

give the social work associate the feeling of importance and status that is gained through the team examining the case together with each member having her appropriate input heard, recognized, criticized and implemented. Out of this kind of careful case examination, a treatment plan is developed. The ongoing relationship with the client is a shared team responsibility. Individual supervision, when indicated and needed, is available on a "demand-feeding" basis. One might say that this "demand-feeding" supervision could well create unhealthy dependency. Actually, the reverse has been found to be operating thus far. The mutual respect that develops in each team member through this group supervision progress has made for greater independence, more creative input, and heightened self reliance.

The team has also developed a different use of the administrator of the unit, using her consultatively and thoughtfully, which further develops independence rather than fostering dependence. In the comparison group where the traditional method of supervision continues, there is less opportunity for achieving this. Cases are brought to supervision, usually because of a problem the staff member is encountering. Even in a trusting supervisory relationship, there may be cases that may not be brought to supervision because the caseworker is uncertain of the supervisor's reaction or fears criticism. However, in the team approach, every case is in a sense being supervised not just by the team leader, but by the entire team. In a large family service agency such as ours, where the administrative responsibilities of the Director of Services for Older Persons are extremely heavy, the supervisory responsibilities are lessened by having teams within which there are accountability and essential supervisory controls. Essentially, the experience thus far has given affirmation of the value of peer and group supervision in helping the social worker to function more independently and to provide

quality services.

Implications

While we have not yet completed the project or our data analysis, our qualitative findings are already illustrating some advantages to using social work teams. Our final analysis will involve an examination of quantitative service delivery and cost factors as well as an assessment of client and social worker reactions to the team approach.

The project thus far illustrates the possible benefit of social work teams in working with clients who need concrete reality supports as well as counseling. Frequently the social worker is the only person standing between the family and disaster, real or perceived. This creates an enormous pressure for the social worker. Under heavy caseload pressures it is often difficult to assess a situation, resulting in insufficient or inappropriate services. However, with the team approach a social worker is not as easily overcome by a needy client population when he or she has the support of other team members. Our experience to date indicates that with older persons, pressures on the individual social worker seem to be reduced and seem to lead to more appropriate service delivery. Other client groups requiring a combination of counseling and concrete services might also benefit from a team approach.

The agency has adapted well to the introduction of this new mode of service delivery and is considering the application of the team concept to other client groups. This illustrates the constructive role which a research function can have in a family service setting. By limiting changes in program to the manageable and systematic answering of specific questions, research can permit the agency to explore more objectively alternative approaches without committing itself prematurely to massive organizational restructuring.

Community Responses to the Proselytization of Jews

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The only support that many young people have found has been in peer approval and empathy. Thus, to vulnerable adolescents who are lonely, idealistic, and sometimes rebellious and confused, the new missionary religious movements or cults have offered new opportunities for activities requiring commitment to clearly-defined goals. In the face of too many choices, the cults offer freedom from decision-making.

On 3 April 1977, it was reported in *The New York Times* that the sixth meeting of the International Catholic-Jewish liaison committee had issued a declaration denouncing proselytization of Jews. The article further stated that "the legacy of forced conversion of Jews has posed formidable problems for ecumenical talks even as the climate between two faiths has warmed since the Second Vatican Council."¹ Although the Second Vatican Council had condemned anti-Semitism, it had not explicitly rejected proselytizing practices. In response to the new declaration, Rabbi Henry Siegman, a conference participant, said: "The memory of forced conversions is deeply ingrained in the consciousness of the Jewish people and has been the most serious obstacle to the development of Christian-Jewish relations."²

Rottenberg, son of a convert to Christianity and grandson of a rabbi, supported this view, as he pointed out that most Christian clergy are unaware of such actions despite having studied church history. In a review of the cruelties perpetrated by Christians against the people they called "Christ-killers," Rottenberg asked, "Is it surprising then that to so many Jews conversion came to mean 'joining the enemy'?"³

¹ *The New York Times*, April 3, 1977.

² *Ibid.*

³ Isaac C. Rottenberg, "Should There Be Christian Witness to the Jews?" *Christian Century*, V. 94, (April 13, 1977), pp. 353-354.

In contrast to this rejection of proselytization, we have today the militant efforts of the Jews for Jesus to convert young Jewish adults through intensive evangelical campaigns on college campuses.⁴ This messianic group, as well as numerous other cults, pose a threat to a Jewish community already endangered by less exotic but potentially more lethal plagues of intermarriage, assimilation and ignorance.⁵ The number of young people enmeshed in all of these groups may be relatively small,⁶ but, like the State of Israel itself, we can ill afford to lose any of the newest adult generation of Jews. For that reason, we seek to explore this contemporary threat to Jewish life and to examine the psycho-dynamics of the community's response to it. Against an historical setting, we will emphasize the psychological factors involved in both the conversion efforts and the responses.

