

THE ROLE OF JEWS IN AMERICAN POLITICS: **Achievement, Accomplishment and Anonymity**

Almost from the moment that a handful of storm-tossed Hebrew mistakenly landed in New Amsterdam, Jews have played a leading – though often anonymous – role on the stage of American politics. Although hailing from countries and cultures that debarred them from the political process, once in America, Jews quickly discovered that they did have a civic voice. Initially serving as constables, sheriffs and members of town councils, the Jews of America would eventually become state legislators and mayors, ambassadors, and elected members of Congress.

These eight-standalone lectures examine the leading personalities, politics and achievements of the Jewish community in American political history. We will pay special attention to the inherent tension that has always existed between politics and religion, and investigate how, traversing that tightrope, the Jewish community has helped shape modern American society.

Lectures (eight):

1. **In the Beginning:** an examination of the origins of American Jewish political history from 1654 to approximately 1840.
2. **Disunion:** The issues, personalities and politics that divided the United States
3. **The Socialist Agenda:** Anarchists, Communists and Socialists and their impact upon the sociopolitical fabric of American society.
- 4-5. **America's New Deal:** 30-year mortgages, unemployment insurance and an end to Prohibition.
6. **The Holocaust and its Aftermath:** The role of the Jews on Capitol Hill, including Emanuel Celler, Sam Dicstein, Adolph Sabbath and Sol Bloom.
7. **Zionism and McCarthyism:** Senator Herbert Lehman, Representatives Javits and Ribicoff, and McCarthy aide Roy Cohn.
8. **From JFK to the Twin Towers and Beyond:** The American acceptance of Jews as political leaders, Jewish responses to Vietnam, Watergate and the Arab-Israeli conflict; looking beyond September 11.