



Corrections made from
earlier print edition

CHICAGO JEWISH HISTORY

THE BOOK ISSUE



WHO RULES THE SYNAGOGUE?

Religious Authority
and the Formation of
American Judaism

ZEV ELEFF



From left: Leo Lichtenberg, Alfred Wolf, W. Gunther Plaut, Herman Schaalman,
and Wolli Kaelter. Hebrew Union College campus, August, 1935.

Collection of Rabbi Herman Schaalman.

The “Gang of Five” and Their Impact on Twentieth Century Reform Judaism

BY RICHARD DAMASHEK

In late August of 1935, five young German rabbinic students left their homeland and set out for America on an adventure that would transform their lives and help shape twentieth century Reform Judaism. All of them—Herman Schaalman, W. Gunther Plaut, Alfred Wolf, Wolli Kaelter, and Leo Lichtenberg—had been selected by Leo Baeck, their seminary president to receive scholarships that had been offered by Cincinnati’s Hebrew Union College. They left Berlin’s renowned Liberal *Lehranstalt Für die Wissenschaft des Judentums* for the uncertainty of a journey to America’s heartland, a place they knew nothing about, for study at an institution they never heard of, and to experiences they had never dreamed of. *Continued on Page 22*

Rev. Dr. Emil G. Hirsch
(Born 1851 - Dies 1923)
Early Ministry thru 1881



Compiled & Edited by his Grandson,
Emil G. Hirsch, 3rd
from newspapers & archives.

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



Rachelle Gold.

Guest columnist is CJHS Secretary Dr. Rachelle Gold.

There is a great affinity between Jews and books.

In this year's book issue of *Chicago Jewish History* we are again proud to present a broad range of works authored by Society members.

This issue includes reviews of Board member Rabbi Dr. Zev Eleff's two latest books. A special added feature is Richard Damashek's preview of his forthcoming book about five influential German refugee rabbis. One of the five is Chicago's beloved Rabbi Herman Schaalman. The Society is fortunate to attract avid scholars and readers who create a community of learning and discovery.

Our appreciation of books led me to think about the prominence of Jews among Nobel Prize winners in literature. In the years 1901 to 2016, 109 Nobel prizes have been awarded to 113 recipients (as stated in the official Nobel website Nobelprize.org). According to the website jinfo.org, there are 15 laureates who are Jewish or of Jewish descent (two have half-Jewish parentage), comprising 13% of the total in literature.

The laureates are **Paul von Heyse** 1910, **Henri Bergson** 1927, **Boris Pasternak** 1958 (due to Soviet pressure, he declined the award after initially accepting it), **Shmuel Yosef Agnon** and **Nelly Sachs** 1966, **Saul Bellow** 1976, **Isaac Bashevis Singer** 1978, **Elias Canetti** 1981, **Joseph Brodsky** 1987, **Nadine Gordimer** 1991, **Imre Kertesz** 2002, **Elfriede Jelinek** 2004, **Harold Pinter** 2005, **Patrick Modiano** 2014, and **Bob Dylan** (born Robert Allen Zimmerman), this year's unconventional but widely acclaimed choice.

The 2016 award citation is "for having created new poetic expressions within the great American song tradition."

Chicago Jews, as Midwesterners, can claim extra pride in the Minnesota-born Dylan's accomplishment. As it turns out, he had some early history in our city, even though he developed his career and gained fame in New York.

Rick Kogan writes in the *Chicago Tribune* (October 17, 2016) that in late April or early May of 1963, the 21-year-old Dylan was interviewed in the WFMT studio by Studs Terkel for his one-hour radio show, *The Wax Museum*. (I highly recommend listening to the entire interview, which can be found on npr.org or youtube.com). Also, while in Chicago, Dylan performed at a venue called the Bear, possibly co-owned by Dylan's new manager, Albert Grossman, a Chicagoan.

Dylan had recently finished recording his second album, "The Free-wheelin' Bob Dylan," which would be released in late May 1963, featuring now iconic original songs, including *Blowin' in the Wind*, *A Hard Rain's Gonna Fall*, and *Don't Think Twice, It's All Right*. The Terkel interview is interspersed with Dylan's performance of songs from his new album.

Before concluding, Studs remarks with his usual warmth and sincerity, "We got just a touch of you now. We hope this is chapter one involving your visits to Chicago." He asks Dylan for one more song. It is a heartfelt rendition of *Blowin' in the Wind*, as relevant and moving today as ever. ❖



chicago jewish historical society

Fall 2016

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Chicago Jewish History

is published quarterly by the CJHS at 610 S. Michigan Ave., Room 803, Chicago, IL 60605-1901. Phone (312) 663-5634. info@chicagojewishhistory.org. Successor to *Society News*. Single copies \$4.00 postpaid.

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Send submissions to Editor, electronically (preferred) or via standard mail. Enclose SASE.

EXHIBITIONS OF SPECIAL INTEREST

Moholy-Nagy: Future Present

The Art Institute of Chicago
Michigan at Adams

Painting, photography, film, sculpture, advertising, product design, theater sets—László Moholy-Nagy (American, born Hungary, 1895–1946) did it all. This exhibition surveys the career of an artist who was always ahead of his time. He founded the New Bauhaus in Chicago, a school that continues today as the Institute of Design at IIT. He remains the most famous international modern artist ever to have resided in Chicago.

Open Now thru January 3, 2017

For hours, admission fees, and online slide show visit www.artic.edu

Making Mainbocher:

The First American Couturier
Chicago History Museum
1601 North Clark Street

Chicagoan Mainbocher (1890–1976) established a fashion empire serving royalty, Hollywood icons, and the social elite. Raised in a modest home on the city's West Side, he leveraged his passion for the arts to become a tastemaker of twentieth-century style.

Open Now until September 2017.

For hours, admission fees, and online slide show visit www.chicagohistory.org

New Art Space at Spertus Institute Spertus Institute for Jewish Learning and Leadership 610 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago

The Ground Level Arts Lab features artifacts from Spertus Institute's impressive collections around its perimeter, on view for both researchers and members of the public. In the center is flexible space for changing exhibits.

The first exhibit, titled **VOICES OF WISDOM**, presents new works by Chicago-area Jewish artists.

The works on display were created in conjunction with the Midwest Jewish Artists Lab, an initiative through which Spertus brought together 12 distinguished artists to learn from experts and each other.

For a year, the artists had opportunities to study art from the Spertus collections and meet with historians, art scholars, and specialists in a range of fields. Free. For hours and online slide show visit www.spertus.edu

THE NEXT CJHS OPEN MEETINGS *mark your 2017 calendars!*

SUNDAY, APRIL 30

Temple Beth-El

3810 Dundee Road, Northbrook

2:00 p.m.

Michael Ebner

Professor Emeritus, Lake Forest College

Presents an Illustrated Talk

as the Major League season begins and the World Series Championship pennant flutters over Wrigley Field

JEWES and BASEBALL

SUNDAY, MAY 21

Emanuel Congregation

5959 North Sheridan Road, Chicago

2:00 p.m.

Mary Wisniewski

Transportation Reporter, The Chicago Tribune

Discusses Her New Book

on the famous Chicago author and aspects of his Jewish family

NELSON ALGREN: A Life

Report: CJHS Open Meeting, Sunday, November 6, 2016
“Music & History” Concert at KAM Isaiah Israel



Max Janowski.

When the audience was seated in the magnificent sanctuary of KAMII, 1100 East Hyde Park Blvd., and before the start of the concert, Past President Edward Mazur conducted a brief meeting of the Society. He told our attendees that this would be the first in a series of cultural events funded by a generous legacy to the Chicago Jewish Historical Society from Seymour H. Persky. Dr. Mazur then conducted the election of members to the CJHS Board of Directors. The nominees were Herbert Eiseman, Clare (Chaikey) Greenberg, Dr. Edward H. Mazur, Joan Pomaranc, and Burton Robin, all current Board members. They were all reelected by acclamation to a three-year term.



Cantor David Berger.

The KAMII building is an architectural treasure. Before the meeting and concert Joan Pomaranc and Mark Mandle guided a tour of the sanctuary and chapel. CJHS Tour Chair Leah Axelrod had reserved a coach to bring members from the North Side, and more than thirty CJHS members accepted the offer of easy round-trip travel to Kenwood, the opportunity to take the tour, attend the concert, nosh on post-concert rugelach, and view the home of President Obama.

“Music & History” was a concert presented by the Chicago Jewish Historical Society and KAM Isaiah Israel Congregation for the 25th Yahrzeit of Max Janowski, music director of KAMII. Cantor David Berger conducted a delightful and informative multimedia event.

Cantor David Berger

is the cantor of KAM Isaiah Israel Congregation.

Cantor Miriam Eskenasy

tutors b'nei mitzvah at Temple Shalom of Chicago. Before her semi-retirement, she was the cantor at KAMII.

Cantor Jay O'Brien

currently serves as cantor of Congregation Solel in Highland Park, Illinois.

Robert McConnell

serves as High Holy Days accompanist at KAMII.

Quartet:

Henry Hunt

Woo Chan Lee

Shira Jacobson

April Salerno

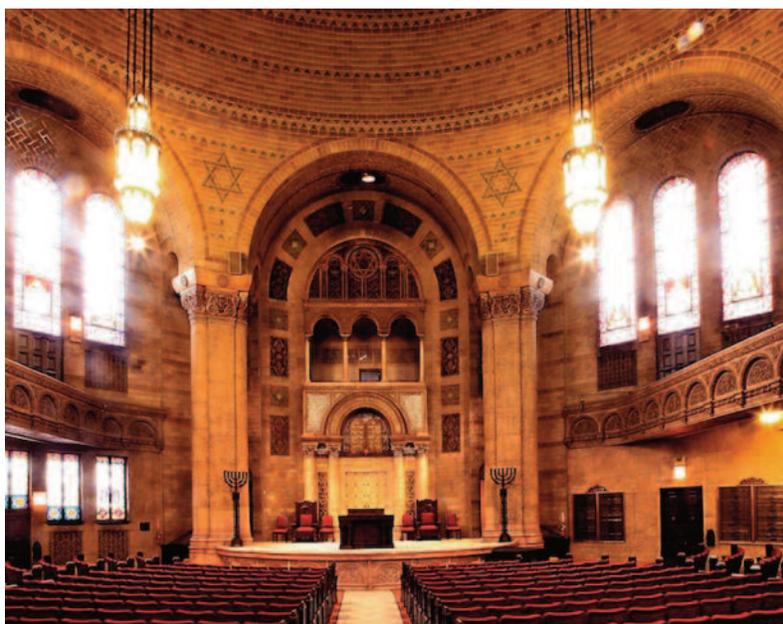
Who was Max Janowski? He was born in Berlin—or Poland—depending on who asked. His father was Chaim Janowski from Poland; his mother was an opera singer who divorced Chaim, married a composer, and lived a long life in Tel Aviv.

Max studied piano with a fine teacher in Berlin. He accompanied Yiddish pop singers and old time hazzanim. Somehow he was awarded a teaching position in a music academy in Japan where he was called “professor.” He married and divorced Ilse Wunsch who later became a music educator at NYU.

