



MIDWINTER MEETING IN DENVER
President's Report

FEB 12 1982

LIBRARY.

At one point during ALA Midwinter, I was asked: "What is the Jewish Librarians Caucus anyway? Why does it exist?" I explained to my questioner that our purpose is to communicate Jewish problems and concerns within librarianship -- issues such as offensive subject headings, materials selection (subject to the principles of the Library Bill of Rights), and conference scheduling.

The last problem seems to be the biggest issue facing us in our relations with the profession. As ALA's divisions more and more hold mini-conferences outside the confines of Midwinter and annual conferences, some division programs have in the past -- and may in the future -- conflict with Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur, Sukoth, Pesach and Shivaot. According to several of our members, particularly Joe Rine and Madeleine Cohen Oakley, ACRL's meeting last year was scheduled to begin on the second day of Rosh Hashana. ACRL's brass rescheduled the meeting, although -- at least, according to Joe -- with poor grace.

The question of how ALA relates to its divisions will doubtless be decided -- after much rhetoric -- within the next few years. All of us who are division members should write to our division executive directors (listed in the ALA Handbook) and point out dates of major Jewish holidays for the next few years. If, being alerted, divisions persist in scheduling meetings to conflict with important holidays, we should vote with our feet/checkbooks and deprive them of our financial support.

We can't win the battle of ALA meeting on Shabbat because meetings are also scheduled on Sunday, to the chagrin of Christians who would like to attend church services. We can, however, sensitize Gentiles in ALA to our concerns about holy days and -- we hope -- prevent the kinds of problems we experienced in dealing with AASL and ACRL.

See you in Philadelphia.

Sue Kamm,
President

Please note that, thanks to Annette Blank, we have tentatively scheduled a tour of the Jewish Publication Society in Philadelphia from 2 to 4 P.M. on Tuesday, July 13.

Congratulations to Cookie Lewis-Soldinger and her husband Steve on the birth of their daughter, Mara Elizabeth.



RESOLVED: It is appropriate for the Jewish Librarians Caucus to protest the RLG's new logo (left).

Pro: As part of a project to "let people know who we are and what we do," the Research Libraries Group commissioned an award-winning design group to create a new logo. In a recent press release, the RLG gushed: "Our new logo is an attempt to sum up our purpose and goals in one easy-to-identify sign." This writer identified the sign all too easily because the RLG has unfurled, as its new logo, the swastika. The new logo will be displayed on "business papers, publications, exhibits, signs, and business cards." To be sure, the Group's new symbol is not meant to be a swastika; it is actually "four stylized books...linked to form a ring around an open square."

How irrelevant is this explanation and how ironic, for it conjures up one particular image, one particular day in May 1933 when the public squares of university cities in Germany played host, as Joachim Fest aptly wrote, to "a brutal gesture of open hostility to the intellect: the burning of the books." It is not too late for the RLG to befriend the intellect. It is not too late for the RLG to abandon its ill-conceived logo and seek instead a symbol more appropriate to its "purpose and goals."

Con: Every grievance in our society is followed by a number of suggestions or actions, some of them practical, which are designed to remedy an idea's objectionable or even dangerous shortcomings. Symbols evoke associations in our conscious or unconscious minds, and there are times when each of us finds a representation disturbing, whatever the intent of the designers. I, too "flash" on the swastika when I look at the RLG's logo, but I urge restraint, understanding and consideration of the obvious intentions of the RLG before action is taken. Formal protest, asking or demanding that RLG modify or scrap its logo because of its affront to the feeling of Jews, Poles and other victims of Nazism are likely to be counterproductive, making the complainants appear hypersensitive rather than vigilant, and militant rather than reasonable.

My recommendation, for what it would be worth, would be that the RLG attempt to incorporate some additional stylized representations into its logo, indicating the role of automation and technology in the future of the group's cooperative efforts. In the absence of voluntary willingness on the part of RLG to change its symbol, I would recommend that we leave them alone, lest we come off looking like the coercive pressure groups of the new right which we all deplore for their demand that things offensive to them be restricted, modified or removed.

