

Jewish

Representation Matters:

An intersectional study of the confluence of playwrighting, casting practices, and progressive productions as they relate to diversity and inclusion in theatre.

Created for the students of the McLennan College Theatre Department

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Acknowledgements

Many thanks to the friends and colleagues who served as my peer-review committee:

Robert Kaiser, Editor *Merrimack Valley Havurah*, New Hampshire.

Debbey Sperberg Lukaszewicz, Temple Beth Abraham Nashua, New Hampshire.

Barbara Matthews, retired Professor of Theatre California State University—Long Beach.

Why do we need to know this?

American theatre, film, and television have a long and problematic history with systemic racism, misogyny, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, homophobia, and ableism:

Although BIPOC make up 70% of the world's population (and 67% of the world's non-Christians), white performers held 76% of the roles during the decade between 2006-2016 on Broadway. Of the 24% of the roles that went to minority actors (which includes all non-whites plus actors with disabilities) only 10.7% of those were non-traditionally cast. In other words, roles that could have been filled by a performer of any ethnic background, nearly always went to a white actor. White actors also earn higher wages than BIPOC actors.

Jews make up 1.7% of the American population, for every 100 actors in a show or movie, only two would be Jewish. But that's almost never the case.

In the 21st Century we should know better and do better. We hope through education and deliberate action toward inclusivity in our productions as well as our classes, to increase the representation of these under-represented groups in both our student population and the plays we produce.

<https://howlround.com/how-liberal-arts-theatre-programs-are-failing-their-students-color>

<https://variety.com/2016/film/news/movie-tv-diversity-study-hollywood-straight-white-male-1201711586/>

http://www.aapacnyc.org/uploads/1/1/9/4/11949532/aapac_2015-2016_10year_report.pdf

<https://allarts.org/2019/03/study-finds-decrease-in-broadway-diversity-following-a-record-breaking-year/>

The Jewish Diaspora

Diaspora means dispersed. The Jewish homeland was the city of Jerusalem. During its long history, Jerusalem has been attacked 52 times, captured and recaptured 44 times, besieged 23 times, and destroyed twice. What follows is a very oversimplified version of events.

The oldest part of the city was settled in the 4000 BCE, by the Canaanites, making Jerusalem one of the oldest cities in the world.

Jerusalem became controlled by Egypt by 1550 BCE but its power began to wane by 1100 BCE.

Jerusalem was sacked by King David in 1000 BCE and became the capital of the Kingdom of Israel. David's son King Solomon built a great temple there. 70 years later Israel split apart and Jerusalem became the capitol of the Kingdom of Judea at the end of Solomon's reign, and stayed that way for another 400 years.

In 597 BCE Jerusalem was sacked by the Babylonians who captured the city, burned the Temple, destroyed the city walls. Most of the population fled to Egypt.

In Egypt, the Jews were held in captivity but allowed to return in 516 BCE and rebuilt the Temple.

When Alexander the Great conquered the Persian Empire, Judea fell under Greek control. After Alexander died, it fell under Ptolemaic control and was ruled by Simon Maccabaeus and his descendants for 103 years.

In 37 BCE King Herod captured it after a 40 day siege and rebuilt the second temple.

After Herod's death in 4 BCE, it fell under Roman control for the next 70 years. All of the events of the Old Testament take place before this time frame, and all of the events of the New Testament take place after.

In 66 CE the Jews rebelled against the Roman rule and by 70 CE under Titus, Roman legions reconquered Jerusalem, burnt the second Temple, knocked down all but the west wall around the city, and ran the Jews out of the city. This was the first major Jewish Diaspora.



