

The Narratives of Interfaith Parents Raising Their Children With Jewish
Identities: An Emerging Discourse

By

Peter Kaufman Gluck

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
Of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
(Social Work and Social Science and American Culture)
in The University of Michigan
2010

Doctoral Committee:

Professor Jonathan E. Freedman, Co-Chair
Professor John E. Tropman, Co-Chair
Professor Charles D. Garvin
Assoc. Professor Julian A. Levinson

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to

Dr. Ellis Rivkin, 1918-2010 *z"l*

Whose genius was excelled only by his smile

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Always, in a work that has taken so long to come to fruition, it is dangerous to acknowledge a few when there have been so many. First I would like to thank Professors John Tropman and Jonathan Freedman, the co-chairs of my Individual Interdepartmental Degree Program dissertation committee. Professor Tropman stood by me and this project from its inception many years ago and was unwavering in his support throughout. We all need an advocate and John was mine. When my original co-chair, Professor Roy “Skip” Rappaport died prematurely of a late diagnosis of cancer, Professor Jonathan Freedman graciously extended a hand. By gathering all my credits under the Program in American Culture I was not only able to continue but add a significant dimension to my graduate studies. I add here a thank you to Professor June Howard and all those in the Rackham graduate school offices for guiding me through the process of setting up an Independent Interdepartmental Degree Program degree. I could not have accomplished this without their help.

I mentioned “Skip” Rappaport. During the time I studied with him at the University of Michigan, he was always available, in class, office hours, and one on one coffee shop meetings, always willing to share his insight and thoughtfulness, while listening and responding to the direction I was taking. His embrace provided me with the confirmation I was on the right track. His untimely passing took from the world a truly inventive thinker.

I also want to mention my teacher, mentor and guide, Dr. Ellis Rivkin, to whom this work is dedicated. I met Dr. Rivkin at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, Ohio, when I was a rabbinical student. In 2007 I took my son to meet Dr. Rivkin, then 89 years old. The five hours we spent “reconnecting” in his apartment were special. Watching him converse with my son, then a high school student, explaining the importance of the “individuality” of every snowflake, was for me “a foretaste of heaven,” as the ancient rabbis would say. I rediscovered at that time Dr. Rivkin’s historical insights were the guiding framework for my Jewish thinking since I met him in a classroom some thirty years earlier.

I want to thank also Professor Charles Garvin and Professor Julian Levinson for their support, encouragement and friendship. Sometimes the role of doctoral committee is to offer more than just intellectual advice. Without their commitment I may not have persevered. As well, I thank Professor Armand Lauffer, whose initial “You really do need to do graduate studies. You will not be satisfied otherwise,” sent me on my way.

A special thank you, of course, to my wife Diane, and my kids Maleah and Adam, who put up for years with my piles books and papers-- whose importance I kept trying to convince them of-- around the house. The time I took to complete my doctorate came down to a function of my priorities. Raising a family and being there for you was always number one. You have my love.

Finally, I want to thank and acknowledge all those respondents who graciously gave of their time and energy—and life experience—to be interviewed and recorded for the research reported here. Their continued commitment, support and life choice is a modern miracle.

Table of Contents

DEDICATION	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
ABSTRACT.....	vii
Chapter 1 Setting the Research Table(s).....	1
The Importance of Interdisciplinary Work.....	1
Foucault and Rivkin: Discourse and History.....	3
Foucault’s Enunciative Modalities	3
Rivkin: A View of Jewish History	10
American Jewish Historical Discourse Pre-1980: Building an Episteme	14
The Period 1980-2010 Defined by the National Jewish Population Study.....	18
Making Jewish History: A Data view of the American Jewish Community	19
American Jewish Data Going Public: Turning Numbers into Narrative, Part I.....	28
Making Jewish History 1980-2010: Turning Numbers into Narrative, Part II	34
Narrative and Helpful Accounts of Interfaith Families.....	40
Chapter 2 American Jewish Organizations Go Disciplinary	55
Introduction—Discourse and Dominance.....	55
The Emergence of Social Science and the Modern Episteme within Judaism.....	60
More on Foucault’s Discursive Formation: Its Importance for Understanding	
Modern American Judaism’s Social Scientific Response to Intermarriage	66
The Sovereignty of Kings and the Rule of Scientists: A Paradigm Conflict	76
Modern Jews Break with the Past.....	82
Social Science Teams with Modern Organizations	86
Documenting Three American Jewish Discursive Levels	89
Monarchical/Juridical: Tradition’s Law.....	91
Normative	103
Acceptance/Transformation	108
Chapter 3 Getting to Know the Other	114
The “Other” in Anthropology.....	114
The New Ethnography: The Researcher is Part of the Story.....	117
“Location” of Research “Field” Site.....	130
The Synagogue as a Human Service Organization	135
Native Anthropologist as Social Work Research-Practitioner.....	138
The Identity Society.....	141
Oral History/Testimony: Pulling It All Together.....	147
The Interviews	153
The Interviewees by the Numbers.....	154
Actual Location.....	155
Interview Questions	156
Chapter 4 Group I: “Meeting in Multi-Cultural America”	158

Preface to Chapters Four, Five, Six and Seven	158
Introduction	161
Chapter 5 Group II: “Strong Feelings” of the Jewish Spouse	184
Introduction	184
Chapter 6 Group III: “An Open and Friendly Synagogue Community”	205
Introduction	205
Chapter 7 A Few Additional Components and Surprises	224
Introduction	224
“Desire for a Unified Household”	226
“Good Values and Ethics”	233
Surprises	240
Trickling Up	240
Sensitivity to Anti-Semitism	243
Not Seeing Her Child in Heaven	244
Converts Who Convert Themselves	245
Chapter 8 Conclusion	249
Introduction	249
What did we learn?	250
Where do we go from here?	254
An Innovative Proposal	256
A Postlude	257
The Dialogic Emergence of Culture	257
Notes to the Text	262
BIBLIOGRAPHY	269

ABSTRACT

The Narratives of Interfaith Parents Raising Their Children With Jewish Identities: An Emerging Discourse

By

Peter Kaufman Gluck

Co-Chairs: John E. Tropman and Jonathan E. Freedman

The purpose of this dissertation is to describe an emerging social discourse as found in the narratives of interfaith parents raising their children with Jewish identities, and to demonstrate how in social work practice it can be applied to help in community empowerment. A multidisciplinary approach is implemented to researching intermarriage in the American Jewish community, considered by many observers to be the central social issue of this minority community. With more than forty percent of all American Jewish marriages being intermarriages between 1980 and 2010, the given identity and organizational integrity of the community is called into question. The “American Jewish Culture Critical Literature” primarily describes intermarriage in what would be considered negative terms, as a problem to be solved. This discourse is rooted in either “monarchical/tradition” or “normative/coercion” power relations. Little is known of the self identity “acceptance/transformation” discourse found in the narratives of those mixed couples, where there has been no formal conversion, who choose to bring their children to synagogues to be raised with Jewish identities. Oral

history research techniques are used to uncover the account of this aspect of their life story. The emergent discourse a function of an underlying “conflict of paradigms,” and is part of a “mutational” moment in Jewish history. Themes found in the oral testimony include “meeting in multicultural America,” “strong feelings of Jewish partner,” “finding an open and friendly synagogue,” “desire of a unified household,” and “looking for good values and ethics.” The theoretical literature used spans multiple disciplines. The research-practice theory in Social Work and the new ethnographic theory in Anthropology allows for the complex study of an area of field practice wherein the field worker is also a participant within the culture researched. The American Studies Program locates the social setting within the United States, with its special understanding of organized religion, multiculturalism and other cultural specific norms.

Chapter 1

Setting the Research Table(s)

The Importance of Interdisciplinary Work

This dissertation is an interdisciplinary effort that combines and utilizes different disciplines, methodologies, understandings, and analyses, for not only an academic intellectual understanding, but to provide some possibility for application and active practice of both process and research findings. Part of the goal of this work is, then, to demonstrate the possibility inherent in bringing together different fields to not just advance knowledge, but to help advocate for the community to which this knowledge applies.

I needed to turn to an interdisciplinary model, as the goal of my work was to find a way to create community affirming and empowering interventions in American Jewish organizations that involved both secular and religious discourses. The Joint Program in Social Work and Social Science afforded me the opportunity to theorize the organizational structure of American Judaism while reframing the American synagogue as a human service organization and the role of rabbi as communal worker. As well, the discipline of Anthropology gave me the methodological and epistemological tools to do research, while the Program in American Culture, a location in the university that allows for reflection on the American experience, provided an additional intellectual frame that fit exactly to the project. The cultural factors at work here, taken in their gestalt, are uniquely American. In this introduction, after setting forth the larger theoretic

framework, I intend to demonstrate the most significant uses of each of the disciplines involved in my work.

In any multidisciplinary study, each domain informs the other. Expectations of a fully vertical analysis through a specific discipline are forgone for a wider view that employs various perspectives. It is the weaving together of these various perspectives that gives the depth in understanding of the human phenomenon of our study. For indeed human reality does not fit neatly into this or that discipline or area of study, but, rather, our studies are meant to help us understand the complexity of human social life.

We know interdisciplinary work can create a new hybridist perspective, but it is also at times difficult to manage. This is because

Any interdisciplinary field encompasses a range of existing and potential affiliations. The hybridity theoretically creates an ever-expanding obligation to learn the techniques and concepts of many disciplines. In practice, though, selected cuts are made. Even interdisciplinary knowledge is partial knowledge. (Klein 1996: 56)

It appears there are both strengths and weaknesses to this approach, costs and benefits.

The hybridity of interdisciplinary fields is at once their strength and a continuing source of difficulty. Part of the difficulty is the impossibility of doing everything. As one adds disciplinary perspectives one is given many opportunities to see the subject of interest in many new ways. It is important to be selective and to choose the components from each that are relevant to the goals of the research. Interdisciplinary fields also experience greater traffic in and out of pertinent disciplines and the fields themselves. Multidimensionality is a vital stimulus, but it is also a constant source of jurisdictional disputes. The taken-for-granted assumptions common in established disciplines are often lacking, leaving the foundation in contention (Messer-Davidow, Shumway, and Sylvan 1993: 19) (Klein 1996: 58)

Still, interdisciplinary work is seen as valuable when it gives us new insight into the phenomenon under investigation.

The final realization is that boundary crossing has become part of the process of knowledge production, not a peripheral event. Teaching and learning, research and scholarship, and service work are no longer simply inside or outside the disciplines. Interdisciplinary work is in the disciplines as much as it is outside them. (Klein 1996: 56)

Combining the fields such as I am doing here allows us to apply both practice and theory to the social world in a new and significant way.

The uniqueness of the unfolding historical cultural moment calls for a different approach for its study. Moreover, the idea of applying disciplinary knowledge to practice domains, inclusive of both the secular and religious, for a minority group within the United States is, in itself, a kind of disruption to the norms of the disciplines. However, disruption and difference play important, productive roles in interdisciplinary work. Roland Barthes writes:

Interdisciplinarity is not the calm of an easy security. It begins effectively, in contrast to a mere declaration or wish, when the solidarity of existing disciplines breaks down. This breakdown may occur suddenly, even “violently,” through disruptions of fashion and the interests of new objects or new languages that lack a place in the fields being brought together. The starting point is an “unease in classification.” From there a “certain mutation” may be detected. This mutation must not be overestimated: it is more in the nature of an epistemological slide than a break. (Barthes 1977: 155)

Foucault and Rivkin: Discourse and History

Foucault’s Enunciative Modalities

This is a study of what may be considered counter-narratives told by those intermarried families wherein children are being raised with Jewish identities. I will be using the analytic of Foucault to situate these narratives in the larger discourse on intermarriage that has arisen in recent years in the American Jewish community. I will be examining how the written discursive representations within the organized community

have subjugated the oral testimony of a large percentage of its own population. In simple terms, the counter-narratives represent a repressed voice that contradicts the dominant voice of the authoritative institutions in the community. I will be looking for how a new discourse is emerging by looking within the oral life history of my selected sub-population. By converting the oral testimony to written form and making it available for further research, comment and study, I hope to be making an intervention--a discursive intervention—within the Jewish community that will help this minority group expand its self-definition while at the same time maintaining identity boundaries within a multi-cultural American society.

As we will see, American Jews are classed with other white Americans. Even as such, Jews represent a definable sub-culture. In the American milieu, this sub-culture is represented by a system of voluntary organizations in both what are widely accepted as secular and religious domains.

Foucault writes in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* in the chapter entitled “Formation of Enunciative Modalities”:

...we must first discover the law operating behind all these diverse statements, and the place from which they come.

First question: Who is speaking? Who, among the totality of speaking individuals, is accorded the right to use this sort of language? Who is qualified to do so? Who derives from it his own special quality, his prestige, and from whom, in return, does he receive if not the assurance, at least the presumption that what he says is true? What is the status of the individuals who—alone—have the right, sanctioned by law or tradition, juridically defined or spontaneously accepted, to proffer such a discourse?

We must describe the institutional sites from which the ---- makes his discourse, and from which this discourse derives its legitimate source and point of application (its specific objects and instruments of verification).

The position of the subject are also defined by the situation that it is possible for him to occupy in relation to the various domains or groups of objects...the questioning subject...the listening subject...observing subject...seeing subject; his is situated at an optimal perceptual distance whose boundaries delimit the wheat of relevant information...To these perceptual situations should be added the positions that the subject can occupy in the information networks.
(1972: 50ff)

It gives us the opportunity to analyze not just the data, but also the production of the data, who produces it, who analyzes it, and how it is used on the community level to shore up existing historical discourses, or how it is seen as challenging those discourses. I will be reviewing these discursive trends below. My concern here is not so much with the “why” of intermarriage as with the “how” it has been derived as the central issue facing the Jewish community in the United States. Other writers are concerned with telling us about the statistics and looking for causal relationships between “variables” drawn from the data. I am more concerned with disclosing the narratives, the stories, as articulated by the “actors” involved, and looking for how the trope of the stories do or do not converge with the dominant narrative circulating in the Jewish community concerning Jewish “survival.” As well, I will be investigating the power relationships between those producing the narratives in the community.

In *Power/Knowledge Selected Interviews*, Foucault writes:

I would say that we should direct our researches on the nature of power not towards the juridical edifice of sovereignty, the state apparatuses and the ideologies which accompany them, but towards domination and the material operators of power, towards forms of subjection and inflections and utilizations of their localized systems, and towards strategic apparatuses. We must eschew the model of Leviathan in the study of power. We must escape from the limited field of juridical sovereignty and the State institutions, and instead base our analysis of power on the study of the techniques and tactics of domination. (1980: 102)

I would add that we find, in the case of the American Jewish community, there is a power relationship between the religious and secular institutions (the discourses produced by them) and the people. I will look closely throughout at the relation between the discursive fields produced by the varying religious perspectives and those produced within secular frames by the secular organizations. Indeed, the cultural mix of religious and secular is a complicated one that needs to be spelled out in detail. There is religious power (*Halacha*) and organizational/professional power. Both of these are sources of control over what can, and what cannot, be said, published, spoken about, described, and discussed. Foucault instructs:

Let us not...ask why certain people want to dominate, what they seek, what is their overall strategy. Let us ask, instead, how things work at the level of those continuous and uninterrupted processes which subject our bodies, govern our gestures, dictate our behaviors, etc. (1980: 97)

I don't believe that this question of 'who exercises power?' can be resolved unless that other question 'how does it happen?' is resolved at the same time. Of course we have to show who those in charge are...But this is not the important issue, for we know perfectly well that even if we reach the point of designating exactly all those people, all those 'decision makers,' we will still not really know why and how the decision was made, how it came to be accepted by everybody, and how it is that it hurts a particular category of person, etc...the strategies (of power) the networks, the mechanisms, all those techniques by which a decision is accepted and by which that decision could not but be taken in the way it was. (1990a: 103-04)

As it relates to Social Work, we follow Foucault's analysis that, while contemporary social science can perform its task and produce data and analysis about a population, it cannot legislate or determine programming in response to the data. The way social science influences social formulations is by speaking about a "norm."

*The power of the Norm appears through the disciplines. Is this the new law of modern society? Let us say that, since the eighteenth century, it has joined other powers—the Law, the Word (*parole*), and the Text, Tradition—imposing new limitations on them...normalization becomes one of the great instruments of*

power at the end of the classical age. For the marks that once indicated status, privilege, and affiliation were increasingly replaced—or at least supplemented—by a whole range of degrees of normality indicating membership of a homogeneous social body, but also playing a part in classification, hierarchization, and distribution of rank. (1984: 196) (emphasis mine)

Following Foucault further, we see how the authoritative description of a norm, or the reinscribing of normative discourses, brings to social science and those who use it a kind of power, a kind of legislation, that contradicts a juridical system of power and sovereignty. For my study, we see “intermarriage” is, and can only be, constructed as a problem by the Jewish cultural discourse of the past. Disciplinary and normalizing forces in Jewish society utilize social science to re-enforce this problem saturated perspective. Whereas a system that replaced the sovereign/obedience (monarchical) form came into play in the host culture of the United States, Jewish traditional religion still deploys it. It is interesting to note, then, as we review some of the most cited social scientific data about Jewish intermarriage in the United States, that those reporting it will invariably promote a policy perspective based upon an interpretation that retains the historic norm. The researchers uncover a truth that must be solved—the “problem” of intermarriage, and allow the research to be used to prove the veracity of this or that policy or program to solve the given “problem.” This helps to explain the lack of concern for hearing from a segment of the population that contradicts two norms—intermarriage and the enculturation process of the children—which is the focus of my study here.

We see with the introduction of social scientific data into the communal discourse a movement of a new kind of force and power, a change in perspective. A conflict arises between the institutions that educate and those that describe. Those that educate do not know what to do with the description. Professional social science scholars are asked to

take up positions at meetings of educators and theologians who do not know what to do with the newly emergent narrative.

Communal workers, aware of the discursive disjuncture of this moment, find themselves in a professional bind. But as the data continues to mount about the change occurring in the Jewish community in the United States, social science has more and more difficulty in defending the norm. Moreover, the norm represented by the statistics begins to contradict the norm represented by historical discourse. This fits further with Foucault's analysis. He writes:

...disciplinary normalizations come into ever greater conflict with the juridical systems of sovereignty: their incompatibility with each other is ever more acutely felt and apparent; some kind of arbitrating discourse is made ever more necessary, a type of power and of knowledge that the sanctity of science would render neutral. (1980: 107)

A Jewish communal social worker should not be constrained by either the limits of research or Tradition, and could be such a mediator.

What we need, however, is a political philosophy that isn't erected around the problem of sovereignty, nor therefore around the problems of law and prohibition. (1980: 121)

Still, one needs to investigate historically, and beginning from the lowest level, how mechanisms of power have been able to function...we need to see the manner in which, at the effective level of the family, of the immediate environment, of the cells and most basic units of society.. We need to identify the agents responsible for them, their real agents (those which constituted the immediate social world, the family, parents, doctors, etc). (1980: 101)

And, I add here, ministers, rabbis and modern communal workers. The concern of the social scientists deployed by the community is how to develop knowledge for the institutions so that they can find solutions to the problem of intermarriage, now understood as "saving the people" not "abridging the law." Thus, intermarriage is

constructed as a problem as a consequence the merging the discourse of Tradition and the discourse of disciplinary society in which the Tradition now lives. The social institutions of the Jewish community function no less and no more as other social organizations in the post monarchical/obedience epoch. However, since these institutions still constitute a community within a larger community, since they still promote a minority population's identity, their narrative, and the narrative they produce and reproduce, is both similar to, but of necessity different from, shares, but asserts difference, the majority's narrative.

I am concerned here not with the entire history of the Jewish discourse on intermarriage, though we will need to draw on the history of that discourse, but rather the emergence of a robust discursive production about American Jewish intermarriage after the publication of the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey. In analyzing how the discourse was produced, what was left out, and what is in the field yet to be recorded, I hope to show how we can use discourse analysis to affect social change.

To understand any discursive regime, we must understand its genesis, its history, in terms of how it came to be knowable in the world. Foucault called this process "genealogy."

Genealogical work makes no sweeping generalizations. Selecting particular practices and statements, it traces back the 'conditions of their existence,' or how they came to be what they are, and not other. In this manner, it identifies new continuities and discontinuities among the ideas and practices of a field. It highlights critical moments, breaks and departures. (1977: 146)

This is a process of studying the history of discursive formation. It teaches us to look in not just the official sources, but in alternative places for emergent discourse. Oral testimony can be enlisted for this work.

Genealogy retrieves an indispensable restraint: it must record the singularity of events outside of any monotonous finality; it must seek them in the most unpromising places, in what we tend to feel is without history—in sentiments, love, conscience, instinct; it must be sensitive to their recurrence, not in order to trace the gradual cure of their evolution, but to isolate the different scenes where they engaged in different roles. (1977: 139)

The only way to understand the narratives, the impetus to understand them, comes within an historical context. It is our job here to understand the break the narratives of interfaith parents raising their children with Jewish identities represent with the received discourses. Following Foucault we must understand the context is to understand the narratives, and how they are in turn making history. But the narratives of these marriages are not included within the day-to-day, or published, discourse on intermarriage. The communal institutions have appropriated the “scientific” survey data in such a way as to control the interpretations so they may fit the inherited master narrative. Intermarriage family narratives are thus subjugated and marginalized. They are not part of the contemporary archive. It could be the job of the research-practitioner trained in ethnographic methods to raise the voice of these narratives thus allowing them to be heard. That is what I wish to do in my work. The Jewish communal social worker has the job of looking independently at the entire population of possible “clients”, while encouraging the communal organizations to match the openness of the society in which they are embedded with a similar kind of openness and acceptance.

Rivkin: A View of Jewish History

In my work, I also follow the analysis of the American Jewish historian, Ellis Rivkin, who sees “Jewish history” as being divided into periods determined by the kind

of culture work and “structuration” going on within Jewish society. At certain times, the work constitutes a “mutation” from earlier work, and what emerges is a new structure with new authority arrangements and practices. Key to his understanding is the shift in identity structure of the group. Indeed, there may be remnants from earlier periods, but something about the new structure makes it recognizable as wholly different from that which preceded it. Though there may be differing alterations, what he calls, variations, at times, or simply repetitiousness at other times, a period that makes for a mutation requires, in hind sight, some innovative quality that distinguishes the outcome from all other representations. Though his most thorough treatment of the subject of change within Jewish history is found in *The Shaping of Jewish History* (re-published as *The Unity Principle* 2003), and is also treated in monographs such as *Jewish Identity Crisis and their Resolution* (1975), and *The Crisis of Identity in the Dynamics of Jewish Life* (1976), Rivkin, in *Lessons from the Past: Mutation as Mode of Jewish Survival* (1973) articulates the question in clear language:

Is Jewish identity something fixed, permanent and eternal by which Jews can be authenticated, or is Jewish identity open-ended and self-authenticating? Is Judaism a specific, eternal body of ideas and concepts, a permanent array of forms, an immutable fixation to Sabbaths, festivals, and appropriate rites of passage—the bris, the bar mitzvah, the chuppah, the burial service—or is it a dynamic principle which shapes the ideas, concepts, forms and rituals which it needs to spiritualize and sacralize the novel and unanticipated breakthroughs occasioned by qualitative change? (1973: 1)

He then gives his answer describing a threefold process of identity creation through time:

As an analytical historian, searching for pattern and meaning in the bewildering and awesome odyssey of the Jewish people and its religion, I can only conclude that Jewish identity is open-ended and self-authenticating, and that Judaism

reveals a dynamic principle which shapes the ideas, concepts, forms, and rituals vital for sacralizing and spiritualizing qualitative historical change.

The history of Jews and Judaism thus reveals that the Jewish people are a developmental people and Judaism a developmental religion. And the dynamic energizing this developmental quality has, throughout the millennia, been effective problem-solving for creative survival. Effective problem solving means the nature of the problem to be solved was correctly assessed, and the solution worked through was not a solution for survival per se but a creative solution. This has required an uncanny sensitivity as to the nature of the problem being faced and as to the kind of solution that would prove to be effective.

For some kind of problems, the only solution required was simple replication, i.e., holding on to a Jewish Identity and a form of Judaism without compromise; for other kinds of problems, the solution lay in variations of ongoing themes; and for certain infrequent but traumatic and bewildering problems, the only viable and effective solution lay in innovation or mutation or synergy—indeed, any concept that conveys the notion of a radical transformation, where innovating dis-continuity plays a more vital role than replication or variation on a theme. It was this capacity for sensing whether replication, variation or innovation was the vital choice for creative Jewish survival that marks Jewish leadership throughout the ages as distinguished.¹ (1973: 2)

Rivkin concludes:

This has been the traditional way in which Jews have survived both effectively and creatively. History shows that mutation is the only authentic Jewish response to problems which cannot be solved either by replication or variation. (1973: 14)
(His underlining)

Here Rivkin does not speak of problems in the same way as the discourse on intermarriage speaks of intermarriage as being a “problem.” Here the type of problem he is considering is more of an historical challenge to the existing norms and “structures” of the inherited cultural discourse of the group. The problems of which he speaks are really historical changes that contradict at fundamental definitional levels the meanings that constitute the identity discourses of the people. Though we do not have the space to fully consider this interpretation of Jewish history here, suffice it to say it is different than the

traditional interpretation that smoothes over all the jagged edges of change discoverable by historians in religious texts. Also, it is important to note the different periodizations in Rivkin's historical analysis define and are defined by the differing dominant "identities" found among Jews within Jewish history.

My thesis will give us an inside look at an aspect of the discourse that constitutes a new period considered by Rivkin mutative in nature. I hope to demonstrate some aspects of the inner dynamic, linguistically constructed, of this emergent cultural historical moment. It is still not entirely formed in its emergence, but the signs of change, quite literally, are found in the oral narratives of a large sub-group that now exists for the first time in Jewish history. It is unlike any other group, and its actions and practices defy analogy to any other period, for its dynamics are different and the structures it operates under and within are different, perhaps, unique.

The larger period of change that Rivkin speaks of extends for many reasons beyond the years in question, 1980 to 2010, but I have chosen this time period to look at as it can easily be traced in the publication of the most significant population studies produced on American Jewry. It is, if you will, a segment of this larger period, and will help us to understand it better. Not only do the numbers represented in the studies tell us a new story, but the analysis and resulting communal narrative that arose around the studies (and the resultant programs and institutional practices) constitute a break with the past, or, at the least, point us in a different direction. The most significant of all the data points as interpreted by many authors is the rate of intermarriage, and, taken together with the fertility rate and analysis of children resulting from these marriages, the future outlook for the American Jewish community as a whole.

American Jewish Historical Discourse Pre-1980: Building an Episteme

Before we look at the rise of the influence of population studies of the American Jewish community (by American Jews, not by “outsiders”), I consider a thumbnail sketch of the run up to this period, the building of an American Jewish social science *episteme*.

Most scholarship about “Jews and Judaism” in the Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment era was historical in nature. *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, the “Scientific Study of Judaism,” usually meant the study of Hebrew and the history of the Jews from a modernist historical perspective, i.e. not a traditional religious one.² Major works appeared that re-wrote a “History of the Jews” in a fashion that followed the epistemological logic of modern historians. Many followed an historical linguistic approach—philology—that attempted to set each of the received traditional religious texts in a proper historical period. Scholars were (and are) at work re-writing the master-narrative from ancient times to the present. The re-writing of Jewish history in a modernist’s key started in Europe and moved, with the scholars, to the United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. I add that the major rabbinical schools in the United States were founded and built by scholars whose intellectual careers were grounded in these approaches.

Starting in the late 1950’s a new kind of writing started to appear.³ Representative of this new discourse is a work by Nathan Glazer, entitled, *American Judaism* (1957). The significance of this work is that Glazer, a Harvard professor of “Education and Social Structure,” tries to demonstrate how a modern Jewish American culture can reconcile itself with its historical roots. His work is published by The Chicago History of

American Civilization, a series devoted, in the words of its editor Daniel Boorstein, to “making each aspect of our culture a window to all our history” (Glazer 1957: viii). In the book Glazer tries to show how Jews in America are both American and Jewish, and how there exists a tension in this dynamic as American Jews try to hold on to a distinctive Jewish identity. For my purposes here, we see in this work an attempt to locate the “American Jewish experience” within the larger frame of an American experience, with a careful eye toward the Jewish variable. Jews had not only made it in the social, economic political and academic world, but they themselves (we/ourselves) had made it as an object of contemporary scholarship hosted/promoted/sponsored by the most prestigious institutions of university learning in the country.

I note another social scientific analysis of the American Jewish community that has become almost canonical, Sklare’s *The Jews* published in 1958. In the preface, quoting a Jewish historian of renown in his day, he writes:

This volume is intended to meet a need which has been described as follows by Dr. Louis Finkelstein of the Jewish theological Seminary [the Conservative Jewish Rabbinical School]:

Some years ago, I undertook to prepare a comprehensive work describing the whole phenomenon of Judaism. It was to include a history of the Jews, a description of their (note pronoun used) present condition, a discussion of their contribution to civilization...and an outline of their beliefs and practices as Jews...What surprised me...was the dearth of information about Jews today. There are probably a hundred people, and more, whose profession it is to discover all that can be known about the Jews of Jerusalem in the first century; there does not seem to be one who has the same duty for the Jews of New York in the twentieth century. So it comes about that we understand Judaism in the first century better than we understand Judaism in the twentieth. (Sklare 1958: v) (emphasis mine)

Sklare’s volume is really a collection of essays about American Jews. One gets a sense of the variety of texts presented here from some of the titles of the articles presented as

chapters: “America is Different,” “Some Aspects of Jewish Demography,” “Jewish Organizational Elite of Atlanta,” “The American Rabbi: A Religious Specialist Responds to the Loss of Authority,” and “Some Relationships between Religion, Ethnic Origin and Mental Illness.” Many of the articles are reprints from other published works, while others were written just for this volume and were published for the first time. Sklare introduces the volume with these words:

How much history must one know before he can fully comprehend the contents of this, or any similar volume? The answer to such a question would vary from sociologist to sociologist—there is no general agreement on the degree to which historical understanding is a prerequisite for studies of contemporary life. (Sklare 1958: 3)

We see here the beginnings of the influence of social science on the narrative making of American Jews. History can serve to give a framework, but analysis and understanding of how American Jewish experience is different comes from a different kind of thought and writing. We get a real sense of the beginning of a reflexive mode of analysis, where American Jews are beginning to take an interest in their own social dynamics as analyzed by a small, newly minted number of professional sociologists who turn the gaze inward upon their own community, while still talking about the venture in third person plural syntax. This work also pre-dates the coming wave of Jewish Studies Programs that would eventually, and still, help to bring about a plethora of modern scholarly studies of Jews in America.

Another work of interest is *The Ghetto and Beyond: Essays on Jewish life in America* edited by Peter Rose (1969). What is striking about this volume, which again is a collection of essays about American Jews by American Jews, is that the articles are primarily written by professional academics. The contributors, while including some

rabbis, and a few professors from the Reform Jewish and Conservative seminaries, is mainly comprised of sociologists of Jewish descent who decided to write about their own host community. However, the major academic work of each (excluding Sklare and Glazer) was not about the Jewish community, but rather others. This turn toward analyzing American Jews with a modern scholarly eye is my concern here. More and more the university educated American Jewish world was beginning to observe itself through the lense(s) of the academy. In his article “Reflections on Jewish Identity,” sociologist Daniel Bell expresses the newly emergent American Jewish identity this way:

A persistent fear worried Jews of the early Diasporas and of Hellenistic times: the fear that a child of theirs might grow up to be an am-haaretz—a peasant, ignorant of Torah; or, even worse, an apikoros—a sophisticated unbeliever who abandons Jewish faith to indulge in rationalistic speculation about the meaning of existence. In either case, the danger felt was that such an individual would not only ignore the commandments and rituals, but that he would, in effect, have lost the sense of his past. Asked, in the classic question of identity, “Who are you?” the am-haaretz does not understand; and the apikoros, instead of giving the traditional response: “I am the son of my father” (Isaac ben Abraham), says: “I am I”—meaning, of course, I stand alone, I come out of myself, and in choice and action, make myself...

A similar crisis of identity is a hallmark of our own modernity—except not rationalism, but experience, has replaced faith... One stakes out one’s position and it is confirmed by others who accept the sign; it is no longer the hand of the father placed upon us—the covenant—that gives confirmation... Not only the Jew, but all moderns, and particularly the intelligentsia, have made this decision to break with the past... the break has meant that the individual himself becomes the source of all moral judgment. (1969: 465)

I note here the use of “identity” in his title and throughout his article. Maybe more than anything else, this signals the emergence of a new, disciplinary discourse.

The Period 1980-2010 Defined by the National Jewish Population Study

As I am concerned with the emergent discourse on intermarriage and its production, reproduction and dissemination in the American Jewish community, I continue with a defining statement coming this time from within the lay institutional community of American Jewry. In 1991, Linda Weinstein, a representative of the Council of Jewish Federations, the most widely representative of all American, national, secular Jewish organizations, and probably the most financially powerful, had this to say at an organizational conference called to discuss the “issue” of intermarriage:

Our coming together at the council of Jewish Federations symposium on Intermarriage and Jewish continuity reflects a critical moment in the lives and history of American Jewry. The 1990 Council of Jewish Federation’s National Jewish Population survey has shown us the facts—statistics that we might have tried to minimize but that we must begin to consider and discuss: Before 1965 only 9% of Jews had married a non-Jew; of those Jews who married between 1985-90, 52% married a non-Jewish spouse; of the 777,000 children of intermarried families only 28% are being raised as Jews. As always, the facts only tell part of the story. For many of us, intermarriage is a powerful, emotional part of our own lives. It is no longer a subject that can be ignored in our communal conversations, just as we no longer can hide it in our private conversations and lives. When even Newsweek and the Wall Street Journal publish major articles on the topic, it is indeed time for all of us to face the challenge and develop strategies to deal with it. (Reprint of speech in “Symposium on Intermarriage and Jewish Continuity” 1991)

The publication of results of the 1990 NJPS set off what is referred to as a “firestorm” of responses in the organized American Jewish community. I begin here as I follow the genealogical method in mapping a short history of the discourse under consideration. I will be presenting examples of the discourse defining the period during which time the narratives of interfaith parents raising their children as Jews emerged as well.

Making Jewish History: A Data view of the American Jewish Community

Unlike other minorities, Jews in the United States have resisted census taking. On the national census the category “Jew/Jewish” does not appear. Only in the past forty years has serious social research taken place on a national level.⁴ The most significant research in the area of intermarriage is found embedded in the National Jewish Population Studies carried out under the auspices of the Council of Jewish Federations (as of 2010 renamed “The Jewish Federations of North America,” see note 11) the national organization of secular Jewish Federations throughout the United States. In this section I offer a few of the findings of the 1990 NJPS taking most of the analysis of the data from an article published in the *American Jewish Yearbook* (1992: 77-173), a special article written by Sidney Goldstein, the chairman of the National Technical Advisory Committee of the 1990 survey, entitled “*Profile of American Jewry: Insights from the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey.*” Goldstein’s analysis is exhaustive; it follows from enumerable statistical tables that could only be read with the kind of interpretive skills he provides. A special thank you should be extended to him for his text is undoubtedly one of the bedrock data texts from which so much American Jewish community identity narrative has since evolved. Here, using very select quotes, I try to give a sense of way the demographic data was reported. The entire article, inclusive of charts, is almost one hundred pages in length.

It begins with the big picture and the basic question of a census—how many Jews are there in America?⁵

At no time in American history has there been a complete enumeration of the nation’s Jewish population. Any statistics on the number of Jews in the United

States must always therefore remain an estimate. Given the “complexity of identifying who is Jewish,” the estimates vary considerably, depending on the inclusiveness or exclusiveness of the criteria used and the success achieved in identifying the various subsets of the population (Goldstein 1992: 89).

Right from the start, we are alerted it is not as easy to determine this, for it depends on many definitions, or “criteria.” Or, what constitutes “Jewish identity.” Researchers, however, to create their variables for measurement, must make a decision. Then a data point is created. In trying to account for a few of the differing perspectives in the community, they derived different numbers.

As the results of NJPS-1990 indicate, depending on which criteria were used, the number of Jews in the United States varies from a low of 5.5 million to a high of 6.8 million, or even up to 8.2 million if we choose to include the Gentile members of “Jewish households” (Goldstein 1992: 92).

In fact, some analysts of the 1990 data may conclude that there are far fewer than even the 5.5 million Jews if they apply halakhic criteria, as recorded in the survey. Such variations for any given year, and the use of different criteria in different years, makes any evaluation of changes over time even more difficult if not dangerous (1992: 92).

NJPS-1970/71 counted persons as Jewish if they had been born Jewish, had a parent who had been born Jewish, or regarded themselves as being Jewish. It estimated the national Jewish population to be 5.4 million, or 2.9% of the total American population (1992: 92).

The additional controlling variable descriptions of “*halakhic*,” “households,” “regarded themselves as Jewish” offer a far greater range of statistical possibilities. Still, the numbers come out differently depending on which definition one deploys.

If we restrict the comparison to those currently Jewish, what became known as the “core population,” the data points to only a slight increase in the Jewish population since 1970, from 5.4 to 5.51 million, or 1.8%. This is far slower rate of growth than that of the American population as a whole, which increased 22.4 percent in the same time period.

The percentage of Jews to the population of the United States as a whole has dropped, therefore, in the twenty-year period from 1970 to 1990. (1992: 93)

The research guidance committee settled on three categories. These enter the discourse knowingly or unknowingly by those who will subsequently quote the survey numbers, as well as quote articles such as Goldstein's:

For purposes of the NJPS analysis, the core population of the 1990 data set was divided into three groups: those born Jewish and reported as Jewish by religion, the secular-ethnic Jews--those born Jewish but not reporting themselves as Jewish by religion and not reporting any other religion, and "Jews by choice"--those converted to Judaism and those simply choosing to regard themselves as Jewish (1992: 95).

But it is not clear that the categories chosen reflect accurately the sum of "self-naming" of Jews, and a difficulty with the research design might be that there are other definitions not picked-up by the survey. Whereas this points again to the difficulty in doing Jewish demography, it also points to a possible problem in contemporary American Jewish culture where the social institutions carrying out the research perhaps allow their policy agendas to cloud their view of the population that they serve. For this and other reasons, a research design that includes an ethnographic foundation could reveal variables otherwise lost in the existing data.

To the extent that ethnic identity is maintained by generational support within a family system, the NJPS-1990 reveals important data to be studied in preparation for a research based intervention.

Already in 1970, the growing Americanization of the Jewish population was evident. NJPS-1970/71 found only 23 percent of household heads to be foreign born, one out of every five was already third generation (#49, Massarik and Chenkin, US National Jewish Population Survey)...By 1990, only nine percent of the core population had foreign born heads of household (1992: 108).

Though this can be explained by the lack of immigration occurring during the past fifty years, its impact on the culture of the Jewish family is profound. With the increase in intermarriage, the weakening of ties to an ethnic past will continue. At a certain point most “Jewish” households in America were headed by Jews born in America. This of course will have a determining influence on how they think and act.

Rising Americanization, judged by generation status, seems to be associated with both higher levels of secularism, higher rates of conversion to another faith, probably largely in association with intermarriage. (1992: 110).

As many Jews attempt to maintain their identity in the majority culture, various attempts are made to hold on to ethnicity. At the same time, however, the weakening of ethnic ties probably leads away from ethnicity as a form of identity. This possible conflict of ethnic identity versus contemporary social identity needs further study. It is relevant to a discussion on intermarriage, for when partners are chosen from outside the ethnic group a new social reality is created. The narratives of a sub-group of these couples are the point of my research.

Other reporting of interest in the NJPS 1990 are the educational levels attained and the labor force status and occupation of American Jews. Compared to the general population in America, Jews have gained more education on all levels studied. The identity of Jews seems tied to value in educational attainment.

In the NJPS 1970/71 just over half of all Jews age 25 and older were found to have some college education, in contrast to only 22 percent of all whites age 25 and over (1992:110)...Particularly sharp differences characterized the proportion that had some graduate education--18 percent of the Jews, compared to only 5 percent of white adults. While Jewish women, like those in the general population, had, on average, less education than men, the levels of educational achievement for both Jewish men and women were well above those of their counterparts in the general population (1992: 111).

By 1990, almost 75 percent of the core Jewish population of 25 years of age and over had some college education, while 25 percent had graduate education. This is twice and three times as high as the general population respectively. (1992: 111)

As older adults die, these numbers will only increase. When we look at the 1990 study for men and women aged 30-39, we see some remarkable figures. Roughly 70 percent of males and females had graduated college, while 37 percent of men and 30 percent of women had some graduate education. Though we see some differential between Jewish men and women in these graduate numbers, the aggregate numbers are three times those of the non-Jewish population. (1992: 111)

The high level of educational attainment seems to be an indicator of the “successful American Jew.” Similar data of importance is the distribution of occupation types among Jews. The age of entering the workforce closely parallels the education years for obvious reasons.

A most significant figure is the proportion of Jewish women aged 25-44 and 45-64 in the labor force. Three-fourths of the former and two thirds of the latter were at work in 1990...they far outdistance the numbers of the general population. It is clear that, for the age range 25-64, Jewish women's participation in the labor force has become commonplace, with significant implications for family, fertility, income and participation in the organized activities of the community (1992: 113-114).

The types of jobs, the changing role of men and women in the married household, the career goals and expectations, and childrearing roles are all affected by the employment picture. These in turn will affect the identity of the Jewish man and woman as they enter the world looking for a marriage partner. The education, career minded American Jew is getting married at an older age, though, than their non-Jewish fellow Americans.

By 1990, the current marital status of the Jewish population almost matched that of the general U.S. white population. Just over 26 percent of all Jewish adult males had never married, compared to 24 percent of the total adult white

population; slightly more of the total whites were married and divorced than were Jews.

These overall similarities are misleading, however, because of pronounced differentials among younger age groups. In the 18-24 age group, for example, only 4 percent of the Jewish men had been married, compared to 17 percent of men in the general population; by ages 25-34, just half of all Jews but two-thirds of all whites had been married.

*Even as late as ages 35-44, substantial differences persisted. Only by age 45 and over were the differences minimal, with approximately 92 percent or more of the men in both groups having been married
...by 1990 only half (Jewish women aged 25-34)...at ages 35-44, 89 percent (had married)...For those aged 45 and over...over 90 percent were married. (1992: 117-118)*

This data is important background for my research, as it helps to give us some picture of the age and maturity of the marrying individuals. Age would seem to impact in some way their approach to having children. This of course is true for all American Jews, not just the intermarriers. The overall fertility data, then, is also of interest.

Comparison of the Jewish fertility reported in 1990 with that of all white women in childbearing years in 1988 shows Jewish fertility to be substantially below that of the general population. For example, Jewish women aged 25-29 averaged only 0.5 children, whereas white women in this age group had already had one child. By ages 40-44, Jewish women averaged 1.6 children, considerably below the 2.1 average of all white women in that age group. For all women of childbearing age the average number is 1.5, which is below-replacement fertility. These differentials suggest that the motives for small families among Jews reflect a complex combination of factors involving both conditions unique among Jews and those shared with the larger population. (1992: 122).

Inadequate research has been carried out to understand this most important statistic. Taken together with the low percentage of children from interfaith couples being raised Jewish, the Jewish population of North America is faced with the prospects of steep decline as the older generation dies off.

*In 1957 the Bureau of the Census estimated the rate of Jewish intermarriage to be between four and seven percent. The NJPS-1970-71 found that 8.1 percent of those surveyed were married to a person not Jewish. What shocked the community then was the reported rise in the level of intermarriage from less than 2 percent of those who had married before 1925, to about 6 percent of those marrying between 1940 and 1960, to 12 percent of the 1960-64 marriage cohort, to a high of 29 percent of all Jews marrying in the five years preceding the survey. The magnitude of the rate, the fact that it reflected a national pattern, and projections that the rate would rise still higher aroused the community to new concerns about its demographic survival.⁶⁹ (Goldstein cites in this footnote Elihu Bergman, "The American Jewish Population Erosion," *Midstream*, Oct, 1977, p.9. where Bergman predicts essentially the demise of all non-Orthodox Jews in the United States by 2076) (1992: 125)*

The NJPS-1990 confirmed some of this concern.

It estimated that 2.6 million adults were born Jewish and were married at the time of the survey⁷¹. Of this number, 69 percent were married to someone also born Jewish. Four percent were married to converts. The remainder of the born Jews were married to Gentiles, including six percent of born Jews who converted to another religion. Compared to the findings of the NJPS 1970/71, therefore, these data point to a very substantial rise in the level of intermarriage, from 8 percent in 1970/71 to 31 percent of all born Jews (1992: 126).

In his footnote seventy-one, Goldstein sheds some light on the kind of difficulty the survey designers had with establishing the definition of their variables, as personal identities people ascribe to themselves in American society tend to shift over time:

Intermarriage can be defined in different ways, depending on whether the Jewish identity of the marriage partners is ascertained according to religion at time of birth, at time of courtship, at time of marriage, or at time of the survey. Depending on the definition used, the rate of intermarriage will vary. Consistent with NJPS-1990's goal of encompassing current as well as former Jews, intermarriage is measured in terms of the religious identification of the current marriage partner of anyone who was born Jewish and is now married, irrespective of current Jewish identity.

In addition, the key data about the intermarriage rate was presented this way:

Whereas 89 percent of born Jews who married prior to 1965 married another born Jew, only 69 percent of those marrying between 1965 and 1974 did so. This percentage declined to only 49 percent for the group marrying between 1975 and

1984, and in the five years preceding the survey, 1985-1990, it reached a low of 43 percent. (1992: 126)

After factoring in marriages of those who converted and those who “regard themselves as Jewish even if not formally converted (1992: 126),” the final rate posted at that time was 48 percent.

The high rate of mixed marriages in 1985-1990 means that for every new couple consisting of two Jewish partners there were approximately two new couples in which only one of the partners was Jewish. (1992:126)

The rest of the massive data collected was analyzed and made available to most anyone--professional scholars, demographers, and lay readers--who wanted to see it. Indeed, the internet was for the first time used as a tool in this process, as was the publishing of monographs and articles in Jewish organizational newsletters, journals, at seminars, conventions and Jewish community newspapers.

Significantly, prior to the publication of the results of the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey there were already clouds on the horizon. Elihu Bergman, a demographer and assistant director of the Harvard Center for Population Studies, had already shocked the Jewish world in 1977 when he published his forecast in *Midstream* about the demise of the American Jewish population in the twenty-first century. Yet, his prediction seemed to be read only by organizational Jewish professionals. The trend lines were already there for those who were looking; the alarm was sounded; intermarriage rates continued at unprecedented levels. Many local community Jewish Federations undertook their own surveys to determine the make-up of their local communities. The purpose was to determine programming allocations. Enough studies were being conducted on the local level that a national community organization need was determined

to house all the information in one place. Thus the rationale and purpose for the establishment of the North American Jewish Data Bank were born.⁶

Typically, users of the Data Bank were social planners, professors, rabbis, educators, students, organizational personnel, communal service workers, and others involved in the field of social research. Its goal is to serve the organized Jewish community as well as those in academia. "The Data Bank does not cooperate with any commercial for-profit enterprise. It was not until the preparation for the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey, however, that the resources of the Data Bank were used to their full potential." (Retrieved from <http://www.jewishdatabank.org>)⁷

But, with the 2000-2001 NJPS disputes arose over the way questions were asked, coding of responses, and interpretation of the data. Two examples relevant for my work are as follows, quoted from the Data Bank webpage. For the key question that will come to be the focus of the community, some believe the questionnaires are not able to get clear enough information, and thus conclusions reached based on the data would not be "scientific."

In terms of how children are being raised, and the questions asked to determine a child's Jewish-raised status, the community studies are inconsistent. (emphasis mine) *Some studies ask whether the child is being raised Jewish, Jewish and something else, not Jewish, or the child's status is undecided. Other studies ask whether the "not Jewish" child is being raised in another religion or not in any religion. Many studies just ask whether the child is being raised Jewish or not Jewish; some allow respondents to indicate "part Jewish" answers. A few studies ask the religion in which the child is being raised as an open-ended question, rather than asking whether the child is being raised Jewish, partially Jewish, in another religion, etc.* (Dashefsky, Arnold, Ira M. Sheskin, Ron Miller. "FAQs on American Jews, Comparative Tables: American Jewish Demography," footnote 2(b) Retrieved from http://www.jewishdatabank.org/FAQs/FAQs_Table2_Intermarriage.pdf)

And, city-to-city, there is wide variance so that generalizability is difficult to determine:

In general, inmarried couples where both spouses were born/raised as Jews invariably (approaching 100%) report that they are raising their children Jewish-only. In conversionary inmarried households (the non-Jewish born/raised spouse now self-identifies as Jewish), the percentage of children raised Jewish-only is typically between 80% and 100%, with most of the other children being raised

partially Jewish, and rarely in another religion. The data in FAQ Table 2a focus on intermarried Jewish households substantial variation exists in whether children are being raised Jewish. (emphasis mine)
(Dashefsky, Arnold, Ira M. Sheskin, Ron Miller. “FAQs on American Jews, Comparative Tables: American Jewish Demography,” footnote 6. Retrieved from http://www.jewishdatabank.org/FAQs/FAQs_Table2_Intermarriage.pdf)

These debates were engaged in mainly by trained social scientists advising American Jewish organization professional workers. A data driven response in an age of formal professional institutions makes sense, as boards and program advisors look to this kind of data to recognize “needs” in the target population, this time being what has come to be called the “Jewish community.” It is not clear, however, if statistical information is disputed on many levels, that good policy decisions can be derived. In any historical moment, there will be discourse that is privileged over other expressions. This is the case with the narratives of interfaith couples raising their children with Jewish identities. Their narratives, their discourse, the nuanced nature of their lifestyle are missing from the literature. They might be called, therefore, a growing *sub-altern* voice in the community. Part of the purpose of this study is to let that voice be heard and take its place within the cacophony of voicings within the community, as we will see.

American Jewish Data Going Public: Turning Numbers into Narrative, Part I

An entire literature of what I will call “American Jewish Culture Critique/Criticism” emerged in the 1990’s. Now the findings of the 1990 NJPS were making front-page news in the *New York Times*. In these accounts, written by lawyers, journalists, and individuals, as well as social scientists, we read and hear about American Jews and American Jewish life through the lens of survey research. The most oft quoted data was that depicting intermarriage, the birth rate, and the gross number of Jews. Together they

help to constitute a new discursive regime. Among other perspectives we see quoted a variety of Jewish leaders giving their apologetic spin as to why the figure was *distorted*. Most argued that there were over a million other “Jews by birth” who should be added to the aggregate, even if they did not actively identify as Jews. The counter argument is that “Jewishness” is more than a Jewish surname (the way they believed the telephone random survey was carried out); it involves certain actions, (sociology’s way of measuring) and at least a minimal way of life or thought. Without that, Jews are, for most intents and purposes, assimilated.

A good example culture critical work of the 1990’s, and of the “Culture Critical Literature,” is found in Dershowitz’s *The Vanishing American Jew* (1997). In it we are given a full rendering of the contemporary discourse that portrays the American Jewish situation as a population at risk. Dershowitz carefully summarizes and footnotes what many others were saying. His book is a compendium of the discourse reflecting the new “crisis” mentality. The picture he paints is the picture many professional Jews and their lay boards took into meetings and operated by as they planned and budgeted for their programmatic year. This picture became the social reality, and short of a war in the Middle East, occupied much of their time. Slowly the numbers were being turned into a self-critical narrative.

In 1991, when the Council of Jewish Federations published the results of its 1990 National Jewish Population Survey, they identified six subgroups of the Jewish population: religious Jews, Jews by choice, agnostic Jews, born/raised Jewish—converted out, adults of Jewish parentage raised with other religion, Jewish children being raised with other religion. The use of such categories by professionals is only a sign of further divisions and groupings in the future of American Jewry. (Dershowitz 1997: 347)

Citations are numerous. I include a few here only as examples of those I believe are representative of the larger grouping. Since this is a dissertation about newly emergent discourse, it is important throughout to see and parse the publications, who, what, where, in addition to what they say, for I argue, the documents themselves constitute the cultural historical moment in which we live, and the frame within which the oral testimony of parents raising their children with Jewish identities live as well.

Titles of other articles of the day tell the story, a narrative constructed around the numbers. “The Intermarrying Kind: A Gloomy Study Leads Jews To Fear For Their Future,” *Newsweek*, July 22, 1991; “Demographic time-bomb could decimate Jewish life as we know it,” *Jewish Bulletin of Northern California*, October 6, 1995; “Are American Jews Disappearing,” *New York Magazine*, 1997; “Conservative Jewry Draws ‘Bottom Line’ On Intermarriages: Synagogues, Schools Will Ban Hiring Those Wed to Gentiles,” *Forward*, 1998; “Our Intermarriage Obsession,” *Jewish World Review*, 10/20/98; “Will Your Grandchildren Be Jewish?” The list goes on.

I focus here on an article that exemplifies the discursive archive as it includes references to so many other publications and authors. *New York Magazine* (July 14, 1997) ran one of the best synopses of this new American Jewish intermarriage and demographic “crisis situation” narrative.⁸ Media outside the Jewish community, and reporting to American audiences at large, began covering the story. Now we can ask such questions as: Who is the reading audience for the article? Why would others be interested? It is entitled “*Are American Jews Disappearing?*” (Horowitz 1997). In it the author canvasses the field and assembles the various trope in the emergent Jewish culture

critical literature on intermarriage. However, throughout, the voices of the intermarried, the talked about, are absent.

He begins by giving an account of an “outreach” organization speaker promoting a traditional type of Judaism. He then turns to his main subject, the diminishing numbers of Jews in America.

Indeed, the American Jewish community—the most vibrant, diverse, productive, creative, and powerful Diaspora Jewish community in history—believes it is under siege. The danger comes not from some hostile outside aggressor but from enemies within: a low birth rate, rampant intermarriage, assimilation, rejection of organized religion, and widespread indifference. As a result, even the celebrations of Jewish identity—like the Jungreis lectures—are informed by a crisis of confidence, an almost desperate sense that it is time to circle the wagons, to turn inward, to huddle together.

The language used is stark and descriptive of the feelings in the community. He continues:

It’s ironic that the success Jews have had in integrating into American life is the very thing that many now believe threatens their future. All across the country, worried Jewish parents wonder, with good demographic reason, whether their grandchildren (a Jewish cultural emphasis!) will be Jewish.

Here is used an invented expression, “demographic reason,” referring obliquely to the National Jewish Population Survey previously cited.

He quotes Rabbi Ephraim Buchwald, the founder and director of the National Jewish Outreach Program,

Our grand- parents prayed for a melting pot, but what we have now is a meltdown...Over the last three decades, the rate of intermarriage has doubled every ten years, and it is leading us into oblivion...There are no barking dogs, and no Zyklon-B gas but make no mistake: this is a spiritual Holocaust. For all practical purposes, the American Jewish community is committing suicide, and no one is saying anything about it.

This is perhaps the most extreme of possible analogies, but I quote it as it gives expression to the range of discourse being utilized in the press at this time. With references to the “melting pot” and the “Holocaust” the speaker is able to utilize discursive fields widely understood while placing blame on the new narrative deployed by the organized community and picked-up (replicated) in the press—intermarriage. “Intermarriage” becomes synonymous with “suicide.”

From the boardrooms of thickly muscled major Jewish organizations (UJA, the American Jewish committee, et al.) to coffee klatches at local synagogues, the continuity debate has raged with the uncontrollable intensity of a forest fire. But there has been little consensus about a viable response. The Jewish Establishment, traditionally so effective at fund-raising, arm-twisting, and problem solving, seems almost paralyzed by the complexity of the issues and their long-term implications.

Quoting Norman Lamm, president of Yeshiva University, Horowitz again brings in the survey idea, this time in a negating way. Lamm says:

We don't need right now more surveys. We are being surveyed to death...We know what needs to be done...We need to make some real choices. But a community that is trying to make everyone happy—you know, this 'I'm okay, you're okay' attitude—is not going to make real choices. Because real choices mean that for everything you accept, there is something you must reject.

Of course the real choices Lamm speaks of are to be determined by a traditional Jewish approach to intermarriage, which is to reject the intermarrieds until and unless one of the spouses converts according to traditional Jewish law and practice. Horowitz does not side with this point of view; he only reports it. As a good social critic he raises the questions that many fear are at the heart of the consternation.

