

International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism

Life Cycle Ceremonies – PS 410 February 20 – February 24, 2012

Faculty: Rabbi Miriam S. Jerris, Ph.D.

SYLLABUS

Course Description

A course designed to explore the history and development of Jewish celebrations of life cycle events, from birth to death, as well as the practical skills of creating original Secular Humanistic Jewish ceremonies. Reading proficiency in Hebrew required.

Pre-Course Assignments

1. Prior to January 15, 2012, choose, in consultation with the faculty for this course, one of the following life cycles (birth, marriage, intermarriage/conversion death) and be prepared to teach the class the history of the life cycle from biblical to modern times for about an hour. You may want to look at some of the Supplementary Texts that relate to your chosen life cycle. Pay attention to bibliography and footnotes. You will need them for your final paper. (Life cycle choices will be assigned in the order that they are requested. Please have second or third choices ready).
2. Prepare and submit a Secular Humanistic Jewish ceremony for your chosen life cycle. Due February 20, 2012. You will end your presentation with the “performance” of your ceremony, using members of the class as your participants. In your preparation, please create and note the steps you would take for implementation, the questions you would include in a pre-ceremony interview, a list of ritual items needed for the ceremony, the processional/recessional and the ceremonial set-up. (You may use material from various sources. However, every non-original part of the ceremony must be attributed to the writer).

Requirements to Complete the Course

1. Completion of pre-course assignments.
2. Class attendance at all sessions.
3. Students shall complete a one to two page self-evaluation to be completed and sent to course faculty no later than April 1, 2012. The self-evaluation will include understanding of the readings, your assessment of your class presentation and your sense of preparedness to be a capable life cycle ceremonialist.

4. Students shall complete an evaluation form for the course to be returned to Jeremy Owens at info@iishj.org, no later than April 1, 2012.
5. Rabbinic and Masters students shall complete a final paper (15-20 pages) based on the life cycle presented in class and shall include a history of the life cycle, textual references (*Bible, Mishna/Talmud, Mishne Torah* and *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch*), Ceremony Elements of a traditional/rabbinic ceremony, changes in ceremony in reform Judaism, a discussion of Ceremony Elements of the traditional ceremony that can be used in Secular Humanistic Judaism and your original ceremony. Please include the ceremonial preparation materials you used in an appendix. The paper will be double spaced, 12 point type with one inch margins. Papers/projects are due no later than December 21, 2012.
6. Create ceremonies (6 in total) for Birth Celebration, Coming of Age Ceremony (Bar/Bat Mitzvah or Confirmation), two ceremonies for Marriage one between two Jews and one intermarriage between a Jew and another religious/cultural background with one or two officiants (co-officiated), a Memorial or Funeral Service (if a Memorial Service is chosen, include a separate burial of either body or cremation remains), and one other ceremony. The ceremony you write prior to class is included. These ceremonies can also be used to satisfy field work requirements and must be included again when the field work is documented and submitted. (You may use material from various sources. However, every non-original part of the ceremony must be attributed to the writer). All ceremonies are due by December 21, 2012. If you do not yet have a field work arrangement, please discuss this assignment and different deadline with Rabbi Jerris.

Required Texts

Celebrating Life's Passages, Humanistic Judaism, Vol. XXVII, Number I-II, Winter/Spring 1999 (Available from the Society for Humanistic Judaism, www.shj.org)

Petsonk, Judy and Remsen, Jim. *The Intermarriage Handbook*. Arbor House. 1988.
http://www.amazon.com/Intermarriage-Handbook-Guide-Jews-Christians/dp/B005Q5W3Y0/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1322432559&sr=1-1)

Schauss, Hayyim. *The Lifetime of a Jew*. Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1950, 1976. (http://www.amazon.com/Lifetime-Jew-Hayyim-Schauss/dp/B000HBRGY0/ref=sr_1_4?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1322432393&sr=1-4)

Required Readings

(You will need the books in this section either for other courses or you should have them on your bookshelf [or on your electronic reader]. Required online readings are also listed here)

