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Outreach [Intermarriage], 1985-1994.

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## RELIGION

**Despite Prohibition, Estimated 40% Will Wed Jews to Non-Jews****Area Reform Rabbis Open to Mixed Marriages**

By JOHN DART, Times Religion Writer

PALMS SPRINGS—About 40% of the Reform rabbis in Los Angeles and Orange counties will officiate at weddings of a Jew and a non-Jew under some conditions—despite their own denomination's guidelines opposing so-called mixed-marriage ceremonies.

That estimate, by Rabbi Lennard R. Thal, a regional Reform executive, is higher than generally supposed. Thal estimated that between 30 to 40 rabbis out of 85 affiliated with the liberal wing of Judaism perform such services.

Rabbis who perform such weddings rarely talk about the issue openly.

For one thing, they are going against Judaism's legal tradition forbidding intermarriage. That law is strictly observed by Orthodox and Conservative rabbis, and widely supported by most Jewish community leaders, who fear that intermarriage is partly responsible for American Jewry's eroding numbers and decline in religious observance.

It is estimated that one Jew in three marries outside the faith, although studies vary widely.

Most Reform rabbis who officiate at mixed marriages believe that refusing to do so will do nothing to stem their proliferation. They believe they are taking a constructive step toward preserving Jewish identity within families with one Jewish spouse.

Some of these rabbis, who say they do not worry about criticism from their peers, are reluctant to be identified for another reason: "The demand for mixed-marriage ceremonies is so great that I would be overrun with requests," said a well-known Los Angeles rabbi.

Thal, however, contends that while while "the phone might go off the hook" for popular rabbis, "there is no shortage of people relative to the need."

Thal is director of the Pacific Southwest Council, the Los Angeles-based association of 64 synagogues aligned with Reform Judaism's Union of American Hebrew Congregations. He was attending the Palm Springs meeting of the Pacific Assn. of Reform Rabbis.

Rabbis who refuse to officiate at mixed marriages say it is a matter of personal and religious integrity. "I can't look a non-Jew in the eye and say this wedding is sanctioned by the Jewish people and have him break the glass at the end of the

bis, on the other hand, seem more tradition-bound, Glaser said.

Two rabbis who do perform mixed marriage ceremonies—Leonard Beerman of Leo Baek Temple, Los Angeles, and Henri Front, Temple Beth David, Westminster—said they will not co-officiate at so-called ecumenical weddings with a priest or minister. Both said they require that the couple agree to study Judaism, have a Jewish home and raise the children as Jews.

Beerman said he has always been

**'They felt the people they had turned down, they had sort of lost. These rabbis were going to take another tack now.'**

ceremony; it's hypocritical," Rabbi Larry Goldmark of La Mirada said. "I'm not a rent-a-rabbi."

Surprisingly, Thal said, those who do officiate in the Los Angeles area tend to be older rabbis, some of whom once consistently declined requests.

Rabbi Joseph B. Glaser, executive vice-president of Reform Judaism's Central Conference of American Rabbis, based in New York, said the same is true in Northern California.

"I was very much surprised when I began to hear who was doing it in California, because many of them were very traditional in other ways," Glaser said.

After talking to some of these rabbis, Glaser said, he found that "it was not that they had been worn down by the constant pressure but that they felt the people they had turned down, they had sort of lost. These rabbis were going to take another tack now."

The younger generation of rab-

bis, on the other hand, seem more willing to sanction such marriages. "If anything, I've been more liberal in recent years," he said.

Front said he once opposed mixed marriage weddings. However, about 15 years ago, he took his turn conducting Reform's introduction to Judaism classes, mostly for people who were about to be married.

"After a year's experience with hundreds of these people, I realized my former position was in error. We live in an age of romantic love—people are going to get married regardless of who marries them," Front said. "I am not so interested in *halakha* (Jewish law) as I am in the future generations of Jews in this world."

Why is Southern California a place where so many have agreed

to break with tradition?

A possible factor is that most Reform synagogues have been lenient on the issue—unlike major temples in some other cities.

The late Rabbi Edgar F. Magnin occasionally performed mixed marriages, said his longtime associate at Wilshire Boulevard Temple, Rabbi Alfred Wolf.

"As long as the Jewish partner had a firm commitment to Judaism, the couple intended to have a Jewish home and the non-Jewish partner had no conflicting faith commitment," Magnin would disregard the Reform guidelines, last re-stated in 1973, said Wolf, who is now retired.

These days, in Los Angeles County, Thal said, "to the best of my knowledge, the majority of rabbis of congregations with 400 families or more will officiate under a variety of circumstances." Put another way, he said, "There are two or three senior rabbis of large congregations in Los Angeles who do not officiate at mixed marriages."

One of those apparently is Rabbi Daniel Polish of Hollywood's Temple Israel. He was among 24 rabbis who recently signed a nationwide protest statement against a privately published argument for mixed-marriage weddings.

The statement, mailed last week to almost 1,000 U.S. and Canadian Reform rabbis, responded to criticism by Prof. Eugene Mihaly of Reform's Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati of the basis on which mixed-marriage ceremonies are discouraged.

At the same time, the protest statement suggested that the re-

fusal to officiate at mixed weddings may harm a rabbi's career.

"What is intimidating is the fact that some congregations are screening out pulpit candidates who do not officiate at mixed marriages," the signers said.

Reform officials interviewed here, however, said that is not usually the case.

"It's not an illegitimate area of questioning," Thal said, "but in the 3½ years I've been in my position there has not been one congregation that has made a decision based on that."

One rabbi, who did not wish to be identified, said he was recently tempted to change his stance against mixed-marriage ceremonies in order to beat out a rival candidate whom he thought condoned the practice. The other rabbi got the pulpit, but it turned out that he also opposed such marriages.

"He convinced the selection committee that it was not the most important thing by which to judge a rabbi," the losing rabbi said.

Rabbi A. Stanley Dreyfus of New York, the national placement director for Reform Judaism, said, "We encourage synagogues not to make it a prime factor and we prepare panels of candidates without regard to whether they do or they don't" (approve of mixed marriages).

Dreyfus, who said he resisted pleas for mixed marriages for 14 years at a Brooklyn synagogue without losing many members, nevertheless acknowledged the difficulty each rabbi faces.

"It's hard to turn people down, hard to be turned down, especially since the parents at a time like that feel that somehow they have failed. When the rabbi says no, that confirms this view of themselves."



# TEMPLE BETH EL

809 Eleventh Avenue South

Fargo, North Dakota 58103-3199

(701) 232-0441

March 7, 1991

#1  
Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler  
President, UAHC  
838 Fifth Avenue  
New York, NY 10021

Dear Rabbi Schindler:

Although I have been Administrative Secretary at Temple Beth El for 14 years and you may even recall meeting me a few times, I am not at all writing you in any official capacity. I am writing about a concern about something I see happening in Judaism which you may be aware of but in all good conscience I felt the need to write.

ARCHIVES  
The subject is rabbis performing mixed-marriages. I have read some things that you have written on the subject and I know you encourage rabbis to handle each case individually and not to be offensive. I think you realize that this is one of the main ways we are losing people. I have heard rabbis tell the Jew that we'd rather see them convert to Christianity than create a mixed marriage. People move here and I hear their tales of disgust at not being able to find a rabbi to marry them and falling away from their religion for that reason. We have successful mixed marriages in our congregation (50%) and they still maintain their Judaism. It's not ideal but is the alternative any better? Jews do fall in love with non-Jews.

What really concerns me now is the commercialism of rabbis who do perform mixed marriages. I have been quoted fees of \$1,000 to \$1,200 per marriage plus expenses. There are rabbis who perform 4-5 per day and are getting rich on this black market. There is a need and this is how it is being filled. People are very creative.

What are your feelings on this? Are there any guidelines for what kind of fees should be charged for life-cycle events? Now that spring is here I'm getting many requests for help in finding rabbis and I would like to have better answers for these people than "how much money are you willing to spend?" I would appreciate hearing from you. Thank you very much.

Cordially,

*Carla*

Carla J. Fachini, CPS  
Administrative Secretary

/cjf

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RABBI ALEXANDER M. SCHINDLER • UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS  
PRESIDENT 838 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021 (212) 249-0100

March 11, 1991  
25 Adar 5751

Ms Carla J. Fachini, CPS  
Administrative Secretary  
Temple Beth El  
809 Eleventh Avenue South  
Fargo North Dakota 58103

Dear Ms Fachini:

As you may know, I do not officiate at mixed marriages for a whole variety of reasons with which you are surely familiar. I heeded this principle even when my daughter was involved. I had a Justice of the Peace perform the ceremony and I said some words as did her father-in-law after the couple had been pronounced man and wife.

This does not mean that I do not respect those rabbis who do officiate at intermarriages. An argument on principle can be made for that case, too.

In either case, I am convinced that it doesn't matter whether you do or do not officiate. What matters is how you approach the couple and how you explain your position to them.

Note if you will, that I said that I respect those rabbis who officiate at mixed marriages "on principle" I do not respect those who see this as a means of making a lot of money. Crass commercialism and greed are not a matter of principle. I, myself have never, in my entire rabbinic career - when I was in a congregation or out - accepted a fee for such a life cycle rite. Occasionally, people make a charitable contribution in my honor, but that is all. This is the guideline that I have set for myself. Unfortunately, I am not in a position to set such guidelines for anyone else. It is a matter of everyone having to live with his own conscience.

I know that does not help you very much, but it is the best that I can offer.

Cordially,

Alexander M. Schindler



*Mixed Marriage*  
*CCAR*  
*Endorsement*

*No further*

February 14, 1985

Mrs. Betty G. Zivitz, President  
Temple Sinai  
6227 St. Charles Avenue  
New Orleans, Louisiana 70118

Dear Betty:

Thank you for your letter of January 24. I appreciate your sharing your own personal reactions to the pamphlet on mixed marriage.

I think it important to note that this was a publication undertaken by a group of rabbis on their own, and without the blessing, funding or endorsement of either the UAHC or the CCAR. I fully expect that the other side will be heard from shortly, and that of course will also have to be undertaken as a private matter.

The UAHC as an institution should not enter into this debate. The ultimate decision as to officiation or non-officiation at mixed marriages lies with the individual rabbi. This is, therefore, a matter that must be debated in rabbinic circles, and resolved to the extent that it will ever be resolved.

I would suggest that you send a copy of your letter to Rabbi Maslin. It is Rabbi Maslin and his colleagues who should have the benefit of your opinion. Thanks again for also sharing it with me.

Kindest personal regards.

Cordially,

Charles J. Rothschild, Jr.

CJR:tb

bcc: /AMS  
Rabbi Seltzer  
Rabbi Syme  
Lydia Kukoff



# Temple Sinai

January 24, 1985

Mr. Charles Rothschild  
Chairman of the Board  
Union of American Hebrew Congregations  
838 Fifth Avenue  
New York, New York 10021

Dear Chuck:

I have recently finished reading the pamphlet on 'Reform Rabbis and Mixed Marriage' and the cover letter signed by Rabbi Simeon Maslin. The letter states that this pamphlet is available to congregational board members as well as members of the CCAR. This being so, the question has now been formally opened to the lay community. It is with that in mind that I express my own personal attitude on the matter.

First of all in the letter, Rabbi Maslin begins with a concern that "deserving colleagues are not being considered or even interviewed for certain pulpits because of their refusal to officiate at mixed marriages." This, I hasten to add, is true as well in cases of his colleagues who do officiate at mixed marriages.

While it is the right of each rabbi to determine what is right for him or her, it is also the right of each congregation to determine what is right for it and who can best serve the needs of its membership.

Second, Rabbi Maslin states "something had to be done to counter the common perception that, while Orthodox and Conservative rabbis do not officiate at mixed marriages, Reform rabbis do."

Here again, I believe Rabbi Maslin "misses the mark." The perception more accurately stated is that Orthodox and Conservative rabbis don't perform mixed marriages and Reform rabbis may. A fact which I personally support.

For a group of Reform rabbis to take this position, in this manner, questioning the rabbinic integrity of their own colleagues who for just and valid reasons differ with them is, I believe, most inappropriate and divisive.

Within the pamphlet itself, we are treated to a new phrase which I presume is to be supportive of the position taken - "according to the heritage of Moses" - an interesting phrase. Where else could we use such a phrase to re-fundamentalize Reform Judaism?

cc: AMS  
Sandy Seiberg ✓  
Dore Sygne  
Lydie's Kucholt



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Mr. Charles Rothschild  
Chairman of the Board, UAHC

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According to the heritage of Moses, debts are to be forgiven after seven years.

According to the heritage of Moses, a stubborn and rebellious son is to be stoned to death.

According to the heritage of Moses, a woman may not wear garments which pertain to a man.

According to the heritage of Moses, we may not wear cloth of wool and linen together.

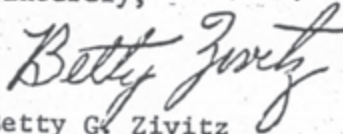
There are those of our own brethren who state that according to the heritage of Moses, only a child born of a Jewish mother is a Jew; an interpretation denying patrilineal descent.

We Reform Jews now are so strongly embracing "Outreach." What a noble term! The same rabbis who have signed this document no doubt welcome couples of mixed marriage into their congregations and their children into religious school ;... as long as someone else does the deed.

The final statement in this pamphlet that these rabbis have been "dealing with the problem of mixed marriages" is presumptuous to say the least. All Jews have been dealing with the question of interfaith marriage, but we come to different yet equally gut-wrenching conclusions. Interfaith marriage is not, I believe, a problem that can be solved by saying "No." Rather it is a question that can be addressed by saying "Maybe."

One final note -- what threatens the survival of Judaism may well not be interfaith marriage. It may be that those responsible for keeping our Jewish batteries charged are in some cases searching for the peak on the wrong mountain.

Sincerely,



Betty G. Zivitz  
President

BGZ/ba

DRAFT LETTER

*to Betty Zvitz*

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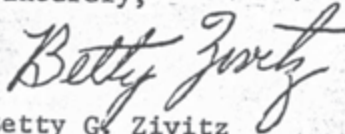
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Sincerely,



Betty G. Zivitz  
President

BGZ/ba



Israel's national existence comes from the Arab armed forces and that "the limited threat to Israel, not the major one," is posed by terrorism.

"Whenever we deal with Israel's security we have to bear in mind the existence of these two levels of threats. No terror organization can threaten the very existence of Israel, not the PLO, not the Shiites and who knows who in the future. But at the same time they carry out the daily threat to the normal way of life of the Israelis. When we talk about Lebanon, we talk only about terrorism. Lebanon never was and will not be in the foreseeable future an Arab country than can build an armed force that can be of any threat to Israel."

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Premier Shimon Peres, addressing the same mission, said: "I know that many of us were suspicious that deep in our hearts we want to expand, we want to gain land. Nothing is more wrong than that. We have withdrawn from Sinai though we could have remained there. We are withdrawing from Lebanon though we have the military strength to stay there. What we are doing represents a policy, a moral commitment, not a military must nor an expediency in political terms."

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Israel is land and it is people. Since 1948, Israel has absorbed more than 1.8 million Jews from 120 countries, speaking 70 languages. But above all else, Israel is a word -- and that word is Shalom.

#### **SURVEY SHOWS INTERMARRIAGE AMONG FRENCH JEWS IS PERVASIVE** By Edwin Eytan

PARIS, March 28 (JTA) -- From the mid-sixties until now, more than 50 percent of French Jews who married took a non-Jewish spouse, according to a survey carried out by the French National Research Center and the Hebrew University's Institute of Demographic Studies.

The 400-page study, just released here by the National Research Center, also found that there are 535,000 Jews currently living in France, about 200,000 fewer than previous estimates, and that the average age of French Jews is increasing.

The principal authors of the study are Prof. Doris Bensimon of Caen University, who is chief research scientist at the National Research Center, and Dr. Sergio Dela Pergola, of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. They reported that the high rate of intermarriage "is particularly serious" for the future of the Jewish community because 60 percent of the Jewish partners in mixed marriages are women.

The researchers noted that in French society "it is the father who is the dominant note in the family's religious practices and cultural options." They predicted that there will be fewer Jewish males available for marriage in the years ahead, according to demographic trends in France, and that consequently, an every larger proportion of Jewish women will marry non-Jews.

On the basis of current demographic trends in Western Europe as a whole, and especially in the European Jewish community, the study predicts "at the best" a stabilization of the French Jewish community and probably a drop in its numbers by the end of the century. The French Jewish community is the largest in Western Europe.

Dela Pergola warned that the community's average age will continue to increase and this ageing process will affect the number of active community members. This factor must be borne in mind by Jewish community leaders and organizations when they allocate resources and lay the groundwork for educational institutions during the next 10-15 years, Dela Pergola wrote.

So far, community leaders have had no comment on the study's findings. Most lay and professional leaders said they have not yet had an opportunity to thoroughly study its hundreds of pages and dozens of tables and graphs.

#### **ROCKEFELLER U., WEIZMANN INSTITUTE COLLABORATION MADE POSSIBLE BY \$5 M CONTRIBUTION BY RAPID-AMERICAN CORP.**

NEW YORK, March 28 (JTA) -- An unprecedented collaboration between two of the world's foremost research institutions, the Rockefeller University and the Weizmann Institute of Science, will be made possible through a contribution by the Rapid-American Corporation (R-AC), it was announced today by Mona Ackerman, R-AC president.

A new foundation, the Foundation for the Rockefeller University and the American Committee for the Weizmann Institute of Science, Inc., will be funded by the Rapid-American Corporation through a contribution of \$5 million which is expected to generate \$500,000 per year from investment.

It is anticipated that the beneficiaries of the new foundation will ultimately share in an aggregate of at least \$14 million.

"The magnitude of the research efforts undertaken by these two institutions is enormous and they have already contributed significantly toward finding solutions to the world's most pressing problems," Ackerman said. "Our ardent hope is that the award will enable the Rockefeller-Weizmann scientific teams to work together even more intensively and fruitfully to eradicate disease."

According to Dr. Joshua Lederberg, president of the Rockefeller University, the establishment of the new foundation will bring the two institutions closer together in ways that would not otherwise have been possible.

"We expect that the foundation will support work in many fields, but many of its initial efforts are likely to be in biomedical research areas like cancer biology, the neurosciences, molecular genetics, immunology, plant genetics and parasitic diseases, as well as other fundamental science," Lederberg said. "Research in these fields would impact on a wide range of human problems."

