

UCLA

UCLA Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Title

Searching for a Stake: The Scope of Jewish Politics in Los Angeles from Watts to Rodney King, 1965-1992

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/8gk6m3ks>

Author

Baumgarten, Max David

Publication Date

2017

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Searching for a Stake:

The Scope of Jewish Politics in Los Angeles from Watts to Rodney King,

1965-1992

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in History

by

Max David Baumgarten

2017

© Copyright by

Max David Baumgarten

2017

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Searching for a Stake:

The Scope of Jewish Politics in Los Angeles from Watts to Rodney King,
1965-1992

by

Max David Baumgarten

Doctor of Philosophy in History

University of California, Los Angeles, 2017

Professor Janice L. Reiff, Chair

“Searching for a Stake: The Scope of Jewish Politics in Los Angeles from Watts to Rodney King, 1965-1992” traces the intensification of local Jewish political activity as well as the factors that led to Jewish disengagement from local political and civic affairs. It does so by considering Jewish politics within the context of metropolitan social structures, localized ethno-racial hierarchies, and spatial scales. An insidious sense of defeat following concerted efforts to mesh together distinct ethnic concerns with broader civic ones, coupled with a heightened interest in seemingly remote issues, pulled Jews away from the local sphere. Herein lies one of the great ironies of late twentieth century Jewish political life in Los Angeles and beyond: as the American Jewish community enhanced their political clout on the national and international level, they sensed little to gain by participating in local politics.

This project commences during the mid-1960s as Jews, inspired by the rising tides of identity politics, were testing new ways to fashion themselves as a meaningful part of a diverse urban fabric. An array of Jewish leaders and activists saw local contests over electoral representation, public education, and neighborhood preservation as opportunities to wield political influence over their urban surroundings and articulate a distinct Jewish voice in local civic affairs. And yet, by the 1980s, Jewish leaders and activists began to question how to effectively remain engaged in the local political scene. In concert with the Jewish grassroots, they began to increasingly lack confidence in the public school system as an institution responsible for the education of Jewish children and doubt their ability to stem seemingly disruptive economic development and urban growth initiatives from transforming local neighborhoods. These sources of frustration not only exacerbated pre-existing inter-and intra-group tensions, but also forced Jewish community leaders and activists to question the efficacy and responsiveness of ethnic-based political models as vehicles for substantive local activism. Seeking to affirm the political relevance of the Jewish community, various organizations looked towards international and historical issues as a means to stay engaged, though such projects ultimately propelled Jewish communal resources away from the local arena.

The dissertation of Max David Baumgarten is approved.

Stephen A. Aron

David J. Halle

David N. Myers

Janice L. Reiff, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2017

DEDICATION

To my parents, siblings, and wife. Keep doing you.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements		vii
Vita		x
Introduction		1
Chapter 1	<i>Goldwater is Goyish, MLK is Jewish:</i>	17
	The Social Niches and Politics of Jewish Los Angeles during the 1960s	
Chapter 2	Tom, Sam, Henry, and Zev:	65
	When Jewish Identity Politics Met Los Angeles Electoral Politics, 1968-1975	
Chapter 3	Wither the Jewish Love Affair:	118
	Public Schooling and the Pressures of Privatization in Los Angeles, 1970-1980	
Chapter 4	Searching for the Jewish Stake in the Neighborhood:	178
	Beverly-Fairfax from the Urban Crisis to the Age of Gentrification	
Chapter 5	Looking Over There To Stay Engaged Here:	230
	Coalitions and Museums in 1980s Los Angeles	
Conclusion		276
Bibliography		282

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

While researching and writing a history dissertation is often described as a solitary endeavor, my experience has been anything but, as I have been able to rely upon an expansive and supportive network. First and foremost, I want to thank my dissertation committee for effectively guiding me through “the process.” Jan Reiff has been there from the start, helping me form my initial research objectives, providing substantive advice with each draft, and steering me back on course whenever I needed guidance. As a teacher, advisor, and scholar, she has set a high bar and for this I am ever appreciative. David Myers has made this dissertation all the more compelling with his “big picture” questions and assisting me in navigating the messy contours of Jewish history. Steve Aron helped me think through the craft of historical research and where exactly my work fits within the American history field. At various points, David Halle has encouraged me to consider Los Angeles through a comparative perspective. Outside of my committee, Sarah Stein, Joan Waugh, Todd Presner, Tobias Higbie, and Eric Avila also provided astute advice. UCLA was also filled with supportive colleagues and friends who consistently provided positive encouragement as well as insight and were (thankfully) happy and willing to grab a beer and chat about things that had very little to do with “dissertating.” Shout out to Michael Casper, Jason Lustig, Caroline Luce, Arnon Degani, Brian Kovalesky, Jean-Paul deGuzman, Daniel Lynch, Erik Greenberg Karen Wilson, and Caitlin Parker in particular.

I have also found much support outside of Bunche Hall and UCLA. Whether reading and commenting on drafts, helping me conceptualize and refine my research, or treating me to a much-needed cup of coffee, Marc Dollinger, Steven Windmueller, Tony Michels, Bruce Phillips, Lila Corwin Berman, and Raphael Sonenshein were all eager to lend their expertise and gracious

with their time. Thanks to the Western Jewish Studies Association team (Ellen Eisenberg, Lawrence Baron, and Ava Kahn in particular) for inviting me to join their board, always providing constructive feedback, and reassuring me that there is nothing wrong with *not* wanting to fly to Boston in the middle of December. I am also privileged to have been part of a thoroughly productive and immensely enjoyable bi-weekly writing group with fellow American Jewish historians: Avigail Oren, Barry Goldberg, Britt Tevis, Ayelet Brinn, and Geraldine Gudefin.

I am also fortunate to have come across some wonderfully supportive archivists and librarians who were willing to accommodate research request after research request. The list here is quite long but I want to specifically thank those at CSUN's Urban Archives, the American Jewish Archives, UCLA's Young Research Library, and the Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research.

Not everyone has the opportunity to be in a PhD program in his or her hometown and for this I am quite grateful. Even fewer people have the chance and the challenge to examine their hometown through the lens of a dissertation. Living in and studying Los Angeles has allowed me to explore this complicated, beautiful, and endlessly fascinating city in a new light. Perhaps more importantly, being in close proximity to beloved family and longtime friends (and new ones as well) has helped to keep me grounded and fulfilled during the exhausting and longwinded process of researching and writing a dissertation. Sharing meals, holidays, birthdays, and baseball games with a network of loved one has, among other things, helped me better understand myself and my value system all the while allowing me to deepen and strengthen my relationship with these good folks.

My immediate family deserves much of the credit here. Since starting graduate school, and since 1984 for that matter, my parents have offered nothing but love, support, and warmth. Time and again they have provided my siblings and myself with a “home base” (both in a metaphorical and physical sense) that has served as a launching pad. Cheers for making some wise and eccentric parental decisions along the way. As for my brother and sister, I know this is beginning to sound like a bar mitzvah candle-lighting speech, but I am a big fan. In addition to teaching me invaluable lessons about integrity, commitment, and friendship, we all seem to share this psychic connection, sensibility, and sense of humor. Looking forward to more quality time with the two of you and my soon-to-be sister in Kelly. Lastly, I want to thank and express my deep appreciation and love for my wife, Meredith, not least because she has done a fine job of summarizing my research when asked “so what’s he writing about.” She has looked out for me these past few years: without her sharp editing skills, her ability to effectively talk me through the challenges that arose along the way, and her innate kindness and patience, I would not have been able to finish this dissertation. In many ways, this is her dissertation as well and I can’t to celebrate its completion with her.

VITA

EDUCATION

University of California, Los Angeles

2013 C. Phil., History

2012 M.A., History

University of California, Berkeley

2007 B.A. History

PUBLICATIONS

Articles

“Deep Los Angeles, A Roundtable on Histories of Los Angeles in the Twenty-First Century,” with Ryan Fukumori, Daniel Lynch, and Celeste Menchaca, *California History*, vol. 93, no. 3 (Fall 2016), 92-101.

“Beyond the Binary: Los Angeles and a New York State of Mind,” *American Jewish History*, vol. 100, no. 2 (April 2016), 233-246.

Book Review

American Jewish Political Culture and the Liberal Persuasion by Henry Feingold, *American Jewish Archives Journal*, LXVII, no. 1 (2015), 60-61.

Other

Guest co-curator, “Deep Los Angeles,” special issue of *California History*, vol. 93, no. 3 (Fall 2016).

“Organizing Testimonies in the Digital Age” *The Federalist: Newsletter for the Society for History in the Federal Government*, no. 38 (Summer 2013), 5-6.

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

- 2016-2017 Jack H. Skirball Fellow in Modern Jewish Culture, Skirball Cultural Center/
UCLA Alan D Leve Center for Jewish History
- 2015 Summer Fellowship, Feinstein Center for American Jewish History,
Temple University
- 2014 Rabbi Ferdinand Isserman Memorial Fellowship, The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the
American Jewish Archives
- 2014 Benjamin Nickoll Summer Research Travel Grant, UCLA History Department
- 2014 Roter Research Travel Grant, UCLA Alan D Leve Center for Jewish History
- 2012 Graduate Summer Research Mentorship, UCLA Graduate Division
- 2010-2015 Five-Year Department Fellowship, UCLA History Department
- 2007 Matilda Morrison Miller prize in Western United States History, UC Berkeley

SELECT ACADEMIC CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- 2015 “Surveying Liberalism: Jewish Politics in the Age of Heightened Jewish Diversity,” Association for Jewish Studies, Boston, MA.
- 2015 “When Identity Politics Met Electoral Politics: Liberalism, Anti-Semitism, and the 1969 Los Angeles Mayoral Election,” Western Jewish Studies Association Conference, Vancouver, BC.
- 2014 “Suburban Space and the New Jewish Right,” Pacific Coast Branch of the American Historical Association, Portland, OR.
- 2014 “Race, Neighborhood, and the Rise of Jewish Identity Politics,” The 2014 Biennial Scholars Conference on American Jewish History, Atlanta, GA.
- 2013 “Digital Archives and the Curation of Holocaust Survivor Testimonies,” Society for History in the Federal Government/ Oral History in the Mid Atlantic Region Conference, College Park, MD.

INVITED LECTURES

- 2016 “Jewish Politics: Jewish Los Angeles,” Skirball Cultural Center (Los Angeles, CA).
- 2015 “A Cultural History of the Fairfax District during the 1970s and 1980s,” Jewish Family Service of Los Angeles (Los Angeles, CA).
- 2014 “Peoplehood, Politics, and Citizenship in Jewish Los Angeles, 1965-1992,” The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives (Cincinnati, OH).

RELEVANT PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE/ACADEMIC SERVICE

- 2017 Public Policy Analyst, Pat Brown Institute for Public Affairs, Cal State Los Angeles.
- 2015-2017 Curator, Mapping Jewish Los Angeles, UCLA Alan D. Leve Center for Jewish Studies.
- 2015 Co-organizer for “Deep LA” Graduate Conference, sponsored by UCLA, USC, and the Huntington Library.
- 2013-2014 Project Officer, “Sourdough & Rye,” Historypin.
- 2013 Research Team Member, “Ethics of the Algorithm,” UCLA Digital Humanities.
- 2012 Researcher, *Seeing Sunset: Learning Los Angeles*, UCLA Digital Humanities/General Education Cluster.

Introduction

Michael Dukakis, as part of his presidential campaign, spent much of the summer of 1988 traveling across the country courting potential donors and voters. In advance of his trip to Los Angeles, a group of Jewish lawyers met with Dukakis's campaign strategists to craft a specific plan to help the Democratic nominee secure financial and electoral support among local Jews for his bid to the White House. The strategy was quite straightforward: whether speaking at country club fundraisers, Jewish Federation events, or synagogues, Dukakis and his wife, Kitty, were encouraged to emphasize their strong commitment to Israel, the separation of church and state, and equitable health care. At the same time, these Democratic loyalists advised the Dukakises to "stay away from local issues" when and if possible.¹ The Jewish community had been deeply invested in the local politics at the start of the decade, as numerous leaders, activists, and journalists had championed the notion that Jews should and could mesh their distinct ethnic concerns with broader civic ones. Yet, enthusiasm and interest in the local scene had been swiftly dwindling as long-held assumptions about how city politics should operate were overturned, often by simultaneous and overlapping intra- and inter-group conflicts. As such, by the late-1980s, local politics had become an acute source of consternation and distress for many Jewish Angelenos.

"Searching for a Stake: The Scope of Jewish Politics in Los Angeles from Watts to Rodney King, 1965-1992" traces the intensification of local Jewish political activity that began during the civil rights era as well as the factors that led to Jewish disengagement from local political and

¹ "Calendar of Events," Box 13, Folder 9, MS 727, Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives (hereafter cited as MS 727); "Don't be Fooled When You Cast Your 1988 Vote. Here are the Facts," Box 13, Folder 9, MS 727; Richard Mosk, "Memorandum," August 31, 1988, Box 13, Folder 9, MS 727.

civic affairs by the early 1990s.² It does so primarily by examining municipal elections, coalition building, neighborhood preservation campaigns, public and private schools, and museums as crucial sites for the formation of Jewish political identity. It also recognizes the ways in which broad changes in American political culture that expanded the limits of acceptable ethno-religious expression compelled Jews to emphasize their own group distinctiveness. This approach allows me to more effectively understand how questions related to the State of Israel, the free Soviet Jewry movement, the Holocaust, new expressions of religiosity, and heightened fears over assimilation affected and shaped Jewish political activity on the local level. In this way, studying Jewish life in late twentieth century Los Angeles provides insight into the intertwined relationship between American Jewish identity, the opportunities and constraints associated with urban life and the broader metropolitan experience, and modes of political activism.

The question of how precisely to define a distinctly “Jewish” politics and its contours begs an explanation, particularly for a period marked by Jewish integration into the white mainstream and the elimination of most anti-Semitic discriminatory barriers.³ For the purposes of this dissertation, Jewish politics largely refers to the advocacy and mobilization efforts carried out by individuals or organizations that aimed to represent or specifically appeal to Jews with regards to public policies, laws, and government. I am primarily interested in exploring the ways local civic issues were represented and interpreted as matters of Jewish communal significance by leaders,

² To conduct this research, I examined various types of sources, including policy reports, organizational memos, political campaign materials, newspaper articles, oral histories, and polling data.

³ For a general overview of American Jewish History during the final third of the 20th Century, see Stephen Whitfield, “Influence and Affluence, 1967-2000,” in *The Columbia History of Jews and Judaism in America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008); Hasia R. Diner, *The Jews of the United States, 1654 to 2000* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 2004), 259–358; James Loeffler, “Modern Jewish Politics,” *Oxford Bibliographies Online: Jewish Studies*, 2017, <http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199840731/obo-9780199840731-0150.xml>, accessed October 2017.

activists, public officials, journalists, philanthropists, and voters. This includes those who were formally affiliated with Jewish organizations and institutions such as the Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles and the Simon Wiesenthal Center as well as those who operated outside the official structures of Jewish life. Regardless, most of the key historical actors under consideration were conscious (and often self-conscious) of the fact that an identifiable Jewish voice had to be carefully cultivated, articulated, and affirmed to operate as a relevant force in local politics.

During the final decades of the twentieth century, the Jewish community was far from a homogenous or cohesive entity. The city was home to around 500,000 Jews and internal divisions—socio-economic, geographic, and religious—were instrumental in structuring and organizing Jewish life.⁴ Shaped by racialized and uneven patterns of metropolitan development, inter- and intra-city migrations, and connections to the greater Jewish world, it was along these axis points that Jews constructed their own micro-communities, which included upper-middle class Westsiders, San Fernando Valley homeowners, immigrant newcomers, the entertainment industry cohort, and lower-middle class Fairfax residents. Growing out of these micro-communities, Jews developed identifiable political networks and forms of activism that operated in tension and tandem with one other and collectively helped to determine the geographic scope of Jewish advocacy efforts. More often than not, efforts to speak on behalf of Jewish Angelenos waded into contested ideological terrain and spurred competing claims. As Jews wrestled with questions about urban safety, cultural pluralism, racial equality, and community integrity, distinct, oft-discordant, political agendas emerged.

⁴ Bruce Phillips, “Los Angeles Jewry: A Demographic Portrait” (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1986) 160.

This study commences during the mid-1960s as Jewish Angelenos were testing new ways to fashion themselves as a meaningful part of an ethnically and racially diverse urban fabric. In the wake of and in response to the 1965 Watts Riots, Jews increasingly dismissed older Cold War-era models of Jewish civic engagement that downplayed distinct ethnic concerns in the name of liberal universalism. Indeed, the rising tides of identity politics had started to inspire various groups in Los Angeles to understand their civic obligations and priorities through an ethnocentric prism. While open expressions of group distinctiveness and ethnic pride were increasingly celebrated, this public appreciation of diversity did not erase the social inequalities between whites and communities of color.⁵ Jews were one of the few groups in Los Angeles with both white racial privilege and an identifiable ethnic affiliation. As such, an array of Jewish activists and community leaders—counterculture activists, liberal attorneys, middle-class suburban homeowners, and rabbis from various denominations—held positions of political power and prestige through the 1970s. Despite the internal disagreements that transpired, Jews across the ideological spectrum collectively saw local electoral contests, public education, and neighborhood preservation not just as opportunities to wield political influence over their urban surroundings, but also articulate what was perceived as a distinct Jewish voice in local civic affairs.

And yet, in the 1980s, Jewish leaders and activists began to question how to effectively remain engaged in the local political scene. In concert with the Jewish grassroots, they began to increasingly lack confidence in the public school system as an institution responsible for the education of Jewish children and doubt their own ability to help stem seemingly disruptive economic development and urban growth initiatives from transforming local neighborhoods.

⁵ Scott Kurashige, *The Shifting Grounds of Race: Black and Japanese Americans in the Making of Multiethnic Los Angeles* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 277–94.

These sources of frustration not only exacerbated pre-existing inter-and intra-group tensions, but also forced Jewish community leaders and activists to question the efficacy and responsiveness of ethnic-based political models as vehicles for substantive local activism. Seeking to affirm the political relevance of the Jewish community, both established and emerging community organizations looked towards international and historical issues as a means to stay engaged, though such projects ultimately propelled Jewish communal resources away from the local arena. On a symbolic and practical level, the 1992 Los Angeles Riots represented the culmination of the political disinvestment process. As the city found itself in a moment of intense crisis, Jewish stakeholders did not know what role to assume.

I consider Jewish politics within the context of metropolitan social/spatial structures and localized ethno-racial hierarchies in order to tell a story that is anchored in the particularities of Los Angeles's social geography and the Jewish experience therein. The patterns of spatial development in Los Angeles help to confound the typical "white flight" narrative, whereby federal transportation and housing policies and the growing minority population incentivized upwardly mobile whites to move to new suburban developments outside of the city.⁶ In Los Angeles, however, new suburban developments were often located within the sprawling city. Unlike the Jews of the Midwest and East Coast who left the urban core and relocated to suburban communities outside of the city, a significant percentage of the Jews in Los Angeles who opted for the comforts and security of suburban life moved to the San Fernando Valley, which was located within the municipality of Los Angeles.⁷ Thus, Jewish suburbanites in the San Fernando

⁶ Arnold R. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago, 1940-1960* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983); Kenneth Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987); Thomas J. Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

⁷ A significant percentage of Jews also lived in Beverly Hills, an independent municipality that was surrounded by the City of Los Angeles. Bruce A. Phillips, "Not Quite White: The Emergence of Jewish 'Ethnoburbs' in Los

Valley, to a greater extent than their counterparts in other major cities, played an active and direct role in citywide advocacy campaigns, particularly those related to public education.⁸ The history of the Beverly-Fairfax, a traditionally Jewish neighborhood in Los Angeles, also deviates from identifiable patterns in other cities. Like other neighborhoods of first and second settlement throughout the country, Beverly-Fairfax served as a site of nostalgia and an emblem of cultural authenticity for upwardly mobile Jews who grew up in the area but had since relocated to suburbia; yet, Beverly-Fairfax was distinctive because it was not simply a site of Jewish memory but was also home to a majority Jewish population through the 1980s. As such, both on-the-ground residential realities and symbolic concerns animated debates about Beverly-Fairfax and its supposed role as the epicenter of Jewish life in Los Angeles.

While firmly grounded in the local, I do not argue that the Jewish experience in Los Angeles was altogether exceptional or immune from broader nationwide metropolitan trends. The socio-economic status of Jews in Los Angeles was fairly similar to that of other cities with large Jewish populations. Uneven patterns of upward mobility produced stark Jewish class divisions, though on the aggregate Jews had more access to political and social resources than communities

Angeles 1920–2010,” *American Jewish History* 100, no. 1 (2016): 86–87. Also see Eli Lederhendler, *New York Jews and the Decline of Urban Ethnicity, 1950-1970* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2001), 148–54; Judith Goldstein, *Inventing Great Neck: Jewish Identity and the American Dream* (Piscataway, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2006); Jeffrey S. Gurock, *Jews in Gotham: New York Jews in a Changing City, 1920-2010*, City of Promises, vol. 3 (New York: New York University Press, 2012), 155; Jack Schneider, “Escape from Los Angeles: White Flight from Los Angeles and Its Schools, 1960-1980,” *Journal of Urban History* 34, no. 6 (2008); Phillips, “Los Angeles Jewry: A Demographic Portrait,” 134–37.

⁸ Lila Corwin Berman’s recent study on Jewish politics in twentieth-century Detroit provides an intriguing point of comparison. While most Jews during the postwar period migrated to suburban neighborhoods outside Detroit, they maintained a loose connection to the city through a form of “metropolitan urbanism” that was predicated upon liberal capitalist values. Lila Corwin Berman, *Metropolitan Jews: Politics, Race, and Religion in Postwar Detroit* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2015). For more on how Los Angeles’s suburban enclaves located within city boundaries helped to generate particular forms of political activism, see Laura R. Barraclough, *Making the San Fernando Valley: Rural Landscapes, Urban Development, and White Privilege* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011); Jean-Paul de Guzman, “‘And Make the San Fernando Valley My Home:’ Contested Spaces, Identities, and Activism on the Edge of Los Angeles” (Ph.D., University of California, Los Angeles, 2014).

of color.⁹ From these shared vantage points, city-dwelling Jews simultaneously contemplated and actively engaged in discussions with one another around civic responsibility, urban betterment, inter-group relations, and Jewish self-assertion.¹⁰ While the multiracial composition of Los Angeles certainly complicated the white/black racial dichotomy that organized most American metropolitan areas, Jewish leaders in Los Angeles, informed by the nationalizing thrust of the civil rights movement, emphasized the importance of black-Jewish relations.¹¹ Reinforcing this bent, the Jews who migrated en masse from Northeastern and Midwest cities to Los Angeles during the postwar years and increased the city's Jewish population threefold, brought to their new home an understanding of the ethno-racial status of Jews in relation to the so-called black/white binary.¹² Thus, for a variety of reasons, black/Jewish dynamics operated as the key litmus test for how Jews understood their role as both advocates for and critics of liberalism and productive inter-group relations in Los Angeles.¹³

⁹ Eric Goldstein, *The Price of Whiteness: Jews, Race, and American Identity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006); Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999).

¹⁰ For more on the Jewish experience in other American cities during this period, see Ellen Eisenberg, Ava F. Kahn, and William Toll, *Jews of the Pacific Coast: Reinventing Community on America's Edge* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2009); Barry Goldberg, "'The World of Our Children': Jews, Puerto Ricans, and the Politics of Place and Race on the Lower East Side, 1963-1993" (Ph.D., CUNY Graduate Center, 2017); Deborah Dash Moore, *To the Golden Cities: Pursuing the American Jewish Dream in Miami and L.A.* (New York: Free Press, 1994); Beryl Satter, *Family Properties: How the Struggle Over Race and Real Estate Transformed Chicago and Urban America* (New York: Picador, 2010); Joshua Zeitz, *White Ethnic New York: Jews, Catholics, and the Shaping of Postwar Politics* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007).

¹¹ The demographics of Los Angeles also incentivized blacks and Jewish liberals to try to form coalitions with one another. Indeed, during the 1960s both groups constituted a minority of the population and needed to pursue alliances with one another to gain political power at City Hall. Raphael Sonenshein, *Politics in Black and White: Race and Power in Los Angeles* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

¹² For more on these migrations, see Moore, *To the Golden Cities*, 47, 54; William R. Ferris et al., "Regionalism: The Significance of Place in American Jewish Life," *American Jewish History* 93, no. 2 (2007): 125–26.

¹³ For more on black/Jewish relations, see Murray Friedman, *What Went Wrong? The Creation and Collapse of the Black-Jewish Alliance* (New York: The Free Press, 1995); Cheryl Lynn Greenberg, *Troubling the Waters: Black-Jewish Relations in the American Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006); Jonathan Kaufman, *Broken Alliance: The Turbulent Times Between Blacks and Jews in America* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1988); Jerald Podair, *The Strike That Changed New York: Blacks, Whites, and the Ocean Hill-Brownsville Crisis* (New Haven:

By recognizing how exactly the Jewish experience in Los Angeles converged or alternatively diverged with what transpired in other cities, I seek to more effectively integrate Los Angeles into the broader narrative of American Jewish history.¹⁴ Most studies of Los Angeles Jewry approach Los Angeles by emphasizing its differences from other cities and focus on the ways in which its Jews created a unique form of ethno-religious identity that valued individualism and innovation.¹⁵ As a leading scholar of American Jewry, Deborah Dash Moore has been instrumental in advancing the trope of Los Angeles as a welcoming and accommodating frontier environment where Jews were able to accomplish what they could not in Midwestern and East Coast cities due to entrenched social hierarchies.¹⁶ According to Moore and the scholars that followed her lead, Jews took advantage of these hospitable circumstances and reinvented American Jewish culture and American Judaism as a lifestyle choice that highly valued communal experimentation and personal freedom.¹⁷ The problem with this characterization is that it not only marks the Jewish experience in Los Angeles as fundamentally distinct, but also leaves little room to recognize when Jews in Los Angeles were denied the opportunity to

Yale University Press, 2002), 143–44, 209; Jack Salzman and Cornel West, *Struggles in the Promised Land: Towards a History of Black-Jewish Relations in the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

¹⁴ Here, I am building off an article that I wrote for the April 2016 issue of *American Jewish History* that examines why historians of American Jewry have emphasized the differences between New York and Los Angeles as a way to approach and frame Los Angeles and what this focus has obscured. Max D. Baumgarten, “Beyond the Binary: Los Angeles and a New York State of Mind,” *American Jewish History* 100, no. 2 (2016): 233–46.

¹⁵ Not all historians of Jewish Los Angeles are intent on chronicling the ways in which the city provided fruitful opportunities for innovation. See Ellen Eisenberg, *The First to Cry down Injustice: Western Jews and Japanese Removal during WWII* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2008); Caroline Luce, “Visions of a Jewish Future: The Jewish Bakers Union and Yiddish Culture in East Los Angeles, 1908-1942” (Ph.D. University of California, Los Angeles, 2013).

¹⁶ Moore, *To the Golden Cities*.

¹⁷ Other scholars that have cited and expanded upon Moore’s analysis include Caryn Aviv and David Shneer, *The End of the Jewish Diaspora* (New York: New York University Press, 2005); Josh Kun, “White Christmases and Hanukkah Mambos: Jews and the Making of Popular Music in L.A.,” in *Jews in the Los Angeles Mosaic*, ed. Karen S. Wilson (Los Angeles: Autry National Center of the American West, in association with University of California Press, 2013); David J. Leonard, “‘No Jews and No Coloreds Are Welcome in This Town’: Constructing Coalitions in Post/War Los Angeles” (Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley, 2002).

reinvent and reshape the contours of Jewish life and how they contended with their own hardships and social conflicts. What's also lost in this equation is a way to understand and appreciate Los Angeles—with its complex ethno-racial hierarchies, social structures, and political cultures—as a revealing case study with widely applicable lessons. My dissertation considers Los Angeles as a place of Jewish significance in order to simultaneously reinforce and challenge assumptions about Jewish life during the final decades of the 20th Century, particularly those related to race, liberalism, social mobility, and assimilation.

The question of how to characterize and explain American Jewish political identity and activity has long preoccupied historians of American Jewry. Standing at the center of most discussions on Jewish politics is the topic of liberalism and the strong Jewish attachment to a liberal tradition associated with a concern for social welfare programs, civil rights causes, and equality of opportunity. In seeking to explain this relationship, Marc Dollinger identifies liberalism as a pragmatic political strategy; American Jewish organizations helped to shape and advocate for a liberal agenda whose message of pluralism and civic equality promoted Jewish social inclusion.¹⁸ On a similar note, Lila Corwin Berman argues that midcentury rabbis and Jewish intellectuals devised a public language of Jewishness that highlighted the compatibility between seemingly distinct Jewish behavior and liberal democratic ideals in an effort to ensure American Jewish survival.¹⁹ Other scholars have sought to challenge the centrality of liberalism and explore Jewish political activity on the other side of the ideological spectrum. Studies by Nathan Abrams, Michael Staub, and Ronnie Grinberg examine an influential cohort of Jewish

¹⁸ Marc Dollinger, *Quest for Inclusion: Jews and Liberalism in Modern America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000). Also see Stuart Svonkin, *Jews Against Prejudice: American Jews and the Fight for Civil Liberties* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997).

¹⁹ Lila Corwin Berman, *Speaking of Jews: Rabbis, Intellectuals, and the Creation of an American Public Identity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009).

policy makers and intellectuals in New York City and Washington D.C. who advocated for a moderate form of political conservatism that valued minimal government interference and the prerogatives of family and religion.²⁰

This dissertation challenges these debates and analyses about American Jewish identity in two key ways. Within the framework of metropolitan politics, it complicates the notion of a rigid liberal-conservative binary as the key driving force of American Jewish political behavior. While acknowledging the resonance of these general categories, Jewish organizations, activists, and voters did not consistently operate along neat political lines.²¹ Jewish Angelenos, even while identifying with traditional political labels, approached questions about local governance and public policies primarily by considering how relevant debates would affect their opportunities to influence the local political conversation and shape what was perceived as the greater urban good. Much of this was informed by on-the-ground political and social realities and the plethora of competing interests within the large and heterogeneous metropolis. Whether due to public funding pressures, the varying priorities within coalitions, or internal contests for communal legitimacy and influence, Jewish leaders and activists were forced into arduous political compromises with Jews and non-Jews alike that ultimately diluted the original intent of proposed policies. Such inter-and intra-group negotiations frequently placed civically engaged Jews in unexpected ideological positions and forced them to engage with complex and uncomfortable questions regarding their own socio-economic privileges. This turned out to be an especially

²⁰ Nathan Abrams, *Norman Podhoretz and Commentary Magazine: The Rise and Fall of the Neocons* (New York: Continuum, 2010); Ronnie A. Grinberg, "Neither 'Sissy' Boy Nor Patrician Man: New York Intellectuals and the Construction of American Jewish Masculinity," *American Jewish History* 98, no. 3 (2014): 127–51; Michael Staub, *Torn at the Roots: The Crisis of Jewish Liberalism in Postwar America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004). Also see Murray Friedman, *Commentary in American Life* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2005); Murray Friedman, *The Neoconservative Revolution: Jewish Intellectuals and the Shaping of Public Policy* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

²¹ Neil Sandberg, *Jewish Life in Los Angeles: A Window to Tomorrow* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1986), 165.

difficult task for Jewish liberals who sought to identify and align their interests with the needs of communities of color though often found themselves at odds with their purported allies.

Secondly, this dissertation extends the periodization of postwar American Jewish urban politics well beyond the late 1960s and early 1970s, which is largely unexplored within the historical literature.²² For Jewish urban historians such as Lila Corwin Berman, Eli Lederhendler, and Joshua Zeitz, the 1967 Israeli-Arab War, the rise of Black Power, and the consequent shift towards Jewish self-assertion mark an effective end point within their respective narratives that, intentionally or not, leaves the impression that Jewish urban activity dissipated immediately thereafter.²³ Disengagement from the local political scene in Los Angeles occurred, in part because ethnic forms of organizing experienced strains locally and drew Jews deeper into further-flung issues such as legacy of the Holocaust and Israel, but not until the mid-to-late-1980s. For roughly a fifteen-year period, identity-based political models that called for the recognition of group differences and focused on addressing the particular needs of the Jewish community animated Jewish political behavior at the local level.²⁴ In the multicultural metropolis, the rising discourse of ethnicity and diversity provided Jewish activists, community leaders, and politicians with opportunities and access points to broach local political issues through a Jewish lens. While ethnic political models ultimately proved ineffective at sustaining long-term Jewish interest in the local political environment, they were a formative part of Jewish political development.

²² Deborah Dash Moore has recently called for historians of Jewish New York to study this period in more detail. Deborah Dash Moore, “Remaking Ourselves at Home,” *American Jewish History* 100, no. 2 (2016): 179–89.

²³ For histories of American Jewish politics that end in the early 1970s, see Berman, *Metropolitan Jews*; Dollinger, *Quest for Inclusion*; Lederhendler, *New York Jews*; Zeitz, *White Ethnic New York*.

²⁴ For more on Jewish identity politics, see Goldstein, *The Price of Whiteness*; Deborah Dash Moore, *American Jewish Identity Politics* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2009); Joe Merton, “Rethinking the Politics of White Ethnicity in 1970s America,” *The Historical Journal* 55, no. 3 (2012): 731–56; Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Roots Too: White Ethnic Revival in Post-Civil Rights America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006).

The chapters for this dissertation are organized in a loose chronological order that moves through the animating themes of each time period. As such, certain historical episodes and actors that are introduced in earlier chapters are revisited later in the dissertation through a slightly different analytical prism.²⁵ This organizational approach allows me to examine distinct areas of civic engagement and the opportunities and challenges each posed to Jewish Angelenos seeking to participate and influence political life.

The first chapter of the dissertation seeks to establish the social, geographical, and political foundations of Jewish life in early-1960s Los Angeles. I pay particularly close attention to the political and social processes that helped to construct, support, and challenge the link between Jewishness and liberalism. In an effort to provide a diverse Jewish community with a semblance of communal cohesion and reinforce the perceived ideological differences between Jews and non-Jewish whites, Jewish leaders, particularly those associated with the Jewish Federation's Community Relations Committee, took the lead in championing liberalism as a political strategy and a source of public identity. And yet, along perceived and concrete socio-economic fault lines, Jewish Angelenos contemplated the value of liberalism in discrete and often contradictory ways. The Watts Riots of 1965, which pitted storeowners up against civil rights activists, marked a key turning point by publicly exposing and exacerbating long-existing intra-Jewish class and ideological tensions while also heightening the stakes of Jewish communal debate.

The second chapter examines how the concept of Jewishness and perceived Jewish interests became an explicit part of the electoral discourse in Los Angeles. By the late 1960s, many activists and politically engaged Jews had begun to develop new identity-based political models that placed a self-conscious emphasis on ethnic pride, ethnic assertion, and ethnic awareness.

²⁵ Perhaps most notably, chapter 2 briefly discusses the perceived decline of the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood in relation to electoral politics; in chapter 4, I examine in detail how various neighborhood groups sought to salvage the Jewish character of the Fairfax neighborhood.

Privy to the shifting demands of the political environment and associated intra-Jewish tensions, politicians seeking public office actively brandished and employed the new ethnic politics as a tool to establish an aura of authenticity among Jewish voters and lay claim to representing “authentic” communal interests. This chapter specifically focuses on four politicians—Tom Bradley, Sam Yorty, Henry Waxman, and Zev Yaroslavsky—and their efforts to help organize and propose solutions to existing Jewish debates and political competitions regarding the merits of Jewish political assertiveness and ethnic distinctiveness. Such strategies and outreach efforts not only provided Jews with new modes of political power, visibility, and influence, but also encouraged Jews to view city politics as an arena where they could seamlessly mesh together their broader civic and distinct Jewish concerns.

My third chapter examines Jewish educational activism during the 1970s. The Los Angeles Unified School District was in the midst of a fundamental transformation due to the prospect and implementation of desegregation programs; Jewish liberal and conservatives alike pursued educational policy initiatives that intended to provide Jewish children with a “quality education” and strengthen the local public school system. However, locked in conflict with one another and the district’s knotty bureaucracy, Jews, specifically parents of school-aged children, increasingly sensed that contests over compulsory busing and public school funding were counterproductive for their families. At the same time, Reform and Conservative rabbis and educators began to increasingly promote and experiment with new ways to transmit Jewish knowledge and values through the private school model. By doing so, they not only provided an alternative educational environment for Jewish families who could afford to leave the public school system, but also, albeit unintentionally, helped to deprioritize Jewish public school activism as an agenda item within the organized Jewish community.

In the fourth chapter, I examine how, and to what end, Jews from the mid-1970s through the mid-1980s sought to preserve the ethnic character of the Jewish Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood. The outward migration of the area's relatively affluent Jews, coupled with the specter of racial integration, encouraged and engendered an existential crisis about Jewish assimilation and the future of the Jewish neighborhood. Seeking to maintain and sustaining Beverly-Fairfax as a vibrant and identifiable Jewish area, civic leaders from the wider Jewish community as well as local neighborhood organizations invested in a form of political advocacy that aggressively promoted Jewish attachments to the area. Yet, the question of whether neighborhood preservation initiatives should primarily focus on controlled economic revitalization or social service objectives for lower-middle class and poor residents divided the priorities of various Beverly-Fairfax stakeholders. At the same time, metropolitan-wide land redevelopment pressures began to threaten to displace the neighborhood's residents and eradicate its ethnic-oriented storefronts. These plans for public works and redevelopment projects forced Jewish politicians and grassroots activists to recognize their inability to effectively traverse the minefield of growth politics.

The fifth chapter of this dissertation examines Jewish efforts to incorporate seemingly distant international issues into the local political arena from the 1980s through the early 1990s. The transformation of Los Angeles into a "global city" and new external political pressures—particularly those related to the evolving reputation of Israel and the legacy of the Holocaust—compelled Jewish leaders and organizations to increasingly invest in a model of civic engagement fused together local and global concerns. To accomplish this goal, Jewish philanthropists, rabbis, politicians, and activists funneled new resources into interracial political coalition building and museum development projects. These initiatives were designed to allow

Jews to address questions pertaining to local intergroup relations, the city's shifting demographics, and the allocation of political power through a global prism while also affirming their political relevance in the multicultural metropolis. Yet, they were not able to effectively accomplish these intended goals. While organizing coalitions around local and global concerns helped to expose and exacerbate the social and ideological tensions between Jews and other minority communities, museum projects effectively rendered specific local issues as matters of secondary concern.

After concluding the fifth chapter, I briefly describe how the 1992 Los Angeles Riots forced Jewish community leaders, journalists, and other prominent individuals to come to terms with how far the Jewish community had drifted away from local political conversations and contests. Simply put, the riots were distressing for Jews who, while witnessing widespread looting, arson, and assault, were uncertain how to proceed and questioned whether they had become politically irrelevant to Los Angeles. Disengagement and disinvestment from the local scene were not preferred outcomes but rather the consequences of investing in ethnic political models that were unable to continuously and successfully adapt to and address the emerging demographic, economic, and social realities within Los Angeles.

The history of Jewish politics in late twentieth century Los Angeles is at its core one of an internally diverse ethno-religious community that, for a time, heavily invested in the local political arena. While the definition of urban good frequently varied, what Jews shared was the belief that they had the ability to substantially enhance the city's wellbeing and that the forms of activism they cultivated would help to define as well as sustain a meaningful sense of civic belonging. And yet, when these expectations were seriously challenged, Jews gradually veered away from the local political scene. In this regard, the case of Jews in Los Angeles is quite

instructive for better understanding why, despite the adage that “all politics are local,” the local has not continued to maintain the interest of the American Jewish political imagination.²⁶

²⁶ This phrase is most commonly associated with former Speaker of the United States House of Representative Tip O’Neil.

Chapter 1

***Goldwater is Goyish, MLK is Jewish:* The Social Niches and Politics of Jewish Los Angeles during the 1960s**

In the months leading up to the 1964 presidential election, *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, a weekly newspaper for the Los Angeles Jewish community, published a series of op-eds and columns that sought to characterize Republican candidate Barry Goldwater and his supporters as right-wing extremists. “Don’t minimize the Goldwater threat to human liberty in America,” noted the paper’s editor-in-chief Herb Brin, who also declared that, “it assures us little that Barry Goldwater was brought up to a Jewish father. His image is that of a standard-bearer against the civil rights movement. He is the magnet for the suburbanites who are afraid of freedom for the Negroes in America.”¹ More than simply critiquing the Goldwater campaign, Brin looked towards Goldwater’s candidacy to reflect upon the Jewish community’s penchant for liberal politics. While Goldwater might have had a Jewish surname and Jewish relatives, his conservative politics, according to Brin, were at odds with his Jewish heritage and Judaism’s contemporary social justice thrust. And unlike Goldberg’s core Southern Californian supporters—John Birchers and Young Republicans who lived in lilywhite areas like Glendale, La Jolla, or Orange County and supported limited government and socially conservative positions—Jews were supposedly a people that respected and valued President Johnson’s Great Society initiatives, separation of church and state, and civil rights.² Grafting *Goldwaterism* onto

¹ “Our Republic Faces a Real Crisis,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, June 11, 1964. Also see, “Republican Extremists Hit Civil Rights,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, May 7, 1964; Herb Brin, “Freedom Is the Issue: Vote for Johnson,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, October 22, 1964; “Barry’s Strange Lexicon of Double Talk,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, August 13, 1964; “Barry’s Heritage—at Odds with His Views,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, October 15, 1964; “Barry High in His Kooky Saddle,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, July 9, 1964.

² “Barry’s Heritage—at Odds with His Views.” For more on conservatism in midcentury Southern California, see Eric Avila, *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight: Fear and Fantasy in Suburban Los Angeles* (Berkeley:

the ideological and geographical landscape of Southern California, Brin was seeking to publicly and brashly juxtapose his conception of Jewishness and the Jewish community with all things Goldwater.

Brin was not alone in equating 1960s Jewishness with a version of liberalism and local civic engagement predicated upon racial integration, state enforcement of nondiscrimination laws, and the potent language of brotherhood and tolerance.³ The early 1960s marked a transitional moment in the development of Jewish political and public identity throughout the United States and Los Angeles in particular.⁴ While Jewish grassroots activists, public officials, and organizations had been at the forefront of the liberal wing of the local civil rights movement for around two decades, Jewish communal leaders started to publicly highlight and celebrate Jewish advocacy efforts throughout Los Angeles. With the civil rights movement emerging as the nation's defining moral and political issue, Jewish leaders viewed Jewish liberal activism as a source of unabashed pride; they found in liberalism's icons and ideologies a relatively coherent yet elastic political strategy that could potentially ensure equal rights and opportunities for Jews

University of California Press, 2006); Darren Dochuck, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt: Plain-Folk Religion, Grassroots Politics, and the Rise of Evangelical Conservatism* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2011); Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); Michelle Nickerson, *Mothers of Conservatism: Women and the Postwar Right* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012); Becky Nicolaides, *My Blue Heaven: Life and Politics in the Working-Class Suburbs of Los Angeles, 1920-1965* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).

³ These values helped to define and characterize the ideology of postwar racial liberalism. Mark Brilliant, *The Color of America Has Changed: How Racial Diversity Shaped Civil Rights Reform in California, 1941-1978* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010); Eric Goldstein, *The Price of Whiteness: Jews, Race, and American Identity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 194–201; Daniel Martinez HoSang, *Racial Propositions: Ballot Initiatives and the Making of Postwar California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010); Daniel Martinez HoSang, "Racial Liberalism and the Rise of the Sunbelt West: The Defeat of Fair Housing on the 1964 California Ballot," in *Sunbelt Rising: The Politics of Place, Space, and Region*, ed. Michelle Nickerson and Darren Dochuck (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 188–213.

⁴ For a broader understanding of how American Jewish public identity evolved during the early 1960s, see Lila Corwin Berman, *Speaking of Jews: Rabbis, Intellectuals, and the Creation of an American Public Identity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009); David Kaufman, *Jewhooing the Sixties: American Celebrity and Jewish Identity*; Sandy Koufax, *Lenny Bruce, Bob Dylan, and Barbra Streisand* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2012). Indeed, a Lenny Bruce standup routine that divides 1960s American culture into "Jewish" and "goyish" spheres inspired the title of this dissertation chapter.

and other minorities and transform a decidedly segregated Los Angeles into a more tolerant and cosmopolitan metropolis. Of particular importance in helping to champion liberalism as a focal point of Jewish communal politics was the Jewish Federation Council's Community Relations Committee (CRC). It was through their exchanges, negotiations, and interactions with rabbis, grassroots activists, journalists, and other defense agencies that the CRC helped to catapult a distinctly Jewish version of American liberalism to the mainstream of local Jewish life and Los Angeles's political culture.

The public projection of Jews as quintessential liberals developed in tandem with two interrelated socio-economic developments, both of which were deeply rooted in Los Angeles's social geography. Firstly, the spatial and racial logic of Southern California placed Jews in a seemingly precarious though privileged social position. Jews through the postwar period continued to face exclusions in housing, employment, and other social realms; and whether perceived as subversive communists, clannish, or a threat to a moral Christian society, Jews were often the ire of conservative ideologues based out of Los Angeles and nearby Orange County. Yet, Jews were also beneficiaries of shifting racial boundaries that empowered their upward mobility and nominal acceptance into a white power structure. As such, they also had access to public and private resources that eluded many inner-city communities of colors. As a result, Jews had to reconcile and negotiate their newfound privileges with tenuous claims to whiteness and a "not-quite-white" outsider identity that confounded one-dimensional racial categories.⁵ Secondly, while the geographic and social divides that long separated the working and lower-middle class Jews of Boyle Heights from their elite Jewish counterparts on the Westside of Los Angeles were dissolving, a new set of less obvious though nevertheless meaningful intra-

⁵ Bruce Phillips, "Not Quite White: The Emergence of Jewish 'Ethnoburbs' in Los Angeles, 1920-2010," *American Jewish History* 100, no. 1 (2016): 73-104.

communal hierarchies, class tensions, and geographical divisions came to define the Jewish social scene during the postwar period. Amid the rapid growth of the local Jewish community and inter/intra-city migrations, Jews developed a diverse range of micro-communities and occupational, spatial, and social niches.

On the surface level, Jewish community leaders promoted liberalism to help define their relationship with non-Jewish whites by reinforcing perceived ideological differences and provide a diverse Jewish population with a sense of communal cohesion. Even so, a broad liberal community did not necessarily mean an all-inclusive or a monolithic one though. Liberal politics might have provided a diverse Jewish population, varied in its geographic, occupational, educational, and religious profile, with a seemingly coherent political agenda and a rhetorical semblance of unity. Yet, it was this source of diversity that also threatened to challenge and chafe up against liberalism's apparent idealism and integrationist obligations. Jews frequently found themselves in social positions that hindered the progress of civil rights-era liberalism. While Jewish leaders sought to counterpoise the Jewish community and Jewish values with all things white-conservative, the on-ground-social dynamics and politics revealed a more complicated and nuanced situation. Along the perceived and concrete socio-economic fault lines that shaped Jewish Los Angeles, Los Angeles Jewry considered and contemplated the value of liberalism as an ideological worldview, a political label, and a practical model of every-day behavior in discrete and often contradictory ways.

The tension between the ideal of liberal communal unity and the reality of heterogeneity came to a head during the mid-1960s with contests over fair housing and the Watts riots.⁶ As the

⁶ While I recognize that "riots" is a politically loaded and divisive term, I have elected to use the word "riots" to describe the civil disorder that erupted in August 1965 in Watts for the purpose of consistency and clarity. The historical actors under consideration—although interpreting the civil disturbances in distinct and contradictory ways—employed the word "riot" as both a neutral descriptor and as politically loaded rhetoric. For a very good

stakes of liberal advocacy initiatives throughout Los Angeles mounted with intensity, the chasms between Jewish liberalism and manifestations of Jewish illiberal behavior became all the more a liability and cause of concern for liberalism's audible proponents. When Jewish community relations professionals were forced to confront and address evidence of Jewish racism, they intensified their efforts to celebrate the Jewish community's liberal tendencies and downplay indications of countervailing trends. Herein lies the great irony of the liberal moment: in seeking to position liberalism as a cornerstone of Jewish identity, liberal Jewish community leaders crafted new intra-ethnic political boundaries and modes of communal exclusion that impeded liberalism's political potency and curtailed their own practical reach in shaping communal affairs.

I.

The demographic and social alterations that consumed Southern California during 1940s and 1950s altered the foundations of Los Angeles and the Jewish experience therein. The war effort and expansion of federal involvement in the region helped initiate mass suburbanization, stimulate the growth of the region's economy, attract a massive influx of migrants, and propel Southern California into a major industrial and population center.⁷ While Los Angeles at the beginning of the war was an overwhelmingly white, Protestant city, minorities groups (African Americans, Mexican Americans, and Jews in particular) comprised much of the newcomer population and helped to bolster the region's ethnic and racial diversity.⁸ The impact of what one

discussion on historians and the craft of researching "riots" see Amanda I. Seligman, "'But Burn—No': The Rest of the Crowd in Three Civil Disorders in 1960s Chicago," *Journal of Urban History* 37, no. 2 (March 1, 2011): 230–55.

⁷ Avila, *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight*; Gerald D. Nash, *The American West Transformed: The Impact of the Second World War* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990); Nicolaidis, *My Blue Heaven*, 185–93.

⁸ Shana Bernstein, *Bridges of Reform: Interracial Civil Rights Activism in Twentieth-Century Los Angeles* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 62–63.

historian has labeled “the region’s most explosive period of economic and demographic growth” on Los Angeles Jewry was profound.⁹ In the 1920s and 1930s, Los Angeles’ Jewish population was largely divided into two distinct socio-geographic spheres: the working class and lower middle class Jews of Boyle Heights and the Jewish elites affiliated with the burgeoning film industry, the legal professions, and the descendants of local pioneer families.¹⁰ In the most general sense, Los Angeles’ metamorphosis helped to transform this polarized Jewish community into one that was more affluent, visible, cosmopolitan, and middle class than it was at the start of the 1940s.

The most conspicuous source of change was the growth of the Jewish population, which expanded from about 130,000 residents before World War Two, to 315,000 residents in 1952, to about 400,000 residents in 1960s.¹¹ Approximately 10,000 of the Jewish newcomers that accounted for Los Angeles Jewry’s growing population were European refugees.¹² The vast majority of the migrants, however, were second and third-generation Americans Jews from Midwest and East Coast cities who were attracted to the region’s professional opportunities,

⁹ Avila, *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight*, 29.

¹⁰ George J. Sanchez, “‘What’s Good for Boyle Heights Is Good for the Jews’: Creating Multiculturalism on the Eastside during the 1950s,” *American Quarterly* 56, no. 3 (2004): 636.

¹¹ By 1955, Los Angeles had the second-largest Jewish population in the United States, behind New York; in 1951 only 16% of Jewish households had been living in Los Angeles for more than 15 years. Deborah Dash Moore, *To the Golden Cities: Pursuing the American Jewish Dream in Miami and L.A.* (New York: Free Press, 1994), 23; Bruce Phillips, “Los Angeles Jewry: A Demographic Portrait,” in *American Jewish Year Book*, vol. 86 (New York and Philadelphia: American Jewish Committee (AJC), Jewish Publication Society (JPS), 1986), 141.

¹² Max Vorspan and Lloyd P Gartner, *History of the Jews of Los Angeles* (San Marino, CA: The Huntington Library, 1970), 229–30. For more on European exiles and refugees in Los Angeles see Erhard Bahr, *Weimar on the Pacific: German Exile Culture in Los Angeles and the Crisis of Modernism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007); Saverio Giovacchini, *Hollywood Modernism: Film and Politics in the Age of the New Deal, Culture and the Moving Image* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2001).

benign climate, and the so-called prospect of “leisurely living.”¹³ This migratory group helped to ensure the social composition of Jewish Los Angeles as overwhelmingly American-born and Ashkenazi.¹⁴ Because the Jewish population grew at a more rapid pace than the city’s overall population growth, the percentage of Jews in Los Angeles rose from 4% to 7% during the 1940s.¹⁵

Paralleling the migration of Jews into Los Angeles was the spatial and occupational reorientation of the Jewish community. An amalgam of federal and corporate efforts to devalue older neighborhoods and separate the races geographically incentivized Jews to leave racially mixed neighborhoods for relatively affluent residential communities west of downtown.¹⁶ The footprint of white, Jewish flight was particularly apparent throughout the multiracial working class and lower-middle class neighborhoods of Boyle Heights and City Terrace. While the Home Owners’ Loan Corporation’s decision to give Boyle Heights its lowest possible ranking encouraged potential homebuyers to look elsewhere, the construction of five freeways between 1943 and 1960s actively displayed thousands of Boyle Heights residents.¹⁷ In large part due to

¹³ Moore, *To the Golden Cities*, 21–52.

¹⁴ Fred Massarik’s 1951 study on the Los Angeles Jewish community notes that 67.9% of Los Angeles Jews were native born; by 1959, this percentage had risen to 75%. While Massarik’s reports do not explicitly highlight the breakdown of Ashkenazim/Sephardim, the data points toward a low percentage of Sephardim within the community. For example, according to the 1951 survey, only .8% of Jewish Angelenos were born in “Sephardic” countries such as Turkey and Syria and only 1% of the Jewish population spoke either Spanish or Ladino. Fred Massarik, “A Report on the Jewish Population of Los Angeles, 1951” (Los Angeles: Jewish Federation-Council of Greater Los Angeles, 1951), 30; Fred Massarik, “A Report on the Jewish Population of Los Angeles, 1959” (Los Angeles: Jewish Federation-Council of Greater Los Angeles, 1959), 18.

¹⁵ These percentages refer to growth within Los Angeles County. Phillips, “Los Angeles Jewry,” 128.

¹⁶ Of course during this period other white groups also left racially mixed areas or alternatively put up barriers against racial mixing. Charlotte Brooks, *Alien Neighbors, Foreign Friends: Asian Americans, Housing, and the Transformation of Urban California* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009); Avila, *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight*; Jennifer Mandel, “Making a ‘Black Beverly Hills’: The Struggle for Housing Equality in Modern Los Angeles” (Ph.D., University of New Hampshire, 2010); Nicolaidis, *My Blue Heaven*.

¹⁷ Caroline Luce, “Visions of a Jewish Future: The Jewish Bakers Union and Yiddish Culture in East Los Angeles, 1908-1942” (Ph.D., University of California, Los Angeles, 2013), 254.

these pressures, the Jewish population in Boyle Heights and City Terrace dropped from 35,000 residents in 1940 to somewhere around 4,000 in 1959.¹⁸ For the Jews of West Adams, who were already living in a middle class area, outward migration had less to do with upward mobility and was more directly related to the belief that black migration into the neighborhood after the Supreme Court struck down restrictive housing covenants in 1948 (*Shelley v. Kraemer*) would ultimately depress local property values and the quality of neighborhood life. Movement out of West Adams was largely a self-generating process that was supported by easy access to home loans from banks and mortgage companies: as Jews started to leave the area, the Jewish Centers Association and other Jewish institutions decided to pull communal resources out of the area, which expedited the local Jewish exodus.¹⁹ Due to the particularities of the Los Angeles Jewish community as a relatively young, rapidly growing, and highly educated population—many of whom were able to accrue occupational skills and preferential hiring treatment through the GI Bill of Rights and Jewish social service agencies—the occupational profile of Los Angeles Jewry also underwent a noticeable upward shift during the 1940s and 1950s. As the percentage of Jews working in white-collar professions increased, the proportion of Jews working in all other fields declined.²⁰

¹⁸ Fred Massarik, “A Report on the Jewish Population of Los Angeles, 1951”; Fred Massarik, “A Report on the Jewish Population of Los Angeles, 1959”; Sanchez, “What’s Good for Boyle Heights Is Good for the Jews,” 635; Phillips, “Los Angeles Jewry,” 161.

¹⁹ In 1948, there were an estimated 15,000 to 18,000 Jews in the West Adams area. By the late 1950s, the number of Jews in the area had dropped drastically, though it is difficult to provide firm estimates due to the in-migration of a Sephardic community into nearby Baldwin Hills. Mandel, “Making a ‘Black Beverly Hills’”; Massarik, “A Report on the Jewish Population of Los Angeles, 1959”; Massarik, “A Report on the Jewish Population of Los Angeles, 1951”; Fred Massarik, “The Jewish Population of the West Adams Area: A Tentative Report” (Jewish Centers Association, 1948); Phillips, “Los Angeles Jewry.”

²⁰ Through the 1940s, the proportion of Jews working for a small employer in clerical or sales work declined as the percentage of self-employed Jews working in the field of trade and commerce rose. From 1951 to 1959, the percentage of Jews working as proprietors and managers dropped from 35.5% to 24.2%, while the percentage of Jews who were working as professionals or semi-professionals increased from 15.3% to 24.9%. Massarik, “A

These social and demographic changes helped to boost Jewish homeownership rates and facilitate the entry of an expanding portion of the Jewish population into the ranks of the middle and upper-middle class.²¹ Relatedly, intra-migrations and upward mobility accelerated the transformation of Jews from a racial minority into white Americans.²² The entry of Jews into new, racially homogenous and restrictive residential developments, coupled with a rising occupational status, exacerbated the social and spatial distance between an upwardly mobile Jewish population and communities of color on the east and south sides of Los Angeles that were largely denied access to public and private resources available to whites.²³ Shifts in social standing, however, did not marginalize distinctive ethnic traits, eradicate anti-Semitism, or homogenize the internal socio-economic differences between Jews. Working in a narrow range of industries and professions, displaying patterns of concentrated residential dispersion, and experiencing frequent in-group contact, Jews maintained a specific socio-economic profile, albeit one that reflected the geographical, class, and cultural diversity of the city's Jewish population.

The extensive anti-Semitic job restrictions that kept Jews away from older, established industries such as finance and insurance helped to generate Jewish overrepresentation in a range

Report on the Jewish Population of Los Angeles, 1959,” 20–21; Vorspan and Gartner, *History of the Jews of Los Angeles*, 232.

²¹ Specific information on Jewish homeownership rates in the 1930s and 1940s is difficult to ascertain, though Fred Massarik highlights the link between rising homeownership rates and the growth of the Jewish suburban population. Indeed, from 1951 through 1959, Jewish homeownership rates increased from 58% to 69%. Massarik, “A Report on the Jewish Population of Los Angeles, 1959,” 13.

²² On the relationship between upward mobility, suburbanization, and the Jewish relationship to whiteness, see Avila, *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight*, 43–44; Sanchez, “What’s Good for Boyle Heights Is Good for the Jews”; Karen Brodtkin, *How Jews Became White Folks: And What That Says About Race in America* (Piscataway, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1998).

²³ Avila, *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight*; Gerald Horne, *Fire This Time: The Watts Uprising and the 1960s* (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 1997); Scott Kurashige, *The Shifting Grounds of Race: Black and Japanese Americans in the Making of Multiethnic Los Angeles* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008); Josh Sides, *L.A. City Limits: African American Los Angeles from the Great Depression to the Present* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).

of industries and the foundations of an ethnic-oriented economy.²⁴ Jews, for example, carved out an identifiable niche within the legal profession: many older law firms in Los Angeles discriminated against Jews, which in turn led to the establishment and proliferation of firms that overwhelmingly hired Jews as attorneys and relied upon a Jewish clientele.²⁵ With the Jewish share of the Southern California homebuilding market hovering around 40%, homebuilding was also a heavily “Jewish industry.” Described by historian Eric Avila as “agents of suburbanization in postwar Southern California,” Jewish builders such as Mark Taper, Louis Boyar, and Lawrence Weinberg found in construction and real estate a highly profitable and rapidly growing industry.²⁶ If well-educated Jews disproportionately gravitated towards lucrative, white-collar professions and industries such as home building and law, lower middle class and middle class Jews tended to work as wholesale and retail traders in large numbers, especially in the garment industry. Also of note, a significant percentage of lower middle class and middle class Jews owned independent retail stores in south Los Angeles; 80% of the storeowners in Watts, for example, were of a Jewish background.²⁷

²⁴ Regarding anti-Semitism and job discrimination in Los Angeles, see Vorspan and Gartner, *History of the Jews of Los Angeles*, 206. Regarding Jewish overrepresentation in certain industries in Los Angeles, see Ellen Eisenberg, Ava F. Kahn, and William Toll, *Jews of the Pacific Coast: Reinventing Community on America's Edge* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2009), 190; Massarik, “A Report on the Jewish Population of Los Angeles, 1951,” 35–38; Massarik, “A Report on the Jewish Population of Los Angeles, 1959,” 20–22; Vorspan and Gartner, *History of the Jews of Los Angeles*. For a more general analysis of Jews and American economic life, see Rebecca Kobrin, *Chosen Capital: The Jewish Encounter with American Capitalism* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2012).

²⁵ Walter S. Hilborn, “Reflections on legal practice and Jewish community leadership: New York and Los Angeles, 1907-1973,” interview by Malca Chall, 1973; Vorspan and Gartner, *History of the Jews of Los Angeles*, 206.

²⁶ Avila, *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight*, 43. Also see, Moore, *To the Golden Cities*, 43–44; Vorspan and Gartner, *History of the Jews of Los Angeles*, 233–34.

²⁷ Milton A. Senn to Jerry Rosen, November 9, 1965, Private property inventory 1-21 (9-a), Carton 5, Folder 7, Governor’s Commission on the Los Angeles Riots Records, 1965 August-December, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley (hereafter GCLARR).

Such occupational distinctions were reflected in the Jewish population's socio-economic composition and its internal hierarchies. In looking at the Jewish population's "economic rating"—that is, the information concerning a household including the style of furnishing and status of neighborhood though not income—demographer Fred Massarik found that in 1959 9% of Jewish households had a "below average" economic rating, 63.9% were "middle class," 20% were "well-to-do," and 6.0 were "luxurious."²⁸ Socio-economic diversity comes into sharper focus when assessing the median household income for Los Angeles Jewry. Massarik demonstrated that, in comparison to the national household income for urban families of \$5,211 a year, 23% of the Jewish households in Los Angeles were of lower-middle economic rank, 34% were of relatively comparable rank, 19.6% were of higher-middle rank, and 3% were of the highest rank.²⁹

Residential patterns and the social geography of Los Angeles, intimately rooted in distinctions based on social status, income, level of ethno-religious affiliation, and cultural values, offer a more comprehensive lens through which to identify and examine the often subtle, though meaningful, social variations within the Jewish community. To a certain extent, anti-Semitism limited Jewish housing choices: even after the passage of Supreme Court's passage of *Shelley v. Kraemer*, informal housing restrictions, upheld by home owners associations, real estate agents, and in certain cases Jewish builders, continued to keep Jews out of areas such as Rolling Hills, Portuguese Bend, Hancock Park, San Marino, and the San Gabriel Valley.³⁰ Contending with

²⁸ Massarik, "A Report on the Jewish Population of Los Angeles, 1959," 23–25.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ Moore, *To the Golden Cities*, 48; Phillips, "Not Quite White," 78.

these constraints, the vast majority of Jews tended to live within three contiguous areas: the Fairfax neighborhoods, the affluent Westside, and the San Fernando Valley.³¹

Located on the Westside of Los Angeles, the Fairfax neighborhood (Beverly-Fairfax and Wilshire-Fairfax) became a residential destination for Jews during the 1930s and gradually emerged as the city's prime Jewish area during the 1940s and 1950s. With its newly constructed houses, duplexes, and apartments, Fairfax attracted Jews from Boyle Heights who sought to relocate west of downtown.³² A move to the Fairfax neighborhoods tended to represent a modest though nevertheless meaningful expression of upward mobility in an overwhelmingly Jewish setting. Here, they built an identifiable ethnic community—for the religious and secular, the Yiddish and English speaking, the middle class and the lower middle class, and the foreign and native born—commonly referred to as Los Angeles' "Borscht Belt" and "kosher canyon."³³ Describing this area, sociologist Fred Massarik noted, "American urban values, a cosmopolitan orientation, and Jewish tradition give rise to a new form of social and economic neighborhood organization that is complex but novel non-ghetto blend."³⁴ If the dual allure of ethnic distinctiveness and middle class aspiration brought Jews en masse to the area, Fairfax was never quite an area marked by affluence but a home for the barely middle class. In comparison to most of other neighborhoods where Jews settled during the postwar era, the Jews of Fairfax were

³¹ Although thousands of Jews were scattered throughout the county in far-flung areas such as Pasadena, Lakewood, and Long Beach, about 60% lived on the affluent Westside, the Fairfax neighborhoods, or the San Fernando Valley. Massarik, "A Report on the Jewish Population of Los Angeles, 1959," 8.

³² Robert L. Blumenthal, "Fairfax as a Gray Area Ethnic Community" (M.A., University of Southern California, 1973), 8–10; Carey McWilliams, *Southern California: An Island on the Land* (Santa Barbara, CA: Peregrine Smith, 1973), 322; Iddo Tavory, "Off Melrose: Sustaining Orthodox Jewish Religious Life in a Secular Space" (Ph.D., University of California, Los Angeles, 2010), 28–35.

³³ Lewis Erenberg, *Boyle Heights Boy: A Memoir of Growing Up in LA*. (unpublished, n.d.), 119; Moore, *To the Golden Cities*, 58.

³⁴ Fred Massarik, "The Jewish Community," in *Community Structure and Analysis*, ed. Marvin B. Sussman (New York: Crowell, 1959).

likely to have lower rates of homeownership, a relatively high percentage of Jews working in the clerical and sales fields, and a slightly lower-than average median household income.³⁵ While no more than 20% of the Jews in Los Angeles lived in the Fairfax neighborhoods through the 1950s, the area boasted the highest concentration of Jewish residents throughout Los Angeles (about 65%) and a plethora of (public and religious) schools, synagogues, social clubs and storefronts that catered primarily to Jews.³⁶

Also on the Westside were the more affluent and prosperous neighborhoods—such as Westwood and Brentwood and the independent municipality of Beverly Hills—that became home to the Los Angeles’s Jewish elite and upper-middle class. Jewish life in these neighborhoods began in the 1920s when Jews who were affiliated with the movie industry broke existing restrictive residential covenants and moved into new housing developments and residential areas.³⁷ The affluent Westside also attracted the leaders of the Jewish community—public officials, lawyers, and professionals associated with the Jewish Community Council and its Community Relations Committee (CRC).³⁸ As the Jewish population grew and its socio-economic profile trended upwards—and neighborhoods such as Cheviot Hills and Beverlywood added new housing developments—the number of Jewish individuals on the affluent Westside steadily increased from 69,604 in 1951 to 85,440 in 1959. Compared to their counterparts

³⁵ Massarik, “A Report on the Jewish Population of Los Angeles, 1951,” 85–124.

³⁶ Blumenthal, “Fairfax as a Gray Area Ethnic Community”; Massarik, “A Report on the Jewish Population of Los Angeles, 1959,” 8–11.

³⁷ Sanchez, “What’s Good for Boyle Heights Is Good for the Jews,” 636.

³⁸ Walter S. Hilborn, "Reflections on Legal Practice and Jewish community leadership"; Joseph Roos, Joseph Roos Oral History Interview, interview by Leonard Pitt and Murray Wood, December 18, 1979, Urban Archives General Oral History, Urban Archives Center, Oviatt Library, California State University, Northridge; Rosalind Wiener Wyman, Malca Chall, and Women in Politics Oral History Project (Bancroft Library), *“It’s a Girl”: Three Terms on the Los Angeles City Council, 1953-1965, Three Decades in the Democratic Party, 1948-1978* (Berkeley, Calif.: Regional Oral History Office, Bancroft Library, University of California, Women in Politics Oral History Project, 1980).

situated in and around the Fairfax neighborhoods, Jews living in Beverly Hills, Westwood, Beverlywood, or Cheviot Hills were more likely to be native born, own a home, have a college education, and work as a white-collar professional.³⁹ Although the affluent Westside lacked the visible ethnic ambiance of the Fairfax neighborhoods, about 50% of the residents in these areas were Jewish.⁴⁰

Located to the north of the Westside laid the sprawling San Fernando Valley, which until the mid-1940s primarily consisted of agricultural land.⁴¹ Homebuilders spearheaded the development of new racially exclusive residential communities during the 1940s and 1950s, which attracted Jewish and non-Jewish white residents to the area.⁴² From 1951 through 1959 the number of Jews in the San Fernando Valley nearly doubled from about 40,000 to 80,000.⁴³ The Jews who settled in the suburban San Fernando Valley—especially in areas as such as Encino, Reseda, Sherman Oaks, and North Hollywood—were overwhelmingly part of middle class Jewish families with household heads that tended to work as proprietors and managers.⁴⁴ Taking advantage of the area’s affordable single-family housing units, Jewish homeownership rates in the San Fernando Valley hovered around 86.6%, the highest percentage out of any area in the

³⁹ Massarik, “A Report on the Jewish Population of Los Angeles, 1951,” 84–124; Phillips, “Los Angeles Jewry: A Demographic Portrait.”

⁴⁰ Phillips, “Los Angeles Jewry,” 113–14, 166.

⁴¹ Moore, *To the Golden Cities*, 58. For more on the history of the San Fernando Valley, see Laura R. Barraclough, *Making the San Fernando Valley: Rural Landscapes, Urban Development, and White Privilege* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011); Kevin Roderick, *The San Fernando Valley: America’s Suburb* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles Times Books, 2001).

⁴² Moore, *To the Golden Cities*, 42–43; Laura Pulido, Laura R. Barraclough, and Wendy Cheng, *A People’s Guide to Los Angeles* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 222–23.

⁴³ Massarik, “A Report on the Jewish Population of Los Angeles, 1951,” 11; Massarik, “A Report on the Jewish Population of Los Angeles, 1959,” 8.

⁴⁴ Massarik, “A Report on the Jewish Population of Los Angeles, 1951,” 80.

city.⁴⁵ Although they tended live near other Jews, the Jews of the San Fernando Valley, at least according to Jewish community studies, were less consciously committed to Jewish life and tended to have looser, more casual affiliations with Jewish associations and organizations than those of the Westside. For Jewish Valleyites, Jewishness and Judaism functioned more as a periodic obligation—with infrequent synagogue visits, High Holiday observance, and childhood exposure to Jewish afterschool education—rather than an organizing principle of everyday life.⁴⁶

In sum, although Jewish life in postwar Los Angeles lacked a fixed or rigid social structure, the Jewish community was one with a discernable social profile: upwardly mobile, rapidly growing, though internally stratified and geographically dispersed. Within this setting, Jews maintained and developed micro-communities and social niches that enabled them to establish both concrete and abstract distinctions between themselves and with other Angelenos as well as foster a self-conscious sense of group belonging. And from these vantage points, Jews pondered, negotiated, and debated their political allegiances and affiliations.

II.

The social reshuffling of the 1940s and 1950s prompted Jews to reassess and reorient their political identities and priorities. The two previously dominant models of Jewish political engagement—conservative accommodationism and Yiddish radicalism—lost much of their political appeal, social context, and communal credibility during the postwar period. The dynamic growth of the Jewish community made it all but impossible for a quiet model of Jewish politics to thrive; likewise, the Red Scare of the early Cold War period, alongside the movement

⁴⁵ Ibid., 81. For more on Jewish (and non-Jewish) homeownership in the San Fernando Valley, see chapter 3 of this dissertation.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 105–23. Also see, Massarik, “The Jewish Community,” 249–50.

of Jews out of the Boyle Heights neighborhood that fostered radical activism, marginalized socialist and leftist politics.⁴⁷

During this period of concentrated residential dispersion, rapid population growth, and social splintering, liberalism emerged as the Jewish community's political focal point. A broad-based and elastic form of liberalism appealed to Jewish Angelenos for many of the same general reasons that Jewish individuals and organizations throughout the United States looked favorably upon liberalism during the postwar period. Jews identified liberalism as a strategy to confront postwar manifestations of anti-Semitism and promote their own social inclusion and integration into the American mainstream; Jews saw in liberalism the scaffolding to ensure social stability vis-à-vis government welfare responsibility, equal rights for minorities, and a moral order predicated upon a belief in social betterment and civil rights; moreover, liberalism allowed Jews to articulate their support for Israel as a noble experiment in democracy and a cause worthy of broad American support.⁴⁸ While Los Angeles Jews, akin to the counterparts throughout the country, demonstrated a commitment to liberal values during the postwar period, Los Angeles's political culture and social geography profoundly shaped their understanding of liberalism.

A great deal of Jewish liberal activity in Los Angeles existed outside the formal institutional and organizational framework of Jewish communal life and proliferated on the unaffiliated grassroots level. The Jewish newcomers who came to Los Angeles from Chicago and New York City were an integral part of the New Deal coalition and brought to Los Angeles a dedication for

⁴⁷ Eisenberg, Kahn, and Toll, *Jews of the Pacific Coast*, 185–97; Moore, *To the Golden Cities*, 189–226; Sanchez, “What’s Good for Boyle Heights Is Good for the Jews.”

⁴⁸ Marc Dollinger, *Quest for Inclusion: Jews and Liberalism in Modern America* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000); Stuart Svonkin, *Jews Against Prejudice: American Jews and the Fight for Civil Liberties* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997).

liberal politics and the Democratic Party.⁴⁹ Newspaper editor and publisher Herb Brin was part of this migration and political milieu. Brin founded the weekly *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press* in 1954 for the Los Angeles Jewish community; its editorial content consistently championed, anti-communism, civil rights, local and national Democratic candidates, and the State of Israel.⁵⁰ Of particular concern to Brin were the activities of the right-wing John Birch Society during the early 1960s, their supposed infiltration of their state Republican Party, their growing popularity in suburban Orange County, and the threat they posed to liberal democracy: “the fact is, the Birchers have taken root among the ‘respectables’ of California to a greater extent than elsewhere in the country,” lamented Brin.⁵¹ Jewish liberals and progressives-in-transition from Boyle Heights also contributed to the Jewish liberal milieu. Upon leaving Boyle Heights for the Westside in the early 1950s, staunchly liberal newspaper editor and publisher Al Waxman sold the *East Side Journal* and established the *L.A. Reporter*.⁵² Appealing primarily to the residents of the Fairfax neighborhoods, Waxman’s journalistic voice was intended to serve as a liberal counterweight to the conservative *Los Angeles Times*.⁵³

Jewish liberal sensibilities were not just ideological but also participatory and channeled into the realm of amateur club politics, which provided a setting for Los Angeles Jews to develop and

⁴⁹ Moore, *To the Golden Cities*, 189–226. For more on Jewish politics in Chicago and New York during the age of the New Deal, see Lizabeth Cohen, *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Deborah Dash Moore, *At Home in America: Second Generation New York Jews* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981); Beth S. Wenger, *New York Jews and the Great Depression: Uncertain Promise* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996).

⁵⁰ For more on *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, Herb Brin, *Shouting for Justice: The Journey of a Jewish Journalist across the Century of Hitler and Israel*, 2012.

⁵¹ Herb Brin, “Across the City Desk,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, February 21, 1963. For more on the Birch Society in Southern California, see Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 75–87.

⁵² Henry A. Waxman and Joshua Green, *The Waxman Report: How Congress Really Works* (New York: Twelve, 2009).

⁵³ *Ibid.*

articulate their liberal impulses in a well-organized social and communal environment. California Democratic Council's (CDC) clubs surfaced throughout California in the early 1950s in an effort to transform a feeble state Democratic Party into a more politically and ideologically liberal organization that advocated for strong labor unions, a social welfare safety net, antidiscrimination legislation, and public infrastructure projects.⁵⁴ Political scientist James Q. Wilson found that about half of the club's members in Los Angeles (an estimated 5,500) were Jewish.⁵⁵ In particular, club politics appealed to middle class Jews—especially young East Coast transplants, lawyers, and former Boyle Heights leftists—who sought to influence political process through grassroots community organizing.⁵⁶ Holding local voter campaigns, political rallies, and political fundraisers, these clubs helped to establish Westside Jewish neighborhoods as a reliable base for local, state, and national liberal Democratic candidates.⁵⁷

If political clubs and newspapers helped to nurture Jewish liberal sensibilities on the grassroots levels, Jewish communal leaders and organizations found in politics something more — that is, a potential source for communal unity. They intentionally sought to sketch out a new community-wide model for Jewish politics vis-à-vis liberal values and address Jewish political concerns through the guise of consensus, or some variation thereof. Of prime importance in the post-war era was the CRC, which coordinated political activity between the branches of national Jewish agencies that operated in Los Angeles—the Jewish War Veterans, the Anti-Defamation League, American Jewish Congress, and American Jewish Committee. They also functioned as

⁵⁴ For more on the CDC, see Jonathan Bell, *California Crucible: The Forging of Modern American Liberalism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012); Raphael Sonenshein, *Politics in Black and White: Race and Power in Los Angeles* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 47–50.

⁵⁵ James Q. Wilson, *The Amateur Democrat: Club Politics in Three Cities* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962).

⁵⁶ Bell, *California Crucible*.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*; Moore, *To the Golden Cities*.

the self-appointed spokesman for Los Angeles Jewry. It is of no small coincidence that the CRC emerged as the central venue for Jewish political discussion and communal policy formation in Los Angeles at the same moment that the Jewish community underwent rapid growth, geographic splintering, and social diversification. The CRC operated under the auspices of the Jewish Community Council (later the Jewish Federation Council) and its mandate to help unify, centralize, and organize Jewish political life.⁵⁸ As various historians of postwar American Jewish politics have demonstrated, the national heads of the defense agencies disagreed on a range of issues such as Zionism and anti-communism.⁵⁹ With its emphasis on political activity at the local level and its centralizing pull, the CRC helped to delimit the ideological and political differences between the local branches of these national organizations.

The evolution of the CRC paralleled and promoted the ascent of Jewish liberalism in Los Angeles. Well-to-do professionals described by historians Max Vorspan and Lloyd Gartner as “the most prominent Jews in the city” established the CRC in 1933 in response to the rising tides of local anti-Semitism and pro-Nazi activity in Los Angeles.⁶⁰ As the first organization in the country established to combat the domestic fascist threat, much of the CRC’s early activities entailed monitoring and spying on groups such as the German American Bund well as the Silver Shirts that were quite active throughout Southern California.⁶¹ While prominent Hollywood

⁵⁸ On the CRC’s centralizing mission, see Arthur Manella, “Notes for Use at CRC Meeting December 18, 1964 with Leaders of the Negro Community,” December 18, 1964, Agenda and Minutes 1964 Folder, Box 26, Jewish Federation Council of Greater Los Angeles, Community Relations Committee Collection IV, Urban Archives Center, Oviatt Library, California State University, Northridge (hereafter CRC); Moore, *To the Golden Cities*, 199–200; Vorspan and Gartner, *History of the Jews of Los Angeles*, 263–75.

⁵⁹ Dollinger, *Quest for Inclusion*, 91–106; Svonkin, *Jews Against Prejudice*, 161–77. Also see Michael E. Staub, *Torn at the Roots: The Crisis of Jewish Liberalism in Postwar America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).

⁶⁰ Vorspan and Gartner, *History of the Jews of Los Angeles*, 221.

