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COMMISSION ON JEWISH EDUCATION IN NORTH AMERICA

The Preparation of Jewish Educators in North America: A Status Report

Aryeh Davidson, Ph.D.

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Convened by Mandel Associated Foundations, JWB and JESNA in collaboration with CJF

The Preparation of Jewish Educators in North America: A Status Report

Aryeh Davidson, Ph.D.

June, 1990

A Report Submitted to
The Commission on Jewish Education in North America

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The Commission on Jewish Education in North America was convened by the Mandel Associated Foundations, JWB and JESNA in collaboration with CJF. The ideas expressed in this report are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Commission.

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Introduction

The preparation of Jewish educators, perhaps more than any other area of Jewish education, reflects the complexity of issues, problems and needs confronting the future of Jewish education in North America. The recruitment of students, the development of appropriate training programs, the placement of graduates, the preparation of prospective faculty, the professionalization of the field, the relationships among the academy, the community and the school, are all issues that embody many of the challenges for Jewish education in the 1990s.

Recognizing the centrality of these issues, the Commission on Jewish Education in North America commissioned this study to describe the nature and scope of the preparation of Jewish educators in North America.[1]

Research Questions

The study was designed with the input of the staff of the Commission to examine four areas in depth:

1. The nature and scope of training: What institutions of higher learning are preparing personnel for Jewish education? How do these institutions perceive their mission vis-a-vis Jewish education? What are the funding patterns for these programs? What is the range of educational preparation programs offered by these institutions?

2. A profile of those students studying to become Jewish educators: How many students are being trained to become Jewish educators? What motivates students to pursue training in Jewish education? How much does it cost to complete one's training as a Jewish educator?

3. A profile of faculty engaged in preparing future Jewish educators: How many faculty members prepare Jewish educational personnel and who are they? How do they perceive their roles?

4. The identification of issues and problems confronting Jewish institutions of higher learning: What do these institutions see as the issues and roles they will confront in the next decade? Are the issues confronting these institutions comparable to those in general education?

Although Jewish educators trained in North America may engage professionally in formal and/or informal education (Hochstein, 1986; Ettenberg & Rosenfield, 1988; Reisman, 1988), Jewish institutions of higher learning primarily prepare personnel

for formal settings.[2] Consequently, the research questions are aimed towards gaining a better understanding of the preparation of those entering and engaged in formal Jewish education by institutions of higher learning. Some attention will also be given to identifying issues relating to the preparation of Jewish educators serving in informal Jewish educational settings.

Methodology

Two forms of information, written documentation and interviews, were collected and provided the basis for developing a description of the current state of preparing Jewish educators. Written documentation, i.e., school bulletins, program descriptions, published and unpublished institutional reports, and research studies on the preparation of Jewish educational personnel were reviewed and analyzed. Between September 15 and November 20, 1989, the investigator conducted a total of 70, one to two and one-half hour semi-structured interviews with personnel and others engaged in the preparation of Jewish educators throughou: North America.[3] (Appendix A, p. 45, contains the schedule that guided each interview.) Seventy-three students enrolled in Jewish education programs participated in group and individual meetings led by the investigator.

Data Analysis and Presentation

Answers to quantitative research questions, relating to the numbers and types of faculty and students, are presented in tabular form and discussed in the text. Descriptions of programs, analysis of training issues and problems discussed in the text are based on written documentation and interview data. Excerpts from interviews are used extensively to present the views and perspectives on the current state of training.

Limitations of the Study

The study is not comprehensive, thereby limiting the conclusions that may be drawn from it. A narrow time required that existing available data, which is sometimes incomplete, be relied on, and the promise of confidentiality to those interviewed prevented reporting profiles of individual institutions. Consequently data are presented and interpreted in aggregate form, and the discussion presents an overview of those issues relating to all training institutions.

The Historical Context

Beginning in the late 19th century, Jewish leaders such as Mordecai Kaplan, Judah Magnus and Samson Benderly (Kaplan & Crossman, 1949; Margolis, 1968; Sherwin, 1987), and the organized Jewish community were concerned with the education of large immigrant Jewish populations. They worked towards establishing teacher training institutions in large urban areas to prepare a generation of Hebrew teachers particularly suited for educating American Jewish youth on the elementary and high school levels.[4] Between 1897 and 1954 eleven such institutions were established.[5]

Although some were established as denominational schools and extensions of nationally-based seminaries (e.g., Teachers Institute of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, Teachers Institute of Yeshiva University), most were designed to serve the needs of the entire Jewish community (e.g., Boston Hebrew Teachers College, Gratz College, The College of Jewish Studies). Differences in ideology and religious orientation did not prevent them from being viewed by American Jews as having one primary function: the training of Hebrew teachers who would ensure continuity from one generation to the next (Honor, 1935; Hurwich, 1949). When Leo Honor conducted the first comprehensive study of the curricula of eight Hebrew Teachers Colleges in 1935, he found that these institutions shared three characteristics: an emphasis on the study of classical Jewish texts; an emphasis on Hebrew language/cultural Zionism; and the assumption of additional functions beyond their original mission of training Hebrew teachers. The additional functions included adult education, advanced Hebrew studies, and the training of Sunday School teachers.

Fourteen years after Honor's study, Hurwich (1949) reported that the Hebrew Teachers Colleges were moving further away from their mission of training Hebrew teachers. He found that only 20 to 25 percent of the annual need for new teachers was met by the training institutions. Moreover, the schools actively encouraged students to pursue a full course of study in secular colleges, leading to professional careers other than Hebrew teaching.

In the years that followed, Hebrew Teachers Colleges continued to expand their course offerings and programs to meet the broad Jewish educational needs of the community. Several established joint degree programs with universities (e.g., Jewish Theological Seminary and Columbia University; Spertus College of Judaica and Roosevelt University; Gratz College and Temple University). New programs in Judaic studies, Jewish communal service, adult education and high school education were also established.

In 1981, when Mirsky examined the eleven accredited institutions that constituted the Iggud Batei HaMedrash (Association of Hebrew Teachers Colleges, refer to Appendix B, p. 47), he noted that with the exception of one, all of the colleges had removed "Teachers" from their names. Moreover, Hebrew was the language of instruction in

only 20% of the courses. The colleges also reported shifts in their student populations and viewed their respective missions as changing.

> The Iggud Schools have begun to develop courses, and sometimes entire programs, to meet the needs of the general community, and to enroll more and more students . . . non-traditional learners. . . . This, of course, can be seen as a positive development—a guarantee for the continued growth and viability of these institutions —or as a negative development—a sign of decline and change of mission, with the possibility that Hebrew teacher preparation programs may gradually lose importance in the institutions, and may even disappear (Mirsky, 1981, p. 18).

Over a seventy-year period the Hebrew Teachers Colleges, institutions originally established for the sole purpose of preparing Hebrew teachers, expanded their roles within the Jewish community. They currently have thousands of students enrolled in adult education courses, in-service education courses, and secondary level programs. A perusal of their course bulletins shows that they offer a variety of degrees in Judaica, liberal arts, social service, and administration. Their long-range planning and mission statements indicate that they view themselves in broad terms as serving a variety of constituencies and addressing contemporary cultural, educational, and religious needs of the American Jewish community. A profile of each would demonstrate that the institution responds to a complex set of factors which are different for each school.

The Current Picture

There are currently fourteen Jewish institutions of higher learning offering programs for the preparation of Jewish educators. Between September 15 and November 20, 1989, the investigator visited eleven of these institutions. Each visit consisted of a tour of the facilities and interviews with various administrators, faculty, and students. Where possible, personnel involved with the community were also interviewed. The institutions fall into three categories: 1) independent community-based colleges founded and supported by the organized Jewish community; 2) denominational schools established by religious movements as part of their respective seminaries; 3) university-based programs established by the community and/or individuals within the framework of a general university.

Independent community-based colleges
Gratz College, Philadelphia
Baltimore Hebrew University
Spertus College of Judaica, Chicago
Cleveland College of Jewish Studies
Hebrew College, Boston
Midrasha (Teacher Training Institute), Toronto

Denominational schools

Hebrew Union College: Rhea Hirsch School of Education, Los Angeles; The School of Education, New York

Jewish Theological Seminary of America, Graduate School, Department of Jewish Education, New York

Yeshiva University, New York: Azrielli Graduate Institute; Isaac Breuer College; Stern College

University of Judaism, Fingerhut School of Education, Los Angeles

University-based programs

Hornstein Program for Jewish Communal Service, Brandeis University, Waltham, MA.

School of Education, George Washington University, in association with the College of Jewish Studies, Washington, D.C.

Department of Jewish Studies, York University, Toronto

Department of Judaic Studies, McGill University, Montreal

Before addressing the major research questions relating to training of Jewish educators an overview of the institutions visited will be presented.

Physical plants

The facilities of each institution are comfortable, well-maintained and generally perceived by school personnel and students as providing adequate space. Both the denominational and university-based programs provide housing for students, whereas none of the independent community colleges have housing facilities. Each institution has a library of Judaica, including an education collection, which meets the standards of the respective regional accrediting associations for institutions of higher learning.

Funding

The operating budgets of the institutions vary significantly. The independent community colleges report budgets ranging from approximately $400,000 to $2,300,000. Income is generated through tuition, gifts, and local federations which contribute between 20-90% of the budget. It is difficult to assess what percentage of the total budgets of the denominational and university-based schools is allocated for their education training programs. Their income is generated through tuition, relatively small endowments, grants, and fundraising. None of the denominational institutions are eligible for Jewish community (e.g., federation) funding because of their perceived sectarian status. University-based programs, in contrast, do receive considerable community support in the form of federation allocations, grants, and tuition subventions.

Governance

All of the institutions have independent Boards of Trustees. The amount of authority and control a board exerts is contingent on the status of the institution (university-based, denominational, independent community) and its dependence on the federation. All independent community schools must have their budgets approved by the federation and are included in the long-range planning activities of the federation. University-based programs often have rather complicated relationships with their respective federations and departments of Jewish studies.

Accreditation

The institutions listed in Table 1 (p. 43) all have some form of state (U.S.) or provincial (Canada) accreditation. Most are also accredited by regional accrediting associations and accepted by the National Board of License for Teachers and Supervisory Personnel in American Jewish Schools (NBL) as institutions preparing educators for Jewish schools. (Appendix B, p. 47, provides a description of each type of accreditation.)

Mission

Examination of the mission statements of the respective institutions and the interview data indicate that they share common goals in the following areas:

- the preservation and perpetuation of Jewish culture;
- the preparation of Jewish professionals;
- the support and promotion of Jewish scholarship.

Independent community colleges, in addition to supporting these goals, stress their commitment to serving the needs of their respective communities through various forms of outreach and direct service, including secondary school Jewish education, in-service teacher education programs, and adult education programs. In addition they are responsive to the changing priorities and needs identified by the local federation for the community. The president of a community-based college remarked:

> We're experiencing a large influx of Russian immigrants in our community. The College is responding by working together with (. . .) to sponsor ESL programs. We're also thinking about other programs that will involve them in the study of Jewish culture. . . . We see ourselves as serving local needs; that means assessing and being responsive to local constituencies and issues. . . . In a few years we may consider expanding to serve the entire region but I don't see us attracting a national student population, nor attempting to compete with the nationally-based seminaries.

By way of contrast, the administrator of another community-based college indicated that the College was attracting a national student body and would continue to aspire to be perceived as responding to national as well as local needs.

> Our recent long-range planning study indicates that we have the potential to train administrators and educators extending beyond (. . .). We are planning to build a dormitory and actively seek fellowship funds to attract students.

With respect to the role of Jewish education and its prominence within the college, each institution has a rather unique perspective. One is engaged in re-establishing a Jewish education program which will require adding faculty and actively recruiting students. The president of another community-based college takes a rather dim view of the prospects for Jewish education.

> Frankly, there is no profession of Jewish education; salaries are low, status is low and there is no incentive for us to build our Jewish education program at this point in time. The field of Jewish education needs to change as a profession out there before we can build our programs to train Jewish educators.

Structurally, the community-based colleges do not have distinct academic departments of education, rather they offer programs in Jewish education which do not necessarily have full-time education faculty (see section 3).

Each denominational school has a department, school or institute of Jewish education which focuses on the preparation of educational personnel, and has appointed full-time education faculty (see section 3). By virtue of their ideological affiliation, they emphasize their commitment to the specific needs of their religious movements through programs, outreach and scholarship. They also view themselves as serving the needs of national and international constituencies.

The missions of university-based programs focus on the preparation of educators and communal professionals uniquely trained to serve Jewish communities. They tend to stress an interdisciplinary approach to training and scholarship as part of a university, and a pluralistic attitude towards developing leadership. Structurally, programs in Jewish education are components of either Judaic studies or Jewish communal service programs of the university.

Programs and Activities

Although a profile of each school's program activities is beyond the scope of the present study, each institution sponsors programs in some or all of the following areas:

Training programs—pre-service and in-service programs designed to prepare and provide continuing education to rabbis, Jewish communal service workers, cantors and Jewish educators;

Jewish Studies programs – academic degree programs in Judaica;

Adult education – courses, lectures, workshops and retreats designed for local and regional Jewish communities;

Secondary level supplementary schools – intensive Jewish studies programs designed for motivated adolescents;

Special projects – museum programs, joint programs with universities, library training workshops and research institutes.

1. Training Programs

As indicated above, each of the institutions offers programs to prepare Jewish educators, but the type and orientation of the programs differ significantly, depending on the particular academic degree and institution. Table 1 (p. 43) lists the training institutions and the various programs they offer in Jewish education. Most offer degree programs at the B.A. and M.A. levels. A growing number are also beginning to offer advanced degrees (doctorates) and principal certification. After each degree program is examined, the common issues confronting training institutions will be reviewed. Because most students are enrolled in graduate programs, an extensive discussion is devoted to an analysis of the M.A. programs.

1.1 B.A. Level Programs

Those institutions which offer a concentration or major in Jewish education are listed in the column marked B.A. of Table 1. These programs by and large conform to the requirements of the NBL (refer to Appendix B) for licensing teachers at the elementary and secondary level. Requirements for licensure include: 42 credits of Judaica (Bible, literature, history, customs and prayer); Hebrew language proficiency; and 18 credits in Jewish education including a student teaching experience. In addition, candidates for the NBL license must earn 90 points of liberal arts credit from an accredited college or university. As indicated in Tahle 1, only the denominational and community-based colleges offer B.A. level or certification programs.

There are a total of 68 students currently enrolled in B.A. degree programs who major or concentrate in Jewish education. Although accurate comparisons with previous enrollment figures are not available, it is clear that there has been a steady decline in the number of B.A. education majors over the past twenty years (Mirsky, 1981; Schiff, 1974). Declining education enrollments at the B.A. level have also been reported for general colleges and universities. They are attributed in part to poor salaries and the low status of the teaching profession (Carnegie Forum, 1986; Feistritzer, 1984). Aside from these factors, Jewish institutions of higher learning are encouraging students considering careers in education to complete a liberal arts education and then pursue an M.A. in Jewish education.

> In response to your question, we are trying to phase out the B.A. major in Jewish education at (...). In order to professionalize the field we need educators with graduate degrees. . . . It also doesn't make sense for us to place undergraduates in the same courses with graduate students. We don't have the budget to run parallel courses at the B. A. and M.A. levels.

Most of the institutions listed in Table 1 and all of the Canadian-based programs offer courses on the undergraduate level to meet NBL teacher license requirements.

Forty-three students are enrolled in teacher certification programs (refer to Table 2) as non-matriculating students. They generally enroll in the school for the requisite 18 credits in Jewish education courses and take Judaica courses in other institutions. Several interviewees felt this approach to teacher certification worked against the professionalization of the field.

> Students who come here to take a few courses in education may not even be acceptable candidates for our degree programs. Since they are here as non-matriculating students we aren't supporting their candidacy for a license; we're just letting them take courses. We need to rethink, on a national level, the whole area of teacher certification.

1.2 M.A. Programs

The M.A. program has become the primary vehicle for preparing Jewish educators in North America. With the exception of the undergraduate colleges and the Toronto Midrasha, all institutions now offer an M.A. in Jewish education. Most Jewish education programs are registered by their respective state's departments of education as part of the institution's graduate school of Judaica. Consequently, a student enrolled in an M.A. program in Jewish education will also need to meet the requirements of the particular graduate division of the school. All students receiving M.A. degrees in Jewish education from an accredited institution are automatically eligible for a teaching license from the NBL (refer to Appendix B).

The majority of programs make provisions for both full and part-time study. The exceptions, Brandeis, HUC-Los Angeles, and the University of Judaism, will only accept full-time students. Full-time students complete the program in two to three years, depending on their background and the program. Part-time students take between three to five years for completion of the degree. As indicated in Table 2, in June, 1989, 62 students received M.A. degrees in Jewish education. Of those, approximately 40 were full-time students and 22 attended part-time.

The M.A. programs differ substantially from each other in numerous ways. Unfortunately, these differences cannot be easily classified into a typology[6] and a detailed analysis of each program is beyond the scope of this study. Despite these differences, the data analyses indicate that there are several foci or issues around which programs may be better understood and discussed. Three such issues emerge from the data, and also have relevance to the literature on teacher training: the programs' philosophical orientation, standards, and curricula.

1.2.1 Program philosophies and goals

The various programs reflect different educational philosophies and models of teacher training. At a symposium entitled New Models for Preparing Personnel for Jewish Education (*Jewish Education*, 1974), leading Jewish educational thinkers dis-

cussed their respective programs. Three distinctive models of training were discussed:

1) Generalist
The educator prepared as the generalist (Cutter, 1974) should be familiar with classical texts, fluent in Hebrew, knowledgeable about the worlds of both Jewish and general education, and have experience in curriculum writing, teaching and supervision. The generalist is prepared to serve as both a resource to the Jewish educational community and a leader in a variety of settings including the congregational school, the day school, the bureaus of Jewish education, the JCC and camps.

2) Critical translator
Lukinsky (Lukinsky, 1974), discussing the program at the Jewish Theological Seminary, described a model or approach to training that emphasizes Jewish scholarship and its translation to the classroom; provides educational experiences that stress struggling with real problems in our world; and prepares Jewish educators to think critically.

3) Reflective educator
The model developed at Brandeis University described by Wachs (Wachs, 1974) and elaborated by Shevitz (Shevitz, 1988), underscored the training of the Jewish educator through self-awareness and reflection; socialization within a community of faculty and students; focused field experiences in the Jewish community; and the development of professional competence.

4) Practitioner
A fourth model, not addressed in the symposium but clearly reflected in the literature of several of the institutions under study, focuses on preparing the practitioner—a Jewish educator committed to and expert in the art and science of teaching.

These four models—the generalist, the critical translator, the reflective educator and the practitioner—are not pure models in theory or practice. However, by virtue of providing a vision and model of the Jewish educator, each model guides the preparation of educators, provides direction to students and faculty, and helps to inform the Jewish community of the purpose and goals of Jewish education. Implicit in each model is the notion of the Jewish educator as a religious educator, but this emphasis varies depending on the program and its ideological orientation.

In reality, few of the schools preparing educators have clearly articulated a philosophy of Jewish teacher education. Many of the programs refer to themselves as eclectic, borrowing, combining and applying concepts from a number of areas. It is questionable to what extent this eclecticism has been integrated into a Jewish philosophy of education.

> There is a clear and burning need for classroom teachers, persons who are grounded in the study of text and fluent Hebrew speakers. Theories and philosophies aren't all that helpful when fires need to be put out. . . . Quite honestly, developing a clear philosophy is a luxury we can't afford at this time.

> We (*students*) often sit around talking about the lack of direction in our program. Some of the courses are excellent but the parts don't hold together. I couldn't tell you what the philosophy of this program is.

> We've prided ourselves on the development of a clear statement of what kind of educators we want to prepare at (. . .). But, it has required an inordinate amount of work on the part of faculty and administration. We spend three hours per week in weekly meetings to discuss goals, philosophy and the more mundane stuff.

These excerpts from the interviews capture some of the problems and issues training programs face in relationship to the development of a program philosophy. Most programs just do not have the resources, with respect to time and personnel, to do the needed work in this area. Many interviewees observed that when there is a lack of vision and guiding philosophy of training, all aspects of the program suffer and contribute to the sense that Jewish education is not a real profession.

In the general world of education a good deal of attention is being focused on commissions (Carnegie Forum, 1986; Holmes Group, 1986) that advocate reconceptualizing teacher preparation programs and their philosophies of training. Referring to this work, a faculty member concluded the interview with the following comment:

> American education has been struggling with the purpose and philosophy of its education schools for decades. . . . It's taken seriously, and every ten to fifteen years, after considerable research and deliberation, reports are issued which lead to proposed reforms that are heard both by the educational community and Washington. We've been struggling with comparable issues for hundreds, thousands of years, but we haven't in recent years taken Jewish education seriously enough to give it the thought and reformulation it needs. We have a lot to learn from our colleagues in American education. Interestingly, analysis of the data found that most program goals or mission statements, reflected little explicit concern with the religious dimension of the educator. With the exception of the denominational schools, course descriptions, self-studies, and interviews suggest ambivalence about identifying Jewish education programs as preparing religious educators.

> Let me outline our missions: providing a quality educational program of Judaic and Hebrew studies; the training of Jewish educators and communal service workers; serving as a cultural resource, serving as a scholarly resource, housing a Jewish library; and providing a community Hebrew high school. Religious development per se is not part of our mission. To the extent that adults seeking meaning take our course. . . . I guess you could say we are involved in religious education.

> As one engaged in the development of Jewish educators, I am very concerned with their spiritual life. As Jewish educators they are first and foremost crafting learning opportunities where learners can create personal religious meaning, from the text, from the experience. . . . We have a lot to learn from religious educators in the Christian world who are doing some fantastic things in this area.

1.2.2 Program standards

The development of rigorous standards to improve the profession of education is high on the agenda for reform of the American educational system (Clifford & Guthrie, 1988; National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 1989). Similarly, the establishment and enforcement of standards for Jewish educators is viewed as necessary to the professionalization of the field (Aron, 1990). In the course of data collection, standards were often mentioned with reference to two issues: the perceived low status of teacher training institutions, addressed by accrediting and licensing agencies (Appendix B); and standards within individual programs relating to admission criteria, Judaica background, and Hebrew language proficiency.

With the exception of two schools, all of the administrators and Jewish professionals interviewed want to increase their programs' enrollments and out-reach to untapped potential student populations. In fact, several schools have begun to recruit bright, motivated people who desire careers in Jewish education but who lack extensive Jewish backgrounds. This tension between attracting new blood to the field and maintaining standards was expressed repeatedly in the interviews. Schools have responded in different ways. A few have developed *mechina* (preparation) programs in Israel; two have initiated special summer institutes enabling students to study Judaica and Hebrew; one school requires weak students to spend a "preparatory" year of study at the institution before they are formally accepted into the program. None send the message that "students with weak Judaica backgrounds need not apply."

The overall results of these strategies are questionable. The *mechina* and special programs receive mixed reviews from faculty, students, and administration, with respect to their ability to compensate for weak Judaica backgrounds. They impose serious financial burdens on students and often discourage them.

> (. . .) was a good program; it gave me some of the basic skills, but I feel that breaking my teeth over Talmud isn't exactly what I need in order to teach kids in Hebrew school. I don't know if I can make it through another two and one half years.
>
> Psychologically I never expected it to be so difficult to be in a learning situation where I feel infantalized because the material is so foreign and, from my current vantage point, utterly useless for my intended career, working as a Jewish family educator.

A faculty member commented:

> The quality of preparation our students receive in the Israel program is questionable. And standards are non-existent. We have no control and little input. . . . They study text, but they could also attain comparable gain here.

Standards are also an issue with respect to teaching competency. Although all schools have some type of practicum, most have not developed effective forms of

evaluation to assess a student's ability to teach. A few programs zealously adhere to self-imposed standards, but that does not mean that their programs conform to the standards of the NBL (refer to Appendix B).

> We have committed ourselves to a quality program meeting self-imposed criteria. We will maintain the requirements of full-time study, numerous field placements, study in Israel, because they all flow from our vision of what is required to train a Jewish educator. We realize that our standards inhibit growth of the program but that is how we maintain standards of excellence for ourselves and the field.

1.2.3 Program curricula

Issues of curriculum, i.e., the content of training programs, appear to be directly influenced by institutional positions towards standards and philosophical orientation. Programs which have clearly articulated goals and a guiding educational philosophy are perceived by students and faculty as having courses and practical experiences which complement each other and help create a unified program. By way of contrast, programs which are not grounded in a philosophy are often perceived as diffuse, a collection of courses that do not hang together. This sense of diffusion was particularly obvious within programs which primarily serve part-time students.

> In contrast to my work at (. . .) where I deal mostly with students who have a full-time commitment to graduate study, the students here check in and out, hardly know each other, seem to be taking courses in any sequence that meets their schedule, and have very little sense of what it means to be a professional Jewish educator. I certainly don't have a sense of a program where students and faculty fully participate, and I don't know if students perceive it any differently.

Irrespective of students' and faculty's perceptions of the program curricula, analysis of the program and course descriptions do indicate specific areas of curricular content and emphasis. All programs require courses in three areas of concentration:

Judaica—classical Jewish text study (e.g., Bible, rabbinic literature), Jewish literature, Jewish history, liturgy, customs and ritual;

Jewish education—foundations (e.g., philosophy of Jewish education, human development), methodology skills, specialization courses (e.g., informal education, special education, adult education)

Supervised practicum experience—student teaching or internship (paid training experiences tailored to the needs and career aspirations of each student).

Aside from these core areas of concentration, programs may require courses on contemporary Jewry, administration, and supervision, or departmental seminars. All programs also require that students demonstrate proficiency in Hebrew language. "Proficiency" is determined and evaluated by each institution.

A program's course requirements play a large role in determining its duration. Programs which emphasize all of the aforementioned areas are three year programs requiring approximately 60 credits. Programs comprised of the three areas of concentration generally consist of 35-40 credits.

The curricula of training programs vary significantly with respect to the relative emphases that are placed on the areas of concentration and the additional areas noted above. Although a detailed curricular analysis of each program would be useful, it is beyond the scope of this study.

Program specialization also affects the curricular models adopted by each school. From their inception, teachers colleges focused on training of the Hebrew school teacher. The term connoted a rather specific type of occupation that resulted in a narrow conception of training. In response to community needs, occupations in Jewish education have burgeoned to include day school teachers, early childhood specialists, special educators, resource personnel, curriculum specialists, supervisors, family educators, Jewish community center educators, and summer camp educators. Many of the faculty interviewed felt that their schools have not kept pace with the changing needs of the Jewish community. Tinkering with a training model designed for preparing supplementary school teachers may not be an appropriate response to the need for new training programs. What are those training models most appropriate for preparing family educators, day school teachers, and other specialists?

Two curricular issues were repeatedly mentioned in the interviews: the tension between theory and practice and the nature of the role of the practicum.

1) The tension between theory and practice

Schools and departments of education are continually faced with the problem of balancing the theoretical aspects of teaching and learning with the practical (Zeichner, 1988). Jewish educators are keenly aware of the need to integrate these elements. At many of the training institutions this issue frequently appears as an agenda item for faculty meetings. Students often clamor for more practical courses that will provide them with teaching skills, whereas faculty members are prone to stress a theoretical approach to understanding practice. Few schools have taken an either/or position, i.e., stressing either a practical or theoretical orientation to the detriment of the other. Most programs reflect a tension between the two, exacerbated by the significant Jewish content of programs which also has its theoretical and practical aspects. The tension between theory and practice is also reflected in the various practica and student teacher experiences of the programs.

2) The role of the practicum

According to the guidelines of the NBL, all students are required to complete a supervised field experience (practicum) to be eligible for a teaching license. The nature and design of the practicum in Jewish schools depends on a variety of factors,

including: the orientation of the program, its ideological affiliation, student schedules, geographic locations of educational facilities, the availability of master educators, and economic realities. For those preparing to assume positions in supplementary schools, there is a good deal of flexibility in arranging the field placement. Students take their courses in the morning and use their afternoon teaching jobs to fulfill their practicum requirement. Such accommodation is not feasible for those training to become day school educators. They must be available during the day time for their placement and also take courses. This affects only two training programs which have day school tracks. One has developed an internship model which reduces the student's course load; the other has students take course work during the summers.

Students enrolled in general education programs rate their practicum experience as the most significant, interesting, and helpful part of their training (Feiman-Nemser, 1989). Among Jewish educators in training this often is not the case:

> When I hear the words 'field placement' the first thing that comes to mind is commuting, getting in the car and driving 10 hours a week for a 14 hour field placement. Overall, I feel the placement looms too large in our program. I've had a good deal of experience in Jewish education; I need more basic Judaica knowledge, not more field experience.
>
> The kids are great, but the administration just doesn't use me properly. I'm the gofer, the substitute, the small group teacher, and lowest person on the totem pole. It's infantalizing.
>
> The administration just doesn't realize how labor and time-intensive the supervision of student teachers is. We should have a ratio of one faculty person to five students. I currently supervise eight students and teach an additional three courses per semester.

The quality of the practicum experience is significantly influenced by the supervision a student receives. General programs for teacher training tend to borrow from several models of supervision (e.g., peer supervision, on-site supervision, university-based supervision, see Woolfolk, 1988). All of the models require trained personnel to provide supervision. Many students and faculty discussed with the investigator their concern about the lack of supervision in their field placements. In most instances on-site supervisors, burdened with their own job responsibilities, visit students infrequently. Faculty who supervise students spoke of their frustrations in not finding enough time to provide adequate supervision. In contrast, programs which have full-time requirements do not have the same degree of difficulty because they have adequate staff to supervise.

1.2.4 Part-time/full-time students

Issues relating to the differences between full and part-time students were raised repeatedly during the interviews. Those who invested in full-time study clearly felt it

was superior to part-time enrollment with respect to the overall quality of the training experience.

> When students are part of a full-time program they form a learning community, a sense of professionalism, and a strong knowledge and skill base. . . . It also makes a difference for me – when working with part-time students, I feel they sort of squeeze my course into their busy schedules. I also feel I have to be more sympathetic to their external pressures outside of my class. Consequently, I'm embarrassed to say, I tend to be less demanding of part-time students.

> I just love the opportunity to be in school full-time. It's not just the learning, it's the fellowship I feel part of. Jewishly, socially, and academically its very supportive.

The superiority of full-time study is by no means a matter of consensus. Most of the training institutions are invested in programs for part-time students (see section 2.5). Historically, Hebrew Teacher Colleges always had students who attended on a part-time basis (Margolis, 1968; Janowsky, 1967) while they taught in Hebrew schools and attended secular universities. Aside from tradition, several of those interviewed felt that it would not be economically viable for students preparing to be supplementary school teachers to attend a full-time training program.

> From my perspective an education program that is designed for full-time students in this community is neither possible nor desirable. Those interested in studying at (. . .) generally have families and need to work. Even with fellowship money they would not be able to study full-time. Secondly, I'm not at all convinced that the preparation of Jewish educators for supplementary schools requires one to study full time. . . . We produce some excellent teachers who teach in schools and take one or two courses a year. The work and study complement each other.

1.3 Doctoral Programs

There are 67 students (Table 2) enrolled in doctoral programs – Ph.D., D.H.L. (Doctor of Literature), and Ed.D. (Doctor of Education) – at three institutions. The majority (58) are part-time, taking between one and three courses per year. However, schools offering a Ph.D. in Jewish education have a two-year full-time study residency requirement. Course requirements for all doctoral students include taking approximately 35 credits beyond the M.A. and the writing of a dissertation; the Ph.D. also has foreign language requirements.

Doctoral students may be classified into three overlapping categories:

1) Continuing education

The majority of students (55%) view a doctorate as a way of continuing their studies and improving their skills. Students in this category hold full-time positions as educational leaders. Although they associate the title "Doctor" with status, its attainment will not affect their marketability or economic situation. These "continuing

education" students are most likely to complete their course work in four years, but often do not complete writing a dissertation.

2) Career advancement
About 30% of the doctoral students view the degree as a credential for improving their professional status and marketability. The majority of career advancement students are Israelis who study full-time and complete all course work and their dissertations in four years or less and then return to positions in Israel.

3) Scholarship
This category includes doctoral students who have academic and research interests (approximately 15%). They are generally full-time students who view doctoral study as preparing them to assume leadership responsibilities in academic or research settings. They are perceived by many as representing the cream of the crop and therefore assume teaching and administrative responsibilities before completion of their dissertations. Students in this category often take upwards of eight years to complete their dissertations.

There are also many who enroll in doctoral programs because they are continuing to take course work past the M.A. level and decide to have those courses count towards a degree. Many do not complete their degrees; they stop short of writing the dissertation.

Unlike in most schools of general education, the doctoral education students in Jewish institutions of higher learning do not tend to function as active members of the school, i.e., they do not assume roles as research assistants, instructors or supervisors. To a large extent this seems to be a function of their part-time status and economic pressures to maintain full-time positions outside of the institution.

1.4 Administrative Certificate Program

Four institutions currently sponsor programs to certify school principals and thereby train senior personnel. These programs are modelled after general education programs, tailored to enable full-time educators to study on weekends and during summers (Clifford & Guthrie, 1988). The programs require course work during the summers—courses in administration and supervision which may be taken at general universities—and an internship. Approximately half of the 42 students enrolled in these programs (see Table 2) already hold administrative positions. The schools and bureaus of education feel these programs should be expanded to prepare more senior educators and to fill informal and formal education positions. Most of the programs seem to be modelled after programs observed in general education (Clifford & Guthrie, 1988). Jewish professionals and faculty who were interviewed voiced enthusiasm for the expansion and reinforcement of principal and educational leadership programs.

These programs provide us with opportunities to create new models specifically tailored to the needs of the Jewish community.

1.5 Special Programs

The growing needs in the field of Jewish education have created new positions for personnel—day school teachers, special educators, family educators, and early childhood specialists (Hochstein, 1985; *CAJE Newsletter*, 1989). Interviewees maintain that the training institutions are not able to adequately respond to those needs. The data indicate that among the 14 institutions, three have begun early childhood programs in conjunction with local universities or BJEs. Although five have courses in special education, none have comprehensive training programs in that area. None have developed programs in family education. Day schools have flourished in the past decade, but there are only four institutions that have developed a capacity for the preparation of day school personnel and the unique challenges it involves. Day school teachers need extensive knowledge of Jewish texts, fluency in Hebrew language, and a willingness to work for low salaries (see Aron, 1990). Paradoxically, the training required for school administrators and "generalists" assuming leadership positions involves fewer demands in the areas of text study and Hebrew language but results in significantly higher salaries. The issues in the development of day school programs are directly related to the student applicant pool, financial support, and personnel.

It's very unlikely that we will ever be in a position to develop a training program for day school educators. Even if the demand is there, and that's debatable, we don't have the personnel. I doubt if we could recruit students to enroll in a three or four year program with the hope of going out and earning $25,000. It makes more sense for them to consider an administrative program. Theoretically, we could develop a joint program with (. . .) in early childhood, special education, even family education. But a day school program, we'd have to do that on our own. We would need enormous resources.

2. Student Profile

The last comprehensive study of students enrolled in Hebrew Teachers Colleges was conducted by Alvin Schiff in 1965 (Schiff, 1967). He reported that a total of 1835 students were enrolled in all programs of the ten colleges studied. Of those, approximately 500, or 27% of the college population, preferred Jewish education as a career choice on the survey Schiff administered. (There is no follow-up data to indicate whether these students did indeed become Jewish educators.) By and large the majority of students enrolling in Hebrew Teachers Colleges during the early sixties, prior to the proliferation of Judaic studies programs at universities, chose these colleges because they wanted to study Judaica seriously on the undergraduate level, while pursuing a liberal arts degree. For most, Jewish education as a field of study and subsequent career was viewed as an option, but not the primary reason for entering the school.

On the basis of the survey responses from Hebrew College students, Schiff drew a profile of students most likely to pursue careers in Jewish education. They tended to be female (80%), 21 years or older, were products of day school education, and worshipped in Orthodox synagogues. They were satisfied with their previous Jewish learning experience, demonstrated strong Judaic and Hebraic backgrounds, desired positions teaching Jewish studies and Hebrew, and were motivated by idealism to promote Jewish life.

2.1 Demographic Factors

Analysis of the interviews and institutional literature yielded information for drawing in broad strokes a picture of the current student population of Jewish institutions of higher learning.

It is estimated that as of November, 1989, approximately 1500 students were enrolled as matriculating students in both the undergraduate and graduate programs of the 14 institutions under study. Of those, 358 students (refer to Table 2) or 24% of the total student population were enrolled in Jewish education degree programs, a percentage comparable to the 1965 survey. The teacher preparation programs are comprised primarily of women (75%). In contrast,the Judaica programs of these institutions are comprised of 35% males and 65% females. Although male/female ratios vary considerably from school to school, as in general education (Feistritzer, 1986), Jewish education programs have a disproportionate number of women.

The denominational and university-based programs draw students from a national pool, whereas the independent community schools primarily attract students on a

local or regional level. On the graduate level, the majority of students have had some prior work experience in either formal or informal Jewish education.[7] Although they tend to be in their mid-twenties, increasingly administrators report that students thirty and older, seeking a career change, are applying to their programs.

2.2 Jewish Educational Background

With respect to students' Jewish background, there is considerable inter- and intra-institutional variation. Nevertheless, certain patterns are clear. Unlike the 1965 sample, current students generally do not come from Orthodox backgrounds, nor are they graduates of day schools. Many seem to be dissatisfied products of congregational schools who only began to take serious interest in Judaica in Jewish studies courses on the college level. While there has been a proliferation of day schools over the past two decades, their graduates have a disproportionately low representation in programs for preparing Jewish educators. Denominational institutions are increasingly attracting students who are not affiliated with a particular movement and view themselves as serving the Jewish community at large.