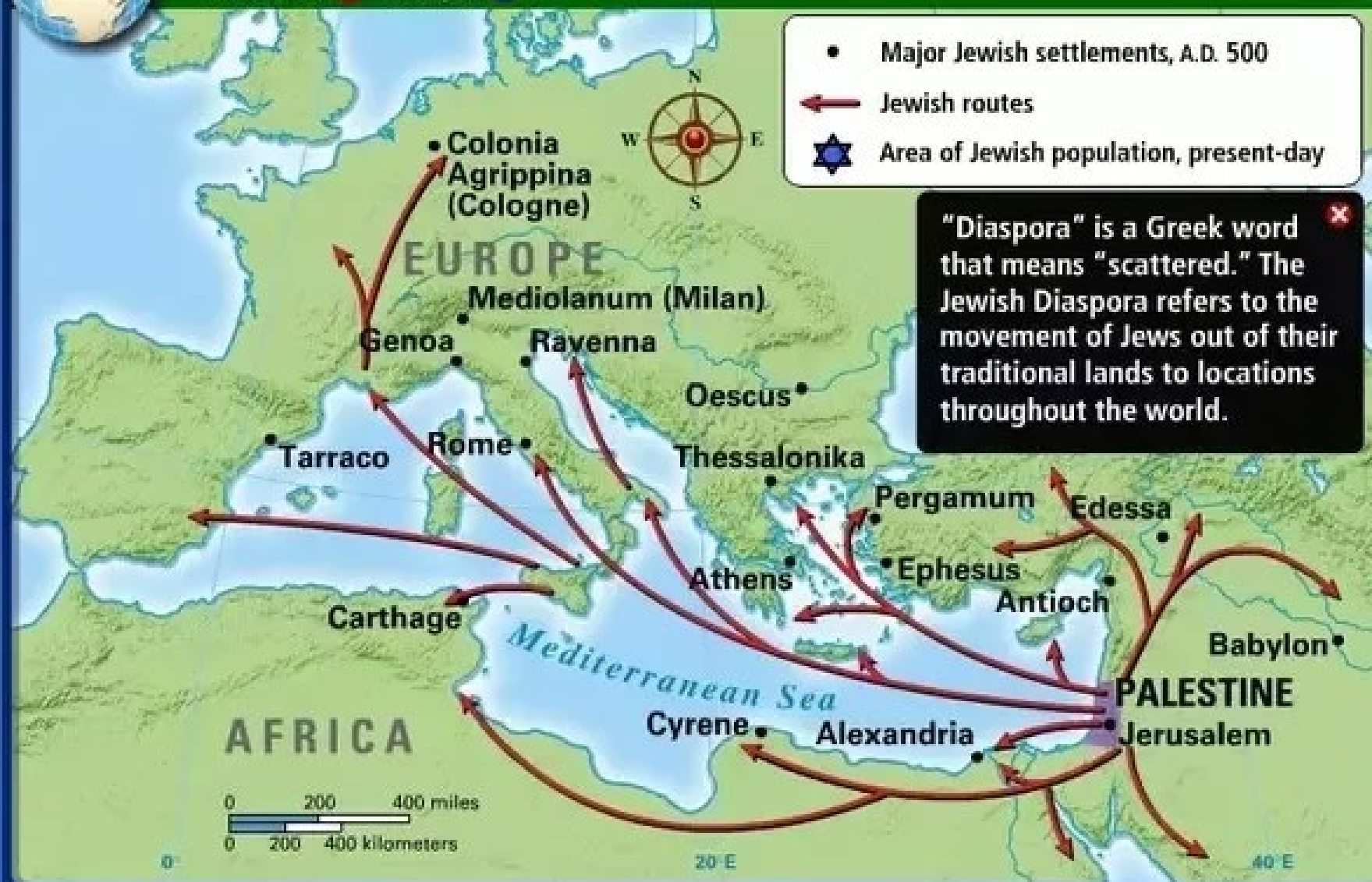
Jewish Diaspora, A.D. 70–500

DIRECTIONS

GEOQUIZ

- Major Jewish settlements, A.D. 500
- ← Jewish routes
- ★ Area of Jewish population, present-day

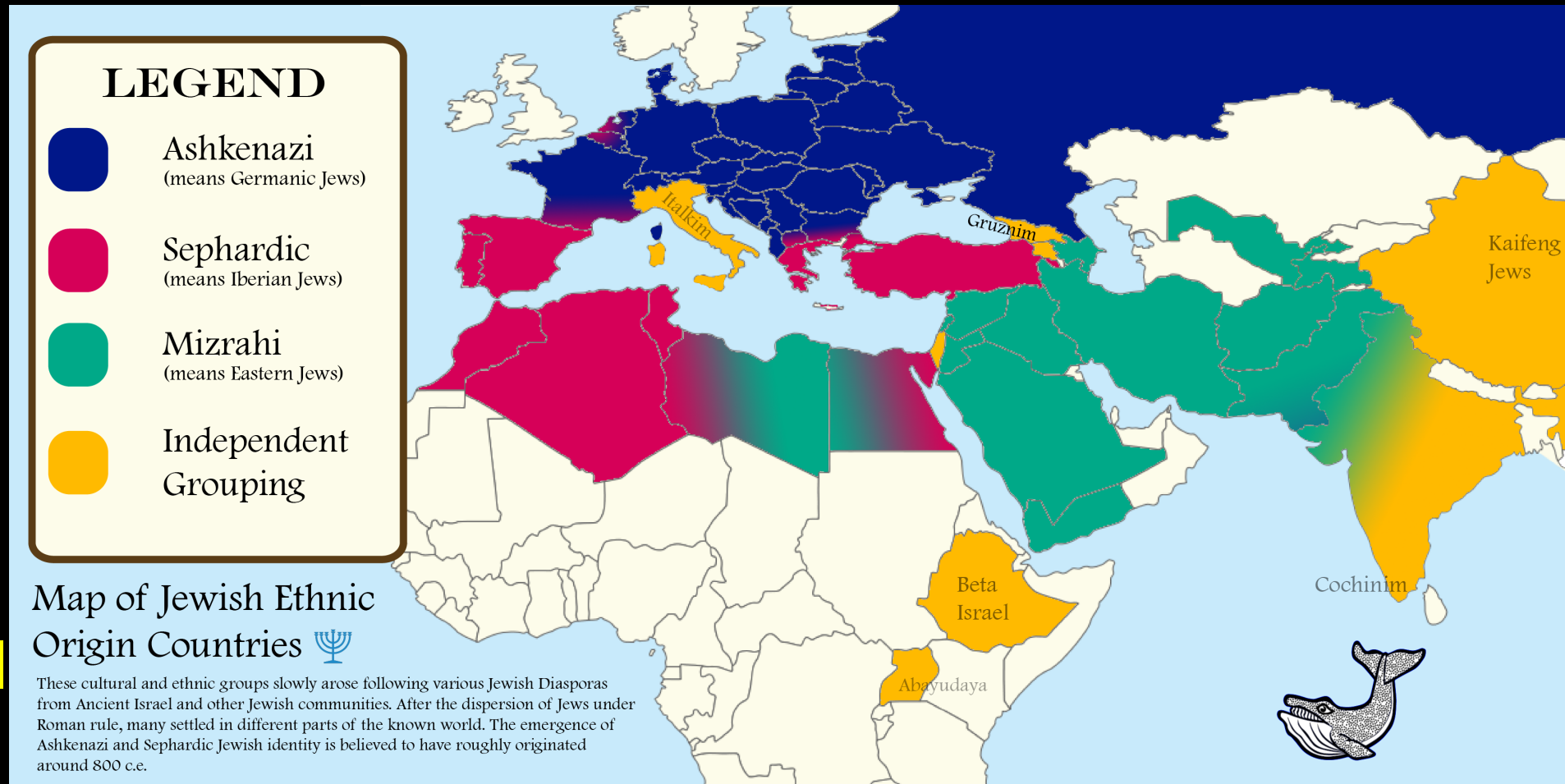
“Diaspora” is a Greek word that means “scattered.” The Jewish Diaspora refers to the movement of Jews out of their traditional lands to locations throughout the world.



Jewish Diaspora by 800 C.E.

- Ashkenazi Jews are European.
- Sephardic Jews are from Spain, Portugal, Morocco, Algeria, and Turkey.
- Mizrahi Jews are from the Middle East and Libya.
- The yellow areas on the map are Italy, China, India, Ethiopia and Uganda. Each of those areas established its own unique cultural identity.

When the Jews were expelled from Jerusalem and settled in different locations, they evolved different ethnic and cultural identities.



EXPULSION OF THE JEWS FROM WESTERN EUROPE



When the Black Death moved across this area between 1348-1351 Jews were blamed, massacred, and/or expelled from almost every major city during the Middle Ages.

Due to the rise of Hitler and the ensuing anti-Semitism, Jews were again blamed for the state of things, and massacred. Many fled Germany during this time. Almost 200,000 Jews fled to North and South America.



