

*TIJS Graduate Research & Travel Grants  
Academic Year 2013-2014*

**CARRIE CRAWFORD, History**  
*ccrawf5@emory.edu*

Advisor: Eric Goldstein (History)  
Purpose: Travel to various archives in Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana to conduct preliminary dissertation research on the nature of Jewish racial identity in 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> century American South

TIJS's generous grant allowed me to conduct dissertation research at multiple archives in the southern United States (Mississippi, Florida, Alabama) during the 2013-2014 academic year. Specifically, my research has been aimed at explicating trends of social exclusion of Jews from public and private spaces. My dissertation, currently in-progress, plans to trace these trends both spatially and temporally, focusing on Louisiana, Mississippi, Florida, Georgia, the Carolinas, and Alabama in the years 1880s-1950s.

In my research thus far, I have uncovered numerous discriminatory restrictions that excluded Jews from residential neighborhoods, beaches, parks, sporting teams, college Greek organizations, private country clubs, and golf courses. These restrictions ranged from being overtly anti-Semitic in nature (for instance, I uncovered multiple brochures advertising "Gentiles Only" or "Always a View, Never a Jew") to euphemisms such as "Restricted Clientele" or "Exclusive Clientele." Yet, even ostensibly benign regulations were directly targeted at Jewish citizens. After perusing large amounts of correspondence, newspaper articles, and oral histories, it became increasingly clear that anti-Semitism was alive and well in the U.S. South, despite claims to the contrary. Indeed, whereas previous scholars have argued that anti-Semitic acts in the South were sporadic aberrations, my preliminary research has determined that Jews were perennially subjected to both overt and subtle discrimination.

Furthermore, I have explored and will continue to explicate tensions between native southern Jews and transplants (or "snowbirds," as they were often called) from the Northeast. As I suspected, these groups often conceived of "Jewishness" (religiosity, use of Yiddish, racial identity) in very different ways, and were commonly at odds over contentious issues of desegregation, political activism, and Israeli independence. I am confident that this approach will allow me to gain a better sense of southern Jewish identity. Again, I am grateful for TIJS's financial support, without which I would not have been able to explore this fascinating and important topic.



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