Prof. Michael Sela, president of the Weizmann Institute of Science, said that this new formal link with the Rockefeller University will serve as the catalyst for Weizmann and Rockefeller scientific teams, both in New York and in Israel, to deepen their range of potentially life-saving research. "The formalization of the Weizmann Institute's link with the Rockefeller University adds a bold new dimension to the relationship between the two institutions -- we are most grateful to the Rapid-American Foundation and the Riklis family," he said.

Additionally, the subjects and findings of the research supported through the new foundation will form the basis of international symposia involving leading scientists from institutions throughout the world.



# BEHIND THE HEADLINES THE OTHER FACE OF ISRAEL: A REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK By Murray Zuckoff

(Last article in a series.)

JERUSALEM, March 28 (JTA) -- Israel is not only a place, it's also a state of mind, a bitter-sweet reality. It's ebullience, verve and vitality. It's the quiet measured pace of 19th century Mea Shearim, and the now, the in, the where-it's-at dizzying and bedazzling Dizengoff Street.

It's where a Cabinet Minister can stand on a street corner chewing the fat with a crony and where a disgruntled citizen can chew out a Cabinet minister. It's where the speech of a Prime Minister is interrupted on TV and radio so that an international soccer match in which an Israeli team is involved can be telecast and broadcast.

It's where young men and women soldiers stand at bus stops waiting to hitch rides. It's where bus drivers are kings and riders are peasants in their eyes. It's where motorists vie with each other to see who can drive faster than a Concorde plane. It's where every red-blooded Israeli aspires to become a "pakid" (bureaucrat) and where every pakid reigns supreme in his or her own office or cubicle.

It's Yad Vashem and King David's Citadel. It's where every street is named after known or obscure Zionists, Jewish writers, poets and philosophers -- and American Presidents like "Avraham Lincoln." It's arms tattooed with concentration camp numbers, faces from almost every corner on the globe, and where the worst form of intermarriage is that between a Litvak and a Galitzianer.

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Israel is also a place where primary school students dressed as American Indians put on a Purim play for recently arrived Ethiopian Jewish immigrants at the Kfar Saba absorption center. Why American Indians? A Jewish Agency official was quick to explain: "Why not? Who's to say that Mordechai and Esther weren't Indians?"

\*\*\*

Israelis have always been known for ignoring lines and for breaking into them at will at bus stops, at supermarkets, at movies, wherever. It was a challenge. The usual response from those waiting was always a boisterous, "Rega, Rega," (roughly translated as "wait a minute" or "hold it.") No more. Lines are respected, and if someone should revert to the primeval, the offender will immediately say, "slicha" (excuse me.) Unbelievable, but true.

\*\*\*

Taba is little more than a hotel and a strip of sandy beach. The Egyptians and Israelis are trying to settle a dispute over the ownership of this enclave near Eilat. But the Israeli and Egyptian soldiers who stand on either side of the border, which is demarcated by nothing more than two oil drums with a heavy metal rod across them, are more concerned with who is going to get the latest container of coffee for each other than who owns the land. Fraternization is the order of the day.

\*\*\*

Some 40 members of the 80-member United Jewish Appeal Ambassadors' Mission visited an Air Force base somewhere in the Negev. While there, they planted trees. With uncanny adroitness, every one of them picked up a shovel, dug up some earth and patted it down around the saplings.

Having finished their task, they boarded a waiting bus to take them to their next destination. As the bus, filled with contented UJA tree planters, left the base it passed by the area of the planting. Out in the field IDF soldiers were busy re-planting the saplings, "doing right what we screwed up," some of the UJA members said wistfully.

\*\*\*

Kibbutz Grofit, in the Negev near Eilat, across from Aqaba, has what might be a unique relationship with Jordan. Through a tacit agreement with the kibbutz and with the Israel government, Jordanian security authorities notify the kibbutz whenever they know or suspect that terrorists might be in the vicinity. The Jordanians are practical about this arrangement -- they don't want their only port city disrupted, and so they keep the kibbutz informed. "A cat couldn't slip through the area without us being informed," said one leading member of the kibbutz.

\*\*\*

One of the hottest items in Israel is a T-shirt with the inscription: "America, feel safe. Israel is behind you."

\*\*\*

Owners and workers in the "shuk" (open air market) in the Old City are inveterate hawkers and talkers. They entice customers into their emporiums by assuring each and every passerby, "Come in, doesn't cost anything to look." Once in, the customer is asked his place of residence. In my case, the answer was New York. It seemed as if almost every merchant -- if one took seriously every one of them -- had either visited New York, intended to visit it or had friends or relatives who lived or had visited the city. Invariably, the areas were identified as "Central Park West," "Forest Hills," or "West End Avenue." Real Arab enclaves.

\*\*\*

Tourists love to take pictures. And what better place is there than at an absorption center for Ethiopian Jews. The ever-smiling youngsters are a joy to behold. And so, on this afternoon a group of American tourists were cocking shutters, flashing bulbs and having a time photographing the Ethiopian youngsters and each other photographing the youngsters. One of the Ethiopian children turned to his counselor and asked, in all innocence: "Are Americans born with cameras?"

\*\*\*

Few Israeli civilians are seen in Nablus. The few that are are cabbies. It seems that they come here to have work done on their cars because the mechanical work is better and cheaper than it is in Jerusalem. Although it might take a whole day for the job to be done, the cabbies don't mind. While waiting for their cabs, they sit around at the local cafes and sip coffee at a leisurely pace.

\*\*\*

On a recent Saturday night a group of young Orthodox Jews sat around a TV set in a hotel lobby. They were entranced by an episode of the popular "A-Team," with Hebrew subtitles. They chortled and chuckled with delight whenever the A-Team good guys would clobber the baddies.

\*\*\*

Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin, addressing the Ambassadors' Mission, stressed that the basic threat to



*Outreach*  
Edith J. Miller

March 28, 1984

Karen Lurie

Joan Greenberg; Edith Lerner

In response to your memo of March 27 you should know that it has been my policy to turn over all inquiries regarding rabbis who officiate at inter-faith marriages to the NYFRS -- or the proper UAHC region. Unless it is a very close personal friend asking the question I bow out of the picture. I firmly believe that this should be the policy for your office, indeed for all UAHC offices.

There was a time when this question was simply not answered, certainly names were not shared. Times have changed and with the Outreach Program a different view is being taken on the part of some. There have been discussions of this subject by the staff cabinet and there will undoubtedly be continued discussions. But until a final ruling is made, I would urge that you turn over all calls for this information to the NYFRS.

In re your comments on Outreach and encouragement, I take a different view. I am firm in my belief that each rabbi must determine personal policy on interfaith weddings. I do not believe we can tell any rabbi he or she must or must not officiate at such ceremonies. On the other hand, if a rabbi chooses not to officiate this does not mean the door is closed to the couple. The rabbi should be open, should take time to chat with the couple and share the reasons why his/her participation is not possible. There are many ways to provide encouragement short of denying one's own principles.

Know, too, that even if we were to provide a listing of rabbis who perform such ceremonies the utmost of care must be taken. Many of the rabbis have rules and regulations as to when they will or will not officiate. Many of the calls come from people who have no ties to the Jewish community beyond wishing to have a "Jewish wedding." We can't have our rabbis inundated with calls from such couples. It is not a cut and dried, black and white subject..there are many, many areas to be considered. Therefore, I once again urge that you transfer all calls requesting names of rabbis to proper Regional offices.



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# MEMORANDUM

From Karen Lurie  
To Edie Miller  
Copies Joan Greenberg, Edith Lerner  
Subject Requests for Rabbis to perform "mixed marriages".

Date 3/27/84

Edie, I spoke with a woman yesterday who wanted to know if I could suggest a rabbi (in this case, one located in the Metropolitan area) who would perform a "mixed" marriage ceremony.

From what I gather, the UAHC policy is not to give out names. In the above case, I asked the New York Federation to send the woman a listing of congregations in the area. Rabbi Zlotowitz sent her a Brooklyn listing.

Usually, Edith Lerner gets these calls, but when she is not here, I answer her phone. We receive many requests for this type of information.

I am writing to you to ask whether, indeed, UAHC policy is not to give out specific names. If this is the case, perhaps you can inquire whether this policy can be changed.

It seems to me that the Union's position on Outreach would go hand in hand with honoring "mixed marriage" requests for a rabbi to perform the ceremony. If we are trying to encourage non-Jews to adopt our faith, then this encouragement should start from stage 1: arranging the wedding. If we are cooperative in the very beginning, I believe we establish good relations which will last past the actual ceremony.

Is it possible to have a listing of rabbis who will perform these weddings for those people who request it from our office?

Thanks for your help,

*Karen*





# NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PROGRAMS FOR THE INTERMARRIED

*Co-Sponsors:* American Jewish Committee, Union of American Hebrew Congregations,  
United Synagogue of America, Federation of Reconstructionist Congregations and Havurot

## CONFERENCE REGISTRATION PACKET



*Conference Coordinator:*

Nina Mizrahi  
Union of American Hebrew Congregations  
838 Fifth Avenue  
New York, New York 10021  
(212) 249-0100, ext. 511



# NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PROGRAMS FOR THE INTERMARRIED

Co-Sponsors: American Jewish Committee, Union of American Hebrew Congregations,  
United Synagogue of America, Federation of Reconstructionist Congregations and Havurot

## REGISTRATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (home) \_\_\_\_\_ (Business) \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate Workshop choice by number:

WORKSHOP I: "Introduction to Judaism - Programs of Study and Experience"

Tuesday, 11:00-12:30 PM

\_\_\_\_\_  
1st choice

\_\_\_\_\_  
2nd choice

WORKSHOP II: "Integrating Jews-By-Choice into the Synagogue and the Community"

Tuesday, 2:30-4:00 PM

\_\_\_\_\_  
1st choice

\_\_\_\_\_  
2nd choice

WORKSHOP III: "Outreach to Interfaith Couples and their Children"

Wednesday, 10:30-12:00 PM

\_\_\_\_\_  
1st choice

\_\_\_\_\_  
2nd choice

WORKSHOP IV: "Outreach to Jewish Parents of Interfaith Couples"

Wednesday, 2:00-3:30 PM

\_\_\_\_\_  
1st choice

\_\_\_\_\_  
2nd choice

Conference Coordinator:

Nina Mizrahi

Union of American Hebrew Congregations

838 Fifth Avenue

New York, New York 10021

(212) 249-0100, ext. 511



Please respond early.

Fee: \$75.00, includes lunch\*, registration packet and all materials.

\* dietary laws observed

Make checks payable to: NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PROGRAMS FOR THE INTERMARRIED

Send to: Nina Mizrahi, Conference Coordinator  
Union of American Hebrew Congregations  
838 Fifth Avenue  
New York, N.Y. 10021





# MEMORANDUM

From Nina Mizrahi  
To Rabbi Alexander Schindler  
Copies  
Subject

Date 5/6/85

You are scheduled to deliver keynote address III, on Wednesday, 5/22/85, 9:30-10:30 AM at the Stephen Wise Free Synagogue. Information on the workshops following your address can be found in the enclosed registration packet.

Please let us know what parts of the conference you plan to attend in addition to your address. We would also appreciate knowing if you will join us for lunch on one or both days of the conference. Please specify.

Thank you for your assistance. We are looking forward to your important contribution to this historic event!

Best regards,

*Nina Mizrahi*  
Nina Mizrahi  
Conference Coordinator

*Tell her  
you'll attend  
most of it*



Union of American Hebrew Congregations  
838 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021 (212) 249-0100



# NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PROGRAMS FOR THE INTERMARRIED

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United Synagogue of America, Federation of Reconstructionist Congregations and Havurot

## PROGRAM

MAY 21-22

STEPHEN WISE FREE SYNAGOGUE, N.Y.

### Tuesday, 5/21

9:30 LK

- 9:00-9:15 AM Check-in, pick up registration packet
- 9:15 Greetings
- 10:00 Keynote I: "Introduction to Judaism - Programs of Study and Experience"  
Keynote speaker: Dr. David Gordis
- 11:00 Workshop I: Introduction to Judaism Models
- 12:30 PM Lunch and Browse in Resource Center
- 1:30 Keynote II: "Integrating Jews-by-Choice into the Synagogue and the Community"  
Keynote speaker: Rabbi David Teutsch
- 2:30 Workshop II: Integration & Post-Conversion Models
- 4:00 Discussion: "What Research Tells Us"
- 5:30 First Day Wrap Up

\*\*\*\*\*

### Wednesday, 5/22

- 9:00 AM Coffee/Tea
- 9:30 Keynote III: "Outreach to Interfaith Couples and Their Children"  
Keynote speaker: Rabbi Alexander Schindler
- 10:30 Workshop III: Models for Interfaith Couples and Their Children
- 12:00 Lunch
- 1:00 PM Keynote IV: "Outreach to Jewish Parents of Interfaith Couples"  
Keynote speaker: Rabbi Alexander Shapiro
- 2:00 Workshop IV: Models for Parents of Interfaith Couples
- 3:30 Directions for the Future

#### *Conference Coordinator:*

Nina Mizrahi  
Union of American Hebrew Congregations  
838 Fifth Avenue  
New York, New York 10021  
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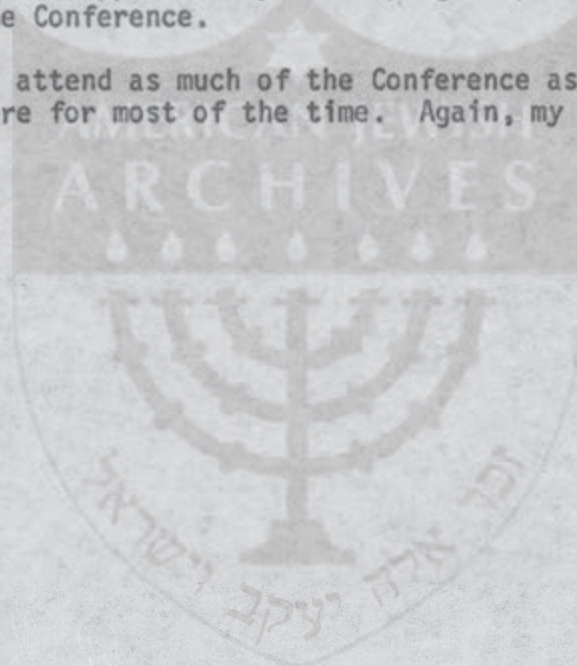
Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler

May 8, 1985

Nina Mizrahi

Thank you for the schedule for the National Conference on Programs for the Intermarried. I appreciate your keeping me posted with all of the details of the Conference.

I will do my best to attend as much of the Conference as possible, I'll probably be there for most of the time. Again, my thanks for all your efforts.





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## WORKSHOP I

Tuesday, 5/21/85, 11:00-12:30 PM

### "Introduction to Judaism-Programs of Study and Experience"

1. Presenter: Rabbi Stephen E. Einstein

A cum laude-Phi Beta Kappa graduate of UCLA, ordained at HUC-JIR, Rabbi Einstein is the spiritual leader of Congregation B'nai Tzedek, Fountain Valley, CA. He has taught the community-wide Introduction to Judaism course for nine years, and is the co-editor of Introduction to Judaism: A Course Outline. He is past president of the Orange County Board of Rabbis and the Jewish Educators' Association, Vice President of the Bureau of Jewish Education, and has served on the Board of Jewish Federation and Jewish Family Service. He was recently elected to the Fountain Valley School Board. Rabbi Einstein is married and the father of four children.

Workshop: A description of and sample lesson from the Introduction to Judaism course developed by Rabbi Einstein and Lydia Kukoff. The course combines Jewish learning and Jewish doing, utilizing the holidays and life cycle as points of entry into Jewish theology, ethics, history, literature and observance.

2. Presenter: Rabbi Steven E. Foster

Ordained by the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati, is currently serving as Senior Rabbi of Temple Emanuel, Denver, Colorado. He is a former Dean of the Denver Institute and College of Jewish Studies. Rabbi Foster is a Co-Chairperson for the Commission on Reform Jewish Outreach and Vice-President of the Denver Area Interfaith Clergy Conference. A former board member of Jewish Family and Children's Service, Rabbi Foster currently serves on the Boards of the Jewish Marriage Encounter of Colorado and the Allied Jewish Federation.

Workshop: Rabbi Foster will outline the conversion process that he uses in Denver. Included in the process will be the ten commitments that have become a part of the requirements for conversion, and the topics with some conclusions of his group process that every prospective convert enters. Rabbi Foster will also comment on some of the problem/areas for prospective converts together with some possible solutions for the helping professional.

3. Presenter: Dr. Edward L. Greenstein

Is Associate Professor in Bible at the Jewish Theological Seminary and the Author of many academic and popular writings. For the second year he has been teaching introductions to Judaism in a



small-group format, last year for the Federation of Reconstructionist Congregations and Havurot and this year for Derekh Torah in New York.

Workshop: Dr. Greenstein will discuss the rationale for and structure of an introduction to Judaism that seeks to develop participants' involvement in Jewish community and culture as well as instruct them in the history and subject matter of Jewish civilization. Participants will examine a 30-week course using a small-class format in which participants become connected to the Jewish community through a network of Jewish hosts.

4. Presenter: Rabbi Stephen C. Lerner

Is founder and director of the Center for Conversion to Judaism with offices in Manhattan and Teaneck, New Jersey. He is also chairman of the Committee on Conversion of the Rabbinical Assembly, the international organization of more than 1,200 Conservative rabbis. He has made programs for potential converts his major rabbinic work for much of the past decade.

Workshop: Learning about Judaism with conversion in mind is best done in individualized, caring, hands-on programs which not only impart information about Judaism but also try to expand the experiential dimension so that the potential ger (convert) comes to identify with the Jewish people as well.

5. Presenter: Ann Lynn Lipton

Ms. Lipton is the Director of Jewish Education of our Jewish Federation and brings to the position much experience in education and in Jewish community work. Ms. Lipton holds a B.A. degree in American Jewish History from Hunter College and an M.A. degree in American Jewish History from the College of William and Mary. She is presently working on her Doctoral Degree in Jewish Education at New York University where she spends the summers studying.

Ms. Lipton is also involved in educating young men and women who "chose Judaism" in Palm Beach County. Working with the Board of Rabbis, she is the instructor for all potential converts who are also in counseling with their respective rabbis. This program has been an overwhelming success with some 30 couples and individuals going through the 16-week course of instruction in the past year.

