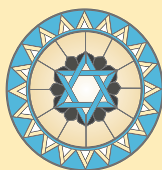
Michigan Jewish History

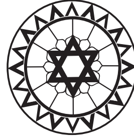
Special 60th-Anniversary Extended Issue



JHSM

Very Truly Yours
Mrs. Simon Kander.

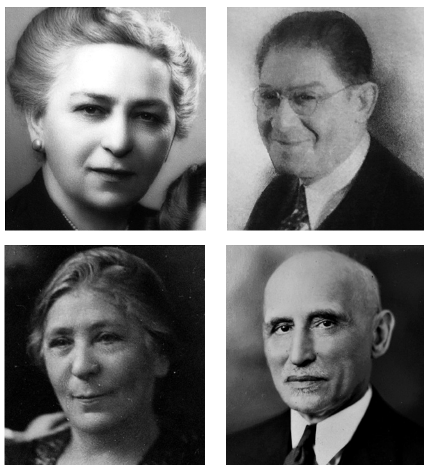
Volume 59/60 | Summer 2020 | Tammuz 5780



JHSM

Founded in 1959,
Jewish Historical Society of Michigan
interprets and highlights the history of
Jewish Michigan. Through the past,
we understand our present and
actively shape our future.

Michigan Jewish History is dedicated to the memory of **Sarah and Ralph Davidson** and **Bessie and Joseph Wetsman**, the parents and grandparents of **William Davidson**, of blessed memory, and **Dorothy Davidson Gerson**.



Figures 1-4: (clockwise from top left) Sarah Wetsman Davidson, Ralph Davidson, Joseph Wetsman, and Bessie Handler Wetsman. (Courtesy of Gretchen and Ethan Davidson.)

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MICHIGAN JEWISH HISTORY

The Journal of Jewish Historical Society of Michigan

Special 60th-Anniversary Extended Issue

Volume 59/60 Summer 2020 Tammuz 5780

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Message from Our President

Risha B. Ring

(Courtesy of author.)

In 1959 our founders committed themselves to the academic pursuit of researching, interpreting, and transmitting Michigan's rich Jewish history, thereby strengthening our Jewish life and culture. The first issue of *Michigan Jewish History* was just 37 typed pages, printed and distributed to fewer than 50 members in March 1960. This 60th-anniversary edition, by contrast, is much longer and reaches more than 1,000 subscribers across the globe.

MJH is the oldest journal of its kind. We are proud to continue publishing and innovating, while still honoring the vision of our founders. Our goal is for the journal to become a premier, "go-to" resource for researchers, educators, students, and the interested general public. To that end, under the leadership of our executive director and editor, Catherine Cangany, PhD, and with strong support from our managing editor, Tracy Weissman, JD, we have brought back several former practices and added some new ones:

- We have moved *MJH*'s publication date to June to align better with the academic year and our annual meeting. New last year, we now publish the *JHSM Bulletin*, our annual report, in December.

- We have reinstated the Journal Advisory Committee. This group consists of interested and capable members and historians who serve as the journal's steering committee.

- We have instituted a peer-review process, whereby submissions are appraised by professional historians for the worthiness of their contributions to the field. This enhances the journal's quality, thereby attracting more academic attention and support. We are pleased to include our very first peer-reviewed scholarly articles in this issue.
- We have created the new Rabbi Emanuel Applebaum Award (named for *MJH*'s first editor), given annually beginning in 2021 to honor outstanding original scholarship, increasing and strengthening submissions. See page 104 for more details.
- We have returned to the practice of offering reviews of relevant new books, which our readers may be interested in adding to their libraries.
- For religious and secular educators, we have added lesson plans to promote the sharing of Michigan's Jewish history with students.

We hope you enjoy this enhanced version of *MJH*, which we expect will better serve the needs of our members and the scholarly community. I look forward to many more opportunities to celebrate our Michigan Jewish history with you.

Message from the Editor

JHSM Executive Director, Catherine Cangany, PhD

(Courtesy of Elayne Gross Photography.)

There is a long-running quip (often misattributed to Mark Twain, father-in-law of Ossip Gabrilowitsch, the Russian-Jewish founding director of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra) that only kings, presidents, editors, and people with tapeworms have the right to use the editorial "we." On that good authority, *we* welcome you to *Michigan Jewish History*'s special 60th-anniversary extended issue.

This fortuitous occasion marks my first year at the helm of *MJH*. After a career as a tenured academic, with various writing and editing credits, I am well prepared and eager to lead the journal through its next and very exciting chapter. The *MJH* Advisory Committee, Tracy Weissman (our new managing editor), and I are working hard to cement *MJH*'s place as the field's leading publication.

This will be no small feat. The past is not in vogue now. Neither is intellectualism. But, history has much to teach, especially about those who came before us and how they coped with the human experience. Thinking critically about the past helps us understand the present, so we can change the future. Not just for ourselves, but also for those who come after us.

In this issue, you will find our latest efforts to produce knowledge that helps us make sense of the world—from "kitchen acculturation" to benevolent societies to architectural technology to an appraisal of JHSM's own existence. This issue is jam-packed with knowledge and wrapped in a fresh, new, reader-friendly package. Watch for more refinements (including a survey to gauge the success of the 2020 changes) in the year ahead.

From all of us, happy reading. And happy learning.

Introduction from the Managing Editor

Tracy Weissman, JD

Welcome to *Michigan Jewish History*'s special 60th-anniversary extended issue. I am honored to have been selected to be the journal's new managing editor and am thrilled to share this special issue with you. In celebration of *MJH*'s milestone, we have chosen *origins* as the theme for this issue. To me, origins means beginnings—in this case, a new beginning for *MJH* with a new editor and managing editor, a new layout, and, for the first time, peer-reviewed feature articles. The fascinating articles, essays, and stories in this extended issue each explore origins from a unique perspective. Together, they provide an exciting beginning to *MJH*'s next 60 years.

In the first of the issue's three peer-reviewed feature articles, "Uptown Matrons and Downtown Daughters: Constructing Jewish-American Womanhood through the Kitchen, 1900-1925," community cookbooks serve as the vehicle for Mara Steinitz's exploration of the origins of Jewish-American womanhood in the early twentieth century. Cookbooks such as *The Settlement Cook Book* compiled by Lizzie Black Kander, pictured on this issue's cover, used recipes and tips to promote the Americanization of newly immigrated Jewish women.

In "The Industrial Removal Office in Detroit, 1902-1922," Robert A. Rockaway examines the Detroit origins of a national Jewish resettlement organization, which relocated unemployed or underemployed Eastern-European Jews from New York to Detroit during the first part of the twentieth century. Letters reveal first-hand the successes and failures immigrants experienced in their new homes, including, for some, the trauma of being uprooted a second time from family, friends, and a rich Jewish life.

In "Julius Kahn, Man of Steel," Michael G. Smith recounts the origins of Julius Kahn's breakthrough invention of the first practical and scientific method for reinforcing concrete. Kahn's intense work ethic and resolve drove him to grow his company from modest beginnings into the dominant supplier of cutting-edge construction materials. In doing so, he emerged from the shadow of his famous brother, architect Albert Kahn, and transformed the landscape of the United States.

This issue also includes a review by Eastern Michigan University's Nicholas Ezra Field of Mark Slobin's *Motor City Music: A Detroiter Looks Back* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019). Field provides insight into Slobin's exploration of the origins of Detroit's diverse musical cultures during the middle decades of the twentieth century. Slobin's personal recollections shape the discussion of the Jewish community's impact on the city's musical history.

In “Essays and Personal Reflections,” *MJH* marks JHSM’s anniversary with a retrospective of the organization’s origins and many accomplishments. In “In the Beginning: The History of JHSM, Celebrating 60 Years,” past president Judith Levin Cantor and current vice president Jeannie Weiner trace JHSM’s development from its early days to its current programming and future goals. In “Allen A. Warsen and the Founding of JHSM: Recollections by His Daughter,” Annette Friedman recalls family stories about the founding of JHSM.

“Essays and Personal Reflections” concludes with Arnold Collens’ “Before There Was JARC: The Detroit Community’s Response to Developmental Disabilities,” which recounts the origins of the community’s hard-fought efforts to provide mainstreaming opportunities and independence for young adults with disabilities.

MJH’s “Art Treasures” section offers Gail Fisher’s “The Journey of the Petzolt Double-Cup at the Detroit Institute of Arts,” tracing the harrowing journey of a stunning pair of silver-gilt cups over more than four centuries to its current home at the DIA. Surviving both World Wars and confiscation by the Nazis, the Petzolt Double-Cup is an amazing part of history.

The issue concludes with additional perspectives on the meaning of origins. The educator materials in the new “Youth History Education” section offer lesson plans on the founding of Jewish Ann Arbor. The stories, memoirs, and poems in the inspirational “Creative Expressions” section under the editorship of Joy Gaines-Friedler each relate origins to the idea of home—either in the physical sense or as a metaphor for connections with loved ones. Together with the articles and essays, these contributions provide readers with a rich and exciting exploration of origins.

Enjoy the journey!

FEATURE ARTICLE

Uptown Matrons and Downtown Daughters: Constructing Jewish-American Womanhood through the Kitchen, 1900-1925

Mara Steinitz

The Jewish woman who presides over her home is entrusted with a great and noble responsibility. The Jewish fate, the Jewish present, and the Jewish future are in her keeping.
— Miriam Isaacs[1]

In the current era of internet recipes put forth by everyone from moms in Cincinnati to America's Test Kitchen in Boston, the cookbook seems almost a relic of a different time. Those published today tend to be large, glossy-photograph-filled affairs created by highly lauded celebrity chefs and influencer-bloggers. They make excellent coffee-table books and serve as inspiration for many, but what do they tell us about the ways people really live or eat? In contrast, cookbooks of the past are a vital window into their authors' lived experiences, or at least their aspirations. Before blogs opened up the lives of women, cookbooks served a similar purpose. Reading cookbooks as historical texts allows insight into the world of women and the ways they constructed their identities.

The cookbooks under consideration here are critical sources: Jewish women living in the first half of the twentieth century left little written record of their experiences. The recipes in the cookbooks they created are fascinating in their own right, documenting an era of tongue soufflés and "tutti-frutti" desserts that seem as far removed from the present as woodstoves and floor-length dresses.[2] Even more valuably, the cookbooks reveal larger truths about the ways Jewish women navigated their identities in rapidly changing Jewish and American contexts.

Mara Steinitz is a 2018 graduate of Macalester College. She wrote her history honors thesis, "Destabilizing Domesticity: The Construction and Collective Memory of Jewish-American Womanhood from 1900 to 1950," on Jewish women after years of reading about them in both cookbooks and fiction books. She was a 2018-2019 Repair the World Fellow in Detroit and now works as a butcher's apprentice at Marrow Detroit and as a Hebrew school teacher at Dor Hadash. She wishes to thank the Macalester College History Department for its support during the process of writing the paper that became this article, the Dorot Jewish Division of the New York Public Library for providing access to the cookbooks discussed here, and JHSM for providing a platform for this research.

[1] Miriam Isaacs, *What Every Jewish Woman Should Know* (New York: Jewish Book Club, 1941), 5.

[2] *The Auxiliary Cook-Book* (New York: Auxiliary Society of the Hebrew Sheltering Guardian Society of New York Orphan Asylum, 1909), 99; *The Practical Cook Book*, 2nd ed. (New York: Sisterhood of the West End Synagogue, 1909), 16.

From the 1880s to the closing of immigration in 1924, about two and a half million Jewish people came to the United States, primarily from Eastern Europe.[3] These immigrants joined established Central European Ashkenazi Jewish people, who had arrived in the mid-nineteenth century and were on their way towards assimilation and acceptance by the general population.[4] As with the first wave from Central Europe, once in the United States, the newer immigrants faced heavy pressure to adapt to the dominant American forms of life—both from acculturated Jews who wanted to maintain their social status and from xenophobic mainstream society. Simultaneously, the growth of the Reform movement in the late nineteenth century and subsequent shifts away from more observant practices, such as separation by gender during services and strict adherence to the laws of Kashrut, changed the lived experience of Judaism, making it more similar to Christianity, the dominant form of American religion.[5] These shifts affected the lives of all Jewish people in the United States, but can be understood particularly through the lives of women, who were held responsible for their family's cultural and religious identities, a role they frequently performed via the kitchen.

The tremendous social and cultural changes of the early twentieth century, in both Jewish-American life and the lives of US women more broadly, and the challenges they presented, especially for Jewish women, are evident in a variety of English-language cookbooks published in the United States from 1900 to 1925. Functioning as manuals for Jewish women across geographic and class spectrums, these texts reveal how behavioral expectations changed over time and were influenced by both religious and mainstream societal gender norms. Though the religious norms frequently mirrored society's norms, cookbooks required women to walk a thin line between Jewish (or "foreign") and American behavior, often not satisfying the requirements of either one.

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[3] Hasia R. Diner and Beryl Lieff Benderly, *Her Works Praise Her: A History of Jewish Women in America from Colonial Times to the Present* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 136.

[4] The Jewish people are divided into three main diasporic groups: the Ashkenazim, the Sephardim, and the Mizrahi. Ashkenazi Jews descend from those who settled in Central and Eastern Europe, Sephardic Jews come from the Iberian Peninsula, and Mizrahi Jews are of Middle-Eastern descent. Jews from all three groups currently live in the United States. This project focuses specifically on the experiences of Ashkenazi Jews because they constituted the majority of Jews who immigrated and acculturated to the United States during this time period. Rachel M. Solomin, "Sephardic, Ashkenazic, Mizrahi and Ethiopian Jews," *My Jewish Learning*, 2017, https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/sephardic-ashkenazic-mizrahi-jews-jewish-ethnic-diversity/.

[5] The laws of Kashrut, or Kosher laws, are the dietary restrictions put forward in Leviticus and adhered to by more observant Jews. They include not eating shellfish or pork and not mixing meat and milk products in the same meal. The laws also extend into housekeeping: separate dishes are needed for meat meals and milk meals.

Although all the cookbooks studied here were written for Jewish female readers, that readership was diverse. Some were or descended from Central-European Reform Jews. These wealthier "uptown" matrons—well on their way to Americanization—utilized community cookbooks primarily to share and gently reinforce their hybridized culture within their class group. Their experiences were far different from those of the cookbooks' other primary readership: recently immigrated Orthodox Jews from Eastern Europe. The cookbooks aimed at these poor "downtown" daughters (written by "uptown" matrons) more explicitly pushed assimilation, forcing American culture through recipes and household advice. Ultimately, regardless of readership or approach, the cookbooks collectively shared the same end goal: uniform white, American womanhood—a type of femininity rooted in domestic labor and fulfilled through carefully prepared food. Judaism became a secondary trait. Recipes for dishes made with meat and milk together, or with shellfish, suggested that dietary distinctions between Jewish and non-Jewish people would not hold in the United States. And yet, as the recipes for Passover foods and other traditional Jewish dishes make clear, Jewish religious and cultural practices could never fully be left behind.

Cookbooks as Historical Texts

Cooking—and, more broadly, the kitchen—was an important location for the construction and performance of Jewish-American femininity in the first part of the twentieth century. The English-language cookbooks written for Jewish women discussed here, though a small sample, reflect more than just popular recipes.[6] They are "full of words," and at the same time, "they don't really tell us what people eat."[7] What they do reveal are the gender expectations and norms of the time period. The cookbooks represent their authors' expectations, and perhaps ideals, but not necessarily reality. As such, the rich cookbook material employed here focuses on Jewish-American women's constructions of gender identity, rather than the meals they were preparing every day.

The methodology used here draws on an increasing body of scholarly work that utilizes cookbooks as texts. However, cookbooks from the early twentieth century primarily have been used to understand the experiences of middle- and upper-class white women, focusing on the period's

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[6] The cookbooks referenced in this study were accessed at either the Dorot Jewish Division of the New York Public Library or the Center for Jewish History Archives. They are not a comprehensive or representative sample. Rather, they are the books that were available and had enticing titles.

[7] Megan J. Elias, *Food on the Page: Cookbooks and American Culture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017), 1.

declining use of servant labor, increased availability of convenience foods, and the rise of domestic science. In this context, cookbooks were primarily an attempt to entice wealthier women into the kitchen, the central site of American womanhood.[8] Scholars such as Jessamyn Neuhaus and Megan Elias have done little to acknowledge the limits of their interpretation. Poorer white women, many women of color, and recent immigrants never had servants and thus always cooked for their own, and often others', families. Moreover, many cookbooks, including those under study here, were written for women not in white, Christian, middle- and upper-class households. By expanding the types of cookbooks that can be used as historical evidence, scholars can generate new insights into the lives of all women in the United States, including Jewish women.

Uptown Matrons: Cookbooks as Intra-Class Cultural Transmission

The earliest examples of English-language cookbooks aimed at Jewish women included in this study are community cookbooks compiled by the first-wave, wealthy Germanic Jewish women and sold to support philanthropic work benefiting women and children—an acceptable public extension of American ideals of domestic femininity. Many of the compilers descended from families who had served in the Old World as middlemen traders operating between urban and rural communities. They were forced to immigrate due to industrialization, which eliminated their services and livelihoods.[9] Most of the women who came to the United States in this first wave hailed from small towns with traditional gender norms and expectations, such as exclusion from religious study and activity outside of their daily prayers, arranged marriage, and extensive preparation to run a proper Jewish household and support their husbands' work.[10]

By the twentieth century, most of these families were firmly established financially, and the women no longer had to engage in wage labor.[11] Instead, they could fully devote themselves to the home, religion, and suitable philanthropic pursuits. These women tended to be highly involved in Reform Judaism, modeled on "contemporary American middle-class Protestantism."[12] Women were ascribed different, more equal roles in the Reform movement than in Orthodox Judaism, such as sitting with men during services and being counted as part of a minyan (the ten people requisite for public Jewish prayer). Simultaneously, as a central part of the

[8] Jessamyn Neuhaus, *Manly Meals and Mom's Home Cooking* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003); Elias, *Food on the Page*, 43-44.
[9] Diner and Benderly, *Her Works Praise Her*, 70-72.
[10] Ibid., 76-77.
[11] Ibid., 82-88.
[12] Ewa Morawska, "Assimilation in the United States: Nineteenth Century," *Jewish Women's Archive*, 2017, https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/assimilation-in-united-states-nineteenth-century.

acculturation of their ethnic group, these women were expected to "perform their part flawlessly as creators of a peaceful and decorous home and as transmitters of morality."[13] They aspired to middle-class, Christian, American femininity and modified Jewish tradition to achieve it. As the Jewish women most acculturated and with the best grasp of the English language at the turn of the twentieth century, it is not surprising that their cookbooks became the means to share and promote those aspirations.

In 1909 the Auxiliary Society of the Hebrew Sheltering Guardian Society of the New York Orphan Asylum published *The Auxiliary Cook-Book* to raise funds for the society's orphanage.[14] The same year, the Sisterhood of the West End Synagogue published the second edition of its *Practical Cook Book* to benefit its charity work.[15] These two cookbooks are typical of the many community cookbooks published in this era in terms of both their structures and their compilers' notions of proper Jewish-American womanhood. Community cookbooks generally consist of recipes gathered from the women in a neighborhood or group, often sold as a fundraiser. The cookbooks under study here served as "communal partial autobiographies" that asserted the ideals and status achievements of the middle-class Germanic-Jewish women who created them.[16] Overwhelmingly, the names attached to individual recipes identify the contributors' marital statuses. With the majority of contributors identified as married, the books position matrimony as central to proper notions of womanhood and assert that married women—by virtue of their respectability and social norms—are ideally suited for public charity work.

Despite their Jewish authors, the recipes in both cookbooks do not follow the laws of Kashrut. They call for prohibited ingredients and techniques, such as using shellfish or mixing meat and milk together, though neither book has recipes for pork.[17] Historically, Kosher food served as an easy way to separate Jewish people from non-Jewish people. Jewish women purposefully creating non-Kosher cookbooks was a calculated break from tradition that showed the levels of assimilation to which they aspired.[18] That said, both cookbooks also include Passover recipes that are explicitly Jewish. Thus, in the recipes themselves are visible the tensions inherent in

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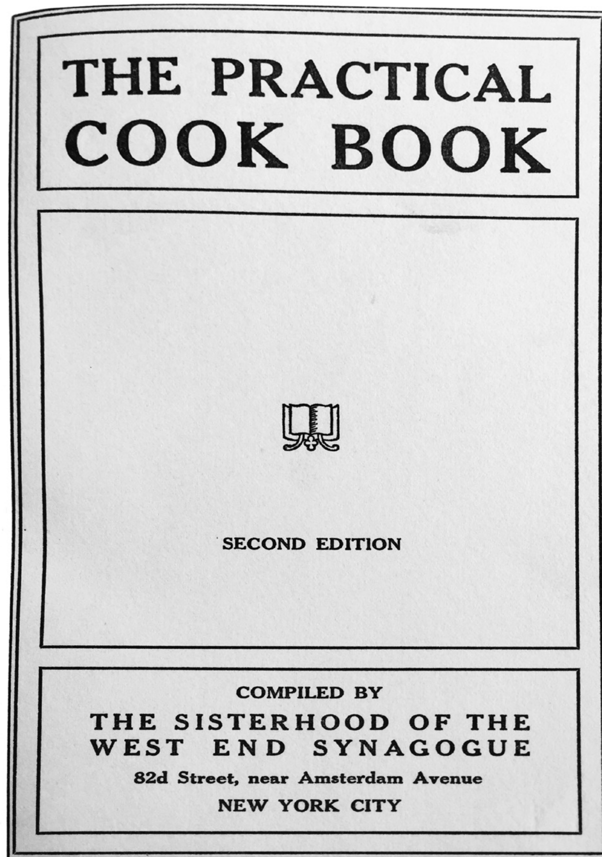
[13] Paula Hyman, "Gender and the Shaping of Modern Jewish Identities," *Jewish Social Studies: History, Culture, and Society* 8 (February/March 2017): 155.
[14] Auxiliary Society of NY Orphan Asylum, *Auxiliary Cook-Book*.
[15] Sisterhood of the West End Synagogue, *Practical Cook Book*.
[16] Anne L. Bower, "Cooking Up Stories: Narrative Elements in Community Cookbooks," in *Recipes for Reading; Communities, Cookbooks, Stories, Histories*, ed. Anne L. Bower (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1997), 30-31.
[17] Auxiliary Society of NY Orphan Asylum, *Auxiliary Cook-Book*, 13-19, 25-27; Sisterhood of the West End Synagogue, *Practical Cook Book*, 16.
[18] Hasia Diner, *Hungering for America: Italian, Irish, and Jewish Foodways in the Age of Migration* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 180-81.

the process of assimilation.[19] American life was the goal, yet these women could, or perhaps would, not fully let go of centuries of religious tradition.



THE PRACTICAL COOK BOOK

SECOND EDITION

COMPILED BY
THE SISTERHOOD OF THE WEST END SYNAGOGUE
82d Street, near Amsterdam Avenue
NEW YORK CITY

Figure 1: **The Practical Cook Book** ***(1909) is one example of an early twentieth-century community cookbook that provides insight into Jewish-American womanhood through recipes and household advice. (Accessed at Dorot Jewish Division, New York Public Library. Courtesy of author.)***

Both cookbooks also hint at class status. Recipes for traditional German or Jewish foods reveal the authors' expectations of the readers' financial resources and culinary expertise. Lebkuchen, a common German dessert resembling gingerbread, is found in both *The Auxiliary Cook-Book* and *The Practical Cook Book*. Both recipes call for expensive ingredients: branded baking powder, large quantities of sugar, and several luxury spices.

[19] Auxiliary Society of NY Orphan Asylum, *Auxiliary Cook-Book*, 69-70; Sisterhood of the West End Synagogue, *Practical Cook Book*, 110-13.

The recipes' structures also imply a community of women, both readers and contributors, who knew how to cook. For example, instead of being featured at the beginning of each recipe's instructions, as in a modern cookbook, ingredients and quantities are included only as they arise: "Beat eight eggs very light with two small teacupfuls of sugar." This indicates the recipes were likely transmitted orally before being written down.[20] Similarly, although the recipes themselves are complex, they do not include many directions, revealing an expectation of the readers' basic cooking knowledge. Of course, for many middle-class women in this era, kitchen labor was likely performed by a hired cook supervised by the lady of the house. In some cases, the cookbooks' recipes may have been provided by the contributors' working-class domestics.

LEBKUCHEN

Four eggs, one large cup of granulated sugar; cream well together. One-half pound almonds cut fine, not blanched; one-half teaspoon each of cinnamon, cloves and allspice; vanilla to taste, one-half pound citron cut fine, one and one-half cup of flour, one-half teaspoon baking powder. Bake in a moderate oven. *A. G.*

Figure 2: **The Auxiliary Cook-Book*****'s recipe for lebkuchen, which calls for expensive ingredients, including baking powder, cinnamon, cloves, and allspice, is just one example of the expectations the book's Germanic-Jewish authors had about their readers' financial means. (Accessed at Dorot Jewish Division, New York Public Library. Courtesy of author.)***

Beyond recipes, both cookbooks also include advice about proper womanhood, particularly in an American context.[21] *The Auxiliary Cook-Book* contains several long sections with no recipes at all, instead discussing at length the authors' ideas about femininity. They include Robert G. Ingersoll's essay, "Woman," which praises the innate domestic abilities of a matriarch elevating her as "the redeeming glory of humanity, the sanctuary of all the virtues, pledge of all perfect qualities of heart and head."[22]

This language is secular, yet it echoes "Eshet Hayil," a Jewish poem drawn from Proverbs 31 that speaks to the virtues of women.[23] The choice

[20] Auxiliary Society of NY Orphan Asylum, *Auxiliary Cook-Book*, 88; Sisterhood of the West End Synagogue, *Practical Cook Book*, 85.
[21] Auxiliary Society of NY Orphan Asylum, *Auxiliary Cook-Book*, 109-42; Sisterhood of the West End Synagogue, *Practical Cook Book*, 114-19.
[22] Auxiliary Society of NY Orphan Asylum, *Auxiliary Cook-Book*, 123
[23] Wendy Zierler, "How to Read Eshet Hayil," *My Jewish Learning*, 2020, https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/how-to-read-eshet-hayil/.

to place women on a pedestal in a way that ties them to the broader American cultural expectations of moral femininity, rather than to Judaism, fits fully into the cultural agenda of the cookbook.

Moreover, the epigraphs included under each section title of *The Practical Cook Book* connect to broader American culture. With the exception of the Passover chapter, introduced with a line from Exodus, all other quotes featured in the cookbook are of Anglo-American origins. Shakespeare kicks off canapes and appetizers: "A good digestion to you all, and once more I shower a welcome on you, welcome all." Frozen dainties' inscription is drawn from Oliver Wendell Holmes: "I always thought cold victuals nice, / My choice would be vanilla ice."[24] Here, then, in the midst of a Jewish-American cookbook is a primer on American culture. The juxtaposition of Jewish content for the Passover recipes with Anglo-American content for the rest reveals the complexities involved in adopting American cultural norms. As Jewish people assimilated, they did so primarily in daily life, while still preserving ritual observance. The cookbooks' creators positioned themselves as aspirational role models, having achieved this balance and now sharing best practices with their readers.

Downtown Daughters: Attempts to Mold Jewish-American Domesticity

As assimilated, middle-class Germanic-Jewish women used their homes to create American-Jewish identities, they also expanded their roles in the public sphere beyond simply raising funds for philanthropic organizations. Having been instructed by rabbis and other prominent Jewish men that "women were by nature moral arbiters and the source of religiosity—initially in the home and ultimately in civic society," these women found a variety of culturally acceptable, hands-on, public ways to broaden their domestic reach, including through temple sisterhoods and settlement houses.[25] Temple sisterhoods developed within Reform congregations as a way for Jewish women to engage in philanthropy and influence their families' and congregations' religious lives. Although in the public sphere, the sisterhoods' emphasis on educating children fell safely within the bounds of domesticity.[26] Outside the home and congregation, well-to-do Jewish women also helped found settlement houses, where they organized

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[24] Sisterhood of the West End Synagogue, *Practical Cook Book*, 1, 59.

[25] Paula Hyman, "Feminist Studies and Modern Jewish History," *Feminist Perspectives on Jewish Studies*, ed. Lynn Davidman and Shelly Tenenbaum (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1994), 124.

