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**THE IMPACT OF RELIGIOUS DAY SCHOOL EDUCATION
ON MODERN ORTHODOX JUDAISM : A STUDY OF CHANGES
IN SEVEN MODERN ORTHODOX DAY SCHOOLS AND THE
IMPACT ON RELIGIOUS TRANSMISSION TO STUDENTS AND
THEIR FAMILIES**

by

MARGARET CHARYTAN

**A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in
Sociology in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City
University of New York**

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APPROVAL PAGE

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Sociology in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

THE SOCIOLOGICAL PROBLEM AND HYPOTHESIS

Ever since the 1970's, a number of sociologists studying Judaism have noted a definite change in religious behavior and attitudes among Orthodox Jews (Kranz4ler, 1976; Mayer and Waxman, 1977; Danzger, 1989; Helmreich, 1986; Heilman and Cohen, 1989; Joselit, 1990; Liebman, 1988). Their observations have been focused primarily on a shift to stricter, more stringent religious behavior (in both religious practices and attitudes) among American Orthodox Jews. This process in Judaism (as well as religious fundamentalism in Evangelical Protestantism and in the Moslem religion) has occurred amidst and as a reaction to an increasingly secularized society. Those sociologists observing the shift in Judaism have found it to be particularly noteworthy in a subgroup of the Orthodox-the Modern Orthodox.¹ Detailed observations have been made in describing this right wing religious tilt, but many of the hypotheses asserted as explanations of these changes in Modern Orthodoxy have not yet been fully explored. Additional investigation is still needed into the socially interactional process of this tilt occurring

¹ The Modern Orthodox have been defined most often in terms of their more "middle of the road" level of adherence to specific aspects of religious law (halacha) and custom. It is precisely because of this heretofore moderate approach to religious observance that sociologists have found this to be a surprising change (a fuller definition of this subgroup will be given elsewhere in this dissertation).

in a previously religiously moderate group.

A point of departure for such an exploratory study are theories offered by both Kranzler in "The Changing Orthodox Community" (1976) and Mayer/Waxman in "Modern Orthodoxy: "Towards the Year 2000"(1977). In their essays, they have alluded to the decreasing role of the family in transmitting religious education and the increasing role of the Jewish educational system known the as the day school or yeshiva as an increasingly significant determining factor in the religious shift to the right in Orthodox Judaism. The aim of this dissertation study is to carry out an exploratory investigation of this hypothesis. In the course of this study, research will be conducted to gather needed substantiating information in order to evaluate the assertions made by Kranzler and Mayer/Waxman. Research will, therefore, be focused on demonstrating how the Modern Orthodox day school's role has increased and changed since the late 1940's and 1950's, how these changes have impacted on students, and how this impact has contributed to more rigid religious behavior and attitudes in Modern Orthodox Judaism today. While there will be some clues available from archival publications from both day schools and educational organizations, research will focus mainly on analyzing material obtained from intensive focused interviews with those who have been most directly involved in day school education: principals, teachers and family members.

THEORETICAL GROUNDING AND PROBLEMS OF SUBSTANTIATION

The hypothesis offered by Kranzler and Mayer/ Waxman should be considered significant in view of the fact that more students 1987-1988 census survey conducted by the Jewish Education Service of North America corroborates this with findings of 139,338 students attending Orthodox Day Schools. This is a dramatic increase in the figures reported by Alvin Schiff(1966) of 7,700 students in 1940 and 65,000 students in 1965. These increasing numbers mean that more students are being exposed to day school education than ever before. Kranzler and Mayer/Waxman maintain that this growing dependence on the day school, rather than on the family as the primary tool for transmitting Judaism may have happened as a result of Orthodox Jews more fully adopting a modern American lifestyle, leaving less available time for family life. Kranzler and Mayer/Waxman theorize that this turn to the day school has had several unanticipated effects on Modern Orthodoxy.

To begin with, they have linked the increasing dependence on the day school as the major transmitter of religious practice with students' increasing allegiance to teachers and rabbis in the schools. This increasing allegiance may have led to students viewing their teachers/rabbis, rather than their parents, as their primary religious role models. Kranzler and Mayer/Waxman also point out that since students view the school as the main religious standard bearer, they

begin insisting that the more stringent patterns of religious observance and attitudes conveyed by the day school educational system be followed in their homes. Mayer/ Waxman further suggest that it is the stress on religious scholarship within the system rather than the warmer, more emotional approach that usually develops within the family structure that has led to a "dryer," less emotional and more legalistic Orthodoxy.

AGENTS OF SOCIALIZATION

Victor Gecas ("Contexts of Socialization," 1981) has contributed a theoretical approach that is pertinent in laying a foundation for this hypothesis. Gecas notes that social structures have different approaches in transmitting similar values, and using these different approaches can have a modifying impact on the values being taught. The social institutions of the family and the school are two structures which differ in their basic teaching approaches. The family, according to Gecas, normally passes along the values and culture of the society in an emotive, affective manner, with its lessons being reinforced by family relationships overlaid with familial love. The school, on the other hand, utilizes a more formal and judgmental method, with expectations of conformity reinforced by a grading system. Gecas' findings, then, provide theoretical foundation for the assertions of Kranzler and Meyer/Waxman: the rigid expectations of an educational system such as the day school can impart more

conforming and more rigid religious attitudes and behavior than those developed through home experiences.

THE DAY SCHOOL AS A CLOSED INSTITUTION

Danzger (Returning to Tradition: The Contemporary Revival of Orthodox Tradition, 1989) and Helmreich (The World of the Yeshiva: An Intimate Portrait of Orthodox Jewry, 1986) have demonstrated in studies of yeshivot² that a religious educational institution contains many elements of the totally closed system described and analyzed by Erving Goffman in his study, Asylums (1961). Danzger focused on the baal tshuva yeshivot (yeshivot for Jews with little religious background who wish to become Orthodox) while Helmreich studied the advanced post-graduate yeshiva world of the Ultra Orthodox movements. Both sociologists referred to the yeshivot they studied as being forms of a closed world. The Modern Orthodox day school, however, has not been thought of as a closed world. Indeed, the philosophy of Modern Orthodox education has been to provide students with the ability to create a synthesis between the religious and the secular world. Yet, a closer look at the situation raises the question of whether the day school is now becoming more similar to the cloistered-like yeshivot described by Danzger and Helmreich. It is

² The term yeshivot usually refers to schools which provide only post-graduate religious studies or offer only the minimum of state-required elementary or high school secular education, unlike the day school system which puts equal stress on both secular and religious studies.

noteworthy that until the successful establishment of the day school in the 1920's³, which offered a combination of secular and religious education from elementary through high school grades, Orthodox children in America attended public school and were, therefore, immersed in the secular world. Orthodox students received their religious education in a system of after-school programs called the Talmud Torah or had private tutors. This meant that Orthodox youth were not socially or educationally surrounded by a totally Orthodox Jewish environment during the entire school day. There were a host of other social and educational influences which had an impact on their thinking and behavior. Before the day school movement began to spread, Orthodox youth did not live insular lives. The normative pattern today, however, is for Orthodox children to attend day school from kindergarten through high school. Students are enclosed in the day school environment from eight to ten hours a day (in some schools for six days a week) for twelve to thirteen years. A closer look at what their school day and extra-curricular activities are like may reveal that they are living school lives that are, indeed, self-enclosed and insular.

³ Alvin Schiff(The Jewish Day School in America, 1966) reports that the earliest prototypes of the American day school movement were the Yeshivath Etz Chaim (1887) and the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary (1897). By the 1920's, the total number of students from these two schools, plus the Rabbi Jacob Joseph Yeshiva (1900), Yeshivath Chaim Berlin (1906), and the Talmudical Institute of Harlem (1908) totaled some 1000 students.

QUESTIONS FOR SUBSTANTIATION

In order to more fully explore the hypothesis that a changed day school system has been a significant factor in the rise of a more right-wing Modern Orthodoxy, there are a number of questions that must be answered. Information must be obtained on how various previously home-based religious observances now may be encompassed in the day school educational process: morning prayers before classes, Bar or Bat Mitzvah celebrations, building a Succah for the holiday, making condolence calls, helping the needy, etc.

A number of additional questions also need to be addressed: What are the reactions of parents if schools are taking over previously home-based activities? What are the differences when schools present these activities and the way they are handled at home? Have the schools extended their authority and discipline proceedings into students' lives outside the school day? Has there been, for example, an increase in regulation regarding the kind of social activities students may participate in - i.e. social dancing, attending certain summer camps? Do the schools expect students to maintain certain dress codes in their private lives?

If additional authority is found, inquiry must be made into whether and why this is accepted by parents. In order to provide the clues to determine if parents are simply acting from lack of information about Jewish law and custom, and to

provide a broader sample, these questions will be asked of parents who have varying backgrounds in religious education and who consider themselves to be more or less or similarly observant as the other parents in their children's school. Parents will be asked whether they have stopped particular family practices which now conflict with school policy. Thus, questions will be asked about changes in family standards of kashrut⁴ practices, manner of dress, religious holiday and Sabbath observance, vacation patterns, and career or college selection.

A number of related matters should also be explored: Do the parents agree with the religious ideology taught in the schools? Do they resent it if their children turn to the school for guidance in religious matters? Do parents feel the schools are trying to emphasize the same aspects of Judaism that they are trying to communicate through the home?

Several other aspects must also be explored. Have there been any significant changes and modifications in the educational content and methodology used by the day school in transmitting Judaism's religious rituals, laws, scholarship, and culture? For example, have there been certain courses and religious texts emphasized or de-emphasized in the curricula?

⁴ Kashrut refers to the religious laws determining what is deemed kosher (religiously permissible) and therefore suitable for consumption.

Has there been a de-emphasis on studying Hebrew as a spoken language? Has there been an increased emphasis on teaching Talmud? Has the methodology of teaching the Bible changed? Has there been a shift in the methods used to teach the various laws and rituals concerning the major Jewish holiday festivals and Sabbath observance? Has critical questioning or a historical analytical approach been discouraged in the classroom? Has there been a pronounced difference in what the school's primary goal should be?

Another area for analytical research concerns the teaching staff. There has been considerable notice taken of the fact that the teaching staff in day schools now come primarily from the more right wing Orthodox movements. Has this been the only change in the staff teaching in the day school system? Are there additional differences in the staff that have impacted on students in terms of their acceptance of these teachers as religious role models?

FOCUSING RESEARCH ON MODERN ORTHODOX DAY SCHOOLS

These questions will be addressed to the Modern Orthodox day school movement because it is within this movement that the most pronounced changes in both schools and their students have occurred over the past two decades. These changes have been particularly noticeable in the following areas: kashrut observance, sexual behavior, dress code, attitudes towards halachic (religious law) development, study of religious

texts, attitudes towards those who are non-Orthodox or less Orthodox Jews and views on Jewish doctrine. It is undoubtedly true that changes have also taken place among students attending the yeshivot of the more right wing subgroups of Orthodoxy, as they, too, shifted even more to the right. But the changes within the right wing schools, unlike those in the Modern Orthodox schools, do not have a major bearing on the problem being explored: what factors are involved in this turn from the middle-of-the road to the religious right?

CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIOLOGY

In Understanding American Jewry (1982), a compendium of papers delivered at the Planning Conference for a Center for Modern Jewish Studies at Brandeis University, Charles Liebman notes that many studies have been published dealing with subjects about the various Jewish denominations.⁵ The studies of the Orthodox, however, have been largely focused on understanding the Hasidic world (Poll, 1962, Kranzler, 1961, Heilman, 1992), the Ultra-Orthodox yeshiva world (Helmreich, 1986) and the world of the baal tshuva (Danzger, 1989, Aviad, 1983). These works are not only descriptive but also trace and explain the process of organizational and institutional change. However, there has been far less attention focused on Modern Orthodox Judaism. Heilman and Cohen's 1989 survey did focus on Modern Orthodox religious practices and beliefs, and

⁵ Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, Reconstructionist

there have also been a number of essays published on the topic of a shift to religious zealotry in this movement. However, research into Modern Orthodox Judaism's organizational and institutional structure is still lacking the information needed to provide a fuller understanding of why this movement has been undergoing a right wing religious tilt.

CHAPTER II: METHODOLOGY

While factual information about the various changes in the day school movement will be analyzed, much of the research needed to explore the theories offered by Kranzler and Mayer/Waxman is to be found in the qualitative area, in the gathering and analysis of the opinions and attitudes of those who have been a part of the day school movement. The qualitative research method is considered by many sociologists to be particularly helpful in answering questions about the characteristics of social phenomena because of its concentration on getting data directly from in-depth informant interviewing. This "face to face" non-standardization method allows for flexibility in both gathering and analyzing information that is often difficult to pin down through statistical analysis conducted on surveys (Lofland, 1971; Glaser/Strauss, 1967; Strauss, 1969; Vidich and Shapiro, 1955; Becker/Geer, 1957). Accordingly, the information needed will be gathered primarily through in-depth focused interviews conducted with former or present principals (in some cases, the assistant principals) and teachers in Modern Orthodox day schools, as well as parents of students attending these schools.

A number of preliminary interviews for this dissertation with students from both the elementary and high school levels proved to be unsatisfactory, with students either being highly

self-conscious or wary. Both those of elementary school and high school age were unwilling or unable to comment either on any actions the school took or on any interactions with their parents involving religious observance or discussions about school matters. This was true no matter how the questions or conversations took place. On the other hand, the parents were quite cooperative and open about answering questions and commenting on how their children had changed family religious practices. Parents were also quite aware and had strong opinions on what effect the day schools had on their children. For that reason, the field interviews about changes in family religious practices were held only with parents.

The intent of the interview guides (see Appendixes A and B) for school staff members was to build a picture of the specific changes in educational content, in the activities, in the rules and regulations, and in the staff from the early period of the schools to the present time. Similar questions were asked of parents with an additional focus on possible changes in family religious observances and attitudes that might be connected to the influence of day school education. Though less time consuming multi-choice questionnaires could have been used, the more intensive one-on-one focused interview method was selected to allow for open-ended comments. The interview guides were not used in a rigid manner as open-ended comments can, according to Dexter(1970), lead to clues which often provide crucial information.

CHOOSING THE SUBSAMPLE

The interviews were held with seven principals or assistant principals, two Judaic studies teachers from each of the seven schools, and five parents from each day school. The fifty-six interviews provide a small but representative subsample which can be used to connect events or to describe a process. There is no reason this subsample should not relate to the wider Modern Orthodox Jewish population. Although Glaser and Strauss (1967:57) strongly suggest that the qualitative sociologist's task is to maximize differences among comparative groups, perhaps by going to different cities, this exploratory study is not intended to generate hypothesis, but rather to explore theories already stated. Those theories concentrate around the American Jewish Orthodox community whose largest population resides in the New York Metropolitan area. And as Heilman and Cohen(1989:34) noted in their study of the Orthodox, "the search for a perfectly representative population of Orthodox Jews in America is a chimera." For their study, Heilman and Cohen did utilize the New York Metropolitan area, as it is generally acknowledged that this is where the largest number of American Orthodox Jews live. In fact, according to the 1981 Greater New York Jewish Population Study, commissioned by the American Jewish Committee, over 30% of all American Jews are concentrated in the New York Metropolitan area.

While the names of some of the day schools in the New

York Metropolitan area will be used, others will be assigned fictional names and locations at the request of the principals and teachers interviewed. The fictional names of these institutions and locations will be marked with an asterisk. These fictional locations will be assumed to have the same demographics and characteristics as their real counterparts. Principals and teachers who requested anonymity will be assigned fictional names marked with an asterisk. At their request all the parents interviewed have been assigned fictional names, but their names will not be marked with an asterisk. This researcher will maintain a file of the actual names of all those interviewed, as well as the real names and locations of all schools mentioned in this dissertation. The list was made available to this researcher's dissertation committee with the permission of those interviewed.

The students and parents in the day schools chosen for this study come from the same economic class structure - middle to upper middle class, with a sprinkling from the upper class, as did the subjects of the Heilman/Cohen study. Economic class was determined (as was the case in the Heilman/Cohen study) by asking the parents to select the economic category they believed was descriptive of their economic and social status. About 75% of parents described themselves as middle class, another 24% choose upper middle class status, and 1% described themselves as being in the upper class. All of the parents interviewed were college

graduates, with a variety of occupations, some in business, others in the professions. About one-third of the mothers interviewed did not work outside the home and were full time homemakers. Although my analysis of the interviews of parents involves a sample of only thirty-five people, there is no reason to assume that these parents are unrepresentative of the larger Modern Orthodox population as they appear to be quite similar to the groups interviewed by Heilman/Cohen. They also fit the characteristics of the general Jewish community characterized in the Council of Jewish Federations 1970 and 1990 National Jewish Population Studies as well as the 1981 and 1991 studies of Metropolitan New York Jews sponsored by the UJA/Federations of Jewish Philanthropies of New York. The findings of all these studies overlapped a great deal, but the samples shows several characteristics held in common by the national and the New York Metropolitan area Jewish community. Jews are still concentrated in the Northeast, particularly in the New York area. Over three-quarters of the Jews surveyed hold college degrees, one-quarter hold graduate degrees, and eighty per cent hold white collar positions (professional, technical, and executive) concentrated in the upper rank of the occupational hierarchy with corresponding high incomes. The number of Jewish women in the labor force has increased 46% since 1957 with 76% of women between the ages of 25-35 working in jobs or the

professions.⁶

The seven representative day schools chosen for the study have been in existence for several decades, some since the 1940's: Ramaz High School, Yeshiva of Flatbush High School, Nassau County Hebrew High School*, Derech Torah Yeshiva*, Meadow Pond Day School*, Tikva Yeshiva*, and Central Suburban Day School*.⁷ The study is centered on these schools⁸ for a variety of reasons. To begin with, all of these schools have been in existence for at least four decades. There is a mixture of elementary school and high schools in order to determine if the changes are related to the age group being taught. All of these schools are co-educational and have, therefore, been considered to be among the most liberal of the Modern Orthodox day school system. In addition, the approach of these schools has been to welcome a pluralistic student body, an approach associated with the Modern Orthodox

⁶Information from the various studies were obtained from the following sources: "The Social Characteristics of the New York Area Jewish Community, 1981," Paul Ritterband and Steven M. Cohen, pp.128-161; "Profile of American Jewry: Insights from the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey," Sidney Goldstein, pp.77-171.

⁷A list and description of the principals and teachers can be found in Appendix C. A description of the day schools, rated as to their religious left or right wing dimensions can be found in Appendix D.

⁸The schools will also be referred to by the following abbreviations or initials: Ramaz(Ramaz High School, Flatbush(Yeshiva of Flatbush High School), NCHHS*(Nassau County Hebrew High School*), DTY*(Derech Torah Yeshiva*), MPDS*(Meadow Pond Day School*), Tikva*(Tikva Yeshiva*), CSDS*(Central Suburban Day School*1).

body, an approach associated with the Modern Orthodox movement, which has not usually demanded a monolithic religious standard. Ironically, as will be shown elsewhere in this dissertation, many of the changes in the day school may have come about because these progressive day schools have had to cope with a pluralistic student body.

CONSIDERATION OF INSIDER STATUS OF RESEARCHER

This researcher's ability to gain the cooperation of the day school staff and parents was based on her insider status, having been at various times over the past four decades, a student, a teacher, and a parent at some of the same day schools in this study. In addition, some of the principals contacted recognized the names of some of the dissertation committee members or the names of the sociologists whose theories were being explored, and this gave the project a measure of credibility. In fact, after being given a general idea of some of the theories, the principals, teachers, and parents would often comment on them and enthusiastically offer their own opinions on the subject. The researcher also further identified herself as a member of an Orthodox synagogue and offered her Rabbi's name as a reference. While Becker and Geer (1957) might point to the researcher's insider status as a source of personal bias which could affect the reliability of the conclusions reached, this was not really a problem. The researcher's insider status simply gave her access and the ability to weigh the accuracy of the information obtained in

the interviews.

The researcher first noticed the advantage of being an insider during the interview with Rabbi Schuster* at Central Suburban Day School*, the school attended by her children in the 1970's and 1980's. Rabbi Schuster* had been a teacher then and also functioned as a chairman of Hebrew studies. Yet, when asked if the dress code had changed since that time, he claimed that it had not. Since the researcher's daughter had worn pants, even jeans, and sometimes (on hot spring days) shorts, while girls are now required to wear skirts covering the knee, it was evident that the code had indeed changed. Similarly, when the researcher asked if the student population had changed, she already knew, having lived in Fallsville County* since 1970, that the Orthodox community in this northern suburb at that time was quite small, with the main Orthodox synagogue in Lindhurst* numbering only thirty-five families, and the day school Orthodox student population totaling less than one-third of enrollment. By the late 1980's, with over two hundred families in two rapidly expanding Orthodox synagogues in Fallsville County*, the majority of pupils in the day school now come from Orthodox families. Yet, the researcher was told that the ratio of Orthodox to non-Orthodox was pretty much the same as it had always been since the school had started. In both these instances, the researcher knew the information being given was not correct and continued to push for additional

responses, asking more specific questions about the dress code and the student population until more correct information was elicited.

In general, however, being perceived as an insider to the day school system and the Modern Orthodox Jewish world meant that the researcher was not thought of as a threat or as someone who was going to embarrass them, but as someone who had empathy in understanding the problems of day school education and who appreciated the importance of transmitting Judaism to the next generation. And as an insider, the researcher was aware, through conversations with friends and acquaintances throughout the Modern Orthodox community, by reading articles in Jewish weekly newspapers, and listening to weekly synagogue sermons, of the changes and trends that were occurring in the Orthodox world and was therefore able to shape appropriate questions.

ASSESSING ACCURACY OF INFORMATION

However, the researcher could not be as fully aware of the accuracy of information at some of the other schools and did feel that some principals started out being quite defensive, denying that any changes had taken place. It is interesting to note that principals in those day schools that seemed to be learning furthest to the right were less defensive about these changes than those who were keeping more to the center. In fact, those to the right seemed to feel

quite proud of the changes. In contrast, the principals in the schools holding to a more centrist approach appeared quite apologetic about any changes they perceived might be signaling a shift to the right, as if embarrassed at not being able to withstand the pressures that are leading the schools away from their centrist philosophy. On the other hand, this researcher might have misjudged their attitude. Some of these principals might have been embarrassed at heading schools that have stayed centrist when their own preference would have been to join the shift to the right. Perhaps held back from acting by more powerful board members who control the purse strings, these principals have not been able to join in the shift to the right for fear of jeopardizing their jobs.

The researcher's general approach to the problem of determining the accuracy of information was two fold. Before interviewing the principals, she generally had spoken on an informal basis to people in the community who would give her some background information that could be of use in probing more deeply, enabling her to aim questions more accurately. The principals, therefore, naturally assumed that the researcher was fairly well-informed about what was taking place in their schools, and this seemed to make them more comfortable and willing to talk more freely. In other cases, the researcher felt it was better to avoid direct questioning, eliciting the information in the course of a more open-ended conversation. The conversation, however, was still being

technique was more relaxing for some principals who offered anecdotes about all sorts of matters. Although there was no way of being absolutely certain that correct information was being received from any one source, a fuller picture of the school did evolve through the multiple interviews held with teachers and parents who were generally quite open and forthcoming.

The principals and staff selected for interviews had been at the schools for long periods of time. In some cases, interviews were held with retired principals, assistant principals, or teachers who were now teaching elsewhere. Parents were selected for the interviews by several methods. In general, a principal would be asked to suggest a parent who had attended the same day school as a child and who now had children enrolled for at least six years. Often, the principal would be able to suggest several such parents. Some of these parents would then suggest other names to me. This random selection produced both parents who had a day school education themselves and those who did not, although all considered themselves to be Modern Orthodox.⁹ Most of the parents interviewed had a day school education, with eight parents having attended the same elementary or high school as their children. In total, five out of the ten fathers

⁹Of the thirty-five parents interviewed, only one was reluctant to use the term "Modern Orthodox", professing to be more comfortable identifying himself as "Centrist," rather than use what he considered to be a more radical term.

parents interviewed had a day school education, with eight parents having attended the same elementary or high school as their children. In total, five out of the ten fathers interviewed had received a day school education through high school, two had continued through college, two had attended until the eighth grade, and one had received no day school education. Among the twenty-five mothers interviewed, twelve had received a day school education through high school, eight had attended a day school only through the eighth grade, three had gone through college or post-high school classes, and two had received no day school education. This broader sample provided a basis for determining if parents were simply acting from lack of education about Jewish law and custom.

INFORMATION FROM INTERVIEWS AND ARCHIVAL MATERIALS

The school interviews were scheduled during the day, while the parents were interviewed in their homes during the evening hours. Most of the teachers interviewed in the Judaic studies department of the day schools were men. This was partly due to chance. Women teachers had usually taught for a few years, married, had children, and retired from teaching, while many of the men had stayed for longer periods of time and were, therefore, more likely candidates for this study. While both mothers and fathers were to be interviewed, it proved difficult to arrange time with the fathers, as so many of them seemed to work quite late in the evenings and were unable to accommodate the researcher during their workday.

When an appointment was arranged with the fathers, they often proved to be quite unaware of what was going on in their children's school lives. Indeed, several commented that they left school issues largely up to their wives and suggested that their wives be interviewed instead. Interviews were held for a period of forty-five minutes to two hours, were taped and then partially transcribed.

Information regarding changes in the day school system and its increased role was also obtained by reviewing archival material and publications from the day schools and educational organizations. In particular, Jewish Education, a publication which contains articles written by principals and teachers in Jewish education proved to be an excellent source of material which illustrated the changing concerns of Jewish education over the years. The researcher was also given access to the files of the Principals' Committee of the Board of Jewish Education of New York City, which included minutes and agendas from meetings held over the years. The school libraries did have copies of the student yearbooks dating back to the 1970's, and these proved to be a useful source of information from which deductions about changes could be made.

Most schools, aside from Ramaz, did not maintain any archival files such as brochures or letters. Indeed, very few schools had even kept copies of their old curricula or statements of purposes. Copies of current curricula were

available, but in general, these were often not very specific. The curricula will be discussed in various chapters, but as Oded Schremer(1992) notes in his study of Jewish education, it is often quite useless to pay any attention to the written curricula. Schremer found that it is teachers' attitudes and beliefs that really determine what is being taught(also Schoem, 1979). In actuality, Schremer found, education "functions on the basis of the teacher's Jewish world view."¹⁰ The official curriculum or educational policy, then, serves its purpose by impressing parents and the community, with little connection to what is actually going on in the classroom. As Schremer notes, there is an "explicit vs an implicit curriculum, the syllabus vs what is really being taught."¹¹ And indeed, much valuable information demonstrating this, as well as the differences between what teachers professed to teach and what was actually being taught, was obtained through the in-depth interviews with teachers and principals and from analyzing the articles from educational journals and educational organization minutes.

¹⁰Oded Schremer, "Making Sense of the Curriculum: The Case of a Jewish Day School," Jewish Education, p.226.

¹¹op. cit. p.223.

CHAPTER III: THE SHIFT TO RELIGIOUS FUNDAMENTALISM

A trend towards greater traditionalism and the reassertiveness of religious fundamentalism¹² beginning in the late 1970's in Orthodoxy is associated with a similar rise in other religions. This resurgence is surprising in view of the generally accepted secularization theories offered by Cox, 1955; Berger, 1967; Bellah, 1967; Herberg, 1960; and Luckmann, 1967. These prominent sociologists of religion stressed the eroding effects of modernity on traditional religions, crediting science and technology with demystifying the world. The new rationality joined with the rootlessness of increased mobility and the anonymity of urbanization turned society away from the old outmoded religious traditions which no longer held power or the ability to instill a sense of awe in modern man. The theorists, as Greeley (1972b.) noted, however, had apparently underrated modern man's need for the structured value system and the fellowship of community, as modern man became disenchanted with the moral chaos and anomie of modern life. Dickstein (1977:184) refers to the late 1960's and 1970's as "something hollow at the core." Religion, whether in the form of cults (Antony and Robbins, 1982; Glock,

¹²In this dissertation, the terms "fundamentalist" and "fundamentalism" will be used in the expanded sense utilized by Marty (1991): terms used to describe any militant reaction to the onslaught of modernity. Similarly, Lippman (1982), writing about Islam, and Grossman (1993), commenting on Judaism, use the terms to connote ritualistic, piestic, and even militaristic impulses within religious tradition.

1976;) or traditional religious communities of tightly bound believers, offered their members the reassuring comforts of community and a sense of meaning and order as a defense in the fast paced modern world. Indeed, Marty(1982) pointed out that "traditional religion has not fallen away, as expected, but has survived and staged an impressive comeback, establishing itself firmly and enduringly in large subcultures such as Orthodox Judaism and Evangelical Protestantism."¹³

CHARACTERISTICS OF RELIGIOUS FUNDAMENTALISM VARIES

Although the driving force for the reassertiveness of religion and the development of religious extremism may stem from the common source of modern man's disenchantment with the forces of modernity, the forms and pace of change will vary in each religion. Sharot(1991) warns that research into the resurgence of religion has been hampered by the "multitude of the independent variables(the various dimensions of 'modernization') and the concentration on studies drawn mainly from one source - Western Christianity."¹⁴ Sharot suggests that comparative analysis can be difficult, and the researcher would be best off looking for explanations in the characteristics of the particular religion. Thus, reference to fundamentalism in Judaism is more commonly used to indicate stringent religious observance in the many areas of

¹³"Religion in American Since the Mid-Century," p.149.

¹⁴"Judaism and the Secularization Debate," p.256.

daily life that are not connected to formal worship services in the synagogue. While the Encyclopaedia Judaica defines Judaism in terms of its overall theology as the "amalgam of three ideas---belief in God, God's revelation of the Torah to Israel, and Israel as the people which lives by the Torah in obedience to God."¹⁵, the stress is on living a life according to what is considered to be divinely inspired religious law. These laws (halachot) are listed in the Torah (Pentateuch) and are to be studied both as the basis of Jewish history and, along with the Talmud (a vast compilation of rabbinical discussion of Biblical law), as a guide to religious behavior. Orthodox Judaism concerns itself with applying these laws in an intertwining of the religious and personal realms of daily life and contends that halacha is binding for all Jews. While Scripture is studied, it is the study of the ramifications of the halacha that is the main focus of religious scholarship in Judaism.

Sharot(1991) contends that this emphasis on practice as the core of Judaism, rather than on doctrine, has allowed non-secular Jews to shrug off the major inroads of modernity by simply compartmentalizing¹⁶ scientific and secular ideologies. This compartmentalizing allows traditional Jews

¹⁵Vol. 10, p.387.

¹⁶Egon Mayer, in From Suburb to Shtetl: The Jews of Boro Park: 1979, was the first writer on Orthodoxy to identify this process of compartmentalization.

to relegate intruding ideologies to the side, while continuing to carry out the many practices of Judaism. Judaism's heavy concentration on religious observances is a factor, however, which can lead to an increased stringency. While traditional Jews can compartmentalize, American rabbis were aware that the temptations of assimilation were always present. In Europe, as well as in the American past, Jews, and other religious and ethnic groups stood somewhat apart from mainstream American society. However, beginning with the late 1960's and 1970's, with the counterculture spreading throughout America, ethnic and religious differences seemed to be less of a barrier to assimilation than ever before. "Doing one's thing" was not a barrier to acceptance, and mass communication technology quickly spewed out information about the new lifestyles, lifestyles that often included group sex, open nudity, and hallucinogenic drugs. It is possible that rabbinical authorities and their religious communities, unnerved by the temptations and the acceptance that life in America was offering to all comers, sought to insure that religious practices be carried out in a more dedicated and meticulous fashion in order to more completely seal off Judaism from the lives and culture of the non-believers. Certainly, Sharot notes that over the past two decades, there has been a tendency to close ranks against the non-believers by "the establishment and strengthening of clear boundaries for those

who wish to defend traditional religion."¹⁷

Reference to fundamentalism in contemporary Christianity, however, still primarily refers to the growth of sects which stress the inerrancy of scripture and the acceptance of a prescribed belief in a body of religious dogma. Religious rituals and practices are patterned mainly around formal worship/church services. Studies conducted by such sociologists as Stoms(1972) Peshkin(1986), Ammerman(1987), Balmer(1989) show the emphasis Christian sects, such as the Evangelical Protestants or Charismatic Catholics, put on a literal belief in the inerrancy and infallibility of Scripture and the development of an intense personal commitment to Christ as the means of salvation. Certainly, there are a growing number of fundamentalist parochial schools in the United States¹⁸ which teach these doctrines, encapsulating their students in an insular environment much like the right-wing yeshiva system of Orthodox Judaism. While this rise in enrollment can be attributed to parents who wished to avoid the racial integration public schools, particularly in the South, research by Stom(1972), Kraushaar (1973) and Kanter (1972) indicate that the majority of parents sent their

¹⁷op. cit. p.272.

¹⁸Figures cited by Balmer in Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory, on p.26 are from the American Association of Christian Schools and demonstrate a definite growth pattern: In 1972, 125 schools with a student population of 25,000 to 1,000 schools with enrollment of 450,000.

children to fundamentalist Bible parochial schools to be religiously indoctrinated.¹⁹

Islam, like Judaism, has also turned to the religious right in terms of an increased stringency of religious practices in the personal spheres of daily life. The fact that these practices have become more stringent have been noted by Gibbs(1973), Haddad(1987), Esposito (1983), Al-Ahsan(1992) as well as in a series of newspapers articles by Steinfels(May,1993) in The New York Times. Islam's religious practices stem from laws based on the observations and practices of the prophet Mohammed as found in the Koran. The religious laws are known as Shari'a and were virtually set in the Third Century by Muslim Jurists who interpreted the Koran for the people of Islam. The Shari'a contains rules of conduct which are part and parcel of a Muslim's daily life, aimed at restricting and controlling attitudes inappropriate to the spirituality encouraged by the Koran. Many restrictions(such as the veiling of women) are not specifically mentioned in the Koran but have now become the norm in Muslim society as fundamentalists have taken hold. Haddad(1987:5) maintains that there is an "impetus to return to what is considered the essential core of Islam, shredding the desecrations of centuries of redefinitions as well as

¹⁹In The Growth of Evangelical Schools, 1972. Stoms researched this area by sending questionnaires sent to parents of students from five different Bible parochial schools.

Westernizing effort that were championed in the early parts of the Twentieth Century." Lewis(1993) notes that the demands by religious leaders for increased stringencies are followed perhaps less for religious reasons than as a renewal and retrieval of the purer forms of Islam untainted by the Western liberal ideas. This call for renewal has taken a political turn as Islamic fundamentalists call for the establishment of society run strictly in accordance with the Shari'a, one in which Islam is dominant in every sphere of life, with no dichotomy between religious law and man's law enabling Islam to resume its greater role in the world. Western ideas are rejected and are blamed for the relaxation of moral strictures which have led to weakness and poverty in the Islamic world. To this extent, fundamentalism in Islam is less a religious affair and more a political movement as Islamic fundamentalists attempt to recreate a world in which everyone will live by the one true religion, Islam, without the governmental, ecclesiastical and private corporate entities of the West (Rejwan, 1993).

FOCUSING ON THE MODERN ORTHODOX

As Sharot has pointed out, the paths fundamentalism takes varies in different religions. Accordingly, this dissertation will be limited to a study of the process of fundamentalism that has occurred in Judaism. In Judaism, the study of how a fundamentalist approach creeps into a non-fundamentalist religious group can be best accomplished though an exploratory

study of what is considered to be a moderate form of Orthodoxy
- the Modern Orthodox.

A number of sociologists (Heilman and Cohen,1989; Joselit,1990; Helmreich,1986; Danzger,1989) have focused on the behavioral aspects of Modern Orthodoxy. Some of their descriptions have characterized this movement primarily as a more lenient form of Orthodoxy practiced by those who pick and choose among halacha in order to make their Judaism more compatible with the modern world. Thus, for example, Heilman and Cohen describe the Modern Orthodox as being "true to what they see as the demands of a sacred tradition while avoiding social insularity. They seek to be both cosmopolitan and parochial" (1989:164). The more right wing Orthodox, according to Heilman and Cohen, disdain the demands of the contemporary world and do not attempt to compromise their adherence to halacha; indeed, they embrace the most rigid of halachic prescriptions.

In a similar vein, Helmreich describes the Modern Orthodox as observing the Sabbath and Festivals, keeping the dietary laws and other halachot, but doing so in a "watered down" manner that allows them to participate fully in the modern world:

They may sometimes eat certain dairy foods in a nonkosher restaurant, fail to recite a blessing while lunching with a gentile or even Jewish business client, not wear a yarmulke (skullcap), and be generally more liberal in their

interpretation of the gray areas in Jewish law(1986:53).

Joselit(1990) notes that the aim of many, of what she calls the "reasonable" Orthodox Jews, is to be as much like everyone else as possible, to live a life which combines American culture with Judaism. That synthesis would not preclude socializing between men and women, seeing plays and movies, participating in mixed dancing and mixed swimming, eating certain foods in non-kosher restaurants (foods like cold salads or fish prepared on foil), traveling or vacationing in areas where there are no synagogues or Jewish communities, or sending their children to Ivy-league colleges away from home. Nor would it mean that women who wished to be considered modest must refrain from wearing sleeveless attire, pants, or keeping their hair covered in public at all times after marriage. Joselit claims that the Modern Orthodox create this synthesis between modern life and religious law by ignoring "inconsistencies such as eating out in a nonkosher restaurant while observing the ritual amenities" (1990:22). In general, Joselit does not feel the Modern Orthodox have any "overarching interpretive principle that governs behavior"(1990:22). Adamant about the failure of the Modern Orthodox to develop an articulated ideology, Joselit states that in their intent to blend the ritualistic with modernity: "at no time did they believe they were contravening either the spirit of the letter of the law, nor did it occur to them that they were circumventing some of its provisions"(1990:23).

IDEOLOGY OF MODERN ORTHODOX JUDAISM

Clearly, Joselit's appraisal of Modern Orthodoxy is that it is essentially without internal coherence, with its practitioners primarily "concerned with the practical, quotidian realities of adapting ritual requirements to the freedoms of middle-class life shaped by exigencies of acculturation, class and urbanization; few appeared to be the least concerned with higher existential issues"(1990:23). But, Modern Orthodoxy can definitely be defined and understood as an Orthodox movement which does have an ideology underpinning the religious behavior of its followers. In fact, some adherents of Ultra Orthodoxy have acknowledged that Modern Orthodoxy is not just synonymous with unorthodox, lenient practices. As Rabbi Chaim Dov Keller, the Rosh Yeshiva of the right wing Telshe Yeshiva in Chicago, observes, "as a result of the work of a handful of articulate and, it would certainly seem, sincere spokesmen, it now describes an ideological movement which is not content with merely apologizing for its existence and practices, but has set out to create a 'weltanschauung' of its own, justifying its own life-style and openly challenging what it has labelled as the 'rightist camp.'"²⁰ Rabbi Keller, speaking for the more right wing²¹ Orthodox elements within Judaism, objects

²⁰"The Modern Orthodox: An Analysis and a Response," in The Jewish Observer, Vol.6, No.8, June, 1970, p.3.

²¹The term "right wing" or "Ultra-Orthodox" can be loosely defined as those Orthodox who are affiliated or sympathetic to the Eastern European type of advanced yeshivot or the Agudat

strenuously to one of the most basic premises of Modern Orthodoxy-"that there is an all-encompassing worldview, 'Weltanschauung,' to be formulated by and for the Modern Jew, based on his equally firm commitment to Torah on the one hand, and to the value of World culture on the other."²²

The premise Rabbi Keller objects to forms one of the basic ideological foundations of Modern Orthodoxy: Torah U'Madda, the co-existence and unity of the Torah with secular knowledge and culture. Torah U'Madda is a motto attributed to Rabbi Abraham Isaac Hachohen Kook, the first chief rabbi of Palestine in 1921, who developed his views based on the teachings of Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch, the leader of the Frankfurt Jewish community in Germany in the 1880's. Rabbi Hirsch referred often to the concept of Torah Im Derech Eretz, a co-existence between religious teaching and tradition and "the way of the land" i.e. secular knowledge and culture.²³ In the 1930's, a small group of Hirsch's followers immigrated to the United States and set the pattern for Modern Orthodoxy, a pattern which combined religious observance with full involvement in secular life(Karp:286-287). Two of the American followers of Rabbi Kook and Rabbi

Israel rabbinical organization or the various sects of Hasidism and the religious standards and attitudes these represent.

²²op. cit., p.12.

²³ Isaac Breuer, "Samson Raphael Hirsh," in Leo Jung, ed., Jewish Leaders (1750-1950), New York: 1953.

Hirsch are among those commonly acknowledged to be the rabbinical spokesmen of Modern Orthodoxy in the 20th Century: Rabbi Emanuel Rackman (currently the chancellor of Bar-Ilan University in Israel) and Rabbi Norman Lamm (currently the President of Yeshiva University). For both these rabbis, there is no doubt that there is a unity of Torah knowledge with secular knowledge as part of the cosmic Divine holiness and no legitimate reason, therefore, requiring Orthodox Jews to spurn modernity and reject secular culture in order to remain faithful to Jewish law. Lamm insists that Orthodox Jews should embrace secular studies, not only to prepare for a job, but in order to remain open to the wider culture of the world:

....because we consider that there be a world in which Torah be effective; that all wisdom issues ultimately from the Wisdom of the Creator, and therefore it is the Almighty who legitimates all knowledge; that a world cannot exist and that certainly an independent Jewish state cannot exist in the contemporary world in which some of the best of its brains and the most sensitive of its religious spirits will condemn as sinful and dangerous those profane disciplines which alone can keep it alive and prosperous²⁴.