Ms. Lipton is interested in the issues of Jewish identity and Jewish survival. She has great interest in furthering the Jewish life of our community. As Jewish Education Director of Palm Beach County, she is 1 of only 5 females out of more than 50 individuals who hold this position in the U.S.



Workshop: The "Introduction to Judaism" course sponsored by the Palm Beach County Board of Rabbis was created to meet the needs of individuals and couples from different congregations who were considering choosing Judaism.

The members of the class study for 16 weeks, 2 hours each week, while also meeting with their respective rabbis for counseling and discussions. They also must be sponsored by a Rabbi who agrees to meet with them and to assist them as they explore Judaism.

The unique quality of this program is that it is taught by a Jewish Educator and that there is a partnership with the rabbis who are involved on a weekly or monthly basis with their respective students. Also, this program crosses movement lines and presents all aspects of Jewish life equally. As a result, there is a quality of sharing and mutual understanding of all aspects of Jewish life. In addition it enables all students--whether they come from a large or small synagogue--the same, quality education supplemented by interested and caring counseling from the rabbis in the community.

The program has been so successful that 33 couples have gone through it in the past 18 months and another 6 couples are presently enrolled in the program. Of the 33 who entered the program 28 have proceeded to chose Judaism. The program has a very high visibility in the community as well as an excellent reputation.

6. Presenter: Rabbi Ira J. Schiffer

Is a graduate of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College and holds a Master's degree from Brown University in History of Religions. He has done training in pastoral care and counseling and has served Temple Beth El in Newark, Delaware for eight years. He was recently elected President of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association.

Workshop: This workshop will present a model program based on the cooperative efforts of a community's Reform, Conservative and Reconstructionist rabbis. Issues concerning selection for the program, course content, relational concerns and integration into the community will be discussed.

Discussion will be encouraged to explore the model's appropriateness and implementation in various communities.

## WORKSHOP II

Tuesday, 5/21/85, 2:30-4:00 PM

### "Integrating Jews-by-Choice into the Synagogue and the Community"

7. Presenter: Rabbi Ephraim Z. Buchwald

Rabbi Ephraim Buchwald has been the educational director of Lincoln Square Synagogue for thirteen years, during which time the Joseph Shapiro Institute of Adult Jewish Studies, which he directs, has achieved national acclaim as one of the largest and most successful adult Jewish education programs in the country. He has also pioneered in outreach efforts to non-affiliated Jews with programs such as the "Beginner's Service" for those with little or no background, and "Turn Friday Night into Shabbos," a community Shabbat experience.

Workshop:

Lincoln Square Synagogue in New York City, an Orthodox synagogue, has long been a center for Jews returning to observance, and Jews-by-Choice. Rabbi Buchwald will share with you from the experiences of converts in Lincoln Square Synagogue and their transformation from almost unwelcomed guests to fullfledged members in a traditional synagogue setting.

8. Presenter: Rachel Cowan

Is Director of Derekh Torah, a Jewish Learning Center which is a program designed to provide a solid intellectual and experiential introduction to Jewish thought, prayer, history and community for people--Jews and non-Jews alike--who are considering a commitment to Judaism. It seeks to integrate its graduates into the Jewish community by helping them to establish personal friendships with observant Jews and to study with a rabbi who will introduce them into his/her congregation. Students study in groups of 12 with one teacher for 30 weeks. Ms. Cowan is a Jew-by-Choice.

Workshop:

This workshop will discuss the needs of Jews-by-Choice who have recently converted, and will discuss ideas and programs for integrating them into the Jewish community, and helping them work through the feelings they have about leaving a familiar environment and joining a new one--whether it be holidays and ceremonies, or culture and life style, or issues of relations with family, either the Jewish or non-Jewish.

9. Presenter: Dru Greenwood

Became a Jew-by-Choice in 1970. She has served as the Chairperson of B'nai Abraham, a post conversion support group sponsored by Temple Israel of Boston. Ms. Greenwood has also served as Post-Conversion Program Coordinator and Outreach Coordinator of the UAHC Northeast



Council. Currently, she is the Outreach Coordinator for the New Jersey-West Hudson Valley Council of the UAHC.

Ms. Greenwood holds a B.A. in English from Smith College.

Workshop:

Integrating new Jews-by-Choice into the community. This workshop will deal with the multitude of issues and challenges faced by the new Jews-by-Choice in the process of becoming part of the Jewish community and by the Jewish community in its attempt to reach out to new Jews. A variety of specific programs for the education and sensitization of the community and two models for support of new Jews-by-Choice will be discussed in detail.

10. Presenter: Rabbi Frederic Margulies

Is the Associate Rabbi of Valley Beth Shalom in Encino, California and, as an instructor in the Introduction to Judaism Course at the University of Judaism, has taught many Jews-by-Choice. In addition, he has been instrumental in coordinating various programs at the synagogue to enrich the conversion process.

Workshop:

Rabbi Margulies will describe the Outreach Program developed at Valley Beth Shalom. Under this program, Jews-by-Choice have been matched with synagogue families for home hosting to celebrate Shabbat and holidays. They have developed a program of Friday night dinners at the synagogue. Rabbi Margulies will share materials that have been developed to implement these programs.

11. Presenter: Lena Romanoff

Born in Italy, earned a B.S. in Nursing and an M.A. in Educational Psychology from the University of Pennsylvania. She underwent Orthodox conversion in 1973. In 1983 she became involved with the Jewish Converts Network, founded at the Penn. Hillel, and established the main line chapter the following year.

The Jewish Converts Network is an informally affiliated network of locally autonomous groups of individuals who have chosen Judaism or who may be contemplating conversion. People come to JCN with a need for information, counseling, support, guidance, and socialization. JCN offers these people an opportunity to share their thoughts and experiences with other people of similar background in a friendly and informal setting. Meetings are held in the homes of members on a monthly basis, however much of the support that JCN provides is done

on an ongoing individual basis either personally, over the phone, or by letter.

Workshop:

It will deal with the following concerns: 1) Organizing local chapters of JCN - "Who Needs this Anyway?"; 2) A typical meeting of a JCN chapter - "What's Going on Here?"; 3) Converts experiences in the process of Jewish acculturation - "How Can you Be a Real Jew with a Face like That?"; 4) Interaction with local synagogue rabbis - "Don't Call us, We'll Call you when We Need You!"; 5) Support and rapport among members of the extended families on both sides - "I Win - You Win!"

12. Presenter: Erica Bard Riley

Attended the State University of New York at Stony Brook and the University of Louisville where she received an M.A. in Clinical Psychology. Most recently, she coordinated the two-year Project on Inter-marriage/Jews-by-Choice at the Jewish Family and Vocational Service in Louisville, KY.

Workshop:

The integration of the Jews-by-Choice into the community is a challenge both for the new Jews and for the community. Utilizing the model developed by the Jewish Family and Vocational Service in Louisville, Kentucky, for its Project on Inter-marriage--Jews-by-Choice, this workshop will focus on the practical aspects of integration. Approaches designed to ease the new Jew's entry into the community will be discussed as well as methods devised to increase community awareness and sensitivity. Discussion groups, workshops and other means of addressing these issues will be described.



### WORKSHOP III

Wednesday, 5/22/85, 10:30-12:00 PM

#### "Outreach to Interfaith Couples and the Children"

13. Presenters: Judy Aronson and Rabbi Joel Oseran

An alumna of both Harvard Divinity School and Brandeis University, Judy Aronson is Education/Administrator of the New Reform Congregation in Encino, California. Judy has facilitated interfaith couples' groups for the U.A.H.C. for the past two years, and has worked with many children of interfaith marriages in her school.

In 1983, Judy was a presenter at a conference entitled Women, Religion, and Social Change at the Center for the Study of World Religions at Harvard.

An honors graduate of U.C.L.A., Rabbi Oseran earned a Master of Science degree in Education at U.S.C. before being ordained at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in New York. His specialty in Jewish education has been supplemented with doctoral work at Hebrew University's School of Education in Jerusalem and now at Hebrew Union College in Los Angeles.

For many years, he was associated with the Brandeis-Bardin Institute, serving as program director and then director of the Institute's Camp Alonim. In addition, he has served as Rabbi and educational consultant for Vista Del Mar's Child Care Service.

Following his ordination in 1976, Rabbi Oseran moved to Israel where he became a member of the HUC-JIR faculty in Jerusalem.

In 1982, Rabbi Oseran served on an interim basis at Temple Judea in Tarzana. He is currently the rabbi/educator at the University Synagogue in Los Angeles.

#### Workshop:

The workshop is entitled "The Times and Seasons--A Jewish Perspective" and is part of the UAHC's Outreach Effort to Interfaith Couples.

The workshop session will focus on the following key dimensions of the course: 1) The philosophical and theoretical goals for the course - Why was it created? For whom? What constitutes success? Failure?; 2) A specific class by class (8 classes in all) explanation of approach and methodology. What happens in each class, what is the thread which connects one class to the next; 3) What we have learned about Interfaith Couples and their Children? Prominent issues which seem to arise in every group. What Interfaith Couples are looking for in such a course. 4) Suggestions for instituting such a course in "your community." Factors for consideration; what experience has taught us.

14. Presenter: Rabbi Andrew Baker

He is the Washington Area Director of the American Jewish Committee and co-author of Working with the Intermarried: A Practical Guide to Jewish Community Workshops. His work in Washington has led to a number of jointly sponsored AJC-Jewish Social Service Agency workshops for interfaith couples, seminars for community lay leaders and a guide to area congregations for intermarried families.

Rabbi Baker is also the First Vice President of the Interfaith Conference of Washington, a member of the board of the National Catholic Conference for Interracial Justice and a Commissioner of the D.C. Human Rights Commission.

Workshop:

While this session will discuss the practical elements of establishing a community workshop for intermarried couples, it will give special focus to dealing with the Jewish communal questions and concerns and bridging the traditional gap between rabbi and social worker.

15. Presenter: Rabbi Howard I. Bogot

Rabbi Bogot is Co-Director of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, Department of Education, Director of Curriculum Development and Teacher Education, and the Co-Director of the Joint Commission on Jewish Education of the UAHC, the Central Conference of American Rabbis and the National Association of Temple Educators.

Rabbi Bogot served as a Regional president and Educative Board member to the Central Conference of American Rabbis and is co-author of five newly published UAHC books for young children: Prayer Is Reaching, My Body Is Something Special, I Learn About God, I'm Growing, Books Are Treasures and author of the synagogue text, Yoni, as well as of numerous syllabi for learners of all ages. His newest text, Alef-Bet of Jewish Values, is a lexicon of Hebrew concepts basic to Jewish thought.

Workshop:

This workshop will review a selection of home and school activities designed to sensitize young people (Pre-School-High School) in the realms of Jewish Identity Assertiveness and Jewish Identity as Choice. Participants will sample a variety of educational tasks published in the UAHC William and Frances Schuster Curriculum, "To See the World Through Jewish Eyes."

16. Presenter: Nancy Kleiman

She is co-chairwoman of the Jewish Family Connection, the Outreach program of Temple Israel, Boston, MA. A former nun, Nancy has lived in a Mixed Marriage for the past ten years with her husband, Ed, and sons Danny, age 5, and Sam, age 3. This year Nancy converted to Judaism and is involved in running support/discussion groups for Interfaith families.



Workshop:

The Jewish Family Connection, the Outreach Program of Temple Israel, Boston, offers hospitality, support, and education to Interfaith Couples and their children through the following vehicles:

1. The IFC Network - to refer callers to a personal contact;
2. Major Events - workshops, panels and guest speakers;
3. Support/Discussions - led by a licensed social worker;
4. JFC Newsletter and mailing list;
5. Rabbinic Counselling

17. Presenter: Fradya Rembaum

She is the assistant director of the Council on Jewish Life, Jewish Federation Council, Los Angeles, California, and is the Staff Coordinator for the Commission on Outreach to Jews-by-Choice and the Commission on Outreach to Mixed Married Couples. Fradya completed her Masters in Social Work at the University of Southern California. She has counselled children and families in a family service agency and in private practice. Prior to her current position, she was Parent and Family Education Consultant to the L.A. Bureau of Jewish Education, where she developed and implemented family education programs in cooperation with local religious schools and synagogues.

Workshop:

"Bridge to Understanding: How to Raise a Jewish Child in a Home in Which only One Parent Is Jewish." This six session series provides Intermarried Couples with an opportunity to grapple with their individual and family definitions and expectations of Jewish Identity through a combination of discussions and didactic presentations. Also discussed are tensions within the extended families, holiday celebrations, religious education and finding a niche in the Jewish community. This session will also include information about the L.A. Jewish community's experience of interagency and transideological cooperative efforts in community planning for outreach to mixed married couples.

#### WORKSHOP IV

Wednesday, 5/22/85, 2:00-3:30 PM

#### "Outreach to Jewish Parents of Interfaith Couples"

18. Presenters: Rabbi and Mrs. Robert A. Alper

Dr. Robert A. Alper is spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Or, Spring House, Pennsylvania. He was ordained in 1972 by the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati.

He is active in many local, regional and national organizations, from the Ambler Ministerium and chaplancies at Northwestern Psychiatric Center and the Horsham Clinic to the National Vice-Presidency of the Institute of Creative Judaism. He has recently been elected President of the Delaware Valley Association of Reform Rabbis.

In May, 1984, Rabbi Alper received the Doctor of Ministry degree from the Princeton Theological Seminary.

Sherri Alper received her B.A. degree from Bennington College and her Master's in Social Service from the Bryn Mawr Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research. She is currently employed full-time at the Fox Chase Cancer Center where she provides direct service to individuals, families and groups and is responsible for a number of inter-disciplinary teaching and community outreach activities. In addition, she maintains a private practice in partnership with Psychiatrist Robert C. Cohn, primarily focusing on marital and family issues.

Ms. Alper is a member of the Rabbinical Counseling Service of the Philadelphia Federation of Reform Synagogues. In that capacity, she counsels intermarrying and intermarried couples and individuals and conducts workshops on the psycho-social aspects of conversion and intermarriage as part of the Introduction to Judaism classes sponsored by the Federation. She has conducted workshops and seminars on intermarriage at various regional gatherings.

#### Workshop:

#### Support Group for Parents of Intermarried Jewish Children.

Parents of intermarrying or intermarried Jewish children hold a unique position in the Jewish community: They are often active participants in the marriage process, yet their needs are largely ignored. This support group model, co-led by a Rabbi and a social worker, assumes that parents of intermarrying Jewish children have personal and theological issues worthy of attention by the community and rabbi, as well as relational skills in need of development in light of new realities.

This support group model provides a vehicle through which participants informally set the agenda under the guidance of the group leaders. The primary goals are to: 1) normalize the feelings and reactions of participants by enabling them to share their experiences with others in similar circumstances; 2) lessen isolation, thus insuring that such Jewish parents will not be lost to their community; and 3) aid participants in development of relationship skills for further interaction with the



newlyweds and non-Jewish in-laws.

19. Presenters: Harriet Feiner and Rabbi Lee Friedlander

Harriet Feiner (M.S.W.) is Associate Professor of Social Work at the Wurzweiler School of Social Work at Yeshiva University. A member of the Task Force on Mixed Marriage of the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies of New York, she is the consultant to Samuel Fields Y on developing workshops for intermarried couples and/or their parents. Professor Feiner is a founding member of the Reconstructionist Synagogue of the North Shore.

Lee Friedlander (M.A. in Religion) is the Rabbi of the Reconstructionist Synagogue of the North Shore. He has run a workshop for inter-married couples and their parents with Professor Feiner for his congregation.

Workshop:

Models for Parents of Interfaith Couples.

Group composition, auspice, program and process in outreach to the parents of intermarried couples will be discussed in the context of a commitment to Jewish survival. The relationship between rabbi and social worker in their respective roles as groups leaders will also be explored.

20. Presenter: Diane Baxter

She is currently the Adult and Family Program Director at Leo Baeck Temple and a family therapist in private practice. She was the Consultant for Family Life Education at the Los Angeles Bureau of Jewish Education. Her degrees are in the fields of sociology and psychology and she is a Ph.D. candidate in Psychological Anthropology at UCLA.

Workshop:

This four session program is designed for the Jewish parents of Interfaith Couples. Participants will examine their own Jewish identity and commitment, as well as the expectations they have for their children. The methodologies include experiential learning and group discussion.

21. Presenter: Phoebe Starr Sharaf

She earned her MSW at the UCLA School of Social Welfare. She served as Director of Volunteer Services at Jewish Family Services of Los Angeles for a number of years. Currently, she is the Director of the Volunteer Bureau of the Jewish Federation Council of Greater Los Angeles. Ms. Sharaf has extensive experience in the organization and presentation of workshops, seminars, and conferences. One of her areas of expertise is in Gerontology.

Workshop:

This four session program is designed for the Jewish parents of Interfaith Couples. Participants will examine their own Jewish identity and commitment, as well as the expectations they have for their children. The methodologies include experiential learning and group discussion.

22. Presenter: Carol Frank

She is an MSW-LCSW. She worked. She worked at Jewish Family and Children's Service in Baltimore as a caseworker and then Director of Jewish Family Life Education for 14 years. She became interested in the issues of Intermarriage through groups for recently married couples. Ms. Frank holds a Masters of Jewish History from Baltimore Hebrew College. She is presently in private clinical practice and provides consultation regarding intermarriage to individuals, families and organizations.

Workshop:

This workshop is designed for the Jewish parents of children who are either intermarried or about to intermarry. It is also a model for couples who will or have already intermarried. The model focuses on confronting feelings of guilt, anger, and failure, while evaluating and exploring Jewish identity. The intermarried couples will consider personal identity as well as marginality, priorities, and values.





# NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PROGRAMS FOR THE INTERMARRIED

Co-Sponsors: American Jewish Committee, Union of American Hebrew Congregations,  
United Synagogue of America, Federation of Reconstructionist Congregations and Havurot

## REGISTRATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (home) \_\_\_\_\_ (Buisness) \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate Workshop choice by number:

WORKSHOP I: "Introduction to Judaism - Programs of Study and Experience"

Tuesday, 11:00-12:30 PM

\_\_\_\_\_  
1st choice      2nd choice

WORKSHOP II: "Integrating Jews-By-Choice into the Synagogue and the Community"

Tuesday, 2:30-4:00 PM

\_\_\_\_\_  
1st choice      2nd choice

WORKSHOP III: "Outreach to Interfaith Couples and their Children"

Wednesday, 10:30-12:00 PM

\_\_\_\_\_  
1st choice      2nd choice

WORKSHOP IV: "Outreach to Jewish Parents of Interfaith Couples"

Wednesday, 2:00-3:30 PM

\_\_\_\_\_  
1st choice      2nd choice

Conference Coordinator:

Nina Mizrahi  
Union of American Hebrew Congregations  
838 Fifth Avenue  
New York, New York 10021  
(212) 249-0100, ext. 511

Please respond early.