2.3 Motivation to Pursue Jewish Education as a Career

There are no studies that examine why people enter Jewish education. Group interviews with students suggest that as with the 1965 student population (Schiff, 1967), idealism plays a prominent role in the decision to pursue a career in Jewish education. The following comments by students also point to the students' belief that their roles as Jewish educators center on identity development and the transmission of Judaism.

> I chose Jewish education because I'm concerned about the future of the Jewish community, and being an educator is a way to make a difference.
>
> For me, the transmission of knowledge and Jewish culture are the essence of being a Jewish educator.
>
> I think that as an American Jewish educator my work must focus on transmitting Jewish values and shaping Jewish identity.

In choosing a program for graduate study in Jewish education students were keenly aware of their career options, which guide their choice of program. Programs which stress teaching tend to attract those who want to teach, whereas programs designed for administrators attract students who are primarily interested in affecting change in

Jewish educational systems. Nevertheless, when queried, students don't see themselves staying in teaching for more than a few years.

> I love kids and teaching but you can't make ends meet on $18,000 a year. I figure that after a year or two I'll become a principal.
>
> My student teaching experience reinforced my decision to go teach in a day school next year. It's important to teach before you move on to administration.
>
> I think the only way teaching in a Jewish school can become a real profession is if more people from our program go into teaching instead of administration. On the other hand I'll probably end up in administration in a few years.

Among all student groups interviewed a visit or period of study in Israel was noted as a factor contributing to the decision to pursue Jewish education.

> Studying in Israel for a year helped me clarify that I wanted to pursue a career as a Jewish professional . . . improving the quality of Jewish life.
>
> I think it was the people I met in Israel, charismatic, intellectual Jewish doers, who had the greatest impact on my decision to enroll in. . . .
>
> I'm not sure if it was being in Israel, the country, or the people, that played the most significant role in my decision. But somehow, I don't think I would have made the decision in the same way if I would have been in the States.
>
> Intensive study in Israel proved to me that I could do it. I felt confident, for the first time, in my ability to understand Jewish texts and teach Judaica.

2.4 Academic Performance

Feistritzer (1986), in her comprehensive study of students enrolled in teacher education programs reported that education students, as compared to other graduate students, tend to be academically inferior, scoring below the 35th percentile on national test norms. Interviews with administration and faculty indicate that Jewish education students are by no means academically inferior and fall above the 60th percentile on standardized tests (GREs, MAT) when compared to other graduate students in the humanities. With respect to their academic performance, education students do as well or better than those enrolled in Jewish studies programs.

2.5 How Students Support Themselves

Until recently, financing one's education in a Hebrew Teachers College was not considered a factor affecting student enrollment. In 1967, Ackerman reported that tuition costs in the teacher training institutions were nominal—ranging between $5

and $80 per credit. He commented "... no student will be denied the opportunity of studying because of his inability to pay the required tuition" (Ackerman, 1967, p. 51). To a large extent Ackerman was referring to full-time undergraduates and working teachers taking courses on a part-time basis. The realities of the 1980s present a different picture. Tuitions at the institutions studied are high ($150- $350 per credit). Depending on the particular school fees, a full-time student (12-15 credits per semester) can expect a tuition bill of $3,600 to $ 10,000 per year, exclusive of living expenses. Administrators know of several students who deferred admission or declined to come to the program because of its prohibitive costs. Some of the institutions do have small scholarships and a few fellowships are available. However, the majority of full-time students require financial aid in the form of government loans, which must be paid back once the student graduates. Full-time students take out loans ranging from $2,000 to $14,000 per year of study.

> My wife and I are both students. When I complete my M.A. we will have between us $45,000 in loans to pay back.
>
> If I'm lucky I'll have a starting day school salary of $22,000. I'll also have outstanding loans of $18,000. Although I haven't graduated I'm beginning to get depressed about my ability to make ends meet.
>
> The Wexner fellowships are great for those very few who are eligible. But for most of us there just isn't any scholarship money of significance.
>
> Although I love school, I'm very angry that the Jewish community doesn't provide scholarship moneys for my schooling. It's just one more sign of the low priority Jewish education has on the community's agenda.

2.6 Summary

The profile of current students underscores the continuing changes within the institutions studied. In contrast to previous generations of students, they enter programs less Judaically knowledgeable, older, are interested in pursuing M.A. degrees as opposed to undergraduate degrees or teacher certification, come from different backgrounds and require significant financial aid in order to study full-time.

The findings raise a number of questions that require further investigation:

1. Given the student profiles, what are the best strategies for recruitment? What types of recruitment currently are most effective in attracting students?

2. What are those factors that deter people interested in graduate education training from entering Jewish education versus general education? Why is the field of Jewish education attracting relatively few graduates of day schools?

3. What are the most effective ways of preparing students with weak Judaica backgrounds? What role if any should an experience in Israel play in their education?

4. Do training programs affect the religious development of students?

5. What career paths do graduates of programs choose? How do graduates evaluate their training experiences?

6. How do the profiles of Jewish professionals in training, e.g., rabbinical students and communal service students, compare to graduate students in Jewish education?

3. Faculty Profile

Historically there have never been more than a handful of full-time Jewish education faculty members appointed to Jewish institutions of higher learning in North America. Most of those who taught education courses and had direct responsibilities for the preparation of teachers had rabbinical degrees and/or advanced degrees in the humanities.

> For a variety of reasons education was not viewed as a rigorous discipline by (. . .). Although many of our students in the post-war years wanted to teach, the stress of the institution was on content – Judaica, text study. One could pick up techniques and methods the first or second year of teaching. It didn't make much sense to appoint a full-time educator to the faculty.

A glance at Table 3 shows that there are currently eighteen full- time faculty serving in departments or schools of Jewish education. They are full-time by virtue of having full-time academic appointments. However, only six have full-time teaching responsibilities. The other twelve, teach a partial load and assume significant administrative responsibilities. There are another 22 faculty who teach on a part-time basis and an additional 44 brought in on an adjunct basis.

> The parallels between the field and academia are fascinating. The best teachers in the field last a year or two and then are pushed into administrative roles where many succeed but where an equal number fall prey to the Peter Principle. . . . In our departments of Jewish education the best pedagogues, teacher trainers, those who know the field, are generally assigned inordinate amounts of administrative responsibility and they are a real loss to the program. I also find they lose touch with the field and have a difficulty relating to students.

Part-time and adjunct faculty are generally recruited from schools and nearby institutions of higher learning. Many of the administrators interviewed are pleased that their respective institutions are able to attract the most prominent and knowledgeable academics and practitioners to teach a course or seminar.

> In part our training program is superb because we can bring in local talent. The teaching stars from day schools, the resource people from the BJE and people like (. . .) and (. . .) from (. . .) University come to teach courses in special education and administration.

> Having to rely extensively on part-time people, when we only have two full-timers of our own contributes to the sense that we aren't taken seriously in this institution. When I sit at faculty meetings it's clear that we are the only department where the part-time personnel out number the full-time faculty.

Full-time faculty have had their academic training in various areas. Eleven hold doctorates in education or allied fields (e.g., psychology, counselling); the others hold

doctorates in Judaica or the Humanities.[8] Seven of the eighteen are also ordained rabbis. All have had field experience in Jewish education prior to choosing an academic career path. This diverse group ranges in age from 40-60 with approximately 65% of the faculty under age 50. Salaries of faculty vary considerably from institution to institution. In the denominational and university setting, full-time instructional salaries range from $26,000 to $63,00 depending on rank and seniority. Among the independent community colleges salaries are appreciably lower, ranging from $18,000-$45,000 depending on rank and longevity. All administrators interviewed spoke of the need to increase faculty salaries to levels commensurate with comparable schools of higher learning. In some schools there are standing committees which keep abreast of university salary scales and inform administration and faculty of the relative standing of the institution.

Teaching loads vary considerably among the training institutions. In one institution full-time faculty members are expected to carry a load of six courses per term. At the other extreme, one institution requires full-time faculty to teach two courses per term. The average teaching load of faculty is 3.5 courses per semester.

Jewish educational faculty tend to publish articles but produce few books devoted to education. Unlike their colleagues in other departments, they engage in several forms of research having a direct bearing on Jewish education including curriculum development, working with schools, and special projects.

> My colleagues in history and rabbinics have little understanding of educational research. Nor do they understand how Jewish education should relate to the institution as a whole. . . . Because the type of research we do is qualitatively different, we should be judged by a different set of criteria for promotion and tenure.

Attitudes reflected in the interviews of faculty and administrators correspond to the long-standing tensions between graduate programs and schools or departments of education in general universities (Clifford & Guthrie, 1988) which suggest deep biases concerning the role of research, the criteria for promotion and the seriousness of education courses.

Those interviewed have a variety of interests and belong to several different professional organizations. There is no one professional organization or conference which all attend. When presented with these data, a faculty member noted, "we are an interesting group of academicians but our diversity works against us in terms of becoming a professional group."

There was particular concern among several faculty about the need for educational research and the lack of support it receives from the community, foundations, and schools of higher learning.

> (. . .) sends a mixed message about research in Jewish education. Lip service is given to its importance, but no significant financial support has come forth for educational research. Instead curricular projects, service projects, and in-service training take priority. Consequently education faculty, in contrast to my colleagues in other departments, are not really encouraged to engage in serious educational research projects.

3.1 Summary

The number of faculty members holding full-time positions in Jewish education is astonishingly small. They come from diverse backgrounds and training experiences, but all have had a long association with Jewish education. The interviews point to the need to increase the number of faculty in Jewish education if the field is to grow.

1. What strategies might be considered in order to increase the number of faculty?

2. What steps should be taken to improve the support of Jewish education faculty in the institutions of higher Jewish learning? What mechanisms or opportunities need to be developed to enable faculty to do more research? How can support and professional networks for faculty be built?

3. To what extent are the issues and concerns of faculties comparable to those in general education and those in Jewish studies? What motivates faculty to pursue academic careers in Jewish education?

4. Summary of Training Programs: Retrospect and Prospect

The patterns of training for Jewish education in North America reflect complex, diverse programs that cannot be easily reduced to a few categories or types. During the past two decades there has been a steady decline in the number of students choosing to major in Jewish education at the B.A. level, while there was a proliferation of M.A. level programs. Currently, there are 358 students enrolled in degree or teacher certification programs preparing for careers in Jewish education. Another 109 students are enrolled in post M.A. programs (doctoral or principal).

Students entering Jewish education programs come from varied backgrounds, they tend to be predominantly female, weaker than previous generations with respect to Judaica knowledge, highly motivated, and interested in pursuing a number of different career paths in Jewish education. The education faculties are exceedingly small. They are expected to function in a number of different arenas within the schools and few are able to devote sufficient time to research and training in Jewish education.

A number of specific questions and issues emerged from the analysis and discussion:

1. In order to meet the challenges of the next decade and chart a course of action, most of the institutions examined have or are currently conducting long-range planning studies. Their findings should provide data for better understanding their relative strengths and weaknesses, needs and resources. How might this information best be used in mapping out options for the training of Jewish educators?

2. Institutions fiercely want to maintain their autonomy and unique identity. Each needs to be understood within the context of its community, constituencies, and respective ideology. These realities require further exploration in order to understand how colleges might work together.

3. Despite their need for autonomy, Jewish institutions of higher learning are interested in working together. What mechanisms can be developed to facilitate collaboration among institutions? Is the AIHLJE (The Association for Institutions of Higher Learning for Jewish Education) a mechanism that will facilitate denominational, university, and independent programs in Jewish education to collaborate?

4. The articulation and maintenance of standards in the field of Jewish education is essential to its professionalization. Is it feasible and/or desirable to set national standards for the preparation of Jewish educators?

5. In what ways can each institution best serve Jewish education on a local, regional, national, and international level?

6. The recruitment and support of students is viewed as a primary factor in the shortage of personnel for Jewish education. Are trans-denominational recruitment efforts desirable and/or realistic? What new mechanisms or strategies for recruitment are the most appropriate for training institutions?

7. Financial resources are needed to support existing programs, develop new programs, hire additional faculty, attract students, and conduct research. What types of structures and strategies would enable all training institutions to share and distribute resources?

8. A profile of each institution detailing the way these factors affected their respective training programs would contribute to a better understanding of what supports and what hinders effective training of Jewish educators. Are these factors affected by the type and number of students and faculty? What role does the local Jewish community play in relation to these factors?

9. Given the complexity of the programs, which work best under what circumstances? What is the structure of good programs for training Jewish educators?

5. Alternative Training Programs

5.1 Short-Term Training Programs

In response to the shortage of qualified supplementary schools teachers (Bank & Aron, 1986), several communities have initiated short-term training programs for adults who may not have any formal training in education or Judaica. The investigator identified six communities (Long Island, Chicago, Pittsburgh, Providence, and Oakland) where Bureaus of Jewish Education, denominational agencies or federations have developed such programs. Approximately 80 students (90% female) are participating in these programs. They range in age from 21 to 65 years old and include university students, lawyers, public school teachers, social workers, home makers, and retired persons.

The programs characteristically consist of four, twelve-session courses over a one to two year period. Courses focus on Jewish thought, history, classical text study, and Hebrew language, and are taught by university or bureau instructors. Parallel to or upon completion of course work, students participate in a field experience. Chicago and Providence have instituted a mentor program where experienced teachers guide and work with trainees both in and outside of the classroom. Other communities have a more traditional supervised field experience.

The budgets of these programs provide stipends to both trainees and mentors (approximately $150 per semester) and honoraria to the instructors. With the exception of Long Island, the local federation covers the costs of these programs, which are administered by the bureaus. Additional federations are planning to initiate similar programs in 1990-91. Short-term training programs are specifically designed for persons who are committed to Jewish education, desire part-time work, have little or no formal Jewish education training, and are highly motivated. No systematic follow-up studies have been reported that assess the effectiveness of these programs, but they have generated a good deal of enthusiasm and controversy. The instructors, trainees, and mentors are exceedingly enthusiastic about the programs.

> This program has been a very powerful experience for all concerned. The students are highly motivated and committed to Jewish education. It's refreshing to see bright, talented, energetic people become excited at the thought of teaching Hebrew school. For the mentors . . . it's given them new meaning in their work. They find that working with new teachers is stimulating and enriching. At the end of the program we all went on a weekend retreat where I observed the close bonds which had developed among program participants – it gives me hope about the future of Jewish education.

On the other hand, administrators of training institutions have voiced their concern about the quality of the programs, the lack of standards, and the general "non-professional" tone of the programs.

Short-term training programs provide one strategy for dealing with the teacher shortage problem. However, follow-up studies are needed to determine their effectiveness. Are such programs effective for training teachers at all grade levels? Are there other training formats that might prove more effective, e.g., camp settings? How can established teacher training institutions contribute to these programs? What can be learned from alternative teacher training models in general education that may have application to short-term training programs for Jewish educators?

5.2 Senior Educator Programs

Responding to the need for senior personnel in Jewish education, training initiatives based in Israel have taken a leading role in the preparation of mid-career Jewish educators who desire advanced preparation. The Jerusalem Fellows Program, an elite program for the training of Jewish leadership for education in the Diaspora, was established in 1981 by Bank Leumi and the Jewish Agency for Israel, and supported by public and private funding. It enables 12-18 educators to study intensively in Israel for periods of one to three years, engage in research, and participate in an international network of Jewish educational leadership. To date, 60 Fellows have completed the program and have assumed leadership positions in the Diaspora and Israel.

The Senior Educators Program at the Samuel Mendel Melton Centre of the Hebrew University, sponsored by the Jewish Agency for Israel and funded by public and private sources, selects approximately 20 Jewish educators each year from the Diaspora for graduate education study at the Hebrew University for one year. Graduates of the program return to school settings to teach or engage in administration. Approximately 100 educators have completed the program.

Although it is premature to assess the impact of these programs on the profession of Jewish education, they are perceived as generating excitement and confidence in the field. Many of those interviewed noted the value of these programs as models for advanced training in a pluralistic setting but also stressed the need to establish counterparts in North America, possibly in affiliation with the existing training institutions.

5.3 In-Service Training Programs

Since the mid-1970s, in-service staff development programs have been implemented as a way of promoting professional growth and school improvement (Lieberman, 1982; Rand, 1979). Bureaus of Jewish Education, institutions of higher Jewish learning, and individual schools all conduct in-service activities, in which thousands of Jewish educators enroll each year. These programs vary with respect to their function, format and duration, content, participants, sponsors, and instructors.

Function: Most agencies and schools sponsor in-service activities as a way of providing professional growth for their staffs. Interviews with agency directors and principals suggest that the majority of educators employed in Jewish educational settings are required to participate in some form of in-service training on an annual basis. Administrators in particular view staff development as a way of promoting professionalism among staff.

A second function of in-service education is to train people in specific content or skill areas where personnel are needed. For instance, a number of bureaus have offered in-service programs to train individuals in special education, art education, values education, and family education. Most recently, some experimental work has been conducted in the area of retreats for Jewish educators. These in-service retreats are designed to promote personal and religious growth as they relate to one's role as an educator (Holtz & Rauch, 1987).

Formats and duration: The continuum of formats range from a single lecture to a year-long course. More intensive formats include three-week continuing education programs in Israel and multiple-day retreat programs. Although there have not been national surveys or studies of the quantity or quality of Jewish educational in-service programs, descriptions of programs (*Pedagogic Reporter*, JESNA) suggest that most in-service activities are short in duration and lack continuity. Many of those interviewed by the investigator were well aware of the shortcoming of their programs and the evaluation literature which cites the importance of duration and continuity for effectiveness (see Fullen, 1981; Lieberman, 1981).

> Within (. . .), the only form of staff development we can provide consists of one-shot sessions. It's probably not very effective, in the long-term, even though the feedback is very good. . . . We just can't expect supplementary school teachers, who are part-time to begin with, to give of their time to participate in intensive staff development programs. On the other hand, if they would be willing, we don't have the financial resources to sponsor intensive programs.

> One of the travesties in Jewish education is the use of the CAJE conference as the primary form of staff development in Jewish education. Unfortunately, I see more and more administrators and directors sending their staff members to CAJE and copping out on their responsibility to provide staff development programs. Don't misinterpret me, CAJE is great but it's being misused.

Content: The content for in-service education varies considerably as a function of the educational setting (e.g., informal education, day school) and practical considerations (e.g., budget, instructor availability). Perhaps more significant is the question of who determines the content of in-service education. Evaluation research findings point to the importance of the consumers, i.e., those receiving training, being invested and involved in determining the content and format of staff development programs (Lieberman, 1981). Within Jewish educational settings, as in general education, it is often the administrator or sponsoring agency who determines content without con-

sulting consumers. Consequently, there is often a feeling among Jewish educators that staff development programs are unresponsive to their needs, e.g., too theoretical, unrelated to what they are expected to do in the workplace (Davidson, 1982).

Participants: Most formal Jewish educational establishments mandate that all education staff participate in in-service activities on an annual basis. Bureau or agency directors view in-service days as opportunities to bring together personnel from all denominational backgrounds, educational settings, and age levels.

Sponsors and Instructors: Bureaus generally have personnel assigned to the coordination, planning, and execution of in-service education. All bureaus publish calendars or newsletters with schedules for in- service programs. A perusal of many such schedules suggests that, overall, programs are conducted by Jewish educators from within the system who have particular areas of expertise or by bureau personnel. Some of the larger bureaus also call upon experts from the university world.

In four communities, the bureaus have developed a special relationship with the independent colleges of Jewish studies. Teachers in Jewish educational settings affiliated with the bureau are encouraged to promote their own professional growth by taking courses at the Jewish institutions of higher learning. The teachers are given subventions by the the federation to pay for these courses. Approximately 250 teachers nation-wide receive subventions for enrollment in Jewish institutions of higher learning. In the majority of communities the institutions of higher learning do not work in a collaborative fashion with the bureaus and schools in providing in-service programs. One faculty member felt that the bureaus and schools tend to turn to secular schools and universities for "experts" before they approach the Jewish colleges.

Training institutions have also established branches and off-campus courses in areas which are far from their main campus. Branch programs serve both Jewish educators (in-service) and adults interested in studying Judaica.

Interview data and references to annual CAJE Conference (Reimer, 1986) suggest that it is viewed as a major center for in-service Jewish education. The 2,000 conference participants enroll in workshops, modules, and mini-courses focusing on all areas of Jewish life and education.

For the past several years, university-based programs in Israel (e.g., Samuel M. Melton Centre for Jewish Education in the Diaspora, Hebrew University) have offered summer institutes for Jewish educators. These institutes are intensive three-week seminars, held in Jerusalem, which focus on specific content areas: values education, Hebrew language, and the teaching of Israel. Teachers from all denominations have participated in these programs.

The denominational movements are also beginning to use Israel as a base for in-service educational programming. For example, the United Synagogue of America, in collaboration with the Jewish Theological Seminary and the Department of Torah Education and Culture of the WZO, has sponsored annual intensive winter workshops in Jerusalem focusing on the teaching of text, ideology, and values.

Yet another form of in-service education is sponsored by professional educational organizations of the denominations (The Jewish Educators Assembly, Conservative; National Association of Temple Educators, Reform; and The National Council of Torah Educators, Orthodox). These organizations sponsor national and regional conferences where workshops, modules, and mini-courses are offered.

The preceding superficial overview of in-service staff development in Jewish education illustrates its expansiveness and complexity. It is viewed by many in the field of Jewish education as the most dominant form of training, however, their is virtually no research to back this claim.

The interviews and documentation suggest that there are literally hundreds of opportunities for in-service and short-term training in North America and Israel. Accurate data concerning the number of participants, the overlap between programs, and their effectiveness is not available. A systematic study of in-service Jewish educational programs is needed to assess its current and potential impact on the professionalization of the field. Specific questions to be addressed include:

1. What is the scope and content of in-service Jewish education in North America? What are the costs of providing in-service programs? What is the effect of in-service education in different educational settings, i.e. informal, supplementary school, day school? What are the most effective formats for staff development programs within specific communities? Does in-service education contribute to the preparation of senior educators?

2. What role can Jewish institutions of higher learning play in providing staff-development programs? Do those who enroll in in-service courses at Jewish institutions of higher learning continue to study for degrees?

3. What unique benefits do in-service programs in Israel provide to North American Jewish educators?

6. Training Informal Jewish Educators

Whereas the boundaries between formal and informal Jewish education were once determined by setting, that is no longer the case (Reimer, 1989). Informal Jewish educational programming now occurs within the context of: camping, youth groups, community centers, schools and synagogues, adult study groups, college campuses, and museums. A theoretical analysis of the distinctions and commonalties between Jewish formal and informal education within the context of contemporary Jewish life would be most informative.

More germane to this study is the training of educators for informal Jewish education. There are no education programs at the training institutions studied specifically designed for preparing informal educators. However, many of the students interviewed indicated that they were planning careers in non-school settings as educators. The positions mentioned included family educators, adult educators, and out-reach. Moreover, faculty and administrators viewed informal education as a new and exciting frontier for Jewish educators. Statistics about the job placements of their graduates do not indicate how many do indeed enter informal education.

Given the lack of training programs, how are positions in informal Jewish education filled? Among the denominations, graduates of their respective training institutions are generally appointed to be camp directors, youth leaders, and adult education directors. They have degrees as rabbis, educators, and communal social service workers. Within the Jewish Community Center world there are a growing number of full-time positions in Jewish education. These positions are filled by rabbis, Ph.D.s in Judaica and persons holding M.S.W.s. Youth organizations such as Young Judea, B'nai Brith, and Hillel-JACY also tend to select graduates of rabbinical schools and schools of social work for their leadership positions for Jewish education.

Overall there is little contact between institutions of higher learning preparing Jewish educators and non-denominational programs where informal Jewish education is conducted. The lack of contact is coupled with ignorance and stereotypes about what the respective institutions do. (Exceptions to this rule are Brandeis University and Baltimore Hebrew University, which do collaborate with informal Jewish education programs.) However, there is clearly the desire of all concerned to learn more about each other and possibly work together.

The JWB, in response to the growing concern that its affiliated Jewish Community Centers lacked Jewish content, commissioned several studies over the years (JWB, 1948; 1968; 1982; 1984; 1988) addressing this issue. Its Mandate for Action (JWB, 1986) proposed upgrading professional staff through Jewish education, which led to the

development of a Jewish education guide (Chazan & Poupko, 1989); the initiation of staff development programs based in Israel; and the appointment of Jewish educators in JCCs.

An emphasis on staff development, i.e. involving JCC personnel in intensive Jewish content programs, may be an effective mode of training for informal education personnel.[9] Data were not available on the extent and nature of staff development programs for youth groups, family educators, etc.

In sum, the training of informal Jewish educators has not been systematically studied. It is not known how many personnel are involved, where they are trained, and who they are with respect to their Jewish and educational backgrounds. There is a good deal of interest on the part of Jewish institutions of higher learning to play a more active role in the preparation of informal Jewish educators. Similarly, service agencies such as community centers are interested in learning what these institutions can offer.

> We haven't begun to explore the possibilities in informal education. We have some of the most sophisticated programs and systems in camping and adult education in both denominational and non-denominational settings. But the links between the formal and informal are non-existent.
>
> We have young talented students who want to enter this area and there is a need for trained personnel. The appropriate structures may not be in place, but overall I'm very optimistic that we all can work together.

Notes

1 Throughout this paper the terms training and preparation will be used interchangeably when referring to the preparation of educators.

2 Personnel working in informal Jewish education seem to be prepared as formal Jewish educators, as Jewish communal workers, or in general areas of social service and education (Reisman, 1988). There are no training programs known to the investigator whose primary purpose is to prepare informal Jewish educators. For a fuller discussion, see section 6.

3 Depending on their availability, personnel associated with the Jewish Community Center, Bureau of Jewish Education and Jewish Federation were interviewed.

4 According to Sherwin (1987, p. 97), Magnus and his colleagues viewed Jewish education as a means for achieving Jewish group survival in an American environment and religious training aimed at the transmission of Jewish morals. Magnus made a direct link between the role of Jewish education and good American citizenship.

5 Gratz College, 1897
Teachers Institute, Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1909
Teachers Institute, Yeshiva University, 1917
Baltimore Hebrew Teachers College, 1919
Hebrew Teachers College of Boston, 1921
Herzliah Hebrew Teachers Institute, 1923
College of Jewish Studies, Chicago, 1926
Hebrew Teachers Training School for Girls, Yeshiva University, 1928
Teachers Institute of the University of Judaism, 1947
Stern College for Women, Yeshiva University, 1954
Cleveland Teachers College, 1952

6 Because of the small numbers of institutions and training programs and the numerous differences among them, a typology for understanding their differences and commonalties is not feasible. In general teacher education, such typologies have been most helpful in developing a conceptual and practical understanding of teacher training programs (see Feinman-Nemser, 1989).

7 Students entering pre-service programs in general teacher education institutions have usually never had a paid teaching experience. This is a basic premise of pre-service programs, i.e., those entering have not had teaching experience. In Jewish education training programs virtually all students have taught in some Jewish educational setting or are engaged as Jewish educators, while enrolled in a graduate education program. It follows that general and Jewish education training programs are based on different premises with respect to the "pre-service" aspect of the students' experience.

8 The faculty who hold doctorates in education, on the whole, have done their academic training in the philosophy of education. There are no faculty who have concentrated on curriculum development, and very few who have a background in the social sciences.

9 In 1989, 565 lay people, staff and administrators from 20 Jewish community centers participated in staff development seminars held in Israel.

Table 1

Institutions of Higher Learning Granting Jewish Education Degrees and Certificates

Institution	*B.A.*	*Teacher Cert.*	*M.A.*	*Principal Cert.*	*Doctorate*
1. Baltimore Hebrew University	Yes	Yes	Yes		
2. Brandeis University Hornstein Program			Yes		
3. Cleveland College of Jewish Studies	Yes	Yes	Yes		
4. George Washington University/B.J.E.			Yes		
5. Gratz College	Yes	Yes	Yes		
6. Hebrew Union College, L.A.			Yes	Yes	Yes
Hebrew Union College, N.Y.			Yes		
7. Hebrew College Boston	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
8. Jewish Theological Seminary	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
9. Midrasha Toronto		Yes			
10. McGill University		Yes	Yes		
11. Spertus College		Yes	Yes		
12. University of Judaism		Yes	Yes		
13. Yeshiva University Stern College	Yes	Yes			
Breuer College	Yes	Yes			
Azrielli Institute			Yes	Yes	Yes
14. York University	Yes	Yes	Yes		

Table 2

Enrolled and Graduating Jewish Education Students from Institutions of Higher Learning

Degrees or Certificates	*Currently Enrolled Students*	*Number of 1989 Graduates*	*Total Number of Students*
B.A.	68	21	89
Teacher Certification	43	n.a.	n.a.
M.A.		62*	247
Full-time	76		
Part-time	171		(358)**
Principal Certification	42	10	52
Doctorate	67	7	74

* Data giving the number of part-time and full-time M.A. graduating students were not available. A total of 62 students received M.A. degrees.

** Total number of pre-doctoral students (M.A. students, B.A. students, Teacher certificate program students).

Table 3

Distribution of Jewish Education Faculty in Institutions of Higher Learning

Full-time Faculty	18
Part-time Faculty	22
Adjunct Faculty	44

Appendix A

Semi-structured Interview Schedule

Introduction

The purpose of the research; the purpose of the Commission.

Setting and Context

I've read and heard a good deal about your institution. Before we focus on education, I'd like to get a general sense of it. Within an historical context, what is its current direction and status? What lies ahead? Let's focus a bit on the current structure of the institution: relationship to other institutions, e.g., federation, universities, BJE. . . .

Students

Who are the students attending the institution? Have there been recent changes in the profiles of your students? How are students recruited? What type of students would you like to attract in the future? What implications does this have for the curriculum, structure, etc.?

Faculty

In examining your bulletin, I noticed that you list faculty for education schools or departments. Would you please tell me about the school's faculty, the department's faculty? What constitutes a full-time faculty load? Who are your full-time faculty? Who are the part-time and adjunct faculty? What challenges do you see, from your perspective, with respect to education faculty? Please describe the tenure process in your institution. What place does research have in the lives of faculty? Who are the faculty in education? What are their responsibilities?

Salaries

We're going to move on now to another area—salaries. How would you describe the salaries of your faculty? How do faculty salaries in your institution compare to those of other institutions (locally, nationally)? What fringe benefits do faculty receive?

Education Programs

As I indicated to you earlier in our discussion, I'm primarily interested in the education programs you offer. Before we speak specifically about teacher training, would you please describe any programs you feel fall under the rubric of education. What

programs does the institution offer that ostensively prepares or trains educators? How do you view the purpose of training Jewish educators? What are the needs of the education programs?

Visions and Dreams

If major funding became available in the near future specifically earmarked for education projects, what would be your wish list?

Appendix B

Accreditation and Institutions of Higher Jewish Learning

Historically, four types of accreditation were sought in order to certify the quality of the programs as meeting certain standards.

1. All of the training institutions have authority through their respective state's Departments of Education to grant degrees. The areas state officials examine include: faculty, library facilities, admissions standards, the adequacy of course hours, and appropriate curricula. Obtaining state certification involved submitting required documentation and a site visit by department officials.

2. Regional accrediting associations such as Middle State Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools and the Western College Association attempt to strengthen and increase the effectiveness of higher education. They do not grant permanent accreditation but review each institution once every ten years. As part of the review process institutions are required to conduct an extensive self-study.

3. The Iggud Batey Midrash le-Morim (Association of Hebrew Teachers Colleges) was founded in 1951 as the accrediting body for Hebrew Teachers Colleges. While requiring less elaborate procedures than state of regional accrediting associations, it aimed to assure the quality of Hebrew Teachers Colleges. The Iggud ceased to be a functioning organization in the early 1980s.

4. The National Board of License for Teachers and Supervisory Personnel in American Jewish Schools (NBL) was established in the 1940s to examine the qualifications of Hebrew teachers. According to an agreement between the Iggud and NBL (1955), any graduate of an Iggud affiliated Hebrew Teachers College will be automatically eligible to receive a Hebrew teachers license upon application to the NBL.

In 1986 the Association for Jewish Institutions of Higher Learning for Jewish Education (AJIHLJE) was established as an umbrella organization for North American institutions preparing Jewish educators. The NBL is in the process of determining whether to automatically award a teaching license to graduates of AJIHLJE affiliated schools who apply.

Members of AJIHLJE are:

Baltimore Hebrew University, Brandeis University, Cleveland College of Jewish Studies, Hebrew Union College, Gratz College, Hebrew College, Jewish Theological Seminary, McGill University, Spertus College of Judaica, Yeshiva University, University of Judaism.

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COMMISSION ON JEWISH EDUCATION IN NORTH AMERICA

The Synagogue as a Context for Jewish Education

Joseph Reimer, Ed.D.

May 1990

Convened by Mandel Associated Foundations, JWB and JESNA in collaboration with CJF

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A Report Submitted to
The Commission on Jewish Education in North America

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The Commission on Jewish Education in North America was convened by the Mandel Associated Foundations, JWB and JESNA in collaboration with CJF. The ideas expressed in this report are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Commission.

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Introduction

During the years that I worked in Cambridge, Massachusetts, tourists would often stop me to ask, "Where is Harvard?" They could be standing in front of a Harvard building, but, I learned, "the Harvard" they were looking for was "the Yard." Harvard Yard, the enclosed space that houses the original site of Harvard College, has the traditional buildings and courtyards to match the tourists' image of Harvard. Like the old city of Jerusalem, the Yard takes on the aura of the historic spot.

The "Yard," like many traditional universities, is enclosed by walls: walls that demarcate the space of serious study, keep out the bustle of the market and keep in the intensity of learning. As barriers that separate the academy from the world, the walls are limiting; but as permeable boundaries, they serve to remind us that serious study and learning often need the protection and security of a bounded space. Study and learning can dissipate in an open space; hence, we build schools, libraries, *batei midrash*, and universities with walls.

It takes more than walls, though, to create a safe space. As the British psychoanalyst D.W. Winnicott has noted, space is also a relational term. One person can provide safe space for another, such as a parent does for an infant. In that relational space, the infant feels safe from external danger and feels safe to explore the world around. But when the parent leaves the room, the same physical space no longer feels safe. The infant stops exploring and calls out for the parent's return. If the parent returns and re-establishes contact, all is well again and the exploration continues and expands. If not, the infant grows more and more anxious and the exploration is halted. The safe space is gone; the infant's opportunity to grow is put on hold.

Jewish learning and living also require a bounded, safe space. While in North America, Jews for the most part are not worried about their physical safety, they are aware of a diminution of "Jewish space," areas in which it feels comfortable to live openly as a Jew. Often, even within an enclosure such as Harvard Yard, Jews find it difficult to explore their Jewish concerns.

Our communal response has been to build "Jewish spaces" in the midst of the "open space" of secular society. Harvard has a Hillel building, our neighborhoods have JCCs and synagogues, etc. We intuitively feel the need for bounded space to enclose and protect the germ of Jewish activity. We sense that while bounded space cannot guarantee a high quality of Jewish living and learning, it may be a contextual prerequisite for serious and creative work to take place.

This paper is an exploration of one such Jewish space, the local synagogue. The focus will be on one particular aspect of synagogue life—the educational program; our attention will not be on the allocation of physical space, but, following Winnicott, the provision of relational space. We will want to know how synagogues create "Harvard Yards," not with brick and mortar, but with love and attention. We will study how synagogues enable the

participants in Jewish education – the students and teachers – to feel safe enough to explore their Jewishness and secure enough to feel that what they are involved in represents the highest good the community has to offer.

Synagogues across North America have generously built classroom spaces for the pursuit of Jewish education. What has sometimes, but not always, gone with the allocating of physical space is the blessing of the activity. Synagogues, as universities, differ in priorities. Some place a highest priority on quality learning; others do not. Our interest is in describing those who do: those who, like loving, attentive parents, provide the secure relational space in which Jewish exploration can flourish and communicate a serious intent to make Jewish learning meaningful and productive.

The tone of this paper will be positive. Enough has been written to document what can go wrong in synagogue education. Little has been written to describe what can go right. Using a qualitative methodology, we will use the examples of two "good enough" congregations in the Boston area to illustrate how a synagogue can nourish the germ of Jewish living through its educational programs in ways that give hope to the endeavor of synagogue-based Jewish education.

What we will also do in this paper is describe in some detail the schools within these congregations. We will hypothesize that a synagogue's prioritizing of Jewish education, under the right conditions, will have a positive effect on students' learning in the school. But as very little attention has yet been focused on the synagogue-school relationship and the question of how a positive Jewish learning space is created, we will attend first to those issues in this descriptive study.

Rumors of a Good School

While attending a bat mitzvah celebration of a colleague's daughter last September, I found myself seated at a table of parents of 13-year olds. The conversation moved briskly from topic to topic until resting upon the subject of Hebrew school. Bracing myself for the familiar assault, I was surprised to be hearing about the virtues of the school to which they sent their children. When I expressed my surprise, they shared theirs as well. One mother summed it up in this anecdote:

> Once last year on a Hebrew school day, my babysitter called in sick. It happened to be the day when I was scheduled to take the final exam in a course I was taking. I couldn't miss the final, and so I decided to ask one of my older kids to miss Hebrew school to stay home to babysit my youngest child. I was sure they would argue between themselves as to who would stay home. They did argue, but to my surprise, it was about who would go to Hebrew school.

