

L'Chain

By Nathaniel S. Greenwood, ACSW
Director of
Jewish Social Services

What Is Family Therapy?

A counseling approach for solving problems within a family; family therapy involves the entire family in working toward the solution.

Often used by families whose members all live together, family therapy can also work when some members live apart, such as when children live away from home or when parents are divorced.

Why Do Family Therapists Work With An Entire Family If Just One Person Seems To Have A Problem?

Viewed as a system, each family strives to maintain its own balance or equilibrium. The whole product will somehow be affected by problems in any part of any member. Similarly, family lives with the suffering, discomfort and improper behaviors of its own members.

A series of sessions with an entire family may not be the ongoing treatment of choice for a given family. Seeing the client's family together can improve the therapist's subsequent ability to help.

What Can Be Expected From Family Therapy?

During the first session, the therapist is likely to gauge each family member's view of why counseling is sought. Patterns of interaction and modes of communication, rules, personalities, roles and expectations offer evidence of how the family system "ticks."

In addition to hearing what family members say, the therapist may soon become aware of how expectations or patterns might cause problems.

By the end of the second session, the family and the therapist will reach an agreement concerning the nature of the problem and how change needs to occur in one or more ways. Then the therapist may offer to work one family member, certain members, or the entire family. He may also suggest referrals or alternate approaches depending on his professional observations at that point.

Following sessions will feature the introduction of techniques intended to assist the family in resolving a problem and improving its abilities to live together in a more satisfying way. Techniques often involve teaching communication skills, working on parenting skills or on issues of authority, or focusing on the relationship between parents—either married or divorced—who seek to upgrade the quality of child-rearing.

How Long Does Family Counseling Take?

Most families are able to make significant changes within a period of eight to ten weekly counseling sessions.

Sometimes the very act of coming in together is adequate to get a family talking and

solving problems in a cooperative way that will bear fruit.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Jews marry on an average of two years later than non-Jews?
- Fewer married Jews remain childless than their non-Jewish counterparts.
- Jews exhibit the lowest birthrate of all comparably aged religious groups; about 2/3 of a child lower.
- While Jews are divorcing more frequently than they have in the past, they are still divorcing less often than their non-Jewish counterparts.
- All forms of Jewish activity (i.e., lighting Sabbath candles, belonging to at least one Jewish organization), significantly increase when children reach age 6.
- "Alternative households" (singles, childless couples, divorcees) tend to be less Jewishly active.

Source: American Jewish Yearbook, 1982

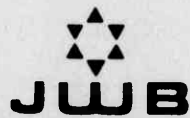
Past the obstacle of "communication breakdown," families will find ways to work out

difficulties rather quickly; often this occurs allowing family members to feel much better about themselves and one another. In more complex situations, solutions may seem more distant and less complete; there a family will need to demonstrate commitment to working on change and to sharing difficult, and often intense emotions and needs, as they work toward a common goal.

Does Jewish Social Services Offer Family Therapy In Charlotte?

Jewish Social Services staff has extensive family background and skills and is equipped to deal with a broad range of family problems.

Inquiries about services are encouraged as are requests for consultation or information. To arrange for further information or family counseling, call 375-7738 or 375-7739.



Jewish Books in Review

is a service of the JWB Jewish Book Council,
15 East 26th St., New York, N.Y. 10010

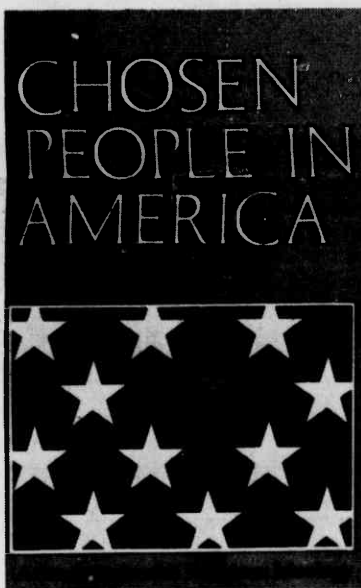
The Chosen People in America: A Study in Jewish Religious Ideology. By Arnold M. Eisen. Indiana University Press, Bloomington, IN 47401. 1983. 237 pages. \$17.50. Reviewed by Henry L. Feingold

We possess a fairly full account of what happened to the Jews in America but we are only beginning to fathom what happened to the Judaism they carried with them to the New World.

The imbalance in our historical account is not difficult to understand. Historians find it problematic to trace the development of a theology, or the religious ideology which is substituted for it in America, because idea-systems are by their very nature more amorphous. In the case of Judaism in America the problem is compounded by the reluctance of the few trained theologians to address a central component of Judaism, the notion of chosenness. America was a society with an egalitarian pluralistic bent which strove to implement the promise of civil equality embodied in the emancipation. It could hardly be expected to accommodate a people whose idea of itself was so outspokenly elitist.

