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## **Part I.**

# **The Production of Philanthropy: A Case Study of the Imagery & Methodology of Jewish Fundraising**

## **Introduction**

**T**his curriculum is designed to familiarize professionals working in not-for-profit and philanthropic organizations, particularly those employed in such organizations in the American Jewish community, with the role of emotional arousal as a component of philanthropic giving behavior. The proposed 8-session course will examine the use of audio-visual techniques utilized by major American Jewish philanthropic organizations in seeking donations. The session topics are:

Session 1. The Role of Emotions in Philanthropic Behavior

Session 2. Varieties of Emotion in Varieties of Causes

Session 3. Affecting and Reflecting the Emotional “Triggers” of Philanthropy

Session 4. Decades of Immigration

Session 5. The Holocaust: Rescue and Restoration

Session 6. Israel Reborn: From Weakness to Power

Session 7. Post-Communist Russian Immigration: The American Jewish Journey Recapitulated

Session 8. Philanthropy without Enemies

There is something peculiar about philanthropy. As one of the central activities of any voluntary community, whose existence depends on the personal generosity of individuals, its processes are generally shrouded in mystery. As if the ultimate act of an individual donating a significant sum of his or her personal wealth occurred by chance or as a result of some extraordinary quirk of personality. This curriculum guide is designed to familiarize professionals engaged in the work of not-for-profit and philanthropic organizations with some of the theoretical and practical issues involved in the inducement of philanthropic behavior.

For purposes of practical illustration, the curriculum guide focuses upon the case of the American Jewish community. This community, perhaps more than any other, has been dependent from its inception in 1654 upon the stimulation and activation of philanthropic impulses among its co-religionists and sympathizers. Arguably, the organization of philanthropic activity among American Jews has also been among the most successful in generating financial, moral and political support for the interests and causes of this community. Therefore, its techniques of *philanthropic production* can well serve as a model for other communities, particularly those based on common interests rooted in a shared religious and/or ethnic heritage or a common experience with immigration and struggle for integration in American society.

## Session 1

## The Role of Emotions in Philanthropic Behavior

The notion that philanthropy (the private giving of money, time, and other resources for collective benefit) is the result of an intentional, organized, and productive process is particularly shrouded in the mythology of sacred largess in the Jewish community. The act of philanthropy is cloaked in a mantle of quasi-religious ideology. The Bible-based obligation of *tzedakkah*, the responsibility to give a portion of one's personal substance for the common good, bestows upon philanthropic donors in the Jewish community an aura of public saintliness that completely overshadows the process by which these individuals come to open their hearts and wallets to their brethren.

Those who spend their daily professional lives in direct contact with philanthropists, fund raisers, development officers, solicitors or in the more traditional Yiddish, *schnorers*, devote vast amounts of their time identifying and cultivating prospects and soliciting the funds that ultimately constitute the philanthropic treasury of the community. Yet, their theories and methods for activating individual generosity are rarely if ever the stuff of intellectual discourse about the structure and functioning of the organized Jewish community.

The annual fund raising campaigns mounted by all major Jewish organizations in North America, entailing millions of mailing pieces, hundreds and thousands of telephone calls, hundreds of print ads, radio spots, dinners for the largest givers and innumerable other special events designed to stimulate the act of giving are virtually absent from any of the standard histories or social scientific studies of the American Jewish community.\*

\*A rare exception is Jonathan Woocher's *Sacred Survival* in which he examines the ideological underpinnings of the major Jewish organizations in North America.

Yet, without these activities it is inconceivable that there would be much of any organized Jewish community in America. Indeed, Jewish philanthropy is one of those rare activities about which a great deal more is done than said, and a great deal more is known than written.

The purpose of this curriculum is to begin to build a bridge between the formal, academic study of the organized Jewish community and the professional know-how of those who are engaged in the practice of making philanthropy happen. The first session means to address the simple question: how is the motivation to philanthropic action produced?

Philanthropy is often studied as an abstraction that is embodied in institutions or programs of social and human improvement. As such, the focus of attention in most studies of philanthropy falls on actions of individuals or of collectivities that have been defined by their manifest objectives (i.e. to accomplish some social good) and incorporated into the programs of some organized entity variously referred to as a philanthropic organization or a voluntary association or a foundation. In virtually all academic studies of philanthropy, the work of the scholar or analyst begins with the assumption that however it is defined, philanthropy has already taken place.

The object of this course of study is to examine the dynamic processes by which philanthropy is produced. In short, the course does not presume, as most historical research on the subject does, that acts of philanthropy emerge *deus ex machina* from the altruistic recesses of human hearts and minds. Rather, we begin with the assumption that philanthropy, like many other social acts, is *produced*. Moreover, it is assumed that philanthropy is a *social production* (involving the interplay of roles, expectations, and reinforcements) not unlike work, recreation, or family life. To be sure, this assumption rubs hard against the notion of voluntarism, which is often presumed to be the heart of philanthropic activity.

The rationale for this approach to philanthropy comes from the recognition that, in fact, a very large amount of philanthropic giving by donors both large and small comes as a result of organized fund raising campaigns. Thus, what is commonly understood as charity or philanthropy, whether in the form of gifts of money or time, is the product of some *interaction* between donors and donation-seekers. If the interaction is successful from the vantage point of the donation-seeker, its end result is the passing of a gift from one hand (donor) to another (donation-seeker). During what might be called the *pre-philanthropic interaction*, there is positive effort made by donation-seekers to *stimulate* the desired outcome by activating or invoking such incipient motives within prospective donors as might trigger the ultimate philanthropic behavior.

Indeed, perhaps, the most poignant and elementary form of that interaction process occurs thousands of times each day on the streets of major metropolitan areas when panhandler encounters pedestrian. As unwelcome as such interactions often are, they can be found at the heart of some of the most time-honored traditions of Jewish philanthropy: the face to face collection of alms in synagogues and other places of Jewish gathering. This form of philanthropy is described in vivid detail by Samuel Heilman in an article dealing with the emotional bonds that arise out of face-to-face giving. (Heilman 1991)

### Questions

1. If philanthropy is produced through conscious techniques designed to create emotion, how is that activity different from techniques that create group emotions for less noble ends? Do the ends, raising money for a “good cause,” justify the means?
2. If *tzedakkah* is a fundamental requirement of Jewish identity, why should it be necessary to “produce” philanthropy?
3. How is *tzedakkah* different from other religious imperatives to give, such as the Christian concept of charity?