Arguing for the resolution is Edward Bayone, Newsletter Staff. Arguing against the resolution is B.A. Schulman, Associate Professor, Queens College/CUNY, Graduate School of Library and Information Studies. Readers of this Newsletter are encouraged to respond.

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1981-1982

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letters to the
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Notes...Notes...Notes...Notes...Notes...

Options: The Jewish Resources Newsletter is an extremely useful publication, containing annotated listings of publications, audio-visual media, pamphlets and Jewish organizational materials. Options Publishing Co., Box 311, Wayne, New Jersey 07470. \$12 per year.

Interested in shopping by mail? Hamakor Judaica is a Jewish mail order company selling ritual objects, prayerbooks, record and novelty items. For a catalog, write to Hamakor Judaica, Inc. 6112 N. Lincoln Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60659. Another mail order business is Mail Order Maven, Inc. which sells Jewish books for children and adults, puzzles, ceremonial objects and gifts. Mail Order Maven, Inc., R.F.D. Box 375, Norwich, Vermont 05055

Jewish Book News, published by the Jewish Book Club, contains excerpts from their book selections. A subscription is free but subscribers must purchase one book a year. New books and other titles are discounted. Jewish Book News, 111 Eighth Avenue, New York, New York 10011

Lilith, a quarterly magazine, covers the political, cultural and religious issues facing Jewish women from a feminist perspective. The latest issue, number 8, contains articles on women in the Israeli Army and Jewish attitudes toward abortion. Subscriptions are \$12 per year for individuals, \$16 for libraries. The current issue costs \$3. Lilith Magazine, 250 W. 57 St., NY, NY 10019

The Jewish Welfare Bureau publishes Learning for Jewish Living, a biennial listing of more than 100 speakers available to community organizations and synagogues. JWB Lecture Bureau, 15 East 26 Street, New York, New York 10010

"Raisin with Almonds" (Rozhinkes mit Mandlin) is a musical spoken-word rendition of the Jewish experience. The recording features Al Jolson, Richard Tucker, I.B. Singer, David Ben-Gurion, and Abba Eban among other luminaries. The two record stereo album or double cassette stereo tapes costs \$20. Living Archives Ltd., Route 2, Spring Creek Rd., P.O. Box 86, Barrington, Illinois 60010

Micah Publications has just published two new volumes: Phoenix Rising - Contemporary Jewish Voices, an anthology of current American Jewish writing, and South African Jewish Voices. Both volumes are part of the Echad series, anthologies of Jewish writing from different parts of the world. Phoenix Rising can be purchased for \$7.00; South African Jewish Voices for \$8.50. Micah Publications, 255 Humphrey Street, Marblehead, MA 01945

The 1981-82 volume of Jewish Book Annual has recently been published. This year's edition contains articles on Latin American Jewish writers, Jewish Bible Scholarship in North America, an essay on Rabbi Naham of Bratslav, Israeli periodicals in English and trends in Haskalah literature. In addition, there are bibliographies of Jewish fiction and non-fiction, juvenile books, Hebrew and Yiddish titles and listings of Jewish book award winners. The volume sells for \$15.00 plus \$1.00 for postage and handling. Jewish Book Council, 15 East 26 St., New York, NY 10010

YIVO Institute for Jewish Research receives a grant for film project. With a grant from the Charles H. Revson Foundation, YIVO is about to create a novel kind of documentary archive. Joshua Waletzky, director of YIVO film "Image Before My Eyes," will conduct a six-month pilot project applying recent developments in video disc computer techniques to simplify and speed the "cataloging" of rare documentary film footage together with eyewitness descriptions. The recollections of eye-witnesses as they view the original footage, much of it dating back to pre-war Eastern Europe, will provide the essential identifying context for scenes of family and communal life. "The novelty of this," according to Waletzky, "is that we'll be doing visually stimulated oral history." Waletzky will transfer the original footage to video disc and "invite eyewitnesses who either were present at the filming or lived in the place filmed to be interviewed and videotaped as they describe what is on the screen."