[26] Pamela S. Nadell and Rita J. Simon, "Ladies of the Sisterhood: Women in the American Reform Synagogue 1900-1930," in *Active Voices: Women in Jewish Culture*, ed. Maurie Sacks (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 66-67.

"recreation, education, and medical and social service programs, primarily for immigrants."[27] These activities tended to focus on women and children, an unthreatening public extension of the philanthropists' domestic sphere of influence.

THE PRACTICAL COOK BOOK

CANAPES AND APPETIZERS

"A good digestion to you all, and once more
I shower a welcome on you, welcome all."
—SHAKESPEARE.

To Serve Grape-fruit in a New Way.—Take half a grape-fruit; remove the seeds and fill center with white currant Bar Le Duc jelly (I use Raffetto's jelly, as I like it better than any other). *Mrs. D. Davis*

Canape Lorenza.—For eight people take a pint or a pound of crab-flakes, mix in a cup of milk, some salt, pepper, paprika, and a tablespoonful of flour. Pour this and the crab-flakes together and cook until creamy. Cut round pieces of bread (from a slice as large as you can make) and toast. Spread mixture on very thickly and sprinkle with lots of grated cream-cheese. Butter a baking-pan and place all of the toast in this and bake until the cheese is brown and the whole thing is firm. These canapes can be made and left a few hours; all but the baking, and at the last moment baked and served hot. *Mrs. P. M.*

Figure 3: Epigraphs such as this quote from Shakespeare connected readers of the Jewish-American **Practical Cook Book** ***to Anglo-American culture. (Accessed at Dorot Jewish Division, New York Public Library. Courtesy of author.)***

As a key focus of this more hands-on work, philanthropically minded women promoted Americanization of immigrant women through the kitchen even more so than in cookbooks aimed at their own peer group. In this instance, they boldly attempted to reform immigrant Jews'

[27] Sarah Henry Lederman, "Settlement Houses in the United States," *Jewish Women's Archive*, 2017, https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/settlement-houses-in-united-states.

diets, and, by extension, immigrant Jewish women themselves. They encouraged the creation of and aspiration to "a uniquely American home, clean, healthy and well nourished."[28] Of course, these philanthropists, who expanded their own power by attempting to modify other people, were those with discretionary funds and leisure time. Moreover, among Jewish women in America, they occupied the position closest to the white Protestant end-goal of assimilation. By seeking to mold others, they continued their efforts to prove their own claims to American womanhood. Particularly through their work in settlement homes, this group of women transformed the Jewish-American kitchen from a set of norms shared within a class group to one promoted, and in many cases imposed, across class and ethnic lines. This action would set the stage for Jewish women's expressions of gender for years to come.

The story of the settlement houses is not just that of wealthy women. It must center on the immigrants themselves. Second-wave Jewish immigration in the first part of the twentieth century was a family migration. More Jewish women immigrated than any other European group at the time.[29] As a consequence of their more recent arrival and their families' lower economic position, these Eastern-European Jewish women experienced life in the United States differently than the first-wave German-Jewish immigrants. They had to work at least until marriage, frequently in sweatshops. They lived in ethnic enclaves such as the Lower East Side in New York City, Hastings Street in Detroit, and the North End in Boston that existed as a point of tension between "Old-World" tradition and American innovation. Their behavior and gender norms in the United States were rooted in the Jewish communities of Eastern Europe. In the "old country," Jewish men aspired to be scholars. As a result, as in Central Europe, Jewish women were excluded from formal religious roles and training. However, due to the pitiful income derived from scholarship, women played vital economic roles in supporting their families. Unlike their non-Jewish counterparts, these women were active in the public sphere of the market and achieved a comparatively high level of autonomy in the secular world.[30] When they then immigrated to the United States, Eastern-European women already had expectations of freedom that life in the New World only would serve to strengthen.

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[28] Marcella White Campbell, "Domestic Religion: Food, Class and Choice in the Memoirs of Jewish American Women Writers" (master's thesis, San Francisco State University, 2004), 26-28.
[29] Paula Hyman, "Gender and the Immigrant Experience in the United States," in *Jewish Women in Historical Perspective*, ed. Judith Reesa Baskin (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1991), 222.
[30] Ibid., 223-24.

Few of the Eastern-European families had much money upon arrival. As a result, all members of the family were expected to work, including young women. Wage labor, primarily in factories, gave these second-wave Jewish women new levels of independence that encouraged their embrace of new social movements, such as the use of birth control.[31] Furthermore, while arranged marriages were the norm in European Jewish communities, the new freedoms of the United States provided young Jewish women the opportunity to choose their partners and marry for love.[32] These matches tended to be made during the many leisure activities and unchaperoned instances of mixed-gender socializing that were also a new part of life for Jewish young people in the United States.[33] Thus, this immigrant generation created new norms of behavior, particularly for women, that combined "old country" expectations with the liberties of their new home.

Growth in Jewish women's autonomy in the United States led to great anxiety among Jewish people, both Germanic and Eastern European. They expressed their broader fears about assimilation and difference through a series of negative stereotypes and judgments about immigrant Jewish women. In the first decades of the twentieth century, as Eastern-European Jewish people struggled to adapt and as the more established German Jews worried about losing the benefits of their position in broader society, the "Ghetto-Girl" stereotype emerged. A caricature of young, unmarried Jewish women and their desires, the Ghetto Girl was condemned for "excessive and undeserved wants," epitomizing "the meeting ground of anxieties about Americanization, class status and gender."[34] Through her attempts to fit in and adapt to American norms, the Ghetto Girl went outside the bounds of acceptable, repressed, white Christian-based femininity and thus threatened the very notions of class and behavior underlying American society. Seeking to combat this stereotype and maintain their own tenuous position in society, middle-class and wealthy settlement-house workers focused on Jewish girls, urging their assimilation through domestic activities, such as cooking classes.

With recipes and tips designed to help recent immigrants assimilate to America, *The Settlement Cook Book* demonstrates these goals clearly. Originally published in 1901 and still in print today, *The Settlement Cook Book* was compiled by a number of mostly Jewish women involved in the Settlement House in Milwaukee. The goals were twofold: the compilers

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[31] Ibid., 228.
[32] Riv-Ellen Prell, *Fighting to Become Americans: Jews, Gender and the Anxiety of Assimilation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2000), 59.
[33] Paula Hyman, *Gender and Assimilation in Modern Jewish History* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1995), 100-101.
[34] Prell, *Fighting to Become Americans*, 43.

wanted to raise money for the institution and to have a collection of recipes to distribute to young women enrolled in its cooking classes.[35] Although the recipes were designed to appeal to a wide audience, the cookbook clearly instructs its readers on how to become proper American women, an approach most impactful on recently immigrated women, whether wives with families or (more likely) unmarried daughters. As with the other cookbooks under study here, *The Settlement Cook Book*'s authors were relatively assimilated Germanic-Jewish women. In this text—even more than in the books examined above—they present themselves as experts informing the unaware, rather than members of a group sharing advice.

The Settlement Cook Book's first chapter, "Household Rules," includes basic instruction in housekeeping, such as setting a table, washing dishes, cleaning a room, and laying a fire—in addition to domestic-scientific information, such as making level measurements and understanding the relative nutritional values of food and how it is digested.[36] The rest of the book is devoted to hundreds of recipes and a section of advertisements, mostly for dry goods. Notably, unlike in *The Auxiliary Cook-Book* and *The Practical Cook Book*, there are no articles extolling the virtues of women. These assumed readers are not paragons of Jewish-American womanhood. Rather, they are threats to the status quo that must be controlled, redirected, and reshaped before the entirety of the American-Jewish community loses its foothold in the New World.

Despite those high stakes, *The Settlement Cook Book* has no formal link to Judaism through name or organization. Its recipes are not Kosher. There are sections explicitly devoted to shellfish and pork.[37] And yet, Jewish cultural practices remain. The meat section includes a paragraph on how to Kosher meat. Although there is no separate Passover section (as in the previous cookbooks), the index does list all the Passover recipes scattered throughout. Additionally, the soup section distinguishes between meat- and milk-based versions of borscht: "Beet Soup Russian Style (Fleischik)" and "Beet Soup Russian Style (Milchik)." The 1920 edition of *The Settlement Cook Book* also contains recipes for staples in Jewish cuisine: "Beef à la Mode or Sauerbraten," lebkuchen, and filled fish (the English approximation of gefilte fish).[38]

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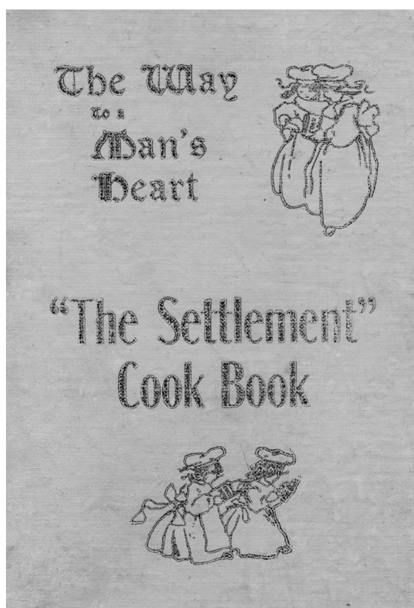
[35] Judith Friedlander, "Jewish Cooking in the American Melting-Pot," *Revue française d'études américaines* 27-28 (February 1986): 90.
[36] Mrs. Simon Kander, *The Way to a Man's Heart: "The Settlement" Cook Book* (Milwaukee: The Settlement, 1901), 3-16.
[37] Ibid., 109-12, 125-27.
[38] Fleischik is the Yiddish descriptor for dishes containing meat, and milchik is the Yiddish descriptor for dishes containing milk. These descriptors would have been familiar signifiers to Yiddish-speaking readers of the cookbook. Ibid., xxiv-xxv, 79, 114.

A closer look at these particular recipes speaks to the presence of two different intended audiences: recent, working-class immigrants and middle-class assimilated families. All of the recipes in the book list ingredients and quantities above the instructions and provide thorough directions. This format implies that the reader, in this case specifically the working-class immigrant reader, needs additional guidance and instruction in basic cooking skills. At the same time, there are two versions of recipes for lebkuchen and filled fish: one requires only simple ingredients and equipment; the other is more complex.[39] The more complex version, along with the original sub-title of the book: "The Way to a Man's Heart," gestures to *The Settlement Cook Book*'s other audience: middle-class Jewish women well on their way to assimilating and more experienced in the skills required of American femininity and domesticity. For these women, cooking was more a tool to utilize in the process of acquiring the social status of marriage so prized in the community cookbooks.



Figures 4 and 5: **The Settlement Cook Book*****, compiled by Lizzie Black Kander, used recipes to promote the Americanization of newly immigrated women and to support more established readers in attracting husbands through their stomachs. (Figure 4, Mrs. Simon Kander, comp.,*** **The Way to a Man's Heart: "The Settlement" Cook Book*****, 4th ed. [Milwaukee: The Settlement, 1910], cover. Figure 5, Mrs. Simon Kander, comp.,*** **The Way to a Man's Heart: The Settlement Cook Book*****, 27th ed. [Milwaukee: The Settlement Cook Book Company, 1945], ii. JHSM collections.)***

[39] Mrs. Simon Kander, *The Way to a Man's Heart: The Settlement Cook Book*, 10th ed. (Milwaukee: The Settlement Cook Book Company, 1920), 115, 140, 434.

As with *The Auxiliary Cook-Book* and *The Practical Cook Book*, *The Settlement Cook Book* asserts that women must know how to perform proper American domesticity while not requiring that they keep Kosher. At the same time, like the other cookbooks considered in this article, it also acknowledges that the readers would not entirely abandon Jewish religious and cultural practices. This tension—the inclusion of Jewish content in spite of the lack of explicit Jewish ownership—demonstrates the complexities of constructing Jewish-American identity. The difference between these two sets of cookbooks of course is their scope. *The Practical Cook Book* and *The Auxiliary Cook-Book* were intended only for intra-class cultural transmission among a small group of middle-class women. But *The Settlement Cook Book* expands this sphere of influence by seeking to promote and prove the worth of assimilation among all Jewish people, particularly new immigrants.

Ultimately, the efforts of middle-class Germanic women in the first three decades of the twentieth century centered on creating a version of Jewish-American womanhood grounded in assimilation. The English-language cookbooks written during this period of immigration and anxiety about the Jewish place in America were a roadmap for women to follow as they carried the burdens of acculturation, seeking to mold themselves, their families, and their co-religionists into proper Americans. In particular, middle-class Germanic women dominated this discourse. Initially they shared assimilatory aspirations within their group. However, once they had achieved status as Americans, they utilized settlement houses, and cooking classes in particular, to expand their social capital and push their values onto newly immigrated Eastern-European women who did not fit neatly into the bounds of middle-class American norms. Fears of a backslide into immigrant "other-ness" motivated these women to create collections of non-Kosher recipes alongside references to middle-class morality. However, each of these cookbooks also included specifically Jewish recipes and instructions, evidence of their authors' ultimate inability to leave behind their religious and cultural practices in the process of becoming American.

Despite their efforts, these generations of Jewish-American women would have been unable to control, or even predict, the ways that their granddaughters and great-granddaughters have sought to reclaim and celebrate those elements of "other-ness" their forebears sought to squash. Though cookbooks are less of a lens into the cultural projects of twenty-first-century women than the twentieth, blogs and Instagram accounts showcase ways that Jewish women today seek to emphasize their Jewish identities and distance themselves from mainstream Christian hegemony.

From the Kosher recipes that food blogger Chanie Apfelbaum shares to the weekly Shabbat reminder Samantha Frank and Rena Singer post on their Modern Ritual Instagram account, there is ample evidence that the project of assimilation started by Jewish women in the first part of the twentieth century only went so far.[40]

[40] For examples, see: Chanie Apfelbaum (@busyinbrooklyn), 2020, "Happy Tu B'shvat! FIG NEWTON HAMANTASCHEN look like the perfect way to celebrate! (Recipe on the blog) #tubshvat #fruit #newyear #trees #חגהאילנות #hamantaschen #fignewton #pastry #cookies," Instagram photo, February 10, 2020, https://www.instagram.com/p/B8ZAHj8HVJa/. Samantha Frank and Rena Singer (@ modernritual), 2019, "WE ♥ CHALLAH + SHABBAT ✡ ....Shabbat tastes like Challah. There is something so gorgeous about tasting and smelling this delicious bread week after week throughout our lives..........This Shabbat we feel so grateful for all of the small delights in our life..........What are the small delights in your life this Shabbat?......Thank you to @paintedinpeonies from @loveintheory for this picture!#challah #jewishfood #bread #carbohydrates #challahbread #shabbat #shabbatshalom #spirituality #prayer #judaism #jewish #spiritualjunkie #gratitude #gratitudequotes #rest #familytime #unplug #ritual #modernritua," Instagram photo, November 22, 2019, https://www.instagram.com/p/B5MIOLvlocp/.

FEATURE ARTICLE

The Industrial Removal Office in Detroit, 1902-1922

Robert A. Rockaway

Sometime before 1907 Eastern-European Jewish immigrant Louis Friedman arrived in New York. Despite anticipating an easier life in Gotham, he endured months of unemployment and uncertainty about his future. Desperate to leave, in April 1907 Friedman applied for help to the Industrial Removal Office (IRO)—a national Jewish resettlement organization based in New York and dedicated to helping transfer migrants like Friedman. Soon, the IRO granted Friedman's wish, moving him and his family to Detroit.

Life in Michigan proved much rosier. In April 1907 Friedman wrote this effusive letter to express his thanks for being sent west:

> Worthy Sirs of the Removal Office!
>
> I thank you many times for all the good you do with people and have done with me, by sending me and my three Children to Detroit. I thank you for your noble deed which gave me the opportunity to tear ourselves away from oppressive New York. In Detroit, where you sent us, we can breathe more freely and make a respectable living. I can inform you that as soon as we arrived and showed your letter to Miss [Birdie] Pick [director of Detroit's IRO office], she straightway provided us with accommodations, food and drink, and lodgings for eight whole days, and secured work for everyone at his trade. In New York, I, a man with no trade, walked around for three months and could not find work. Now, when I came to Detroit, Miss Pick also found me a job, and I earn three dollars a week. And it is a steady position . . . And each of the children works at his trade and earns good money. I have rented three nice rooms for six dollars a month and have bought a few pieces of furniture, and so far I and the children are managing quite well . . . Blessed is Detroit, where if only one wants to work, there is no shortage of work. And there the working class does not live in foul, airless rooms as in New York because the rent is cheaper here. Detroit is to be marveled at for her freedom and for her clean air, which is like that found in a park full of beautiful trees.[1]

Robert A. Rockaway was born and raised in Detroit, Michigan. He received his PhD in history from the University of Michigan in 1970. Since 1971 he has been a member of the Department of Jewish History at Tel Aviv University, where he is professor emeritus.

Friedman's letter, like so many others written to the IRO expressing gratitude or grievances, offers an intimate and personal portrayal of the circumstances many Eastern-European Jewish immigrants experienced in the United States. The surviving letters, now located in the IRO archives at New York's American Jewish Historical Society, are a goldmine. Mostly written in Yiddish and then translated into English by IRO employees, they are more authentic and significant than the versions appearing in print, notably in the *Jewish Daily Forward*'s Yiddish advice column, "Bintel Brief." Unlike the originals (which include the writers' signatures and addresses), the *Forward* versions were printed anonymously. This has led historians to conjecture, wrongly, that many of the *Forward*'s letters were written and answered by its editor, Abraham Cahan.

Now that the letters' authenticity is certain, we can extract from them a first-hand look at the process of second uprootings. The trauma of moving from Europe to the United States (and to New York in particular) has been well documented. The shock of migrating a second time has been examined less thoroughly. Through the letters, we can sense the immigrants' apprehension, anguish, melancholy, and terror. We can also understand the vital role that organizations like the IRO played in helping alleviate or exacerbate those feelings. While some immigrants like Louis Friedman were tremendously grateful to the IRO, others wrote of negative experiences. The letters also provide insight into the tensions between the removals and New York's IRO managers. Goodwill notwithstanding, the immigrants and New York office personnel came from two different cultures. The office personnel were Americanized and spoke and wrote in English. Most of the immigrants did not, which sometimes led to misunderstandings.

In addition to numerous articles, Rockaway has authored four monographs: *The Jews of Detroit, From the Beginning, 1760-1914* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1986), *The Jews Cannot Defeat Me: The Anti-Jewish Campaign of Louis FarraKahn and the Nation of Islam* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 1995), *Words of the Uprooted: Jewish Immigrants in Early 20th Century America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998), and *But He Was Good to His Mother: The Lives and Crimes of Jewish Gangsters* (Jerusalem and New York: Gefen Publishing House, 2000). He has appeared on radio and television in Israel and the United States. He appeared on the Arts and Entertainment series, *American Justice* ("The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Mobster"), and on *American Biography* ("Louis Lepke" and "Mickey Cohen"). A number of his writings are being made into feature films. Rockaway wishes to thank Catherine Cangany, PhD, and Tracy Weissman, JD, for their excellent editing and valuable suggestions and comments that aided him in revising and strengthening this article.

[1] Louis Friedman to IRO, April 5, 1907, Michigan file, Detroit, Industrial Removal Office Records, American Jewish Historical Society, New York City (hereafter cited as IRO records).

Additionally, the goals and requirements of the New York office did not always match those of local agents, often leading to a strenuous relationship that impacted immigrants.

The letters in this article provide examples of the various emotions that immigrants experienced after arriving in Detroit. As this article makes clear, some immigrants were thankful to be in the city and did well. Others felt betrayed at being sent to Detroit and blamed the IRO for the misfortunes they experienced.

IRO's Creation and Detroit Connections

Six years before Louis Friedman's gushing missive, German-American Jewish leaders and philanthropists created (and staffed) the IRO. They were spurred by a variety of motives. Persecution, violence, and economic discrimination toward Jews in Tsarist Russia and Romania, and grinding poverty in Galicia (the borderlands between modern-day Poland and Ukraine), led hundreds of thousands of Jews to come to the United States after 1881. Most landed at New York's harbor. By 1900 New York contained five hundred thousand Jews. The Jewish district on the Lower East Side alone equaled the entire population of Detroit.[2]

The flood of newcomers thronged the city's Lower East Side, generating enormous problems for both the immigrants and the city's Jewish establishment. Packed together in the Jewish quarter, the newcomers endured filth, poor sanitation, disease, and soaring rates of unemployment, delinquency, and crime.[3] The IRO was established precisely to relocate unemployed Eastern-European Jews, removing them from New York and settling them in American towns and cities where Jewish communities and jobs existed. From its inception until its liquidation in 1922, the IRO dispatched 75,000 Jews to over one thousand American towns and cities.[4]

The IRO advertised itself as "the Society which settles unemployed Jews of New York in other cities in the country."[5] It publicized its functions in a number of ways, the most successful being through notices

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[2] Ira Rosenwaike, *Population History of New York City* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1972), 111. In 1900 Detroit contained 285,704 people (Robert A. Rockaway, *The Jews of Detroit: From the Beginning, 1762-1914* [Detroit: Wayne State University, 1986], 54). Naomi W. Cohen, *Encounter With Emancipation: The German Jews in the United States, 1830-1914* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1984), 305; Fred M. Butzel, "Autobiography," *Detroit Jewish News*, March 15, 1974, 8.

[3] Robert A. Rockaway, *Words of the Uprooted: Jewish Immigrants in Early 20th Century America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998), 13.

[4] Jack Glazier, *Dispersing the Ghetto: The Relocation of Jewish Immigrants Across America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998), 20.

[5] Rockaway, *Words of the Uprooted*, 15.

in New York's Yiddish press and in settlement houses. Unemployed immigrants who knew about the IRO applied at the main office. With the help of an investigator (usually a trained communal worker employed by the IRO), each male applicant filled out a questionnaire, which asked for the individual's name, address, occupation in the United States, occupation abroad, length of time in the United States, last employer, and any history of having received aid from a New York charity. If married, the applicant's wife had to sign a consent form allowing her husband to be sent out of town. She also had to promise that she would not become a charge upon any institution during her husband's absence. If the investigator felt that the applicant satisfied the IRO's criteria and that his family would not become public burdens, he was placed on a list of prospective removals. Although officially established in 1901, the IRO got its real start a year later at a meeting of the National Conference of Jewish Charities, held in Detroit.

Although the conference's location may seem surprising, it was a calculated decision. Because of its viable Jewish community and the opportunities presented by the city's burgeoning automobile industry, Detroit became one of the IRO's prime destinations.[6] When Jewish immigrants began to be relocated to the Motor City, Detroit's Jewish population numbered about 12,000 persons. At the time Louis Friedman wrote his 1907 letter, it had swelled to 25,000 out of a general population of 450,000 (about 5.5 percent). By 1914 it stood at 34,000. The Jewish community supported fifteen synagogues, two religious schools, and numerous social, cultural, and charitable organizations.

One of the conference's purposes was to pitch the idea of the IRO before the larger American Jewish community. Participants were moved to tears as speaker after speaker described the horrors of the immigrant quarter in New York City. Fred M. Butzel, a prominent Detroit Jewish philanthropist and communal and civic leader, later recalled New York businessman Cyrus Sulzburger breaking down mid-speech, overcome by his own recounting of New York's teeming slums. Leo Levi, president of the B'nai B'rith, the national Jewish fraternal organization, called New York's Jewish quarter "a worse hell than was ever invented by the imagination of the most vindictive Jew-hater of Europe." By redistributing Jewish immigrants to other locations, the IRO's founders hoped to alleviate these problems and also ease the immense burden placed upon New York's Jewish charities. But there were other motivations at work.[7]

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[6] Ibid., 165.

[7] Two studies of the IRO and its operations are Glazier, *Dispersing the Ghetto*, and Rockaway, *Words of the Uprooted*.

American Jews believed that New York's huge Eastern-European Jewish enclave offered a prime breeding ground for worrisome radical movements, such as socialism and anarchism. Detaching immigrants from this environment and shipping them to smaller Jewish communities in the Midwest, South, and West, the IRO's supporters argued, would help speed their Americanization, modify their foreign life-style, and diminish their chances of becoming radicalized. This, the IRO leaders hoped, would mitigate American anti-immigrant and anti-Semitic sentiments and thwart efforts to restrict immigration. David Bressler, a young German-born attorney and general manager of the IRO, acknowledged these terrifying challenges, positioning the IRO as the solution:

> [T]he problem of the New York immigrant Jew is a national problem. The rumor of ghetto vice, spreading through the United States and Europe, affects disastrously the whole of Jewry. White slavery [prostitution], gangsters, gunmen-terms figuring in reports from New York are prejudicial and largely eliminateable. The totality is decreased with the decrease of congestion and poverty.[8]

Americanized German-Jewish leaders' concerns about anti-Semitism cannot be minimized. They knew about the rise of racial anti-Semitism and anti-Semitic political parties in Germany and Austria. They saw that even liberal France, the first European country to grant Jews civic and political equality, was not immune to anti-Semitism, as demonstrated by the Alfred Dreyfus trial. And they were very aware of the ongoing violence, pogroms, and economic restrictions perpetrated against Jews in Russia and Romania.

The IRO's leaders were also distressed at the widespread social discrimination against Jews in the United States. They feared that the Old-World mannerisms and socialist leanings of the Yiddish-speaking Eastern-European Jews would reflect on them and jeopardize their hard-won status in America. They supposed that Americans would equate the Americanized German Jews, "the better class of Jews," with the Eastern Europeans, the "vulgar Jews." If this happened, they feared, everything they had worked for would be destroyed.

As a solution to these problems and to alleviate their anxiety, the Detroit conference leaders proposed that unemployed Eastern-European Jewish immigrants in New York be dispersed through a central office to be managed by Bressler. In order to secure the active cooperation of as

[8] "Removal Work and the Industrial Removal Office," undated written speech, David Bressler file, IRO records.

many cities as possible, the IRO subsidized their operations, giving each community an allowance for every family or individual received.

During the first few years of the IRO's operation, local Jewish communities set up committees, usually organized by B'nai B'rith lodges, to receive and care for male relocated immigrants. The local committees kept the New York office informed about the availability of jobs and committed themselves to accepting a monthly quota of arrivals. Although a seemingly sensible arrangement, in many communities, the committee system proved unsatisfactory. This prompted the IRO to replace committees with paid agents. Depending on the workload, male agents received a salary ranging from $40 to $75 per month. Female agents sometimes started at $25 per month. All the IRO's activities were subsidized by the Jewish Colonization Association and the Baron de Hirsch Fund.[9]

Women Leaders at Detroit's IRO

After the National Conference of Jewish Charities ended, Detroit's Pisgah lodge of the B'nai B'rith initially undertook local administrative responsibilities. Later, Detroit's United Jewish Charities (UJC) took over, arranging for Detroit's committee to receive and care for a fixed number of men sent by the IRO each month. This procedure continued until 1904. That year, Bressler made a personal appeal to Detroit to do more. The UJC complied, hiring social-worker Birdie Pick (mentioned in Louis Friedman's 1907 letter) to run the office, a post she held for three years. In 1907 Miriam Hart, another young social worker, succeeded her. From time to time, Blanche Hart (no relation to Miriam), the first female superintendent of the UJC and a founder of what became Tamarack Camps, as well as other UJC officers, helped out as the need arose.[10]

The IRO expected local agents like Pick and Hart to locate jobs and arrange lodging, board, transportation, and other necessities of daily living for the men dispersed to Detroit. Detroit's office was especially competent in this regard, seeing to most of the arrangements before the immigrants even arrived. This businesslike approach led Bressler to marvel to Miriam Hart, "It gives me much pleasure to tell you how well satisfied we have been with the work of our very efficient Detroit agent."[11]

[9] The Jewish Colonization Association and Baron de Hirsch Fund had been established in 1891 by the German-Jewish financier and philanthropist Baron Maurice de Hirsch (1831-1896), to settle Eastern-European Jews on farming colonies in North and South America, and to provide a wide variety of aid to Eastern-European Jews in the United States. See Samuel Joseph, *History of the Baron de Hirsch Fund* (New York: Jewish Publication Society, 1935). For the system of payments, see Rockaway, *Words of the Uprooted*, 20-21.

[10] Rockaway, *Jews of Detroit*, 113.

[11] David Bressler to Miriam Hart, December 23, 1912, Michigan file, Detroit, IRO records.