In order to make real choices, there must first be some agreement on what's important and on what the nature and the character of the American Jewish community should be...should the American Jewish community continue to be open and pluralistic? Should it continue to fully embrace American standards and values? What does it mean, at the end of twentieth century, to lead a purposeful life as a Jew in America? Should intermarried couples be welcomed in synagogues? Will this result in more converts and more kids being raised as Jews? Can you prevent intermarriage in a free and open society?...how do you allocate your resources?

He then spells out the moment in clearest of terms: "This is essentially uncharted territory." The obsession with trying to fit in, to make it, to be accepted by mainstream Protestant America has led to a loss of the very ethnic identity that was so easily a natural part of immigrant and post-immigrant life. More interestingly is that many Jewish ethnic characteristics became part of popular culture in America. Even Yiddish expressions could be heard spoken by the most un-Jewish of persons. *Oy, schmuck, kibbitz.* The Jewish involvement with mainstream America has become a two way street. "As a result, the secular Jewish world is losing its distinctiveness. Jewish humor, the Jewish perspective, the Jewish sensibility, are all being subtly blended into the American mainstream."

Horowitz returns then to a discussion of numbers by quoting Steven Bayme, a sociologist and director of communal affairs at the American Jewish Committee.

The real impact of the intermarriage numbers hasn't been felt yet. If someone intermarried in the last couple of years, we don't know what their kids will be raised as. That's the joker in the deck. It's possible we could go from 5 1/2 million down to 4 million over the next twenty years. In the shadow of having lost one third of our population in the Holocaust, losing people through cultural assimilation is demoralizing. A society losing numbers is a society of decadence.

In the end he quotes two spokespeople for the community, one from the conservative right and one from the liberal left. They seem to agree on a significant point which I will

come back to in my conclusion—there is required for any group to maintain its identity something distinctive in its cultural meaning structures. This is what is at stake in the creation of the current and future American Jewish community.

Jack Wertheimer, a historian, and provost of the conservative Jewish Theological Seminary says: “ We’ve got to get everyone to look more closely at the religious, cultural, and ethnic differences and the value of preserving those differences. We need to demonstrate what’s lost to the individual, to the group, and to society by all this leveling that’s taking place.”

He quotes Leonard Fein, asking the “ultimate” question:

The ultimate question is: can you have a Jewish community if it doesn’t have some elements of a distinctive culture? And can you have elements of a distinctive culture given the immense power of popular culture and the immense failures of Jewish education?

Making Jewish History 1980-2010: Turning Numbers into Narrative, Part II

In 2001, another National Jewish Population Survey was completed.⁹ This time, with experience of the 1990 survey as their guide, the CJF committee tried twice the sample size. There was much debate over the wording of questions, and especially over the definition of who was to be considered a Jew. This debate was fueled by the “intermarriage debate” for the wider the definition, the less traditionally minded Jews would make a statistical difference in the findings, and that, probabilistically would mean a larger intermarriage quotient. Indeed, the intermarriage rate was found to be roughly the same as in the NJPS 1990.

One of the issues facing the organized community institutions was that they had spent ten years and millions of programming dollars in an effort to reduce the intermarriage rate, and if the rate was the same or had gone up it would be a sign their

understanding of the “problem” and their ability to do something to ameliorate it had failed.¹⁰ The committee was careful to share with the public media certain information. This was to be another big event in the American Jewish community. A sort of drama surrounded it this time. What would the numbers be? Here, again, our concern is not with the content only, but also with the form. During the past thirty years, the gathering of the social data and the commentary it produced defines the “era” for American Jews. Within this context, those professionals who control the flow of information and publications created the story. The data collected needed to be narrativized. The information, including practice data, however, could not speak the whole story. The voice of the intermarrieds deciding to raise their children as Jews was not included. Thus, we see the importance of this research. Whereas I do not want to romanticize the voice of the folk, I do think it is important to know and begin to understand – at the least to hear – what “regular” people are saying in their daily lives, how they are constructing their life narratives, their identities, how they express what is going on to themselves and to their significant others, for it is these stories that are transposed into action and social practice.

It is specifically these discursive conditions established in part by the American Jewish institutions and the new genre of American Jewish Social Critique literature that I want to highlight over against the identity narratives of individuals and couples. For instance, the then Council of Jewish Federations, now renamed as The Jewish Federations of North America is uniquely an institutional structure of American origin and following American cultural patterns.¹¹ It is not only a social organization, but, like all bureaucratic structures, it is political as well. As a secular organization representing

all Jews who wish to be a part of it, mainly through making monetary contributions, it cannot favor or privilege one religious movement, such as Orthodoxy, over another. Thus, its position, if it has one on intermarriage, cannot favor one point of view and exclude others. (see my Chapter 2 on Foucault's analysis of the transition from monarchical, to juridical, to new forms of power in modern society) This has always been a sticking point, and members of the CJF may sit on boards of any denominational movement. As the CJF then funded the Population Survey, the members on its advisory committee, also representing all denominations, must, as a matter of course, create a new discourse, a hybridization if you will, of all that has gone before as an *official policy position*. This egalitarian position is partly a product of American culture. All of this is worthy of further study, with the purpose of resolving internal community conflict.

A *Forward* newspaper article from January 16, 1998 exemplifies the discourse at that time bridging the 1990 survey and leading up to the next. The *Forward* is a nationally published weekly English paper that once was for Yiddish speaking American Jews. It would be the kind of article that I and other American Jews might see in the Jewish communal press. In it a staff writer expounds on the ensuing launch of a second, follow-up National Jewish Population Study that would rival the 1990 study and add to its findings. Entitled "*New American Jewry Survey Picks Up Steam, Controversy*" its subheading is "*Population Study, Due in 2001, Scored for Using Overly Broad Definitions. 5,000 Households to Be Questioned.*" Now a population study and its structuring would become part of the discourse of American Judaism. But there would be some debate over questions covering its most celebrated statistic—intermarriage. I copy it here for it exemplifies the level of discursive articulation the national American

Jewish press engages in as it points out many of the communal issues raised during this time period that did not seem to be issues before the publication of the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey. The issues were certainly not spoken about in the same way.

New York—Scholars and Jewish community leaders are pressing ahead with preparations for the largest and most expensive survey ever of American Jews—a study they say will shed new light on the rate of intermarriage...Although the results of the upcoming survey will probably not be published until 2001, a dispute surrounding the study—and particularly the intermarriage statistic—has already begun to emerge.

The debate is left over from the 1990 study, which was attacked by a social scientist, Steven Cohen, for using too broad a definition of a Jew. Mr. Cohen says that as a result of this broad definition, the Council of Jewish Federations survey inflates the intermarriage rate, and he estimates that the true figure is closer to 43%. In other words, the 'Who is a Jew?' question, which had been a subject for the rabbis, is now shaping up as a battle among the demographers.

The article continues:

Mr. Cohen, a professor at Hebrew University, is already criticizing the 2000 study for its methodology and for the composition of its National Technical Advisory Committee. "The problem with the current advisory committee is that most of the major researchers on the American-Jewish population are not included in it," he said, complaining that he, Jack Ukeles, Gary Tobin, Calvin Goldscheider and Bethany Horowitz, all among the most active scholars in the field, had been left off the list. Mr. Cohen also said he thinks that Jewish communal leaders should be more involved in the planning of the survey and in the eventual release of its results to the public. Already, the pollsters' relation with the public have become a sore point, with the two council of Jewish Federation staffers heading up the survey, Jim Schwartz and Jeff Scheckner, refusing to talk to the press.

The chairman of the National Technical Advisory committee of the 1990 survey, Sidney Goldstein, who is also a member of the advisory committee for the 2000 survey, said that his goal is to make sure the 2000 survey is comparable to the 1990 one. 'the sample must be picked so that is representative, and the methodology used in 1990 must remain unchanged,' he said.

An opposing view is given:

A professor at the City University of New York who serves as co-director of the North American Jewish data Bank, Egon Mayer, says the debate between Steven Cohen and other demographers is pointless. 'From my point of view, it's a

fruitless argument because it's not where the issues are,' Mr. Mayer said. 'Okay, use [Cohen's] numbers...believe me, the trend line looks exactly the same. The issue for me is, 'What's the trend line.'

Thus, a population survey once again became the central focus of the professionals of the community. The survey, its institutional grounding, along with its results, became and remain part of the national American Jewish discourse. This constitutes something new, an emergent narrative organized by numbers, in Jewish history.

In another article found in the *Forward* (April 30,1999) Rela Mintz Geffen, a professor of sociology at Gratz College, summarized it this way: “Clearly, this time the Jewish renaissance, Jewish continuity, Jewish identity piece is being given very high priority. I think that’s partly because of the findings from 1990.” The focus of the questions for the 2000 survey “reflects a change in values, “ she continued. From the point of view of my work, the surveys were being used to write the self-story of the community. They were “making history.”

By the publication of the 2001 NJPS the Internet had become a locus for the discourse as well. The next example is taken from a website that had updated the information and their commentary from the late 1990’s. Antony Gordon and Richard Horowitz published a well circulated article entitled: “Will Your Grandchildren Be Jews?”¹² They reference Michael Steinhart, the founder of the Steinhart Foundation for Jewish Life and publisher of the journal *Contact*. Part of the reason for my using this example is to show the interconnectedness of those writing and reading, and publishing, in the discursive field of American Judaism. With all the controversy surrounding the announcement of the results of the NJPS 2000 - 2001 the bottom line consensus from a

non-denominational perspective is aptly captured by Michael Steinhardt and quoted by Gordon and Horowitz to give supportive opinion to their claims:

"... All would agree that Jews in America are demographically endangered. In addition to the usual suspects of assimilation and intermarriage, the survey revealed that Jews in America are getting married later and having fewer children - so few that we are experiencing negative population growth ... When we remove the Orthodox from the statistical equation, the picture becomes that much bleaker for those American Jews who are most at risk. In the wake of the study, one would have hoped to find a leadership galvanized to change. The NJPS (2000), after all, revealed palpable evidence of a crisis. But the community largely ignored the bad news, justifying its complacency by disputing the study's methodology..." (originally published in "Contact," *Journal of Jewish Life Network*, vol.5, no. 3: 9)

Gordon and Horowitz continue:

Mr. Steinhardt's summation is correct. Based upon the data and the various population studies that are now available, it appears that an extraordinary disintegration of the American Jewish community is in process. There was a time when every Jew could take it for granted that he or she would have Jewish grandchildren with whom to share Seders, Sabbath and other Jewish moments. However, the clear data indicates that this expectation is no longer well founded. Indeed, our studies show that within a short period of time the entire complexion of the American Jewish community will be altered inexorably.

As was the case with the NJPS 1990, the NJPS 2000 targeted four key quantifiable elements of Jewish survival: marriage rates, intermarriage rates, birth rates, and levels of Jewish education. When all of these factors are tabulated and correlated, a troubling picture emerges of the future of American Jewry. Skyrocketing intermarriage rates, declining birth rates, and inadequate Jewish education continue to decimate the American Jewish people. (Retrieved from http://www.simpletoremember.com/articles/a/WillyYourGrandchildrenBeJews#_ftn6)

As late as 2009, the intermarriage "crisis" was "making news" in the American Jewish press. Writing in the (New York) *The Jewish Week*, Steve Bayme, national director of Contemporary Jewish Life for the American Jewish Committee, looked at the trends in the Jewish community. "Among the scandals, success, and the work within each denomination to strengthen Jewish engagement," he noted that the "most divisive issue

on the Jewish religious agenda remained mixed marriage.” His report drew this rebuttal from a representative of the Jewish Outreach Institute on their blog pages:

Bayme’s decision to focus on the division in the debate over intermarriage rather than focus on the work that has been done to welcome and include interfaith families only intensifies the disconnection. He’s adding fuel to the fire by implying an either/or relationship between in-reach and outreach, and draws JOI into the argument. Bayme misrepresents us by implying we are against in-marriage. That is simply untrue. We are against the exclusion and marginalization of couples who intermarry. For instance, he quotes JOI associate executive director Paul Golin’s argument that Birthright Israel should “abandon ulterior motives such as promoting in-marriage.” This isn’t because we’re against in-marriage, it’s because we don’t want to see young Jews in interfaith relationships or young adult children of intermarriage turned off to the Jewish community. The goal is to create a Jewish community that is relevant to everyone. Framing the debate as in-reach versus outreach is an artificial dichotomy. The two are not mutually exclusive. They are two sides of the same coin. We need to move beyond the antiquated belief that intermarriage is “the single greatest threat to Jewish continuity,” as some insist, and realize that we are fully capable of engaging intermarried families, children of intermarriage, and all others who have historically felt marginalized. This will happen by removing the artificial barriers that exist between us and creating a culture built on the shared interest of seeing the Jewish community flourish.¹³ (emphasis mine)

We see here a debate perhaps only understood by those involved. Charges and counter charges are made as the utility of this or that program is measured to create an acceptable outcome, and all the while the voice of those spoken about is not articulated.

Narrative and Helpful Accounts of Interfaith Families

To round out a picture of the discursive field from this time period, I think it important to add examples of the several “narrative” or qualitative research accounts of Jewish interfaith marriage that received attention and responses. There were but few narrative accounts of the stories of the intermarrieds published during this time especially when compared to the vast amount of material published on the subject. I have selected what I consider to be the most important in that, like my work, they were meant to be

helpful to couples. I note all of the authors, but one, are *not* Jewish communal professionals or academics. They are comprised of journalists, filmmakers, free-lance writers, and, of course, intermarrieds themselves. For the most part, they are writing and producing from further out on the margins of the organized community. I list them in chronological order.

I begin with two texts worth noting in that they include a personal account by authors who speak from a more oral historical perspective about themselves and others. Paul and Rachel Cowan published *Mixed Blessings* in 1987. Though this book predates the 1990 NJPS, it certainly became part of the literature of the period under consideration. I observe that many of the books on intermarriage attempt to help couples through the “problems of interfaith marriage” miming, what I call, a “therapeutic model.” For the most part, there is no advocacy for what the outcome should be for the children’s identities. Partners are helped to work out their interfaith marriage “problems” strictly on a relationship level. The “therapeutic model” may include the suggestion the couple adopt inter-denominational religious education for the children, both his and hers, representing what could be called an egalitarian perspective. The authors here favor choosing a Jewish path. This is akin to the narrative genre of my research as they tell us much about their own life story, and the processes of their affirming Judaism for their family, even as Rachel was originally from a non-Jewish background. They exhibit a concern for the trope that will dominate the discursive field—“Jewish survival.” It seems that to this end, and because of their own developing feelings, the Cowans chose to unify the religious outlook of their family under one name. Similarly, the theme of a “unified household” emerges repeatedly in the interviews I conducted. But time and again I heard

this could be done without conversion or the suggested eventual conversion of the non-Jewish spouse. Most importantly for my purposes here, this text represents one of the first very public attempts to insert personal narrative into the published discourse on Jewish intermarriage in America.

I call attention to a different kind of work altogether. In *Embracing the Stranger: Intermarriage and the Future of the American Jewish Community* (McClain 1995) we get a full-fledged rebuttal of those community organization professionals who want to blame the population shrinkage of American Jews, and thus its surmised demise, on intermarriers. While she is conversant with and includes references to the studies and writing on the subject, McClain based much of her book on interviews--with intermarried couples, individuals, representatives of Jewish organizations, and the children themselves. She also draws upon her own experience being married to a non-Jew. McClain uncovers a cause. Unlike most of the other writers of this time period, she sees that Jewish intermarriage possibly can be beneficial for the future of Judaism in America, not harmful. She believes, and my research confirms it, there can be a positive outlook toward Judaism in many of the intermarried families and thus the Jewish community should treat interfaith couples in a more welcoming manner. Her opinion was not widely shared among those publishing at the time, and her perspective was, and is, quite controversial. The title of the book is instructive.

The research I am doing comes closest in purpose to *Embracing the Stranger*. McClain's work represents the beginning of a counter trend to the organizational, professional, demographic narrative. She argues for letting the sub-altern speak. The following is taken from her Internet website homepage. The Internet has become a major

source for popular discourse dissemination, and as we will see below, it has become an avenue for the emergence of the new social discourse on American Jewish intermarriage. Her book and counter perspectives are beyond the domain of the official organizational structures that enforce disciplinary perspectives (Foucault's sense) on the community. The important trope at this point will be clear to the reader. They represent something new, and thus the importance of being fully cited here.

Does intermarriage necessarily spell the end of an individual's Jewish life -- and the end of the Jewish community? [the author] who at the time she began her research was a deeply committed, temple-going, holiday-observing Jew who had married a non-Jew, argues vehemently that it does not. Exploding a number of myths about intermarriage and the intermarried, she challenges the misuse of statistics to read all too many people out of Jewish life. She contends that while intermarriage overall may pose a threat to Jewish continuity, not every intermarriage is part of that threat. Embracing the Stranger looks behind and beyond the statistics and makes the case for encouraging Jews who are in relationships with non-Jews to claim, reclaim, or confirm their place in the Jewish community.

I wrote this book because I have a passionate commitment to liberal Judaism," [the author] states in the book's introduction. "I want to empower Jews whose partners are religiously disaffected or unaffiliated Gentiles to jump into Jewish life and bring their partners with them -- with the full support of the Jewish community.

(Retrieved from http://home.earthlink.net-matmid/Embracing_the_Stranger.html)

Gabrielle Glaser wrote *Strangers to the Tribe*, published in 1997. Her journalistic style includes a personal narrative approach. It is another example of what I am calling the "therapeutic model." Most of the "characters" in the book go through a decision making process with their spouse in deciding about the religion they want their families to be. Lots of feelings, both ways, are discussed. Glaser wants to accurately report the complexity of these kinds of marriages, and is good at portraying the "hybrid" nature of the identities involved. Some of her respondents talk about how two religions can be

confusing for a child. Again, I found much the same thinking in my group of respondents. Yet, with my group of interviews, the confusion was overcome by deciding to raise their children with Jewish identities. Thus, while some of what is included here is pertinent to my research, the focus is not on un-converted non-Jewish spouses choosing Judaism/Jewishness for their children.

As another kind of example of the newly minted discourse, Jennifer Kaplan in 2005 produced a documentary film that was promoted to Jewish communities (and shown on PBS). The title of the film, *Mixed Blessings*, echoes the Cowans' book title. The film presents interviews with four interfaith couples, again, one spouse Jewish, the other not. I think it important to note Kaplan's biography, as her professional expertise is not in Jewish communal affairs or social science. She is a bit of an outsider to the formal organized Jewish community.

Jennifer coordinated the New England "Making Media Now" conference for filmmakers presented by filmmakers Collaborative in June 2007 and May 2008, and served as the group outreach coordinator for the Boston Jewish film festival in 2006. As the President of her own special events consulting business, Jennifer has managed the planning, coordination and execution of major events for associations and organizations. She has an extensive background in marketing, management, fund development, training and special event planning.
(Retrieved from <http://www.mixedblessingsfilm.com>)

Like others writing during this period, her interest in interfaith marriage dynamics stemmed from her personal experience. She writes her personal narrative on the web page associated with the film. It is compelling in its honesty. I heard many of the same themes in my interviews.

When I was growing up, interfaith dating was forbidden. I followed that dictum for 15 years until I met and fell in love with someone who wasn't Jewish. The year was 1995. It wasn't supposed to happen that way, but it did. I was in love, but a part of me felt like I was letting down "our side." I knew how frightfully

small the Jewish population is. On the other hand, in fairness to my partner, I was going to have to be exposed to Christianity and its rituals in a way I had never been before. And that challenged me to look more closely at my own belief system and determine what was important to me. It was painful searching for a Rabbi who would perform our ceremony. I was very hurt that the Jewish community did not accept me in my interfaith relationship. I couldn't believe this was happening to me and us. Because of my experience, I developed a much greater sensitivity toward interfaith couples and how they work out the multitude of issues they face. It is these families' stories, and what they represent to the hundreds of thousands out there, that are the power behind the film.
(Retrieved from <http://www.mixedblessingsfilm.com>)

Her film moves in the direction of my research, but not exactly. The four couples interviewed represent to the producer different aspects or possibilities in the dynamics of interfaith couples. Though the purpose of the documentary was to let us in on these dynamics, it seems, once more, to focus more on the struggles, problematics and conflicts involved in the relationships, and not so much on any “successes.” Though dealing with the “issue” of intermarriage, the lack of outcome of children being raised with Jewish identities marks this as different from my research. Certainly the question of raising children does arise. Since the documentary appears problem, not solution, saturated, it leaves room perhaps for a different kind of film resulting from the research presented in my study.

Perhaps the most significant academic research based work done in the area I am studying is reported in the book *Double or Nothing?* (2006), written by Sylvia Barack Fishman, one of the most highly touted and published of contemporary “Jewish” sociologists. She directs the program in Contemporary Jewish Life in the Near Eastern and Judaic Studies Department at Brandeis University, where she is a Professor. Indeed, *Double or Nothing?* is essentially an expanded version of a study, based on more than

200 interviews with both intermarried and “inmarried” couples, that she conducted for the American Jewish Committee, a national, secular Jewish organization in 2001.

In some methodological ways, my work comes closest to hers. She writes:

...relatively little systematic research on the internal dynamics of the interfaith family has been published. Most available research until now has been survey (population) research. Such statistical research does not, by its nature, deal with the subtleties of ethnoreligious family dynamics. Survey research excels at providing us with a snapshot in time, but it is less successful at exploring nuanced processes over time, such as the process through which families negotiate their ethnoreligious identity. (2006: 9)

I agree with her when she writes:

*During the past century, cultural historians have transformed the way communal stories are interpreted. Rather than depicting the evolution of a particular national, ethnic, or religious group as a “grand narrative in which the many individuals are submerged,” some currently influential methods focus on the “micro” picture, a multiplicity of small stories, “a multifaceted flow with many individual centers.” *Double or Nothing?* follows this approach, using the particularized stories of interview participants to illuminate the broader psychosocial dimensions of mixed marriage. This approach is often referred to as “thick description,” ...as advocated by anthropologist Clifford Geertz. (2006: 12)*

Yet, she makes two claims I am not sure are achieved by her book, though I agree with possibility of her statement:

I show how these pro-exogamy trends have transformed American Jewish communal norms, and even the way Jews understand and talk about their ancient texts and historical experiences. These personal, individual stories of American Jewish mixed-married families, along with my analysis of their meaning, cultural sources, and impact, now become texts themselves for a scholarly and broader cultural discussion. (2006: 13)

Portions from *Double or Nothing* refer to the interviews she did in her research, but they do not delve fully into the world of those intermarrieds who decide to raise their children Jewishly. Moreover, she most commonly presents in the frame of what is problematic

with their positions even when they seem to have positive responses and “results.” For example,

Most Jews do not celebrate Christmas or Easter festivities in their homes. Christian symbols are found in a mere 2 percent of homes of American Jews who are members of a synagogue...However, in mixed-married households, in dramatic contrast, the intermingling of Jewish and Christian holidays is one of the most prevalent patterns...However, it is not only families raising their children in two faiths who incorporate Christian observances into their family life. Most mixed-married couples who describe themselves as ‘raising all our children as Jews’ also report incorporating Christian holiday festivities into their calendars. (2006: 61-62)

Following are additional examples of how she emphasizes the negative in the positive, extending the discourse of “the problem of intermarriage”:

However, when mixed-married couples tried to create an exclusively Jewish household, Christian extended family members often tried to undermine that resolve. They tended to think of the children as ‘half and half.’ As a result, they felt that it was unfair to deprive a half-Christian child of Christian holiday celebrations in his or her own home.” (2006: 66)

Christian observances are reported by all types of mixed-married households: those raising their children with a double religious heritage, Jewish and Christian; those raising them with no religion; and even among most (but not all) of those who say that they are raising their children as Jews. (2006: 68)

The vast majority of mixed-married households, however, are not unambiguously Jewish. Some form of Jewish holiday celebration is reported by over half of mixed-marriage families with one Jewish spouse. In mixed-married households that do not aim to be unambiguously Jewish, including the majority of families defining themselves as raising Jewish children, Jewish and Christian holiday activities are juxtaposed and interspersed.” (2006: 69)

Thus, I agree with Edmund Case, publisher of InterfaithFamily.com, and co-editor of *The Guide to Jewish Interfaith Family Life: An InterfaithFamily.com Handbook* (2001) critique of Fishman’s work:

My main concern is Fishman's assertion that the vast majority of mixed-married families who say they are raising their children as Jews "incorporate Christian

holiday festivities" into their lives, which makes them "religiously syncretic" -- combining Judaism and Christianity -- such that Jewish identity is not transmitted to their children, even though they say that these festivities have no religious significance to them. This central conclusion is not supported by the research itself, which is based on a limited sample and is inherently subjective; is inconsistent with other available evidence, including the results of the InterfaithFamily.com Essay Contest; and provides a wholly inadequate basis for the very dangerous policy it will be used to justify -- that it is not worth encouraging interfaith families to make Jewish choices. (emphasis mine)

In other words, even when there is some distinctively good outcome regarding Jewish identification or communal belonging, she points out how it is flawed when compared to a cultural norm she implicitly supports: Jewish-Jewish marriages. Still, she reports many tropes I will return to when analyzing my interviews. Here is an example:

*Perhaps because ethnic and religious identification plays such an important role in American culture, my study revealed that the majority of mixed-married couples started talking about the possible religious character of their potential households while they were dating, with their first realization that the relationship had become serious...the majority of both Jewish and Christian informants in this study recalled that family faith issues were discussed while dating, and this was true both of first and second marriage situations...
...the partner with the strongest religious background and/or beliefs usually wanted the children to be raised in his or her faith. However, frequently Jewish spouses wanted their children to be raised as Jews even when they did not have particularly extensive knowledge of Judaism and/or patterns of religious involvement. (2006: 50)*

I will also be discussing Fishman's work further in chapter two.

An example of a work more sympathetic, positive and supportive of interfaith couples attempting to connect to the American Jewish community and raise their children with Jewish identities is "*Inside Intermarriage: A Christian Partner's Perspective on Raising a Jewish Family*" (Keen 2006). Keen is the non-Jewish partner. They decided to raise their children with what I am calling a "unified" Jewish identity, even though he did not convert. The uniqueness of the book is that it is written by someone not born into the

Jewish community, but, rather, who “married into” the Jewish community. His interest in the subject arose not only from his personal life, but also from his growing awareness of the importance of the issue of intermarriage within Jewish circles today in America. This counters the dominant discourse about non-Jewish partners pulling Jews away from their faith and community. Part Three, “Parenting,” addresses some of the same issues as my study. It speaks to the decision about child rearing and its processes. Keen writes:

A friend of mine recently asked me how I decided to give this 'gift' [the decision to raise the children Jewish] to my wife. She wanted to know what were the factors that made this the right choice. I had a hard time answering that one. I finally said that, technically speaking, there wasn't one thing per se that did it. Nothing forced us to decide one way or the other. The only criterion that we had was that we both had to be happy with the resolution. There is no right or wrong answer. (2006: 29)

Here I was, about to marry someone who did not share all of my viewpoints. I was fine with that. It dawned on me that if I were to love and respect this person with whom I was about to spend the rest of my life, I could certainly feel the same way toward my children. We would be one family. It no longer made sense to me that tolerance could apply to only one member. It somehow just felt right. Today, as we raise our two Jewish daughters, it still does. (2006: 30)

The book was published by the Union for Reform Judaism Press, and has a forward written by its president, a Reform rabbi, Eric Yoffie. As well, parts of the book were published online at InterfaithFamily.org. Certainly it thus not only received the institutional validation needed to extend the narrative and discourse of possible “successfully Jewish” interfaith families into the public domain, but it also is testimony to a discursive rupture theorized by Foucault. If there is a model to follow, Keen comes the closest to what I am after in my research. I would add we need a book written from his wife’s perspective as well.

Karen McGinity published her work, *Still Jewish: A History of Women and Intermarriage in America*, in 2009. McGinity writes from a personal, and an “historical” research, perspective. She includes personal narrative material, and, as an interfaith parent raising her children with Jewish identities, her testimony is compelling. Her main focus is on Jewish women and their many different responses to their own intermarriages over the last 100 years in America. In this way, and through her own storytelling, we do get an “insiders” point of view. Yet, the point of the book is to tell about how Jewish women maintained their existing identities even while intermarried. The focus of my research is different in that regard.

Two American Jewish organizations need to be mentioned as they grew out of the communal narrative of intermarriage crisis during the 1990’s, and they have, from time to time, published narrative type material of interfaith parents raising their children with Jewish identities. One is the Jewish Outreach Institute; the other is InterfaithFamily.com. The JOI will be discussed later in chapter 3. Here I want to call attention to their web site, as it is their major means of communication, their newsletter, and writing about its programming.

The Jewish Outreach Institute was organized in 1988, pointing to the advanced thinking of its founder, Egon Mayer. Mayer was a sociologist and a leading exponent for “outreach,” a term that came into usage as American Jewish organizations began programming to “stem the tide” of intermarriage. On its webpage we read:

Since 1988, the Jewish Outreach Institute has been a leader in the development of Jewish community-based outreach programming. Through our national conferences, publications and informational resources, JOI has helped foster the creation of scores of Jewish outreach programs from coast to coast. Our research has garnered national attention on the opportunities for including the intermarried in the Jewish community. (Retrieved from <http://www.joi.org>)

The JOI has produced many programs that touch on themes presented in this thesis. Much of the service they provide, but not all, is done online. By this means they connect to local communities, organizations and individuals who borrow their ideas and utilize resources otherwise not available. As they say on their webpage, for instance, citing the new demographics and the lack of participation in organized Jewish affairs by all Jews, they innovatively create new programs and new frames of reference.

Much of what is considered "Jewish outreach" takes place within the confines of institutions like synagogues or community centers for its members. The fact is, less than half of all Jews---intermarried or otherwise---are actually participating in Jewish institutions. In order to bridge the growing divide between the minority of Jews engaged with the organized community and the majority who are not, JOI advocates the creation of programs and events where the two can meet on neutral ground. Instead of asking people to cross our threshold we must go out and meet them first, to welcome them in. That's the kind of outreach JOI promotes and what we call the Public Space Judaism model. (Retrieved from <http://www.joi.org>)

The point of these and other programs is helping parents in interfaith marriages learn to navigate the new territory of raising children within the Jewish community. They want to make it clear the JOI exists as an independent organization, not part of a larger synagogue or secular Jewish movement. Also, they emphasize the use of cutting edge communications technology. They exist as a sort of organization without walls that supports and supplements many different kinds of collaborative efforts with existing Jewish institutions. There is a transparency to their presentation that is refreshing.

Who are we? JOI's operations are overseen by the members of our board, without whose efforts JOI could not continue. If you'd like to learn about these supporters, visit the JOI Board page.

JOI has been a welcoming presence on the Internet since 1995. The site began on a small scale with several booklets, a bibliography, and excerpts from our newsletters. It has since taken advantage of the potential of the Web to reach

thousands of people in unique ways. Our holiday sites have utilized sound, animation, and interactivity. JOI has used both bulletin boards and chat rooms to foster dialogue and support. And much is in the planning. If you have any comments about the site, please feel free to contact JOI.

In a printed newsletter the JOI publishes, three one-page narrations of women who chose to raise their children as Jews, women who were part of the program “Mother’s Circle,” were run in the Autumn 2005. In the introduction, the executive director wrote the following under the title “Unsung Heroes”:

These are the unsung heroes of our generation: women who have taken it upon themselves to raise Jewish children despite being of a different faith. Today women of a variety of religious and ethnic backgrounds are doing the work of creating a Jewish home and instilling a sense of Jewish identity in their children. Some are wistful about the religions they left behind. Some continue to practice their religion on their own. Others fully participate in the synagogue and the Jewish community. These are the women of JOI’s Mothers Circle—women who are making a fit to the Jewish community by helping to build a Jewish future while sacrificing the continuity of their own beliefs. We thank them. We support them. We welcome them.

In these ways, Jewish Outreach Institute is participating in the emergent discourse, and, in many ways, is a location for its production.

InterfaithFamily.com is a “dot com” organization. The “.com” is part of its formal name. Like the Jewish Outreach Institute it takes full advantage of internet connectivity to communicate with individuals and existing American Jewish organizations—synagogues, community centers, schools and the like-- on the subject of outreach to interfaith couples. It has this to say about itself on its web front page.

InterfaithFamily.com offers resources and services for interfaith couples and families exploring Jewish life. We encourage Jewish choices and a welcoming Jewish community. (Retrieved from <http://www.interfaithfamily.com>)

Its Mission Statement reads:

InterfaithFamily.com, Inc. is the online resource for interfaith families exploring Jewish life and the grass roots advocate for more welcoming Jewish communities. This resource is for everyone touched by interfaith relationships where one partner is Jewish, on every topic of interest to them, and for everyone who works with and cares about them. (<http://www.interfaithfamily.com>)

This is clearly an advocacy group attempting to respond in a myriad of positive ways to the emerging discourse on American Jewish intermarriage. The site is information rich. Narrative themes of interfaith couples working on “how to raise their children” intersperse the “Discussion Boards,” which possibly could be a study on their own account. The threads of interest are “Pregnancy, Birth, and Adoption,” “Bar and Bat Mitzvah,” “Growing up in an interfaith Family,” “Parenting,” and “Interfaith Families and the Jewish Community.” As the discussion board is a “free and open forum for discussing issues related to intermarriage and interfaith families,” it is also a possible location for the irruption of this social discourse.

My research has uncovered additional new websites relevant to this work. One such site is called “Jewcy.” (<http://www.jewcy.com>) It is not a website for and about intermarriage, but in one of its discussion areas, for instance, “Jewcy” takes up the question concerning the difficulty outreach workers for the Jewish community have in dealing with the identified children of interfaith marriages. The discussion is stimulated by those who are being put-off or rejected. They tell their stories. The themes raised here are instructive in how many Jewish individuals in the United States are having problems “becoming members” of organized groups because of the difficulty in communicating with the representatives of the community organizations—especially about intermarriage. My concern with narrative function and re-education of communal workers utilizing social work modalities would find application here.

Before moving to the next section, one additional organizational publication should be cited. The Winter 2007 edition of *Reform Judaism*, the quarterly journal for lay members of the Union of Reform Judaism, celebrates the 30-year anniversary of “Outreach” meant to make the Reform Movement more hospitable to interfaith marriages. This represents a later publication in the period under consideration in my research. It suggests how long it took for an organizational publication to feature the stories of interfaith families. Entitled, “The Outreach Revolution” its subtitle reads, “30 Years since the start of the outreach revolution, the children can now tell us what it’s like to grow up in a home in which one parent was not born Jewish.” Two of the short case histories are first person accounts told by the adult parents who met and decided to raise their children as Jews. They are stories that sound a lot like the oral accounts in my research.

I am sure there are other organizations that sponsor interfaith programming wherein stories of interfaith couples are highlighted. The above is only representative. However, the reproduction of supportive, positive narratives are minimal at best, especially when compared to the vast amount of printed words published, and on the web, dealing with Jewish concerns. We now have a picture of the discursive space into which the narratives of interfaith couples raising their children as Jews will enter.

Chapter 2

American Jewish Organizations Go Disciplinary

Introduction—Discourse and Dominance

The goal of this chapter is to demonstrate, using the theories and methodology of Michael Foucault, how social science professionals and formal communal organizations in the American Jewish community construct “intermarriage” discursively as a “problem.” To my knowledge, such an analysis has not been done. It is important to understand as this discourse dominates others in the field, and constrains others from emerging. I believe such an analysis can add to the understanding of social phenomena of interest to social workers engaged in the processes of community change in the United States. While it is true that the construction of intermarriage as a problem depends upon many differing “literatures” and types of “documents,” as well as oral communication at conferences, organizational committee meetings, and university talks, the scope of this chapter is such that I will concentrate only those produced by writers who might be called “Jewish social scientists.” These are Jewish individuals who, having acquired doctorates in a social science, do research for academic and Jewish communal institutions, both secular and religious, in which they hold professional positions. As we shall see, the situating and description of these “authors” is important in that it locates the production of discursive regimes in institutions which exercise power in describing and maintaining as legitimate certain behaviors, identities and definitions as “true or false” and “legitimate or illegitimate” within the American Jewish community. The problem-oriented discourse

is related to religious traditional discourse. It is, however, “translated” into a new context of modern, secular institutions and the episteme that under girds them. Intermarriage is presumed to be a problem precisely because of the low number of interfaith couples raising their children with Jewish identities. Thus, before looking at the narratives of those who are raising their children with Jewish identities, we will look at the discursive regimes within which these heretofore privatized narratives exist as counter-narratives to those that hold privileged positions in the communal discourse. I have determined three levels of this “problem” saturated discourse: monarchical/judicial; normative; and acceptance/transformation. Acceptance/transformation is paradoxical in that it attempts to deal with the “problem” by doing away with it and substituting a new discourse in its place.

As noted, since the publication of the results of the 1990 National Jewish Population Study thousands of documents have appeared wherein the data findings about the percentage of interfaith marriages and the identity of their children is of central concern. These documents include magazine articles, books, newsletter columns, newspaper articles and Internet websites, examples of which I presented in chapter one. Social science played the key role in the irruption of this discourse. Also, as we have seen, though there is a history of writing on intermarriage in Judaism that predates the 1990 NJPS, it was the coming of age of social science, and its correlate practitioners in communal service and religious organizations, which made the survey the landmark event which it is. It may be the case, with a follow-up national survey now in the field as well, that the NJPS 1990 is symbolic of a change occurring in the American Jewish community.

Following Foucault, I am concerned with understanding how in social science discourse, in this case, within the culture of a minority population--the American Jewish community—a social phenomenon known as “intermarriage” is constructed most commonly as a “problem” that needs to be “solved.” Of all the data collected in that survey, the data on intermarriage is acknowledged as by far the most widely discussed. Still, we should not take as self-evident how it is that the data of the NJPS 1990, specifically, that which found forty-five percent of marriages among Jews from 1985-1990 were intermarriages, has come to be used to construct our understanding of the “problem of intermarriage.” Because discourses do not occur in some ideal state outside the social, political, and economic domain, it is necessary to situate them, to show how they are a part of social history. This tracing of the interconnectedness of the discourse about an “object” with the social history in which it occurs Foucault calls genealogy. In fact, this work represents the beginnings of a genealogy of intermarriage in the Jewish community. In order to do so, we must think in terms of Foucault’s archaeological methodology. That is to say, we must try to understand how discursive objects appear, and have a way to distinguish discursive formations as they differentiate. “Archaeology is much more willing than the history of ideas to speak of discontinuities, ruptures, gaps, entirely new forms of positivity, and of sudden redistributions” (1972: 169). The archaeological method calls on us to see differences where before we might only have seen similarities. Foucault bids us to question those ready-made syntheses, those groupings we normally accept before any examination, for they are divisions which are always themselves reflexive categories, principles of classification, normative rules, institutionalized types (1972:22). If the task of an archaeological analysis is to discover

the discursive rules of formation of objects, then genealogy's task is to use the particulars of what is found in any archaeological investigation to tell us about the historical conditions of a particularly situated discursive practice.

What I mean by archaeology is a methodological framework for my analysis. What I mean by genealogy is both the reason and the target of analyzing those discourses as events, and what I am trying to show is how those discursive events have determined in a certain way what constitutes our present and what constitutes ourselves—either our knowledge, our practices, our type of rationality, our relationship to ourselves or to others...the genealogy is the finality of the analysis, and the archaeology is the material and methodological framework...Genealogy defines the target and the finality of the work and archaeology indicates the field with which I deal in order to make a genealogy. ("The Culture of the Self" in Mahon 1992: 105)

For Foucault, the key to doing genealogical work is in understanding how a particular discourse achieves dominance, and to do this one must understand the power relations within which discourses are found. Foucault writes:

...the question that we must address, then, is...in a specific type of discourse...in a specific form of extortion of truth, appearing historically and in specific places...what were the most immediate, the most local power relations at work? How did they make possible these kinds of discourses, and conversely, how were these discourses used to support power relations? (1990b: 97)

It is the drawing of our attention to and explaining the significance of the connection between power and knowledge, power and discourse, power and truth, for which Foucault is known. "Indeed, it is in discourse that power and knowledge are joined together" (1990b: 100). To analyze how a discourse appears we must come to an understanding of power relations among institutions, their members and their leaders, and those outside the institution as well. Still,

One needs to be nominalistic, no doubt: power is not an institution, and not a structure; neither is it a certain strength we are endowed with; it is the name that one attributes to a complex strategical situation in a particular society. (1990b: 93)

Foucault is interested in spelling out these complex strategical situations. The situation of the modern Jewish community continues to represent such a condition, even as, through time, institutional structures have carried out the role of determining authoritative Jewish discourses. Their institutions have the task of reproducing what comes to be known as official Jewish identity, of giving boundaries for a minority group, and of replacing geographically determined affiliation with voluntary memberships. And, while much attention has been placed on the power relations between Jew and non-Jew, little attention has been given to the past and emergent power relations within Jewish institutions and between the various different groups, which comprise the community. Yet, in order to fully understand how intermarriage is constructed as a problem, we must explore these power relationships.

For Foucault, power is not *ipso facto* a bad thing. Nor is power only in the hands of those in superior positions in a hierarchical order. He writes:

Relations of power are not in a position of exteriority with respect to other types of relationships, but are immanent in the latter; relations of power are not in superstructural positions, with merely a role of prohibition or accompaniment; they have a directly productive role, wherever they come into play. (1990b: 94)

The productive role includes the propagation of discourses. In particular, discourses which are taken to be about the “truth.” Foucault defines truth as “a system of ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation and operation of statements. Truth is linked in a circular relation with systems of power which produce and sustain it, and to effects of power which it includes and which extend it.” (1980: 133). Foucault calls this a “regime of truth.” How is this regime administered? Mainly through discourse. Foucault writes:

...power acts by laying down the rule: power's hold...is maintained through language, or rather, through the act of discourse that creates, from the very fact that it is articulated, a rule of law. (1990b: 83)

Rule of law is here understood by Foucault not to mean legislative law, but *normative rules*.

The Emergence of Social Science and the Modern Episteme within Judaism

In the production of discourses on Jewish intermarriage in modern society, there exist at least two dominant “regimes of truth” which lay down the law through their discursive practitioners. These two are known by their literatures, the manifestation of certain discursive practices.

Discursive practices are characterized by the delimitation of a field of objects, the definition of a legitimate perspective for the agent of knowledge, and the fixing of norms and practices, in behavior and thought, for the elaboration of concepts and theories. Thus, each discursive practice implies a play of prescriptions that designate its exclusions and choices. (“History of Systems of Thought” in Bouchard 1977a: 199)

The first is commonly called the “Tradition of Judaism.” The second is a contemporary “Social Science” based discourse which circulates as part of secular institutions and professional publications, but which also is included in modern Jewish religious discussions on intermarriage.¹ Here I would like to delve more deeply into the emergent social science discourse that is utilized for multiple purposes as part of the modern formal organization episteme.

In speaking about the modern episteme, Foucault writes:

In reality, the disciplines have their own discourse. They engender...apparatuses of knowledge (savoir) and a multiplicity of new domains of understanding. They

are extraordinarily inventive participants in the order of these knowledge-producing apparatuses. (1980: 106)

When considering the question of how intermarriage has been constructed as a problem in modern American Jewish discourse, it is clear that the social sciences have a significant stake in the processes. As the data, which the majority of the documents cite, comes from the NJPS 1990, it is relevant to understand how that survey itself is talked about. Whereas the Traditional Discourse is well established, the social scientific disciplinary discourse is still emergent, and its presence is still being justified and proven. At the time of the publication of some of the results, Sidney Goldstein and Barry Kosmin published papers describing the significance of the survey. Goldstein was G.H. Crooker University Professor of Sociology at Brown University and chairman of the CJF National Technical Advisory Committee on Jewish Population Studies. Kosmin was director of research for the Council of Jewish Federations. Much of what they say is important for not only understanding the survey and its history, but also the rise of social science in contemporary American Jewish communal organizations. I note the articles are found in publications sponsored by secular Jewish organizations, not journals of professional scholarly associations. Goldstein's article is found in the *American Jewish Year Book* 1992, a publication of the American Jewish Committee and Jewish Publication Society. Kosmin's is found in the *Journal of Jewish Communal Service* (Summer 1992). These are good examples to demonstrate how social scientific discourse has been blended with American Jewish communal concerns and widely used in communal discussion.² Most importantly, these represent the kinds of statements which help to establish the power of social scientific discourse in its deployment in the community and thus help to render its

conclusions authoritative. We recall that for a Foucaudian analysis these statements as *enunciations* are considered our data. They go a long way in describing how the discursive field, which produced intermarriage as a problem, is constructed.

Goldstein begins with an explanation of the need for such a survey:

Recognition of the importance of a national perspective and the multiplicity of interactions between the national and the local communities has reinforced the need for demographic, social and economic information at both levels. Because separation of church and state precludes a question on religion in the U.S. Census, there is no core of information about those who identify themselves as Jewish by religion. It has thus been necessary to look for alternate sources of data needed for assessment and planning purposes. (1992: 78-79)

Key issues are outlined throughout in the language of modern social scientific discourse. National and local community levels are mentioned. In this discourse demographic information is needed. The context of why there is a lack is stated. He continues with statements about planning and population assessments:

Local Jewish communities have increasingly recognized that effective planning must be based on comprehensive, accurate assessments of the population. (1992: 80)

He tells of the advancement of the survey capabilities within the Jewish community:

In preparing for a possible new Council of Jewish Federation national survey, advantage was taken of the many improvements introduced in sampling and survey procedures since NJPS-1970-71, the experiences gained from the large number of local Jewish community surveys completed since then, and the various limited efforts to collect national data. (1992: 82)

He then explains how the professional staffing is more educated and geared for just such a project. Here we see mentioned the collaboration of “Jewish scholars,” meaning social scientists, whose credentials add the needed validity to the undertaking and its results:

Moreover, the new survey benefited from the much stronger professional credentials of the recent planning and research staffs of local federations, the CJF, and other national agencies, as well as the availability and commitment of a substantial number of Jewish scholars interested and often experienced in surveying and assessing both the general and the Jewish populations. (1992: 82)

Next, Goldstein makes an explicit statement about the need for “scientific” data, the essential component for planning for the population:

Thus, there was a greater appreciation of the need for data of high scientific quality and a far greater potential for employing the most sophisticated methods to obtain such data and for using them effectively for analytic and planning purposes. (1992: 82)

Then, Goldstein talks of the organizational side of the project. Here it is significant to note the “national” component, that is, the effort to make the project uniform throughout local communities. Also, I note again the development of a new national organization, the North American Jewish Data Bank, which brought together the resources of the City University and the secular community organization CJF. This uniting of institutional domains is highly significant. In modern society, when discourses are communicated which have the authority of such institutions, the truth value of such statements is enhanced.

...in 1984 CJF created the National Technical Advisory Committee on Population Studies (NTAC). In 1986, through the cooperative efforts of CJF and the Graduate School and University Center of the City University of New York, the Mandell L. Berman North America Jewish Data Bank (NAJDB) was founded; its goal, to enhance comparability of the data collected locally and nationally to facilitate analysis of the various data sets. Operating through the concerted efforts of NTAC and NAJDB, planning for a 1990 National Jewish Population Survey was initiated in the late 1980's. (1992: 82)

The dating of decisions, the evolution of institutional support and the ability to engage a group of emergent Jewish social science professionals, among other contextual

factors, helps us to see how a change in discursive practice takes place. It is within this discursive context that intermarriage will be constructed as a problem. When it is spoken about by other social scientists, their words will carry the weight and authority of this new discursive arrangement. The authority of this emergent discursive system is also established by its connection to larger social systems. The relationship between the Jewish community in the United States and the other national communities with which it associates is mentioned:

The decision to undertake the survey coincided with worldwide interest in launching a 'world census' of Jewry parallel to the 1990 round of censuses being undertaken by national governments. The October 1987 World Conference on Jewish Population, held in Jerusalem, with over 20 countries represented, recommended a stocktaking of world Jewry as the basis for obtaining information for future study and action in the Jewish population field...(1992: 83)

In this retelling of events leading to the NJPS 1990, Goldstein relates how the study was funded, who structured the questions, and finally, the “outside” firm which was selected to do the actual work.

In late 1988, CJF's endowment committee and its board of directors approved undertaking a 1990 national Jewish population study in the United States. Organizing of the sample survey was the responsibility of NTAC...Following receipt and review of proposals from a number of survey firms, CJF commissioned the ICR Survey Research Group of Media, Pa., to collect data in a three-stage national telephone survey...(1992: 83)

Now that he established the way it came into being, he moves on to explain how the “findings” would be disseminated. In discussing how intermarriage is constructed as a problem, we pay close attention to the details of this reporting process about the survey in general. It explains how “word gets around,” how people far from the project come into contact with it, how other institutions are utilized to spread the discourse, and how the

media becomes part of the discursive practice. There is a purposeful use made of discursive vehicles by those in charge. We read:

...a major feature of NJPS 1990...is the extensive attention paid in the early stages of the study to the uses to which the data would be put analytically and for planning purposes. A subcommittee of NTAC developed an agenda for disseminating the findings. Beginning with a report at the 1990 Council of Jewish Federations General Assembly, and through two major news releases in 1991, the findings were publicized in leading newspapers, on national TV, and on radio. (1992: 87)

Next we are shown how the information, in the form of “papers,” derived from the survey is presented at “conferences” sponsored by Jewish organizations. The sheer number of times the discourse produced with the help of this survey at significant organizational meetings helps lead to the construction in question. Soon there are conferences wherein the discussion piece itself is survey. In this way the findings are made available to “both professionals and the public.”

A number of papers have already been presented at professional meetings; more are scheduled. The Sidney Hollander Colloquium in July 1991, cosponsored by the Wilstein Institute of the University of Judaism and the Council of Jewish Federations, focused on the initial findings of the survey and served to encourage utilization of the data by both planners and researchers. A second conference--'A Consultation on Conceptual and Policy Implications of the 1990 CJF National Population Survey'--was sponsored in October 1991 by the Hornstein Program in Jewish Communal Service at Brandeis University. Through CJF Satellite, the findings have been reviewed with local federations. Highlights of the CJF 1990 National Jewish Population Survey was published and is available to both professionals and the public. (1992: 87)

Finally, Goldstein tells us about how the discourse is extended by authors of monographs, “leaders in their fields.” Most of these are written by social scientists utilizing their disciplinary expertise to expand our knowledge of the phenomena in

question. This gives us some understanding of how a newly constructed discursive regime in the American Jewish community was established.

Most significantly, a number of scholars and planners, many of them leaders in their fields, agreed to author individual monographs, with the State University of New York (SUNY) Press undertaking to publish the series, beginning perhaps in late 1992. (1992: 87)

Bringing the short history of the NJPS 1990 to a close, he lauds the American Jewish Year Book editors for the kind of work they do in demography, and he looks to the future of more such publishing:

Over the past several decades, the American Jewish Year Book has occupied a key role in keeping the leadership and the public informed about the demographic situation of American Jewry. In addition to its regular inventory of the size and distribution of Jews among the various localities in the United States and overseas, it has published an impressive number of articles on various demographic features on world and especially American Jewry...Now, with the initial findings of NJPS-1990 available, this decennial monitoring of American Jewry's profile and of the ways it has changed in the second half of the 20th century can be undertaken again. (1992: 88)

He concludes his introduction with this thought, suggestive of the debate, which the data from the survey would stimulate:

The major question is the extent to which these changes have contributed to the weakening of American Jewry, especially in terms of the ties of individual Jews to the Jewish community. (1992: 78) (emphasis mine)

More on Foucault's Discursive Formation: Its Importance for Understanding Modern American Judaism's Social Scientific Response to Intermarriage

It is important, if we are to understand how intermarriage is constructed as a problem in contemporary American Judaism, to first understand the central concern of Foucault - discourse. What exactly is discourse? It is indeed something composed of language, and at its core is the "statement." Foucault writes:

...I have used the term 'statement', either to speak of a population of statements (as if I were dealing with individuals or isolated events), or in order to distinguish it from the groups that I called 'discourses' (as the part is distinguished from the whole). At first sight, the statement appears as an ultimate, undecomposable element that can be isolated and introduced into a set of relations with other similar elements. A point without a surface, but a point that can be located in planes of division and in specific forms of groupings. A seed that appears on the surface of a tissue of which it is the constituent element. The atom of discourse. (1972: 80)

He wants to distinguish his definition of the statement from other parts of language or aspects of language analysis. He continues:

A statement is not confronted (face to face, as it were) by a correlate--or the absence of a correlate--as a proposition has (or has not) a referent, or as a proper noun designates someone (or no one). It is linked rather to a 'referential' that is made up not of 'things', 'facts', 'realities', or 'beings', but of laws of possibility, rules of existence for the objects that are named, designated, or described within it, and for the relations that are affirmed or denied in it. The referential of the statement forms the place, the condition, the field of emergence, the authority to differentiate between individuals or objects, states of things and relations that are brought into play by the statement itself; it defines the possibilities of appearance and delimitation of that which gives meaning to the sentence, a value as truth to the proposition. (1972: 91)

The statement, as proposed by Foucault, relates to a more general domain he calls the referential. This is not a thing, or a concept, but a more radical category of "laws of possibility." While the referential of the statement forms the conditions of its possibility, the statement itself confirms this referential in its positivity. Many different statements can relate to the same referential. Taken together, statements and their referentials allow for this type of language usage on what Foucault calls the enunciative level.

It is this group that characterizes the enunciative level of the formulation, in contrast to its grammatical and logical levels: through the relation with these various domains of possibility the statement makes of a syntagma, or a series of symbols, a sentence to which one may or may not ascribe a meaning, a proposition that may or may not be accorded a value as truth. (1972: 91)

Thus, statements are linked to a ‘referential,’ which, according to Foucault, contains the possibilities of composition of the objects that are spoken about in discourse. And, while statements are language bound, they fit into a larger phenomenal system that must be taken as a whole. The ‘referential’ refers to more than the language used, but includes such elements as the place, the social moment, the institutional situation, the power and position (or lack thereof) of the people speaking. The ‘referential’ makes it possible to talk about one thing rather than another, and allows that object to stand out from the possibility of all objects of which it is possible to speak. For my concern with intermarriage, in order to speak about it at all, all speakers and writers on the subject, including social scientists, must participate in a referential field. To speak about intermarriage is to call upon the domain wherein marriage is constructed within Jewish culture as a discursive object.

Foucault writes much of the relation of the statement to those speaking or writing. The statement, as proposed by him, has a special and unique relationship with the subject. It is as if the statement needs a carrier, the subject, for the statement to survive, even exist, in the world. “...the enunciating subject brings into existence outside himself an object that belongs to a previously defined domain, whose laws of possibility have already been articulated, and whose characteristics precede the enunciation that posits it” (1972: 93). The statement is scripted in advance of any particular subject, not on the sentence level, but as a particular kind of statement. “As an enunciating subject, he accepts the statement as his own law” (1972: 95). Statements are there in the world to be inhabited by individuals, and to give boundaries to those speaking and writing. Individuals create very little discourse, if any, is created *ex nihilo*. Foucault adds: “The

subject of the statement should not be regarded as identical with the author of the formulation - either in substance, or in function. He is not in fact the cause, origin, or starting point of the phenomenon of the written or spoken articulation of a sentence” (1972: 95). This is important, for to see them accurately, we must learn to differentiate the discourses from their presumed authors. This is why we find different people in the same culture living in different places but saying the same things. In addition, Foucault posits that “...the subject of the statement actually fills a particular *function*. And it is an empty function, that can be filled by virtually any individual when he formulates the statement” (1972: 95). We experience this in organizational meetings all the time. He adds:

It is a particular, vacant place that may in fact be filled by different individuals...It is one of the characteristics proper to the enunciative function and enables one to describe it. If a proposition, a sentence, a group of signs can be called 'statement', it is not therefore because, one day, someone happened to speak them or put them into some concrete form of writing; it is because the position of the subject can be assigned. To describe a formulation qua statement does not consist in analyzing the relations between the author and what he says...but in determining what position can and must be occupied by any individual if he is to be the subject of it. (1972: 95)

In the construction of intermarriage as a problem, we encounter time and again specific articulations that fall into larger, predictable categories of statements. Individual researchers, comparing data, arrive at differing conclusions that fall neatly into what seem to be pre-existing categories. Social scientists, as enunciating subjects, participate in the play of pre-existing domains of statements. Given the discourse on intermarriage within historic Jewish culture, it would appear that individual writers could only talk of it as a “problem.”