Jewish Tropes

- **Misers:** Began with Marlow's *The Jew of Malta* but Shakespeare's Shylock in *Merchant of Venice* is the one everyone remembers. This started because of trade restrictions in the medieval period where Jews were not allowed to join trade guilds or own land, so that they only professions open to them were money-lending. Their Holy Laws don't contain rules about not charging interest, so they did, which was seen as exploitive by non-Jews. Usually portrayed as a man, sitting on a pile of money but hates spending it. Even though Ebenezer Scrooge is not Jewish, he is the embodiment of this trope. Cares about money more than people. These characters are usually bankers or loan sharks. Hesh on *The Sopranos*. Bobby on *Sons of Anarchy*. Maurice Levy on *The Wire*, as well as the Goblin bankers from *Harry Potter*, Grabnak, a Goblin gangster in *Fantastic Beasts*, and Watto from *Star Wars: Phantom Menace*.
- **Cheapskates:** Never wants to pay retail, knows a guy, Jerry's parents and George Costanza in *Seinfeld*, Ross Geller from *Friends*. Larry David from *Curb Your Enthusiasm*, Neil Schweiber from *Freaks and Geeks*. Joel from *Northern Exposure*.
- **Holocaust Victim/Survivor:** Much like the Black Enslavement trope, there are 750+ plays about The Holocaust and many of them have been adapted into movies.
- **Alter Kocker** (translated as Old Farts) a senior citizen with a Yiddish accent. Jackie Mason films. Nana from *Madagascar*, Barbershop guy in *Coming to America*. Tommy in *Third Rock from the Sun*. Cory on *Boy Meets World*. *Law and Order SVU* episode with Judd Hirsch and Wallace Shawn.
- **Nagging Jewish Mother:** Jewish mother was to blame for the persistent woes of the Jewish American male — his anxiety, his neuroticism, his own assimilation failures. Her image was designed to absorb the stigmas of the old world. Jerry's mother Helen and George's Mom on *Seinfeld*, Rhoda's mother Ida Morgenstern on *Mary Tyler Moore* and the spin off *Rhoda*. Paul Reiser's mom Sylvia on *Mad About You*. Bobbi on *Will on Grace*, Kyle's mother on *South Park*, Beverly on *The Goldbergs*, Judith Light on *Transparent*.

More Jewish Tropes

- **Jewish American Princess (JAP):** Second gen of Nagging Mother. Entitled and withholding, Emotionally strategic and materially demanding, she leads a life of domesticated excess with all the stuff that daddy's money can buy. Spoiled, loves shopping, has a nose job, marries a doctor. Best example is Star Wars parody Spaceballs Princess Vespa is Drewish, had a nose job, loves shopping. Runs out on her wedding to a prince. Rachel from *Friends*. Juicy Couture. Shops at Bloomingdale's. Lisa in *Dirty Dancing* but not Baby. Mona Lisa from *Parks and Rec*.
- **Gratuitous Yiddish:** where words or phrases are dropped into speech. Mostly in shows set in New York or LA. All Mel Brooks films. *Seinfeld*, *Friends*. *Sunshine Boys*. *The Producers*. Mr. Mushnik in *Little Shop*. *City of Angels* Buddy.
- **Jews love to argue/complain:** Began with the Talmud where the teachings are explained by back and forth arguments. Arguments usually include gratuitous Yiddish. All Woody Allen films. All Mel Brooks films. *The Wolf of Wall Street*: Donnie Azoff. David and his father in *Independence Day*. Miracle Max and his wife on *Princess Bride*.
- **Sinister Schnoz:** Characters with big noses are traditionally bad guys. The Goblin bankers from *Harry Potter*, due to their skills with money and finances, control the wizarding economy to a large extent and run Gringotts Wizarding Bank. They are a race of gnarled, hook-nosed misers obsessed with gold, who believe they own everything they've ever produced and wizards who purchase things only 'rent' from them. They appear to run the entire wizarding economy, and trust no one but their own kind. It's suggested that secret cabals of goblins work to undermine the wizard government. The fact that these creatures appear in a book series which is ostensibly an allegory for the Holocaust is as distressing as it is bizarre. Watto from *Phantom Menace* who also has an accent, is a cheapskate and a miser, as well as having a big nose, as does Grabnak, the Goblin gangster in *Fantastic Beasts*.
- **Magical Jew:** serving only to guide the non-Jewish character as a mentor. David's father in *Independence Day*. Pops on *The Goldbergs*. Yogurt from *Spaceballs*.