THE TELEOLOGY OF HALACHA

Rackman, in particular, has spoken and written often on the concept of Torah U'Madda, arguing that "the giants of our tradition always asked the whys and wherefores. They pondered the facts of life--past and present. They mastered every science available in order to explore the depths of divine

²⁴"Modern Orthodoxy Identity Crisis," in Jewish Life, Vol. 36, No.5, p.7.

wisdom."²⁵ Rackman feels that Modern Orthodox Jews, unlike those to the religious right, do not fear secular contamination from the study of the humanities, the social sciences or the use of a scientific-critical method in the study of Torah because there is nothing within these disciplines that is threatening to Judaism. In part, Rackman feels, that is because their loyalty to tradition is not dependent on a quasi-literal interpretation of the Torah and its precepts. Besides an insistence on the idea of Torah U'Madda, Rackman feels that Modern Orthodoxy' essence lies in its view of the halachic process, the centrality of ethics, Zionism, equality of the sexes, tolerance and love for all Jews.²⁶

In regard to the halachic process, Selengut(1993) agrees with Rackman and Lamm's insistence that there have always been varied and conflicting answers in the Orthodox rabbinic tradition. Selengut reiterates that Orthodoxy's acceptance of diverse positions and rabbinic precedent in interpreting traditional law, rather than the concept of the one absolute truth, has been present throughout many periods of Jewish history: "There is, therefore, no singular correct halachic decision. The halacha in loyalty to its processional nature

²⁵"The Halachic Process," in Jewish Week, December 27-January 2, 1992.

²⁶ This summation of Rackman's ideas is based those expressed in the previously cited article, "The Halachic Process."

will in different times and locales and as interpreted by different rabbis yield different even contradictory rules and guidelines."²⁷

Selengut notes that both Lamm and Rackman have strongly deplored Orthodoxy's current denigration of present day sages which has caused a virtual halachic freeze that has made it difficult, if not impossible, to solve many problems of modern life. With regard to these halachic problems, Rackman has stated that "Modern Orthodoxy is "vitally interested in the teleology of the the law's purpose. Its leaders want to relate the interpretation of the law to its purpose as they can best discover it."²⁸ Rackman implores Orthodox rabbis to utilize the halachic process, within proper parameters, to eliminate hardships and disabilities, especially in the areas of the disadvantaged status of women. For example, while many Orthodox rabbis have become increasingly unwilling to modify the inequality of divorce proceedings (which permit only the man to grant a divorce) claiming there is no historical precedent to do so, Rackman urges Orthodox rabbis to consider the divorce laws in light of today's more egalitarian view of women. He finds it unthinkable that the intent of the Torah was to relegate women to a permanently inferior status.

²⁷"Between Tradition and Modernity," Midstream, January, 1993, p.11.

²⁸"A Fundamental of Modern Orthodoxy," in Jewish Week, January 21-27, 1994.

Rackman has often decried the climate of religious fundamentalism in the Orthodox rabbinate and has stated that Modern Orthodox rabbis are more willing to judge issues more leniently: "Balancing equities between what one may call concern for the most meticulous fulfillment of God's will and the interest of God's children, the latter prevails for the Modern Orthodox rabbi-if only the parameters of the law permit it."²⁹

A good deal of Modern Orthodox religious behavior can thus be understood in the light of this emphasis on the teleology of religious law. To the Modern Orthodox Jew, the main thrust of Jewish law should be the development of proper behavior towards other human beings rather than demonstrating unquestioning submission to God's will by a meticulous observance of every halacha. Waxman(1993) suggests that this rationalistic approach emphasizes the intent of halacha and means retaining a certain amount of personal autonomy rather than the more automatic submission to rabbinical authority characteristic of right wing Orthodoxy. The Modern Orthodox do not perceive themselves as totally without choice, nor do they accept the concept offered by Berger in The Heretical Imperative(1979:27) that connects the idea of choice with heresy. Indeed, while Danzger(1989) points to differences in dress style, the role of women, relationships between men and

²⁹ "A Fundamental", January, 1994.

women, and attitudes towards secular education and Zionism in his efforts to differentiate between the Modern Orthodox and those on the religious right³⁰, he feels that the most important distinguishing factor lies in their differing attitudes towards religious authority:

Traditionalists allow their leaders authority in political and personal matter, and the leadership attempts to exercise authority beyond the specifics of halakha. They achieve this by developing powerful communal ties and customs. Modernists, in contrast, seek maximum scope for personal decision making, and their leadership limits its authority to halakha. Communal ties and customs are weaker among modernists(p.164).

The Modern Orthodox Jew may, therefore, reject some of the more stringent standards of religious behavior demanded by the right wing rabbinic voices of Orthodoxy by deciding that these requirements are not necessarily consonant with the intent of the halacha.

GOING BEYOND THE REQUIREMENTS OF HALACHA

The Modern Orthodox Jew might also argue that once one meets the requirements of a particular halacha, there is no religious obligation to go beyond these requirements in order

³⁰Danzger uses the term Traditionalists for those on the religious right.

to demonstrate their religiosity in contrast, as Leibman(1988:28) explains, to the effort religious extremists make in seeking to expand religious law. Thus, for example, those who eat permitted foods, such as cold salads, in non-kosher restaurants, might not feel they are violating religious law, although they may admit that they have chosen to follow a less demanding standard of kashrut, one which permits them to live a less sectarian life. Nor might they feel it necessary to purchase only rabbinically supervised prepared food items when certain of these items, such as milk, are not likely to be adulterated by non-kosher additives.

Similarly, while the more zealous Orthodox women might wear only long-sleeved dresses, skirts no higher than mid-calf, and keep their hair covered after marriage, following the interpretations of their rabbis who have ruled on the laws of modesty, the Modern Orthodox might argue that a definition of modesty has never been halachically determined and common sense rather than strict, formalistic requirements can determine modest dress and behavior. Modern Orthodox men and women, while acknowledging that the halacha does regulate sexual behavior, do not accept, as do the more sectarian Orthodox, that the intent of these laws was to separate men and women in social gatherings, activities such as mixed dancing and swimming, or studying together in educational institutions. In regard to education, unlike those on the religious right, the Modern Orthodox recognize that there is

no halachic prohibition against boys and girls studying together nor any specific laws forbidding girls to study the Talmud.

The Modern Orthodox approach to Zionism has been in accordance with the teachings of Rabbi Kook: the establishment of the State of Israel in modern times means that the Holy Land of the Jewish people has been brought about with God's will through the efforts of man. Although only those in extreme Ultra Orthodox movements openly express the view that the Holy Land could not have been brought about largely through the efforts of secular Jews, many rabbis in right wing Orthodoxy have not been as forthcoming as the Modern Orthodox about openly declaring and celebrating Yom Haatzmaout (Israel Independence Day) as a religious holiday. Unlike those on the religious right, who, as Waxman(1993) and Leibman(1983) noted, have withdrawn more and more into separation from the larger Jewish community, the Modern Orthodox have not wanted to set any rigid boundaries, pointing to Rabbi Kook's precepts regarding the love and concern which all Jews must show for one another. While not accepting all religious views as being equal, Modern Orthodoxy maintains that toleration, understanding and cooperation with Jewish organizations of all denominations in matters of mutual concern and benefit is incumbent upon all Jews.

The examples and explanations in the preceding paragraphs have been given in an attempt to define the movement of Modern Orthodox Judaism from both a behavioral and ideological viewpoint. This dissertation will utilize a definition of Modern Orthodox as that group of Orthodox Jews who hold a more liberal religious view on the role of women, relationships between men and women, secular education, and Zionism. Unlike the more fundamentalist Orthodox, the Modern Orthodox have not sought the extension and elaboration of the details of halacha by various religious authorities. In essence, the stricter interpretations of the halacha have led to greater social restrictions and increasing isolation from other Jews as well as from general participation in Western culture. The Modern Orthodox have not, in the past, wished to legitimate isolation. Since the 1980's, however, it has become apparent that many Jews who identify themselves as Modern Orthodox or Centrists³¹ have moved closer to the more right-wing ideology, level of observance, and tendency towards separatism such as those described in the previous paragraphs. The following review of sociological studies suggests a number of reasons for these changes.

³¹The terms Modern Orthodox and Centrist are often used interchangeably, but the term Centrist seems to have been coined around the 1980's when many people became uncomfortable naming themselves Modern Orthodox as if that meant they were radicals beyond the religious pale. The term Centrist avoids unsavory implications of being too attracted to the modern world.

UNDERLYING SOCIOLOGICAL REASONS FOR THE SHIFT TO THE RIGHT

There are some sociologists and historians (Heilman and Cohen, 1989; Joselit, 1990) who argue that stricter religious observance has developed as a result of the greater socio-economic success of the present generation of the Modern Orthodox. Increased economic success, for example, has made observance easier as more food products and kosher establishments and food products have been made available. In addition to greater economic power, Orthodox Jews, no longer an immigrant generation, have felt less self-conscious about looking and acting "more Jewish" as the ethnic revival of the 1970's and 1980's made culturally diverse groups more acceptable. Modern Orthodox Jews, these sociologists suggest, are more self-confident in America and therefore more willing (and financially able) to live a more intensive Jewish life. These arguments presume that the Modern Orthodox movement was not ever really based on ideology but was related mainly to lack of opportunity or embarrassment at following what is suggested is the more authentic approach in Orthodoxy.

Other sociologists (Aviad, 1983; Helmreich, 1986; Danzger, 1989; Leibman, 1988; Waxman, 1993) have pointed towards the sterility of modern culture, plus the complexities, ambiguities, and loneliness of modern life as reasons why people turn towards a more right-wing Judaism. While Modern Orthodoxy emphasizes personal autonomy coupled with an intellectual balancing act of multiple choice and decision

making, the right-wing Orthodoxy of Hasidism and the yeshiva world offers the solace of certainties. A specific set of comprehensive directions for living life and a sense of rootedness within a community may be far more appealing than Modern Orthodoxy's intellectual approach for people who may be confused and overwhelmed by modern life.

Some sociologists (Waxman, 1970; Leibman, 1983; Helmreich, 1986; Landau, 1993) have suggested that the lack of any official generally accepted body of authority representing Modern Orthodoxy has made it difficult for its constituency to feel they can "hold their heads up" with a legitimate Orthodox viewpoint. It is difficult for the lay community to feel legitimized when their rabbis espousing a Modern Orthodox philosophy are often openly vilified in the pulpit or Jewish publications and their views totally dismissed by the more sectarian rabbinical organizations and heads of post-graduate yeshivot.³² While the Modern Orthodox view Orthodoxy as accepting a plurality of approaches, the more right-wing groups often openly deny religious integrity to anyone who appears willing to compromise with modern society and refuses to accept the most non-compromising religious standards of observance. In 1992, several rabbis espousing Modern Orthodox

³² In a typical examples, Rabbi Yaakov Perlow, writing in the January, 1994 issue of The Jewish Observer refers to Rabbi Lamm as "the author of this spurious ideology [Torah UMadda], "p.13 and goes on to say that "this is neither the time nor the place to discuss the falseness and the insidious implications of such a philosophy," p.13.

viewpoints were threatened with expulsion from the Rabbinical Council of America for alleged departure from halachic norms. Listed among the complaints was their willingness to participate in seminars and panel discussions with Conservative and Reform rabbis.³³ Apparently, modernity is considered synonymous with moral relativism and a dangerous worldliness which can easily erode religious belief. These more rigid standards and attitudes emanate primarily from the heads of the right-wing Orthodox post-graduate yeshivot who, ensconced in scholarly self-contained institutions, have less to do with the realities of the compromises and daily conflicts of modern life than do many congregational rabbis (Leibman, 1988:36).

RABBINICAL COMMENTS ON TREND TO FUNDAMENTALISM IN ORTHODOXY

A 1982 symposium published in Tradition: A Journal of Orthodox Thought contained the comments of a number of Modern Orthodox rabbis who were asked to discuss the inroads right-wing Orthodoxy was making into the religiously moderate world of Modern Orthodoxy. In his introduction, the editor, Rabbi Walter Wurzberger, bemoaned the self-doubt and religious inferiority complex of the Modern Orthodox who feel spiritually inferior and guilty because of their modern lifestyle and moderate religious approach. Rabbi Reuven Bulka alludes to the frequent description of Modern Orthodoxy as a

³³ Rabbi Elya Svei, "The Outward Glance," Jewish Observer, January, 1994, p.6.

movement of compromise "noting that this word is an anathema when dealing with religious values, even if Modern Orthodoxy's "theoretical thrust is not grounded in compromise."³⁴ Rabbi Sol Roth feels that the adherents of Modern Orthodoxy have always opted for involvement and relationships outside the Orthodox community, rather than the radical separation from the rest of society that has been the mark of the more traditional forms of Orthodoxy, but many have become disillusioned about the ability to preserve religious commitment without this separation in the ever more complex world of the 1970's and 1980's.³⁵ The Modern Orthodox as Heilman and Cohen have noted³⁶, are aware that the highest retention rates for Orthodoxy are seen in the Ultra Orthodox communities where the centrality of one's personal and private life is religion. The Modern Orthodox realize from looking at Jewish life in their own communities, that the retention rates for those who have attempted to avoid social insularity and who have rejected modernization in thought and action have been lower. As Elliott Oring has noted³⁷ the Modern Orthodox, who do not make extreme adjustments in living, often

³⁴op. cit., p.18.

³⁵op. cit., p.68.

³⁶ Cosmopolitans and Parochials, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989.

³⁷"Rechnitzer Rejects: A Humor of Modern Orthodoxy," in Between Two Worlds: Ethnographic Essays on American Jewry, Ed. Jack Kugelmass, Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, p.157.

begin to develop a sense of doubt about the sincerity of their own commitment to the halacha when it is obvious to them that adopting more makhmir (religiously strict) standards does increase retention rates among the next generation.

Until recently, Orthodox rabbis of Modern Orthodox congregations did not openly call their congregations to task for a perceived lack of ritual observance of the minutia of kashrut or Shabbat laws. Perhaps, this is because, as Bulka(1983) suggests, congregational rabbis were aware that more stringent regulation would create resistance or even economic difficulties for their congregants. Modern Orthodox congregants listening to rabbinical sermons or attending synagogue classes did not hear rabbis lecture on the importance of closely inspecting each lettuce leaf in salads (for the presence of tiny bugs, considered unkosher) or more restrictive methods of heating up food on the Sabbath or purchasing only Glatt Kosher (a higher standard of kashrut) meat. Yet, while it has become even more expensive today to abide by the more stringent requirements for kashrut observance, there are no rabbis who will publicly defend halachic permissiveness because it has become apparent to them that the community is ready to accept whatever is dictated by the right-wing rabbinic authorities. It is these authorities, the Roshei Yeshivot, rather than the congregational rabbis who set religious standards, and Bulka submits that their makhmir rulings are developed out of a sense of responsibility

mainly to the text rather than to the needs and problems of the total Jewish community.³⁸

While all of the above reasons have played a role in the fundamentalist move in Modern Orthodoxy, Dr. Hayim Soloveitchik, points to another reason for this shift which this dissertation will explore more fully: "the lifestyle created by focusing on a text demands a higher level of accuracy, resulting in a tendency to become more stringent in many areas."³⁹ Noting that the traditional role of the Jewish home has diminished in today's society, Soloveitchik states that the yeshiva has now become the foremost authority that determines religious expression: "authority is conferred on those who have mastered the text."⁴⁰ In general, Soloveitchik notes, most of the Torah scholars as well as the majority of the teachers in today's modern day schools have studied in post-graduate yeshivot oriented to the religious right.

Soloveitchik's attribution of textual authority replacing home religious authority has been suggested by Kranzler(1976)

³⁸"Orthodoxy Today: An Analysis of the Achievements and the Problems," Dimensions of Orthodox Judaism, p.109.

³⁹From a lecture given on November 30, 1993 at the Bernard Revel Graduate School of Yeshiva University, "The Transformation of Contemporary Orthodoxy".

⁴⁰From second lecture given at the Graduate School on Dec.1, 1993.

and Egon Mayer and Chaim Waxman (1977). Kranzler noted that "cohesiveness of the Jewish family has suffered from the problems of middle class life in suburbia."⁴¹ Kranzler maintains that Jewish family life has disintegrated as Jews have become oriented towards self-realization rather than inculcating Jewish values and traditions into their children's lives. However, Kranzler notes that especially among the Orthodox, there is a concern with providing their families with an extensive yeshiva education. It is through this education, Kranzler states, that Orthodox children develop "their loyalty to the roshei yeshiva or rebbes [leading rabbis in the yeshiva] that are responsible for their learning and ideology."⁴² Egon Mayer and Chaim Waxman essentially agree with Kranzler's assessment, indicating that the Jewish family is a "diminishing influence in transmitting skills and values to the next generation..."⁴³ Mayer and Waxman feel that it is the yeshiva system with its educational and social offerings which has taken over this role with the following consequences: "Lomdut, correct knowledge, has taken primacy over midot and mitsvot, or correct living. The mitsvot which are practiced are done so almost as a mark of sophistication,

⁴¹"The Changing Orthodox Community," Tradition, 1976, p.64.

⁴²op. cit., p.71.

⁴³Modern Jewish Orthodoxy in America: Towards the Year 2000," P.103.

indicating the level of knowledge gained by the practitioner."⁴⁴

Soloveitchik, Kranzler, Mayer and Waxman have theorized that a more stringent form of religious observance is connected to the increasing role of the yeshiva system in the lives of the students. While Helmreich(1986) and Danzger(1989) described the process of the self-enclosed postgraduate Ultra Orthodox yeshiva system, further exploration is necessary to determine if a similar process is happening in the Modern Orthodox day school system. Has the day school changed as it has increased its role in religious transmission, and have these changes contributed to the general fundamentalist move in Modern Orthodoxy?

⁴⁴op. cit. p.105.

CHAPTER IV: HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND
EXPANSION OF THE MODERN DAY SCHOOL MOVEMENT
IN AMERICA

Until the 1920's the supplementary system was the sole method used in Jewish religious education. Classes were held in communal schools-the Talmud Torah or synagogue affiliated congregational schools. Sessions were held in the afternoons after students attended public school and on Sunday mornings. Although a number of Orthodox day schools had been founded by the 1920's, following the pattern established in 1886 by Yeshivath Etz Chaim, they did not attract enrollment from any but the most Orthodox families because of the minimum amount of secular studies grudgingly allowed and so did not attract enrollment from any but the most Orthodox Jewish families.⁴⁵ In 1935, surveys conducted by the Committee on Jewish Education and the Bureau of Jewish Education⁴⁶ show that over 90% of the total population of 200,000 students in the United States were enrolled in one of the two supplementary systems, with only 2.3% being educated in the more extensive Orthodox Jewish day schools which combined comprehensive Jewish

⁴⁵Yeshivath Etz Chaim was founded in 1886 as a modified form of the Eastern European yeshiva system-schools for advanced Talmud study for young men. By the 1900's, Etz Chaim and the other early American day schools offered two hours a day of secular learning, primarily English grammar and arithmetic, in order to attract students who intended to go on to higher secular education (Dushkin, 1918:480; Klaperman, 1955:52).

⁴⁶These figures are from the entry on Education in the Encyclopaedia Judaica, Vol.2:442 which utilized surveys reported by Israel Chipkin ("Jewish Education in the United States at the Mid-Century," Jewish Education, Spring, 1951.

studies with a secular program. During World War II, the day school system which had originally attracted only a small number of Orthodox students in a few schools, rapidly expanded to a total of ninety-five schools with 14,385 pupils. This dramatic growth (mainly in New York City) continued so that by 1948, 128 such schools existed. By the late 1960's, some 258 day schools had been established throughout the United States with enrollment four times that of the supplementary schools.⁴⁷

More recent figures (Table 1) as compiled by Alvin Schiff, Executive Vice-President of the Board of Jewish Education of New York City in a 1991 survey report of Greater New York demonstrate the continuing trend towards day school enrollment along with the significant decrease in supplementary school registration:

Table 1. NUMBER OF SCHOOLS AND ENROLLMENT BY SCHOOL TYPE AND YEAR⁴⁸

1970		1980		1990	
Schools	Enroll.	Schools	Enroll.	Schools	Enroll.
Day 174	49,431	207	60,513	212	79,312
Supp 502	81,889	368	52,796	282	47,693

⁴⁷Information about the expansion of the day school movement was obtained from Alvin Schiff's, The Jewish Day School in America, p.78-82.

⁴⁸Jewish Education in Greater New York: Comparative Demographic Report 1970-1990, p.5.

The 1991 survey report by Schiff, while concentrating on the Greater New York area, stated that the 43.8% decrease in the number of supplementary schools since 1970 with a 41.8% decrease in pupil enrollment are similar to national declines for supplementary schools.⁴⁹ The report further points to the fact that while only 20% of the total Jewish enrollment in Greater New York is Orthodox, over 60% of that enrollment is in day schools under Orthodox auspices.⁵⁰ Nationally, the most current figures obtained from Leora Issacs, Director of Research for the Jewish Education Service of North America,⁵¹ record the number of day schools at 532 with a total student population of 167,776. The number of students attending Orthodox day schools is reported as 139,338 with 12,482 attending Conservative day schools, 2050 in Reform day schools, and the remainder in combined denomination communal day schools.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS AFFECTING NATURE OF JEWISH EDUCATION

The growth of the Modern Orthodox day school movement in America parallels the changing social and economic status of the American Jewish community. To understand the factors that influenced the first period of day school expansion one must

⁴⁹op. cit., p.3.

⁵⁰op. cit., p.24.

⁵¹Figures obtained in a telephone interview on August 16, 1993.

note some of the characteristics of the Jewish community during that period, a generation after the period of the mass immigration of Eastern European Jews to America.

That mass immigration from the late 1800's through the end of free immigration in 1924 had brought 2.5 million Eastern European Jews to America.⁵² A large proportion of these immigrants were Orthodox Jews, but even those whose Jewish identity was more connected to Yiddish culture, Zionist philosophy or socialism than to religious observance still had a familiarity with the traditional Jewish life of the small towns and villages in Eastern Europe from which most of them came (Zborowski and Herzog, 1962). Moving into urban areas, especially into the Lower East Side of New York City, the immigrants in the early 1900's created a Jewish milieu of synagogues, kosher butcher shops, communal philanthropic and educational institutions, and Yiddish publications. This early wave of Jewish immigrants consisted mainly of artisans, small traders, and factory workers who set about the business of trying to make a living. Social historians (Wirth, 1928; Glazer, 1989; Howe, 1976; Karp, 1985; Kessner, 1977, Lestchinsky, 1955; Finklestein, 1960) have recorded the early years as well as the rapid process of acculturation and assimilation that occurred during this time period. All of the historical accounts note that many of the immigrants abandoned or were

⁵²Fishman, Priscilla, ed. The Jews of the United States, p.34.

indifferent to those religious observances that might keep them from achieving economic success, especially the laws concerning not working on the Sabbath.

These immigrants enrolled their children into public schools and free public colleges to receive the secular education which would Americanize them and enable them to advance into better paying jobs and the professions. Yet, many of these parents still wanted their children, especially their sons, to receive some Jewish education. A good number of these American Jews may have forsaken many of their religious beliefs and practices by the 1920's, but Glazer (1972:86) points out that about one-quarter of the immigrant's children received some form of supplementary Jewish education, perhaps in the hope that they would maintain some sense of Jewish identity and kinship with the Jewish people. Certainly, many of the immigrants wanted their sons, at least, to be able to read enough Hebrew to participate in Bar Mitzvah ceremonies at the age of thirteen. Most Orthodox families in the 1920's and 1930's utilized the supplementary schools which presented a traditional religious orientation taught by observant staff and were far less expensive than the \$50-\$300⁵³ yearly tuition charged by the existing day schools.

⁵³The current average day school tuition of day schools similar to those mentioned in this dissertation range from \$8000-10,000. Many of the schools noted that at least about 50% of their students were on partial or full scholarship.

Some Orthodox families who could afford the tuition chose supplementary education because of their concern with the what they perceived as the overly sectarian nature of the existing day schools (Dushkin and Engelman, 1948:331, Nardi, 1944:12, 24). Others, who were products of the European Haskala (period of enlightenment) movement in the late 1800's (Katz, 1973)⁵⁴, welcomed the idea of secular education but ignored the early American day schools which modeled themselves on the more classical Eastern European yeshiva. Joselit (1990) includes the following (rather disdainful) description of an early American day school offered by educator Fannie Neuman in 1932⁵⁵: "The Rabbi Jacob Joseph School of the Yeshiva d'Harlem functioned as a traditional European yeshiva in which secular studies, when provided, were thrust into the tail-end of a long day devoted largely to Hebrew and Talmud." For the most part, it appeared that the Orthodox, many of whom had received a Jewish education in their small villages in Eastern Europe but had not gone on to the advanced Talmud study usually offered only to the intellectually elite, assumed that supplementary education added to their observant home life would provide their children with an adequate buffer against the temptations

⁵⁴In Out of the Ghetto (1973), Katz describes the process of by which European Jews in the 1840's, granted full citizenship by France and Germany began entering secular educational institutions to study philosophy, science, and other secular branches of non-Jewish knowledge which had been banned by earlier generations.

⁵⁵ "A Modern Jewish Experimental School-In Quest of a Synthesis," p.26.

of assimilation into a secular American lifestyle.

The Talmud Torah system, a communal supplementary school which provided students with five days a week of after school study of the Bible, Jewish history and Hebrew language thus appeared to meet the needs of the Jewish community, Orthodox and non-Orthodox during this period. By the late 1930's and 1940's, however, the struggling immigrant generation had largely changed from working class status to the middle class, with more and more Jews entering higher paid occupations and the professions as well as developing successful business enterprises (Lestchinsky, 1955:197, Elazar, 1976:35-42). As they achieved greater affluence, the Jews began to move out of the urban areas (like the Lower East Side of New York) which were heavily populated by Jews, to the newly developed suburbs, where few Jews lived (Wertheimer, 1989, Sklare and Greenblum, 1979).

Sklare, Greenblum and Wertheimer point out that the Jews who first moved out to the suburbs were those who were not Orthodox and, therefore, more willing to live in a decidedly non-Jewish suburban environment, without established surrounding Jewish religious or communal institutions. Ironically, it was in these non-Jewish suburbs that many of these Jews found that, as Herberg (1960) relates, "it is as members of a religious group that the great mass of Americans identify themselves to establish their social location once

they have really sloughed off their immigrant foreignness.⁵⁶ Herberg characterized this involvement with religion as a way of maintaining an approved shared affiliation within religious affiliations that shared religious values consonant with being a good American. Thus, a Judaism with distinctive ethnic ways might keep Jews from participating in the great melting pot, but a Judaism whose religious values shared a grounding with Protestantism and Catholicism was consonant with being a good American. The shared values of the three major religions formed, as Herberg(1960) named it, an "American civil religion" with a shared grounding in the American Way of Life and a belief mainly in belonging to a religion rather than any specific way of orientating one's life to God. This American civil religion served to help Americans define themselves and establish a unity among them by celebrating the American way of life: a belief in God coupled with the idea that hard work, love of one's fellow man, helping the needy, and leading a strong family life. This form of American civil religion was characterized by a need to show that one belonged to a group which enshrined these values, and Herberg, as well as Sklare and Greenblum described the process by which Catholics, Protestants and Jews built churches and synagogues which functioned as religious community centers emphasizing their similar concerns for good citizenship and family values. And just as the Christian families in the suburbs sent their

⁵⁶Will Herberg, Protestant, Catholic, Jew, New York: Doubleday, 1960, p.38.

children to Sunday school, so did the Jewish families send their children to the supplementary schools connected to the synagogues they had built. According to figures cited by Wertheimer, 1989)⁵⁷ hundreds of Conservative and Reform congregations with their own supplementary schools were built as Jews began moving into the suburbs. These congregational supplementary schools, however, differed from the communal Talmud Torah schools in several ways.

Unlike the Talmud Torah, which had provided at least four hundred yearly hours of instruction in five weekly sessions, the synagogue congregational schools generally offered only two hundred hours per year in three weekly sessions. And unlike the communal Talmud Torah in the urban areas, the suburban congregational schools were denominational, primarily Conservative and Reform. While the teachers may have been observant Jews, the students now were Conservative and Reform, coming from homes where many religious practices, such as kashrut and Shabbat observances were no longer followed. (Wertheimer, 1989). While parents may have looked towards supplementary schools to assure group survival, they, themselves, provided little home reinforcement by leading observant Jewish lives: "Their loyalty to tradition tends to be more of a sentimental gesture than a hard

⁵⁷Figure of 800 Conservative synagogues built between 1946-1965 is cited by Wertheimer on p.65 of "Recent Trends in American Judaism."

commitment"(Glazer,1979:160). Other researchers studying the effectiveness of supplementary Jewish education in maintaining a Jewish identity, measured by religious observance (Himmelfarb,1977; Bock,1977; Ackerman,1970; Ribner,1978), concluded that without Jewish religious practices performed at home, there was little statistical correlation with education under one thousand hours of attendance each year. Neither the Talmud Torah nor the congregational schools supplied anywhere near the necessary amount of education deemed necessary for the maintenance of a Jewish identity.

Nevertheless, the congregational system began to replace the Talmud Torah schools, as more Jews, including Orthodox Jews continued the move to the suburbs beginning in the late 1940's and the early 1950's. The congregational system began to take hold in the midst of urban areas as well, as large synagogue edifices were erected by each denomination, each with its own supplementary school attached. Although large numbers of children attended these congregational schools, Jewish educators were alarmed at the ineffectiveness of supplementary education :

The maintenance of religious ties to Judaism could be accomplished by supplementary education when traditional observance was followed in Jewish homes. While this may have been true in the late 1800's and early 1900's, by the 1930's and 1940's, it was apparent that traditional Judaism was no longer being practiced by most American Jews. Combined with the diminished influence of the synagogue, the afternoon Hebrew school cannot counteract the secularization and assimilation

process that is eroding Jewish identification (Nardi,1944:17).

Articles in Jewish Education⁵⁸ from 1929- 1955 attest to the concerns voiced by Jewish educators about the limited scope and influence of supplementary school education. These concerns were summarized by Zalman Diskind(1960) in an analysis of all the articles published from 1929-1955. Diskind found that essays written in the 1940's showed that Jewish educators seemed unable to appreciate the drawing power of the secular American environment. Educators were concentrating blindly on imposing the study of the Bible and religious laws and customs on students who wanted fervently to be as Americanized as possible. A similar study conducted by Dushkin and Engleman (1948:4-23) covering forty-four years of supplementary Jewish education noted that Jewish educational goals were shallow and failed to foster a strong sense of Jewish identification in students.

It is noteworthy, however, that even in the midst of the numerous essays decrying the inadequacy of supplementary education, very few articles in Jewish Education between 1929 and 1940 mentioned the day school-yeshiva concept. For the most part, American Jews seemed to view the day school as being un-American, sectarian, and separatist. They had no wish

⁵⁸A quarterly magazine published by the National Council of Jewish Education, founded in 1926.

to considered a separate ethnic group who wished to be isolated in any way from other Americans. Joselit(1990) reports that most Jews considered the day school to be "an agent of segregation, willfully creating a distinct and separate class composed of alien Jews....it was only grudgingly accepted as a highly specialized kind of institution, a pre-vocational school for the extremely religious children of extremely religious parentage destined to embark on careers as rabbis or educators."⁵⁹ American Jews wished to be considered one hundred percent loyal by sending their children to public schools like other Americans(Nardi, 1944:12; Sklare, 1982:155).

By the 1940's, however, American Jews began to feel less certain about the possibility of being absorbed into the great American melting pot. As they applied to colleges, graduate, and professional schools, Jews became aware that they were being admitted within the framework of an unofficial but definite quota system. Those who attempted to gain entry into the corporate business world found that whole areas were closed to Jews. As the in America felt uneasy. The recognition that anti-Semitism existed in America and the awful realization that the Holocaust was decimating European Jewry was an impetus for a renewed interest in Judaism among

⁵⁹Quote by Joselit on P.127 of New York's Jewish Jews attributed to Alexander Dushkin, "The Next Decade of Jewish Education," Jewish Education, Vol.12, September, 1940"137-138.

American Jews. In the late 1940's, there seemed to be a desire among American Jews to deepen the connections between their fellow Jews. There was also the knowledge that the great centers of Jewish life and culture in Europe had been destroyed in the Holocaust. This was coupled, especially among Orthodox American Jewry, with the realization that rapidly increasing assimilation among the younger generation was destroying the chances of Jewish survival in America.

American Jews turned to education in the hope that teaching the younger generations more about their Judaism might develop the awareness and pride in their Jewish heritage that would bond them to their fellow Jews and ensure Jewish survival. While there have been various interpretations in the American Jewish community about what surviving as Jews actually means, the Orthodox community has always connected religious identity with religious observance. Indeed, as Leibman notes, "Orthodoxy defines the good life as adherence to Jewish law. Hence, the more and closely one adheres to Jewish law, the better Jew one becomes."⁶⁰ Thus, the main focus for Orthodox Jewish education in America would center on teaching children the Jewish way of life by educating them thoroughly in the Torah, the revelation of God's divine will (Dushkin, 1966). The more children studied the Torah, the basis for Jewish law, the more their Jewish identity might be

⁶⁰"Separatism and Isolation," in Dimensions of Orthodox Judaism, p.109, Ed. Reuven Bulka, New York, 1983:106-120.

strengthened.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MODERN ORTHODOX DAY SCHOOL

Many Orthodox Jews, however, did not turn to the existing day school system because secular studies, while offered at these schools, were not emphasized equally with Jewish studies⁶¹. Also, the insular religious sectarianism in the old line day schools did not attract these Orthodox who, while not assimilated Jews, were acculturated to a modern American way of life (Nardi, 1944; Brickman, 1982; Sklare, 1982). Joselit (1990) reports the comments of Rabbi Joseph Lookstein, founder of Ramaz, who emphasized that his day school would be an example of what Modern Orthodox Jews wanted, schools with a modern progressive educational orientation: "The modern day school in no way resembles the traditional Jewish parochial school, neither in form, substance, character or curriculum".⁶² One radical difference between the parochial schools and the day schools was in offering a day school education to girls as well as boys, rejecting the traditional European approach which stressed Jewish studies mainly for boys. Indeed, many of the new schools were coeducational. The new day schools all included Judaic studies, instruction in modern Hebrew (the teaching of Hebrew as a modern spoken

⁶¹Refer to footnote #45 in this chapter.

⁶²Quoted by Joselit on p.134 from Archives of Kehilath Jeshurun, remarks by Rabbi Joseph Lookstein, founder of the day school Ramaz on March 21, 1947.

language was a statement indicating that the day schools were Zionistic as contrasted with the parochial schools), cultural Zionism, and a positive, rather than a grudging stance towards secular culture (Schiff,1966; Ackerman,1969; Joselit,1990; Heimowitz,1979). As Rabbi Joseph Lookstein (founder of the Ramaz day school in 1937) stated, "I was not in competition with Tifereth Jerusalem or with Torah Voda'ath [two traditional yeshivot of that period] but with Horace Mann and Ethical Culture [two prominent secular private schools in New York City]."⁶³ Schiff(1966) describes the new day schools established during this period as being considered religiously moderate and oriented towards what has been described in the previous chapter as Modern Orthodoxy. Among these schools were Ramaz High School, in Manhattan, Yeshiva of Flatbush High School in Brooklyn, and Derech Torah Yeshiva* in Borough X*; in the suburban areas (day schools developed there about ten years later as larger numbers of Orthodox Jews moved to the northern and southern Metropolitan New York City suburbs) were Central Suburban Day School* in Freedona*, Meadow Pond Day School* in Meadow Pond*, Nassau County Hebrew High School* in Sandington*, and Tikva Yeshiva* in Tillet*.

The Yeshiva of Flatbush High School was an offshoot of its elementary school which had been started in 1928. The

⁶³Quoted by Joselit(1990) on p.136 from Rabbi Joseph Lookstein unpublished autobiography, God Owes Me Nothing, p.58.

elementary school had been established by a small group of Jewish parents who wished to have a coed day school which would use the Ivrit B'Ivrit method (utilizing modern conversational Hebrew in teaching Jewish studies in order to foster and strengthen the use of Hebrew as a living language). With the help of the local rabbis who encouraged congregants to enroll their children, and the addition of numerous Holocaust survivors who moved to Brooklyn in the late 1940's, the elementary school grew to over 600 students. The Yeshiva of Flatbush High School was opened in 1950 to enable the eighth grade graduates to continue their education in a day school which was committed to the Ivrit B'Ivrit method.

Derech Torah Yeshiva* had been opened in 1941 by wealthy Modern Orthodox Jews who had moved to Borough X* and wanted a local day school for their school age children rather than sending them into existing day schools in the other boroughs. While the first class consisted of only six students, the school began expanding quickly in the late 1940's with the addition of the children of Holocaust survivors. Like the other six schools selected for this study, Derech Torah Yeshiva* was coed and used the Ivrit B'Ivrit method.

The Orthodox Jewish population of the more distant southern and northern Metropolitan New York City suburbs grew more slowly, and the day school population there was made up of the more prosperous Orthodox Jews able to afford the high real

estate prices and property taxes in these areas. There were few Holocaust survivors, therefore, to swell the student population of Central Suburban Day School* in Freedona*, established in 1948, of Tikva Yeshiva*, established 1953 in Tillet* or of Meadow Pond Day School*⁶⁴, opened in the 1950's in Meadow Pond*. Nassau County Hebrew High School*, located in Sandington*, was established in the 1980's but is included in this study because it is a combination of three Orthodox day high schools which existed in that area in the 1950's and had joined together in 1981 for economic viability. In each case, these northern and southern suburban schools, each with only a handful of students, were financed by wealthy supporters at the urging of the local rabbis. Enrollments from the non-Orthodox population grew slowly as the local suburban public school systems were considered to be excellent and well run, while the Modern Orthodox suburban communities did not expand at the rapid rate of those in Brooklyn and Queens.

Ramaz High School opened its doors eight years after its parent school, the Ramaz Elementary School, was founded in Manhattan in 1937. The elementary school, as well as the high school, owe their start to the efforts of Rabbi Joseph

⁶⁴In the 1980's, numbers of Jews, emigrating from Iran, began moving to Meadow Pond*. They enrolled their children in Meadow Pond Day School* in order to provide them with a familiar Jewish environment. This enrollment has continued, and Iranian students now make up a significant portion of MPDS*'s student population.

Lookstein of Congregation Kehilath Jeshurun, an Orthodox synagogue located on the upper East side of Manhattan. The elementary school initially had only six students, one of them being Rabbi Lookstein's own son, but it was well funded by Kehilath Jeshurun's wealthy Orthodox congregation. Offering scholarships, Ramaz attracted students from several areas of New York, and by 1945, Ramaz High School was opened to enable those first six students to continue their day school program. Although the initial enrollments in all the day schools were quite small, student population in all the schools grew steadily. By the 1970's, the city day schools like Ramaz High School, Yeshiva of Flatbush High School, and Derech Torah Yeshiva* had enrollments of around 400-600, while the suburban elementary schools like Tikva Yeshiva*, Meadow Pond Day School* and Central Suburban Day School*, usually numbered around 300 students.

The population of many day schools existing in the 1940's had grown rapidly, doubling between 1940 and 1948, primarily because of the next wave of Jewish immigrants who came to America-the survivors of the Holocaust. Among the approximately two hundred thousand immigrants⁶⁵ were large numbers of Orthodox Jews. While some sent their children to the day schools with a more sectarian religious approach, a large number enrolled their children in the more modern day

⁶⁵Fishman, 1973:249.

schools. Other survivors, both those who were not observant and those who had abandoned their Orthodoxy, sent their children to these day schools to rebuild their sense of worth in an understanding and familiar Jewish environment (Schiff, 1966:70-79). After the Holocaust, the modern day school movement continued to grow for a variety of reasons. The establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 had generated a great deal of pride in being Jewish and an interest in the Hebrew language and Zionism. Since many modern Orthodox day schools, unlike the older parochial schools, had an openly Zionist orientation and taught religious subjects in modern Hebrew, parents who were strong supporters of Israel enrolled their children in these schools (Heimowitz, 1979:17 and Schiff, 1962:78-81). According to Schiff's research⁶⁶, there were various reasons cited by non-observant parents for sending their children to these day schools. Apparently, a significant number of the non-Orthodox were attracted by the outstanding secular programs combined with the ease of enabling their children to obtain a Jewish cultural heritage during the school day. Others liked the small classes which enabled their children to receive more individual attention than in the more crowded public schools. The longer school day (usually an hour or two later than public school) also

⁶⁶Schiff based his conclusions both on informal surveys he conducted, such as one taken at the Mid-Island Hebrew Day School in Long Island on October 18, 1961, and on the observations of other educators and researchers such as Louis Nulman, "The Parent and the Jewish Day School," The Jewish Parent, September, 1955.

appealed to working mothers or those who simply appreciated the additional hours of child care. The day school movement, aided by enrollment of the non-Orthodox, continued to expand as Orthodox families moved to the suburbs and established schools similar to the ones they would have sent their children to in the urban areas.

DAY SCHOOLS PROMOTE THE IDEA OF SYNTHESIS BETWEEN TWO CULTURES

The new day schools offered Jews the opportunity to give their children a full religious and secular education in an atmosphere enabling the next generation to feel integrated and at ease in the non-Jewish world while identifying fully with Judaism. The key word was integration, the synthesis of two cultures, rather than the dualism of attending public school and a supplementary Jewish school. In an effort to encourage social integration, almost all the modern day schools followed the public school calendar with respect to holidays and did not hold classes on Sunday. Children were thereby able to play with friends who were not attending day schools, and families were able to vacation together during the normal American holiday periods. And by emphasizing the excellence of the secular studies, the day schools allayed the fears of parents who might worry that they had sacrificed their children's futures in the business or professional world by not sending them public school.

Recruitment bulletins from Torah U'Mesorah⁶⁷ illustrate some of the problems the new day schools faced in projecting an appropriate image to prospective families. Although Jewish parents (Orthodox and non-observant) both might dress and talk like other Americans, they still felt self-conscious about being considered separatist. This is evident from the following questions and answers from the following recruitment bulletin "Basic Questions People Ask About the Hebrew Day School" and contains the following questions and answers:⁶⁸

- Q. I am afraid that my child will suffer in every-day life from lack of contact with the "outside world." How will he get along with people who are racially and religiously different?
- A. Day School children are fully committed to intergroup liberalism. among the other articles of the American Creed....There is no difference in inter-group attitudes between Day School and other Jewish children of similar backgrounds.
- Q. Is the Hebrew Day School consistent with the American ideal of public education?
- A. From its earliest days, the American educational system has been characterized by private schools which initially were the only form of education and later continued to prosper alongside the public school system. The private school is able to maintain high standards of academic excellence and particularly those under religious auspices continue to contribute unique values to the fabric of American society. Schools like Andover, Exeter and St. Paul send their

⁶⁷The National Society for Hebrew Day Schools formed in 1944 to encourage the formation of Orthodox day schools by providing them with resource information and guidance.

