Toward an Explicit Integrated Jewish Curriculum for Union for Reform Judaism Summer Camps

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Digest

Camp is a magical place where Reform Judaism can be lived in an immersive environment. To truly realize this goal, summer camp professionals work hard to integrate Judaism into every space and every moment of camp. In recent years, the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) summer camps have increasingly experimented with doing-away with a set daily education hour (which is traditional in URJ camps) and to consciously deliver Jewish educational content through 'specialty' areas, such as sports and the arts. I study these recent trends through the scholarly literature on experiential education and integration and through interviews with camp professionals. Being explicit with integrating Reform Judaism on camp helps provide a framework campers can use in living Reform Jewish lives away from camp. Research and interviews show the key to integration is decentralizing how education is delivered – having the rabbinic and education professionals train and advise the counseling staff, who then run the programs for the campers. I conclude that the ideal for Reform Jewish camping would be to further empower campers and counselors to make their own Reform Jewish choices about how Judaism should be practiced and how we should be educating at camp. Decentralization and integration, the two main concepts discussed in this thesis, are steps towards youth empowerment so that Reform Judaism can be presented as a compelling and legitimate way of life – a true living Judaism.

Thank you to:

Jemma and Toby for your ongoing loving support. (You only cried a little bit.)

My parents for helping polish everything on short notice, and all of their support.

Rabbi Sam Joseph for working with me to make this thesis a reality, and pushing me to see a bigger picture of what camp education can be.

All of the wonderful people that gave of their time to be interviewed. (Your names are listed at the end of this thesis. I very much hope that I represented your words accurately, and captured your passion for camp.)

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Introduction

If you are URJ Camp Educator (director, faculty member, staff member), I hope that while much of this thesis will look familiar, you will be surprised by programs that are happening at other camps, both URJ and non-URJ. While we have much to celebrate in our camps and across our movement, I hope we can look at other camps and other movements that are so compelling they have to turn away staff, and, with an open mind, ask what they are doing right.

I expand on interviews with our colleagues and on published materials on informal and experiential education to make several suggestions as to how we can best educate in our movement's camps**. If you are pressed for time, I recommend that you skip to the section, "What Can We Learn from These Camps?" at the end of Chapter 3 and to conclusion of this thesis, Chapters 9 and 10.** The rest of this thesis represents the theory behind these recommendations and gives examples of how other camps (both URJ and non-URJ) have worked to deliver quality Jewish education.

The first three chapters of this thesis look at how the educational programs on URJ camps came together, and how other camps currently provide education to their campers. Chapters 4 and 5 look at the theory behind informal and experiential education. These chapters also begin to look at the current tension on URJ camps between centralization and decentralization in who delivers the educational programming and how this relates to integration.

Chapters 6 and 7 discuss integration. Chapter 6 presents the theory behind integration, discussing what the term can mean, and how it applies to Jewish education.

This chapter also includes a discussion of the models of integration that have been applied to Jewish day school and summer camps. Lessons learned from art education are used to discuss how Judaism can best be integrated into sports. Chapter 7 highlights current practices of integration on URJ summer camps.

The final three chapters provide an ideal vision of what Reform summer camp could be like. Chapter 8, "Towards an Explicit Integrated Jewish Curriculum for URJ Summer Camps" is a big-picture view of an ideal Reform Jewish summer camp. Practical suggestions are made in chapter 9, and chapter 10 discusses the challenges and opportunities to integration and decentralization on our camps, while providing recommendations as to how we can overcome those challenges.

There is still a lot more work to do. While I quickly discuss how educational programming developed in our movement's camps, I was not able to do an in-depth history. Michael Lorge and Gary Zola began collecting the history of our movement's camps with Olin Sang Ruby Union Institute,[1] but the other URJ camps have not received a similar treatment.

Additionally, while I feel that I was able to get a snapshot of what is happening across our movement at a specific moment, each camp deserves much more thorough treatment. Each camp has its own culture, traditions, challenges and opportunities. URJ camps would undoubtedly benefit from formal preservations of their institutional memories and more sharing of this information between camps.

I hope you find this thesis useful.

[1] Michael M. Lorge, Gary P. Zola. A Place of our Own. 2006.

1. A Historical Overview of Union for Reform Judaism Camps' Education

The most widely respected historian of Reform Judaism, Michael Meyer, portrays today's Reform Judaism as a complex tapestry. Ideas in Judaism appear as the colors and threads in this tapestry. At certain points in history certain of these threads may feature more prominently or more faintly. Even when an idea becomes less popular, its thread does not end. But rather it fades into the background for a while as other ideas, different threads, momentarily move into a place of prominence.[2]

Since the founding of its first camp in 1951/2, the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) has been providing "exciting experience[s] in living Reform Judaism" through summer camp.[3] Different educational models have been used at different times across the URJ camping system, reflecting both the ideologies and the logistical realities faced by the camps' stake-holders. As logistical realities change and as new camp staff envisions new programming, these older threads do not disappear, but merely take their turn waiting to reemerge in this ongoing cycle.