Chill, A. *The Minhagim*. Sepher-Hermon Press. 1989, pp. 275-338.
<http://www.amazon.com/Minhagim-Customs-Ceremonies-Judaism-Rationale/dp/0872030776>)

Davis, A. *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch*. Metsudah Publications, 1996. (selections)

Guide to Humanistic Judaism, Society for Humanistic Judaism. Read selections on Adult Celebrations, Celebrations, Birth Celebrations, Brit Mila, Bar/Bat Mitzva and Confirmation,

Marriage, Marriage Celebrations, Intermarriage, Sexual Orientation, Divorce, Death, Funeral, Memorial Services, Mourning Practices, Adoption (Conversion). All new members of the Society for Humanistic Judaism receive this “guide.” (Available from the Society for Humanistic Judaism).

Lewis, E. “Preparing for the Chupah, Premarital Counseling,” in Friedman, Dayle A. *Jewish Pastoral Care: A Practical Handbook from Traditional and Contemporary Sources*. Jewish Lights Publishing, 2005, 2010.

Lowenfeld, J. (2011, August 2). Little-known non-cutting ritual appeals to some who oppose circumcision. *JewishJournal.com*, Retrieved December 11, 2011 from http://www.jewishjournal.com/los_angeles/article/little-known_non-cutting_ritual_appeals_to_some_who_oppose_circumcision_201/

Maimonides, M. *Mishneh Torah*, “Ishut,” *Sefer Nashim*.
http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/952880/jewish/Chapter-Six.htm

Maimonides, M. *Mishneh Torah*, “Gittin,” *Hilchot Gerushin*.
http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/957706/jewish/Chapter-One.htm

Mishnah Online <http://www.sacred-texts.com/jud/etm/index.htm>

Scherman, N, tr. *The Complete Art Scroll Siddur*, Mesorah Publications, 1984. (Ashkenaz or Sefard) Page numbers will be Ashkenaz first and then Sefard. (selections)

Seid, Judith. *God-Optional Judaism*. Citadel Press, 2002. pp. 143-192

Wine, Sherwin. *Celebration: A Ceremonial and Philosophic Guide for Humanists and Humanistic Jews*. Prometheus Books, 1988, pp.313-390. (Available Society for Humanistic Judaism, www.shj.org, www.amazon.com)

Wine, Sherwin. *Judaism Beyond God*. Society for Humanistic Judaism, 1985, pp. 179-189, 221-234. (Available used at http://www.amazon.com/gp/offer-listing/0912645083/ref=dp_olp_used?ie=UTF8&condition=used)

Supplementary Texts **(not required)**

Bloch, A. *The Biblical and Historical Background of Jewish Customs and Ceremonies*. Ktav, 1980, pp. 1-59, 252-253, 258-260. (In course pack)

Diamant, Anita. *The New Jewish Wedding*. Summit Books, 1985.

Diamant, Anita. *The New Jewish Baby Book*. Jewish Lights, 1993/94.

Gaster, T. *Holy and the Profane*. William Morrow, 1980.

DAILY SCHEDULE (may vary) –

We will meet one evening in order to break by 2 pm on Friday

Session 1: 9:00-11:00

Break: 11:00-11:10

Session 2: 11:15-12:45

Lunch: 12:45- 1:30

Session 3: 1:30-3:15

Break: 3:15-3:25

Session 4: 3:30-5:00

Day 1, Monday, February 20, 2012 and Day 2, Tuesday, February 21, 2012

ROLE OF THE RABBI AS CEREMONIALIST IN SECULAR HUMANISTIC JUDAISM

CELEBRATING THE JEWISH LIFE CYCLE

Schauss, (pp. 3-8)

Wine, *Judaism Beyond God*, (pp. 179-180).

Guide to Humanistic Judaism – Celebrations

Rowens, M. “The Celebrations of Life.” *Celebrating Life’s Passages, Humanistic Judaism*, pp.2-4.

Oraynu Contract for Life Cycle 2011-2012 (course pack)

BIRTH AND CELEBRATING NEW LIFE

B’rit Mila (Circumcision)

History and Overview

Schauss (pp.11-76 – see below for sections related to Pidyon HaBen)

Chill (pp.291-306)

Wine, *Judaism Beyond God*, pp. 180-182.