Max came to KAM (the old building) when the churchy music from the Union Hymnal was sung in English. Max set about enriching and enlivening the

repertory. He was a Zionist. He married Gretel Haas, the lovable secretary of the choir. KAMII gave him the title “cantor.” Gretel died in 1990, Max, in 1991.

Cantor Berger inserted these biographical notes with wit and charm. He played recordings and screened visuals between the Janowski compositions and arrangements.



Thanks to Jerry Levin for coordinating the event and arranging for the video recording.

AN INQUIRY... *with an answer and an addition*

Chicago's Jewish Aldermen: From 1856 to the Present

Last year, Eric Hopp of Skokie asked us if Burton Natarus was Chicago's first Jewish alderman. We answered that Henry Greenebaum was the first one, elected in 1856. Our historians added some well-known names which we published in our winter 2016 issue, and our members added more. Our editor delved deeply into the internet and discovered others. Then we went to work compiling a complete list. Special thanks to Research Librarian Lesley Martin at the Chicago History Museum who had at hand lists of city officials compiled by the Municipal Reference Library. She provided us with any missing years and wards for the names we supplied.

When we received a letter from Joe Kraus (see below), we turned to Ms. Martin at the CHS for more research. She sent us a clipping from the 1913 *Chicago Tribune* verifying the election of Manny Abrahams to the City Council and a second clipping telling about his death the same year. So we present here our latest revised list of Chicago's Jewish aldermen who served in the Chicago City Council in the past and the two Jewish women currently serving.

Manny Abrahams	(20th)	1913	Bertram B. Moss	(5th)	1943-1947
Morrie Abrahams	(20th)	1913	Burton Natarus	(42nd)	1971-2007
Jacob Arvey	(24th)	1923-1941	Martin Oberman	(43rd)	1975-1987
Ralph Axelrod	(46th)	1979-1983	Jerome Orbach	(46th)	1983-1987
Benjamin Becker	(40th)	1947-1955	Ivan Rittenberg	(40th)	1979-1983
Lawrence Bloom	(5th)	1979-1997	Jacob Rosenberg	(2nd)	1876-1878
Hyman Brody	(39th)	1935-1937	Thomas S. Rosenberg	(44th)	1959-1968
Abraham H. Cohen	(4th)	1939-1955	Edward S. Salomon	(6th)	1861*
Chris Cohen	(46th)	1971-1977	Esther Saperstein	(49th)	1975-1979
Berthold A. Cronson	(4th)	1925-1937	Philip Shapiro	(39th)	1959-1965
Leon Despres	(5th)	1955-1975	Helen Shiller	(46th)	1987-2011
Sidney Deutsch	(24th)	1953-1957	Debra Silverstein	(50th)	2011-current
Edwin Eisendrath	(43rd)	1987-1993	Seymour Simon	(40th)	1955-1961
Fred Fischman	(24th)	1943-1947	“ “	(40th)	1967-1974
Milton J. Foreman	(4th)	1899-1901	William Singer	(43rd)	1969-1975
“ “	(3rd)	1901-1911	Michele Smith	(43rd)	2011-current
Henry Greenebaum	(6th)	1856-1858	Jack Sperling	(50th)	1967-1973
Leonard J. Grossman	(5th)	1927-1931	Bernard Stone	(50th)	1973-2011
Solomon Gutstein	(40th)	1975-1979	Paul T. Wigoda	(49th)	1959-1974
Barnet Hodes	(7th)	1931-1935			
Louis London	(24th)	1947-1953			

**volunteered for service in Union Army*

To Editor Bev,

Just a quick addition to the list of Jewish aldermen. For reasons that I find interesting, these lists never seem to include Manny Abrahams, 20th ward alderman, who died in 1913 on the floor of City Hall as he argued before the Council for the repeal of a law that banned (mostly Jewish) pushcart peddlers from yelling too loud about their wares. Manny was briefly succeeded in office by his brother Morrie, so that makes a second alderman. And, for footnote's sake, Manny's widow ran against Morrie, making her the first female Jewish candidate for office in the first year Illinois women had the vote.

Joe

Joe Kraus preceded Bev Chubak as editor of *Chicago Jewish History*. His 1993 article about Alderman Manny Abrahams is reprinted on the following pages.

Manny Abrahams: A Checkered Career as “Boss of the Ghetto”

West Side Politician Died in Chicago City Council Defending Rights of Peddlers

BY JOE KRAUS

Edited Reprint from the Spring 1993 issue of *Chicago Jewish History*

Emanuel “Manny” Abrahams rose from working as a West Side peddler to serving in the Illinois State Legislature and Chicago City Council, all the while juggling two masks. To some he was a political scoundrel one step ahead of indictment. To others he was the heroic “boss of the ghetto” out to protect Jewish working class interests. Although largely forgotten today, Abrahams was one of the first Chicago Jewish politicians of consequence and led one of the most colorful careers in the remarkably colorful history of Chicago politicians. From his days struggling to make a living in early Chicago through his neighborhood prominence as owner of a big saloon through his checkered political career and even his dying moments, Abraham made his mark.

Born in 1865 to Prussian immigrants who had arrived as early as 1848, Manny came from one of the oldest Jewish families in the city. He himself was one of the first generations of Jews to be born, live his entire life, and die in Chicago. His birthplace was somewhere on Canal Street, either 610 South Canal or at the intersection of what is now Canal and Monroe.

Young Abrahams at Work

But belonging to a pioneer Chicago Jewish family did not assure an easy road for the younger generation of the Abrahams, and early on Manny had to support himself. He quit the public schools when he was just 15 and went to work as an errand boy for E. Rothschild and Brothers wholesale clothing house. While he eventually identified himself as a “traveling salesman,” he was apparently a peddler whose routes brought him to know many of the other young and future leaders of Chicago’s various ethnic communities.

Although he claimed in a *Chicago Daily News* biographical sheet from 1906 that he worked with Rothschild and Bros. for 17 years, he had already begun his political career with a bid for county commissioner in 1898. Despite losing, he made it clear that he wanted to be someone with clout, and he soon allied himself with the growing Democratic Party. In 1891 he secured for himself an appointment as court bailiff.

Era of the Ward Bosses

Though Abrahams’ appointment came from Mayor Carter Harrison, the most powerful figures in the Democratic Party of the day were the ward bosses who controlled huge voting blocs and were not afraid to stoop to questionable tactics to get their way. While boss Mike McDonald* saw his influence waning, the infamous Hinky Dink Kenna and Bathhouse John Coughlin were growing into their full power as twin bosses of the First Ward.

Kenna and Coughlin maintained their power through their ownership of strategically placed saloons that brought them into contact with—and gave them the opportunity to satisfy—enough of their constituents to control the Irish voting bloc on any question of concern to them. With the clout they held, Kenna and Coughlin could determine elections in wards other than their own (each of Chicago’s wards had two aldermen until soon after the turn of the twentieth century). So they controlled enough of their City Council colleagues to have effective ownership of the Council.

Lays out Political Future

As part of their organization, Abrahams followed their model and established his own neighborhood saloon some time around 1890. His first location was at 14th Street and Racine, but he eventually settled at 912 West 12th Street. A shrewd organizer, he saw to it that his saloon came to serve him with the same effectiveness as the ones owned by Kenna and Coughlin. With the influence he held in the Jewish Maxwell Street area and his connections to political figures citywide, Abrahams laid the foundation of his own career as a political boss.

From his position as a court bailiff he moved up to serving as clerk of the court in 1903, and then emerged as his organization’s candidate for the Illinois State Legislature in 1906. Elected easily, his career looked to be in full flight.

First Big Scandal

In 1909, during his second term in the legislature, Abrahams found himself in the middle of a political

*Mike McDonald’s eventual marriage to Dora Feldman and his conversion to Judaism were chronicled in an article by CJHS President Emeritus Walter Roth in the March 1988 issue of *Chicago Jewish History*. Read it on our website.

scandal that eventually reached the United States Senate. At the time, Illinois, like many other states, determined its U.S. senators by vote within the state legislature rather than the at-large popular elections we know today. Though Democrats controlled the state house, there was a strong “smoke-filled room” push for the Republican nominee, William Lorimer.

Would Lorimer have the votes to win a seat from the Democratic House? Legislators lobbied one another nervously in the halls outside the chamber. Political observers could not venture to predict the outcome of the vote even as the election session was convened.

Since members cast their votes in alphabetical order, it fell to Abrahams to vote first. Standing in front of the expectant legislators, he announced he was for Lorimer. He had shown it was possible to break with the Party label and vote as the clout directed. He made it a matter of course for the other Democrats to follow suit. Lorimer was elected.

Stuck with “Bellwether” Label

Dubbed by the press the “bellwether” of the House for his vote, Abrahams became a central figure in the subsequent U.S. Senate investigation of fraud in the election. It took months before Lorimer was seated, and Abrahams was twice called to Washington to testify about the circumstances behind his vote. He would find himself stuck with the title “bellwether.” [The definition comes from Middle English: the leading sheep of a flock, from the practice of belling the leader.].

Abrahams defended his vote as part of Chicago politics. As he explained in a 1913 conversation with a *Chicago Daily News* reporter:

“‘Bellwether.’ Say, I could ’a’ stood for the rest [of the charges about the election] and grinned, but that “bellwether” got my goat. You bet I voted for Lorimer, and I’d vote for him tomorrow under the same circumstances. I’ve known Lorimer for thirty years. Knew him when he was a Halsted Street car conductor. He’s my friend. Say, what is a fellow to do when he knows his own party can’t win and his friend is a candidate. All he can do is vote for his friend. And that’s just what I did. This is a Lorimer district and I’m a Lorimer man [even] if I am a Democrat. And the people of the district endorsed my vote for him.”

Abrahams decided not to run for re-election in 1910, and his legislative career came to an end. Whether he felt tarnished by the scandal, had grown temporarily weary of politics, or had been promised favors for his

vote by Chicago’s bosses is anybody’s guess. For the next two years he returned full-time to his saloon and the unrecorded politics of the neighborhood.

Rivals Turn to Bombs

However, things were not quiet for the temporarily retired politician. The newspapers accused him of running one of the area’s largest gambling operations, and he continued to be haunted by the Lorimer scandal. In 1912 a bomb exploded near the saloon, apparently in an attempt to intimidate him. It did the reverse: Abrahams announced soon afterward that he would run for City Council against the well established 20th Ward Alderman Dennis Egan.

The big political issue of the moment was an ordinance that Egan had supported making it illegal for peddlers to cry their wares in the streets of certain parts of the city during the hours 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Though designed to protect the daytime sleeping hours of the many Irish night watchmen and streetcar drivers, the ordinance marked a serious obstacle to the business practices of many Jewish and Bohemian street peddlers. Not too long removed from his own days as a peddler, Abrahams vowed to change things.

Six months later, in February 1913, another bomb exploded, this one in the doorway of the saloon itself. The blast was powerful enough to knock out every pane of glass in the three-story building, and it seemed ominous enough for at least one newspaper to declare it “the first bomb in what promises to be a gambling war as fierce as any ever waged in the city.”

“I’m no Boss!”

