Focus on the American Jewish Family:
A Select Annotated Bibliography 1970-1982

Compiled by David Singer
The William Petschek National Jewish Family Center was created by the American Jewish Committee in 1979 as an expression of its commitment to the family as the indispensable social institution for maintaining and enhancing Jewish identity, communal stability and human fulfillment. Its goal is to promote research on family problems, help clarify family values and stimulate the development of innovative programs to help meet the needs of parents, would-be parents and their children. It also strives to encourage an awareness and responsiveness to those needs in the Jewish and general community.
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PREFACE

The 1970s ushered in a period of great interest in the Jewish family. Sparked in part by a concern that a weakened family could erode both the size and the quality of American Jewry in the coming generations, Jews and their communal organizations have vigorously debated the present state and future prospects of their families. Indeed, it has become rare for a Jewish conference or an issue of a Jewish periodical not to discuss some aspect of this topic.

In the light of the careful attention that scholars, popular writers, communal workers, and Jews generally are giving to the Jewish family today, the William Petschek National Jewish Family Center is pleased to publish a select annotated bibliography on the subject. The 100 items chosen by David Singer are, in our judgement, the most salient and representative writings that have appeared since 1970. We hope that this bibliography will be of use to all who are interested in and concerned about Jewish family life.

Yehuda Rosenman
Director
INTRODUCTION

In compiling a select annotated bibliography on the American Jewish family, I have been guided by several criteria. I have limited myself to articles and books published during the period 1970-1982. For the earlier period, the reader may conveniently consult Benjamin Schlesinger, (ed.), The Jewish Family: A Survey and Annotated Bibliography (Toronto, 1971). I have excluded works of fiction, historical studies, and material about Jewish life outside the United States. The goal throughout has been to provide a well-rounded perspective on the state of contemporary American Jewish family life. Toward this end, I have employed a very broad definition of family -- broad enough to encompass such diverse matters as intermarriage, divorce, single-parent families, singles, fertility, changing roles of men and women, sexual ethics, homosexuality, abortion, and the elderly. In dealing with each of these subjects, I have been concerned not only with the reporting of data, but also with the formulation of theological viewpoints and the adumbration of Jewish communal perspectives. I have tried hard to provide a balanced picture of opposing opinions.

In the vast bulk of cases, the annotations are direct quotes from the publications cited, indicating their central thrust.

Why these 100 items, and not others? Obviously, in preparing a select bibliography, there is a need to choose. Taken as a whole, the items presented here represent my best choice.

David Singer

Using more comprehensive data than have heretofore been available, Cohen examines the extent to which American Jews have participated in some of the larger society's recent family changes. He asks how family life cycle status—in particular, being single, childless, or divorced—affects Jewish identification, and how different forms of Jewishness relate to the family life cycle. Cohen assesses the extent to which recent changes in the family, especially among young people, have been linked to diminished Jewish identification. Finally, he considers alternative communal policies in light of the research findings.


Goldscheider's article reviews and summarizes what is generally known about the demography of Jewish Americans, with particular attention to the limitations of available research. A concluding section provides a series of research suggestions and priorities. There are valuable sections dealing with fertility, mortality, family structure and intermarriage.


This article offers a definitive demographic portrait of American Jewry as of 1970. Among the topics surveyed are fertility, mortality, age composition, generational change, marriage and the family, and intermarriage.


An updating of Goldstein's definitive study, "American Jewry, 1970: A Demographic Profile" (see entry above), this article carries the story to 1980. Goldstein states: "In undertaking this review, the focus...will be on the major areas of concern to demographers--size, composition, distribution, and the components of change (fertility, mortality, and migration). The presentation would not be complete, however, without some
attention to intermarriage. Throughout the discussion, the implications of the current situation for future patterns of growth and identification will be explored."


"Families are changing, as is society around us. Change may be and usually is painful; but neither death nor disaster is inevitable for the Jewish community. New family lifestyles offer a significant potential for improving the quality of life for all members, as men and women become more equal and as both share more in the larger society and in their roles as parents."


Among the questions that Sanua explores are the following: "What is the present role of the Jewish father and Jewish mother? What is the pattern of love-hate relationships among members of the Jewish family? Who is the disciplinarian, and who has more influence? What are the attitudes of Jews towards birth control, Jewish education, intermarriage, towards the out-groups? A fundamental question is does the Jewish family provide enough security to reduce mental illness among its members. What are the aspirations of the young?"