Kids vying to go to an afternoon Hebrew school flies in the face of our common expectations. Most of us have put supplementary schools in the category of "necessary evils" and expect our children to do the same. When they do not, we are taken by surprise.

Some rumors are worth tracking, and the rumor of a good supplementary school was one I certainly would not let go by. By September, I was in the midst of the research for this paper and was anticipating selecting sites for observation. I was also reading a powerful book, Sarah Lawrence Lightfoot's (1983) *The Good High School.* Lightfoot argues that educational researchers have tended to be so critical of American schools that it is rare to find in the literature careful descriptions of schools that work well. Receiving appropriate encouragement and backing, Lightfoot set out to present a portrait of six good American high schools.

"Good" is a central term in her work. However, it means something quite different from "perfect" or even "excellent." It is in fact closer to Winnicott's term of "good enough", that is, having weaknesses and not succeeding in all one's goals, but having the strength to recognize the weaknesses and the will to keep working at getting better. Goodness is not quantifiable (as "effectiveness" might be), but it is recognizable and open to description. From within a school a trained observer can sense an "ethos" and discern how in this school the elements come together to produce a finer program, a greater sense of purpose, a keener sense of direction. No two schools may be "good" in the same ways; but there may be common characteristics that are found in "good schools" that separate them from the rest.

I was intrigued by the questions of whether there are supplementary schools that could be termed "good" according to Lightfoot's definition, and if so, whether they could be portrayed in terms similar to hers. I decided to track down the rumor of the good supplementary school, a decision which paid off handsomely. But along the way I realized that in the case of supplementary schools there are fundamental questions which need to be addressed before reaching the task of defining and describing the good school.

The School Within the Synagogue

In her portraits, Lightfoot carefully places each high school in its setting. The reader is offered a description of the physical setting, the local community and the socio-political climate surrounding the school. But all that is backdrop to what really interests the author: the school itself as an autonomous functioning educational organization. Lightfoot as sociologist is acutely aware of how schools fit in a social context; but as portrait artist, Lightfoot is struck by how these good schools each in its own way stands out against the background and strives to achieve a set of educational visions and goals that it sets for itself.

Pursuing the search for the "good" supplementary schools along the descriptive path would distort the reality of congregational schools as I have observed them. While an American public high school can legitimately be described as an autonomous educational institution in spite of its close legal, financial and cultural ties to the local community in which it is located, the same is not true of the congregational supplementary school which is not an autonomous organization in any real sense of the term. It is rather a part of the synagogue and in most cases cannot be viewed apart from its relation to the host congregation.

While we do commonly speak of supplementary schools as if they were autonomous units comparable to public schools, I propose that that is a perceptual error. A public school has its own space; a supplementary school is most usually spatially enclosed within the walls of the host synagogue. One enters the school through the doors of the Temple. In truth, we should be speaking about schools-within-synagogues.

Perhaps it is time for research on the supplementary school to also enter through the doors of the Temple. A researcher cannot even gain access to the school except by going through the synagogue, and that fact begins to tell us much about the place of the supplementary school as an organizational unit. To make descriptive statements about the space in which Jewish education takes place is to talk about an overlapping space, a spot where school and synagogue *are joined together*. It is that joining that needs to be described before we can understand more about the goodness of supplementary education. The prior questions are about the relationship between synagogue and school, about how the synagogue provides for the school within it and how the school fits in and contributes to the life of the congregation.

School and Synagogue: A Historical Perspective

There is a history to the relationship between the synagogue and supplementary school which is quite relevant to this discussion. It was not always the case that most children attending supplementary education did so through the synagogue school. Rather, the independent Talmud Torahs, organized by the central agencies and by-and-large functioning apart from the synagogues, were once the dominant model of Jewish schooling. As Susan Shevitz (1987) reports:

> By 1930 the Talmud Torahs had become the paradigm of Jewish schooling for a large group of American Jews. . . . Other than for supporters of either (mostly Reform) Sunday schools or (until recently, exclusively Orthodox) day schools, the Talmud Torahs served as the model for the congregational schools which emerged in the subsequent decades (p. 62).

The shift to the congregational school, which began in the 1920s and picked up great momentum after 1945, was not the choice of Jewish educators, but the result of demographic change, as Daniel Elazar (1976) reports:

> As American Jews moved from their original settlements in the large cities into second generation neighborhoods, they founded synagogues to satisfy their immediate Jewish needs. Prime among these needs was Jewish education of their children, and before long each new synagogue boasted of its own congregational school (p. 262).

Many prominent Jewish educators regretted this shift, seeing in it a diminution of the effectiveness of Jewish education as practised in the Talmud Torahs. Again, Elazar:

> Despairing of any other alternatives, many professional educators abetted the transfer of Jewish education to the synagogues on the ground that there was no one else to do the job . . . [But] the hours and days of instruction were reduced. In place of an emphasis on Hebrew the schools stressed the teaching of synagogue skills' and congregational loyalty . . . . Increasingly, Jewish education moved in localistic directions, as congregational rabbis made it clear their primary interest was in fostering loyalty to their own institutions (*ibid.*).

Elazar reflects a broad sentiment of opinion from a generation ago, but still felt today in certain circles of Jewish educators, that regrets the demise of the independent Talmud Torah and the rise of the congregational school. From Elazar's perspective it remains important to stress the autonomy of the Jewish school and its right to establish an educational agenda and a school schedule which may not match the "localistic" or denominational interests of the synagogue. From this perspective the more ideal model today is the free-standing, community-supported day or supplementary school.

I am taking a different stance in stressing the school-within-the-synagogue. I begin with synagogue sponsorship as a given and as an opportunity. It is a given of contemporary American life that in most metropolitan areas Jews will disperse themselves in a range of suburbs that make a centralized, communal school difficult to sustain. Local synagogues are needed precisely because they are the local Jewish address within a given town or area.

But synagogue sponsorship is also an opportunity because congregations are more inclusive than schools. They include not only children, but also families; and beyond families, synagogues provide a space into which each stage of the life cycle can enter and be drawn together in worship, study and activity. Synagogues at their best can represent, generationally, "the whole house of Israel" and thereby provide a context in which the child's learning of Judaism is organically connected to the community's living Jewishly (Dorph, 1989; Kushner, 1988). That places a heavy burden on the congregation to be a living community, but represents in my view a significant rationale for locating the Jewish school within the congregation.

Accepting the school's location within the synagogue as a given and an opportunity, I go on to ask: how can the synagogue sponsor its congregational school in ways that maximize the school's potential to provide a quality Jewish education? I accept that the definition of a "quality Jewish education" will vary from denomination to denomination, community to community, and sometimes from congregation to congregation (though I believe there are some common goals that are broadly shared). I view input from the congregation—rabbis and other professionals, families and lay people—as a way of binding the congregation to the school and vice versa. I view the congregation and school's relation to the surrounding Jewish community as vital to fulfilling the educational mandate. I offer the hypothesis, based on my observations, that when the right kind of relationships are established among the synagogue, school and community the results can be the creation of a dynamic Jewish educational program which, while very different from the traditional Talmud Torah or the contemporary day school, has an integrity and coherence which Winnicott would recognize as being "good enough."

To Be Located Within: School Within Synagogue

The emphasis placed here on the school's being within the synagogue is not original to this study but is found in much of the literature on supplementary schools (cf. BJE, 1988; Schoem, 1989). Less commonly found however is a careful consideration of what is meant by the school's being "located within" the synagogue.

Some characteristics of the "location within" are common knowledge and stand out most clearly when a congregational school is compared to an independent Jewish day school:[1]

1 By "independent," I mean a day school that was founded not to be part of a given congregation, as some are, but to stand as an autonomous organization, though usually affiliated with a denomination or community.

1. The congregational school is founded by the congregation to educate primarily the children of members of the congregation. The day school is founded to educate children from anywhere in the community—membership not being a primary consideration.

2. The congregational school is governed by a committee within the lay structure of the congregation. The congregation's rabbi also serves as rabbi for the school. A day school is governed by an independent board of directors, and while congregational rabbis often serve on that board, none of them is necessarily the rabbi for the school.

3. The congregation is fiscally responsible for the school and its committees make the fiscal decisions about the school. In a day school those responsibilities belong to the board of the school.

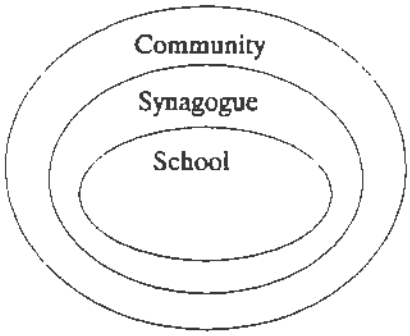
4. The congregation hires the principal of the school who reports to the lay committees and often to the rabbi. In a day school the board hires the principal who then reports to them.

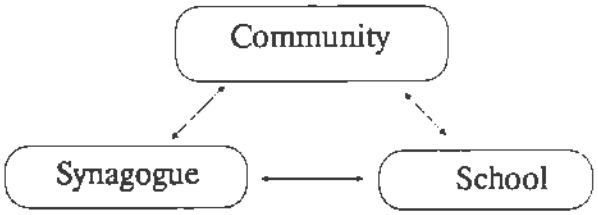
5. The congregation through its lay structure works with the principal and usually the rabbi to set the educational policy of the school. In a day school policy is set by the leadership of the school itself.

These are some organizational ways in which the congregational school is defined as being part of—rather than independent from—the host synagogue. But these organizational arrangements by themselves only define the structural relationship between synagogue and school and not the **quality** of that relationship. While this structural relationship is common to most synagogues and their schools, there are within this structure areas of choice and opportunities for priority setting. How the major stakeholders within a congregation relate to the principal, teachers and educational programs can vary significantly, and as those relationships vary so does the felt support that the school receives from the congregation.

To Be Located Within: Synagogue Within Community

Before looking in depth at the relationship between synagogue and school, it is important to note that a parallel set of relationships exists between the synagogue and the surrounding Jewish community, and that this set of relationships also plays a significant role in defining the synagogue as a context for Jewish education. These relationships may be diagrammed in two different ways:





The first expresses the school's inclusion within the host congregation and those relationships between the community and the school that are significantly mediated by the congregation.

The second expresses those relationships between the community and the school that are relatively direct and not fully mediated by the congregation.

Let us take two examples to exemplify these differences: relationships with the federation and its agencies, and relationships with the denomination and its offices.

(1) When a local federation becomes actively involved in an effort to support and improve supplementary education, as has been the case with the Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Boston, the federation usually relates to the congregation rather than directly to the school. However, when the Bureau of Jewish Education, which is a federation agency, develops programs and services, it tends to relate more directly to the school. That is not to overlook the B.J.E.'s need to establish a relationship with the host congregation, but to understand how the B.J.E.-school relationship differs from the federation-congregation relationship.

(2) Congregations, not schools, affiliate with a denomination. But once the congregational affiliation has been established, the school may relate more directly to the educational offices of the denomination in seeking resources and services to run educational programs. So too the school principal may belong directly to a denominational educator's organization, but, often, the congregation will subsidize the principal's attendance at the conferences and meetings held by those organizations.

The relevance of looking at this set of external relationships can be stated succinctly. Congregations are not able to run educational programs by themselves without relating to and drawing upon resources from the surrounding Jewish community.Crucial for our consideration are questions about defining the set of relationships between community, congregation and school that best supports the educational enterprise within the synagogue. How do the school and congregation best work together to access the educational and financial resources available from the community? How does the community – through its various agencies – identify, galvanize and support the best efforts of congregations to improve their educational programs? While the answers may vary from com-

(1) A school is like a boarder in the synagogue if it is required to pay rent for the space it occupies and if its lease may not be renewed. While this is an unusual position for a supplementary school, it is a common status for a nursery school or early-childhood center. One way to differentiate the supplementary school, therefore, is to say "at least it is not a boarder."

(2) A school may be considered like a stepchild if the leadership of the synagogue treats it as if it belonged to someone else. While they may recognize their obligation to provide financial support, they may try to limit that support to bare necessities and turn a deaf ear to any special pleading on the part of the school committee or principal of the school.

(3) A school may be considered less favored when the leadership of the synagogue recognizes its obligation to finance the school to a reasonable extent, but yet the principal and teachers feel as if their work does not receive the full attention of the lay and rabbinic leadership.

(4) A school may be considered favored when it receives not only generous financial support, but also special attention and recognition from the lay and rabbinic leadership.

These four positions invite consideration of how in different congregations—or at different moments in the life of a congregation—the quality of the relationship between the synagogue and the school may vary. The positions represent differential status within the system, with the boarder having the lowest status and the mission-bearing or favored child the highest. Our focus will be on the positions of higher status, trying to distinguish by example between congregational schools that are favored versus less favored. But first we will consider some priorities within the synagogue life.

Congregational Priorities

> While congregations are frequently formed because of a desire to provide Jewish schooling for the children of the potential members, once they come into existence they take on a life of their own that relegates education to a secondary position (Elazar, 1976, p. 272).

Elazar is describing "the natural course of events" in the life of a congregation. Jews founded synagogues to take care of a few basic Jewish needs, among which is educating the young; but in the process of creating a social organization, raising funds, obtaining a building, hiring professional staff, defining a religious orientation, etc., the key members' attention can easily be diverted from some of the original goals. While a school for the children often remains over time a significant budgetary item, it may no longer be of primary concern to the leadership and its status may fall to a secondary (less favored) or tertiary (stepchild) position.

But this is not inevitable; congregations can become well-established without necessarily allowing the status of education to fall to a secondary position. In a series of interviews conducted with ten key lay and professional leaders of the synagogue movements in the Boston area, I learned in detail of many of the financial and organizational pressures that even well-established synagogues currently face.

Yet how congregations choose to respond to these pressures differ in many ways. One difference has to do with their vision of how their educational programming fits into their plans for the future. Some congregations have decided to make quality Jewish education part of their appeal to the broader community. Others have decided to reduce their budgets by (among other ways) cutting their educational staff. Still others try to hold the line on their educational budgets, but are not clear on how to make education appealing to new constituencies.

It is important to realize that congregations are complex organizations with thick histories and organizational dynamics. (In this way they resemble families.) There is no easy way to cut through the complexity and get a handle on the priority-setting process in a congregation. However, it remains important to describe how in some congregations the leadership has managed to keep education in a favored status and use those programs as a way of sustaining the vitality and growth of the congregation, while in other congregations education has become a lesser priority.

Education as a Lesser Priority

Two of the major recent studies on supplementary education (BJE, 1988; Schoem, 1989) supply us with vivid descriptions of congregations in which educational programming—and particularly the congregational school—are not held as a highest priority. We will focus on the BJE study since it offers a broader perspective.

The report on Jewish supplementary schooling which the Board of Jewish Education of Greater New York released in 1988 was based on interviews and observations in 40 congregations of varying size, location and denominational affiliation within the New York area. Principals, teachers, rabbis, lay leaders and parents were interviewed, and from these interviews the following portrait of the school-within-the-synagogue emerges:

1. Principals

About half of the principals are employed part-time while one-third work full time and one-sixth have the shared responsibility of being a rabbi in addition to principal. Many do not have adequate support services and are required to do their own clerical work. They often do not have enough time to adequately supervise and train their teachers.

2. Teachers

Of the 426 teachers surveyed, only 17% have served six or more years in their current school while 62% have served for two years or less. A majority work between five to twelve hours in their school while only 5% work over twelve hours. Observations of their teaching reveal that:

> (1) The overwhelming majority of teachers utilize frontal teaching methods and dominate the lesson with teacher talk. . . . Questioning is not generally used.
>
> (2) Teachers' obvious lack of Jewish knowledge and Jewish educational methodology hinders the maximization of learning.
>
> (3) Some teachers take time to prepare classroom materials. Most cannot or are unwilling to invest the time needed for classroom preparation (p. 69).

3. Rabbis

> All of the rabbis interviewed "reported that they interacted with the principal, school board and parent body" and felt "it is important for them to maintain a close relationship with the principal and assist him/her with his/her work" (p. 74). Yet "the level of involvement of rabbinic leadership in the ongoing functioning of the school varies greatly" since the rabbis are "beset by many claims on their time and energies" and when "comfortable with their principals, they generally do not interfere with the school program" which can lead to a "lack of rabbinic involvement in the school" (p. 75).

4. Lay Leaders

> Two types of synagogue lay leaders were interviewed: those serving on school boards and those on boards of trustees. The former "are generally satisfied with the roles of their respective school boards," but "are frustrated by their inability to obtain adequate budgets from the synagogue leadership to meet educational needs." That may be because most members of boards of trustees "appear to be satisfied with the quality of education in their respective schools although they admitted they lacked knowledge about the school and had limited exposure to it." Most "do not consider the school program a top priority of the synagogue" (p. 77).

David Schoem, in his intensive study of one Conservative congregation and its school, amplifies what it means for the board members not to hold education as a high priority.

> Given the predominant perspective held by most congregational board members, the school was considered an important and costly arm of the synagogue but, at the same time, was only one of several synagogue priorities. Two issues dominated debates over finances of the school. First, some questioned whether quality education was an objective of the school, and second, whether increased funding would necessarily result in improved quality. In an important budgetary discussion, an influential member of the congregation board raised the first question. He said: 'Does the congregation really want quality education? Maybe we just want kids to make it through their Bar Mitzvah.' Although most board members did not dare be as frank as the person quoted above since it was normatively understood that Jews were always supposed to be in favor of education, many supported his budgetary position by saying: 'There are a lot of things we'd like to have in life but we have to limit ourselves' (1989, p. 71).

Giving education highest priority in a congregation is not simply a matter of financial support, but of a deep belief by the lay and professional leadership that quality education makes a substantial difference to the life of the congregation; a sustained and generous investment in education is not bowing to special interests, but breathing life into the congregational community. It is further the recognition that the principal is not a professional in charge of a separate wing of the congregation, but part of a full-time team with the rabbi and other professionals who help the whole congregation to live richer Jewish lives.

The data from these two studies indicate that it may be hard to find congregations that sustain these commitments but that is exactly what I was searching for.

Searching for the Committed Congregation

> There are certain Temples that stand out as having excellent schools. Often the quality of the school is a barometer of the general qualities of these congregations. These Temples want excellence in all their programming. So they attract quality staff who can produce a finer program and end up attracting more members. [From an interview with a key leader in the Boston area Reform movement.]

The interviews I conducted with key leaders of the synagogue movements in the Boston area gave me confidence that I could find in this area several synagogues that exemplified the commitment to education that I have been describing. I set out not only to identify these congregations, but also to test a hypothesis about the relationship between congregational priorities and the quality of Jewish education provided by the schools within those congregations. I wanted to learn if it was true that schools that enjoyed favored status in their congregations were those that turned out to be the "good supplementary schools."[2]

I began by trying to identify "good congregational schools." To do so, I conducted a telephone survey among eight selected professionals in the area who are involved in and knowledgeable about synagogue-based educational programs and whose judgment I respect. Four of these are principals of local congregational schools (two Conservative,

2 Given the very limited sample I was working with, I could in no rigorous way test for a relationship between the school's "status" and its educational "goodness." It is possible that there are good schools that do not enjoy high status in their congregations, and that there are congregations who give education their highest priority but have not been able to build a good school. All that I was hoping to achieve in testing this hypothesis was to establish by providing examples the likelihood that a relationship between "status" and "goodness" may exist.

two Reform)[3] and four are from the Bureau of Jewish Education or the Federation. They were asked individually if there were synagogues in the area with "especially good" educational programs and if so, to identify them. They also were asked to describe what in their judgment accounts for the programs being "especially good."

All eight believed there were "especially good" educational programs. In identifying them, all eight professionals agreed on one, and seven professionals chose a second. In addition, eight other congregations were cited, but none of these were named by more than five respondents.

In describing what accounts for these programs being "especially good," they cited the following factors: the school director (6); the support of the community (4); the involvement of the rabbi (4); the quality of the teachers (3); the engagement of the parents (3); and the quality of the curriculum (2).

As the two congregations named most frequently for having "especially good" educational programs were already known to me (one was where I had attended the Bat Mitzvah), I chose to make them and their schools the focus of my study. Once having gained permission from the congregational leaders and the principals to conduct this study, I tried to go into each of these congregations with an open mind to discover how their leadership described the goodness of their schools and the relationship between school and synagogue.

Temple Israel and Temple Isaiah

The two synagogues selected were Temple Israel of Boston and Temple Isaiah of Lexington. Both are modern Reform congregations but are different from one another.

Temple Israel, founded in the 1850s, is the largest Reform Temple in New England. It wears its long history proudly. Its finely-architectured building, located in the city of Boston (though on the border with suburban Brookline), is a blend of traditionalism and modernity. The art displayed within the Temple is strikingly rich and satisfying, but also traditionally Jewish in theme. The sanctuary is very large and comfortable, but simpler in design than one might expect.

By contrast, Temple Isaiah, founded after the war as Jews began to move in some numbers to suburban Lexington, is a medium-sized congregation housed in the plainest of structures. Whereas no one could miss seeing Temple Israel on its street in Boston, you could

3 In the Boston area, while the Orthodox are actively involved in sponsoring day schools, they are little involved in supplementary education and were therefore not consulted in my survey.

drive by Temple Isaiah and never realize you missed it. Inside the building it is clear there are but two central spaces: the sanctuary and the classrooms.

Temple Israel's splendor obscures the fact that many of its members commute to the temple from the suburbs or from other areas of Boston and are neither wealthy nor well-established. This synagogue also has demonstrated a keen commitment to integrating as members newly-arrived immigrants from the Soviet Union. Temple Isaiah's plainness obscures the fact of its drawing some good percentage of its members from the more affluent professional community of Lexington and surrounding suburbs. Simplicity is a choice rather than a necessity at Temple Isaiah.

Cary Yales has been rabbi at Temple Isaiah since 1971. The Temple does not employ a resident cantor, but has for many years employed a full-time educator, Lois Edelstein, to run the school and has more recently employed an associate rabbi.

Bernard Mehlman has been the senior rabbi at Temple Israel since 1978. Ronne Friedman came that same year to become associate rabbi, but has since chosen to become the full-time Temple educator. In addition, Temple Israel employs a full-time associate rabbi, cantor, executive director, youth director and librarian/teacher. With over 1,700 members (compared to Temple Isaiah's 660), Temple Israel has developed a larger professional staff.

Sponsoring the School

For all the apparent differences between these two temples, once I began investigating the relationship of the synagogue to the school, it became clear that the two have much in common. Both temples sponsor the school-within in ways that clearly exemplify the status of their being favored.

Being favored means, according to our definition, that all the major stakeholders in the congregation express through word and deed their support and recognition for the centrality of the educational program for the mission of the congregation. This would include: (1) a community—membership and parent body—that highly values education for themselves and their children; (2) a professional leadership who can articulate a clear vision of what the educational program should be in this congregation; (3) rabbis (and where present, cantors) who are integrally involved in the educational work of the congregation; (4) a lay leadership that through its board and committee structure gives real financial and organizational backing to the educational program; (5) a congregation that integrates the children and teachers of the school into its communal and worship life.

It was these five forms of support, here elaborated upon, that could be clearly seen in Temple Israel and Temple Isaiah:

(1) Communal Support[4]

Both Temples have a proud history of communal support for education. Lexington as a town is well-known for the quality of its public school system and for parental involvement in their children's education. That transfers to a large extent to Temple Isaiah, where the parents are concerned about their children's Jewish education and the leadership has from early on hired two full-time professionals: the rabbi and the educator. The leadership has wanted the school to offer a quality Jewish education and has backed the insistence on standards in the school in regard to attendance, learning and work completed. Their attitude is: "This is how we do things at Temple Isaiah; if you, the family, do not wish to maintain these standards, you are free to choose another Temple." Families who join agree with these higher Jewish educational standards.

Temple Israel also has a long history of hiring full-time educators and running a quality school. For many years, well-known Reform educators taught in the school. Roland Gittelsohn, the rabbi emeritus, came to Temple Israel after his former congregation—in the fashion of those days—did not want to institute Hebrew education during the week in addition to religious school on Sunday. At Temple Israel he found a Reform congregation committed to Hebrew as well as religious education.

In the 1960s the school at Temple Israel was very large and operated on a double shift. It was known as "the place" to send children for a Reform education and attracted an intellectually-ambitious parent and student body. After the baby-boomer generation of students ended and the size of the school was greatly reduced, the Temple leadership continued to support education. That support in one way manifested itself upon Rabbi Gittlesohn's retirement in hiring an educationally-oriented successor, Rabbi Mehlman.

(2) Educational Vision

On a promotional videotape made by Temple Israel, the rabbi is introduced by a congregant who speaks of the joy of learning with the rabbi in his classes for adults. Rabbi Mehlman's voice is then heard saying, "The first most formidable challenge to any synagogue is education." He goes on to speak about life-long Jewish learning. It works as a rhetorical charm; but upon observation, it proves also to be a programmatic reality.

Temple Israel is an active center of Jewish learning with as much activity for adults and families as for children. Rabbi Mehlman and his team (the two other rabbis and the cantor) are in the midst of the teaching, whether it be at a worship and study session before regular services on Shabbat morning, at a downtown law office on Thursday

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4 The information used to describe these temples was drawn primarily from interviews with synagogue leadership, rabbis and educators. Temple Israel also supplied me with some written documents and a videotape they created to present themselves.

morning or tutoring newly-arrived Soviet teenagers. The school, K-12, is clearly the Temple's largest single educational program; but it is surrounded by enough other educational activity that the rabbi's vision of building community in a large urban synagogue through the joint pursuit of learning is made manifest each day of the week.

Rabbi Yales at Temple Isaiah is no less emphatic about creating a learning community. He is proud that his congregation has fostered twenty active *havurot* among the membership, with three new ones beginning in the past year; he is proud of the 26 adults—some parents, some not—who studied all year to learn enough Hebrew and Torah to become bar mitzvah; and he is proud that Temple Isaiah has the fastest growing family education program in the Boston area, with the parents being the ones who continue to ask for more programming. As he says, "I have the same philosophy for the school as for the congregation. First get people comfortable, and once they are comfortable with you and each other, you can begin to talk about worship, God, etc."

(3) Rabbinic Involvement

Rabbi Mehlman and Rabbi Yales are not only articulators of an educational vision, they are also involved directly in teaching in the congregational school. Rabbi Mehlman teaches a Bible class to the eighth grade each Sunday morning and classes in the Monday evening high school. Rabbi Yales teaches a Holocaust course to the ninth graders and a Sex and Sexuality course in the high school. Both rabbis are also involved in several yearly Shabbat retreats for the older students and encourage their associate rabbis also to be actively involved in the school and other educational programming such as family education.

By their involvement in the school, the rabbis are consciously sending a signal. Even though, as senior rabbis of well-established congregations, they could easily relegate the teaching of children to others, they feel the teaching is so central to their vision of building community in the congregation that they take the time to do it themselves.

Of equal significance, each of these rabbis works alongside the Temple educator as partners in a shared endeavor. Being a Temple educator can be a lonely position,[5] but what one senses in talking to Rabbi Friedman and Mrs. Edelstein is how well-supported they feel in their positions.

Rabbi Friedman's situation is unusual, if not unique. How often does a congregational rabbi choose to remain in the same Temple, and become the Temple educator? Rabbi Friedman describes his choice on the basis of his love for educational work, his close

5 When I was telling a colleague who is now a day school principal about my research, he stopped me at this point to say: the biggest difference between being the principal of a day school and a principal of a supplementary school (which he had been previously) is how much more support you get in the day school.

working relationship with Rabbi Mehlman, and his commitment to their shared vision of building community in Temple Israel.

Mrs. Edelstein came from another local synagogue to Temple Isaiah ten years ago. In asking about the support she gets, Mrs. Edelstein cites three main sources: a closely-knit group of Temple educators in the area, the congregants, the rabbis. The group of educators was set up by a consultant from the BJE and has met regularly over many years. The congregants surprise her by doing more service for the school than she would have expected. (For example, the father who volunteered without solicitation to cook *latkes* for all the children and teachers during the Chanukah celebration.) And the rabbis—senior and associate—work closely with her on almost every aspect of the educational program.

In speaking in both Temples with the senior rabbis and the educators, I was struck by how closely and respectfully each team works together. They refer to each other by first name; they share a vision; they plan and work together; they are colleagues in the fullest sense of the term.

Rabbi Yales explains how in his view this team works together:

> My leadership style is to empower and not to second-guess.... It's Lois (Edelstein)'s school. I work with her.... Rabbis are teachers, but we are not educators. It behooves us to leave education, i.e. curriculum, pedagogy, running the school and staff, to people more well trained than we are. But when it comes to policy decisions, the rabbi needs to lend support. I don't go to all the [Temple] committees, but I do go to the school committee meetings. That involvement sends a message.

(4) Financial and Organizational Backing

Commitment, vision, involvement and support all create the relational space of which we spoke earlier as being essential to promoting Jewish learning. But clearly the relational space needs solid financial and organizational backing to survive in the realities of synagogue life.

The interviews at those temples indicate that concrete support is forthcoming from the synagogue leadership, as the following examples show:

a) In Temple Israel between 1984-85 and 1989-90 the operational budget for the congregation grew by 50 percent. The budget for educational programs in the congregation grew by 66 percent, increasing from 22 to 27 percent of the total budget.

b) Within that increase, by far the largest area of growth has been for teachers' salaries which in the five years expanded from $80,000 to $190,000. The increase reflects a congregational decision—spearheaded by Rabbi Friedman and the school committee—to increase by 30 percent the salary for each teaching position and to create more full and half-time positions for educators.

c) Temple Israel, which is a wealthy congregation and charges a relatively high membership fee (though with a sliding scale) charges no tuition for attendance in the school or in any educational program. As their literature says: "We believe so strongly in education as the foundation of understanding that for Temple members there is no additional cost for [any educational program]."

d) Temple Isaiah, which is a less affluent congregation, charges a lower membership fee (on a sliding scale) and, as almost all other congregations in the area, additional tuition for school enrollment. Over the past few years the budget for educational programs has risen from 20 to 22 percent of the operational congregational budget.

e) Due to increases in the size of the school and the family education program, Temple Isaiah has run out of classroom space on Sunday mornings. The Board is not ready to approve fundraising for new construction; but they did decide that the school has first priority to any space at that time in the temple. All other temple functions have to wait their turn.

f) Rabbi Yales considers post Bar Mitzvah education a high priority. To motivate students to remain for two more years of study, he proposed in a Yom Kippur sermon that the congregation offer a subsidized trip to Israel for each tenth grader. The proposal found quick support from congregational donors and has become part of their high school program.

g) A three-year grant from Federation to Temple Isaiah to begin family education programs will end this year. Given the program's popularity, Rabbi Yales encouraged Mrs. Edelstein to work with the school committee on a proposal to the board to pick up most of the tab. But in a year in which the economy has been very uncertain, the board was reluctant to devote that much money to a new program. Mrs. Edelstein, however, worked closely with the chair of the school committee, and he successfully convinced the Board that family education was no frill and needed their fuller support.

(5) Integration into the Life of the Temple

Worship stands alongside education as the other central focus of Temple life. To what degree are these two realms integrated together?

a) In both schools, the students are learning Hebrew with an eye to being able to participate intelligently in the services by being familiar with the Hebrew of the Torah and the *siddur*.

b) Both temples have shabbat and holiday services that actively involve children and families in the service. At Temple Israel, there is also a children's choir and a Torah reading group that are involved.

c) The rabbis take off time from involvement in adult congregational activities on several Shabbat days during the year to go off on retreat with the high school students and participate in special services for preschool children and their parents.

d) In Temple Isaiah, several teachers have joined as congregants, and Mrs. Edelstein reports that the students are surprised that she is a member and worshipper at her home Temple. They expect to see her at services, perhaps because school and synagogue are so closely integrated.

e) In Temple Israel, I observed a *Yom HaMoreh* Friday night service to honor all the teachers. What made the service special was not only that the congregation was honoring the teachers at its regular shabbat service, but that the service had been created by members of the high school youth group in conjunction with the cantor and rabbi. What I saw that evening was a dozen or so high schoolers on the *bimah* with the cantor and rabbis leading the service and in the congregation the families of both the adolescents and the teachers. In place of a sermon, Rabbi Friedman called up all the teachers and selected three for special awards. It was an opportunity for him to explain publicly what is so special about the contribution that these teachers make to the children of the congregation, and to thank them for those contributions.

Are These Good Schools?

Through the descriptive material I have attempted to illustrate how these two synagogues actively express their commitment to education through involving the support of all the major stakeholders in the congregation. The contrast between these congregations and most of those presented in the BJE study (1988) should be evident.

If the case for support and favored status has been made, there remains the question of goodness. Our argument has been that congregations need to provide the right relational space to enable educational goodness to develop. But is it the case that these two congregational schools that enjoy a favored status are enabled by that status to become good schools? Further, how are we to define "goodness" in relation to a supplementary school?

Returning to Lightfoot's (1983) work may be a helpful beginning. She too began her search for good high schools by asking knowledgeable people in the field for schools with "distinct reputations as fine institutions with clearly articulated goals and identities" (p. 23). Once identifying such schools, she decided not to seek objective ways of discerning which were the best, for to do so would be to rely on techniques for measuring comparative output or performance within schools and then comparing schools on scores of student performance. But Lightfoot's whole thrust, which I am following, is not to reduce schools to their output, but to study them in their wholeness. Goodness—in contrast to

effectiveness – is a description of "character and culture" – of what makes a given school what it is. One gets at goodness not through administering tests, but through observing a school at work and interviewing its members as to what is the meaning of their work.

Goodness, therefore, is not an absolute quality in a school. One cannot say from the outside that a given school is or is not good. Rather, by studying the school from within, by grasping its "ethos" or "sustaining values" (p. 23), a trained observer can begin to make judgments as to where a school stands in struggling to achieve its own innermost goals. Two schools (e.g. an Orthodox yeshiva and a Reform supplementary school) can be quite different from one another in terms of their character and culture, and can be using varying approaches to attain dissimilar goals; yet each can be judged to be good by virtue of how each struggles to realize its own identity. In that sense, goodness is a contextual judgment: there are "myriad ways in which goodness gets expressed in various settings" (p. 25).

Lightfoot cautions us to distinguish goodness from perfection. All too often real schools, with their notable imperfections, are compared in our minds to nostalgic visions of schools that were, or to ideal visions of schools that could be. In reality, "no school will ever achieve perfection . . . It is not the absence of weakness that marks a good school, but how a school attends to the weakness. . . . One of the qualities of good schools is their recognition and articulation of imperfection" (p. 24).

Finally, Lightfoot notes that "schools are changing institutions . . . and recognition of their goodness should reflect these transformations" (p. 24). In our case the relevant transformations are those within the congregations, the Reform Movement and the Boston Jewish community. In judging the goodness of these schools, we will be asking: did each take good advantage of the changes around (in Reform ideology, communal demography, synagogue-Federation relations, etc.) in molding an evolving program of quality Jewish education?

Criteria for Goodness

While goodness is a contextual judgment, it is still possible, as Lightfoot has done, to find certain commonalties among good schools. Each good school has its own way of enacting a given commonalty (e.g. seriousness of purpose); but the commonalties give us some starting point in making a judgment about a school's being good.

As Jewish supplementary schools face unique problems in striving for goodness that separate them from American high schools, I will not list the commonalties Lightfoot revealed in her study. Rather, I will draw upon criteria of goodness which emerge from discussions specific to congregational schools.

To derive such criteria I turned to five "experts" from around the country—two supplementary school principals and three professors of Jewish education. Each has had extensive experience in working in or with supplementary schools of the Conservative or Reform movement. I asked for help in thinking about "criteria for goodness" in congregational schools. I asked "to reflect on your experience with these schools and share with me the criteria or indicators you use to judge a congregational school as being or not being 'good enough'."

It was reassuring that the experts had been thinking about good supplementary schools and did not subscribe to the negative stereo-typing of these schools that one generally finds in the literature (Himelfarb, 1975; Bock, 1977; Schoem, 1989). Each had experiences with individual schools that gave hope that there could be quality education in this sector. I sat with the complex responses they offered and began sorting them—along with the criteria supplied earlier by my Boston informants—into categories. Some of the criteria fell into the supporting or enabling qualities of an educationally-committed congregation (e.g. rabbinic involvement, communal support). Of those that dealt more directly with the school, I found seven broad criteria that encompass most of their points.

1. *Shared Vision and Purpose.* The school has an identity, a sense of purpose, articulated goals that inform practice because they are shared by the rabbi, principal, and teachers, and are clearly communicated to the parents and students.

2. *Coherent curriculum/Standards of achievement.* There is a master plan for the learning that will take place progressively within each grade and from grade to grade, and strong, but realistic expectations for what students will learn each year in the school.

3. *An embracing, caring school climate.* Children and parents walking into the school experience its warmth and its culture and feel at home in this Jewish environment.

4. *Educational leadership from the principal.* The principal is not only an administrator, but also a leader who gives direction and support to the staff and offers supervision and guidance on a regular basis.

5. *A qualified teaching staff.* Teachers are committed to what they are teaching, knowledgeable of the subject matter and sufficiently in touch to communicate effectively and believably with students and parents.

6. *A learning student body.* Students attend regularly, behave appropriately, are involved in their learning and show evidence of gaining mastery over and caring about the subject matter.

7. *Continuity.* A majority of staff remain in their position for more than a year or two and a majority of students continue their education beyond Bar Mitzvah.