The significance of forced conversions, excessive proselytization, and the responses of the Jewish community to them, the principal issues of this article, reside in the importance Jews place upon family life. The family in the Jewish tradition is as important as it is in Christianity, perhaps even more so since the home has been the

⁴ Richard J. Israel, "The Kosher Revolution," *Christianity Today*, V. 23, (October 5, 1979), p. 1346.

⁵ Richard J. Israel, "The Cult Problem Is a Fake!" *The National Jewish Monthly*, (January 1980), pp. 34-37.

⁶ Richard J. Israel, "Personal Communication," *The National Jewish Monthly*, (January 1980), p. 37.

center for worship and religious festivals, serving as primary a function as that of the synagogue. Thus, threats to the family structure and its welfare—that is, conversion, proselytization, intermarriage—strike at the heart of Jewish life, its beliefs, its social structure, its very survival. Proselytization, in short, has been perceived and is still perceived as a continuing and durable enemy.

Persecution and proselytization together have been facts of life for Jews for centuries. The sufferings caused by expulsion from various countries, from the thirteenth through the sixteenth centuries, were only minimally relieved by the growing movements toward human freedom and dignity two centuries later, particularly for those who did not joyously and gratefully seek to become assimilated. Salo Baron pointed out that negative attitudes encountered by Jews through the centuries were based on a "dislike for the unlike."⁷ "Unlikeness," or difference, has been shown to provoke feelings of anxiety, jealousy, and even of guilt, that contribute to negative attitudes and behaviors. Moreover, the nature of Christianity with its exclusive claim of salvation gave an impetus to and justification for the continuing struggle to save souls, particularly Jewish ones, that continues at present. Such sects as the Hebrew Christians actively sought converts in London in the nineteenth century,⁸ and have contemporary equivalents in the "Jews for Jesus" or messianic Jewish movements today, as well as in the more traditional evangelical missions.

Although religious prejudice varied from country to country, one fact remained the

same. Many Christians regarded (and still consider) Judaism as a source for potential converts, and Judaism as a "not quite equal" or a "fossilized" religion.⁹ The nineteenth and twentieth centuries provided three critical cases which, although dissimilar in some ways, revealed this attitude most clearly. These affairs involved involuntary conversion. One occurred in the Roman States in 1858, another in France in 1948-53, and the third in Holland, also in the post-World II period.

The first case was the Mortara Affair, which aroused enormous controversy and produced widespread international Jewish cooperation. The Mortara family lived in the city of Bologna. Edgardo, one of their younger children, fell ill and was secretly baptized by a Catholic servant girl living with the family. (Note: A law of the Church counseled Catholics to baptize infidels or heretics if they were dying.) Subsequently, the child recovered, and the girl, Anna Morisi, revealed her action to her priest during confession. The papal authorities, notified of the baptism, removed the child at the age of six from the custody of his parents. Under Canon law, anyone baptized had to be educated as a Catholic. Therefore, the child was taken to Rome, where he was educated as a Christian under very strict Church supervision. All efforts on the part of the distraught family and of the world to retrieve Edgardo were fruitless.¹⁰

The case illustrated to Jews their new problems and continuing precarious status, despite their acquisition of freedom. The triumph of emancipation and assimilation posed a new challenge to the Jewish community—that of survival. The reaction

⁷ Salo W. Baron, "Changing Patterns of Anti-Semitism: A Survey," *Jewish Social Studies*, V. 38 (1976), pp. 5-38.

⁸ *London Jewish Chronicle*, 1853-64, the articles and letters to the editor constantly refer to such activity; Mel Scult, "English Missions to the Jews, Conversion in the Age of Emancipation," *Jewish Social Studies*, V. 35 (1973), pp. 3-17.

⁹ Arnold J. Toynbee, *A Study of History* (An Abridgement of Volumes I-VI by D.C. Somervell). New York and London: 1947, pp. 8, 22, 135, 361, 380, 388-9, 509.

¹⁰ Gemma Volli, *Il Caso Mortara nel Primo Centenario*, Rome: 1960; c.f. Lita L. Schwartz and Natalie Isser, "A Note on Involuntary Conversion Techniques," *Jewish Social Studies*, in press.

of the Jews reflected their cognizance of these threats. In 1858, the Jewish community, first in Sardinia-Piedmont and then throughout Western Europe and the United States, reacted to the Mortara case in a positive fashion to protect itself from what it considered dangerous enemies. Despite varied differences and animosities which existed in the Diaspora, they perceived correctly that they were threatened by the action and the political belief of the Church. Hence, they closed ranks in the face of danger to their co-religionists.