Abrahams denied the bomb had anything to do with gambling or the aldermanic campaign, blaming it instead on residual anger over the Lorimer election. He explained that he had given over control of the saloon to his brother Morris.

“What! Me a police and gambling boss! I never bossed anything but a bartender in my life. I don’t run no saloon any more, and I never did run no gambling house.”

Abrahams fought back against the perpetrators of the bombings by pushing forward with his aldermanic campaign. In a hotly contested primary he managed to defeat Egan by a narrow margin. Local election commissioners—in some cases appointed by Egan—charged him with vote fraud, but further investigation seemed to indicate that he had indeed won. It was just another scandal for the man who found himself increasingly referred to as “the boss of the ghetto.”

Continued on Page 8

Manny Abrahams *Continued from Page 7*

Elected in Contested Vote

Republicans and disgruntled Egan supporters made a last ditch effort to stop Abrahams' election to the Council by attempting to run former Alderman Henry L. Fick against him. With help from Kenna, Coughlin, and Mayor Carter Harrison II, Abrahams managed to keep Fick off the ballot. The Republican Party's last-minute candidate was Samuel Heller, a law student at Northwestern University. He didn't stand a chance.

Once in office, Abrahams set about securing his place. He granted free peddling licenses to his supporters, arranged to put some of his people in the police department, and began appointing his allies to various key positions. Most galling to his opponents was his appointment of A. R. Goldstein as Maxwell Street Market Master. Under Goldstein's management, Abrahams' supporters among the peddlers received the best locations. His opponents in the Council brought charges against Goldstein soon after his appointment.

Manny's Finest Hour

On July 1, 1913, Abrahams rose before the Council to argue for removing the city's ban on peddlers crying their wares. Chicago happened to be in the midst of a devastating heat wave. The *Record-Herald* ran a headline: "Pedestrians Topple Over and Women Drop Dead in Their Kitchens."

Abrahams himself was as fiery hot as he had ever been. Alderman Nance, a supporter of the ban, argued that it should remain in place in consideration of the perhaps 60,000 Chicagoans who were home sick each day. Abrahams retorted:

"The peddler don't make as much noise as the automobiles on the boulevards. There are only 4,000 peddlers, and they don't make a tenth of the noise that 20,000 do at the west side [Chicago Cubs] ballpark, right next to the county hospital where there are 2,000 sick all the time."

But then the unexpected happened. While the cheers of "Good boy, Manny," continued to well up from his supporters in the gallery, Abrahams' face took on a pained expression, and he staggered into his seat. He quickly passed out and slumped to the floor. He had suffered what the coroner would call apoplexy, and he died hours later without regaining consciousness. The "boss of the ghetto" had given his life defending the rights of Jewish peddlers.

Man of the People

Such a dramatic exit secured Abrahams a reputation as a champion of the poor and otherwise unrepresented immigrants of the West Side. The *Daily News* correspondent, in a notably sensitive report, interviewed several of Abrahams' constituents who had come to sit *shiva* with the family.

"Manny was good to his *landsmen*," one man said. "His people he did not forget. That is what he was here for. He did not forget."

A woman at the same scene commented on the widespread rumor that Manny's brother Morris would succeed him, saying, "I supposed Morrie will go into the Council to take his place. Morrie is a good man, too, but never will he be a man like Manny. Manny knew his people too well."

Another man took pride in the fact that Manny was someone who had learned from experience and who stood for a different kind of Chicago than the politicians usually did:

"It all goes to show, education ain't everything. Look at Manny. He was born right over here on Canal Street. Does he go to school and college and everything? No. When he is a boy he goes to work. He is an errand boy and learns the business. Then he gets a good job for this here wholesale cloak and suit company. But he is too smart for that. So he gets into politics. And they can't keep him down either. When he's 47, he's a big man... Don't tell me that he wasn't as smart as these fellows that learn out of books."

Abrahams' funeral attracted representatives from all the areas of city government. Whether we choose to remember him today as a scoundrel or as the defender of what was right when others would not, we can see in retrospect that he helped make it possible for the Jewish West Side to enter into the age of Chicago Machine politics. His first steps toward forging a Jewish voting bloc provided a foundation for other better-remembered bosses to build on. There may never have been another "boss of the ghetto" after Abrahams, but West Side politics would not have been the same without him. ❖

Dr. Joseph E. Kraus, Ph.D. is Associate Professor of English at the University of Scranton. He resides in Shavertown, PA, with his wife Paula Chaiken and their three sons. He is co-author with Walter Roth of *An Accidental Anarchist: How the Killing of a Humble Jewish Immigrant by Chicago's Chief of Police Exposed the Conflict Between Law & Order and Civil Rights in Early 20th Century America*.

THE BOOK SECTION

our publications

HISTORY OF THE JEWS OF CHICAGO. Edited by Hyman L. Meites. The Chicago Jewish Historical Society's 1990 facsimile of the original 1924 edition and supplementary excerpts from the 1927 edition. With a new introduction by James R. Grossman. Foreword by Thomas R. Meites and Jerome B. Meites. Hundreds of biographical entries; synagogue and organization histories; index. Illustrated with black and white photographs and drawings. 856 pages. **Limited Edition Sold Out.** *Reference copies can be found in the Asher Library of Spertus Institute, the Chicago Public Library, and other libraries. Copies are sometimes offered for sale on the internet.*

DVD: ROMANCE OF A PEOPLE: The First 100 Years of Jewish Life in Chicago: 1833-1933. Beverly Siegel, Executive Producer-Director, 1997. Rare film footage, vintage photos, sound recordings, and informative interviews combine to tell the story of the building of Chicago's Jewish community and its impact on the City of the Big Shoulders. Highlighted is the role of the early German-Jewish settlers in the development of some of the city's major cultural institutions, the arrival of Jews from Eastern Europe, and the founding in Chicago of several national Jewish organizations. One of the most moving segments is actual film footage of the Jewish community's spectacular pageant, *The Romance of a People*, presented on Jewish Day at the 1933 Century of Progress. Color and B&W. Running time 30 minutes. DVD \$29.95

ROMANCE OF A PEOPLE: DVD and PROGRAM BOOK. In the year 2000, the Society published a facsimile of the 72-page souvenir program for the Jewish Day pageant *The Romance of a People*. Includes program notes, names of the participants and sponsors, and lots of ads. Walter Roth's eight-page essay adds a historical perspective. 80 pages. Paper.

Special Offer! DVD and Program Book \$39.95
Ergo Media. www.jewishvideo.com

THE GERMAN-JEWISH EMIGRATION OF THE 1930s AND ITS IMPACT ON CHICAGO. Publications Committee Chairman: Roberta L. Bernstein. Edited by Curtis C. Melnick. 1980. Report of CJHS symposium at Cong. Ezra-Habonim on November 18, 1979. Illustrated. 24 pages. Paper \$4.00*

A WALK TO SHUL: Chicago Synagogues of Lawndale and Stops on the Way. By Bea Kraus and Norman D. Schwartz. 2003. **First Edition Sold Out — Second Edition in Preparation**
Reference copies in Spertus Institute Library and the Chicago Public Library.



SYNAGOGUES OF CHICAGO.

Edited by Irving Cutler, Norman D. Schwartz, and Sidney Sorkin. Project supervised by Clare Greenberg, 1991. A compilation of information on local synagogues, based on listings in Chicago city directories (1839 through 1928-29) and Chicago classified phone directories (1929-30 through 1992).

The information was entered into a computer database from microfilm prints of the directories located in the Chicago Municipal Reference Library. To make the synagogue listings more readily usable by scholars, entries have been sorted into various categories, and separate lists have been made:

1. Master information: **all available information** listed in alphabetical order by record number.
2. Basic information: synagogue name, address, year of record, and record number, in alphabetical order **by synagogue name.**
3. Basic information as above **by year**, with all entries for a given year together.
4. Basic information as above sorted by year, by street address, and **by alphabetized street names.**
5. Basic information sorted by year and **by alphabetized names of rabbis.**
6. Basic information sorted by year and **by alphabetized names of congregation presidents.**

Three parts, spiral-bound paper.

CJHS Members \$90*

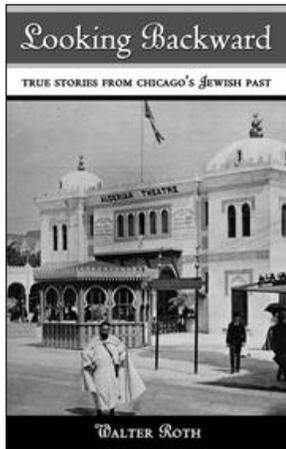
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our authors

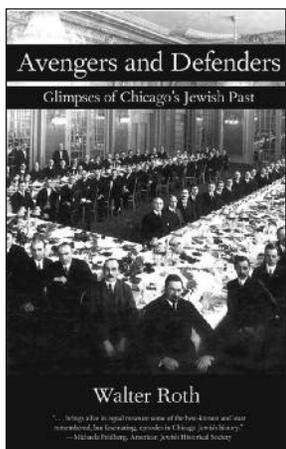
Walter Roth's Jewish Chicagoans

Famous, Infamous, and Little-Known Heroes and Happenings



LOOKING BACKWARD: True Stories from Chicago's Jewish Past. By Walter Roth. Academy Chicago Publishers, 2002. The unknown story of Jewish participation in Chicago's great fair of 1893 is only one of the fascinating nuggets of history unearthed and polished by Walter Roth in the pages of *Chicago Jewish History*. The material chronicles events and people from the late 1800s to the end of World War II. Illustrated. 305 pages. Paper.

*Buy Direct from CJHS at Special Price \$10.00**



AVENGERS AND DEFENDERS: Glimpses of Chicago's Jewish Past. By Walter Roth. Academy Chicago Publishers, 2008. The second collection of articles from *Chicago Jewish History* by President Emeritus Roth, who conveys his justifiable pride in the productive immigrants, refugees, and native-born Jews who enriched the life of our city. The "avenger" in the title is Sholom Schwartzbard, who assassinated Simon Petlura, whose followers perpetrated the post-WWI pogroms in Ukraine. Illustrated. 235 pages. Paper.

*Buy Direct from CJHS at Special Price \$10.00**

AN ACCIDENTAL ANARCHIST: How the Killing of a Humble Jewish Immigrant by Chicago's Chief of Police Exposed the Conflict Between Law & Order and Civil Rights in Early 20th Century America. By Walter Roth & Joe Kraus.

Academy Chicago Publishers, 1998. The episode took place on a cold Chicago morning in March, 1908. Lazarus Averbuch, a 19-year-old Jewish immigrant, knocked on the door of Police Chief George Shippy. Minutes later, the boy lay dead, shot by Shippy himself. Why Averbuch went to the police chief's house and exactly what happened afterward is still not known. The book does not solve the mystery, rather the authors examine the many different perspectives and concerns that surrounded the investigation of Averbuch's killing. Illustrated. 212 pages. Paper.

*Buy Direct from CJHS at Special Price \$15.00**

New! EVERYDAY HEROIC LIVES: Portraits from Chicago's Jewish Past. By Walter Roth. Amazon Kindle, 2016. A collection of writings first published in *Chicago Jewish History* that includes profiles of the author's heroes, social justice advocates among his fellow lawyers (hardly "everyday"), plus more family memoirs. 228 pages. Paper.

