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**MS-831: Jack, Joseph, and Morton Mandel Foundation Records, 1980-2011.**

Series F: CIJE Accrual, 1981-2011, undated.  
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JCC Jewish educators project. Seminar, 2001.

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## CONFIDENTIAL

JCCA Educators' Initiative Launch Seminar:

Responses  
*Joy Rochwarger*

Daniel,

[Daniel, throughout this paper I am addressing my comments directly to you and your document, at the same time that I am sending a copy of this to Howard in order to keep the conversation going amongst the three of us.]

As I noted in an earlier e-mail to you – I have taken the time to read through your thoughts very carefully and would like to respond and comment on some of the issues that you raise in your document. After rereading this document, I feel the need to make an apology at the outset – I find that I have been very direct and forthcoming in my comments in a “no-holds barred” manner, that you might find to be a bit off-putting. Please do not take it personally and understand it to be an outpouring of enthusiasm for this project and a desire to move on to the next stage of the program development process.

### Overall Reactions to the Program

I agree with your initial assessment, that this seminar was a success, but perhaps I am even harder on myself than you are on yourself. I do not think that the program was a *tremendous* or a *major* success, but rather see it as a good, strong beginning to a program that, in the long run, will hopefully yield some very positive results for the JCC world and benefit the JCCA field as well. I do not think that we should take Allan's enthusiasm – that was expressed to us both during our summation meeting post-seminar, as well as privately to Howard the day afterwards – lightly. At the end of the day, he is the JCCA representative that will make or break this program. I tend to agree with you concerning his hesitations vis –a –vis the Execs. I think that they are overstated and he is overly concerned about losing their support for this project. The session that HC and AF co-chaired on Wednesday morning, in my opinion, substantiates this point by the direction in which the conversation went – focusing much more on substantive content for the 18-month program and expressing concern for the development of the field of “Jewish Educator” in the JCC world. [Notes will be sent out to everyone, summarizing the sessions and the seminar.] However, it is my feeling that we cannot ignore AF's concerns and must continue to address them head on throughout the development of the 18-month program - in order to both alleviate his concerns and validate his role as Executive Director of the JCCA.

The issue of the difference in educational approaches between the JCCA and the MF is not going to go away overnight. I agree with you that these differences are not insurmountable, but rather need to be negotiated carefully and skillfully. Strategic planning with our team will be necessary to navigate these waters. The May seminar is an example, and I must reiterate, not a perfect example but still an example, of how we can do this successfully. The more lead time we have on planning curriculum, the more successful we will be at “merging” the two philosophies to produce a result that will satisfy both interested parties. It is also worth noting that RJ is an ally

whom we should not ignore in the development process for ~~both~~ his curricular-planning talents, ~~as well as~~ his respected status in the JCCA and the MF worlds, potential (if needed) <sup>as</sup> arbiter between the two. and his

Finally, in looking over the goals and outcomes that we had set for ourselves at the outset of this program, I am tempted to create a checklist and mark off what we did/n't accomplish. Instead, I will leave that up to the individual educators and will suffice it to say that we did, indeed, accomplish all of our desired goals and outcomes. There is a lot to be said for this, and on the basis of this achievement alone we should easily feel that this seminar was a success in the context of the JCCA initiative.

### Relationships with JCCA staff

This is a more difficult issue for me to comment on the record, and I would feel more comfortable discussing this around a table, in person, with you and the rest of the MFPT. The strategic advice from those of us who have known CH, AF, LR, RJ and others for a while has helped me again and again throughout the past few months, and I think that the project will only benefit from this type of continual feedback. I have to deal with CH on a daily level, but HC has to work with AF, which is also no simple matter. AF announced a week ago, that LR would be replacing DS on the team and we are all very hopeful that this bodes well for the initiative as a whole. As noted above, RJ has proven himself to be a real asset for both organizations and I am looking forward to his continued input and ideas as we move forward on the project. about

I agree with your assessment of the Educators, but would stay away from evaluating them on a standard of who would or wouldn't have made the cut as a Jerusalem Fellow. It is a very different ball game out here in the wide expanse of Jewish education in the JCC. *Very learned*, does not necessarily make a *very talented* educator, or administrator, or implementer, as we all know from our many different educational experiences. The group that we chose to be part of the first cohort, ~~were~~ <sup>were</sup> picked according to a complex set of standards that span a wide array of talents, skills and personality characteristics. We have to stay aware of the differences, but at the same time I strongly support playing to the top rung, with the belief that the bottom rungs will "rise to the occasion." (Pardon the weird metaphor.)

As for the Execs, I was positively impressed by them, much to my surprise given the wariness that CH had imposed on our approach to the programming because of their participation, and the tremendous need for their "buy-in." For some reason I was never worried about this happening, although I am aware that others on our team were concerned. I don't think that they are *nervous* about what the Jewish educators *will come up with*, but rather, more concerned with the feasibility of the theories and ideas that will be discussed, debated and produced during the 18-month program. They have a business to run, but have also warmed to the idea that Jewish education has to take on a more central and guiding role in the overall planning of the JCC – otherwise they wouldn't have been present at this seminar. So I believe that from the outset we were dealing with a loaded deck, and the observations, comments, concerns, etc. that were raised at the last session on Wed. (with AF and HC) once again confirm this belief. Thankfully so, I might add.

## Teaching

This seminar was a blend of formal and informal teaching units, representing one of the ongoing discussions that we've had concerning a possible theme for the program (Informal education). Did the fact that DG and DP taught in a hotel ballroom, with windows, to a group of students formally arranged in a semi-circle, who broke up into discussion groups periodically throughout the lectures, turn their formal-style (*frontal*) lectures into informal teaching sessions? Or were the hevrutot and room designations perceived to be an attempt to minimize what were *clearly* formal lectures? These questions need to be examined in a round-table discussion that would include the JCCA representatives, as well as some of the educators and execs who were present at the seminar. In addition, we need to analyze what type of methodology would be most "successful" (to be defined by us) with the group of educators in particular, cutting the Execs out of the picture except for the one or two occasions at which they would be brought back in to the program. We all knew that the "levels" of the participants were very varied and prepared the lectures/discussion sessions accordingly. But when you are in the room with the different people, from different professional backgrounds as well as levels of Jewish learning abilities and knowledge, these realities constitute very different levels of interest as well, and present a real challenge to the educator. All of this, combined with a non-conducive physical environment for the "classroom" setting, presented one heck of a challenge not only to JA, DG and DP, but also to the facilitators who had to manage the discussions connected to the lectures.

I'm not sure that the emphasis placed (repeatedly) on "the demonstration/consultation" dimension to the conference took away from the experience for the Educators, but would think that it affected the involvement/level of participation of the Execs. My impression was that in the lectures they took a "sit back and enjoy (or not)" approach, while in the small discussion groups (Monday night and Tuesday night in particular) they were very verbal and as involved, if not more so, than the Educators (e.g. Ken Weintraub). Again, this problem should be obviated in the future by the fact that the Execs will not be present for most of the rest of the seminars.

Here comes the "being hard on myself" mode of thinking, which is really unfair since I did not do any of the formal teaching during this seminar, and the "hardness" is really being extended to others. I'm wary to criticize others when, to a certain extent, I am only looking in from the outside. Yet, as leader of this initiative, I do feel that it is appropriate for me to express some criticism that I hope will be taken only as constructive in form and content, and will be understood as coming from the heart and from a desire to see this program only become better than the good it already is. Based on comments that I heard from both Execs and Educators, I think that we missed the mark in all 3 of the "formal teaching sessions" – JA, DG and DP. There were different reasons given by different people, and I did not conduct a comprehensive survey of the how's and why's behind these general sentiments. Yet, I also was given the impression that rather than having failed miserably in these sessions – EVERYONE walked away very impressed and excited about the opportunity to continue learning in this way. "This way", being defined (as far as I can tell) as, the MF way. The feeling is that we have tremendous insights and ideas to offer the world of Jewish education in the JCC on many, many different levels, and even if they didn't "get it" this time around, they realized quite clearly that there is something worth "getting," and do not want to miss an opportunity to be party to this enterprise. And so, yes, I do

think that the faculty did a good job teaching the classes, as well as facilitating the discussions. But we can do better and should not be satisfied with a job done “ok.”

One other comment as the “leader” – we had discussed amongst ourselves, many times, the problem of note taking/minute keeping. I was under the impression that we had resolved this issue and that faculty members were going to designate themselves as official note takers at the various sessions. Blame it on excitement or on weariness but this did not happen, much to my chagrin. At the present time I am making an attempt to reconstruct the events of those 2.5 days, but it is not an easy task. Together, we might be able to come up with some viable alternatives as to how to approach this in the future. The main questions we have to ask ourselves would include: What is the purpose of the note taking – to be used as content-analysis for future programs; to provide a record of the events as they happened; to provide blow by blow accounts as they happened; to track the flow of the seminar as it is developing, etc.; How do we resolve this issue – do we hire someone to take notes for us? Do we designate different faculty members for different sessions? What are our options?

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sure.

### Importance of Israel Seminars

In principle I agree with your point, concerning the rushed atmosphere of the 2-day structure and the obvious pro to having two weeks in Israel with extended time for development of ideas, thoughts, etc. [Note: AF made explicit references to 2 of these blocks and the 18-month Program and seemed quite amenable to the idea, in contrast to the opposition that has been consistently raised by CH throughout the planning process.] The issue of free time I think could have been easily remedied – giving the longer break immediately after lunch – always a downer on the energy output capacity. And of course, Israel seminars have many additional positive dimensions – but it would serve us better to discuss them at that “round-table.” Speaking of which...

### Next Steps and Meetings

- The issue of communicating between the different members of the curriculum committee, as well as the JPT, was minimally addressed during the summation meeting that we had Wednesday afternoon. The Next Steps piece of the project will be very dependent on how we decide to approach this issue, and therefore needs to be addressed immediately. E-mails are helpful, but can be cumbersome for all those involved. Decisions, clear cut decisions made and accepted by all those involved, need to be made concerning who gets contacted, when and why. If responses are asked for, it's because they are desired and not because it's politically correct to make the request. It seems that in the process of trying to bring many different people on board at different points in the program development, some people felt marginalized while others felt overwhelmed. How do we go about our business as effectively as possible, without wasting energy put to better use on more substantive elements of the program development? I think that posting documents on the web-site is a nice PR move, but will not push us forward in the “roll your sleeves up and get down to the dirty work” necessities of developing the curriculum for this project.

Perhaps  
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many!

- “We” need to meet soon and with clear objectives. It worked for us to push the 18-month curriculum off the agenda last time we were in Jerusalem, but that was only pushing off the inevitable, which is what I believe we are facing now. Let’s clearly define who the “we” is, in all the next steps that were delineated in the Wed. afternoon meeting. To refresh our memories, these steps, amongst others, include:
  1. a meeting in Jerusalem as soon as possible, with SF, AH, the MS Israel team, JCCA Israel team and selected members of the JCCA/MF PT;
  2. Producing an 18-month program conception by the end of July, that will bear the input of the whole JPT, including DG, JH and JR
- What role do we want the JPT to be playing in this, if at all (remember Jody’s complaint about feeling ‘left out’ after the December meeting – Debbie disagrees totally)? When does the MF work on its own and when does it turn to the JCCA, to bring them into the process?

I think that the Jerusalem meetings are crucial for setting tone and direction to the most basic aspects of the program, and are therefore a necessity. However, as much as you might not believe what I’m about to say – we have to draw the line somewhere. Budget restrictions prevent either the Jerusalem team or the NY team from traveling back and forth as often as we all agree would be helpful to this project. Therefore, we need to sketch out for ourselves when and why we need to be in Jerusalem, when and why we need members of the Jerusalem team to come to NY and when/why the NA team will have to meet and conference in the Israeli team members. Personally, I think that video conferencing is a modern convenience that does not achieve all that it can, with drawbacks, and would prefer conference calls.

The visits to the JCCs are something that I’ve been advocating since the onset of this project, way back when in September. Now that we’ve heard expressly from the Execs and Educators about how important it is to them that we make on-site visits and consultations, I think it is imperative that we figure out a way to make this work. Whether it’s a team visit “tour” of sorts, or something more sporadic – it demands due process. AH and I had discussed one model of mentoring that incorporates the concept of geographically based mentors, with either qualified [to be defined by us] Jerusalem Fellows in those areas, or faculty members who are academic advisers to the MF. DP and I have discussed a model of mentoring that would include ‘pre-next seminar’ interviews, to be conducted by the core faculty or overseers of the program (for lack of a better title) – on-site – with all the Jewish educators enrolled in the program, in order to facilitate the matching-up of mentor with mentee.

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#### JCCA Center for Jewish Education

I look forward to hearing more on this front. Michael Wegier certainly comes with good credentials, but Danny, if you’re not willing to let him go after his first year at the Fellows, then???

#### Future Initiative

I assumed, along with you and I think many other members of the MF team, that this cohort is just the first of many. I had the impression that the other groups to which AF periodically refers,

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i.e. camp directors, Execs, etc., are merely references to other initiatives that he had outlined in the original initiative proposal that was rejected for the time being. Maybe HC will be able to clarify for us.

*→ include*

Now, for my major point – Danny – I am very thankful for all of the time and energy that you have invested in this project, notwithstanding this detailed ‘performance review’ of the seminar. I constantly find your thoughts to be insightful and extremely helpful and would like to take this opportunity to not only thank you for all your help, but also to encourage you to continue to share your observations with us.

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JCCA Educators' Initiative Launch  
Some Preliminary Thoughts

Daniel Gordis

Dear Howard and Joy:

Joy has asked me to prepare some thoughts in the Launch of the JCCA Initiative the week before last, which I'm happy to do, though they are not the "content" report that I know might be helpful to you. I still hope that this will be of some use.

Please note that the following is VERY CONFIDENTIAL.

This report is a summary of some of the major issues I believe we ought to think about in light of our experience at the "JCCA Launch" this past week. It is not an exhaustive list, and indeed, other items will follow in subsequent conversations, I'm sure. But I hope that the next few pages will be useful in highlighting the areas in which we were successful, as well as those on which we should focus more. My general predilection is to be very hard on myself after conferences such as this and to generate a to do list for the future. This list reflects that orientation. Please take it only as such. It does not in any way detract from the tremendous success of what we did, or the credit that you both deserve for making it happen.

Overall Response to the Program

Despite any misgivings or critiques that may be raised below, it is important to begin with the assertion that I believe that the Launch was a major success. I think that the two of you deserve major kudos for what you pulled off, and I was awed by watching what it was you had accomplished.

I believe that our staff performed well, that the Educators left the "conference" excited about what is to follow, and that the Exec's were also pleased. They retain some of their nervousness about Educators' returning to their JCC with ideas that the Exec is not comfortable with, and therefore want some oversight role, but they also asked to participate in this Initiative so that they, too, could learn, and even asked for a separate initiative to address their needs and interests.

Allan Finkelstein seemed genuinely pleased. He remains concerned about the Executives, and strikes me as overly worried in this arena. I don't know if you agree with me, but I think that their level of enthusiasm was extremely high. But overall, he felt that the environment was very positive and that there is much positive energy for moving forward. In addition, AF remains committed to the notion that we need a "less academic" approach. I think we did well in "selling" our version of a content-rich program, but I suspect that this will remain a constant tension. The cultures of the two institutions are simply very different, and this is an issue we shall have to continue to manage. I do not believe it will "go away," but neither do I believe that it

will be a problem. It is simply something that will demand our attention and sensitivity.

But again the major point. This was a major success. We have the necessary buy in, and are ready to proceed. Bottom line, that's all we needed, and we got much more.

Now for a few of the issues that I believe we should think about seriously:

#### Relationships with JCCA Staff

As I alluded to above, these relationships are all very cordial, and I think are improving.

The major sticking point here is Cippi, who is, quite frankly, a difficult, complex and somewhat bitter person. Personally, I think that she's lovely and bright. In professional settings, however, I've noticed that something changes. For reasons that I do not pretend to understand, she seems unwilling or unable to accept the MF approach to training. My suspicion is that it's related to her not entirely positive experience of working at CIJE, though she's of course never said anything about that. She gives Joy a very hard time (which Joy handles very professionally), and I suspect that this tension (a tension which she almost seems to breed intentionally) will be around for a while. Again, it's not a disaster, and it's manageable, but it will require time, sensitivity and a bit of frustration. When the Director of the new Center is appointed (more on that below), we may be able to step outside this problem. Until then, we need to work with it.

In general, I felt that the Educators are a lovely group of people, desperately hungry for interaction with each other, and each to learn. Even the most educated among them (and there are some *very* learned people in the group) seemed to feel that our "content" sessions were of a high enough level. They seemed to "get" the idea of what MF is up to, and to relish an opportunity to be part of it. Here, too, though, there is a wide range of people. Some would be (or have been) excellent Jerusalem Fellows, while others would never be considered for the program, now or in the future. But they are a good group, a group that we can teach a great deal to, and people we'll enjoy working with.

The Exec's were also a lovely group. AF is right that there is a tendency to feel "outpaced" when we do content learning, but again, some genuinely appreciated the opportunity to engage in real confrontations with ideas. Not all were excited by it, but I picked no principled resistance. I spent as much time as I could with many Execs, and found them to be serious, committed and pleasant. They're clearly struggling with what should be "Jewish" about the *Jewish* Community Centers, and they *are* a little nervous about what the Educators will come up with, but I anticipate no major issues here.

#### Teaching

The Mandel staff offered three formal sessions, offered by JA, DG and DP (in that order) all on the same day. In general, I think we all performed solidly, but all of us

would agree that we did not hit a “grand slam.” I think that there were several reasons our collective sense that we did well, but not superbly:

- Teaching this diverse group of people was an incredible challenge. We had to make sure that people like Jody Hirsch and Nina Beth Cardin did not feel that their time was being wasted, but at the same time, we had to worry about the Execs and making sure that they were not hopelessly lost. It was not easy, to say the least. Now that we’re be working primarily with the Educators, though, this problem should “self-resolve.”
- The room in which we taught was simply terrible. We’ll come back to this issue below, but it was cavernous, set up poorly and not conducive to what we wanted to accomplish. We can fix this, too, for next time.
- While I understand the reasons for the approach taken, I think that the repeated reference to these days as a “demonstration and consultation” made the teaching more difficult, as well. It created a kind of “show and tell” atmosphere, which felt a bit un-genuine as I was teaching, at least. Again, I fully understand the reasons for framing the conference this way, and don’t mean this as a critique *in any way whatsoever*, but it did take away from the teaching. Probably nothing we could do about it.
- But again, the teaching was no disaster. Far from it. It was fine, and people enjoyed it. We just want to do better next time.

#### Importance of the Israel Seminars

Another issue that we faced was the lack of adequate time, and the feeling that we were constantly rushed. Given the short period of time that we had to work with, I think that we had divided it up pretty well. However, the JCC participants felt pressed for some free time, we felt that we were forced to teach in too condensed a format, and in fact, we had to cut a piece of our plan out altogether. Even if we had had another full day (which would bring us to the length of the program anticipated for the other US meetings), it would still have been too short to do anything of which we’re really proud. Thus, the two week sessions are particularly important, and getting them to Israel, where we have our stable of faculty and where people are more disconnected from work, will be very important.

#### Staffing Issues

Again, I think that the two of you did a simply fabulous job getting this thing happening. Yasher koach again. You’re amazing.

Like you, I have been giving a bit of thought to things that we might have done a bit differently, and here are a few things I think would help:

- Hotel Preparation – no one from the Mandel staff had been to the site prior to the event itself. Given the fact that the hotel is only 17 minutes from the west side of the George Washington bridge, I think that we probably should have had someone visit, once if not more. Had we gone there earlier, we could have asked for specific rooms, done a better job of working with the staff to get rooms set up

the way that we wanted, etc. Again, not catastrophic, but it would have helped the teaching and the overall sense of control. (When the Mandel staff went to Tel Aviv the week before last, our staff had been to the hotel several times, for exactly this purpose, and it made a great difference.)

- Use of Emails – Joy did an admirable job of keeping a lot of people in the loop and of keeping things moving forward. Doing so was a Herculean task, well performed. However, the cost of the task was that many of us received a basically unmanageable amount of email, many with attachments of slight emendations of previously received documents. More than one person told me that they'd just stopped reading the e-mails that they received about the Launch. I can't quite blame them, and we have to figure out a better system for the future. One possibility would be to post documents on our web site; I have other thoughts, too, but in general, we threw too much information at people for whom this wasn't their major professional responsibility, and we need to work with that in the future.
- Understaffing – my basic sense is that we were understaffed at the Conference. We needed more people to help out with logistics, to clean up after sessions (I ended up cleaning up coffee mugs after JA taught so that the room would be ready for my session; I didn't mind, but it kept me from a few important conversations at that moment). Jennifer didn't feel well and contributed very little, I thought, though she may have done things that I didn't know about. Again, not a disaster by any means, but I think that the Jerusalem model of "over-staffing" is really not over-staffing, and makes things run more smoothly. I've learned a lot from watching Seymour and Annette work the office that way.
- Some Errors in Office Preparation – admittedly, here, the NY office had very little time to prepare the books for the conference, and everyone involved deserves credit for getting as much done as they did. But again, there is room for improvement. There were no extra books, so that when one person signed in and didn't find one for her, we had (at least at the moment) nothing to give her. There were mistakes (pages missing, for example) in a number of the books. The name tags, which were written in by hand by the participants themselves, should have been printed on computer not only with their names, but their position and city as well. That would have facilitated much more interaction among people, especially at the beginning. Other examples abound, but again, the issue here isn't to nit-pick, but to set our sights even higher for next time.

### Next Steps and Meetings

There are obviously several things that we need to do to get the rest of the process moving. The list is long, but I want to mention only two at this point:

- More meetings in Jerusalem – I think that the Jerusalem meetings were a critical step in getting us as well prepared as we were, and I believe that we need another set, soon. This is something we should talk about quickly.
- Visits to JCC's: The Exec's and Educators invited us to visit their JCC's. I actually think that this is an excellent idea, and as I was approached directly by St. Louis and asked to visit, I'll continue to take this seriously. No plans now, but I'll try to see if it can be fit in. In general, when I visit a given area of the U.S. in the

future, I'm going to make a concerted effort to visit the JCC (or JCC's there) and to get to know the culture better. Perhaps Howard and Joy would like to coordinate some plan to have us visit the majority of the centers over the next 18 months, even if it's only going to places we're already traveling to for other work? Just an idea.

### Staffing the JCCA Center

There is currently interest in Michael Wegier, a present Jerusalem Fellow, as a possible Director of the Center. The downside, from AF's perspective, is that Wegier has another year left on the Fellows (something about which I have no intention of compromising), while AF would like to fill the position sooner. But AF and I have had some good conversations, and I've brought HC up to date. We'll see how this progresses. This, of course, is very confidential.

### Future Initiative

My assumption had long been that there would be several cohorts of JCCA educators. AF is clearly not thinking along these lines. He doesn't public rule it out, but speaks instead of a cohort of camp directors, Execs, etc. What I think lies behind this is his assumption that we've got the vast majority of the high quality educators in this group, and that the next step down would be much less productive. For obvious reasons, he's never said this, but I think he's made it pretty clear. This should inform our thinking whenever relevant.

Now for the major point, once again: we had a major success. I think we should be proud of the work that we have accomplished thus far, and filled with optimism for the work that we can do with the remainder of the Initiative. I appreciate everything that the two of you did to make this as great as it was, and hope that you feel tremendous satisfaction for what was accomplished.

I was proud to be involved with this project, and am grateful for the opportunity to have played a small role in it.