Twenty-one Jewish Sardinian congregations addressed an appeal to the London Board of Deputies, representing English Jews, and to the French Central Consistory. Their appeal urged that Jews make their voices heard in protest of the Papal action.¹¹ As a result, Jewish, as well as world, opinion was mobilized and expressed its outrage in an angry barrage of editorials and petitions to persuade the Papacy to alter its decision. The Jews in France, Holland, the United States, Prussia, and England cooperated to seek redress for the Mortara family. Despite all attempts by them, by the French government, and by the media, the child remained with the Church for the rest of his life.

Nevertheless, the ensuing publicity surrounding the Mortara Affair aroused Jewish communities to unite both from within and with each other for defensive purposes, a move assertive and innovative for its time, which reflected a change in community behavior from passive adaptation to active self-protection. This feeling of interdependence and the sense of mutual responsibility among Jews has been essential for their survival as a people, whether the crisis concerns an individual, as in the Mortara case, or a whole country, as in the

¹¹ *London Jewish Chronicle*, September 10, 1858, translated the appeal published in *La Presse*, September 3, 1858; c.f. *L'Univers Israelite*, October, 1858; *Morning Herald* (London), September 13, 1858; *Morning Advertiser* (London), September 2, 1858.

instance of the 1973 war. As Lewin has pointed out, this factor of dynamic interdependence is critical to the concept of a group.¹² Community action groups have persisted from the mid-nineteenth century to the present; united action, however, has had to be generated anew as new crises have arisen for individual Jewish communities or for all of them.

As Jews joined the mainstream of economic and social life in their respective Western nations, assimilation seemed to be almost complete. The ethnic dimension of Jewish life diminished as Jews adapted to the cultural characteristics of their new national identities. There were symptoms, nevertheless, that indicated that these communities remained cohesive and identifiable. Occupationally, for example, Jews tended to remain urban and continued to focus on certain businesses, trades, and professions—remaining easily visible. On the other hand, often their children were tempted by the seductions and promises of the majority religion and the social gains it promised through conversion. Furthermore, the Jewish community itself was a direct target of missionary activity, either Catholic or Protestant. Intermarriage posed another problem, as it continues to do today.

Even more insidious and widespread, and an enemy to other faiths as well, was the prevailing secularism which was eagerly embraced by innumerable Jews. This further vitiated the intellectual and religious vigor of some Jewish community life. Jewish educational institutions were weakened, and Yiddish was discouraged. Recognizing the dangers, community members set out to combat these polycentric tendencies which seemed likely to annihilate the remnants of common identity. In this group effort, as Freud pointed out, men's

¹² Kurt Lewin, *Field Theory in Social Science*, Dorwin Cartwright, ed. New York: 1951, p. 146; c.f. Simon N. Herman, *Jewish Identity: A Social Psychological Perspective*. Beverly Hills, California: 1977.

emotions were exalted and intensified as they could not be on an individual basis.¹³ These emotional reactions gave impetus to the creation of institutions to perpetuate Jewish culture and to meet the community's special needs: schools, newspapers, and charitable institutions.

In Western Europe, these efforts came to naught as the Hitler era and the Holocaust wreaked destruction on the traditional institutions and communities of the Jews. Nevertheless, despite the tragedy, after the war, Jews returned to Holland and France and attempted to recreate their former sense of identity both as citizens and as Jews. However, the Finaly Affair following the Second World War reawakened the anxieties of the Mortara kidnapping, and exacerbated the fears created by wartime events.

The values, attitudes, and publicity which attended the new case opened old emotional wounds and revived bitter, angry memories. To the anti-clericals, the Church reappeared as the old enemy and the threat to liberal ideals.¹⁴ To the Jews, the old spectre of proselytization appeared even more devastating in the shadow of the Holocaust and its terrors. As the Finaly case developed, knowledge of the Holocaust and the added anxiety over the fate of the newly-born State of Israel intensified the sense of mutual responsibility and community among French Jews at this time.

The Finaly brothers had been left by their parents with a friend in their French community, as the parents anticipated arrest by the Nazis. The friend put the boys in the hands of the nuns of Notre Dame de Sion, who transferred them to the care of municipal nursery. Here the youngsters were securely hidden from the Nazis, edu-

cated, and were eventually baptized. At the end of the war, the surviving relatives sought custody of the children since their parents had indeed been victims of the Nazis. The directress of the municipal nursery refused to surrender the boys. As the custody case was pursued in the courts, she hid the boys in one convent or monastery after another in France and Spain in an attempt to keep them. The resulting outcry of the Jewish community, and their appeal to the Church itself, plus French law, led after several years to the reunion of the children with an aunt in Israel.¹⁵ The combined action of the Jewish organizations in this instance led the Church to disavow the earlier ruling of the Mortara case on the baptism of Jewish (and other non-believing) children.