Fee: \$75.00, includes lunch\*, registration packet and all materials.

\* dietary laws observed

Make checks payable to: NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PROGRAMS FOR THE INTERMARRIED

Send to: Nina Mizrahi, Conference Coordinator  
Union of American Hebrew Congregations  
838 Fifth Avenue  
New York, N.Y. 10021





August 15, 1985

Rabbi Simeon J. Maslin  
Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel  
York Road and Township Line  
Elkins Park, Pennsylvania 19117

Dear Shin:

I have your letter of August 13 and hasten to respond. At the outset let me make it clear that Danny Syme was not acting unilaterally when he contacted you in regard to providing information to lay leaders on the subject of mixed marriage. He was in touch with you following discussions with a number of staff members of the Union, including the writer, and a select group of our lay leaders.

The Task Force on Outreach (now the Commission) named a sub-committee to study the matter of rabbinic participation in mixed marriage ceremonies. They agreed upon two conclusions and these were placed before the full Commission which voted unanimously - rabbinic as well as lay members - in support of the following:

- 1/ An affirmation that the question of officiation is a matter of individual and personal rabbinic conscience.
- 2/ In order to open doors of understanding and encourage a sharing of thoughts between rabbis and laypersons, the UAHC was asked to establish "Listening Post" to provide information on this sensitive area of concern.

Thus the correspondence from Dan to you. We want very much to fulfill the Commission's mandate and to set up a system which will provide Listening Posts for our people. Let me reassure you that we will not utilize either Gene Mihaly's document or the one which you helped to create. We may determine to prepare an independent document for our purposes.

With all good wishes from house to house and with warm regards, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

cc: Rabbi Joseph B. Glaser  
Rabbi Walter Jacob  
Rabbi Sanford Seltzer  
Rabbi Daniel B. Syme

*Simion J. Mastin, D. Min., D. D.*

SENIOR RABBI

Reform Congregation  
KENESETH ISRAEL  
York Road and Township Line  
ELKINS PARK, PENNSYLVANIA 19117

August 13, 1985

Rabbi Alexander Schindler  
U.A.H.C.  
838 Fifth Avenue  
New York, New York, 10021

Dear Alex:

I believe that Danny Syme has conferred with you about our correspondence of June 27-July 3. I thought it best to write to you now directly so that there be no misunderstanding on my part (and on the part of the colleagues who share my concern) about the intentions of the Union in regard to keeping the laity informed about rabbinic officiation at mixed marriages.

As you know, it was Danny Syme's intention, either unilaterally or in consultation with others at the Union, to distribute 3000 copies of Eugene Mihaly's "Responsa on Mixed Marriage," along with our "Reform Rabbis and Mixed Marriage" and the report of the Commission on Outreach. According to his letter of July 3, this was not a unilateral decision but rather his interpretation of the mandate of the Commission.

It was my understanding, when I was appointed as a CCAR representative to the Research Task Force on Interfaith Marriage, that the subject of rabbinic officiation was to be shelved until the Task Force brought in its report. One of the aspects of mixed marriage that the Task Force was mandated to study was the effect of rabbinic officiation or non-officiation on the attitudes of mixed couples. If, as I have been led to believe, the subject of rabbinic officiation is then shelved for the time being, why would the UAHC even consider distributing as partisan a statement as Mihaly's?

I could see distributing Walter Jacob's 1982 responsum on rabbinic officiation; it is an official statement of CCAR policy. Mihaly's overblown pamphlet is an affront to the CCAR. And, if you have read it, you know that it is a perversion of the very halachic process




which, for whatever misguided reason, he invokes. It is of a piece with his 1976 responsum defending and, in fact, recommending marriages on Shabbat!

Danny's letter of July 3 assures me and all who share this concern that the proposed packet, including Mihaly's pamphlet, will not be sent out by the Union. What worries me now is his statement: "We will simply have to find another mechanism." What other mechanism? For what purpose? I would appreciate some reassurance from you that neither Mihaly's pamphlet nor any part of it will be distributed by the Union in the future.

With the approach of Elul, my best wishes to you and Rhea for a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Shalom,

  
Simeon J. Maslin

SJM:mb

cc: Rabbi Joseph Glaser  
Rabbi Daniel Syme  
Rabbi Walter Jacob  
Rabbi Sanford Seltzer





איחוד  
ליהדות  
מתקדמת  
באמריקה

# Union of American Hebrew Congregations

PATRON OF HEBREW UNION COLLEGE—JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION  
838 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021 (212) 249-0100 CABLES: UNIONUAHC

June 27, 1985

*Inter Marriage*

Rabbi Simeon J. Maslin  
Keneseth Israel Reform Congregation  
York Road and Township Line  
Elkins Park, Pa. 19117

Dear Shim,

It was good seeing you in Minneapolis, however briefly. I had to return to New York before the conference concluded, and therefore did not have a chance to speak with you regarding an upcoming UAHC mailing on which we'd like your help.

Sometime this fall, we would like to distribute a kit of materials to our congregations, containing the following items:

1. The statement of "The Committee of 100".
2. Eugene Mihaly's responsum.
3. The statement of the Commission on Outreach affirming the principle of rabbinic conscience in officiation at mixed marriages.

In providing these materials, we hope to share the most thoughtful papers available on this subject.

Gene has graciously arranged for us to receive 3,000 copies of his responsum. I hope it will be possible for you to help us in a similar manner with the statement of the "Committee of 100." If a reprinting of the booklet is required, we will be happy to assume printing costs.

Please let me know at your convenience how we might proceed.

Have a wonderful summer. I'll look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Daniel B. Syme  
Vice-President.

DBS/e

bcc: Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler





# Commission on Reform Jewish Outreach

UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS—CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN RABBIS  
6300 WILSHIRE BOULEVARD, SUITE 1475, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90048 (213) 653-9962  
1330 BEACON STREET, SUITE 355, BROOKLINE, MASSACHUSETTS 02146 (617) 277-1655

July 2, 1985  
13 Tammuz 5745

*TSJ*  
*cgr*

## M E M O R A N D U M

TO: RABBI ALEXANDER M. SCHINDLER, RABBI DANIEL B. SYME,  
RABBI STEVEN FOSTER, DAVID BELIN

FROM: LYDIA KUKOFF

I just thought you'd like to know Outreach has finally arrived as far as the Conservative Movement is concerned. I have learned that the RA is setting up a Task Force on Inter-marriage which will begin this fall. I have also learned that the Jewish Theological Seminary will offer a course on intermarriage which will be mandatory for all rabbinic students at the Seminary. This course has been funded by Leonard Greenberg of Caleco fame. It will begin in the spring and be taught by a special adjunct professor. It will also have a programmatic component which will be linked with a consortium of synagogues. I will keep you informed of any further developments.

LK/mf

Chairman  
David W. Belin  
Co-Chairman  
Rabbi Steven Foster  
Director  
Lydia Kukoff  
Los Angeles  
Co-Director  
Rabbi Sanford Seltzer  
Brookline

# an Horizon Institute Report

Union of American Hebrew Congregations 838 Fifth Avenue New York, N.Y. 10021

September 1985

## SAFEGUARDING JEWISH IDENTITY: THE ANTENUPTIAL AGREEMENT

By Rabbi Sanford Seltzer

Director of Research  
Union of American Hebrew Congregations

In August, 1981, an Horizon Report, entitled, Intermarriage, Divorce and the Jewish Status of Children, dealt with the role of civil courts in adjudicating custody disputes between divorcing parents in a mixed marriage over the religious upbringing of children. Since then, civil courts have become progressively more embroiled in the resolution of such controversies. This trend has raised concerns regarding the constitutional propriety of judicial intervention into what are basically sectarian disagreements. The increase in the number of divorces involving mixed married couples has also prompted a search for more creative and legally acceptable methods of insuring a child's religious upbringing in a specific faith when parents are of different religious backgrounds. Foremost among these has been the recommended use of antenuptial agreements heretofore utilized primarily for the settlement of monetary questions.

The issue has been further complicated by recent changes in the divorce laws of a majority of the 50 states which now provide for a presumption of joint or shared legal custody of children in the event of divorce. Such statutes by definition grant both parents equal responsibility for decisions affecting a child's educational, moral and religious welfare.<sup>1</sup> While the limited research that is available appears to support the view that shared custody is psychologically beneficial for children, its religious implications, particularly in situations where parents are unwilling to surrender their legal rights to inculcate their own religious values in their children, have not been investigated.<sup>2</sup>

This Horizon Report will examine various aspects of these developments as they impact upon the rearing of children of mixed marriages as Jews subsequent to divorce. Reference will also be made to the dilemma of reform Judaism as it ponders such legal devices as the antenuptial agreement, the use of which may be antithetical to its time honored opposition to any infringement of the doctrine of separation of church and state as found in the first amendment to the Constitution.

### ANTENUPTIAL AGREEMENTS

As previously mentioned, in the past, antenuptial agreements were drafted primarily for the settlement of financial problems between men and women about to marry who were seeking some legal instrument for protecting previously accumulated assets. Such contracts have never received widespread court approval.



One author, in noting that even today, despite their growing popularity, only a minority of jurisdictions recognize them, adds that "courts subject stipulations regarding children to higher degrees of scrutiny than they would apply to monetary disputes" and suggest, therefore, that they be avoided in agreements dealing with support and custody.<sup>3</sup>

Although admitting that contracts directing the religious upbringing of children have not enjoyed judicial favor, Kenneth Ernstoff, Dean of Students, Boston College Law School, has called for the employment of such agreements as a means of safeguarding the Jewish upbringing of children after the divorce of a mixed married couple. Excerpted sections of his proposal which he believes would be judicially acceptable follow:

...the parties to this agreement make the following provisions for the religious upbringing of our child(ren): ... We agree that religious training and practice is an important and integral part of our lives and our children's lives. It is our joint resolve that our children practice and receive a formal education in the Jewish religion....Subsequent to their Bar or Bas Mitzvah our children shall be provided with the opportunity to choose whether to continue their formal religious education....Should one or all children reside in the care and custody of a single parent, we agree that parent shall carry this provision to the best of his or her ability and shall cooperate with the non-custodial spouse to that end.<sup>4</sup>

The draft has been so worded to anticipate joint custodial situations as well as the more traditional practice of vesting legal and physical custody in one parent. Rabbis and Jewish educators may take issue with the clause in the agreement according the child the right to discontinue Jewish education subsequent to Bas and Bar Mitzvah. The reasoning behind Ernstoff's emphasis upon that event is unclear given the prevailing Jewish position that terminating one's Jewish education at that point is wholly inappropriate.

There is no indication whether this prerogative is to be exercised because in the author's opinion it is normative in Jewish life to end one's Jewish education at that time or it is to be a special consideration granted children of mixed marriages. In the latter instance, it raises the question of whether such an arrangement is intended to placate the non-Jewish parent who may have signed the agreement reluctantly and who, in the event of a child's decision to discontinue formal Jewish training, can now exert his or her own religious influence.

Although the Ernstoff proposal requires much more clarification and additional study, it represents a significant beginning, particularly in light of newly evolving shared custodial arrangements. Whether such agreements will meet judicial standards remains to be seen. Whether any legal instrument is a solution for deeply felt interpersonal religious needs and family conflicts remains unanswered.



Whether Reform Judaism can live with antenuptial agreements focusing upon religion is an equally vexing problem.

#### THE QUESTION OF CONSTITUTIONALITY

In 1971, the Supreme Court of the United States, in a decision in *Lemon vs. Kurtzman* that became known as the Lemon Law, established a series of criteria that were to be met if a statute with religious implications was to be deemed constitutional. These criteria have become the basis for judicial rulings in church-state disputes. They require that the law in question have a legitimate secular legislative purpose, that its primary effect neither advance nor inhibit religion and that the statute not foster an excessive governmental entanglement in religion.<sup>5</sup>

A number of articles in the legal literature have charged that more recently, the Supreme Court, perhaps reflecting the changing tenor of public opinion in the United States regarding the role of religion and responding to the emerging cultural phenomenon of deconstruction,<sup>6</sup> has so loosely interpreted the Lemon Law as to render it meaningless.

The Virginia Law Review of May 1985 has criticized two recent rulings of the Court which, in the Journal's opinion, exemplify this tendency. One is a 1983 decision in which the Court upheld the right of the State of Nebraska Legislature to pay chaplains to open its legislative sessions with prayer by arguing "the historical and nearly universal acceptance of legislative prayer." <sup>7</sup> The second was a 1984 ruling upholding the right of the city of Pawtucket, Rhode Island, to display a nativity scene on the town green since, in the Court's words, "the benefits to any particular religion were insignificant and minor and remote."<sup>8</sup>

A note in the 1984 June issue of the Michigan Law Review is even more specific in its condemnation of judicial attitudes as these pertain directly to child custody cases involving religion. It accuses many courts of openly favoring religious parents over non-religious parents despite the fact that such decisions are clear violations of the neutrality principle of the first amendment. The author contends that courts should consider religion only when a child has expressed a custody preference predicated upon personal religious beliefs and not upon parental convictions. Even then, the child's religious preference should be weighed in the context of all other pertinent factors before an award of custody is made.<sup>9</sup>

The article fails to address how one is to determine the origins of a child's avowed religious preference or whether it is possible to isolate the expression of such beliefs from the influence of one or both parents, a factor particularly telling in the case of very young children. It would appear that if courts were to base their rulings in custody cases on the conditions set forth in the Michigan Law Review article, the antenuptial agreements suggested by Dean Ernstoff would not be admissible.



The unwarranted intrusion of secular courts into the religious realm is also deplored by Joan Wexler, Professor of Law at the New York University Law School, in an article, entitled, Rethinking the Modification of Child Custody Decrees.<sup>10</sup> Wexler is critical of the ease and frequency with which she believes divorce courts are currently granting petitions for the modification of child custody decrees. They fail in the process to give ample regard to the growing body of sociological and psychological insights regarding the needs and behavior of children as they adapt to the post divorce configuration of the family. Instead, she asserts, "judicial judgements of what constitutes a child's best interests have become a product of the personality, temperament, background, interests and biases of the trial judge or the community that elected him"<sup>11</sup>

Wexler's contentions are especially relevant in light of the example she cites in her article, the 1980 New York case of Friederwitzer vs Friederwitzer. Originally both parents had been granted joint legal custody and the mother physical custody of their two children. Later the father sued for physical custody of the children on the grounds that Mrs. Friederwitzer had violated various tenets of Orthodox Judaism by her behavior, tenets which she had agreed to honor and instill within the children.

In holding for Mr. Friederwitzer, the court observed that in general, religious beliefs should play only a small part in custody decisions and that it was not clear whether the contradictions between Mrs. Friederwitzer's behavior and her religious teachings had upset the children. Still, it concluded, "such contradictions can only cause confusion in the minds of children of tender years and be detrimental to the development of a religious feeling."<sup>12</sup>

Wexler challenged both the right and the capacity of a secular court to evaluate what constituted religious training and to then transfer custody "unless there is evidence of serious harm to the children. None was presented in Friederwitzer."<sup>13</sup> The author stressed that in awarding custody to the father, the court had not bothered to consider his fitness as a custodial parent. "The court," she wrote, "did not examine his religious or sexual behavior, his care for the children prior to divorce or his plans relevant to their case if his motion were granted."<sup>14</sup>

#### IMPLICATIONS FOR REFORM JUDAISM

The ongoing controversy in legal circles over the extent to which courts should delve into religious matters has been accompanied by a perceptible shift in the attitudes of some segments of the Orthodox and Conservative Jewish communities. The latter are now turning to civil courts for the redress of religious grievances based upon violations of Halakhic aspects of marriage and divorce. Friederwitzer is one example. A second is that of Avitzur vs Avitzur. Here, a Jewish husband was ordered by the New York Court of Appeals to honor the obligations contained in the Conservative Ketubah he and his wife had signed as a condition of their marriage and to grant her a Get, a Jewish divorce, which he now refused to do.

In an article, entitled, Jewish Divorce and the Promise of Avitzur, the author hailed the court decision as a milestone "reflecting society's desire to



see matters of marital settlements resolved by the spouse's themselves."<sup>15</sup> In the author's opinion, the decision laid important groundwork for the re-education of the Jewish community regarding the merits of antenuptial agreements in general and their specific application to such Jewish concerns as Get and the questions of the Aguna.<sup>16</sup> While the Avitzur article makes no reference to child custody and mixed marriage, it is of relevance in this context as well.

Unlike its Conservative and Orthodox counterparts, Reform Judaism has up until now steadfastly resisted any breach in the wall of separation between church and state and has insisted upon a strict interpretation of the first amendment.<sup>17</sup> At the same time, it continues to deny the binding validity of Jewish law particularly as it applies to marriage and divorce even though Halakhic issues served as the basis upon which civil courts were drawn into the disputes raised in Friederwitzer, Avitzur, et al. Nor has any other movement in Judaism been more sensitive to the findings of the social sciences and applied them more consistently in reconciling the traditional teachings of Judaism with needs of modern Jews. Reform Judaism has never taken an official stand on the question of joint custody. It may now find itself obligated to do so in light of its concerns over the future of the Jewish family.

Antenuptial agreements have not been endorsed by the reform movement although a special committee of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations does exist for the purpose of studying them. The absence of any official position may change as the incidence of divorce grows and as anxieties regarding the Jewishness of children of mixed marriages are heightened. The complexities of the subject demand lengthy and serious debate. Its implications go far beyond the question of how to safeguard the Jewish identity of children of mixed marriages. The matter of church-state relationships will have to be probed as well. For should antenuptial agreements be deemed appropriate, their use will mark a radical departure from Reform's longstanding aversion to secular involvement in religious questions. This in turn may augur a more flexible approach to other church-state issues in the future.



