



GRADUATE students at the University of Pittsburgh Linda Pritchard, Fred Siegal, and Dena Meyers (l to r) take inventory of historical materials at Temple Sinai as part of the Western Pennsylvania Jewish History Project. By the end of the summer inventories will have been taken at most of the institutions and organizations in the Pittsburgh area.

## History Foundation Seeks Today Through the Past

The Western Pennsylvania Jewish History Foundation has been established to fill a need—the need for Jews to find themselves today through a thorough knowledge of the past.

“The roots of such fundamental elements lie in an earlier age and making them accessible to a space-age clientele has become the aim of the Western Pennsylvania Jewish History Project,” according to Jonathan Levine, project co-director.

An immediate goal of the project, now in its second year of operation, is to preserve and arrange historical data relevant to the history of the Jewish community of Western Pennsylvania and to make this data available to community members and scholars. At present, Pittsburgh is the focus of research.

The acquisition and arrangement of data has been organized under three categories. Manuscripts and similar types of archival materials in danger of neglect, deterioration, or loss are being gathered, collected, and stored in a Western Pennsylvania Archives of Jewish history.

A second data type consists of an oral history collection which will provide new sources of historical information through taped interviews with a number of community members.

Finally, a computerized data bank is being established which will serve as a repository for information gathered from a variety of sources including the materials mentioned above. All of the information in the data bank will be put on punched cards or magnetic tape.

Through the use of a computer, it will then be easy to develop a complete and cross-referenced index of information pertaining to the history of the entire community.

Under the guidance of project directors, Professor Walter Glazer and Jonathan Levine of the University of Pittsburgh's Department of History, five graduate students in history have been working to gather relevant data.

Last summer several congregations, such as Tree of Life and Rodef Shalom, were visited to determine what archival materials, records, publications, etc. they might possess which would be valuable in reconstructing a community history. The United Jewish Federation was likewise visited.

This summer, similar work has been done at B'nai Israel, Temple David, Beth El, Beth Israel, Temple Sinai, Beth Shalom, Hillel, and the Jewish War Veterans Service Center. By the end of the summer, each group which cooperated in the project will have received a computer print-out of their holdings.

Other phases of the project such as the indexing of the Jewish Criterion (1910-1920) are in progress. At this point, articles of

special interest are being collected but eventually all items of importance mentioned in the weekly newspaper will be transferred to the data bank.

The oral history project is another undertaking. Under the guidance of Dr. Gould Colman, past president of the American Oral History Association, tape recorded interviews are being arranged with many members of our community who will be able to provide information about the history of Pittsburgh Jewry.

Many of these tasks are time-consuming and depend ultimately on volunteer assistance. For the project to be successful, community cooperation and participation is essential.

The project directors are therefore anxious that members of the community contribute in any way possible to the gathering of historical data. For instance, an attic might be the repository of useful and interesting material.

Financially, the project has thus far been underwritten by initial contributions from the United Jewish Federation, the American Jewish Committee, and the Rodef Shalom Brotherhood, and, hopefully, contributions from community organizations and individuals will provide the money necessary to continue the project for the next two years.

Those wishing to make contributions can contact Messrs. Glazer or Levine at the University of Pittsburgh, Department of History—621-3500, extension 586.

The project will promote interest in and a sense of identity with the community's past through participation in the work and through the eventual publication of studies based on the collected data,” Mr. Levine told The Chronicle.

“Of all the major Jewish communities in America, ours is the only one without a published history. The Western Pennsylvania Jewish History Project will remedy this situation in a unique manner.

“It will be the first systematic and detailed historical diary of an American Jewish community. More importantly, it will be a source of continuity for our community at a time when change threatens to leave us without roots.”

KING Henry VI, King Louis XIV, Martin Luther, Frederick the Great, Cardinal Richelieu, Napoleon Bonaparte, and Charles Dickens all suffered from hemorrhoids.