The National Center for Jewish Film, a film archive and study center designed to preserve motion picture materials relevant to the 20th-century Jewish experience, has been established by the American Jewish Historical Society (for more on the AJHS, see article on p.5). The Center will serve as a permanent repository for all film materials, both fictional and documentary, dealing with Jewish life, provide scholars with access to such a collection, and facilitate their use by educational and cultural institutions, community groups, filmmakers and broadcasters. The Center seeks additional film and still photographic materials, including home footage, dealing with Jewish topics. For more information, contact: The National Center for Jewish Film, Lown Bldg. 102, Brandeis University, Waltham, MA 02254.

Harvey, John F., editor. Church and Synagogue Libraries. Scarecrow Press, Inc. 1980. 299 pages. \$15.00.

This collection of twenty papers is a first in church and synagogue librarianship. The editor has assembled these essays in an attempt to present a tableau of the present state of development and the future direction of one of the least known library fields. There is an emphasis on the shortcomings of existing activity, as well as recommended service policies.

The volume also contains information on the history and development of Jewish, Catholic, Protestant and other Christian libraries, as well as the three Religious Library Associations that emerged as a result of their activity; namely, the Catholic Library Association, the Church and Synagogue Library Association and the Association of Jewish Libraries.

Since this is the only book which covers the entire sphere of church and synagogue libraries, it is an important source for historical and organizational information for anyone working in the field. In the editor's own words, "The book is compromised by the field's lack of intellectual development, lack of useful and significant data and research, and the lack of information and development in most of its subfields." Therefore, this book is not for the specialist but for anyone seeking basic information on this important and growing area of librarianship. It also points up the need for more research and supporting data to provide the base for improvement of standards and future growth.

Reviewed by Sylvia Eisen, synagogue librarian

In upcoming issues, the JLC newsletter will survey individual Jewish libraries and archives. This issue presents the American Jewish Historical Society.

Three Hebrew words form the legend on the seal of the American Jewish Historical Society: "Remember the days of old", a passage from Deuteronomy (32:7). On June 7, 1892, the American Jewish Historical Society was founded by a small group who realized the importance of establishing a society devoted exclusively to the study of American Jewish history. The aim was twofold: to assess the role of Jews in America and to preserve the records and documents of the past and present for future generations.

In 1968, seventy-six years after its founding in New York City, the Society moved to the Brandeis University campus in Waltham, Massachusetts. Although not an official part of the University, the Society serves as an important resource for both Brandeis and the local Boston Jewish community.

To perform its mandate, the Society publishes books and periodicals, develops public service outreach programs and has a library-museum. The AHJS library has one of the largest collections in the world on the settlement, life and history of Jews on the American continent. The Society is a major repository for the archives of local and national Jewish communal and social service organizations. Among its holdings include the official records of the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds, the American Jewish Congress and the Synagogue Council of America. The Library also has the papers of Haym Solomon and Rabbi Stephen S. Wise. In addition to possessing more than 76,000 volumes, the Library has an extensive collection of Hebrew, Yiddish and English-language newspapers and a unique collection of Jewish student periodicals and publications. The Society also owns a large Yiddish film collection, theater posters and sheet music.

The Society publishes American Jewish History, a quarterly journal which presents scholarly articles on the cultural, historical and religious life of American Jews. In addition, the Society has published books on Colonial Jews, the Jewish experience in Latin America and several monographs on local history.

As part of its public outreach program, the Society has sponsored conferences throughout the country on a variety of topics, ranging from local history to a comparison of Italian-Americans and Jewish-Americans. The Society mounted a traveling exhibition of the history of Boston Jews, which attracted more than 100,000 visitors at the American Museum of Immigration located next to the Statue of Liberty.

Like other historical groups, the AJHS is a non-profit membership organization. Currently, there are more than 3,500 members throughout the world. If you are interested in receiving a price list of publications or a membership application, write to AJHS, 2 Thorton Road, Waltham, MA, 02154.

The JWB Jewish Music Council offers the following programming materials:

Israeli Music. An annotated resource listing	\$4.00
Jewish Center Songster. 100 Hebrew, Yiddish and English songs	\$1.50
Jewish Music Programs. Concerts and multi-arts events	\$5.00
Jewish Music Movement in America	\$2.00
The Yiddish Folksong: An Illustrated Lecture	\$1.00

Order these materials from the JWB Jewish Music Council, 15 E. 26 St., New York, NY 10010. Please allow 3 to 4 weeks for delivery.