And yet, despite generally cordial relations, tensions ran through the correspondence between Detroit agents and New York. This mostly concerned differing perceptions of Detroit's capability to absorb removals. Detroit's agents felt the local office did more than its share; New York disagreed. In 1914 Fred Butzel and Bressler quarreled over Miriam Hart's salary. Bressler felt that the decline in the number of removals being accepted by Detroit did not justify her wages. He wanted to reduce them accordingly. Butzel objected, threatening to shut down the office. In the end, the two men came to an understanding and the Detroit office continued to operate.[12]

From its 1902 start in Detroit to 1914, the IRO sent approximately four thousand men to Detroit. By 1914 Detroit had become one of the more popular choices for unemployed immigrants wanting to leave New York. According to Bressler, it was due as much to the local directors' efforts as to any of the city's charms: "This popularity which Detroit enjoys among those in New York who have seen the light, is due entirely to Detroit's fair name, fame and merit, added to which the benign influence and humane service of the two H's Miriam [Hart] and Blanche [Hart], make the combination irresistible."[13]

Detroit's agents periodically canvassed the city's economy and job market and reported their findings to the IRO. The city surveys sent to the IRO presented a detailed picture of economic conditions in the city. For example, the 1912 report, compiled by Miriam Hart, included information about the general and Jewish communities; the number of educational facilities, libraries, and colleges; whether the immigrants received any instruction in English; the number of Jewish congregations, fraternal, social, and benevolent organizations; and the nationality and occupations of the Jews who lived in the city. It also listed the cost of living, industrial and business conditions, wages of various occupations, and occupations in most demand. Hart ended her comprehensive survey by concluding, "In general the Jewish population seems to thrive."[14]

Upon receipt of the survey details, the New York office forwarded the applications of men with pertinent occupations and awaited Miriam Hart's approval for the immigrants to be sent. The New York

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[12] David Bressler to Fred Butzel, April 20, 1914, Michigan file, Detroit, IRO records; Fred Butzel to David Bressler, April 23, 1914, ibid.; David Bressler to Fred Butzel, April 25, 1914, ibid.

[13] David Bressler to Blanche Hart, January 13, 1913, ibid. From 1902 to 1914, the IRO sent 4,875 removals to Michigan, ranging from 75 in 1902 to 1,175 in 1913. The IRO directed over 80 percent of them to Detroit. The annual reports of the IRO list the number of men sent to every state.

[14] Detroit Survey, January 20, 1912, Michigan file, Detroit, IRO records.

office's endorsements of particular applicants reveal a surprising degree of familiarity with them, their skillsets, and their backgrounds:

> Ignatz Binstock, wood worker and machine operator. Binstock does not yet speak English, having been in the country but three months, but brings splendid references showing that he was a good worker in Austria. And if you can find him work in one of the factories of your city, he will undoubtedly make fine progress. He is 25 years old and unmarried.

Another entry reads, "Morris Wold, tinsmith (special at automobile lamps), is a first class workman and in good health," while "Meyer Burde, machinist (lathe hand), about 12 years at his trade, [is] a very worthy case, and in good health. May we have your permission to send them to Detroit?"[15]

Sometimes Bressler's requests took a more personal approach:

> I wish you would give special consideration to the enclosed application. The applicant is down as a laborer, and it is a fact that he has worked as such, as a perusal of the record will show. He did reasonably well until three or four months ago, since when he has been unsuccessful in getting employment, despite the fact that he has not been choicy by any means. He himself suggested Detroit, and when I asked him why, he said that he is quite sure that he could get employment in one of the automobile factories as [a] general, all round laborer. I imagine that he would have no difficulty in holding such a job, because the Interborough Railroad employed him for almost three years . . . and this concern is by no means a light task master. He left because of an accident to him. His family consisting of [a] wife and three children are unusually nice. They all speak English very well, and I would appreciate it if you could see your way clear to permit us to send this family to you.[16]

In some instances, Detroit companies, learning of the IRO, sent requests for help directly to the New York office. Mr. J. Schwartz of the Progressive Couch Company needed a "first class couch maker, one who thoroughly understands putting leather tufted pads and can make nice side ruffles." Harry B. Clark asked for "a nice young mens costum tailor,"

[15] IRO to Miriam Hart, March 31, 1911, ibid.; IRO to Miriam Hart, January 18, 1912, ibid.

[16] David Bressler to Miriam Hart, June 12, 1912, ibid.

reassuring the office that the candidate could "be one who is not able to speack anglish." Both employers promised steady work to the men hired. In most cases, the IRO referred the employers to the local agents.[17]

Detroit Removals' Lives and Demographics

Wherever they went, many "removals," as they were called, wrote letters to the IRO. Their motives varied. Most wrote to request that family, friends, or belongings be forwarded to them. Some, such as Louis Friedman, with whom this article began, wrote to express gratitude to the IRO and the local agent. Others wrote to describe their successes or failures and to express their hopes, dreams, and disappointments. And some wrote to complain about the treatment they received at the hand of the local IRO agent or about conditions in the place where they were sent. Since they were not written for publication in the Yiddish press, as some historians have contended, the letters include the writers' names, addresses, and other identifying details. Most were written in Yiddish and were translated into English at the IRO office. Together, the surviving letters present an intimate and authentic portrait of the writers' thoughts, feelings, and experiences at a particular moment in time.

Although many letter-writers, like Louis Friedman, marveled at the efficiency of the Detroit office, their praise masked the agents' many headaches in discharging their tasks. Periodic economic recessions in the automobile industry played havoc with Detroit's employment quotas, leaving agents frustrated and helpless. "I have daily from fifty to seventy-five applicants for work and cannot place any," complained Miriam Hart in 1914. "Last Tuesday afternoon I personally visited eleven factories, on Wednesday twelve, and on Thursday nine, and was not able to place one man." Even when times were good, discrimination against Jews in factories sometimes prevented IRO men from being placed.[18]

There were other challenges. Although the men sent from New York received small stipends from the IRO, many of them arrived in Detroit without money. This strained the local office's resources and prompted calls for more funds. Some men arrived ill. In 1912 Miriam Hart reported, "Jacob Silverstein was sent to us on July 30. Undoubtedly the man had tuberculoses before being sent here. As his family is in New York and he is unable to work, may we send him at your expense, back to your city?" There were also problems discovered only after the removals had arrived. In 1912 Hart alerted David Bressler, "Upon investigation

[17] J. Schwartz to IRO, March 17, 1912, ibid.; IRO to J. Schwartz, March 19, 1912, ibid.; Harry B. Clark to IRO, March 13, 1910, ibid.; IRO to Harry B. Clark, March 17, 1910, ibid.

[18] Miriam Hart to David Bressler, January 20, 1914, ibid.

have found that Issy Hurstein, sent by your office to this city, Oct. 10th, while posing here as a single man, is deserting his wife in New York." There were men who simply refused to work. In 1906 Birdie Pick informed the New York office that "No. 14506 Abraham Azilan . . . possessed no trade and had worked in a lumber yard abroad. He was apparently a strong man. He refused five positions."[19]

What of the removals themselves? A random sample of 308 men sent by the IRO from New York to Detroit from 1903 to 1914 reveals that Russian immigrants comprised 85 percent of the total sent to Detroit. The majority had been in the United States fewer than six months. Sixty percent were somewhere from 21 to 30 years old; 22 percent from 31 to 40. More than half the men sent were married, many with their families still in Europe. Since Detroit requested that only men with trades be sent, it is not surprising that 75 percent of the men could be classified as skilled or semi-skilled.[20]

In addition to these records, Birdie Pick and Miriam Hart kept a card file on the removals received and sent the New York office regular updates on their progress. For example, a February 28, 1906, report concerned twelve men who had arrived in November and December of the previous year. Their occupations in Europe varied: seven had no trade, two worked in embroidery, one had previously worked as a tanner, one as a leather worker, and one as a tailor. Those without trades found employment in various settings: a restaurant, a clothing company, a stoneworks, a cap company, and a stove company. One man with no trade worked sporadically for four different employers before leaving the city.[21]

According to the local agents' reports, a number of Detroit removals left the city within a year. But most remained where they had been sent. In his presentation to the National Immigration Commission in 1910, IRO General Manager David Bressler reported that fewer than fifteen percent of those relocated departed from their new communities, and fewer than five percent returned to New York. Testifying before the Commission on Industrial Relations in 1914, he estimated that 88 percent remained in the communities where they had been sent. While Bressler's reports may have exaggerated the IRO's success, most removals stayed put, especially if they had decent jobs and places to live. Those who returned to New York did so primarily because of loneliness for family and friends, or because of an

[19] Miriam Hart to David Bressler, March 13, 1912, ibid.; Miriam Hart to David Bressler, November 21, 1912, ibid.; Birdie Pick to IRO, February 28, 1906, ibid.

[20] The sample was taken from the IRO ledger books located in the IRO records. The ledgers give the age, nationality, and marital status, and location of the families at the time of removal; and occupation, and length of time in the United States.

[21] February 1906 report to IRO, Michigan file, Detroit, IRO records.

absence of Jewish life in their new surroundings. Sometimes the urge to try their luck elsewhere prompted them to leave.[22]

Efficiency and goodwill by the IRO and Detroit branch notwithstanding, adjusting to their new community was no easier for removals than for other Jewish immigrants. The IRO never promised applicants that they would find particular jobs at certain salaries in particular communities. Many of the aspirants misinterpreted or misunderstood IRO policies and procedures. And when expectations remained unfulfilled, complaints and accusations abounded. One man charged the IRO with lying to him by promising to assume all responsibility for having his family admitted to the United States: "You are surely laboring under a misapprehension," Bressler replied. "We never made such promises to you, nor have we made it to anyone [sic] of our beneficiaries." Another removal, upset at being made to contribute seven dollars to his brother's transportation, accused the IRO of having "acted like a robber" in taking his money. Angered by what he considered humiliating investigatory procedures, Herman Marcus blamed the IRO for degrading him: "The charities was organized for the purpose of bettering the conditions of the poor workingman. I am one of those workingmen but I do not like to beg."[23]

Some of the complaints reflected the immigrants' displeasure with the agent's attitude toward them. As members of the Americanized middle class, Detroit's agents tended to view Eastern-European immigrants as unsophisticated and benighted, sometimes treating them paternalistically. Although thankful for the assistance they received, many removals resented the condescension with which the aid was rendered, and they did not shrink from saying so. The agents often mistook the immigrants' sensitivity for ungratefulness. In one such encounter, Miriam Hart lost her temper with a Mr. A. Bressler (no relation to David Bressler), who asked to have his family brought to Detroit. "What kind of people are you to leave your four children in New York?" she demanded. "We don't need such a people here. When you want your children, you have to pay their fare." A. Bressler then wrote the IRO in New York to complain about this treatment: "I assure you, Mr. [David] Bressler, that this will be the last 'movement,' because I prefer to choose death rather than be dependent on charity. This I discovered with Miss Hart." Lack of understanding characterized relations between agents and removals throughout the Detroit office's existence.[24]

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[22] Glazier, *Dispersing the Ghetto*, 161; Rockaway, *Words of the Uprooted*, 30.

[23] IRO to Joseph Rader, May 1, 1906, Michigan file, Detroit, IRO records; W. Levitt to IRO, April 29, 1906, ibid.; Herman Marcus to IRO, April 24, 1906, ibid.

[24] A. Bressler to David Bressler, September 13, 1916, ibid.

Immigrant literature is filled with stories depicting the trauma newcomers experienced before they acclimated to America. Despite the help and best intentions of the IRO and its local agents, leaving New York, family, friends, and the city's rich Jewish life proved devastating for many removals, especially those—like Nathan Toplitzky—who experienced horrific tragedies in their new homes:

> I, Nathan Toplitzky, sent to Detroit 5 months ago, wish to inform you that a great misfortune has happened to me. Your committee has placed me to work in a machine factory, where I have earned $.75 a day, and being unskilled I have had four of my fingers torn from my right hand. I now remain a cripple throughout my life. For six weeks my sufferings were indescribable.
> When the condition of my health improved a little, I called on the Committee and they advised me to go back to the old employer. I went back to him and he placed me to work at the same machine where the accident occurred. Having lost my fingers I was thus unable to operate the machine which made me a cripple. I now call daily at the office of the Committee and beg them to give me another job, but they do not want to hear me. I am alone in the city without a cent, without a friend, whereas in New York I have many friends. Kindly write to your Committee to find a position for me for you cannot realize how unfortunate I am.[25]

David Bressler responded blandly that he regretted "very much to learn of your mishap, but trust you will in a very short time have recovered." He tried to reassure Toplitzky that the local agent was doing all she could for him, but advised him to call upon her again, as "I am sure she will give you due consideration." Bressler's response may seem unduly formal and lacking in sympathy. Perhaps he was overwhelmed by immigrant letters and under pressure to answer each one personally. But his history confirms he was sensitive to the immigrants' concerns and worries.[26]

Conclusion

From its inception until its liquidation in 1922, the IRO dispatched 75,000 Jews to more than 1,000 American towns and cities. From 1902 to 1914, approximately 4,000 individuals were sent to Detroit. Most were unmarried men or married men who had left their families in New York or Europe. Since the majority of these 4,000 men likely remained in

[25] Nathan Toplitzky to IRO, March 30, 1908, ibid.

[26] David Bressler to Nathan Toplitzky, April 2, 1908, ibid.

Detroit, where the married men were later joined by their families, it would not be unreasonable to estimate that the IRO was responsible for 10,000 to 12,000 Jewish immigrants coming to the city by 1914.

Detroit may have been the land of promise for removals like Louis Friedman, whose glowing letter opened this study. For others, however, it was just one stop in their quest for the American dream. Perhaps they later found their Land of Gold in another city and state. Regardless, while the IRO may have had shortcomings and exaggerated its successes, it offered thousands of Jewish immigrants a chance for a better life. The Detroit operation illustrates the trials and tribulations encountered by local agents and those they tried to help, and provides us with another perspective on the Jewish immigrant experience in Detroit.

The First World War drastically decreased the number of immigrants arriving in the United States. In 1916 David Bressler resigned from his post to go into business, although he remained active in Jewish communal life. For all intents and purposes, the IRO's operations ended the following year, when the United States entered the war.

Four years later, in 1921, the United States passed its first immigration quota, limiting immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe. By then the Eastern-European Jewish immigrants in New York had become more established and economically secure. They had left the Lower East Side and moved to Brooklyn, Harlem, and the Bronx. The era of the Great Immigration of Jewish migrants to the United States came to a close. In 1922 the IRO formally shuttered its New York and local offices. A fascinating and unique project in American Jewish history and American immigration history had ended.

FEATURE ARTICLE

Julius Kahn, Man of Steel

Michael G. Smith

Though responsible for one of the most significant inventions of the twentieth century, Julius Kahn (younger brother of famed Jewish architect Albert Kahn) is largely unheralded for his contributions. Early in the last century, Julius Kahn invented the first practical and scientific method for building with reinforced concrete—a technology so essential that it is hard to imagine our world without it. Through his inventions and the companies he founded to market them, Kahn transformed concrete from a seldom-used and little-understood material into the basis for modern commercial and industrial architecture.

Julius Kahn was the rare individual who excelled at scientific theory, business management, and marketing savvy. Most importantly, he had the confidence and drive to tackle problems that others with far more experience had failed to solve. In a relatively short period of time, he built a highly successful company to take his invention directly to the market. Through rapid expansion nationally and internationally, Kahn grew this firm into the dominant supplier of innovative construction materials, and in so doing, facilitated the early twentieth century's dramatic growth in industrial production.

Boom Times in Detroit

By the beginning of the twentieth century, the American economy was undergoing rapid industrialization. Factories grew in size and number, attracting workers to the cities from farms and other countries, increasing urban population and density. In 1900 more than half of all wage earners worked in just 97 of the nation's nearly 3,000 counties.[1]

Michael G. Smith enjoys his second career as an architectural historian and expert on Detroit's early twentieth-century construction boom. His book, *Designing Detroit: Wirt Rowland and the Rise of Modern American Architecture* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2017), received critical acclaim and won a number of awards. He is involved with the Kahn legacy project, which seeks to establish a permanent exhibit and museum honoring the achievements of the Kahn brothers. One Saturday each month, he leads a bus tour of landmark Kahn- and Wirt Rowland-designed buildings (available through Detroit History Tours). Detroit's developers often rely on him to provide background research essential to placing buildings on the National Register of Historic Places. The research for this article also will be the subject of Smith's forthcoming book on Julius Kahn.

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From 1900 to 1930, the country's population increased 62 percent; more than half of that increase took place in those same 97 counties.[2] No city was more affected by this wave of industrial growth than Detroit, which zoomed from the thirteenth-largest US city in 1900 to fourth-largest in 1930. Its population grew from 286,000 in 1900 to 1.6 million in 1930, a whopping 550 percent increase.[3]

The building construction methods of the time, however, were far from adequate. In the late nineteenth century, commercial and industrial buildings, large and small, were constructed with brick exterior walls and interiors composed of wooden beams, columns, and floors. Due to the highly flammable nature of their construction, factories, warehouses, hotels, schools, apartment houses, stores, and even entire towns often burned to the ground, resulting in tremendous financial losses, and, due to increasing urbanization, a rapidly rising fatality rate. Building features such as sprinkler systems, brick-enclosed stairways, and automatic fire doors were introduced, providing occupants of a burning building a greater opportunity to escape, though they rarely prevented a total loss of the building and its contents.

The poor fire resistance of manufacturing buildings resulted in devastating losses for Detroit's manufacturing firms. In 1900, major fires destroyed the factories of Morgan, Puhl & Morris (a manufacturer of regalia) and Witchell, Sons & Company (a shoe manufacturer). The Detroit Steel & Spring factory was also leveled by fire, though the firm continued operations in its foundry building until it too went up in flames later that year.[4] The following year, the Dresskell-Jupp Paper Company, which had been burned out in 1895 and again in 1897, was once more destroyed, along with the Free Press Printing Company in the same building. The Valentine Schroeder candy company was heavily damaged by fire in 1901, the second time in just over a year. The factories of American Radiator, West Side Lumber, John Marten box manufacturing, and Phoenix Foundry were also all leveled by fire that year. In a portent of the fire hazard for Detroit's premier industry, 1901's costliest fire destroyed the factory of the Oldsmobile Motor Works on Jefferson Avenue.[5]

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[1] Bureau of the Census, "General Report. 1933, Statistics by Subjects. Areas, Counties, and Cities," vol. 1, chap. IX in *Fifteenth Census of the United States; Manufacturers: 1929* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1931), 241.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Bureau of the Census, "Number and Distribution of Inhabitants, 1931, Table 11, Population of Cities Having, in 1930, 100,000 Inhabitants or More: 1790 to 1930," vol. 1 in *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930; Population* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1931), 18.

[4] "899 Fires; $580,506 Loss," *Detroit Free Press*, January 1, 1901, 11.

[5] "1,068 Runs, $690,370 Loss," *Detroit Free Press*, January 1, 1902, 4. Detroit's Cadillac factory succumbed to fire in 1904, and the Anderson Electric Car plant in 1906.

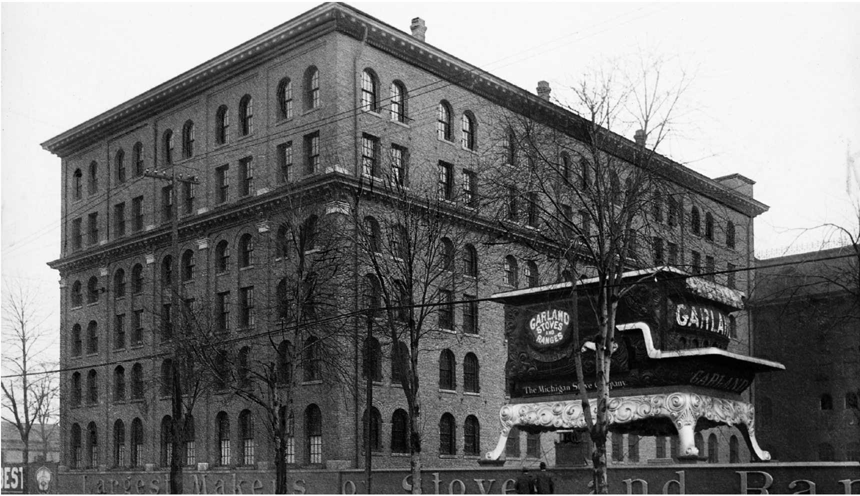

Figure 1: Michigan Stove Company's brick and timber factory on Jefferson Avenue in Detroit before it was destroyed by fire in January 1907. Built in 1902, it was of "slow burning" mill construction, the most fire-resistant construction method commonly available at the time. ("Garland Stove Works and big stove," between 1915 and 1925, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Detroit Publishing Company Photographic Collection: https://www.loc.gov/resource/det4a27880u/.)

Figure 2: Michigan Stove Company after the fire of January 1907. All that remains of the large factory in the previous figure is the corner of the building jutting up on the left side of the image. On the right side of the photo is the burned-out husk of another factory building. The giant Garland stove, seen on its perch in the previous photo, barely escaped the conflagration and sits atilt in the lower left corner. (Built for the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, the fifteen-ton stove stood for many years at the Michigan State Fairgrounds until it finally succumbed to fire in 2011.) (Courtesy of Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University, Detroit: https://digital.library.wayne.edu/item/wayne:vmc20053.)

Detroit was not alone in suffering devastating damage. From 1899 through 1901, fire losses for commercial and industrial buildings nationwide spiked twenty percent above the average of the prior ten years, bankrupting some insurance firms; many surviving firms declined to continue writing fire insurance.[6] To stem losses, insurance rates on commercial and manufacturing buildings east of the Rocky Mountains were raised 25 percent in February 1902.[7] To make matters worse, the heavy timber required for constructing factory buildings was becoming more difficult and expensive to secure, as virgin forests were depleted.

Figure 3: The typical factory in 1900 was constructed with brick supporting walls, timber columns, and wood joists and floors. Because the exterior walls supported the building, windows had to be narrow and limited in size to avoid excessively weakening the structure. (Unless otherwise noted, all figures created by author.)

[6] "Annual Fire Losses in the United States for Thirty-Six Years—1875-1910," in *The Insurance Year Book* (New York: Spectator Co., 1911), 39:516.
[7] "Insurance Rates Greatly Increased," *St. Louis Dispatch*, January 22, 1902, 6; "Higher Rates of Insurance," *Detroit Free Press*, February 19, 1902, 1; "Go Up," *Louisville Courier Journal*, February 21, 1902, 1.

Beyond safety and loss considerations, timber and brick structures were poorly suited to house the larger, heavier, and more precise machine tools increasingly employed by manufacturers. Work areas were illuminated primarily by natural light entering through the building's windows (fluorescent bulbs were not yet in use and incandescent bulbs were generally inadequate), but the number and size of windows was limited because the exterior walls which contained them also supported the building.[8]

New Challenges in a New World

Clearly, nineteenth-century construction methods were incapable of producing the buildings required for twentieth-century industry and commerce. The solution, unsurprisingly, was invented in Detroit. What *is* surprising is that, after leading engineers in Europe and the United States had tried and failed to devise a practical and economical method of reinforcing concrete, Julius Kahn, a 28-year-old engineer with little experience in concrete, developed the solution. Julius Kahn was born March 8, 1874, in Germany, the second of Rosalie and Joseph Kahn's eight children. Because they were not well off financially, in 1880 Joseph Kahn moved the family to the United States. The Kahns' oldest son, Albert, though just twelve at the time, was the only family member who spoke fluent English. As a result, he bore much responsibility for the family's welfare after arriving in Detroit.

Though trained as a rabbi, Joseph Kahn believed he could achieve financial security for his large, tight-knit family through business ventures, the first of which was a restaurant on Woodbridge Street. This eatery was destroyed by fire, along with the family's living quarters above. Joseph Kahn next opened a saloon, but this venture was not successful. He then tried his hand giving private French and German lessons, which provided an adequate living. Eventually, he was hired as rabbi for a congregation in Pennsylvania, and the family moved there for a couple of years, followed by a two-year stint in New Jersey. His next move was to a congregation in New Orleans, but his family returned without him to Detroit for the duration of this assignment.[9]

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[8] In the 1890s, a new construction method—steel frame—was first used to support buildings. It was employed primarily for tall buildings, which, if constructed of brick, would have required massive exterior walls to support the weight of the many floors above. Unlike wood, steel is not flammable. However, when exposed to fire, steel becomes soft: a fire in a steel-frame building could cause it to collapse. This hazard necessitated insulating the steel columns and beams by completely enclosing them in a layer of brick or hollow terracotta blocks. Due to the high cost, factories were rarely constructed of steel frame.

[9] Mollie Kahn Fuchs, Memoirs, 1937, box 1:3-4, Mollie Kahn Fuchs Subseries, Albert Kahn Family Papers, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

Figure 4: The Kahn family around 1899. Julius is third from the left in the back row and Albert is fourth from left. ("Albert Kahn [back row, 3rd from right] with his parents and 7 siblings, ca. 1900," Albert Kahn Family Papers. Courtesy of University of Michigan Bentley Historical Library: http://quod.lib.umich.edu/b/bhl/x-hs13331/.)

The family did what was necessary to survive financially. During high school in Detroit, Julius Kahn earned money delivering newspapers in the morning and washing dishes after school. He and his sister Mollie together saved enough money to assist their father when he was "needing money very badly."[10] Julius Kahn attended the University of Michigan, his tuition largely covered by his brother Albert, by then established as an architect. After earning a BS in civil engineering in 1896, Kahn worked briefly as a draftsman, and then as an engineer for several firms in New York City. In 1899 he earned a civil engineering degree from his alma mater.[11]

In the spring of 1900, Kahn accepted a position as the manager and chief engineer of a sulphur and iron mining company in Japan, a country in which he had a "keen interest."[12] During the year and a half he spent in Japan, Kahn sharpened his engineering and management skills. More important, perhaps, he acquired an education in general business practices, including a wariness of the motives and intentions of others, by observing the unscrupulous manner in which Japanese and foreign business people

[10] Fuchs, Memoirs, box 1:5.
[11] American Society of Civil Engineers, *Transactions of the American Society of Civil Engineers* 110 (1945): 1743.
[12] Ibid.

treated each other. In a letter to Albert Kahn, Julius Kahn promised, "I shall at least be more cautious when I return to America in any business that I may undertake there."[13]

In the spring of 1901, Albert Kahn proposed that his younger brother join his architecture firm.[14] Julius Kahn was nearing the end of the time he planned to spend in Japan, but he intended after returning to the United States to acquire further engineering education, or join an engineering firm. In response to his older brother's proposal, Julius Kahn offered to return to school and learn architecture, but Albert Kahn had something entirely different in mind.[15] During this era, when architecture firms were called upon to design industrial projects, they typically secured engineering services from outside engineering firms. Albert Kahn's idea was to bring engineering services in-house. At the time, Albert Kahn was handling mostly residential work. Though moderately successful, he was highly ambitious. To significantly increase his business, he needed commissions for large commercial and industrial buildings. His younger brother's education and experience with large-scale industrial structures made him an ideal candidate to aid Albert Kahn in securing such work.[16]

Julius Kahn arrived home in Detroit in early February 1902.[17] Albert Kahn was then in the final month of his partnership with his former employer, George D. Mason. In March the *Detroit Free Press* announced the dissolution of the firm of Mason & Kahn and that Albert Kahn would continue practicing "with the collaboration of Julius Kahn, civil engineer."[18] Julius Kahn's experience with industrial buildings in New York and Japan helped the new firm of Kahn & Kahn quickly secure a number of industrial construction projects: a warehouse and coal elevator for the Brown & Brown Coal Company (headed by David A. Brown, a prominent fundraiser in the Jewish community), a coal-handling apparatus for Detroit City Gas, a two-story brick warehouse for American Car & Foundry, and a storage building for Chicago Pneumatic Tool.[19]

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[13] Julius Kahn to Albert Kahn, April 26, 1901, box 3, folders 22-26, Albert Kahn Papers, 1875-1970, Series 2: Correspondence, 1891-1970, Julius Kahn, 1897-1920, Archives of American Art, Washington, DC (hereafter cited as Albert Kahn Papers, Series 2).

[14] Julius Kahn to Albert Kahn, June 15, 1901, Albert Kahn Papers, Series 2 (refers to Albert Kahn's letter suggesting "our possible future association"). While Julius Kahn was in Japan, Albert Kahn had been in a partnership with George Nettleton, who died in 1900. Albert Kahn then partnered with George D. Mason for one year.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Dale Carlson and Michael G. Smith, "Albert Kahn: 400 Buildings in Metro Detroit," accessed July 30, 2019, https://ilovedetroitmichigan.com/detroit-architecture/albert-kahn-400-buildings-in-metro-detroit/.

