Lesson Title: Jewish Americans: Identity, Intersectionality, and Complicating Ideas of Race

Sample Lesson: Jewish Americans: Identity, Intersectionality, and Complicating Ideas of Race

Theme: Identity

Disciplinary Area: General Ethnic Studies

Ethnic Studies Values and Principles Alignment: 1, 2, 4, 5

Standards Alignment:

CA HSS Analysis Skills (9–12): Chronological and Spatial Thinking 2, 4; Historical Research, Evidence, and Point of View 2, 4; Historical Interpretation 1, 2, 3

CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy: RH.9–10. 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 10; WHST.9–10. 2, 4, 7; SL.9–10. 1, 2, 3, 4

CA ELD Standards: ELD.PI.9–10. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12

Lesson Purpose and Overview:

This lesson examines the diversity of the Jewish American community to teach students about visible and invisible parts of intersectional identities, and how this impacts Jewish Americans' identities and how Jews are perceived by others. While individual identity is personal, Jewish Americans are connected through ties of history, culture, language, religion, ancestry, celebrations, communal and familial traditions, common values, and a sense of a common ethnic peoplehood.

By examining how Jews have been stigmatized as outsiders, sometimes seen as a racialized other, and sometimes have experienced conditional whiteness and privilege, the lesson will address how conceptions of race and labels change over time and place (racial formation), adding another lens to the study of race. The lesson explains how the experiences of Jewish Americans include: prejudice, discrimination, antisemitism, racialization, hate crimes, Holocaust denial, and being targets of white supremacists, and how some Jews have also experienced assimilation, conditional whiteness, and privilege. Communal experiences of persecution and the Holocaust have led to a widespread commitment among Jews to pursue justice and repair the world for all people, and a vigilance against rising antisemitism. Jews are a distinct ethnic group connected by rich traditions, thousands of years of history, ancestry, language, and religion.

Key Terms and Concepts: antisemitism, conditional whiteness, identity, intersectionality, racial formation, racialization, Jews of color, Mizrachi, Sephardi, Ashkenazi

Lesson Objectives (Students will be able to…):

1. Explain how identities are composed of visible and invisible attributes, and are intersectional and multifaceted.
2. Learn about diversity within the Jewish American ethnic community.

3. Understand the varied intersectional identities of Jewish Americans, and how Jews see themselves.
4. Identify the range of Jewish American experiences in relation to race and racial hierarchies over time, and how Jews are seen by others.

Essential Questions:

1. How do visible and invisible components make up each person's unique identity?
2. How does the concept of intersectionality help us understand Jewish American experiences?
3. How do conceptions of race change over time and place? What is racialization?
4. How does the diversity of Jewish Americans deepen our understanding of the concepts of race and ethnicity?

Lesson Steps/Activities

Diversity of Jewish Americans: Identity and Intersectionality

1. **Iceberg of Identity Activity for Students** - Only a small part of an iceberg is visible above the waterline, while most of the iceberg's mass lies below the waterline and is invisible. Have students use the Iceberg of Identity worksheet to list above the waterline the parts of their identities that are visible, what others see, and below the waterline, the parts of their identities that are not visible to others. Distribute two blank copies of the Iceberg of Identity worksheet handout.

   Have students refer to the Iceberg of Identity Categories list below and add three visible, and three invisible examples from these categories to the first Iceberg of Identity worksheet:
   - Gender
   - Race
   - Ethnic appearance
   - Visible religious signs (kippah, yarmulke, tzitzit, head covering, hijab, turban, cross, other)
   - Age (child, teen, young adult, middle age, elderly, etc.)
   - Body type
   - Ability/Disability
   - Sexuality
   - Class markers (clothing, speech, cleanliness, etc.)
   - Language(s)
   - Religion/religiosity/spirituality
   - Familial national origin/migration or refugee journey
   - Nationality/citizenship
   - Language
   - Survivor status (trauma/abuse survivor or relative of one)
   - Activity/passion/job that's an important part of identity

2. Watch the video **"What's it Like to Be an African-American Orthodox Jew?**" by Shais Rishon, also known as Ma Nishtana. Provide students with background on the concept of intersectionality from Chapter 1. Give students the second blank Ice Iceberg of Identity worksheet and ask them to note down the many

aspects of identity of the speaker in the following video as they watch it https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FoZwCvGRR4g