Guide to Humanistic Judaism, Birth Celebrations, Brit Mila

Text on B’rit Mila

Genesis 17:9-27, 21:1-8, 29:31-35

Exodus 4:24-26

Mishnah Shabbat 19:5 (<http://www.sacred-texts.com/jud/etm/etm041.htm>)

Laws and Jewish Practice

The Laws of Circumcision, *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch*, Chapter 163, pp.1077-1081

Traditional/Rabbinic Bris [circumcision] Ceremony, *Art Scroll Siddur*, pp. 208-215 or pp.224-231

Pidyon Ha Ben

History and Overview

Schauss (p.18,29,48-50,60,62)

Chill (pp.309-314)

Guide to Humanistic Judaism, Birth Celebrations

Text on Pidyon Ha Ben

Genesis 22; Exodus 13:1-3, 13:15; Numbers 18:15-17; I Samuel 1:11.

Laws and Jewish Practice

The Redemption of the Firstborn, *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch*, Chapter 164, pp.1081-1085.
Pidyon HaBen Ceremony, *Art Scroll Siddur*, pp. 218-221 or pp.234-237

Secular Humanistic Jewish Approach to Birth

Philosophy

Statement of the Leadership Conference of Secular and Humanistic Jews on
Circumcision <http://www.lcshj.org/circum.html>

Celebrating Life's Passages, pp. 5-8.

Ceremony Elements

Issues

Wine, S. "Circumcision." (course pack)

Lowenfeld, J. (URL in required readings)

Family Preparation

Preparing the Rabbi (all in course pack)

Birth Celebration Order of Service Sample

Goldfinger, E. *Naming Certificate Application*

Goldfinger, E. *Candle Values*

Certificates

Jerris, M. *Naming Certificate Cade D'Haem*

Oraynu Naming Certificate

Ceremonies

Celebration, pp.317-329

God-Optional Judaism, pp.143-151,

Celebrating Life's Passages, pp.8-15, 19-21

Ceremonial course pack

Day 2, Tuesday, February 21, 2012 and Day 3 Wednesday, February 22, 2012

COMING OF AGE, BAR/BAT MITZVAH, GROWING UP

History and Overview

Schauss (pp.112-121)

Chill (pp. 315-317)

Guide to Humanistic Judaism, Bar/Bat Mitsva and Confirmation.

Barr, R., "Bar and Bat Mitzvah Origins." (course pack)

Wine, *Judaism Beyond God*, pp. 182-186.

Text on Coming of Age

Genesis 17:23-26

Mishnah, Pirke Avot 5:21, Mishnah Niddah 5:6, Ketubot 50a (course pack)

Laws and Jewish Practice

Art Scroll Siddur, Blessings Before and After Reading of Torah, pp.440-441 or 480-481.

Traditional/Rabbinic Bar Mitzvah Blessing, pp. 444-445 or 484-485, Blessings Before and After Reading of Haftarah, pp. 446-447 or pp.484-487

Secular Humanistic Jewish Approach to Coming of Age

Philosophy

Celebrating Life's Passages, pp.25-29.

Rosenfeld, M (course pack)

Bar and Bat Mitzvah Kibbutz Style (course pack)

The Programs (in course pack unless otherwise noted)

Schweitzer, P. The City Congregation Program

Schweitzer, P. The City Congregation Mentor Guide

Kol Hadash Humanistic Congregation Mitzvah Guide

http://kolhadash.com/uploads/1/bnai_mitzvah_guide_2.pdf

Gottfried, Rosalie, Mitzvah Program

Secular Jewish Circle Mitzvah Program

Ceremony Elements

Issues

Family Preparation

Preparing the Rabbi (all in course pack)