**Session 2****Varieties of Emotions in Varieties of Causes**

The approach to philanthropy explored in this session is stimulated by the work of James M. Jasper in “The Emotions of Protest: Affective and Reactive Emotions In and Around Social Movements” (Jasper 1998). Jasper contends that, at least in recent decades, scholarship on social movements or movements of protest has either ignored the role of human emotions in collective action or treated them from the vantage point of psychology as essentially irrational forces to be explained away or reduced to psychogenic factors or even somatic states of little social or political significance. In contrast to this widely held opinion, Jasper argues for “the centrality of emotions for understanding one corner of social life: the collective, concerted effort to change some aspect of society. . . .” (Jasper 1998, 399)

Invoking the work of Randall Collins “Stratification, Emotional Energy and the Transient Emotions,” (Collins 1990), Jasper characterizes emotions as “the ‘glue’ of solidarity and what mobilizes conflict.” Further, he argues that this constructive role of emotions in collective behavior is itself “culturally constructed and hence linked to cognitive appraisal rather than being automatic somatic [or psychic] responses.” In the perspective that Jasper seeks to advance, “emotions are constituted more by shared social meanings than by automatic physiological [or psychological] states.”

In seeking to restore the role of emotions to the center stage of discourse about collective behavior, Jasper takes great pains to address the tension between those human responses that are culturally relative (e.g. the manner in which one might express grief or joy) and such universals as the sense of surprise, fear and anger.

However, in the present context, we are less concerned with the analytic question of where to draw that boundary between what is culturally

relative and anthropologically universal. Rather, our point of departure is Jasper's cogent observation that:

"A social movement organizer deploys different language and arouses different emotions in his or her listeners. . . . As an integral part of all social action, affective and reactive emotions enter into protest activities at every stage. Some help explain why individuals join protest events or groups. . . . Others are generated during protest activities, including both affective ties among fellow members and feelings toward institutions, people and practices. . . . These [emotions] affect whether a movement continues or declines. . . . In all stages [of a movement] there are both pre-existing affects and shorter term emotional responses to events, discoveries and decisions. . . . It is affects and emotional responses that political organizers appeal to, arouse, manipulate and sustain to recruit and retain members." (Jasper 1998, 401, 404-405)

In other words, collective social action—in contrast to spontaneous crowd or mob behavior—is nearly always the product of aroused emotions, be the source of those emotions psychological, somatic, or cultural. The nature and intensity of those emotions will determine the nature, intensity, purpose, effectiveness, and duration of the collective behavior to which it is linked. With rare exceptions such as natural disasters or wars, the durability of philanthropic productions depends on the sustaining of motivation. In the history of the American Jewish community, for example, the pogroms of the early 1880s and early 1900s in Russia, the Holocaust, the birth of Israel, the Six-Day War in 1967, and the mass exodus of Jews from the Soviet Union and Ethiopia mark watershed events that served to stimulate massive amounts of philanthropic motivation.

The historian Abraham J. Karp writes:

Accounts of spontaneous and enthusiastic giving in the summer of 1967 [the Six-Day War] have become part of American Jewish folklore. At a [fund-raising] luncheon in New York, one man pledged \$1.55 million dollars and four others pledged \$1 million dollars each. Fifty families in Boston contributed \$2.5 million dollars to launch a [fund raising] drive for Israel. In Cleveland \$3 million dollars was raised in one day, and over \$1 million dollars was raised in St. Louis overnight. (Karp 1985, 333)

Here, we extend Jasper's line of analysis to a particular form of collective behavior, namely philanthropy, even more particularly to Jewish philanthropy. It has to be acknowledged at the outset that philanthropy differs from participation in social movements or movements of protest in a number of significant respects. First, philanthropy almost by definition assumes at least some measure of altruism (i.e. that one is undertaking a beneficial action on behalf of others). Participation in a social movement or a movement of protest makes no such assumption. One might well join such movements to benefit one's self. In the present use of the term, it is also assumed that philanthropy involves the contribution of money or other goods of value to a cause.

Indeed, it might be argued that to the extent philanthropy involves the giving of money rather than actual participation in a social movement it constitutes merely a symbolic or vicarious form of participation. Such vicariousness or symbolic participation may represent a lesser form—certainly a different form—of emotional engagement in a cause or a movement than more concrete forms of social action. To illustrate the possible disconnection between philanthropy and more direct involvement in the cause it serves, Edward Tivnan relates the following story in his critical assessment of American-Jewish philanthropy.

In 1984, the San Francisco Federation of Jewish Charities ran a fund-raising ad that featured a photograph of an automatic clothes-washing machine: "To you this is a washing machine," the copy read. "To the people of Kiryat Shmona, this is a miracle." When Professor Chazan showed the ad to the residents of Kiryat Shmona, an Israeli development town [close to the northern border with Syria and frequently the target of enemy shellings], they laughed at it. And then they got angry. (Tivnan 1987, 249)

They apparently resented the fact that their American co-religionists thought them to be primitives who did not know what a washing machine was. Yet, American-Jewish fundraisers thought it an effective strategy to appeal to American Jews with the implicit message that what the latter take for granted as a common convenience is virtually an unheard of luxury for their putative brethren in Israel. The ad was meant to awaken a feeling of invidious surfeit that would trigger a sense of responsibility to share one's well being as an American Jew with one's less fortunate brethren in the backwaters of northern Israel.

Tivnan's story underscores the often-voiced criticism of American Jewish philanthropy – that it constitutes a kind of “check book Judaism” whereby all forms of Jewish social responsibility are discharged by the giving of money. That criticism aside, however, the story underscores the point of this study: that for the most part, philanthropy is the product of engaged emotions mobilized to result in a particular form of collective behavior, to wit, the giving of money to a cause.

Since the end of the nineteenth century, when organized Jewish philanthropic institutions have emerged on the American scene to address the multitude of social, cultural, political and religious problems of the immigrant Jewish population, organized fund-raising appeals have become a routine feature of American Jewish communal life. From appeals pouring forth from synagogue pulpits to rallies at Madison Square Garden, from highway billboards to telethons and Super Sunday phonathons, the Jewish community has raised the many hundreds of millions of philanthropic dollars it requires each year to meet its collective needs as a voluntary community by evoking and cultivating philanthropic giving. The art and science of “the campaign” is thus as much a part of the history of American Jewish philanthropy as are the multitude of worthy institutions that have deployed the financial resources raised thereby.

Over the course of the twentieth century, those campaigns have been shaped by events external to and affecting the Jewish community, as well as by events or policies Jews have sought to shape. They have been shaped as well by events, policies or desired outcomes that are entirely internal to the Jewish community. Thus, for example, the campaign of a local Jewish community to build a new recreational center or a synagogue is radically different, at least in terms of the emotions to be aroused, from the mobilizing efforts of the entire Jewish community to prevail on the American Congress not to sell advanced weaponry to Arab countries hostile to the State of Israel.

Following Jasper, one might argue that the nature of each collective political or philanthropic project has associated with it an infrastructure of prototypical emotions. Thus, for example, the building of a Jewish community center or a synagogue is likely to depend on the invoking of emotions associated with nurturance and piety. The effort to mobilize American Jews to write to their Congressmen to oppose the selling of advanced weaponry to Arab countries will likely depend on the invoking of emotions of fear and anger.