DEPARTURE AND RETURN: Trips to and Memories from Roth, Germany. By Walter Roth.

Amazon Kindle, 2013. In the summer of 1938, nine-year-old Walter Roth arrived in Chicago with his immediate family after they escaped Nazi Germany. Growing up in Hyde Park, he was a typical American immigrant teen.

However, a trip in 1953 back to Roth, his hometown in Germany, proved to be a turning point on which would begin a lifelong journey exploring his roots. This project grew into the creation of a memorial in Roth to commemorate the Jews who were murdered during the Holocaust, and his continued involvement with his village, to which he has traveled with his wife, Chaya, their children and grandchildren to explore his family's tragic past. Illustrated, 165 pages. Paper.

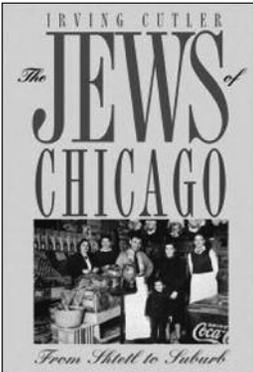
TONI AND MARKUS: From Village Life to Urban Stress.

By Walter Roth. Amazon Kindle, 2014. In this memoir, Roth explores the everyday lives of his father, Markus, and his stepmother, Toni, and other members of the family in Germany and as refugees in Chicago. The interview format allows the reader to hear the story in Toni's own words. Family recipes are included. 121 pages. Paper.

our authors

Irving Cutler's Neighborhoods

Our Community, Our City, Our Region



THE JEWS OF CHICAGO: From Shtetl to Suburb. By Irving Cutler. University of Illinois Press, 1996. The authoritative, vividly told history of Chicago's Jewish community by the professor emeritus of geography at Chicago State University and a founding board member of the Chicago Jewish Historical Society. 162 black and white images. 336 pages. Cloth and Paper editions.

CHICAGO'S JEWISH WEST SIDE. By Irving Cutler. Arcadia Publishing *Images of America*, 2009. A gathering of nostalgic photos from private collections and Dr. Cutler's own treasure trove. Former West Siders will *kvel* and maybe also shed a tear. 207 black and white images. 128 pages. Paper.

JEWISH CHICAGO: A Pictorial History. By Irving Cutler. Arcadia Publishing, *Images of America*, 2000. A sentimental snapshot of the city's Jewish community. 200 images. 128 pages. Paper.

CHICAGO: Metropolis of the Mid-Continent. Fourth Edition. By Irving Cutler. Southern Illinois University Press, 2006. Dr. Cutler skillfully weaves together the history, economy, and culture of the city and its suburbs, with a special emphasis on the role of the many ethnic and racial groups that comprise the "real Chicago" neighborhoods. Illustrated. 447 pages. Cloth and Paper editions.

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF AMERICAN JEWISH HISTORY. Edited by Stephen Norwood and Eunice Pollack. ABC-CLIO, 2007. The encyclopedia's six-page entry on "Chicago" is by Dr. Irving Cutler. Illustrated. Two volumes, total 775 pages.

THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CHICAGO. Edited by James R. Grossman, Ann Durkin Keating, and Janice L. Reiff. University of Chicago Press, 2004. The "Jewish Community" entry is by Dr. Irving Cutler. Illustrations and maps. 1,152 pages.

URBAN GEOGRAPHY. By Irving Cutler. Charles E. Merrill Publishing, 1978. A general study of cities in the USA and some of their major characteristics. Illustrated. 120 pages. Paper.

THE CHICAGO METROPOLITAN AREA: Selected Geographical Readings. Irving Cutler, Editor. Simon & Schuster, 1970. 322 pages.

THE CHICAGO-MILWAUKEE CORRIDOR. By Irving Cutler. Northwestern University Studies in Geography, 1965. A study of intermetropolitan urban coalescence. Includes 117 maps and illustrations. 322 pages.

CHICAGO'S FORGOTTEN

SYNAGOGUES. By Robert A. Packer. Arcadia Publishing *Images of America*, 2007. The author is a former history teacher, professional building inspector, and freelance photographer. His goal was to document the many old synagogues and communal buildings before they met the wrecking ball. His explorations cover every area of the city where there was a Jewish population. Packer includes photographs of rabbis, Hebrew school class pictures, social event announcements and invitations. 200 black and white images. 128 pages. Paper.

DOORS OF REDEMPTION: The Forgotten Synagogues of Chicago and Other Communal Buildings. Photographed and edited by Robert A. Packer. Booksurge, 2006. 282 pages. Spiral-bound paper.

AVONDALE AND CHICAGO'S POLISH VILLAGE. By Jacob Kaplan, Daniel Pogorzelski, Rob Reid, and Elisa Addlesperger. Foreword by Dominic Pacyga. Arcadia Publishing *Images of America*, 2014. Home to impressive examples of sacred and industrial architecture, and the legendary Olson Waterfall, Avondale is often tagged as "the neighborhood that built Chicago." 207 black and white images. 128 pages. Paper.

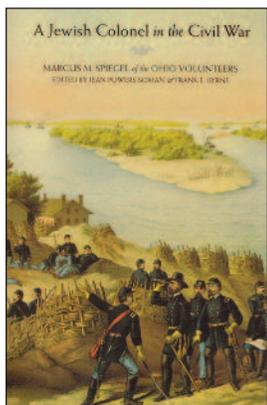
LAKE VIEW. By Matt Nickerson. Foreword by Norman J. Dinkel, Jr. Arcadia Publishing *Images of America*, 2014. The neighborhood, located on our North Side, is known today for its million-dollar homes and Wrigley Field, but it was once a very different community. Shopkeepers once risked rebuke if they did not speak German. 204 black and white images. 128 pages. Paper.



our authors

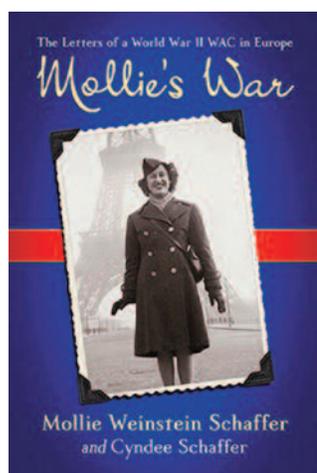
*These days books are available in many formats from many vendors so we don't list prices, except for the *starred selections that can be purchased from the CJHS office. Some books are out of print. Reference copies may be found in public or academic libraries. Most of our members' books are sold on the internet, but please also shop local bookstores!*

A JEWISH COLONEL IN THE CIVIL WAR: Marcus M. Spiegel of the Ohio Volunteers. Edited by Jean Powers Soman and Frank L. Byrne. University of Nebraska Press, 1995. Marcus M. Spiegel, a German Jewish immigrant, served with the 67th and 120th



Ohio Volunteer regiments. He saw action in Virginia, Mississippi, Arkansas, and Louisiana. These letters to Caroline, his wife, reveal the traumatizing experience of a soldier and the constant concern of a husband and father. (Caroline Hamlin Spiegel was the first convert to Judaism in Chicago.) Spiegel was fatally wounded in battle in May 1864 in Louisiana, and

his body was not recovered. His cenotaph is in the Hebrew Benevolent Cemetery in Chicago, near the graves of his wife and children. Jean Soman, a great-great-granddaughter of Colonel Spiegel, is a Life Member of the CJHS. Illustrated. 353 pages. Paper.



MOLLIE'S WAR: The Letters of a World War II WAC in Europe.

By Mollie Weinstein Schaffer and Cyndee Schaffer.

Contributing Editor Jennifer G. Mathers. Introduction by Leisa D. Meyer. McFarland Publishing, 2010. Illustrated. 291 pages. Softcover.

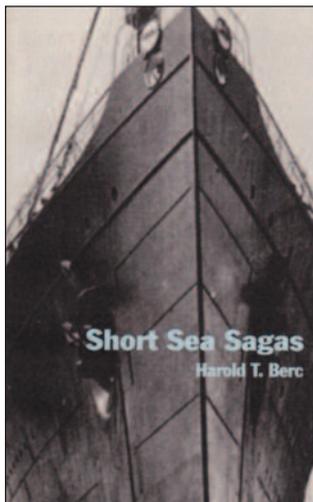
My mother, Mollie Weinstein Schaffer (1916–2012), was very proud of her husband, children, and grandchildren, but she was also proud to be an American Jewish War Veteran. Born in Detroit in the early twentieth century, her parents were Jewish immigrants who came to the United States in 1910 from Kiev, Russia.

Mollie's late 20's were the defining time of her generation and her life. She was a part of "the greatest generation." Like most of her contemporaries, she did not talk much about her war service. The only inkling was that my sister and I would wear her uniform as a Halloween costume when we were young.

When World War II began, Mollie tried to enlist but was rejected because of low weight. So she went home and fattened herself up! A few months later, she was accepted into the WAC and, after basic training in Florida, was on her way to a wartime experience in Europe. She worked in Medical Intelligence as a secretary, following the American troops into England, France, and finally Germany with the Army of Occupation. She returned to the US in November 1945 on the Queen Mary. My mother's story, as recounted in *Mollie's War*, was based on the letters and photos that she sent home and that her sister saved.

—Cyndee Schaffer Schwartz

SHORT SEA SAGAS. By Harold Berc z"l. Athena Press, 2000. Extraordinary sea experiences, gathered out of the author's own readings in maritime lore for over fifty years. Mutinies, unimaginable sinkings, mystery ships sailing for years without crews, sin at sea, accounts



of piracy, wartime disasters, and phenomena of the unknown are among the subjects recounted in quick and pungent studies. Berc provides a separate chapter on his own dramatic World War II naval service aboard the *USS Washington* at Guadalcanal and the *USS Reno* in the battle of Leyte Gulf, and later as National President of AMVETS. In his long, full life, Harold Berc was a

journalist, an attorney, and a valued Board member and benefactor of the CJHS. Illustrated. 190 pages. Paper.

our authors



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REV. DR. EMIL G. HIRSCH: Early Ministry thru 1881.

Compiled and Edited by his Grandson, Emil G. Hirsch, 3rd. Collage Books, Inc., 2014. Rare *Chicago Tribune* and *American Israelite* newspaper articles from 1866 to 1881. 304 pages. Paper.

In these collected newspaper articles I visit my grandfather. I was born two years and ten months after his death and never appreciated his personality until I helped my father [David] before his death in 1976, to extract and publish in a book, *Theology of Emil G. Hirsch*, the fifty-one essays that my grandfather wrote for *The Jewish Encyclopedia* of 1903 (which were in addition to the hundreds that he edited). But only last year, in 2013, after I visited via the internet the archives of the University of Pennsylvania, and then the American Jewish Archives at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, and then newspapers of the time, with their live eyewitness reporting by my grandfather, did I come to feel his presence.—*Emil G. Hirsch, 3rd*

Rev. Dr. Emil G. Hirsch in Chicago:

Rabbi of Chicago Sinai Congregation (1880-1923).

Professor of Rabbinical Literature and Philosophy (1892-1923) and Founding Faculty Member of the Divinity School, University of Chicago.