Oraynu Mitzvah Policies and Guidelines

Oraynu Application for Mitzvah

Oraynu Host Agreement

Goldfinger, E., *Mitzvah Candidate Interview*

Goldfinger, E., *Mitzvah Candidate Agreement*

Goldfinger, E., *Mitzvah Project List*

Chalom, A. *Mitzvah Role Models*

Goldfinger, E., *Mitzvah Ceremony Content*

Society for Humanistic Judaism Certificate

Ceremonies

Celebration pp.330-354

God-Optional Judaism, pp 152-164

Celebrating Life's Passages, pp.31-38

Ceremonial course pack

Day 3 Wednesday, February 22, 2012 and Day 4, February 23, 2012

WEDDINGS, MARRIAGE AND PARTNERSHIP

History and Overview

Schauss (pp.125-219)

Chill (pp. 275-290)

Guide to Humanistic Judaism, Marriage, Marriage Celebrations

Wine, *Judaism Beyond God*, pp. 187-190.

Text on Marriage

Genesis 1:26-29; Genesis 2:18-25; Genesis 24:1-8, 50-59, 63-67; Genesis 29:10-30;

Deuteronomy 25:5-10; Mishnah Ta'anit 4:8 (course pack)

Laws and Jewish Practice

Mishne Torah, “Ishut,” Chapter 6:1-7.

Kitzur Shulchan Aruch

Pre-Nuptial Laws, Chapter 157, pp.1049-1052.

The Fast of the Bridegroom and the Bride, Chapter 146, pp.-999-1001

The Nuptial Ceremony, Chapter 147, pp.1001-1003

The Privacy Following the Marriage Ceremony, Chapter 148, pp. 1003-1005.

The Laws of Birkas Hamazon for Wedding and the Mitzvah to Gladden the Bride and Groom, Chapter 149, pp.1005-1009.

Lewis, E. “Preparing for the Chupah, Premarital Counseling,” in Friedman, D., pp. 205-236.

Orthodox Ketubah Text (course pack)

Art Scroll Siddur, The Marriage Service, pp. 202-205 or pp. 218-221, Traditional Seven Blessings, pp. 206-207 or pp. 222-223

The Reform Marriage Service (course pack)

Intermarriage

Guide to Humanistic Judaism, Intermarriage

Wine, *Judaism Beyond God*, pp. 221-229

Celebrating Life’s Passages, pp. 56-66

Petsonk and Remsen, *Intermarriage Handbook*

Jerris, M. *Intermarriage Reading List* (course pack)

Recent Surveys on Intermarriage: 2000 AJC Opinion Survey, 2000-1 NJPS (course pack)

“If I were a Moose” by Fred Small (course pack)

Text on Intermarriage

Genesis 27:46-28:9; Deuteronomy 7:1-6; Ezra 9:1-10:17; Ruth 1-4

Same-Sex Unions/Marriage

History and Overview

Guide to Humanistic Judaism, Sexual Orientation

Text on Homosexuality

Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13

Laws and Jewish Practice

Homosexuality

<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/homo.html>

Amsel, N., *Homosexuality in Orthodox Judaism*,

http://www.lookstein.org/resources/homosexuality_amsel.

Divorce

History and Overview

Bloch (course pack, pp. 42-46 in Bloch)

Guide to Humanistic Judaism, Divorce

Text on Divorce

Deuteronomy 24:1; Malachai, 2:14

Laws and Jewish Practice

Mishne Torah, Gittin, <http://www.sacred-texts.com/jud/etm/etm134.htm>

Chapter 1:1-5,9-11,15,24. Chapter 2:1,12,16,17,20. Chapter 4:1. Chapter 6: 1,3-4. Chapter 8:1. Chapter 10:1-2,22. Chapter 11:1.