But statements cannot exist alone or in isolation. For a statement to be a statement, it must fall into relationship with other associated statements. These associated statements are part of what Foucault calls an enunciative field. “Generally speaking, one can say that a sequence of linguistic elements is a statement only if it is immersed in an enunciative field, in which it then appears as a unique element” (1972: 99). This is important for understanding how discourses work, for to participate in an enunciative field means to have access to and be educated in the many statements of which it is composed. In contemporary society this takes time and resources, the end result of which is to establish a privileged group, sometimes known as professionals or experts. When they speak or write, they actualize this enunciative function. In fact, their speaking and writing is dependent upon this function. Their roles and statement making capacity are part of the institutions in which they participate. This is because, as Foucault states:

...the enunciative function...cannot operate on a sentence or proposition in isolation...It is not enough to say a sentence, it is not even enough to say it in a particular relation to a field of objects or in a particular relation to a subject, for a statement to exist: it must be related to a whole adjacent field...one cannot say a sentence, one cannot transform it into a statement, unless a collateral space is brought into operation. A statement always has borders peopled by other statements. (1972: 97)

He adds:

At the very outset, from the very root, the statement is divided up into an enunciative field in which it has a place and a status, which arranges for its possible relations with the past, and which opens up for it a possible future. Every statement is specified in this way: there is no statement in general, no free, neutral, independent statement; but a statement always belongs to a series or a whole, always plays a role among other statements, deriving support from them and distinguishing itself from them: it is always part of a network of statements, in which it has a role, however minimal it may be, to play. (1972: 99)

Those involved in the social sciences, as other professionals in contemporary society who gain educational degrees, go through a process of learning what statements are possible in their respective fields of “knowledge” at any given time.

Lastly, for a sequence of linguistic elements to be regarded and analyzed as a statement it must have what Foucault calls a *material existence*. The statement is always given through some material medium. But this means something more than having physical attributes, as something that can be heard or seen. “Materiality...is constitutive of the statement itself: a statement must have a substance, a support, a place, and a date. And when these requisites change, it too changes identity” (1972: 101). A statement can be discovered as a statement also because it is repeatable. But this repeatability is determined by a host of factors that need to be present for the statement to appear.

What, then, is this rule of repeatable materiality that characterizes the statement?...the materiality of the statement is not defined by its status as a thing or object...the statement cannot be identified with a fragment of matter; but its identity varies with a complex set of material institutions...The rule of materiality that statements necessarily obey is therefore of the order of the institution rather than of the spatio-temporal localization; it defines possibilities of re-inscription and transcription (but also thresholds and limits), rather than limited and perishable individualities. (1972: 102)

In other words, statements come into the world in specific social, political, economic and knowledge orders, as part of larger systems that make them possible.

To describe a statement is not a matter of isolating and characterizing a horizontal segment; but of defining the conditions in which the function that gave a series of signs (a series that is not necessarily grammatical or logically structured) an existence, and a specific existence, can operate.... The description of statements is concerned, in a sort of vertical dimension, with the conditions of existence of different groups of signifiers (significants). (1972: 108,109)

One must be cautious, for “the analysis of statements does not claim to be a total, exhaustive description of ‘language’ (*langue*), or of ‘what was said’ ...it is another way of attacking verbal performances...and of locating the various regularities that they obey” (1972: 108).

Having defined the statement, Foucault can define discourse: “The term discourse can be defined as the group of statements that belong to a single system of formation” (1972: 107). He wanted to be clear to distinguish his meaning from one that focuses only on language qua language studies, philosophy, or psychology. Discourse constitutes its own category for analysis.

*A statement belongs to a discursive formation as a sentence belongs to a text, and a proposition to a deductive whole. But whereas the regularity of a sentence is defined by the laws of a language (*langue*), and that of a proposition by the laws of logic, the regularity of statements is defined by the discursive formation itself. The fact of its belonging to a discursive formation and the laws that govern it are one and the same thing;...the discursive formation is characterized not by principles of construction but by a dispersion of fact... (1972: 116) (emphasis mine)*

And again,

Now, what has been described as discursive formations are, strictly speaking, groups of statements. That is groups of verbal performances that are not linked to one another at the sentence level by grammatical (syntactical or semantic) links; which are not linked to one another at the proposition level by logical links (links of formal coherence or conceptual connection); and which are not linked either at the formulation level by psychological links (either the identity of the forms of consciousness, the constancy of the mentalities, or the repetition of a project); but which are linked at the statement level...which implies that one can define the general set of rules that govern the status of these statements, the way in which they are institutionalized, received, used, re-used, combined together, the mode according to which they become objects of appropriation... (1972: 115) (emphasis mine)

In our attempt to understand the construction of intermarriage as a problem in contemporary America, we must look at the discourse on intermarriage, as it has appeared through time in Jewish culture, as well as the conditions of the production of the contemporary discourse. For that matter, we should be concerned with the discourse on traditional as well as contemporary marriage practices in general. The professionals writing today configure their categories within the web of statements that is available to them. Foucault calls this the “historical a priori.”

...all these various figures and individuals do not communicate solely by the logical succession of propositions that they advance, nor by the recurrence of themes, nor by the obstinacy of a meaning transmitted, forgotten, and rediscovered; they communicate by the form of positivity of their discourse, or more exactly, this form of positivity (and the conditions of operation of the enunciative function) defines a field in which formal identities, thematic continuities, translations of concepts, and polemical interchanges may be deployed. Thus positivity plays the role of what might be called a historical a priori. (1972: 126,127) (emphasis mine)

Thus, for instance, the possibilities embedded in the traditional religious law on marriage/intermarriage are part of what controls what is said today, even by non-religious individuals, or individuals who eschew religion altogether. All of these possibilities are configured in what Foucault suggested is a type of archive. More than a collection of statements, of positivities, the archive produces and reproduces the inherent or implied guidelines for how statements in a particular discourse can be constructed.

The archive is first the law of what can be said, the system that governs the appearance of statements as unique events. But the archive is also that which determines that all these things said do not accumulate endlessly in an amorphous mass...; but they are grouped together in distinct figures, composed together in accordance with multiple relations...The archive is...that which, at the very root of the statement-event, and in that which embodies it, defines at the outset the system of its enunciability... (1972: 129) (emphasis mine)

Now, because discourse depends upon specific *conditions* to emerge, “it...is from beginning to end *historical*--a fragment of history, a unity and discontinuity in history itself, posing the problem of its own limits” (1972: 117). The analysis of statements, then, is also an historical analysis, one that avoids all interpretation. This type of analysis questions statements as to their mode of existence, that is, what it means to them to have appeared when and where they did. One does not analyze language. What one is concerned with is the fact of language as it appears in contexts. Foucault sought to describe the conditions of possibility, the contextual rules which allow the putting together of statements, and the ruptures in formations where novelty could appear.

Foucault summarizes his approach to discourse by defining the process by which one investigates the deployment of an historical discourse. A discourse only becomes fully visible by utilizing the archaeological method.

The never completed, never wholly achieved uncovering of the archive forms the general horizon to which the description of discursive formations, the analysis of positivities, the mapping of the enunciative field belong. The right of words--authorizes, therefore, the use of the term archaeology to describe all these searches. This term does not imply the search for a beginning; it does not relate analysis to geological excavation. It designates the general theme of a description that questions the already-said at the level of its existence; of the enunciative function that operates within it, of the discursive formation, and the general archive system to which it belongs. Archaeology describes discourses as practices specified in the element of the archive. (1972: 131)

To understand how a discursive object is constructed in discourse, “we must first discover the law operating behind all the diverse statements, the place from which they come” (1972: 50). The law, for Foucault, is discovered by answering the following kind of questions, and being able to describe the contours of the following situations:

(a) First question: who is speaking? Who, among the totality of speaking individuals, is accorded the right to use this sort of language (langue)? Who is qualified to do so? Who derives from it his own special quality, his prestige, and from whom, in return, does he receive if not the assurance, at least the presumption that what he says is true? What is the status of the individuals who--alone--have the right, sanctioned by law or tradition, juridically defined or spontaneously accepted, to proffer such a discourse?

(b) We must describe the institutional sites from which the ---makes his discourse, and from which this discourse derives its legitimate source and point of application (its specific objects and instruments of verification).

(c) The positions of the subject are also defined by the situation that it is possible for him to occupy in relation to the various domains or groups of objects...the questioning subject...the listening subject...observing subject...seeing subject; his is situated at an optimal perceptual distance whose boundaries delimit the wheat of relevant information...To these perceptual situations should be added the positions that the subject can occupy in the information networks. (1972: 50-53)

This last point needs some elaboration. For Foucault the commonly presumed position of the subject in relation to discourse is reversed. The enunciating subject does not produce discourse but rather discourse is a site for the production of the subject. “In the proposed analysis, instead of referring back to the synthesis or the unifying function of a subject, the various enunciative modalities manifest his dispersion” (1972: 54). In other words, discourse comes first. All aspects of the statement allow the subject to be invented co-terminus with the statement itself. The subject only makes sense to his fellow subjects within the discursive field that provides the statements he utilizes. “To the various statuses, the various sites, the various positions that he can occupy or be given when making a discourse...this system is not established by the synthetic activity of a consciousness identical with itself...but by the specificity of a discursive practice” (1972: 54). The game, its rules, and even its possible outcomes pre-exist the players. Foucault concludes that discourse, once produced, stands outside the person as a cultural object:

I shall abandon any attempt, therefore, to see discourse as a phenomenon of expression...instead, I shall look for a field of regularity for various positions of subjectivity.

Thus conceived, discourse is not the majestically unfolding manifestation of a thinking, knowing, speaking subject, but, on the contrary, a totality, in which the dispersion of the subject and his discontinuity with himself may be determined. It is a space of exteriority in which a network of distinct sites is deployed. (1972: 55)

In pursuing the question of how the discourse on intermarriage has been constructed as a problem in contemporary America, we keep in mind that social scientists, the authors of the documents under consideration, are enunciative subjects who occupy sites in networks where the levels of possible discursivity unfold. Having done so, we can focus more clearly on how the discursive object “intermarriage” has come to be constructed in its specificity. Part of the puzzle is the authority contemporary society invests in social science and the discourse of its spokespeople. As we will now see, it is the modern archive that provides the different possibilities used by the spokespeople to produce the discourse about intermarriage. The different discursive levels about which we will read constitute part of the “space of exteriority” that allows for intermarriage to be constructed as a problem.

The Sovereignty of Kings and the Rule of Scientists: A Paradigm Conflict

I turn to the core of the argument of this chapter. In speaking about the emergence of new discourses Foucault writes that

these are not simply new discoveries, there is a whole new ‘regime’ in discourse and forms of knowledge...My problem was...to pose the question, “How is it that at certain moments and in certain orders of knowledge, there are these sudden take-offs?” (1980: 112)

But his concern is not with the suddenness as much as with the ‘newness’ or ‘change’ in discursive formations. These result from

a modification in the rules of formation of statements which are accepted as scientifically true...It is a question of what governs statements, and the way in which they govern each other so as to constitute a set of propositions which are scientifically acceptable...In short, there is the problem of the regime, the politics of the scientific statement...this problem of the ‘discursive regime’, of the effects of power peculiar to the play of statements. (1980: 112)

This also is at the core of Foucault’s concerns.

Foucault traces, through his genealogical method, the general lines of power of the modern ‘discursive regime’ to the break-up of the monarchy at the end of Medieval Europe and its replacement by a system of subjugation and domination that he claims characterizes the *disciplinary society* in which we live. Highly significant for the study of Jewish communities is Foucault’s discussion of the role of law and jurists, what he calls the monarchical/juridical system. He suggests that legal systems in the West are organized around the sovereignty of the King, and that “right in the West is the King’s right” (1980: 94). With the end of monarchy came change, but a change that is deceiving to us. The legal structure masks our continuing concern with sovereign power. “It is in response to the demands of royal power, for its profit and to serve as its instrument or justification, that the juridical edifice of our own society has been developed” (1980: 94).

Jewish communities, up to the beginning of the nineteenth century, though they existed as semi-autonomous communities, mirrored this monarchical/juridical structure. Jewish communities found their organizing principle in the laws based on the discourses of the tradition. This system of laws, known as the *Halachah*, was believed to be articulated first by Moses, *Torah Sh’Bichtav* (“Written Law”) and *Torah B’alPeh* (“Oral

Law”), and then interpreted by the rabbis and sages of the *Talmud*. The author of both the laws was indeed thought to be the Deity, *Melech Malchei HaMelachim* (“God the King of Kings”), whose earthly kingdom is ruled by these laws.³ This system of law was most fully implemented after the end of the monarchy in ancient Israel, and the cessation of the priesthood after the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in 70 CE. We do not have the space to do a full genealogy of Jewish law and its organizing theology. I note here this constitutes one of the “structures” in Rivkin’s historical analysis.⁴ However, it is important to further note, though Jewish communities were semi-separate, during the rise of the new juridical systems in Medieval Christian Europe of which Foucault speaks, there arose a parallel interest and growth in the re-codifying of Jewish law. I propose, therefore, that one way to understand the *Halachah* is as a “Sovereign/Juridical” or, variously, a “Monarchical/Law” system.

In the history of the discourse on intermarriage we find that members of the Jewish community are not allowed to marry outsiders, that is, intermarry. But, the others were not allowed to marry Jews and cross the boundary leaving their community either. On one level this is traced to the allegiance the populations had to their ruling monarchs, their sovereigns. Every king had a people to watch over and defend in an agreement which had the people committed as a group to his sovereign rule. The laws of the king foreswore the allegiance of the people to the king. At the same time, the identity of the group was defined by the arrangement. Community macro-narratives tell the story.

This general system of sovereign power and obedience would come under attack as monarchs would overstep the boundaries of the arrangement and take advantage of the people. Foucault suggests that during the French Revolution and the subsequent creation

of republic based societies, “the legal edifice escapes from the control of the monarch” (1980: 94) and instead of representing the king becomes a mechanism for placing limits on sovereign power in relation to the people.

The essential role of the theory of right, from medieval times onwards, was to fix the legitimacy of power; that is the major problem around which the whole theory of right and sovereignty is organized. (1980: 95)

For Foucault, the physical kings in Western societies are gone, but the fact of “sovereign power” is not. Sovereign power transformed itself into a new discourse in a newly configured form, what we know as the “rule of right.”

Foucault sets as his general project the reversal of the mode of analysis that shows how right evolved from sovereignty.

“My aim, therefore, was to invert it, to give due weight, that is, to the fact of domination, to expose both its latent nature and its brutality.”

Foucault’s analysis shows not only how right is, in a general way, the instrument of domination--but also the extent to which, and the forms in which, right transmits and puts in motion relations that are not relations of sovereignty, but of *domination* (1980: 96).

Foucault is suggesting here that power is practiced in new ways in post-monarchical, democratic, western societies. This helps to explain the nature of oppression in these societies. Power arrangements come about and are maintained through domination not obedience.

Moreover, in speaking of domination I do not have in mind that solid and global kind of domination that one person exercises over others, or one group over another, but the manifold forms of domination that can be exercised within society. Not the domination of the King in his central position, therefore, but that of his subjects in their mutual relations; not the uniform edifice of sovereignty, but the multiple forms of subjugation that have a place and function within the social organism. (1980: 96)

Thus, according to Foucault, power is expressed in modern societies through the domination and coercion of citizenry, and is deployed in systems of what he calls disciplinary modalities comprising functions of surveillance, normalisation, control, as well as punishment, correction education and so on. He suggests, therefore, that we “substitute the problem of domination and subjugation for that of sovereignty and obedience” (1980: 96).

Foucault adds that another “type of power” emerged at the end of the seventeenth century. It is considered new because it cannot be formulated in terms of sovereignty. “This non-sovereign power, which lies outside the form of sovereignty, is *disciplinary power*” (1980: 105). This power resulted from knowledge producing vehicles that emerged with the Enlightenment. He traces these developments in *The Order of Things* (1970), especially as they relate to what became known as the human sciences. Disciplinary power leads to the development of *disciplinary society*. His studies on madness and reason (*Madness and Civilization* 1973), of the asylum (*The Birth of the Clinic* 1975), the penal system (*Discipline and Punishment* 1977), and on sexuality (*The History of Sexuality* 1978) detail the historic shift.

Disciplines are the bearers of discourses, which are taken to be knowledges that produce truths, but they cannot be providers of the discourse of right. “The discourse of discipline has nothing in common with that of law, rule, or sovereign will” (1980: 106).

If discourses come to speak of and constitute rules, they speak in the form of *norms*, not *laws*. The code they are responsible for is thus one of “normalisation.” And “it is human science which constitutes their domain, and clinical knowledge their jurisprudence” (1980: 107). The power of sovereignty, however, continues in the form of a theory of right, and provides “the organizing principle of the legal codes which Europe acquired in the nineteenth century, beginning with the Napoleonic Code” (1980: 105). The legal codes, and the juridical systems they compose

have enabled sovereignty to be democratized through the constitution of a public right articulated upon collective sovereignty, while at the same time this democratization of sovereignty was fundamentally determined by and grounded in mechanisms of disciplinary coercion. (1980: 105)

For Foucault, power is exercised in modern society within these two limits that cannot be reduced to one another--the bounds of a right derived from sovereignty and a “polymorphous” mechanism of discipline.

Modern society, then, from the nineteenth century up to our own day, has been characterized on the one hand, by a legislation, a discourse, an organization based on public right, whose principle of articulation is the social body and the delegative status of each citizen; and, on the other hand, by a closely linked grid of disciplinary coercions whose purpose is in fact to assure the cohesion of this same social body. (1980: 106)

Finally, Foucault writes:

I believe that in our own times power is exercised simultaneously through this right and these techniques and that these techniques and these discourses, to which the disciplines give rise invade the area of right so that the procedures of normalisation come to be ever more constantly engaged in the colonisation of those of law. I believe that all this can explain the global functioning of what I would call a society of normalization. (1980: 107) (emphasis both mine and Foucault’s)

Modern institutions use strategies and techniques that are discursive in nature to bring populations under control. He suggests Bentham's panopticon is the best model for explaining of how things work. The Panopticon has become the metaphor for the processes whereby disciplinary 'technologies', together with the emergence of a normative social science, 'police' both mind and body of the modern individual. Surveys and research projects through which populations are observed and data is collected in organizational centers are examples of these works. Further, through what gets published, advocated at conventions, and policy decisions, we have "the submission of bodies through the control of ideas" (1995: 102).

Modern Jews Break with the Past

When analyzing the history of the transformation of monarchical/judicial power Foucault does not speak of minority populations such as the Jews who have their own indigenous history and legal system. The situation is made more complex as the Jews maintained a structure of governance even while they live linked as a minority population to the general or host culture. There exist separate, internal community discourses that have enabled Jews to function in the host society while at the same time maintaining their own religious legal (traditional) identity. For indeed, from what is called ancient times, Diaspora Jewish discourse acknowledges two systems of sovereign power throughout, that of the host community and that of the Tradition. In many ways they were structured similarly. The emergence of post-monarchical juridical systems of right challenged this arrangement. When the ghetto walls were torn down by Napoleon as he marched across

Europe, so the walls to participating in “citizenship” discourses also fell. As Jews left the physical ghettos, so they were able to leave the social ones as well.

Whereas changes occurred in the external conditions, there was not a similar change affected *within the internal structuring of the Jewish community* vis-à-vis its own religious law, based on a monarchical/law, sovereign/obedience discourse.⁴ This “old” model was kept, in fact it was necessary, as Jews needed to identify with their religious law (the “Tradition”) if they were to maintain their hyphenated identity (i.e., “French, German, Italian Jews”). Certainly some efforts have been made during the last two hundred years toward formal reform within the religious legal framework. But in both Europe and the United States these continue to come under attack from the “loyalists”. Many reforms are tried and then often reversed. Most significantly for this paper is the fact that a fundamental shift in the structuring of power within the community was not affected. For many, discourse on Jewish identity in the Diaspora is still under girded by religious discourse that has not dispensed with the monarchical/law, sovereignty/obedience system. In Foucault’s terms, the juridical/right has never been differentiated from, or “escaped from,” the monarchical/judicial in Jewish discursive formations utilized by Diaspora Jewish organizations. There has never been a parallel revolution *within* Jewish discourse and society, or at least one that is formally recognized as such. Secular juridical rights come from outside the community’s discourse, and then perhaps are borrowed through formal organizational structures, but they are always in conflict with the system of monarchical/sovereign power as represented in the Tradition.

Sovereignty and Formal American Jewish Organizations

Jewish communal organization has undergone change as well during the periods discussed by Foucault. The most significant for many historians of Judaism is the emergence of Jews from segregated communities and their inclusion in the general societies of which they became apart. In order for Jews to become part of the nations in which they lived, they had to abandon the semi-autonomous, separate nature of their communities and merge with the populations in their host countries, mainly newly formed nation states. Now Jews were not considered as a wholly separate group, but as ethnic Jews, or as a group that practiced a religion called “Judaism.” A significant event on the way to creating these new social categories was the calling together of what is known as the Napoleonic Sanhedrin (1806).⁵ Napoleon gave the Jews of his new republic the choice of becoming French citizens, whose religion could be Judaism, or proclaiming themselves a separate “nation” or “people” who would require their own country. The choice was clear for those Jewish leaders called together to answer Napoleon’s queries, and all through Europe, as emancipation spread in the eighteenth century, Jews were given the chance to leave their separated communities, their ghettos, and become members of “society.”

This represents a most significant aspect of the changing discourse concerning the Jews’ relations with the non-Jewish world in the West. But it also had significant influence on the discourse within the Jewish population. The more common focus has been on the inter-group relations; my focus is on the intra-group dynamics of modern institution building that resulted in what is known today as the “organized Jewish community.” The involvement of Jews in general society, sometimes called Jewish

assimilation into mainstream Western culture, meant a weakening of ties to the world of Jewish law. Or, to put it in Foucaudian terms, as Jews became ever more involved in post-monarchical juridical societies and their discourses, Jewish discourse was ever more influenced by the same. For instance, in the United States, not only did scholarly endeavors continue from their European origins (the scientific study of religion, philology, archaeology), but Jewish religious and secular institutions were founded whose infrastructures (boards of directors, bylaws, funding, membership) followed the patterns of newly emerging discursive and organizational practices in the American landscape. American Jewish communal institutions adopted forms of organization required by the state. They would operate on what Foucault calls the disciplinary/surveillance, domination/subjugation model. The popular not-for-profit, education, religious, voluntary charitable organizations, which dot the landscape, utilize the many modes of operation deemed successful by practice.

I note that the basic organizational structure of American Jewish religious and secular institutions is one where the rights of individuals are protected. Even though there is separation of church and state, religious institutions are mainly hybridizations, where the authority of religious teachings is mitigated by the “laws of the land.” The discourse of the institution is thus a mixed discourse. In the case of Judaism, the rule of the *Halachah* is bounded by the rule of secular law and practice. The result is a *conflict of discourses*, where the sovereign right of the tradition to determine the discursive reality of the Jews conflicts with the freedom of the Jewish population to determine its own practices as spelled out by American law.

Let us not, therefore, ask why certain people want to dominate, what they seek, what is their overall strategy. Let us ask, instead, how things work at the level of

on-going subjugation, at the level of those continuous and uninterrupted processes that subject our bodies, govern our gestures, dictate our behaviors etc. In other words, rather than ask ourselves how the sovereign appears to us in his lofty isolation, we should try to discover how it is that subjects are gradually, progressively, really and materially constituted through a multiplicity of organisms, forces, energies, materials, desires, thoughts, etc. We should try to grasp subjection in its material instance as a constitution of subjects. (1980: 97)

Modern Jewish communal organizations are no less involved as networks of power that constitute subjects than others. In many ways they are a microcosm of the larger societal structures. However, for Jews, as Jews, power relations are informed, indeed constituted, by two conflicting discourses. The phenomenon of intermarriage in the United States emerges at the intersection of these conflicting discourses.

Social Science Teams with Modern Organizations

Social scientific discourse constitutes but one level in the larger discursive formation about intermarriage, and it is a privileged one. Disciplinary society uses these producers of truth to help regulate the population by describing what is “normal,” an aspect of Foucault’s process of “normalisation.” No longer able to use the proxy of monarchical sovereignty, modern juridical power seeks scientific truth statements to ensure its power. Science, on the other hand, to sustain its role, “must use highly specific procedural techniques, completely novel instruments, and quite different apparatuses to establish its power” (1980: 104). These are new ways of exercising power, Foucault believes, and they are “absolutely incompatible with the relations of sovereignty” (1980: 104). He adds, “this type of power is in every aspect the antithesis of that mechanism of power which the theory of sovereignty described or sought to transcribe” (1980: 105).

The rest of Foucault's analysis of discourse, and the power that generates and lies behind it, is based upon this shift.

The existence at question is no longer the juridical existence of sovereignty; at stake is the biological existence of a population...power is situated and exercised at the level of life, the species, the race, and the large-scale phenomena of population. (1990b: 137)

We find this to be true in the discourse on intermarriage. The argument given in the social scientific research is that intermarriage will lead to the decimation of the group *as a population*. We do not hear, as found in the Tradition, that intermarriage goes against the law, but, rather, that the demographic data shows that our "numbers will be down." For the social scientists the problem is not one of breaking the law and transgressing a sovereign will. Social scientists are part of disciplinary power arrangements. Disciplinary power, which took root in the eighteenth century, functions differently. Foucault writes:

The old power of death that symbolized sovereign power was now carefully supplanted by the administration of bodies and the calculated management of life...there was an explosion of numerous and diverse techniques for achieving the subjugation of bodies and the control of populations, marking the beginning of an era of 'biopower.' (1990b: 139-140)

The concern of many social scientists is how to develop knowledge for the institutions so that they can find solutions to the problem of intermarriage, which is now understood as the saving of the population, not the transgressing of a law. The institutions themselves can be of either secular or religious nature. In addition, in seeking the normative behavior for the group, social scientists have had two dominant discourses to engage. The first is the discourse of the culture or group itself. Merely reflecting the empirical observation of what has been the case, social scientists have no choice but to

elaborate on the data they are gathering about intermarriage in terms of it being a problem. The second is the tradition/law discourse that carefully spells out the necessity for in-marriage. Those who still choose to express the discourse of the Tradition seize upon the data as a way of describing the intermarrieds' behavior as essentially a betrayal of the “sovereign” and his law. No amount programming is necessary, for this discourse does not include a concern for change or solving problems. Alternatively, social scientists involved with the first level of discourse, while agreeing intermarriage is a problem, will go about trying to ascertain the “solution” and how to solve it. Working with institutions, be they secular *or* religious, almost any technique is implemented which might keep an individual from choosing a non-Jewish spouse, and, if chosen, there are many ideas of how to make sure their children will “be Jewish.” In all cases, the concern is with population maintenance.

It is thus important to note that the “problem of intermarriage” is discursively dissimilar depending on the level of the discursive formation in which it is embedded. These levels can be described either as: 1) tradition/sovereign law, or 2) normalisation/coercion. Without a discursive arrangement that legitimizes a juridical/right formation within the larger field of Jewish discourse, social scientists have no other options to choose from if they are to remain situated, as good practitioners, in their positions. As well, intermarriage can be constructed in these ways for the individuals and institutions that produce the discourse, in simple terms, have been granted, by the circumstances of our historical moment, the power to do so. The fact that another level of discourse can be found in the community, one I will call

“acceptance/transformation,” suggests a shift in power relations. It may be that this third level will help to produce a juridical/right discourse within the Jewish community.

Documenting Three American Jewish Discursive Levels

Though the Jewish population experienced emancipation in Europe, and was able to assimilate in the United States by virtue of several factors, the separation of church/state and the ascribing of white racial identity primary among them, it has not produced a communal structure—in the Diaspora (outside the state of Israel)—equivalent to the post-monarchical form of governance that modern secular societies evolved. To put it another way, since Jewish identity is still primarily a religion-based identity, and the religion still uses the monarchical/domination style of power, within the Jewish sub-culture the rule of right has not “escaped” from the earlier model of power. Within Jewish institutions in the United States the discourse of the “king” still lives. Indeed, the rise of extensive networks of secular communal organizations has offered a challenge to this structure of power. But the unresolved conflict between these two modes of power remains one of the most complicated aspects of the Jewish community today. The disciplinary/domination of which Foucault speaks when he talks about how modern societies work was supposed to have replaced the prior form of sovereign/subjugation. In the broader, civil society this may have happened. Our modern institutions would surely suggest this. However, in particularist Jewish institutions, the attempt has been made to have both forms exist simultaneously. On the one hand, religious organizations are structured as not-for-profit charitable corporations, with elected boards, budgets, and charters that call for the equal representation of all members. This decision making apparatus conflicts structurally with the religious one wherein clerics, speaking from the

discourse of the Traditional Law (*Halacha*), determine for the community what the rules will be. What is more, the rabbinic organizations in the United States follow a republican model of governance that includes resolutions, votes and equal representation, while deciding upon religious legal matters dictated by the Traditional Law. On the other hand, modern secular Jewish organizations, such as the Federations as part of the United Jewish Communities, Jewish Community Centers, the American Jewish Committee, or any number of the “research institutes” associated with them, sponsor significant programs, but defer to Jewish law when formal questions of Jewish identity arise. Just as “disciplines are the bearers of a discourse, but this cannot be the discourse of right” (1980: 106), so the communal institutions which use the discourses of the disciplines in mutually sustaining ways (i.e. Jewish communal affairs programs in schools of social work) cannot be bearers of the sovereign will either. And if “disciplinary normalisations come into ever greater conflict with the juridical systems of sovereignty” (1980: 107), all the more so will these disciplinary normalisation processes come into conflict with the old monarchical/juridical systems, wherever they might come into contact. We remember that, for Foucault, the two limits, “a right of sovereignty and a mechanism of discipline” (1980: 106) define the arena in which power is exercised in modern society. And, again, most importantly, “these two limits are so heterogeneous that they cannot possibly be reduced to each other” (1980: 106). Thus, the discourses, which represent both of these systems, can exist side by side, but cannot be merged. Elements may be borrowed, however, so at times the distinctions appeared blurred. This is indeed the case with intermarriage. The discursive object “intermarriage” is presented as a “problem” from two differing systems or formations each of which is constrained from constructing

it in any other way, but for different reasons internal to each formation. Each represents one of the strands which, when braided together, form the discourse on intermarriage as we know it.

Still, we recall we are speaking about a dynamic process. The human sciences as they develop “knowledge,” and suggest “norms,” come to be ever more constantly engaged in the “colonisation of those of law” (1980: 107). These mechanisms are irresolvable and cannot be reduced one to the other, so these two power apparatuses are locked in conflict. “I mean more precisely that disciplinary normalisations come into ever greater conflict with the juridical systems of sovereignty: their incompatibility with each other is ever more acutely felt and apparent” (1980: 107). Thus, “some kind of arbitrating discourse is made ever more necessary” (1980: 107). Perhaps an aspect of this discourse can be found in the oral testimony of interfaith parents raising their children with Jewish identities, for these self-authenticating narratives go beyond the discursive boundaries of law, and the normalising disciplines, while including parts of both of them.

Monarchical/Juridical: Tradition’s Law

The designing and execution of the National Jewish Population Survey 1990, and subsequent publishing of data collected, signals an important development in the discourse of the American Jewish community. It appears as part of the “colonisation” of which Foucault spoke. The sheer number of articles, responses, books and other documents published which utilize or refer to the NJPS 1990 points to the emergence of a social science, disciplinary approach to talking about, analyzing and planning in the contemporary Jewish community.

And so it is not surprising as we review the literature which produced intermarriage in the American Jewish community as a “problem” that social scientists would of necessity be able to speak from within three discursive levels available to them. Whatever the data might be, it will be interpreted within the bounds of discourses found in the archive of the community. The first reflects the monarchical/juridical domination level of the Tradition’s Law. And while these social scientists may not refer directly to the Law, the statements they make are linked to this level of discourse. And, though they are active protagonists (subjects) in the practice and promotion of social scientific techniques, they are not yet ready to accept the change in the Jewish community that these techniques might imply in secular society. Moreover, there is no other particularist discourse for them to choose from since, as was already noted, the Jewish Diaspora community has not produced a discourse centered on right mirroring that which non-Jewish Western societies invented. Thus, not being able to “return to a theory of right organized around sovereignty and articulated upon its ancient principle.” (1980: 108), these writers fall back to the still older discourse. When they speak, they speak the discourse of sovereignty/obedience. Bayme, Fishman, Cohen and Wertheimer fall into this group. In this discourse, intermarriage is a problem because it is the equivalent of transgressing the community’s Tradition and Law. It is wrong to intermarry, for it is a forbidden practice. A fifty-five percent intermarriage rate would mean that a majority of the community is transgressing an obligation to the sovereign authority. From within this discursive formation of the Tradition, this would mean those who are intermarrying are putting the entire community at risk.

Steven Bayme, Ph.D., National Director of Jewish Communal Affairs, American Jewish Committee, New York, is one of the most outspoken critics of those in the Jewish community who do not reject intermarriage outright. For him, intermarriage is an obvious problem, and one which Jewish leaders and organizations should take a hard stance against. He is a director in a major American secular Jewish organization for which he has completed national surveys over the past several years. One survey found the majority of American Jews did not oppose the marriage of their children to non-Jews, while over seventy percent favored Jewish officiation with gentile clergy at mixed weddings. Bayme's response was to call an emergency meeting to fight the "war against intermarriage."

The statements I selected as examples come from articles he wrote in 1991. In the first, "Ensuring Jewish Continuity: Policy Changes and Implications for Jewish Communal Professionals," found in the *Journal of Jewish Communal Service* (Summer, 1992), he acknowledges the NJPS 1990 and then points out why he thinks it is important—because of the data collected, the communal attitude changed from optimistic to pessimistic. Additionally, he reminds of the role social scientists are playing in the unfolding of the communal dialogue. He writes:

...we clearly have much more knowledge than ever before about contemporary American Jewry. Much of the credit for accumulating this data and storehouse of information deservedly belongs to the Council of Jewish Federations, which determined that long-range communal planning can only proceed on the basis of up-to-date and reliable information.

The 1990 National Jewish Population Survey (NJPS) represents the single most comprehensive study of American Jews ever undertaken.

Yet, little consensus exists within the community as to what to do about the information gathered, its implications, and prescribed directions for future action. (336) (emphasis mine throughout following quotes)

Much of the news in the NJPS flatly contradicts the prevailing optimism of the 1980s concerning the future of American Jewry. Inspired in part by a series of Federation studies suggesting increased communal involvement and affiliation, several social scientists and Jewish intellectuals articulated a ‘transformationist’ vision of American Jewish life. In this view, American Jewry was by no means declining—it was merely changing the expression of its Jewish identity. Despite low fertility, high intermarriage, and weak Jewish education, at worst American Jewry would hold its own in the fourth and fifth generations. Moreover, the Jewish community would gain numerically through conversion, rather than suffer losses via intermarriage. (337)

The prognoses of these ‘optimistic’ social scientists have been sharply challenged by the NJPS. Delayed fertility has meant, in fact, decreased fertility, as American Jews are clearly not replacing themselves. Conversion rates have plummeted as intermarriage becomes a more acceptable option for American Jews. Moreover, out-marriage in the second and third generations clearly threatens the Jewish future, for, absent conversion, nearly three-quarters of mixed-married couples are raising their children outside the Jewish faith (Kosmin et al., 1991, p.16). (337)

In a second article, entitled, “Preventing Intermarriage: A Continuing Challenge to Modern American Jewry,” found in *The Imperatives of Jewish Outreach* (1991), Bayme is very clear about the problem. His position places him well within the sovereign/law level of this discursive formation.

Essentially the problem is whether one defines ‘family’ in terms of the personal choices and fulfillment of its individual members or in terms of the continuity of certain historical models laid down by a particular religio-cultural tradition.

From the perspective of personal fulfillment, there appears to be very little wrong with intermarriage, nor should one have any desire to prevent it. From the perspective of historical continuity, in terms of Jews as a community, the communal imperative is to encourage Jewish in-marriage. (127)

He considers outreach and conversion efforts to be secondary to the primary position the religio-cultural tradition invokes—one must declare opposition to

intermarriage, and resist it with strength even as this goes against the norm of universalism in American culture.

...to suggest that conversion is our only response in terms of intermarriage prevention amounts to a statement of surrender on the part of Jewish leadership that the forces for intermarriage are so overpowering in America today that we have no capacity for resisting intermarriage currents. To be sure, our dilemma as a community is that our capacity to resist intermarriage is limited, particularly in light of our acceptance of the universalist norms of American culture. (128)

Bayme is clear that intermarriage poses a threat to Judaism. Jews who believe intermarriage is wrong should not feel as if they need to change. It is the responsibility of those in leadership positions to understand their role in representing the sovereign power of the tradition. Most importantly, we should remember that personal good comes second to our obligation to the community. Bayme is not interested in the discourse of personal fulfillment, but, rather, the historical continuity of the tradition. Still, he does borrow from the discourse of the disciplines when he talks about norms and standards, and the need for intermarriage prevention:

In short, this brings us to a crossroads. Some, particularly enthusiastic advocates of outreach, call for a fundamental change of attitude towards intermarriage as a phenomenon that will permit us to truly welcome the intermarried. A recent column in the Boston Jewish Advocate urged “that Jews must overcome the perception that intermarriage is a threat to Judaism.” I would like to challenge this perspective on several grounds:

First, the responsibility of leadership is to view issues not from the perspective of personal good, but rather from the perspective of communal interest. In this regard, our continued resistance to intermarriage must be based on the definition of the Jewish family as historical continuity rather than only personal fulfillment...

Second, the historical responsibility of leadership has always been to set norms and standards—to shape the climate of opinion. To suggest, as some do, that the realities on the ground make resistance to intermarriage antiquated, is to abandon leadership responsibility for the shaping and molding of public norms and opinion.

Thirdly, in addition to shaping norms and setting standards, our responsibility is to develop pragmatic initiatives that will not only aim at outreach to those who are already intermarried but also aim at intermarriage prevention. (128-129)

In the passages which follow, Bayme drives home the point that from his perspective there is no other way to see intermarriage but as a problem. He cautions against listening to those who would suggest the phenomenon presents an opportunity. Even those who are interested in outreach and conversionary programs should not forget that they are working on a problem in the community. One of the rules of this discourse is that fundamentally a wrong cannot be a right. Those breaking the law are lawbreakers no matter how much one might want to help them out.

I think several conclusions flow from this analysis. First, if we truly adopt a positive attitude towards intermarriage that will clearly breed a climate that itself is more conducive to intermarriage. In other words, if the Jewish community abandons its resistance to intermarriage, it will only succeed in sending a message that intermarriage is normative and that it is not a problem.

In that sense, it is extremely important to provide the intellectual context for outreach to intermarried couples. Efforts to provide outreach services should be encouraged. However, they should be informed by a realistic attitude towards what outreach is and what we are addressing—namely, a serious effort to cope with a problem in Jewish communal life rather than perceive intermarriage as the great challenge and opportunity of the Jewish future.

Let us avoid the temptation to transform a communal problem into a blessing for the Jewish future. Our attitudes toward outreach must be realistic attitudes that intermarriage remains a communal problem and that outreach represents our best accommodation towards a difficult reality. (131)

A different aspect of the discourse on the intermarriage problem is articulated in an article found in the *Journal of Jewish Communal Service* (Fall 2000: 17-27) entitled “Jewish Communal Policy Toward Outmarried Families: The Question of Outreach.”

Sylvia Barack Fishman, Associate Professor of Contemporary Jewish Life and Co-

Director of the Hadassah International Research Institute on Jewish Women, Brandeis University, and Charles S. Liebman, Yehuda Avner Professor of Politics and Religion, Bar Ilan University are the co-authors. They report that their research has revealed neither intermarriage, nor the organizational policy toward intermarriage, is the core issue, but rather the non-Jewish values of American Jews. They state unequivocally at the outset their ideological position:

...our opposition to intermarriage is not based solely on its measurable impact upon Jewish continuity and survival. We believe that intermarriage (the marriage between a Jew and someone who is not Jewish) is a radical break with historical Jewish communities, Jewish religious belief, and previous generations of Jewish individuals. (17)

The authors blur the distinction between their position and their research question, a question we have heard before, and one that they will abandon by the end of their article. Their assumption is that Jewish organizations can and should do something about intermarriage, implying that it is a problem and the solution may be found.

The question that we explore, therefore, is not whether mixed marriage can be justified—in our opinion it cannot—but what the organized Jewish community, whether it is a synagogue, a national synagogue movement, or a Jewish communal agency such as a Jewish Community Center...should do about it. (17)

As researchers participating in disciplines, they read the ‘printed material’ that constitutes a significant part of the discursive regime already available about our object. They will argue against outreach, but for different reasons than we saw in the Wertheimer article. Their argument echoes Foucault’s analysis that disciplinary society functions by peers regulating peers through observation and social contact. If institutions include intermarried couples in their ranks through outreach programs, then other Jews will think it is normative to intermarry and be encouraged by their peers to do so. In this way,

normalising society will be counter to the purposes of sustaining a particularist Jewish community. They argue that prevention is still possible and desirable, if we only knew what to do to prevent it.

The most controversial of all topics, at least in terms of the volume of printed material on the topic is what kinds of outreach should be extended to intermarried couples. (17)

...outmarriage is not a tidal wave that carries away individuals randomly regardless of their Jewish background or orientation. Jews who have acquired deep connections to and knowledge of Judaism are far less likely to marry non-Jews than those whose connections and knowledge base are shallow. Prevention of outmarriage is not a hopeless—or hopelessly outmoded—strategy. (20)

Every study of local and national Jewish populations has shown how powerful peer relationships are in setting standards and maintaining behaviors...For this reason, among others, Jewish leaders need to carefully consider the wider ramifications of their policy decisions. It may well be that sponsoring outreach programs can be counterproductive, because such programs may send the message that the Jewish community legitimates and supports mixed marriage. (21)

The alternative they offer is based on their conclusion that intermarriage is not a problem in and of itself. Rather, utilizing the medical model, they would have us see intermarriage as a symptom. The real problem, according to their analysis, is the abandonment of the value system of historical Judaism. This value system has been supplanted by the post-modern American value system. Though they are not clear to what specific values they are referring, they are clear that the lack of differentiation between a set known as Jewish and a set known as other has led to intermarriage, and intermarriage is hurting the community. The allusions they make to historical Judaism lead us to understand their analysis to utilize the sovereign/obedience discourse of tradition/law.

Intermarriage is not the cause of American Jewry's problems; it is a symptom. Rather, the cause is the value system and assumptions of the American Jewish community as reflected in its attitudes toward outreach. (24)

The vast majority of American Jews, certainly its communal leadership, pays lip service to the idea that intermarriage is bad for the Jewish people. However, little in our basic values and assumptions provides a barrier to intermarriage. Our values and assumptions are not unique to the Jews, but are embedded in the post-modern consumer culture that characterizes contemporary Western culture. And although these values are foreign to historical Judaism... We suspect that the majority of American Jews are more dedicated to these values more than they are to Judaism itself. (25) (emphasis mine)

They present four aspects of American, universalist society that they believe American Jews hold dear, which to their mind undermines efforts to prevent intermarriage. We are to understand the tradition/law maintains the opposing point of view. Anyone who is obedient to the tradition would need to reject these American values.

Four interrelated aspects of our culture that are especially relevant because they undermine opposition to intermarriage.

First there is a grave reluctance to judge the behavior of others.

The second principle that animates contemporary culture as it applies to the question of intermarriage is the absence of boundaries. Boundaries distinguishing Jew and non-Jew lose all meaning.

(Third) Jews are reluctant, indeed close to incapable, of acknowledging any substantive conflict between Judaism, including the requisites of Jewish survival, and contemporary mores and values.

(Fourth) the last two decades have been characterized by the emergence of personal and privatized Judaism and an accompanying decline of ethnic Judaism...the personalist lifestyle is indeed a 'style'; that is, a form of life given to sharp fluctuations ...rather than out of a fixed position that encourages disciplined regularity or patterned coherence.

Jewishness has increasingly become an acquired taste, not an historical obligation. (26,27)

We find in this article a deep understanding of both the sovereignty/law and disciplinary/subjugation levels of discourse. Though they use the language of both, in the end they are clear we cannot have two masters, one leads to the right kind of marriage, the other threatens Jewish survival.

The assimilation process is also a process by which the group increasingly internalizes and coalesces conceptions that prevail in the general culture about itself, about others, and about God....it is a mistake to believe that it is invariably a source of strength or that in the last analysis it does not threaten Jewish survival and continuity. (27)

Jack Wertheimer and Steve Cohen represent the tradition/law level of discourse as well. Each has written extensively on the subject of modern Jews and Judaism. Wertheimer is a professor of American Jewish history at Jewish Theological Seminary in New York. Though he is not a social scientist doing survey research, his academic credentials and scholarly expertise, as well as his significant amount of publishing, make him an important addition for this chapter. Steve M. Cohen is professor at the Melton Centre for Jewish Education in the Diaspora at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. The document the following quotes are taken from first appeared in *Commentary* (January 1996), entitled “*How To Save American Jews.*” The article was excerpted and reprinted in the magazine *Masoret*, (vol 5., issue 3), published by the Jewish Theological Seminary (Conservative), and then posted on their Internet website. A third co-author, Charles S. Liebman, professor of political studies and director of the Argov Center for the Study of Israel and the Jewish People, at Bar Ilan University, also co-authored with Fishman the article previously cited. This represents another good example of how the discourse on intermarriage as a problem gets constructed. The overall power effect of the

collaboration of all the organizations, authorities, and joint effort in disciplinary scholarship is enormous.

They begin the article talking about the struggles of American leadership to develop strategies “to hang on to” those Jews who “remain within the fold” and to win back those who are on the “margins.” They state a familiar point:

The present anxiety can be dated to the findings gathered by the National Jewish Population Study (NJPS) of 1990. That study reported that among individuals born Jewish who married between 1985 and 1990, more than fifty percent were marrying Gentiles.

And they produce their own understanding of the “history” since the publication of the data. Their description of what happened fits to Foucault’s description of disciplinary society and the scientific, medicalized language the disciplines use to describe human relationships. The “treatment” they refer to is of course the programs community organizations initiated as their response to the data:

These findings jolted Jewish leaders sufficiently to prompt a far-reaching reexamination of the community’s internal condition. Initially, most discussions focused on the apparently devastating data concerning intermarriage...The reports issued...reflect an emerging consensus on how best to cope with the challenges they describe. They also offer an opportunity to revisit the question of the exact nature of the threat facing the American Jewish community today, and to ask whether the treatment being prescribed is in fact appropriate to the illness.

Their scientific analysis has them challenge the prevailing ethos in community organizations. They are going to argue that two differing populations exist in the Jewish community, those intermarrying and those not intermarrying. Moreover, they will suggest that those intermarrying have stepped beyond the boundary of the group, and that too much attention is being given to them at the of cost of ignoring those most involved and committed to the community—those marrying other Jews. They use the data of the

NJPS 1990 and make new calculations by comparing different variables. Their conclusion is that the “core” community is being harmed by the overemphasis on the intermarriage. What they found was that those who were religiously more active and committed tended to intermarry less and belong more.

The assumption, in brief, is that intermarriage is present in every Jewish family; that it appears at random; and that all sectors of the community are equally vulnerable... Why are American Jewish leaders disposed to see an all-pervading crisis when, as they themselves tacitly concede, the data they are drawing upon suggest a number of sub-populations behaving in different ways?

In an effort to arrive at a more accurate picture of reality, we devised our own categories of Jewish involvement, using the 1990 NJPS data to identify the numbers and types of individuals... Our intention was to cast as wide a net as possible, in order to catch the population group that, when all is said and done, is most likely to determine the future of American Jewry.

Categorizing American Jews according to levels of religious and communal participation brings into focus the true pattern of identification with and/or disaffiliation from Jewish life...

...many of the programs targeted at the uncommitted are virtually designed to undercut the Jewish values of the committed.

The values they speak of are religious values, rooted in religious practices.

The difference is rooted, ultimately, in religion—a fact which leaders of the organized community, and especially of the secular policy-making agencies, have long sought to avoid addressing. Task force reports conspicuously shy away from speaking of Judaism as a religion of laws, obligations and norms. They speak about the imperative of Jewish survival; but no reason is given to explain why such survival is important, or how and by what means it can be effected. They pay lip service to the desirability of Jewish knowledge; but no attention is devoted to defining the content or purpose of such knowledge. Reading the task force reports, one receives little or no sense of the inherent value of Judaism’s religious teachings. (emphasis mine)

They conclude:

Significantly, among those we identified as the most engaged Jews, large numbers have made up their minds on this selfsame issue. For them, religious

participation, even if it marks them out as 'different' from their fellow Americans, is central to Jewish involvement. (emphasis mine)

Their overall assessment is that intermarriage is a problem not only because of the lessening numbers of Jews, but also because it is sapping American Jewish organizations of their resources while turning off those who are staying “within the fold.”

Normative

A second level is that which reflects the idea of “normative behavior.” Researchers such as Phillips, Tobin and Goldschieder represent this discursive configuration. Here it is considered normative that a member of a group where intermarriage is not accepted—for whatever reason—should follow the practice of the group. And it is a “problem” when the norm is not followed, for the general will of the group and its body politic is subverted. No longer concerned with sovereignty as expressed through systems of obedience, these social scientists speak within the discourse of disciplinary society. Rather than a concern for maintenance of the “monarchy” and its sovereign law, they are concerned with the “body of society.” “It is this social body which needs to be protected, in a quasi-medical sense” (1980: 55). For this reason, these researchers are many times interested in finding cause and effect relations, isolating variables, in an effort to derive programs that will “solve the problem.” They are interested in the “survival of the group,” not the following of juridical statutes. They are not interested in ideological issues, but “the production of effective instruments for the formation and accumulation of knowledge—methods of observation, techniques of registration, procedures for investigation and research, apparatuses of control” (1980: 102). They participate in systems of disciplinary power.

In both of the aforementioned levels we see parallels with the discourses, supported by institutional domains, which distinguish matters of “sacred” and matters of “secular” interest. The old, sacred discourses of the religion reflect a juridical/monarchical structure. The modern, secular discourses of communal agencies reflect the changes that have occurred over the past two hundred years. Though the NJPS 1990 was deployed by the major secular fundraising institution in the United States, the Council of Jewish Federations, those responding to and interpreting its findings can choose from those discursive formations, for they are all that are available to them at this time. Working from within the archive known to them, their responses are limited to a certain set of statements. Moreover, having been funded by social organizations whose discourses also fall within this archive, and needing to publish in journals, report at meetings, give speeches at assemblies, there is no place for them to make statements beyond the discursive frames which already exist.

Bruce Phillips, at the time of this writing, was Professor of Jewish Communal Service, HUC-JIR/Los Angeles, the same school that educates and ordains Reform rabbis. In a “research précis” entitled “A Jewish Sociologist Deciphers the Intricacies of Inter-marriage”(Retrieved online <http://www.huc.edu/faculty/faculty/pubs/pPhillips.html>), Phillips reviews his research wherein he re-interviewed nearly half of respondents in the NJPS 1990 “to learn more about the 52% rate of intermarriage.” I found this on the web site of Hebrew Union College. Funding for the research came from the Wilstein Institute for Jewish Policy Studies in Los Angeles, a newly established research organization. In this statement, he tells us that several of the results of his study drew the attention of the “Jewish press,” the system of Jewish community newspapers published throughout the

United States. One was that Jewish day school attendance did not prevent intermarriage. This was controversial since many of the more conservative in the community believed that simply “more schooling” would help to reduce the intermarriage rate. More importantly, in Phillips’ own estimation, was the finding that “*formal* Jewish education had less impact on intermarriage than did *informal* experiences such as Jewish camp, trips to Israel, youth group participation, and Jewish dating in high school.” He continues, “As a result, many Federations are taking a new look at programs that have been largely ignored over the past 20 years.” Programming for more informal, not formal, social encounters between Jewish youth was necessary.

By reexamining the data, Phillips also came upon a yet undifferentiated population, the “adult children of intermarried parents.” He writes:

I also found that the adult children of intermarriage (a population which had been missed in previous research) will become an ever larger shadow population with weak ties to the Jewish community but with some potential for Jewish involvement. My research established the importance of differentiating among various kinds of mixed marriages, especially for the purpose of outreach. (Retrieved online <http://www.huc.edu/faculty/faculty/pubs/pPhillips.html>) (emphasis mine)

The importance of these statements for the purposes of this paper is twofold. The first is the continuing significance of the NJPS 1990. Phillip’s research and report on intermarriage presuppose its problematic character as derived from that study to the extent that he was able to find the funding from a new community research institute to re-interview those in the original survey. We recall from Goldstein’s description of the events leading to the survey just how complicated an effort it was. Now, because of the significance of the discourse it engendered, an individual researcher was able to find the

funding to re-interview, and on just one topic—intermarriage. His findings added to the “problem” discourse as he discusses the growing “shadow population” with “weak ties.”

Secondly, Phillips, though he is director of a school of communal studies at the Reform Judaism rabbinical school, does not resort to the discourse of tradition/sovereignty, but he attempts to refine our knowledge concerning what programming might be effective given our disciplinary perspective. He is part of the social scientific group that is trying to find solutions to fix the situation. His conclusions contradict others in this level of discourse who had claimed that Jewish day schools could prevent intermarriage. This is one of the alternative approaches—if one can prevent intermarriage by the right programming, then that is the best cure. He wrote: “We have to look at Jewish teenagers as *at-risk* youth. The more Jewish experiences people have in their lives, particularly in their teenage years, the more likely they will be committed to marrying a Jew” (Phillips online cited above). The presumption is that the network of Jewish communal organizations has it within its power to give these young adults the experiences that will guide them to the right marriage partner choices. We could find no better example of Foucault’s analysis of the panopticon and biopower as it applies to American Jewish communal discourse on intermarriage.

At the time Gary Tobin wrote the article from which these statements are taken he was director of Brandeis University’s Maurice and Marilyn Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies/Institute for Community and Religion. He is the author of *Opening the Gates: How Active Conversion Can Revitalize the Jewish Community* (1999). The article was found online and was published in the Jewish Theological Seminary Magazine. The cross referencing of so many institutions, both secular and sacred, points to the complex

context from which the “rules” of the discourse on intermarriage as a problem are derived. He refers to the “problem” in an oblique way, suggesting the real “problem” is the larger task of “redefining” Jewish civilization. We note his use of a purely secularized, disciplinary discourse.

Jews do not have an intermarriage problem. Rather, they have the challenge of redefining the structure, meaning and purpose of Jewish civilization. The Jewish community must not fear that all of its children and grandchildren will be potential Gentiles. Instead it must embrace the belief that many Americans are potential Jews.

In dealing with the intermarriage problem, Gary Tobin makes the case that the Jewish community must practice what he calls “pro-active conversion.” What he means by this he summarizes with these words:

Promoting conversion must take place in two realms. The first is promoting religious conversion. This is the process through which individuals become part of Judaism as a religion by understanding its laws, its forms of worship, its ritual observance and so on...But the Jewish community must also promote cultural conversion. Cultural conversion takes place through the adoption of values and norms of Jewish peoplehood—the customs in terms of language, history, mythology, self-views and institutional participation.

Tobin moves beyond the frame of the tradition/sovereignty model to include a more secular approach. Borrowing the idea of “conversion” he promotes the idea that non-Jews who marry Jews should be able to find a home in Jewish culture by adopting the practices and markers of the people. His discourse already moves from that of law to that of normative practice. He writes:

It is important for Jews to maintain the normative imperative to marry other Jews.

And,

Jews should declare with gusto, pride, enthusiasm, certainty and rigor that it is good for Jews to marry other Jews.

But,

To then say that the preferable entrance to that world is through the bloodline crates an implicit inequality in the merit of both the marriage and the family. Judaism must open up its psychological and institutional gates for real... (Note: article is no longer available online; similar quotes are in comment #7 of http://www.uscj.org/Vayishlah_57646261.html excerpted from Tobin 1999)

So for Tobin, we can borrow a practice from the religion and make it work as a disciplinary strategy. The type of conversion he advocates is meant to maintain the numbers in the population and not necessarily achieve some religious end.