⁶⁸This brochure was given to me in an interview, January 6, 1994 with Lisa Meisner*, the first secular studies principal of Derech Torah Yeshiva*. Although no date appeared on the brochure, she stated that it was from the early 1950's.

graduates to top colleges and from there to leading positions in the country....

- Q. Does the Jewish Day School segregate or ghettoize the Jewish child?
- A. A good Day School does not narrow a child's horizon but on the contrary attempts to broaden it within a Jewish context by emphasizing the best in Western culture.....In addition, the hours of the Day School are such that the child is free to associate with his non-Jewish friends after school, on weekends and on holidays.
- Q. Frankly, we are not particularly observant in our home. We are afraid that attendance at a Hebrew Day School would bring about a clash of values.
- A. The child's values are affected by the school he attends, but so are they by his home and by the particular synagogue with which his parents are affiliated. While a Hebrew Day School expects to give its pupils a full education-Jewish as well as general-it is not likely that children will emerge with values with which their parents could not live.

While the aim of the Modern Orthodox who instituted the new day schools might have been "to preserve and transmit to posterity traditional Judaism with all its practices, customs, ceremonies, tenets, and ideals, to prepare one for the practice of the ideal"(Hartstein,1937), it seems obvious from the above recruitment brochure that a major aim of many day school parents was to make sure their children were not separated from the "ways of America". This was true of both Orthodox and non-Orthodox parents. Statements about the aims and goals of the day school from two of the first principals of these schools demonstrate that these parental aims were acknowledged: "It is our aim to blend the best of American culture with the best of traditional Judaism.... to

appreciate the democratic ideals of our great country in order to develop useful citizens" (Rabbi Mendel Weiss* of Derech Torah Yeshiva*)⁶⁹. "It is our goal to develop an American Jewish child and eventually an adult who will grow into manhood and womanhood experiencing no clash between being a Jew and an American at one and the same time." (Rabbi Joseph Lookstein of Ramaz)⁷⁰. Joel Heimowitz, whose Ph.D. dissertation topic was the Yeshiva of Flatbush High school notes that the founders of that day school were determined to have a school "where both Jewish values and American democratic ideals would be taught"⁷¹. The modern forms of the day school proved to be particularly successful in attracting American Jews from the more acculturated Orthodox families. As Jeffrey Gurock, a historian of American Orthodoxy, noted in his essay analyzing the modern day school population, these families no longer felt that their children could remain Orthodox by living in a dichotomy of the secular and the religious world: "They were at home in America, but they feared what comfort, and possibly acceptance, in America might mean to their own children's attachment to the Jewish

⁶⁹From material gathered (but not used) in the Fiftieth Anniversary Dinner Journal of Derech Torah Yeshiva*. This was a statement by the first principal taken from a recruitment brochure of Derech Torah Yeshiva* which Lisa Meisner* identified as written in the early 1950's.

⁷⁰From "Principal's Report," October 12, 1950, p.4, Kehilath Jeshurun Archives.

⁷¹A Study of the Graduates of the Yeshivah of Flatbush High School, p.16.

people"(Gurock, 1989:50).

The modern day school system utilized modern teaching techniques in their Jewish studies programs that were associated with the best advances in secular education: music, art, and drama became an integral part of the Jewish curriculum. Jewish studies were taught in Hebrew, not, as had often been the case, in Yiddish. In a number of these schools girls and boys were offered the same religious studies in coed classes.

The modern day schools provided a fuller complement of religious studies than the early day schools: in addition to the study of the Torah(with heavy emphasis on the study of the Five Books of Moses and the Prophets) and Talmud, Jewish studies were widened to include modern Jewish history, Jewish philosophy and the study of Hebrew as a living, spoken language, not just as an adjunct to studying the Bible. The study of modern Hebrew, as a living language, was especially significant because it acknowledged the Modern Orthodox day school acceptance of Zionist ideology, an ideology that was looked askance by more right wing Orthodox denominations. A religious atmosphere was created by emphasizing the rituals, customs, and ceremonies of the Sabbath and the Festivals in a creative and joyous manner with special art projects and plays. The Sabbath was welcomed on Friday afternoons by holding Oneg Shabbat(celebration of the coming of the Sabbath)

parties where blessings were taught for the wine (substituted with grape juice) and challah (special bread for the Sabbath meal) and candle lighting amidst the singing of special Sabbath songs. On the Festivals, such as Passover, children participated in a model Seder so that they and their families would become familiar with the procedures. On the holiday of Succot, students participated in decorating the Succah, the booths in which they would take their meals or snacks for that holiday week.

RELIGIOUS MODERATION OBSERVED

While many of the students at these modern day schools came from Modern Orthodox families who observed Shabbat and kashrut, as well as many of the laws concerning the Festivals and family life, neither they nor the schools they attended seemed to concern themselves with emphasizing minutia or some of the more stringent rabbinical interpretations of kashrut and Shabbat regulations or the relationship between the sexes.⁷² It is certain that the Orthodox families were not unaware that the day schools offered many of the same coed social and non-academic activities that public school students enjoyed. Thus, for example, many day school students who were

⁷²Many of the following observations in the next two paragraphs are based on this researcher's personal knowledge of the day school movement during the 1940's and 1950's. These observations were corroborated in the discussions with the principals and families interviewed. Specific reference to the interviews will be made in later chapters of this dissertation when the nature of the changes in the day school will be analyzed further.

in junior or senior high school enjoyed school sponsored dances on Saturday or Sunday nights after basketball games (where short-skirted female cheerleaders performed during intermissions) and attended senior proms upon graduation. Those day schools which did not actively sponsor mixed social dancing (as did Ramaz and the Yeshiva of Flatbush) made no attempt to discourage their students from organizing proms held off school premises or from attending the Saturday or Sunday night basketball games and dances. In fact, this researcher vividly remembers attending such games and dances while she was a student at Jafa* (one of the three day schools which combined to form NCHHS*) in buses chartered by the school. In general, many Modern Orthodox families not only accepted boys and girls studying together as being halachically acceptable, they also did not suggest that socializing together was not permissible.

Interviews with the principals of the day schools selected for this dissertation reveals that these schools all provided the students in the upper grades with opportunity to sing in a chorus, as there was no concern then with the observance of the prohibition of kol issa (the voice of a woman singing is maintained by some rabbinical authorities to be sexually stimulating and thus is to be avoided). Boys and girls acted together in coed plays, and went on school graduation trips together. Many of the day schools allowed students to dress informally; boys wore jeans and some of the

suburban schools (Central Suburban Day School*, for one) permitted girls to wear pants and even shorts. Except for an attempt by Ramaz to require boys to wear ties and jackets to upgrade the look of the school, none of the day school demanded any sort of dress code aside from requiring boys to wear tzizit (fringed ritual undergarment) and kippot (skullcap worn for religious reasons). Pictures from yearbooks and dinner journals through the early 1970's from Derech Torah Yeshiva*, Ramaz, Flatbush, Central Suburban Day School*, Nassau County Hebrew High School*, and Tikva Yeshiva* show girls in short sleeves, short skirts above the knee, and boys in uncollared shirts and jeans. In addition, these pictures have groups of boys and girls posed together or in the midst of various coed school activities. The pictures from Ramaz archives from the 1950's (Figs.1, 2, and 3 on page 80) show the coed chorus, first grade students holding each other in coed pairs, and even a photo of Ramaz's first senior high school dance.⁷³ Indeed, the majority of these Modern Orthodox day schools held fund raising dinner dances which included social dancing for the parents.

⁷³Some of the photos from RAMAZ have been reproduced and used throughout this dissertation. Other photos referred to are in school yearbooks which this researcher was able to look at but was not permitted to take off the premises nor was able to photocopy.

Fig.1

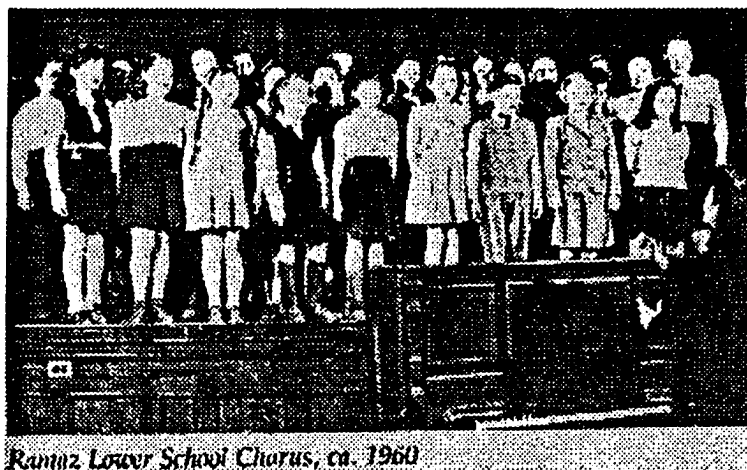


Fig.2

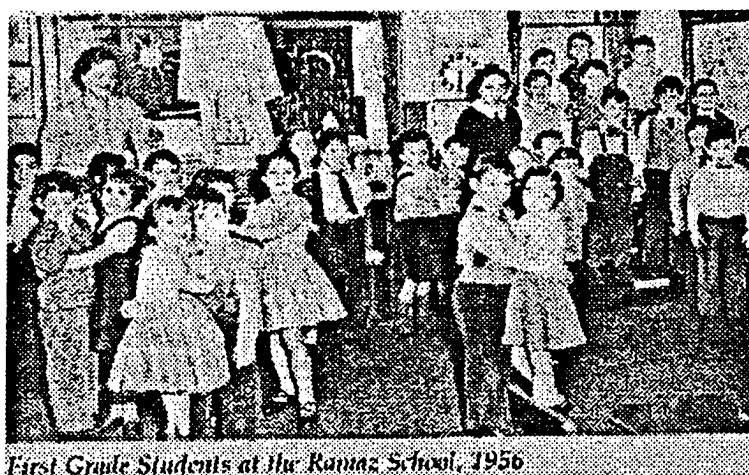


Fig.3



INCREASED ENROLLMENT OF THE NON-ORTHODOX

Throughout the 1950's, the day schools actively encouraged registration from non-Orthodox students, partly because they were committed to serving the entire Jewish community, and partly because even with the large numbers of Holocaust survivors' children, there was just not enough of an Orthodox community to supply enough students or adequate financial support. Lisa Meisner⁷⁴ refers to going door to door in the Borough X* area trying to solicit Jewish children for Derech Torah Yeshiva* to add to the few Orthodox children of rabbis and Holocaust survivors who were ready to enroll in this new day school. Heimowitz(1979)⁷⁵ notes that over 50% of the Yeshiva of Flatbush students were non-Orthodox during the 1950's, a figure similar to the registration in many of the other Modern Orthodox day schools. This mixture of a majority of non-Orthodox with a minority of the Modern Orthodox remained constant from the 1950's through the 1970's⁷⁶ as day school registration increased.

⁷⁴Personal interview of January 6, 1994.

⁷⁵Heimowitz had access to the records of Flatbush High School includes this information on p.102 of his dissertation: A Study of the Graduates of the Yeshiva of Flatbush High School(1979). The dissertation is based both on school records and answers to questionnaires mailed to 808 graduates dating from the first graduating class. Heimowitz claims he received a total of 404 responses, which was 50.3% of the total mailed (p.81).

⁷⁶Irving Fried studied thirty-five day schools in 1973 by analyzing the questionnaires answered by 150 educational, religious or communal leaders who had associations with a cross-section of these schools(including the principal of each school). He found that close to 50% of the students at these schools, which he considered to be in the middle range of Orthodox affiliation, were from non-Orthodox Zionist or

Alvin Schiff, as the Executive Vice-President of the Board of Jewish Education of New York City, researched the reasons for the increase in day school enrollment⁷⁷ in the 1960's and 1970's and noted that non-Orthodox enrollment in day schools increased during this period, primarily for security factors. Schiff(1966, 1972, 1974) feels that Jewish parents became uneasy about the physical safety of their children in New York City, particularly during the late 1960's and 1970's when policies of busing Black students to integrate largely White public school districts led to a good deal of racial tension in the city schools, particularly in the junior and senior high schools. Jewish parents were also apprehensive about attempts by local leaders to take community control of the public schools. Such an attempt had occurred in the Ocean Hill - Brownsville district in Brooklyn in April where Black leaders took over the public schools and demanded total control over hiring and firing teachers and planning curricula. When 13 teachers(all white and Jewish) from the district were dismissed by the local board without a hearing, the United Federation of teachers called a strike. There were incidents of verbal and physical violence between the mostly Black community leaders and the teachers, most of whom were

Conservative homes, (Trends and Issues in Hebrew Day School Education), 1973).

⁷⁷Schiff conducted a variety of surveys over the years on which he based the information contained in these references which are listed on the bibliography section of this dissertation.

Jewish. Although the strike ended, Jewish parents remained anxious about the new issue of decentralization and wary about the anti-semitic remarks that had been passed during the "Brownsville riots."

Writing in Tradition in 1972, Rabbi David Eliach, Principal of Yeshiva of Flatbush High School concedes that "Some yeshivot exist partly because of racial problems, political upheaval and lack of security"⁷⁸. Those parents who were not alarmed by racial unrest in the schools were disturbed by the lack of discipline, the drug culture, sexual permissiveness, and the general counterculture attitudes that had pervaded American society, especially among high school and college-aged students.

Hertzberg(1968), Glazer(1972), and Dickstein(1977) describe the years of turmoil in the United States, from the assassination of President Kennedy in 1965, the ill-fated Vietnam War to which the United States fully committed forces in 1968, and the subsequent related internal cultural revolution carried on by politically disenchanted American youth who attempted to overturn or reinvent what was essentially the American middle class value system. A whole new youth counterculture seemed to emerge in the late 1960's whose major theme was rebellion against adult authority and

⁷⁸"The Jewish Day School: A Symposium" Tradition, Vol 13, No.1, p.100, Summer 1972.

the conventional values of obtaining a responsible job, a home, and a family. The new counterculture had its own music with sexually explicit lyrics, advocated permissive sexual behavior, encouraged the recreational use of marijuana and other drugs, and adopted long hair styles for males.

An interesting off-shoot of this period was an emphasis on exploring one's ethnic heritage as an alternative to the "establishment" way of life. This exploration led some young people to a renewed acquaintance with the ethnic foods, language, dress, and customs that their immigrant parents and grandparents had sloughed off in the Americanization process. For some counterculture Jews from assimilated homes, the search for authenticity awakened an interest in religion. This search led some back to Orthodox Judaism, for this "anti-establishment" Judaism "represented an alternative that was consonant with the predominant values of that day" (Danzger, 1989:77). For the most part, however, the counterculture had only scorn for institutionalized religion. Anxious to have their children avoid contact with this counter-culture approach to life and in the safety of familiar surroundings, Jewish parents increasingly enrolled their children in the safe territory of the day schools where a religious value system was emphasized (and tuition was less than in secular private schools). They were joined by others whose interest in observant Judaism had been aroused during the 1960's or rekindled by the 1967 Six Day War in Israel with

the reunification of Jerusalem. The day schools in New York City, therefore, continued their strong growth throughout the 1960's and 1970's, although, as Schiff pointed out, it was for different reasons than the increase which had occurred after the Holocaust.

Thus, the typical student mix of the Modern Orthodox day school of the 1950's through the early 1970's was more similar to the mix of students in the early communal Talmud Torah schools than to the student body of the more stringently religious Orthodox day schools. Typically, as Fried(1973) had indicated, in the Modern Orthodox day schools, no more than 40% or 50% of the students came from Orthodox homes. Among these were students from Zionist homes interested primarily in Hebrew language and the spirit of Jewish nationalism and those sent to learn something about Jewish history and culture while getting a solid secular education. And there were those who were sent primarily to escape the deteriorating, crowded, and increasingly racially diverse public schools. With this increasing influx of non-Orthodox, non-observant students, the Modern Orthodox day schools became faced with the problem of educating a population containing a large percentage of students not subscribing to a Modern Orthodox religious orientation.

CHAPTER V: INCREASED ROLE OF THE DAY SCHOOL IN ENCOURAGING STUDENTS' RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE

Although a mixed student population (observant and non-observant) may have always presented educational challenges for day school educators, it did not seem to cause any particular problems for the families, at least not during the 1950's and early 1960's. This researcher did not find any articles published in Jewish Education during that time period regarding parents' concern about the presence of large numbers of non-Orthodox students in the day schools. However, by the late 1960's and throughout the 1970's, Modern Orthodox day schools apparently were getting complaints about this situation from Orthodox parents.

ORTHODOX PARENTS WARY ABOUT NON-ORTHODOX PRESENCE IN DAY SCHOOLS

A prime example is offered by Heimowitz(1979) who relates that by 1968, Orthodox parents had become alarmed about the fact that at that point, less than 50% of the students at the Yeshiva of Flatbush came from Orthodox homes. At the request of a group of these parents, the Yeshiva of Flatbush agreed to set up special programs for those interested in an intensified Talmud program and a stress on religious observance. Heimowitz suggests that Flatbush may well have acceded to such requests in the fear that the Orthodox parents might remove their children and enroll them in one of the three new yeshiva high schools which had opened in the area and were offering a

more stringently observant atmosphere.⁷⁹ However, the voluntary program offered by the Yeshiva of Flatbush, while evidently placating the parents, did not really offer a more stringently observant atmosphere. The Yeshiva of Flatbush may have been worried about the competition from more right wing day schools because those schools, by stressing a more stringent level of religious observance, were essentially offering parents the promise of a student body made up primarily of Orthodox students. In essence, the voluntary program of the Yeshiva of Flatbush was a method of separating the Orthodox from the non-Orthodox students. The voluntary program, which offered additional Talmud study, acted to select out the Orthodox and isolate them, at least during Judaic studies, since parents who were not Orthodox presumably would not sign up their children for the extra Talmud hours. Thus, the new program satisfied those Orthodox parents who were worried about their children being socially involved with students who might not be Orthodox. Why had Modern Orthodox parents become so uncomfortable about their children associating with non-Orthodox children? Why were they suddenly worried that their children's religious faith or level of observance might be threatened because of exposure to less observant children in the Modern Orthodox day schools? What was there about the late 1960's and 1970's that was

⁷⁹Brooklyn Talmudical Academy, Chaim Berlin, and Torah Vodaath were for boys only; Central High School accepted only girls. Orthodox parents assume that non-coed yeshivot are more Orthodox.

different from the 1950's when these worries were not expressed?

ORTHODOX RESPONSE TO THE COUNTERCULTURE

It is quite likely that the worries had a lot to do with the nature of the social movement - the counterculture movement - that was occurring in America during the late 1960's and 1970's. According to Timothy Miller(1991), the counterculture movement, made up primarily of teenage and young adult "hippies" and "yippies" differed from the "beats" of the 1950's. While both movements consisted largely of white, middle class alienated from the American way of life, the beats mainly promoted new forms of art and literature. They smoked marijuana, dropped out, listened to jazz."⁸⁰ But, Miller points out that the beats were not movers; they did not demand the imminent demise of American society. They were not cultural shock troops. As a 1967 Time Magazine essay explained, the hippies may have shared the same scorn for middle-class sexual mores and values as did the beats. They may have smoked pot and flirted with Oriental mysticism much as the beats of the 1950's did. The contrast, according to Time Magazine is that "hippiedom is vivid color compared to the black and white of the beats."⁸¹ Time Magazine pointed out that, in essence, the hippies wanted to generate an

⁸⁰The Hippies and American Values, p.6.

⁸¹"Youth: The Hippies," p.19.

entirely new society, one which was anti-intellectual and would in no way resemble the production directed, goal oriented American way of life: "The standard thing is to feel in the gut that middle class values are all wrong....not to feel uptight about sex, drugs, LSD, hashish, marijuana, free love, group sex. All are knives to cut the knot."⁸².

The knives were being used to cut what John Updike, novelist and essayist, described as the ties of the 1950's⁸³, the period of middle class expansion following the upheaval of WWII: "The 1950's were a time when the divorce rate had dropped, people got married early, shows like Father Knows Best and Leave it to Beaver, nuclear family, suburban housing developments. It was a relatively docile time. There was no birth control pill, no drug use, no pornographic shopping malls or home videos."⁸⁴ Historian Lucy Dawidowicz, writing in the 1982 American Jewish Yearbook, characterized the late 1960's and 1970's as a period when American society was in turmoil, when the counterculture became a new religion which pervaded American life with "the flower children, and the hippies, the dropouts from school and work, the runaways from home and family in search of mythic freedom. They left home to join communes; they left their parents for gurus; they left

⁸²Time Magazine, July 7, 1967, p.19.

⁸³In an essay in Newsweek, January 13, 1994, pp.46-49.

⁸⁴p.Op. Cit.,42.

the despised familiarity of their own religious culture in search of exotic Eastern cultures."⁸⁵ And during the late 1960's and 1970's, newspapers, magazines, radio and television were filled with stories, essays, and reports about the nudity, promiscuity and hard drugs rampant in the counterculture, behavior that was intended to be viewed as a revolutionary smashing of middle class taboos. It was certainly no easy time to be parents, particularly Modern Orthodox parents practicing a religion whose value system contained much in common with the values and mores of that despised middle class.

As Herberg(1960) had concluded, in the 1950's and early 1960's, it had become apparent that the majority of American Catholics, Protestants, and Jews held a shared system of values. Modern Orthodox Jews and non -Orthodox Jews, therefore, had much in common regarding bringing up children. What the day schools emphasized reinforced much of what middle class American life was all about. Although non-observant families may not have practiced many of Judaism's religious rites, their moral value systems were not in conflict with those of Modern Orthodox families. However, once the ideas and actions of the counterculture began spreading through American society, Modern Orthodox parents, threatened by the period of rapid social change, may have become less sure that

⁸⁵"A Century of Jewish History, 1881-1981: The View from America, p.91.

they had as much in common with non-Orthodox parents. It is possible that they felt non-Orthodox parents, less fortified by the observance of religious traditions and halacha, might be more open or more accepting of some aspects of the counterculture. Perhaps, Orthodox parents, may have reasoned, non-Orthodox parents might be more willing to agree with sexual activity for teenagers, be more tolerant of their children smoking marijuana, more willing to accommodate some of the counterculture philosophy.

Certainly, it had become apparent that some of those ideas were filtering through mainstream society, a society from which the Modern Orthodox had not shut themselves off: total nudity was now being accepted on the Broadway stage; pornographic magazines and books were displayed openly in stores, sexually revealing clothing was worn on the street; the androgenous look, with long hair for men, was considered fashionable; articles even appeared in magazines discussing the hypocrisy of parents not openly acknowledging their teenagers' sexual activities. While it was true that the counterculture, with its emphasis of ethnic exploration, may have encouraged some Jews to explore their Jewish roots and enroll their children into day schools, for the most part, the counterculture was hostile to organized religion. In response, Orthodox parents, wary about their children being touched by the inroads of the counterculture, seemed to become less interested in outreach and more interested in insulating

their own children.

FOSTERING A MORE HOMOGENOUS RELIGIOUS ATMOSPHERE

School administrators, unnerved by the late 1960's and 1970's, began to take more of an interest in fostering the religious commitment of students in order to provide for the more religiously homogenous atmosphere they felt would be more reassuring to the Orthodox parent body. The Modern Orthodox day schools did not, as Heimowitz(1979) had noted, wish to chance losing their observant student population to the more stringently Orthodox day schools which now offered secular studies(albeit not on the same level as the Modern Orthodox day schools) and, even more crucial - a more homogenous Orthodox student body. It was the attraction of a more religiously homogenous study body that might be the lure for the unnerved Modern Orthodox.⁸⁶ Modern Orthodox parents apparently wanted to lessen the chances that their children might be influenced by contact in school or visiting the homes of the non-Orthodox. As Bellah(1985) noted, "It is true that in periods of rapid social change, when moral standards seem to be crumbling, and relativism seems to be pervasive, some people are tempted to assert a simple and unquestionable morality, and in some circumstances to force it on their

⁸⁶Several other past and present principals interviewed also referred to this fear. Their specific statements will be quoted and attributed elsewhere in this dissertation.

neighbors."⁸⁷ The solution for the day schools was to concentrate more on instilling religious commitment in their non-Orthodox population. This was a difficult task.

Awareness of the difficulty of instilling religious commitment in children of non-observant families had always been acknowledged among administrators of the Modern Orthodox Day schools. Gurock quotes Dr. Benjamin Brickman, the Educational Supervisor of Ramaz in a 1952 article⁸⁸ from the Ramaz Mirror, a publication sent to all Ramaz parents:"The "Shabbos party" on Friday afternoon [must be] a wonderful prelude to an actual sabbath-like Friday night. Otherwise it is just play-acting...." Brickman emphasized that families should integrate the teachings of the schools into their home lives if they wished to reinforce what the school was trying to teach about Judaism. Educators such as Louis Kaplan bemoaned the magnitude of the problem now that "the Jewish home, which was a unique and most effective institution making for Jewish living, has in large measure lost its distinctive character.....We must teach home and synagogue observance, develop in the children a desire to practice these observances and in addition attempt to

⁸⁷Habits of the Heart, p.140.

⁸⁸"School and Home: An Educational Team," p.52.

influence the home through the children.''⁸⁹ Research in Jewish education (Cohen,1974) had also demonstrated that strong religious identification, as defined by religious observances, occurred mainly when day school education was combined with religious observances by the families of students.

While the problem had existed for some time, it was during these uneasy decades of the late 1960's and 1970's that many of the day schools including Flatbush, Ramaz, Tikva Yeshiva*, Derech Torah Yeshiva*) began to institute certain requirements in order to foster more religious observance in their religiously pluralistic student bodies.⁹⁰ The first such requirement was compulsory attendance at early morning (before classes started) prayer for post Bar Mitzvah aged boys. To tighten up the kashrut problems of home birthday parties, carefully worded letters were sent to parents suggesting politely that birthday parties not be held on the Sabbath and that dairy refreshments be served. To enable the Judaic studies program to expand and allow more time to teach

⁸⁹"Developments in Jewish Education: On Jewish Life and Its Observance," Jewish Education, Spring, 1950, Vol.21, #2, p.49,

⁹⁰None of the principals interviewed by this researcher remember the exact dates when these requirements went into effect, but all mentioned the changes began in the late 1960's or early 1970's. The examples referred to are taken from interviews conducted with various principles and will be further referred to and attributed in context in future chapters.

such subjects as Talmud with more intensity, many of the schools began to lengthen their school day, in some cases by an hour or even two.

In the early day school years of the 1950's and 1960's, The modern day schools had to tread a fine line and avoided a heavy handed approach in instilling religious observance in order not to offend their non-observant families, encouraging rather than demanding compliance from students. But this middle of the road indirect approach obviously was deemed insufficient in the turbulent counterculture years of the late 1960's and 1970's, and the day schools utilized a more aggressive approach in transmitting religious content. A more open commitment to reinforcing observance would serve to quiet the fears of Orthodox parents who might object to the religiously pluralistic student body in the Modern Orthodox day schools. Recognizing that the schools had to combat these fears, in order to insure that Orthodox parents were fully satisfied, the day schools began to take a more aggressive approach to religious education.

DAY SCHOOLS TAKE ON MORE OF A FAMILY ROLE

In the 1970's, Modern Orthodox parents may also have encouraged the day school to take on an increased and more aggressive role because the nature of family life had changed. As Kranzler and Waxman/Mayer have noted, Jewish families, including the Orthodox, were not immune from the weakening in

family cohesiveness that has characterized an increasing percentage of urban, middle-class educated American families. Kammerman(1981) refers to government surveys taken throughout the 1970's which indicate that by the early 1980's the divorce rate had doubled, along with a 44% increase in the number of families headed by women. The labor force participation rate of women had undergone an even more dramatic growth in the 1970's with over 60% of all women with school age children participating in the labor force. With an increasing number of families in which husband and wives both worked, median family income rose, but there was obviously less time for family life. Data for Jewish families, reported by the National Jewish Population Survey conducted in 1990 for the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Fund imply similar trends. When the available labor statistics for 1957 are compared to those of 1970 and 1990, it is noteworthy that the percentage of Jewish women between the ages of 25-34 show dramatic increases, doubling in the last two decades from 25% to 45%⁹¹. While those studies and others did not specifically target Modern Orthodox women, informal surveys

⁹¹Data on working Jewish women from 1957 United States labor statistic in 1957 were compared by Sidney Goldstein to statistics from the 1970 and 1990 National Jewish Population Survey in "Profile of American Jewry: Insights from the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey," American Jewish Year Book 1992, Vol.92, p.113.

conducted in the late 1960's and 1987 by Blu Greenberg⁹² at an unnamed Modern Orthodox day school in Riverdale, New York, provide a basis for the assumption that Modern Orthodox women have not been immune to changes in women's lifestyles. The Riverdale study indicates that since the 1960's, there has been a 45% increase of working mothers, with a full 70% of those being mothers with school age children.

It was not that family life disappeared in the 1970's and 1980's, but certainly the amount of time parents and children spent together at home decreased considerably. It was not only the entry of mothers to the work force that changed family life, it was also economic need and opportunity which propelled both mothers and fathers into working longer hours. And when parents were not working outside the home, they seemed to be spending more time pursuing various outside leisure activities while their children were busy in sports activities or music, dance and art lessons. In addition to an increased divorce rate, the faster, pressure cooker pace of life raised tensions and caused conflicts between work and

⁹²Survey results reported by Blu Greenberg in "Jewish Women Today: Where are They? Where are they Going?" Jewish Monthly. pp.8-11, February, 1991. In a personal letter to this researcher, Greenberg confirmed that the principal, Rabbi Yonah Fuld, of S.A.R. day school had collected the figures from surveys of the school's parents. Rabbi Fuld had collected the figures from information provided by parents when registering their children and filling out emergency contact cards.

family life that some sociologists(Holmstrom,1972; Lasch, 1977; Kammerman, 1981) feel have characterized much of modern American family life.

Although none of the parents interviewed for this study were divorced, in the majority of the families, both parents worked. Of the twenty-five women interviewed, ranging between the ages of 32-50) eighteen worked at full time jobs or professions outside the home, three worked part time(20-40 hours per week), and only four were full time homemakers. Those who worked did mention that life was very hectic, but they were interested in the topic and arranged time for the interview. However, only ten men agreed to be interviewed, and two of the men broke appointments so often, it became impossible to proceed. Most of the men declined the interview stating that they came home late in the evenings and often worked on Sundays. In the Modern Orthodox world, then, as in much of American urban life, time has become a premium.

CHANGES IN FAMILY LIFE PATTERNS AFFECT THE MODERN ORTHODOX

The task of religious transmission becomes even more difficult in time-compressed family life or in single parent families. It was not surprising that as family patterns changed in the 1970's and 1980's, Modern Orthodox parents began turning to the day schools for more reinforcement or even the expectation that the schools should assume more aspects of instilling religious values, attitudes, and

traditions. Thus, in the 1970's, the day schools began to shoulder the major responsibilities of religious transmission not only for non-observant families, but also for Modern Orthodox families.

Both principals and teachers referred to the changes in family life that had become apparent since the 1970's. Rebecca Glazer*, who has taught at Derech Torah Yeshiva* since the early 1960's, noted that "more students coming to the school are bright children, but there are more emotional disturbances due to the difference in lifestyle of their families--more divorce, more parents working, paying less attention to children, less help with homework. This I noticed in the late 1970's and the beginning of the 1980's."⁹³ Rabbi Lippner* (DTY*) pointed to the tutorial program the school started in the 1980's in which teachers are available to help kids with their homework. Markman*, who has been teaching Jewish studies at NCHHS* since 1980, stated that she has noticed that over the past ten years more children are from broken homes: "I was surprised to what degree that problem existed here."⁹⁴ All of the principals and teachers interviewed referred to similar findings. Rabbi Alpert*(Tikva*) observed that he did not think the school should have the biggest role in transmitting Jewish identity

⁹³Interview, February 15, 1994.

⁹⁴Interview, 4/18/94.

and observance, but noted that "the parents today would like the school to take on that role. They don't trust themselves."⁹⁵ Commenting that "the school is blamed for everything," Rabbi Bienenfeld* (Tikva* teacher) added that "home was the place where children learned manners. The shul [synagogue] was the place where they learned how to daven [pray], but now the school has responsibility for the total makeup of the child." Rabbi Bakst (Dean of Jewish Studies at Ramaz) stated that "....it is not that parents are not interested, they are. Of course now for the most part, in many families, parents have to work just to afford the basics. The school takes a stronger role in education because the parents don't have time."⁹⁶

Reviewing minutes from the archives of the Principals' Committee of the Board of Jewish Education of New York City demonstrates that the Modern Orthodox day schools became dismayed that so many of their Orthodox students had not been trained in basic moral behavior or religious rituals which the schools assumed the Modern Orthodox family would have transmitted as part of their responsibility. Discussions at these committee meetings, which had met monthly since 1975 to discuss common problems, focused on such matters as how to develop the habit of daily prayer (September and November,

⁹⁵Interview, May 1, 1993.

⁹⁶Interview, February 2, 1994.

1976) and how to develop a program of moral and personal guidance for students (March, 1977). At the March 11, 1981 Eighth Annual Conference Day of the Principals' Council, the title of the keynote speech was Families in Crisis, while the opening session at the November 2, 1982 Conference Day was entitled, "The Jewish Family in Transition: the Role of the Day School".

EFFECTS OF A MORE HIGHLY EDUCATED PARENT BODY

There were also other reasons for parents' increasing demands on the day schools. Most of the principals interviewed noted that since the late 1970's, an increasing percentage of parents, both the men and the women had received a full twelve years of day school education themselves, unlike the parent body of the 1950's -early 1970's, and thus were more knowledgeable and demanding about day school education. Mrs. Schwartz*(Derech Torah Yeshiva* English Department Principal) also pointed out that unlike today's parents, many of the families in the 1950's were holocaust survivors who assumed that whatever the day school did was all right, but today's parents are very demanding and expect the day school to take on many roles.⁹⁷

⁹⁷Interview, November 15, 1993.

THE DAY SCHOOLS BEGIN SUPERVISING RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE

One such religious role was more closely monitoring davening (praying) in the morning⁹⁸. Although prayer sessions were typical of the more right wing yeshivot in the 1940's, offering morning prayer sessions at the Modern Orthodox day schools was only instituted in the 1970's. However, in those early years, attendance was voluntary. Some schools, like Tikva Yeshiva* and DTY* declared davening mandatory only for bar-mitzvah age boys, requiring them to appear for minyan before classes started. Providing time for morning prayers usually lengthened the school day by a half hour or more. Thus, compulsory prayer in the Yeshiva of Flatbush High School, begun in 1970, made it mandatory for boys to start school at 7:15, instead of 8:00 (by the late 1980's both boys and girls were required to attend the morning prayer service which then began at 7:am).

REQUIRING DAILY PRAYERS

Informal minutes from the archives of the monthly meetings of the Yeshiva Principals' Council⁹⁹ show this

⁹⁸Orthodox Judaism mandates saying prayers three times a day. Starting at age thirteen (for males) it is preferable to daven with a minyan (group of at least ten men). The day schools normally conducted afternoon prayers during the school day, assuming that it was the parents' responsibility to see that their children davened before school in the mornings.

⁹⁹The Principals' Council (originally named the Principals' Committee) had begun meeting in 1970 as an informal group (organized by the Board of Jewish Education of New York City). Its purpose was to allow for regular communication on topics of common interest to the day school

concern with how to develop the habit of daily prayer in students. Several meetings in 1976 were devoted to this topic, and at the November, 1976 meeting, a questionnaire addressing the problem was developed for distribution to the day schools.

The following questions were asked:

1. Does your school have a daily minyan?
2. Is student participation in the yeshiva minyan voluntary or mandated?
3. How many teachers participate?
4. What percentage of students participate?

Although the results of this survey are not available, communication among the various schools underscored the depth of the problem and encouraged the day schools in their plans to foster daily morning davening. This is evident in the questions asked of the day schools eight years later, on January, 1984. This questionnaire does not ask if the schools offer a daily minyan. Acting on the assumption that the schools do, this questionnaire on davening requests information on whether something more than prayer (lectures or discussions) are included in the minyan period. However, since the questionnaire is interested in the total numbers of students in the morning minyan and whether attendance for teachers and students is voluntary or mandatory, the day schools at that point were evidently still encouraging but not requiring daily prayer of students or teachers.

Even though some of the day schools NCHHS*, DTY*,

principals.

Flatbush, Tikva*, Ramaz) had increasing numbers of Orthodox students by the 1980's (students who could be expected to daven at home), morning davening still was included as part of the school day. As Rabbi Bakst (Ramaz dean) pointed out, "Even in Modern Orthodox families, not every child will see their father go to synagogue every day....davening in most Modern Orthodox home is a Shabbat activity....The kid does not see that it should be part of his life. If you don't have time for davening every day, you are not an example. We do, so we provide the example" (Interview, 2/2/94). Rabbi Bakst remarked on the increased emphasis the day schools have put on davening, remembering that when he first came to Ramaz High School in the early 1960's, the school held prayers only once a year - on Yom Haatzmaout (Israel Independence day). Even after holding morning prayer in the 1970's, davening was held only four days a week at Ramaz High School because time was not allotted on Friday, an early dismissal day. It was only in the early 1980's that Rabbi Lookstein decided to rearrange Ramaz's day by shortening class time to allow time for davening: "We said, what is the message we are delivering? That if you have to choose, you don't find time for davening? What are we here for?" (Interview 1/2/94).

Since the late 1980's, the day schools have become even more conscious of the need to act as a role model in davening. Central Suburban Day School*, which had rotated their English and Hebrew classes weekly, holding morning davening at the

proper time only when Hebrew classes began the day, changed in the late 1980's with all classes davening in the mornings according to the religious requirements. In addition, since 1990, Rabbi Schuster*(CSDS*) reports that the seventh and eighth grade students report to school at 8:10 instead of 9:00 in order to daven not just in their classroom but with a minyan. By the 1980's, all of the seven Modern Orthodox day schools researched for this dissertation, had added a half hour to one hour to the school day in order to hold required morning davening in the classroom or with a minyan.

Davening has been organized in the elementary schools with teachers overseeing the class while a male student leads the prayers. Depending on the age of the students, services are held in the classroom or in the school's auditorium or study centers. In the high schools, where minyanim are required, large groups of students are assigned to male teachers who supervise the procedure. Once mandatory davening under teacher supervision was instituted in the 1980's by the day schools, prayer was no longer a matter of a home based, personal choice for the students. Instead, it took place under the school's authority, becoming one more subject in a teaching situation where discipline had to be maintained. Thus, students who talked, appeared to be inattentive, or not fully participating could receive bad conduct marks, be suspended from school or have privileges taken away. Rabbi Alpert*(Tikva* principal) acknowledged that in the case of

someone being disruptive or inattentive during davening, such measures have been taken in his school:

We call his attention to it. We isolate him, put him by himself. Not in a punitive way, in an educational way. We send parents a note and maybe ask what kind of arrangements can be made---maybe davening at home....We have to consider the child's impact on the group. If he is angry and shoots off his mouth, it is conceivable that if it becomes a problem for the other students and teachers, that there would be a gradual level of suspension, and he could be asked to leave the school.(Interview, 5/1/1993)

In commenting on the discipline methods he and the other principals have used to maintain decorum, Rabbi Kampner*(NCHHS* principal) points out that telephoning parents with complaints is often not very effective: "When I speak to some parents, I know from personal observation in the community, that they talk during synagogue services even more than their children do"(Interview, 4/1/1994).

THE SCHOOL BECOMES THE ROLE MODEL

It is clearly evident that in terms of davening, it is often the institution of the school, rather than the home that is the role model for this religious observance. Indeed, interviews conducted among the parents at the various day schools indicate that while Modern Orthodox parents know that davening is an important religious obligation and do expect their children to pray daily, parents are not necessarily strict about overseeing their children in this matter. Comments by the parents typically indicated this attitude. For example, when asked whether her thirteen year old son davened at home on days when there was no school, Esther

Brainson (Tikva* parent) admitted that she really didn't always know for sure: "No one really watches him. Since he was bar-mitzvahed¹⁰⁰ and tefillin¹⁰¹ came into the picture, he takes it more seriously. I have to think if he did it in sixth or seventh grade. Come to think of it, I don't think he did"(Interview, 5/1/93). Beth Spindler(Ramaz parent) thought, as did several other parents, that it was best not to stir things up: "Sometimes, I know that he [Joel, age 17] has not davened because I can see that the siddur [prayerbook] he uses has been in the same place for a few days, but I would not say anything to him about it. Maybe if it kept not being used, I would try to ask him in a general way about what was going on"(Interview, 2/17/94). Mira Dwek(Flatbush parent) echoed this attitude of not making an issue over davening: "Some weeks Ranon [age 17] doesn't even want to go to shul [synagogue] on Shabbat. Some days he just sleeps through Shabbat all day. He's a teenager, and sometimes it's better to just leave him alone"(Interview, 6/3/94). And Ruth Levitt(Ramaz parent) commented that she always asked her son, Michael [age 16], if he had davened when he came down for breakfast: "He says 'yes,' but sometimes I think he is lying. I don't check into it too thoroughly. He asks me if I davened, and I have to admit that I don't; so I really can't

¹⁰⁰At age 13, boys are considered to adults and are counted in for a minyan.

¹⁰¹Black boxes containing lines from the Bible. During the morning prayers, one box is strapped onto the arm, and the other on the forehead.

check on him"(Interview, 6/22/94). Mel Lassner(Tikva* parent) said that his son Evan [age 15] davened when he was at home: "However, I am careful not to nag Evan about sleeping too late to say the morning prayers at the proper time"(Interview, 4/2/93).