Secular Humanistic Jewish Approach to Marriage and Partnership

Philosophy

Celebrating Life's Passages, pp. 39-45

Jerris, M. *Intermarriage and Jewish Identity* (course pack)

LCSHJ Statement on Intermarriage <http://www.lcshj.org/intermarriage.html>

AHR Statement on Intermarriage and Co-officiation,

<http://www.humanisticrabbis.org/intermarriage/>

<http://www.humanisticrabbis.org/co-officiating-at-wedding-ceremonies/>

AHR and LCSHJ Diverse Sexualities and Gender Identity Statements

<http://www.humanisticrabbis.org/sexualities-identities/>

<http://www.lcshj.org/same-sex.htm>

Ceremony Elements

Hartman, H. (course pack)

Sukenik, M (course pack)

Issues

Preparing the Rabbi (all in course pack)

Chalom, A. *Wedding Tracker Worksheet*

Goldfinger, E. *Intermarriage Prenup Philosophy*

Levy, K. *Humanistic Jewish Wedding Information* (including prices)

Goldfinger, E. *Client Information Sheet*

Levy, K. *Wedding Custom Reply*

Jerris, M. *Intermarriage Ceremony Outline*

Chalom, A. *Wedding Information Booklet*

Goldfinger, E. *Wedding Set Up*

Goldfinger, E. *Sample Processional*

Goldfinger, E. *Same Gender Blocking*

Secular Humanistic Ketubah Texts

Family Preparation

Ceremonies

Celebration, pp. 365-376

God-Optional Judaism, pp. 165-179,

Celebrating Life's Passages, pp. 51-55

Ceremonial course pack

Day 5 February 24, 2012

DEATH, MOURNING AND CELEBRATING LIFE

History and Overview

Schauss, pp.223-300.

Chill, pp.319-338.

Wine, *Judaism Beyond God*, pp. 187-190.

Guide to Humanistic Judaism, Death, Funeral, Memorial Services, Mourning Practices.

Text

Genesis 3:17-19; Genesis 37:34

I Samuel 28:7-15; II Samuel 1:12

Job 1:21

Laws and Jewish Practice

Laws Pertaining to Death, *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch*, Chapters 194-221, pp. 1180-1283.

Art Scroll Siddur, K'riah pp.796-797 or pp.844-845, El Male Rakhmim, pp.814-815 or pp. 860-861, Kaddish After Burial, pp. 800-801 or pp.848-849

"Funeral Service at the Chapel" The Rabbi's Guide p124a-136 (course pack)

Secular Humanistic Jewish Approach to Death and Celebration of Life (in course pack unless otherwise noted)

Philosophy

Celebrating Life's Passages, pp. 80-97

LCSHJ Statement Aid in Dying

Ceremony Elements

Examples of Humanistic Kaddish and Alternatives

Humanist K'riah

Issues

Family Preparation

Preparing the Rabbi

Jerris, M. *Humanistic Jewish View of Death and Mourning*

Miller, L. *SHJ Leaders Guide to Death*.

Wolfelt, A. "Understanding the Six Needs of Mourning."

Goldfinger, E. *Pre-arrangement*

Jerris, M. *Steps from First Call to Eulogy Preparation*.

Goldfinger, E., *Funeral/Memorial Information*

Jerris, M. *Questions to Prepare Eulogy*.

Ceremonies

Celebration, pp.377-390

God- Optional Judaism, pp. 180-189

Celebrating Life's Passages, pp. 98-106

Ceremonial course pack

OTHER CELEBRATIONS

Text

Mishnah, Pirke Avot 5:21 (course pack, see Coming of Age)

Conversion/Adoption

Text

Deuteronomy 23:3-9, Isaiah 56, Ezra 9:1-10:17, Ruth 1

Laws and Jewish Practice

Klein. *A Guide to Jewish Religious Practice* pp. 440-448 (course pack)

Reform Rabbi Manual, pp. 229-234 (course pack)

Secular Humanistic Jewish Adoption/Conversion (all in course pack unless otherwise noted)

Philosophy

IFSHJ Statement , *Who is a Jew?* <http://www.ifshj.net/id44.html>

Schweitzer, P. *Presentation on Conversion*

Barr, R. *Adopting Humanistic Judaism*

LCSHJ Conversion Considerations

Association of Humanistic Rabbis Statement on Conversion

<http://www.humanisticrabbis.org/conversion-adoption/>

Preparing the Rabbi (all in course pack)

Oraynu Private Conversion Guidelines

Oraynu Syllabus and Reading List for Conversion

Jerris, M. *Society for Humanistic Judaism Distance Program for Conversion/Adoption*