A Christmas Carol



The Sopranos



Sons of Anarchy



The Wire

Misers with and without Sinister Schnozzes



Phantom Menace

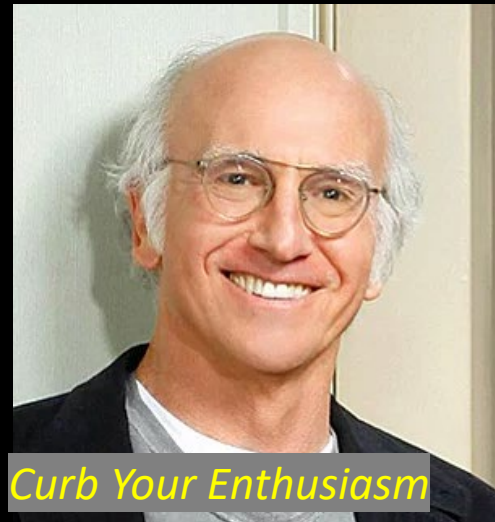


Harry Potter

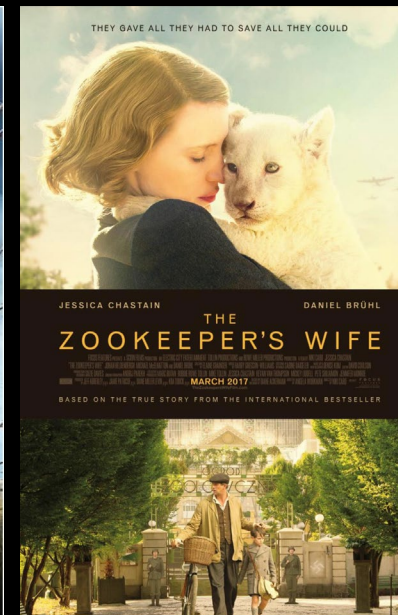
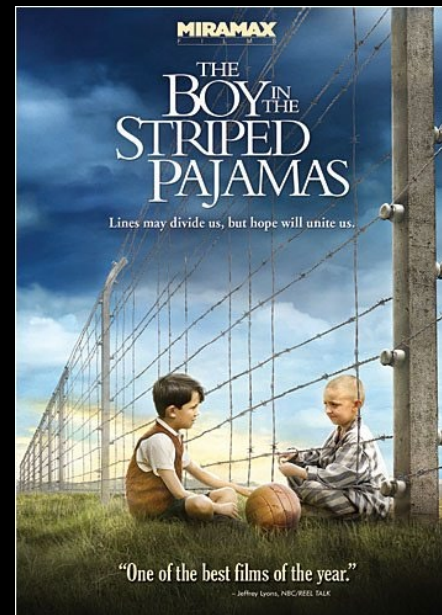
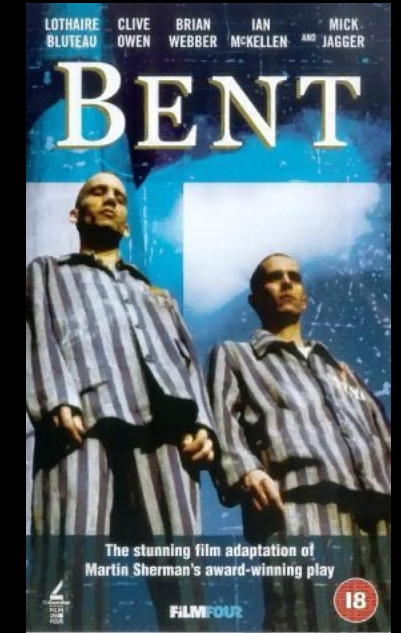
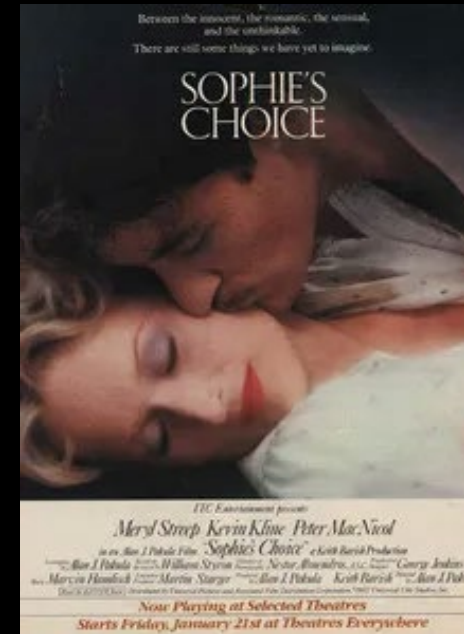
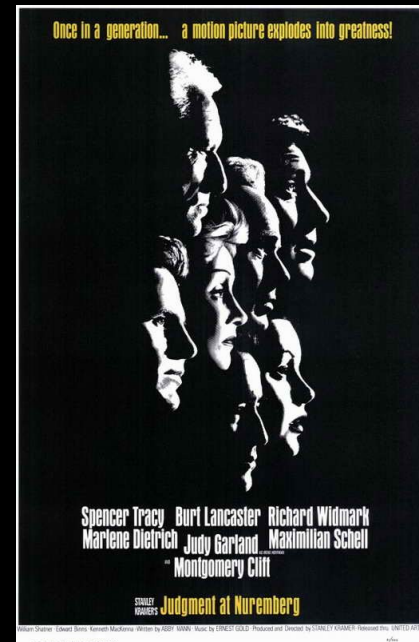
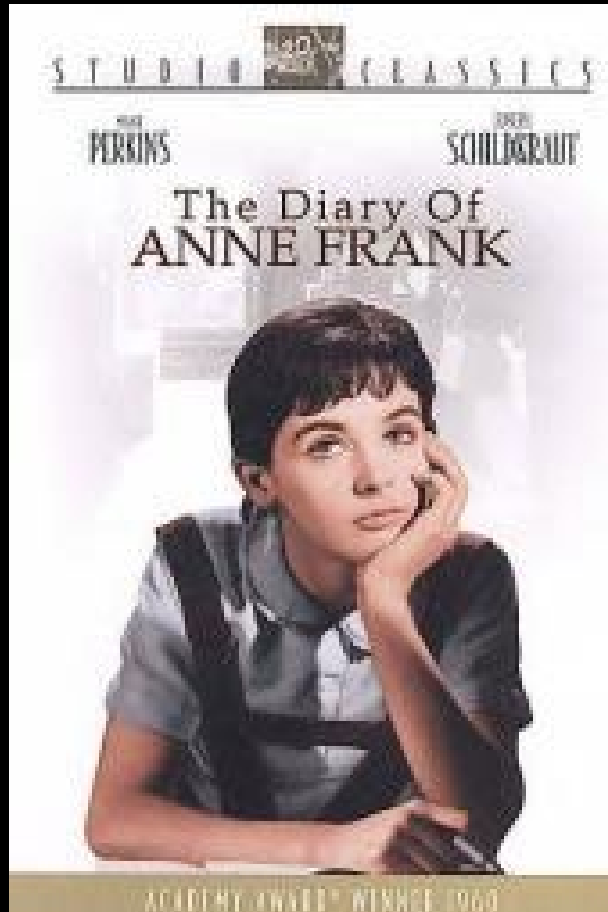


Fantastic Beasts

Cheapskates



Holocaust





George's parents on *Seinfeld*



Jerry's parents *Seinfeld*



Madagascar

Alter Kocker (Old Farts)



Little Shop of Horrors



Coming to America



Independence Day

Nagging Jewish Mothers





Princess Vespa's
Mercedes
SPOIL'D ROTT'N I
Metal Stamped
License Plate



JAP: Princess Vespa



IT'S MY INDUSTRIAL-STRENGTH HAIR-DRYER
AND I CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT IT!





Dirty Dancing



Rachel on Friends



Parks and Rec



I have done nothing wrong, ever, in my life.



I know this, and I love you.



Money, please!!

Magical Jew: Yogurt in *Spaceballs*



Merchandising, merchandising, where the real money from the movie is made. Spaceballs-the T-shirt, Spaceballs-the Coloring Book, Spaceballs-the Lunch box, Spaceballs-the Breakfast Cereal, Spaceballs-the Flame Thrower.



What now?

Without bringing attention to the mistreatment of Jewish characters, it makes it difficult for writers to change how they write these characters. By learning about stereotypes, we grow to appreciate quality storytelling. We always have to ask ourselves certain questions: Are these stereotypes damaging? How should show-runners and writers improve their storytelling when it comes to Jewish characters? Can we like certain pieces of media while simultaneously recognizing their mistreatment of Jewish characters?