Some of these criteria (#1, 3, 4) could be found in Lightfoot's descriptions of good high schools. Others (e.g. #5, 7) she might often take for granted; but they cannot be assumed

in supplementary schools. When looking for goodness in supplementary schools, we realize they have to overcome problems in finding and keeping qualified teachers and motivating students and parents that some other schools do not even face. But a case can be made, using these criteria as benchmarks of quality, that some congregational schools struggle valiantly with these problems and find ways to offer their students a limited, but good enough Jewish education – a basis for future Jewish living and learning.

The Two Schools

Before taking a more in-depth look, we need an over-all picture of the schools within Temple Israel and Temple Isaiah.

In terms of structure, these two Reform-affiliated schools are very similar. Each is a K-12 school that is divided into four sections: primary (K-3); elementary (4-7); junior high school (8 or 8-9); high school (9-12 or 10-12). Elementary grades meet three times weekly while all others meet once weekly. Temple Israel this year initiated the three-day schedule for third grade and an optional second day for eighth grade.

Temple Israel is the larger school with 30 teachers and 450 students. Temple Isaiah has 15 teachers and 303 students. The difference in staff size is due in part to a structural variation. Temple Israel uses the more common Reform format of having religious school on Sunday and Hebrew school twice during the week for the elementary grades. Six faculty teach in both but the rest teach in one or the other program. Temple Isaiah has integrated programs for those grades in which the Judaic and Hebrew subjects are intermixed all three days. There are fewer teachers, but they teach the whole three-day schedule.

Another salient difference is in administrative structure. Temple Isaiah has one full time administrator, Lois Edelstein, plus secretarial help. Temple Israel employs Rabbi Friedman full time with secretarial help, and three half-time co-ordinators. The co-ordinators, for K-3, 4-8 and the Hebrew program, share with Rabbi Friedman responsibilities for planning and supervising the staff and program.

On a comparative note, there are only six supplementary schools in the Boston area with over 300 students, making these among the largest schools in the area (Shevitz, 1989).

Making A Case for Goodness

When beginning to study these schools in greater depth, I was not at all certain what I would find. Being myself a product of day school education and a parent of two day school students, would I be able to study these schools in their own terms and not covertly compare them to the schools I knew better? Would I, given my own strong bias towards the study of classical Jewish texts in the original, find instances of Jewish learning that would intuitively accord with my own sense of good Jewish education?

At first, having the seven criteria of goodness to guide me proved very helpful. Long before I encountered moments of learning in classrooms —moments that my intuition told me where "good"—I was seeing and hearing about aspects of these schools that seemed to fit what the criteria called for. The earlier evidence gave me hope that I could find the data that would make the case for me.

Using data from interviews with the principals and teachers as well as observations from the schools, I will present shorter narratives on criteria 1-4 and 7. I will then concentrate on criteria 5 and 6 as I found the data there to make the most convincing case for goodness.

1. Shared vision and purpose

We have spoken of how the senior rabbi in each Temple has articulated a vision of the congregation as a learning community. Clearly, the senior rabbi sets the tone, but in each case the educator is a co-articulator of the vision with special reference to the congregational school. An example from each Temple will illustrate the point.

(a) Rabbi Mehlman is a scholar of the Hebrew Bible and loves to teach biblical material, placing great stress on becoming familiar with key terms in Hebrew. When Rabbi Friedman became Temple Educator, he shared Mehlman's conviction and looked for a way to translate vision into practice. He found it through the Melton Centre's curriculum for Hebrew which stresses the teaching of traditional, textual Hebrew to students. He has put that curriculum into place in the school without concern that it comes from the Conservative and not the Reform movement. What is clear, as we will see, is that the teachers are involved and supportive and the students quite receptive.

(b) Rabbi Yales, a strong advocate of outreach to the intermarrieds, seeks to include those couples and families within the congregation. Rabbi Wolfman, his associate, runs special groups for intermarried couples. Neither rabbi wishes to keep this group separate, but rather to find ways to integrate them with the rest of the congregation.

Family education programs, which Mrs. Edelstein has most actively introduced, have proven an avenue for integration. It may be the intermarrieds who have the greatest need

to learn Judaism alongside their children, but almost all the parents need to refresh their knowledge and skill level. When children and parents are learning together, everyone is able to fit in comfortably. In these programs, Mrs. Edelstein has the rabbis and teachers working together with the families. It is a shared vision put into practice on a multiple of grade levels.

2. Coherent curriculum/Standards of achievement

Both schools share the same general goals for their Hebrew curriculum. They recognize that in the limited time available they will not bring students to a point of active Hebrew fluency or mastery; but they do aim to give students receptive Hebrew skills: a strong foundation in terms of reading, grammar and limited vocabulary. They aim to allow students to be able at a later point to return to learning Hebrew and build on the foundation they received in these years. And for those who will not return, they have the skills to be functional Jews within the life of the congregation.

Within these areas of agreement, each school has taken a different turn. Temple Israel's curriculum stresses textual Hebrew while Temple Isaiah's stresses modern Hebrew. These differences are not absolutes (each side does not reject the other), but do fit into some larger coherence within each Temple.

Given Rabbi Mehlman's stress on studying Bible, the adoption of the Melton curriculum makes sense in Temple Israel. It allows seventh and eighth grade students who study *Genesis* with the rabbis to follow when they make textual comments based on the Hebrew. It allows the post-Bar Mitzvah students to more meaningfully participate in reading from the Torah scroll during services and would allow them as adults to participate in the worship and study group who meet each Shabbat for a close reading of a text from the weekly *parsha*.

Temple Isaiah students in the higher grades study Biblical texts, but only by using the English translation. But their learning of modern Hebrew also has a coherence, for as mentioned, every student who stays through tenth grade is subsidized for a summer trip to Israel. Thus, visiting Israel, in which spoken Hebrew can be used, has a more regularized place in Isaiah's curriculum than in Temple Israel (though this year Temple Israel began the Passport to Israel program in conjunction with federation).

Curricular coherence is of limited value without a system of standards and accountability. In each school two forms of accountability are in place: one for teachers, the other for students. As we will later illustrate, teachers are clearly expected to be prepared for class, to have sound knowledge of what they are teaching and to know how to communicate the knowledge to students. Students are clearly expected to attend on time, to behave and learn in class, to do homework assignments and to advance from year to year in their knowledge base. Temple Isaiah will not allow students to complete tenth grade until they have successfully passed a test in knowledge of basic Judaism.

3. An embracing, caring school climate

How you are greeted upon entering can tell you a lot about school climate. Is the teacher already in the classroom waiting? Does the principal know you by name? Is your parent welcome to come in as well? Is your absence noticed? Is it a pleasant place to return to each week?

Rabbi Friedman and Mrs. Edelstein are masters at creating a homey, comfortable environment in their schools. As serious as each is about maintaining standards for teaching and learning, each is also aware that they are not simply running a school, but also creating a Jewish home for the students and parents (Heilman, 1985). How is this accomplished?

(a) In Temple Israel there is a shabbat morning service once a month with the rabbi for three and four year olds and their parents. It is held in the kindergarten room. Before school ever begins a connection to the Temple, rabbi and classroom are established for child and parent.

(b) In Temple Isaiah family education begins in the kindergarten. It is an opportunity for children and parents to get to know the rabbi and principal and learn more about the life of the congregation and school.

(c) The principals (and in Temple Israel, the co-ordinators) know and greet the students by name. There is a feeling of being known when you walk down the hall. Teachers are there before you enter the room. Roll is called; absentees are asked after. Parents wander in; the library is always open, welcoming. Parents help out with special events and in Lexington especially, are dropping in and calling to offer suggestions.

(d) Youth groups begin in the elementary grades so that children are getting both formal and informal education. There are also retreats for junior high school students.

(e) By high school the integration of formal and informal education is far more complete. The youth groups are in full gear and are coordinated with the high school classes. Studying with the rabbis is a regular feature as are weekend retreats away with the principal and rabbis. In Temple Isaiah the associate rabbi is the leader of the senior youth group. In Temple Israel Rabbi Friedman teaches a course in the high school on leadership skills for the youth group leaders. There is an active philosophy that we, the full-time professionals, are not only teachers and administrators, but also objects of attachment. Especially in the upper grades the message is, "Come and get to know us. We are here for you, and we will be sticking around for you in the years to come."

4. Educational leadership

It is the teachers who will most directly experience the educational leadership of the principal, and so it was to them that I turned for information. The responses were informative.

A 25-year veteran told me she decided to retire several years ago, but when Rabbi Friedman came on board, she couldn't. I asked why. "Because it's so stimulating," she said, "he sees things so differently than others do, and he's been teaching me." A five-year veteran told me he loves teaching at Temple Israel and wouldn't teach elsewhere. Why? "Working with Ron (Friedman) and Esther (the coordinator): two supervisors who are incredibly helpful."

I wondered what the magic is. He continued: "Teachers are made to feel very good. The coordinators are your supervisors and they create a team feeling with the teacher meetings over lunch. . . . Ron (Friedman) is over-all in charge: the school is his turf."

At Temple Isaiah the style is different, but the story is the same. A four-year veteran reports that Lois Edelstein frequently "pops into class; not everyday, but regularly." I wondered what the effects were. "The kids don't even notice, but I do. Sometimes, in an intimate moment with the class, it blows it away for me. Other times I am glad she is there so she can see learning moments in the class."

I ask Mrs. Edelstein about this practice. She admits it is her style not to stay in the office during class time, but to move around and visit the classrooms. She thinks people have gotten used to it and it's vital for her as supervisor to know what's really going on. Then she can work one on one with the teachers based on what she sees.

I ask the veteran teacher why he has stayed at Temple Isaiah. He gives me four reasons:

> (1) Lois (Edelstein) and the support she gives you. You're going to teach something three weeks away and you're not even thinking about it and she is already giving you the materials you will need.
>
> (2) The rabbis are really great and really value the school which trickles down to the parents.
>
> (3) The parents are very supportive, always there to help when you need them; very into the school.
>
> (4) The teachers are very supportive and cooperative.

Mrs. Edelstein spoke to the last point. Her teachers tend to remain and it is not because of the money: Isaiah cannot pay high salaries. She attributes it to the group feeling, the feeling of being in this work together. For example, this year she did not make plans for a school celebration of Israeli Independence Day. But the teachers got together on their own, made plans and carried off the celebration. In a sense, I thought, it was their tribute to Mrs. Edelstein. They were showing her they could take the initiative and this time, for a change, she could relax and enjoy.

7. Continuity

How good is Temple Isaiah's record of teacher continuity? Last year, 1989, Mrs. Edelstein had to replace only one of fifteen teachers. This year four of her teachers are completing their graduate degrees and she is quite busy replacing them. But that is who she is primarily looking for: graduate students or young adults with good Judaica backgrounds and teaching skill. She is willing to invest a lot of time with new teachers to bring them up to her standards of teaching; but then she wants to keep them for at least several years.

She and I reviewed the longevity of her staff. The range was from the first-year teachers to those who pre-dated Mrs. Edelstein ten years ago. The average was approximately five years.

Temple Israel's record on continuity is more checkered. Rabbi Friedman looks primarily for graduate students or young adults and will only occasionally take a chance (as will Mrs. Edelstein) on a mature undergraduate. He employs a few veteran teachers who come to Temple Israel from other congregations primarily to teach in the Hebrew program. They—some of whom are clearly more traditional in Jewish commitment—tend to remain over time, making the Hebrew program faculty more stable.

The young Sunday morning faculty is less veteran and more mobile. Rabbi Friedman estimates that of twenty classroom teachers on any given year he will have to replace between six and twelve teachers. He feels strongly that this is a most unsatisfactory situation and wishes he had the money to attract stable, veteran 30 and 40 year old teachers to the Sunday morning program as well as during the week.

There is a second form of continuity of interest to us: student continuity. Both Temples place great emphasis on continuity for children beyond Bar Mitzvah. How successful are they in keeping students for the eighth grade and high school?

Temple Isaiah keeps exact records of student continuity. Over the past four years the retention rates from seventh to eighth and from seventh to ninth have been:

Year	*7th to 8th*	*7th to 9th*
1986	.70	.41
1987	.69	.60
1988	.61	.69
1989	.89	.50

Currently there are 17 students in 8th grade, 13 in 9th grade, 18 in 10th grade, 8 in the 11th grade and 6 in 12th grade. There is a gradual drop-off during the high schools year after a very strong retention rate in junior high school.

At Temple Israel this year approximately 75% stayed from seventh to eighth grade and 50% of the original cohort began the high school in ninth grade. Rabbi Friedman believes the dispersal of his students—coming from so many different neighborhoods and schools—makes it harder to form a tight peer group and keeps down the rate of continuity.

For comparative purposes, looking at a recent census of students in all supplementary schools in the Boston area (Shevitz, 1989), the current eighth grade population is less then 50% of the size of the seventh grade population, and eighth-twelfth grade population is approximately 30% the size of the fourth-seventh grade population. By contrast at Temple Isaiah the eighth-twelfth grade population is over 60% the size of the fourth-seventh grade population.

5 and 6. The Quality of Teaching and Learning

When all is said and done, the quality of education in a school rests on the teacher-student interaction in classrooms. In reaching these criteria I believe we come down to the essential question: no matter how good the support from the congregation, rabbis, parents and principal, can teachers teach and students learn in these schools?

To answer I will present in some detail excerpts from notes I took from two classes in Temple Israel, from grades 4-7. They struck me as examples of quality teaching, but they were not so different from the other classes I observed. In fact, I saw nothing but acceptable to good teaching; these were, in my judgment, simply the better moments.

a) A fourth grade learning about Passover

This part of the lesson is about *bedikat hametz*, the ceremonial search for *hametz* that takes place the night before the first *seder*. This class, taking place on a weekday afternoon during the week before Passover, is attended by 11 students, 7 boys and 4 girls. The teacher is a veteran, clearly a more traditional Jewish woman, their regular Hebrew teacher.

T: *Bedikat hametz*: When does it happen? After, during or before the *seder*?

S: After. (Apparently he is confusing this with *afikomen* as the teacher gently points out.)

Several students: Before

T: Why is looking for *hametz* important?

S: (Aside) It isn't.

T: Who does this at home? (One hand goes up). In my house we do this in every room. (She goes on to describe how her family does it.)

Students ask teacher a number of questions about the details of the ceremony.

T: To celebrate the end of cleaning, we deliberately mess it up by putting out 10 pieces of *hametz*. (Teacher then gives out to each child one piece of bread.)

T: What else do we do in tens?

Students: plagues, commandments.

S1: We are having four Russians (presumably to *seder*).

Teacher reviews the blessing for *bedikat hametz*. Together they all read the blessing in Hebrew from the *haggadah* each student has.

T: (Shows them the next statement in the *haggadah* which is in Aramaic. On the board she writes in Hebrew *kiddush* and *kaddish*. Do they know these?)

Students: (Recognize *kiddush*, but no *kaddish*.)

T: Do you know about *yahrzeit* lamps?

Students: (Begin to tell about the lamps they've seen at home.)

Teacher sensing they will not get the connection to the Aramaic in the *kaddish*, she quickly organizes them into a procession to look for the *hametz* with a spoon and feather.

T: Why do we do such a bizarre thing?

S1: Because we're Jewish.

T: But why **this**?

Students begin to guess and get somewhat wild. Teacher warns them to calm down.

S2: It's a symbol.

T: Excellent.

S3: There are a lot of symbols. You know the story and you pass it on.

S1: Maybe God made up Hebrew because it is nonsense.

Teacher sensing the order is cracking, she continues the procession until all the *hametz* is collected.

S4: Does this work?

S5: It is an Arabian thing (he meant: Aramaian).

S6: Are we going to burn it?

S7: Do you burn the spoon?

S8: Will we burn the Temple?

Teacher finishes the exercise. Seats them. Moves quickly on to singing *Dayyenu* which they join in with gusto.

This is a risky lesson for the teacher. She is teaching a custom which she knows very few of the children will know from home. It is, in her words, "a bizarre" ceremony and one that raises, in Heilman's (1985) sense, the risk of "cultural dissonance." Writing on his observations of classes in supplementary schools, Heilman noted that moments of such cultural dissonance run greater risk of the children's "flooding out"—finding disruptive ways of distancing themselves from the material. The students in this class were right on the edge with comments like "It isn't (important)" or "Will we burn the Temple?"

What makes this good teaching is that the teacher takes the risk of introducing this material, skates the edge of their flooding out, but holds the lesson together so the students can experience the ceremony, recite the blessing in Hebrew and learn that there are Jews, such as the teacher herself, who do this today in their homes. The foreignness of tradition is somewhat reduced. Given that this is only fourth grade, the students will have opportunities in the next years to learn more about the meaning of *bedikat hametz.*

b) Seventh grade learning *Jonah* in Hebrew

This lesson is from the first chapter of *Jonah,* the scene with Jonah on the boat tossing in the storm and the sailors' discovering that it is Jonah's presence that is causing the storm. The ten seventh graders are reading from a loose leaf book that has excerpted Hebrew verses from this chapter, but no English translation. They do have an extensive dictionary constructed to help them specifically with translating the verses they are working on. The teacher is a five-year veteran with a beautiful Israeli-accented Hebrew. It is a Tuesday afternoon class.

S1: (Is slowly but accurately reading Verse 10. Teacher helps her with one word she mispronounces: *livroach*—to flee.)

T: (Writes the word on the board.) What does this word mean?

Students: (Look at the dictionary and tell her the translation.)

T: Have we had this word before in this chapter?

S2: Yes, (and he finds it.)

S3: (In Hebrew) My I please go to the bathroom?

T: Yes.

Teacher and students work on translating the sentence, "taking apart" the Hebrew words into their "base" and grammatical form. Most students are involved.

Teacher initiates a short game in which she writes on the board a number of the words in Hebrew from the lesson, they identify a word, go up and erase that word and call on another student to come up next. Students perk up, even getting a little wild. Game ends when all the words are correctly identified.

T: Let's begin the next page.

Two girls each slowly but accurately read next verses (13-14).

S1: How do we know the sailors weren't Israelites?

T: (Goes over the words carefully to show why that is not implied by the text.)

S2: When they (the sailors) pray to God, have they converted?

T: (Explains how without converting the sailors are more humanly concerned than is Jonah at this point.)

S3: Why do they attribute the storm to God's anger?

T: (Explains in every age people develop theories about the unknown like science today.)

Two students are quietly, but clearly not attending. Teacher goes over and asks one a relatively simple question to which she responds with a correct answer.

S4: Do you mean that they (the sailors) all come together and prayed in Hebrew?

T: (Explains that the story teller was writing for an Israelite audience and so put Hebrew words in the sailors' mouth.)

Walking in and seeing the students working with the Hebrew text took me by surprise. Isn't that for day school students? But it was happening before me: seventh graders in a two day Hebrew program were reading, translating (with the help of the dictionary) and taking apart the words to analyze their grammatical construction. In the short game on the board they translated spontaneously. It looked like a form of mastery.

The next day I called New York to speak to a friend in the Melton Center. I described what I had seen. He explained that the Melton Hebrew curriculum only goes through sixth grade and this is one step beyond: application to Biblical text. The goal is for the students to be able to read selective verses and translate with the aid of the teacher and dictionary. Inquiry and conversation is to be in English with the goal of the students working to understand the meaning of the story.

Inquiry was clearly going on in this class. The students readily pick up on the basic irony of the text: Jonah, the Hebrew prophet, is hiding and endangering everyone's life while the heathen sailors are doing all they can to save his life. The students want to know why wouldn't Jonah jump by himself and save everyone's life? Can these really be heathen

sailors? If so, how do they know to pray to God and in Hebrew? Those are the kinds of questions a teacher would want any careful reader to raise.

The teacher not only heard the questions, but allowed discussion among the students and answered as if speaking to mature readers. What the transcript cannot reveal, but which was clearly observable, was that she was thinking on her feet. The questions took her, as me, by surprise. But she honored them by thinking out loud and answering as directly as she could. At those points she was not only teaching, but also studying Torah with her students.

I later spoke to the teacher about the class. She is a well-educated Reform Jew who received her teacher training on the job in Temple Israel. She considers this class to be one of the better classes in the school, and the first to have gone all the way through with the Melton curriculum. "What separates the better from the weaker students is the vocabulary. Everyone gets the basic idea of the Hebrew and the story line. But the better kids also remember the vocabulary—not from memory, but repetition." With the four better students she thought she could open any of the narratives in *Genesis* and they could decipher the text. As to the level of their questions, she noted the four better students start the questions and set the tone and then the others are challenged and rise to their level.

I told her I noticed that several students phase in and out of focus, but no one was disruptive. She replied, "I am happy to have those kids move in and out (of the lesson), but if I see I'm losing one, I walk over to involve him." As for disruptions, she said in past years she encountered some students who were disaffected; but now "The kids like being here . . . a negative attitude is unusual."

Here, then, is a well-educated, committed and communicative teacher teaching *Jonah* to a group of receptive, bright 7th graders. Is that not the mark of a good supplementary school?

Innovation

Although none of my informants used "innovation" as a criterion of goodness, I am convinced it is part of the case for these two schools. It also ties the schools back in with the congregation and the community.

Consider the following four instances of innovation:

(1) Rabbis Mehlman and Friedman have been very actively involved with congregants in visiting refuseniks in the Soviet Union, working for their release and, when relevant, helping to settle them and other Soviet Jews in the Boston area. There are 25 to 30 New American children who are students in the school. But most innovative is the program they began to educate New American high school students, who are often the hardest to reach, in Judaism. On Shabbat of Passover seven 13 to 15 year old New Americans celebrated their bar mitzvah, having completed an intensive two year course in Hebrew and Judaica. In this effort the congregation and the school worked

closely together with one another and with the federation and its agencies to bring Soviet Jews home to Judaism.

(2) Temple Isaiah, as many congregations, has faced the problem of children with special needs. Rabbi Yales felt strongly about these children, but the congregation could not afford to hire its own special education teacher. But there is a second, Conservative congregation in Lexington. The two congregations joined forces, went to federation for assistance, and began one of the most innovative special education programs in the area.

(3) Rabbi Friedman knows many of his families do not have the skills to run a *seder* at home and many of the students are not confident enough in their skills to lead the *haggadah* reading in Hebrew. But he heard of a new software program that helps students and/or parents gain facility with the Hebrew and the music at whatever speed they need to learn it. With a donation from a congregant, he hopes to have that program in place for next Passover.

(4) Mrs. Edelstein did not start family education on her own. A strong impetus came from her consultant at the BJE. An enabling factor was the grant from federation. What has happened is that an innovative principal, with encouragement from the rabbi and school committee, has successfully gained federation support and worked closely with the BJE consultant to help the program grow and expand.

The rabbis and educators of these Temples are innovators; but their innovations take hold because they know how to activate funds and resources from within their congregation and from the wider Jewish community. They do not wait for the community to come to them, but, with a good measure of self-confidence, go out to the congregation and community to seek support for their ideas. In their cases, the relationship between community, congregation and school works to promote good Jewish education.

Conclusions

I have tried in this paper to make several points about synagogues and their schools. To review:

(1) Jewish education in North America cannot prosper without being enclosed in a protective space. Synagogues can provide such space when they are able to maintain a sustained level of commitment to education as the mission of the congregation. This is often difficult for congregations to do.

(2) In those congregations that grant their education programs a favored status we find that all the major stakeholders are involved and committed. This includes the rabbis and other professionals, the lay leadership on the board and in the school committee and the membership and parent body.

(3) In the two cases we studied in depth, the schools which were granted favored status were also judged to be good supplementary schools. This judgment was made following the example provided by Sara Lightfoot and the criteria for goodness provided by five experts in the field of Jewish education.

There has been so little written in recent years about good supplementary education that the dominant impression in the field and the community is of congregational schools as a necessary evil: necessary because many parents choose it over day schools and evil because they seem to have so little positive impact on either children or families.

While a case study of two good congregational schools can hardly dispel this over-arching impression, there is a message in the methodology. In trying to look at these schools in their own terms, and not as the assumed "weak sister" of the more intensive day school, and in searching for schools that work, I have been asking, is it all gloom and doom? There may be some exceptions to the case, some congregational schools in which the community can take pride.

I believe Rabbi Friedman and Mrs. Edelstein are unusually talented educators, but they are not unique. In the Boston area alone I know of other Temple and synagogue educators who share their commitment and zeal and are devoting their best professional efforts to making their congregational schools work. With the appropriate levels of congregational and communal support, a talented educator may bring life to the dry bones of supplemental education. But if people do not believe it possible, the levels of needed support will not be forthcoming and the possibility will be foreclosed.

I have no doubt that what is true of two Reform-affiliated schools in the Boston area may not be true of other schools in other areas. There is no one formula for becoming a good supplementary school. Surely even the criteria for goodness I have proposed will be challenged and the supporting data disputed. Case studies are by no means conclusive. But if this work can open a conversation about what **are** good supplementary schools,

where or whether they can be found and how they could be developed and supported, it will, I believe, have served its purpose.

If this discussion begins, I hope it will remain attentive to the ecological issues, to the location of schools within congregations and congregations within communities. For I emerge from this paper more than ever convinced that supplementary schools are not entities unto themselves and that our best hope for promoting good supplementary schools lies in better understanding the culture of the congregation within a rapidly changing Jewish community.

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COMMISSION ON JEWISH EDUCATION IN NORTH AMERICA

Informal Jewish Education in North America

Bernard Reisman

December 1990

Convened by Mandel Associated Foundations, JWB and JESNA in collaboration with CJF

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A Report Submitted to
The Commission on Jewish Education in North America

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Introduction

The objective of this monograph is to provide information about *informal Jewish education* in North America with the intention of helping to guide leaders of the American Jewish community involved in making policy and program decisions in the broad realm of Jewish education. The material is presented in two Parts: Part I —*History and Social Context* and Part II—*Policy and Program Issues and Recommendations*.

Part I addresses the changing social and political forces over the past 75 years which have shaped the challenges and aspirations of individual American Jews and of the organized Jewish community in its efforts to assure Jewish continuity. Attention is focused on the changing streams of intellectual thought and of the professional methodologies which have influenced informal Jewish education. The key assumption is that if Jewish education professionals are to be effective in working with their constituents, their methodology must be grounded in an accurate perception of the contemporary social context.

Part II addresses the practical, nuts and bolts issues which concern the application of informal Jewish education in the North American Jewish community today and in the near future. Areas to be covered include: informal Jewish education settings; skills of practice; priorities of service; and policy and program recommendations.

Part I: History and Social Context

Two Themes

Two persistent themes emerged in my investigation of informal education within the American Jewish community. In the first theme, informal education is presented as a combination of mental hygiene, something which makes people feel good, and a type of minimalist education. Compared to formal education, informal education is viewed as trivial, effective in helping people (generally children or youth) have fun and perhaps feel positive about their Jewishness, but not as a means of transmitting serious Jewish content. From the perspective of some Jewish educators, informal Jewish education is seen, at best, as a necessary evil—something you turned to to placate or distract poorly motivated students, or, at worst, misguided efforts which competed with and deflected attention from more significant Jewish educational activity.

But, a second theme of informal education emerged, one which I found more appealing in that it seemed to move beyond a stereotype which appears to have become outdated. In this perspective, the relationship between informal and formal Jewish education is seen not as a matter of divergence or even competition, but rather of convergence. That is, the basic agenda and methodology of informal and formal educators are seen as essentially the same: both are committed to teaching Jewish content and both are attentive to teaching methods which would be responsive to their students. Further, there is the belief that this dual orientation makes for a more effective professional practice. If there are differences between informal and formal educators, these are more a function of the age of the students or the setting in which students are encountered, rather than a reflection of contrasting educational ideologies.

A Suggestive Historical Analogy

I have come to think of the notion of a convergence of informal and formal Jewish education as the major motif of this review of the "state of the art" and a motif which can have significant practical implications. In his book, *Democracy and Education* (1916)[1], John Dewey, one of the classic educational theorists, introduced a new philosophy of education, identified as "progressive education." Dewey's innovative ideas were adopted by a number of educators, resulting in different approaches to organizing schools and curricula. Over the course of the next two decades two contrasting and competing educational ideologies had emerged: one, "*traditional education*," which described the existing ideology and which focused primarily on subject matter, and a second, "*progressive education*," which built on

the writings of Dewey, and which focused primarily on the total experience of the students.

Dewey became increasingly troubled by the growing divergence between the two educational ideologies, each affirming that its approach was **the** "correct" one and that there was no merit to the other. Dewey rejected this "either-or" thinking. He decided it was time to clarify his original position and in 1938 wrote *Experience and Education*.[2] This discussion of "progressive education" and "traditional education," written over fifty years ago, offers an interesting paradigm for current efforts to clarify the relationship between formal and informal education. Dewey's basic orientation is expressed in the two opening sentences of the book:

> Mankind likes to think in terms of extreme opposites. It is given to formulating its beliefs in terms of **Either-Ors**, between which it recognizes no intermediate possibilities.[3]

"Either-Or" thinking leads the advocates of different ideologies to stereotyping and over-simplification. Dewey goes on to describe the stereotypes of "traditional education" and "progressive education" which he rejects because they do not accurately represent reality and because they are not helpful in drawing selectively upon the strengths inherent in each of the methodologies. His descriptions sound very similar to current tendencies to polarize formal and informal education.

On the over-simplification of "traditional" education:

> The subject matter of education consists of bodies of information and of skills that have been worked out in the past; therefore, the chief business of the school is to transmit them to the new generation. In the past, there have also been developed standards and rules of conduct; moral training consists in forming habits of action in conformity with these rules and standards. Finally, the general pattern of school organization (. . . the relations of pupils to one another and to the teachers) constitutes the school a kind of institution sharply marked off from other social institutions . . . (with what goes on in the family, for example.)[4]

> The attitude of pupils must, upon the whole, be one of docility, receptivity, and obedience. Books, especially textbooks, are the chief representatives of the lore and wisdom of the past, while teachers are the organs through which pupils are brought into effective connection with the material.[5]

The problem, Dewey points out, in "Either-Or" thinking is that each of the alternative models defines itself by negating the principles and ideas of the other rather than by choosing ideas based on their intrinsic merit. So, progressive education seeks to "correct" the "inadequacies" of "traditional education": replacing "imposition from above" with "expression and cultivation of individuality"; rejecting "external discipline" in favor of "free activity"; "learning from experience"; instead of learning from "texts and teachers"; and rather than preparing students for a "remote future" the time orientation of progressive education focuses on "the opportunities of present life."[6]

But as a result of having conceived its ideology in a negative, reactive manner, progressive education affords insufficient attention to certain vital educational requisites stressed by traditional education. Dewey notes the resulting lacunae in the following questions he poses for progressive education:

> What is the place and meaning of subject-matter and of organization **within** experience? How does subject-matter function?
>
> . . . What results follow when the materials of experience are not progressively organized? . . . What does freedom (of the learner) mean and what are the conditions under which it is capable of realization? . . . When external authority is rejected, (does it) follow that all authority should be rejected? . . . What is the role of the teacher and of books in promoting the educational development of the immature? . . . How shall the young become acquainted with the past in such a way that the acquaintance is a potent agent in appreciation of the living present?[7]

The intent of raising such questions is to lead progressive (or formal) educators to move beyond an "either-or" orientation into what Dewey calls "intermediate possibilities." This is apt to be a realm of flexibility and synthesis rather than rigidity and dogmatism, and, he suggests, likely to lead to more effective educational approaches.

The indications are that contemporary Jewish educators are beginning to think about formal education and informal education in terms of "intermediate possibilities"—of convergence rather than divergence, of an appropriate blending of the key insights and skills of both methods in addressing the Jewish educational requirements of the contemporary American Jewish community.

Before proceeding to the specifics of that task however, it would be helpful to provide two other pertinent sets of background information, both of which have contributed to the "either- or" orientation of formal and informal Jewish education.

Setting and/or Method?

Until recently, most Jewish educators defined informal educators in terms of the settings in which they practiced. So, for example, there are youth workers, camp counselors, nursery school teachers, Jewish center workers, etc. What these practitioners have in common is that they work in Jewish communal settings whose programs are mainly in the area of recreation, they seek to incorporate Jewish content in their programs, and they have informal relationships with the participants. At the same time there is a parallel network of Jewish communal settings—Jewish schools—whose practitioners, the teachers, are defined as "Jewish educators," who are to transmit a standardized Jewish curriculum in a formal setting with the students.

The above definition of formal and informal Jewish education has been undergoing discernible change over the past several years. It is a change in which both types of Jewish communal practitioners have been reassessing their goals and

their methodologies. Informal Jewish educators have been increasingly seeking to upgrade the priority given to formal Jewish content in their programs; formal Jewish educators have been increasingly attentive to utilizing informal educational values and methodology as means of better achieving their educational goals.

A similar type of change is affecting the settings in which formal and informal educators work: greater informality in teacher-student relationships and in institutional practices in "formal" Jewish schools, and greater attentiveness to "formal" educational procedures, such as the use of curriculum and other staff-initiated educational content in Jewish community centers, camps, and pre-schools. The staffing patterns of formal and informal Jewish education settings similarly reflect a greater interchange of professional personnel: the typical formal Jewish educators—rabbis and Jewish educators —are now being hired in informal settings, and social workers and other types of informal educators are taking positions in Jewish schools.

In summary, the differences between formal and informal Jewish educational settings are diminishing and the similarities in the methodologies used by the two types of practitioners are increasing.

The Professional Frame of Reference of Formal and Informal Jewish Educators

Contributing to the differences between formal and informal Jewish educators are issues related to their professional identity. First is the question of whether either is a full profession since the large majority of both formal teachers and informal group leaders work part-time and for limited periods of time. And within both formal and informal practitioners there is a diversity of educational backgrounds and career tracks.[8] Such a lack of clarity about professional identity and status typically leads practitioners to be overly concerned about how they are perceived by their constituencies and what are their specific responsibilities. Formal and informal educators essentially share the same Jewish constituencies, both in terms of the people in the Jewish community they serve and the Jewish communal leaders to whom they are responsible, and such a situation inevitably, albeit inadvertently, generates competition between the two sets of practitioners.

Secondly, while there are few professional credentials among the front-line practitioners in formal and informal Jewish education, many of the top practitioners have had advanced specialized education and have a long-term commitment to their professional careers. These top practitioners do have a clear sense of professionalism and it is their professional identity which serves as the frame of reference for the other staff and defines the values and operating style of the work organization. It is therefore helpful to clarify the dominant and existing professional identity of each of the two fields of formal and informal education in order to assess how this identity has shaped the values of the two fields and their relationship with each other.

The leading professionals in formal Jewish education—principals and school directors—have been trained either as rabbis or Jewish educators. The primary area of professional expertise highlighted in their training is a knowledge of Jewish studies (the essence of the curriculum of the rabbinic seminaries)—Jewish history, classical texts, rituals, and Hebrew language. Some of the Jewish educators receive their training at the seminaries; others are likely to do graduate training at a university, either in America or Israel, where they concentrate on Jewish studies. In either case, their professional socialization and subsequent professional identity will have been shaped by an institutional culture and professors whose teaching style and values are consonant with "traditional education" as described by John Dewey. That is, there is a central commitment to achieving a mastery of Jewish classical subject matter with minimal attention to methodology, process, or shaping school environments. This "traditional education" orientation is further reinforced by the likelihood that when these formal Jewish educators complete their graduate education they will be supervised in their professional positions by a rabbi.

The professional routes of the formal and informal educators, therefore, vary greatly, with those of the informal educators being more diverse and at times in conflict with the formal educators. More specifically, the sources of professional influence for informal education stem from five different, but related, disciplines or areas of intellectual/professional thought: progressive education, group dynamics, social group work, values clarification and adult education. For formal Jewish education, the framing professional motif is mastery of Jewish content; for informal Jewish education, if there is a single framing professional motif represented in these five realms, it lies in the area of methodology, a way of working with people, sometimes referred to as "process." In other words, the "how" of the interaction among teacher (leader) and students (members) is at least as important as the "what" (subject matter).

Let us briefly examine the key ideas and values represented by these five professional areas as they have shaped the emerging discipline of informal education across the fifty years beginning with Dewey's introduction of progressive education in 1916 and continuing through the late 1960s.

1. Progressive Education

A new approach to understanding human development appeared at the outset of the 20th century, stemming from the psychological theories of Sigmund Freud and the emerging disciplines of sociology and anthropology concerning the role of culture in shaping behavior. John Dewey first addressed the implications of these new insights for education. He emphasized the need to afford central attention to the needs and perspectives of the student in designing both the curriculum and the culture of the school. Dewey broadened the responsibility of the educator to include the **affective** dimension—the social and psychological needs of the student, in addition to the **cognitive** dimension—the subject matter. Finding an appropriate

balance between these two dimensions remained as a key challenge facing all educational theorists following Dewey.

2. Social Group Work

In the early decades of the 20th century, a growing number of people were finding positions as group workers and informal educators in settlement houses, recreation departments, Scout programs, Ys, and youth movements. Perhaps the first systematic initiative to professionalize these informal education practitioners occurred in the 1930s with the alignment of group work as a specialization within the profession of social work. At this point in time, graduate schools of social work began to expand on their previous focus on clinical case work by developing specializations in community organization and group work. One of the pioneer theorists in defining the methodology of social group work was Grace Coyle who introduced the group work concentration at the School of Social Work at Western Reserve University. She, and the other early group work theorists, identified three major themes in their methodology, which they drew from three related approaches of working with people in recreation and informal education settings:

a) *Individual-centered*—as defined by progressive education;

b) *Democracy*—as reflected in the Settlement House movement;

c) *Group potential*—as demonstrated in the research of social scientists studying the impact of small groups.