[17] Julius Kahn to Albert Kahn, September 26, 1901, Albert Kahn Papers, Series 2.

[18] "Personal," *Detroit Free Press*, February 23, 1902, 7; ibid., March 23, 1902, 18.

[19] "News of the Architects," *Detroit Free Press*, March 9, 1902, 23; ibid., March 30, 1902, 23; ibid., May 4, 1902, 18-19.

A New Technology Invented in Detroit

Meanwhile, despite the dissolution, the two former partners of Mason & Kahn continued to oversee the projects begun by the firm, including the Palms Apartments at 1001 East Jefferson Avenue in Detroit, and the West Engineering Building (now West Hall) at the University of Michigan.[20] Notably, instead of timber or terra cotta tile, the floors of both buildings were constructed of concrete, providing superior soundproofing and offering a modicum of fire resistance. In that era, concrete was commonly used for cellar floors, sidewalks, foundations, and other applications where it was laid directly upon, and supported by, the ground. But in 1902 concrete was just coming into use for floors above ground level: the Palms was Detroit's first significant building constructed in this manner.[21] The concrete floor was supported by steel beams and joists attached securely to the building's steel frame.[22] As the city building inspector had not yet seen this type of construction, to ensure safety, he required that the floor be tested with weight far in excess of what it would ever experience.[23]

To Julius Kahn, testing the floor was an admission that no one involved—not the architect, contractor, or city building inspector—had any idea how much weight a concrete floor could support. With other materials, such as timber and steel, scientific standards described their weight-bearing capability in various configurations; the inspector merely reviewed the plans to ensure the design was consistent with established standards and inspected the building as it went up to confirm that it conformed to the plans. For concrete, there were no scientific standards.

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[20] Other buildings begun by the partnership of Mason & Kahn and continued under their individual supervision were Temple Beth El (3424 Woodward Ave.) and the Belle Isle Aquarium.

[21] "Mammoth 100-Suite Apartment Building is Nearing Completion," *Detroit Free Press*, December 3, 1905, 30.

[22] George D. Mason and Albert Kahn Architects, "Detail of Col's & Beams for Support of Floors & Walls 2nd Story West Side," drawer 18, folder 7, Albert Kahn Associates Records: 1825-2014, Dr. J. B. Book Apartment Building ("The Palms"), Job Nos. 93 and 105, Detroit, Michigan 1901-1902, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

[23] "Those Floors in 'The Palms'," *Detroit News*, April 20, 1902, 23. (Due to the numerous pages missing from the microfilm of this issue of newspaper, the section in which page 23 appears is unknown.) "Architect A. Kahn has provided floors of cement and steel for 'The Palms,' the apartment house being erected at the corner of Jefferson and Rivard. The steel is inside the cement, and someone who couldn't see through the latter got into communication with the building inspector last week. The latter proceeded to make severe tests of the floors. After placing six tons in the weakest place he could find, where one ton is all that will ever be placed on it, in all likelihood, and noting the lack of serious result, he concluded that the floors would do."

This uncharted territory gave Kahn a sensational idea. If concrete could be reinforced with steel, and if the strength of the combined materials could be determined with the same precision as timber and steel, reinforced concrete would become the ideal construction material. A building of such material would be nearly fireproof. It also would require far less steel than a steel-frame building, making it less expensive to build. According to his sister Mollie, Julius Kahn believed that if he could develop a method for building with reinforced concrete, "we'll all be on easy street." The invention would provide the family with financial security for the first time.[24]

Concrete reinforced with steel was already in use in Europe. But European engineers did not have a scientific understanding of how steel reinforcement and concrete worked together to resist stress. They could only guesstimate the strength of structural materials in a concrete building. Consequently, European concrete structures were designed with an exceedingly large safety factor, adding significantly to the cost. Moreover, these methods required skilled laborers to place the reinforcing material in the concrete forms at the job site. While relatively affordable in Europe, these laborers were quite costly in the United States.[25]

Julius Kahn intended to accomplish what no one else had: establish a method to calculate precisely the weight-bearing capacity of concrete reinforced with steel, and design an economical reinforcing method based on scientific principles. He began by identifying the two most significant shortcomings of existing methods of reinforcing concrete beams: the tendency of reinforcing bars under stress to be pulled loose from the concrete within which they were embedded, and the problem of vertical cracks in the concrete becoming large enough to cause failure.[26] These problems made it impossible to calculate the strength of a beam and to predict its exact failure. Kahn realized the beam must be designed to prevent the reinforcement bar from being pulled loose, so that beam failure could only occur when the steel reinforcement bar was stretched beyond its limit and failed. He reasoned that if a beam under stress can only fail due to the steel reinforcement bar snapping in two (as opposed to being pulled loose), the strength of the beam could be calculated, as the breaking point of steel was known.

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[24] Fuchs, Memoirs, box 1:6.

[25] American Ernest Ransome developed a system to construct a small number of buildings with reinforced concrete, but it, too, was expensive and suffered the same lack of an underlying scientific theory of how it worked.

[26] Julius Kahn, "A New System of Concrete Re-Enforcement, Designed to Resist Vertical Shear," *Engineering News* 50, no. 17 (October 15, 1903): 349-52; Julius Kahn, "Concrete Reinforcement," *Engineering Record* 48, no. 16 (October 17, 1903): 465-67; Julius Kahn, "Concrete Reinforcement," *Railroad Gazette* 35, no. 42 (October 16, 1903): 734-36.

When a beam is under a load, its bottom half is subjected to stretching forces and the top half to compressive forces. (These forces can be visualized with a hair comb. Place the comb between two supporting objects and press down on it. If the teeth are facing down, they will move farther apart, and if up, closer together.) When a load is placed on a reinforced concrete beam, the stretching forces along the bottom of the beam cause the steel reinforcement bar to stretch; the concrete cannot stretch, so cracks open up along the bottom. As the load increases, these cracks become larger and can cause the beam to fail, even if the reinforcement bar does not.

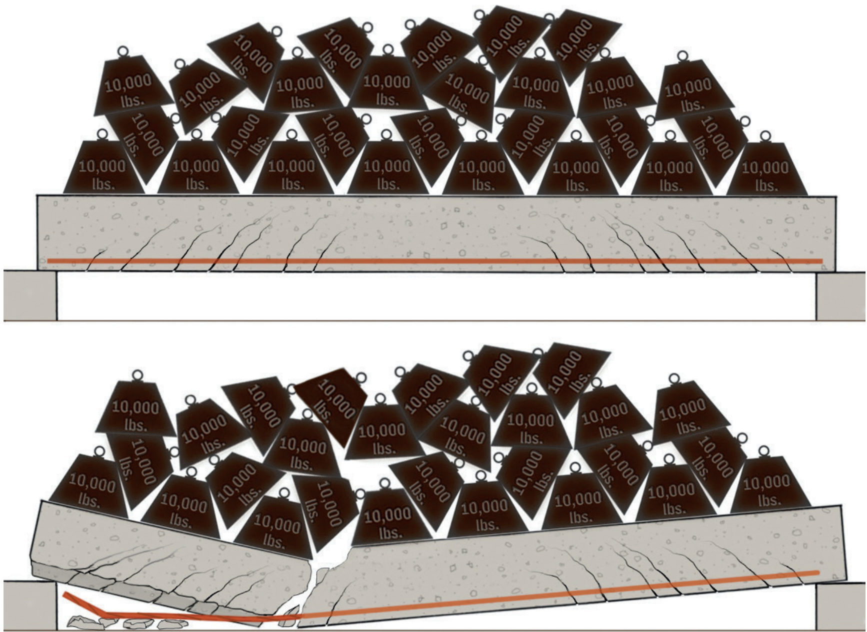

Figure 5: Horizontal reinforcement bars in a concrete beam could be pulled from the concrete when under stress. Such bars did not prevent vertical cracks.

To solve this problem, Kahn added "wings" extending from his bar that cross these cracks at right angles, effectively holding the beam together. As these cracks tended to develop at a 45-degree angle to the beam, he set the wings on his bar at a 45-degree angle in the opposite direction. These wings not only prevented cracks from causing beam failure. They also held the reinforcement bar firmly within the concrete, preventing it from pulling loose. The bar was inexpensively manufactured from a single piece of rolled steel: a thick, square middle section flanked by thin flanges that formed the wings. Cuts made in the flanges allowed the wings to bend up at a 45-degree angle.

Figure 6: A Kahn System advertisement from the December 1904 issue of Municipal Engineering, *showing the Kahn bar with wings bent up at a 45-degree angle.*

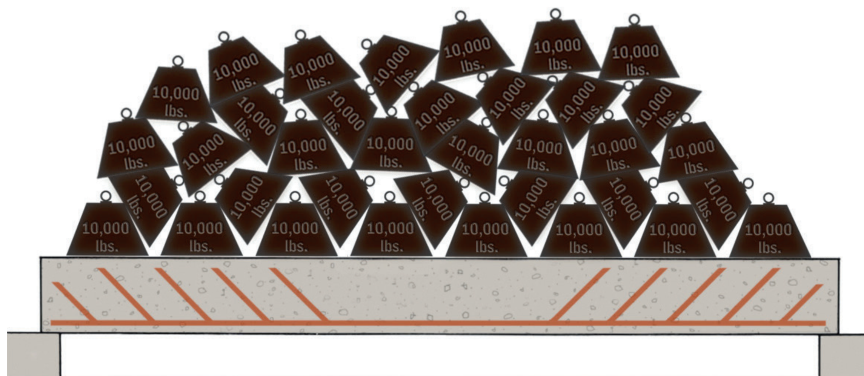

Figure 7: Wings on the Kahn bar prevented vertical cracks from developing and held the bar firmly within the concrete so it could not be pulled loose.

Julius Kahn tested his bar—using his brother Gustave's basement as a workshop—to confirm it would perform exactly as predicted by his engineering calculations.[27] As expected, the beams always failed with the steel slowly stretching in the center and finally breaking in two (and never with the bar pulling loose or the concrete cracking). This was a great breakthrough: the beam's strength could now be precisely gauged.[28] Beams reinforced with Kahn's bars were also safer in the unlikely event that they were loaded beyond their carrying ability. Rather than failing suddenly and without warning, they would sag and exhibit visible cracks before collapsing.

[27] Fuchs, Memoirs, box 1:6; Jack Orr, "Julius Kahn," *Youngstown Telegram*, January 1, 1933, 7.

[28] Moritz Kahn, "A Reinforced Concrete System, with Rigid Shear Members," *Concrete and Constructional Engineering* 1, no. 1 (March 1906): 69.

Kahn submitted a patent application for his bar in December 1902.[29] While the patent was pending, he set out in June 1903 to meet with construction and engineering firms on the east coast, seeking manufacturers and licensees who would market his reinforcement bars.[30] The feedback he received from engineers was exceptionally encouraging, both as to his theory and the technology's marketability. One engineer at the Brooklyn Navy Yard was deeply impressed that Kahn had "accomplished what all others had tried."[31]

In spite of his many successful meetings, Julius Kahn had growing reservations about licensing others to produce and market his bar. He wrote to his brother Albert Kahn about the advice offered by one prominent engineer, who recommended against outsourcing production:

> It would be a great mistake to establish agencies everywhere for manufacturing concrete bars according to my method, but thought we ought to manufacture the bars ourselves and sell them to who ever wanted to buy them. Thereby keeping whatever profit existed entirely in our own hands.[32]

Julius Kahn had learned from watching business transacted in Japan that some might "take fearful advantage of you. They listen to all of your good ideas merely for the purpose of seeing how they can get around [the patent]." He continued: "I feel like a little fellow in their hands and if I gave them the exclusive right to manufacture the bar, I would be quickly squeezed out."[33] By the end of June 1903, Kahn was firmly committed to the idea of starting his own firm to manufacture and market the bar, rather than selling the manufacturing rights to others.[34]

Perhaps Kahn's most important meeting was with Captain John S. Sewell of the US Army, in charge of construction for the Army War College in Washington, DC (known now as Fort Lesley McNair). Like Kahn, Sewell was a gifted engineer who recognized the weaknesses in existing reinforcement systems. Sewell became a strong advocate for Kahn's system and subsequently purchased many reinforcement bars to construct the War College and barracks.[35]

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[29] Julius Kahn, Concrete and Metal Construction, U.S. Patent 736,602, filed December 11, 1902, granted August 18, 1903, https://patents.google.com/patent/US736602A/en.
[30] Julius Kahn to Albert Kahn, June 27, 1903, Albert Kahn Papers, Series 2.
[31] Ibid.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Ibid.
[34] Julius Kahn to Albert Kahn, July 1, 1903, Albert Kahn Papers, Series 2.
[35] Ibid.; "Dome and Floor Construction in the United States War College," *Engineering Record* 53, no. 18 (May 5, 1906): 571.

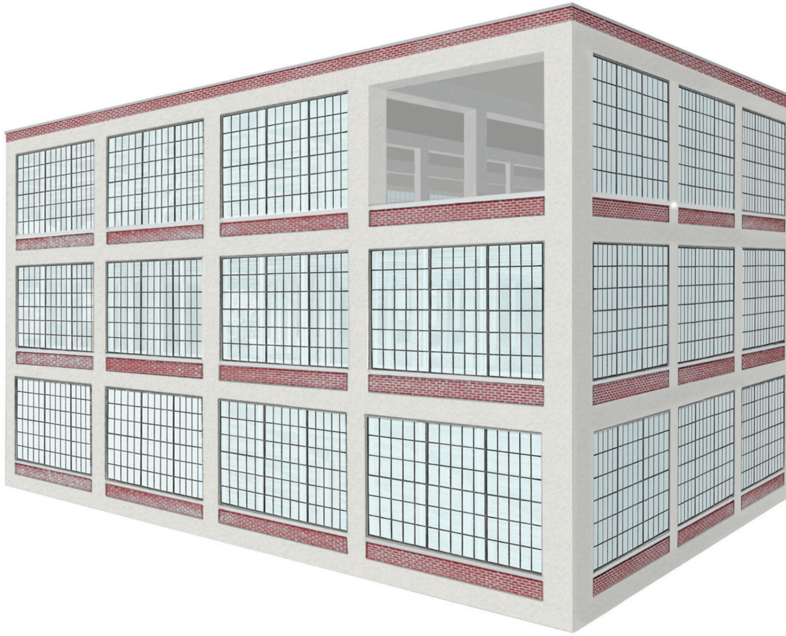

Figure 8: A typical reinforced concrete building from the early twentieth century: the structure is supported by its concrete frame, the floors (and ceilings) are concrete, and nearly the entire space between frame members is filled with windows. The extensive windowed area permitted plenty of natural light to enter the work area. (Effective industrial lighting did not come into use until the late 1930s.)

On August 11, 1903, the US Patent Office granted Kahn a patent on his system of combined steel and concrete construction. The following month, as he made preparations for starting his own company, he and his older brother secured a number of projects. The Great Northern Cement Company of Marlboro, Michigan, hired Kahn & Kahn to design a large shed to be used for the storage of concrete mix—the first building constructed in Michigan using the Kahn bar.[36] Most significantly, Kahn & Kahn was hired to engineer three military barracks in the Army War College complex and ten buildings at the US Naval Academy at Annapolis.[37]

[36] "The Era of Cement," *Detroit Free Press*, September 20, 1903, 11.

[37] "Contracts for Government Buildings," *Detroit Free Press*, October 4, 1903, 15; "The Trussed Concrete Steel Co. Organized," *Detroit Free Press*, October 8, 1903, 9; "Miscellaneous," *Municipal Engineering* 27, no. 2 (August 1904): 153.

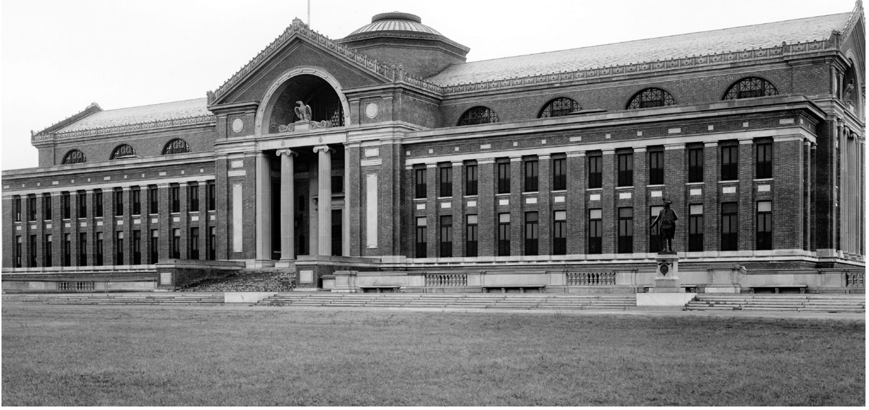

Figure 9: The Army War College in Washington, DC, was constructed throughout using the Kahn System (built 1903 to 1907). ("War College," Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, National Photo Company Collection: https://lccn.loc.gov/2016824767.)

In early October 1903, Kahn launched his new firm, the Trussed Concrete Steel Company (Truscon), in Detroit's Union Trust Building on Griswold, the same building where his brother Albert's architecture firm was located.[38] Kahn's partners in the enterprise included Albert, Herman Krolik (cousin of Albert's father-in-law), Day Krolik (Albert's brother-in-law), and attorney Henry M. Butzel, all of whom were members of Michigan's oldest congregation, Detroit's Temple Beth El.[39]

Kahn understood that other firms would imitate his invention. Only by swiftly building a company that was active in all major cities could Truscon become a dominant supplier of concrete reinforcement products. His first marketing effort took the form of a widely published article in October 1903, "Concrete Reinforcement," which explained the theory behind his system and how his bar made it possible to calculate accurately the amount of weight a concrete beam could support.[40] With his system, he asserted, concrete beams need not be built ten times stronger than necessary as a margin of safety. Rather, they could be constructed with a safety margin of four, the same as steel beams. This change meant enormous savings in material and construction costs.

[38] "The Trussed Concrete Steel Co. Organized," 9; J. Kahn, "New System Designed to Resist Vertical Shear," 352. The Union Trust Building was located on the northeast corner of Detroit's Congress and Griswold Streets.
[39] "Articles of Incorporation Filed," *Detroit Free Press*, October 10, 1903, 9.
[40] J. Kahn, "Concrete Reinforcement," 465-67; J. Kahn, "New System Designed to Resist Vertical Shear," 352.

Meanwhile, the last three months of 1903 were calamitous for a number of firms attempting to employ concrete in construction, using a variety of unscientific methods and inexperienced workers. These failures illustrated the woeful state of the nascent reinforced concrete business. In Greenpoint, New York, the roof of a single-story reinforced concrete factory building collapsed when the forms were removed too soon, killing the job foreman.[41] Through improper design and material, the concrete roof of an eight-story apartment building in Pittsburgh also collapsed, destroying all the floors beneath and killing one workman.[42] The reinforced concrete roof of a three-story department store in Corning, New York, also collapsed, carrying away the rear of the building. Workers had failed to install the reinforcement at all.[43] At the new La Crosse, Wisconsin, courthouse, the wooden structure supporting the still-wet concrete floor of the third story gave way, taking the floors below with it into the basement.[44] The floor in the Clark County, Illinois, courthouse also collapsed due to poor design and overly aggressive efforts to trim costs.[45] Finally, while undergoing testing, the reinforced concrete floor in the J. L. Mott Iron Works in Trenton, New Jersey, failed due to improper anchoring to the walls, killing the two workers passing underneath at that moment.[46]

Appalled by these failures, Julius Kahn fired off an article to the *Engineering News* entitled, "Some of the Causes of Recent Failures of Reinforced Concrete." It included a withering criticism of the current state of the industry and castigated several of the major reinforcement manufacturers for their lack of scientific knowledge.[47] This, of course, resulted in a number of letters in response. Some were supportive of Kahn's views. Others were incensed by his assertions, including A. L. Johnson, the manufacturer of a competing product, who penned a particularly acerbic reply.[48] Kahn and Johnson traded arguments running to several pages in

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[41] "Failure of a Reinforced Concrete Floor Under Test at Trenton, N.J.," *Engineering News* 50, no. 25 (December 17, 1903): 553-54.

[42] Conried Bronston, "Pittsburgh Concrete Collapse," *Fireproof* 4, no. 1 (January 1904): 24-26.

[43] "A Collapsed Concrete-Steel Building," *Engineering News* 51, no. 1 (January 7, 1904): 21.

[44] Bryant Newell, "Concrete Collapse. La Crosse, Wis.," *Fireproof* 4, no. 1 (January 1904): 29-30.

[45] "Concrete—Steel for Building Construction," *Municipal Engineering* 27, no. 1 (July 1904): 28-29.

[46] "Collapsed Concrete-Steel Building," 21.

[47] Julius Kahn, "Some of the Causes of Recent Failures of Reinforced Concrete," *Engineering News* 51, no. 3 (January 21, 1904): 66-68.

[48] A. L. Johnson, letter to the editor, *Engineering News* 51, no. 7 (February 18, 1904): 157.

Engineering News through May 1904, by which time Kahn had so much work coming in that he abandoned the contest.[49] His purpose, however, had been served: to educate engineers on the science of concrete reinforcement and promote, nationally, the products marketed by Truscon. Kahn's exceptionally detailed and accessible explanations of the science behind concrete reinforcement were tremendously effective in advancing the industry and instilling in architects and engineers sufficient confidence to use the new material.

Rapid Growth of a Company and an Industry

Truscon experienced tremendous growth and success during 1904 and 1905. Kahn's implementation of several new practices that helped ensure proper use of his products fueled much of the success. First, to ease the transition to concrete construction for architects and building owners who wished to employ the new material but lacked experience with it, Truscon provided complete engineering services to any customer purchasing Kahn System products.[50] The architect designed the building and Truscon provided structural drawings indicating where each reinforcement bar was to be placed.

Next, following several collapses due to insufficient shoring, as well as improper placement of reinforcing steel, poorly prepared materials, and other blunders, Kahn recognized that, although unskilled laborers were adequate to construct concrete buildings, they must be supervised by construction foremen and supervisors with relevant experience. To address this issue, Kahn began providing construction services, initially through Truscon, and then through a new firm, the Concrete Steel and Tile Construction Company, established in October 1904.[51] Concrete Steel and Tile made available a competent contractor in those instances where a reinforced concrete building was desired, but no construction company with proper experience was available. In addition to facilitating increased business for Truscon, there was another important advantage to an affiliated construction firm: problems that arose in the field could be referred to the engineers at Truscon for solutions, resulting in rapid product improvements and ideas for new inventions.

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[49] Julius Kahn, ibid., 158-60; Maurice Goldenberg, ibid., no. 15 (April 14, 1904): 354-55; A. L. Johnson, ibid., 355-56; Julius Kahn, ibid., 356-58; A. L. Johnson, ibid., no. 18 (May 5, 1904): 426-28.

[50] "Trussed Concrete Bulletin," *Technical World Magazine* 5, no. 6 (August 1906): vii; "Structural Materials," *Engineering Magazine* 31, no. 5 (September 1906): 121.

[51] "New Business Enterprises," *Detroit Free Press*, October 30, 1904, 23; "Supply Trade Notes," *Railway Age* 38, no. 19 (November 4, 1904): 673.

Finally, to compete better with steel-frame construction, Truscon manufactured Kahn System reinforcement products in standard sizes, all of which were kept in stock (first in Detroit and, later, in warehouses throughout the world). This eliminated the construction delays that plagued the steel-frame building industry where steel columns, beams, and girders typically were custom-rolled by the steel mill, requiring a wait that could take months.

During 1904 Kahn also helped grow Truscon dramatically by establishing offices or sales representatives in fourteen US cities and Toronto. Due to the importance of the New York market, he had his brother Moritz, also a civil engineer, manage that office. In order to keep up with the flow of work, Kahn hired engineers, giving preference to those from the University of Michigan. An extensive Truscon exhibit at the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair aided Kahn's marketing efforts. The Kahn System was awarded a gold medal at the fair as "the most scientific method yet devised for reinforcing concrete."[52]

The year 1904 also saw the first use of the Kahn System of reinforced concrete in Detroit: the factory and headquarters of the American Arithmometer Company (later known as Burroughs Adding Machine Company) at Second and Amsterdam avenues, was completed in October.[53] Albert Kahn's firm designed the structure, the roof and floors of which were made of reinforced concrete. It was engineered by Truscon and constructed by Concrete Steel and Tile.[54] Though the interior support columns were made of iron rather than concrete, the building was sufficiently noteworthy that both *American Architect* and *Engineering Record* reported on it in illustrated articles.[55] In June of the following year, Albert and Julius Kahn's firms began construction of another building for Burroughs in which all structural members were concrete, making it the first Detroit building constructed entirely of reinforced concrete.[56] In August construction began on two ten-story, reinforced concrete hotels in Detroit, the Tuller and Pontchartrain, the two largest construction projects in the city's history. George D. Mason designed both buildings, employing the Kahn System in their construction.

52 "What Makes the Best Floor?" advertisement, *Manufacturers' Record* 47, no. 26 (July 13, 1905): 50.
53 As of this writing, no earlier reinforced concrete building has come to light, making this the first reinforced concrete building in Detroit.
54 "Factory of the American Arithmometer Co., Detroit, Mich.," *American Architect* 87, no. 1527 (April 1, 1905): 107-08; "The Factory of the American Arithmometer Co.," *Engineering Record* 51, no. 13 (April 1, 1905): 382-83.
55 Ibid.
56 "High-Speed Reinforced Concrete Construction," *Manufacturers' Record* 48, no. 18 (November 16, 1905): 460; "Bright Outlook in Building for Incoming 1906," *Detroit Free Press*, December 31, 1905, 15.

Figure 10: The headquarters and factory of American Arithmometer under construction on Second Avenue. The large sign propped against the front right side of the building reads, "Floors, roofs and lintels, Kahn System, Trussed Concrete and Steel Company." (Courtesy of Charles Babbage Institute Archives, University of Minnesota Libraries, Minneapolis, MN—Burroughs Corporation Collection.)

By the end of 1905, the Kahn System had become the most widely used method of concrete reinforcement. It also received extensive coverage in engineering and construction journals.[57] One structure that garnered widespread publicity was the Farwell, Ozmun, Kirk & Company warehouse in St. Paul, Minnesota, a nine-story building with a half-million square feet of floor space—the largest warehouse building in the United States outside of New York—completed in November 1905.[58] In a sensational piece of theater, an article on the building penned by Maurice Goldenberg, Truscon's chief engineer, was accompanied by a photograph of an interior floor holding an eight-foot pile of iron billets weighing over 91,000 pounds—all supported by just two Kahn bars.[59] Kahn supplemented this free marketing with an increasing barrage of display ads trumpeting the virtues of his system and offering an impressive list of buildings constructed using it.

[57] Carl Condit, *American Building: Materials and Techniques from the First Colonial Settlements to the Present* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), 241; Peter Collins, *Concrete; the Vision of a New Architecture*, 2nd ed. (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1959), 81.

[58] Walter Mueller, "Reinforced Concrete Construction," *Cement Age* 3, no. 5 (October 1906): 323; "The Farwell, Ozmun & Kirk Co. Warehouse at St. Paul," *Engineering Record* 53, no. 16 (April 21, 1906): 517-18. The former Farwell, Ozmun, Kirk & Co. Building is now known as the Ramsey County Government Center East Building.

[59] Maurice Goldenberg, letter to the editor, *Engineering Record* 52, no. 26 (December 23, 1905): 725.

Figure 11: The Blenheim Hotel in Atlantic City, completed in February 1906, was constructed using the Kahn System of concrete reinforcement. ("Marlborough-Blenheim, Atlantic City, NJ," circa 1908, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Detroit Publishing Company Photograph Collection: https://www.loc.gov/item/2016795897/.)

The Blenheim Hotel in Atlantic City constituted the most significant and largest of the buildings engineered in 1905 by Truscon and constructed using the Kahn System. Completed in February 1906, the massive twelve-story structure with 250 guest rooms was the largest reinforced concrete building in the world. Technical journals, magazines, and newspapers covered the construction extensively because the "entire building was constructed on the Kahn system of reinforced concrete."[60] If any doubt remained as to the practicality and economics of reinforced concrete, this project demonstrated the technology was here to stay, and the Kahn System was the construction method of choice.