However, even though most parents did not check on their children or did not make an issue over davening, they maintained that their children, both girls and boys, seemed more serious about taking on the responsibility of daily davening than they had been at their children's age. Parents also agreed that their bar-mitzvah age sons did attend minyan on Sunday mornings or days off from school, even without their fathers attending the synagogue services. Although six of the fathers interviewed did say they davened daily at home or with a minyan at the synagogue, only two mothers claimed to say daily prayers. The fact that quite a few of the women mentioned that their daughters were davening at home may well be attributed to the changes the three high schools made in the 1980's when they required the girls, as well as the boys, to attend minyan in the mornings. Before the 1980's, only boys had been required to attend.

The parents' more casual attitude towards monitoring daily prayer or their unwillingness to antagonize their children by insistence on davening is in direct contrast to the day school's much more adamant stance on this issue. In

the home, parents are willing to give children the freedom of choosing how, if, or when to daven. Their children might choose to skip certain passages, linger over those more meaningful to them or even refrain from praying at all for periods of time. Davening in school, however, is a more serious business. The school is not interested in fostering an individual approach to prayer and is uncowed by rebellious students who can be easily subdued with threats of punishment. It is, instead, eager to replace any idea of choice in religious observance with the concept of duty and obedience to the law. The day school, therefore is uncompromising, unyielding, and adamant about the requirements and the serious tone of daily davening, and this message is being transmitted to the students.

Since the late 1980's, when the day schools reorganized the day to include mandatory morning prayer, students have been incorporating davening into their lives in a more conscientious way than through the more informal methods used by the family. Rabbi Lippner*'s (DTY* principal) observation, "the way students approach davening now shows that they are more serious about davening," (Interview 1/4/94) is typical of the comparisons the principals made between students of the early 1980's and today's students. Transmitting the ritual of daily prayer through the school, rather than through the efforts of the family may indeed inculcate students with more awareness of the religious obligation to daven daily and

habituate them to a stricter adherence to this religious law.

Thus, as Gecas, Kranzler, and Mayer/Waxman have suggested, there has been a more stringent nuance to the transmission of the value of daily prayer because it has been accomplished and enforced by stricter and harsher discipline methods of the school rather than through the generally more intimate and emotive, and perhaps less specifically focused environment of the family. In general, no matter how parental techniques vary, one can assume that in normal circumstances the environment of the family and its transmission of a value system occurs in a different way and with different nuances to that transmission than what is transmitted by the institution of a school system.

INSTITUTIONALIZING THE PERFORMANCE OF GOOD DEEDS

There have been other religious practices normally handled by the family which are also now included in the day school program. Although the day schools had always encouraged the performance of chesed(good deeds), its performance was mainly, according to all the principals interviewed, limited to conducting weekly charity drives in the classrooms or collecting canned Passover foods for distribution to needy Jewish families. However, since the early 1980's, the day schools have assumed much more of a role in making the students aware that Jewish life should follow the ideals laid down in the Torah: "The world rests on three

pillars--on Torah, on service and on acts of charity" (Mishna Avot). In part, this role was assumed because many suburban students had little contact with needy families. And in general, students were not, as many American Jews of the 1940's and early 1950's were, involved in directly helping Holocaust survivors, sponsoring relatives for immigration to America, and finding them jobs and housing. Having left the Lower East Side of New York by the 1970's and 1980's for the growing, largely middle class Jewish communities of Brooklyn, Borough X*, and the suburbs, most Jewish families had little direct contact with the poor, mostly elderly Jews who had been left behind. Realistically, few parents had much time or need to be actively involved in helping needy families. As Elazar(1976), has noted, by the 1970's, the concept of chesed was in the process of being relegated by most families to philanthropic organizations. For most Jewish families, therefore, helping the Jewish poor was accomplished by the less time consuming act of donating money to the various charitable Jewish organizations. This was in contrast to the more hands-on activities which had always been the distinguishing mark of Jewish communities in Europe before World War II, pictured by Zborowski and Herzog(1963) in Life is with People, on the Lower East Side in the years of heavy Jewish immigration to America, described by Howe(1976) in The World of our Fathers, and as it was in the close knit Hasidic communities analyzed by Poll(1962) in The Hasidic Community of Williamsburg.

It is noteworthy that none of the parents who had attended day schools before 1980 remembered any involvement with school-based chesed programs. Most simply recalled bringing in money every Friday for the weekly charity drives. Neither did the younger parents (those below the mid-30's to 40's) claim to have participated or noticed any chesed activities in their own homes aside from helping prepare a meal and making shiva calls (condolence visits) or perhaps visiting those who were hospitalized. Parents noted that they encouraged their children to make shiva calls, but as high school students come from a variety of communities, it has not always been feasible for them to travel in the evenings to make these condolence visits. Several of the older parents (six were in their late forties or early fifties) did recall that their own parents had taken in relatives who had survived the Holocaust and had collected clothing to be sent to poor relatives in Israel during the early years of the State.

Rabbi Gratenstein* (Flatbush teacher) who was a senior at Ramaz in 1979 does not remember having the kinds of chesed programs that now exist in the day schools: "I know that social service has increased from the beginning; it has done so in all the day schools, with Ramaz and Flatbush at the forefront. It has been institutionalized, with staff people and organization. This was started in the 1980's because altruism is on the downswing in our society. Chesed is a major part of Judaism, and we want the kids to have a chance

to experience this in a hands-on way"(Interview 4/25/94). Ironically, although social service programs became institutionalized, the new trend to personalized involvement, as Danzger(1989:321) notes, was "characteristic of the broader community in the late 1960's and 1970's---a rebellion against the 'establishment philanthropies'...."

Rabbi Alpert*(Tikva* principal) feels that the day schools are simply responding to the new reality of the times: "It is really since the 1980's that nursing homes have become a part of the community. The need for teaching children concern for the elderly has fallen to us"(Interview, 5/1/93). Rabbi Alpert* notes that it is over the past ten years, since 1983, that the school's chesed program has been in effect with students entertaining or making friendly visits to the elderly. Although caring for the elderly has become institutionalized, students are, therefore, still able to show their concern for the elderly in a direct way. Tikva Yeshiva* students also respond to communal needs, for example, making up a minyan for davening in the early afternoons at the home of a mourner when the family has trouble assembling the necessary ten men.

All of the teachers and principals confirmed that since the 1980's, even though various institutions now function to care for the elderly, the mental and physically handicapped, and the poor, the schools have become even more involved in

chesed various projects: students hosting and participating in Yachad (an organization for mentally retarded Jewish children) weekends at the school, sending groups of students to make shiva visits to the homes of schoolmates in the case of a death in the family, inviting nursing home residents to the school for luncheons and holiday celebrations or entertaining at the nursing homes, collecting toys for Camp Simcha (a summer camp for Jewish children suffering from cancer) and various other projects. As Rabbi Eliach(Flatbush principal) stated, "Being sensitive to these kinds of kids [the Yachad program], to work with them, in my opinion, learning to be sensitive and kind is worth more than learning two more pages of Gemorah"(Interview 4/25/94). The students at Flatbush, according to Rabbi Benjamin*(Flatbush teacher), collect money, buy food, make packages and deliver them to poor families whose names were supplied by Jewish agencies. Mrs. Schwartz*(DTY* secular principal) acknowledged that the day schools assumed there was a need to go beyond simply teaching that chesed should be done: "We've tried to make the children more aware of their communal responsibilities....We recognized that more children were coming home to empty homes--mothers were working. Nobody has time anymore. We felt an obligation to stress mitzvot in their lives"(Interview, 11/15/93). Rabbi Lippner*(DTY* principal) reiterated that "living Judaism is important, not just learning it. We want them to experience things... You can't just talk about chesed, you have to do it"(Interview 1/4/94). Rabbi Lippner* noted that his students

had raised \$1300 from a Purim carnival held at the school and had given the money to a grocery store in the neighborhood which was known to extend credit to customers who needed it: The children had the store owner take \$100 off some of the bigger bills of people who were having trouble paying"(Interview 1/4/94). And Rabbi Shenberg*(MPDS* principal) felt strongly that "it's my belief that we should not set up a program where the kids just ask the parents for money. We have a mother who coordinates collecting winter coats and canned food. Every month she comes up with another project. We set up tangible projects where the kids are directly involved"(Interview 2/1/94).

Ramaz now requires sophomore and junior students to perform twenty hours of chesed a term. However, the choice of activities is made by each student, and neither the student council nor the parents have protested making volunteerism part of the school curriculum. Since 1992, a similar requirement (thirty-six hours a year) has been in effect for eighth graders at Central Suburban Day School*. None of the principals reported having any difficulty with students participating in the various projects; the usual approach has been to encourage students to develop ideas for the chesed program, with the role of the school as facilitator. Except for the time students spent learning material for the plays and songs they perform in nursing homes, the programs are not carried out in the classroom or directed by the teachers.

Although being charitable is a value ideally taught in the home, there seems to be little real opportunity for parents to teach this mitzvah in as dramatic or organized a manner as the day school does. Having personal involvement with the problems of the poor or those disabled, or elderly impresses students with the importance of doing good deeds, of performing chesed and reiterates the idea that living their Judaism is as important as learning about it. All of the parents interviewed expressed satisfaction with their children's involvement with these social action programs. Several parents even mentioned that as a result of experiences at school, their children continued to make nursing home visits on Sundays or now worked at a camp for retarded Jewish children during the summer. In essence, the schools have functioned much as Jewish communities have in the past.

While the day school provides a level of organization for performing charitable deeds, there is no evidence that this element of bureaucracy has changed the nature of the value of chesed as Gecas' theory would suggest. In taking over the role of the family, the day school filled what it saw to be the vacuum remarked on by Kranzler (1976) and Mayer/Waxman (1977) as family life became less cohesive. The day school simply made suitable opportunities available for the students, widening the concept of charity beyond donating money. One change, however, directly due to day school involvement has

been the emphasis on doing chesed within a Jewish framework. While none of the Modern Orthodox schools have openly suggested that concern with helping others only meant helping other Jews, the programs organized by the schools have not emphasized the non-Jewish needy. Students at Ramaz and Flatbush receive credit for any kind of community volunteer work they do out of school, but most of the chesed opportunities within the framework of the day school stress Jewish communal activities. The day schools, in effect, may be moving students closer, within the framework of a Modern Orthodox setting, to the communal involvement that Poll (1969), Helmreich(1986) and Danzger(1989) have noted has been considered characteristic of the yeshivish and Hasidic communities.

CHAPTER VI: INFORMAL EDUCATIONAL AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The combination of a largely non-Orthodox student population in the day schools during the 1960's and 1970's and the anti-authority, anti-establishment attitudes of that decade's counterculture had made the job of transmitting Jewish commitment that much more difficult for principals and teachers. Even those students who came from Orthodox homes were not cloistered from the turmoil, the secularism, and the permissiveness of American society. According to Heimowitz's(1979:64-65) study of Yeshiva of Flatbush High School, Rabbi Eliach decided in 1970 that the best approach to reaching and influencing students during the counterculture years was by using informal methods and involving Yeshiva of Flatbush High School with a seminar program run by Yeshiva University. The three to five day seminar programs, usually held in a hotel outside the Metropolitan area had been originally devised by Yeshiva University(Danzger, 1989: 50, 64:65) to encourage religious commitment among non-observant Jewish high school students who did not attend day schools. Called the Torah Leadership Seminars, the programs were and still are directed by college advisors who have demonstrated the ability to communicate with teenagers. During the seminars, there are singing sessions, open discussions with rabbis and the college leaders on all aspects of Judaism and the problems of modern life, and a warm, atmosphere is maintained. Unlike the formal school situation, there are no

books, tests, or marks.

Yeshiva of Flatbush High School evidently found the seminars to be a positive force in developing religious commitment because the minutes of the December, 1971 monthly Principals' Council meeting of the Board of Jewish Education of New York City indicate that Rabbi Eliach urged the other high schools to participate in the seminar programs. The high schools and elementary schools also began holding shabbatons, weekend mini-seminars with visiting students being housed by the host community. Since the mid 1980's, according to the teachers and principals, there has been a great upsurge in the number of seminars and shabbatons as part of the day school curriculum: each high school class level holds one inter-school seminar in addition to one held just for the school, while the elementary schools hold shabbatons for their sixth-eighth grades.

Another successful informal education method adopted during the 1970's was involving students with Jewish activist causes that would intensify their loyalty to the Jewish community. By the early 1970's, by all historical accounts, an era of anti-Vietnam war and anti-establishment activism, several of the high schools, with Ramaz in the forefront, urged their students to join the struggle for human rights for Soviet Jewry, sending students to participate in non-violent street protests in front of the Soviet Embassy. Ramaz's

student activism in the 1980's included maintaining an early morning prayer vigil for Soviet refusenik Anatoly Scharansky. This activism was new to the day school world but was an important part of the hands-on, living your Judaism, informal approach of the day school movement which began in the late 1970's and early 1980's.

DAY SCHOOLS CONTINUE TO EXPAND AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

The number and extent of the seminars and shabbatons have greatly expanded over the years as have the number of extracurricular activities available to day school students. Parents like Mira Dwek, graduate(1970) and current parent at Yeshiva of Flatbush High School and Beverly Moscovitz, graduate(1962) and current parent at Ramaz High School point to the many after school clubs available after classes. Dwek mentions mock trials "which takes up hours of weekday evening hours for preparation. When I went to Flatbush, there were clubs, but they were part of the school during regular school hours"(Interview, 6/3/94). Moscovitz states that she used to get home late from Ramaz, but not as late in the evening as her son does now: "Now, aside from sports, there is music, debates, so many things that we never had, and things like shabbatons"(Interview, 6/12/94).

Most¹⁰² of the other schools offer numerous after school programs. Rabbi Bakst(Ramaz dean) confirms that the school has double the number of activities they had in the 1980's and has hired three staff members whose job is to oversee the various extracurricular programs. Derech Torah Yeshiva* sponsors Wednesday and Thursday night activities such as sewing, baking, karate, and sports. Mrs. Schwartz*(DTY* secular principal)notes that the number of activities increased in 1989 when the administration realized that many students were coming home to empty homes--mothers were working: "We felt an obligation to provide them with a surrounding where they would not be home watching television for hours...to counteract all that is inappropriate on television"(Interview, 11/15/93).

Rabbi Schuster*(CSDS* asst. principal) characterizes all the recent activities as an attempt to instill ruach (spirit): "The school is trying to take over and to do something which in Israel the youth movements are doing....Our school is trying to provide the needs--the social needs, the ruach needs for the kids. So for example, we try to have fun things after school. We do things like three times a year, we invite a

¹⁰² At the time of the interview (1994), Meadow Pond Day School* offered fewer after school programs than the other day schools because most MPDS* students attend youth activities offered by the Meadow Pond* Synagogue. However, it was brought to this researcher's attention that, in the two years following the interviews, additional extra curricular programs have been added.

live band for dancing and singing Israeli songs. We did not do that in the past"(Interview, 7/22/94). In essence, the day schools are consciously¹⁰³ trying to create a total environment for the students, offering everything - music, choir, athletics, hobbies, art, all manner of clubs from debate to math teams, under the auspices of a controlled environment. Students regularly stay late for weekday late afternoon and evening activities and often return on Saturday night or Sunday for sports events and drama performances. The high schools, especially, offer holiday haggigot (party celebrations) for Chanukah and Purim, with singing and Israeli dancing:

The school thinks it really adds to the school spirit and the religious experience, especially on the weekends, figuring if the kids want to have a place to go on a Saturday night, it might as well be the school, better to celebrate in school in a controlled atmosphere. (Richard Mintz*, Ramaz teacher, Interview, 5/10, 1994).

CHANGED FOCUS OF AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

The high schools offer the seminars, shabbatons, chaggigot, and other extracurricular activities not only to promote ruach but also in order to provide some outlet for socializing. There has been a changed focus of extracurricular activity as certain forms of socializing have

¹⁰³Rabbi Mayer Schiller, a teacher at Yeshiva University High School for Boys, states openly that in order to have sufficient influence on students, the day school must increase its activities so that all leisure time is spent under yeshiva auspices. "Reaching Orthodox Youth," Ten Da'at, Volume III, #2, Winter, 1989, p.25.

become taboo: As Rabbi Lookstein(Ramaz principal) stated, "Don't forget, we no longer have dances like they use to years ago after the basketball games. They stopped in the early '70's or late 60's when some kids and faculty felt uncomfortable. I certainly wanted to keep the faculty, and I certainly didn't want to lose the kids from more observant homes" (Interview 2/1/94).

Another new addition (starting in the late 1980's) to the school day is mishmar, voluntary extra study (usually Talmud) in the evenings or Sunday morning. The term "voluntary" is used, but participation is heavily encouraged:

We also now have voluntary extra Mishna (Talmud studies) classes once a week for boys in the fourth grade. About 40% attend. There are prizes given, special recognition. We make a party with the parents at the end of the year where they are given special recognition. (Rabbi Alpert*, Tikva* principal, Interview, 5/1/1993).

We started a mishmar program for the sixth to eighth grade boys on Sundays for half the day. It's optional, but it's really not. There is an assumption that they will come, and they do. They study and then play basketball. The girls have it too, but they study mishna not Gemorah. (Schwartz*, DTY* secular principal, Interview, 11/15/1994).

Parents noted that the mishmar classes extended the school day by an hour, and the Sunday classes at Tikva*, NCHHS*, and DTY* meant that children had less time to spend on other outside activities or on outings with their parents.

The programs added since the late 1970's, the davening,

the mishmar studies, plus the chesed and leisure time programs described in Chapters V and VI, have enabled the day schools to surround the students with more of an Orthodox Jewish milieu. Avoiding conflicting influences, what Festinger(1957) refers to as cognitive dissonance, means that students must be insulated as much as possible from connection with any outside culture. While by no means the "total institution" described by Goffman(1961) and Wallace(1971), nor the "self-enclosed" post-graduate yeshiva world described by Helmreich(1986) and Danzger(1989), the day schools have encompassed more of students' waking hours by expanding activities beyond classroom experiences and the school day.

DAY SCHOOL STUDENTS BECOME MORE INSULAR

Because of the longer school hours, day school students naturally tend to be isolated from other peers who attend public or other private schools and therefore usually choose their friends from within the day school population. As Danzger(1989:306-306) notes about the baalei tshuva, having friends within the Orthodox world, rather than from various social trajectories, is a great help in maintaining religious patterns. With day school students, there is little chance that they will get involved in any social group other than an Orthodox one. Interviews with parents confirmed this, with all parents indicating that the school schedule made it difficult for their children to participate in local YM-YWHA activities or even befriend other children on their blocks or

in their neighborhoods. Even during the summer, socializing occurs within Modern Orthodox summer camps where almost all of the campers attend day schools. Only a few secular extra-curricular activities on the high school level (mock trial, chess team, for example) are conducted with non-day school team leagues, so that almost all possible social contact is spent with other day school students. Even celebrations that used to be shared on a community wide basis seem to have ceased. Rabbi Alpert* (Tikva* principal) explained that Tikva Yeshiva* no longer participated in a community wide celebration of Israeli Independence Day: "A variety of schools were involved, but now the entire concept has been abandoned. The Orthodox community became uncomfortable with that kind of interaction, with the kind of music played, the kind of dress being displayed, the kind of refreshments or mixed dancing, so about ten years ago, the non-Orthodox gave up the attempts to hold something jointly"(Interview, 5/1/93).

While winter vacation is still held during Christmas week at Ramaz, Flatbush, Meadow Pond Day School*, and Central Suburban Day School*, the three other day schools have, since the early 1980's, rescheduled their vacation period to mid-January when many of the other day schools and yeshivot give a winter break. And Rabbi Shenberg*(MPDS* principal) acknowledged that while the community insisted on Christmas week off, he, too, would much prefer the mid-January vacation.

Both Rabbi Kampner* (NCHHS* principal) and Rabbi Lippner*(DTY* principal) claimed not to be aware that (according to comments made by former students who were now parents) both schools had Christmas week off before 1980¹⁰⁴. While the rescheduling of the winter vacation may have taken place, according to the principals and teachers, in order to avoid the appearance of celebrating the Christmas holidays, it serves to ensure that vacation time will be shared only with other day school students.

Unlike the characterization of the total institutions studied by Goffman and Walker, social intercourse between insiders and outsiders is not officially barred in the day schools, but the cloistered time spent during the school day does effectively limit the extent of outside socializing. As Himmelfarb(1980:17) noted, the day school "limited contrary influences by expanding the school day and by facilitating the formation of religious peer groups.....the school seemed relatively able to insulate (rather than to isolate) its students from such influences...." This encirclement of students in the late 1970's and 1980's, alongside the weakening of family cohesiveness noted by Kranzler and Mayer/Waxman, has paved the way to the increased influence and strength of the day school in establishing religious norms and practices.

¹⁰⁴Both JAFA* and Bezalel Yeshiva*, two of the three schools which combined to form NCHHS* in 1980 had Christmas week off. The holiday week was changed when both schools combined.

CHAPTER VII: THE INFLUENCE OF DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES

With the onset of the 1980's, many of the day schools began noticing the changing demographics in the surrounding neighborhoods from which their student populations were drawn. The Orthodox population on the West Side of Manhattan, in West Ridge* and Rockford* in Borough X*, in Lindhurst* and Northdale* in the northern suburbs, in Waterville*, Woodley*, Forestdale* and Sandington* in the south shore suburbs began to expand, attracted by the Orthodox infrastructure of schools, kosher bakeries, kosher butcher shops, synagogues and day schools which had been established over the years.

MAJORITY OF DAY SCHOOL STUDENTS ARE ORTHODOX

Rabbi Lippner*(DTY* principal) and Schwartz*(DTY* secular principal) noted that since the 1980's more than 90% of DTY* students now come from Orthodox homes. Unlike the earlier generation of students, most have at least one parent who has attended day school. A DTY* parent, Gail Messinger, who attended the school in the 1960's mentioned that many families at that time were not religious: "The first time I saw ham was in DTY* when the kids brought lunch to school! But now the non-religious kids who come to DTY* don't feel comfortable there, although the kids who do come, sometimes get their families to change"(Interview, 2/17/94). Glazer*(DTY* teacher) commented that the admission policies at DTY* have changed so that few non-Orthodox are ever admitted:

Children are interviewed as in the past, but now

they accept mostly Orthodox families. If the school was aware that the kids were not from religious families, I am not sure they would be accepted. Before Solomon Schechter [a Conservative day school] opened, everyone was accepted. But now the Conservative kids go to Schechter. This is now an Orthodox school, and they want only Orthodox students (Interview, 2/15/94).

Tikva Yeshiva* also reported that over 90% of their students now come from fully observant homes, and the rest, mostly in kindergarten or the lower grades, are from families that are seriously considering becoming Orthodox. This, reported Rabbi Alpert* (Tikva*) is far different from the 50 to 60% of Orthodox families in the early years of the 1960's and 1970's. About ten years ago, in the 1980's, a Conservative day school was established in the area. "Now," Rabbi Alpert* stated, "most children are interviewed before they come. We are selective because our community demands it. They want to have kids who are all Orthodox. People do not really want a melting pot in school" (Interview 5/1/93). Barry Eidelman, Chairman of the Board of Education at Tikva Yeshiva*, a parent and graduate of Tikva* in the 1960's, remembers attending Tikva* in those early years: "there was more kiruv, more of a feeling of bringing kids to religion. As it grew, there was a greater proportion of kids who were not Orthodox, but for a long period now, it has been 90% Orthodox" (Interview, 5/1/93). Ironically, Eidelman would probably not meet admission standards now, as he is not from an Orthodox family.

NCHHS* acknowledged that its population became virtually all Orthodox once the three high schools combined to form NCHHS* in 1981, and a Solomon Schechter (Conservative) type day school opened in the area. Rabbi Lehman* (NCHHS* teacher) reported that since that time, "there is not such a broad religious spectrum of kids because the school does not have to be that tolerant and really can't accommodate too many viewpoints. Some of the Conservative rabbis do send their kids, but they just keep quiet"(Interview 2/15/94), Markman*(NCHHS* teacher) mentioned that "initially we were just a community school, but now we are also fed by the many new Orthodox elementary schools which have opened in the area since 1980, so we have mostly Orthodox students"(Interview 4/18/94).

Central Suburban Day School* noted that in the 1950's and 1960's, there were few Orthodox Jews living in the northern suburban county of Fallsville*, and only about 30% of the student population at CSDS* was Orthodox at that time. Rabbi Forman*(CSDS* teacher) and Mr. Berger*(CSDS* teacher) both commented that the growth of CSDS*'s current Orthodox population to about 70% had begun in the early 1980's. The expansion was a result of the gradual success of the two Modern Orthodox Young Israel synagogues which had been founded in the area in the early 1970's.

Ramaz High School's student population change was most

dramatic between 1980, when it began rising from approximately 55% Orthodox to the present 79%. Ramaz teachers Miriam Kammerman* and Richard Mintz* pointed out that this change came about as a result of the school's decision to take in students primarily from Orthodox families or from families who professed commitment to the school's aims and goals. This was done because the school needed to provide a more positive, homogenous atmosphere as students in high school can be very antagonistic to authority and influence each other negatively. Mintz* stated that "now discussions start with an assumption that one is obeying halacha. Teachers can assume a higher level of observance with less concern for intellectual underpinnings"(Interview 5/10/94). As Kammerman* noted, "students are less rebellious because the school is going after the more traditional families. We are not getting the rebels like we did in the 1970's and at the beginning of the 1980's, but, on the other hand, we are not getting exciting creative kids either!"(Interview, 5/26/94).

According to Rabbi Bakst, Ramaz has stopped admitting students whose parents are members of the Israeli diplomatic corps: "We used to give free tuition to Israeli diplomats' children, but we just can't afford to do that now. The Israeli embassy does not want to pay their tuition, and neither do their parents"(Interview 2/2/94). With the rising expenses of more costly insurance, health and retirement benefits for teachers, and the expenses of a recently

completed new high school building (with plans to relocate the junior high school into its own building), Ramaz parents are faced with increases in tuition, and Lookstein maintains that he does not want to increase the financial load on parents and contributors by granting free admission to the Israelis. While this may be true, in the past, Ramaz welcomed the Israeli students, feeling that their presence contributed to the Zionist orientation of the school. However, in the past five years, their non-religious, indeed, often anti-religious attitudes began to be seen as a liability as Ramaz, with its pluralistic student population began to worry about its image in the Orthodox world. It is not surprising, therefore, that Ramaz might no longer be able to award Israeli students free tuition. Kammerman* agreed that most of the Israeli students at Ramaz were not religiously observant, often were scornful towards the Orthodox students and teachers, and noted that their absence has contributed to the development of a more religiously homogenous population. Robert Spindler's (Ramaz parent) observation sums up the feelings of the parents: "Ramaz is much more selective about whom they are taking. There is less of a negative attitude about being observant than there used to be when I sent my other two kids ten years ago in 1983" (Interview, 6/15/94).

A DIFFERENT DEMOGRAPHIC PATTERN

Unlike the other day schools, Flatbush and Meadow Pond Day School* have experienced a different demographic pattern.

While both Flatbush and Meadow Pond* showed rising percentages of Orthodox students in the 1960's, as the Orthodox communities around them developed, they also began to see large numbers of Sephardic Jews from Syria (Flatbush) and Iran (MPDS*) settling in these areas. Ira Rothman(Flatbush parent) pointed out that "there are a lot of Sephardim in Flatbush. Although they are very careful about saying the right brachot [blessings over food] or davening, they will walk in the street without a kippah, and the women do not dress with tzniout [modesty]. They send their kids to Flatbush because it has a good secular program, but they don't want to modify their families' religious background"(Interview, 6/1/94). As Rabbi Eliach(Flatbush principal) explained when asked about the numbers of Orthodox students: "If you tell me what is Orthodox, I will tell you the numbers. You can't go by shomer Shabbat [observing the laws of the Sabbath] because we have a lot of Sephardic Jews who don't work on Shabbat. They do ride bikes on Shabbat, but don't consider that not being shomer Shabbat"(Interview 4/25/94).

Taking into consideration that many Syrian Jews identify themselves as Orthodox, but "have a loose definition of what Orthodoxy means in terms of religious behavior," Eliach answered that Flatbush is now about 70% Orthodox, as opposed to the 1950's when the majority of the students were not religiously observant. Both Eliach and Benjamin* stated that Flatbush offers an Orthodox orientation, but everybody -

Reform, Conservative, or Orthodox is welcome, with no questions asked. However, Rabbi Eliach did concede that because of the large percentage of Sephardic students, many Ashkenazic families avoided the school on the assumption that it was less Orthodox than other Modern Orthodox day schools. Attempting to counteract this perception, Rabbi Eliach has announced that separate classes for high school boys and girls in Judaic studies (The Talmud program has had separate classes since the 1970's) will be instituted in September, 1995.

TREADING THE FINE RELIGIOUS LINES

Rabbi Gratenstein* (Flatbush teacher) acknowledged that he has heard that the total separation is being done to attract more Orthodox families. Rabbi Benjamin* felt strongly that the separation is a big mistake: "It is stupid and unnatural. At Mt. Sinai, men and women received the Torah together.... the school board of education is demanding the change as a sign, an outward gesture to some people in the community that Flatbush is going to be a more religious school" (Interview, 4/25/94). In a 1994 newspaper interview, Rabbi Eliach denied that the recent changes the school has made are due to the changing dynamics as more Ultra-Orthodox Jews move into the neighborhood: "We understood that certain changes have to be made," Rabbi Eliach said, "Modern Orthodoxy has put an emphasis more on the modern than on the Orthodox. We've moved to the right because we understand we have to emphasize more Torah and to increase Judaic studies and philosophy" (Jewish

Week, December 9-15, 1994 p.41). Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that most of the changes have more to do with separation of the sexes and a tightening up of the dress code than with any increase in Judaic studies, moves that Rabbi Benjamin* pointed to as misguided attempts to attract the more Orthodox following that is now populating the area in increasing numbers.

Meadow Pond Day School* has a large number of Iranian and Israeli students (Rabbi Shenberg* would not give the exact numbers, but acknowledged that it is quite high) who arrived in the 1970's and 1980's. As a result of this student population, MPDS*, like Yeshiva of Flatbush High School, is suspect to many Orthodox Ashkenazic parents in the area. Rabbi Abramson*(MPDS* teacher) felt that many of the non-observant Iranian or Israeli families send their children to MPDS* only because they want their children to be in a Jewish atmosphere, not because they want them to become Orthodox. Rabbi Tellerman*(MPDS* teacher) recalled that when he first started, "it wasn't an Orthodox community, maybe only four or five kids in a class were observant, but when a Young Israel synagogue formed in the late 1980's, more people who are Orthodox moved in, but it was still only a small number of them"(Interview, May 3, 1994). Many of those Young Israel families (Ashkenazic), however, have recently left MPDS* in the past few years to enroll their children in Har Torah, a nearby day school founded in 1987, which Rabbi Shenberg*

stated "presents themselves as accepting only observant families. It's not really true, but that is how they want people to think. That has definitely taken away some of our more observant families"(Interview, 2/1/94). Shenberg*(MPDS*) and the two teachers agreed that now only about 30% of the students are Orthodox, somewhat more than in the school's beginning, but far less than in the other Modern Orthodox day schools in the New York area. Smiling somewhat ruefully, Rabbi Shenberg* commented that he was sure some parents even felt their kids were the only Orthodox kids around. Although he stated that he was not in favor of segregating the classes on the basis of religious observance, Rabbi Shenberg* said he tried to put a large nucleus of Orthodox kids in any one class: "I do this especially in the upper grades, so that they will become friendly and feel they have support. The Orthodox families wanted me to do it this way, and it works"(Interview, 2/1/94).

Elona Frankel, one of the MPDS* parents interviewed, thought that the percentage of observant students had definitely decreased since Har Torah had opened, but parent Gene Shapiro disagreed. He felt there were more observant parents now: "The point is that the community is heterogenous. Even with the Young Israel crowd, there isn't a substantial right wing group that has moved into Meadow Pond*. Rabbi Shenberg* is much more observant than most of the families in this community"(Interview, 6/21/94). Rabbi Shenberg* also

conceded that the majority of the observant families at MPDS* were not eager to change their level of religious observance, "They are happy at the level where they are and make no bones about it." While changes at Yeshiva of Flatbush High School have been demanded by the school board in order to attract more Orthodox elements of the community, Rabbi Shenberg* does not envision MPDS*'s school board demanding any move to the right. The only significant change occurred in 1986, when Rabbi Meyerson*, who was then the school principal, refused to allow mixed dancing at the annual fundraising dinner which was held in his honor. When Rabbi Shenberg* became principal the following year, several of the more Orthodox parents requested that the school continue to ban mixed dancing. Heated meetings were held with the majority of parents objecting to the request, while the minority felt it would attract a more Orthodox student population. Rabbi Shenberg* recalled that tempers were quite high at the meetings, but eventually the concession was made: "We talked to parents and told them they have to understand that it is a yeshiva...The new rabbi at the Meadow Pond* Synagogue¹⁰⁵ had also banned mixed dancing at their dinners, and that helped. Our brochure for new parents now says that the dinner has simcha [celebration dances with males and females separated] dancing and not mixed social dancing" (Interview, 2/1/94).

¹⁰⁵Although Rabbi Rabinowitz did not mention the fact that the rabbi at Meadow Pond* Synagogue had failed in his attempts to ban mixed dancing.

Rabbi Shenberg* does not think that after this last battle, parents will easily accept any other changes they perceive as a move to the right, especially since many of the more observant parents have left the school for Har Torah and other day schools considered more Orthodox. He has no plans for classes on Sunday or for separating the sexes for Jewish studies stating that the community wouldn't stand for it. He is not happy about the community's insistence about continuing the school's winter break during Christmas week but has made his peace with it.

AFFECTING A COMMUNITY OR RESPONDING TO DEMANDS?

The fact that several Conservative day schools which now exist in the suburban areas, attracting Conservative students who in the past would have attended day Orthodox schools and the changing community demographics have definitely affected the day schools. All of the principals agreed that to a large extent the community does have a great deal of input. Alpert*(Tikva* principal) put it bluntly, "Where the community and the principal disagree, you have situation where there will be a lot of confrontation. Eventually, it divides into two entities or the leadership departs from the school, or one faction leaves. Who controls the money is always a factor"(Interview, 5/1/93). A change in demographics, Rabbi Alpert* suggested, will usually mean a change in a school's aims and goals in order to meet the new demands and expectations. Rabbi Schuster*(CSDS* asst. principal)

maintained that Central Suburban Day School*'s policies were once almost solely determined by the principal because few parents in this northern suburban area had much of a Jewish education. However, in the past ten to fifteen years, the school has responded more to the demands of the more educated Orthodox community that has now populated the area.

Another aspects of changing demographics is the increased number of baalai tshuva parents who have enrolled their children into the day school system. While the actual numbers of these parents and their children have not been systematically collected, Danzger(1989:328-330) notes that Cohen and Ritterband's (1981) Study of Jews in the Metropolitan New York Area estimated that about one quarter of Orthodox Jews are baalai tshuva. It can be reasonably assumed that at least some of these parents are sending their children to Modern Orthodox day schools. With no Jewish educational background and a strong desire for anchoring within a community and religious acceptance, these parents are likely to grant the day school complete autonomy on religious issues. Unlike the day schools' contacts with their more educated and ideologically grounded Modern Orthodox parents, the day school can wield complete religious authority over the baalai tshuva parents who have no valid stance to defend.

It is not clear, however, by what process the schools determine what the community desires. In a number of cases,

the schools seem to be either anticipating community demands or appeasing small groups of its parent population. An important factor in many policy decisions appears to be purely economic-the need to attract and keep students from the largest demographic base. Tikva Yeshiva*, for example, was the only area day school in the early years of the Tillet* community. "There was only one school in the area," Rabbi Alpert* stated, "And that was us. There was only one right wing yeshiva around. If parents couldn't take that kind of right wing commitment, they would have to come to us. In the 1980's, a number of other options in the community opened, including a Solomon Schechter[Conservative] school and an Orthodox type school for non-Orthodox kids. So non-Orthodox parents can and do gravitate to the alternative where they feel more ideologically comfortable"(Interview, 5/1/93). The loss of non-Orthodox families has meant that Tikva Yeshiva* must now compete for students with a number of new right-wing yeshivot which have opened their doors in the past decade. In order to attract sufficient numbers of students and remain competitive in an era when religious fundamentalism appears to gaining strength, Tikva Yeshiva*, like DTY* and NCHHS*, Ramaz, and Flatbush has tried to meet the needs of these parents who might otherwise overlook the day school as not being sufficiently frum(religious).

In general, a strong emphasis on secular education still remains in those day schools which try to appeal to Modern

Orthodox parents who might be leaning more towards the religious right. While the schools did not have copies of the original statements of their aims and goals, the principals did not think that current enrollment brochures differed in any major way. Certainly the current brochures sent to prospective families not only still mentioned an appreciation of the American heritage, and an encouragement of patriotism, but all still stressed the dual curriculum with its academic excellence and pursuit of strong academic skills in the humanities and sciences. The new outreach, however, unlike the early years of the 1950's and 1960's, is evidently no longer focused on welcoming the non-religious but on reaching out to the more frum communities which have joined the move to the suburbs, to the West Side of Manhattan, and to Modern Orthodox enclaves in Brooklyn and Queens.

Ironically, as Schwartz*(DTY* secular principal) admitted, it was not a demand from the parent community at DTY* that led the school principal to separate the boys and girls from sixth grade up in both secular and religious studies in 1989: "Changes were made in response to the changing neighborhoods as more yeshivish -more frum people moved in. It was an attempt to get those parents to send kids to our school instead of to Beis Yaakov and Tiferet Moshe[right wing yeshivot]. The school thought if they had separate classes, the parents would send kids to our school. It didn't really work though. The change did not bring in

those families"(1/4/94).

DEMOGRAPHICS AFFECT EDUCATIONAL CONTENT

The changing demographics also changed the emphasis on how halacha was to be taught . Rabbi Alpert*(Tikva* principal) pointed out that in the past, the school used to mention all three aspects of the major Jewish holidays: halachic, national, and socio-cultural aspects. In the past ten years, however, the change in the kind of families that send their children has geared the lessons more towards the halachic aspects:

Now the student can go home with plans or ideas to enrich or even upgrade his own home with knowledge. The student learns now what is kosher schach (a form or covering from branches or poles) for the Succah. Or what makes and Esrog (ritual object for the holiday of Succot) kosher. What makes a matzha shmura (a more closely supervised matzha). These things are more practical in terms of today's family than the reality we faced years ago, ten, fifteen years ago. The changing families have brought about the need to emphasize certain areas that were not previously necessary or given the same attention (Interview, 5/1/93).

CSDS*, DTY*, NCHHS*, and Ramaz also reported delving deeper into halachic aspects of holidays or kashrut. Richard Mintz*(Ramaz teacher) reported that when he was a student at Ramaz in 1980, he didn't remember ever discussing or learning about areas of kashrut that are now studied: " They discuss things now about eating out-whether or not to eat fish out or cold food. They point out the compromises they feel are flimsy. You have to know who your clientele is to discuss

those things" (Interview, 5/10/94). Mintz* also pointed out that Ramaz and Flatbush no longer give out homework or writing assignments to students during the week of Succot, although they do remain open to give city students the experience of eating in a Succah. Other day schools, like DTY* and NCHHS* now close totally during that week, on the assumption that almost all of the students will have a Succah at home, although in the 60's and early 70's, they remained open to make sure students had such an experience.

While principals and teachers reported that, in general, the Jewish studies curriculum did not change in any significant way because of the more Orthodox student population, Tikva*, DTY*, NCHHS* and CSDS* did mention that the texts used for teaching Hebrew literature and language were now screened more carefully to eliminate essays, stories and illustrations that might conflict with the values being taught or have an anti-religious flavour. The principals of DTY*, Tikva*, and NCHHS* seemed to be the most apprehensive about exposing students to non-religious viewpoints that might be found in texts. Since the schools no longer had the original texts, it was impossible to discover what kind of stories or essays had been eliminated, but the present texts had no stories with male and female characters who were socially involved, and no stories or essays with distinctly non-Orthodox viewpoints on socio-political or religious matters. Flatbush has also put together a new text, but Eliach

stated that this was done only to eliminate stories and essays that students had found boring and had not been done for religious reasons.

However, the major changes DTY* and most of the other Modern Orthodox day schools have made in order to appeal to the more strictly Orthodox are to be found in the areas of dress code, Talmud and Hebrew curricula, separation of the sexes, selection of teachers, extension of school authority beyond the school day, and even in the basic aims and goals of the school. It is these changes and their effect on students and their families that have made the Modern Orthodox day schools a significant factor in reinforcing the move to the religious right in Modern Orthodoxy.

CHAPTER VIII: IMPACT OF CHANGES IN Talmud STUDY

In theory, every day school is free to create its own curriculum, according to the desires of its principal and the school's Board of Directors. In practice, this autonomy has been modified by the standardized high school entrance exam requested by various principals and developed by the Board of Jewish Education of New York City (BJE) in 1974. While the BJE does not set curriculum or dictate school policy, in essence, the entrance exam created a more uniform curriculum as elementary day school day schools began tailoring their courses to ensure good test performance by their students. Both Alvin Schiff, who held the position of Executive Vice-President of the Board of Jewish Education from 1970 until 1991, and the current Director of the Education Department of Yeshivot and Day Schools, Rabbi Beresh Finklestein*, maintained in interviews¹⁰⁶ that the elementary school curriculum is not really controlled by the BJE test, but admitted that the teachers do "teach" to it, thus assuring a basic core curriculum for these day schools. Schiff and Finklestein* pointed out that due to time limitations, only certain areas of knowledge can be tested. Other areas, like Zionist history, are left out, although students can choose to write about these topics in the Hebrew language essay question. Since the basic subject matter - the study of the Torah and of Jewish laws and customs- is essentially the same

¹⁰⁶Dr. Schiff was interviewed March 27, 1993, and Rabbi Finklestein* on March 30, 1993.

from school to school, and has not really changed much over the years, the BJE test concentrates mainly on these areas. Obviously, subjects that are left out on the BJE test will receive short shrift in the day school classrooms. The basic curriculum of the day schools, with minor modifications, has, therefore, stayed the same over the years, although there have been definite changes both in educational methodology and in the emphasis or de-emphasis put on certain subjects. Some of these changes can be ascribed to the advent of the BJE test, while others have come about through different pressures.