Both cases involved involuntary conversion of minor children without their parents' consent. In the one case, the child Edgardo was seized by the Church authorities; in the other, the Finaly boys had been taken for protection, and the parents' trust had been betrayed. The third case, in The Netherlands, similarly was a case of betrayal of parental trust, and had a less happy conclusion. Baby Anneke Beekman, as the Finaly boys, had been placed under the protection of some Dutch women when her parents were deported and killed by the Germans. After the war, all attempts to place the child with a Jewish family were thwarted by the Dutch ladies as they placed Anneke in one convent after another, first in Holland and then in Belgium. Despite the attempts of the decimated Jewish community to use both the Dutch courts and the media to recover the child, she remained hidden in Belgium. The Dutch Roman Catholic Church was not cooperative, and the Dutch Jewish community was too weak and fragmented to achieve the same results

¹³ Sigmund Freud, *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*, edited and translated by James Strachey. New York, 1959.

¹⁴ Rene Remond, *L'Anticlericalisme en France de 1815 a nos Jours*. Paris: 1976, pp. 316-317.

¹⁵ Nicholas Baudy, "The Affair of the Finaly Children," *Commentary*, V. 15 (1953), pp. 547-557.

as in France.¹⁶

The problem that we face today is analogous to these earlier cases. The individual is separated from the family by a religious movement, and, as in the past, religious movements of this kind are perceived by the majority of the Jewish community as inimical to its welfare.

Two major differences emerge as one examines the various ways in which Jewish children and youth have been proselytized in the past and as they are being proselytized today. One difference is that in the Finaly and Beekman cases, parents entrusted their children to others for protection in a time of life-threatening crisis, and that trust was violated by members of the Church as the children were involuntarily converted. Parental trust is not involved in today's cult conversions. The second difference is the matter of chronological age. In the Mortara, Finaly, and Beekman cases, the victims were legally minors. In the instance of contemporary cults, the overwhelming majority of victims are legally adults, and hence legally not subject to parental preferences in the matter of religion. Furthermore, cult representatives allege that the conversions are voluntary. Despite these differences, the past and the present are linked by the thread and threat of involuntary conversion.

The triumph of secularism and the assimilation of our Jewish community into society at large have accentuated the vulnerability of our Jewish adolescents to proselytization appeals. Our society has been marked by a rapidity of change, and this has left our young people without a solid basis of values and beliefs. The increasing mobility of our technological society has deprived them of the security of stable neighborhoods and the continuity of schools and friends. Faced with the normal difficulties of this developmental stage, the

¹⁶ Joel S. Fishman, "Anneke Beekman Affair and the Dutch News Media," *Jewish Social Studies*, V. 40 (1978), pp 3-24.

search for identity and the desire to acquire meaningful adult values, goals, and purposefulness, young people often rebel against parental life styles. Vacillating parental behaviors, often perceived by youths as hypocritical, have left many adolescents bereft of a firm emotional foundation upon which to grow.

In the more secure and settled environment of the past, young people were supported by the extended family, and by local institutions and mores which are less frequently available today. The only support that many young people have found has been in peer approval and empathy. Thus, to vulnerable adolescents who are lonely, idealistic, and sometimes rebellious and confused, the new missionary religious movements or cults have offered new opportunities for activities requiring commitment to clearly-defined goals. In the face of too many choices, the cults offer freedom from decision-making.¹⁷ In addition, peer approval is abundant as the individual conforms to the group's simplistic, anti-establishment, and emotional messages.

Unlike the cults, the conservative and reform movements in Judaism are highly intellectual. Hence, they frequently fail to kindle the loyalty or commitment of their congregants, whose religious practices then lapse. Youths regard their parents' synagogue affiliation, therefore, as hypocritical and superficial. The adolescent, even less committed himself, partly because of an inadequate Jewish education, rejects the complex institutional values of his past in favor of the more clearly delineated, emotional, and experiential involvement proffered by the cults. Sometimes, feeling a certain loyalty to their roots and being unable or unwilling to deny their heritage completely or effectively, young people have responded to the Jewish "counter-culture" movements and have joined Chas-

¹⁷ E. Fromm, *Escape from Freedom*. New York: 1941; W. Kaufmann, *Without Guilt or Justice*. New York: 1973.

sidic groups or other Orthodox congregations. Regarded by some as cults, these groups attract or entice young Jews and provide the authoritative direction desired by the floundering youths. However, they do not practice emotional or intellectual deception, nor do they utilize techniques which incorporate "psychological pressures" for thought reform. Further, in contrast to most cult leaders, the group leader is obligated to obey the same laws as his followers, rather than being above the laws, and cannot change them to suit his momentary needs.