3. To conclude the Iceberg activities above, ask the class to share their thoughts on how visible and invisible identities shape personal and communal identity.
4. Ask students to read the **Fact Sheet on Jewish American Diversity.**
5. Ask students the following questions:
    a. In what ways is the Jewish American community diverse?
    b. What bonds Jewish Americans together across diversity?
6. Divide students into small groups and assign each group to read two to three brief excerpts from ***I Am Jewish: Personal Reflections Inspired by the Last Words of Daniel Pearl*.**
7. Questions for students on the excerpts on personal and communal identity:
    a. What elements of their identity does the author stress? (culture, family, ancestry, history, religion, social justice, community, etc.)
    b. Ask students to highlight or underline one key sentence or phrase for each excerpt to share with the class.
    c. Why do Jewish Americans not fit neatly into racial and religious categories?
    d. Ask students to share one word that jumps out on what being Jewish means to the writers, and the teacher will compile them in a shared visual medium.

Jewish Americans and Complicating Ideas of Race

8. The teacher leads a read aloud of the **Fact Sheet on Jewish Americans and Complicating Ideas of Race**, including Key Word Definitions on racialization, conditional whiteness, racial formation, and antisemitism.
9. Questions for students:
    a. What is racialization? What is racial formation?
    b. When and how have Jews been racialized as non-white?
    c. What is conditional whiteness?
    d. When, how, and which Jews have experienced racial privilege?
    e. How did the Holocaust shift Jewish Americans' position in American society?
    f. Can you determine someone's membership in a racial group based only on external appearance? Referring to the Fact Sheet or reflecting on your own knowledge of racial groups, what other factors go into racial identity?
    g. Based on what we have learned about changes in how Jews as a whole have been racially categorized, what conclusions can we draw about race as a social construct?

Assessment, Application, Action, and Reflection

Have students reflect and answer the following questions to conclude the lesson:

a. Ask students to choose one aspect of their own identity, and write a one paragraph reflection on why that aspect of their identity is important to them. Please complete: "I am (choose an aspect of identity) because _____, and it is important to me because _____."
b. In what ways is the Jewish American ethnic group diverse? What bonds Jews together across this diversity?

c. What have we learned about the changeability of racial classifications and hierarchies? How does this complicate or help us understand race more broadly?

Materials and Resources

- Two copies of the Iceberg of Identity worksheet
- Video “What’s it Like to Be an African-American Orthodox Jew?” by Shais Rishon, also known as Ma Nishtana located at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FoZwCvGRR4g accessed 9/30/2020.
- Fact Sheet on Jewish American Diversity
- Fact Sheet on Jewish Americans and Complicating Ideas of Race
- Excerpts from *I Am Jewish: Personal Reflections Inspired by the Last Words of Daniel Pearl*. Edited by Ruth Pearl and Judea Pearl. Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2004.

Ethnic Studies Outcomes

Students will:

1. Recognize intersectionality and understand how it is related to identity; understand how intersectionality is related to systemic discrimination racism, ethnic bigotry, discrimination, and marginalization. (Outcome 5)
2. Develop a better understanding of other people, cultures, and ethnic groups. (Outcome 4)
3. Further self-understanding by asking what ethnicity and heritage mean, and to what extent can identity change over time. (Outcome 3)

