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JEWISH IDENTITY IN STATE PRISON

by

Gordon Louis Gladstone

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for the Degree of Master  
of Arts in Hebrew Letters and Ordination

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion

1973

Referee, Dr. Norman Mirsky

To Harry Whitney, 96089,

For greasing the skids.

THE AROUSING, THUNDER

THE GENTLE, WIND



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## DIGEST

There are Jews in prison in the United States. This statement comes as news to many people who would prefer to be ignorant of Jewish criminality. Yet, there are Jews in prison, and these Jews are criminals. They have been convicted of murder, armed robbery, assault, breaking and entering, and possession of heroin.

I have examined the identity of these Jews in prison by treating two of its component parts: religion and values. What kind of Jews are these people? Are they like us, or are they radically different from a Jewish perspective? What kind of values do they hold, being both Jews and criminals? What is it like being Jewish in prison? These and other questions are answered by means of my personal observations as a Chaplain of a state prison, and through the inclusions of transcripts of seven tape recorded interviews I held with Jewish inmates of that prison.

A section of this paper discusses the meaning of religion and values from a socio-psychological point of view. While not directly applied to the analyses of the interviews, this section supplies a frame of reference to which the religion and values of the Jewish prisoners may be contrasted and compared.

For the Jewish inmates of a state prison, Judaism means fellowship and security. At all times the social value of

Judaism is emphasized over its spiritual values. A Jew in prison can count on his fellow Jewish inmates for help in times of crisis: The Jewish community in prison is supportive and protective of its members. Jews in prison also reap benefit from the celebration of Jewish holidays. These are marked by distribution of Jewish foodstuffs and time out from prison routine. The Jews also participate in the prison-wide celebrations accompanying the major Christian holidays. There is no reciprocal arrangement, and so the Jews, alone, have the best of both.

While the interviews deal mainly with the prisoners themselves, some of their most revealing insights are found in their perception of the outside Jewish community's attitude towards Jews in prison. Their indictment is scathing and I'm afraid that we are guilty. The question remains, "Do we care?"

The men who were interviewed were all eager volunteers. They asked that their names and numbers be included despite the fact that they were offered anonymity. Their participation in this research adds to their identity.

JEWS IN PRISON

There are three names by which a man is called:  
One is that which his mother and father call him,  
one which his friends call him, and one which he  
will build for himself. The best of them is that  
which he builds for himself.

Tanhuma Vayakhel

What kind of a name does a Jewish inmate of a state prison build for himself? How does he relate to Judaism and his fellow Jews? By means of seven tape recorded interviews I have attempted to secure the answers to these and other related questions.

In 1970, I was assigned to the pulpit of Temple Beth Israel in Jackson, Michigan. Part of the duties of the rabbi of this congregation is to be the Jewish Chaplain at the State Penitentiary of Southern Michigan (S.P.S.M.). In previous years the Jackson temple had been served by an ordained rabbi, therefore, I was the first student to serve the Jewish inmates of S.P.S.M.. My formal duties at the prison were conducting services and serving the spiritual needs of the Jewish prisoners. I was well received by both the prison administration and my new congregants, who did everything they could to make me feel comfortable and, I suppose, secure on my first visit. There is no question that the men could have taken great advantage of me while I was adjusting to the world of the prison. Yet, none did, and I must say that I hope that I helped them as much as they helped me.

S.P.S.M. is the largest maximum security prison in the

world, although it holds only five thousand inmates. Of the five thousand inmates, twenty-five were classified as Jewish. Let us begin by exploring the term "classified". When a man enters a maximum security facility in the state of Michigan, whether for the first time, as a recidivist, or as a transferee, he is placed in what is called "Reception". He is, in effect, isolated from the prison population at large for a period of thirty days. During this first month he undergoes a rite de passage--he ceases to be an individual and becomes an inmate. This is known as a stripping process.

The stripping processes through which mortification of the self occurs are fairly standard in our total institutions. Personal identity equipment is removed, as well as other possessions with which the inmate may have identified himself, there typically being a system of nonaccessible storage from which the inmate can only reobtain his effects should he leave the institution. As a substitute for what has been taken away, institutional issue is provided, but this will be the same for large categories of inmates and will be regularly repossessed by the institution. In brief, standardized defacement will occur. In addition, ego-invested separateness from fellow inmates is significantly diminished in many areas of activity, and tasks are prescribed that are infra dignitatem. Family, occupational, and educational career lines are chopped off, and a stigmatized status is submitted. Sources of fantasy materials which had meant momentary releases from stress in the home world are denied. Areas of autonomous decision are eliminated through the process of collective scheduling of daily activity. Many channels of communication with the outside are restricted or closed off completely. Verbal discrediting occurs in many forms as a matter of course. Expressive signs of respect for the staff are coercively and continuously demanded. And the effect of each of these conditions is multiplied by having to witness the mortification of one's fellow inmates.

It is a period of enforced idleness. As he considers his

position, the only diversions allowed are talking with other prisoners in "Reception" and reading a Bible, which is provided by the prison. As he learns the prison rules and regulations he discovers that he has to make an important decision: Is he religious? During these first thirty days a man must decide if he wants to be affiliated with a formal religious group while in prison. If he chooses not to affiliate at the outset he may not do so later. Furthermore, a man may not convert to another religion while in prison. His choice of religious identification is limited. There are three chapels in the Chapel Building: Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish. These are the officially recognized religions. (While there is a Black Muslim fellowship at S.P.S.M. it has no minister and is therefore not officially recognized.)

If a man chooses to be Catholic or Protestant he is quickly added to that group's roster, and once in the yard and out of isolation he may begin attending services. But, a man who seeks a Jewish classification must be passed by the Jewish Chain. There are three reasons for this:

1. It has "always" been done this way. Prison traditions are both untraceable and highly resistant to change;
2. The Jewish inmate population is very protective and cliquish. Outsiders and newcomers are viewed with suspicion;
3. The custodial staff, from the warden to the individual guard is, by in large, anti-Semitic, and oftentimes overtly so.

Jews in prison possess some things that most other prisoners cannot. One is identity, and the other is special



privileges. Although the Jewish inmates may disagree, the Jewish inmate community is very introverted and protective. No Jew in S.P.S.M. ever "goes without". The men share what little they have freely and usually without being asked. On Saturday mornings, after services, they all gather, packed shoulder to shoulder in the rabbi's office and share coffee and conversation. A parallel to the shtetl is striking: On Shabbat every Jew is a prince. He assumes an identity and an individualism denied every other inmate. He has a closer relationship with his clergyman and with his co-religionist than does his Christian neighbor. While his Christian neighbor has a day of rest on Sunday, the Jewish inmate has time off for both Sabbaths, while celebrating only one. The Jewish prisoner is released from work for both Christian and Jewish holidays, and most of all, he has Passover.

At Passover time, the Jewish Inmate Foundation, a private group organized by the late Max Stern of Southfield, Michigan, delivers, prepares, and serves a Seder to the Jews of S.P.S.M.. Moreover, once again owing to prison tradition, each Jewish inmate may have two male relatives come into the prison dining hall to celebrate the Passover with him. This is an unheard-of privilege in a prison where visitors must sit across a table from the inmates in the Visitor's Room.

In addition to the Passover Seder, the Jewish Inmate Foundation provides two food packages to each prisoner, one



at Chanukah and one during Passover. The packages consist of sixty-five pounds of Jewish foods (salamis, lox, bagels, mahtzot, pickles, etc.), and fresh fruits. The prison administration does not like this custom, but because it is "traditional" there is nothing it can do about the situation.

An additional factor which upsets the prison authorities is the Jewish Inmate Foundation itself. All that is known about this organization is that it was founded by the aforementioned Max Stern, who before his death was the owner of Raleigh House Catering of Southfield. The predominant rumor is that organized crime in Detroit is the money behind the Jewish Inmate Foundation. I personally can attest to the fact that some of the packages wind up in the possession of alleged Mafiosi who reside in S.P.S.M.. There appears to be an informal alliance between some of the Jewish inmates and these alleged Mafiosi. For example, my clerk made sure that I was introduced to certain individuals when I visited the cell blocks. These men were presented as friends, but seemed to command a certain respect from the Jewish inmates. Their Italian-sounding names led me to question the Jewish inmates as to whether these men were, in fact, Mafia-related. This was vehemently denied--as was the existence of any such organization. Yet, two unassailable facts remain: 1. At least three of these men have been identified as Mafiosi by both Detroit newspapers, and 2. Prisoners who have assaulted Jewish inmates have been beaten up by person or persons unknown. None of the Jewish inmates has taken credit

for being the avenger. I also have reason to believe that families of Jewish inmates act as go-betweens in transmitting messages for the alleged Mafiosi. I must conclude that for reasons of self-interest, the Jewish community of S.P.S.M. maintains a tie-in to the Mafia. The only evidence of this found in the interviews is Remy Gamble's reference to "Meyer" and his remarks about one of his father's business associates. (It is to be understood that for me to have pursued such matters while in the prison might have been unwise.) The only actual experience I had with a Mafia-associated individual was when one offered to loan me money. I graciously declined his offer.

When I approached then-Warden Perry Johnson concerning this thesis, he quickly granted permission, asking only that I supply him with written credentials from the College. A letter, stating that I was a student at Hebrew Union College writing a thesis on Jewish inmates, was sent to Mr. Johnson by Dean Roseman's office. Subsequently, I was allowed to bring a tape recorder into the prison in order to tape the interviews. At no time was I asked to hand over tapes or any of my research material; the Warden and staff gave me a free hand. Writers and reporters doing research with other inmates have not been given the same privileges. The prison administration is sensitive towards clergymen, and hesitates to interfere in their activities in the prison. All of the Chaplains are treated with great deference by the staff. Visiting clergy gain access to prisoners with none of the

red tape that entangles layman-visitors. This would appear to be State policy.

The Rabbi's office at S.P.S.M. is the most aesthetically unpleasing of all the Chaplain's offices. The same holds true for the Jewish Chapel itself. Being State-tolerated rather than State-supported, the religious institutions of S.P.S.M. depend on contributions from their own religious organizations on the outside. Very little has come from the outside Jewish community in recent years. The complaint, often voiced in the interviews, that Jews on the outside don't care about Jewish prisoners, appears to be somewhat justified. Few of my civilian congregants in Jackson expressed more than passing curiosity and more than one expressed open hostility towards Jews in S.P.S.M.. It was my experience that national Jewish organizations are also disinterested in the plight of Jews in prison. This prompted one of the questions in the interview: What would you want to say to the leader of an influential Jewish organization who might be visiting S.P.S.M.?

The Jews of S.P.S.M., while they as a whole may appear ignorant of Judaism and its teachings, never the less strongly identify with Jews and Judaism. Their reasons are revealed in this paper.

There was one Friday when I stopped in the prison to drop some papers off, and having no pressing engagements, I wandered over to one of the cell blocks where I knew several of my congregants "locked." Only one man was around, and we

sat in his cell and talked. Among the things we talked about were movies, politics and people. The subject of people led into the favorite topic of conversation in the prison; that is, what's going on in prison? Cons are like rabbinical students in a way--both groups love to "talk shop". The conversation tends to dwell on the exploits of the cons in dealing with the system: "Hey Rabbi, let me tell you what Joey did when the bulls caught him outside of the library," and the like. But, when you get a man alone, his "shop talk" tends to become more introspective, as he is not competing for your attention. Knowing this, I asked my companion how he felt about being a Jewish criminal. He answered the question in two parts: how he felt about being Jewish and how he felt about being a criminal. When I pressed him for an answer to the original question, he appeared to withdraw from the conversation. However, I was able to bring him back in by re-affirming my interest in knowing what it was like to be in his situation. The men love to talk about themselves, but there appear to be areas of sensitivity, and I had obviously hit one with my question. He answered the question, and then we moved on to other areas of discussion. I've reproduced the answer here from memory, as I had no means of recording it at the time.

"Rabbi, we don't think of ourselves as Jewish criminals. We think of ourselves as Jews who did something wrong, either because we were backed into a corner, or because we were stupid. But to say 'Jewish criminal' is to describe a type

of guy. And we are not like that. I mean, what's the difference between me and the guy next cell over? I mean, I'm a person; a human being, and so is he. But I'll help out one of my own who's in trouble. The guy next cell over won't help his mother unless there's a percentage in it for him. It's the difference between self-interest and selfish-interest. Jews take care of their own; goyim take care of number one (themselves). So there's no such thing as a Jewish criminal, like there's a Catholic criminal. There are Jews who messed up, that's all. Look, we're not kidding anybody. We're in here because we made a bad move and we're paying our dues for it. But don't lump us with the goyim."

The inmate was expressing the same superiority that many of the interviewees later in this paper express: Jews are better than gentiles, especially in prison. Note also, that for this man being Jewish means being a member of a club. He evades the issue of Jewish ethics or morality. Judaism is of social value. For Jews in prison, "Thou shalt not kill" or "Thou shalt not steal" are values of society-at-large. Jewish values concern themselves only with social relationships between Jew and Jew. Each one of the Jewish inmates, at one time or another, pointed out that their crimes were not committed against Jews, e.g. "I'd never hold up a Jewish business." While frequently being critical of other Jews, almost every Jewish inmate felt that Jews per se are better people than gentiles. Thus, any statement that lumps Jews and gentiles together as a group is viewed as an affront



to their Jewishness. Gentiles may be criminals, while Jews who have committed a crime are guilty of errors in judgement. It must be noted however, that this applies only to Jews in state prisons. Such Jews view the Jewish inmates of federal institutions as an elitist group. They are seen as richer, smarter, and better off than Jews in state prisons. This is probably because of the misconception that only upper class Jewish businessmen end up in federal prisons, which are considered to be resorts, when compared to state facilities. Hence, a Jew who goes to federal prison for tax fraud, or whatever, is not in the same class as one who goes to state prison for robbery. The former is imprisoned because he was caught, i.e. it's the law's fault he's in prison. The latter is imprisoned because he was stupid, i.e., it's his own fault. Both are criminals by society's standards, but neither is a Jewish criminal, by S.P.S.M. Jewish inmates' standards.

A DAY IN THE LIFE

What is life in prison like on a day to day basis?  
Let's look at a prisoner we'll call Dave.

Dave lives in a private cell in a cell block. There are no dormitory conditions in S.P.S.M.. His cell measures six by nine. The door opens at seven-thirty in the morning, and locks at ten every night. All of Dave's possessions are in his cell. When he is away, he counts on his "neighbors" to watch his "house". Dave has few possessions: a wrist-watch, three pairs of pants, three tee shirts, three pairs of underpants, one cap, one light cotton jacket, several pairs of socks, two pairs of shoes, a bottle of hair tonic, a tube of toothpaste, a cigarette lighter and a typewriter sent from home. He doesn't go out much during the winter because he doesn't have a warm jacket, and there is no prison issue winter clothes.

When the doors slide open at seven-thirty, Dave dresses, "stands the count" (his presence in his cell is noted), and then he goes to breakfast. Breakfast is coffee, milk, hot or cold cereal, and pancakes or eggs twice a week. Breakfast is over by eight-thirty and from then until lock-up at ten that night, Dave is on his own. He can go to lunch and dinner, or he can choose not to do so. Only one third of the inmates are employed in the prison. The jobs, while they don't pay well (eighty-five cents per day), do pay something, and so are hard to get. Jobs range from typing braille, to sweeping, to doing laundry, to processing film for Studio 805, the prison photo lab. Some guys even volunteer for drug experi-



ments in the Park-Davis facility in the prison. Dave, however, doesn't have a job. He is in line for a job in the prison library.

Cons, as the men refer to themselves, are just like civilians in one respect: they need money. Each man has a prison account from which he draws "scrip" which he can use for money in the prison store. He must buy his own soap, toothpaste and brush, combs, and other toiletries as they are not prison issue. He may also buy candy, pipes, cigarettes, watches and transistor radios from the prison store. (The prices are retail--if he were on the outside he could buy these things at discount.) If a man has no job, the only way money is put in his account is if he has friends or relatives on the outside who support him. He cannot even borrow "scrip" from buddies, as each ticket is numbered, and one con cannot spend another con's "scrip". Dave is more fortunate than most cons with respect to his financial situation. He is poor, but he is Jewish. The Jewish inmates take care of their less wealthy neighbors. They can't loan "scrip", but they keep sundries stockpiled in the Rabbi's office for "charitable purposes".

Dave reads a bit in his cell during the morning hours. He has a class before lunch in the prison's junior college. After lunch he plays in a pick-up baseball game and kibbitzes a few card games. Then he goes to dinner. After dinner there is a movie in the "rec hall", and then, off to bed.

In short, Dave has time on his hands. When things get

tough, he wanders over to the chapel building and sits with other Jewish inmates in the Rabbi's office. The Rabbi is only in his office twice a week, except for special cases, but several of the "big-boys" in the Jewish prison community congregate there. That's one of the reasons the office draws so much "heat" (official attention). Because of such hassles, Dave tends to avoid the office, except when the Rabbi is in. But whether the Rabbi is in or out, his office is still a gathering place for Jews. Hanging around the Rabbi's office, even during the week, is a way of asserting one's identity.

A man yearns to grasp the essence of his spirituality-- he strives to fulfill certain values; taken together, these two aspects of human experience comprise an important relationship for many people during their lifetime. The relationship between religion and values is an intricate one, difficult to determine because human yearnings and strivings are involved, many of which are rarely verbalized. In addition, a multiplicity of definitions exist which attempt to delimit all the meanings which value holds; and religion encompasses just as many approaches. The task is made somewhat easier, therefore, by choosing a number of people with whom it is possible to explore the role religion plays in determining their values in life. The information derived from questioning these people can then be utilized as a means of critically arriving at some conclusions which will hopefully provide a heuristic model for further study and thought.