It is beyond the scope of this curriculum guide to catalogue the plethora of Jewish communal causes and projects by what their associated emotions might be. However, it is useful to acknowledge the primary axes of emotion outlined by Jasper as a step in that direction. With reference to what he calls “emotions of protest,” Jasper identifies the following:

A. Primarily Affective Emotions (feelings rooted in deep attachment and primary relationships). The range of such feelings includes:

- |              |             |
|--------------|-------------|
| - Love       | - Hatred    |
| - Loyalty    | - Hostility |
| - Solidarity | - Loathing  |
| - Trust      | - Mistrust  |
| - Respect    | - Disdain   |

B. Primarily Reactive Emotions (feelings rooted in disappointed expectations or sudden unexpected turn of events). The range of such feelings includes:

- |           |                |
|-----------|----------------|
| - Anger   | - Elation      |
| - Sorrow  | - Anticipation |
| - Grief   | - Aspiration   |
| - Shame   | - Indignation  |
| - Outrage |                |

C. Between what he calls the affective and the reactive emotions, Jasper identifies an array of “moods” of greater or lesser duration. These are an amalgam of affects and reactions, often brought on by precipitating events or triggered by agents of arousal. However brought on, these “moods” constitute a state of mind in which a great variety of collective behavior can be brought about. The variety of these “moods” includes:

- |              |               |
|--------------|---------------|
| - Compassion | - Resignation |
| - Enthusiasm | - Fear        |
| - Pride      | - Dread       |
| - Joy        | - Defiance    |
| - Hope       | - Cynicism    |
| - Sympathy   | - Envy        |
| - Pity       | - Resentment  |

Whether Jasper's schema is sufficiently comprehensive, or not, is of less concern here than that it allows us to begin to classify emotions by their source (e.g. rooted in a primary relationship or rooted in basic creature need), by their valence (i.e. positive or negative), by their intensity and duration. To these core emotions we need to add the particular cultural and institutional matrix in which they are most likely to be experienced.

## Questions

1. Discuss the different emotions evoked by a natural disaster in which hundreds of people are killed in a country far away from yours and the death of a family close to yours. How might the disaster far away from you be used to engage emotions like those you feel when disaster strikes closer to home?
2. Which emotions on Jasper's schema are most likely, in your opinion, to cause people to give money? To give time? To protest in the streets?

## Session 3

## Affecting and Reflecting the Emotional Triggers of Philanthropy

Typically, for American Jews, emotions associated with philanthropy or collective action are likely to coalesce around: *religious participation*, particularly in congregational settings; *ethnic involvement* in fraternal or social welfare organizations; or *triggering events* that arouse personal identification with the fate of the group and memories that invest those events with emotional import. Thus, a great deal of Jewish organizational life has been historically bound up with the cultivation of donors and the raising of funds in the context of those social events. Indeed, many traditional synagogues have made the raising of money—not only for the congregation but also for a whole host of other Jewish communal purposes—an integral feature of the worship service.

The inexorable link between affiliate emotions and fund-raising in the later half of the twentieth century would eventually produce a backlash in many American Jews. But, in the first half of the twentieth century that link played a critical role in making American Jewish communal institutions an exemplary engine of philanthropic production.

The political focus of Jasper's work also reminds us that affiliate emotions are essentially produced or at least evoked by purposeful design to move people to act in some desired manner. Indeed, those emotions can be and often are aroused by mobilizing agents (e.g. fundraisers, *agents provocateurs*, advance men and the like) who themselves may not be possessed of these emotions. Indeed, the art of effective philanthropic production may well be to maintain the illusion on the part of the target of solicitation that the one doing "the ask" shares the same set of emotions that he or she is attributing to or attempting to evoke in the target.

For purposes of understanding philanthropy in general and Jewish philanthropy in particular, it is essential to keep in mind that for the

most part those who seek to arouse emotions to effectuate acts of philanthropy are presumed to have these emotions themselves. Yet, for the sake of accomplishing the task of mobilization (an act of manipulation to a greater or lesser degree), those seeking donations cannot be expected to be possessed of the same emotions at the same time as those who are being aroused to make donations.

The arousal of emotions that will result in philanthropic behavior must involve a careful orchestration of triggering events that evoke and sustain a complex of feelings, which will result in the giving of money or the commitment of one's time and effort to a particular cause. What those events might be constitute the art and science of fund raising.

As any street-wise pan-handler knows, some hearts are won over by the plaintive tone and needy look while others will be won over by reason or belligerence or the simple persistence of "the ask."

In the case of the production of American Jewish philanthropy of the twentieth century, one can identify a number of modalities of production:

- individual face-to-face solicitation
- individual telephone solicitation
- in-person group solicitation
- direct-mail solicitation
- telephone solicitation
- impersonal mass appeal via
  - posters and bill boards
  - newspaper and magazine ads
  - radio, film, and television

One of the objectives of this course of study is to identify what are the auditory and visual tools that have been used to stimulate philanthropic giving. Apart from and sometimes in conjunction with the "personal ask," organized Jewish fundraising has depended upon a wide variety of media to motivate, mobilize, and activate the emotions that ultimately result in the philanthropic act of giving money to an organization. In the course of this curriculum some attention will be given to the role of audio-visual stimulants such as videotapes.

A survey of such major Jewish philanthropic organizations as HIAS (Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society), JDC (American Joint Distribution



Committee), CJF (Council of Jewish Federations) and UJA-Federation of New York has yielded a telling insight about the role of auditory and visual materials in the service of philanthropy. Each of these large, well-established philanthropic organizations has devoted staff, space, and financial resources to the production, archiving and utilization of a wide variety of such materials. These materials take the form of posters, photographs, brochures, audiotapes, film, and videotapes.

The very existence of these materials attests to the fact that for the philanthropic organizations that own and utilize these materials, philanthropy is not expected to emerge in full bloom from the hearts of minds of well-meaning individuals. Rather, philanthropy is to be evoked, triggered, stimulated, and cultivated by the application of cognitive and emotional stimuli, carefully insinuated into the awareness and psyche of a target group (i.e. the Jewish population in most cases). Indeed, it may be fair to say that the multimedia tools of the fund-raising campaign are production tools of philanthropy.

As one examines these tools of philanthropy, it becomes apparent that they vary considerably in the variety of emotions they are designed to evoke as well as the manner in which those emotions are to be triggered. The auditory and visual tools vary as well by their target audience. Some are designed to affect a highly targeted audience such as previously proven "larger donors" or perhaps a professional group of fund-raisers. Tools designed for the latter group are, strictly speaking, "training tools." But a great variety of the multimedia materials (audio tapes and videotapes) are intended as "trigger" instruments that precede a more direct solicitation of a large, mixed audience of previously committed donors, as well as others. Still other of these audio-visual tools are designed for a mass audience, for people who will possibly be listening and/or viewing the materials on radio or television, quite removed from the experience of solicitation.

The questions that drive the analysis of the materials at hand are: (a) what are the origins of the auditory and visual materials? (b) who is/are the intended audience? (c) what is/are the setting(s) in which these tools are intended to be deployed?, and most importantly, (d) what are the emotions the tools are meant to trigger?