Notes

1. "Recent Developments In Custody Standards," Family Law Quarterly, Volume XVIII, No.4, Winter 1985, pp. 432-36.
2. Constance Ahrons, "Divorce Before, During and After," Stress and the Family, Volume I, Hamilton I. McCubbin and Charles R. Figley, Eds., Brunner/Mazel Publisher, New York, 1983, pp.112-13.
3. Marcia Mobilia, "Antenuptial Agreements, Anticipating Divorce, How Effective Are They?" Massachusetts Law Review, Volume 70, No.2., June 1985, p.90.
4. Kenneth Ernstoff, "Forcing Rites On Children," Family Advocate, Volume 16, No.3, Winter 1984, p.15.
5. "The Establishment Clause and Religion In Child Custody Disputes: Factoring Religion Into the Best Interest Equation," Michigan Law Review, Volume 82, No.7, June 1984, p.1708.
6. See Allan C. Hutchinson, "From Cultural Construction To Historical Deconstruction," Yale Law Journal, Volume 94, No.1, November 1984, pp.209-237. See also Sanford Levinson, "On Dworkin, Kennedy and Ely: Decoding the Legal Past," Partisan Review 2, Volume LI, No.2, 1984, pp.240-64.
7. "Beyond the Establishment Clause: Enforcing Separation of Church and State Through State Constitutional Provisions," Virginia Law Review, Volume 71, No.4, May 1985, p.629.
8. Ibid.
9. Michigan Law Review, op cit., p.1729.
10. Joan G. Wexler, "Rethinking the Modification of Child Custody Decrees," Yale Law Journal, Volume 94, No.4, March 1985, pp.757-820.
11. Ibid., p.762.
12. Memorandum Supreme Court Nassau County, Sharon Friederwitzer Plaintiff vs Elliott Friederwitzer Defendant, Index No.21095/78, Cal. No.80N01539, October 2, 1980.
13. Wexler, op cit., p.773.
14. Ibid., p.772.
15. Linda S. Kahan, "Jewish Divorce and Secular Courts: The Promise of Avitzur," The Georgetown Law Journal, Volume 73, 1984, p.222. See also David Ellenson and James S. Ellenson, "American Courts and the Enforceability of a Ketubah as a Private Contract: An Investigation of Recent U.S. Court Decisions," Conservative Judaism, Spring 1982, pp.35-42.
16. Kahan, op cit., p.224.
17. See "Where We Stand," Social Action Resolutions, adopted by the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, revised edition, 1984, Commission On Social Action, UAHC, New York, p.74.

HORIZON REPORTS

August 1980	Membership Status of Non-Jews: A Review of Congregational Policies
August 1981	Intermarriage, Divorce and the Jewish Status of Children
September 1982	Christian Mixed Marriages: Implications for Jewish Researchers
October 1983	Conversion To Judaism: Filling Some Significant Knowledge Gaps
October 1984	Who Enrolls In the Introduction To Judaism Program? A Report From Four American Cities
September 1985	Safeguarding Jewish Identity: The Antenuptial Agreement

For copies, write to: Rabbi Sanford Seltzer  
1330 Beacon Street  
Suite 355  
Brookline, MA 02146





איחוד  
ליהדות  
מתקדמת  
באמריקה

# Research Task Force on Interfaith Marriage

UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS—CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN RABBIS  
—HEBREW UNION COLLEGE-JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION

1330 BEACON STREET, SUITE 355, BROOKLINE, MASSACHUSETTS 02146 (617) 277-1655

September 12, 1985

*Put on  
calendar  
if I can*  
*OC*

Dear Task Force Member:

This is to remind you of the forthcoming meeting of the Research Task Force to be held on Thursday, October 10, from 1 - 9 P.M. at the House of Living Judaism, 838 Fifth Avenue, New York. Cocktails and dinner will be served.

Under separate cover, you will shortly be receiving a copy of the Biennial delegate's questionnaire which will be discussed at the special Biennial breakfasts in Los Angeles. The questionnaire represents months of diligent preparation by the members of the Task Force Design Subcommittee chaired by Paul Gans. A full agenda is enclosed. Please make every effort to be with us. May we take this opportunity to wish you and your loved ones a happy and a healthy New Year.

Sincerely,

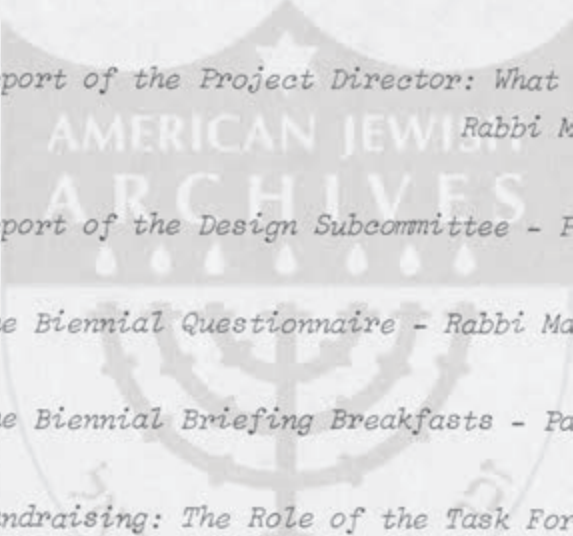
*Alan*

Alan V. Iselin  
Chairman  
Research Task Force

*Murray*

Rabbi Murray I. Rothman  
Co-Chairman  
Research Task Force

*Agenda*  
*Research Task Force*  
*October 10, 1985*

- 
- I. *Welcome and Opening Remarks - Alan V. Iselin*  
*Rabbi Murray I. Rothman*
  - II. *Report of the Project Director: What We Have Achieved -*  
*Rabbi Mark L. Winer*
  - III. *Report of the Design Subcommittee - Paul Gans*
  - IV. *The Biennial Questionnaire - Rabbi Mark L. Winer*
  - V. *The Biennial Briefing Breakfasts - Paul Gans*
  - VI. *Fundraising: The Role of the Task Force - Alan V. Iselin*



not be having cocktails and dinner.

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P

to: Rabbi Sanford Seltzer  
UAHC  
1330 Beacon Street, Suite 3  
Brookline, MA 02146

I will not be having cocktails and dinner.

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CITY/STATE/ZIP

Please return to: Rabbi Sanford Seltzer  
UAHC  
1330 Beacon Street, Suite 355  
Brookline, MA 02146



COPY

RABBI ALEXANDER M. SCHINDLER • UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS  
PRESIDENT 838 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021 (212) 249-0100

*Alexander*

December 16, 1991  
9 Tevet 5752

Cantor Raymond Smolover  
Jewish Community Center  
252 Soundview Avenue  
White Plains, NY 10606

Dear Ray:

Thank you for sending me the materials on the subject of interfaith marriages. I have not had time to read it yet but I am certain I will find it interesting.

I hope that life is treating you well.

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler



*Jewish Community Center*  
252 Soundview Avenue, White Plains, New York, 10606

*Dr. Raymond Smolover, Cantor*

December 12, 1991

Rabbi Alexander Schindler, President  
Union of American Hebrew Congregations  
838 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10021


Dear Alex:

The enclosures will be of special interest to you since we had the occasion to discuss the subject of interfaith marriages in depth some time ago, when we met to discuss officiating at Reggie Port's daughter's marriage.

I was delighted to congratulate Mel Merians on his being elected to chair the Board of Trustees and I know that this will be a dynamic period of accomplishments for the UAHC and for Reform Judaism.

I am also taking this opportunity to send you and Rhea and your family our best wishes for a happy and healthy holiday season.

Sincerely,



Raymond Smolover

# **MAY THE JCC SANCTUARY BE USED FOR INTERFAITH MARRIAGES?**

The Board of Trustees has set up an Ad Hoc Committee to study and report to it on this question. We, the Ad Hoc Committee, would appreciate your objective input as a part of our study.

1. Call any member of the Committee to discuss it.
2. Write your thoughts and forward them to the AD HOC COMMITTEE c/o JCC.
3. Ask any committee member to arrange a time for you to meet with members to express your views.

## **JCC AD HOC COMMITTEE...1991-1992**

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# *Interfaith Marriages*

*Questions, Responses and Commentaries*

*Dr. Raymond Smolover*

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# Interfaith Marriages

## *Questions, Responses and Commentaries*

by Dr. Raymond Smolover

### 1. The survival of the Jewish people

Current statistics indicate that the Jewish population is in alarming decline. A number of reasons have been advanced, including low birthrates, disaffiliations, conversions and interfaith marriages. The following addresses only one of the factors: that of interfaith marriages.

**Question:** Do interfaith marriages endanger the survival of the Jewish people?

**Response:** An impartial reading of history suggests that interfaith marriages have at times been beneficial, and at other times detrimental to Jewish survival (*see sections 3 and 4*). The constant threat to Jewish survival, however, has always been "intolerance." Being Jewish in a world that is intolerant to differences resulted in anti-semitism, exiles, pogroms and in history's most devastating tragedy: the genocide of the holocaust, with the loss of millions of Jewish lives.

**Commentary:** Helping to create a world that is tolerant, sensitive, and appreciative of differences, enhances Jewish survival - as well as the survival of other minorities. Being supportive of the intermarrieds helps to establish an environment of tolerance. Making our synagogues available to our children prior to an interfaith marriage manifests our tolerance, increases their sense of belonging, and diminishes their sense of rejection. This may be a time in history when welcoming our intermarrieds prior to their wedding can once again benefit Jewish survival, when reaching beyond "outreach" can become an "ingathering."

### 2. The beginning of the Jewish people

**Question:** When and where does the history of the Jewish people begin?

**Response:** The history of the Jewish people does not have an arbitrary beginning; it does not begin wherever we would prefer it to begin. It does not begin with the Patriarches, with Moses, with the Kings or the Prophets; not with the destruction of the Temple, nor the Exile, nor with the decrees of Ezra, nor with Yohanan ben Zakkai. It cannot arbitrarily begin with halachah, the teachings of the talmud, or rabbinic judaism. Nor does it begin with the Bal Shem Tov and the founding of Hasidism, nor the Enlightenment in the 18th century, nor with the founding of Reform Judaism in 1810, nor with the redemption of the State of Israel in 1948. The history of the Jewish people, according to Torah, begins with God the Creator, and the creation of humanity.

**Commentary:** As described by the authors of Torah, the history of the Jewish people could have begun with Abraham. Instead it begins with Adam and Eve, and with the three covenants: (1) God's covenant with Noah - that the earth would never again be destroyed (the rainbow being the sign of the covenant); (2) God's covenant with Abraham that he will be the father of a multitude of nations through the descendants of Isaac and Ishmael (circumcision being the sign of the covenant); and (3) God's covenant with Moses at Sinai that the children of Israel will be His people and He will be their God (the sign of the covenant being the Ten Commandments).



### 3. The beginning of Jewish intermarriage

**Question:** When and where did intermarriage begin?

**Response:** Intermarriage obviously began with the first Hebrew. Abram, son of Terah, of the tenth generation from Noah through the line of Shem, was a Babylonian from the city of Ur in the Chaldees. With God's covenant (Genesis 17:10) Abraham became the first Hebrew. He "took" two wives: Sarah, and the Egyptian, Hagar. Upon the death of his wife Sarah, Abraham married Keturah, one of his concubines, who bore him six sons. At Abraham's death, he was buried by his two sons: by Isaac, son of Sarah, and by Ishmael, son of Hagar (Genesis 25:9). His grandson, Jacob, "took" two non-Jewish wives, Bilhah and Zilpah. Jacob's sons, Reuben, Simeon and Judah married Canaanite women. And Joseph, "took" an Egyptian, Asenath.

Moses' wife, Zipporah, was the daughter of a Midianite priest and idolator, Jethro. Following the death of Zipporah, Moses married a Cushite - an Ethiopian. (Numbers 12:1).

Ruth and her sister Orpah were Moabites. They married Naomi's sons, Mahlon and Chilion. The sons died and Orpah returned to Moab. Ruth followed Naomi, saying "your people shall be my people." She married Boaz, a kinsman of Elimelech, Naomi's husband, and bore him a son, Obed, the father of Jesse, the father of David the King.

King David married Macciah (daughter of the king of Geshur, who bore him Absalom) and Bath-Sheba, a Gilonite - who was the wife of Uriah the Hittite. David and Bath-Sheba's son, King Solomon, married a number of foreign women - Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians and Hittites, including the daughter of the King of Egypt.

### 4. The beginning of prohibitions against intermarriage

**Question:** Where and when did the first prohibitions against intermarriage begin?

**Response:** An early prohibition against worshipping other gods includes a warning against intermarriage. It is to be found in Deuteronomy 7:1-3 (prior to the conquest of Canaan by the Israelites): "...Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son ... that they may serve others gods."

The most often cited prohibition is stated in Ezra 10:2-3 (following the return to Zion after the Babylonian exile in 536 b.c.e.): "We have broken faith with our God, and have married foreign women of the people of the land; yet now there is hope for Israel concerning this thing. Now therefore let us make a covenant with our God to put away all the wives, and such as are born of them, according to the counsel of the Lord, and of those that tremble at the commandment of our God; and let it be done according to the law."

Today intermarriage is forbidden in the State of Israel. According to section 2 of the Rabbinical Courts Jurisdiction (Marriage and Divorce) Law, 5713/1953, no marriage of Jews in Israel is valid unless contracted "in accordance with the law of the Torah."

**Commentary:** The prohibition against intermarriage in the biblical period was to prevent the worship of other gods. The prohibition against intermarriage by contemporary orthodox and conservative denominations is based on "halachah" (sacred law); "marriages must be in accordance with the law of the Torah." Reform Judaism does not consider halachah to be binding law. In keeping with the democratic precepts of respect for the individual and for private conscience, Reform Judaism does not encourage, nor prohibit intermarriage.



## 5. Wedding ceremonies, rites and traditions

**Questions:** What is the history and meaning of the wedding ceremony and traditions?

**Response:** There is little data about marriages in biblical times. The act of marriage was simply "taking" ("when a man taketh a wife," Deut.24:1). That celebrations took place is evident in various passages of the bible, but without description.

In Talmudic times, from the third through the fifth centuries b.c.e., the wedding ceremony contained two separate aspects: Kiddushin or erusin, meaning betrothal, and nissu'in, the marriage proper. During the Kiddushin, the bridegroom presented an object of value to his betrothed in the presence of two witnesses and recited the marriage formula: "Behold, you are consecrated unto me with this ring according to the law of Moses, and Israel." During the second ceremony - nissu'in - the bride was inducted into the groom's home (chuppah) at which time the marriage was consummated. During the middle ages these two ceremonies - kiddushin (erusin), and nissu'in were merged into one ceremony.

**Ketubbah** (marriage document): the ketubbah represents the act of Kinyan - acquisition, the conditions of which are detailed in a written deed (a ketubbah). In Reform Judaism the ketubbah takes the form of a marriage certificate minus the aspect of the acquisition of the bride and exchange of property.

**Chupah** (bridal canopy - or bridal chamber): In ancient times the chupah represented the tent or room of the groom into which, at the end of the betrothal period, the bride was brought in festive procession for the marital union. In the middle ages the chupah was not used at the wedding ceremony. Today, the chupah is ceremonial, sometimes consisting of a self-standing structure, a floral arrangement, or a tallit supported by hand-held rods to symbolize the home of the newlyweds.

**Ring:** Traditionally a ring - or a coin, in oriental communities - which belongs to the groom (free of precious stones) was used as an act of acquisition. In Reform and Conservative congregations a "double ring" ceremony is often practiced. (Since, according to the halachah, it is the groom who is acquiring the bride, this innovation raises serious halachic doubts which, according to some authorities, even affects the validity of the marriage.)

The marriage formula recited during the ring ceremony: "Harei at m'kudeshet liy b'tabaat zo k'dat Moshe v'Yisrael" is literally translated, "Behold, thou art betrothed unto me with this ring, in accordance with the Law of Moses and Israel." Inasmuch as Reform Judaism regards halachah as traditions rather than binding laws, this formula is reinterpreted accordingly: "Be consecrated to me with this ring as my wife/husband in keeping with the heritage of Moses and Israel.

**Tallit** (prayer shawl): Originally, the word meant "gown" or "cloak, which was a rectangular garment worn by men in ancient times. At the four corners of the tallit, tassels were attached in fulfillment of the biblical commandment regarding "tzitzit" - fringes (Numbers 15:38-41, "And it shall be unto you a fringe, that you may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the Lord, and do them...") In some communities, it is customary for the groom to dress in a prayer shawl - tallit, during the Chupah ceremony. (It is likewise customary to bury male Jews in their tallit from which the fringes have been removed or torn.)

**Kipah** (Yarmulka - head covering): There is no Biblical law or directive for covering the head. According to the Talmud (Ned.30b) it was optional. To cover one's head with a turban or a skullcap as a sign of humility, respect and reverence has been a widespread custom among the Hindus, Arabs, and Persians. In the middle ages the Jewish sages in Palestine considered it proper to go bareheaded even during worship. The Sephardim, however, followed the teaching



of the academies in Babylonia where the practice was to cover the head as a sign of piety. This became a western custom until the founding of Reform Judaism in 1810.

**Breaking the Glass:** The custom in the Ashkenazi tradition of breaking a glass originally represented a defense against evil spirits. The custom has been reinterpreted from time to time to temperate the celebration in keeping with the Jewish tradition of moderation.

## 6. Officiating at interfaith marriages

**Question 1:** What is the official position of Jewish clergy on officiating at interfaith marriages?

**Response:** (Orthodox and Conservative): Orthodox and conservative clergy are prohibited from officiating at interfaith marriages unless the non-Jewish person has been converted to Judaism "in accordance with the law of Torah" - at which time, of course, it is no longer an interfaith marriage. According to halachah, however, converting for the purpose of marriage is unacceptable; such a conversion being considered "of impure motive."

Jewish missionaries were very active and conversions to Judaism were extremely successful long before Christianity, especially during the early Hellenistic era, in Arabia and in the vast Khazar kingdom. However, animosity between Christian missionaries and Jewish missionaries eventually discouraged the process of missionizing by both faiths.

**Response** (Reform): The Joint Outreach Task Force of the Union of American Hebrew congregations and the Central Conference of American Rabbis prepared the following statement in September 1985: "The Task Force unqualifiedly affirms the right of every rabbi to act in accordance with his/her religious conscience in the matter of officiating at interfaith marriages free from any external pressure." This statement was issued in response to the "Committee of 100" reform rabbis (out of some 1,500) who advocated non-participation in "mixed marriages."