Fact Sheet on Jewish American Diversity

- Jewish Americans have come to the United States from all over the world.
- The Jewish people originated about 3,000 years ago in Southwest Asia, in the land of Israel.
- Jews do not fit neatly into predefined categories, and meet the criteria for being both a religious group and an ethnic group.
- Jews are a distinct ethnic group connected by rich traditions, thousands of years of history, ancestry, language, and religion. Jewish American ethnic identity may be expressed through food, language, holidays, celebrations, expressions of peoplehood, remembrances of historical and ancestral experiences, connections to the land of Israel, a commitment to social justice, and cultural elements such as music, literature, art, philosophy that are also part of Jewish life.
- The racial appearance of Jewish Americans is very diverse, and can range from light skinned to Middle Eastern to Jews of color, including African American Jews, Asian American Jews, Latino/a/x Jews. Jewish families include multiracial households and there are diverse appearances both within families and within communities.
- Many Jewish Americans trace their ancestry to Eastern Europe, and their racial appearance reflects this.
- Many Jews with light skin identify with the idea of white-presenting, which recognizes the divergence between external classifications and internal identity.
- There are several major Jewish ethnic subgroups:
    - Mizrachi Jews are racially diverse Arabic- and Farsi-speaking Jews indigenous to the Middle East and North Africa for over 2,500 years.
    - Sephardic Jews are Ladino-speaking Jews expelled from Spain and Portugal to North Africa and the Ottoman Empire beginning with Spain's expulsion in 1492.
    - Ethiopian Jews are Amharic-speaking Jews originally from Ethiopia.
    - Ashkenazi Jews are Yiddish-speaking Eastern European Jews.
- Major languages and literature of Jewish expression include English, Hebrew, Arabic, Yiddish, Ladino, and Farsi. Hebrew, the language of Jewish scripture, is often a lingua franca that has united different Jewish ethnic subgroups.
- American Judaism has a range of religious denominations, including Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox, with a range of observances and practices. At the same time, Jews are united by shared sacred texts, like the Torah, by celebrations, traditions, and a feeling of connection to other Jews around the world.
- Jews have a wide range of opinions and beliefs about what it means to be Jewish and how Jewish identity is defined.
- Across Jewish denominations, ancestry marks a person as Jewish regardless of the individual's personal level of religious observance. Traditionally, a person was considered Jewish if born to a Jewish mother. Reform Jews consider a person with a Jewish father to also be Jewish.
- Jews consider a person who converts to Judaism, without Jewish ancestry, to be as Jewish as any other Jew.
- Jews are part of the Jewish American community by birth, adoption, marriage, and by throwing their lot in with the Jewish people through conversion.

Fact Sheet on Jewish Americans and Complicating Ideas of Race

Key Word Definitions

racialization - When a group becomes categorized as a stigmatized group, and that group is seen as a separate race by another dominant group.[1]

conditional whiteness - When a person or group can gain racial privilege by dropping ethnic markers of difference or assertions of belonging to a separate group. A person or a group can become white conditionally, on the condition of not being ethnically or religiously different, assimilating or passing as white.

racial formation - Race is socially constructed rather than fixed, biological, or from time immemorial. The structure, or formation, of racial hierarchies vary in different times and places. Racial formation theory states that race is composed of ideas about race and the social structures of racial stratification in a particular time and place. Racial categories and boundaries can change over time and place, and a group can become racialized, that is, categorized as a stigmatized group, or be seen as part of a dominant race.[2]

antisemitism - Hatred, discrimination, fear, and prejudice against Jews based on stereotypes and myths that target their ethnicity, culture, religion, traditions, right to self-determination, or connection to the State of Israel.