Goldfinger, E. *Client Information for Conversion*

Goldfinger, E. *Conversion Covenant*

Certificates

SHJ

Goldfinger

Jerris

Hebrew Naming Ceremony for Older Children or Adults (ceremonial course pack)

Ceremonies of Love and Connection

Engagement (ceremonial course pack)

Other Commitment Ceremonies

Women's Ceremonies

Loss (Miscarriage, still birth), *Celebrating Life's Passages*, pp. 107-109

Ceremony of the Wise Woman (retirement/aging) *Celebrating Life's Passages*, pp. 77-79

Others

Others

SUMMARY AND EVALUATION

Additional Resources

- Amichai, Y. *Yehuda Amichai: A Life of Poetry 1948-1994*. HarperCollins, 1994.
- Arisian, Khoren. *The New Wedding: Creating your own marriage ceremony*. Vintage Books, 1973.
- Black, A. *Without Burnt Offerings, Ceremonies of Humanism*. Viking Press, 1974.
- Brener, A. *Mourning and Mitzvah*. Jewish Lights, 1993, 2001.
- Bullough, Vern & Bonnie. *A Humanist Divorce Ceremony*, Council for Secular Humanism, 1997.
- Carmi, T. *Penguin Book of Hebrew Verse*. Penguin, 1981.
- Fine, I. *Midlife, A Rite of Passage & The Wise Woman, A Celebration*. Woman's Institute for Continuing Jewish Education, 1988.
- Goldman, R. *Questioning Circumcision, A Jewish Perspective*. Vanguard, 1998.
- Klein, I. *A Guide to Jewish Religious Practice*. Jewish Theological Seminary of America. 1979, 1992
- Kolatch, A. *The New Name Dictionary, Modern English and Hebrew Names*. Jonathan David, 1989, 1994.
- Lamont, Corliss. *A Humanist Funeral Service*. Prometheus Books, 1977.
- _____. *A Humanist Wedding Service*. Prometheus Books, 1972.
- Lerner, D. *Celebrating Interfaith Marriages*. Henry Holt, 1999.
- Levine, E.R., ed., *A Ceremonies Sampler, New Rites, Celebrations and Observances of Jewish Women*. Woman's Institute for Continuing Jewish Education, 1991.
- Long, Rev. Amy. *Weddings, Funerals and Rites of Passage*. Self-Published, 2002.
- Macomb, Susanna Stefanachi. *Joining Hands and Hearts: Interfaith, Intercultural Wedding Celebrations*. Fireside, 2003.
- Mintz, R. *Modern Hebrew Poetry*. University of California, 1966.
- Munro, E. *Wedding Readings* Viking, 1989.
- Sewell, M, ed., *Cries of the Spirit*. Beacon Press, 1991.

Willson, Jane W. *Sharing the Future*, Non-religious wedding ceremonies, British Humanist Association, 1988. (Available on Amazon, newer edition on British Humanist Association web-site)

_____. *New Arrivals: Guide to Nonreligious Naming Ceremonies*, Baby naming ceremonies and poetry, published by British Humanist Association, 1991. (Available on Amazon, newer edition on British Humanist Association web-site)

_____. *Funerals Without God*, published by BHA and Prometheus Books, 1995. (Available on Amazon)

Wolfelt, Alan D. *Creating Meaningful Funeral Ceremonies: A Guide for Caregivers*. Companion Press, 1994. (Available from Amazon)

_____. *Understanding Your Grief: Ten Essential Touchstones for Finding Hope and Healing Your Heart*. Companion Press, 2003. (Available from Amazon)

York, Sarah. *Remembering Well: Rituals for Celebrating Life and Mourning Death*. Jossey-Bass, 2000.

WEBSITES

Association of Humanistic Rabbis. <http://www.humanisticrabbis.org/>.

InterfaithFamily.com. A very complete website for interfaith couples and families, including life cycles, <http://www.interfaithfamily.com/>

Leadership Conference of Secular and Humanistic Jews. www.lcshj.org.

Ritual Well. Website for Jewish rituals, <http://www.ritualwell.org/>.