**SCHEDULE**

*JCC Jewish Educators Initiative:  
Jewish Educators and Executive Directors*

May 7 – 9, 2001  
Pearl River Hilton, NY

**MONDAY MAY 7**

4:15 pm  
5:30 pm  
6:30 pm – 7:00 pm

Departure from Grand Hyatt Hotel  
Arrival/Check-In - Pearl River Hilton  
*Introductions and Welcome* - Beruchim Habaim  
Howard Charish and Allan Finkelstein  
Dinner

7:00 pm – 7:50 pm  
8:00 pm – 9:45 pm  
Session 1

*Diversity and the JCC: Challenges and Opportunities*  
–Small group discussions utilizing the pre-seminar assignments

**TUESDAY MAY 8**

7:30 am-8:30 am  
8:30 am-9:30 am  
Session 2

Breakfast

*Me We and the JCC-The Presentation of Self in JCC Life*  
Jonny Ariel

9:45am-12:00noon  
Session 3

*What is a Jew? – Challenges from the Tradition to Contemporary Life*  
Dr. Daniel Gordis

12:00 noon-12:50 pm  
12:50 pm-1:30 pm  
1:30 pm-3:45 pm  
Session 4

Lunch  
Break

*Jewish Diversity: Perspectives from the Multicultural Wars*  
Dr. Daniel Pekarsky

3:45pm-4:00pm  
4:00 pm-4:45 pm  
Session 5

Break

*Art, History and Community: Seeing Diversity in Jewish Life*  
Jody Hirsh

4:45 pm-6:15 pm  
6:15 pm-7:00 pm  
7:00 pm-7:50 pm  
8:15 pm-9:45 pm  
Session 6

Break  
Cocktails  
Dinner

*Diversity in the JCC: Our Own Experiences – Part I*  
Dr. Barry Holtz

**WEDNESDAY MAY 9**

7:30 am-8:30 am  
8:30 am-11:00 am  
Session 7

Breakfast

*Diversity in the JCC: Our Own Experiences – Part II*  
Jonny Ariel, Dr. Barry Holtz, Richie Juran

11:00 am-12:00 noon  
Session 8

*Looking Forward: Next Steps*  
Cippi Harte, Joy Rochwarger  
Lunch/Departure

12:00 noon-1:00 pm

***ROSTER***

**JCCA JEWISH EDUCATORS INITIATIVE**  
**Introductory Seminar with Executive Directors and Jewish Educators**  
**Monday, May 7 – Wednesday, May 9, 2001**  
**Pearl River Hilton**

**FACULTY and STAFF**

Jonny Ariel  
Senior Education Officer  
Mandel School  
101 Hebron Road  
PO Box 10613  
Jerusalem, Israel 93553  
Phone: (011) 972-2-568-8810  
Fax: (011) 972-2-673-5229  
E-mail: ja@vms.huji.ac.il

Daniel Gordis  
Director, Jerusalem Fellows  
Mandel School  
101 Hebron Rd.  
PO Box 10613  
Jerusalem, Israel 93553  
Phone: (011) 972-2-568-8888  
Fax: (011) 972-2-673-5229  
E-mail: gordis@mandelschool.org.il

Howard Charish  
Director, Leadership Initiatives  
Mandel Foundation  
15 East 26th Street, Room 1817  
New York, NY 10010  
Phone: 212-532-2360  
Fax: 212-532-2646  
E-mail: hcharish@mandelny.org

Pattie Cippi Harte  
Coordinator of Jewish Ed. Services  
JCC Association  
15 E. 26th Street  
New York, NY 10010  
Phone: 212-532-4958, ext. 275  
Fax: 212-481-4174  
E-mail: pcharte@jcca.org

Allan Finkelstein  
President  
JCC Association  
15 E. 26th Street  
New York, NY 10010  
Phone: 212-532-4949, ext. 207  
Fax: 212-481-4174  
E-mail: jccal@jcca.org

Barry Holtz  
Senior Education Officer  
Mandel Foundation  
15 East 26th Street, Room 1817  
New York, NY 10010  
Phone: 212-532-2360  
Fax: 212-532-2646  
E-mail: bholtz@mandelny.org

Jennifer Glaser  
Editorial Assistant  
Mandel Foundation  
15 East 26th Street, Room 1817  
New York, NY 10010  
Phone: 212-532-2360  
Fax: 212-532-2646  
E-mail: jglaser@mandelny.org

Richie Juran  
Director  
JCC Association Israel Office  
12 Hess Street  
Jerusalem, Israel 94185  
Phone: (011) 972-2-625-1265  
Fax: (011) 972-2-624-7767  
E-mail: rjuran@jcca.org

Dan Pekarsky  
Senior Education Officer  
Mandel Foundation  
Old Educational Building  
100 Bascom Hall, Rm. 233  
Madison, WI 53706  
Phone: 608-262-1718

Leonard Rubin  
JCC Association  
15 E. 26th Street  
New York, NY 10010  
Phone: 212-532-4949, ext. 269  
Fax: 212-481-4174  
E-mail: rube@jcca.org

Joy Rochwarger  
Senior Program Officer  
Mandel Foundation  
15 East 26th St., Suite 1817  
New York, NY 10010  
Phone: 212-532-2360  
Fax: 212-532-2646  
E-mail: jrochwarger@mandelny.org

ATTENDEES

Harold Benus  
Executive Director  
Bergen County Y, a Jewish Community  
Center  
605 Pascack Rd.  
Washington Township, NJ 07676  
Phone: 201-666-6610, ext. 262  
Fax: 201-664-7518  
E-mail: hbenus@aol.com

Nina Beth Cardin  
Rabbi, Director of Jewish Life  
JCC of Greater Baltimore  
3506 Gwynnbrook Ave.  
Owings Mills, MD 21117  
Phone: 410-356-5200, ext. 343  
Fax: 410-581-0561  
E-mail: nicardin@jtsa.edu

Robert Cahen  
Chief Executive Officer  
Cleveland JCC  
26001 S. Woodland  
Beachwood, OH 44122  
Phone: 216-831-0700, ext. 335  
Fax: 216-831-7796  
E-mail: cahen@clevejcc.org

Dr. Avrum I. Cohen  
General Director  
JCC of Chicago  
One South Franklin  
Suite 905  
Chicago, IL 60606  
Phone: 312-357-4690  
Fax: 312-855-3283  
E-mail: acohen@jccofchicago.org

Mark Dindas  
Executive Director  
Springfield JCC  
1160 Dickinson St.  
Springfield, MA 01108  
Phone: 413-739-4715  
Fax: 413-739-4747  
E-mail: mdindas@jcca.org

Dr. Gavriel Goldman  
Director, Jewish Nature Center  
New Jersey YMHA-YWHA Camps  
21 Plymouth Street  
Fairfield, NJ 07004  
Phone: 570-296-1756  
Fax: 973-729-6199  
E-mail: gabe@njycamps.org

Joel Dinkin  
Executive Director  
Columbus JCC  
1125 College Avenue  
Columbus, OH 43209  
Phone: 614-231-2731  
Fax: 614-231-8222  
E-mail: jdinkin@columbusjcc.org

Hal Greenwald  
Director of Education  
Detroit JCC  
6600 W Maple Road  
West Bloomfield, MI 48322  
Phone: 248-661-7634  
Fax: 248-661-7711  
E-mail: hgreenwald@jccdet.org

Janet Elam  
Executive Director  
Austin JCC  
7300 Hart Lane  
Austin, TX 78731  
Phone: 512-735-8006  
Fax: 512-735-8001  
E-mail: janet.elam@jfaustin.org

Jody Hirsh  
The Harry & Rose Samson Family JCC  
6255 N. Santa Monica Blvd.  
Milwaukee, WI 53217  
Phone: 414-967-8199  
Fax: 414-964-0922  
E-mail: jody\_hirsh@jcca.org

Rabbi Jeffrey L. Falick  
Jewish Educator  
Dave and Mary Alper JCC  
11155 SW 112 Ave.  
Miami, FL 33176  
Phone: 305-271-9000, ext. 239  
Fax: 305-595-1902  
E-mail: rabbi@alperjcc.org

Melanie Kohler Levav  
JCH of Bensonhurst  
7802 Bay Parkway  
Brooklyn, NY 11214  
Phone: 718-331-6800  
Fax: 718-232-8461  
E-mail: melanie@jchb.org

Jonathan Fass  
Jewish Education Specialist  
JCCs of Greater Los Angeles  
5870 W. Olympic Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90036  
Phone: 323-938-2531, ext. 2280  
Fax: 323-954-9175  
E-mail: jonathan\_fass@jcc-gla.org

Nina Lieberman Giladi  
Executive Vice President  
JCCs of Greater Los Angeles  
6505 Wilshire Blvd. #350  
Los Angeles, CA 90048  
Phone: 323-761-8761, ext. 1  
Fax: 323-761-8762  
E-mail: nina\_giladi@jcc-gla.org

Phil Miller  
Director, Helene Mirowitz Dept. of Jewish  
Life  
St. Louis JCC  
#2 Millstone Campus Drive  
St. Louis, MO 63146  
Phone: 314-432-5700, ext. 3295  
Fax: 314-432-5825  
E-mail: pmiller@jccstl.org

Len Robinson  
Executive Director  
New Jersey YMHA-YWHA Camps  
21 Plymouth Street  
Fairfield, NJ 07004  
Phone: 973-575-3333, ext. 120  
Fax: 973-575-4188  
E-mail: len@njycamps.org

Rabbi Nina Mizrahi  
Director, Pritzker Center for Jewish  
Education  
JCC of Chicago  
5050 West Church Street  
Skokie, IL 60077  
Phone: 847-763-3621  
Fax: 847-675-2914  
E-mail: nmizrahi@jccofchicago.org

Ed Rosen  
Executive Director  
Dave and Mary Alper JCC  
11155 SW 112 Ave.  
Miami, FL 33176  
Phone: 305-271-9000  
Fax: 305-271-8661  
E-mail: jccanna@aol.com

Rabbi David Nelson  
Director, Jewish Life Connection  
Bergen County Y JCC  
605 Pascack Rd.  
Washington Township, NJ 07676  
Phone: 201-666-6610, ext. 291  
Fax: 201-664-7518  
E-mail: dnelson\_yjcc@yahoo.com

Jay R. Roth  
Executive Director  
The Harry & Rose Samson Family JCC  
6255 N. Santa Monica Blvd.  
Milwaukee, WI 53217  
Phone: 414-964-4444  
Fax: 414-964-1345  
E-mail: jrrexec@jcca.org

Aliza Orent  
Director of Jewish Education  
Austin JCC  
7300 Hart Lane  
Austin, TX 78748  
Phone: 512-735-8030  
Fax: 512-735-8001  
E-mail: aliza\_orent@jcca.org

Buddy Sapolsky  
Executive Director  
JCC of Greater Baltimore  
3506 Gwynnbrook Ave.  
Owings Mills, MD 21117  
Phone: 410-356-5200, ext. 301  
Fax: 410-356-5440  
E-mail: bsaposky@jcca.org

Rabbi Jonathan Perlman  
Director of Jewish Education  
Springfield JCC  
1160 Dickinson St.  
Springfield, MA 01108  
Phone: 413-739-4715  
Fax: 413-739-4747  
E-mail: Jonathan\_Perlman@jcca.org

Debbie Schwartz  
Director, Dept. of Jewish Life & Learning  
Columbus JCC  
1125 College Avenue  
Columbus, OH 43209  
Phone: 614-231-2731  
Fax: 614-231-8222  
E-mail: dschwartz@columbusjcc.org

David Sorkin  
Executive Director  
Detroit JCC  
6600 W Maple Road  
West Bloomfield, MI 48322  
Phone: 248-661-1008  
Fax: 248-661-3680  
E-mail: dsorkin@jccdet.org

Howard Wasserman  
Executive Vice President  
JCH of Bensonhurst  
7802 Bay Parkway  
Brooklyn, NY 11214  
Phone: 718-331-6800  
Fax: 718-232-8461  
E-mail: howard@jchb.org

Ken Weintraub  
Associate Executive Director  
St. Louis JCC  
#2 Millstone Campus Drive,  
St. Louis, MO 63146  
Phone: 314-432-5700, ext. 3147  
Fax: 314-432-5825  
E-mail: kweintraub@jccstl.org

Rabbi Larry Zierler  
Assistant Executive Director and Director of  
Jewish Life and Learning  
Cleveland JCC  
26001 S. Woodland  
Beachwood, OH 44122  
Phone: 216-831-0700, ext. 303  
Fax: 216-831-7796  
E-mail: lzierler@clevejcc.org

***SESSION 1***  
***GROUP ASSIGNMENTS***  
***PRE-SEMINAR ASSIGNMENTS***

*JCC Jewish Educators Initiative*  
*May 7 -9, 2001*  
*Pearl River Hilton*

Group Assignments:

Monday, May 7  
Session 1

Group 1

Aliza Orent/Janet Elam  
Gabe Goldman/Len Robinson  
Larry Zierler/Bob Cahen  
Phil Miller/Ken Weintraub

Group 2

Melanie Kohler-Levav/Howard Wasserman  
Jody Hirsh/Jay Roth  
Jeffrey Falick/Ed Rosen

Group 3

Nina Beth Cardin/Buddy Sapolsky  
Debbie Schwartz/Joel Dinkin  
David Nelson/Harold Benus

Group 4

Hal Greenwald/David Sorkin  
Nina Mizrahi/Avrum Cohen  
Jonathan Fass/Nina Leiberman-Giladi  
Jonathan Perlman/Mark Dindas

*JCC Jewish Educators Initiative*

*May 7 -9, 2001*

*Pearl River Hilton*

“What Is a Jew? –  
Challenges from the Tradition to Contemporary Jewish Life”

Discussion Questions for Breakout Groups

- The sources we discussed in our formal session illustrated a variety of models of how the Jewish tradition understood what it means to be a Jew. How well do each of these models fit the contemporary American scene, and to what extent do typical members of the JCC world define themselves and their Jewishness in light of any of these models?
- Are you personally comfortable with any one of these models as the defining core of what constitutes Jewishness? Why? Why not? What elements would you add? What elements would you remove?
- Do you think that we ought to even engage in the attempt to define the core elements of Jewishness as this session did? What are the benefits of such definitions? What are the costs? Can such definitions realistically be avoided?
- Are there any other models, not mentioned in the sources we discussed, which might better characterize the “core” of what constitutes Jewish belonging in contemporary America?
- What overall picture about Judaism, Jews and Jewishness emerges from the texts we’ve reviewed? In what ways should this picture be reflected in the life and aims of a JCC? What are the elements of the picture that emerges that we would most want to *avoid* when shaping the world of the JCC?

JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER [REDACTED]

Mandel Executive / Educator Seminar

Pre-Seminar Assignment

April 13, 2001

From: [REDACTED]

*Presentation of the Issue:*

Our Center was called by Rabbi X who informed the Executive Director that one of the Center staff was a member of a messianic temple, i.e. a "Jews for Jesus."

*How was the issue presented to the Center?*

One call was made to the Executive Director (me) by Rabbi X of a local congregation. The call was somewhat hostile indicating that Rabbi X's desire to have the staff person fired from his position of PE worker. (Rabbi X found out about the staff persons "beliefs" from Rabbi Y, also from a local congregation. Rabbi Y found out about the staff person during a confidential counseling session. Rabbi Y called Rabbi X because Rabbi X had married the staff persons brother and knew the family). I listened to Rabbi X during a very emotional conversation and tried to "weed out" the facts from the emotions. After hearing out Rabbi X, I noted my thanks for the information and also suggested that my knowledge of the situation was not "reason" for firing.

Rabbi X took great offense to my response but suggested that I call Rabbi Y given his prominent role in the Jewish community.

Upon hanging up with Rabbi X, I called Rabbi [REDACTED] the Center's Director of Jewish Education. Almost simultaneous to my call from Rabbi X, Rabbi [REDACTED] was also called by Rabbi Y. We traded stories and then called in [REDACTED] the management staff who supervises the staff person in question. [REDACTED] was surprised to hear about this situation and had no indication of any concern from a parent, other members, etc.

***What was the process for decision making?***

The Center staff group agreed that there were several issues;

- Protecting the religious beliefs of our staff member
- Political concerns related to the Rabbis' concerns and demand for dismissal of the staff
- Legal ramification
- Communication issues with the Board and staff if this information were to be made public.

Given this information the following action plan was agreed upon;

- I would call the President and the Center's legal council.
- The staff supervisor would determine if there was any impact on other staff or participants
- Rabbi [REDACTED] would maintain contact with both Rabbis

***What was the follow-up?***

I convened a conference call with our President and legal council. Our legal council was very directive, in that, as long as the employee was keeping their "beliefs" private, this was not an employment issue. We, the Center, are an EO employer and the employees religious beliefs had no bearing on their job performance. In fact the employee had a good work record.

Rabbi [REDACTED] informed both Rabbis that we were following up with legal council. They both separately noted that if this happened at their congregations they would fire the employee.

I spoke to Rabbi Y and he continued to push the issue. I noted that he was treading on thin ice given the fact that he had betrayed the staff person's confidentiality, in that the information about his connection to Jews for Jesus was conveyed in a counseling session.

***How was the issue resolved.***

First of all, both the Center staff and lay leadership were very firm about protecting the employees right to his own religious beliefs. We also kept our discussions in strict confidence.

Given the advice of council and the fact that we did not have any indication that the employee was or had discussed his beliefs with anyone else, we determined that it was a non-issue and dropped further discussion.

I called both Rabbis and decisively communicated our position. They both dropped the issue. Rabbi [REDACTED] followed up with each Rabbi.

**What Jewish concepts / values were brought to bear on the decision-making process?**

I (Rabbi [REDACTED]) don't believe that it is pushing the halachic concept too far in asserting that with this issue we dealt with matters of *r'shut harabim* (public domain) and *reshut hayachid* (private domain.) As an agency we have no evidence of this staff member's having tried to influence religiously anyone

associated with the Jewish Community Center. Hence his r'shut harabim behavior was in line with community norms and posed no threats.

This staffer's situation, I think, can also be compared to that of the *ger*. "Stranger" is mentioned a surprising 77 times in the Chumash alone. Extensive protection is afforded the *ger*, with God warning the children of Israel that any neglect of the stranger will result in severe punishment, even death by the sword (Shemot 22:23.) The *ger* is to be given Shabbat off, adequate provisions, his pick of the corners of the fields (*pe'ah*), and the Rambam goes much further in the Mishneh Torah. The directive to not oppress the stranger is terribly strong and insistent. In addition to the legal issues surrounding this issue which precluded the JCC from taking action, there is distinct Torah precedent for not pursuing what has, for this "stranger" in our Jewish community, been a strictly private matter.

We host a variety of Shabbaton retreats at our camp in [REDACTED] and attract the widest range of ideologies and practices. This always gives rise to how we will deal with questions related to the type of programming we do on Shabbat, issues related to use of microphone in dining room, etc.

The issue is one that we are aware of and is made a part of the planning process well before the actual retreat. We established a policy to deal with these issues after speaking with the Jewish educators at JCCs and local rabbis.

=====

Resolution led to the following guidelines:

1. We have a kosher eruv enclosing a significant portion of the main campground, cabin and dining room area for those who require it.
2. We do not use a microphone or adjust lights at public events. What participants do in their own cabins is their decision.
3. We offer a wide variety of programs on Shabbat including those which Shomer Shabbat participants cannot participate in. Therefore, we make certain to offer the same programs the next day and give the Orthodox participants preference in sign up for these programs.
4. We make Sunday our Jewish nature project day and do not do these projects on Shabbat.
5. All Jewish nature activities, walks, etc. conducted on Shabbat are of a Shomer Shabbat status.

In general, we make it possible for everyone to participate in large group gatherings, enable those who are not Shabbat observant to have a full range of programs and activities on Shabbat but ensure that no one feels discriminated against by offering the same programs when it is not Shabbat.

The overriding Jewish value was b'chirah -- free choice. Those that have chosen to be Shomer Shabbat have the right to this choice. Those who exercise the choice of not being Shomer Shabbat have the right to exercise this choice.

## Pre-Seminar Assignment

[REDACTED] Jewish Community Center

A number of years ago before the creation of a Department of Jewish Education at our JCC, Temple [REDACTED] a Conservative synagogue, sought funding from our community endowment foundation for a "community" Shabbaton for [REDACTED]. It was defined as a "community" project by B [REDACTED] because all members of the [REDACTED] Jewish community were invited to attend. In their deliberations, the Foundation wanted to understand the inclusive nature of this program. Would all Jews affiliated with the different movements in our community feel comfortable at Shabbat services? How would [REDACTED] design a program that include the disparate ideologies and styles of our community? The director of the Jewish Community Center, [REDACTED], was asked to intervene to arbitrate the decision between B [REDACTED] and the other synagogues in the community. The Foundation reasoned that, as the neutral player in the community, the JCC was best equipped to reach a compromise on this issue.

B [REDACTED] had proposed an egalitarian worship service with guitar music. These features were not acceptable to the traditional and Orthodox synagogues in the community. It was finally agreed that a creative Shabbat morning convocation would be created. It would not be called a "service" and would not include the Torah service obviating the need for adherence to a particular community's interpretation of halacha. It would be pluralistic in nature and a guitar would not be used.

The JCC's proposal was brought to the rabbi at B [REDACTED] and he did not accept the revised program. He claimed that it would defeat the liturgical nature of Shabbat services and would be an opportunity lost in teaching his community about Shabbat. The Foundation turned down the proposal and the program was scrapped.

This issue represents a perennial issue between the JCC and other synagogues in our community. Which institution is best suited for organizing community-wide programs? Is the synagogue a central address for the celebration of community celebrations such as Hanukkah or Yom Haatzmaut? What role does the JCC in serving these disparate communities and uniting them in community planning?

A coda: This year under the direction of our new Department of Jewish Education, the synagogues jointly participated in bringing a visiting scholar and entertainer for "Shabbat across [REDACTED]." The scholar was scheduled to speak at six synagogues during Shabbat evening, morning, and afternoon services. He geared the worship style and his remarks to each audience and every rabbi in the community turned out for a community Havdalah service at night. The program was successful in that the tradition of each community was respected and the choice of speaker was appropriate for each venue.

JOINT EXECUTIVE AND SENIOR JEWISH EDUCATORS' SEMINAR  
OF THE JCCA AND THE MANDEL FOUNDATION  
May 7 - 9, 2001

Pre-Seminar Assignment

[REDACTED]

YOM HaSHOAH DEBATES

Recently our JCC has become more involved in creating a coordinated effort for Holocaust programming in our community. The JCC has been approached by a local survivors' organization, the [REDACTED] and its [REDACTED] group, to serve as the umbrella agency under which our various community Holocaust programs would take place. In recent years, we have provided a staff liaison person and other services for the planning of the annual Yom Hashoa Commemoration. At the request of the [REDACTED] Foundation, I have taken a more active supervisory role within the Yom Hashoa committee, overseeing its meetings and monitoring its deliberations, with the understanding that eventually the JCC will become the principal organizational arm of this annual commemoration.

THE JCC'S ROLE IN THE CONTROVERSY

To this end, the survivor community this year requested that the JCC's Department for Jewish Life and Learning sign its name on a letter that was sent to all of the Rabbis in the community, encouraging them to participate in the annual Yom Hashoa Commemoration, specifically the rabbinic procession with which the program begins. Through this procession there is an important demonstration of support for this service from across the community's various religious denominations.

A point was made in the letter to encourage the rabbis to be present, noting that in past years, many have been absent. It called for an end to division and fractionalism. The letter evoked some negative response from certain members of the Orthodox community, in particular the A [REDACTED] organization, whose president, a noted attorney, sent a stinging letter of criticism to both the Yom Hashoa planning committee as well as the JCC, taking exception with the legitimacy that we accord this commemoration, since it takes place in the month of Nissan, a month in which, according to some traditional interpretations, there are to be no memorial services. His letter went so far as to imply that we had insulted those Orthodox rabbis who in previous years have chosen not participate in the procession due to certain *halakhic* objections, and that they were owed an apology. The letter alleges the ignorance of the JCC and the Yom HaShoah Committee concerning Jewish law and tradition, especially as it pertains to this time in the Jewish calendar.

### VARIOUS RESPONSES

The letter was received not only by my office and that of our chief executive, but by the representatives of our various Holocaust Memorial and survivor organizations. Some of that leadership was of the opinion that a rebuttal was necessary. Others, including myself, felt that this is a point that could be argued ad infinitum, in that it represents what are strong theological tendencies and differences. I decided to discuss it with the lay leadership of the [REDACTED] organizations, as well as with one of the co-chairs of the Yom Hashoah Commemoration. I also discussed the matter with our JCC chief executive. The decision concerning the appropriate response was left up to me. I chose to let the matter pass. To engage in rebuttals and refutations of these theological points and areas of practice, I felt, would create greater dissension and tension in the community.

## REASONS FOR THE RESPONSES

### **I. Detractors**

Various values and belief systems are brought to bear in this matter, particularly as they relate to the State of Israel and the various Jewish communal observances that take place in the period immediately following Passover. The JCC, as a key gateway and umbrella organization in the community, usually serves in some administrative or coordinating capacity for these events. Because of the decision made a few years ago to specifically reach out to Rabbis and create this rabbinic procession, we touch upon sensitivities and issues of religious orientation and ideology. For one, there are many in the Orthodox community who hold fast to their position that Yom Hashoah is an inappropriate commemoration for the horrors of the Holocaust. They contend that other opportunities already exist in the Jewish calendar to pay memorial tribute to these tragic periods. Additionally, some Orthodox rabbis take exception to the committee's decision to hold this annual event in either a Reform or Conservative synagogue sanctuary. They feel that it would be better to have it held at a neutral site. These issues, in turn, bring to the fore a tremendous response of pain and anguish, frustration and anger from the survivor community that cannot understand how a segment of the community, not to mention rabbinic leaders, can take exception to this program.

### **II. Supporters**

Experience has shown that the survivor community is rather single-minded in its dedication to this commemoration, which it sees as an inviolate experience and expression of our collective pain. A great divide exists, however, among survivors, who come from either a less observant or more observant orientation. This is an example of a conflict that does not lend itself easily to resolution because of the level of emotion associated with it. And yet, these tensions might easily continue to increase as the more

right-wing Orthodox community, which is no longer distant from or invisible at the JCC, continues to grow in size, influence and scope and will, in turn, more actively and vocally question and criticize the leadership and organizational positions taken by the JCC. The level of debate might also increase as the [REDACTED] group, the organization of children of survivors, becomes more involved and focused in perpetuating Holocaust education and commemorative programs, albeit with less of an understanding of and appreciation for religious issues, given this group's high level of intermarriage and religious alienation.

### FUTURE PLANS

I would, however, contend that some forum needs to be created in which these issues can be discussed, separate and apart from the planning of the Yom HaShoah program, which does not lend itself to much theological interpretation. That annual program has proven itself to be of a very narrow nature in terms of its focus and feel, and these associated debates and discussions only create what is seen by survivors as an assault on the memory and a disregard for their shared suffering. However, I bring this matter as an example for discussion, because issues around the Holocaust and its associated theological issues and the kinds of Holocaust educational and commemorative programs that might be assumed under the aegis of the JCC, will continue to create certain fault lines in our various communities.

Our challenge, in turn, will be to determine and measure the necessary responses to these issues of great emotional and moral import, and to create opportunities for constructive engagement with our various constituencies.

[REDACTED]

## Pre-Seminar Assignment

[REDACTED]

### The issue:

The [REDACTED] JCC had a tradition of opening the Health and Fitness Center each Saturday at 1pm. Inspired by a JCCA Conference presentation by Rabbi I [REDACTED], several professional and lay members of our JCC decided to suggest that the JCC consider opening on Saturday mornings, as well.

### How the issue presented itself:

There were two primary considerations as the issue was raised. The first arose from a desire to become more competitive, particularly with other health and fitness facilities around the community. The other consideration grew out of a desire to have a non-religious Jewish space available to our members on Shabbat, where a Shabbat ambiance might be created in a non-religious setting. It was thought that there are many Jews who would enjoy and Jewish cultural setting on Shabbat morning that was distinct from synagogue.

### The process for decision making and the key players:

The JCC, fresh off the creation of an extensive Jewish Strategic Plan, convened a year-long process to examine the implications of opening on Shabbat and to determine what types of activities or programming would be appropriate. The initial process focused on Board study and a special Shabbat committee which utilized Jewish texts and traditions to examine the variety of Jewish attitudes toward and observances of Shabbat. In addition to this internal leadership education, Board members held individual meetings with local rabbis and convened a panel of local rabbis. They met with Federation lay and professional leaders and even presented their concepts at the Synagogue Relations Committee of the Federation. In addition to all this, they participated in a Retreat with Rabbi K [REDACTED] to study the Shabbat expansion programming. Finally, any one with an opinion was welcomed to share their point of view.