Though different URJ camps have different educational systems, all of the URJ camps are largely products of the American camping movement and the Jewish educational camping that came from this movement.

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[2] Personal conversation based around a paper in which I presented a vision of Reform Judaism on which younger generations constantly progress the Judaism that they inherit so it stays relevant to their time. I currently find his view of the tapestry of our movement to have greater merit.

[3] Proposal for United Institute "Union Institute, UAHC owned by the Chicago Federation of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations," undated, circa 1952, and Union Institute brochures for the years 1952-1956; "Memorandum on Camp Institute", November 29, 1951 (Lorge Papers, AJA). quoted in Michael M. Lorge and Gary P. Zola, "The Beginnings of Union Institute in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin, 1952-1970: Creation and Coalescence of the First UAHC Camp." in Michael M. Lorge, Gary P. Zola. A Place of our Own. 2006.

As "the beginnings of Jewish camping in this country came as a byproduct of the social and ideological trends that enveloped the nation during the Progressive Era [of the 1890s-1920s]," Jewish camp education has always been an attempt to bring the best, learner-centered education to Jewish youth in order to fulfill the twin goals of "promot[ing] Jewish learning and strengthen[ing] the bonds of Jewish identification."[4] This has been achieved by many different educational formats over time. These education formats can be placed on two spectrums. First, from centralized education delivered by rabbis and other skilled educational faculty to decentralized education presented by college-age counselors. Secondly from education embedded in the 'hidden curriculum' plus a scheduled education hour, to education that is consciously and consistently integrated into every activity area and programmed time on camp.

This thesis will look at these two related spectrums – centralization versus decentralization, and an intense education hour versus scattered education planned throughout the day. Though some camp professionals claim to prefer a particular vision of educational camping, most camps weave these ideas together into their own unique blend. These different ways of planning education on camp are tied to the history of camping, and specifically in the history of our movement's camps.

The work of Gary P. Zola, Michael M. Lorge, and of Jonathan D. Sarna in Lorge and Zola's history and tribute to the URJ's first camp, Olin-Sang-Ruby Union Institute in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin provide a detailed history of how Reform Jewish camping began, and is an interesting place to begin this discussion. Their histories show how the Reform movement's camps coalesced from the American camping movement, the

[4] Gary P. Zola, "Jewish Camping and Its Relationship to the Organized Camping Movement in America" in Michael M. Lorge, Gary Phillip Zola. A Place of our Own. 2006.

success of non-movement Jewish educational summer camps, and the experiences of the movement's rabbis in German youth movements.

Camping in America

According to Zola, "the history of Jewish camping is firmly rooted in the soil of a distinctly American phenomenon: the organized camping movement."[5] This movement glorified the outdoors experience, idealized Native American culture, and worked to build self-reliance in campers.

> The organized camping movement as we know it usually traces its roots back to the school camp created by Frederick William Gunn and his wife in 1861. Camping spread slowly, but by the end of the nineteenth century, the first Protestant (1880) and Catholic (1892) camps commenced operations; Sumner F. Dudley started the first YMCA camp (1885); a few private camps for wealthier youngsters began, notably in New England (where Ernest Balch established his influential Camp Chocura [New Hampshire] in 1881); the first "fresh air" funds designed to bring the uplifting benefits of country air to the urban and immigrant poor originated (1887); and the first family camp (1888) and girls' camp (1892) opened.[6]
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> The first known Jewish camps also came into existence at this time: Camp Lehman, founded in 1893 by the Jewish Working Girls' Vacation Society, on the site of what would later become Camp Isabella Freedman; and the Educational Alliance Camp, established in 1901 in Cold Springs, New York, and later incorporated as Surprise Lake Camp.[7] Thereafter, and

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[5] *Ibid.* p. 18

[6] Sarna notes: "The standard "History of Organized Camping" was published by Henry William Gibson in various issues of *Camping Magazine*, beginning in 1936, and have now been conveniently brought together on microfilm. See also Frank L. Irwin, *The Theory of Camping* (New York: A.S. Barnes, 1950), 3-7, and Daniel Cohen, "Outdoor Sojourn: A Brief History of Summer Camp in the United States," *A Worthy Use of Summer: Jewish Summer Camping in America*, eds. Jenna Weissman Jselit and Karen S. Mittelman (Philadelphia: National Museum of American Jewish History, 1993), 10-13." Sarna, "The Crucial Decade in Jewish Camping." 2006. p. 29.