The multimedia materials under examination have not only technical features (i.e. production characteristics, such as who produced them, when, in what media), but also content in the form of images that

convey a story, characters who perform or tell a story and possibly dramatic, comic or journalistic content. All of these elements are designed to act in concert to effect the desired outcome in the audience: to stimulate them to acts of philanthropy. Therefore, additional questions must be used to analyze these auditory and visual devices in terms of (a) what “entertainment” values are utilized such as dramatic tension, irony, comedy, music, lighting? (b) what characters are used to deliver key messages such as recognized figures of authority, cultural icons or celebrities or prototypical examples of those who would benefit from the acts of philanthropy?, and (c) what is the central “message” intended for the audience? Finally, the most general question to be addressed in the analysis of these auditory and visual tools is: what is the key emotion they intend to evoke in the audience?

Because philanthropy is always embedded in the particular cultural context of a group, American Jews in the present case, cutting across the aforementioned analytic concerns is the matter of history. The political psychology of American Jewry in the twentieth century is shaped by at least four critical events:

- mass immigration;
- the Holocaust;
- the founding of the State of Israel; and the
- collapse of Communism (and hence the liberation of Russian Jewry).

The Jewish response to these events has been filtered through the cultural lenses of religious knowledge and belief, ethnic experience and the diverse national aspirations of Jews living in the United States, Israel and the former Soviet Union.

Thus, the auditory and visual tools of American Jewish philanthropy need to be analyzed both along a horizontal scale of technical, artistic, strategic and motivational distinctions and along the vertical scale of historical events. Such a set of distinctions will readily give rise to a conceptual analytic grid that might look as follows.

### ANALYTIC GRID DESCRIBING AUDITORY AND VISUAL TOOLS

TECHNICAL	Immigration	Holocaust	Israel	New Russians	Local U.S.
Producer					
Date of Production					
Intended Audience					
Venue for Showing					
<b>CHARACTERS</b>					
Authorities					
Celebrities					
Beneficiaries					
Fellow Donors					
<b>THEMES/ MESSAGES</b>					
Drama					
Comedy					
History					
Irony					
<b>ARTISTIC VALUE</b>					
Music					
Lighting					
Staging					

The cells of this grid will contain annotated references to the videotapes and possibly other multimedia tools that have been used to produce Jewish philanthropy. Looked at in the context of this grid, it is expected that there will emerge distinct modes of philanthropic production associated with each period.

## Questions

1. Why are visual and auditory images particularly effective in moving people to give money or time? Are they necessarily more effective than other forms of appeal? Can you imagine a situation in which printed words would be better than images or spoken words?
2. What kinds of images might be used to evoke the founding of Israel or mass immigration?
3. Would images of people in misery necessarily be more likely to cause people to give than people who appear to be happy?

## Session 4

## Decades of Immigration

It is well to remember that more than eighty percent of America's Jews are descended from Eastern European ancestors who came to the US as immigrants sometime after 1880. Therefore, the immigrant experience looms large in the historical memory of nearly all American Jews. At the same time, it is also important to note that according to the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey more than ninety percent of American Jews alive today were born in the United States. Therefore the immigrant experience is only a memory for the vast majority and an increasingly distant memory for those who are in the younger age groups. To the extent that identification is used as a tool for philanthropic production (i.e. the evocation of empathy), such a device is less likely to be present or less likely to be effective with the masses of American Jews who themselves are far removed from the immigrant experience. On the other hand, such a tool might be expected to be found in auditory and visual materials that are designed to be used with older Jewish adults.

Quite apart from the evocations of the immigrant experience that recur through a great many contemporary Jewish fund-raising appeals, it is useful to recall that some of the earliest organized efforts at the production of Jewish philanthropy in the late nineteenth century were the numerous *landsmanshaften* (mutual aid societies organized by immigrants on the basis of their community of origins). Some of these highly localized and idiosyncratic organizations grew out of the social service programs of equally localized synagogues.

Gerald Sorin writes in The Jewish People in America: A Time for Building, The Third Migration 1880-1920: "As early as 1892 there were eighty-seven eastern European *landsmanshaften* in New York. By 1910 there were more than two thousand, representing over nine hundred European cities and towns, and embracing virtually every Jewish family in New York City." (Sorin 1992, 97)

Interestingly, as early as 1901 some of these *landsmanshaften* began to change their original names.

The Independent Young Men of Poniewiez became the Young Men's Association of Manhattan because they had "no desire to be identified with Russia or any town in Russia." . . . The Kalushiner Society, for example, reported that it had "long given up the idea of being isolated from general Jewish life in America. . . . Its hand is extended to the many other Jewish organizations in America." Other *landsmanshaften* Americanized by enlarging their scope and changing their names. In 1911 the Ekaterinoslow Ladies Charity Society became the Ladies Charity Society of New York in order to enlarge the field of its charity. (Sorin 1997, 98)

The change in names and missions of the literally thousands of *landsmanshaften* during the first several decades of this century speaks clearly of a rapidly changing mindscape on the part of its participants and more importantly on the part of the second-generation children of the immigrants. That changing mindscape would reflect a set of motivations for voluntary association and philanthropic giving among Americanized Jewish immigrants and their children that is quite different from that of their "greenhorn" forebears or former selves.

The success of *landsmanshaften* in their early years was clearly rooted in the common experience of neediness shared by their members, all of whom had gone through the same or very similar experiences with the traumas of immigration and resettlement in the New World. The effectiveness of their successor organizations depended on their ability to adapt their missions to the changing worldviews of a more Americanized population. At the same time, these successor organizations had to be able to link their members and participants into at least a fictive kinship group of "us" who shared a common memory if not a common experience.

The ongoing question of the "us" who share a common experience and memory is critical to the effective use of evocative imagery. In recent years, the most potent immigration issue was associated with rescuing Soviet Jewry—bringing Jews to the United States and supporting them once they were resettled. (See Session 7 for more on this subject.) Richard Geduldig, a New York-based immigration attorney and a member of the board of the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews, observes

that the issue at the heart of the response of U.S. Jews to immigrants from the former Soviet Union was “being Jewish.” He writes:

If most of us American-born Jews do not practice our religion to any significant degree, and are trying to find our place within Judaism, as opposed to within “being Jewish,” certainly Russian Jews will be even less observant and comfortable with religious practice, which was burned out of Jewish families’ lives for three generations. How many of us have met a woman from Russia, Ukraine, Latvia or other former Soviet republic and seen it [*sic*] that person’s face the face of our grandmother, our aunt, or the woman from the house across the street in the neighborhood where we grew up, only to learn that she never has known the singular joy of sitting at a Passover seder table, because her grandfather, although observant, wanted to hide this fact in order to protect the family? (Geduldig 1999)

In short, the issue of immigration may more importantly have become assimilation. No longer a threatened immigrant group, the Jewish community has power. And yet,