Sklare's America's Jews is the best one-volume sociological survey of American Jewry. In chapter 3, "Family and Identity," he covers the following topics: the obligation of marriage and family life; family size; parents and children; kinship relationships; and the transmission of identity.


This valuable article summarizes the existing social science literature relating to the American Jewish family. Among the topics covered are marriage and divorce, single-parent families, fertility, intermarriage, and the centrality of the family. A full bibliography is appended to the essay.

"Many in this country now have identified the Jewish family as the key to the survival of the Jewish people. A task force of 10 or 12 people from all walks of Jewish life could, with the support of CJF...bring back some policy proposals with action time lines, priorities, costs, designated delegation of action to all manner of organization, agency and institution in Jewish life...We can thus come together to share our successes and intensify our strengths even as we work to help evolve the strategies needed to help those in need of help."


"Five distinct areas which affect Jewish family life will be examined: 1) lifestyle, 2) divorce and single parenthood, 3) fertility, 4) intermarriage and 5) the woman's role. In the mix of these often interlocking areas, a developing pattern will emerge which will clarify the context within which we are working and help focus on the future direction communal policy makers should embark upon."


"How many Jewish couples do you know who are divorced? How many couples who have no children? How many men and women in their thirties who are not married? How many single parents? How many homosexuals? And how many young families who live thousands of miles from relatives and friends and whose Jewish affiliations are tenuous...?"


"In our computerized culture people need to be seen as individuals, recognized as unique persons, and appreciated as human beings. The types of experiential groups that I have mentioned have great potential for aiding people in developing trust, and providing reconciliations that can effectively aid in counteracting the alienation and dehumanization that sometimes overwhelms us."


"Turning to the Orthodox Jewish community and family, one would expect to find here a clear havdalah, the traditional emphasis on a desired otherness—on distinctiveness as the dominant trend of its comprehensive and unique life-style. But obviously, the radical changes and forces that have contributed to the erosion of the American family in general, have had their effect on the Orthodox Jewish family."

"It is true that the indicators of family disorders have been increasing in recent years for non-Jews and Jews alike. But the overfascination with signs of social pathology has tended to obscure the fact that the family situation of the vast majority of America's Jews is one of pervasive normality."


"The Jewish community has a particular commitment to assure the viability of the family. Given the centrality of Jewish religious-cultural continuity for the Jewish people, this analysis concludes that the family remains the most effective vehicle to assure that continuity."


"If we are to move against the tide, parents must reassess their own role in the light of the trends of contemporary society, children must be taught values and responsibilities—to their elders and to the Jewish people, not by rote but by doing and by example, and by working together as families."


"We must develop an openness to change and modification so that the life styles of Jews and our notions of the Jewish may be brought into closer harmony. Not everything that was is automatically good, nor is every innovation necessarily bad. Somehow, we must and can move forward, preserving essences and not focusing exclusively on transitory attributes."


If the organized Jewish community and the rabbinate wholeheartedly believe that the Jewish family unit should thrive and still remain a religious entity, then let it aid the family by establishing groups or centers within the synagogue whereby preventive psychological counselling can occur. It is encouraging to see the rabbinate becoming more sophisticated in psychological jargon and methods...Simply look at the number of rabbis who are taking courses in counselling today."


"The impact of dislocation of family life and rupture of family ties on the individual member's emotional integration is devastating. Most people absorb the impact with varying degrees of traumatization, loss of
richness in their emotional lives and sense well-being...The family agency, the synagogues and centers, the relevant media, all, must pay heed to the crisis in family life and join in reparative activities, each in its own way and out of its own competence."

THE JEWISH FAMILY: UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS


"How has the Jewish group advanced so well economically while maintaining cohesive family ties?...I have put forward [an] explanation based on the interaction of two sets of ostensibly divergent attributes--cohesiveness and extra-familial orientation--which are found in the make-up of the Jewish family in America. It is the combination of these apparently conflicting factors which has produced economically successful individuals."


"While the differences between American Jewish families and non-Jewish families would seem from this investigation to be more modest than popularly assumed, the findings regarding childrearing corroborate the perception reflected in literary and scholarly works that Jewish families invest a great amount of time, effort and money in aiding their children's advancement, and take special pride in their achievements. Significantly enough the overwhelming majority of all the married respondents--Jewish and non-Jewish--said they were very happy with their family life. It appears that marriage is here to stay."


