

Request for Interview Participants

Disciplinary Discourses and the Experiences of Jewish Scholars

Principal Investigator: Mara Lee Grayson, Ph.D., Independent Scholar

Project Overview

Existing research demonstrates that Jewish people in the academy have long experienced marginalization, regardless of expressions of Jewishness, understandings of self- or community identity, or political ideologies (Brodkin, 1998; Cieslik & Phillips, 2021; Flasch, 2020; Grayson, 2023; Holdstein, 2008; Karabel, 2006; Laitman, 2022; Levine-Daniel et al., 2020; Rubin, 2023; Wright et al., 2023). Norms and discourses within specific disciplines directly and indirectly impact the experiences of marginalized members of those disciplines. Still, despite increased public attention since October 7, 2023 to antisemitism's manifestations and discourses, scholarly attention to the lived experiences of Jewish people in the academy, including or even particularly within rhetoric, composition, and writing studies, and its sister disciplines (e.g. communication, technical communication, etc.) has remained scarce. As understandings of identity and bigotry, already political in a polarized society, are increasingly politicized within and beyond the academy, Jewish scholars and educators, regardless of their understandings of their identities or communities, have too often been positioned as proxies for majoritarian arguments and agendas – while their own stories and lived experiences have been overlooked.

This qualitative research project explores the experiences of Jewish educators within their classrooms and schools, as well as within the professional communities of which they are members, both before and after October 7, 2023, and both in and beyond the context of sociopolitical tensions in the U.S. and around the world. This research seeks to better understand the relationships among disciplinary discourses (or silences) and the marginalization of Jewish stories, knowledges, and experiences within academic professional communities. This grant-funded (NEH FEJ-310977-26) study is an extension of IRB-approved research (CSUDH IRB 20-084) research on the experiences of Jewish educators and scholars in the fields of rhetoric, composition, and writing studies, and its sister disciplines, including communication and technical communication.

Participant Criteria

If you meet the following criteria, I would be very grateful for your participation:

- Identify as Jewish, regardless of the nature or complexity of that identification; and
- Identify as an educator or scholar of rhetoric, composition, writing studies, communication, technical communication, and/or a related field on the postsecondary level, regardless of employment status.
- *Optional:* Work in multiple humanities disciplines and/or focus on social justice (however defined).

Participation Details

This interview seeks to better understand your experiences as a Jewish-identifying educator before *and* since October 7, 2023.

- Location/Medium: The interview will take place virtually (via phone or videoconference) or, if possible, in person at a location of your choosing.
- Time Commitment: The interview should take approximately 30-60 minutes. You may be contacted for a second, shorter interview (10-15 minutes) for purposes of clarification.
- Compensation: Participants will receive \$50 for their participation.

If you are interested in participating in such an interview, please complete the brief [Willingness to Participate](#) form or contact Principal Investigator Mara Lee Grayson directly: maragrayson@gmail.com.