Editor, Bible Department (1903-1906) *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, Vols. 3-12.

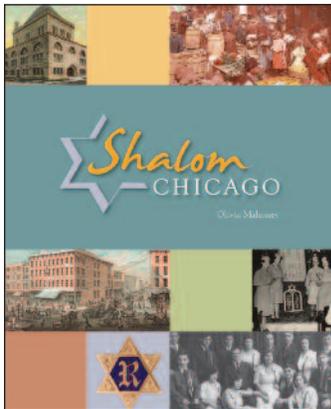
President and Board Member, Chicago Public Library (1888-1897).

Lt. Commander (Chaplain), Illinois Naval Militia.

PHOTO JOURNAL: EMIL G. HIRSCH 90th YEAR TOUR, 2015. Emil and his pilot son Bernie take a trip in a six passenger single engine Piper Cherokee to visit old friends and relatives in all corners of the US. 96 pages. Paper.

DVD: EMIL & BERNIE IN GERMANY, 2016. Ceremony in Thalfang, Germany, January 28, 2016.

Emil dedicates the Rabbi Samuel Hirsch Platz and Memorial. Plus Emil's conversation with a Thalfang High School class about the Holocaust and Emil's personal experiences with the Dutch Underground in WWII. 54-minutes.



Shalom Chicago. By Olivia Mahoney.

Chicago History Museum, 2013. Though it was conceived as merely a catalog of the exhibition at the CHM from October 21, 2012, to September 2, 2013, through the wonderful work of Senior Curator Olivia Mahoney it turned out to be a stand-alone essay of true depth on the Chicago Jewish experience. Illustrations include rare portraits, documents, photographs, costumes, religious objects, and works of art. The publication was made possible by a generous gift from CJHS Life Members Thomas R. Meites and Jerome B. Meites. 168 pages. Paper. At the Chicago History Museum Store, shopchicagohistory.com

On June 1, 2016, the Chicago History Museum received the National Medal for Museum and Library Service. Conferred by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), the award is the nation's highest honor given to museums and libraries in recognition of exceptional service and outreach. The honor recognizes the Museum's collaborative efforts with various neighborhoods and community groups on exhibitions including My Chinatown, Benito Juarez and the Making of Modern Mexico, Out in Chicago, and **Shalom Chicago**. It also acknowledges the Museum's work in hosting special programs such as the Day of Remembrance for Japanese internment, which is organized by several groups representing Chicago's Japanese American community. The CJHS looks forward to future collaboration with the CHM on programs and projects!

our authors

JULIUS ROSENWALD: The Man Who Built Sears, Roebuck and Advanced the Cause of Black Education in the American South. By Peter Ascoli. Indiana University Press, 2006. The author is the grandson of the Chicago businessman-philanthropist as well as a historian. He tells J.R.'s story with a historian's professional skill and with insights that only an insider with access to family records and memories could have. Black and white photographs. 472 pages. Cloth and Paper editions. Peter Ascoli appears in Aviva Kempner's documentary film, "Rosenwald."

WOMEN BUILDING CHICAGO, 1790-1990: A Biographical Dictionary. Edited by Adele Hast and Rima Lunin Schultz. Indiana University Press. 2001. Of the over 400 individual entries, forty are Jewish women. Illustrated. 1,088 pages.

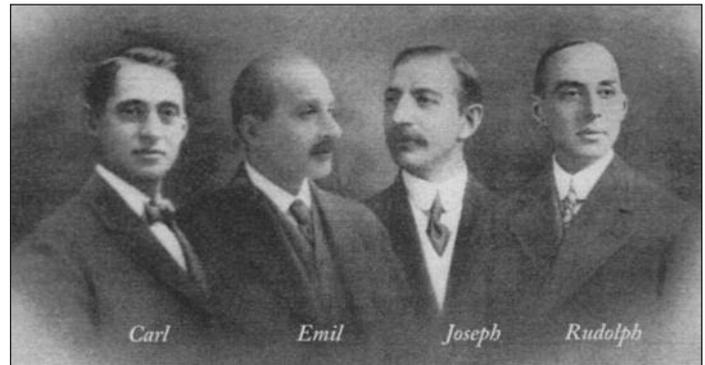
BREAKING GROUND: Careers of 20 Chicago Jewish Women. By Beatrice Michaels Shapiro. Edited by Dr. Khane-Faygl Turteltaub. AuthorHouse, 2004. Interviews bring out the Jewish values that have played a part in the lives of these high achievers. Judge Ilana Rovner, U.S. Rep. Jan Schakowsky, and Ruth Rothstein are included, among other notables. 137 pages. Paper.

CREATING CHICAGO'S NORTH SHORE: A Suburban History. By Michael H. Ebner. University of Chicago Press, 1988. Evanston, Wilmette, Kenilworth, Winnetka, Glencoe, Highland Park, Lake Forest, and Lake Bluff—eight communities that serve as a genteel enclave of affluence, culture, and high society. Prof. Ebner explains the origins and evolution of this distinctive region. Photographs and maps. 368 pages.

AFRICAN AMERICANS IN GLENCOE: The Little Migration. By Robert A. Sideman. The History Press, 2009. While little has been written about Glencoe's African American heritage, the author discovered ample historical resources to tell the story from the very first days. Illustrated. 126 pages. Paper.

"Catskills of the Midwest"

A TIME TO REMEMBER: A History of the Jewish Community in South Haven. By Bea Kraus. Priscilla Press, 1999. Covers the 1920s–1950s, when this town on the Lake Michigan shore had a thriving Jewish summer resort community, Those sugar sand beaches, those blueberries, those peaches—it's no wonder South Haven has experienced a gentrified renaissance in recent decades. Illustrated. 287 pages. Paper. *KrausBooks.com*. This is the first of Bea Kraus's three books chronicling the history of the town from its earliest days to the present. **Catskills of the Midwest: The Jewish Resort Era in South Haven Driving Tour.** The Historical Association of South Haven. 44 pages. Paper. Available from *historyofsouthhaven.org*.



THE DOCTORS BECK OF CHICAGO: Men of Integrity. Second Edition. By Sidney J. Blair, M.D., FACS. Chauncey Park Press, 2013. The German Jewish Beck brothers visited the Mayo Clinic, adopted that institution's idea of cooperative medicine, and established their North Chicago Hospital with that principle. It was the first hospital to do so in Chicago, located on North Clark Street in the Lakeview neighborhood. Black and white photographs. 263 pages. Paper.

DVD: CHICAGO'S ONLY CASTLE: The History of Givins' Irish Castle and its Keepers. Errol Magidson, producer and co-director; Joshua Van Tuyl, co-director. 2011. Documentary tells the stories of the five Castle "keepers"—Robert C. Givins, the Chicago Female College, the Burdett family, the Siemens family, and Beverly Unitarian Church. Their stories are tied to the history of Chicago from 1886, when the Castle was built, to the present. One hour, 26 minutes. *www.chicagosonlycastle.org*.

SOUTHERN JEWISH HISTORY. The peer-reviewed annual journal of the Southern Jewish Historical Society. CJHS Past President Rachel Heimovics is the Founding Managing Editor. *www.jewishsouth.org*

THE FLORIDA JEWISH HERITAGE TRAIL. By Rachel Heimovics and Marcia Zerivitz. Florida Department of State, 2000. Illustrated. 44 pages. Paper. *Jewish Museum of Florida—FIU, Orovitz Museum Store, 301 Washington Avenue, Miami Beach, FL 33139. store.jewishmuseum.com*

our authors

Fiction and Memoirs

THE ALEXANDRIA LETTER:

A Novel. By George R. Honig. Synergy Books, 2010. Cambridge scholar Nathan Tobin discovers an ancient Aramaic letter which contains surprising revelations about the lives of Jesus, John the Baptist, and Paul of Tarsus. If true, the contents threaten to overturn long-held tenets of Christianity. As Tobin races to verify the letter's authenticity, he faces rejection by his fellow scholars and sinister opposition from within the Church. 329 pages. Paper.

CORPORATE WAR: Poison Pills and Golden Parachutes.

By Werner L. Frank. Amazon Kindle, 2010. A business thriller portraying the cutthroat behavior of two computer companies engaged in a hostile takeover. 360 pages. Paper.

LEGACY: The Saga of a German-Jewish Family Across Time and Circumstance.

By Werner L. Frank. Avoteynu, 2003. Includes a portion on the author's immigration to Chicago and growing up in Hyde Park. 926 pages plus CD

A SONG OF INNOCENCE.

By Harold H. Kraus. Fidlard-Doubleday, 2004. Two meek U.S. Army recruits, a Jew and a Gentile, feel the wrath of an anti-Semitic redneck in a WWII training camp. 135 pages. Paper. *KrausBooks.com*

BLOSSOM WINTERS IS DRIVING ON THE LOS ANGELES FREEWAYS and Other Short Stories.

By Albert Zimble. Create Space, 2012. One of the six short story collections by this comic writer. 263 pages. He asks our readers to visit his website to enjoy examples of his humor. *AlZimComedy.com*.

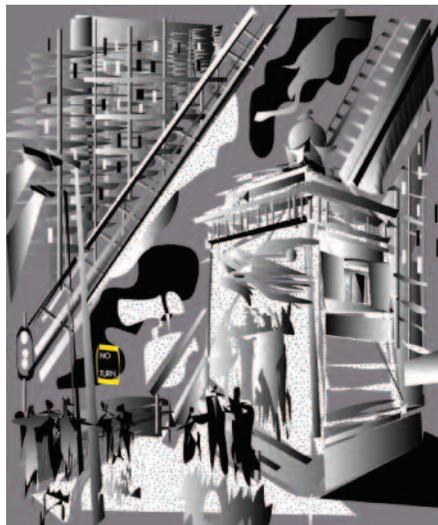
MY AFFAIR WITH THE TRUNK MURDERESS: Kind of A Memoir.

By Melvin L. Marks. AuthorHouse, 2015. A terrified teenage boy is pulled out of his Orthodox Jewish home in Iowa and brought to live in Phoenix, Arizona, where Winnie Ruth Judd, the infamous "trunk murderess" of the 1930's was then an escapee from the state insane asylum. 126 pages. Paper.

BORN ON THE 4TH OF JULY:

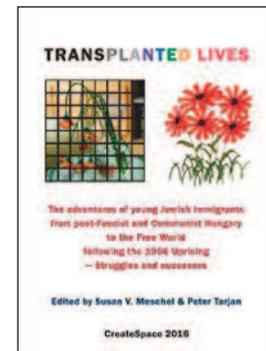
A Memoir. By Beatrice Michaels Shapiro. Edited by Dr. Khane-Faygl Turteltaub. Illustrated by Adele Soll Aronson. AuthorHouse, 2014. Short articles and poems by an observant and sensitive writer who despite decades of hardship and tragedy established a career as a respected journalist. 137 pages. Paper.

CHICAGO SKETCHES. By Richard Reeder. AMIKA Press, 2012. Single-page stories drawn from the author's childhood and from the neighborhoods he visited in his work for the city: Rabbi Mendel's Purim party, Maxwell Street, the Arbeter Ring social hall, the racial situation in Canaryville. Color illustrations by Leonid Osseny. 45 pages. Paper.