Acceptance/Transformation

There is yet an emergent third level of discourse, one that recognizes the first two, is aware of the problematic nature of the practice as described by others, but which does not reproduce the discourse of the problem except for comparative reasons. Foucault writes:

We are witness to what we might describe as an insurrection of subjugated knowledges. By subjugated knowledges I mean two things: on the one hand, I am referring to the historical contents that have been buried and disguised in a functionalist coherence or formal systemization's... (and) something else...a whole set of knowledges that have been disqualified as inadequate to their task or insufficiently elaborate: naïve knowledges, located low down on the hierarchy, beneath the required level of cognition or scientificity. (1980: 81)

It might appear contradictory that a social scientist would utilize discourse that goes beneath the level of science. We remember, however, that discourses do not exist in exclusive channels, but are free to move. Foucault adds:

We are concerned, rather, with the insurrection of knowledges that are opposed primarily not to the contents, methods or concepts of sciences, but to the effects of the centralizing powers which are linked to the institution and functioning of an organized scientific discourse within a society such as ours. (1980: 84)

We might call this third level the discourse of acceptance/transformation, suggestive of Rivkin's "mutation."⁶ It is composed partly of the statements like Mayer's, and partly of the intermarrieds themselves, partly of statements that call for change in the institutional discourse, and partly of statements that speak of new forms of family configuration. Within this discourse, intermarriage is constructed as a viable option, among others, for individuals to choose from as they decide on a marriage partner. It recognizes the new social conditions both inside and outside the Jewish community.

Along with Foucault we might also call this a discourse of resistance, for, within this level, we see intermarriage as an acceptable behavior. This runs counter to the prevailing discourses we have already encountered. The new positivity that is emerging is the legitimation of intermarriage as a practice among the population contrary to the attempt to control marriage patterns by communal institutions. The data on intermarriage of the NJPS 1990 might also be construed as revealing an historic rupture or break in the discourse of the Jewish community. Here "rupture is the name given to transformations that bear on the general rules of one or several discursive formations" (1972: 177).

The most significant representative of this level is Egon Mayer.⁷ Perhaps the American Jewish social scientist who has written on intermarriage the most and for the longest time, he was Professor of Sociology at Brooklyn College and Director of the Center for Jewish studies of the Graduate School of the City University of New York. Also, he was the Founding Director of the Jewish Outreach Institute. He received an M.A. from the New School for Social Research in 1970 and his Ph.D. from Rutgers University in 1975. Mayer spent most of his career studying Jewish intermarriage. He conducted numerous surveys on the subject, including nationwide surveys for the secular

organization the American Jewish Committee. His book *Love and Tradition: Marriage Between Jews and Christians* (1985) is a classic in the field. While many rabbis, scholars, and social scientists have counseled resistance, Mayer has advocated being open to the non-Jewish spouses and welcoming the couples in the organized Jewish community.

Mayer speaks ironically when he says: “Our problem is no longer anti-Semitism, it is romance. We have met the enemy and it is us.” And,

Faith in our future as equal partners in the evolving civilization that is America must move beyond merely the age-old Jewish quest for security. Our quest must be for greater awareness and acceptance of Jewish values along with participation in the variety of ways of Jewish living—particularly among those of our non-Jewish brothers and sisters who are already members of the Jewish family through marriage.

Such a quest by American Jewry requires cultural and religious ‘affirmative action’ that will not come solely from any synagogue program or from the plethora of other Jewish organizations. It will come only from our own private hearts and minds. (“Family Issues Forum: A Publication of the B’nai B’rith Center for Jewish Family Life,” Retrieved from <http://bnaibrith.org/family/fif/aut95/emayer.html>.)

Mayer, though a social scientist by training, moves beyond disciplinary constraints. He does not replicate the subjugation/population management discourse, nor the sovereignty/law discourse, but, rather, he articulates a third level. His statements above represent what Foucault meant by looking “toward the possibility of a new form of right, one which must indeed be anti-disciplinarian, but at the same time liberated from the principle of sovereignty” (1980: 108). Indeed, Mayer does carry on social scientific research, publish scholarly reports, and speak at conferences. He participates in every aspect of the institutional context of modern American Jewish communal life. But he does not speak within the discursive levels already discussed. Still, his writing is

important since it is indicative of a discourse linked to the formation that constructs intermarriage as a problem, while at the same time it moves in a new direction. Mayer is at the forefront of an emerging discourse that affirms new possibilities rather than fixing problems.

The national organization he founded—The Jewish Outreach Institute—is concerned with programming for interfaith couples and their families. Yet, none of what he says or does is couched in the language of “intermarriage as a problem.” This is not to say he does not understand that discourse. Moreover, he utilizes it in his own writing as he is called upon to respond to criticisms. As we read above, he uses another kind of language. Examples can be found in his article entitled “American-Jewish Intermarriage in the 1990s and Beyond: The Coming Revolution in Jewish Demography and Communal Policy” found in the volume *The Imperatives of Jewish Outreach: Responding to Intermarriage in the 1990’s and Beyond* (1991).

...it is clear now that in the past few decades the American Jewish family has unleashed a veritable demographic revolution of its own...the trend that appears to portend the greatest changes in the life of the American Jewish community is the tendency of its young to marry non-Jews. (40)

If one focuses on the marriages that have taken place since 1985, translating the individual percentage of intermarriage into the proportion of couples that are Jewishly endogamous and those that are mixed, the drama of Jewish family transformation becomes even more pronounced...In short, more than half of the nuclear families formed by the most recently marrying Jews are mixed-marriages...

The implications of such a pattern of Jewish household formation are formidable, indeed! (41)

We note the kind of statements Mayer makes and his avoidance of judgmental or restrictive terms. His is a language that reflects more of a dynamic movement in the

population. He is not guessing what the outcome of the intermarriage practice might be. He certainly is not interested in participating in the discourse that structures our understanding of the social phenomenon as a problem. He takes a different view of the possible future of this population.

Traditionally, Jews have been among America's most insular religious groups. The demographic shift I am predicting will transform U.S. Jewry from 'a people that dwell alone' into a unique American minority: one that takes advantage of cultural pluralism not only by blending into the majority, but by absorbing large numbers of the majority as well. (42)

Mayer points out that the concern for intermarriage in the Jewish community is not new. What saved the community from this kind of angst in the past is that it occurred relatively infrequently. He extrapolates the data from the NJPS 1990, and he is convinced, with other analysts, that Jews in America are experiencing something wholly different as the intermarriage rate moves toward and over the fifty percent rate. But he refrains from discursively interpreting the data as a problem. Rather, he reports that

Since the end of the 1970's the more liberal segments of the American Jewish community began to approach the issue of intermarriage with a new attitude, which is aptly captured in a word, 'outreach.' (44)

Finally, he tells about the differing outreach approaches in the community. There is a separate outreach discourse which speaks about more than intermarriage, and which can be applied to each level discussed in this paper. It thus shows up somewhat differently depending upon with which intermarriage discourse it is mixed. Mayer's notion of outreach is the broadest, and it suggests we accept the discourse of the intermarried families as they are produced in their particularity. He represents the linkage or bridging between the discourse of *normative society* and the discourse of

personal transformation. He would like Jewish communal institutions to be accepting of the transformation.

Chapter 3

Getting to Know the Other

My research is an extension of the third level of possible community response, “acceptance/transformation.” In order to hear the voice of the new members of the wider American Jewish community, I needed to find and employ a social scientific method that has a toolbox designed for face-to-face contact with the target population, and one that would allow the voice of those researched to be heard above the numbers. I found that in Anthropology.

The “Other” in Anthropology

If “getting to know the Other has been anthropology's *raison d'etre*” (Daniel and Peck 1996: 2), then the study of the life narrative/story of interfaith couples where one of the spouses is Jewish certainly lies within the domain of anthropological concern on several levels. The “Jew” has been constructed as Other in western culture since the earliest days of the emergence of Christianity and its foundational narrative that places Jesus in opposition to the Pharisaic Jews and Rabbinic Judaism. As well, Jews have constructed the Other as foreign, dangerous and a worshipper of idols. Mitchell writes in *A Goy in the Ghetto*:

I had little personal experience with Jewish-Gentile relations in American society...It was during the research...that I first became aware of the Jewish view of a distinct Jewish-Gentile cultural dichotomy characterized by the goy as a symbol of callousness and danger; the kind of person one tries to avoid if possible. (Mitchell 1988: 62)

One of the problems studying the families of those interfaith couples who are raising their children as Jews is that we are investigating a sub-group that is Other to both Christian and Jewish cultures, what we might call "doubly Other." More, the parents and children of these families live outside the borders of both Jewish and non-Jewish cultural identities. The choosing of the minority "Jewish" identity, however, appears to be something new. Anthropology's concern with "lineage," "race," and "primitive peoples" signal but a few of the intellectual categories used to underwrite bias against Jews in the past. Jews and Judaism fit the description of Other as explicated by Daniel:

The Other as a people has borne various names throughout anthropology's brief history: primitives, natives, traditional peoples, tribes, and ethnic groups, to mention but a few...anthropology has been enamored by that which is foreign to it. This Other with which anthropology has attempted to engage, and about which much has been written recently, is difference essentialized and distanced in time and space by a particular way of coming to know it. Willingly or otherwise, this form of knowledge has abetted three strategies of engagement with difference: conquest, conversion, and marginalization (Connolly 1991: 36-63). (Daniel and Peck 1996: 2)

When studied by an "outsider," the Jewish people show up as an ethnic group, a nation, a religion, or even a "race." One of the great problems in Euro-American scholarship, particularly in the field of anthropology, is the marginalization of the Jew and the study of Jewish culture by non-Jewish scholars. Harvey Goldberg argues in *"The Voice of Jacob: Jewish Perspectives on Anthropology and the Study of the Bible"* (1995) this is a residue of the earlier days in anthropology when Judaism was equated with primitive religions, as any religion pre-dating or other than Christianity would be considered. This only partially explains why the masters Boas, Levi-Strauss, Fortes,

Durkheim and Jakobson, to name but a few, found little value in the reflexive study of their own people and culture. The explicit and implicit anti-Semitism of the societies and learning institutions in which they found positions (and didn't) is general knowledge. When listening to narratives of interfaith couples, we need to remember the conquest, conversion and marginalization that have occurred as part of the experience of the Jewish people, and try to locate their stories in relation to this significant discursive historical frame. Perhaps a new frame is emerging that includes acceptance. On the other-hand, one could theorize that assimilation has been so complete that non-Jews no longer see "difference" when interacting with their Jewishly identified partners. Even as "multi-cultural study programs" became part of the academic scene, they too generally excluded the study of the Jews as Jews in the United States. (Galchinsky 1998) The reason for this is perhaps in recent decades have Jews been categorized not as a separate group, but as part of "white" America. (Brodkin 1995) Having apparently "made it" socially and economically, Jews in the United States are no longer considered an oppressed minority. This is demonstrated by a 2009 survey showing anti-Semitic viewpoints of non-Jewish Americans continue to decline.¹ All this could be good news. But, these developments could also be a new twist on an older tale. American Jews may be giving up particularistic identity markers to gain access to the larger general culture. Daniel writes:

The conquest of the Other lay in the imposition on it of such explanations, naturalized laws, and universals, with little regard to the historically specific scientific culture to which these valorized goals belonged. Had the conquest in question, the conquest by imposition, been limited to our understanding of the Other, it would have been a partial one. But to the extent that we may have succeeded in converting the Others to our point of view without reciprocity, in making them see themselves as we see them, our conquest is a resounding one. (Daniel: 3)

These are concerns to guard against in researching the narrative life stories of interfaith couples on several accounts. We must guard against imposing a point of view on intermarrieds, either derived from Jewish community discourse, or anthropologic discourse on Jews and Judaism. In either case, the assumption that the researcher knows more than the people studied know about themselves should prove to be erroneous. Additionally, the researcher must continuously become aware of his biases and privileged point of view throughout the interviewing, analyzing, and reporting process. The specter of half of all marriages being “out” marriages is seen by many Jews as leading to the erasure of a distinguishable Jewish sub-culture and way of life. It bears repeating, from the normative Jewish perspective, nothing less than the survival of the group is narrativized as being at stake. It is my experience the intensity and seriousness of this concern may not be understood by outsiders. With interfaith couples, certainly the non-Jewish spouses have concerns as well. However, rarely, if ever, is a concern for the very extinction of the group to which they belong mentioned. This is not the case with Jewish families, where the discussion of “will the grandchildren be Jewish” signals a much deeper anxiety than a mere personal choice of identity among a round of possibilities. It is anxiety produced by contemplating one’s own disappearance.

The New Ethnography: The Researcher is Part of the Story

Ruth Behar’s anthropology “that breaks your heart” (*The Vulnerable Observer* 1997) informs the kind of initiative I have taken with this dissertation. In her work she suggests the role of the anthropologist, the field researcher, the ethnographer is more than an objective viewer of Others. The researcher is also a person with interests in and

responses to that which is being researched. This fits well with a community approach to social work research wherein the researcher has a personal interest in the empowerment and well being of the community in which he or she works. It became obvious to me the role of a rabbi, commonly understood to be a “teacher” or “spiritual leader,” was changing in the American scene when I was told while applying for positions upon graduating rabbinical school that boards of directors of temples (Reform synagogues are called Temples to distinguish them from traditional, Orthodox synagogues) were not interested in scholars so much as rabbis who could manage the organizations. “Rabbis should be getting MBA’s, not PhD’s,” I was told. I wondered as a newly ordained rabbi what I was supposed to do in relation to the people I was meeting. What did the congregants want from me? What was I supposed to say? Since we spent ninety-five percent of the time in the five-year rabbinic program studying books, the answers were not obvious. More importantly, it seemed to me that the language (quite literally, Hebrew) of the books and study had very little to do with the language of the people’s lives. Modern America was nothing like ancient Israel, notwithstanding the metaphoric borrowing of the Puritans who settled here.

My interest in Judaism and being a “rabbi” was to find an authentic Jewish voice, one that connected me with the past, while giving me life in the present. My voyage, my quest, my journey had very little to do with managing a not for profit, charitable organization. Or did it? And there was certainly more to my search than following ritual committee resolutions concerning from what side of the pulpit I was allowed to speak about the *Torah*, and from what side current events.

My rabbinical studies gave me an historical perspective from which to view what is happening. My involvement permitted me to see up front and personal the varied needs and diversity *within* the Jewish world. For me, the present is even more interesting than any of the past. Indeed, I understand the present to be shaped by the past, but not constrained by it. The present is the moment in which we live, so studying the present made much sense to me. I believe it is also very *Jewish* to live this way. Yet the books I read spoke only of the past. None of the people I met in the congregations, and few of the situations, were written about in those books of history. So I turned to fields of study that would help me, I hoped, to understand the present. I found Anthropology and Social Work to provide unlimited intellectual resources for seeing into the present moment of my community, and my situation.

As I thought further, I realized little theory existed on the structure of modern American synagogues. Here was one of the oldest organizations in the Western world whose name and function were carried from continent to continent through time, but whose organizational structure as a formal organization had little theory guiding it. American corporate law regulates American synagogues. This makes it different than all synagogues in different societies coming before it. As well, separation of church and state forbids state involvement and financing by government institutions. Thus, all funding comes as charitable contributions from “members.” At the same time, the Constitution and secular laws of the United States protect these members. The relationship of religion and state for *all* religions in the United States means that citizens, Jewish or otherwise, are free to choose their affiliation. Coercion from without is forbidden. Jewish organizations, no matter what the traditional religious law states, must

also abide by these rules of state. It is what makes America different. Yet, the rules of the American system have not been theorized in relation to the historic traditions enshrined in the synagogues and temples. The authority inherent in the rules of the religion clashes with the power of the people who decide how they are going to live that religion. This I have come to understand, and discussed in the previous chapter, has created a “*conflict of paradigms*,” a conflict that all members of the community are structurally caught in by being actors in the cultural historical moment.

In the role of a professional, modern American rabbi, I experienced this conflict on a daily basis, with no guiding textbooks or organizational manuals to help. Part of my journey, the journey that has me writing this dissertation, became finding a way out of, or at the very least, describing in intelligent terms, this conflict. It may still be for others to flesh out the details of a new structure, to fill in the many voices still to be heard. I found it worthwhile and a challenge (some say a “calling”) to help spell out a perspective, and analysis, that might begin to resolve the conflict. For as much as this is an external problem, those identifying with the community as well, internalize it. Upon further analysis, I surmised that intermarriage is but a result of a deeper underlying dynamic affecting all aspects of current Jewish life. I theorize that a resolution to the internalized conflict through self-affirming—and Other affirming-- responses, is the beginning of a healing process that needs to take place.

A Beharian anthropology calls on one to insert oneself in the text as indeed the picture always included the researcher in any case. There is no hiding behind numbers and words. More, in the case of those who are doing research, reflection, thought, thinking about their own community, a group with which they identify, the researcher

must be aware of that which calls him to the task. It is not a “by the way,” but one more part of the story, and maybe one of its most important themes.

As I think further about my interest in “intermarrieds raising their children as Jews” I recall the many times I have said in conversation, “this is *the* major issue facing Jewish survival, outside of Israel.” Not the intermarriage itself, but what comes of the families who move outside the band of Jewish family-hood in history?

In 1982, the year I was ordained, I remember being at an official meeting of the graduating class. A question was asked by a more conservative member of my class, “What happens if we do not perform intermarriages? Will we be able to apply for jobs at those big congregations who want their rabbis to officiate?” The reply, echoing from somewhere in the room, has always stayed with me. “I wish the whole issue of interfaith marriage would just go away. It just messes everything up.” In other words, what we did not know at the time was that we were entering an age of intermarriage, maybe *the* age of intermarriage, a time when more than a third of all American Jews were going to choose non-Jewish partners to marry, accounting for nearly half of all families thus created. It is very hard to just make this go away. But if that is the perspective of the leadership, I figured then, and I still do, we will never see our way through this historic moment. Institutional leaders, policy makers and program designers were having difficulty thinking about something that stands so far outside our frame of reference and inherited discourses that there is little of a constructive nature that could be said. This, actually, is the *real* problem. There are also heartfelt religious truths at stake. Behar writes:

Anthropology...is the most fascinating, bizarre, disturbing, and necessary form of witnessing left to us at the end of the twentieth century. As a mode of knowing that depends on the particular relationship formed by a particular anthropologist with a particular set of people in a particular time and place, anthropology has

always been vexed about the question of vulnerability. Clifford Geertz says: “You don’t exactly penetrate another culture, as the masculinist image would have it. You put yourself in its way and it bodies forth and enmeshes you.” (Geertz 1995) Our intellectual mission is deeply paradoxical: get the native point of view, per for favor without actually “going native.” Our methodology, defined by the oxymoron “participant observation,” is split at the root: act as a participant, but don’t forget to keep your eyes open....Nothing is stranger than this business of humans observing other humans in order to write about them. (Bihar 1996: 5)

The oddest part of the work herein, is that I, in the official role of rabbi, practitioner, scholar, social worker, but also researcher, religious authority, hired hand, committed Jew am going on a trip into relationships I know personally very little about. Though two of my three siblings married non-Jews, I married another Jewish person, as did one of my brothers. Indeed, my birth family, ironically, reflects the national Jewish statistics. So, in some ways, I do know about intermarriage up close. Now, for me, going to my professional work place is going to the field, and my community. Simultaneously, the others I am studying are like me, but not me. We share some of the same identity components, but not others. I am, in my professional role as rabbi, however, charged by my own self-definition to include others not like me but choosing to identify their children in the enterprise to which I am committed. The role of the American rabbi is a highly contested site.

An anthropologist’s work results in some type of ethnographic writing.

The ethnography serves as the only proof of the anthropologist’s voyage, and the success of the enterprise hinges on how gracefully the anthropologist shoulders what Geertz calls the “burden of authorship.” The writing must convey the impression of “close-in contact with far-out lives” (Behar 1996:7).

The lives I am writing about, and whose words I have transcribed herein, are in some ways as far out as they could be compared to marriageable norms in Jewish history. This

is the whole point of the research. My concern, however, after the countless hours I have spent with couples and their children, couples I did not seek but who sought me as a representative of a group, and a religion, as they sought an identity that I in my professional role was somehow a steward of, was to not only help them in their voyage, but in so doing, help to augment the group that I am in so many eyes a leader of by virtue of my position and education. In the end, people come to be a part of the group I have found so much meaning being a part of, and my role, as I define it, is to welcome them. My life and theirs is made richer by this synergistic relationship. As I experience it, my survival, and theirs, is certified for the moment.

My involvement, for instance, includes spending hours training (!), coaching, teaching, in partnership with the parents of the children who become adults as they learn to lead an entire *Shabbat* worship service for their *Bar* or *Bat Mitzvah*. During this time, these “sessions,” I learn of the families in their daily life schedules, I learn about relatives, I help to plan the event. And when the day comes, I sit with the extended families as they share in the experience. I hear their stories. I relate to their lives. But I read about these lives in so few places. I think how contested what we have done is in the Jewish world. I wonder if they feel the conflict in the debate swirling about them, in the statistics, in the essays. And I conclude time and again, the problem of intermarriage is not their problem. They come for the spiritual moment, for the meaning, the connection, for so many positive things. The problem is really someone else’s. And so I determined to try to share their success story, their victory, their take of the mountain they climbed from the peak upon which they rest.

On one level, I am an insider to Jewish culture, but outsider to Jewish interfaith marriage culture--if personal life experience is the test. Still,

In the last decade of meditation on the meaning of 'native anthropology'—in which scholars claim a personal connection to the places in which they work—has opened up an important debate on what it means to be an insider in a culture. As those who used to be 'natives' have become scholars in their own right, often studying their home communities and nations, the lines between participant and observer, friend and stranger, aboriginal and alien are no longer so easily drawn. We now have a notable group of 'minority' anthropologists with a range of ambivalent connections to the abandoned and reclaimed 'homelands' in which they work. The importance of this 'native anthropology' has helped to bring about a fundamental shift—the shift toward viewing identification, rather than difference, as the key-defining image of anthropological theory and practice. (Behar 1996: 28) (emphasis mine)

Many times it is hard to tell while reading the reports and analysis of the statistics that almost all of the researchers reporting on the NJPS, and writing Jewish culture critique, are themselves Jewish, and that they have very much at stake in what they are writing. The intellectual and institutional gap between the researcher and the subject material—the people being researched-- is something that needs more reflection and commentary itself. For a Jewish reader such as myself, for someone engaged with Jewish affairs, for one who has sat in the meetings and seminars, worked with the people in face to face situations for thirty years, the void felt is palpable. Where is the “I” in the discourse?

Perhaps mimicking the distance between the researcher and the researched (and then closing the distance between the supposed objective view of the subject viewed) is a process replicated in the internal relationship of the modern Jewish psyche to itself. The Jewish world is so used to being viewed, analyzed, and told who and what he or she is that those narratives would of necessity weigh on the psyche, especially when such

narratives could lead to the twentieth century Holocaust. For Jews to speak about their own “communal” issues in “public,” such as the population decline (see non-Jewishly affiliated websites that comment on all the same data), creates too much uneasiness in both the speaker and the listener. It points to vulnerability. But worse is the difficulty of American Jewish intellectuals, social critics and organizations with establishing and affirming new categories of Jewish self-definition that are neither non-self-effacing, nor apologetic, nor “bragatorial.” In other words, the phenomena of modern Jewish life has brought with it many new experiences, but not enough creative linguistic categories (interpretations), that allow for positive self-appraisal—as Jews. This conflict is part of an internal war that creates enough dissonance positive identification becomes problematic, both publicly and privately. Creative self-authentication and acceptance, in Rivkin’s sense, are hard to come by. The difficulty with “acceptance/transformation” is one of the ironies of American Jewish life, even as it is a life filled with more freedoms and security than the community may have ever known.

So it would only make sense for some Jews to see non-Jewish affirmation in the form of intimate relations, such as results in marriage and children, to be a complete infringement on what was to always be the fortress of Jewish self-affirmation and healthy narcissism. The idea that the non-Jewish world could hold things Jewish, even Jewish persons, in high esteem, is incongruous with the community’s normative inherited history and narrative. It literally boggles the mind. Yet, that is what I suspect, what is happening. But it may even be more the case with those not Jewish who chose to bring their progeny to the Jewish alter to have them raised as an Other.

To locate the researcher in the middle of all this is not an easy task. Research is supposed to bring us new knowledge. It is thought that this task of reaping new knowledge is made even more difficult when the researcher has a vested interest.

Delmos Jones in an influential piece published in 1970, “Towards a Native Anthropology” wrote:

Field methodology is a much-discussed subject in anthropology. As usually conceived, research is a task carried out by an ‘outsider’ or ‘stranger’ who enters a society and attempts to learn about the way of life of its people. Thus, most discussions center on the problems encountered by the outsider. But there is another vantage point from which research can be conducted—that of ‘insider,’ (a different kind of participant-observation made so popular in qualitative research manuals, cite) the person who conducts research on the cultural, racial, or ethnic (religious?) group of which he himself is a member. (Jones 1988: 30)

The general philosophy in anthropology is that a graduate student should do field research for his Ph.D. dissertation. Furthermore, it is thought that his research should take place in a culture other than his own. Students are generally taught that a person working among his own people cannot maintain the degree of objectivity desirable, hence research experiences must be gained initially in another culture...However, it is an undeniable fact that most African students in American universities are Africanists who have conducted field work in their own society and are specialists in their own people...there is, then the expectation that the insider will know things in a different, more complete way than will the outsider...This description, as much as possible, should be made from the point of view of the people—i.e., the inside view...For the anthropologist to obtain such a description, he must become actively involved in the life of the people, communicate with them, and spend a considerable period of time among them. With these general goals as the primary emphasis, it seems obvious that the trained native anthropologist can produce the best and most reliable data, since he knows the language (!), has grown up in the culture, and has little difficulty in becoming involved with the people. (Jones 1988: 30, 31, 32)

Before one can begin collecting data, it is necessary to gain access to the community. In this, the insider is faced with a much different set of problems than the outsider. But unless the insider returns to the same community in which he grew up, he still has the problem of developing contacts. (Jones 1988: 33)
(emphasis mine)

To go inside the Jewish community as a research-practitioner utilizing anthropology's ethnographic skills may help us derive a better understanding of what is happening. However, we need to be on guard. There may be a hidden agenda of Jewish communal workers who do not know the language of the intermarried couples, and whose purpose might be secretly to make their client population more religious, observant, "more Jewish" than they are. The professional may, also, set him/herself up as being the "real" Jews, the "more Jewish" one, or in a better position to know what is right to do. All this could place them at odds with their client base. However, it is also possible the communal worker who is a member of the community can know more, and can use that knowledge empathically in encounters with membership, the client base. There are both strengths and weaknesses to being a native anthropologist research practitioner.

One vantage point cannot be said to be better than the other. There are logical dangers inherent in both approaches. The outsider may enter the social situation armed with a battery of assumptions which he does not question and which guide him to certain types of conclusion; and the insider may depend too much on his own background, his own sentiments, his desires for what is good for his people. The insider, therefore, may distort the 'truth' as much as the outsider. Since both positions involve the possibility of 'distortion,' which is better?...Many anthropologists believe the native's view of his own culture reflects the most accurate view...Both have room for distortions...Thus the whole value of the inside researcher is not that his data or insights into the social situation are better—but they are different. (Jones 1988: 37)

The practical importance of this point for the researcher is driven home by Mitchell in *A Goy in the Ghetto* (1988) when he discusses the problems of being an outsider, and pointing again at the advantages of having insider knowledge. He writes:

...anthropological rapport is a culturally symbiotic relationship. There must be a behavioral 'fit' between the anthropologist and her or his informants for trust and understanding—essential ingredients in all anthropological research—to grow.

If the anthropologist's behavior signifies a culturally antithetical persona, the wary informant will withdraw, and the research most certainly will flounder. So it is anthropologists as 'cultural guests' who must make the accommodating moves if they want the approval and cooperation of informants. (Mitchell 1988: 60)

So while what follows is well understood within Jewish speech communities, it is something he only found out in his role as researcher. Even as it is good awareness on his part, his is still the voice of an outsider looking in. His positionality has to be taken into account as he collects data and writes up his report.

While 'gentile' is a somewhat neutral term, 'goy' is loaded with cultural meaning stemming from the Jewish experience as a persecuted minority in the Diaspora. This is one of the first and only times this reality, everywhere known in the group's self-story, but here to be recognized in print by a non-Jew in scholarly work seems unique and different. As used by Jews, it is a pejorative term, referring to someone who is 'dull, insensitive, heartless.' As Leo Roston (1970: 142) further points out in his discussion of the term, centuries of Jewish persecution have left a legacy of bitter sayings about goyim. For example, 'dos ken nor a goy,' translated from the Yiddish, means 'That, only a goy would do.' Or exclamation of exasperation 'A goy!' is used 'when endurance is exhausted, kindness depleted, the effort to understand useless' (Roston 1970: 142). (1988: 62)

He continues with an important piece of self-awareness.

It was during the research discussed here that I first became aware of the Jewish view of a distinct Jewish-Gentile cultural dichotomy characterized by the goy as a symbol of callousness and danger; the kind of person one tries to avoid if possible. (1988: 62)

During the interviews at the beginning of the research, an informant would usually pause at some point and, eyebrows raised, diffidently ask, "You Jewish?" (p.63) The point is that unambiguous ethnic identification of me was of great importance to my informants. They needed to know if I was an "insider" or an "outsider"—did I "belong" or didn't I?...Their underlying question seemed to be, "What's he here for if he's not Jewish?" (1988: 63)

His conclusion is significant, especially for a research-practitioner.

By adapting one's behavior to that of one's informants, a sense of empathy may be generated, and the work of learning the culture gets underway (1988: 61)

This is also the case in the sub-culture of interfaith marrieds raising their children as Jews. My working in the community and my relationship with the informants should in some way sensitize me to the communication issues at stake. Indeed, many of the stories included renderings about rabbis, and other organization workers, who were not at all responsive to the intermarried's relationship. In fact, there are many stories of those representing the synagogues as being outright antagonistic to such couples. However, I try as a research-practitioner to use my knowledge to my, and their, advantage. *Rapport* is the key to oral history testimony ethnographic research. The point is further underscored by Jack Kugelmass when he writes in *Between Two Worlds: Ethnographic Essays on American Jewry* (1988: 1, 2):

This collection of original essays on the ethnography of American Jewry is intended as a reflection both on the subject of study, American Jewry, and on the object of study, anthropologists and anthropology. But because almost all the anthropologists conducting these studies are extremely intimate with their subjects, there is a dialogue here that is not always made explicit in anthropological inquiry: the dialogue between the anthropologist as outsider and the anthropologist as insider. Moreover, it is a dialogue in which the boundaries separating one from the other constantly shift, as perspectives, emotional ties, informants, and personal histories change.

The need for a self-reflexive value, particularly on the subject of American Jewish ethnography, stems in part from current recognition of the value of reflexivity in anthropological research (Ruby 1982) and in part from the special conditions of the ethnography of American Jewry, which, very much like the sociology of American Jewry, as Samuel Heilman (1981) notes, consists for the most part of research done by Jews to be read chiefly by Jews.

If this is so, then to what end do we do our work? Although it would be difficult to suggest one single answer here, it does seem rather clear that the ethnographic study of American Jewry is integrally related to the general issue of ethnic identity as an alternative to hegemonic ideologies, or as Michael Fisher argues in regard to ethnicity, "as alternatives to the melting pot rhetoric of assimilation to the bland, neutral style of the conformist 1950's" (1986: 196).

Indeed, the search for that identity is particularly acute within the postmodern world of fragmented cultural universes. In this sense, the personal quest for

authenticity and communal needs compete deep within the heart of the anthropologist with interests that are purely scientific. The common approach evident in Jewish anthropologists writing about Jewish culture speaks less to the purely methodological value that self-reflectivity has come to play in anthropological research and much more to the ethnotherapeutic value, the search for wholeness, that ethnography can bring to bear in postmodern society. (emphasis mine)

I further note the rise of the study of ethnicity and multiculturalism in American universities. Just when the “success” of American Jews is being celebrated, along with the reduction of anti-Semitism, American Jews are being told it is now good to have a specialized ethnic identity, that difference is not bad, but rather desirable, and minority group identity was something to be celebrated, not hidden. All this may have been already implicitly communicated by the non-Jewish other joined in wedlock.

“Location” of Research “Field” Site

One of the themes of modern, and some would say post-modern anthropology, is its focus on the location of the research. Whereas this was taken for granted in the past, a new awareness of the importance of location for fixing meanings or establishing the discursive frame has come to the foreground. (Gupta and Ferguson 1997) Location refers to all the markers of the space where the respondents in the research carry on their life activity. In relation to the research here, the “synagogue” becomes the place of research. Indeed, with Internet access and ease of travel in the United States, one may not need to utilize the space of the synagogue for transferring Jewish identity. However, the activity of “going to the synagogue” carries with it significant meaning for those attempting to actively identify with “Jewishness.” Many of the questions of the community-wide surveys, following sociological variable formats, inquire about the times and usage of the synagogue. In the folk parlance of the community we speak of

“two day a year Jews” referring to Jews who only visit the synagogue to celebrate Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, thus establishing the bare minimum attendance record and seemingly lukewarm interest. Again, in the folk parlance, these would not be considered “good” Jews. Still the synagogue is a place of communal focus and gathering where the symbols of Jewish culture are taught. As is well known in the tradition, the synagogue has three distinct names in Hebrew, each referring to a different aspect of its purpose—*Beit Midrash*, *Beit T’fillah*, and *Beit Keneset*—learning, prayer and community meeting. One its primary purposes is education. So it is only natural that interfaith parents would turn to the synagogue to achieve their plans for their children.

To insert the researcher’s gaze inside the synagogue is something new. In some ways it feels a violation of sacred and private space. For it is here that Jews, surrounded by other Jews and people of mutual concern and support, can be “Jewish” without concern for what the outsider has to say, without concern for critique. Still, one of the goals of action research in social work practice is not the tearing down of community, or the “colonizing” of the Other, but to help in the process of community building by giving the “client base” an opportunity to become more aware of its processes and make improvements in the attainment of its goals, whatever they may be.

“Going to the synagogue” means far more than arriving at a point in geographic space. Yet, it also means that. One of the more interesting unreported data points is the paucity of synagogues in any given metropolitan area, especially when compared with the number of churches. Individuals must learn by asking others where the synagogue in their area is. That information, though sometimes in phone books, is usually discovered in conversation with others. And who might know? Other Jewish folks will know.

Many times the name of the synagogue, usually in Hebrew, is not remembered. Rather, someone might say, “You mean the one on Packard?” A non-Jew might say, “I think there is one on Packard. I have a friend who goes there. I once went there for a *Bar Mitzvah*. Why don’t you talk with so and so?” Finding a synagogue can involve work and effort, and time. And, as it may even be geographically distant from one’s home, it may not be so easy to get there.

A lot of meaning and emotion is tied up in “going to the synagogue,” if for no other reason, one is marking oneself as Jewish, in a present active way, both internally and externally. Synagogue membership and attendance have statistically shrunk by all accounts, one of the phenomena of American Jewish life that, even when compared with other denominations in America, still needs its own analysis. This is for future work. For my purposes here, we must understand that I am going within the synagogue culture to do my research and “field work.” It is of great importance, and perhaps unique, that I am reframing the work, as said, as social work. My contact with the respondents is done within the frame of meaning for both of us. My role plays a large part in my getting to the stories within the context where they are lived. At some level, I, in my role as rabbi, am part of their story. Additionally, as the particularities of American Jewish life continue to change, certainly interfaith couples raising their children as Jews bring new meaning(s) to the synagogue not historically found, if, for no other reason, than their being there.

In “You Can’t Take the Subway to the Field!': Village Epistemologies in the Global Village,” Passaro writes,

To restate the problem, although explicit reference to primitive natives has generally disappeared from anthropological discourse, conceptions of “the field”

that constituted and defined those natives persist. The world as viewed by anthropology is still broken up into “areas” and “sites” sanctioned for study, peopled with those who might no longer be exotic but who are still coherent Peoples (Dominguez 1989) and necessary Others.

The delineation of a culture area presupposes the specific kinds of Otherness to be found there. (1997: 148)

The perpetuation of the notion of culture areas as coherent wholes is a vestige of what Rosaldo (1989) has called ‘imperialist nostalgia’; as such it cuts to the heart of a discipline built upon unequal and colonial encounters (Asad 1973: 2).

There are those who might rejoin I am using my position and authority to “colonize” the interfaith couples and that my research is an infringement on their (spiritual) religious freedom. My response is to let the stories speak for themselves, and to note that one of the most remarkable aspects of this group is that they chose to identify not under duress, but of free choice, and that at any time they could desist from the interviews as they not be used in the research. In almost all cases I was struck by how freely they shared their narratives, and the excitement they exhibited to participate in the research. Not only is the group of Jews not a coherent whole, but neither is the group of intermarrieds who wish to raise Jewish children. It is my hope the narratives as told will help us see the varieties of experience and responses, even as we may find common themes and tropes in what they say. Again, this gives us an opportunity to “look inside.”

Orlove suggests (1997) that Dominguez raises a ‘complicated dynamic’ she calls “the epistemology of the Jewish closet” (1993: 622). She borrows Sedgwick’s notion (1990). Dominguez writes:

Closet identities [Sedgwick] argues, have particular epistemologies, and ghettoizing strategies, I would add, have particular histories. Some closets and ghettos are externally imposed; others are strategic or self-imposed...Both closets and ghettos entail confinement and disability, but they also sometimes produce space of one’s own or room in which self-acknowledgement, assertiveness, and

experimentation can take place safely. Those affected may feel resigned, indignant, relieved, or fearful, but never unaware...Those in both closets and ghettos often feel a desire for choice that can feed a complicated illusion of freedom. There is, after all, rarely a let-up in the need to manage and strategize one's encounters in accordance with one's choice. To be or not to be openly gay? To be or not to be assertively Jewish? (1993: 622)

Do current conditions in the Jewish community enforce this close mentality, and at what cost? When a child of an interfaith family occupies the pulpit for her or his *Bat* or *Bar Mitzvah*, reading aloud the Hebrew prayers and voicing the words of the torah portion selected for their event, and does so in front of both Jewish and non-Jewish family members and friends (usually from school and adult acquaintances) in the Jewish public square, are they not “becoming seen” and “heard,” and thus “out of the closet?” It is perhaps this that creates so much anxiety in the community. Something “different” is happening, and everyone knows it.

My investigation into the life stories of intermarrieds through synagogue affiliation (though not entirely) takes me into a world interestingly that did not exist fifty or a hundred years ago. And yet the “location” is one that stands in the literatures as discursive object for over two thousand years and dates to antiquity. In the case of my study, the intermarrieds stand in a position of Other within the received meanings of family and descent within the community. I call their positionality “Doubly Other” as Jews have stood historically as Other to the Christian (and Islamic) world. Moreover, for Jews, the Gentile world is also taken as Other. So we have multiple levels of difference occurring simultaneously. Thus, there is much baggage we take with us to the field, many points of view that are inscribed by the narratives we live. Perhaps they can be utilized in a new way. With so many identities in the marketplace, it is certainly not the

case that any one holds sway over the others. However, the religious markings would seem to predominate in one form or another, whether “Reform,” “Conservative,” “Orthodox,” or other. There are the “I’m a Cultural Jew” or “I’m a Secular Jew” camps, but it is hard, though not impossible, to find at least at this moment schools for young families wanting purely cultural identification or affiliation.

The Synagogue as a Human Service Organization

For this work I bring together the secular and the religious by redefining the synagogue as a human service organization. I do this for many reasons, not the least of which it then provides us with a framework to understand organizational dynamics in an American cultural way. More importantly, this allows me use of all the theory that applies to such an organization. Technically, the synagogue is a not-for-profit charitable organization that must function under secular corporate laws of the state within which it is incorporated. In addition, all synagogues must obviously be run in accordance with the Internal Revenue Code rulings for religious organizations. Yeheskel Hasenfeld writes in *Human Services as Complex Organizations* (1992):

The hallmark of modern society, particularly of its advanced industrial states, is the pervasiveness of bureaucratic organizations explicitly designed to manage and promote the personal welfare of its citizens. Our entire life cycle, from birth to death, is mediated by formal organizations that define, shape, and alter our personal status and behavior.

I denote that set of organizations whose principal function is to protect, maintain, or enhance the personal well-being of individuals by defining, shaping, or altering their personal attributes as ‘human service organizations.’ These organizations are distinguished from other bureaucracies by two key characteristics. First, they work directly with and on people whose attributes they attempt to shape. People are in a sense their ‘raw material.’ Second, they are mandated—and thus justify their existence—to protect and to promote the welfare of the people they serve. (1983: 1)

One question is in what ways are not-for-profits, human service organizations like or unlike other kinds of organizations? Specifically, how do sub-population groups, ethnic, religious and otherwise, who create communal infrastructure in an effort to promote their cultural “needs,” utilize the same structures and strategies as are used in other kinds of organizations? Parents who bring their children to the synagogue are coming to engage the organization to satisfy some need, in this case the teaching of their children and the giving to their children some positive experience leading to identity creation.

As a social service organization, the purpose of the synagogue is to enhance the life of the community and the target population it serves. Fellin writes in *The Community and the Social Worker* (1995):

Direct social work practice gives attention to person-in-environment and to social change in the community and societal levels of the social environment. Most often, then, practice in direct service agencies involves practice at both the “micro” and “macro” levels of intervention. (1995: 17)

In social work terms, we may understand the large intermarried population in the United States as a “population-at-risk.” This is especially true of those who are choosing to raise their children with Jewish identities, but are unable to find acceptance in the community.

According to Hartman (1989), social workers occupy a unique position between “client and community,” as they seek to help people improve their lives and to “overcome their marginality and to become fully functional and rewarded members of their communities.” (Fellin 1995: 17)

All the time families are in contact with the agency, they are interacting with synagogue staff at one level or another. Primary among them, but not exclusively, is the rabbi. As most American synagogues are structured and run as membership organizations, where boards are invested by the membership with legal, policy and committee authority, they conflict fundamentally with traditional authority of the rabbi. As cited elsewhere,

Foucault describes this as a conflict between monarchical/judicial, and now “professional”/normalizing forms of power deployed in discursive practices. Rivkin would describe it as a shift in “structuration.” Again, I describe it as a “conflict of paradigms.” This conflict is no better exhibited than within policy and discourse about intermarriage. The people with authority in the institutions, both on staff and board levels, must also cope with the changing demographics of their client base, such as population and membership shrinkage. Thus there is often a struggle, a conflict within the organizations as to whether they should follow traditional law or move in the direction of serving the needs of their group. We see, then, conflicting values within the theory of the organizational structure itself.

This structural conflict is important for us to understand, for it is part of what defines the historical moment, and helps to determine the conditions for certain discursive objects to emerge or be subjugated. This is also the kind of problem Rivkin speaks of when describing need for mutational solutions that emerged in Jewish history. Now, as redefined, we see how in the United States, much of the Jewish “community” discourse is reproduced and distributed through human service organizations, both secular and religious. As already shown, words, in both spoken and published form, create the discursive field that defines the identity of the group. As already discussed, when people decide to “raise their children as Jews,” they most commonly turn to the synagogue for this service. Yet, if the narratives of the families are not known, their needs may not be met. The way to discover their needs is to do the kind of research exemplified in this study.

Again, there is a general way in practice that is used to achieve identity. American Jews of childbearing age choose to affiliate with congregations. For intermarried couples to come to congregations, then, follows a pattern well known to American Jews. While there may be other ways to think about being Jewish, the overarching communal choice for doing and participating in a social setting with other Jews and Jewish families is still through one of the synagogue movement's local organizations, the congregations. Their product? "Judaism" of one brand or another. As such, a researcher wanting to find out about those coming to the community would need to have access to synagogue membership, and as an anthropologist, would want to be able to relate to the members in an activist way.

Native Anthropologist as Social Work Research-Practitioner

As I do my research, then, I am also working within a particular position in the organized community. I utilize the model of "research-practitioner," meaning I am intricately involved in using both research modalities and practice techniques to arrive at outcomes beneficiary to the people with whom I work. Rothman and Thomas explain the special use of research in this context.

D & D (intervention design and development) may be conceptualized as a problem-solving process for seeking effective interventive and helping tools to deal with given human and social difficulties...In its aim to produce workable human service technology, rather than generalizable knowledge per se, (although it may achieve the latter), the methods of D&D are more akin to the field of engineering than to the traditional behavioral sciences...Instead of emphasizing the interrelationships of variables, as in conventional research, the primary focus throughout D&D is on the interventive technology to be evolved.

In this connection, a key difference is that D&D takes as its original point of departure a given real-world problem and practical goal, rather than a hypothesis to be tested or a theory to be explored.

The researcher may also carry out original research that is topic--or locality--specific to shed light on the subject, such as needs assessment...

The process of development is interlaced with the realities of practitioners and clients in close, intensive interaction with one another and researchers. It is only in the context of such real-world encounters, including practitioner and client reaction to proposed intervention designs, that meaningful helping behavior can be explicated and evaluated for eventual general use. (Rothman and Thomas 1994: 12-13)

Here I link research modalities from social work and anthropology, to the end of finding some intervention that will be to the benefit of my clients. The gathering of their stories is the first step in this process. I spend hours in discussion with couples, young and not so young, discussing their families' past and future. As such, my story, my identity and narrative as rabbi is a kind of Other to whom these couples relate as they present their story. Yet, as Allan Nevins said, "The people who you interview are going to become your teachers and you're going to know a hell of a lot, and it all depends on what questions you pursue" (Grele 1991: 54). I learn from them as they learn from me. Among other things, I advocate being open to their story. (Gluck 1991) My position is a difficult one, at times, as my role is both to sustain and transmute the institutions and norms of a religious cultural system. I represent the collective memory of the past, as I listen to personal narratives of a new part of the living community in the present.

On the one hand, some would recognize personal memory as the thread of every individual's life history, central to each person's understanding of themselves and their own sense of both history and self. On the other hand, they would perceive public history, for all its pretensions, to be no more and no less than the accepted modern version of old-fashioned, traditional, collective memory--the functional equivalent to the traditions passed down oral in non-literate societies but now transmitted in a much more complicated way, through buildings and scholarships and media and ceremonial...So you really have two aspects of memory and two aspects of history, personal and collective. (Thompson 1994: 2) (emphasis mine)

For many, the reason to interact with the "Rabbi" is that the rabbi represents the collective "memory" of the history and traditions of the Jewish people. One could conceive the interview moment as a meeting between representations of the collective and the personal. A meaningful framework for them to tell their story is established.

Thus, part of this interdisciplinary work is the inclusion of the researcher in the project also as a practitioner. Again, in social work the research--practitioner uses this connection to the client base to generate new knowledge to help solve problems. Consequently, mine is a more sympathetic approach, one based on personal involvement. I work with the community I am researching as I reframe my role of rabbi as a social worker doing Jewish empowerment work.² Whereas there may be many variables to consider, the major issue I am considering here is how to encourage interfaith parents so their children may have the possibility of growing up with the Jewish identity they have chosen. There are many ways to configure this identity. In an open and democratically structured community, one particular Jewish identity structure cannot negate another. Individuals are free to choose. My commitment is to help with the engagement of those who come to the community with this need. By listening to the narratives of parents choosing to raise their children with Jewish identities, I see an opportunity to help create something new and different in this new period. The practitioner, the organization, and the client base will be redefined. This commitment of mine informs the work here, and the work would not be happening without it. Moreover, my commitment provides the motivation to keep working in the community. The goal is finding new pathways by way of "acceptance/transformation" for community maintenance.

The Identity Society

Since Jewish identity could be considered the significant discursive object in this study, I think it appropriate at this point to give a short accounting of how I am using “identity” in my work. It appears the linguistic term gained wide spread usage after Eric Erickson began talking about the “identity crisis” he was witnessing in 60’s teenagers in America. In his work *Identity: Youth and Crisis* (1968) he writes that he first used the term in his 1963 book *Childhood and Society*. Through the discursive venue of psychology, “identity” and its importance in the development of the individual came into usage. It is instructive that Erickson quotes Freud’s personal statement about “identity” on the way to defining the term.

But plenty of other things remained over to make the attraction of Jewry and Jews irresistible—many obscure emotional forces, which were the more powerful the less they could be expressed in words, as well as a clear consciousness of inner identity, the safe privacy of a common mental construction. And beyond this there was perception that it was to my Jewish nature alone that I owed two characteristics that had become indispensable to me in the difficult course of my life. Because I was a Jew, I found myself free from many prejudices which restricted others in the use of their intellect; and as a Jew I was prepared to join the Opposition, and to do without agreement with the ‘compact majority.’ (Freud as quoted in Erickson 1968: 21)

Erickson comments this is the only time Freud used the term “identity” in a more than casual way, and, in fact, in a most central ethnic sense. (1967:23) Significantly, Erickson also adds the following:

No translation ever does justice to the distinctive choice of words in Freud’s original. “Obscure emotional forces”...and “safe privacy of a common mental construction”---not just “mental” then and certainly not “private,” but a deep communality known only to those who shared in it, and only expressible in words more mythical than conceptual. (1967: 21)

Erickson suggests why the problem of understanding what we mean by “identity” is hard to grasp, even while the phenomenon is “all-pervasive”:

for we deal with a process “located” in the core of the individual and yet also in the core of his communal culture, a process which establishes, in fact the identity of those two identities. (1967: 22)

Identity formation employs a process of simultaneous reflection and observation, a process taking place on all levels of mental functioning, by which the individual judges himself in the light of what he perceives to be the way in which others judge him in comparison to themselves and to a typology significant to them; while he judges their way of judging him in the light of how he perceives himself in comparison to them and to types that have become relevant to him. (1967: 23)

The concept of identity and identity crisis caught on so fast that by 1972 William Glaser, the founder of a therapeutic modality known as Reality Therapy, was proclaiming in his book *The Identity Society* that America had moved to being a society more focused on achieving “roles” than setting goals, and that through adopting roles we gained our identities. The onset of this change was brought about by the enormous material wealth of the United States. This signaled, in his terms, a possible end of aggressive, war-like human behavior. We were now able to seek meaning where once we were forced to worry only about subsistence.

The importance of this for the current study is in understanding that the discourse of identity formation--confusion, subjugation, and politicization--emerged at the same time as that leading up to the broadening instance of intermarriage. It helps to determine how we understand ourselves and others. This self-aware, somewhat psychologized discursive practice wherein we talk about ourselves and “who we are,” became a part of the every day. Discourses about being Jewish—Jewish identity--are part of this emerging field as they became part of personal identity narratives. It appears by this process we may have moved away from an essentialized view of group identity to a pluralistic one. A new type of politics—identity politics—also was delineated.³ In an America where

everyone has a “right” to their own identity, no monolithic identity would be permitted. In many ways, this “right” was not just applied between communities, but has been introjected into the American Jewish communal world. Part of the difficulty for American Jewish organizations is that they determined a problem for which they could have no solution as there is no way to enforce any authoritative identity from the past. No particular Jewish sub-group has an authoritative grip on any one particular sub-definition. The politics and polemics surrounding the different “types” of “Judaism” –all turned into proper names one could call oneself and thereby establish an identity--abound.

But people have chosen names to identify themselves, both individually and collectively, perhaps from the beginning of the use of language itself. A name is a key symbol when understood in Ortner’s sense of the term. (Ortner 1973) We find the discourse Jew/Jewish/Judaism is predated by many linguistic expressions, most notably *B’nai Yisrael*, *Beit Yisrael*, *Bnai Yaacov*, *Beit Yaakov* and *Am Israel*, or simply, *Yisrael*, all self-appellations derived from the macro-narrative found in *Tanach* (Bible) concerning the dependency of the patriarchs and tribes. The name “Jew” itself was not widely used, and certainly was not the most popular way of identifying the group we (both insiders *and* outsiders) now call “the Jews” until modernity. So pervasive is the use of the name now it is difficult to discuss its derivation and usage without using it in the definition itself. Thus my inclusion of the name in quotation marks to call attention to the non-obvious derivation from outsiders to the group it is purported to describe. It appears the widespread use of the term is a result of nineteenth century Christian European scholarship that needed to utilize an appellation to describe the group that

descended from the “Old Testament” and was no longer a part of the covenant with God, a covenant that was broken and then restored through Jesus, the New Testament. The logic seems to have run something like: if Christians were the “New Israel,” then what were the descendents of the broken covenant to be called? European, Christian scholars derived the name “Jew” from several texts (this is a complicated story, for which space here does not allow), most notably those concerning the area of the southern Kingdom where Jerusalem is located, an area named for the surrounding tribe Judah, and echoed again in the *Megillat Esther*. Thus the name “*Bnai Yehudah*” (referencing the tribe of Judah) was used as an etymological base and synonym for the most common Jewish self-name, “*Bnai Yisrael*,” or just “*Israel*.” Perhaps this is why originally the name “Jew” (as in Shakespeare’s Shylock as well) was considered more a pejorative expression. That being said, immigrant American “Jews” inserting the name “Hebrew” in their organizational titles exemplifies the identity confusion that resulted for modern “Jews”. Noting internally that there existed negative meanings to the word/name “Jew,” they struggled to find a more neutral nomenclature deemed to be non-problematic in mass American “Christian” society. The leaders thus chose names that incorporated the name “Hebrew,” again probably derived from the scholarship of the day that referred to the “Jews” also as “Hebrews.” We recall that the scholarship was primarily philologically based, and of course the Hebrew language was the predominant language (in all its variations) of the group under question. Such new organizations were formed in America as the Hebrew Free Loan Society, Young Men and Women’s Hebrew Association (paralleling the YMCA), Union of American Hebrew congregations, the Hebrew Union College, and the like. Their understanding, again, of the word/name “Jew” included

sentiments that were bigoted and actually “anti-Jewish.” I note that when the founders of the new “Jewish” state selected a name, they chose the name “Israel” which, for the sake of this discussion, was not an insignificant choice. In returning to the historic land of the group, the founders of the state returned as well to that people’s historically derived self-appellation. Still, the names Jew/Jewish/Judaism became the most commonly used both in the home and on the street.

I suggest the name is more than just a name. When Ortner speaks of “key symbols” she writes:

The focus in the study of meaning systems has shifted to the symbolic units which formulate meaning...in key symbols...all of them will be expressed somewhere in the public system, because the public symbol system is ultimately the only source from which the “natives” themselves discover, rediscover and transform their own culture, generation after generation. (Ortner 1973:1338)

In the cultural matrix known as “Judaism” the name “Jew” has become one of these symbols. I would argue that through identification with this name in our English-speaking American culture the entire community/population gains its identity, even as the name is derived from essentially non-Jewish discourses. In the time period of my research, “Jews,” of many types and varieties, have adopted these symbols to talk about themselves and their culture. Again, the effects of a minority adopting a majority population’s “other-calling” as their own is significant, and, if nothing else, speaks to the transitory, semiotic nature of the meaning and use of symbols. In any case, now to say “I am a Jew,” or, “I want my child to be Jewish” is at some level declaring identification with this group. Identity narratives, by definition, are the linguistic expressions by which such statements are enacted. The narratives transport the discourses to the point where

individuals are able to access them for personal use. The particular kind of use is self-identification. Ortner adds:

Summarizing symbols are those symbols which are seen as summing up, expressing, representing for the participants in an emotionally powerful and relatively undifferentiated way, what the system means to them. This category is the category of sacred symbols in the broadest sense, and includes all those items which are objects of reverence and/or catalysts of emotion, it does not encourage reflection on the logical relations between these ideas, nor on the logical consequences of themes they are played out in social actuality, over time and history. On the contrary, (they encourage) a sort of all-or-nothing allegiance to the whole package. (1973: 1340)

Thus, by taking on and identifying with the name—by using the linguistic expression “I am a thus and such”—an individual becomes a self-identified participant in the culture.

What we call a “proper name” becomes an essential, perhaps the essential, unit of significance in the maintenance of the culture as a living entity.