CHANGING FOCUS ON TALMUD STUDY

Thus, while the study of Talmud has always been considered a major focus of advanced Jewish study and has been emphasized in the right wing yeshivot which have modeled themselves on the European models, there has also been much more of a stress on Talmud study in the Modern Orthodox day school movement since the early years of the 1950's and 1960's. In his study of the Yeshiva of Flatbush High School, Heimowitz(1979:26) noted that the early goals of the Talmud course were the following:

1. Develop an understanding of the "Oral Law" as an integral part of the "Written Law" (Five Books of Moses).
2. Develop an understanding of Rabbinic law as the basis of the Commandments.
3. Show the connection between Rabbinic Law and Modern Law. (A Study of the Graduates of the Yeshiva of Flatbush High School)

In general, Talmud courses in Modern Orthodox high Schools and elementary schools (study of the Talmud usually begins in 6th grade) consisted of one fifty minute period per day. Over the years, optional additional periods in the high schools were offered to students who were gifted or whose families (usually Orthodox families) requested additional hours devoted to Talmud. In 1976, Yeshiva of Flatbush High School began offering an enhanced Talmud program, with boys being offered three and a half hours of Talmud daily in the traditional chavrusah method (studying with a partner before the formal class begins). Girls were offered two hours per day (without the chavrusah method). Heimowitz (1979) reported that Rabbi Eliach instituted this increased Torah study during the same period in which social dancing was banned after the school basketball games, and mandatory morning davening was instituted, all in an attempt to reinforce the image of Flatbush as an Orthodox institution and convince the observant families not to enroll their children in the more right wing yeshivot which had begun opening in the area. The other Modern Orthodox high schools also expanded their Talmud programs, for much the same reason, adding optional extra hours of Talmud, while the elementary schools began upgrading their Talmud programs to prepare students for the more intense high school level.

The founding families of the modern day schools had prided themselves on the varied program of Jewish studies

offered in the high schools in contrast with the more right wing yeshivot, with history, philosophy, Hebrew language, Chumash, and the Prophets receiving as much time as Talmud. Yet, it became apparent that some Orthodox families still regarded the knowledge of Talmud as a mark of religiosity and commitment (Danzger, 1989; Helmreich, 1986; Heilman, 1983 have all noted this almost mystical attachment to studying Talmud) and appeared to be ambivalent about enrolling their children in the Modern Orthodox day school Jewish studies program. On the one hand, they applauded the study of modern Hebrew and the expanded program. Yet, they were apparently uneasy at the realization that students at more right wing yeshivot, by devoting fully half of the school day to learning Talmud, graduated with a more extensive Talmud education. By the late 1970's, the Modern Orthodox schools began highlighting Talmud studies over other Jewish study subjects, not quite as much as the more right wing yeshivot but enough to maintain enrollments of the more Orthodox students who had begun, as Flatbush had noted, to enroll in more right wing yeshivot.

This has been true on the elementary school level as well, in those communities where right wing yeshivot now abound. Thus, Tikva Yeshiva* reports having boys now beginning the study of commentaries on the Talmud (Mishna) as early as fourth grade, a program requested by the parents. DTY* reports that since the late 1980's, they have offered extra evening and Sunday morning Talmud classes for the boys.

As Rabbi Lehman* (DTY* teacher) explained, "The high schools which many of our boys will attend demand that they know more Talmud, and we have to spend the time teaching the boys that, so there is less time to spend on language"(Interview, 2/15/94). CSDS* and MPDS* do not report any changes in their curricula, but Rabbi Schuster*(CSDS* asst. principal) mentioned that some parents have become concerned that their sons will not be placed in advanced Talmud classes at some of the yeshiva high schools and are beginning to pressure the school. At the moment, CSDS* is not planning to add any additional class time for Talmud, but Rabbi Schuster* is aware that some parents are providing their children with special Talmud tutoring to make up the perceived deficit.

NEW METHODOLOGY IN TEACHING TALMUD

The trend in a few of the Modern Orthodox high schools (Flatbush and Ramaz) since the late 1980's has also been directed towards a new approach in teaching Talmud. Rabbi Gratenstein*(Flatbush teacher) summed up the current thrust as requiring students to acquire certain learning skills in Talmud -knowledge of Talmudic terminology and analytical approaches - which will enable them to continue learning on their own after they leave: " We still teach the text, but it means we concentrate on whether we want the message or the skills more"(Interview, 4/25/94). This change in aims and goals has also developed as increasing numbers of graduates choose to study at post-graduate yeshivot in Israel before

starting college. Rabbi Bakst(Ramaz dean) noted that "more and more students were going to Israel and were having trouble adjusting to six hours at a time for independent Talmud study. In Ramaz, they had Talmud, but it was not independent study for long periods of time. We started it to give them a different outlook about learning Talmud and concentrating on it"(2/1/94). The programs have added another half hour to the school day, for juniors and seniors, but Rabbi Bakst said the fifty students who have signed up are enthusiastic: "Fifteen years ago, when seniors had electives, there were few who would have elected Talmud"(Interview, 2/1/94).

INCREASED FOCUS ON TALMUD STUDY LEADS TO DECREASE IN HEBREW SKILLS

Only Ramaz has lengthened the school day in order to offer the independent study program to juniors and seniors without affecting the rest of their program. But at Ramaz, and at the other high schools, opting for the double Talmud periods throughout the four years means that these students do not have time in their schedules for the Hebrew language and literature classes which are required of all other students. As the extra Talmud periods are generally taken by Orthodox students who either enjoy studying Talmud or are urged to do so by their parents, this means that since the late 1970's, Orthodox high school students study less Hebrew language than in the past. Often, however, since neither the regular or advanced Talmud program is offered in several of the day

schools (DTY*, Tikva*, NCHHS*) to girls, female students often have more Hebrew language and literature study than the male students.¹⁰⁷

All the teachers interviewed admitted that Talmud classes are generally not taught in Hebrew because of the special terminology and complex concepts involved, thus limiting the total exposure to Hebrew language for those in the expanded Talmud sections. A number of parents who had attended day schools noted this weakness in Hebrew, ascribing it to the extra Talmud study:

"The problem is that they take honors Talmud program, and that cuts something out of the curriculum, and that something is Hebrew language study" (Beth Spindler, Ramaz parent, Interview, 6/15/94).

"As the kids start taking the more advanced Talmud classes, and the religious kids tend to, the level of Hebrew goes down. There is almost no Hebrew literature study" (Beverly Moscovitz, Ramaz parent, Interview, 6/15/94).

Although those students who have increased their study of Talmud are not exposed to Hebrew as much as the other students, parents and principals feel that none of today's day school students are getting as much Hebrew as they did in the 1940's-1970's. In part, principals ascribed this to the

¹⁰⁷The BJE has a separate high school entrance exam for girls which does not include questions about Talmud. In essence, this means that there is no pressure being put on those schools who feel girls should not be learning Talmud. A discussion of Talmud for girls will be expanded on in another chapter.

dearth of teachers who are fluent in Hebrew. Schiff noted that several colleges and institutes which had opened in the late 1940's and 1950's to train Jewish studies teachers for Talmud Torahs and day schools were either closed by the late 1970's or had greatly diminished enrollments. Teachers' Institute of Yeshiva University, for example, which once graduated about 125 women teachers annually closed its doors in the late 1980's as women chose to enter the better paying fields of law, medicine, and business which were now more open to women. Yeshiva University still maintains its male teacher training program, the Erna Michael College, but only about a half dozen of its graduates actually enter the teaching profession per year. Many of today's teachers now come from graduates of the post-graduate kollel and right wing yeshivot described by Danzger(1989) and Helmreich(1986) where neither pedagogical techniques, modern commentaries on the Bible nor modern Hebrew are being studied. Schiff agreed that the teaching of Hebrew has declined precipitously as fewer of Hebrew trained teachers have become available, but felt that if there were a strong enough passion for learning Hebrew, schools could still attract the proper people by offering higher pay: "The parents don't demand it, [indeed, while most of the parents interviewed, who were graduates of day schools, commented that their children's Hebrew language skills were below par, they did not appear to be overly concerned]) and the principals and school boards are busy looking who is to the right of them and are busy hiring teachers from the right wing Beit Yaakov and

kollel type schools where they don't care about teaching in Hebrew"(Interview, 3/27/93).

Miriam Kammerman*(Ramaz teacher) noted that even those teachers who have studied in a post-graduate yeshiva in Israel for a year or two are weak in Hebrew because they concentrated on religious studies and not on learning modern spoken Hebrew. Several of the older teachers decried the fact that Jewish studies classes were not really being taught in Hebrew regardless of the official school policy, but some of the teachers were not at all concerned with the weakening of the Ivrit b'Ivrit program. A typical attitude was that of Rabbi Bienenfeld*(Tikva* teacher) who stated, "This day school [Tikva*] claims that its goal is to teach love of Israel, love of Torah, and knowledge of spoken Hebrew. I think we are trying to teach the difference between right and wrong and the love of Torah and its mitzvot. We should concede that spoken Hebrew is not a mark of religiosity and not easily obtainable by non-residents or non-Israelis.(Interview, 5/1/93). Suri Levine* (Tikva* teacher), who is Israeli, acknowledged that many parents in the school really didn't seem to care so much about Hebrew, "Anyway, some of them say they will go to Israel and they will pick up the language there, so it is not so important. They say it is more important to study more, to behave, to teach more Jewish laws and things like that" (Interview, 5/1/93). Rabbi Alpert*(Tikva*) dismissed Rabbi Bienenfeld*'s comment by noting that it was not really a

matter of philosophy, but of self-justification: "The newer teachers don't know Hebrew, like the previous generation, but instead of feeling embarrassed that they are deficient in Hebrew, they turn this lack into ideology"(Interview 5/1/93).

Rabbi Kampner*(NCHHS* principal) attempted to defend NCHHS*'s admitted weakness in conducting Jewish studies in Hebrew by maintaining that it was the fault of some of the elementary feeder schools which do not stress Hebrew: "We have noticed that some of the kids are coming in to the high school with a weak Hebrew background, so that means we can't teach in Ivrit b'Ivrit so successfully. We don't want to sacrifice understanding for the sake of language"(Interview, 4/18/94). Rather bitterly, Rabbi Masserman*(NCHHS* teacher) recalled that when he first started teaching at NCHHS* in 1979 he did teach all his classes, even Talmud in Hebrew because that was the school policy:

My Hebrew was not that strong, because I am not Israeli, but there was a stronger commitment by the school for Ivrit b'Ivrit, so I struggled, and I did it. For a while in the 1980's the parents raised a tumult and even chose one principal over another because he knew Hebrew. The teachers who come now don't have fluency. Everyone knows that, but you can teach in Hebrew if it were demanded. I often wonder why the Spanish teachers come here and teach in Spanish, and the French teachers conduct their classes in French, but the Hebrew teachers can't teach their classes in Hebrew.(Interview, 4/18/94)

REDUCED STRESS ON HEBREW CONNECTED TO LESS EMPHASIS ON ZIONISM

As Heimowitz (1979:129) pointed out, "The older

[Flatbush] graduates (1954-1967) were educated in an atmosphere which placed greater stress on Hebrew culture and Zionism than upon religious observance." It has always been the policy of the day schools that use the Ivrit b'Ivrit method to recruit teachers from Israel, not only to teach language classes, but also to teach religious studies in Hebrew. Although schools still attempt to hire Israeli teachers, there are few who seem suitable for the Modern Orthodox day school system. Rabbi Alpert*(Tikva* principal) noted that while non-observant language teachers can still be found, it's difficult to hire Israeli religious studies teachers who can function with American students, especially in coed schools:

In the past, teachers from Israel were religious but walked around without a tie, without tzizit hanging out, who were clean-shaven. They were dati [religious], not haredi [religious extremists] (Interview, 5/1/93).

The declining study of Hebrew language, literature and the history of Zionism has been noted by Rabbi Naftali Rothenberg, the National Director of the Department of Torah Education and Culture of the Joint Authority for Jewish Zionist Education in North America. In a bulletin sent to day schools in 1993, Rabbi Rothenberg reminded principals that the Hebrew language has always been a central factor in Jewish identity for centuries: ".... the position is presented, forcefully, [In a commentary in the Talmud, Sifrei 'Eigev:46] that without the preservation of the language, there is no

expectation for Jewish continuity: 'When a child begins to speak, his father should converse with him in the Holy tongue, and teach him Torah. If he doesn't converse with him in the Holy tongue and doesn't teach him Torah, he might as well bury him.' This is the burial of the future of the Jewish people."¹⁰⁸ Rothenberg insisted that attachment to Hebrew has been the means of maintaining the bond between all Jews, and loosening this tie can lead to profound changes in Jewish identity. Certainly as Heimowitz's (1979:28) review of the main aims of studying Hebrew at Flatbush in the 1950's indicated, teaching the Hebrew language meant infusing students with "a love for Hebrew as the holy language, the tongue of our forefathers and the symbol of the national Jewish renaissance movement of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries...,to strengthen the cultural bridge with the State of Israel."

ISSUES REGARDING TALMUD STUDY FOR GIRLS

Day schools which do not teach Talmud to girls acknowledged that the girls received more Hebrew language study, thereby attaining more mastery of Hebrew. However, this increased skill comes at the expense of mastering Talmud. Talmud study for females has been a sensitive issue for some day schools. The decision to withhold Gemorah study for girls,

¹⁰⁸The quote is from page 4 of the bulletin which was presented to me by Alvin Schiff during the interview with him on 4/1/93.

while allowing them to study selections from the Mishnah (halacha and commentaries but without the deep intellectual analysis found in the Gemorah) was a policy that has to do with the founders of the various schools. In those communities in which the founding families or leading rabbis were uncomfortable about teaching Gemorah to girls, it was not included in the curriculum. Some of these Modern Orthodox day schools, like Tikva Yeshiva*, have never veered from their original policy of not offering Talmud study to the girls. Other schools, like Ramaz, Flatbush¹⁰⁹ CSDS*, and MPDS*, have always offered Talmud study to girls, and NCHHS* began doing so in 1984. Both Flatbush and NCHHS*¹¹⁰, however, appear to be weakening in this commitment, and DTY* stopped in 1989 when the classes in limudai kodesh were no longer coed. Out of the seven Orthodox day schools, only three principals or Deans - Rabbi Lookstein and Rabbi Bakst (Ramaz), Rabbi Schuster*(CSDS*), and Rabbi Benjamin*(Flatbush) - were willing to state that there was no reason girls should not learn Talmud with the same intensity as boys.

¹⁰⁹Heimowitz(1979) reports that until 1979, Talmud study was offered to girls only in the ninth and tenth grades. Girls took courses in Jewish philosophy and Chumash study in the eleventh and twelfth grades. After 1979, girls continued to study Talmud for four years.

¹¹⁰Over the past ten years, NCHHS* has had five different principals. Each principal has had a different ideology ranging from Zionist, Centrist, to Rabbi Kampner* who was chosen with the full knowledge that his religious ideology was right wing. Talmud was introduced by a Centrist principal with the backing of the community in 1984.

As Danzger(1989:131-138) noted in Returning to Tradition, Talmud study for females has been problematic because those on the religious right feel that women's education should be limited to the practical application of the halacha. An even more important issue is that without Talmud study, women are not prepared to discuss and analyze the basis and extension of halacha. Without that knowledge, they cannot expect to be consulted or become religious authorities. This inability, Danzger feels, clearly establishes the men as religious authorities who can play a communal role, while the role of women is largely domestic, limited to practical knowledge of the halachot concerning the home and family. While it is true that Jewish law specifically enjoins parents to teach their sons Torah, there is no prohibition against teaching their daughters. Although the Talmud does contain disparaging comments made by various rabbis who suggest that teaching women Talmud is a waste of time, there is no religious prohibition against women learning Talmud. Still, such a Centrist religious authority as Rabbi Aharon Lichtenstein, a renowned Talmud scholar and Educational Director of Yeshiva University's Gruss Institute in Jerusalem, while not opposing teaching women Talmud, comments that from a practical point of view, it doesn't make much sense:

....Many women seem to lack the motivation, a societal support is missing, and more importantly, there is lacking a desire to be unconditionally committed to such learning in the future.....It is clear that it is improbable that women will develop the same level of intensity as that of men. I am also not convinced that is desirable to press

women to study Talmud in such an intensive form. After all, halakha does differentiate between men and women in this matter, and their respective life roles are also different.¹¹¹

Rabbi Jack Bieler suggests in "Issues Concerning Torah Education for Women" that perhaps the reason male and female students were offered the same curriculum in Modern Orthodox day schools, including Talmud study, had more to do with the cost factor of providing separate teachers and classes in financially struggling institutions than any commitment to egalitarian ideals. Although Bieler admits that an informal poll he conducted among principals in yeshiva day schools¹¹² revealed that many principals were still in favor of offering identical learning opportunities to boys and girls, he claims that this is just a rationalization: "Nevertheless, it is difficult to know whether providing girls with an education identical to that of boys is an ideological decision, or simply the continuation of a policy that was originally necessitated by financial pressures and that is now being rationalized in order to preempt the need to reconsider the entire educational structure."¹¹³ Bieler specifically points to what he considers to be overwhelming problems in teaching girls Talmud: the absence of women Talmud teachers coupled

¹¹¹"Torah Study for Women," p.8.

¹¹²Bieler does not cite the number of replies he received nor mention the names of the schools.

¹¹³"Issues Concerning Torah Education for Women." p.19.

with the inappropriateness of providing men teachers, the need to protect girls from counterproductive impressions they might form when learning of comments in the Talmud concerning the intellectual abilities of women, and the dearth of girls willing to commit themselves to the double period Talmud classes that many boys take to insure progress in Talmud skills. In addition, Bieler makes the point that allowing males to teach Talmud to girls creates problems: "Having a particular teacher for a double period also presents the possibility of developing a "rebbe-talmid" relationship, often so pivotal in a student's religious and learning development. An additional concern is whether the relationship that boys often develop with their male Torah teachers should even be attempted to be replicated in the case of a male teacher and female students...."¹¹⁴

In an effort not to precipitate any ideological arguments about the right of women to study Talmud, the BJE high school entrance examination now gives separate tests for girls and boys. The test for girls (which is now given in a separate building, away from the boys) does not include any questions on the Talmud. Until the late 1980's, boys and girls took the same test, although the girls were told that the section on Talmud was not included in their test scores. According to Rabbi Finklestein* (Interview 8/9/93), the change was made

¹¹⁴"Issues Concerning Torah Education for Women," p.21.

because some yeshivot apparently regarded these questions as a means of pressuring them to sanction Talmud study for girls.

DECLINING SUPPORT FOR Talmud STUDY FOR GIRLS

When asked to explain why their schools do not teach Talmud to the girls, none of the principals or teachers referred to halachic prohibitions or even philosophical reasons. Rather, as exemplified by the following responses, they referred to one of the following reasons:

1. Community customs - "Girls have never studied Talmud at DTY*" (Schwartz*, DTY* secular principal, Interview 11/15/93).
2. Lack of parental pressure - "There were a few voices for girls to study Talmud, but these voices did not speak up with conviction, or with tremendous concern, so they did not make a significant impact. If there had been a strong feeling in the community, they would have had the ability to influence and see it introduced in this school" (Rabbi Alpert*, Tikva* principal, Interview 5/1/93).
3. Blaming it on the high schools - "There is some interest in the community, but it's just that to be taught in elementary school, when it's not going to be followed up in most high schools, is just a waste of time. If this were true for the boys, I wouldn't teach them either. Since most of the girls go to Central High School where Talmud is not a required subject, just an elective, to teach Talmud when it's not used again is just a waste. I've told parents when they asked me that if Central would require it, then we would do it, although some of my teachers would have qualms" (Rabbi Lippner*, DTY* principal, Interview, 1/4/94).
4. Girls have no interest - "Most girls are happy not to have the pressure. We don't raise the matter with them because it could become a problem" (Rabbi Schein*, Tikva* principal,

Interview, 5/15/93).

None of the principals stated that it was inappropriate for females to learn Talmud, although Rabbi Schein* suggested that questions would have to be raised about that, and all assured this researcher that they were totally committed to giving female students a solid education in limudai kodesh, as well as in secular studies. Rather, the principals concentrated on the impracticality of Talmud study for girls and pointed to the lackluster nature of the demands by parents and students. When asked whether they had ever asked if male students were interested in Talmud study or simply required them to study Talmud, or had waited for overwhelming parental demands before initiating other courses, several of the principals simply shrugged and did not answer those questions. Their evasive shrugs indicated to this researcher that the principals knew their arguments against teaching Talmud to girls were specious. Aware of feminist ideology, the principals obviously did not wish to engage in open confrontation, neither with this researcher nor with parents. Clearly, however, the principals were in agreement with the religious right and felt it was inappropriate for girls to study Talmud and intended to make sure, by subtle means, that Talmud would not be taught in their schools. In response to the question of whether good Talmud teachers for girls were available, Ramaz, CSDS*, MPDS*, and Flatbush principals stated that teachers interviewed for Talmud positions at their

schools were fully aware that girls were taught Talmud and were willing to do so, even in coed classes.

There appears to be a decline in the support given to the idea of Talmud study for girls as the more right wing religious opinions prevail. This is exemplified in the plans made by Rabbi Kampner* at NCHHS*. Although NCHHS* had introduced Talmud study for girls around 1984 when one of the former principals had requested it, starting in 1995, Rabbi Kampner* will offer Talmud study to the senior girls as an elective rather than a requirement: "I wouldn't offer it as an option for boys because halachically, studying Talmud is required for boys, but it is not required for the girls, so for them it can be optional...It will be interesting to see how many of the girls choose to stay with Talmud"(Interview 4/18/94). Rabbi Kampner* plans to offer girls an independent study course in Chumash where they will look up references to certain passages and discuss them with a teacher.

NCHHS* teachers Markman* and Masserman* do not think that Talmud study for girls will last long at NCHHS*. Markman* commented that the Talmud program will not have the prominence it now has because "at the time the community asked for Talmud for girls, it reflected a Centrist movement. By hiring Rabbi Kampner*, it will not be emphasized as much"(Interview 4/18/94). Rabbi Masserman* felt that making Talmud optional for the senior girls was the administration's way of gradually

eliminating Talmud study for girls: "It will almost certainly disappear. It's in name only name anyway. They don't really teach the girls Talmud like the boys. They will take a line or two from the Talmud and then switch into commentaries which are not Talmudic. The more right wing teachers won't teach the girls, so I do it. Up until this year, it was a regular Talmud class with questions and answers, but now they switched to a different text, by subject matter. It's not Talmud, it's more like philosophy. The optional idea is just a prelude to eventually getting it out of NCHHS*" (Interview 4/18/94).

According to Heimowitz (1979) Flatbush offered Talmud to girls since its inception, but never on an equal basis with the boys. Until 1955, girls were only offered Talmud in the ninth and tenth grades, while the boys continued in the eleventh and twelfth grades. In 1970, Rabbi Eliach instituted the advanced Talmud study program, in part to stop the drain of boys whose parents wished them to have additional Talmud. Neither the advanced Talmud course nor the chevrusah method has even been offered to the girls, although they are required to study Talmud for four years. Since Flatbush is particularly interested in recapturing the Orthodox population, it is highly unlikely that Talmud study for girls will go beyond what is now required. Rabbi Eliach did not suggest that Flatbush would eliminate Talmud as a required subject for girls in order to appeal to the more right wing Orthodox community. However, Rabbi Eliach did not offer any

explanation of why the girls were not given the same methodology or opportunity as the boys in Talmud study when all other subject matters are treated in the same way.

A number of parents feel that by downplaying or not offering Talmud study to girls, day schools are underlining the right wing religious viewpoint about the role of women in Orthodoxy, and giving tacit agreement to the disparaging views of women's intellectual abilities expressed by some Talmudic era rabbis. Evidently, the messages are being received quite clearly, as evidenced by the remarks of Tikva* parent, Barry Eidelman: "No, the girls in Tikva* don't learn Talmud. There's a hidden agenda in your question. It's traditional....I see it as a problem about women being rabbis. It's a problem about the stature of a rabbi. The traditional role model-leader should be a man. Women should not adopt man's role.....Women should be responsible for developing the sense of Jewishness in the home"(Interview, 5/1/93).

On the other hand, Tikva* parent Esther Brainson says that she is beginning to think that girls should be taught Talmud, although she was hesitant at first about expressing herself on this matter. "I have a daughter who is now in college, and she is getting interested in Talmud. But she doesn't have it as easy as the boys. But really, does she

need it. Does she need to know? Well, why not?"¹¹⁵(Interview, 5/1/93). Throughout her interview, Brainson mentioned that she has resented the fact that the boys always have smaller classes and better teachers. For her, withholding Talmud from the girls is just one more example of the way Orthodoxy shows that educating boys is more important than educating girls.

Although Schwartz*(DTY* secular principal) had stated that DTY* had never taught Talmud to girls, this was contradicted by DTY* parents Gail Messinger and Yael Singer. Messinger remembered learning Gemorah thirty years ago when she attended DTY*. Both women feel there is no halachic reason why women should not learn Talmud. Like Esther Brainson, Singer pointed out that it was typical of DTY*'s treating girls differently: "There's a certain attitude that the girls should make do with what is given to them. It's just a general attitude"(Interview 2/17/94). Messinger claimed that girls who go on to high schools where Talmud is taught are usually quite bright and would be able to catch up and did not fault Rabbi Lippner* for halting Talmud study when boys and girls were separated in religious studies: "Rabbi Lippner* doesn't think there are qualified women teachers to teach the girls, and the men teachers won't do it. So to give them a little of it on the fifth and sixth grades, when the classes are still coed, is silly. Rabbi Lippner* said it was

¹¹⁵Underlined words indicate Shapiro's voice rising in anger.

better to give the girls a good foundation in Mishnah than a little bit of Gemorah in fifth grade and not again"(Interview 2/17/94).

NCHHS* parent Sandra Marcus pointed out that introducing Talmud has become a problem as the school has become more and more right wing: "As the rebbes have come in, Talmud for girls has been watered down. They are just giving lip service to it, but I don't know if the parents really care at this point"(Interview 5/5/94). Out of the five NCHHS* parents interviewed, only two expressed dismay at the possibility that NCHHS* might change its Talmud requirement for girls to an elective. However, these two disagreed with Marcus, stating that parents would object and the school would have to reinstate the requirement. The other three parents did not seem to care all that much, although they all disagreed with the idea that it was halachically incorrect. Most felt like parent Ronnie Seidel: "I just don't think much about it, but I feel learning Talmud just frustrates the girls. How much are they going to use it anyway, so why should they bother? I am really a little fuzzy on this issue"(Interviews 5/19/94).

Several parents echoed the statements of Tikva* parent Michelle Lassner: " My sons don't think about this, but my daughter feels that teachers have downgraded the female role, inferring that women can't do this because they don't have brain power or maturity. These kind of inferences have upset

her. There is no good reason why girls can't study Talmud"(Interview 4/1/93). Except for Lassner, none of the parents remarked on fact that withholding Talmud study from girls might engender resentment towards Orthodoxy as girls realize that they are deemed unable to study Talmud when all boys, intellectually gifted or not, interested in the subject or not, are required to study Talmud. Instead, they viewed the issue as one that is simply inevitable as more right wing teachers have entered the day school system. When asked how he would feel if Talmud study was denied to girls at MPDS*, parent Avner Gershon answered in a way that seems to sum up the feelings of a number of parents: "The girls study Talmud, but if that were to change, and the girls would not, I would not fight it. I just can't fight about everything in life"(Interview 6/14/94).

IMPLICATIONS OF SHIFT IN Talmud STUDY FOR GIRLS

While the trend through the mid-1980's in the Modern Orthodox junior high and high schools was to require Talmud study for girls, it would appear that since the late 1980's, there has been a shift from this commitment as more right wing teachers have entered the day school system. To some extent, the shift has meant that girls in many Modern Orthodox day schools will have a greater knowledge of modern spoken Hebrew than do the boys, who are given more Talmud study. The shift has greater implications, however, for girls may very well be internalizing the message that studying limudai kodesh is not

as important for girls as for boys, that the woman's role in Orthodoxy should be restricted to learning what is necessary to run a Jewish home and bring up Jewish children - a more fundamentalist view than that of Modern Orthodoxy. In general, as Chapter VIII purports to show, both girls and boys are being presented with a more fundamentalist religious viewpoint as the "rebbe system" has become an integral part of the day school system.

CHAPTER IX: CHANGES IN EDUCATIONAL MISSION AND METHODOLOGY

Over the years, Jewish identity as taught in the day schools has shifted from the early Zionist - Hebrew oriented focus to a more halachic Talmudic orientation, a trend that would seem to corroborate Mayer/Waxman's linkage of religious stringency with increased study of the halacha. And all of the principals interviewed in Chapter VIII confirmed that this trend has been intensified because most of today's Judaic studies teachers are now, of necessity, drawn mainly from Ultra-Orthodox educational institutions which place a major emphasis on Talmud study, stringent religious observance and commitment to Jewish law. Rabbi Alpert*(Tikva* principal) commented on the fact that nowadays even teachers from Yeshiva University are not as Centrist as one might expect: "Especially teachers in the middle or upper grades, those who go into elementary schools to teach, is an American, yeshiva educated person. But by choosing chinuch [religious education], he already has a more fundamentalist attitude. If you get a teacher from Yeshiva University today to come and teach, you are getting someone from the right wing, not from the Centrist group, someone who is going into it, not as a job, but as a religious mission." (Interview, 5/1/93).

FOSTERING CLOSER RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

Yet, that mission, as vocalized by many of the younger teachers, is not really to concentrate on the text, even though the day schools have increased the percentage of time

devoted to Talmud study. The primary goal of present day teachers is to serve as religious role models, in essence to serve as the students' personal rebbes (rabbis). Interviewed teachers stated firmly that it is only by becoming involved with the students beyond a classroom relationship that they can achieve their goal of inspiring students with a love of Judaism and the desire to fulfill its commandments. Rabbi Benjamin* (Flatbush teacher) indicated that he had certainly always felt that way about the teacher's role but didn't think most teachers in the past understood how important that role was and how to reach out to students:

The people I had valued the most when I was a student went beyond the text. I played a large role in being informal with the kids, I studied for the SAT's too; I knew where they are coming from. That was sort of revolutionary for the 1960's. Teachers were not that involved with their students. It is a whole new generation of teachers who are here now, largely as a reaction to the previous generation who were out of touch with their students. With the breakdown of the family, it is even more important for teachers to break through. (Interview, 4/25/94).

To break through, Benjamin* lets his students ask questions on any topic at the beginning of each class, answering them on the spot or after school. Students know they can talk to him about anything, and Benjamin* encourages them to contact him after graduation with any of their problems.

Many of the teachers interviewed conduct themselves in a similar manner with their students, but go beyond just fostering the open communication that Benjamin* offers. In

certain schools, like NCHHS*, Tikva*, and DTY*, teachers frequently take students home for Shabbat meals. As Markman*(DTY* teacher) pointed out, " We invite them [students] over for Shabbat or a meal to increase communications and foster a deep relationship"(Interview, 4/18/94). This relationship is fostered, according to Markman* and other teachers, in order to teach and reinforce a religious lifestyle. In other schools, like Ramaz and Flatbush, and CSDS*, students are not regularly invited to teachers' homes except on occasion to celebrate a holiday, like Purim, in the manner of the teachers' more religious home communities. However, teachers do attend the holiday parties these schools hold in the evenings or weekends for students, make time available for informal conversations, and frequently accept invitations to students' Bar and Bat Mitzvah parties, all in order to foster closer relationships. Single teachers at all the schools refrained from inviting students to their homes, but mentioned that they hoped to do so once married.

EASE OF ESTABLISHING POINTS OF CONTACT

Although many of the day school Judaic studies teachers hold religious views that are to the right of Modern Orthodoxy (in most cases far to the religious right of the students¹¹⁶), these young teachers still find it easy to

¹¹⁶Several teachers said they did not approve of watching television or movies, or mixed swimming, nor having students attend mixed social events or coed summer camps, all of which many of their students do. Many of the married women teachers

establish points of contact with their students. Principals reported that almost all of the Jewish studies teachers are college graduates, unlike many in the 1940's and 1950's who had obtained rabbinical ordination in Europe without attending secular colleges. This is in contrast to many teachers at today's more right wing yeshivot who have rabbinical degrees but do not have college degrees, secular degrees not being required nor encouraged for the Jewish studies staff. Several of the older Yeshiva University educated teachers, while critical of the right wing religious teachers for their lack of Hebrew do admit that they are not unaware of the outside world.

Typical was Masserman*'s(NCHHS* teacher) comment: "Lately, the teachers are coming from Mir Yeshiva or Telz[very right wing post graduate yeshivot], but kids can identify with them better than some teachers in the past. They are not unaware of the outside world. They do not cut themselves off from the outside world. They go to basketball games; they take the kids home for Shabbat dinners"(Interview, 4/18/94). Masserman* felt that many of the older teachers in the 1950's and 1960's were Holocaust survivors from Europe, and students, while respecting their knowledge, found it hard to relate to them or their cultural milieu.

wore sheitels or had their hair covered.

REBBES FUNCTION AS RELIGIOUS ROLE MODELS

Rabbi Lookstein(Ramaz principal) and Rabbi Bakst(Ramaz dean) admit that the Hebrew may not be there, but the new teachers have a great deal of warmth and enthusiasm and know how to be accessible to the kids. While Miriam Kammerman*(Ramaz teacher) agreed that schools are looking for role model teachers, she commented somewhat cynically that perhaps that is all some of the teachers from right wing educational backgrounds have: "They sure don't have teachers who know much. If you don't know your content, if you don't have a strong background, then you feel uneasy with questions. Maybe your only choice then is to be a pal or have the student respond emotionally to you rather than respecting your knowledge"(Interview, 5/26/94).

Rabbi Eliach (Flatbush principal) and Rabbi Lookstein (Ramaz principal) insisted that they do expect a teacher to be knowledgeable and speak decent Hebrew in order to gain students' respect but admit that for the past ten years their first priority has been to look for a warm, attractive personality, for the type of person Rabbi Kampner*(NCHHS* principal) described as "living lives that I would want my students to emulate and who want to establish relationships beyond that of teacher to student" (Interview, 4/18/94). Similarly, Rabbi Lippner* (DTY* principal) stated that he hires teachers who will be good role models even though some of these teachers do not speak Hebrew well: "What I am

looking for is someone who is teaching for the sake of Torah rather than it's just being a job. And sometimes you have to sacrifice Hebrew language to get role models"(Interview, 1/4/94). Rabbi Shenberg*(MPDS* principal) felt that in the past the school had been wary of teachers who had a right wing religious orientation, but he (as have Eliach, Lookstein, and Ziegler) has had long talks with teachers before hiring them to make them aware of the school's Zionist orientation and its basic attitude of love of all Jews: "If they did not have the basic attitude of love for all Jews, I would not hire them. No one is fighting us about hiring them"(Interview 2/1/94). Teachers reported that students do feel close to them. Rabbi Abramson*(MPDS* teacher) mentioned that several boys who have attended Mishmar classes have told him that he is the most important person in their lives. Rabbi Tellerman*(MPDS* teacher) summed up the feelings expressed by many of the teachers in his comments what being a teacher means to him:

I think it is important for the kids to know the teacher is a real human being - to take him home and see him in a full life--also to give the kids a notion of what a full Shabbat is really like. Also, it gives the girls a chance to pal around with my wife. Also, it gives the kids a chance to bond with their rebbe. That is part of being a rebbe--to have the kids love and respect you and use you as a role model and relate to. Once you bring the kids into your home, it becomes less just giving them information and more of a lifestyle to model after. I have the impression that most of my friends who are teaching do this because that is the way we were turned on to yiddishkeit. It's the way you can change people's lives - with an emotional rapport and being a role model(Interview, 5/3/94).

It would appear that many teachers in Modern Orthodox day schools see their role as one similar to the rabbis described by Danzger(1989) and Helmreich(1986) in their studies of post-graduate yeshivot. It is, in some respects, the same rebbe role model system that Mayer/Waxman have suggested may be playing a significant role in bringing about a more stringent form of Orthodoxy in which "the emphasis is on personal contact and the intimacy of small groups.....Its spokesmen and spokeswomen capture their audience not because they represent a particular movement or group, but rather because they seem to be genuinely moved people. They inspire as much as they educate."¹¹⁷ However, the rebbe system (all of the principals interviewed used this term in describing the newer male teachers and indicated that women teachers were trying to become closer to their students,too) in the day schools, especially in the elementary schools, works mainly through their being inspirational role models and developing emotional bonding between students and teachers rather than emerging from the type of intensive study that takes place in the right wing post-graduate yeshivot such as Telz or Mir Yeshiva. It is not the emphasis on textual study in elementary or high schools that plays the significant role in the increased stringency of Modern Orthodoxy, as Kranzler and Mayer/Waxman have suggested has happened. That part of their theory does not seem to be applicable to the Modern Orthodox day school

¹¹⁷"Modern Jewish Orthodoxy in America: Toward the Year 2000," p.110.

system. Indeed, this section of the dissertation was to have included an analysis of how increased stringency of religious observance was related to the increased reliance on texts and academic pressure.

RELIGIOUS ROLE MODEL SYSTEM LEADS TO LESSENING OF ACADEMIC PRESSURE

However, anecdotal evidence, as evinced from comments by principals and teachers who had been with the schools over long periods of time did not indicate that academic pressure had increased in any way; indeed, it appeared that the opposite was true, the emphasis on the rebbe system, on developing warm relationships between students and teachers, linked with the decision in the elementary-junior high school grades to lessen the tension of academic pressures seem to be the new hallmarks of today's Modern Orthodox day school education. As Mayer/Waxman theorized, the day school does appear to be replacing the role the family plays in the transmission of religion. Students evidently do relate warmly to these committed teachers who are admired for rejecting the worldly financial success the students' own parents are striving for, aiming instead for the more idealistic and spiritual goals of teaching Jewish studies. And students do recognize and appreciate the large amounts of time and the interest in their emotional well being that teachers devote, a devotion that all too often seems to be missing in the students' own families who are busy earning a living in more

hectic or more lucrative pursuits. In essence, the rebbe system now used in the day schools seems to be a stand-in for the warmth of family life, in effect, providing the safe haven from a heartless world that Lasch(1977) felt was the true function of the home.

As Dreeban(1973) has noted, albeit commenting on secular education, successful education must involve "sustained relationships between parties of encouraging a discovery beyond reward and punishment on a quid pro quo basis. In a family that is done on the basis of affection. It is maintained by expressions of concern, friendliness, support, sympathy, encouragement, and the like, not simply as a response to specific acts, but as indicators of a more enduring solidarity."¹¹⁸ The day school may be taking over the family's role in the transmission of religion and is adopting some of the emotive, affective methods of the family that both Gecas and Dreeban have described. In day schools, this enduring solidarity encourages students who used to emulate their parents in the various aspects of religious life, to emulate those showing the most warmth and encouragement - their more religiously right wing teachers.

LIFE IN THE 1980'S LEADS TO CONCENTRATION ON "MENSCHLICHKEIT"

It is no surprise that the development of the rebbe role-

¹¹⁸"The Contribution of Schooling to the Learning of Norms, pp.65-55.

model system, beginning in the 1980's, has occurred simultaneously with a change in educational methodology, particularly on the elementary - junior high school levels. Starting in 1981, minutes from the Principals' Committee of the Board of Jewish Education of New York City indicated some soul searching regarding educational aims and methodology in the day schools. The theme for the May, 1981 principals meeting was "Yeshivas Aim for Mastery of Text - Haskafah and Each Student's Personal Commitment is not a Mark of Success." The conference was followed by a series of other meetings voicing similar concerns that day school education was missing the boat in stressing the mastery of religious texts at the expense of developing religious ethics and values. By September 27, 1989, these concerns had escalated when principals of the high schools had to meet regarding the findings of widespread cheating and selling of the New York State regents examinations by day school students. Several day school educators pointed out that treating limudai kodesh(religious studies) like secular subject matter obviously did not build religious character nor transmit any religious values. Rivka Behar, an educational specialist at the Board of Jewish Education of New York City, had given the following warnings to day school educators:

To progress to higher stages of moral growth, children require a nurturing and supportive adult who serves not only as a role model, but who helps them internalize moral values....Authoritarian parents and teachers who control children through punishment and reward retard moral growth.... Too often, the values of Judaism are taught through

formal lessons, drills, and work sheets, and students may well be experiencing so much stress during a formal lesson that they display irritability and behavior contrary to the very words they are reciting.¹¹⁹

Other day school educators also decried the nature of the educational methodology used in Modern Orthodox day schools to give the same academic rigor to religious studies as secular studies. They called for Torah educators to "stop mimicking secular studies with its patterned curricula and routine testing and emphasis on textual achievement."¹²⁰ Rabbi Norman Lamm, President of Yeshiva University, stated strongly that "We must beware of reducing Torah to a 'course' or subject or discipline or field of knowledge alone. Torah is and must always be presented as a deeply religious and spiritual enterprise."¹²¹ The insistence on academic rigor had been particularly true in the high schools. All the high school teachers and principals interviewed essentially agreed with Rabbi Benjamin* (Flatbush teacher) who stated, "The basic approach to teaching religious studies is much the same as it has always been, with grades and tests, the use of frontal instruction, periodization, the same basic structure as the secular studies departments" (Interview, 4/25/94). Rabbi

¹¹⁹"Transmitting Jewish Values to Young Children," p.10.

¹²⁰Rabbi Pinchas Hecht and Roy Pinchat, "Creating an Atmosphere for Positive Learning and Caring in Modern Orthodox Schools," p.14.

¹²¹"Torah Education at the Crossroads," p.4.