Rabbi Eugene Mihaly, professor of Rabbinic Literature and Homiletics, Executive Dean of Academic Affairs of the Hebrew Union College was called upon by the Task Force to respond to the "Committee of 100" in a "Responsa on Jewish Marriage." Dr. Mihaly's response to the four arguments was: (1) It is not the Rabbi, according to our Jewish tradition, who marries a couple; the bride and groom marry one another. (2) Kiddushin is clearly a rabbinic metaphor and refers to a man's acquisition of a woman through an act of appropriation, it is not to be translated as "sacred Jewish marriage," (3) "The Sheva Berachot (seven benedictions) were classically not part of the marriage service until after the medieval period when Kiddushin (betrothal) and nissu'in (marriage proper) were merged. (4) The Central Conference of American Rabbis is a deliberative not a legislative body. It cannot and does not dictate to its members what they may or may not, should or should not believe, do, advocate, preach or practice.

**Commentary:** In a landmark decision by the Israeli Supreme Court two and a half years ago, only orthodox rabbis authorized by the rabbinate as recognized by the Chief Rabbinate of Israel are permitted to register marriages with the Interior Ministry. That means Jewish weddings performed halachically in Israel by Reform, Conservative or Reconstructionist rabbis have no legal standing in Israel.

**Question 2:** Are cantors authorized to officiate at marriages?

**Response:** Cantors are Jewish clergy. Historically and traditionally - as well as by the approbation of the Federal Government, the Hebrew Union College, and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations - cantors are vested with the authority to officiate at all life-cycle events. The position of the American Conference of Cantors - which represents the Reform Cantorate - is in agreement with the above statement of the UAHC-CCAR Outreach Task Force.



## 7. Believing-In-Belonging

**Question:** Do Jews have to "believe" in order to "belong"?

**Response:** Belonging to the Jewish people does not require that one believe in a specific theology or philosophy. The three main contemporary belief systems are represented by: (1), the orthodox, who believe the Bible to be the literal word of God, containing obligatory laws for all Jews; (2), the conservative, who adjust and interpret this belief to meet the needs of the times; and (3), the reform, who believe the bible to be the divinely inspired creation of the genius of the Jewish people, containing history, saga, poetry and prayer.

There are also Jewish atheists, Jewish agnostics, Jewish secularists, Jewish culturalists, and Jewish nationalists-- any or all of whom may or may not believe in any specific form of "Judaism" but who nonetheless have a strong and positive sense of belonging to the Jewish people.

Whereas other "belonging systems" may require a doctrine of belief in order to belong, the Jewish people has not and does not demand an affirmation of belief in order to belong.

**Commentary:** We are born "belonging" not "believing." Belonging is a genetic need whereas believing is an acquired condition. If born wanted and nurtured, we expand our nuclear family to include their believing systems as well as their belonging systems. If born unwanted, uncared for, abused or abandoned, we will continue to seek that to which we can belong; be it constructive or destructive.

Those Jews who enter into an interfaith marriage and want a Jewish clergyperson to officiate are voicing their intent to continue to belong to the Jewish people, and are expressing their sensitivity to the "sacred" in life. They are also demonstrating their pride in belonging to a "belonging system" that provides the freedom to believe or not to believe, without being coerced into accepting established dogma.

## 8. Statistics

The 1990 survey by the Council of Jewish Federations, and the 1991 survey by the Graduate Center of the City University of New York showed that of the 110,000 polled, 86% of Americans identify themselves as Christians, 2% as Jews, one half of 1% as Muslims and the remaining indicating no affiliation.

Among the major findings of the new survey is that the Jewish population is a good deal larger than 2% when nonreligious Jews are taken into account. The 2% of the earlier religious survey, representing 4.3 million Jews, grows to 5.5 million Jews when secular Jews are included. The number rises to 6.6 million when people of Jewish heritage, including converts to Christianity, are included.

Dr. Barry Kosmin, a sociologist who headed the team pointed out that an even broader category exists which he calls Jews by association numbering 8.2 million. They are among those who live in a household with at least one Jewish person.

1. While 44% of Jews still live in the Northeast, the Jewish population in the South and West has doubled since World War II.
2. Forty-five percent define themselves as liberal; 20 percent as conservative, with 80% registered voters.

3. Approximately the same number of Christians convert to Judaism (185,000) as Jews who have converted to Christianity (210,000).
4. In 1965, 91% of the Jews married Jews. Since 1985, only 48% of the Jews marry Jews. In other words, in 1965 the rate of intermarriage was 9% and in 1985 it was 52%. From 1985 to 1991 it has increased to 55%.
5. Twenty-eight percent of the children of intermarrieds are raised Jewish. 31% are raised without religion, and 41% are being raised in another religion.

**Commentary:** Since approximately 98% of the Jewish clergy do not officiate at intermarriages, and inasmuch as synagogues are not available for interfaith wedding ceremonies, these statistics represent, in the main, those who were rejected by the synagogue and by the Jewish clergy. The effect upon these statistics might be substantially different if the intermarrieds were welcomed by the synagogue and the clergy prior to their wedding; especially with regard to raising their children Jewish and retaining an affiliation with a synagogue.

**Question:** What accounts for the increase in interfaith marriages?

**Response:** Contemporary interfaith marriages differ from those of post-biblical times in a number of ways: In the recent past, interfaith marriages were often the means by which Jews could try to escape anti-semitism, enter the larger community, have access to higher educational opportunities and better professional positions.

Today, having achieved access to the mainstream of society, interfaith marriages are more a result of a democratic open society, and a wider sensitivity to the commonality of humanity made possible by a "particularistic/plural" society. Represented in the higher levels of the arts, the professions, politics, and commerce, Jews who were formerly the "seekers" have often become the "sought afters."

**Commentary:** Regarding their Jewish identity, young American Jews after the holocaust, have the same options faced by their ancestors, as described by Professor Irving Greenberg in "Crossroads to Destiny." Like their ancestors following the destruction of the Temple in 70 c.e., they can choose to identify with any of the branches of Judaism, or they can identify as Jews without having to choose a religious connection. Today, many reject the current religious choices and become zionists, culturalists, secularists or humanists, for the following reasons:

1. Many who want a religious connection reject orthodox Judaism because it is associated with authoritarianism, exclusivity and coercive practices; and because it remains fixed in a 19th century life-style.
2. Conservative Judaism, standing midway between orthodoxy and reform, calls for preserving traditions based on re-interpreting the laws of Torah. But for many young American Jews, these traditions seem more of a life-style based on nostalgia rather than law. It too is often accused of being intolerant toward those who differ with them.
3. Reform Judaism originally stressed the universality of the teachings of Judaism - the tenets of which have been accepted by most civilized societies- leaving it with a lack of "particularity." Without the "authority" of halachah, traumatized by the holocaust, as well as inspired by the redemption of the State of Israel, Reform Judaism seems unable to decide whether to retreat to the "traditionalisms" of the past in order to seem more "authentic," or, to find the courage to continue in the path of creative reform.



## 9. The Synagogue and Intermarriage

**Question 1:** Do any congregations provide their synagogues for interfaith weddings?

**Response:** More than one synagogue in our community has provided the use of the synagogue for an interfaith marriage in a special circumstance. However, virtually all churches welcome interfaith wedding ceremonies. Almost all will adjust the wedding service to meet the suggestions of a Jewish co-officiant, or the desires of a Jewish bride or groom.

**Commentary:** Many intermarrieds belong to families who are members of a synagogue. Most became b'nei mitzvah or confirmed. They consider marriage to be a sacred event in their lives in which they can express their Jewishness. Suggesting that they be married in a place other than a synagogue, or by a justice-of-the-peace instead of a Jewish clergyman is to question their sense of belonging and religious sincerity. To refuse them the use of the synagogue for their wedding ceremony and then to offer them free membership for one year following their marriage, is to question their intelligence and to add insult to rejection.

**Question 2:** What is the history of interfaith marriages at JCC?

**Response:** There are three histories: (1), that of the congregants, (2), of the synagogue, and (3), of the clergy.

**1. Congregants:** Although statistics regarding our congregation and intermarriage do not exist, communities such as ours are estimated to be in the top percentage of interfaith marriages.

**2. Synagogue:** Over the years, the use of our synagogue has been refused to those members of our congregation who have requested them for interfaith marriages. The formation of the Committee to consider the use of the synagogue for interfaith marriages is the first time this issue has been brought before the congregation.

**3. Clergy:** At the initial presentation to the Central Conference of American Rabbis, chaired by the late Rabbi Bamberger, Rabbi Schwartz voted in favor of officiating at interfaith marriages. However, the majority of the vote was "not to solemnize intermarriage." Rabbi Schwartz agreed to abide by the majority vote. (Bamberger later stated that he had made a mistake and should have voted in favor.) Neither Rabbi Davis, Rabbi Winer or any of the associate or assistant rabbis officiated at interfaith marriages while employed by our congregation.

**Personal Comment:** In 1973, I officiated at the marriage of my son, David, to Barbara who was not Jewish. The ceremony took place on her father's farm in Yorktown Heights. Shortly thereafter a number of congregants requested that I officiate at the weddings of their children. The president, Lawrence Foster, and Rabbi Davis agreed. I have since officiated at interfaith weddings for many families of our congregation as well as for the unaffiliated - but not in our sanctuary or the chapel.

**Commentary:** A distinction must be made between a specifically "Jewish ceremony" and a "religious ceremony" performed in our synagogue. For example: our congregation has often hosted the annual community Thanksgiving service at which priests, and ministers of our community participate on our pulpit in a service of thanksgiving to God. It is not a Jewish worship service, but it is a religious worship service. How can we justify refusing the use of our sanctuary to our own Jewish families on the grounds that it is not a Jewish ceremony, knowing full well that it is indeed a religious ceremony?



## 10. Recommendations:

There are positive and negative factors to be considered in providing the use of our synagogue to our members for interfaith weddings:

**Negative:** Some will interpret our providing the use of our synagogue for interfaith marriages as an endorsement, or an encouragement of interfaith marriages. We will be criticized for being "out of the mainstream" of reform congregations.

**Commentary:** Being the target of criticism is part of the "tradition" of Reform Judaism. From its very inception in 1810, Reform Judaism - which was created by lay leaders - met with harsh criticism. The first reform synagogue in Seesen, Germany, was literally forced to leave town. Reform was accused of contributing to the demise of the Judaism. Almost one hundred years later, Reform Judaism generated similar criticism when it decided to recognize as Jewish those who are born to a Jewish father; thus re-establishing patrilineal descent.

**Positive:** Making the synagogue available to our congregants for interfaith wedding ceremonies is not an endorsement of intermarriage: it is an endorsement of our children! It affirms our confidence in them, and provides their families with a support system for encouraging a continued identification with our congregation, and the universal teachings of Judaism.

**Commentary:** Our congregation has a history of adhering to democratic processes; such as when the congregation commendably voted to permit our senior rabbi to wear a yarmulke on the pulpit - for the first time in our history - despite the fact that over 90% of our members do not wear them. Refusing the use of the synagogue to members of the congregation because of differences in theology or philosophy is discriminatory and undemocratic.

**Conclusion:** There were times when the existence of a Diaspora contributed to the survival of the Jewish people (Babylon 586, b.c.e.). There were times when it did not (Germany, 1939). Similarly there were times when interfaith marriages benefited the survival of the Jewish people (1800-900 b.c.e.), and there were times when it did not (500-300 b.c.e.). This is a time when the fact of interfaith marriages may once again be used to benefit Jewish survival.

**Commentary:** At this stage in history, our children will not abandon the benefits of living in an open society; nor will they give up their right to act in accordance with their consciences for acceptance by an authoritarian orthodoxy, a nostalgic traditionalism or an insecure reform. It is doubtful that any Jewish bride or groom decided not to intermarry because they could not obtain a Jewish clergyperson to officiate, or a synagogue in which to be married. Our children will continue to intermarry in increasing numbers. They will be married by a justice-of-the-peace or a non-Jewish clergyperson. They will be married in their homes, in restaurants, hotels and country clubs, or even in a welcoming church.

The varieties of strategies attempting to stem the tide of intermarriages: education, affiliation and encouragement; intimidation, coercion, restrictions, scare-technics, prohibitions and rejections: all have failed! Welcoming our children and their families prior to an interfaith marriage is the only option that has not been tried. Exposing them to a tolerant and embracing Judaism may inspire them - as well as ourselves - to continue to try to realize the teachings of an enduring faith: that ...

"The stranger that sojourneth with you shall be unto you as the home-born among you, and you shall love them as yourself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt; I am the Lord your God" (Leviticus 19.34).





CONFIDENTIAL QUESTIONNAIRE

STUDY OF JEWISH IDENTITY, RELIGIOUS PRACTICES AND BELIEFS,  
AND MARRIAGE PATTERNS

Please complete this questionnaire by following the directions at each question. You will be asked to do one of three things. --

- (1) circle a code number to the right of the answer you choose, or circle one code number in each row, etc. or
- (2) fill in a number (for example, your zip code), or
- (3) write in a word or short explanation (such as your specific answer, if the stated choices are not appropriate).

If you are uncertain or do not know the answer to any question, just leave that item blank and go on to the next question.



# SECTION 1. RESIDENTIAL BACKGROUND AND COUNTRY OF FAMILY ORIGIN.

1. Where do you currently live (most of the year)? Please write in CITY OR TOWN, STATE OR PROVINCE, AND POSTAL ZIP CODE.

(City/Town)

(State/Province)

(Zipcode)

2. How many years have you lived in the city or town where you live now? \_\_\_\_\_ years

3. This question is about place of birth.

First, please indicate in **column A** where **you** were born, in **columns B and C** where **your parents** were born, and in **columns D and E** the country or region of origin of your mother's family and your father's family. IF YOU DON'T KNOW FOR SURE, JUST GIVE US YOUR BEST GUESS.

PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER IN EACH COLUMN. [IF MORE THAN ONE ANSWER IN COLUMN D OR E, CIRCLE TWO NUMBERS.]

	A. You	B. Your mother	C. Your father	D. Mother's family	E. Father's family
USA or Canada .....	1	1	1	1	1
Russia, Poland, or other parts of Eastern Europe .....	2	2	2	2	2
Germany .....	3	3	3	3	3
Austria, Hungary, or other parts of Central Europe (except Germany) ....	4	4	4	4	4
Other, please specify below and circle the "5" in the appropriate column.	5	5	5	5	5

4. For each in Question 3 **NOT BORN IN THE USA OR CANADA**, please write in the (approximate) year(s) of immigration to North America.

A. You	B. Your mother	C. Your father	D. Mother's family	E. Father's family
(year)	(year)	(year)	(year)	(year)



**SECTION 11.** IN THIS SECTION WE WILL ASK ABOUT YOUR FAMILY AT VARIOUS STAGES PRIOR TO ADULTHOOD. IF ONE OF YOUR PARENTS WAS DECEASED OR IF YOUR PARENTS WERE NOT LIVING TOGETHER, YOU MAY CHOOSE TO ANSWER EITHER ABOUT THE DECEASED PARENT, OR ABOUT A STEP-PARENT OR GUARDIAN, OR WRITE "not applicable."

**A. "WHEN YOU WERE SIXTEEN. . ."**

5. When you were 16, where did you live (most or all of the year)? Please write in CITY OR TOWN, STATE OR PROVINCE.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(City/Town)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(State/Province)

6. A. When you were 16, what was your mother's and your father's (usual) occupation?

	YOUR MOTHER	YOUR FATHER
JOB TITLE OR POSITION	_____	_____
NATURE OF WORK DONE	_____	_____
TYPE OF BUSINESS OR INDUSTRY	_____	_____

- B. Were your parents self-employed in the positions described above?

	MOTHER	FATHER
Yes .....	1	1
No .....	2	2
Don't know .....	3	3

7. When you were 16, what did each of your parents consider themselves?

	Mother	Father
Orthodox Jew .....	1	1
Conservative Jew .....	2	2
Reform Jew .....	3	3
Just Jewish .....	4	4
Catholic .....	5	5
Protestant .....	6	6
Other (Please specify and circle the "7" in appropriate column)	7	7

(PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER IN EACH COLUMN)

(Please specify denomination) ←

↓

## B. "DURING YOUR CHILDHOOD. . ."

8. Please read the various activities listed in this question. Then indicate about how frequently your parents (one or both of them) took part in each one during your childhood.

	Never	Once a year or less	2-5 times a year	6-11 times a year	12 times a year or more
Have Jews visit in your home?..	1	2	3	4	5
Have non-Jews visit in your home? .....	1	2	3	4	5
Attend synagogue services? ...	1	2	3	4	5
Attend church services? .....	1	2	3	4	5

9. Please tell us about life cycle ceremonies you (and your siblings) have experienced.

(PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER IN EACH ROW)

	Yes	No	I had no brothers	I had no sisters	Don't recall
Were <b>you</b> confirmed? .....	1	2	--	--	--
Were any of your brothers or sisters confirmed? .....	1	2	3	4	5
Did <b>you</b> have a Bar or Bat Mitzvah? .....	1	2	--	--	--
Did any of your brothers have a Bar Mitzvah?	1	2	3	--	5
Did any of your sisters have a Bat Mitzvah?	1	2	--	4	5

10. Was there a **religious ceremony** in connection with the circumcision of each of your brothers, and (if you are male) your own circumcision?

Yes, for all ..... 1  
 Yes, but not for all ... 2  
 I had no brothers ..... 3  
 No, for none ..... 4  
 Don't recall ..... 5

11. Did your parents name their children in synagogue? (PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER)

Yes, all ..... 1  
 Yes, but not all ... 2  
 No, none ..... 3  
 Don't know ..... 4



12. This question is about Jewish family customs. Most of the time during your childhood, was it your family's practice to. . .

(PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER IN EACH ROW)

	Yes	No	Don't Recall
Light Sabbath candles? .....	1	2	3
Have mostly Jewish friends? .....	1	2	3
Eat no bread on Passover? .....	1	2	3
Live in a "Jewish neighborhood"? .....	1	2	3
Sit shiva after the death of a relative? .....	1	2	3
Build a Sukkah? .....	1	2	3
Keep Kosher? .....	1	2	3
Have or attend a Passover Seder? .....	1	2	3
Light Hanukah candles? .....	1	2	3
Have a Christmas tree? .....	1	2	3
Fast on Yom Kippur? .....	1	2	3
Light Yahrzeit candle at home in memory of a relative? .....	1	2	3
Eat pork or pork products? .....	1	2	3
Observe Yizkor on Yom Kippur in synagogue in memory of a deceased relative? .....	1	2	3
Have a Mezzuzah on your front door? .....	1	2	3

13. Now we would like you to tell us about some of the educational, social, and cultural activities in which you participated as you were growing up.

PLEASE INDICATE THE NUMBER OF YEARS OR SUMMERS YOU ATTENDED BEFORE YOUR 22ND BIRTHDAY.