During the same quarter-century in which the Jewish community was transformed from weakling into powerhouse, the individual American Jew underwent a metamorphosis no less sweeping. Fewer Jews were joining synagogues or donating to Jewish charities. Growing numbers were marrying outside the faith. Community leaders interpreted the statistics in cataclysmic terms, warning that Jews were on the verge of disappearing, melting into the general American population. . . . [but] Jews are not disappearing. What they are doing is losing interest in the institutions of organized Judaism. (Goldberg 1996)

Birthright Israel, which commenced in 2000, is a case in point. The idea, first conceived several years ago by Israeli Justice Minister Yossi Beilin, was simple: “In an effort to help plug the dam of assimilation, bring Jewish youth to Israel for 10 days. For free.” Philanthropists Michael Steinhardt and Charles Bronfman (former chairman of United Jewish Appeal) initiated the project with the support of fourteen other organizations. Steinhardt and Bronfman believe “that every Jew in the Diaspora has a right to come to Israel once in his or her life, and that the established Jewish community should help

them exercise it. They were buttressed in their conviction by a 1997 study by Barry Chazan, now a consultant to Birthright, showing that teenagers who visit Israel are more likely to marry Jews, join synagogues and contribute to Jewish charities.” (Wohlgelernter 2000) Funding sources include the two philanthropists; local American Jewish federations and their national organization, the United Jewish Communities; and the Israeli government. Each partner is to contribute \$70 million over five years—2000 to 2005. Securing a Jewish future is clearly one of the aims of Birthright Israel.

Some 4,000 students were brought to Israel for the Birthright project in its first year. Engaging the emotions of pride, enthusiasm, and joy, fundraising activities can be expected to feature the faces of youth in Israel reconnecting with the Jewish identities they may have lost between the arrival of their immigrant ancestors and the present. For Jews from the former Soviet Union, the connection may be established for the first time.

See the United Jewish  
Communities web site at:  
<http://www.ujc.org>

The importance of this theme can be seen in the recent award-winning United Jewish Communities video, “A Legacy of Light,” which the UJC (the new entity formed by the 1999 merger of United Jewish Appeal, the United Israel Appeal and the Council of Jewish Federations) describes as “a moving video showing how and why leaving an endowed legacy to federation is the means to secure the Jewish future. Using testimonials from donors who have endowed their gifts, the video embraces three themes: the need to secure a Jewish future; making wishes come true; and how a person of modest means can create an endowed legacy.” (UJC web site)

## Questions

1. Can you identify in other immigrant groups organizations like the Jewish *landsmanshaften*? In what ways were *landsmanshaften* alike and different from other charitable organizations in the United States?
2. How might an appeal to American Jews, based on their immigrant pasts, be created by UJA to encourage young Jews two or three generations removed from those who first came to the United States to support Jewish education? How might images be used? What could be done to bring younger Jews to identify more closely with the experiences of their immigrant ancestors, using video images?



3. If assimilation is the desirable end of immigration, how do groups maintain their identity? If assimilation is not the end of immigration, how do immigrant groups acquire power in the larger culture? And what role might philanthropy play in maintaining identity or acquiring power?



**Session 5****The Holocaust: Rescue and Restoration**

In a remarkable 1946 NBC broadcast, Katherine Hepburn plays Naomi, a depressed Jewish woman who questions her right to live following the loss of her family and friends in the Holocaust. Produced by the United Jewish Appeal, the tape's message is that those who survived have a duty to care for other survivors. The message is delivered at a high emotional pitch and driven home at the end by Samuel Goldwyn, who makes explicit what the story left implicit: good, responsible Jews give money to the United Jewish Appeal.

This radio drama is paradigmatic of the use of the Holocaust as a device to arouse emotions. In this, as in most other instances, it was designed to trigger a philanthropic response. The radio drama also illustrates the symbolic devices that can be deployed to arouse guilt and the desire for redemption or absolution through an appeal to shared memory.

The United Jewish Appeal was born out of the need to care for refugees and other victims of World War II. Its success grew directly from an appeal to the conscience and means of American Jewry and focused on settlement in Palestine (see Session 6) and the rescue of European Jews from Nazi persecution. The Joint Distribution Committee rescued 162,000 Jews between 1939 and 1944; UJA funds provided direct relief to Jews in 48 countries.

Visual images and spoken testimony have been central to this process of recovery through memory. Jews gave to support Jewish welfare and defense throughout the world as part of the classic value of Judaism (reinforced here in the memory of the destruction of European Jewry) that "all Jews are guarantors of [i.e., responsible for] one another." (London and Chazan 1990, 28) Although not designed to raise money, the PBS program "America and the Holocaust" (in The American Experience series), broadcast in 1999, provided a wealth of potent images that demonstrate the power of film to galvanize emotions.

See <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/holocaust/> for an online overview of the program and an extensive bibliography of sources, including primary documents online.

The Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies at Yale University and the Shoah Visual History Foundation include first efforts, going back twenty years, to videotape Holocaust survivors recollecting their experiences. The project “revolutionized the act of witnessing,” according to Stephen Mayer, the author of “Bearing Witness to the Holocaust: How the First Video Archive of Holocaust Testimonies was Established.”

See the web site of the  
Fortunoff Video Archive at:  
<http://www.holocausttestimonies.com>

The Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation was established by Steven Spielberg to chronicle first-hand accounts by survivors. The Archive is comprised of 200,000-plus videotapes filled with more than 100,000 hours of testimony. With the world’s largest collection of digitized video testimonies, the Foundation is developing new and innovative ways of disseminating this information to promote tolerance and cultural understanding.

The imagery of the Holocaust was used early in UJA campaigns, often in connection with appeals on behalf of the new state of Israel. As Abraham Karp explains when writing about the UJA, American Jewry was challenged by the photograph of a survivor and his wife against a background of Auschwitz, Buchenwald, Dachau, Bergen Belsen . . . clutching a Russian newspaper, captioned:

He can’t forget . . . can you?

He hasn’t forgotten the nightmare of Nazism. Today’s threatening headlines in *Pravda* won’t let him forget.

*He thinks, now we must live in fear again* – (Karp 1981)

The Holocaust continued to galvanize Jewish philanthropy in the postwar years. Jacob Neusner suggests, in discussing the Holocaust museum movement, that:

American Jewish Holocaustomania was born with the Israelis’ spectacular defense of their lives and homeland [in the 1967 War], the return to the Jewish memorial of the ancient Temple (“the Western Wall”) and the establishment of the state of Israel as a permanent and powerful presence in world affairs. The nations had failed us. But we had not failed ourselves. We have learned the lessons of the Holocaust: Defend ourselves; don’t trust gentiles. . . . Returning to the fold, an entire generation of

formerly indifferent Jewish intellectuals discovered not the Torah but Jewishness. . . . Appealing to the “self-evident” meaning of events they have not experienced, in places where they do not live, an entire generation has explained to its children the reason they are Jewish, therefore in some ways different from others. (Neusner 1999)

The Holocaust was effectively tied in this case to campaigns on behalf of both Israel and Soviet Jewry. For many American Jews the Holocaust would be but vague history were it not for the work of educators to create knowledge of and evoke emotions relating to it. The journalist George Robinson writes that

The Holocaust forced a serious reevaluation process in Jewish theology and philosophy, but the impact of the new thinking wrought by the Shoah trickled down to the ordinary Jew gradually; the primary impact of the Holocaust took place on the political ground first, in the final victory of Zionism, the founding of the State of Israel. That political change, in turn, would have enormous ramifications for the concept of Jewish identity. (Robinson 2000)

The creation of *Yom ha-Shoah* (The Day of [commemorating] the Holocaust) by the Israeli Parliament in 1951 helped to focus community emotion. Designed as a day on which the six million Jews murdered by the Nazis could be properly memorialized, the day is marked by a wide range of observances, which may include speakers or films on the *Shoah*. Gradually, special liturgies are being developed as well.