Jewish Americans, Antisemitism, and Race

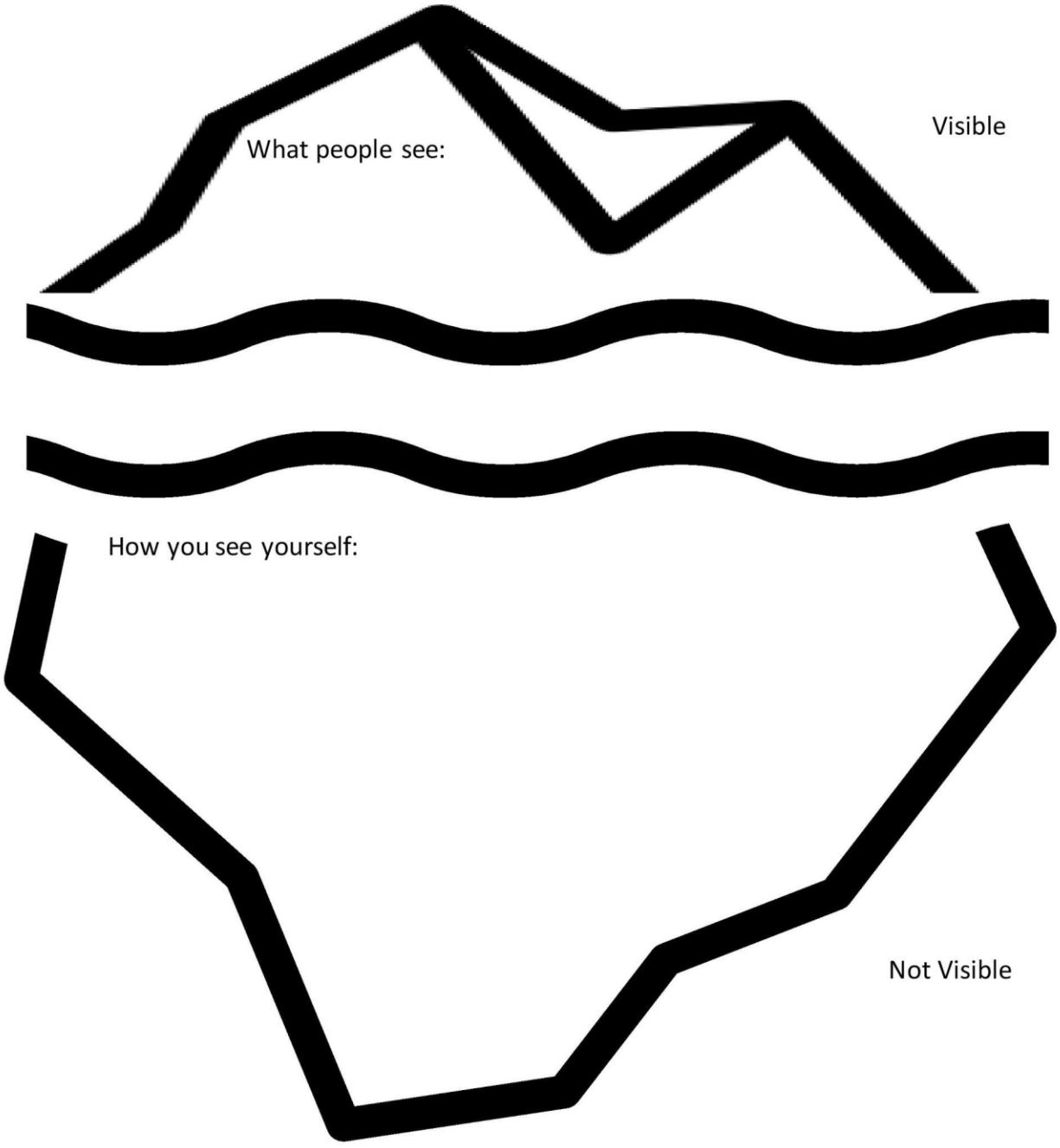
- The first Jews to arrive in 1654 to what became the United States were Sephardic Jews from Brazil.
- In U.S. immigration and naturalization law from 1898-1941, Jews were categorized as part of the “Hebrew race.” This racialization deemed Jews as non-white.
- A large wave of Jewish immigrants came to the U.S. from Eastern Europe between 1880 and 1924. Prejudice against Jews and Catholics from Eastern and Southern Europe motivated the passing of the Johnson-Reed Immigration Act of 1924, greatly restricting Jewish immigration through 1965.
- In addition to targeting African Americans, the white supremacist racism of the Klu Klux Klan (KKK) saw Jews as non-white, a separate and lesser race, and targeted Jews, such as with exclusionary immigration legislation and intimidation in large marches on Washington DC.
- For the first half of the 20th century, Jews were usually not considered white in the U.S. racial formation.
- Through the 1960s, antisemitic employment discrimination with overt and covert ‘no Jews allowed’ notices often led Jews to enter new industries with less discrimination. Elite universities also had quotas, limiting the number of Jews who could attend them until the early 1960s.
- In the 1920s and 1930s, anti-Jewish conspiracy theories were openly distributed in the U.S., for example by Henry Ford’s newspaper (later used in Nazi propaganda) and Father Edward Coughlin’s radio show.