### What was decided and resolved:

Ultimately, the Board voted to expand Shabbat hours from the afternoon to the morning. They approved free, non-competitive programming that was in keeping with the mood of Shabbat. Since then, the Health & Fitness Center has been fully open on Shabbat mornings. After experimenting with some adult activities that proved less than successful, the focus was moved to family arts and crafts projects. In addition, the Health & Fitness Center features banners that wish people "Shabbat Shalom," Jewish and Israeli music (in the workout areas), and constantly playing Jewish music videos. The overall effect is to create a quiet and peaceful family-oriented ambiance that is much different from the hustle-bustle of day to day Health Center programming. While the formal programming is not extensive, there have been occasional Shabbat lunches and other programs that are now made possible by the Center's opening. (So, for instance, just this week, the ECD Chavurah held a Shabbat luncheon and program.)

Jewish values and concepts:

The Center was forced to weigh many different competing images of Shabbat and, ultimately, design its own. It is certainly a different atmosphere from an Orthodox Shabbat or what might be found in the synagogues of any movement. In many ways, the Center has the relaxed feeling of a Shabbat in a secular neighborhood of Israel: the music, the language, the child-centered activities, and the quiet mood all lend themselves to the sense that this place is different on Saturday than on any other day because it is Shabbat. While this differs from the program of a religious institution, it retains a high quality of Jewish character, albeit drawn from a more secular Jewish cultural model.

# Jewish Community Center

## JCCA/Mandel Jewish Educators' Initiative

### *Pre-seminar Assignment*

#### **Primary Issue:**

If people are not coming to adult education opportunities, does it mean that we are not meeting their needs; or, does it mean that we are not working together as a community to make adult education accessible? Or perhaps both. How can the community as a whole be more inclusive to all segments and target groups?

#### **Sub Issue:**

Adult education in nearly all forums in [redacted] tend to center on issues related either to religion or Israel, with a few additional programs by public relations institutions about current events. Do we need to find issues and topics that engage Jews who are alienated or disinterested in the above?

#### **Background**

Adult Jewish education is offered in the [redacted] community in a very sporadic and uncoordinated manner. Other than the JCC, there are a few places in which Jewish education is offered regularly and has an organized structure. They include: a consortium of 3 synagogues that offers a cluster of classes 2 semesters per year; the local campus of the University of [redacted], the [redacted] Jewish Learning [redacted] that offers occasional teachers workshops and a Day of Learning and Hebrew Ulpan, both co-sponsored by the JCC; and, the [redacted] which is conducted by the orthodox community. In addition, individual synagogues also offer classes and speakers for their congregants. Participation in all these classes and programs is very small and tends to attract small overlapping groups of people, so the the total sum of individuals involved in ongoing Jewish education is extremely small.

#### **Concept**

After some dialogue with the Jewish Studies Department of the University, it was felt that Jewish education could be enhanced and participation increased in this community if it was both better coordinated and incentivized in some fashion. The proposal was to identify a method for coordinating Jewish education classes throughout the community and to offer a certificate program through the University for those classes.

**Process:**

We invited rabbis and professionals from all the synagogues, the K [REDACTED] and the University to discuss the status of Jewish Education in the city and to present a very loosely conceived idea of coordination and a possible certificate program. This was designed to be a very open ended meeting which allowed people to discuss their concerns about Jewish education and to float the idea of having a certificate program for individuals who study across time.

**Results:**

All identified agencies and Rabbis from several synagogues were present. All agreed that Jewish education needed enhancement in [REDACTED] some even expression enthusiasm for a combined effort. However, the synagogues did not appear amenable to any coordination or collaboration on a more global level due to various degrees of turf protectiveness. They made it very clear that the programs they conduct at their respective synagogues were essential to providing service to their members.

**Outcome:**

The response appeared one of either disinterest or inaction and, therefore, no follow-up took place.

**Communal Issues:**

- Expanding the pool of participants in adult Jewish education.
- Reducing turf and competitive complications. Each institution felt that it is vital that each needs to show its constituents that it provides services for their needs without
- Minimizing proliferation of conflicting programs at the various institutions.
- Avoiding duplication of resources and opportunities.
- Increasing the effectiveness of marketing and PR directed toward the entire Jewish community.
- Offering a wide spectrum of educational opportunities.
- Including to all types of target groups, including younger Jews of the "Bowling Alone" generation who don't necessarily see a personal and vital connection to Am Yisrael.

**JCC Issues**

- Clarifying the place of Jewish education at the JCC.
- Defining the role of the JCC exec and Jewish educator in this process.
- Defining how the JCC works with the various institutions regardless of the overall community structure.
- Specifying how the JCC's contribution to adult education is different than the synagogues.
- Deciding how the JCC can take the lead in a community initiative that won't invoke competition, distrust and turf consciousness among the various groups.

Submitted by

[REDACTED]

## CASE STUDY FOR JCC JEWISH EDUCATOR/EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SEMINAR

Submitted by [REDACTED]  
and [REDACTED]  
Jewish Community Center [REDACTED]

The JCC allocates close to one million dollars per year in scholarship for its many different programs and services. To make this possible, creative fundraising opportunities are continually being developed. One such initiative has been the opportunity to solicit corporations for sponsorships of JCC events. Indeed, these corporate sponsorships have made it possible for the Center to meet its scholarship demands each year. At times, the Center has been confronted with a Jewish ethical dilemma proposed by the nature of the corporation interested in donating to the JCC. One such instance was an opportunity for corporate sponsorship from a non-kosher food chain. The dilemma was heightened by the fact that the sponsorship would be for the Annual Jewish Book Festival. This premier event is one of the highlights of this Jewish community's Jewish education offerings each year.

On the one hand, the Center felt compelled to accept this generous sponsorship in order to help meet the very real human needs of single parent and New American families seek scholarships for Early Childhood, camping and other essential services. On the other hand, the Center realized the clear conflict in attaching the name of a non-kosher food establishment to its premier Jewish education event of the year. Kashrut is an essential Jewish value to which the Center is committed. The third component of the conflict was the realization that certain components of the Jewish community who are involved in both the planning and the customer base of Jewish Book Festival would be offended by seeing the name of this food chain promoted in Jewish Book Festival literature.

The discussion on this dilemma began between the JCC's Director of Jewish Life and its Associate Executive Director who supervised the agency's development operations. This conversation was then expanded to the agency's professional Management Team. Eventually, a policy emerged from these discussions and it was brought to the JCC's Board of Directors. After a full discussion at the Board level, the policy was accepted and is in place.

That policy is an attempt to balance the different competing concerns. It recognizes and validates the agency's needs to aggressively pursue corporate sponsorships throughout the corporate sector. It does not categorically rule out any particular type of corporation such as a non-kosher food chain. However, it recognizes that certain corporations may be an inappropriate match for certain specific events. Ultimately, it gives license to the Executive Director to make final decisions on which corporations should be pursued for which events. Subsequently, similar complex situations have arisen. The Executive Director has made his decisions based on dialogue with the Director of Jewish Life and then with the agency's Executive Committee.

### Pre-Seminar Assignment

[REDACTED]

The Jewish Community Centers [REDACTED] values Jewish pluralism and seeks to serve all members of the diverse [REDACTED] Jewish community with quality programming. Our agency is committed to offering the entire [REDACTED] community equal access to our services with respect for the values of all we serve.

In a specific instance, the members of the [REDACTED] Jewish Community Center ([REDACTED] JCC) requested that their center remain open during the Jewish holidays of Passover and Shavuot. The lay leadership brought this request to the senior staff of the [REDACTED] JCC. The staff was reticent to open during these holidays because they felt it prevented the Jewish staff of the [REDACTED] JCC their opportunity to celebrate. In addition, the staff of the [REDACTED] JCC felt that this request was motivated by the inconvenience that these closures would cause working parents, both Jewish and not Jewish, that did not celebrate these holidays.

The senior staff of the [REDACTED] JCC consulted with the Jewish Education Specialist in order to develop a policy for holiday openings. The Jewish Education Specialist was opposed to holiday openings because it violated the opportunity for [REDACTED] JCC staff to celebrate, it presented a negative message to the larger [REDACTED] Jewish Community, and it violated the fundamental spirit of the holidays.

Nevertheless, the [REDACTED] JCC decided to open for these holidays on a one-time trial basis with a modification in programming to include an enhanced Jewish curriculum. This curriculum was developed in collaboration with the Jewish Education [REDACTED]. In addition, the staff of the [REDACTED] JCC encouraged parents to join in the holiday programming with their children throughout the day.

In an evaluation of the program after Shavuot, it was determined that the membership of the [REDACTED] JCC was interested in holiday openings only to benefit their childcare needs. Parents did not participate in the holiday programming nor did they offer to assist as volunteers throughout these openings. Needless to say, the staff of the [REDACTED] JCC were disappointed that they were required to give up their celebrations of the holiday to satisfy the membership's needs. The [REDACTED] JCC has determined that it will not open again for holiday programming.

[REDACTED]

## Case Material on Inclusion

Historically, our Center has offered afterschool childcare four days per week. The program did not run on Fridays due to early Shabbat closings during the winter months. Also, the presence of our own Orthodox synagogue in our building added another factor to the mix. (The synagogue has been part of the agency for 74 years as a regular, budgeted program). The [REDACTED] is open on Shabbat and holidays but only for synagogue.

This year, due to increased parent demand, staff went to the Board with a recommendation that Friday after-school be offered. The proposal was for an Oneg Shabbat program designed in consonance with Shabbat.

After a lively discussion, the Board was very supportive of the proposed program. It was approved with the understanding that it be done without upsetting people in the community. It was suggested that some discussion take place, and sensitivities be listened to.

A meeting was set with the [REDACTED] Rabbi, a local Board member and the Executive Director. The Director of Jewish Education was not included as [REDACTED] was new to her position.

The meeting turned quite tense. The Rabbi was totally opposed to the program quoting "Marat Ayin" as the main reason. He was concerned about parents driving cars to the center, and picking up their kids after Shabbat starts. He was very concerned about his rabbinic colleagues (Orthodox), and said he wouldn't be surprised if we were picketed if we did the program. Although like all JCCs we are pluralistic, the reality of having our own Orthodox shul mitigates against inclusivity quite often.

A solution was found. A discussion with the local Reform rabbi was quite positive. For a reasonable fee, we agreed to rent space at the Temple to offer afterschool programming. While it added to our costs, and was more difficult for staff (supplies, snacks, etc. had to be transported every week), this solution enabled us to start the program, establish a closer working relationship with the Reform synagogue and its rabbi, and avoid some community acrimony. The [REDACTED] rabbi was quite satisfied with this approach (although some staff feel it's an imperfect solution).

The Jewish value that was operative is Shalom Bayit. The goal was to meet parents and children's needs for childcare.

P.S. — The program is terrific and has been well received by our kids and their families.

4/23/01

## JCCA JEWISH EDUCATORS INITIATIVE

ASSIGNMENT May 3, 2001

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

The Jewish Community [REDACTED] opened its doors January of 2000 to the delight of the local Jewish community that had been waiting over eight years for the event to occur. Initially we had one year of a Honeymoon phase during which the [REDACTED] could do no wrong. Now, after a year, we are beginning to have issues that will allow for good use of Jewish values in order to solve problems.

An example of such a process which incorporates these values was the creation of this year's Yom HaShoah commemoration.

A committee was formed consisting of the chair of the Community Relations Council-part of the J [REDACTED], a co-chair for Yom HaShoah; a professor from the University [REDACTED] specializing in Holocaust studies; a child of a survivor; a survivor and additional interested parties. We sent a call out to the board of Rabbis to send a representative to these meetings to coordinate our efforts, they chose not to send anyone or were too busy to attend.

The committee spent about four months formulating plans for a variety of events and for outreach opportunities for the Non-Jewish community, including; libraries (creation of displays); bookstores, other faith communities and churches. A □ reading of the names vigil □ was organized which was held at the State Capitol during which a multitude of individuals, church groups, children from the [REDACTED] Jewish Community Day School and the American Red Cross staff read the names of those that were murdered.

An evening observance was planned with heavy emphasis on the educational aspect of the future of Yom HaShoah commemorations. A presentation/lecture was planned with an interactive element requiring individuals to participate in a dialogue about why we commemorate the Shoah and what will happen after all the survivors have passed away. The program would start, however, with a relatively brief (20 minute) service led by the local rabbis.

There were a number of problems with the planning that became apparent one week prior to the actual commemoration. The board of Rabbis felt that given our plans, there was not adequate time for an actual service and instead, they decided that they wanted to have a separate service at a synagogue after the reading of the names vigil, which was to take place the evening before the other commemorative service planned by the committee.

To say that all Heck broke loose is a gross understatement. Most of the committee began to let their feelings be heard via email. Many were angry with the Rabbis for wanting to change the plans one week before the commemoration was to be held and for not having attended any of the planning meetings.

A meeting was scheduled immediately to figure out how to address the concerns of both sides. Both the president of the J [REDACTED] as well as the CEO were asked to join us as well as a representative of the board of Rabbis. Initially the debate was heated, as several committee members expressed frustration with the fact that the rabbis never bothered to give input earlier, and now wanted to change the entire event at the last minute.

To make a long story short: we attempted to create a compromise and SHALOM BAYIT by providing the board of rabbis 25 minutes (they used 45 minutes at the actual event which annoyed the committee too) to create a meaningful yet traditional service, followed by a speech entitled □ Commemorating For The Future □. There was no interactive component, however, the committee is determined to have one next year. In addition we asked that in the future the board of rabbis make a concerted effort to attend event planning requiring rabbinical input.

I am not sure if we were all 100% happy with the end result, however, for the moment there was communal Shalom Bayit. For the sake of the community, we felt that it was important that the lay committee and the rabbis come to an agreement together, a compromise, and not be seen to hold their own, separate commemorations. My concerns for the future are more about getting younger individuals involved with programming around Yom HaShoah. If the board of rabbis come in at the last minute and asks for changes after a committee has formulated the commemoration, will the younger people who are only just now getting involved as lay committee members feel undermined and not acknowledged? Only the future will tell.

And to end this all; three citations to provide more food for thought on the issue:

The purpose of the laws of the Torah are to promote compassion, loving-kindness and peace in the world.  
-Moses Maimonides

A rabbi is listening to two opposing sides of a Talmudic argument. After hearing the first one, he says, "you're right." Then, after hearing the second one, he says "and you're right." Immediately the tzin butts in: "but rabbi, they can't both be right!" To which the rabbi replies, "and you're right too."

No matter what side of the argument you are on, you always find people on your side that you wish were on the other.  
Jascha Heifetz

JCCA Jewish Educators Initiative  
May 7-9, 2001

Pre-Seminar Assignment

Submitted by

[REDACTED]

Kashrut

Shortly after beginning my position as Director of the [REDACTED], a local rabbi raised the issue of how kashrut is handled in one of our largest day camps. About the same time, I received calls from various early childhood directors, camp directors and center directors asking for clarification of the "official" kashrut policy of JCC [REDACTED]. There was no one central policy. We are a system of 7 centers spread throughout [REDACTED], and which includes 13 ECE sites, as well as day and resident camping. The culture and focus of each center is defined by its surrounding demographics, which range from an almost exclusively orthodox center to a center where Jews are in the minority. Historically, policies are set autonomously by each center's board of directors, with central providing basic guidelines.

At the time the issue of kashrut was raised, it became clear that JCC [REDACTED] needed to clarify our agency guidelines regarding kashrut and to embark on a communication plan that clearly explained these policies to lay leaders, staff and members. Current policies were inconsistent and communicated differently by different people in the agency, all resulting in confusion, frustration, and even anger among staff, lay leaders and members. The issues ranged from what is acceptable to bringing into a center to whether it is permissible to enter into a coupon or sponsorship arrangement with a restaurant or food vendor serving non-kosher food.

Our approach to examining this issue as a Jewish communal agency began with the recognition of our obligation to respect and maintain some traditional adherence to kashrut throughout our agency. In recognizing its responsibility to serve a religiously diverse community, the JCC encourages the provision of a level of kashrut that is acceptable to the Jewish community at large, while providing a level of flexibility within the facilities for more informal community meals and gatherings.

We have determined that kashrut need not be an "all or nothing" deal for JCC. Rather, JCC should seek to create an environment where kashrut can be taught and experienced as part of being Jewish, without endorsing one particular approach. Kashrut will be presented as a meaningful expression of Jewish identity and connection to the larger Jewish community, even if our approach reflects the pluralistic nature of our community. To assist our centers in setting their policies, we are providing suggested guidelines to be followed by staff, leadership and members, alike, at all centers and satellites, as well as at the central office and JCC-staff meetings in other locations. We have also put together study materials which focus on the ethics and values reflected in the observance of Jewish dietary laws.

Attached are some of the questions raised in the process of examining this issue.

Possible Considerations for [REDACTED] Kashruth Policies

Some thoughts are we engage in this process... Please feel free to respond! Thanks, Nina

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1. Is any Center kitchen supervised by the Va'ad Hakashruth?  
If not, who does the supervision?  
If it is JCC personnel, are they instructed in the supervising of kashrut?
2. ECE/CAMP: Are we willing to say that "all foods purchased and used in the ECE/Camp departments must be certified kosher?"
3. ECE/CAMP: Are we willing to say: "All lunches consumed in the ECE/Camp Area must be dairy or parve only?"
4. STAFF: Are we willing to say, "Personal consumption of food by staff must be dairy or parve"?
5. Are we willing to say, "All food served at committee meetings conducted under the auspices of JCC, held within the center facility, must be certified kosher"?
6. Are we willing to make all JCC community-wide programs, held on or off site, kosher?
7. CAKE SALES: if held within center, all cakes must be pre-packaged with certified kosher heksher?
8. General policy: Can we make the statement that all functions in which JCC provides food will be strictly kosher? Are there times when food is being provided which and, though not certified kosher, every effort will be made to serve kosher or, at the very minimum, "kosher-style" food?
9. FIELD TRIPS: Will every effort be made on field trips either to take kosher food from the JCC, or to stop in places where participants may purchase either fish, dairy or salad?  
  
Will we make the statement that trips will be allowed even though non-kosher meals will be involved? Would be offer to accommodate individuals requesting kosher food?
10. If our centers are kosher, will any eating area be maintained so that surfaces shall be covered for all kosher events?
11. In the JCCs of Greater Philadelphia, they maintain two levels of kashrut:  
  
LEVEL I: in centers everything is kosher. While they do not use a mashgiach from the Va'ad Hakashruth, they make sure someone knowledgeable in kashruth supervises the kitchens regularly. All products used in the kitchen must be certified kosher. No foods prepared in private homes are permitted.

LEVEL II: these rules apply to committee mtgs, staff events and for functions of some communities using the buidlings, and uphold a rather lenient practice of kashrut. These groups may use home-prepared foods, etc., but may not have access to the JCC kitchen. A kosher-style policy applies: only dairy or parve pizza from a non-Kosher pizzeria may be used; all cookouts must adhere to Level I kashrut; any home-prepared foods or store-bought w/o rabbinic certification, must be dairy, vegetable or fish. No meat is allowed. Only kosher fish allowed. All dairy (certified or not).

.....  
Without a mashgiach on every site, we cannot guarantee a rabbinic certification of kashrut. Are we comfortable with our own standard and oversight?

Even using a "lay mashgiach" could be problematic for our [REDACTED] community.

Would lay people be willing to follow a "kosher-style" policy for all committee mtgs held outside of the centers?

How important is kashrut to us as JCC and what kind of support can be expected from lay leaders for a "certified kosher only policy" for all community events?

Are Central board meetings to be kosher or kosher-style? What about regional & local boards?

Would the community (both to the right and left in areas concerning kashrut) accept across the board a "kosher-style" policy for all events – on or off site, including the expectation that staff and members bringing food into the centers will accept and adhere to this policy?

What impact would our kashrut policy have on fundraising efforts which involve non-kosher food (i.e. sponsorships)

How do we deal with those centers where kosher food is less available, and the population less Jewish?

Goal: to create a policy which is reasonable, clear and consistent in its application on and off-site, and which applies to staff, member and leaders equally.

What are the given restrictions (if any) or parameters which we are obligated to follow?

## PRE-SEMINAR ASSIGNMENT

The Jewish Community Center has recently received funding to develop a Matchmaker program. The impetus for this position came as a result of a study on Young Adults by the JCC and the Jewish Federation. The study reported that this program was an important need for this constituency. The program has been initially funded by the Federation for a two-year period.

Several months ago after much initial research, a Matchmaker was hired and a broad based community-wide committee was established to help develop direction, policy and guidelines.

Last month, the Director received a letter and a phone call from a woman requesting that same sex matching be part of the service. The woman who made this request is an active member of the local Gay/Lesbian Community Center and is working to promote the inclusion of the Jewish gay and lesbian population into the mainstream of the Jewish community.

The request was brought to the Steering Committee, who after lengthy discussion, felt this was an issue beyond their purview.

Unlike some of the other issues that will be presented at this JCCA gathering, this one is a work in progress.

Here are some of the issues that will be explored as we work toward a resolution:

- The fact that there is currently no address for the gay and lesbian population in the organized Jewish community presents an opportunity for positive outreach.
- The JCC, by virtue of its mission, practice, and most recent Vision Statement, believes strongly in being totally inclusive.
- The program could give gay and lesbians the opportunity to establish committed relationships and to build a Jewish home.
- Although a metropolitan community, xxxx is conservative in its social values, and past attempts to include gays and lesbians on a community-wide basis have been largely unsuccessful.
- The Orthodox community, which is 20% of the population, plays a significant role in community politics.
- Promoting gay/lesbian matches could be destructive to a burgeoning program.
- It can be argued that the inclusion of gays and lesbians is antithetical to the values and mission of the program.

- The decision making process, although not totally defined, needs to take into account the following:
  - Is this only a JCC issue, realizing the prominent role Federation plays in the community and the fact that they are the initial funders?
  - How do we proceed in the decision making process to avoid this becoming a cause celebre?
  - What role does the Director of Jewish Life play in this process, knowing that we may be in a no win situation.

[REDACTED]  
Executive Director

[REDACTED]  
Director, The Jewish [REDACTED] Connector

## PRE-SEMINAR ASSIGNMENT

JCC's are known to be inclusive institutions that welcome a variety of groups. Sometimes, the commitment to inclusivity gives rise to problems because the different groups have very different beliefs, values and aspirations. Ultimately, there may be conflicts between our goal of Jewish community building and our status as an open and welcoming public institution.

### The case:

- The [REDACTED] JCC wanted to develop a Saturday evening program for Jewish Youth, based on the belief that providing opportunities for informal Jewish teen socializing is an important step in building Jewish community. But...
- The [REDACTED] JCC membership is open to all regardless of religious affiliation.

### The question:

- How can the [REDACTED] JCC limit participation in a specific ongoing program to only *Jewish* teens without offending our non-Jewish family members?

### The solution:

- We established a consortium of local synagogues and regional Jewish youth organizations to sponsor the program.
- Participation in the program required the teen to be a member-in-good standing of one of the sponsoring organizations.

### Jewish Values involved:

- קרוב (Keruv – bringing close) ...Outreach
- כל ישראל ארים זה בזה (Kol Yisrael Arevim Zeh Ba-zeh – all of Israel is responsible for one another) by partnering with the synagogues, all Jews become responsible for one another
- מפני דרכי שלום (Mipnei Darkei Shalom – for the sake of the paths of peace)...pursuit of good relations in the community at large

## JCC Association Pre-Seminar Assignment

What was the issue? Conflict

The JCC was approached by the Chabad House to provide space for their new pilot adult Jewish education learning course.

Two issues regarding this request were: That the Chabad course was viewed as a direct conflict with the mini school program and the second conflict dealt with the issue of whether the program was pluralistic and whether the JCC was entirely comfortable with Chabad teaching a presumably pluralistic program at the JCC. Tied into this issue is whether the JCC was to be viewed as a sponsor of the program since the program would be held at the JCC. With other community requests, the JCC usually provides space without questions but certain questions arose with the request from Chabad.

The process included the following: a discussion with the education director from Chabad to further understand the goals of the program, with the JCC lay leader who was advocating the program be held at the JCC, with the JCC president who was supportive of the staff position on the issue. Staff worked hard with Chabad to gain a sense of the curriculum, which was never fully shared with the JCC. The lay leader who was outwardly expressing support felt that the staff should be more trust worthy of the potential partnership. They lay leader in support of the program felt that the JCC, on a pragmatic basis should be inclusive and that the ideological issue should not drive the decision. If the JCC is truly open than it should be open to everyone without qualifications.

After many meetings and discussions, the JCC opted not to house the program mostly because Chabad was not willing to share the program and the staff felt that they were not being fully open to the issue on the table. There was a belief that the program was modeled after the mini school program. Chabad opted to hold the program within a mile of the JCC and held a successful pilot program. The decision has not had an impact on the relationship with Chabad since there have been other collaborations that have taken place. The lay leader advocating the program has maintained his involvement with the JCC.

On one hand, the JCC wanted to be accommodating to support other agencies but the JCC commitment to the mini school and the integrity of the mini school program was the foremost important issue since the JCC believes the mini school curriculum mirrors the JCC philosophy of inclusivity.

