

# Identicom Looks-Inside, Outside, Sideways

By Chronicle Staff

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Dr. L. Fein. M. Himmelfarb  
Problem probers.

From in-depth discussion of the changing American Jewish family scene, through a probing look at U.S. Jewry vis-a-vis Israel, and on to a look at Jewish political moods, and finally to the role of who decided what for the Jewish community, Identicom Weekend told it all.

Kicking off the opening program on Saturday night, Dr. Norman Paul, a Cambridge, Mass. psychiatrist, discussed the difficulties in the parent-child relationship and how this tension carries its effects when the children grow up and become parents.

Later, Dr. Henry W. Maier, former Pittsburgher and professor of Social Work at the University of Washington, told the crowd at the Y-ICK that "authority has shifted from a backward to a side-ways base."

"Backward", Dr. Maier explained, meant that families and individuals looked to the wisdom of previous generations as a guide, while, "sideways" means that youth today now look to "peer associates for guidance".

"The young of today are related to recent wisdom and look backward where it is relevant to today," Dr. Maier told the Chronicle. "The wisdom of experience must prove itself to today's youth."

With this "sideways look", there is a shift from preoccupation with "roles" toward an emphasis to individual capability, he continued. He predicted that this trend would eventually end racial or religious bigotry but would create a new type of bigot—a bigotry against "squareness", a bigotry "placed against a person's self."

After Dr. Sklare's discussion, Milton Himmelfarb, director of Information and Research Services of the American Jewish Committee and editor of the American Jewish Yearbook, answered the program question, "What Happened to the Jewish Liberal?"

Frank Mankiewicz, Washington tv news analyst scheduled to appear with Mr. Himmelfarb, was scratched by the chicken pox (and probably vice versa).

Mr. Himmelfarb answered the query on the Jewish Liberal with an affirmative: "he is alive and well inside his voting booth—with a complication." He pointed out that U.S. Jewry consistently does not fit the Oldegard axiom that the poorer the ethnic-religious group, the higher the Democratic vote and vice versa.

"We voted in a sort of un-American way—we voted in a Jewish way. Of all white groups in the last New York election, for example, Jews gave less of their vote to Conservative Buckley than any other—even less than the Puerto Ricans."

The complication cited by Himmelfarb stems from the difference in motivation between Jewish "haves" and "have-lesses". While the former votes liberal because "liberalism has become his religion; "the latter votes "bread and butter".

Dr. Marshall Sklare, Professor of American Jewish Studies at Brandeis University, addressed himself to "The Impact of Israel on the American Jewish Community" at the early Sunday afternoon session.

Dr. Sklare is editor of "Jewish Identity," "The Jews," and co-author of "Conservative Jews," among other books and papers. He is an acknowledged authority in his field.

According to Dr. Sklare, "Israel is not an American Jewish creation but one of European Jewry. Israel is not a response to the American Jewish situation.

"But it has had a profound psychological effect on the Jewish self-image."

"Salute to Israel Parade" that marked the new holiday of "Jewish Independence Day," for American Jews to express their Jewishness.

But within the last three years, emigration has surpassed what it was in the past two decades. The reasons are a pessimism about America with all its problems and that Israel is a place where Jews have secure future, which is not so apparent here.

For the Jews here are being threatened by other minority groups, most notably blacks and Puerto Ricans.

The vast outpouring of funds and effort during the Six-Day War was important because it highlighted the fact that American Jews are now in solidarity with Israel.

Dr. Sklare said, "the American Jew is highly dependent on Israel.

The psychological effect of its destruction would be devastating."

Winding up the week-end was a presentation by Dr. Leonard J. Fein, Associate Professor of Politics and Social Policy at Brandeis University, whose topic was "Power and Decision Making in the Jewish Community."

Dr. Fein's main concern was with Jewish identity today. He believes that the Jewish youth are "culturally deprived" due to the assimilation of their parents into the American society.

"America offered not to treat us as Jews (persecution) if we agreed not to act like Jews," remarked Dr. Fein. The Jews spent so much time convincing their non-Jewish neighbors that they were no different than they that the Jews eventually convinced both themselves and their children.

Today, however, the Jewish youth no longer believe that the mere vestiges of the religion have anything to do with the actual religion. And because of that Jewish youth are turning back to a tradition of which they know very little.

Dr. Fein did prepare a set of guidelines to aid the growth of the Jewish community.

► We must provide a Jewish idiom to encompass all facets of Jewish life: prayer, philosophy, literature, music, games, food, etc.

► We must exploit our own opportunity to retain our Jewish identity, not only help others to retain theirs (aid to Soviet Jewry).

► We must not accept depressed standards in our Hebrew schools which we would not accept in our public schools.

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