Shylock: A Case Study

Merchant of Venice has been historically criticized for its anti-Semitic themes. There were no Jews in England in 1600 when the play was written, they had all been expelled in 1290. At this time Jews were believed to be evil, deceptive, and greedy, mostly because they charged interest on loans, which Christians believed was a sinful practice. Jews were blamed for killing Jesus, causing The Plague that killed half of Europe's population in the Middle Ages, and it was also widely believed that they drank Christian children's blood. In Venice Jews had to wear a red hat at all times and live in a walled off ghetto "guarded" by Christians for their own safety, and were forced to pay protection money to their guards.

Richard Burbage was the first actor to play Shylock in 1596. Traditionally Shylock was played as a villain, with a large hooked false nose and traditional yellow yarmulke and long, red sidelocks called peyos. There is no record if Burbage was costumed this way, but he probably was. For the next 200 years Shylock was played as either a clown or a villain. It wasn't until the 19th Century that actors began to play him more sympathetically. Shylock continued to be played by Gentile actors for the next 300 years.



The first Jewish Shylock: Jacob Adler, 1903

Yiddish theatre star, Jacob Adler, performed Shylock in Yiddish with a cast of English speaking actors. This was the first time that a Yiddish theatre actor from the Bowery had broken through the language barrier to appear on a mainstream stage on Broadway.

“Adler’s portrayal of Shylock posed an opportunity to right the wrongs that for centuries the character had wreaked on cultural ideas about Jewishness... revising and broadening the terms of national identity and inclusion. Adler was praised for his representation of a typical, modern Jew.”

This production was so successful that it toured up and down the East Coast and then returned to Broadway in 1905.



<https://www.bl.uk/shakespeare/articles/a-jewish-reading-of-the-merchant-of-venice#>

<https://muse.jhu.edu/article/614401#:~:text=Adler%20made%20his%20first%20appearance,Shakespeare's%20The%20Merchant%20of%20Venice.&text=The%20run%20was%20so%20successful,a%20different%20English%20speaking%20cast.>

The first Jewish *Merchant of Venice*

Stockbridge Playhouse, Mass., 1966



Director George Tabori was inspired by the play-within-a-play conceit behind *Marat/Sade*. All the actors played the roles of Jewish prisoners in a German concentration camp who had been asked to put on a performance of *The Merchant of Venice* as an entertainment for the German officers in charge. Alvin Epstein played the character of “The prisoner playing Shylock”. To prepare for the “play” all costumes were taken from a bag containing the clothes and possessions of victims of the gas chambers.

The props were imaginary. Act IV—the courtroom scene in which Shylock, after thinking he is going to win his case against Antonio, ends up having to forfeit half his wealth to the court and the other half to Antonio, loses his daughter in marriage to a Christian, and he himself being forced to convert to Christianity—ended with the actor playing Shylock taking a real knife and stabbing a guard, after which he is shot to death and dragged off the stage. Curtain. No Act V.

More Jewish Shylocks

David Warfield, 1924



Aharon Meskin, 1936



Meier Tzelniker, 1946



David Suchet, 1981



<https://forward.com/culture/365520/why-have-so-many-jews-wanted-to-play-shylock/>



Anthony Sher, 1978



Dustin Hoffman, 1989



Ron Liebman, 1999



Henry Goodman, 1999

Female Shylock, 2019

Calgary Shakespeare, Canada

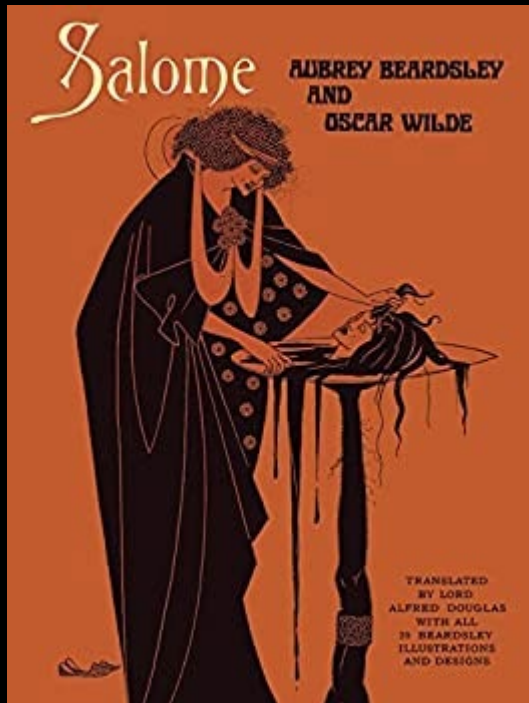
Directed by Carey Perloff, Jewish daughter of a Viennese refugee mother who fled to America in 1938, and a Jewish father of Russian/Polish descent. Starring Seana McKenna as Shylock with a score by 17th C female Venetian composer, Barbara Strozzi. From the dramaturgical notes written by Carey Perloff:

“Shylock was a Jewish woman asserting her legal claim against opponents who were not only all Christian but all male. This compound “otherness” exposed the deep bias in the play with immediate clarity, and we found that with each scene, Seana’s gender allowed us to hear specifics in the language in startling new ways. We altered some personal pronouns and a few other references, and once, out of the mouth of Gratiano, we changed the word “dog” to “bitch,” which, as Seana commented, “became deeply personal and had a startling effect. Accurate and immediately resonant to today’s world, ‘bitch’ is the default slur for any woman who does not comply with expectations.” Otherwise we played the text exactly as written. A female Jew is what one might call a “double Other.” The male is always the default and female always the “Other.” Throughout history, Jews have also been routinely characterized as “Other,” suspected of having no loyalty to a given country because our true loyalties lie with our tribe, and considered separate and worthy of suspicion even when we try hardest to “belong.” So when the Jewish Shylock is also a woman, the “Otherness” of the character is indisputable.”



Salome, 1896 Comedie-Parisienne

Salome, was written by Oscar Wilde in French in 1893 and first produced in 1896 at the Comedie-Parisienne in France while he was still serving a two year prison sentence at Reading Gaol for being a homosexual. It is the story of the beheading of John the Baptist by Herod, the King of Judea. It starred Sarah Bernhardt as Salome. The play was controversial and was banned in England due to its depicting biblical characters on stage. However, it was produced privately in 1906 at Covent Garden, starring Maud Allan as Salome. The first public performance of *Salome* in England wasn't until 1931 at the Savoy Theatre in London, with Joan Maud in the title role. All three of these actors were Gentiles.



Sarah Bernhardt as Salome, 1896



Maud Allan as Salome, 1906



Joan Maud as Salome, 1931

Salome, 2015

Shakespeare Theatre Company, D.C.