"The modern Jewish family can become...a social unit which retains generational differences, where children [learn] such fundamentals of human relationship as love, interdependence, and respect for elders, and where parents and children mutually respect each other's needs for authority and independence."


"This book is about family circles and cousins' clubs, two remarkable social innovations by New York City Jews of Eastern European background, that attempt to keep relatives, the mishpokhe, together even as the indomitable forces of urbanization and industrialization continue to rend them apart."

"Jewish social workers, in particular, should attempt to deliver those services that are 'advertised' in the agency name. Unfortunately, families are often neglected, replaced by American 'individualism' which abandons those values and practices which reflect both Judaism and social work in their overt dedication to enhanced social and familial functioning."


"I conceive of the family as a synthesis of living parts. The agreeable working together of this unity is similar to that of the rhythmic complementary action of the human body. This unit has the potential of expressing itself in creative and humane nurture of each of its individuals. The ill-functioning of a component of this unit is related to an aspect of the malfunctioning of the total unit."


"Since the American Jewish community has a vested interest in its own continuity, it is incumbent upon the community to respond to the conditions which impact on and cause stress for the traditional forms of Jewish family life....What is called for are wide-ranging and comprehensive strategies, some of which can be introduced and would begin to bear fruit in a reasonably short period of time, while others would require a much longer period for implementation and whose effects would become apparent only over the span of several years and even decades."

**SINGLES**

27. Dorfman, Dan, "WE'RE HAVING TOO MUCH FUN TO MARRY," *Sh'ma*, January 22, 1982, pp. 41-44.

Dorfman presents a lively survey of the Jewish singles scene. He argues: "I see signs that the current college generation is striking a healthier balance between autonomy and ties, between relationship and self-sufficiency, between marriage and career. But for my generation, the Sixties generation now in their late twenties and early thirties, these are still very 'hard times for lovers.'"


"Everywhere I look these days I see terrific young women who are, as it's called 'looking.'...Sometimes I talk to these women and, perhaps because I'm married, and certainly because I'm inquisitive, they tell me
things I didn't hear when I was single. Most of them, I find, describe variations on a single theme: there just don't seem to be many good, available men around with whom to have a relationship."


"Jewish singles represent one of the great untapped resources of the Jewish community. A great deal of interest is being shown by Jewish organizations in reaching them...It is the 1960s Jewish student, now older and more mature, that is of interest. How committed is this group to Judaism? to the Jewish people? to Israel?"


"I am neither a mental health practitioner nor a researcher on living single. Yet I have observed that the behavior of single adults is often consciously and/or unconsciously motivated by the interplay of two psychological forces: the fear of commitment and the pain of loneliness."

FERTILITY


Bergman argues that "if present trends are not arrested, or reversed, the American Jewish community faces extinction as a significant entity, and by its own hand, during the first half of the 21st century." An analysis of a demographic "disorder...in the making," and what steps the Jewish community might take to deal with it.


"I find that the urging of Jewish women to become...'baby machines,' in order to save the Jewish people from extinction depresses and disgusts me--not so much because I am a feminist, but because I am a Jew. I am deeply ashamed at the idea of Judaism sinking to a level where we are scrounging around for every warm body we can get."


"The mitzvah of procreation has undergone many vicissitudes, parallel-ling the shifting tides of Jewish history. Basically, there have been four principal stages in the history of the mitzvah." Gordis concludes with a passionate plea that contemporary Jews have larger families.


"Thus, our best hope for an increased Jewish population, it would
seem, would be to help families cope with the areas of conflict and tension, by encouraging a blending of feminist and traditional models. We must find ways to support women in the choice of multiple roles, of career and motherhood."


A forceful polemic against the advocates of Zero Population Growth. Himmelfarb observes sarcastically: "Long ago the Jewish parochials were put in their place by that joke about the elephant and the Jewish question, and now the parochials are worrying about the population explosion and the Jewish question. The parochials are solemn about the Jews' uniqueness in being so much fewer, all these years after Hitler's war, than before it. They say that Russians, Poles, Germans have made up their wartime losses, and that only the Jews have not. They worry even about America, and will tell you that the Jewish ratio to the total population has dropped a fifth in one generation."