⁶¹ Bernstein, *Bridges of Reform*, 49; Eisenberg, Kahn, and Toll, *Jews of the Pacific Coast*, 49–55.

studio executives provided much of the funding for the CRC, the organization's more active members included the likes of attorneys Mendel Silderberg, Harry Hollzer, and Isaac Pacht as well as public relations specialist Joseph Roos. With close ties to business leaders and politicians, they sought to promote goodwill between Jews and gentiles through personal connections and elite civic networks.⁶²

By the end of the Second World War though, the CRC and its leadership had shed its “accommodationist” roots.⁶³ The swelling of the city's overall population, the shaky transition to a peacetime economy, and the onset of the Cold War intensified anti-Semitism and other forms of social discrimination. Finding a receptive audience through public rallies and sensationalist radio sermons, populist demagogues such as Gerald L. K. Smith and Reverend James W. Fifield called upon white Protestant Angelenos to protect their city against Jewish intrusion into certain industries and residential areas.⁶⁴ Likewise, State Senator Jack Tenney, chairman of the California Senate's Fact-Finding Committee on Un-American Activities, launched an anticommunist crusade in Los Angeles because he believed the city was a bastion of radicalism; while most Jewish organizations in Los Angeles had an anticommunist bent, Tenney focused his attention on Jews and Jewish institutions for supposedly supporting subversive communist activity that aimed to threaten domestic security.⁶⁵ These worrisome conditions compelled the CRC to collaborate and form alliances with other minorities—specifically Mexican Americans

⁶² Bernstein, *Bridges of Reform*, 49–55, 178–80; Eisenberg, Kahn, and Toll, *Jews of the Pacific Coast*, 49–55.

⁶³ Bernstein, *Bridges of Reform*; David J. Leonard, “‘The Little Fuehrer Invades Los Angeles’: The Emergence of a Black-Jewish Coalition after World War II,” *American Jewish History* 92, no. 1 (2004): 81–102; Sanchez, “What's Good for Boyle Heights Is Good for the Jews.”

⁶⁴ Bernstein, *Bridges of Reform*; Leonard, “The Little Fuehrer Invades Los Angeles”; Sanchez, “What's Good for Boyle Heights Is Good for the Jews.”

⁶⁵ Bernstein, *Bridges of Reform*, 104–7.

and African Americans—and pursue political initiatives that emphasized the state enforcement of nondiscrimination laws and the language of tolerance. Jewish interracial activism was largely predicated on the idea that the most effective way to ensure the safety for Jews was to work with other groups to secure common goals.⁶⁶ Reflecting on the CRC’s pragmatic “building bridges” strategy in an oral history, former CRC executive director Joseph Roos explained that “much of what was done at the time was the belief that as you fight intolerance, as you make people aware of the value of the human being, judge him on the basis of his merit, as you do that, you eliminate also the prejudice against the Jews. In other words, it was an overall anti-prejudice, call it pro-tolerance.”⁶⁷

While Jewish leaders shared with their counterparts a common interest in eradicating discrimination, they also approached interracial activism from a distinct socio-economic position. Within the context of Los Angeles’s ethno-racial hierarchy Jews were situated somewhere between the white, Protestant majority and marginalized minority groups. By virtue of their white skin color, they had more access to avenues of power than their African-Americans or Mexican-Americans counterparts and served as, what historian Shana Bernstein has labeled, “civil rights brokers” on relevant fair employment, housing discrimination, police brutality, and civil liberties campaigns.⁶⁸ At the same time, however, they sought to avoid public activism that drew attention to their district ethnic concerns and preferred to work through and support organizations such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the Community Service Organization (CSO) to promote relevant social and

⁶⁶ Ibid., 4.

⁶⁷ Joseph Roos, Joseph Roos Oral History Interview.

⁶⁸ Bernstein, *Bridges of Reform*, 168–69.

political reforms. In this regard, the CRC pursued coalitions to “camouflage” their specific ethnic interests and strategically frame their initiatives as an expression of American democratic ideals with universal appeal.⁶⁹

Efforts to organize communal politics around a vision of postwar liberalism that invoked the ideals of democratic superiority and liberal universalism forced the CRC to address cases of dissent from the liberal fold and develop patterns of communal exclusion. Of particular significance, the pressures of the Cold War led the CRC and other liberal organizations to a look upon local Jewish radicals with newfound skepticism. Mainstream Jewish leaders feared that the Yiddish-influenced, socialist-tinged, organizations that thrived in the lower-middle-class milieu of Boyle Heights and migrated to the Fairfax neighborhoods heightened anti-Semitic fodder and thus posed a threat to Los Angeles Jewry’s safety. As such, they wanted to create distance between their own policies/ public perceptions of Jewish politics and the activities of Jewish organizations too closely associated with leftist politics. They embarked on a virulent anticommunist crusade that ultimately led to the expulsion of organizations such as the Jewish Peoples Fraternal Order (JFPO) from Jewish communal ranks.⁷⁰ Justifying the expulsion of the JFPO from the Jewish Community Council, Chairman of the CRC Mendel Silderberg noted that the organization’s supposed ties to communism “has the seeds of great injury to the Jewish Community.”⁷¹ Likewise, the CRC closely monitored leftist parents of Fairfax High School students that recently migrated from New York City and formed a parent-teacher association

⁶⁹ Bernstein, *Bridges of Reform*. For more on this strategy at the national level, see Svonkin, *Jews Against Prejudice*.

⁷⁰ Bernstein, *Bridges of Reform*, 100–137; Moore, *To the Golden Cities*, 189–226; Sanchez, “What’s Good for Boyle Heights Is Good for the Jews.”

⁷¹ Bernstein, *Bridges of Reform*, 100–131.

(PTA). From the perspective of the CRC, this “dubious element” was responsible for provoking anti-Semitic incidents in the Fairfax area.⁷²

Rabbis, who emerged as a potent liberal force within the Jewish community during the 1950s, constituted another key pillar of communal Jewish politics. The black freedom struggle of the 1950s grabbed the attention of sympathetic rabbis throughout the country who supported black equality not simply as a pragmatic strategy to promote a more inclusive America but also as a moral crusade. Los Angeles was home to a cohort of relatively young and civically engaged rabbis—Leonard Beerman from Leo Baeck Temple in Bel Air, Max Nussbaum from Temple Israel of Hollywood, and Albert Lewis from Temple Isaiah in the Cheviot Hills/Rancho Park area—who were affiliated with the Reform movement. These rabbis were committed to Judaism’s *prophetic tradition* and the legacy of select biblical prophets such as Isaiah, Amos, and Micah that spoke out against social injustice; they found in Judaism and its sacred texts, doctrines, and traditions a strong social justice and reformist impulse that propelled Jews to stand at the forefront of the civil rights struggle and other progressive causes.⁷³ For example, Beerman, as he explained in an oral history, was attracted to the rabbinate and Judaism’s religious teachings for its “ethical concerns,” which led him to appreciate and recognize “the mutual accountability that that we have for fellow human beings.”⁷⁴

Reform Judaism was especially popular in areas of Los Angeles like the San Fernando Valley and affluent parts of the Westside where Jewish household incomes were relatively high

⁷² “Minutes of Community Relations Committee meeting, Friday May 9, 1952,” CRC Minutes 1952 Folder, Committees 9, CRC IV; “Minutes of Subcommittee on Education,” Friday May 16, 1952, Committees 9, CRC IV.

⁷³ On the prophetic tradition in 1950s and 1960s America, see Jonathan D. Sarna, *American Judaism: A History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 307–9; Staub, *Torn at the Roots*, 45–75.

⁷⁴ Leonard Beerman, Leonard Beerman Interview, April 3, 1997, Oral History Catalog, California Social Welfare Archives, 8-9.

and Jews identified with their ethno-religious backgrounds in a rather loose and casual manner.⁷⁵ Reform rabbis understood and recognized that their congregants were not an intensely religious or observant lot and thus imbued select though popular forms of religious participation with a political cast that highlighted the universality of Jewish ethics. On the days of the Jewish calendar where religious and ritual observance was at its peak (Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Passover) rabbis made a concerted effort to present moral righteousness and social justice as an eternal and shared Jewish value.⁷⁶ As Nussbaum explained to his congregants in 1963, “The High Holy Days with their message of reflection, repentance, and challenge should, in this connection, speak directly to our conscience as Jews and as human beings. We are called upon, this year, to eradicate every vestige of prejudice from our hearts. We should endeavor to practice racial brotherhood in our daily lives, to avoid every form of discrimination.”⁷⁷ And through organizations such as the Board of Rabbis of Southern California and the Southern California Association of Liberal Rabbis, the clergy coordinated their politicized activities—sermons, public speeches, press releases, rallies—with one another to ensure that the Jewish laypeople understood the moral imperative behind integration and proactively supported for civil rights.⁷⁸

⁷⁵ Massarik, “A Report on the Jewish Population of Los Angeles, 1951,” 105–9.

⁷⁶ Massarik, “A Report on the Jewish Population of Los Angeles, 1959,” 30.

⁷⁷ Max Nussbaum, “The Year of the Great Dialogues--Rosh Hashona Sermon,” September 18, 1963, Folder 4, Box 6, MC 705, Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives. Also relevant, Nussbaum told his congregants that the freedom story of Passover “is the spiritual motivation of the Negro Revolution of our own days... We, more than any other group, ought to have the fullest understanding for it and evolve a complete identification with it. One can best fulfill the commandment of the seder in 1965 by drinking one of the four cups to the Negro Revolution and say l’chayim to Martin Luther King.” Max Nussbaum, “The Freedom Story of Passover,” in *Max Nussbaum, from Berlin to Hollywood: A Mid-Century Vision of Jewish Life*, Lewis M. Barth and Ruth Nussbaum (Malibu, CA.: Joseph Simon/Pangloss Press, 1994), 45-47.

⁷⁸ Concretely, this entailed calling upon synagogues and Jewish-owned business to engage in fair employment and non-discriminatory business practices, organizing dialogues and community meetings between Jewish and African American congregations, helping to establish and support synagogue social action committees, and urging Jewish families and congregants to support neighborhood and educational integration. “Minutes of Special Meeting Held on September 9th, 1963,” September 9, 1963, Southern California Association of Liberal Rabbis, 1960 – 1965, Folder 8, Box 99, Western States Jewish History Archive, Department of Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research

These proclamations and initiatives did not fall on deaf ears. Reflecting upon his experience as a Temple Isaiah congregant involved in various civil rights and social action campaigns during the early 1960s, historian and rabbi Marc Raphael Lee noted, “Judaism and Jewishness were the sources of our commitment to African Americans.”⁷⁹

Reform rabbis and the CRC spent the majority of the 1950s pursuing two distinct and often discordant agendas. Whereas the CRC dedicated much of its energy and resources towards interracial coalitions and purging socialist sympathizers from the ranks of Jewish life, rabbis like Nussbaum and Beerman built a reputation as outspoken progressives and in certain cases were branded by conservative state officials as subversive communists.⁸⁰ Their respective approaches to intergroup relations also differed. While the CRC tended to work through coalitions, rabbis in Los Angeles seldom engaged in interreligious activities. Indeed, interfaith activism in Los Angeles through the 1950s was relatively weak. There were a variety of reasons for this: the head of the Catholic Church in Los Angeles, the right-wing Archbishop James McIntyre, sought to minimize intergroup contact; rabbis found themselves at odds with many of their Protestant counterparts who supported Bible reading in public school classrooms; and predominantly Jewish neighborhoods lacked vibrant Christian institutions.⁸¹ As one study on interfaith activism

Library, University of California, Los Angeles (hereafter WSJHA); “Statement on Race Relations -- Prepared by the Board of Rabbis of Southern California: A Guide for Community Action,” July 1963, Negroes (Correspondence and Reports) 1963, Subject Files 97, Series IV, CRC.

⁷⁹ Marc Lee Raphael, “Diary of a Los Angeles Jew, 1942-1972 (An Excerpt),” *American Jewish History* 92, no. 3 (September 25, 2006): 299–311.

⁸⁰ Beerman, Leonard Beerman Interview; “Report of the Senate Fact-Finding Committee on Un-American Activities, 1948: Communist Front Organizations,” March 25, 1948, Folder 3, Box 22, WSJHA.

⁸¹ Eugene J. Lipman and Albert Vorspan, *A Tale of Ten Cities; the Triple Ghetto in American Religious Life* (New York: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1962), 78–110; McGirr, *Suburban Warriors*, 50; Michelle Nickerson, *Mothers of Conservatism: Women and the Postwar Right* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 42.

in Los Angeles found, for rabbis there was “a ‘go-it-aloneness’ on general social issues as integrated housing, civil liberties, and other things.”⁸²

Two broad developments, however, helped to streamline a great deal of Jewish political activity and align these two key pillars of Jewish liberalism. Firstly, as the black freedom struggle was becoming the nation’s defining moral issue, African-American leaders in Los Angeles associated with the NAACP demonstrated a heightened assertiveness and a sense of urgency in their demands for civil rights. While postwar Los Angeles was certainly a multiracial metropolis, the local political discourse surrounding race relations increasingly adhered to the black/white binary.⁸³ Civil rights marches and sit-ins to promote an integrated Los Angeles might have engendered “a new public consciousness of race” that helped to challenge the pillars of segregation, but also ignited, what historian Joshua Sides has described as, “bitter hostility and resistance from a great many of whites.”⁸⁴ This hostility manifested itself in numerous ways. Blue-collar white residents of South Gate and Torrance, for example, initiated and organized grassroots efforts to keep blacks out of their neighborhoods and public schools.⁸⁵ Likewise, conservative evangelicals in Los Angeles and nearby Orange County, while primarily concerned with promoting anticommunism, patriotism, minimal government intervention, and moral Christian values, increasingly identified their agendas at odds with the integrationist thrust of the civil rights movement.⁸⁶ In this tense civic environment, where the ideological and political

⁸² Dan Thrapp, "Interfaith Work Seen Lagging Here: Rightwing Extremism Contributing to Triple Ghetto," *Los Angeles Times*, November 3, 1962.

⁸³ Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 167–68.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 168.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 167–68.

⁸⁶ McGirr, *Suburban Warriors*; Nickerson, *Mothers of Conservatism*.

divide between blacks and whites was increasingly hardening, the CRC began to reassess its traditional insistence on “camouflaging” Jewish political activity. Attempting to demonstrate that Jews were, indeed, different from other whites and proactively supported civil rights, the CRC started to articulate and draw attention to Jewish liberal credentials in a public and forceful manner.

There is no concrete evidence of a particular document or meeting in which the CRC’s members collectively decided to transition away from a low-key liberal approach to one that explicitly drew attention to Jewish liberal activity. But the CRC’s actions at the dawn of the 1960s clearly highlight a changed set of priorities and thus a willingness to turn work closely, even harmoniously, with outspoken Reform rabbis who were committed to the prophetic tradition. In front of non-Jews allies, rabbis and CRC officials highlighted and explained the Jewish community’s widespread support for civil rights as a key component of Jewish civic identity.⁸⁷ The CRC, for example, invited Rabbi Beerman to a meeting with local United States Congressmen in 1960, where he discussed the intertwined relationship between Jewish heritage, Jewish identity, and the Jewish community’s contemporary political agenda. As Beerman told the Congressmen, “because of the persistence on the part of our ancestors to maintain their separate identities and to be different, we today are different—a difference that takes on another form now. We bear a specific feeling with tradition. One single unifying concept is at the forefront of this feeling; that is an elementary, fundamental concern with justice and the maintaining of such.”⁸⁸

⁸⁷ Manella, “Notes for Use at CRC Meeting December 18, 1964 with Leaders of the Negro Community.”

⁸⁸ “Minutes of Community Relations Committee Meeting with Members of Congress,” December 9, 1960, Agenda and Minutes 1960, Committees 14, Series IV, CRC.

In their efforts to explain the imperative of racial integration to their fellow Jewish brethren, the CRC similarly drew upon the language and rhetoric of the prophetic tradition and positioned liberalism as a source of pride for the Jewish community. In a letter sent from the CRC to all the organizations affiliated with the Jewish Federation Council in July of 1963, Joseph Roos declared, “Our religious tradition and our commitment to the principles of democracy place upon us the responsibility to work actively against all forms of intolerance and the elimination of discrimination... The Jewish community has good reason to be proud of its work and accomplishments in the area of race relations.”⁸⁹ The CRC also worked with the Southern California Board of Rabbis to develop concrete and specific plans of actions to help ensure that Jewish individuals and organizations understood the merits of and proactively supported racial integration.⁹⁰ This entailed ensuring that synagogues follow fair employment and non-discrimination business practices, setting up and assisting synagogue social action committees, co-sponsoring civil rights rallies with non-Jewish allies, and supporting new opportunities for interfaith activism between Jews and liberal Protestants.⁹¹ Interfaith initiatives assumed a heightened importance during this so-called “new era in race relations”; the CRC worked with rabbis to ensure that synagogues “develop interracial services” and that an “exchange of pulpits with clergy of other faiths and across racial and ethnic lines [would] be increased.”⁹² Indeed, it

⁸⁹ Joseph Roos, “The Negro Struggle For Equality,” July 9, 1963, Negroes (Correspondence and Reports) 1963, Subject Files 97, Series IV, CRC.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ “Statement on Race Relations -- Prepared by the Board of Rabbis of Southern California: A Guide for Community Action.”

⁹² Program and Action Suggestions from the Community Committee of the Jewish Federation-Council, “The Negroes’ Fight for Equality,” Negroes (Correspondence and Report) 1963 folder, Subject Files 97, CRC IV.

was within this context that Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. accepted invitations from rabbis Max Nussbaum and Albert Lewis to speak at their respective synagogues.⁹³

The CRC adopted and promoted this potent liberal discourse and agenda, not simply as a way to flaunt Jewish liberal accomplishment, but also to address a sense of apathy and ambivalence towards the liberal integrationist model that was quietly mounting within some segments of the Jewish population. The CRC recognized and understood that many Jewish individuals and businesses, ranging across the socio-economic spectrum, practiced, perpetuated, and benefited from the forms of discrimination and prejudice that civil rights leaders throughout the city and the country uniformly condemned. Indeed, certain Jewish homebuilders and private developers refused to sell lots to potential Mexican or black buyers; children at heavily Jewish public schools in the Fairfax neighborhoods and Beverly Hills excluded their non-Jewish counterparts from social activities and clubs; and the migration of African Americans into the Wilshire-Fairfax compelled Jewish homeowners to begin to leave the neighborhood.⁹⁴ Likewise, the NAACP accused Jewish film industry executives of discriminatory hiring practices and negatively portraying African-American characters in movies.⁹⁵ In associating liberal integration with the notion of Jewish responsibility, heritage and identity, the CRC was calling upon the

⁹³ Martin Luther King Jr., “Dr. Martin Luther King’s Speech at Temple Isaiah” (Temple Isaiah, February 1960), http://templeisaiah.com/MLK_Speech.php; Martin Luther King Jr., “Sermon at Temple Israel of Hollywood” (Temple Israel of Hollywood, February 26, 1965), <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mlktempleisraelhollywood.htm>. Also see Dan L. Thrapp, “Jewish Meeting to Hear Wilkins: NAACP Chief and Other Negro Leaders to Address Three Branches of Judaism,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 3, 1963.

⁹⁴ Avila, *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight*. Stanley Mosk, “Dear Mr. Weingart,” November 30, 1951, Subcommittee: Discrimination in Housing 1951 Folder, Committees 2, CRC IV; “Westside Tensions,” CRC – 1965 Westside Tensions Committee Meeting Notices & Agenda, Committees 9, CRC IV; “Community Relations Committee Meeting, December 13, 1963,” CRC Agenda and Minutes folder 1963, Committees 22, CRC IV; Vorspan and Gartner, *History of the Jews of Los Angeles*, 246.

⁹⁵ “Meeting Will Hit Race Bias,” *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*, July 9, 1963; Murray Schumach, “N.A.A.C.P. Presses Hollywood Fight,” *The New York Times*, June 28, 1963.

Jewish population to help eliminate segregation without publicly condemning or explicitly drawing attention to these very-real manifestations of Jewish racism. There was also evidence that anti-Semitism was growing within certain segments of the black communities through news outlets such as the sensationalist and militant *Herald-Dispatch*, which accused Jews of seeking to take over and control civil rights organizations.⁹⁶ As such, the CRC feared that many Jews were on the verge of openly resisting and demonstrating hostility towards integration. As Joseph Roos declared at a Jewish Community Federation Conference in October of 1963, “in spite of this type of anti-Semitism, in spite of all the constructive things we have done, we must continue the fight.”⁹⁷

III.

For civically engaged Californians of all ideological stripes, the question of housing politics emerged as a controversial issue of prime concern during the early 1960s. Undergoing a recent change in local leadership, the NAACP became increasingly vocal and insistent with its demands for integrated housing opportunities in Los Angeles.⁹⁸ Moreover, in 1963 California’s Democratic-controlled state legislature’s passed the Rumford Fair Housing Act of 1963, which called for the state enforcement of nondiscrimination in about 70% of the California housing market. Immediately following its passage, the California Real Estate Association launched a

⁹⁶ Community Relations Committee, “Report to the Board of Directors of Federation-Council,” July 9, 1963, Special Committee re: Negroes, 1963, Box 107, CRC IV; Frederic C. Coonradt, University of Southern California, and School of Journalism, *The Negro News Media and the Los Angeles Riots* (Los Angeles: School of Journalism, University of Southern California, 1965); Horne, *Fire This Time*, 47, 328–29.

⁹⁷ Joseph Roos, “Speech Delivered by Joseph Roos at Conference of Area Councils,” October 20, 1963, Negro-Jewish Relations Folder, Subject Files 97, Series IV, CRC.

⁹⁸ Community Relations Committee, “Report to the Board of Directors of Federation-Council: The Negro Revolution,” July 9, 1963, Special Committee Regarding Negroes Folder, Subject Files 107, Series IV, CRC; Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 148–68.

movement to dismantle and nullify the Rumford Act through a statewide proposition (Proposition 14) that would prioritize the rights of the individual property owners over state-sanctioned housing regulations.⁹⁹ In the months leading up to the November 1964 election, the contest over Proposition 14 helped to intensify political activities on all sides of the housing integration debates and operated as a referendum on civil rights. Indeed, Proposition 14, according to historian Becky Nicolaides, “became the most controversial issue of the 1964 state election.”¹⁰⁰

For the CRC, the heated political focus on housing integration functioned both as an opportunity to help strengthen the liberal integrationist agenda and a powder keg that could potentially expose and exacerbate the latent anti-integrationist sentiments within the Jewish community. Thus, at the same moment that the CRC was seeking to align their own policies with the NAACP’s demands for integrated housing they also made a concerted effort to address, control, and limit manifestations of Jewish dissent from the liberal fold. Of particular concern was the fact that Jews played a visible and prominent role in the local housing industry as builders, lenders, and real estate agents and in many cases, were the actors who refused to sell houses in all-white neighborhoods to African Americans and other minorities.¹⁰¹ In July of 1963, the CRC held a meeting with a group of well-to-do Jewish builders such as Lawrence Weinberg,

⁹⁹ Brilliant, *The Color of America Has Changed*, 190–226; Thomas W. Casstevens, University of California, Berkeley and Institute of Governmental Studies, *Politics, Housing, and Race Relations: California’s Rumford Act and Proposition 14*, (Berkeley: Institute of Governmental Studies, University of California, 1967); Daniel Martinez HoSang, *Racial Propositions: Ballot Initiatives and the Making of Postwar California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010); Kurashige, *The Shifting Grounds of Race*, 260–67; Nicolaides, *My Blue Heaven*, 308–15; Raymond E. Wolfinger and Fred I. Greenstein, “The Repeal of Fair Housing in California: An Analysis of Referendum Voting,” *The American Political Science Review* 62, no. 3 (September 1, 1968): 753–69.

¹⁰⁰ Nicolaides, *My Blue Heaven*, 308.

¹⁰¹ Joseph Roos, “Letter to Builders,” July 3, 1963, Special Committee Regarding Negroes, Subject Files 107, Series IV, CRC; “CRC Subcommittee RE: Current Developments in the Negro Community Meeting,” June 18, 1963, Special Committee Regarding Negroes Folder, Subject Files 107, Series IV, CRC.

Nathan Shappell, and Mark Boyar to discuss the responsibilities of the Jewish community in promoting housing integration. As notes from the meeting reveal, although the majority of the attendees claimed to support housing integration as a moral issue, they argued that the economic realities of the situation such as the prospects of white homeowner flight and falling property values prevented them from fully integrating their housing developments and properties. Jewish builders were also sensitive to pressures from their fellow non-Jewish colleagues in the housing industry, many of whom wanted to ensure that select suburban tracts remain racially restrictive.¹⁰² As a compromise of sorts, the builders and real estate professionals agreed to open a limited number of houses to potential African-American buyers and proactively recruit a finite number of minorities into their rental units.¹⁰³

In addition to approaching Jewish professionals associated with the real estate industry, the CRC also looked towards neighborhoods with a high concentration of Jews to experiment with integrated housing. With evidence that the recent migration of African Americans into the lower middle class Wilshire-Fairfax neighborhood was prompting Jewish homeowners to sell their property and leave the area, the CRC established “Committee on Changing Neighborhoods” and the Neighbors Unlimited program.¹⁰⁴ Working closely with the local Protestant and Catholic clergy, rabbis, public schools officials, and real estate brokers to carry out educational programs that touted the benefits of integrated housing, the committee sought to create a “stabilized

¹⁰² “Ad Hoc CRC Sub-Committee Re Current Developments in the Negro Community Meeting, June 18, 1963,” June 18, 1963, Special Committee Regarding Negroes Folder, Subject Files 107, Series IV, CRC.

¹⁰³ “RE: Current Developments in the Negro Community Meeting.”

¹⁰⁴ Jack Panitz, “Background Paper on Neighborhood Stabilization Program and Neighbors Unlimited Coalitions,” May 9, 1967, Coalition 1966-1968, Box 192, Series IV, CRC.

integrated community.”¹⁰⁵ This intentionally cautious approach welcomed a finite number of minorities into the neighborhood, condemned the “unethical practices” of panic selling, and tried to stabilize the current demographic composition of the neighborhood, all in an effort to prevent the large-scale outward migration of Jews as well as the emergence of a new black ghetto.¹⁰⁶ While the CRC’s “stabilized integrated community” plan was certainly limited and narrow in its definition of integration and vision of what integration could entail, it was touted (and correctly so) as an exception to the dominant housing trends throughout Los Angeles.¹⁰⁷

In terms of electoral politics, the organized Jewish community in general and the CRC in particular was a hotbed for “no on 14” activity. California Governor Edmund Brown appointed Max Mont the campaign director for Californians Against Proposition 14 (CAP 14). Mont was affiliated with the Jewish Labor Committee and an active member of the CRC; he received early financial support and endorsements for the “no on 14” campaign from the CRC.¹⁰⁸ The CRC’s efforts to organize Jews against Proposition 14, however, started slowly. In December of 1963, Mont reported that the John Birch Society was trying to leverage the “yes on 14” campaign to disrupt the current political system and that there was a “serious gap” between the leaders of the Jewish community and the Jewish grassroots; thereafter, the CRC intensified their efforts to mobilize the Jewish masses against the proposition.¹⁰⁹ The CRC’s efforts involved reaching out towards and working with leaders of about 450 local Jewish organizations—including the

¹⁰⁵ “Committee on Changing Neighborhoods,” December 4, 1964, CRC Agenda and Minutes, 1964, Committees 26, Series IV, CRC; “Community Relations Committee Meeting,” December 13, 1963, Agenda and Minutes -- 1963, Committees 22, Series IV, CRC.

¹⁰⁶ “Community Relations Committee Meeting.”

¹⁰⁷ Kurashige, *The Shifting Grounds of Race*, 277.

¹⁰⁸ Joseph Roos, “Attempts to Repeal the Rumford Fair Housing Acts,” December 27, 1963, Discrimination Housing 1963, Subject Files 90, Series IV, CRC; “Community Relations Committee Meeting.”

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

American Jewish Congress, the American Jewish Committee, the Anti-Defamation League, the Jewish Labor Committee, the Jewish War Veterans of America, synagogue social action committees, B'nai B'rith social clubs, the Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox rabbinate, youth groups, and the Jewish Centers Association—to relay the “no on 14” message to the Jewish masses. Indeed, various Jewish organizations helped to organize the interfaith “no on 14” rally in May of 1964, which featured Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. as the main speaker.¹¹⁰ With the vast majority of Jewish-affiliated organizations in Los Angeles throwing their support behind the “no on 14” campaign, the CRC laid claim to organizing and coordinating a united Jewish political front.¹¹¹ One study regarding Proposition 14 observed that, “the Jewish community leadership was virtually unanimous in its opposition to Proposition 14. Jewish organizations were perhaps most vigorous and persistent of all in trying to reach their constituency.”¹¹²

The CRC and its affiliates employed two basic argumentative and rhetorical strategies in their efforts to mobilize the Jewish grassroots against Proposition 14. The first of which, the pragmatic approach, emphasized the practical and tangible problems associated with the proposition. That is, with the passage of Proposition 14, the state of California would lose funding from various federal programs and the legislative and legal protections associated with

¹¹⁰ Joseph Roos, “Members of the Community Relations Committee,” May 15, 1964, CRC Memos and Meeting Notices 1964, Box 27, CRC IV; “Religious Witness for Human Dignity,” CRC Memos and Meeting Notices 1964, Box 27, CRC IV.

¹¹¹ Joseph Roos, “Joseph Roos to Nancy Ashdon,” October 30, 1964, Discrimination Housing Rumford Act (1964), Subject Files 113, Series IV, CRC.

¹¹² “Review of Proposition 14: Report to Jewish Labor Committee,” February 3, 1965, Box 22, Folder 11, Max Mont Collection, Urban Archives Center, Oviatt Library, California State University, Northridge (hereafter MMC).

the Rumford Act. Helping to convey this point, one CRC newsletter from October of 1964 explained, “Proposition 14 threatens your job, your home, your tax dollar.”¹¹³

The second and more commonly adopted strategy was the moralistic and emotionally tinged one. As the CRC and its various affiliates articulated in statements, speeches, brochures and letters, Proposition 14 was not simply a political matter but also “an important moral issue” that was concerned with the welfare of the underprivileged and basic notions of decency. As one CRC newsletter noted, “the Segregation Amendment strikes at the very root of democracy and it behooves every citizen who wants to see democracy strengthened instead of weakened, to work for the defeat of Proposition 14.”¹¹⁴ While certain right-wing organizations publicly supported Proposition 14 as a means to ensure the residential separate of the races, the official leaders of the “yes on 14” campaign framed their argument around the protection of private property and colorblind notions of fairness.¹¹⁵ Overlooking these more nuanced arguments, the CRC’s “no on 14” literature presented the proposition’s proponents as “hate mongers” associated with the likes of the John Birch Society and the Ku Klux Klan.¹¹⁶ And upon the suggestions of local rabbis, the CRC produced a widely distributed pamphlet entitled “Remember when ‘restricted’ meant: For Rent—No Jews or Dogs Allowed,” that lambasted and critiqued white extremists and warned Jews that the passage of Proposition 14 would help to unleash a new wave of anti-Jewish

¹¹³ “CRC Newsletter: Campaign Against Proposition 14 on the Upgrade,” October 1964, Newsletter 1964, Subject Files 120, Series IV, CRC.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ HoSang, *Racial Propositions*, 63–72.

¹¹⁶ “Hate Mongers in the Political Campaign,” August 1964, Newsletter 1964, Newsletter 1964 Folder, Subject Files 120, Series IV, CRC. For more on the CHP’s strategy, see Dochuck, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt*, 249, 254; Kurashige, *The Shifting Grounds of Race*, 262.

housing restrictions.¹¹⁷ In positioning the “no on 14” campaign as a moralistic battle against racism, anti-Semitism, and segregation, Jewish leaders also took the opportunity remind the Jewish grassroots of the supposed link between Judaism and its ethical precepts. As one such letter sent from the leaders to the congregants of the Reform synagogue Temple Emanuel succinctly stated, “Proposition 14 is an attack on one of the basic tenets of Judaism – the brotherhood of man.”¹¹⁸

The results of the November 1964 election, with Californians voting in favor of the proposition by a two-to-one margin, both stunned and disappointed the proposition’s liberal opponents.¹¹⁹ Largely ignoring that Proposition 14’s protection of private property rights appealed to many moderate white voters, the state’s liberal leadership saw and explained the lopsided “yes on 14” vote as a simple and one-dimensional expression of right-wing racism.¹²⁰ The leadership of the Jewish community joined in on this chorus and attributed the passage of Proposition 14 to the state’s unabashed racists. Yet, they also faced a more nuanced internal problem. While estimates suggest that Los Angeles Jewry voted *against* the proposition by about two-to-one margins, these results did not necessarily indicate the fruition of the overwhelming liberal mandate that Jewish leaders were hoping to capture.¹²¹

In the same election cycle where numerous Jewish leaders spoke out against conservative presidential candidate Barry Goldwater and about 94% of the identifiable Jewish electorate voted

¹¹⁷ “Pamphlet: Remember When ‘Restricted’ Meant For Rent—No Jews or Dogs Allowed,” 1965, Folder 11, Box 22, MMC.

¹¹⁸ “Dear Member,” October 12, 1964, Social Action, Reform (Correspondence) 1964, Subject Files 126, Series IV, CRC.

¹¹⁹ Brilliant, *The Color of America Has Changed*, 203.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Wolfinger and Greenstein, “The Repeal of Fair Housing in California.”

for the Democratic incumbent Lyndon B. Johnson, the two-thirds margin seemed suspect and slightly disappointing.¹²² Like other pro-Johnson/anti-Goldwater, “yes on 14” voters, a sizeable minority within the Jewish electorate “drew a line” between Goldwater’s conservative iconoclasm and a belief in protection of certain private property right. Or stated another way, these voters made a distinction between Johnson’s broad and diffused civic rights agenda and a particular state proposition that supposedly threatened their property rights.¹²³ Thus to mask signs that certain segments of the Jewish community were ambivalent about housing integration, the CRC leadership flaunted the Jewish support for Johnson in newsletters and meeting with African-American groups though was conspicuously vague about the particularities of the Proposition 14 results.¹²⁴ Perhaps to deflect attention away from the results of Proposition 14, inter-groups meetings also stressed Jews that were deeply troubled by “the activities of the extreme right wing radicals and the flag-waving super-patriots” and proposed that blacks and Jews continue to productively work together to “educate the public so that it would not be misled by members of the Birch Society and other similar organizations.”¹²⁵

The political discussions surrounding housing integration during 1963 and 1964 internally threatened though did not publicly challenge in any significant way the Jewish liberal project.¹²⁶ The CRC and other Jewish organizations were able to prop up the image of the Jewish community as a devotedly liberal one, even if that entailed pursuing political compromises that

¹²² “Bitter Attack on Goldwater by Rabbi Prinz,” *B’nai B’rith Messenger*, October 2, 1964; “Barry’s Heritage – at Odd with his Views”; “Hadassah Head Raps GOP,” *The Sentinel*, August 20, 1964.

¹²³ For more on Johnson voters that supported Proposition 14, see Brilliant, *The Color of America Has Changed*, 206.

¹²⁴ Manella, “Notes for Use at CRC Meeting.”

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*; “Election Returns,” CRC Memos and Meeting Notices 1964 Folder, Committees 27, CRC IV.

¹²⁶ The exception here was a single *Los Angeles Times* article that came out in April of 1964, long before the election. Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, “California Points Up Impact of Militancy,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 27, 1964.

limited liberalism's integrationist objectives and conducting crafty public relations campaigns that concealed expressions of dissent from the liberal fold. If anything, the unambiguous support against Proposition 14 within Jewish leadership circles helped to strengthen and fortify the perception of Jews as liberals.¹²⁷ The Watts riots of 1965, however, posed a more acute, incendiary, and immediate public relations and political problem.

IV.

Located about seven miles south of downtown, Watts was one of Los Angeles's more racially diverse neighborhoods during the first half of the century.¹²⁸ Along with blacks, Asians, Mexicans, and other whites, Jews had worked and lived in Watts through the early 1950s.¹²⁹ New opportunities for homeownership and the pressures of suburbanization propelled the outward migration of upwardly mobile African Americans, Jews, and other white residents from Watts during the postwar period.¹³⁰ Even so, Jewish merchants continued to operate retail businesses—particularly food, furniture, and liquor—in what had become an overwhelmingly African-American neighborhood marked with deepening levels of poverty, high levels of unemployment, substandard housing, and inadequate educational opportunities.¹³¹ Although owning a store in Watts was typically a profitable professional endeavor that helped to provide the financial basis for a lower middle class or middle class existence, it was not necessarily

¹²⁷ "Introduction," Folder 11, MMC.

¹²⁸ Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 19.

¹²⁹ Massarik, "A Report on the Jewish Population of Los Angeles, 1951," 11.

¹³⁰ Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 121.

¹³¹ Senn, "Milton A. Senn to Jerry Rosen"; Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 169–76.

considered prestigious.¹³² Given the relatively high and increasingly growing percentage of Jewish white-collar professionals, the merchant occupation was typically regarded as one of low social status within the Jewish community.¹³³

Blacks in Los Angeles and elsewhere had long contended with poverty, police abuse, and residential segregation, though the situation in August of 1965 was an especially delicate one. While the civil rights movement had brought blacks new job opportunities and enhanced political representation, the modest and uneven nature of these gains, coupled with the results of Proposition 14, frustrated younger African Americans who continued to feel like second-class citizens.¹³⁴ A confrontation between the police and local, black residents on the evening of August 11, 1965 unleashed a wave of public unrest and civic disturbance that lasted six days. Much of this animosity was channeled directly towards their white counterparts—Jews and non-Jews alike—that worked in Watts; merchants and policemen not only had access to opportunities which eluded the black residents of Watts, but were viewed as personally responsible for helping to perpetuate inequality.¹³⁵ Local critics of inner-city businesses, for example, routinely charged storeowners with price gouging, selling shabby merchandise, routinely disrespecting customers, and engaging in ruthless credit practices.¹³⁶ Describing retail conditions in Watts, one local

¹³² Walter Jerome Raine, “Los Angeles Riot Study; The Ghetto Merchant Survey” (Los Angeles: Institute of Government and Public Affairs, University of California, 1967), 4.

¹³³ Leonard Brown, “Leonard Brown to Rabbi Dubin,” August 30, 1965, Relations to Negro Community, 1965, Folder, Box 31, CRC IV.

¹³⁴ Kurashige, *The Shifting Grounds of Race*, 267–73; Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 167–68.

¹³⁵ David J. Leonard, “‘No Jews and No Coloreds Are Welcome in This Town’: Constructing Coalitions in Post/War Los Angeles” (University of California, Berkeley, 2002), 54; Raymond John Murphy et al., *The Structure of Discontent: The Relationship between Social Structure, Grievance, and Support for the Los Angeles Riot* (Los Angeles: Institute of Government and Public Affairs, University of California, 1967).

¹³⁶ Horne, *Fire This Time*, 110–11; “Testimony of Mrs. Daniels,” October 8, 1965, Merchant-consumer relations: general, Folder 1, Carton 12, GCLARR.

resident noted, “I have bought meat many times that I’ve had to bring back! Also the same is true with fruits and vegetables and we are paying the highest prices for them.”¹³⁷ Helping to inflame these criticisms, the *Herald-Dispatch* ran a series of articles in the weeks leading up to the riots that attacked merchants for their unscrupulous business practices. Much of this content was laced with anti-Semitism.¹³⁸

In examining anti-Semitism as a potential motivating factor for the riots, historian Gerald Horne argues that although the rioters drew upon potent anti-Semitic rhetoric, the riots foremost grew out of economic deprivation. The rioters, as Horne argues, employed anti-Semitic language not because of an intrinsic hatred towards Jews or Judaism, but because they conflated whiteness and Jewishness.¹³⁹ Cheryl Greenberg has made a similar observation: Jews who worked in black neighborhoods, as she argues, “stood in” for whites in black people’s minds and thus “absorbed the full force of their racial resentment.”¹⁴⁰

Jews were undergoing a similar sense of confusion and disorientation when trying to understand and process, not just the riots, but more specifically questions of black anti-Semitism and Jewish economic exploitation. In doing so they grappled, often awkwardly and in contradictory ways, with their own racial status, assumptions about urban betterment, internal class differences, and their relationship with African Americans. Intentional or not, various

¹³⁷ “Testimony was taken on October 8, 1965...,” Folder 27, Carton 12, GCLARR

¹³⁸ Horne, *Fire This Time*, 328–29. Roos, “Speech Delivered by Joseph Roos at Conference of Area Councils.”

¹³⁹ Horne, *Fire This Time*, 110–11.

¹⁴⁰ Cheryl Lynn Greenberg, *Troubling the Waters: Black-Jewish Relations in the American Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 6.

efforts to disentangle and contemplate these issues and interpret the riots effectively functioned as a referendum on Jewish liberalism.¹⁴¹

In the immediate aftermath of the riots, CRC associate director and executive director (Charles Posner and Joseph Roos, respectively) met with representatives from local Jewish agencies and synagogues to discuss the riots. Here, various policies, positions, and procedures were discussed and coordinated. In relaying the content of this meeting to his colleague, Posner noted that, “we all agreed that we would use the same story, basically that this area had been a Jewish area, when the Jewish Community moved out, the Jewish businessmen stayed. To our knowledge, we had not been able to determine any overt anti-Semitism, rather the acts were against whites.”¹⁴² Indeed, the Anti-Defamation League conducted a study of the riot area and could not find an outstanding pattern of anti-Jewish violence: although Jewish merchants suffered more damage than their non-Jewish counterparts—Jews owned 140 out of the 229 stores destroyed—Jews were proportionately targeted at a lower rate than other storeowners.¹⁴³

Accordingly, the Community Relations Committee, the American Jewish Committee, the American Jewish Congress, the Anti-Defamation League, the Jewish Labor Committee, and the Jewish War Veterans released a series of brief joint and individual statements, press releases, and organizational memos in concert with one another that considered the causes of the riots and their implications for the Jewish community in particular and the city of Los Angeles at large.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴¹ For a discussion of how Jews discussed, approached, and argued over another riot with anti-Semitic undertones, see Edward S. Shapiro, “Interpretations of the Crown Heights Riot,” *American Jewish History* 90, no. 2 (2002): 97–122.

¹⁴² Charles Posner, “Charles Posner to Joseph Roos,” August 20, 1965, Relations to the Negro Community-1965, Committees 31, Series IV, CRC.

¹⁴³ Senn, “Milton A. Senn to Jerry Rosen.”

¹⁴⁴ Albert Rabbi Lewis, “Letter from American Jewish Congress,” August 18, 1965, Watts Correspondence, Subject Files 146, Series IV, CRC; “Joint Statement by the Community Relations Committee of the Jewish Federation-

Emphasizing the importance of social justice, tolerance, and inter-racial cooperation, these statements conveyed nearly identical liberal messages that emphasized three points in particular. Firstly, they did not believe that anti-Semitism was a valid explanation of the riots. As one letter from the American Jewish Congress noted, “The rioting and the destruction of property which resulted were directed at whites. There is no evidence to indicate that the mobs singled out Jewish-owned stores as special targets.”¹⁴⁵ From this perspective, the cause of the riots had little to do with the specific relationship between Jews and blacks and was largely rooted in underlining structural forms of social and economic deprivation as well as the general “problems of Negro family life and lack of direction among a number of the poor.”¹⁴⁶ Secondly, although based on questionable and limited evidence, these statements asserted that Jews were in fact among the most well respected storeowners in Watts. “One large food-chain store with a well-respected Jewish manager was ‘saved’ by the negro employees who protected it from mob violence at gun point,” explained a CRC press release. On various occasions, agencies referred to the fact that a thrift shop operated by the Jewish War Veterans, with its supposedly “excellent reputation for fairness in the community,” was not looted or affected by the riot.¹⁴⁷ Lastly, these statements also affirmed that the Jewish community should continue their support for the civil rights movement, help the residents of Watts rebuild their community, and resist the allure of the

Council and Its Cooperating National Agencies: American Jewish Committee, American Jewish Congress, Anti-Defamation League, Jewish Labor Committee, Jewish War Veterans,” August 1965, Watts Correspondence, Subject Files 146, Series IV, CRC; Arthur Groman, “Letter from American Jewish Committee,” August 24, 1965, Watts Correspondence, Subject Files 146, Series IV, CRC; Joseph Roos, “Letter to Organization Presidents, Rabbis, Community Leaders,” August 30, 1965, Watts Correspondence, Subject Files 146, Series IV, CRC; “Letter from Jewish War Veterans of America,” August 20, 1965, Watts Correspondence, Subject Files 146, Series IV, CRC.

¹⁴⁵ “Dear Fellow Congress member,” August 19, 1965, Watts Correspondence, Subject Files 146, Series IV, CRC.

¹⁴⁶ “Letter from Jewish War Veterans of America.”

¹⁴⁷ “Community Relations Committee News Release,” August 20, 1965, Watts Correspondence, Subject Files 146, Series IV, CRC; Horne, *Fire This Time*, 110.

emerging conservative, white backlash. As one such letter from the American Jewish Committee noted, “the riots will almost inevitably rekindle anti-Negro sentiments within the white community. They have provided a field day for the bigot and the extremist. It would be tragic if we allow the Jewish community to ally itself in any way with such elements.”¹⁴⁸

To a certain extent, Jewish agencies were effective in articulating a message that distinguished Jews as enlightened whites and sought to fortify and reinforce the liberal sentiments that had long been part of Jewish community and its political discourse. *Heritage: Southwest Jewish Press*, for example, ran a series of articles and editorials in response to the civil unrest in Watts that proclaimed “No ‘Anti-Semitism in the Riots,’” reminded Jews of their own experience as victims of discrimination, and called upon their readers to show compassion for blacks and their struggle to achieve civil rights.¹⁴⁹ “The rioting by a small minority of power-crazed mad men of the Negro community must not deflect decent men and women from the never-ending effort for human values,” explained one *Heritage* editorial.¹⁵⁰ Moreover, in the months following the riots, liberal-minded Jews held fundraisers to aid riot victims, organized synagogue symposiums and panels that discussed the riots, and established a chapter of JOIN (Jews Organized to Integrate Negroes) in Los Angeles.¹⁵¹ And as one such study on white

¹⁴⁸ Groman, “Letter from American Jewish Committee.”

¹⁴⁹ Herb Brin, “Across the City Desk,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, n.d.; Herb Brin, “Warsaw and the Los Angeles Ghetto,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, August 19, 1965; “No ‘Anti-Semitism’ in the Riots” A Report From the Community Relations Committee,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, August 26, 1964; “The Target Is Still Humanity,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, August 19, 1965.

¹⁵⁰ “The Target Is Still Humanity.”

¹⁵¹ “For Riot Victims, Aid Is Mobilized,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, August 26, 1965; “Jewish-Negro Fellowship Group Formed in L.A.,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, October 7, 1965.

reactions to the riots revealed, only 18% of Jews expressed negative feeling towards the civil rights movement, about twenty percentile points lower than that of non-Jewish whites.¹⁵²

What statistical polling, fundraising efforts, and synagogue events do not reveal is the sense of bitterness and resentment that the liberal explanatory framework engendered within certain segments of the Jewish community. While not articulated in a coherent or unified manner, merchants and their families tended to perceive the liberal explanation for the riots as an affront to their personal experiences and a threat to their sense of social (and monetary) stability. The majority of Watts merchants, as one study from UCLA noted, interpreted the riots as a violent spree carried out by “racists,” “hoodlums,” and “opportunists.”¹⁵³ In an interview with the Governor’s Commission on the Los Angeles Riots, storeowner Meyer Bluestein defended his business practices and those of other local merchants as sound and honest and pointed towards anti-Semitism as a cause for the riots. As Bluestein explained, liberal efforts to blame a so-called “white power structure” for the riots actually are not just incorrect but dangerous in that they help to legitimize the “greatest crime spree of the century.”¹⁵⁴ Marge Horowitz, whose family’s property was destroyed in Watts, saw the CRC’s policies as a source for concern: she believed that their memo which stated the riots were not anti-Semitic was incorrect (“Black Muslims said they were going run every Jewish businessmen out of Watts”) and believed that the CRC’s conciliatory message would ultimately justify further violence against Jews.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵² Richard Morris and Vincent Jeffries, “The White Reaction Study” (Los Angeles: Department of Sociology, University of California, Los Angeles, 1967), 552.

¹⁵³ Raine, “Los Angeles Riot Study,” 19. The majority of merchants interviewed were Jewish. See page 3 of study.

¹⁵⁴ “Information Sheet Regarding Meyer Bluestein’s Phone Call to Governor’s Commission,” November 4, 1965, Private property inventory 1-21 (9-a), Carton 5, Folder 7, GCLARR.

¹⁵⁵ “Phone Message from Marge Horowitz to Community Relations Committee,” September 2, 1965, Watts Correspondence, Subject Files 146, Series IV, CRC.

In a more coherent and articulate manner than the merchants, the local *B'nai B'rith Messenger* newspaper also criticized the CRC and its liberal explanatory framework. The *Messenger* was long skeptical of Jewish communal leaders who supposedly prioritized the “Negro revolution” over specific Jewish interests; the riots provided the weekly newspaper with the opportunity to directly launch an assault on the liberal Jewish agenda.¹⁵⁶ In the immediate aftermath of the riots, the paper ran a series of stories that sought to characterize the riots as an inexcusable rebellion against the pillars of law-and-order and drew attention to its “anti-Semitic undertone.” One such report, titled “anti-Semitism in Watts Riots Bitter,” chronicled a young black Watts resident explaining his motive for rioting to a reporter: “We’re not gonna stand for old Saul Schwartz waiting behind the counter in his liquor store with his NAACP sticker in the window. Then comes 2:30, and old Saul puts the community’s money in his pocket and gets in his Jewish canoe—a Cadillac—and goes home to Bel Aire while he leaves his Negro clerk to wait on the stick-up men.”¹⁵⁷ Also of note, its editorials pointedly critiqued the “paths of [Jewish] do-gooders and statement makers” that prioritized the appearance of harmonious Jewish-black relations at the expense of Jewish safety and directly chastised the CRC for evading the question of anti-Semitism and supposedly justifying anti-Jewish violence.¹⁵⁸ And drawing a distinction between Jewish and African-American values, the *Messenger* argued that Watts should not be called a “ghetto” because its residents lack the “intellect and integrity” found in the so-called “[Jewish] ghetto of the old country.”¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁶ “Rights’ and Survival,” *B'nai B'rith Messenger*, July 23, 1965.

¹⁵⁷ “Operation Hindsight,” *B'nai B'rith Messenger*, August 27, 1965.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid. Also see, “The Scar,” *B'nai B'rith Messenger*, August 20, 1965.

¹⁵⁹ “The Ghetto That Isn’t,” *B'nai B'rith Messenger*, September 10, 1965.

In the months following the riots, the number of public statements and comments that called attention to both local black anti-Semitism and Jewish illiberal behavior exponentially increased. Numerous McCone Commission testimonies from the residents of Watts suggested that the riots served as a vehicle to address Jewish exploitation, or as one rioter put it, that “there were just a bunch of Jews selling us a second-class merchandise for first-class prices.”¹⁶⁰ Others interviewed by the McCone Commission, without much verifiable evidence, accused the majority of the Jewish merchants of taking advantage of their female employees by sleeping with them.¹⁶¹ Maybe most damaging to the cause of Jewish liberalism and its emphasis on brotherhood and tolerance were the public reports regarding the ways in which Jews were responding to the riots: a widely-publicized *Washington Post* story claimed that after Watts “the liberal rich Jewish communities were thrown into such unreasonable panic that scores of families laid off negro servants.” Also according to the *Washington Post*, while the Democratic National Committee was planning a Los Angeles fundraiser with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the event was cancelled because in the aftermath of the riots Jewish donors supposedly refused to attend.¹⁶² Jews, as columnists Rowland Evans and Robert Novak suggested, were now key participants in a classic tale of white backlash, not all that different from the so-called “lunatic fringe” of Orange County.¹⁶³ While based upon flimsy evidence, the *Washington Post* report, coupled with other corroborating stories, helped to publicly shake and destabilize the liberal foundations upon which Jewish public identity was built.

¹⁶⁰ “Interview of Mr. Smith (Volume 16, 120),” in *Governor’s Commission of the Los Angeles Riots, The McCone Commission Transcripts* (Sacramento: Governor’s Office, 1965).

¹⁶¹ Gerald L. Rosen, “The Curfew Resident as a Consumer,” November 8, 1965, Carton 27, Folder 17, GCLARR.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*

¹⁶³ Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, “Inside Report: The Watts Backlash,” *Washington Post*, October 6, 1965.

Through the fall of 1965, the CRC and other Jewish agencies responded to these criticisms with a deep sense of befuddlement, hesitation, and anxiety. As the minutes of several CRC meetings reveal, Jewish community relations professionals approached the questions of Jewish exploitation (“it is true that some [Jewish] merchants did create difficulties for the Negroes”) and black anti-Semitism (“there were definite undertones of anti-Semitism”) not as mere rumors but as confirmable claims.¹⁶⁴ While they recognized the need to honestly address “the very strong white Jewish backlash” and growing evidence of black anti-Semitism, CRC members found themselves in a precarious and unenviable position, contending with both acute internal and external criticisms, the fear of an increasing percentage of the Jewish population drifting to the political right, and the prospect of alienating non-Jewish liberal allies.¹⁶⁵

Their public actions, ironically, reflected and projected an emboldened faith in the liberal project. Despite internal hesitations and conversations, the CRC released a statement in September of 1965 that echoed and fortified previously articulated points—that is, the lack of anti-Semitism in Watts, the Jewish commitment to civil rights, and Judaism’s social justice tradition.¹⁶⁶ Instead of seeking to revisit or revise their core political message, the CRC continued to find in liberalism a source of social stability, a blueprint for urban betterment, and mechanism to restore relationships with African Americans. If the tenets of liberalism provided the CRC and other Jewish civil rights advocates with scaffolding to uphold the majority of their political investments throughout Los Angeles, its reach though was now limited. In the wake of Watts and its fracturing affect on the Jewish community, liberalism could no longer serve as the

¹⁶⁴ “Joint Staff Meeting,” September 8, 1965, Watts Correspondence, Subject Files 146, Series IV, CRC; “Transcript: CRC Sub-Committee on Relations to the Negro Community,” September 21, 1965, Relations to Negro Community, 1965, Committees 31, Series IV, CRC.

¹⁶⁵ “Transcript: CRC Sub-Committee on Relations to the Negro Community.”

¹⁶⁶ Joseph Roos, “Statement Re Watts,” September 24, 1965, CRC Relations to the Negro Community Folder, Box 31, CRC IV.

communal focal point for Jewish political life as had been envisioned by community leaders only a few years earlier. Indeed, the question of whether liberalism was still central to Jewish life was now one worth seriously considering. And yet, these fissures and disagreements did not discourage Jewish civic engagement nor deter Jewish organizations and individuals from actively and enthusiastically participating in the local political arena. Rather, as the next chapter will demonstrate in detail, they helped to inspire and shape new forms of Jewish political activity across the ideological spectrum.

Chapter 2

Tom, Sam, Henry, and Zev: When Jewish Identity Politics Met Los Angeles Electoral Politics, 1968-1975

In the spring of 1972, the *Los Angeles Times*' weekly magazine, *West* dedicated its May 21st issue to exploring and explaining the influence of Jews on the cultural and political fabric of Los Angeles under the appropriate header, "The Goyim's Guide to L.A." In the primary feature story, *A Report on Jews and Politics in Los Angeles*, journalists Nancy and Bill Boyarsky described Los Angeles' Jews as "a great political force, as important as the better publicized minorities, the chicanos and the blacks."¹ What captured the Boyarskys' attention was the belief that the relationship between Jews and the local political process was undergoing a drastic transformation: while Jews, according to the Boyarskys', were tangentially involved in local politics from the 1940s through the late-1960s, they were in the midst of enhancing their own political influence and emerging as a distinctly powerful group in Los Angeles's political matrix.²

While the contrast employed was somewhat of an overgeneralization, the Boyarsky's were certainly correct to point out that Jewish politics in Los Angeles was entering a new, more visible and assertive phase. This was the age, of what political scientist Fernando Guerra has called, the "Jewish takeoff" in local electoral politics—the number of Jewish elected officials in Los Angeles grew from 2 in 1964 to 18 in 1975;³ Jews enhanced their reputations as prominent political fundraisers, activists, and strategists; Jewish and non-Jewish politicians alike

¹ Bill Boyarsky and Nancy Boyarsky, "A Report on Jews and Politics in Los Angeles," *Los Angeles Times*, May 21, 1972.

² Ibid.

³ For more on the Jewish takeoff, see Fernando Javier Guerra, "Ethnic Politics in Los Angeles: The Emergence of Black, Jewish, Latino and Asian Officeholders, 1960-1989" 1990.

increasingly and conspicuously crafted and utilized electoral strategies and messages that sought to appeal directly to Jewish voters; the concept of Jewishness and perceived Jewish interests became an explicit part of the electoral discourse.

This enhanced sense of Jewish political empowerment and heightened Jewish visibility in Los Angeles emerged at a moment of considerable political flux. Jews throughout the United States, as Eric Goldstein has noted, “began to express a growing impatience with the constraints of liberal universalism and exhibit a tendency to turn away from classical liberalism towards a more group-centered political agenda.”⁴ Against the backdrop of Black Power gaining strength as a political strategy and a rhetoric idiom, as well as growing fears about Jewish assimilation into the white mainstream and the safety of Jews abroad, many activists and politically engaged Jews throughout the United States developed new identity-based political models that placed a self-conscious emphasis on ethnic pride, ethnic assertion, and ethnic awareness. In calling for a more pronounced recognition of group differences and demanding that Jews become more assertive on matters of communal interest, these activists helped to position identity politics as a seemingly genuine expression of Jewish concerns.

The second chapter of my dissertation considers the growth of Jewish political clout and the rise of Jewish identity politics in Los Angeles as mutually constitutive and intertwined processes. While certain demographic factors were necessary preconditions for the “Jewish takeoff”—the potential sway of Jewish voters for an election and the inclination of Jews to cluster in certain neighborhoods and political districts—what propelled the newfound Jewish electoral visibility were the efforts of politicians (and their political campaigns) to engage with the new ethnic politics. Through speeches, debates, campaign brochures, and pamphlets, politicians actively

⁴ Eric Goldstein, *The Price of Whiteness: Jews, Race, and American Identity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 213.

inserted themselves into, helped organize, and proposed solutions to existing Jewish debates and political competitions regarding the merits of Jewish political assertiveness and the recognition of ethnic distinctiveness. They brandished and employed identity politics as a tool to establish an aura of authenticity among Jewish voters and lay claim to representing communal interests. In doing so, they helped transform the electoral arena into a public forum for Jewish political discourse—that is, a space that addressed local Jewish concerns as well as remote matters such as the security of Israel and the safety of Soviet Jewry even though the ability of local government to shape foreign policy was quite limited.

Politicians, however, did not simply echo grassroots political sentiments. The logic of electoral politics in Los Angeles—that is, the need to attract an array of voters, build and refine fundraising networks, and construct feasible coalitions—informed and framed the ways in which politicians engaged with and approached identity politics. Whether exacerbating existing social contests or presenting a harmonious mutuality of interest between lower middle-class Jewish voters and more affluent Jewish donors, politicians utilized the rhetoric and ideologies associated with identity politics in tension and in tandem with the practical rules and strategies that undergird electoral politics. The result was a simplified and popularized form of identity politics that helped dictate the ways in which Jews understood the meaning of public good and the purpose of local governance. The convergence of electoral and Jewish identity politics transpired in other American cities with large Jewish populations such as New York City during this same time period. Yet, the situation in Los Angeles was distinctive due to the fact that the political structure in Los Angeles was historically designed to suppress ethnic politics and thus the visible

emergence of the Jewish electoral clout transformed the political balance of power throughout Los Angeles.⁵

I primarily focus on four local politicians—Tom Bradley, Sam Yorty, Henry Waxman, and Zev Yaroslavsky—their respective efforts to integrate particular Jewish concerns into their electoral platforms, and their attempts to build a rapport with journalists, Jewish voters, donors, and community leaders from the late-1960s through the mid-1970s. Equipped with overlapping though also distinct political platforms, bases of supports, and electoral strategies, these four politicians functioned as powerful political symbols and political pacesetters. Yorty and Bradley were non-Jews who infused the rhetoric and ideology of identity politics into their mayoral campaigns, empowering groups that were disenchanted with the liberal establishment and inspiring new expressions of liberalism, respectively. Waxman and Yaroslavsky were Los Angeles-born Jews who, like Bradley, sought to reinvent the contours of liberalism for the Jewish community. While associated with competing political factions, Waxman and Yaroslavsky similarly identified as progressives and ethnic-oriented politicians whose presence was essential to ensure the Jewish community's wellbeing.

Such political initiatives and strategies provided Los Angeles' Jews with new modes of political power, visibility, and influence. They also helped embolden Jewish attachments to Los Angeles's political opportunities and the local political process. Jewish community leaders, activists, donors, journalists, and voters across the ideological spectrum responded to pointed political and electoral overtures, not with uniform approval for each politician, but with an intensified interest in the electoral process. Simultaneously, however, as politicians constructed

⁵ Regarding the merging of identity politics and electoral politics in New York City, see Jeffrey F. Taffet, "The Snubs and the 'Sukkah': John Lindsay and Jewish Voters in New York City," *American Jewish History* 97, no. 4 (2013): 413–38; Jonathan M. Soffer, *Ed Koch and the Rebuilding of New York City* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010); Eli Lederhendler, *New York Jews and the Decline of Urban Ethnicity, 1950-1970* (Syracuse, N.Y: Syracuse University Press, 2001), 155–63.

platforms and strategies that valorized and promoted ethnic concerns, Jews increasingly related to the electoral process and local government in ethnocentric terms. The merging of identity politics and electoral politics, thus, drew Jewish attention away from the broader political questions that faced Los Angeles and limited the ways in which Los Angeles' Jews understood, contemplated, and discussed their civic obligations and priorities.

I.

During the first half of the 20th Century, the political powerbrokers and civic leaders in Los Angeles primarily consisted of White Anglo Saxon Protestants who were hostile towards immigrants and minority groups. Jews and other minorities had limited political representation or influence at the municipal level and were largely excluded from the city's dominant political culture.⁶ The tides of local Jewish political fortunes gradually started to change in 1953 with the election of Democrat Rosalind Wiener to the 5th District Council on the Westside of Los Angeles (which extended from the Fairfax neighborhoods westward towards Bel Air and Westwood and included Cheviot Hills as well as Beverlywood). The large-scale migration of Jews to the Westside of Los Angeles, coupled with the redistricting of Los Angeles City Council boundaries, created an overwhelmingly liberal council district where about 50%-60% of the residents were Jewish.⁷ Wiener's political ascent involved an astute ability to appeal to the district's evolving

⁶ Shana Bernstein, *Bridges of Reform: Interracial Civil Rights Activism in Twentieth-Century Los Angeles* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); Raphael Sonenshein, *Politics in Black and White: Race and Power in Los Angeles* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 21–35; Max Vorspan and Lloyd P Gartner, *History of the Jews of Los Angeles* (San Marino, CA: The Huntington Library, 1970), 91–94, 135–38, 143–45.

⁷ Estimates based on comparisons between Fred Massarik's 1951 and 1959 demographic studies of the Jewish community and district maps. Fred Massarik, "A Report on the Jewish Population of Los Angeles, 1951" (Los Angeles: Jewish Federation-Council of Greater Los Angeles, 1951), 11; Fred Massarik, "A Report on the Jewish Population of Los Angeles, 1959" (Los Angeles: Jewish Federation-Council of Greater Los Angeles, 1959), 8. Also see Deborah Dash Moore, *To the Golden Cities: Pursuing the American Jewish Dream in Miami and L.A.* (New York: Free Press, 1994), 219–24.

demographic and ideological composition. This entailed garnering financial support from local Jewish powerbrokers, recruiting a cadre of local volunteers, and frequently speaking at synagogues and Jewish community centers.⁸ Ultimately serving three terms on the city council (from 1953 to 1965), Wiener, as Deborah Dash Moore has noted, helped “to pioneer a type of white ethnic politics in Los Angeles” that brought Jews into local electoral politics as an identifiable voting bloc.⁹

Yet, Wyman, née Wiener, did not campaign as a Jewish candidate nor seek to mobilize or divide voters on the basis of direct ethnic appeals and typically steered clear of manifest ethnic politics. Only in passing did she allude to her Jewish background.¹⁰ Reflecting the values of a political culture predicated upon the appearance of consensus, Wyman, to varying degrees of success, sought to identify Jewish concerns with a broad political agenda. Early in her political career, she campaigned as a steadfast liberal Democrat who supported public housing and nondiscrimination legislation.¹¹ Wyman’s later elections reflected her evolution into a political moderate, as her platforms focused on promoting cultural improvements, decreasing property taxes, and providing traffic controls in school areas.¹²

⁸ Much has been written about Wyman (née Wiener) and her political ascent. See Ellen Eisenberg, Ava F. Kahn, and William Toll, *Jews of the Pacific Coast: Reinventing Community on America’s Edge* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2009), 187–88; Moore, *To the Golden Cities*, 219–24; Amy Hill Shevitz, “At the Intersection of Gender, Ethnicity, and the City: Three Jewish Women in Los Angeles Politics,” in *Jews in the Los Angeles Mosaic*, ed. Karen S. Wilson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013), 65–68; Barbara Soliz, “Rosalind Wiener Wyman and the Transformation of Jewish Liberalism in Cold War Los Angeles,” in *Beyond Alliances: The Jewish Role in Reshaping the Racial Landscape of Southern California*, ed. Bruce Zuckerman, George Sanchez, and Lisa Ansell, vol. 9 (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2012), 71–110.

⁹ Moore, *To the Golden Cities*, 221.

¹⁰ This low-key approach to ethnic politicking can help to explain why the *Los Angeles Times*, upon naming her the 1958 Woman of the Year, only briefly mentioned her Jewish background in a two-page profile piece. Cordell Hicks, “Woman of the Year--Rosalind Wyman: A Civic Force at 28,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 18, 1959.

¹¹ Moore, *To the Golden Cities*, 221–24; Barbara Soliz, “Rosalind Weiner Wyman.”

¹² “5th District Race: Background Given on Candidates for Los Angeles Council Post,” *Los Angeles Times*, March 14, 1965; Barbara Soliz, “Rosalind Weiner Wyman.”

The early political career of Henry Waxman similarly points towards a low-key Jewish presence in the electoral realm. While Henry Waxman was born in the left-liberal Jewish milieu of Boyle Heights and, by all accounts, grew up with a strong Jewish identity, his political activity though the late 1960 was seldom concerned with explicit or particular Jewish matters.¹³ Waxman attended University of California, Los Angeles (both as an undergraduate and a law student) from 1958 through 1964, which had been functioning as a focal point of liberal activism in Los Angeles since the 1930s and had become a popular destination for young Jews.¹⁴ While actively involved in the university's Young Democrats Club as a student, Waxman upon graduation served as the president of the California Federation of Young Democrats for two years and a member of the West Beverly Democratic Club in the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood.¹⁵ Much of his political energies during the mid-1960s revolved around pushing the state's Democratic apparatus in more liberal-leaning direction, which involved galvanizing opposition to the war in Vietnam and supporting pro-civil rights and pro-labor reforms.

In 1968, Waxman, at the age of 28, decided to run for a California State Assembly seat in the 61st District on the Westside of Los Angeles, where 1/3rd of the eligible voters were Jewish.¹⁶

¹³ According to Congressional historian Kurt Stone, "Henry Waxman attended Hebrew school at the Conservative Huntington Park Hebrew Congregation, where he became bar mitzvah in 1952. He went to Fremont High School, where, he recalls, 'I was in a minority—both as a Caucasian and a Jew.'" Also see, Kurt F. Stone, *The Congressional Minyan: The Jews of Capitol Hill* (Hoboken, N.J.: KTAV Pub. House in association with American Jewish Historical Society, 2000), 290; Henry A. Waxman and Joshua Green, *The Waxman Report: How Congress Really Works* (New York: Twelve, 2009), 1–4.

¹⁴ In 1953, out of the 5,800 Jews attending colleges and universities in Los Angeles, 1,800 attended UCLA. Vorspan and Gartner, *History of the Jews of Los Angeles*, 277. Regarding UCLA's political reputation, see Margaret L. Davis, *The Culture Broker Franklin D. Murphy and the Making of Los Angeles* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 43; Kevin Starr, *The Dream Endures: California Enters the 1940s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 184.

¹⁵ Kurt F. Stone, *The Congressional Minyan*; Waxman and Joshua Green, *The Waxman Report*; "West Beverly Democratic Club Bray," June 1968, West Beverly Democratic Club, Folder 12, Box 25, California Democratic Council Records, Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research.

¹⁶ Ken Reich, "McMillan Defeat in Primary Laid to Foe's 'Coordination,'" *Los Angeles Times*, June 18, 1968.

Journalists, academics, as well as Waxman himself have described the 1968 campaign as an ultimately successful experiment in developing a new voter-contact, direct mailing plan.¹⁷ Working on Waxman's campaign, college student Michael Berman and sociologist Howard Elinson crafted a strategy that identified the various sub-cultures within a district, analyzed the lifestyles, voting behaviors, and attitudes of each group, and employed "cutting edge" computer technology to collect and store information about each individual household. As such, the campaign created and sent out personalized letters and messages targeted to different households based on up to twenty variables such as ethnicity, socio-economic status, age, and occupation. Within this classification system, "Jew" was one of many coded variables, along with "black," "senior citizen," "youth," "teacher," and "union member," but it was not a variable associated with a potent or specific political message. While the Waxman campaign mailed a Passover greeting card and a flyer that noted Waxman's membership in American Jewish Congress, these gestures were largely tangential to the crux of Waxman's 1968 campaign.¹⁸ What primarily drove Waxman's election to the State Assembly in 1968 was his ability to recruit youth volunteers and galvanize electoral support on the basis of his anti-Vietnam, anti-poverty, and anti-racism appeals and his willingness to directly challenge the state's moderate Democratic establishment.¹⁹

¹⁷ Susan Littwin, "How Waxman and Berman Run the Bagel Boroughs," *California Journal*, no. 18 (September 1976): 299–301; Waxman and Green, *The Waxman Report*; W. B. Rood, "Michael Rows Boat for Berman: Berman's Brother Major Asset," *Los Angeles Times*, January 28, 1980; Edward J. Weiss, *The Waxman-Berman Organization: A Senior Honors Thesis*, 1985.

¹⁸ "For Assemblyman: Henry A. Waxman," 1968, Box 14A, Inventory 2, Berman/D'Agostino Redistricting and Political Campaign Materials, Institute of Governmental Studies Library, University of California, Berkeley (hereafter BDCM); "The Four Questions," 1968, Waxman for Assembly 1968 Passover Flyer Folder, Box 113, Inventory 2, BDCM.

¹⁹ "Our campaign," as Waxman told the *Los Angeles Times* upon his election to the California State Assembly, "represented a move by the Democratic Party to build a coalition of people concerned about peace in Vietnam and poverty and racism in this country... a liberal coalition of labor, civil liberties organizations and young people who want to get involved in what is happening in our society." Burt Wuttken, "Waxman Says His Rapport With Youth

While the elections of Wyman and Waxman technically signaled the inclusion of Jews into the city's political structure, the vast majority of Jewish political participation in the formal electoral and legislative process through the late 1960s occurred behind the scenes: Jews played an active and outsized role as fundraisers, community organizers, and voters.²⁰ As rabbi and historian Max Vorspan explained, "The Jews have been involved in the financing and in getting the proper candidates. But never noticeably as office seekers. This is due, in part, to the feeling they could not make it in seeking office. But they still have a desire for good government. There is the feeling that with good government, Jews will be in the best possible position."²¹ The exclusive Hillcrest Country Club on the Westside of Los Angeles, for example—which primarily catered to local Jewish elites affiliated with Hollywood, real estate development, and the legal industry—operated as a hub of Jewish political fundraising and helped to financially support the careers of elected officials such as Edward Roybal, Jesse Unruh, and Edmund G. Brown.²²

For the leaders, powerbrokers, and activists within the Jewish community who tended to shape the Jewish communal agenda, good government during the mid-to-late 1960s typically implied a liberal-oriented government that was associated with the Democratic Party, economic welfare programs, the separation of church and state, and civil rights. As such, Jews affiliated

Brought Victory," *Los Angeles Times*, November 7, 1968; Robert Gottlieb, *The Next Los Angeles: The Struggle for a Livable City* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 144.

²⁰ Bernstein, *Bridges of Reform*, 138–84; Kenneth C. Burt, "The Power of a Mobilized Citizenry and Coalition Politics: The 1949 Election of Edward R. Roybal to the Los Angeles City Council," *Southern California Quarterly* 85, no. 4 (December 1, 2003): 413–38; George J. Sanchez, "Edward R. Roybal and the Politics of Multiracialism," *Southern California Quarterly* 92, no. 1 (April 1, 2010): 51–73; Fred L. Zimmerman, "The Money Man: When Democrats Need Campaign Cash, They Turn to Eugene Wyman Persistence, Nerve and Lots Of Rich Friends Make Him A Champ at Fund-Raising 'If You Can Do It, You're In' The Money Man : Eugene Wyman Is A Top Fund-Raiser for Democrats," *Wall Street Journal*, March 8, 1972. Regarding the history of Hillcrest Country Club, see Neal Gabler, *An Empire of Their Own: How the Jews Invented Hollywood* (New York: Anchor Books, 1989), 274–76.

²¹ Boyarsky and Boyarsky, "A Report on Jews and Politics in Los Angeles."

²² *Ibid.*

with the California Democratic Council (CDC) cultivated organizational and ideological ties with non-Jewish, often African-American liberals; the Jewish Federation's Community Relations Committee (CRC), the American Jewish Congress, and the American Jewish Committee (AJC) mobilized the organized Jewish community behind fair housing and school integration initiatives and embarked upon efforts to "rebuild" Watts in the wake of the 1965 riots; Jewish political contributors represented an estimated 50% of the donors to Democratic candidates in the state of California.²³ While rarely drawing attention to distinct or explicit Jewish concerns, these manifestations of Jewish liberal activity helped to tie the bulk of Jewish political energies and resources together with the moral thrust of the civil rights movement and provided the groundwork for an informal black-Jewish political alliance that primarily consisted of activists and elites from both communities. In this particular incarnation, black-Jewish cooperation was organized around the assumption that advocacy for equality of opportunity and liberal integration would help transform a decidedly segregated Los Angeles that was struggling to recover from the Watts Riots into a more tolerant, cosmopolitan, and equitable city.²⁴

II.

²³ For more on the CDC, CRC, American Jewish Congress and the American Jewish Committee, see chapter one of this dissertation. Regarding efforts to "rebuild" Watts, see "Encinans Plan Visit to Watts," *Los Angeles Times*, January 30, 1967; "Jewish Youth Group Aids Problem Areas: Mitzvah Corps Members Spend Summer Helping Underprivileged in Los Angeles," *Los Angeles Times*, August 5, 1967; Ronald Ostrow, "Interracial Council Helping to Restore Business in Riot Area," *Los Angeles Times*, September 7, 1965.

²⁴ Bernstein, *Bridges of Reform*; David J. Leonard, "'No Jews and No Coloreds Are Welcome in This Town': Constructing Coalitions in Post/War Los Angeles" (Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley, 2002); Sonenshein, *Politics in Black and White*.

Historians and commentators have traditionally identified the late 1960s as a turning point that altered the American Jewish approach to group identity and politics.²⁵ “In the years following 1967,” as Jonathan Sarna explains, “the American Jewish communal agenda as a whole shifted inward, moving ‘from universalistic concerns to a preoccupation with Jewish particularism.’”²⁶ According to the conventional narrative, two broad developments helped initiate the emergence of identity-based political models that relied upon an intensified Jewish consciousness and focused on the particular needs of the Jewish community. The Arab-Israeli Six Day War of 1967 inspired Jews to reassess, what had previously been, a supportive though distant relationship with the State of Israel. Overcome with an acute sense of fear about Israel’s prospects for survival, American Jews rallied en masse to support Israel, celebrated its victory with feelings of pride and praise, and gradually became more concerned with the fate of the Jewish people. This heightened interest in Israel and Jewish survival intersected with developments and contests in the black community over the direction and leadership of the civil rights movement. Critical of interracial cooperation, the established black leadership, and non-violent protest, a new generation of blacks activists embraced the idiom of Black Power, black identity, and black autonomy as a way to fight racial oppression and urged whites—Jews in

²⁵ Clayborne Carson, “Black-Jewish Universalism in the Era of Identity Politics,” in *Struggles in the Promised Land: Towards a History of Black-Jewish Relations in the United States*, ed. Jack Salzman and Cornel West (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); Hasia R. Diner, *The Jews of the United States, 1654 to 2000* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004); Marc Dollinger, *Quest for Inclusion: Jews and Liberalism in Modern America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Jonathan Sarna, *American Judaism: A History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004).

²⁶ Sarna, *American Judaism*, 318.

particular—to leave civil rights organizations and devote their energies to their own communal problems.²⁷

Although Jews in Los Angeles were swept up in this nationwide trend, its manifestations were shaped by Los Angeles's social geography and political culture. Jews in Los Angeles did not simultaneously or uniformly adopt the idioms and strategies associated with identity politics at the site of a Black Power demonstration or the onset of the Six Day War. Rather, they gradually and unevenly approached and engaged with the new ethnic politics in ways that grew out of existing power relations, social structures, and political contests.

The Jewish community through the 1960s was, on aggregate, experiencing new levels of affluence, professional success, demographic growth, and social mobility: from the late 1950s through the mid-to-late 1960s, the Jewish population grew from 391,000 to 511,000 residents, the proportion of Jewish household heads employed in professional or semi-professional occupations rose from 24.9% to 35.4%, and the percentage of Jewish households of incomes over \$10,000 rose from 22% to 42%.²⁸ Yet, the Jewish community was simultaneously contending with intensified social divisions. While the number of Jewish households and average Jewish household incomes rose throughout upper middle class neighborhoods such as Beverly Hills, Beverlywood and parts of the San Fernando Valley, the number of Jewish households in the middle class and the lower middle class Beverly-Fairfax and Wilshire-Fairfax neighborhoods started to decline for the first time since the 1930s. In large part this was due to the fact that the

²⁷ Marc Dollinger, "'Is It Good for the Jews?: Liberalism and the Challenges of the 1960s,'" in *"Jewishness" and the World Of "Difference" in the United States*, ed. Marc Lee Raphael (Williamsburg, VA: Dept. of Religion, College of William and Mary, 2001), 9.

²⁸ Fred Massarik, "A Report on the Jewish Population of Los Angeles, 1968" (Los Angeles: Jewish Federation-Council of Greater Los Angeles, 1968), 1–2, 25–27.

better-off Fairfax residents increasingly migrated towards more affluent communities on the Westside and in the San Fernando Valley.²⁹

Jewish outward migration from the Fairfax neighborhoods was not simply a product of upward social mobility. Black migration into residential pockets throughout the Fairfax area and the school district's preliminary and small-scale efforts to integrate the overwhelmingly Jewish Fairfax High School in 1968, coupled with the growing presence of hippies and counterculture institutions along Fairfax Avenue, provoked longstanding fears about declining property values, outsider intrusion, and black anti-Semitism.³⁰ While the Fairfax neighborhoods still possessed the highest concentration of Jews in Los Angeles, those who stayed were markedly older, poorer, and more religious than the city's Jewish population at large.³¹ While an estimated 30,000 Jewish households in Los Angeles, made up of 55,000 individuals, existed below the poverty line, about half of these households were located in and around the Fairfax neighborhoods.³²

The question of how Jews should contend with the social and demographic changes that overwhelmed heavily Jewish neighborhoods produced a variety of responses. The established

²⁹ Massarik, "A Report on the Jewish Population of Los Angeles, 1968"; Bruce Phillips, "Los Angeles Jewry: A Demographic Portrait" (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1986), 133–37; Vorspan and Gartner, *History of the Jews of Los Angeles*, 277.