This unified and honest life-style is not true for many of the other proliferating cults and evangelical sects seeking Jewish converts. "Jews for Jesus," "Key '73," the Campus Crusade for Christ, and similar evangelical movements are legitimately regarded as extremely dangerous by the Jewish community, causing it to mount and pursue an organized anti-missionary campaign as it did not always do in earlier years.¹⁸ Part of the response suggests a possible cause for guilt feelings within the community itself, one that is stressed by many rabbis. The editor of one conservative Jewish journal wrote that "Perhaps some of our impressionable young adults are looking into exotic religious training and practice."¹⁹ Messianic Judaism, or "Jews for Jesus," actively "encourages members to straddle the fence and retain whatever aspects of Jewish worship they care to—as long as they accept Christ as the Messiah."²⁰ The barrenness of "effective religious training and practice" becomes acutely

¹⁸ Marshall Sklare, "The Conversion of the Jews," *Commentary*, V. 56, No. 3 (1973), p. 52.

¹⁹ Editorial, *United Synagogue Review*, V. 30, No. 1 (1977), p. 3; c.f. Thomas Piazza, "Jewish Identity in the Counter-Culture," in Charles Y. Glock and Robert N. Bellak, eds., *The New Religious Consciousness*. Berkeley: 1976, p. 251.

²⁰ Susan S. McDonald, "Jews for Jesus," *Philadelphia Inquirer: Today Magazine* (December 19, 1976), p. 9.

evident when one realizes that Jewish youth respond to this encouragement without even recognizing its inherent weakness. This philosophy of messianic Judaism is patently incompatible with Jewish theology, and is acceptable neither to Jews nor to most Christians.

Although "Jews for Jesus" is a contradiction in terms, one writer asserts that "the pan-denominational character of born again Christianity, which emphasizes personal religious experiences above ritual, leaves Messianic Jews conveniently free to improvise their own style of worship and to cater to 'their own special needs.'"²¹ These movements are supported, financially and enthusiastically, by some evangelical Christians who even now are committed to strong efforts to convert Jews.²²

(Note: The husband of one of the authors received a note from a friend (?) of long standing urging that he consider becoming a "Hebrew Christian." Several pieces of missionary propaganda were enclosed with the note. In the latter, the "friend" hoped that the recipient "will not be offended by the literature I have sent along with this note, for offense (sic) is not meant but only a desire that you and your family may understand why many Jewish folk are accepting Christ as Messiah.") Why should a Jew *not* be offended by the implication that, in holding to his faith, he is in error?

Similarly, in a booklet published by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, entitled "The Mormons and the Jewish People," that religious group seeks to entice Jews to become Mormons because they are, after all, common descendants of Jacob.²³ The arguments presented are all based on Mormon interpretations of refer-

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

²² Dwayne Walls, "The Jesus Mania: Bigotry in the Name of the Lord," *Saturday Review* (September 17, 1977), p. 17.

²³ Elder LeGrand Richards, *The Mormons and the Jewish People*. Salt Lake City: 1974.

ences from the Old Testament, although in similar pamphlets addressed to other groups, New Testament verses are cited.²⁴ The booklet addressed to the Jews is distributed openly on college campuses by young Mormon missionaries, who are only too happy to sit down with a prospective convert to debate the points made. Unfortunately, in most cases, the young Mormon's familiarity with the Old Testament is far superior to that of the young Jew, and thereby more convincing. This is likewise true for members of some cults, and speaks again to the barrenness of "effective religious training and practice."

Response to this evidence of inadequate and ineffective religious education reflects the ambivalence of parents and the adult Jewish community in general. Though vocally supporting both day-school and congregational schools, too often Jewish education is sabotaged when its advocates cite financial costs and personal inconvenience as reasons for not sending their children for instruction beyond Bar/Bat Mitzvah age or for not providing better instructional staffs. The minimal exposure to Jewish values and attitudes in the elementary school years, often not reinforced at home, rarely leads to their internalization, which would aid the youth in resisting attempts to convert him. A recent psychological study confirmed this hypothesis by showing that youth most vulnerable to the cults' blandishments have been those raised in environments that have been most attuned to the prevailing secularism of our society.²⁵

It is, perhaps, more difficult to associate anti-Semitism clearly with today's funda-

²⁴ Elder Mark E. Peterson, *Which Church is Right?* Salt Lake City: 1974.