- In the 1930s, growing anti-Jewish prejudice in the U.S. led to the U.S. government's refusal of entry to Jewish refugees from Nazi Germany until 1944 after millions were already murdered.
- Jews often changed Jewish sounding names to avoid discrimination, to assimilate, or for reasons of internalized oppression. Starting with immigrants, and common with actors, this practice of name-changing continues to the present day.
- After the full horror of the Holocaust came to light after 1945, American attitudes gradually changed toward Jews, anti-Jewish prejudice decreased, Jews were less often racialized, more frequently able to assimilate, and began to be considered white by American societal standards. While anti-Jewish prejudice became less socially accepted, it persisted.
- Descendants of Jewish immigrants often assimilated and changed their position on the racial hierarchy from their immigrant parents, gaining racial privilege.
- White supremacists continue to racialize Jews as non-white. This was evident when the Unite the Right March in Charlottesville chanted "The Jews will not replace us" with 'us' referring to white Americans. See https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/acts-of-faith/wp/2017/08/14/jews-will-not-replace-us-why-white-supremacists-go-after-jews/
- Jewish institutions continue to be targets of hate crimes, including synagogue shootings in Poway, CA in 2019, and Pittsburgh, PA in 2018.
- Light-skinned Jews may simultaneously experience white privilege on the basis of their appearance and prejudice and discrimination on the basis of their Jewishness.
- Jews of color like all communities of color face systemic racism, and may simultaneously face prejudice and discrimination on the basis of their Jewishness.
- Jews of all skin colors who are visibly Jewish, from their appearance, name, or religious clothing or symbols, e.g., a Star of David necklace, experience more overt antisemitism.

Footnotes

1. See Daniel Martinez Hosang, and Oneka Labennett "Racialization," *Keywords for American Cultural Studies*, Second Edition. NY: NYU Press, 2014, p. 212. https://keywords.nyupress.org/american-cultural-studies/essay/racialization/
2. See Michael Omi and Howard Winant. *Racial Formation in the United States*. 3rd Edition. New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 2014.

The Iceberg of Identity



Reflections on Jewish American Identity

Excerpts from *I Am Jewish: Personal Reflections Inspired by the Last Words of Daniel Pearl.* Edited by Ruth Pearl and Judea Pearl. Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2004.

1. Rabbi Angela Warnick Buchdahl is an Asian American Rabbi ordained by Hebrew Union College. She spent her college summers working as head song leader at Camp Swig, a Reform Jewish camp in Saratoga, California.

"My father is a Jew and my mother is a Korean Buddhist. As the child of a mother who carried her own distinct ethnic and cultural traditions — and wore them on her face — I internalized the belief that I can never be "fully Jewish" because I could never be "purely" Jewish. My daily reminders included strangers' comments "Funny you don't look Jewish"), other Jews' challenges to my halakhic [Jewish law] status, and every look in the mirror.

Jewish identity is not solely a religious identification, but also a cultural and ethnic marker. While we have been a "mixed multitude" since Biblical times, over the centuries the idea of a Jewish race became popularized. After all, Jews have their own language, foods, even genetic diseases. But what does the Jewish "race" mean to you if you are Black and Jewish? Or Arab and Jewish? Or even German and Jewish, for that matter? How should Jewish identity be understood, given that *Am Yisrael* [people of Israel] reflects the faces of so many nations?

Years ago... I called my mother to declare that I no longer wanted to be Jewish. I did not look Jewish. I did not carry a Jewish name, and I no longer wanted the heavy burden of having to explain and prove myself every time I entered a new Jewish community. My Buddhist mother's response was profoundly simple: "Is that possible?" At that moment I realized I could no sooner stop being a Jew than I can stop being Korean, or female, or *me*. Judaism might not be my "race" but it is an internal identification as indestructible as my DNA.

Jewish identity remains a complicated and controversial issue in the Jewish community. Ultimately, Judaism cannot be about race, but must be a way of walking in this world that transcends racial lines. Only then will the "mixed multitude" truly be *Am Yisrael.*" (pages 19-20)

2. Naim Dangoor was a leader of Iraqi Jewry outside Iraq.

"When I was a young boy a teacher at school asked me, "Why are you a Jew?" I, with all the practicality of youth replied, because I was born one!"

There is, however, something in this sentiment that rings truer than one might think Judaism is a birthright, a glorious gift from one's forefathers of faith, culture, and heritage.

For me, it is this: my strong Babylonian heritage, the heritage that Daniel Pearl also shared, his mother having been born in Baghdad, that makes me so proud to be a Jew. Babylonia was one of the main birthplaces of the Jewish people, from where Abraham emerged as a founder, and later from where the Babylonian Talmud, forming the framework for Rabbinic Judaism, was created. Its glorious Jewish intellectual eminence fanned out across the known world for more than a thousand years. Currently the descendants of this tradition are spread throughout the globe." (pages 97-98)

3. Julius Lester is an African American civil rights activist and writer.

"It is the particular responsibility of the Jew to suffuse history with holiness. This is not something that, done once, is done for all time. It must be done every day, for every day a Jew must choose anew the responsibility of holiness.