³⁰ Regarding the Fairfax counterculture see Gerald Faris and Skip Ferderber, "Fairfax: Lower East Side of the West," *Los Angeles Times*, February 18, 1973; David McBride, "On the Fault Line of Mass Culture and Counterculture: A Social History of the Hippie Counterculture in 1960s Los Angeles" (Ph.D., University of California, Los Angeles, 1998); Burt Prelutsky, "Hippie Haven on Fairfax," *Los Angeles Times*, May 14, 1967. Regarding racial changes, see Robert L. Blumenthal, "Fairfax as a Gray Area Ethnic Community" (M.A., University of Southern California, 1973), 77; Garnt Lee, "Fairfax--It's Still Where the Heart Is," *Los Angeles Times*, December 21, 1975; Milton Gordon, "Report of Movement of the Black Families into West Los Angeles Area," n.d., Coalition Folder, Box 192, Group 9, Jewish Federation Council of Greater Los Angeles, Community Relations Committee Collection IV, Urban Archives Center, Oviatt Library, California State University, Northridge (hereafter CRC); Massarik, "A Report on the Jewish Population of Los Angeles, 1968," 22; Phillips, "Los Angeles Jewry: A Demographic Portrait."

³¹ Blumenthal, "Fairfax as a Gray Area Ethnic Community"; Massarik, "A Report on the Jewish Population of Los Angeles, 1968," Table 18.

³² These statistics come from a 1973 study but the data was based off of household cash income from 1969. Fred Massarik, "'Low Income' – Levels in the Jewish Population; The 'Jewish Poor' in Los Angeles, a Summary of the Findings" (Los Angeles: Research Service Bureau, Jewish Federation-Council of Greater Los Angeles, 1973).

leaders within the Jewish community, typically living outside the Fairfax neighborhoods in markedly more affluent areas, spearheaded programs that aimed to welcome blacks into the Fairfax neighborhoods and foster harmonious relations between blacks and Jews at local public schools.³³ For example, under the leadership of Rabbi Albert Lewis of Temple Isaiah, the CRC's "Inter-Congregation Committee of Concern of the West Side," sought to ensure that the Jewish community maintain and even strengthen their commitment to an "integrated situation—and that they react to their new Black neighbors from an ethical Jewish position."³⁴

Those Jews who were most stringently opposed to such integrationist initiatives, believing that they placed the safety of individual Jews and even Jewish communal survival at risk, tended to reside within or adjacent to transitioning neighborhoods. While discontent with the established approach to Jewish communal affairs started to mount with increasing fervor following the Watts Riots, dissenters lacked a coherent ideology, a cohort of identifiable leaders, or a unified strategy and thus challenged the prospect of neighborhood integration in a piecemeal fashion. For

³³ "At JF-C Meet: Probe Urban Crisis," *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, November 14, 1968; John Dart, "Negro-Jewish Tension Topic of Discussions: Prominent Southlanders to Attend Series at Temple Isaiah This Month and Next," *Los Angeles Times*, October 5, 1968; "Encinans Plan to visit Watts"; Jack Panitz, "Background Paper on Neighborhood Stabilization Program and Neighbors Unlimited Coalitions," May 9, 1967, Coalition 1966-1968, Box 192, Series IV, CRC. Also of note, in response to well-publicized, often-sensationalized national rifts between blacks and Jews, the established communal leadership demonstrated a firm adherence to the maintenance of black-Jewish ties. Take, for example, social and political flashpoints such as the Ocean Hill-Brownsville school crisis, which pit the largely Jewish teachers union against local black parents and unleashed anti-Semitic and racist sentiments in New York: Jewish liberals in Los Angeles insisted that black radicals and black anti-Semites were merely a misguided minority voice within the African-American community, sought to combat anti-black prejudice within the Jewish community, and continued to support established middle class black allies. As Harvey Schechter of the Anti-Defamation League explained at a B'nai B'rith meeting in the San Fernando Valley, "we must distinguish between those who are militant in the struggle for long overdue civil rights and those who are using hatred as a gimmick to gain political power." Julian Hartt, "Zionist Leader Charges Negro Anti-Semitism Is Increasing," *Los Angeles Times*, November 7, 1967; "'Keep Negro Anti-Semitism In Perspective'—Pfeffer," *B'nai B'rith Messenger*, January 17, 1969.

³⁴ Under the leadership of Rabbi Albert Lewis of Temple Isaiah, the CRC's Inter-Congregation Committee of Concern of the West Side sought to ensure that the Jewish community maintain and even strengthen their commitment to an "integrated situation—and that they react to their new Black neighbors from an ethical Jewish position." "Minutes of the Committee of Concern of the Jewish Congregations of the West Side, Coalition Folder, Box 192, Group 9, Series IV, CRC; "An Inter-Congregational Committee of Concern of the Westside: A Preliminary Statement," Coalition Folder, Box 192, Group 9, Series IV, CRC; "Minutes of the Committee of Concern of the Jewish Congregations of the West Side," Coalition folder, Box 192, Group 9, CRC IV.

example, the parents who feared school integration would bring about black-on-Jewish violence met with their respective school principals in 1968 to protest the school district's integration efforts.³⁵ Furthermore, a handful of local Orthodox Jewish rabbis supported Jewish residential segregation and defended the concept of the ethnically homogenous neighborhood as a means to preserve Jewish traditions and “the uniqueness of Jewish life.”³⁶

With concerns regarding class conflict, the merits of black-Jewish ties, and the validity of liberalism floating around the Jewish communal discourse during the late 1960s, the 1969 Los Angeles mayoral race helped channel, consolidate, and concretize many of pre-existing arguments and agendas. In doing so, it helped to initiate a new era for Jewish electoral politics. The election featured two non-Jewish candidates—incumbent Sam Yorty and Tom Bradley—with two very distinct political outlooks and approaches to urban governance. While initially entering public life as a populist with strong liberal tendencies, by 1969 Sam Yorty had become a symbol of the city's white conservative leadership and a protector of the status quo, typified by his rejection of federal funds targeted at helping inner-cities as well as his failure to adequately address allegations of police discrimination against minorities. Bradley was a former police lieutenant and an African-American liberal with roots in the California Democratic Council, where he became associated with an emerging black-Jewish political coalition. Joining the Los Angeles City Council in 1961, Bradley assumed the role of Yorty's primary liberal critic on the City Council, demanding a Civilian Review Board to monitor police-minority relations

³⁵ “Minutes of the Committee of Concern of the Jewish congregations of the West Side,” November 21, 1968, Coalition Folder, Box 192, Group 9, Series IV, CRC; “Minutes of an Informal Exploratory Meeting at Temple Isaiah of a ‘Committee of Concern of the Jewish Congregations of the West Side,’” May 16, 1968, Coalition Folder, Box 192, Group 9, Series IV, CRC.

³⁶ Simon Dolgin, “Integration Must Not Mean Dislocation,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, September 13, 1966; “The Jewish Right Formed to Promote Respect for Law,” *B'nai B'rith Messenger*, May 2, 1969. Regarding Dolgin's ambivalence towards racial integration, also see “Minutes of Committee of Concern of the Jewish Congregations on the Westside.”

and seeking to funnel federal funds into impoverished areas.³⁷ Given these choices, the 1969 mayoral election—described by political scientist Raphael Sonenshein as “symbols of social order versus ideals of social justice”—operated as a contest over the future of race relations in post-Watts Los Angeles and a battle for the city’s ideological soul.³⁸

In a general election where Yorty captured 53% of the vote and ultimately defeated Bradley, 78% of the eligible Jewish voters turned out for the election. While 68% of non-Jewish whites voted for Yorty, Jews split their support relatively evenly between the two candidates.³⁹ Scholars, commentators, and journalists have frequently discussed this divide in relation to the socio-geographic schisms within the Jewish community. Allen S. Maller explained that in the Fairfax neighborhoods, “where most of the Jews are in their 40’s and up, have incomes under \$15,000 a year, are not college graduates and are affiliated with orthodox synagogues and Zionist organizations, Bradley received 50 to 60 percent of the vote. In those areas [Cheviot Hills, Bel Air, Beverlywood] where most of the Jews have family incomes of \$15,000 to \$20,000 and up, are college graduates, are in their 30s’s and 40’s and are affiliated with Reform temples and Jewish ‘human right’ organizations, the vote for Bradley was 80 to 90 percent.”⁴⁰ Connecting the 1969 mayoral election with nationwide trends in Jewish voting patterns, political scientist Daniel Elazar found that, “in Los Angeles and twice in New York, the voting figures revealed two different kids of Jews, voting in different ways. Less prosperous, less well-educated, and older

³⁷ Leonard, “‘No Jews and No Coloreds Are Welcome in This Town,’” 47, 62; Sonenshein, *Politics in Black and White*, 57, 80–83, 86.

³⁸ Sonenshein, *Politics in Black and White*, 100.

³⁹ Anti-Defamation League of B’nai B’rith - Pacific Southwest Regional Office, “The Exploitation of Bigotry in the Los Angeles Mayoral Campaign,” 1969, Folder 2, Box 1075, Bradley Administrative Papers, Department of Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles (hereafter BAP); Sonenshein, *Politics in Black and White*, 94.

⁴⁰ Allen S. Maller, “Class Factors in the Jewish Vote,” *Jewish Social Studies* 39, no. 1/2 (1977): 161.

Jews have been more sympathetic to law-and-order appeals than better educated, younger, and more prosperous Jews.”⁴¹

While the electoral divide reflected pre-existing social factors, it was also the result of an exercise in political identity formation that cohered as the campaign progressed. Both candidates were technically Democrats but, because Los Angeles’ elections were a nonpartisan affair, neither received formal support from the Democratic Party and thus were compelled to build their own bases for support. Both candidates sought to attract a politically engaged Jewish population that accounted for 10% of the overall population but 15% of the city’s voters and could feasibly determine the election’s outcome.⁴² Thus, they respectively envisioned the Jewish community—or particular segments therein—as an essential part of their electoral strategy and surrounded themselves with Jewish supporters and volunteers. To varying degrees, both campaigns employed ethnic appeals aimed at mobilizing potential Jewish voters. This entailed calling upon Jews to consider how competing political visions affected and interacted with specific Jewish concerns, which in turn heightened the Jewish community’s interest in the election.

In the wake of a primary election where Yorty only captured only about 18% to 23% and Bradley garnered 52% of the Jewish vote, the Yorty campaign intensified its efforts to attract Jewish voters.⁴³ The Yorty campaign’s most divisive electoral strategy involved appealing to

⁴¹ Richard Bergholz, “White Voter Made the Difference: Precinct Tallies Show How Bradley Lost,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 3, 1969; Henry Cohen, Gary Sandrow, and American Jewish Committee, *Philadelphia Chooses a Mayor, 1971; Jewish Voting Patterns*, (Philadelphia: American Jewish Committee, 1972).

⁴² Boyarsky and Boyarsky, “A Report on Jews and Politics in Los Angeles”; Richard L. Maullin, “Los Angeles Liberalism,” *Trans-Action* 8, no. 7 (April 1971): 40–51.

⁴³ Anti-Defamation League of B’nai B’rith - Pacific Southwest Regional Office, “The Exploitation of Bigotry”; Sonenshein, *Politics in Black and White*, 94.

Jewish racial fears in order to drive an ideological wedge between blacks and Jews.⁴⁴ The campaign presented Bradley specifically, and black political empowerment more generally, as a potential danger for the Jewish community. For example, the Yorty campaign—claiming that Bradley decried anti-Semitism in front of Jews though spoke negatively about Jews in African-American neighborhoods—characterized Bradley as a duplicitous politician with little interest in the wellbeing of the Jewish community, and more generally, accused Bradley as being “anti-police” and a threat to “law and order.”⁴⁵ Furthermore, the Yorty campaign circulated leaflets throughout heavily Jewish neighborhoods that linked Bradley with Black Power, social unrest, anti-Semitism, and the decay of Fairfax area. The campaign reprinted and circulated flyers with excerpts from James Forman’s “Black Manifesto” that called for blacks to “use whatever means necessary, including the use of force and the power of the gun to bring down the colonizer.”⁴⁶ The Yorty also dispersed flyers that read, “Today New York! Tomorrow Los Angeles! Stop the Militants Now!” to remind Jewish voters of Brooklyn’s Ocean Hill-Brownsville school crisis, which pit the largely Jewish teachers union against local black parents and unleashed a tidal wave of Jewish racism and black anti-Semitism.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ To a certain extent, Yorty was emulating Richard Nixon’s efforts to attract disaffected white ethnic voters during the 1968 Presidential elections through the language of conservative populism. See Thomas J. Sugrue and John D. Skrenty, “The White Ethnic Strategy,” in *Rightward Bound: Making America Conservative in the 1970s*, ed. Bruce J. Schulman and Julian E. Zelizer (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008); Ieva Zake, “Nixon vs. the G.O.P: Republican Ethnic Politics, 1968-1972,” *Polish American Studies* 67, no. 2 (October 1, 2010): 53–74.

⁴⁵ Anti-Defamation League of B’nai B’rith - Pacific Southwest Regional Office, “The Exploitation of Bigotry”; Yet Lock, “Robert Steinberg Endorsement,” April 15, 1969, Memos—April 1969 Folder, Box C-2080, Records of Sam Yorty Los Angeles City Archives; Karen M. Kaufmann, *The Urban Voter: Group Conflict and Mayoral Voting Behavior in American Cities* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004), 69–71; Maullin, “Los Angeles Liberalism.” According to one such 1968 study, 55.5% of Jews in California had a “highly favorable” attitude towards police; 42.3% had a “mildly favorable” attitude. Allen S. Maller, “Notes on California Jews’ Political Attitudes - 1968,” *Jewish Social Studies* 33, no. 2/3 (April 1, 1971): 160–64.

⁴⁶ “A Message of Conscience,” Folder 2, Box 13, MS 727, American Jewish Archives (hereafter MS 727).

⁴⁷ “Today New York! Tomorrow Los Angeles!,” Folder 2, Box 13, MS 727.

The Yorty campaign also sought to project an image of Yorty as a source of social order and an advocate for particularistic Jewish concerns. The speeches that Yorty gave in front of Jewish audiences as well as the advertisements the campaign placed in Jewish newspapers consistently reminded Jewish voters of Yorty's inclination to speak out against Hitler in the 1930s, his firm support for Israel, his decision to add Eilat to Los Angeles' sister city program, and his record of appointing Jews to posts in his administration.⁴⁸ Furthermore, under the direction of the Yorty campaign, Yorty's prominent Jewish supporters wrote letters to Jewish voters that articulated and conveyed the virtues of a Yorty mayorship. Twenty Jews associated Non-Partisan Citizens Committee for Mayor Sam Yorty—the likes of which included Democratic centrist Louis Warschaw and Zionist stalwart Aaron Riche—signed a letter that described Yorty's record on issues “close to our as hearts” as both pragmatic and praiseworthy. (“Sam Yorty has been a staunch friend of the State of Israel since its founding. Sam Yorty has been a staunch practical practitioner in the field of Civil Rights, Civil Liberties, and Human Relations... And which public official in Los Angeles has been more generous in cooperation when called upon for help by any Jewish institution or cause than our friend Sam Yorty?”⁴⁹) Another letter that was signed by 21 Orthodox rabbis and cantors helped convey the message that a Yorty mayorship would protect “traditional” Jewish interests and serve as a bulwark against “violence and militancy.”⁵⁰

The Bradley campaign relied on the premise that blacks and Jews shared similar social interests and political ideologies. Bradley's core group of Jewish supporters included liberals affiliated with the CRC, the local Reform rabbinate, and the California Democratic Club. They

⁴⁸ “Election Supplement,” *B'nai B'rith Messenger*, May 23, 1969; “Good Government News,” *B'nai B'rith Messenger Political Advertisement*, March 28, 1969; “‘Israel Had Better Depend on herself’ Mayor Yorty Tells 700 at ZOA Forum,” *The California Jewish Voice*, February 7, 1969; “Mayor Yorty Makes Los Angeles the International City,” *The California Jewish Voice*, March 21, 1969.

⁴⁹ “A Letter To Our Friends, We're For Yorty!—Here's Why,” *B'nai B'rith Messenger*, May 23rd, 1969.

⁵⁰ “We Need Yorty Now...more than ever!,” Folder 2, Box 13, MS 727.

found in Bradley both a liberal crusader and a model for black-Jewish universalism in post-Watts Los Angeles. This sentiment is neatly captured throughout the pages of a pro-Bradley special election supplement of *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, with various letters and editorials in support of Bradley from local politicians, rabbis, and community leaders.⁵¹ Highlighting the appeal of Bradley to Jewish liberals, journalist Herb Brin explains that “there is a built-in-radar within men and women of the Jewish faith, one created by a very special history, which allows no alternative but for us to support the ‘good guys’ in any confrontation....[Bradley’s] election will ennoble our city and will go far in eliminating the divisive feeling of distrust which have unfortunately taken root.”⁵²

Bradley’s core Jewish supporters were intimately involved with the operations of the campaign and provided about 40% of his fundraising base.⁵³ As deputy manager of the campaign Anton Calleia recalled, “without the westside Jewish liberals, we simply *had* no campaign.”⁵⁴ Indeed, long-time Bradley ally Maurice Weiner served as Bradley’s campaign manager and chief strategist; his advisory committee included Rabbi Leonard Berman, CDC activist Hershel Rosenthal, and young Westside attorney Howard Berman; his first major campaign contribution was from affluent Westside Jew, Mark Boyar; Jewish Federation-Council president and philanthropist Victor Carter hosted pro-Bradley cocktail parties and fundraisers; Assemblyman

⁵¹ “Elect the ‘Good Guys,’” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press* Special Election Supplement, May 22, 1969; “Notables of the Rabbinate Voice Support for Bradley,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press* Special Election Supplement, May 22, 1969; Isaac Pacht, Albert Lewis, Herschel Rosenthal, David S. Bassan, Dore Schary, Victor Carter, Henry Waxman, Sylvia Bassan, “Vote for Tom Bradley, Jewish Leaders Urge,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press* Special Election Supplement, May 22, 1969.

⁵² Herb Brin, “L.A. Jewry All-Out for Bradley,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press* Special Election Supplement, May 22, 1969.

⁵³ Estimates based upon examination of “contributions” folders in Bradley Administration Papers. Folders 1-2, Box 1366 and Folder 7, Box 1075, BAP.

⁵⁴ Sonenshein, *Politics in Black and White*, 87.

Henry Waxman wrote letters to voters, organized receptions, and participated in rallies on Bradley's behalf.⁵⁵

Yet one of the key problems with the Bradley campaign was that it relied upon liberal Jewish leaders to help Bradley navigate and reach the Jewish community and ingratiate Bradley with rank and file Jewish voters.⁵⁶ In doing so, it came to echo the classical liberal principles that informed black-Jewish cooperation while doing little to court those Jews who felt threatened by the rising tides of integration or prioritized specific Jewish issues. As Warren Hollier, one of Bradley's African-American aides later explained, "I don't think leaders in the Jewish community who were for Bradley understood their own people."⁵⁷

Essentially, Bradley particular appeals to the Jewish community were anything but particularistic. Bradley's speeches and statements aimed at Jewish audiences repeatedly underscored traditional liberal ideals—e.g., "I am not the Negro candidate for Mayor. I am the candidate for Mayor deeply committed to a liberal Democratic philosophy, who is black"—broadly condemned anti-Semitism—"I will not tolerate anti-Semitism in any form. I will not appoint those who are, in any way, tainted with this evil"—and applauded Jewish social activism—"Jews have been among the best friends the Negro has had in his fight for full equality

⁵⁵ "Advisory Committee," October 25, 1968, Folder 1, Box 1453, BAP; "You are invited by Melitta Eckhoff to Champagne Reception for Tom Bradley," Folder 15, Box 1384, BAP; Lu Haas, Untitled Press Release, May 14, 1969, Folder 3, Box 1685, BAP; Sonenshein, *Politics in Black and White*, 85-96; Noreen Sulmeyer, Untitled Press Release, February 5, 1969, Folder 5, Box 1685, BAP; Henry Waxman, "Dear Maury," February 12, 1969, Folder 14, Box 1384, BAP.

⁵⁶ Maurice Weiner, "Dear Ely," December 13, 1968, Folder 2, Box 1353, BAP; Maurice Weiner, "Dear Howard," December 13, 1968, Folder 2, Box 1353, BAP; Letter from Isaac Pacht (Chairman), Rabbi Albert Lewis (Co-Chairman), Sherill Corwin (Co-Chairman), and Victory Carter (Co-Chairman) "Dear Community Leader," February 26, 1969.

⁵⁷ Heather Rose Parker, "The Elusive Coalition: African American and Chicano Political Organization and Interaction in Los Angeles, 1960-1973" (Ph.D., University of California, Los Angeles, 1996), 102.

in America.”⁵⁸ But he never fully articulated why or how a Bradley mayorship could help to support Israel or preserve the Jewish character of the Fairfax neighborhoods, the locus of politically cautious, communitarian, lower middle class Jews.⁵⁹ Furthermore, despite Yorty’s characterization of Bradley as an anti-police militant, the Bradley campaign was reluctant to highlight and celebrate Bradley’s experience on the police force prior to joining city council for fear of alienating Bradley’s core liberal supporters who might have associated “law and order” with racism.⁶⁰

While Yorty and the Bradley both sought to attract Jewish voters, it was Yorty’s strategies that troubled Jewish community leaders. In the months following the election, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) and the CRC respectively published reports that condemned Yorty’s “appeals to bigotry” as well as his efforts to inject Israel into the election to obtain Jewish votes.⁶¹ Both organizations offered recommendations for fair campaign practices in the “hopes that the occurrences of the last campaign will not be repeated,” though they also acknowledged that it was unrealistic to expect that politicians would refrain from employing such strategies. As

⁵⁸ “Council Thomas Bradley on Black Anti-Semitism,” Folder 5, Box 1685, BAP; “Fairfax Rally Speech,” May 25, 1969, Folder 5, Box 2124, BAP; Joe Scott, “Bradley For Mayor,” March 5, 1969, Folder 3, Box 1367, BAP.

⁵⁹ Regarding Bradley’s speeches and statements aimed at Jewish voters, see Joe Scott, “Bradley for Mayor Press Release,” March 5th, 1969, Folder 3, Box 1367, BAP; Tom Bradley, “Fairfax Rally Speech,” Folder 5, Box 2124, BAP; Tom Bradley, “Statement Issued by Councilman Thomas Bradley on Question of Black Anti-Semitism,” May 12, 1969, Politics—Campaign for Mayor, 1969 Folder, Box 192, Subject Files, Series IV, CRC. Many Jews did not find Bradley’s appeals to the Jewish community persuasive. After hosting a debate between Yorty and Bradley, a local Jewish community center received over 200 letters that conveyed the same basic message: “Don’t you know the blacks (ergo Bradley) are anti-Semitic; if Bradley gets in the Negroes will dominate city govt...how can you let down a good friend of the Jewish (Yorty)...” Furthermore, I.B. Zwirin expressed a similar distrust of Bradley: “Bradley can’t see a communist conspiracy which is paying Nasser’s army to destroy Israeli society. He can’t hear the threats of the B.S.A. and the S.D.S., nor the Black Panthers; all working to divide Americans into a black, white, brown and yellow society.” Leonard Goldhammer, “Joe,” May 12, 1969, Politics—Campaign for Mayor, 1969 Folder, Box 192, Subject Files, Series IV, CRC; I.B. Zwirin, “Three Major Questions,” Folder 1, Box 16B, Inventory 2, BDCM.

⁶⁰ Kaufmann, *The Urban Voter*, 70; Sonenshein, *Politics in Black and White*, 92.

⁶¹ Anti-Defamation League of B’nai B’rith—Pacific Southwest Regional Office, “The Exploitation of Bigotry in the Los Angeles Mayoral Campaign”; Community Relations Committee, “Report of Committee on Fair Campaign Practices” September 5th 1969, Folder 2, Box 1075, BAP.

the CRC's report noted, "other officials will seek re-election and issues of importance to various interests will be on the ballot and racism will be used directly or indirectly (the law and order pitch). Once more a play will be made for the 'Jewish vote.'"⁶² To a certain extent, their fears were misplaced: post-1969 candidates rarely utilized overt racist appeals to attract Los Angeles' Jewish voters, and when they did, these candidates failed to replicate Yorty's success.⁶³ Of more lasting significance, the 1969 election introduced to Los Angeles' Jewish voters a new style of political campaigning that expected local politicians to communicate and address perceived Jewish concerns with passion and zeal.

III.

In the half decade following the 1969 mayoral election, Los Angeles Jews increasingly experimented with and embraced identity-based political expressions and strategies that valorized ethnic interests. College-aged Jewish students were instrumental in vocalizing and articulating these concerns. During the mid-1960s, Jewish youth were actively involved in the general anti-establishment, anti-authority youth rebellions and counter culture movements flourishing on college campuses such as the University of California, Los Angeles and San Fernando Valley State College.⁶⁴ By the late 1960s, grassroots Jewish organizations emerged

⁶² Community Relations Committee, "Report of Committee on Fair Campaign Practices."

⁶³ In the 1970 election for the 61st State Assembly seat, Michael Van Horn faced incumbent Henry Waxman. To attract Jewish voters, Van Horn sought to associate Waxman with revolutionaries and black radicals; this strategy failed. "Fairfax Reporter," Press Release folder, Box 114, Inventory 2, BDCM.

⁶⁴ As one local Jewish community official observed in October of 1967, "the proportion of the number of Jews involved in the hippie movement; the drug culture; the psychedelic revolt; the activist resurgence; the meditative cults—all of these, they outnumber their proportionate number in the total campus population." "Discussion on Social Action on the Campus, LAHC Board Meeting," October 10, 1967, Folder 1, Box 53, Western States Jewish History Archive, Department of Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles (hereafter WSJHA).

throughout Los Angeles that sought to channel much of this political activism and social discontent among college-aged Jews into a Jewish-centered protest movement.

Insurgent youth-led organizations pointedly critiqued the leaders of the Jewish establishment for guiding the Jewish community on a path that prioritized affluence and the ideal of assimilation into American society over the spiritual and cultural wellbeing of the Jewish community. Consciously and visibility emulating the rhetoric and strategies of black nationalists that advocated for black autonomy and pride, youth-led organizations and activists engaged in activities designed to affirm the status of Jews as an oppressed minority and accentuate their differences from mainstream American culture.⁶⁵ While in constant contact and conversation with like-minded Jewish youth activists throughout the country, they also identified Los Angeles' social geography as especially corrosive to Jewish identity. As one such flyer from the Jewish Radical Community proclaimed, "to be a Jew on America's terms is to trade in historical and religious ethics of social justice for a \$60,000 house in Cheviot Hills... to forget 2000 years of oppression because of 20 years of prosperity....is to not be a Jew at all."⁶⁶ What these young people sought, as one historian has noted, was "*more Jewishness*, not less" and thus called for the local Jewish community to dedicate more of their resources to specifically Jewish causes,

⁶⁵ Regarding the relationship between race and the Jewish youth counterculture more broadly, see Goldstein, *The Price of Whiteness*, 212–14.

⁶⁶ Jewish Radical Community, "To be a Jew on America's Terms," Folder 4, Box 5, MS 285, American Jewish Archives (hereafter MS 285). Likewise, regarding his upbringing in Granada Hills, the Jewish Defense League's Irv Rubin explained to the *Los Angeles Times* that, "I grew up an assimilated Jew. You hardly know you're Jewish in the Valley." Skip Ferderber, "Jewish Defense League's Roar Heard in Land: Role of Agency Both Praised and Criticized," *Los Angeles Times*, June 18, 1972.

warned against the disappearance of Jewish culture at home and abroad, and proposed new ways to create an “authentic” form of American Jewish life in Los Angeles.⁶⁷

With agendas and ideologies that often overlapped though also contradicted one other, youth-led organizations tackled a range of issues.⁶⁸ The Jewish Defense League (JDL), a militant and ultranationalist organization that was originally founded in New York City, established a Los Angeles branch in 1971 that called for local Jews to defend themselves against all forms of anti-Jewish aggression.⁶⁹ With about 300 members, most of them between the ages of 18 and 25, the JDL patrolled the Fairfax area with arms to protect the neighborhood from the African-Americans students that transferred to Fairfax High School; they also vandalized retail stores that sold Soviet products and initiated violent attacks upon white supremacist organizations throughout Southern California.⁷⁰ Addressing Jewish concerns from a markedly leftwing perspective, the Jewish Radical Community launched out of Los Angeles Valley College in 1969. This organization embarked upon teach-ins, pickets, boycotts, and other public displays of

⁶⁷ Also see Michael E. Staub, ed., *The Jewish 1960s: An American Sourcebook* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press; Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 2004); Michael Staub, *Torn at the Roots: The Crisis of Jewish Liberalism in Postwar America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 194–240.

⁶⁸ A *Los Angeles Times* article from 1971 confirms this point. Steve Kline, “New Fist on Campus: Youths Rally to Help Soviet Jews,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 7, 1971.

⁶⁹ More than a Jewish “defense” force, the JDL, as its West Coast coordinator Irv Rubin explained to the *Los Angeles Times*, was part of a cultural reclamation project that was “trying to absolve the Jews’ perennial self-hate complex.” Skip Ferderber, “Jewish Defense League’s Roar Heard in Land: Role of Agency Both Praised and Criticized,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 18, 1972. Also see, “Jewish Defense League, Los Angeles” 1971 (?), S/S Jewish Defense League Folder, Box 223, Group 2, Series IV, CRC; “Jewish Defense League,” memo, December 11 1971, Jewish Defense League Resource File Folder, Box 226, Group 14, Series IV, CRC; “A Symbol of Cowardice,” *Jewish Defense League Newsletter*, December 11, 1971, Jewish Defense League Resource File Folder, Box 226, Group 14, Series IV, CRC.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

social discontent that called for Jews liberate themselves from the superficiality, materialism, and the racism of middle-class American values and the white power structure.⁷¹

Perhaps the most prominent of these groups was the California Students for Soviet Jews, which was founded by UCLA student activist Zev Yaroslavsky in 1969. It wove together anti-communist moralism, ethnic particularism, and the ideology of human rights. Seeing the Jewish Federation as “morally bankrupt” and too cautious to effectively aid Soviet Jews who were banned from practicing Judaism and restricted from leaving the U.S.S.R, the California Students for Soviet Jews sought to draw public attention towards the status of Soviet Jewry as an “oppressed minority” and secure their right to emigrate.⁷² To do so, the California Students for Soviet Jews—often working in tandem with the Southern California Council for Soviet Jews—sponsored disruptive public protests and peaceful candlelight walks that attracted diverse groups of Jews (youth and older adults alike) and notable non-Jewish supporters.⁷³

Mainstream Jewish political organizations were ambivalent about the new ethnic politics and the youth activists. On one hand, they spent much effort and energy during the early 1970s trying to prevent youth insurgents from assuming positions of respectability and influence within Jewish communal affairs. The CRC and the ADL ran spy networks to track the JDL’s activities

⁷¹ Jewish Radical Community, “American Oppression Divides Blacks and Jews,” January 5, 1970, 4/1, MS 285; Jewish Radical Community, “To be a Jew on America’s Terms”; Yonay, “Jewish Radicals Emerge on Campus,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, December 6, 1969.

⁷² “Patience is Wearing Thin Says Student Leader...,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, July 31, 1970; UCLA Hillel Council Soviet Jewry Committee, “Memorandum,” October 31, 1969, UCLA Student Committee on Soviet Jewry Folder, Box 233, Group 11, Series IV, CRC; Zev Yaroslavsky, “The Soviet Jewry Game and How It’s Played,” *Ha’am*, April 1972.

⁷³ “400 L.A. Jews Picket Soviet Ballet Troupe,” *Los Angeles Times*, August 8, 1970; “Candlelight Walk for Soviet Jews,” Folder 1, Box 55, WSJHA; “Open Letter to the Soviet Visitors,” Folder 2, Box 25, Si Frumkin Papers, Department of Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles (hereafter SFP); Southern California Council for Soviet Jews, California Students for Soviet Jews, “Welcome Moiseyev Dancers!” 1970 (?), Folder 2, Box 24, SFP; Tom Paegel, “March Staged to Protest Russian Jews’ Treatment: More than 6,000 Take Part in Candlelight Walk Ending at City Hall Steps,” *Los Angeles Times*, December 23, 1970; “We hope you enjoy the Magnificent Dancers,” Folder 2, Box 24, SFP.

and publicly encouraged other Jewish organizations and individuals to not “support financially or otherwise, or to affiliate” with the JDL; the CRC’s director Charles Posner frequently critiqued the California Students for Soviet Jews’ rowdy style and anti-establishment ethos.⁷⁴

Simultaneously, however, establishment organizations increasingly invested in programs and initiatives that addressed particular Jewish concerns but did so in a manner that was consonant with their traditional dedication to consensus-oriented liberalism, tolerance, and civil equality. As historian Joshua Zeitz succinctly explains, establishment organizations in Los Angeles (and elsewhere throughout the United States) “sought to forge a middle ground between ‘universalism’ and ‘particularization’—between the changing exigencies of political liberalism and American Jewish life.”⁷⁵ For example, the CRC along with the local chapters of the AJC and the ADL—while supporting affirmative action to increase minority opportunities—spoke out against racial quotas for minorities predicated upon the belief that quotas were a form of anti-Jewish discrimination and a violation of the principles of equal opportunity; the Los Angeles chapter of the AJC and the Jewish Federation embarked upon efforts to study and combat local manifestations of Jewish poverty throughout Los Angeles; the CRC shunned disruptive public protests but established a Commission on Soviet Jewry that relied upon low-key diplomatic methods and sponsored petitions, letter-writing campaigns, and educational programs within the

⁷⁴ Community Relations Committee, JF-C, "Statement of Position, Jewish Defense League, "February 8th, 1972, Jewish Defense League Folder, Box 15, Series IV, CRC; George M. Goodwin, "The Marginal Man Reconsidered: Five Jews in Los Angeles" (University of Southern California, 1984), 229-40; Charles Posner, "Dear Marshall," November 10, 1971, Russian delegates Folder, Box 22, Series IV, CRC; Charles Posner, "Memo," October 27, 1972, Jewish Defense League Resource File Folder, Box 266, Group 14, Series IV, CRC; Milton A. Senn, "Jewish Defense League (Los Angeles) -- Conversation with A.S. Epstein, Area Coordinator," Jewish Defense League 1971 Folder, Box 22, Series IV, CRC.

⁷⁵ Joshua Michael Zeitz, "‘If I Am Not for Myself . . .’: The American Jewish Establishment in the Aftermath of the Six Day War," *American Jewish History* 88, no. 2 (2000): 258.

Jewish community to “educate the community regarding the plight of Soviet Jewry” and “speak out against unjust and unfair treatment of Jews in Russia.”⁷⁶

The question that confronted politicians in this charged environment was both a straightforward and thoroughly complex one: what were the most effective ways to address Jewish voters and donors as well as build feasible coalitions at a moment in which Jews were increasingly seeking to assert their “differences” from other groups, address the specific needs of the Jewish community, and strengthen the foundations of American Jewish life?

IV.

In December of 1972, Tom Bradley publicly announced his candidacy for the 1973 mayoral election. Upon doing so, he inherited much of the local campaign infrastructure that helped to sustain Democratic George McGovern’s amply funded though ultimately unsuccessful 1972 Presidential campaign against Richard Nixon.⁷⁷ Jewish business executive and engineer Max

⁷⁶ Regarding affirmative action, see Neil Sandberg, “More on Quotas,” *Common Sense Center on Public Affairs*, February 1973, Folder 17, Box 22, Max Mont Collection, Urban Archives Center, Oviatt Library, California State University, Northridge (hereafter MMC); Milton Senn, “Quotas and Preferential Treatment, as View by the Anti-Defamation League,” *Common Sense Center on Public Affairs*, February 1973, Folder 17, Box 22, MMC; Zeitz, “‘If I Am Not for Myself . . .,’” 278-279. Regarding efforts to combat poverty, see The American Jewish Committee, Los Angeles Chapter, “June 15, 1972 Press Release,” June 15, 1972, American Jewish Committee Folder, Box 213, Series IV, CRC; “Jewish Poverty in Los Angeles,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, June 29, 1973; “JFC Allocations Show Drop from 1972, Shift in Priorities to Local Problems,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, September 21, 1973. Regarding Soviet Jewry, “Guidelines,” *B’nai B’rith Messenger*, January 29, 1971; Commission on Soviet Jewry of the Community Relations Committee, “Guidelines for Community Actions Concerning Soviet Jewry,” January 1971, Comm. Soviet Jewry – Guidelines Folder, Box 226, Group 14, Series IV, CRC.

⁷⁷ The New York Times recognized this connection, describing Bradley as a black liberal “who has inherited some of the political and financial assets of Senator George McGovern’s Presidential campaign.” Also relevant, a cohort of Jewish entertainment industry celebrities such as Carl Reiner, Norman Lear, and Barbara Streisand that supported McGovern gravitated towards the Hollywood Committee to Elect Tom Bradley and campaigned on Bradley’s behalf. Kathryn Cramer Brownell, *Showbiz Politics: Hollywood in American Political Life* (Durham: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 218–24. Also see, Tom Bradley, “Dear Friend,” November 10, 1972, Elections – Mayor’s 1973 Folder, Box 17, Series V, CRC; Bill Boyarsky, “Bradley Seeking McGovern ‘Army’ Aid for Mayor Race: Spokesman Says Youthful Doorbell Ringers, Affluent Campaign Contributors Could Provide Potent Support,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 9, 1972; “McGovern Concert Committee,” Folder 4, Box 15, MS 727; Bruce Miroff, *The Liberals’ Moment: The McGovern Insurgency and the Identity Crisis of the Democratic Party* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2007), 65; Steven V. Roberts, “Race Issue Emerges on Coast As a Black

Palevsky—who openly criticized the McGovern campaign and Bradley’s 1969 campaign as poorly organized and too ideologically focused—was one of the key links between McGovern and Bradley.⁷⁸ After fundraising for McGovern, he served as Bradley’s finance chairman and strategist and helped integrate into the Bradley campaign a cohort of wealthy donors who previously demonstrated little active interest in local political affairs.⁷⁹ With newfound sources of funding—ultimately spending about \$300,000 more than it had in 1969—the campaign hired New York-based media advisor David Garth and political consultant Nelson Rising.⁸⁰ While Bradley’s longtime liberal loyalists still played an active role in the campaign, Garth, Rising, and Palevsky were quite influential throughout the 1973 campaign and helped transform the Bradley organization from an ideologically-driven liberal crusade into a strategic and highly organized professional and practical outfit.⁸¹

Central to the reformed strategy was a concerted effort to allay and address the racially motivated fears and accusations that haunted Bradley during the 1969 election and appeal to the largest possible cross-section of the electorate.⁸² Thus, Bradley was portrayed a consensus builder and the candidate concerned with the wellbeing of the entire city. As Nelson Rising

Challenges Yorty: Run-off Is Expected Endorsement From Labor,” *New York Times*, March 18, 1973; Sonenshein, *Politics in Black and White*, 103.

⁷⁸ Palevsky financially contributed to Bradley’s 1969 mayoral campaign but was not an advisor. Bill Boyarsky, “From M’Govern to Bradley: Palevsky Dives Into New Political Waters,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 4, 1973.

⁷⁹ Leonard, “No Jews and No Coloreds Are Welcome in This Town,” 85; Jules Witcover, “L.A. Executive Is Top McGovern Contributor: Senator Voluntarily Lists Names and Sums Given or Loaned for Presidential Campaign,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 29, 1972.

⁸⁰ Doug Shuit, “Bradley Spent Nearly \$300,000 More Than Yorty in Campaign,” *Los Angeles Times*, July 7, 1973; Sonenshein, *Politics in Black and White*, 103.

⁸¹ Sonenshein, *Politics in Black and White*, 104.

⁸² Kenneth Reich, “Bradley, 1973: The Goal Is the Same but Tactics Are Low-Key,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 14, 1973.

explained in a 1974 interview, “anytime you have a minority candidate...what you have got to do is convince the majority of voters that you understand their problems and your interests are in line with theirs.”⁸³ Simultaneously, the Bradley organization demonstrated a heightened commitment to understanding the city’s ethno-racial diversity and identifying how exactly Bradley could more effectively attract different groups within the city. To reconcile these two imperatives, the Bradley campaign aimed to demonstrate how Bradley’s commitment to specific group concerns was consonant with the general welfare of the city.

This basic strategy guided the ways in which the Bradley campaign sought to broaden Bradley’s Jewish support, not just within the Fairfax neighborhoods but also throughout the affluent Westside and the San Fernando Valley.⁸⁴ Whereas the 1969 Bradley campaign largely relied on public polls that made no particular effort to recognize Jews as an identifiable group, the 1973 Bradley campaign conducted and commissioned polls and studies that sought to comprehend the number of Jewish households in each neighborhood, identify Jewish political sentiments with precision, and recognize where exactly Jewish voters deviated from other voting blocs such as liberal Republicans, “hard hat” Democrats, and college students.⁸⁵ Findings from these studies highlighted ways for the Bradley campaign to increase Bradley’s share of the Jewish electorate relative to the 1969 mayor election.⁸⁶ At public events aimed to enhance

⁸³ J. Gregory Payne and Scott C. Ratzan, *Tom Bradley, the Impossible Dream: A Biography* (Santa Monica, CA: Roundtable Publishing, 1986), 134.

⁸⁴ Boyarsky, “Bradley Seeking McGovern ‘Army’ Aid for Mayor Race”; Bill Boyarsky, “Yorty, Bradley Seek Jewish Votes at Fairfax Ave. Fete,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 7, 1973.

⁸⁵ Regarding the 1969 mayoral election, see “A Study of Voter Preferences for 9 Potential Candidates for the Office of Mayor of the City of Los Angeles,” Folder 7, Box 4701, BAP; Sonenshein, *Politics in Black and White*, 88. Regarding the 1973 mayoral election, see “Estimated Number of Jewish Households by Area,” Folder 1, Box 4701, BAP; “Poll Results,” Folder 4, Box 4701, BAP; Public Response Company, “Analysis of the Jewish and Democrat Hard Hat Voter Segments,” December 4, 1972, Folder 3, Box 4701, BAP.

⁸⁶ Public Response Company, “Analysis of the Jewish and Democrat Hard Hat Voter Segments.”

Bradley's visibility and familiarity within the Jewish community—and through advertisements, brochures, and pamphlets—the Bradley campaign emphasized two themes and messages to attract Jewish voters.⁸⁷

Firstly, the campaign stressed Bradley's involvement in the free Soviet Jewry movement. Bradley's position as the councilman for the 10th District brought him into close contact with the budding free Soviet Jewry movement and its competing efforts to aid Soviet Jews. Different in both style and ideological conviction, CRC officials and brash grassroots activists frequently debated how to best address the plight of Soviet Jewry. As these organizations courted local politicians to legitimize their approaches, Bradley emerged as an active participant and leader within the movement, reflecting and channeling the often-incongruent priorities of both Jewish establishment and the grassroots activists. Since 1969, he frequently participated in pro-Soviet Jewry rallies and mass demonstrations as a speaker.⁸⁸ And from his position on the City Council he proposed and organized a Soviet Jewry Day in Los Angeles, circulated a petition that called upon President Richard Nixon to help Jews emigrate, and passed a resolution that criticized the Soviet Union's treatment of Jews.⁸⁹ From Bradley's perspective, the free Soviet Jewry

⁸⁷ Bradley's calendar in the months leading up to the election included over sixty scheduled events that brought Bradley into close contact with an array of Jewish voters on the affluent Westside, throughout the Fairfax neighborhoods, and in the San Fernando Valley; this entailed participating in mayoral debates at Westside Jewish Community Center, meeting and speaking with Jewish voters at the old age homes, Jewish cultural centers, and numerous synagogues, attending Bar Mitzvahs, a Jewish Federation picnic, and Israel birthday celebrations, and embarking on a "handshaking and drop-in tour of Fairfax Blvd." "Final Schedule," April 2, 1973, Folder 1, Box 3157, BAP; "Final Schedule," May 2, 1973, Folder 5, Box 3157, BAP; "Final Schedule," May 4, 1973, Folder 5, Box 3157, BAP; "Final Schedule," May 6, 1973, Folder 5, Box 3157, BAP.

⁸⁸ Tom Bradley, "Address by Councilman Thomas Bradley Concerning the Jews of the Soviet Union," December 22, 1970, Folder 24, Box 2124, BAP; "Los Angeles Plans Mass Rally to Support Soviet Jews," Folder 1, Box 24, WSJHA; "Address by Councilman Thomas Bradley Concerning the Jews of the Soviet Union," December 22, 1970, Folder 24, Box 2124, BAP; Paegel, "March Staged to Protest Russian Jews' Treatment"; "UCLA Students Protest Soviet Trials," *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, May 21, 1971.

⁸⁹ Tom Bradley, "The Los Angeles City Council Approved the Following Resolution" December 31, 1970, Folder 2, Box 15, MS 603, American Jewish Archives; "Tom Bradley Circulates Appeal for Soviet Jews," *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, April 7, 1972; Kathleen Hendrix, "The Obsession: For Years, Si Frumkin irked

movement was the rightful heir to the African-American civil rights movement. As such, his activism and arguments drew upon the language and ideology associated with universal morality, social justice, and the strength of black-Jewish ties. (“Until every man and woman is free, until every man and woman has dignity...I shall not rest. Nor will any of us gathered here tonight. The cause of my brother is my cause”).⁹⁰ Simultaneously, however, he explained the oppression of Soviet Jewry as a uniquely Jewish experience and identified their plight as a link in the chain of Jewish history and Jewish suffering (“We must remember the six million Jews who were sent to the gas ovens 30 years ago. By the same token we must never let it happen again.”)⁹¹ This inclination to meld Jewish particularism and liberal universalism provided Bradley with an idiom and appeal that was conspicuously lacking during the 1969 mayoral election.

The Bradley campaign made a concerted effort to celebrate Bradley’s involvement in the free Soviet Jewry movement. They placed advertisements in Jewish newspapers that underlined Bradley’s solidarity with Soviet Jewry (“Councilman Tom Bradley, always concerned for human rights and dignity, leading the march protesting Soviet Russia’s inhuman treatment of Jews and demanding justice”) and featured a photo of Bradley at a Soviet Jewry rally, with signs that read “Stop violating universal declaration of human rights” and “Russia: Stop Spiritual Cultural Destruction of Jews,” in the official Bradley Tribute pamphlet.⁹² While the mayor of Los Angeles had minimal ability to influence foreign policy, the Bradley campaign presented

the Establishment with his Crusade to Aid Soviet Jews. Now his Cause is in the Mainstream,” *Los Angeles Times*, August 30, 1990.

⁹⁰ Bradley, “Address by Councilman Thomas Bradley Concerning the Jews of the Soviet Union.”

⁹¹ “15,000 March in L.A.; Black Official Says Tragedy of Gas Chambers Must Not Be Repeated,” *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, December 24, 1970.

⁹² “Tom Bradley, A Tribute,” Folder 14, Box 2129, BAP; “Tom Bradley is Our Choice for Mayor,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, March 30, 1973.

Bradley's participation in the Soviet Jewry movement as more than a series of symbolic gestures. Explaining to Jewish voters that, "when I am Mayor, there will be no welcome mat for high Soviet official at City Hall until the Soviet Union allows full freedom of emigration," Bradley and his public relations team approached this seemingly remote crisis as an issue of local and immediate concern for Los Angeles and articulated how exactly a Bradley mayorship would carry out a stern anti-Soviet policy.⁹³

Bradley's strong identification with the free Soviet Jewry movement prompted responses from other candidates. Democratic Jesse Unruh, who was competing with Bradley for black votes for the primary election, distributed a brochure throughout African-American neighborhoods that compared the records of the mayoral candidates "on issues affecting the black community." The brochure labeled Bradley's efforts to protest the treatment of Soviet Jewry as one of his signature civil rights achievements though conveniently failed to mention Bradley's record of combatting police brutality and job discrimination against racial minorities.⁹⁴ The Unruh brochure became the focal point of a local controversy: the local press, the Bradley campaign, and Bradley's core supporters discussed and interpreted the pamphlet as a deliberate effort on the behalf of Unruh to exploit black anti-Semitism, attack Bradley's links to the Jewish community, and imply that the 1973 incarnation of Bradley would neglect the inner-city.⁹⁵ "Our

⁹³ "Tom Bradley for Mayor," *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, May 25, 1973.

⁹⁴ Community Organization for Unruh, "A Comparative Record of the Major Candidates for Mayor of Los Angeles on Issues Affecting the Black Community," Elections – Mayor's 1973 Folder, Box 17, Series V, CRC.

⁹⁵ Leon Alschuler and Stephen Arent, "Dear Unruh," March 13, 1973, Elections – Mayor's 1973 Folder, Box 17, Series V, CRC; Herb Brin, "Heritage Deplores Unruh Pamphlet," *Southwest Jewish Heritage Press*, March 23, 1973; Kenneth Beich, "Bradley Labels Unruh Mailout to Blacks 'Vicious, Outrageous': His Efforts for Civil Rights Distorted, Councilman Says; Aide to Yorty Calls Comparison of Records 'Gratifying,'" *Los Angeles Times*, March 14, 1973; Kenneth Reich, "Unruh Aides Urge Bradley to Disavow Anti-Semitism Letters," *Los Angeles Times*, March 16, 1973.

thinking,” as one Bradley spokesman explained to the *Los Angeles Times*, “is that the reason they did that is to try to play on black anti-Semitism.”⁹⁶

By drawing attention to Bradley’s involvement in the free Soviet Jewry movement, the Unruh brochure, unintentionally, presented a more a legitimate concern: Bradley’s emphasis on the plight of Soviet Jewry as a frame of reference for understanding and defining discrimination obscured and deprioritized more local and perhaps more subtle manifestations of discrimination.⁹⁷ Indeed, in responding to the controversy over the brochure, pro-Bradley Jewish leaders did not bother to examine or defend Bradley’s record on local civil rights or his advocacy for anti-discrimination legislation but took the opportunity to exalt Bradley’s support of Soviet Jewry. As one such letter that was signed by 37 Bradley supporters and sent to Unruh noted, “as American Jews who are deeply concerned with the fate of our Russian brothers, we are grateful indeed that Tom Bradley marched with us in our month long vigil for Soviet Jewry...we do not recall having seen you participate, as he did.”⁹⁸

While the Soviet Jewry issue certainly helped to bolster Bradley’s reputation within the Jewish community, the Bradley campaign also had to contend with Jewish racial anxieties entrenched within the local setting. The Bradley campaign commissioned studies that found that while the majority of Jewish voters might consider Bradley an acceptable candidate, these voters were not especially concerned with social, racial, and economic justice—particularly when compared to Bradley’s non-Jewish supporters. Thus, as the study suggested, the Jewish voter “would suffer paralysis of his convictions (and susceptibility to other candidates) directly to the

⁹⁶ Beich, “Unruh Will Revise Data Sent to Black.”

⁹⁷ Unemployment and crime rose from the late 1960s through the 1970s in African-American neighborhoods. Josh Sides, *L.A. City Limits: African American Los Angeles from the Great Depression to the Present* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 189.

⁹⁸ Alschuler and Arent, “Dear Unruh.”

degree he believes a Bradley administration would radicalize LA or institute racial hiring quotas that would create at his expense more jobs for Mexican-Americans and blacks.”⁹⁹ Furthermore, Bradley’s opponent in the 1973 general election was Sam Yorty. The Yorty campaign relied upon many of the same basic strategies and tropes employed during the 1969 election, portraying Bradley as a black nationalist, an anti-Semite, and an extremist whose election would threaten Jewish security.¹⁰⁰

To address these matters, the Bradley campaign presented Bradley as a forward-thinking reform-minded leader with a concern for civic stability and framed this synthesis around specific Jewish issues. During a mayoral debate held at the Westside Jewish Community Center, Bradley claimed that Mayor Yorty’s administration had “total responsibility” for the rising crime rates that have plagued the Jewish community and explained how his own police-reform proposals—especially reducing the present priority on investigating victimless crimes—would help bring a sense of security and safety to heavily Jewish neighborhoods and Los Angeles more broadly.¹⁰¹ Furthermore, Bradley’s stance on affirmative action similarly sought to assuage specific Jewish concerns. While advocating for merit-based employment and affirmative action programs in order to institutionalize diversity in hiring and employment practices, Bradley publicly disapproved of racial quotas in college admissions and employment to assist underprivileged groups. Advertisements placed in Jewish newspapers stressed that Bradley was an opponent of “quota systems for racial minorities” because quotas, in Bradley’s words, “are a form of reverse

⁹⁹ Public Response Company, “Analysis of the Jewish and Democrat Hard Hat Voter Segments.”

¹⁰⁰ Richard Bergholz, “Yorty, Bradley Level Heavy Charges as Election Nears: Mayor Calls His Opponent a Left-Winger,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 24, 1973; Richard Bergholz, “Yorty Says Hidden ‘Radicals’ Work in Bradley Campaign,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 17, 1973.

¹⁰¹ Richard Bergholz, “Yorty, Bradley Revert to Slam-Bang Debating: Councilman Calls Rivals Campaign ‘Vicious;’ Mayor Says Foe Dodges Police Chief Issue,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 15, 1973.

discrimination. They discriminate against Whites, especially Jews.”¹⁰² He frequently explained his rationale in a manner that not only described quotas as antithetical to his belief in “equality of opportunity” but also validated the legitimacy of the Jewish historical experience—based on past encounters with discrimination—as an argument and rationale against racial quotas.¹⁰³

Bradley’s ability to construct a seemingly durable and public connection between himself, Los Angeles, and the Jewish community helped Bradley increase his share of the Jewish electorate en route to becoming Los Angeles’ first black mayor. Winning about 60% of the city’s Jewish vote, Bradley drew overwhelming support from upper middle class Jews that were located on the Westside of Los Angeles and throughout the San Fernando Valley’s hillside areas such as Encino and moderately though sufficiently improved his showing throughout the Fairfax neighborhoods.¹⁰⁴ This sense of closeness between Bradley and the Jewish community was further fortified in the immediate aftermath of the election. Central to Bradley’s vision of a transformed Los Angeles was the notion that the Bradley administration would not only respond to the needs of distinct ethno-racial groups, but also create a space for minorities at City Hall, which he envisioned as a racially and ethnically diverse Camelot.¹⁰⁵ Rewarding Jews for their political and financial support, Bradley identified Jews as a crucial part of his ruling coalition and enhanced Jewish access to the corridors of local political power. Specifically, this entailed

¹⁰² “Tom Bradley for Mayor,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, May 25, 1973.

¹⁰³ Tom Bradley, “Bradley Speech at Minority Complex Society,” January 3, 1973, Folder 16, Box 2129, BAP.

¹⁰⁴ Richard Bergholz, “Study Shows ‘Black Bloc’ Vote Wasn’t Key to Bradley Victory: Analysis of Precinct Returns Throughout City Proves That Challenger Gained on Incumbent in Various Areas,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 10, 1973; Robert M. Halley, Alan C. Acock, and Thomas H. Greene, “Ethnicity and Social Class: Voting in the 1973 Los Angeles Municipal Elections,” *The Western Political Quarterly* 29, no. 4 (December 1, 1976): 521–30; Leonard, “No Jews and No Coloreds Are Welcome in This Town,” 69–71; Parker, “The Elusive Coalition,” 102–5; Sonenshein, *Politics in Black and White*, 108–13.

¹⁰⁵ Scott Kurashige, *The Shifting Grounds of Race: Black and Japanese Americans in the Making of Multiethnic Los Angeles* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 279; Sonenshein, *Politics in Black and White*, 112–13.

appointing longtime Jewish supporters like Maurice Wiener, Bruce Corwin, Valerie Fields, and Fran Savitch to key positions in his administration, nearly doubling the number of Jews serving as city commissioners, and publicly lobbying on behalf of Israel during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War.¹⁰⁶ Likewise, the mayor's office and the CRC agreed to formalize communication with one another and have mayoral officials attend CRC meetings "in order to make each other aware of the needs and resources in the Community."¹⁰⁷ Whatever ambivalence continued to persist towards Bradley within the Jewish community—and despite the criticism that Bradley's relationship with the Jewish community effectively relegated blacks to second-class citizenship—Bradley's overtures signaled to the Jewish community that it was in Los Angeles' best interest for Jews to bond together their ethnic concerns with their broader civic ones.

V.

Beyond the contests for the mayor where liberal and conservative non-Jewish candidates alike sought to vie publicly and brashly for Jewish votes, the so-called merging of identity politics and electoral politics also helped to usher in a new era of Jewish political self-representation in Los Angeles. The evolution of Henry Waxman's career politician reveals how the visibly Jewish politician emerged as a staple of Los Angeles' political culture. Waxman, as previously discussed, did not enter the State Assembly as an ethnic-oriented politician but as a devout liberal that was closely associated with the California Democratic Council, the anti-war youth movement, and the Bradley coalition. Once in office, the young Assemblyman continued

¹⁰⁶ Tom Bradley, "A Candle of Freedom," December 19, 1973, Yom Kippur War –1973 News Releases, CRC Folder, Box 9, Series V, CRC; Doug Shuit, "Move Made to Avoid Bradley-Gibson Split: Harbor Appointee and Council Chief Who Opposed Him Confer Bradley-Gibson," *Los Angeles Times*, August 9, 1973; Sonenshein, *Politics in Black and White*, 149.

¹⁰⁷ "Minutes of CRC's Commission on Urban Affairs," September 11, 1974, Minutes: Comm. On Urban Affairs, 1961-1981 Folder, Box 32, CRC V.

to identify as a progressive Democrat but also increasingly drew attention to his own Jewishness and built a reputation as a politician who aimed to help American Jews effectively navigate the democratic process. While Waxman's heightened awareness of his role as a Jewish politician was certainly a pragmatic and advantageous position for a politician whose constituents were also prioritizing ethnic matters, it would be incorrect to characterize his political evolution as superficial or purely calculating. The social and political upheavals that swept the American Jewish community during the late 1960s and early 1970s helped refocus and politicize aspects of Waxman's Jewish identity that were previously latent.

Through his weekly column in the *L.A. Reporter*—a well-known newspaper published by Waxman's family and circulated to a largely Jewish readership on the Westside of Los Angeles—Waxman was able to insert himself into Jewish communal debate.¹⁰⁸ The question of how Jews should try to resuscitate the liberal paradigm while simultaneously seeking to affirm their “differences” from mainstream America consumed Waxman's attention. For Waxman, who was so closely associated with the anti-war youth movement of 1960s and opted to work within the established political system to generate political reform, the presence of young Jewish radicals engaging in unlawful expressions of political dissent was especially worrisome. Waxman condemned the activities of young, radical Jews “who have embraced goals of nationalism and separatism, even condoning and advocating violent and disruptive tactics.” Yet, Waxman appreciated their “enormous idealism” as well as their concern with Jewish identity, even calling Jewish Defense League founder Meir Kahane “a man of courage.”¹⁰⁹ Waxman deemed it crucial for the Jewish community to “pursue those values and possessions of our own

¹⁰⁸ Regarding Waxman's familial ties to the *L.A. Reporter*, see Waxman and Green, *The Waxman Report*. Also see first chapter of dissertation.

¹⁰⁹ Henry Waxman, “Bradley vs. Yorty, An Easy Choice,” 1969, *L.A. Reporter*, Box 15, Inventory 2, BDCM.

heritage and history as Jews and as Americans which correspond best with the legitimate concerns of all people for social justice and equality” and more specifically, saw it as his duty as an elected official to help strengthen the contours of Jewish life when possible.¹¹⁰

Accordingly, in the State Assembly Waxman sponsored a bill in 1971 that prevented a freeway from cutting across Fairfax Avenue and linked the construction of the freeway with the disruption and destruction of Jewish life in the Fairfax neighborhoods.¹¹¹ “This freeway,” as Waxman told *Heritage Jewish Press*, would “hit the heartland of Los Angeles Jewish Life like a tornado” and “destroy the largest, most varied, and most attractive Jewish retail and merchandising area west of Chicago. Numerous Jewish bookstores, kosher butchers, delicatessens, restaurants, bakeries, and other shops catering to the ethnic and cultural needs of Los Angeles Jewry would be wiped out.”¹¹² Likewise, Waxman introduced a bill that authorized public support for parochial schools in California, which were in the midst of a dire statewide financial crisis. Waxman claimed that the bill was in the best interests of all Californians because it would help keep parochial schools open and avoid the overcrowding of public schools; yet he also acknowledged that he introduced the bill primarily in response to pleas from local constituents who wanted to provide their children a quality Jewish education.¹¹³

¹¹⁰ Henry Waxman, “Generation Gap and the Jewish Community,” August 27, 1969, *L.A. Reporter*, Box 15, Inventory 2, BDCM; Henry Waxman, “‘New Left’ Stand Against Israel Disturbing,” August 27, 1969, *L.A. Reporter*, Box 15, Inventory 2, BDCM.

¹¹¹ Neil Sandberg, “Memorandum,” November 24, 1971, American Jewish Committee Folder, Box 213, Group 10, Series IV, CRC; “Waxman Calls 170 Freeway Peril to Jewish Community,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, October 8, 1971.

¹¹² “Waxman Calls 170 Freeway Peril to Jewish Community.”

¹¹³ “Assemblyman Waxman Co-Authors Measure for Jewish Day Schools,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, June 25, 1971; “Henry Waxman’s Jewish Day School Bill Passes Assembly,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, August 4th, 1971.

The State of Israel was also a priority for Waxman. Throughout the pages of the *Los Angeles Reporter*, Waxman celebrated Israel's "miraculous" accomplishments as a "tiny nation," sanctified the state as "ultimate monument to the Six Million Martyrs" who died in the Holocaust, and advanced an impassioned defense of Israel on moral grounds.¹¹⁴ From his perspective, Israel was a humanistic, peaceful, and democratic state that was prone to unwarranted, faulty, and often anti-Semitic attacks from right-wing extremists and the New Left. Seeking to strengthen the relationship between the United States and Israel, he called upon the Nixon Administration to support Israel diplomatically and militarily against Soviet and Arab aggressions.¹¹⁵ Additionally, Waxman co-authored a bill in the State Assembly that used public savings and loans, pension systems, and retirement funds to expand Israel bond sales throughout California.¹¹⁶

By the time that Waxman decided to run for a United States Congressional seat in 1974, he had garnered a firm reputation as a reliable and committed advocate for Jewish concerns. Indeed, as one *Los Angeles Times* journalist noted, "his three-room suite has a nice, messy feeling about it. Soviet Jewry and Israel were the themes of the clippings and pictures pinned up around the room. Waxman is 32 but looks older...it is his reserved, almost bashful, manner and his

¹¹⁴ Henry Waxman, "General's Anti-Semitism Alarming," *L.A. Reporter*, n.d., Box 15, Inventory 2, BDCM; Henry Waxman, "Israel and American Liberalism," *L.A. Reporter*, June 3, 1970, Box 15, Inventory 2, BDCM; Henry Waxman, "A Meeting with Israeli Ambassador Rabin," *L.A. Reporter*, n.d., Box 15, Inventory 2, BDCM; "A Meeting with Israeli Ambassador Rabin," *L.A. Reporter*, n.d., Box 15, Inventory 2, BDCM; "'New Left' Stand Against Israel Disturbing," *L.A. Reporter*, n.d., Box 15, Inventory 2, BDCM; "Thoughts on Israel's 21st Birthday," *L.A. Reporter*, n.d., Box 15, Inventory 2, BDCM.

¹¹⁵ Henry A. Waxman, "Russia vs. Israel—America Must Act," Henry Waxman, "Israel and American Liberalism," *L.A. Reporter*, June 3, 1970, Box 15, Inventory 2, BDCM.

¹¹⁶ "The Right Man for a New District, Henry A. Waxman, Democrat for Congress," 1973, First Mailing Folder, Box 113, Inventory 2, BDCM.

seriousness, as if he carried the weight of Fairfax on his shoulders.”¹¹⁷ The campaign, thus, sought to take advantage of Waxman’s standing as a distinguishably Jewish politician. Employing the targeted mailing strategies that were initially used during the 1968 election cycle, Waxman’s campaign—once again, spearheaded by Michael Berman and Howard Elinson—sent out flyers and pamphlets to Jewish voters that foregrounded Waxman’s Jewish identity and Jewish-oriented political activism on par with Waxman’s broad-based progressive goals and accomplishments. Thus, mentioned alongside Waxman’s advocacy for women’s rights, civil liberties, and consumer protections, campaign materials flaunted Waxman’s support for Israel and Soviet Jewry, noted his efforts to provide public funding to parochial schools as well as prevent a freeway from cutting through the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood, and listed the numerous Jewish community leaders that endorsed Waxman.¹¹⁸ As one such letter read, “Progressives concerned with peace and social justice will have a Congressman who shares their views on the basic moral issues which underlie political questions...Citizens anxious about the course American policy will take in the Middle East will be represented by a dedicated and effective friend of Israel.”¹¹⁹ Not all mailers highlighted Waxman’s Jewish identity; one letter that was sent to members of the medical community from “Physicians for Waxman for Congress” exclusively discussed Waxman’s accomplishments as the Chairman of the Assembly Health Committee and his ability to understand prescient medical issues.¹²⁰

¹¹⁷ Boyarsky and Boyarsky, “A Report on Jews and Politics in Los Angeles.” Also see, “Dear Editor,” Finished Thank You Letters Folder, Box 114, Inventory 2, BDCM; “Dear Mrs. Faierman,” Finished Thank You Letters Folder, Box 114, Inventory 2, BDCM; Littwin, “How Waxman and Berman Run the Bagel Boroughs.”

¹¹⁸ “The Right Man for a New District, Henry A. Waxman, Democrat for Congress”; “Waxman Announces for Congress,” December 5, 1973, Press Releases 1973-1974 Folder, Box 113, Inventory 2, BDCM.

¹¹⁹ William Endicott, “24th Congressional District: New Area Proves Democrat’s Political Dream New District Is a Dream for Democrats,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 5, 1974.

¹²⁰ Presumably sent to non-Jews working in the medical field, this flyer stated that, “there is an answer to physicians’ frustrations in dealing with ever-increasing government programs and bureaucratic regulations... We

The Waxman campaign also positioned their candidate as a harbinger of a new era for the Los Angeles Jewish community. Waxman was running in the 24th Congressional District—a recently created political district that was 58% Democratic, 40-50% Jewish, and included the Fairfax neighborhoods, West Hollywood, the Hollywood Hills, Los Feliz, and Silverlake though not the more affluent Westside.¹²¹ Putting together a campaign finance committee that overwhelming consisted of elite Westside Jews and holding campaign events at the Hillcrest Country Club, Waxman and his strategists effectively tapped the resources of the significantly wealthier Westside Jewish contingent.¹²² Part of the campaign strategy entailed framing the appeal of Waxman—both to voters within the district and the potential donors that lived immediately outside of it—around the claim that the Los Angeles Jewish community needed a Jewish Congressional Representative to ensure its interests and the well-known Jewish Assemblyman running in the largely Jewish district provided the ideal opportunity to accomplish that goal. As such, letters and advertisements aimed at galvanizing financial and electoral support for Waxman presented Waxman as, potentially, “the only Jewish Congressman from the West Coast” as well as the “natural choice for election to Congress...the district has the largest concentration of Jewish voters on the West coast” and explained the election as “a unique opportunity to help the first Member of Congress from California of the Jewish faith.”¹²³

need members in Congress who understand and share the concerns of doctors in private practice.” Jewish doctors, alternatively, received a letter that simultaneously highlighted Waxman’s experience on the health committee and foregrounded his Jewishness. Joseph F. Boyle and David B. Horner, “Dear Doctor,” May 9, 1974, Doctors Letter Folder, Box 113, Inventory 2, BDCM; Jack Moshein, “Dear Colleague,” May 14, 1974, Doctors Letter Folder, Box 113, Inventory 2, BDCM.

¹²¹ Endicott, “24th Congressional District;” “The Right Man for a New District, Henry A. Waxman, Democrat for Congress.”

¹²² Edmund G. Brown, Isaac Pact, Yvonne Bratwaite Burke, and Thomas Rees, “Dear Democrat,” Doctors Letter Folder, Box 113, Inventory 2, BDCM; Carmen Warschaw, “Dear Ed,” March 29, 1974, Folder 1, Box 17, MS 727.

¹²³ Brown, Pact, Burke, and Rees, “Dear Democrat”; Moshein, “Dear Colleague.”

Waxman's Jewishness, in this equation, was not only presented as a source of public good but also as a necessity for the area's constituents. These tactics were ultimately successful, as they helped Waxman receive about 64% of the vote, raise \$95,000 in campaign contributions, and cement his image as a politician who was uniquely attuned to the needs of the Jewish community. Indeed, *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press* labeled Waxman as "the first clear voice of our community on Capitol Hill."¹²⁴

Waxman's impact on the relationship between Jews and the electoral arena transcended his own campaign and ascent to Congress. Taking advantage of California's relatively weak partisan institutions, Waxman and his aides started to build a political organization and electioneering infrastructure during the early 1970s designed to elect other like-minded candidates to public office.¹²⁵ The Waxman organization overlapped with the Bradley coalition in various ways: the leaders of both operations knew one another from the California Democratic Council initiatives and tended to endorse one another in electoral campaigns; they adhered to the same general liberal ideals; and received donations, votes, and endorsements from many of the same individuals.¹²⁶ Yet, the Waxman organization was its own distinct entity with its own modus operandi. The organization operated under the assumption that by promoting ideologically aligned candidates, they would help ensure the political clout and alliances necessary to effectively advocate for Jewish (security of Israel, Soviet Jewry) concerns and broad-based liberal issues (civil liberties, labor, equality of opportunity for minorities) in office. Waxman and

¹²⁴ Stone, *The Congressional Minyan*, 513-514; "Our Endorsements for the Upcoming Election," *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, October 18, 1974.

¹²⁵ Seth E. Masket, *No Middle Ground: How Informal Party Organizations Control Nominations and Polarize Legislatures* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2009), 123.

¹²⁶ Jonathan Bell, *California Crucible: The Forging of Modern American Liberalism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 266-67; "The Right Man for a New District, Henry A. Waxman, Democrat for Congress."

his allies spent much of their efforts and energies refining Michael Berman’s micro-targeting techniques, building reliable fundraising networks that primarily drew upon affluent Westside Jews for donations, and using Waxman’s position as the chairman of the Assembly reapportionment committee to secure “safe” seats for allies.¹²⁷ Through the mid-1970s the organization recruited, funded, and trained a certain political “type”—that is, liberal Jews who were eager to embrace particular Jewish causes and were running in districts with a large Jewish population.¹²⁸ In 1972, the organization supported Michael Berman’s older brother, Howard, in his campaign for the State Assembly; two years later, the organization endorsed Herschel Rosenthal in his bid to take over Waxman’s seat in the State Assembly. Both candidates were active in Democratic club politics, Bradley’s mayoral campaigns, and Jewish community affairs, and—akin to Waxman—were presented as politicians in tune with the needs of the Jewish community.¹²⁹ As one such pro-Rosenthal advertisement featured in *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press* noted, “Running to take Waxman’s place in the Assembly is the well know Jewish community leader and former President of the Westside Jewish Community Center, Herschel Rosenthal. Rosenthal is a long-time friend of Assemblyman Waxman’s and is running with Waxman’s enthusiastic support.”¹³⁰

¹²⁷ Littwin, “How Waxman and Berman Run the Bagel Boroughs”; Edward J. Weiss, “The Waxman-Berman Organization,” University of California, Berkeley, Spring 1985.

¹²⁸ Littwin, “How Waxman and Berman Run the Bagel Boroughs.”

¹²⁹ “A Campaign Switch, Rosenthal Support,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, May 31, 1974; “Elect Tom Bradley,” Folder 4, Box 3, Inventory 2, BDCM; “Howard L. Berman Democrat for Assembly,” Box 15, Inventory 2, BDCM; “Our Community Unites Behind Henry A. Waxman for Congress and Herschel Rosenthal for Assembly,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, May 31, 1974; “Political Notes, Berman Opens Hqs.,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, April 14, 1972; “Sponsors of the Committee to Elect Howard Berman,” Box 15, Inventory 2, BDCM; “Waxman Announces for Congress”; “Your Crucial ’72 Decision,” Box 113, Inventory 2, BDCM.

¹³⁰ “A Campaign Switch, Rosenthal Support,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, May 31, 1974.

By the mid-1970s, the Waxman organization had emerged as a visible and identifiable hub of Jewish political power. Journalists began to speak of the organization as a “political machine” and the exemplar for a new kind of political operation that effectively brought together pragmatic strategies, dogmatic liberalism, and ethnic politicking. As Susan Litwin of the *California Journal* explained, “Waxman and Berman run the bagel boroughs...[they] have an in-house political organization that has demonstrated a dazzling ability to win in urban districts, to pool resources, and to parlay winning into substantial political power.”¹³¹ Likewise, the *Los Angeles Times* called the organization the “reigning political power in heavily Jewish parts of the city” and noted that “if you want to run in the Waxman-Berman area, you’ve got to be Jewish and part of that establishment to get the money and support.”¹³² More critical of Waxman and his associates, competing non-Jewish politicians claimed that the creation of “Jewish districts” through reapportionment was an unfair political maneuver; Chicano activists publicly protested Waxman’s redistricting plans as an affront to their own aspirations for proper political representation.¹³³ While the Waxman organizations’ efforts to (unevenly) distribute political power and access to representation along ethno-racial lines were often stymied, the organization’s reliance upon identifying attainable “Jewish districts” nevertheless fueled its agenda.¹³⁴

¹³¹ Littwin, “How Waxman and Berman Run the Bagel Boroughs.”

¹³² Doug Shuit, “Liberal Aide to Bradley Seems to Have Edge in Race for Council Seat” *Los Angeles Times*, December 15, 1974; Jean Merl, “Liberal, Jewish, Democrat, Attorney--How to Run, Fit the Image, Bring Money” *Los Angeles Times*, October 15, 1978.

¹³³ Pat Bryant, “Jewish District Being Created, Conrad Says: Conrad Puts Jewish Tag on New District,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 18, 1971; Alberto Juarez, “State’s 3 Million Chicanos Used to Secure Political Tenure,” *Los Angeles Times*, October 16, 1971; Narda Z. Trout, “57th Assembly District: Residency Dispute Enlivens Campaign E,” *Los Angeles Times*, October 12, 1972; Narda Z. Trout, “Waxman Accused of Unfair Practices by Council Candidate” *Los Angeles Times*, September 11, 1973. Also see, Henry A. Waxman, “Waxman Gives Views on Chicano Redistricting,” *Los Angeles Times*, October 7, 1971.

¹³⁴ Littwin, “How Waxman and Berman Run the Bagel Boroughs”; Weiss, *The Waxman-Berman Organization*.

If the Waxman operation's success was defined by its ability to help provide ideologically aligned allies with access to elected positions in seemingly safe districts, it was also circumvented by the expectations that the organization created and could not consistently meet. For all of its logistical prowess and pragmatic maneuvering, not every candidate was able to convincingly fit into the mold of a Jewish community leader. It was this flaw that led to the Waxman organization's first notable defeat, which occurred in the 1975 5th District City Council race.

The 5th District ranged from the lower-middle class Fairfax neighborhoods to the more affluent hillside areas such as Bel Air and Westwood.¹³⁵ Jews comprised about 30%-40% of the district's population and expressed a desire to find a candidate who would represent and protect their specific communal interests.¹³⁶ One study conducted prior to the 1975 City Council election found that the majority of Jewish voters in the 5th District race defined their preferences for city council and local government through an ethnic prism.¹³⁷ On aggregate, Jews believed that the City Council should have pro-Israel spokesperson, thought that the city government should ban the purchase of Arab oil, supported the use of public funds to help enhance Fairfax Boulevard, and noted that endorsements from local Jewish newspapers (*B'nai B'rith Messenger*, *Israel Today*, *Southwest Heritage Press*) would have a positive impact on their vote.¹³⁸

¹³⁵ Edmund D. Edelman, "City Council District No. 5," map, Folder 14, Box 2, Braun & Company Records, California State Archives, Sacramento, CA (hereafter BCR).

¹³⁶ "The candidate must," as *Los Angeles Times* observed in November of 1974, "be acceptable to the district's heavily Jewish population." "List at 12 Hopefuls for Edelman's Council Seat: 'Caretaker' May Fill Post Until April 1 Municipal Election Council Race," *Los Angeles Times*, November 24, 1974. Regarding the percentage of Jews living in the 5th District, see Bergholz, "Study Shows 'Black Bloc' Vote Wasn't Key to Bradley Victory."

¹³⁷ Hugh Schwartz of the Public Response Company, "A Report on a Survey of 250 Voters in the Los Angeles 5th Council District," Folder 14, Box 2, BCR.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

The Waxman organization supported and endorsed Mayor Bradley's administrative coordinator Fran Savitch for the open 5th District seat, who upon entering the race, acquired the Waxman organization's resources and emerged as the front-runner among twelve candidates.¹³⁹ Following the primary election, the field of twelve candidates was narrowed down to two—Savitch and young Jewish activist Zev Yaroslavsky. Regarding the key civic issues facing the 5th District, Savitch and Yaroslavsky had similar municipal policy proposals and electoral platforms. Both were liberal-leaning Democrats who aimed to enhance alternative transportation programs, feared that excessive commercial development was hurting the local environment and residents' quality of life, and believed the city should help provide subsidized housing for senior citizens.¹⁴⁰ Prior to the election Yaroslavsky even admitted that he and Savitch had, "very few differences on issues."¹⁴¹

The two candidates' public personas vis-à-vis their Jewishness and respective ties with the Jewish community, however, distinguished them from one another. Savitch—like other candidates affiliated with the Waxman organization—was Jewish but unlike Waxman, Berman, or Rosenthal, was not actively involved in Jewish communal affairs and had little name recognition among Jewish voters. Savitch, as commissioned studies suggested, had a "Jewish problem" but the Waxman organization perceived her potential shortcomings as manageable and ultimately fixable during the crowded primary election and operated under the assumption that

¹³⁹ "The Waxman-Berman-Rosenthal endorsement," as the *Los Angeles Times* noted, "makes Ms. Savitch 'the establishment' candidate in the 5th District." Shuit, "Liberal Aide to Bradley Seems to Have Edge in Race for Council Seat." Regarding the details of the Waxman organization's involvement in the Savitch campaign, see Fran Savitch Campaign Files, Folders 13-15, Box 2, BCR.

¹⁴⁰ "Frances Savitch for City Council," pamphlet, Folder 13, Box 2, BCR; "Zev Yaroslavsky for City Council," pamphlet, Folder 13, Box 2, BCR.

¹⁴¹ Doug Shuit, "4 Candidates Stick to Familiar Themes: Campaigns for Two City Council Seats Enter Final Week," *Los Angeles Times*, May 20, 1975.

they could help transform Savitch into a recognizably Jewish candidate.¹⁴² In that spirit, the Waxman organization urged Savitch to change her name on the ballot to Frances Gitelson Savitch in order to sound more Jewish, labeled her as a “strong and outspoken supporter on Israel” on flyers mailed to Jewish voters, helped Savitch garner endorsements from prominent Jewish Federation/CRC officials, and created a pro-Savitch supplement for the *B’nai B’rith Messenger*, which featured Savitch in photographs alongside Waxman, Rosenthal, Howard Berman, and local rabbis.¹⁴³

Yaroslavsky entered the race with higher name recognition and a better favorability rating among Jewish voters than Savitch.¹⁴⁴ Much of this had to do with his background: he was a 26-year-old Los Angeles native who, since the age of eight, resided in the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood. His political and professional experience—as an anti-establishment activist associated with the California Students for Soviet Jews and the Southern California Council for Soviet Jews, as a Hebrew teacher at local synagogues, and as a Jewish community organizer for the McGovern campaign in California—brought him into close contact with numerous synagogue groups, religious leaders, and fellow Jewish activists.¹⁴⁵ Helping Yaroslavsky garner media attention long before he announced his candidacy for the 5th District Council seat, the local Jewish and non-Jewish press frequently covered his role in the free Soviet Jewry

¹⁴² Schwartz, “A Report on a Survey of 250 Voters,” BCR.