Coyle's description of how her thinking and that of her colleagues moved from focusing on activities to human relationships parallels a similar process earlier described by John Dewey with progressive education:

> The greatest innovation in our thinking . . . has come—as it has in education—in the realization that it was not the activity nor the subject matter alone that was important. It was also the human relations . . . The experience in and through the group began to emerge as a significant part of what these leisure-time activities meant to people . . . As the more progressive educators made their schools child-centered, not subject-centered, so we moved toward making our program person-centered, not activity-centered.[9]

As in the field of education, there remained a traditional activity-centered element of recreation practitioners and a second element, described by Coyle, who aligned with social workers and who saw their recreation and informal education programs as means for affecting personal and group development. In addition, social group workers differed from their traditional recreation colleagues in two other respects:

a) *The role of the group leader*—The traditional recreation worker assumes an active leadership role in planning and carrying out the group programs. The social group

worker assumes a non-directive, facilitating style of leadership so as to foster individual and group responsibility.

b) *Ideology and values*—For the traditional recreation practitioner, the prime values are to help people learn to use leisure time productively and at the same time to have fun. Recreation programs are frequently used by youth groups, under ideological auspices, to attract and maintain the interest of their members. Because of social work's commitment to individual client/member responsibility, there is the expectation that its professionals should be "value-free," remaining ideologically neutral so as to help their group members choose their own beliefs and values.

Of particular interest in this analysis of informal Jewish education is the very close relationship between social group work and the field of Jewish community center work. In the early decades of the 20th century the major function of the predecessor agencies to the JCCs, the Jewish settlement houses and YMHAs, was to help the largely immigrant Jewish population accommodate to American society. The staffing of the Jewish settlement houses and YMHAs was similar to that of their non-Jewish counterparts, namely, a mixture of recreation workers, educators, and "idealists," whose vocational identity was defined by the setting in which they worked. Following World War II, the function of the settlement houses and Ys, now generally identified as JCCs, changed to helping what was now primarily a second and third generation American Jewish community become better acculturated into American society. To accomplish this function, the centers moved to professionalize their staff and turned to social group work as the most compatible profession. By 1955, 58% of all professionals working in JCCs were professional social workers, with masters degrees in social group work, with an even higher proportion of social workers occupying the top administrative positions.[10] In that same year Sanford Solender, then executive director of the Jewish Welfare Board, described the close relationship between the JCCs and social work: "Central to the Jewish community center's way of work is its use of modern social work. . . . This commitment to social work is at the heart of the uniqueness of the JCC."[11]

The close ties between the JCCs and social work reached their zenith in the mid-1950s and have been diminishing since. The reasons for this will be discussed below.

3. *Group Dynamics*

The use of small groups is a key ingredient in informal education. The awareness of the potential of the small group for influencing human behavior in education, therapy, industry, and other human collectives, was given a major impetus in the 1930s and 1940s by the pioneering research of the social psychologist, Kurt Lewin. Lewin's research was of particular value for human service professionals since much of his research was "action research," geared to modifying the behavior of people in the range of small groups encountered in their day-to-day lives. The following are five theoretical perspectives, including research findings, drawn from Lewin's work,

which have been of particular relevance to Jewish communal professionals working with groups.[12]

a) *Field Theory*—Lewin viewed the small group as "a psychologically organic whole," comprised of individuals with different and similar interests and agendas, but with an important psychological interdependence. The interactions among the group members include both negative and positive emotions. To the extent that professionals working with small groups are aware of these "group dynamics," they can more effectively guide the experience to achieve their professional goals.

b) *Life Space*—Lewin's concept of "life space," defined as "the total psychological environment which the person experiences subjectively,"[13] provides a social psychological perspective for understanding human behavior. He liked to use mathematical terms to present his concepts and used this now classic formula to explain life space, B = f(p,e), behavior is a function of the person and his/her environment.[14] The appeal of this approach for Jewish communal professionals is that it affords an understanding of individual behavior which accounts for both family influence and the many social forces which affect the person, and it focuses on "here and now" behavior.

c) *Leadership Style*—Lewin's work at the University of Iowa Research Station resulted in two classic studies of leadership, both of which have had significant impact on shaping the leadership style of contemporary human service practitioners. The first study, done in collaboration with Ronald Lippett and Ralph White, contrasted the differential effects on groups of three types of leaders—authoritarian, laissez-faire, and democratic. The democratic leadership style emerged as the one most preferred by the group members, generated the most creative, consistent work output, and caused the least negative interpersonal behaviors in the group such as hostility and scapegoating.[15]

The second study addressed the issue of how different leadership styles might change people's attitudes and behavior. During World War II, an American government agency turned to Lewin and his Iowa colleagues to attempt to get housewives to use foods for their families which were more nutritious and readily available, although not typically appealing. Two leadership styles were used in the experimental design, one using a knowledgeable and prestigious expert who lectured on the benefits of the foods being promoted, and a second leadership style in which the leader used discussion-leading techniques to encourage the group members to share their own ideas about how to get their families to accept the new foods. The anthropologist Margaret Mead worked on this project with Lewin. Alfred Marrow summarized the results, quoting Mead.

> The lecture of the prestigious expert from Washington "had no effect at all." The approach in which the group members were asked to find their own resolution of the problem proved that groups of people "can do a thing better when they themselves decide upon it, and also how they themselves can elect to reduce the gap between their attitudes and actions.[16]

These studies offered strong endorsement for two basic approaches in working with groups in informal education—democratic decision-making and non-directive leadership to foster active member participation.

d) *Feedback*—While Lewin was working with a leadership training program designed to help community leaders combat racial and religious prejudice in their communities, he unexpectedly came upon the important leadership process of "feedback." The content of the training program was originally focused on teaching the community leaders about causes of prejudice and ways to combat such attitudes. In the open atmosphere of the group discussion, the staff and the community leaders began to share reactions both to the internal dynamics of the group and to the behaviors of the group members themselves. The process of feedback has been a valuable technique for helping people become more aware of developments within the group and more sensitive to their own functioning.

This training experience led to the emergence of Sensitivity or T-Group Training and the awareness of the importance of introspection and self-awareness as vital ingredients for effective group leadership.[17]

e) *Jewish Identity*—Finally, Lewin might well be thought of as the social scientist who launched a systematic study of Jewish identity, a process which has flourished in the fifty years following Lewin's pioneering work. An important resource for carrying on Lewin's research on Jewish identity is Simon Herman, the social psychologist now living in Israel, who studied with Lewin in his final years and who has applied Lewin's theoretical model to his own studies of Jewish identity.[18]

Lewin begins with the premise that people's identity is shaped by the key groups to which they belong. Most important is the family group. A person's well-being is primarily a function of the sense of clarity and security they have about their family and, subsequently, about other groups they deem important. For Jews, their Jewish well-being is similarly linked to the sense of clarity and security they have to the Jewish group. In Lewin's "field theory," the Jewish group involves several forces: Jewish history and traditions; the nature of the interaction between Jews and the host culture in which they live; and the nature of the Jews' involvement in the Jewish community itself. How a Jewish person resolves these several areas of tension determines his/her Jewish attitudes and behaviors. Since for many Jews their Jewishness occupies much of their "life space," the resolution of their Jewish identity also affects their general "grounding." When they are at one with their Jewishness, there is a sense of coherence and security; when there is conflict, it leads to confusion and insecurity.[19]

In Traditional society, the all-encompassing Jewish family and Jewish community provided a stable grounding for earlier generations of Jews. For Jews of modernity, living in the open society, Jewish identity is "problematic"; they are confronted with the task of finding a resolution to living in two cultures. Helping Jews grapple with this ever-present problem of defining their Jewish identity is a central challenge for Jewish professionals.

4. Adult Education

The field of adult education began to emerge as a significant specialization following World War II as a result of two interrelated developments. First, in the post-war period, the economy surged forward, following the depression of the 1930s, and the standard of living of the general public rose. In addition to higher levels of income there was also a drop in the hours people were working. The result was that people had more leisure time and a growing interest in using that leisure for self-development and advancing of their education.

One of the early theorists of adult education, Malcolm S. Knowles, established that the learning needs of adults were different from those of children.[20] The premises and the techniques of teaching used with children—*pedagogy*—are not effective with adults. The premises of pedagogy are that students are dependent and passive; therefore, the teacher should be central in assuming responsibility for transmitting the subject matter and controlling the school environment. Such premises are not applicable to adults, who come to their educational experiences voluntarily (children have no choice) and with an interest and motivation to learn. As mature individuals with ideas and interests to share, adults are desirous of assuming an active role in their learning. They are eager to interact with their fellow students both for social reasons and for serving as educational resources for each other.[21]

Knowles defined a special educational methodology designed for adults which he termed *andragogy*. Andragogy is quite similar to informal education in its emphasis on the emotional needs of the student, the active role of students in the learning experience, the informal relationship between teacher and students, and the effort to set up a creative and supportive educational environment.

Obviously, these principles of adult education are relevant to the important fields of adult education and family education in the Jewish community today. At the same time, the characteristics of adults which were presented a generation ago as the rationale for a different educational approach for that age group, may, in the 1990s, be appropriately extended to young people who have had rising levels of expectation about being in charge of all phases of their lives, including their education.

5. Values Clarification

I conclude this discussion of the several methodologies which have shaped informal education with a brief review of values clarification. My interest in including values clarification in this section is twofold: first, it provides another perspective to the "either-or" debate between formal and informal education with which this inquiry began; and second, values clarification offers a good example of how a methodology develops as a response to the dominant cultural ideas and themes of its time.

An important area of difference between formal and informal education is in the different emphases each one places on the cognitive (subject matter) and the affective (emotional) domains. Thinking about these two domains as a continuum, traditional formal education would be at the cognitive end of the continuum and values clarification at the affective end. Values clarification is an educational methodology which seeks to help students become more aware of themselves and how they choose to order their lives. If there is to be a curriculum, explain the authors of a values clarification text, it should be "a curriculum of affect, based on student's concerns," whose content should include such areas as "feelings, fears and wishes of the students."[22]

Process becomes an end in itself. Encouraging students to assume responsibility for their own lives is viewed as a priority, the primary educational objective. The teacher or group leader should strive to remain neutral and non-directive to allow full freedom of choice for the students. This attitude is reflected in the following comments by a Jewish educator committed to a values clarification approach:

> If I tell my students what to think, how to act, and what to feel, I am infantilizing them, not teaching them . . . I have come to the firm conclusion that *I can't teach anybody anything!* I can only help them teach themselves.[23]

In retrospect, what becomes clear is the strong connection between the flourishing of Values Education, in the 1960s, as a very popular educational approach and the societal developments of that period of time, especially as they were perceived by young people. This was the time of the Vietnam War and revolts in America's urban centers. There was a disenchantment, particularly among young people, with the major social institutions of American society: government, family, religion, the education system, and the prevailing values of America. What up to then had been the accepted societal sources of stability and meaning in people's lives were now sources of uncertainty for much of the population. Traditional authorities—government leaders (recall Watergate), parents, teachers, and religious leaders—no longer were automatically viewed as objects of respect or as models of identification. There were few ideologies which could give direction to people and how they ordered their lives. And at the same time as these societal institutions and authorities were becoming less appealing and responsive to young people, the young people's sense of their own entitlements and expectations was growing.[24]

Values clarification emerged as a response to these societal/generational tensions. Its method fully respected the rights and autonomy of its constituents, its ideology focused on the individual and not on the institutions, its style was innovative rather than traditional, and its creative techniques could capture and hold the attention of a clientele with a low tolerance for frustration and tedium. In sum, Values Clarification was in consonance with the needs, rhythms and values of the '60s generation.

Times change, and, in turn, people's needs, expectations and values change; so too should the methodologies used by human service practitioners change if they

are to he effective. My thesis is that the current growing interest in informal Jewish education is, in large measure, to be explained by the consonance of this methodology with the agenda of American Jews and of the American Jewish community of the '90s.

Contemporary Developments in the American Jewish Community

The review of the five methodologies which have shaped informal education (progressive education, social group work, group dynamics, adult education, and values clarification) is helpful to us in two ways. First, it clarifies several relevant, educational assumptions and techniques. Second, the review highlights the key principle that these methodologies were effective because they incorporated new ideas in human development and the social sciences. They made their approach responsive to the changing issues and values of the individuals and collectives they sought to serve.

If, as I have suggested, the growing interest in informal Jewish education today is because it is a methodology which appears to be responsive to the societal changes which have affected individual American Jews and the American Jewish community, it is well to be clear ahout the nature of those changes.

I turn now to examine some of those important changes.

1. The Jewish Resurgence

Until the 1980s, the prevailing assumption about the future prospects of the American Jewish community was governed by the "three generation theory." This theory posited that American Jews (or any other religious or ethnic minority group) would gradually assimilate over the course of three generations.[25] Jewish communal policies and strategies growing out of an "inevitability of assimilation" perspective resulted in what might be characterized as a "saving remnant" approach. In Jewish education, that perspective would be translated into a strategy which concentrates the Jewish community's resources on educating the children of those families who are dedicated to their Jewish heritage, and ignoring or giving low priority to the children of those families assumed to be on the assimilatory track. One simple policy expression of such an approach would be to invest community resources in day schools, assumed to be the mode of education chosen by the "serious" Jewish families, and invest less in supplementary schools or types of informal education, assumed to be the choices of assimilating families.

There are several problems with such a strategy. The first is uncertainty regarding the premise that the choice of day school education fully reflects serious Jewish commitment. Families choose between day school and supplementary school Jewish education for a variety of reasons, some of which are unrelated to levels of Jewish commitment. Moreover, the comparative impact on the Jewish

identity of graduates of the two systems, let alone different schools within the two systems, is not clear.

A second problem is that of sheer numbers. Figures on Jewish education of all Jewish children within the past several years indicate that about 21% attend day schools, 62% attend supplementary schools (from one to several days a week), and 17% have no formal education.[26] The strategy of giving little attention to the supplementary school, a system which all agree is in need of improvement, is likely to jeopardize the future Jewish identity of over 60% of Jewish young people growing up today. Add to that number the almost inevitable loss of the 17% of Jewish children who receive no Jewish education at all, and we have a self-fulfilling prophecy which would seem to abet the possible assimilation of four out of five Jewish young people.

However, new demographic data about American Jews, emerging in the early 1980s, confirmed that the community was now primarily third and fourth generation. The new data raised questions about the "three generation theory," suggesting that the assimilatory thrust abated with the third generation and that fourth generation American Jews were holding on to their Jewish identity. While there are differences among demographers about these new data,[27] most analysts agree that there is more Jewish interest expressed by the fourth generation than previously expected. There is also agreement that the majority of third and fourth generation American Jewish families are positive about their Jewish identity and "receptive" to learning more about their Jewishness and how this learning might shape their lives.

Such information about the contemporary Jewish community leads to different communal policies and strategies than the "saving remnant" approach. It suggests that there can be payoffs, in terms of Jewish identification, in reaching out to the "American Jewish masses," those individuals and families likely to be marginally involved in the Jewish community and who previously were assumed to be assimilatory "victims" of the "three generation theory." Given that the "American Jewish masses" now represent the majority of American Jewry, such an outreach program, if successful, can be significant. Among the programmatic techniques and services which would likely be responsive to the marginally involved would be informal Jewish education methodologies and the use of the range of informal Jewish educational settings.

2. New Responses from the Organized Jewish Community

a) *The Jewish Federation* — Until the 1950s, Jewish federations in America restricted their funding of community agencies to social welfare services such as Jewish centers, family agencies, and community relations agencies. Excluded were Jewish education programs. That pattern began to change by the early 1950s when federations began to fund Jewish day schools. Within the past decade, there has been an important upgrading in the priority afforded to Jewish education by leaders of the organized American Jewish community, in particular by the leaders of the

Jewish federation world. I believe this change is grounded in an implicit belief in a resurgence in the American Jewish community and of the holding power of the Jewish heritage for acculturated third and fourth generation American Jews. Previously, federation leaders made minimal effort to relate to Jewish education services. Jewish education was seen as part of the domain of the synagogue world or of the Orthodox community, neither of which was part of the federation mainstream. The federation leaders depended on other strategies to sustain the Jewish people, primarily Israel and its achievements, and to a lesser extent, organizational work and the appeal of Jewish ethnicity. But starting in the early 1980s, these leaders began to sense that these bases for Jewish identity were not enough to hold the interest of their changing American Jewish constituents.

Symbolizing the recognition of a changing, resurgent American Jewish community was the title chosen by the federation leaders for the 1985 General Assembly—"The Coming of Age of the American Jewish Community." I interpret the coming of age to be an awareness of a deepening of interest in Jewish identity of American Jews, and the recognition by the federation leaders that these Jews could not be sustained by vicarious or instrumental Jewish strategies. It was a beginning of the realization that today it is only Jewish education—knowledge about Jewish history, ideas, beliefs, and practices—that can assure the future of the American Jewish community.[28]

There are two implications for the new interest and involvement of the Jewish federation in Jewish education. First is the availability of new resources, financial and human, which can make feasible extending the reach and impact of Jewish education. The second implication, following the adage that "he who pays the piper picks the tune," is that Jewish education will be expected to be more responsive to the federation perspectives and priorities, among which is the greater use of informal Jewish education methodologies and settings.

Among the new resources available to the American Jewish community as it prepares to respond to an upgraded Jewish agenda are the several schools of Jewish communal service which have emerged over the past two decades. Up until the late 1960s, the primary setting for educating Jewish communal professionals was the graduate school of social work. With the rise in Jewish consciousness, the Jewish commitment and background of the communal professionals became more important. To respond to that need new university-based graduate schools specializing in Jewish communal service began to be established. These schools (of which there are now seven) seek to blend a Jewish perspective along with the necessary human relations, planning, and management skills in their curricula.

b) *Jewish Foundations*—A related phenomenon is the recent emergence of a number of independent Jewish foundations which represent significant sums of money and which have chosen to concentrate their efforts on Jewish education. Many of the individuals and families who have established these foundations have been actively involved in the organized Jewish community. It is reasonable to assume that they have been motivated to support Jewish education for many of the

same reasons that have motivated the leaders of the Jewish federations to upgrade Jewish education. It is also reasonable to presume that their decision to set up a foundation as the vehicle for their philanthropic initiatives represents the classic free enterprise entrepreneurial spirit. Being independent, the foundation can direct large amounts of money to a perceived priority need—Jewish education—without the initiative being significantly slowed up, or rejected, by bureaucratic procedures or institutional policies, and without the innovative ideas being vetoed or distorted by people in the system who have a vested interest in maintaining the status quo.

At the same time, to the credit of most of these Jewish foundations, they thus far have sought to cooperate with the organized Jewish community, both in getting input from the relevant Jewish communal organizations and, where appropriate, involving communal organizations in helping implement the foundation-supported projects. This style of operation is best represented by the Mandel Associated Foundations in their initiative to create the Commission on Jewish Education in North America.[29] On one level, the Mandel Foundation involved three Jewish national organizations, each of which has an important connection to Jewish education: the JWB, the Council of Jewish Federations, and Jewish Education Service of North America. On another level, the convening foundation invited some six other independent foundations interested in Jewish education to be part of the Commission so as to coordinate their efforts and to assure the mobilization of "significant financial support" needed to generate real changes in Jewish education in America. It was recognized that such collaborative fund raising could also have a leveraging effect on the readiness of the traditional network of Jewish communal organizations to upgrade their own financial initiatives in strengthening Jewish education.[30]

c) *JWB and the Jewish Community Centers*—Further evidence of the upgrading of Jewish education in the American Jewish community is reflected in the actions launched in 1984 by the JWB (today known as the Jewish Community Centers Association), the umbrella organization of the North American Jewish community centers, to "maximize Jewish educational effectiveness of JCCs." The plan is outlined in the Report published by the Commission. In order to assure achieving the JCCs' central objective for "promotion and nurturing of Jewish identity and continuity," centers are encouraged to enhance their Jewish educational activities both within the centers by "providing appropriate Jewish educational experiences" and within the overall Jewish community "by cooperating in Jewish educational programs with Bureaus of Jewish Education, synagogues, schools and other institutions and organizations; and by giving leadership to and/or participating in the sponsorship of community events."[31]

The initiative by professional and lay leaders of the Jewish center field to maximize the Jewish education function of the centers is of special significance for this study of informal Jewish education for two reasons. First, the JCC is the major informal Jewish education setting in North America in that it reaches the largest numbers of American Jews. Second, many people in Jewish communities have been skeptical of the Jewishness of the Jewish centers. The maximizing initiative

seems to be convincing many of its critics that this is a serious endeavor. This is seen in the tangible steps taken over the past five years to enhance the Jewish background of professional staff and lay leaders, the attempt to increase Jewish programs in the centers' offerings, and the more obvious appearance of Jewish ambiance of the center buildings. Further evidence to support the seriousness of the maximizing effort was provided by an evaluative study in 1988 of the process.[32]

d) *Israeli Sponsored Projects* – Within the past five years, a number of projects specifically geared to strengthen Jewish education in the diaspora have been developed by Israeli universities and by different units within the Jewish Agency. The 1984 World Leadership Conference for Jewish Education held in Jerusalem and focusing on Jewish education was the largest gathering of lay and professional leaders of Jewish communities from around the world. The Conference affirmed the leadership role Israel was prepared to take for Jewish education in diaspora communities and successfully mobilized many leaders to act on behalf of Jewish education.

The Joint Fund for Jewish Education of the Jewish Agency has funded many educational programs in Israel for diaspora Jewish educators with the objective of enriching the educator's background in Judaica, Hebrew, and knowledge of Israel. The Melton Centre for Jewish Education in the Diaspora at Hebrew University has sponsored several Jewish enrichment programs for diaspora Jewish educators, among them the Jerusalem Fellows, the Senior Educators Program and a range of custom-designed continuing Jewish education institutes for lay and professional leaders of American Jewish educational and communal organizations. The other Israeli universities are similarly developing programs to offer educational opportunities for diaspora teachers.[33]

3. Developments in the Field of Jewish Education

This appears to be a propitious moment in the American Jewish community for new breakthroughs in the realm of Jewish education and, in particular, for informal Jewish education. I have outlined recent developments with respect to two key constituencies in the American Jewish community which have resulted in changes favorable to Jewish education. Highly educated and sophisticated young Jewish men and women, who, a decade ago, were assumed likely to assimilate are now evidencing a receptivity for Jewish education for themselves and their families. The mainstream American Jewish organizations and leadership, who, for decades, had been oblivious or indifferent to Jewish education, now consistently identify Jewish education as the community service most vital for assuring Jewish continuity. Moreover, these organizations and leaders are backing up their verbal commitments with increasing financial incentives for innovative programs to improve the quality of American Jewish education. This brings us to the issue of implementation and the response of the community of Jewish educational professionals. What have been the related developments among the professional Jewish educators, within their organizational networks, and in the realm of new

ideas? And what role might be expected for informal Jewish education in future implementation plans?

A. DECLINE OF THE SUPPLEMENTARY SCHOOL

Barry Chazan, in a recent comprehensive overview of the state of Jewish education in America, describes three major changes occurring on the Jewish educational scene: the growth of the day school, the decline of the supplementary school, and the search for new forms.[34] This is his description of the latter phenomenon:

> One of the most prominent dynamics of the past decade has been the search for new forms of Jewish education outside of the existing school frameworks. This search has emerged from the growing sense of frustration with existing models and from a sense of success with some new alternatives.[35]

Chazan highlights four arenas which he envisages as "potentially important new Jewish educational networks: Jewish pre-school education; adult and family life Jewish education; the Jewish community center; and the Israel trip."[36] These comments indicate that, according to Chazan's projections, the frontier for Jewish education exists within informal Jewish education settings.

Chazan's reference to the decline of the supplementary school is based on figures of diminishing student enrollment. A more telling critique of the supplementary school emerged from the major study of the Jewish education effectiveness of supplementary schools in the New York area undertaken by the Board of Jewish Education of New York City as reported on in 1988. The study's assessment of the impact of the schools on students is unequivocal:

> Schools do a very poor job in increasing Jewish knowledge in all subject areas; they show no success in guiding children towards increased Jewish involvement; and they demonstrate an inability to influence positive growth in Jewish attitudes.[37]

This critical evaluation of the supplementary school has had a particularly dramatic impact on the Jewish educational community. While many people intuitively have had doubts about the Jewish educational quality of supplementary schools, especially in recent years as the schools have been reducing their numbers of hours of instruction, the issue of their effectiveness was essentially avoided. The New York Board of Jewish Education study, because of its thoroughness, the wide dissemination of its findings, and the credibility of the research team headed by Alvin Schiff, obliged lay and professional leaders to confront the consequences of the study's findings. Simply put, since today some 72% of Jewish youth who receive any Jewish education attend supplementary schools,[38] doubts about the effectiveness of that system means doubts about the Jewish education and identity of a significant majority of the next generation of American Jews.

B. FAMILY EDUCATION AND OTHER INFORMAL EDUCATION APPROACHES

The New York study addressed the question which logically follows its critical evaluation of the supplementary school: What is the alternative? One response is to encourage greater enrollment in day schools, but the assumption still remains that the large majority of American Jewish families will prefer to use some type of supplementary Jewish schooling. To improve on the quality of the supplementary school experience, the New York study recommendations point to a changing mode of operation built on the use of informal education approaches, in particular, family education and the development of a new professional position for synagogue schools, a Jewish family educator. The research team concludes:

> What is needed, then, is a new supplementary school construct that will make possible the confluence of the affective and cognitive domains, the combination of formal and informal learning, the partnership of home and school.[39]

The language resonates of John Dewey.

At about the same time the New York study was being undertaken, a number of other American Jewish communities set into motion their own self-studies. They too were concerned about problems such as low level of Jewish affiliation and intermarriage, and were not confident about the capacity of their existing Jewish educational services to counteract these assimilatory threats. Perhaps the first and most ambitious such study was conducted in Cleveland. It led to the setting up of an action-oriented commission on Jewish continuity whose goals were to develop new services and modes of organizing and staffing the Jewish organizations in the community in order "to maintain, strengthen and transmit Jewish values and traditions to future generations of Jews."[40] At the core of the Commission's recommendations was a call for the development of several informal education programs—family education, study in Israel, "beyond classroom" activities, retreats and services to strengthen youth groups. In order to implement these informal education programs, the Commission recognized the critical importance of capable professional personnel and recommended a program of recruitment and training especially geared to preparing professionals who would have the personal aptitudes and skills to staff the new informal Jewish education programs. An indication of the seriousness of the Cleveland Commission's program is that it has a four-year operating budget of $5,687,422.[41]

Similar commissions on Jewish continuity with similar recommendations stressing informal Jewish education programs are now getting underway in a number of American Jewish communities. Barry Shrage, president of the Jewish federation in Boston, in an important paper on this subject, provides several valuable specifics and priorities to increase the likelihood that the commission's action goals are implemented. He identifies two high-priority target populations—young families, and people marginally affiliated in Jewish organizations. These targeted populations can be best reached in "gateway institutions" such as synagogues and JCCs. The goal is to establish relationships, particularly with young families during their impressionable parenting years, and to

use family education and other informal Jewish education activities to strengthen the family's Jewish commitment. The close collaboration between the federation and the synagogue is a central strategy in Shrage's action plan, both as a means for effectively reaching an important population—receptive young Jewish families—and also for assuring full access to the community's Jewish educational resources in terms of personnel and facilities.[42]

C. A NEW GENERATION OF PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS

One might characterize the current state of the American Jewish educational professionals, and of the major Jewish educational professional and service organizations, with the phrase "a changing of the guard." Today, virtually all of the key Jewish education professionals, those who are full-time, career educators and those who occupy the responsible leadership positions in the field, are products of the North American Jewish education system. For most, that means they have grown up with a supplementary school education (day school for Orthodox-reared educators); were likely to have been members of one of the denominational youth groups; attended a secular university with a major in Judaica, education, or social science; studied for a year or more in an Israeli university; and are likely to have an advanced degree, either a masters or a doctorate in Judaica or education.

The professional socialization of Jewish educators coming out of this educational path largely reflects the values and style of both the American Jewish education system and that of the general American education system. This professional socialization is likely to have generated a different type of Jewish educator than earlier generations of American Jewish educators whose socialization had been mainly in more traditional European Jewish communities. The American-trained educator would have been exposed to a modern, secular approach to Jewish studies and to a progressive approach to methodology; the European-trained educator would have been educated in a Yeshiva, concentrating on a traditional approach to Jewish scholarship and with little or no attention to methodology.

The current Jewish educational system still bears the imprint of the non-native traditional Jewish educator. At this juncture, as the American-trained Jewish educational professionals are assuming the positions of influence in the field, they are increasingly sensing the disjunction between their liberal socialization and the traditional settings they have inherited in their professional positions. Therefore, in the face of the current calls coming from outside the system demanding significant change in the current Jewish educational system, it is very likely that this generation of Jewish educators will be quite supportive. Indeed, many of them are already in the vanguard of those calling for radical change. It is also likely that they will be quite responsive to the current recommendations for introducing programs in family education and other types of informal Jewish education.

D. A NEW NETWORK OF JEWISH EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

The prognosis for innovative Jewish education approaches taking hold today is further enhanced by the parallel process of a changing of the guard in the network of professional and coordinating Jewish education organizations. The two dominant organizations in the American Jewish education community today are CAJE (Coalition for the Advancement of Jewish Education) and JESNA (Jewish Education Service of North America). The priorities and style of each of these organizations is refreshingly innovative, representing the perspectives of the young generation of American Jewish educators.

As a professional Jewish education organization, CAJE attracts significantly more Jewish educators to its conferences and institutes than any of its predecessor organizations. The educational ideas and materials generated at their professional meetings and research institutes are at the cutting edge of practice. CAJE has especially captured the interest of the young people entering, or considering entering, the field of Jewish education. The *chevrot* CAJE has fostered are an important resource for continuing learning and for sustaining the morale of the new generation of Jewish educational professionals.

JESNA is a national voice and coordinating body for Jewish education programs and services in North America. It is funded by allocations from Jewish federations around the country and seeks to effect a closer tie between the federation system and the full range of Jewish educational programs. JESNA concerns itself with efforts to upgrade the quality of Jewish education professionals. It maintains an ongoing liaison with organizations of professional Jewish educators in America and with the Association of Institutions of Higher Learning in Jewish Education, the American coordinating body of the colleges and universities which have programs for educating professional Jewish educators. JESNA also communicates with institutions in Israel which have an interest in Jewish education in America.

The Executive Vice-President of JESNA, Jonathan Woocher, has the personal stature and vision to open up new vistas for Jewish education in America and to extend community support for expanded Jewish educational services. In an important paper he wrote recently, Woocher stressed the importance of informal Jewish education programs, such as Jewish pre-schools, adult Jewish education, and use of Israel as an education resource.[43]

Within the past year, JESNA sponsored three major regional conferences on Jewish education. The subjects were: marketing and financing of Jewish education, Jewish family education, and adult education. These conferences are designed both to provide new perspectives on Jewish content for Jewish education professionals and to mobilize the interest and support of lay leaders for Jewish education services in the community.

E. PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS IN JEWISH EDUCATION

Virtually all the analysts reviewing the state of Jewish education today indicate that conditions in the American Jewish community are ripe for a significant breakthrough in Jewish education. One of the requisites for such a development is the professionalization of the field.[44] No profession exists without its own specialized, university-based program for practitioners. The professional schools, through the research and writing of their professors, help define the body of knowledge relevant to the profession's function and teach the skills, emerging from the knowledge base, to the aspiring practitioners. The common educational experience contributes both to a clear sense of professional identity of the practitioners and to public recognition and affording of status to the field.

A major surge forward in strengthening the professional schools of Jewish education in North America occurred in 1988 with the formation of the Association of Institutions for Higher Learning in Jewish Education. Today this Association has twelve member colleges, universities, and seminaries, each of which has a degree program in Jewish education.[45] That this Association has come into being is a function of three developments, all of which reflect the growing professionalization of Jewish education:

1) There has emerged a strong cadre of Jewish educators with doctorates who have the credentials, capacity and interest to enter academic careers in Jewish education.

2) There is an adequate number of institutions of higher education committed to maintaining departments or programs in Jewish education to make credible careers as academics in Jewish education.

3) The academics in these twelve institutions now share enough of a commitment to the profession of Jewish education to bring them together to do what professors in professional schools are expected to do: collegially define basic educational standards for entry into the profession.

While the formation of the Association of Institutions for Higher Learning in Jewish Education is an indication of an emerging sense of professionalization of the field of Jewish education in North America, a word of caution must be noted about the current scope of these schools. Davidson, in his 1990 study of the Jewish education schools, identifies a total of fourteen such institutions (he includes two schools which are not formal members of A.I.H.L.J.E.). But he also points out that there are only eighteen full-time faculty in these schools.[46]

* * *

The "changing of the guard" in terms of the emergence of a new generation of capable American-trained Jewish educators, a new constellation of Jewish educational organizations which are innovative in style and substance, and the formation of the Association of Institutions for Higher Learning for Jewish Education are all evidence of a strengthened Jewish education infrastructure. This development bodes well for the professionalization of the field of Jewish education and, in turn, for its capacity to elicit the respect and confidence of American Jews.

Part II: Policy and Program Issues and Recommendations

Informal Jewish Education Settings: Characteristics and Issues

This section includes a listing of informal Jewish education settings in the North American Jewish community. The outline describes the unique characteristics of the setting along with the issues confronting the professional practitioners as they pursue the goals of informal Jewish education.

Two informal education settings however are not afforded separate treatment in this section: service to toddlers and pre-schoolers, such as child care and nursery school, and service to Jewish university students, such as Hillel programs. Such programs touch people at important impressionable stages in the developmental cycle and typically utilize informal education approaches effectively. Similarly, this analysis does not discuss the use of media. Clearly media are a new frontier for informal Jewish educators, particularly the use of videotapes, and interpretive material about this technology is needed.

The information in this section is drawn from interviews with leading practitioners of the several settings (Appendix 1 lists names of people interviewed) and from literature about the settings.

I. Jewish Community Center

The JCC is the oldest and largest informal Jewish education setting in North America, having served the largest number of people for the past 150 years. It is also a prototypical setting for informal Jewish education; it represents the basic elements of both the methodology and of the setting. The center can be considered an informal education setting due to its recreational function and social group work background of its professionals.

A. MAJOR CHARACTERISTICS

- Major program activities are recreation, physical education, creative arts and informal education.
- Emphasis is on social relationships—between professionals and members and between members themselves.
- Members are autonomous—they attend voluntarily and actively define their own programs.
- Staff training emphasizes interpersonal skills and a non-directive, process-oriented, leadership style.

- Ambiance of the setting is informal and relaxed.

B. ISSUES

1. *Jewish Content – Pre-Maximizing:* The JCCs of today are involved in a major effort to "maximize" the Jewish educational function of the setting. In the "pre-maximizing" period, however, the "Jewish content" of the centers focused mainly on affecting positive Jewish identity and attitudes, with less focus on formal Jewish learning. This objective was to be achieved by a number of indirect influences such as:

- helping members have fun in an identifiable Jewish setting;
- maintaining a Jewish ambiance in the center through observing the Jewish calendar, Shabbat, Kashrut, and a Jewish building decor;
- fostering relaxed and positive interactions among Jewish people and Jewish professionals;
- serving as the only means of Jewish identification for those Jews not otherwise involved in Jewish life;
- providing an experience for Jews of different ideological backgrounds to interact with each other;
- responding to members' concerned questions about Jewish issues.

2. *Jewish Content – Post-Maximizing:* Since the mid-1980s, the JCCs have been embarking on a major campaign to upgrade the centers' Jewish objectives. The indirect activities, noted above, continue to provide important informal Jewish educational "lessons," but are now receiving even greater attention in light of the raised Jewish consciousness level of the JCC staff. There is a new initiative which seeks to transmit more formal Jewish educational content, e.g., Jewish history, values, customs, life cycle, rituals.

3. *How to Maximize?* This program, which was undertaken primarily by the initiative of the JWB, the umbrella organization of JCCs, is a model of intentional institutional change. It bodes well for improving the effectiveness of the centers' efforts to achieve their Jewish educational goals. A recent evaluative study of the centers' program to maximize their Jewish education goals confirms that the initiatives, taken over the past five years, have produced positive results. The study pointed to the following four steps as having been particularly important in accounting for positive change in the JCCs' achievement of their Jewish education goals:[47]

a) A clear and persistent affirmation by the centers' leading lay and professional leadership of their commitment to the maximizing program, backed in part by the directing of financial resources to this effort.

b) A serious and sustained program of staff and lay leadership development in the area of Jewish learning, both in America and Israel.

c) Hiring a Jewish educational specialist for the local centers, both to help train fellow staff and to serve as a Jewish program resource/initiator.

d) Developing Jewish educational curriculum materials adapted for use with different age groups and utilizing informal education approaches. Currently underway is the development of a set of materials on "Basic Jewish Literacy."[48]

4. *Constraints*: What are the future prospects for the maximizing initiative? The steps taken thus far indicate that the lay and professional leadership are virtually fully supportive. Two constraints should be acknowledged which will likely set limits on how much change is achievable. The first concerns the traditional function of the JCC as a recreation agency. The appeal of the center has largely been because it makes available quality recreation programs which are attractive and important to the Jewish people in the community. There is of course the motivation of Jews to come to the JCC for these recreation programs because they prefer to be with other Jews and, in responding to this motivation, the JCC contributes to enhanced Jewish identification. But it should be clear: for many of these recreation programs, especially in the physical education realm, there is little or no Jewish education included. This is not said to make light of this fully appropriate and important recreation function of the JCC, but rather to recognize that a large proportion of the center's resources are directed to recreation programs, and also that a large proportion of the people who come to the centers will come only for this level of involvement.