Eliach (Flatbush principal), Rabbi Kampner*(NCHHS* principal) and Rabbi Bakst (Ramaz dean) all regretted this approach but felt constrained to continue:

I haven't found a formula yet for doing it[teaching limudai kodesh] without marks. A few years ago, I said, "OK, Jewish philosophy-no marks, no tests." The kids said that wasn't fair; they wanted marks. There are certain things that just go on from generation to generation(Rabbi Eliach, Interview, 4/25/94).

I would love to have learning for its own sake, but that is just not reality (Rabbi Bakst, Interview, 2/1/94).

We would like to teach students to learn for learning's sake, but we have to be realistic and know that we have to give tests and papers and treat it like the secular studies in order to give it the same respect(Rabbi Kampner*,Interview, 4/18/94).

Rabbi Kampner* did add, however, that when students come in on Sunday mornings or on Thursday evenings for Mishmar classes, there is a less pressured atmosphere.

Teachers at Ramaz described Ramaz as a "gentler, kinder" school since the early 1980's, with a new emphasis on developing what Rabbi Lookstein (Ramaz principal) calls menschlichkeit (ethical and moral behavior) that is considered as important as producing students capable of Ivy League college acceptances. Rabbi Lookstein (Ramaz principal) stated that Ramaz has now become more "self-conscious about what our purpose is--to develop students who are committed kids, to Torah and mitzvah, the land of Israel....(Interview, 2/1/94). While Ramaz, according to Richard Mintz*(Ramaz teacher),

doesn't want students to regard Judaism as a hindrance in choosing a college, it no longer urges all students to accept Ivy League college admissions as it did in the 1960's-early 1980's. "Now," Mintz* reported, " Ramaz tells students they should look for a vibrant Jewish life before going to a college. That is something they did not really push ten years ago.(Interview 5/10/94).

Ramaz's recent concern that students be guided towards a college which offers a vibrant Jewish experience may be, as stated, a desire to focus on menschlichkeit rather than Ivy League acceptance, but it can also be seen as an acknowledgement that the college world has changed dramatically. Since the 1970's colleges have been abandoning the idea of being in loco parentis. By the 1980's, even dormitory bathrooms had become coed, not to mention the dormitories themselves. Parents realized that their children were going to be totally unsupervised while away from home, with virtual freedom to experiment with different lifestyles, with drugs and sex. Encouraging students (especially Orthodox students whose families are apprehensive about exposing their eighteen year olds to a non-Orthodox, non-sheltered environment) to attend these colleges has made Ramaz less sure that twelve years of day school education are enough to ward off the temptations that college life has offered since the mid-1980's. Parents are also more apprehensive, and aware of increasing intermarriage rates since the 1980's and are unsure

about the desirability of colleges with a small Jewish or a non-Orthodox Jewish population.

Another factor for the new emphasis on menschlichkeit in the 1980's could also be attributed to what Cornel West, in an essay in Newsweek magazine, labeled the "market culture" of the era. Calling the 1980's a "decade of glitz and greed," West noted the spiritual impoverishment of running after the good life which he felt consisted of "gaining access to power, pleasure and property by any means."¹²² The line in the 1987 film, Wall Street, spoken by a manipulating corporate raider, also summed up the era of the 1980's: "Greed is Good." It was, West, claimed no mere accident that in such a market culture "values like loyalty, commitment, service, care, concern, even tenderness can hardly gain a secure foothold."¹²³ Were Modern Orthodox Jews affected by this market culture? There is no reason to think that they were not. Several sociological surveys suggest that Modern Orthodox Jews, like other American Jews who worked in mainstream American society, were an economically upwardly mobile group. According to the statistics compiled in a 1981 survey¹²⁴ of the New York City Metropolitan Jewish community, conducted by

¹²²Newsweek, January 13, 1994, p.48.

¹²³Ibid.

¹²⁴Survey entitled, "The Social Characteristics of the New York Area Jewish Community, 1981, commissioned by UJA/Federation of Jewish Philanthropies of New York, American Jewish Yearbook, 1984, pp.128-161.

sociologists Paul Ritterband and Steven M. Cohen, more than one-half of the community earned at least \$40,000 (\$20,000 was the figure used as the median for the U.S. national income), and 12% earned over \$40,000. In Westchester County, and Manhattan, one-quarter of all Jewish households reported incomes of over \$60,000. An analysis of the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey¹²⁵ revealed that no matter where they lived, Jews have generally exceeded the national median income of \$39,000: 20% of all core Jews earned between \$40,000 - \$59,999; 12% earned between \$60,000 - \$59,999, 10% earned between \$80,000 - \$124,999, and 2% earned \$200,000 or more. The statistics of the 1981 survey and those from the 1990 survey could lead to the assumption that Jews participated fully and successfully in the market decade of the 1980's, were just as materialistic as other Americans, and probably more financially successful than most.

That full participation and financial success also included suffering from the increased stress and tensions of running after the good life. A good part of running after the good life involved working harder than ever to keep up with the galloping inflation (fueled by the oil crisis in the late 1970's) that was also the hallmark of the 1980's in America. This faster paced life took a definite toll on family life (see Chapter V in this dissertation). Calvin

¹²⁵"Highlights of the Council of Jewish Federations 1990 National Jewish Population Survey," 1991, p.19.

Goldscheider(1987:72), in summing up his own 1986¹²⁶ studies, as well as the 1983 studies conducted by Steven M. Cohen¹²⁷, found an increase in the rates of divorce and family dissolution among the Orthodox. Goldscheider noted that the divorce rate had risen to between 8-10% of the Orthodox Jewish population between 1983-1986, a figure representing a doubling over the last quarter of the century.

The day schools acknowledged being affected by this decline in family life. The subjects of the conferences of the Principals' Committee of the Board of Jewish Education of New York City in the early through the late 1980's indicate¹²⁸ that the day schools were concerned that families were not providing their children with the moral and ethical backgrounds that affirmed what Judaism purported to teach: The title of the 1981 March conference was "Families in Crisis; the 1982 November conference title was "The Jewish Family in Transition;" the 1986 November conference title was "Teaching Torah Values and Moral Reasoning," and the 1989 September title was "Ethics and Honesty in General, the Regents in Particular." This last title referred to a

¹²⁶Jewish Continuity and Change: Emerging Patterns in America, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986a.

¹²⁷American Modernity and Jewish Identity, London: Tavistock Press, 1983.

¹²⁸Titles taken from the minutes of the Principals' Committee meetings found in the archives of the Board of Jewish Education of New York City.

particular incident that had occurred in June 1988, when several New York State high school regents exams were stolen, sold, or purchased by students in day schools. While there were no available minutes for the 1989 September meeting, the concern for day school students' ethical and moral behavior is evident from the title.

Perhaps, the day schools felt that what students were learning from the environment of the 1980's was the pressure to succeed at any cost, not to practice menschlichkeit. It was up to the day schools to get them back to the moral and ethical standards of behavior that the schools had assumed they would learn from texts bolstered by parental guidance. If part of the problem was the pressured world of the 1980's, perhaps one approach might be to soften the day schools' rigorous academic demands and lessen the pressure to achieve good grades as the mark of success. If the era of the 1980's required the day schools to more emphatically foster a love and appreciation of the moral and ethical standards of Judaism, perhaps the emphasis on texts, on testing, on marks, on getting into the best colleges, was not the approach to use.

CHANGES MADE TO FOSTER LOVE OF JUDAISM

Accordingly, since the 1980's, there has been a noticeable change in educational methodology, a change involving a relaxation of admission standards and a movement

away from rigorous academics, a change that has been most noticeable on the elementary-junior high school levels. The change has taken place primarily in Judaic studies(schools are evidently not willing to totally and openly challenge parents' desires for the academic success that is dependent on high scores on the Standard Achievement Tests for college acceptance) all in the interests of fostering a better condition for developing a love of Judaism. This move is intended to remove the feelings of failure and low self-esteem that Gecas(1981:183) alludes to as the undesirable consequences of a school's stress on grades and academic achievement as a measurement of success. As Parsons(1964:133) points out, unlike the family, the school institutionalizes the establishment of a status system based on academic achievement. Certainly, students who repeatedly receive poor grades on tests in limudai kodesch or are constantly faced with academic pressure and failure cannot easily dismiss these negative experiences and may well form a negative attitude towards religious observance as well. For sure, as Dalke(1958) notes in his research on education, the humiliation of constantly performing below the academic mean will not bring about positive reinforcement or internalization of values. Nor would it bring about a positive identification with Judaism.

Suri Levine*(Tikva* teacher) commented that Tikva*'s current principal, Rabbi Schein*, wants the school to have a

less pressured atmosphere with more emphasis on plays, school fairs and projects: "He doesn't want strict studying. He feels the kids will learn more about being a better Jew by following a teacher's example than by sitting and studying from texts. In the past [under Rabbi Alpert*], everything was very strict, very serious, as much as you could teach in a period. No wasting time...."(Interview, 4/1/93). Indeed, when interviewed, Rabbi Schein* explained that he wanted Tikva Yeshiva* to put more emphasis on projects rather than on tests and grades: "We have to beat television at their own game. Children don't thrive unless they do hands-on activities. We will do things like having a mitzvah fair with each class having a booth representing a different mitzvah or a color war which highlights themes of Jewish life like the concept of korbonot (animal sacrifices in the time of the temple). We can't negate text, but we can't be book driven"(Interview, 5/15/93). Levine* reported that Rabbi Schein* is considering abandoning the final exams in limudai kodesch in order to reduce pressures on the students.

When asked about the changes that Rabbi Schein* has instituted, Rabbi Alpert*(who as the retired principal acts as a consultant) replied that over the past ten years, parents have been pushing for an educational process that is less motivated by competition for grades and is a more intrinsic process, with the result that mastering the text is no longer considered important: "It's not how many books do I have

access to, not how to say the prayers with any understanding....the schools are less strong academically with less breadth and depth of learning"(Interview, 5/1/93). Rabbi Alpert* felt that the day schools have tilted too far away from the comfortable balance that had existed between specific Torah knowledge and faith: "In the past, parents demanded more education and less religion. And now people demand more religion and less education....One is now expected to observe meticulously, without the underpinnings of specific knowledge, as a show of religious commitment"(Interview, 5/1/93). Perhaps, this feeling of unease with education represents a fear that too much knowledge, too much analysis can encourage questioning, and questioning never creates the security of knowing the one truth. And, as life gets more complex, maybe knowing too much, thinking too much, makes people uneasy.

Rabbi Lippner*(DTY* principal) also reported a change over the past ten years in the educational approach used for limudai kodesch: "We no longer have different teachers for every subject in the seventh and eighth grades like we do in the secular department. We don't want students to think this is just subject matter, but to develop a relationship with one or two teachers two or three periods a day - to develop a kesher (connection) with a rebbe or a woman teacher. That is why we encourage a lot of informal education and role models"(Interview, 1/4/94). Schwartz*(DTY* secular principal) stressed the school's desire to have students

develop a love of learning: "There is no point in teaching ten more sentences in the Talmud. Our goal is to have the students want to learn on their own after they leave school and to practice the mitzvot, to have Jewish values and good character"(Interview 11/15/93).

Rabbi Schuster*(CSDS* asst. principal) also reported that there are now more hands-on projects in the Jewish studies department, for example, fairs on Jewish subjects, in order to make learning less rigid. And Schuster* also remarked on the change in admission policy at CSDS* since the late 1980's. In the past, the school had very selective admission standards because the stress was on producing highly educated students, both in secular and Jewish studies. In fact, this researcher remembers serving on the Education Committee of CSDS* in the 1970's and 1980's and can well remember the principal, Mr. Kropkin*, both resisting remedial reading classes and arguing against admitting even mildly learning disabled children. "Thirty years ago," Schuster* stated, "the focus was not for the student to be an observant Jew necessarily, and if a student was not tested as capable of benefitting academically, he was not admitted. Now, we feel we are servicing the religious community, even those with learning disabilities"(Interview, 7/2/93).

Rabbi Shenberg*(MPDS* principal) felt that Meadow Pond Day School*, like many of the Modern Orthodox schools, has

overemphasized the academics and de-emphasized emotions: "There was never any question about education here. The attitude has been teach them Torah-expose them to Torah, and they will be religious....It's a shame. A lot goes into people that involves more than their brain.... We want to have more feeling-more experiential, that is what makes the commitment. They are not going to buy into it because of the intellectual experience(Interview, 2/1/94).

It would seem that the lessened emphasis on academics in teaching limudai kodesch has occurred as the new generation of teachers has become dedicated to the role model method of transmitting Judaism rather than the highly intellectual, text oriented approach previously used. In general, parents are certainly well aware that the current teaching staff in day schools hold very right wing religious views and concentrate on bonding with students in the hope of inspiring them to emulate their more religious lifestyles. Some parents appreciate the enthusiasm these teachers display and find that today's more right wing college educated teachers actually have more in common with the students than the European teachers who populated the schools in the 1940's, 1950's and 1960's.

POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF THE REBBE-ROLE MODEL SYSTEM

Approximately one-third of the parents interviewed commented favorably about the new rebbe system. An observation by Ronnie Seidel (NCHHS* parent) was typical: "The teachers are certainly more Orthodox now, but the rebbe role model system is one I am very happy with. It means there is more teaching of midot [laws about ethical behavior] and so there is more hashkafa [more of a spiritual atmosphere] in the school" (Interview, 5/9/94). Several of the parents who had daughters attending the day schools even complained that the rebbes were provided only for the boys. Rabbi Schein* (Tikva* current principal) agreed that it was the boys who were assigned to a rebbe, while the girls were assigned women teachers but said he encouraged the women teachers to develop close relationships with their students. Parents from DTY* Tikva*, and NCHHS* where the rebbe system is used not only for Talmud classes but for all Jewish studies classes (for the boys) made comments like the following:

My son is taking on a more religious attitude because of this rebbe thing. My daughter is focusing more on Hebrew because she has an Israeli teacher. My daughter speaks better Hebrew, but she hasn't developed as much of a religious spirit as my son. (Esther Brainson, Tikva* parent, Interview, 5/1/93).

Since the girls don't have rebbes, they never develop that feeling of being part of a chevra [a close-knit group] that the boys have when the rebbes take them home for Shabbat or study with them in the early morning or after school. (Ronnie Seidel, NCHHS* parent, Interview 5/19/94).

While some parents praised the rebbe system, others were worried about the more fundamentalist religious outlook and ideology that appeared to accompany this role model approach. The majority of parents did have reservations with the rebbe system, complaining about the teachers' inadequate Hebrew language skills and noting, as the following comments reveal, that these teachers were generally much more to the religious right than parents welcomed and were intolerant of any religious views other than their own:

The teachers in NCHHS*, the rabbinical staff are more to the right. There are no more teachers from Yeshiva University like we use to have. Then we had some degree of tolerance at the school. Now it's very rigid...A very rigid religious point of view is upheld (Sandra Marcus, NCHHS* parent, Interview, 5/5/94).

The school has changed a lot over the past years since my children started school [1983]. They have moved to the right in their choice of teachers. Even for the girls, there are a lot more women from Beis Yaakov [right wing religious yeshiva] or the wives of kollel students. The teachers are very enthusiastic and very sincere and so full of the answers. I think they are pushing religion down the throats of the kids. Certainly, it wasn't like this when I went to the school. These teachers are not good for all kinds of kids. My daughters had a problem with one particular teacher in eighth grade. My girls ask questions and want answers. The teachers belittled them and asked why they were asking questions when no one else was. She said you have to accept things on faith. These teachers sincerely believe you shouldn't ask questions (Yael Singer, DTY* parent, Interview 2/17/94).

Some of these teachers mix into the English Department subjects. I know they had an eighth grade science teacher who was Orthodox but was teaching the theory of evolution and the "big bang" theory. One of the rebbeim walked in and went nuts, and said you don't even talk about it. When I went to this school, the two departments were

totally separate (Gail Messinger, DTY* parent, Interview, 2/17/94).

In the Jewish history class, a very right wing point of view is always upheld. My son doesn't think that just because you are Orthodox, you have to think Israel should hold the West Bank and not give back any land, but when the teacher says so, it seems like most of the kids are afraid to argue. My son was one of the few who objected to the Hebron massacre by Goldstein and objected to the teacher not talking one hundred per cent against it. My son is very vocal, but he says he is about the only one that ever objects or even thinks there is another point of view (Sandra Marcus, NCHHS* parent, Interview, 5/5/94).

One of the teachers, Richard Mintz*, also pointed to a deliberate attempt to preserve a right wing point of view at Judea Academy:

In my subject [Jewish history] there has been a change. Ramaz does not want to start the course from Joshua and The Judges, but instead wants to start the course from the prophet Ezra in order to avoid the fact that during the prior time period, all Jews were not observant. There is now more emphasis on what the Talmud said about things then because Ramaz is backing away from a sociological, historical emphasis that can show that religions are not immune from whatever else the outside community was involved in. They want to avoid any suggestion that Jews were shaped by outside forces. Ten years ago, Ramaz would not have been concerned with this (Interview, 5/10/94).

Joel Wolowelsky, a Jewish day school educator, argues that in order to protect their students from cognitive dissonance, educators in day schools have begun ignoring the plurality of opinions and legitimate halachic perspectives. This is a trend that happens quite regularly in right wing

circles, but Wolowelsky worries that the trend has permeated the Modern Orthodox community as well, a fear that may be justified given the example above by Mintz*. Wolowelsky gives several examples of what this careful revisionism entails:

Rav Yoseph Zevin was a religious Zionist, a political position opposed by many. When his work was translated, a paragraph expressing his most positive appreciation was cut out. The eventual explanation was that after not correcting eleven Hebrew editions of his work, Rav Zevin would have wanted his posthumous English translation to be corrected.¹²⁹

Rabbi Jack Bieler, a day school educator who has contributed a number of articles on day school education to Ten Da'at in the 1990's, feels that there is a conflict inherent between the closed, fixed yeshiva knowledge, where there are specific, fixed answers that are right and unarguable and the open secular system with its plurality of positions. While Bieler's conflict may be understandable, up until the 1990's, the Modern Orthodox day schools did not find such conflicts, emphasizing instead the synthesis of secular and Jewish studies - the Torah U'Madda aspect of day school education.

¹²⁹"Selective Citations," p.13.

CHAPTER X: CURRENT MANIFESTATIONS OF FUNDAMENTALISM IN THE MODERN ORTHODOX DAY SCHOOLS

Many parents feel that schools in the 1990's are deliberately looking for right wing teachers who steer students into a narrow range of religious viewpoints. Parents suggested that rather than simply having no choice because of the limited teacher pool available, many Modern Orthodox day schools seemed to be welcoming the move to the religious right and the swing to rigid, fixed answers.

Dora Felder, a parent at MPDS* commented that the principal, Rabbi Shenberg* seems to hire only women teachers who wear long skirts and sheitels: Even the office secretaries dress like that. The more religious teachers look, the more Rabbi Shenberg* likes them" (Interview, 6/7/94). A Flatbush parent, Mira Dwek, stated her belief that Flatbush was hiring more religious teachers in order to attract frum people from the neighborhood. Although Rabbi Schuster*(CSDS* asst. principal) denied it, Rabbi Forman*(CSDS* teacher) said that the school now specifically looks for women teachers who will cover their hair if they are teaching limudai kodesh. Rabbi Schuster* did comment on the fact that some of the teachers who are graduates of Yeshiva University do wear their tzizit visibly hanging out under their jackets: "If Mr. Kropkin* [the founding principal] had seen this years ago, he would have fainted!"(Interview, 7/21/93).

Suri Levine* (Tikva* teacher) stated that she didn't think that nowadays a woman teacher would be hired at Tikva* if she didn't cover her hair: "It's more because of the new principal [Rabbi Schein*]. He won't admit it, but he will look first at the background of the teacher and the way she looks, her family. If he feels that she is from the proper Jewish background, then he will see what her qualifications as a teacher are. I think that before, what Rabbi Alpert* looked at first was how she was in the classroom, what kind of teacher she was" (Interview, 4/1/93). Levine*, who said that over the past ten years she has noticed that more women teachers were covering their hair, admitted to getting a lot of pressure from the new principal, Rabbi Schein*, because she did not do so. But this past year, Levine* succumbed and now puts on a hat whenever she teaches limudai kodesh, taking it off when she teaches Hebrew language skills.

PREPONDERANCE OF RIGHT WING TEACHERS ENCOURAGES MANY RELIGIOUS RESTRICTIONS

Parents also feel that the preponderance of right wing teachers has affected a number of other aspects of day school education. They point to the dress code, increased social separation, restrictions on Talmud study for girls, and the rise of an anti-Zionist tone as four examples of the move to the right in Modern Orthodox day schools that has occurred as more right wing teachers have entered the Modern Orthodox day school system.

TIGHTENING OF THE DRESS CODES

Although both principals and teachers readily conceded that the day schools had definitely tightened up their dress codes, particularly over the past five years, only the teachers admitted that this had been done for religious reasons (for tzniut, modesty in dress). All of the principals mentioned that educational research studies had suggested that students were more receptive to education when dressed in a neat, restrained, and unprovocative manner, although none was able to cite any specific studies. The new dress codes, requiring girls to wear their skirts at calf length seemed to go beyond the requirements of simply being neat or unprovocative. But the principals attributed the stricter codes solely as a response to extreme fashion changes, in particular, the introduction of the mini-skirt in the 1980's, claiming that the day schools had changed their laissez faire attitudes when the mini-skirt came on the scene in order to let the girls know that wearing such short skirts was not acceptable. Up until the early 1980's, several schools like CSDS* had been rather lax about dress codes, allowing girls in the junior high school to wear pants and not making an issue over forbidding boys to wear sneakers, collarless shirts, or jeans. The mini-skirt had evidently jolted the day schools into establishing or enforcing a stricter dress code, one that would demonstrate students respect for learning. However, up until 1993, the permissible skirt length had been set at the knee. Since 1993, however, the dress code has become stricter

for girls, with the new length set at mid-calf in all of the high schools. With the exception of MPDS* which so far has stopped at knee length, all of the elementary-junior high schools have now also adopted the mid-calf dress code. While forbidding boys to wear jeans, sneakers or collarless shirts could be attributed to setting a formal tone more conducive to learning, requiring girls to wear skirts at mid-calf seems to go beyond what most people would describe as modest dress.

Yet, Rabbi Bakst (Ramaz dean) insisted that the new mandated length at Ramaz had nothing to do with religion: "We didn't change it to mid-calf to become a more religious school, but it just wasn't fine the way the girls were dressed. They would sprawl all over the student lounges in skirts to the knee, and then would say they had met our requirements. So now the skirts have to come to mid-calf. They always look proper, and we have solved the problem"(Interview 2/2/94).

Several of the principals noted that the problem of defining what was knee length (did knee length mean the skirt had to come to the knee, covering the knee even when the student sat down?) had been a problem for many years, and after being discussed informally some time in 1993 at a

Principals' Committee meeting¹³⁰, the principals had decided to eliminate the problem by referring to calf length, a length no one could argue did not cover the knees. Rabbi Shenberg* (MPDS* principal) claimed that he made dress code changes when he became principal, requiring skirts to be at least knee length to bring Meadow Pond Day School* in line with the other day schools (although, obviously that is no longer the case). "We can't depend on parents to instill the idea of proper dress in their children," Shenberg* stated, "because in this community, the women wear skirts above the knee"(Interview, 2/1/94). Indeed, Avner Gershon (MPDS* parent) observed that the school had recently posted a sign requesting mothers to wear skirts (instead of pants) when they enter the school building(men are also asked to cover their heads with a kippah).

NEW CONCENTRATION ON ENFORCEMENT

Rabbi Kampner*(NCHHS*) noted that the changes were really not about the specifics but concerned a new concentration on enforcement. His statements were echoed by Rabbi Benjamin*(Flatbush teacher) who explained that schools now feel they are more in a position to enforce and extend the dress codes because the Orthodox community appears to have accepted more stringent halachic definitions of modest dress:

¹³⁰No Principals' Committee notes are available for this meeting, but all the principals agreed that the idea had been discussed informally for some time.

"If you had asked a teacher or a rabbi in the 1950's if wearing pants or short skirts for girls was halachically correct, he would have said, 'No, but what can I do about it. I can't push it in my school.' But now one can get what one has always wanted"(Interview 4/25/94).

It was obvious, however, from simple observation, that some schools were having a hard time enforcing the dress code as students resisted following the rules to the letter of the law. This researcher noticed that many of the girls at MPDS* were wearing mini-skirts, albeit with black tights. Students at Flatbush were wearing mid-calf skirts, but many of the skirts were slit up the side, showing quite a bit of leg. And the girls at NCHHS*, while dressed in long skirts, showed their defiance of the dress code by not wearing stockings. To reinforce the idea of modest dress, some of the schools, Flatbush, DTY*, MPDS*, and CSDS*, have considered school uniforms. However, schools have been unwilling to mandate this change because parents, already wary about the recent enforcement of the dress code, have looked upon the uniform issue as one more step to the religious right. Ronnie Seidel and Dora Felder(MPDS*) reported that the uniform issue had come up for a vote in 1994, but both voted against it on the grounds that it was just another way for the school to gain more control over the kids religiously, and one more way to have increased regimentation.

DAY SCHOOLS HOPING TO EXTEND DRESS CODES BEYOND SCHOOL DAY

Many of the parents have not openly protested the new skirt lengths, agreeing with the schools that fashions have become too provocative, and that students behave more seriously when they are dressed appropriately for school. However, at the same time, parents are perfectly aware that many teachers wish students to adopt religiously appropriate dress not only in school, but at all times. And as Rabbi Tellerman*(MPDS* teacher) noted, "They don't like the implication that unless their girls dress in long skirts, they are being immodest"(Interview,5/3/94). Gail Messinger(DTY* parent) summed up the attitude of many of these parents by commenting that teachers seemed more interested in the issue of tzniut since they started wearing longer and longer skirts themselves: "They are obviously very sincere, but why bother the kids when the parents do let them dress less religiously. My daughter, who is a skinny little thing in sixth grade, likes to wear short skirts with tights. Maybe the skirt is an inch above her knees. And I let her go around that way. After all, she is just a young girl. What is the big deal?"(Interview, 2/17/94).

Schools are very definitely trying to extend the dress codes beyond the classroom. This past year, for example, the Principals' Committee of the BJE requested that girls attending team activities after school, such as school basketball games, dress according to school dress codes -no

pants or short skirts. Several parents remembered that the schools no longer have cheerleaders at after school basketball games because the rebbes began objecting to the way the girls were dressed. According to Rabbi Finklestein* (Director of Education Department of BJE, Interview, 3/27/93), in the 1950's and 1960's, the girls wore short cheerleading skirts (note picture, Figure 4, p.203) of Ramaz cheerleaders in mid-1950's), and no complaints were raised either by teachers in these schools or by the more right wing day schools whose teams were present. However, by the 1970's and 1980's, the Principals' Committee had received enough complaints so that the BJE had asked Ramaz and Flatbush to do something about the cheerleaders' uniforms. Ramaz and Flatbush thought they had solved the problems by changing the short skirts to pants. However, that, too, was objected to by the rebbes, as according to some interpretations of halacha, females are not supposed to wear male clothing. Rabbi Finklestein* pointed out that by 1990, the problem no longer existed as several of the more right wing schools refused to allow their teams to play in the yeshiva league if cheerleaders were present; even in long skirts, the cheerleaders had been deemed immodest as they jumped up and down performing in front of the audience. Cheerleaders were phased out, according to Rabbi Finklestein*, in order to avoid open confrontation over the issue of proper dress.

From Ramaz Archives



Ramaz Cheerleaders, mid-1950s

Fig. 4

Glancing through the available yearbooks from several of the schools¹³¹, this researcher noted that up until the 1970's, there were many photos of female students from Flatbush, Ramaz, and CSDS* who were dressed in short skirts or pants. For example, the 1968 Flatbush yearbook contains a photo of a student named Eve with the comment, "Eve's good looks, vivacious manners and miniskirts, have made her a highlight of our grade." The 1970 yearbook pictures eight female Flatbush students, all wearing short skirts above the knee, plus a photo of the girls' swimming team, dressed in bathing suits. By the late 1980's, however, there were only a few of those pictures in evidence in the Flatbush yearbook, and by 1993, no pictures, even of after school activities, showed anyone dressed other than according to strict school dress codes.

The yearbooks from other schools demonstrate similar trends. Most of the informal photos in the NCHHS* yearbooks were printed showing students from the waist up, perhaps in an effort to avoid printing pictures of students dressed inappropriately. Ramaz yearbooks continue to show pictures of girls dressed in pants engaging in extra curricular activities

¹³¹Only Ramaz, Flatbush, and DTY* had collections of backdated yearbooks. The other schools were able to supply only a few back copies. Some of the yearbooks were available to make photocopies, but not all the schools allowed the books out of the building. In a number of instances, the school's copy machine was not able to produce clear copies. Thus, only a few photocopied examples are produced in the appendix to this dissertation.

held off campus, such as picking apples at a farm. However, it is evident from a 1981 yearbook picture (Figure 5, p.206) that the girls basketball team was once dressed in abbreviated shorts (picture in 1981), whereas by 1987, the girls team played in pants (Figure 6, p.207).

A review of available yearbooks from DTY* from 1975-1993 reveal that various editions between 1975-1977 had photos of girls in short skirts above the knees, girls in short skirts marching in the Salute to Israel parade, and even an article about a school PTA fashion show with girls modeling bathing suits. After 1979, the photos show longer skirts on the girls, and by 1980, all the girls wear long calf length and long sleeved blouses. While recent yearbooks of CSDS* show the official class pictures of neatly dressed boys and girls in long skirts, one can see from the photos of the CSDS* yearbooks (Figures 7 and 8, p.208) that as late as 1983, it was evidently not against the dress code for girls to wear pants or for boys to wear jeans and collarless t shirts. Indeed, the 1983 yearbook contains a photo (Figure 9, p.209) of a school celebration with girls and their teacher dancing in pants.

Still, the schools have gone only so far in demanding certain standards of dress outside the school day, knowing that this is a sensitive issue for parents. Beverly Moscovitz (Ramaz parent, Interview, 6/12/94) noted that when students go

1981 Ramaz Yearbook



Point-guard Tara Hershman brings up the ball against heavy pressure. Hershman scored 20 in the game and keyed the Renegades' "Thunder and Lightning" association with Diana Zanger, who scored 14.

The key to the Renegades' success was their ability to dominate the boards. Sixth "man" Rebecca Schorsch supplemented the excellent play of starters Rachel Berk, Mandy Goldstein and Diana Zanger.

GIRLS' VARSITY

SHHS	41-8	W
NANC	44-18	W
HATTAN	40-12	W
Fritch	40-4	W
Central	33-23	W
Flabush	36-18	W
YHSQ	37-18	W
JEC	25-32	L
Total	TM, 91	

THE GAME TO CLAIM

112 Girls Varsity

Fig. 5

1987 Ramaz Yearbook



Even the talented Frisch team is no match for Michelle Kleinhans with ball in hand. By beating Frisch, the team took over first place in the league.

Concentration is the key to the game. This key opened the door to many a winning score for the girls' basketball team.

Fig. 6

1982 CSDS* Yearbook

6th GRADE

Fig.
7

7th GRADE

Fig.
8

1983 CSDS* Yearbook

Succoth Dancing

Fig. 9

on seminar, girls are allowed to wear pants or shorter skirts because they are not on school grounds. Photos of girls dressed in pants on the senior seminars still appear in the Ramaz yearbooks (Figure 10, p.211). "But," she noted, "Ramaz wants to be perceived as being religious by the other day schools; they are worried about being considered too different from the other yeshivas. For example, at the Israel Day Parade, the Ramaz girls were wearing long jean skirts, so they would look like the other yeshiva girls." Mira Dwek (Flatbush parent) remarked that a similar situation existed at Flatbush: "When I attended the school in the early 1980's, we were allowed to wear skirts four inches above the knee, but now that they want to break the image of Flatbush not being a religious school, they are trying to create a different image" (Interview, 6/3/94).

Even Barry Eidelman (Tikva* parent), who first denied that Ashar had changed its dress code since he had been a student there, admitted that sometimes teachers went too far in trying to enforce the dress codes outside of the school day. Eidelman mentioned that Tikva* had asked one of its students to retract her statements that a teacher had said girls couldn't wear pants, even at home: "The school spoke to her because we don't generally let teachers say such things so directly (Interview, 5/1/93). Eidelman, who is president of the Tikva*'s board of directors, is aware that many Tikva

1985 Ramaz Yearbook

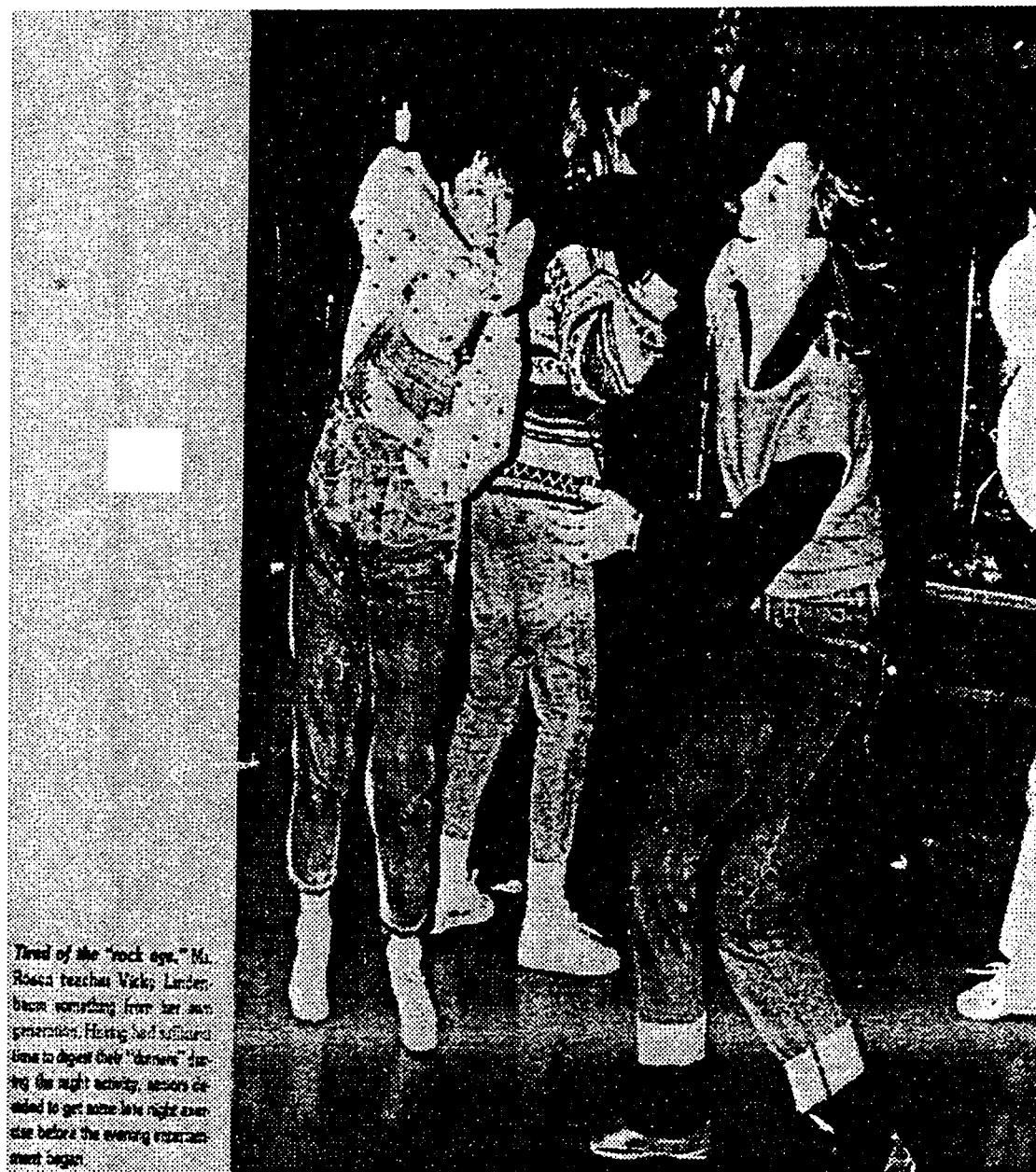


Fig. 10

Yeshiva parents were offended by the zealousness with which the dress code was enforced: "Tikva Yeshiva*'s current principal, Rabbi Schein*, checks the length of the girls' dresses at the front door as they enter the school in the morning. And in one of the older grades, the teacher stands by the classroom door to check the girls for loose sleeves, the kind you can see down when you raise your arm. They are making a big deal over nothing"(Interview, 5/16/93).

Because parents do help shop for their children's clothing, they are aware of the changes in the dress codes and do view skirt lengthening as symbolic of a move to the religious right. Melissa Shapiro (MPDS* parent, Interview, 6/21/94)) noted that the lowered hemline was really the sole change MPDS* had made since Rabbi Shenberg* had become principal, but parents still considered that evidence of a definite move to the religious right. Rabbi Kampner* (NCHHS* principal) felt that there were aspects to the dress code, such as sleeve length for girls dresses and blouses that were tacitly followed("No one wears sleeveless to school even though the rules about sleeve length don't appear in the written dress code because the parents would be upset. It just wouldn't pay"(Interview, 4/18/94).

Primarily, the schools' method of encouraging students to dress at all times in a manner considered religiously appropriate is to hope that students will desire to emulate

their teachers' modes of dressing. In general parents' apprehension about teachers influencing students about how to dress in their private lives does not appear to be warranted. Most of those interviewed mentioned that, for the most part, their children dressed according to fashion standards rather than religious standards when they were not in school. However, in the more insular Modern Orthodox communities, like Tillet* and West Ridge*, and on the more community based elementary-junior high school level, there is some anecdotal evidence garnered from the interviews that younger children are indeed beginning to adopt more tzniosdic styles(although the boys in every community still wear jeans and t shirts out of school). Thus, Michelle Lassner and Esther Brainson(Tikva* parents) of Tillet* note that few girls in Tillet* now wear pants or short skirts. Michelle Lassner stated that some of her daughter Sarah's friends weren't convinced of her home's kashrut because Sarah and Michelle both wore pants.

However, in other, less insular school communities, like MPDS*, Flatbush, Ramaz, and CSDS*, almost no attention seems to be placed on dress codes in students' private lives. Certainly, pictures in the Ramaz yearbooks continue to show girls wearing pants on the Ramaz senior seminar(held at a hotel and therefore totally off the school premises). As a matter of fact, Rabbi Tellerman*(MPDS* teacher) mentioned his consternation at seeing his seventh and eighth grade students dressed in short, mini-skirted spandex dresses at their Bat

and Bar Mitzvah parties he attended: "I found it difficult to believe that the girls who dressed so demurely in school would dress that way when they weren't in school.....The kids certainly know that when you are in a yeshiva, you have to dress differently-with more respect. Maybe they will learn when they are outside school to dress more modestly,too"(Interview, 5/3/1994).

INCREASED EMPHASIS ON SOCIAL SEPARATION

Another change that has brought some dissatisfaction to parents is the increased emphasis on social separation between the sexes, a separation parents feel is being encouraged by the rebbes. The trend is particularly noticeable at Tikva Yeshiva*. The school had always held coed classes in secular studies with girls and boys separated from sixth -eighth grades for limudai kodesch. However, in 1990, boys and girls were separated in both secular and religious studies from the fourth grade on. Rabbi Bienenfeld* (Tikva* teacher) commented that the separation had occurred at the instigation of the teachers who felt that it was more religiously appropriate to stop socialization between the sexes: "Even when separated, they interacted socially. They would share homework projects. Now, they are not even on the same floor. There is much less interaction socially. Even in the lunchroom, they eat at separate part of the room, and the socialization has dropped dramatically"(Interview, 5/1/93). Tikva* teacher Suri Levine* asserted that in the past, she used to teach mixed groupings

when teaching Hebrew language classes, but in the last few years, nothing has been mixed, not even small groups preparing for New York State Regents examinations.

Levine* felt that the new principal, Rabbi Schein*, and a vocal group of parents support the idea of separation and would even like to see it extended down to the first grade. She mentioned, however, that a large group of parents are very unhappy and feel that boys and girls should study together, at least in the secular subjects, but feel the matter is out of their hands: "They feel it is the new stream, the new atmosphere now"(Interview 4/1/93). Levine* pointed out that even school excursions, such as the eighth grade graduation trip to Washington, D.C. are now taken on separate buses, to avoid social contact between the sexes. When asked why the separation had occurred, Rabbi Alpert*(Tikva* principal) pointed to the lack of propriety in today's society that schools must counter by guiding boys and girls to have more wholesome and constructive relationships. When asked how the students were going to form positive social relationships if they were constantly separated, Rabbi Alpert* conceded that there was a problem: "To teach them how to relate to each other is a strong need, and I, for one, believe that where this is prevented, one produces individuals who are handicapped in forming relationships"(Interview, 5/1/93).

It seems clear to parents that the rebbes have succeeded

in convincing many of the Modern Orthodox day schools to adopt the more right wing attitude towards social interaction between the sexes. In a similar manner in which the matter of the dress codes is handled, schools attempt to mollify parents by pointing out that studies have been conducted suggesting that students learn better when they are separated by gender. Although such studies have been conducted¹³², the results have been published after 1990, and the day schools have been separating students by gender before that date. Certainly, none of the principals discussed any of these studies. However, they clearly seemed relieved at being able to point to the fact that secular educators/researchers also held this viewpoint, thus enabling them to avoid any possible confrontations with parents. And, indeed, there could be confrontations. It was obvious in the interviews, that parents are fully aware of the real agenda of the rebbes - to imbue the students with the concept that socializing in mixed groups is religiously inappropriate. As Rabbi Benjamin* (Flatbush teacher) pointed out in his comments on the dress code, in the 1990's, the rebbes evidently feel that they

¹³²A 1991 study by the American Association of University Women indicated that coed education favors boys and discourages girls after fifth grade. This conclusion is reiterated by Myra and David Sadker's 1993 study, Failing at Fairness: How America's Schools Cheat Girls, New York: Scribner's Sons. Carol Gilligan's study, Meeting at the Crossroads: Women's Psychology and Girls' Development, New York: Ballantine Books, 1992, followed the educational progress of a group of girls from elementary through high school and determined that their progress slowed down when they entered high school because of their inability to compete with aggressive high school boys.

now have authority and power to enforce these stricter standards of religious behavior.