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[60] Condit, *American Building*, 26; W. Noble Twelvetrees, *Concrete-Steel Buildings* (London: Whittaker & Co., 1907), 267; "Reinforced Concrete and Tile Construction in an Atlantic City Hotel—I," *Engineering Record* 52, no. 26 (December 23, 1905): 719-22; "Reinforced Concrete –II," ibid., no. 27 (December 30, 1905): 743-45; "Reinforced Concrete and Tile Floors," ibid. 53, no. 3 (January 20, 1906): 62; "Marlborough-Blenheim Hotel," *Washington Post*, March 4, 1906, E3; "Marlborough-Blenheim Hotel," *Insurance Engineering* 11, no. 2 (February 1906): 144-55; E.A. Trego, "Concrete and Hollow Tile," *Cement Age* 2, no. 9 (February 1906): 621-25; "Reinforced Concrete and Tile Construction, Marlborough Hotel Annex, Atlantic City, N.J.," *Engineering News* 55, no. 10 (March 8, 1906): 251-56; "The Hotel Blenheim, a New Type of Construction," *Brickbuilder* 15, no. 4 (April 1906): 78-84; William L. Price, "Architectural Form and Finish in Concrete Construction," *Engineering News* 55, no. 21 (May 24, 1906): 576-77; and others.

New Construction Technology for a New Industry

The Kahn System also revolutionized the construction of automobile factories. In 1905 the world's first concrete automobile factory was built. The Cadillac Motor Car Company hired architect George D. Mason to design a new factory building at 450 Amsterdam Avenue in Detroit (now the Westcott Displays Company).[61] Cadillac's head, Henry Leland, accepted Mason's recommendation to use reinforced concrete. Beyond resistance to fire, concrete offered other advantages important for auto manufacturing. Fewer support columns permitted flexibility in the placement of equipment and work areas. Moreover, a much larger percentage of the exterior walls could be devoted to windows, improving illumination. Mason also recommended that Kahn's Concrete Steel and Tile Company be hired as contractor (of which George Mason was a partner). In a phone conversation on the evening of September 6, Leland gave Kahn the go-ahead to begin construction. Work at the site started the next day. Construction of the building began the following week and was completed fewer than 70 days later.

Figure 12: Cadillac Motor Company plant under construction by Julius Kahn's Concrete Steel and Tile Company, October 28, 1905. When this photo was taken, the concrete had been poured on the first through third floors and carpenters were erecting wooden forms for the top floor. Columns and beams, which comprised the structural frame of the building, were still encased in the forms, giving shape to the concrete while it hardened. A forest of vertical timbers supported the floors and beams for several weeks until the concrete was sufficiently cured to support the weight of the building. (Resource ID MR0353. Courtesy of Burton Historical Collection, Detroit Public Library.)

[61] The former Cadillac factory is currently occupied by the Westcott Displays Company, which has owned the building since 1946. Little has been altered, except for replacing the original double-hung windows with smaller windows and removing the brick cladding that covered the building's concrete frame on the front façade. Some of the concrete on the building's columns has been chipped away, exposing the Kahn bars.

Figure 13: The completed Cadillac Motor Company building as it looked on November 19, 1905. (Book of completed projects, 1909 [unpublished], George D. Mason Papers 1884-1936. Courtesy of Burton Historical Collection, Detroit Public Library.)

Figure 14: The former Cadillac Motor Company building as it looks today. (Photo by author.)

Immediately upon completion of the Cadillac factory, Truscon and Concrete Steel and Tile began work on a small addition to the Packard Motor Car Company plant—Building No. 10—designed by Albert Kahn.[62] The previous nine buildings at the Packard complex on Grand Boulevard in Detroit were of typical brick and timber construction. Building No. 10 served as a proof of concept for a switch to reinforced concrete.[63]

During 1906 Truscon's aggressive sales efforts secured commissions for three substantial automobile factories: Pierce Arrow and E. R. Thomas in Buffalo, and Garford Company in Elyria, Ohio.[64] For two of these projects (Pierce and Garford), the client accepted Truscon's suggestion that Albert Kahn be employed as the architect because of his experience both with reinforced concrete and designing the auto plant for Packard in Detroit. This work did much to cement Albert Kahn's reputation as a leading architect of modern factories and automobile plants in particular. The following year, Albert Kahn's list of jobs included more industrial buildings than residences, reflecting a significant change in the nature of his business. Among his dozen-plus factory jobs were a nine-story plant in Brooklyn for the Mergenthaler-Linotype Company (engineered by Truscon and built by its subsidiary, Concrete Steel and Tile), and Henry Ford's Highland Park factory complex.

Continued Growth Cut Short by Great Depression

By 1906 Truscon claimed that more than 1,500 buildings in the United States had been constructed using the Kahn System. To keep up with demand, the firm employed more than 75 engineers.[65] By 1914 Truscon had more than 5,000 buildings worldwide to its credit.[66] That same year,

[62] Michael G. Smith, "The First Concrete Auto Factory: An Error in the Historical Record," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 78, no. 4 (December 2019): 442-53. Packard Building No. 10, located at 42°22'48.4" N, 83°01'44.2" W, remains standing in the expansive Packard complex, but in derelict condition. Two floors were added to the original two-story building. A nearly complete list of Albert Kahn buildings in Detroit (both extant and demolished) may be found online at "Albert Kahn: 400 Buildings in Metro Detroit": https://ilovedetroitmichigan.com/detroit-architecture/albert-kahn-400-buildings-in-metro-detroit/.

[63] As evidence, the next project for Packard was nearly four times the size of No. 10. Interestingly, Albert Kahn's firm thought so little of No. 10 that no photos were taken of it during construction.

[64] The plants were: E. R. Thomas Co. and George N. Pierce Co. in Buffalo, and Garford Manufacturing Co. in Elyria, Ohio. "Kahn System of Reinforced Concrete," *Sunset Magazine* 18, no. 5 (March 1907): 526; "Note That Bar," *American Monthly Illustrated Review of Reviews* 9, no. 6 (June 1906): 115; Job list for Albert Kahn Architects and Engineers, unpublished, maintained by Albert Kahn Associates, Inc., Detroit, Michigan.

[65] Truscon advertisements in School of Architecture, *Syracuse University Yearbook* (Syracuse, NY: 1907), 80, HathiTrust, https://hdl.handle.net/2027/hvd.32044027634690; *Western Architect* 10, no. 3 (March 1907): xxiii.

[66] Truscon advertisement in *McClure's Magazine*, November 1910, 130.

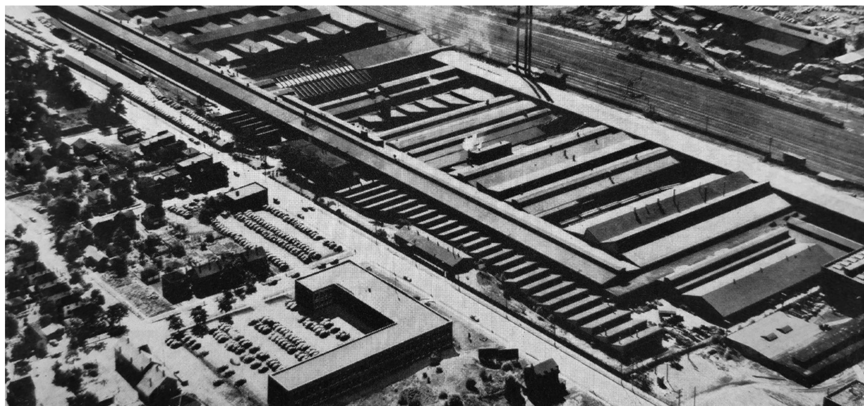

Figure 15: The Truscon factory complex in Youngstown, Ohio, during the 1930s. (Truscon Steel Division of Republic Steel Corporation sales catalog, n.d., Mahoning Valley Historical Society Archives Library, Tyler History Center, Youngstown, Ohio.)

Julius Kahn moved Truscon to Youngstown, Ohio. By locating his factory in close proximity to the large steel mills, he eliminated the need to transport the raw steel to Detroit for processing.

Julius Kahn's reinforcement bar contributed much to the early success of Truscon, but his invention of a steady stream of innovative construction products aided the firm's continued growth. By the 1920s Truscon had expanded beyond construction merchandise, becoming one of the country's largest steel-fabricating operations, manufacturing stamped-steel products previously made of cast iron.[67] Products ranging from tractor seats and bedpans, to bombs and foundry flasks were lighter in weight and less costly than the cast-iron versions they replaced.

In 1929 Truscon had sales of nearly $40 million and a net profit of almost $3 million. The Great Depression, however, reduced construction activity to a trickle, and Truscon's sales plummeted to less than $9 million by 1933, resulting in the company's first losses.[68] With no economic rebound visible on the horizon, Kahn and his associates agonized over Truscon's future, ultimately deciding in 1934 to merge the firm with Republic Steel, its largest supplier. In 1935 Truscon became a subsidiary of Republic; Kahn was named vice president in charge of product development for the steel company.[69] He remained with Republic until 1939, when at age 65 he retired from the steel business.[70]

[67] *The National Cyclopedia of American Biography* (New York: James T. White and Co., 1947), 33:36.
[68] "Investors' Guide," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, December 18, 1933, 29; "Truscon Steel," *Wall Street Journal*, March 6, 1935, 6.
[69] "Republic Votes Merger Approval," *Massilon Evening Independent*, September 23, 1935, 1; "Julius Kahn," *Barron's*, June 22, 1936, 28.
[70] "Kahn Leaves Republic Steel," *Wall Street Journal*, October 11, 1939, 11.

Julius Kahn at Work and Home

Julius Kahn's intense work ethic and desire for excellence defined his personal and professional lives. During his career, he was granted more than 75 patents.[71] Fellow Truscon employees reported that he sometimes would "halt an important business conference to jot down a figure or two, or draw a rough sketch which became one of the concern's many products."[72] One of his vice presidents told of attending the theater with him. As the curtain dropped, "Mr. Kahn turned to me and I expected some breathless comment about the show. Instead, he began showing me a diagram of a new invention he had scrawled over the program."[73] Julius Kahn understood that innovation was essential to retaining the company's position in the marketplace. He encouraged "the entire engineering department . . . to work on new devices which may reward them financially and help Truscon to keep at the forefront of the industry."[74]

Kahn likewise understood the importance of hiring excellent employees and instituted numerous programs to retain them. All employees were eligible for incentive bonus plans; machine operators who exceeded 80 percent of the rated output of their machine received additional compensation; and generous bonuses were paid to salespeople and sales managers for meeting or exceeding sales goals. The company was among the earliest to provide accident and life insurance and free legal aid for its employees.[75]

Julius Kahn's intense work ethic also extended to his philanthropic endeavors. During the early years of Truscon, Kahn had little time for outside activities. But after 1930 he became involved in various Jewish organizations, including the Jewish Federation of Youngstown and the Allied Jewish Campaign. He served as vice president of Youngstown's Congregation Rodef Sholom and, after moving to Cleveland in 1939, as a trustee of Cleveland's Euclid Avenue Temple.[76] In August 1939, in honor of their brother who had died that year, Kahn joined Albert, Louis, and Felix to establish the Moritz Kahn Memorial Library at Detroit's Temple Israel.[77]

Julius Kahn and his wife Margaret (née Kohut) remained frequent visitors to Detroit, attending parties, family events, and visiting their son, Julius Kahn Jr. and his wife. On November 4, 1942, at the age of 68,

[71] "Kahn Given 75th Patent," *Youngstown Vindicator*, February 23, 1934, 1, 8.
[72] Ibid.
[73] Ibid.
[74] Ibid.
[75] *National Cyclopedia of American Biography*, 33:36; "Julius Kahn," Transactions of the American Society of Civil Engineers 110, no. 1945 (1946): 1742-47.
[76] Ibid.
[77] "Start Kahn Memorial Library," August 29, 1942, *Detroit Free Press*, 12.

Figure 16: Julius Kahn. (Call number PC-2141. Courtesy of the Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio, at americanjewisharchives.org.)

Kahn died at his home in Cleveland. His cause of death was reported in the Cleveland-area press as pneumonia, while the Detroit papers claimed it was a heart attack.

Conclusion: The Concrete Age

Julius Kahn possessed the rare combination of a scientific mind, a fluency in business management, a knack for marketing, a personality that exuded confidence, and an intense work ethic. He solved the most pressing construction problem of the day and then capitalized on his solution. His firm rapidly became the leading supplier of cutting-edge construction materials, notably concrete reinforcement bars, and transformed the life and landscape of the United States.

The widespread use of reinforced concrete, precipitated by Julius Kahn's invention, dramatically lowered the death rate from fire. After rising rapidly from fewer than six deaths per 100,000 in 1890 to more than ten in 1910, the rate declined just as rapidly to four in 1950. It now stands at less than one.[78] Although insurance costs on concrete buildings were dramatically lower than for brick and timber buildings, because of their resistance to fire, most owners did not insure them, carrying insurance only on their contents.

Julius Kahn's impact on construction, architecture, and urban space cannot be overstated. In a 1906 article on concrete construction, Captain John Sewell highlighted the "very important advances" of the Kahn bar.[79] With it, "all limitations as to [concrete's] possible uses disappear . . . [T]his century is likely to be known as the Concrete Age."[80] If anything, this prediction proved an understatement. Sewell, Kahn, and others could hardly have imagined how essential and pervasive concrete would become. It is an essential part of our lives we largely take for granted. This may explain, to some degree, why the story of Julius Kahn's breakthrough innovations, which made reinforced concrete so common and indispensable, have been taken for granted as well.

[78] John Elflein, "Rates of deaths due to fire, flames, or smoke, in the United States from 1915 to 2016," 2019, accessed August 1, 2019, https://www.statista.com/statistics/527394/death-rate-due-to-fire-flames-smoke-in-the-us/.

[79] Captain John Sewell, "Reinforced Concrete in the United States," *Concrete and Constructional Engineering* 1, no. 2 (May 1906): 80.

[80] Ibid., 83. Sewell wrote: "So that—as my British colleague, Lieut.-Colonel Winn, so ably argued in the preceding issue of this journal—this century is truly likely to be known as the Concrete Age." In the article referred to by Sewell, Winn wrote: "There is little doubt that when our descendants review the past and speak of the dawn of the twentieth century, especially in its relation to structural engineering, the term 'Concrete Age' will not be inappropriate." Lieut.-Colonel J. Winn, "The Advent of the Concrete Age," *Concrete and Constructional Engineering* 1, no. 1 (March 1906): 7.

BOOK REVIEW

Motor City Music: A Detroiter Looks Back. By Mark Slobin. Oxford University Press: New York, 2019. 248 pages. $29.95.

Reviewed by Nicholas Ezra Field, *Eastern Michigan University*

Mark Slobin's *Motor City Music: A Detroiter Looks Back* is a multi-faceted contribution to several scholarly fields. The work scrutinizes Detroit's vibrant musical scene during the middle decades of the twentieth century and offers a sociological parsing of the musical spaces constructed within the city during that era. As a social history this book resonates with Peter D. Norton's *Fighting Traffic: The Dawn of the Motor Age in the American City* and Robert J. Sampson's *Great American City: Chicago and the Enduring Neighborhood Effect*.[1] Slobin's musical history, however, helps pioneer an area of musicology engaging cities as cultural performance spaces, joining studies such as Amy Absher's *The Black Musician and the White City: Race and Music in Chicago, 1900–1967*, and Leta E. Miller's *Music and Politics in San Francisco: From the 1906 Quake to the Second World War*.[2]

Slobin's effort to comprise Detroit's musical cultures in a formal study addresses a dearth of extant literature on the subject—a condition laid bare in this book's surprisingly brief appendix, "Sources for the City," outlining a select Detroit musical bibliography. Slobin is able to build on regionalized genre studies like Suzanne E. Smith's *Dancing in the Street: Motown and the Cultural Politics of Detroit* and Craig A. Maki and Keith Cady's *Detroit Country Music: Mountaineers, Cowboys, and Rockabillies*, but Slobin's subject—the musical life of a city—surpasses the scope of specific genre studies.[3] In the absence of a corpus of literature about Detroit as a musical entity, *Motor City Music* does not so much respond to ongoing musicological dialogue as break new ground. This work inhabits the fields of sociology and anthropology at least as comfortably as musicology,

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[1] Peter D. Norton, *Fighting Traffic: The Dawn of the Motor Age in the American City* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2008); Robert J. Sampson, *Great American City: Chicago and the Enduring Neighborhood Effect* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012).

[2] Amy Absher, *The Black Musician and the White City: Race and Music in Chicago, 1900–1967* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2014); Leta E. Miller, *Music and Politics in San Francisco: From the 1906 Quake to the Second World War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011).

[3] Suzanne E. Smith, *Dancing in the Street: Motown and the Cultural Politics of Detroit* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999); Craig A. Maki and Keith Cady, *Detroit Country Music: Mountaineers, Cowboys, and Rockabillies* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2013).

describing and analyzing the influence and confluence of urban groups. It is an intensely cross-disciplinary contribution. To the fields of cultural anthropology and sociology, it contributes a study of human migration and identity within an urban context, recalling French sociologist Henri Lefebvre's work on the social production of space.

As indicated by the title, *Motor City Music: A Detroiter Looks Back* is also a memoir. In the second chapter, Slobin relates the story of his family's emigration to America from Eastern Europe and his own 1943 birth in Detroit. He describes a strong sense of ethnic awareness from his early childhood: "I grew up never quite feeling like an 'American,'" he recalls. "There was the strong effect of the Yiddish spoken at home, memories of 'the Old Country,' including much music, and the minority status of being Jewish, though other European immigrant kids felt the same way in that era."[4] These early reminiscences are supported by charming photographs not only of his own childhood scenes, but also those of his parents and grandparents.

Slobin's personal recollections invest this work with an air of nostalgia for the world he knew as a youth growing up in Detroit from "the height of the city's power in the early 1940s" until the late 1960s, "when its decline could not be denied."[5] They also invest his perspective with personal subjectivity. Statements like, "when you traveled through an American city of the 1940s or 1950s, you sensed constant border crossings, even if the street sign never changed," reveal as much about the author's perspective as about the city's social geography.[6] Slobin remembers Detroit as a patchwork of distinct ethnic groups, some established and others recent arrivals. His exploration of musical cultural genres—jazz, polka, country, gospel, pop, rock, folk, the orchestral and choral traditions of European classicism—reveals a driving interest in the Polish, German, Greek, Ukrainian, Southern White, African American, Armenian, Croatian, and Serbian subcultures that made up the city. Slobin's investigation of Detroit's myriad musical ethnicities most closely focuses on the Jewish community—his own sub-cultural group—and generates a convincing central argument in *Motor City Music*: the convergence of immigrant groups drove the musical energies during Detroit's halcyon days, and the Jewish community in particular was crucial in guiding and broadly sustaining the cultures of the musical milieu.

Detroit in wartime attracted populations from around the world. For decades after it enjoyed a conspicuous position modeling a cosmopolitan future replete with cars, jobs, security, and social vibrancy. *Motor City*

[4] Mark Slobin, *Motor City Music: A Detroiter Looks Back* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), 13.
[5] Slobin, *Motor City Music*, 8.
[6] Slobin, *Motor City Music*, 67.

Music investigates the social forces shaping culture in the global automobile capital. Chapter three, "The Traffic Circle," explains how social structures of school, neighborhood, and industrial workspaces channeled young lives into specific and often unexpected courses. The fourth chapter, "Merging Traffic," surveys "the American drive for unity through music" and explores the social intercourse of musical traditions influenced by corporations, media, and labor groups interested in the process of pooling and mingling musical talent, including a fascinating and rare look at the sponsorship of music within the corporate cultures of Ford and General Motors.[7]

Slobin keenly recalls the power of school structures to provide or deny social and cultural opportunities to young Detroiters during what he calls "the golden age of public school music," describing at some length the conditions at Durfee Junior High, Miller High School (where his father taught social science), and his own alma mater Cass Tech, which he lionizes as the generator of "countless important musicians, from Gerald Wilson and Wardell Gray in the 1930s to Ron Carter and Diana Ross in the 1950s and 1960s to Geri Allen, Regina Carter, and Jack White in the 1980s and 1990s."[8] Slobin credits the founders and faculty of Cass Tech with generating a school culture that superseded ethnic identity among its students and "ran counter to the city's nagging sense of categories."[9] Slobin writes, "Cass represented Detroit's attempt to advance kids from every subculture simultaneously," an unusual concession in a book heavily emphasizing cultural divisions within society.[10]

Chapter five, "Border Traffic: The Jewish Location," constitutes an insightful history and ethnography of the Detroit Jewish community and is among the book's most valuable contributions, adding to a growing body of literature spotlighting the history of Jewish Detroit, including Sidney Bolkosky's *Harmony and Dissonance: Voices of Jewish Identity in Detroit, 1914–1967*, Deborah Dash Moore's *Urban Origins of American Judaism*, and Lila Corwin Berman's *Metropolitan Jews: Politics, Race, and Religion in Postwar Detroit*.[11] Slobin posits that the Jewish sub-culture "occupied an intriguing position in the city's cultural life, on the border

[7] Slobin, *Motor City Music*, 139-47.
[8] Slobin, *Motor City Music*, 48, 51.
[9] Slobin, *Motor City Music*, 55.
[10] Slobin, *Motor City Music*, 55.
[11] Sidney Bolkosky, *Harmony and Dissonance: Voices of Jewish Identity in Detroit, 1914–1967* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1991); Deborah Dash Moore, *Urban Origins of American Judaism* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2014); Lila Corwin Berman, *Metropolitan Jews: Politics, Race, and Religion in Postwar Detroit* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015).

between its own neighborhood and the wider world of municipal music."[12] He demonstrates that the Jewish community used music to reach the cultural mainstream and "cross the city's highly charged social borders" to effect a disproportionate influence on the musical life of Detroit.[13] Slobin also argues that the intensity of anti-Semitism during his youth made the Jewish community especially close-knit: "In Detroit's Jewish enclave of the 1940s, living near Twelfth Street allowed us to be neither 'ethnic' nor 'religious,' but just members of a kind of village with its customs, habits, and language. Anti-Semitism put the Jews in a [defensive] frame of mind, so ninety thousand people could make a world."[14]

Songs are central to the musical culture that Slobin describes: "songs are cultural currency—you never know when you'll earn them, save them, or spend them."[15] Slobin remembers songs his family cherished, in English, Hebrew, and Yiddish, expressing love, loss, freedom, and politics. He lingeringly explores Jewish contributions to Detroit's classical music scene and points to closely held Jewish traditions cultivating European high culture that served to centralize the importance of classical music to the Jewish community, identifying an array of such Jewish musical figures as Mischa Mischakoff, Karl Hass, Emma Lazaroff Schaver, and Julius Chajes as crucial to what he calls the "classical core" of the Jewish musical community.

Jews produced a profound impact on Detroit's musical culture through an unrelenting campaign of outreach into mainstream society: "the Jews of Detroit balanced the pressing spiritual, ideological, and aesthetic values of their dense, divisive internal life by making a sturdy and studied effort to cross their neighborhood border, flowing steadily into the mainstream musical traffic of the city."[16] While Jewish Detroit enjoyed a strong sense of cohesive identity, Slobin argues that the Jewish community rejected cultural insularity and energetically participated in the wider urban society: "cultural activity provided a positive atmosphere for the Jews to push out from their microworlds of music into the broader arena of Detroit's cultural activity, as a way of countering the intense animosity of much of the city's attitude toward the Jews and courting good will."[17] Slobin convincingly credits Detroit's Jewish sub-culture with a far broader contribution to the Detroit musical scene than had previously been recognized.

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[12] Slobin, *Motor City Music*, 72.
[13] Slobin, *Motor City Music*, 107.
[14] Slobin, *Motor City Music*, 110.
[15] Slobin, *Motor City Music*, 18.
[16] Slobin, *Motor City Music*, 137.
[17] Slobin, *Motor City Music*, 114.

Slobin's subject—the musical life of a highly diverse city over several decades—is a moving and difficult scholarly target: "In a city as raw and rough, varied and volatile as Detroit, the ground kept shifting. A synagogue would change into a church, the symphony hall into a jazz site and then back to a home for the orchestra. . . . No one lived where their parents had settled down; everyone listened to all kinds of music."[18] *Motor City Music*, however, is both thoroughly investigative and refreshingly accessible. It provides the casual reader with a thoughtful tour of the author's native city, while offering important simultaneous contributions to the scholarly fields of music history, sociology, cultural anthropology, and Jewish history.

[18] Slobin, *Motor City Music*, 8.

ESSAYS AND PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

In the Beginning: The History of JHSM, Celebrating 60 Years

Judith Levin Cantor and Jeannie Weiner

The Early Days

It is remarkable that in 1959, a group of Jewish Detroiters recognized the need to publish and promote Michigan's early Jewish history. As far as these leaders knew, no local institution of this nature had been established west of New York City. They were concerned that Michigan's unique Jewish history would be lost if not recorded.

Jewish Historical Society of Michigan was officially founded on Sunday, June 21, 1959. For most of the preceding decade, Jewish leaders in Detroit, including Philip Slomovitz, then editor of the *Detroit Jewish News*, had pushed for an organization to preserve and memorialize Detroit's Jewish community, as well as those of Ann Arbor, Flint, Bay City, Grand Rapids and neighboring towns such as South Haven, and the resort areas of Petoskey and Traverse City.

The organization initially focused on researching and recording Michigan's Jewish history, from the arrival of the first Jewish settlers in the early 1760s to the beginnings of Jewish migration into Detroit's suburbs in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Less than a year after JHSM's founding, the organization's official publication, *Michigan Jewish History* (*MJH*)—complete with a logo in both English and Hebrew and a distinguished editor, Rabbi Emanuel Applebaum of United Hebrew Schools—went to print. From that first issue until now, 60 years later, the journal has proven to be invaluable—irreplaceable—and a fascinating reference for all time.

Figure 1: JHSM's original 1959 logo. The Hebrew phrase was the organization's first slogan: **"When your children shall ask their fathers in time to come"** ***(Joshua 4:21). (JHSM collections.)***

JHSM's founders had lofty goals for the new publication. Scholar-rabbi Jacob Rader Marcus—who had helped found the American Jewish Archives at Hebrew Union College in 1947—recognized that the field of American Jewish history was young and understudied. In *MJH*'s first issue, he encouraged the organization to "contribute to our understanding of Jewish life in America . . . and to advance a discipline whose cultural value to the American Jew is potentially incalculable."

New Leaders and New Ideas

A generation later, a new group of JHSM leaders found inspiration in Marcus's directive. Struck by American history books' continued omission of Jewish participation in and direction of the nation's stories, this second generation sought a new editor for *MJH*, to produce a corrective to the textbooks, command a larger audience, and cultivate Michigan's Jewish communities' senses of pride and interconnection. In 1979 they passed the pen to Phillip Applebaum, who became editor of *MJH* and president of JHSM two years later. He was the ideal successor, having already published significant articles in the journal.

MJH's editors continued to maintain the central elements of JHSM's mission: research, scholarship, and publication. Attorney George Goldstone succeeded Phillip Applebaum in 1986. Three years later came Leonard N. Simons (who helped found the community archives housed at Detroit's Jewish Federation building), followed by Judith Levin Cantor (author of *Jews in Michigan* [East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2001]) from 1990 to 1998. Aimee Ergas was a gifted writer who began her tenure as editor in 1998. In 2003 Wendy Rose Bice assumed the role, as Ergas transitioned to being JHSM's first director, moving the organization into a partnership between volunteers and staff. Bice continued to edit *MJH* until 2018. Today, Catherine Cangany and Tracy Weissman serve as editor and managing editor, respectively. They are committed to continuing to raise the journal's profile and appeal to both scholars and the interested public. This issue includes its first peer-reviewed articles.

In 2012 Ergas departed JHSM to become an archivist at the Walter P. Reuther Library at Wayne State University. Bice replaced her and continued to serve as editor of the journal. As JHSM's first executive director, Bice continued to raise the organization's visibility and prestige. JHSM grew, and more volunteers became involved in its new activities and projects. Among them was the launch of bus tours led by trained docents, an enduring programming staple. Early tours highlighted Jewish sites in Detroit, the buildings of famed Jewish architect Albert Kahn, and historic synagogues no longer serving Jewish congregations.

The bus tours were instantly successful and soon expanded to reach other demographics. "We were very original," past president Judy Cantor

explains. "The tours had never been tried, especially with kids." On one of those early tours, Cantor recalls, groups of children arrived at the Detroit River, where they learned that Jews first came to Michigan from Montreal in huge canoes. She remembers an eight-year-old exclaiming, "Wow, I didn't know *that* about Jews!"