The subjects of this study only number seven. (It is gratifying to note that, whereas the State Penitentiary of Southern Michigan had twenty-five Jewish inmates three years ago, only ten remain.) The men interviewed came from various parts of the United States, and from somewhat diverse economic backgrounds. Thus, the backgrounds of the subjects differ from each other, as do their commitment to Jewish beliefs and practices. The interviews consisted of two parts. Before the interview occurred, each subject completed Allport, Vernon, and Lindzey's Study of Values.<sup>2</sup> This is a short questionnaire which classifies people according to six groupings, based on

the categories specified in Spranger's Types of Men.<sup>3</sup> The six types specified are: 1. the theoretical, who emphasizes intellectual values, especially scientific-type comprehension; 2. the economic, who emphasizes an interest in monetary concerns; 3. the aesthetic, who involves an artistic or creative motivation; 4. the social, who is concerned with people; 5. the political, who is concerned with practical matters; 6. the religious, who emphasizes experiential faith with a spiritual sensitivity. For greater detail, see the manual accompanying Allport, Vernon and Lindzey's Study of Values cited above. According to this test an individual's personality is weighed by studying the values he prefers. The purpose of administering this test was:

1. to start the subjects thinking about their values and the relative importance they have in their day to day lives in the prison environment;
2. to provide the interviewer with a further knowledge of the basic orientations of the subject, with a test which had been used successfully by other researchers to determine values;
3. to have a common set of questions with which to compare the different subjects.

(The Study of Values was administered to the seven subjects all at one time. Hence, there was no opportunity for the subjects to discuss their responses. The interviews, themselves, were made over a period of several weeks, and, while they were asked not to, the first subjects may have discussed the interviews with subsequent interviewees.) The specific interviews consisted of the following questions:

1. Why are you a Jew?
2. What was your parents' religious background?
3. Tell me about yourself.
4. Where were you born?
5. What was your parents' economic background?
6. What kind of education have you had?
7. What kind of religious education have you had?
8. Have you, or your family, been associated with a temple or synagogue?
9. How is your religion manifested in your daily life?
10. Why did you decide to affiliate with a religious community while in prison?
11. Why did you choose to affiliate with the Jewish religious community while in prison?
12. A leader of a national Jewish organization is visiting the chapel. What do you want to tell him, knowing that he might be able to do something about what you tell him?
13. Describe the S.P.S.M. Jewish community.
14. What Jewish interests do you have?
15. How do you feel about Israel?
16. How do you feel about the Jewish Defense League?
17. How do you feel about gentiles?
18. How do you feel about blacks?
19. How do you view the outside Jewish community?
20. Where do you put yourself politically?
21. What do you think is the outside Jewish community's response towards Jews in prison?
22. Do you have anything you would like to add?

The interviewees were also asked to identify the following names and holidays:

Torah	Passover
Moses	Chanukah
Abraham	Purim
Talmud	Shavuot
Hillel	Sukkot
Maimonides	Rosh Hashanah
Herzl	Yom Kippur
Ben Gurion	Simhat Torah
Golda Meir	

In some instances, questions were added or deleted, depending on the way the interview was proceeding. The questions were asked without explanation or elaboration. The interviewees were expected to interpret them for themselves. This proved to be quite revealing, as will be noted in the conclusion. An endeavor was made to extract a sensitivity for the values of each subject, and specifically, the relationship between religion and values, rather than attain a systematic knowledge of the material. Because of this approach, no objective evaluation of the data was possible, so that the study does not measure discrepancies between a verbal proclamation and the actual existence of such claims, (outside of the interviewer's personal relationship with the interviewee). In other words, it was difficult to distinguish between operative values and values which the subjects conceived as desirable, but which had very little influence on their daily behavior. It is hoped that the findings and the resulting conclusions are not greatly distorted by this fact. It is felt that the subjects, who were all extremely cooperative, were as honest as possible in the interviews. (Much of this presumption is borne out by the interviewer's personal relationships with the interviewees as their chaplain.)



In attempting to define the nature of value, a problem arises because of the many different associations which are incorporated into its meaning. In many instances, furthermore, the meaning of value has been misunderstood. W.W. Meissner, in a series of articles on values in the Journal of Religion and Health, defines value as a "code or standard that enjoys persistence through time and serves to organize action."<sup>4</sup> Values are normative in that they include a sense of obligation; they are, to some great extent, goal oriented, implying a course of action; they are experienced in the form of a conception so that they are not directly observable (except as test results) but can be inferred from an individual's actual behavior; they can be implicit or explicit, but, in any case, they are what might be called "verbalizable." Values are part of the process of selection and decision making which an individual participates in as a human being; thus, both cognition and emotion are involved in the formation of values.

Meissner points out several misconceptions which he feels have been associated with an understanding of values. He does not believe that values can be equated with behavioral choices, as advocated by John Dewey, so that values and preferences become interchangeable.<sup>5</sup> Meissner contends that values can conflict with preferences, and that in actuality, valuing not only precedes desirability but also determines it. If values include a sense of "oughtness" or obligation, then values and preferences cannot be equated. Neither are values

equivalent to biologically determined needs. Here, Meissner disclaims Maslow's thesis which asserts the instinctual derivation of both the "lower" life--necessitating needs (i.e., food, clothing, shelter, security) and the "higher" needs for self-actualization and fulfillment, love, justice, honesty, etc..<sup>6</sup> Although values respond to man's needs, they must be distinguished from them. The definition of values as a "need-reducing, preferential behavior" would severely limit several qualities which Meissner includes in his definition.<sup>7</sup> Values and motivation are not identical either, according to Meissner. This criticizes the premise of Allport, Vernon, and Lindzey's Study of Values which defines values as beliefs that an individual acts on by preference. Meissner claims that although values are motivational and directive, they are not necessarily a direct source of motivation, but function as organizers of the cognitive and affective aspects of the personality, channeling energies towards decisions which become concretized in actions.

For Meissner, values do not arise solely from immediate tensions or situations, but comprise that part of a man's motivation which is referable to standards, personality and culture.<sup>8</sup> Viktor Frankl, an existentialist, emphasizes the freedom man possesses in choosing his values concomitant with the responsibilities he holds. One responds to the problems life places upon him by actualizing as many values as possible.<sup>9</sup> Rather than responding to abstract, relatively stabilized and static "oughts", which seem to be implicit in



Meissner's definition (Meissner defines value as a code or standard which persists over time), Frankl focuses on the unique life situations which necessitate the realization of unique values by individuals who are themselves the result of singular experiences. The concreteness of man's response is underlined by Frankl. Although values exist independently of their acceptance or rejection by man, which Frankl refers to as the "objectivity of absolute values," they are only comprehended by concrete tasks determined by the uniqueness of each individual.<sup>10</sup> In this respect, Frankl distinguishes between "eternal" and "situational" values.<sup>11</sup>

The normative aspect of values emphasized by Meissner is applicable to Frankl's definition in that every human being has the obligation to fulfill his destiny by responding to the situations confronting him with the actualization of the necessary values. His response can take the form of:

1. creative values, which are values realized in creative action;
2. experiential values, which are values realized in receptivity to the world, independent of action;
3. attitudinal values, which are realized when an unalterable situation causes suffering and man must actualize an attitude that can give this suffering meaning. (This is of particular interest vis-à-vis criminal activity.)

Man is not just the result of his conditioning, neither of the environment nor heredity, but possesses the ability to transcend his daily experience.

It is unclear whether Meissner's use of normative refers

to an external sense of obligation ( i.e. an obligation imposed by religion, parents, social norms) which would exclude Frankl's understanding of man's obligation to life, requiring him to fulfill his destiny in the actualization of values. Frankl recognizes man's need to have responsibility for a force other than himself, a force which transcends man. He refers to man's belief as an "overmeaning", the meaning of the universe which goes beyond the comprehensible, so that "our minds require its existence at the same time that it is to our minds unfathomable."<sup>12</sup> Man's destiny, his will-to-meaning, consists of actualizing as many values as possible. The tension between this inherent need and the actual possibility of its fulfillment in life results in the formation of a conscience. With this line of reasoning, Frankl arrives at the conclusion that man's ultimate goal in life is that of self-transcendence, in which man is able to transcend concrete life situations that discourage the realization of values and actualize the eternal values.

Self-actualization is a by-product of self-transcendence, but it is not the dominant aspiration of man's labors, as it is for Abraham Maslow. Maslow, in accentuating the basic human origins of "higher" needs and thus "higher" values, advocated the actualization of these natural biological needs and impulses as the goal of life.<sup>13</sup> With the gratification of the "lower" needs, man is free to pursue gratification of his "higher" needs, which are just as much apart of human nature as the needs for sleep, sex, and food. There is no

dichotomy between "lower" and "higher" needs, usually portrayed as animal impulsiveness versus rational abstractions, and the motivational source is identical for both ends of the continuum as well. Therefore, the "higher" values are ultimate, irreducible, intrinsic values of reality, values which are attributes of as well as "the defining characteristics of humanness is its essence."<sup>14</sup> Imbued in the very existence of these values is man's need to transcend his existence, his need for values which he can admire, sacrifice himself for, surrender to, and, if need be, die for.<sup>15</sup> Maslow points to peak experiences as means of arriving at these "transcendent" values naturally, resulting in the growth of the individual and providing meaning for the individual--this is the process of self-actualization. Man's obligation in life is to no other force than the forces he discovers in himself through "spontaneity, release, naturalness, self-acceptance,"<sup>16</sup> The "higher", instinctive needs are weaker than the "lower" needs because they are less important for survival, and they therefore must be protected against the forces which are capable of changing, distorting or annihilating them (such as religion, culture, etc.).

Maslow's theory of values holds man responsible for his natural impulses, and needs, while Frankl feels the man must be responsible to some greater life force; (through his ability to transcend himself, self-actualization will occur). Carl Rogers' theory of values de-emphasized "oughtness" in similar fashion to Maslow's.<sup>17</sup> The importance

of authenticity, moving away from facades, meeting expectation, pleasing others and moving towards openness to experience, acceptance of others, trust of oneself. For Rogers, man has no obligation to anything but an awareness of his own being; and through awareness, he will move "toward becoming all of the complexity of one's changing self in each significant moment."<sup>18</sup> This is a process of self-actualization, a process of becoming, through the development of potentialities necessitated by the individual's need to creatively adapt to a world constantly in flux. Man's values reflect his genuine feelings and needs, providing a "satisfying order in life may be perceived," and enabling man to participate in his self-actualization.<sup>19</sup>

Some of the above definitions of values conflict with one another while others can be synthesized into complimentary aspects of distinct systems. These definitions provide helpful models for viewing the complexities of man's existence as he actually struggles with life's problems. However, they are only models and they must not be rigidly imposed on experiences which do not comply with certain aspects of the model. It is also important that the manner in which a man chooses to deal with his experiences and the degree to which his behavior corresponds to a specific model not be judged. It is each individual's concern as to the efficacy of his decisions or lack of decision, and the amount of fulfillment he receives through the realization of his values. As Frankl points out, every man has the choice to accept or reject

his destiny, and only he knows whether he has made the correct choice. These statements form the basic attitude of this study: care has been taken to refrain from making value judgements or imposing inflexible parameters on behavior.

Before proceeding with a description of the data and a subsequent analysis of it, a definition of religion is required.

Religion is defined and related to values

In defining religion, it is necessary first of all to distinguish organized religion from other aspects of religion. Organized religion is characterized by its institutional nature, such as ritual observance and a doctrine of beliefs and practices involving a community of believers and a church or temple--a house of worship--at the center of religious activities. Organized religion can be theistic (such as Christianity or Judaism) or non-theistic (like Buddhism), but it is usually founded on an original revelation embodied in a tradition and preserved through some kind of ritual observance. Ideally, participants in an organized religion possess a mature religious sentiment, described by Gordon Allport as

a disposition built up through experience to respond favorably and in certain habitual ways to conceptual objects and principles that the individual regards as of ultimate importance in his own life and as having to do with what he regards central in the nature of things.<sup>20</sup>



Allport implies that this definition pertains to the individual participating in an organized religion and to the individual who prefers to remain outside of a church.<sup>21</sup> The mature religious sentiment includes: 1. a critical, reflective attitude, resulting in a multiplicity of interests which is held together by an underlying unity; 2. an autonomous motivating force, not founded on the need for gratification of self-interest, but on the desire to live in accordance with an adequate frame of value and meaning, and to enlarge and energize this frame; 3. a constant, directive force; 4. a comprehensiveness which is concerned with all matters central to existence and is harmonious with the realities of existence; 5. a heuristic belief, one which is held temporarily until a more valid belief is discovered.<sup>22</sup>

Maslow emphasized the need which every man has for religion because it provides a "validated useable system of values."<sup>23</sup> One of man's "higher" needs includes a need for knowledge and understanding of life philosophy, a theoretical frame of reference, and a value system which directs man's energies towards meaningful activities. However, he vehemently criticizes organized religions' claim as the possessor of the values which exemplify the spiritual life solely because of the nature of its super-natural revelation, guarded by a secret tradition. Maslow claims that man's religious yearnings, his need to transcend his existence, must be fulfilled by his own strivings and not soothed by the tempting security provided by the overworked rituals of

organized religion. Tradition, consensus, cultural habit, and unanimity of belief are all to common means for arriving at spiritual values.<sup>24</sup>

According to Maslow, the ritual practices and beliefs of organized religion represent an endeavor to concretize the experience of the original revelation for those who could not have experienced it, and thereby succeeds in discouraging even the possibility of direct experiences for its members. Organized religion, by placing ultimate importance on man's responsibility to fulfill the needs of the deity rather than his own needs, cuts man off from his innate ability to experience his own "natural" impulses and thus achieve self-actualization. Because man is capable of gratifying his religious yearnings through the process of self-actualization, the need for a supernatural revelation is obviated, and because organized religion tends to be more harmful than worthwhile, Maslow advocates a total disavowal of it and substitutes the self-validating process of self-actualization. Through peak experiences in which "higher" values are realized, man can discover for himself a frame of reference and meaning, and a value system; the continual expansion of this frame, through more peak experiences will characterize his religion.

Since Viktor Frankl advocates self-transcendence over self-actualization, with man as responsible to a destiny beyond his own existence, Frankl is not as critical of the supernatural revelation central to organized religion. For

Frankl, life, as a task in which man is responsible to face the problems confronting him, becomes a mission for the religious man in that he is aware of the task master and is thus responsible to him. The religious man not only must answer to life's task, but is also responsible to the "who" behind the task, the source of all destiny. If the religious man, as a member of an organized religion, avoids his responsibility by performing rituals without any sense of their meaning or by mouthing prayers without any intention behind the words, then the values advocated by organized religion will certainly have no significance for him. Responsibility and consciousness are two attributes of the religious human being and they must go hand-in-hand if a man is to have a meaningful existence.

The point at which Allport's, Maslow's, and Frankl's views intersect is in their characterization of man's religious yearnings. All three authors recognize man's need for understanding the meaning of life, which is inextricably joined to his spirituality; whether this is characterized as a need for religious sentiment (Allport), the need for "higher" values (Maslow), or the need to transcend his existence (Frankl), man's existence is portrayed with a spiritual element that potentially connects with some form of religion. The importance of spiritual values in a man's life, however, can vary greatly depending on his experiences and how he chooses to respond to them. In interviewing the seven inmates of the State Penitentiary of Southern Michigan, it



was of special interest to determine the degree of importance which the spiritual needs have for each subject and how these needs are fulfilled in his life.

INTERVIEWS

INTERVIEW ONE

Remy Gamble  
Age: 37  
Offense: Murder I

Question: Why are you a Jew?

Answer: It's a heritage. Uh, I didn't find out I was a Jew actually, until I was seven. My grandfather was the one who told me then. And of course my father wasn't brought up too well as a Jew because of the fact that they moved from the Ohio Valley to Idaho. You know, and there was no teachings in Idaho. I think they were the only family out there. Of course there's two shuls out there now, and one is right near my dad's town. Was it Boise? There's one by the capital and one by the ski resort.

Q: What was your parents' religious background?

A: My father was kinda weak and my mother, you know, was Scotch. But she didn't follow her Catholic religion.

Q: Tell me in two or three minutes who Remy Gamble is. What makes him run? What does he stand for? Pretend we've just met.

A: I paint for a hobby. Did you hear about that? Oh yeah, I took Harry's place. Drew all the heat too. He should have been so fortunate to leave to have to leave me here. I don't know really. I'd say I'm pretty easy going: congenial to a point. Uh, I don't know. Wow. You

know this is a heavy question.

Q: Where were you born?

A: In Grosse Point.

Q: What was your parents' economic background?

A: Middle class. My father was uh, uh, usually, you know, uh, with the automobile field. Like uh, in service. Yeah, a service manager. And during the war he ran a small tool and die shop, which did quite well. He was white collar. As service manager they gave him a car and paid him "X" amount of dollars. During the war he worked for a Dutch Jew that came to this country. I think he was really a German or a Russian Jew, but he didn't want to admit it and uh, at that time it wasn't too good to admit that you were German or Russian. You know with the World War and all. Over there its not too good to admit you're Jewish and over here it's not too good to admit you're German or Russian. "Oh, I'm Dutch!" And my dad did quite well during the war. Well enough, you know, we lived good; we ate well under the circumstances. Course, we went to Canada and bought everything else. You know my father bought another car; I can't think of what it was, any way you could lift a package tray, it was a coupe, and we'd bring a big meat package back. We did all right.

Q: What kind of education have you received?