South African director Yael Farber adapted Wilde's script into a more political, feminist story, using Hebrew and Arabic texts and dialogue, Sumerian songs to the goddess Ishtar, and the Song of Songs from the Torah. The purpose was to equate the ancient Roman-Hebrew conflict with the present day Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Featuring a diverse cast of Arab Americans and Jewish Americans. It was produced as part of the Women's Voices Theatre Festival. Starring Yuval Boim as Herod, Nadine Malouf as Salome, Ramzi Choukair as Jokanaan, and Olsen Fouere as Nameless Woman.



Yuval Boim as Herod, Nadine Malouf as Salome, Ramzi Choukair as Jokanaan, Olsen Fouere as Nameless Woman.

The Goldbergs, 1949-56

The Goldbergs started on radio in 1929 as an ethnic working-class family sitcom. The lead character and matriarch, Molly Goldberg, was voiced by Gertrude Berg, who also created, wrote, and starred in the show. The show was a gently humorous portrait of an upwardly striving Jewish family living in a cramped tenement apartment on New York's Lower East Side. Her character Molly was adored. She was a warm competent matriarch of a functional loving family. She spoke with an accent and used Yiddish words in her conversation with neighbors about Gefilte fish. It was adapted for television in 1949 and became the first successful sitcom on TV. Gertrude won the first Best Actress Emmy in 1950.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Goldbergs_\(broadcast_series\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Goldbergs_(broadcast_series))
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/1225662?seq=1>



Fiddler on the Roof

Broadway, 1965

The musical is based on stories written in Yiddish by Sholem Aleichem at the turn of the 20th Century. Although the musical was criticized for not being as bleak as the stories, and having a happier ending, *Fiddler* was "one of the first popular post-Holocaust depictions of the vanished world of Eastern European Jewry". *Fiddler on the Roof* held the record for the longest running Broadway musical for ten years. It won nine Tony Awards, it spawned five Broadway revivals, and a film adaptation, which was nominated for eight Oscars and won three.

The musical is set in Anatevka, Russia in 1904. All of the characters are Jewish, except for Fyedka and the Constable who are Russian Orthodox Christians. Both the producer Harold Prince and the director/ choreographer Jerome Robbins were Jewish, as was the scenic designer Boris Aronson. The cast was mostly made up of American-born children of Jewish immigrants/refugees. Zero Mostel played Tevye, the father, Maria Karnilova played Golde, Tevye's wife, and Bea Arthur played Yente, the Matchmaker, Milton Grossman played Lazar Wolf, the Butcher.



Zero Mostel as Tevye

Jesus Christ Superstar, 1970 Original Broadway Cast

Written as a rock opera by English artists Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice when they were in their 20's, Judas is at the center of the story, rather than Jesus. The show focuses on the sociopolitical factors at work, portraying Jesus as a radical revolutionary fighting against the establishment. Opening night was protested by both Jewish and Christian groups who saw it as sacrilegious, however the concept album was broadcast on Vatican radio. It was a diverse American cast including half Japanese actor Yvonne Elliman as Mary Magdalen, Black actor Ben Vereen as Judas, and Jewish actor Barry Dennen as Pontius Pilate. However, Jesus was played by a white Gentile actor, Jeff Fenholt.

It was nominated for five Tony awards and ran for two years. The 1973 film adaptation was done on location in Israel and other Middle Eastern locations. It was produced in England, Ireland, Australia, Sweden, Yugoslavia, France, Venezuela, Japan, Mexico, Czechoslovakia, Italy, Norway, Brazil, and Russia. It had two US revivals, five US tours, two West End revival, and one UK tour. In 2018 a concert version was broadcast live on Easter Sunday on NBC, and was rebroadcast on Easter in 2020, during the pandemic.



Jeff Fenholt as Jesus



Ben Vereen as Judas



Yvonne Elliman as Mary Magdalene



Barry Dennen as Pontius Pilate

Rhoda, 1974

The character of Rhoda Morgenstern was created by James L. Brooks, who is Jewish, and developed for the *Mary Tyler Moore* show as Mary's upstairs neighbor. MTM ran from 1970-1977. Rhoda was played by Valerie Harper (who was not Jewish) and appeared on the show as Mary's best friend and frequent partner in crime. The MTM show was the first show to feature a female lead who was a career woman, rather than a mom. As characters, Mary and Rhoda explored issues of being a woman in the workplace, dating, and other problems of modern life. Rhoda was a spunky, flamboyant, and fashionable young woman who was unconventional by the standards of her Jewish family because she had moved to Minneapolis to get a job and live on her own, rather than stay in NY, get married, and raise a family.

In 1974 Rhoda got her own spin-off show called *Rhoda* that ran to 1978. On *Rhoda* she and her sister Brenda lived in the same apartment building (just like she did with MTM) and their mother was a frequent visitor. *Rhoda* was nominated for 17 Emmy awards and 7 Golden Globes. Valerie Harper won 4 Emmy awards for playing Rhoda. In 2000, there was a made for TV movie *Mary and Rhoda*, where MTM and Rhoda were reunited.



Brighton Beach Memoirs, 1983

Brighton Beach Memoirs was the first of Neil Simon's trilogy of autobiographical plays which included *Biloxi Blues* and *Broadway Bound*. It was a coming of age story set in Brooklyn in 1937 during the Great Depression and on the verge of WWII. It starred Matthew Broderick as Eugene, for which he won the Tony award for best actor. It was the last non-musical to run over 1,000 performances on Broadway. It was nominated for three Tony awards including Best Direction, but was snubbed for a Best Play nomination which many critics were very vocal about, *Variety* saying "Neil Simon deserved better". It was immediately adapted into a movie in 1986 starring Jonathon Silverman as Eugene. Both productions were cast with mostly Jewish actors. Both Broderick and Silverman were Jewish.



Matthew Broderick



Jonathon Silverman

Seinfeld, 1989-98



Based on Jerry Seinfeld's comedy acts, Jerry plays a fictionalized version of himself as a stand- up comic with his group of friends who live in New York, all of whom are Jewish. Starring Jerry Seinfeld, Jason Alexander, Julia Louis-Dreyfus, and Michael Richards. Nominated for 67 Emmy awards, won 10. Jerry and George's parents are written with many of the standard Jewish tropes: Misers, Cheapskates, Alter Kockers, Jews who Argue/Complain, Gratuitous Yiddish, and Nagging Jewish Mother are all there. They are there to contrast with the main characters who are modern and don't, for the most part, fall into those tropes. George is a cheapskate, but Jerry has lots of money and spends it for the benefit of his friends. When Jerry's parents don't tip, Jerry whips out his wallet to compensate. Elaine likes shopping and getting things on sale, but isn't spoiled, doesn't beg her dad for money, has a job, supports herself, and isn't looking for a doctor husband so she can use his credit cards. The characters celebrate a holiday called Festivus "for the rest of us" who don't celebrate Christmas, invented by George's dad to protest the commercialization of Christmas.