Even in its early years, the organization was active in campaigning for plaques to mark historic Jewish institutions, people, and events. "Credit the early society leadership. They had moxie. There were already six markers up when I became president [in 1993]," Cantor remembers. These included two markers erected in the 1960s: one memorializing Michigan's first Jewish settler, Ezekiel Solomons (often rendered Solomon), who arrived at Fort Michilimackinac in northern Michigan in 1761; and the other, Michigan's first Jewish cemetery on the University of Michigan's Ann Arbor campus.

Figure 2: Since the 1960s JHSM has spearheaded efforts to place historical markers at key sites, including at Fort Michilimackinac, where Michigan's first Jewish resident, Ezekiel Solomons, lived in 1761. Present at the May 31, 1964, dedication were JHSM President Dr. Irving I. Edgar (fourth from left), Treasurer Jonathan D. Hyams (fifth from right), and founder Allen A. Warsen (fourth from right). (JHSM collections.)

More recently, in April 2007 Senator Carl Levin addressed a large, enthusiastic crowd at the dedication of a new two-sided marker on the Detroit riverfront at William G. Milliken State Park, commemorating Michigan's Jewish Civil War soldiers and Detroit's first Jewish resident, fur-trader Chapman Abraham, who arrived in 1762. The ceremony included the surprise arrival of canoes paddled by Camp Tamarack counselors representing Detroit's original voyageurs. The marker continues to be an important stop on student and adult bus tours.

Figure 3: (left to right) JHSM Past President Judith Levin Cantor, Senator Carl Levin, Honorable Avern Cohn, and* Michigan Chronicle *publisher Samuel Logan Jr. were present at William G. Milliken State Park for the April 29, 2007, dedication of a two-sided historic marker honoring Detroit's first Jewish resident—fur-trader Chapman Abraham, who arrived in 1762—and the 181 Jewish soldiers from Michigan who served in the Civil War. (JHSM collections.)

In this era JHSM also expanded its programmatic offerings, launching several history exhibits. In 1997 JHSM sponsored and presented "Becoming American Women: Clothing and the Jewish Immigrant Experience" at the Detroit Historical Museum (DHM). Photos of this pathbreaking exhibit can be seen at the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit building in Bloomfield Hills.

That exhibit was followed by another collaboration with the DHM in 2009. Under Aimee Ergas's direction, JHSM and the DHM brought in "From Haven to Home: 350 Years of Jewish Life in America," a traveling exhibit created by the Library of Congress. JHSM supplemented the exhibit's original panels with materials highlighting our local story. As during the first collaborative exhibit, JHSM-trained docents brought the exhibit alive for busloads of Michiganders and tourists from other states.

Figure 4: JHSM docent Judy Nolish tells the story of "From Haven to Home: 350 Years of Jewish Life in America," a 2009 collaborative exhibit between JHSM, the Detroit Historical Museum, and the Library of Congress. (JHSM collections.)

The Last Ten Years: Exhibits, Tours, Programs

In the last ten years, JHSM has continued to create innovative programs and tours. In 2014 then-president Michael Maddin developed a popular summer event, a cruise on the Detroit River, with period costumes, professional actors, and period-appropriate music to commemorate the Jewish community during Prohibition.

Figure 5: On July 23, 2014, JHSM President Michael W. Maddin and Donna Maddin hosted a Detroit River Cruise & Schmooze, a salute to the Jewish community during Prohibition. (Courtesy of Ben Friedman.)

The 2016 exhibit, "Chasing Dreams: Baseball and Becoming American," was another successful collaboration with the DHM. This most unusual exhibit, developed by Aimee Ergas, was brought from Philadelphia's National Museum of American Jewish History, and expanded to include local stories, including that of Detroit Tigers legend Hank Greenberg. In 2018 JHSM undertook its most ambitious event yet: "The Henry Ford: Through a Jewish Lens." This one-day collaboration with The Henry Ford Museum of American Innovation™ considered Henry Ford's anti-Semitism alongside the designs and inventions of Jewish innovators represented among the museum's collections.

Figure 6: Textile artist Ruth Adler Schnee (left) discusses her work with Dr. Tor Shwayder (center) and former JHSM Director Aimee Ergas (right) at JHSM's November 18, 2018, collaboration with The Henry Ford, "Through a Jewish Lens." (Courtesy of KMS Photography.)

Expanding on the success of the bus tours, but using a different form of transportation, in 2010 past president Jerry Cook and executive director Wendy Bice initiated an annual bicycle tour: J-Cycle. Cyclists stop at about seven curated sites, staffed by docents, along a roughly eighteen-mile route. J-Cycle has become a huge event, attracting more than

two hundred eager cyclists and propelling exciting new partnerships. Last year's iteration included an unprecedented collaboration with Hazon's Jewish Food Festival.

Figure 7: JHSM hosts an annual bike tour of historic Jewish Detroit, J-Cycle. Here, cyclists from the inaugural 2011 ride head for the finish at William G. Milliken State Park. (JHSM collections.)

In the last decade, JHSM's programming for students has become more sophisticated and relevant, buoyed by input from religious educators. The Traveling Trunk—an interactive series on Michigan Jewish history for students in grades four through six that combines the youth bus tour with four sessions in the classroom—has become part of the curriculum in most Detroit-area religious schools. In 2019 JHSM launched an all-new youth bus tour, a field study combining historical content with hands-on experiences, including a fur-trade encampment at William G. Milliken State Park, a Shabbat-candle-making activity, a "meet and greet" in Eastern Market with a peddler from the early 1900s, and an opportunity to run the bases with Hank Greenberg at The Corner Ballpark, former home of the Detroit Tigers.

Figure 8: In 2019 JHSM unveiled its revamped youth bus tour, part of the Traveling Trunk curriculum on Michigan Jewish history for religious-school students in grades four through six. In this experiential field study, students "meet" an early 1900s fruit peddler at Eastern Market, played here by educator Tova H. Schreiber. (JHSM collections.)

For those who wish to stay indoors and "visit" remotely, JHSM's Speakers' Bureau offers virtual tours of historic sites, a valuable tool for teaching about the community's past. Topics include the early years of Michigan's Jewish history, the tale of Michigan's synagogues, the history of Michigan's Jewish cemeteries, the history of the neighborhoods of Northwest Detroit, and stories of Michigan's remarkable Jewish women. This last virtual tour grew out of Aimee Ergas's extensive research for her 2014 book, *Michigan Women Who Made a Difference* (West Bloomfield, Michigan: Jewish Historical Society of Michigan, 2014).

Figure 9: JHSM's Speakers' Bureau offers armchair journeys to historic sites through interactive lectures. Docents for the Michigan Women Who Made a Difference Speakers' Bureau presentation in 2014 included: (left to right) Cindy Daitch, Sharon Alterman, Margery Jablin, Jeannie Weiner, Risha B. Ring, Sheri Terebelo Schiff, Fran Hildebrandt, Judie Blumeno, and Aimee Ergas. (JHSM collections.)

The incomparable stories of Michigan's Jewish women also have produced symposia, including a 2016 "Jewish Voices" conference at Temple Emanuel in Grand Rapids, and an online gallery. As part of its mission to preserve history, JHSM plans to enlarge the gallery and make it increasingly useful to students, scholars, and the interested public, with biographies, photographs, and primary sources.

Figure 10: In June 2016 JHSM held a "Jewish Voices" conference at Grand Rapids' Temple Emanuel. Part of the Michigan Women Who Made a Difference project, events included a panel discussion on cultural barriers faced by Jewish women, facilitated by three academics: (left to right) Karla Goldman, Natalie K. Rose, and Linda J. Borish. (JHSM collections.)

In 2018 JHSM welcomed a new executive director—a true historian with a PhD in history. Catherine Cangany took the reins from Wendy Bice. She intends to maintain the high standards of the organization and, with the assistance of JHSM's many dedicated volunteers, continue to improve on the delivery of history to an even wider audience.

Figure 11: Wendy Rose Bice, JHSM's longtime executive director and MJH ***editor, is pictured at her November 2018 farewell party with the three presidents with whom she worked: (left to right) Michael W. Maddin (2014-2016), Arnold Collens (2008-2012), and Gerald S. Cook (2012-2014). (Courtesy of Elayne Gross Photography.)***

In 1959 one of JHSM's primary goals was to "encourage all projects, celebrations and other activities which tend to spread authentic information that concerns Michigan Jewish history." Sixty years later, we say, "Amen to that!"

ESSAYS AND PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Allen A. Warsen and the Founding of JHSM: Recollections by His Daughter

Annette Friedman

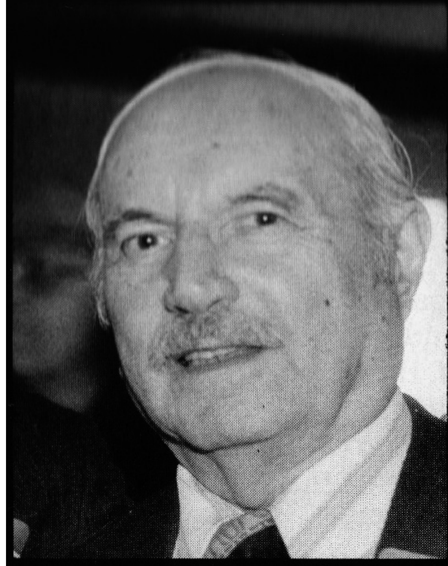


Figure 1: Cody High School history teacher Allen A. Warsen founded JHSM in 1959. (Courtesy of author.)

It was only natural that my dad, Allen A. Warsen, founded JHSM, as he taught Jewish subjects in his birthplace (Poland), social studies for fifteen years at the Higginbotham School (Detroit), and history for eighteen years at Cody High School (Detroit). By the time JHSM was established in 1959, my dad also had written several pamphlets: "The Religious School at the Northwest Congregation, 1940-1950," "Jewish Communal Institutions in Detroit in 1952," and "The Adas Shalom Religious School, 1945-1955," where my dad served as director for eighteen years.

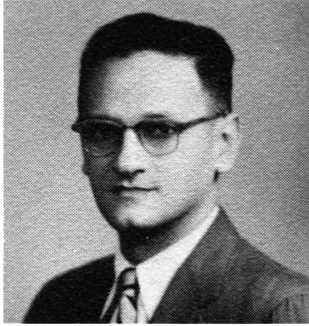
In 1954 the American Jewish community celebrated the 300th anniversary of the arrival of Jewish settlers in New Amsterdam, now New York. Philip Slomovitz, then editor of the *Detroit Jewish News*, asked my dad to serve on a local Tercentenary Celebration Committee, where he proposed that Detroit Public School students learn about the American Jewish community's milestone. It was rejected. More than fifteen years later, the spring 1970 issue of *NEWS*, the American Jewish Historical Society's bulletin, reported that New York City

secondary schools had introduced elective courses in American Jewish history. A delayed victory. Another time my dad wanted to introduce Hebrew to Oak Park schools at a time when there were many Jewish students attending. The outcome is unknown.

Hebrew and Yiddish were very important to my dad, as was keeping up on current events. He spent time sitting in his recliner in our living room reading newspapers in both languages, such as the Yiddish-language *Forward*, along with the local paper and the *Commentary*. He also enjoyed listening to news commentators on the radio, including Drew Pearson and Walter Winchell.

Figure 2: To maintain his Hebrew- and Yiddish-language skills and to keep up with current events, Allen A. Warsen regularly read multiple newspapers in Hebrew, Yiddish, and English. (Courtesy of author.)

I recall my father and Jonathan Hyams (JHSM's treasurer and co-editor of *Michigan Jewish History*) sitting at the dining-room table working on materials for JHSM. I was recruited to put letters in envelopes and seal them. At the time I was a teenager and had little interest in this project! Names heard at home of some of JHSM's first members include Richard Leland, Irving Edgar, Irving Katz, and Rabbi Emanuel Applebaum.



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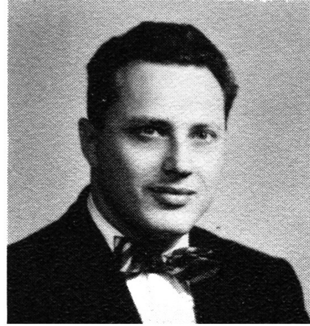
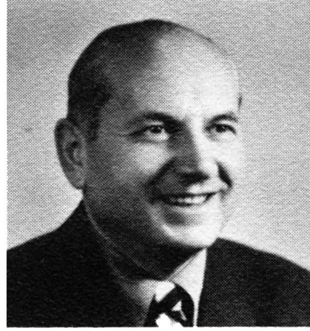


R. LELAND

M. NADIS



A. WARSEN

Figure 3: Photos from the 1959 Cody High School yearbook of Allen A. Warsen and fellow JHSM founders Arnold Glovinsky, Richard Leland, and Maxwell Nadis. All four were teachers at the school. (JHSM collections.)

My dad also spent a lot of time researching Michigan's Jewish history during JHSM's early years. He worked in the basement, writing ample correspondence on his typewriter to gather historical information. I recall his many trips to the Detroit Public Library's Burton Historical Collection to do research and deposit discoveries.

Despite being involved in JHSM as one of its organizers and founding members, my dad found time to write and be active in the community. His writings and activities included:

- 1971: *Autobiographical Episodes*
- 1973-77: Chair of the Yiddish Committee at the Oak Park Jewish Community Center
- 1974: *Addenda to Autobiographical Episodes*
- 1978: *The Destruction of the Mlawa [Poland] Jewish Community*

For many years, Philip Slomovitz, editor and publisher of the *Detroit Jewish News*, provided my dad with books to review. Two hundred and fifty of my dad's book reviews were published in the *Detroit Jewish News*.

My dad was passionate and dedicated to JHSM and so proud of its many accomplishments. If my dad had dared to dream, he would have hoped to see the journal's longevity, and the society have its own space, a full-time executive director, an education director, a publications editor, events coordinators, and an office manager. WOW, some wild dreams do come true! As a daughter, it is so gratifying to see the beginning of a vision succeed and grow through hard work, dedication, and persistence.

ESSAYS AND PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Before There Was JARC: The Detroit Community's Response to Developmental Disabilities

Arnold Collens

On a Thursday night in May 1963, "The Israel Boys" happily played kickball on the Detroit Jewish Community Center sports field. "The Israel Girls" made bracelets, hopping to radio music such as "If You Wanna Be Happy" by Jimmy Soul, and "From Me to You" by The Beatles. A third JCC group, "The Detroiters," baked and frosted a cake that all three groups would share as snacks at the end of the evening.

Together, the three groups of young adults with developmental disabilities constituted the Thursday Night Social Groups (TNSG), formally known as "The Young Israel Club." With the usual buzz of excitement, they—along with JCC members who swam, used the gym, danced, ate in Henry Sperber's Kosher, cafeteria-style snack bar, and attended classes—filled the building. Everything was ordinary on a Thursday night.

It was a marked contrast to a Thursday evening just over a year earlier when "The Detroiters" club leader, Ralph Levy, and "The Israel Boys" club leader, Arnold (Arnie) Collens, signed their time cards in the JCC's group services offices. It was 7:00 p.m. and JCC administrative staff members Golda Shapiro and Molly Isbee, along with JCC group services director Allan Gelfond, went to work making sure the TNSG meetings started on time. Following the JCC's policy at the time of not allowing TNSG participants to mingle with Center members, a call was made to confirm the swimming pool was cleared of all JCC members. By 7:30 p.m. the locker rooms were empty, and the TNSG were allowed to enter. After showering and using the buddy system to pair up, the groups continued to the swimming pool area. With lifeguards in place and parents watching, the TNSG entered the water, some with difficulty, others nervously complaining about the water temperature.

On that Thursday night in 1962, activities started with closely monitored, regimented exercise in the shallow end of the pool. The session ended with free play that ignited laughter and smiles of freedom. Nerves calmed, parents smiled. Excitement and chatter continued as the groups dressed and left for snacks in their tucked-away, second-floor meeting rooms. Regular Center members then returned to the locker room and pool, unaware of what had just occurred.

And yet, just one year later, the practice of separating TNSG participants from JCC members had come to an end. What influences and changes happened to cause the JCC to become part of the mainstreaming movement, after initially opposing the idea?

In the first half of the twentieth century, normalizing options, or mainstreaming, as it is now called, for children with special needs were limited by more than family resources. Societal norms dictated that such people should live in institutional settings or be cloistered at home. Families felt alone, with few options and no sources of advocacy or support. Many family members thought beyond shelter and protection, asking how, especially after their demise, they could provide a secure future for their loved ones.

In the Eisenhower-inspired 1950s, Detroit and its Jewish community began creating and building organizations to improve the lives of individuals with disabilities. From 1955 to 1969, the community formed and blended several widely different mindsets and advocacy groups. People with developmental disabilities began to come out of their homes and institutions. Organizations built momentum, opened employment opportunities, formed social clubs, and worked with parents to organize. Shifting attitudes took shape at home and in institutions.

DARC

In 1952 Jewish parents of children with developmental disabilities became involved in Detroit's first advocacy group for special-needs children, the Detroit Association for Retarded Children (DARC). Sara Mitteldorf, a founding member and the board's first secretary, was instrumental in obtaining funds for DARC. In the late 1940s and early 1950s, Mitteldorf worked as a bookkeeper at Associated Industries, a furniture store on Detroit's Fort Street. Milton Kogan worked there as a salesman. They and their spouses, Morris Mitteldorf and Evelyn Kogan, became close friends. When their daughters, Barbara Mitteldorf, who had disabilities, and Carole Kogan, played together, both sets of parents could see there was a need for community help with mainstreaming.

Sara Mitteldorf introduced Evelyn Kogan to DARC. As past president of the Jewish women's group, Northwest Child Rescue Women (NCRW), Evelyn Kogan thought NCRW might help DARC raise much-needed funds. NCRW more than met the challenge. After she became NCRW's camp chairperson in 1955, Evelyn Kogan directed NCRW to create on DARC's behalf what is thought to be the first camp program in the United States for people with disabilities.

NCRW's fundraising efforts were just the beginning. Other Jewish organizations also stepped up. For example, the Sheruth League, guided by its president, Ann Chapin, and the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) provided funding for DARC's camp program.

Guided by the success of the DARC camp experience, Jewish religious groups established recreation, socialization, and religious programming for individuals with special needs. In 1955, with little lead time before the school year started, DARC treasurer Jeannette Pernick and special education teacher Ruth Aron approached Rabbi M. Robert Syme at Detroit's Temple Israel to start what is thought to be the first Sunday school class in the United States for what it termed "slow learners." The concept would popularize in the 1970s and evolve into today's inclusive mainstreaming practices for people with developmental disabilities.

Several NCRW leaders would go on to receive "Heart of Gold" recognition from the city for their work with DARC. For four years in the mid-1960s, NCRW itself received keys to the city of Detroit from mayor Jerome Cavanagh for raising funds to send DARC participants to the city's Department of Recreation Fresh Air Camp in nearby Brighton.

Creation of the Thursday Night Social Groups

Following these early successes, Jewish parents of individuals with disabilities from within DARC approached JCC executive director Irwin Shaw in the fall of 1958. By formal letter, they requested a Center social program containing Jewish religious content for the 25 to 35 Jewish people, ages 16 to 40, in DARC. A full year later, Jeannette Pernick, who had written Shaw, learned that the Center would "negotiate with your group and parents regarding Jewish Retarded Young Adults and Adults."

DARC members Pernick, Sara Mitteldorf, and Harry Berlin represented the parents in negotiations, with support from Center president Samuel Frankel and JCC board member Beatrice Rowe. Although he initially opposed the idea, fearing the Center would lose members if the program was located at the JCC, in time Shaw also became an important advocate.

Community support and funding became key issues. NCRW went back to work, raising money by selling aprons, hosting luncheons and dinner dances, holding rummage sales, and soliciting funds in front of Hudson's department store and on other busy Woodward Avenue street corners. With this seed money, the TNSG program, initially called "The Special Young Adult Group," was born at the JCC in the spring of 1960. The nucleus of the program's membership came from the Temple Israel Sunday school class for "slow learners."

The majority of original club members lived at home, and their parents escorted them to the JCC on meeting nights. Others walked, came

by hired car or cab, carpooled, or took buses requiring transfers from Detroit's East Grand Boulevard group homes. It was rare when someone was not on time, as activities building friendships became the highlight of each member's week.

The TNSG were comprised of three groups: The Israel Girls (ages 16 to 25), The Israel Boys (ages 16 to 25), and The Detroiters group (ages 26 to late adulthood). Under the direction of JCC group services director Allan (Geli) Gelfond, initial TNSG staff members included JCC employees Maxine Ordower and Allan Freedman who served as program aides and the first club leaders of The Israel Girls and The Israel Boys groups, respectively. In 1962 Ralph Levy, a vocational rehabilitation specialist for the state of Michigan, who in 1959 had worked under Gelfond as a woodworking instructor at Detroit's JCC on Davison, became group leader of The Detroiters. Also in 1962 Arnie Collens, a Wayne State University student and part-time JCC tween group leader, replaced Allan Freedman as leader of The Israel Boys.

Figure 1: Detroiters group leader Ralph Levy calls Bingo for TNSG participants, circa late 1960s. (All photos courtesy of JCC Collection, Leonard N. Simons Jewish Community Archives, Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit, Max M. Fisher Building, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan.)

Levy and Collens, together with Sharon Alterman, who in 1965 became a program aide, and Cheryl Guyer, who in 1968 worked as a program aide and later as a TNSG club leader, became a constant in the lives of TNSG members into the 1970s. It was not uncommon for group members to be invited guests at Ralph Levy's dinner table or spend time on weekends visiting Arnie and Dorothy Collens at their home. Early staff are still involved in JARC today.

TNSG Programming

The TNSG staff created a culture of unconditional acceptance, respect, and parity. Groups were expected to plan the same types of weekly activities as for groups of young adults without special needs. Gelfond recalled:

> The new (1960) Curtis and Meyers JCC [in Detroit] was a neighborhood place with a staff that made it warm and impactful. We made real progress. We didn't plan for a special group; we did what normal groups do at the Center, in the community, at camp, and on trips. The TNSG staff treated each person with the attention necessary to make them feel they were part of the community. The staff had special skills; none were professionally trained in social work, yet all carried within themselves a passion, gentleness, sense of humor, and non-judgmental disposition.

In the early years, typical activities included shooting baskets, jumping on the trampoline, swimming, and playing organized games like kickball and bingo. Programming specialist Linda Collens, Arnie's sister, later introduced Israeli dancing, art projects, and how-to-dress programs, including how to use makeup. The groups made and sold craft items to raise money for activities. They also planned annual family events, including Passover seders and Hanukkah parties.

Figure 2: Eva Davidson sells craft items made by TNSG participants, circa late 1960s.

It was not unusual for JCC executive director Irwin Shaw to observe activities for a minute or two and then give an approving smile. Once he saw the experiment was working, he would be on his way. Later, he would write notes of thanks, praise, and support to members of the JCC staff. No one remembers him asking for praise in return.

By the mid-1960s, additional services were made available to the TNSG. Ralph Levy's children, Ruth and Sam, began working one-on-one with those who needed help with autism and self-esteem. Leonard Rachmiel, PhD, instituted a reading program, and Ronald Trunsky, MD, of Sinai Hospital provided requested psychiatric and medical exams and conducted the first social awareness and sex-education classes for the groups.

Figure 3: TNSG participants during one of their many weekend trips to Camp Tamarack, circa 1972.

NCRW continued to provide financial support as the TNSG program evolved. Starting in the mid-1960s, NCRW helped pay for weekends at Camp Tamarack and trips to Toronto, Chicago, and Washington, DC. In December 1968, the organization helped fund the TNSG participants' first journey by airplane to New York City. NCRW's support for individuals with disabilities continues today through the Northwest Child Rescue Women Fund for Special Needs at the JCC of Metropolitan Detroit.

Figure 4: Participants sightsee during TNSG's first trip to New York City in 1968. Pictured are: (front row left to right) Noam Gelfond, Audrey Yarrows, Janet Graff, and Mark Pearlman; (back row left to right) Gil Golden, unknown, Bob Winer, Judy Zager, and Larry Rosenberg.

Creation of JARC and the Organization's First Group Home

At the same time that the TNSG were getting off the ground, researchers, such as Wolf Wolfensberger, PhD, director of research at Plymouth State Home and Training School in 1963-1964, were beginning to see the benefits of including individuals with disabilities in mainstream society. Wolfensberger believed in normalization (today called mainstreaming), a method in which people with disabilities have access to the "patterns of life and conditions of everyday living which are as close as possible to the regular circumstances and ways of life or society." His and others' research helped pave the way for society's later adoption of mainstreaming, integration, and inclusion approaches to assisting individuals with disabilities.

While movement away from institutionalization greatly benefited children with disabilities, it created some new concerns: long-term care options, employment opportunities, comprehensive social support, and housing. Chief among them was long-term care. By the mid-1960s, parents of TNSG participants began meeting to discuss these and other concerns related to raising children with disabilities. On August 28, 1969, they officially formed the Parents' Association for Jewish Residential Care, which later became known as Jewish Association for Retarded Citizens, today known as JARC.

Founding Officers	Founding Directors	
Harry Berlin ***President***	Evelyn Bider	Norman Kleinman
Stella Kraft ***Vice President***	William Boone	Ruth Mendelson
Tessie Resnick ***Recording Secretary***	Dr. Meyer Elman	Dr. Henry Raskin
Ester Granat ***Corresponding Secretary***	Arnold Flack	Bernard Sukenic
Sara Mitteldorf ***Treasurer***	Dr. Laslo Galdonyi	Joseph Tanzman
	Ruth Golden	Harry Wohl
	Marion Goldman	

Table 1: Initial officers and directors of the Parents' Association for Jewish Residential Care, founded on August 28, 1969, and today known as JARC. (Original listings have been updated to include female officers' and directors' first names.)

The parents group approached the Jewish Welfare Federation of Detroit, today known as the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit, for help. Within Federation, Jewish Vocational Service of Detroit, now known as Jewish Vocational Service and Community Workshop (JVS), stepped in, providing work counseling to young adults. It also opened a workshop that included opportunities for Jewish workers with developmental disabilities. By the time JARC was formed in 1969, the TNSG had 67 members, of whom 62 had some form of employment, training, or schooling. Of that number, seventeen worked in workshops: four were employed at the JVS workshop, and thirteen were employed in a workshop operated by DARC.

Likewise, Jewish Family & Children's Service (JFCS), now known as Jewish Family Service (JFS), worked on an individual casework basis offering guidance and referral assistance to the developmentally disabled and their families. By the late 1960s, JFCS was aware that those being discharged from institutions and those without families needed services and prepared to help them adjust.

Figure 5: TNSG Israel-Detroiter typing program. Pictured (left to right) are Sharon Alterman, JCC program aide and later JCC liaison to TNSG parents group; Janet Indenbaum, daughter of JCC group services secretary Shirley Indenbaum; and TNSG participant Janet Graff.

Securing independent living for Jewish adults with disabilities proved to be a great challenge. Rabbi Solomon Gruskin, the first chaplain rabbi for the State of Michigan Department of Mental Health Institutions, worked tirelessly with the parents group and then JARC to create the first group home in the Detroit area for Jewish adults with disabilities. In the mid-1960s, Gruskin invited Sara Mitteldorf and Sharon Alterman to see first-hand what life was like inside an institution. The disturbing visit motivated the women to continue their efforts, in conjunction with the parents group, to make Jewish group homes available to disabled adults in the Detroit area. In 1967 Shaw officially assigned Alterman to be the JCC liaison to the parents group, with the task of developing a model for group living.

Gruskin introduced the parents group to Hillel (James) Rosenfeld, PhD, a member of the task force created to depopulate the Wayne County Child Development Center, who understood the plight of people moving from institutions. He educated the group on the nature of group homes, federal legislation, licensing, public funding, and JCC support.

With the help of Alterman, Mitteldorf, and Harry Berlin, the parents group approached Federation to seek funding for housing. At the same time Gruskin, also on behalf of the parents, and Rosenfeld, representing the state, asked Federation officials to encourage community participation, funding, and a favorable housing outcome.

On December 2, 1970, Federation agreed that "services to the Jewish retarded properly belong within the scope of on-going agency programs and are to be encouraged," but admitted "[we don't] know enough about the dimensions of need, the services to be rendered, the kind of facility under consideration or the cost involved."