The Holocaust is a classic—and, for Jews, fundamental—triggering event that evokes a wide range of emotions: anger and sorrow, as well as outrage, captured in the widely used slogan, “Never Again.” Oddly enough, hope may also be a factor, as suggested by the broadcast tape described at the beginning of this session. Survivors can hope.

## Questions

1. The radio broadcast produced for NBC radio makes an emotional appeal to an audience for whom the events of the Holocaust were still vivid. What prevents our seeing such a broadcast—or any

similar use of media—as exploitation, using personal tragic stories to raise money (even for a good cause)?

2. What are the differences between a film (or video) made to move people to give money and a film such as “Schindler’s List”? Could “Schindler’s List” be an effective money-raising vehicle? What role might intent play in the effectiveness of a medium for producing philanthropy?

**Session 6****Israel Reborn: From Weakness to Power**

Some commentators, such as Arthur Hertzberg, have suggested that Israel has become “the religion of the American Jews.” This connection to Israel, which helps to create a sense of group identity for Jews, has been most pronounced since the Six-Day War of 1967. Being an Israel supporter became just the *right thing* in the eyes of many American Jews. This position was part of the ethos that was emerging in the post Second World War era, which Jonathan Woocher labeled as the Jewish “Civil Religion” in America. (Woocher 1986) Identification with Israel was part of the survival ideology, which energized the Jewish community, and became the central force of organizations and community processes. Elan Ezrachi argues that:

American Zionism was an ideology that paradoxically encouraged American Jews to focus inward. In this respect, Israel served as metaphor for the American Jewish experience. Identifying with Israel had more to do with the building of the American Jewish community rather than with actually participating in the building of Israel. The UJA formula of the united campaign in which money is raised in the name of Israel but more than half of it stays in the US for local needs exemplifies this position. (Ezrachi, 1998)

The idea of Israel, then, served as a powerful motivating and unifying force for American Jewish philanthropy, whatever the destination of the money raised. Israel began to emerge as an important image in the early 1950s (although it did not become *the* motivating idea until the 1967 War), when “the Jewish population in the United States had shifted from the city to the suburbs. New facilities for the established and newly created institutions were high community priorities. Competition for the philanthropic dollar ensued” (Karp 1981, 111). Addressing the annual national conference of the UJA in 1953, Joseph J. Schwartz (Executive Director of the UJA) made this appeal:

I was recently in Israel—and I came away from Israel with the realization that this is a very grim moment in its history. . . . To the American Jewish community, Israel is vastly important—and we are vastly important to Israel. (Karp 1981, 112)

More recent conflicts between Orthodox and Reform Judaism in Israel have emphasized the way in which events are quickly tied to fund-raising efforts. In 1998, Rabbi Ismar Schorsch, chancellor of New York's Jewish Theological Seminary, the academic and spiritual center of Conservative Judaism, called for Reform and Conservative Jews to "stop funding all ultra-Orthodox organizations and institutions for whom religious pluralism is anathema" and to put pressure on the United Jewish Appeal, the principal charitable fund-raising institution of American Jewry, to use its distribution of money to promote religious pluralism in Israel. Such appeals do not "strike a very sympathetic note among United Jewish Appeal officials, who argue that giving for worthy charitable purposes shouldn't be caught in the cross-fire of the religious debate and who have sought to drop the word 'pluralism' from their fund-raising appeals because of its divisive connotations." (Goshko 1998)

Some suggest that the present generation of American Jews is less receptive to skillfully pitched emotional appeals on behalf of Israel. In a review of "Envisioning Israel: The Changing Ideals and Images of American Jews," Lloyd Gartner notes that:

Investments, which Israel wants today, are carefully calculated and compared with the risk and return on other investments; they are not gifts presented in a rush of skillfully stimulated emotion. When today's "big givers" envision Israel, they usually desire a territorial compromise and a regime of religious pluralism, both of which go against the grain of the present regime. Moreover, unlike their fathers, they [present generation Jews] are not diffident about expressing their views in such matters. And big American Jewish giving to Israel must compete today with gifts to concert halls, museums and universities including, wondrous to say, Jewish studies in their own countries. (Gartner 1999)

Competing images become even more important in winning hearts and minds in the age of video and the Internet. [TruePeace.org](http://TruePeace.org), for example, is "dedicated to educating the public regarding the current situation in Israel, based on Torah sources, with special emphasis on the opinion and



See the TruePeace web site  
at: [http://www.truepeace.org/  
index2.html](http://www.truepeace.org/index2.html).

The MSN's Israel web  
community can be found at  
[http://communities.msn.com/  
israelplace](http://communities.msn.com/israelplace); it offers a variety  
of links, including a link  
to an online archive of video  
clips found at [http://www.  
geocities.com/Eureka/Park/9  
829/video/](http://www.geocities.com/Eureka/Park/9829/video/).

teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe.” It contains audio and video links warning that “Jerusalem is next! If obtaining a peace agreement may indeed be considered a matter of life and death, then just as it is permitted to give away Yehuda and Shomron, so is it permitted to give away the old city of Jerusalem!”

At the same time, MSN's Israel web community offers numerous links designed to boost support for Israel, including an extensive online archive of video clips. They are organized historically under the general heading “The Birth of a Nation” and can be easily viewed with RealVideo/Audio. The importance of such online communities in developing and maintaining support for Israel is likely to increase.

The idea and reality of Israel draws on Jewish group identity (or ethnic involvement) to encourage giving. The survival of Israel is, in a sense, about the survival of the Jews, especially in the aftermath of the Holocaust. Its founding is also a triggering event. Emotions such as loyalty and solidarity combine with pride and, again, hope. By supporting Israel, Jews can express confidence in the future and identify in a concrete way with the image of Jewish identity represented by a place with historic and religious meaning.

## Questions

1. The reality of a Jewish homeland is obviously important for Jews who live in Israel, but it is as an idea that Israel is most potent for Jewish identity. What are the elements of that idea that make it especially powerful in producing philanthropy?
2. As Israel becomes more established as a nation state and more secure in its environment, how might it continue to function as a symbol for Jews in the diaspora? Is it necessary for Israel to be threatened for it to be such a symbol?