***Session 2 – Jonny Ariel***  
***SOURCE SHEETS***

**SESSION 3 – DR. DANIEL GORDIS**  
**GROUP ASSIGNMENTS**  
**SOURCE SHEETS**

*JCC Jewish Educators Initiative*  
*May 7 -9, 2001*  
*Pearl River Hilton*

Group Assignments:

Tuesday, May 8  
Session 6

Group 1

Aliza Orent/Janet Elam  
Gabe Goldman/Len Robinson  
Larry Zierler/Bob Cahen  
Phil Miller/Ken Weintraub

Group 2

Melanie Kohler-Levav/Howard Wasserman  
Jody Hirsh/Jay Roth  
Jeffrey Falick/Ed Rosen

Group 3

Nina Beth Cardin/Buddy Sapolsky  
Debbie Schwartz/Joel Dinkin  
David Nelson/Harold Benus

Group 4

Hal Greenwald/David Sorkin  
Nina Mizrahi/Avrum Cohen  
Jonathan Fass/Nina Leiberman-Giladi  
Jonathan Perlman/Mark Dindas

*JCC Jewish Educators Initiative*  
*May 7 -9, 2001*  
*Pearl River Hilton*

“What Is a Jew? –  
Challenges from the Tradition to Contemporary Jewish Life”

Discussion Questions for Breakout Groups

- The sources we discussed in our formal session illustrated a variety of models of how the Jewish tradition understood what it means to be a Jew. How well do each of these models fit the contemporary American scene, and to what extent do typical members of the JCC world define themselves and their Jewishness in light of any of these models?
- Are you personally comfortable with any one of these models as the defining core of what constitutes Jewishness? Why? Why not? What elements would you add? What elements would you remove?
- Do you think that we ought to even engage in the attempt to define the core elements of Jewishness as this session did? What are the benefits of such definitions? What are the costs? Can such definitions realistically be avoided?
- Are there any other models, not mentioned in the sources we discussed, which might better characterize the “core” of what constitutes Jewish belonging in contemporary America?
- What overall picture about Judaism, Jews and Jewishness emerges from the texts we’ve reviewed? In what ways should this picture be reflected in the life and aims of a JCC? What are the elements of the picture that emerges that we would most want to *avoid* when shaping the world of the JCC?

*JCC Jewish Educators Initiative*  
*May 7 -9, 2001*  
*Pearl River Hilton*

“What Is a Jew? –  
Challenges from the Tradition to Contemporary Jewish Life”

Dr. Daniel Gordis

**The Biblical Period: The Jew as Israelite**

Ruth, Chapter 1

**1** In the days when the chieftains ruled, there was a famine in the land; and a man of Bethlehem in Judah, with his wife and two sons, went to reside in the country of Moab. <sup>2</sup>The man’s name was Elimelech, his wife’s name was Naomi, and his two sons were named Mahlon and Chilion—Ephrathites of Bethlehem in Judah. They came to the country of Moab and remained there.

<sup>3</sup>Elimelech, Naomi’s husband, died; and she was left with her two sons. <sup>4</sup>They married Moabite women, one named Orpah and the other Ruth, and they lived there about ten years. <sup>5</sup>Then those two—Mahlon and Chilion—also died; so the woman was left without her two sons and without her husband.

<sup>6</sup>She started out with her daughters-in-law to return from the country of Moab; for in the country of Moab she had heard that the LORD had taken note of His people and given them food. <sup>7</sup>Accompanied by her two daughters-in-law, she left the place where she had been living; and they set out on the road back to the land of Judah.

<sup>8</sup>But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, “Turn back, each of you to her mother’s house. May the LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me! <sup>9</sup>May the LORD grant that each of you find security in the house of a husband!” And she kissed them farewell. They broke into weeping <sup>10</sup>and said to her, “No, we will return with you to your people.”

<sup>11</sup>But Naomi replied, “Turn back, my daughters! Why should you go with me?”

... <sup>14</sup>They broke into weeping again, and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law farewell. But Ruth clung to her. <sup>15</sup>So she said, “See, your sister-in-law has returned to her people and her gods. Go follow your sister-in-law.” <sup>16</sup>But Ruth replied, “Do not urge me to leave you, to turn back and not follow you. For wherever you go, I will go; wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God my God. <sup>17</sup>Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. Thus and more may the LORD do to me if anything but death parts me from you.” <sup>18</sup>When [Naomi] saw how determined she was to go with her, she ceased to argue with her; <sup>19</sup>and the two went on until they reached Bethlehem.

א וְיָהִי בַיָּמֵי שְׁפֹט הַשְּׁפָטִים וַיְהִי רָעַב בְּאֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל אִישׁ מִבֵּית לָחֶם יְהוּדָה לָגוּר בְּשֵׂדֵי מוֹאָב הוּא וְאִשְׁתּוֹ  
וּשְׁנֵי בָנָיו: ב וְשֵׁם הָאִישׁ אֱלִימֶלֶךְ וְשֵׁם אִשְׁתּוֹ נָעֳמִי וְשֵׁם שְׁנֵי-בָנָיו מַחְלוֹן וְכִלְיוֹן אֶפְרַתִּים מִבֵּית לָחֶם

יהודה ויבאו שדי-מואב ויהיו-שם: ג ונמת אלימלך איש נעמי ותשארה היא ושני בניה: ד וישאו להם נשים מאביות שם האחת ערפה ושם השנית רות וישבו שם כעשר שנים: ה וימותו גם-שניהם מחלון וכליון ותשארה האשה משני ילדיה ומאישה: ו ותקם היא וכלתיה ותשב משדי מואב כי שמעה בשדה מואב כי-פקד יהוה את-עמו לתת להם לחם: ז ותצא מן-המקום אשר היתה-שמה ושתי כלתיה עמה ותלכנה בדרך לשוב אל-ארץ יהודה: ח ותאמר נעמי לשתי כלתיה לכנה שבנה אשה לבית אמה יעשה [יעש] יהוה עמכם חסד כאשר עשיתם עם-המתים ועמדי: ט ותן ה' לכם ומצאן מנוחה אשה בית אישה ותשק להן ותשאנה קולן ותבכינה: י ותאמרנה לה כי-אתך נשוב לעמך: יא ותאמר נעמי שבנה בנתי למה תלכנה עמי... יד ותשנה קולן ותבכינה עוד ותשק ערפה לחמותה ורות דבקה בה: טו ותאמר הנה שבה יבמתך אל-עמה ואל-אלהיה שובי אחרי יבמתך: טז ותאמר רות אל-תפגעני-בי לעזבך לשוב מאחריך כי אל-אשר תלכי אלך ובאשר תליני אליו עמך עמי ואלהיך אלהי: יז באשר תמותי אמות ושם אקבר כה יעשה ה' לי וכה יסיף כי המנת יפריד ביני ובינך: יח ותרא כי-מתאמצת היא ללכת אתה ותחדל לדבר אליה: יט ותלכנה שתיהם עד-באנה בית לחם

## The Rabbinic Period I: The Jew as the Oppressed Outsider

### Babylonian Talmud, Yevamot 47a

Our Rabbis taught: If at the present time a man desires to become a proselyte, he is to be addressed as follows: 'What reason have you for desiring to become a proselyte; do you not know that Israel at the present time are persecuted and oppressed, despised, harassed and overcome by afflictions'? If he replies, 'I know and yet I am unworthy', he is accepted immediately and is given instruction in some of the minor and some of the major commandments.

He is informed of the sin [of the neglect of the commandments of] Gleanings, the Forgotten Sheaf, the Corner and the Poor Man's Tithe. ....

And as he is informed of the punishment for the transgression of the commandments, so is he informed of the reward granted for their fulfilment. He is told, 'Be it known to you that the world to come was made only for the righteous, and that Israel at the present time are unable to bear either too much prosperity or too much suffering'. He is not, however, to be persuaded or dissuaded too much. If he accepted, he is circumcised forthwith. .... As soon as he is healed arrangements are made for his immediate immersion, when two learned men must stand by his side and acquaint him with some of the minor commandments and with some of the major ones. When he comes up after his immersion he is deemed to be an Israelite in all respects.

תנו רבנן: גר שבא להתגייר בזמן הזה, אומרים לו: מה ראית שבאת להתגייר? אי אתה יודע שישאל בזמן הזה דוויים, דחופים, סחופים ומטורפין, ויסורין באין עליהם? אם אומר: יודע אני ואיני כדאי, מקבלין אותו מיד. ומודיעין אותו מקצת מצות קלות ומקצת מצות חמורות, ומודיעין אותו עון לקט שכחה ופאה ומעשר עני. .... וכשם שמודיעין אותו ענשן של מצות, כך מודיעין אותו מתן שכרן, אומרים לו: הוי יודע, שהעולם הבא אינו עשוי אלא לצדיקים, וישאל בזמן הזה - אינם יכולים לא רוב טובה ולא רוב פורענות. ואין מרבין עליו, ואין מדקדקין עליו. קיבל, מלין אותו מיד. .... נתרפא, מטבילין אותו מיד ושני ת"ח עומדים על גביו, ומודיעין אותו מקצת מצות קלות ומקצת מצות חמורות טבל ועלה הרי הוא כישראל לכל דבריו.

## The Rabbinic Period II: The Jew as the One Who Obeys God's Command

### B.T. Bekhorot 30b

If a heathen is prepared to accept the Torah except one religious law, we must not receive him [as an Israelite]. R. Jose son of R. Judah says: Even [if the exception be] one point of the special minutiae of the Scribes' enactments.

ת"ר: הבא לקבל דברי חבירות חוץ מדבר אחד - אין מקבלין אותו, עובד כוכבים שבא לקבל דברי תורה חוץ מדבר אחד - אין מקבלין אותו, ר' יוסי בר' יהודה אומר: אפי' דקדוק אחד מדברי סופרים

### A Responsum of Rabbi Moshe Feinstein; Yoreh De'ah 1:157

Regarding that which the Honored Torah Scholar was dubious, if a convert who never took upon himself the [obligation to perform] the commandments is a convert, it is plain and obvious that he is no convert at all, even after the fact. That is how my father, May the Memory of the Righteous be Reserved for the World to Come, also ruled. . . . for [lack of] acceptance of the commandments by a convert renders the conversion null and void, as it is written in Yoreh De'ah 268:3. And even if he says that he accepts the commandments but we know that in truth he does not, [his statement and the conversion are] nothing. . . . And furthermore, I cannot understand the reasoning of the rabbis who err in this. For even according to their own reckoning, what value are they bringing to the Jewish people by accepting converts like these? For it is obviously not good for either God or the Jewish people that converts like these should be mixed into the Jewish people. And as for the ruling, it is clear that these are not converts at all.

במה שנסתפק כת"ר"ה אם גר שלא קבל עליו מצות אם נחשב גר, פשוט וברור שאינו גר כלל אף בדיעבד וכן הורה אבא מארי הגאון זצלה"ה הלכה למעשה בסטראבין בעובדא כזו שאינו גר כלל בין לקולא בין לחומרא שקבלת מצות בגר מעכב כדאיתא ביו"ד סי' רס"ח סעי' ג'. ואף אם אמר בפיו שמקבל מצות אם אנון סהדי שאינו מקבל עליו באמת אינו כלום. וגר שמהני לשם אישות בדיעבד, איירי שבשביל האישות קבל עליו מצות באמת והוא ברור ופשוט וכל זה אמר אבא מארי הגאון בפירוש אז כשהורה. ובכלל איני יודע טעם הרבנים הטועים בזה דאף לדידהו עכ"פ איזה תועלת הם מביאין בזה לכלל ישראל שמקבלין גרים כאלו דודאי לא ניחא ליה להקב"ה ולעם ישראל שיתערבו גרים כאלו בישראל. ולדינא פשוט שאין זה גר כלל. ידידו, משה פיינשטיין

### The Contemporary Period II: A Return to Biblical Roots?

A Responsum of Rabbi Isaac Herzog, Ashkenazic Chief Rabbi, Even Ha-Ezer 1:21 (selections from a very long and complex responsum)

[December 1948] Of late, there have been many instances in which Jewish people married to non-Jewish women in civil courts have asked to convert them and to marry them with *chuppah* and *kiddushin* because they wish to immigrate to the Land of Israel.

. . . [much] depends on their condition in your country. If it is the case that as strangers they could not stay in their country, then it is clear that their motivation is not for the sake of heaven.

But if it would be possible for them to stay in your country, but they simply desire the Land of Israel, this is apparently for the sake of heaven, for they are uprooting their dwelling and leaving their source of income in order to migrate to a new land, and specifically to the land of Israel. Thus, it becomes clear that their desire is to embrace the People Israel, in its Land . . . and this is a good motivation, and there is no need to prevent their acceptance [by the Bet Din]. . . .

And know, furthermore, that although the law has been, from the time of the Mishnah, that after the fact they are all converts, I have grave doubts about this in our own day. For it used to be the case that the transgressor was despised and chased in his community. Thus, when he accepted the Jewish religion, even if the original reason was for a woman, he knew that his condition in the Jewish community would be bad if he did not follow the Torah, which is not the case in our own day. Today, there are many "free" Jews [who do not observe commandments]. Not only do they not encounter difficulties because of this, they stand at the head of the community and the congregations, and thus, we have to be concerned that he has no intention of keeping the commandments, but just says that he does. . . . Thus, in our day, there is a great responsibility on the rabbi to examine each case carefully until he is satisfied that these people will genuinely observe our sacred faith.

שאלה: כ"א כסלו, תש"ט. בזמן האחרון מתרבים המקרים שבאים אלי אנשי מדינתנו יהודים הנשואים עם נכריות (וכן להיפך) ע"י ערכאות ומבקשים לגייר אותם ולהשיאם ע"י חו"ק מפני שעומדים לעלות לא"י.

אלא שכאן יש חשש אחר, שהכוונה היא לשם עליה לא"י, אך זה תלוי במצבם במדינתכם, שאם המצב הוא כך, שבתור זרים לא יוכלו להשאר במדינתכם, הרי הכוונה שלא לש"ש גלויה, אבל אם אפשר להם להשאר במדינה, אלא שהם חפצים בארץ ישראל, הרי זו לכאורה כוונה לשם שמים, שהם עוקרים דירתם ועוזבים פרנסתם לנוע לארץ אחרת, ודווקא לא"י, הרי ניכר שכוונתם להאחז בעם ישראל, ובארצו, והיינו שניכר לבית דין שהוא והיא רוצים בכך, (שאם רק צד אחד, הינו הצד הישראלי, רוצה, הצד השני מסכים על כרחו, כלומר הצד שהוא גוי, שהוא קשור ואחוז בצד שהוא ישראל). ואז הרי זוהי כוונה טובה, ואין צריך למנוע את קבלתם. אבל אם אין להם אפשרות להשאר שם במדינתכם וההכרח הוא להם לעלות לא"י, הכוונה פוגמת ואעפ"כ יש מקום לצדד בזכותם,

ודע שאעפ"י שהדין כבר מימי התנאים ז"ל הוא שבדיעבד כולם גרים הם, יש לי חשש רציני בזה"ז, לפי שלפנים בישראל, היה העברייני נבזה ונרדף בעמו, וע"כ כשקיבל עליו גוי יהדות, אעפ"י שהסיבה הראשונה שהניעתו לכך היתה אישות, הרי ידע שיהא מצבו רע מאד בחברה היהודית, (ומהחברה הגויית יהא תלוש ונעקר), אם לא יתנהג כתורה, משא"כ בימינו שכ"כ הרבה יש חפשים, ולא רק שאינם מתקשים בגלל זה, אלא שעומדים עוד בראש האומה והקהלות, וע"כ יש לחוש שאיננו באמת מקבל עליו לשמור את המצוות, אלא שמשום הסיבה, הוא אומר בפיו, אבל לבו בל עמו, והריטב"א אומר שאגב אונסו גמר וקיבל, ובימינו י"ל שאגב אונסו הוא אומר מה שאומר אבל למה לו לגמור בדעתו לשמור באמת וד"ל, וע"כ היום האחריות מוטלת ביותר על הרב להתבונן בכל מקרה עד שתתישב דעתו עליו שבני אדם הללו מסתבר שבאמת ישמרו את דת קדשנו.

***SESSION 4 – DR. DANIEL PEKARSKY***  
***SOURCE SHEETS***



# CAMPUS WARS

*Multiculturalism and the  
Politics of Difference*

edited by

John Arthur

Amy Shapiro

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21. Quoted in "Negritude Black Poetry From Africa and the Caribbean," ed. and trans. Norman R. Shapiro (New York: October House, 1970), 7.
22. Baldwin, "Stranger in the Village," 218.
23. Dubois, "The Conservation of Races," in Brotz, 491.
24. Orlando Patterson, "Ethnic Pluralism," *Change* (March 1975): 10.
25. Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, (New York: Grove Press, 1967), 228, 229.

## CHARLES TAYLOR

### *The Politics of Recognition*

#### I

A number of strands in contemporary politics turn on the need, sometimes the demand, for *recognition*. The need, it can be argued, is one of the driving forces behind nationalist movements in politics. And the demand comes to the fore in a number of ways in today's politics, on behalf of minority or "subaltern" groups, in some forms of feminism and in what is today called the politics of "multiculturalism."

The demand for recognition in these latter cases is given urgency by the supposed links between recognition and identity, where this latter term designates something like a person's understanding of who they are, of their fundamental defining characteristics as a human being. The thesis is that our identity is partly shaped by recognition or its absence, often by the *misrecognition* of others, and so a person or group of people can suffer real damage, real distortion, if the people or society around them mirror back to them a confining or demeaning or contemptible picture of themselves. Nonrecognition or misrecognition can inflict harm, can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted, and reduced mode of being.

Thus some feminists have argued that women in patriarchal societies have been induced to adopt a depreciatory image of themselves. They have internalized a picture of their own inferiority, so that even when some of the objective obstacles to their advancement fall away, they may be incapable of taking advantage of the new opportunities. And beyond this, they are condemned to suffer the pain of low self-esteem. An analogous point has been made in relation to blacks: that white society has for generations projected a demeaning image of them, which some of them have been unable to resist adopting. Their own self-depreciation, on this view, becomes one of the most potent instruments of their own oppression. Their first task ought to be to purge themselves of this imposed and destructive identity. Recently, a similar point has been made in relation to indigenous and colonized people in general. It is held that since 1492 Europeans have projected

an image of such people as somehow inferior, "uncivilized," and through the force of conquest have often been able to impose this image on the conquered. The figure of Caliban has been held to epitomize this crushing portrait of contempt of New World aboriginals.

Within these perspectives, misrecognition shows not just a lack of due respect. It can inflict a grievous wound, saddling its victims with a crippling self-hatred. Due recognition is not just a courtesy we owe people. It is a vital human need.

In order to examine some of the issues that have arisen here, I'd like to take a step back, achieve a little distance, and look first at how this discourse of recognition and identity came to seem familiar, or at least readily understandable, to us. For it was not always so, and our ancestors of more than a couple of centuries ago would have stared at us uncomprehendingly if we had used these terms in their current sense. How did we get started on this?

Hegel comes to mind right off, with his famous dialectic of the master and the slave. This is an important stage, but we need to go a little farther back to see how this passage came to have the sense it did. What changed to make this kind of talk have sense for us?

We can distinguish two changes that together have made the modern preoccupation with identity and recognition inevitable. The first is the collapse of social hierarchies, which used to be the basis for honor. I am using *honor* in the ancien régime sense in which it is intrinsically linked to inequalities. For some to have honor in this sense, it is essential that not everyone have it. This is the sense in which Montesquieu uses it in his description of Monarchy. Honor is intrinsically matter of "préférences."<sup>1</sup> It is also the sense in which we use the term when we speak of honoring someone by giving her some public award, for example, the Order of Canada. Clearly, this award would be without worth if tomorrow we decided to give it to every adult Canadian.

As against this notion of honor, we have the modern notion of dignity, now used in a universalist and egalitarian sense, where we talk of the inherent "dignity of human beings," or of citizen dignity. The underlying premise here is that everyone shares in it.<sup>2</sup> It is obvious that this concept of dignity is the only one compatible with a democratic society, and that it was inevitable that the old concept of honor was superseded. But this has also meant that the forms of equal recognition have been essential to democratic culture. For instance, that everyone be called "Mr.," "Mrs.," or "Miss," rather than some people being called "Lord" or "Lady" and others simply by their surnames—or, even more demeaning, by their first names—has been thought essential in some democratic societies, such as the United States. More recently, for similar reasons, "Mrs." and "Miss" have been collapsed into "Ms." Democracy has ushered in a politics of equal recogni-

tion, which has taken various forms over the years, and has now returned in the form of demands for the equal status of cultures and of genders.

But the importance of recognition has been modified and intensified by the new understanding of individual dignity that emerges at the end of the eighteenth century. We might speak of an *individualized* identity, one that is particular to me, and that I discover in myself. This notion arises along with an ideal, that of being true to myself and my own particular way of being. Following Lionel Trilling's usage in his brilliant study, I will speak of this as the ideal of "authenticity."<sup>3</sup> It will help to describe in what it consists and how it came about.

One way of describing its development is to see its starting point in the eighteenth-century notion that human beings are endowed with a moral sense, an intuitive feeling for what is right and wrong. The original point of this doctrine was to combat a rival view, that knowing right and wrong was a matter of calculating consequences, in particular, those concerned with divine reward and punishment. The idea was that understanding right and wrong was not a matter of dry calculation, but was anchored in our feelings.<sup>4</sup> Morality has, in a sense, a voice within.

The notion of authenticity develops out of a displacement of the moral accent in this idea. On the original view, the inner voice was important because it tells us what the right thing to do is. Being in touch with our moral feelings matters here, as a means to the end of acting rightly. What I'm calling the displacement of the moral accent comes about when being in touch with our feelings takes on independent and crucial moral significance. It comes to be something we have to attain if we are to be true and full human beings.

To see what is new here, we have to see the analogy to earlier moral views, where being in touch with some source—for example, God, or the Idea of the Good—was considered essential to full being. But now the source we have to connect with is deep within us. This fact is part of the massive subjective turn of modern culture, a new form of inwardness, in which we come to think of ourselves as beings with inner depths. At first, this idea that the source is within doesn't exclude our being related to God or the Ideas; it can be considered our proper way of relating to them. In a sense, it can be seen as just a continuation and intensification of the development inaugurated by Saint Augustine, who saw the road to God as passing through our own self-awareness. The first variants of this new view were theistic, or at least pantheistic.

The most important philosophical writer who helped to bring about this change was Jean-Jacques Rousseau. I think Rousseau is important not because he inaugurated the change; rather, I would argue that his great popularity comes in part from his articulating something that was already occurring in the culture. Rousseau frequently presents the issue of

morality as that of following a voice of nature within us. This voice is often drowned out by the passions that are induced by our dependence on others, the main one being *amour propre*, or pride. Our moral salvation comes from recovering authentic contact with ourselves. Rousseau even gives a name to the intimate contact with oneself, more fundamental than any moral view, that is a source of such joy and contentment: "le sentiment de l'existence."<sup>5</sup>

The ideal of authenticity becomes crucial owing to a development that occurs after Rousseau, which I associate with the name of Herder—once again, as its major early articulator, rather than its originator. Herder put forward the idea that each of us has an original way of being human: each person has his or her own "measure."<sup>6</sup> This idea has burrowed very deep into modern consciousness. It is a new idea. Before the late eighteenth century, no one thought that the differences between human beings had this kind of moral significance. There is a certain way of being human that is *my* way. I am called upon to live my life in this way, and not in imitation of anyone else's life. But this notion gives a new importance to being true to myself. If I am not, I miss the point of my life; I miss what being human is for *me*.

This is the powerful moral ideal that has come down to us. It accords moral importance to a kind of contact with myself, with my own inner nature, which it sees as in danger of being lost, partly through the pressures toward outward conformity, but also because in taking an instrumental stance toward myself, I may have lost the capacity to listen to this inner voice. It greatly increases the importance of this self-contact by introducing the principle of originality: each of our voices has something unique to say. Not only should I not mold my life to the demands of external conformity; I can't even find the model by which to live outside myself. I can only find it within.<sup>7</sup>

Being true to myself means being true to my own originality, which is something only I can articulate and discover. In articulating it, I am also defining myself. I am realizing a potentiality that is properly my own. This is the background understanding to the modern ideal of authenticity, and to the goals of self-fulfillment and self-realization in which the ideal is usually couched. I should note here that Herder applied his conception of originality at two levels, not only to the individual person among other persons, but also to the culture-bearing people among other peoples. Just like individuals, a *Volk* should be true to itself, that is, its own culture. Germans shouldn't try to be derivative and (inevitably) second-rate Frenchmen, as Frederick the Great's patronage seemed to be encouraging them to do. The Slavic peoples had to find their own path. And European colonialism ought to be rolled back to give the of what we now call the Third World their

chance to be themselves unimpeded. We can recognize here the seminal idea of modern nationalism in both benign and malignant forms.

This new ideal of authenticity was, like the idea of dignity, also in part an offshoot of the decline of hierarchical society. In those earlier societies, what we would now call identity was largely fixed by one's social position. That is, the background that explained what people recognized as important to themselves was to a great extent determined by their place in society, and whatever roles or activities attached to this position. The birth of a democratic society doesn't by itself do away with this phenomenon, because people can still define themselves by their social roles. What does decisively undermine this socially derived identification, however, is the ideal of authenticity itself. As this emerges, for instance, with Herder, it calls on me to discover my own original way of being. By definition, this way of being cannot be socially derived, but must be inwardly generated.

But in the nature of the case, there is no such thing as inward generation, monologically understood. In order to understand the close connection between identity and recognition, we have to take into account a crucial feature of the human condition that has been rendered a most invisible by the overwhelmingly monological bent of mainstream modern philosophy.

This crucial feature of human life is its fundamentally *dialogical* character. We become full human agents, capable of understanding ourselves, and hence of defining our identity, through our acquisition of rich human languages of expression. For my purposes here, I want to take *language* in a broad sense, covering not only the words we speak, but also other modes of expression whereby we define ourselves, including the "languages" of art, of gesture, of love, and the like. But we learn these modes of expression through exchanges with others. People do not acquire the languages needed for self-definition on their own. Rather, we are introduced to them through interaction with others who matter to us—what George Herbert Mead called "significant others."<sup>8</sup> The genesis of the human mind is in this sense not monological, not something each person accomplishes on his or her own, but dialogical.

Moreover, this is not just a fact about *genesis*, which can be ignored later on. We don't just learn the languages in dialogue and then go on to use them for our own purposes. We are of course expected to develop our own opinions, outlook, stances toward things, and to a considerable degree through solitary reflection. But this is not how things work with important issues, like the definition of our identity. We define our identity always in dialogue with, sometimes in struggle against, the things our significant others want to see in us. Even after we outgrow some of these others—our parents, for instance—and they disappear from our lives, the conversation with them continues within us as long as we live.<sup>9</sup>

Thus, the contribution of significant others, even when it is provided at the beginning of our lives, continues indefinitely. Some people may still want to hold on to some form of the monological ideal. It is true that we can never liberate ourselves completely from those whose love and care shaped us early in life, but we should strive to define ourselves on our own to the fullest extent possible, coming as best we can to understand and thus get some control over the influence of our parents, and avoiding falling into any more such dependent relationships. We need relationships to fulfill, but not to define, ourselves.