¹⁴³ “*B’nai B’rith Messenger* Political Advertisement Supplement,” pamphlet, May 23, 1975, Folder 13, Box 2, BCR; “Frances Savitch Works to Get Things Done” pamphlet; Doug Shuit, “Council Race: Roz Wyman: Running Against Past,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 23, 1975.

¹⁴⁴ Schwartz, “A Report on a Survey of 250,” Folder 14, Box 2, BCR.

¹⁴⁵ Shuit, “Council Race—Roz Wyman: Running Against Past”; Shuit, “Liberal Aide to Bradley Seems to Have Edge in Race for Council Seat.” Regarding Yaroslavsky’s biography, see George M. Goodwin, “The Marginal Man Reconsidered,” 223-46.

movement, labeling Yaroslavsky as a “an emerging hero in the struggle for Jewish survival.”¹⁴⁶ Following his announcement to run for public office, Yaroslavsky also received endorsements and public support from a range of Jewish community leaders. This included fellow grassroots activists such as Southern California Council for Soviet Jews’ Si Frumkin and the JDL’s Al Epstein as well as traditional supporters of the Bradley organization and the Waxman coalition such as Reform Rabbi Albert Lewis and former Jewish Federation President Edward Sanders, who worked with Yaroslavsky in the free Soviet Jewry movement and on the McGovern campaign and realigned to endorse Yaroslavsky.¹⁴⁷

Yaroslavsky’s campaign was designed to take advantage of the supposed Jewish credibility gap that existed between the two candidates. In an effort to fortify Yaroslavsky’s base of Jewish support, the Yaroslavsky campaign focused its attention on campaigning in heavily Jewish neighborhoods and highlighting Yaroslavsky’s Jewish credentials.¹⁴⁸ The candidate spoke to voters about the importance of Jewish identification and ethnic awareness, adopted the label of “Jewish Community Executive” on the municipal election ballot, and frequently referenced his accomplishments as a Jewish community activist as evidence of his leadership skills.¹⁴⁹ As one

¹⁴⁶ “400 Jews Picket Soviet Ballet Troupe”; “Ballet Appearance in L.A. Protested,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, January 11, 1974; “Jewish Youth Lash at Humphrey ‘Ad,’” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, June 2, 1972; “Student Group Raps Jewish Man’s Arrest,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 11, 1970; “Yaroslavsky, Frumkin Tell JF-C Platform,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, October 15, 1971. Furthermore, Yaroslavsky’s letters to the *Los Angeles Times* were frequently published. See, Zev Yaroslavsky, “Banning Soviet Credit Not in U.S. Interest,” *Los Angeles Times*, December 17, 1973; Zev Yaroslavsky, “Dissent and the Soviet,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 27, 1970; Zev Yaroslavsky, “Soviet Jews and U.S. Trade,” *Los Angeles Times*, March 23, 1973.

¹⁴⁷ Jack McGrath, “Zev Yaroslavsky for City Council,” April 28, 1975, Folder 1, Box 17, MS 727. Regarding relationship with Lewis and Sanders, also reference Zev Yaroslavsky, Interview by author, Los Angeles, December 12, 2014.

¹⁴⁸ Regarding the campaign’s emphasis on heavily Jewish precincts, see Zev Yaroslavsky, Interview by author. For more on this strategy, see Goodwin, “The Marginal Man Reconsidered”, 233-5.

¹⁴⁹ Doug Shuit, “Political Flimflam: Tabloids Thrive in City Council Race,” *Los Angeles Times*, March 28, 1975; “Heritage Endorses Dynamic, Young Activist for L.A. City Council,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, January 17, 1975.

letter read, “he has shown outstanding leadership as Executive Director of the Southern California Council for Soviet Jews.”¹⁵⁰ Yaroslavsky’s campaign was also a largely antagonistic one: while presenting their candidate as the community-based ethnic candidate of choice who was intimately familiar with the district, they described Savitch as Yaroslavsky’s foil—that is, the “establishment” City Hall candidate who was beholden to “special interests” and out of touch with the grassroots. That Savitch raised \$150,000 and spent about \$120,000 (compared to Yaroslavsky’s \$60,000) and a received plethora of endorsements from fellow public officeholders only served to corroborate Yaroslavsky’s point.¹⁵¹

Yaroslavsky captured 55% of the overall vote en route to defeating Savitch.¹⁵² An examination of voting results reveals the ways in which ethnicity (and to a certain extent socio-economic factors) helped to determine the election’s outcome: the higher the percentage of Jews living in a certain neighborhood, the more likely that the neighborhood voted in favor of Yaroslavsky.¹⁵³ This is not to suggest that Savitch’s appeal rang hollow throughout the entire Jewish community. She appealed to Jewish voters and donors living in the high-income areas of Westwood and Bel Air who were committed to the viability of the Waxman organization as a

¹⁵⁰ “Dear Mrs. Schwartz,” 1975, Folder 1, Box 17, MS 727.

¹⁵¹ Doug Shuit, “Big Contributors Listed in City Council Campaigns: Major Contributors in Council Races Listed,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 22, 1975; Doug Shuit, “Council Race: 2 Candidates Chased by Contradictions,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 3, 1975.

¹⁵² City of Los Angeles, “Municipal Ballot, General Municipal Election and Special Consolidated Elections,” May 27, 1975, Box B-0216, Los Angeles City Archives. Political Scientist Raphael Sonenshein explained the outcome in terms of “limited socioeconomic factional effects”—Savitch broke even in affluent communities such as Bel Air and Westwood but trailed by eight points in the relatively lower income areas around Pico and Fairfax. While Sonenshein’s analysis effectively identifies the social factors at play at the high and low end of the district’s socio-economic spectrum, it doesn’t factor into account voting patterns throughout the entire district. Sonenshein, *Politics in Black and White*, 131-3.

¹⁵³ “High % Jewish; High % Dem” results, Folder 14, Box 2, BCR; City of Los Angeles, “Municipal Ballot, General Municipal Election and Special Consolidated Elections.”

political model.¹⁵⁴ Yet, for 65% of the voters residing in heavily Jewish areas such as the lower-middle income Beverly-Fairfax, the middle income Pico-Robertson, or the upper-middle income Cheviot Hills and Beverlywood—the exact neighborhoods where Yaroslavsky spent the bulk of his time campaigning—Yaroslavsky’s appeal strongly resonated.

Public responses from within and beyond the Jewish community portrayed the links between Yaroslavsky’s Jewishness and his iconoclastic approach as a key driving force behind his victory over Savitch. *Heritage*’s lead story the week following the election enthusiastically proclaimed that “Zev Yaroslavsky 26, a hero in the struggle to save Russian Jewry, last week, emerged as a political ‘giant killer,’ when he demolished one of the most heavily financed campaigns for City Council in Los Angeles by Fran Savitch, who was ‘endorsed by the political pros.’”¹⁵⁵ The Southern California Council for Soviet Jews’ newsletter lauded Yaroslavsky’s campaign “as exciting, unorthodox, and successful...Zev won as a Jew. I know that all of us feel proud of Zev.”¹⁵⁶ While approaching Yaroslavsky’s election from less of a triumphant or celebratory perspective, the *Los Angeles Times*’ Al Martinez described Yaroslavsky as an intense, impatient, activist “who huffed at the door of the Establishment, blew it down, and ate up the house candidate” and noted that the “the fate of the Jews past and present has stamped itself on his life.”¹⁵⁷ These descriptions might have presented Yaroslavsky as a political caricature but they also helped to reinforce and echo the anti-establishment, ethnic-oriented populist rhetoric that

¹⁵⁴ “Very High Income; High % Rep; Dems. Heavily Jewish,” results; “We Support Fran,” *B’nai B’rith Messenger*, May 23, 1975; Sonenshein, *Politics in Black and White*, 131-3.

¹⁵⁵ “The Giant Killer, Zev Beats ‘em!,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, June 6, 1975.

¹⁵⁶ Si Frumkin, “Notes to Members,” *Southern California Council for Soviet Jewry* newsletter, August 1975, Folder 5, Box 25, SFP.

¹⁵⁷ Al Martinez, “Wolf of the Westside’--Yaroslavsky: Neophyte Out-Politicks Politicians,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 16, 1975.

Yaroslavsky himself employed throughout the campaign and underlined the salience of ethnicity as a political organizing principle.

What none of these post-election commentaries nor the campaign itself acknowledged were the parallels between the Yaroslavsky campaign and the ethnic politicking model that the Waxman organization introduced and so heavily relied upon. Yaroslavsky might have defeated the Waxman organization's candidate but one of the core strategies that undergirded the Waxman model—that is, conveying the message that Jewish politicians were vital for the community's wellbeing—was ultimately validated by the Jewish voters of the 5th District in favor of Yaroslavsky. The 1975 5th District election affirmed the trend of local politicians and Jewish voters collectively guiding the electoral process in a trajectory whereby Jewishness was deemed a key ingredient for a potential candidate. As one *Los Angeles Times* article on Westside politics explained, “Want to get elected to office on the West Side? In much of the area, particularly inland, it appears it would help to be Jewish. And a Democrat, a fairly liberal one.”¹⁵⁸ While Yaroslavsky prided himself on defeating the “political establishment,” the differences between the organizational factions tended to dissipate once Yaroslavsky arrived in office.¹⁵⁹ In fact, over time, the two parties cooperated on various political projects.¹⁶⁰ These aligning interests helped to strengthen Waxman's vision of having ideologically like-minded individuals serve in public office and complement one another at various levels of government and thus fortified the Westside as a bastion of an assertive form of Jewish politics.

¹⁵⁸ Merl, “Liberal, Jewish, Democrat, Attorney.”

¹⁵⁹ Jean Merl, “Political Muscle? It's Waxman and Berman: ‘Machine,’ ‘Clique’ or ‘Alliance’ Calls Democrats’ Tune Waxman and Berman Alliance,” *Los Angeles Times*, October 15, 1978.

¹⁶⁰ Sonenshein, *Politics in Black and White*, 193-206. Also see chapter 4 of dissertation.

More broadly, by the mid-1970s Jewish electoral clout and political visibility in local politics had settled into a stable form and identifiable pattern. As Jewish and non-Jewish politicians increasingly recognized that electoral success depended on directly engaging with Jewish voters, Jewish voters promoted and affirmed particular Jewish interests within the context of a broadly (though not homogeneously) liberal and Democratic milieu. Viewed from this perspective, what becomes evident is that the rising tides of Jewish identity politics did not spur a turning away from the local political sphere but rather emboldened Jewish attachments to Los Angeles and its political opportunities. While Jewish expressions of civic-mindedness were mounting and interest in Los Angeles and its political structure and political culture was reaching new heights, this equation relied on the expectation that Jews and perceived Jewish interests could and should direct the electoral process and political discussions. The logic of electoral politics certainly helped to catapult Jewish interests to the center of the local political discourse, but as the following three chapters will demonstrate, other local venues of political action effectively challenged the assumption that Jewishness and Jewish concerns should have an active and engaged role in local public affairs.

Chapter 3

Wither the Jewish Love Affair: Public Schooling and the Pressures of Privatization in Los Angeles, 1970-1980

In March 1979, Jewish Federation official Murray Wood wrote an editorial in the *Los Angeles Jewish Community Bulletin* that described the importance of public education for the local Jewish community.¹ Wood was well aware that Jewish parents, in large part due to school desegregation programs, were increasingly harboring doubts about the public school model and enrolling their children in private schools. Much of Wood's argument was predicated on highlighting the crucial role that public schools played in facilitating Jewish upward mobility during the early twentieth century. "The schools were the vehicle by which the children of an immigrant Yiddish-speaking generation emerged as businessmen and entrepreneurs," explained Wood. But more than simply an appeal to Jewish nostalgia, Wood claimed that Jewish parents should support the racial integration of public schools because, when functioning correctly, public schools could teach Jewish children about different cultures, foster meaningful social interactions between different ethno-racial groups, and help to stem anti-Semitism and racism.² As such, he sought to present the "Jewish investment in the public schools" as both beneficial for the Jewish child as well as the health of the broader urban environment.³

To a certain extent, Wood's plea to Jewish parents both reflected and took into account the weighty communal concerns that had become a staple of the Jewish political discourse in Los Angeles during the 1970s. Since the Watts Riots, Jews had emerged as a distinctly powerful and

¹ Murray Wood, "Jewish Investment in Public Schools," *Los Angeles Jewish Community Bulletin*, March 12, 1979.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

influential political group in Los Angeles. As such, questions regarding how exactly Jews fit into the city's multicultural matrix, the reach (and limitations) of Jewish liberalism, and the relationship between Jewish assimilation, the privileges of whiteness, and upward mobility intensified. But K-12 education was more than just another arena where Jews contemplated and articulated the role they should play in local civic affairs. Embedded within education policy contests lay more personal and fundamental concerns and questions about the purpose of schooling itself—that is, what should Jewish parents and community leaders expect from a school and what were the most effective ways to educate a Jewish child from a, broadly defined, middle class home?⁴

During the 1970s, a range of Jewish Angelenos—public school teachers, community relations professionals, journalists, Reform and Conservative rabbis and educators, parents, and students—immersed themselves in ongoing educational debates. Like their non-Jewish counterparts, Jews recognized that the city's educational infrastructure on both the public and private school level was in the midst of a fundamental transformation. Much was at stake and nearly every decision was contested, including the number of students per classroom, the curriculum, the length of the school day, and the all-important question of how students should be transported to and from school. In an effort to promote a particular environment for and approach to learning, Jewish educational activists undertook various initiatives. This ranged from spearheading experimental classroom programs and schools to lobbying educational policymakers and running for public office.

⁴ As the 1979 Los Angeles Jewish Community Survey highlights, 76% of Jewish households in Los Angeles with Jewish children fell within this broad category. I defined the category between \$10,000 and \$99,999 household income per year. Bruce Phillips, *Los Angeles Jewish Community Survey: Overview for Regional Planning* (1980), 10, 40, <http://www.jewishdatabank.org/studies/downloadFile.cfm?FileID=1716>, accessed October 15, 2017.

Jewish educational activism was a contentious affair that exposed and exacerbated the oft-divergent educational priorities and related socio-geographic divisions within the Jewish community. Much of these tensions pivoted around the question of whether education should help to reinforce or challenge prevailing structures of social power and existing racial and spatial privileges; negotiations between these imperatives helped to determine conceptions of Jewish identity as well as the relationship between Jews and other groups in Los Angeles. Whether operating within existing political structures and traditions or creating new models for activism, the result was a proliferation of internal Jewish debate and a heightened state of Jewish political fragmentation. Nevertheless, intensified Jewish interest in education was driven by two common motives and assumptions about schools. First, was the belief that systematic communal investments in “quality education,” a slippery though oft-employed term, could reap concrete rewards; providing students with a “quality education” would help them scholastically achieve and succeed as well as enhance their behavioral and social development as budding individuals outside the formal classroom setting. Second, Jewish activists, in both subtle and obvious ways, assumed that their educational agendas would benefit not only the Jewish children in their particular communities but also serve a greater social good for Los Angeles at large.

Guided by these dual beliefs, Jewish Angelenos immersed themselves in various educational contests and projects that, directly or not, served as a referendum on the ability of Jewish activists to navigate the local political process and the general value of the local public school system. This chapter chronicles how over a ten-year period Jewish perceptions of public schools, deriving from a variety of sources, changed from that of treasured and malleable social institution to that of a largely chaotic and regrettably ineffective bureaucracy. And with this

transformation came a heightened sense of defeat and frustration that gradually, albeit unevenly, led Jewish activists and parents to pull away from the realm of public education.

Through the mid- 1970s, the bulk of Jewish educational activism in Los Angeles was dedicated to sustaining the viability of the public school system as an institution responsible for the education of the Jewish child. Indeed, as Los Angeles Unified School District was demonstrating a new openness towards desegregation programs, community-control initiatives, and curricula reform, Jewish parents and community officials helped to shape local education policy. For those who were working within the liberal tradition, this entailed ensuring that Jews and non-Jews alike would receive a high quality education in an integrated setting as well as advocating for programs that would instill ethnic pride and intercultural competence in children. Also presenting themselves as saviors of public education was a cohort of suburban Jewish parents from the San Fernando Valley who sought to preserve an unequal educational system that disproportionately benefited white suburban students. Foremost intent on preventing compulsory busing to achieve racial integration, they argued that busing, by effectively ignoring the specific educational and social needs of their community, was counterproductive for the learning process and insensitive to Jewish families who lived far from the inner-city.

However, by the end of the decade, Jewish educational activists had largely grown skeptical of public schools, primarily due to rising racial, religious, and financial concerns. While parents across the ideological spectrum increasingly sensed that fights over busing and public funding had left the public school system in a state of disarray and questioned the efficacy of public schools, Reform and Conservative rabbis and educators were experimenting with new ways to transmit Jewish knowledge and instill distinct Jewish values through private Jewish schools. In

this regard, parental and rabbinical interests aligned, which in turn helped to fuel the proliferation of Jewish day schools.

With anti-busing passions mounting and Jewish flight from the public school system accelerating, stakeholders at every level were confronted with the question of how to proceed. The potency of Jewish interest in the public school system shattered on the shoals of these negotiations, not only because those who had the means to leave the public school system did, but also because Jewish activists increasingly found it difficult to align district-wide education policies with what they thought was best for Jewish children. By the early 1980s, the discourse of “choice” and “Jewish continuity” had emerged as the preferred way for Jews to justify their educational investments. The experiences that led Jews to question the value of public schools were formative in the broad arc of Jewish disengagement from local political affairs and representative of the loss of faith in the public school model that affected various groups throughout Los Angeles during the late 1970s and the early 1980s.⁵

I.

Los Angeles Unified School District during the 1960s was the second largest district in the country with around 700,000 students and 579 schools.⁶ It was also deeply segregated along racial lines and a forceful perpetuator of educational inequality.⁷ Combined with the city’s

⁵ Natalia Mehlman Petrzela, *Classroom Wars: Language, Sex, and the Making of Modern Political Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 202–17.

⁶ Brian Kovalesky, “Unification and Its Discontents: The Four Cities Coalition and the Creation of the Los Angeles Unified School District,” *California History* 93, no. 2 (August 1, 2016): 4–16; Janet L. Abu-Lughod, *New York, Chicago, Los Angeles: America’s Global Cities* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 382; Jack Schneider, “Escape From Los Angeles: White Flight from Los Angeles and Its Schools, 1960-1980,” *Journal of Urban History* 34, no. 6 (September 1, 2008): 995–1012.

⁷ Jeanne Theoharis, “Hidden in Plain Sight: The Civil Rights Movement Outside the South,” in *The Myth of Southern Exceptionalism*, ed. Matthew D Lassiter and Joseph Crespino (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010),

racialized housing patterns, the Board of Education’s gerrymandering of school attendance zones and its assignment policies helped to create a school district where segregation by the mid-1960s was “as complete as any in the pre-*Brown* south.”⁸ Indeed, more than 80% of its black students attended schools that were predominantly black, 50% of Mexican-American students were enrolled in predominantly Mexican-American schools, and the vast majority of white students, Jews included, attended white majority schools.⁹ Segregated schooling in Los Angeles also meant unequal and inferior learning environments for Hispanic and African-American students. Compared to predominantly white schools, those with a majority of minority students were less likely to receive funding for new facilities and more likely to attract low-quality teachers and contend with overcrowded classrooms. Furthermore, while white students had ample opportunities for college preparatory courses, LAUSD tracked the overwhelming majority of minority students into manual and vocational programs.¹⁰

Emboldened by recent civil rights litigation victories, liberal and left leaning political organizations increasingly started to challenge the segregated and unequal state of public education in Los Angeles during the early 1960s. Threatened by these progressive advocacy initiatives, supporters of the “traditional” neighborhood school model questioned the validity and necessity of measures designed to facilitate integration and educational equality.¹¹ As such, various educational concerns—from that of racial balance and school attendance boundaries to

60–68; Josh Sides, *L.A. City Limits: African American Los Angeles from the Great Depression to the Present* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 10.

⁸ Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 159.

⁹ Daniel HoSang, “The Changing Valence of White Racial Innocence,” in *Black and Brown in Los Angeles: Beyond Conflict and Coalition*, ed. Josh Kun and Laura Pulido (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013), 120–21.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*; Theoharis, “Hidden in Plain Sight,” 61–62.

¹¹ *Ibid.*; Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 158–67.

curricula offering and resource allocation—came under heightened scrutiny. Woven into these discussions was the question of whether Los Angeles Unified was too massive, impersonal, and bureaucratic to effectively respond to the particular educational needs of local communities.¹² What emerged across the political spectrum was the sense that the public education system was at a critical juncture and the proliferation of debates within and beyond the courtroom over the structure and purpose of schooling.¹³ Highlighting the stakes involved in such contests, historian Natalia Mehlman Petrzela has recently explained that, “the realm of K-12 education [in California] reveals how parents, teachers, and increasingly students transmitted, and resisted the social revolutions of the 1960s and 1970s, and thus how they explicitly endeavored to influence future generations.”¹⁴

Jewish parents, community leaders, and educators saw themselves as key stakeholders in these battles over educational policy. And for good reason: throughout the postwar period, Los Angeles’s Jewish population was largely invested in Los Angeles’s public schools. Crossing many of the geographic and socio-economic divisions ingrained within the Jewish community, an estimated 70,000 Jews—which constituted around 90% of Jewish children in the City of Los Angeles—were enrolled in public schools during the late-1960s.¹⁵ Likewise, about 4,000 Jews worked as teachers within the school system.¹⁶

¹² For more on questions of community control and decentralization, see Donald Glen Cooper, “The Controversy over Desegregation in the Los Angeles Unified School District, 1962-1981” (Ph.D., University of Southern California, 1991), 60–79.

¹³ Petrzela, *Classroom Wars*.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 7.

¹⁵ Estimate based off comparison between the following two documents. Fred Massarik, “A Report on the Jewish Population of Los Angeles, 1968” (Los Angeles: Jewish Federation-Council of Greater Los Angeles, 1968); “Report of the Educators Advisory Council,” March 21, 1969, Educators Advisory Committee, 1968-1970 Folder, Box 216, Jewish Federation Council of Greater Los Angeles, Community Relations Committee Collection, IV, Urban Archives Center, Oviatt Library, California State University, Northridge (hereafter CRC). Also relevant, according to one study from the early 1960s, only 3.2% of the Jewish children in Los Angeles were enrolled in a day school.

More than simply a matter of demographics though, Jewish community leaders in Los Angeles and elsewhere throughout the country frequently identified public education as a crucial component of the American Jewish experience. Much of this discourse was organized around a firm belief in a bifurcated model of education that had been a mainstay of American Jewish life since the late nineteenth century: while supplemental religious schools were supposed to teach Jewish values and traditions, public education was responsible for providing Jews with the knowledge and skills needed to achieve and succeed within the American mainstream.¹⁷ Chronicling the ways in which successive generations of Jews benefited from public schools, one such 1971 study from the National Jewish Relations Advisory Council applauded public schools for teaching turn-of-the-century Jewish immigrants American norms, helping to facilitate Jewish upward mobility, and continuing to provide a high quality education for Jewish children.¹⁸ Similarly conferring deference upon public schools, a 1970 Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles report described the Jewish relationship with public education as part of the traditional Jewish respect for learning and study: “education is and always has been of the highest importance to Jews and the Jewish Community, which has always prided itself on being in the forefront of support for public schools.”¹⁹ While not all Jews could attest to the benefits of the

Zalman F. Ury, “The Development of the Day School in Los Angeles,” *Journal of Jewish Education* vol. 33, no. 3, (1963) 158-161.

¹⁶ “Report of the Educators Advisory Council.”

¹⁷ Jonathan D. Sarna, “American Jewish Education in Historical Perspective,” *Journal of Jewish Education* 64, no. 1-2 (July 1, 1998): 9-10.

¹⁸ Reassessment Conference on the Public Schools and American Democratic Pluralism - the Role of the Jewish Community, National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council, and Reassessment Committee, eds., *The Public Schools and American Democratic Pluralism - the Role of the Jewish Community; Report of a Conference May 1-May 3, 1971, Barbizon Plaza Hotel, New York*, (New York, 1972), 5-6.

¹⁹ Martin Gang, “Statement of Concern,” April 23, 1970, Educators Advisory Committee, 1968-1970 Folder, Box 216, CRC IV.

public school model—the Orthodox typically attended Yeshivas, the exceptionally wealthy often went to non-sectarian private schools—the concept of a “Jewish love affair” with public education operated as a powerful component of Jewish identity in mid-century Los Angeles and throughout the United States more broadly.²⁰

With new educational initiatives being hotly debated, Jewish activists sought to build off these time-honored principles by branding public education as an arena worthy of heightened Jewish attention.²¹ Within this environment, mainstream Jewish organizations allocated additional resources to address issues related to public education; Jewish educators embraced new forms of community organizing; innovative modes of volunteer-based parental activism emerged at the individual school level. In constant conversation with the Los Angeles Board of Education, district superintendents, and other relevant governmental bodies, liberal-leaning Jews wanted to ensure that Jewish interests would be addressed and that perceived Jewish values would help to guide the fate of an all-important social institution. This form of activism, at least through the mid-1970s, was guided by four seemingly overlapping principles: advancing educational equality; assuring high quality public education; maintaining the viability of the public school system; and affirming the importance of particular Jewish concerns within a multicultural framework. Though appearing mutually supportive, these principles simultaneously encompassed conflicting views and subtle contradictions.²²

²⁰ “Some Background Information on Day Schools in Los Angeles,” Jewish Education, 1970-1974 Folder, 1970-1974 Folder, box 15, CRC IV.

²¹ “Public Schools,” July 14, 1971, Folder 19, Box 22, Max Mont Collection, Urban Archives Center, Oviatt Library, California State University, Northridge (hereafter MMC).

²² Reassessment Conference on the Public Schools and American Democratic Pluralism - the Role of the Jewish Community, National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council, and Reassessment Committee, *The Public Schools*, 28.

Perhaps the most far-reaching question that Jewish educational activists addressed was that of district-wide desegregation. In 1963, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) filed a lawsuit against the LAUSD that sought to compel the school district to desegregate two of its high schools—one primarily black, the other overwhelmingly white—that were located less than two miles from one another.²³ Five years later, the ACLU expanded the case (*Crawford v. Board of Education of Los Angeles*) to include the desegregation of all schools in the district. Highlighting evidence of de jure discrimination—assignment and transfer policies, gerrymandered boundaries, school construction decisions—Judge Alfred Gitelson ruled in 1970 that the schools were intentionally and illegally segregated on the basis of race.²⁴ While Gitelson called upon the Board of Education to develop an affirmative desegregation plan for the district, the decision was soon appealed.²⁵

Jewish organizations affiliated with the Jewish Federation-Council had closely followed *Crawford v. Board of Education of Los Angeles* since the early 1960s. After the Gitelson decision, eight Jewish advocacy groups—including the American Jewish Committee (AJC) and the Community Relations Committee (CRC)—became active participants in the case by filing amicus curiae briefs in support of Crawford.²⁶ As CRC Chairman Allan Greenberg explained, “our concern continues for these students and their ability to receive a quality education in the

²³ Judge Paul Egly (Ret.), “Crawford v. Los Angeles Unified School District; An Unfulfilled Plea for Racial Equality,” *University of La Verne Law Review* 31 (2010): 258.

²⁴ Andrew Furman, *My Los Angeles in Black & (Almost) White* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2010), 32.

²⁵ Alfred Gitelson was himself a Jewish Angeleno; his decision was heavily criticized and subject to anti-Semitic attacks. William Endicott, “Judge Named as Death Plot Target: Murder Plot,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 30, 1970; Furman, *My Los Angeles*, 28–32; Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 159, 167.

²⁶ Bruce Hochman, “Dear Mr. Gardner,” December 5, 1969, Folder 3, Box 1604, Los Angeles Unified Board of Education Records, 1875-2012, Department of Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles, (hereafter LAUBE); “Statement Issued by the Community Relations Committee of the Jewish Federation-Council of Greater Los Angeles,” March 4, 1976, Miller Resolution Folder, Box 2, CRC IV.

Los Angeles School District and for the community, as a whole, as they are the ultimate victims of a segregated school system.”²⁷ Jewish communal advocacy for Crawford was based on the premise that a strong system of public education, which provided equality of opportunity for all, was essential to social harmony and American democracy.²⁸ Whether arguing that underprivileged minorities were entitled to the same kinds of educational opportunities as Jews or that Jews were especially sensitive to the moral and social implications of school segregation, Jewish organizations drew upon their own experiences with and assumptions about the public school system to articulate their advocacy positions.²⁹ While Jewish organizations certainly identified the Crawford case as an issue of central importance for the public school system and well being of Los Angeles, they rarely confronted questions regarding the logistics of a district-wide integration program during the early 1970s.³⁰

Beyond advocating for district-wide desegregation, Jewish activists also engaged with relatively granular issues that brought into sharp focus the impact of policies designed to foster educational equality on a Jewish child’s learning experience. Questions regarding the relationship between desegregation and quality of education reverberated quite loudly on the Westside and throughout the Fairfax neighborhoods. This was especially the case at Fairfax High School and Hamilton High School, where an estimated 85% of the student body was Jewish

²⁷ Allan Greenberg, “Dear Mr. Bardos,” February 11, 1974,” Folder 5, Box 1605, LAUBE.

²⁸ Reassessment Conference on the Public Schools and American Democratic Pluralism - the Role of the Jewish Community, National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council, and Reassessment Committee, *The Public Schools*.

²⁹ “Minutes of Joint Meeting of CRC’s Commission on Education & Commission on Law and Legislation,” October 21, 1971, Joint Meeting of CRC’s Commission on Education & Commission on Law and Legislation October 21, 1971 Folder, Box 212, CRC IV; “Statement of Interest of Amicus Curaie,” Joint Meeting of CRC’s Commission on Education & Commission on Law and Legislation October 21, 1971 Folder, Box 212, CRC IV.

³⁰ The key exception here was the Jewish Labor Committee (JLC). After the Gitelson decision, the JLC began to develop a plan for desegregation that would involve the reassignment of students across district lines. Jewish Labor Committee, “Proposed--Statement on the Judge Alfred Gitelson decision on school desegregation,” March 18, 1970, Folder 6, Box 23, MMC.

through the mid-1960s.³¹ During the postwar period, these schools built citywide reputations as bastions of academic achievement that, as one journalist explained, nurtured “the Jewish home’s regard for education” and sent a disproportionately large number of students to four-year universities.³² Recalling his high school experience during the early 1960s, essayist (and future *Good Morning America* host) Joel Siegel described Hamilton as a “Great school. Great teachers, great kids. Learning-hungry, smart mouthed Jewish kids out of Salinger and Bruce Jay Friedman and *Portnoy’s Complaint*. It was *something* going to Hamilton High. Even the *girls* have become college professors.”³³

With the school board’s decision to slightly redraw zoning boundaries and institute a new transfer permit policy, the black and Hispanic populations at Hamilton and Fairfax increased fivefold from 1968 through 1973.³⁴ The prospect and reality of racial integration presented a similar set of challenges for both schools.³⁵ On-campus fights between African American and Jewish students became commonplace; teachers complained that the new students were ill prepared to succeed scholastically while lamenting that the schools were losing their academic

³¹ Gerald Faris and Skip Ferderber, “Fairfax: Lower East Side of the West,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 18, 1973; Skip Ferderber, “Innovations Transform Hamilton High School,” *Los Angeles Times*, October 22, 1970.

³² Gerald Faris, “How New Principal Views Fairfax High School’s Transition: Fairfax,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 21, 1971; “Changing High School: As Academic Reputation Slips, Frustration Rises at Hamilton,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 11, 1973; Garnt Lee, “Fairfax--It’s Still Where the Heart Is,” *Los Angeles Times*, December 21, 1975.

³³ Joel Siegel, “My Life as a Student Rebel,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 1, 1969.

³⁴ “Boundary Changes Affecting Ethnic Attendance,” Folder 4, Box 1606, LAUBE; Noel Greenwood, “Hamilton High Bucks Trend in Move to Gain Racial Balance: Changed Regulations Governing Transfer Privilege May Reverse Past Patterns That Have Led to Segregation,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 31, 1972.

³⁵ Faris, “How New Principal Views Fairfax High School’s Transition”; “Changing High School”; Lee, “Fairfax--It’s Still Where the Heart Is.”

luster; defiant parents obtained permits to enroll their children in overwhelmingly white LAUSD schools that were located further west or relocated altogether.³⁶

Fearful that a continuous decline in white, Jewish enrollment would lead to the all-too-familiar pattern of re-segregation and exacerbate the schools' academic problems, the parents who spearheaded the advisory councils at Hamilton and Fairfax committed themselves to "making integration work." To this end, council members such as Harold Horowitz and Judith Weinstein, with assistance from the AJC and the CRC, lobbied district officials to ensure that schools in transition would maintain a sustainable racial balance and continue to provide a high quality of education. "If we keep the multi-cultural environment as it stands now, then the excellent quality of education and high success of academic achievement that is now enjoyed by these students will continue to prevail," explained one Fairfax Advisory Council member to the school board.³⁷ In large part due to these advocacy campaigns, the district hired additional personnel (educational aides, tutors, counselors) to "alleviate anticipated problems," funded educational enrichment programs, halted the distribution of incoming and outgoing school permits, as well as capped minority enrollment to 30% to 40% of the student body as a measure of integration.³⁸

³⁶ Gerald Faris, "Hamilton High: School Talking Out Its Problems School Talking Out Problems," *Los Angeles Times*, January 29, 1970; "Frustrated at Fairfax," *Los Angeles Times*, March 15, 1971; Los Angeles City Board of Education, "Report of Correspondence," February 25, 1971, Folder 1, Box 1193, LAUBE; "Minutes Board of Education of the City of Los Angeles," December 20, 1971, Box 471, LAUBE; "Permits Issued as at January 24, 1974, John Burroughs Junior High School," John Burroughs Junior High School Folder, Box 215, CRC IV; "The following persons addressed the members of the Board," June 29, 1972, Folder 3, Box 1605, LAUBE.

³⁷ Gemma Green, "Members of the Board, Mr. Superintendent, Ladies and Gentlemen," John Burroughs Junior High School Folder, Box 214, CRC IV.

³⁸ American Jewish Committee, "Resolution," John Burroughs Junior High School Folder, Box 214, CRC IV; Greenwood, "Hamilton High Bucks Trend"; Dawn Weiss and Judith Weinstein, "Permit Policy," January 21, 1974, John Burroughs Junior High School Folder, box 214, CRC IV.

While Jewish educational activists presented their case for racial balance as a civil rights imperative, their proposals reflected a subtle socio-economic bias whereby certain forms of racial integration were deemed more desirable than others.³⁹ Indeed, advisory council parents and CRC officials questioned whether it was wise for the district to allow “[students] from south central coming from such a radically different culturally and economic backgrounds” to attend these schools in transition and urged school personnel to ensure that the incoming minority students lived in nearby middle-class neighborhoods.⁴⁰ Whether these activists personally believed that inner-city minorities would demonstrate disruptive behavior in the classroom or simply wanted to appease white, Jewish parents who were considering transferring their children elsewhere is a question up for debate. Nevertheless, their approach illustrates how Jewish integrationists on the Westside and in the Fairfax neighborhood, seeking to promote racial balance and stability on their own terms, defined the wellbeing of their local public schools through a class-based and race-based prism.

Newfound questions regarding integrated schooling coincided with the development of identity-based political models that demanded the recognition of group differences and focused on the specific needs of minority communities.⁴¹ During the late 1960s, Hispanic and (and to a lesser extent African-American) students and educators launched a public critique of the school system’s supposed insensitivity towards minority communities: this called for the hiring of

³⁹ Judith Weinstein, “Dear Mr. Taylor,” January 13, 1974, John Burroughs Junior High School Folder, Box 214, CRC IV. Likewise, Harold Horowitz, a law professor and Hamilton High parent, explained to the Board that “the failure to adopt clearly reasonably available means of [preserving integration at Hamilton] must inevitably suggest the deliberate adoption of a policy to end integration.” Harold W. Horowitz, “Dear Dr. Newman,” January 11, 1972, John Burroughs Junior High School Folder, Box 214, CRC IV.

⁴⁰ Ernest L. Carbaugh, “Community Meeting to Discuss Problems of Burroughs Junior High School,” July 25, 1973, John Burroughs Junior High School Folder, Box 214, CRC IV.

⁴¹ See second chapter of dissertation.

additional minority administrators and teachers as well as textbook and curriculum changes that rectified existing ethno-racial biases.⁴² Riding this wave of ethnocentric activism, a group of about 60 Jewish public school teachers and administrators organized “as Jews and educators,” to establish the Educators Advisory Committee (EAC), which operated under the auspices of the CRC. Akin to their black and Hispanic counterparts, EAC activists believed that the public school system, as part of an effort to provide a culturally relevant education, should help students learn about minority groups and develop intercultural competence. Within this context, they were foremost concerned with ensuring that district superintendents and the state board of education officials would broaden the definition of “multicultural education” and their understanding of ethnic diversity to include Jews.⁴³

The Educators Advisory Committee, identifying social studies education as a powerful device to transmit social knowledge and values, placed a premium on addressing the supposed inadequacies of the current pedagogical framework.⁴⁴ Working with the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), the University of Judaism, and the Board of Rabbis of Southern California, EAC activists developed and proposed various courses and in-service training modules that were designed to teach students and educators of all backgrounds about the American Jewish

⁴² Perhaps most well-known in this respect was the East Los Angeles Blowouts of 1968, where thousands of Hispanic students walked out of their classes, in part to demand a culturally relevant education. HoSang, “The Changing Valence,” 122–24.

⁴³ “The Los Angeles City Schools and the Jewish Community,” Educators Advisory Council, Agendas, Mts. Notices, Minutes, 1968-1970 Folder, Box 216, CRC IV; “Report of Special Meeting of CRC Education Committee with School Personnel, November 15, 1968,” Educators Advisory Council, Agendas, Mts. Notices, Minutes, 1968-1970 Folder, Box 216, CRC IV.

⁴⁴ As one report noted, “ethnic content dealing with the Jewish American experience has been and continues to be quite inadequate. It has been either totally omitted, inaccurate, distorted, or not comprehensive enough to reflect favorably on the Jewish social legacy.” “Position Statement, Teaching about the Jewish American Ethnic Experience,” Commission on Education, January 22, 1974 Folder, Box 212, CRC IV.

experience alongside that of other ethnic groups.⁴⁵ Curricula proposals emphasized topics such as the evils of anti-Semitism, the importance of Israel as a Jewish homeland, Jewish contributions to American popular culture via contemporary icons such as Bob Dylan and Sandy Koufax, as well as the prominence of *Tzedakah* (charity) and social justice in the Jewish tradition.⁴⁶ Jewish educational activists argued that learning about Jewish culture and tradition had several benefits.⁴⁷ That is, the opportunity would not only “help Jewish students to develop self-esteem and pride in their culture and history” and “expose and break down negative stereotypes of Jews” but also “encourage understanding and respect for cultural similarities and differences among all groups of our society.”⁴⁸ In this regard, Jewish educators saw curricular reform as an opportunity to foster a mode of learning that was both sensitive to the needs of Jewish students, who constituted only about 10% of the district, and socially relevant for all LAUSD pupils.⁴⁹

Bringing together a concern for integrated schooling with pedagogical reform, the parents who helped to establish the Canfield-Crescent Heights Community School spearheaded what

⁴⁵ CRC Commission on Education minutes, May 21, 1974, Commission of Education, January 22nd, 1974 Folder, Box 214, CRC IV; “Dear Mr. Loveland,” Commission on Education, January 22, 1974 Folder, Box 212, CRC IV; “Minutes of CRC’s Commission on Education,” May 21, 1974, Minutes: Commission on Education, 1971-1979 Folder, Box 32, CRC IV; “Minutes of CRC’s Commission on Education,” November 27, 1973, Minutes: Commission on Education, 1971-1979 Folder, Box 32, CRC IV; “Minutes of CRC’s Commission on Education,” October 17, 1974, Minutes: Commission on Education, 1971-1979 Folder, Box 32, CRC IV; “Minutes of CRC’s Commission on Education,” October 30, 1973, Minutes: Commission on Education, 1971-1979 Folder, Box 32, CRC IV; “Statement of Purpose,” Ethnic Identification Folder, Box 265, CRC IV.

⁴⁶ “The American Jews,” Commission on Education, January 22, 1974 Folder, Box 212, CRC IV; Harvey B. Schecter, “For Immediate Release,” Commission on Education, April 7, 1976 Folder, Box 218, CRC IV; “Working Outline: The Jew in America,” Commission of Education, January 22nd, 1974 Folder, Box 214, CRC IV.

⁴⁷ CRC Commission on Education minutes, May 21, 1974 Commission of Education, January 22nd, 1974 Folder, Box 214, CRC IV; “Dear Mr. Loveland.”

⁴⁸ “Minutes of the CRC’s Commission on Education,” May 28, 1975, Minutes: Commission on Education, 1971-1979 Folder, Box 32, CRC IV; “Working Outline: The Jew in America.”

⁴⁹ That number is based on a comparison between “Report of the Educators Advisory Council” and Schneider, “Escape from Los Angeles.”

was perhaps the most ambitious experiment with the public school model in Los Angeles. Plans for the Community School began in 1972 among a group of Jewish and black parents from adjacent middle class neighborhoods that sent their children to either the overwhelmingly black Crescent Heights Elementary School or the predominantly Jewish Canfield Elementary School, both of which were part of the greater Hamilton complex. Spurred by a recent district initiative to decentralize school operations and encourage more community involvement in public education, the Canfield and Crescent Heights parents came together to discuss ways to build a learning environment that combined educational innovation with racial integration.⁵⁰ The parents also sought more operational control over what and how their children were taught.⁵¹ As one such proposal for the school explained, “The Planning Committee is convinced that open, flexible, individualized instruction combined with ethnic interaction, provides the best possible education for its children.”⁵² Theoretically, this approach appealed to both middle class black and Jewish parents.

Upon gaining approval, funding, and resources from the Board of Education, the Community School opened in the fall of 1974 with 150 students as Los Angeles’s first

⁵⁰ Jack McCurdy, “Board of Education to Require Citizens Councils at All Schools: Citizen Advisory Units Ordered for Schools,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 29, 1971; Jack McCurdy, “Experiment in Education--A School That Parents Built,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 28, 1975.

⁵¹ The Canfield-Crescent Heights Community School Committee, “The Canfield-Crescent Heights Community School” proposal, May 10, 1973, 3-5, Howard Sherwood’s personal collection, in possession of author.

⁵² Ibid, 4. The Community School was predicated on the idea that instruction would be held at both the Canfield and Crescent Heights sites as an alternative to the regular elementary schools. The Community School plan, however, troubled a group of parents from Canfield Elementary School, who feared that the integrated campus setting would facilitate white flight from Canfield Elementary School. Due to pressure from concerned Canfield parents, the Board of Education was reluctant to fund and approve the Community School project. After Community School parents threatened a lawsuit against the Board of Education though, the board relented and approved the Community School. Gerald Faris, “Under Study by Superintendent Canfield-Crescent Alternate School,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 27, 1973; “School Integration Policy in Doubt,” *Los Angeles Times*, July 30, 1973.

voluntarily integrated public school.⁵³ While parents demonstrated an eagerness to participate and volunteer in school affairs, this close involvement also brought to the surface the discordant visions that black and Jewish parents had for the school. Black parents were foremost concerned with academic achievement. Julius Albertson, for example, had been disappointed with the quality of education and the lack of responsiveness among the teachers and administrators at Crescent Heights Elementary School; he was drawn to the community school model because, as he explained to the *Los Angeles Times*, “you can take your problems to someone and get something done.”⁵⁴ Yet, Albertson, like many of other black parents, feared that an overemphasis on experimental learning would make it all the more difficult for his child to effectively learn basic reading, writing, and arithmetic skills.⁵⁵

The Jewish parents, however, believed that their local public schools placed too much of an emphasis on academic achievement at the expense of other childhood development objectives. Most of them were highly-educated college graduates: they were confident that their children would absorb traditional academic skills at home and wanted the school itself to focus on creating well-rounded individuals who were self-motivated, creative, and responsible as well as offering black and Jewish studies classes in order to have students “gain an understanding of the richness in their own heritages and in those of their neighbors.”⁵⁶ In fact, school founder and Jewish parent Clive Hoffman attended workshops at the San Francisco Multicultural Institute, where he learned about the latest trends in multicultural education. As Hoffman explained to one

⁵³ 52% of the school was white; 48% was black. McCurdy, “Experiment in Education--A School That Parents Built.”

⁵⁴ Ibid. Also see, Gerald Faris, “Concern, Skepticism Clouding Alternative School’s Chances,” *Los Angeles Times*, March 11, 1973.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

reporter, Jewish parents are more interested in having their children “learn to make decisions, to think for themselves, to associate with different kinds of people [because] there is a much broader view of what makes the successful person today in the Jewish community than may have been true in my father’s time.”⁵⁷ And yet, despite these differing pedagogical and practical priorities, the Community School parents reached key compromises by reducing the amount of time dedicated to experiential learning, placing a stronger emphasis on traditional subjects, and giving teachers more authority to discipline students.⁵⁸

By the mid-1970s, influential outsiders increasingly began to stand behind the Jewish advocacy campaigns that sought to shape public education policy. For example, the district provided Fairfax High School with a \$45,000 grant to implement an “Excellence of Education in a Multicultural School” program, which was predicated upon helping the school continue to maintain its racial balance and its academic reputation; the district also began to offer American Jewish heritage courses for students and teachers throughout the city.⁵⁹ Perhaps most notable in this vein of affirmative gestures was the school board’s selection of Howard Miller, out of an applicant pool of 336 candidates, to the Board of Education in February of 1976. In many ways, the 38-year-old Miller embodied and articulated the prevailing educational philosophy of Jewish liberals. As the child of Russian Jewish immigrants, he attributed much of his own professional success as an attorney and law professor at the University of Southern California to the education he received at Fairfax High School; he served as the educational chairman of the AJC and

⁵⁷ Ibid. Clive Hoffman also travelled to San Francisco to attend workshops at the Multicultural Institute, where he learned about new methods in conducting integrated education.

⁵⁸ Ibid; Jack McCurdy, “Postscript: School Begun by Parents Now a Model of Voluntary Integration,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 28, 1980.

⁵⁹ Claudia Luther, “Fairfax High Makes Integration Work,” *Los Angeles Times*, December 19, 1976. Classes included “The American Jewish Experience: Implications for the Classroom” and “The Jews in America.” Schecter, “For Immediate Release.”

spearheaded many of their school integration initiatives; Miller also believed that the Board of Education should encourage more community participation and provide parents with more decision making power at the individual school level.⁶⁰ Instrumental in securing Miller's appointment, Tom Bradley's mayoral administration (including Bradley himself) publicly lobbied on Miller's behalf. Although the Mayor of Los Angeles had no formal power over the school district, the administration largely comprised of black and Jewish liberals who sought to advance the cause of educational equality and provide groups that previously lacked political clout with a voice in city government. The Bradley administration, as the *Los Angeles Times*' Jack McCurdy reported, "felt it was the time the board put a [Jewish] representative on the [school] board since the Jewish community had always given strong financial, political, and other support to [public] education" and employed soft political power to help achieve these ends.⁶¹ And yet despite the goodwill and mutual trust that seemed to exist between liberal-oriented Jewish activists and educational policy makers, the looming specter of a compulsory, crosstown busing program presented the Jewish Angelenos, especially Jewish parents, with a more vexing and complex set of education-related challenges.

II.

1976 was a watershed year for educational policy in Los Angeles: after sitting in the California Court of Appeals for five years, the *Crawford* case made its way to the California

⁶⁰ Jack McCurdy, "School System Too Distant, Miller Says: New Board Member to Seek Changes in Authority Structure Miller Says Top Priority Is Increasing Input of Citizens in L.A. School System," *Los Angeles Times*, February 9, 1976; "New Voice on the School Board," *Los Angeles Times*, February 9, 1976; William Trombley, "Schools Shaped His Life, Miller Feels," *Los Angeles Times*, May 28, 1978.

⁶¹ McCurdy, "School System Too Distant"; Diane Edith Watson, "The Effects of the Desegregation Controversy on Trustee Governance in the Los Angeles Unified School District (1975-1980)" (Ph.D., The Claremont Graduate University, 1987).

Supreme Court. Here, Judge Paul Egly affirmed Gitelson's 1970 ruling that the schools were illegally segregated and ordered the Board of Education to take "reasonable and feasible steps to eliminate segregated schools."⁶² The question of how to desegregate a school district that consisted of 710 square miles and nearly 600,000 students compelled the Board of Education to consider the viability of a compulsory, district-wide busing program. This entailed using buses to transport students from schools in close proximity to residence to relatively far-flung schools to achieve racial balance.⁶³ While school boards throughout the country often responded to court-ordered desegregation mandates by implementing large-scale busing programs, the Los Angeles Board of Education was hesitant to embrace compulsory busing. The seven board members recognized that white parents in other cities throughout the country publicly resisted and sometimes even violently protested busing initiatives and were concerned that Angelenos would respond similarly.⁶⁴ Yet, the board also understood that busing was likely the only realistic way to integrate the district and thus slowly albeit begrudgingly took preliminary steps to explore this goal.⁶⁵

Busing was an issue of the utmost concern for minority communities in Los Angeles. By and large, African Americans supported busing as a mechanism for desegregating the schools and addressing educational inequality. Indeed, polls demonstrate that African Americans were the most ardent supporters of busing in Los Angeles; likewise, African-American leaders

⁶² Furman, *My Los Angeles*, 37–38; Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 167.

⁶³ Abu-Lughod, *New York, Chicago, Los Angeles*, 380; Schneider, "Escape from Los Angeles," 998.

⁶⁴ Stephanie Clayton, "A Brief History of Efforts to Desegregate the Los Angeles Unified School District" (Claremont Graduate University, 2008); Furman, *My Los Angeles*, 33; "Stand Against Busing Urged," *Los Angeles Times*, February 27, 1976; Herbert Sosa, "Fragmented Diversity: School Desegregation, Student Activism, and Busing in Los Angeles, 1963 - 1982" (University of Michigan, 2013), 273–84.

⁶⁵ Sosa, "Fragmented Diversity," 272–73.

persistently called upon the school board to employ comprehensive busing in order to distribute the burden of desegregation equally and fairly.⁶⁶ Mexican Americans the fastest growing and largest population within the district, approached the question of busing with more uncertainty and less cohesion.⁶⁷ The prospect of busing was introduced as Mexican-American political leaders, parents, and activists were seeking to implement and improve bilingual and bicultural education programs.⁶⁸ While mainstream Mexican-American civil rights organizations tended to argue that quality bilingual programs could (and should) be implemented within integrated settings, the majority of Mexican Americans feared that a busing program would ignore the particular needs of Mexican Americans and thus result in the dilution of bilingual education offerings. As Raul Arreola of the Mexican-American Education Commission told the *New York Times*, “Unlike blacks very few Mexican-American parents are interested in busing their children to white schools... We feel that we have much to lose if our children are bused out of the neighborhood.”⁶⁹

For Jewish Angelenos, the prospect of busing similarly brought a series of converging logistical and ideological questions to the forefront of public discourse. Even before the Egly’s 1976 decision, Jewish organizations such as the AJC and the CRC began to broach and contemplate the desirability of compulsory busing. While concerns regarding in-classroom instruction, safety, interference with afternoon religious school programs, and feasibility abounded, the AJC and the CRC also reasoned that busing, if implemented correctly, could

⁶⁶ Ibid., 335–38.

⁶⁷ “Los Angeles Chicanos Fear School System’s Proposed Busing Integration Plan Will Hurt Bilingual Program,” *New York Times*, February 6, 1977.

⁶⁸ HoSang, “The Changing Valence,” 125–26; “Los Angeles Chicanos Fear School System’s Proposed Busing Integration Plan Will Hurt Bilingual Program”; Petrzel, *Classroom Wars*, 86–89.

⁶⁹ “Los Angeles Chicanos Fear School System’s Proposed Busing Integration Plan Will Hurt Bilingual Program.”

indeed help the district achieve the all-important “twin goals of integration and quality education.”⁷⁰ The AJC and the CRC certainly harbored doubts about busing though identified its usefulness and undertook modest “pro-busing” advocacy initiatives. To this end, representatives from the AJC and CRC lobbied against a proposed resolution that aimed to prevent compulsory busing in any form throughout Los Angeles.⁷¹ Furthermore, the AJC and CRC officials worked with various civil rights, religious, and labor leaders as well as officials from the Bradley administration on the Board of Education-appointed Citizen’s Advisory Committee on Student Integration (CACSI) in an effort to devise a multiphase integration plan that included “pupil transportation” alongside other desegregation methods.⁷² The CRC and the AJC also sought to prepare Jewish families for compulsory busing through outreach programs.⁷³ This entailed organizing community workshops and distributing informational pamphlets that presented busing as a potentially enriching educational experience for Jewish children.⁷⁴ Indeed, busing, as one brochure explained, could provide Jewish children who were previously enrolled in

⁷⁰ “CRC Planning Committee,” February 27, 1976, Miller Resolution Folder, Box 2, CRC IV; “For Immediate Release,” The American Jewish Committee Los Angeles Chapter, Miller Resolution Folder, Box 2, CRC IV; Maxwell E. Greenberg and Charles Posner, “Statement Issued by the Community Relations Committee of the Jewish Federation-Council of Greater Los Angeles,” March 4, 1976, Miller Resolution Folder, Box 2, CRC V; United States Commission on Civil Rights, *A Generation Deprived: Los Angeles School Desegregation: A Report of the United States Commission on Civil Rights* (Washington: The Commission, 1977), 108.

⁷¹ Greenberg and Posner, “Statement Issued by the Community Relations Committee”; Jack McCurdy, “Reaction Milder Than Blacks’: Jewish Groups Rap Antibusing Vote,” *Los Angeles Times*, March 5, 1976.

⁷² George Foos, “School Integration: Problems and Progress,” Commission on Education, Tuesday February 1, 1977 Folder, Box 218, CRC IV; “Minutes of the Commission on Education,” April 26, 1977, Commission of Education, June 7th, 1977 Folder, Box 218, CRC IV; Valerie Fields, “Education Commission Meeting of the Community Relations Committee of the Jewish Federation Council,” February 5, 1977, Folder 15, Box 4211, Bradley Administrative Papers, Department of Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles (hereafter BAP).; Sosa, “Fragmented Diversity,” 320.

⁷³ William Trombley, “Citizens Panel OKs Own School Integration Plan: Citizens Panel Adopts Plan on School Integration,” *Los Angeles Times*, March 2, 1977.

⁷⁴ Roz Cooperman, “Re: Parent Brochure,” May 31, 1977, Commission of Education, June 7th, 1977 Folder, Box 218, CRC IV.

predominantly white schools with the opportunity to learn a second language in a bilingual classroom and become exposed to “new and innovative” multicultural education programs.⁷⁵

Yet, the public positions that the CRC and the AJC publicly adopted did not neatly align with that of the Jewish rank and file, especially Jewish parents.⁷⁶ Numerous polls taken both before and after the 1976 California Supreme Court decision indicate that the majority of Jews in Los Angeles disapproved of comprehensive busing programs both on principle and in practice.⁷⁷ Such was the case even for liberal Jews residing in middle class and upper-middle class neighborhoods on the Westside of Los Angeles.⁷⁸ Many Jewish Westsiders, whether due to voluntary initiatives or small-scale attendance rezoning measures, had been immersed in integrated educational environments since the early 1970s. Amid debates surrounding busing, Westside parents wanted to ensure that their situation remained stable and that they retained a semblance of control over their child’s schooling.⁷⁹ As an aide to Westside Congressman Henry Waxman recalled, “I can tell you from the letters we received... [busing] sent a lightning bolt through Jews because it affected their children, about which they’re known to be more a little

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Indeed, the CRC recognized that the “gap between the leadership of all Jewish community organizations and the rank and file grassroots people is vast.” Minutes of CRC’s Commission on Education meeting, Wednesday April 7, 1976, Commission on Education Tuesday May 4, 1976 Folder, Box 218, CRC IV.

⁷⁷ Robert Scheer, “Los Angeles Jews Middle-Class Values Change,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 1978. Herschel Rosenthal, “Rosenthal Reports,” February, 1978, Hugh Schwartz of the Public Response Company, Folder 11, Box 3, Berman/D’Agostino Redistricting and Political Campaign Materials, Institute of Governmental Studies Library, University of California, Berkeley; Hugh Schwartz of the Public Response Company, “A Report on a Survey of 250 Voters in the Los Angeles 5th Council District,” Folder 14, Box 2, Braun & Company Records, California State Archives, Sacramento, CA (hereafter BCR); Neil Sandberg, *Jewish Life in Los Angeles: A Window to Tomorrow* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1986), 167.

⁷⁸ Rosenthal, “Rosenthal Reports.”

⁷⁹ Jeanne Thiel Landis, “The Crawford Desegregation Suit in Los Angeles 1977-81: The Multiethnic Community Versus ‘Bustop’ (Civil Rights, Remedies, Public Schools; California)” (Ph.D., University of California, Los Angeles, 1984), 242–43.

solicitous.”⁸⁰ This was the case for Stephanie and Howard Sherwood, two of the Jewish parents that helped to establish the Community School. They were quite content with the education that their children were receiving at the Community School and did not want them bussed across town; from their perspective, busing was counterproductive to a homegrown model of integration that was based on socio-economic likeness, respect for ethnic diversity, educational innovation, and geographical proximity.⁸¹

But Jewish anti-busing sentiment was strongest in the suburban San Fernando Valley. The San Fernando Valley was geographically separated from the rest of Los Angeles by the Santa Monica Mountain range. Its growth during the 1940s and 1950s as a residential destination was largely regulated on racial grounds: builders and developers who were transforming underdeveloped agricultural land into residential tracts during the postwar period tended to envision and operate these communities as exclusively white domain.⁸² While the Supreme Court declared racially restrictive real estate covenants unconstitutional in 1948, real estate agents, property owner associations, lenders, and developers continued to discriminate against “non-Caucasians” though allowed Jews to move into these postwar suburban communities.⁸³ These dynamics helped to ground, reify, and accelerate the racial transformation of Jews into white Americans.⁸⁴ The color line in the San Fernando Valley, as historian George Sanchez has

⁸⁰ Joe Domanick, "Bobbi and the New Jewish Right," *The Jewish Journal*, February 28, 1986.

⁸¹ Howard and Stephanie Sherwood, Interview by author, Beverly Hills, May 13, 2016. Also see, Connie Ramberg, "Dear Friends," March 9, 1976, Miller Resolution Folder, Box 2, CRC IV.

⁸² Furman, *My Los Angeles*, 13–14. The great exception here was the neighborhood of Pacoima, which was the center of the Valley’s African-American community.

⁸³ George Sanchez, “‘What’s Good for Boyle Heights Is Good for the Jews’: Creating Multiracialism on the Eastside during the 1950s,” *American Quarterly* 56.3 (2004): 633–61.

⁸⁴ For more on this process, see chapter 1 of dissertation.

demonstrated, “placed Jews decidedly into the ‘white race’ but continued to exclude Blacks, Asians, and probably most Mexicans.”⁸⁵

The Valley attracted Jews (and other white Angelenos) who sought to distance themselves from the supposed ills of urban life and valued the perceived comforts and security of the post-World War II suburb. This entailed high rates of home ownership, spacious single-family homes, often in areas where residential segregation was enforced through the early-1970s, and access to overwhelmingly white, high-quality neighborhood schools.⁸⁶ With its particular appeal to young families, the Valley Jewish population grew at a faster rate than the city’s overall Jewish population, as it went from constituting less than 10% of Los Angeles Jewry in 1951 to around 32% in 1974.⁸⁷ In terms of raw numbers, Jewish households in the San Fernando Valley skyrocketed, increasing from 10,165 in 1951 to 40,997 in 1970 to 51,286 in 1974.⁸⁸ During the immediate postwar period, most of those Jews who resided the Valley were of modest-middle class means; by the early 1970s, however, the Valley had increasingly become a prime destination for upper-middle class Jews.⁸⁹ This “economic upgrading” was especially prevalent in neighborhoods along the Ventura Boulevard corridor such as Encino, Tarzana, and Sherman Oaks, where Jews comprised about 25% of the population by the early 1970s.⁹⁰

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ HoSang, “The Changing Valence,” 120–21. Regarding Jewish homeownership, see Massarik, “A Report on the Jewish Population of Los Angeles, 1968,” Table 13.

⁸⁷ Bruce Phillips, “Los Angeles Jewry: A Demographic Portrait” (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1986), 160–61.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Fred Massarik, “Jewish Population Indicator: Report I, SFV Hispanic-Jewish Meeting Folder, Box 21, CRC IV; Phillips, “Los Angeles Jewry: A Demographic Portrait,” 160–61.

⁹⁰ Massarik, “Jewish Population Indicator”; Phillips, “Los Angeles Jewry: A Demographic Portrait,” 135; Research Service Bureau of the Jewish Federation Council of Greater Los Angeles, “Los Angeles Estimated Jewish Population, 1970-1971,” email attachment from Bruce Phillips to author, September 22, 2016.

In the San Fernando Valley, Jews developed a particular lifestyle that sociologists of postwar American Jewry such as Albert Isaac Gordon, Herbert Gans, and Marshall Sklare would have identified as emblematic of the Jewish suburban experience.⁹¹ Jews in the Valley primarily socialized with other Jews and had little interaction with racial minorities; Jewish households with young children were commonplace as was the child-centered family, with its focus on the perceived needs of children; on the aggregate, Jewish parents demonstrated low levels of religious observance within the home though tended to belong to Reform and Conservative synagogues and enrolled their children in supplemental religious schools.⁹² The Valley also garnered a reputation as representing the next generation of the Jewish mainstream. As *Los Angeles Times* reporter Robert Scheer explained, they are “the important Jews because they are the anew with family, with young. They are the ‘normal’ Jews, not the organization honcho, the college radical, the bohemian writer, the feisty labor organizer, the religious nut, the gangster millionaire—all of whom were full-throttle Jews of the past.”⁹³ While subtle class divisions certainly existed within the Valley Jewish community, particularly between affluent white collar professionals and the markedly middle class, the socio-geographic divisions between “The Valley” and the rest of Los Angeles were all the more meaningful for the Jewish Valleyite.⁹⁴

⁹¹ Lila Corwin Berman, “American Jews and the Ambivalence of Middle-Classness,” *American Jewish History* 93, no. 4 (2007): 409–34; Hasia R Diner, *The Jews of the United States, 1654 to 2000* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 283–301.

⁹² Massarik, “Jewish Population Indicator”; Gene N. Levine et al., “The Affiliations of Los Angeles Jewry: Preliminary Findings of A Metropolitan Area Sample Survey,” *Jewish Sociology and Social Research* 2, no. 2 (1976): 4–9; Massarik, “A Report on the Jewish Population of Los Angeles, 1968,” 20; Charles Zibbell, “Suburbia and Jewish Community Organization,” *Journal of Jewish Communal Service* 38, no. 1 (September 20, 1961): 69–79.

⁹³ Scheer, “Los Angeles Jews Middle-Class Values Change.”

⁹⁴ Furman, *My Los Angeles*, 54.

The Valley, however geographically and culturally remote from the rest of Los Angeles, was still located within the city's expansive borders and thus subject to a court-ordered mandate to integrate Los Angeles Unified. In this regard, the so-called spatial and racial privileges of suburbia were circumscribed. For many Jews who resided in the San Fernando Valley, the remedy of two-way busing, which would have likely involved sending children on a freeway to a school over twenty-miles away in the inner-city, was perceived as a highly disruptive threat to the seemingly idyllic child-centered fabric of Valley life. Indeed, many young Jewish families had moved from neighborhoods such as Beverly-Fairfax and Wilshire-Fairfax earlier in the decade precisely to escape school integration measures.⁹⁵ Between 1976 and 1978, hundreds of Jewish parents from the San Fernando Valley, advancing numerous arguments, wrote to the Board of Education in order to express their firm disapproval for busing.⁹⁶ For instance, Mrs. Marvin Hornstein of Tarzana, whose child attended a public school that was three minutes from their residence, understood busing as a geographically inconvenient, unwieldy, and time-consuming process. She contended that busing long distances would make it all the more difficult for parents like herself to participate in "P.T.A., fundraising, and class room activities"

⁹⁵ Phillips, "Los Angeles Jewry: A Demographic Portrait," 161. There is no hard or comprehensive data regarding where those who left Fairfax moved. Yet, certain trends are identifiable. According to a 1968 report on Los Angeles' Jewish population, the Beverly-Fairfax residents that planned on moving named the San Fernando Valley as their top destination. Furthermore, as one study of the Fairfax High School class of 1964 indicates, by 1979 less than 10% of the graduates still resided within the Fairfax neighborhood. The majority of the graduates were highly educated, middle and upper-middle class Jews who settled in the San Fernando Valley. "Fairfax: Lower East Side of the West"; Massarik, "A Report on the Jewish Population of Los Angeles, 1968," 17; "What Happened to the Class of 1964," Folder 1, Box 35, Western States Jewish History Archive, Department of Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles (hereafter WSJHA).

⁹⁶ For example, see A Disgusted Parent, "Dear Dr. Nava," Folder 2, Box 1610, LAUBE; David Howard Cohn, "Dear Dr. Nava," January 16, 1977, Folder 4, Box 1610, LAUBE; Mrs. Marvin A. Hornstein, "Dear Dr. Nava," November 1, 1976, January 16, 1977, Folder 4, Box 1610, LAUBE; Marvin A. Leventhal, "Dear Dr. Nava," January 17, 1977, Folder 3, Box 1610, LAUBE; "Paul Rosenthal, "Dear Dr. Nava," January 13, 1977, Folder 5, Box 1609, LAUBE; Bernard Schatz, "Dear Dr. Doctor," March 16, 1976, Folder 1, Box 1607, LAUBE; Sandra Ritter, "Dear Educator," November 15, 1976, Folder 2, Box 1608, LAUBE; Emanuel Shipow, Sandra Shipow, Mark Shipow, "Dear Dr. Nava," October 18, 1976, Folder 3, Box 1608, LAUBE; Bernard Weiner, "Dear Dr. Nava," November 1, 1976, Folder 1, Box 1608, LAUBE.

and would deny her child the time needed to attend to his afternoon commitments such as religious school, little league, and dental appointments.⁹⁷ Others, such as Bernard Schatz of Van Nuys, cast the argument against busing in explicit race and class terms: “There is resentment by the black race against the white and vice versa. You have not taken into account the problems and frustrations, when you take a poor child and put him into a school where there is a more affluent society, that he cannot keep up socially or academically with the other children.”⁹⁸

More than simply protesting the prospect of busing, Jewish parents from the Valley were at the vanguard of the organized anti-busing movement. In fact, in 1976 seven parents, six of whom were Jewish, formed Bustop.⁹⁹ The organization began among a group of relatively affluent Encino residents who were actively involved in the Lanai Road Elementary School Parent-Teacher Association. This included Rebecca Rothman, Marilyn Fink, as well as Roberta “Bobbi” Fiedler, all of whom fit the mold of the “typical” Jewish Valleyite.¹⁰⁰ For example, Fiedler and her husband moved from the Westside of Los Angeles to the San Fernando Valley in 1966; Fiedler split her time between raising her two children, managing a pharmacy that she and her husband co-owned, and volunteering at Temple Judea, a Reform synagogue in Tarzana.¹⁰¹

⁹⁷ Hornstein, “Dear Dr. Nava.”

⁹⁸ Bernard Schatz, “Dear Dr. Doctor,” March 16, 1976, Folder 1, Box 1607, LAUBE. Regarding Schatz’s Jewishness, see “Bernard Schatz,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 31, 2007. On a similar note Dr. Robert Fischer of Northridge explained that busing would exacerbate the inherent academic and social divides between different racial groups and expose Valley children to “violence in the ghetto schools.” Dr. Robert Fischer, “Dear Sirs,” November 18, 1976, Folder 1, Box 1608, LAUBE. Regarding Fisher’s Jewishness, see “Robert Martin Fischer, M.D.,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 12, 2002.

⁹⁹ Bill Boyarsky, “How Bustop Became Force in School Suit: Valley-Based Body Claims About 65,000 Members,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 15, 1977; Joe Domanick, “Bobbi and the New Jewish Right,” *The Jewish Journal*, February 28, 1986.

¹⁰⁰ Boyarsky, “How Bustop Became Force in School Suit”; Betty Cuniberti, “Fightin’ Fiedler Steps Into the Ring on Capitol Hill,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 29, 1981; Kathleen Neumeyer, “The Fiedler Formula: ‘Busing...Children...Boston,’” *California Journal*, (December 1981): 427-429.

¹⁰¹ Bobbi Fiedler, Bobbi Fiedler Oral History Interview, November 17, 1988, CSUN Department of History and University Library’s Urban Archives Center.; Neumeyer, “The Fiedler Formula: ‘Busing...Children...Boston.’”

The Lanai Road parents did not identify as traditional political activists. “[We] were pushed into politics by necessity, not plan,” explained Fiedler.¹⁰² In the winter of 1976, upon finding out that the district transferred a white teacher to a predominately minority school in the middle of the year as part of a staff desegregation program, the Lanai Road parents met with a district superintendent to complain that teacher reassignments were ultimately counterproductive for their child’s education.¹⁰³ The parents left the meeting with the distinct impression that they should not only expect more teacher transfers but also prepare for a district-wide busing program.¹⁰⁴ In response, the Lanai Road group launched a formal campaign to contest mandatory busing and salvage the public school system from supposedly unresponsive public officials.¹⁰⁵

During the spring of 1976, the Bustop faithful convened on a weekly basis and developed a coherent platform that revolved around two basic premises. First, the group posited that busing would divert attention and resources away from the primary purpose of public schooling, which was to provide a quality education.¹⁰⁶ Bustop argued that while educational equality and integration were noble goals, busing was a waste of taxpayer resources because it would not help to improve the public school system or benefit children.¹⁰⁷ More specifically, they argued that busing would make it all the more difficult for the district to meet the unique needs of each

¹⁰² Susan K. Pollock, “Bobbi Fiedler,” *Jewish Women: A Comprehensive Historical Encyclopedia*, Marc 1, 2009, accessed July 18, 2017, <https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/fiedler-bobbi>.

¹⁰³ For more on the Board of Education’s teacher integration plan, see Sosa, “Fragmented Diversity,” 284–85.

¹⁰⁴ “I knew that meant the schools would be in utter chaos,” recalled Rebecca Rothman about a decade later. Pamela Moreland, “Activists of Busing Era: Where They Are Now: Most Founders of Bustop Out of Limelight: Founders’ Limelight Fades,” *Los Angeles Times*, October 14, 1984. Also see, Boyarsky, “How Bustop Became Force in School Suit.”

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ “Bustop Philosophy,” Bustop Folder, Box 215, CRC IV.

community, whether that be providing specialized enrichment courses for high achieving students or offering bilingual education courses for native Spanish speakers.¹⁰⁸ They also feared that busing, by virtue of transporting children great distances from their home, would make it all the more difficult for children to develop meaningful out-of-school friendships with their classmates and attend afternoon religious school programs.¹⁰⁹ Perhaps no single document more succinctly crystalizes Bustop's efforts to juxtapose busing with quality education than the Bustop Philosophy statement: "Busing long distances takes valuable time and energy from the lives of children. It interferes with their opportunity to pursue educational enriching and socially developing activities."¹¹⁰

In building their case, the Bustop parents also presented parental choice as both a wise educational policy and a legal right. A successful public school system, according to Bustop, was predicated on allowing parents to decide what was best for their children within a legal and democratic framework; otherwise, families would lose faith in public education and increasingly pursue private schooling options.¹¹¹ Through the prism of parental choice, Bustop believed that they could preserve the neighborhood school model and simultaneously support voluntary methods of desegregation.¹¹² In this regard, Bustop distinguished itself from local anti-busing activists such as Floyd Wakefield of South Gate, who rallied against the concept of

¹⁰⁸ Bustop, "Goals and Objectives," Folder 3, Box 1608, LAUBE.

¹⁰⁹ "Bustop Philosophy."

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ibid.; Bustop, "Goals and Objectives."

¹¹² Bustop, "To Los Angeles Board of Education," November 15, 1976, Folder 3, Box 1608, LAUBE; Moreland, "Activists of Busing Era."

integration.¹¹³ “It was never a point with me – the race of the teacher or who was in the classroom,” later remarked Rothman.”¹¹⁴ Effectively ignoring substantial evidence of de jure segregation, their contention was predicated on the belief that Los Angeles’s public schools were free of intentional discrimination and thus state-sponsored remedies such as “forced busing,” and the “forced reassignment of school children” constituted needless government interference. Building off this questionable deduction, Bustop argued that busing was ultimately a form of reverse discrimination that infringed upon the all-important rights of parents to determine what was ultimately best for their children.¹¹⁵

With their rationale in place, the Bustop organization embarked upon a multi-pronged approach to contest busing all the while emerging as a serious force in city politics.¹¹⁶ Bustop activists attended Los Angeles Board of Education hearings throughout 1976 and 1977, where they attacked compulsory busing and proposed voluntary integration measures such as the establishment of magnet schools that specialized in subjects such as fine arts, business, and science.¹¹⁷ At the same time, the Bustop operation hosted community forums and established various chapters throughout the greater Los Angeles area. Within a year of its founding, Bustop had recruited 50,000 new members, most of who were white Angelenos.¹¹⁸ While Bustop members were not required to pay dues, they were responsible for raising funds for the

¹¹³ “Bustop Philosophy.” For more on Wakefield, see Daniel Martinez HoSang, *Racial Propositions: Ballot Initiatives and the Making of Postwar California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 97–104.

¹¹⁴ Moreland, “Activists of Busing Era.”

¹¹⁵ “Bustop Philosophy.”

¹¹⁶ Boyarsky, “How Bustop Became Force in School Suit.”

¹¹⁷ Bustop, “To Los Angeles Board of Education”; Moreland, “Activists of Busing Era.”

¹¹⁸ Boyarsky, “How Bustop Became Force in School Suit”; Neumeyer, “The Fiedler Formula: ‘Busing...Children...Boston;’”; Laura Pulido, Laura R Barraclough, and Wendy Cheng, *A People’s Guide to Los Angeles* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 226.

organizations, often through community raffles and garage sales.¹¹⁹ And with these funds, the Bustop organization hired attorneys to challenge the legality of busing in the courts.¹²⁰ Also of prime importance, in a Spring 1977 city-wide election that was widely perceived as a public referendum on busing, the Bustop organization helped Bobbi Fiedler defeat incumbent and ardent integration supporter Robert L. Docter for a seat on the Board of Education.¹²¹

Even as Bustop expanded beyond a handful of Jewish families, the organization exuded a distinct Jewish dimension. Like many Jews who resided in the San Fernando Valley, the leaders of Bustop were not all that religiously observant though strongly identified with Jewish history and culture.¹²² In this regard, they fashioned themselves as Jewish activists and drew upon their own understanding of what it meant to be Jewish to articulate and animate their advocacy positions. “Being Jewish had a very strong impact on my political philosophy—not necessarily in the spiritual or religious sense—but in the sense of being a minority, of being the object of discrimination,” noted Fiedler.¹²³ The Jewish suburban warriors of Bustop were well aware that organizations affiliated with the Jewish Federation were largely supportive of comprehensive busing measures.¹²⁴ And yet, despite—or perhaps because of—the efforts of the “Jewish

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Faith C. Christmas, “Dokter, Fiedler Tell Busing Views,” *Los Angeles Sentinel*, February 10, 1977. Jack McCurdy, “2 Busing Foes Win School Board Seats: Bustop Leader Fiedler Ousts Dokter; Conservative Ferraro Reelected Easily,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 1, 1977; Diane Edith Watson, “The Effects of the Desegregation Controversy on Trustee Governance in the Los Angeles Unified School District (1975-1980)” (Ph.D., The Claremont Graduate University, 1987), 23-24.

¹²² Levine et al., “The Affiliations of Los Angeles Jewry.”

¹²³ Cuniberti, “Fightin’ Fiedler Steps Into the Ring on Capitol Hill.” For more on Fiedler, see, Joe Domanick, “Bobbi and the New Jewish Right,” *The Jewish Journal*, February 28, 1986; Amy Hill Shevitz, “At the Intersection of Gender, Ethnicity, and the City: Three Jewish Women in Los Angeles Politics,” in *Jews in the Los Angeles Mosaic* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013), 65–68.

¹²⁴ Scheer, “Los Angeles Jews Middle-Class Values Change.”

establishment” to compel the Jewish rank and file to support busing, the Jews of Bustop insistently presented busing as antithetical to Jewish communal interests.

To this end, Bustop leaders invoked provocative rhetoric that identified compulsory busing as a potential link in the long historical chain of Jewish suffering. At a moment in which the discourse of identity politics and ethno-racial grievances was becoming all the more central to educational policy debates, Jewish activists turned to the prime symbol of Jewish suffering, the Holocaust, to articulate their antipathy towards busing, describe their sense of vulnerability, and fear of bureaucratic overreach.¹²⁵ Bustop’s Rebecca Rothman later recalled that, “a lot of the people involved in this [movement] were Jewish... when you say that you are going to be selected to go somewhere or to do something because of who you are (racially) this is frightening to them...I think of gas chambers.”¹²⁶ For instance, when the Board of Education, in an effort to develop a desegregation program, proposed a survey that would identify each student by race, Jewish anti-busing activists critiqued the plan as all too reminiscent of the Nazi’s counting and sorting machinations.¹²⁷ Having recently watched and seemingly informed by NBC’s *Holocaust* miniseries, Bustop member Arlene Ingber explained to the Board that the survey was akin to how “Jews and others marked for extermination were so identified” in Nazi Germany.¹²⁸ Likewise, Bobbi Fiedler discussed and equated the process of compulsory busing of children with Nazi efforts to transport Jews to concentration camps. Explaining her inspiration to form Bustop, Fiedler told the *Los Angeles Times* in 1977, “And I began to see what I viewed as the

¹²⁵ Peter Novick, *The Holocaust in American Life* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999).

¹²⁶ Moreland, “Activists of Busing Era.”

¹²⁷ William Trombley, “Mrs. Fiedler Sabotage of Integration Plan Charged: ‘Guerrilla Warfare’ Against School Board’s Program Claimed by Miller,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 3, 1978.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

cattle cars that hauled off so many Jews during the course of the Holocaust... And I made a commitment at that time that I would not go down without a fight.”¹²⁹ In this equation, if Jewish history was replete with instances of Jewish passivity and victimization, then the fight against busing and the calls to preserve suburban privileges emerged as a way to learn from the lessons of the past and stand up for perceived group interests.¹³⁰

In the short term, the Bustop movement failed to achieve its immediate goal of preventing mandatory busing. In the fall of 1978, following two years of negotiations between the Board of Education and Judge Paul Egly, the district began a busing program under the supervision of the court that called for the reassignment of 54,000 fourth through eighth grade students.¹³¹ The burden of mandatory busing primarily fell upon whites in the San Fernando Valley and inner-city minorities; the program had less of an impact on the Westside where numerous schools took proactive steps to achieve integration on a voluntary basis and thus avoid “mandatory” busing.¹³² While only 46% of LAUSD’s schools were involved in the busing program, it proved to be one of the largest school desegregation initiatives in the country.¹³³

¹²⁹ Scheer, “Los Angeles Jews Middle-Class Values Change.” Also see, CRC Commission on Education meeting minutes, December 13, 1977, Commission on Education Monday, January 16, 1978 Folder, Box 212, CRC IV.