**Session 7****Post-Communist Russian Immigration: The American Jewish Journey Recapitulated**

In the autumn of 1971, the National Conference on Soviet Jewry opened offices in New York to coordinate activities designed to raise consciousness about Soviet controls on Jewish emigration. The campaign emphasized the need to “rescue” Jews in the Soviet Union. It sought to mobilize public opinion—especially Jewish public opinion—to influence international sanctions against the policies of the Soviets. The issue was particularly poignant for many American Jews, who are of Russian ancestry.

In 1989, the United Jewish Appeal, which had dedicated itself to the support of Israel, launched “Operation Passage to Freedom,” which encouraged immigration to the United States rather than to Israel. By 1990, Israeli pressure had brought the UJA back to a campaign called “Operation Exodus,” focused on settlement in Israel.

The Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society produced a video in 1992, “HIAS Means Freedom,” that includes a segment on a Russian Jewish Family reunited with American relatives after seven years of separation. Calling itself “the oldest international migration and refugee resettlement agency in the United States,” HIAS is dedicated to assisting persecuted and oppressed people worldwide and delivering them to countries of safe haven. Since its founding in 1880, it has rescued more than four and a half million people.

See the Hias web site at:  
<http://www.hias.org/>.

The International Soviet Jewry Archival Project, located at the University of Colorado (Boulder), provides an interesting example of the use of archival materials, including video and audio interviews, for advocacy. Part of a larger human rights initiative, the project on Soviet Jewry grew out of the university library’s holdings (the archives of the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews, a score of affiliated area Councils, the American Association of Russian Jews, and a considerable set of

documents related to Soviet Jewry in the University's Amnesty International archive). The project entailed a two-pronged effort: "the creation of documentary interviews regarding the origin, development and consequences of the transnational rescue movement on behalf of Soviet Jews; and the bolstering of these documentary interviews through a major effort to collect and preserve original archival materials. The project's goal is thus to preserve and promote the rescue movement's heritage to researchers and a wider international public."

*See the International Soviet Jewry Archival Project at:*  
<http://www-libraries.colorado.edu/ps/arujewry.htm>.

But at the same time, the project web site notes: "Several leaders in the American Jewish community have strongly recommended that the project generate a documentary film describing the Soviet Jewry Rescue Movement, and are assisting us in locating an acclaimed film maker toward this end. We hope to translate this film into Russian and distribute it there in order to supplement current efforts to revitalize Judaism in the former Soviet Union."

In the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union, the National Conference has shifted its attention to the support of Jews in the former Soviet Union. It now describes itself as an advocate "on behalf of Jews in Russia, Ukraine, the Baltic States & Eurasia." With the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), it publishes a regular bulletin to encourage support for Jews living in the former Soviet Union. According to the bulletin, "Revival," activities of the JDC expanded in variety and size in 1997.

The JDC uses videos to promote this work in the former Soviet Union. "For the Sake of the Future" is a seven-minute tape about children from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union enjoying a Jewish camping experience at the Ronald S. Lauder Foundation/JDC International Summer Camp at Szarvas, Hungary." The video "Window on a Miracle" illustrates the great cultural and spiritual change that is taking place in Jewish life in the former Soviet Union. "A Branch of the Family" offers a view of the JDC's programs in Kiev through the voices of the recipients and the program director. Clearly, these brief videotapes are designed primarily to raise funds by portraying children and families in need of help—or by appealing to the relatedness of Jews across cultural and national boundaries.

Rescuing Soviet Jewry undoubtedly evokes memories of rescuing Jews from Europe. One might even think of a "philanthropy of rescue" that generates emotions like loyalty, anger, and outrage. Some of the videos

from JDC also draw on pity and sympathy and appeal to group solidarity. Not only are Jews to be rescued, but others who are in trouble are to be assisted because that is what Jews do.

### **Questions**

1. What might be the advantages for fundraisers in the United States to focusing attention on settling Jews from the Former Soviet Union in Israel instead of the US?
2. In raising money, can an appeal to people's sympathy for others who are in trouble, regardless of their group identity, be as effective as an appeal to group solidarity? What might be the elements of the latter sort of appeal?



**Session 8****Philanthropy without Enemies: Turning Inward**

**C**auses that generate emotional response and therefore promote giving have provided springboards for organizing philanthropic efforts by American Jews. The holocaust, the survival of Israel, and the rescue of Soviet Jews have all provided the images and the stories that have shaped Jewish generosity. Philanthropy is a tradition in Judaism, however, and the disappearance of particular “causes” will be unlikely to change what one donor calls “a Jewish thing.” (Ostrower 1995)

But it is also likely that the assumed generosity of Jews may be an endangered image. Susan Chambré notes in a discussion of Jewish philanthropy that there is evidence that the:

Jewish civil religion that evolved during this century will not continue in its present form. In response, Jewish organizations and conferences now include opportunities for Torah study and ritual observance. . . . There are strong signs that Jewish philanthropic and organizational life will not continue in its present form without conscious changes in both the structure of organizations and in the techniques they employ to motivate donors and volunteers. . . . Empirical data from a number of studies indicate that Jews are becoming more integrated into the philanthropic organizations of the general society. They are less exclusively involved in Jewish organizations and direct more of their donations to non-Jewish organizations. (Chambré 1997)

It is perhaps not surprising, then, that United Jewish Communities (a new organization combining United Jewish Appeal, Council of Jewish Federations, and United Israel Appeal) won an award from the New York Festivals International Film and Video Competition for “A Legacy of Light,” which was described as a “moving video showing how and why leaving an endowed legacy. . . . is a means to secure the Jewish future. Using testimonials from donors who have endowed their gifts,

the video embraces three themes: the need to secure a Jewish future; making wishes come true; and how a person of modest means can create an endowed legacy." The video was distributed in 1999 for use by endowment and annual campaign professionals. (UJC 2000)

The creation of United Jewish Communities suggests a refocusing of energies, perhaps not unlike that noted by Abraham Karp in an assessment of the UJA after forty years of operation. The UJA can, he wrote:

Make its contribution beyond the need dollars it raises. It can act as a testing organism for all manner of national Jewish activities and projects and it can help retain the pluralistic character of American Jewry. . . . The new leadership [of the UJA] is one with a commitment to Judaism derived not so much from an inherited sense of duty, or from nostalgia, as from knowledge and understanding. Their program for the UJA is aimed at the broadening of Jewish knowledge which they are convinced will lead to an enlightened understanding not only of Jewish needs but also of Jewish purpose. (Karp 1981, 170-172)

A focus on education for Jewish identity seems to be emerging as a new theme in the absence of identifiable threats or crises.