The second constraint is affected by the atmosphere of the center and the perception of the institution by the people in the Jewish community. The vast majority of people think of the center as a place to go to be in a Jewish environment where they can have fun, relax, take part in essentially secular activities, and enjoy social interactions with Jewish friends and with the accessible staff. Such an image of the JCC is appropriate both to attract people to a **community** center and as a desirable end in itself. For many people these reasons will he the only ones which bring them to the JCC. Some of these JCC members are likely to participate in other organizations in the Jewish community, which they perceive of as more appropriate for Jewish educational or spiritual pursuits, such as the synagogue or the Jewish school. Other JCC members will seek out no further Jewish educational activities or involvements, contenting themselves only with an ethnic/social Jewish identification afforded by their JCC participation.

The challenge to the center leadership is how to make the newly emerging Jewish educational programs of the JCC more accessible both to those current JCC members who are not utilizing these services and to people in the community who have not been coming to the center. This would entail a two-step process. First, it should begin to project a new image of the JCC, one which indicates the center's broadened Jewish educational activities. However, recognizing that images are slow to change and that public relations efforts do have limits in their capacity to change perceptions, a second task is needed that will assure that the center's Jewish educational programs are successful. That task will entail persisting in the effort to

achieve a synthesis of the JCCs' appealing, informal, people-centered style with techniques for creatively teaching Jewish subject matter. This is the essence of effective informal Jewish education, and in pursuing it the centers not only help themselves to be more responsive to today's American Jews, but are also doing pioneering work in honing a methodology which can be helpful to other Jewish organizations in the community.

Indeed, the image of the JCC has changed. A top professional of the movement defined today's Jewish center professional as a "Jewish educator in an informal setting." A generation ago the definition would have been a "social worker working with Jewish people."

5. *Statistical Data on Jewish Community Centers*[1] *and YMHAs*[2]*: 1980-81 and 1990*

TABLE 1

Year	No. different cities with at least one JCC or Y[3]	Total JCCs or Ys (includes all branches of multi-unit centers)[4]	Total members of all JCCs and Ys[5]	Total different individuals who participated in JCCs or Ys at least once in the non-members[6]
1980 1981	128	231	750,000	1,875,000
1990	124	217	800,000	2,000,000

1 These data were drawn from the Directory of Jewish Community Centers and Ys of North America, published annually by the JWB in New York City. For comparative purposes statistics have been compiled from the current Directory, 1990, and from the Directory of ten years ago, 1980-81. Information was also obtained from interviews with three JWB professionals: Mitchell Jaffe, Assistant Executive Director; Leonard Rubin, Assistant Executive Director; and Edward Kagen, Consultant for Research and Statistics.

2 *Other Jewish Group Serving Agencies—O.J.G.S.A.* In addition to established JCCs and YMHAs there exist in North America very small or incipient Jewish community centers, usually located in cities with small Jewish populations. Typically these units are sponsored by the Jewish federation in that community and are staffed by a federation professional usually on a part- time basis, or a lay committee or volunteer.
In 1980-81 there were thirty such O.J.G.S.A. units; in 1990 there were thirty-six such units. These small centers offer community-wide events or other occasional programs to youth and the elderly in North America.

3 In this listing New York City is counted as one city. In 1980-81 there were thirty-five separate JCCs and Ys in Greater New York City out of a North American total of 231 centers and Ys; in 1990, there were thirty-three separate JCCs and Ys in Greater New York City out of a North American total of 217 centers and Ys. Not included in these data are synagogue centers in the Greater New York City area, of which there are nineteen, both in 1980-81 and 1990.

4 If O.J.G.S.A.s are included, the total number of centers in 1980-81 is 261; in 1990 there are 253 centers.

5 If O.J.G.S.A.s are included, the estimated number of members in 1980-81 increased by 3,000 to 753,000; in 1990 the number of members increases by 3,500 to 803,500.

6 JWB professionals estimate that at least once a year involvement of non-members in a center is one and one-half times the number of members. The estimated figures in this column included participation (active or passive) of both members and non-members. If these figures were to include O.J.G.S.A.s the total number of different individuals participating in all centers in 1980-81 would increase by 8,000 to 1,883,000; in 1990 there would be an increase of 8,750 individuals and a total of 2,008,750 different individual participants.

Implications of the JCC Statistics

Number of JCCs and Members: Across the past twenty years there has been a slight decline in the number of JCCs in North America, primarily as a result of the consolidation of smaller branch operations and the building of new large facilities. Also in some geographic areas there has been a consolidation of centers in nearby communities and the emergence of a single larger regional JCC.

During this same period of time there has been a gradual increase in the total number of JCC members in North America. In 1968 there were 754,000 members; in 1978—750,000 members; and in 1989—800,000 members.

In 1989 some 2,000,000 different individuals—members and non-members—had participated in some activity in a JCC. That number represents over one out of every three American Jews. Certainly many of these individuals may have been in the JCC only once or twice, and perhaps as participants in some large audience type of event. This impressive number dramatically interprets the potential of the center as an "entry point" or "window of opportunity" for welcoming people in the Jewish community and for assuring the participation in some Jewish organization of many American Jews who otherwise would not be involved.

II. Youth Groups

While there is an ongoing process of change affecting the professional identification of JCC workers, the leading professionals in the field of Jewish youth work have always defined themselves as "Jewish educators working in informal settings." Where social work had been the shaping profession of the JCC movement, the rabbinate and Jewish education remain the shaping influences in the field of Jewish youth work. The number of full-time, professionally trained staff in Jewish youth work is smaller, both in total numbers and in proportion to part-time staff, as compared to the staffing pattern in JCCs. Those full-time professionals in Jewish youth work are almost all rabbis or Jewish educators. It is their strong commitment to Jewish learning, emerging from their own initial attraction to these professions and their subsequent professional socialization, which gets translated into the clear priority for Jewish education (using informal methods), in the Jewish youth groups.

Jewish youth groups primarily serve young adolescents of junior high school and high school age. Most of the groups are aligned with national Jewish organizations. These include the three major denominationally sponsored organizations—National Conference of Synagogue Youth, National Federation of Temple Youth, and United Synagogue Youth; the B'nai B'rith Youth Organization; and the American Zionist Youth Foundation and other Zionist youth groups. These youth groups serve some 75,000 members with at least another 25,000 young people attending some of their programs.

A. MAJOR CHARACTERISTICS:

1. *Responsive Methodology*—The capacity of the youth groups to attract and to have an impact on their young adolescent constituency is a result of their responsive methodology. As expressed by a veteran youth group professional: "We focus on where our kids are at." Key elements of that methodology include:

- Jewish programs which use creative techniques and innovative formats and settings with the result being that kids learn that "being Jewish is fun."
- Active participation by members in defining the programs and in carrying them out.
- Opportunities for co-ed interactions and a sense of social belonging to a Jewish peer group.
- Access to sensitive, non-authoritarian group leaders who serve as Jewish role models. A Jewish youth group professional comments: "I live the life I teach and I help my kids see that what they learn about their Jewishness can give direction to their lives."

2. *Responsive Curriculum*—The informal nature of the youtb group environment draws on the key issues concerning the personal lives of Jewish adolescents for its curriculum of Jewish programming and activities. Recognizing that this is a developmental stage for clarifying personal and Jewish identity, the types of "learning needs" which are likely to occupy the thoughts of Jewish young adolescents, and to which the youth group "curriculum" is responsive, includes such issues as:

intermarriage;

divorce;

changing family patterns;

Soviet Jewry;

anti-Semitism;

changes in Eastern Europe and South Africa;

developments in Israel.

3. *Local and National Coordinating Organizations*—Since most Jewish youth groups are led by part-time, untrained staff, the field has developed a range of appropriate support services for these group leaders. Typically these services are in the realm of staff training and program resources and have been provided by the national or regional offices of the sponsoring ideological organization. Recently, support services for youth group chapters are also coming from the local Boards of Jewish Education or city-wide coordinating agencies, such as the Central Agency for Jewish Education in Miami. Examples of support services, coming from both the national ideological organizations and the local coordinating bodies, are the following:

- inter-youth group programs to enhance pluralism and to focus energies on action projects, e.g., rallies, fund raising;
- program materials and equipment, e.g., media, publications;
- incentive and recognition programs;
- leadership development;
- the providing of facilities for Shabbatonim, retreats.

B. ISSUES

1. *Professional Staff*—Clearly belonging at the top of a list of issues calling for change in the field of Jewish youth work is the current state of its professional personnel. There are too few full-time professional staff who have made this their career and too much reliance on staff who are part-time and who have a high rate of turnover. There is also a need to clarify the professional identity of the full-time youth group practitioner. A specialized, university-based educational program in informal Jewish education would be very helpful both to attract people to the field and to add to their effectiveness.

2. *Status*—The field of Jewish youth work is not afforded a level of status commensurate with its important educational potential. In part, this is a reflection of the general inclination in the community not to view informal education programs as serious. This adversely affects the morale of the leading Jewish youth group professionals, and in turn has a ripple effect on the part-time staff members. The field's low status also results in the community leaders not allocating adequate financial resources to Jewish youth work. The suggestion to clarify the professional identity of youth group professionals by the development of a specialized university-based training program, would help raise the status of the field.

3. *"Points of Contact"*—Although current Jewish youth group programs may reach up to 100,000 young people in North America, many of these individuals have only a marginal involvement and approximately another 200,000 Jewish youth in North America are not reached at all by such programs. The professional leaders of the field have recognized that by pursuing "points of contact"—creative, personalized reach-out initiatives— with both their own marginally involved members and with the not-involved, they can significantly increase the impact of their Jewish educational work.

In sum, the track record of Jewish youth groups has been impressive. A large majority of people who choose to enter professional careers as rabbis, Jewish educators or Jewish communal workers attribute their decision to a positive experience they had as members of Jewish youth groups and by identifying with a Jewish youth group professional. The director of one of the national Jewish youth groups indicated that 75% of their group leaders had grown up in the movement.

Such an achievement by Jewish youth groups is particularly noteworthy in light of the low status of the field, the gaps in its professionalization, and the minimal financial resources it receives.

III. Jewish Family Education

Jewish family education (JFE) has become the prime frontier for informal Jewish education in North America today. In addition, much hope for the future of the supplementary school has been invested in this educational approach. This expectation grows out of two sets of educational research. The first is the research on such remedial education programs as Head Start, which indicated that efforts of professionals in the school experience without family involvement are limited. A difference can only be made when parents and family acknowledge the importance of the educational endeavor and reinforce the effort by participating in it directly. The second area of research is the several critical evaluative studies of the Jewish supplementary school. The most devastating report is the Board of Jewish Education study in New York.[49]

A. MAJOR CHARACTERISTICS

1. *Organic Learning*:

Jewish family education has become particularly attractive today because it incorporates a methodology which has the unique capacity to involve Jewish young people and their parents in an organic Jewish educational experience. Traditionally, Jews "absorbed" their Jewish education by being immersed in an organic Jewish culture. Their family life, the schools they attended, and the communities of which they were a part, were pervasively Jewish. One learned "how to be a Jew" from a range of accessible role models and because it was what one needed to function in that society.

Jews growing up today in America have few or no opportunities to experience an organic Jewish culture. As third and fourth generation Jews, most of these young people have no direct contact with grandparents, or other relatives, who have been reared in the pervasive Jewish environments of "the old country." Similarly, as a modern mobile community, American Jews have moved away from "the old Jewish neighborhoods," the organic Jewish communities, in which their grandparents grew up.

Jewish family education is an intentional effort to recapture some of the features of organic Jewish life and weave them into the realities of Jewish life in America as the 20th century comes to a close. The strategy is to seek to enrich the two key environments in which Jewish young people grow up today—their families and the Jewish community—so that these young people recognize that Jewish learning can be functional in their lives as they grow up. The family is the most important influence in shaping children's basic Jewish identity and attitudes. Jewish family education seeks to strengthen the family influence directly by

organizing Jewish educational activities in which parents and children learn together, either at the same time or in parallel activities. This Jewish learning may take place in the Jewish school, in the synagogue, in other Jewish organizational settings, or in the home. The Jewish learning, shared by both children and parents, contributes to a Jewishly enriched household.

Jewish family education indirectly strengthens the children's motivation for Jewish learning, as they see and recognize their parents—their primary "value-shapers"—as viewing Jewish learning as important. Also, this process of parental validation of Jewish education is transferred to the other partners in the JFE experience—the Jewish community and its agencies. Such active involvement and reinforcement by parents and the Jewish community sends a very different message to children about the importance of Jewish education as compared to the "drop-off" syndrome where parents merely drive the children to the school for their Jewish education then move on to their separate areas of interest.[50]

2. *Two Components of Jewish Family Education:*

a. Jewish Education: Parents and children participate together in programs of Jewish learning or celebrating. The learning agenda includes the general Jewish educational curriculum of history, religious ideas/practices, and contemporary subjects such as Israel, Jewish identity, life cycle and religious rituals.

b. Enhanced Family Life: Parents and children participate together in "fun" activities or in discussions to foster good communication and understanding among members of the family.

3. *Perceptions of Jewish Educators about JFE:*

In May 1989 the Board of Jewish Education in New York assembled a group of experienced Jewish educators (whose average age was forty-two) for an institute on JFE in supplementary schools. I administered a questionnaire on Jewish family education which was completed by seventy of the participants. The respondents represented three types of Jewish educators: supplementary school directors/principals (64%), supplementary school teachers (12%), and staff of Jewish education coordinating agencies (23%). The attitudes of these career educators provide insights which can be useful for future policy strategies in seeking to introduce programs of Jewish family education in supplementary schools. The full questionnaire findings are included as Appendix 2.

A. OBJECTIVES OF JEWISH FAMILY EDUCATION

I indicated earlier that there are two components to JFE: *Jewish Education*, transmitting Jewish subject matter; and *Enhanced Family Life*, improving interaction and communication between parents and children. When this group of educators was asked to rank their objectives for JFE, three out of five of them

(60%) chose the *Jewish Education* alternative, while 40% chose from among three other alternatives which focus on *Enhanced Family Life.*

TABLE 2: PRIORITY RANKING OF FOUR DIFFERENT OBJECTIVES AND TARGET POPULATIONS OF JEWISH FAMILY EDUCATION—FIRST CHOICES

JFE Objectives/Target Populations	*First Choice*
Help parents and children improve communication with each other.	27%
Help parents and children increase their Jewish learning and commitment.	60%
Reach out to the several new types of families: single parents, reconstituted, mix marriages. . . .	5%
Interpret an approach to the Jewish family which extends beyond parents and children to include siblings, grandparents, and other relatives.	8%

That a majority of Jewish educators lean to the Jewish education objective is less surprising than the fact that two out of five of them chose one of the family interaction options. These reactions suggest that most educators consider both the Jewish education **and** the enhanced family life objectives as appropriate and are not inclined to an either-or definition of JFE.

B. EXPECTED OUTCOME OF JFE ON PARENTS AND CHILDREN

Recognizing that there is a tendency in Jewish education to turn to new educational approaches with the expectations they will bring dramatic results, the educators were asked to assess whether the current interest in JFE might be a "fad," a trend unlikely to have much impact on children and families. The vast majority (89%) did not agree that JFE was a fad and, among these, 33% strongly disagreed.

TABLE 3: EXTENT AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENT: "JFE IS TYPICAL OF MANY FADS IN JEWISH EDUCATION AND IS LIKELY TO RESULT IN NO IMPACT ON CHILDREN AND FAMILIES."

Extent of Agreement	
Strongly Agree	7%
Agree	4%
Disagree	56%
Strongly Disagree	33%

Another question sought to assess more specifically the nature of the impact, if indeed there was, of JFE programs on children and families. The outcomes to be evaluated were divided into the two JFE functions—Jewish education and enhanced family life. The most inclusive JFE outcome, expecting more family interaction, more positive Jewish attitudes and greater Jewish education, was chosen by 53%. The next outcome possibility, achieving more interaction, more positive Jewish attitudes, was chosen by 38%. Only 9% chose the minimal outcomes—6% felt that only more family interaction might be expected, and 3% anticipated little or no impact of JFE programs. These findings confirm the results of the prior two questions, namely, that dedicated and serious Jewish educators consider **both** Jewish education and enhanced family interaction as appropriate and achievable JFE objectives. They are apparently quite optimistic about the prospects for these objectives being realized.

TABLE 4: EXPECTATION OF OUTCOME OF JFE PROGRAM ON STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Outcome of JFE on Parents and Children	
More interaction between parents and children; more positive Jewish attitudes, more Jewish learning	53%
More interaction and more positive Jewish attitudes	38%
More interaction	6%
Little or no impact	3%

C. IMPLEMENTATION OF JFE PROGRAMS

Two questions addressed the issue of implementation of JFE programs in the supplementary school—one which asked these educators how competent they felt about their personal and professional aptitudes in JFE, and a second question which asked the respondents to assess the attitudes of the several synagogue constituencies to the prospect of having a JFE program in their school.

TABLE 5: LEVEL OF PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE FELT BY EDUCATOR FOR IMPLEMENTING A PROGRAM OF JFE IN JEWISH SCHOOLS

Level of Competence	
Very competent	18%
Competent	73%
Not very competent	7%

As noted in Table 5, the largest majority, 73% of the educators, feel they are now competent in JFE, with an additional 18% describing themselves as very competent. Only 7% felt they were not very competent. Allowing for the likelihood that this particular population of Jewish educators would have had more involvement in JFE than a random group of Jewish educators, their self evaluations, notwithstanding, indicate a high level of confidence in their capacity to implement JFE programs.

TABLE 6: ELEMENT WHICH WOULD BE MOST RESISTANT TO INTRODUCING JFE IN SUPPLEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Element	*First Choice*
Students	5%
Families	46%
Teachers	18%
Principal	3%
Rabbi	8%
Board of Directors	20%

The educators' views about the extent of resistance of the several synagogue constituencies to the introduction of a JFE program in their school are useful for planning strategies for change. The respondents consider the families as the most resistant group (46%), yet since only 5% thought students might be resistant, we can assume that the respondents are referring to parents (Table 6). Clearly, parents are the critical element for JFE, and, if they are indeed unwilling to participate, this calls into question the basic premises and expectations of JFE. There is the possibility, however, that the educators may have responded based on impressions shaped by working with earlier generations of families. But it is more likely the educators' impressions are accurate. In any event, this finding suggests that a direct study of parents attitudes regarding JFE is needed.

The next highest levels of anticipated resistance to JFE are attributed to the board of directors (20%) and to the teachers (18%). Neither of these percentages are high, suggesting that no significant problems are expected from these two important groups. It does, however, hint that a plan should be developed for interpretive meetings about the JFE programs with the board and teachers. That the two top professionals in the synagogue system, the school principal and the rabbi, are not seen as sources of resistance is a potential strength on which to build implementation strategies.

D. FUTURE PROSPECTS

The overall positive attitude to JFE of this group of educators is confirmed by their responses to two concluding questions about policy choices concerning the viability of the supplementary school and the value of JFE. The New York Board of Jewish Education study of supplementary schools calls for a radical change in the schools' current educational structure and focus. High on the list of recommendations for the supplementary school is to introduce JFE. Another, more radical option, which one might extrapolate from the study findings, is to give up on the supplementary school and pursue different approaches for educating Jewish children.

TABLE 7: CONSIDER IT WORTH MONEY AND EFFORT TO MAINTAIN SUPPLEMENTARY SCHOOL – WITH JFE PROGRAM

Choices	
Definitely yes	79%
Yes	18%
No	3%
Definitely no	0%

The educators were almost unanimous (97%) in their conclusion that it was worth the money and effort to maintain the supplementary school and to try to improve its effectiveness with JFE programs (Table 7). Almost four-fifths of the 97% responded "definitely yes" to maintaining the supplementary school. This certainly is a clear endorsement of the basic Jewish educational vehicle for the majority of American Jews – the supplementary school.

A similarly favorable response to the supplementary school being strengthened by JFE is reaffirmed when the group was asked to choose between that as a policy option and two other alternative policy options: encouraging greater use of day schools or for families to go on aliyah. Almost four out of five educators (79%), prefer a policy to support supplementary schools, with 21% favoring an emphasis on the day school (Table 8). No one chose the option of aliyah. It is not clear whether the non-endorsement of aliyah for American families is based on pragmatism or ideology, but a zero response is notewortby.

TABLE 8: PRIORITY CHOICE OF JEWISH EDUCATIONAL POLICIES

Policy Choices	*First Choice*
Introduce JFE to maintain and enhance a viable supplementary school	79%
Try to get as many Jewish children into day schools	21%
Try to get as many Jewish families to go on aliyah	0%

B. ISSUES IN FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

1. *Professional Personnel*—If JFE is to become a more significant component of the basic educational program of the supplementary school, who will provide the professional leadership? Thus far, where there have been successful JFE programs—of which there are few—they have been developed by an unusually gifted individual with some professional background and personal aptitudes for informal education approaches. There are a handful of such "stars" in the country, among them: Harlene Appelman in Detroit, Vicky Kelman in Oakland, Ron Wolfson and Janice Alper in Los Angeles, and Joe Reimer and Joan Kaye in Boston. There is a need to define the knowledge, skills and personal qualities requisite for effective JFE practice and to develop educational programs to produce more able JFE professionals. Needed are both short-term institutes for retraining Jewish educators already in the field and formal JFE educational components in the formal curricula of the graduate programs in Jewish education, the rabbinate, and Jewish communal service.

2. *Participating Families*—The uncertainty of the willingness of parents to participate in JFE programs, emerging from the study I did of Jewish educators, raises the critical issue of how families are to be recruited and sustained. Some reassurance arises from the several "star" directed JFE programs which have successfully involved parents, and suggests that it is an achievable objective. Nevertheless, this is an issue which requires creative thinking and certainly needs to he addressed by research directed at better understanding the attitudes of parents in addition to curriculum development for the JFE professionals.

Another issue concerning family participation which needs attention is how to involve non-traditional families in JFE, e.g., single-parent families, reconstituted families, and mixed marriage families. Non-traditional families represent a growing proportion of all Jewish families, and are likely to especially benefit from JFE programs.

3. *Educational Materials*—The curriculum resource specialists, over the past decades, have been developing increasingly effective Jewish educational materials for the Jewish schools. Certainly some new types of materials will be needed when

the target population is the family. Special attention should be devoted to materials which can be used by family units working independently in their homes. The use of media is certainly an area which can be further exploited.

A Concluding Note: JFE has much promise for bringing a valuable, new perspective to the field of Jewish education in America and for revitalizing the supplementary school. Much is at stake given these high expectations. If the JFE initiative fails to fulfill its promise it could have a very chilling impact on the field of Jewish education. The prospects for such a negative outcome can be significantly reduced by deliberate and thoughtful advanced planning, with special attention to the three issues noted above: preparing skilled JFE professionals, soliciting the active involvement and participation of parents, and developing appropriate curricular resources. Implicit in such a serious planning effort must be the allocation of adequate financial resources by the North American Jewish community.

IV. The Retreat/Conference Center

A retreat or conference center under local Jewish communal auspices is now in operation in about fifty cities in North America. Only thirteen of these centers have facilities to accommodate conference meetings and are capable of housing people overnight. The rest use other facilities available in their community. Most of the Jewish communities without a current retreat or conference center have future plans for developing one.

A. MAJOR CHARACTERISTICS

1. *Types of Settings:* An example of a retreat center "without walls" is the Bob Russell Community Retreat Center in Miami. The permanent staff of the Center locate a number of different types of settings, using hotels and other community buildings with appropriate facilities, which are reasonably accessible to the Miami area, and which can provide Kosher food. The Russell Center's staff serve as an administrative and program resource in helping Jewish community groups plan retreats, conferences, and Shabbatonim. The Center is administratively based in Miami's central Jewish education coordinating agency—CAJE.

A similar service, The Retreat Institute, has recently been developed in Cleveland, and is part of The Jewish Community Center of Cleveland.

The Butzel Conference Center in Detroit is one of the centers with its own facilities. It is part of the Fresh Air Society, a Jewish camping agency affiliated with the Detroit Jewish Federation. The Butzel Conference Center has comfortable winterized quarters, serves Kosher food, and can accommodate forty people overnight (larger groups for day meetings). Priority is given to serving groups from Detroit area synagogues and federations and Jewish youth groups. An attractive feature of the Center is that it is within a one-hour drive of the city. However, despite the fact that Jewish groups make extensive use of the Butzel Center, its

financial viability is dependent upon use by outside groups. For example, for several years a large area industrial corporation had a contract with the Center to use the facilities for their executive staff retreats. While this corporation and others were using the Center, the Center made a modest profit. Without that outside income, however, the year-round facility would result in a significant financial deficit.

The staff who work in the retreat/conference centers "without walls" indicate a strong preference to have their own facility. The problem in seeking to develop a new retreat/conference center is a financial one—both the high cost of constructing or purchasing a building and the high annual costs of maintaining the building and the grounds. For a number of years the National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership (CLAL), located in New York City, which regularly conducts conferences and institutes for Jewish groups, has been actively pursuing the idea of establishing a major Jewish conference center. Although CLAL has grown in its programs and resources, they have not been able to commit the significant amount of money required for capital and operating costs of a permanent facility.

2. *Groups Served and Types of Programs:* A conference/retreat center offers the opportunity for "away from home" programs for a period of a day, a weekend, a week or even more. Types of programs and Jewish populations who are served include:

- leadership training programs for board and staff groups;
- family camping or Jewish education retreats;
- *Shabbatonim* for Jewish schools and other groups;
- "beyond classroom" Jewish educational programs for Jewish school groups;
- specialized weekends for different groups, e.g., singles, mixed marrieds, the elderly;
- specialized weekends based on themes: Jewish arts; drama; music; pluralism; Who is a Jew?;
- conferences on different subjects and for different groups with use of guest scholars.

3. *Unique Characteristics of the Conference/Retreat Center:* The following are the appealing characteristics of the conference/retreat center. These attributes should be stressed to optimize the potential of this setting:

- Close social relationships are fostered when a group of people spend a sustained period of time together. People experience a sense of community.
- Living in a "Jewish domain," people learn about Jewish traditions in action, at meal times, during Shabbat, through songs and other Jewish cultural activities.
- Being in a setting, away from home and routine, allows for sustained study and work without distraction, along with opportunities for leisure and relaxation.

- The attractive rural setting of a retreat/conference center fosters creativity.
- The informal atmosphere helps people relate more comfortably to each other and to authority figures such as rabbis, teachers or employers.

B. ISSUES

1. *Pre- and Post-Planning:* The quality of a retreat or conference away from home can be enhanced by convening the participants both before and after the experience. The pre-planning serves two important purposes: first, coming together to meet both the staff and their fellow "campers" and getting details about how to travel to the setting, the nature of the facilities, what to bring, etc. helps to dispel the participants' anxiety. Second, the advance meeting is an opportunity for staff to involve the participants in shaping the agenda and procedures for the group's time together. This initial involvement will set a pattern for the group's assumption of responsibility while they are at the retreat center or camp, which will strengthen their sense of autonomy and full participation in the retreat objectives.

A meeting of the group "back home" following their time together at the retreat/conference center affords an opportunity to consolidate the actions or learnings and to build on the social relationships developed. For the sponsoring Jewish organization this can be an occasion to bridge the group or individuals more closely into the ongoing work of the organization.

2. *Auspices:* The professionals who work with retreat/conference centers agree that the issue of organizational auspices is an important factor in how well the center functions and accomplishes its goals. The reality is that for reasons of costs a Jewish community can only sustain one retreat/conference center. The issue is who, which community organization, operates the center. In addition, it is not only economically prudent for the center that the full range of Jewish organizations make use of what it has to offer, but it fosters pluralism too. The shared use of this Jewish community facility by the different Jewish groups and also the coming together of individual members of these different groups or programs addressing common interests, are ways of building a sense of Jewish unity—a priority issue facing the Jewish community today.

Given the desirability of a permanent, well-equipped retreat/conference center, one approach which should be considered is a regional center which would serve several Jewish communities in the same general area. Such an arrangement could assure optimum use of the facilities by Jewish groups throughout the year, and could help spread the costs of setting up and maintaining the center.

V. Informal Programs in Day Schools and Supplementary Schools

Day schools and supplementary schools are formal education settings which have been increasingly turning to the approaches of informal education as the vehicle for more effectively fulfilling their educational goals. In both settings, more attention is being directed at shaping the cultural feel of the school, recognizing that this can either support or undermine Jewish learning. The headmaster of a large day school reports that when the school is solely focused on academics, there is a tendency for cliques and hostile relations to develop among students which distract energy from learning and result in poor morale. Social programs are planned to improve interpersonal relations among students and also to afford opportunities for students and faculty to have fun together. Students who feel good about their fellow students and their teachers will come to school with positive attitudes and, it is reasonable to assume, with a greater receptivity to learn.

Student councils, with an appropriate allocation of responsibility, are proving to be a means for helping students feel a sense of ownership for their school. To the extent that students sense they have a voice in shaping their school the greater is the likelihood that they will identify with the school's educational objectives.

Both day school and supplementary schools report greater use of creative methodologies, such as experiential activities and media, as means for transmitting their lesson plans.[52] Also, rather than relying solely on direct teaching, teachers are using small groups within the classroom for "cooperative learning." An added benefit of this approach is to lessen the tendency to individualism and competition among students and to foster cooperation and collaboration.

Some day schools have become aware of a tendency toward Jewish insularity among their students and their families. For some families, this may be expressed as their viewing the day school as their sole means of Jewish involvement, with no membership in either a synagogue or other Jewish organizations. Principals have taken initiatives, working with Jewish youth groups and other Jewish organizations to encourage their students' participation in the broader Jewish community.

Perry London, in an important paper, has offered an historical and psychological perspective to make the case for Jewish educators to be more attentive to creating a sensitive and responsive culture in the Jewish school.[53] He describes a lag, in which Jewish educators bring a perspective about the Jewish school which may have been appropriate for earlier generations of students, but is not in tune with the situation and expectations of families today. Traditionally, London points out, "the ideal of the school" was viewed as a "Jewish literacy training center" seeking to teach knowledge of Jewish texts and Jewish technical skills. Such knowledge and skills would have been applicable in an earlier era, when most Jews lived in organic Jewish communities. As that era has passed, however, families are turning to Jewish schools primarily for shaping their children's Jewish identity and positive Jewish attitudes. In the open American society of today, London writes, Jewish children are confronted with:

> competition for (their) attention, interest and commitment. . . . (C)apturing hearts and minds is exactly what identity is all about. In its affective aspects, identity has to be modelled and motivated. It cannot be ordered, drilled, or even habituated. . . . Indeed, it is a quality first of the heart, and only then of the mind.[54]

VI. Camps

The camp setting affords the opportunity for a "classical" informal Jewish education experience. Here participants can spend extended periods of time with each other and with staff which allows for the emergence of close personal relationships and for the pursuing of subject matter with greater intensity than is otherwise generally possible. The camp is an active and living environment which can serve as a laboratory for campers to experience how Jewishness impacts on daily life. In the camp setting one can recreate an organic Jewish life situation. Shlomo Bardin, the founder of the very successful Brandeis-Bardin Institute Camp for young adults in California, described his camp's environment as a "Jewish domain." By immersing young adults for four weeks in a vibrant and creative Jewish environment, Bardin was able to interpret the attraction of Jewish rituals, cultural activities, and Jewish learning—in sum, a Jewish life-style.

Assessing the impact of the Conservative Movement's Ramah camp experience on the campers, Wertheimer observes:

> Precisely because it created a total Jewish environment, Ramah provided a setting in which to explore what it means to live as a Conservative Jew on a day-to-day basis. Products of Ramah, accordingly, have been prepared to put Conservative ideology into action once they have assumed roles of leadership within the movement.[55]

Wertheimer pointed out that during the late 1960s, many of the first generation alumni of Ramah camps were moving into adulthood and seemed to be attracted to new Jewish institutional forms, such as the *havurah* movement. The question raised by some leaders of the Conservative movement was whether the Ramah experience was leading these young people away from the more mainstream Conservative synagogues. Within the past decade there is evidence that as these first generation Ramah alumni have begun to have children, they are turning in large numbers to the Solomon Schechter schools for their own children's education.[56] Similarly, a high proportion of people choosing professional careers as rabbis, Jewish educators and communal service professionals have attended Ramah camps. These responses suggest that the Ramah experience has indeed socialized their campers in a positive sense about their Jewish commitment and their commitment to the Conservative movement. An even more impressive outcome suggested is that the Ramah alumni are likely to bring fresh and invigorating leadership perspectives to the movement, ones which will help the Jewish communal institutions adapt to the interests of this generation.

In a similar vein, follow-up studies of individuals who attended Brandeis-Bardin Camp Institute indicate that the camp experience had a pervasive influence on the Jewish identity of their former campers.[57]

In the study of the effectiveness of Jewish community centers, the center directors were asked to compare the Jewish educational effectiveness of their day camps with the Center's regular children's programs. Fifty-nine percent of the directors felt day camp was more effective, 33% said there was no difference, and only 8% said camp was less effective.[58] What were the reasons given by the directors to explain why they considered the day camp to be more effective? Their most frequently reported answers were:

More extended contact in the camp	42%
Israeli shlichim	20%
Jewish resource specialist	12%[59]

These data highlight along with the inadequately documented, but nonetheless impressive, personal testimonies of people active in Jewish life, the important role played by a summer camp experience in positively influencing their Jewish identity. Similarly, today one encounters growing interest expressed by leaders of the Jewish community in extending the use of camp settings for Jewish educational objectives. There is the sense that the camp setting can be especially effective in responding to the needs of today's Jewish individuals and families. The question is how ready and capable are the camps in the North American Jewish community to respond to the rising expectations of the Jewish community? I turn now to a more detailed review of the Jewish camps in America.

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE STATE OF JEWISH CAMPS IN AMERICA

1. *Camp Statistics*

TABLE 9: SUMMER RESIDENT CAMPS FOR CHILDREN WHICH ARE UNDER NORTH AMERICAN JEWISH AUSPICES, 1988-89

Camp Type & Auspices[1]	Number of Camps	Bed Capacity	Total Different Campers Served (Most camps have two four-week periods)
1. JCCs, YMHAs & Jewish Federations	48	11,660 Range 24-588 Avg. 274	30,287

1 Data on JCC camps obtained from the *Directory of Jewish Resident Summer Camps 1986-87,* published annually by the JWB, supplemented by an interview with Leonard Rubin of the JWB, their staff consultant on camps. Rubin indicates the 1989-90 Directory is about to be published and the figures are essentially the same as reported in the 1986-87 *Directory.*
Data on UAHC camps obtained from Rabbi Alan Smith, Union of American Hebrew Congregations and Arie Gluck, National Director of Camping and Youth, UAHC.
Data on Ramah camps obtained from Dr. Shelly Dorph, National Ramah Director.
Data on Orthodox camps obtained from Meir Frischman, Director, Camp Agudah Israel of America and Director of the Association of Jewish Camp Operators, 84 William St., New York, NY 10038.
Data on other children's camps under Jewish auspices, Teen Camps, Camps Serving Older Adults, obtained from JWB Director of Jewish Resident Summer Camps, 1986-87.
Data on Day Camps obtained from Leonard Rubin of JWB.

Camp Type & Auspices	Number of Camps	Bed Capacity	Total Different Campers Served (Most camps have two four-week periods)
2. **Jewish Denominational**			
a) Union of American Hebrew Congregations (Reform)	9	2,905 Range 345-534 Avg. 323	6,160
b) Ramah Camps – United Synagogue of America	6	2,288 Range 200-460 Avg. 381	3,146
c) Association of Jewish Camp Operators (Orthodox)	42 (33 camps not for profit; 9 private)	17,100 Avg. 407	18,870
3. **Other Children's Camps Under Jewish Auspices** (includes Zionist camps, B'nai B'rith camps & other independent Jewish organizationally-sponsored camps)	37	11,735 Range 149-1,000 Avg. 317	23,110
4. Camps Serving Youth with Special Needs Under Auspices of JCCs, Ys & Jewish Federations	7	1,333 Range 35-750 Avg. 190	2,418
5. Teen Camps	2	68 Range 18-50 Avg. 34	186

TABLE 10: TWO OTHER TYPES OF JEWISH-SPONSORED CAMPS

Camp Type & Auspices	Number of Camps	Bed Capacity	Total Different Campers Served (Most camps have two four-week periods)
1. Residential Camps Serving Older Adults Under Auspices of JCCs, Ys and Jewish Federations	6	1,689 Range 85-1,000 Avg. 282	9,808

Camp Type & Auspices	Number of Camps	Bed Capacity	Total Different Campers Served (Most camps have two four-week periods)
2. Day Camps Under Auspices of JCCs & Ys	200	Capacity for Day Campers 78,000 Range 150-1,000 Avg. 400	120,000

Two cautions should be noted about these data:

a. Aside from the data on the three groups of denominationally-sponsored camps, all data come from the JWB. The JWB contacts camp and obtains its data from their response. Since not all camps respond, nor does the JWB purport to be in touch with all Jewish camps in existence, there remains some number of Jewish camps not included in this report. The central offices of the UAHC and of National Ramah have fewer camps in their jurisdiction and it appears that their reports are based on relatively solid information. I have no information on how the Association of Camp Operators obtains their data on Orthodox camps, nor can I speak of the reliability of the figures I was given or whether this Association is in contact with all Orthodox camps.

b. My impression is that the figures on the last four categories of camps: Camps for Children with Special Needs, Teen Camps, Camps for Elderly and Day Camps, are under-represented. For example, I learned that there is a growing number of day camps under Orthodox auspices but I was unable to obtain definitive information. The Ramah camps offer several Teen Trip Camps, including a summer camp in Israel and a large children's day camp in Nyack which serves some 1,000 different children. In part, these specialized camps appear to be increasing and are not as well covered in the current method of recording camp statistics.