"What is needed is a change in values and priorities. This sort of transformation seldom comes about as a result of policy analysis... Nevertheless, we should be thinking about the two aspects of the problem, namely, what we can do to raise the issue of Jewish infertility within the context of Jewish history and experience in order to counteract Jewish zero population growth and secondly, how we can change some of the anomalies in our American way of life which unnecessarily discourage families from risking the joys and frustrations of parenthood."

MEN AND WOMEN: ROLES AND IMAGES


"The portrayal of the young American-Jewish woman as 'princess' in fiction is at variance with empirical findings from a recently completed study identifying several significant social sources of variation in IQ and achievement scores of Black and White children. The discussion that follows will provide evidence to support the contention that it is Jewish boys, not girls, that enjoy singular advantages in socialization, relative to peers from other religious backgrounds. To confer the title 'prince' upon them, therefore, would be more consonant with empirical findings than is the fictional stereotype of the Jewish-American princess."

"As director of guidance for several decades of the country's largest Jewish sponsored vocational agency, I had the unique opportunity to counsel and to study hundreds of young and mature Orthodox women. Moreover, as vocational consultant to Stern College for Women of Yeshiva University, I enjoyed the uncommon opportunity of studying the psyche of Orthodox Jewish coeds many of whom came from various states and from foreign countries."


"What can be done to restore a continuity of authoritative paternal love for children growing up in Jewish homes in a culture which undermines the authority of parents in so many ways? Virtually nothing, so long as fathers focus their energy and attention on their careers apart from their families, preach platitudes and moral pieties without living visibly and consistently by them, or seek popularity from their children rather than respect."


"Myth-making about the Jewish family, and particularly about the role of women in that family, has become virtually a preoccupation of the contemporary Jewish community... Concern for continued Jewish group survival has led scholars and communal leaders alike to look for those social factors which accounted for Jewish survival in the past, even in the face of centuries of persecution. Often the Jewish family has been held up as the source of past stability in Jewish life; and a restored Jewish family has been proposed as a bulwark against further erosion of Jewish solidarity and consciousness."


"In today's society, the chief question most women face is not whether they will embark on serious professional careers, but whether they will also have families. This study portrays 97 married Jewish women living in or near Washington, D.C., who have both professions and families--large families with three or more children."


"Analysis of a questionnaire designed to measure intergenerational and intragenerational change in male acceptance of emerging sex-role definition reveals statistically significant differences between Catholic and Jewish men... The combined data provide evidence of continuity in familial values of Catholic males and change in some of those values for Jewish men. These
trends are explained by Catholicism's specificity on the nature of sex and social roles of men and women, and Judaism's more diffuse teachings in these areas."


"We find ourselves in a transition phase during which we have begun to accept the changes which have profound implications for Jewish identity and the Jewish future while we maintain the importance of assuring the health and viability of the family. We must, therefore, examine the new roles of women in our society in order to develop sufficient models and opportunities for effective support systems and programs which will simultaneously strengthen the family without denying to women an individually satisfactory degree of fulfillment."


"The time is propitious, therefore, for Jewish feminists who are concerned with themselves as women and as members of the Jewish community, and with the welfare of the American Jewish community as a whole, to reexamine their strategies and to reorient themselves to their new significant potential. Since they define themselves as Jewish women, their well-being as women is inextricably tied up with the welfare of the Jewish community. By focusing upon the well-being of American Jewish families, they will be contributing to the enrichment of their lives as women and as Jews."


"The world of today finds motherhood outside the call of duty. One's personal views may be rooted in tradition, in moral conviction, or in religious precept, but the steadfastness of these views becomes weakened by the type of journalism that presents the reader with a 'liberating' moral standard and a new brand of fulfillment--one that is equated with freedom and footlooseness."

INTERMARRIAGE: EMPIRICAL STUDIES


"A classification of Jewish university students into Reform and Conservative showed a marked difference in their attitudes toward interfaith and intra-Jewish marriage. Reform Jews were more willing to make interfaith marriages than were Conservative Jews. Students of both branches were more reluctant to marry Catholics than Protestants, and both were more willing to marry persons of no faith than either Catholics or
Protestants. In intra-Jewish marriages, attitudes showed that Reform Jews were more willing to marry Conservative than Orthodox Jews, whereas Conservative Jews were more willing to marry Orthodox than Reform Jews."


"The organization of this paper follows the procedure dictated by the bookkeeping metaphor. It first presents an accounting of the trends in Jewish intermarriage and a general diagrammatic balance-sheet of the factors in intermarriage. It then turns to the elements in this balance-sheet to produce a particular accounting for what has occurred, and it concludes with a 'profit and loss' statement."