To be holy is to be apart from, the Torah teaches us. We must be apart to possess our unique identity as a people. We must be apart to offer the world those aspects of the holy which God put into our keeping.

There is a paradox: The world needs us to be apart as Jews, though it may be loath to acknowledge it. It does not need us to be just another ethnic group. It does not need us to dissolve our particularity into an undifferentiated and colorless mass.

The world needs us to assume the difficult task of living as Jews and to do as Jews have sought to do through the ages past — merge past and present and future into a Holy Now.

We do this by becoming a continuous *bracha* [blessing] —a blessing of joy that refuses to be suppressed or destroyed despite what others have said and done, despite what others say and do. To be a Jew is to be a *bracha* of laughter expressing our surprise, delight, and wonder in creation and our place in it as Jews. We are called to be a *bracha* of unending love because to be a Jew is to be in love — with a God, a people, and a land. To be a Jew is to live that love —boldly, defiantly, joyously —to become that love and live with the fluidity of a melody understood in the silence of the soul.
To be a Jew is to be a love song —to the God of our people —and to the world." (page 144)

4. Norman Lear is a writer, producer, and social activist.

"I identify with everything in life as a Jew. The Jewish contribution over the centuries to literature, art, science, theater, music, philosophy, the humanities, public policy ,and the field of philanthropy awes me and fills me with pride and inspiration. As to Judaism, the religion: I love the congregation and find myself less interested in the ritual. If that describes me to others as a "cultural Jew," I have failed. My description, as I feel it, would be: total Jew." (page 34)

5. Douglas Rushkoff is a writer, journalist and professor of media studies.

"Jews are not a tribe but an amalgamation of tribes around a single premise that human beings have a role. Judaism dared to make human beings responsible for this realm. Instead of depending on the gods for food and protection, we decided to enact God, ourselves, and to depend on one another.

So out of the death cults of *Mitzrayim* [Egypt] came a repudiation of idolatry and a way of living that celebrated life itself. To say "*l'chaim* [to life]" was new, revolutionary, even naughty. It overturned sacred truths in favor of living sacred living.

We are not passive recipients of law and truth, but active creators of ethical systems and models for the Divine. We are not believers, or even doubters, but wrestlers. Israel, more than a nation-state, is this very confrontation with the Divine. The wrestling is our continuity.

It's important to me that those, who throughout our history, have attacked the Jews on the basis of blood not be allowed to redefine our indescribable process or our internally evolving civilization. We are attacked for our refusal to accept the boundaries, yet sometimes we incorporate these very attacks into our thinking and beliefs.

It was Pharaoh who first used the term *Am Yisrae*l [People of Israel] in Torah, fearing a people who might replicate like bugs and not support him in a war. It was the

Spanish of the Inquisition who invented the notion of Jewish blood, looking for a new reason to murder those who had converted to Catholicism. It was Hitler, via Jung, who spread the idea of a Jewish "genetic memory" capable of instilling an uncooperative nature in even those with partial Jewish ancestry. And it was Danny Pearl's killers who defined his Judaism as a sin of birth.

I refuse these definitions.

Yes, our parents pass our Judaism on to us, but not through their race, blood, or genes — it is through their teaching, their love, and their spirit. Judaism is not bestowed; it is enacted. Judaism is not a boundary; it is the force that breaks down boundaries. And Judaism is the refusal to let anyone tell us otherwise." (pages 90-91)

6. Ruth R. Wisse is a professor of Yiddish literature at Harvard University.

"The American way of life affords us the freedom to live as we please, within the bounds of the law. We may choose to live as Jews, visibly and vitally or else slip anonymously into the Gentile [non-Jewish] mainstream.