   In sum, these camp data are representative of the scope of camp services available to the North American Jewish community. If they err, it is in the direction of under-representing the numbers of camps and the people being served by them.

2. *Enrollment Patterns*

Interviews with the key coordinating professionals from the several national Jewish organizations which sponsor large numbers of summer camps confirm that over the past ten years there has been a decline of about 15% in camp enrollment. For the most part the decline is explained by the demographic dip in the population of children during that period of time. Some of the camps reported that the enrollment figures for 1990 have increased. Since the numbers of American

children who are of camp age should begin increasing, the Jewish camps should be able to expect fuller enrollments in the ensuing years.

However there are other persistent problems which could affect future camp enrollments. The most frequently reported problem is the increase in camp fees, and the concern that high cost may dissuade middle class Jewish families, for whom there is little or no scholarship support, from sending their children to Jewish camps. The issue of cost of camp services is a serious one which is likely to become more problematic in the future because of four recent developments.

a) The major factor responsible for increasing the costs of camp services is the maintenance of facilities. Most Jewish camps are now at least forty years old and the expenses in keeping such facilities operational are very high.

b) Liability insurance costs for camps have been raised significantly.

c) Camps need to increase counselor salaries to attract even a minimally qualified staff.

d) The influx of Russian Jewish families will add a large new camp population requiring full scholarship support.

The one recent development which camp directors report has positive implications for enrollment are the growing numbers of working parents who turn to summer camps as child care.

3. *Jewish Content*

Particularly with the summer camps under the auspices of the Jewish community centers there has been a discernible increase in Jewish content. One important contributing factor are two relatively new members of camp staffs: Israeli *shlichim* (in 1989 there were over 200 *shlichim* in camps in the New York area alone) and Jewish resource specialists. The latter staff specialists help other counselors enrich their individual Jewish programming as well as organizing Jewish programs for the entire camp. The *shlichim* encourage camp programs related to Israel, learning Hebrew, and Jewish singing and dancing.

Virtually all Jewish camps now maintain *kashrut* and have some type of Sabbath observance. Most camps have also taken steps to add to the Jewish ambiance of their physical settings.

Acknowledging these positive developments the JCC camp directors report that Jewish programming efforts still require hard work, with apathy or resistance from some campers and staff.

4. *Personnel*

As with other areas of informal Jewish education, the key problem identified by the leaders of the Jewish camps in America is staff. The American Camp Association reported that in their annual surveys of all camp directors in America over the past

three years, directors responded that staff was their number one problem. There are two aspects to the personnel problem. The first concerns the director, because the director is recognized as the most important variable in determining the quality of the camp. There is high turnover among camp directors. Asher Melzer, the Director of Camping Services of the UJA-Federation in New York City, reported that in the last two years he has had a turn-over of six out of seventeen camp directors. The issues which adversely affect the morale of the director are: relatively low salary, intense work pressures during "the season," year-round camp responsibilities despite the view that it is not a year-round job, and no sense of professional identity or status commensurate with the position of director.

The other major camp staff difficulty concerns getting adequate numbers of qualified counselors. (It is a problem of **both** numbers **and** quality.) In the past, the opportunity for college students to work at summer camps was considered an attractive option. Frequently counselors would work at the same camp for several summers, thereby assuring continuity. Today college students, especially the more able ones, are interested in summer jobs which pay more money and which might help in their long-term career plans in such realms as law, medicine, or business. The difficulty in finding adequate numbers of counselors has obliged camp directors to be dramatically resourceful. One new frontier they have discovered is to recruit counselors from Europe. For example, in this past year, the Jewish camps in New York brought over thirty-five counselors from England and Sweden, and the New Jersey Jewish camps hired over two hundred counselors from these two countries. The vast majority of these European counselors are non-Jews.

There is another reason why the issue of getting more Jewish young men and women into summer jobs as counselors should be given high priority by the American Jewish community. For many of the same reasons which make a summer at a Jewish camp important in terms of the Jewish identity of campers, such an experience is likely to have an enriching effect on the Jewish identity and Jewish learning of the camp counselor. Some camps identify this task as one of their objectives and invest their resources in Jewish educational programs for their counselors. In a recent interview with Shelly Dorph, the National Ramah Director, he explained:

> We see investing in a program of Jewish education for our own staff as an important goal. This is educating for the future leadership of the Jewish community. After all we have over 1,200 staff working in our Ramah camps every summer. About a thousand of these are college-age counselors and another two hundred are division heads and supervisors. They come with Jewish commitment and an aptitude in working with people.

A conservative estimate is that some 25,000 counselors, plus supervisory staff, work each summer in Jewish camps in North America. An investment by the American Jewish community in seeking to assure that these positions are filled by capable young men and women pays off in two ways: first, by having good counselors to serve the more than 200,000 Jewish young people who attend Jewish

camps, and second, by providing a leadership development program for an important pool of future Jewish communal leaders.

5. *Summary Recommendations*

a) Despite the promise and expectations of summer camps, the evidence is that Jewish camps are not being used to their potential. Some of the reasons for this gap have been discussed earlier. Included are: high costs for maintaining facilities, insurance and personnel. Perhaps even more of a factor seems to be the lack of resolve and creative initiatives by community leadership to invigorate the community's summer camps.

b) One frontier is to extend camp programs so that they reach more and varied Jewish populations. Among the important populations which might well be targeted for camp experiences are: families, young adults, people with special needs and interests, children in Jewish education programs, leaders of Jewish organizations, and the well elderly. Grants to innovative camps could help them develop new ways to utilize the camp setting.

c) Another initiative to better utilize the current camp facilities is to extend the times when the camps are available for serving the community. Ideally, having a winterized camp available in various sections of the country would be one approach. A less expensive alternative would be to extend the camp season, depending on the section of the country, for those Spring and Fall months when there is no danger of frost. This might mean having camp open in the northern half of America from May 1 to October 15 and somewhat longer in the southern half.

d) Initiatives to recruit capable young men and women to work as counselors in summer camps should be a high priority. Such initiatives would need to include upgrading salaries, building in more leisure time in the job expectation, and launching an active public relations and a national recruiting campaign. Similar initiatives should be undertaken to upgrade the job prerequisites and salary benefits of the directors, so as to assure attracting and maintaining quality individuals to this critically important position.

VII. Adult Jewish Education

MAJOR CHARACTERISTICS

I distinguish between two major categories of adult education programs for Jewish groups, formal and informal, each of which has different types of programs. The main distinction is that formal adult education groups are organized and taught by professional staff and are almost always based in the sponsoring institution; informal groups typically are formed and are maintained by the initiative of its own members, with occasional use of a professional resource person. They tend to meet in rotating locations, including members' homes.

Formal Adult Jewish Education Groups:

Synagogue, JCC, or Hebrew College based—The classic adult program is organized by a single synagogue or a group of synagogues in the same area. The program may be a single lecture or a series of lectures and classes which would meet over a number of weeks. In this format there are usually formal lectures and classes as the educational style is formal—teachers lecture and students ask questions. The subject matter is either in the area of Judaica, Hebrew language or contemporary Jewish issues.

Similar Jewish educational programs, supplemented by Jewish cultural arts activities, are increasingly being offered for adults in JCCs. The teaching style and class atmosphere in the JCC groups tends to be more informal. Some JCCs have developed a special reputation for offering a large number of high quality classes. Among these centers are the 92nd Street YMHA in New York City, the JCC in Washington, D.C., and the JCC on the Palisades in New Jersey.

The American cities which have Hebrew Colleges offer another setting for Jewish classes for adults. These are classes offered both for credit and not for credit. In a few communities there are special resources which offer Jewish adult education classes and cultural arts programs, e.g., the Brandeis Bardin Institute in California and the Foundation for Jewish Studies in the Washington, D.C., area.

Demographic studies which have inquired about participation in formal Jewish adult education programs indicate a level of participation of between 5-10%. Twenty percent of adults said they had an interest in attending such programs in the future.[60]

VIII. Informal Adult Jewish Education Groups—Havurot and Minyanim

A. TYPES OF HAVUROT

The start of the modern *havurah* movement is attributed to the year 1968 when Havurat Shalom in Somerville, Massachusetts, was founded.[61] There have evolved in the ensuing two decades three variants of *havurot:* **independent** groups, not affiliated with any other Jewish organization, e.g. Havurat Shalom, the New York Havurah and the Washington Fabrengen; **synagogue-based** *havurot*, organized by an initiative of the synagogue rabbi and involving members of that synagogue; and **intermediate** *havurot,* which operate like a small synagogue, using rented facilities. What these three types of *havurot* have in common is that they are run primarily by the members, and stress active participation by members in programs of Jewish study, worship and social activities.

The *havurah* phenomenon represents an effort to create informal, non-institutional environments in which the participants pursue their Jewish interests without being dependent on a rabbi or other Jewish professional. One of the issues which has proven a problem for the sustaining power of the early *havurot,*

especially the independent groups, has been their reluctance to define adequate leadership or institutional arrangements, which could help assure survival over time. Most *havurot* have an average life-span of two to three years, although there are havurot which have continued to meet for fifteen to twenty years.[62]

Havurot Support Systems—Two approaches for offering some institutional supports for *Havurot* have emerged. One is the National Havurah Committee, based in New York, an umbrella organization serving primarily independent *havurot*. Their main function is to keep some lines of communication open among the groups. Each year the Committee sponsors a national retreat and several regional retreats. These events bring together the movement leaders and does foster a network. But the same strong commitment to independence and fear of institutionalism extends to the National Havurah Committee. For several years the Committee has been struggling to meet accumulated debts and no longer is able to maintain any permanent staff. As a result, the support services the Committee can provide its member *havurot* is limited.

Intermediate *havurot,* such as the Havurah of South Florida, have added some greater institutional structure while maintaining the basic *havurah* principles.[63] Havurah of South Florida is essentially a network of several *havurot* which pursue their independent Jewish interest and which on special occasions come together. The key variant is that the Havurah of South Florida has a full-time rabbi, Mitchell Chefitz, who is available for direct leadership of some groups and activities, and who provides administrative/coordinative services to the groups. While there is no permanent facility—most groups meet in homes and even the rabbi's office is in his own home—the members of the network do assume responsibility for maintaining the rabbi's salary. The HSF has operated for ten years and seems to have achieved a balance between the autonomy of the separate member *havurot* and centralized administrative support services. But this resolution may be idiosyncratic in that the coordinating rabbi has a special commitment and capacity to make the *havurah* network, which he created, work.

Another type of intermediate *havurah* is represented by the *minyanim* which have emerged within synagogues. These are usually made up of members of the synagogue who prefer to *daven* separately from the synagogue's main religious service conducted by the rabbi. The *minyan* members typically are more Jewishly knowledgeable than their fellow congregants and have the capacity to manage their own religious services without synagogue professional staff. Further, having their own *minyan*, which generally ranges in size from 30 to 75 members, the *minyan* members determine their own customs and rituals. Like the *havurot* they shun pomp and trappings and seek active participation.

B. ISSUES—POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This overview of *havurot* raises three issues which concern informal Jewish education. First, the *havurah* is a classic informal Jewish educational experience. It is certainly informal in style, it stresses active participation, and its Jewish

educational program is concerned not only with Jewish learning, but also with Jewish behaving. Compared to the typical synagogue-based formal adult Jewish education programs, I believe the extent of participant involvement and impact of the *havurah* is much greater. This raises two policy questions:

How might formal adult Jewish education programs adapt the principles and approaches of the *havurot* to strengthen their programs? Can the organized Jewish community provide support services to *havurot* which would be fully sensitive to the group's autonomy, and might help sustain and extend these creature "pockets of Jewish energy"?

An example of this type of support coming from within the synagogue is the recent initiative of some synagogues to create a new professional position, a program director (an informal Jewish educator) whose responsibilities would include serving as the program/administrative resource for the synagogue's *havurot*, as well as other informal groups and activities within the synagogue, such as the pre-school, youth group, adult education, sisterhood, etc.[64]

A second "lesson" from the *havurah* experience is to recognize the important attraction spirituality holds for people today. One motivation of the people in the separate *minyanim* is to create an environment which is primarily spiritual and deals with religious essence and not its trappings and pomp. Perhaps mainstream Jewish organizations will find that they do not need as much *pizzazz* to attract and sustain their people as they have presumed and would do better with more stress on Jewish spirituality and its essence.

Finally, because of the *havurah*'s openness and informality such groups have special appeal to Jewish "marginals," those in the Jewish community who have not been fully integrated into the "Jewish establishment" organizations. Examples include mixed marrieds, single adults, academics and non-traditional families. I learned from my interview with the director of the Havurah of South Florida of a new population of "marginal" Jews which may well be outside the organized Jewish community—Jews who are involved in "12-Step" programs, such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Gamblers Anonymous, Overeaters Anonymous, etc.[65]

IX. Trips to Israel

A. MAJOR CHARACTERISTICS

In terms of cost effectiveness (time and money), no other educational experience today has the impact on American Jews as does a trip to Israel. We know this intuitively from our own visits and from those of friends and associates. We also know this empirically from the several evaluative studies which have been conducted, both of Jewish young people and adults.[66] In the study I conducted of the Jewish community centers' maximizing Jewish education initiative, educational programs for JCC professional and lay leaders were one of the variables highly correlated with effective maximizing of the centers' Jewish educational objectives.[67]

When directors of centers whose staff had an educational experience in Israel compared the effectiveness of that experience with their center's own Jewish education program, 32% evaluated the U.S. based in-service education program as very effective; 87% evaluated the Israel-based program as very effective.[68]

Thirty-six percent of American Jews have visited Israel at least once. When others were asked if they ever intend to visit Israel, 62% answered yes.[69] One can assume most of these visits were in the category of tourism, but that does not preclude its educational effect, both in terms of learning about Israel and Jewish history, and its enhancing of Jewish commitment. But one can further assume that systematically designed educational programs will have an even greater impact on both Jewish learning and commitment. Such educational programs in Israel are now being made a part of the regular agenda of most American Jewish organizations. Examples include Jewish educational programs for youth groups, JCC groups, Jewish schools, and leadership development programs in Israel for lay leaders and professionals, such as the "missions" regularly planned by UJA and Jewish federations. Hundreds of college-age students spend their junior year studying in Israeli universities, yeshivot and programs like WUJS and Pardes.

B. ISSUES

Several suggestions are offered to optimize the Jewish educational benefits of these trips to Israel:

1. *Staff training:* Having quality staff working with the groups can make a notable difference in their effectiveness. This involves both the American staff who accompany the groups and their counterparts in Israel with whom the American staff work. The first task is to recruit quality people and then to conduct a quality educational program for them. The Charles R. Bronfman Foundation has already undertaken a training program in Israel for Israeli university-age people who will serve as *madrichim* for visiting youth groups from America. The Foundation is considering the possibility of developing a similar training program in America to prepare American university students who will staff summer youth trips to Israel.

2. *Pre- and Post-Trip Meetings:* Groups of young people and adults who are planning a trip to Israel will get more from that trip if they participate in a pre-trip orientation. Similarly, the Jewish educational experience can be further enhanced by a post-trip meeting or series of meetings. One goal of the post-trip meetings is the opportunity to debrief on both things learned about Jewish history and about Israel, and to process emotional reactions. A second goal is to build on the raised Jewish consciousness and identification with Israel by connecting the individual or the group to a relevant Jewish organization in the American Jewish community. Also, there is the possibility that the people returning from Israel would tend to be more receptive at this time to studying Hebrew or other Jewish subjects and to considering *aliyah*.

Summary: Principles and Skills of Informal Jewish Education

A clear conclusion emerges from this review of informal Jewish education: informal Jewish education has the potential to make a significant impact on the present-day Jewish individuals, families, and in turn on Jewish communities. This potential grows out of the consonance between the style, values and techniques of informal Jewish education and the needs and interests of today's American Jews and the American Jewish community. While there does appear to be a sense in the American Jewish community that informal approaches and informal settings need to be afforded higher priority, there is much less clarity about how such a goal is to be achieved. The major void lies in the area of professional personnel. To paraphrase the aphorism: "Everybody talks about informal Jewish education (and Jewish family education), but nobody knows what to do about it."

The prime need now, in terms of personnel, is twofold: to upgrade tbe capacity of current Jewish professionals to use informal Jewish education approaches, and in addition, to develop a new cadre of specialists in informal Jewish education. This would require a program of in-service training and of redefining the basic curriculum of the institutions which educate Jewish professionals. If such professional retooling is to be effective, it will need a clarification of the methodology and skills of informal Jewish education.

1. Perspective and Grounding

History helps to clarify issues and to better understand how to approach the tasks on the contemporary agenda. As a prelude to defining the knowledge and skills of informal Jewish education it is well to summarize the principles emerging from the review of the early approaches to informal education, the informal Jewish education settings and the changing social context.

a. *The Two Issues:* At the outset of this monograph I noted two persistent dualities which have characterized earlier thinking about informal Jewish education: one is the idea that there are two different educational methodologies, formal and informal, each having different goals; and two is the question of whether informal Jewish education is a generic methodology or one restricted to particular organizational settings. From my interviews with both formal and informal Jewish educators, I received a clear consensus that these dualities no longer are relevant to actual practice. First, Jewish education today involves **both** formal education—systematically organizing and transmitting Jewish subject matter—and informal education—using informal methodologies, focusing on active involvement of the students and shaping a supportive educational environment.

Second, informal Jewish education describes **both** a methodology and Jewish organizational settings. The key point is that the methodology and the setting are not mutually exclusive; that is, formal Jewish education settings, e.g., schools, are increasingly using informal methods, and informal settings, e.g., JCCs, youth groups,

etc., are increasingly using formal methods. And such a synthesis makes for more effective Jewish education.

b. *Consonance Between Method and Context*: In virtually every society across time, the basic function of education has been to transmit the culture of the society, its values, traditions and history, and to provide the next generation with the necessary knowledge and skills both to function in the society and to assure its survival. Since societies change, so too must the agenda and methodologies of its educational system. Note two recent examples of this adaptive process in the educational system of the United States. When the Soviet Union successfully launched Sputnik, the first space satellite, in 1957, it was perceived by the political leaders of the United States as a threat to their assumed technological supremacy. There followed a major effort to upgrade the teaching of sciences and mathematics in American schools. Similarly, the uprooting of many of the accepted American social institutions and values which occurred during the Vietnam years in the late 1960s, resulted in an increased expectation that schools afford more autonomy to students as they worked on redefining their values. Thus was spawned the great interest in introducing programs of values clarification and the expectation by students that they should have more responsibility for the school's curriculum.

I turn now to highlight four significant changes which have been going on in the contemporary American Jewish community and the challenges these changes pose to the Jewish educational system.

First, there has been the weakening of the traditional social institutions which have always played a significant role in the socialization of Jews: the family, the Jewish community, and the synagogue. As a result, there has emerged a particular need by contemporary Jews for finding a **sense of community**, a place where they feel they belong and are nurtured.

Second, as third and fourth generation Jews have become acculturated in modern American society, they have absorbed that society's strong commitment to individualism and questioning of authority. Today's Jews have high expectations to be autonomous, active participants in all phases of their lives, including their schools. They are not inclined to be in awe of or to defer to traditional authorities such as parents and teachers.

Third, while a steady trend of assimilation has characterized the past three generations of American Jews, the situation today, with the predominantly third and fourth generation, is indicative of a resurgent interest in Jewish identity. That change has a bearing on the receptivity these Jews will have to Jewish education and in turn should be reflected in the response of the Jewish educators. In the early generations, as traditional values prevailed, few Jewish children had the psychological freedom to reject the Jewish identity of their parents and family. Jews growing up today are truly autonomous, and if they choose to continue to identify as Jews, it represents a voluntary decision. They will define the specifics of their Jewishness on what makes sense to them. As someone has said, "All Jews today are 'Jews by choice.'"

Finally, another characteristic of a third and fourth generation Jewish community is the loss of access to an organic Jewish culture in which to experience a Jewish life-style with authentic Jewish role models. The Jewish school is as a result expected to make up for this significant cultural deficit by taking on what Isa Aaron refers to as the function of "enculturation," offering their students the opportunity to experience a Jewish culture. Aaron writes:

> Jewish schools must be re-structured and re-configured to become agents of enculturation. They must become places which model for young people what it means to be Jewish. In short, they must become communities.[70]

In sum, the changes in the American Jewish community which I have described have generated a Jewish communal agenda and a Jewish clientele which are particularly receptive to informal Jewish education insights and approaches.

2. *Areas of Knowledge and Skills for Informal Jewish Education Professional Practice*

A. THE INSTITUTIONAL SETTING—SHAPING ENVIRONMENTS

I have pointed out the importance of Jewish educators grounding their practice in a knowledge of the overall social context. I narrow the focus now to examine the institutional environment in which the Jewish educator works with his/her students. Here the educator must begin to think on several levels and in systematic terms. The basic unit of the Jewish education system is the class or the group where the teacher or leader regularly meets his/her students. The class or group is part of a school or an organization. And the school or organization is part of a network of Jewish organizations in the community. Effective practice obliges the teacher/leader to be attentive to the interdependence of these several elements of the system and to develop the skills to shape an ambiance in each of these elements which enhances the learning of the students.

What are the specific skills needed at each of these levels for effective informal Jewish educational practice?

- In the classroom—The teacher/group leader needs to structure both the physical and psychological environment to foster active participation by the students in the educational experience.[71] Shaping the physical environment involves, for example, having movable chairs and tables for use in small group activities; enough space for groups to move about and to work without disturbing each other; accessible supplies of newsprint and markers for students and the teacher/leader to use in the process of active learning; and the presence of appropriate Jewish symbols for a Jewish decor.

Shaping the psychological environment involves creating an atmosphere which encourages students to feel comfortable in expressing their ideas and feelings. This requires the teacher/leader to learn to share responsibility with the students for the

class and the educational process. A non-judgmental and accepting attitude by the teacher/leader encourages creativity, risk-taking and honest expression of feelings and questions by students.

- In the school/organization—The school/organization should be viewed as a culture, guided by Jewish values and seeking to be fully responsive to both the Jewish educational interests and the personal emotional issues of its members—staff, students, parents, and board of directors. Ideally, a culture will be created which has the flavor of a surrogate extended family, offering a level of personalized caring and security generally found in the family.

- In the community—Reference has been made to the growing interest of the Jewish federation and other coordinating Jewish agencies to become more involved in Jewish education. This interest can bring important new financial and human resources to support the work of the Jewish educational settings and to strengthen their educational services. This will occur to the extent that the Jewish educational professionals can work collaboratively with other organizations and with professionals from different disciplines.

B. USE OF PERSONALIZED SMALL GROUPS

In the traditional classroom the full responsibility for the educational agenda rests with the teacher; with an informal education approach that responsibility is shared with the students. The rationale for viewing the class as a personalized group is the belief that when students experience a connection between their Jewish learning and their social/emotional needs, the students' learning is enhanced. Sensitive, personalized relationships with the teacher and with fellow students are desirable ends in themselves, and also contribute to students having a receptive, positive attitude to learning. The converse—unpleasant or hostile interpersonal relations—are disincentives to learning.

In addition to providing emotional support, the personalized group adds another educational dimension to the experience, one which is basic to informal education—peer learning. Each member of the group is a source of information. Students learn from the ideas and experiences of their colleagues as well as from the teacher. The question is asked by Rabbi Ben Zoma in *Pirke Avot* (4.1), "Who is wise? They who learn from every person."

In addition to working with the full class group, the informal educator will also divide the group into smaller groups to encourage even more active participation and group interaction. The use of small groups is especially effective for educational problem solving. Also different formats make the educational experience a more interesting one.

Finally, in the recently completed evaluative study of nonformal programs for youth aged eight to twenty-two, conducted by Hanan Alexander in Los Angeles, the importance of group process, in terms of the success of their programs, was noted by 74% of the respondents. Group process is described as: "techniques for creating

collective identity, for encouraging active participation and team work, for involving participants in decision-making and for fostering a sense of group ownership."[72]

C. CREATIVE PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

At the core of informal education is the principle that when a student is directly involved in the educational content, learning is enhanced. The reliance on lecturing from the front of the class has the dual limitation of fostering student passivity and boredom. Deborah Lipstadt points to research which documents the limits of frontal teaching with adults.[73] It is reasonable to assume this formal approach would be even less effective with children, especially this generation of children, accustomed to creative methods in their secular schools and to the stimulating style of television. Having a low tolerance for tedium, children will not be easily sustained by educational approaches which are not creative. They will simply "tune out."

The skills of planning a creative education curriculum begins with a clear understanding of the subject matter to be taught. Then, taking into account the age of the students and time constraints, the teacher/leader creates an appropriate lesson plan, which might include one or more participatory activities (games), and is designed to focus the students' attention on the subject matter. By linking the content to the students' interests and experiences, the students have become involved in the lesson. They are then receptive to ideas coming from their fellow learners and the teacher/leader, to solve a problem which is of interest to them. Whetting the students' interest is a requisite for learning. Educators who skip this step and assume student interest as a given make what Paul Tillich has described as the "fatal pedagogic error: To throw answers, like stones, at the heads of those who have not yet asked the questions."[74]

D. THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER/LEADER

The catalyst, vital for bringing together the several elements of the informal education method, is the teacher/leader. Without capable leadership, the methodology doesn't work or is distracted from its educational potential. To highlight the centrality of the group leader's role however may seem paradoxical in a methodology which seems to de-emphasize the role and status of the teacher/leader. To understand that paradox one must understand the dynamics of the non-directive, facilitative, empowering style of leadership of informal education. This leadership style requires a subtle balance of direct and indirect means of influence.[75] On the indirect level, there is the creation of an open, safe environment which encourages active student involvement in the educational lessons; on the direct level, the teacher/leader uses wisely selected interventions to enhance the learning. Such interventions might include an effort to draw out a student, to rephrase the comment of another student, to link several comments, and of critical importance, to summarize, at the end of the lesson, by highlighting the key learnings which have emerged in the group discussion.

The informal definition of the authority of the informal educator does not, as some suggest, lead to less respect by students, but more likely, the opposite. Since the informal educator is more attentive and more accessible to the students, they come to recognize how this leadership role helps them learn and grow, and they respect the teacher/leader. It is because of this responsive definition of authority that the informal educator also is likely to become a role model for his/her students.

Since much of the learning in the informal educational setting occurs within, and because of the carefully structured environment, the teacher/leader must develop those administrative skills needed to assure that the environment functions effectively and efficiently. This involves the thoughtful advance preparations of the educational activities and then having on hand the necessary supplies to implement the program. Managing time is an important skill, particularly being able to sustain active student participation while being able to limit and focus the group discussion so that there is a sense of achievement and closure.

Finally, the informal educator always grapples with the tension of finding the right balance between learning goals for students and sustaining the appropriate social/emotional ambiance of the educational setting. The responsive ambiance helps to motivate the students and they will have fun in the creative, relaxed environment. These are worthy goals in their own right. They also contribute to a positive Jewish identity and identification with the Jewish community. But the informal educator also has a formal educational agenda – helping students/members learn more about the Jewish heritage so that they become informed Jews.[76] The leadership skill lies in being able to achieve a synthesis of both the affective and the cognitive sides of learning. The reality is that the students are themselves searching for such a blend and will be willing collaborators.

3. Caveats

While it is obvious that I believe informal Jewish education is a potent educational vehicle for the needs of today's Jewish community, I must conclude with two caveats, lest unrealistic expectations are raised. First is to reiterate that the informal education method should not become an end in itself. It is a means to achieving Jewish educational goals. But the point must be noted that some Jewish educational goals, particularly in the more advanced curricula of the school setting, will respond better to a formal educational approach, with a teacher who has a specialized competence in some subject. One such example is mastery of texts. Yet even with this type of more formal teaching, the students' learning will be advanced if the teaching occurs within a supportive school culture.

Second, one must realize that mastery of informal Jewish education, in the full sense in which I have presented it, is not easy to achieve. The method is still being defined. Informal Jewish educators now practicing lack any clear sense of professional identity. It is uncertain whether the field can attract, and hold, capable people, especially people who could indeed master the key dualities endemic to this

methodology—the tension between formal and informal education and between the affective and the cognitive. Finally, is the issue of numbers. As we have come to understand the changing requirements of Jewish education today and in projecting for the near future, there appears to be a need for a major infusion of professionals who have informal Jewish education skills. Can the American Jewish community generate an adequate supply of informal Jewish educators who will have the personal qualities and professional competencies to fulfill the expectations?

Recommendations

As I conclude this review of informal Jewish education in North America, I am impressed with a number of concurrently emerging and converging developments. These developments are:

1. A current generation of highly educated, acculturated and quality-conscious young Jewish families who are positively inclined to find a connection to their Jewishness.

2. A current Jewish education system which has acknowledged that the status quo is unsatisfactory and which has indicated a readiness, and some capacity, to bring about change.

3. An organized North American Jewish community which is becoming increasingly self-assured and which recognizes that its future survival is dependent on Jewish education.

4. Growing affirmation from leading Jewish educators and from the research in the field, that informal Jewish educational approaches, e.g., Jewish family education, trips to Israel, a Jewishly maximized JCC, and others, offer much promise for responding to the interests and aspirations of current Jewish families.

I offer the following recommendations which seek to contribute to the convergence of these related developments and to optimize for the American Jewish community the potential inherent in this process.

1. Professional Personnel

At the top of the list of recommendations is the issue of professional personnel, which involves recruitment, professional education and status. Upgrading professional personnel clearly is the priority need identified by all the formal and informal Jewish educators with whom I met and in the articles and research now being done in the field. A few examples:

• Isa Aaron identifies five steps which are needed to "transform" Jewish schools into communities which foster Jewish enculturation. She concludes: "Of these five,

the most important . . . is that a school which wants to be the core of a community must have teachers who are deeply involved in that community."[77]

• Alvin Schiff comments: "The priority issue for **both** formal and informal Jewish educators is to recognize the confluence of the cognitive and affective areas and how to bring this confluence into their practice."[78]

• Zac Kaye, Director of Informal Education for the Jewish education coordinating body in London, comes to this conclusion in his report on informal Jewish education: "Clearly raising the level of leadership at all levels is the key . . . The emphasis (is) on professionalism."[79]

• Finally, I asked virtually all of the people I interviewed the question: "If money were available, how would you recommend it be used to improve informal Jewish education?" Without exception, the first choice was in the area of professional personnel.

A FIVE-STEP PROGRAM

To move forward in the realm of professional personnel five initiatives are required, all of which are interrelated:

a) Recruitment: Capable people who are prepared for long-term careers as informal Jewish educators need to be recruited. The field needs to work at putting together full-time positions and to assure the prospects of a professional career ladder with opportunities for advancement.

b) Status: The current low status of the informal Jewish educator needs to be upgraded. This will happen to the extent informal Jewish education is viewed as a full-time, long-term career, and has its own professional educational requirements. Along with greater professionalization it is to be expected that there will be a commensurate improvement in salaries and other personnel benefits.

c) Professional Education: The thrust of my analysis of Jewish education today is that all Jewish communal professionals *need* a blend of informal and formal methodologies. The reality remains, however, that the needs of the Jewish community require different educational experiences and settings in order to be fully responsive to its audience. As a result, there are Jewish schools which will need professionals with greater proficiency in formal Jewish education, and informal Jewish settings which will need professionals with greater proficiency in informal Jewish education. At this point in time there is a void in any systematic professional education for informal Jewish education, and this is a priority need. Therefore I recommend that a specialized program for educating informal Jewish educators should be developed, based in a university framework. It should be a graduate-level program making it comparable to the educational expectations for other Jewish communal professionals.

The focus of the curriculum in such a graduate program would include the areas of education and skills outlined by Susan Shevitz for preparing "Community Educators."[80] Such community educators would have the capacity to work collaboratively with other Jewish professionals and to integrate formal and informal methods. The curriculum would include:

- General education skills;
- Judaica and Hebrew;
- Jewish communal life and issues on the contemporary Jewish agenda;
- Group work, community organization, and organizational management;
- Programming for informal Jewish education;
- Working with families and lay people;
- Capacity for "use of self."

d) Curricular Units for Other Institutions of Higher Learning: It is particularly important that content about informal education be introduced in the American seminaries which educate rabbis and Jewish educators. Courses should be developed for the seminaries and for all the graduate programs which prepare Jewish educators and communal professionals. The expectation is that all Jewish professionals should be familiar with Jewish informal education.

e) Continuing Education: Programs of continuing education are needed to upgrade the competence in informal Jewish education and Jewish family education of professionals now working in the field.

2. Maintain the Supplementary School

The supplementary school has recently received much critical evaluation. From the information I have obtained in the course of this study, I am led to two conclusions: first, that the current structure and approach of most supplementary schools need modification; and second, that it is definitely possible to make modifications which will improve the effectiveness of the supplementary school. Implicit in these conclusions is the conviction that the supplementary school should remain a core component in the Jewish educational services of the American Jewish community.

The type of changes needed to make the supplementary school more viable have been described in this analysis. They include greater use of informal education approaches and programs, especially Jewish family education. For such changes to occur in the supplementary schools, an understanding of the integral relationship between the school and the synagogue context in which it is situated is required. Joseph Reimer has done important research on the relationship between the ambiance of the synagogue, largely shaped by its professional leadership, and the nature of the supplementary school and other educational experiences available in the synagogue.[81]

I recommend that institutes be organized with professional and lay leaders of the synagogue community to discuss how to create a synagogue environment which would be responsive to the changing interests of American Jews today. A more responsive synagogue would lead to changes in the way the supplementary school operates and which would result in greater impact on the students and their families.

An interesting project has been launched in the Los Angeles area which seeks to implement the goal of creating a sense of community in the synagogue. The major leadership for this effort is to come from lay members of the synagogue who participate in an extended training program to become "rabbinic or para-Judaic counselors." The expectation is that the training will produce a leader who "is not in the organizational mode. Rather, this leader is committed to personal Jewish enrichment and growth as well as to leading his fellow laymen along the path to such growth." It is with such volunteer leaders that the project hopes to "create a caring Jewish congregational community."[82]

3. New Frontiers for Informal Jewish Education

I became aware, in the course of this study, of four areas of service in the Jewish community which show potential for having an important Jewish educational impact, and which would benefit from greater community recognition and support. These include:

a) Jewish Sponsored Pre-School Programs and Child Care: One of the "windows of opportunity" for Jewish education are services to toddlers and pre-schoolers. Young Jewish families are strongly inclined to use pre-school programs and child care. When these services are offered by the Jewish community, it affords an opportunity for the Jewish community to establish relationships with an important constituency. Also, the opportunity to reach very young children with Jewish content allows for the kind of bonding which has significant psychological Jewish meaning.

b) Havurot and Minyanim: The development of *havurot* and *minyanim* has occurred as a result of the initiatives and energy of able and committed Jews. These innovative structures have played an important role both in innovating new ideas in Jewish worship and study, and in sustaining the active involvement in the Jewish community of a very creative Jewish population. Because of the great concern such groups have for their autonomy, they do not receive the support services which would be important to help these groups sustain themselves. Such help needs to be offered judiciously. Possibilities include helping the National Havurah Committee to assist its member groups, or conducting a workshop for leaders of *minyanim* to help them share together their common issues.

c) The Jewish 12-Steppers: It is clear that there are increasing numbers of American Jews who have been turning to 12-step programs like Alcoholics Anonymous with problems of addictions of one sort or another. It is time for the American Jewish

community to explore ways of responding sensitively to this growing population. Programs are needed which provide a Jewish context, while incorporating the ideology of the 12-step program.

d) Residential Camps: I identified earlier in this monograph the fact that there is a definite gap between the potential and current expectations of the American Jewish community for its residential camps. Since these settings have the capacity to be particularly responsive to many of today's Jewish educational objectives, it is a service which warrants a high priority. Creative initiatives are especially needed in two areas:

1) *Staff*: There is a critical need for a recruitment program for counselors to work in summer camps and a critical need to upgrade the position and benefits of the camp directors.

2) *Facilities*: To make camping facilities more available to the American Jewish community I recommend that efforts be directed to winterizing a number of camp facilities so that reasonably accessible facilities exist in all geographic regions of the country. These camps would be used for retreats, family camping, leadership development, and educational programs for all age groups.

4. Research

I have noted several times in this report the importance of professionalizing the field of informal Jewish education. In that regard, my final recommendation is in the realm of research—both for its own sake, as a requisite professional function, and to clarify three areas which are important for future professional practice in informal Jewish education:

a) Much interest and high expectations have been invested in Jewish family education as a major new focus for Jewish education in North America. This response reflects a pattern which recurs with some regularity in Jewish education: discover some single emphasis which is expected to resolve the problems which face the field and then invest significant resources (and hopes) in this latest panacea. The missing ingredient in this scenario is research. Carolyn Keller has recently written a thoughtful analysis of Jewish family education in which she raises key questions which clearly need to be systematically researched, both to define what is meant by Jewish family education and to identify the professional and programmatic factors which determine effective performance.[83] Research in Jewish family education is a top priority.

b) What approaches or techniques will be effective in outreach to minimally involved Jews?

c) Finally, evaluative studies of "best practice" are recommended, especially in the newly emerging areas of informal Jewish education, such as Jewish family education, work with pre-schoolers and their families; and innovative projects to introduce informal Jewish education in day schools and supplementary schools.