In terms of salary and contract negotiations, Jerry as the show's creator and star by the last season made \$1 million an episode and was the first ever television actor to make that much. By season 5, the other three cast members were only earning \$150,000 an episode. Jason Alexander said, "Julia, Michael and I, during our big renegotiation for the final year, asked for something that I will go to my grave saying we should have had, and that is back-end participation in the profits for the show. It was categorically denied to us, which forced us to then ask for ungodly salaries. We make very little, standard Screen Actors Guild residuals for the reruns." He told Jerry, "The day will come when you regret this decision, only because it's going to put us in a position eventually of seemingly tainting the wonderful impression of what this was for the four of us. You have created a rift between you and the three of us, and while we are in no way, shape or form looking for parity with you, you have created a chasm that is also inappropriate."

<https://www.celebritynetworth.com/articles/entertainment-articles/how-much-did-the-seinfeld-cast-members-make-off-the-show/>

Friends, 1994-2004



Friends is a show about a group of 6 friends who live in two rent-controlled apartments above a coffee shop near Central Park in New York City. It starred Lisa Kudrow, Jennifer Aniston, Courtney Cox, Matt LeBlanc, David Schwimmer, and Matthew Perry. The characters Monica, Ross, and Rachel are Jewish. David Swimmer and Lisa Kudrow are Jewish IRL, Courtney is married to a Jew IRL, Matthew Perry is half Jewish IRL, but his character Chandler is not. Rachel is also a JAP who has a nose job, is obsessed with shopping, and was engaged to a doctor.

Friends received criticism from the Jewish community for not making any effort to acknowledge the Jewish identities of half the show's main characters. In all of the flashbacks of their childhoods there was never any reference to a Bat or Bar Mitzvah, celebrating Rosh Hashanah, or of having a Passover Seder. However, in the 7th season, Ross decided to teach his son about Hanukah, while wearing an armadillo costume who he said was Santa's Tex Mex Helper, the Holiday Armadillo. The episode ended on a close up of a menorah and the song "Tradition" from *Fiddler on the Roof* playing softly in the background. "It was an insult to Jews everywhere."

Friends is the first network show where the cast members banded together during their contract negotiations so that they would all get paid the same salary per episode. During the last season they were each paid \$1 million per episode. Also, in 2000 they demanded back end points which would allow them to earn royalties off of syndication. In any given year, each actor earns between \$10-20 million in royalties.

<https://jewlicious.com/2016/12/friends-insulted-CHANUKAH-whole-jewish-religion/>

<https://www.celebritynetworth.com/articles/entertainment-articles/how-much-did-the-seinfeld-cast-members-make-off-the-show/>



Shlemiel the First,
A.R.T. Mass., 1997

Shlemiel the First is a celebration of traditional Jewish music and culture. It is a musical adaptation of the Pulitzer Prize winning stories of Isaac Bashevis Singer about the goings on in the fictional town of Chelm. Conceived and written by Robert Brustein with Klezmer inspired music by Hankus Netsky and lyrics by Arnold Weinstein. It was directed and choreographed by David Gordon. The story centers around the town fool, Shlemiel, who is sent out to spread the story of the town's elders' wisdom, only to be turned around on the road and come straight back home to Chelm but is convinced that he is in a town identical to the one he left. Hilarity ensues as he falls in love with a woman who looks just like his wife.

Jewtopia, 2003 West Coast Playhouse, CA



From left to right: Cheryl David, Sam Wolfson, Gerry Vichi, Bryan Fogel

By Brian Fogel and Sam Wolfson. Story focuses on two friends, Chris and Adam, who are about to turn 30 and are having trouble dating women. Chris, the Gentile, wishes to date Jewish women and Adam, the Jew, wishes to date Gentile women. They join forces to teach each other how to woo the women of their own culture, some of whom they find on Jewdate.com. It was the longest running comedy in LA. Starring Fogel and Wolfson, it ran for a year in LA before it transferred to Off-Broadway where it ran for 3 years, making it the longest running show in off-Broadway history. It was adapted into a coffee table book called *Jewtopia: The Chosen Book for the Chosen People*. It was adapted into a film in 2012 starring Jennifer Love Hewitt and Ivan Sergei.

https://www.theatermania.com/new-york-city-theater/reviews/jewtopia_5256.html

The O.C., 2003-2007



Created by Josh Schwartz, who is Jewish, when he was 26. Schwartz was the youngest show runner on network television. The show centers around the family of Sandy and Kirsten Cohen, their son Seth, and his foster brother Ryan. The dad, Sandy is Jewish and his wife Kirsten is Presbyterian. They've raised their kids with both Jewish and Christian traditions. Seth is based on Schwartz's own childhood. Seth frequently makes jokes about his Jewishness including his Jew-fro, his lanky body, and his inability to do handiwork. The biggest reference was Seth's idea to merge both winter holidays into Chrismukkah, where they have a Christmas tree but decorated with Hanukah ornaments. Each season there was a Chrismukkah episode.

The show was nominated for a Writer's Guild of America award for its pilot episode. . The show became well known for its music which was chosen by Schwartz and designed to reflect who the characters were, making the general public aware of Indie bands like Death Cab for Cutie, Bloc Party, and Rooney. The show also made nerd culture popular in the mainstream and paved the way for shows like *Big Bang Theory* as well as all of the DC comic book-based shows that were developed on the CW network. <https://thejewishnews.com/2018/06/05/the-oc-judaism-and-seth-cohen/>

The Goldbergs, 2013-2020

Series created by Adam Goldberg, based on his childhood growing up in the 1980's in Pennsylvania. He says "This family isn't overtly Jewish, they are implicitly Jewish". It stars Wendi McLendon-Covey, Jeff Garlin, Sean Giambrone, Troy Gentile, Hayley Orrantia, and George Segal. Much like Neil Simon's *Brighton Beach Memoirs*, the story is told through the pre-adolescent Adam's POV with narration by him as an adult, voiced by Patton Oswalt. The series is nostalgia for a time when there were no parenting blogs or peanut allergies and, in that respect, it resonates with the Gen X kids who are now parents themselves.