¹³⁰ Perhaps influenced by Bustop, non-Jewish parents also discussed busing through the prism of the Holocaust. Not comfortable with busing her daughter, Pamela Escobar noted that, “I’m scared to death about her safety. I have this awful, sinking feeling that parents like us, who are leaving heir kids in public school to be bused *anywhere* are just like the Jews in ‘Holocaust’ who walked to their death without even fighting.” Bella Stumbo, “‘White Flight’ No Cheap Alternative: ‘White Flight’ a Wrenching Family Decision,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 18, 1978.

¹³¹ Abu-Lughod, *New York, Chicago, Los Angeles*, 381; HoSang, “The Changing Valence,” 115.

¹³² Landis, “The Crawford Desegregation Suit in Los Angeles 1977-81,” 333; David O. Sears and Harris Jr. Allen, “The Trajectory of Local Desegregation Controversies and Whites’ Opposition to Busing,” in *Groups in Contact: The Psychology of Desegregation*, ed. Norman S Miller and Marilyn B Brewer (Burlington: Elsevier Science, 2013), 143; William Trombley, “Most Schools Agree to Voluntary Pairings: 88% in Next Fall’s Integration Plan Find Partners Most Schools Pair Voluntarily,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 12, 1978.

¹³³ Jack McCurdy, “L.A. Busing Starts Today; Leaders Urge Compliance: Mayor and Police Chief Call for Nonviolence; City Will Be Largest in U.S. to Desegregate,” *Los Angeles Times*, September 12, 1978.

At the same time, however, the implementation of busing in 1978 helped to embolden and strengthen the Bustop agenda and the broader anti-busing movement. As busing went from a hypothetical idea to a concrete policy, frustration with school district's transportation policies among white Angelenos reached a fever pitch.¹³⁴ This was especially evident in the electoral contests over seats on the school board. Before the busing program, only two out of the Board of Education's seven members, Fiedler included, held strong anti-busing positions. After busing commenced, Roberta Weintraub—a parent of two from Sherman Oaks—helped to organize and ran in a school board election to recall Howard Miller.¹³⁵ Weintraub was an ardent anti-busing activist affiliated with Bustop and the “yes on Proposition 13” anti-tax movement; she persistently attacked Miller for helping to design the current desegregation plan and claimed that he needed to be held accountable to supporting a misguided government program that was destroying Valley schools and wasting taxpayer dollars.¹³⁶ She promised voters that a Miller recall would signal to the courts and legislators the depth of public feeling against busing and help to end busing.¹³⁷ “I think the cumulative effect of recalling a person who was advocating a massive forced busing program would have a tremendous impact. Everybody looks to the political winds,” explained Weintraub.¹³⁸ The 1979 recall against Miller was successful;

¹³⁴ Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 196.

¹³⁵ Scott Austin and Jack McCurdy, “Voters Oust Miller From School Board: Roberta Weintraub, Recall Organizer, Wins Race for His Seat by Wide Margin,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 30, 1979; Jack McCurdy, “School Board: Two Issues Land Miller in Tough Race,” *Los Angeles Times*, March 25, 1979; Kevin Roderick, “Anti-Busing Activist: High Profile is the Easy part for Miller Successor,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 9 1979.

¹³⁶ Roderick, “Anti-Busing Activist.”

¹³⁷ Jack McCurdy, “Election Shapes Up as Key Test of School Desegregation in L. A.: Miller Says Ouster Would Not Stop Forced Transfers,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 27, 1979.

¹³⁸ McCurdy, “School Board: Two Issues Land Miller in Tough Race.”

Weintraub assumed her seat on the school board with 58% of the vote.¹³⁹ The following year, “anti-buser” Tom Bartman, who was part of Bustop’s legal team, was also elected to a seat on the Los Angeles Board of Education; Bartman’s victory provided the board with its first anti-busing majority.¹⁴⁰ Also of significance, in 1979 Democratic politician Alan Robbins, who represented the that San Fernando Valley in the California State Senate, proposed an amendment that would effectively alleviate the school board of its responsibility to desegregate the schools.¹⁴¹

The shifting composition of the school board and the amendment proposal sent shock waves through the city’s political structure not least because the new cohort of anti-busing leaders, similar to the founders of Bustop, were Jewish. Moreover, they held campaign events at synagogues, took out advertisements in the local Jewish press, and received overwhelmingly electoral support and strong grassroots backing from San Fernando Valley-based Jews.¹⁴² The collective political ascent of Fiedler, Weintraub, Robbins, and Bartman prompted several newspapers and magazines in Los Angeles to report on a sea change in local Jewish politics, one that marked a key challenge to Jewish liberalism and was driven by Jewish Valleyites.¹⁴³

Describing Weintraub’s victory of Miller, one such article—the appropriately titled “The Right

¹³⁹ Austin and McCurdy, “Voters Oust Miller From School Board.”

¹⁴⁰ Kevin Roderick, “Busing Foe Wins School Post: Bartman’s Election Puts Conservatives in Control Bartman Easily Defeats Juarez,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 6, 1980.

¹⁴¹ HoSang, *Racial Propositions*, 107–16.

¹⁴² “Busing Themes Ahavat Shalom Forum Series,” *B’nai B’rith Messenger*, February 18, 1977; Seymour Beubis, “Stance on Busing Strains Jews’ Liberal Tradition,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 22, 1980; Susan Littwin, “The Right Approach: Jews and the GOP,” *New West*, Folder 2, Box 35, WSJHA; Kenneth Reich, “Power of Jewish Right Delineated by Miller Recall,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 31, 1979; “Roberta Is Listening To You And Agrees...” *B’nai B’rith Messenger*, April 1, 1977.

¹⁴³ Beubis, “Stance on Busing Strains Jews’ Liberal Tradition”; Reich, “Power of Jewish Right Delineated by Miller Recall”; Scheer, “New Set of Values for the Middle Class”; Michele Willens, “The Sudden Rise of the Jewish Politician,” *California Journal*, no. 11 (1980): 146–48.

Approach: Jews and the GOP”—noted, “it began to appear that the Jewish community, a traditional mainstay of liberalism and the Democratic party, was moving toward conservatism.”¹⁴⁴ That Miller was a Jewish liberal from the Westside of Los Angeles who publicly received support from politically progressive rabbis, Jewish Federation officials, and prominent Democratic politicians throughout California, including Governor Jerry Brown and Mayor Tom Bradley, only served to reify the sensationalist rise of the “new Jewish right” narrative.¹⁴⁵

The anti-busing movement also helped to fuel tensions between blacks and Jews in Los Angeles who were affiliated with Tom Bradley’s mayoral administration. While the Bradley coalition was largely predicated on the notion that black and Jewish Angelenos shared similar civic interests, the busing controversy helped to challenge this assumption and led many black leaders to question whether Jews were reliable political allies. As one such statement from a group of black leaders that included Tom Bradley’s advisor William Elkins, Deputy District Attorney Johnnie Cochran, and John Mack of the Los Angeles Urban League explained, “the negative segregationist aggression exemplified by uncontrolled Jewish voices such as Bobbi Fiedler, Alan Robbins, and Roberta Weintraub represents a form of evil ... the behavior of these three Jewish renegades strains the fabric of a viable working relationship among blacks and Jews in this city.”¹⁴⁶ Of even greater concern for these black leaders was the “public muteness of the ‘silent organized majority’” within Jewish leadership circles and their supposed failure to

¹⁴⁵ Interestingly, three prominent liberal Jewish politicians — Henry Waxman, Howard Berman, and Zev Yaroslavsky — turned down requests to endorse Miller. As reporter Kenneth Reich suggested, “they were bending for essentially political reasons to what they perceived to be the conservative antibusing tide within their own communities.” Jack McCurdy, “Bradley, Civic Leaders to Aid Miller,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 17, 1979; “Coalition to Fight Recall of Miller: Valley Group Backs School Board President,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 24, 1979; Sosa, “Fragmented Diversity,” 540.

¹⁴⁶ “Relationships between Blacks and Jews: A Black Perspective,” Folder 13, Box 4857, BAP.

forcefully speak out against the Bustop group and others who actively oppose desegregation efforts.¹⁴⁷ Black leaders demanded that their longtime allies, liberal Jews who were affiliated with the Bradley coalition and the Jewish Federation, publicly disavow the anti-busing movement; yet, Jewish leaders, as Murray Wood from the CRC explained, resented this external pressure to “condemn his own.”¹⁴⁸

Journalists and African-American leaders were certainly correct to point out that the Jews who spearheaded and supported the anti-busing movement did not adhere to liberal Jewish orthodoxies. What is questionable, though, is whether the Jews of Bustop identified and understood their activism as part of a broader project to reconsider and challenge the liberal-oriented foundations of Jewish political life. Fiedler, Weintraub, and their fellow Valley Jews appeared to be fueled, not by a comprehensive political agenda such as groups like the militant Jewish Defense League, but an obsession with the more specific problem of busing and how it related to educational enrichment, parental control and the heavily racialized suburban ideal. As a frustrated Weintraub explained in 1980, “they bused in students from the inner city with a different value system, a different culture system and nobody, but nobody, prepared the teachers, so chaos resulted.”¹⁴⁹ And it was this fixation that continued to consume Bartman, Fiedler, and Weintraub’s attention on the Board of Education.¹⁵⁰ The anti-busing school board spent much of its efforts devising, defending, and proposing to the court an all-voluntary approach that would

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.; John L. Mitchell, “L.A. Group to Tackle Black, Jewish Issues: Dialogue Fears Busing, PLO, Israel, Affirmative Action May Threaten Unity Dialogue to Tackle Four Issues,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 19, 1979.

¹⁴⁹ Beverly Beyette, “Weintraub: Summing Up School Issues,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 29, 1980.

¹⁵⁰ Laurie Becklund, “Members Feud L.A. School Board: Forum on Incivility Rudeness on L.A. School Board Is Regular Occurrence,” *Los Angeles Times*, October 17, 1980.

effectively do away with mandatory busing.¹⁵¹ Rationalizing their collective modus operandi to the *Los Angeles Times* in the spring of 1980, Weintraub noted, “we came out of the community with a strong conviction from the bottom of our hearts that we were right. I guess I think of politics as representing special interests groups, which, of course, we do.”¹⁵²

III.

About a decade before compulsory busing began to consume how Jewish parents understood and related to the public school system, Jewish educators and religious leaders in Los Angeles (and elsewhere throughout the country) started to question whether the present model of Jewish schooling was in need of a fundamental reform. In the broadest sense, the Jewish school, as preeminent educational theorist Walter Ackerman explained in 1969, “is to contribute to the continued existence of Jews as an identifiable group” through teaching children about Jewish traditions and culture and transmitting Jewish values.¹⁵³ Thus, in both obvious and subtle ways, discussions about Jewish education operated as a commentary on how to shape modes of Jewish identity for the next generation and ensure a viable future for American Jewry.

Aside from the 1,000 or so students that attended one of Los Angeles’s six Orthodox day schools in 1968, 89% of the Jewish children who received *some form* of Jewish education were enrolled in one of Los Angeles’ supplementary religious school programs.¹⁵⁴ These supplemental

¹⁵¹ Kevin Roderick and William Trombley, “Defiance of Busing Plan, Egly Intensifies: Conservatives on Board Rap Judge, Integration Order Conservatives on School Board Intensify Defiance of Egly’s Desegregation Order,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 21, 1980; Sosa, “Fragmented Diversity,” 573; William Trombley and Mimi Ginott, “School Board Draws Fire From 2 Sides: LA Schools: Board Attacked,” *Los Angeles Times* October 29, 1980.

¹⁵² Becklund, “Members Feud L.A. School Board.”

¹⁵³ Walter I. Ackerman, “Jewish Education-For What?,” *The American Jewish Year Book* 70 (1969): 3–36.

¹⁵⁴ Massarik, “A Report on the Jewish Population of Los Angeles, 1968,” Table 23. The exact number of students enrolled in Orthodox day schools is difficult to decipher. Yet, as of 1971, it was less than 1,351. “Some Background Information on Day Schools in Los Angeles,” Jewish Education, 1970-1974 Folder, Box 15, CRC IV; Emil Jacoby,

schools were most often affiliated with Reform and Conservative congregations and offered instruction on either weekday afternoons or Sunday mornings, anywhere from two to six hours a week.¹⁵⁵ Reform schools tended to focus on “developing attitudes which should give the children a feeling of security in our faith and a devotion to Judaism as a way of life”; their Conservative counterparts adopted a more traditional approach by seeking to provide Jewish children with a working knowledge of modern Hebrew, Jewish History, as well as relevant customs and ceremonies.¹⁵⁶ Despite these differences, both Reform and Conservative schools were designed to accommodate the desires of parents who sought to offer their children a Jewish learning experience on a relatively low-commitment, part-time basis.

About 2/3rds of the Jewish public school students in Los Angeles had attended or were in the midst of attending a supplemental school during the late 1960s and early 1970s.¹⁵⁷ Yet, Jewish educators and rabbis were becoming increasingly concerned that Jewish children were not being socialized in a manner that would ultimately foster a meaningful Jewish identity and a commitment to Jewish life. Much of this anxiety stemmed from a frustration with the supplemental school model itself. Studies and reports from the Bureau of Jewish Education of Los Angeles found that high dropout rates, low curricular standards, teachers without proper training, and classroom boredom were commonplace; moreover, the limited number of hours

“The Los Angeles Bureau of Jewish Education Responding to Changing Needs 1975–1988,” *Jewish Education* 56, no. 4 (December 1, 1988): 3–12.

¹⁵⁵ Irwin I. Soref, “The Los Angeles Bureau of Jewish Education in Retrospect 1937–1975,” *Jewish Education* 56, no. 4 (December 1, 1988): 16; Max Vorspan and Lloyd P Gartner, *History of the Jews of Los Angeles* (San Marino, CA: The Huntington Library, 1970), 248–55.

¹⁵⁶ Dr. Harris Hirschberg, Steven Jacobs, Dr. David Bidna, Gerald Miller, “The Religious School of Temple Judea,” Folder 7, Box 111, WSJHA; Vorspan and Gartner, *History of the Jews of Los Angeles*, 122.

¹⁵⁷ Eugene I. Bender, “Patterns of Jewish Identification within Third-Generation Jewry in the County of Los Angeles” (University of Judaism, 1969), 263. Regarding the number of religious school attendees, see United States Commission on Civil Rights, *A Generation Deprived: Los Angeles School Desegregation: A Report of the United States Commission on Civil Rights* (Washington: The Commission, 1977), 152.

devoted to Jewish studies left many students “Jewishly illiterate,” especially in regards to core subjects such as bible and prayer.¹⁵⁸

But beyond a frustration with the supplemental school lay a more fundamental problem with how Jewish practices and beliefs operated and resonated in the home. Jewish educators and community leaders bemoaned that while parents expected supplemental schools to teach their children Jewish subjects, often in preparation for the bar or bat mitzvah ceremony, they personally felt little obligation to expose their children to Jewish values or rituals.¹⁵⁹ According to Geoffrey E. Bock of the AJC a combination of upward mobility, acculturation, and the migration to the suburbs helped to transform the Jewish home from a space that was instrumental in transmitting Jewish identity to one where to one where Jewishness was of minimal significance. “Sixty years ago,” Bock noted, “Jewish educators and parents alike assumed that Jewish schooling simply enriched an indigenous cultural heritage. Jewish educators never claimed that their efforts [alone] would insure cultural continuity and this task has only recently been thrust upon them.”¹⁶⁰

In order to address this crisis of faith with the current arrangement, Jewish educators, rabbis, and lay leaders in Los Angeles began to explore a new form of Jewish schooling—the non-Orthodox day school. Non-Orthodox day schools had been operating on the East Coast since the

¹⁵⁸ Samuel Dinin, “Building Jewish Education in the West,” Folder 1, Box 53, WSJHA; Emil Jacoby, *Continuation and Dropout in Conservative Congregational Schools; a Comparative Study of Students Who Discontinue Their Jewish Education Following Their Bar/Bat Mitzvah Observance and Their Classmates Who Continue in the Hebrew High School or Confirmation Department* (Los Angeles: University of Judaism and Bureau of Jewish Education of the Jewish Federation-Council of Greater Los Angeles, 1970); Soref, “The Los Angeles Bureau of Jewish Education in Retrospect 1937–1975”; Educators in Los Angeles were not the only ones skeptical of the supplemental education model. As historian Hasia Diner has explained, Jewish educators throughout the country “bemoaned the scant number of hours devoted to Jewish education, what they perceived of as the watering down of the curriculum, the fading away of Hebrew-language instruction.” Diner, *The Jews of the United States, 1654 to 2000*, 319.

¹⁵⁹ Ackerman, “Jewish Education-For What?,” 8; Bock, “Does Jewish Schooling Matter?”; Sandberg, *Jewish Life in Los Angeles*, 90.

¹⁶⁰ Bock, “Does Jewish Schooling Matter?,” 11.

early 1950s.¹⁶¹ For numerous reasons—the amount of time devoted to Jewish studies, the day-long Jewish atmosphere, the presence of full-time Jewish studies teachers—they were deemed a more effective vehicle for transmitting Jewish knowledge and values than the supplemental school.¹⁶²

Between 1968 and 1975, five non-Orthodox schools opened in Los Angeles. Each one of these schools was founded independently of one another, some under the auspices of individual synagogues, others as parent-led “community schools.”¹⁶³ What they shared was a commitment to celebrating Jewish pluralism, offering a high quality Judaic and general education, and instilling in their students a strong and positive sense of Jewish identity.¹⁶⁴ These schools were showered with much positive publicity in local Jewish newspapers. Upon the founding of Akiba Academy in 1968, the *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press* celebrated the first Conservative day school in Los Angeles as an institution that will “blend a Torah centered heritage with the finest in American tradition... The school will be staffed with highly qualified, creative teachers having experience in Hebrew and Judaica as well as secular subjects.”¹⁶⁵ Likewise, the *B’nai B’rith Messenger* urged parents to enroll their children in Kadima Day School, which offered “a full three year curriculum of Hebrew and English studies” as well as the “opportunity for individual

¹⁶¹ Jack Wertheimer, “Jewish Education in the United States: Recent Trends and Issues (1999),” *American Jewish Year Book* 99 (January 1, 1999): 20.

¹⁶² Ackerman, “Jewish Education-For What?,” 19; Bock, “Does Jewish Schooling Matter?”; Wertheimer, “Jewish Education in the United States,” 17–22.

¹⁶³ The schools were Akiba Academy (1968), Kadima Hebrew Academy (1968), Abraham Joshua Heschel Day School (1972), Herzl School (1972) and Emanuel Community Day School (1973). Jacoby, “The Los Angeles Bureau of Jewish Education Responding to Changing Needs 1975–1988,” 4; Stuart Laurance Kelman, “Motivations and Goals: Why Parents Send Their Children to Non-Orthodox Jewish Day Schools” (Ph.D., University of Southern California, 1978), 68–72.

¹⁶⁴ Kelman, “Motivations and Goals,” 14. Also see, Diner, *The Jews of the United States, 1654 to 2000*, 318-320.

¹⁶⁵ “Akiba Academy Founded, Opens in Fall,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, June 26, 1968.

and personalized attention for each pupil.”¹⁶⁶ And yet, the first generation of non-Orthodox day schools, to varying degrees, struggled with low enrollments and inadequate funds during their first few years of existence.¹⁶⁷

But as debates over busing became more pressing, local non-Orthodox day schools were increasingly inundated with applications and requests from parents to expand day school enrollment.¹⁶⁸ While Jewish parents throughout Los Angeles took proactive steps to explore the day school model, interest in day schools was especially prevalent in the San Fernando Valley.¹⁶⁹ Indeed, in 1976 and 1977 the waitlist at the recently established Abraham Joshua Heschel Day School and Kadima Hebrew Academy, which were located in the Valley neighborhoods of North Hollywood and Canoga Park respectively, expanded into the hundreds.¹⁷⁰ Likewise, numerous parent groups urged local synagogues and the Jewish Federation’s Bureau of Jewish Education (BJE)—which helped to fund and set curricula guidelines for day schools—to support financially and institutionally the creation of new Jewish private schools.¹⁷¹

While acknowledging that parental motives were multi-faceted, school administrators, educators and rabbis who spoke with prospective day school families and fielded applications

¹⁶⁶ “Kadima School in Third Year,” *B’nai B’rith Messenger*, August 11, 1972.

¹⁶⁷ Sara Smith, “If You Will It, It is No Dream: Jewish Day Schools in Los Angeles,” Works in Progress at the Autry series, April 12, 2016.

¹⁶⁸ Jacoby, “The Los Angeles Bureau of Jewish Education Responding to Changing Needs 1975–1988,” 3–12; Vorspan and Gartner, *History of the Jews of Los Angeles*.

¹⁶⁹ Russell Chandler, “Church Schools Are Reluctant to Offer Refuge From Integration,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 1, 1977.

¹⁷⁰ Russell Chandler, “Popularity of Religious Schools Rising: Busing Escape, Sectarian Training, Education Quality Compete Religious Schools Growing in Popularity,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 18, 1978; Minutes of Board Meeting, June 10, 1976, Bureau of Jewish Education Internal Records (hereafter BJEIR).

¹⁷¹ Jacoby, “The Los Angeles Bureau of Jewish Education Responding to Changing Needs 1975–1988”; Stuart L. Kelman, “Parent Motivations for Enrolling a Child in a Non-Orthodox Jewish Day School,” *Jewish Education* 47, no. 1 (March 1, 1979): 44.

tended to agree that a general disapproval with the public school system was encouraging parents to consider private Jewish schooling. Researching what exactly motivated Jewish parents throughout Los Angeles to consider the non-Orthodox day schools, Rabbi Stuart Kelman found his subjects were most often attracted to day schools, not necessarily to instill a strong sense of Jewish identity, but for “predominantly secular reasons.”¹⁷² That is, they felt that day schools would provide a better overall *general* education for their children than their public counterparts through smaller classes, individualized instruction, better teachers, and enhanced facilities.¹⁷³ Rabbi Harold Schulweis of Valley Beth Shalom spoke with many of his congregants about their child’s schooling and partially attributed the heightened interest in day schools to the racism embedded within the suburban experience: “You mean to tell me parents are registering because a little bit of xenophobia, a little bit of fear and hatred of the stranger, a little bit of discomfort with the blacks and the chicanos.... I suspect it, I am convinced that it must be.”¹⁷⁴

What underlined Schulweis’ observation was a feeling of distress with having day schools become a place a refuge from the LAUSD. While day schools by default functioned as an alternative to public education, rabbis and educators did not initially intend for these schools to become a place where parents could escape the supposed problems of the public school system. In fact, most of Los Angeles’s Reform and Conservative rabbis publicly identified as advocates for an integrated public school system and supporters of Crawford; through individual sermons and collective resolutions, they had called upon the district to facilitate integration in a manner

¹⁷² Kelman, “Motivations and Goals,” 76, 148.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Harold M. Schulweis, “Position on the VBS Day School,” February 24 1978, the Harold M. Schulweis Institute, <http://hmsi.info/position-on-the-vbs-day-school-a-shabbat-service-a-sermon-by-rabbi-harold-m-schulweis>, accessed October 6, 2017. Also of note, BJE director Benjamin Yapko told the *Los Angeles Times* that that San Fernando Valley-based Jewish parents were drawn to day schools because of their concern “about busing and the way it would affect their children’s life.” Chandler, “Church Schools Are Reluctant to Offer Refuge From Integration.”

that would enable all pupils to receive a high-quality education and urged the Jewish masses to help eliminate educational discrimination by supporting integration.¹⁷⁵ As one 1976 resolution from the Board of Rabbis of Southern California explained, “[we call] upon the Jewish community to take an active and constructive role in preparing for the integration of our public schools and to do so in a spirit of goodwill and cooperation with all who share this city with us, and to refrain from acts which may hinder or jeopardize the achievement of integration.”¹⁷⁶

While Jewish religious and educational leaders were reluctant to facilitate Jewish flight from public schools, they also saw a valuable opportunity to develop a more far-reaching day school system that would enrich Jewish life in Los Angeles. Within the context of their institutions’ respective missions, rabbis and educators considered and weighed the relative merits of these two seemingly contradictory imperatives. Spearheading the establishment of Stephen S. Wise Temple in 1964, Rabbi Isaiah Zeldin set out to build a congregation that foregrounded education as a crucial component of Jewish identity and helped congregants of all ages “feel comfortable about their Jewishness” through education.¹⁷⁷ This initially entailed developing a supplemental religious school, summer camps, and holiday workshops. Thereafter, Zeldin and temple officials commenced plans to build a day school though were soon confronted with the question of busing.¹⁷⁸ While Zeldin told reporter John Dart that he wanted to prevent his congregation’s day school from becoming a “dumping ground” for children pulled out of public

¹⁷⁵ John Dart, “L.A. Jews Urged to Aid School Integration: Rabbis’ Stand,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 20, 1977; John Dart, “Rabbi’s Remarks on Jewish Racism Hit: Others in Southland Call Clergyman’s Assessment Wrong,” *Los Angeles Times*, September 30, 1976; John Dart, “Rabbi Warns of Growing Racism by Jews in U.S.,” *Los Angeles Times*, September 25, 1976.

¹⁷⁶ “Statement by the Board of Rabbis of Southern California on School Integration,” Commission on Education, Tuesday February 1, 1977 Folder, Box 212, CRC IV.

¹⁷⁷ Deborah Dash Moore, *Urban Origins of American Judaism*. (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2014), 64.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

schools, he admitted that deciphering parental motives was an impossible task. Stephen S. Wise Day School opened as planned in the fall of 1977.¹⁷⁹

The BJE was faced with a similar challenge. The BJE did not want to encourage an exodus from the public schools but also sought to support a Jewish educational system that would help strengthen Jewish identity and counteract the seemingly corrosive tides of assimilation. From the perspective of BJE director Benjamin Yapko, newfound efforts of Christian evangelicals and cults to attract and convert Jewish youth, as well as the fear that a time-consuming busing program would adversely affect attendance for afternoon supplemental schools and leave a rising number of students without a formal Jewish education, made it all the more necessary for the BJE to fund and support day schools.¹⁸⁰ Ultimately, the BJE under Yapko's direction implemented guidelines in 1977, such as the hiring of qualified administrators and teachers, to ensure that the schools they financially supported were not simply trying "to take advantage of a critical situation" but had "sincere plans to develop quality Jewish educational programming."¹⁸¹ The BJE, as the minutes of meetings reveal, identified their position as one "on the side of principle," applauding themselves for preventing the mushrooming of day schools while also furthering the cause of Jewish education.¹⁸²

Perhaps no Jewish leader in Los Angeles provided a more nuanced and thorough defense of the day school model in the context of the busing crisis than Rabbi Harold Schulweis. Schulweis

¹⁷⁹ Dart, "L.A. Jews Urged to Aid School Integration."

¹⁸⁰ "Minutes of Board Meeting," November 4th, 1976, BJEIR; "Minutes of Board Meeting," April 7, 1977, BJEIR.

¹⁸¹ Indeed, due to these measures, several temples in the San Fernando Valley decided not to open day schools. Jacoby, "The Los Angeles Bureau of Jewish Education Responding to Changing Needs 1975–1988," 3. "Minutes of Board Meeting," February 17, 1977, BJEIR; "Minutes of Board Meeting," September 8, 1977, BJEIR; "Rules and Regulations for Affiliated Schools," Schools Folder, JCLLA Archives box, Jewish Historical Society of Southern California Archives.

¹⁸² "Minutes of Board Meeting," September 8, 1977, BJEIR.

was a theologian and social justice advocate of national renown as well as a rabbi at Valley Beth Shalom in Encino; he had long been concerned with promoting forms of Jewish engagement that would address the specific needs of Jewish Valleyites. For instance, worried that his congregants were suffering from an acute sense of social and spiritual alienation, Schulweis was the first rabbi in the country to adapt the counterculture “Havurah” practice of creative study and religious community building for a mainstream suburban synagogue.¹⁸³ By the mid-1970s, Schulweis had become increasingly concerned that the suburban Jewish experience and “middle-classism,” (the ideology he associated with self-interest, materialism, and privatism) was corrupting time-honored Judaic values.¹⁸⁴ While Schulweis argued that this transformation helped to spur the rise of Bustop—an organization he lambasted for fear mongering and exploiting the Holocaust—he was especially concerned about the ways in which this “perversion of Jewish ethics” was affecting Jewish children.¹⁸⁵ As Schulweis bemoaned at a American Association for Jewish Education conference, “the Jewish child of the middle class is raised to identify the calculative, manipulative intelligence so precious to middle-classism with the moral wisdom sought by Judaism; to identify middle class privatism with Jewish respect for individual worth.”¹⁸⁶

Mounting anxieties about the “middle class ills” of suburban Jewish life led Schulweis to work with his synagogue’s board of directors to establish a day school. In February of 1978,

¹⁸³ Neil Reisner, “Encino and Harold Schulweis,” *Present Tense*, Spring 1982, 38; Mark Oppenheimer, *Knocking on Heaven’s Door: American Religion in the Age of Counterculture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 95-129. For more on the Havurah movement, see Diner, *The Jews of the United States, 1654 to 2000*, 346.

¹⁸⁴ Scheer, “Los Angeles Jews Middle-Class Values Change”; Harold M. Schulweis, “The New Jewish Right,” *Moment Magazine*, May/June 1975, 1-7.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid. Also see, Harold M. Schulweis, “Position on the VBS Day School.”

¹⁸⁶ “New Program to Educate Jewish Family as Means of Preserving Jewish identity of Young,” *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, June 8, 1977; Harold Schulweis, “The Public & Private Agenda in Jewish Education,” *The Pedagogic Reporter*, Fall 1978.

Schulweis delivered an impassioned sermon to his congregants that expounded upon the benefits of the Valley Beth Shalom Day School. From Schulweis's perspective, the day school would help Jewish children develop a stronger sense of Jewish identity through an education that emphasized character building. "We can give your child *character*. Jewish character, which means to live with a sense of purpose, which means to live with such a security that you are created in the image of G-d, that they are able to resist the temptations to narcotize their lives," noted Schulweis.¹⁸⁷ While Schulweis explained that he was certainly afraid of parents "using" Judaism and the institutions of Jewish life to avoid integrated schooling, he also reasoned that the day school could help to serve as an antidote to Jewish racism and xenophobia as well as alleviate anxiety over interacting with minorities. Drawing upon the work of Kurt Lewin, Bruno Bettelheim, and other prominent social scientists, Schulweis believed that Jews who demonstrated reprehensible racist behavior did so in part "because they are uncomfortable with their own Jewishness."¹⁸⁸ And so, by exposing Jewish children to a "Jewish civilization" and an "American civilization" the school would in fact help to provide a young generation of Jews with the ethno-religious self-awareness and self-esteem necessary to function successfully in a pluralistic society.¹⁸⁹

Zeldin, Schulweis, as well as the BJE adhered to a multicultural worldview that valued ethno-religious distinctiveness and the general assumption that private day schools could effectively help to foster Jewish identity. While reluctant to facilitate Jewish flight, they identified separate Jewish schools as a valuable institution for socializing Jewish children. In

¹⁸⁷ Schulweis, "Position on the VBS Day School."

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

many ways, it was this ambivalence and effort to reach a compromise of sorts that differentiated Jewish rabbis and educators from their Protestant and Catholic counterparts who were similarly called upon by white parents to provide an alternative to public schools.¹⁹⁰ In contrast to Jews, Protestant leaders seemed unambiguously enthusiastic about rising parental interest in parochial education.¹⁹¹ While those associated with the burgeoning Christian school movement tended to come from mainline Protestant denominations, they borrowed rhetoric from the evangelical “Christian right” by critiquing public schools for failing to provide students with a moral education and claiming that they would offer a “[higher] quality product.”¹⁹² In contrast, the Catholic Church in Los Angeles, while receiving requests to build schools in suburban parishes, was committed to a policy of non-expansion. In large part this was due to the Church’s tight finances during the late 1970s and the belief that suburban expansion would take resources away from inner-city Catholic schools who primarily served minority students. As Cardinal Timothy Manning explained to the *Los Angeles Times*, “We are also sensitive to the needs of the central city. The economically deprived have to enjoy a high priority for us. We feel that for the present, their needs must take priority over any move....”¹⁹³

Ultimately, rabbis and educators helped to accommodate Jewish parental demand by facilitating the growth of the day school movement. This entailed establishing new day schools, expanding enrollment capacities, hiring and training additional personnel, and building new

¹⁹⁰ Chandler, “Church Schools Are Reluctant to Offer Refuge From Integration”; Russell Chandler, “Popularity of Religious Schools Rising.”

¹⁹¹ Chandler, “Popularity of Religious Schools Rising.”

¹⁹² David G. Savage, “Private Schools Do Well Despite L.A. Busing End: L.A. Busing Is Gone but Private Institutions Linger,” *Los Angeles Times*, August 27, 1981. Martha L. Willman, “Demand for Private Schools Grows, Fills Waiting Lists: Demand for Private Schools Still Exceeds Supply of Classrooms Despite Openings,” *Los Angeles Times*, September 16, 1979.

¹⁹³ Russell Chandler, “Catholic Schools Won’t Expand,” *Los Angeles Times*, September 4, 1979.

facilities. In this regard, the negotiations that transpired between parents and community leaders regarding the expansion of the day school system, at least on a surface level, served the interests of numerous parties who were concerned with the well-being and development of the Jewish child. During the 1976-77 school year, there were five non-Orthodox day schools in Los Angeles with an enrollment of 458 students. Two years later, following the opening of the Stephen S. Wise and Valley Beth Shalom day schools, the number of students attending non-Orthodox day schools had rose to 1,460; by the fall of 1981, 2480 students were enrolled in one of Los Angeles' eleven non-Orthodox day schools¹⁹⁴

Socio-economic and geographic considerations played crucial roles in determining where non-Orthodox day schools were located and who attended them. These institutions tended to be located in those areas of Los Angeles where parental frustration with the public education was especially high and interest in day schools had been rising. Out of the eleven schools that were open by 1981, six were in the San Fernando Valley, four were on the Westside of Los Angeles, and one was located on the outskirts the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood.¹⁹⁵ Even as non-Orthodox day schools were becoming all the more commonplace, the tuition costs associated with these schools created barriers of affordability and accessibility.¹⁹⁶ While the Bureau of Jewish

¹⁹⁴ Kelman, "Motivations and Goals" 17; The Los Angeles Bureau of Jewish Education Budgets, 1980, 18; "Minutes—Bureau Board Meeting," October 1, 1981. Number of students attending Valley Beth Shalom schools is a rough estimate, based off *Los Angeles Times* articles: "Beth Shalom Will Open Day School," *Los Angeles Times*, February 23, 1978. The number of Jewish children receiving an Orthodox day school education also expanded during this same period, rising from around 1200 in the early 1970s to 1862 in 1978 to 2541 in 1981. While a number of Jewish families looking to leave public schools enrolled their children in Orthodox schools, the city's overall Orthodox population also increased during this period. As such, it is difficult to decipher the extent to which frustration with the public school model led to growth of Orthodox schools. "Minutes—Bureau Board Meeting," October 1, 1981, BJEIR; The Los Angeles Bureau of Jewish Education Budgets, 1980, 18; "Some Background Information on Day Schools in Los Angeles," Jewish Education, 1970-1974 Folder, Box 15, CRC IV.

¹⁹⁵ "Minutes—Bureau Board Meeting," October 1, 1981, BJEIR.

¹⁹⁶ Kelman, "Motivations and Goals." Barbara Rosenberg, "Proposition 13: Busing, Declining Enrollment—Implications for Jewish Education," *Jewish Education* 47, no. 1 (March 1, 1979): 23–26.

Education established a fund of \$100,000 to provide need-based scholarships, most of the expenses fell upon individual parents vis-à-vis annual tuition payments, which ranged from \$1,930 (\$6,418, adjusted for inflation) at Stephen S. Wise Day School to \$2450 (\$9050, adjusted for inflation) at Abraham Joshua Heschel Day School.¹⁹⁷ Given these relatively high fees, about 90% of the children who attended non-Orthodox day schools came from middle and upper-middle class families, where the father was typically employed as a white-collar professional and both parents held college degrees.¹⁹⁸ While day school advocates such as Rabbi Stuart Kelman proposed ideas such as sliding scale tuition where the more affluent would contribute a larger share of costs, tuition reform suggestions tended to fall on deaf ears. As such, the day schools continued to primarily function as a choice and luxury for families with means.¹⁹⁹

IV.

The district-wide desegregation movement was contending with potentially debilitating challenges during the early 1980s. In tandem with the proliferation of day schools, the number of non-sectarian and church-affiliated private schools operating in Los Angeles grew, as did the enrollment capacities at existing private schools.²⁰⁰ And some Jewish parents, notably Roberta Weintraub and Tom Bartman, took advantage of the expanding educational marketplace by

¹⁹⁷ Russell Chandler, "Catholic Schools Won't Expand"; Russell Chandler, "Popularity of Religious Schools Rising. Note that scholarships were for both religious and day schools. See, "Minutes of the Meeting," February 2, 1978, BJEIR.

¹⁹⁸ Kelman, "Motivations and Goals," 90-92. Bustop founder Marilyn Fink sent her children to Stephen S. Wise Day School.

¹⁹⁹ Kelman, "Motivations and Goals," 162.

²⁰⁰ Just in the San Fernando Valley alone, 30 new elementary and secondary schools opened between 1977 and 1979; likewise, from June to September 1978 an estimated 50 to 100 schools opened in Los Angeles County. Schneider, "Escape from Los Angeles"; Willman, "Demand for Private Schools Grows, Fills Waiting Lists."

sending their children to non-sectarian private schools.²⁰¹ “There seems to be little doubt,” noted reporter William Trombley, “that the desegregation plan has been a tremendous boon to private schools of all kinds in the Los Angeles area.”²⁰² In large part due to the rising popularity of private schools, the number of white children—Jews and non-Jews alike—attending LAUSD schools dwindled from 219,384 (37% of all students) in 1976 to 127,281 (23% of all students) in 1980.²⁰³ Numerous demographers and social scientists concluded that the shrinking number of white students effectively made it all the more difficult for the district to achieve a sustainable model of integration; as Judge Egly later recalled, “there were too many minority and too few majority [white] students to have a desegregation plan that was feasible and practical.”²⁰⁴

These pessimistic prognostications encouraged Fiedler, Bartman, and Weintraub to continue their anti-busing crusade with vigor. Arguing that ending busing would help to stem white flight and renew faith in the public school model among white families, the Board of Education’s majority persistently proposed alternatives to and challenged mandatory integration.²⁰⁵ By the spring and summer of 1980, these expressions had become openly defiant. The school board’s

²⁰¹ Weintraub sent her child to a private school because her son was subject to bullying at a San Fernando Valley public school. “I felt very strongly that he should be put in a more protected environment,” noted Weintraub. Beyette, “Weintraub: Summing Up School Issues”; Roderick, “Control of School Board Rests on Tuesday Election.” For more on Jewish parents sending their children to non-sectarian private schools, see, Bill Boyarsky, “Threat of Busing Spurs Rush Toward Private Schools,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 1, 1977; Celeste Durant, “Some Stay, Others Flee, but Busing Affects Them All: Soul-Searching for Ones Who Remain Ones Who Remain Search Their Souls,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 18, 1978; Furman, *My Los Angeles*, 43; Sandra Ritter, “Dear Editor,” November 15, 1976, Folder 2, Box 1608, LAUBE; Ed Shevick, “Portola Exodus,” SFV/CRC Education Task Force, Feb. 7, 1979, Box 21, CRC IV.

²⁰² William Trombley, “White Flight--the Unknown Factor: Private School Enrollment Up White Flight,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 18, 1978.

²⁰³ The declining birth rate and outward migration from Los Angeles were also responsible for the drop in the number of white students. Robert Lindsey, “Los Angeles Schools Plan Busing Amid White Flight,” *New York Times*, October 11, 1977; Schneider, “Escape from Los Angeles,” 998.

²⁰⁴ Egly, “Crawford v. Los Angeles Unified School District; An Unfulfilled Plea for Racial Equality,” 302; Sosa, “Fragmented Diversity,” 492; Trombley and Ginott, “School Board Draws Fire From 2 Sides.”

²⁰⁵ Sosa, “Fragmented Diversity,” 580–82.

majority appealed a court order to expand the mandatory busing program, publicly encouraged white parents to leave the district as long as compulsory busing was in effect, and refused to devise and submit to the courts a desegregation budget for the 1980-1981 school year.²⁰⁶ Fiedler, Bartman, and Weintraub were all adamant supporters of Proposition 13 and its mandate to lower taxes in larger part because they believed that a state decline in funding for public education would effectively force the district to eliminate its busing program; what they failed to realize, though, was that the proposition and the resulting tax cut would affect education-related public service other than busing.²⁰⁷ Effectively blind-sided by the reduction in state funds, the school board was forced to hastily eliminate sixth period for 7th through 10th graders and lay off probationary teachers right before the start of the 1980 school year.²⁰⁸

As the district found itself in a state of disarray and confusion throughout the fall of 1980, support among Jewish families for public schools continued to erode.²⁰⁹ Frustrated with and dismayed by the school board's obstructionist agenda, Jewish parents who had embraced integrated schooling for their children increasingly feared that the Board of Education's actions were causing irreparable harm to the school system. Tom Tugend, a local journalist and parent of public school children, criticized the board for its "intense hostility against anyone who counsels

²⁰⁶ Kevin Roderick and William Trombley, "Defiance of Busing Plan, Egly Intensifies: Conservatives on Board Rap Judge, Integration Order Conservatives on School Board Intensify Defiance of Egly's Desegregation Order," *Los Angeles Times*, May 21, 1980; Sosa, "Fragmented Diversity," 578; Trombley and Ginott, "School Board Draws Fire From 2 Sides."

²⁰⁷ William Trombley, "Miller Fighting Hard to Defend, Implement Desegregation Plan Miller Fighting for Desegregation Plan," *Los Angeles Times*, May 28, 1978; Austin and McCurdy, "Voters Oust Miller From School Board." Also see, Eric Avila, *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight: Fear and Fantasy in Suburban Los Angeles* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006); HoSang, *Racial Propositions*.

²⁰⁸ Ibid. These budget cuts resulted from the passage of Proposition 13. For more on the impact of Proposition 13 on public schools, see: Petrzela, *Classroom Wars*, 204–13.

²⁰⁹ "A Statement of Conscience and Concern Issued by the Board of Rabbis of Southern California," October 7, 1980, Folder 15, Box 4221, BAP; Barry Keaton, Sandra Klasky, Richard Geisberg, "Dear Members, Los Angeles Board of Education," September 19, 1980, Folder 15, Box 4221, BAP.

moderations and understanding” and bemoaned that he was “watching with a heavy heart the deterioration of our schools.”²¹⁰ Furthermore, as one *Los Angeles Times* article reported, parents at Warner Avenue in the affluent neighborhood Westwood who were “willing to give [busing] a try” began to lose trust in the district during the summer and fall of 1980; the school board’s shifting plans and teacher cutbacks prompted anxious parents to enroll their children in non-Orthodox day schools (Stephen S. Wise Day School and Emanuel Community School in particular) as well as non-sectarian private schools.²¹¹

Even after the passage of Proposition 1—the state amendment that Allan Robbins proposed to ban mandatory busing as a means to achieve integration—in the middle of the spring of 1981, the day school movement continued to exist and thrive.²¹² Many Jewish parents who experimented with Jewish education in the late 1970s found that they preferred the day school to its public counterparts. Nancy and Barry Levy, for example, decided to send their daughter to Emmanuel Day School primarily because of dissatisfaction with public education and busing, only to become influenced by the school’s Judaic values and embrace Jewish rituals and traditions at home.²¹³ “It’s proven to be one of the most enriching experiences for our whole family. When my daughter started day school five years ago, we had a very small amount of traditional (religious) observances in our house, and that has completely changed now,” noted

²¹⁰ Tom Tugend, “Jew Against Jew on School Busing,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, December 5th, 1980.

²¹¹ Pat B. Anderson, “Indecision Left ‘Best School’ in Shambles, Parents Say: School Board’s Shifting Plans Called Principal Cause of ‘White Flight’ at Warner Avenue ‘White Flight’ Blamed on Board,” *Los Angeles Times*, October 12, 1980.

²¹² Kevin Roderick and Gerald Feris, “L.A. Will End Busing April 1; Parents Will Be Permitted Option on Pupil Transfers,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 17, 1981. Also see, Harry D. Hoekstra et al., “Letters to The Times: School Problems in Los Angeles,” *Los Angeles Times*, September 28, 1980.

²¹³ “Learning How to Be Jewish: Pupils, Parents Rediscover Roots in Day Schools.”

Mr. Levy.²¹⁴ With the end of busing, whatever reluctance the Bureau of Jewish Education had towards supporting the unfettered growth of the day school movement and encouraging “white flight” had dissipated. Indeed, during the early 1980s, the BJE undertook new initiatives, such as developing brochures and sponsoring newspaper columns, all in the name of attracting new families to day schools and thus helping to transmit “our culture all through educational means.”²¹⁵ By the end of the 1980s, the number of Jewish students enrolled in day schools rose to around 7,000.²¹⁶

Concurrently, the question of whether it was possible for Jewish children to receive a “quality education” in a public school system continued to consume parents.²¹⁷ While busing generated intense parental skepticism and unease with Los Angeles Unified during the late 1970s, the long-term fiscal consequences of Proposition 13—for example, the district lacked the funds to build new facilities that would help alleviate overcrowded classrooms, eliminated summer school, and reduced the number of electives offerings in shop, music, and journalism—reinforced these assumptions throughout the 1980s.²¹⁸ The funding problem was exacerbated by the fact that student attendance helped to determine state funding for public schools, which

²¹⁴ Ibid. Similarly praising the day school for her two sons, Nancy Sloan of Westwood noted, “I think it’s great because they learn traditions and customs. And when they grow up they feel very much part of the community. They don’t feel strange when they go to temple. It’s become a part of life.”

²¹⁵ “Bureau of Jewish Education Review,” November 1982, Planning and Budgeting Department, Jewish Federation Council of Greater Los Angeles, 22, 43.

²¹⁶ “Erosion of Allocations in Contrast to Student Enrollment,” Bureau of Jewish Education Budgets 1985, BJER.

²¹⁷ Herb Brin, “Jewish Students are Leaving the Public Schools,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, August 27, 1993; Marshall Grossman, CRC Board Meeting, April 11, 1986, CRC Executive Committee 1986 Folder, Box 3, CRC V; Minutes, Community Relations Committee, April 11, 1986, CRC Board Minutes, January 10, 1986-December 12, 1986 Folder, Box 46, CRC VI.

²¹⁸ James S. Catterall and Emily Brizendine, “Proposition 13: Effects on High School Curricula, 1978-1983,” *American Journal of Education* 93, no. 3 (1985): 327–51; Robert Gottlieb, *The Next Los Angeles: The Struggle for a Livable City* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 151–52. Pamela Moreland, “Post-Prop. 13 Surge in Summer School Expected,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 17, 1985.

declined as parents increasingly opted to enroll their children in private schools.²¹⁹ While some Jewish families continued to support Los Angeles Unified within this strained environment, they overwhelmingly gravitated towards enrichment focused magnet schools and other select public schools in affluent, heavily Jewish neighborhoods where parent groups raised funds for supplemental services and programs.²²⁰ And yet, on the aggregate, the district's reputation had fallen in esteem among Jewish parents during the 1980s. As one CRC official explained to the district superintendent, "the perception of [our] community is that the LAUSD is dying but even more serious, it is ineffectual and failing in its job to adequately educate children to live, and work in our society."²²¹ In this regard, Jews were one of many groups in Los Angeles and California more broadly that lost faith in the public school model as an all-important social institution following the passage of Proposition 13.²²²

Paralleling the decline in parental support for the public school model, Jewish community organizations also deprioritized public education as an agenda item. While during the mid-1970s, the AJC and the CRC employed full-time staff members to address public education-related concerns, these positions were cut during the early-1980s; likewise, by the end of the decade, both organizations had eliminated their respective "education committees" that had worked closely with parent groups and district officials to shape curricula offerings and ensure the twin

²¹⁹ HoSang, *Racial Propositions*, 128.

²²⁰ Bruce A. Phillips, "Rational Choice Meets School Choice in the Jewish Community: The Case of Jewish Day Schools," Paper presented at the Association for the Study of Religion, Economics, and Culture conference, November 2007. For more on magnet schools: Ryane McAuliffe Straus, "Reconstructing Los Angeles Magnet Schools: Representations in Newspapers," *Peabody Journal of Education* 79, no. 2 (2004): 98–121; John L. Mitchell, "Castle Heights Parents Say Enrollment Drive Worked," *The Los Angeles Times*, October 6, 1985.

²²¹ "Dear Dr. Handler," Commission on Education Folder, Box 55, CRC V.

²²² Petrzela, *Classroom Wars*, 202–17.

goals of providing quality education and integration during the 1970s.²²³ To a certain extent, organizational disengagement from the public school system was a response to and reflection of declining levels of enthusiasm for public education among Jewish parents.²²⁴ “The Jewish community’s general apathy towards public education,” as one community official observed, prompted the CRC and the AJC to “shift away from public education concerns.”²²⁵ More than passively following the direction of Jewish parents though, Jewish organizations recognized that San Fernando Valley-based parents who sought to preserve exclusionary notions of community had overwhelmingly rejected their educational agendas, especially advocacy for district-wide integration, and felt pressure to reassess their seemingly unpopular *modus operandi*. As such, community organizations became increasingly reluctant to take a stand on educational issues that could be deemed “controversial.” Explaining to journalist Susan Littwin the ways in which the busing crisis affected the CRC’s priorities, its chairman Richard Volpert noted, “I work hard to steer a neutral course and I insist that the pros and cons of every issue should be explored. Ten years ago there was more of an automatic line-up on one side of the fence.”²²⁶

Even as Jewish organizations gradually pulled away from public school advocacy efforts, they continued to invest in projects that taught Jewish children about and exposed them to other cultures and communities. Most notable in this respect was the Black-Jewish Youth Experience (BJYE), which was sponsored by Tom Bradley’s formalized Black-Jewish Leadership Coalition

²²³ Marlene Adler Marks, “Back to Basics,” *The Jewish Journal*, October 21, 1999; “Minutes of Meeting, CRC Executive Committee Jewish Federation Council of Greater Los Angeles,” March 27, 1981, CRC Exec. Committee Meeting, 1981 Folder, Box 32, CRC V. Also note that the 1987/1988 CRC Program Proposal, which outlined general goals and objectives, says little of public education. See 1987/1988 CRC Program Proposal, CRC Executive Committee 1986/1987 Folder, Box 3, CRC V.

²²⁴ “Minutes of Meeting, CRC Executive Committee Jewish Federation Council of Greater Los Angeles,” March 27, 1981, CRC Exec. Committee Meeting, 1981 Folder, Box 32, CRC V.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*

²²⁶ Littwin, “The Right Approach: Jews and the GOP.”

and the CRC and received support from the AJC, the Board of Rabbis of Southern California, and Valley Beth Shalom.²²⁷ Established in 1980, the program offered about 60 to 80 black and Jewish high schoolers a year “an opportunity to develop an increased understanding and an appreciation for each other,” and a “constructive forum for the discussion of mutual issues and concerns.”²²⁸ Activities included weekend camping retreats, field trips to black and Jewish cultural centers, meeting with politicians and civic leaders, and Easter/Passover celebrations.²²⁹ The Jewish students who participated in the program, at least according to media coverage, benefited from and internalized BJYE’s core mission.²³⁰ As high schooler Greg Worchell of Encino explained, “This is a great opportunity to get insight into another group and to interact with blacks.... before, my opinions were based on what others had told me, on what you would call stereotypes.”²³¹

Within the context of 1980s Los Angeles, in which public schools were resegregating and opportunities for interactions between Jewish and black children were diminishing, the BJYE program was an exception to the dominant social trends. And with financial support from synagogues, black churches, public officials, and private citizens, the BJYE lasted through the

²²⁷ “CRC Black-Jewish Dialogue,” Folder 3, Box 3812, BAP; Ethel Narvis, “Black/Jewish Students Program,” November 21, 1979, Folder 3, Box 3812, BAP.

²²⁸ “Black and Jewish Youth Experience, in: A Program begun in 1980 for high school students,” Black/Jewish Youth Experience, Steering Committee Meetings, 83/84 Folder, Box 70, CRC V.

²²⁹ Ibid; Patricia Franklin, “Weekend Dispels Stereotypes: Black and Jewish Students Unify,” *Los Angeles Times*, March 27, 1981; Marla Landis, Greg Brown, “Dear Members of the BJYE,” November 5, 1982, Black/Jewish Youth Experience, Steering Committee Meetings, 83/84 Folder, Box 70, CRC V.

²³⁰ Ibid; Ira Rifkin, “Black, Jewish Youth Camp Together for Understanding,” *Daily News*, January 11, 1984; Hanelle Rubin, “‘We Learned to Share Similar Problems’: Black-Jewish Youth Dialogue,” *Israel Today*, Black/Jewish Youth Experience, Steering Committee Meetings, 83/84 Folder, Box 70, CRC V.

²³¹ Rifkin, “Black, Jewish Youth Camp Together for Understanding.”

middle of the decade.²³² At the same time though, its goals, which effectively identified the development of multicultural competence as an extra-curricular enrichment activity for a select few, were relatively limited in comparison to the proposals that Jewish educational activists had advocated for a decade earlier. The narrowness of the BJYE project was in many ways a reaction to a decade-plus educational experiment that left Jews without a clear-cut role in the realm of public education. A combination of factors—the perceived deterioration of the school district, Jewish flight, and the growing popularity of private schools—compelled educational activists to reconsider the scope of their youth development objectives and enabled a “fortress form” of civic engagement that called upon Jewish children to participate in public life in a highly meditated and safeguarded manner. These limits to Jewish civic participation, as these next two chapters will demonstrate, became even clearer with the rise of slow growth politics and the disintegration of the so-called Bradley coalition.

²³² Jerry Freedman Habush, “To: Murray Wood,” February 18, 1982, Black/Jewish Youth Experience Programs Folder, Box 70, CRC V.

Chapter 4

Searching for the Jewish Stake in the Neighborhood: Beverly-Fairfax from the Urban Crisis to the Age of Gentrification

In August 1988, the City of Los Angeles' Cultural Affairs Department, as part of its mandate to showcase the ethnic diversity in Los Angeles, sponsored an all-day festival at Fairfax High School entitled "Treasures of Fairfax: A Salute to Jewish Cultural Traditions."¹ Organized by local politicians, Jewish communal leaders, and neighborhood activists, the festival featured Yiddish storytelling sessions, Sephardic and klezmer musical performances, Soviet Jewish craft demonstrations, as well as panel discussions regarding the vitality of Orthodox life in Los Angeles.² In addition to celebrating the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood as "a genuine microcosm of the Jewish world" and a source of "Jewish cultural heritage," the festival served as a vehicle to address contemporary political concerns. Indeed, organizers used the festival to warn Angelenos that the neighborhood was in danger of losing its distinctly Jewish character and its sense of community. As one pamphlet for the festival explained, "Fairfax is subject to rapid change and development. The resilience and comingling of its Jewish traditions today may not be found there in such vibrancy tomorrow. We hope this spotlight of some of its 'treasures' will help explain and sustain the daily festival that is Fairfax."³

The impulse to emphasize the Jewish significance of the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood was not a new phenomenon. Starting in the mid 1970s, Jewish organizations, political and religious leaders, and neighborhood residents increasingly invested in a form of Beverly-Fairfax localism

¹ For more on the Cultural Affairs Department and its political agenda, see Daniel Widener, *Black Arts West: Culture and Struggle in Postwar Los Angeles* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 244.

² Los Angeles (Calif.), Cultural Affairs Department, and Folk Arts Program, *Treasures of Fairfax: A Salute to Jewish Cultural Traditions* (Los Angeles, Calif.: City of Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Dept., 1988).

³ *Ibid.*

that aggressively promoted Jewish attachments to the neighborhoods and addressed place-based concerns as issues of ethno-religious significance even if the link was often slippery. In comparison to other arenas for Jewish political activity such as the electoral realm and debates over school busing, the categories of liberal and conservative were not all that relevant in the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood, where traditional political distinctions were often blurred in the name of neighborhood integrity.

Beverly-Fairfax localism evolved through various iterations but was rooted in two key principles. First was the general assumption that maintaining and sustaining Beverly-Fairfax as a Jewish place was in the best interest of the greater Jewish community—the secular and the religious, immigrant newcomers and longtime residents, affluent Westsiders and lower-middle class storeowners. Second, localism was also predicated on the idea that outsiders and outside influences—whether in the form of racial minorities or large-scale commercial development—needed to be, if not wholly excluded, prevented from overwhelming the neighborhood and thus harming the ideal of Beverly-Fairfax as a “Jewish space.” Over a fifteen-year period, Jews tried to negotiate these two imperatives and in the process employed governmental and private resources as well as manpower and public relation campaigns to achieve such ends.

Examining the Jewish relationship to the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood illuminates how Los Angeles’ Jews understood and contended with the local political process and the broader structures of civic power. During the 1970s and 1980s, Los Angeles, in large part due to new sources of immigration and heightened levels of ethno-racial diversity, emerged as a cosmopolitan world city in which open expressions of group distinctiveness were publicly valorized. Like their fellow Angelenos, Jewish politicians, activists, rabbis and other community leaders saw in Los Angeles’s political culture and its neighborhoods the opportunity to balance

the ideal of cultural pluralism with exclusionary notions of community. Within this context, Jews were one of the few groups in Los Angeles with white racial privilege and an identifiable ethnic affiliation and increasingly occupied municipal leadership positions. Much of this energy (and corresponding communal resources) were funneled into the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood; Beverly-Fairfax localism thus became a key referendum on the general value of Jewish civic engagement and neighborhood-based identity politics.

To a certain extent, Jewish localism reflected broader national trends during the final third of the twentieth century. In various cities throughout the country, upwardly mobile American Jews (who now lived far from the neighborhoods of yore) reclaimed first and second settlement areas as objects of cultural authenticity, historical memory, and prime political importance.

Chronicling the emergence of New York's Lower East Side as the "American Jewish Plymouth Rock," historian Hasia Diner notes that, "at a time when rabbis and Jewish newspapers, organizations and schools express openly their fears of a looming break in the continuity of the Jewish people, they and the masses of American Jews have sought out the Lower East Side, a place where they can stake a claim to their peoplehood in America."⁴ Likewise, Lila Corwin Berman reveals that even as Jews left Detroit en masse and moved to the suburbs, they continued to express deep concerns for the city's wellbeing and for the old neighborhood and constructed a Jewish political identity predicated on the idea of "remote urbanism."⁵

While Beverly-Fairfax existed as a symbol of nostalgia and a political focal point for Jews living outside the "urban core," the development of Jewish localism in Los Angeles was

⁴ Hasia Diner, *Lower East Side Memories: A Jewish Place in America* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000), 8, 182.

⁵ Lila Corwin Berman, *Metropolitan Jews: Politics, Race, and Religion in Postwar Detroit* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007); Lila Corwin Berman, "Jewish Urban Politics in the City and Beyond," *The Journal of American History* 99, no. 2 (September 2012): 492–518.

distinctive from what transpired with New York's Lower East Side and Detroit's Twelfth Street-Linwood-Dexter neighborhood.⁶ Although some Jews left Beverly-Fairfax, other Jews continued to live and, in fact, moved into the neighborhood. Not simply a site of historical resonance like its counterparts in other cities, Beverly-Fairfax had a majority Jewish population as well as numerous ethnic storefronts and provided an array of commercial and social services for its residents.⁷ Along the socio-economic, religious, and geographic fault lines that structured Jewish life in Los Angeles, Jewish Angelenos understood Beverly-Fairfax as a physical space and conceptual landscape.

This chapter chronicles the rise, apex, and erosion of Beverly-Fairfax localism from the mid-1970s through the late-1980s. To chart this shift, I focus on the ways in which an array of neighborhood stakeholders operated in tension and in tandem with each other in their effort to define who and what belonged within the Fairfax "community" and what exactly made the neighborhood "Jewish." During the early 1970s, the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood faced the prospect of racial integration and the outward migration of middle-class Jews; as a result, it became a site of a Jewish urban crisis. Activists, religious leaders, social service professionals, politicians, and residents—whether seeing Beverly-Fairfax as a bulwark against assimilation, a religious destination, a Jewish social service center, or a focal point for Jewish cultural identity—found distinct though complementary reasons to salvage and bolster what was considered the authentic ethnic character of this seemingly marginalized neighborhood. These overlapping interests helped to not only transform Beverly-Fairfax's identity into that of a cosmopolitan and

⁶ Berman, *Metropolitan Jews*. Also see, Barry Goldberg, "The World of Our Children': Jews, Puerto Ricans, and the Politics of Place and Race on the Lower East Side, 1963-1993" (CUNY Graduate Center, 2017).

⁷ Janice Goldstein, "Jewish Neighborhoods in Transition," *Our Stake in the Urban Condition*, Pertinent Papers. (Domestic Affairs Department, American Jewish Committee, October 1980).

multi-purpose Jewish space but also catapult localism to the mainstream of Jewish civic life and Los Angeles's political culture.

The collision of various ethnic-oriented political and social agendas also posed a key challenge to Beverly-Fairfax localism. Starting in the early-1980s, large-scale land redevelopment pressures and the resulting gentrification process began to threaten to displace the neighborhood's residents and eradicate its ethnic signifiers. To address these concerns, elected officials, community leaders, and local businessmen steered a revitalization project that sought to promote selective, community-driven commercial growth and renovate Beverly-Fairfax into a commercially viable ethnic heritage destination. While Beverly-Fairfax boosters reasoned that controlled economic revitalization would preserve the neighborhood's ethnic character and benefit the Fairfax community in its entirety, grassroots activists, social service agencies, and residents questioned and looked beyond commercial solutions as a way to sustain the neighborhood's ethnic ecosystem.

With Jewish interests diverging and the looming specter of large-scale development becoming all the more ominous, stakeholders at every level were confronted with the question of how to proceed. The potency of localism dissolved not simply because efforts to forge a communal consensus proved futile, but also because Jews increasingly questioned whether ethnic political models could protect residents from the practical problems that large-scale commercial development engendered. By denying Jews the opportunity to merge their civic and economic interests with their Jewish identities, the minefield of growth politics prompted many Jewish leaders and activists to minimize their previously intense attachments to the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood and recognize the limitations of their ability to control broad urban trends.

I.

During the postwar period, the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood boasted the highest residential concentration of Jews in Los Angeles, mostly of a middle-class and lower-middle class standing, as well as numerous retail stores, religious institutions, and eateries along or nearby the Fairfax Avenue commercial strip that principally catered to Jews.⁸ Starting in the mid-1960s, a set of inter-related demographic and social changes began to transform the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood. While Jews constituted 70% of the neighborhood's population from the early 1950s through the mid-1960s, more affluent and younger Jewish residents increasingly left Fairfax and moved toward the San Fernando Valley and the Westside of Los Angeles, a process that intensified during the late 1960s with the migration of African Americans into the adjacent Wilshire-Fairfax neighborhood and the racial integration of local public schools.⁹ The number of Jewish households in Beverly-Fairfax dropped by 30% (from 11,725 to 8,547) from the late 1960s through the early 1970s.¹⁰ Those who stayed within the neighborhood—often because they lacked the means to uproot themselves and move elsewhere—were older, poorer, and more religious than the city's Jewish population at large.¹¹ Alongside these demographic

⁸ Robert L. Blumenthal, "Fairfax as a Gray Area Ethnic Community" (University of Southern California, 1973); Lynn C. Kronzek and Southern California Jewish Historical Society, *Fairfax: A Home, a Community, a Way of Life* (Los Angeles: Jewish Historical Society of Southern California, 1990), 21–39; Fred Massarik, "A Report on the Jewish Population of Los Angeles, 1951" (Los Angeles: Jewish Federation-Council of Greater Los Angeles, 1951), 11; Fred Massarik, "A Report on the Jewish Population of Los Angeles, 1959" (Los Angeles: Jewish Federation-Council of Greater Los Angeles, 1959), 8.

⁹ See chapters 2 and 3.

¹⁰ Bruce Phillips, "Los Angeles Jewry: A Demographic Portrait" (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1986).

¹¹ According to Fred Massarik's 1967 study of the Los Angeles Jewish community, 42% of Jewish households in Los Angeles had incomes over \$10,000 (\$74,454.41, adjusted for inflation); 16.4% of the population was above the age of 60. In the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood, 29.8% of the households had incomes over \$10,000; 20.4% of the population was above the age of 60. Fred Massarik, "A Report on the Jewish Population of Los Angeles, 1968" (Los Angeles: Jewish Federation-Council of Greater Los Angeles, 1968), 4, 27. Also see, Blumenthal, "Fairfax as a Gray Area Ethnic Community"; Bruce Phillips, *Analysis of the 1974 Jewish Population Indicator Reports* (Los Angeles: Department of Community Planning, Jewish Federation-Council, n.d.); Phillips, "Los Angeles Jewry: A Demographic Portrait," 161.

transformations, property values, and income levels throughout Beverly-Fairfax correspondingly declined; by the early 1970s Beverly-Fairfax had become a noticeably lower-middle class enclave characterized by rising crime rates and markers of commercial blight.¹²

The changing social composition of Beverly-Fairfax was not an aberration in the annals of Jewish urbanism but part of a broader, seemingly predictable, pattern of Jewish flight from relatively marginalized urban neighborhoods throughout the country in postwar America. Jewish socio-economic ascendance, the portability of communal institutions, and widespread ambivalence towards the prospect of racial integration drove Jews to abandon “second settlement areas” like West Adams and Boyle Heights in Los Angeles, the Twelfth Street-Linwood-Dexter neighborhood in Detroit, Roxbury in Boston, and Ocean Hill-Brownsville in Brooklyn.¹³ Jewish community leaders, activists, and politicians in Los Angeles during the late 1960s and early 1970s contemplating the fate of Beverly-Fairfax commonly articulated and echoed the sentiment that “the problem of continuity of Jewish life within the urban core has been one that communities across the country have faced for some time” and frequently reasoned that it was only a matter of time until Fairfax ceased to exist as a predominantly Jewish place.¹⁴

¹² The City of Los Angeles’ Community Analysis Bureau calculated the socioeconomic status of each census tract based off of income, education, and home value and ranked these tracts on a 1 (“upper economic status”) through 4 (“low economic status”) scale. On average, the eight Fairfax census tracts (1944, 1922, 1921, 1945, 2144, 2143, 2142, 2146) dropped from 1.875 in 1950 to 2.125 in 1960 to 2.5 in 1970. Los Angeles (Calif.), Thomas A. Smuczynski, and Yoon Lee, eds., *1980 Los Angeles County Forecast* (Los Angeles, Calif: The Bureau, 1977). Also see Blumenthal, “Fairfax as a Gray Area Ethnic Community,” 15–79.

¹³ Berman, *Metropolitan Jews*, 97–105; Gerald Gamm, *Urban Exodus: Why the Jews Left Boston and the Catholics Stayed* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001); Jeffrey Gurock, *Jews in Gotham: New York Jews in a Changing City, 1920-2010*, City of Promises 3 (New York: NYU Press, 2013); Fred Massarik, “The Jewish Population of the West Adams Area: A Tentative Report” (Jewish Centers Association, 1948); George Sanchez, “‘What’s Good for Boyle Heights Is Good for the Jews’: Creating Multiracialism on the Eastside during the 1950s,” *American Quarterly* 56.3 (2004): 633–61.

¹⁴ Fred Massarik, *Jewish Population Trends in the Beverly-Fairfax Area 1960/1972/1982*, Los Angeles, Jewish Federation Council of Greater Los Angeles, December 1972, mimeo, 7; Harvey Moss, “Proposal for the Development of a Beverly-Fairfax Community Organization,” Beverly-Fairfax Neighborhood Stabilization Folder, Box 213, Group 10, Jewish Federation Council of Greater Los Angeles, Community Relations Committee

Race and anxiety about racial integration in particular loomed large in communal conversations about Beverly-Fairfax and its Jewish future. In his study, “Jewish Population Trends in the Beverly-Fairfax Area,” sociologist Fred Massarik noted that while African-Americans constituted only about 5% of the neighborhood’s population in 1970, the black population would gradually increase throughout the decade. Massarik concluded that, similar to the Jews of Boyle Heights who left because of the “Spanish-American” influx, the most probable pattern for Beverly-Fairfax was one of “gradual decline.”¹⁵

The arc of American Jewish history would seem to suggest that Los Angeles’ Jews, just as they moved away from West Adams and Boyle Heights during the immediate postwar period, would eventually desert Beverly-Fairfax. Yet, Fairfax’s supposed decline as a Jewish neighborhood was occurring under markedly different historical circumstances for Jews in Los Angeles and elsewhere throughout the country. In the wake of the 1967 Six-Day War, American Jews increasingly embarked upon initiatives that aimed to strengthen the foundations of American Jewish life, focus on the specific needs of the Jewish community at home and abroad, and sanctify Jewish distinctiveness.¹⁶ Heightened interest in particularistic Jewish concerns coincided with the nationwide neighborhood movement of the 1970s; as historian Suleiman Osman has explained “neighborhoodism” was rooted in the idea that neighborhoods could provide an authentic sense of community and neighborhood planning was best left in the hands of local residents and organizations.¹⁷ In Los Angeles, the concept of “neighborhoodism” was

Collection, IV, Urban Archives Center, Oviatt Library, California State University, Northridge (hereafter CRC); Zev Yaroslavsky, “Fairfax: Death of a Jewish Community,” *Ha’am*, May 1972.

¹⁵ Massarik, *Jewish Population Trends in the Beverly-Fairfax Area*.

¹⁶ See chapter 2 of dissertation.

¹⁷ Suleiman Osman, “The Decade of the Neighborhood,” in *Rightward Bound: Making America Conservative in the 1970s*, ed. Bruce J Schulman and Julian E Zelizer (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2008), 106–27;

closely tied to the city's ethno-racial diversity: different groups—whether that was Latinos in East Los Angeles, Japanese Americans in Little Tokyo, or African Americans in Watts—invested in specific ethnic enclaves as a means to preserve seemingly distinct modes of communal identity and assert “community control” over local policies and resources.¹⁸

In light of and in response to these broad developments, Jews increasingly branded Beverly-Fairfax as a social and geographical realm worthy of Jewish attention. Carried out by disparate subgroups and organizations, investments in the neighborhood reflected a variety of distinct interests and agendas. What they collectively shared though was promoting Jewish attachments to Beverly-Fairfax and advancing the premise that Jews and perceived Jewish interests should and could guide the fate and future of the neighborhood.

Perhaps most noticeably, during the 1970s, Beverly-Fairfax became a crucial source of cultural and public identity for Jewish Angelenos. Responding to the outward migration of upwardly mobile Jews towards the Westside and the San Fernando Valley, local journalists, artists, and activists were instrumental in advancing the trope of Fairfax as “the great ethnic neighborhood” in what was otherwise perceived as a sprawling, homogenous, and alienating metropolis. From their perspective, Beverly-Fairfax was an incubator for Jewish authenticity and old world sensibilities.¹⁹ Newspaper articles with maudlin titles like “Fairfax: Old Ways Survive

Neal R. Peirce, “Neighborhood Action Moves Cities Into the '80s,” *Los Angeles Times (1923-Current File)*, December 30, 1979.

¹⁸ Laura Dominguez, “Este Lugar Sí Importa,” *California History* 93, no. 3 (August 1, 2016): 58–60; Hillary Jenks, “‘Home Is Little Tokyo’: Race, Community, and Memory in Twentieth -Century Los Angeles” (Ph.D., University of Southern California, 2008), 206–26, 267–80; Doug Shuit, “Ceta--a Complex Part of the City's Political Glue,” *Los Angeles Times*, December 19, 1978; Widener, *Black Arts West*, 221–49.

¹⁹ Harvey Edwards and Jody Avery, *Fairfax*. (New York, Los Angeles: Copley Press West, 1976); Garnt Lee, “Fairfax--It's Still Where the Heart Is,” *Los Angeles Times*, December 21, 1975; Gerald Faris and Skip Ferderber, “Fairfax: Lower East Side of the West,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 18, 1973; Robert Spiegel, *By the Rivers of Babylon*, n.d.; Susan Pasternak, “Fairfax Remains Stable,” *Pico Post*, April 27, 1978; Gary Wexler, “The Sights and Sounds of L.A.'s Traditional Jewish Community: The Fairfax File the Fairfax File,” *Los Angeles Times*, August 29, 1978.

in Changing Times,” “Fairfax: Lower East Side of the West,” and “Fairfax – Its Still Where the Heart Is,” pointed towards “the elderly... gesticulating on street corners, sitting on city bus benches,” the “broken English and fluent Yiddish,” and the “aromas of hot corned beef and fresh lox” as the visible signs of ethnic distinctiveness and the potent symbols of Jewish life. Local Jewish counterculture activists similarly romanticized Beverly-Fairfax; they believed that the neighborhood could protect against the perceived blandness and soullessness of suburbia.²⁰ As one student activist noted, “it simply isn’t conceivable that Ventura Blvd. Laurel Canyon, or Victory Blvd. can replace the Jewish community that has grown around Fairfax Avenue. The Valley is suburban WASP country—it’s Encino and Reseda, Woodland Hills and Canoga Park; that can never become a Jewish community.”²¹ In this equation, if upward mobility led to residential dispersal and inevitability assimilation, Beverly-Fairfax emerged as a lower-middle-class milieu where authentic Jewish life and ethnic idiosyncrasies could persist and thrive.

At the same time that writers and activists exalted the cultural significance of Beverly-Fairfax, the area also received heightened interest from Orthodox Jews. From the perspective of Orthodox leaders on the East Coast, Los Angeles was a wasteland, exemplified by lax religious observance, interfaith marriages, as well as the young “lost Jews” involved in the secular hippie subculture; intervention, they reasoned, was necessary.²² As Rabbi Baruch Cunin of the Chabad movement later explained, “I was sent to Los Angeles by the Rebbe to work for Judaism as his

²⁰ For more on this phenomenon, see Rachel Kranson, “‘To Be a Jew on America’s Terms Is Not to Be a Jew at All’: The Jewish Counterculture’s Critique of Middle-Class Affluence,” *Journal of Jewish Identities* 8, no. 2 (2015): 59–84.

²¹ Blumenthal, “Fairfax as a Gray Area Ethnic Community,” 12; Yaroslavsky, “Fairfax: Death of a Jewish Community.”

²² Merrill Singer, “Chassidic Recruitment and the Local Context,” *Urban Anthropology* 7, no. 4 (1978): 373–83; Iddo Tavory, “The Hollywood Shtetl: From Ethnic Enclave to Religious Destination,” *Ethnography* 11, no. 1 (2010): 89–108; “Weekend with Naftali Estulin Family,” Interviews and Notes folder, Box 128, Barbara G. Myerhoff Papers, University Archives, Special Collections, USC Libraries, University of Southern California (hereafter BGMP).

emissary, to see what could be done to better the Jews of Los Angeles.”²³ Religious carpetbaggers such as Cunin and Rabbi Chaim Fasman of the Lakewood Yeshiva in New Jersey recognized Beverly-Fairfax—because of its central location, its relatively affordable real estate, its large Jewish population, and its existing amenities for an Orthodox lifestyle—as a neighborhood that could help to stem the assimilation trends that were supposedly engulfing the Los Angeles Jewish community and attract Orthodox Jews from elsewhere to move to Los Angeles.²⁴ With funds raised from private donors who supported their respective missions, the newly arrived religious leaders spearheaded efforts to transform Beverly-Fairfax into a premiere religious destination.²⁵ This entailed opening new synagogues, yeshivas, mikvahs, and kosher restaurants within the Beverly-Fairfax area, installing a neighborhood *eruv* (which allowed Orthodox Jews to carry items outside the home on the Sabbath), and providing subsidized or free housing for those who were eager to join the Beverly-Fairfax Orthodox community.²⁶

The Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood also received enhanced attention from the Los Angeles Jewish Federation-Council, which oversaw communal planning, fundraising, and resource allocation for approximately 500 Jewish organizations in Los Angeles. While Federation leaders

²³ Singer, “Chassidic Recruitment and the Local Context,” 378.

²⁴ Barbara Myerhoff, “Culture of Fairfax: Proposal to the National Endowment for the Humanities,” NEH Grant Application for Culture of Fairfax, Box 129, BGMP; *Ibid.*; Tavory, “The Hollywood Shtetl.”

²⁵ For example, an organization called Friends of Lubavitch, mostly consisting of non-Chassidic supporters of the movement, helped to raise funds for Chabad in Los Angeles. Sue Fishkoff, *The Rebbe’s Army: Inside the World of Chabad-Lubavitch* (New York: Schocken Books, 2003), 175. Also see, Singer, “Chassidic Recruitment and the Local Context,” 378; Iddo Tavory, *Summoned: Identification and Religious Life in a Jewish Neighborhood* (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2016), 31–36.

²⁶ Such investments in the neighborhood’s religious infrastructure grabbed the eyes of *Los Angeles Times* reporters Gerald Faris and Skip Ferderber, who described the neighborhood as “a scene out of New York’s Lower East Side: of old men in long black coats and hats of full, graying beards, of skull caps called yamulkas and chanting young men with the wood-block-and-thing of their ‘tefeillin’ wrapped around their arms, praising God.” Faris and Ferderber, “Fairfax.” Also see Pam Izakowitz, “Traditional, Flamboyant Coexist Easily in Beverly-Fairfax,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 16, 1983; Stephen J. Sass and Council on Jewish Life Los Angeles, California, *Jewish Los Angeles: A Guide* (Los Angeles: Council on Jewish Life, 1982); Singer, “Chassidic Recruitment and the Local Context”; Tavory, “The Hollywood Shtetl.”

typically lived outside the Beverly-Fairfax in more affluent parts of Los Angeles and had long subscribed to a de-facto policy of directing communal resources *away* from areas with declining Jewish populations, they began to allocate new resources to Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood starting in the early-1970s.²⁷ These investments initially grew out of a nationwide Jewish conversation about how to combat more effectively manifestations of Jewish poverty. The prevailing approach was widely deemed insufficient: if the myth of universal Jewish affluence had rendered the Jewish poor “invisible” within the organized Jewish community, the War on Poverty’s race-based approach to addressing social reform frequently overlooked white and thus Jewish pockets of need.²⁸ The Federation commissioned studies that discovered that 55,000 impoverished Jews, while scattered throughout the entire county, were disproportionately concentrated in the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood.²⁹ Seeing Beverly-Fairfax as a key location to address the financial, health, and emotional problems afflicting disadvantaged Los Angeles Jews, especially the elderly, the Federation increasingly invested in Fairfax-based member agencies such as Jewish Family Service’s Freda Mohr Center and Bet Tzedek Jewish Legal Services that provided these services.³⁰

²⁷ Phillips, “Los Angeles Jewry: A Demographic Portrait,” 135–36; Sanchez, “‘What’s Good for Boyle Heights Is Good for the Jews’: Creating Multiracialism on the Eastside during the 1950s.”