"Some of the worst fears and some of the best hopes of those American Jews concerned about Jewish intermarriage are being substantiated by the preliminary findings of the National Jewish Population Study....[The] preliminary report suggests that some startling findings will ultimately come out of the vast body of new data. Two conclusions which can be drawn from the data available at this time, however, are: (1) projections of the rate of intermarriage have greatly underestimated the incidence of intermarriage, and (2) the commonly accepted view that intermarriage is tantamount to leaving the Jewish faith and the Jewish people is only partially true."


"Because there is so little in the way of hard facts to support the passionately held positions on all sides of this issue, the American Jewish Committee undertook, in 1976, to sponsor a study on the effects of intermarriage. This study...was conducted in eight American communities with the participation of the local chapters of the American Jewish Committee and with the cooperation of many individuals and groups in and out of the AJC. The study sought to examine the impact of intermarriage on the couples involved and on their families, as well as on their ties to the Jewish community."


"The United States National Jewish Population Study (NJPS) constitutes the first attempt to design and conduct a nationwide survey representative of the United States Jewish population as a whole. The study, sponsored by the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds, now has completed data collection and other tasks prerequisite to analysis...This report is the first in a series that will probe a wide range of issues in Jewish life in America."

"My purpose here is to relate...earlier findings in a more systematic way to social structure and social theory. While the phenomenon of intermarriage has previously been related to the process of acculturation and community organization, the relationship between three types of families--the preindustrial or rural, the companionship or tempered romantic love, and the personality growth--has to the best of my knowledge not been explored."

INTERMARRIAGE: COMMUNAL IMPACT


"The easy assumption that those who intermarry are 'lost' to the community is widely accepted, and each new report of increased readiness to intermarry, and each fragmentary report of an increase in the actual rate of intermarriage...is greeted with alarm. Yet, in the absence of information regarding the behavior of the intermarried, such lamentation may well be premature. It is, after all, theoretically possible that all the offspring of Jewish-Christian unions are raised as Jews, in which case intermarriage might lead to an increase, rather than a decline, in the total number of Jews in the United States."


"Above all, we must avoid the temptation, ingrained though it be, to leap to doomsday conclusions. Intermarriage in its widest sense need not imply Jewish population loss nor even inevitable decline in the quality of Jewish life. Intermarriage is a variable, not a constant; intermarriage creates risks, but it creates opportunities as well."


"The logic of the above considerations suggests to me that there is an urgent need to broaden the avenues of entry into the Jewish community. At the moment the only legitimate path of entry leads through the portals of a synagogue...But the prospect of acquiring substantial numbers of adherents who are currently 'fellow travelers' as well as the prospect of retaining the Jewish children of mixed marriages requires us to cast a much broader net than the traditional vocabulary of conversion and Jewish education permits."

"Never mind the open society. Never mind that everyone else is doing it. When it strikes home, intermarriage is still intermarriage, and neither numbers nor crowds can soothe the immemorial pain of it."


"Intermarried Jews are often written off as sheep gone astray. But not everyone is ready to make that judgment. As for Lee and McKenny, they dismiss the traditional Jewish position as nonsense. Intermarriage is a part of American life in the 1970s, they say."


"American Jews, with the exception of the Orthodox, then, are clearly intent upon making peace with intermarriage. As the intermarriage rate continues to rise, and it will almost certainly do so, pressures to accede to it will become even stronger within the community. The stronger these pressures become, the more they will encourage mixed unions which in turn will generate still further demands for concessions. The spiral is almost certainly bound to continue upward."


"It is intermarriage which weighs more heavily than all the positive trends combined, and which calls into question the 'creative survival,' as the phrase has it, of the American Jewish community. That this should be so is hardly surprising, since intermarriage strikes at the very core of Jewish group existence."


"In a community obsessed with attrition and assimilation, where debate about conversion, 'naturalization' and 'outreach' constantly intensifies, astonishingly little is known about the roughly half-a-million Americans who are children of intermarriages between Jews and non-Jews."

INTERMARRIAGE: CONVERSION


"Inner conviction is not as tangible and compelling a motivation to remain steadfastly within the Jewish fold as the determination of both the convert and the Jewish-born mate to have their marriage succeed and their realization that a unitary Jewish religious framework within the home can
greatly enhance their chances of success. It is these very considerations which often cause the convert to make a serious and permanent commitment to Judaism and its observances."