The monological ideal seriously underestimates the place of the dialogical in human life. It wants to confine it as much as possible to the genesis. It forgets how our understanding of the good things in life can be transformed by our enjoying them in common with the people we love; how some goods become accessible to us only through such common enjoyment. Because of this, it would take a great deal of effort, and probably many wrenching break-ups, to *prevent* our identity's being formed by the people we love. Consider what we mean by *identity*. It is who we are, "where we're coming from." As such it is the background against which our tastes and desires and opinions and aspirations make sense. If some of the things I value most are accessible to me only in relation to the person I love, then she becomes part of my identity.

To some people this might seem a limitation, from which one might aspire to free oneself. This is one way of understanding the impulse behind the life of the hermit or, to take a case more familiar to our culture, the solitary artist. But from another perspective, we might see even these lives as aspiring to a certain kind of dialogicality. In the case of the hermit, the interlocutor is God. In the case of the solitary artist, the work itself is addressed to a future audience, perhaps still to be created by the work. The very form of a work of art shows its character as *addressed*.<sup>10</sup> But however one feels about it, the making and sustaining of our identity, in the absence of a heroic effort to break out of ordinary existence, remains dialogical throughout our lives.

Thus my discovering my own identity doesn't mean that I work it out in isolation, but that I negotiate it through dialogue, partly overt, partly in internal, with others. That is why the development of an ideal of inwardly generated identity gives a new importance to recognition. My own identity crucially depends on my dialogical relations with others.

Of course, the point is not that this dependence on others arose with the age of authenticity. A form of dependence was always there. The socially derived identity was by its very nature dependent on society. But in the earlier age recognition never arose as a problem. General recognition was built into the socially derived identity by virtue of the very fact that it was based on social categories that everyone took for granted. Yet inwardly de-

rived, personal, original identity doesn't enjoy this recognition *a priori*. It has to win it through exchange, and the attempt can fail. What has come about with the modern age is not the need for recognition but the conditions in which the attempt to be recognized can fail. That is why the need is now acknowledged for the first time. In premodern times, people didn't speak of "identity" and "recognition"—not because people didn't have (what we call) identities, or because these didn't depend on recognition, but rather because these were then too unproblematic to be thematized as such.

It's not surprising that we can find some of the seminal ideas about citizen dignity and universal recognition, even if not in these specific terms, in Rousseau, whom I have wanted to identify as one of the points of origin of the modern discourse of authenticity. Rousseau is a sharp critic of hierarchical honor, of "préférences." In a significant passage of the *Discourse on Inequality*, he pinpoints a fateful moment when society takes a turn toward corruption and injustice, when people begin to desire preferential esteem.<sup>11</sup> By contrast, in republican society, where all can share equally in the light of public attention, he sees the source of health.<sup>12</sup> But the topic of recognition is given its most influential early treatment in Hegel.<sup>13</sup>

The importance of recognition is now universally acknowledged in one form or another; on an intimate plane, we are all aware of how identity can be formed or malformed through the course of our contact with significant others. On the social plane, we have a continuing politics of equal recognition. Both planes have been shaped by the growing ideal of authenticity, and recognition plays an essential role in the culture that has arisen around this ideal.

On the intimate level we can see how much an original identity needs and is vulnerable to the recognition given or withheld by significant others. It is not surprising that in the culture of authenticity, relationships are seen as the key loci of self-affirmation. Love relationships are not just important because of the general emphasis in modern culture on the fulfillments of ordinary needs. They are also crucial because they are the crucibles of inwardly generated identity.

On the social plane, the understanding that identities are formed in open dialogue, unshaped by a predefined social script, has made the politics of equal recognition more central and stressful. It has, in fact, considerably raised the stakes. Equal recognition is not just the appropriate mode for a healthy democratic society. Its refusal can inflict damage on those who are denied it, according to a widespread modern view, as I indicated at the outset. The projection of an inferior or demeaning image on another can actually distort and oppress, to the extent that the image is internalized. Not only contemporary feminism but also race relations and discussions of multiculturalism are undergirded by the premise that the withholding of recognition can be a form of oppression. We may debate whether this

factor has been exaggerated, but it is clear that the understanding of identity and authenticity has introduced a new dimension into the politics of equal recognition, which now operates with something like its own notion of authenticity, at least so far as the denunciation of other-induced distortions is concerned.

## II

And so the discourse of recognition has become familiar to us, on two levels: First, in the intimate sphere, where we understand the formation of identity and the self as taking place in a continuing dialogue and struggle with significant others. And then in the public sphere, where a politics of equal recognition has come to play a bigger and bigger role. Certain feminist theories have tried to show the links between the two spheres.<sup>14</sup>

I want to concentrate here on the public sphere, and try to work out what a politics of equal recognition has meant and could mean.

In fact, it has come to mean two rather different things, connected, respectively, with the two major changes I have been describing. With the move from honor to dignity has come a politics of universalism, emphasizing the equal dignity of all citizens, and the content of this politics has been the equalization of rights and entitlements. What is to be avoided at all costs is the existence of "first-class" and "second-class" citizens. Naturally, the actual detailed measures justified by this principle have varied greatly, and have often been controversial. For some, equalization has affected only civil rights and voting rights; for others, it has extended into the socioeconomic sphere. People who are systematically handicapped by poverty from making the most of their citizenship rights are deemed on this view to have been relegated to second-class status, necessitating remedial action through equalization. But through all the differences of interpretation, the principle of equal citizenship has come to be universally accepted. Every position, no matter how reactionary, is now defended under the colors of this principle. Its greatest, most recent victory was won by the civil rights movement of the 1960s in the United States. It is worth noting that even the adversaries of extending voting rights to blacks in the southern states found some pretext consistent with universalism, such as "tests" to be administered to would-be voters at the time of registration.

By contrast, the second change, the development of the modern notion of identity, has given rise to a politics of difference. There is, of course, a universalist basis to this as well, making for the overlap and confusion between the two. *Everyone* should be recognized for his or her unique identity. But recognition here means something else. With the politics of equal dig- what is established is meant to be universally the same, an identical

basket of rights and immunities; with the politics of difference, what we are asked to recognize is the unique identity of this individual or group, their distinctness from everyone else. The idea is that it is precisely this distinctness that has been ignored, glossed over, assimilated to a dominant or majority identity. And this assimilation is the cardinal sin against the ideal of authenticity.<sup>15</sup>

Now underlying the demand is a principle of universal equality. The politics of difference is full of denunciations of discrimination and refusals of second-class citizenship. This gives the principle of universal equality a point of entry within the politics of dignity. But once inside, as it were, its demands are hard to assimilate to that politics. For it asks that we give acknowledgment and status to something that is not universally shared. Or, otherwise put, we give due acknowledgment only to what is universally present—everyone has an identity—through recognizing what is peculiar to each. The universal demand powers an acknowledgment of specificity.

The politics of difference grows organically out of the politics of universal dignity through one of those shifts with which we are long familiar, where a new understanding of the human social condition imparts a radically new meaning to an old principle. Just as a view of human beings as conditioned by their socioeconomic plight changed the understanding of second-class citizenship, so that this category came to include, for example, people in inherited poverty traps, so here the understanding of identity as formed in interchange, and as possibly so malformed, introduces a new form of second-class status into our purview. As in the present case, the socioeconomic redefinition justified social programs that were highly controversial. For those who had not gone along with this changed definition of equal status, the various redistributive programs and special opportunities offered to certain populations seemed a form of undue favoritism.

Similar conflicts arise today around the politics of difference. Where the politics of universal dignity fought for forms of nondiscrimination that were quite "blind" to the ways in which citizens differ, the politics of difference often redefines nondiscrimination as requiring that we make these distinctions the basis of differential treatment. So members of aboriginal bands will get certain rights and powers not enjoyed by other Canadians, if the demands for native self government are finally agreed on, and certain minorities will get the right to exclude others in order to preserve their cultural integrity, and so on.

To proponents of the original politics of dignity, this can seem like a reversal, a betrayal, a simple negation of their cherished principle. Attempts are therefore made to mediate, to show how some of these measures meant to accommodate minorities can after all be justified on the original basis of dignity. These arguments can be successful up to a point. For instance, some of the (apparently) most flagrant departures from "difference-blind-

ness" are reverse discrimination measures, affording people from previously unfavored groups a competitive advantage for jobs or places in universities. This practice has been justified on the grounds that historical discrimination has created a pattern within which the unfavored struggle at a disadvantage. Reverse discrimination is defended as a temporary measure that will eventually level the playing field and allow the old "blind" rules to come back into force in a way that doesn't disadvantage anyone. This argument seems cogent enough—wherever its factual basis is sound. But it won't justify some of the measures now urged on the grounds of difference, the goal of which is not to bring us back to an eventual "difference-blind" social space but, on the contrary, to maintain and cherish distinctness, not just now but forever. After all, if we're concerned with identity, then what is more legitimate than one's aspiration that it never be lost? . . .

One of the key authors in th[e] transition [to the demand for recognition] is undoubtedly the late Frantz Fanon, whose influential *Les Damnés de la Terre* (*The Wretched of the Earth*)<sup>16</sup> argued that the major weapon of the colonizers was the imposition of their image of the colonized on the subjugated people. These latter, in order to be free, must first of all purge themselves of these depreciating self-images. Fanon recommended violence as the way to this freedom, matching the original violence of the alien imposition. Not all those who have drawn from Fanon have followed him in this, but the notion that there is a struggle for a changed self-image, which takes place both within the subjugated and against the dominator, has been very widely applied. The idea has become crucial to certain strands of feminism, and is also a very important element in the contemporary debate about multiculturalism.

The main locus of this debate is the world of education in a broad sense. One important focus is university humanities departments, where demands are made to alter, enlarge, or scrap the "canon" of accredited authors on the grounds that the one presently favored consists almost entirely of "dead white males." A greater place ought to be made for women, and for people of non-European races and cultures. A second focus is the secondary schools, where an attempt is being made, for instance, to develop Afrocentric curricula for pupils in mainly black schools.

The reason for these proposed changes is not, or not mainly, that all students may be missing something important through the exclusion of a certain gender or certain races or cultures, but rather that women and students from the excluded groups are given, either directly or by omission, a demeaning picture of themselves, as though all creativity and worth inhered in males of European provenance. Enlarging and changing the curriculum is therefore essential not so much in the name of a broader culture for everyone as in order to give due recognition to the hitherto excluded. The background and premise of these demands is that recognition forges identity,

particularly in its Fanonist application: dominant groups tend to entrench their hegemony by inculcating an image of inferiority in the subjugated. The struggle for freedom and equality must therefore pass through a revision of these images. Multicultural curricula are meant to help in this process of revision.

Although it is not often stated clearly, the logic behind some of these demands seems to depend upon a premise that we owe equal respect to all cultures. This emerges from the nature of the reproach made to the designers of traditional curricula. The claim is that the judgments of worth on which these latter were supposedly based were in fact corrupt, were marred by narrowness or insensitivity or, even worse, a desire to downgrade the excluded. The implication seems to be that absent these distorting factors, true judgments of value of different works would place all cultures more or less on the same footing. Of course, the attack could come from a more radical, neo-Nietzschean standpoint, which questions the very status of judgments of worth as such, but short of this extreme step (whose coherence I doubt), the presumption seems to be of equal worth.

I would like to maintain that there is something valid in this presumption, but that the presumption is by no means unproblematic, and involves something like an act of faith. As a presumption, the claim is that all human cultures that have animated whole societies over some considerable stretch of time have something important to say to all human beings. I have worded it in this way to exclude partial cultural milieux within a society, as well as short phases of a major culture. There is no reason to believe that, for instance, the different art forms of a given culture should all be of equal, or even of considerable, value; and every culture can go through phases of decadence.

But when I call this claim a "presumption," I mean that it is a starting hypothesis with which we ought to approach the study of any other culture. The validity of the claim has been demonstrated concretely in the actual study of the culture. Indeed, for a culture sufficiently different from our own, we may have only the foggiest idea *ex ante* of in what its valuable contribution might consist. Because, for a sufficiently different culture, the very understanding of what it is to be of worth will be strange and unfamiliar to us. To approach, say, a raga with the presumptions of value implicit in the well-tempered clavier would be forever to miss the point. What has to happen is what Gadamer has called a "fusion of horizons."<sup>17</sup> We learn to move in a broader horizon, within which we have formerly taken for granted as the background to valuation can be situated as one possibility alongside the different background of the formerly unfamiliar culture. The "fusion of horizons" operates through our developing new vocabularies of comparison, by means of which we can articulate these contents.<sup>18</sup> So that if and when we ultimately find substantive support for our initial presump-

tion, it is on the basis of an understanding of what constitutes worth that we couldn't possibly have had at the beginning. We have reached the judgment partly through transforming our standards.

We might want to argue that we owe all cultures a presumption of this kind. I will explain later on what I think this claim might be based. From this point of view, withholding the presumption might be seen as the fruit merely of prejudice or of ill-will. It might even be tantamount to a denial of equal status. Something like this might lie behind the accusation leveled by supporters of multiculturalism against defenders of the traditional canon. Supposing that their reluctance to enlarge the canon comes from a mixture of prejudice and ill-will, the multiculturalists charge them with the arrogance of assuming their own superiority over formerly subject peoples.

This presumption would help explain why the demands of multiculturalism build on the already established principles of the politics of equal respect. If withholding the presumption is tantamount to a denial of equality, and if important consequences flow for people's identity from the absence of recognition, then a case can be made for insisting on the universalization of the presumption as a logical extension of the politics of dignity. Just as all must have equal civil rights, and equal voting rights, regardless of race or culture, so all should enjoy the presumption that their traditional culture has value. This extension, however logically it may seem to flow from the accepted norms of equal dignity, fits uneasily within them, as described [earlier], because it challenges the "difference-blindness" that was central to them. Yet it does indeed seem to flow from them, albeit uneasily.

I am not sure about the validity of demanding this presumption as a right. But we can leave this issue aside, because the demand made seems to be much stronger. The claim seems to be that a proper respect for equality requires more than a presumption that further study will make us see things this way, but actual judgments of equal worth applied to the customs and creations of these different cultures. Such judgments seem to be implicit in the demand that certain works be included in the canon, and in the implication that these works have not been included earlier only because of prejudice or ill-will or the desire to dominate. (Of course, the demand for inclusion is *logically* separable from a claim of equal worth. The demand could be: Include these because they're ours, even though they may well be inferior. But this is not how the people making the demand talk.)

But there is something very wrong with the demand in this form. It makes sense to demand as a matter of right that we approach the study of certain cultures with a presumption of their value, as described above. But it can't make sense to demand as a matter of right that we come up with a final concluding judgment that their value is great, or equal to others'. That is, if the judgment of value is to register something independent of our own wishes and desires, it cannot be dictated by a principle of ethics. On exam-

nation, either we will find something of great value in culture C, or we will not. But it makes no more sense to demand that we do so than it does to demand that we find the earth round or flat, the temperature of the air hot or cold. . . .

Perhaps we don't need to ask whether it's something that others can demand from us as a right. We might simply ask whether this is the way we ought to approach others.

Well, is it? How can this presumption be grounded? One ground that has been proposed is a religious one. Herder, for instance, had a view of divine providence, according to which all this variety of culture was not a mere accident but was meant to bring about a greater harmony. I can't rule out such a view. But merely on the human level, one could argue that it is reasonable to suppose that cultures that have provided the horizon of meaning for large numbers of human beings, of diverse characters and temperaments, over a long period of time—that have, in other words, articulated their sense of the good, the holy, the admirable—are almost certain to have something that deserves our admiration and respect, even if it is accompanied by much that we have to abhor and reject. Perhaps one could put it another way: it would take a supreme arrogance to discount this possibility *a priori*.

There is perhaps after all a moral issue here. We only need a sense of our own limited part in the whole human story to accept the presumption. It is only arrogance, or some analogous moral failing, that can deprive us of this. But what the presumption requires of us is not peremptory and inauthentic judgments of equal value, but a willingness to be open to comparative cultural study of the kind that must displace our horizons in the resulting fusions. What it requires above all is an admission that we are very far away from that ultimate horizon from which the relative worth of different cultures might be evident. This would mean breaking with an illusion that still holds many "multiculturalists"—as well as their most bitter opponents—in its grip.

#### NOTES

1. "La nature de l'honneur est de demander de préférences et des distinctions. . . ." Montesquieu, *De l'esprit des lois*, Bk. 3, chap. 7.

2. The significance of this move from "honor" to "dignity" is interestingly discussed by Peter Berger in his "On the Obsolescence of the Concept of Honour," in *Revisions: Changing Perspectives in Moral Philosophy*, ed. Stanley Hauerwas and Alasdair MacIntyre (Notre Dame, Ind.: University Notre Dame Press, 1983), pp. 172–81.

3. Lionel Trilling, *Sincerity and Authenticity* (New York: Norton, 1969).

4. I have discussed the development of this doctrine at great length, at first in

the work of Francis Hutcheson, drawing on the writings of the Earl of Shaftesbury, and its adversarial relation to Locke's theory in *Sources of the Self* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989), chap. 15.

5. "Le sentiment de l'existence dépouillé de toute autre affection est par lui-même un sentiment précieux de contentment et de paix qui suffiroit seul pour rendre cette existence chère et douce à qui sauroit écarter de soi toutes les impressions sensuelles et terrestres qui viennent sans cesse nous en distraire et en troubler ici bas la douceur. Mais la plupart des hommes agités de passions continuelles connoissent peu cet état et ne l'ayant goûté qu'imparfaitement durant peu d'instans n'en conservent qu'une idée obscure et confuse qui ne leur en fait pas sentir le charme." Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Les Rêveries du promeneur solitaire*, "Cinquième Promenade," in *Oeuvres complètes* (Paris: Gallimard, 1959), 1:1047.

6. "Jeder Mensch hat ein eigenes Maass, gleichsam eine eigne Stimmung aller seiner sinnlichen Gefühle zu einander." Johann Gottlob Herder, *Ideen*, chap., 7, sec. 1, in *Herders Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Bernard Suphan (Berlin: Weidmann, 1877–1913), 13:291.

7. John Stuart Mill was influenced by this Romantic current of thought when he made something like the ideal of authenticity the basis for one of his most powerful arguments in *On Liberty*. See especially chapter 3, where he argues that we need something more than a capacity for "ape-like imitation": "A person whose desires and impulses are his own—are the expression of his own nature, as it has been developed and modified by his own culture—is said to have a character." "If a person possesses any tolerable amount of common sense and experience, his own mode of laying out his existence is the best, not because it is the best in itself, but because it is his own mode." John Stuart Mill, *Three Essays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), pp. 73, 74, 83.

8. George Herbert Mead, *Mind, Self, and Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1934).

9. This inner dialogicality has been explored by M. M. Bakhtin and those who have drawn on his work. See, of Bakhtin, especially *Problems of Dostoyevsky's Poetics*, trans. Caryl Emerson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984). See also Michael Holquist and Katerina Clark, *Mikhail Bakhtin* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1984); and James Wertsch, *Voices of the Mind* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991).

10. See Bakhtin, "The Problem of the Text in Linguistics, Philology and the Human Sciences," in *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, ed. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986), p. 126, for this notion of a "super-addressee," beyond our existing interlocutors.

11. Rousseau is describing the first assemblies: "Chacun commença à regarder les autres et à vouloir être regardé soi-même, et l'estime publique eut un prix. Celui qui chantait ou dansait le mieux; le plus beau, le plus fort, le plus adroit ou le plus éloquent devint le plus considéré, et ce fut là le premier pas vers l'inégalité, et vers le vice en même temps." *Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité parmi les hommes* (Paris: Garnier-Flammarion, 1971), p. 210.

12. See, for example, the passage in the *Considerations sur le gouvernement de Pologne* where he describes the ancient public festival, in which all the people took part, in *Du contrat social* (Paris: Garnier, 1962), p. 345; and also the parallel

passage in *Lettre à D'Alembert sur les spectacles*, in *Du contrat social*, pp. 224–25. The crucial principle was that there should be no division between performers and spectators, but that all should be seen by all. "Mais quels seront enfin les objets de ces spectacles? Qu'y montrera-t-on? Rien, si l'on veut. . . . Donnez les spectateurs en spectacles; rendez-les acteurs eux-mêmes; faites que chacun se voie et s'aime dans les autres, que tous en soient mieux unis."

13. See Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), chap. 4.

14. There are a number of strands that have linked these two levels, but perhaps special prominence in recent years has been given to a psychoanalytically oriented feminism, which roots social inequalities in the early upbringing of men and women. See, for instance, Nancy Chodorow, *Feminism and Psychoanalytic Theory* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989); and Jessica Benjamin, *Bonds of Love: Psychoanalysis, Feminism and the Problem of Domination* (New York: Pantheon, 1988).

15. A prime example of this charge from a feminist perspective is Carol Gilligan's critique of Lawrence Kohlberg's theory of moral development, for presenting a view of human development that privileges only one facet of moral reasoning, precisely the one that tends to predominate in boys rather than girls. See Gilligan, *In a Different Voice* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982).

16. (Paris: Maspero, 1961).

17. *Wahrheit und Methode* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1975), pp. 289–90.

18. I have discussed what is involved here at greater length in "Comparison, History, Truth," in *Myth and Philosophy*, ed. Frank Reynolds and David Tracy (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990); and in "Understanding and Ethnocentricity," in *Philosophy and the Human Sciences* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

# The Disuniting of America

☆☆☆☆

ARTHUR M.  
SCHLESINGER, JR.

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# Foreword



**T**he fading away of the cold war has brought an era of ideological conflict to an end. But it has not, as forecast, brought an end to history. One set of hatreds gives way to the next. Lifting the lid of ideological repression in eastern Europe releases ethnic antagonisms deeply rooted in experience and in memory. The disappearance of ideological competition in the third world removes superpower restraints on national and tribal confrontations. As the era of ideological conflict subsides, humanity enters—or, more pre-

cisely, re-enters—a possibly more dangerous era of ethnic and racial animosity.

The hostility of one tribe for another is among the most instinctive human reactions. Yet, the history of our planet has been in great part the history of the mixing of peoples. Mass migrations have produced mass antagonisms from the beginning of time. Today, as the twentieth century draws to an end, a number of factors—not just the evaporation of the cold war but, more profoundly, the development of swifter modes of communication and transport, the acceleration of population growth, the breakdown of traditional social structures, the flight from tyranny and from want, the dream of a better life somewhere else—converge to drive people as never before across national frontiers and thereby to make the mixing of peoples a major problem for the century that lies darkly ahead.

What happens when people of different ethnic origins, speaking different languages and professing different religions, settle in the same geographical locality and live under the same political sovereignty? Unless a common purpose binds them together, tribal hostilities will drive them apart. Ethnic and racial conflict, it seems evident, will now replace the conflict of ideologies as the explosive issue of our times.

On every side today ethnicity is the cause of the breaking of nations. The Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, India, South Africa are all in crisis. Ethnic tensions disturb and divide Sri Lanka, Burma, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iraq, Lebanon, Israel, Cyprus, Somalia, Nigeria, Liberia, Angola, Sudan, Zaire, Guyana, Trinidad—you name it. Even nations as stable and civilized

as Britain and France, Belgium and Spain and Czechoslovakia, face growing ethnic and racial troubles. "The virus of tribalism," says the *Economist*, "... risks becoming the AIDS of international politics—lying dormant for years, then flaring up to destroy countries."

Take the case of our neighbor to the north. Canada has long been considered the most sensible and placid of nations. "Rich, peaceful and, by the standards of almost anywhere else, enviably successful," the *Economist* observes: yet today "on the brink of bust-up." Michael Ignatieff (the English-resident son of a Russian-born Canadian diplomat and thus an example of the modern mixing of peoples) writes of Canada, "Here we have one of the five richest nations on earth, a country so uniquely blessed with space and opportunity that the world's poor are beating at the door to get in, and it is tearing itself apart. . . . If one of the top five developed nations on earth can't make a federal, multi-ethnic state work, who else can?"

The answer to that increasingly vital question has been, at least until recently, the United States.

Now how have Americans succeeded in pulling off this almost unprecedented trick? Other countries break up because they fail to give ethnically diverse peoples compelling reasons to see themselves as part of the same nation. The United States has worked, thus far, because it has offered such reasons. What is it then that, in the absence of a common ethnic origin, has held Americans together over two turbulent centuries? For America was a multiethnic country from the start. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur emigrated

from France to the American colonies in 1759, married an American woman, settled on a farm in Orange County, New York, and published his *Letters from an American Farmer* during the American Revolution. This eighteenth-century French American marveled at the astonishing diversity of the other settlers—"a mixture of English, Scotch, Irish, French, Dutch, Germans, and Swedes," a "strange mixture of blood" that you could find in no other country.

He recalled one family whose grandfather was English, whose wife was Dutch, whose son married a Frenchwoman, and whose present four sons had married women of different nationalities. "From this promiscuous breed," he wrote, "that race now called Americans have arisen." (The word *race* as used in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries meant what we mean by nationality today; thus people spoke of "the English race," "the German race," and so on.) What, Crèvecoeur mused, were the characteristics of this suddenly emergent American race? *Letters from an American Farmer* propounded a famous question: "What then is the American, this new man?" (Twentieth-century readers must overlook eighteenth-century male obliviousness to the existence of women.)

Crèvecoeur gave his own question its classic answer: "*He is an American, who leaving behind him all his ancient prejudices and manners, receives new ones from the new mode of life he has embraced, the new government he obeys, and the new rank he holds. The American is a new man, who acts upon new principles. . . . Here individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men.*"

*E pluribus unum.* The United States had a brilliant solution for the inherent fragility of a multiethnic society: the creation of a brand-new national identity, carried forward by individuals who, in forsaking old loyalties and joining to make new lives, melted away ethnic differences. Those intrepid Europeans who had torn up their roots to brave the wild Atlantic *wanted* to forget a horrid past and to embrace a hopeful future. They *expected* to become Americans. Their goals were escape, deliverance, assimilation. They saw America as a transforming nation, banishing dismal memories and developing a unique national character based on common political ideals and shared experiences. The point of America was not to preserve old cultures, but to forge a new *American* culture.