Since I've always enjoyed being a Jew it never occurred to me to live otherwise. I appreciate the tough-mindedness of the Jewish religious tradition that knows how hard it is to achieve a mature civilization; I admire my ancestors who brought Jewish civilization to such a high level of maturity. Although I don't follow all the requirements of *Halakhah* [Jewish law], my observance is higher than that of my parents whose observance was lower than that of their parents. I love the cycle of the Jewish year, particularly the contrasted experiences of Rosh Hashanah and Passover. The cultural and history of the Jewish people engage much of my intellectual energy. And the pleasure of being a member of the Jewish community usually outweighs its frustrations." (pages 7-8)

7. Senator Dianne Feinstein is the senior U.S. Senator from California since 1992.

"I was born during the Holocaust. If I had lived in Russia or Poland —the birthplaces of my grandparents —I probably would not be alive today, and I certainly wouldn't have had the opportunities afforded to me here. When I think of the six million people who were murdered, and the horrors that can take hold of a society, it reinforces my commitment to social justice and progress, principles that have always been central to Jewish history and tradition.

For those of us who hold elected office, governing in this complex country can often be difficult. My experience is that bigotry and prejudice in diverse societies ultimately leads to some form of violence, and we must be constantly vigilant against this. Our Jewish culture is one that values tolerance with an enduring spirit of democracy. If I've learned anything from the past and from my heritage, it's that it takes all of us who cherish beauty and humankind to be mindful and respectful of one another. Every day we're called upon to put aside our animosities, to search together for common ground, and to settle differences before they fester and become problems.

Despite terrible events, so deeply etched in their souls, Jews continue to be taught to do their part in repairing the world. That is why I've dedicated my life to the pursuit of justice; sought equality for the underdog; and fought for the rights of every person regardless of their race, creed, color, sex, or sexual orientation, to live a safe, good life. For me that's what it means to be a Jew, and every day I rededicate myself to that ideal." (pages 228-229)

8. Rabbi Eric H. Yoffie is President Emeritus of the Union for Reform Judaism who focuses on interfaith relations and social justice.

"I am Jewish. This means, above all else, that I was present at Sinai and that when the Torah was given on that mountain, my DNA was to be found in the crowd. . . .

A people is usually defined by race, origin, language, territorial or statehood, and none of these categories is an obvious common denominator for the worldwide Jewish people. Peoplehood is a puzzling concept for modern Jews, particularly the younger ones, who often cannot understand what connects them to other Jews in Moscow, Buenos Aires, and Tel Aviv. But I am convinced, to the depth of my being, that Jewish destiny is a collective destiny. . . . It is the covenant at Sinai that links all Jews, including non-observant ones, in a bond of shared responsibility. And if we hope to strengthen the unity and interdependence of the Jewish people, we will have to revive the religious ideas on which these notions are based." (pages 114-115)

9. **Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg** was a Justice of the U. S. Supreme Court from 1993-2020, and advocate for women's rights.

"I say who I am in certain visible signs. The command from Deuteronomy appears in artworks, in Hebrew letters, on three walls and a table in my chambers. "*Zedek*, *zedek*, *tirdof*," Justice, Justice shalt thou pursue," these artworks proclaim; they are ever-present reminders to me what judges must do "that they may thrive." There is also a large silver *mezuzah* [Torah verses in a small case] on my door post. . . .

I am a judge, born, raised, and proud of being a Jew. The demand for justice runs through the entirety of Jewish history and Jewish tradition. I hope, in all the years I have the good fortune to serve on the bench of the Supreme Court of the United States, I will have the strength and courage to remain steadfast in the service of that demand." (pages 201-202)

10. Kerri Strug is an Olympic Gold medalist in gymnastics.

"I have heard the same question over and over since I received my gold medal in gymnastics on the Olympic Podium. "You're Jewish?" people ask me in a surprised tone. Perhaps it is my appearance or the stereotype that Jews and sports don't mix that makes my Jewish heritage so unexpected. I think about the attributes that helped me reach that podium: perseverance when faced with pain, years of patience and hope in an uncertain future, and a belief and devotion to something greater than myself. It makes it hard for me to believe that I did not look Jewish up there on the podium. In my mind those are the attributes that have defined Jews throughout history." (page 98)

11. **Sarah Rosenbaum** is 15 years old from Southern California.

"When I say that I am Jewish, I am identifying myself as part of a tradition, connected to our foremothers and fathers, and carrying on to the future a culture, a religion, a way of life. I feel pride and am overwhelmed with joy when I declare that I am part of this incredible people, our people Israel." (page 54)