Activity	How many years or summers did you attend?	In thinking about it now, on the whole was it a positive, neutral, or negative experience?		
		Positive	Neutral	Negative
Sunday School (1 weekly session) _____	_____	1	2	3
Yiddish School (1 weekly session) _____	_____	1	2	3
Synagogue School (2 or more weekly sessions) _____	_____	1	2	3
Jewish Day School or Yeshiva (all day, 5 days a week) _____	_____	1	2	3
Other Jewish schooling, please specify _____	_____	1	2	3
Synagogue or Temple Youth Group _____	_____	1	2	3
Other youth group with Jewish content and/or members _____	_____	1	2	3

## 13. (Continued)

Activity

How many summers did you attend?	In thinking about it now, on the whole was it a positive, neutral, or negative experience?		
	Positive	Neutral	Negative

Summer camp of Jewish religious movement (such as UAHC)	_____	1	2	3
Summer camp with Jewish program	_____	1	2	3
Mostly or all Jewish summer camp without Jewish program	_____	1	2	3
Summer study or touring in Israel	_____	1	2	3
Semester or year in Israel	_____	1	2	3
Other Jewish activities, please specify _____	_____	1	2	3

14. What is the highest level of education you have completed?  
(PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER)

<b>IF YOU ATTENDED COLLEGE:</b> What was the name of the undergraduate col- lege you attended (the longest)?  _____ (Name of College)	Some high school .....	1
	High school graduate .....	2
	Some college .....	3
	College graduate .....	4
	Some graduate school .....	5
	Master's degree or equivalent ..	6
	Law degree .....	7
	Medical doctorate .....	8
	Other doctorate .....	9
	Other, please specify _____	0

## C. "YOUR HIGH SCHOOL YEARS . . ."

15. When you were in high school,  
how often did you attend an  
organized Jewish activity, in-  
cluding religious services?

(PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER)

IF THE FREQUENCY VARIED DURING  
YOUR HIGH SCHOOL YEARS, ANSWER  
FOR THE YEAR(S) YOU WERE MOST  
ACTIVE JEWISHLY.

Rarely or never .....	1
About once a year .....	2
Several times a year, but less than once a month .....	3
About once a month .....	4
2 or 3 times a month .....	5
Once a week or more .....	6

16. When you were in high school, did you date. . . (PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER)A. IF YOU DIDN'T DATE IN HIGH SCHOOL,  
please circle an additional number  
for the answer that best describes  
the group with whom you socialized  
most.

I didn't date .(PLEASE READ A) .	1
Only Jews? .....	2
Mostly Jews? .....	3
Jews and non-Jews equally? .....	4
Mostly non-Jews? .....	5
Only non-Jews? .....	6



IF YOU WERE JEWISH AS A TEENAGER, please answer Q. 17A.

IF YOU WERE NOT JEWISH AS A TEENAGER, please answer Q. 17B and 17C.

17A. If you were Jewish as a teenager, which of the statements below best describes your parents' approach toward your dating non-Jews? (PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| They encouraged me to date non-Jews .....  | 1 |
| They expressed no preference .....   | 2 |
| Although I think they preferred that I date Jews, they expressed no opposition to my dating non-Jews ..... | 3 |
| Although they stated their preference that I date only Jews, they permitted me to date non-Jews .....      | 4 |
| Although they strongly opposed my dating non-Jews, they did not forbid it .....                            | 5 |
| They would not permit me to date non-Jews .....  | 6 |
| The issue never came up because .....  | 7 |

- - - - - IF YOU ANSWERED Q. 17A, PLEASE CONTINUE WITH QUESTION 18. - - -

17B. If you were NOT Jewish as a teenager, which of the statements below best describes your parents' approach toward your dating Jews? (PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| They encouraged me to date Jews .....  | 1 |
| They expressed no preference .....   | 2 |
| Although I think they preferred that I date people of my own faith, they expressed no opposition to my dating Jews ..... | 3 |
| Although they stated their preference that I date only people of my own faith, they permitted me to date Jews .....      | 4 |
| Although they strongly opposed my dating Jews, they did not forbid it .....  | 5 |
| They would not permit me to date Jews .....  | 6 |
| The issue never came up because .....  | 7 |

17C. If you were NOT Jewish as a teenager, please give a brief description of your religious education. \_\_\_\_\_

18. When you were college age, whether or not you actually went to college, how often did you attend an organized Jewish activity, including religious services?

IF THE FREQUENCY VARIED DURING THOSE YEARS, ANSWER FOR THE YEAR(S) YOU WERE MOST ACTIVE JEWISHLY.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| Rarely or never .....                                  | 1 |
| About once a year .....                                | 2 |
| Several times a year, but less than once a month ..... | 3 |
| About once a month .....                               | 4 |
| 2 or 3 times a month .....                             | 5 |
| Once a week or more .....                              | 6 |

19. When you were college age, whether or not you actually went to college, did you date. . . (PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER)

A. IF YOU DIDN'T DATE, please circle an additional number for the answer that best describes the group with whom you socialized most.

I didn't date .(PLEASE READ A) . 1  
 Only Jews? ..... 2  
 Mostly Jews? ..... 3  
 Jews and non-Jews equally? ..... 4  
 Mostly non-Jews? ..... 5  
 Only non-Jews? ..... 6

**SECTION III. ABOUT YOU AS A JEWISH ADULT -- YOUR CURRENT ATTITUDES, BELIEFS, KNOWLEDGE, PRACTICES, AND EXPERIENCES.**

20. What is your Jewish status? (PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER)

I was born Jewish:

Both parents were Jewish ..... 1  
 Only mother was Jewish ..... 2  
 Only father was Jewish ..... 3  
 I converted without specific plans for marriage to a Jew ..... 4  
 I converted prior to marriage, but would have converted anyway .. 5  
 I converted prior to marriage, but would NOT have converted  
 without specific plans for marriage to a Jew ..... 6  
 I converted, but don't regard myself as really Jewish ..... 7  
 I never converted, but I feel Jewish ..... 8  
 I never converted, and although my spouse is Jewish, I do not  
 consider myself Jewish ..... 9  
 Other, please specify ..... 0

21. IF YOU CONVERTED TO JUDAISM:

A. Under whose sponsorship did you convert? Reform ..... 1  
 Conservative ..... 2  
 Orthodox ..... 3  
 Other, please specify ..... 4  
 (PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER)

B. For how long a period did you formally study Judaism before conversion? \_\_\_\_\_

C. At the time of your conversion, you might have participated in one or more of the rituals listed below. For each one, please indicate whether or not you participated in it.

(PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER IN EACH ROW)

	Yes	No
Private conversion ceremony .....	1	2
Conversion ceremony in front of congregation ..	1	2
Jewish court (Bet Din) .....	1	2
Ritual immersion .....	1	2
Ritual circumcision .....	1	2
Other, please specify .....	1	2

22. How well do you know each of the following languages?

(PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER IN EACH ROW)

	Well	Fair	Slight	Not at all
Reading Prayerbook Hebrew ..	1	2	3	4
Modern Hebrew .....	1	2	3	4
Yiddish .....	1	2	3	4
Ladino .....	1	2	3	4



23. Religious beliefs vary widely. In this question we list a number of statements of religious belief. Please tell us about your own belief by indicating the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.

(PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER IN EACH ROW)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Dis- agree	Strongly disagree
A person can be a good Jew without beleiving in God .....	1	2	3	4	5
People who think there is a divine purpose to things that happen in their lives are fooling themselves .....	1	2	3	4	5
The Torah is the word of God given to the Jews	1	2	3	4	5
Jerusalem is no holier to the Jews than to Christians or Muslims .....	1	2	3	4	5
Belief in God gives people a false sense of security .....	1	2	3	4	5
God has a special concern for the unfortunate and the oppressed .....	1	2	3	4	5
We have the ability to appreciate what is beautiful in the world because something of God is in each of us .....	1	2	3	4	5
The concept of God is an old superstition that is no longer needed to explain things in the modern era .....	1	2	3	4	5
A strong belief in God strengthens the will to live when a person is seriously ill .....	1	2	3	4	5
God is not aware of our actions .....	1	2	3	4	5

24. Many reasons have been given for remaining Jewish. Please indicate by **CIRCLING ONE NUMBER IN EACH ROW** how important each of the five is to you as a reason for remaining Jewish.

	Extremely important	Very important	Somewhat important	Not very important	Not at all important
The satisfaction I get from being Jewish .....	1	2	3	4	5
I owe it to my parents, grandparents, and ancestors.	1	2	3	4	5
I don't want to give Hitler his victory after all .....	1	2	3	4	5
Jews have a special task to be examples to the world ..	1	2	3	4	5
I was born a Jew and see no reason to change .....	1	2	3	4	5

25. Much has been written and said about Jews as the "chosen people." Which of the following statements comes closest to describing what the term "chosen people" means to you? (PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER)

The Jewish people was chosen to bring the knowledge  
of God to the world ..... 1  
Whether or not the Jewish people literally was chosen  
by God, Jews have had a special role in history .... 2  
Because Jews were chosen, they must be better ..... 3  
Jews were not really chosen; they have been simply  
victims of circumstance ..... 4

26. What is your current marital status -- are you. . . (PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER)

Married ..... [PLEASE ..... 1  
Separated ..... CONTINUE ..... 2  
Divorced ..... WITH ..... 3  
Widowed ..... Q. 27] ..... 4  
Never married ... (PLEASE CONTINUE WITH Q. 38) ..... 5

27. How many times have you been married [including your current marriage]? (PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER)
- Once ..(PLEASE CONTINUE WITH Q.30).. 1  
Twice ..... [PLEASE .. 2  
Three times ..... CONTINUE .. 3  
Four times ..... WITH .. 4  
More than four times .. Q. 28] .. 5

28. Was your **former** spouse Jewish? (PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER)

IF MORE THAN ONE FORMER  
SPOUSE, ANSWER FOR **FIRST**

Yes, born Jewish ..... 1  
Yes, converted to Judaism before marriage .. 2  
Yes, converted to Judaism after marriage ... 3  
No, not Jewish ..... 4

29. While you were divorced or widowed (before your most recent marriage), about what **proportion** of the people you dated were Jewish? (PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER)

Did not date then ..... 0  
None ..... 1  
Almost none ..... 2  
A few ..... 3  
About half ..... 4  
Most ..... 5  
Almost all ..... 6  
All ..... 7

30. Is your present (or most recent) spouse Jewish? (PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER)

Yes, by birth ..... [CONTINUE ..... 1  
Yes, by conversion before marriage ... WITH ..... 2  
Yes, by conversion after marriage .... Q. 35] ..... 3  
No ..... (PLEASE ANSWER Q's 31 - 34) ..... 4



NOTE: QUESTIONS 31 THROUGH 34 SHOULD BE ANSWERED ONLY IF YOUR PRESENT (OR MOST RECENT, IF YOU ARE DIVORCED OR WIDOWED) SPOUSE IS NOT JEWISH.

Yes	No
-----	----

31. A. Was your present (or most recent) spouse married before? ..... 1 2 (CONT. WITH Q.32)
- B. Was (his/her) former spouse Jewish? ..... 1 2
- C. Are there any children from your spouse's previous marriage? ..... 1 2 (CONT. WITH Q.32)
- D. Does your spouse rear his/her child(ren) from a previous marriage as non-Jews within your home? 1 2
- E. Does your spouse celebrate Christian holy days with his/her child(ren) in your home? ..... 1 2
- F. Does/Do your spouse's child(ren) who does/do not live with you, visit your home regularly? ... 1 2

32. In some families non-Jewish spouses do Jewish things; in others they do not. If your spouse is not Jewish, does he/she . . .

(PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER IN EACH ROW)

	Yes	No	No Children
...attend synagogue services as often as you do? .....	1	2	-
...participate in some synagogue activities? .....	1	2	-
...participate MORE actively in the synagogue than you do? 1	2	-	
...refrain from involvement in Jewish religious activities with you (and your children)? .....	1	2	-
...attend church services on special holy days? .....	1	2	-
...attend church services somewhat regularly? .....	1	2	-
...take your child(ren) to church services sometimes? ...	1	2	3
...rear your child(ren) in a faith other than Judaism? ..	1	2	3

33. This question asks about your present or most recent spouse and (his/her) parents.

Yes	No	IF NO: In which country was he/she born?
-----	----	--

- A. Was your spouse born in the USA or Canada? 1 2 (Country)
- B. Was your spouse's mother born in the USA or Canada? 1 2 (Country)
- C. Was your spouse's father born in the USA or Canada? 1 2 (Country)
- D. IF ALL THREE OF THEM WERE BORN IN USA/CANADA:  
From what country or part of the world did most of your spouse's ancestors come?

(IF MORE THAN ONE, PLEASE NAME THE ONE YOUR SPOUSE IS MOST LIKELY TO IDENTIFY WITH.)

(Country or region of family origin)

34. When your spouse was 16 years old, what did each of your spouse's parents consider themselves, as far as you know?

(PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER IN EACH COLUMN)

	Spouse's Mother	Spouse's Father
Catholic .....	1	1
(Please specify denomination) ← Protestant .....	2	2
Orthodox Jew .....	3	3
Conservative Jew .....	4	4
Reform Jew .....	5	5
Just Jewish .....	6	6
Other (Please specify and circle the "7" in appropriate column) .....	7	7
Don't know .....	8	8

35. Before your (first) marriage, approximately what proportion of the people you dated were Jewish?

(PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER)

Did not date then .....	0
None .....	1
Almost none .....	2
A few .....	3
About half .....	4
Most .....	5
Almost all .....	6
All .....	7

36. How old were you when you were (first) married? \_\_\_\_\_

37. A. Where were you married (the most recent time)?

(PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER)

In a synagogue .....	1
In a church .....	2
Some other place (Please specify type of place) .....	3

B. And who performed that wedding ceremony?  
(PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER)

A rabbi or cantor .....	1
Non-Jewish clergy .....	2
A judge or Justice of the peace .....	3
Jewish and non-Jewish clergy jointly .....	4
Other (Please specify) .....	5

THE NEXT SET OF QUESTIONS SHOULD BE ANSWERED BY EVERYONE.

38. Thinking about the neighborhood where  
you now live, about what proportion of  
the people who live there are Jewish?

None or almost none ( 0 - 10%)...	1
Less than half .....(10 - 40%)...	2
About half .....(40 - 60%)...	3
Most .....(60 - 90%)...	4
All or almost all ..(90 -100%)...	5



39. Thinking about the people whom you consider your close friends, . . .

(PLEASE READ A & B AND CIRCLE ONE NUMBER IN EACH COLUMN)

A. ...about what proportion of them are Jewish?		B. ...about what proportion of them belong to your Temple?	
All .....	5	.....	5
Almost all .....	4	.....	4
Most .....	3	.....	3
About half .....	2	.....	2
Less than half .....	1	.....	1
Almost none or none .....	0	.....	0

40. For approximately how many years have you belonged  
to the Temple where you are a member now?

\_\_\_\_\_ years

41. Please read the various activities listed in this question. Then indicate about  
how frequently you participate in each one. (PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER IN EACH  
ROW).

	NUMBER OF TIMES PER YEAR:				
	Never	Once or less	2-5	6-11	12 or more
Attend a sports event, such as a ball game? .....	1	2	3	4	5
Visit a museum or attend a symphony concert, theater, or other live cultural event? .....	1	2	3	4	5
Have Jews visit in your home? .....	1	2	3	4	5
Have non-Jews visit in your home? ...	1	2	3	4	5
Attend synagogue services? .....	1	2	3	4	5
Attend church services? .....	1	2	3	4	5
Attend Jewish adult education class or lecture? .....	1	2	3	4	5
Attend general adult education class or lecture? .....	1	2	3	4	5
Read a book with Jewish content? ....	1	2	3	4	5
Read a book without Jewish content? .	1	2	3	4	5
Read a Jewish magazine or newspaper?	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Attend meetings of, or perform organizational functions for:</u>					
Your own Temple? .....	1	2	3	4	5
Jewish organizations other than your own Temple? .....	1	2	3	4	5
General organizations or civic groups? .....	1	2	3	4	5

42. During the past year, how has your family (living in your household) distributed its charitable giving? (We don't want amounts -- just the percent to various causes or organizations.) PLEASE ENTER A PERCENT FROM 0% TO 100% ON EACH LINE SO THAT THE COLUMN ADDS TO 100% (APPROXIMATELY).

Your Temple or synagogue .....	_____ %
Reform Jewish national institutions, such as UAHC, HUC-JIR, or ARZA .....	_____ %
UJA/Jewish Federation .....	_____ %
Other Jewish causes or organizations .....	_____ %
Other general causes or organizations ....	_____ %
TOTAL ...	100 %

43. This question is about customs in Jewish families. Is it the practice in your family to . . . (PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER IN EACH ROW)

	Yes	No
Light Sabbath candles? .....	1	2
Eat no bread on Passover? .....	1	2
Sit shiva after the death of a relative? .....	1	2
Build a Sukkah? .....	1	2
Keep Kosher? .....	1	2
Have or attend a Passover Seder? .....	1	2
Light Hanukah candles? .....	1	2
Have a Christmas tree? .....	1	2
Fast on Yom Kippur? .....	1	2
Light Yahrzeit candle at home in memory of a relative? .....	1	2
Eat pork or pork products? .....	1	2
Observe Yizkor on Yom Kippur in synagogue in memory of a deceased relative? .....	1	2
Have a Mezzuzah on your front door? .....	1	2

44. A. How many children do you have, all together, counting any who may not be living now (and any by a previous marriage)? NUMBER OF CHILDREN \_\_\_\_\_

B. How many of your children are married? \_\_\_\_\_

C. If any of your children are married, how many are married to non-Jews? \_\_\_\_\_

D. How many (more) children do you (and your spouse) expect to have (in addition to those you already have had)? \_\_\_\_\_

IF YOU HAVE HAD, OR EXPECT TO HAVE, ANY CHILDREN, PLEASE CONTINUE WITH Q. 45.  
IF YOU HAVE NO CHILDREN NOW, AND EXPECT TO HAVE NONE IN THE FUTURE, PLEASE CONTINUE WITH Q. 50.



45. In this question we would like you to tell us about your child(ren)'s educational, social, and cultural activities.

First, please give us the age and sex of (each of) your child(ren) in Part A below.

Next, in Part B, please indicate on the line the number of years or summers each attended or took part in the activity before his/her 22nd birthday.