A: I finished the ninth grade. Never finished high school. I had good opportunities to finish school, but when I

blew my knee, you know, uh, wiped out four scholarships and that kinda dampened my spirits far as finishing high school cause I couldn't go onto college, on a scholarship. But my parents could have well afforded to send me to college. But--nah. Course I went to school in Grosse Point. Makes a little difference there. Well to do. What is it, the richest community? We were kinda non-Jewish there. There were other Jews in the school but since their families moved to Grosse Point, they forgot their faith. Changed their name from Rosenthal to Rose. In fact, I went with a girl named Marilyn Ross whose father had a bunch of drive-in theaters and uh, she ended copping out. Told me she was Jewish too. But I've always said I was Jewish.

Q: What kind of religious education have you had?

A: Only by my own choosing. There was no formal religious school. When I found out I was Jewish--through my dad and grandfather--it was just something that stayed with me, I don't know. Judaism was something I wanted to relate with. Uh, you know I was just in limbo before I found out. I was nothing, you know. It was just something that stayed with me and I finally ended up going to the downtown synagogue in Detroit and uh, put the whole thing to 'em. You know, said, "Here I am. I'd like to learn something of my authentic background."

Q: Have you ever had any affiliation with a temple?

A: Yes, uh, well the downtown synagogue, and later when I

had a motor by myself I went to, I don't know the name of it, but it was in Windsor. That was a shul, not a temple or synagogue--Conservative--where as the downtown place was very staunch. I didn't feel very accepted there. My parents were not affiliated at all though. But I was proud to be Jewish. My grandfather was Jewish, but because of where they were at (Boise, Idaho), there was no ethnic background. My grandfather did state that I'm the only one who looked Jewish of all the grandchildren. I have an aunt that still lives out there, and an uncle that is deceased, and another uncle who was a big construction carpenter all over the country. Like when they built Boulder Dam.

Q: Have you ever met any Rabbis other than Rabbis Shapiro, Slavkin, Chester and myself (Prison chaplains during Mr. Gamble's stay)?

A: Uh, yeah, Bernard Cohen, Terre Haute (Indiana). He is in uh. . . .I was incarcerated at the time, huh? And we had a very good affiliation, and I did go to see him after leaving. Other than that I haven't had any close association.

Q: How is your religion manifested in your life? Does the fact that you are Jewish have any effect on you?

A: Well, most of my associates accept me as I am, so I don't have any problem that way. In fact one friend of mine's mother goes to a temple, and she's Scotch also. She was born in the same place my mother was: Glasgow.



In fact I just got a card from her Wednesday. She's going to Toronto. There's a big meeting there, of some Jewish organization that a lot of her friends belong to. And she even reads Hebrew. You know, it's amazing, she talks with a brogue and the whole thing, but she goes to Temple Israel in Detroit. Heh-heh! But she's still a Catholic. It's amazing. But you can see that there's, uh, wow, I have no anti-Semitic friends. They accept me. A couple of them have gone to temple with me, to see that we're not eating babies or something. I think--right, right--that might have been it.

Q: Why did you decide to affiliate yourself with the religious community here at S.P.S.M.?

A: Well, maybe I need a little spiritual guidance. Naw, really, it's for companionship: affiliation with other Jews, although some of them I'd rather forget about if I was outside. In general, Rabbi, you know as well as I do who I'm speaking about. In general though, they're all pretty good heads. Actually my association with people inside has been with the Jewish people.

Q: Let's pretend that a leader of a powerful Jewish national agency accompanies Rabbi Chester to services some Saturday. What do you want to tell him?

A: That's rather a hard question to answer because I've never really considered it. Nobody comes in here except you and Steve (Rabbi Chester). I believe I would try to impress upon him how much you and Steve have done for us,

as far as my personal contact with you both. You know I'm not going to hold any of that back. I don't know, I suppose I'd try to tell him about how I fell about the institution and their, uh, pseudo-anti-Semitic attitude. But to carry a message to the world Jewry, I don't believe that you could really take out of here, a message that is.

Q: What with the anti-Semitic attitude of the administration, which you mentioned, how do you explain the fact that there are so many "fake-outs" in reception? (Men claiming to be Jewish who are not.) What is the attraction?

A: I've always walked around like branded anyway. You know, I lived in Grosse Point and was the only one who admitted that he was a Jew, in a school of 1,500, where I figure there had to be at least 20 Jews. A lot of them (fake-outs) are looking for the gratuities. You know, if we didn't have the packages, the meals, it wouldn't make any difference to 'em at all. The one meal a year (Seder) and the two packages (food on Chanukah and Pass-over--eighty pounds each). Yeah, that's it. The goyim don't know about the comradery. On the outside you don't know what those two packages mean to a guy. And we take care of each other. If a guy doesn't have someone putting into his account, the other Jews take care of him. The goyim are told, "Go in as a Jew 'cause that's the way to be." But we stop 'em and most are too stupid

to try a fake-out. 'Course Mr. Serious up front (then the new warden, Perry Johnson) has cut down on the size of the packages. We used to get a lot more, a lot more, believe me we used to get a lot more in the packages. When I was in the first time (under the previous warden) there wasn't so much anti-Semitism, official-wise, as this time. The first time I came in here I came with no religious preference in my file at all, 'cause I didn't know how I would be accepted. And someone had recognized my name, being Sammy Norbert actually (a now paroled inmate), when he saw the roster. Well, he came in to see me, knowing me from, uh, my previous--time elsewhere. And he said, "What's the deal man?" And I said, "Like wow, brother, I don't know what's happening. I'm here and I'm wearing my star (Magen David around his neck) and I'm not denying that I'm Jewish, I just didn't know how it would be accepted here, you know, I've run into so many bottlenecks in life and I just figured I'd better find out what's happening before I jump in the door and say, 'Here I am; Super Jew.'" You know, the first time I came in here I figured there would be anti-Semitism and he came over and rescued me. But I didn't make the roster (the official list of who is what religiously) because I didn't come in right off the bat as a Jew.

Q: Describe if you would the S.P.S.M. Jewish Community.

A: Can I laugh? Huh? Can I laugh? Uh, we are about

ten to twenty of the most fucked up people in this institution. Oh, sorry about the word. That's about all I can say about us. Just in their whole general attitude. To me, some of them are embarrassing to the Jewish faith, that's all. Some of them may not be Jewish. One of them is gone now. You know, gone up north? (Referring to Harry Whitney, the former Clerk of Jewish Chapel who worked with Rabbi Slavkin, myself, and Rabbi Chester.)

Q: What Jewish interests do you have?

A: Well, how would you define that? (Interviewer: "How would you?") Interest in what? Oh, I definitely read the Jewish newspaper. I'm not a student of the Talmud or anything like that, but I do read Jewish history (in the Chapel library). But I do keep abreast of what is going on now, in Israel.

Q: What are your feelings about Israel?

A: That's a rather deep question. A lot of people who have really gone through hell. I don't know, I wish I could do something. I've bought a few trees but what's a few trees. And a few dollars here and there through the Jewish Relief Fund. But I feel like I wouldn't mind being over there, to be very truthful with you. Mad as I am, I could probably start my own suicide squad (to kill Arabs). Yeah, go to Tel Aviv with Meyer (Lansky). He's got it soft over there. He knows Golda and she says, "It's all right, I'll take care of you."

Q: How do you feel about the Jewish Defense League?

A: I think they're achieving something that the back-seat Jews will never do. Uh, they're putting our problems to light where the whole world is going to have to recognize it, because they're going to raise so much hell someone is going to recognize it. They get the publicity; they're in the papers and so forth. I don't feel that by blowing up things they're going to accomplish anything. Let the other radicals blow things up. Just leave us make our stand as strong as possible without any undue violence.

Q: What is your attitude towards gentiles in here (S.P.S.M.)?

A: That's a hard one to say. They, uh, the whole population in general needs some education to us. We're accepted to the extent that we're the merchant on the corner, outside. They have to come to us for a commodity. So they accept us to this extent as a Jew, but they don't accept us actually as a Jew, because of our ethnic background or our religious background. They feel that. . . I feel this, anyway. . . that we're still animals, man, compared to them, you know.

Q: How do you feel about blacks?

A: Uh, I'm growing to hate 'em. Because of the fact that the populace (prison) is turning black percentage-wise. They're getting defiant. It's a shame that we started the N.A.C.P. (sic: N.A.A.C.P.) for them. Uh, I think they can find, in their own right, without our help



because we've been oppressed for so long, so we're going to help the others that are oppressed, and now we've helped them, and what are they going to do for us. And we get kicked in the ass.

Q: How do you feel about the outside Jewish community?

A: I'm kind of torn between the Reform and the Conservative. I like the ideals they both have. Definitely couldn't be an Orthodox. I don't. . .this has to be something that is instudied (sic) in you all your life to actually go through life as these people do (Orthodox Jews). God bless them, for they are so staunch in staying with the old ways. But this is 1972 and there's just going to have to be some more modern thinking used.

Q: How do you feel about the political left?

A: I'm not much on politics, but I am disgusted and I don't even read the paper on it. Right, left, it doesn't matter. I can't stand Richard Nixon. I think the John Birch Society is a bunch of sick-o's. Half of our correctional staff is members. I'd have to go with Hubert Humphrey. But for President, now I'd go for McGovern. He's trying to project a younger image of himself right now. If he can get the majority of those twenty-four million kids he's got it knocked. Humphrey tried it and it didn't go over too good. I like Humphrey better but he won't sell. If McGovern doesn't win. . . he's our last chance. It'll be King Richard the First.

Q: How do you view the outside Jewish community's attitude



towards Jews in prison?

A: Being here and in a federal institution. . .the difference in caliber of the Jews here and in a federal institution are very far-reaching. We have riff-raff Jews here. This is not educated Jews here. In federal Jews are in for counterfeiting, smuggling, armament sales, which isn't very kosher according to the government. There was another one in there who owed half a million dollar in taxes for gambling. But no violent types and all of us were in for crimes of intelligence not, crimes of violence. So by in large the attitude of the Jewish community is based on the criminals they come into contact with in their lives. These guys here: the riff-raff. So they say, "Jews in prison? Screw 'em!"

Q: Please identify in a few words the following terms, names, and holidays.

A: Torah--that's our book

Moses--a prophet

Abraham--also

Talmud--again, our religious readings

Hillel--I don't know

Maimonides--I don't know

Herzl--I don't know

Chaim Wetizman--I don't know, an ambassador

Abba Eban--he's the ambassador to the U.N.

Ben Gurion--my hero, he led our people, man, like Moshe  
Dayan

Golda--my main lady. The President of Israel

Passover--our most religious time of year in here.

Our escape from Egypt

Hanukah--it's gotten out of context. It's just like the

Goyim's Christmas. It's no longer what it was.

Purim--it's just another High Holiday. I'd go to temple  
for it.

Shavuous--I realize the value of it but I'd just go to  
temple on it to be part of it.

Rosh Hashonah and Yom Kippur--New Year, new life and

Day of Atonement. I don't know if I confess all  
my sins or not but I do think about it.

Q: What message do you have for the readers of this paper?

A: We need more unity. We're getting away from our back-  
ground and we are all not adhering to the religion as  
a whole. We have too many controversies among ourselves,  
the three kinds of Jews. It's wrong for the Orthodox  
to hold us back in Israel. Like I wouldn't be Jewish  
in Israel cause my mother wasn't and some other guy would  
be. It isn't fair. We need more Jewish unity.

Analysis

Mr. Gamble, on Allport, Vernon and Lindzey's Study of Values, scored high on economic and artistic values, with an average score on social values and a low score on political, religious and theoretical values. This is in keeping with the views expressed in his interview.

His formal religious background is almost non-existent. His Judaism stems from a strong identification with his grandfather who was the only religiously oriented person he came into contact with in his childhood. While acknowledging his father as a good provider, he acknowledges that he was not a practicing Jew. The subject defends his father's lack of religion by pointing out that there were "no teachings in Idaho" where his father was raised. The attitude of his family and neighbors in Grosse Pointe towards Judaism led the subject to view Judaism as a stigma, a burden to be carried throughout life. His reaction to this was to assert his Jewishness and to scorn others who tried to hide their religion. He views gentiles as "stupid goyim" and fellow Jews as "embarrassing to the Jewish faith" because of their shallow identification with Judaism, while he feels "branded" and strongly asserts his faith, although he knows little about it.

Judaism, for Mr. Gamble, is not so much a religion as it is a way of identifying people. Most Jewish prisoners feel that their Jewishness adds to their identity--makes them different from other inmates. This is viewed as a positive

factor, as the prison system is designed to make every man the same as his fellow--hence, identity-less.

The subject's strong feelings toward Israel are indicative of his desire for identity. The Israelis are seen as his people; Jews taking care of themselves. Being unable to join the Israelis, his choice of identification must be with the Jewish inmates of S.P.S.M. who, while they are "riff-raff" Jews and not totally acceptable to him, are the closest thing to a "people" that he can have. Were it not for the fact that he is Jewish, and they are Jewish, he would prefer not to associate with most of them. Thus it is his strong sense of Jewishness that determines his association with them. Of course, it must be noticed that like the "fake-outs" he despises, he values the food packages and Seder, but unlike them, he feels that these privileges are due him as a Jew.

While readily acknowledging that he is justly confined for murder, he appears to look down on others who advocate or practice violence: his fellow inmates and the Jewish Defense League. At the same time, he is forced to admire the fact that like himself, the Jewish Defense League and his fellow Jewish inmates strongly declare their Jewish identity for the world to see.

At no time during the interview did the subject volunteer information about personal matters such as presently-held religious belief or the fact that he has a Jewish wife and children. This is in keeping with the prison norm. Men

do not discuss their wives and families while in prison. It is as if they want to keep their family out of the prison environment, even as a topic of conversation. Of course, there are exceptions to this, but in general the men cling to an acquired identity while in prison and put away their real self until they are released. This is partially a result of the stripping process that occurs upon imprisonment, and partially because of their desire to keep their families clean and uncontaminated by prison life.

He believes that Jews should stick together and explains the outside Jewish community's rejection of Jewish inmates by stating that they, too, view his fellow Jewish prisoners as "riff-raff" Jews. While deprecating the other Jews in prison he is at the same time forced to point out their "comradery" and that "we take care of each other." In short, there are good Jews and bad Jews, but it is good for one to be Jewish in any case. Jewishness is for the subject something to be strongly defended against a hostile gentile world.

Unlike most of his fellow Jewish inmates, Mr. Gamble is not really interested in politics. Nevertheless, when pressed, he advocates the same political preferences as they hold, by in large. Like most of his fellows, he dislikes Negroes, but his reasons are different. Most Jewish inmates view blacks negatively as animals and sub-humans. The subject attacks Negroes because they have turned against the Jews who helped them in society.



In conclusion, the subject strongly identifies with Judaism, while he seeks to disassociate himself from Jews, or at least those Jews who do not meet his Jewish standards. Yet, in every instance, he is forced to defend Jews, not as individuals but simply because of their Judaism. His parting statement, "We need more Jewish unity," is indicative of this. What he seems to be saying is that there ought to be more Jews who think as he does. However, until the rest come to his viewpoint, he will continue to defend them from outside criticism, while expressing his own discomfiture with them.



INTERVIEW TWO

Marx Cooper

Age: 41

Offense: Attempted Murder, Bank Robbery, Assault with intent to rob

Question: Why are you a Jew?

Answer: Probably because I was born a Jew and continued to maintain ties with, uh, I feel a certain, I don't know whether it's a mystical or national tie, with some degree of religious preference, but basically because I was born a Jew, and grown up with a history of Jewish heritage and background. And therefore, I elect to stay this way. I identify myself as a Jew and I consider myself as a Jew.

Q: What was your parents' religious background?

A: They were Jewish. Not affiliated with any temple, as such, but they were both of Jewish origin.

Q: Tell me about Marx Cooper.

A: I've lived all my life in the Detroit area. I'm married and have four children, the oldest of which is sixteen. I have a fourteen year-old daughter, a six year-old son and a five year-old daughter. I've been married for seventeen years to a very lovely young lady. I've attended school in Detroit. I attended Wayne State University with a Master's degree in Special Education. I also have a Teacher's Certificate in Elementary Education, and a Specialist's Degree in teaching the educable mentally

retarded. In the last five years, after I left teaching, I've been with a company as an Educational Consultant. My hobbies are hi-fi, tape recording, and music in general, particularly the classics. This is my first experience being in a prison. Other than that. . . .

Q: Where were you born?

A: In Detroit, Michigan.

Q: What was your parents' economic background?

A: I would say lower middle class, basically. I say this in the context of the Depression. There were a lot of people who became lower middle class for a few years. My father now owns a jewelry store and he has moved more into the middle class. I would consider myself more middle class too.

Q: What kind of religious education have you had?

A: I did not attend Hebrew school, as such. I was tutored for Bar Mitzvah. My formal Jewish education terminated at that point. My background was largely Orthodox as I was tutored by an Orthodox Rabbi and was "Bar Mitzvahed" in an Orthodox shul.

Q: Have you been formally affiliated with a temple or synagogue?

A: No. However, most of my relatives are members of temples. Most of them are Reform although a few uncles are Orthodox.

Q: How has your religion been manifested in your life?

A: Before I was imprisoned I regularly attended services at a Reform Temple in Detroit, and my son was "Bar Mitz-

vahed" three years ago. It may have been hypocritical, because I attended services because he had to be there. Now, that is, here in prison, I attend services every Saturday morning, and I don't know whether I do this out of what might be considered a traditional religious understanding of Deity as much as I think it reflects wanting to identify with one's own ethnic group. I've always maintained that being a Jew entails a combination of both: it's not one or the other.

Q: Why did you elect to affiliate yourself with a religious community while in S.P.S.M.?