"Current intermarriages can be divided into those involving conversion into Judaism and those still mixed on religious faith. An examination of the Jewish characteristics of the members of these two marriage types shows that marriages which involve conversion to Judaism are consistently high on measures of Jewish religious expression. These respondents prefer the Conservative or Reform denominations. The religiously mixed marriages have low levels of Jewish expression. One must declare that, overall, religious conversion 'works' for the Jewish group."


"The recently formed National Jewish Hospitality Committee has been organized for just such an outreach program. Out of the multiple organizations in the Jewish community, this is the only one that seeks to reach couples involved in mixed marriages and their children and win them for the Jewish people. It is surely one of the greatest of mitzvot to bring such a family within the household of Israel."


"If a rabbi is willing to meet with a couple on at least eight or ten occasions, or the couple is willing to undertake a course of study similar to that for conversion, there is some chance that the direction of their home will be affected. Even this depends on the Jewish family's eagerness to bring the Gentile partner into the Jewish community. Simply to perform a ceremony with only one or two prior meetings and with no institutional involvement, seems to have little effect on the couples' future direction."


"What should we be doing with, and for, the many people who come to us and ask for help in becoming Jews? This is a real question, not a hypothetical one. There is no week in which I (and every other rabbi) do not get at least two or three or four calls from people inquiring about how or whether they can enter the ranks of the Jewish people."

"What then can be done [to deal with the intermarriage crisis]?...Parents, teachers, rabbis and other Jewish leaders must stop showing by their example that Jewish identity is meaningless. Persons and institutions with Jewish money and facilities must use them for things that are really Jewish. Hypocrisy and empty, non-spiritual value systems must be banished from our synagogues and Jewish organizations. Jewish leadership must take the lead in bridging the generation gap, rather than spearheading the drive to widen it."


"Until now, the names of rabbis who would perform mixed marriages...have been transmitted strictly by word of mouth. Even though many of us in the profession know of them, and even though many ostensibly more stringent colleagues referred mixed couples to them, these rabbis constituted more or less of an underground....Knowledge of who these men were remained in-group, clandestine information until last year."


"This book is for couples, where one of the two is Jewish, the other Christian, who have determined to marry, or have already married. How can they make a go of it? What are the possible pitfalls that can jeopardize such a marriage? How much does the religious difference mean? How much do family, history, and society intrude? What minimum ought the couple to know about Judaism and Christianity? In short, is such guidance possible as to insure a successful marriage?"


"But the harsh fact of the intermarriage problem is that it is a lucrative business. A significant number of rabbis who defend rabbinic participation in intermarriage ceremonies on the basis of principle make no attempt at all to counsel the couple or even to meet them before the ceremony. One survey of 47 New York state rabbis who officiate at intermarriages showed that only ten so much as spoke to the couples on the telephone prior to the ceremony, and of the ten, only three asked to see the couple before the wedding."


"This handbook [published under Reform auspices] has been written to provide Jews and non-Jews and their families with some basic information regarding interfaith marriages from a Jewish perspective. A marriage
should be among the happiest moments in the lives of a couple and the couple's loved ones. But interfaith marriages are often cast in an atmosphere of pain, turbulence, and rancor...It is hoped that what follows can help reduce some of these difficulties so that such marriages can begin in a more harmonious and conflict-free setting."


Rabbi Silver feels that marriage is most important for our society and a uniquely satisfying way for one person to relate to another. He therefore believes that despite the difficulties involved, and whatever the faith of the people involved, marriage is an institution worth preserving.


"It would seem that if this terrible tide of defection were to be attributed to any single cause it would be the total lack of priority the intermarrying Jew assigns to his Jewishness. Beyond doubt, this is an outgrowth of meagre experience, if any, with the richness of a Torah life ....Only a Jew steeped in Torah values and committed to a Torah way of life will be much less swayed by all of these disturbing factors."

SEXUAL ETHICS


"As with every other aspect of Judaism, a Jewish sexual ethics cannot be maintained meaningfully without an understanding of the presuppositions on which it is based. The statement that the world is creation implies that all the vital forces in which human nature shares, that are present within man and carried into life through man, have their place within the scheme of all things. Thus, human sexuality has its Creator-intended function within the plan of creation; it is world-related, handed to man with a goal directed beyond the individual."