One reason why Canada, despite all its advantages, is so vulnerable to schism is that, as Canadians freely admit, their country lacks such a unique national identity. Attracted variously to Britain, France, and the United States, inclined for generous reasons to a policy of official multiculturalism, Canadians have never developed a strong sense of what it is to be a Canadian. As Sir John Macdonald, their first prime minister, put it, Canada has "too much geography and too little history."

The United States has had plenty of history. From the Revolution on, Americans have had a powerful national creed. The vigorous sense of national identity accounts for our relative success in converting Crèvecoeur's "promiscuous breed" into one people and thereby making a multiethnic society work.

This is not to say that the United States has ever fulfilled Crèvecoeur's ideal. New waves of immigration brought in people who fitted awkwardly into a society that was inescapably English in language, ideals, and institutions. For a long time the Anglo-Americans dominated American culture and politics. The pot did not melt everybody, not even all the white immigrants.

As for the nonwhite peoples—those long in America whom the European newcomers overran and massacred, or those others hauled in against their will from Africa and Asia—deeply bred racism put them all, red Americans, black Americans, yellow Americans, brown Americans, well outside the pale. The curse of racism was the great failure of the American experiment, the glaring contradiction of American ideals and the still crippling disease of American life.

Yet even nonwhite Americans, miserably treated as they were, contributed to the formation of the national identity. They became members, if third-class members, of American society and helped give the common culture new form and flavor. The infusion of non-Anglo stocks and the experience of the New World steadily reconfigured the British legacy and made the United States, as we all know, a very different country today from Britain.

The vision of America as melted into one people prevailed through most of the two centuries of the history of the United States. But the twentieth century has brought forth a new and opposing vision. One world war destroyed the old order of things and launched Woodrow Wilson's doctrine of the self-

determination of peoples. Twenty years after, a second world war dissolved the western colonial empires and intensified ethnic and racial militancy around the planet. In the United States itself, new laws eased entry for immigrants from South America, Asia, and Africa and altered the composition of the American people.

In a nation marked by an even stranger mixture of blood than Crèvecoeur had known, his celebrated question is asked once more, with a new passion—and a new answer. Today many Americans disavow the historic goal of "a new race of man." The escape from origins yields to the search for roots. The "ancient prejudices and manners" disowned by Crèvecoeur have made a surprising comeback. A cult of ethnicity has arisen both among non-Anglo whites and among nonwhite minorities to denounce the idea of a melting pot, to challenge the concept of "one people," and to protect, promote, and perpetuate separate ethnic and racial communities.

The eruption of ethnicity had many good consequences. The American culture began at last to give shamefully overdue recognition to the achievements of minorities subordinated and spurned during the high noon of Anglo dominance. American education began at last to acknowledge the existence and significance of the great swirling world beyond Europe. All this was to the good. Of course history should be taught from a variety of perspectives. Let our children try to imagine the arrival of Columbus from the viewpoint of those who met him as well as from those who sent him. Living on a shrinking planet, aspiring to

global leadership, Americans must learn much more about other races, other cultures, other continents. As they do, they acquire a more complex and invigorating sense of the world—and of themselves.

But, pressed too far, the cult of ethnicity has had bad consequences too. The new ethnic gospel rejects the unifying vision of individuals from all nations melted into a new race. Its underlying philosophy is that America is not a nation of individuals at all but a nation of groups, that ethnicity is the defining experience for most Americans, that ethnic ties are permanent and indelible, and that division into ethnic communities establishes the basic structure of American society and the basic meaning of American history.

Implicit in this philosophy is the classification of all Americans according to ethnic and racial criteria. But while the ethnic interpretation of American history, like the economic interpretation, is valid and illuminating up to a point, it is fatally misleading and wrong when presented as the whole picture. The ethnic interpretation, moreover, reverses the historic theory of America as one people—the theory that has thus far managed to keep American society whole.

Instead of a transformative nation with an identity all its own, America in this new light is seen as preservative of diverse alien identities. Instead of a nation composed of individuals making their own unhampered choices, America increasingly sees itself as composed of groups more or less ineradicable in their ethnic character. The multiethnic dogma abandons historic purposes, replacing assimilation by fragmen-

tation, integration by separatism. It belittles *unum* and glorifies *pluribus*.

The historic idea of a unifying American identity is now in peril in many arenas—in our politics, our voluntary organizations, our churches, our language. And in no arena is the rejection of an overriding national identity more crucial than in our system of education.

The schools and colleges of the republic train the citizens of the future. Our public schools in particular have been the great instrument of assimilation and the great means of forming an American identity. What students are taught in schools affects the way they will thereafter see and treat other Americans, the way they will thereafter conceive the purposes of the republic. The debate about the curriculum is a debate about what it means to be an American.

The militants of ethnicity now contend that a main objective of public education should be the protection, strengthening, celebration, and perpetuation of ethnic origins and identities. Separatism, however, nourishes prejudices, magnifies differences and stirs antagonisms. The consequent increase in ethnic and racial conflict lies behind the hullabaloo over “multiculturalism” and “political correctness,” over the iniquities of the “Eurocentric” curriculum, and over the notion that history and literature should be taught not as intellectual disciplines but as therapies whose function is to raise minority self-esteem.

Watching ethnic conflict tear one nation after another apart, one cannot look with complacency at pro-

posals to divide the United States into distinct and immutable ethnic and racial communities, each taught to cherish its own apartness from the rest. One wonders: Will the center hold? or will the melting pot give way to the Tower of Babel?

I don't want to sound apocalyptic about these developments. Education is always in ferment, and a good thing too. Schools and colleges have always been battlegrounds for debates over beliefs, philosophies, values. The situation in our universities, I am confident, will soon right itself once the great silent majority of professors cry "enough" and challenge what they know to be voguish nonsense.

The impact of ethnic and racial pressures on our public schools is more troubling. The bonds of national cohesion are sufficiently fragile already. Public education should aim to strengthen those bonds, not to weaken them. If separatist tendencies go on unchecked, the result can only be the fragmentation, resegregation, and tribalization of American life.

I remain optimistic. My impression is that the historic forces driving toward "one people" have not lost their power. For most Americans this is still what the republic is all about. They resist extremes in the argument between "unity first" and "ethnicity first." "Most Americans," Governor Mario Cuomo has well said, "can understand both the need to recognize and encourage an enriched diversity as well as the need to ensure that such a broadened multicultural perspective leads to unity and an enriched sense of what being an American is, and not to a destructive factionalism that would tear us apart."

Whatever their self-appointed spokesmen may claim, most American-born members of minority groups, white or nonwhite, while they may cherish particular heritages, still see themselves primarily as Americans and not primarily as Irish or Hungarians or Jews or Africans or Asians. A telling indicator is the rising rate of intermarriage across ethnic, religious, even (increasingly) racial lines. The belief in a unique American identity is far from dead.

But the burden to unify the country does not fall exclusively on the minorities. Assimilation and integration constitute a two-way street. Those who want to join America must be received and welcomed by those who already think they own America. Racism, as I have noted, has been the great national tragedy. In recent times white America has at last begun to confront the racism so deeply and shamefully inbred in our history. But the triumph over racism is incomplete. When old-line Americans, for example, treat people of other nationalities and races as if they were indigestible elements to be shunned and barred, they must not be surprised if minorities gather bitterly unto themselves and damn everybody else. Not only must *they* want assimilation and integration; *we* must want assimilation and integration too. The burden to make this a unified country lies as much with the complacent majority as with the sullen and resentful minorities.

The American population has unquestionably grown more heterogeneous than ever in recent times. But this very heterogeneity makes the quest for unifying ideals and a common culture all the more urgent.

FOREWORD

And in a world savagely rent by ethnic and racial antagonisms, it is all the more essential that the United States continue as an example of a how a highly differentiated society holds itself together.

Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.

# The Disuniting of America

☆☆☆☆

*JCC Jewish Educators Initiative*  
*May 7 -9, 2001*  
*Pearl River Hilton*

Group Assignments:

Tuesday, May 8  
Session 6

Group 1

Aliza Orent/Janet Elam  
Gabe Goldman/Len Robinson  
Larry Zierler/Bob Cahen  
Phil Miller/Ken Weintraub

Group 2

Melanie Kohler-Levav/Howard Wasserman  
Jody Hirsh/Jay Roth  
Jeffrey Falick/Ed Rosen

Group 3

Nina Beth Cardin/Buddy Sapolsky  
Debbie Schwartz/Joel Dinkin  
David Nelson/Harold Benus

Group 4

Hal Greenwald/David Sorkin  
Nina Mizrahi/Avrum Cohen  
Jonathan Fass/Nina Leiberman-Giladi  
Jonathan Perlman/Mark Dindas

**JCC Jewish Educator Initiative:  
18-Month Overview**

## *JCC Jewish Educator Initiative: Professional Development Program*

The JCC Jewish Educator Initiative: Professional Development Program has been designed for a small group of experienced, full-time JCC Jewish educators. The following summary describes basic administrative and content information for this program:

### **Administrative Details:**

1. There will be 6 gatherings of the Jewish Educators, beginning with Fall 2001 and continuing through 2003, over two academic years.
2. There will be approximately 30 program days for participants during approximately 18-24 months beginning in October 2001.
3. First two seminars are scheduled for:  
Sunday October 14-Wednesday October 17 (Harvard)  
Monday January 7th-Thursday January 17th (Israel)
4. The overall program and administrative costs will largely be borne by the grant given by the Mandel Foundation to the JCC Association Center for Jewish Education. In addition, each participating JCC will pay a total of \$3,000 towards the cost of the full program, this amount can be split over two fiscal/academic years, 2001-2002 and 2002-2003.
5. Transportation (air/train/bus) to the 6 full group meetings will be covered by the program, utilizing the JCC Association travel agent.
6. Participating JCC Jewish educators agree to make a commitment to continue employment in a JCC for 2 years beyond completion of the program is a pre-requisite for enrollment in the program. If the Jewish Educator leaves the JCC field s/he may be responsible to repay a portion of the program, which will be not more than \$3,000.
7. Mandel Foundation faculty will be the primary teachers/facilitators for the program, in collaboration with
  - a. JCC and JCC Association Staff for the continental program segments
  - b. JCC Association Israel office staff for the Israel program segment(s)

### **Content/Curriculum:**

1. The goals of the JCC Jewish Educator Initiative are to enable the JCC Jewish Educators to:
  - develop a thoughtful vision, grounded in Jewish thought, of the nature and aims of the JCC and its relationship to Jewish living and learning
  - understand the implications of that vision for practice in the JCC setting
  - analyze and discuss critical issues faced by JCCs

Participants will systematically examine critical themes that must be understood in a profound way if an adequate conception of the JCC's educational mission is to be identified. These could include but not be limited to the following:

- *Community* – What is a Jewish community, and how does this understanding of community reflect a meaningful conception of Judaism?;

8:12 AM

5/4/01

- *Klal Yisrael* – How do we understand *Klal Yisrael* and its relationship to the JCC?;
- *An Educated (JCC) Jew* – How do we define an educated Jew in the life of the JCC?;
- *Informal Education* – What do we mean when we say “informal education?”
- *Israel* – What is the place of Israel in the life of the JCC?

2. The participants will be exposed to new ways of thinking about the challenges that face the JCC, in both the Jewish and American context.

3. Each participant will develop a project that will be implemented within his/her own JCC. An individual project, designed to contribute to the participants' professional growth and to make a meaningful contribution to Jewish education in the participant's own JCC and to the JCC movement. Project may be done individually or in small groups.

In the course of the Program, time will be allotted for appropriate activities that are grounded in the projects. Projects will be used as vehicles to help identify and critically examine the participants' guiding assumptions.

4. Opportunity to enhance and develop the network of JCC Jewish educators to add to the individual's JCC as well as to their local community and the JCC movement as a whole. Great ideas can change institutions

5. The work of the JCC Jewish educators will be documented to benefit the entire JCC movement.

## JCC Jewish Educators Initiative Launch

May 7 – 9, 2001

Desired “Game Plan”:

- Have them bring praxis from the field; start with them where they are (pedagogical strategy)
- Lifting important questions that are embedded in the assignments
- Understanding their issues and how they look at things now
- Serious learning, text-based
- Running commentary on extrapolating from this to the eighteen months
- Make the operating assumptions transparent; reflective practice

Desired Outcomes:

- Executives Buy-in and Educators Buy-in
- Staff needs stronger knowledge of our clients and their issues
- Nurture them as group, קהילת לומדים
- Beginning appreciation of “practice to theory to practice” as ongoing dimension of their professional thinking

### **Monday, May 7**

Arrival and Check in – 5:30 pm – Pearl River Hilton

Introductions and Welcome (6:30 – 7:00): AF and HC

- Address Themes we’ll be addressing
- Setting the stage, etc. Will also ask the participants to please decide amongst themselves (each dyad) who will be presenting the pre-seminar assignment, during the first session, after dinner.
- Introduce group

Dinner (7:00 – 7:50)

### **8:00 – 9:45**

Session 1 – *Diversity and the JCC: Challenges and Opportunities* – small group discussions utilizing the pre-seminar assignments

**Monday evening** – Opening session based on pre-seminar assignment:  
AF and HC explain assignment and point out info in notebook

**8:00-9:30** - One representative from each dyad should present the case orally (when introducing the session – indicate whether it’s going to be the exec or the educ presenting)

- Invite clarifying questions

- Raise key issues and surface underlying assumptions

**9:30 – 10:00** – Regroup and examine some of these issues

*Process*

*We will break everyone up into the pre-assigned groups of 3-4 dyads of exec/educ. (All facilitators have received a copy of the groups; the groups are listed in the notebooks that will be distributed to all the participants.)*

*Guiding questions for the group discussions have been provided to facilitate the dyads in their problematizing of the issue of diversity, based on the three cases that came from the people in their own group. Goal: To begin seeing how complex the problem of diversity is. Request that they themselves try to identify some of the critical issues.*  
*Concern: Watch the clock - Is there enough time for each team to process its pre-seminar assignment?*

Staff meeting – around 10:15 pm

**Tuesday, May 8**

Breakfast (7:30-8:30)

**Session 2** -(8:30-9:30)

*“ME, WE and the JCC – The Presentation of Self in JCC Life”*

Group Building Activity, JA

**Session 3 – What is a Jew? Challenges from the Tradition to Contemporary Life**

(9:45-12:00) – First study session –Judaic DG

- a. “Teaching Session” (9:45-10:45) – different conceptions of what belonging to the Jewish people means. [Focus on diversity, different conceptions]
- b. Discussion Session (10:45-12:00) Break them up into groups of approximately six to eight people, keeping Exec’s and educators together, but with different people from the previous groups. The groups have been pre-assigned and can be found in the notebooks.
  - i. What does this say about the Jewish tradition?
  - ii. What are the implications of this for my JCC?

**Guiding questions for discussion:**

- The sources we discussed in our formal session illustrated a variety of models of how the Jewish tradition understood what it means to be a Jew. How well do each of these models fit the contemporary American scene, and to what extent do typical members of the JCC world define themselves and their Jewishness in light of any of these models?
- Are you personally comfortable with any one of these models as the defining core of what constitutes Jewishness? Why? Why not? What elements would you add? What elements would you remove?
- Do you think that we ought to even engage in the attempt to define the core elements of Jewishness as this session did? What are the benefits of such definitions? What are the costs? Can such definitions realistically be avoided?
- Are there any other models, not mentioned in the sources we discussed, which might better characterize the “core” of what constitutes Jewish belonging in contemporary America?
- What overall picture about Judaism, Jews and Jewishness emerges from the texts we’ve reviewed? In what ways should this picture be reflected in the life

and aims of a JCC? What are the elements of the picture that emerges that we would most want to *avoid* when shaping the world of the JCC?

*Process: The teaching session is for the whole group. The discussion session break the group into pre-assigned sub-groups.. We are going to keep the exec/educ pairs, but group them differently than Monday night's groupings.*

**Concerns:**

- *Should we regroup after the discussion session? DG needs to answer this, but we thought that it would be a better idea NOT TO regroup and debrief after every session (we are doing this Monday night and again Tuesday afternoon)*

- *Do the groups need "facilitation," or do we sit in, or do we step out totally?*

**Possible direction: The discussion will lead to concluding that – The JCC has a beautiful opportunity to provide an environment for diversity. This is an opportunity that JCCs have, but not other institutions.**

Suggestion: We have been talking about having a session that will be devoted solely to "scanning current practice." This entails: 1. Surveying the current practice in individual JCCs, with attention to exploiting diversity in their institutions; 2. examining missed opportunities; 3. examining "blown"/messed up opportunities. Alternatively, it's been suggested that we just weave this discussion into the morning and afternoon sessions, inviting the participants to share with us their personal experiences.

Lunch (12:00-12:50)

Free time (12:50-1:15)

**Session 4 – Jewish Diversity: Perspectives from the Multicultural Wars**

**Tuesday afternoon (1:15-3:45) – Second study session – Western DP**  
[Focus on issue of what we share, what we have in common]

a. "Teaching Session" (1:30-2:30)

b. Discussion Session (2:30-3:45)

a. To what extent is 'recognition', or the absence thereof, a major problem in contemporary Jewish life -- that is, in the relationship between the organized community and its diverse constituencies and in the relationships among these constituencies?

b. What might it mean for the JCC to tackle a 'recognition'-agenda? (What kind of recognition might it seek to encourage, and how might this be reflected in its approach to its work?)

Critics of contemporary forms of multiculturalism urge the need for American to hold some significant thing or things in common, or else risk coming unglued as a community.

a. Do you think this concern with 'commonality' is overblown (as applied to the American community and as applied to the Jewish community)?

b. Assuming that it is important for members of the Jewish community to share some thing or some things in common, what might or ought this something to be? (Begin by identify a number of possibilities, and then decide from among them which one(s) is (are) essential.)

c. Pick one of the things you focused on in b. If a JCC decided to make the encouragement of this trait central to its educational mission, how might this be reflected in the life of the JCC? (Pick a context: Early Childhood Program, the Swimming Pool, then Sports Program, the Board Room)

Should the groups be accompanied by facilitators (see same question in DG's session)?

c. Break (3:45-4:00)

d. Reconvene full group (4:00-4:30)

Content issues:

- Important to stress the issue of change

*Process: Teaching session is for the whole group; Discussion session - - DP will direct the group to break themselves up, 4 to a group, preferably with people whom they have not yet had opportunity to meet with.*

*Direction: The starting point will be: substantial diversity which includes groups that are mutually distrustful. The questions that are raised will focus on two themes:*

I. *There's a need for different sub-groups to share some traits*

a. *How important is it for there to be a shared traits*

b. *What are these shared traits and why are they important?*

c. *How could the JCC contribute to the development of these shared traits?*

II. *Recognition - According to Charles Taylor and others, the diverse groups that make up the community will continue to be hostile until each group feels recognized by the others as the bearers of meaningful insights and values*

*How far does this question go? What does it mean to respect another regroup? To what extent should the JCC be encouraging this respect? Should it be part of the Jewish educational mission, or in what way is it already?*

a. *How would a policy of encouraging such recognition manifest itself in a JCC?*

b. *How important is it for JCCs to be encouraging this kind of recognition?*

Suggestion: We have been talking about having a session that will be devoted solely to "scanning current practice." This entails: 1. Surveying the current practice in individual JCCs, with attention to exploiting diversity in their institutions; 2. examining missed opportunities; 3. examining "blown"/messed up opportunities. Alternatively, it's been suggested that we just weave this discussion into the morning and afternoon sessions, inviting the participants to share with us their personal experiences.

Jody Hirsh — a third input

*We are asking Jody to develop a more informal session, based on art, etc., that will be a third lens/input/perspective (Tues AM and afternoon are the first two), on the question/issue of diversity. Maybe he'll be able to provide/evoke new dimension(s) of the problem that we have not yet examined (i.e. who's in and who's out of the JCC).*

Free Time (4:45-6:15)

Cocktails (6:15 – 7:00)

Dinner (7:00-7:50)

**Session 6 – Diversity in the JCC: Our Own Experiences – Part I - BH**

(8:00-9:30)

Dyads develop “stance” on diversity and pluralism

- a. In what ways do we in our practice celebrate diversity, and in what ways do we do the opposite?
- b. Where would we like to go? Where do we want to position ourselves? What's our vision for the institution on this issue?

*Process:*

*I. 45 minutes - The group will be broken down according to the original exec/educ teams. The session will be introduced with leading questions and then the teams are left to discuss and develop their individual “stances.” We will ask the group to articulate current policy in their JCC.*

*Then, we will ask them to look through the multiple lenses that they have hopefully acquired during the past 24 hours, and consider how they might develop new ways of thinking about diversity that would be helpful to them in their work in the JCC. We will then ask them to write up either: “How you might translate what you've learned in this day, into practice in your JCC.” OR: “Articulate three-five principles that will get at the way diversity fits into your mission. What are the things that define our approach as an institution?”*

*II. 8:45 – 9:30 – Regroup into the larger sub-group from Monday night, to compare/contrast the stances. The groups are pre-assigned and listed in the notebooks.*

*Direction:*

*I. Elicit current practice [We can make a grid for the teams to fill in for themselves that will help organize their individual discussions.]*

*“Scanning your current practice, answer the following questions:*

- a. areas where we miss opportunities to address diversity*
- b. take advantage of diversity to accomplish educational, social, cultural purposes*
- c. deal inadequately with issues of diversity”*

*Develop a stance – based on ideas and questions encountered during the seminar, and other relevant considerations, develop an educational stance towards diversity.*

10:00 PM- JA and RJ

Staff meeting to review critical issues that have surfaced during the three sessions, in preparation for Wed. morning session. We will type up the stances that have been produced in the previous session, in preparation for distribution in the Wednesday morning session.

### **Wednesday, May 9**

Breakfast (7:30-8:30)

#### **Session 7 – Diversity in the JCC: Our Own Experiences – Part II BH & RJ & JA “translation” of a “stance” into the work of a JCC**

**A. (8:30-9:30) - 1.** A lot happened yesterday. What questions/issues surfaced for you through the various discussions that happened? We'd like to take some time to discuss your intellectual journey of the past day and ½.

2. One of the faculty will give his/her impression of what happened/what has been going on, tracking the flow of the discussions, etc....

**B. (9:00-9:15)** Let's look at the stances that you developed in last night's session (give out stances that we typed up the night before). Break yourselves into groups to react to the stances. First take 10 minutes to read the stances to yourselves.

**C. (9:15-9:30)** Regroup – What thoughts emerged as you scanned the different stances? Then, we share our thoughts with the participants. Goals: 1. Show our appreciation for the ideas that have emerged during the past day and ½. 2. “As you look at the way different people looked at diversity (the three inputs), what strikes you...?” 3. Translation exercise - (9:30-11:00)

Some guiding questions:

- i. What are the different definitions of the problem that emerge from the paragraphs?
- ii. What is the operating analysis that is going on in there?
- iii. Range of the visions that have been presented in these stances
- iv. Range of the strategies – what they're doing now, and what they'd like to be doing in the future
- v. Reproblematize what they've done do make it clear that this is all very preliminary

**D. (9:30-11:00) – Translation exercise:** “What difference does “this” stance make for practice in any specific arena of your JCC? “ Take the stance that you've developed and see what implication it's going to have for what you do in a particular arena in your JCC (i.e. summer camp, early childhood, etc.)

#### **Session 8 –**

(11:00-12:00) *Discussion, Feedback, Intro to Eighteen Month Program* JR & CH  
What are the issues on your mind – other than diversity – that you would like to think about during this 18-month seminar?

Lunch and checkout (12:00-1:00)

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12:44 PM

5/4/01

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- *Klal Yisrael* - How do we understand Klal Yisrael and its relationship to the JCC?;
- *An Educated {JCC} Jew* - How do we define an educated Jew in the life of the JCC?;
- *Informal Education* - What is informal education, and in what ways might it meaningfully enter into the work of JCCs?;
- *Israel* - What is the place of Israel in the life of the JCC?

2. The participants will be exposed to new ways of thinking about the challenges that face the JCC, in both the Jewish and American context.

3. Each participant will develop a project that will be implemented within his/her own JCC. An individual project, designed to contribute to the participants' professional growth and to make a meaningful contribution to Jewish education in the participant's own JCC and to the JCC movement. Project may be done individually or in small groups.-

In the course of the Program, time will be allotted for appropriate activities that are grounded in the projects. Projects will be used as vehicles to help identify and critically examine the participants' guiding assumptions.

4. Opportunity to enhance and develop the network of JCC Jewish educators to add to the individual's JCC as well as to their local community and the JCC movement as a whole. Great ideas can change institutions

5. The work of the JCC Jewish educators will be documented to benefit the entire JCC movement.

JCCA JEWISH EDUCATORS INITIATIVE

ASSIGNMENT May 3, 2001  
Aliza Orent and Janet Elam  
Austin Texas

The Jewish Community Association of Austin opened its doors January of 2000 to the delight of the local Jewish community that had been waiting over eight years for the event to occur. Initially we had one year of a Honeymoon phase during which the Association could do no wrong. Now, after a year, we are beginning to have issues that will allow for good use of Jewish values in order to solve problems.

An example of such a process which incorporates these values was the creation of this year's Yom HaShoah commemoration.

A committee was formed consisting of the chair of the Community Relations Council-part of the JCAA; a co-chair for Yom HaShoah; a professor from the University of Texas specializing in Holocaust studies; a child of a survivor; a survivor and additional interested parties. We sent a call out to the board of Rabbis to send a representative to these meetings to coordinate our efforts, they chose not to send anyone or were too busy to attend.

The committee spent about four months formulating plans for a variety of events and for outreach opportunities for the Non-Jewish community, including; libraries (creation of displays); bookstores, other faith communities and churches. A "reading of the names vigil" was organized which was held at the State Capitol during which a multitude of individuals, church groups, children from the Austin Jewish Community Day School and the American Red Cross staff read the names of those that were murdered.

An evening observance was planned with heavy emphasis on the educational aspect of the future of Yom HaShoah commemorations. A presentation/lecture was planned with an interactive element requiring individuals to participate in a dialogue about why we commemorate the Shoah and what will happen after all the survivors have passed away. The program would start, however, with a relatively brief (20 minute) service led by the local rabbis.

There were a number of problems with the planning that became apparent one week prior to the actual commemoration. The board of Rabbis felt that given our plans, there was not adequate time for an actual service and instead, they decided that they wanted to have a separate service at a synagogue after the reading of the names vigil, which was to take place the evening before the other commemorative service planned by the committee.