A: Well, I, uh, don't really know, fully. I would have to say that it has something to do with the feeling that one is isolated in a prison situation, and while I didn't know any of the members of the Jackson prison chapel, the idea of not wanting to be alone in this situation, and seemingly wanting to be identified with one's own group, or becoming a part of its identity, I think, manifested itself in wanting to be affiliated; wanting to be a Jew. I never hide the fact. In other words, never being in prison before, with all kinds of people, I was proud to say I was a Jew. Whereas some people might want to shy away from admitting it, particularly in a situation like this, I freely admitted it. I thought that my reaction might have been different, because I felt, wow, there's a lot of tough guys around who might hate Jews, and they might take it out on me.

Q: A leader of a powerful Jewish national organization is visiting S.P.S.M.. What do you want to tell him?

A: I don't know. There would probably be a lot of things that would come to mind after he leaves. I think any kind of help that he could give the men here would certainly be appreciated. Privately, I would want to tell him the hardships that prison imposes on any individual and his family, just so he would better understand our situation.

Q: Describe the S.P.S.M. Jewish community.

A: Well, uh, I don't think I can describe it that adequately. I think it's not typical of a Jewish community generally, for several reasons. One, that very few Jews wind up in prison, at least in this country. Secondly, from what I've seen, a very small minority of the men--and I consider myself in the majority--have a very tenuous relationship with formal Jewish religion. In fact, a number of our members don't strike me as being Jewish. And I don't know what that is supposed to mean, and it may sound very chauvinistic in some ways. Because here I am, a person having no formal affiliation (with Judaism) on the outside, making this observation. But this is the two things that strike me: one, that very few have formal Jewish contacts on the outside; and two, very few are religiously oriented. Maybe, I'm using stereotypes, but many don't seem to be that closely identified with the (general) Jewish community. In other words, out on

the street, you would not recognize these people as Jews. I'd say two-thirds of the men fall into that category.

Q: Do you have any reason to believe that any members of the S.P.S.M. Jewish community are, in fact, not Jews?

A: Well, yeah I do think that there are two, possibly three who have very, very tenuous relations with Judaism. And I say this because their mannerisms, speech, and background indicate this. I think, in fact, that their Jewish identification is only on the inside (in prison), and that outside they do not want to be identified with Jews and Judaism. But this is a personal observation, and they might dispute that.

Q: What Jewish interests do you have?

A: Well, I'm very interested in the Jewish community--in the survival of the Jewish community. I guess that's the motivating factor behind having my first-born "Bar Mitzvahed". Again, this might be seen as hypocritical. I am against the idea of us dissolving away in one big melting pot. I think we lose something. I think the Jews have contributed a great deal to Western Civilization far in excess to our proportionate size. I believe that there is something within the Jewish culture, something within the Jewish community, that makes our people contribute far more into civilization than they take out of it. And I'm not sure what that something is. But I'm not in favor of that "whatever-it-is" being



washed away or assimilated. Therefore, and, for the same reason, I am interested in seeing the State of Israel survive. I think it stands as a symbol, in a hostile world, of the Jewish will to survive. Incidentally, whereas I am not formally associated with a temple on the outside, I and my family are members of the Jewish center in Detroit and we observe the holiday celebration at home.

Q: We may have covered this, as a matter of fact you touched on it in the last question, but what are your feelings toward the State of Israel?

A: I had mixed feelings at first. In the beginning, I admit that I really tended to be quite sympathetic with the Arabs. In fact, I'll have to admit this, at one time, back in the early fifties, I was almost akin to the Communist-Arab position, that Israel was an imposition-- a white, colonialist power being imposed on the people of the Middle East who had a right to be there. But I've changed quite a bit since then, because I feel that they (the Israelis) have earned the right to exist. They may have had to take certain actions there, but the attack on the Lebanese airport, that bugs me out. But all of the other things that had to be done were of necessity for survival, and I don't think that the State is perfect. But I think Israel's survival is very important.

Q: How do you feel about the Jewish Defense League?



A: I'm ninety percent against that kind of thing. I say ninety percent because I realize that there has to be a certain catalyst or activity that focuses attention on certain problems, but I think they've really gone beyond that and have defeated their own purposes. I think that in a sense they've become not Jewish nationalists but crypto-fascists, resorting to terrorism and violence, attempting to hideously disrupt cultural events that the Soviets send over here. I can't accept that this contributes anything at all. The means to the end that they're engaged in is very negative. So I'm pretty much against what they do, while I am sympathetic towards their cause.

Q: How do you feel about gentiles?

A: Some of my best friends. . . . Well, no, I'd like to feel I'm relatively free of prejudice. I've always avoided talking Yiddish with reference to other people: goyim, shagitz, shvartsa. I've always abstained from that sort of thing. I've really never had any problem with non-Jews.

Q: Do you speak Yiddish?

A: Yes, fluently.

Q: How do you feel about blacks?

A: I find that I've been getting more prejudiced recently. I don't know if it's the environment I've been keeping, to mess up an old phrase, but I find myself saying--or not opposing--things that other guys say about blacks.

I personally have never felt that it's necessary to denigrate anybody, and I say this not out of any patronizing attitude, but simply because I've always felt this way. I don't use words in my conversation like "niggers," "crows" or "shvartsas". I don't use those types of terms. Now, I've had some interesting experiences in here. Being in prison tends to enforce the prejudices that always seem to be inherent in a person, a white person. I don't like people who wear outrageous Afros. I don't know why. This is a bias of mine. And there are certain individuals in here who are rather . . . repugnant. And you would say, "These are niggers." And I say to myself, "What the hell am I saying?" Because most of the people I talk to are black. Most of my neighbors (in the cell block) are black, and we get along really well. And I realize that the people I am generalizing about I don't generalize about when they're white. I mean there's plenty of white obnoxious characters in here, too.

Q: Where do you stand politically?

A: I consider myself. . . well, a little bit right of the left. Sort of the middle of road. I don't look upon the system as corrupt--I have faith in the system. I believe in Jeffersonian Democracy and I'm an avid supporter of Senator McGovern. The fact that he is what he is and yet is an establishment politician is a hopeful sign. This Viet Nam, this is a hopeless atrocity and I think it will come to stand on par with what the Germans did

in World War II. I think there's enough redeeming value in the heritage of our country, and even in the system, the forms that we still have, that we can still make something out of it. I hope I'm right, because if I'm not we're in for a lot of trouble in the years to come.

Q: How do you view the attitude of Jews on the outside towards Jews in prison?

A: I think the predominating attitude, among both Jews and gentiles, is that there are not very many Jews in prison. I think it just fits in with our stereotype. "Jews are all brain and intellect, and Jews don't go to prison. We certainly wouldn't rob a bank, or rape a girl or hold up a gas station. That doesn't exist. It's genetically impossible." That sort of thing. It all fits in with our stereotype.

Q: Please identify the following names, terms, and holidays.

A: (Mr. Cooper was able to identify every term, name and holiday, going into great detail and using many Hebrew terms (e.g., Pesah, T'shuvah, Gemarra, etc.) in his definitions.)

### Analysis

Mr. Cooper scored high on theoretical, aesthetic, and political values. His scores on economic, social, and religious values were average.

The subject is atypical. He is highly educated, very intelligent, and very knowledgeable concerning Judaism. His lack of formal religious education and affiliation has not prevented him from pursuing a Jewish existence. Were he not in prison he might be taken to be an average congregant with a few strange conceptions. He appears to be a typical white, middle class liberal, both politically and philosophically. His feelings about blacks are those which any such person would develop when thrust into the world of prisons.

His most interesting response was to the question, "Describe the S.P.S.M. Jewish community." His critique of his fellow Jews, that many of them don't appear to be Jewish, is balanced against his own feelings of being incompletely Jewish. Yet his resolve remains firm: he feels that a number of the men are Jewish only because it is convenient and useful for them to be so. This, I think, was my own response towards several of the men when I was chaplain: they are Jewish because they can "get something out of it," in a materialistic sense.

Perhaps a word ought to be said as to why the subject did what he did--rob a bank. The man's wife was ill, he was in debt, and he saw no way out. In order to acquire the necessary cash, he single-handedly tried to rob a bank. Until

that time he had no previous record, of any kind. In our society, it seems one must be either very poor or very rich to survive a financial crisis. The former depends on welfare programs and the latter depends on his wealth. The middle class man, unable to secure the necessary cash by legal means, must turn to illegal channels, or, lacking the knowledge how to do that, turn to actual crime. Such was the case with Marx Cooper.

It is interesting to note, that unlike his fellows, Marx involved his wife and children in the interviews. The average inmate tries to keep his personal life submerged while he is in prison.

I would have to say, that by ordinary standards, Mr. Cooper was the most Jewishly identified of all the men interviewed.



INTERVIEW THREE

Perry Alan Davis  
Age: 26  
Offense: Armed Robbery

Question: Why are you a Jew?

Answer: I'm a Jew mostly because I want to be, and because I wouldn't have it any other way. I was born Jewish. I'm very happy with the way I was born. I think if I was born probably any other religion that I'd try to become Jewish.

Q: What was your parents' religious background?

A: My father was born Orthodox, from two European parents. He was born in Canada. He was brought up going to cheder every day. He had a very strict teacher and very strict parents. His parents kept kosher in the house. My grandmother right up until the day she died kept kosher. My grandfather had a business and he stayed away from the house quite often. My mother was born a goy and converted. She converted when she married my father, and she's kept the religion ever since.

Q: Tell me about Perry Davis.

A: Well, I've been in and out of quite a bit of trouble. Uh, my main hobby is probably cars. I dig cars. I'm not extremely mechanical, but I do work on them and I have a lot of fun doing that. I like to party. I love water: I swim, water ski. I like being around people. I'm not what you would call a loner although I think I'm kept pretty much inside of myself where nobody knows



what I'm thinking, or why I feel what I feel, except me, most of the time. But I do enjoy being around people. And I guess like most people, I like to be recognized. Most everybody in here knows me--I guess they know me as well as they know the warden. And a lot of people probably know me better. I have gone to high school and I've gone to college and I'm a few credits away from an Associate's Degree. And as far as actually where I'm heading, I'm not sure. A lot of my ideas are radical, and a lot of them are kind of conservative. Sometimes I'm in conflict with myself: sort of mixed up.

Q: Where were you born?

A: I was born in London, Ontario, Canada.

Q: What was your parents' economic background?

A: They were lower, lower, middle class when we lived in Canada, and higher middle class since we moved to the states. My father is chief accountant for Federal Mobile Ball Bearing for the states of Michigan, Wisconsin, Indiana, and Ohio. He does most of the tax work and keeps tabs on the other accountants. My mother is a secretary. We live in a nice mixed neighborhood. "Mixed" meaning Jew/gentile. We had an opportunity to live in the Oak Park neighborhood (a suburb of Detroit) but my father refused, saying he wouldn't live in a ghetto. I don't know, I guess he thought we'd get a better understanding of everything if we grew up in a mixed neighborhood.

Q: What kind of education have you had?

A: I've had what might be called an education of average quality, because the teachers just don't seem to care the way they did when my parents went to school. As I've mentioned before, I almost have an Associate's Degree in college. I've earned my high school diploma here in prison, and my college education has been here too.

Q: What kind of religious education did you have?

A: I went to United Hebrew Schools (Detroit) for about two years, under pressure (from parents). The old family tradition is that you will go and you will study whether you want to or not. But I screwed up, and got screwed up, quite a bit, and I got removed from all religious schools in the area. I was tutored by an Orthodox rabbi for my Bar Mitzvah and that's about all I have. But I wish I had studied more, and I'm sorry I resented it. But I just have a strong personality and I hate to be forced to do anything.

Q: Was your family affiliated with any temple?

A: Prior to my Bar Mitzvah we went occasionally and on all the holidays. After my Bar Mitzvah I very seldom went at all until I was eighteen and I went into the Marine Corps then, and attended all the Jewish services. Since then I've been a fairly regular temple-goer.

Q: Why did you begin attending services in the Marines?

A: I didn't do it as a shuck, to get out of work--definitely not. But it was no rebirth. But when you join the Service,

it's a lot like being in jail; you are very alone. And by going to services I found I could talk with the rabbi and meet people I could be friendly with. So when I left the Service I continued going, because I had picked it up on my own and I wasn't forced to go. I wanted to do it. And here in jail, as you well know, I attend every week.

Q: What branch of Judaism do you mostly identify with?

A: Well, at first it was Orthodox, but they kind of look down on driving to services, so later on my family was Conservative. But today I am Reformed (sic).

Q: Do you have any rabbi with whom you identify?

A: Rabbi Harry Jubas, an Orthodox rabbi who tutored me for my Bar Mitzvah. He lives in Oak Park (Michigan) and teaches at Oak Park High. The other rabbis, well there's Rabbi Slavkin, you, and Rabbi Chester (all prison Chaplains at S.P.S.M. ).

Q: How is your religion manifested in your life?

A: I've always been proud of being Jewish. I wear it like a badge because I want everybody to know. I have a second cousin who's a doctor, who claims that Jewish doctors don't make any money, so he's now Catholic, and that almost killed my great uncle. I don't see how anybody could do that. I think that we Jews have the greatest religion and I could never picture myself being anything else. Here, in prison, you get a lot of kidding from the other prisoners. I think a lot of it is jealousy

rather than actual prejudice and bigotry. Either they don't understand or they're actually jealous. The Jews in general are very tight knit, and even if they don't know a new guy, they're willing to help you any way they can.

Q: Why did you elect to affiliate yourself with a religious community at S.P.S.M.?

A: I guess it's like in the service. You need a place to look to when everything is dark and gloomy, and where else can you look to but God?

Q: A leader of a powerful Jewish national organization is visiting S.P.S.M.. What do you want to say to him?

A: First, shalom! I'd probably ask him how he was, and how things were with the Jewish communities on the outside. I'd want to know how he is helping Jews outside, and whether there is anything we can do from in here.

Q: Describe the S.P.S.M. Jewish community.

A: As a rule the S.P.S.M. Jewish community is like a family. We fall in and out a lot, and it's hard to tell who's friends from week to week. But, that's like blood is thicker than water. We might be mad at each other and we might not be talking, but let something happen, or an outsider try to infiltrate, and right away we're tight and close together and no one can tell if there's any problems. We'll all band together against him. Anyone who tries to infiltrate; a prisoner, a guard, another

clergyman--if he's not a "Hebe", right away he's blocked out.

Q: What Jewish interests do you have?

A: Oh, I've taken a couple of Jewish philosophy class (from Rabbi Slavkin), and I study up on my religion, as far as knowing all the history, and what's happened, and what's brought us up to where we are. Probably, that's all I have time for, what with my college studies.

Q: How do you feel about the State of Israel?

A: I'd love to go there. I don't know if I'd want to stay there for the rest of my life, but I know I'll go there before I die.

Q: How do you feel about the Jewish Defense League?

A: I agree with the Jewish Defense League, and if I was ever given the opportunity to belong I'd love to. Never again.

Q: How do you feel about gentiles?

A: Uh, I guess I fall into the "somewhat prejudiced" category. Uh, a lot of time they use our temple (i.e. Christian functions are held in the Jewish Chapel at S.P.S.M.) because there are only three chapels, the Protestant, the Catholic, and the Jewish. So, the Seventh-Day Adventists use our chapel on Saturday afternoons because they don't want to use the other goyim's chapels. It gives me a funny sensation when I see goyim going into our temple 'cause I don't think they belong.

Q: How do you feel about blacks?



- A: Uh, I'd say that I'm at least ninety percent extremely prejudiced. As a rule I don't like blacks, shvartsas, whatever you want to call them.
- Q: Is this the result of your prison experience, or is this a long held prejudice?
- A: I'd have to say it comes from the prison system. I was brought up to be very liberal-minded. However, no matter what they said, my father is prejudiced, too, while my mother, who is very distorted in her thinking, thinks blacks are every bit as good as anyone else. In the prison system, the white structure is so afraid of offending the blacks that they give the blacks anything they want to appease them, and they completely step on all other peoples. The administration doesn't care about anybody but the blacks and they completely cater to them. But among the inmates, Jews, whites, Protestants, and Catholics hate the blacks so much it would only take a match to set off a beautiful explosion.
- Q: With what branch of Judaism do you identify most strongly?
- A: Well, while I've got to give the Orthodox credit for sticking to their guns, I feel the Conservative Jew is the Jew of today. I'm Reformed (sic) in here, but you can't be anything else in an institution. But the Reformed (sic) are so relaxed--I miss the talis and yarmulkah, and I can't wear them during services 'cause it would make for trouble. But I eat no pork in here, although they serve it four times a week. I trade it



for desserts or something.

Q: How do you see the outside Jewish communities response towards Jews in prison?

A: The blacks get favors because they have a strong outside organization pulling for them. We get nothing because nobody out there is interested in us except Max (the late Max Stern, founder of Michigan's Jewish Inmate Foundation that caters the prison Seder). I personally once had a major hassle in here, and I wrote to every Jewish organization I could think of, and the few that even bothered to write back said, "We can't help you." The only people who have really stuck by me are Steve (Chester), the rabbi here, and Gordy (Gladstone), the man with the microphone.

Q: How do you stand politically?

A: I agree with a lot that the radicals want to do, but I don't agree with a lot of the ways they want to do it. I mean "Tear down the government," sure, that's great, but only if you've got something better to replace it with. But just to tear it down, period, that's a lot of crap. The only thing the Conservatives and I have in common is I'd like to go back to 1840 when we had slaves instead of free blacks running around.

Q: Who do you like for President in 1972?

A: Well, I'd like to see Wallace make it, but I don't think he will, so in lieu of Wallace, I guess I'd have to go with McGovern.

Q: Do you see any inherent contradiction there?

A: No.

Q: Please identify the following names, terms, and holidays.