It is 1985 and Adam is a 12 year old boy who is obsessed with becoming a film maker and records everything on his VHS camcorder, to his family's annoyance. The show focuses on his coming of age story and his love of pop culture. His grandfather "Pops" frequently gives him advice and they often go on side quests together. Unusually, the show is told in no particular order, since the whole thing is a flashback and jumps around in time.

At the end of every show, Adam's actual video footage is shown of the events that inspired that episode.

<https://variety.com/2013/tv/news/the-goldbergs-tv-review-1200613772/>

<https://www.wbur.org/hereandnow/2013/09/23/goldbergs-jews-tv>



Indecent, 2017

Written by Paula Vogel and Rachel Taichman. *Indecent* is a play about the birth of another play-- a Yiddish Play *God of Vengeance* which was written in Warsaw in 1906 by Sholem Asch about a lesbian love affair in a Jewish brothel that ends with a pimp dashing the Torah to the ground. "It's all in there," marvels Sholem's wife, Madje. "The roots of all evil: the money, the subjugation of women, the false piety... the terrifying violence of that father... the two girls in that rain scene." The play was popular enough to be translated into English and premiered on Broadway in 1923 but after a six week run, the entire cast was arrested and convicted for obscenity due to the lesbian content. "*Indecent* is an impressionistic glance at the controversy surrounding something as small as a kiss, as big as representation, and as fuzzy as the rules that include prostitution but not homosexuality as topics for consumption in polite society."

Nominated for 3 Tony awards including Best Play, won 2 for Best Direction Rebecca Taichman and Best Lighting Design Christopher Akerlind.

<https://www.nhregister.com/entertainment/article/Review-Indecent-triumphs-on-all-fronts-at-11348360.php>
<https://www.newcitystage.com/2018/10/02/dust-to-dust-a-review-of-indecent-at-victory-gardens-theater/>



Adina Verson and Katrina Lenk

Hunters, 2020

This series created by David Weil whose grandmother was an Auschwitz survivor. It follows a diverse group of Nazi hunters living in 1977 New York City, who find and kill Nazi war criminals who escaped justice and were living under cover in the US. Although the series was inspired by several IRL Nazi hunters, it isn't meant to be a specific representation of any of them. However, a major component of the show is Operation Paperclip, the IRL US government program that relocated German scientists to the US, many of whom were actual Nazis.

The show stars Logan Lerman, Al Pacino, Jerrika Hinton, Saul Rubinek, Carol Kane, Josh Radnor, Louis Ozawa, Kate Mulvany, and Tiffany Boone. Lerman, Pacino, Rubinek, Kane, and Radnor are all Jewish. Although Mulvany is not Jewish, her father was a Vietnam vet and due to his Agent Orange exposure, Kate spent much of her childhood hospitalized with renal cancer.

Weil talked about his experience visiting Auschwitz: "It was an experience that forever altered the course of my life. It was the moment consecrated in time and memory that I sought to make good on doing my part – however big or however small – to ensure the promise of "Never Again." I believed then – as I do now – that I had a responsibility as the grandson of Holocaust survivors to keep their stories alive." Aspects of the show were criticized on Twitter by the Auschwitz Memorial as being made up, "disrespectful and dangerous."

<https://deadline.com/2020/02/auschwitz-memorial-hunters-amazon-prime-nazi-hunters-1202866536/>



Jewish Theatre Companies

Texas

Austin

- Shalom Austin <https://shalomaustin.org/theateratthej>
Houston

- Evelyn Rubenstein JCC
<https://www.erjcchouston.org/arts/theatre/>

Dallas

- Aaron Family JCC <https://jccdallas.org/arts/performing-arts/productions/>

San Antonio

- The Sheldon Vexler Theatre <http://www.vexler.org/>

Nationally

California

- Jewish Women Theatre <https://www.jewishwomenstheatre.org/>
- West Coast Jewish Theatre <http://www.wcjt.org/>
- Theatre Dybbuk <https://www.theatredybbuk.org/>

New York

- Jewish Community Center CenterStage Theatre
<https://jccrochester.org/centerstage>
- Jewish Repertory Theatre of Western New York
<https://jewishrepertorytheatre.com/>

Jewish Oscar winners

Best Actor

- Joaquin Phoenix
- Daniel Day-Lewis
- Sean Penn
- Adrian Brody
- Dustin Hoffman
- Paul Newman
- Michael Douglas
- Richard Dreyfuss
- Peter Sellers

Best Supporting Actor

- Alan Arkin
- Martin Landau
- Kevin Kline
- Melvyn Douglas
- George Burns
- John Houseman
- Joel Grey
- Jack Albertson
- Walter Matthau
- Martin Balsam
- Peter Ustinov

Best Actress

- Natalie Portman
- Gwyneth Paltrow
- Helen Hunt
- Marlee Matlin
- Barbra Streisand
- Elizabeth Taylor

Best Supporting Actress

- Patricia Arquette
- Rachel Weisz
- Jennifer Connelly
- Lee Grant
- Tatum O'Neal
- Goldie Hawn
- Shelly Winters

Jewish Oscar winners

Direction

- Michel Hazanavicius
- Joel and Ethan Coen
- Roman Polanski
- Sam Mendes
- Steven Spielberg
- Oliver Stone
- Barry Levinson
- Sydney Pollack
- James L. Brooks
- Woody Allen
- Milos Forman
- William Friedkin
- John Schlesinger
- Mike Nichols

Costume Design

- Albert Wolsky
- Edith Head
- Irene Sharaff
- Helen Rose

Makeup and Hair

- Barney Burman
- Howard Berger
- Stan Winston

Sound

- Niv Adiri
- Tom Fleischman
- Lora Hirschberg
- Mark Ulano
- Mark Berger
- David E. Stone

Cinematography

- Emmanuel Lubezki
- Haskell Wexler
- Walter Lassally
- Eugen Schufftan
- Joseph Ruttenberg
- Milton Krasner
- Boris Kaufman
- Jon Alton
- Paul C. Vogel
- Karl Freund

Production Design

- Ken Adams
- Allan Starski
- Richard Sylbert
- Anton Furst
- Patrizia von Brandenstein
- Paul Sylbert
- Harry Horner
- Boris Leven
- Alexandre Trauner
- Jo Mielziner
- Hal Pereira
- Paul Huldshinsky
- Nathan Juran
- Vincent Korda

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Jewish_Academy_Award_winners_and_nominees