How this works on a psychological level is not entirely clear. For this study I accept the notion the “self” is actually constructed by the telling of the self-story. The existential psychoanalyst Schaefer describes the situation this way:

The self has become the most popular figure in modern, innovative psychoanalytic accounts of human development and action. (1992: 21)

Further more, this featured active self is the central organized and organizing constituent of the person considered as a structured psychological entity. In this aspect the self is the unity, the essence, the existential core, the gestalt, and mastermind of a person’s life. (1992: 22)

It is intrinsic to any psychological theory to present the human being as an agent or actor in certain essential ways and to some significant extent (Schafer, 1976, 1978, 1983). Even an extreme tabula rosa theory must include an account of how the person who has been written on by the surrounding world and by bodily processes becomes, in turn, an author of existence. Although the person may be a repetitive and largely preprogrammed author, he or she cannot be that entirely, for there is no one program to be applied to everything identically. (1992: 23)

An author of existence is someone who constructs experience. Experience is made or fashioned: it is not encountered, discovered, or observed, except upon secondary reflection. (1992: 23)

Thus,

It is taken for granted, it is common practice to converse on the understanding that, whether in the role of observer or observed, a person can only tell a self or encounter it as something told. (1992: 27)

When we combine this understanding of the specialized use of language to create the meaning world of individuals with Rappaport's understanding of the language used in religious "ultimate sacred postulates" and "highest order meaning" we arrive at an understanding of how the narratives of the parents in this study do the "work" of identity construction.⁴ The children live in a world in which they learn the sentence--"I am Jewish"—that it makes sense, and they learn to adopt it as a key symbol in their own self-story.

Oral History/Testimony: Pulling It All Together

This study constitutes a limited oral history project. To gather field data, I utilize the oral history techniques of interviewing, taping, transcribing, editing, analyzing, interpreting and writing up results. Most importantly I will resolve to written word what is now only in oral transmission. The discourses embedded in the oral transmission and used by the respondents to construct their social and personal life will be converted to written text. Transcription then is more than a simple physical activity. It allows those present and distant from the respondents to "hear" what they have to say. It also makes it available to the written archive discourses from the field of practice. Those maneuvering and deploying written discourses strategically in the community to achieve all sorts of ends, whether "pro" or "con" in the intermarriage debate, will now have at their disposal

additional linguistic constructs with which to work. This new source material will contribute to the discussion, and help in the construction of new understandings of the historical moment. More, the narratives will give us insight into how American Jews are adapting to the American culture. Certainly the root theme of the selection of the interviewees suggests a concern of mine for highlighting what I consider to be success stories—stories that in effect tell of emergent adaptive survival strategies for Jews living in a society where freedom is a *leit motif* of daily living.

As has been made clear in the review of the published research on Jewish interfaith marriages, quantitative survey research has been the main source of data. To some extent the findings of the NJPS and other findings of survey research are somewhat skewed by the kinds of questions that are asked and the narratives produced by those evaluating the data. The purpose of the research herein is to provide qualitative research findings. Though there is an aspect of participant/observer methodology involved, the primary methodology of oral history/oral testimony will allow the respondents to speak for themselves, and allow us to access their point of view, while bracketing our own. “Oral history research in social work is based on the conviction that intellectual learning cannot replace direct relationship and exposure.” (Martin 1995: 31) The benefits of this approach are many. Stone (1977) summarizes them as follows:

Obtaining information where little documentary evidence exists or where documentation is suspect;
Revising history where conclusions are suspect...
Collecting phenomenological data, where most appropriate to illuminate the holistic nature of the subjects biopsychosocial functioning. (Martin 1995: 8)

The respondents tell stories in many different ways. It is important for the researcher to let the storyteller direct the interview as much as possible so that the way of speaking about the event is captured in a more authentically voiced way.

It is not necessary that the story begin with the earliest years or even that chronological order and the other historic points be scrupulously maintained. The 'truth' lurks in the patterns and connections between life events as revealed in the telling of the story. Thus oral history, which formalizes the storytelling process with the interviewer-social worker intervening as midwife, can provide a bridge between the problems social workers and their clients seek to confront and the clients' own solutions. (emphasis mine) (Martin 1995: 9)

Some consider the interview itself can be an intervention in the life of a person.

The surface recurrences are articulated with formal recurrences that, on the deeper level of narrative, appear in the narrator's anecdotes. I shall refer to these formal recurrences as the 'key pattern' of the narrative structure. Aiming to dramatize the self, this pattern reproduces throughout the narrative a recognizable matrix of behavior that imposes a coherence on the speaker's life experience, the coherence of the self. This pattern most often deals with the reproduction or transgression of the hegemonic social model, i.e., (as seen in discursive formations) the dominant model that finds its way into social groups beyond the specific social model available to each group. Speakers, in fact, attempt to express—in narrative terms—their relation to social models. In their anecdotes, they picture themselves confronted with a dominant model and always actualizing the same pattern of behavior: identification, acceptance, or at least compromise, and so on, on the one hand; defiance, refusal, exclusion, and so on, on the other. (Marie-Francoise Chanfrault-Duchet, in Gluck 1991: 80)

With the theme of intermarriage, where the lines are so clearly drawn in traditional (and pseudo-traditional) Jewish laws and norming of behavior, the narrators of my research are placed, more often than not, in the situation of either accepting or rejecting the received narrative. It could only be the case. Yet, this is not a complete rejection, for the couples are arriving within the institutions looking to be part of the “community” as they are.

As of yet, though, their voices have not been heard; their story has not been told. This should come as no surprise; societal authorities have no interest in their being told. Since "narrative analysis takes as its object of investigation the story itself...the first person accounts of respondents" (Reissman 1993: 1), I chose this research methodology as a way of finding out what is "actually happening," that is, how these interfaith couples perceive what is happening.

The historical profession has not yet come to terms with the implications of this kind of material, despite the fact that it paves the way for a new social history that asks questions not about what happened, but about the historical processes of complex societies. Because at its best it posits answers in terms of a dialectical relationship between changing consciousness and social, political and economic movements, such materials deserve far more analysis and criticism than they have so far received. (Harris 1975: 3)

I want to raise the stories of these couples to an articulated level so we can hear them before we offer our analysis utilizing pre-set discursive frames of reference. The analysis should come only after we have experienced the narrative of the couples. That experience can lead in many directions, but it must first of all be our experience of what they are saying. We will experience the oral telling of the narratives as they are turned into text.

What is essential is not found in a series of historically verifiable proofs; it lies rather in the experience which the book permits us to have. And an experience is neither true nor false: it is always a fiction, something constructed, which exists only after it has been made, not before; it isn't something that is 'true,' but it has been a reality. (Foucault 1991: 36)

Our experience of these couples will be mediated by a written version of their interviews. By offering entire segments of their expression, my "investigation makes use of 'true' documents, but in such a way as to furnish not just the evidence of truth but also an experience that might permit an alteration, a transformation, of the relationship we have

with ourselves and our cultural universe: in a word, with our knowledge (*savoir*).

(Foucault 1991: 37) Foucault goes on to ask what the consequences are of this approach. As in narrative reproduction and analysis, he sees no "theoretical background that is continuous and systematic." Also, as a good anthropologist might say, he writes and incorporates in his writing his "direct personal experience." Foucault hopes the experience of the book may "clear the way for a transformation, a metamorphosis which isn't simply individual but which has a character accessible to others: that is, this experience must be linkable, to a certain extent, to a collective practice and to a way of thinking" (Foucault 1991: 39). It is, ultimately, this "transformation" which I hope to effect. The stories of Jewish intermarriage reveal changes occurring in modern society that cut across cultural boundaries established since antiquity. There are other couples making other border crossings of a similar kind. However, these couples, in their choosing to raise their children as Jews, represent, perhaps, a unique transformative moment in the past two thousand years in "Western" history.

My interest in the subject, therefore, is more than one of intellectual curiosity. It is trying to understand so that "the Other may reciprocate by bringing out the best in us." (Daniel 1996: 5) Clearly, I am an advocate of these couples and families. I am attempting to get at one of the potential survival techniques a minority population may employ to maintain its numbers in an ever increasing multi-cultural culture, where "border crossings" are common, brought on by the very nature of economic and social patterning, and influenced by media and public educational systems.

As we read the narratives produced by these intermarried individuals and couples, we are reminded, "family stories may emerge in bits and pieces or in lengthy

genealogies” (Langellier 1993: 49). You will notice that the stories are arranged in various chronological patterns, usually starting when the couple met, but many times going back into the childhood of the speaker. Though there are special occasions recounted, "family monuments" (Langellier 1993: 59) cast in narrative form, such as the time they were married, a child was born, or the beginning of school. There are long stretches of discursive reflection on the meaning of family and of religion, in particular, in their lives. Indeed, "family stories can also delegitimize or contest dominant meaning systems” (Langellier 1993: 59), which we see in these stories in both the way the non-Jewish spouse commonly pulls away from their Christian roots, as well as when the Jewish spouse works to define in a new way what his/her Jewish family looks like. We get the feeling for how the couples weave their family narrative from the strands of stories that construct each of their independent pasts. Again, though most commonly the couples said they do not talk about this issue a lot, we can conclude from the depth of the responses that

the family-as-lived, replete with its multiple and contradictory meanings, is organized and maintained daily and over generations through a variety of discursive practices by which we 'do family.' Doing family embraces practices that present the family as legitimate and interpretable. (Langellier 1993: 56)

I felt many times the narration was more than a recapitulation. Perhaps, for interfaith families, the story they tell is more intentionally used to construct their reality since it is a story with no analogies in the broader narrative of their cultural context. The stories represent ways in which these couples "do" their families, and if "the family's first concern is itself and its own survival" (Langellier 1993: 57) than those interested in

Jewish survival should take special interest in how these families are "doing" their families in regard to the raising of their children as Jews.

Finally, the oral telling of these couples' stories includes many statements about the identity of the individuals involved. They constantly refer to themselves, their native families, their opinions on religion and the family. They begin their telling most often with the pronoun "I". Throughout they represent the nuances of change occurring in their identity. Still,

"...the construction of 'I' remains central and always open to question...it reminds us of the open and potential character of identity. That one's self is both variable and vulnerable may be disconcerting to consider, but it does not follow that selves are non-existent. We really have consciousness, we are really agents, till death, of past-into-future. For it is a banal but terrifying conclusion that knowledge and social life itself have to be passed on if they are to survive. If humans annihilate what's present, they annihilate what's past as well, and so prevent a future.
(Tonkin 1992: 136)

The "I-ness" of these stories might represent not the demise of the American Jewish community, but an aspect of its survival.

The Interviews

I chose to interview the couples together, as much as possible, for as Langellier and Peterson write:

the family involved in storytelling exemplifies the process and structure of interpersonal and small-group communication, the information exchange and network of organizational communication, the generation and evolution of intercultural communication, the creativity and force of poetic and rhetorical communication, and so on. (Langellier 1993: 50)

We are also aware that

A joint narrative allows researchers to see how the couple's orientation toward the relationship is expressed in the presence of each other, and in the presence of a third person. (Veroff 1993: 443)

Still, the following is also the case.

While this joint production is likely to tap more of the shared meaning the couple has about their life than what we would learn from separate stories told by each individual, we should recognize that all of the joint account rendered by the couple may not be deeply shared meaning. Some of 'shared meaning' in the joint narrative is not necessarily meaning that each carries around on his/her own, but may result from public deference of one partner to the other. (Veroff 1993: 443)

The only practical way to get the information about how they performed their stories for one another was to have them present to one another as they told their stories. Of course this could not always be the case. Yet, in both the situations where the partners were interviewed separately or together, there was constant reference to the other, what they thought on a given subject, and what they probably would say. It is clear from my interviews that "story telling is a primary way that families are produced, maintained, and perhaps transformed" (Langellier 1993: 50), as I listened to them tell and even retell, instruct and correct one another throughout the interviews.

The Interviewees by the Numbers

I interviewed fourteen sets of partners. One mom was interviewed without her divorced husband. Two of the sets of partners were divorced, and at the time of the interviews would be considered single. In both these cases the men were Jewish. Of the total group, eight men were Jewish, and seven women were Jewish. All in all, five of the couples had divorced at one point or another, and two were remarried. One of the Jewish women and one of the non-Jewish men were remarried. All maintained their commitment to raise the children with Jewish identities, even if divorced and even with remarriage. All ranged in age from thirty-three to fifty-five. All the men worked. Two of seven

women were “stay at home moms.” All were college educated. Nine men had more than an undergraduate degree, either professional or academic, compared with the same number of the women. After the children were *Bar Mitzvah*, one of the non-Jewish women formally converted; two men and one woman informally did so, as recorded in the interviews. All the non-Jews were raised in a Christian faith, either Protestant or Catholic. Thirteen of the partner-couple pairs had two children, while the rest had one child. Nearly half were born out of the area and moved to Michigan mainly for employment purposes. None are living in the exact community of their birth. All of the respondents are American born. I did not ask about income. However, the general statistics for the community around the congregation are shown below.

According to the U.S. Census “2006-2008 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates,” (Retrieved from: <http://factfinder.census.gov>) over 90,000 residents live in Canton, Michigan. The vast majority (74%) are considered racially white by the Census. There are over 34,000 households in the area. The median value of a house is \$235,000. Of all households, 30% of the children are under the age of 19. Households with married couples living together account for 60% of all households. The median age was 36 years. The median income for a household in the township was \$82,513. Thus, Canton is by any measure a middle class white suburban community, populated by mainly young families.

Actual Location

The interviews were done mainly with congregants from a synagogue located in Canton, Michigan. Canton is a Charter Township in western Wayne County, roughly a forty-minute drive to downtown Detroit, just west of Interstate 275, a major north/south

highway in the region. It is also but a twenty-five minute drive from Ann Arbor. As I approach the area from the west, I drive through housing developments and farmland. The congregation rents space from the Cherry Hill United Methodist Church, a small community church founded in 1834. A private cemetery sits adjacent to the church property. A developer bought the farmland near the church building and initiated a community project called Cherry Hill Village. Jewish families, by word of mouth and advertisements in the Detroit Jewish News and the Observer/Eccentric newspaper, find the congregation from Canton and neighboring communities of Plymouth and Livonia.

Interview Questions

In the interviews of couples that tell the story of how they came to raise their children as Jews, I follow the narrative as they speak it and I attempt to encourage them to tell the story as they know it within their family. I am attempting to elicit the story as they are accustomed to narrating it. As all communication is co-created, it is never possible to ascertain if this is a different telling, or if in some way my identity provides them with the possibility of telling it in a different way, than they have told it before. Perhaps all narrative accounts of past events are interpretive. Before meeting with the respondents I emailed or handed to them in printed form the following:

You decided to raise your children with Jewish identities, as "Jews." In the past thirty or so years in the United States a very high percentage of Jews are marrying non-Jews. A part of the group of those intermarrying, such as yourselves, decided to raise their children with Jewish identities. I am interested in the story surrounding your decision to do so. You should realize that no judgment is implied in this research. Rather, I am interested in how you and your partner see things, the way you narrate, that is, tell yourself, one another, and others about this subject in your life story. It is your story to tell; I am interested in how you tell it in your own way and in your own words."

If you need, I have some general questions to get us started, but you in no way need to stay with the questions or feel bound by them. Please feel free to add anything you would like to make your reporting as accurate as you can.

What follows is a list of types of possible "helper" questions. Some of them, all of them or none may be used as is deemed necessary to help the interview process. Other questions most commonly arise during the interviews, as each story constitutes a narrative with highly specific information that often does not appear in alternative interviews:

When did you meet your spouse?

How old were you when you were married?

When were you married? (If applicable, when separated? divorced? remarried?)

Where did you meet?

When did you move to this area?

What brought you here?

What is your level of education?

What kind of work, profession, employment?

How would you describe your ethnic and religious backgrounds?

Before you met, did you think about how you wanted to raise your children if you were to have any?

Was there any influence from people in your families?

Did you discuss the raising of the children while you were dating?

Can you relate what that discussion was like?

Did either spouse as to a decision concerning this question before or after you were married make any commitments?

If yes, can you describe this commitment? When did it occur?

How did it play out in your opinion, that is, did it change or was it altered in some way over time?

How did the marriage ceremony go? How was it organized? Who officiated?

After the child(ren) were born, did you carry on any further discussions on this question?

Did you have any naming ceremonies for your child(ren)?

Have you joined any faith communities as an adult?

Have you been happy with the decision?

Chapter 4

Group I: “Meeting in Multi-Cultural America”

Preface to Chapters Four, Five, Six and Seven

We turn now to the interviews. My research is focused on the positives, notwithstanding there exist, as in most relationships, conflict, disagreement and problems. However, in my field experience as a rabbi in American synagogues, I have grown to know many families whose goal is to identify with the Jewish community in constructive and beneficial ways.

All the interviews carried out for this project are with people who chose to link their lives to Jewish culture and society. I have selected seven themes found in the oral histories I collected that tell us, in the words of the respondents, how it is they came to choose Judaism for their children.

As I also have discussed earlier in this dissertation, the voice of those who are choosing in a multi-cultural America to raise their children with a minority identity are looked upon with suspicion by insiders (Jews), and many times condemned by outsiders (non-Jews) for being, among other things, no longer “saved.” Social work community research aims to enhance the effectiveness of community programs that are to help alleviate problems affecting the community. Looking at the narratives of couples who are choosing Judaism fits this model of applied qualitative social analysis. It also joins with a kind of ethnographic reporting considered in the new anthropology.

When listening to the recordings, and now reading the transcripts, I am not concerned with finding one “correct” way or set of standard phrasings. Rather, I try to distill some of the key ways the interviewees expressed certain layered discourses within their narratives. I found three categories that reappear in most of the narratives as themes leading to a positive affirmation of Jewish identity for the children. While many of the narratives combine or flow one theme into the next, it still seems possible to distinguish these repeating trope that refer us to significant discourses. Sometimes we hear the exact same words or phrases used; at other times, similar phrases from the same discursive fields are called upon.

The first group of testimonials (chapter four) tells about where and how the parents met. As Jews have entered general society and participate in many aspects of an open cultural landscape, the opportunities to meet others of a non-Jewish background proliferate. In the open American society, especially where Jews have shed their external cultural trappings, and moved to suburban neighborhoods, participated in large public high schools, attended large public and private universities, the opportunity to meet non-Jews of marriageable age exploded exponentially. “Emancipation” was successful. With the ghetto reality shed, and engaged in an American milieu where many ethnic and religious groups co-mingle, Jewish singles find others, and are found by others, of many backgrounds as desirable mates. The choice of partner, once given support by the locale of the host community, has broadened as literally the scope and locale of the adopted life-ways has broadened. This is played out, as well, as the new couples find places to live.

The second group of testimonials (chapter five) is based on another recurring theme--a real concern by the Jewish partners that their child or children somehow gain a

“Jewish identity” and stay connected to “Judaism.” I put these in quotes for they mean so many different things in the discursive field. Yet, they are used as some kind of symbolic catchall for those involved. Individual respondents seem to know what the words mean even if not from a scholarly perspective. The words are broadly enough construed that meanings may at times even be contradictory. This strong attachment to some sort of personal identity is perhaps at the core of what we are looking at. In the end, it may be, indeed, an emotional response to a very complex historical story.

The third group of testimonials (chapter six) are concerned with the need for finding an accepting community—in this case, a synagogue—that is responsive to the needs of the families. Couples and single parents cannot achieve the goal of providing a Jewish identity to their children in isolation from some kind of Jewish organizational community. Simply stated, an affirming community aids in the raising of the children and produces the outcomes mutually sought. Interfaith parents raising their children with Jewish identities seek out, just as others do in the American religious landscape, a place where they can feel comfortable being who they are. They sort information, test the waters, and make the decision to affiliate based on their lived experience as they interact with Jewish organizations.

In chapter seven I present other major themes that recurred in the interviews. Two -- “desire for a unified household,” and “good values and ethics” – were found in many of the narratives. I also include a few surprises. I named them “surprises” because the respondents added them to their reports generally near the end of the interviews as if they were something extra. There are many contentious issues in the discourse on intermarriage expressed with intense emotion. These “surprises” were also expressed as

heart felt concerns. They struck me as needing to be heard as the respondents chose to share them within the context of the interviews. This is the point of such research: to uncover the unexpressed.

Introduction

It goes without saying that American Jews have become part of the mainstream America. What is not as clear is the impact on Jewish communal life the breakdown of the cultural shtetl walls is having. On the level of local individual life it means Jewish Americans are meeting non-Jews in every aspect of culturally normative living. One of the consequences of living in an “open society” is the possibility of meeting people of different races, ethnicities, and religions at any given time. The stories of these couples include narratives of “the time that we met.” They are varied and point to the lifestyle of college bound Americans living primarily in urban/suburban environments. In the narratives that follow, we will hear in their own words how the couples that are raising their children with Jewish identities met. The oral history of this significant life moment seems to be told and retold, fashioned and refashioned, as a co-created tale. I note that while doing this research, couples spent an inordinate amount of time telling these stories. I can only presume they have much invested in them. They met in some aspect what we could call the normal life way of middle class white American life. They no longer live in a shtetl village. They are male and female; they come from differing Jewish backgrounds, have different educational levels and are of different economic means. Indeed, they are part of urban, suburban and trans-urban America.

#1. Michelle

Michelle grew up in the Chicago area. She, like many of my respondents, met her future spouse in college. The Jewish minority in America attends college at a very high rate. The mixing with other groups there is part of the multi-cultural experience of the American campus.

Michelle: I met Ed on a blind date set up by a friend of ours. I was nineteen and Ed was twenty. So we dated for a while and we went to two different colleges. We did that long distance thing. We decided to get married when I graduated college. He still had a year to go to finish. I grew up in—in the suburbs. It was in Illinois close to Parkridge Glenview area.

Int: This is where you and Ed were living?

Michelle: Well we lived in the suburb—south suburb—actually right outside of Cook County. Maybe about a half an hour from Indiana in the southern part of Illinois—southeastern part there.

Int: By the way, you went to school—you met when you were 19 or 20?

Michelle: Yeah we met through a friend. I worked with a friend of his and so the friend was dating somebody—a friend—that I knew through school and the friend said hey let's double date, I have somebody that you might want to meet. And I said okay.

Int: Were they Jewish—these friends?

Michelle: No.

Int: So and you met them through work? Your...

Michelle: Through like my part time work. When I was home—like through high school and when I was home from college I worked at a self-serve gas station as a cashier. And so this guy worked at another station that was owned by the same person. So we would call and talk to each other, he'd come over and get supplies, I'd go over and get supplies. So that's how this friend and I just met. We were just friends. For whatever reason he said let's double date and you know okay whatever that's fine. So that's when I met Ed. He lived close to me—his parents lived about 15 minutes from my mom. So we lived close. He went to Southern Illinois University and I went to Western Illinois University. So we met in May and right before the summer. So we were you know were together during the summer and then we went off to school. And he eventually wound up transferring

for his last year. He transferred to the school that I was at. I stayed in the town and worked while he finished up his last year of school and then we moved back to the Chicago suburbs.

Int: Did he transfer because of you?

Michelle: Probably. We had talked about it.

Int: So it was serious at that point?

Michelle: Yeah. His car kept breaking down and it was 6 hours for him to drive from Southern Illinois to my school and he just got tired of that.

#2. Deborah and Louis

Here are stories of college meetings. Graduate school meetings were popular as well, as such a large number of American Jews receive post-graduate and professional education. The stories can be long, or told with just a few words

We met in Ann Arbor at U of M. during our sophomore year. We were both students. I had been rooming with a couple of girls and one of them had to leave in the middle of the year. So she found roommate for me. This roommate was a friend of Louis'. We all became very good friends and within a year it led to a little bit more than just friendship

#3 Ben and Cindy

Cindy: We met at that agency, then kept in touch during grad school. Neither one of us was practicing religion when we met. When we decided to have children after we were married I had no problem in deciding to raise the children Jewish.

#4 Paula and Charlie

Paula: We met at Yale in an organizational behavior class

Charlie: That was 11 years ago

Paula: If I'm 43. That made me...

Charlie: 32

Paula: 32? I was so young, so young

Charlie: You were a kid!

Paula: Keep warming us up

*Int: When you met you were both in graduate school
(they speak at the same time): Yup!*

Paula: He went into graduate school to get his master's degree. When he finished his master's degree he was done.

Charlie: Correct

Paula: And I was there to get my Ph.D. Our classes would often overlap. Ph.D.s would often take classes with the master's students.

Charlie: We let them take classes with us!

#5. Staci and Mike

I note in this next narrative the detail involved in telling the story. The two helped each other through the entire recounting. They are Michigan natives and met in the most public of places—a health club.

Int: Where did you meet?

Mike: We met in February '94 at Bally's, which is a health club. I walked up the steps and I was working out you know when I walked up the steps to do a lap around the walkway, this girl smiled at me with a really nice smile. It happened to be Staci. So I walked around the track and I was going to go on the elliptical or the treadmill or whatever it was—the stair master—so I happened to go to the one that was right next to her cause I knew she had smiled at me, or at least it appeared that she had,

Staci: I had! (laughs)

Mike: So I walked on the stair master next to hers, she took her headphones off and Walkman off, and dropped it!

Staci: I thought, "How is this guy ever going to talk to me if I am sitting here listening to this music. So I tried to take them off subtly and of course I am very clumsy so I drop them all over (laughs) the place."

Mike: Luckily I was there to pick up her Walkman and said, "It will be OK, it's a Sony." (laughs)

Int: How old were you at the time?

Mike: I was 23 and you were 21.

Staci: Yeah.

Mike: So we started talking and I was I knew about Walkmans because I worked at Highland Appliance and I knew about stereos and appliances, and TV's and

everything there. So I was basically an expert. It turned out we went to Eastern Michigan. Both of us went to the same school. And she knew some of the people I went to High School with. Cause I grew up in Redford. She grew up in Farmington Hills.

Int: You were seniors?

Mike: Well she graduated that year.

Staci: Yeah.

Mike: You graduated in April right after we met, and I graduated in December. So we met at Bally's and we ended up talking and we had quite a few things in common and knew some of the same people. So I asked her if she wanted to go out to Wendy's afterwards

Staci: High class!

Mike: We had worked out, showered and I said "I am going to head over to Wendy's would you like to go (she: nothing but the best) I told her I'd drive her to her car. She thought that would be nice. So I drove her to her car. She couldn't find her car, and she started to say "Oh my god, my car's been stolen..."

Staci: I was so nervous that I couldn't find my car. I thought it was stolen.

Mike: But luckily it hadn't. We found it. And then we got to Wendy's and we were eating and talking and stuff and she just started choking horribly on her chicken and I'm like "Do I need to do the Heimlich maneuver?" (she's laughing) She managed to stop coughing and was OK. And so I asked her out. I took her number and told her I would call her. She left and proceeded to get into a car accident on the way home.

Staci: It was a weird night. (laughing)

Mike: She told a bunch of people how she'd met me--a pretty interesting meeting story. Her brother-in-law told her that she was going to marry me. Just that night, knowing that story. It was such a unique story. Anyway I called her the very next day. And asked her out. It was a Sunday. I called her and asked her out for Tuesday. And, ah, it went well. We dated for two months. And her graduation was coming. She had to decide if she was going to invite me or not because we had only been going out for two months and she only had four tickets for the graduation. And I didn't tell her at the time but I was planning to go anyway even if she didn't invite me just because I wanted to be there just in case we ended up getting married. I didn't want to miss, you know, that part. She did end up inviting me, and I ended up inviting her to mine.

Staci: I thought that was very sweet because at the time I was not big on inviting, Because I thought if this is just some fly by night guy I really don't want him at my college graduation I had worked so hard. It was really an important moment. For somebody to be there who is like not really invested. So I wasn't going to invite him. It was my sister who talked me into it. She said, "He's a really good guy. He seems to really like you. I think you should really invite him." And so I did. But it is sweet to know that even if I didn't that he was going to go on his own to see me graduate from college.

Mike: I already talked to other people about it. Had other tickets lined up. Stuff like that.

Staci: Right, right it was meant to be, coincidental in the positive way.

Mike: We dated for two years. And it got pretty serious obviously. She invited me to Atlanta for her cousin's graduation that summer. That was really cool cause I hadn't really gone on vacation with many girl friends, and for her to ask me to go after three months was pretty cool, and so we had fun on that vacation, and that got us...

Staci: We have a love of travel.

Mike: And that's when it started, in the month of June of 1994 was our first trip like that. Ever since then we really have enjoyed traveling.

Staci: Yeah, yeah. Mike has a company car, he travels a lot for work, he gets free gas...we like to expose the boys...

Mike: They like to travel as much as we do...

Staci: We spent five years before we had kids, so we really traveled quite a bit. Those were a nice five years.

Mike: We went to Europe, a bunch of countries in Europe, two week tour there, a lot of islands in the Caribbean...been to Alaska...we took an Alaskan cruise as our honeymoon...and we went on a cruise for my 30th birthday...Caribbean.

Int: How old are you guys now?

Staci: 37 and 39

Mike: I turn 40 this year...

Staci: Traveling like that has died down since those two little fellows

Mike: For our tenth anniversary we went to San Francisco (she yeah)

My mom watched the boys...we went to Las Vegas for one of my work trips, and the Bahamas for a work trip and Chicago for a work trip...

#6. Glenn and Karen

Glenn and Karen are divorced now. Karen is not Jewish. They were, at the time, two single professionals invited to a friend's Super Bowl party. Their economic and educational levels brought them together in a shared social engagement.

Glenn: Karen and I met at a Super Bowl party, when it was in Detroit. I remember Cincinnati was playing and they lost. Anyway we met at a party and one of Karen's friends tried to fix us up.

Int: I think it was San Francisco Forty-Inners, wasn't it?

Glenn: I think you're right. Anyway, we were both getting along in our careers. Times were good then, and we seemed to get along well. She was an accountant, the comptroller of a chemical company. I was already an attorney. She must have been 34, 35, somewhere in there, and I was probably 32, 33. She works in accounting for a law firm. She was involved in finance. I tell David this all the time, she's good at what she does. Professionally, she does a good job.

#7. Marc and Denise

Much of the literature published in the Jewish community concerning intermarriage talks about "Jewish dating." Essentially it asks, in order to promote Jewish "in-marriage," how Jewish organizations can start by promoting Jewish dating. This might be difficult to do for post-college, post-first marriage individuals. In this matter of fact recounting of how Marc and Denise met, Marc tells us a lot about his life as a single man.

Marc: We met in the summer of 1981. I went to a jazz concert at a hotel in Detroit. I was living in Farmington Hills at the time. A friend of mine suggested we go to one of these concerts. They had them once a week on Thursday night, or something like that. That's where I met Denise. She was there with two or three of her girl friends and we started talking. I think my friend made the overtures to these young ladies. And we started talking to them. I do recall that at one point,

Denise said that she was rather chilly. I think I was wearing a suit coat and tie. I took my suit jacket off and offered it to her. And she was very appreciative of that. I believe I learned that she was not Jewish that evening. I think. I hadn't dated many women in general and I don't think I dated a non-Jewish person at that point. But I did ask her if she would be interested in going out on a date and I believe, I believe I got her phone number that evening. Denise, is that right?

Denise: Yeah.

Marc: And I called her up subsequently. She was living in Grosse Pointe Farms (Denise: "Woods") And we started dating.

Int: Is there a reason why you didn't date non-Jewish girls?

Marc: I didn't date much period. I was a fairly shy person. I didn't really start dating until I graduated college. I had a few dates in college I may have had one or two dates in high school. The first woman I seriously dated I knew in high school. ...We got married after college, and then divorced in 1980...Prior to my first marriage I didn't date any Jewish girls...And I only dated one woman after my divorce before meeting Denise.

#8. Robin and AJ

The following includes many trope of interest. Robin was born and raised in a Jewish family. Her degree and employment position are quite unique. Robin and AJ met on the job, and, following the economic trend of the day, moved where the jobs were. Actually, in this case, AJ, born and raised Catholic, moved across country to Michigan to stay with his Jewish girl friend. You will note in other narratives included herein that they joined and have been loyal members of the synagogue for over ten years, have both their girls enrolled in the religious school. Robin sings as a soloist for worship services and at holiday celebrations.

Robin: So we're both working there.

Int: What aircraft?

Robin: Pratt and Whitney. Jet engines. Yeah, before we moved here to Michigan we were working for Pratt and Whitney. It was engineer's week, and I had

volunteered to be one of the ushers at an offsite gathering they were having. It had presentations and stuff. So, we took the busses out to the airplane hangar, and it was cold out because it was winter. I had on my flight jacket that had patches from the programs I was working flight tests on, and I guess he saw me there.

AJ: I was there with a man, and I said, "Hey Frank, look at that girl, that's a pretty cool jacket. Where did she get all those patches?" And he was like, "Want to meet her?" I responded, "What? Okay, I don't care."

Robin: His friend worked with my girl friend.

AJ: So my friend tried to set us up on a date, and convinced us, so it was sort of etched in stone.

Int: So, how did you get to be working there?

Robin: I got a Bachelor's in Aerospace Engineering, and I had the time from Boston University, and I went to work for Pratt and Whitney, working in their engine testing department. Eventually I was working power plant performance and flight tests. So not only was I testing airplanes in house, but I was also going through all the aircraft certification programs to monitor the engines during tests.

AJ: While we were dating she was out at Air Force security base with security cars, working on the C-17.

Int: So you had your BA in Aerospace Engineering from which university?

Robin: Boston University. While there I was working at Pratt and Whitney, and I got my Masters in Mechanical Engineering from a Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. They have a branch in East Hartford.

Int: So your degree was in...?

AJ: My degree was actually in Heat Power Air Conditioning with solar option, and my Associate degree in Heating and Air Conditioning. I probably was leading into a drafting career, spent about ten years doing combustion engineering in Windsor, Connecticut on the fossil side doing electrical drawings via CAD for power plants. It turned into a less than stellar situation, so I exited and went to go to work for Pratt and Whitney after they had secured a major contract. So I went from a drafting electrical to a drafting mechanical, and I got a job drafting engine carts on the PW-4000, which was the engine on the 767 and 747. I actually went to go work in the externals area, so I was drilling the parts that sit on the outside of the engine. On the 4000 program I did some work on the 777. I was doing CAD cam solid modeling, which was really cutting edge stuff. We were probably the number one CAD company in the world at the time. They

were doing stuff that was so far out there. We were literally drawing parts that used to take two weeks on a drafting board, and we would bring it down to 2 to 4 hours. They would send the part out to a laser cutter robot, and they were cutting it and welding it. This was 1993-1994.

Int: So, you're both at Pratt and Whitney, and you come out in a flack jacket?

Robin: I was wearing my flight jacket.

Int: Your flight jacket, okay.

Robin: Well, during this time it was engineer's week, so they had us all at the flight hangar, and they had some speakers.

AJ: The thing about it was, at the time Pratt and Whitney had their own airfield. They don't have it anymore, they turned it into a stadium for college football or something. But in the hangars, where we had this engineering day,

Robin: They were honoring the engineers. They had guest speakers, they gave out some awards and stuff. That's the first and only time they did that too. I was there just working as an usher, he commented to his friend, his friend worked with my friend Esther, so he talked to Esther, and Esther talked to me and said, "Would you like to go out with this guy who saw you and is interested in meeting you?" and I said, "Okay." You were on the second floor and I was up on the third floor. It's not like we were very far apart from each other. We met and started dating. Like he said, I was working flight tests so I was back and forth between Connecticut and Edward's Air Force Base.

Int: Edward's air force base is in...

Robin: California. Southern California.

Int: So, is that where they land the space shuttles?

Robin: Yeah, on occasion. So, I was back and forth between the two places, but we started dating and we were at Pratt and Whitney when they started doing all the layoffs. They were downsizing a lot in the aerospace industry, so it was almost a competition between Pratt and Whitney and GE, as to who was going to lay off more employees. That's what it felt like at least, because every few months there was another layoff. About the time my program finished and wrapped up, I wasn't getting assigned to anything so I knew I was going to be involved in the next layoff. I did, and at that time I started looking around for a job. Ford Motor Company did some heavy recruiting in that area because they were looking for experienced engineers, with ten years of experience. I interviewed at Ford out in Connecticut, because they actually sent people out there for interviews. Then I

eventually got invited to Dearborn, and I decided to take the job. At the time I took the job, he was trying to decide whether or not to come with me.

AJ: It was as little as a few months earlier when she got laid off, there was a big story on the cover of Newsweek. It was about the Big Three Comeback, and I said, "Sweetie, it looks like aerospace is dying, we should set our sights here." About a few weeks later, this huge ad in the papers says this, and I realize that she has nothing to lose. 800 people apply, and only 150 get hired.

Int: You were just dating at the time?

Robin: We were just dating.

AJ: I had the opportunity. My boss walked by one day and he said, "You look kind of pissed off, what's the matter?" and I said, "My girlfriend just got a job at Ford, is it too late to take a layoff package?" and he said, "No, come here."

Robin: I got a letter from Ford, and that same week, they were getting ready to issue a round of layoffs.

AJ: So I was in on the bubble, taking a separation package in order to follow her out here. It took a lot of moxy to do this.

Robin: It was tough for both of us to have to pick up and move. It was at that point that he actually decided to quit his job and move out with me. I was thinking that at some point, he would be serious and start thinking about asking me to marry him. So we kind of made it seem like we were engaged, even though we weren't at the time, because that would have actually paid for him to move out here with me. He waited until Christmas to finally propose to me. He waited to go back out east and propose to me at his folks' place.

#9. Roberta and Craig

Roberta has been, since joining, one of the "pillars" of the congregation. She has an engineering degree and met her future husband while working at Ford Motor Co.

Craig was born and raised in a Lutheran family in Wisconsin.

Roberta: One of the first things you want to know is how we met? How we got together?

Craig: Well, we met through a mutual friend. We both were working at Ford Motor Company. The friend was a transmission mechanic at the transmission plant. And I was playing tennis with him before, and they said hey we know this

woman engineer that plays tennis, and would you like to play mixed doubles and that's basically how we started getting together, and we started playing more often and we started going out and that's basically the whole thing. We had mutual things that we liked to do. It was 1978.

Roberta: I think we dated for two years.

Craig: For two years, because remember we had this '78 Buick that we went to New York with.

Roberta: In Wayne, Michigan. I knew this friend Norm who said the same thing to me. "Oh I'm playing tennis with this guy, and I thought it would be fun to play doubles – would you like to play?" So we both liked tennis as it turns out. It wasn't anything to do with that we both worked for Ford, it just happened that he knew me through work, this man, and he knew Craig through playing tennis on the courts and I remember afterward talking to him and his wife who were obviously good friends, who were an older couple, they could be our parents actually. They said yeah we talked together and they said "Wouldn't they make a nice couple together?" And not that I was interested in Craig at first, I thought he was kind of boring, because he didn't talk much. But that's not what this story's about.

Int: You were talking about the older couple... Then you dated for a while?

Roberta: So we dated.

Craig: It was almost two years of dating. We started playing tennis in summer of '78.

Roberta: I didn't think so, well maybe it was that, but we decided. I had always wanted a May wedding but it was too close to May when we decided we'd get married. So that's why we decided on a fall wedding in October. But at any rate, we got married in October 1980, and this is our 30th anniversary this year. We bought a home in Livonia and it was 5 years before we had kids. But we were talking earlier about, did we talk about kids before we had decided to get married?

#10. Mark and Judy

Mark and Judy are veterinarians. Again, it is important to note Judy's Jewish background, her educational and professional level, and the fact she moved from her hometown for employment possibilities. That is how she met her future husband.

Mark: My background was very much a Norwegian heritage - I was baptized Lutheran, born to Lutheran parents, born in Milwaukee, but at a very young age moved here to Detroit. Pop was with General Motors and lived in Bloomfield Twp, Maple & Lahser. I attended Sunday school regularly at the Presbyterian Sunday school. My parents were not specific at all – we had friends who went there, it was convenient. So I grew up in the Presbyterian environment. I attended Boy Scouts sponsored by the Methodist church next door, so I kind of switched around there, but grew up in Birmingham schools, and very much grew up with my closest friends being Jewish kids. We lived in a neighborhood that at one time was actually, I'm not sure of the specific term for it, but deeds to the land that Jews couldn't live there, couldn't buy the land there which even as a kid just struck me as wrong. But there was a two-block area just down a little ways that wasn't like that and we kind of friendly referred to it as Hanukah Hill. That's where my Jewish friends lived, and that's where I spent my childhood. That was just, I don't know why, the kids who I really liked being with. We did stuff in school together and so on. I grew up going to a lot of Bar Mitzvahs, you did that, they were your friends, you got invited. So that was kind of my exposure. I was say by even Junior High going to church became pretty optional. My mother had MS, and it was get tougher for her, especially in the mornings, to be able to manage well. So that kind of fell by the wayside, and religion-wise in my family it's been very casual. It's not been an intense thing at all.

Int: Light.

Mark: Light, Lutheran light, that's what it was.

Int: If there is anything you want to add at any time, please do. I want to understand it the way you see it.

Mark: I was routinely dating Jewish girls, and it just seemed the norm. There was nothing to me unusual about it, or to most people

Judy: I got recruited out here, Mark & I are both veterinarians, and I went to school at Colorado State University, did some post-doctorate training in California, and Mark is a Michigan State grad, and I helped start an emergency clinic in Denver and was interested in pursuing a residency in internal medicine. I had applied at the University of Minnesota for a residency there, got accepted, and their program lost its funding. So all of a sudden I was a resident without a residency program, unless I wanted to go for free. So I got a call from Michigan, from a gentleman – also Jewish, by the way – who had started one of the first veterinary corporations in America. He had a group of 14 hospitals at the time, and he was looking for someone to help direct his emergency program, and act as an emergency doctor in one of his hospitals, with goals of having the highest class of emergency centers in his emergency centers. So he flew me out here, wined and dined me. I interviewed with every one of his chiefs of staffs of all his hospitals, his purchasing agent, his partner, his human resource manager, and then I was

assigned a doctor to do a working interview with. I was to spend the whole day at that clinic with that chief of the hospital, and he was to evaluate my medical skills, and make sure that I walked the walk. And that person happened to be Mark.

Mark: I was responsible for making sure she had dinner and got back to her hotel and so on, and we just had a nice evening. Now keep in mind that I at this point when I met you I was 4 months freshly divorced from another Jewish veterinarian. We kind of clicked, as far as just obviously we could be friends and so I kind of communicated with her, helped get her information for moving out here and so on. She got the job. She was engaged to an airline pilot so she moved out here. We kind of hung out and did stuff together. She was engaged and I was freshly divorced and pretty gun-shy.

Judy: It was a very comfortable relationship.

Mark: Yeah, we spent the next couple of months as friends. It was a really solid friendship with no intention of going anywhere, until I started wondering how she was engaged to a guy who she saw twice a month, flying back and forth to Denver, which I thought was a little odd.

Judy: And then that flying back and forth ended when football season began. We can thank the Oklahoma Sooners for our relationship, Barry Switzer particularly, because of his violations to NCAA recruiting. My fiancé was a boomer Sooner, a football fan through and through. He would go and watch the summer practices; he would go to every single game. His pores bled Sooner blood. The year I moved out here they had gotten nailed for recruiting violations and they lost their ability to have any of their broadcast in any way shape or form. So no radio, no television. So airline pilot, instead of flying out here the weeks that I was working visiting me, and me flying there and him being there, he was every weekend wherever the Sooners were. So we did not see each other for five months. This relationship was not heading in the direction that we wanted to. After five months we both kind of mutually decided this was not going to be an engagement any longer, and that's when Mark and I started dating.

Int: OK. That's also very important because the professional connection is part of the themes, we call trope—people are meeting each other in the professions, in the field...

Mark: Right, because that's where we are...

Judy: Right. Mark & I had developed a very strong friendship before we began dating, and we were confidants to each other. And so that's where our relationship started, so we got a very strong relationship as friends before we even thought about going out on a date.

Int: Makes sense. You had similar qualifications, and were working in the same field, and seeing the day together, seeing stuff that was relevant to each other.

Judy: Right. Well, we were able to talk about what was going on with our relationships with the other people in our lives.

Mark: Just as a highlight, months before she moved out here in the summer, she was back in Denver for a couple of months, my ex was seeing Judy at her practice with some cats that she needed assistance with, because she had moved to Denver.

Int: What are the probabilities of that?

Mark: She called me to say, "Who do you know out here? I need access to someone's equipment to help my kitty." And I said, well, I met this gal, she seems really nice and she's in your general area, so I guess Gail looked you up. And then Judy moves here, Gail leaves the guy who she was seeing out in Denver, she moves back here, those two start working together at the St. Clair Shores office.

Judy: After Mark & I were dating.

Mark: After we were very seriously dating. So it just went from odd to strange.

Judy: And once again, this veterinary practice was owned by a Reform Jewish veterinarian, businessman, entrepreneur, and his partner--both Jewish. And they had quite a few Jewish people on their staff, right? Ann was Jewish, Mike was Jewish – so they all worried about us, because that's what our culture promotes to some extent. And so we were getting phone calls on a daily basis. "Are you two doing ok?"

Mark: My first wife had a good track record of ...

Judy: having a volatile temper. We got these daily phone calls from the main office – everything ok over there? Are you two doing ok? No problems there?

Int: Oh, the two women...

Jill: She tried once and she kind of got the "don't piss on me" attitude from me, and that was it. I've seen her in action with other people, and she can be brutal. And poor Mark, I told her one of the tales of seeing her in action, and the blood vessels on his temple start standing out, when he hears Gail stories, because unfortunately he's experienced it on a regular basis.

Int: complexity of what's going here...

*Mark: But Gail liked her, and told me I should marry her. After 3 years of dating, Judy comes to me and says, "So where are we going? Are we going anywhere or shall I just maybe move back to Denver?" You know, I'm divorced, I'm gun-shy, and she was very nice about it, but made it pretty clear that I need to give her a strong indication, and I did.
I proposed rather nicely.*

Int: Sounds like a cooperative venture.

#11. Barb

Barb and Ray are both Michigan natives.

Barb: Ray and I met going to different high schools together. And he was friends with my boyfriend at the time. Then we used to double date a lot. So, so after while. I figure out I like my boyfriend's best friend a little better. And so we ended up becoming very good friends. I think this went on for maybe a year and a half and then we decided that we want to start dating. We started dating when we are 18. Even though we knew each other in high school. So that must mean we met each other when we were 16 or 17.

Int: Was that here?

Barb: Yes, that was here in Michigan. He lived in Oak Park. And I lived in W. Bloomfield. The suburbs of the Detroit area. ...

Int: When you first met, did you know he was Jewish?

Barb: Yeah

Int: Did that have any bearing on your thinking at the time?

Barbara: Yeah. I knew other Jewish people. I was brought up being taught never to prejudge anyone over anything whether it was religion or anything else. And so we became really, really close friends. We went through a lot of different things with each other concerning confidences we were having in other relationships. We found that we really knew what we wanted out of a relationship, because we knew what was wrong with the ones we had previously.

Int: Did you have any thoughts about getting married or did it take a while?

Barb: It definitely took a while before we were at that point. We started dating, and we broke up while we were in college, then we got back together.

#12. David and Jill

Is there a normal way of engagement in America? Here is the story of two young PhD's., who, having met in graduate school away from home, decide to marry. David was raised Jewishly in New York. Jill was raised in a Catholic home in Cleveland. They chose to be married by a Justice of the Peace in a secular ceremony. They moved from the east coast to Michigan where they started their family. Currently they have two teenage kids, a boy and a girl, and both teach at universities.

David: Well, we met in graduate school at Hunter College actually taking a class, the very first class in graduate school. It happened to be a genetics class; it's ironic that it happened to be a genetics class. And that's where we first met, and we started dating in graduate school. As things moved along, we got married on July 8 in 1989. We got married in a park on Long Island called Eisenhower Park. It was not a religious ceremony, it was a secular ceremony, Justice of the Peace was the one who married us.

Jill: We had decided to do that because our families differed religiously. David was raised Jewish but still some part of his family, like your uncle and his family didn't consider themselves Jewish, or hadn't really gone that way. My family was all Christian. So rather than create a situation, I guess, at the wedding we decided to just kind of go a more secular route, which worked fine until ...

Int: What were you doing in New York? Specifically?

Jill: He was in the biology program and I was in biochemistry.

David: But the two programs had an overlap in terms of course requirements.

Int: Did you meet in class?

David: Yes, we met in a genetics class, in a 400 level, 500, 600 level genetics class.

Int: And you were 2 students in the class, in a big lecture classroom

Jill: It wasn't that big, it was small; but what we were also doing is we were TAs in the freshman level biology

David: So it carried over, so we were in this class and then we were also at meetings together and we were teaching the same thing so ...

Int: So at some point you decided to go out on a date?

Jill: Well, there were group dates, a bunch of grad students go to the bar, which is what we did. And then we went on our own after a while. But there were many group dates first.

Int: So going all the way back to this ancient history...what was the first time you had an inkling that this was more?

David: I don't remember. But she was the one who pursued me.

Jill: 'Cause I thought he was cute. And I still do.

Int: So you asked him out on a date?

Jill: Well, we went together as a group.

David: Yeah, and then I think that we then went our own separate ways and Jill and I went off this one way together and then the group went another way and that's when I guess we figured, this ain't so bad, but I don't remember the specifics of it honestly.

Int: But you do?

Jill: No, I remember as much as David. Quite frankly, we were in the labs most of the time trying to get our research confirmed.

David: So then, if she was late and I was late we would then go out – there's this one bar we used to go to all the time.

Int: So at one point you decided to get married.

David: Well, our relationship kept growing, and growing, growing, growing, but we were in graduate school, which sort of expanded out, I think, the normal relationship process only because we had to finish up with our...

Jill: And he had to leave New York, actually – his mentor left New York and went up to Massachusetts. So for him to finish, he went with the guy.

David: So then we were on the bus there and back, big Greyhound, with a very different type of people.

Int: And you were still thinking "This is the person I want to marry?" – is there any story around that?

David: It was after her defense – that we were out at a restaurant, and then I was going to propose at the restaurant, and then I didn't. And then I think it was back at your apartment that I proposed. Actually I had the ring out, and then I said no and I put it away.

Int: Did you know it was coming?

Jill: Well, we had been talking because we needed to – you know we were finishing up, and we were going to do post-doctoral fellowships, and I was like, well, if we're going to live together, maybe we should be engaged and stuff.

David: And maybe we should at least find post-docs in the same city or the same general area.

Jill: Yeah, we should decide if we're going to go to the next step here, we at least have to be near each other. And we did. So I had a fellowship at Harvard, and he was at UMS Medical. We decided to live right in between them, in Framingham, and I would go into Cambridge and he would go into Worcester. You did that for a year or two.

Int: So you were open to the idea of getting engaged?

Jill: Some of our friends were getting married; some of them were having babies. It just depended. People were all over the place in terms of that.

Int: You were pretty organized – proposed – at the apartment?

David: I took the ring out and said would you marry me? And she said yes! And here's the ring right there. At the apartment in New York.

#13. Rick and Ilene

In this narrative we get a different take on the meeting and dating scenario. Rick and Ilene met in High School, went to college in Michigan and currently reside in the suburbs of Detroit. They have known each other, thus, for a long time, though according to their narrative they did not date continuously. They re-met in college after breaking off after high school. Ilene is Jewish; Rick is of Christian origins. She knew that about him before he knew she was Jewish. These were not significant enough markers for either of them not to date. They now have two boys. Rick considers himself Jewish.

Rick: We both grow up in the same community—West Bloomfield, Michigan. We met on December 17th, 1982. It was a group outing, I was supposed to meet up with a friend who was going out with some other friends and Ilene was with them.

Ilene: It was our friend's birthday and that's how we know the date.

Rick: Yes it was our friend's birthday and one month after my 16th birthday, so we met in high school.

Int: This was a public high school? In West Bloomfield?

Rick: Yes, West Bloomfield High School. I was a junior; she was a sophomore. We met initially at West Bloomfield Lanes, which is now a bookstore I think

Ilene: I don't know it's something.

Rick: It's something; it's not a bowling alley anymore. And then in the process of trying to get everyone together in multiple vehicles we were using—this was before cell phones—we were using CB radios and one of the radios wasn't working. So we went back to my house to get another radio and so you actually met my mom.

Ilene: Yeah she was decorating the Christmas tree.

Rick: Decorating the Christmas tree.

Ilene: She invited us all in to hang out.

Rick: We all went on to do whatever.

Ilene: There was not much to do because the community didn't have much to do in the evenings and the bowling alley being one of the places open late.

Rick: But you were.

Ilene: It was only you know middle evening—7:30 or 8:00. But we were all young

Rick: Fifteen, sixteen year olds. You were riding with another friend who had to go home and then so you ended up riding with me.

Ilene: Yeah he had like an 8:00 curfew or 8:30—something like that, something ridiculously early.

Rick: Ilene rode with me as we ended up whatever, getting dinner or whatever

Ilene: Yeah

Rick: That was a Saturday. That was like the Saturday before the break, a short school week. I asked you out on a date the next week

Ilene: Cause you were working

Rick: We went out. I was working and I didn't get off work until late and so we went out before

Ilene: It was like 9:00 or 9:30

Rick: Well, late for a sixteen year old. We ended up, we couldn't go to the movies so we went to Duncan Donuts

Ilene: Mmm, and that's still there.

Rick: That one's still there on Orchard Road and had a donut and milk or whatever and then cause I think we only had an hour or so before curfew

Ilene: Oh, I'm sure

Rick: It was a late night. That was it; we started dating. I don't even know, I mean obviously you knew I was Christian because you saw the Christmas tree being decorated at my house. But I don't think I knew you were Jewish until I don't even know when. I'm trying to think, I don't know when...

Ilene: Probably wouldn't have met my parents for a long time so...When you had the purple car you met my parents

Rick: No I met them before that

Ilene: Did you?

Rick: Yeah. Then we dated through my junior year of high school, over the summer and through my senior year—her junior year—of high school. By that time you had come to Chicago to visit my relatives with me, I had met your folks by then

Ilene: Oh, yeah

Rick: dances, proms...and then I went to Michigan State a year ahead of her and so while we saw each other it was much more infrequent. And then we started and then you came a year later.

Ilene: Yeah, but we didn't start talking until my sophomore year really.

Rick: Yeah so it was kind of a two-year on and off period

Int: You kept the dating thing going while you were.

Rick: Not as much during.

Ilene: Off and on we'd see each other at different points because we had friends in common even still from that time period. So we weren't dating necessarily, we were seeing other people.

Rick: Yeah it wasn't until

Ilene: once in awhile we'd run into each and see each other but we weren't really talking much, we must have gotten in a fight at some point because we stopped talking all together. But we knew—because we had same friends—what the other was up to. In fact I was really upset one night and I went and talked with Rick's mother. My folks moved my senior year of high school, so I finished up high school living at my aunt and uncle's house, just the last month or so. But the first half a year my mom and brother and sister moved out to Arizona ahead of my father. He said you guys go out, set up a house, live out there and decide if you want to stay out there. So then I was just living with my dad, working, and going to school my senior year, doing our own things.

Rick: And it was my well the summer between sophomore and junior year of college for me, so freshman and sophomore year for you we got back together again. Again it was kind of a chance get together.

Ilene: I think it might have been spring, wasn't it?

Rick: No, it was in the summer. Cause then during my junior year we were dating again and been together ever since.

Ilene: In college? At Michigan State?

Rick: Yes. So it would have been what '87... '86. We graduated—I went a little over four years and she went a little less over four years and I think we graduated about six months apart. We actually ended up moving in together the last few months

Ilene: We were engaged before that

Rick: Yeah. Oh, yeah we got engaged in...

Ilene: I was living in Okemos. So we were

Rick: It was '88....so it was Christmas '87, January '88 we got engaged.

Ilene: You weren't in school anymore? You had both graduated from Michigan State?

Rick: No we were still in school engaged

Ilene: We didn't get married until after I graduated, like months after I graduated.

Rick: Yeah

Ilene: You mentioned Okemos?

Ilene: Yeah that's where I lived in college. In that city

Ilene: Okay.

Ilene: We lived in different places, we didn't live on campus the whole time.

Rick: We lived in dorms for two years and then

Ilene: Lived in Lansing, lived in Okemos, lived in

Rick: Lansing. Yeah so we were by then I'd say by January '88 we were engaged, knowing full well that we were not going to get married until we graduated college. We wanted to both finish up. We actually talked about having the ceremony up at Michigan State in the Alumni chapel.

Chapter 5

Group II: “Strong Feelings” of the Jewish Spouse

Introduction

One of the more important themes I found was the strong feeling of the Jewishly-identified spouse that they wanted to raise their children with Jewish identities. Again and again I heard this stated as a decision on the Jewish individual’s part either announced prior to or after marriage. It is clear that this was a significant component of the decision making process, and of what becomes the joint discourse of the family. In this group of narratives we hear about the different ways the Jewish parents express their feelings. We also learn how they make their strong feelings known to their partner. As we read we note there are many ways for partners to communicate their needs and intentions. Part of my interest in oral history is it more closely approximates the complex nature of cultural moments.