A: Torah--the holy scroll; we read from it every week

Moses--the ancient leader of the Jews

Abraham--also a leader, but after Moses

Talmud--the book of laws, similar to the Torah, but in  
book form instead of on scrolls

Hillel--don't know

Herzl--don't know

Weitzman--don't know

Ben Gurion--former president of Israel in 1944 or 1945

Abba Eban--don't know

Golda Meir--the president of Israel now

Passover--when the angels passed over the Jewish houses  
in Egypt and killed the first son of every gentile  
family

Chanukah--celebration of the little twenty-four hour  
candle burning for eight days.

Purim--festival of the harvest

Shavuot--don't know

Sukkot--comes right after Passover

Rosh Hashana--New Years

Yom Kippur--Day of Atonement

Simchat Torah--don't know

Q: Any closing statement?

A: (Instead of a closing statement, Mr. Davis handed me a

four page autobiography. He stated that he thought it might help me in my research. The document, as he typed it, is presented in the Appendix.)

Analysis

Mr. Davis' scores on the Study of Values were as follows: in economic, social and political--average; in theoretical, aesthetic and religious--low.

I could write a book about my experience with Perry Davis. To begin with, his record states that he is a borderline paranoid. This is the conclusion of the prison psychologists. His assertion the "everybody knows me" is true. Everybody knows him, and as far as I can tell, all of his "friends" genuinely dislike him. The only reason he is accepted at all by the S.P.S.M. Jewish community is the fact that he is classified Jewish on the prison roster.

He is devoted to me and the present chaplain, Rabbi Steve Chester. In the two years since I was chaplain, he has written beautiful letters to my wife and me, regularly. He telephones us, once a month--collect. During my tenure as chaplain he was helpful and eager to the point of being a nuisance. He is fiercely Jewish, at least in his own mind, and he does wear his faith like a badge. He has three main drives in prison: 1. to serve the rabbi and to be his pal, 2. to proclaim his Jewishness to the world, and then blame his non-acceptance by others--even by his fellow Jews--on anti-Semitism, and 3. to get out of prison by writing letters to anybody he thinks can help him. He keeps a correspondence file which, the last time I saw it, was almost six inches thick. He has written to almost every judge, politician and Jewish lawyer in the state of Michigan. His address file

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of Jewish organizations contacted reads like the American  
Jewish Yearbook.

INTERVIEW FOUR

Marvin Calfin

Age: 24

Offense: Possession of Heroin

Question: Why are you a Jew?

Answer: Uh, I feel more than religiously, a nationalistic feeling of being Jewish. I dig my heritage, you know, and I've studied quite a bit about a lot of religions and I feel real good when it comes to the religion aspect, real good religious feeling, in the Jewish type of ceremony although I'm not confirmed to the Jewish religion as a religion, but definitely as my, you know, nationalistic origin and background.

Q: What was your parents religious background?

A: Uh, Conservative Jewish. Both of them. Yeah. High Holidays and Bar Mitzvah and the whole bit.

Q: Tell me about yourself. Who is Marvin Calfin? What makes him run?

A: Marcus (nickname) is, above all, a Sagitarian and he digs people very much. He also gets hurt by people very much. Marcus likes to reach out and now he's trying to put it to work. He's trying to reach out to as many people as he can, on a therapeutic, socialistic, personal basis. Uh, he digs knowing a lot of things and being learned, but not learned to the point that he's a rodent. And this is a problem that I realize in myself. Some-



times I place myself above others. Uh, in an ego trip or whatever, and I don't like to do that. But I just do it normally. But I try to be aware of it when I'm dealing with people.

Q: Where were you born?

A: Detroit.

Q: What was your parents' economic background?

A: Middle class--upper middle class. Uh, close to wealthy. We lived in a middle class neighborhood but we moved to a wealthy neighborhood. Built a house. My sister moved away. She got married, so the house was too big for us, and uh, my father was in business for himself a pretty good portion of my life. He was a used car salesman. Used and new. More towards the used in the end. He owned a used car lot.

Q: What kind of education would you say you had?

A: Uh, very good and very formal education. I went through grammar school and, uh, junior high school at the same school. And I went on to high school, in Detroit, you know, like a gigantic three story high school with like eighty people in one class. And it was. . . .I was getting wilder at the time, so I left. A year later. . .uh, left the school not because I was suspended but because I never went. And I turned around and I said, wow, I need an education, and Detroit Board of Education, once you are out, you can't get back in. So adult day or night school. I tried it for a while but I just couldn't

get into it. So I went on to military school, which was my own decision, and I had a very good education at military school, 'cause the ratio of students to teachers at any time was nine to one. And uh, at times two to one. I went on to college and I complete not quite two years of college, with a 3.8 on a 4.0 point average. And it's just been a breeze, you know.

Q: What kind of religious education have you had?

A: Uh, well I had a Bar Mitzvah and I went to Hebrew school to prepare for my Bar Mitzvah. My affiliation was Conservative. And the only thing I see bad about Hebrew school--I was so young, ten, eleven and twelve, getting ready for my Bar Mitzvah--was that I didn't understand what was going on. And the only thing I related to was learning to read Hebrew. Whereas I really didn't learn a lot of Hebrew words; what they meant. And I was just, you know, like, reading things out of a book. And everything I've done since then, which has been a very eclectic study, going into very many different areas, going into very many different religions, and delving into many different aspects, trying not to center on just one. It has been my wish that I had gone to religious school at a more aware age.

Q: What kind of temple affiliation have you had?

A: Recently, man? Yeah, well, we had a family membership, and to me it was kind of an exploitation at the same time. I mean you paid so much per month to the Sisterhood, and

this and that. I've been very much against the monetary aspect of Judaism. I mean, I appreciate that the church (sic) does need the money, but I don't like the way they go about it and I haven't thought about it enough to come up with another solution. And that was it: just the High Holidays. After my father died I seemed to get a very strange feeling--a very warm feeling for the Kaddish. I can't describe what the feeling was but I really related to the Kaddish. I really dug religion after my father died. I really became the religious kid, afterwards. I really did. I have a really big family and it's the same with them. And when they go to shul they go on the holidays. Except for my uncle, on my mother's side of the family who is Orthodox and goes all the time. But he's the only one. He won't drive; he won't do anything on the holidays and Shabbat.

Q: Did you have, as a youth, a rabbi with whom you identified?

A: Well, you know, like there was a member of the Baha'i faith who opened my eyes to the Baha'i faith, and it's something I want to go into and understand. But other than that, as far as religious ties go, I never had a rabbi who really got me into religion. Rabbis, well, you were one and Steve (Rabbi Steven Chester, the present Jewish Chaplain). And I don't look at rabbis, you know as some Christians or Catholics might look at their. . . you know, you're a person, and I can relate to you, and I don't have to, you know, bow down. And that's really

being aloof. But we can relate, and we're both people, and I think that's a very important step.

Q: How is your religion manifested in your life?

A: Uh, it's a hard thing, other than the nationalism, as far as religion went before I was incarcerated, uh, I wasn't into it. In fact at times I was really critical of it in group discussions and a lot of things. But I always fell back into, you know, I am a Jew and I supported that by saying this is my origin, first and foremost, and then the religion thing--there's a lot of things I don't agree with. As far as in prison, I didn't find religion in prison, but my relating with people and going to synagogue here every Saturday--or just about every Saturday--I opened my eyes and realized, you know, about being open, when I thought I was being open, I was being narrow, and not leaving myself open to religion. And now, at least, I have this experience, to open myself to religion, too. Because you can't cut down what you really don't know. And I want to know. I'm not going to be necessarily an advocate of religion, but you've got to be open about that, too, 'cause it's like a two-way street.

Q: Why did you elect to affiliate yourself with the religious community at S.P.S.M.?

A: Uh, it's funny, you know, because before I came here, some guys hyped me up who weren't Jews, who said, "Wow." You know, first of all I didn't think there would be any Jews, or there would be few Jews in prison. And the

guys really hyped me up at the County Jail, 'cause they said, "Wow, the best thing you could be (in S.P.S.M.) is to be a Jew, uh, because you get packages (food at Hanukah and Passover), and they're really together and they take care of each other." And that really blew my mind, because I thought, like, how many Jews? Like the old saying, you know, we're all doctors and lawyers, and how many Jews are going to be in prison? And so, when I came here, the first week I was here, I was approached by the Rabbi's clerk, and you know, at first I was skeptical, 'cause, you know, like, you don't get nothing from nobody: you don't get in debt. But I got a warm feeling from him. So it was like, wow, this guy isn't being phony to me. You know, I didn't see him as a religious cat, and I sort of dug on the relationship. And when I came inside (after a month in isolation) like, I dug on the chapel as a place where people can really express themselves, and maybe get something off their chests. So, slowly, because of that, I came to see religion was a good vehicle, and I really dug it.

Q: So, and this might seem obvious, why did you elect to declare yourself Jewish?

A: Well, mainly because of my origin. And I dig what the Jew represents. Not in the business world where the Jew is a tightwad. I've always been able to relate to other Jews because of my nationalism, and my feelings about people.



Q: If you had the opportunity to speak with the leader of a powerful, national, Jewish organization, what would you tell him?

A: Just about anything I had to say. But publicly, you know, in here you really don't know who to trust. My main thing when I get out of here is working on. . . .well, to exploit. I mean, I want to work on the fact that we're exploited in here. You know, the prison system, the bureaucracy, is exploiting the prisoners. Like when we have to pay street prices in the (prison) store, why can't we have a street selection? Why do we have to have the, excuse me, bullshit. You know, the crap then can't sell on the street, bring it in here and sell it at street prices. Sorry about the language but that's me. Well, you know, I'd tell the guy about that. But, I'd have to build up a rapport with this guy before I felt I could talk freely. Because, like it would depend on the individual. Like, he might be a member of the exploitative bureaucracy that I'm trying to fight. You know, I don't expect him to get me out of here, but what I say might help the guys in here, you know, to have a little less bullshit. Hey, let me digress. Very strange . . . .it's very strange, man, uh, at times I have some really good feelings, and other times, I think, you know, as a whole the (Jewish inmate) group really does look out for each other, and they're really concerned for each other, but unfortunately, and it's not just



because they're Jews, but they're people, and a lot of them are misguided. And it hurts me that I can't. . . . that I'm unable to pull them up. And this is something that I'm dealing with. But also I realize that I can't pull everybody up. You know, the community is strange, but I feel a certain basic warmth of inter-relatedness and caring for each other. You know some people use, or are using, the Jewish community here. Jews and gentiles.

Q: How would a gentile "use" the S.P.S.M. Jewish community?

A: As a place to go--to hang out. You know, in here there's not too many places to go, and things to do. And if you can get a place to hang out, and maybe get some free coffee or something, it's to your advantage. But in a way it's all right, 'cause maybe the Rabbi can relate to him too. Because a man is a person first. His religion is something added on later. But if a guy is going to abuse us, like, how do you deal with it?

Q: What Jewish interests do you have?

A: Uh, I like to study the one copy of the Kabballah (in the Chapel library), 'cause like, you know, I dig mysticism for its being there. I'm not swayed by mysticism or occultism--I'm not an occultist. But, you know, if it's there, there must be a reason for it, and I want to dig it. Other than that I can't think of anything too significant. Really, except Israel.

Q: O.K., that's the next question. How do you feel about the State of Israel?

A: Wow, I really dig the people there. They are so-o-o-o together. And I just feel, I can feel all the way over here. . . I have a friend here (in the prison, but not an inmate) who is a psychiatric intern in the clinic, who's from Israel. And we sit down and rap quite often. And I just get such a good feeling when I hear what they're doing, and the way that they treat people. Like, number one, I hold life there as very significant, and I don't, you know, I'm more of a pacifist than I am someone who'll hurt someone. But at times, feeling, you know I feel, feelings are important to express even if you don't do the thing. Like, if you want to smash your friend in the mouth, either do it, or tell him you feel like it, and you'll be better friends in the end. Otherwise you don't belong together anyway. But my friend comes straight out. Like when we talked about one of the highjackers. I saw the gleam in his (the Israeli's) eyes. Like, they didn't pay him the ransom and they didn't take any of his shit, they just blew his head off. I hold human life significant, but he was threatening human life so I can justify Israel's actions to some degree. And my friend was so happy, so proud. And I dug the feeling. They're really together people. Rabbi Chester brought in a movie, uh, I don't know the name of it, but it showed the pipelines that they built and they tied the movie up with Biblican quotations, and it was really beautiful man, and I really got a fantastic

feeling from it (the movie was Wilderness of Zin).

I'd like to go there some day. When I can get out of the country legally. I understand they're cold to American tourists, but I think we could relate and they might dig me.

Q: How do you feel about the Jewish Defense League?

A: You know, at times I really dig the Jewish Defense League, but at times I really don't dig some of the things they do. I compare them to the White Panther Party evolving into the Rainbow Peoples' Party. That's what the J.D.L. is slowly doing. And it's good. Evolving from throwing stones to solving problems. You've got to have the right crowbar or lever. You know, sociological techniques. You ain't always going to win, but change doesn't come overnight. I hate to see the J.D.L. ruin things that they've built up in peoples' minds by doing something violent and stupid. One incident can destroy all of the good that they've worked and strived for. And again, what is revolution? A revolution of the mind is good, but a revolution of the body--hating people and hurting people is not. People listen to the speaker and they don't hear what he says. They've just got all these feelings and emotions that they don't know how to let out. They go to work, and they hate the boss. They go home, and they have a fight with the wife. And they don't know how to let these feelings out. They build up and then they go to a meeting and the speaker

riles them up. Like that's an old military tactic. They pound their fists and explode, because they have all this pent up emotion. And what are they? They're "yes people". They don't know what they're doing--a good portion of them. And they're misled. So I got pros and cons. I think the J.D.L.'s name should be changed. Because right away, like "White Panther", "Jewish Defense" puts a lot of people up tight. And you can do that. If you want to fight communism, for example, it doesn't help to call yourself a Nazi.

Q: How do you feel about gentiles?

A: About gentiles? Well, how do I feel about people is the correct word. Because I have, unfortunately, some things drilled into me from childhood but being aware of them, you know, I'm aware of them--racial prejudices. I'm not. I don't see myself as a racist, disliking someone for their ethnic background. Although, heh-heh, I dig being a Jew, man, which is strange, I realize that a lot of these lies--my parents lied to me, although they couldn't realize it, when they threw all of these hates into my head. It's a chain of command, and hopefully I can evolve out of it, and not do that with my children or the next generation to come. People are people. They are not white; they are not black; they are not green; they are not gentiles. They are people.

Q: That brings us to the next question: How do you feel about blacks?

A: Yea, o.k., it's all the same thing.

Q: How do you feel about the outside Jewish community?

A: People who are into it--I've never known any young people--are the older people. And they're really hung up and into their thing. It's a very narrow thing, you know. But if it's good for them, I don't see anything. . .yeah, it's beautiful. Everything is beautiful in its own way. Everything is relative. Everything is relative, man. I don't know how many young people are into Orthodox religion; why, I don't know about that either. Maybe it's like with mysticism. You know, say the right words and manipulate God around. For myself, I can't get caught up in one thing--or I hope I won't, 'cause then I become narrow. When you get caught up in one thing, you're turned against something else. And that's not right, 'cause as I say, everything's beautiful, in its own way, and it's all-l-l-l-l relative. Conservative is like the same thing. As far as religious practice goes I feel the Orthodox is very religious, very into their thing, and really understanding what they're doing. I see the Conservative Jew as quite hypocritical. Biggest thing that hurt me, or that I didn't understand, when I went to shul, was when people were going through the prayer book, going through the service, and they didn't know what they were reading. Now some of them are really davening but the rest. . . .like it's "Boruch ataw ba-buh-buh-buh-buh." Then, "Shemo," as they recog-



nize a word. Man, I don't know what they're there for, man. It really fucks me up. I don't know why they're there. You know, here they are, but they don't know what they're doing, or the words, or why they're saying it, or the interpretation. And it's very hypocritical. Now the Reform, I see the Reform as a new branch, and it's opposed to my traditional teachings that I grew up with in the Conservative. I grew up with the talis and a yarmulkah. I went to the Reform church, and it's funny. I call it a church and not a synagogue, that may be significant--a Freudian slip? I don't know. But it seems strange to me. The one thing I really picked up, I miss the Hebrew words in the Reform. I feel something in the Hebrew words. The first time I was ever in a Reform church was for someone's Bar Mitzvah, and here's the Rabbi decked out in religious significance, and here's the kid decked out in talis and yarmulkah, and here's the congregation, decked out in NOTHING!!! Where's the relationship, man? Why does he have this stuff on and the congregation doesn't, you know? And so Reform is very strange to me. So if you're really going to get into the Jewish religion exclusively, really get into it and be Orthodox. Because all the Reform pick up on is. . .you don't have to keep kosher but you have to keep the High Holidays. Where's that?

Q: Knowing you as well as I do, I almost hate to ask you this question, because we only have a short amount of



time left, but here goes: How do you feel about the political Left? Try to be brief.

A: Right! About the political Left? I'm a card-carrying member. They're my people, from McGovern and Kennedy, who are really just Liberals to Jerry (Rubin) and Free (Abbie Hoffman). And John Sinclair (leader of the Rainbow Peoples' Party of Ann Arbor, Michigan) is my brother. I don't think I need go on. So ask me about the Right.

Q: O.K., the Right?

A: I don't believe in going back in time. The farther Right you go, the farther back in time you go, and that's their whole doctrine. But I see the Right as necessary. Yin and Yang, the positive and negative forces are needed to keep each other in check. I'm, personally, not a far Leftist. I believe in revolution but only of the mind. People revolution--molecular revolution. And if you want change, if you want revolution, you have to be on the Left.

Q: Who do you like for President in '72?