²⁸ Marc Dollinger, “The Other War: American Jews, Lyndon Johnson, and The Great Society,” *American Jewish History* 89, no. 4 (2001): 437–61; Dorothy Rabinowitz, *The Other Jews: Portraits in Poverty*. (New York: Institute of Human Relations Press, American Jewish Committee, 1972); Ann G. Wolfe, “The Invisible Jewish Poor,” *Journal of Jewish Communal Service* 48, no. 1 (March 20, 1972): 260–65.

²⁹ To better understand and address local manifestations of Jewish poverty, the Federation created the Task Force on the Jewish Poor. According to the “Report on the Task Force on the Jewish Poor,” 55,000 Jews in Los Angeles (1/8th of the population) were poor. While only comprising 11.4% of the total Jewish population, the Jewish elderly (65 and above) constituted 22.4% of the Jewish poor. Out of the 18,300 estimated poor Jewish households, 4,700 were located in the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood. Jewish Federation Council of Greater Los Angeles and Community Planning Department, *Report of the Task Force on the Jewish Poor* (Los Angeles, 1973), 1–12. Also see American Jewish Committee, Los Angeles Chapter, and Lewis F Blumberg, *A Study of the Elderly Jewish Poor of Los Angeles County in 1970* (Los Angeles: American Jewish Committee, 1971).

³⁰ American Jewish Committee, Los Angeles Chapter, and Blumberg, *A Study of the Elderly Jewish Poor of Los Angeles County in 1970*; Blumenthal, “Fairfax as a Gray Area Ethnic Community,” 92-99; “JFC Allocations Show

Moving beyond particular welfare concerns, the Federation also experimented with ways to ensure that Beverly-Fairfax remained an identifiable Jewish “heartland”— a demarcation that Federation officials based off of the high density of Jewish residents, the large number of institutions (commercial, religious, educational, and social) that served Jewish communal needs, and the assumption that the neighborhood was, indeed, distinct from other areas.³¹ Keeping Fairfax Jewish, the Federation reasoned, would serve both its residents who relied upon the area’s existing institutions as well as Jews from elsewhere who found in Fairfax’s “Jewish flavor,” an important way to identify with their heritage.³² As one resolution from 1975 explained, the Jewish Federation “is concerned with preserving the specific character and quality of life in the Beverly-Fairfax area...We favor appropriate action...which seek to preserve the quality of life in the Beverly-Fairfax area.”³³ To this end, the Federation conducted community surveys that sought to decipher what exactly residents and non-residents alike wanted from a “Jewish” neighborhood and formed the Beverly-Fairfax Stabilization Committee planning initiative.³⁴ The Federation also helped to establish and financially supported the Beverly-Fairfax

Drop from 1972, Shift in Priorities to Local Problems,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, September 21, 1973; Eli Kantor, “Free Jewish Law Office Assisting Poor, Elderly in Los Angeles,” *Ha’am*, April 24, 1974; Garnt Lee, “Fairfax--It’s Still Where the Heart Is”; Harriet Weinreich, “Eyewitness Recalls Bet Tzedek’s Early Days,” *Bet Tzedek News*, Winter 1981, Folder 2, Box 83, Western States Jewish History Archive (hereafter WSJHA).

³¹ Blumenthal, “Fairfax as a Gray Area Ethnic Community,” 14; “Minutes of Ad Hoc Committee on Beverly-Fairfax Stabilization, November 15, 1976,” Beverly Fairfax Neighborhood Stabilization Folder, Box 213, CRC IV.

³² As one such Federation resolution noted, “the community is reflective of that Jewish flavor which not only has relevance to those who reside there but reaches out to far corners of the greater Los Angeles area as a point of identification for all Jews, wherever they reside.” “Minutes of Ad Hoc Committee on Beverly-Fairfax Stabilization.”

³³ “Proposal for the Development of a Beverly-Fairfax Community Organization,” Beverly Fairfax Neighborhood Stabilization Folder, Box 213, CRC IV; “Minutes of Ad Hoc Committee on Beverly-Fairfax Stabilization.”

³⁴ The stabilization committee discussed ways to financially incentivize young Jewish families to move into the Fairfax neighborhood; such efforts never came to fruition. Jerry Weber, “Resolution regarding Beverly-Fairfax,” February 28th, 1975, Beverly-Fairfax Neighborhood Stabilization Folder, Box 213, Group 10, Series IV, CRC. Also see Mirko Julius Dolak, “Age Concentrated Ethnic Neighborhood: An Exploratory Study” (M.S., University of Southern California, 1977).

Council; the council consisted of local Jewish residents who primarily sought to improve local public and private schools, develop a crime abatement program with the local police force, and work with government officials to maintain the area's Jewish ambience.³⁵

Federation leaders were frequently confronted with the question of how initiatives to stabilize the Jewish community and preserve the Beverly-Fairfax's Jewish identity could exist alongside the needs of other minority groups in and around the neighborhood. For the most part, those who spearheaded key Federation agencies such as the Community Relations Council or the Jewish Family Services identified as steadfast liberals who sought to meld the particular needs of the Jewish community with broader civic ones.³⁶ As such, Federation-based proposals and resolutions regarding the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood emphasized that "any approach to stabilize the neighborhood must be necessarily merged with the total needs of that neighborhood and not just Jewish needs."³⁷ In this regard, Federation-affiliated agencies stood in contrast with the Jewish Defense League, a militant, ultranationalist organization that patrolled the neighborhood during the early 1970s to "protect" residents from African Americans.³⁸ And yet, while serving as a respectable voice in civic affairs, the Federation and affiliated agencies

³⁵ The Federation granted the council \$52,000. Joel Linderman, the chairman of the council and Fairfax resident, described the council as an opportunity for "the Federation and its constituent agencies to better relate to our community as well as establishing alliances with the non-Jewish community to work on issues of common concern." "JFC Council on Jewish Life Strives to Revive Beverly-Fairfax Community," *JFC Bulletin*, April 1976. Regarding the Neighborhood Council, also see Joel Linderman and Stan Treitel, Dear Ms. Burns, August 15, 1975, Beverly Fairfax Neighborhood Stabilization Folder, Box 213, CRC IV; "Minutes of the Meeting of the Beverly-Fairfax Neighborhood Council," March 25, 1976, Beverly-Fairfax Stabilization Folder, Box 213, CRC IV; "Minutes of the Meeting of the Beverly-Fairfax Neighborhood Council," September 23, 1975, Beverly Fairfax Neighborhood Stabilization Folder, Box 213, CRC IV; "Proposal for the Development of a Beverly-Fairfax Community Organization."

³⁶ Joshua Michael Zeitz, "'If I Am Not for Myself . . .': The American Jewish Establishment in the Aftermath of the Six Day War," *American Jewish History* 88, no. 2 (2000): 258. Also see chapters one and three of dissertation.

³⁷ "Minutes of Ad Hoc Committee on Beverly-Fairfax Stabilization."

³⁸ Skip Ferderber, "Jewish Defense League's Roar Heard in Land: Role of Agency Both Praised and Criticized," *Los Angeles Times*, June 18, 1972. Also see chapter 2 of dissertation.

implemented policies and programs that perpetuated a vision of Fairfax that limited the role of non-Jewish minorities in the neighborhood.³⁹

Examining refugee resettlement initiatives underlines how Jewish organizations carried out seemingly non-sectarian, integrationist objectives in a manner that helped to construct and reify patterns of social inclusion and exclusion throughout Beverly-Fairfax along Jewish/non-Jewish lines. During the course of the 1970s, the federal government and non-governmental organizations placed Vietnamese refugees as well as Russian Jewish refugees in Los Angeles.⁴⁰ Jewish agencies and synagogues throughout Los Angeles demonstrated an eagerness to help not just their Russian brethren but also the Vietnamese resettle in Los Angeles.⁴¹ As one local Jewish activist noted, “the Jews were the boat people of the last generation, and we feel an extra obligation to these people.”⁴² For these reasons, the federal government allocated funds to Federation agencies in Los Angeles such as the Jewish Family Services and the Jewish Vocation Services to resettle about 6,250 Russian Jewish and 1,000 Vietnamese newcomers.⁴³ And with these funds, the Jewish Family Services provided Jewish and non-Jewish newcomers alike with

³⁹ Demographics bear this out: from 1970 through 1977, the non-white population within the neighborhood, at least according to census data, only grew 4.1%, from 7.4% to 11.5% of the total population. Envicom Corporation, SRI International, and Greer and Company, *Beverly-Fairfax Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy: Final Report* ([Los Angeles?]: 1982), 167.

⁴⁰ Phuong Tran Nguyen, “The People of the Fall: Refugee Nationalism in Little Saigon, 1975--2005” (Ph.D., University of Southern California, 2009); Annelise Orleck, *The Soviet Jewish Americans* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1999); Barbara Myerhoff, Research Division Application Summary Page, “The Culture of Fairfax,” NIA Grant Proposal for Culture of Fairfax Folder, Box 129, BGMP.

⁴¹ Jim Schachter, “7 Synagogues Aid ‘Boat People’: Refugees,” *Los Angeles Times*, August 2, 1979; Ethel Taft, interview by author, Los Angeles, October 29, 2015.

⁴² Schachter, “7 Synagogues Aid ‘Boat People’: Refugees.”

⁴³ “Community Rallies for 200 Boat People,” Los Angeles, CA, Misc. nearprint, American Jewish Archives (hereafter AJA); “Jewish Community to Help Resettle Boat People,” *Jewish Family Service of Los Angeles* newsletter, September 1979, Box 26, Jewish Family Service Collection part 2 (hereafter JFSC2).

temporary apartments, anywhere from three-to-six months, in the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood.⁴⁴

Jewish agencies, however, also helped to create divergent experiences of acculturation for Jews and non-Jews. Supplementing government funding, they used resources from the Federation and other private entities to station Russian-language translators in local public schools and hospitals, provide Russian Jewish immigrants with complimentary employment guidance, job placement and medical services at JFS and JVS facilities, and sponsor English as a Second Language classes for Russian speakers at the nearby Westside Jewish Community Center.⁴⁵ Such measures were designed to help integrate Russians Jews into Los Angeles' social fabric and encourage them to remain in the Fairfax neighborhood.⁴⁶ To a large extent, they were successful: about 5,000 Russian Jewish refugees (about 80% of the refugee population) lived in the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood during the 1970s. These same opportunities, however, were not available for Vietnamese refugee. As such, Vietnamese newcomers had had no incentive to stay in the area following the formal resettlement period and generally moved away from Beverly-Fairfax towards areas such as Garden Grove in Orange County where they there was already a critical mass of Vietnamese immigrants and better prospects for housing and employment.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Envicom, *Beverly-Fairfax Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy: Final Report*, 21; Taft, interview by author; Orleck, *The Soviet Jewish Americans*, 131–32.

⁴⁵ Jewish Vocational Service, "Russian Jews Currently Available for Work," December 11, 1973, SJ Resettlement in Los Angeles Folder, Box 231, CRC IV; Vimala Jayanti, "From Russia to Fairfax Avenue: The Integration of Soviet Jewish Immigrants in Los Angeles" (University of California, Los Angeles, 1995), 116-119; "Westside Jewish Community Center," Fall Program Brochure, 1978-79, Los Angeles, CA Westside Jewish Community Center nearprint, AJA.

⁴⁶ Minutes of the Meeting of the Task Force on Soviet Jews. May 29, 1974, SJ Resettlement in Los Angeles Folder, Box 231, CRC IV; Jewish Vocation Service and Jewish Family Service of Los Angeles, "Report on Special Russian Project," SJ Resettlement in Los Angeles Folder, Box 231, CRC IV.

⁴⁷ Nguyen, "The People of the Fall."

Through the 1970s, Beverly-Fairfax localism operated as cultural expression, a religious mandate, a social service objective, and a political organizing principle, all of which revolved around making the neighborhood more amenable to Jewish life. Within this context, religious leaders, Federation officials, and grassroots activists helped to prove predictions of a wholesale Jewish exodus incorrect. In no small part due to these efforts, the neighborhood's Jewish population grew: the number of Jewish households in the Beverly-Fairfax area increased from 8,647 in 1974 to 13,619 in 1979 and the percentage of Jewish residents rose to around 75%.⁴⁸ Joining Russian and Orthodox Jews as newcomers to Fairfax community were somewhere between 3,000 and 6,000 Israeli immigrants; unlike their Russian counterparts, they were neither embraced nor settled by Jewish organizations but nevertheless gravitated towards Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood upon arrival.⁴⁹ Far from creating a utopia for a multi-faceted and heterogeneous ethno-religious community, however, efforts to reengineer the Beverly-Fairfax's social structure and cultural purpose coincided with and helped engender new anxieties and questions about the neighborhood's Jewish future.

⁴⁸ Phillips, "Los Angeles Jewry: A Demographic Portrait."

⁴⁹ Demographers Pini Herman and David LaFontaine estimated that approximately 10,000 to 12,000 Israeli Jews moved to the United States and settled in Los Angeles following the liberalization of United States immigration policy. Unlike Russians Jews, Israelis were not refugees but immigrants who moved because they perceived the United States as a source of economic betterment and personal opportunity. Israeli newcomers, derisively called *yordim*, were neither embraced nor supported by the organized Jewish community due to the idea that Jewish emigration away from Israel would hurt the wellbeing of the Jewish state and was a contradiction to the Zionist ideal. Mary Curtius, "Antipathy of U.S. Jews Toward Israeli Immigrants Wanes," *Los Angeles Times*, August 14, 1983; Pini Herman and David LaFontaine, "In Our Footsteps: Israeli Migration to the U.S. and Los Angeles" (1982); "Commission on Israelis" (Los Angeles: Jewish Federation Council of Greater Los Angeles, June 1983); Barbara Myerhoff, "Culture of Fairfax," Proposal to the National Endowment for the Humanities, February 1983, NEH Grant Application for Culture of Fairfax Folder, Box 129, BGMP.

II.

Several competing socio-economic trends were at play in the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood during the late 1970s and the early 1980s. Although the Orthodox Jews who moved to the neighborhood were often young middle-class and upper-middle professionals, their presence did not significantly alter the demographic composition of the area; the majority of the neighborhood's 38,000 residents were Jews of a lower-middle and lower socioeconomic status.⁵⁰ In large part, this was due to the fact that seniors, comprising one-third of the neighborhood's population, tended to live on fixed incomes.⁵¹ Likewise, recent Jewish immigrants, constituting about a 20% of the neighborhood's population, often worked low-paying relatively menial jobs while trying to adjust to the local economy.⁵² In fact, on the aggregate, from 1970 through 1977, the average household income within the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood (adjusted for inflation) dropped and the percentage of residents living below the poverty line rose.⁵³

Although the aggregate wealth of its residents dropped, real estate costs in the neighborhood skyrocketed throughout the 1970s. Neighborhood home values increased about 120% while the prices for rental units that were unencumbered by rent control increased three-fold.⁵⁴ To a certain extent, the basic principles of supply and demand helped to fuel rising property costs: as

⁵⁰ Envicom, *Beverly-Fairfax Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy*, 13–29; Janice Goldstein, “Jewish Neighborhoods in Transition,” 9–14.

⁵¹ The area's proportion of elderly was three times higher than the citywide average. Envicom, *Beverly-Fairfax Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy*, 18.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ The median income for Beverly-Fairfax households in 1970 was \$10,621; the media income for households in 1977 was \$12,200. Yet, taking inflation into account, the area's households had *less* buying power in 1977: \$12,200 in 1977 equated to \$7,811 in 1970. *Ibid.*, 24. Also see Mike Davis, *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992), 180–82.

⁵⁴ Goldstein, “Jewish Neighborhoods in Transition,” 12.

the neighborhood's population grew and the vacancy rate plummeted, home values and rental prices escalated.

But changes in the local real estate market also grew out of broader economic trends and metropolitan-wide land development pressures.⁵⁵ In an effort to transform Los Angeles into a “world class city,” Mayor Tom Bradley adopted a strong “pro-growth” agenda that initially centered on downtown Los Angeles. Soon enough, civic leaders and realtors started to look west of downtown to build multilevel shopping malls, condominiums, luxury rental units, and large office buildings.⁵⁶ With the global oil crisis of the 1970s came rises in energy and transportation costs; partly in response to such conditions, young affluent Angelenos increasingly opted to buy homes and rent apartments near their places of employment.⁵⁷ While the city's implementation of rent control in 1978 regulated the amount that property owners could charge for rent, landlords who wanted to circumvent such regulations increasingly resorted to converting modest properties into luxury units and evicting existing tenants.⁵⁸ Within this context, Beverly-Fairfax—only seven miles away from downtown Los Angeles, located in close proximity to Beverly Hills and

⁵⁵ Also relevant, following the city's implementation of rent control in 1978, apartment owners increasingly sought to convert their modest properties into luxury units, which in turn led to the proliferation of eviction notices for local tenants. Barbara Riegelhaupt, “Beverly-Fairfax Area: ‘House of Justice’ Aids Needy in Rent Cases,” *Los Angeles Times*, July 26, 1981.

⁵⁶ William B. Fulton, *The Reluctant Metropolis: The Politics of Urban Growth in Los Angeles* (Point Arena, CA: Solano Press Books, 1997), 44–49; Raphael Sonenshein, *Politics in Black and White: Race and Power in Los Angeles* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 169–71.

⁵⁷ Proposal to the National Endowment for the Humanities, February 1983, NEH Grant Application for Culture of Fairfax Folder, Box 26, BGMP. Also see, Joshua Benjamin Freeman, *American Empire: The Rise of a Global Power, the Democratic Revolution at Home, 1945-2000* (New York: Viking, 2012), 330–31.

⁵⁸ Fulton, *The Reluctant Metropolis*, 49; Jean Merl, “Rising Land Costs Hold Senior Housing to Small Start,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 14, 1979.

other affluent Westside neighborhoods, and near numerous freeways—received heightened attention from middle-class renters and homeowners, realtors, and commercial developers.⁵⁹

Jewish community leaders, journalists, and local politicians almost immediately recognized the rising property values, the increasing eviction notices, and the shrinkage of affordable housing options as a potentially devastating threat to the neighborhood’s Jewish character. The American Jewish Committee’s (AJC) 1980 study “Our Stake in the Urban Condition: Jewish Neighborhoods in Transition,” for example, sought to determine the long-term impact of land development pressures and evictions on Beverly-Fairfax’s Jewish community. The findings were hardly sanguine: AJC’s policy analyst Janice Goldstein feared that luxury high-density condominiums would soon replace Beverly-Fairfax’s low-density lower-middle and middle-income options. Recognizing that neighborhood groups throughout the country had little success containing large-scale commercial development, she also questioned if it was even possible for Beverly-Fairfax to avoid becoming another ‘displacement community where land development pressures and gentrification have forced out the indigenous population – in this case almost entirely Jewish.’⁶⁰

Focusing more on the neighborhood’s low-rise commercial district centered along Fairfax Avenue, Patricia Wolf’s feature story in *California Living Magazine*, “Beverly-Fairfax Faces the Future,” arrived at a similar conclusion, explaining that, “Fairfax’s appeal could be its destruction.”⁶¹ Wolf contended that as local land prices rose, property owners would be presented with lucrative buy-out offers. It was thus only a matter of time before large-scale

⁵⁹ Fulton, *The Reluctant Metropolis*, 47–55.

⁶⁰ Goldstein, “Jewish Neighborhoods in Transition,” 14.

⁶¹ Patricia Wolf, “Beverly-Fairfax Faces the Future,” *Los Angeles Herald Examiner/ California Living Magazine*, January 3, 1982.

commercial centers and high-rise office buildings replaced the 59 small ethnic-oriented storefronts—kosher markets, delicatessens, bakeries, Middle Eastern restaurants, as well as bookstores, record stores, and newsstands that primarily catered to a Jewish clientele—located along the Fairfax Avenue commercial strip.⁶²

These threats garnered and helped to refocus the attention of various community organizations. Bet Tzedek Legal Services, for example, was a Beverly-Fairfax based nonprofit founded in 1974 by a small group of lawyers, rabbis, and community activists who sought to provide free legal counseling to lower-income individuals, most of whom were Jewish. The bulk of its casework through the 1970s entailed writing wills and helping its clients receive unemployment social security benefits.⁶³ From 1978 through 1981, its caseload grew from about 1,000 to 5,000 cases a year, about half of which involved tenant-landlord disputes.⁶⁴ A “typical” case was that of Bess and Victor Rosenthal, a couple in their 60s who had lived in the same two-bedroom Beverly-Fairfax apartment for nine years and faced eviction on three separate occasions.⁶⁵ With its emphasis on protecting its clients against evictions and violations of rent control ordinances, Bet Tzedek assumed a new sense of purpose: the organization began to view itself as a legal safeguard that would help ensure that Fairfax remain an overwhelmingly Jewish area. Explaining this modus operandi to the *Los Angeles Times*, Bet Tzedek Executive Director Terry Friedman noted, “the whole idea of the neighborhood is important... We very much see the

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Riegelhaupt, “Beverly-Fairfax Area.” For more on the history of Bet Tzedek, see Sid Schwarz, *Judaism and Justice: The Jewish Passion to Repair the World* (Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2006), 194–95.

⁶⁴ “Bet Tzedek Annual Report, 1985,” Bet Tzedek Legal Services Folder, Terry Friedman Papers, California State Archives, Sacramento, CA. hereafter TFP; Lynn Simross, “Rent-Control Fallout: Plight of the Elderly Tenant,” *Los Angeles Times*, December 7, 1981.

⁶⁵ Riegelhaupt, “Beverly-Fairfax Area.”

elderly Jewish poor as our clients in the cast sense, and we have a commitment to preserving the unique life that is available here and nowhere else.”⁶⁶

It was also against this backdrop that Los Angeles City Councilman Zev Yaroslavsky and the Young Israel Community Development Corporation (YICDC) launched the Beverly/Fairfax Neighborhood Revitalization Project (also known as Vitalize Fairfax) in 1979. Both parties had long demonstrated a commitment to ensuring that Beverly-Fairfax would endure as a viable base for local Jewish life; they also both believed that the government and the formal political process had an active role to play in helping achieve these ends. Yaroslavsky was part of a cohort of Jewish Democratic politicians—which included the likes of Henry Waxman, Herschel Rosenthal, and Howard Berman—who were initially elected to local public office from the late 1960s through the mid-1970s. These elected officials identified as Jewish community leaders with particular stakes in the wellbeing of the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood.⁶⁷ Soon after his election to city council in 1975, Yaroslavsky successfully fought a city ordinance to widen Fairfax Avenue, which would have substantially disrupted the vibrant public street life and the local pedestrian activity. Explaining his rationale to the *Los Angeles Times*, Yaroslavsky noted, “this is one place where people walk. I don’t want it to become a freeway.... It’s important to me because I grew up here and still live here, because I’m Jewish. We need to preserve whatever we had in the past for the future.”⁶⁸

YICDC, the local arm of a national social service program affiliated with the Orthodox movement, was founded in 1973 as an employment training non-profit that aimed to serve low-

⁶⁶ Ibid; “The Poor and Elderly Jews of Los Angeles are Being Evicted from their Community,” Folder 2, Box 83, WSJHA.

⁶⁷ See chapter two of dissertation.

⁶⁸ Lee, “Fairfax--It’s Still Where the Heart Is.”

and moderate-income Angelenos.⁶⁹ Stanley Treitel, a Beverly-Fairfax resident who was actively involved in the Jewish Federation's Beverly-Fairfax Council, served as the director of the agency. He worked closely with local Jewish politicians such as Yaroslavsky and U.S.

Congressman Henry Waxman to secure government grants to provide job training assistance for young adults, free handyman assistance for senior homeowners, affordable housing for seniors, and technical English education for new immigrants.⁷⁰ Although officially a non-sectarian organization, YICDC preferred to pursue projects that, as one board member described, "directly benefit the Jewish people" and thus steered the bulk of their programs and operations towards the Fairfax neighborhood.⁷¹

The Vitalize Fairfax project, building off established models of neighborhood engagement and assumptions regarding Fairfax's Jewish communal value, provided a new rationale for ethnic-driven civic engagement. Councilman Yaroslavsky and YICDC's Stanley Treitel, along with YICDC consultant Ira Handelman, publicly discussed the Vitalize project as the first major initiative to protect the fragile Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood and its vulnerable residents against the long-term impact of unfettered and excessive private sector development pressures.⁷² More

⁶⁹ The organization was founded as the Young Israel Employment Bureau but changed its name. Young Israel Employment Bureau, "On the Job Training Program Proposal to the City of Los Angeles Funded Under MDTA or EOA, 1974, Folder 3, Box 0097, Bradley Administration Papers, Department of Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles (hereafter BAP).

⁷⁰ Specifically, they received funds from the Department of Labor's CETA Program Community Development Block Grant Funds, Department of Housing and Urban Development, and from the Department of Commerce's Economic Development Agency. *Celebrate Fairfax!* (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Hal Sloane Associates, 1980), 30; Robin Heffler, "Home Repairs: Handyman--Where Young Help the Old," *Los Angeles Times*, October 13, 1977; Shuit, "Ceta--a Complex Part of the City's Political Glue."

⁷¹ Shuit, "Ceta--a Complex Part of the City's Political Glue"; Young Israel Employment Bureau, "On the Job Training Program Proposal." Also see David Bubis, Maxine Epstein, and Laurie Strom, "Room for One More: A Study of Three Alternative Jewish Organizations" (M.S.W., University of Southern California, 1982), 67-73.

⁷² "Councilman Zev Yaroslavsky's Instructions and Charge Establishing the Vitalize Fairfax Committee," Vitalize Fairfax Committee Folder, Box 25, CRC VI.

than a neighborhood preservation project though, Councilman Yaroslavsky and YICDC defined Vitalize Fairfax as a comprehensive revitalization program that aimed to combine select commercial development with social welfare and cultural concerns.⁷³ At a moment in which citywide debates regarding the relative merits of economic development and pro-growth policies were starting to mount, Yaroslavsky and YICDC staked a position, not as anti-development ideologues, but as self-proclaimed pragmatists who could increase affordable housing options for existing residents, provide residents with new employment opportunities, and enhance the commercial viability of local businesses, all the while preserving the ethnic character of the community.⁷⁴ “Its overriding goal,” as grant materials for the Vitalize project explained, is to develop “strategies which recognize and accommodate change in a manner which meets the highest social and ethnic needs of the community.”⁷⁵

Central to this approach, Councilman Yaroslavsky and YICDC sought to work closely with select community leaders, merchants, property owners, and residents to help guide the revitalization process and decide how an enhanced Beverly-Fairfax should look. To this end, Councilman Yaroslavsky and YICDC established the Vitalize Fairfax Citizens Committee. While the committee of 22 featured Jewish social service and community relations professionals such as Sandra King of the Jewish Family Service, Murray Wood of the Community Relations Committee, and Dorothy Hubel of the National Council of Jewish Women, it primarily consisted of local businessmen with a financial stake in controlled commercial revitalization such as Eugene Holt of the recently formed Beverly-Fairfax Chamber of Commerce and Norman

⁷³ Statement of Work, “Councilman Zev Yaroslavsky’s Instructions and Charge Establishing the Vitalize Fairfax Committee,” Vitalize Fairfax Committee Folder, Box 25, CRC VI.

⁷⁴ Davis, *City of Quartz*; Fulton, *The Reluctant Metropolis*, 48–51; Sonenshein, *Politics in Black and White*, 169–71.

⁷⁵ Envicom Corporation, SRI International, and Greer and Company, *Beverly-Fairfax Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy*, 2.

Bodenstein from the Fairfax Branch of City National Bank. The chairman of the committee was real estate attorney and commercial developer Joseph Kornwasser, an Orthodox Jew who lived in the Fairfax neighborhood since 1949.⁷⁶ (Instrumental in securing various government grants for the project, local politicians such as U.S. Congressman Henry Waxman, State Assemblyman Herschel Rosenthal, and County Supervisor Edmund Edelman served on the committee as ex-officio members.⁷⁷) Yaroslavsky and YICDC called upon the group to recommend specific policies, foster volunteer-based models of community engagement, and nurture public-private partnerships that dovetailed with and encouraged revitalization; they also charged the committee with “representing our citizens and the grassroots” and “speaking with one voice for the community.”⁷⁸

And yet, despite employing such inclusive rhetoric and outlining a comprehensive set of objectives for the neighborhood and its residents (i.e. affordable housing, job creation, and business rehabilitation), subsequent actions carried out by YICDC, Councilman Yaroslavsky, and the Vitalize Fairfax Committee reflected a relatively narrow set of priorities. They promoted commercial-based solutions to ensuring that the Fairfax neighborhood remained an ethnic place. As such, efforts to enhance the neighborhood’s commercial core and increase revenue for the small businesses—in this case the ethnic specialty retail shops and eateries along the Fairfax Avenue commercial strip—took precedence. Surveys indicated that the vast majority of shoppers

⁷⁶ Regarding Kornwasser’s biography, Mary Curtius, “Fairfax Gets ‘Own’ Bank: Loans: Bank to Serve Area Businessmen,” *Los Angeles Times*, July 24, 1983. Also see, Wolf, “Beverly-Fairfax Faces the Future.”

⁷⁷ *Celebrate Fairfax!*, 25.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.* Councilman Zev Yaroslavsky’s Instructions and Charge Establishing the Vitalize Fairfax Committee,” Vitalize Fairfax Committee Folder, Box 25, CRC VI; “Pleased to Announce Vitalization Program,” Folder 10, Box 4560, BAP.

along the Fairfax Avenue commercial strip lived within the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood.⁷⁹ Seeking to expand beyond this current customer base, Vitalize believed that attracting tourists who were visiting nearby locations such as the Farmer's Market or the Los Angeles County Museum of the Arts and wealthier Jews from the Valley and Westside were essential to ensure the long-term health of the neighborhood's ethnic character.⁸⁰ Likewise, Vitalize wanted to make the neighborhood's retail offerings more appealing to the growing number of Orthodox Jews, many of whom were young professionals with disposable incomes.⁸¹

Vitalize employed various strategies to attract more consumers to the neighborhood. At the outset of the project, Vitalize started to experiment with ways to market a sense of place and promote Fairfax Avenue as an "ethnic showcase area" analogous to better-known ethnic enclaves such as Little Tokoyo, Chinatown, and Olvera Street.⁸² Indeed, Vitalize-sponsored studies held these "ethnic areas" up as models for Fairfax to follow in order to increase its draw of sales.⁸³ "Multicultural diversity," as historian Scott Kurashige has suggested, "figured most prominently as a dominant theme of the new boosterism celebrating 1980s Los Angeles."⁸⁴ Vitalize embraced this idiom of multiculturalism to present Fairfax as both a cosmopolitan and commodified Jewish space, which both residents and cultural tourists could patronize. In this equation, visiting Fairfax and supporting local businesses such as the Hataklit Records (which specialized in Jewish and Israeli music) and King David Bakery emerged as a way for shoppers to experience and

⁷⁹ Envicom, *Beverly-Fairfax Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy*, 8–10, 98, 118–20.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Patricia Wolf, "Beverly-Fairfax Faces the Future," *Los Angeles Herald Examiner/ California Living Magazine*.

⁸² Envicom, *Beverly-Fairfax Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy*, 11, 119, 163.

⁸³ Ibid.; Scott Kurashige, *The Shifting Grounds of Race: Black and Japanese Americans in the Making of Multiethnic Los Angeles* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008),

⁸⁴ Kurashige, *The Shifting Grounds of Race* 280.

appreciate the so-called mosaic of Jewish life. The 1980 “Celebrate Fairfax” gala, kick-off event for the Vitalize Fairfax project and the Los Angeles Bicentennial, exemplified the impulse to market Fairfax through its Jewish heterogeneity and its mixture of “traditional” Ashkenanzi and Israeli culture. As one flyer for the event read, “It is ...kosher butcher shops and bakeries...falafel and humus. It speaks with a voice that is Hebrew, Yiddish, and Russian. FAIRFAX represents the past and the present to the Jewish community of Los Angeles, and is now-at-long last addressing itself to the future!”⁸⁵

The conceptual rebranding of the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood was also organized around a specific nostalgia narrative. Even though a majority of Jews in Los Angeles could not trace their familial roots to the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood, Vitalize was intent on publicly defining the Fairfax community in capacious terms (“there is a little bit of Fairfax in every Jew in our town”) and using the neighborhood to evoke a collective Jewish memory and shared heritage. The Vitalize project compelled Jews in Los Angeles to experience physically and symbolically the authentic Jewish neighborhood of yesteryears through consumption. Promotional materials frequently noted that key Beverly-Fairfax commercial establishments that moved into the neighborhood during the immediate postwar period were still essential features of the Fairfax Avenue commercial core. The Vitalize Fairfax Committee, for example, produced a souvenir pamphlet that featured a rewritten version of the song “Tradition!” from the Broadway musical *Fiddler on the Roof* (1964). The revised lyrics presented Beverly-Fairfax as the center of Jewish “tradition” in Los Angeles: “Where Do you Go for Breakfast Lunch or Dinner.../ Just to Sit and

⁸⁵ “Celebrate Fairfax!” Celebrate Fairfax 1980 Folder, Box 5, Series VI, CRC.

Schmooze a While/At Canter's At Canter's/ Tradition ...Tradition/...For Books I go to Solomon's/On Fairfax...On Fairfax/ Tradition ...Tradition," the revised lyrics explained.⁸⁶

By 1981, Vitalize began to upgrade the area's built environment through government sponsored commercial investments. From Vitalize's perspective, Fairfax Avenue's commercial core was shabby and unappealing. As the "Beverly-Fairfax Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy" report noted, "commercial structures...require extensive structural upgrading....Building facades...are visually and architecturally chaotic and require upgrading."⁸⁷ Likewise, describing the dirty sidewalks and trash that lined the Fairfax Avenue commercial strip, Council Yaroslavsky complained to the *Los Angeles Times* that, "this place looks terrible."⁸⁸ Believing that enhancing the neighborhood's appearance was necessary for boosting commercial activity, Vitalize tried to work closely with local storeowners and merchants to beautify the area.⁸⁹ With a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, YICDC and Councilman Yaroslavsky formed the Fairfax Local Development Corporation in November of 1982, which packaged and processed low-interest government loans to local small business.⁹⁰ These loans were earmarked to provide the businesses owners with the capital necessary to invest in relatively minor improvements such as removing disintegrating awnings,

⁸⁶ *Celebrate Fairfax!*, 67.

⁸⁷ Envicom, *Beverly-Fairfax Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy*, 116.

⁸⁸ Josh Getlin, "Fairfax Area Study Asks Facelift: 'Community Strategies' for Rejuvenation Outlined Fairfax: Ethnic Neighborhood Studied," *Los Angeles Times*, September 27, 1981; Josh Getlin, "Colorful Fairfax Needs a Cleanup Fairfax: But City Won't Pay," *Los Angeles Times*, December 13, 1981.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ "Fairfax Local Development Company Certified by U.S. Small Business Administration as a Section 503 Local Development Company," November 10, 1982, Folder 10, Box 4560, BAP. Also relevant, to market and publicize the benefits of revitalization, the YICDC staff met one-on-one with property owners and merchants, organized financial and technical seminars to elucidate the loan process, and provided complimentary architectural assistance. Romer Gomez, "Memorandum: Update on Fairfax Avenue Improvements," April 6, 1983, Folder 10, Box 4551, BAP.

installing new floors and display cases, or putting up new signs with “Jewish style” lettering; YICDC staff met with storeowners to ensure that these “face lifts” adhered to a set of pre-established architectural guidelines.⁹¹ In this regard, reconstructing the deteriorating commercial strip became an important way for the Vitalize project to present Beverly-Fairfax as consumer friendly shopping destination.

At least nineteen stores on the Fairfax Avenue commercial strip took advantage of such incentives, utilizing at least \$500,000 in loans.⁹² Moshe and Sara Kagan, for example, worked with the Vitalize Fairfax staff to secure \$130,000 for Kosher King/Western Meat and Deli. They used this money to renovate an empty storefront on Fairfax Avenue and purchase equipment for their recently opened eatery.⁹³ Likewise, longtime neighborhood storeowners Sam and Daisy Wesley of S&D Market borrowed about \$20,000 from the Fairfax Development Company to sandblast their building, re-letter the signage, and repaint the exterior. In response to these renovations, politicians associated with the Vitalize project publicly praised the Wesleys’ and Kagans’ as exemplary community members and models for other local storeowners to follow.⁹⁴

Vitalize also created opportunities for volunteerism that weaved together commercial objectives with Jewish communal ones. In response to a rash of well-publicized local robberies as well as escalating conflicts between minority students at Fairfax High School and the neighborhood’s elderly residents, after-hours commercial activity on Fairfax Avenue noticeably

⁹¹ “Councilman Zev Yaroslavsky’s Vitalize Fairfax Committee: Consultant Review Subcommittee,” March 10, 1981, Folder 9, Box 4551, BAP; Gomez, “Memorandum: Update on Fairfax Avenue Improvements”; “Local Development Company Formed,” Folder 10, Box 4551, BAP; “Vitalize Fairfax Project, Annual Report,” Vitalize Fairfax Committee Folder, Box 25, CRC VI. “Fact Sheet,” Vitalize Fairfax Committee Folder, Box 25, CRC VI.

⁹² Gomez, “Memorandum: Update on Fairfax Avenue Improvements.”

⁹³ “New Business in Fairfax,” *Israel Today*, April 22, 1983.

⁹⁴ “New Business in Fairfax”; Mary Curtius, “Tidying Up: Some Fairfax Shops Pitch In, Others Prefer Old Mishmash,” *Los Angeles Times*, March 17, 1983. Other stores took advantage of these programs. Diamond Bakery used loans for expansion, physical renovation, and new equipment; USA Dry Cleaners used loans to re-paint signs and the exterior of their building. Gomez, “Memorandum: Update on Fairfax Avenue Improvements.”

declined as did attendance for Friday night Shabbat services.⁹⁵ While crime rates within the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood were relatively stable, the Vitalize Fairfax Committee and YICDC officials reasoned that reducing fears of crime by way of indicating to potential shoppers and synagogue attendees that Fairfax was a safe and secure neighborhood, would help to make the area more attractive.⁹⁶ Defining crime prevention as a necessary part of the revitalization process, the Vitalize Fairfax project, with assistance from the Los Angeles Police Department, established and organized the Beverly-Fairfax Community Patrol.⁹⁷ The program started in April of 1981 with fifty volunteers, mostly merchants, religious leaders, and residents, who drove around the neighborhood in marked cars searching for signs of suspicious activities.⁹⁸ The patrol grew four-fold in less than two years to become the largest neighborhood volunteer program west of the Mississippi River.⁹⁹

The logic of the Vitalize project exposed and generated sources of class tension and conflicting assumptions about urban betterment within the Jewish community. Not all merchants were as hopeful or excited about Vitalize's commercial agenda as the Wesleys': a cohort of older businessmen and merchants who were long ensconced in the neighborhood were overwhelmingly suspicious and occasionally hostile toward the Vitalize-led Fairfax Avenue

⁹⁵ Envicom, *Beverly-Fairfax Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy*, 117–19.

⁹⁶ The JDL also organized a neighborhood patrol during the 1980s. David Holley, "Fairfax Gets JDL Daylight Patrols," *Los Angeles Times*, September 10, 1981.

⁹⁷ "Beverly-Fairfax Community Patrol Seeks Volunteers," Folder 1, Box 35, WSJHA; "Councilman Zev Yaroslavsky's Vitalize Fairfax Committee," minutes, January 21, 1981, Vitalize Fairfax Committee Folder, Box 25, CRC VI; Envicom, *Beverly-Fairfax Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy*, 119; "Vitalize Fairfax Project Annual Report July 1, 1982 – June 30, 1983," Vitalize Fairfax Committee Folder, Box 25, CRC VI.

⁹⁸ "Minutes of Vitalize Fairfax Committee meeting," Wednesday January 21, 1981, Vitalize Fairfax Committee Folder, Box 25, CRC VI.

⁹⁹ "Los Angeles Times Magazine Map No. 7 Beverly-Fairfax Series: A Series of Hometown Maps of Southern California Communities by Westwood Artist Paul Shaffer," *Los Angeles Times*, April 13, 1986.

facelifts.¹⁰⁰ For many, business during the early 1980s, while not booming, was sufficient; they feared that revitalization's aesthetic enhancements and efforts to attract new, perhaps wealthier consumers to the area would scare away their core customer base—loyal bargain-conscious shoppers. In March of 1983, Henry Goldscher, the owner of Henry's Barber Shop for about 20 years, explained to the *Los Angeles Times* that, "If I put chandeliers, my customers would not come in here. My customers are mostly the old folks.... A store, it has to be just the way it was. Believe me, I know. They want to know they can afford it."¹⁰¹ Other small businesses simply saw these programs as a waste of capital and questioned whether Vitalize could even achieve its intended results. "We hear that this program will bring back some of the Jews who moved to Encino and other areas and get them interested in this community again. But just cleaning the sidewalks won't do that," noted Alan Canter of Canter's Delicatessen."¹⁰² According to one survey, only about around 40% of the storeowners believed that storefront renovations would significantly help to improve their businesses.¹⁰³ From the perspective of these storeowners and merchants, the stated long-term benefits of revitalization were not necessarily enticing or clear and were outweighed by the immediate and discernable financial drawbacks.

Likewise, while Vitalize defined recent Jewish immigrants as potential beneficiaries of revitalization and important symbols of Beverly-Fairfax's multicultural fabric, little was done to address the emerging social needs pertinent to this heterogeneous group. Promises to create more

¹⁰⁰ Vitalize Fairfax implemented a Fairfax Avenue sidewalk-cleaning program. While the city council provided most of the funding, the program called upon storeowners and merchants to pay around \$2,500 on an annual basis for these aesthetic improvements. "Fairfax Will Show Cleaner Face to the Public," *B'nai B'rith Messenger*, January 29, 1982; Getlin, "Colorful Fairfax Needs a Cleanup." Regarding the age divide, see Vitalize Fairfax Committee, Public and Private Improvement Subcommittee, July 14, 1982, Folder 11, Box 4551, BAP.

¹⁰¹ Curtius, "Tidying Up."

¹⁰² Getlin, "Colorful Fairfax Needs a Cleanup."

¹⁰³ Envicom, *Beverly-Fairfax Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy*, 155.

jobs and enhance the stock of market rate housing never came to fruition; affordable housing did not materialize; preliminary discussions regarding how to help newcomers with the immigration and naturalization process did not lead to concrete action.¹⁰⁴ To a certain extent, the gap between Vitalize's stated objectives and adopted procedures can be explained by examining who served on the Vitalize Fairfax Committee and what role these members played. While the committee featured Jewish social service professionals who had experience working with Jewish immigrants (primarily Russians), there is little evidence to indicate that they played an influential role on the committee, as the most active and engaged members of the committee were businessmen. Even more illustrative, the Vitalize Fairfax Committee did not include representatives from immigrant communities.

The project's allocation of resources was part of a broader trend that, while subtle and not immediately discernable, encouraged the outward migration of Jewish immigrants from the neighborhood.¹⁰⁵ Revitalization appealed to elected officials, better-off Orthodox Jews and consumers, as well as certain storeowners, but did little to advance or augment the immigrant resettlement and acculturation process. Israelis and Russians might have initially moved to the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood during the 1970s for different reasons but on the aggregate, were intent on achieving socio-economic stability and success in Los Angeles and increasingly questioned whether Beverly-Fairfax would help to facilitate such goals. For lower-income immigrants, rental costs within the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood were becoming prohibitive. Neighborhoods that were close to Beverly-Fairfax and offered significantly cheaper rents such as

¹⁰⁴ Envicom, *Beverly-Fairfax Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy*, 32.

¹⁰⁵ The Jewish Federation's 1979 Jewish population survey did not register these trends but the 1997 survey certainly did. Pini Herman, *Los Angeles Jewish Population Survey, 1997* (Los Angeles: Jewish Community Library of Los Angeles, 1998); Bruce Phillips, *Los Angeles Jewish Population Survey, 1979*. (Los Angeles: Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles 1979).

West Hollywood or Pico-Robertson attracted an increasing share of Jewish immigrants.¹⁰⁶

Conversely, those with the means to purchase single-family homes tended to gravitate towards neighborhoods west of Beverly-Fairfax and to the suburban San Fernando Valley, where there were more available single-family houses.¹⁰⁷ These intra-city migrations, while certainly rooted in concrete socio-economic conditions, also had a strong cultural component. Many Russians immigrants, for example, saw Beverly-Fairfax as a clannish and insular Jewish ghetto that impeded their acculturation and adjustment into the broader society. As one Russian refugee explained, “What don’t Russians like about Fairfax? Too many Russians.”¹⁰⁸ For others, Fairfax served as a metonym for dashed expectations and frustrations about their new country and what it would offer: “Had an image of Fifth Avenue, New York. . . . Instead come to a shtetl, have all these Jews, poor people, markets—disappointing.”¹⁰⁹

Despite immigrant ambivalence towards Beverly-Fairfax and scattered storeowner protestations, Vitalize’s efforts to facilitate revitalization and transform broader perceptions of Beverly-Fairfax were publicly and frequently validated through the mid-1980s. Uneven power relations might have existed within the Fairfax community but the narratives of ethnic solidarity

¹⁰⁶ Steven J Gold, Debra Gold Hansen, and Michal Shachal-Staier, *Israelis in Los Angeles: Pilot Study Report* (Los Angeles, CA: Wilstein Institute of Jewish Policy Studies, 1992), 1, 50; Lynn C. Kronzek, “‘Magazine’ Means Store: Jews from the Former Soviet Union in West Hollywood” (West Hollywood: City of West Hollywood, 2000), 9–11. For more on Soviet Jewish life in West Hollywood, see Orleck, *The Soviet Jewish Americans*, 147.

¹⁰⁷ This was in large part because Beverly-Fairfax had a relatively small number of single-family homes. According to the Beverly-Fairfax Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy, 3/4ths of the housing stock in the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood consisted of multi-unit housing. Envicom, *Beverly-Fairfax Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy*, 75. Also see, Elya Baskin interview, Vimala Jayanti Field Notes Folder, Box 128, BGMP; Pini Herman and David LaFontaine, “In Our Footsteps: Israeli Migration to the U.S. and Los Angeles” (Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute and of Religion, University of Southern California, School of Social Work 1982); Larry Stammer, “Soviet Jews Find L.A. Frustrating, Challenging,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 28, 1981.

¹⁰⁸ Anna Golovchinsky interview, Vimala Jayanti Field Notes Folder, Box 128, BGMP. Also see Leonid Feldman interview, Vimala Jayanti Field Notes Folder, Box 128, BGMP.

¹⁰⁹ Leonid Feldman interview; Stammer, “Soviet Jews Find L.A. Frustrating, Challenging.”

and unity through diversity reigned supreme. Journalists, politicians, and academics commonly identified and celebrated Beverly-Fairfax as home to a new form of Jewish urban community where old- and new-world cultures and values harmoniously coexisted and the spirit of localism thrived.¹¹⁰

Perhaps no one articulated this general sentiment more clearly than prominent USC anthropologist Barbara Myerhoff, herself a secular Jew that lived in the San Fernando Valley.¹¹¹ Following two years researching how four groups—Orthodox Jews, senior citizens, Israelis, and Russian newcomers—experienced revitalization and made sense of Beverly-Fairfax, she embarked on a media tour to explain her fieldwork and her findings.¹¹² From Myerhoff's perspective, the revitalized Fairfax was "violating the assumptions we made about socialization, about communities dying out and about ethnicity disappearing. What is happening in Fairfax has universal significance: It says something important about American life, about how people are coming together."¹¹³ She also celebrated Beverly-Fairfax as home to a new kind of Jewish culture, one that was "capable of supporting the great variety of people, particularly the fragile—the elderly, children, poor, and immigrants" and was "being closely observed by scholars and

¹¹⁰ Joy Horowitz, "The Neighborhood of Unbroken Dreams: Fairfax Retains Its Cultural Diversity and Sense of Community," *Los Angeles Times*, March 5, 1984; Pam Izakowitz, "Traditional, Flamboyant Coexist Easily in Beverly-Fairfax," *Los Angeles Times*, January 16, 1983; Vimala Jayanti, "Fairfax: The Revitalization of a Jewish Urban Neighborhood," *Urban Resources*, Volume 1, No. 3, Spring 1984, LA1-LA4.

¹¹¹ "Culture of Fairfax," Proposal; "Barbara Myerhoff, Chronicler of Venice Jews, Dies," *Los Angeles Times*, January 8, 1985. For more on Myerhoff, also see Barbara G Myerhoff, Marc Kaminsky, and Mark Weiss, *Stories as Equipment for Living: Last Talks and Tales of Barbara Myerhoff* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2007).

¹¹² "Breakfast with the Rebbetzin," Breakfast with the Rebbetzin Folder, Box 126, BGMP; "Tradition of Jewish Stores: Big and Little Tales from Fairfax," Fairfax Project Notes Folder, Box 128, BGMP.

¹¹³ She also spoke of the neighborhood as the focal point for a new type of hybrid Jewish culture, one that was "a bold experiment in living together as Jews by a population that reflects every possible religious orientation, the entire range of possible assimilation and non-assimilation, and cultural backgrounds from every nation where Jews have lived." Horowitz, "The Neighborhood of Unbroken Dreams."

urban planners all over the country as a potential model for urban development.”¹¹⁴ Myerhoff’s characterization of Beverly-Fairfax, as part of the broader echo chamber of Fairfax boosterism, was a heavily romanticized one that glossed over important nuances. Even so, she keenly recognized that Fairfax’s continued vitality as an ethnic enclave was not predestined but heavily predicated on the ability of local organizations to respond adeptly to outside pressures.¹¹⁵

III.

While land-use pressures, eviction notices, and real estate costs mounted through the early 1980s, the prospect of massive redevelopment transforming Beverly-Fairfax remained hypothetical because a specific proposal had yet to materialize.¹¹⁶ Starting in the mid-1980s, however, concrete plans for large commercial and public projects began to emerge. In 1983, the Southern California Rapid Transit District (SCRTD) received preliminary starter funding from the federal government to build and operate the Los Angeles Metro Rail mass transit system, which was slated to run beneath Fairfax Avenue with two stops in the vicinity of the commercial core.¹¹⁷ These plans for mass transit garnered the attention of private real estate developers and large landowners in and around the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood. For decades, CBS and the A.F. Gilmore Company had owned a 55-acre site on the southern edge of the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood that featured the CBS Television City complex and Farmers Market though it was mostly undeveloped. After the announcement of the MetroRail, the two companies drew up

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ *Celebrate Fairfax!*

¹¹⁶ Riegelhaupt, “Beverly-Fairfax Area.”

¹¹⁷ Bill Boyarsky, “Political Pitfalls Mar Metro Rail Path: Despite Strong Backing, L.A. Project Faces Obstacles at Several Levels of Government,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 1, 1984; Lionel Rolfe, “Big Developers Eye Fairfax: Jewish Agenda Has Other Ideas,” *B'nai B'rith Messenger*, December 28, 1984.

elaborate plans for a four million square foot commercial complex that was to include a hotel, an entertainment and theater complex, and a two-story shopping mall. Likewise, May Company announced plans to erect a 50-story hotel near its Fairfax and Wilshire location.¹¹⁸

City planners and journalists examining the question of development in the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood deemed these projects as nothing short of transformative for the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood, potentially creating a parking shortage, aggravating the housing crisis, diluting Beverly-Fairfax's ethnic flavor, as well as bringing more traffic crime and congestion to the neighborhood.¹¹⁹ As journalist Jon Robin Baitz succinctly stated, "one way or another, the face of Beverly-Fairfax is likely to change over the next decade."¹²⁰ While the fear of Beverly-Fairfax's decline as a Jewish hub had long been part of the local Jewish discourse, the announcement of the MetroRail and the commercial complexes exacerbated such anxieties because of the size of the projects and the accompanying sense that "outsiders"—in this case bureaucrats and large corporate interests—would soon control the neighborhood's future. Thus, the questions that confronted community leaders and residents in this charged political environment were seemingly straightforward and thoroughly complex: what were the most effective ways to control and limit proposed developments, what role did Jewish community organizations play in this process, and how exactly was development an issue of Jewish significance?

¹¹⁸ Richard Silverstein, "A Neighborhood Fights for its Soul," February/ March 1985, Folder 3, Box 3, New Jewish Agenda, Los Angeles Chapter Records, 1979-1991, Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research (hereafter NJALACR); Debra Zauzmer, "Fear and Renewal: Development comes to Beverly-Fairfax," *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, January 18, 1985.

¹¹⁹ Zauzmer, "Fear and Renewal: Development comes to Beverly-Fairfax."

¹²⁰ Jon Robin Baitz, "Beverly-Fairfax: Growing, Growing, Gone?," n.d., Folder 1, Box 35, WSJHA.

The Vitalize Fairfax project was the first community organization to confront these issues. With regards to the subway, Vitalize's stakeholders assessed the proposed project in terms of its potential impact on Vitalize's economic revitalization mission. Although they viewed the subway as an opportunity to attract more shoppers to Fairfax Avenue, Councilman Yaroslavsky, YICDC, and active members of the Vitalize Fairfax Committee nevertheless wanted to ensure that it would not hurt the small businesses along the Fairfax Avenue commercial core. Of particular concern was the power of SCRTD to control zoning and taxation in the areas immediately adjacent to MetroRail stations. Receiving less federal funding than anticipated for the MetroRail, the SCRTD proposed ordinances that called upon commercial property owners to pay for the supposed benefits of being located near a subway stop.¹²¹ Councilman Yaroslavsky along with members of the Vitalize Fairfax Committee reasoned that these taxes would harm the small retailers along the Fairfax commercial strip by forcing property owners to raise rents above what merchants could afford.¹²² Likewise, in 1984, SCRTD proposed an additional tax of \$2,500 for merchants wishing to invest more than \$1,000 in storefront improvement, which Vitalize believed would disincentive storefront rehabilitations. As Vitalize's project director David Tuttle explained in a memorandum, "the efforts of Vitalize Fairfax to encourage the upgrading of the area will be brought to a grinding halt if this tax is instituted."¹²³

¹²¹ "Benefit Assessment Measure Becomes Law," *Metro Rail News*, Volume 7, No. 4, 1983, libraryarchives.metro.net/DPGTL/employeeenews/Rail_1983_Nov.pdf, accessed October 5, 2017; Boyarsky, "Political Pitfalls Mar Metro Rail Path"; Helene Touizer, "The Revitalization of an Ethnic Neighborhood," Folder 4, Box 3, NJALACR.

¹²² Bill Boyarsky, "Metro Rail's Financial Gap Could Change Nature of L.A. Neighborhoods," *Los Angeles Times*, April 8, 1984; Mary Curtius, "Special RTD Assessment Power Worries Merchants on Fairfax: Fairfax: Special Assessment Power Brings Worries," *Los Angeles Times*, October 6, 1983.

¹²³ David Tuttle, "Memorandum," June 22, 1984, Folder 3, Box 3, NJALACR.

While Vitalize Fairfax arrived at a consensus on the pressing need to control SCRTD' taxation and zoning powers, the prospect of large-scale commercial development was a more divisive matter and an issue of public debate. Soon after CBS/Gilmore announced plans for their commercial complex, Councilman Yaroslavsky began to attack the proposed development, as he was concerned about its effect on commercial and residential rents as well as the potential strains on the social fabric of the Jewish community.¹²⁴ Councilman Yaroslavsky, however, was limited in his ability to control the size of the development because the CBS/Gilmore lot was outside of his council district. To muster public opposition to the project and put pressure on Councilman John Ferraro (whose district was home to the CBS/Gilmore tract) and city planning officials, he sent out numerous letters to local residents that labeled “the intensity of the proposed development.... [as] far in the excess of anything our streets and neighborhood can absorb.”¹²⁵ More than 1,800 residents contacted the councilman, expressing support for his opposition to the proposed development.¹²⁶

Others, however, found Yaroslavsky's hostility towards the CBS/Gilmore project as misplaced and overstated. Ira Handelman, who had worked on the Vitalize Fairfax project since its inception, was hired by CBS/Gilmore in 1984 to act as a liaison between the developers and the local community. While still actively involved in the Vitalize project (Handelman oversaw the Beverly-Fairfax Community Patrol), Handelman issued a series of statements on behalf of

¹²⁴ Mathis Chazanov, “Yaroslavsky Musters Opposition to Farmers Market Area Development,” *Los Angeles Times*, October 4, 1984.

¹²⁵ Out of the four residential blocks that surrounded the CBS/Gilmore lot, three were located in the 5th Council District, which Councilman Yaroslavsky represented. Chazanov, “Yaroslavsky Musters Opposition to Farmers Market Area Development”; Zev Yaroslavsky, "Dear Mr. Silverstein," April 9, 1984, Folder 4, Box 3, NJALACR.

¹²⁶ Chazanov, “Yaroslavsky Musters Opposition to Farmers Market Area Development.”

CBS/Gilmore that sought to counter the councilman's public opposition to development.¹²⁷ As Handelman told *Los Angeles Times* reporter Mathis Chazanov, "[I am] shocked by the inaccurate statements in Yaroslavsky's letter....[CBS and Gilmore] would not propose a development on their properties which would adversely affect or change the character of this community."¹²⁸

While Handelman served as a mouthpiece for CBS/Gilmore in this instance, he was not the only individual involved with the Vitalize project who supported the CBS/Gilmore commercial project. Stanley Treitel also defended the proposed development: he assured journalists that the commercial complex would not overwhelm the neighborhood and might even help to attract more shoppers to the Fairfax commercial core.¹²⁹

Public disputes regarding the CBS-Gilmore development never quite resolved themselves. They, however, exposed the limitations of the Vitalize Fairfax group as a vehicle for political action and its inability to find a balance between commercial and social welfare considerations. At a moment in which large-scale commercial development was emerging as one of the, and soon to be *the* defining, issue for the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood, the Vitalize project failed to take a formal advocacy position on the CBS/Gilmore project. Moving forward, Vitalize continued to focus on cosmetic projects intended to beautify Fairfax Avenue and attract more cultural tourists and shoppers to the commercial core. For example, the Vitalize Fairfax project helped to secure funds for and spearhead an initiative to plant palm trees along Fairfax

¹²⁷“Beverly-Fairfax Community Patrol,” flyer, Folder 1, Box 35, WSJHA; Chazanov, “Yaroslavsky Musters Opposition to Farmers Market Area Development.”

¹²⁸ Chazanov, “Yaroslavsky Musters Opposition to Farmers Market Area Development.”

¹²⁹ Ibid; Yehuda Lev, “The Gentrification of Fairfax?: The Farmers Market Will Remain But Developers have Big Plans for the Neighborhood,” Folder 16, Box 929, BAP.

Avenue.¹³⁰ Vitalize also sponsored and organized the Fairfax Community Mural, which aimed to display “how the Fairfax area is such a wonderful mix, still maintaining its wonderful Jewish flavor and still coexisting side by side with other communities—black, Asian, ect.” while also serving as a clear-cut sign of the area’s upgraded physical environment.¹³¹

Yaroslavsky was not alone in expressing concerns about large-scale commercial development. In the year following the announcement of the subway and the CBS/Gilmore development, other neighborhood stakeholders began to increasingly vocalize an agenda that reached beyond specific commercial considerations and mobilized to achieve such ends. To a certain extent, these emergent expressions of neighborhood activism were part of the broader “slow growth” movement—what Mike Davis has described as the “revolt against density”—that was transforming and animating local politics throughout neighborhoods west of downtown Los Angeles during the mid-1980s.¹³² In affluent areas such as Pacific Palisades and Hancock Park, well-to-do homeowners mobilized, often through homeowner associations, to impede developments that they believed would harm their quality of life and demanded a greater say in local-land use decisions.¹³³ But slow-growth politics in the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood was distinctive for two reasons. Firstly, 75% of Beverly-Fairfax’s residents lived in apartments, not in single-family homes, and thus organizations in Beverly-Fairfax with a pronounced slow-growth

¹³⁰ “Fairfax: Tree Planting Postponed,” *Los Angeles Times*, March 13, 1986; Mathis Chazanov, “Fairfax Face Lift Not Everyone Likes Revitalization, but ‘After All, It’s Free,’” *Los Angeles Times*, September 14, 1986.

¹³¹ Unveiled in September of 1985 at a 400-person dedication ceremony, the seven-mural panel depicted the history of Los Angeles Jewry from the 1840s to the 1980s; Vitalize co-sponsored the project with the Jewish Federation-Council. Chazanov, “Jewish Historical Mural—Sans Color—to be Unveiled Sunday; “Mural Dedicated,” *The Corridor Reporter*, October 1985, Folder 9, Box 4553, BAP.

¹³² Davis, *City of Quartz*, 173.

¹³³ Fulton, *The Reluctant Metropolis*, 80; Fulton, *The Reluctant Metropolis*, 80; Sonenshein, *Politics in Black and White*, 192; Greg Morrow, “The Homeowner Revolution: Democracy, Land Use and the Los Angeles Slow-Growth Movement, 1965–1992” (Ph.D., University of California, Los Angeles, 2013), 309.

agenda took both tenant and homeowner considerations into account.¹³⁴ Secondly, slow-growth politics in the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood, at least initially, featured an explicit and particular Jewish component, one that identified the slow-growth strategy as the most effective way to sustain the neighborhood's ethnic ecosystem.

The work of the Community Relations Committee (CRC) highlights the merging of slow growth politics and perceived Jewish communal concern. The CRC had long operated as the Jewish Federation's public policy and community relations arm, working to advocate for "Jewish issues" on behalf of the Federation throughout Los Angeles.¹³⁵ The CRC primarily consisted of liberal-leaning lay leaders such as anti-poverty attorney Jonathan Lehrer-Graiwer, Judge Jack Newman, and businessman Sanford Weiner as well as a handful of staff members such as Michael Hirschfeld and Murray Wood. Since the 1970s, the CRC had supported Fairfax-based projects such as the Beverly-Fairfax Council, Fairfax High School Community Advisory Council, and Vitalize Fairfax on an ad hoc basis. Yet, in response to the proposed developments, and after much consultation with local residents, merchants, as well as representatives from the Vitalize Fairfax Committee, the Jewish Family Service, Beverly-Wilshire Homes Association, and Bet Tzedek, the CRC decided to prioritize Beverly-Fairfax as an agenda item.¹³⁶ "We are very concerned that the Fairfax community could be jeopardized," explained CRC Chair Jack Newman in a public relations memo.¹³⁷ Maintaining the "short term and long term future of this center of Jewish life within Los Angeles," CRC leaders reasoned, required a thorough and

¹³⁴ Envicom, *Beverly-Fairfax Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy*, 77.

¹³⁵ Sass and Council on Jewish Life Los Angeles, California, *Jewish Los Angeles*, 30.

¹³⁶ "Resolution," CRC Meetings, 1984-1985 Folder, Box 26, CRC V. Also see, Baitz, "Beverly-Fairfax"; "Metro Rail Impact on Beverly-Fairfax Neighborhood is Probed at CRC Parley," Folder 1, Box 35, WSJHA.

¹³⁷ Judge Jack Newman, "Metropolitan Region Board Meeting," April 19, 1984, Development Issues Folder, Box 26, CRC IV.

systematic effort to address issues such as residential and commercial rents, affordable housing, traffic congestion, parking problems, and the size of proposed developments.¹³⁸

CRC officials had much experience navigating the formal political system and working with public officials as well as private entities in the realm of public affairs. These established and well-trodden models of civic engagement guided the CRC's advocacy initiatives in the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood. For example, CRC Chair Jonathan Lehrer-Graiwer lobbied the Los Angeles Department of City Planning officials and members of the Los Angeles City Council to restrict and regulate construction on the proposed CBS-Gilmore development. Specifically, Lehrer-Graiwer and the CRC urged governmental bodies to require the construction of senior housing and/or low-moderate income units on the CBS/Gilmore lot and limit the size of the commercial developments as a way to moderate traffic congestion.¹³⁹ The CRC also worked with Richard Volpert, a Jewish Federation president who also served as the legal counsel for CBS/Gilmore to arrange various meetings with representatives from the CBS/Gilmore project. As meeting notes indicate, the CRC took such opportunities to "bring to the attention of CBS/Gilmore the housing problem of the area and explore ways to work together."¹⁴⁰ The development process was a slow-moving, heavily bureaucratic one that did not lend itself to immediate action but the CRC, at least at in 1984 and 1985, demonstrated a keen interest in working with governmental bodies and private developers to ensure that perceived Jewish communal interests were addressed at various levels of the decision-making process.

¹³⁸ Jonathan Lehrer-Graiwer, "Dear Mr. Peter Broy," Box 3, Folder 3, NJALACR.

¹³⁹ Jonathan Lehrer-Graiwer and Jerry Freedman Habush, "Dear Peter," August 2, 1984, Box 3, Folder 3, NJALACR.

¹⁴⁰ Lois Nagy Tadin, "Meeting of Representatives from CBS, Gilmore Olympia-York, and the Metro CRC Concerning Development at Beverly-Fairfax," February 1, 1985, Development Issues Folder, Box 26, CRC IV.

The New Jewish Agenda also turned its attention towards the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood during the mid-1980s. The New Jewish Agenda was established in Washington D.C. in 1980 with the intention “promoting values of peace and social justice from the Jewish tradition” and representing a [politically] “progressive voice within the Jewish community and a Jewish voice within the progressive community.”¹⁴¹ A local Los Angeles chapter was soon formed and organized around a range of progressive issues such as advocating for gay and lesbian rights, lobbying against President Ronald Reagan’s social service cuts, and opposing the Israeli invasion of Lebanon.¹⁴² Led by a small cohort of volunteer and professional activists such as Richard Silverstein and Ruth Egger, the New Jewish Agenda soon began to focus on “preserving” the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood. The New Jewish Agenda believed that commercial developments and the MetroRail, by way of raising property values, would displace lower-income residents, ruin the “ethnic-small-scale character of our community,” and turn the Beverly-Fairfax into a premiere shopping and residential destination for “young urban professionals.”¹⁴³ In this regard, the New Jewish Agenda sought to protect the Beverly-Fairfax community from massive, potentially disruptive projects though was critical of existing organizations and initiatives that proclaimed to share these general objectives. While the concrete policy differences between the CRC and New Jewish Agenda were quite minor, the Agenda saw itself as a necessary alternative to the existing neighborhood leadership core. From the Agenda’s perspective, the CRC, Councilman Yaroslavsky, and the Vitalize project were too

¹⁴¹ For more on New Jewish Agenda, see Bubis, Epstein, and Strom, “Room for One More”; Berkley Nepon, *Justice, Justice Shall You Pursue*.

¹⁴² Bubis, Epstein, and Strom, “Room for One More,” 63, 64; Mary Curtius, “Dovish Jews Walk Tightrope but Draw Fire,” *Los Angeles Times*, July 14, 1983.

¹⁴³ “The Beverly-Fairfax Town Meeting: A Call to Build and Preserve the Community,” Folder 3, Box 3, NJALACR; Rolfe, “Big Developers Eye Fairfax”; New Jewish Agenda, “For Immediate Release,” December 8, 1984, Folder 3, Box 3, NJALACR.

closely associated with commercial interests and developers to effectively advocate on behalf of Beverly-Fairfax residents, especially low-income seniors.¹⁴⁴ The New Jewish Agenda understood this conflict as one that presented important moral, generational, and socio-economic questions for the American Jewish community writ large – that is, “whether our politics are determined by our roots or our prosperity, whether we carry out our *mitzvot* in the streets or confine them to the synagogues.”¹⁴⁵

In an effort to address the perceived though moderately overstated gap between the existing neighborhood leadership core and the grassroots, the New Jewish Agenda created an economic justice task force to mobilize residents. As Richard Silverstein noted, the task force was “designed to inform the residents of the dangers that development and the means they have to control the fate of the neighborhood.”¹⁴⁶ To facilitate this process, New Jewish Agenda organizers, often in tandem with Beverly-Wilshire Homes Association, organized at least ten town hall-style meetings in 1984 and 1985.¹⁴⁷ And in these settings, the New Jewish Agenda organizers encouraged residents, mostly seniors, to write to and testify in front of Councilmembers and city planners, which would ideally pressure public officials to regulate development in a manner that was consonant with the interests of residents.¹⁴⁸ As local senior Sheila Weissman explained in one such letter, “Our loyalty to the neighborhood can even be compared with the feeling Jews once had for the Shtetl... The developers tell us they want to

¹⁴⁴ Ibid. Also see, Richard Silverstein, “Dear Sandy,” October 11, 1985, Development Issues folder, Folder, Box 26, CRC IV.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ “Save Beverly-Fairfax,” Folder 3, Box 3, NJALACR; “Save Beverly-Fairfax and the Farmers Market,” New Jewish Agenda Folder, 1980-1989, CRC VI; Silverstein, “A Neighborhood Fights for its Soul.”

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

give us ‘Tivoli Gardens’ in Los Angeles, with ice-skating all year around. I ask them what good is ice-skating to me and my fellow seniors, when what we really need is low-income housing and discount shopping.”¹⁴⁹

To a certain extent, calls to limit development in the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood benefited from larger socio-political currents. In March of 1985, a methane gas explosion occurred at a “Ross Dress for Less” store two blocks south of the Fairfax Avenue commercial core, injuring 21 bystanders. The incident received much sensationalized publicity and generated new questions about the safety of the MetroRail project.¹⁵⁰ The explosion came at quite an inopportune moment for the leaders of the SCRTD, who were relying upon the United States Congress to authorize \$427 million dollars to help fund the subway. Much of this strategy relied on convincing Henry Waxman, the U.S. Congressional Representative for Beverly-Fairfax, that tunneling a subway line through a methane field would not increase the risk of another blast.¹⁵¹ After holding a congressional hearing, where engineers, planning officials, as well as Beverly-Wilshire Homes Association and New Jewish Agenda representatives testified about the supposed dangers of tunneling, Waxman decided otherwise.¹⁵² “I’m not willing to take the risk of lives being lost...I want safety to be the paramount issue,” explained Waxman to reporter Rich Connell.¹⁵³ Waxman agreed to help secure the necessary federal funds for the project under

¹⁴⁹ Shelia Wesiman, “Saving Beverly-Fairfax: A Senior’s Perspective,” May 18, 1985, Folder 6, Box 3, NJALACR.

¹⁵⁰ Ethan N Elkind, *Railtown: The Fight for the Los Angeles Metro Rail and the Future of the City* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014).

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 81–88.

¹⁵² The hearing was held before the House Subcommittee on Health and Environment in June of 1985. As the New Jewish Agenda’s Terry Warsaw explained at the testimony, “catastrophes like this fast explosion have an especially damaging effect on the lives of the elderly because they are the most vulnerable among us.” “Testimony by the Economic Justice Task Force of New Jewish Agenda,” June 14 1985, Folder 4, Box 3, NJALACR.

¹⁵³ Rich Connell, “Waxman Demands Metro Rail Avoid Methane Zone,” *Los Angeles Times*, August 27, 1985.

the stipulation that the SCRTD not tunnel underneath the methane-rich Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood; SCRTD officials ultimately rerouted the MetroRail to travel four miles east of Fairfax along Vermont Avenue.¹⁵⁴

Across Los Angeles, slow-growth activism was also starting to bear fruit. Recognizing that his constituents from Beverly-Fairfax to more affluent Westside neighborhoods such as Bel Air and Westwood were overwhelmingly and increasingly concerned about unrestrained commercial growth, Councilman Yaroslavsky advanced the slow-growth agenda on a citywide level and positioned himself as a slow-growth advocate on the city council.¹⁵⁵ Together with fellow Westside Jewish Councilman Marvin Braude, Yaroslavsky introduced the “Proposition U” initiative onto the city ballot in 1986, which effectively aimed to reduce by half the allowable size of most commercial developments in Los Angeles. The proposition passed by a two-to-one margin.¹⁵⁶

And yet, despite these noticeable victories for slow-growth advocates, neither Proposition U nor the rerouting of the MetroRail route deterred CBS/Gilmore from moving forward with the large-scale commercial complex. With plans for the large-scale commercial complex still in place, CRC officials continued to advocate for limits on development through 1986 though were repeatedly confronted by bureaucratic, logistical, and political roadblocks. CRC officials increasingly sensed that they were making little progress with CBS/Gilmore developers and

¹⁵⁴ Elkind, *Railtown*, 96–98.

¹⁵⁵ Bill Boyarsky, “The Two Sides of Zev Yaroslavsky,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 21, 1988; Fulton, *The Reluctant Metropolis*, 51–55; Robert Gottlieb, *The Next Los Angeles: The Struggle for a Livable City* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 152–53.

¹⁵⁶ Fulton, *The Reluctant Metropolis*, 55.

privately questioned if it was possible for the two parties to find a satisfactory compromise.¹⁵⁷

Internal letters indicate that individuals involved with the CRC doubted whether the small CRC staff and lay leaders had the technical and urban planning knowledge or the time necessary to continue to monitor the proposed development.¹⁵⁸

But it was ultimately due to a top-down mandate, at the behest of Jewish Federation officials, which forced the CRC to abandon its advocacy efforts within the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood. The Jewish Federation received about 25% of its donations from individuals involved in development and construction industries; top-level Federation officials who oversaw Federation fundraising and marketing feared that the CRC's efforts to lobby CBS-Gilmore and regulate development would alienate these donors.¹⁵⁹ Likewise, the Federation was intent on improving its relationship with the growing Orthodox community; that politically active Orthodox leaders associated with the Vitalize project such as Stanley Trietel were sympathetic to the CBS/Gilmore development gave Federation officials reason to question whether they wanted the CRC to continue to engage in development politics.¹⁶⁰

From the perspective of top-level Federation leaders who were concerned with fundraising and cultivating Jewish unity, intense CRC activism and public advocacy in the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood clashed with the best interests of the organized Jewish community. As Wayne Feinstein, the Vice-President of the Jewish Federation, explained to CRC

¹⁵⁷ Lois Nagy Tadin, "To: Jonathan Lehrer-Graiwer, Murray Wood, Sandy Weiner, Deborah Dentler," Development Issues Folder, Box 26, CRC IV.

¹⁵⁸ "It is possible that the technical knowledge and time needed to follow this issue have usurped the energy of both staff and lay leadership," noted Lois Nagy Tadin in a letter to Murray Wood. Lois Nagy Tadin, "Summary of Activities/Recommendations," CRC Meetings 1984-1985 Folder, Box 26, CRC IV.

¹⁵⁹ Wayne L. Feinstein, "Beverly Fairfax/ Park LaBrea Development issues," February 25, 1987, Development Issues Folder, Box 26, CRC IV; Lois Weinsaft (formerly Lois Nagy Tadin), interview by author, Los Angeles, March 25, 2016.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid; Steven Windmueller, "Federation Strategies for Involvement of the Orthodox Community," May 27, 1986, Orthodox Community Folder, Box 19, CRC VI.

leaders in a private memo, “it is increasingly important that we adopt a such position...so that the various private development or catchment area constituent groups do not find further reason to be alienated from Jewish Federation Council.”¹⁶¹ He also explained to CRC officials that seeking to limit traffic and density and advocate for affordable housing, even if they would help Fairfax residents, were technically not issues of Jewish communal concerns and were best to be avoided.¹⁶² Alternatively, the Federation called upon the CRC to participate in neighborhood politics, not as policy-driven activists, but as a “benevolent player” in the area.¹⁶³

The New Jewish Agenda ran into a different, though no less debilitating set of roadblocks. The New Jewish Agenda model was predicated upon developing a cohort of residents, especially low-income seniors, to fight development. While garnering a grant from the Liberty Hill Foundation to pursue community organizing and recruiting about 150 volunteers, the New Jewish Agenda’s grassroots mobilization model and volunteer core was unable to sustain itself.¹⁶⁴ Much of this had to do with the competing needs and limited time of the volunteers: many of the older residents that the New Jewish Agenda tried to mobilize were struggling with rising rents, evictions notices, and a diminished quality of life. Looking back on the New Jewish Agenda’s neighborhood mobilization efforts, community organizer Ruth Eggers told *The Jewish Journal* in 1989 that their key problem was one of displacement—that is, the bulk of New Jewish

¹⁶¹ Feinstein, “Beverly Fairfax/ Park LaBrea Development issues.”

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Julie Jaskol, “Residents Fear Development Will Change Character of Neighborhood,” *Los Angeles Free Weekly*, August 23, 1985; Rolfe, “Big Developers Eye Fairfax”; Debra Zauzmer, “Fear and Renewal: Development comes to Beverly-Fairfax.” Richard Silverstein recalled that there were about 150 volunteers. Richard Silverstein, interview by author, Los Angeles, March 22, 2016.

Agenda's volunteer core were evicted from their apartments and left the neighborhood.¹⁶⁵

Quantitative evidence to confirm Eggers' exact claim is not available but general census data does help to support the explanation: from 1980 through 1990, residents over the age of 65 dropped from 33% to 24% of the neighborhood's population while the percentage of residents paying over \$300 a month (adjusted for inflation) jumped from 54.3% to 82.6%.¹⁶⁶

Also diluting the potency and presence of the New Jewish Agenda as a neighborhood force were the seemingly remote and highly controversial politics surrounding the State of Israel. The New Jewish Agenda's stance on Israel—which called for the Israeli government to support a two state solution and negotiate with the Palestine Liberation Organization—was firmly outside the Jewish mainstream in the 1980s.¹⁶⁷ While the Agenda's had been publicly critical of Israel since its founding, heightened tensions between Israel and Palestine that resulted in the Intifada made this position all-the-more divisive.¹⁶⁸ Accordingly, politically conservative organizations such as the Simon Wiesenthal Center and Americans for a Safe Israel embarked on a coordinated and unrelenting effort to discredit the New Jewish Agenda as “anti-Israel” and “anti-Jewish.”¹⁶⁹

Being pulled away from local issues, the New Jewish Agenda was forced to spend much of its

¹⁶⁵ Lionel Rolfe, “Fairfax: The Center of L.A. Jewish Life Worries About its Future,” *The Jewish Journal*, 1989, Box 35, Folder 1, WSJHA.

¹⁶⁶ Comparison of census tracts 1921, 1922, 1944, 2141, 2143, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, and 2151 from 1980 US Census with census tracts 1920, 1944, 1945, 2140, 2144, 2145, 2147, 2148, and 2151 from 1990 US Census. U.S. Census Bureau. Age, 1980, Prepared by Social Explorer, (accessed September 30 2017); U.S. Census Bureau, Age, 1990, Prepared by Social Explorer, (accessed September 30 2017); U.S. Census Bureau. Gross Rent – Cumulative (More), 1980, Prepared by Social Explorer, (accessed September 30 2017); U.S. Census Bureau. Gross Rent – Cumulative (More), 1990, dollars adjusted for inflation to match value in 1980, Prepared by Social Explorer, (accessed September 30 2017).

¹⁶⁷ Mary Curtius, “Dovish Jews Walk Tightrope but Draw Fire.” Also see Berkley Nepon, *Justice, Justice Shall You Pursue*.

¹⁶⁸ Mathis Chazanov, “Jewish Group Wants to Boot Rival Agency,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 19, 1988.