#1. Michelle

Not often in my interviews did I hear about the Jewish parents of the respondents interceding in any way with the decision to raise the children with Jewish identities. In this narrative, Mike’s father is involved in a more traditional way as the non-Jewish spouse-to-be goes to him to ask permission to marry his daughter. Since the bat mitzvah of both their children (the grandchildren), Mike has remarried another non-Jew. There

are regular attendees and she continues to volunteer at synagogue events, including running the Passover candy sale.

Michelle: At that point, getting into how I grew up and that...he knew at that point he wanted to talk to my dad about getting married, asking his permission. And my history growing up? I grew up in a conservative neighborhood. Our rabbi was Orthodox. He kind of merged conservative and orthodox into the synagogue we went to. We lived close. We were not Orthodox though my dad was raised that way. But we didn't drive on the holidays. We didn't do any of the things you are not supposed to do on any of the holidays. I went to Hebrew school four days a week. I went to services on Friday night and all day on Saturday. That was part of my upbringing. My dad was pretty strict. With what we could do and what we couldn't do. And really more towards those conservative guidelines. Ed knew that and we had talked about it a little bit. So at the point we wanted to get married he wanted to ask my father for permission.

And being young and really naïve and not thinking very much into the future one of the questions my dad had was "How are you going to raise your children?" And he came back to me and I said "So how did it go? Did you get permission for us to get married?" And he said, "No not yet." He said, But your dad had a question. I said What did he ask? He didn't give permission, what is he worried about? He said, "He wants to know how are we going to raise the kids. I said, "Well we don't have kids yet. We'll decide that when we get there. Ed had gone through Catholic school through 8th grade. Then to public high school. He was pretty burnt out on his religion. He didn't agree with everything that that was about. I think he had used the term he didn't like the negativity of it. Everybody is doomed from the beginning. And that was kind of it. He really didn't do much through high school. He went to church on Christmas. And went on Easter with his mom out of obligation. It wasn't that he felt any kind of connection.

So I said we really need to go back and talk to my dad because I really don't know. So my dad said "I'm not giving any kind of permission until you guys decide what you're doing." I said, "Why can't we just decide when we decide to have kids?" He said, "No you need to decide now." So we talked about it and I said, "Well this is how you feel about your religion." At that time I felt like I kind of broke away. I joined Hillel and went to services on the big holidays. But I really didn't do much in there. If I was with my parents for the holiday I would go to services with them. But I kind of took a back seat to practicing anything myself. I mean being in college I just didn't do it.

So we sat down with my dad and I talked with Ed and I said "How do you feel about your religion, what do you think?" And he said, "I don't really care. What do you want to do?" And I said "Well, I would like to raise them Jewish. If this something you do not have a strong feeling about, that's what I would like to do. "And he said, "OK." And so my dad gave permission."

#2. Staci and Mike.

In this narrative piece, Staci and Mike reveal more about the underlying process at work with interfaith couples. Their sons were some of the younger children of parents interviewed for this project. It appears Staci and Mike are still working through their own reactions to decisions that they made. Here we get a glimpse into what we could call an ongoing decision process. Still, the themes presented in most of the interviews are presented here as well. Their sons have been attending the religious school for three years. They make it as a family to almost all holiday events. Staci, the mother, is the Jewishly identified parent. Mike shows amazing sensitivity and self-awareness. His thoughtfulness extends to respecting his wife's strong feelings about how she wants to raise their children, even though he would like them to understand where he is "coming from" as well.

Mike: I still would like to expose them to Christianity or at least tell them what it is and what the differences are, what our beliefs are and how they're different why some people believe like my sister does, who is their aunt, and their cousins believe the same way, that they are very conservative, they're Baptist, they're very anti-gay, very anti-abortion, very pro-Republican and they defend their beliefs constantly and it comes up a lot. I would like to tell them why that's different, why they believe that way, and try to explain to them how we believe differently. And I don't know if we can find a church that can help us do that or not, or a congregation. It would be nice to find something that's really warm and inviting. The church that I grew up at was kind of like that but maybe that's because that's I grew up there, so it seemed that because I grew up there, I knew everybody there; but the services were pretty boring, normal hymns, normal sermons. I always kind of like the sermons, but if you get the wrong person delivering it, that could be really boring even if it's a good message. I'd like to have something that they could at least be exposed to. What are your thoughts on that?

Staci: And that's tough because then you've got major conflict, because now we're bringing up Jesus...

Mike: ... Who grew up Jewish.

Staci: Right, but to me the easier religion to go with is Judaism because I'm not asking them to believe in anything that you don't believe in, but once we step over and expose them to a church we're now asking them to believe or to understand in this other entity, I think it gives them conflict they can't really handle. We're not out of the woods with this whole religion thing.

Mike: And what has happened is I put my ideas to the wayside because she believes that way. Another thing too is I'm a horrible morning person and I have a hard time getting up to go to church on Sunday. It's really hard for me. I do like that temple's once a month and it's on a Friday night. It works good.

Staci: He thinks that's great.

Int: Was there a joint decision on your part to say that we're going to have kids, you're going to have to raise them in a religion? Or, did you stick with them both, and it just so happens that you found something first that was closer to the model overall, or did you change your philosophy just a bit, was there some kind of weighing in that the mom did and say, "I really want it unified. I don't want a bi-religious identity"?

Mike: I think I was getting some lip service. I think she always thought that she was going to raise them Jewish and would give me the idea that she'd be ok with going to a church. But I don't think that was ever really the case. Is that right?

Int: Because you said you had that moment where you were going to split and then you didn't. How did you resolve that?

Staci: How did we resolve that?

Mike: We resolved it by not deciding, pretty much.

Staci: We kind of were under the mind that we love each other and this is going to work out, that we're both moral and ethical people and we have the same kind of value system. We're just going to raise them with that, and we're going to expose them to my religion and your religion. They celebrate Christmas and they celebrate Easter, they don't have the background of that so much

Mike: I think that's what you see as the Christian part of it.

Staci: I do because when I grew up I didn't have that. That's not Jewish. But...

Mike: I think you're saying that's how you compromise is by allowing them to celebrate Christmas and Easter.

Int: When you say celebrate it do you go to Mass?

Mike: No, I celebrate the commercial part of it only.

Int: Is that OK? I'm kind of sensing that you'd like a little more.

Mike: I think I need a little more. It's not something I've pursued much because I really don't want to upset Staci, I don't want to confuse the boys. I don't want to contradict what they're learning. I guess I just need something for myself is what it's going to end up being, and that's going to be my religion and they're going to be Jewish with Staci is kind of how it's going to be. I've been coming to that realization. I'm ok with everything, Judaism, I like the religion. There's nothing really against my beliefs. I've always had a hard time with the Hebrew, because I don't know it and it seems so foreign, but I understand that it connects back to the history and the culture. The thing I like about Judaism is that it's not just a religion it's a culture. And I like the culture, and I like the holidays. I like the shortened versions of all the celebrations, not necessarily the long drawn out Passover and stuff, it's difficult, but I like the ideas of all of it, celebrating the past, celebrating the turmoil of the culture and of the people. Because really, even if I'm Christian, which I am, my identifying with Jesus that he grew up Jewish and his experiences growing up my boys are experiencing, so it's not against what I believe. I'm a pretty open-minded person, which helps, and I don't like to think that I know the way to do anything, or that I know things better than other people. I like to experience a lot of different things and find what's best, or what works best.

Int: (to Staci) What are you thinking about right now?

Staci: I was hoping that in joining that it would fulfill a spiritual need on your part.

Mike: Well, it does to a certain degree. I like it. With the temple itself, when we have our service, I get a lot out of that. I like the congregation, and the people there, that's all good.

Staci: My idea is not that to snatch up our kids and say I'm raising you Jewish.

Mike: But you want us all to be comfortable in your religion and not expose them to...

Staci: That's my hope. My hope is that you're comfortable and as they learn it more, that they're just comfortable, that they've learned the Hebrew, and that's why I thought the religious part is so crucial.

This is what she had to say about her connection to Judaism and decisions about her children.

Staci: And so you know I had all these kinds of thoughts, so I never really connected too much to Judaism after my Bat Mitzvah. Until...I met Mike and started thinking about, "Is this the person I am going to marry." And didn't realize how much I was tied to Judaism until I thought about raising my kids as a different religion. Does that make sense? So I am more Jewish now than I think I ever have been because I realized when thinking about the kids that it means so much more to me. Thinking about raising them as Christian really, really bothered me, um and so at one point in our relationship we were thinking about breaking up because of the conflict with religion. We were going to break up and I thought a lot about it and I kept thinking "God would not want you to not be with the person you really loved." What it comes to in the whole big picture how could God not want me to be with this man that I loved so much. And so what we did, I didn't belong to a synagogue, and Mike really was not like a church-going person. We found Shir Tikvah. Rabbi Arnie was running an interfaith group at that time, like an interfaith couples group, so we went to that. And that kind of helped us. There were a lot of people that were in the same situation and that kind of helped us see that there are a lot of people that are doing this and making it work and helped us to be more OK with it.

#3. Ray

For this project Ray and Barb asked to be interviewed separately. Thus this narrative seems more to be a monologue, the only interruption being the interviewer's questions. Ray is not particularly a strong "believing and practicing" Jew. He represents a strongly identified American "cultural" Jew. What does this mean? This still needs exploration. Ray also introduces the theme of male-female relations within the Jewish cultural community. He is painfully honest about how difficult it was for him to find comfortable relationships with Jewish women. Stereotypes play a large role here. Also, the theme of shared values is raised. I found this very common theme in the interviews—a sense of shared values often trumped religious and ethnic identification.

Ray: What lead up to the decision or at least the way that I was thinking about things was growing up my parents were—I knew I was Jewish and I enjoyed having a lot of the family togetherness. We'd get together and we'd celebrate

Hanukah and we'd celebrate Passover and we really didn't do too much in between that. So that's where I enjoyed the identity piece of it enough—that's what I understood Judaism was about...was family get-togethers.

But really in terms of bringing up kids, I never felt like I was treated very well by my Jewish peers. When I was going to junior high school and I was involved with not BBYO but the Jewish organizations, a lot of the Jewish girls didn't treat me the way that I wanted to be treated. I wasn't the popular guy, I wasn't necessarily going to be a doctor and so a lot of that they would be consider the traditional, stereotypical Jewish-American Princess, the JAP. And I rejected that, the notion that anybody should be treated that way. And so I really stopped looking for um dating Jewish girls because the gentile girls treated me better, with more respect. There was no preconceived notion.

And so what I started looking for at that point was—when it became more serious—was not whether they were Jewish or not, but did we share the same values in bringing up kids? And really looking for people that were thinking people with respect to religion, in other words they didn't necessarily go by institutional rules, they didn't and they were willing to kind of buck the trend. And this was all leading up...and what attracted me to Barbra in terms of the compatibility was a thinking person, she didn't just blindly go with what her religion at the time told her to go with. I certainly didn't in terms of Judaism and that was kind of my criteria for getting together with her in the first place. In terms of actually making a decision as to what we were going to do it was more a situation of—we started out I think with saying well we can do both. I'll respect your religion and we'll let the kids decide what they're going to do. But Barb was much more willing to take an active role and again we've talked about it many times before but Barb was much more willing to take an active role in religious education than I was. But I was not willing to ask what I mind if we brought them up Christian. That was not even anything that I could conceive of—was going into a church and watching my child be brought up in a Christian environment.

Int: Did you ever probe why?

Ray: Yes. First I rejected the notion of the messiah having come and Christ which is why I'm Jewish primarily, in my mind. In other words the whole notion of being Christian to me was acknowledging that the existence of a Christ and that the messiah had come, that was the first thing. And I could not get myself to allow my child to be programmed to believe that because to me it's a belief, it's a leap of faith—there's nothing that can prove it. So that was the part and it was the feeling every time I walked into a church because you know we did explore and we would go into the church and this part I can't explain. I never would feel comfortable, it was not my home, it was nothing I could feel comfortable doing. So you know that was why and again

#4 Ben and Cindy

Once more we find in this narrative an interesting combination of non-religious, secular identification on the Jewish father's part, yet, with a strong concern for maintaining the Jewish identity of his children. There is great angst at the thought of going to church and having the children raised as Christians. Again, the non-Jewish mother goes along, as she too has no strong religious leaning, and is willing to raise the children with Jewish identity as it includes "good values." Another theme that appears is the "trickle up" nature of Jewish education—once the children get involved, the parents also begin reading and learning again. Many have stopped since their days in synagogue religious school and now can turn, as adults, to learning once more on a post-college level.

Int: Did you discuss the Jewish thing with Ben?

Cindy: Really the discussion was: we would raise them Jewish or we wouldn't raise them anything at all. Even though Ben was atheistic.

Ben: When we first got together I wasn't too concerned that the children be a part of a congregation. Before the girls were born I felt I could do enough about giving them some identification, their identification as Jews. I hadn't really thought it through too well. I'm kind of a secular Jew and Cindy didn't feel any need to have them involved in any formal religion. So we kind of left it at that. And then after we had the girls and they started getting older, through the girls, and in part of contact with the cousins of mine who are involved their congregation What we began to see was that through their involvement they got a lot out of it. It was really positive. And we were taking a look at the girls and seeing what they could be involved in.

It's not like it used to be. The community is not like it used to be. It's harder to get involved today. As when I was a kid, and we thought it would be good to get them involved so they could start picking up that identification. And start having them working on the values in a different venue than what we do here. It just seemed like it would be a good thing. When they were young we talked about it but didn't take any acting on it.

I felt like I couldn't find myself getting involved in a Christian Church, my identity being Jewish was too strong for that and Cindy didn't have any problem with that. I don't know what we would have done if she had different feelings but for her it was never an issue. And so it was really an easy thing, We started looking for a synagogue. We looked for a while. We didn't have to process it all that much. We both felt good about it.

I dropped out after my bar mitzvah, and my parents drifted away. When I came back it was just as strange for me as for Cindy. But now the pieces are coming together. I'm reading and really feeling comfortable with the whole thing. So it started to make more sense for me. I'm really feeling quite happy about the whole thing. I'm doing more reading. For Cindy it doesn't feel as comfortable. I'm not sure how involved she'll ever be. But for me it's neat. I got a hold of a book called "History of the Jews"...Stuff I haven't been exposed to in any rigorous way...It talks about the roots which go way, way back...I'm not sure where its going and where it's taking us. I'm not sure how it's going to work out, I think she'll be supportive of the three of us...I don't think she'll feel the need to belong to some other congregation...I don't know...We're kind of taking it a day at a time...we'll see where it goes...taking it as it goes.

#5. Glenn

Glenn was one of the founders of the congregation. He has remained connected even as his two children went through *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*, and now graduated college.

Glenn is resolutely Jewish and very thoughtful about modern Jews and Judaism. Note his concern for family.

Glenn: A good part of it dealt with my background and the fact that I had some camp survivors and had grown up around camp survivors. Some of my family had been eliminated in the Holocaust. I was raised with a pretty strong Jewish identity in that regard. She was always interested in religion, but a particular religious affiliation was much less important to her than anything else. She was just interested in the overall what went on. I told her this up front: If we were to get married and have children, the children would be raised Jewish. And she agreed to that. And that's what we did. We fortunately found the congregation, we helped to start the congregation, and fortunately you were there, you became involved and put structure behind it, and brought to greater level things like the school, and brought legitimacy to things like the school. And that was great, and that's how we got things going.

Int: If the subject came up, you married somebody who wasn't Jewish and you decided to raise with her at the time the children in the synagogue. You made the

assertion that was the only way it was going to be basically, and she agreed, from what you're saying. So what else would you want the world to know about that decision making process.

Glenn: I jotted a few things down, in just thinking about it, and you talk about the Jewish identity of kids. You can go from things like the holidays. We observed all of the Jewish holidays. We really did not observe any of the Christian religious holidays. We observed the Jewish holidays in a number of different ways. And this relates to something that's really important to me, and that's family. We were always a lot closer to my family than to hers. My family was always very embracing. Hers was not particularly respectful towards our religion. I know there were times when they would, despite our requests, they would always say their prayers in Jesus' name. I think they knew if I was there they would throw in a couple of extra Jesus-es for me. I think the kids saw this, and I think the kids recognized that, as far as family goes, family is extremely important. Particularly in my life and it became in theirs, and because my family was so close, I think the kids adopted the philosophies of religion that was in line with my family. It's odd because the hostility of her family almost united us, not almost, but was a factor to a good degree in uniting us in our religion. So we've got the holidays, the holidays were always fun with my family. Everything from Pesach to Rosh Hashanah – in the family -our holiday was always Hanukkah so we were always doing a lot, there were gifts because of the kids – it was fun. The kids enjoyed it.

#6. Karen

Here is Karen's response to the same questions and on the same topic that Glenn spoke of above—his strong feelings. Karen became a regular religious schoolteacher, taught the Jewish holidays, and for several years produced a Purim *spiel* for the congregational Purim party.

Kate: Oh, yea, (strong voice) I told him definitely the kids are going to be Jewish. I'm not going to disturb that. That's what I've agreed to bring them up and I think it's a beautiful religion.

Int: What's your background again?

Kate: I'm Baptist. Protestant.

Int: Had you been involved with the Church before getting married?

Kate: But when we got married I wasn't too involved. Although I know a whole lot more about his religion than he does about mine, or that he knows about his own, I think. When we got married that was one of the deals we made, a deal

about raising the kids Jewish. I think he's paranoid about the Christian faith. He sees it as a threat.

Int: At the time you guys got married you didn't have any problem with what he was requesting? In other words, was this something that grew on you or was this something that you had made up your mind way back when?

Kate: I think I just felt religion was important and it didn't really matter what kind. I grew up in a Jewish neighborhood. I had friends that were Jewish. To me it was not really a big deal. I just felt it was important to bring up your children in any religion. And if he wanted to do it in the Jewish faith, that was OK with me. But as I've gotten to know it better, I do appreciate it more than I did before I understood better.

#7. Barb

Barb and Ray are two of the longest serving members of the synagogue. Barb has taught in the religious school and volunteered on various committees, such as the *Oneg* committee that provides refreshments after Shabbat services. They have two children, both of which became *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*. Barb, raised in a non-Jewish background, speaks about how she had to encourage Ray, who wanted their children to be raised as Jews, to take more responsibility in the process. This role of the woman, to be the caretaker of religious education of the children, may be a part of gender roles in American culture playing itself out in the Jewish sub-culture. This is all the more interesting, as traditional Judaism has defined the male role as the responsible for knowing the ins and outs of the religion. Ray has the commitment, but not in-depth knowledge of the religion. It takes prodding by his partner to begin the process of improvement. These gender roles can be found described in other testimonies.

Barb: The time that we are dating, and when we start talking about getting together and getting married, the total philosophy at that point was that we loved each other for who we were and that we weren't going to try to change either one of us, because that just wouldn't be the proper thing to do, because we fell in love with the person we are. So with that in mind, our idealistic, little young mind at

the time was that we would teach our kids about both and we would let them decide as they got older. And Ray had very strong feelings about one thing: his children be raised Jewish. And I had very strong feelings, and at the beginning. It was really more important to me that they had a faith in God than what religion it was.

Int: How did Ray express to you that he wanted his children raised as Jews?

Barb: He would say pretty much that it was important to him, and things like that. He really didn't feel comfortable going into a church, he said. Even though he may have gone to Christmas Eve services and things like that. But he never really felt comfortable going there. That was part of it. His comfort level.

Int: but did he ever tell you directly, but he didn't want children to be Christian. You want them to be Jewish?

Barb: Yes. And I guess, the sentiment in the way he would say it. If you don't raise them to be Jewish they're going to be Christian because of the way the world is here. So he felt very strongly about it, about making a choice.

Int: And your reaction about it?

Barb: My reaction to it was that he needed to be a part of it because I don't know how to do it. I knew nothing about doing that. So a lot of the discussion about this over the years and our arguments were about me saying, "I can't do it because I don't know how."

Int: But you were in agreement with him somehow? With this question of the identity of the children? You went along with it?

Barb: Yes.

Int: How did that happen?

Barb: Very slowly, because he, even though he realized you had to decide to raise your children Jewish, at the same time you're saying well, "If you're born Jewish. You just are Jewish. Because it is not just a religion. It's a culture." But the two concepts conflicted in my mind. Again, a lot of our discussions early on, when we were younger were like "You say you're Jewish, and we have discussions about the Torah, and the Bible, we would think about what does this mean, and he would not know, wouldn't know. We would have discussions and I would say, "How can you say this is what you believe, if you don't know what's there?" And he would say, "Judaism is also a culture not just a religion. And that's why he you can grow up not knowing stuff. It was a big conflict of him saying, "You're Jewish, because of the culture, while at the same time also saying that you have to make a conscious effort to do that." But he wasn't making a conscious effort to

do it. And I didn't know how to do it. Somehow a lot of discussions went along that line, "All in all, I want them to be Jewish." I would think, "Then and get up and do it!"

#8. David

David has a doctorate in the natural sciences and teaches at the college level. He does not espouse a strong belief in any traditional God concept, Jewish or otherwise. He speaks here about his not believing in Jesus. This aversion to a Christian belief system, while at the same time not professing a strong Jewish belief, is a regular trope in the narratives. This seems true especially among American Jewish men. In some way, "Jewish identity" stands in for and represents some kind of counter system not clearly articulated. Often the strength of the Jewish partner's interest in providing a "Jewish identity" for the kids, coupled with the non-Jewish partner's non-involvement or lack of belief in a religious structure, turns out to be a good combination.

David: I knew in the back of my mind before I even met Jill, that if I had kids I would want to raise them Jewish. When I met Jill and we were dating, and it was evident that we were going to get married, we had this conversation along the way on how we would raise our kids. She didn't have a problem with them being raised Jewish and I wanted them raised Jewish, so there really wasn't a whole lot of dialog. The only thing that Jill said was that "If we're going to raise our kids Jewish then you have to take the lead; if we're going to raise our kids Catholic then I will have to take the lead." So, me wanting to raise the kids Jewish, I knew that I would have to take the lead. And she actually forced me into taking the lead when Daniel was around 5. I knew we would raise him Jewish, but it was – she was the one who pushed the issue of finding a synagogue when Daniel was around 5. So in the back of my mind I always knew, and to me it was something very important. I couldn't see, in all honesty, myself raising a child in any other religion.

Int: Because?

David: Because I think I would find it hard to – for example, Christianity – raising them Christian when one of the core tenets of Christianity is Jesus and that he is the Messiah and that's something I don't believe. So I would have a

hard time, all of a sudden supporting that, when how do you support something you don't believe in.

#9. Cheri

It is interesting to note the sensitivity the non-Jewish spouses had toward the feelings of their Jewish husbands and wives when it came to the question of the identity of their children, especially when Jewishness was construed as a religious identity. In this family, Cheri is not Jewish. One of her children will be raised with Jewish identity and become *Bar Mitzvah*. Her daughter, though she still attends with her Jewish father many congregational events, does not consider herself Jewish. Cheri and Jerry are now divorced, but Cheri will still volunteer for helping at the congregation. During the time Kyle attended school, she sponsored an annual project where all the children in the religious school made ceramic menorahs for Hanukkah.

Cheri: When Kyle was born, Jerry's religion was stronger than mine, so we talked about having a bris for him. I was all right with that because it was important to Jerry. It was fine with me. I was a little uncomfortable, but it was okay with me. Having my baby exposed out there was kinda different. I still looking back think that when we had that bris for him I felt that Kyle was going to grow up and become a Jewish child. That was fine, as long as I knew that when he was old enough to make decisions, that that is what he wanted.

Cheri: With Kyle, you could tell that the Jewish religion was strong for him. I always knew that Kyle was going to be Jewish. I really didn't see that in Shelby. I knew that I had a Jewish child, and a not Jewish child. And that is fine, because I knew that it had to be a choice for yourself, and if Shelby doesn't feel in her heart that she wants to be Jewish, then so be it. Even though she'll partake in the services and stuff like that, she still recognizes that she is part Jewish; I just don't think it's as strong of a following for her in the religion. I don't think Jerry ever pushed Shelby into the religion, and I never tried to influence my kids as far as what they thought was right for them, but I thought they should decide what's right for you, so I kind of let that determine their choice of religion. I didn't really push either, I thought it was good to be exposed to both, and then let them make their own choices. I support any choice they make.

#10. Mark and Judy

As the age for marriage increases, so do many issues, both personal and medical, also increase. Here we see how the decision to have children and the manner in which they will be raised involves many other concerns, such as the health concerns of the mother.

Mark: Up to this point, we hadn't given much consideration to family. I would have been fine without children. That was pretty much my mindset. My first wife, who by the way has two, kids now, so that shows how well that held up. But I was also supportive of what Judy wanted, and if that meant lots of practice and trial and error, well I was good with that. There's got to be an up-side to trying to have kids. But after 5 miscarriages, I think we pretty much figured we weren't having children.

Judy: Prior to us getting married I had dealt with cervical cancer, so the chances of us having a child were very slim. We did at one point during our relationship we did talk about if we did have kids – I had told him that if we did have kids they were going to be raised Jewish.

Mark: But it was the case where I was just fine with that. It wasn't a foreign thing to me – I really grew up, because of my friends in that environment and I was fine with that. I just think an ethical upbringing that religion provides is good. I wasn't really worried what direction that would come from.

Int: That's point number three that most people are saying

Mark: It was fine because I always realize that a child is really considered the religion that the mother is. Again, I was fine with that. So I took it as a given anyway.

Judy: And this conversation was prior to our ever being engaged.

Mark: Yet I refused to give up Christmas. I wasn't giving up Christmas for anyone. She was just going to have to deal with Hanukkah and Christmas.

Judy: We talked about what would happen if we had kids, prior to being engaged.

Mark: Judy understands that I'm vague on it. We have been through some medical issues with me, of which memory – it's called bump-head syndrome. I had some blank spots that Judy's used to me dealing with.

Judy: The conversation on kids did occur prior to us ever being engaged. It was a kind of “what if”. I think it was occurring when I found out I had cervical cancer.

Mark: I guess it is that we decided that if we did have kids we weren't going to consider our marriage a failure.

Judy: And that if we did have kids that I would like them to be raised Jewish.

Int: Judy -non-negotiable...,Mark – there's no disagreement, matter of fact to you

Mark: If you're looking for how did they come to that decision, it was automatic to my mind, and it's what she wanted, and the opinions just meshed right together. The real question was would we really have kids, which wasn't looking very good.

Int: in spite of your medical issues, it was still part of your discussion

Judy: It was actually a conversation that went on when we were at Point Pelee National park. We talked about all the what-ifs of if we had children how would we raise them. We did talk about the issues of being raised in a predominantly Christian society and, if we were to get married, a grandfather who is not a practicing Christian but a holiday Christian. Easter's important to him and Christmas is important. He doesn't go to a church, he doesn't attend any ceremonies, and in fact when we had asked him one year about going to a Catholic mass on Christmas, an incredibly beautiful ceremony. It's a very moving ceremony. He did not want to do that.

Mark: Well, we have to understand that my mom passed away my first week in college freshman year, and I'm an only child. So my father went from having a family to living alone. He got remarried a couple of years later to what he thought was a proper marriage, and she was Catholic. She turned out to be the Wicked Witch of the West. It was just a terrible experience that he went through for a year. So his feelings about Catholicism at that point were very jaded

Judy: Which I didn't know, but he – it was like I was asking him to cut out his heart. The response I got – I didn't understand it. We had talked about, if we had a child, what we're going to do about Christmas, Easter, and determined that we could celebrate the major Christian holidays as a social holiday and kind of minimize the religious side of them, which is essentially what his dad does. It's a social holiday, not a religious holiday to him.

#11. Ilene and Rick

We hear in this narrative a progressive process whereby the couple became more aware of the direction their household was taking. Time and again in the interviews we hear about how the Jewish individual knew what they wanted before getting married and were able to articulate this to their partner. There are others, however, who became aware of their feelings after becoming married. We also hear, almost universally, how the couple tries, by some means, to show mutual respect by incorporating some aspects of the celebration of the major holidays of Christmas and Easter. It is difficult for a minority, particularly a “religious” minority, in the United States not to be influenced in some way by the dominant religion around which, for instance, the school schedule for children is set. All the more we recognize how difficult it is when the couple choosing Jewish identity for their children attempts to work how this will be done by eliminating some part of the other’s celebration, and therefore identity, especially when a part of the Christian partner’s family still celebrates it.

Int: Were kids ever a part of the logarithm of your relationship discussion?

Rick: Yep. We talked, obviously we talked that we wanted to have kids.

Ilene: But we waited a long time.

Rick: Yeah we waited...we got married in 1990 and Matt was born in 1997. We wanted to get settled into a house and get settled into jobs. During that time we actually we kind of celebrated minor aspects of both—we would put a Christmas tree up in our house before we had kids.

Ilene: Do a little bit of lights and do a little bit of this.

Rick: Yeah

Ilene: I actually cooked Christmas Eve dinner sometimes. We wouldn’t go to church but I’d cook dinner and everyone else would

Rick: We wouldn't go to church cause I at that time would only go if I were attending a ceremony for somebody—a funeral or a wedding. I just wouldn't go to mass anymore, stopped taking communion—the whole thing. We would but we still kind of celebrated the more secular aspects of the holidays.

Ilene: The commercial aspects

Rick: Yeah and we would decorate—we even put stuff up. We'd have different Hanukkah decorations up.

Ilene: And people have given us gifts through the years so we still maintain a little bit because we received gifts from loved ones and we wanted to honor loved ones. But we don't put a tree up anymore—once we had kids

Rick: Yeah at that point we wanted to make a decision

Ilene: What are we going to do?

Rick: I still to this day I am not comfortable being a Catholic. I don't really have any ties to that religion. And so I think we just I don't know if it was default or we just kind of said well let's

Ilene: I think we talked about it once a long time ago that I wanted to have Jewish kids. But I think it was a really brief in passing. There were so many people killed in so many different ways through the time period—the same can be said for any group of people. But for me I think I grew up knowing or feeling or expecting that that's how it would be so of course that's how it is.

Rick: So when we had Matt we had him named at Birmingham Temple so he has a Jewish birth certificate and when we got married we actually have a ketubah. And then

Ilene: We were just living our lives, no big thing. Then Zach came along of course Rabbi Wine was still officiating there and we liked the continuity of this.

Rick: Yeah and we actually attended some services. We joined the temple for a couple of years.

Ilene: I think only a year.

Rick: No we did it once after we were married and once after

Ilene: Well that was, yeah

Rick: And then the year after Matt was named we joined and we went to a couple of services

Ilene: Not often and I wouldn't say we even went on the high holidays. We just weren't involved in any of it really. Zach came along and again we got him named for the official aspects of these are the things that you do when you have a baby. Both boys were just named there we didn't have a brit milah, we didn't have that ceremony for them. We did the medical stuff at the hospital.

Rick: We just at that point I think we had decided we were raising them Jewish.

#12. Robin

Here the Jewish partner, the mother of two girls, recounts her mother's advice. At the same time she suggests a mutual respect for her partner's faith, she states clearly her discomfort with the possibility of her girls being baptized. We are also clued into the complex family structures of American Jews given the high divorce rate among Americans. I also note the first marriage of Robin's mother was endogamous.

Int: Did the Jewish thing come up for you at all? Did you guys talk about it at all?

Robin: We talked about it. From my perspective, and a lot of this is from my mom's upbringing too, she told me, "I don't care whether you marry someone who is Jewish or not, as long as you marry someone who respects your beliefs and is willing to let you live the way that you want to live, with regards to those beliefs." So my mother has always been good about that. She always wanted me to look at what she had. She married someone Jewish, and that didn't work at all. She's remarried to someone that is not Jewish. So, from her perspective it wasn't so much the religion, just that we were respectful towards each other's religion and beliefs. I knew that he had a good friend who was Jewish, so it wasn't like he didn't know anything about the religion.

Int: So you were aware of this potential thing coming down the road, the family and kids. Your mom had told you, as long as he was respecting your beliefs. So you had it in your mind that you would be not willing to go to church, to have the kids baptized.

Robin: No. If he had wanted to raise the kids where they went and did religious studies and such, we would've discussed that further. I don't think I would have felt comfortable with them being baptized though, not at all.

#13. Roberta and Craig

Many times it becomes apparent by what was not done, together with what was, that leads to the identity making of the children. In the case of Roberta and Craig, small steps were taken toward creating Jewish connections while similar steps that may have leaned more toward a non-Jewish upbringing were avoided.

Roberta: Well it became to be that when Brett was probably in 2nd or 3rd grade, I can't remember exactly, he had asked some questions about religion or church which were not even questions. He mentioned about kids at school talking and it just seemed he was wondering and interested, and so it was at that point that we'd talk and I said, you know I really think he's looking for something. And we'd always said, as far as the religion thing, is as much as I want to do with Judaism and he wants to do with Lutheran, we can do. If he wanted to take him to church every Sunday he could do that. If I wanted to... really the only thing I didn't want was to have him baptized. That was kind of something I was not interested in, which he (Craig) was really good and he was ok with that.

Int: That's an important little detail, you kind of snuck it in there. Can you talk a little bit more about it?

Roberta: That just seemed that would just seal that that's what you are, period, or something, I don't know. But it just was a little too out there...(later)...

Roberta: Yes, they have become very good young men. And in the same right though, we didn't do any Hebrew naming ceremony, even though they do have Hebrew names, we didn't do any of that. However they both did have a bris.

Int: A hospital bris?

Roberta: No here at the home. We had Seymour, whatever, the tall guy. I don't know who did Brett's, but I remember Andrew's.

Int: I think in some ways I'm hearing, and I want to be careful—even though there was mutual respect – the stronger feeling was on Roberta's part... if you're going to have a Moil come in...and that was OK with Craig ?

Craig: Well, you have to make a selection...

#14. Paul and Charlie

In this interview, things seemed rather matter of fact. Later in the interview Patti explains how she understands Judaism to be a culture, and she distinguishes that from being a religionist in the Catholic Church. Patti refers later to identifying, however, as culturally Italian. The two daughters became *Bat Mitzvah*.

Charlie: I don't remember it ever being a big issue. It was: I wanted to raise the kids Jewish. You wanted to raise the kids Jewish. You didn't want to raise them Catholic. You wanted them to have a religion. So, given, not your religion but some religion...

Paula: Christian would have been fine too. I just wanted the children to have a religion. If I was with someone who was Christian then it would have been easier, in retrospect, at the time it appeared to be easy, that it didn't matter. It was not at all, I don't know, if on Charlie's part, a consideration on the marriage, one way or the other. It was pretty insignificant. Pretty insignificant.

Chapter 6

Group III: “An Open and Friendly Synagogue Community”

Introduction

While there are many personal tales to be told in the narratives of interfaith couples raising their children with Jewish identities, there appeared as well a communal group theme: the families that had chosen this path desired and found a like-minded social group through the synagogue they joined. Most of the time they sought a place for educating their children in the religion and formal cultural ways of Judaism. But they also sought an organization wherein their needs could be met, a place where they felt “comfortable.” Perhaps this is because the “issue” of religious identification carries with it much emotional charge. We hear in these testimonies some of the struggles couples go through, especially given they are breaking with so many taboos by crossing the religious and ethnic boundaries in choosing a minority identity for their children. Yet, without exception, the narratives tell of the success they experienced in bonding with their synagogue. Given the lack of geographic boundaries in defining belonging and identity in the urban field, this kind of community building is to be noted. Many times this is the first introduction of the non-Jewish spouse to things Jewish; other times it is the first introduction to formal Jewish religion; still other times it is the first time the non-Jewish partner has a chance to participate and relate to others in a Jewishly sponsored social situation.

One of the difficulties is “getting the word out” about synagogue location. There simply are not that many synagogues. In a predominantly non-Jewish area such as Canton, Michigan, it is not clear how newcomers to the area would “hear” about Bet Chaverim. It is interesting that most comment on having seen advertisements in the local newspaper. In this way, the synagogue is marketed to those in the proximate geographical area. Thus, the decision to raise the children as Jews brings with it many other moments of decision making. Key to the success of the chosen direction is finding a suitable community where all can fit in. Several respondents mentioned, in a complimentary way, the work I was doing as rabbi in the congregation. They suggested the understanding and acceptance I provided were ingredients in the feelings of success they experienced.

#1. Staci and Mike

“Finding a congregation,” or, in these particular cases, “finding a synagogue,” is a process all to itself. Potential members in a sense “shop” for the right congregation as they would almost any other product they intend to purchase. I believe this is a little studied cultural component of American religion. Individuals and families are not constrained by any authority to visit or participate in a particular religious outlet. Perhaps for interfaith couples this process is made more complex, as usually one of the partners is unfamiliar with most of the practices of a given denomination. This is especially true with the parents I interviewed. They reflect about not only the places they visit, but each other’s responses as well.

Mike: How we kind of came about finding the congregation and ...

Staci: Wait, wait, he was asking about the kids – we discussed that...

Mike: We discussed we would do it with both religions, and after we got married I would look for a church; and I was never able to find a church that I thought would be acceptable for Staci, that she'd be comfortable in. I was basically trying to find a church that didn't emphasize Jesus as much.

Int: Why was that?

Mike: Because she is very, Staci has always been, like there have been people that have tried to convert her, and told her that you have to accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior and you're going to go to hell if you don't, and I didn't want her to get that from a church that I would find, and I wanted to find something that was conducive to her being comfortable, me getting my spiritual fulfillment, and I wasn't able to find that happy medium anywhere. I would find these churches that seemed real progressive, and I'd try to go to them, and they weren't. They were just the same old beliefs, same old kind of boring ceremonies. I'd like to find something that has a little more upbeat ceremony, emphasizing the good in all of us. I feel close to Jesus, and I feel a spiritual connection to him but that's just because of how I was raised. I don't need everybody to feel that.

Int: So you were watching out for her feelings in this regard.

Mike: I was trying to. In doing that I was never able to find a church I thought would work for us. I always thought it would be nice to belong to a church because growing up I always did and I always liked that I had friends from church. Church is really to me about the congregation and getting together and worshipping together. It's about meeting people, not as much about what you hear and what you learn to me because you can practice Christianity or Judaism anywhere. I think that the temple or the church is a good place to share your thoughts and ideas with other people.

Staci: Fellowship they call that, right?

Mike: Fellowship, it's all about the fellowship, that's what I think. Anyway I never found one that worked out real well. But Staci and I were reading the Livonia Observer and she saw the ad for the synagogue, and I forgot what it said, but it seemed ...

Staci: This was a while ago.

Int: The Eccentric Observer.

Mike: And anyway, she had called on it, and it sounded good, a really small community, a small congregation...

Staci: I talked to Roberta.

Mike: In a church, so it was interesting. I figured it would be more relaxed beliefs, because we tried going to synagogues in the past and people were not very friendly. It wasn't about getting together it was about going to synagogue. It didn't seem to me as much about the fellowship and meeting other people, it was more about the service. And it's kind of the experience you've always had with it too. So it was nice when we went to this congregation and we met everyone, it was really friendly, there were some kids there, which was great, our kids liked the kids. They had a great rabbi there, who was really good at story telling. I liked the stories and relating it back to things we learn and things about Judaism that we can teach our kids.

Staci: It was the first synagogue you felt comfortable at, and it was really the first synagogue that I felt comfortable at.

Mike: Because she pursued that and then the Sunday school too, that's basically how we ended up raising our kids Jewish is because we were able to find something that Staci and I were both comfortable with, it seemed like a good mixture of people, and David is outstanding, and our boys were comfortable there, and just having the Sunday School close by our house it all seemed to work out really well. That's kind of how we ended up raising them Jewish is because we found that right fit. We weren't thinking all along that we would raise them Jewish.

Staci: I didn't think we would find it. I felt that I would never find what I was searching for.

#2. Ray

It is most likely Jewish intermarrieds have encountered some negative response to their decision to be married to a non-Jew given the wide ranging negative discourse and “problem” saturated commentary within the literature of the Jewish community. (see chapter two). It is all the more remarkable, then, to hear in these narratives that in spite of the rejection they pursue affiliation. Here Ray speaks about “acceptance and rejection,” and can estimate, from his knowledge of the American Jewish synagogue movements, which synagogues he would take his family to, and which he would avoid so as not to embarrass his wife. Ray was born and raised in the Detroit environs so he has a lot of “insider” information on the synagogue landscape. I am reminded that it is difficult to “be

Jewish” without belonging to an organized community, an actual group. Rejection of interfaith couples who wish to participate creates a self-fulfilling prophecy of community breakdown.

Ray: So when we were looking for synagogues in the back of my mind I was thinking of which one should we look for that would be acceptable—that would be accepting. And yet on the front side to Barbara I was saying “Well let’s do this together.” That this is a common thing that we should be able to do as a family but again tacitly in the back of my mind I’m thinking I not even going to expose her to some of the synagogues that I would suspect would reject her or would be more judgmental. And I immediately went, just as an extension, I immediately removed any of the Conservative Synagogues from the fold and any of the Orthodox and was hoping that the Reform Synagogues would be a place to start and even among the Reform Synagogues that we went to—in West Bloomfield specifically that was a prominently Jewish neighborhood. There was even some clique and some rejection there even among the reform synagogues. So again that’s why we went what would be considered out state and started looking at Bet Chaverim that was a Reform Synagogue but it was in a non-Jewish neighborhood, because of the demographics in the area.

Yeah but it was the same thing. In other words the synagogues that we typically were always attracted to were the smaller ones where the rabbi seemed to be accessible and where the family was accepting. And so to your point part of the success was finding a group that was accepting, was not judgmental, we felt we were peers with, there was a commonality of background—both from an intermarriage perspective so that we didn’t feel that we were all alone and there were other couples that were tackling the same thing that we were. Even having discussions with them over coffee or at the synagogue and saying, “Hey, how are you dealing with this?” But again the commonality was wherever we were it was not going to the traditional Jewish neighborhood—identifiable Jewish neighborhood where there was a concentration of Jewish couples that were doing things that perceived ‘normal Jewish couples’ were doing. But kind of going outside of those environments—whether we chose to or not and finding our way that way. We purposely avoided some of the highly concentrated Jewish areas.

#3. Glenn

It is well known by American Jews that there exist areas of the major metropolitan areas in the United States that have a higher concentration of Jews. Over time these areas have shifted, usually moving from closer in to further out of the urban center. This would bear studying, for American Jewish organizations have determined

over time where to locate buildings that will house the organizations. This all comes at a cost. Bet Chaverim, in Canton, Michigan, has never grown to the size where we could purchase a building. Instead, we rent space at a Methodist Church. Glenn talks about how some of these “practical” concerns are interwoven with the programmatic concern of passing on Jewish identity to the children.

Then we went on to a different area, which I go back to, the formal area. The services - the kids attended services. They went to the religious school, they were involved in the school, as you know, and the school did a good job preparing them. They prepared and successfully completed their Bar and Bat Mitzvah. I think some of those are the factors that drew them into the religion, and despite the fact that, and oddly, we live in an area where there are no Jews. There are so few Jews in the western Wayne county and Plymouth/Canton area. So I thought it was nice that they had this Jewish identity. That Sarah and David both maintained their Jewish identity, and even grew their Jewish identity while they were in a geographic area that was strictly non-Jewish. And which didn't support the Jewish identity only because there weren't many Jews.

Int: Pretty interesting isn't it?

Yeah, it really is. You're such a vast minority; you're getting no positive reinforcement externally. Internally at the family level and even through the congregation the kids are getting positive reinforcement. And so that was good.

#4. Barb

Barb talks about how she and Ray looked around, sampled congregations, to see whether they “felt friendly.” In any given metropolitan area there are only a handful of synagogues to choose from. This is somewhat different than in the Christian community, as different denominational churches proliferate throughout an area. The lack of number of synagogues, and the necessary size required to maintain efficient organizational structure and staff, may mitigate against the small group interfacing many seek to establish a supportive comfort level. Barb mentions the holiday celebration—*Simhat Torah*—that occurs in the fall, honors the Torah (Bible), and signals the beginning of

religious school for the kids. Note Barb participated in the search for the synagogue as the non-Jewish mother of two.

Int: Did you go anywhere before Bet Chaverim?

Barb: We checked out Kol Ami and Shir Shalom. We had been at a few things at Temple Israel but knew that wasn't for us. That was just not friendly in my mind.

Int: What did they say?

Barb: One, Temple Israel, they were the ones that really aggravated us at the beginning. When you go to a service even at the Oneg, if they didn't know who you were, they would not approach or come to talk to you. It was too cliquish, and so few are part of the clique already they wouldn't take the time to get to know you. That was not comfortable.

Int: So you knock off the obvious ones. You are living here then?

Barb: Actually we had just checked out those ones. This was sheer dumb luck. We were looking at this house at the time and decided to put an offer in and we saw in the paper. You guys were meeting for one of the holidays right in the clubhouse near us here.

Int: Right around the corner?

Barb: Yeah, yeah. We had seen it in the Observer newspaper. And I said, "Hey, look at this." So we decided to check it out. It was kind of interesting. Looking around was. It was the fall holidays, and we moved in here in November. We came and we saw and I think it was Simchat Torah. That really made it someplace special. We wanted to join because you really could be a part of that. They were marching around. We were able to get close. We were able to touch the Torah, and actively be a part of it. Whereas in the bigger shuls, yeah the rabbi had it and was marching around with it but you couldn't actually. You did not feel like you were a part of it.

Int: What year was it?

Barb: Gosh, let's see.

Int: Joe was 12?

Barb: 1997. I think there was something going on at the church. So you have to use the clubhouse as those are going to go to the service, paying to go to the service coming from a Christian background. I had no idea you had to buy tickets to go to a worship service, and they cost so much. I found it was much more

important to go every week than just twice a year. Do it regularly rather than the high holy days to show off my new hat. That seemed to be my attitude about some of the wives, who came to the congregation to show off their new hat.

Int: That is a classic problem... who they want to sit next to...

Barb: Ray did take us to one of the services at one of the larger synagogues and he literally paid for tickets that you were to sit in the lobby and listen to the service over the loudspeaker and I think that's where this really made the difference and then we went to the Yom Kippur service at the shul, at Bet Chaverim, where we could just come to the services and just be a part of it and then to actually be able to touch the Torah. At the Simchat Torah celebration it was like okay here we are able to actually participate. There we can sit in the lobby and listen over the loudspeakers. Which is more beneficial to us?

Int: That's what we're trying to do. Make it more approachable. So the religious school was meeting at the Montessori school, and I remember conversations with you and meeting you and talking with you about your son.

Barb: We wanted you to know he might be able to learn to read Hebrew and not able to write it because of his disability. We never got as far as talking about schools with any of the other temples. We did speak with Shir Shalom. But they did not have playgroup for our daughter, and they said we could start one up if we wanted to.

Int: We had a playgroup?

Barb: Yes, and it was meeting at D's home.

#5. Jill and David

First impressions mean a lot. Here is a report by a non-Jewish spouse who attended her first Jewish services on an on-going basis as she agreed to have her children raised with Jewish identities. She felt “comforted” by involvement with service and community. She is able to express her feelings in a direct way. Community workers can learn from Jill what kinds of responses non-Jews may be having as they experience being “strangers in a strange land.” In the second paragraph below, David talks about how Jill convinced him to take charge of the playgroup—a group for pre-school children to learn

and experience Judaism. It is important to note how quickly Jill was able to transition from her Catholic background to taking a leadership role for the education of children at the synagogue. Part of the role of community building social work is to find ways to involve individual and families in the running functioning of the congregation.

Volunteerism leads to ownership and stronger identification. It is good role modeling for the kids as well for commitment to a community.

Jill: Well, at the service – the first service we went to – everything’s in Hebrew, it’s like I’m back as a kid and mass and it’s all Latin, and I don’t know what’s going on. Fortunately the English translation’s there most of the time, so I could at least see what’s going on, and read it and understand it. I didn’t have any problems with it. I actually found the services especially very comforting, I think that’s a good way to put it, you get a lot of comfort out of that. It was nice. And the sense of community I enjoyed, because I think that’s one thing I think organized religion can provide, is a sense of community. I like all the people, I liked you, and I had gone to some bigger temples. For example, your cousin, the one in Massachusetts, Ray. We went to high holy days, it was one of these huge congregations with singing, the cantor is singing away all the time, and the rabbi, and a ton of people. I didn’t actually get the sense of community from that so much. Maybe because we were strangers in a strange land, we didn’t know these people anyway. But I got it more from the small congregation. I thought it was a little weird you guys met in the Methodist church, but it is what it is. But I enjoyed it. I could see our kids growing up with these people, and becoming educated in the Jewish religion. And I had to learn all about what a Bar and Bat Mitzvah was, I didn’t know what that was, what was involved in that, how you got to that point. I was actually surprised that you were talking about mixed marriages, that there were a lot of them in that particular congregation, so I think that also made me feel more comfortable. I didn’t feel like such an oddball.

David: Actually how that all happened is someone else was running the playgroup when we joined, Michelle Ray was running the playgroup when we first joined, and I don’t know if it was the first year we were there or the second year when her oldest was now going to be leaving the playgroup and going into the religious classes, Jessica. And the playgroups used to be in individual’s houses. We used to rotate through houses. When Michelle was no longer going to be in charge of the playgroup, Jill actually stepped up and convinced me that we should now take charge of the playgroup. It was not me who said, “OK, I’ll go do the playgroup.” It was Jill who stepped up – she said we should step and run the playgroup. That’s how we got involved in running the playgroup and we made the transition from people’s houses to then having it once a month at the Montessori, where at that time the religious school was taking place. So we

would still do it once a month, but we did it there and our feeling was to get the kids used to going to the Montessori so that when they make the transition into the classes it will be an easier transition for them because they go there once a month anyway.

Int: So your kids are growing, going to the school, you're doing the playgroup. The unifying the house process is still good?

Jill: So the kids start going to religious school, they get out of playgroup, and we're in it for the long haul now. The idea is that they're working towards being Bar and Bat Mitzvah'd. Again I didn't feel like there was a whole lot I could do to help, because this is something I have not gone through myself, so I don't know, I'm just kind of trusting that the religious school took care of them.

#6. Jerry

Jerry grew up Jewish in the Detroit area. He is one of the founding members of the synagogue. He is very knowledgeable about Jewish life in the area. Here he expresses a common trope written about and heard as a common critique of American Jewish congregational life. His language is a little strong. Yet, he felt empowered to make changes and help build an organization that fit his and others interests and needs. Again, the theme of small group, face-to-face community and relationships is sounded.

Jerry: I went to a Bat Mitzvah at Temple Israel. One of my cousins, his daughter had her Bat Mitzvah. So I go there, and I'm looking at these kids. They're wearing expensive suits, and \$500 gowns. This was 15 years ago, so wearing a \$500 gown is a big deal to a teenager. The boys had Rolexes on, and I did not want my kids to be brought up that way if they were going to be a part of the Jewish religion. To me, that was worshipping the devil, not worshipping religion. Temple Israel has a lot of good stuff going for it, that's what I had seen. So we started talking to Wendy and Amy, and some other people, and they felt sort of the same way. We could do religion our way, which is what we did. We've had it in basements, we've had it in homes, we've had it in backyards. We did things that other congregations didn't do. We would go on camping trips. That's not really a Jewish activity. But, we all had a good time I thought and I think we've served a real good purpose so far.

#7. Marc and Denise

Getting back involved in the Jewish community is a common theme throughout my interviews. Formal involvement seems to be curtailed, generally, after *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* age. The advent of parenthood brings with it a need to become associated once again with formal Jewish institutions. Hillel is the university campus Jewish organization.

Int: So all of a sudden, some decisions were made. You and Marc were moving towards being more involved in synagogues. Why do you think that happened?

Denise: Because he's not a hypocrite. Once we decided to raise our child Jewish, he figured how could they be Jewish without being involved more formally. Even though he had a Bar Mitzvah, a decade earlier or two, he just became more interested formally when we decided to raise Marlowe Jewish.

Int: So you just kinda came along and participated. Did you ever feel that it wasn't for you? Or there was an issue?

Marc: No, they were very nice at Hillel. I think we took a class together when I was actually pregnant.

#8. Rick and Ilene

The story in this narrative might fall under the rubric, "Jewish geography." It shows the networking and interconnectedness of the small, minority Jewish population, as well as the continued referencing of Jewish organizations identified by Jews with geographic areas. It also shows that there is no one direct route that affiliation and involvement with the organized community takes. As well, we find the interfacing of informal and formal societal structures -- the family, a funeral, the work environment, and synagogue organization. We are also clued into how the needs of a nuclear family to educate their children are met. Finally, this is an example of what I call the "trickle up" nature of Jewish education. The movement back toward connection with the Jewish community started with the child's curiosity and questions.

Ilene: And then Zach started talking and then we started to realize we couldn't answer his questions. We could, we did, we have but we needed more people to answer the questions the same way because he's a boy that has a lot of questions. We have books and books and books and children's bibles and you start to look at it and realize oh my gosh I can't read this to a child even though it's the children's version. He has a lot of questions. I think that's really what drew us into it a little bit more. My grandpa passed away—I was at his funeral—I went alone because my kids were pretty small and ran into Jerry Kaplan's mother. Her and Jerry's dad were friends with my grandparents. Now my grandmother passed away before I met Rick a long time ago but they were all friends for years and years. I didn't know it because I wouldn't know my grandparents' friends. But she said, "Oh my son he belongs to a shul out in your area. I know you're in Canton, you should..." It was one of those conversations when you're at a funeral and my grandfather had remarried after my grandmother passed away and had a second family. So it was my grandfather's funeral but it wasn't our funeral, it was very it much somebody else's funeral for him. So you take it in your pocket and you're grieving and you go through your thing and you don't worry about it, you stumble through your job and I was staying with the kids and Rick was working. And he stumbled through his job and wound up working with Michelle and they wound up traveling together frequently because that was what their job was—they got real close.

Rick: Yep. We were working (for Ford Motor) in Germany around Christmas time and we were wandering back to the hotel and we were talking about stuff for the holidays and she said, "I wanted to get you something for Hanukkah." And I said, "Really? You're Jewish? We celebrate Hanukkah too!" And she's like, "Really, what temple do you go to?" I said, "Well, we don't go to a temple we just live out in Canton."

Ilene: The kids were still pretty small but still Zach was starting to ask questions.

Rick: And she said, "So you gotta come to ours!" So I think it was the following Passover was when we came to the first Seder at the Hanford Club House.

Ilene: We stopped in and we sat down. And we attended that, and I guess we looked at the Sunday school—and I remember calling in between my grandfather's funeral, off and on, before we went with Michelle. Maybe we just did not make the right connection to figure out where to go or how to go, but I must've also been talking to Dave or Carrie. Then somewhere I saw something in the paper, I remember tearing something out of the paper, but it was just one of those weird—took a variety of meetings to actually make something happen. And really it was someone saying, "Okay you have nowhere to be, you're coming." So we did. But at the same time while these things were coming to light, Zach had all of these unanswerable questions, which still remain for the child and always will. So that's just kind of how we got involved in it and got more into it. But prior to

becoming involved at the synagogue the boys—we had books, we had some minor home education, menorahs, and Hanukkah gifts and all that kind of stuff.

Int: It evolved.

Rick: It did. It really evolved and as we got more and more involved with Bet Chaverim it brought us into the religion even more.

Ilene: Mmm. 'Cause we started attending services more. High holidays at first, little bits by little bits the family Sukkot, the things you go to with your kids at Sunday school and you just move along in the years...

Int: Before you know it, you're editing and putting out the newsletter and coming to everything and you have these bar mitzvahs.

Int: Let's go back to something. Don't take this question the wrong way, but you're in Germany and you're with a co-worker from Ford and you're hearing about you meeting up with Michelle who's I know born and raised—born in Israel, raised in Cleveland. So you are working for Ford Motor Company and you discover about the Passover Seder and you come home and you must've had an interesting conversation with Ilene because you're promoting this whole movement.

Ilene: Well he had heard of it because I had made some contact prior too.

Rick: Yeah

Int: Okay, okay.

Ilene: He came back and said, "Hey I was talking with someone I work with, Michelle," and I don't know if I knew her then or didn't know her then, I certainly know her better now than I would have at that time period and there's a Passover Seder and I might not have heard about it until much closer to Passover

Rick: Yeah this was in December when we heard about it and...

Ilene: He traveled with Michelle every three weeks. He traveled three weeks home, three weeks one place, three weeks another place. So they were together for almost two years

Rick: Constantly, yeah.

Ilene: So they were together frequently. It was part of their jobs.

Int: So there must've been a conversation somewhere along the line where you kind like said, "Okay we're gonna do Bet Chaverim. We're gonna take the kids to it or we're gonna..."