²⁵ Florence Kaslow and Lita L. Schwartz, "Vulnerability and Invulnerability to the Cults: An Assessment of Family Dynamics, Functioning and Values," in D. Bagarozzi, editor, *New Perspectives in Marriage and Family Therapy: Issues in Theory, Research and Practice*. New York: in press.

mentalist and Eastern-oriented cults. Indeed, many adults do not regard the Eastern cults as dangerous, but rather as manifestations of an exotic philosophy that temporarily draws the young, as to a fad. The Hare Krishna movement, more formally known as the International Society of Krishna Consciousness, is believed to have as much as a twenty percent Jewish membership.²⁶ This is the most visible of the cults in terms of physical appearance, which should alert the prospective recruit, but apparently does not. Its philosophy and practices leave no room for Judaism. The Divine Light Mission of the Guru Maharaj Ji, another Eastern-oriented group, seems to be the most popular among Jewish youth of all the cults, allegedly having a membership which is about thirty percent Jewish.²⁷ It, too, has no room for Jewish beliefs or practices.

The Children of God movement, now known as the Family of Love,²⁸ partly modeled on the kibbutz life-style early in its communal history, is now alleged to be anti-Semitic because its leader became disenchanted with Jews and with Israel after he visited the State in 1970.²⁹ The leader of this cult, David (Moses) Berg, converted from Judaism and is an ordained Christian minister who utilizes the Christian Gospel, antiestablishment rhetoric, and recruitment methods which smack of strenuous psychological repression and coercion.³⁰ Berg has

²⁶ Robin Warshaw, "Anybody's Kid: Cults and the Jewish Connection," *Expo*, V. 1, No. 2 (1979), pp. 36-40, 103-113.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ R. Wallis, "Observations on the Children of God," *Sociological Review*, V. 24 (1976), pp. 817-818.

²⁹ Ronald M. Enroth, Edward Ericson, Breckinridge Peters, *The Jesus People, Oldtime Religion in the Age of Aquarius*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: 1972, pp. 9-20; Lowell D. Streiker, *The Jesus Trip*. Nashville, 1971; Wallis, "Observations," *Sociological Review*, 807-29.

³⁰ Carroll Stoner and Jo Anne Parke, *All Gods Children: Salvation or Slavery?* Radnor, Pa.: 1977, p. 297.

not hesitated to proselytize among young Jews, although there has been less response to the Children of God than to other groups. Another group, "Love Israel," loves neither Israel nor Israelites.³¹

Perceived as a greater danger by some, mainly because of its higher profile in the media, is the Unification Church of Reverend Sun Myung Moon. With Jews comprising less than three percent of the United States population, the converts to Reverend Moon who are Jewish are reported to be close to ten percent.³² Other sources indicate that about twelve percent of the "Moonies" may be from Jewish families.³³ Even Christians are not happy with Moon's movement because he regards himself as the "Lord of the Second Advent," thus negating Christ's mission. The Jewish view of the Messiah is totally at odds with Moon's theology.

Another of the major cults is the Church of Scientology, led by L. Ron Hubbard. It is believed to have a "fairly high" Jewish membership, although definite figures are not available.³⁴ Part of the appeal of this group lies in Hubbard's "therapeutic" book, *Dianetics*, which is offered for sale in a number of reputable journals. Again, Jewish belief is incompatible with the group's philosophy.

Groups in various sectors of the Jewish community are having more difficulty in combatting these perils of proselytization today than was true in former years. Society is more fluid; youths are less constrained by parental injunctions; the cult techniques are swift and emotional, rather than intellectual; and efforts by parents to retrieve their children from the cults are being

hindered by charges of kidnapping and violation of their children's civil liberties.³⁵ Once again, the principle of family rights is being challenged, as it was in the Mortara and Finaly affairs, only this time the conflict is with civil and constitutional rights and with less-established or less "socially acceptable" churches.³⁶

There are those who believe that anti-Moon or anti-cult action is inappropriate for the community, although it may be appropriate in individual cases. There is some anxiety that, in drawing attention to the problem, others in society will condemn the Jews for not wanting to share religious liberty with other groups. Indeed, one Baptist minister, supportive of the cults, wrote that Quakers, Catholics, and other religious groups now regarded as "legitimate religions," had experienced discrimination earlier in American history when *they* were regarded as cults.³⁷ The implication that today's cults are no different from these groups is clear, and in error. An encapsulated environment and enforced estrangement from one's family of origin, together with the practice of deception regarding the true nature of the cult's beliefs and practices, are common features of some cults but not of earlier nascent religions.