New! TRANSPLANTED LIVES: The adventures of young Jewish immigrants from post-Fascist and Communist Hungary to the Free World following the 1956 Uprising.

By Susan V. Meschel and Peter Tarjan. Create Space. 2016. Anthology of personal recollections of escaping from Hungary, the land



of their birth, where they never had real roots, following the 1956 uprising against Communist rule. Filled

with hope and fear, most of the young adult storytellers were eager to learn the language of their new home and complete their education to become professionals. Their family backgrounds represent a broad range as does the spectrum of their careers at the time of writing these memoirs—more than half a century later. 288 Pages. Paper.

Most of the protagonists described their wartime experiences as children and post-war experiences as teenagers in two earlier collections.

YOUNG PEOPLE SPEAK: Surviving the Holocaust in Hungary.

By Andrew Handler and Susan V. Meschel. 1993.

RED STAR, BLUE STAR: The lives and times of Jewish students in Communist Hungary, 1948-1956.

By Andrew Handler and Susan V. Meschel. 1997.

Leonid Osseny, *Open Bridge on Michigan Avenue*, 2003. Oil on canvas.

our authors

A Film by Ethan Bensinger

REFUGE: STORIES OF THE SELFHELP HOME (2012, 60 minutes.) *Refuge* reaches back more than seventy years to give voice to the last generation of Jewish victims of Nazi persecution. The film traces the lives of Holocaust survivors and refugees who today live in Chicago at Selfhelp, a home that has provided refuge for more than 1,000 elderly Central European Jews since the end of World War II. Told through the eyewitness experiences of Selfhelp's residents and founders, it is a story of remarkable courage and resilience. www.storiesofselfhelp.film.com

THE FATE OF HOLOCAUST MEMORIES: Transmission and Family Dialogues.

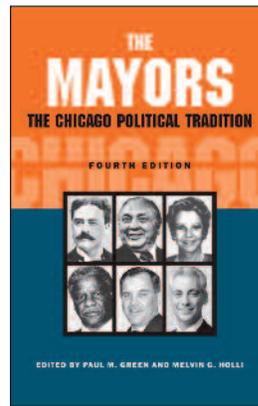
By Chaya H. Roth with the voices of Hannah Diller and Gitta Fajerstein. Amazon Kindle, 2013. Part oral history, part psychological exploration. After her father's murder in the Sachsenhausen concentration camp, the author fled with mother Hannah and sister Gitta from Berlin to Belgium, France, and Italy, scrambling on foot up the Alps, hiding in primitive stone *cavas*, and in a Dorothean convent. The book also charts their escape to Palestine in 1945, assisted by soldiers of the Jewish Brigade. The book uses interviews, diary entries, and psychological analysis to reveal how each generation has passed on memories of the War and the Shoah to the next. Roth asserts that Holocaust memories engender values, ideals, and beliefs, just as trauma can engender vitality and hope.

Those learning about the Holocaust will find in this book both an intimate depiction of the trauma endured by Jews during World War II, and its ramifications in the present day. Finally, this work speaks to the remaining survivor generations who struggle with issues of Holocaust transmission, wondering about the value, necessity and manner in which Holocaust memories are handed down. Illustrated. 295 pages. Paper.

THE CURSE OF GURS: Way Station to Auschwitz. By Werner L. Frank and Dr. Michael Berenbaum. Amazon Kindle, 2012. In an October 1940 *aktion*, Jews from the States of Baden and the Pfalz/Saar were gathered at Vichy's Gurs internment camp, then in the Parisian suburb of Drancy, where they faced a final deportation to Auschwitz. 408 pages. Paper.

CANDLES BURNED IN CHICAGO: A History of 53 Memorial Commemorations of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. The Midwest Jewish Council. Kenan Heise, editor; N. Sue Weiler *z"l*, contributing editor. AuthorHouse, 2004. A record of the annual gatherings mounted by a group of Jewish Chicagoans and their friends 1944–1996. 132 pages. Paper.

Politics and Ethnicity



THE MAYORS: The Chicago Political Tradition. Fourth Edition. Edited by Paul M. Green *z"l* and Melvin G. Holli. Southern Illinois University Press, 2013. Distinguished scholars contributed profiles of our city's first sixteen modern mayors, from Joseph Medill to the Daleys, Jane Byrne, Harold Washington, and Rahm Emanuel. 368 pages. Paper.

MINYANS FOR A PRAIRIE CITY: The Politics of Chicago Jewry 1850-1914. By Edward H. Mazur. Garland Publishing, 1990. Our Society's president displays his deep knowledge and enthusiasm for his subject in this reference book for researchers. 428 pages.

THE ETHNIC FRONTIER. Holli and d'A Jones, editors. Eerdmans, 1984. Essays on the history of group survival in Chicago and the Midwest. The entry on "Jewish Chicago" is by Edward H. Mazur. 422 pages.

BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY OF AMERICAN MAYORS, 1820-1980. Holli and d'A Jones, editors; Edward H. Mazur, contributing editor. Greenwood Press, 1981. 441 pages.

BRIDGES TO AN AMERICAN CITY: A Guide to Chicago's Landsmanshaften 1870 to 1990. By Sidney Sorkin *z"l*. Peter Lang American University Studies, 1993. A valuable overview of the hundreds of service organizations, named after their Old World origins, that were a significant part of the Jewish immigrant experience in our city, the book is a primary reference on the subject for urbanologists, historians, and sociologists. 480 pp. Sorkin's research was a valuable resource for the CJHS Landsmanshaften Exhibition mounted at Spertus Institute, Nov. 1989-Jan. 1990.

our authors

Our Art



THE STAINED GLASS WINDOWS AT TEMPLE SHOLOM. By Norman D. Schwartz z"l and Rolf Achilles. Photographs by Rich Master. Design by Dianne Burgis. Temple Sholom, 2001. Twelve sets of brilliant stained glass windows enhance the stately beauty of Temple Sholom of Chicago, 3480 North Lake Shore Drive. The earliest windows were moved to this building in 1928-29 from the congregation's previous home, and the most recent set was dedicated in 1998, so a wide range of art glass techniques

and styles are represented. 20 pages. Paper. *The cost of the project was underwritten by the Moselle Schwartz Memorial Fund.*

MICHAEL ASHER: Kunsthalle Bern 1992. By Anne Rorimer. Afterall Books: One Work Series, 2012. Michael Asher (1943-2012), one of the foremost installation artists of the conceptual art period, was a founder of site-specific practice. Rorimer considers this one work in the context of Asher's ongoing desire to fuse art with the material, economic, and social conditions of institutional presentation. Illustrated. 116 pages. Paper.

ABANDONED: America's Vanishing Landscape. By Eric Holubow. Schiffer Publishing, 2014. This hard cover coffee table book is a comprehensive collection of Holubow's urban exploration photography, including over 200 images from sites all across America. He finds a surprising yet undeniable beauty beneath the rubble and decrepitude. The magnificent—and abandoned—sanctuary of Chicago's Agudas Achim North Shore Congregation is included. A signed copy of the book is available through the photographer's website *ebow.org*.

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Sima Miller (847) 673-6409.

WHO RULES THE SYNAGOGUE?

Religious Authority and the Formation of American Judaism. By Zev Eleff. Oxford University Press, 2016. *See Review on Page 18.*

MODERN ORTHODOX JUDAISM IN AMERICA: A Documentary History. By Zev Eleff. The Jewish Publication Society, 2016. *See Review on Page 19.*

IGGUROT HA-LEVI: Essays on the Service of the Levites According to Rambam and Other Essays. By Zev Eleff. Boston, 2012. A small collection of traditional rabbinic novellae; one is a pathbreaking work on the intersection of academic historical writing and Jewish law. Hebrew.

LIVING FROM CONVENTION TO CONVENTION: A History of the NCSY, 1954-1980. By Zev Eleff. Ktav, 2009. A history of Orthodox Judaism's leading youth movement in its formative years.

SHIRAT MIRIAM: Essays on Rambam and Talmudic Discourses. By Zev Eleff. Baltimore, 2009. A collection of traditional rabbinic novellae that explores many areas of Jewish law and literature. The lengthiest chapter explores the historical Beruriah of the Mishnaic period. Hebrew.

MENTOR GENERATIONS: Reflections on Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik. Edited by Zev Eleff. Ktav, 2008. A collection of original essays on the life and legacy of the leading and towering rabbinic figure in American Orthodox Jewish life.

STANDING AT SINAI: Sermons and Writings. By Fred N. Reiner. AuthorHouse, 2011. Chicago born and raised, the author is rabbi emeritus of Temple Sinai, Washington, D.C. Captures some of the trends and struggles of his twenty-five years serving a well-educated and sophisticated Reform congregation. 356 pages.

JEWISH LAW IN TRANSITION: How Economic Forces Overcame the Prohibition Against Lending Interest. By Hillel Gamoran. Hebrew Union College Press, 2008. The intention of the biblical prohibition was to prevent the wealthy from exploiting the unfortunate. However, in the course of time it was seen to have consequences that militated against the economic welfare of Jewish society as a whole. 196 pages.

THE SIDDUR COMPANION. By Paul H. Vishny. Devorah Publishing, 2005. This work is intended to form the background for a meaningful devotion to prayers. 112 pages. Paper.

reviews



WHO RULES THE SYNAGOGUE? Religious Authority and the Formation of American Judaism. By Zev Eleff. (Oxford University Press, 2016.)

Review by Rabbi Vernon Kurtz

As a congregational rabbi, I am very aware of the partnership between laypeople and Jewish professionals. I call it “creative tension.” By that I mean that laypeople and clergy, in particular, (although it may not only be in the synagogue, but in Jewish communal life as well), attempt to work together to create a partnership of vision, mission, programs, and practice. When it works well, laypeople push staff and staff push laypeople in order to move the mission and vision forward. It becomes an extremely creative process. When it does not work well, tension is simply created and very often the institution or organization suffers, as well.

As a layperson in a number of different organizations, both here in Chicago and in Israel, I have seen the other side as well, and I have attempted to be sensitive to all the issues that can arise between staff and laypeople as I make my way between my synagogue and the wider community. It is not an easy task and it is fraught with complex situations and circumstances.

Rabbi Dr. Zev Eleff, Chief Academic Officer of Hebrew Theological College in Skokie, highlights some of these issues in a most enlightening fashion. His book *Who Rules the Synagogue? Religious Authority and the Formation of American Judaism* concentrates on both the creativity and the tension between clergy and laypeople throughout the history of nineteenth century American Jewry. It was this century, Dr. Eleff suggests, that created the transformation from a lay dominated community to one whose leading authorities were rabbis.

Dr. Eleff is an author and editor of six books and a student of Dr. Jonathan Sarna, the illustrious professor of American Jewish History at Brandeis University, and it is to Dr. Sarna that Eleff dedicates his book.

Eleff begins his scholarly journey in early nineteenth century America with the description of the hostile attitude found toward clericalism evidenced in synagogue life. In his introduction to the book he writes, “Laypeople were incredulous about the role and need of a congregational rabbi.” While in Europe things were a little different and rabbinic leadership was expected, it was in the United States that battles took place during the first decades of the 1800’s over how to operate their religious communities. In time, Eleff writes, “In the synagogue, trustees hesitantly invited rabbis into their congregations as functionaries rather than as religious authorities.”