Ilene: Well, we went to Passover.

Rick: Yeah and then we probably then went to the High Holidays.

Ilene: Well we went to Passover and maybe Matt was going into first grade or second grade—something like that. He was a little older when he started, he was probably going into second and Zach was going into Kindergarten. And Zach in kindergarten needed more help, needed more questions answered and Matt didn't. So we went to Passover and had an enjoyable Passover—it was not a big thing—we went on with our lives. But I probably called about Sunday school more than anything. And that's all that there was at that time. There weren't enough kids to make a kids group or anything. So I called probably and maybe talked to David or something and we got the kids in school and then maybe went to the high holidays.

Rick: And at that point...

Ilene: And we were like because first grade might've been the time we mostly put the kids in. And we were going to put Matt in starting in second grade, which would've been fine and Zach wasn't going to be outdone that his brother was going to attend something he couldn't attend so can he go too? And of course he did and that might've been what really pushed us in was the need for a Sunday school for the kids. We weren't particularly um...we didn't interview a lot of schools. We didn't interview any other schools. We only had a vague passing notion of what Bet Chaverim members were like 'cause we had met them. Everyone seemed nice—we had nice conversations and we sat with the Gordon's and we talked about airplanes, and the kids were doing their thing and running around. It was just one of those chatting kind of things and it was like well wait a second, there's a lot of people with similar interests to us. And that's really all it really was at that point. But kids need Sunday school and we'd try to for a year and see. That's kind of how it was; I was just looking for reinforcement to what we already were teaching the kids at home in a mild sort of life-living sort of way. I figured we'd try it out so I think that's really kind of how it...

Int: Okay. And so it seems like there was a cascade of different things happening and then finally you got to where you needed to be and you were looking kind of anyway and you found it.

Ilene: Well we stumbled in—we fell in the door after a couple people poked and prodded us and maybe we saw some stuff here and there. But any one event wasn't enough to have us tumble through the door perhaps until someone invited

us to attend something. Someone that we trusted maybe someone Rick was friends with...

Rick: That we knew more than an acquainted of an acquainted of an acquaintance.

#9. Robin and AJ

Unlike many, Robin searched for a congregation before having children. She had moved across country for employment and found a synagogue on the East Coast before moving to Michigan to take another job. She implies the congregation helps as a sort of extended family, an often used metaphor for congregational life.

Robin: You have to keep in mind, none of our family is close by. So it's not like we're going to be getting a day to day pressure. If your folks lived within a couple miles of you, it would be different. Our family doesn't live close, so that helps. So, we got married. We didn't spend a lot of time talking about how we were going to raise the kids. It was sort of one of those areas that we didn't really want to get into; we didn't want to get into a really deep discussion on the topic.

AJ: Her mom sort of said something one day that set me afire. But I just sort of let it go.

Robin: Then we moved here to Canton. We saw something in the paper one day, it was around Hanukkah, an article about the congregation. Another time we went to the ice cream social event at A's house, and that's where I met a bunch of folks. At that point, I got more involved with the congregation, so did he.

Int: You're looking for some kind of education for kids.

Robin: Well, they hadn't been born yet. When I first started the congregation, I didn't have children. That didn't come for a couple of years.

Int: So, why were you there? Why did you come to the ice cream social for Religious School?

Robin: Well, I had been looking for churches for him and I always was interested in going to temple for high holidays. When we moved here, there was nothing in the phone book. We didn't hear of anything until we saw this ad in the paper and we decided to go find out about it.

AJ: I think previous to that we may have been invited to a service in Ann Arbor. That was actually my first exposure to the High Holidays.

Robin: Well we moved here in 1994. We got involved in the congregation. Then eventually I got pregnant with Reagan. I was already starting to help out at the Sunday school and everything, so I think it came about almost more as a default. What we did talk about was, "Hey I'm part of the congregation, it would be hard not to bring my kids here and have them learn. We can start them in an education for Judaism in the Old Testament, which we always have agreed on."

#10. Ray.

We recall that Ray and Barb wanted to be interviewed individually. So we have here Ray's understanding of the nuances of a "friendly and inviting" congregation. Ray spent an extended period as president of Bet Chaverim, so he is well suited to talk about it. Ray spent innumerable hours over a period of years helping others become a part of the synagogue so that they could experience what he did. He once said that he knew one day he was going to be a president of a congregation. Still, he had to come a long way as he was respectful of his wife's interests at the time. Ray makes a strong distinction between cultural Judaism, cultural Christianity, and religious belief. During December, nearly every house in his neighborhood has some kind of Christmas lighting and decoration. Bet Chaverim was a place where he could feel at home with others who shared his interests and chosen family path. A surprise for Ray was that Barb became more and more involved in the congregation. She felt welcomed. We were to discover, over time, that her father had been half-Jewish, and converted to Christianity. Part of this story is Barb's rediscovery of some of her roots as well.

Ray: It was the perfect combination, not to sell Bet Chaverim but it was the perfect blend of not being too institutional, not being clique-ish, not being everything that institutional Judaism is. Barb and I both would go to the big synagogues and nothing felt—our perception was—I can't speak for the people that were there...nothing felt genuine. It was about the same thing, hearing the

Rabbi. It didn't touch us, it didn't affect us hearing them say the same things, being very safe. You have to be wearing the best clothes, it was all about status, it was all about if you were giving the most money for donations and if you were going to the right men's club or the women's club. Again, it was very hard for us to find the right place to feel comfortable.

Int: You needed the right place because your son was coming of age. Meanwhile, Barb wasn't promoting or pushing any kind of Christian belief system in the house, per say. Or was she?

Ray: I felt like she was. I don't know if she felt, but I felt by having the Christmas tree up, by having the Christmas lights up, by celebrating Easter, and I wasn't doing anything that she was promoting Christianity in the house. Not blatantly the religion, but again the culture.

Int: So what I thought I heard her say was at the same time you guys were doing family Passovers and celebrating Hanukkah with the kids. So there's a dual...

Ray: There's a dual there but again it comes back to—and I take the blame for this—but she was, Barb is always willing to go the extra mile to do those things and she's celebrating her childhood and her upbringing by continuing to bring the Christian holidays into our household. So even though we talked about it, it was very complicated, even though we agreed that we wanted to bring Joe up in the Jewish faith, it didn't feel real to me because we never would have had a tree in the house, we never would have had Christmas lights up. So what we did though, which was the blend...it wasn't the religious portion of those things that Barb was promoting, it was the celebrating the holidays.

Int: So when did she...so there's a point at which things shifted? Somehow you found yourself at Bet Chaverim. Was it because of the kids? How did that happen?

Ray: I don't know the answer to that question. You've known us for a lot of years. I think it was the acceptance of the community itself that helped her feel that it's okay to, that she is part of the community. When she started, when she was asked to be part of the Sunday school. When what she would talk about was accepted, she would always say things like, "Well I don't know the Torah." Or, "They're not going to listen to me." Actually, now that I'm thinking about it again she thought it was very funny that a Jewish religious school would ask a Christian woman to teach at their religious school. But then as she did it and she learned that she actually knew more than most of the people, biblically—Old Testament—than a lot of people at the school. And that she could reach them. Then she started feeling more and more like really is part of the community. And our son came along. And that's when it all started to work...

Ray: So we got drawn more and more into the community because of those pieces that were Bet Chaverim and I think it was infectious to Joe to see that he could be accepted by other Jewish people and that he could be around other Jewish people. He would go like me—we would go to Beth Shalom for example—ah, Temple Israel, excuse me, and he would see the other kids all dressed up in their suits and he totally rejected that he would have to get dressed up and demonstrate this kind of thing, that he couldn't be Joe he had to be this other person which he didn't feel like he was to go to Temple Israel to be accepted as a Jewish boy.

Int: That's interesting, so I guess it's worked.

Ray: It's worked with our daughter, Amanda. She's actually learned to read and you've seen that she's participating, and I think she's going to continue there a long time. Joe is a little different, but it was a success.

Ray: I found it, I mean, you know again I am talking to you, but I found I don't know how to say this without sounding insulting to you. I found Bet Chaverim to be tolerable. I could go, I liked the people that were there, I—the service was of reasonable length. What I heard touched me.

Int: I guess there is a victory every so often.

Ray: Very often. You were not, you weren't—you were accessible and I had never felt that before and that is what really kept me coming back was really your accessibility. And then the acceptance of the group that was, as you know as I became more and more involved myself as president and publicity and all that. And it was the fact that I could experiment a little bit and get good feelings not just from a religious perspective, but from an organizational perspective—which I never could have done at a big synagogue—even if I would had wanted to...I think that it's as much "lead by example"—I couldn't expect them to, and this was just from experience, I wouldn't have anticipated it before we got married, or before this miracle happened of negotiation. By us investing so much time being involved, and feeling in general better about it and going to shul, I think that that helped to build their identity. The time that you took to take interest in some of what Joe was doing, or our relatively lengthy conversations even as Amanda was sitting here boosted everyone's interest. It's—that's also part of it. Being able to have that kind of conversation.

It's kind of like knowing that it's "accessible" is what I think made it a success. Knowing that it's a smaller group, knowing that it's a flexible group, knowing that for the kids is what made it a success.

Int: I guess meeting other young families and other kids obviously was useful as well.

Ray: Well yeah, because at school they felt very isolated and alone and seeing other kids and feeling their company and camaraderie made a huge difference.

Chapter 7

A Few Additional Components and Surprises

Introduction

In this chapter we will look at few additional components of the narratives that were not as prevalently shared as those in the prior chapters, but whose presence sound important notes nonetheless. Taken together, these narrative lines tell of a cultural milieu much more complex—and positively directed—than the current American Jewish community discourse allows us to see.

One trope was the “need for a connection to a strong history, family and ritual structure.” Though at times it is not as clear to what specifics they are referring, it seems, to paraphrase one parent, that in a world where anything goes, there is a sense something should give “stability” to the family they are creating. Perhaps with all the openness, flexibility, and freedom, couples setting out to establish a household also find they have a need for “stability” and “connectedness.” “Judaism” is identified as providing this “structure,” and is again desirable for the non-Jewish partner in an open market place of possibilities.

Interestingly there were several accounts of how the engagement with a synagogue, brought about by the need to educate the children, presented the opportunity for couples to “learn together” about a significant subject like Judaism. They begin to read further in areas that now, as adults, they could appreciate more and “get more out of.”

Quite often I heard about interest in a “non-dogmatic, open and flexible religion” by the non-Jewish spouse. Usually these narratives include references to Christian religious approaches that are heavily dogmatic and critical of other religions. There seems to be a view that Judaism is more open to others and less rigid in its teachings. Again, I hear much about the attractiveness of a thoughtful religion that focuses on values and human relations rather a fixed and rigid theology. Indeed, in representing a “Reform Judaism” (though as we see many of those who come to reform temples were raised in Conservative, even Orthodox, settings) those with whom I work are self-selecting. They seek out a less rigid Jewish religio-cultural expression as well.

Again, though this is certainly not always the case, and stories abound describing the difficulties these interfaith families have dealing with strongly believing Christian family members, I found numerous stories about the “support of non-Jewish family” for the choice one of their members has made to “go Jewish” with their kids. This is an important historical finding, for it cuts against the macro narrative of the antagonism between the Jewish and Christian communities. In fact, in some cases, it appears the non-Jewish grandparents were genuinely overjoyed by what was happening. Jewish community organizations need to be sensitive to this counter-historical trend.

An additional statement heard several times is “Judaism’s core is a part of Christianity, not vice versa.” What exactly this means needs interrogation, but it appears to reveal some kind of scholarly knowledge concerning the relationship of the two religions. It is important in that the non-Jewish spouse finds aspects of their religious identity in Jewish religious settings, while the articulation of a strict theology concerning Jesus is antithetical to any Jewish belief system. That, some would argue, was the central

point of the separation of the faiths in the first place. Two themes are important to explore further here with the presentation of three additional narratives. They showed up in many, but not all, of the interviews.

“Desire for a Unified Household”

The first of these I call “Desire for a Unified Household.” One of the recurring themes found in the oral testimony of the parents was their desire to create what they called a “unified household.” While great respect for each other’s individual beliefs was also a constantly sounded trope, the desire to create a “home” where the children would have a singular religious identity meant, in other words, that the home itself needed to be “unified.” One interviewee said succinctly:

After much soul-searching and prayer I realized that in a “split” household, it would be difficult for children not to feel they were being disloyal to one parent if they chose or practiced the other’s belief system.

This of course did not mean the system of religious and cultural expression would always be monolithic. Degrees of unification could be inferred from what they said. For some, there was a boundary to be drawn; for others, it was more of a grey line. Still, for these couples, blending fifty-fifty did not seem desirable. It is of course a delicate balance to keep. Sometimes the non-Jewish, as well as the Jewish, spouse is still working out their religious identity within the “unified” family. There is an ongoing process for the adults, who are now also parents. What they seem to mean is unified in terms of sharing cultural symbols, which in turn provides a setting for shared communication and activities. This makes sense for people living together, under one roof, to want their “nuclear family” to be a cultural unit, an expression of who they are. As one of the non-Jewish grandparents

said, “You should not confuse the children. It doesn’t matter which you choose.” Still, it would require more research to see how this unified identity is comes to be constructed.

#1. Jill

In this narrative, the non-Jewish spouse, Jill (who eventually freely took on/adopted a Jewish identity herself, see below) discusses the process by which the household became progressively “unified.” It was not done all at once. David had non-Jewish influences in his Jewish family. It took going through a few holiday seasons to work things out.

Int: Was this a “policy decision” of the family?

Jill: And we had to talk with the kids, because there was stuff they didn’t like. So we didn’t do Christmas any more.

David: That was your decision also. Because in the beginning we did both, and they when they were getting older, Jill actually said, “You know I don’t want to be confusing them.”

Jill: I didn’t see the reason at all. They loved having the tree. We had a little tree, a little fake tree, and the lights and stuff. I said, “You know, we shouldn’t be doing both, because if we’re raising the kids in one religion, we need to follow that.” So the Christmas stuff went away.

David: And that didn’t bother me that she would want to put up the Christmas tree. That didn’t bother me, and then she made that decision to not do it and ...

Jill: And the kids would ask us, “Why didn’t we have a Christmas tree, and why does everybody get this week off around Christmas, why is Christmas such a big deal, and we don’t do it?” So I’d explain that.

David: And the kids still remember us having a small tree.

Int: Logical questions, especially since it’s everywhere.

Jill: We kept some things. The kids get presents around the holidays. We’re not doing Christmas, but they get presents.

David: They get presents from my aunt and stuff like that, because my aunt is Catholic.

Int: So is this the unified household theme I mentioned? Did you think it was bad to have both, confusing to the kids?

Jill: David had a Christmas tree!

David: Because my mom wanted it, not 'cause my dad wanted it.

Jill: Well, we did also, of course, when I was growing up, and it was a big deal to put the tree up, put the stuff on it. So that was kind of a tough decision for me, to say, "No more tree."

David: And I didn't want to say that to her, because I didn't think it was fair for me to totally get rid of your faith, your ritual of your faith.

Jill: It was like a remnant, so I thought, I'll decorate the house another way. And I really like the fact that around Hanukkah you do a menorah, because to me that's a festive thing. I was ok with that.

#2. Marc and Denise.

Once again, a non-Jewish wife and mother counsels for a one religion household. In this case we hear of her interest, and her flexibility, in adopting her husband's religion for the child's upbringing in spite of his willingness to go outside that faith if need be. Of German Lutheran descent herself, she would agree to any faith, just not atheism. In addition, near the end of this narrative, we hear sensitivity for Marc's minority status in her family. "I didn't want his identity to be minimized," she remarks. This is directly counter to the inherited Jewish discourse on intermarriage.

Int: When you met Marc, did you know that you were going to marry him? Did you know that you were going to raise your children with Jewish identities?

Denise: I was very open to it when we were married because I realized that the child needs to have a religious background. No matter what it is, to me it had to be either his faith or my faith. We weren't going to be Quakers, which was one of Marc's ideas. And I really do not feel comfortable being an atheist, because that

was his compromise. I was very open to it, because, to me, religion is very important. I believe a child should have parents that have a religious identity. Once the child has established this religious identity, if they want to, they can use that just as a base to explore other religions. Marc and I are really flexible, we are not rigid. I mean, Marlowe had a Bat Mitzvah. I am sure that she will raise her kids to be Jewish, and also seek out a mate that doesn't have to be Jewish, but be willing to raise their children Jewish, I would imagine. But, you never know what the future holds. When I grew up, religion was important. We were not zealots by far in any religion. My mother was Catholic and married a Lutheran, and that's my family tree. I don't know about Marc's.

Int: So, basically I think you are saying, by being very flexible...

Denise: I wanted Marc to be very comfortable... It made sense that she either would be, since I was raised Lutheran, either Lutheran or Jewish. It doesn't make sense to apply a religion if you have not had that religious experience.

Int: So, how did you decide Jewish?

Denise: Well, I figured that Jewish faith made logical sense. When I was Confirmed, there were questions I had that were not fully answered. Also, I did not want Marc to be the only Jewish person in our family. He's marrying into my family, so his identity would be probably extremely minimized, and I just didn't feel that was right. I think if the majority of my family were Lutherans, it didn't matter if I ended up raising my own Jewish. He would still be a member of my family, and my side of the family didn't matter. But, if I raised her Lutheran, then Mark's identity would be minimized. I just didn't want his religion to be forever minimized, and so it would be a stupid decision.

#3 Rick and Ilene

We also hear about the extended family where the Christian side celebrates Christmas. It could put strain on the household. In these narratives, the extended family seems to have come to terms with what is happening in the unified household where the parents have decided to raise their children with Jewish identities.

Rick: We send out our holiday cards to Jewish friends and Jewish family, and we do just plain holiday cards to go out to anyone else...But we don't celebrate Christmas in our house per se. We do have big dreidel stockings that Hanukkah Harry can fill up Christmas Eve on his way to the deli.

Ilene: Those are gifts for Hanukkah.

Rick: So we do a little bit of that. But Santa doesn't come, and we don't go to church—we'll go to my family and we'll have Christmas dinner and do that.

Ilene: So we're together with family.

Rick: Because that's what the family celebrates. But they know here we celebrate Hanukkah. We do the lights; we do the blessings.

Ilene: It became apparent pretty early on that with Zach having so many questions that we had to be pretty—and we knew this with Matt—we had to pick one thing and stick to it because you can't easily teach or practice both things. You have to stick to something and believe in it and so we did and we chose to celebrate other holidays as guests in our family members' homes. And certainly don't exclude that idea from the children or hide it from them in any way. And if they ask we try to give them the best answer we can or we try and seek someone that can answer for them in a better way. Just because we don't know doesn't mean someone doesn't know. We might very well ask Rick's mother or somebody who practices whatever religion they're asking about. I would do the same thing if they wanted to know about Hindu or anything else—I'd find someone who is of that religion and try and see if we could find a common answer.

Int: So you're consciously going about creating a unified household.

Rick: Yes.

Ilene: Absolutely.

#4. Paula and Charlie

My respondents came from many different socio-ethnic and religious backgrounds. All the non-Jews in my research group were from Christian birth families. In some instances, such as Paula and Charlie, the wisdom of the non-Jewish, Christian grandmother helps to lead to the Jewish upbringing of the children.

Charlie: I remember your mother saying it was just an important thing for the kids to have a religion and that we shouldn't confuse them by having it be ambiguous

Paula: Which totally surprised me, because my mother is very Catholic. We went to church with mantillas on their head...a little lace on the head. My aunt's a nun. It's not just like I was raised catholic, I was raised Catholic... So we were very

devout. But I think my mother was just very thankful. I might have kids, but if I don't have husband, you know. I had been saying to them...then I met Charlie...I was thirty-two...my parents say to Charlie, thank you, thank you, thank you...But I was very surprised my mother, as devout as she is, would say don't confuse the children. Choose one religion, don't do both. I give her a lot of credit for that. She's never undermined it, ever. Any more than would in that we do Christmas and Easter.

#5. Karen

Again, the non-Jewish spouse wants a unified household, and, where the Jewish father had made known his interest in raising the children as Jews, she was willing to go along with him. Even with diversity occurring in a single family among adult siblings who started their own families, the feeling to unify one's household under one religious banner still holds for some. Here Karen discusses her tolerance comes from her mother.

Karen: I think I just felt religion was important and it didn't really matter what kind. I grew up in a Jewish neighborhood. I had friends that were Jewish. To me it was not really a big deal. I just felt it was important to bring up your children in any religion. And if he wanted to do it in the Jewish faith that was OK with me. But as I've gotten to know it better I do appreciate it more than I did before I understood better.

Int: Were your parents involved in the church when you grew up?

Karen: Just my mother

Int: Do you have any siblings? Are they married?

Karen: My brother also married a Jewish woman. My other brother married a Catholic woman. Just a big hodge-podge. I was brought up to be tolerant. Except for the Catholics. My mother thought they drank too much. Now, though, I'd like to know more about the faith and a little about the peace I can get at this time in my life.

#6. Staci and Mike

Indeed, there are differing degrees of “unification.” It is a process worked out over time. Mike and Staci have decided to raise their two boys as Jews. The boys have

been attending the religious school for a couple of years, and attend all holiday celebrations. Still, Mike, the non-Jewish father, feels something is missing for him. In one of the interviews the dialogue went this way.

Staci: At first we kind of were under the mind that we love each other and this is going to work out, that we're both moral and ethical people and we have the same kind of value system. We're just going to raise them with that, and we're going to expose them to my religion and your religion. Now when they celebrate Christmas and they celebrate Easter, they don't have the background of that so much.

Mike: I think that's what you see as the Christian part of it.

Staci: I do because when I grew up I didn't have that. That's not Jewish. But...

Mike: I think you're saying that's how you compromise is by allowing them to celebrate Christmas and Easter.

Int: When you say celebrate it do you go to mass.

Mike: No celebrate the commercial part of it only.

Int: Is that OK, I'm kind of sensing that you'd like a little more.

Mike: I think I need a little more. It's not something I've pursued much because I really don't want to upset Staci, I don't want to confuse the boys. I don't want to contradict what they're learning. I guess I just need something for myself is what it's going to end up being, and that's going to be my religion. They're going to be Jewish. With Staci it is kind of how it's going to be. I've been coming to that realization. I'm OK with everything. Judaism--I like the religion. There's nothing really against my beliefs. I've always had a hard time with the Hebrew, because I don't know it and it seems so foreign, but I understand that it connects back to the history and the culture. The thing I like about Judaism is that it's not just a religion, it's a culture. And I like the culture, and I like the holidays. I like the shortened versions of all the celebrations, not necessarily the long drawn out Passover and stuff, it's difficult, but I like the ideas of all of it, celebrating the past, celebrating the turmoil of the culture and of the people. Because really, even if I'm Christian, which I am, my identifying with Jesus that he grew up Jewish and his experiences growing up my boys are experiencing, so it's not against what I believe. I'm a pretty open-minded person, which helps, and I don't like to think that I know the way to do anything, or that I know things better than other people. I like to experience a lot of different things and find what's best, or what works best.

Staci: I was hoping that in joining that it would fulfill a spiritual need on your part.

Mike: Well, it does to a certain degree. I like it. With the temple itself, when we have our service, I get a lot out of that. I like the congregation, and the people there, that's all good.

Staci: My idea is not that to snatch up our kids and say I'm raising you Jewish.

Mike: But you want us all to be comfortable in your religion and not expose them to...

Staci: That's my hope. My hope is that you're comfortable and as they learn it more, that they're just comfortable, that they've learned the Hebrew, and that's why I thought the religious part is so crucial

“Good Values and Ethics”

An additional common theme found in the narratives is the search by many of the parents to find resources for helping them teach their children “good values and ethics.” Judaism was seen as a helpful in this regard. A large part of the system of mitzvot is dedicated to the practice of ethical behavior. The religious discourse of normative Judaism provides such a footing. Judaism’s emphasis on “deed not creed” provides a discursive field for these parents that helps them in their “job” of raising young children. Here the non-Jewish spouse struggles with the Hebrew, but understands the idea in any case.

#1. Staci and Mike

Mike: We've both agreed that we'd like to have some religion, because of the core values, there are certain things you can't teach them as a parent, that it's nice to have taught from the outside, the religion does give you a basis of core values and I like a lot of the shir tikva, the mitzvahs.

Staci: Shir Tikva is the other synagogue, you mean mitzvahs?

Mike: Mitzvahs, oh that's the other synagogue, oh that's the one they go to, to help people?

Staci: That synagogue we went to, with Rabbi Arnie? Who ran the...

Mike: Yeah what's that place they go to with the mitzvahs?

Staci: Yad Ezra

Mike: Yad Ezra, you know what I meant, but the mitzvahs, I like that idea, thinking of other people, thinking of the land, and remembering the past

We did also go to an interfaith couple group after we had the problems, by Rabbi A. at the Shir Tikva. We never went to his synagogue. But we met with couples and talked about it. Of course it was arranged by a Jewish group it was all people who were going to raise their kids Jewish. Staci would always tell me: hey, everybody is raising their kids Jewish when they're interfaith couples, because that's what she would always see.

#2. Cindy

This non-Jewish mother recounts her experience rejecting religion as an adult, her decision to leave the Baptist faith, and her comfort level with the teaching of values at the synagogue. Her having children and needing help to teach them values mitigated her adult reaction against religion.

Cindy: But when I was twenty-one I pretty much rejected religion altogether pretty much as a reaction against the Baptist faith. I found them to be very restrictive and very judgmental and condemning of other religions. I didn't like that, so I rejected them. It was something I had wanted, but then I saw it differently. Later, when we got married, I went to a couple of services at the synagogue. The values I heard were good. I didn't find anything annoying about the services. I wanted the kids to have the values.

#3. Jill

Jill brings together many of the themes outlined here in one statement.

Jill: I don't know really how to put it into words. It seemed a little – clearly Judaism is very different from Christianity for that reason. You know I wasn't clear in my own head whether I strongly believe that Jesus Christ had been the Messiah or not. I had to think about that. And at the end of the day I didn't strongly believe that. So if that is the core of

Christianity, and I'm not so convinced. It was hard because, in Catholicism especially, you're taught to have faith – faith means you believe it even if objectively you can't prove it, or there's contrary things to that telling you it's not true. You're supposed to have faith – you're taught that. It's kind of a self-fulfilling thing. If everyone has faith then everyone will continue believing in the tenets of the religion, and the religion will continue, etc. But with me it wasn't working that way. I was, like I said before, open to suggestion. And my thing with raising the children was that I personally didn't have a strong commitment to raising them Jewish or raising them Christian, but they needed to be raised with a system of values, and I really thought that doing that through religious means had worked for me, and it had worked for David, and it seemed like a good way to do it. And I wanted them to have their upbringing, and then if they became adults and decided they didn't quite get it anymore, then fine – they can make that decision as adults. But as children I thought they really needed to be raised in a definitive value system. And I also thought you have to start early, because that had been my experience. So when Daniel was getting around the age of 5, and he would be starting school soon, I thought this is really when, if we're going to raise the children one way or another, to start doing that. So that's when David found the congregation.

#4. Roberta and Craig

While Roberta talks about shared values and “how we treat people,” Craig, the non-Jewish husband and father, agrees, and finds more commonality with the Old Testament emphasis on action and behavior, rather than the theological discourse he experiences in churches. Craig is interested in “the life lessons.” “It's all about life, and that's what you want your kids to experience,” he says. “It's all about doing the Mitzvahs,” and “That's why I am satisfied they are being brought up Jewish,” he concludes. Craig was brought up in a conservative Lutheran home in Wisconsin. America has allowed him to learn about *mitzvot*.

Roberta: So like I said, basically we're doing both religions while we were just a couple and we continued that on. I think what's always made our marriage and our family work – we talked about this before. It wasn't so much about the

religion as it was about the moral attitude, the rights and the wrongs and how do we do things and how we treat people

Craig: The life lessons.

Roberta: And that sort of thing, and so that's why religion didn't play a large role in going to chapels or synagogues or that, it was more like raising our children to be responsible, to be respectful, knowing right and wrong, and we have the same values. Craig and I have always had the same set of values. That was more of the guiding course to us than a religion guiding course. Now religion probably sculpted that for each of us because we both participated in our religions growing up,

Craig: But for me I kind of swayed away from, to be honest – I feel like nowadays a lot of, like my church's current pastor – you can't talk to him without – it's almost like a hard-sell. I just can't relate to this coming from – they live in the New Testament only. To me my mind is like, there are ten important rules that were already set down way before the New Testament came around. To me that's what everything is all about. That's life, those are the rules. So when we talked later on, she said, I'd like to raise them in the Jewish faith I had no problems with that because to me the Jewish...this is life, going to the synagogue and the chapel, and experiencing even going to New York, it's all about family, it's all about life, and that's what you want your kids to experience, what's right and what's wrong, and the rest of that stuff that goes on from that part of the Bible on is, I don't know, to me it's not the important parts. The first part is the important part because that's what guides you.

Int: You are really emotionally...truly intense...this is really Craig coming out?

Craig: So that's why I'm totally satisfied that they're brought up Jewish, because it's all about doing the Mitzvahs, I might be using that wrong, but you should always be trying to help people. If you can help people, then help people...

Roberta: ...Really the only thing I didn't want to have them baptized. That was kind of not something I was interested in. Which he was OK with that.

Int: That's an important little detail you snuck in there. Can you talk a little more about it?

Roberta: That just seemed like that would seal that's what you are—period. I don't know. That was just a little too out there.

Craig: And again to me that wasn't the important part.

Roberta: But I know it is to your religion...(someone) said when she was a young girl, she said in fact that we were all going to hell because we didn't get baptized.

Craig: And my thought to that is, "Boy, there must be a lot of people in hell, because (laughter)...all those American Indians that were here," and...

Int: That small point ends up being a significant. A little degree here makes a big difference there.

Craig: That goes back to my beliefs. It all has to do with – to me it's what's laid down in the Ten Laws.

Int: This little detail, am I hearing you right to say about Lutheranism, this is not part of your take on that religion.

Craig: Yes.

Int: You declared your independence individually from that even before Roberta?

Craig: No. It wasn't as strong then, because I didn't have a child then. When you have a child then you start thinking even more. You're saying, what is really important?

Roberta: But you don't think of yourself as Lutheran?

Craig: I call myself "Lutheran" because I went through catechism and that, but do I really get involved into the discussions, every time you turn around it's like "Jesus says..." Ok, but God is still God.

Roberta: I'm just saying neither Brett or Andrew really knows what being Lutheran is anyway though. Because you never really had that discussion.

Craig: And I don't think that's necessarily important now. Because they've both grown up to be pretty good young men.

#5. Sally

A Jewish mom says it this way.

Sally: I always thought that if we were able to have children, whether we adopted or had them naturally, I still wanted to bring them up with an ethical and historical part of Judaism, and the family, the togetherness part, which I felt was even more important...I really think the ethics I learned and how to think about ethical concerns is something I want to give to my children. If they have that then they will have some kind of intellectual strength which I feel I got from my

background. And I was able to pass that on. Other people have commented on that...that it came from my background.

#6. Deborah

Here the non-Jewish mom speaks about the important “values” in religious education. But, she also frames that discussion by telling us how she questioned her own Catholic faith from the time she was young. What she hung on to was a “belief in God” and “how important family was.” Interestingly, she says that her Jewish husband-to-be felt the same way about religion.

Religion really wasn't in the picture for either one of us. And it wasn't because...I basically had many questions about my religion. I was raised Catholic. Early on, 12 or 13 years old, I was really already questioning my own faith. And I always considered myself to be a religious person. I knew I believed in God. But I didn't believe in all the rules we had to follow. It was important to be a good person. The rest didn't make any sense to me. So basically I just...when I met Louis...he and I basically felt the same way about religion. He grew up in a household where basically he did not have any family ritual, weekly rituals, of going to synagogue or having dinners...But we talked about how important family was, and how we had the same values. We felt we could not have the religion thing, me being Christian and he being Jewish, interfere with our relationship. And it really has never, ever, really interfered.

Like I said, I believe in God. I don't know if that constitutes being a religious person. I don't think it does. It's always been very important for me to have a religion in my life. I needed that. I feel it's important. I feel that things have come up in my life that I don't know if I'd been able to get through it if I didn't have a strong faith. It has helped me a lot. Over the past years I feel like I've needed it more and more as things come up.

And I really feel it's important for my kids to have that. I wanted them to have a religion, a belief system, that they could fall back on. Maybe not now but later on in their lives. So basically I've done my own research, and with Louis' help also, with both of us reading together that this is the route we wanted to go. To me Judaism just makes so much sense as far as living your life. It's more than just a religion that tells you just what to believe. I need to have it mean something for me and Judaism does. As far as ethics and just the way you live your life. I just feel it's a good way to live your life. And I want my kids to feel that way. I want them to feel good about themselves. I want them to feel good about their

relationship with God. And I do believe that Judaism does allow us to do both. And I applaud that.

#7. Robin and AJ

In the context of discussing the *Bat Mitzvah*, AJ offers the remarks below and affirms his daughters' "reading from scripture ...at an age when you're transitioning...and asking them to lead a service." This is not a direct statement about "values." But, certainly, when we understand the meaning of *Bar and Bat Mitzvah*, the implication that his daughters are learning values at the time of puberty can be inferred.

Int: I'm curious still in what you're saying. So, how do you go about your girls being raised Jewish?

Robin: I haven't heard a complaint yet about how we're planning Bat Mitzvahs for the girls.

AJ: I hate to sound like a teenager, but it's pretty cool.

Int: What part is really cool, the Bat Mitzvah or being raised as Jews?

AJ: I had this really interesting experience. I was taking one of the classes in pursuit of my degree, that's kinda sort of on hold, I had a sheriff that was retired that was a barracks commander. He had to take this one speech class before he retired in a month or two and he was going back to become a minister, going back to military school in his late 40s early 50s. We had a conversation about our religious beliefs, and I told him we were going to raise our kids Jewish. He said don't worry about it, they're the chosen ones. Here was a guy that was cool about it, so I could be cool about it. Here was a guy who was not taking it serious, but almost comedial. There are so many that aren't okay with it. I'm okay with it. I've seen how hard these kids work. I can't think of another thing that makes you learn a really intense language and read from a scripture in that native language, and do it at an age where you're transitioning, you're growing, hormones are raging, sometimes teenagers aren't focused, and you're asking them to lead a service. That's a big deal.

Surprises

Trickling Up

One of several surprises found in the narratives is the constant reference to how bringing up the children leads to a need for the parents to get educated in Judaism and Jewish things in general. One of the patterns seen in American Judaism is the non-involvement of teenagers and young adults. People “return” after having children. But it is not always a trip to the synagogue only for the kids. Interfaith couples interviewed use their new connection to synagogue life as an opportunity to upgrade their own knowledge. Thus, one could say that an unintended consequence of an open and friendly synagogue engaging those who want to raise their children with Jewish identities is making the identity of the parent level stronger. There is an ironic twist to what’s going on. We have had a number of youngsters who are like this--because of their interest at the age of 11, 12, and 13 they speak up and ask their parents to bring them over to participate. Even as younger children, the questions they ask give cause for the parents to seek out a connection to a synagogue. Sometimes the kids’ involvement brings a new commitment from the parents on many different levels.

Here are some examples.

#1. Marc

Marc: Marlowe, we ask, does Marlowe want to go to services? She says “OK,” then we’ll go. If she was one of those kids who after the Bar Mitzvah like I was, after my Bar Mitzvah I didn’t go to services anymore. And I knew a lot of kids like that, and I’m sure you know them. But Marlowe wants to, and it’s her decision and we respect it. And she’s the one who wants to teach at the Sunday school,

and so fine. It takes time, Denise has to take time to drive her back, but Marlowe wants to do it. A lot of kids wouldn't want to do it. I hope that doesn't – I'm not trying to put a damper on...

#2. Deborah

At the time Deborah told the story she was one of the most active volunteers at the synagogue in Canton. This was well past her daughters' *Bat Mitzvah* ceremonies.

When J. was born we probably really didn't talk about religion until she was probably...um...until J. (her sister) was born, maybe three or four years old. When I had to put J. into school. And we talked about the kind of school we wanted to put her in. We looked into some private schools, I think at that time Beth Judah had a nursery school that we looked into. We went a couple of times, we decided we liked the people, and decided to put her in there for a year. And we did and it worked out great. That's basically where we started. That's how we kicked it off as a family. We knew we wanted to raise the girls Jewish and that was our beginning. Louis didn't really want to get involved in any kind of synagogue family. He was not interested in that at all. So we held back a little bit.

#3. Ben

It is common to hear about “dropping out” after Bar Mitzvah. Many parents quit synagogues after their children “come of age.” The cycle is repeated when the youthful *Bar Mitzvah* matures, marries, and has children of his own. The children bring the young parents back into the fold, even if one is not Jewish, as is the case with interfaith couples.

Ben: I dropped out after my bar mitzvah, and my parents drifted away. When I came back it was just as strange for me as for Cindy. But now the pieces are coming together. I'm reading and really feeling comfortable with the whole thing. So it started to make more sense for me. I'm really feeling quite happy about the whole thing. I'm doing more reading. For Cindy it doesn't feel as comfortable. I'm not sure how involved she'll ever be. But for me it's neat. I got a hold of a book called “History of the Jews”...Stuff I haven't been exposed to in any rigorous way...It talks about the roots which go way, way back...I'm not sure where it's going and where it's taking us. I'm not sure how it's going to work out, I think she'll be supportive of the three of us...I don't think she'll feel the need to belong to some other congregation...I don't know...We're kind of taking it a day at a time...we'll see where it goes...taking it as it goes.

#4. David

David, the Jewishly identified father of this narrative, eventually became director of the religious school and comes to almost all synagogue events.

David: So, me wanting to raise the kids Jewish, I knew that I would have to take the lead. And she actually forced me into taking the lead when Daniel was around 5. I knew we would raise him Jewish, but it was – she was the one who pushed the issue of finding a synagogue when Daniel was around 5. So in the back of my mind I always knew, and to me it was something very important. I couldn't see, in all honesty, myself raising a child in any other religion.

#5. Roberta

Roberta recounts her initial move toward connecting with the synagogue community. She eventually held every position in the synagogue organization.

Roberta: Well it became to be that when Brett was probably in 2nd or 3rd grade, I can't remember exactly, he had asked some questions about religion or church which were not even questions. He mentioned about kids at school talking and it just seemed he was wondering and interested, and so it was at that point that we'd talk and I said, you know I really think he's looking for something. And we'd always said, as far as the religion thing, is as much as I want to do with Judaism and he wants to do with Lutheran, we can do. If he wanted to take him to church every Sunday he could do that. If I wanted to, really the only thing I didn't want was to have him baptized. That was kind of not something I was not interested in, which he was really good and he was ok with that.

Int: So why do you want to do more?

Roberta: I never, when I started taking them to religious school, I never thought beyond, oh, I'm doing this so they get Bar Mitzvah-ed and become good Jewish men. It wasn't like that, it was over a time development, and after we went and they were fine, and I am happy that they were raised in my religion, and that worked out, because I always felt good about my religion, being Jewish, and I think from a family perspective, even though my parents did not live here, I think that we felt closer, enveloped more, with my family. So I can't even put a definitive on it.

And then of course when I get a hold of something and if I'm going to do it, then I'm going to make sure it's done right, as best as I can, and once we move into doing Sunday school, and then when Amy in her transitioned out, I took a more forward step because I saw a vision on how I wanted this done. And if I wanted it done in a certain way, then if no one else was stepping up, I was going to run things to make sure it got done in a certain way. It was a very selfish move, leading the Sunday school. It was for my son and me, and my family, first, and everyone benefited by my desire and drive, I believe that. Because I think I improved it, not just me alone, but with everything, but taking a hold of it. And I think it continues to raise to another level regardless if I was there or not, but that's why I took over the evening Sunday school. There was a need there for somebody, and I had a need, so that's how that happened.

Int: What was your need?

Roberta: That if my son was going to be Bar Mitzvah-ed I was going to make sure I was going to be there.

Int: You didn't have to be the head of Sunday school to make sure....

Roberta: No, if I wanted to make sure the education was right, and things were going to happen and all of that, and someone needed to run the Sunday school then I'll step in and do it and then I'll make sure it happens. And then it gave me more leeway to set things in motion and to make sure things happened.

Sensitivity to Anti-Semitism

The speaker here shows an amazing quality. It is difficult to find in Jewish macro-historical texts the story of a non-Jewish father having this severe a concern about anti-Semitism. He wants to protect his daughters from “the tyrants that are out there” because of their Jewish identity. AJ's sentiment is something that needs to be spoken and heard, for it is the opposite of what is feared by many Jews writing about intermarriage. The sensitivity he is showing is not part of the public discourse in the Jewish press. Quite the opposite.

AJ: I do have one fear. This delves into the exogenous. Raising them Jewish right now, at a time where I'm watching Europe descend into an anti-Semitism that is on a barbaric scale that is not even being discussed in the dominant media, and I'm raising kids in the faith that are going to be in the crosshairs, is a

concern. It's not being talked about. There are people fleeing France, Netherlands.

Robin: Back then, it didn't matter whether you were raised Jewish, it was what you were born as. You may have not been raised Jewish, but if your mother was Jewish then you were considered Jewish. It didn't matter how you were raised, and if that is the case, then I want my girls to understand their religion is who they are.

AJ: Making them aware of the death threats...my girls love me, even though sometimes they get tired of Mr. Talk. I'm trying to get them interested in desperation of tyrants. Communism, Fascism, Totalitarianism. Sometimes those factions are not very good to Jews. I really try to make them aware of a historical perspective. Sarah is 9, Reagan is 11, it's like, "yeah dad". There are times when I think that it is sinking in...

Robin: It does not matter, I am Jewish, in anyone's eyes.

AJ: We have heard that Australia is very amenable to Jews, we have discussed that. Where is the next Promised Land for Jews? I've got to make them aware of it for their own good.

Robin: They have to understand the world that they're living in. That's really what has got to happen.

Int: That's an amazing quality. It's not part of history that a non-Jewish father of two Jewish girls would have this severe concern about protecting his daughters from the tyrants that are out there. That's because of their identity. That is something that needs to be spoken and heard, because I think that is an amazing sensitivity. The sensitivity that you are showing is not written about.

Not Seeing Her Child in Heaven

One of the most heartfelt testimonies I collected included the following account of the concern by a child raised with Jewish identity by his non-Jewish mom. Cheri wants to know if she will see Kyle in Heaven, as the Jewish grandfather (ex-father-in-law) says Jews don't believe in heaven.

Cheri: So let me ask you, since you are an expert on Jewish religion, when through my work, someone would approach me, and when they found out that I was married to Jerry and he was Jewish, and that my son was taking on the Jewish faith, he said to me, "how can you really be comfortable with that?" He

was a little bothered that I wasn't trying to change his mind about that. I believe that when I die I go to heaven. But when Kyle dies, he won't go to heaven. I had been bothered by that, because my dad had taught me, that when we die we are all going to go to this better place, but my son won't be going to that better place. That does kind of bother me. I remember asking B. after his wife passed away, and I guess I didn't understand, but I said, "Oh, she is in a better place", and he responded, "no she is in the ground and that's it." I asked him, "You really do believe that after you die you don't go to heaven, you just die and that's it?" Every time I talked about him, he was scared of falling into death. However, he has always been scared of dying, even if he is 92 or 93 years old. When he dies, that's it and there's nothing after that. Not that I'm looking forward to death, but I'm looking forward to going to heaven, and I think how sad that you don't feel like I think. I am not afraid of death because I feel like there is going to be something better for me. I don't know if it's sad, or it just deflates a little bit, but I can understand your fear of dying, because you don't feel like there's something after that. That's the end. It's really horrifying that that's the end and there's not going to be anything after that. That's the only part of Kyle being Jewish that bothers me. So, when a Jewish person passes they don't go to heaven? When a Jewish person passes away, do they go to heaven?

Converts Who Convert Themselves

Finally, perhaps the biggest surprise of all was the number of Christian-born spouses who had quietly adopted a Jewish identity themselves. Formal conversion in Judaism is long process. It is as old as the Talmud itself. There is normally some sort of public ceremony confirming the conversion accompanied by immersion, known as *Mikvah*. Here I found a private process going on wherein, for many different reasons, the non-Jewish spouse had come to adopt a Jewish identity with little public announcement. While of course there are many who do not make the choice, who either remain believing Christians, or non-religionists, or secular religionists, or secularists, there are those who make the personal decision to call themselves Jews. Though Jewish religious bodies would not formally recognize these "conversions," they are, in this writer's opinion, some of the most sincere statements of commitment I have heard.

#1. Rick

Rick: And who's to say that if my feelings were different that I would have wanted to say, "Oh I want to stay in the Catholic religion," then maybe we would have tried to do—would have done something different. I don't know. As the more and more we become involved with Bet Chaverim, the more Jewish I feel and so much so that that's who I am, I'm Jewish.

Ilene: He actually has learned a lot of things on his own. He's gone and studied. It wasn't something that I ever—I have friends that—our doctor that converted because her spouse it was very important that she learn and convert. I can think of four couples off the top of my head that a conversion has taken place to make the other spouse Jewish.

Rick: Whereas I think this is more, this is a true conversion, where I didn't go through a formalized "fill out this form, do this, do that."

Ilene: ...Take this class, do this, yah...

Rick: I just as a person—in my soul—I say, "No, this is who I am now. I'm not Catholic, I'm Jewish." And that's good enough for me; it's good enough for everyone else. We'll call it a day.

#2. Jill

In response to my mentioning that others quietly consider themselves to be Jewish, without formal conversion, Jill mentions that she does as well. This is something new.

Jill: Well I tell people we're Jewish. Me too. All of us. Our family. We all are.

David: You have to realize, she had an interview at Notre Dame. And you brought up that we were Jewish.

Jill: Yeah.

David: She brought up her background, but, she made them aware that we, our family, is Jewish. Because they brought up those kinds of questions which they do at interviews.

Jill: Yeah, that's right.

#3 Barb

In this lengthier report, Barb speaks frankly about her positive involvement with the religion, the congregation and her family. She reveals some anger at the possibility of being excluded from the pulpit during her son's reading from the Torah during his Bar Mitzvah. Her sincerity, backed up by her action and knowledge, is special. There is much to learn from her about the feelings and commitment of others who may be part of the congregation. The defensive posture of a culture under attack may not be the best footing in a secure America.

Int: Will you tell me something about your "journey" toward becoming Jewish?

Barb: A few weeks before my son's Bar Mitzvah the decision had not yet been made if I would be allowed to come up to the Bema. Out of respect for the faith, I thought perhaps I would not. The rule is that only those of the Jewish faith be allowed on the Bema. Rabbi called me to ask me some questions. Where would this conversation lead?

I let him know I was hurt, that I was good enough to teach the children Midrash for two years, but not good enough to be on the Bema. I felt like I was the hired help. While all the born Jewish parents were working out, shopping, or some other activity, their children were being taught by me. I was good enough to be Oneg Coordinator (caterer and cleanup crew), but still not good enough to be on the Bema.

Rabbi asked me questions, some I remember others I do not. I remember telling him what I like about Judaism is that one is responsible for their own sins. No one died so that I can go on sinning. There is a need to apologize and there is a need to forgive. A human being is capable of both. I also remember telling him I liked that I did not have to believe in anything that could not be scientifically proven. I had studied with another Rabbi in Atlanta who had explained all the miracles scientifically. It did not make it any less miraculous to me that the incidents occurred when they did, but it didn't go against my sense of rationale either.

Rabbi declared me "a friend to the Jewish People" and I was able to be on the Bema for my son's Bar Mitzvah. That day I probably gave one of the most precious, inspiring, and defining speeches to my son of my life.

As time went on I still taught at the Sunday school, and had long conversations with the Rabbi. I celebrate Shabbat at home and at Synagogue. It is my favorite holiday as it gives me such a sense of peace.

During one of my many after services late night conversations with Rabbi he asks me to formally convert. I am insulted. I do not yell often but this time I did. I let him know I do not have a need to do this. I know who I am, and my relationship with God is personal. I do not need to do a formal conversion ceremony for others' benefit. Rabbi did a little ceremony right then and there that was private and mine to keep.

It is interesting to see after many years, my sister tells me I am not Jewish. My mother-in-law still felt she did know how I would answer the question if asked what my faith is. I have been the one responsible for Chanukah and Passover festivities for more than 20 years. I go to services, I celebrate Shabbat, and she doesn't know! My sister has attended both of my children's Bar or Bat Mitzvah, She knows I go to Synagogue. My sister also knows I celebrate Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. She screams at me, telling me I am not Jewish. I am not sure why they are denying a personal decision. Neither one of these women is religious, and yet they have strong feelings about my faith. Either way, I know what I believe. I know what I do not believe. I know that my Jewish faith gives me a sense of peace and a sense of strength that I have found from no other source. I feel a connection to the history and the people. It is my faith and it is my relationship with God. I share it with the community when we meet as a congregation, but even then my silent meditations are between me and my God. I share it with my family when we celebrate Shabbat at home. I think my husband and children get it, and if they don't I hope one day they will.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

Introduction

I started this dissertation looking at the current discourse on American Jewish intermarriage as found in the public, culture critical, semi-official and official documents of the organized Jewish community. Much, but not all, of the discourse emerged as a reaction to the findings of the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey. Taken together with other local community surveys published since 1980, the discourse on Jewish intermarriage in the United States can be construed as framing an historical period. I analyzed how intermarriage is defined as a problem in American Judaism. In all these strata in the discursive field one of the key elements was the articulation of what could be called the discourse on the destructive power of intermarriage. Intermarriage is understood by many in the Jewish community to be the cause of the erosion of Jewish identity and, indeed, a threat to the very survival of this minority community in America.

However, the narratives I presented in this study reflect a different picture altogether. There is a movement toward affirming Jews/Judaism/Jewishness among some interfaith families. In particular, those parents choosing to raise their children with Jewish identities are part of a counter-historical moment, maybe even a trend. The cultural moment now appears more complicated than previous studies might suggest. Many “positives” are occurring in the life of the community that, if not explored and

affirmed by social organizations—particularly the American synagogue reframed as a social service type organization—could be lost. The American Jewish community is part of a modern American milieu that includes discourses perhaps not hitherto taken into consideration, as they are newly emergent.

What did we learn?

The following are significant insights gleaned from the research.

1. Of greatest importance, we learn the non-Jewish spouse is many times a catalyst that drives the Jewish spouse, and thus the family, to a closer identification with Judaism, not further away. This is completely counter to the dominant narrative and worst fears of many in the community.
2. The non-Jewish spouse can find great value and meaning in Jewish ritual and ethics, and enjoy participation at some level, without formal conversion.
3. The non-Jewish spouse can be very supportive and actively participate in the synagogue education of their children. Their attendance and involvement can be of great value to the community in many ways. It should be encouraged.
4. Many Christian by birth parents married to Jewish spouses see Judaism as the source of their religious or cultural heritage, and so feel comfortable in Jewish precincts.
5. Since identities are often not fixed, but evolving and in process, an open and friendly synagogue “agency” can encourage already budding interest on the part of the non-Jewish spouse. As well, the adult Jewish partner is open to further education and identity development. Often they embrace this learning as a shared, beneficial experience that enhances their overall relationship.

6. Jewish spouses who marry non-Jews do not necessarily feel they have “turned their back” on Judaism. Quite the opposite. They feel those who represent Judaism have turned their back on them through rejectionary rhetoric and exclusionary policies.
7. Many Jewish spouses win commitments from their non-Jewish partner to raise their children with Jewish identities before getting married. Other Jewish spouses in intermarriages rediscover their strong feelings about being Jewish once they have children.
8. Another emergent theme that needs to be thought about is the number of moves, and the distance moved, by many American couples. Employment and schooling impact individuals in such a way that they are called upon to move away from family and family connections. The traditional role of the extended family is hampered in passing on cultural and religious education. More often than not the synagogue is implicitly charged with helping in this responsibility. Young parents hold in high esteem the ethical and moral values taught by Judaism. Also, in a time of “rootlessness,” young families are looking to Judaism for a connection to a culture with “a long history and deep roots.” The organizational workers and all who come face to face with parents of young children should understand they are actually replacing the extended family. Familial connections are not just metaphoric, but carry with them enormous emotional and psychological power. New sensitivity and sophistication is called for in dealing with these family needs presented in the organizational context, both secular and sacred.

9. It is clear from my research that even “non-practicing” intermarried Jews find it difficult to entertain the notion of raising their children with strong Christian (or other) identities. Here it might not make sense to some in the Jewish world who assume a Christian marriage partner would represent an exit from Judaism altogether by the Jewish partner. That is not what I found to be the case in these narratives. Clearly, other levels of meaning are at work in the selection of a marriage partner, and, when the subject of child raising occurs, there exists some residue of affiliation and concern that gets played out in the request and interest of the Jewish partner to have their children raised with Jewish identities. And, again, this makes the entire subject of intermarriage much more complex than the communal discourse currently accounts for.
10. It is also important for communal workers and program designers to be aware of the possible institutional support needed by these individuals. If rejected wholesale, there is no place for such individuals to go to connect with the larger community. Where there is already agreement with the non-Jewish spouse to raise the children in the synagogue, welcoming strategies lead to successful outcomes.
11. Involvement of the children can bring deeper commitment and participation of their parents. Young parents engaged in childrearing enter a new learning curve on many levels. “Open and friendly” synagogues have an opportunity to augment the education of the parents as Jewish knowledge “trickles up.”
12. It is also important to note again how often the narratives reveal interest in an “open and flexible” religion by the non-Jewish spouse. Usually these narratives

include references to Christian religious approaches that are heavily dogmatic and are highly critical and judgmental of other religions. There seems to be a view that Judaism is more open to others and less rigid in its teaching about other religions. Again, I hear much about the attractiveness of a thoughtful religion that focuses on values and human relations rather a fixed and rigid theology. Indeed, in my representing “Reform Judaism” (though as we see many of those who come to Reform temples were raised in Conservative, even Orthodox, settings) those with whom I work are self-selecting. They seek out a less rigid Jewish religious-cultural expression as well.

13. In reviewing the testimonies collected here, one of the needs that emerges is for smaller organizations with face-to-face community interactions where members can get to know one another. Smaller is better in this case. This goes against a cultural norm. Part of the success of the congregation that was my field site is its smallness. Indeed, identity creation occurs when individuals can introject the narrative of the group and take it on as their own. This is harder to do in larger organizational settings where the members consider themselves mere spectators to the events. The feeling generated is they are not necessary for the continuation of the group; the group exists beyond them. More, as their marriage choice is considered contrary to the group norm, intermarried couples do not feel welcomed. As a result, they do not affiliate and attend, thus eroding meaningful participation and experiences.
14. We need to be more aware of the extended network of friends and members of the non-Jew and family. The narratives carry with them many vignettes where the

outsider, or stranger, becomes part of the story line. Indeed, there is a new dialogue with those of other communities through the extended families of the non-Jewish spouse, as well as the non-Jewish friends of both spouses. More also needs to be done to understand these newly extended levels of emergent dialogue.

15. Finally, the “where we met” stories, a part of many couple’s repertoire, demonstrate clearly that as long as American Jews are going to be part of society, Jewish men and women are going to meet others in every normative walk of life. In an open multicultural society this will remain a social reality. The fact that Jewish men and women are meeting non-Jewish partners who they wish to join to “Judaism” is a positive event in Jewish history.

Where do we go from here?

The research technique utilized in this study can yield further results in a multiplicity of ways. As I listened to the recorded interviews many times, I discovered I would hear themes I may have overlooked. Oral testimony takes time to review. In listening again to the recordings, more themes undoubtedly could be found. Even so, many of the points outlined above need further research. To accomplish this, follow-up interviews could be scheduled with the respondents in this study. Given time to reflect, it would be interesting to hear what additional reports they might have.

Additional interviews with other sets of parents should be recorded and transcribed. The population of intermarrieds is large and varied. Further research is necessary if we are to get a fuller picture of the life they are leading vis-à-vis Jewish

identity structures and practices. A publication of these narratives with analysis may be helpful to others engaged in the process of decision-making.