PARENTS UNEASY ABOUT GENDER SEPARATION

None of the parents interviewed at any of the schools voiced agreement with this more fundamentalist attitude, although several did accept the premise that separation may lead to better learning habits. Two of the five Tikva Yeshiva* parents interviewed had mixed feelings on the subject. Esther Brainson mentioned that she felt that girls learned better when there were no boys around, with "none of that sexual tension that goes on as they start to develop" (Interview, 5/1/93). However, she was uneasy about the girls getting the "short end of the stick", feeling that the better teachers, both in secular studies and in limudai kodesh, were probably being assigned to the boys. Brainson was appalled at hearing that several more right wing schools in Brooklyn and Tillet* had forbidden students to attend coed summer camps and hoped that Tikva* rebbes wouldn't join in this chumra (stringent halachic interpretation): "After all, at least in summer camp, boys and girls can see each other." But she shrugged when asked what she would do if the rebbes convinced Tikva* to rule against coed camps: "I guess I would have to abide by that because there is no way to fight it."

Tikva Yeshiva* parent Barry Eidelman waxed enthusiastic about separated classes, claiming that it had resulted in his

son's class developing a special class camaraderie. Yet, he, too seemed to be unsure of the need for the almost total social separation being encouraged by the rebbes. As President of Tikva Yeshiva*'s Board of Directors, he felt an obligation to support the rebbes' attitudes towards socializing. Accordingly, he had told his eighth grade son that it was inappropriate to go bowling with a mixed group of boys and girls. Yet, he thought it really might be acceptable for girls and boys to meet together on a Sabbath afternoon with parental knowledge or supervision: "After all, you have to know how to talk to a girl, how to react to her as a person. The high school my son will go to does not permit students to attend coed camps. I think that is a mistake, and I don't know what my son will do"(Interview, 5/1/93).

Other Tikva Yeshiva* parents were adamantly against the trend towards social separation:

I am against the separation of the sexes. I don't believe that it is appropriate, either socially or for learning(Mel Lassner, Interview, 4/2/93).

I think the school is too extreme. Maybe mixed parties in junior high school is not necessary. But that is different from keeping them at opposite ends of town. By high school, it is important to have friends of the opposite sex. Boys and girls have to look at each other as people. It gets to a ridiculous point. The other day, my eighth grade son told me that his friend refused to get on the school bus because his rebbe had told him it's wrong to be in a place with girls, and there were girls on the school bus (Paula Fenig, Interview, 5/16/93).

I don't think the sexes should be separated-it's very isolating. You are, in essence, doing the

opposite of what you intend. You are putting thoughts in their heads that they might not have otherwise. They grow up not knowing how to treat each other with respect. They only know how to act with each other as a sex object. If they are being told they are being separated so as not to have sexual thoughts, they will have those thoughts. (Michelle Lassner, Interview, 4/1/93).

GENDER SEPARATION BECOMING THE PATTERN

The trend since the late 1980's has been to hold separate classes both in secular studies and in limudai kodesh rather than continuing the pattern many schools had in separating students for religious studies from the sixth grade on. Only a few day schools have refrained from doing so. Among these schools are Ramaz, CSDS*, and MPDS*. While Ramaz and MPDS* principals said that their schools and parent body were committed to the idea of coed education, Rabbi Schuster* (CSDS* asst. principal) admitted that CSDS* had considered separating the sexes if the community should demand it: "We are here," he said, "To serve the community, and if that is what they want, we would do it" (Interview, 7/2/93). The pattern of separating the sexes for limudai kodesh has been established in certain schools, such as DTY* and NCHHS*, because the parent body and/or the administration have been unwilling to have girls study Talmud, especially in a coed class. Starting in 1989, however, the idea of separation has been extended as several of the Modern Orthodox day schools no longer have coed classes in both secular and religious studies.

In some schools, such as DTY*, the decision was made against the will of the overwhelming majority of parents, the Board of Education and the Board of Directors. DTY* parent, Yael Singer, reported that at one point five hundred angry parents came to a meeting, but the principal didn't even bother to give much of a reason for the change: "The administration just said that this was the path Judaism would take, and in order to keep the school filled, they had to separate the kids. We all had meetings with hundreds of people, and we all said they would never separate the classes, but they did. But where else are you going to send the kids if you were angry and wanted out?" (Interview, 2/17/94). A DTY* board member, Dr. Herbert Danzger, confirmed that neither the parents, nor even the local community rabbis had urged such a change. Apparently it had been a decision made by the administration and passed through by Rabbi Samuelson*, the president of DTY*'s Board of Directors. Indeed, one wonders whether it was the challenge of a changing neighborhood, with more strictly observant families moving in, that convinced the school to change over to separate classes or whether the president simply seized this change to implement a more right wing approach when the opportunity arose to present it as a smart fiscal move.

Glancing through the DTY* yearbooks, one can observe a definite change as photos of mixed groupings(boys and girls) playing games, in the art room, in classes, marching in the

Salute to Israel Parade give way by 1989 to photos of all male or all female groups. Mrs. Schwartz*(DTY* secular principal) said that students do study together for special projects, like the National Bible Contest or election debates, but admitted that logistics have made it difficult to arrange such joint classes. Schwartz* is happy with the new arrangement because the socializing between boys and girls has calmed down. However, Rabbi Lehman* (DTY* teacher) claimed that the separation was symptomatic of the move to the religious right: "Students now being taken on school trips in separate buses to make sure they don't socialize. The whole center has moved to the right"(Interview, 2/15/94).

Although in the 1940's-early 1980's the question of social separation was not a major issue, it is now the more makhmir religious standards on social interaction promoted by the school rebbes and right wing rabbinic authorities that are now becoming the hallmark of whether a day school is fit to be considered Orthodox. Schools such as Tikva Yeshiva*, Flatbush, and DTY* are shifting over to these standards in order to be considered Orthodox institutions - Orthodoxy defined by the right wing rabbinic authorities in whose institutions many of the day school rebbe teachers have studied. Other day schools like MPDS* and CSDS* are in communities which have been antagonistic to any attempts to separate classes by gender. Still, the yearbooks of both these schools show indications of the school's desire to

downplay the coed aspect of the schools. The only MPDS* yearbook made available to this researcher was the 1988 edition. The two pages of informal pictures (Figure 11, p.223) contained photos of both boys and girls. However, the pictures were arranged in a series of cut-outs, as if to emphasize that social contact was not encouraged. Only one picture (Figure 12, p.224) showed a mixed grouping, and the lone boy is seated at a distance from the rest of the group. There were few photos in early editions of the CSDS* yearbooks, but in later years, the same technique of cut-outs is used, with very few pictures of mixed groupings.

Certainly a shift way from coed learning has occurred at Flatbush High School. Until 1956, all classes, both secular and in limudai kodesh were coed. In 1956, the classes were separated for Talmud study. This past year, Rabbi Eliach announced that religious studies classes were going to be separated. Rabbi Gratenstein*, one of the younger Flatbush teachers, noted that not separating the classes is essentially inconsistent: "I think it is hard to defend the current practice. Either make it coed in all Judaic studies, or separate it all. It is inconsistent that Talmud is separate and nothing else. I have heard it is being done to attract more Orthodox families..."(Interview, 4/25/94). Rabbi Benjamin*(Flatbush teacher) felt that the decision by the school's board of directors was "very stupid and unnatural. I wonder what is happening. I don't think we will be more

1988 MPDS* Yearbook



Fig. 11

1988 MPDS* Yearbook**Fig. 12**

religious if they hold separate classes...At Mt. Sinai, men and women received the Torah together. Being separate in prayers, that is in our tradition, there is nothing wrong in studying together.... The school feels it will attract more students if they are separated, but I don't think so"(Interview, 4/25/94).

At this point, however, secular classes and extra curricular classes are still coed. The mixed dances after Saturday night basketball games which took place from in the 1950's and 1960's have been banned since 1970¹³³, and the Flatbush yearbooks now contain fewer pictures of mixed groupings. In contrast, a review of the Flatbush yearbooks from 1958-1973 reveals several pictures of male and female students holding hands and references to parties and dancing: A picture in 1958 yearbook, page 52, has references to "Sweet Sixteen" parties, an article on page 33 is entitled, "To the Fair Young Maidens," about dating girls. The 1968 yearbook also has an illustration of a boy and girl walking hand in hand, as does the 1973 edition. After 1973, there are fewer pictures of mixed groupings, and most of those involve photos of the drama society's offerings. Flatbush parent Mira Dwek's attitude was typical of those parents who remembered the less

¹³³Heimowitz(1979) reports that the school dances were discontinued by Rabbi Eliach "who took a strong stand regarding this issue and was able to withstand parental and student pressure"(p.75). Rabbi Eliach wished to create a more religious atmosphere at Flatbush.

restrictive social life at Flatbush and Ramaz in the 1960's and were annoyed that the school has retreated from helping students to socialize: "There were dances after the basketball games, and that was good because it was a safe center to socialize in. Now the kids have their social lives elsewhere. They find things to do anyway and places to go, but who knows what they are really doing and how safe or chaperoned they are?"(Interview, 6/1/94).

Although Ramaz continues to be committed to coed classes in both secular and Judaic studies, Ramaz teachers Kammerman* and Mintz* say that certain changes have been made at the urging of some teachers. Mintz* stated that while the chorus is still coed, only boys sing solos at the assemblies. "That," said Mintz*, "is a change that has occurred within the last three years. And even though boys and girls are still in plays together, the rabbis are concerned that there should be no touching on stage"(Interview, 5/26/94). The 1985 Ramaz yearbook (Figure 13, p.227) shows a typical photo of a dramatic presentation. In the photo, boys and girls can be seen linking arms. After 1987, it appears that the photos have been screened so that mixed groups either do not appear (Figure 14, p.228) or are not pictured touching each other. When questioned, Rabbi Lookstein answered that the yearbook was not officially censored, but the student photographers were aware that certain poses could embarrass the school and used discretion in photographing events that took place on

1985 Ramaz Yearbook



Fig. 13



Fig. 14

school grounds.

Kammerman* maintained that some of the teachers are now making noises about kol issa, and others have directed their attention to the mixed social dancing at Ramaz's annual fundraising dinner. While social dancing for students was a part of Ramaz's social life in its early years (see picture of Ramaz's 1950 "Collegiate Dance", Figure 1, p.80) the dances stopped in 1970 as they did at Flatbush. The Ramaz fundraising dinner, however, which is aimed at the parent body and other invited guests, continues to have mixed dancing. To date, Rabbi Lookstein has refused to prohibit social dancing for the adults, although starting in 1983, simcha dancing at the dinner has been conducted with separate circles for men and women. Kammerman* pointed out that Rabbi Lookstein might not want to antagonize the current "religious middle of the road" parent body and board members, many of whom are major contributors to the school. Accordingly, Ramaz's teachers have not pushed hard on this issue.

SOCIAL SEPARATION NOTICEABLY ENFORCED

NCHHS* has always held separate classes in both secular and religious studies, but since Rabbi Kampner* became principal, he has enforced as much social separation as he can. Parent Sandra Marcus mentioned that even in classes such as Advanced Placement Physics, with only a handful of students, Rabbi Kampner* still preferred to split the class in

two rather than have boys and girls in the same class. The change is also noticeable in some of NCHHS*'s extra curricular activities. Comparing the pictures of students gathered at the senior weekend seminar that NCHHS* has held for the past ten years reveals this change. Until Rabbi Kampner* became principal in 1992, the photos in the school yearbook that were taken at the seminar showed mixed groupings of boys and girls with their teachers and seminar leaders. However, starting in 1992, both yearbook photos and photos of the seminars posted on the school hallway bulletin boards show only single sex groupings. Adina Jackman (NCHHS* parent) said that socializing is difficult for the students: It is harder for the girls to meet someone with all this separation and limited social settings"(Interview, 5/19/74).

EVALUATING SUCCESS OF SCHOOLS' EFFORTS

Although Jackman may be concerned, other NCHHS* parents thought the school was just closing its eyes to the fact that the students do not really pay that much attention to the rebbe's warnings about keeping away from the opposite sex. Indeed, on the day this researcher was at the school, she saw mixed groups of students talking together in what was a noticeably flirtatious manner, both in the hallways and on the front stairway landing of the building. And while the NCHHS* yearbook does not contain photos of mixed social grouping as it did as late as 1987, the yearbook still contains remarks about class couples and references to parties, as if students

defiantly wanted the rebbes to know that socializing is still going on. When asked if the school yearbook was censored, Rabbi Kampner* said that he tried as much as possible to keep a "hands off" attitude because the students had to feel it was theirs. Unless the students showed flagrant disrespect for the school, remarks containing innuendos about the students' social lives outside of school were generally ignored as much as possible by the administration.

Just about all of the interviewed parents seemed irritated at the way some of the more right wing teachers at the various day schools were directly pressuring the schools, as well as the students, with the message that social mixing was inappropriate. In truth, however, judging by the interaction in the high schools' hallways, remarks in the school yearbooks, and the references parents made to parties and dating, many of the high school students in the Modern Orthodox day schools seem to be ignoring the rebbes' messages on this matter. It was on the junior high school level, with its younger and, therefore, more impressionable student population that parents seemed more apprehensive about the likelihood that the rebbes and the schools were successfully encouraging an unnatural social separation. Especially in the more geographically insular schools like Tikva Yeshiva* or in schools with a less religiously pluralistic student body like DTY*, parents felt their children were being kept from developing the normal social relationships that would enable

them to function socially during their later teen-age years.

THE RIGHT WING MOVE AWAY FROM ZIONIST PHILOSOPHY

While some parents were quite dismayed over the encroachment of right wing attitudes towards coed social interaction, coed classes, and dress codes, principals did not seemed particularly concerned about these matters. Many of the principals, however, were quite disturbed over the anti-Zionist tone demonstrated by right wing teachers in their schools. While principals all insisted they fully discussed their schools' Centrist and Zionist philosophy with their new teaching staff, those schools that now had right wing teachers on their staff conceded that teaching a Zionist philosophy was becoming problematic. Rabbi Shenberg* (MPDS* principal) stated that if being a Zionist meant loving Israel, he could honestly say that all of his teachers were Zionists. While all of the principals could comfortably attest to this, they also acknowledged that many right wing teachers, while professing love for the land of Israel, will not recognize its secular government. Principals at Ramaz, Flatbush, and CSDS* insisted that they would not hire teachers who expressed this anti-Zionist attitude, but principals at the other day schools preferred not to take a confrontational stance on the issue.

Rabbi Alpert*(Tikva* principal) told of teachers who would accompany their class to a YOM HAATZMAOUT (Israeli Independence Day) assembly program and remained silent when

the Hatikva, the Israel national anthem, was sung. Other Tikva* teachers called in absent on the day of Yom HAATZMAOUT celebrations or taught units on the religious laws of living in Israel when asked to teach about Zionist history, rather than teach about how the State was formed or about the structure of its government. Alpert* mentioned that he knows other day schools where similar attitudes are evinced by right wing teachers, attitudes he claimed would not have been openly expressed or tolerated ten years ago.

Indeed, principals from NCHHS* and MPDS* admitted that a few teachers had felt uneasy about students marching in the Israeli day parade because it implied recognition of the State of Israel. Rabbi Lehman* (DTY* teacher) reported that two of the teachers at DTY* had not wanted to participate in the parade although attendance for teachers is mandatory: "The Rosh Yeshiva (head of the yeshiva) from Chofetz Chaim finally told them to participate because a large parade turnout is necessary for the safety of Israel"(Interview, 4/15/94). Although none of the schools has cancelled participation in the parade, Tikva Yeshiva*, for one, no longer makes it mandatory for seventh and eighth grade students to march in order not to anger the rebbes who protest that the time devoted to practice and marching on that Sunday morning is not as important as Torah study. Several parents from NCHHS* reported being angry after discovering that some of the rebbes wouldn't attend the Yom HAATZMAOUT assembly at the school.

However, none of the parents reported calling the school to register their complaints, although they were uncomfortable with this researcher's suggestion that this indicated to the school that the teachers' actions were acceptable.

CONCERN ABOUT THE NEED TO TEACH ZIONISM

All of the principals interviewed remembered that courses about Zionism had been taught and weekly news reports about Israel had always been discussed in the day schools during the 1950's and 1960's. In those early years after the establishment of the State of Israel, with its embattled halutzim (pioneers) heroes and its very existence in continuous crisis, Modern Orthodox day schools and their students/parents were living through an era of historical identification with Israel. But four decades have passed, and educators have become concerned about keeping up a strong level of identification with Israel. Notes of several meetings of the Principals' Committee of the BJE from 1973-1990 indicate that principals continually discussed the problem of how to teach Zionism to students, who unlike their parents, have no memories of the founding of the State of Israel and may well be complacent or even indifferent to Israel as a life-shaping presence. This concern was also expressed by Jonathan Woocher, writing as the Executive Vice President of the Jewish Education Service of North America in 1980: "...the teaching of Israel must occupy an important and carefully delineated place in our educational

endeavors....Celebrating Yom Haaztmaut and learning a few Israeli songs are not enough. Rather, the teaching of Israel must be approached as a regular component of the curriculum, with all the creativity we apply to the teaching of Bible, Jewish history, Hebrew language and religious tradition."¹³⁴

These concerns, however, are in stark contrast to the views of many of the right wing rebbes now teaching in Modern Orthodox day schools. As Rabbi Eliach (Flatbush principal) noted, "Zionism is viewed by the right wing as a bankrupt movement-materialistic, not rooted in Torah. And anything not rooted in Torah is not considered as lasting"(Interview, 4/25/94). While the Modern Orthodox day schools still officially espouse a Zionist philosophy, as the pool of Centrist teachers dries up, and more right wing rebbes teach in these schools, students are obviously not receiving the same strong sense of Zionist commitment from their teachers as they have in the past.

DAY SCHOOL PARENTS RESIGNED BUT UNEASY

Since interviews with the parents about the religious standards and views of the rebbes and the day schools revealed that most parents objected to the stress on social separation, the interpretation of what modesty in dress involved, and the lukewarm (at best) attitude towards Israel, it was noteworthy

¹³⁴"Israel Today and the Jewish School," p.25.

that most parents seemed resigned to the changes. They did not feel that it was likely that their own more middle of the road religious views were likely to be considered acceptable by the schools. In this sense, the parents' attitudes were similar to the analysis discussed in Chapter III of this dissertation: they suffered from the religious inferiority complex of the Modern Orthodox coupled with a sense of doubt about the sincerity of their own commitment to halacha in lives marked by adjustments to secular lifestyles.

One might assume that parents who were either baalai tshuva or had little day school background might not object openly to some of the right wing religious policies set by the day schools simply because they were unsure of themselves. However, in this group of interviewed parents, this did not prove to be important factors. Those parents (such as Tikva* parent Paula Fenig, a self-described baalat tshuva) had objected directly to the schools. In Fenig's case, she had objected to her son being repeatedly chastised by Tikva* teachers and principal for deciding to attend a coed high school. Some of the parents with little day school background, however, did feel that objecting to school religious policies was useless as they probably would not be able to present a strong case for their objections in view of their limited knowledge.

And in truth, given the hectic lifestyles of many of the

families, with a number of the mothers working full or part-time, and most fathers being too busy to be interviewed, with children staying in school for long hours, it is quite possible that parents hardly have the time to discuss their objections or set up a plan of action. It takes time to organize a protest or even to call the principal, and most families just didn't seem to have much free time in their lives. With parents too busy to raise protests and others too uneducated to present cogent arguments, the day schools are able to exert additional power.

Perhaps, the acceptance of right wing religious stances by middle of the road Orthodox parents in the late 1980's - 1990's also stems from the awareness that their children live in an ever more complex, fast paced, and less rooted world. And in this world, the statistics released by the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey¹³⁵ are compelling truths that involvement in secular lifestyles, living a life that is not insular, has indeed led to what Orthodox parents fear: intermarriage. Nationally, the percentage of Jews marrying non-Jews has risen from 4.4% pre-1965 to 19.7% in 1965-1974, to 39.5% in 1975-1984 to 46.9% since 1985.¹³⁶ Although the

¹³⁵Study commissioned by the Council of Jewish Federations and directed by Barry Kosmin, et.al.

¹³⁶These statistics and the ones following in the next sentence were listed and analyzed by Bethamie Horowitz and Jeffrey Solomon in "Why is This City Different From Other Cities? New York and the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey," p.316.

percentages for intermarriage in New York City were lower, for all years, (for example, since 1985, the New York City statistics were 23% vs 46.9% nationally) Orthodox parents have been stunned at the rapid increase in intermarriage. The well publicized findings have struck fear in the hearts of those Orthodox parents, who by sending their children to secular colleges and encouraging them to combine a religious and secular lifestyle have also opened contacts with a non-religious, even non-Jewish environment. The success of the right wing Orthodox is in contrast. By creating more insular worlds for themselves and their children, they do not run the same risks, for their children are not expected to mingle with the non-Orthodox or the non-Jewish world. With the statistics from the Survey staring them in the face, Modern Orthodox parents are less sure than ever that their middle of the road Orthodox viewpoints will be enough of a bulwark against intermarriage. In the interviews, just about all of the parents expressed such fears. While the statistics have been released only since 1991, all of the parents mentioned friends and relatives whose children had intermarried. It seemed to them, even without the survey results, that intermarriage had been increasing dramatically since the 1980's. In their view, whatever the problems presented by right wing teachers, if it helped in any way in cementing their children's commitment to marrying Jewish (and Orthodox), it was probably worth not making a fuss even if the religious viewpoints were often far to the right of their own views.

Finally, many parents, even those who were the most upset about the turn to the religious right, still felt that the Modern Orthodox day schools were still the most religiously moderate choice out of what was available. Taking their children out of Orthodox day schools and sending them to Conservative day schools was not a decision that any were willing to make. Even if the day schools are not practicing what the parents preach, there is enough common ground for Modern Orthodox parents to stay in the system.

CHAPTER XI: EXTENDING THE BOUNDARIES OF INFLUENCE AND AUTHORITY

Over the past ten years, the day schools have made increased efforts to reach out, encompass, and embrace not only the students but also their families. These efforts have been made in order to combat the emotional thinness referred to by Rabbi Lamm in his comments on day school education: "Our children are taught to recite berahot [blessings] before eating, and their knowledge of which blessings to recite and when is often quite sophisticated. But I do not find these children actually reciting them as a normal and accepted part of their lives at home. There is a concern here about the quality of the observance, the emotional dimension..."¹³⁷ Apparently, Lamm feels that although the role model system in the day schools encourages a deeper religious observance among students, without total family backup, even Orthodox students will not develop whole hearted religious commitment. Lamm's thesis is consistent with what Greeley and Rossi(1966) concluded in their study of the education of Catholic Americans: the school needs the backup of family to carry out its program of religious socialization. And family backup is even more crucial in Jewish education because so many of Judaism's practices are carried out within a family setting.

¹³⁷ "Torah Education at the Crossroads," p.2.

DAY SCHOOLS RESOLVE TO PENETRATE THE HOME

While in the past, day schools had despaired of transmitting religious values and practices to students of non-observant families, today, the concern is also with Orthodox families who do not live the lives of the rebbe role models. The day schools, therefore, are making a more overt and concerted effort than ever before to penetrate the Jewish home, both in observant and non-observant families. Rabbi Jack Bieler, an educator and contributing editor of Ten Da'at, suggests that the "maintenance of a religious status quo for an individual is not possible"¹³⁸. Bieler insists that even the Orthodox family cannot be depended on to provide the proper religious consistency unless the day schools seriously expand family education programs beyond the few programs a year that create such interaction. Similarly, Norman Linzer, a day school educator writing in Jewish Education¹³⁹ suggests that the day school must initiate programs engaging parents in formal Torah study in order to maintain the motivation to carry out their part in religious transmission. Such programs have begun.

THE STRESS ON PARENT ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS

The Jewish Parent Connection, a new magazine which began publication by Torah U'Mesorah in 1993, is aimed directly at

¹³⁸"The Day School: A Modern Orthodox Jewish Community's Reflection or Guiding Light?" p.27, 1990.

¹³⁹"A Perspective on Jewish Education," p.27, 1990.

parents of day school children. The quote on the title page sums up the intentions of the publishers: "He shall return the heart of parents to children and the hearts of children to their parents' (Malachi 3:23). The magazine contains interviews with day school parents who have happily undertaken more religious observances, and includes Hebrew vocabulary lessons, and explanations of various holiday rituals. While that publication is geared primarily towards non-observant parents, Torah U'Mesorah's new program of parent enrichment addresses concerns about the apathy and detachment of Orthodox parents. Rabbi Joshua Fishman, Executive Vice-President of Torah U'Mesorah pointed to the deterioration of the traditional family as the primary motivation for the development of the National Parent Enrichment Program.¹⁴⁰ The program suggests that parents be encouraged to establish a partnership with the school, to feel that they are part of the school's extended family. To widen parents' understanding, the enrichment program suggests day schools hold evening classes for parents, teaching them the same material covered by their children. Several of the schools used in these interviews have attempted to institute such family enrichment programs over the past ten years; however, so far, only a few have been particularly successful.

¹⁴⁰This program was described in Visions, a Spring, 1955 publication of Torah U'Mesorah.

Tikva Yeshiva* and Nassau County Hebrew High School* have had some success with fathers who now attend the Sunday morning mishmar classes with their sons. DTY* reports that about one hundred parents(of boys only) come in on Tuesday evenings to be taught a variety of subjects. The program is specially funded by a private grant. Rabbi Kampner* pointed out that if funds for the girls' parents were donated, the project could be expanded, but so far no one has offered the money for more classes. On the other hand, CSDS* had such poor parental attendance over the last five years that it stopped holding evening classes, and MPDS* had only limited success - a few mothers studying with Rabbi Shenberg* for about a year. Rabbi Benjamin*(Flatbush teacher) says that he has asked Flatbush for years to hold seminars with parents, but nothing has ever been done. Ramaz does hold a weekly Talmud class for parents, but as Beverly and Chaim Moscovitz(Ramaz parents) reported, only a few parents show up regularly. Rabbi Lookstein feels that parent enrichment is difficult in the high schools since most are not really community schools: "The kids come from all over New York, Westchester, and Queens, so we are not centrally located. It's not convenient for people to come during the evening"(Interview, 2/1/94). It would seem, in general, that the schools have not been particularly successful in convincing parents to become full partners in the school's transmission system. Perhaps because of this, many of the schools have apparently decided to assume authority over

matters which cannot be said to fall under the category of school run extra-curricular school activities.

DAY SCHOOLS SUPPLY PARENTAL TYPE SUPERVISION

A certain amount of authority was assumed by the BJE beginning in the early 1980's. Minutes from the January, 1982 Principals' Committee of the BJE discuss the matter concerning a conference sponsored by a Young Israel (Orthodox) synagogue and advertised in flyers directed towards day school students. Although the synagogue's advertising brochure called for students at the various day schools to attend, the principals were concerned that no one had approached them to provide supervision at the conference. Worried that the schools could be blamed for whatever social activities might take place, the principals at the January 1982 Principals' Committee meeting agreed to notify students and parents that participation in such conferences were to be discouraged.

That language and concern is rather mild compared to a decision taken most recently by the Principals' Committee. Rabbi Finklestein* reported that on March 16, 1992, the Kingsway Jewish Center allowed an outside entrepreneur to rent its premises for a dance. As before, the names of various day schools were mentioned in the ad. Although none of the schools were sponsoring the dance, the organizers included the names of a number of the day schools in the New York area to imply that students from these schools would be attending.

Teenagers seeing the names of various day schools would naturally expect the dance to draw a gathering of Orthodox students, and this would encourage them to attend. This time, however, the remarks made at the Principals' Committee (as reported to this researcher by Rabbi Finklestein* on 3/30/93) were not addressed at the lack of supervision. According to Rabbi Finklestein*: "The principals worried about the fact that the dance was an undermining of what the kids were learning in school. The songs they were hearing, the mixed dancing, everything was the antithesis of what the day schools are trying to impart. Principals are concerned that the kids will start to compartmentalize. Kids will conduct themselves under certain standards of religious behavior during the school day, and then act differently out of school. The outside world is vying for their attention, the very songs in the air are antithetical to what we are teaching. The streets are pulling them away"(Interview, 3/30/93). In order to conduct the fight against the currents that attract attention away from day school teachings, the Principals' Committee decided to notify principals that flyers advertising the Kingsway dance displayed the names of their schools. In addition to this notification, the Committee also undertook to ask principals to tell their students not to attend the dance. "Exposing kids to these kinds of social situations," Finklestein* said, "is like lighting time bombs. It's going to undermine everything we do. Principals have to show kids the right way if parents are leaving a vacuum"(Interview,

3/30/93).

DAY SCHOOL TAKING OVER AS PRIMARY BOUNDARY STRUCTURE

In essence, both the church and family should be the boundary structures described by Parsons(1969) which develops patterns of commitment and internalization of religious values. The family, according to Parsons, should act out its part as a boundary structure by reinforcing religious education through family practices at the ritual level. The day schools, however, according to what Rabbi Finklesetin* reports, appear to be taking over the family's role, apparently deciding, as Lamm suggested, that today's Modern Orthodox family can no longer be trusted to play its part in the kind of religious reinforcement and maintenance that the day schools insist is now required. The day schools seem primed to take on this maintenance as the BJE memo indicated. Rabbi Finklestein* was not clear about how many schools had responded to the Committee's request to require schools to forbid students to attend the dance in 1992, but the idea that the schools should be monitoring the religious appropriateness of student behavior that was unconnected with school sponsored activities has apparently taken root.

At Tikva Yeshiva*, as Rabbi Alpert* noted, the school does exert a great deal more increased authority than ten years ago: "Tikva* does reach out to students and makes an attempt to find out what kind of follow up the family does -

what fulfillment and practices learned in school are carried out at home" (Interview, 5/1/93). Asked what kind of follow up Tikva* carries out, Rabbi Alpert* gave the following examples:

A student might mention that he went to Miami for Pesach and went swimming on the first day of Yom Tov after coming home from davening. If that would happen, the school would sit with the parent and with the child and attempt to convey the impropriety of that particular conduct for a family that is affiliated with a yeshiva. In the case of Bar and Bat Mitzvah celebrations, the school meets with the parents and advises them. We would approve or disapprove a certain caterer. Members of our staff could only accept invitations if those caterers were used, and if the parents would not be having any mixed dancing. Then the teachers would come and enhance the celebration by singing and dancing and giving a talk. Also, if we hear about New Year's Eve parties that parents are giving, even just for the adults, or any kind of parties for the kids with mixed dancing, the school speaks to the parents.

According to Rabbi Alpert*, most parents respond positively to such intervention, and would, for example, cancel a party if asked. However, Rabbi Alpert* admitted that some parents did get upset and were then hostile, and a few have withdrawn their children from Tikva Yeshiva*. Tikva*'s current principal, Rabbi Schein* stated emphatically that it was the school's job to reinforce a religious lifestyle: "We think that the Modern Orthodox day school is serving Modern Orthodox families, and it is appropriate to ask them to continue at home what we teach in school" (Interview, 5/15/93). Sometimes, Rabbi Schein* explained, the school has to go

beyond asking. For example, in order to reinforce the idea that boys should always wear their tzizit, Rabbi Schein* often goes to the little league games in Tillet* and offers a dollar to every boy who demonstrates that he wears tzizit while playing baseball.

Rabbi Bienenfeld* (Tikva* teacher) announced quite proudly during the interview that the hidden objective of some of the teachers is to create change in the level of observance of students and their families. "The staff," Rabbi Bienenfeld* explained, "plans how to deal with the problems that arise. Usually the class is spoken to. We tell them that their parents and grandparents were cheated out of normal Jewish education by the War. That certain traditions or ways of behaving developed in American society and have become a habit"(Interview, 5/1/93). In essence, then, the school is telling children that their parents are ignorant; only teachers are educated sufficiently to be considered as proper religious authority figures for the children.

Levine*(Tikva* teacher) maintained that the school's exertion of authority on events in the students' private lives has occurred only over the past two or three years. She mentioned that other teachers also remembered that eighth grade graduation parties given by parents in their homes were always mixed, and even mixed swimming parties had taken place. "At first, Levine* related, "Rabbi Alpert* and Rabbi Schein*

used to hear about the parties and just ask the kids 'what kind of parties are you going to?', but now they don't wait to hear about something, they both come into the classroom and ask and then tell the kids they shouldn't go" (Interview, 5/15/93). Levine* stated that even though the kids don't like being told what to do outside of school, they are afraid of the repercussions. She feels there are probably some parents who still let their children have private coed graduation parties, but far fewer than in the past.

PARENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS DAY SCHOOL ASSUMPTION OF PARENTAL AUTHORITY

Tikva* parent Michelle Lassner said that until quite recently, Tikva Yeshiva* didn't come out with any statements about outside activities, but over the past two or three years, the teachers and principals have been openly requesting students not to go to coed parties or to attend high schools where boys and girls study limudai kodesh together. Lassner felt quite strongly that Tikva* is overstepping the boundaries between parents and the schools. "Schools should stand back," Lassner said, "and say that this is the parent's home and it is their right to make certain decisions" (Interview, 5/1/93). Lassner noted that while her older children still host and attend coed parties, the younger children in the community, who have grown up under the new changes at Tikva*, seem to be adhering to most of the school's guideline on social separation.

Of all the Tikva* parents interviewed, only Eidelman, while conceding that Tikva* had been less permissive in past years, insisted that Tikva* only tried to instill a way of life and did not presume to tell families what to do. On the other hand, Tikva* parent Paula Fenig was particularly infuriated by the school's constantly lecturing both her son and her husband against the family's choice of a coed yeshiva high school. She and her husband felt it was parents who should be in charge of deciding certain matters: "I think their approach is wrong. I think parents should be in charge of certain matters, like checking to see if their kids are wearing tzizit when they are playing ball"(Interview, 5/16/93).

Some parents didn't have as negative a reaction as the Lassners and Fenigs but still felt uneasy about the school's gradual but constant encroachment into what families considered their private lives. Tikva* parent Esther Brainson thought that, ironically, the school actually now talked less against such things as coed parties because there seem to be fewer than in past years. However, upon being asked what she thought about the school asking a parent not to give a coed party for themselves or telling the kids not to attend a coed Bar Mitzvah party, Brainson vacillated in her response but admitted she felt irritated by Tikva*'s exercise of outside authority:

I would feel irritated because.....[She trailed

off] yet, I think if they go to a certain institution....I don't know. Maybe you have to go along with what they want. I don't know.[Started speaking loudly and forcefully] I do get a little irritated, and I do speak with my peers. We have discussion about this. We are irritated, but we do try to understand the institution's side of it. But we do think that at times they are crossing an unspoken agreed about line Interview, 5/1/93).

In each case, parents, while irritated at the crossed boundary lines, felt that a significant portion of Tikva*'s parents seemed to welcome the school's intervention. Still, unlike their somewhat resigned acceptance of other changes in which the day schools had assumed increased authority in areas such as the dress codes, curriculum changes, or separating boys and girls for educational and social purposes, it appeared that parents were more likely to confront the school when the borders between parental and school authority were more directly violated.

MORE PLURALISTIC DAY SCHOOLS TREAD MORE LIGHTLY IN THIS AREA

Perhaps in recognition that they are treading sensitive ground, the other day schools have treaded far more gently in this area, although more extensively than they have in the past. Also, those schools whose population is not as homogenous as it is at Tikva Yeshiva*, or where the surrounding community is not predominantly Orthodox, tend to make suggestions about matters not directly connected to the school rather than demanding conformity to the school's philosophy.

Thus, Rabbi Schuster*(CSDS* asst. principal) remembered that throughout the 1970's and early 1980's, there were incidents where students were invited to birthday parties on Shabbat or where non -kosher food was served, CSDS* simply sent a letter at the beginning of the school year suggesting that dairy food be served at all home parties. This suggestion was made after a number of incidents where non-kosher parents served hamburgers and frankfurters, and kosher parents called the school to complain. Over the past five years, however, CSDS* has sent home a longer letter to parents which specifically states the guidelines for parties. These guidelines include a list of acceptable kashrut symbols on all foods along with a reminder that home parties are to be dairy, that parties are to be held on Sunday and not on Saturday, fast days, or Yom Tov(festivals), and that all party activities be accordance with the philosophy (unstated) of CSDS*. The letter is sent out again with a list of approved area caterers when students reach Bat or Bar Mitzvah age. Asked what CSDS* would do if parents refused to abide by the guidelines, Rabbi Schuster* replied: "Look, we cannot dictate to parents what to do. We can guide them, but the parents can decide 'We know what your guidelines are, but we are choosing to do something else.' What can we do?"(Interview, 7/4/94). Rabbi Schuster* insisted that CSDS* teachers do not involve themselves with discussions about parties, dancing or dating activities. CSDS* teachers and parents all agreed that the school pretty much confines itself to kashrut guidance.

Although Rabbi Schuster* acknowledged that he would take aside a student who was seen eating in McDonald's and suggest that this was not an appropriate place to patronize, but he would not think of calling in the parents unless they took a whole class to McDonald's.

Similarly, MPDS*, which all parents agreed was dealing with a predominantly left-wing Orthodox community, reports that since Rabbi Shenberg* became the principal there is school involvement with all birthday parties as well as Bar and Bat Mitzvah celebrations. Rabbi Shenberg* reported that someone who made a non-kosher birthday party two years in a row, would be asked to leave the school. "Things came to a head a few years ago," he said, "when a caterer dropped off kosher food at the country club, and it was served on non-kosher plates, while the kids from MPDS* got kosher tv dinners. Now we have a meeting each year with parents and discuss what is appropriate kashrut at home parties"(Interview, 2/1/94). However, Rabbi Shenberg* mentioned that the school does not legislate what parents are doing at their own home unless it involves a group of students. And his teachers are instructed to be discrete when it comes to conflicts between what they are teaching and what his students' families observe. Rabbi Abramson*(MPDS* teacher) stated that he specifically informs his junior high school aged students (sixth-eighth grades) not to start a revolution in their homes. "I tell them," Rabbi Abramson*

said, "that I pray that when you are older, you will make Jewish decisions, that you will remember what you have learned"(Interview, 5/3/94). He is happy, Rabbi Abramson* added, when a student informs him that rather than refusing to accompany the family when they drive on Shabbat to visit his grandmother, he simply stays in the car when they stop at the department stores on the way back.

Agreeing with Rabbi Abramson*'s non-confrontational approach, Rabbi Tellerman*(MPDS*) added that sometimes attending Bar or Bat Mitzvah parties becomes problematic when there is disco dancing, but he solves the problem in a discrete manner: "I usually just tell parents I will attend just for a few minutes, not to reserve a table for me. That way, if there is disco dancing or I am not too sure about the kashrut, it doesn't look like I am approving it by staying for the evening. I don't have the right to demand certain behavior from the parents, but I don't stay long if the party isn't traditionally celebrated"(Interview, 5/3/94). Tellerman* added that he knows his students sometimes ask their parents to change their party plans, so that they can be sure he will stay longer. Although all of the parents claimed that MPDS* was making a subtle attempt to move to the right and seemed to be wary about possible changes, none could point to any actual interference with families' private lives. Certainly, all the parents agreed that asking parents to provide food from approved caterers at parties was a

reasonable involvement for a day school.

Both Flatbush and Ramaz principals stated emphatically that they are completely "hands off" regarding private activities like sweet sixteen parties or private proms. Rabbi Lookstein did say that if someone ran a party which was not kosher or where drugs or liquor was served, the school would have something to say, but otherwise Ramaz simply gave a seminar to parents informing them about what is considered appropriate for Bar and Bat Mitzvah parties. Both Ramaz and Flatbush deal with private graduation proms by creating a senior dinner, a formal dinner which takes place after graduation. Rabbi Eliach stated that in the past five years, the number of Flatbush students going to privately organized proms seems to be decreasing: "We are not saying that anyone who goes to a prom will not graduate. But over the years, in our own way, we will get what we would like to see"(Interview, 4/25/94). Flatbush does not appear to be totally dedicated to its declared "hands off" policy. Rabbi Eliach mentioned that he has called parents who host the private proms and asked them to cancel the party. In contrast, Rabbi Bakst (Ramaz Dean) spoke of not being like other schools: "We do not have a policy of interfering. I had a parent the other day call here and tell me that they saw two students wearing Ramaz kippot eating in a non-kosher pizza place. It's bad enough they do it, but why do they have to wear a Ramaz kippah? But I told the parent there was nothing I could do"(Interview,

2/2/94). Since the late 1980's Ramaz has informed students that it insists on appropriate behavior, including eating in kosher places when they are involved in any group activities representing Ramaz. The school also requests that students not embarrass the school by patronizing non-kosher eating places in the streets around Ramaz. Although both of these suggestions were not made before the late 1980's, it hardly represents a major change in school policy.

MORE RELIGIOUSLY HOMOGENOUS SCHOOLS USE STRICTER APPROACH

NCHHS* and DTY*, however, are more like Tikva Yeshiva* in their approach. The two schools are similar in that the surrounding communities are more religiously homogenous than Ramaz, MPDS*, or CSDS*. Although Rabbi Lippner*(DTY* principal) told this researcher that starting in 1980, DTY* began guiding parents in planning Bar or Bat Mitzvah parties that would connote the religious nature of the event, he claimed that the issue was handled in a non-pressured manner: "If you don't threaten, on the whole, parents listen. I tell them this is the way the kids expect it to be"(Interview, 1/4/94). This was not the way Marcia Schwartz* (DTY* secular principal) described the school's involvement:

We interview the parents before they have the Bar or Bat Mitzvah parties. The caterers have to be approved, and there can't be social or mixed dancing....We tell them that the children will be told not to go, and they will listen and not attend. In general, the parents are cooperative (Interview, 1/15/93).

Schwartz* also said that Rabbi Lippner* would feel it was his

right to call up parents and speak to them if he saw students eating in a non-kosher restaurant or knew of students attending parties with dancing. And if the school found out that students were attending Conservative sponsored Jewish summer camps, it was entirely possible that the school would inform Orthodox parents that a more appropriate choice should be made.