The Project Judaica Foundation (PJF), for example, was established by Mark and Jill Talisman in 1983, "to initiate and execute projects related to the rescue, rehabilitation, dissemination, and exhibition of Judaica. Consistent with that goal, the Foundation is an active partner with Jewish communities throughout the world focusing in the Czech Republic and Poland." Mark Talisman, founder of PJF, says that "we have virtually begun a whole new type of philanthropy. Someone comes to us with a project, and if we want to commit to it, we set out to find a sponsor." Project oriented, this kind of fund-raising still relies on generating emotional responses from potential donors. For example, "some of the projects in the works [include] Jewish art behind the former Iron Curtain, bringing together the Center for Jewish Art in Jerusalem and the Steven Spielberg Righteous Persons Foundation; Jewish study in Cracow—linking host Jagiellonian University, New York University and enthusiastic students from America for a five-week course; and a Judaica Renaissance Gallery on the Web site (<http://www.judaica.org>)." (Hoffman 1997)

See the Project Judaica Foundation web site: <http://www2.judaica.org>, and <http://www2.judaica.org/pj/about1.html>.



See the Joint Distribution  
Committee web site:  
<http://www.jdc.org/about/>.

Opening Jewish philanthropy to respond to situations that do not necessarily involve Jews or particularly Jewish causes has also become more important. The Joint Distribution Committee, for example, “sponsors programs of relief, rescue, and reconstruction, fulfilling its commitment to the idea that all Jews are responsible for one another and that ‘To save one person is to save a world’.” (*Mishnah*, Sanhedrin 4:5) Appeals for contributions to assist flood victims in Mozambique emphasized “assistance which enables South African and Israeli physicians” to provide help. “Report from Kosovo” is a five-minute video that offers a close up of the programs JDC established in Kosovo to help people return their lives to normalcy. “Rescue in Sarajevo” offers “a dramatic look at JDC’s rescue of 300 people from war-torn Sarajevo, including the Righteous Gentile Zeyneba Hartaga-Susic and her family, and their arrival in Israel.”

See Tzedek Sites at:  
<http://rj.org/rac/social/tzsites.html>.

Congregational social action is also important in the overall picture of Jewish philanthropy. *Tzedek Sites, Congregational Social Action Pages* emphasizes the wide range of philanthropic activities Jews engage in at the local level – activities that involve more than just the giving of money. Their presence in such a web site suggests the increasing importance of the Internet as a medium for generating financial support, perhaps as important as video (and, of course, the web can include video, as the JDC site does).

See The National Center for  
Jewish Film web site:  
<http://www.jewishfilm.com/funfsup.html>.

Film itself continues to be an important medium for marking and solidifying identity. The National Center for Jewish Film is a unique film library created to preserve the pictorial records of the Jewish experience. In addition to being an archive and a study center, it maintains an audiovisual library to circulate films to educational institutions, community groups and the public. Presumably, one of the purposes of such a circulating library would be to add to the store of Jewish knowledge and provide a deeper understanding of Jewish community and identity. Support for the Center comes from a wide range of Jewish institutions and groups, suggesting the importance the Jewish community places on this kind of archive of visual materials.

The collection housed at the National Center for Jewish Film also indicates that themes considered in this guide will not necessarily disappear. They emerge in different contexts. For example, “Jewishfilm2000: From Berlin to Jerusalem” consists of a series of films shown at Brandeis University and sponsored by the Center and the Consulate General of Israel to New England. The series included

“‘Rosenzweig’s Freedom,’ an award-winning feature based on a true story that confronts the issue of Germany’s ongoing right-wing extremist violence. ‘Closed Country, a Swiss film about siblings who investigate the events which led up to their parents’ murder at Auschwitz, was followed by ‘Witness: Voices From the Holocaust,’ a compelling documentary of video testimonies. One of the major highlights was the Boston premiere of Ron Havilio’s epic project, ‘Fragments\*Jerusalem,’ a film which spans centuries and continents to tell the story of a man, his people and his country.”

See the web site of The  
National Center for Jewish  
Film at: <http://www.jewishfilm.org/jf2kwelcome.html>.

When there are no enemies or specific triggering events—and when even motivating images like Israel become more complex—generating emotions is more difficult. It seems likely that Jews will turn to religious participation and continue to focus on group identity as ways of evoking the necessary responses that result in giving of time and money. Group pride in local congregations, for example, is less about what is being done (that is, who is being helped) than it is about the feeling of group involvement. That is, the idea that ‘We do these things because we are Jews and because we are part of *this* community, which is a generous and caring place.’ The return to spirituality in society has also been evidenced in Judaism. Fundraisers appealing to more positive emotions, such as pride and solidarity, compassion and sympathy, are perhaps more likely to prove successful in the current (or in a more pacific) environment. Films that draw on images from triggering events such as the Holocaust can still be effective; however, the focus seems increasingly to be on the personal stories. The issue is not a broadly conceived idea or set of images but rather the fact that *this* person suffered, even as we might suffer. And so one is urged to be generous to alleviate suffering with which one can personally identify.

## Questions

1. What would the impact be on Jewish individuals and the Jewish community at large if Jews gave money to generic philanthropic causes instead of specifically Jewish campaigns? What is the role of philanthropy in group identity?
2. It has been suggested that the future of religion is entirely local, focused on the congregation or neighborhood. Many synagogues have developed extensive social outreach programs that engage people in specific ways, not only as givers of money. How might

larger organizations use that local energy to raise money on a larger scale? What emotions might be effectively evoked?

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## Part III.

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Born in Switzerland and raised in Budapest, Hungary, Egon Mayer immigrated with his family to the United States during the Hungarian Revolution of 1956. He received his B.A. from Brooklyn College in 1967, his M.A. from the New School for Social Research in 1970 and his Ph.D. from Rutgers University in 1975.

Dr. Mayer is a widely sought-after lecturer and author of major studies in Jewish intermarriage, including Intermarriage and the Jewish Future (1979), Children of Intermarriage (1983), Conversion of the Intermarried (1987), and Rabbinic Officiation and Intermarriage. He is the author of the widely acclaimed book Love & Tradition: Marriage between Jews & Christians (Plenum Publishing Co., 1987), as well as From Suburb to Shtetl (Temple University Press) about the Orthodox and Hasidic communities of Boro Park, Brooklyn. He is also the author of a curriculum guide, Philanthropy and Voluntarism Among the Jews, published by the Center for the Study of Philanthropy, The Graduate Center, The City University of New York (Spring 1998).

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**NOTES**

*A Case Study of the Imagery & Methodology of Jewish Fundraising*

**NOTES**



## NOTES

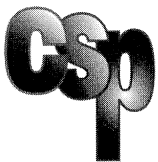
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**NOTES**

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Founded in September 1986 at The Graduate School and University Center of The City University of New York, Center for the Study of Philanthropy focuses attention on giving, voluntarism, and nonprofit entrepreneurship by individual donors, foundations, and corporations in the United States and around the world.

The focus of the Center's work is to broaden the pool of scholars engaged in the study of giving and voluntarism, to increase the opportunities for collaboration with practitioners in the field, and to enhance public awareness of philanthropic trends through a varied format of seminars, symposia, conferences, courses, research projects, awards, and publications.



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