Workshops can be created around the findings to sensitize community leaders, programming leaders, and paid professionals to the dynamics of this sub-population in the community. Other projects of interest would be a study of the children themselves, either as children, as teenagers, or even as they grow into adulthood to find out, from their point of view, how being Jewish is for them. We remember the lack of involvement of post-teens in the Jewish community. Interviewing them is one way to show they are important, and to affirm them as they “tell their story.” New strategies for family involvement need to be developed. To this end, extended family members should be interviewed in an effort to uncover their points of view on all the same events. For instance, it would be of interest to hear more from the non-Jewish grandparent point of view. It would also be of interest to know about other siblings of the interviewed couples as to whether they are in the same situation. Interviews with them might yield interesting testimony.

In addition, it would also make sense to develop workshops and curricula to teach prospective professionals in the field the advantages of the theory and methodology deployed here for discovering their client population’s needs, whatever area of Jewish communal service they may be preparing to enter.

Finally, articles and commentary could be written for community journals and newspapers, the kind mentioned in the beginning of this work, describing the findings of this study.

An Innovative Proposal

I conclude with an innovative proposal, one that results from the interdisciplinary work I have done. It is clear from the research herein presented that there are non-Jews who hold Jews/Judaism/Jewishness in high esteem. The non-Jewish spouses who spend the time, energy and funds to raise their children as Jews do so by choice. As Judaism has been innovative in the past, so it seems it would be important to create a new affirming name for such individuals, one that more clearly approximates *their* identity. To this end, a Hebrew name, such as *MitChaverYisrael*, literally, “one who has made himself or herself a friend of Israel (the Jews)” could be deployed. The English translation does not fully express the meaning of the Hebrew, however. The intent of the expression is to catch the middle ground, the gray area between being “totally in or totally out,” and give it an affirming nod. America allows for many hybridizations. In the identity society we have multiple identities. Jewish tradition only provides for two identities—Jewish, and all the others nations, the *Goim*. There is in the tradition the notion of a *Ger*, a non-Israelite who travels and lives in the land of Israel, but is not *B'nai Yisrael*, a Jew. A *MitChaver/et* is akin to this. But we do not live in the Land of Israel; we live in the *Galut*, the Diaspora. It is here that so much conflict with the Other has taken place. It is only fitting that it would be here, in America, that a new category of identity could emerge—“One who has freely chosen to make of him/herself a friend of the Jewish People” -- “*MitChaver/et Yisrael*.”

A Postlude

The Dialogic Emergence of Culture

The oral testimony presented herein may give us a glimpse into a new social construct, and how it is coming into being discursively. We see here an instance of “the dialogic emergence of culture,” for the narratives arose not only co-created between the parents of the children in question, many times with the children themselves, but also with the researcher.

It should be noted the participants were enthusiastic to be a part of the study. This shows they were proud of the work they had accomplished with their decision to raise their children as Jews. Most understand that their stories may be of help to others going through the same life circumstances and decision-making. “Participant” or “respondent” should not be understood as a static category. I use the term throughout also as a way of describing individuals who were willing to share their stories for this research, and thus open their personal lives to a wider possible readership.¹ The interviews result from a dialogue between the researcher and the informants. Without this interaction the narratives could not obviously be recorded, then reproduced in writing. The narratives are a result of an indefinite number of dialogues between the parents. Mannheim writes:

To propose that language and culture are dialogical to their core is to relocate them in the interstices between people (Geertz 1966: 5-6 suggested in a different context), to see language and culture as emergent qualities of action, “as the result of thousands of life-changing dialogues that call into play the affective and corporeal energies of the participants in the history of their times” (Attinasi and Friedrich, Chapter1 in Dialogic Emergence of Culture). (1995: 8)

We are reminded of the ongoing formulation of cultural moments through human interaction at the level of language. Yet...It does not require that linguistic and cultural patterns and social relations be generated anew with every interaction. Rather, every interaction takes place within specific social, institutional, and

historical coordinates, all of which color the interaction at the same time as they are reshaped, to greater or lesser extent, by that interaction. (1995: 9)

If we combine this with the notion in social work of action research, or in anthropology of applied ethnography, we can conclude that a researcher working within social agencies can have an interventionary effect on the group. The researcher in this way can help shape history by affirming hitherto un-affirmed voices at the level of power/knowledge. The use of oral history methodology brings the compiler of narratives into direct contact with the respondents. There is interaction with the social other. There is a de-facto dialogue. Thus, my collecting of the stories and reproducing them here constitutes, in and of itself, another level of emergence, as I provided the informants an opportunity to tell and retell their stories in an authoritative context. Still,

Ethnographers of performance argue that verbal meaning does not arise solely from texts, conceived narrowly. Rather, it is an emergent property of performance, conceived as a fully engaged social event and constructed jointly through the actions of all participants in the event. (1995: 13)

Here I have turned performance into text, giving its meaning the possibility to participate at the level of textual discourse in the community.

The quantification of social acts can tell us only as much as the discourse represented by variables will allow. Those analyzing the data utilize dominant narratives of their institutions and epistemologies to frame the meaning and interpretation of the data, sometimes missing completely significant aspects of the social reality under investigation. I conjecture that in the historic period under consideration a “conflict of paradigms” (see Ch.2) is giving rise to emergent discourses not heard before within the continuum of the Jewish historical archive. It will be up to others to determine whether an ascription of “good” or “bad” should be applied to the new discursive practices. But, I

argue, they must be recognized. Again, it would seem a self-fulfilling prophecy, at least in part, if those concerned with the ongoing continuity of the Jewish community reject those who are freely choosing to help maintain it with both words and action, even as they are not self-identifying as Jews. I am speaking of interfaith parents raising their children with Jewish identities.

For those concerned with “Jewish survival,” this does not mean all is well. But intermarriage may be more of an outcome than a cause. If we use a different model for analysis, a model based on a narrative construction of social identity, we may have an opportunity to understand the unfolding of an historical moment in process. The focus on narrative process may allow those concerned to escape the cause and effect discursive corner. The discourse of those living “American Judaism” may contain variations not found in the historic archive, but valuable in any case.

It will be the decision of the social worker, the community worker, as to which discourse they will be attuned. The Jewish communal worker participates in many and varied discourses within the Jewish community. However, the location of the Jewish communal worker in the institutional structures of the community will need to be interrogated and problematized if the communal worker is to grasp the wider social discursive field within which they are practicing. It is possible, and perhaps desirable, that the position of communal worker could fulfill Foucault’s suggestion that some kind of arbitrating discourse (1980: 107) be found which could “stand beyond” the power of sovereign/obedience and discipline/subjugation. Again, since disciplinary normalisations are in ever greater conflict with juridical systems of sovereignty, it would make sense for social work to emerge as a profession which understood both domains but which could

find power in its own unique perspective as being the one which evokes and articulates possible new social discourses. Foucault writes in the conclusion of *The Order of*

Things:

In a more general fashion, man for the human sciences...that living being who, from within the life to which he entirely belongs and by which he is traversed in his whole being, constitutes representations by means of which he lives, and on the basis of which he possesses that strange capacity of being able to represent to himself precisely that life. (1970: 352)

...it will be possible to speak of human science when an attempt is made to define the way in which individuals or groups represent words to themselves, utilize their forms and their meanings, compose real discourse, reveal and conceal in it what they are thinking or saying. (1970: 353)

But he cautions:

The object of the human sciences is not language (though it is spoken by men alone); it is that being which, from the interior of the language by which he is surrounded, represents to himself, by speaking, the sense of the words or prepositions he utters, and finally provides himself with a representation of language itself. (1970: 353)

If one wants to look for a non-disciplinary form of power, or rather, to struggle against disciplines and disciplinary power, it is not towards the ancient right of sovereignty that one should turn, but towards the possibility of a new form of right, one which must indeed be anti-disciplinarian, but at the same time liberated from the principle of sovereignty. (1980: 108)

Perhaps this is already being done in the production of new forms of expression and practice in the American Jewish community extending beyond the issue of intermarriage. And perhaps the narratives of interfaith parents raising their children with Jewish identities are part of the self-actualizing, self-authenticating fifth mutation about which Rivkin wrote. I think they are.

So the tactics for Jewish group survival in this emergent period may need to be something new as well. As we have seen, all the existing mechanisms put into place have

not been successful. This is because, one could theorize, they are based on older, replicating discourses. The strategies must be based or rooted in the emergent discourses of the population itself, and understood within the frame of contemporary historical power arrangements. When the institutions allow the voices within the community to be articulated, when they are heard, when the identities are affirmed, then and only then can authentic survival be realized. In the tradition of social work, I hope this dissertation will make a contribution in some small way to that cause. Intra-communally, there is in fact a disagreement as to which path to follow—replicating the past, or innovating with a newly constructed modern identity which as of yet does not have a singular proper name by which to define it or call it. But it is, in any case, to the oral discourse, the identity narratives of the living community, to which we must turn to discover emergent history. The skills of a research practitioner are needed for such a moment and task.

Notes to the Text

Chapter 1

1) (p.12) Rivkin saw there were the Prophetic, Aaronide Priestly, Pharisaic Rabbinic, Modern Liberal Reform, and Secular (ethnic/cultural/nation state) forms of Judaism, each with its own institutional, authority, practice and philosophic/theological structure. He hypothesized another “mutation” was occurring that he called the “Fifth Mutation” wherein individuals would seek self-realized identities.

The Fifth Mutation, while affirming the authenticity of all previous forms of Judaism and all previous modes of Jewish identity, and while affirming the authenticity of all forms of Judaism and modes of Jewish identity currently compatible with the developmental spiral, would focus its own creative and synergistic efforts to forming and shaping a Judaism and a Jewish identity for those on the developmental frontier. For these are the Jews who, because they are compelled to look forward and not backward, need a faith that will reassure them that their innovating and creative endeavors are sacred, and that their synergistic efforts are holy because they energize the developmental spiral vitally essential for the upgrading of Jews and all mankind...

The Fifth Mutation thus authenticates the vital impulses which motivate those on the developmental frontier: experimentation, questing, innovating, and synergistic creativity. Above all, it affirms the self-developing, self-searching, self-motivating and self-fulfilling individual. And it shapes and forms and modifies institutions so that these institutions can be supportive of these values. (Lessons from the Past: Mutation as a Mode of Jewish Survival, 1973: 17)

2) (p. 14) I refer to historians such as Zunz, Frankel, Graetz, Dubnow, and others who followed the “Higher Biblical Critical Method” and other “rational scientific” approaches to traditional texts.

3) (p. 14) See: Mitchell B. Hart. 2000. *Social Science and the Politics of Modern Jewish Identity*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

4) (p. 19) Though there was a 1970 national survey, and many local community studies had been carried out by that time as well, the reporting and statistical validity of many of these have been questioned.

5) (p. 19) The Council of Jewish Federations published a summary, available upon request. The following is from its introduction:

CJF commissioned the ICR Survey Research Group of Media, PA, to undertake a national sample survey of 2,500 households drawn from a qualified universe of households containing at least one person identified as currently or previously Jewish. This sample was to be obtained by random digit dialed (RDD) telephone interviews.

A further note was added:

One must also accept the fact that in the United States, religion and ethnicity are voluntary expressions of identity. Americans are at liberty to construct identities and practices as they desire or require. Consequently many people exhibit inconsistencies in their behavior with respect to normative expectations. Neither the full complexity of the situation nor the underlying rationale for such behavior can be found in the abridged overview. For, that, the reader will have to await later in-depth analyses and especially the series of monograph volumes to be published by the State University of New York Press in the coming years.

6) (p. 27) The following organizational description was retrieved from Data Bank's web site, <http://www.jewishdatabank.org>.

The North American Jewish Data Bank is the central repository of social scientific studies of North American Jewry...The NAJDB was established in 1986 by the Council of Jewish Federations (CJF), now United Jewish Communities, and the Graduate Center of the City University of New York (CUNY). Development of the Data Bank arose from CJF's long-term involvement in demographic research and the interest by CUNY faculty in applied research concerning the Jewish community. CJF, the association of Jewish Federations in the United States and Canada, had sponsored the 1971 National Jewish Population Study. In addition, Federations in over 60 Jewish communities across North America conducted local demographic studies during the 1960s and 1970s. Population data acquired in these studies helped Federations better serve their constituencies and aided scholars of contemporary Jewry, journalists, religious leaders and others interested in the socio-demographics of North American Jewry.

By the early 1980s, population research and other quantitative social research had become an increasingly valuable and necessary part of Federation planning. Utilization of the research was, however, often hampered because survey data were often inadequately analyzed and methodological differences across surveys made it difficult to compare studies. Federations did not have the resources to do much of their own analysis, nor even to retain the original data files (then on tapes). A CJF colloquium for planners and demographers in 1984 led to the creation of the North American Jewish Data Bank.

7) (p. 27) Here they describe the linkage between them and the CJF (Retrieved from <http://www.jewishdatabank.org>):

Starting in 1987 with the initial organizing steps for the 1990 NJPS, the Data Bank began to plan for the development of a questionnaire and codebook. It arranged for the cleaning, collating, and recording of the 1990 NJPS raw data. The Data Bank started to plan for the development of a monograph series. The series, which involves scholars from a number of academic institutions, includes specific subject area reports on data emanating from the NJPS. These subject areas include education, Jewish identity, the role of women, denomination, fertility, and mobility. In 1990 the Data Bank distributed the enhanced NJPS data materials to twenty monograph authors. By 1993, twenty-one authors had contracts with SUNY Press in connection with its series entitled "American Jewish Society in the 1990's." The Data Bank has convened meetings of monograph authors who regularly receive reports, coding information, new data, and other informational updates on the NJPS data.

8) (p.30) Also note letters to the editor that followed, and the interview presentation on the "Charlie Rose Show" on cable television with the author and others.

9) (p.34) For reporting on this survey see: "National Jewish Population Survey 2000-2001: Strength, Challenge and Diversity in the American Population." At the United Jewish Communities website <http://jewishfederations.org/page.aspx?id=33650>

10) (p. 35) As late as October 2010, in an opinion piece published in *Sh'ma: A Journal of Jewish Responsibility*, Leonard Saxe, Klutznick Professor of Contemporary Jewish Studies, and director of the Steinhardt Social Research Institute, wrote:

Over the past several decades, the American Jewish community has invested more funds in sociodemographic studies of the Jewish population than it has in any other form of systematic social research...Knowing the number of Jews in the United States is far less interesting and important than understanding their character. Unfortunately, conducting demographic research has drained attention and resources from the task of better understanding the dynamics of communal engagement and the effectiveness of our efforts to engage and educate new generations. Key to my pessimism with our counting obsession is that we have not been able to conduct very good studies... 'Who is a Jew?' questions notwithstanding, it's extremely difficult to locate Jews and to estimate accurately their numbers. (Retrieved from <http://www.shma.com>)

11) (p. 35) In October of 2009, the board approved a name change—"The Jewish Federations of North America." They had already changed the name from the Council of Jewish Federations to United Jewish Communities. However, "as part of an ongoing effort to create a stronger continental brand and market positioning for the Federation system, and based on market research, UJC is changing its name to align with and reflect the Jewish Federations' naming." The organization represents 157 Jewish Federations

and 400 independent Network communities across the continent. A new logo was approved as well. “The organization allocates annually more than 3 billion dollars for social welfare, for social services, and educational needs.” (Retrieved from <http://www.jewishfederations.org/section.aspx?id=31>)

12) (p. 38) See their website <http://www.SimpleToRemember.com>.

13) (p. 39) The blog can be found at <http://www.joi.org//blog?p=2122#move-2212>. The original text by Bayme was no longer available online because of computer database changes at *The Jewish Week*, per personal phone call.

Chapter 2

1) (p. 60) The concern with lineage in Jewish discourse begins with the very first narratives in Tanach (Old Testament). It is not the task of my work here to present the entire story. I call the reader’s attention, however, to the following that will help in understanding the nuanced matter of Jewish lineage. Most significantly the line was determined in the pre-Diasporic monarchical period, and prior wandering pre-settlement days, through the male and the “male’s house.” After the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 C.E., a change was instituted and the line was then determined through the mother, establishing so-called “matrilineal descent.” In the modern period, Reform Judaism (1988) broke with the past and decided on an “ambilineal” approach, allowing for either of the two parents to be Jewish. The determining factor would be the way the child is raised. To be sure, there exists a community-wide debate on the question. My study is about how, in an intermarried household, the decision comes about to raise the child with a Jewish identity. See the following for in-depth traditional textual analysis of the question: Central Conference of American Rabbis. 1983. *Resolution on patrilineal descent*. New York: CCAR; Eichorn, David Max. 1963. *Conversion to Judaism: A history and analysis*. New Jersey: Ktav Publishing House; Freehof, Solomon B. 1944. *Reform Jewish practice*. New York: UAHC Press; Mihaly, Eugene. 1985. *Responsa on Jewish marriage*. Cincinnati: Private Publisher; Reines, Alvin J. 1975. “Birth dogma and philosophic religious faith: A philosophic inquiry. In *Hebrew Union College Annual*.46: 297-329. Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press; Rosenbloom, Joseph R. 1978. *Conversion to Judaism: From the Biblical period to the present*. Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press.

2) (p. 62) In “*Counting for Something: The Why and Wherefore of the CJF 1990 National Jewish Population Survey*,” Barry A. Kosmin, then Director of Research, Council of Jewish Federations explains it well in this passage:

Obviously, the first task was to justify the exercise. Why do we need social research data on American Jews? The answer is clear. We operate one of the largest and most sophisticated range of voluntary social services in the world. The gross national product of the organized Jewish community, comprising both philanthropic contributions and payment for services, amounts to several billion dollars and exceeds the GNP of many countries represented at the United Nations

(Kosmin 1991). This requires that we initiate and develop assessment efforts as the basis for identifying problems, measuring needs, and making decisions about facilities, services, funding, communal relations, as well as social, religious, and educational activities.

Any enterprise today, particularly one developed on voluntary taxation, requires information on its market and clientele in order to operate successfully and to monitor and evaluate its progress. In the absence of official government-supplied data on the Jewish population as an ethnic or religious group from the U.S. Census, the organized Jewish community is forced either to rely on speculation and myths or to engage in its own data collection exercise.

3) (p. 78) A rabbinic doctrine known as “*Ol Malchut Shamayim*” that every Jew takes on the “Yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven,” meaning, in a powerful metaphor, to “shoulder the burden of the Laws of God.” Or, in terms being used here, to accede to the monarchical sovereign/law.

4) (p. 78) See Ellis Rivkin, 1978. *A Hidden Revolution*. Nashville: Abington Press.

5) (p. 84) Indeed, one of the key questions asked of the French Jews by Napoleon’s representatives was whether a Jew could marry a non-Jew, i.e. a French citizen. The formal answer provided by the Jewish notables is striking as it leaves open the possibility of intermarriage:

Third Question: Can a Jewess marry a Christian, and a Jew a Christian woman? Or, does the Law allow the Jews to intermarry only among themselves?

Answer:

The Law does not say that a Jewess cannot marry a Christian, nor a Jew a Christian woman; nor does it state that the Jews can only intermarry among themselves. The only marriages expressly forbidden by the Law are those with the seven Canaanite nations, with Amon and Moab, and with the Egyptians. The prohibition is absolute concerning the seven Canaanite nations; with regard to Amon and Moab, it is limited, according to many Talmudists, to the men of those nations, and does not extend to the women; it is even thought that these last would have embraced the Jewish religion. As to Egyptians, the prohibition is limited to the third generation. The prohibition in general applies only to nations in idolatry. The Talmud declares formally that modern nations are not to be considered as such, since they worship, like us, the God of heaven and earth. And, accordingly, there has been, at several periods, intermarriages between Jews and Christians in France, in Spain, and in Germany; these marriages were sometimes tolerated, and sometimes forbidden by the laws of those sovereigns, who had received Jews into their dominions. Unions of this kind are still found in France; but we cannot dissemble that the opinion of the Rabbis is against these marriages. According to their doctrine, although the religion of Moses has not forbidden the Jews from intermarrying with nations not of their religion, yet, as marriage,

according to the Talmud, requires religious ceremonies called Kiddushin, with the benediction used in such cases, no marriage can be religiously valid unless these ceremonies have been performed. This could not be done towards persons who would not both of them consider these ceremonies as sacred; and in that case the married couple could separate without the religious divorce; they would then be considered as married civilly but not religiously.

Such is the opinion of the Rabbis, members of this assembly. In general they would be no more inclined to bless the union of a Jewess with a Christian, or of a Jew with a Christian woman, than Catholic priests themselves would be disposed to sanction unions of this kind. The Rabbis acknowledge, however, that a Jew, who marries a Christian woman, does not cease on that account, to be considered as a Jew by his brethren any more than if he had married a Jewess civilly and not religiously.

(“Transactions of the Parisian Sanhedrin, or Acts of the Assembly of Israelitish Deputies of France and Italy, convoked at Pairs by an Imperial and royal decree, Dated May 30, 1806. Collected by Diogene Tama and Translated by F. D. Kirwan, London, 1807”; reprinted by Ellis Rivkin, ed., Readings in Modern Jewish History. Cincinnati.)

6) (p. 109) Rivkin writes:

So long as each profile, irrespective of where it may currently be on the spiral, reveals a developmental bias, its forms of Judaism and its types of Jewish identity are affirmed as authentic. When, however, a profile displays an orientation, which endangers the upward-moving spiral and predisposes Jews either to bring the spiral to a halt or to redirect it downward, then the fifth mutation would expose it as lethal for both Jews and mankind. There would be no quarrel or quibbling with a Jewish identity or any form of Judaism so long as it does not obstruct the movement from a lower to a higher level. (1973: 17)

7) (p. 109) Egon Mayer died in 2004, z”l.

Chapter 3

1) (p. 117) The Anti-Defamation League reported in October 2009 anti-Semitism in the United States to be at its “lowest level ever.” The report can found at http://www.ladl.org/PresRele/Asus_12/5633_12.htm.

2) (p. 141) Two good sources for discussion of social work empowerment theory is Wormer, Katherine Van and Fred H Besthorn. 2007. *Human behavior and social environment, macro level: Groups, communities, and organizations*. Oxford: Oxford University Press; and Fetterman, David M. 2001. *Foundations of empowerment evaluation*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

3) (p. 144) See a collection of essays in: Moore, Deborah Dash. 2008. *American Jewish Identity Politics*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, for discussion of how Jews in America have participated in this cultural change.

4) (p. 147) Rappaport (1979: 126-128) distinguishes three levels of meaning in the use of language: distinction/information; similarity/metaphor; identity/state of being.

Chapter 8

1) (p. 9) I find the following definition instructive for those engaged in face-to-face field research.

The notion of “participant” is fourfold. First, participation roles are created in verbal performances through such formal linguistic devices as deictics and evaluative comments. Second, a verbal performance requires a particular type of participant structure to succeed as a certain kind of social event. Third, participants are socially positioned actors, embodying vectors of power and authority that are repositioned during the performance. And fourth, participants are always specific individuals with specific histories of interaction with the other participants in the performance. Each of these four aspects contributes to the interpretation of the event by the participants, with no guarantee that all participants will understand the event in the same way. These conditions hold as much for verbal performances in which an ethnographer is present as for any other (see: D. Tedlock 1990). (Mannheim and Tedlock 1995: 13

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abrams, Elliot. 1997. *Faith or fear: How Jews can survive in a Christian America*. New York: The Free Press.
- Alper, Robert A. 1984. "A support group for parents of intermarried Jewish children." *Dissertation abstracts international* (Nov) Vol. 45 (5-A): 1424.
- Alper, Sherri. 1992. "Intermarriage in the family: Issues in counseling Jewish parents," *Psychotherapy in private practice*. Vol. 10 (4): 103-114.
- American Jewish yearbook*. 1992. Vol. 92. David Singer and Lawrence Grossman, eds. New York: The American Jewish Committee.
- _____. 2002. Vol. 102. David Singer and Lawrence Grossman, eds. New York: The American Jewish Committee.
- Aradi, Nicholas S. 1988. "Toward a conceptualization and treatment of interfaith marriage." *Family Therapy Collections*. Vol. 25: 71-88.
- Attinasi, John and Paul Friedrich. 1995. "Dialogic breakthrough: Catalysis and synthesis in life-changing dialogue." In *The dialogic emergence of culture*. Dennis Tedlock and Bruce Mannheim, eds. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Austin, John. 1962. *How to do things with words*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Bakhtin, M. M. 1981. *The dialogic imagination*. Trans. C. Emerson and M. Holquist. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Baron, Salo W. 1958. *Social and religious history of the Jews*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Barron, Milton. 1972. *The blending American: Patterns of intermarriage*. New York: Quadrangle Books.
- Barthes, Roland. 1977. "From work to text." In *Image, music text*. Trans. Stephen Heath, 155-64. New York: Hill and Wang.

- Bayme, Steven and Gladys Rosen, eds. 1994. *The Jewish family and Jewish continuity*. New York: Ktav.
- Behar, Ruth. 1996. *The vulnerable observer: Ethnography that breaks your heart*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Belin, David. 1985. "Why choose Judaism: New dimensions of Jewish outreach." New York: Union of American Hebrew Congregations.
- Bellah, Robert N. 1967. "Civil religion in America." In *Daedalus* 96: 1-21.
- Berger, Alan L. Ed. 1994. *Judaism in the modern world*. New York: New York University Press.
- Berger, Helen. 1991. Quotes taken from program notes, Council of Jewish Federations 1991 General Assembly, Symposium on Inter-marriage and Continuity.
- Berger, Peter L. 1979. *The heretical imperative*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday.
- Bergman, Elihu. 1977. "The American Jewish population erosion." In *Midstream*. 23(8). October. New York: Theodore Herzl Foundation.
- Berman, Louis A. 1968. *Jews and intermarriage: A study in personality and culture*. New York: Thomas Yoseloff.
- Bershtel, Sara and Graubard, Allen. 1992. *Saving remnants: Feeling Jewish in America*. New York: The Free Press.
- Bhabha, Homi K. 1994. *The location of culture*. London: Routledge.
- Biale, David, Michael Galchinsky, and Susan Heschel, eds. 1998. *Insider/outsider: American Jews and multiculturalism*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Blair, Sara and Jonathan Freedman, eds. 2004. *Jewish in America*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1990. *The logic of practice*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Bouchard, Donald F., ed. 1977. *Language, counter-memory, practice: Selected essays and interviews by Michel Foucault*. Trans. Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Boyarin, Jonathan. 1996. *Thinking in Jewish*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- _____. 1991. "Jewish ethnography and the question of the book." *Anthropological Quarterly* 64:14-29.

Boyarin, Jonathan and Daniel Boyarin, eds. 1997. *Jews and other differences: The new Jewish cultural studies*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Brodin, Karen. 1999. *How Jews became white folks & what that says about race in America*. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press.

Brown, Alison Leigh. 2000. *On Foucault: A critical introduction*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.

Bubis, Gerald B. 1987. *Saving the Jewish family: Myths and realities in the diaspora, strategies for the future: An analysis and cumulative bibliography 1970-1982*. New York: University Press of America.

Central Conference of American Rabbis. 1983. *Resolution on patrilineal descent*. New York: CCAR.

Chambon, Adrienne S., Allan Irving, and Laura Epstein, eds. 1999. *Reading Foucault for social work*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Chambon, Adrienne S. and Allan Irving, eds. 1994. *Essays on postmodernism and social work*. Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press.

Chanfrault-Duchet, Marie-Francoise. 1991. "Narrative structures, social models, and symbolic representation in the life story." In *Women's words: The feminist practice of oral history*. Sherna Berger Gluck and Daphne Patai, eds. New York: Routledge.

Chesler, Phyllis. 2003. *The new anti-Semitism: The current crisis and what we must do about it*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Clamar, Aphrodite. 1991. "Interfaith marriage: Defining the issues, treating the problems." *Psychotherapy in private practice*. Vol 9 (2): 79-83.

Cohen, Shaye J.D. Cohen and Edward L. Greenstein, eds. 1990. *The state of Jewish studies*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press.

Cohen, Steven M. 1983. *American modernity and Jewish identity*. Tavistock Publications.

_____. 1988. *American assimilation or Jewish revival?* Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Cohen, Steven M. and Paula E. Hyman, eds. 1986. *The Jewish family: Myths and reality*. New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, Inc.

Commission on Reform Jewish Outreach of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and the Central Conference of American Rabbis. 1990. *"Defining the role of the non-Jew in the synagogue: A resource for congregations."*

Connolly, William E. 1991. *Identity/difference: Democratic negotiations of political paradox*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Contact: The journal of Jewish life network. 1997-2000. New York: Judy and Michael Steinhardt Foundation.

Cowan, Paul with Cowan, Rachel. 1987. *Mixed blessings: Marriages between Jews and Christians*. New York: Doubleday.

Daniel, E. Valentine. 1980. *Fluid signs: Being a person the Tamil way*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Daniel, E. Valentine and Jeffrey M. Peck. 1996. "Culture/contexture: An introduction." In *Culture/Contexture: Explorations in anthropology and literary studies*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

De Montigny, Gerald A. J. 1995. *Social working: An ethnography of front-line practice*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

De Tocqueville, Alexis. 1945. *Democracy in America*. New York: Vintage Books.

Dershowitz, Alan M. 1997. *The vanishing American Jew: In search of Jewish identity for the next century*. New York: Little Brown and Company.

DiMaggio and W Powell. 1983. "The iron cage revisited: Institutional isomorphism and collective rationality in organizational fields." *American sociological review*. 48: 147-60.

Dimont, Max. 1978. *The Jews in America: The roots and destiny of American Jews*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Dominguez, Virginia. 1993. "Questioning Jews." In *American ethnologist*. 20(3): 618-24.

Dreyfus, H.L., and Paul Rabinow, eds. 1982. *Michel Foucault: Beyond structuralism and hermeneutics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Dubnov, S.M. *History of the Jews in Russia and Poland*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society.

Dubnov-Erlick, Sophie. *Life and work of S.M. Dubnov: Diaspora, nationalism, and Jewish history (The modern Jewish experience)*. Trans. Judith Vowles, ed. Jeffrey Shandler. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Eichorn, David Max. 1963. *Conversion to Judaism: A history and analysis*. New Jersey: Ktav Publishing House.

_____. 1974. *Jewish intermarriages: Fact and fiction*. Satellite Beach, Florida: Satellite Books.

Elazar, Daniel J. 1976. *Community and polity: The organizational dynamics of American Jewry*. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society.

_____. 1989. *People and polity: The organizational dynamics of world Jewry*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press.

Engel, Edith S. and Henry W. Engel. 1990. *One God: Peoples of the book*. New York: The Pilgrim Press.

Erickson, Erik H. 1968. *Identity: Youth and crisis*. New York: Norton and Co.

Fetterman, David M. 2001. *Foundations of empowerment evaluation*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

Fein, Leonard. 1988. *The inner life of America's Jews*. New York: Harper & Row.

Feld, Edward. 1991. *The spirit of renewal: Crisis and response in Jewish life*. Woodstock, Vermont: Jewish Lights Publishing.

Fellin, Phillip. 1995. *The community and the social worker*. Itasca, Illinois: F.E. Peacock Publishers.

Finke, Roger and Rodney Stark. 2005. *The churching of America, 1776-2005: Winners and losers in our religious economy*. NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Fischer, Michael. 1986. "Ethnicity and the art of memory." In *Writing culture*. James Clifford and George Marcus, eds. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Fishman, Sylvia Barack. 2000. *Jewish life and American culture*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

_____. 2000. "Jewish communal policy toward outmarried families: The question of outreach." In *Journal of Jewish communal service*. Fall 2000.

- _____. 2004. *Double or nothing: Jewish families and mixed marriage*. Lebanon, NH: Brandeis University Press.
- Foucault, Michel. 1970. *The order of things: An archaeology of the human sciences*. London: Tavistock [Fr 1966]
- _____. 1972. *The archaeology of knowledge & the discourse on language*. Translated by A.M. Sheridan Smith. New York: Pantheon.
- _____. 1973. *Madness and Civilization: A history of insanity in the age of reason*. Trans. Richard Howard. New York: Vintage/Random House.
- _____. 1975. *The Birth of the Clinic: An archaeology of medical perception*. Trans. A.M. Sheridan Smith. New York: Vintage Press.
- _____. [1979] 1995. *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison*. Translated by Alan Sheridan. New York: Vintage.
- _____. 1977a. "History of systems of thought." In *Language, counter-memory, practice: Selected essays and interviews*. Ed. D. F. Bouchard; trans. D. F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- _____. 1977b. 'Nietzsche, genealogy, history.' In D. F. Bouchard, ed., and D. F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon, trans., *Language, counter-memory, practice: Selected essays and interviews*, pp.139-64. Ithaca, N. Y.: Cornell University Press.
- _____. 1978. 'Politics and the study of discourse.' In *Ideology and consciousness* 3, pp. 7-26.
- _____. 1978. *The History of Sexuality. Volume I: An introduction*. Trans. Robert Hurley. New York: Vintage Books.
- _____. 1980. *Power/knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings, 1972-77*. Edited and translated by Colin Gordon. New York: Pantheon.
- _____. 1981. 'Questions of method: An interview with Michel Foucault'. In *Ideology and consciousness* 8, pp. 3-14.
- _____. 1982. The subject and power. In H.L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, eds. *Michel Foucault: Beyond structuralism and hermeneutics*, pp. 208-26. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- _____. 1983. "The Culture of the self." Lecture at Berkeley in spring of 1983. Recording available from the Language Laboratory at the University of California at Berkeley.

_____. 1984. *The Foucault reader*. ed., Paul Rabinow. New York: Pantheon Books.

_____. 1990a. *Politics philosophy culture: Interviews and other writings 1977-1984*. ed., Lawrence D. Kritzman. Trans. Alan Sheridan. New York: Routledge.

_____. 1990b. *The history of sexuality*. Trans. Robert Hurley. New York: Vintage.

_____. 1991. 'Governmentality'. In *The Foucault effect: Studies in governmentality*. G. Burchell, C. Gordon and P. Miller, eds. London: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

_____. 1991. "How an experience book is born." In *Remarks on Marx: Conversations with Duccio Trombadori*. New York: Semiotest(e).

Frank, Geyla. 1997. "Jews, multiculturalism, and Boasian anthropology." *American anthropologist* 99 (4):731-745.

Freedman, Jonathan. 2008. *Klezmer America: Jewishness, ethnicity, modernity*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Freedman, Samuel G. 2000. *Jew vs. Jew: The struggle for the soul of American Jewry*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Freehof, Solomon B. 1944. *Reform Jewish practice*. New York: UAHC Press.

Friedland, Ronnie and Edmund Case, eds. 2001. *The guide to interfaith family life: An InterfaithFamily.com handbook*. Woodstock, Vermont: Jewish Lights Publishing.

Friedman, Abby L. 1992. "A comparison of interfaith, conversionary, and same-faith couples from a family-of-origin perspective," *Dissertation Abstracts International*, Vol. 53 (9): 4952-B.

Friedman, Edwin. 1985. *Generation to generation: Family process in church and synagogue*. New York: The Guilford Press.

Galchinsky, Michael. 1998. "Glimpsing *golut* in the golden land: Jews and multiculturalism in America." In *Insider/outsider: American Jews and multiculturalism*. Biale, David, Michael Galchinsky, and Susan Heschel, eds. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Garvin, Charles D. 1981. *Contemporary group work*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

- Garvin, Charles D. and John E. Tropman. 1998. *Social work in contemporary society*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1966. "Religion as cultural system." In *Anthropological approaches to the study of religion*. Michael Banton, ed. London: Tavistock.
- Gilman, Sander L. 1986. *Jewish self-hatred, Anti-Semitism, and the hidden language of the Jews*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Glaser, Gabrielle. 1997. *Strangers to the tribe: Portraits of interfaith marriage*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.
- Glazer, Nathan. 1972. *American Judaism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Gleckman, Ari D., Streicher, Pamela J. 1990. "The potential for difficulties with Jewish intermarriage: Interventions and implications for the mental health counselor." *Journal of Mental Health Counseling*. Vol, 12 (4): 480-494.
- Gluck, Sherna Berger and Daphne Patai, eds. 1991. *Women's words: The feminist practice of oral history*. New York: Routledge.
- Goldberg, Harvey, ed. 1987. *Judaism viewed from within and without*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Goldscheider, Calvin. 1986. *The American Jewish community: Social science research and policy implications*. Atlanta: Scholars Press.
- Goldman, Edward A., ed. 1978. *Jews in a free society: Challenges and opportunities*. Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press.
- Goldstein, Sidney. 1992. "Profile of American Jewry: Insights from the 1990 national Jewish population survey." In *American Jewish yearbook* (Vol. 92). New York: The American Jewish Committee and Jewish Publication Society.
- Gordis, Daniel. 1997. *Does the world need the Jews*. New York: Scribner.
- Gordon, Albert I. 1964. *Intermarriage: Interfaith, Interracial, Interethnic*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Gordon, Milton 1964. *Assimilation in American Life*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Graetz, Heinrich. 1967. *History of the Jews*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society.

Greenstein, Daniel; Carlson, Jon; Howell, Ward, Candace. (1993). "Counseling with interfaith couples," *Individual psychology: Journal of Adlerian theory, Research & practice*. (Sep-Dec) Vol. 49 (3-4): 428-437.

Grele, Ronald J. 1991. *Envelopes of sound*. New York: Praeger

Grossman, Beth. 1990. "Children of interfaith marriage." *Dissertation Abstracts International*, Vol 51 (5-B): 2621.

Gumperz, John. 1982. *Discourse strategies*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Gupta, Akhil and James Ferguson, eds. 1997. *Anthropological locations: Boundaries and grounds of a field science*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Halliday, M.A.K. 1973. *Explorations in the function of language*. Hawthorne, New York: Elsevier North-Holland.

Harris, Alice Kessler. 1975. Introduction. In *Envelopes of sound: Six practitioners discuss the method, theory and practice of oral history and oral testimony*. Ronald J. Grele, ed. Chicago: Precedent Publishing.

Hart, Mitchell B. 2000. *Social science and the politics of modern Jewish identity*.

Hartman, Ann. 1989. "Still between client and community." *Social work*. 34:5 (September).

_____. 1990. "Many ways of knowing." In *Journal of the national association of social workers*. 35(1), 3-4.

Hasenfeld, Yeheskel. 1983. *Human service organizations*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Hasenfeld, Yeheskel, ed. 1992. *Human services as complex organizations*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Hauxhurst, J. 1998. *The interfaith family guidebook*. Kalamazoo, MI: Dovetail.

Heilman, Samuel. 1981. "The sociology of American Jewry: The last ten years." *Annual review of sociology*. 8: 135-60.

Heilman, Samuel C. 1995. *Portrait of American Jews: The last half of the 20th century*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Hertzberg, Arthur. 1989. *The Jews in America: Four centuries of an uneasy encounter*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

- Hilberg, Will. 1955. *Protestant, Catholic, Jew: An essay in American religious sociology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Hollinger, David A. 1999. *Science, Jews, and secular culture: Studies in mid-twentieth century American intellectual history*.
- Horowitz, Craig. 1997. "Are American Jews disappearing?" *New York Magazine*. July 14, 1997.
- Hyman, Paula E. 1995. *Gender and Assimilation in Modern Jewish History: The Roles and Representation of Women*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Hymes, Dell. 1974. *Foundations in sociolinguistics: An ethnographic approach*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- "InterfaithFamily.org". Web address. <http://www.interfaithfamily.org>
- Jakobson, Roman. 1990. *On language*. Eds. Linda R. Waugh and Monique Monville-Burston. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Jantsch, Erich. 1980. "Interdisciplinarity: dreams and reality." *Prospects* 10, 3: 304-12.
- "Jewcy". Web address: <http://www.jewcy.com>
- "Jewish Outreach Institute". Web address: <http://www.joi.org>
- Jick, Leon A. 1992. *The Americanization of the synagogue, 1820-1870*. Lebanon, NH: Brandeis University Press.
- Jones, Delmos J. 1988. "Towards a native anthropology." In *Anthropology for the nineties: Introductory readings*. Ed. Johnnetta B. Cole. New York: The Free Press.
- Judd, Eleanore P. 1990. "Intermarriage and the maintenance of religio-ethnic identity: A case study: The Denver Jewish community," *Journal of comparative family studies*. Vol 21(2): 251-268.
- Kaplan, Dana Evan. 2003. *American Reform Judaism: An introduction*. Rutgers University Press.
- Kaplan, Jane. 2004. *Interfaith families: Personal stories of Jewish-Christian intermarriage*. New York: Seabury Books.
- Kaplan, Jennifer. 2005. *Mixed blessings*. Documentary film. Website: <http://www.mixedblessingsfilm.com>.

- Katz, Jacob. 1993. *Tradition and crisis: Jewish society at the end of the middle ages*. New York: Schocken Books.
- Keen, Jim. 2006. *Inside intermarriage: A Christian partner's perspective on raising a Jewish family*. New York: Union of Reform Judaism Press.
- Keyser, Ariela, Barry A. Kosmin, and Jeffrey Scheckner. 2000. *The next generation*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Klein, Emma. 1996. *Lost Jews: the struggle for identity today*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Klein, Julie Thompson. 1996. *Crossing boundaries: Knowledge, disciplinarity, and interdisciplinarity*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia.
- Kosmin, Barry A. 1992. "Seizing the challenge of the 1990 national Jewish population survey: Policy and planning." *Journal of Jewish communal service*. Vol. 68 (4) Summer. Kendall Park, New Jersey: Jewish Communal Service Association.
- Kosmin, Barry A. 2006. "*Hard and soft secularists and hard and soft secularism: An intellectual and research challenge*." Hartford: The Institute for the Study of Secularism and Religion.
- Kosmin, Barry A. and Jeffrey Scheckner. *North American Jewish data bank*. Retrieved online <http://www.jewishdatabank.org>.
- Kristeva, Julia. 1980. *Desire in language: A semiotic approach to language and art*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- _____. 1991. *Strangers to ourselves*. Trans. Leon Roudiez. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Kugelmass, Jack, ed. 1988. *Between two worlds: Ethnographic essays on American Jewry*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Langellier, Kristin M. and Eric E. Peterson. 1993. "Family storytelling as strategy of social control." In *Narrative and social control: Critical perspectives*. Dennis K. Mumby, ed. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Lerner, Michael. 1994. *Jewish renewal: A path to healing and transformation*. New York: Putnam.
- Levinson, Julian. 2008. *Exiles on mainstreet: Jewish American writers and American literary culture*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

- Levy-Strauss, Claude. 1983. *Structural anthropology*. Trans. Monique Layton. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Linde, Charlotte. 1993. *Life stories: The creation of coherence*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Linzer, Norman. 1984. *The Jewish family: Authority and tradition in modern perspective*. New York: Human Sciences Press.
- Lipset, Seymour M., ed. 1990. *American pluralism and the Jewish community*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction.
- Loewenberg, Frank M. 1988. *Religion and social work practice in contemporary American society*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- McBeath, G.B. and S.A. Webb. 1991. Social work, modernity, and postmodernity. *Sociological Review* 39 (4): 745-62.
- McClain, Ellen Jaffe. 1995. *Embracing the stranger: Inter-marriage and the future of the American Jewish Community*. New York: Basic Books.
- McGinity, Karen R. 2009. *Still Jewish: A history of women and intermarriage in America*. New York: New York University Press.
- McHoul, Alec and Wendy Grace. 1997. *A Foucault primer: Discourse, power and the subject*. New York: New York University Press.
- McNay, Lois. 1994. *Foucault: A critical introduction*. New York: Continuum.
- Mahon, Michael. 1992. *Foucault's Nietzschean genealogy: Truth, power, and the subject*. Albany: State University of New York.
- Marttila and Kiley. 1992. "Highlights from an Anti-Defamation league survey on Anti-Semitism and prejudice in America."
- Martin, Ruth R. 1995. *Oral history in social work: Research, assessment, and intervention*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- McNay, Lois. 1994. *Foucault: A critical introduction*. New York: Continuum.
- Marty, Martin E. 1984. *Pilgrims in their own land: 500 years of religion in America*. London: Penguin Books.
- Massarik, Fred. and Chenkin, Alvin. 1973. "United States national Jewish population study: A first report." In *American Jewish yearbook*. (Vol. 74). New York: The American Jewish Committee and The Jewish Publication Society.

May, Todd. 1993. *Between Genealogy and epistemology: Psychology, politics, and knowledge in the thought of Michel Foucault*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania University Press.

Mayer, Egon, and Carl Sheingold, eds. 1979. *Intermarriage and the Jewish future: A national study in summary*. New York: The American Jewish Committee.

_____. 1983. *Children of intermarriage: A study in patterns of identification and family life*. The American Jewish Committee Institute of Human Relations Pamphlet. New York: The American Jewish Committee.

_____. 1985. *Love and tradition: Marriage between Jews and Christians*. New York: Plenum Press.

_____. ed. 1990. *Jewish intermarriage, conversion and outreach*. New York: The Center for Jewish Studies of the Graduate School of the City University of New York.

_____. ed. 1991. *The imperatives of Jewish outreach: Responding to intermarriage in the 1990's and beyond*. New York: The Jewish Outreach Institute & The Center for Jewish Studies of the Graduate School of the City University of New York.

_____ and Luann Dragone, eds. 1992. *Jewish connections for interfaith families: A national directory of outreach programs*. New York: The Jewish Outreach Institute and The Center for Jewish Studies of the Graduate School of the City University of New York.

_____. 1997. "Jewishness among the intermarried." In *American Jewry: Portrait and prognosis*. Eds. David M. Gordis and Dorit P. Gary. West Orange, NJ: Behrman House.

_____, Barry Kosmin, and Ariela Keysar. 2003. *American Jewish identity survey 2001 report: An exploration in the demography and outlook of a people*. New York: The Center for Cultural Judaism.

Mechling, Jay, Robert Merideth and David Nelson. 1973. "American culture studies: The discipline and the curriculum." In *American quarterly*. Vol. 25, No. 4: 363-389.

Medding, Peter, Tobin, Gary A., Fishman, Sylvia Barack, and Rimor, Mordechai. 1992. "Jewish identity in conversionary and mixed marriages." In *American Jewish yearbook* (Vol. 92). New York: The American Jewish Committee and Jewish Publication Society.

Mendes-Flohr, Paul R. and Jehuda Reinharz, eds. 1980. *The Jew in the modern world: A documentary history*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Merquair, J.G. 1984. *Foucault*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Messer, Ellen. 1986. "Franz Boas and Kaufmann Kohler: Anthropology and Reform Judaism." *Jewish Social Studies* 48:127-40.

- Messer-Davidow, Ellen, David R. Shumway, and David Sylvan. 1993. *Knowledges: Historical and critical studies in disciplinarity*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia.
- Meyer, Michael A. 1987. *The ideas of Jewish history*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press.
- Mihaly, Eugene. 1985. *Responsa on Jewish marriage*. Cincinnati: Private Publisher.
- _____. 1982. *Writing of Reform responsa*. Midrash class coursepack. Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College.
- Miller, Perry. 1956. *Errand into the Wilderness*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Mitchell, William E. 1988. "A Goy in the ghetto: Gentile-Jewish communication in fieldwork research." In *Anthropology for the nineties: Introductory readings*. Ed. Johnnetta B. Cole. New York: The Free Press.
- Moore, Deborah Dash, ed. 2008. *American Jewish identity politics*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Mott, Frank L. and Joyce C. Abma. 1992. "Contemporary Jewish Fertility: Does Religion Make a Difference?" *Contemporary Jewry* 13, 74-94.
- Murrin, J.M. 1990. "Religion and politics in America from the first settlements to the Civil War." In *Religion and American politics*. Ed. M.A. Noll. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Myerhoff, Barbara. 1978. *Number our days*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Nelson, Evan Stuart. 1991. "*The dynamics of interfaith marriage involving Jews*," Dissertation Abstracts International, Vol 52 (10): 5544-B.
- Orlove, Benjamin. 1997. "Surfacings: Thoughts on memory and the ethnographer's self." In *Jews and other differences: The new Jewish cultural studies*. Jonathan Boyarin and Daniel Boyarin, eds. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Ortner, Sherry B. 1973. "On key symbols." *American anthropologist*. 75: 1338-46.
- Passaro, Joanne. 1997. "'You can't take the subway to the field!': 'Village epistemologies' in the global village." In Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson, eds. *Anthropological locations: Boundaries and grounds of a field science*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

- Patai, Raphael, and Emanuel Goldsmith, eds. 1995. *Events and movements in modern Judaism*. New York: Paragon House.
- Payne, Michael. 1997. *Reading knowledge: An introduction to Barthes, Foucault and Althusser*. Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers Inc.
- Petsonk, Judy and Jim Remsen. 1988. *The intermarriage handbook: A guide for Jews and Christians*. New York: William Morrow.
- Philips, Bruce A. "A Jewish sociologist deciphers the intricacies of intermarriage." Retrieved online <http://huc.edu/faculty/faculty/pubs/pPhillips.html>.
- Piaget, Jean. 1970. *Structuralism*. New York: Basic Books.
- Rabinow, Paul, ed. 1984. *The Foucault Reader*. New York, Pantheon Books.
- Raphael, Marc Lee. 1984. *Profiles in American Judaism: The Reform, Conservative, Orthodox and Reconstructionist traditions in historical perspective*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Rappaport, Roy A. 1979. *Ecology, meaning and religion*. Berkeley: North Atlantic Books.
- Reines, Alvin J. 1975. "Birth dogma and philosophic religious faith: A philosophic inquiry. In *Hebrew Union college Annual*. 46: 297-329. Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press.
- Rosaldo, Renato. 1989. *Culture and truth: The remaking of social analysis*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Reuben, Steven Carr. 1987. *But how will you raise the children? A guide to interfaith marriage*. New York: Pocket Books.
- _____. 1992. *Raising Jewish children in a contemporary world: The modern parent's guide to creating a Jewish home*. Rocklin, California: Prima Publishing.
- Reuben, Steven C. 1994. *Making interfaith marriage work*. California: Prima Publishing.
- Riessman, Catherine Kohler. 1993. "Introduction: Locating narratives and Theoretical Cantexts." In *Narrative analysis: Qualitative research methods series*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Rivkin, Ellis. 1971. *The shaping of Jewish history: A radical new interpretation*. New York: Scribners.

_____. 1978. *A hidden revolution: The Pharisees' search for the kingdom within*. Nashville: Abingdon.

_____. 1971. *Lessons from the Past: Mutation as Mode of Jewish Survival*. Unpublished manuscript.

_____. 1971b. "Lessons from the past: Mutation as a mode of Jewish survival." In Francis Barry Silberg, *Aspects of the life and work of Ellis Rivkin: An intellectual biography with annotated bibliography*. (Ph.D. Dissertation, The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2004): n. 103, pp.222-223; n. 103, p. 396.

_____. 1975. *Jewish identity crisis and their resolution*. A position paper submitted to the Program Committee of the Central Conference of American Rabbis.

_____. 1976. *The crisis of identity in the dynamics of Jewish life*. Paper presented at the 49th annual conference of the national council of Jewish education, Baltimore, MD. In *Jewish education* 45(1), 4-16, 31.

_____. 2003. *The unity principle: The shaping of Jewish history*. Springfield, NJ: Behrman House.

Rose, Peter I. 1969. *The ghetto and beyond: Essays on Jewish life in America*. New York: Random House.

Rosenberg, R., Meehan, P. & Payne, J. 1988. *Happily intermarried: authoritative advice for a joyous Jewish-Christian marriage*. New York: Macmillan.

Rosenbloom, Joseph R. 1978. *Conversion to Judaism: From the Biblical period to the present*. Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press.

Rosten, Leo. 1970. *The joys of Yiddish*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Rothman, Jack and Edwin John Thomas, eds. 1994. *Intervention research: Design and development for human service*. Binghamton: The Haworth Press.

Ruby, Jay. 1982. *A crack in the mirror*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Sacks, D. 1995. *Welcoming the intermarried into your Jewish family*. New York: Jewish Outreach Institute.

Sapir, Edward. 1949. *Selected writings in language, culture, and personality*. Ed., David G. Mandelbaum. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Schafer, Roy. 1992. *Retelling a life: Narration and dialogue in psychoanalysis*. New York: Basic books.

- Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. 1990. *Epistemology of the closet*. Berkley: University of California Press.
- Schiffman, Lisa. 1999. *Generation J*. San Francisco: HarperCollins.
- Schneider, Susan Weidman. 1989. *Intermarriage: The challenge of living with differences between Christians and Jews*. New York: The Free Press.
- Schwartz, Arnold. 1970. "Intermarriage in the United States." In *American Jewish yearbook*. (101-121) New York: AJC
- Searle, John R. 1995. *The construction of social reality*. New York: The Free Press.
- Sheridan, Alan. *Michel Foucault: The will to truth*. New York: Tavistock.
- Silberman, Charles E. 1985. *A certain people: American Jews and their lives today*. New York: Summit Books.
- Silver, Samuel M. 1977. *Mixed marriage between Jew and Christian*. New York: Arco Publishing.
- Silverstein, Alan. 1994. *Alternatives to assimilation: The response of Reform Judaism to American culture, 1840-1930*. Lebanon, NH: Brandeis University Press.
- Silverstein, Alan. 1995. *Preserving Jewishness in your family after intermarriage has occurred*. Northvale, New Jersey: Jason Aronson.
- Sklare, Marshall. 1958. *The Jews: Social patterns of an American group*. New York: The Free Press.
- _____. 1971. *America's Jews*. New York: Random House.
- _____. 1993. *Observing America's Jews*. Lebanon, NH: Brandeis University Press.
- Saussure, Ferdinand de. 1959. *Course in general linguistics*. New York: The Philosophical Library.
- Smith, Tom W. 1993. "Actual trends or measurement artifacts? A review of three studies of anti-Semitism." In *The public opinion quarterly*. Vol. 57, No. 3. Autumn: 380-393.
- Stone, Frank A. 1977. *Using oral history in educational studies: Multicultural research guides series, Number one*. Storrs: University of Connecticut, Isaac Newton Thut World Education Center.
- Steinhardt, Michael H. 2003. "Contact." *The journal of Jewish life network*. Vol.5, 3:9.

- Tedlock, Dennis. 1990. "From voice and ear to hand and eye." *Journal of American folklore* 103:133-56.
- Tedlock, Dennis and Bruce Mannheim, eds. 1995. *The dialogic emergence of culture*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.
- Thompson, Paul. 1994. "Believe it or not: Rethinking the historical interpretations of memory." In *Memory and history: Essays on recalling and interpreting experience*. Jaclyn Jeffrey and Glenace Edwall, eds. New York: University Press of America.
- Tobin, Gary A. 1999. *Opening the gates: How proactive conversion can revitalize the Jewish community*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Tonkin, Elizabeth, 1992. *Narrating our past: The social construction of oral history*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tropman, John E. 1989. *American values and social welfare*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, Inc.
- Veroff, Joseph, Lynne Sutherland, Letha Chadiha, and Robert M. Ortega. 1993. "Newly weds tell their stories: A Narrative method for assessing marital experiences." In *Journal of social and personal relationships*. Vol 10: 437-457. Newbury Park: Sage.
- Waxman, Chaim I. 1994. "America's Jews: ideology of cultural pluralism/reality of melting pot," *Shofar: An interdisciplinary journal of Jewish studies*, Vol. 12 (3): 66-79.
- Weinstein, Linda C. 1991. Quote taken from program notes, Council of Jewish Federations 1991 General Assembly, Symposium on Inter marriage and Continuity.
- Wertheimer, Jack. 1993. *A people divided: Judaism in contemporary America*. New York: Basic Books.
- Wertheimer, Jack, ed. 1995. *The American synagogue: A sanctuary transformed*. Lebanon, NH: Brandeis University Press.
- Wertheimer, Jack, Charles S. Liebman, and Steven Cohen. 1996. "How to Save American Jews," *Commentary*. 101, no. 1 (January); 47-51.
- Whitfield, Stephen J. 1999. *In search of American Jewish culture*. Lebanon, NH: Brandeis University Press.
- Whorf, Benjamin Lee. 1956. In *Language, thought, reality*. Ed. J. B. Carroll. Cambridge: MIT Press.

“Working with interfaith couples, a Jewish perspective: A guide for facilitators.” 1992. Commission on Reform Jewish Outreach of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and the Central Conference of American Rabbis. New York.

Wormer, Katherine Van and Fred H Besthorn. 2007. *Human behavior and social environment, macro level: Groups, communities, and organizations*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Yerushalmi, Yosef Hayim. 1996. *Zakhor: Jewish history and Jewish memory*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Yow, Valerie Raleigh. 1994. *Recording oral history: A practical guide for social scientists*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Zenner, Walter P., ed. 1988. *Persistence and flexibility: Anthropological perspectives on the American Jewish experience*. Albany: State University of New York Press.