A: Wow, well I have to go along with McGovern. I don't like Humphrey or Muskie. Not that he (McGovern) is the best of all worlds, but he's the best of all the candidates.

Q: How do you think Jews outside feel towards Jewish inmates?

A: Number one, I say that all people should be concerned with prisoners here. I don't feel that because I'm a Jew that the outside Jews owe me anything. But I do feel

that all people, Jews, everybody, should be concerned with what goes on in prisons. You know, I suffered from the myth, too. I felt I'd be one of the only Jews here. Jews in prison? Impossible! All people have got to look--not just Jewish people--and say something has got to be done. They've got to look at it and see what. But, right, you can't make it in here like a resort. It shouldn't be a resort either. What is the answer? I think rehabilitation is the answer. Twelve to eighteen months. But there's no rehabilitation going on. So I don't think Jews out there owe Jews in here anything, except as people. Now I really dig the food packages and all, but they don't owe me nothing. I did this to me. I'm responsible for myself and what happens to me. Sometimes I look in the mirror and say; "Shmuck, what the hell are you doing here?"

Q: Please identify the following names, terms and holidays.

A: Torah--the ancient scroll, the five books of Moses

Moses--prophet, led the people out of Israel, received

the Ten Commandments at Sinai

Abraham--a shepherd, the first Jew

Talmud--the complete works of Jewish commentary on everything

Hillel--"Do unto others" and up on the roof. Also it's like on college campuses

Maimonides--the greatest Jewish philosopher, wrote the

Guide, a theologian

Herzl--an early Zionist

Chaim Weitzman--a president of Israel

David Ben Gurion--was prime minister before Golda Meir

Abba Eban--don't know who he is, but I've heard him and  
he is a far out speaker

Golda Meir--she is the present Prime Minister; her real  
name is Meyerson

Passover--exodus from Egypt

Chanukah--feast of Lights, the Maccabees got the oil  
for the Temple light

Purim--Haman got hung, you use gragers

Shavuuous--don't know

Sukkot--you build a booth, you use a lulav and ethrog,  
it's the harvest festival

Rosh Hashonah--New Year

Yom Kippur--Day of Atonement

Simchas Torah--the rejoicing of the Law where you parade  
around

### Analysis

Mr. Calfin after taking Allport, Vernon, and Lindzey's Study of Values scored high on theoretical and political values, average on religious aesthetic and social values, and very low on economic values.

Marvin, or Marcus as he prefers to be called, is the lone hippie of the S.P.S.M. Jewish community. He is outgoing, hip, and friendly with everybody. He has had poetry published in several publications, both in and out of prison. He is well read in many areas, all of a somewhat esoteric nature; mysticism, theory of religion, layman-level philosophy, and revolutionary literature. I found him to be the most personable of all the Jewish inmates, probably because of our related ages and areas of interest.

His Jewish identity is reinforced by his "spiritual" nature. It is not so much Judaism, per se, that intrigues him, but the whole concept of religion-in-general. His religion happens to be Judaism, so he attempts to deal with it as part of his metaphysical being. He is not so much religiously oriented as he is fascinated by the effects of religious orientation on others. This is evident in his criticism of the three branches of Judaism.

Marcus has an incredible ego but he recognizes it, and deals with it. ("I try to be aware of it when I'm dealing with people.") He is a crusader, championing many causes, and this gives him a certain individualism, in a world where it's easier to just plod along, marking time, waiting to get

out. He views his imprisonment as an experience, an opportunity to grow and learn. He has privately confided to me that the only thing wrong with prison is the "lack of skirts." This is, no doubt, a great oversimplification on his part, but I truly feel that this one individual does not resent his imprisonment. His one big area of naivete, as revealed in this interview, is his reactions to the State of Israel. Like many young Jews, Marcus is influenced by the glamorous image of the Israeli. He sees Israel as the almost perfect state, marred only by its aggressive nature.

Marvin Calfin is definitely out of place in the prison. He is a criminal only by society's definition: if you have heroin you are a criminal. This is not to say that possession of heroin is good, but rather that Marvin Calfin at the time of his arrest was no threat to his fellow man, except potentially. In short, he was made a criminal because of what society felt he might do or become, not because of what he actually did.

So far as his Jewishness is concerned, Marvin is typical of many college-aged Jews. His roots are Jewish, but he is exploring--looking for other means of expressing his spirituality--and justifying his search by attributing his own lack of faith to Judaism's "narrowness". Were he to take the same amount of time to explore Judaism that he takes seeking out other "-isms" he might find what he is looking for.



INTERVIEW FIVE

Leonard Engleberg

Age: 26

Offense: Attempted Possession of Heroin, Breaking and Entering

Question: Why are you a Jew?

Answer: I believe because I was born a Jew.

Q: What was your parents religious background?

A: They were Jewish. . .Orthodox. . .they followed the religion. . .tradition.

Q: Tell me about yourself: Who are you?

A: It's. . .that's a hard question to answer in two or three minutes. Uh, basically, I'm just an average individual. Basic needs and functions of an average individual. Do you want me to go into detail about. . .Hmm! I, I don't really know how to answer it, because, ah, I don't know.

Q: Where were you born?

A: Montreal, in Canada.

Q: What was your parents economic background?

A: Uh. . . now, or. . .well, middle class, I'd say middle class people, ya know, now they are. My father's retired now; he was a milk man for years.

Q: What kind of an education have you had? Uh, no I never finished high school, and as for the kind of education, uh, I feel, I felt I received a poor education. But it wasn't due to the schools I attended, but through my own neglect. I completed the tenth grade.



Q: What kind of religious education have you had?

A: Well, I went to Hebrew school. I attended (undercipherable) and I had four years of Hebrew school, Bar Mitzvahed and, uh, that's about the extent of my religious experience.

Q: Were you or your parents ever members of a temple?

A: No, we attended, like on the High Holidays, but to my recollection we never were members. The Hebrew school I attended, you know, you had to pay to attend, and any young Jewish child who wanted to attend was eligible.

Q: Were any of your relatives other than your immediate family temple members?

A: Yes. Uncles, aunts. . .they are now. Both sides of the family.

Q: Why not your family?

A: Uh, I don't. . .money. . .well, I don't know.

Q: Are you acquainted with any rabbis other than through the prison?

A: Uh, yeah, uh Rabbi D (unclear) in Detroit. A Reform rabbi. And there's uh, let's see, uh, there's, I'm trying to think of, well.

Q: How is your religion manifested in your life?

A: Before I came here, like I would attend services on the High Holidays. I would go with the family and attend services. But I didn't attend regularly. And uh, you know, maybe I should have. I was living on my own when I screwed up. In here, uh, it's (Judaism has) made me

realize what I could have participated in, in the streets. And I feel that if I would have, uh, become involved in a temple, then, uh, nine out of ten times I don't think I would have come here, to prison. It's made me more aware. Now a lot of religion is a lot of crap but well, if I had a closer contact with the congregation and a rabbi, in the streets, uh, that, uh, you tend to follow a different path--I'm talking about people rather than the religion in itself.

Q: Why did you join the S.P.S.M. religious community at all in that you were not involved with religion "in the streets" as you put it?

A: Uh, to be truthful, like I said, on the High Holidays I'd go with the family, all right, so it isn't that I've neglected the religion entirely. In here, where you are incarcerated and there isn't that much to do; the minority group of the Jewish people in here--it's mandatory that the few of us in here should attend, and should try to grasp something of the services that are in here. You see, some of us have a harder time ducking religion 'cause our name's got "Jew" written on it (e.g. Engleberg). But it's still up to the individual if he cares to participate or not. I know a Jew in Marquette (Michigan) who came in and he's never attended any services. So, I mean it's up to the individual. It's something. . . like I said, that there's so few of us that we should try to. . .uh. . .stick together in whatever form we

can and uh, attending services, you know it helps you inwardly to . . .uh. . like when I attended services, I find (sic) myself saying maybe if you attended services in the streets as regularly as you do in here, ya know, you wouldn't be here.

Q: This may have been answered, but having decided to be "religious" in S.P.S.M., why did you choose Judaism?

A: 'Cause I am a Jew. Oh, I see, you mean like. . .uh. . . being Jewish in here is a drag and all. Well, yeah, but you have to do what's right. I'm a Jew so I'm Jewish in here. Next time around, I'll be Jewish in the streets too. Or more Jewish anyway.

Q: If you had the opportunity to speak with the influential leader of a big Jewish organization, what would you want to tell him?

A: I don't know if I would say anything. I mean, I'm not an extrovert, and I don't think I would be able to add anything to the conversation that would really be pertinent enough. I don't believe I would say anything.

Q: Describe the S.P.S.M. Jewish community.

A: Uh, well, I don't feel that the Jewish population of S.P.S.M. sticks together as well as they have in the past. You know, I mean, we're all human beings and we have different personalities. I mean, one Jew likes sports, and another is an intellectual like Marx (Cooper), and another is a gambler. I don't feel that they stick together like they have in the past. I've been here for

three years. Before, if a Jew had a problem, whatever, a personal problem or not, and he went to the Rabbi's office, and there was a couple of Jews in there, uh, you wouldn't feel reluctant to kick the problem around, you know, to talk about it, and you would receive some kind of advice or consolation. But I don't feel that it's like that now. No disrespect to Rabbi Slavkin (previous Jewish Chaplain), but Rabbi Chester is very decent, a human being. Rabbi Slavkin didn't want the job at all; it was pushed on him and all, but he accepted it. Rabbi Chester, however, is new and doesn't seem to know the ropes yet (after a year). So even though I didn't like Rabbi Slavkin, personally, he did a better job of counselling. The best Rabbi we ever had was Rabbi Shapiro (before Rabbi Slavkin). He would fight for the Jews. You don't find that any more.

Q: What Jewish interests do you have?

A: Jewish interests. ...in what respect? You mean toward religion? Jewish interests, uh, Jewish girls? Jewish food? I dig Israel, like every Jew, but seeing as how we're not there to participate, I mean, as far as studying and reading about Israel's progress and the situation with Israel and Egypt, yeah, you know, I'm interested in that. I believe every Jew should be.

Q: How do you feel about the Jewish Defense League?

A: It's a very, very worthwhile organization. It hasn't received its full recognition as a, well, they don't

realize how really powerful an organization it is, and how it will be in times to come. And I feel it will be in times to come, uh, it'll go over big. Myself, I think that they advocate good thinking. The goals that they are striving to achieve are worthy positions. In time--naturally it's going to take time to straighten out. Eventually it will achieve their purpose. Their problem in being accepted is Jews not wanting to be involved; not caring one way or another. They're not aware. It's people living in suburbia not caring what goes on in the inner city. That's exactly what the situation is. You know, they (Jews in suburbia) say, "Let them (J.D.L.) continue to fight," but they don't help or say anything.

Q: What do you feel towards gentiles?

A: Well, they're people, just like anyone else. That's about it. There's no hatred--animosity.

Q: How do you feel about blacks?

A: Uh, that's the. . .I was never prejudiced until I came to prison. And, I believed everybody was equal and had an opportunity to be judged by their ability, and not by the color of their skin. And I had this feeling-- I was raised with this attitude. And then upon my arrival here in S.P.S.M., certain situations that didn't occur to me personally but occurred to other white boys made my attitudes and feelings change. Situations where, uh, there would be ten or twelve black men jump on one white



guy, thinking that this was a prestige thing or I don't know what. You know it's a role reversal of the outside. It's like we've got a little Mississippi here with the roles reversed. The prison population being what it is, the white guys are the blacks and the blacks are the whites. It does bad things to **your** head. But as I said, there's a reason for it: the role reversal because of the numbers (of blacks as opposed to whites). They use the excuse that they've been prisoners and slaves for so many hundreds of years, yeah, well so have the Jews. And I don't see fifteen or twenty Jews jumping on a guy. So, uh, that's a weak excuse, you know. Because six hundred million (sic) Jews were killed and we still strive for identity without jumping on a guy. True, we're not treated as bad as the blacks, but, you know, I think they bring a lot of this on themselves. If you act like an animal you belong in a zoo. But you don't go picking on the other animals.

Q: What is your feeling toward the outside Jewish community?

A: Well, the Orthodox, well, my parents were Orthodox, yeah, right, so how do I view them? Uh, well, now that the world is changing and is more or less liberal than ten years ago, uh, the Orthodox, I have really nothing to say for or against them. They follow the tradition with strict guidelines and, uh, in a way I have a lot of respect for this because I can see how tradition over the centuries has been passed down, so I have a



lot of respect for it, but I myself am a Reformed (sic) Jew, and, uh, and I like the Reformed religion, uh, religious aspect of the religion better because I believe if you don't understand the Jewish religion you can grasp more out of the Reformed background than the Orthodox. Anybody without any, uh, concept of the Jewish religion going into an Orthodox synagogue, and listening, would be completely lost. But he can come into a Reformed and more or less understand the procedures, and what is trying to be said; what the Rabbi is trying to say to the congregation. Now, the Conservatives, I don't know. They're trying to be Orthodox and Reformed. I don't know a Conservative, so I don't know a lot what they're like.

Q: How do you stand politically?

A: Politics themselves are played off what they think the people want to hear. Politics for me is a farce. I don't really know the individuals involved so I don't know if he believes what he's speaking to the voters for the vote. That's why I don't even like to discuss politics. There's a lot of things in the Left that I like. If I was running I'd conduct my platform on their political speakings. Uh, but then, you know, like I say it's a game. They're playing it like a game--a strategic battle against the Right wing. And the Right is doing the same number on the Left. Now if I had to choose, I'd have to go with the Left, because the Right

hates my. . .type. It's a shame that they can't, well, they can't get together, because both sides got some good views. I don't think they want to in the first place. But if the people want to, they should get together and come up with something in the middle.

Q: What do you think is the outside Jewish community's attitude toward Jewish prisoners and how do you account for it?

A: Well, like there's three viewpoints. One guy says, "There's no Jews in prison." One guy says, "Don't hassle me--I don't want to know." Another guy, who knows, says, "They got in on their own choice--let them rot, man." There's three kinds, really. I mean it's funny that fellow Jews could be astounded--that a Jew couldn't be in here. And then, uh, the ones: "I don't want to hear about it," well, they don't want to know about anything. And the "Forget about 'em" group figures he's the bad apple in the barrel so he's garbage. Throw him out. So as far as all three of them are concerned, I believe if they were made more aware, and if they became involved, I mean most of them wouldn't even attempt to become involved. You know, they got their own life to lead and, uh, "I'm sorry to hear that they're in prison, but. . . ." I mean I had an experience in '68 when I came here for assault and battery against a police officer which I did not do. He was busting us, man, and I couldn't move. Like I was not what you would call in

control. So I couldn't have hit him. He just got in the way of my body in motion, you know. Right, I had the dope, but no way I attacked the guy. Anyhow, I had a copy of my transcript sent to the uh. . . what was the name of it. . . I can't even remember the name. . . Grossman was at that time the president of it. . . in Detroit. . . whatever. . . whew! And, uh, I got a letter back and he said that a legal staff had looked at it and they felt that a gross injustice had been done and they would do everything in their power to. . . and he would be up here in the near future and blah-blah, when he came up four months later, for a few minutes, he said, "Well, I don't know what we can do." And I said, "Well, from your letter, you indicated that you were going to do everything." So he said, "Well, I'll talk with your attorney, and if he needs any help. . . ." And I said, "Naturally he needs help or I wouldn't be here." So in essence what he said was, "When you get out, drop by, and I'll get you a job sweeping floors." Terrific. Yeah, he owns that Grossman Realty in Detroit. And you know there's another kind of Jew outside. The one who says we're all in here for embezzling 'cause he feels that he, Mr. Good-Jew couldn't do violence; couldn't bring himself to turn out someone's lights. This isn't a qualification of his make-up. I think anyone who is pushed far enough can be violent. Also the guy outside draws a distinction between a guy who goes around murdering and

raping and a guy who comes home and finds his wife making it with someone and kills them both. But it's all the same. Violence is just violence. That's all. In a way though, Jews are different. Jews who kill usually don't plan to, it just comes off. Most of the Jews in on murder are not premeditated. They did it 'cause of circumstances. As far as a Jew just burning and looting and killing, I don't think you'll find this. The Jews that I've know maybe one or two cases where allegedly they were supposed to have with malice and forethought have killed somebody. Like Hyman up in Marquette. He was a little tipsy. We won't elaborate. But he was a nice guy who could be talking to you and he'd suddenly decide your head would look better crushed in. But that was a mental disorder. It had to be. . .it had to be.

Q: Please identify the following names, terms, and holidays.

A: Torah--the Jewish scroll

Moses--Jewish prophet

Abraham--another Jewish prophet

Talmud--don't know

Hillel--don't know

Maimonides--don't know

David Ben Gurion--a Prime Minister of Israel

Chaim Weitzman--a Jewish philosopher

Herzl--writer

Abba Eban--don't know

Passover--Jewish holiday--Pesah--when the Jews came out

of bondage in Egypt

Chanukah--Jewish holiday--when Jerusalem fell and the  
oil with the Menorah

Purim--don't know

Shavuot--don't know

Rosh Hashonah--New Year

Yom Kippur--the other High Holiday, like confession

Tisha B'Av--don't know

Simchas Torah--that's where they carry the Torahs around  
and you kiss it.

Q: Any closing statement?

A: The only thing I'd like to say to the Jewish people, who  
will in time recognize all this, is to take some time  
to stop and consider that some of these Jews who are here  
need help, and if they themselves are individually unable  
to help they might form some kind of committee to help.  
To my knowledge there is no Jewish organization helping  
Jewish prisoners or who you can appeal to. And they  
should become aware and become involved. Because it's  
not going to hurt them. Because we are incarcerated at  
present doesn't mean we're always going to be incarcerated.  
We're going to try to establish ourselves as good  
citizens upon release. At least I am. And I'd say that's  
the general feeling among the Jewish prisoners that  
I have spoken to. So I'd just like them to stop and  
take into consideration that there are Jews in prison and  
they do need help.