To say that all Heck broke loose is a gross understatement. Most of the committee began to let their feelings be heard via email. Many were angry with the Rabbis for wanting to change the plans one week before the commemoration was to be held and for not having attended any of the planning meetings.

A meeting was scheduled immediately to figure out how to address the concerns of both sides. Both the president of the JCAA as well as the CEO were asked to join us as well as a representative of the board of Rabbis. Initially the debate was heated, as several committee members expressed frustration with the fact that the rabbis never bothered to give input earlier, and now wanted to change the entire event at the last minute.

To make a long story short: we attempted to create a compromise and SHALOM BAYIT by providing the board of rabbis 25 minutes (they used 45 minutes at the actual event which annoyed the committee too) to create a meaningful yet traditional service, followed by a speech entitled "Commemorating For The Future". There was no interactive component, however, the committee is determined to have one next year. In addition we asked that in the future the board of rabbis make a concerted effort to attend event planning requiring rabbinical input.

I am not sure if we were all 100% happy with the end result, however, for the moment there was communal Shalom Bayit. For the sake of the community, we felt that it was important that the lay committee and the rabbis come to an agreement together, a compromise, and not be seen to hold their own, separate commemorations. My concerns for the future are more about getting younger individuals involved with programming around Yom HaShoah. If the board of rabbis come in at the last minute and asks for changes after a committee has formulated the commemoration, will the younger people who are only just now getting involved as lay committee members feel undermined and not acknowledged? Only the future will tell.

And to end this all; three citations to provide more food for thought on the issue:

The purpose of the laws of the Torah are...to promote compassion, loving-kindness and peace in the world.  
-Moses Maimonides

A rabbi is listening to two opposing sides of a Talmudic argument. After hearing the first one, he says, "you're right." Then, after hearing the second one, he says "and you're right." Immediately, the rebbetzin butts in: "but rabbi, they can't both be right!" To which the rabbi replies, "and you're right too."

No matter what side of the argument you are on, you always find people on your side that you wish were on the other.  
Jascha Heifetz

## JCC Jewish Educators Initiative Launch

May 7 – 9, 2001

Desired “Game Plan”:

- Have them bring praxis from the field; start with them where they are (pedagogical strategy)
- Lifting important questions that are embedded in the assignments
- Understanding their issues and how they look at things now
- Serious learning, text-based
- Running commentary on extrapolating from this to the eighteen months
- Make the operating assumptions transparent; reflective practice

Desired Outcomes:

- Executives Buy-in and Educators Buy-in
- Staff needs stronger knowledge of our clients and their issues
- Nurture them as group, קהילת לומדים
- Beginning appreciation of “practice to theory to practice” as ongoing dimension of their professional thinking

### **Monday, May 7**

Arrival and Check in – 5:30 pm – Pearl River Hilton

Introductions and Welcome (6:30 – 7:00): AF and HC

- Address Themes we’ll be addressing
- Setting the stage, etc. Will also ask the participants to please decide amongst themselves (each dyad) who will be presenting the pre-seminar assignment, during the first session, after dinner.
- Introduce group

Dinner (7:00 – 7:50)

**8:00 – 9:45**

**Session 1 – Diversity and the JCC: Challenges and Opportunities – small group discussions utilizing the pre-seminar assignments**

**Monday evening** – Opening session based on pre-seminar assignment:  
AF and HC explain assignment and point out info in notebook

**8:00-9:30** - One representative from each dyad should present the case orally (when introducing the session – indicate whether it’s going to be the exec or the educ presenting)

- Invite clarifying questions

- Raise key issues and surface underlying assumptions

**9:30 – 10:00** – Regroup and examine some of these issues

*Process*

*We will break everyone up into the pre-assigned groups of 3-4 dyads of exec/educ. (All facilitators have received a copy of the groups; the groups are listed in the notebooks that will be distributed to all the participants.)*

*Guiding questions for the group discussions have been provided to*

*facilitate the dyads in their problematizing of the issue of diversity, based on the three cases that came from the people in their own group. Goal: To begin seeing how complex the problem of diversity is. Request that they themselves try to identify some of the critical issues.*

*Concern: Watch the clock - Is there enough time for each team to process its pre-seminar assignment?*

Staff meeting – around 10:15 pm

**Tuesday, May 8**

Breakfast (7:30-8:30)

**Session 2** -(8:30-9:30)

*“ME, WE and the JCC – The Presentation of Self in JCC Life”*

Group Building Activity, JA

**Session 3 – What is a Jew? Challenges from the Tradition to Contemporary Life**

(9:45-12:00) – First study session – Judaic DG

- a. “Teaching Session” (9:45-10:45) – different conceptions of what belonging to the Jewish people means. [Focus on diversity, different conceptions]
- b. Discussion Session (10:45-12:00) Break them up into groups of approximately six to eight people, keeping Exec’s and educators together, but with different people from the previous groups. The groups have been pre-assigned and can be found in the notebooks.

- i. What does this say about the Jewish tradition?
- ii. What are the implications of this for my JCC?

**Guiding questions for discussion:**

- The sources we discussed in our formal session illustrated a variety of models of how the Jewish tradition understood what it means to be a Jew. How well do each of these models fit the contemporary American scene, and to what extent do typical members of the JCC world define themselves and their Jewishness in light of any of these models?
- Are you personally comfortable with any one of these models as the defining core of what constitutes Jewishness? Why? Why not? What elements would you add? What elements would you remove?
- Do you think that we ought to even engage in the attempt to define the core elements of Jewishness as this session did? What are the benefits of such definitions? What are the costs? Can such definitions realistically be avoided?
- Are there any other models, not mentioned in the sources we discussed, which might better characterize the “core” of what constitutes Jewish belonging in contemporary America?
- What overall picture about Judaism, Jews and Jewishness emerges from the texts we’ve reviewed? In what ways should this picture be reflected in the life and aims of a JCC? What are the elements of the picture that emerges that we would most want to *avoid* when shaping the world of the JCC?

*Process: The teaching session is for the whole group. The discussion session break the group into pre-assigned sub-groups. We are going to keep the exec/educ pairs, but group them differently than Monday night's groupings.*

**Concerns:**

- *Should we regroup after the discussion session? DG needs to answer this, but we thought that it would be a better idea NOT TO regroup and debrief after every session (we are doing this Monday night and again Tuesday afternoon)*
- *Do the groups need "facilitation," or do we sit in, or do we step out totally?*

**Possible direction: The discussion will lead to concluding that – The JCC has a beautiful opportunity to provide an environment for diversity. This is an opportunity that JCCs have, but not other institutions.**

Suggestion: We have been talking about having a session that will be devoted solely to "scanning current practice." This entails: 1. Surveying the current practice in individual JCCs, with attention to exploiting diversity in their institutions; 2. examining missed opportunities; 3. examining "blown"/messed up opportunities. Alternatively, it's been suggested that we just weave this discussion into the morning and afternoon sessions, inviting the participants to share with us their personal experiences.

Lunch (12:00-12:50)

Free time (12:50-1:15)

**Session 4 – Jewish Diversity: Perspectives from the Multicultural Wars**

**Tuesday afternoon (1:15-3:45) – Second study session – Western DP**  
[Focus on issue of what we share, what we have in common]

- a. "Teaching Session" (1:30-2:30)
- b. Discussion Session (2:30-3:45)
  - a. To what extent is 'recognition', or the absence thereof, a major problem in contemporary Jewish life -- that is, in the relationship between the organized community and its diverse constituencies and in the relationships among these constituencies?
  - b. What might it mean for the JCC to tackle a 'recognition'-agenda? (What kind of recognition might it seek to encourage, and how might this be reflected in its approach to its work?)

Critics of contemporary forms of multiculturalism urge the need for American to hold some significant thing or things in common, or else risk coming unglued as a community.

- a. Do you think this concern with 'commonality' is overblown (as applied to the American community and as applied to the Jewish community)?
- b. Assuming that it is important for members of the Jewish community to share some thing or some things in common, what might or ought this something to be? (Begin by identify a number of

possibilities, and then decide from among them which one(s) is (are) essential.)

c. Pick one of the things you focused on in b. If a JCC decided to make the encouragement of this trait central to its educational mission, how might this be reflected in the life of the JCC? (Pick a context: Early Childhood Program, the Swimming Pool, then Sports Program, the Board Room)

Should the groups be accompanied by facilitators (see same question in DG's session)?

c. Break (3:45-4:00)

d. Reconvene full group (4:00-4:30)

Content issues:

- Important to stress the issue of change

*Process: Teaching session is for the whole group; Discussion session - -- DP will direct the group to break themselves up, 4 to a group, preferably with people whom they have not yet had opportunity to meet with.*

*Direction: The starting point will be: substantial diversity which includes groups that are mutually distrustful. The questions that are raised will focus on two themes:*

- I. *There's a need for different sub-groups to share some traits*
  - a. *How important is it for there to be a shared traits*
  - b. *What are these shared traits and why are they important?*
  - c. *How could the JCC contribute to the development of these shared traits?*
- II. *Recognition – According to Charles Taylor and others, the diverse groups that make up the community will continue to be hostile until each group feels recognized by the others as the bearers of meaningful insights and values*

*How far does this question go? What does it mean to respect another regroup? To what extent should the JCC be encouraging this respect? Should it be part of the Jewish educational mission, or in what way is it already?*

  - a. *How would a policy of encouraging such recognition manifest itself in a JCC?*
  - b. *How important is it for JCCs to be encouraging this kind of recognition?*

*Suggestion: We have been talking about having a session that will be devoted solely to "scanning current practice." This entails: 1. Surveying the current practice in individual JCCs, with attention to exploiting diversity in their institutions; 2. examining missed opportunities; 3. examining "blown"/messed up opportunities. Alternatively, it's been suggested that we just weave this discussion into the morning and afternoon sessions, inviting the participants to share with us their personal experiences.*

**Session 5 – (4:00 pm – 4:45 pm) Art History and Community: Seeing Diversity in Jewish Life**

**Jody Hirsh — a third input**

*We are asking Jody to develop a more informal session, based on art, etc., that will be a third lens/input/perspective (Tues AM and afternoon are the first two), on the*

*question/issue of diversity. Maybe he'll be able to provide/evoke new dimension(s) of the problem that we have not yet examined (i.e. who's in and who's out of the JCC).*

Free Time (4:45-6:15)  
Cocktails (6:15 – 7:00)  
Dinner (7:00-7:50)

**Session 6 – Diversity in the JCC: Our Own Experiences – Part I - BH**

**(8:00-9:30)**

Dyads develop “stance” on diversity and pluralism

- a. In what ways do we in our practice celebrate diversity, and in what ways do we do the opposite?
- b. Where would we like to go? Where do we want to position ourselves? What's our vision for the institution on this issue?

**Process:**

*I. 45 minutes - The group will be broken down according to the original exec/educ teams. The session will be introduced with leading questions and then the teams are left to discuss and develop their individual “stances.” We will ask the group to articulate current policy in their JCC.*

*Then, we will ask them to look through the multiple lenses that they have hopefully acquired during the past 24 hours, and consider how they might develop new ways of thinking about diversity that would be helpful to them in their work in the JCC. We will then ask them to write up either: “How you might translate what you've learned in this day, into practice in your JCC.” OR: “Articulate three-five principles that will get at the way diversity fits into your mission. What are the things that define our approach as an institution?”*

*II. 8:45 – 9:30 – Regroup into the larger sub-group from Monday night, to compare/contrast the stances. The groups are pre-assigned and listed in the notebooks.*

**Direction:**

*I. Elicit current practice [We can make a grid for the teams to fill in for themselves that will help organize their individual discussions.]*

*“Scanning your current practice, answer the following questions:*

- a. areas where we miss opportunities to address diversity*
- b. take advantage of diversity to accomplish educational, social, cultural purposes*
- c. deal inadequately with issues of diversity”*

*Develop a stance – based on ideas and questions encountered during the seminar, and other relevant considerations, develop an educational stance towards diversity.*

**10:00 PM- JA and RJ**

**Staff meeting to review critical issues that have surfaced during the three sessions, in preparation for Wed. morning session. We will type up the**

stances that have been produced in the previous session, in preparation for distribution in the Wednesday morning session.

**Wednesday, May 9**

Breakfast (7:30-8:30)

**Session 7 – Diversity in the JCC: Our Own Experiences – Part II** BH & RJ & JA  
**“translation” of a “stance” into the work of a JCC**

A. (8:30-9:30) - 1. A lot happened yesterday. What questions/issues surfaced for you through the various discussions that happened? We'd like to take some time to discuss your intellectual journey of the past day and ½.

2. One of the faculty will give his/her impression of what happened/what has been going on, tracking the flow of the discussions, etc....

B. (9:00-9:15) Let's look at the stances that you developed in last night's session (give out stances that we typed up the night before). Break yourselves into groups to react to the stances. First take 10 minutes to read the stances to yourselves.

C. (9:15-9:30) Regroup – What thoughts emerged as you scanned the different stances? Then, we share our thoughts with the participants. Goals: 1. Show our appreciation for the ideas that have emerged during the past day and ½. 2. “As you look at the way different people looked at diversity (the three inputs), what strikes you...?” 3. Translation exercise - (9:30-11:00)

Some guiding questions:

- i. What are the different definitions of the problem that emerge from the paragraphs?
- ii. What is the operating analysis that is going on in there?
- iii. Range of the visions that have been presented in these stances
- iv. Range of the strategies – what they're doing now, and what they'd like to be doing in the future
- v. Reproblematize what they've done do make it clear that this is all very preliminary

D. (9:30-11:00) – Translation exercise: “What difference does “this” stance make for practice in any specific arena of your JCC? “ Take the stance that you've developed and see what implication it's going to have for what you do in a particular arena in your JCC (i.e. summer camp, early childhood, etc.)

**Session 8 –**

(11:00-12:00) *Discussion, Feedback, Intro to Eighteen Month Program* JR & CH

What are the issues on your mind – other than diversity – that you would like to think about during this 18-month seminar?

Lunch and checkout (12:00-1:00)

1. Priority
2. ~ yesterday's qs
3. concepts:

Monday night, May 7  
Session 1 – Pre seminar assignments

Guiding questions:

- Does this case seem to you to be unusual, or is it symptomatic of other things that happen in your JCC? Are the issues from your cases familiar ones, are they common, have you had these experiences before? We want the participants to be able to objectify – to categorize: this case is a symptom of..... My case is a case of....
- What other examples of this type of case come to mind? Can you give an instance of a larger category that this belongs to?
- What did you learn from documenting your case? In retrospect, how do you feel about the response that you made at the time– could you have done it in a different way?
- What beliefs about diversity are embedded in the way you thought about this question?
- What competing concerns gave rise to a dilemma in the first place?
- Can you articulate your operating principles? **Put principles up on flip charts.** [i.e. a. I try not to offend certain people in the community on religious, ethical, etc. grounds; b. Let's have as many different kinds of Jews be a part of my JCC – that's why I was happy to sponsor the gay-lesbian group... a. might say – I wouldn't do b. because it might offend more right-wing groups...]
- why do you think your operating principles are good?
- What big questions about the role of the JCC in Jewish life are raised for you?

**We are trying to lay the groundwork for later discussions – to explode notions/assumptions, etc. What do we mean when we use terms like, *community, klal yisrael...***

Intro:

Salience/⊕/⊖/ Need for JCC to develop stance

Why look at "M-C" → General -- 2-fold Relevance

Great debate Prefigures: Ketchum/Hughes

↳ Is Common culture really "common"? Whose?

Fast forward: Similarity (Competing fact/Ideal)

↳ Differences -- Antagonists/"Common" Cult.

Critique of Common - Destructiveness

MC Aspiration: Cult. Integ./ID - Kallen ≡ "Recognition"

On nature, need, importance of R.

"R and MC - Taylor" → ↑ Diff + Recognition

Critics: Tendency + Destructive Effect of M-C.

Schles/Ketchum: ↑ What share -- or else!!

3 Issues: A) "Common-fact" B) Imp. of Recognition  
C) "Common Core"

Starting point: Great diversity - practice, belief, outlook

From some viewpoints - Exhilarating - Exciting -- e.g. Bakke

From other viewpoints: Worrysome = "Problem" - Sam Friedmann

Which it is ~ How we understand  $\Rightarrow$  Our work: Jewish/General

Why JCC profs/stakeholders = Right address for Conversation

~ Like public school -- Embodies diversity

Its response: educational/symbolic

My approach look at diversity within the

Jewish community via "Multicultural debates"

These debates = 2-fold relevance

1) Jews as one group among many.

2) Within contemp. Jewish life, many diverse sub-groups: How think about this

all

Recent Debates pre-figured in 19th century arguments between WASPs and Irish-Catholics

1840's -- New York: collects \$ for free, non-sect schools

Archbishop Hughes: \$ for Catholic schools

Hiram Ketchum's Response: Read/Discuss

→ Come share in "American" culture: Amalgamate  
+ Private Sphere {Fraternity

Bishop Hughes' response:

Your "common culture" = Anti-Catholic/Irish-

Not neutral = your culture!

Your real agenda: Assimilate us

No ~ And No Thank you

Hughes' view: "Common culture" =  
Smug monoculturalism  
Intolerant of diversity

See Support for this View.

Fast-forward : Roughly similar debate - New Players

"Roughly Similar": A) New players

B) Those urging minorities to come share in a common culture claim that it's not just "neutral," but itself multi-cultural.

E.g. Textbooks -- black experiences

C) Their critics: <sup>Bill</sup> nothing has really changed!  
White-Eurocentric, and destructive.  
disrespect.

What do minorities want?

A) Achievement -- Meaningful rep. in mainstream culture

C) More deeply: "Recognition"  
~ A) and B)

B) Cultural Id  
- Roots  
- Affirmation

We want to be recognized!

A) Read passage

→ B) What does it mean "to be recognized?"

Ask them

"To be taken seriously, affirmed"

A) Invisibility

B) Viewed negatively

C) Viewed Positively but in your terms

d) Viewed positively -- but in a way that values what I value in myself

C) Value self ~ Value by others

D) From Ind. → Cultural

Results of this movement:

1) Abandon "commons" → Roots/Pride/Recognition

Respond the Hiram Ketchums:

This nation cannot endure  
w/o a common, ~~trans~~  
culture!

See passage

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Upshot

- 1) Recognition/Affirm difference
- 2) Commonality

How do these concerns apply  
within Jewish life?

## The Jews

Yehuda Amichai

The Jews are like photos in a display window,  
all of them together, short and tall, alive and dead,  
brides and grooms, bar mitzvah boys and babies.  
Some are restored from old yellowed photographs.  
Sometimes people come and break the window  
and burn the pictures. And then they start  
photographing and developing all over again  
and displaying them again, sad and smiling.

Rembrandt painted them wearing Turkish  
turbans with beautiful burnished gold.  
Chagall painted them hovering in the air,  
and I paint them like my father and my mother.  
The Jews are an eternal forest preserve  
where the trees stand dense, and even the dead  
cannot lie down. They stand upright, leaning on the living,  
and you cannot tell them apart. Only the fire  
burns the dead faster.

And what about God? God lingered  
like the sent of a beautiful woman who once  
faced them in passing and they didn't see her face,  
only her fragrance remained, kinds of perfumes,  
blessed be the Creator of kinds of perfumes.

A Jewish man remembers the succah in his grandfather's home.  
And succah remembers for him  
the wandering in the desert that remembers  
the grace of youth and the Tablets of the Ten Commandments  
and the gold of the Golden Calf and the thirst and the hunger  
that remember Egypt.

And what about God? According to the settlement  
of divorce from the Garden of Eden and from the Temple,  
God sees his children only once  
a year, on Yom Kippur.

The Jews are not a historical people  
and not even an archeological people, the Jews  
are a geological people with rifts  
and collapses and strata and fiery lava.  
Their history must be measured  
on a different scale.

The Jews are buffed by suffering and polished by torments  
like pebbles on the seashore.  
The Jews are distinguished only in their death  
as pebbles among other stones:  
When the mighty hand flings them,  
they skip two times, or three,  
on the surface of the water before they drown.

Some time ago, I met a beautiful woman  
whose grandfather performed my circumcision  
long before she was born. I told her,  
you don't know me and I don't know you  
but we are the Jewish people,  
your dead grandfather and I the circumcised and you the beautiful granddaughter  
with golden hair; we are the Jewish people.

And what about God? Once we sang  
"There is no God like ours," now we sing "There is no God of ours,"  
but we sing. We still sing.

Jonathan Ariel  
JCC Jewish Educators Initiative

**Me, We and the JCC:  
The Presentation of Self in JCC Life**

"My father an enlightened man believed in man.  
My grandfather a pious chasid believed in God.  
The one taught me to speak.  
The other to sing.  
Both loved stories.  
And when I tell mine, I hear their voices."

Elie Wiesel

From Pilgrim to Tourist

"Modernists strove to make the world solid by making it pliable, so that identity could be built at will. They... turned the space in which identity was to be built into a desert. And a desert does not hold features well. The easier it is to emboss a footprint, the easier it is to rub it out. A gust of wind will do. And deserts are windy places."

Zygmunt Bauman

**SOME CONTEMPORARY PERSPECTIVES ON DIVERSITY**  
**SMALL GROUP EXERCISE**

1. Public schools have prided themselves on representing a common culture that is neutral as between the varied outlooks and values of its diverse constituencies. Its critics, though, have claimed that the so-called common culture embodied by our public schools is actually the culture of a particular, socially dominant sub-group, and that other groups are marginalized by it; that is, they are made to feel like 'outsiders' whose outlook and values are 'second-class'. Is there any merit to this critique as applied to the Jewish culture that greets the diverse individuals that come to JCCs? That is, is this public culture more congenial to the outlook of some of its constituencies than to that of the others? If so, is this a problem?
2. In discussing multiculturalism, Charles Taylor has written on 'the need for recognition', urging that it is the withholding of recognition from different cultural sub-groups that is the source of many of the tensions between the cultural groups that make up the larger community.
  - a. To what extent is 'recognition', or the absence thereof, a major problem in contemporary Jewish life -- that is, in the relationship between the organized community and its diverse constituencies and in the relationships among these constituencies?
  - b. How, if at all, does JCC practice currently address the problem of recognition?
  - c. What might it mean for the JCC to tackle a 'recognition'-agenda? (What kind of recognition might it seek to encourage, and how might this be reflected in its approach to its work?)
3. Critics of contemporary forms of multiculturalism like Arthur Schlesinger urge the need for Americans to hold some significant thing or things in common, or else risk coming unglued as a community. Today, similar concerns are being expressed in relation to the diverse sub-groups that make up the American Jewish community.
  - a. Do you think this concern with 'commonality' is overblown as applied to the Jewish community)?
  - b. Assuming that it is important for members of the Jewish community to share some thing or some things in common, what do you think this something should be? (You might begin by identify a number of possibilities, and then decide from among them which one(s) is (are) essential.)
  - c. Pick one of the things you focused on in b. If a JCC decided to make the encouragement of this trait central to its educational mission, how might this be reflected in the life of the JCC? (Pick a context --e.g., Early Childhood Program, then Sports Program, the Board Room, Adult Education, etc. -- and ask yourselves how it would look different if nurturing this trait was central to your educational mission?)

JCCA Jewish Educators Initiative  
May 7 -9, 2001  
Pearl River Hilton

“What Is a Jew? –  
Challenges from the Tradition to Contemporary Jewish Life”

Dr. Daniel Gordis

The Biblical Period: The Jew as Israelite

Ruth, Chapter 1

**1** In the days when the chieftains ruled, there was a famine in the land; and a man of Bethlehem in Judah, with his wife and two sons, went to reside in the country of Moab. <sup>2</sup>The man’s name was Elimelech, his wife’s name was Naomi, and his two sons were named Mahlon and Chilion—Ephrathites of Bethlehem in Judah. They came to the country of Moab and remained there.

<sup>3</sup>Elimelech, Naomi’s husband, died; and she was left with her two sons. <sup>4</sup>They married Moabite women, one named Orpah and the other Ruth, and they lived there about ten years. <sup>5</sup>Then those two—Mahlon and Chilion—also died; so the woman was left without her two sons and without her husband.

<sup>6</sup>She started out with her daughters-in-law to return from the country of Moab; for in the country of Moab she had heard that the LORD had taken note of His people and given them food. <sup>7</sup>Accompanied by her two daughters-in-law, she left the place where she had been living; and they set out on the road back to the land of Judah.

<sup>8</sup>But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, “Turn back, each of you to her mother’s house. May the LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me! <sup>9</sup>May the LORD grant that each of you find security in the house of a husband!” And she kissed them farewell. They broke into weeping <sup>10</sup>and said to her, “No, we will return with you to your people.”

<sup>11</sup>But Naomi replied, “Turn back, my daughters! Why should you go with me?”

... <sup>14</sup>They broke into weeping again, and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law farewell. But Ruth clung to her. <sup>15</sup>So she said, “See, your sister-in-law has returned to her people and her gods. Go follow your sister-in-law.” <sup>16</sup>But Ruth replied, “Do not urge me to leave you, to turn back and not follow you. For wherever you go, I will go; wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God my God. <sup>17</sup>Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. Thus and more may the LORD do to me if anything but death parts me from you.” <sup>18</sup>When [Naomi] saw how determined she was to go with her, she ceased to argue with her; <sup>19</sup>and the two went on until they reached Bethlehem.