DTY* parents Singer and Messinger, who both attended DTY* thirty years ago, stated that even back then the day school tried to stop coed parties, but the methods used now are more overt. Messinger reported that if it is known that there will be social dancing at a Bar or Bat Mitzvah party, the teachers will not accept the invitation and will leave a party if social or mixed simcha dancing occurs. "Teachers," said Messinger, "even give speeches to the kids who are going to coed Orthodox summer camps. They tell them to remember who they are and how to behave as a yeshiva kid. In my day, they wouldn't talk like that"(Interview, 2/17/94). Singer felt that the next step on DTY*'s agenda was to stop students from getting together after school: "They haven't done anything about this yet, but I think they are trying to go to the right a little at a time, and that will be something they probably will try next"(Interview, 2/17/94).

NCHHS*'s principal, Rabbi Kampner*, insisted that the school did not involve themselves in monitoring what the

students did after school. However, he did concede that teachers did not consider social dancing acceptable and did speak to students about the right kind of activities for socializing. Furthermore, Rabbi Kampner* made a distinction between informal activities or parties versus organized activities or parties. NCHHS* parent Sandra Marcus thought the distinction between informal and organized parties made no sense and just gave the school an excuse to intrude into families' private lives. In reference to this, Marcus related the following story:

Last year, Rabbi Kampner* found out about a prom that the students were organizing. They had rented a hall (not through the school, but privately by themselves). The girls had all bought dresses, and the boys had rented tuxedos. But the principal put a stop to it by calling the caterers and threatening to have the vad [the Orthodox organization in the area which awards certificates of kashrut] pull away its kashrut authentication. The caterers got very nervous. He also called the parents and convinced them to back off. I don't know the difference between organized or not organized. In my mind, it was still a privately held affair (Interview, 5/15/94).

Most of the other NCHHS* parents also expressed some resentment at NCHHS*'s intrusion but were just watching to see if any additional intrusions were being planned beyond issues of kashrut and social dancing.

DAY SCHOOLS CITE NECESSITY OF MONITORING EXTERNAL EVENTS

Both Rabbi Lookstein (Ramaz principal) and Rabbi Eliach (Flatbush principal) pointed out that one could understand day schools' involvement in aspects of their students' lives

outside the school day when one looked at the changes in the American cultural scene that have occurred since the early 1980's. Both principals referred to the increasing use of sexually suggestive lyrics in popular music and explicit sexual references and nudity in theatre, movies, television, and magazines. "Thirty years ago," Rabbi Eliach said, "there was no problem going to the theatre. There is a problem today with what you see in the theatre, what you hear in the music"(Interview, 4/25/94). Rabbi Lookstein echoed those thoughts: "Even what the kids hear and see on the streets is not conducive to a life of shmira[observance of the halacha](Interview, 2/2/94).

Perhaps, parents are also aware and fear the attraction the American cultural scene has for their children, for they apparently do restrain themselves from openly challenging the day school when it oversteps the unspoken boundaries between parents and school. Parents do feel that, for the most part, the aims and goals for which the day school strives do match their own aims and goals. All of the parents interviewed cited their appreciation of the new emphasis the day schools have placed on educating students to practice a Judaism which maintains the "highest standards of menschlichkeit in attitude and behavior, reflecting moral sensitivity, personal

refinement and human decency."¹⁴¹ While many parents remained wary of the increasing encroachment of the day schools into the area parents considered their domain, all parents agreed that the Modern Orthodox day school movement was attempting to transmit most of the same aspects of Judaism that parents tried to emphasize: love of Torah, joy in following an observant way of life, and concern for moral development(menschlichkeit).

¹⁴¹These words are from the 1994 "Mission Statement From the Ramaz School" and exemplify the emphasis on this aspect of day school education in the 1990's.

CHAPTER XII: DAY SCHOOLS' EFFECT ON FAMILIES' RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE

Parents who differ with the day school's religious views and resent the increased intervention and dogmatism are faced with the problem of how to maintain their own middle of the road religious stance while not completely undermining the school's overall religious aims and goals. Many parents handle the dilemma by a series of religious compromises, trying to hold the line between a blatant rejection of what the day schools and the rebbes teach and a complete surrender to a more right wing form of Orthodoxy.

PARENTS RETAIN IDEOLOGICAL COMMITMENTS

While there are enough common aims and goals to keep parents from openly challenging the day schools or removing their children, the interviewed parents had not backed off from their own personal commitment to a middle of the road Modern Orthodox ideology. Certainly, they remained steadfast in support of the idea of Torah U'Madda and expected their children to synthesize the demands of religious observance with a secular lifestyle as well as encouraging them to understand that a plurality of religious viewpoints was not unacceptable within Orthodox Judaism. Indeed, only one or two of the interviewed parents said they welcomed the unilateral religious approach of many of the day schools, and even these parents equivocated. For example, parent Ellie Becker (DTY*)

stated, "children should be taught that there are laws. It is very dangerous to teach them to pick and choose. Where will they stop?" (Interview, 5/23/94). Yet, she also mentioned her worry that her children might end up thinking that they couldn't live in the modern world but "should sit a whole day and learn." And parent Marvin Rabinowitz (CSDS*) claimed that knowing what is prescribed, knowing the definitive road to travel, was less confusing for kids. At the same time, Rabinowitz stated: "You need a balance, you need to express yourself differently, not be so dogmatic" (Interview, 11/29/93). Most of the parents were more definitive about their uneasiness regarding the religious dogmatism advocated by many of the day school teachers:

There is a fanaticization of religious observance. Schools are being fanatic about teaching minute observances. It is accept what the rabbis say without being able to think about it. You are being taught blind obedience (Michelle Lassner, Tikva* parent, Interview 4/1/93).

I can't take this "holier than thou" attitude, and looking down on those who don't observe such a narrow path. Everything is so black and white. In life, there are grey areas. They don't allow them any space (Yael Singer, DTY* parent, Interview, 2/17/94).

I find the narrowness very unappealing. If the family is comfortable in the middle, and the teacher is to the far right, they do try to browbeat the kids to be more religious (Gail Messinger, DTY* parent, Interview 2/17/94).

It's becoming like a group of thought police. You have to do what everybody else is doing. There is no tolerance for doing anything different (Beth Spindler, Ramaz parent, Interview, 6/15/94).

PARENTS DO ACCOMMODATE REQUESTS FOR INCREASED RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE

While parents acknowledged that the close relationships that have developed between day school teachers and students have been a great influence on their children's religious development, they still insisted that the final arbitrators of religious observance was the family. Yet, it was obvious from parents' comments during the interviews that many of the parents had indeed made changes in their religious observances at the request of their children. Parents of junior high school age children generally had made fewer or less significant requests for changes. Parents of this age group (11-13) said that their children seemed to know what the family level was and were not eager to challenge their parents over religious matters. When these children made requests, they seemed satisfied if the increased stringency was followed within the family and did not demand that parents change their habits in their business or personal lives. Parents of high school students, on the other hand, found themselves enmeshed in issues of adolescent development and often had made requested changes in efforts not to exacerbate a potentially explosive situation which could drive their children into either extremes of religious behavior as a means of declaring their adolescent independence. Clearly, however, almost all the families were making some changes as their children brought up issues based on what they had been taught in the day schools.

In most of the interviews, however, parents first denied that their children had become more stringent about observing the halacha, and insisted that their children learned more about how to observe Shabbat and the holidays from the home rather than the day school. However, when questioned further, they all admitted to making various changes in religious practices in order to accommodate their children, and all agreed that their children learned much of the actual halacha and background information about the festivals and Shabbat from the day schools. It seemed clear to this researcher that parents simply did not wish to face up to the admission that the day school, rather than the family, was now setting religious standards for the children. Every one of the parents who came from an Orthodox background stated that when their children had questions about religious observance, it was the parents, not the school, to which their children turned. Yet, in the course of the interviews, parents had admitted openly that their children often brought home detailed information about kashrut observance or laws regarding the holidays which contained information parents were either not familiar with or had never referred to in previous discussions with their children.

PARENTS MAKE MOST COMPROMISES IN AREAS NOT GREATLY AFFECTING THEIR LIFESTYLES

Many parents also felt they could not denigrate what the day school was teaching by insisting their children follow

family levels of religious observance, even when they felt the increased stringency encouraged by the schools was not necessary. Simply ignoring their children's requests was not an approach most felt would help their children to develop a positive attitude towards Judaism. These parents, however, generally made compromises on issues that did not affect the family's lifestyle to any major extent, perhaps enabling the parents to still feel in control.

Increased stringency in keeping kosher was the area where most parents made compromises and concessions to their children. The Lassners and Fenigs (Tikva* parents) were typical of those who only took their children to eat in kosher restaurants. However, in these two families, as in the majority of the others interviewed, the children knew that their parents still ate permissible foods in non-kosher restaurants but did not pursue this matter with them. A number of these parents also noted that the family vacation patterns had now become more limited because they could vacation only in areas which had kosher restaurants or rental apartments where they could prepare kosher food. Many families also reported that they now bought home only those packaged foods with marked kashrut symbols rather than just relying on reading the ingredients as they had always done. "I now only bring snacks, even sodas with some sort of symbol," reported Tikva* parent Michelle Lassner, "because it wasn't a big thing to be more kosher. It didn't change my lifestyle

that much, and I didn't want them to get the feeling that they were being sent to learn about religion and then have basic things like kashrut ignored at home"(Interview 4/1/93).

CSDS* parent Merle Phillips mentioned that she and her husband had stopped eating even permissible foods at non-kosher restaurants when their daughters said they had learned that it was not really correct to do so. "When they brought these things up," said Phillips, "I said OK. I didn't argue or even discuss it. I did not want to chance losing my daughters to Orthodoxy by alienating them"(Interview, 8/22/94). A total of one-third of the parents had stopped eating permissible foods in non-kosher restaurants, even when they went without the children. Almost all of the parents reported being much more careful about purchasing food, although several admitted that if the children didn't specifically notice and question them about a particular product, they might continue using it.

Phillips, as well as approximately one-third, of the interviewed had decided to become more observant of other halachot based on information that their children brought home from school for similar reasons: becoming more stringent about observance was a way of strengthening against assimilation, and it also helped their children feel accepted within an Orthodoxy that parents perceived was turning to the right. Phillips, for example, agreed to stop tearing toilet paper on

the Sabbath, to prolong the Sabbath by an additional ten minutes as if to show regret at its end, and gave up wearing short sleeves and pants in order to conform with what her daughters insisted was more modest dress. Other parents reported that their husbands had started going to synagogue more often for weekday morning minyanim. Spindler(CSDS* parent) had stopped swimming in a neighbor's pool on Shabbat (although she admitted that she and her husband still did so when they were away from the community) so that their daughter wouldn't fear that her friends might ostracize her.

PARENTS DO DRAW LINES AT WHAT THEY CONSIDER UNREASONABLE REQUESTS

There are some arbitrary lines that parents (particularly those that grew up in Orthodox households and had an extensive day school education) have drawn. For example, all of the mothers who did not cover their own hair stated that they would not do so if their children requested it. At the same time, however, they were loath to engage their daughters in discussion when their children announced that they expected to do so when they were married. Two thirds of the mothers also stated that they would not stop wearing pants or short sleeves because they did not find the underlying premise for this stringency to be particularly logical. But once again, they did not engage in any discussions when their children began to dress in long sleeves or refused to wear pants.

When approached by their children with what parents considered to be outlandish requests, parents generally responded in the same fashion as DTY* parent Gail Messinger: "Last year, the kids stopped using the knocker on the door on Shabbat. Apparently, their teachers had said that this was not permissible as it was a forbidden mechanical action. I explained that this was not really a matter of halacha but a chumrah [a much more stringent observance]. If they wanted to take it on as a chumra that was fine, but they shouldn't think it was wrong if you don't want to add it on" (Interview, 2/17/94). Other parents said that in cases they considered to be chumrot (such as not washing dishes with a sponge for fear of squeezing water on Shabbat as Tikva* parent Esther Brainson's son had requested), they explained that not only were there considerable variations in practices among Orthodox Jews, there was also a difference between law and minhag (custom). These parents continued to point out to their children that while certain customs might take on the force of a law because everyone followed it, other customs remained as a voluntary act, not a required act. Parents also reported telling their children that they were free to become more stringent when they had their own homes, but as far as parents were concerned, religious observances within the family were based on acceptable and religiously valid past practices.

Although there were areas, like those discussed above, where parents refused to cross a particular religious line,

the most common accommodations were being made in the area of kashrut. The preceding chapters in this dissertation have also discussed the growing tendency for day school children from Modern Orthodox families to become more stringent than their parents in the following areas: increased commitment to daily davening and Talmud study (for boys), more modest dress, and less socializing between boys and girls. None of the parents, however, were refraining from socializing as usual in their private lives; none had stopped watching television or had refrained from attending movies or shows. The changes in the families' levels of observance were centered on more scrupulously observing the holiday or Shabbat halachot, being more careful and stringent about kashrut, and on a slightly more diligent attendance (by the fathers) of the daily minyan. All the parents, however, felt that their children were more stringent about observance and would probably swing over to a more right wing Orthodoxy. Parents also generally agreed that one danger of this turn to the right was their children's growing lack of tolerance and display of scorn for Jews who do not adhere to a strict level of religious observance. This misgiving was linked with a growing parental uneasiness about the increased insularity of today's young Orthodox Jews.

CHAPTER XIII: CONCLUSIONS

The stated purpose of this dissertation was to examine the validity of the theories offered by Kranzler(1976) and Mayer/Waxman(1977) to partially explain the mechanism of the shift to stricter, more stringent religious behavior among Modern Orthodox Jews. Their theories centered around the increasing role of the yeshiva system in the lives of students coupled with the diminishing role of the family in transmitting religious skills and values. Kranzler and Mayer/Waxman hypothesized that the yeshiva education system has become more insular and all encompassing, with a full complement of educational and social offerings, leading students to develop loyalty to their teacher/rebbes who are responsible for their learning, rather than looking to the family as religious role models. The consequences of this role transfer, according to Kranzler and Mayer/Waxman, is that the emphasis the rebbes have put on learning and correct knowledge leads to a dependence on textual authority. Dependence on textual authority in religion is a mode of learning demanding a high level of accuracy, and this focus on accuracy can create a tendency towards a more stringent religious lifestyle. Mayer/Waxman suggested that Jewish education, with its new stress on intense scholarship, rather than on the warmer, more emotive approach more typical of the religious transmission accomplished within the family structure has led to a more legalistic, stringent Orthodoxy.

While several sociological studies have confirmed these theories with studies of the post-graduate yeshiva system (Helmreich, 1986; Danzger, 1989), this dissertation sought to explore the possibility that the theories presented by Kranzler and Mayer/Waxman could be a factor for the increasing fundamentalism noted in Modern Orthodoxy. This dissertation, therefore, was structured as an exploration of the changes in the content, nature, and role of the Modern Orthodox day school and the impact of these changes on religious transmission to students and their families.

This researcher had expected, as one aspect of the study, to analyze the effect of an increased emphasis on textual scholarship in the Modern Orthodox day schools. The comments offered by Gecas(1981) on the differing outcomes of values transmitted through the family versus an educational system indicated that the day schools might indeed be imparting a more conforming and rigid form of Orthodoxy if they increasingly stressed students' scholastic efforts. However, it was apparent, as the comments of principals, teachers, and parents quoted in the various chapters has indicated, that there has been a definite move away from intense scholarship in the Modern Orthodox day school system and a definitive move towards the affective, more emotive techniques of the family. In essence, the day schools have begun to recreate themselves as a family, a family which is warm, accepting, and approving, with teacher/rebbes who serve as admirable role models for

students to emulate. It is the new "rebbe" approach which the day schools have adopted over the past ten years that is the primary factor impacting on religious transmission to students. As Mayer/Waxman have stated (19077:106-110), the right wing movement within Orthodoxy does offer charismatic appeal. The rebbes and women teachers do seem to be genuinely moved people who inspire as well as educate. And the primacy of the day schools in students' lives, which this dissertation has attempted to demonstrate, has provided students with a symbolic insular universe, a form of Gemeinschaft that envelops and grounds them with a sense of warmth and community spirit missing in today's frantic and shifting American lifestyle. Indeed, the school has, in essence, become a community of believers with boundaries very clearly defined.

That day school children are becoming more right wing, more stringent in several areas of religious observance than their Modern Orthodox parents is a given. Parents, teachers, and principals all attested to this. However, the motivating factor for increased religious stringency does not seem to be the result of increased scholarship on the part of students nor on more in depth knowledge of the halacha. Rather, students' respect and admiration for their idealistic, committed teachers has been the apparent motivation for much of the noted religious change. Students appear to be emulating their rebbe/teachers' lives and seem more dedicated

to carrying out the traditions and laws of Judaism in ways their teachers would approve. Most of the limudai kodesch teachers have studied in the very type of post-graduate yeshivot referred to by Kranzler and Mayer/Waxman and comprehensively described by Helmreich and Danzger. It comes as no surprise, therefore, that these teachers are transmitting the much more stringent forms of Jewish traditions, customs, and laws stemming from their post-graduate yeshiva textual study. And they are transmitting these stringencies in a microcosm of the rebbe/guide for life role they are familiar with from the post-graduate yeshiva world.

Of course, the degree to which day school students engage in more stringent levels of religious observance and develop more insular religious attitudes does vary according to the community. It can also vary according to the number of baalai tshuva families enrolled in the schools. As Danzger(1989:330) has pointed out, it is vitally imported for the returnee to feel anchored in a community. The outward signs of this anchoring and identification with a community is accomplished through adopting certain outward signs, such as style of dress or relations between men and women that seem to define the boundaries of community. One could expect the children of baalai tshuva parents, to engage in more stringent levels of religious observance if they perceive that is what is needed to gain or maintain community acceptance.

The more cohesive Orthodox day school communities served as a further reinforcement for the schools. In these communities, such as Tikva Yeshiva* in Tillet*, DTY*in West Ridge*, NCHHS* in Forestdale*, students are surrounded by friends who attend the same schools and follow the same religious paths. In schools like CSDS* and MPDS*, the surrounding communities and the student population are more religiously diverse, with students being exposed to different levels of religious observance. Communities and schools are intertwined, and it was difficult, even after fully analyzing the interviews, to determine in all cases whether the community is making demands on the day schools to move to the right or if the day school are leading the way for the communities. There is no question, however, as has been demonstrated throughout this dissertation, that Kranzler and Mayer/Waxman are correct in theorizing that the increased role of the day schools in the lives of its students have fostered a more committed attitude and a more positive reception to a more right wing form of religious observance on the part of students.

Changes are more apparent in the junior high schools than in the high schools. It is the junior high school principals who seem more committed to and more able to de-emphasize textual learning and scholarship in their day schools, substituting experiential learning instead. This is at least partly due to the scheduling demands of the high school

secular program and the emphasis on high grades for college admission purposes. It is also apparent that the rebbes do have more influence over younger children, as younger age groups are generally are less cynical and therefore more open to the rebbes emotive and charismatic appeal. On the other hand, the older adolescents in high school often gravitate to the rebbes whose religious lives can be emulated either as a statement of adolescent rebellion or as a means of creating a sense of self separate and distinct from one's parents.

It might be of interest to determine if the Yeshiva of Flatbush girls who were described in this dissertation as being "defiant in their dress" or the boys and girls in NCHHS* who were observed socializing in the school hallways stay resistant to right wing directives in their dress and social behavior as they go on to college. Further research might demonstrate the effects of early vs late marriage and/or secular vs yeshiva college attendance (i.e. Stern College or Yeshiva University) on those high school students who appear to be resistant to having religious stringencies imposed on them.

While the major impact on religious behavior for students and their families seems to be an increased stringency in kashrut observance, this change does have some implications for Modern Orthodoxy. The more strictly one observes kashrut, the more restricted and insular one's contacts are, as one cannot easily trust others to be as diligent about these

matters as necessary. Additionally, if an increased percentage of today's day school students and their families no longer eat in other than completely kosher rabbinically authorized restaurants or become accustomed to avoiding events where the kashrut is not up to their stricter standards, or social dancing, mixed seating, or even simple coed socializing takes place, then the Modern Orthodox community will become much more insular, eventually surrounding themselves socially only with others who observe at the same level.

There are, of course, other factors that may have caused Modern Orthodoxy to shift to the religious right. Several of these factors were mentioned by parents, principals, and teachers during the interviews. As NCHHS* parent Sandra Marcus stated, "I think a lot of turning to the right has to do with a person's personality. My second son was a very rebellious type, and he rebelled against religion. But my older son was a very accepting sort, and took on a lot of what he was taught. I think some people are by nature more attuned to religious feelings"(Interview, 5/5/94). However, unless the Modern Orthodox community is suddenly producing more of one personality type than another, the general move towards the religious right must have some other more far reaching factors involved.

Other teachers and parents pointed towards the year of limudai kodesh study in Israel that many high school graduates take as an important factor in the move to the religious right

in Modern Orthodoxy. This, indeed, may be an important factor and might be explored in another study, but of the thirty-five parents interviewed, only three had children who were studying in Israel, and those had not yet completed their year there. Nor does spending a year in Israel after high school graduation explain the more stringent religious behavior of those students still in junior or senior high school.

The increased role day school education has played in the lives of students has influenced students to take Jewish values and rituals more seriously. Thus, the Shabbatons, the chesed programs, davening in school all have enabled students to experience Jewish life more in depth and in ways the modern Jewish family has not been able to supervise or provide. Enveloping students for most of their day in Orthodox day schools has also played a part in shaping students' thinking. Students do not get much of a chance to be presented with other approaches to religious observance or other religious attitudes. As parents pointed out, their children were less tolerant than their parents' generation in their attitudes towards non-Orthodox Jews and did not accept the concept of a plurality of approaches to religious observance.

Not intended as a definitive analysis of fundamentalism in Orthodox Judaism, this dissertation is a qualitative, exploratory study utilizing information obtained primarily from interviews with principals, teachers and parents at seven

Modern Orthodox day schools. The information obtained from these interviews and from other source material can serve to add information necessary to determine if and how changes in the day school system have played a significant part in leading the shift to the religious right in Modern Orthodox Judaism. While this dissertation has been focused on the impact of religious education, one of its findings has been the importance of role models and experiential learning in transmitting a value system. Clearly, this finding has far reaching implications for the American secular school system. Of late, there has been a call for schools to teach classes on moral and ethical behavior as part of their curricula. Yet, in the day school system, the most effective methods for transmitting values were not thorough formal classes or even through informal discussions, but through experiential learning and the formation of close relationships between teachers and students. These close relationships with idealistic, caring teachers motivated students to emulate their teachers, to use them as their role models. It may also very well be that if the American family system is less of a force in moral transmission, particularly in the inner cities, that more attention should be paid to arranging opportunities for students to participate in "chesed" programs and less to what can be taught from books.

APPENDIX A

FOCUSED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS USED WITH DAY SCHOOLS

Questions are to be addressed to current and/or former principals and teachers.

Name of School _____

Location _____

Number of Students _____

Year Established _____

K-8th grade only _____ K-high school _____ high school only _____

1. What would you consider the ideal day school student of the 1990's? How, if any, is this different from what would be considered the ideal student in past decades? The 70's, 60's, 50's, the 40's? Probe for information regarding changes in primary goals of school.
2. What activities does your school conduct now that it did not conduct in the past? Why does your school include these activities now? Probe by bringing up examples such as Shabbatons, model Seder, holding morning prayers at school, directing community volunteer projects through the school, visiting bereaved families as a student group, Bar or Bat Mitzvah celebrations. Ask if activity was introduced at request of parent body, students, or teachers?
3. What activities does your school no longer conduct? Why? Probe for social activities or extra-curricular activities or those involving coed activities: School trips, dances, athletic activities, clubs, plays, student conferences-competition with other schools.
4. What differences do you note in your student body now than in past years? Probe for differences in what kind of families they come from-from more or less observant families, difference in percentage of observant families?
5. In What ways is the school involved in students' lives outside the school day? How is this different than in previous years? Probe for examples such as regulations regarding the kind of outside activities students can participate in: sweet sixteen parties, dating, eating at unapproved restaurants, dress. If answer indicates

schools have increased authority extending outside school day, ask how this authority is maintained. Ask how students, as well as parents, react to this authority. If school has always had these regulations, ask if there is difference in way students and parents now respond.

6. What differences are there between the way the various rituals, especially those concerning the major Jewish festivals, are now taught to students and ways in which this was handled in the past?
7. What differences are there between the teachers who now staff your religious department and those who taught at the school in the past? Probe for religious background of teachers, educational background, social backgrounds of teachers now as compared to the past.
8. If differences in nature of staff, how has this affected your choice of curriculum, texts, aims and goals? What affect has the differences in nature of staff had on student body? Probe for ability of students to identify with teachers as role models versus in the past.
9. What new courses have you introduced or emphasized in your curriculum over the past years? Why have these changes been made?
10. What courses or religious texts have you eliminated or de-emphasized? Why?
11. What changes have you noted in the methods used in teaching the religious curriculum? Probe for introduction of grading system, term papers, types of research projects, special prizes, contests, honors given for high achievers.
12. If coed, do both boys and girls study same curriculum? If not, in what ways are they different? Has this always been the case or is this a change?
13. What changes, if any change has been noted, has come as a result of parental demands, staff requests, board of directors, principal, community rabbis? What has been reasons given for request?
14. What do you feel your school's position is on the following:
 - a) religious plurality within Judaism
 - b) equality between the sexes
 - c) modern approach to critical study of religious texts
 - d) separation of the sexes socially
15. Have these positions(14) changed over the years? Why?

APPENDIX B

FOCUSED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS USED WITH PARENTS

Interviews will be conducted with parents who consider themselves to be Modern Orthodox and who have attended the same or similar day schools similar to the ones their children are attending.

Last name:_____ First name:_____

Last name:_____ First name:_____

Type of community: city_____ suburb_____

Number of years of day school education:

Mother_____ Father_____

Name of day school Mother attended:_____

Name of day school Father attended:_____

Number of children at home attending day school_____

Ages/sex of children_____

School/s children attend_____

Profession of husband_____ wife_____

Economic status _____Upper_____Upper Middle_____Middle_____

Upper Lower_____Lower(self-defined)_____

Description of couple and their surroundings for background:

1. What religious observances do you now follow that you did not before your children attended this day school? Probe for differences in kashrut standards, dress, halacha regarding holiday observance, Shabbat observance.

2. In what ways have your religious observances now followed (if any change noted) changed your family lifestyle? Probe for change in family vacation, travel, eating out, career or post-high school education plans for children.
3. Do you think your children are more stringent about the religious observance than you are? If yes, in what ways?
4. Has your own increased or more stringent observance come about as a result of your child's request? If yes, why do you think this request was made of you?
5. How was this request phrased?
6. What was your reaction to the request? Probe for whether discussion was held.
7. If you agreed to the request, what were your reasons for agreeing?
8. If the requests came from school, what was your reaction to what was being taught in terms of expected religious observance?
9. Where do you think your children have learned the most about holiday rituals and laws-from the school, synagogue, home?
10. What is your reaction to the school assuming authority over outside activities such as birthday parties, dating, etc.?
11. Have you ever called the school to object to anything your child was taught in religious studies? If yes, what did you object to? What was reaction of school?
12. What do you like the most about the way the day school presents Judaism to your children? The least?
13. Do you think the school is trying to emphasize the same aspects of Judaism that you are trying to emphasize through the home? If not, what do you perceive as the major differences?
14. To whom do your children turn to for guidance on religious matters? What sort of religious matters?
15. Do you think both girls and boys should be taught essentially the same religious curriculum? Probe for teaching girls Talmud, for studying in same classroom.

16. What happens when you and your children disagree on religious matters? What sort of religious matters do you disagree on?
17. What do you think is the primary difference (if there is any) in religious observance or attitude between you and your children? How do you account for this difference?
18. Is the social world and activities your children are involved with mainly from the day school or from other areas? Which?
19. What are your children's summer activities/jobs?
20. Do you serve on any committees in the day school your children attend? What is the responsibility of this committee?
21. What is your attitude towards the following?
 - a) equality between the sexes?
 - b) religious plurality within Judaism
 - c) modern critical study of religious texts
 - d) social separation of the sexes
22. What do you think your child's/children's attitude(s) is(are) towards the four categories above?

APPENDIX C

DESCRIPTIONS AND LIST OF PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS INTERVIEWEDTikva Yeshiva*

Rabbi Daniel Alpert*-First principal of Tikva* which was established in 1953. Retired in 1992 and now acting as consultant to new principal. Received his rabbinical ordination in Europe and has a college degree. In his 60's. Identifies himself as Modern Orthodox. Wears knitted kippah¹⁴², brown pin-striped suit, shirt and tie¹⁴³ and has a short, trimmed beard. Interviewed May 1, 1993.

Rabbi Moshe Schein*-Current principal of Tikva*. Was at Tikva* since 1988, first as teacher, then as assistant principal. Attended Keren B'Yavne in Israel for advanced Talmudic studies and received rabbinical ordination from Ner Yisrael. Has college degree. Appears to be in his early 40's. Rabbi Schein* declined to describe himself religiously but by his appearance-full beard, black suit, no tie, tzizit¹⁴⁴ hanging down beneath his jacket, large velvet kippah, one can place him in the Ultra Orthodox category. Interviewed May 15, 1993.

Rabbi Joel Bienenfeld*- Has taught Jewish studies at Tikva* to seventh and eighth grade boys since 1985. Has a college degree and an M.A. in special education from. His rabbinical ordination was from Torah Vadaath. In his mid 30's, wears a pin striped dress suit, has neatly trimmed short beard and a silk kippah. Identifies himself as "yeshivish"(which means right wing). Interviewed April 1, 1993.

¹⁴²Ritual headcovering worn by men. The style of the Kippah can suggest the religious affiliation of the wearer. The Modern Orthodox will usually wear a knitted kippah or one made from leather or suede, the more right wing usually choose one made of velvet or silk.

¹⁴³Those who wish to identify themselves as "Yeshivish", distancing themselves with the Modern Orthodox or the Centrists will usually wear only black suits and black hats. This form of dress is encouraged by the post graduate Yeshivot as a means of a reminder that the wearer is different from those who are not as committed to religious observance. Those who wish to be associated with the Hasidic approach to Judaism will often also not wear ties.

¹⁴⁴Tzizit are ritual fringes sewn on a four cornered garment usually worn under clothing. Many Ultra Orthodox Jews let the fringes hang on the outside of their clothing.

Mrs. Suri Levine*- Has taught Jewish studies and Hebrew language to seventh and eighth grade girls since 1978. She is from Israel and studied in the Israel religious public school system and then a teacher training college for Jewish studies. Is in her early 40's and identifies herself as Modern Orthodox. She does not cover her hair. Interviewed April 1, 1993.

Yeshiva of Flatbush High School

Rabbi David Eliach- Has been principal for the past 35 years. Has a college degree and rabbinical ordination from Europe. A Holocaust survivor in his 60's, he wears a knitted kippah and a grey suit. Describes himself as Modern Orthodox. Interviewed April 25, 1994.

Rabbi Aavi Benjamin*- Now Chairman of Bible Department. Has taught Jewish studies at Flatbush since 1957 when he was recruited from Israel. Has rabbinical ordination from Israel and college degree. In his 60's, dressed in grey suit, wearing knitted kippah, he identifies himself as Modern Orthodox. Interviewed April 25, 1994.

Mr. Mel Gratenstein*- Has taught Jewish studies at Flatbush since 1990. Previously taught at Frisch High School. Attended Ramaz High School and Yeshiva University. In his late 20's, wears leather kippah, dark suit. Considers himself Modern Orthodox. Interviewed April 25, 1994.

NAUSSA COUNTY HEBREW HIGH SCHOOL*

Rabbi Alon Kampner*-Principal of NCHHS* since 1992. Taught math at NCHHS* for ten years before being appointed as principal. Wears black suit with tzizit hanging out below his jacket and large velvet kippah. A black hat sits on his desk. Rabbinical ordination and college degree. Declines to identify himself religiously. Is in his late 30's. Interviewed April 18, 1994.

Rabbi Jacob Masserman*- Has taught Talmud at NCHHS* since 1979. Graduated and received rabbinical ordination from Yeshiva University. In his late 40's, wears a grey suit and a large black silk kippah. Considers himself Modern Orthodox. Interviewed April 18, 1994.

Mrs. Debra Markman*-Has taught Jewish studies at NCHHS* since 1980. She is originally from Israel and studied in the Israeli religious public school system and a program to train teachers. She has a college degree. Mrs. Markman* also does guidance counseling and college placement in post high school study programs in Israel. In her 40's, she describes herself as "frum", an expression that means religious and generally used indicate that one is religiously right wing. She wears a sheitel (wig) and is dressed in a long sleeved, high neck blouse, and a long mid-calf skirt. Interviewed April 18, 1994.

Meadow Pond Day School*

Rabbi Israel Shenberg*-Has been principal for seven years. Rabbi Shenberg* has a Ph.d. in education and was ordained at the Hebrew Theological College in Skokie, Illinois. He is in his 40's and is very well groomed, dressed in a well-cut grey suit and pin-striped shirt. He has a short, trimmed beard and wears a leather kippah. He describes himself as right-wing Orthodox. Interviewed February 1, 1994.

Rabbi Robert Tellerman*-Has taught Jewish studies to sixth and seventh graders for the past three years. Has an M.A. in psychology and rabbinical ordination from Yeshiva University. In his early 30's, he wears a fashionable double-breasted brown jacket and pants and wears a knitted kippah. Describes himself as Modern Orthodox. Interviewed May 3, 1994.

Rabbi Shlomo Abramson*-Has taught Jewish studies for two years to seventh and eighth graders. Studied Talmud in Baltimore Rabbinical College but received his college degree and rabbinical ordination from Yeshiva University. Learned Talmud in Israel for several years. In his early 30's, is dressed in a grey suit with a sharply pressed shirt and a leather kippah. Describes himself as Modern Orthodox with a yeshivish background. Interviewed May 3, 1994.

Ramaz High School

Rabbi Haskel Lookstein-Principal of Ramaz since late 1960's. Graduated and received his rabbinical ordination from Yeshiva University. In his late 50's, Rabbi Lookstein is dressed in a grey suit, has a short, trimmed beard, wears a leather kippah and describes himself as Modern Orthodox. Rabbi Lookstein is also the spiritual leader of a prominent Modern Orthodox congregation. Interviewed February 1, 1994.

Rabbi Joshua Bakst-Taught Jewish studies at Ramaz since the early 1960's and is now Dean of Judaic Studies. Has a neatly trimmed beard and is dressed in a black suit. Has college degree and rabbinical ordination from Torah Vadaath. Identifies himself as being to the religious right. In his late 50's. Interviewed on February 2, 1994.

Richard Mintz*-Has taught Jewish history and world history at Ramaz since 1990. Graduated from Ramaz High School in 1984. Has college degree. Is in his late 20's and considers himself to be traditional within the Orthodox movement but quite left wing. He wears a knitted kippah. Interviewed May 10, 1994.

Mrs. Miriam Kammerman*-Has been teaching Jewish Studies at Ramaz since 1976. College degree and B.S. degree from Yeshiva University in Hebrew teacher training program. Is in her late 30's, and considers herself Modern Orthodox. Covers her hair only while teaching Interviewed May 26, 1994.

Central Suburban Day School*

Rabbi David Schuster*-Has been Assistant Principal for two years. Taught Jewish studies to seventh and eighth graders at CSDS* for twenty-eight years. Received rabbinical ordination and teacher training certificate in Israel and college degree in the United States. In his early 50's. Wears leather kippah, dressed in sport jacket and pants. Considers himself Modern Orthodox. Interviewed July 21, 1993.

Rabbi Michael Forman*-has taught Talmud and Bible at CSDS* to seventh and eighth graders for past fifteen years. Has college degree and rabbinical ordination from Yeshiva University. In his 40's, dressed in grey suit with knitted kippah. Considers himself to be Modern Orthodox. Interviewed November 27, 1993.

Mr. Zalman Berger*-No longer teaching at CSDS* but taught there for twenty-two years(until 1993). Received teacher training college degree in Israel. In his early 40's. Dressed in grey suit and wears knitted kippah. Considers himself Modern Orthodox. Interviewed December 13, 1993.

Derech Torah Yeshiva*

Rabbi Avram Lippner*-Principal at DTY* since 1974. Has college degree and rabbinical ordination from Wears grey suit and large velvet kippah. In his 50's. Identifies himself as Centrist. Interviewed January 4, 1994.

Mrs. Marcia Schwartz*-Has been Assistant Principal of Secular Department at DTY* for past eight years. Taught English at DTY* for six years before becoming assistant principal. Has college degree. Is in her early 40's and identifies herself as Modern Orthodox. She covers her hair with a sheitel. Interviewed

February 15, 1994.

Mrs. Lisa Meisner*-Retired, first principal of secular studies at DTY* which opened in 1940. Is not Orthodox. Has college degree. Interviewed January 6, 1994.

Mrs. Rebecca Glazer*-Has taught Jewish and world history to seventh and eighth graders at DTY* since the early 1960's. Is not Orthodox. College degree. Interviewed February 15, 1995.

Rabbi Gideon Lehman*-Has been teaching Jewish studies to seventh and eighth graders at DTY* for over thirty years. Has college degree and rabbinical ordination from Yeshiva University. Dressed in brown suit and wears knitted kippah. In his early 60's. Identifies himself as Centrist. Mentions that he wears the knitted kippah to show students that religiosity is not connected to the color or style of a kippah. Interviewed February 15, 1994.

APPENDIX D

COMPARATIVE RELIGIOUS RATINGS OF THE DAY SCHOOLS

Although all of the schools utilized for this study are coed and therefore acknowledged to be among the most liberal of the Modern Orthodox day schools, this researcher noted some over-all differences in left-right wing religious dimensions. These differences could be most easily observed in the following five areas: if coed classes were held in both secular and Judaic studies, if boys and girls were separated in extra-curricular activities, if Talmud classes were given to girls, if winter holiday vacation period was held during the public school holiday week of Christmas-New Year's Day, if the schools enforced a stricter or looser dress code. These aspects, and possible reasons for the variances among the schools will be discussed in depth in later chapters, but the criteria were chosen as a quick method of judging whether the schools were all equivalent in holding to a "middle of the road" Modern Orthodox line or were some were less "middle of the road" than others.

The schools are listed in descending order with the most middle of the road religious approach given to those schools with coed classes in all subjects, which give Talmud as a required subjects to both boys and girls, which do not separate the sexes in extra-curricular activities, which do not interfere in outside social activities, whose dress code is less stringent, and whose winter vacations is scheduled during the same period as the public schools. Except for Tikva*, which seems to be edging rapidly towards the religious right, the day schools utilized for this study are not that dissimilar from each other. The high schools and junior high schools are described in two different sections.

Ramaz High School - There are coed classes in all secular and religious studies; all Talmud classes are coed, and there are no attempts to interfere with out of school social events. All extra-curricular school activities are coed(sports teams are not coed, but sports events are attended by both boys and girls). Continues to have winter vacation during Christmas week as do public schools. In 1994, changed dress code for girls to calf-length skirts instead of knee length. Enforces dress code for boys and girls by sending improperly dressed students home.

Yeshiva of Flatbush High School- Coed classes are held in all secular studies. Until 1995, Yeshiva of Flatbush High School was coed in all religious studies except Talmud. Starting in 1995, however, religious studies classes are no longer coed. Girls are given only one period of Talmud per day as opposed to two periods daily for the boys. Honors Talmud is offered only to boys. Boys study with a partner on a one to one basis

(traditional chevrusah method) while girls are taught by a teacher using the lecture method. Like Ramaz, all extra-curricular activities are coed. Continues to have hold winter vacation during Christmas-New Year week. Has same dress code as Ramaz. School year book does not have pictures of girls in extra-curricular activities dressed in pants, as does Ramaz.

NASSAU COUNTY HEBREW HIGH SCHOOL*- No coed classes in religious studies and only in those secular classes (like Honors Physics) which cannot fill two classes. Senior girls are offered Talmud, but plans are being made to make Talmud for girls an option rather than a requirement. Over the past three years, more and more of the extra-curricular activities have not been coed (school class weekends are coed but the activities are not). School does attempt to discourage coed social activities, such as graduation parties. Has winter vacation during month of January to avoid idea of closing school during non-Jewish holiday period. Before NCHHS* was formed, two of the three day schools combining to form NCHHS* did have a Christmas week break. Has same dress code as Ramaz and Flatbush. Like Flatbush, the yearbook does not show girls dressed in pants or short skirts.

Meadow Pond Day School* - All classes in secular and religious studies are coed. Both boys and girls study Talmud. All school extra-curricular activities are coed (except sports teams but attendance at games is coed). School involves itself with outside social activities only regarding kashrut of Bat and Bar Mitzvah celebrations. Principal would like to change vacation period, but parent body insists on Christmas week winter vacation. School dress code requires girls to wear skirts to the knee.

Central Suburban Day School*- All classes in secular and religious studies are coed. Both girls and boys study Talmud. Like MPDS*, most extra-curricular activities are coed. School involves itself with outside social activities regarding kashrut. School has winter vacation during Christmas week. There is little noticeable difference here between Meadow Pond Day School* except for the dress code. Central Suburban Day School* requires girls to wear calf-length skirts.

Derech Torah Yeshiva*- Secular classes are coed. Religious studies in junior high school are not coed. Girls are not given Talmud. Extra-curricular activities are generally coed, but class graduation trips are taken on separate buses. Outside social activities are not monitored. School no longer has winter vacation during Christmas week. Dress code is similar to Central Suburban Day school*.

Tikva Yeshiva*- School does not have coed classes in either

secular or religious studies in junior high school and is also beginning to eliminate coed classes in lower grades. Classes for boys and girls are held on separate floors in the building. Even lunch periods are no longer coed. Girls are not given Talmud. School actively involves itself in monitoring outside social activities and discourages coed socializing outside of the school day. Tikva Yeshiva* holds winter vacation during January. Dress code is similar to Central Suburban Day School* and Derech Torah Yeshiva*.

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