¹⁶⁹ “Notes on the New Jewish Agenda,” New Jewish Agenda, 1980-1989 Folder, Box 19, CRC VI.

already limited resources refining and defending its reputation as a legitimate “Jewish” organization.¹⁷⁰ While the New Jewish Agenda remained an active though embattled political organization in Los Angeles through the early 1990s, its Beverly Fairfax-focused economic justice task force was discontinued around 1987.¹⁷¹

While the New Jewish Agenda and the CRC were unable to sustain their advocacy efforts, issues related to urban growth and development continued to define and animate local politics in the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood. Following CBS’s decision to pull out of its development agreement, the Gilmore Company slightly amended their plans; in 1989, they submitted a proposal to the City of Los Angeles for a 2 million square foot shopping center on the Gilmore lot.¹⁷² Still concerned that large-scale development would prove detrimental to the neighborhood, Jewish residents and activists responded to the Gilmore Company’s proposal with skepticism. Yet, with the removal of Jewish organizations from the arena of development politics, the tone and substance of the “slow-growth” critique had evolved. That is, the new wave of neighborhood activism, exemplified by the Beverly-Wilshire Homes Association, the Rancho La Brea Neighborhood Association, and the Committee to Preserve Fairfax, discussed and approached development politics as an issue that was disassociated with or only tangentially related to

¹⁷⁰ “Local News in Brief: Jewish Ouster Bid Fails,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 10, 1988; Mathis Chazanov, “Jewish Group Wants to Boot Rival Agency.”

¹⁷¹ Kathleen Hendrix, “Squabbling Cousins Keep the Lines Open,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 12, 1987.

¹⁷² Mathis Chazanov, “CBS Quitting Development Scheme in Fairfax Area,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 4, 1986; Mathis Chazanov, “Rival Fairfax Projects Jockeying for Approval Development: One Builder Seeks the City’s OK for a Major Shopping Mall. Another Plans a Residential Complex and Office Towers Less than a Mile Away. Fairfax District Residents Aren’t Sure They Want Either Project, and Positive They Don’t Want Both,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 26, 1989.

Jewish identity and life in Los Angeles and primarily focused on limiting the size of the proposed development and curtailing congestion.¹⁷³

Activists did, indeed, receive some key concessions from the Gilmore Company regarding the size of the retail and entertainment complex, but it's unclear whether the "scaled down plan" for the Gilmore project (which opened in 2002 as "The Grove") meaningfully altered the Jewish relationship with the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood.¹⁷⁴ The demographic changes that started to consume Beverly-Fairfax in the early 1980s accelerated through the 1990s: the Jewish population dropped by 47%.¹⁷⁵ In the interim, areas such as Pico-Robertson further west and North Hollywood in the San Fernando Valley attracted an increasing share of the city's Jewish population.¹⁷⁶ Yet, the decline of Beverly-Fairfax as a Jewish hub was not simply a matter of intra-city migrations but also due to a lack of foresight that began with the Vitalize project. The misalignments within the Jewish community in response to development and gentrification ultimately rendered Jewish Fairfax into, what one journalist has mournfully described as an area "losing its Kosher flavor," where "the shops... are being replaced by flashy boutiques more likely to be stocked with designer tees and jeans than lox and bagels."¹⁷⁷ Herein lies one of the great ironies of late twentieth century Jewish political life in Los Angeles: while Jews sought to fashion themselves as a meaningful part of a diverse urban fabric, they were unable to sustain

¹⁷³ Chazanov, "Rival Fairfax Projects Jockeying for Approval Development; Michael Feuer and Stephen Sass, "The Slow Burn of Gentrification in Fairfax," *Los Angeles Times*, June 14, 1989; Lionel Rolfe, "Fairfax: The Center of L.A. Jewish Life Worries About its Future," *The Jewish Journal*, February 24-March 2, 1989.

¹⁷⁴ "Looking Forward by Looking Back; Newest Pedestrian Mall All About Being Outdoors," *Daily News*, March 12, 2002; Jesus Sanchez, "Farmers Market to Unveil New Development," *Los Angeles Times*, May 22, 1998.

¹⁷⁵ Herman, *Los Angeles Jewish Population Survey, 1997*, 16.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 16–17.

¹⁷⁷ Bob Pool, "Fairfax Area Losing Its Kosher Flavor," *Los Angeles Times*, August 18, 2005.

and support one of the key physical and cultural signifiers—that is, the ethnic neighborhood — that they relied upon to present and argue this claim.

Chapter 5

Looking Over There To Stay Engaged Here: Coalitions and Museums in 1980s Los Angeles

Through the 1980s and early 1990s, Jewish activists, politicians, and rabbis in Los Angeles increasingly began to launch programs and initiatives that incorporated seemingly distant international issues into the local political arena. In a variety of settings, Jewish Angelenos intentionally drew upon world politics and interpretations of history to address specific questions pertaining to local intergroup relations, the city's shifting demographics, the allocation of political power, and urban responsibility. Perhaps the most prominent and vocal advocate of this strategy was Rabbi Marvin Hier of the Simon Wiesenthal Center. Explaining the imperative to teach Angelenos from various backgrounds about the Holocaust, Hier noted, "If you don't pay attention to the warning signs, whether it be Bensonhurst or Central Park, Bucharest or Tehran, and you refuse to exit the highway of hate, it will take you directly to Auschwitz."¹

While local Jewish activists had selectively made references to Jewish history and international affairs in during the previous decades, two complementary, broad-based trends help to explain the popularization of this outward looking approach during the 1980s. First, the transformation of Los Angeles into a prime immigrant destination and international nexus of trade and commerce encouraged local leaders from various ethnic communities to experiment with civic projects that would help to ensure the future of Los Angeles as a "great crossroads city."² To this end, Jews increasingly fashioned themselves as global citizens as a way to articulate their sense of belonging in a rapidly changing metropolis. Second, new political

¹ Marvin Hier, "A Race Against Time," 92-153, Simon Wiesenthal Center Collection, Simon Wiesenthal Center (hereafter SWCC).

² Janet L. Abu-Lughod, *New York, Chicago, Los Angeles: America's Global Cities* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999).

developments and cultural pressures—particularly those related to the safety and security of world Jewry, the changing reputation of Israel following its invasion of Lebanon, and the Holocaust—compelled local Jewish organizations and leaders to increasingly orient their agendas around these seemingly distant matters. Whether by choice or demand, engaging with such weighty issues often framed and informed the ways in which Jews presented themselves as local political actors.

An examination of political coalition building and museum development initiatives reveals how, and to what effect, Jewish Angelenos invested in a model of civic engagement that aimed to fuse together local and global concerns. As the socioeconomic disparities between Jews and communities of color grew, local ethnic coalitions increasingly centered around international issues. This approach was intended to help Jewish political leaders to maintain and sustain a dialogue and constructive relations with their African-American and Latino counterparts. The simultaneous emergence of three Jewish museums—the Museum of Tolerance, Martyrs Memorial and Museum of the Holocaust, and the Skirball Cultural Center—was part and parcel with citywide efforts to enrich Los Angeles’s cultural infrastructure against a global backdrop during the 1980s. While the Museum of Tolerance largely set the tone and pace of the Jewish museum boom, all three projects generated spirited communal conversations between rabbis, philanthropists, historians, and political activists. To this end, supporters and critics of these museum projects grappled with the question of how the public presentation of Jewish history and heritage could effectively transmit Jewish knowledge, foster cross-cultural communication, and provide a lesson in responsible citizenship for all.

Despite intending to provide new opportunities for Jewish civic engagement, both coalition building and museum projects proved counterproductive in this regard. Efforts to draw upon and

make relatively abstract concepts and causes seem relevant ultimately overwhelmed and undermined the Jewish investment in local political affairs. Organizing interethnic political coalitions around the nexus of local and global concerns helped to expose and exacerbate the social and ideological tensions between Jews and other minority communities. This in turn led Jewish leaders and activists to question the necessity of such programs. Alternatively, the emerging museum projects were quite successful in terms of garnering public and private funding as well as media attention. And yet, while such initiatives served to fuel reflective and intense conversations about the meaning of Jewish history and Jewish suffering, they engaged with specific local issues as matters of secondary concern and siphoned resources away from tangible social service objectives. Both the fate of coalition and museum projects reveals that by the late-1980s and early-1990s, Jewish Angelenos sensed little to gain by actively participating in local politics.

I.

The early 1980s was a period of spirited debate and seemingly productive conversation between black and Jewish leaders in Los Angeles. In response to contentious issues such as busing, affirmative action quotas, Palestinian self-determination, and the forced resignation of United Nations Ambassador Andrew Young, Mayor Tom Bradley and two of his top aides established and developed the Black-Jewish Leadership Coalition as a means to “strengthening the bridges of communication” between blacks and Jews in Los Angeles.³ More specifically, the coalition was organized around the question of how and under what circumstances blacks and Jews in Los Angeles should work together towards shared political goals on the local and global

³ “Join Statement on Black and Jewish Issues,” Folder 3, Box 2700, Bradley Administration Papers, Department of Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles (hereafter BAP).

level while simultaneously contending with new inter-group tensions and shifting political priorities. The Leadership Coalition included 45 individuals who were broadly committed to a form of coalition politics that emphasized liberal inclusivity and the protection of minority rights; this entailed rabbis and ministers, public officials, notable attorneys and businessmen, as well as the leaders of organizations such as the Anti-Defamation League, the American Jewish Committee, the Southern Christian Leadership Council, and the Urban League, most of whom were longtime supporters of Mayor Bradley.⁴ The Jewish Federation's Community Relations Committee was soon brought on as a co-sponsor of the program.⁵

At a moment in which relations between black and Jewish organizations at the national leadership level had hits its nadir, the Black-Jewish Leadership Coalition deviated from broad national trends by organizing around potential areas of cooperation and mutual interest that would ideally deliver tangible benefits.⁶ For example, the group sponsored the Black-Jewish Youth Experience; this project provided black and Jewish high school students, who were deemed the future leaders of Los Angeles, with the opportunity to "learn about and experience each other's community concerns, cultures, and ethnic identities" through weekend retreats, trips to museums, meetings with elected officials, and other organized social activities.⁷ Likewise, the

⁴ "Black and Jewish Leaders Announce Joint Programs, Statement of Conscience," November 29, 1979, folder 3, Box 2700, BAP.

⁵ John L. Mitchell, "L.A. Group to Tackle Black, Jewish Issues: Dialogue Fears Busing, PLO, Israel, Affirmative Action May Threaten Unity Dialogue to Tackle Four Issues," *Los Angeles Times*, November 19, 1979.

⁶ Murray Wood, "Blacks and Jews: Adversaries on Israel, Partners at Home," *Los Angeles Times*, April 8, 1984. For more on black-Jewish relations throughout the country during the 1970s and 1980s, see Cheryl Greenberg, *Troubling the Waters: Black-Jewish Relations in the American Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 236–44.

⁷ "Black and Jewish Youth Experience: A Program begun in 1980 for high school students," Black/Jewish Youth Experience, Steering Committee Meetings, 83/84 Folder, Box 70, Jewish Federation Council of Greater Los Angeles, Community Relations Committee Collection V, Urban Archives Center, Oviatt Library, California State University, Northridge (hereafter CRC); Tom Bradley, "Dear Mr. Wasserman," January 17, 1983, Black/Jewish Youth Experience Steering Committee Meeting, 83/84 Folder, Box 70, CRC V; Ethel Narvid and Bill Elkins, "To:

Leadership Coalition spearheaded and financed a home building project in the heavily African-American neighborhood of Watts.⁸ While the construction of a single three-bedroom home was by no means a comprehensive solution to the local housing crisis, it was envisioned as a key first step in redeveloping the seemingly dilapidated neighborhood.⁹ “The fact that the Jews and the blacks have gotten together to do this first project, which will be a catalyst for much larger projects, is sending a message—that the two groups can work together,” explained executive assistant to the mayor William Elkins upon completion of construction in 1984.¹⁰

Keenly attuned to the ways in which global issues intersected with local community concerns, the Black-Jewish Leadership Coalition also looked towards and saw in international politics a way to shore up and strengthen the foundations of the coalition. Within this context, Middle East politics loomed especially large. Jewish leaders and sympathetic black counterparts feared that supposed misconceptions within the black community about Israel and its treatment of Palestinians would have an adverse effect on local intergroup relations; on a similar note, Jewish Federation officials also worried that wealthy Arabs were attempting to exploit and “lure Blacks to their [political] point of view by making offers of large business deals.”¹¹ And so, with funding from the American Jewish Committee and the Jewish Community Foundation, the group took a trip to Israel that sought to teach black coalition members about the role of Arabs in Israeli society, the relationship between Israel and Africa, the safety and security issues facing Israel,

Black/Jewish Coalition Participants,” February 18, 1982, Folder 6, Box 3799, BAP. Also see chapter 3 of dissertation.

⁸ Beverly Beyette, “A House That the Black-Jewish Coalition Built,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 2, 1984.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ “Briefing Memorandum for Mayor Kollek,” February 13, 1979, Black-Jewish trip to Israel Folder, Box 17, CRC V; Jerry Cohen and John Mitchell, “Black, Jewish Leaders Fear Rift on Young Resignation,” *Los Angeles Times*, August 17, 1979; Richard A. Giesberg, “Dear Ozzie,” September 11, 1978, Black-Jewish trip to Israel Folder, Box 17, CRC V.

and Jewish ethnic diversity all in an effort to ensure that “they [black leaders] may better understand Jews and Jewish concerns.”¹² Although inter-group consensus on Middle East politics often proved elusive, the coalition members seemed to embrace these disagreements.¹³ Following the trip, the group released a statement that explained that while all of the coalition members recognized Israel’s right to exist and condemned the equation of Zionism with racism, most of the blacks, though not the Jewish participants, supported the Palestinian right to self-determination.¹⁴ Also positioned as a point of mutual interest was the cause for Ethiopian Jewry; the Leadership Coalition worked on projects and fundraising initiatives intended to raise awareness about the plight of black Jews in Ethiopia and accompanying humanitarian efforts to help them resettle in Israel.¹⁵

Operating alongside and in tandem with the Black-Jewish Leadership Coalition, the Community Relations Committee, the American Jewish Committee, and the Los Angeles County Commission on Human Rights launched what became known as the Hispanic/Jewish Dialogue

¹² Irving Allen, “Dear Dick,” December 1, 1978, Black-Jewish Trip to Israel Folder, Box 17, CRC V.

¹³ Harry Adams, “L.A. Civic Group Visits Israel,” *Los Angeles Sentinel*, June 28, 1979; Ed Davis, “L.A. Blacks On Tour of Israel,” *Los Angeles Sentinel*, April 26, 1979. Robert Perlzweig, “Briefing Memorandum for Mayor Kollek, Meeting with Los Angeles Tom Bradley and Black Community Leaders,” Black-Jewish Trip to Israel Folder, Box 17, CRC V.

¹⁴ Local Jewish publications such as *B'nai B'rith Messenger* and *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press* critiqued the statement for suggesting that the Jewish State should conduct discussions with the “murderous Palestine Liberation Organization of Yasir Arafat.” “Black-Jewish Dialogue,” *B'nai B'rith Messenger*, December 7, 1979; Herb Brin, “Dialogue? Price is High,” *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*, December 7, 1979; “Joint Statement on Black and Jewish Issues,” Folder 3, Box 2700, BAP.

¹⁵ Bill Elkins and Ethel Narvid, “Coalition Participants,” December 28, 1981, Folder 6, Box 3799; Murray Wood, “Briefing for Black Community Leaders on Rescue of Ethiopian Jews,” January 18, 1985, Ethiopian Jewry (Falashas) 1979-1999 Folder, Box 8, CRC VI. Anti-apartheid activism was also on their agenda. “You are cordially invited to,” Black and Jews Folder, Box 70, CRC V. For more on Los Angeles advocacy for the rescue of Ethiopian Jewry, see Howard M. Lenhoff and Jerry L. Weaver, *Black Jews, Jews, and Other Heroes: How Grassroots Activism Led to the Rescue of the Ethiopian Jews* (Jerusalem; New York: Gefen Publishing House, 2007), 72.

of Greater Los Angeles.¹⁶ The Jewish participants included various individuals who were closely involved with the Black-Jewish Leadership Coalition such as mayoral official Valerie Fields, Black-Jewish Youth Experience chair Stuart Bernstein, and Ethiopian Jewry activist Richard Geisberg as well as prominent lay leaders with Latino familial roots; television reporter Fernando del Rio, local Democratic Assemblyman Charles Calederon, and Deputy Mayor *Grace Montañez Davis* were some of the more active and influential members representing the Latino community.¹⁷

While the Dialogue shared many of the same general goals as the Leadership Coalition, such as promoting interethnic cooperation and coalition building, the focus was more on helping to establish and nurture constructive relationships between public officials, journalists, and activists from the two communities. Especially in comparison to the black-Jewish relationship in Los Angeles, formal political interactions between Jews and Latinos were quite limited. A combination of factors—stark socioeconomic divides, geographical separation, prior disagreements over affirmative action quotas, and the organization of the Bradley coalition primarily along black and white, Jewish lines—had helped to generate a great sense of distance between leaders from the two communities.¹⁸ From the Jewish perspective, the drastic growth of the local Latino population in large part due to heightened immigration from Mexico and Central America, the rising prominence of community agencies such as the United Neighborhoods

¹⁶ The project was first called the Chicano-Jewish Dialogue. “Minutes, Commission on Urban Affairs, Community Relations Committee,” November 15, 1979, Minutes: Comm. On Urban Affairs, 1961-1981 Folder, Box 32, CRC V.

¹⁷ “List of Participants: Hispanic Mission to Israel, July 21 – July 21 1983,” Chicano Israel Trip Selection And Planning Folder, Box 84, CRC V; “Participants in the Hispanic Jewish Dialogue of Greater Los Angeles’ Trip to Mexico City, August 3 – 7, 1986,” Mexico City Trip Folder, Box 84, CRC V.

¹⁸ “Meeting Notes, Draft,” November 1, 1978, SFV/CRC Intergroup Mtg. Wednesday Feb 14, 1979 – Chicano-Jewish Dial, VAC Board Room Folder, Box 21, CRC V.

Organizations, and the increase in the number of Latino office holders made it all the more important to establish and fortify constructive relationships with Latino leaders.¹⁹ “More needs to be done to build and secure our contacts and interaction with a community that may well be critical in California political life in the coming decades. The potential power of Hispanics in California is tremendous,” noted one 1982 memo from the Community Relations Committee.²⁰ Leaders from both communities identified trips abroad as the primary way to establish and sustain conversations and relationships between Latino and Jewish leaders. As Jewish City Councilman Zev Yaroslavsky explained to one reporter, “the Hispanics are going to be running this town in the next generation. It’s good to get to know one another, unfettered by telephones. On a trip, we get to know each other personally.”²¹

More than simply encouraging broad-based gestures of goodwill, though, trips also intended to educate Jewish and Latino leaders about their respective communal concerns through a global perspective. In August of 1983, a group of 38 participants from the Dialogue embarked upon a ten-day trip to Israel that was designed to “promote and build a better understanding of Israel, her security needs, and her meaning to American Jews for Chicano community leaders.”²² In the

¹⁹ Between 1970 and 1980, Hispanics rose from 18.3% to 27.6% of the county’s population. William Clark, “Residential Patterns: Avoidance, Assimilation, and Succession,” in *Ethnic Los Angeles*, ed. Roger David Waldinger and Mehdi Bozorgmehr (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1996), 115; Fernando Guerra, “Ethnic Officeholders in Los Angeles County,” *Sociology and Social Research*, no. 2 (January 1987): 90. Also see, Frank Del Olmo, “Bradley Meets with East Side Group: Backs Some United Neighborhoods Organizations Proposals,” *Los Angeles Times*, March 2, 1978; Joy Horowitz, “UNO’s New Leader: Organizing for Power,” *Los Angeles Times*, October 26, 1979.

²⁰ Steve Weinstein, “Jewish and Latino Leaders Travel to Mexico,” Mexico City Trip Folder, Box 84, CRC V.

²¹ Lionel Rolfe, “Latinos, Jews Explore Common Ground in Israel,” *Daily News*, September 18, 1983. Deputy Mayor Grace Montañez Davis, the highest ranking Latino/a in city government, expressed a similar sentiment: “On a trip, we get to know each other personally.... we will all have people we can communicate with when we need support or information in the future.” Weinstein, “Jewish and Latino Leaders Travel to Mexico.”

²² The Jewish Community Foundation, together with private donations, helped to fund the trip. Community Relations Committee, “Project Outline: American Zionist Federation Request for Funding,” Chicano-Jewish Mission to Israel Folder, Box 84, CRC V; “Staff members Lead CRC/AJC Hispanic/Jewish tour of Israel,” Chicano-Jewish Mission to Israel Folder, Box 84, CRC V.

wake Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon, Jewish trip organizers deemed that it was especially important for participants to meet with politicians and military officials and visit the Lebanese border and the West Bank.²³ Furthermore, in order to provide Latino leaders with a model for addressing poverty and housing problems within their own communities, the group visited Musara, a former "slum neighborhood" in Jerusalem that the Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles was helping to revitalize.²⁴ Three years later, 40 local Latino and Jewish leaders embarked on a trip to Mexico City; here, the focus was on discussing Mexico-U.S. relations, especially in regards to immigration and border policies, and learning about the Jewish community in Mexico.²⁵ These international trips, whose stated purpose was intercommunal understanding, also provided the necessary foundation for the group to pursue collaborative projects back in Los Angeles that were refracted through a global prism. This entailed raising funds to assist the victims of the 1985 Mexico City earthquake and lobbying local politicians to help secure medical assistance for undocumented immigrants; the Dialogue also spoke out against the Simpson-Mazzoli immigration reform bill for jeopardizing the ability of Iranian

²³ Jerry Freedman Habush, "Los Angeles Hispanic & Jewish leaders Visit Israel on Study Tour," August 23, 1983, Chicano-Jewish Mission to Israel Folder, Box 84, CRC V.

²⁴ Ibid. For more on the Project Renewal program, see Daniel J. Elazar et al., "Project Renewal: An Introduction to the Issues and Actors," January 1, 1980, 1–73. David Margolis, "L.A. Jews Investing in Future: Israel: The Local Jewish Federation Is Spending Millions on Renewal Projects, Including Some in Arab Neighborhoods," *Los Angeles Times*, September 30, 1990.

²⁵ Largely through private donations, the Hispanic/Jewish Dialogue raised the funds for this trip. Luis Lainer, Deputy Mayor Grace Davis, "We are writing...." March 25, 1986, Hispanic Jewish Folder, Box 84, CRC V; Virginia Maas and Fernando Del Rio, "Dear Friends," January 26, 1984, Folder 11, Box 110, Grace Montanez Davis Papers, Chicano Studies Research Center, UCLA (hereafter GMDP); Mitzi Rodriguez, "Dear Member," August 22, 1986, Mexico City Trip Folder, Box 84, CRC V.

Jewish and Central American political refugees who were fleeing civil wars, human rights violations, and religious persecution to settle in the United States.²⁶

While the organizers of the Jewish/Hispanic Dialogue and the Black-Jewish Leadership Coalition could certainly point to tangible achievements at both the local and international level, these parallel projects ran into their own respective set of roadblocks. In the case of the Leadership Coalition, Louis Farrakhan's heavily publicized visit to Los Angeles in September of 1985 helped to challenge much of the goodwill between Mayor Tom Bradley's two key constituent groups. While the high-profile head of the Nation of Islam was in the midst of a national speaking tour designed to promote and enhance black economic opportunities, his speeches were laced with sensationalist anti-Zionist and anti-Semitic diatribes. Most notably, he called Adolph Hitler a "great man," labeled Zionism "an outgrowth of Jewish transgression," and described Judaism as a "dirty religion."²⁷ In the weeks leading up to Farrakhan's scheduled speech at the Forum in Inglewood, representatives from Jewish community relations organizations and longtime Bradley supporters, most of who were associated with the Leadership Coalition, met to coordinate a plan of action to prepare for Farrakhan's appearance.²⁸ Seeking support from non-Jewish city leaders, they mounted an intense campaign to convince Bradley to publicly repudiate and condemn the minister in the name of cooperation and peaceful coexistence.²⁹ "We have a moral responsibility to ourselves, to our constituencies, and to our

²⁶ Jack Heeger, "Jewish Federation Council Sends Aid to Earthquake Victims," Hispanic-Jewish Folder, Box 84, CRC V; Mitzi Rodriguez, "To: Members of the Hispanic Jewish Dialogue of Greater Los Angeles," August 22, 1986, Folder 13, Box 100; Louis Lainer, interview by author, Los Angeles, February 20, 2017.

²⁷ Penelope McMillan, "Wave of Concern Precedes Farrakhan's Visit," *Los Angeles Times*, September 11, 1985.

²⁸ "Notes from "September 5, 1985 Community Relations Leadership Meeting to Plan Reaction to Visit of Louis Farrakhan to Los Angeles," Urban Affairs Folder, Box 84, CRC V.

²⁹ "Jewish Leaders in L.A. Lobby against Farrakhan Visit," *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*, September 11, 1985; "Notes from September 5, 1985 Community Relations Leadership Meeting."

community-at-large to unreservedly commend and reject Farrakhan,” noted Marshall Grossman of the Community Relations Committee in a statement.³⁰

Black members of the Leadership Coalition, however, asked the mayor to reserve his criticism of Farrakhan until after the speech.³¹ This was partly due to the belief that Farrakhan’s message of black economic self-determination and economic separatism was one of great benefit for the local black community. And for good reason: cutbacks in public spending on the state and federal level, deindustrialization, and economic restructuring had a devastating effect on the black community in South Central, which was contending with a wave of industrial plant closures as well as rising poverty and unemployment rates during the 1980s.³² Both in public and private, black leaders insisted that those attending the Farrakhan event would be able to distinguish between the “economic and anti-Semitic aspects of Farrakhan’s message.”³³ Also of note, within the coalition was a group of younger black activists who believed that Bradley suffered from an “Uncle Tom” reputation and needed to stand up for his fellow African Americans; they also viewed Jewish demands to denounce Farrakhan as paternalistic and morally self-righteous.³⁴ “There is a resistance to the somewhat arrogant posture on the part of some Jewish leaders in telling the black community how it ought to handle its business...To tell

³⁰ “Statement of Marshall B. Grossman, Chair, Community Relations Committee of the Jewish Federation,” September 13, 1985, Louis Farrakhan 1985 Folder, Box 8, CRC IV.

³¹ Bill Boyarsky and Janet Clayton, “Farrakhan’s Speech: The Politics, the Uproar: The Mayor Bid to Moderate Muslim’s Words a ‘Partial Success,’” *Los Angeles Times*, September 16, 1985.

³² Janet Clayton and Bill Boyarsky, “Bradley Promised Silence on Farrakhan to Black Leaders,” *Los Angeles Times*, September 13, 1985; Mark E. Kann, “Why Do the City’s Black Leaders Tiptoe around Louis Farrakhan,” *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*, September 22, 1985; Josh Sides, *L.A. City Limits: African American Los Angeles from the Great Depression to the Present* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 202.

³³ Marshall B. Grossman, “Dinner Meeting with John Mack 9-17-1985,” Jewish Community Responses, Louis Farrakhan Folder, Box 8, CRC VI; Eugene S. Mornell, “Memorandum to the Commissioners,” September 23 1985, Louis Farrakhan 1985 Folder, Box 8, CRC VI.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

us we must repudiate and disavow the man is not an acceptable solution,” explained Executive Director of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference Mark-Ridley Thomas.³⁵

If much of Bradley’s mayoral career was based on strong black and Jewish support, the Farrakhan controversy represented, as one columnist remarked, a “high-pressured tug of war between the groups” and posed a challenge to his reputation as a consensus builder.³⁶ With all of the elements of a high-stakes political drama in place, local and national media outlets eagerly anticipated his decision. Bradley ultimately remained silent and waited until after Farrakhan’s speech to denounce the controversial minister and his racism, bigotry, and calls for violence.³⁷ Bradley’s strategy was predicated on the idea that delaying a public statement of condemnation would help to moderate Farrakhan’s rhetoric.³⁸ And perhaps to a certain extent it did: while Farrakhan condemned the “wicked hypocrisy of Israel,” most of the speech emphasized the merits of black economic separatism.³⁹

Even so, Bradley’s “calculated risk” strategy was a source of intense consternation among Jewish coalition members.⁴⁰ The notion it was possible, even preferable, to “negotiate with a

³⁵ Clayton and Boyarsky, “Bradley Promised Silence on Farrakhan to Black Leaders.” On a more critical note, Melanie Lomax of the NAACP explained that, “the black leadership and rightly so, is not interested in being dictated to by the Jewish leadership as to when and if they repudiate Louis Farrakhan. There is a strong sentiment in the black community and among the black leadership that the Jewish community has had too much dominance, influence, and control.” Judith Cummings, “Meeting Planned in Los Angeles by Black Muslim Stirs a Debate,” *New York Times*, September 13, 1985.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Doug Stone, “Mayor’s Farrakhan Strategy Misfires,” *The Los Jewish Community Bulletin*, September 19, 1985.

Eugene S. Mornell, “Minister Louis Farrakhan’s Appearances in Los Angeles,” September 1985, Louis Farrakhan 1985 Folder, Box 8, CRC VI.

³⁹ David S. Broder, “The Significance of Farrakhan,” *The Washington Post National Weekly Edition*, September 30, 1985.

⁴⁰ Penelope McMillan and Janet Clayton, “Farrakhan Says Bradley Bowed to Jews: Accuses Him of Having ‘Contempt for Truth and Black People’ Farrakhan: Says Bradley Bowed to Pressure From Jewish Leaders,” *Los Angeles Times*, September 17, 1985.

hate monger” frustrated local Jewish leaders who understood Farrakhan and the threat he posed through a straightforward, one-dimensional prism.⁴¹ But on a more personal level, Jewish members of the coalition expressed feelings of great melancholy and betrayal. While Jewish organizations had been monitoring anti-Semitism among non-elite African Americans since the mid-1960s, they did not expect that their allies, black leaders and professionals, would help to legitimize a demagogue with a “long record of hate.”⁴² In an open letter to Bradley that was shared with his congregants attending Rosh Hashanah services, Rabbi Allen Freehling noted, “how very sad this makes me and so many others who have sat at your side and worked with you to build bridges that are now in great disrepair as a result of that which you and some of other men and women chose to do – or did not do.”⁴³ Likewise, in an article for the *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*, Harvey Schechter of the Anti-Defamation League argued that Bradley’s inaction went against the ethos of the coalition and his approach to governance: “thanks to Tom Bradley and his administration, this city is remarkably free from the ugly inter-ethnic tensions which are all too common in so many American urban centers. For that reason, it was incumbent upon him to move with dispatch as soon as word was received that Farrakhan had scheduled a mass rally.”⁴⁴

In the wake of Farrakhan’s divisive visit, the County of Los Angeles Commission on Human Relations issued a report that “called upon Black, Jewish, and other leaders in our community to

⁴¹ John Schwada, “Jewish Leaders Give Bradley Plan on How to Handle Farrakhan,” *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*, September 24, 1985; Stone, “Mayor’s Farrakhan Strategy Misfires.”

⁴² Anti-Defamation League, “Background: Louis Farrakhan,” Summer 1985, Louis Farrakhan 1985 Folder, Box 8, CRC VI.

⁴³ Timothy Carison and Milt McGriff, “Rabbis Flail Farrakhan Fault Bradley in Holy Day Sermons,” *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*, September 17, 1985; Allen I. Freehling, Ph.D., “Dear Mr. Mayor,” September 13, 1985, Jewish Community Responses to Louis Farrakhan Folder, Box 8, CRC VI.

⁴⁴ Harvey B. Schetcher, “Mayor Bradley, Why Didn’t You Speak Out Against Hate?” *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*, September 14, 1985.

take the necessary steps to achieve a deeper understanding of each other and overcome the differences that now separate them.”⁴⁵ But among the heads of various black and Jewish agencies, these efforts were fraught, highly contentious, and tended to compound the conflict.⁴⁶ In an editorial for the *Los Angeles Times* that called for the two groups to “move beyond Farrakhan,” Executive Director of the Urban League John Mack firmly argued that black leaders took the correct position, blamed Jews for creating a media furor by publicly demanding denunciation, and chastised Israel for its trade relationship with apartheid South Africa.⁴⁷ David Lehrer of the Anti-Defamation League wrote a response to the *Times* that critiqued Mack for continuing to “stir the pot of inter-group tensions.”⁴⁸ Ultimately, Farrakhan’s visit and the consequent fallout compelled Jewish community leaders to rethink the long-term value of the Black-Jewish Leadership Coalition and how exactly it was helping Jewish Angelenos.⁴⁹ As Bruce Hochman of the Jewish Federation explained in one memo, “our ‘bridges’ to the black community are non-existent or, to be more generous, more like a staircase in ‘Fiddler on the Roof’ — going nowhere.”⁵⁰ More than simply a matter of pessimistic rhetoric, donations from Jewish organizations and individuals for the coalition-sponsored projects precipitously declined,

⁴⁵ Albert DeBlanc, “Dear Supervisors,” September 23, 1985, Louis Farrakhan 1985 Folder, Box 8, CRC VI.

⁴⁶ Also of note, certain black pastors and rabbis participated in interfaith discussions and pulpit exchanges during the fall of 1985. John Dart, “Blacks, Jews Work on Rift Caused by Farrakhan: Rabbis, Ministers Seek Links Between Synagogues, Churches to Avoid Crises,” *Los Angeles Times*, December 21, 1985; Leonard Green Wood, “Farrakhan’s ‘Bigotry, Anti-Semitism’ Damned by Black Bishop,” *Los Angeles Times*, September 29, 1985.

⁴⁷ John W. Mack, “Blacks, Jews in Los Angeles: The Old Coalition Crumbling: Coalition,” *Los Angeles Times*, October 20, 1985.

⁴⁸ David Lehrer, “Letters to the Times,” *Los Angeles Times*, October 27, 1985.

⁴⁹ “Let’s forget about the Black-Jewish dialogue, which was floundering badly anyhow, if it is not already dead,” noted Jewish leader William Levin. Bill Levin, “None of us who . . .” September 30, 1985, Jewish Community Responses to Louis Farrakhan Folder, Box 8, CRC VI.

⁵⁰ Bruce Hochman, “To William Levin,” October 8 1985, Jewish Community Responses to Louis Farrakhan Folder, Box 8, CRC VI.

leading to the cancellation of the Black-Jewish Youth Experience and additional homebuilding initiatives.⁵¹

Simultaneously, efforts to strengthen ties between Israel and Los Angeles vis-à-vis trade assumed a newfound importance in mediating intergroup dynamics. In November of 1985, Bradley embarked on a trip to Israel that was sponsored by the American-Israel Chamber of Commerce; the delegation primarily consisted of local Jewish business leaders, most of whom had little previous contact with the Leadership Coalition.⁵² The trip was designed to explore new opportunities for Israeli investment in Los Angeles; the recently implemented United States-Israel Free Trade Agreement had eliminated duties and the other restrictive regulations on commerce between the two countries.⁵³ “Recent economic and commercial developments place Israel in a position to become a leading trade partner with Los Angeles. And that means jobs,” noted Bradley.⁵⁴

The question of what exactly this trip meant for Bradley and his relationship with the Jewish community took on a life of its own. Various media outlets and Anti-Defamation League officials identified the expedition to Israel as an opportunity for Jewish leaders and Bradley to “repair the damage” and “mend fences” as he prepared to enter the 1986 gubernatorial race. Yet,

⁵¹ “Dear Draft—Michael Hirschfeld,” 1986 (?), Folder 10, Box 2421, BAP; Lois Weinsaft, “Memorandum,” May 27, 1986, Folder 10, Box 2421, BAP; Lois N. Weinsaft, “Re: Staff Report,” July 1, 1985, Urban Leaders Trip to Israel Folder, Box 84, CRC V.

⁵² “Mayor to Lead Trade and Commerce Delegation to Israel,” November 4, 1985, Folder 3, Box 1621, BAP.

⁵³ “A Word about the Mayor’s Trade & Commerce Delegation to Israel,” Folder 10, Box 4220, BAP. For more on the development of Israel’s high-tech industry, see Dan Fisher, “Israel Pushes High-Tech Industries as Major Economic Goal” *Los Angeles Times*, October 28, 1985.

⁵⁴ And, indeed, on the six-day trip the Los Angeles delegation met with Eli Hurvitz of the Israel Manufacturer’s Association and the Minister of Industry and Trade Ariel Sharon; they also visited an aircraft plant, a solar pond facility, as well as more traditional tourists sites such as Yad Vashem and Masada. “Mayor to Lead Trade and Commerce Delegation to Israel,” November 4, 1985, Folder 3, Box 1621, BAP; “Mr. Tom Bradley, Mayor of Los Angeles,” 9-14 November 1985, Folder 10, Box 4220, BAP.

Bradley publicly denied that the fortuitously timed trip abroad had a political agenda. “I haven’t given it any thought in that context...Farrakhan is not an issue as far as any discussions we have,” noted the mayor in an interview with the *Los Angeles Times*.⁵⁵ The expedition was initially proposed prior to Farrakhan’s visit and neatly dovetailed with the mayor’s broader efforts to promote Los Angeles as a global hub of trade and commerce. At the same time though, the trip signaled a new direction for Bradley’s relationship with “the Jewish community,” one marked by a heightened emphasis on economic diplomacy and high-visibility investment. In fact, the following year, the American-Israel Chamber of Commerce honored Bradley at an awards dinner for his “commitment to furthering American-Israeli commerce.”⁵⁶

The Jewish-Hispanic Dialogue did not experience a dramatic flashpoint or fallout akin to the Farrakhan incident but contended with its own relatively understated set of problems. As Latino leaders began to learn more about Israel through the Dialogue project, they came to form their own opinions about the Israeli government, its occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and its relationship with neighboring Arab countries. Some participants such as Democratic Assemblyman Charles Calderon and attorney Dominick Rublcava admitted that they came back from the 1983 expedition to Israel “more hawkish and pro-greater Israel (including the West Bank)” than they expected.⁵⁷ Others, however, were more skeptical towards the government’s policies. “The bottom line is that Likud assumes a constant state of war—a kind of self-fulfilling prophecy that will never end in peace,” explained Daniel Garcia of the Los Angeles City

⁵⁵ Dan Fisher, “Bradley, in Israel, Downplays His Visit: He Has Chance, Though, to Mend Fences After Farrakhan Affairs,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 10, 1985”; Victor Merina, “Bradley: Itinerant Mayor?: Travels: Bradley Criticism,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 22, 1985. Also see, “Bradley in Israel: Talks Trade, Works to Rebuild Public Relations,” *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*, November 11, 1985.

⁵⁶ “Greetings: American-Israel Chamber of Commerce and Government of Israel Trade Awards Dinner,” Folder 18, Box 4216, BAP.

⁵⁷ Lionel Rolfe, “A Chicano Visit: 10 Days Wasn’t All ‘Sweetness and Light’,” *Israel Today*, September 16, 1983.

Planning Commission to journalist Lionel Rolfe.⁵⁸ Similarly critical—in the midst of a local dialogue meeting with the Counsel General of Israel—attorney Alberto Hernandez publicly questioned why Israel was seeking to profit from the Salvadorian Civil War by selling arms to El Salvador’s military-led government.⁵⁹

While this general line of argumentation towards Israel certainly helped to generate tension between Latino and Jewish leaders, such criticism was not fundamentally detrimental to the dialogue project. What proved more problematic was the fact that Jewish dialogue organizers, perhaps in response to the emerging Latino critique, increasingly prioritized Israel as a point of concern. The more that Israel was discussed and presented as a key agenda item, the more the Latino leaders resented and questioned the relevance of the dialogue’s Israel-focused activities and initiatives.⁶⁰ For example, Deputy Mayor Grace Davis explained to one newspaper reporter that while she admired her Jewish counterparts for taking great pride in their history, heritage, and country, she also sensed a certain arrogance on their part for thinking that Los Angeles’ Latinos leaders should actively sympathize with and vocally support Israel.⁶¹ And during the summer of 1987, Jewish efforts to plan Israel-focused events such as meetings with the new Israeli Ambassador garnered little enthusiasm or interest from Latino participants.⁶² Recognizing

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Phillip Castruita, “Oral History interview with Grace Montanez Davis, Deputy Mayor of Los Angeles, 1975-1990,” 1994, 25-44, Chicano Studies Research Center, UCLA.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Weinstein, “Making Friends: Mexico Trip Furthers Hispanic-Jewish Dialogue.”

⁶² Castruita, “Oral History interview with Grace Montanez Davis,” 25-44.

that the dialogue project was lacking tangible benefits for both groups, Jewish and Latino organizers resorted to postponing and ultimately cancelling upcoming meetings.⁶³

This inability to translate the goodwill fostered on the Latino-Jewish excursions abroad into a viable and sustainable coalition was also apparent in the electoral realm. By the mid-1980s, Councilman (and dialogue participant) Zev Yaroslavsky, had become quite critical of Tom Bradley, questioning the mayor for his handling of “quality of life” issues such as the pace of development, traffic congestion, and environmental protections.⁶⁴ These pro-environment, slow-growth positions were quite popular among Yaroslavsky’s constituents throughout the heavily Jewish Fifth District.⁶⁵ In 1987, Yaroslavsky launched a mayoral bid to deny Bradley a fifth term.⁶⁶ In August of 1988, however, the Yaroslavsky campaign suffered a key public relations setback with the leak of two memos that framed the campaign, in disparaging language, as a contest between blacks and Jews.⁶⁷ Indeed, the documents called upon Yaroslavsky to conquer the “racial tug of war many Jews and non-Jewish liberals feel towards Bradley” and tap into the “endless” Jewish wealth in Los Angeles by transforming his fundraising efforts into “the United Jewish appeal.”⁶⁸ The sensationalist memos revealed that while the Yaroslavsky campaign

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Bill Boyarsky, “The Two Sides of Zev Yaroslavsky: He’s Been a Crusader for Slow Growth Who Has Assailed Mayor Bradley as pro-Development. But the Councilman Has Also Worked Quietly in Support of the Same Projects He Has Publicly Criticized. This Duality Is Expected to Come under Intense Scrutiny during Yaroslavsky’s Bid for Mayor,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 21, 1988.

⁶⁵ This included the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood, the Westside, and the southern parts of the San Fernando Valley. Bill Boyarsky “Complications: Old Alliance Loses Ardor for Bradley,” *Los Angeles Times*, July 2, 1987; Kevin Roderick, “L.A. Splits Along Ethnic Lines on Problem Issues,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 21, 1987.

⁶⁶ BAD, “RE: Psychoanalysis, Political Strategy, and Pro-Development,” May 4, 1988, Yaroslavsky Mayor Campaign 1988 Folder, Box 62, CRC V; “BAD Campaign, March 29, 1988,” Yaroslavsky Mayor Campaign 1988 Folder, Box 62, CRC V.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

understood black-Jewish tensions and dynamics as the driving force of local political power, they also did not effectively identify or account for how Latinos, who accounted for around 38% of the city's population, could factor into the election.⁶⁹ This conspicuous omission drew the attention of various leaders and journalists. As Los Angeles City Councilwoman Gloria Molina, herself active in the Hispanic-Jewish Dialogue, somewhat jokingly remarked, "As I read through it... one of the things that ran through my mind was, 'Where were we [the Latino community]? They didn't even insult us. We didn't even count.' The mayoral race is going to be a black-Jewish thing."⁷⁰

The public release of the memos was probably not decisive in determining the ultimate fate of the election. More fundamentally though, Yaroslavsky's election strategy highlighted the difficulty of constructing a vibrant mayoral coalition that was primarily rooted in addressing the quality of life issues that mattered most to his relatively affluent Jewish constituents but also appealed to Latinos. While certain leaders such as Molina were slow-growth advocates, public polls indicated that quality of life concerns were of secondary importance to most Latinos, lagging behind crime prevention and the expansion of economic and job opportunities.⁷¹ To many Latinos, the Yaroslavsky campaign seemed elitist and all-too-parochial. As one story from columnist Frank del Olmo argued, despite the Hispanic-Jewish Dialogue and its famed trips abroad, Jewish politicians such as Yaroslavsky did not have solid handle on the issues that

⁶⁹ State of the Cities Data Systems, "SOCDS Census Data: Output for Los Angeles City, CA," <https://socds.huduser.gov/Census/race.odt?newmsacitylist=31100%2A0600044000%2A1.0&msavar=1&metro=cbsa>, accessed October 5, 2017.

⁷⁰ Bill Boyarsky, "Westside Crude: The Political War Over Palisades Oil Drilling and an Analysis of What's at Stake for L.A.," *Los Angeles Times*, September 25, 1988. Regarding her involvement in the Dialogue, see Fernando Del Rio, "Dear Gloria," February 10, 1984, Folder 11, Box 110, GMDP.

⁷¹ Boyarsky, "Westside Crude"; Janet Clayton, "Molina Victory May Give Council More of Tilt Toward Slow-Growth," *Los Angeles Times*, February 5, 1987; Roderick, "L.A. Splits Along Ethnic Lines on Problem Issues."

concerned the Latino community.⁷² Likewise, reflecting on Yaroslavsky's candidacy, a Mexican-American business woman explained to the *Los Angeles Times* that, "I suppose a Chicano-Jewish alliance existed...But it's now gone. When I go to the Westside, I sense no kinship there. For the most part, people are interested in Westside issues, or environmental issues."⁷³ Others criticized Yaroslavsky for primarily focusing on the specific environmental concerns that affected voters on the Westside and in the San Fernando Valley but ignoring oil drilling in the heavily Latino East Los Angeles area.⁷⁴ To a certain extent, this criticism was unfair: Yaroslavsky, with his promise to add officers to the police department did in fact address issues that the majority of Latino voters deemed a high priority.⁷⁵ And yet, accusations of elitism never quite subsided.⁷⁶ While Yaroslavsky kept up with Bradley in terms of fundraising and put together a 275-member steering committee that heavily drew upon former Bradley supporters, private polls taken in December of 1988 indicated that the councilman significantly trailed Bradley. By early January, Yaroslavsky had dropped out of the race.⁷⁷

Although Bradley was handily reelected for a fifth term, the so-called shortcomings of the Bradley era were increasingly becoming a source of heightened frustration for the city's

⁷² Frank del Olmo, "Coalition Has Held, but Watch Out in '93: City's Latinos See Opportunity in Yaroslavsky's Departure From Mayor's Race," *Los Angeles Times*, January 13, 1989.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Boyarsky, "Westside Crude"; Kevin Roderick, "Palisades Oil Vote Sets Tone for Critical Election Issues," *Los Angeles Times*, August 4, 1988.

⁷⁵ Kevin Roderick, "Yaroslavsky Campaign to Charge Bradley Policies Have Gone Stale," *Los Angeles Times*, December 4, 1988.

⁷⁶ Joan Didion, *After Henry* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993), 174–97.

⁷⁷ Raphael Sonenshein, *Politics in Black and White: Race and Power in Los Angeles* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 198. Also see, Glenn F. Bunting and Ted Vollmer, "Yaroslavsky Won't Fight Bradley for L.A. Mayor," *Los Angeles Times*, January 6, 1989; Roderick, "Yaroslavsky Campaign to Charge Bradley Policies Have Gone Stale."

residents.⁷⁸ As the *Los Angeles Times*' 1989 "How Much Do We Love L.A.?" poll concluded "people are turning pessimistic about life in metropolitan Los Angeles as the area heaves against the social strains of gang violence, rising housing prices and traffic congestion, made worse by the growing population."⁷⁹ Likewise, a study from the Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations found that the social pressures stemming from increased immigration and the city's inability to effectively help absorb and integrate many of these newcomers led to a rise in the number of violent racial and religious incidents.⁸⁰

Within this fraught environment, the formal coalition model that Jewish politicians and community leaders championed through much of the 1980s found itself in a seemingly defeated position without a clear-cut sense of how to help address this mounting sense of discontent. Efforts to bring together local and global concerns as a key organizing principle for local coalition building had, a benign effect at best and a damaging one at worst, in helping to mediate intergroup relations and enhance Jewish political clout. The deterioration of the coalition model worried Jewish public officials and community relations professionals who feared that Jewish political and electoral influence in Los Angeles was on the decline. This anxiety was exacerbated by the fact that the city's Jewish population, despite the recent influx of Israeli, Russian, and Iranian immigrants, was older and growing at a significantly slower rate than other groups,

⁷⁸ Steven P. Erie, "Future of Rainbow Coalition, Not Ethics Probe, Shapes Tom Bradley's L.A.," *Los Angeles Times*, August 2, 1989.

⁷⁹ Indeed, when asked, "how do you feel things are going in Los Angeles," only 52% of the 2,046 respondents answered favorably, which was down nearly 20 percentage points from a 1986 poll that posed the same question. Kevin Roderick, "The Times Poll People Turn Pessimistic About Life in Los Angeles" *Los Angeles Times*, February 19, 1989.

⁸⁰ "In order to define," Voting Patterns, L.A. City Folder, Box 62, CRC V.

particularly Latinos and Asians.⁸¹ Indeed, in 1991, the Jewish Community Relations Committee (formerly known as the Committee Relations Committee) planned a series of “think tank” sessions with local public officials and political activists on the “Future of Jewish Political Power in Los Angeles.”⁸² Reflecting the newfound uncertainty about the nature and role of organized Jewish political activity in the multicultural metropolis, one such report from the program posed the seemingly complex and rhetorically loaded question “who are our political allies and how we do strengthen our relationships with these groups?”⁸³

II.

Many of the same concerns that influenced the fate of political coalitions were also instrumental in propelling and shaping Los Angeles’s museum boom of the 1980s. In the most general sense, Los Angeles’s emergence as a global economic hub, a “world crossroad city,” and prime immigrant destination helped to attract new forms of investment from philanthropists and government agencies looking to enrich its cultural infrastructure and fund local museum projects.⁸⁴ “It appears that every museum [in Los Angeles] that isn’t expanding either just did so, or is brand new anyway,” explained *Los Angeles Times* art critic William Wilson in 1986.⁸⁵

⁸¹ Metro JCRC Program Proposal, “Los Angeles Jewish Political Power in the Year 2000,” September 4, 1990, Metro JCRC August 7, 1991 Folder, Box 99, CRC V. Also see, Allan Jalon, “New Districts Crimp Power of Jews in L.A.,” *The Forward*, April 10, 1992.

⁸² “Is Jewish Political Power in Danger,” Metro JCRC August 7, 1991 Folder, Box 99, CRC V; Metro JCRC Program Proposal, “Los Angeles Jewish Political Power in the Year 2000,” September 4, 1990, Metro JCRC August 7, 1991 Folder, Box 99, CRC V; Lois Weinsaft, “Dear Friend,” January 24, 1991, Metro JCRC August 7, 1991 Folder, Box 99, CRC V.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ Los Angeles 2000 Committee, *LA 2000: A City for the Future* (Los Angeles: The Committee, 1988), 84; William Wilson, “L.A. at Center: Museum Mania Grips the Globe,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 23, 1986.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

Perhaps most notably, after inheriting 1.3 billion dollars from its oil-baron founder and becoming one of the world's richest cultural institutions, the J. Paul Getty Museum commenced plans to open a second site in Los Angeles.⁸⁶ Also in the midst of developing were numerous culturally specific museums; whether affiliated with the Japanese-American, African-American, Latino, or Jewish communities, such projects were dedicated to showcasing and exhibiting the experiences of different ethnic groups.⁸⁷ To a certain extent, the founders and supporters of these ethnic museums immersed themselves into ongoing civic discussions about how to foster intercultural understanding as well as ensure the health and vitality of Los Angeles. That the demographic diversification of Los Angeles, coupled with deindustrialization, helped to produce new social tensions among the city's residents rendered such projects all the more relevant.⁸⁸ For Jewish Angelenos, the museum planning process not only provided a new opportunity for local civic engagement, but also brought to the forefront questions about ethnic heritage and history that were quite broad in scope. In this regard, museum planning helped to generate high-stakes communal conversations about seemingly abstract issues.

The evolution of Marvin Hier's career, perhaps to a greater extent than any of his contemporaries, helps to reveal how museum culture in general and Holocaust remembrance in particular emerged as a focal point of Jewish politics in Los Angeles. The New York City born Hier began his clerical career as a congregational rabbi for an Orthodox synagogue in Vancouver, Canada. Hier, to his own admission, was growing restless with his position as a

⁸⁶ Wilson, "L.A. at Center: Museum Mania Grips the Globe."

⁸⁷ Ibid. Stephanie Chavez, "Doors to Open on the Past in Little Tokyo: Culture: New Museum Preserves the History of Japanese-Americans," *Los Angeles Times*, April 28, 1992; Marita Hernandez, "Museum Proposed as Showcase of Latinos' American Roots," *Los Angeles Times*, December 22, 1985.

⁸⁸ Karen Hill-Scott et al., *The Los Angeles Cultural Masterplan*. (Los Angeles, Calif.: City of Los Angeles, Cultural Affairs Dept. 1991); Christine Burton Manvi, "Leaders of Followers?: Southern California Museums, Cultural Diversity and the Practice of Museum-Based Public Relations" (M.A., University of Southern California, 1993).

pulpit rabbi and wanted to become more involved in religious education and social activism.⁸⁹ Like other Orthodox leaders throughout North America, Hier viewed Los Angeles as a boomtown with a large and growing Jewish population but one that was organizationally underdeveloped and lacking strong Orthodox institutions.⁹⁰ “Such a large, wealthy Jewish community but a place where Orthodox Judaism hadn’t come of age, even scratched the surface,” recalled Hier.⁹¹ With \$500,000 from Vancouver philanthropist Samuel Belzberg and matching funds from Toronto real estate developer Joseph Tanenbaum, Hier purchased a vacant building on Pico Boulevard in a heavily Jewish section of West Los Angeles. The plan entailed opening a yeshiva program (soon to be affiliated with Yeshiva University) to teach high school and post-high school students traditional religious texts as well as a Holocaust research institute.⁹² In an effort to ensure that the Holocaust center would attain a certain standing, Hier met with Simon Wiesenthal and convinced the famed Nazi hunter to lend his name to the project.⁹³

The Simon Wiesenthal Center sought to differentiate itself from seemingly similar institutions at a time when Jewish organizations throughout the country were increasingly starting to invest

⁸⁹ Gary Rosenblatt, “The Simon Wiesenthal Center: State-of-the-art Activism or Hollywood Hype,” *Baltimore Jewish Times*, September 14, 1984.

⁹⁰ For more on how Orthodox leaders perceived and understood Los Angeles, see chapter 4 of dissertation.

⁹¹ Rosenblatt, “The Simon Wiesenthal Center.”

⁹² Ze'ev Chafets, *Members of the Tribe: On the Road in Jewish America* (Toronto; New York: Bantam Books, 1988); Bruce Phillips, “Los Angeles Jewry: A Demographic Portrait” (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1986); Sheldon Teitelbaum and Tom Waldman, “The Unorthodox Rabbi: By Invoking the Holocaust and Bullying the Establishment, Marvin Hier Has Made The Simon Wiesenthal Center the Most Visible Jewish Organization in the World,” *Los Angeles Times*, July 15, 1990.

⁹³ For more on the complex relationship between Wiesenthal and Hier, see Tom Segev, *Simon Wiesenthal: The Life and Legends* (New York: Doubleday, 2010), 351–61.

in Holocaust remembrance initiatives.⁹⁴ To a considerable extent, the Center was predicated on the notion that American Jews needed to not only help preserve the memory of the Holocaust, but also confront contemporary anti-Semitism. Recalling an early conversation with Simon Wiesenthal about the Center's purpose, Hier noted, "Simon told us that too many institutions collected Holocaust information and then, in his words, 'put it in the freezer.' He wanted a vibrant center, not afraid to speak out on current issues....He wanted action. So did we."⁹⁵

At the same time, Hier worked with two fellow Orthodox rabbis—Abraham Cooper and Meyer H. May—to help develop the Center's modus operandi and define the organization's mission in stark religious terms.⁹⁶ Hier claimed that the Center in tandem with the yeshiva ultimately provided strong proof that Judaism survived the Holocaust. "What is the ultimate memorial to the six million? That Torah lives on, that the Jewish people live on. Our memorial is against assimilation, it stands for the future destiny of the Jewish people," explained the rabbi in 1984.⁹⁷ In this regard, Hier (along with Cooper and May) represented a new type of Orthodox leader who believed that core Orthodox ideals should not only resonate within the synagogue but also throughout the American public sphere.⁹⁸ Likewise, Hier argued that the Center and its Holocaust-inspired activism would help to strengthen Jewish identity and provide spiritual as

⁹⁴ For more on other Holocaust remembrance projects throughout the United States during the 1970s, see Peter Novick, *The Holocaust in American Life* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999), 170–203.

⁹⁵ Rosenblatt, "The Simon Wiesenthal Center." Also see, Greg Warnagieris, "Alarmed at Rise of Hate Groups: Actor, Rabbi Tell Horrors of Holocaust," *Los Angeles Times*, June 21, 1981.

⁹⁶ "Rabbi Abraham Cooper Biography," January 1990, ARCH 92-154, SWCC; "Rabbi Meyer H. May Biography," ARCH 92-154, SWCC.

⁹⁷ Rosenblatt, "The Simon Wiesenthal Center."

⁹⁸ Adam S. Ferziger, "'Outside the Shul': The American Soviet Jewry Movement and the Rise of Solidarity Orthodoxy, 1964–1986," *Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation* 22, no. 1 (2012): 83–130.

well as moral nourishment for relatively secular Jews in West Los Angeles who otherwise lived “functional materialistic lives.”⁹⁹

Only seven years after its opening in 1977, the Center had transformed from a relatively small yeshiva-affiliated research institute to one of the country’s best-known Jewish organizations. Reflecting its social action-oriented agenda, the Center led the boycott against the CBS network for allowing pro-PLO actress Vanessa Redgrave to portray a Holocaust heroine, organized demonstrations to protest the Institute for Historical Review for denying the Holocaust, and spearheaded a national campaign against the Statute of Limitations on Nazi war crimes.¹⁰⁰ Furthermore, recognizing the ability of mass media and the local Hollywood film industry to help promote their agenda, the Center developed an internationally syndicated radio program and produced the Orson Wells and Elizabeth Taylor-narrated documentary *Genocide*, which won an Academy Award in 1982.¹⁰¹

Fundraising was instrumental in propelling the growth of the Center and helping it build a five million dollar annual operating budget.¹⁰² The Center derived its prime sources of funding from affluent Jewish Angelenos involved in the local real estate industry such as Roland Arnall, William Belzberg, and Alan Casden; employing a direct mail campaign with letters of solicitations from Hollywood celebrities, it also received smaller contributions from an estimated

⁹⁹ Warnagieris “Alarmed at Rise of Hate Groups.”

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.; Nancy Skelton, “Jews Protesting ‘Holocaust Myth’ Speaker: Right-Wing Extremist Slated to Talk at California Library Conference,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 13, 1984.

¹⁰¹ Such activities not only raised the profile of the Center but also helped Hier and Rabbi Abraham Cooper secure meetings with Pope John Paul II, the German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, and numerous U.S. Senators. “Fonda, Alda to Headline Center Fete,” *B’nai B’rith Messenger*, September 17, 1982; Rosenblatt, “The Simon Wiesenthal Center”; Orson Welles, “Dear Friend,” Nearprint: Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies, American Jewish Archives (hereafter AJA).

¹⁰² Ibid.

200,000 individuals.¹⁰³ Remarking on Hier's approach to organization building, journalist Gary Rosenblatt described Hier as "a curious blend of Lower East Side street smarts and Hollywood sophistication."¹⁰⁴ But this reputation as a fundraising innovator and iconoclast—which Hier himself consciously helped to cultivate with statements such as "we're Orthodox, we're mavericks, and we're successful"—also garnered the Center its fair share of critics.¹⁰⁵ Organizations ranging from the mainstream Anti-Defamation League to the militant, rightwing Jewish Defense League accused the Simon Wiesenthal Center of misrepresenting and exaggerating claims of anti-Semitism for publicity and fundraising purposes.¹⁰⁶

It was not until the mid-1980s, however, that the Simon Wiesenthal Center formally entered the local political fray. Since its opening in 1977, the Center had housed a small museum which featured a detailed model of the Auschwitz-Birkenau extermination camp, a pictorial chronology of the Holocaust, and a display that listed contemporary anti-Semitic threats.¹⁰⁷ As part of Los Angeles's museum boom, the Wiesenthal Center commenced plans in 1984 for the 53,000 square foot Beit Hashoah—Museum of Tolerance that would be located adjacent to the Wiesenthal Center's facilities and the yeshiva.¹⁰⁸ The proposed museum, as Rabbi Hier

¹⁰³ Mathis Chazanov and Mark Gladstone, "'Museum of Tolerance': Proposed \$5-Million State Grant for Wiesenthal Facility Provokes Some Concern Over Church, State Separation," *Los Angeles Times*, May 19, 1985; "The Men and Women Who Make Possible the Simon Wiesenthal Center," Simon Wiesenthal Center – Miscellaneous 1985-86 SB 337 Folder, Box 128, Series 1, David A. Roberti Papers, Department of Archives and Special Collections, Loyola Marymount University, (hereafter DARP).

¹⁰⁴ Rosenblatt, "The Simon Wiesenthal Center"

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.; Miles Corwin, "Claims About Anti-Semitic Wave Hit by B'nai B'rith: Report: Anti-Semitism Letter," *Los Angeles Times*, December 12, 1984.

¹⁰⁷ Warnagieris, "Alarmed at Rise of Hate Groups."

¹⁰⁸ Tupper Hull, "Bill to Fund Holocaust Museum has Jews Divided, Governor Torn," *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*, July 30, 1985; Wilson, "L.A. at Center."

envisioned, would memorialize and underscore the importance of the Holocaust in order to teach Los Angeles' multi-ethnic population about bigotry and intolerance.¹⁰⁹ In this regard, learning about the Holocaust was identified as a way to help Angelenos recognize and confront the social dynamics of prejudice, reflect upon their own values and attitudes, and thus help to prevent the so-called "spread of hatred."¹¹⁰ While Hier had raised \$10 million dollars through donations for the estimated \$35 million dollar project, he also sought state funds for the construction of the museum. As Hier explained to the *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*, "I think the state of California should be proud to be part of such an institution...we have so many museums exploring dinosaurs, which really have no bearing on contemporary man. What happened in the Holocaust does have a bearing on contemporary man because it can happen again."¹¹¹ To this end, Hier approached state Senate pro tempore David Roberti for assistance. Roberti was sympathetic to the idea that the state had an obligation to support the museum and agreed to author a bill, SB337, that would provide the museum with a \$5 million dollar grant.

To a certain extent, the process of seeking state funds for the project helped to subtly alter the focus of the Museum of Tolerance. Senator Roberti expanded the mission of the museum to broach other mass atrocities such as the Armenian Genocide as well as the continuing discrimination and prejudice against racial minorities in the United States.¹¹² Roberti claimed that enlarging the museum's scope would more effectively address local tensions rising from immigration, help all faiths and ethno-religious groups understand the value of tolerance, and

¹⁰⁹ Mathis Chazanov "'Museum of Tolerance' Bill Gains Support," *Los Angeles Times*, February 3, 1985; Dorothy Townsend, "Suit Seeks to Block Funds for Tolerance Museum," *Los Angeles Times*, October 10, 1985.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Hull, "Bill to Fund Holocaust Museum has Jews Divided, Governor Torn."

¹¹² Senator Roberti, "Senate Bill No. 337," Simon Wiesenthal Center 1985-86 SB 337 Folder, Box 128, Series 1, David A. Roberti Papers.

provide the Armenian Genocide with much needed recognition.¹¹³ The inclusion of the Armenian Genocide was in many ways a reflection of an emerging relationship between Jewish and Armenian leaders in Los Angeles that revolved around genocide commemoration and their shared experiences as historical victims.¹¹⁴ At the same time though, skeptics such as KGIB Radio and the *Los Angeles Times* argued that it was merely a blatant attempt to persuade Governor George Deukmejian, who was of Armenian background but had a record of opposing public funding for museums, to support the grant.¹¹⁵ Regardless of Roberti's intent, promotional materials, press releases, local newspaper articles, and Hier continued to present and discuss the Holocaust as the primary focal point of the Museum of Tolerance and the "central historical event of the twentieth century" while relegating the presentation of "other genocides" and "discrimination against minorities" to secondary status.¹¹⁶ However awkward and uneven the balance between Holocaust remembrance and SB337's other stated objectives—between emphasizing the Holocaust's uniqueness as a historical event and the universality of human

¹¹³ David Roberti, "Dear Mrs. Norum," July 3, 1985, Simon Wiesenthal Center—Miscellaneous 1985-86, SB 337 Folder, Box 128, Series 1, DARP; "David Roberti: The Man Behind SB 337," *Commitment*, Volume 1. Number 2, Simon Wiesenthal Center – Miscellaneous 1985-86 SB 337 Folder, Box 128, Series 1, DARP.

¹¹⁴ For more on Armenian-Jewish relations during the mid-1980s in Los Angeles, see Matthew Maibaum, *The Armenian Community of Greater Los Angeles: A Research Note*, (1984), 30-34.

¹¹⁵ Deukmejian opposed public funding for the California Academy of Science, the Japanese-American museum, and the Hollywood Exposition project. Mathis Chazanov and Mark Gladstone, "Quest for 'Tolerance': Grant Plan for Holocaust Museum Questioned," *Los Angeles Times*, May 26, 1985; Hull, "Bill to Fund Holocaust Museum has Jews Divided, Governor Torn"; "The Holocaust II – A 'Public' Museum?," April 10, 1985, 337 Folder, Box 128, Series 1, DARP. Regarding Deukmejian's Armenian heritage, see Carl Ingram, "Deukmejian Forged More than an Ethnic Connection: For Armenians, a Matter of Pride--and Politics," *Los Angeles Times*, December 28, 1982.

¹¹⁶ "Attn: J.J. Kaplan, For 'DR'", Simon Wiesenthal Center—Miscellaneous, 1985-186 SB337 Folder, Box 128, Series 1, DARP; Ron Baker, "Five Million Dollars to Simon Wiesenthal Center of L.A. Museum of Tolerance Measure Approved by Senate," March 21, 1985, Folder 1, Box 103, Western Jewish. "A Good Investment," March 3, 1985, *B'nai B'rith Messenger*; Marvin Hier, "To: Senator David Roberti," July 23, 1985, 1985-1986, SB337 Folder, Box 128, Series 1, DARP.

suffering—by the summer of 1985 the bill had easily cleared the State Senate and Assembly and waited for approval from the governor.¹¹⁷

The question of whether the state should financially support the proposed museum served as a lightning rod for intense debate. Of particular note, liberal-oriented Jewish activists argued that because the Center was associated with a religious institution, the grant straddled, if not breached, the time-honored principle of the separation of church and state.¹¹⁸ Hyman Haves, a retired Anti-Defamation League fundraiser, was one of the bill's more impassioned and vocal opponents. He called upon the governor to veto the bill on the basis that the Wiesenthal Center was a sectarian institution that was led by Orthodox rabbis, shared a campus and a board of directors with a yeshiva, and served as a “public forum for the orthodox community.”¹¹⁹

Likewise, the American Jewish Committee claimed that the grant could set a bad precedent by potentially empowering the Christian right and their efforts to Christianize American political norms.¹²⁰ “When a religious institution sets up a portion of its program to have a broader public interest, as it the case here with the proposed museum, it raised a concern with the creation of a troubling precedent ...”[it] might in the future invite other religious groups to create special

¹¹⁷ Richard C. Paddock, “\$5 Million in State Funds Approved for Tolerance Museum: Legislate: Museum Funds,” *Los Angeles Times*, July 31, 1985.

¹¹⁸ Also of note, a handful of individuals wrote to local newspapers and public officials questioning whether it was wise use state funds to build a museum dedicated to promoting tolerance and thus siphon off public resources needed to address racial inequality and the burgeoning HIV/AIDS crisis. As Edward L. Kussman, the former president of the San Fernando Valley NAACP explained, “my problem with the construction of another brick-and-mortar edifice to remind us of man’s inhumanity to man in the past is that it does little or nothing in my view to changes man’s continued intolerance. Look at the denial of equal opportunity afforded black youth.” Edward L. Kussman, “Intolerance Lives On,” *The Daily News*, March 28, 1985. Also see, John Degatina, “Letters to the Times – Museum of Tolerance,” *The Los Angeles Times*, August 29, 1985.

¹¹⁹ Hyman Haves, “Dear Governor Deukmejian,” July 17, 1985, Wiesenthal/CRC 1985 Folder, Box 25, CRC VI. Following Haves’ lead, four ADL branches throughout California issued a statement opposing the grant “Grant for Wiesenthal Center Opposed,” *The Jewish Week*, July 4, 1985.

¹²⁰ For more on the American Jewish Committee’s anxiety about the Christian Right during the 1980s, see Marianne Rachel Sanua, *Let Us Prove Strong: The American Jewish Committee, 1945-2006* (Waltham, MA; Hanover, NH: Brandeis University Press; University Press of New England, 2007), 302.

programs in order to garner public funding,” explained American Jewish Committee officials in a letter addressed to Governor Deukmejian.¹²¹ Following the governor’s decision to approve SB337 in July of 1985, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Southern California, with support from the American Jewish Committee and the Anti-Defamation League, filed a lawsuit to halt the grant on the basis that it violated the separation between church and state.¹²²

The lawsuit, however, proved to be more of a temporary speed bump than a permanent roadblock for the development of the museum. After three months of negotiations between the ACLU and the Simon Wiesenthal Center, the two parties reached a settlement to ensure that the center (and thus the museum) would operate independently of the yeshiva.¹²³ This entailed limiting the number of individuals who could serve on the board for both institutions, restricting financial dealing between the two entities, and guaranteeing the legal separation of the center and the yeshiva.¹²⁴ Construction on the museum commenced in December of 1986; it was marked by a groundbreaking ceremony that refined and expanded upon many of the museum’s objectives and strategies.¹²⁵ Of particular note, Hier and fellow Simon Wiesenthal Center leaders explained

¹²¹ “AJCommittee Joins Foes of Museum of Tolerance,” *Jewish Community Bulletin*, June 28, 1985. Also see, Nadine Joseph, “Church-State Dispute in Los Angeles,” *The Baltimore Times*, Wiesenthal/CRC 1985 Folder, Box 25, CRC VI.

¹²² Specifically, the lawsuit argued that the proposed museum would help to increase the value of the yeshiva property and alleged that the center would use state funds to build yeshiva classrooms and a sanctuary for the school on the museum site. Peggy Issak Gluck, “Couple Sues to Block Grant to Wiesenthal Center,” *The Northern California Jewish Bulletin*, October 19, 1985; Dorothy Townsend, “Suit Seeks to Block Funds for Tolerance Museum,” *Los Angeles Times*, October 10, 1985.

¹²³ Ronald L. Soble, “Accord Found on Wiesenthal Center Status,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 20, 1986.

¹²⁴ “We have, in effect, built a wall between the [Wiesenthal] center and Yeshiva University. It’s a case where every one wins,” boastfully explained Wiesenthal lawyer Jerome B. Falk Jr. The ACLU also seemed content with the accord. See, Carol Sobel, “Accord Reached in Use of State Funds for Museum of Tolerance,” *Open Forum*, March 1986, 1985-86, SB 337 Simon Wiesenthal Center Folder, Box 128, Series 1, DARF; Soble, “Accord Found on Wiesenthal Center Status.”

¹²⁵ Marita Hernandez, “Work Starts on Museum of Tolerance: Ceremonies for Center,” *Los Angeles Times*, December 8, 1986; Special to The New York Times, “Tears at Ground-Breaking for Holocaust Museum,” *New York Times*, 1986.

that, in contrast to the so-called “static design” of artifact-focused historical exhibitions, the Museum of Tolerance would use three-dimensional dioramas, interactive computerized displays, as well as multi-media presentations to re-create and immerse the visitor in a specific historical scene such as a concentration camp or the Wannsee Conference.¹²⁶ This strategy was predicated on the idea that visitors, particularly school age children, could most effectively be reached on an emotional, thought-provoking level through technology and experiential learning.¹²⁷ “We don’t intend to regurgitate history, rather to involve the visitor in situations we would hope they would care about...If it makes a person aware of similar contemporary situations and then moves them to take action, then we’ve succeeded,” noted philanthropist and museum design committee chair, Frances Belzberg at the groundbreaking ceremony.¹²⁸ And symbolizing its emerging reputation as a vital civic institution of national relevance, the museum, while still under construction, received a well-publicized visit from President George H.W. Bush as well as a five-million dollar grant from the U.S. Congress earmarked for “education programs concerning the Holocaust.”¹²⁹

Conspicuously missing from the spirited public debates during 1985 and 1986 regarding the constitutionality of SB337 was the Jewish Federation Council. And for fairly logical reasons: discussions about the merits and constitutionality of a state grant for the Museum of Tolerance brought into sharp conflict different Federation stakeholders and constituent groups. Many of the

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Hernandez, “Work Starts on Museum of Tolerance: Ceremonies for Center.”

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ 101 U.S. Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on Education and Labor, *Oversight Hearing on H.R. 3210, To Provide Financial Assistance to the Museum of Tolerance at the Simon Wiesenthal Center, and H.R. 2623, To Authorize Funds for the Muskie Archives*; Teitelbaum and Waldman, “The Unorthodox Rabbi.”

Federation's key donors were also financial supporters of the Simon Wiesenthal Center; most notable in this respect was Beverly Hills-based real estate developer and financier William Belzberg, whose brother Samuel provided Rabbi Hier with his initial seed funding. While high-level Federation officials feared that taking a position against the SB337 would ultimately alienate much of their fundraising base, they also did not want to publicly support SB337 and thus make it seem as if they were overly beholden to the interests of their top donors.¹³⁰ Other Federation leaders such as attorney Harold Kwalwasser argued in meetings that taking no position was the best course of action for the Federation to ensure that the organization would not embarrass, offend, or alienate the public officials who actively supported and voted in favor of SB337.¹³¹

At the same time, however, the Federation also had to contend with the fact that the Museum of Tolerance project in general and SB337 in particular was a source of intense consternation for many of the 30,000 survivors residing in Los Angeles, particularly those who were actively involved with Federation-sponsored Holocaust memorialization initiatives.¹³² Since the early 1960s, a group of about 30 local survivors had been trying to launch their own Holocaust memorial project that would help to preserve and display Holocaust-era documents, photographs, maps, and other artifacts that they had saved and collected.¹³³ As mainstream Jewish organizations throughout the country during the mid-1970s were starting to reconsider the role

¹³⁰ "I do not want people to get an impression that the billionaire talks and the Federation and its president jump to attention," explained Jewish Federation Council President Bruce I. Hochman in an internal memo. Bruce Hochman, "To: Marshall Grossman, ESQ.," March 21, 1985, Wiesenthal/CRC 1985 Folder, Box 25, CRC VI.

¹³¹ "Discussion Items—Friday, August 9, 1985," Wiesenthal/CRC 1985 Folder, Box 25, CRC VI.

¹³² James Edward Young and Mazal Holocaust Collection, *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 302.

¹³³ "Los Angeles Museum of the Holocaust," 02—Correspondences from Old Museum, Record Group-0001, Archival Collection, Los Angeles Museum of the Holocaust; Young and Mazal Holocaust Collection, *The Texture of Memory*, 304.

and status of the survivor—from traumatized refugee to teacher, hero, and communal asset—the Jewish Federation in Los Angeles began to provide the survivors with the organizational resources to launch their object and collection-centered museum.¹³⁴ The survivor group, however, was left to their own devices for fundraising.¹³⁵ According to various survivors, Simon Wiesenthal had initially agreed to help this group raise funds though backed out of the commitment after lending his name to Hier’s project.¹³⁶ “We felt like we had the rug pulled out from under us,” recalled one survivor.¹³⁷

While the survivors opened the relatively modest Martyrs Memorial and Museum of the Holocaust in a small exhibition space on the 12th floor of the Jewish Federation office building in 1978, bitter feelings between the survivors and the Simon Wiesenthal Center continued to linger. The grant proposal helped to inflame such frustrations and fuel a conversation about how to best commemorate. Local survivors involved with the Martyrs’ Memorial project such as clothing manufacturer Fred Diament and museum volunteer Masha Loen firmly believed that their first-hand experiences with suffering during the Second World War could and should help to provide Jewish and non-Jewish Angelenos alike with a seemingly authentic and authoritative understanding of the Holocaust. From their perspective, the Simon Wiesenthal Center was unworthy of a state grant because it did not coordinate its activities with the local survivor

¹³⁴ Deborah E Lipstadt, *Holocaust: An American Understanding* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2016), 85; Arlene Stein, *Reluctant Witnesses: Survivors, Their Children, and the Rise of the Holocaust Consciousness* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 103–31.

¹³⁵ Judith Miller, *One, by One, by One: Facing the Holocaust* (New York: Touchstone, 1991), 241.

¹³⁶ “Oral History Interview with Masha Loen,” RG-50.030*0138, 1990, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Oral History Collection; Rosenblatt, “The Simon Wiesenthal Center.” For a slightly different variation of this story, see Teitelbaum and Waldman, “The Unorthodox Rabbi.”

¹³⁷ Rosenblatt, “The Simon Wiesenthal Center.”

organizations.¹³⁸ Not all survivors in Los Angeles felt such animosity; indeed, the American Congress of Jews from Poland and Survivors of Concentration Camps endorsed SB337 on the premise that “everything must be done to educate as many people as possible to the tragic consequences of prejudice, bigotry, and hatred.”¹³⁹ But for the Martyrs Memorial group, there was a right way and a wrong way to commemorate and teach the Holocaust; they saw the SB337’s mandate to address other episodes of persecution as highly problematic because it diluted the significance of the Holocaust as a unique Jewish experience and ultimately served as a crass money making opportunity for the Wiesenthal Center. “The Wiesenthal Center almost packages the Holocaust like somebody would package shampoo. Our parents did not go to their deaths to be utilized to collect money,” explained Diament to reporter Naomi Pfefferman.¹⁴⁰

In their effort to navigate the delicate minefield of intra-communal politics, Federation officials adopted a course of action rooted in caution and a sense of compromise. As far as the question of state funding for the Museum of Tolerance, the Federation’s board of directors ultimately decided not adopt a public position on the proposed allocation and officially remained neutral on this controversial matter.¹⁴¹ This intentional silence and lack of willingness to take a public stand against SB337, perhaps not all that surprisingly, irritated those who feared that the

¹³⁸ Chazanov and Gladstone, “‘Museum of Tolerance’”; Naomi Pfefferman, “Proposed Museum of Tolerance Creates Debate in Community,” *Israel Today*, June 21, 1985,.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Pfefferman, “Proposed Museum of Tolerance Creates Debate in Community”; W.A. Maciver, “Why California Should Help Build a Holocaust Museum,” *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*, August 11, 1985. In response to such criticism, Hier explained to various journalists that envy and communal battles over “turf” were the primary reasons for opposition to the grant within the Jewish community, especially among those affiliated with the Martyr’s Memorial project. Ira Rifkin, “Rabbi Sees Jealousy in Criticism of Grant,” *The Daily News*, October 11, 1985.

¹⁴¹ Manuel Chait, “JFC Says ‘No Position’ on Museum of Tolerance,” *Jewish Community Bulletin*, June 21, 1985.

gargantuan and glitzy the Museum of Tolerance project would ultimately render the significantly smaller and relatively understated Martyrs' Memorial initiative obsolete.¹⁴²

In the short-term, however, this anxiety was misplaced. Following meetings with local survivors and other museum supporters, the Federation ultimately decided to deepen their investment in the museum and help heighten its visibility.¹⁴³ In doing so, the Federation, along with private donors, assisted the Martyr's Memorial in its evolution from a collection and object-driven museum to one that also prided itself upon its strong pedagogic focus and ability to shape the overall visitor experience through a coherent narrative. While survivor volunteers-docents and temporary staffers largely ran the museum through its first half-decade, in 1985 the Jewish Federation hired and appointed Dr. Michael Nutkiewicz as the first permanent director of the museum.¹⁴⁴ Nutkiewicz, a historian by training, brought to the museum a clear mandate to expand the museum's public programs, strengthen and formalize relationships with public and private schools throughout Los Angeles, and provide visitors better a understanding what exactly was lost and destroyed during the Holocaust.¹⁴⁵ Also of significance, in 1988 the Jewish Federation Council launched a 1.8 million dollar campaign to provide the Martyrs Memorial with the resources to relocate. The plan to move from the 12th floor of the Jewish Federation Council headquarters to a larger 6,000 square foot street level location was intended to help the

¹⁴² Hyman Haves, "Dear Milt and Marshall," August 11, 1985, Wiesenthal/CRC 1985 Folder, Box 25, CRC VI; Bruce I. Hochman, "Subject: Martyr's Memorial," June 12, 1985, Folder #2, Record Group # 01, Los Angeles Museum of the Holocaust (hereafter LAMH).