Organizations within the Jewish community are beginning to take steps to combat proselytization by the cults and missionary movements. In Philadelphia, the Jewish Community Relations Council undertook a study of the cult phenomenon and its implications for the community.³⁸ They also cosponsored, with the local Bar Association, Archdiocese, and Episcopal Diocese, a day-long workshop on the cults

³¹ Philip Fraiman, "I Lost My Brother to a Cult," *Reform Judaism*, V. 7 (March, 1979), 1-7.

³² *United Synagogue Review*, V. 30, No. 1 (1977), 3; c.f. A. James and Marcia R. Rudin, "Onward (Hebrew) Christian Soldiers," *Present Tense* (Summer, 1977), pp. 17-26.

³³ Warsaw, *op. cit.* p. 105.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *Civil Liberties*, September 1977.

³⁶ Lita L. Schwartz, "A Note on Family Rights, Cults, and the Law," *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, V. 55, No. 2 (1978), pp. 194-198.

³⁷ *Philadelphia Inquirer*, February 7, 1979.

³⁸ Jewish Community Relations Council of Philadelphia, *The Challenge of the Cults*, 1978, mimeo.

which attracted not only parents and professionals concerned with this phenomenon, but also about 75 "Moonies." The New York counterpart of this group has published a report on "Jews and Jewish Christianity."³⁹ The Union of American Hebrew Congregations has developed a mini-course on "Missionaries and Cult Movements" for use with ninth-graders in religious school.⁴⁰ Individual congregations have invited speakers to address their members on the nature of cult and missionary movements. The Jewish press, both the Anglo-Jewish newspapers and the professional journals, have begun to focus attention on the insidious nature of these groups.⁴¹ Concern is mounting about the vulnerability of Jewish youth to the proselytization efforts of these groups, together with increasing recognition and concern that this generation of young Jews may become assimilated and converted more easily and in greater number than any previous generation.

On the one hand, some official church bodies declare, as noted earlier, that proselytization and anti-Semitism are to be deplored. On the other hand, there are church groups and cult movements that are actively supporting missionary activity to the Jews and, in some cases, not even perceiving that they are betraying the faith of their founding fathers, Jesus and Paul, who were Jews.

The Jewish communities, in their responses to these threats, also exhibit ambivalence. Some perceive the conversion activities as temporary irritants and regard the protesters as paranoid. Some focus on the civil rights issues and aver that adult children have the right to choose their faith, whether or not the choice may be a

mistake with lifelong impact.⁴² (Unlike the cases cited from the past where the victims were *minors*, and the State had the right to intervene on behalf of the family, a large number of the converts to cults are adults. Civil rights groups, such as the American Civil Liberties Union, have stoutly defended the individual's right to self-determination in religious choice once the age of majority is reached.⁴³) The concern, however, of families and community organizations regarding the cults is that this choice is usually not an informed one, and may not be totally voluntary.⁴⁴ An added cause for concern is that the methods used by the cults may leave terrible psychic scars on and emotional damage within the victims and their families, leading to a strong need for psychotherapy.

Other members of the Jewish community, seeing any proselytization effort as anti-Semitic in nature, choose to fight the movement on a more organized community level. Synagogues, communal youth clubs, the Jewish press, and Jewish secular social agencies utilize speakers, the media, and adult education to combat the pernicious effects of the cults and other evangelical sects. This kind of effort was formalized in the Mortara Affair and is the means by which Jews responded to the needs of their co-religionists in Rumania, Russia, France, Germany, and Israel. (The founding of the Alliance Israelite Universelle in 1861 was the forerunner of a continuing international cooperation which became traditional when threats to Jewish welfare appeared throughout the world. As a result of such cooperation, Jewish communities have developed cohesive and effective methods of coping with some crises in the Diaspora.)

Certainly one does not see yet today the

³⁹ Arnold Lustiger, "Eroding Judaism from Within," *Jewish Exponent*, March 23, 1979.

⁴⁰ Annette Daum, *Missionary and Cult Movements: A Mini-Course for the Upper Grades in Religious Schools*. New York: 1977.

⁴¹ Warsaw, *op. cit.* pp. 36-40, 103-113.

⁴² Jean Caffey Lyles, "Letting Go: Everybody Has the Right to be Wrong," *Christian Century*, V. 94 (May 11, 1977), pp. 451-53.

⁴³ *Civil Liberties*, September 1977, p. 2.

⁴⁴ Schwartz, *op. cit.* pp. 194-98.

concerted community response apparent in that century-old crisis, or at the times of the 1967 and 1973 wars in Israel. Yet the dangers facing the community can clearly be seen. The threat to the present and future generations of Judaism is great enough that united action in preventive and remedial measures is warranted. That effort must respond not only to the cults, however, but also to the total threat to the continuity of Jewish life.