Eleff also suggests that there was another realm of religious authority over which rabbis and laypeople disagreed: the arena of textual authority. While Jews in the United States fought over the place of sacred texts and their interpretations, rabbis came from Europe to America seeking to install the religious forms with which they were most familiar or new ones designed specifically for American Judaism. Eleff writes, “The central purpose of these changes in many cases was to wrest away control from the laypeople by substituting familiar religious practices for ones that required the more expert mind and execution of religious leaders.”

Throughout the course of the book, Eleff traces the sense of rivalry between the laypeople and rabbis. He completes his work with the 1885 Reform Rabbinical Conference in Pittsburgh which produced the Pittsburgh Platform. This Platform was created by rabbis with no input from laypeople. Following the Civil War, circumstances began to change, and rabbis took the upper hand in the synagogue and religious communities. At the same time, synagogue attendance began to decline. Eleff’s book describes this journey from the early 1800’s through 1885 and the move from lay to rabbinic authority.

Eleff’s book is not an easy one to read, as it is filled with scholarly notes and a great deal of historical information. However, it is worthwhile spending the time, as it is well-written and researched. He has used his academic credentials well, examining many primary sources from the period, including diaries, journals, and newspaper articles, as well as secondary sources which buttress his arguments. His bibliography and footnotes are extensive and are worthy of study in and of themselves. While I am not a scholar of this period,

I was a little surprised that he did not refer to the work of Marc Saperstein who studied sermons of rabbis of this period, including during the Civil War years. His book *Jewish Preaching in Times of War 1800-2001* is not even mentioned in the bibliography.

There is much to learn from this book: the role of laypeople and their power in nineteenth century American Judaism; the battle of the rabbinate to make itself relevant; and the work of significant rabbis such as Isaac Mayer Wise, David Einhorn, Kaufman Kohler, Alexander Kohut, Isaac Lesser, Max Lilienthal, Sabato Morais, and Morris Raphall—to name only a few. Each had an influence on the formation of American Judaism in the nineteenth century and also how we see ourselves today.

In his conclusion, Eleff raises issues that are present in American Jewish life today, including the lay-rabbinic relationship; the declension of synagogue attendance, particularly of younger people; and the role of texts in determining the contours of Jewish life, as well as deciding who is sufficiently expert to interpret them.

He concludes his work with these words: “Religious authority is sturdiest when supported cooperatively by rabbinic and lay leaders. More crucial, still, is that this balance is a most difficult one to achieve.” These statements are still true today, I would suggest, not only in the synagogue, but in the general organizational Jewish communal world as well. Where does lay authority begin and where does it end? What are the responsibilities of rabbinic or Jewish professional leadership and how are they to relate to the lay community? These issues remain significant ones for our day. Through the scholarly journey of Rabbi Dr. Zev Eleff concerning nineteenth century American Jewish life and his discussion of the concept of religious authority, contemporary issues are at least hinted at. The solutions are still difficult to find.

One of the comments on the back of the volume is by Dr. Jonathan Sarna, “This is the most significant reinterpretation of nineteenth century American Judaism in a generation.” This is indeed high praise from one of the deans of American Jewish historical scholarship and points to the importance of the book not only for American Jewish history but for contemporary synagogue and Jewish communal life as well.

We are fortunate to have Rabbi Dr. Zev Eleff in our Chicago community and we look forward to more scholarly contributions from him. ❖

Rabbi Vernon Kurtz is the Rabbi of North Suburban Synagogue Beth El in Highland Park, Illinois.

MODERN ORTHODOX JUDAISM:

A Documentary History. By Zev Eleff.

Foreword by Jacob J. Schachter.

(The Jewish Publication Society, 2016.)

Review by Rabbi David Wolkenfeld

In February, 1886, Rabbi Emanuel Schreiber of Chicago’s Temple Emanuel declared that “Modern Orthodoxy is a ridiculous farce.” Almost a century later, in 1969, Rabbi Emanuel Rackman, himself a prominent Modern Orthodox intellectual, wrote that “one can hardly regard Modern Orthodoxy as a movement,” since it was “no more than a coterie of a score of rabbis in America and in Israel whose interpretations of the Tradition have won the approval of Orthodox intellectuals who are knowledgeable in both Judaism and Western civilization.” Despite these strident denials, a community of many thousands of Jews, worshipping at dozens of congregations across North America, emerged in the second half of the twentieth century calling itself, and being identified by others as, “Modern Orthodox.”

These Jews, whose lives and worldview combine observance of traditional Jewish law, with cultural integration into secular society, are often described as adherents of an ideology promulgated in Germany by Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch in the nineteenth century endorsing loyalty to the Torah together with an embrace of general culture.

Alternatively, American Modern Orthodoxy is described as the creation of Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik, the University of Berlin trained philosopher and scion of the aristocracy of Lithuanian Talmudic scholarship who trained generations of rabbis at New York’s Yeshiva University and served as a community rabbi in Boston. The formidable achievement of Rabbi Dr. Zev Eleff’s book, *Modern Orthodox Judaism: A Documentary History* is to place Modern Orthodoxy, and its contemporary conflicts and polemics, into a distinctly American context.

In fifteen sections, each a collection of primary documents selected with virtuosity and discernment, Eleff traces the history of Modern Orthodoxy as a distinctly American religious phenomenon. The tensions that inhere in the

Continued in Page 12

MODERN ORTHODOX JUDAISM A Documentary History

Review Continued from Page 11

Modern Orthodox synthesis of the sacred and the secular, and the distinctly American challenge of cultivating robust faith commitments in an American milieu of radical freedom and cultural diversity, have characterized observant Judaism in the United States from its earliest years.

Far from being a recent European import, Modern Orthodoxy is part and parcel of the story of observant Judaism in the United States. Decades before the emergence of the modern Jewish denominations in the mid twentieth century, Eleff shows how Jews constructed their personal and communal religious identities around a set of commitments and values that are both Modern and Orthodox.

As a practitioner of Modern Orthodox Judaism and an occasional participant in its ongoing polemics, it was refreshing and enlightening to trace, through Eleff's deft curating of primary sources, how both the flash points of internal Orthodox polemics and the most formidable challenges facing our community can be understood as the extensions of earlier conversations and arguments, or are themselves the continuations of unresolved conflicts stretching back over years or decades. Being able to trace with ease the contours of an element of contemporary American Modern Orthodoxy across the broad sweep of history can introduce richness, depth and nuance into our understanding of the ideas and institutions that shape our lives. History also provides the opportunity to contemplate "roads not taken" which can sometimes offer a pathway forward around pitfalls, obstacles, and barriers.

The strength of Eleff's book is particularly evident in his chapter "From Rebbetzin to Rabbah," a collection of primary sources documenting the evolution, and even revolution, in female religious leadership within Modern Orthodoxy. In the past generation, there has been a proliferation of women serving in positions of religious leadership in the Modern Orthodox community. They received training at several different institutions of higher Torah education in Israel and in the United States. They serve in a variety of professional roles that were exclusively male in prior generations. They have taken various titles, such as yoetzet, maharat, rabbah, or even rabbi, to signify their credentials for religious leadership. And there has been a concomitant mixture of praise, celebration, anxiety, and condem-

nation in reaction to women serving in these new roles and in these new capacities.

Eleff not only documents this development, but connects it to literature from the early twentieth century exploring the sometimes fraught role of the the rebbetzin, the rabbi's wife. The role of the rebbetzin as an informal (and unpaid) role model and source of religious guidance developed and expanded in twentieth century American Jewry, and Eleff has collected remarkably self-aware primary documents from rebbetzins reflecting on their image and function within the congregations that employ their husbands.

In recent years, even as some rabbis' wives continue to serve as rebbetzins in the classic model, the concept itself is being undermined from two directions. On the one hand, there are increasing numbers of women who wish to professionalize their desire to serve the Jewish community rather than channel it through their husband's rabbinic careers. At the same time, wives of rabbis have joined other women in the workforce leaving less time and energy available for their volunteer communal activities. These wives of rabbis with independent careers are absent from Eleff's book. What primary sources could have told their stories? I imagine an unwritten chapter of this book containing legal briefs, medical school exams, or doctoral dissertations written by women whose husbands are congregational rabbis. Are there board meeting minutes, filed away in synagogue offices across the United States, containing complaints voiced by Modern Orthodox Jews frustrated that their rebbetzins pursue careers and neglect Shabbat hospitality or visits to the sick?

Perhaps more than any document in Eleff's collection, Ellie Hiller's July, 1989, open letter to the Jewish community of Teaneck, NJ, gave me pause and even shocked me by exposing a piece of recent history that continues to reverberate after nearly twenty years. In July 1989, Ellie Hiller wrote his open letter to protest the offer of a rabbinic position at a new Teaneck congregation to Rabbi Baruch Lanner. Hiller's letter documents numerous examples of vulgar and abusive behavior committed by Rabbi Lanner and witnessed by Hiller when he was supervised by Rabbi Lanner at National Council of Synagogue Youth (NCSY).

Rabbi Lanner did not become the rabbi of that congregation and in 2000, and an expose in the *New York Jewish Week* led to Rabbi Lanner's ouster at NCSY and the appointment of new leadership at NCSY's parent organization, the Orthodox Union. In 2002 Rabbi Lanner was convicted of sexually abusing two teenage girls and was sentenced to seven years in prison.

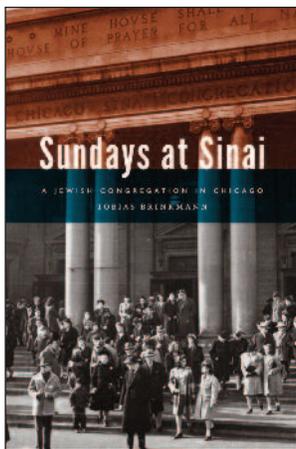
Rabbi Lanner was the first rabbinic scandal in the Modern Orthodox community in the twenty-first century and can be seen as prelude to more recent rabbinic scandals. In Eleff's words, "the Lanner incident was a sea change in the manner in which the Modern Orthodox community addresses and reacts to abuse."

Hiller's letter and its inclusion in this volume illustrates how history can tell multiple stories and how that story sometimes shifts. I first understood Hiller's letter as a courageous exposure that marked the first step in confronting and defeating a criminal. It was a story of a community beginning to come to grips with the potential for abuse. It was a challenging story, but ultimately one of greater knowledge leading to greater understanding and empowerment? Doesn't knowledge always lead to greater understanding and empowerment?