Gordis, a leading Conservative rabbi, examines a host of contemporary issues, including the instability of marriage and the incidence of divorce, the morality and social utility of birth control, homosexuality as a legitimate alternative to heterosexual marriage, and patterns of premarital and extra-marital relations.
Rabbi Lamm presents an Orthodox perspective on such topics as romantic love, premarital sex, homosexuality, mixed marriage, and extra-marital affairs. He argues that Judaism has supported marriage as a vital and stable institution by adherence to a model that steers clear of the dangers of asceticism and the anarchy of free love.

"It is no longer clear to me that single adulthood in and of itself is responsible for the relaxed sexual morality of our generation. The reverse is true as well. Free sex encourages a casual attitude towards relationships generally which, in turn, further discourages early marriages."

"My standard of ethical sexual behavior stresses not the sexual purity of the individual, but rather the sexual relationship between two human beings. Its moral criterion rests with Martin Buber's concept of personhood and what it means to be fully human. While recognizing that 'self restraint and discipline' are important means of hallowing life, the sexual standard to which I adhere rejects the notion that premarital intercourse and the decision not to observe the family purity laws labels one undisciplined and without self restraint."

Lamm presents a detailed analysis of the classical Jewish source pertaining to homosexuality. He concludes: "Judaism allows for no compromise in its abhorrence of sodomy, but encourages both compassion and rehabilitation. Certainly, there must be no acceptance of separate homosexual societies, such as--or especially--synagogues set aside as homosexual congregations."

"This hope that homosexuals will make a significant contribution to the Jewish community may dismay Jews who assume that strong, close-knit family life is the cornerstone of Judaism. As members of a 'rejected' group, homosexuals must work out, often painfully, an individual road to Judaism, whereas for many heterosexuals religious participation usually requires simple conformity to community norms."

"If what we seek is a truly Jewish approach to a contemporary problem, we must not only consult Biblical sources and subsequent halakhic decisions, but must do two other things as well: a) determine, as far as we are able, the rationale and presuppositions of the traditional stand; and b) inquire whether there are now any changed circumstances or new data in the light of which the Torah's stand today--though based on the same divine and enduring concerns and purposes--might possibly involve changed formulations or different emphases."


"I am a homosexual, and it was in 1972 that I 'came out.' I had suspected as much years earlier, during my freshman year at Yeshiva University, when I had suddenly realized that my feelings for Lisa--the woman I loved back then--were no different from my feelings for Moshe, with whom I had attended yeshiva as a youngster, and who had loved me with a passion I had never experienced before. But it was only years later that I faced the full-blown fact, and it was then that my life came unglued."

ABORTION


"The basic issue at stake here is freedom. None of the pro-choice groups would force anyone to have an abortion or to perform an abortion. What is at stake is a woman's legal right to freedom of choice regarding abortion, based on her own religious and moral conscience."


"My stomach tightens at the thought of getting involved in a controversy over abortion, even with myself. Emotionally, theologically, as a Jew, and most of all as a mother who is daily nurtured by the sights and sounds of her children, I am opposed to abortion. And yet, the other facets of unwanted pregnancy are inescapable--fatigue and harassed parents, the shame of rape, the premature end of youth because of a foolish mistake, the degradation and danger of coat hanger abortion, and, not the least, the overwhelming and exclusive claim that a child makes on a woman's life for many of her strongest years. Therefore, I supported and pressured for legalized abortion reform in the United States, with the full knowledge of the inconsistency and ambivalence of my position."

"To accommodate Torah perspectives to the current moral climate is to prostitute a Divinely logical ethic in order to pander to popular demands. The responsibility of the religious Jew is to intensively investigate what are the Torah answers to these troubling and often tortuous questions, and then respond with the thought out consistent answers given us by our scholars."

DIVORCE AND SINGLE-PARENT FAMILIES


"You are a recently divorced, widowed, or separated Jewish woman with three young children to bring up. You are feeling lonely and isolated, and perhaps a little overwhelmed by your changed status, the new problems you are suddenly facing, and the unaccustomed decisions to be made. Where, in the Jewish community, do you go for help?"


"I have attempted to show the parallelisms between death and divorce, insofar as they affect people involved emotionally. I have tried to indicate areas where I feel the synagogue can more consciously address itself to the needs of the single parent family. ...This cannot be done by the synagogue alone. It will call for increasing cooperation with the agencies and organizations whose specialties must be brought to bear to address the emerging needs of the single parent family."