א וַיְהִי בְיָמֵי שְׁפֹט הַשְּׁפָטִים וַיְהִי רָעַב בְּאֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל אִישׁ מִבֵּית לָחֶם יְהוּדָה לָגוּר בְּשֵׂדֵי מוֹאָב  
הוּא וְאִשְׁתּוֹ וּשְׁנֵי בָנָיו: ב וְשֵׁם הָאִישׁ אֱלִימֶלֶךְ וְשֵׁם אִשְׁתּוֹ נְעֹמִי וְשֵׁם שְׁנֵי-בָנָיו מַחְלוֹן וְכִלְיוֹן  
אֶפְרַתִּים מִבֵּית לָחֶם יְהוּדָה וַיָּבֹאוּ שְׂדֵי-מוֹאָב וַיְהִיו-שָׁם: ג וַנָּמֹת אֱלִימֶלֶךְ אִישׁ נְעֹמִי וַתִּשָּׂאֵר  
הִיא וּשְׁנֵי בָנֶיהָ: ד וַיִּשָּׂאוּ לָהֶם נָשִׁים מְאֻבּוֹת שֵׁם הָאֶחָת עֹרְפָה וְשֵׁם הַשֵּׁנִית רוּת וַיָּשְׁבוּ שָׁם  
כְּעֶשֶׂר שָׁנִים: ה וַיָּמָוּתוּ גַם-שְׁנֵיהֶם מַחְלוֹן וְכִלְיוֹן וַתִּשָּׂאֵר הָאִשָּׁה מְשֻׁנִּי לְדָדֶיהָ וּמְאִישָׁהּ: ו

ותקום היא וכלתיה ותשבו משדי מואב כי שמעה בשדה מואב כי-פקד יהנה את-עמו לתת להם לחם: ז ותצא מן-המקום אשר היתה-שמה ושתי כלתיה עמה ותלכנה בדרך לשוב אל-ארץ יהודה: ח ותאמר נעמי לשתי כלתיה לכה שבה אשה לבית אמה יעשה [יעשה] יהנה עמכם חסד באשר עשיתם עם-המתים ועמדי: ט ותן ה' לכם ומצאן, מנוחה אשה בית אישה ותשק להן ותשאנה קולן ותבכינה: י ותאמרנה-לה כי-אתך נשוב לעמד: יא ותאמר נעמי שבה בנתי למה תלכנה עמי... יד ותשנה קולן ותבכינה עוד ותשק ערפה לחמותה ורות דבקה בה: טו ותאמר הנה שבה יבמתך אל-עמה ואל-אלהיה שובי אחרי יבמתך: טז ותאמר רות אל-תפגעני-בי לעזבך לשוב מאחריך כי אל-אשר תלכי אלך ובאשר תליני אליו עמד עמי ואלהיך אלהי: יז באשר תמותי אמות ושם אקבר כה יעשה ה' לי וכה יסיף כי המות יפריד ביני ובינך: יח ותרא כי-מתאמצת היא ללכת אתה ותחדל לדבר אליה: יט ותלכנה שתיהם עד-באנה בית לחם

## The Rabbinic Period I: The Jew as the Oppressed Outsider

### Babylonian Talmud, Yevamot 47a

Our Rabbis taught: If at the present time a man desires to become a proselyte, he is to be addressed as follows: 'What reason have you for desiring to become a proselyte; do you not know that Israel at the present time are persecuted and oppressed, despised, harassed and overcome by afflictions'? If he replies, 'I know and yet I am unworthy', he is accepted immediately and is given instruction in some of the minor and some of the major commandments.

He is informed of the sin [of the neglect of the commandments of] Gleanings, the Forgotten Sheaf, the Corner and the Poor Man's Tithe. ....

And as he is informed of the punishment for the transgression of the commandments, so is he informed of the reward granted for their fulfilment. He is told, 'Be it known to you that the world to come was made only for the righteous, and that Israel at the present time are unable to bear either too much prosperity or too much suffering'. He is not, however, to be persuaded or dissuaded too much. If he accepted, he is circumcised forthwith. .... As soon as he is healed arrangements are made for his immediate immersion, when two learned men must stand by his side and acquaint him with some of the minor commandments and with some of the major ones. When he comes up after his immersion he is deemed to be an Israelite in all respects.

תנו רבנן: גר שבא להתגייר בזמן הזה, אומרים לו: מה ראית שבאת להתגייר? אי אתה יודע שישראל בזמן הזה דוויים, דחופים, סחופים ומטורפין, ויסורין באין עליהם? אם אומר: יודע אני ואיני כדאי, מקבלין אותו מיד. ומודיעין אותו מקצת מצות קלות ומקצת מצות חמורות, ומודיעין אותו עון לקט שכחה ופאה ומעשר עני. .... וכשם שמודיעין אותו ענשן של מצות, כך מודיעין אותו מתן שכרן, אומרים לו: הוי יודע, שהעולם הבא אינו עשוי אלא לצדיקים, וישראל בזמן הזה - אינם יכולים לא רוב טובה ולא רוב פורענות. ואין מרבין עליו, ואין מדקדקין עליו. קיבל, מלין אותו מיד. .... נתרפא, מטבילין אותו מיד ושני תי"ח עומדים על גביו, ומודיעין אותו מקצת מצות קלות ומקצת מצות חמורות טבל ועלה הרי הוא כישראל לכל דבריו.

**JCCA Jewish Educators Initiative**  
**May 7 -9, 2001**  
**Pearl River Hilton**

“What Is a Jew? –  
Challenges from the Tradition to Contemporary Jewish Life”

Discussion Questions for Breakout Groups

- The sources we discussed in our formal session illustrated a variety of models of how the Jewish tradition understood what it means to be a Jew. How well do each of these models fit the contemporary American scene, and to what extent do typical members of the JCC world define themselves and their Jewishness in light of any of these models?
- Are you personally comfortable with any one of these models as the defining core of what constitutes Jewishness? Why? Why not? What elements would you add? What elements would you remove?
- Do you think that we ought to even engage in the attempt to define the core elements of Jewishness as this session did? What are the benefits of such definitions? What are the costs? Can such definitions realistically be avoided?
- Are there any other models, not mentioned in the sources we discussed, which might better characterize the “core” of what constitutes Jewish belonging in contemporary America?
- What overall picture about Judaism, Jews and Jewishness emerges from the texts we’ve reviewed? In what ways should this picture be reflected in the life and aims of a JCC? What are the elements of the picture that emerges that we would most want to *avoid* when shaping the world of the JCC?

Jews Praying on the Day of Atonement, 1978  
Maurycy Gottlieb (1856-1879)



The partially obscured inscription on the wall says:

... מה ה' ויפוצו אויבך וינוסו ...

... ברוך ה' אשר ...

The dedication on the Torah mantle says:

כ"ת

נדבה

לזכרון נשמת

המנוח כמה"ר משה

גא' טליעב זצ"ל

ש' תרל"ח

## The Rabbinic Period II: The Jew as the One Who Obeys God's Command

### B.T. Bekhorot 30b

If a heathen is prepared to accept the Torah except one religious law, we must not receive him [as an Israelite]. R. Jose son of R. Judah says: Even [if the exception be] one point of the special minutiae of the Scribes' enactments.

ת"ר: הבא לקבל דברי חבירות חוץ מדבר אחד - אין מקבלין אותו, עובד כוכבים שבא לקבל דברי תורה חוץ מדבר אחד - אין מקבלין אותו, ר' יוסי בר' יהודה אומר: אפ"י דקדוק אחד מדברי סופרים

### A Responsum of Rabbi Moshe Feinstein; Yoreh De'ah 1:157

Regarding that which the Honored Torah Scholar was dubious, if a convert who never took upon himself the [obligation to perform] the commandments is a convert, it is plain and obvious that he is no convert at all, even after the fact. That is how my father, May the Memory of the Righteous be Reserved for the World to Come, also ruled. . . . for [lack of] acceptance of the commandments by a convert renders the conversion null and void, as it is written in Yoreh De'ah 268:3. And even if he says that he accepts the commandments but we know that in truth he does not, [his statement and the conversion are] nothing. . . . And furthermore, I cannot understand the reasoning of the rabbis who err in this. For even according to their own reckoning, what value are they bringing to the Jewish people by accepting converts like these? For it is obviously not good for either God or the Jewish people that converts like these should be mixed into the Jewish people. And as for the ruling, it is clear that these are not converts at all.

במה שנסתפק כתר"ה אם גר שלא קבל עליו מצות אם נחשב גר, פשוט וברור שאינו גר כלל אף בדיעבד וכן הורה אבא מארי הגאון זצלה"ה הלכה למעשה בסטראבין בעובדא כזו שאינו גר כלל בין לקולא בין לחומרא שקבלת מצות בגר מעכב כדאיתא ביו"ד סי' רס"ח סעי' ג'. ואף אם אמר בפיו שמקבל מצות אם אנו סהדי שאינו מקבל עליו באמת אינו כלום. וגר שמהני לשם אישות בדיעבד, איירי שבשביל האישות קבל עליו מצות באמת והוא ברור ופשוט וכל זה אמר אבא מארי הגאון בפירוש אז כשהורה. ובכלל איני יודע טעם הרבנים הטועים בזה דאף לדידהו עכ"פ איזה תועלת הם מביאין בזה לכלל ישראל שמקבלין גרים כאלו דודאי לא ניחא ליה להקב"ה ולעם ישראל שיתערבו גרים כאלו בישראל. ולדינא פשוט שאין זה גר כלל. ידידו, משה פיינשטיין

## The Contemporary Period II: A Return to Biblical Roots?

### A Responsum of Rabbi Isaac Herzog, Ashkenazic Chief Rabbi, Even Ha-Ezer 1:21 (selections from a very long and complex responsum)

[December 1948] Of late, there have been many instances in which Jewish people married to non-Jewish women in civil courts have asked to convert them and to marry

them with *chuppah* and *kiddushin* because they wish to immigrate to the Land of Israel.

. . . [much] depends on their condition in your country. If it is the case that as strangers they could not stay in their country, then it is clear that their motivation is not for the sake of heaven. But if it would be possible for them to stay in your country, but they simply desire the Land of Israel, this is apparently for the sake of heaven, for they are uprooting their dwelling and leaving their source of income in order to migrate to a new land, and specifically to the land of Israel. Thus, it becomes clear that their desire is to embrace the People Israel, in its Land . . . and this is a good motivation, and there is no need to prevent their acceptance [by the Bet Din]. . . .

And know, furthermore, that although the law has been, from the time of the Mishnah, that after the fact they are all converts, I have grave doubts about this in our own day. For it used to be the case that the transgressor was despised and chased in his community. Thus, when he accepted the Jewish religion, even if the original reason was for a woman, he knew that his condition in the Jewish community would be bad if he did not follow the Torah, which is not the case in our own day. Today, there are many "free" Jews [who do not observe commandments]. Not only do they not encounter difficulties because of this, they stand at the head of the community and the congregations, and thus, we have to be concerned that he has no intention of keeping the commandments, but just says that he does. . . . Thus, in our day, there is a great responsibility on the rabbi to examine each case carefully until he is satisfied that these people will genuinely observe our sacred faith.

שאלה: כ"א כסלו, תש"ט. בזמן האחרון מתרבים המקרים שבאים אלי אנשי מדינתנו יהודים הנשואים עם נכריות (וכן להיפך) ע"י ערכאות ומבקשים לגייר אותם ולהשיאם ע"י חו"ק מפני שעומדים לעלות לא"י.

אלא שכאן יש חשש אחר, שהכוונה היא לשם עליה לא"י, אך זה תלוי במצבם במדינתכם, שאם המצב הוא כך, שבתור זרים לא יוכלו להשאר במדינתכם, הרי הכוונה שלא לש"ש גלויה, אבל אם אפשר להם להשאר במדינה, אלא שהם חפצים בארץ ישראל, הרי זו לכאורה כוונה לשם שמים, שהם עוקרים דירתם ועוזבים פרנסתם לנוע לארץ אחרת, ודווקא לא"י, הרי ניכר שכוונתם להאחז בעם ישראל, ובארצו, והיינו שניכר לבית דין שהוא והיא רוצים בכך, (שאם רק צד אחד, הינו הצד הישראלי, רוצה, הצד השני מסכים על כרחו, כלומר הצד שהוא גוי, שהוא קשור ואחוז בצד שהוא ישראל). ואז הרי זוהי כוונה טובה, ואין צריך למנוע את קבלתם. אבל אם אין להם אפשרות להשאר שם במדינתכם וההכרח הוא להם לעלות לא"י, הכוונה פוגמת ואעפ"כ יש מקום לצדד בזכותם,

ודע שאעפ"י שהדין כבר מימי התנאים ז"ל הוא שבדיעבד כולם גרים הם, יש לי חשש רציני בזה"ז, לפי שלפנים בישראל, היה העברין נבזה ונרדף בעמו, וע"כ כשקיבל עליו גוי יהדות, אעפ"י שהסיבה הראשונה שהניעתו לכך היתה אישות, הרי ידע שיהא מצבו רע מאד בחברה היהודית, (ומהחברה הגויית יהא תלוש ונעקר), אם לא יתנהג כתורה, משא"כ בימינו שכ"כ הרבה יש חפשים, ולא רק שאינם מתקשים בגלל זה, אלא שעומדים עוד בראש האומה והקהלות, וע"כ יש לחוש שאיננו באמת מקבל עליו לשמור את המצוות, אלא שמשום הסיבה, הוא אומר בפיו, אבל לבו בל עמו, והריטב"א אומר שאגב אונסו גמר וקיבל, ובימינו י"ל שאגב אונסו הוא אומר מה שאומר אבל למה לו לגמור בדעתו לשמור באמת וד"ל, וע"כ היום האחריות מוטלת ביותר על הרב להתבונן בכל מקרה עד שתתישב דעתו עליו שבני אדם הללו מסתבר שבאמת ישמרו את דת קדשנו.

Take, for example, this description of its task offered by the Boston School Committee:

[taking children at random from a great city, undisciplined, uninstructed, often with inveterate forwardness and obstinacy, and with the inherited stupidity of centuries of ignorant ancestors; forming them from animals into intellectual beings; and, so far as a school can do it, from intellectual beings into spiritual beings; giving to many their first appreciation of what is wise, what is true, what is lovely, and what is pure; and not merely their first impressions, but what may possibly be their only impressions.]

~~failure.~~ In 1876 one commentator related an alleged decrease in the standard of educational attainment to the altered background of students. No longer did they come from rural New England families, where cultivated common sense and native intelligence were the rule. Instead, the "material" that the

schools were "required to shape and polish" derived from different and inferior sources:

[A very large proportion of the pupils in our cities and populous towns come from homes utterly destitute of culture, and of the means and the spirit of culture, where a book is never seen, and reading is with the adult members a lost art, or one never acquired. There are schools in which four-fifths or more of the children are of this class. I at one time had under my supervision a school in which ninety-nine percent of the children were of foreign parentage, and hardly one of the whole from a home level with the lowest status of native-born intelligence. In such minds a sunken foundation must be laid by months or years of unpromising toil, before any portion of the work begins to appear above the surface. It seems almost impossible to give them a conception of either the uses or the pleasures of knowledge, or to lead them to that primal exercise of judgment by which two ideas are compared or combined. Even the simplest object-lessons are often unintelligible to them. Instruction can hardly be conveyed to them in terms which they can understand, and in what they attempt to learn, memory derives no assistance from association. A person of exceptional skill and patience might hope out of a single such block in the lapse of years to carve a statue; but what shall we think of the sculptor who is compelled every day to make some strokes of the chisel on forty or fifty of them?]

## JCCA-Mandel Jewish Educators Initiative Launch

May 7 – 9, 2001

Desired “Game Plan”:

- Have them bring praxis from the field; start with them where they are (pedagogical strategy)
- Lifting important questions that are embedded in the assignments
- Understanding their issues and how they look at things now
- Serious learning, text-based
- Running commentary on extrapolating from this to the eighteen months
- Make the operating assumptions transparent; reflective practice

Desired Outcomes:

- Executives Buy-in and Educators Buy-in
- Staff needs stronger knowledge of our clients and their issues
- Nurture them as group, קהילת לומדים
- Beginning appreciation of “practice to theory to practice” as ongoing dimension of their professional thinking

I. Introductions and Welcome (6:30 – 7:00): AF and HC

- Address Themes we’ll be addressing
- Setting the stage, etc.
- Introduce group

II. Dinner (7:00 – 7:50)

III. Session 1

**Monday evening** (8:00-9:30) – Opening session based on pre-seminar assignment: AF and HC explain assignment and point out info in book **Small groups** – some guiding question that they have to answer to problematize the issue of diversity, based on the three cases that came from the people in their own group. Begin seeing how complex the problem of diversity is. Request that *they themselves* try to identify some of the critical issues.

*Who are the five facilitators? Double up the facilitators, 2 per group*

*Concern: Is there enough time for each team to process its pre-seminar assignment?*

*Process: Break the whole group into 5 sub-groups of 3 teams (exec/educ) each. 15 minutes for all 3 teams in the group to read the assignments of the other two teams. 1/2 hour total, to invite questions for each team that will enable it to clarify (responding to questions asked by the other teams) its case. 45 minutes to raise key issues and surface underlying assumptions for each case. We, the facilitators, need to be prepared to do some of this.*

- Present the case orally (when introducing the session – indicate whether it's going to be the exec or the educ presenting)

- Invite clarifying questions

- Raise key issues and surface underlying assumptions

9:30 – 10:00 – Regroup and examine some of these issues

IV. Staff meeting

V. Breakfast (7:30-8:30)

VI. Session 2

**Group Building Activity**, led by JA “ME, WE and the JCC – The Presentation of Self in JCC Life” (8:30-9:30)

VII. Session 3

**Tuesday morning** (9:45-12:00) – First study session –Judaic DG

a. “Teaching Session” (9:45-10:45) – different conceptions of what belonging to the Jewish people means. [Focus on diversity, different conceptions]

b. Discussion Session (10:45-12:00), including guiding questions such as: Great them up into groups of approximately six to eight people, keeping Exec’s and educators together, but with different people from the previous groups

i. What does this say about the Jewish tradition?

ii. What are the implications of this for my JCC?

Suggestion: We have been talking about having a session that will be devoted solely to “scanning current practice.” This entails: 1. Surveying the current practice in individual JCCs, with attention to exploiting diversity in their institutions; 2. examining missed opportunities; 3. examining “blown”/messed up opportunities. Alternatively, it’s been suggested that we just weave this discussion into the morning and afternoon sessions, inviting the participants to share with us their personal experiences.

*Process: The teaching session is for the whole group. The discussion session – break the group into 5 sub-groups, not according to exec/educ teams, of 6 people to a group. We are going to keep the exec/educ pairs, but group them differently than Monday night's groupings.*

*Concerns:*

*- Should we regroup after the discussion session? DG needs to answer this, but we thought that it would be a better idea NOT TO regroup and debrief after every session (we are doing this Monday night and again Tuesday afternoon)*

*- Do the groups need "facilitation," or do we sit in, or do we step out totally?*

*Need direction/guiding questions from Daniel Gordis*

*Possible direction: The discussion will lead to concluding that – The JCC has a beautiful opportunity to provide an environment for diversity. This is an opportunity that JCCs have, but not other institutions.*

VIII. Lunch (12:00-1:00)

IX. Free time (1:00-1:30)

X. Session 4

**Tuesday afternoon (1:30-4:30)** – Second study session – Western DP  
[Focus on issue of what we share, what we have in common]

a. "Teaching Session" (1:30-2:30)

b. Discussion Session (2:30-3:45)

Should the groups be accompanied by facilitators (see same question in DG's session)?

c. Break (3:45-4:00)

d. Reconvene full group (4:00-4:30)

Content issues:

- Important to stress the issue of change

*Process: Teaching session is for the whole group; Discussion session - - break the group into 5 sub-groups, not according to exec/educ teams, of 6 people to a group DP will direct the group to break themselves up, 4 to a group, preferably with people whom they have not yet had opportunity to meet with.*

*Direction: The starting point will be: substantial diversity which includes groups that are mutually distrustful. The questions that are raised will focus on two themes:*

I. *There's a need for different sub-groups to share some traits*

a. *How important is it for there to be a shared traits*

b. *What are these shared traits and why are they important?*

c. *How could the JCC contribute to the development of these shared traits?*

II. *Recognition – According to Charles Taylor and others, the diverse groups that make up the community will continue to be hostile until each group feels recognized by the others as the bearers of meaningful insights and values*

*How far does this question go? What does it mean to respect another regroup? To what extent should the JCC be encouraging this respect? Should it be part of the Jewish educational mission, or in what way is it already?*

*a. How would a policy of encouraging such recognition manifest itself in a JCC?*

*b. How important is it for JCCs to be encouraging this kind of recognition?*

Suggestion: We have been talking about having a session that will be devoted solely to "scanning current practice." This entails: 1. Surveying the current practice in individual JCCs, with attention to exploiting diversity in their institutions; 2. examining missed opportunities; 3. examining "blown"/messed up opportunities. Alternatively, it's been suggested that we just weave this discussion into the morning and afternoon sessions, inviting the participants to share with us their personal experiences.

XI. Free Time (4:30-6:00)

XII. Cocktails (6:00-7:00)

XIII. Dinner (7:00-8:00)

XIV. Session 5

**Tuesday evening**

(8:00 – 9:15) Jody Hirsh

We are asking Jody to develop a more informal session, based on art, etc., that will be a third lens/input/perspective (Tues AM and afternoon are the first two), on the question/issue of diversity. Maybe he'll be able to provide/evoke new dimension(s) of the problem that we have not yet examined (i.e. who's in and who's out of the JCC).

(8:00-9:30) DP & CH & JR

Dyads develop "stance" on diversity and pluralism

- a. In what ways do we in our practice celebrate diversity, and in what ways do we do the opposite?
- b. Where would we like to go? Where do we want to position ourselves? What's our vision for the institution on this issue?

*Process: I. 45 minutes - The group will be broken down according to the original exec/educ teams. The session will be introduced with leading questions and then the teams are left to discuss and develop their individual "stances." II. 8:45 – 9:30 – Regroup into the larger sub-group from Monday night, to compare/contrast the stances.*

**Direction:**

*I. Elicit current practice [We can make a grid for the teams to fill in for themselves that will help organize their individual discussions.]*

*"Scanning your current practice, answer the following questions:*

- a. *areas where we miss opportunities to address diversity*
- b. *take advantage of diversity to accomplish educational, social, cultural purposes*
- c. *deal inadequately with issues of diversity"*

*III. Develop a stance – based on ideas and questions encountered during the seminar, and other relevant considerations, develop an educational stance towards diversity. Fill in the blank spots in this paragraph:*

*Our JCC welcomes diverse types of Jew. In relation to this diversity, our aspiration is . The rationale for this aspiration is .*

*Concern: Do we need three people to “introduce?” Do we need facilitators for the second ½ of the discussion, or do we just sit in and observe?*

XV. Staff meeting to review critical issues that have surfaced during the three sessions, in preparation for Wed. morning session

Staff meeting to prepare materials for morning based on “stances” that the develop (10:00-midnight, JA and RJ)

XVI. Breakfast (7:30-8:30)

XVII. **Session 6**

8:30 – 9:30 – Review of critical issues , concerns, insights and themes that arose out of yesterday’s sessions (all three), that have surfaced. Also, we should leave room for discussion of implications for practice (this should have been raised in Tuesday’s discussions – “scanning”)

Process: 8:30 – 9:00 Find three people whom you have not yet met with  
(We will play the timeframe by ear)

9:00 – 9:30 Regroup into one large group. We put up on the board the issues that the individual groups raised. then we introduce our insights, based on staff meeting discussion from night before.

Session 7

9:45-11:00 – Go back to Monday night groupings and we will revisit pre-seminar assignments. Need to develop guiding questions for this session that will encourage the participants to think about the cases in light of all of the inputs, issues, etc. that have been surfaced. BEWARE – do not do a repeat performance of the debriefing on Monday night, when we regroup everyone.

**Wednesday morning** – “translation” of a “stance” into the work of a JCC  
BH & RJ & JA

- a. Articulate and present to the group what was distilled from what they did in the previous session. Help them get a more reflective insight into that they’re doing back in the community.(8:30-9:15)
  - i. What are the different definitions of the problem that emerge from the paragraphs?
  - ii. What is the operating analysis that is going on in there?
  - iii. Range of the visions that have been presented in these stances
  - iv. Range of the strategies – what they’re doing now, and what they’d like to be doing in the future
  - v. Reproblematize what they’ve done do make it clear that this is all very preliminary

- b. Some sort of assignment, possibly based on pre-seminar assignment.  
(9:15-10:30) Chaired by educator or exec?
- c. Regroup (10:30-11:00) *Break up into 5 groups of three teams each.*

*Concerns: Need to develop guiding set of questions and direction in which we'd like to see this session go. How are we going to "reproblematize?" Need to concretize the assignment. What will happen when we "regroup" at 10:30? Should the regrouping be the same groups from the pre-seminar assignments (at this point in the seminar they've been together twice – Monday night and Tuesday evening), or should we split them up differently.*

XVIII. Discussion, Feedback, Intro to Eighteen Month Program (11:00-12:00) JR & CH

*What are the issues on your mind – other than diversity – that you would like to think about during this 18-month seminar?*

*Concerns: What type/format of feedback are we looking for? Do we want to write up an evaluation form?*

XIX. Lunch and checkout (12:00-1:00)

Jay/Jody

Failed "adult education" program  
What's the reason?

Lack of need -

Turf issues

Q: Is there a subject  
matter that would be  
especially appropriate for  
the JCC, given  
its diverse client  
-- that could build  
"community"?

Bensonhurst JCH

Ortho Synagogue "which often works  
against "inclusivity" - I am?

One's Shabbat program elicits Ortho.  
angr. Solution: Reform Tempa.

But -- some staff is unhappy!

Why??

isn't nice + meet needs for  
child-care

What opps. for education?  
Whose? In the situation?

Beverly Richey  
231-3815  
608-2735

Starting At:

Simple facts

4956

- 1) Great diversity in belief & outlook
- 2) Significant levels of mistrust across different groups

The debate : how to respond to this situation

Perspective #1

A) Though historically frowned on, diversity is actually a wonderful thing:

- 1) Multitude of ways of being
  - 2) are appropriate to human beings
- Can learn from one another.  
- unique perspectives

~~How would this play out in Jewish life?~~

## Perspective #2: Diversity-wary

- ① A community is a fragile being, and the emphasis on diversity is likely to threaten any sense of unity
- ② To flourish, to be intact, members of a community need a common core of beliefs & values, practices, commitments
- ③ Our challenge is therefore to identify the common core & to find a way to establish it.

B) ~~The~~ challenge It is unfortunate that, historically, we have tried to destroy diversity by assimilating everyone to some dominant mode.

C) What we should do:

1) end domination by one culture.

2) Encourage each culture to nurture its own ~~to~~ traditions, grow! -- while respecting the others ~ Kalle

and 3) Recognition . . . . .