Recently, I have come to read Hiller's letter in a different light. Elie Hiller's letter exposed a recurrent pattern of vulgar and coarse behavior that, if not criminal, clearly exposed Rabbi Lanner as someone unfit for a rabbinic position or any role that would leave him in contact with children. And yet, in the aftermath of Hiller's brave letter, Rabbi Lanner continued his prominent role within NCSY for an additional eleven years. Hiller's letter is the story of a community ignoring sexual abuse and assault. The letter tells a story of acquiescence to assault and abuse. The story that it tells is altogether demoralizing and altogether common and altogether contemporary. ❖

Rabbi David Wolkenfeld is the Rabbi of *Anshe Sholom B'nai Israel Congregation in Chicago*.

related reading



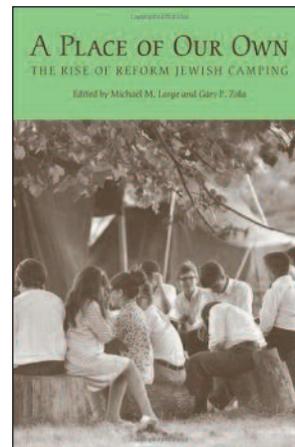
SUNDAYS AT SINAI: A Jewish Congregation in Chicago. By Tobias Brinkmann. The University of Chicago Press, Historical Studies of Urban America, 2012.

First established over one hundred fifty years ago, Chicago Sinai is one of America's oldest Reform Jewish congregations. Its founders were upwardly mobile and civically committed men and women, founders and partners of banks and landmark businesses including

Hart Schaffner & Marx, Sears & Roebuck, and the giant meatpacking firm Morris & Co. As explicitly modern Jews, Sinai's members supported and led civic institutions and participated actively in Chicago politics. Perhaps most radically, their Sunday services, introduced in 1874, became a hallmark of the congregation. Sunday services ceased in May, 2013.

In *Sundays at Sinai*, Tobias Brinkmann brings modern Jewish history, immigration, urban history, and religious history together to trace the roots of radical Reform Judaism from across the Atlantic to this rapidly growing American metropolis. Brinkmann shines a light on the development of an urban reform congregation, illuminating Chicago Sinai's practices and history, and its contribution to Christian-Jewish dialogue in the United States. *Sundays at Sinai* is the extraordinary story of a leading Jewish Reform congregation in our city. Illustrated. 384 pages.

See Richard Damashek's front page article which continues on the following pages.



A PLACE OF OUR OWN: The Rise of Reform Jewish Camping.

Editors: Michael M. Lorge and Gary Phillip Zola.

Contributors: Gerard W. Kaye, Michael Zeldin, Jonathan D. Sarna, Judah Cohen, Hillel Gamoran, and Donald Splansky. University of Alabama Press, Judaic Studies Series, 2006. This is a collection of seven essays which commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the first Reform Jewish educational camp in the United States. The text covers topics related to both the Reform movement and the development of the Reform Jewish camping system in the US. Illustrated. 240 pages.

The “Gang of Five”

Continued from the Front Page

Why did they go? By 1935, Germany was moving quickly toward becoming a police state, anti-Semitism had become state policy, and violence against Jews was becoming part of daily life. Jews became the object of ever-increasing and menacing legislation aimed at demonizing them and depriving them of their civil rights, their livelihoods, and their property. Faced with an increasingly difficult situation, the *Lehranstalt* administrators and faculty worried about the students' futures in Germany, as did their parents.

For the young Herman Schaalman, who did not want to go, “All of a sudden, destiny was knocking on the door.”

The five young rabbinic students knew next to nothing about America. For Schaalman, it was not only a strange land but “uncivilized Indian territory...the wild west...gangster territory...” He had never heard of Cincinnati or Hebrew Union College (HUC). He didn't even know that Cincinnati was a city until he looked it up in his encyclopedia.

According to Plaut, although the students knew little about HUC, they assumed that their education at the Berlin seminary “would be more than adequate to meet all requirements” and that HUC “would be religiously comparable to the Berlin institution. In both respects, we were mistaken.”

When they arrived at HUC, their fellow students didn't know what to make of them. Almost none of the Germans spoke English, they wore “funny” clothes, and they stuck together as a kind of clique. One wag named them “the gang of five.” It stuck, and from then on, the name became the tag for discussing the group of precocious students.

The kind of Judaism that the Gang found at HUC was not the Judaism they knew. Because Reform Judaism had thrown out most traditional liturgical practice, it was barely Judaism. Among the changes: the kippah and talit were no longer allowed in Reform temples, and the laying on of tefilin had been abandoned. Prayer services were shortened and conducted in English because most Reform Jews knew no Hebrew. Shabbat services were no longer strictly limited to Saturday, and sermons could be about anything the rabbi thought might interest his congregation, e.g., books or politics. Women were no longer required to sit in a separate section.

In this environment, the Gang saw themselves as “crusaders” with a mission to reform the heathen American Jews by teaching them what it meant to be truly Jewish.

Although Schaalman claims that he and his refugee colleagues had no intention of overthrowing or rebelling against classical Reform, nevertheless their attempt to introduce more traditional practices at HUC was the first sign of their impact on Reform Judaism. At the same time, they were radically transformed by their training, a transformation that allowed them to become part of the Reform establishment, as well as agents of change.

Although they didn't know it at the time, Reform Judaism was in a continuous state of change. It allowed rabbis nearly complete freedom to practice any way they chose, limited only by the acceptance of their congregations. One example was officiating at mixed marriages. Although the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR), the professional organization for Reform rabbis, officially discouraged it, some Reform rabbis did it anyway.

WWII and the Nazi effort to exterminate the Jews profoundly affected the cultural, social, and religious life of Jews in America. The new realities forced Reform Judaism to change more quickly to address them. Declining attendance and membership in Reform temples was a wakeup call. At CCAR meetings and in various magazines and professional journals, the Reform movement began an intense introspection. It recognized that what it had been doing was not working and that to survive changes were necessary.

One of the most important changes following the war was the sense that the future of Reform depended on educating its youth. In 1950, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC) embarked on an ambitious plan to develop youth summer camps that would provide an immersion experience in Judaism for its young campers. By 1952, the Union had set up three camps, one in its Midwest Region and two in its West Coast Region. As the UAHC Midwest director, Schaalman set up the first camp in Wisconsin, while Wolf and Kaelder established camps in California.

By the beginning of the 1950s, a group of Reform rabbis, including Rabbi Schaalman, began meeting to rediscover the theological basis of Reform. The growing awareness of the Holocaust was beginning to raise questions about the existence and nature of God.

Although the Holocaust had created a sense of unease among these rabbis, the full brunt of its

theological implications had not yet been felt. Lurking in the background for Jews and Jewish theologians was the question: where was God during the Holocaust?

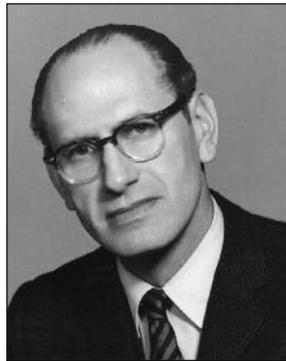
In the ensuing decades, the Gang began to establish themselves as leaders in Reform Judaism. Plaut was by far the most accomplished of the Gang. Beginning in 1961, in a stunning display of academic scholarship in the short span of five years, he published five major books: *The Book of Proverbs—A Commentary*, *Judaism and the Scientific Spirit*, *The Rise of Reform Judaism*, *The Growth of Reform Judaism*, and *The Case for the Chosen People*. In 1981, Plaut published his autobiography, *Unfinished Business*, and his magnum opus, *The Torah: A Modern Commentary*, which demonstrated definitively that Reform took scholarship and tradition seriously. Reform congregations around the country and the world adopted the book.

The contributions of the Gang helped write the history of twentieth century Reform Judaism. Rabbi and scholar Karl Richter wrote: “Over the years, Leo Lichtenberg, Wolli Kaelter, Herman Schaalman, W. Gunther Plaut, and Alfred Wolf would have a remarkable impact, attaining prominence as rabbis, scholars, and community leaders.”

Rabbi Peter J. Knobel, one of the foremost Reform rabbis in America, considers the Gang “pivotal figures of the twentieth century Reform rabbinate. As brands plucked from the fire, each in his own way became a transformative figure” and helped change “the North American Reform Jewish landscape.” ❖

Richard Damashek is the author of *A Brand Plucked from the Fire: The Life of Rabbi Herman E. Schaalman* (KTAV, 2013); “Questioning God’s Omnipotence and Omniscience: The Evidence in Torah,” forthcoming in *The Life of Meaning: The Essential Guide to Reform Judaism*, edited by Dana Evans Kaplan (CCAR Press, 2016); and “The Gang of Five,” the first in a series of three articles in *Reform Jewish Quarterly* (CCAR Press: Fall 2016).

The material in this article comes from Damashek’s forthcoming book, *The Gang of Five: The Impact of Five German Refugee Students on Twentieth Century Reform Judaism*.



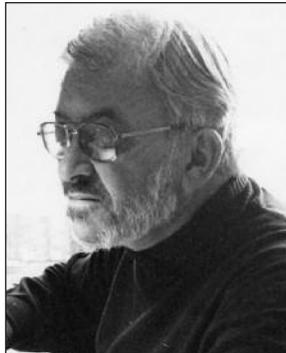
W. Gunther Plaut

Munster 1912–Toronto, Canada 2012

Assistant Rabbi,
Washington Boulevard Temple,
Chicago IL (1939-1949)
U.S. Military (1943-1945)

Rabbi, Mt. Zion Temple,
St. Paul MN (1949-1961)

Senior Rabbi,
Holy Blossom Temple
Toronto, Canada (1961-1977)



Leo Lichtenberg

Rostock 1912–Farmingdale, NY 1977

Rabbi, Temple Israel,
Wichita Falls, TX (1941-1943)
U.S. Army service as military chaplain

President, National Association of Hillel
Directors (1965-1974)

Adjunct Professor of Religion,
Adelphi University (1954-1968) and
Hofstra University(1954-1968)



Wolli Kaelter

Danzig 1915–Long Beach, CA 2008

Faculty, HUC

UAHC Camp Swig, Saratoga, CA

Rabbi, Temple Israel,
Long Beach CA (1955-1979)



Alfred Wolf

Eberbach 1915–Los Angeles, CA 2004

UAHC Camp Hess-Kramer & Gindling
Hilltop Camp, Malibu, CA,

Associate Rabbi, then Senior Rabbi
Wilshire Boulevard Temple,
Los Angeles, CA (1948-1985)
Rabbi Emeritus (1985-2004)



Herman Schaalman

Munich 1916–

Rabbi, Temple Judah, Cedar Rapids, IA
(1941-1949)

Midwest Director, Union of American
Hebrew Congregations (1949-1956)

Rabbi, Emanuel Congregation,
Chicago, IL (1956-1986)
Rabbi Emeritus (1986-

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- **Five German Refugee Students
Who Made an Impact**

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The Chicago Jewish Historical Society was founded in 1977, and is in part an outgrowth of local Jewish participation in the United States Bicentennial Celebration of 1976 at an exhibition mounted at the Museum of Science and Industry by the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago and the American Jewish Congress. Three years after celebrating our “double *chai*,” the Society’s

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ABOUT THE SOCIETY

unique mission continues to be the discovery, collection, and dissemination of information about the Jewish experience in the Chicago area through publications, open meetings, tours, and outreach to youth. The Society does not maintain its own archives, but seeks out written, spoken, and photographic records and artifacts, and responsibly arranges for their donation to Jewish archives.

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- Free admission to Society public programs. General admission is \$10 per person.
- Discounts on Society tours.
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