Federation's response was that it would take no action but would ask the organization's Health and Welfare Division to look into the need. Sixteen months passed before its Sub-Committee on Mental Retardation responded. The organization's position had not changed. The sub-committee said, "The Parents' Association will advance its interests best by clarifying its objective and retaining its full independence of action and initiative." Simply stated, Federation would not actively help with housing.

Despite their disappointment, the JARC parents were not deterred. They developed a fundraising strategy to open group homes. Among JARC's early supporters were Philip Slomovitz, then editor and publisher of the *Detroit Jewish News*, and his wife, Anna. Slomovitz arranged for an article to appear in his newspaper chronicling JARC's accomplishments and needs, including, in particular, funding for a Jewish group home. Charlotte Dubin's February 13, 1970, article, "Center Opens New Horizons to Retarded—But Need for Jobs, Home Clouds Future," found both new supporters and new people in need.

JARC also raised money for a documentary film to help bring attention to the organization and the need for group homes. Fred Doner of the advertising agency, W.B. Doner & Company, together with filmmakers Naomi and Sidney Siegel, produced "Barbara & Yetta," a powerful film contrasting the lives of Yetta Schneider, who lived in an institution (the Lapeer Home and Training School), and Barbara Mitteldorf, who lived at home. The film helped open minds and hearts and motivated the community to change attitudes and help.

Gruskin's and Rosenfeld's efforts also helped. Based on Michigan legal precedent, state funds were made available, along with funds from Sam Frankel, for the parents to create JARC's first group home on Evergreen Road in Detroit in 1972. More JARC homes followed, including in Oakland County, where Jewish families were moving.

It is now 60 years since the birth of the TNSG. Those first ten years brought parents and a community together. Their key to success was opening doors so that others could get involved and help. The women of NCRW who fought so hard to initiate the TNSG built an endowment

that still serves the groups. Rabbi Gruskin's dream of providing independence for the developmentally disabled is alive. The JCC, its group services staff headed by Allan Gelfond, and caring and productive program aides, Sharon Alterman and Cheryl Guyer, had the vision and put the building blocks in place. Along with the parents, this is their story.

Author's note: Limited by space, I present this essay as a representation of my research. I recognize that several others have made contributions to ensure the future of people with developmental disabilities. I have written this recollection of history also to recognize their efforts. May this writing encourage more research on this subject.

Arnold Collens has degrees in education and business from Wayne State University and is a retiree from the business world. He served as president of JHSM for five years during a period of dynamic growth (2008-2012) and was honored in 2018 as the recipient of the Leonard N. Simons History-Maker Award. Collens has previously written for *Michigan Jewish History* and is an avid storyteller of Detroit's growth and history. He likes to bring to the fore his understanding of social justice and how people live.

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ART TREASURES

The Journey of the Petzolt Double-Cup at the Detroit Institute of Arts

Gail Fisher

Among the more than 65,000 diverse works of art at the Detroit Institute of Arts (DIA) is the Hans Petzolt Double-Cup, a magnificent pair of silver-gilt cups from 1596. The gleaming Double-Cup, located in the museum's Renaissance Gallery, belies its harrowing journey to its present home. Owned by preeminent Jewish families, confiscated by the Nazis, and later recovered by the Monuments Men, the Double-Cup has a fascinating history spanning more than four centuries.

Figure 1: Hans Petzolt's magnificent inverted Double-Cup (1596) traveled for four centuries before arriving at its current home at the DIA, surviving both World Wars and confiscation by the Nazis. (Except where noted, all photos in this article are courtesy of the DIA.)

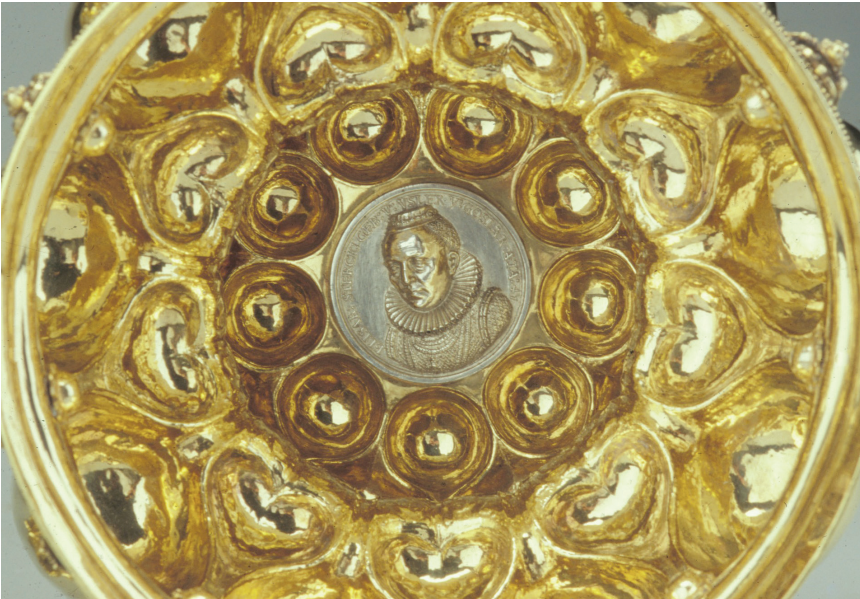

Figure 2 (upper) and Figure 3 (lower): Although typically crafted to mark important events such as a wedding or dignitary's visit, the DIA's Double-Cup was commissioned in 1596 by Jacob Starck to celebrate his own public service. Starck's portrait appears in the bottom of the right cup in Figure 2. Figure 3 shows a close-up of his portrait.

1596: Hans Petzolt Creates the Double-Cup

The Double-Cup's journey began in Nuremberg, Germany, in 1596 when Hans Petzolt (1551-1633), a distinguished and prominent goldsmith, created the silver-gilt cups. His specialty was large, elaborate standing cups used as ceremonial gifts, a custom extending well into the seventeenth century. From 1595 to 1616, Petzolt received more commissions for ceremonial cups than any other goldsmith in the city. One such commission was from Jacob Starck (1550-1617), who ordered the Double-Cup to celebrate either his appointment as magistrate of Nuremberg or his service as chairman of Nuremberg's Executive Council.

The Double-Cup consists of two similarly sized cups, with one inverted onto the other for display. Petzolt adorned the Gothic design of each cup's solid silver surface with richly ornamental, embossed Renaissance motifs of foliate (leaf) scrolls and caryatids (female figures). Stamped on the exterior rim of each bowl and on the rim of each foot is Petzolt's mark (a ram's head within a shield) and Nuremburg's town mark (an "N" within a shield). Portraits of Starck and his wife, Elizabeth, along with their individual coats of arms, are engraved in silver medals at the bottom of each cup. This Petzolt Double-Cup is believed to be the only object of its kind in an American collection.

The Double-Cup began its remarkable journey from Nuremberg to Detroit when Baron Karl Meyer von Rothschild of Frankfurt, Germany, purchased it around 1885. The Rothschild family held the Double-Cup for only a short time, selling it to Eugen Gutmann before 1912.

1912-1940: The Gutmann Family Owns the Double-Cup

Born in Dresden, Germany, in 1840 to Bernhard and Marie Gutmann, Eugen Gutmann was raised in a Jewish home and attended Dresden's Jewish school. This environment seems to have been particularly important to Bernhard Gutmann, who descended from a line of rabbis and rabbinical judges. Unlike many German Jews who assimilated in the rapidly changing modern world, the elder Gutmann upheld Jewish traditions until his death in 1895.

Around the time of Eugen Gutmann's birth, economic and commercial restrictions for Jews were lifted. This more tolerant climate meant that Bernhard Gutmann could pursue a career in banking instead of money changing. Like his father, Eugen became a banker. After his father's bank proved too conservative and restrictive for him, in 1872 Eugen Gutmann launched the Dresdner Bank. It helped the Gutmanns and Germany prosper, financing the country's industries and growing international interests. Eugen Gutmann and his wife, Sophie, along with their seven children, became one of Germany's wealthiest families.

Eugen Gutmann used his wealth to amass a sizable art collection—a symbol of his appreciation for beauty, as well as his power and prestige. At the center of this rapidly expanding collection were numerous German Renaissance silver-gilt pieces, including goldsmith Wenzel Jamnitzer's famous Orpheus Clock. Together, they highlight Gutmann's fascination with the merger of style and function. Known collectively as the Silbersammlung Gutmann, or Gutmann silver and gold collection, these pieces became renowned throughout Europe.

In 1898, a few years after his father died, Eugen Gutmann and his family converted to Lutheranism. Formerly a non-practicing Jew, he now was a non-practicing Christian—undoubtedly a calculated commercial and social move. In the eyes of most Germans, however, Gutmann was still a "Jewish" banker. Unlike in earlier generations, when anti-Semitism was based on religion, in the early twentieth century, it was based on bloodlines and heritage. Jews were now thought of as a distinct racial group, regardless of religious practice.

Eugen Gutmann's youngest child, Friedrich or "Fritz," would become the next owner of the Double-Cup, possessing it during the tumultuous decades of the early twentieth century. While living in London, Fritz Gutmann met and married Baroness Louise von Landau in 1913. Despite Eugen Gutmann's reservations, the marriage took place in a London church, as Landau also was a convert to Christianity.

The happiness of the occasion and the protections conversion offered were short lived. In 1914 World War I began. Germany invaded Belgium. Great Britain in turn declared war on Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire, simultaneously clamping down on its German population. The Alien Restriction Act of 1914 required all German nationals living in Great Britain to register, preventing Fritz Gutmann from leaving. Louise Gutmann and their newborn son Bernard were allowed to go to Germany, where they lived with Eugen Gutmann. Fritz Gutmann spent much of the war interned on the Isle of Man, ultimately released to the Netherlands as a result of an agreement signed in The Hague.

After the war, Fritz Gutmann opened a branch of the Dresdner Bank outside Amsterdam. Soon Louise and Bernard Gutmann joined him in the Netherlands, where they moved into a grand estate called Bosbeek. Among its features was a specially built safe to house the family's silver collection, including the Petzolt Double-Cup, which Fritz Gutmann had inherited following his father's death in 1925. This generation of Gutmanns prospered during the interwar 1920s, possessing one of the most well-known art and silver collections in Europe.

The following decade proved much more difficult. In January 1933 Adolf Hitler became Chancellor of Germany, intensifying the

persecution of Jews throughout Europe. Fully aware of escalating anti-Semitism, Fritz Gutmann stubbornly refused to leave Holland, feeling a false sense of security due to his prestige, wealth, and connections.

1940: Nazis Confiscate the Double-Cup

As its power grew, the Nazi regime began to purge Germany of "degenerate" art owned by Jews and loot Jewish art collections for the regime's personal enrichment. Even before the May 10, 1940, invasion of the Netherlands, Hitler had targeted Fritz Gutmann's art collection for confiscation, sending agents to scout his pieces. Just one month after the invasion, Nazi art dealers arrived at Bosbeek. They seized the Double-Cup, along with other silver items, on behalf of Reichsmarschall Hermann Göring, a Nazi leader who had amassed a personal fortune by plundering Jewish-owned art. A payment far beneath the value of the art pieces was deposited into Fritz Gutmann's bank account. The account was soon frozen.

By the spring of 1942, the Nazis had confiscated most of the Gutmanns' possessions. The family was confined to Bosbeek under house arrest. Soon, the Nazis took title to Bosbeek and sent almost all the Jews in Amsterdam to the ghetto. Going into hiding was not an option as the Gutmann family was too well-known and closely watched.

On May 26, 1943, Gestapo agents escorted Fritz and Louise Gutmann to a train station, where they boarded a first-class compartment, believing they were headed to Italy, where their daughter Lili lived. Instead, they were forced to switch trains in Berlin. Their new destination, in what is now the Czech Republic, was Theresienstadt, a combination ghetto and concentration camp. There, in April 1944, Fritz Gutmann was beaten to death. On July 2, 1944, Louise Gutmann was deported to Auschwitz and sent to the gas chamber.

1945: The Monuments Men Recover the Double-Cup

In 1943 the American government formed a joint Allied military unit of roughly four hundred male and female art historians and other experts in uniform to recover and return to their rightful owners works of art stolen by the Nazis. The Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives section of the Allied military, colloquially known as the Monuments Men, discovered stolen art in thousands of locations, including castles, monasteries, and military bunkers, as well as salt mines and caves (which offered proper temperature and humidity conditions for art, along with protection from Allied bombing). Pieces of Fritz Gutmann's stolen art collection were discovered in the underground Austrian salt mine at Altaussee—one of the largest repositories for Nazi plundered art. The Petzolt Double-Cup, however, was not among them. At the end of 1945, the US army and the Monuments Men

recovered it from a bunker close to Reichsmarschall Hermann Göring's villa near Berchtesgaden in the Bavarian Alps. For logistical reasons, the Monuments Men delivered the Double-Cup to the Dutch restitution commission, the Stichting Nederlands Kunstbezit, known as the SNK. The SNK transferred the Double-Cup to Amsterdam's Rijksmuseum without notifying Louise and Fritz Gutmann's heirs.

2002: The Double-Cup Is Returned to the Gutmann Family

Fritz Gutmann's grandson, Simon Goodman (whose father had changed the family's last name), first learned of his Jewish ancestry and his family's enormous wealth and art collection after his father's unexpected death in 1994. Goodman then embarked on a twenty-year odyssey to locate and reclaim the pieces. Only in 2002, 56 years after the liberation of the Netherlands, the government finally recommended the restitution of art confiscated by the Nazis. That same year, the government returned the Petzolt Double-Cup and 255 other items to the Gutmann heirs.

2003: The DIA Purchases the Double-Cup

In June 2003 the director of the Rijksmuseum offered to purchase the Double-Cup. Concluding the offer was too low, Simon Goodman and his brother Nick gambled and instead sold the Double-Cup at auction. Christie's auction house in London listed the silver-gilt Petzolt Double-Cup, along with other silver pieces, in its June 2003 catalog as "Important Silver Including Three Magnificent Renaissance Silver-Gilt Works of Art from the Collection of Fritz and Eugen Gutmann." At auction, the Petzolt Double-Cup sold for far above the price offered by the Rijksmuseum. It found a new home at the DIA.

Figure 4: Fritz Gutmann's grandson, Simon Goodman, and the author stand beside the Petzolt Double-Cup at the DIA. (Courtesy of author.)

Located in the museum's Renaissance gallery, the Petzolt Double-Cup is often overshadowed by its iconic neighbor, Pieter Bruegel the Elder's *Wedding Dance* (1566). And yet, by considering all the hands that have touched this object over four centuries, the Petzolt Double-Cup is more than just a piece of beautiful art. It is an incredible part of history.

Gail Fisher graduated from the University of Michigan in 1981 with a bachelor of science degree and practiced as a physical therapist for more than twenty years. With a passion for reading, with a special focus on the Holocaust and the arts, she feels privileged to have volunteered at the Detroit Jewish Book Fair for more than 25 years, chairing the event for six years. While raising three children, Fisher also has served as a docent at the Holocaust Memorial Center since 2004 and currently is the chairperson of HMC's Docent Advisory Committee. In addition, since 2012 she has contributed her time as a docent at the DIA. Fisher loves to combine all three of her interests to provide community-wide events at the DIA, including in 2017 hosting Gutmann heir Simon Goodman, and in 2018 hosting Father Patrick Desbois, a French Catholic priest dedicated to uncovering mass graves of Jewish victims of the Holocaust in the former Soviet Union.

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YOUTH HISTORY EDUCATION

Educator Materials: Primary Source, Discussion Questions, Lesson Plans

Primary Source

"Old Jewish Burial Ground," Ann Arbor *Argus-Democrat*, September 29, 1899, from Ann Arbor District Library, https://aadl.org/node/163133.

Background

The standard narrative of the founding of Jewish Ann Arbor has focused on Hattie and William Lansky, who arrived from Russia via Ohio in 1895, and opened a grocery and general store on Broadway. The Lanskys were soon joined by Hannah and Osias Zwerdling, who arrived via Poland in 1903, and opened a fur shop on East Liberty. These two families were instrumental in founding Beth Israel, Ann Arbor's first (and for many years only) synagogue, in 1916.

Primary sources reveal an even longer Jewish history. The following newspaper article, "Old Jewish Burial Ground," published in the September 29, 1899, Ann Arbor *Argus-Democrat*, points to an earlier generation of Jewish founders: the Weils. Anchored by five brothers (Leopold, Solomon, Moses, Marcus, and Jacob) and their wives, the family settled in Ann Arbor beginning in 1845, eventually opening a successful tannery. By the 1870s, expanding business ventures had taken the surviving Weils to New York and Chicago. Before their departure, they founded Michigan's first Jewish cemetery, on what is now the University of Michigan's campus. The article below details what happened to the cemetery after the Weils' departure.

Vocabulary

primary source: an original document, recording, artwork, artifact, or other material created at the time in question. Historians use primary sources as evidence for understanding the past.

obliterated: destroyed

a deed: a legal document establishing ownership of land

gathered to their fathers: deceased; the expression comes from the Book of Judges in the Torah

obviated: made unnecessary

hides, pelts: animal skins, furs

Discussion Questions

Identification Questions

1. What kind of primary source is this?
2. When was it made?

3. What topic does the source concern?
4. Who was the source's intended audience? How do you know?

Comprehension Questions

1. In what kind of dispute was the cemetery involved in the 1890s? How does it seem to have arisen?
2. Why could the Grove family take possession of the cemetery land?
3. What happened to the graves? Why?
4. The article indicates that the dispute had gone on for years. What changed in 1899 to bring it to an end?
5. Who might the "younger generation" refer to?
6. How does the article's author describe the Weils? What traits or attributes were emphasized? Why?

Analysis and Evaluation Questions

1. What can this incident reveal about life in Ann Arbor in 1899?
2. What can this incident reveal about the secular community's attitudes toward the Jewish community in 1899? the Jewish community's attitudes toward the secular community?
3. What might the Lansky and Zwerdling families have thought of this incident and of Ann Arbor's first Jewish community?
4. For what reasons might the first generation of Jewish Ann Arborites have been forgotten or erased?
5. How does including the Weils in the story change the way we understand Ann Arbor's history?

Lesson Plan Ideas

1. Reenact the dispute, with students playing the roles of the Groves, Weil descendants, Lanskys, city representatives, and the journalist.
2. Write contemporaneous letters to the editor protesting or supporting the cemetery's dismantling.
3. Research the Weil family on Ancestry.com, using census and naturalization papers and city directories to construct a mini family history.
4. Take a field trip to Forest Hill Cemetery to make grave rubbings of the Weil headstones or visit the cemetery's commemorative plaque on U-M's campus (near the Rackham Building on the Diag).

Interested in learning more about Jewish Ann Arbor? JHSM offers public and private tours, plus a fabulous four-session, hands-on curriculum, "The Traveling Trunk," designed for families and students in grades four through six. Contact our office (info@michjewishhistory.org) for more information.

OLD JEWISH BURIAL GROUND

University Library

Will Be Obliterated in a Few Days.

REMAINS TO BE TAKEN UP

And Removed to a Lot in the Forest Hill Cemetery.

The question of the old private cemetery lot of the Weil family lying east of Ingalls street, in the lots belonging to the Grove estate is about being settled. The old cemetery was a little west of this. From this the bodies have been removed to the Fairview and Forest Hill cemetery. The Weils claimed to have a deed for their burial lot from the city. It has been claimed that by those who have looked at this deed, or examined the records, that the description of the lot, is erroneous, it describing a lot down on South Fourth ave. Negotiations have been pending, for the removal of the bodies buried there, for a number of years. As long as the heads of the Weil family lived ; nothing could be done, as they were extremely orthodox Hebrews. They said that it was contrary to their religion to sanction the removal of bodies that had been buried. They are now gathered to their fathers. The younger generation see the inevitable, and feel they are showing more respect to their fathers to tacitly allow the remains to be removed to a lot in Forest Hill cemetery, than to be obstructionists. For a time a number of parties undertook to arrange the matter, but their ideas contemplated considerable cost, which is now obviated. Messrs. Groves will probably have the remains taken up next Monday.

The Weil family consisting of four brothers, Leopold, Solomon, Jacob and Moses started in Ann Arbor as poor peddlers. By their uprightness of character, they built up a large business. Their work consisted in gathering up hides, pelts and buying wool. From this they branched out into the tanning line, building a large brick tannery, now occupied by the Ann Arbor Electric Light Co. At one time upwards of 75 men were employed. Later Jacob and Moses started in business in New York City, and Leopold and Solomon in Chicago. They were all very successful and respected. They all until the time of their death, had a warm feeling for Ann Arbor and particularly for their old neighbors.

Figure 1: "Old Jewish Burial Ground," Ann Arbor Argus-Democrat, *September 29, 1899.*

2021 APPLEBAUM AWARD

Call for Submissions

Rabbi Emanuel Applebaum, circa 1948. (JHSM collections.)

JHSM invites article submissions to *Michigan Jewish History* for consideration for the inaugural **Rabbi Emanuel Applebaum Award**. The award honors outstanding original scholarship in the field of Michigan's Jewish history, broadly defined.

Purpose and Process: This annual award is named for Rabbi Emanuel Applebaum (1922-2001), a JHSM founding member and *Michigan Jewish History*'s first editor, serving from 1960 to 1963. All entries are reviewed and judged by *MJH* editors, the *MJH* advisory committee, and external referees. The winner receives publication in *MJH*, a cash prize of $2,000, $150 worth of JHSM books, special recognition at JHSM's fall awards ceremony, and a complimentary JHSM annual membership. Finalists also may be invited to publish in *MJH*.

Eligibility: Graduate students, faculty members, public historians, and independent scholars are encouraged to submit manuscripts for the Applebaum Award on any topic appropriate to the aims of *MJH*. Double-spaced manuscripts should not exceed 10,000 words, excluding notes, tables, and figures. Chicago-style notes should not exceed 5,000 words.

Submission: Please email a Word version of the complete manuscript to Tracy Weissman, *MJH* managing editor: tweissman@michjewishhistory.org. **Please write "Applebaum Award" in your email's subject line.** Submissions received by close of business on **November 30, 2020**, will be considered for the 2021 award cycle.

About: *Michigan Jewish History*, a peer-reviewed academic journal, is published annually by JHSM.

CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS

Editor's Message

Joy Gaines-Friedler

When I think of origins, I think of, among other things, beginnings, possibilities, and new ideas. But I also think of the past, and more specifically, how *origins* is connected to the idea of *home*: not only the literal places in which we grew up, but also the metaphoric idea of home. We're at *home* with people we love, for example. The proverb *Home is where the heart is* is a cliché—but it reveals something of what we seek in the everyday of our lives: a return to our origins, to connection. One of the lessons of the story of Adam and Eve, of the Fall, is that humans are imbued with a yearning to return. We seek to examine our origins and to feel *at home*.

In "Purple Shadows," an anonymous memoir, the writer is shocked to learn the truth behind the ghostly sense of secrecy that always existed at home: an anxiety with unexplained origins. This secret has always haunted, still haunts, still shames this brave teller. Its revelation exposes the roots of intensely felt, previously inexplicable feelings.

In the memoir, "Home," Zieva Dauber Konvisser reveals how her parents, so deeply rooted to Jerusalem, the place where they married and set up their first home, made Aliyah (immigrated to Israel) in the midst of a war.

In "H is for Hebrew," Tova H. Schreiber provides a glimpse of her family's origins as she describes her grandparents' first date in Detroit in 1943.

Also included here is a poem by yours truly, "Let Me Be G-Flat Minor 7th"—a message about what originates and resonates in us and how we know this sense of who we are "by heart."

As always, we invite readers to submit personal essays, short stories, memoirs, or poems for our Creative Expressions section. If interested, please email us at tweissman@michjewishhistory.org.

CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS

Purple Shadows

Anonymous

We cannot escape our origins, however hard we try — James Baldwin

Thursday night dairy dinner. My father, mother, and I at the round table in our pink kitchen. My older siblings away at college. I was sixteen.

"I have something to tell you," Daddy announced looking towards me, but downwards. Mother got up, scurried around the table, cleared some dishes, and left the kitchen. "One of my brothers, your uncle, will be coming for dinner tomorrow," he said quietly.

"One of your brothers? Not Uncle Jimmy?" (my favorite uncle, and the only one of Daddy's brothers I knew).

"No."

"Who?"

"You have never met him. His name is Paul."

Who is Paul? Where has he been? Would he look like my father? I wondered. I knew my father had a number of brothers beyond Jimmy, but I never met them, nor had I ever even seen photos of them. I searched my mind, trying to remember what had been discussed at home about our relatives. I had been told that my father was one of eight children. I recalled once hearing that there were siblings living in California and Upper Michigan. We had holidays, dinners, and family visits with my aunts (my father's sisters) and their families, as well as Uncle Jimmy and his family, but, that was it. So, where had this *Uncle Paul* been? Why was he coming here tomorrow?

"He's been away at what he calls *college*," my father continued.

"Which college? Tell me about him," I pleaded.

Daddy shifted in his chair, clearly uncomfortable. He took a deep breath, then blurted out, "He got in trouble when he was young and has been in jail."

"Jail?" I heard myself exclaim. "For what?"

"He was convicted of murder."

"Murder?" I felt my mouth drop open, the kitchen disappear.

"It was a long time ago. I was still young. He has just been released," Daddy continued.

His voice quivered as he revealed untold stories about the difficulties of having a brother convicted of murder. The neighbors had been cruel, he said. The rabbi and other teachers had embarrassed him in front of the class. Kids had chased him, called him names, kicked, and hit him.

Insults had been hurled. Storekeepers had poked fingers at him, laughing when he had walked by. Some mothers would not let their children out if he was outside playing.

"Because my brother and his friends were in jail, I was ostracized, taunted, teased, beaten, and perpetually called 'purple.' *You, you and Your Purple Family. You are shameful, a Shanda to our community*, they taunted."

"Purple! Why purple?" I questioned.

"Because he and his friends were in the Purple Gang."

I could not believe what I was hearing. I had never seen my calm, confident father so visibly shaken. I tried to make sense of it. So that's why Daddy stopped going to Hebrew school and never had a bar mitzvah! And that's why Mother scolded me at Hudson's when we were shopping for new school clothes: "No purple! Absolutely nothing purple." I came home with drab clothing of her liking instead of the vibrant purple ones of my passion. And, is that what the kids at school had meant when they said to me, "I know who you really are?"

Growing up, whispers, discomfort, and anxiety swirled around me at home and at school. But I had no context, connections, or understanding as to why. Like the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle coming together, the hush-hush whispers between my parents, the unease after unwanted phone calls, the kids taunting me about my family, all of it started to fall into place.

Author's note: Uncle Paul is no longer alive. My parents are also buried. But, fascination with the Purple Gang has not been buried. Stories continue on the internet, on the radio, in newspapers, and in conversations. I am often hit with references to my origins: my family name shows up in reference to the Purple Gang. Each comment, article, and picture of Uncle Paul in the Purple Gang feels like a boxer's punch to my stomach. I recoil in anxiety and shame.

Purple is the symbol now associated with my family's origin. My innocent childhood infatuation with the color is long lost. For me, purple has become stained with images of my father's suffering and my mother's worry and embarrassment. Once I was told of its source, my own discomfort and anxiety gained an identity. *L'dor v'dor* (from generation to generation), my family members and I have been marked with a purple letter.

CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS

Home

Zieva Dauber Konvisser

"I promise our move to America will be temporary and we will return *home* soon," my father told his bride a few months after their wedding in Jerusalem, as the Germans under Rommel were advancing through Egypt and all Americans in the Middle East were advised to return to America. It was 1941. They were 23 and 22 years old.

This promise to make Aliyah and move back to Israel was woven into the fabric of our every-day family life in Passaic and Clifton, New Jersey, and into our family lore for the next 32 years—so much that in 1962, when my parents first met my husband-to-be, my mother told him, "Don't get interested in her. We're moving to Israel next year." My parents' dream would eventually become a reality in 1973, during the Yom Kippur War.

* * *

My maternal grandfather, Rav Aharon-Yitzchak Wirshup, was an ardent Zionist in Vilna, Lithuania. It was 1933 when he, his wife Esther-Yehudit Golomb Wirshup, and their fourteen-year-old daughter Dina (my mother), first made Aliyah, joining her two older brothers who had been there since 1930 and 1933. They left behind at least 30 family members who would later be murdered in the Holocaust.