Analysis

Mr. Engleberg tested average in economic and religious values, and low in theoretical, aesthetic, social, and political values. (see Alport, Vernon, and Lindzey's Study of Values, 3rd ed., N.Y., Houghton-Mifflin Co., 1960)

The subject appeared, at times, to be telling me what he thought I wanted to hear. (see questions--"How is your religion manifested in your life?" and "Why did you join the S.P.S.M. religious community?") The subject appeared to have a low opinion of himself as evidenced by remarks such as, "My poor education was through my own neglect," and, "I don't think I would be able to add anything to the conversation." He is soft spoken and rather shy and is not one of the "leaders" of the Jewish community at S.P.S.M..

Mr. Engleberg's Jewish identification seems to be very self-serving. His Jewish interests are "food," "girls," and, as an afterthought "Israel." He was one of the few that did not disavow the violent actions of the Jewish Defense League. He claims he is "Reformed" because it is easier to grasp Judaism through the Reform movement than through Orthodoxy.

Unlike most of his fellows, Mr. Engleberg claims to accept gentiles. However, like the other, he admits prejudice toward the blacks, and blames this on his experiences in prison. He has a lot of hostility towards the blacks and he justifies his hostility with the statement that Jews have it just as tough as blacks, but don't react to their situation like blacks do. His opinions on how the outside community



views Jews in prison seems to be taken straight from conversations he has heard: he is not reporting his own views, but those of others. His political opinions are not in keeping with those of the rest of the Jewish inmate population: he disavows both the political right and the left. He claims not to care much for politics, and this was reflected in his test scores.

Mr. Engleberg is not typical among the Jewish inmates. He does not identify as strongly with Judaism as his fellows. He is Jewish in prison because it gives him protective coloring, so to speak. He can blend into a group and disappear. He seems to be the sort of person who is a loner, but doesn't want to be alone and at the same time doesn't want to be recognized. By joining the Jewish community he has accomplished a sort of identity with anonymity. He can be by himself, and yet has friends if he feels like opening up. His main Jewish contact has been the rabbi, but he feels that the new chaplain, Rabbi Chester, is somehow not doing his job. Why he feels this way is unclear. He seems to resent the fact that Rabbi Chester has not recognized his needs--whatever they might be.

In conclusion, the subject's Jewish knowledge is poor. His sense of Jewish identity is weak religiously, and he worries about it. His desire to be identified with the Jewish prison community is strong for social reasons: he has few friends even among the Jews. I think he would try to avoid Jewish identification were it not for this fact.

-100-

("Some of us have a harder time ducking religion 'cause our name's got 'Jew' written on it.")

INTERVIEW SIX

Steve Disner

Age: 21

Offense: Possession of Heroin, Armed Robbery

Question: Why are you a Jew?

Answer: I don't know how to answer that. Because my folks  
were Jews. When I was thirteen I was Bar Mitzvahed.

Q: What was your parents religious background?

A: Uh, I'd say it was Conservative. Both.

Q: What kind of an education have you had?

A: Well, I'd say the type of education was, uh, fair.  
Because it was subjects you had to take to stay in school.  
But I started taking school here and it's all right.  
I want to take an Associates Degree here. Psych.  
Psych and sociology.

Q: What kind of religious education have you had?

A: I went to Hebrew school for about three, three and a  
half years. Since 1963 I haven't had any. But I was  
Bar Mitzvahed.

Q: Have you ever been associated with any temple?

A: Uh, yeah. Wait. Shiray Shamayim, (probably Shaare  
Shamayim) Detroit. In Detroit. Gates of. . .something,  
I don't know. My parents are members. My relatives  
are members too. All the way around.

Q: Are you close to any rabbi in your temple or elsewhere?

A: No.

Q: How is your religion manifested in your life?

- A: Well, I'm, uh, proud I'm a Jew. If some guy says some slang words. . .I don't want to say them. . .in here, well, I've got to take them. I can't get mad. But I don't like it. I just have to sit back and accept it though, because otherwise. . . Well, otherwise when I was on the street. . .holidays and everything.
- Q: Why did you decide to affiliate yourself with the religious community at S.P.S.M.?
- A: Uh, why? Yeah. 'Cause it'd be helpful. Help me. 'Cause I didn't have anyone here. Had to help myself. Yeah. Uh. Me. It was an experience, too. A helpful experience. Uh, that's about all I can say.
- Q: Why did you decide to affiliate with the Jewish religious community at S.P.S.M.?
- A: Why? yeah, well, why? 'Cause, uh, I'm a Jew and. . . I've got friends over there. . .in the chapel.
- Q: A leader of a big Jewish committee is visiting the prison. What would you want to tell him?
- A: Uh, about how screwed up things is? Well, uh, where I'm at, I'm in the psychiatric clinic. You know, like it's a shame. We have to do stuff we're told from other inmates. It goes on just twenty hours a day. Just, "Do this, do that." Uh, it's a shame, 'cause like half of these guys are only here for maybe like three, four months, and here I am, ya know, if I don't do it, they, uh, they, uh, they, uh, three of them hold you and they hit you. And they put you up there in the slammer. The

slammer up there, Top Six, is just a solid concrete room. You know, like I feel it's a shame, 'cause like if some high-up guys on the street were aware of what happens up here, there would be a scandal. Be a sure enough scandal.

Q: Tell me who you are: Who are you? What are you? What goes on in your head?

A: I'm a Scorpio, I'm easy going. Uh, soft-hearted, you know. Well, I like stereo--rock. . . .it's hard. I can dig it. Friendly, kind. I don't have any hobbies. It's kind of tough having a hobby, especially here. Uh, and I've got another year, year and a half. Wow, I, uh, it's hard. This is messing me up really. . . .bad. I'm going out not the same way I come in. I guess the word is harder. 'Cause like here, if you're a sheep. . . ya know, like you get. . .I mean, I've expressed how I feel, see, what happens up there (in Psychiatric Ward, "Top Six") is if you express how you feel like I'm no sheep and I can't just accept it how it is. But I've got to protect myself.

Q: Where were you born?

A: Detroit, Michigan.

Q: What social class would you say your people come from?

A: Oh, I'd say upper class, we're upper class. (His father is quite wealthy.)

Q: Describe the S.P.S.M. Jewish community.

A: Uh, it's interesting. A bunch of hip guys. You know,



everybody understands everybody. There's no hatred or anything in our, uh, group. Nothing except, you know, family squabbles. That's about it. Hey, everything is all right. You know, we have services for a half hour every Saturday morning. Now that we have a full-time rabbi. Yeah, he's out of sight.

Q: What Jewish interests do you have?

A: Well, I dig Israel. I follow it in the newspapers. It's a shame, you know, that there's so much, uh, hatred towards the Jews. But you know, if I left here I might go to Israel. I could stay there happily ever after. But I don't know if I'll do it or not. I have to have some money in order to go there.

Q: How do you feel about the Jewish Defense League?

A: Well, I think that they have a cause that is out of sight, but I think if they'd slow down with all the guns and smoke bombs and everything they'd do better. They're steering the wrong way.

Q: How do you feel about blacks?

A: When I was on the street, I didn't have any, you know, hatred, but, like, since I've been here, there's more of a hatred. You know, all of them, like a group, they're really super tough and they hassle you and everything. Uh, that's really it. You hate blacks, but not blacks (some, not all).

Q: How do you feel about Jews on the outside?

A: Orthodox Jews, I don't get off on them. My folks are

Conservative. So am I. I never could understand the Reform. Like services here are of necessity Reform, and yet I'm accepted. Like they don't see no difference between them and me. Maybe there is no difference, uh, well, like maybe not.

Q: How do you stand politically?

A: The Left is messed up. Nowhere. The Right is doing what is best for them and is hurting, uh, at the same time, other groups. Like, uh, their, you know, uh, street bombs, uh, it's dumb to go up against the screws with all their guns. Like I'm in the middle now. Now, right now, who do I like for President? Nobody. Nobody. Nobody is in the middle. So am I, so I am for nobody. Nobody for President.

Q: How do you think Jews outside feel about Jews in prison?

A: Like, I feel that since we're in here, other individuals out there say, you know, "Screw 'em." And we can't speak up, uh, say anything. We're in a tough situation. Like I feel if we had some more strength on the outside, we wouldn't be here.

Q: Please identify the following names, terms, and holidays.

A: Torah--it's the main book

Moses--he got the commandments on the mountain

Abraham--he was one of God's right-hand men

Talmud--that's, wow, I don't know

Hillel--I think it's over in Israel

Ben Gurion--he was the President of Israel

Herzl--he was one of the first Presidents of Israel

Weizman--don't know

Abba Eban--don't know

Golda Meir--she's the Prime Minister of Israel now

Passover--the seder, the holiday when the Jews had to

have, uh, it had something to do with the food, the

bread. I got to dig way back, uh, Egypt and slavery.

Chanukah--the festival of lights

Purim--uh, wait, yeah! Haman--taschen!

Shavuous--don't know

Sukkot--I think it's with the, you know. (gestures as

if holding lulav and ethrog; shakes it at four

compass points)

Rosh Hashonah--the High Holiday

Yom Kippur--the other one

What's the difference between the two?--Rosh Hashonah is

the New Year. Yom Kippur is the Day of Atonement.

Simhat Torah--it's the holiday when you eat a candy apple.

Right. We did it at Hebrew school.

Q: Any closing remarks?

A: Like, uh. . .what the world needs is more love, and that's the answer. That's all.

Analysis

Mr. Disner is a patient in "Top Six" or the psychiatric Block at S.P.S.M.. His condition made it almost impossible to administer the Study of Values. The treatment he is receiving is almost unbelievable. He is being given amphetamines and barbituates in alternating succession. The theory is that the "downers" keep him quiet and the "uppers" keep him from being overly lethargic. Other inmates describe the treatment as being tied to a child's yo-yo. I have had the occasion to talk with Steve's father, who is an extremely observant Conservative Jew. His story is that his son fell into bad company that led him into crime. The story seems substantiated by the record. Steve Disner is a scared kid when compared to other prisoners his age at S.P.S.M..

Judaism, for Steve, represents an escape. For a few hours every Saturday morning he is released from the horrors of "Top Six" and joins relatively normal people, some of whom are near his age. His views on blacks, the J.D.L., and Israel are typical of most of the Jewish inmates. He is trying to fit in to a situation that he cannot cope with as best he can.

INTERVIEW SEVEN

Soule Dowlingtson

Age: 42

Offense: Murder I

Question: Why are you a Jew?

Answer: Well, I was born a Jew and I believe in Judaism.

Q: What was your parents' religious background?

A: Both of them was Jewish, of Jewish background. My father he was of the old country. Judaism is all I been taught.

Q: Tell me about yourself.

A: Well, first of all, if he knows I know the Shema or Passover, the sacred parts, that is, one would know I is Jewish. 'Cause one who isn't, doesn't know.

Q: No, I mean other than your religion; what is Soule like?

A: Well, it's kind of a tricky question. I thought you meant how would a person know I was Jewish. O.K., well, I don't know how to answer that. I am me. You knows me by how I conducts myself.

Q: Where were you born?

A: Monrovia, in. . .that's near Pasadena, where I attended synagogue.

Q: What was your parents' economic background?

A: Huh? Oh, you mean how they lived? He was a detective on Homicide, and my mother, when she did work, she was a receptionist.

Q: What kind of education have you had?



A: Oh, I would say, it's not. . . it would be between high and low, in the same way Reform stands between Orthodox and Conservative. I finished twelfth grade in school-- high school.

Q: What kind of religious education have you had?

A: I haven't had as much as I should have for the simple reason I was pushed. Speaking in the terms of pushed, my mother being a British subject, some people determined her a lot as an Italian, and some as an Indian. She had a goldish color. On account of this, I suppose I was on the dark side. At times when I was small this caused conflict. I wasn't deprived, but I was pushed through, you know what I mean? Many things that you can sense. But I went to Jewish school. It was a long trip between Pasadena and Los Angeles.

Q: Have you had any temple affiliation?

A: I've always attended services, even on the outside, and I've never missed ever since I got in here. Unless I was sick. All my relatives on my father's side was temple people. I'm not too familiar with my mother's side 'cause she was the only one that was in this country. (The mother was born on a boat between Brazil and British Guiana.)

Q: Have you had associations with any rabbis other than Rabbi Chester (Jewish Chaplain)?

A: Well, yes, there is Rabbi Schwartz, down Louisberg; Goldberg out in Pasadena, at least he was. I could prob

ably name hundreds of them.

Q: How is your religion manifested in your life?

A: You want both sides, the good and the bad? It's affected me in many ways. First of all, a person that have been converted Jewish, I don't feel he can have the feeling for a brother, of a person who is born Jewish. He don't know the suffering. You know, you take the large part of the Jewish people, even if they don't like you, they don't do nothing against you. They don't stab you in the back. If there is something to be contributed, even if they don't like you, you are going to be the one they choose. In institutions we are the minority of the minority groups and we are treated different. But on the outside this also effects one. I'm not ashamed of being Jewish. I'm proud of it. I reads a lot on it, and it's just something that's born into one; a feeling that one have, and he don't get away from it. He might bury it for a short period of time or during a short period of time, but it is just something that is buried deep into him.

Q: Why did you elect to join a religious community at S.P.S.M.?

A: Because I believes in Judaism. Sure, and the door ain't never been closed on me 'cause of my color.

Q: A leader of a powerful Jewish agency is visiting S.P.S.M.. What do you want to tell him?

A: First thing that I personally would tell him is the condition of the prisoners, the Jewish prisoners. I'm speak-

ing strictly from the Jewish standpoint. I think this part especially. I would answer (his) questions that would help. Or maybe speak about things that would help the Jewish prisoners. Many peoples are asleep. They seem to forget about their brothers when they are here (in prison). Like Herzl, when he was convicted in 1904 of treason. He wasn't guilty of treason, but only of being a Jew. (Probably a confused reference to the Dreyfuss Affair.) And let's face it, in many parts of the country, people are treated differently. Not in your metropolitan areas, but when they get beyond, I would say, the ghetto. When I use the word ghetto, I mean the (Jewish) community, and things are really rough, and I think many peoples in our society have forgotten about us. There's very little available to us, like here we can not as much as get azoozahs (Mezuzot). I tried to purchase some.

Q: Describe the S.P.S.M. Jewish community.

A: Now I would say it's about sixteen. And it seem to be a conflict with the largest percentage. And when I'm speaking the term "largest percentage", it's usually derived from the youngest ones. I think it's a lack of communication. Something. It's just different. It's almost unvelievable to see the way ones treat one another in here. They's split up in three groups. First group, they believe and they practice what they believe. The second group, I don't know what. It comes from one for-

getting who he are, and trying to identify with someone else. He trying to make specials. Cutting one, stabbing another one in the back. And the one in the middle he stands neutral. The second group is conflicting to try to get your position. They'll connive, and stab other brothers in the back. As I say, I considers the Jewish people closer than any nation or any nationality, any peoples in the world. But you not going to run across all good; you going to run across this. And I think the reason this heppens in here is because of feelings that are trying to be saved. I think one needs to be told, "Look, it's going to be like this, here. We going to sit dow. We going to get along." I think that sometimes it comes to this, that one must understand. And as far as togetherness is concerned I'd say that ninety-nine percent is together. But not together in togetherness.

Q: What particularly Jewish interests do you have?

A: I wants to go back to the old country. I wants to help build our nation back up where it belongs, such as, I would like to contribute my time in the field of Armed Services, trees. In other words, in the field of not what you would say "social work", but in the field of, you know, charity: helping, providing. You know we can help in many ways, but nothing takes the place of money and experience. This is one of my greatest ambitions.

Q: Are you referring to Israel; the concept of Jewish state-

hood?

A: That's right.

Q: How do you feel about the Jewish Defense League?

A: I feel it's a good league. But it's not doing what it could be. I feel there's a link missing in the chain someplace. It's not together in togetherness. They're doing a lot, but sometimes a lot is not enough. Sometimes giving a few hours or a few dollars, this sometimes is not enough. Sometimes it needs giving one's self, and more. Because you got so many hundreds of children who needs homes, who needs food, who needs education. I'm a believer that the Jewish people's like the Indians, the blacks. They's always going to be like this unless they keep their educational standards up. If they continue splitting they's going to fall. I'm a firm believer that no converted Jew is a real Jew. I'll put it that way. I'm not opposed to mixed marriage but there must be agreement for the children. I think human beings is like animals--if you come from a good breed, this is what's going to happen. It was Ellis that discovered that man come from the monkey. Albert Einstein, he discovered the split in time. Sigmund Freud, he spoke of the two minds. (The subject rambled on endlessly. The point he was trying to make is that there are two parts of the mind. One part is controlled and the other part is not controlled. When a man converts, the uncontrolled part of his mind remains in the first



religion. This is why no convert is a real Jew.)

Q: What is your attitude towards gentiles?

A: (Shyly) It's not too good.

Q: Do you want to elaborate on that?

A: I feel one should feel free to believe in what he believes in. But my belief of a Supreme Being is different. (The subject again rambled on. The point he tried to make was that gentiles who believe in Jesus try to make others believe the same. This is wrong.)

Q: In other words, your attitude towards gentiles is colored by their attitude towards us.

A: Right. I've been taught, once a Jew always a Jew. Ain't no one going to convert me. (At this point the subject launched into a long diatribe against something. Several listenings to the tape left me with no idea what he was talking about, except that it dealt with Christians and Jews.)