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ "Federation Names Religious Studies Educator to Direct Martyrs Memorial: Will Involve Historians," *Jewish Community Bulletin*, February 28, 1985.

¹⁴⁵ Under Nutkiewicz's leadership, the museum established an active dialogue that brought together the children of Holocaust survivors with the children of Nazi perpetrators and provided teacher-training workshops for social studies educators. Kathleen Hendrix, "A Legacy of Pain: Children of Both Sides Confront the Lessons of the Holocaust," *Los Angeles Times*, November 9, 1988. Michal Nutkiewicz, "The State of the Museum, 1985 – 1991," Folder # 8, Record Group # 01, LAMH.

museum become more accessible to the public, particularly students, and thus more effectively serve a diverse audience.¹⁴⁶

With the relocation came the opportunity for the museum to redesign the permanent exhibit—which was slated to feature personal onscreen testimonies from Holocaust survivors and a section dedicated to Jewish life in Europe before 1933—as well as refine its mission.¹⁴⁷ As Martyrs Memorial chairman and survivor Jack Salzberg explained in a 1988 newsletter, “this move gives us the opportunity to rethink the methods and design which foster communication between the viewer and the story that we are trying to tell.”¹⁴⁸ The new museum’s operating budget was still considerably smaller than that of the Museum of Tolerance; but it embraced its reputation as the “more authentic,” less sensationalized museum and began to increasingly present itself as, what one journalist described, “as a David of sorts, pitting wits and restraints against the flashier Wiesenthal Center’s Goliath.”¹⁴⁹ Explaining the philosophical and pedagogical differences between the two projects, Michael Nutkiewicz noted that his museum is “not meant to be high-tech. It’s meant to have a very documentary feel to it.... This is a museum that takes ideas very seriously.”¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁶ “Martyrs Memorial to Relocate Museum,” Spring 1988, *Pages – Newsletter of the Martyrs Memorial & Museum of the Holocaust*, Box #1, Esther Brenner Papers of the “1939” Club, 1952-1996, Cal State University, Northridge Urban Archives.

¹⁴⁷ Brian Boye, “Holocaust Museum Reopens in New, Expanded Space,” *Park LaBrea News*, September 17, 1992; Leo Noonan, “Holocaust Museum Has New Idea,” *The Jewish Journal*, November 4-November 10 1988; Naomi Pfefferman, “The Jewish World That Was,” *The Jewish Journal*, September 11-17, 1992.

¹⁴⁸ “Martyrs Memorial to Relocate Museum,” *Pages – Newsletter of the Martyrs Memorial & Museum of the Holocaust*, Spring 1988.

¹⁴⁹ Terry Pristin, “In Los Angeles: 3 Perspectives on the Holocaust: Jewish History: With Two Museums and a Monument Scheduled to Open within a Year, Critics Worry about Duplication,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 12, 1991.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid. Further expanding upon the differences between his museum and the Museum of Tolerance, Nutkiewicz noted, “that we didn’t plan “a museum whose exhibitry is cutesy and sensational and then obsolete in a few years.” Rick Criment, “Balance in Jewish Tributes being Sought,” *Santa Monica Outlook*, July 23, 1990.

With both museums slated to open in 1992, questions about whether it was necessary for Los Angeles to have two Holocaust-focused museums less than two miles apart started to mount with frequency during the early 1990s. Compounding this issue was the fact that another survivor group had raised \$2.5 million dollars to open a 75-by-100 foot Los Angeles Holocaust Monument in a public park about a mile and a half from the Martyrs Memorial.¹⁵¹ (Explaining the importance of having monument in a public space, survivor and project sponsor Jona Goldrich noted, “when a Latino person goes to the park and sees this and asks what is it, he starts reading about the 6 million killed, and that there was a Hitler.”¹⁵²) Some critics, overlooking the very real pedagogical and philosophical differences between the various projects, saw the supposed duplication as the result of organizational jealousy and misguided institutional priorities. “It seems a bit of overkill—one that was motivated more by considerations of turf than substance,” explained Rabbi Alexander Schindler, the president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations.¹⁵³ Others argued that having the Jewish community financially support the construction of two museums was economically unwise, especially during the midst of a recession when various local Jewish social service agencies were facing potential cutbacks.¹⁵⁴ The sense that Holocaust remembrance projects siphoned funds away from other Jewish communal initiatives was commonplace.¹⁵⁵ As Deborah Lipstadt—a historian active in local and

¹⁵¹ For more on the Los Angeles Holocaust Monument, see Young and Mazal Holocaust Collection, *The Texture of Memory*, 302-304.

¹⁵² Criment, “Balance in Jewish Tributes being Sought.”

¹⁵³ Pristin, “In Los Angeles: 3 Perspectives on the Holocaust.”

¹⁵⁴ Criment, “Balance in Jewish Tributes Being Sought.”

¹⁵⁵ On a similar note, Rabbi Laura Geller, the Executive Director of the American Jewish Congress branch in Los Angeles, explained, “I think that at a time when there are so limited resources in the Jewish community for very important work in social services and Jewish education, that it’s a mistake to focus so much money, energy, and resources on duplicating institutions.” Ibid.

national debates about Holocaust memory—explained, “when you’re building structures that are large and impressive, it’s easier to raise for than for ‘let’s take care of the educational needs or care for the people on Fairfax who are hungry’”¹⁵⁶

But beyond concerns about fundraising priorities lay a weightier, more existential criticism that transcended particular local dynamics. As Holocaust memorials, monuments, and museums proliferated throughout the United States during the 1980s, academics, rabbis, and other social critics began to increasingly advance the argument that American Jewish interest in the Holocaust had reached unhealthy proportions.¹⁵⁷ With the seemingly unstoppable momentum behind the institutionalization of Holocaust memory came the fear that the newfound obsession with the Holocaust was harmful to Jewish identity because it cast Jews as history’s ultimate victims and served as the prime rationale for Jewish survival. And Los Angeles, with its two museums and its public monument, was identified as the prime example of and ground zero for, what one scholar derisively described as, “Holocaustmania.”¹⁵⁸ In 1991, three different local news outlets wrote stories that examined the potential ramifications of this heightened Holocaust consciousness on Jewish values throughout Los Angeles. Representing one of the more skeptical voices, local Americans for Peace Now activist Havi Scheindlin emphatically argued that, “[the

¹⁵⁶ Officials from various memorials and museums defended their respective projects by emphasizing the social importance of their work. “When you do research against cancer, how many institutions are spending millions? Every human wants to be cured. Hatred is a social malignancy. And the way to cure it is through educating people,” explained Hier in his typically outspoken manner. Nutwietcz adopted a more restrained but complementary argument: “There is room for two...they have an important role on the national scene and our focus is on the local.” Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Lipstadt, *Holocaust*, 113–17. Also of note, one survey from 1989 ranked the Holocaust as the most important feature of group identity for American Jews. Steven M. Cohen, “Jewish Continuity over Judaic Content: The Moderately Affiliated American Jew,” in *The Americanization of the Jews*, ed. Robert Seltzer and Norman Cohen, 1995.

¹⁵⁸ Lipstadt, *Holocaust*, 114. For criticism along these lines that solely focuses on the Simon Wiesenthal Center, see Yehuda Lev, “Some Questions Answered, Some Ignored About the Simon Wiesenthal Center,” *The Jewish Journal*, July 20, 1990.

Holocaust] plays on the depths of people's fears about anti-Semitism and I think it's unhealthy for us as a community to let that go too far. We need to have a positive reason to be Jewish and need to be looking to the future."¹⁵⁹ Even Samuel Goetz, a survivor who was actively involved with the Martyrs Memorial project and other Holocaust education initiatives, feared that an overemphasis on the Holocaust could ultimately prove counterproductive.¹⁶⁰

Notably, though, not all emerging civic Jewish projects in Los Angeles were organized around Holocaust commemoration. A brief examination of the Skirball Cultural Center reveals how efforts to move beyond a lachrymose, Holocaust-centric focus and articulate an upbeat message that celebrated the Jewish experience infused the Jewish political culture in Los Angeles. Starting in the mid-1980s Hebrew Union College, the rabbinic seminary for Reform Judaism, launched plans to construct the American Jewish heritage-focused Skirball Cultural Center on a spacious 15-acre site in the Santa Monica Mountains between the San Fernando Valley and the Westside of Los Angeles.¹⁶¹ A greatly expanded Judaica museum, relocated from Hebrew Union College's campus on the outskirts of downtown Los Angeles, was intended to operate as the core of the Cultural Center; the Skirball's hillside complex was also slated to feature a café, an auditorium, a garden, as well as conference space.¹⁶² This ambitious project was proposed and spearheaded by Uri Herscher, a rabbi and professor of American Jewish history who moved to Los Angeles in 1979 to serve as the executive vice president of Hebrew Union College. Film

¹⁵⁹ Criment, "Balance in Jewish Tributes Being Sought."

¹⁶⁰ Ibid. Goetz was also instrumental in helping to establish a Holocaust studies chair at UCLA. Sam Goetz, *I Never Saw My Face* (Danbury, CT: Rutledge Books, 2001), 123–39.

¹⁶¹ Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion, "College to Build Cultural Center in Los Angeles," *The Chronicle*, No # 28, April 1984.

¹⁶² Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion, "College to Build Cultural Center in Los Angeles"; Barbara Isenberg, "The Skirball Museum: On the Brink of Prominence: The Skirball Is on the Brink," *Los Angeles Times*, October 7, 1984.

producer and philanthropist Jack H. Skirball, who was also ordained as a Reform rabbi, provided the initial seed funding.¹⁶³

Since its inception, the concept of the Skirball was based on the assumption that innovative efforts were needed to confront the problems American Jews faced such as identity confusion, lack of Judaic knowledge, and alienation from core institutions.¹⁶⁴ Herscher and Hebrew Union College believed that they could help address these serious challenges by building a cultural center that would explore the connections between four thousand years of Jewish history and American democratic ideals. The Skirball, they envisioned, would also provide American Jews with the opportunity to learn about, take pride in, and celebrate their rich cultural inheritance and identity.¹⁶⁵ To this end, the Skirball planned various initiatives that aimed to highlight and emphasize the supposedly seamless synthesis between Jewish and American culture. With Project Americana, for example, the Skirball set out to collect everyday items from synagogues and households in order to showcase what exactly diverse waves of Jewish immigrants brought to the United States and how they expressed their “creative spirit” in America.¹⁶⁶ Within this context, Herscher and fellow Skirball staffers described the center as a necessary counterpoint to

¹⁶³ Beverly Beyette, “For Ex-Rabbi Skirball, Life’s a Big Production: Skirball: Ex-Rabbi’s Life a Big Production,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 17, 1985; Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion, “Interpretive Master Plan, Draft,” Cultural Center Papers Folder, MS 20, AJA; “Herscher New Director of Hebrew Union Campus,” *Los Angeles Times*, August 4, 1979; Ira Rifkin, “Project Americana Begins,” *The Daily News*, April 11, 1987.

¹⁶⁴ Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion, “Interpretive Master Plan, Draft.”

¹⁶⁵ “Descriptive Programmatic Frame of the Hebrew Union College Skirball Museum in the Proposed Cultural Center,” Skirball Museum 1982 Folder, MS 20, AJA; Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion, “College to Build Cultural Center in Los Angeles”; Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion, “Interpretive Master Plan, Draft.”

¹⁶⁶ Collected items included a wooden bowl and chopping blade used to make gefilte fish, a *ketubbah* (a marriage contract) from an 1820 wedding in New York, and a Civil War Hanukah lamp. Rifkin, “Project Americana Begins”; Hebrew Union College, “A Project Americana Sampler,” in possession of author; Amy Stevens, “Cultural Center to Tell Story of Jews in America: ‘Project Americana’ to Search Nationwide for Commonplace Objects to Exemplify Everyday Life,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 23, 1988.

the local Holocaust museums and claimed that their project would help to present Jewish heritage in a significantly more positive and upbeat light.¹⁶⁷ As Herscher explained to one *Los Angeles Times* reporter in 1991, "because of the tragedies in Jewish history, there has been a tendency to emphasize the mournful. But in 4,000 years of history we have had our share of the joyful and the creative, not just the destructive--especially in the United States, where we have every reason to celebrate."¹⁶⁸

The Skirball also adopted and espoused a broad, albeit loose, civic agenda. By the end of the 1980s, the center had begun to increasingly draw upon Hebrew Union College's mandate to apply Jewish values to contemporary social problems and describe its mission as one that served the "welfare of the general public" and the "larger non-Jewish society."¹⁶⁹ This entailed positioning the Skirball as a forum to discuss, address, and underscore the value of social diversity and immigration. These issues were highly contested and the source of much political controversy throughout Southern California. A significant percentage of recent immigrants were undocumented and perceived as putting extra pressure on social services during the economic recession of the early 1990s; as such, calls to restrict and limit immigration mounted.¹⁷⁰ For the

¹⁶⁷ Stevens, "Cultural Center to Tell Story of Jews in America"; Pristin, "In Los Angeles: 3 Perspectives on the Holocaust."

¹⁶⁸ Suzanne Muchnic, "Joyful Forum for Jewish Tradition: Building: Construction of the \$55-Million Skirball Center Complex in the Sepulveda Pass Is Scheduled to Be Completed Late in 1992," *Los Angeles Times*, February 21, 1991.

¹⁶⁹ Based on the sources I examined, there is only one reference to the Center's broad civic agenda through the mid-1980s. This mission becomes more pronounced starting around 1988. Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion, "College to Build Cultural Center in Los Angeles."

¹⁷⁰ Georges Sabagh and Mehdi Bozorgmehr, "From 'Give Me Your Poor' to 'Save Our State': New York and Los Angeles as Immigrant Cities and Regions," in *New York & Los Angeles: Politics, Society, and Culture: A Comparative View*, ed. David Halle (Chicago, Ill: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 99-123. Also see, Harold Meyerson, "The New American Liberal: Guilt-Ridden and Nativist: Doctrine: NAFTA and the Upsurge of Immigrants Have Caught the Left without Many Appealing Solutions. But There Is a Way Out," *Los Angeles Times*, September 19, 1993; George J. Sanchez, "Face the Nation: Race, Immigration, and the Rise of Nativism in Late Twentieth Century America," *International Migration Review* 31, no. 4 (1997): 1009–30.

Skirball, celebrating and chronicling the Jewish experience in the United States was intended to help visitors—Jews and non-Jews alike—effectively appreciate the city’s ethnic diversity and better understand the ways in which waves of immigrants have ultimately enriched the United States.¹⁷¹ As one Skirball grant proposal from 1990 explained, “the historical experience of Jews in America, their effort to integrate in American life and simultaneously to preserve their ancestral heritage in a new and vibrant context, has therefore emerged to serve as a paradigm of what religio-ethnic diversity can contribute to the larger society.”¹⁷²

While this message placed the Skirball in a pro-immigration camp alongside liberal-leaning political coalitions and formal advocacy groups, the Skirball identified its role in civic affairs as more inspirational than direct impact. As such, their political objectives, however well meaning, were articulated in a vague manner. While the Skirball, as promotional materials explained, aimed to “focus on the commonalities of the Jewish experience and that of other immigrant groups.... through a historical awareness,” the practical application of this philosophy was never thoroughly addressed.¹⁷³ When explaining to journalist Ira Rifkin how a general, though unspecific, pro-pluralist bent inflected the center’s agenda, Herscher noted, “when you talk about American Jewish life, you’re talking about immigration, and when you talk about immigration you’re talking about America. We will deal with issues common to all of us that live in the

¹⁷¹ Uri Herscher, “Mr. Bruce Sievers,” HUC Articles of Incorporation Folder, MS 20, AJA

¹⁷² “Proposal to the Kresge Foundation for the HUC Skirball Cultural Center,” February, 1990, Cultural Center Correspondence Folder, MS 20, AJA. From the perspective of Herscher, the center’s commitment to heightening the “public consciousness of the roles religion and ethnic diversity have played” in the United States was also personal. As an immigrant who moved from Israel to California as a child, Herscher believed that the center would provide a way for Jews like himself to demonstrate their appreciation for the opportunities they received as newcomers to the United States and help create a more inviting and inclusive civic atmosphere. Diane Haithman, “Culture: Take the 405 to Utopia: Fourteen Years in the Making, the Hebrew Union College Skirball Cultural Center Will Open in April, without Fanfare--or Debts,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 19, 1995.

¹⁷³ The Skirball Museum (Hebrew Union College), The Skirball Cultural Center, “Remember and Renewing: The Jewish Experience,” December 1990, HUC Articles of Incorporation Folder, MS 20, AJA.

community.”¹⁷⁴ In this regard, the Skirball operated as a site of political and ideological contest that was, ironically, largely removed from its intended urban context.

Well before its opening in 1996, the Skirball Cultural Center was touted and validated in its goal to establish itself as an essential part of Los Angeles’ cultural and social landscape.¹⁷⁵ With its flexible *modus operandi* in place, the organization raised about \$55 million dollars through private funding by the early 1990s. Jewish donors affiliated with the Reform movement and the Hollywood film industry as well as community leaders who were previously involved in the Black-Jewish Leadership Coalition and the Hispanic/Jewish Dialogue provided the majority of the seed funding; non-Jewish sources such as the J. Paul Getty Trust, the Ahmanson Foundation, and the Roy Disney Family Foundation also contributed about \$10 million dollars to the project.¹⁷⁶ Moving forward, Skirball officials frequently pointed towards and discussed their broad funding base as a sign and expression of their institution’s broad multicultural mission and appeal.¹⁷⁷

But the Skirball’s effort to become “an educational and cultural center unlike any other,” also embodied the contradictions and tensions embedded within the project.¹⁷⁸ Seeking to create a space that both showcased the American Jewish experience and promoted a sense of civic belonging for all brought into focus logistical questions about geographic accessibility and engaging multiple publics. As the Skirball’s celebrated architect Moshe Safdie, explained in

¹⁷⁴ Rifkin, “Project Americana Begins.”

¹⁷⁵ Margaret Leslie Davis, *The Culture Broker: Franklin D. Murphy and the Transformation of Los Angeles* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 358–62.

¹⁷⁶ “Hebrew Union College, Skirball Cultural Center Founder List by Category as of August 1, 1992,” HUC Articles of Incorporation Folder, MS 20, AJA; Herscher, “Mr. Bruce Sievers”; Yehuda Lev, “On the Cultural Map,” *The Jewish Journal*, November 6-12 1992.

¹⁷⁷ Lev, “On the Cultural Map”; Tom Tugend, “Skirball Opens Its Doors,” *The Jewish Journal*, April 19-25, 1996.

¹⁷⁸ Muchnic, “Joyful Forum for Jewish Tradition.”

1991, the center's location on a dramatic hillside setting and its hacienda-style design would ideally underline the project's optimistic message by "offering an escape from the chaos of the world" and providing "serenity and harmony with nature."¹⁷⁹ This aesthetic, envisioned as a key part of the Skirball's appeal, was primarily intended to help attract Jews that lived relatively nearby on the Westside or in the San Fernando Valley as well as a way for the center to visually align itself with other cultural institutions along the Sepulveda Pass such as the J. Paul Getty Center and the University of Judaism.¹⁸⁰ Yet, although reachable by the 405 Freeway, the scenic location was not located in close proximity to bus lines and thus rather inaccessible and inconvenient for many of its intended non-Jewish visitors, particularly lower-income ethnic minorities who lived around downtown and in South Central Los Angeles and heavily relied upon public transportation.¹⁸¹ Indeed, while seeking to provide an "ongoing program for urban school children," the practical matter of how to transport these students and others without private automobiles to the center was an issue Hebrew Union College officials and Skirball employees discussed though never quite resolved.¹⁸² "The assumption," noted Safdie in an interview, "is that everyone will come to the Center by car."¹⁸³

In many ways, the Skirball Cultural Center as well as the Museum of Tolerance and the Martyrs Memorial project provided new opportunities for Jews to insert themselves and contribute to contemporary civic discussions, particularly those related to the politics of social

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid. Also see, Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion, "College to Build Cultural Center in Los Angeles."

¹⁸¹ Davis, *The Culture Broker*, 358–62.

¹⁸² John Chandler, "L.A. Approves Plans for Hebrew College and Museum" *The Outlook*, February 1984; Haithman, "Culture: Take the 405 to Utopia"; Hebrew Union College Center for the American Jewish Experience, "Interpretive Master Plan – Draft"; Tom Tugend, "Skirball Opens Its Doors," *The Jewish Journal*, April 19-25, 1996.

¹⁸³ "A Fusion of Archeology and Invention: Excerpts from an Interview with Moshe Safdie," *Oasis*, Fall 1996.

diversity and ethnic pluralism. Fueling Jewish communal discussions between activists, public officials, journalists, rabbis, philanthropists, historians, and architects, the elongated course of museum planning inspired animated dialogues concerning Jewish heritage and its seemingly relevant “lessons.” Throughout the process, museums emerged as a central venue for Jewish communal debate engaging those across various political and ideological divides and viewpoints. Even so, these conversations veered in directions that broached the specific issues facing Los Angeles in only the most superficial and indirect of ways all the while encouraging Jewish Angelenos to understand their role in civic affairs through an abstract lens.

More generally, the blunted political effect of museums, together with the decline of the inter-ethnic coalition model, helped to illustrate that efforts to organize local Jewish politics around global affairs and history were largely counterproductive in terms of maintaining and sustaining Jewish interest in the local political arena. The shortcomings of museums and coalitions ultimately represented and accelerated the process of Jewish disengagement from civic affairs. Indeed, moving forward, the Los Angeles Jewish community increasingly lacked a direct, dynamic, and organized venue to address pressing questions about the volatile nature of inter-ethnic relations in the global city.

Conclusion

The roots of the 1992 Los Angeles Riots were quite complex, stemming from racial and ethnic competition for limited job opportunities, a shortage of education and housing resources within minority communities, and systematic police brutality.¹ Its immediate cause, though, was the acquittal of four white police officers for the beating of African-American motorist Rodney King, which ignited a wave of African-American frustration and anger.² Following the controversial verdict, violence and looting broke out in South Central Los Angeles and soon spread outside of the heavily African-American neighborhood, threatening areas such as Hollywood and Koreatown. According to the *Los Angeles Times*, the riots resulted in 58 deaths, 2,383 injuries, over 17,000 arrests, and an estimated \$785 million dollars in property damage.³ Much of the violence was directed at Korean and Korean-American storeowners, who lost about half of the businesses destroyed in the riots.⁴ Latinos also played a key role in the riots, both as business owners that sustained property damage and also as rioters.⁵ According to historian Brenda Stevenson, the 1992 riot was more than simply a power struggle between whites and blacks, it was “a multiracial and multi/ethnic one on many levels, with painful consequences for several ethnic and racial communities.”⁶

¹ As explained in chapter 1, while I recognize that “riots” is a politically loaded and divisive term, I have elected to use the word for the purpose of consistency and clarity. Much has been written about the 1992 riots. See, John H. M. Laslett, *Sunshine Was Never Enough: Los Angeles Workers, 1880-2010* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 293; Raphael Sonenshein, *Politics in Black and White: Race and Power in Los Angeles* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 210–26; Brenda E. Stevenson, *The Contested Murder of Latasha Harlins: Justice, Gender, and the Origins of the LA Riots* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 277–309.

² Sonenshein, *Politics in Black and White*, 223.

³ Sonenshein, *Politics in Black and White*.

⁴ Lou Cannon, “Scars Remain Five Years After Los Angeles Riots,” *The Washington Post*, April 28, 1997.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Stevenson, *The Contested Murder of Latasha Harlins*, 288.

While the riots were certainly a multicultural and multiethnic affair that reflected Los Angeles's evolving demographics, the role that Jews, as individuals and organizations, played during the riots was relatively limited. Largely due to the fact that the majority of Jews in Los Angeles were middle class and upper-middle class and employed in white-collar jobs, Jews on the aggregate were not on the front lines. In stark contrast to the 1965 Watts Riots, where Jewish storeowners suffered more damage than their non-Jewish counterparts, Jews owned only about 2% of the stores destroyed during the 1992 riots.⁷ Of those storeowners, most were recent Russian, Israeli, and Iranian newcomers who were immersed in immigrant communities that had yet to cultivate their own local civic-oriented leaders and organizations. So while the riots certainly sparked a deep sense of alarm among vulnerable storeowners—Israeli proprietor Gill Zahavi, for example, armed his employees with shotguns and conducted three citizen arrests—immigrant storeowners were not equipped or encouraged to address the riots as an issue of Jewish communal significance.⁸

Jewish participation in formal post-riot cleanup projects was also lacking. Although mainstream Jewish political organizations such as the American Jewish Congress and the Jewish Community Relations Committee identified the riots as an opportunity to reach out to minority communities that suffered great loss and work to “mend the torn fragments of our city,” little came from these calls to action.⁹ Indeed, as was often reported, civically inclined rabbis and

⁷ Susan Rubin, “The Jewish Response to the Los Angeles Riots,” *Western States Jewish History* XXV, no. 3 (April 1993): 195–208; Sheli Teitelbaum, “Now That the Smoke Has Cleared,” *The Jerusalem Report*, November 19, 1992.

⁸ “Los Angeles Jews, Spared by Rioting, Pitch in to Help Rebuild Ravaged City,” *Jewish Telegraph Agency*, May 5, 1992.

⁹ David Margolis, “Is There a Jewish Stake in Los Angeles,” Riots-Los Angeles 1992 Folder, Box 22, Jewish Federation Council of Greater Los Angeles, Community Relations Committee Collection, VI, Urban Archives Center, Oviatt Library, California State University, Northridge (hereafter CRC); Teitelbaum, “Now That the Smoke Has Cleared”; “Tikkun Olam: Jewish Federation Council Responds Quickly to help Rebuild L.A. After Riots,”

community leaders were unable to gain traction and sustain support from their constituents who seemed unwilling to grapple and engage with the upheaval.¹⁰ For example, while various Conservative and Reform rabbis from more affluent communities encouraged the students involved in their synagogue day schools and youth groups to participate in citywide cleanup events, these events were poorly attended.¹¹ In the same vein, only a handful of Jewish leaders took part in the Rebuild LA initiative, a large-scale private-public partnership that sought to help to revive many of the areas that were destroyed.¹²

Within this context, the riots compelled many to assess the state of local Jewish politics and conclude that Jewish interest in civic affairs had significantly waned during the previous decade. For many observers, ranging from prominent African-American civil rights attorney Melanie Lomax to *Jewish Journal* columnist Marlene Adler Marks, the lackluster Jewish response to the riots was a clear-cut sign that the Jewish community had rejected liberal politics and officially become part of the undifferentiated, conservative white masses.¹³ While there was certainly an element of truth to such an explanation, it was also an over-simplified and largely ahistorical one fueled by specific political agendas. Indeed, Jews had long been accepted as part of the white mainstream even while, on the aggregate, they supported liberal candidates and causes. And as key flashpoints such as the Watts Riots, the 1969 mayoral election, and the school busing

Riots-Los Angeles 1992 Folder, Box 22, Jewish Federation Council of Greater Los Angeles, Community Relations Committee Collection, VI, Urban Archives Center, Oviatt Library, California State University, Northridge (hereafter CRC).

¹⁰ Bob Sipchen, "L.A. Jews Look Past the Riots: The Violence Has Forced an Influential Community to Reassess Its Role in a City of Rapidly Shifting Demographics and Increasing Balkanization," *Los Angeles Times*, October 16, 1992.

¹¹ Phil Warflash, "Subject: Youth Involvement in Clean Up," May 6, 1992, Riots-Los Angeles 1992 Folder, Box #22, CRC VI.

¹² Teitelbaum, "Now That the Smoke Has Cleared."

¹³ *Ibid.* In many ways, this opinion was quite similar to what various observers said about the Jewish response to the 1965 Watts Riots.

debates reveal, a sizeable and vocal minority of Jewish Angelenos had actively and publicly championed conservative politics since the mid-1960s.

More accurately, the relatively muted Jewish reaction to the 1992 riots was a sign that many Jews across the ideological spectrum simply did not know *how to* proceed or what civic role to assume in early 1990s Los Angeles. Such uncertainty was particularly pronounced among those who were most active in city politics—especially around thorny issues such as public education, neighborhood preservation and development, as well as coalition building—over the previous two decades though whose interests had since drifted. Indeed, a sense of defeat following intentional efforts to mesh together distinct ethnic concerns with broader ones, coupled with uncertainty about where exactly they fit in the city’s multicultural political matrix, had helped to generate a great deal of distance from the local political culture. But, it was the riots and its aftermath that prompted various journalists, organizational leaders, activists, rabbis, and politicians to actively confront and recognize the affect of this disorientation on Jewish political life. As journalist Sheli Teitelbaum explained in November of 1992, “as the smoke cleared, some Jews discovered that... they were no longer as relevant to the city’s power structure as they might have been a generation ago.”¹⁴ On a similar note, linking the Jewish response to the 1992 riots with broader social and political trends, Gary Rubin and Diana Aviv of the American Jewish Committee and the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council claimed that, “if we are honest, we must recognize that... with very few exceptions, we have become increasingly irrelevant to the most pressing social problems of the nation in which we live.”¹⁵

¹⁴ Teitelbaum, “Now That the Smoke Has Cleared.” On a similar note, Gary Rubin and Diana Aviv lamented that the riots made them recognize that, “we [Jews] have become increasingly irrelevant to the most pressing social problems of the nation in which we live.” Gary Rubin and Diana Aviv, “What the Los Angeles Riots Means to Los Angeles Jews,” Riots-Los Angeles 1992 Folder, Box #22, CRC VI.

¹⁵ Gary Rubin And Diana Aviv, “What the Los Angeles Riots Mean to American Jews.”

Jewish life in Los Angeles and throughout much of North America more generally, has historically been a constant mediation between two competing poles—a desire to embrace cities, build intergroup social movements, and join civic debates, and alternatively, the pressure to retreat from the public sphere and balkanize. Over the past thirty years, as Jews gradually veered away from local civic and political affairs, many of the players and organizations that sought to advocate for and vocally promote a perceived Jewish stake in local politics lost relevance. The number of elected Jewish politicians slowly declined, Jewish support for public projects and citywide philanthropic initiatives decreased, and Jewish political organizations such as the Los Angeles branch of the American Jewish Congress and the Jewish Federation’s Jewish Community Relations Committee were disbanded.¹⁶ Even the election of Eric Garcetti (of a Jewish and Latino background) to mayor in 2013 was met, not with enthusiastic celebration or acute anxiety within Jewish circles as might be expected, but, instead, with a feeling of indifference.¹⁷

Even though the Jewish attachment to the local political scene had considerably weakened, Jewish interest in national and international affairs accelerated throughout the 1990s and early 2000s. Jewish Angelenos—across religious, ideological, and sub-ethnic lines—invested in broader forms of politics passions that were not as relevant or applicable to their daily existence, though in many ways ideologically more straightforward and empowering for their own

¹⁶ Jews represented about 25% of the public officials in Los Angeles throughout most of the 1980s; by the 2000s, that percentage had declined to about 16%. Fernando Guerra/ The Thomas and Dorothy Leavey Center for the Study of Los Angeles at Loyola Marymount University, “170912 Max Baumgarten Request,” email attachment from Berto Solis to author, September 12, 2017. Also see, Marc Ballon, “Federation Support of Civic Group Wanes,” *The Jewish Journal*, May 25, 2006; Eric Roth, “What’s the Jewish Stake in LAUSD,” *The Jewish Journal*, February 25, 2009; Marlene Adler Marks, “Back to Basics,” *The Jewish Journal*, October 21, 1999; Teresa Watanabe, “American Jewish Face East-West Power Struggle,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 6, 2002; Sid Schwarz, *Judaism and Justice: The Jewish Passion to Repair the World* (Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2006), 219–22.

¹⁷ Only a handful of articles discussed and examined Garcetti’s 2013 election as a Jewish event. See, Rob Eshman, “When Did Garcetti Turn Jewish,” *Zócalo Public Square*, July 22, 2013; David N. Myers, “History Matters: Garcetti and the History of Jewish Politics,” *The Jewish Journal*, May 29, 2013.

identities. While liberal Jewish Angelenos increasingly assumed a prominent role as donors and fundraisers for the national Democratic Party, the previously inward-focused Persian Jewish community, largely fueled by a new wave of suicide attacks, began to mobilize en-masse in support of Israel.¹⁸ Articulating a more universalistic, international agenda, members of the Valley Beth Shalom congregation in Encino founded the prominent anti-genocide organization, Jewish World Watch.¹⁹

Jewish concern for national and international political politics was by no means a new phenomenon, as causes such as Holocaust memorialization, aid for Israel, and global human rights had long been high on the community's agenda. From the mid-1960s through the mid-1980s, these relatively distant issues frequently intersected with and helped to animate and inform a vibrant local Jewish political discourse. This was no longer the case by the 1990s. What remained was a Jewish political culture that, while highly politicized, was foremost concerned with far-flung debates. Herein lies one of the great ironies of late twentieth century Jewish political life in Los Angeles and beyond: as the American Jewish community enhanced their political clout and legitimacy on the national and international level, they sensed little to gain by participating in local politics.

¹⁸ Joel Kotkin, "Divided Jewish Voters," *The Jewish Journal*, November 1-7, 1996; Tom Tugend, "Who's Backing Whom?" *The Jewish Journal*, February 17, 2000; Saba Soomekh, "Tehrangeles: Capital, Culture, and Faith among Iranian Jews," email attachment from Saba Soomekh to author, November 26, 2016.

¹⁹ "Jewish World Watch," Valley Beth Shalom, <https://www.vbs.org/social-action/jewish-world-watch>, accessed October 5, 2017. For more on this universalistic outward looking impulse, see Michael N Barnett, *The Star and the Stripes: A History of the Foreign Policies of American Jews*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press) 2016.

Bibliography

Books

- Abrams, Nathan. *Norman Podhoretz and Commentary Magazine: The Rise and Fall of the Neocons*. New York: Continuum, 2010.
- Abu-Lughod, Janet L. *New York, Chicago, Los Angeles: America's Global Cities*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999.
- American Jewish Committee, Los Angeles Chapter, and Lewis F Blumberg. *A Study of the Elderly Jewish Poor of Los Angeles County in 1970*. Los Angeles: American Jewish Committee, 1971.
- Avila, Eric. *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight: Fear and Fantasy in Suburban Los Angeles*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006.
- Aviv, Caryn and David Shneer. *New Jews: The End of the Jewish Diaspora*. New York: New York University Press, 2005.
- Barraclough, Laura R. *Making the San Fernando Valley: Rural Landscapes, Urban Development, and White Privilege*. 3. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011.
- Barnett, Michael N. *The Star and the Stripes: A History of the Foreign Policies of American Jews*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016.
- Bayor, Ronald, ed. *Race and Ethnicity in America: A Concise History*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2003.
- Bell, Jonathan. *California Crucible: The Forging of Modern American Liberalism*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012.
- Berkley Nepon, Ezra. *Justice, Justice Shall You Pursue: A History of New Jewish Agenda*. Philadelphia, PA: Thread Makes Blanket Press, 2012.
- Berman, Lila Corwin. *Metropolitan Jews: Politics, Race, and Religion in Postwar Detroit*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2015.
- . *Speaking of Jews: Rabbis, Intellectuals, and the Creation of an American Public Identity*. The S. Mark Taper Foundation Imprint in Jewish Studies. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009.
- Bernstein, Shana. *Bridges of Reform: Interracial Civil Rights Activism in Twentieth-Century Los Angeles*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.

- . “From Civic Defense to Civil Rights : The Growth of Jewish American Interracial Civil Rights Activism in Los Angeles.” In *A Cultural History of Jews in California*, edited by Bruce Zuckerman, William Deverell, and Lisa Ansell. West Lafayette, Ind.: Purdue University Press for the USC Casden Institute for the Study of the Jewish Role in American Life, 2009.
- Biale, David. “The Melting Pot and Beyond: Jews and the Politics of American Identity.” In *Insider/Outsider: American Jews and Multiculturalism*, edited by David Biale, Michael Galchinsky, and Susan Heschel. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.
- Boyarsky, Bill. *Big Daddy: Jesse Unruh and the Art of Power Politics*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008.
- Bozorgmehr, Medhi, Claudia Der-Martirosian, and Georges Sabagh. “Middle Easterners: A New Kind of Immigrant.” In *Ethnic Los Angeles*, edited by Roger Waldinger and Medhi Bozorgmehr, 345–78. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1996.
- Brilliant, Mark. *The Color of America Has Changed: How Racial Diversity Shaped Civil Rights Reform in California, 1941-1978*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Brin, Herb. *Shouting for Justice: The Journey of a Jewish Journalist across the Century of Hitler and Israel*, 2012.
- Brizel, Florie, and Calif.) Sinai Temple (Los Angeles. *Sinai Temple: A Centennial History 1906-2006*. Los Angeles, Calif.: Sinai Temple, 2007.
- Brodkin, Karen. *How Jews Became White Folks: And What That Says About Race in America*. Piscataway: Rutgers University Press, 1998.
- Brooks, Charlotte. *Alien Neighbors, Foreign Friends: Asian Americans, Housing, and the Transformation of Urban California*. Historical Studies of Urban America. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009.
- Brower, Martin. *Los Angeles Jew: A Memoir*. Bloomington: AuthorHouse, 2009.
- Brownell, Kathryn Cramer. *Showbiz Politics: Hollywood in American Political Life*. Durham: University of North Carolina Press, 2014. <http://site.ebrary.com/id/10945344>.
- Bruce, Lenny. *How to Talk Dirty and Influence People: An Autobiography*. 1st Fireside ed. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992.
- Carson, Clayborne. “Black-Jewish Universalism in the Era of Identity Politics.” In *Struggles in the Promised Land: Towards a History of Black-Jewish Relations in the United States*, edited by Jack Salzman and Cornel West. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Casstevens, Thomas W., Berkeley. University of California, and Institute of Governmental

- Studies. *Politics, Housing, and Race Relations: California's Rumford Act and Proposition 14*. Berkeley: Institute of Governmental Studies, University of California, 1967.
- Celebrate Fairfax!* Beverly Hills, Calif.: Hal Sloane Associates, 1980.
- Chafets, Ze'ev, and Mazal Holocaust Collection. *Members of the Tribe: On the Road in Jewish America*. Toronto; New York: Bantam Books, 1988.
- Clark, William. "Residential Patterns: Avoidance, Assimilation, and Succession." In *Ethnic Los Angeles*, edited by Roger David Waldinger and Mehdi Bozorgmehr. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1996.
- Cohen, Henry, Gary Sandrow, and American Jewish Committee. *Philadelphia Chooses a Mayor, 1971; Jewish Voting Patterns*. Philadelphia: American Jewish Committee, 1972.
- Cohen, Steven M. "Jewish Continuity over Judaic Content: The Moderately Affiliated American Jew." In *The Americanization of the Jews*, edited by Robert Seltzer and Norman Cohen, 1995. <http://www.bjpa.org/Publications/details.cfm?PublicationID=177>.
- Coonradt, Frederic C, University of Southern California, and School of Journalism. *The Negro News Media and the Los Angeles Riots*. [Los Angeles]: School of Journalism, University of Southern California, 1965.
- Cowie, Jefferson. *Stayin' Alive: The 1970s and the Last Days of the Working Class*. New York: The New Press, 2010.
- Culver, Lawrence. *The Frontier of Leisure: Southern California and the Shaping of Modern America*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Davis, Margaret L. *The Culture Broker Franklin D. Murphy and the Making of Los Angeles*. Berkeley, Calif.; London: University of California Press, 2007.
<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=201676>.
- Davis, Margaret Leslie. *The Culture Broker: Franklin D. Murphy and the Transformation of Los Angeles*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007.
- Davis, Mike. *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles*. New York: Vintage Books, 1992.
- Deverell, William, and Greg Hise. *A Companion to Los Angeles*. Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.
- Diamond, Etan. *And I Will Dwell in Their Midst: Orthodox Jews in Suburbia*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2000.

- Didion, Joan. *After Henry*. New York: Vintage Books, 1993.
- Diner, Hasia. *We Remember with Reverence and Love: American Jews and the Myth of Silence after the Holocaust, 1945-1962*. New York: NYU Press, 2010.
- Diner, Hasia R. *In the Almost Promised Land: American Jews and Blacks, 1915-1935*. Contributions in American History, no. 59. Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1977.
- Diner, Hasia R. *The Jews of the United States, 1654 to 2000*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004.
- Dinnerstein, Leonard. *Antisemitism in America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.
- Dochuk, Darren. *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt: Plain-Folk Religion, Grassroots Politics, and the Rise of Evangelical Conservatism*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2011.
- Dollinger, Marc. "'Is It Good for the Jews?: Liberalism and the Challenges of the 1960s.'" In *"Jewishness" and the World Of "difference" in the United States*, edited by Marc Lee Raphael. Williamsburg, Va.: Dept. of Religion, College of William and Mary, 2001.
- . *Quest for Inclusion: Jews and Liberalism in Modern America*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000.
- Edwards, Harvey, and Jody Avery. *Fairfax*. New York, Los Angeles: Copley Press West, 1976.
- Eisenberg, Ellen. *The First to Cry Down Injustice: Western Jews and Japanese Removal during WWII*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2008.
- Eisenberg, Ellen, Ava F. Kahn, and William Toll. *Jews of the Pacific Coast: Reinventing Community on America's Edge*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2009.
- Elkind, Ethan N. *Railtown: The Fight for the Los Angeles Metro Rail and the Future of the City*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014.
<http://librarytitles.ebrary.com/Doc?id=10779286>.
- Envicom Corporation, SRI International, and Greer and Company. *Beverly-Fairfax Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy: Final Report*. [Los Angeles?]: [publisher not identified], 1982.
- Erenberg, Lewis. *Boyle Heights Boy: A Memoir of Growing Up in LA*. unpublished, n.d.
- Fishkoff, Sue. *The Rebbe's Army: Inside the World of Chabad-Lubavitch*. New York: Schocken Books, 2003.
- Fogelson, Robert M. *The Fragmented Metropolis Los Angeles, 1850-1930*. Berkeley: University

- of California Press, 1993.
<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=19210>.
- Freeman, Joshua Benjamin. *American Empire: The Rise of a Global Power, the Democratic Revolution at Home, 1945-2000*. New York: Viking, 2012.
- Friedman, Murray. *Commentary in American Life*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2005.
- . *The Neoconservative Revolution: Jewish Intellectuals and the Shaping of Public Policy*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2005.
- Fuchs, Lawrence H. *The Political Behavior of American Jews*. Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1980.
- Fulton, William B. *The Reluctant Metropolis: The Politics of Urban Growth in Los Angeles*. Point Arena, CA: Solano Press Books, 1997.
- Furman, Andrew. *My Los Angeles in Black & (Almost) White*. 1st ed. Sports and Entertainment. Syracuse, N.Y: Syracuse University Press, 2010.
- Gabler, Neal. *An Empire of Their Own: How the Jews Invented Hollywood*. New York: Anchor Books, 1989.
- Gamm, Gerald. *Urban Exodus: Why the Jews Left Boston and the Catholics Stayed*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001.
- Giovacchini, Saverio. *Hollywood Modernism: Film and Politics in the Age of the New Deal. Culture and the Moving Image*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2001.
- Glazer, Nathan, and Daniel P Moynihan. *Beyond the Melting Pot: The Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Jews, Italians, and Irish of New York City*. Cambridge [Mass.]: M.I.T. Press, 1970.
- Goetz, Sam. *I Never Saw My Face*. Danbury, CT: Rutledge Books, 2001.
- Gold, Steven. *The Israeli Diaspora*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002.
- . *Refugee Communities: A Comparative Field Study*. Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1992.
- Gold, Steven J, Debra Gold Hansen, and Michal Shachal-Staier. *Israelis in Los Angeles: Pilot Study Report*. Los Angeles, CA: Wilstein Institute of Jewish Policy Studies, 1992.
- Goldstein, Eric. *The Price of Whiteness: Jews, Race, and American Identity*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006.

- Goldstein, Judith. *Inventing Great Neck: Jewish Identity and the American Dream*. Piscataway: Rutgers University Press, 2006.
- Gottlieb, Robert. *The Next Los Angeles: The Struggle for a Livable City*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005.
- Greenberg, Cheryl. *Troubling the Waters: Black-Jewish Relations in the American Century*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006.
- Gurock, Jeffrey. *Jews in Gotham: New York Jews in a Changing City, 1920-2010*. City of Promises 3. New York: NYU Press, 2013.
- Halle, David. *New York & Los Angeles: Politics, Society, and Culture : A Comparative View*. Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 2003.
- Halle, David, Robert Gedeon, and Andrew A. Beveridge. "Residential Separation and Segregation, Racial and Latino Identity, and the Racial Composition of Each City." In *New York & Los Angeles: Politics, Society--A Comparative View*, edited by David Halle, 187–91. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2003.
- Herman, Pini. *Los Angeles Jewish Population Survey, 1997*. Los Angeles: Jewish Community Library of Los Angeles, 1998.
- Hill-Scott, Karen, Los Angeles (Calif.), Cultural Affairs Department, and Inc Morris McNeill. *The Los Angeles Cultural Masterplan*. Los Angeles, Calif.: City of Los Angeles, Cultural Affairs Dept., 1991.
- Hise, Greg, and Center for American Places. *Magnetic Los Angeles: Planning the Twentieth-Century Metropolis*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997.
- HoSang, Daniel. "Racial Liberalism and the Rise of the Sunbelt West : The Defeat of Fair Housing on the 1964 California Ballot." In *Sunbelt Rising: The Politics of Place, Space, and Region*, edited by Michelle M. Nickerson and Darren. Dochuk. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011.
- . *Racial Propositions: Ballot Initiatives and the Making of Postwar California*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010.
- . "The Changing Valence of White Racial Innocence." In *Black and Brown in Los Angeles beyond Conflict and Coalition*, edited by Josh Kun and Laura Pulido. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013.
- Horne, Gerald. *Fire This Time: The Watts Uprising and the 1960s*. Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 1997.

- Jacobs, Meg, William J. Novak, and Julian E. Zelizer, eds. *The Democratic Experiment: New Directions in American Political History*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2003.
- Jacobson, Matthew F. *Roots Too: White Ethnic Revival in Post-Civil Rights America*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006.
- . *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999.
- Jacoby, Emil. *Continuation and Dropout in Conservative Congregational Schools; a Comparative Study of Students Who Discontinue Their Jewish Education Following Their Bar/Bat Mitzvah Observance and Their Classmates Who Continue in the Hebrew High School or Confirmation Department*. Los Angeles: University of Judaism and Bureau of Jewish Education of the Jewish Federation-Council of Greater Los Angeles, 1970.
- Jewish Federation Council of Greater Los Angeles. *The Fairfax Community Mural: An Intergenerational Project Celebrating the History of the Jews of Los Angeles*. Los Angeles: Jewish Federation Council of Greater Los Angeles, 1985.
- Jewish Federation Council of Greater Los Angeles, and Community Planning Department. *Report of the Task Force on the Jewish Poor*. Los Angeles, 1973.
- Kamasaki, Charles. "Divergent Understandings or Conflicting Interests? Latino and Jewish Policy Differences." In *Latinos and Jews: "Old Luggage, New Itineraries."* The American Jewish Committee Series on Pluralism, 2002.
<http://www.bjpa.org/Publications/details.cfm?PublicationID=254>.
- Kaufman, David. *Jewhooing the Sixties: American Celebrity and Jewish Identity; Sandy Koufax, Lenny Bruce, Bob Dylan, and Barbra Streisand*. Brandeis Series in American Jewish History, Culture, and Life. Waltham, Mass: Brandeis University Press, 2012.
- Jonathan Kaufman. "Blacks and Jews: The Struggle in the Cities." In *Struggles in the Promised Land: Toward a History of Black-Jewish Relations in the United States*, edited by Jack Salzman and Cornel West. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- . *Broken Alliance: The Turbulent Times Between Blacks and Jews in America*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1988.
- Kaufmann, Karen M. *The Urban Voter: Group Conflict and Mayoral Voting Behavior in American Cities*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004.
- Kobrin, Rebecca. *Chosen Capital: The Jewish Encounter with American Capitalism*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2012.

- Kronzek, Lynn C, and Southern California Jewish Historical Society. *Fairfax: A Home, a Community, a Way of Life*. Los Angeles: Jewish Historical Society of Southern California, 1990.
- Kruse, Kevin. *White Flight: Atlanta and the Making of Modern Conservatism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007.
- Kruse, Kevin, and Thomas Sugrue, eds. *The New Suburban History*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006.
- Kun, Josh. "White Christmases and Hanukkah Mambos: Jews and the Making of Popular Music in L.A." In *Jews in the Los Angeles Mosaic*, edited by Karen S Wilson. Los Angeles: Autry National Center of the American West, in association with University of California Press, 2013.
- Kurashige, Scott. *The Shifting Grounds of Race: Black and Japanese Americans in the Making of Multiethnic Los Angeles*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008.
- Laslett, John H. M. *Sunshine Was Never Enough: Los Angeles Workers, 1880-2010*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012.
- Lassiter, Matthew. *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007.
- Lederhendler, Eli. *New York Jews and the Decline of Urban Ethnicity, 1950-1970*. Syracuse, N.Y: Syracuse University Press, 2001.
- Lee, Marc Raphael. *Diary of a Los Angeles Jew, 1947-1973: Autobiography as Autofiction*. Williamsburg, VA: Department of Religious Studies, College of William and Mary, 2008.
- Lenhoff, Howard M., and Jerry L. Weaver. *Black Jews, Jews, and Other Heroes: How Grassroots Activism Led to the Rescue of the Ethiopian Jews*. Jerusalem; New York: Gefen Publishing House, 2007.
- Levine, Naomi, and Martin Hochbaum, eds. *Poor Jews: An American Awakening*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1974.
- Lipman, Eugene J, and Albert Vorspan. *A Tale of Ten Cities; the Triple Ghetto in American Religious Life*. New York: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1962.
- Lipstadt, Deborah E. *Holocaust: An American Understanding*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2016.
- Los Angeles 2000 Committee. *LA 2000: A City for the Future*. Los Angeles: The Committee,

1988.

Los Angeles (Calif.), Cultural Affairs Department, and Folk Arts Program. *Treasures of Fairfax: A Salute to Jewish Cultural Traditions*. Los Angeles, Calif.: City of Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Dept., 1988.

Los Angeles (Calif.), Thomas A. Smuczynski, and Yoon Lee, eds. *1980 Los Angeles County Forecast*. Los Angeles, Calif: The Bureau, 1977.

———, eds. *1980 Los Angeles County Forecast*. Los Angeles, Calif: The Bureau, 1977.

Maibaum, Matthew. *The Armenian Community of Greater Los Angeles: A Research Note*. Place of publication not identified: publisher not identified, 1984.

Masket, Seth E. *No Middle Ground: How Informal Party Organizations Control Nominations and Polarize Legislatures*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2009.

Massarik, Fred. "The Jewish Community." In *Community Structure and Analysis*., edited by Marvin B Sussman. New York: Crowell, 1959.

McGirr, Lisa. *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001.

McWilliams, Carey. *Southern California: An Island on the Land*. Santa Barbara, CA: Peregrine Smith, 1973.

Michels, Tony. *A Fire in Their Hearts: Yiddish Socialists in New York*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005.

Miller, Judith. *One, by One, by One: Facing the Holocaust*. New York: Touchstone, 1991.

Miroff, Bruce. *The Liberals' Moment: The McGovern Insurgency and the Identity Crisis of the Democratic Party*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2007.

Moore, Deborah Dash, ed. *American Jewish Identity Politics*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2008.

———. *To the Golden Cities: Pursuing the American Jewish Dream in Miami and L.A.* New York: Free Press, 1994.

———. *Urban Origins of American Judaism*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2014.
<http://public.eblib.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=1758436>.

Morris, Bonnie J. *The High School Scene in the Fifties: Voices from West L.A.* Westport, Conn.: Bergin & Garvey, 1997.

- Murphy, Raymond John, James M. Watson, Los Angeles. University of California, and Institute of Government and Public Affairs. *The Structure of Discontent the Relationship between Social Structure, Grievance, and Support for the Los Angeles Riot*. Los Angeles: Institute of Government and Public Affairs, University of California, 1967.
<http://books.google.com/books?id=DLw6AAAAIAAJ>.
- Myerhoff, Barbara G, Marc Kaminsky, and Mark Weiss. *Stories as Equipment for Living: Last Talks and Tales of Barbara Myerhoff*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2007.
- Nash, Gerald D. *The American West Transformed: The Impact of the Second World War*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990.
- Nicolaides, Becky. *My Blue Heaven: Life and Politics in the Working-Class Suburbs of Los Angeles, 1920-1965*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002.
- Nickerson, Michelle. *Mothers of Conservatism: Women and the Postwar Right*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012.
- Novick, Peter. *The Holocaust in American Life*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999.
- Nussbaum, Max. "The Freedom Story of Passover." In *Max Nussbaum, from Berlin to Hollywood: A Mid-Century Vision of Jewish Life*, by Lewis M. Barth and Ruth Nussbaum. Malibu, Calif.: Joseph Simon/Pangloss Press, 1994.
- Oppenheimer, Mark. *Knocking on Heaven's Door: American Religion in the Age of Counterculture*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003.
- Orleck, Annelise. *The Soviet Jewish Americans*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1999.
- Osman, Suleiman. "The Decade of the Neighborhood." In *Rightward Bound: Making America Conservative in the 1970s*, edited by Bruce J Schulman and Julian E Zelizer. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2008.
- . *The Invention of Brownstone Brooklyn Gentrification and the Search for Authenticity in Postwar New York*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.
<http://public.eblib.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=665446>.
- Petrzela, Natalia Mehlman. *Classroom Wars: Language, Sex, and the Making of Modern Political Culture*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Phillips, Bruce. "Los Angeles Jewry: A Demographic Portrait." In *American Jewish Year Book*, 86:126–95. New York and Philadelphia: American Jewish Committee (AJC), Jewish Publication Society (JPS), 1986.
- Phillips, Bruce. "Faultlines: The Seven Socio-Ecologies of Jewish Los Angeles." In *The Jewish Role in American Life: An Annual Review*, Vol. 5. West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University

- Press, 2007.
- Podair, Jerald. *The Strike That Changed New York: Blacks, Whites, and the Ocean Hill-Brownsville Crisis*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002.
- Prell, Riv-Ellen. "Community and the Discourse of Elegy: The Post War Suburban Debate." In *Imagining the American Jewish Community*, edited by Jack A Wertheimer, 67–90. Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 2007.
- . *Fighting to Become Americans: Assimilation and the Trouble Between Jewish Women and Jewish Men*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1999.
- . *Prayer & Community: The Havurah in American Judaism*, 1989.
- Pulido, Laura. *Black, Brown, Yellow, and Left: Radical Activism in Los Angeles*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006.
- Pulido, Laura, Laura R Barraclough, and Wendy Cheng. *A People's Guide to Los Angeles*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012.
- Rabinowitz, Dorothy. *The Other Jews; Portraits in Poverty*. New York: Institute of Human Relations Press, American Jewish Committee, 1972.
- Reassessment Conference on the Public Schools and American Democratic Pluralism - the Role of the Jewish Community, National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council, and Reassessment Committee, eds. *The Public Schools and American Democratic Pluralism - the Role of the Jewish Community; Report of a Conference May 1-May 3, 1971, Barbizon Plaza Hotel, New York*. New York, 1972.
- Reisner, Neil, and Jewish Federation Council of Greater Los Angeles. *Jewish Los Angeles: A Guide*. Los Angeles: Jewish Federation-Council of Greater Los Angeles, 1976.
- Rieder, Jonathan. *Canarsie: The Jews and Italians of Brooklyn Against Liberalism*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985.
- Roderick, Kevin. *The San Fernando Valley: America's Suburb*. Los Angeles: Los Angeles Times Books, 2001.
- Rogin, Michael. *Blackface, White Noise: Jewish Immigrants in the Hollywood Melting Pot*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.
- Sabagh, Georges, and Mehdi Bozorgmehr. "From 'Give Me Your Poor' to 'Save Our State': New York and Los Angeles as Immigrant Cities and Regions." In *New York & Los Angeles: Politics, Society, and Culture: A Comparative View*, edited by David Halle. Chicago, Ill: University of Chicago Press, 2003.

- Salzman, Jack, and Cornel West. *Struggles in the Promised Land: Towards a History of Black-Jewish Relations in the United States*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Sandberg, Neil. *Jewish Life in Los Angeles: A Window to Tomorrow*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1986.
- Sanua, Marianne Rachel. *Let Us Prove Strong: The American Jewish Committee, 1945-2006*. Waltham, Mass.; Hanover: Brandeis University Press ; Published by University Press of New England, 2007.
- Sarna, Jonathan. *American Judaism: A History*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004.
- Sass, Stephen J, and Council on Jewish Life Los Angeles, California. *Jewish Los Angeles: A Guide*. Los Angeles: Council on Jewish Life, 1982.
- Satter, Beryl. *Family Properties: How the Struggle Over Race and Real Estate Transformed Chicago and Urban America*. New York: Picador, 2010.
- Schulman, Bruce. *The Seventies: The Great Shift In American Culture, Society, And Politics*. Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 2002.
- Schultz, Kevin M. *Tri-Faith America: How Catholics and Jews Held Postwar America to Its Protestant Promise*. Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Schwarz, Sid. *Judaism and Justice: The Jewish Passion to Repair the World*. Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2006.
- Scott, Allen John, and Edward W Soja. *The City Los Angeles and Urban Theory at the End of the Twentieth Century*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996.
<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=6895>.
- Sears, David O., and Harris Jr. Allen,. "The Trajectory of Local Desegregation Controversies and Whites' Opposition to Busing." In *Groups in Contact: The Psychology of Desegregation.*, edited by Norman S Miller and Marilynn B Brewer. Burlington: Elsevier Science, 2013.
- Segev, Tom. *Simon Wiesenthal: the Life and Legends*. New York: Doubleday, 2010.
- Self, Robert O. *American Babylon: Race and the Struggle for Postwar Oakland*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2003.
- Shevitz, Amy Hill. "At the Intersection of Gender, Ethnicity, and the City: Three Jewish Women in Los Angeles Politics." In *Jews in the Los Angeles Mosaic*, 65–68. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013.

- Sides, Josh. *L.A. City Limits: African American Los Angeles from the Great Depression to the Present*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006.
- Skirball Cultural Center, and Mia Cariño. *A Place of Wonder: Celebrating the Skirball Cultural Center: Featuring a Conversation with Uri D. Herscher, Founding President and Chief Executive Officer*, 2013.
- Soffer, Jonathan M. *Ed Koch and the Rebuilding of New York City*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2010. <http://site.ebrary.com/id/10433252>.
- Soliz, Barbara. "Rosalind Wiener Wyman and the Transformation of Jewish Liberalism in Cold War Los Angeles." In *Beyond Alliances: The Jewish Role in Reshaping the Racial Landscape of Southern California*, edited by Bruce Zuckerman, George Sanchez, and Lisa Ansell, Vol. 9. West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2012.
- Sonenshein, Raphael. *Politics in Black and White: Race and Power in Los Angeles*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993.
- Soomekh, Saba. *From the Shahs to Los Angeles: Three Generations of Iranian Jewish Women between Religion and Culture*. Albany, N.Y: State University of New York Press, 2012.
- Starr, Kevin. *Golden Dreams: California in an Age of Abundance 1950-1963*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Staub, Michael. *Torn at the Roots: The Crisis of Jewish Liberalism in Postwar America*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2004.
- Staub, Michael E., ed. *The Jewish 1960s: An American Sourcebook*. Brandeis Series in American Jewish History, Culture, and Life. Waltham, Mass. : Hanover: Brandeis University Press ; Published by University Press of New England, 2004.
- Stein, Arlene. *Reluctant Witnesses: Survivors, Their Children, and the Rise of the Holocaust Consciousness*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Stevenson, Brenda E. *The Contested Murder of Latasha Harlins: Justice, Gender, and the Origins of the LA Riots*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Stone, Kurt F. *The Congressional Minyan: The Jews of Capitol Hill*. Hoboken, N.J.: KTAV Pub. House in association with American Jewish Historical Society, 2000.
- Sugrue, Thomas J. "All Politics Is Local: The Persistence of Localism in Twentieth-Century America." In *The Democratic Experiment: New Directions in American Political History*, edited by Meg Jacobs, William J. Novak, and Julian E. Zelizer. Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 2003.

- . *Sweet Land of Liberty: The Forgotten Struggle for Civil Rights in the North*. New York: Random House, 2008.
- . *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005.
- Sugrue, Thomas J. and John D. Skrenty. "The White Ethnic Strategy." In *Rightward Bound: Making America Conservative in the 1970s*, edited by Bruce J. Schulman and Julian E. Zelizer. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008.
- Svonkin, Stuart. *Jews Against Prejudice: American Jews and the Fight for Civil Liberties*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1997.
- Tavory, Iddo. *Summoned: Identification and Religious Life in a Jewish Neighborhood*. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2016.
- Theoharis, Jeanne. "Hidden in Plain Sight: The Civil Rights Movement Outside the South." In *The Myth of Southern Exceptionalism*, edited by Matthew D Lassiter and Joseph Crespiño. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- United States Commission on Civil Rights. *A Generation Deprived: Los Angeles School Desegregation : A Report of the United States Commission on Civil Rights*. Washington: The Commission, 1977.
- United States, Congress, House, Committee on Education and Labor, and Subcommittee on Postsecondary Education. *Oversight Hearing on H.R. 3210, to Provide Financial Assistance to the Museum of Tolerance at the Simon Wiesenthal Center, and H.R. 2623, to Authorize Funds for the Muskie Archives: Hearing before the Subcommittee on Postsecondary Education of the Committee on Education and Labor, House of Representatives, One Hundred First Congress, Second Session : Hearing Held in Washington, DC, April 5, 1990*. Washington: U.S. G.P.O. : For sale by the Supt. of Docs., Congressional Sales Office, U.S. G.P.O., 1990.
- Vorspan, Albert. *Great Jewish Debates and Dilemmas: Jewish Perspectives in Conflict in the Eighties*. New York, N.Y.: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1980.
- Vorspan, Max, and Lloyd P Gartner. *History of the Jews of Los Angeles*. San Marino, CA: The Huntington Library, 1970.
- Waldinger, Roger, and Mehdi Bozorgmehr, eds. *Ethnic Los Angeles*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1996.
- . "The Making of a Multicultural Metropolis." In *Ethnic Los Angeles*, edited by Roger Waldinger and Mehdi Bozorgmehr. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1997.
- Waldinger, Roger, and Michael Lichter. "Anglos: Beyond Ethnicity?" In *Ethnic Los Angeles*,

edited by Roger Waldinger and Mehdi Bozorgmehr, 413–41. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1996.

Wall, Wendy. *Inventing the “American Way”: The Politics of Consensus from the New Deal to the Civil Rights Movement*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Wallach, Ruth. *Miracle Mile in Los Angeles: History and Architecture*, 2013.

Waxman, Henry A. *The Waxman Report: How Congress Really Works*. 1st trade ed. New York: Twelve, 2010.

Whitfield, Stephen. *In Search of American Jewish Culture*. Hanover, NH: Brandeis University Press, 1999.

———. “Influence and Affluence, 1967-2000.” In *The Columbia History of Jews and Judaism in America*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2008.

Widener, Daniel. *Black Arts West: Culture and Struggle in Postwar Los Angeles*. Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2010.

Wilson, James Q. *The Amateur Democrat; Club Politics in Three Cities*. [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962.

Wilson, Karen S., ed. *Jews in the Los Angeles Mosaic*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013.

Young, James Edward, and Mazal Holocaust Collection. *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993.

Zeit, Joshua. *White Ethnic New York: Jews, Catholics, and the Shaping of Postwar Politics*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007.

Zeldin, Isaiah. *What This Modern Jew Believes*. Los Angeles: Isaac Nathan Pub. Co., 1996.

Journal Articles

Ackerman, Walter I. “Jewish Education-For What?” *The American Jewish Year Book* 70 (1969): 3–36.

Arnesen, Eric. “Whiteness and the Historians’ Imagination.” *International Labor and Working-Class History* 60 (2001): 3–32.

Baumgarten, Max D. “Beyond the Binary: Los Angeles and a New York State of Mind.” *American Jewish History* 100, no. 2 (2016): 233–46. doi:10.1353/ajh.2016.0021.

- Berman, Lila Corwin . “American Jews and the Ambivalence of Middle-Classness.” *American Jewish History* 93, no. 4 (2007): 409–34.
- Berman, Lila Corwin. “Jewish Urban Politics in the City and Beyond.” *The Journal of American History* 99, no. 2 (September 2012): 492–518.
- Bock, Geoffrey E. “Does Jewish Schooling Matter?” *Jewish Education and Jewish Identity*, January 1, 1977, 1–51.
- Burt, Kenneth C. “The Power of a Mobilized Citizenry and Coalition Politics: The 1949 Election of Edward R. Roybal to the Los Angeles City Council.” *Southern California Quarterly* 85, no. 4 (December 1, 2003): 413–38. doi:10.2307/41172186.
- Catterall, James S., and Emily Brizendine. “Proposition 13: Effects on High School Curricula, 1978-1983.” *American Journal of Education* 93, no. 3 (1985): 327–51.
- Cutter, William, and Stuart Kelman. “The Next Step in the Day School Movement.” *Sh'ma: A Journal of Jewish Ideas* 11, no. 218 (October 2, 1981): 141–42.
- Delmont, Matt. “The Color of the West.” *American Quarterly* 63, no. 4 (December 1, 2011): 1075–86.
- Diner, Hasia, and Tony Michels. “State of the Field: Considering American Jewish History.” *OAH Newsletter* 35, November 2007.
- Diner, Hasia R. “Why American Historians Really Ignore American Jewish History.” *American Jewish History* 95, no. 1 (2009): 33–41. doi:10.1353/ajh.0.0122.
- Dollinger, Marc. “American Jewish Liberalism Revisited: Two Perspectives Exceptionalism and Jewish Liberalism.” *American Jewish History* 90, no. 2 (2002): 161–64. doi:10.1353/ajh.2003.0025.
- . “The Other War: American Jews, Lyndon Johnson, and The Great Society.” *American Jewish History* 89, no. 4 (2001): 437–61. doi:10.1353/ajh.2001.0062.
- Dominguez, Laura. “Este Lugar Sí Importa.” *California History* 93, no. 3 (August 1, 2016): 52–74. doi:10.1525/ch.2016.93.3.52.
- Doyle, Dorothy. “Way Out West in Dixie: The Los Angeles Desegregation of Schools.” *Equity & Excellence in Education* 20, no. 1–2 (January 1, 1982): 2–6. doi:10.1080/746926846.
- Egly, Judge Paul. “Crawford v. Los Angeles Unified School District; An Unfulfilled Plea for Racial Equality.” *University of La Verne Law Review* 31 (2010).
- Ferris, William R., Deborah Dash Moore, John Shelton Reed, Theodore Rosengarten, and

- George J. Sanchez. "Regionalism: The Significance of Place in American Jewish Life." *American Jewish History* 93, no. 2 (2007): 113–27. doi:10.1353/ajh.2007.0037.
- Ferziger, Adam S. "'Outside the Shul': The American Soviet Jewry Movement and the Rise of Solidarity Orthodoxy, 1964–1986." *Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation* 22, no. 1 (2012): 83–130. doi:10.1525/rac.2012.22.1.83.
- Formisano, Ronald P. "The Concept of Political Culture." *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 31, no. 3 (January 1, 2001): 393–426.
- Friedman, Murray. "Opening the Discussion of American Jewish Political Conservatism." *American Jewish History* 87, no. 2 (1999): 101–12. doi:10.1353/ajh.1999.0016.
- Furman, Joshua J. "Accentuate the Positive: The Influence of Kurt Lewin's 'Bringing Up the Jewish Child' on Postwar American Jewish Life." *Contemporary Jewry*, October 27, 2016, 1–23. doi:10.1007/s12397-016-9181-6.
- Gerstle, Gary. "The Protean Character of American Liberalism." *The American Historical Review* 99, no. 4 (October 1994): 1043–1073. doi:10.2307/2168769.
- Gold, Steven J. "Patterns of Economic Cooperation among Israeli Immigrants in Los Angeles." *The International Migration Review* 28, no. 1 (1994): 114–35. doi:10.2307/2547028.
- Goldstein, Eric L. "Contesting the Categories: Jews and Government Racial Classification in the United States." *Jewish History* 19, no. 1 (2005): 79–107.
- Grinberg, Ronnie A. "Neither 'Sissy' Boy Nor Patrician Man: New York Intellectuals and the Construction of American Jewish Masculinity." *American Jewish History* 98, no. 3 (2014): 127–51.
- Guerra, Fernando. "Ethnic Officeholders in Los Angeles County." *Sociology and Social Research*, no. 2 (January 1987): 90.
- Halley, Robert M., Alan C. Acock, and Thomas H. Greene. "Ethnicity and Social Class: Voting in the 1973 Los Angeles Municipal Elections." *The Western Political Quarterly* 29, no. 4 (December 1, 1976): 521–30. doi:10.2307/448135.
- Heilman, Samuel C. "Orthodox Jews, the City and the Suburb," January 1, 1999. <http://www.bjpa.org/Publications/details.cfm?PublicationID=2736>.
- Hollinger, David A. "Communalist and Dispersionist Approaches to American Jewish History in an Increasingly Post-Jewish Era." *American Jewish History* 95, no. 1 (2009): 1–32.
- Jacobs, Benjamin M. "What's Wrong with the History of American Jewish Education?" *Journal of Jewish Education* 71, no. 1 (January 2005): 33–51.

- Jacoby, Emil. "The Los Angeles Bureau of Jewish Education Responding to Changing Needs 1975–1988." *Jewish Education* 56, no. 4 (December 1, 1988): 3–12. doi:10.1080/15244118809412146.
- Kelman, Stuart L. "Parent Motivations for Enrolling a Child in a Non-Orthodox Jewish Day School." *Jewish Education* 47, no. 1 (March 1, 1979): 44–48. doi:10.1080/0021642790470109.
- Kovalesky, Brian. "Unification and Its Discontents: The Four Cities Coalition and the Creation of the Los Angeles Unified School District." *California History* 93, no. 2 (August 1, 2016): 4–16. doi:10.1525/ch.2016.93.2.4.
- Kranson, Rachel. "'To Be a Jew on America's Terms Is Not to Be a Jew at All': The Jewish Counterculture's Critique of Middle-Class Affluence." *Journal of Jewish Identities* 8, no. 2 (2015): 59–84. doi:10.1353/jji.2015.0022.
- Lassiter, Matthew D. "The New Suburban History II: Political Culture and Metropolitan Space." *Journal of Planning History* 4, no. 1 (February 2005): 75–88. doi:10.1177/1538513204273260.
- Leonard, David J. "'The Little Fuehrer Invades Los Angeles': The Emergence of a Black-Jewish Coalition after World War II." *American Jewish History* 92, no. 1 (2004): 81–102. doi:10.1353/ajh.2005.0033.
- Levine, Gene N., Jeffrey Gittler, Jeffrey D. Glenn, Randy Newman, Brad Sanders, and Ford Michael Waite. "The Affiliations of Los Angeles Jewry: Preliminary Findings of A Metropolitan Area Sample Survey." *Jewish Sociology and Social Research* 2, no. 2 (1976): 4–9.
- Logan, John R., Wenquan Zhang, and Richard D. Alba. "Immigrant Enclaves and Ethnic Communities in New York and Los Angeles." *American Sociological Review* 67, no. 2 (2002): 299–322. doi:10.2307/3088897.
- Maller, Allen S. "Class Factors in the Jewish Vote." *Jewish Social Studies* 39, no. 1/2 (1977).
- . "Notes on California Jews' Political Attitudes - 1968." *Jewish Social Studies* 33, no. 2/3 (April 1, 1971): 160–64.
- Maulin, Richard L. "Los Angeles Liberalism." *Trans-Action* 8, no. 7 (April 1971): 40–51. doi:10.1007/BF02804130.
- Merton, Joe. "Rethinking the Politics of White Ethnicity in 1970s America." *The Historical Journal* 55, no. 3 (2012): 731–56. doi:10.1017/S0018246X1200026X.
- Orfield, Gary. "Lessons of the Los Angeles Desegregation Case." *Education and Urban Society*

- 16, no. 3 (May 1, 1984): 338–53. doi:10.1177/0013124584016003007.
- Phillips, Bruce A. “Not Quite White: The Emergence of Jewish ‘Ethnoburbs’ in Los Angeles 1920–2010.” *American Jewish History* 100, no. 1 (2016): 73–104. doi:10.1353/ajh.2016.0003.
- Raphael, Marc Lee. “Diary of a Los Angeles Jew, 1942-1972 (An Excerpt).” *American Jewish History* 92, no. 3 (September 25, 2006): 299–311. doi:10.1353/ajh.2006.0030.
- Rosenberg, Barbara. “Proposition 13: Busing, Declining Enrollment—Implications for Jewish Education.” *Jewish Education* 47, no. 1 (March 1, 1979): 23–26. doi:10.1080/0021642790470105.
- Rubin, Susan. “The Jewish Response to the Los Angeles Riots.” *Western States Jewish History* XXV, no. 3 (April 1993): 195–208.
- Sanchez, George J. “Edward R. Roybal and the Politics of Multiracialism.” *Southern California Quarterly* 92, no. 1 (April 1, 2010): 51–73. doi:10.2307/41172507.
- . “Face the Nation: Race, Immigration, and the Rise of Nativism in Late Twentieth Century America.” *International Migration Review* 31, no. 4 (1997): 1009–30.
- . “‘What’s Good for Boyle Heights Is Good for the Jews’: Creating Multiculturalism on the Eastside during the 1950s.” *American Quarterly* 56, no. 3 (2004): 633–61.
- Sarna, Jonathan D. “American Jewish Education in Historical Perspective.” *Journal of Jewish Education* 64, no. 1–2 (July 1, 1998): 8–21. doi:10.1080/0021624980640103.
- Schiff, Alvin I. “Public Education and the Jewish School.” *Journal of Jewish Communal Service* 61, no. 4 (June 1, 1985). <http://www.bjpa.org/Publications/details.cfm?PublicationID=1195>.
- Schneider, Jack. “Escape From Los Angeles: White Flight from Los Angeles and Its Schools, 1960-1980.” *Journal of Urban History* 34, no. 6 (September 1, 2008): 995–1012. doi:10.1177/0096144208317600.
- Schulweis Harold M. “Jewish Leisurism and the Synagogue.” Edited by Harry Essrig. *The American Rabbi* 1, no. 2 (1961).
- Seligman, Amanda I. “‘But Burn—No’: The Rest of the Crowd in Three Civil Disorders in 1960s Chicago.” *Journal of Urban History* 37, no. 2 (March 1, 2011): 230–55. doi:10.1177/0096144210391595.
- Shapiro, Edward S. “Interpretations of the Crown Heights Riot.” *American Jewish History* 90, no. 2 (2002): 97–122. doi:10.1353/ajh.2003.0035.

- Sides, Josh. "Straight into Compton: American Dreams, Urban Nightmares, and the Metamorphosis of a Black Suburb." *American Quarterly* 56, no. 3 (2004): 583–605.
- Singer, Merrill. "Chassidic Recruitment and the Local Context." *Urban Anthropology* 7, no. 4 (1978): 373–83.
- Smith, Daniel A. "Howard Jarvis, Populist Entrepreneur: Reevaluating the Causes of Proposition 13." *Social Science History* 23, no. 2 (1999): 173–210.
- Sonenshein, Raphael. "The Role of the Jewish Community in Los Angeles Politics: From Bradley to Villaraigosa." *Southern California Quarterly* 90, no. 2 (Summer 2008), 189–205.
- Soref, Irwin I. "The Los Angeles Bureau of Jewish Education in Retrospect 1937–1975." *Jewish Education* 56, no. 4 (December 1, 1988): 13–20. doi:10.1080/15244118809412147.
- Straus, Ryane McAuliffe. "Reconstructing Los Angeles Magnet Schools: Representations in Newspapers." *Peabody Journal of Education* 79, no. 2 (2004): 98–121.
- Taffet, Jeffrey F. "The Snubs and the 'Sukkah': John Lindsay and Jewish Voters in New York City." *American Jewish History* 97, no. 4 (2013): 413–38.
- Tavory I. "The Hollywood Shtetl: From Ethnic Enclave to Religious Destination." *Ethnography* 11, no. 1 (2010): 89–108.
- Wertheimer, Jack. "Jewish Education in the United States: Recent Trends and Issues (1999)." *American Jewish Year Book* 99 (January 1, 1999): 3–118.
- Wolfe, Ann G. "The Invisible Jewish Poor." *Journal of Jewish Communal Service* 48, no. 1 (March 20, 1972): 260–65.
- Wolfinger, Raymond E., and Fred I. Greenstein. "The Repeal of Fair Housing in California: An Analysis of Referendum Voting." *The American Political Science Review* 62, no. 3 (September 1, 1968): 753–69. doi:10.2307/1953428.
- Zeit, Joshua Michael. "'If I Am Not for Myself . . .': The American Jewish Establishment in the Aftermath of the Six Day War." *American Jewish History* 88, no. 2 (2000): 253–86. doi:10.1353/ajh.2000.0045.
- Zibbell, Charles. "Suburbia and Jewish Community Organization." *Journal of Jewish Communal Service* 38, no. 1 (September 20, 1961): 69–79.

Oral Histories

Beerman, Leonard. Leonard Beerman Interview, April 3, 1997. Oral History Catalog. California

Social Welfare Archives.

http://www.usc.edu/libraries/archives/arc/libraries/cswa/oralhistory/orhist_entry.php?nid=beermanleonard.

Fiedler, Bobbi. Bobbi Fiedler Oral History Interview, November 17, 1988. CSUN Department of History and University Library's Urban Archives Center.

Hilborn, Walter S. *Reflections on Legal practice and Jewish Community Leadership: New York and Los Angeles, 1907-1973*. Interview by Malca Chall, 1973. Berkeley, Calif.: Regional Oral History Office, Bancroft Library, University of California, 1973.

Roos, Joseph. Joseph Roos Oral History Interview, Urban Archives General Oral History. Interview by Leonard Pitt and Murray Wood, December 18, 1979. Urban Archives Center, Oviatt Library, California State University, Northridge.

Wyman, Rosalind Wiener, Malca Chall, and Women in Politics Oral History Project (Bancroft Library). *"It's a Girl": Three Terms on the Los Angeles City Council, 1953-1965, Three Decades in the Democratic Party, 1948-1978*. Berkeley, Calif.: Regional Oral History Office, Bancroft Library, University of California, Women in Politics Oral History Project, 1980.

"All Politics Is Local: The Persistence of Localism in Twentieth-Century America." In *The Democratic Experiment: New Directions in American Political History*, edited by Meg Jacobs, William J. Novak, and Julian E. Zelizer. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2003.