For American-born Jews chosenness served as a disturbing counterpoint to the acculturation process since, if taken seriously, it entailed the obligation of the mitzvot and the separateness inherent in sanctity. Judaism would have to be emptied of its particularism so that it could fit into an America which imagined God to be a pluralist, an America which generated a civil religion of bland interchangeability to which all religious sub-cultures could adhere.

Rabbinic thinkers as far removed as Eugene Borowitz and Joseph Soloveitchik recognized that chosenness and all it entailed was central to Judaism. "All else," observed Arthur Hertzberg, "was commentary." Yet except for the Orthodox who accepted it and the apartness who accepted it and the apartness it entailed as given, the other branches of the faith could not accommodate it. They denied it, ignored it, muted its echoes, and finally reinterpreted it, all so that it could be accepted in America. The Reform movement substituted mission in its place and the Conservatives, as usual, waffled. Mordecai Kaplan, the late founder of the Reconstructionist movement, was virtually alone in denying its applicability. He preferred the word avocation.



Eisner notes that the promise of direct confrontation by the theologians of the third generation has not yet been fulfilled. One senses his disappointment. American Jewry does not need more sociology to explain its unhappy condition, nor history or ideology to rationalize it. It requires a theology to finally mediate between it and its special relationship to the one God. Only in that is there hope of coming to terms with its particularity which is rooted in the chosenness idea. Without it American Jewry becomes an empty vessel. He may be right.

That restatement barely encompasses the richness of this beautifully written book by Arnold Eisen of the Department of Religion of Columbia University. Digging into sermons and writings, Eisen uses the concept of chosenness as a prism to view the accommodation of Judaism to the American scene. It is one of the finest books to come along dealing with the development of American Judaism in recent years. It should be of great interest to all students of American Jewish history. For specialists in Jewish and American intellectual and religious history it is must reading.

Henry L. Feingold is Professor of History at the Baruch College of the City University and Chairman of the Academic Council of the American Jewish Historical Society.

Yiddish Institute at Wildacres

CHARLOTTE YIDDISH INSTITUTE AT WILDACRES

Little Switzerland, North Carolina

Sponsored by the Jewish Community Center of Charlotte, N.C.

CELEBRATING OUR SIXTH YEAR

April 26 - 29, 1984

We proudly announce the sixth annual Charlotte Yiddish Institute at Wildacres. Wildacres is a mountaintop retreat of 1,400 acres in the heart of the Blue Ridge Mountains of Western North Carolina. The institute is open to women and men interested in increasing their knowledge of Yiddish and in enriching their cultural ties with a language that is warm and inventive, distinctive and intriguing.

Institute Faculty:

Chayela Ash - Actress, lecturer, performer with the Yiddish State Theatre throughout Europe and with Yiddish Musical Comedy Revues in the U.S.

Abraham Fuhrman - Cantor, folk singer, performer with Yiddish Musical Comedy Revues in the U.S.

David Goldberg - Lecturer, scholar, director of the Bergen County Secular Shule.

Features:

Lectures; workshops; theatre; daily and Shabbat services; gift shop; nature walks; and a warm glow of Yiddishkeit!

Fees:

Covering tuition, room, meals and gratuities: \$125.00 per person (double occupancy only - rooms located in two main lodges).

A deposit of \$30.00 must accompany each reservation. No refund of deposit unless cancellation is made prior to April 12. Balance of tuition must be paid in full by April 19, 1984.

Opening Schedule:

Thursday, April 26, 1984

2 - 5 p.m. - Arrival and registration

6:30 p.m. - Dinner

7:45 p.m. - Evening Minyan

8:15 p.m. - Evening Program

Institute will be in session until Sunday,

April 29, 11 a.m.

For Further Information:

Contact Baila Pransky, Coordinator, 704-366-5564 or Lyba Pollard, Reservations and Transportation, 704-366-7846

RESERVATION APPLICATION

1984 Charlotte Yiddish Institute at Wildacres

Please enter reservations for ___ persons listed below, for the 1984 Charlotte Yiddish Institute at Wildacres, April 26 - 29, 1984.

I enclose deposit of \$___ (\$30.00 per person, balance to be paid in full by April 19)

I enclose full payment of \$_____ (\$125.00 per person)

NAMES: ENGLISH YIDDISH ADDRESS

Make checks payable to: Charlotte Yiddish Institute-Jewish Community Center.

Mail checks and reservations to: Charlotte Yiddish Institute
Charlotte Jewish Community Center
Box No. 220188, Charlotte, N.C. 28222

Warm Wishes for Passover



Send a Hallmark card,
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Passover, Tues., April 17



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