

Gentleman's Agreement

Gentlemen's Agreement is a 2-hour quintessential anti-Semitism drama released in 1947. Nominated for 8 Academy Awards and Winner of 3 (including Best Picture), it features Gregory Peck, Dorothy McGuire, John Garfield, Celeste Holm, Jane Wyatt and Dean Stockwell. Gentile widowed journalist Phil Green moves to NYC with his son and mother and is asked by his magazine employer to write an article about anti-Semitism. Phil decides to pose as Jewish only telling his mother, son, his girlfriend Kathy and boyhood Jewish GI veteran friend David. Over the next weeks, Phil experiences both "in-your-face-obvious" anti-Semitism as well as the more subtle, but equally pervasive form in both liberal NYC and Connecticut.

The role of Phil Green was originally offered to Cary Grant, but he turned it down and Gregory Peck's agent advised him not to take it as it would endanger his career. Darryl Zanuck decided to produce *Gentlemen's Agreement* after being denied membership to the Los Angeles Country Club because he was thought to be Jewish - even though he wasn't.

It would be nice to assert that anti-Semitism no longer exists in America, but unfortunately it is just as relevant today as it was 74 years ago. Today, it may have a different face and form, but it persists emanating from both political extremes. Many of the lessons from *Gentlemen's Agreement* are equally relevant today as they were in 1947.