Q: I don't know how to ask this, but I've asked it of all the others: How do you feel about blacks?

A: I think as. . . it's not too high. I don't mean in the term of condemning. I cannot give, and feel that I do not give, credit where it is not due. And my experience in what I have read and saw is that they are not together in any way. I can't give one too much credit. One who, tries and fails, and tries again. I gives credit to this person. But I cannot give credit to one who fails and stops. They are not together in togetherness.

(From this point, onwards, nothing made any sense. I abandoned the interview and tried to carry on a conversation about what it's like to be black, Jewish and in prison. I left the tape recorder run, and it's a fascinating conversation--except it makes no sense.)

## CONCLUSIONS

Earlier in this paper I spoke of the difficulty in determining the relationship between religion and values. The task is made even more difficult when one's subjects are criminals, whose sense of values may be distorted, either because of their environment, their education (or lack of same) or their psychological make-up. I also mentioned that it was difficult to distinguish between operative values and values which subjects conceived as desirable, but which had very little influence on their daily behavior. With these facts in mind, let us proceed with an evaluation of the material presented.

The results of Allport, Vernon and Lindzey's Study of Values were remarkably accurate. The subjects' actual values as presented in their interviews and demonstrated by their actual behavior in prison were accurately reflected by the Study.

The subjects were, in general, anti-spiritual. Ritual observances and temple attendance in civilian life were minimal. For these men, such activities, even in prison, hold social and ethnic value rather than religious value. Few of the men claimed a need for the spiritual security which religious activities may involve. Marvin Calfin, one of those who were interested in the spiritual side of religion, has not yet found such security, and sees his Judaism as part of a quest. Another one of the men states that he would have been a better person had he been more "religious" but his tone leads one to believe that he is saying what he thinks

the interviewer wants to hear.

For most of the Jewish inmates of S.P.S.M., Judaism satisfies social needs. The ethnicity of Judaism is also a significant dimension, enabling the men to adapt comfortably to the religious identities which they have both inherited and assumed. (I say "assumed" because many of the men would not be identifiable as Jews, either by practice or association, in their civilian lives. This observation is shared by one of the men, Marx Cooper.) The social activities of a community where people with a similar identity come together has an important value. In spite of their protestations to the contrary, for most of these men the social value of Judaism is far more important than the personal value. For the most part, the ethical laws of Judaism, which provide guidelines for right action, are ignored. The one "Jewish" ethical value shared by all the men in practice is that Jews should support each other and "stick together". It is ethnic identity and group solidarity which makes their Judaism a unique entity. At all times the social value of Judaism is emphasized over its spiritual values. (Note that prayer and faith is never mentioned.) Those who had abandoned their Jewish associations in civilian life found that the social value of Judaism was increased by their confinement.

An additional factor in strengthening their Jewish identity, based on social values, is their awareness of the progress being made in the State of Israel. Most of the men



exhibited an almost fanatic devotion to the Jewish State, because they see Israel as a community of "tough" Jews working together against a hostile world. One gets the feeling that Israel among the Arab states is being subconsciously related to the Jewish inmates among the gentile prison population. Another point of general agreement is their attitudes concerning the Jewish Defense League. While endorsing the goals of the J.D.L.--as they understand them--most of the men decried the J.D.L.'s tactics. (What "good" inmate is going to come out in favor of violence?)

With the exception of Perry Davis, who stands out as a Jewish/white supremacist, backing Governor Wallace, most of the men hold the same kind of political values as Jews their age on the outside: they are liberal but slightly disillusioned with the whole political process. One or two of them advocate "revolution" but it is to be a "revolution of the mind" as Marvin Calfin put it.

All of the men are interested in correcting things which are not "healthy" in the Jewish community. Oftentimes, while admitting the superficiality of their own religious practices, they criticize the hypocrisy of other Jews, both within and without the prison walls. Particularly as regards the outside Jewish community, they criticize the shallowness of peoples' religious understanding. This is applied mainly to Reform and Conservative Jews. While most of the men are Reform Jews--or, at least, nominally Reform Jews--they indicate a strong respect for the Orthodox who take a strong stand

on religion. Most of the men have come to be Reform because it is the only form of Jewish practice open to them because of their situation.

All of the men indicated a dissatisfaction with the response of the outside Jewish community towards Jews in prison. They see the outside community as holding two points of view: 1. there are no Jews in prison, because Jews are not criminals; but if pressed they will state that Jews might commit crimes of intellect, such as embezzlement, but never crimes of violence, such as murder or armed robbery; and 2. Jews in prison are no good; the less said about them, the better, so let them rot. The first view is understood and the reasoning behind it accepted. One of the men interviewed expressed that he felt the same way upon entering prison. The second opinion is vehemently challenged; it violates one of the prisoners' own conceptions of Judaism, namely that the strength of the Jewish faith is that its members stand by one another in times of need.

The common value which all the subjects hold is a strong sense of Jewish identity--however manifested in their life in prison--and the desire to perpetuate this identity, thus affirming an historical and an ethical identity--however poorly understood. The ethnic identification forms an ostensible bond between all members of the community providing a sense of both common and individual identity in an environment where Jews are massively outnumbered and any sense of identity is desirable in order to maintain one's

individuality. This value is experienced concretely every Saturday morning and every holiday. They attend temple (read, Jewish Chapel) and not church (read, Catholic Chapel, etc.), observe Chanukah and not Christmas, and identify with the Jews of America and Israel, rather than the general inmate population. This reinforces their sense of identity. The act of participating in Jewish activities immediately distinguishes them from their faceless Christian neighbors. They feel isolated from the inmate world and feel that this is good. To identify themselves as Jewish affects their life activities for the duration of their imprisonment. Thus, the Jewish Chapel becomes a rallying point for the Jewish inmates, and supplies the basis for their special identity, both as individuals and as a community. To be Jewish means to identify with others who are part of the same tradition. However, to identify with Jewish tradition no longer requires belief in God but only the acceptance of certain social standards, chief among which is group solidarity.

For the prison version of Judaism to provide a meaningful frame of reference, with meaningful values for the Jewish inmates of S.P.S.M., the men must decide to fulfill their responsibility as human beings working in community, and actualize their freedom to live, as defined by Frankl and Maslow. Each individual alone knows if he truly finds satisfaction from his religion, and if the realization of the values it holds gives his life in prison meaning.

APPENDIX  
(Unedited)

My full name is ~~M~~ Perry Alan Davis, son of Martin---and Margrette Jean, born April 14th, 1946 at 3:31 am in London Ontario Canada. Both Martin and Jean were also born in Canada. Martin's Parents Samuel, and Anna Davis were from Europe, Sam from Russia Anna from Poland. Jean does not know her real parents to this day.

Perry was the second son, but truly the eldest as the first born lived less than 24 hrs. After this Perry was really babied for fear of losing him also. But he grew to be good and strong. ~~3~~ At age 6 Perry was given a brother Steven Beriy, who is now 20 years of age.

Martin was born Jewish of two Jewish parents Sam-Anna. Jean was raised Protestant, and ~~M~~ Converted to marry Martin, and has raised both her sons Jewish, and will in most cases go to bat for them like a real Jewish mother.

Perry was forced to attend Hebrew School after reg. public school. I find it bad to force someone to do something he doesn't want to do. Perry made so much trouble that the Detroit United Hebrew Schools kicked him out and barred him from attending any other Yiddish or Heb. schools in the Detroit area. So Perry received private Tutoring from one very Orthodox, Rabbi Harry Jewbis, who once they found out how much easier it was also tutored Steve. Both boys Perry and Steve did receive Bar Mitzv's-Perry in fact was the first Bar Mitzva Boy at the Young Israel of Greenfield-at Greenfield and Ten Mile in Oak Park.

Up until this point Perry had been not too much trouble and Steve in none at all. But just after this spot in time things seemed to change. Within the same month as the B.M. Perry was ~~XXXXXX~~ suspended from school but the way it came down the suspension turned into a full expulsion within minutes. Forced to attend Summer School



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and then not permitted to go to the same Jr. High as the students he'd been with all his school days. Perry's mother Jean, took him to the Childrens-Parents center, it is hooked on the side of the Jew. Comm. cenetr in Det. at Curits and Meyers. But any way at this place some creep who claimed to be a jew and looked just like Eikemann would talk to perry and the in turn tell the kids mother what~~/~~ he had just said in the interview~~s~~. Perrry being like most little kidds thinks he's about half ~~slik~~<sup>C</sup> each time would question his ma on the way home about what her and the guy taked about, then came the big shock-one interview old Ma repeated almost word for word back to perry the same-things that he had just told his Eikemann looking guy.. Well that ended all talk-ing in the interviews from then on all that happened was some small talk and not very much of that. Then one day old Eikemann came up with how would you like to live away from home-at maybe a private school?? I told him in No Unsertan terms that I was not ~~going~~ for it. He offered one place in Cincinnati Oh. that was Co-Ed, and all Jews or a place in F<sub>r</sub>mington Mi. that was all Boys and all Faiths. I refused to pick. But it looks as if maybe even if perry had pick it might not made that much differance. The time was late summer of "59" about the last of July or the ~~first~~ of Aug.. School started in Sept. and four days later perry was infomed that he no longer needed to attend Emmerson Public Jr. High School. two or three days later I was take~~en~~ by Jean to a place in F<sub>r</sub>mington Mich. called "Boys Republic" total pop: 75, I was interviewed my a man named Mr. Hughes, very nice and really together (but I was to~~y~~ young and to~~y~~ mad at everyone to know or careless at the time). He told me how his program was about 18 months but many of the boys were released sooner~~ix~~ if they showed improvement to ~~warrant~~<sup>warrant</sup> such action. The place was kind of nice, but who cares or at least who cared ( if it was to be done over I honestly believe that

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I'd take advantage of the program) but at the time all poor perry could see was that his parents had sent him to a prison type place and had him locked up, and were paying the people who ran the place \$13.50¢ per day to keep him there. On many a Sunday visit from his parents he (perry) asked and even begged; please take me out of here" always the same answer "we can't" "the hell you can't stop paying and they'll make me leave" "we Can't". So on an 18 month prog. perry spend 3 years then one day after spending all that time there. Mr. Hughes called perry into his office and informed him that they were releasing him. They felt they could do no more to help perry. All the time perry was at Boy's Republic there were few jews there but about two or three times a month a Rabbi would come and see the Jewish boys-names like Pete ~~CHAMBERLAIN~~, Bob ~~SMITH~~, Josh ~~CHAMBERLAIN~~, Perry Davis all names that ~~XXX~~ too have had in ~~XXX~~ Cong. at one time or another.

So now the date is sometime after july of "62" Perry has been released from B.R. and has a job as a carry-out-boy, from A.&P., full-time then school started so perry was forced to go part-time ~~at~~ <sup>to</sup> work and full time to school. School was a real drag so bewteen classes many times Perry might skip or leave the school and go to Oak Park High to attend classes with his girl friend Marsha, and sometime perry would leave school and he and a friend of perry's named Dennis would <sup>a</sup>steal cars from the Henry Ford High School parking lot where both Dennis and Perry were students. Once these two boys even got caught and Perry's father had to go down and get them out of jail. Perry at this time was always fighting with his parents and had all but knocked his mother down on one occasion and left the home for about three weeks and then returned for awhile just before being arrested. Perry deecided that he wished to leave the house and join the service.

Just after the above mentioned Court case perry's father had the attorney pull perry's complete arrest record so as he could join the armed services, Perry pick the Air Force as his choice but in taking the entry exam found that without his High school <sup>diploma</sup> ~~Septmola~~ his score was two points to low for the Air Force. But good news his score was high enough for any of the three remaining serv. Perry's Mother said join the Navy, his Dad said nothing. Perry spoke to the U.S. Marine Corps <sup>recruiter</sup> ~~Recruter~~ and joined the Marines with in a weeks time.. In the service was where perry really came back to the faith as for the past four years he's been drifting farther~~x~~ and farther away~~x~~ ~~MM~~from regilom and Judisim.

Perry's now in the Marine Corps and doing well, after Bootcamp he returns home for his boot leave-to find that his Mother has planned the complete 30 days out with no time for him or he to be with his girl Marsha. After causing Perry and Marsha to break up as friends and tring to completely ruin perry's leave perry left. In leaving from his leave 12 days early he did not write or attempt to contact his parents in anyway.. His mother becoming up set with this contacted perry's <sup>m</sup> ~~Com~~manding Officer and Chaplin<sup>a</sup>, the Rabbi asked perry to please write perry explained to the Rabbi fully who at no time after requested he correspond with her. Perry did not and would not explain tothe <sup>m</sup> ~~Com~~anding office who on two different occasions offered to physically teach perry a lesson of respect. Shortly after this family trouble perry was arrested for U.D.A.A. (~~s~~stolen Auto) the Captain who is also the <sup>m</sup> ~~Com~~anding Officer whet<sup>L</sup> to bat for perry and he received Probation 3 years informal. About 90 days later perry was picked up on his way to report to his Probation Officer in a Stolen Auto, this time the Captain tried to send perry away on Emergency leave but it was canceled from higher up-Perry was arrested and

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charged with Violation of Probation and two counts of Stolen Car, at this time his parents were made aware of this trouble by the Comanding Officer and they tried to help perry but it was to late by the time they were informed. Perry was sent to prison for no less than 6 mos. and no more than 5 years 2½ years later perry returned to Michigan from Sunny California with a years parole to do here in this state transferred from Calif.

Upon being sent to Detroit and his family perry was rather unsure of his <sup>position</sup> ~~possession~~ in the home, and as a rule stayed gone much of the time. After a few weeks at home perry had a Car, a Job, and a girlfriend name Dena W. . . He was also still attending the Synogoggd almost weekly. This I feel was a carry over from my being at Soledad Prison in California-with Rabbi Hazelkorn. <sup>He has</sup> ~~I have~~ never attended services so regular as after being in jail and <sup>he has</sup> ~~I have~~ not stopped to date. After being home for a while <sup>he</sup> ~~I~~ met a chick that <sup>he</sup> ~~I~~ was sure was Miss Right, so her and <sup>Perry</sup> ~~I~~ began seeing each other. This was fine until one day <sup>Perry</sup> ~~they~~ spoke of getting married. <sup>Perry</sup> ~~I~~ had told her parnets of my being in prison, they acted very happy that I thought enought of them to tell them something (they knew before I told them) I did not have to tell. But they still tried to block our marrage when it came to the last minute. Bobbie (short for Beverly) and I ~~WXX~~ went to a J.P. and he married us, at that point our dear father-in-law decided it was either go for the marriage or lose his little girl forever, so we were then requested to see a R\_bbi and have it done right.

About a year later I was picked up and found guilty of 3 armed robberyys and other charges that were later dropped. At that very point my father-in-law pressed my wife to divorce me, and she did be-  
\* cause, as mush as we loved each other she is a weak person and very a afraid of her dad.

And here I am with 10 years to 40 years for Armed Robbery with 4½ years already gone, Still jewish and still attending services

FOOTNOTES AND BIBLIOGRAPHIES



FOOTNOTES

1. Erving Goffman, "Characteristics of Total Institutions," Identity and Anxiety, eds. Maurice R. Stein, Arthur J. Vidich and David Manning White, (New York, 1967), pp. 454-455.
2. Allport, Vernon, and Lindzey, Study of Values, 3rd ed., (New York, 1960).
3. Eduard Spranger, Types of Men, trans. Paul J.W. Pigors, (Halle, 1928).
4. W. W. Meissner, "Notes Toward a Theory of Values: Values as Psychological," Journal of Religion and Health, (July, 1970), 238.
5. John Dewey, Theory of Valuation, (Chicago, 1939); as seen in Meissner, Ibid., p. 238.
6. Maslows ideas on the relationship between "higher" and "lower" needs are summarized in : "Higher Needs and Personality," Dialectica, V, Nos. 3 and 4, (1951), 257-265.
7. Meissner, op. cit., p. 236.
8. Clyde Kluckhorm, "Values and Value-Orientations in the Theory of Action: An Exploration in Definition and Classification," Toward a General Theory of Action, eds. Parsons, Talcott, and Edward A. Shils, (Cambridge, 1951), p. 425. Meissner agrees with Kluckhorm, borrowing this idea from him on p. 239 of his article.
9. The source for most of Frankl's ideas as expressed in this paper are found in Viktor E. Frankl, The Doctor and the Soul, trans. Richard and Clara Winston, (New York, 1962).
10. Ibid., p. 47.
11. Ibid., pp. 62-63.
12. Ibid., p. 36.
13. These ideas are found in the article cited above in Dialectica.
14. Abraham Maslow, Religions, Values, and Peak Experiences, (Columbus, 1964, p. 95. The first part of this sentence is taken from p. 91.

15. Ibid., p. 42.
16. Abraham Maslow, "Higher Needs and Personality," Dialectica, 262.
17. The source for Rogers' ideas in this paper is Carl Rogers, On Becoming a Person, (Boston, 1961), pp. 163-182, 347-359.
18. Ibid., p. 172.
19. Ibid., p. 355.
20. Gordon W. Allport, The Individual and His Religion, (New York, 1959), p. 56.
21. Ibid., p. 56. Allport states that the "religious sentiment allows wide variation both in the human race at large and during the course of any single individual's development."
22. Ibid., pp. 57-74.
23. Abraham Maslow, Religions, Values, and Peak Experiences, p. 83.
24. Ibid., p. 9.

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#### UNSOLICITED AUTOBIOGRAPHY

The autobiography of Perry Davis presented in the Appendix was an unsolicited document handed to me at the time of Mr. Davis's interview. (The actual document is presented, and not a copy.)

Davis, Perry. S.P.S.M. 121739, unpublished autobiography, Jackson, Michigan, Summer, 1972.