Third, please rate in the box the quality of the experience on your child's growth as a Jew, using the following rating scale:

EXAMPLE: Six years,  
a positive rating = 6 +

+ = Positive  
blank = Neutral  
- = Negative

PLEASE INDICATE THE NUMBER OF YEARS OR SUMMERS CHILD ATTENDED BEFORE HIS/HER 22ND BIRTHDAY. IF CHILD IS NOT YET 22 YEARS OLD, PLEASE ANSWER PART A FOR HIS/HER PRESENT AGE AND PART B (number of years/summers) FOR WHAT YOU EXPECT HE/SHE WILL DO BY AGE 22 (and skip the rating for the young child(ren)).

**Part A.**

	Child #1	Child #2	Child #3	Child #4
Age: _____				
Male ..... 1	... 1	... 1	... 1	... 1
Female ... 2	... 2	... 2	... 2	... 2
	R	R	R	R
Number of A	Number of A	Number of A	Number of A	Number of A
years (or T	years (or T	years (or T	years (or T	years (or T
summers) E	summers) E	summers) E	summers) E	summers) E

**Part B.**

**Activity**

Temple Sunday school (1 weekly session)	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>
Temple Hebrew school (2 weekly sessions)	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>
Jewish Day School or Yeshiva (all day 5 days a week)	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>
Temple Youth Group	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>
Other youth group with Jewish and/or members	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>
UAHC Summer camp	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>
Other summer camp with Jewish program	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>
Mostly or all Jewish camp without Jewish program	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>
Summer study or touring in Israel	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>
Semester or year in Israel	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>
Other Jewish activities, please specify _____	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>

46. Have you had (or will you have) a religious ceremony in connection with circumcision of your son(s)?

Yes, for all ..... 1  
 Yes, but not for all .. 2  
 No, for none ..... 3  
 Have no sons and do not plan to have any .. 4

47. Please tell us whether or not you observe the following practices?

(PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER IN EACH ROW)

	Yes, all	Yes, but not all	No, none	Have no children & do not plan to have any?
--	----------	------------------	----------	---

Did you (or will you) name your children in synagogue? .....	1	2	3	4
Have your children been confirmed (or will they be when they are old enough)? .....	1	2	3	4
Did (or will) your son(s) have a Bar Mitzvah? ... <sup>2nd</sup>	1	2	3	4
Did (or will) your daughter(s) have a Bat Mitzvah?	1	2	3	4

48. Below are a number of things that Jewish children have done. Please tell us how you would feel about it if a child of yours. . . (PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER IN EACH ROW)

	IT WOULD BOTHER ME:			
	A great deal	Somewhat	A little	Not at All
...became an Orthodox Jew?	1	2	3	4
...converted to Christianity?	1	2	3	4
...married a non-Jew?	1	2	3	4
...settled in Israel?	1	2	3	4
...married a convert to Judaism?	1	2	3	4
...became a Unitarian?	1	2	3	4
...decided not to attend or dropped out of college?	1	2	3	4

49. Which of the following statements best describes your approach toward your child(ren) dating non-Jews? (PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER)

I encourage them to date non-Jews ..... 1  
 I express no preference ..... 2  
 Although I prefer that they date Jews, I express no opposition to their dating non-Jews ..... 3  
 Although I state my preference that they date only Jews, I permit them to date non-Jews ..... 4  
 Although I strongly oppose their dating non-Jews, I do not forbid it .. 5  
 I do not permit them to date non-Jews ..... 6  
 The issue never comes up because ..... 7



50. Jews differ in their beliefs as to the circumstances under which a rabbi ought to officiate at a wedding between a Jew and a non-Jew (who has not converted to Judaism). Please indicate below, by circling one number in each row, whether you think. . .

	Yes	No	Don't know
<u>A rabbi should officiate if. . .</u>			
...the parents of the Jewish partner are members of the rabbi's temple .....	1	2	3
...the couple getting married joins the temple .....	1	2	3
...the couple promises to rear their children as Jews .....	1	2	3
...the non-Jew has completed all of the requirements for conversion except for the conversion ceremony	1	2	3
...the couple is not planning to have children together .....	1	2	3
...the couple promises to expose their children to Judaism along with the religion of the non-Jewish partner .....	1	2	3
...the wedding ceremony is in a church .....	1	2	3
...Christian clergy co-officiates .....	1	2	3
A rabbi should officiate only if the prospective bride and groom are both Jewish (either by birth or conversion) .....	1	2	3
Other (Please explain) .....	1	2	3

51. Some people have told us that they relate to being Jewish in non-traditional ways. The statements below represent some people's means of identifying as a Jew. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each one by circling one number in each row.

	Agree	Disagree
Primarily because I am a Jew, education is especially important to me .....	1	2
Jews are less hasty to use force as means of solving problems ..	1	2
Primarily because I am a Jew, I feel embarrassed when I don't buy at a discount .....	1	2
Jews have a harder time than Non-Jews in separating from their parents when they grow up .....	1	2
Primarily because I am a Jew, I am naturally good at expressing emotions .....	1	2
Primarily because I am a Jew, I am strongly in favor of nuclear disarmament .....	1	2
Most non-Jews have negative feelings about Jews .....	1	2
Primarily because I am a Jew, I have stronger family ties than non-Jews have .....	1	2

52. We are interested in your idea of what it takes to be a good Jew. Please tell us, for each item below, how essential it is to being a good Jew.

<u>A good Jew. . .</u>	<u>Essential</u>	<u>Desirable, but not essential</u>	<u>Makes no difference</u>
...supports all humanitarian causes .....	1	2	3
...believes in God .....	1	2	3
...knows the fundamentals of Judaism .....	1	2	3
...supports Israel .....	1	2	3
...attends weekly worship services .....	1	2	3
...gains the respect of Christian neighbors ..	1	2	3
...belongs to a synagogue or temple .....	1	2	3
...marries within the Jewish faith .....	1	2	3
...contributes to Jewish philanthropies .....	1	2	3

53. We would like to get your opinions about some important current issues. Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the statements below.

(PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER IN EACH ROW)

	<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Strongly disagree</u>
Parents of children in religious day schools should receive tuition tax credits .....	1	2	3	4	5
Orthodoxy represents the mainstream of Judaism .....	1	2	3	4	5
Israel should offer the Arabs territorial compromise in the West Bank (Judea and Samaria) in return for credible guarantees of peace .....	1	2	3	4	5
Persons convicted of murder should be subject to the death penalty .....	1	2	3	4	5
A Jew can lead a more authentic Jewish life in Israel than in America .....	1	2	3	4	5
The United States government should make nuclear disarmament a primary goal of foreign policy .....	1	2	3	4	5
Israel's commitment to democratic values has eroded in recent years .....	1	2	3	4	5
Reform Jews should defer to Orthodox authority .....	1	2	3	4	5
Israel is the center of contemporary Jewish life .....	1	2	3	4	5
A Jew who marries a non-Jew who does not convert to Judaism is jeopardizing the future of Judaism .....	1	2	3	4	5



54. All together, how much time have you spent in Israel?

(PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER)

None .....	1
A few days .....	2
About a week .....	3
More than a week, but less than one month .	4
About a month .....	5
More than a month, but less than six months	6
More than six months, but less than a year .	7
A year or more .....	8

55. Please give us **your own** and, if you are married, **your spouse's** present [or former] occupation. If you are retired or not employed, please write in your usual/former occupation.

**YOUR OWN**

**YOUR SPOUSE'S**

JOB TITLE OR POSITION

NATURE OF WORK DONE

TYPE OF BUSINESS OR INDUSTRY

56. Are you (and, if you are married, is your spouse) self-employed?

**YOU**

**YOUR SPOUSE**

Yes ..... 1  
No ..... 2

1  
2

57. In what year were you born?

(year)

58. What is your sex?

Male ..... 1      Female ..... 2

59. If you would like to be considered for participation in a follow-up personal interview, PLEASE WRITE IN YOUR HOME TELEPHONE AREA CODE AND PHONE NUMBER.

(      )  
A/C

60. Is there anything else you would like to tell us relating to the questions in this survey? Any comments you wish to make, either on the back of this questionnaire or in a separate letter, that would help the Research Task Force will be greatly appreciated.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS RESEARCH EFFORT AND FOR YOUR TIME TO COMPLETE THIS SURVEY. PLEASE ENCLOSE THE COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE IN THE POSTAGE PAID ENVELOPE AND RETURN IT TO THE RESEARCH OFFICE.



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House of Living Judaism  
838 Fifth Avenue  
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## RELIGION

**Despite Prohibition, Estimated 40% Will Wed Jews to Non-Jews****Area Reform Rabbis Open to Mixed Marriages**

By JOHN DART, Times Religion Writer

PALM SPRINGS—About 40% of the Reform rabbis in Los Angeles and Orange counties will officiate at weddings of a Jew and a non-Jew under some conditions—despite their own denomination's guidelines opposing so-called mixed-marriage ceremonies.

That estimate, by Rabbi Lennard R. Thal, a regional Reform executive, is higher than generally supposed. Thal estimated that between 30 to 40 rabbis out of 85 affiliated with the liberal wing of Judaism perform such services.

Rabbis who perform such weddings rarely talk about the issue openly.

For one thing, they are going against Judaism's legal tradition forbidding intermarriage. That law is strictly observed by Orthodox and Conservative rabbis, and widely supported by most Jewish community leaders, who fear that intermarriage is partly responsible for American Jewry's eroding numbers and decline in religious observance.

It is estimated that one Jew in three marries outside the faith, although studies vary widely.

Most Reform rabbis who officiate at mixed marriages believe that refusing to do so will do nothing to stem their proliferation. They believe they are taking a constructive step toward preserving Jewish identity within families with one Jewish spouse.

Some of these rabbis, who say they do not worry about criticism from their peers, are reluctant to be identified for another reason: "The demand for mixed-marriage ceremonies is so great that I would be overrun with requests," said a well-known Los Angeles rabbi.

Thal, however, contends that while while "the phone might go off the hook" for popular rabbis, "there is no shortage of people relative to the need."

Thal is director of the Pacific Southwest Council, the Los Angeles-based association of 64 synagogues aligned with Reform Judaism's Union of American Hebrew Congregations. He was attending the Palm Springs meeting of the Pacific Assn. of Reform Rabbis.

Rabbis who refuse to officiate at mixed marriages say it is a matter of personal and religious integrity. "I can't look a non-Jew in the eye and say this wedding is sanctioned by the Jewish people and have him break the glass at the end of the

bis, on the other hand, seem more tradition-bound, Glaser said.

Two rabbis who do perform mixed marriage ceremonies—Leonard Beerman of Leo Baeck Temple, Los Angeles, and Henri Front, Temple Beth David, Westminster—said they will not co-officiate at so-called ecumenical weddings with a priest or minister. Both said they require that the couple agree to study Judaism, have a Jewish home and raise the children as Jews.

Beerman said he has always been

**'They felt the people they had turned down, they had sort of lost. These rabbis were going to take another tack now.'**

ceremony; it's hypocritical," Rabbi Larry Goldmark of La Mirada said. "I'm not a rent-a-rabbi."

Surprisingly, Thal said, those who do officiate in the Los Angeles area tend to be older rabbis, some of whom once consistently declined requests.

Rabbi Joseph B. Glaser, executive vice-president of Reform Judaism's Central Conference of American Rabbis, based in New York, said the same is true in Northern California.

"I was very much surprised when I began to hear who was doing it in California, because many of them were very traditional in other ways," Glaser said.

After talking to some of these rabbis, Glaser said, he found that "it was not that they had been worn down by the constant pressure but that they felt the people they had turned down, they had sort of lost. These rabbis were going to take another tack now."

The younger generation of rab-

bis, on the other hand, seem more willing to sanction such marriages. "If anything, I've been more liberal in recent years," he said.

Front said he once opposed mixed marriage weddings. However, about 15 years ago, he took his turn conducting Reform's Introduction to Judaism classes, mostly for people who were about to be married.

"After a year's experience with hundreds of these people, I realized my former position was in error. We live in an age of romantic love—people are going to get married regardless of who marries them," Front said. "I am not so interested in *halakha* (Jewish law) as I am in the future generations of Jews in this world."

Why is Southern California a place where so many have agreed

to break with tradition?

A possible factor is that most Reform synagogues have been lenient on the issue—unlike major temples in some other cities.

The late Rabbi Edgar F. Magnin occasionally performed mixed marriages, said his longtime associate at Wilshire Boulevard Temple, Rabbi Alfred Wolf.

"As long as the Jewish partner had a firm commitment to Judaism, the couple intended to have a Jewish home and the non-Jewish partner had no conflicting faith commitment," Magnin would disregard the Reform guidelines, last re-stated in 1973, said Wolf, who is now retired.

These days, in Los Angeles County, Thal said, "to the best of my knowledge, the majority of rabbis of congregations with 400 families or more will officiate under a variety of circumstances." Put another way, he said, "There are two or three senior rabbis of large congregations in Los Angeles who do not officiate at mixed marriages."

One of those apparently is Rabbi Daniel Polish of Hollywood's Temple Israel. He was among 24 rabbis who recently signed a nationwide protest statement against a privately published argument for mixed-marriage weddings.

The statement, mailed last week to almost 1,000 U.S. and Canadian Reform rabbis, responded to criticism by Prof. Eugene Mihaly of Reform's Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati of the basis on which mixed-marriage ceremonies are discouraged.

At the same time, the protest statement suggested that the re-

fusal to officiate at mixed weddings may harm a rabbi's career.

"What is intimidating is the fact that some congregations are screening out pulpit candidates who do not officiate at mixed marriages," the signers said.

Reform officials interviewed here, however, said that is not usually the case.

"It's not an illegitimate area of questioning," Thal said, "but in the 3½ years I've been in my position there has not been one congregation that has made a decision based on that."

One rabbi, who did not wish to be identified, said he was recently tempted to change his stance against mixed-marriage ceremonies in order to beat out a rival candidate whom he thought condoned the practice. The other rabbi got the pulpit, but it turned out that he also opposed such marriages.

"He convinced the selection committee that it was not the most important thing by which to judge a rabbi," the losing rabbi said.

Rabbi A. Stanley Dreyfus of New York, the national placement director for Reform Judaism, said, "We encourage synagogues not to make it a prime factor and we prepare panels of candidates without regard to whether they do or they don't" (approve of mixed marriages).

Dreyfus, who said he resisted pleas for mixed marriages for 14 years at a Brooklyn synagogue without losing many members, nevertheless acknowledged the difficulty each rabbi faces:

"It's hard to turn people down, hard to be turned down, especially since the parents at a time like that feel that somehow they have failed. When the rabbi says no, that confirms this view of themselves."



Inter-relig.

# MEMORANDUM

From Rabbi Bernard M. Zlotowitz

Date 2/13/89

To Rabbi Alex Schindler

Copies

Subject

Maimonides' attitude toward converts is found in his Yad Ha-chazaka, which reads as follows:

"To love the convert, who comes and enters under the wings of The Divine Presence, is fulfilling two positive commandments. First, because he is essentially viewed as part of the social compact, and secondly, because he is a convert and the Torah says and you shall love the convert.

One is under command to love the convert as one is under command to love oneself, as it is written and you shall love the Lord your God. The Holy One Blessed Be He Himself loves converts, as it is written and (He) loves a convert."

"The Book of Knowledge", Hilchot Dayot, 6:4

Bernie





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November 20, 1989

*Outreach*  
Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler, President  
Union of American Hebrew Congregations  
838 Fifth Avenue  
New York NY 10021

Re: Center for Jewish Outreach to the Intermarried - Rabbi Sam Silver

Dear Alex:

Now that the Biennial is over, I am replying to your October 24 letter concerning Rabbi Sam Silver, where you say that "I have just had word from Sam Silver that you have invited him to a meeting in 1990 at which he will speak on his reasons for undertaking to officiate at mixed marriages. The meeting is news to me. Can you provide some details? I would appreciate hearing from you in this connection."

As you know, Egon Mayer and I have been working together to develop the Center for Jewish Outreach to the Intermarried (CJOI) which exclusively devotes its efforts to confronting the challenges of intermarriage and seeks to bring together all denominations of Judaism in this effort. Our principal aim is to serve as a "think tank" for "open debate and discussion about all issues pertaining to intermarriage, and to serve as a catalyst for existing community organizations, lay leaders and professionals who seek to help intermarried families meet their needs within the Jewish community."

The first major public activity of CJOI was the planning of a Memorial Conference on Intermarriage, Conversion and Outreach in memory of Paul Cowan, which was held in New York on October 23 and 24. Rabbi Silver wrote me on August 9, referring to the Conference in New York, complaining that there had been no discussion about rabbinic officiation, and complaining that he had written to me about this and that I have "ignored" him.

On October 12, I responded to Rabbi Silver and told him that "I am aware of the fact that the question of rabbinic officiation is of major concern to many people" and that "sometime in 1990 there will be a colloquium where this issue will be discussed by people who sincerely believe that it is not in the interest of Jewish survival for rabbis to officiate, as well as those who, like yourself, believe that it is in the interest of Jewish survival for rabbis to officiate." Attached are copies of Rabbi Silver's August 9 letter to me and my October 12 reply.

At no time did I issue him any invitation to speak at any meeting, and, as a matter of fact, I did not even issue him any invitation to attend such a meeting because at this particular time no specific meeting has been set. It is a matter which will be brought up before the Board of CJOI.

Rabbi Alexander Schindler  
November 20, 1989  
Page 2

One of the reasons that I refer to this as a "colloquium" is to help insure that any discussion of officiation at intermarriage would be undertaken in an academic-like setting where a full and frank exchange of ideas could take place. Although I cannot necessarily bind the Board of CJOI, it is the present intent of both Egon Mayer and me that CJOI itself would not take any formal position whether rabbis should or should not officiate. Rather, we would hope to provide a forum where this very important and very sensitive issue can be discussed, with subsequent publication of papers on the subject.

By the way, in my welcoming address at the October 23-24 Conference, I called for a major commitment on the part of the Federations to work through the Reform, Conservative and Orthodox Movements to provide for \$6,000,000 of annual support for programs of Outreach to the Intermarried. On November 17 at a meeting of the General Assembly of the Federations in Cincinnati, I once again called for major Federation funding efforts in this area.

I trust I have full responded to your October 24 letter, and if you have any other questions or suggestions, I would appreciate your calling or writing me.

Best regards.

Sincerely yours,

  
David W. Belin

DWB:cs

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