Years later Mom reminisced about her youthful adventures in the Haganah, the underground military organization that met upstairs at the legendary Atara Café, located on Ben-Yehuda Street in the center of Jerusalem. As a typist for the Supernumerary Police Office (a branch office of the Security Department of the Jewish Agency for Palestine), she proudly flirted with the officers and appropriated permits, which she then gave to the Haganah. She even sewed the wings for an airplane being built clandestinely on the roof of a nearby house.

Zieva Dauber Konvisser, PhD, is an adjunct assistant professor of criminal justice at Wayne State University and a fellow of the Institute for Social Innovation at Fielding Graduate University. Her research focuses on the human impact of traumatic events, such as terrorism, genocide, combat, and wrongful conviction. She is the author of *Living Beyond Terrorism: Israeli Stories of Hope and Healing* (Jerusalem: Gefen Publishing House, 2014) and serves on the boards of METIV: The Israel Psychotrauma Center, Strength to Strength, and Proving Innocence. She is the oral historian at the Holocaust Memorial Center Zekelman Family Campus in Farmington Hills, Michigan.

The reality of Arab attacks hit particularly close to home for Mom during Yom Kippur in 1937:

> [W]hile I was attending Yom Kippur services, . . . we could hear the sound of machine gun fire. I remember leaving the shul in great haste and making my way to the emergency outpost, which several others and I manned as members of the Haganah's Signal Corps. When we finally reached our destination, we discovered that it was not our post the Arabs were firing at. However, we could not afford the risk of the Arabs infiltrating during our absence and so we were forced to spend the remainder of Yom Kippur at our post.[1]

* * *

In March 1928 my paternal grandparents, Joseph and Anna Winter Dauber, took their six children (including their youngest son, my father, Emanuel, known as "Mendy"), out of their Brooklyn, New York, schools. They spent six months in Palestine, Egypt, and Europe. Upon their return, Joseph Dauber shared his impressions of the visit:

> [I found] prevailing a healthy optimism. The future holds great promise for the development of the Jewish Homeland in Palestine. . . . [T]he only hope for the redemption of Israel lies in the land of Israel. Nothing that I have ever witnessed in my life thrilled me as this, my first visit to Palestine. [My family and I] are looking forward to when we will again be able to visit Palestine.[2]

Seven years later, in early 1935, the family made Aliyah. Although Dad had not yet finished high school, he was hired as a clerk at Barclay's Bank, a well-known building diagonally across from the Old City of Jerusalem and often a target of Arab gunfire. Until recently (maybe even still) bullet holes could be seen in the front of the bank.

* * *

Despite the times, Dina and Mendy had a courtship full of romance. Dad wrote beautiful poems to Mom. Mom made weighty scrapbooks that document their early years. They married on January 12, 1941, on

[1] Anita Dubnoff, "You Can Quote Me . . .," Interview with Mrs. Emanuel Dauber, *Passaic-Clifton Jewish Community News*, September 19, 1952.

[2] "Dauber Tells of Visit to Palestine," [New York?] *Evening Journal*, n.d. [September 1928?].

a rooftop across from Jerusalem's Zion Square. Seven months later, in August 1941, they heeded the advice of the US government and left Israel for New York.

Both Dad and Mom had been members of the Young B'nai B'rith Auxiliary Lodge in Jerusalem and were given a letter of introduction to AZA leaders in the United States. Mom also carried a letter of recommendation from a family friend stating that she "is a very clever and efficient woman and a good social worker. . . . I am sure that you will find her very useful there, and I know that you will not lose time to initiate her into the life of America and into some good deeds for the benefit of Palestine." How prophetic these proved to be, for Mom and Dad were lifelong, active supporters of many Jewish and Zionist philanthropic and educational institutions.

Like his father in 1928, Dad wrote his impressions of the young state of Israel in December 1956, following one of many visits:

> First was my intense feeling, as I got off the plane, of coming *home*, of *belonging*, of being among my own people. Next, was the realization of the foresight and planning of the government . . . full-grown trees on either side of the highways . . . the tremendous upsurge of building . . . and the fine accommodations for tourists. . . . In addition to the sentimental attachments that Israel has for Jews, it is now a place for a real vacation for all tourists.[3]

* * *

In 1973 Yom Kippur, the holiest day in Judaism, fell on Shabbat. We were stunned as word spread throughout our synagogue that the Arab coalition had launched a surprise attack on Israeli positions. Despite our concerns Mom and Dad were not deterred. They went forward with their long-planned Aliyah that upcoming Tuesday. They felt (as did almost everyone) that this incursion would be like the brief Six-Day War in June 1967. On October 9, 1973, the third day of what would be the nineteen-day-long Yom Kippur War, Mom and Dad boarded their plane "home."

They arrived in a blackout. They and another couple would be the only ones from the flight to make Aliyah that day. They found themselves stranded at the airport, as there were no taxis or public transportation. A good Samaritan gave the two couples a ride to Jerusalem in a car with blacked-out headlights.

[3] Muriel Newman, "You Can Quote Me . . .," Interview with Emanuel Dauber, *Passaic-Clifton Jewish Community News*, December 28, 1956.

For more than ten years, Mendy and Dina lived their dream in Israel, before returning to the United States in 1984 for health reasons. Mendy died June 8, 1985 (19 Sivan, 5745). Dina died ten years later on March 27, 1995 (25 Adar II, 5755). They have both returned "home" to Zion and Jerusalem for their final Aliyah and resting place on the Mount of Olives (*Har Hazeitim*), Judaism's oldest and holiest cemetery. As is written on Mom's gravestone, "Wherever she lived, her home was in Jerusalem."

Figures 1 and 2: Dina and Mendy Dauber, circa 1941. (Courtesy of author.)

CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS

H Is for Hebrew

Tova H. Schreiber

Tobke grabbed her daughter by the arm and pulled her into the kitchen. "Peshie Smolinsky! Did you just bring home a non-Jewish boy to go out with on a Saturday night?" she hissed in Yiddish. "A non-Jewish soldier with blond hair and blue eyes—in my house? Peshie! What do you think you're doing?"

The girl cringed at her mother's distrust. Her Americanized friends called her Pauline, but her parents—immigrants from northeastern Poland, practically Lithuania—preferred the traditional Yiddish nickname 'Peshie.' She was almost nineteen, and she lived with her family at 1628 West Philadelphia Street. The date was July 3, 1943.

"Ma, don't be mad at me!" Pauline pleaded. "His name is Leonard Schreiber, and he's a Jewish soldier." The first of her parents' children to be born in the United States, Pauline spoke Yiddish to her parents. "He has an *H* on the back of his dog tags."

"An *H* on his tags? What's that supposed to mean?" Tobke interrupted. She had given birth to five daughters in fourteen years, but did not have any sons. Despite the war going on, military protocol was a mystery to her.

"I met him at the Holbrook JCC, Ma," Pauline tried to explain. "The one across from Temple Beth El. Remember? I signed up to host tonight's USO swim party. That's where I saw him." Tobke was still irritated with her.

"Listen, Ma. I didn't think Leonard was Jewish either, but then he explained . . ." Pauline trailed off. To argue with her mother was pointless.

Pauline's father, Henoch, the family patriarch, leaned against the kitchen counter. "I know what to do."

A mischievous smile crossed his face as he rushed into the living room. Pauline and Tobke looked on from the kitchen. Pauline bit her lip, nervous about what might unfold.

"So, Leonard Schreiber: You're a Jew?" Henoch, a serious man, looked up at the handsome soldier's blue eyes.

"Yes, sir."

Henoch retrieved an old Hebrew prayer book from a bookshelf. "If you're a Jew, then read us something." He handed the book to the private.

Leonard smiled. "You know, Hebrew is read from right to left. You gave this to me upside-down." He flipped the book around, facing it in the correct direction.

From the kitchen came a sudden and audible sigh of relief.

With Henoch's eyes still on him, Private Schreiber paused. Knowing

the correct orientation of Hebrew was one thing, but being able to read it was quite another. Sweat gathered at his temples. His bar mitzvah had been almost a decade ago, and he could not decipher much Hebrew anymore.

"Yes, I can read something for you," Leonard finally spoke. He opened the prayer book to a random page, hoping to wing it.

His eyes widened. Before him lay a prayer—the only prayer—that he could remember: Friday night Kiddush, the prayer for wine on the Sabbath. "Yom HaShishi . . ." he began. His voice was hesitant.

"That's enough," Henoch announced. He took the prayer book and snapped it shut. "What's your Jewish name?"

"Leib," Private Schreiber answered without missing a beat. It was Yiddish for *lion*, the same meaning as Leonard.

Henoch was skeptical. "Leib? It can't be just Leib. There has to be something more." He paused. "Your name is Aryeh Leib," he announced. Then he called to the kitchen, "Alright, Peshie. You can go out with him!"

Leonard and Pauline left the Smolinsky home. They met up with Leonard's army friends and stopped at a restaurant. The food wasn't Kosher, so Pauline ordered a pop, and the two got to know each other.

Pauline learned that Leonard was 22 years old, a graduate of Brooklyn College, and part of the US Army Corps of Engineers. He was the first child of secular, Austrian-German Jews and had been sent to the University of Michigan for special training. He was visiting Detroit to see a Tigers-Yankees game. The Tigers had won both games of that day's doubleheader.

Leonard learned that Pauline was a recent graduate of Northern High School and a student at Wayne University. She worked downtown at Sam's Cut Rate, making more money than her father (a junk and scrap dealer with a shop near Eastern Market) and was an active participant in Detroit Jewish life. A competent seamstress, she had once sewn window curtains for an affiliate of the Purple Gang.

The duo had much to talk about. In wartime Detroit had become more violent. A racially fueled riot had taken place just before their meeting. Pauline recalled her father having received an ominous phone call at home: "Don't come in to work today, Shorty," one of his Black employees had warned him. (He was not a tall man.) "It isn't safe here. Stay home!" Henoch went, despite the warning. A stranger hit him in the shoulder with a brick. The incident was captured by a photo in the *Detroit Free Press*. With so much for Pauline and Leonard to discuss, the new friends talked and laughed, sharing stories late into the evening.

The next morning, Pauline's seven-year-old sister, Gittel, woke up to find a group of soldiers playing cards in the living room. Leonard's friends had slept on couches and chairs, makeshift overnight accommodations.

It was the Fourth of July, and Tobke Smolinsky prepared brunch for her unexpected guests. She considered it an honor to provide food to Jewish soldiers in the US Army.

During the meal, Leonard leaned over to Pauline. "I'm glad we met." Then, as he left: "I'm going to marry you someday."

"You're nuts," Pauline laughed. "Anyway, you said the same thing when we met at the pool yesterday."

Leonard smiled, a look that Pauline would later refer to as "gorgeous."

Author's note: The author's bubbie (Pauline Smolinsky [1924 – 2018]) and zaidy (Leonard Schreiber [1920 – 1989]) were married at the Taylor Street Shul (Congregation Beth Tefilo Emmanuel) on August 22, 1946. Leonard attended Michigan State College of Agriculture and Applied Science and became a highly respected veterinarian. Pauline worked as a bookkeeper for several institutions, including Spitzer's and Bar-Ilan University. Both were early supporters of Hillel Day School. Leonard and Pauline created a traditional Jewish home together, raising their family in Northwest Detroit near the homes of comedian Milton "Soupy Sales" Supman and Senator Patrick McNamara.

Leonard eventually improved his Hebrew reading skills, and Pauline taught him Yiddish, so the two could hold private conversations in their children's presence. Their union has produced four children, fourteen grandchildren, and (so far) fourteen great-grandchildren.

This story is based on first- and second-hand accounts, historical documents, and a small dose of imagination. The author is named for her great-grandmother, Toyba "Tobke" Smolinsky.

Figures 1-4: Leonard and Pauline's wedding at the Taylor Street Shul on August 22, 1946. (Courtesy of author.)

CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS

Let Me Be G-Flat Minor 7th

Joy Gaines-Friedler

Blue throw folded over the piano bench,
fat-belly ceramic cat holds open the pages.
The hinged lamp moons brass light
over the steadfast notes, language
one reads but cannot speak.

I know this song by heart.

Know it in my body so fully it surges
like the heave of wild flowers
before the trees leaf out.
Or the way the clock gives away
its next minute.

Harmony expelled—this chord
the way the joyous girls sing their approvals
to one another deep and from the diaphragm—
the body, the body involved.

Oh let that one flat note
be the one that warms the world.
Let it make a chapel of me.
Let it make a halleluiah a halleluiah.
Let it be the friend I've always imagined
that brings coffee to the table
with her *remember when's*—

that dear warm chord
heard in the wind along the river
and in the play area at the mall
where the children know nothing of sorrow,
but watch one another like clues to a scavenger hunt.

We all start small—three fingered
add a fourth, and no matter the snow plow didn't show up,
no matter the doorbell lost its ring—

this chord resonates from the past
a message about the future.

The whole world changed.

Joy Gaines-Friedler is the award-winning author of three books of poetry: *Like Vapor* (Woodstock, NY: Mayapple Press, 2008), *Dutiful Heart* (Milton, DE: Broadkill River Press, 2013), and *Capture Theory* (American Fork, Utah: Aldrich Press-Kelsay Books, 2018). Her work also has been widely published in anthologies, including *The Bloomsbury Anthology of Contemporary Jewish American Poets*, ed. Deborah Ager and M.E. Silverman (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013). Gaines-Friedler teaches poetry and memoir as a visiting writer and for nonprofit organizations in Michigan.

IN MEMORIAM

Adele Beverly Weinberg Staller

1934–2018

Courtesy of the Staller family

During the week of Adele Beverly Weinberg Staller's shiva, someone described her as a perfect blend of intellect, caring, and giving. This could not have been truer. Adele was an amazing, strong woman who spent her entire life doing what was important to her. Her family and religion defined her. She was extremely generous and gave willingly; financially, yes, but mostly, her time and experience.

The youngest of four children, Adele was born in Detroit on May 26, 1934, to immigrant parents, Sam Weinberg and Sarah Feldman Weinberg. She married Avery Gerald Staller (Jerry), an only child and the love of her life until her death. Jerry developed serious heart disease before they married, and in 1973, they flew to Texas where Jerry underwent one of the earliest bypass surgeries performed by Dr. Michael DeBakey. Jerry died of complications a few days later, leaving Adele, at age 39, to raise their three young daughters: Julie (17), Sharon (13), and Mara (7). She did a wonderful job, giving her daughters strong values and knowledge of who they were.

Adele was a teacher her entire life. Her passion for teaching started when she was just sixteen years old and taught a neighbor child to read. She earned a teaching degree from Wayne University after her first child was born, with the help of her mother and older sister who took care of the baby. After a few years in a substitute-teaching position, she started teaching primary grades at Woodward Elementary School in Detroit, where she earned the respect of the community. While working full time, Adele put her three daughters through college and earned an advanced degree herself. Adele remained at Woodward Elementary until her retirement, 39 years after she began teaching there.

Adele's retirement was short lived. She became involved with Jewish Family Service of Metro Detroit, teaching English to Russian immigrants. She not only taught her students to speak English but also prepared them for the US citizenship exam. It was said she had a 100 percent success rate: all the immigrants she taught passed the exam on the first try.

Judaism was very important to the Staller family. Adele's daughters were given a Jewish education at United Hebrew Schools, and all graduated from its high school program. They married Jewish men, had Jewish weddings, and are raising their children Jewish. Adele was so proud of her eight grandchildren, all of whom had bar or bat mitzvahs; the last occurred in May 2018, just six months before Adele's death. She also had the privilege of attending the weddings of her two oldest granddaughters and was blessed with five great-grandchildren.

Adele and Jerry became affiliated with Ahavas Achim Synagogue in Detroit, which merged with Beth Aaron to become Congregation Beth Achim in 1968. Adele was part of the congregation from its beginning on Schaefer in Detroit, through its move to Twelve Mile Road in Southfield, and its merger in 1998 with Adat Shalom Synagogue in Farmington Hills. She was a frequent volunteer, often serving at Kiddush, and she took on many leadership roles. Adele became involved in the Sisterhood and went on to become Sisterhood president for eight years. She also was the impetus behind the Rabbis' Lunch and Learn program, which lasted for over 25 years at both Beth Achim and Adat Shalom. Rabbi Rachel Shere of Adat Shalom recalled that Adele never missed one session until the very end. In addition to participating, she discussed the topics with the rabbis, sent invitations, tracked registrations, and even helped cook the meals. Adele was given the honor more than once of being named a "Woman of Valor" through the synagogue Sisterhood for her numerous contributions of time. Adele supported the synagogue financially, as well, giving often to synagogue funds. Going through her jewelry box after she died, Adele's daughters found many Torah Fund pins recognizing Adele's annual contributions.

Adele also was very involved with JHSM. She served as JHSM's president twice (1988-1990) and in 2002 received the Leonard N. Simons History-Maker Award, honoring those who have made outstanding contributions to the enrichment, conservation, knowledge, and dissemination of Michigan Jewish history. She volunteered as a docent giving tours of old Jewish Detroit and later took over leadership of that program. She continued to update and change the tour over the years. She led tours into neighborhoods which were once Jewish and to Jewish cemeteries where few local relatives visit. Adele was responsible for keeping the key to Beth Olem Cemetery, which is more than 175 years old and located in the middle of the parking lot of the General Motors Poletown plant. She relayed stories of her own extended family, the Weinbergs and the Feldmans, coming to America and living in Detroit. She shared an abundance of history with tour participants, giving them an appreciation for the history of Detroit's Jewish community.

Adele left an inspiring legacy of giving. Visit JHSM's Michigan Women Who Made a Difference online gallery for Adele's biography, along with links to photos, articles, letters, and awards (https://www.michjewishhistory.org/mwwmd/2019/adele-staller.html).

IN MEMORIAM

Sheryl Terebelo Schiff

1947–2020

Courtesy of Elayne Gross Photography

On January 5, 2020, JHSM lost a dear friend, energetic member, and tireless volunteer. Sheryl Terebelo Schiff was born Chaya Slava Kaplan on December 28, 1947. The daughter of an Auschwitz survivor and an American aid worker for the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, Sheri was born in an American army hospital in a displaced persons camp in Munich or Cyprus.[1]

After moving to the United States, Chaya Slava Kaplan became Sheryl Kaplan. When her mother remarried in 1956, this time to an Italian-Jewish man, Sheri became Sheri Terebelo. As she put it, "I went through life with everyone thinking I was an Italian Catholic. And you know what? Sometimes it was easier."[2]

[1] Sheri Terebelo Schiff interview, "5 Women, 5 Journeys," Women's Interfaith Solutions for Dialogue and Outreach in Metro Detroit, online at: https://youtu.be/VTi27pefeaM.
[2] Ibid.

Sheri was a colorful character, a force to be reckoned with, who held deep-seated principles. JHSM President Risha B. Ring remembered Sheri as "full of energy, full of life, full of ideas and opinions she was not afraid to share." As a teenager, Sheri was arrested for protesting segregation at a public pool. A child of the 1960s, she closed out the decade by attending Woodstock.

At Henry Ford High School, Sheri was named a National Merit Scholar. She earned a scholarship to Michigan State University, where she received a bachelor's degree in communications and master's degrees in education and cultural anthropology. There, she joined anti-Vietnam-War protests. As a condition of her scholarship, Sheri tutored MSU football players, sometimes helping them take their tests. Because tutors were considered part of the team, she was required to attend football games dressed in suits. On game days, Sheri wore the green suit her uncle bought for her.[3]

Sheri worked for the *Ann Arbor Sun* and the *Fifth Estate* newspapers. Using the pseudonyms Natasha Lawrence and Sheri Thompson, she deejayed for local radio stations, including CJOM in Windsor and WNIC in Detroit. She also did some work in television and labored behind the scenes on Detroit's Thanksgiving Day Parade.

Sheri found her true passion and made a name for herself volunteering in the Detroit community. She held leadership positions at numerous organizations, including the Jewish Community Relations Council/American Jewish Committee, Jewish Federation of Detroit's Women's Philanthropy, and the National Council of Jewish Women, Michigan. She devoted countless hours to each. She was a driving force for Bookstock, the Detroit area's annual used book and media sale that raises money for education and literacy.

Sheri also worked tirelessly for multicultural organizations, including the Interfaith Leadership Council, the Birmingham-Bloomfield Community House's Race Relations and Diversity Task Force, the FBI Citizens' Academy, the Anti-Defamation League, Women Confronting Racism, and WISDOM (Women's Interfaith Solutions for Dialogue and Outreach in Metro Detroit). At Sheri's funeral, Rabbi Daniel B. Syme of Temple Beth El, her home congregation, said it best: "She couldn't tolerate walls. She built bridges."[4]

Sheri was vital to JHSM, where her infectious readiness to help was legendary. She served on the board of directors since 2005 and committees too numerous to mention. She was not simply a joiner: she worked. She chaired the annual meeting several times and

[3] Barbara Lewis, "Her Activism and Leadership Touched Many Organizations," *Detroit Jewish News*, January 16, 2020, 48.
[4] Sheryl "Sheri" Terebelo Schiff funeral service, Ira Kaufman Chapel, January 7, 2020, online at: https://video.ibm.com/recorded/125411229.

worked on J-Cycle (JHSM's bike tour of historic Jewish Detroit) each year. When the actor playing Blanche Hart (founder of the Fresh Air Society, now Tamarack Camps) on JHSM's youth bus tour canceled at the last minute, Sheri immediately assumed the role, arriving on Belle Isle in period costume and doing a superb job. No wonder JHSM named her its Outstanding Volunteer in 2019.

One of Sheri's favorite historical subjects concerned the difference between assimilation and acculturation. As she put it in 2009 while docenting for an exhibit marking 350 years of Jewish life in America:

> The United States has been likened to a melting pot with a thick, rich stew simmering forever. . . . After a while, the various tastes of the carrots, potatoes and meat lose their distinction and take on the taste of each other. I believe this is an erroneous depiction of the United States. Perhaps we are more like a salad bowl with a crunchy radish and a juicy tomato and a tasty cucumber held together with a flavorsome dressing.[5]

The daughter of the late Rita and Lawrence Terebelo, and the niece of the late Janet Bakst and the late Harriett and David Rogoff, Sheri leaves behind her husband of 39 years, Charles "Chuck" Schiff; daughters Stephanie Schiff-Nevell (Ryan Nevell) and Carly Schiff; granddaughter Liora Nevell; younger brother Dr. Marc Terebelo; niece Anna Terebelo; aunt and uncle Edith and Seymour Terebelo; uncle Leonard Bakst; and many cousins, all of whom were shocked and saddened by the sudden loss of their loving family member. Her grandson and namesake, Simon Nevell, was born two weeks after her death. JHSM and countless others will miss this wonderful woman.

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[5] Sheri Schiff, "From Haven to Home: Jewish Life in America, Some of Our Favorites," *Michigan Jewish History* 49 (September 2009): 64.

IN MEMORIAM

Pamela Beth Sofferin

1944–2020

Courtesy of Elayne Gross Photography

Pamela Beth Sofferin, a longtime member and friend of JHSM, passed away peacefully at home on March 9, 2020. Pam was a special woman who was truly one of a kind. She lived life on her terms, a life filled with traveling, aviation, animals, art, volunteering, and the love of her life, Jeff.

Born in Detroit on February 24, 1944, Pam was the loving daughter of Peter and Ann Rubin. She enjoyed a particular closeness with her parents and her grandfather Sholom and joined the family's collection-agency business early on to work alongside her father. After graduating from Mumford High School, Pam attended Detroit Institute of Technology and Wayne State University, earning bachelor of science and bachelor of arts degrees in education. She earned a master's degree in psychology from the University of Michigan. From an early age Pam had a passion for flying and seeing the world.

Pam met Jeffrey Sofferin at a shiva in 1975. She overheard him talking about being a pilot. The next day they went out on a date, and the rest is history. Pam and Jeff married a year later and were deeply devoted to each other. With their shared love of flying, they opened a charter business called Executive Express. Pam continued to fly throughout her life, whether it was in a two-seater or a small jet, her passion never waning.

In 1983 she began teaching foreign language at North Farmington High School. Language came easily to Pam—she learned to speak seven languages: Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, French, Yiddish, German, and English. She was an excellent teacher and was able to connect with and engage her students. Former students often approached Pam to thank her, share a story, or give her a hug. JHSM Vice President Barbara Cohn recalled being out for dinner with Pam just a couple of months before her death when two former students stopped at their table.

Throughout her life, Pam traveled across the globe, visiting more than 80 countries. Her travels included visits to Europe, Russia, Israel, South America, China, Japan, and Egypt. Many of her trips took her to nature preserves or on animal adventures. In China she helped care for baby pandas; in Thailand she fed baby tigers; and on the streets of Moscow, she posed for photos with bears. She also was involved in several archaeological digs.

An avid volunteer, Pam was a longtime docent at the Detroit Institute of Arts and the Detroit Zoo. In addition, she volunteered with Leader Dogs for the Blind at Henry Ford Hospital, brightening patients' days as she walked dogs through the hospital. Her love of history and Judaism brought her to JHSM, where she served on the advisory board for many years and was a Heritage Council life member. She served as a docent for J-Cycle (JHSM's annual bike tour of historic Jewish Detroit) and volunteered on bus tours. Pam was the first to volunteer to host any JHSM event, including programs at the DIA and The Henry Ford.

Family and friends were important to Pam, and she always showed love and support to each of them. Pam dearly valued and admired her longstanding friendships, some going as far back as grammar school. She was a love to her husband, Jeff. She also will be missed by her brother Remey (Julie) Rubin; niece Karolyn (son Rudy) Rubin; nephew Ken (Leslie and children Lucy and Peter) Rubin; and niece Rika (Yugi and son Kai) Fukuyama. Pam's zest for life, incredible passions, positive energy, and support for the community continue to inspire all who knew her. She will be missed.

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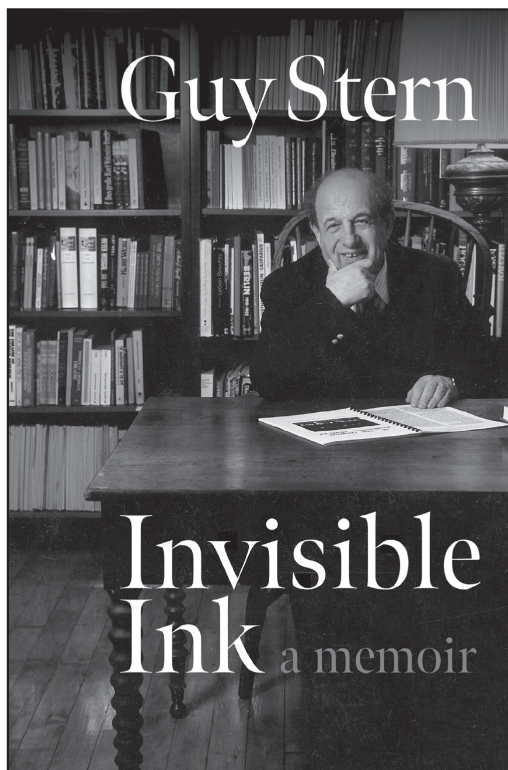

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Guy Stern is Distinguished Professor Emeritus in the Department of Classical and Modern Languages, Literatures, and Cultures at Wayne State University. He is currently director of the Harry and Wanda Zekelman International Institute of the Righteous at the Holocaust Memorial Center Zekelman Family Campus.

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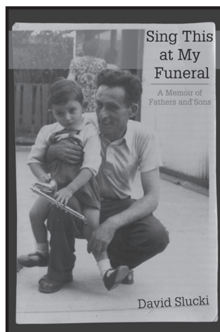

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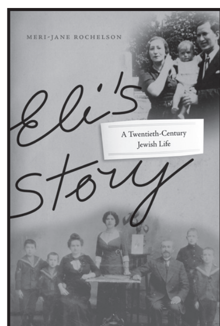

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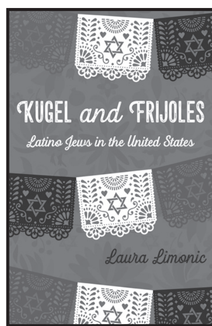

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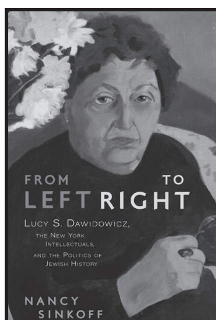

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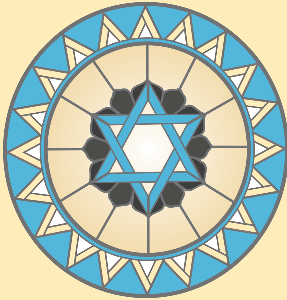

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