Appendix 1: People Interviewed December 1989—February 1990

1. **JWB Executive Staff**

   Sol Greenfield

   Zev Hymowitz

   Mitchell Jaffe

   Edward Kagen

   Jane Perman

   Steve Rod

   Arthur Rotman

   Leonard Rubin

2. **National Jewish Youth Group Directors**

   Raphael Butler, National Conference of Synagogue Youth

   Sidney Clearfield, B'nai B'rith Youth Organization

   Gidon Elad, American Zionist Youth Foundation

   Paul Freedman, United Synagogue Youth

   Alan Smith, National Federation of Temple Youth

3. **Academics in Jewish Education**

   Hanan A. Alexander, Dean, University of Judaism, Los Angeles

   Barry Chazan, Hebrew University, Centre for Jewish Education in the Diaspora; Consultant, JWB and Charles R. Bronfman Foundation

   Steve Copeland, Instructor, Hebrew College, Boston

   Joseph Reimer, Assistant Professor in Jewish Education, Hornstein Program, Brandeis University

   Susan L. Shevitz, Assistant Professor in Jewish Education, Hornstein Program, Brandeis University

4. **Community Informal Jewish Educators**

Sandy Andron, Director, Judaica High School and Youth Programs, CAJE, Miami

Harlene Appelman, Director of Family Programs, Fresh Air Society, Detroit

Miles Bonder, Director, Bob Russell Community Retreat Center, Miami

Mitchell Chefitz, Rabbi of Havurah of South Florida; Former Chairman, National Havurah Committee

Meir Frischman, Director, Camp Agudah Israel of America

Charles Herman, Director, Retreat Institute, JCC of Cleveland

Zac Kaye, Director of Informal Education, United Synagogue Board of Religious Education, London, England

George Marcus, Director, Eli & Bessie Cohen Camps, Ashland, MA

Asher Melzer, Director of Camping Services, UJA-Federation of New York

Charles Rotman, Director, Camp Young Judea, New Hampshire

5. **Formal Jewish Educators**

Shelley Dorph, National Ramah Director

Joshua Elkin, Headmaster, Solomon Schechter Day School, Newton, MA

Gene Greenzweig, Executive Director, Central Agency for Jewish Education, Miami

Alvin Schiff, Executive Vice President, Board of Jewish Education in New York

Jon Woocher, Executive Director, JESNA, New York City

6. **Jewish Communal Professionals**

Paul Jeser, Executive Director, CLAL, New York City

Larry Ziffer, Planning Director, Director Jewish Federation of Detroit

Appendix 2: Results of Questionnaire on Jewish Family Education – May 1989

N = 70 Educators attending conference on Jewish Family Education in New York City convened by the Board of Jewish Education of New York.

All questions refer to Jewish supplementary schools

1. PRIORITY RANKING OF FOUR JEWISH FAMILY EDUCATION OBJECTIVES

	N = 70	N = 67	N = 65	N = 67
JFE Objectives *Choices*	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
Help parents & children improve communication with each other	27%	42%	11%	22%
Help parents & children increase their Jewish learning & commitment	60%	19%	12%	7%
Reach out to the several new types of families: single parents, reconstituted, mixed marriages	5%	19%	33%	40%
Interpret an approach to Jewish family which extends beyond parents & children to include siblings, grandparents & other relatives	8%	19%	43%	30%

2. STAFFING PATTERN PREFERRED FOR JFE PROGRAM IN SUPPLEMENTARY SCHOOL

Staffing Pattern	N = 66
Hire JFE specialist	37%
Retrain current school director/principal	39%
Make changes in all school's Jewish education personnel	23%

3. SCHOOL ELEMENT MOST NEEDED TO ASSURE SUCCESSFUL JFE PROGRAM IN YOUR SCHOOL (1ST & 2ND CHOICES)

	N = 75	N = 68
Element	1st	2nd
Skilled & Committed Teachers	23%	29%
Skilled & Committed School Director/Principal	28%	28%
Access to Appropriate Facilities	1%	0%
Cooperation From Synagogue Rabbi	7%	9%
Creative Program Ideas & Materials	35%	20%
Adequate Budget	7%	13%

4. PRIORITY CHOICES FOR JEWISH EDUCATIONAL POLICIES FOR THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMUNITY (THREE CHOICES)

	N = 67	N = 56	N = 56
Policy Choices	1st	2nd	3rd
Introduce JFE as way of maintaining & enhancing option of viable supplementary school	79%	21%	2%
Try to get as many children into day schools	21%	71%	5%
Try to get as many families to go on *aliyah*	0%	9%	93%

5. ELEMENT WHICH WOULD BE MOST RESISTANT TO INTRODUCING JFE IN SUPPLEMENTARY SCHOOLS (TWO CHOICES)

	N = 65	N = 62
Element	1st	2nd
Students	5%	17%
Families	46%	29%
Teachers	18%	21%
Principal	3%	5%
Rabbi	8%	10%
Board of Directors	20%	19%

6. PERSONAL BACKGROUND OF RESPONDENTS

a. 28% Male 72% Female

b. 42 Average Age 21-60 Range of Ages

c. Current Professional Position

12% Teacher

64% Principal/School Director

23% Staff Jewish Education Coordinating Organization

d. Jewish Denominational Affiliation

11% Orthodox

49% Conservative

32% Reform

4% Reconstructionist

3% Other

Notes

1) John Dewey, *Democracy and Education,* New York: Macmillan, 1964, 1916.

2) John Dewey, *Experience and Education,* New York: Collier Books, 1938.

3) Ibid., p. 17

4) Ibid., p. 17

5) Ibid., p. 18

6) Ibid., p. 19

7) Ibid., pp. 20-23

8) The issue of whether the field of Jewish education should be professionalized, and, if so, how it might be approached, is addressed in two recent publications:
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Isa Aaron, "Issues of Professionalism in Jewish Teaching." Position Paper prepared for the Commission on Jewish Education in North America, December, 1989.

9) Grace L. Coyle, *Group Experiences and Democratic Values,* New York: The Women's Press, 1947, pp. 63-64.

10) Melvin Herman, "Occupational Mobility in Social Work," in *The Jewish Community Center Worker,* New York: National Jewish Welfare Board, 1959.

11) Sanford Solender, *The Unique Function of the Jewish Community Center,* New York: National Jewish Welfare Board, 1955, p. 5.

12) Kurt Lewin, "Experiments in Social Space," *Harvard Educational Review*, 1939, 9; pp. 21-32.

13) Alfred J. Marrow, *The Practical Theorist: The Life and Work of Kurt Lewin*, New York: Teachers College Press Edition, 1977, p. 35.

14) Ibid., p. 34

15) Ronald Lippett and Ralph White, *Autocracy and Democracy: An Experimental Inquiry*, New York: Harper & Row, 1960.

16) Alfred J. Marrow, *op. cit.*, pp. 130-131.

17) Ibid., pp. 212-213.

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23) Dov Peretz Elkins, "Why I Love Values Clarification," *Alternatives,* Fall, 1977.

24) Daniel Yankelovich, *New Rules: Searching for Self-Fulfillment in a World Turned Upside Down,* New York: Random House, 1981.

25) Bernard Reisman, "The Future of the American Jewish Community: Challenges for Its Leadership", in *Towards the Twenty-First Century: Judaism and the Jewish People in Israel and America.* Ronald Kronish, ed., Hoboken, New Jersey: KTAV Publishing House, 1988, pp. 239-242.

26) These figures are extrapolated from demographic studies in several North American cities as reported in: Sylvia Barack Fishman, "Learning About Learning: Insights on Contemporary Jewish Education," Waltham: Cohen Center of Modern Jewish Studies, Jewish Population Studies, Brandeis University, December 1987.

27) Steven M. Cohen and Charles S. Liebman, *The Quality of American Jewish Life – Two Views,* New York: American Jewish Committee, 1987.

28) See comments by Charles Zibbell and Morton L. Mandel in *To Build a Profession,* ed. Joseph Reimer, Waltham, MA: Brandeis University, 1987, pp. 47-49.

29) Bernard Reisman, "Community and Ideology – The Basis for Jewish Leadership Today," New York: Council of Jewish Federations, 1987.

30) "Design Document to Establish the Commission on Jewish Education in North America," Cleveland, Ohio, May, 1988.

31) "Report: Commission on Maximizing Jewish Educational Effectiveness of Jewish Community Centers," New York: JWB, Sept. 1984.

32) Bernard Reisman, *Social Change and Response – Assessing Efforts to Maximize Jewish Educational Effectiveness in Jewish Community Centers in North America,* New York: JWB, 1988.

33) See reports of Nativ Policy and Planning Consultants, Jerusalem: "Report: The Israel Experience Project; Senior Personnel for Jewish Education," June 1988; and "Resource Booklet No. 2," February 1987.

34) Barry Chazan, "The State of Jewish Education," New York: JESNA, Spring 1988, p. 1

35) Ibid., p. 5

36) Ibid., p. 5

37) Alvin I. Schiff, *Jewish Supplementary Schooling: An Educational System in Need of Change,* New York: Board of Jewish Education, 1988, p. 119.

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39) A. Schiff, *op. cit.,* p. 130.

40) *Report of the Joint Federation/Congregational Plenum Commission on Jewish Continuity,* Cleveland: The Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland, December 1988, Appendix I, Mission Statement.

41) Ibid., pp. 6-8.

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43) Jonathan S. Woocher, "Mountain High, Valley Low: The State of Jewish Education Today," in *Facing the Future: Essays on Contemporary Jewish Life,* Steven Bayme, ed., New York: KTAV Publishing, 1989, pp. 117-118.

44) Isa Aaron, "Issues of Professionalism in Jewish Teaching." Position Paper prepared for the Commission on Jewish Education in North America, December 1989.

45) The member schools are: Baltimore Hebrew University; Brandeis University Hornstein Program; Cleveland College of Jewish Studies; Gratz College; Hebrew College of Boston; Hebrew Union College – J.I.R., Los Angeles; Hebrew Union College – J.I.R., New York; Jewish Theological Seminary of America; McGill University; Spertus College; University of Judaism; Yeshiva University.

46) Aryeh Davidson, "The Preparation of Jewish Educators in North America: A Status Report," Report Submitted to the Commission on Jewish Education in North America, June, 1990, p. 27.

47) Bernard Reisman, *op. cit.,* JWB, 1988

48) A prior publication is: Barry Chazan and Yehiel Poupko, *Guide to Jewish Knowledge For the Center Professional,* New York: JWB, May 1989.

49) See David Schoem, *Ethnic Survival in America: An Ethnography of a Jewish Afternoon School,* Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989 and Samuel Heilman, *Inside the Jewish School: A Study of the Cultural Setting for Jewish Education,* New York: American Jewish Committee, 1983.

50) See Harlene Appelman, "Family Education," in "Field Notes." Paper prepared for The Commission on Jewish Education in North America, 1989, pp. 22-29.

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57) Gene W. Levine, "An Adventure in Curing Alienation," Encino, CA: Brandeis Camp Institute 1971.

58) Bernard Reisman, *op. cit.,* p. 58.

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60) Private communication with Dr. Sylvia Barack Fishman, Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University, February 14, 1990.

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70) Isa Aaron, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

71) Bernard Reisman, *The Jewish Experiential Book*, *op. cit.*, pp. 24-35.

72) Hanan A. Alexander, "Good Jewish Youth Programs: Education and the Formation of Jewish Identity," Los Angeles: The University of Judaism, January 1990, p. 8.

73) Deborah E. Lipstadt, "Adult Jewish Learning: Policy Implications," in *Facing the Future*, Steven Bayme, ed., New Jersey: KTAV Publishing, 1989, pp. 136-138.

74) Paul Tillich, quoted in George Isaac Brown, *Human Teaching for Human Learning*, New York: Viking Press, 1971, pp. 15-16.

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76) Hanan Alexander, *op. cit.*, pp. 21-25, discusses the dual requirements for informal education groups to acquire Jewish identity and Jewish knowledge.

77) Isa Aaron, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

78) Personal interview on March 1 1990 with Dr. Alvin Schiff, Executive Vice President of the Board of Jewish Education, New York City.

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80) Susan L. Shevitz, "Community Educators: Implications for Recruitment and Training," in *To Build a Profession, op. cit.,* pp. 102-104.

81) See Joseph Reimer, "The Synagogue as a Context for Jewish Education." Position paper prepared for the Commission on Jewish Education in North America, May 1990.

82) *Project Ezra: A Handbook for Training Congregants as Rabbinic Aides,* Sheldon Dorph, ed., Los Angeles, United Synagogue of America, P.S.W. Region, 1989, p. 20.

83) Carolyn F. Keller, "From Creativity to Policy: Charting a Course for Jewish Family Education," A Paper Prepared for the Jerusalem Fellows, June 10, 1990.

COMMISSION ON JEWISH EDUCATION IN NORTH AMERICA

The Structure of Jewish Education

Walter I. Ackerman

May 1990

Convened by Mandel Associated Foundations, JWB and JESNA in collaboration with CJF

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A Report Submitted to
The Commission for Jewish Education in North America

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The Commission on Jewish Education in North America was convened by the Mandel Associated Foundations, JWB and JESNA in collaboration with CJF. The ideas expressed in this report are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Commission.

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The Structure of Jewish Education

The idea of structure suggests order; it implies a definite pattern of arrangements or relationships. Structures are consciously created according to some preconceived plan or just evolve as experience and circumstance would seem to dictate. The development of structures, whether planned or accidental, rests on the assumption that objectives can be stated with reasonable clarity and that once that is done it is possible to identify the means and steps required for their attainment. Structures are intended to facilitate the process.

The formal relationships between parts which characterize structure do not always guarantee an actual acknowledgement of interdependence. It is a commonplace of large organizations that one branch derides the efforts of another and even questions its contribution to the common endeavor. The fact of the organization, however, forces them to work together. The function of management is to bring both of them to productive cooperation.

Jewish education, by contrast, is without a compelling framework. Whether understood as formal schooling only or as a complex process in which many different agencies may participate, it is a voluntary effort consisting of autonomous units each of which is free to develop as it sees fit. In the case of the former, the school is the basic entity. In congregational schools, the dominant type, final authority for their conduct is rested in the synagogue board which acts through an appointed or elected school committee. Non-congregational schools—large day schools—have their own boards and committees which are responsible for every aspect of the school's activities. Schools and other educational agencies are, of course, subject to all manner of influence. The way in which they react to events and circumstance, however, is ultimately a matter of their own choice. Where connections do exist they are an expression of good will and almost never "required." In all Jewish communities around the world excepting Israel, the relationships between the various bodies engaged in Jewish education, when at all existing, may best be likened to those which characterize a loosely coupled federation lacking all power of enforcement.

The development of Jewish education in the United States in the last hundred years or so may be understood in some senses as an attempt to bring some order

and standardization into an area of public activity given perhaps naturally to separatism. One of the earliest examples of this tendency is the public examinations in various school subjects—Hebrew, Bible, and History—sponsored by the Young Men's Hebrew Association of New York beginning in 1875 and continuing until the end of the century. The seventy students who were tested in 1876 came from all-day schools, afternoon schools, two-day-a-week schools and Sabbath schools. While the ostensible purpose of the examinations, reported in detail in the Jewish press, was to encourage attendance at a Jewish school, its effect, intended or not, was to determine the curriculum of participating schools.[1] Thirty years later, the Central Board of Jewish Education, established in New York in 1909 by a group of professionals and lay people involved with a number of Talmud Torahs, set as its purpose the development of a uniform curriculum for all such schools in the city. It was hoped, among other things, that with the introduction of a common curriculum a youngster moving from one neighborhood to another would not have "to start all over again from the first grade." A similar reason was among the justifications offered a decade later upon the introduction of a unified curriculum in the member schools of the Associated Boston Hebrew Schools.[2] These efforts were clearly influenced by practice in American public school systems. In that model as in others, the locus of curriculum design and development is a source of authority for the conduct of educational affairs.

These efforts as well as others of similar intent were at best sporadic; they were undertaken by bodies of limited resources and a narrow base of public support. They were eclipsed by the establishment in 1910 of the Bureau of Jewish Education of the Kehillah of New York City.[3] The Bureau was the first communal office of Jewish education on the North American continent. Judah Magnes and his associates in the leadership of the Kehillah viewed the creation of the Bureau, rather than direct grants to existing schools, as the most effective use of $50,000 contributed by Jacob Schiff to the Kehillah for the "improvement and promoting of Jewish religious primary education in the city."[4] The Bureau, under the inspired leadership of Dr. Samson Benderly and the coterie of American-born young men attracted to him and the cause of Jewish education, forged a pattern of programs and activities which until this day frames the work of similar agencies subsequently established in cities all over the United States and Canada.

In the years between its establishment in 1910 and its affiliation, upon the virtual dissolution of the Kehillah in 1917, with the Federation for the Support of Jewish Philanthropic Societies, the Bureau had demonstrated the advantages of a centralized effort and, at the same time, gained a new place for Jewish education in American Jewish life. Benderly's report to the Kehillah in 1915 noted that the

Bureau ". . . directs, supervises, or cooperates with 179 schools, 521 teachers and 31,300 students."[5] Even though income from the initial gift, never-ending fundraising, and tuitions collected by the Bureau's Department of Collection and Investigation from the families of pupils in affiliated schools always ran behind the cost of the ambitious and imaginative programs designed by Benderly and his staff, the Bureau engaged in an impressive range of activities: supervision of schools, curriculum development, teacher training and licensing, production of text books and other teaching aids, a professional journal, extra-curricular activities, youth organizations, and more. These activities were rooted in a particular conception of the function of a community office of education.

Aside from emphasizing the importance of professional expertise and scientific method—concepts which were central to the campaigns for "good government" led by progressives of the time—Benderly and his associates established the principle of community support for Jewish education. In their view Jewish education, like education in general, could not be left to the partisan efforts of neighborhood groups. The perpetuation of Jewish life in the demanding circumstances of the American environment required ". . . a system of education . . . under *community control.*" This position led to a structure in which the community assumed responsibility for financing ". . . experimentation, initiation, organization, coordination and general supervision. . . ." The centralized functions, almost exclusively educational, are paralleled and even dependent on the administrative tasks assigned the local community—". . . maintenance [of buildings], teachers' salaries, scholarships for children who cannot pay, and local supervision . . . and financed by tuition fees and local contributions."[6]

The "system" of education which evolved from this conception, first in New York and then in other cities, was not as embracive as would appear at first glance. Just as the federations or similar agencies did not really represent or actually reflect the full range of opinion and practice in the Jewish population, the central agencies for Jewish education did not always serve all the schools in the geographic area of their jurisdiction. Whether organized on the model of New York, or that of a central Talmud Torah with branches throughout the city as in Minneapolis, or as a federation of schools led by the Bureau as in Boston, their reach, until relatively recently, did not always extend either to Orthodox or Reform schools. Their work, reflecting the attitudes of their personnel, was by and large limited to the intensive afternoon Hebrew school whose Zionist orientation emphasized the centrality of the Hebrew language.

The spread of the idea of communal responsibility and the establishment of communal offices of education were abetted by the formation of the American

Association for Jewish Education in 1939. This "bureau of bureaus," lately reorganized as JESNA,* was intended not only to "promote the cause of Jewish education in America"[7] but also to serve as "an association of Jewish education interests in relation to the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds and to the general community (government, etc.)."[8] The surveys conducted by the AAJE are one of its more important contributions. The data gathered in the study of almost forty communities between 1939-59 remain even today an important source of information regarding the growth and development of Jewish education in the country. The method of communal self-study employed in these surveys had an effect as important as the findings themselves; thousands of people were given an opportunity to think about Jewish education and its purposes.

Today JESNA is "considered the organized Jewish community's planning, coordinating and service agency for Jewish education." It is funded by allocations from local federations and private contributions. Among other things the agency provides consultation services to communities, conducts research, disseminates information, conducts a placement service, organizes regional and national conferences for professional educators and lay leaders, works with Israeli educational agencies, operates a Visiting Teacher Program which places Israeli teachers in schools throughout North America, and initiates experimental programs. Not the least of its functions is that of advocacy for Jewish education in federation circles.

It would be a mistake to think of what has been described here as a progression evolving from some unalterable inner logic. It would similarly be an error to think of the relationship between an individual school, the local bureau and the national educational agency as in any way comparable to the hierarchical structure—neighborhood, city, district, state—which defines relationships in the public school system. A suggested alternative to the pattern we know today can be found among the recommendations of a study conducted by Dr. Isaac B. Berkson in 1935-36 in order to determine how to best use a gift of $1,000,000 contributed for the purpose of fostering Jewish religious education in New York City. According to Berkson, the primary function of the new Jewish Education Committee, the amalgam of the Bureau of Jewish Education and the lay Association of Jewish Education which resulted from the study, was research and experimentation. In his view, a central agency would best serve the community by developing a common

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* Jewish Education Service of North America

minimum curriculum for Jewish schools of all kinds; model schools would provide the setting for experimenting with that curriculum, developing new instructional methods and producing textbooks and other materials. Once the effectiveness of these methods and materials had been demonstrated, they could be introduced into existing schools.[9] Berkson viewed the school as the instrument best equipped to unite a divided Jewish community and to provide *all* Jewish children with common cultural baggage.

This way of structuring relationships between individual schools and a communal office of education was rejected in favor of the view, most clearly enunciated by Dr. Alexander Dushkin who had been invited to head the new agency, that the purpose of a central agency was to provide *service* to existing schools. Rather than developing a broad basic program of Jewish education acceptable to all sectors of the community, a task he thought impossible in the cauldron of differences which characterized New York Jewry, Dushkin saw the mission of his agency as providing guidance and supervision to schools of all kinds in order to help them realize their own philosophies more completely. In the lexicon of Jewish education this conception became known as "unity in diversity"; more importantly, it has determined the work of bureaus ever since its initial formulation.

The position celebrates pluralism; it recognizes that schools, like individuals, have multiple loyalties. This was a matter of no small moment in the light of the rise of the congregational school after World War II, a development which structurally is significantly different from a bureau-sponsored community Talmud Torah system. These schools take direction from the educational arms of the national synagogue movements of which they are a part. The potential of conflict is obvious in a statement prepared in 1950 by representatives of the United Synagogue Commission on Jewish Education and the American Association for Jewish Education: ". . . Bureaus should cooperate with the congregational schools or their groups in carrying out their programs as effectively as possible. . . . Bureaus, as central community agencies, shall at all times recognize the autonomy and the ideological integrity of the congregational schools."[10]

This and similar statements issued over the years constitute the ground upon which a delicate pattern of relationships has developed between bureaus and schools or groups of schools of a particular religious or ideological complexion. The internal organization and division of assignments among the professional staff of larger bureaus are very often derived from this sense of function. It is important to note, however, that many educators, not unlike Berkson, feel that the bureau ". . . must cease to be merely a midwife for all the groups in the community and

produce something of its own which represents the best conception of the best educators."[11]

Examples of the possible range of bureau-initiated activities may be found in reports of recently developed programs. In New York, the bureau has established both a teacher's and principal's center, a special education center, a computer resource center, and a media center.[12] In Los Angeles, the bureau has sponsored parent and family life education, holiday workshops, Sephardic Heritage Programs, programs for Iranian and Russian immigrants, special education, activities related to the professional status of educators, community-wide celebrations of Jewish education, and other activities which reflect the idea of an agency responsible to the community as a whole.[13] These listings are not intended as catalogues of activity; they are brought to illustrate the pattern of programs which evolves when an educational agency thinks of itself in one way rather than another.

It is difficult to specify the exact nature of the relationships between national agencies—commissions on education of both the Conservative and Reform movements, the National Commission on Torah Education, Torah U'Mesorah—and local activity. They are not immune to the stricture which specifies that in Jewish life the spread throughout the country of the plans and programs of national agencies depends on local leadership.[14] The key to their influence depends on more than a shared ideological commitment; they must also provide useful service. Over the years these agencies have developed characteristic modes of operation which reflect changing conceptions of their function. The first such agency, the Commission on Jewish Education of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, was originally the Board of Editors of Sabbath School Literature, then the Board of Editors of Religious School Literature, and after that the Commission on Jewish Religious Educational Literature. The present name was adopted in the early twenties to signify that the body ". . . proposed to envisage the entire field of Jewish religious education and will consider all matters pertaining thereto."[15]

The broad mandate, more or less adopted by similar agencies subsequently established, has come to include extensive textbook publication programs, curriculum development, convening regional and national conferences, professional placement services, and the definition and promulgation of statements of broad educational policy. The latter includes such items as recommendations regarding the number of days per week a school should be in session, "starting" age of pupils, and attendance requirements for Bar/Bat Mitzvah. These set a standard for individual schools at the same time as they create a common framework for member institutions.

The seemingly parallel and even interdependent and complementary pattern of activities of the bureaus and the educational commissions of the various religious groupings ought not obscure the fact that the work of each is guided by assumptions which sometimes conflict. The hureaus view the community, however vaguely defined, as the central element of Jewish institutional life; the well-being of the community dictates a policy of consensus. The religious organizations believe that the religious life and its institutional expression in the synagogue are the guarantors of Jewish continuity. Their sense of community and relationships to its institutions, however wholehearted and positive, cannot but be conditioned by the consequences of belief in a transcendent authority.

As the community office of education, the bureau is the educational agency most directly involved with the organized Jewish community and its institutions. The relationships between bureaus and federations or welfare funds, as so many others in communal life, have not always been clearly cut or exactly defined. At one time, large bureaus such as New York and Chicago, even though connected to the local federation, were responsible for raising a major part of their budget. Today some bureaus are part of the federation structure and are one of several agencies within that framework. Others are beneficiaries of the federation and independent of its administrative structure. The several patterns are generally more a function of local history than a design drawn from organizational theory. We do not know which of them results in the most effective delivery of services.

Accurate mapping of the territory of formal Jewish education requires that we identify and locate several other points of influence. Teacher training schools and programs are certainly one of them; indeed, together with schools, bureaus, and educational commissions they constitute the "core" of formal Jewish education. The most obvious connection between teacher training institutions and the day-to-day work of schools of all kinds is that created by graduates who function as teachers, principals, or in other capacities directly concerned with schooling. Little attention has been paid to yet another aspect of linkage: the role played by Hebrew Teachers Colleges or Colleges of Jewish Studies in setting standards in communities throughout the country. The entrance requirements of member institutions of *Iggud Batei Midrash L'Morim* (Association of Hebrew Teachers Colleges), now defunct, played a major role in determining the curriculum of lower schools. While from some points of view the influence may not have always been beneficial, the idea that there was a progression in Jewish schooling which demanded mastery at one level before moving on to another was certainly positive. Current discussions of structure have generally neglected the question of standards and their significance in the educational process. The successor to the *Iggud,* the Association of

Institutions of Higher Learning for Jewish Education, has not been in existence long enough to permit an assessment of its function and influence.

While there is no argument regarding the role of the colleges in pre-service training, there is some question regarding their function, if they have one at all, in in-service training. In some communities there is a tacit agreement that the latter belongs to the bureaus. Where such questions exist, they obviously have more to do with "turf" than with education. The expansion of Jewish studies programs in major universities has led to some exploration of the possibility that their schools of education might also train personnel for Jewish education.

In addition to their specific purpose—either as training schools and more recently as centers of adult learning—the colleges perform an important symbolic function. They represent the commitment of a community to higher Jewish learning and move Jewish education out of the realm of childhood with which it is usually associated.

University programs of Jewish studies, strictly speaking, cannot be counted as part of the structure with which we are dealing here. They should be thought of as a parallel but independent entity. Even though many of the existing programs were initiated because of the interest and financial support of a local Jewish community, once established they are part of another world. Neither the appointment of advisory boards, very often nothing more than a symbolic gesture, nor the active involvement of individual faculty members in the affairs of the community changes the fact that these programs are guided by the requirements of the academy and the demands of scholarship. Indeed, attempts of the American Association for Jewish Education to become involved in the organization of the Association for Jewish Studies, the learned society of instructors of Jewish studies, were quickly rebuffed. These programs also serve a symbolic function. Placed as they are in colleges and universities, public and private, they confer a degree of social respectability on the study of Judaism which is rarely attained by ethnic schools such as the colleges.[16]

The place of Israeli agencies in the scheme described here has been a subject of much discussion, and even controversy, over the years. Criticism or praise of particular programs, more often based on personal experience than on carefully collected and analyzed empirical data, are incidental to a more basic issue. There is no question that good practice is a necessary condition of effectiveness, and that interventions by outside agencies are most successful when initiated by local constituencies and implemented with their cooperation and participation. Israeli agencies have not always observed this "rule." Poor practice, however, is not the only source of strain. The way in which Israel is used as an educational resource

depends on the understanding educators have of the place and meaning of an independent Jewish state in the life of the individual and the polity. Differences on this fundamental issue, even when muted by common agreement, color the entire pattern of relationships between Jewish education in North America and Israeli agencies working in the Diaspora.

Many of the people involved in the conduct of schools, bureaus, national agencies, and other settings concerned with formal education are members of one or another of several professional organizations. With the exception of the Council for Jewish Education, these are organized along denominational lines and sometimes by type of school within a religious grouping. The CJE was originally made up of bureau directors who saw the organization as a vehicle for promoting community support of Jewish education, developing standards of professionalism, and securing and protecting benefits for personnel. These organizations obviously serve a social function; they also provide placement services and protect members from abuses by employers. Even though they aspire to establishing Jewish education as a profession, it is doubtful that these organizations have succeeded in this regard. That achievement requires more than the efforts of practitioners to specify requirements of training, conditions of entry, and standards of performance.[17] The strivings of educators to gain recognition and status must be matched by public acknowledgement of the unique and essential service they provide. Acceptance of that kind has yet to be attained.

The existing organizations cater to principals and other administrators. In contrast to an earlier period—the first organization of Jewish educators in the United States was *Agudat Hamorim* (Teachers Association), founded in New York in 1910—there is today no effective organization of teachers in Jewish schools. The annual CAJE conference, it is true, is intended primarily for teachers; as important as that gathering is, it does not perform the functions usually associated with professional organizations. The lack of a teachers' organization is a troubling gap. The absence of such a body not only deprives teachers of an agency of advocacy; it denotes the disappearance of a sense of calling among those who are responsible for the day-to-day work of schools.

Even though they are generally not included in a schematic presentation of Jewish education, we suggest that commercial publishers of textbooks and other educational materials should be considered among the factors which give shape to practice. This is particularly so in those parts of the country distant from bureaus and the services provided in large centers of Jewish population. Teachers and principals of less than adequate preparation and of loose ideological identity very often find the commercial material more helpful than that produced by the national

commissions. The point is important we think because it notes that the formal mechanisms of Jewish education do not always satisfy the needs of the populations they are intended to serve.

What we have brought thus far may be represented as a series of concentric circles with the school at the center. The farther an agency is away from the school, the lesser its influence on teaching and learning. However, the school need not always be the intended target. JESNA, for instance, expends a great deal of effort in attempting to influence policy-makers in federations. At a certain point in its history, the United Synagogue Commission on Jewish Education was concerned primarily with eliminating the Sunday School and guiding school boards to adopt standards for the three-day-a-week Conservative congregational school. The adoption of codes of practice was for many years a major concern of professional organizations. Looking at the diverse tasks undertaken by different agencies and the audience to which each addresses itself is one way of clarifying the relationship between them.

This patterned patchwork of educational activity is, as we have already indicated, less a system than a network of agencies, individuals, and institutions. The looseness of this voluntary association does not altogether eliminate centers of authority whose decisions effect others. The opinions of rabbinical authorities are binding on certain day schools. A bureau may establish standards and eligibility for schools applying for communal financial support. The workings of the enterprise depend, however, far more on influence than on authority. The adoption of a new program promoted by an agency outside the school depends largely on the skills and qualities of the personnel involved in the proposed program, the level of expertise and services provided by the sponsoring agency, and the fit between the proposal and the needs of the school. National agencies planning the introduction of new programs and practices must surely know that their success depends not on an authority they lack but on the influence they can bring to bear on local affiliates.*

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* The following, I think, nicely illustrates the distinction between authority and influence:
A number of years ago, the United Synagogue of America, the national organization of Conservative synagogues, invested considerable effort and moral fervor in a campaign against Bingo. Congregations which did not stop the gambling were threatened with expulsion from the organization. No comparable sanction was employed, or even suggested, in the case of congregations who continued to maintain one-day-a-week schools for children over eight even after the United Synagogue Commission on Jewish Education had declared the three-day-a-week school the desired norm. The goodwill of rabbis and educators provided fertile ground for the efforts of persuasion of the Commission; in time the overwhelming majority of Conservative synagogues opted for the more intensive form of schooling.

The public understanding of Jewish education confines its location to the school. School people understandably adopt this position and tend to reinforce it as occasion permits. There is much to support that point of view—over the years the idea of Jewish learning has been inextricably connected with the school. As a text-centered tradition, Judaism requires the ". . . deliberate, systematic and sustained effort. . . ."[18] of a school to equip youngsters with the skills and competencies required for understanding and informed practice. The specific task of the school and the particular kind of learning experience it provides ought not, however, lead us to deny the educational potential of non-school settings. Recent social science and historical research indicates that a wide variety of agencies inform, socialize, open avenues of identification, and provide meaning. Indeed institutions of formal instruction are only one element in the configuration of instrumentalities by which ". . . a culture transmits itself across generations."[19] The influence of the family, of course, is the most prominent and powerful.

Modern Jewish communities contain, nourish, and support an extraordinary variety of non-school settings capable of educating: community centers, camps, *havurot*, membership organizations, youth movements, fundraising campaigns, synagogues, service organizations, newspapers, radio programs, television programs. These non-school settings may relate to one another because of some common interest. They may even be part of a larger organization, such as the JWB, or the umbrella organizations of the Conservative, Orthodox, and Reform denominations. On the whole, however, they are quite independent of one another and generally far removed from schools and other settings of formal education. Within limits that is not necessarily a bad thing; some degree of isolation in protection of distinctiveness guarantees a variety which can only enrich a community.

Schools and non-school settings differ from one another in many different ways.[20] The general lack of contact between the two worlds stems, in many instances, from a lack of understanding of the role of each and perhaps even disdain of one by the other. Competition for a limited pool of participants and finite resources sharpens the divide and obscures potentially complementary relationships.

A practitioner whose training has taught him/her how to move from one setting to another with competence and commitment is one way of bridging the gap and developing a fruitful utilization of the possibilities inherent in each type of setting. The idea of moving from one setting to another, back and forth and in and out, applies to teachers as well. The total educational experience, hopefully lifelong, should be seen as a process which consists of different elements—schools, camps,

retreats, Israel, and the like. At one point in life school may be the most important; at another stage the experience of a non-school setting may be more appropriate. We need also to understand how each form of education relates to and affects the other.

The creation of the connections noted above, however, are beyond the abilities and interests of individual educators. The structure implicit in the development of significant relationships requires both resources and a climate which encourages cooperation. Examples are available: a college of Jewish studies which offers courses for Jewish Community Center personnel; a bureau of Jewish education which turns to a family service agency for help in developing a family education program. I have chosen these examples deliberately—in each case the parties involved are school and non-school settings and are communal agencies supported, at least in part, by federation allocations. The federation framework is a vehicle for creating structure and encouraging relationships. Indeed, that may be its major organizational function.

Tracing the development of Jewish education in North America discloses the changing and increasingly significant role of federations. The Federation for the Support of Jewish Philanthropic Societies of New York City ". . . was organized under a plan which contemplated the exclusion of religious educational activities." That position was changed in 1917 when a special committee recommended the inclusion of religious schools among federation beneficiaries because they ". . . work . . . as moral influences in the community for bridging the gap between parents and children and for maintaining the influence of the home and the family."

That halting beginning—reflecting the attitudes of New York's established Jews of German origin toward more recently arrived Eastern European immigrants and the fear of the effect of local Talmud Torah campaigns on citywide fundraising[21]—has moved, over a period of almost three quarters of a century and through numerous controversies, from restricted funding to a pattern of comprehensive communal planning which profoundly effects Jewish education. Commissions recently established in a number of major communities—i.e. Commission on the Jewish Future in Los Angeles—are yet another manifestation of what is obviously an evolving process. Past experience clearly teaches that events in the community or the society at large very often dictate evaluation of existing patterns and the design of new modes of interaction.

The planning process, intended to rationalize organized communal activity, is clearly a mechanism which encourages the establishment of relationships. In many communities it has brought together educational agencies that had previously had

no contact with one another. At the same time it should be recognized that planning is not a "neutral" activity; it is based on assumptions not always congruent with particularistic conceptions of education. Moreover, as an activity sponsored by an organization which can function only as it achieves consensus among participants, there is the danger that planning in such a context must cater to the lowest common denominator.

The idea of centrally organized planning is, of course, an expression of the positivism which has shaped modern society. For all its advantages and even necessity, it would be well to remember its limitations. The most significant developments in Jewish education in North America since the end of World War II—the expansion of the day school movement, the increase in Hebrew-speaking camps, the spread of university programs of Jewish studies, the founding of CAJE, the rise of *havurot*—occurred outside the framework of organized and directed communal activity and planning. Similar developments in the public sector, together with suggestive findings of recent research, have led theoreticians and practitioners alike to think of planning less as a prescriptive measure than as a means of using communal resources as a lever for the inculcation of an ethic of accountability and encouraging individual units in the system to adopt initiatives which celebrate their uniqueness. In such a context the idea of structure assumes new and interesting characteristics.

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