to this issue by many current rabbis. The following text is drawn from an ancient rabbinic conversation about how to understand the situation of the house built from a stolen beam.

- Read Text 3, Appendix A.
- How would you explain this situation in your own words?
- What do the students of Beit Shammai and the students of Beit Hillel agree about? What do they disagree about? Which of the two views do you find most convincing, and why?
- How could this text be used as a rationale for a policy of reparations for descendants of Black enslaved people in the United States?
- How does this text address the moral responsibilities of many American Jews whose ancestors immigrated here after slavery? Of young people who were born in this century?

Closing Activity: 10 minutes

Instruct Gen 1B to hand what they have to Gen 2B. Have Gen 1A give their paper to Gen 2A.

- Group Gen 2A, what did you all do to get what you were just given?
- For those of you who have houses, would you keep both or use the money you can gain from them for something else?
- In this scenario, how did you benefit from ill-gotten gains? What did each step in our activity symbolize?

[Make sure to convey the idea that one set of adults handed over all the wealth they had and then had nothing to pass down to their children, which is what happened prior to the civil war to enslaved people and through post-civil war federal and local policy.]

Race, Religion & American Judaism

Close: 5 minutes

Thank everyone for being engaged during the time together.

Ask each person to imagine the United States as a place where reparations would be a government policy in a more just world and to share one sentence about how that might look or feel.

Texts on Reparations

Text 1

Echoes of Reparations in Jewish Religious Practice

Pesach Haggadah: Dayeinu

How many good steps did the One-Who-is-Every-Place take for us!
If God had taken us out of Egypt and not made judgments on them, *Dayeinu!*
If God had made judgments on them and had not done so on their gods, *Dayeinu!*
If God had done so on their gods and not killed their firstborn, *Dayeinu!*
If God had killed their firstborn and **not given us their money, *Dayeinu!***
If God had given us their money and not split the Sea for us, *Dayeinu!*...

כמה מעלות טובות למקום עלינו!
אלו הוציאנו ממצרים ולא עשה בהם שפטים, דינו.
אלו עשה בהם שפטים, ולא עשה באלהיהם, דינו.
אלו עשה באלהיהם, ולא הרג את בכוריהם, דינו.
אלו הרג את בכוריהם ולא נתן לנו את ממונם, דינו.
אלו נתן לנו את ממונם ולא קרע לנו את הים, דינו....

Text 2

“We Were Slaves in Egypt” - and we left with resources

God to Moshe at the Burning Bush: Sh’mot/Exodus 3:19-22

(God responds to Moshe’s reluctance to accept his assignment to go back to liberate his people.)

“And I know that the king of Egypt will let you go only because of a greater might. So I will stretch out my hand and smite Egypt with all my wonders that I will do among them, and after that he will let you go. And I will put this people’s favor in Egypt’s eyes, and it will be that when you go you will not go empty-handed. Each woman will ask for silver objects and gold objects from her neighbor and from anyone lodging in her house, and you will put them on your sons and your daughters, and you will despoil Egypt.”

ואני ידעתי כי לא יתן אתכם מלך מצרים להלך ולא ביד חזקה: ושלחתי את ידי והכיתי את מצרים בכל נפלאתי אשר אעשה בקרבם ואחרי כן ישלח אתכם: ונתתי את חן העם הזה בעיני מצרים והיה כי תלכו לא תלכו ריקם: ושאלה אשה משכנתה ומגרת ביתה כלי כסף וכלי זהב ושמלת ושמתם על בניכם ועל בנותיכם ונצלתם את מצרים:

Appendix A

Texts on Reparations

Text 3

When a House is Built on a Stolen Foundation

Babylonian Talmud Gittin 55a

<p>About a stolen beam that was already built into a building: The Sages taught: If one robbed another of a beam and built it into a building,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beit Shammai* says: One must destroy the entire building and return the beam to its owners. • And Beit Hillel** says: The injured party receives only the value of the beam but not the beam itself, due to an ordinance instituted for the sake of the penitent.*** 	<p>ועל המריש הגזול שבנאו: תנו רבנן גזל מריש ובנאו בבירה ב"ש אומרים מקעקע כל הבירה כולה ומחזיר מריש לבעליו וב"ה אומרים אין לו אלא דמי מריש בלבד משום תקנת השבין:</p>
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* This refers to the students of the ancient sage Shammai.

** This refers to the students of the ancient sage Hillel.

*** The medieval commentator Rashi explains that this ordinance exists to encourage a person to confess their wrongdoings. If the potential penitent doesn't think they could ever redress the harm they have done, they might not be moved to repent.