If we are to prevent kids from joining cults, we must provide them with the best antidote we have to prevent assimilation and intermarriage: warm, lively, interesting Jewish communities with religious values, communities that care about people.⁴⁵

The alienation, the narcissism, and the general breakdown of family life that characterized the late 1970's, leaving a vacuum for young people at a most critical point in their psychosocial development, must be turned around if the Jewish community is to survive for many more generations. In summarizing several studies of psychological deviance among Jews, Sanua concludes that "family solidarity and identification with one's group tend to reduce the incidence of alcoholism, drug addiction, suicide," and, it might be added, affiliation with other religions or cults.⁴⁶

Recently, because of the scandal of the mass suicide-murder of Guyana of Peoples' Temple cult members, and the ensuing rash of unfavorable publicity in the press against all cults, these groups have adopted a low

profile. Consequently, the threat posed by these groups may appear to be reduced for the future, though only time will tell. The fundamental problems of proselytization, however, will continue. Other, more orthodox, groups such as the Mormons, Seventh Day Adventists, Jehovah's Witnesses, and other evangelical movements will continue to attempt to attract Jewish youth, and even adults. The challenge to the Jewish community will remain: to adopt a more vital, religious life-style and cultural environment that will involve creative, constructive participation *and commitment* on the part of our Jewish young people.

What the Spanish failed to do in the Inquisition, what Pius IX failed to do through his edicts and actions, what the Nazis failed to do in the Holocaust, may yet occur through the apparent gentleness of the Krishnas and the "Moonies," the "Jews for Jesus," and others who speak the language of the disenfranchised. Creative involvement with Jewish institutional development such as camp, schools, families, neighborhoods, and synagogues must be encouraged. A renewed feeling of group identification must replace narcissism, and commitment, of the Jewish community to its youth and of Jewish youth to their community, must replace alienation if the Jewish people are to survive. Lewin stated the case very well: "There is one field of action to the Jew, where the results depend mainly on himself. This is the field of Jewish life."⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Kurt Lewin, *Resolving Social Conflict*. New York: 1948, p. 163.

Editor's Note: In this same *Journal* issue, p. 91, Rabbi Menahem Herman discusses "Manifestations of Jewish Messianic Movements and the Cults."

⁴⁵ Israel, "The Kosher Revolution," *op. cit.*

⁴⁶ Victor D. Sanua, "The Contemporary Jewish Family: A Review of the Social Science Literature." *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, V. 50, No. 4 (1974), pp. 297-312.

The Impact of Feminism on American Jewish Communal Institutions*

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... I would similarly recommend that the focus be changed from women's issues to family issues and human issues. Accordingly, when the focus is upon services... I would urge that they be presented as needs for services for family members, male and female, and for the American Jewish community at large.

There are a variety of perspectives through which the impact of feminism upon Jewish communal organizations might be analyzed. Two such perspectives would be within the context of power and, alternatively, within the context of services. Perhaps drawing an analogy from the anti-poverty effort of the 1960s would be helpful for illustrative purposes. When the Office of Economic Opportunity was being designed and when it first became operational, there was a heated debate over what its major focus should be. On the one hand, there were those who argued that what the poor lacked most was power, that is, the power to have a say in those policies, programs and institutions which affected their lives. Those who made this argument, therefore, advocated measures designed to increase the power of the poor, such as assuring the "maximum feasible participation" of the poor in both the planning and operation of the various projects of a given Community Action Program. Those who adopted the power perspective insisted that there must be explicit and determined efforts to involve the poor, not only in the operation of the projects, but also to have them serve on the policy-making boards of the local anti-poverty agencies. On the other hand, there were those who argued that what the poor needed most were

increased and improved services and programs which would enhance their economic and social well-being. For those who adopted the services perspective, the major focus of the national and local anti-poverty agencies was to be on the coordination of existing programs and services, improving them, and designing new programs and services which would meet needs not presently served.¹

Similarly, with the subject of this article, the analysis might proceed from a power perspective or from a service perspective. Accordingly, the impact of feminism can be measured in terms of the power of women within Jewish communal organizations or, alternately, it can be measured in terms of the availability of services for women within Jewish communal organizations. One method of examining the impact of feminism from the power perspective would be to determine the changes over time in the proportion of women in decision-making positions within American Jewish organizations. Historically, these positions have been virtually exclusively dominated by men. As Daniel J. Elazar observed "at the threshold of change," in 1973:

¹ Expressions of each of these perspectives are found in Louis A. Ferman, (ed.), "Evaluating the War on Poverty," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 385, Sept. 1969; Daniel P. Moynihan, *Maximum Feasible Misunderstanding*. New York: The Free Press, 1969; Chaim I. Waxman, (ed.), *Poverty: Power and Politics*. New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1968.

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