"One of the most alarming aspects of adults experiencing divorce is their newly-developed negative attitudes toward the rabbi and the synagogue. These feelings are generally characterized by two stages: hostility and self-exile. Open hostility, with escalating vindictiveness, is often aimed at the rabbi and is frequently followed by withdrawal from Judaism and experimentation with...non-Jewish lifestyles."


"The NJFC [National Jewish Family Center] commissioned the noted social psychologist, Thomas J. Cottle, to investigate how divorce affects the Jewishness of children experiencing such family disruption. We asked him to discover, if he could, the impact of the trauma on the children's attitude toward their religious instruction, their participation in Jewish
ritual and their general commitment to Judaism, and what role Jewish institutions, particularly the school and the synagogue, have in the children's lives during their ordeal."


"Traditional Jewish divorce law points up two things: how much change has taken place during the evolution of this halachah; and how much further development it needs to serve women more equitably and indiscriminately."


"The single parent is an individual at risk as a result of the loss of a marital partner because of separation, divorce, or the death of a spouse. I will describe the steps the Jewish Community Center of Greater Rochester took which culminated in the establishment of a Single Parent Department. To illustrate the process and the features of the program, I will describe four representative case histories."


"The purpose of this paper is to examine the nature of the contemporary single-parent family in the Jewish community and to assess its impact on Jewish life. On the basis of a review of the special problems and potential strengths in such families we will also consider the services which are necessary to enable these families to find a significant place in the Jewish community and to enhance their potential contribution to Jewish continuity."


"I have attempted to focus on the problems of women and divorce, but clearly, as a family therapist, I have been unable to stay with women's problems without discussing their ex-spouses, children and extended families. Reintegration difficulties of women cannot be viewed in isolation from reintegration problems of reorganized families, dealing with loss and change."


"In what follows, we shall examine some of the social-psychological and economic needs and difficulties faced by members of single-parent families. For the most part, we will address the problem of parents--especially mothers, since they head a large majority of such families. Later, we will recommend specific approaches the community might take in response."

"We are struck by the uncomfortable feeling that the number of divorces in Orthodox circles is increasing to the point of alarm. Even after we make allowances for the fact that the Orthodox community is a closely tied-together group, living in densely populated enclaves where a single divorce is whispered about by many people...we are still confronted with the reality of a tremendous increase, in recent years, in the divorce rate among Orthodox and bnei-torah families."

**THE ELDERLY**


"Even as Judaism took note of age's disabilities...it emphasized that there were positive dimensions to life's final stage which might well prove to be far more significant. To identify these is to have a different perspective on a number of problem areas in the field of gerontology."


"I believe that two such...needs and trends to which [Jewish] Centers can contribute more significantly in the future are continuing education for the aged, and pre-retirement preparation and counselling for those in the middle years. These two programs should increasingly become major elements in the adult activities of Centers."


"Jewish Family Service of Philadelphia is currently engaged in a three-year research and demonstration project studying the relative effectiveness of centralized and decentralized service delivery systems in working with the elderly. The two modes of service organization are being compared with respect to service delivery, staff morale and productivity, cost, and client satisfaction. This paper will describe how the project is being implemented, and some preliminary findings."


"As the median age of the American Jewish community increases, the percentage of aged persons within synagogue membership may also increase. Any such increase will mean a possible additional counselling responsibility for the congregational rabbi. Counselling the "well-aged" requires an awareness of the basic aging processes and an ability to deal objectively with complex issues which often appear simple and clear-cut on the surface."

"Veneration of the elderly in traditional Jewish culture provides rewards near the end of life as well as its beginnings. It provides for continuity of psychological life and self-esteem until the end of natural life. The Jewish tradition rejects psychological death or withdrawal of status before the natural end of life."


"Clearly, the development of an intelligent scheme of comprehensive, articulated services to provide a continuum of care for the elderly requires the cooperative efforts of the larger community, the government authorities, and voluntary agencies. Within each Jewish community, a coordinated effort must be taken to assess the problems of the aged, determine priorities, the strategy for mobilizing resources, the allocation of responsibility for leadership, authority and the development of needed services, and assurance that the Jewish elderly have access to, and secure, needed benefits and entitlements."


"To discuss the service needs of the Jewish elderly is to confront what is probably the major social problem of our society. This discussion will attempt to relate the issues to the realities of our service parameters and available dollars."
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