[7] Sarna notes: "For the history of Jewish camping, see especially Daniel Isaacman, "The Development of Jewish Camping in the United States," *Gratz College Annual of Jewish Studies* 5 (1976), 111-120 and Shimon Frost, "Milestones in the Development of Hebrew Camping in North America: An Historical Overview" (in Hebrew with English summary), *Kovetz Massad, Second Volume, Hebrew Camping in North America*, eds. Shlomo Shulsinger-Shear Yashuv with Rivka Shulsinger-Shear Yashuv (Jerusalem: Alumni of Massad Camps, 1989), 17-79, XV-XXVI." *Ibid.* p. 29

> until the Great Depression, camping developed rapidly in both the general and Jewish communities. Over one hundred summer camps of various types existed in the United States in 1910, and almost 3500 in 1933.[8]

This was an American phenomenon that found its way into the Jewish community. With rare exceptions (Camp Kohut in Maine, Camp Kawaga in Wisconsin, Cejwin Achvah and a few others) these camps were meant to promote Americanization amongst the immigrant children that attended the camps.

> Jewish camping enthusiasts also believed that their programs effectively countered antisemitic stereotypes concerning Jewish weakness and also promoted the great goal of Americanization. Campers were thus supposed to breathe in the "pure sweet air of American mountains, lakes and forests," and to exhale any residual foreign traits. As the summer progressed, they were likewise supposed to imbibe the manners and mores of America, and to become (as one former Winslow camper recalled in his old age) "stalwart, healthy American adults."[9]

As these camps were meant to teach American culture, Judaism was not integrated into the camp at all, or at most was, "reduced to a whisper." Even most Jewish communal camps, "as late as the 1930s… 'were almost completely devoid of any meaningful Jewish programming or consciousness.'" [10]

Educational Camps

The progressive education movement started to influence camps at the end of World War One:

> Progressive educators worked out a new theory of camping during the interwar years. Focusing on camp as an educational setting, they emphasized its role in shaping the character and personality development of campers, both individually and as part of a group. "The organized summer camp is the most important step in education that America has

[8] Sarna notes: "Gibson, *History of Organized Camping*, presents these figures in his fourth chapter (unpaginated.)" *Ibid.* p. 29

[9] Sarna notes: "David Lyon Hurwitz, "How Lucky We Were," *American Jewish History* 87 (March 1999), esp pp. 34, 42." *Ibid.* p. 30

[10] Isaacman, *Jewish Summer Camps in the United States and Canada,* 133. in *Ibid.* p. 30

> given the world," Charles B. Eliot, former president of Harvard University, famously declared in 1922.[11]

Initially, most Jewish camps were counted as Jewish because they had a Friday night meal or provided Kosher food. But it did not take long for some Jewish educators involved in the progressive education movement to realize that, as in the secular camping movement, the controlled environment of camp could be used as a powerful educational tool.

The Beginning of Jewish Educational Camping

Summarizing Zola's article on the relationship between Jewish camping and the greater camping movement, Jonathan Krasner notes that:

> Historian Gary Zola identified four broad categories of theories and ideals that shaped the development of organized camping in North America. They include the conceptualization of camping as an educational enterprise focused on "learning through doing"; the conviction that camping could play an important role in improving social conditions and bettering the lives of the underprivileged; the notion of camp as an ideal setting for engendering religious and spiritual growth; and, finally, the belief that camping could instill a respect for and identification with America's cultural heritage and foster a communitarian spirit. Each of these in turn, played a part in shaping the development of Jewish educational camping.[12]

These ideas, present in the general camp movement, were mediated through the vision of various Jewish educators into Jewish camping experiences.

The first of these camps, Cejwin, was founded by Albert P. Schaalman in 1919. Schaalman was a student of the pioneering Jewish educator, Samson Benderly.[13]

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[11] *Ibid.* p31. Sarna, though adding additional material, is clearly drawing from Florence Zeldin and Samuel Kaminker, "Handbook for Camp Counselors" Education Department of Los Angeles College of Jewish Studies at Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion and the Union for Reform Judaism, 1956.

[12] Jonathan B. Krasner. The Benderly Boys and American Jewish Education. 2011. p. 281.

[13] Miriam Ephraim, one of Benderly's early students, was involved in running the woman's side of camp, and became the assistant director.

Through his own education, he came to view camping as a place that could be used for teaching purposes, and not just as a place to relax. Well before he established his camp,

> he came under the influence of Kilpatrick and Professor Elbert Fretwell, both of whom drew on Deweyan educational principles to advocate strongly on behalf of the scouting and organized camping movements. Camps, they taught, were ideal "embryonic communities" where "life situations" could become educative settings, where children could be socialized and prepared to become agents of social reform. In camp, a child's natural interests and impulses, his creative play, could be harnessed for the purposes of education and character development. In particular, camps were recognized as ideal settings in which to utilize experience-based methodologies, as exemplified by Kilpatrick's project method, in the service of constructivist learning.[14]

This concept that camp is an immersive educational setting which can be used for knowledge-based education and character development, is foundational to Jewish educational camping. [15]

Schaalman was also pioneering in his conscious use of the 'hidden curriculum,' the use of non-programmatic elements as educational tools, at a Jewish camp:[16]

> Creating a total Jewish environment entailed making Jewish observances routine and "Jewish values" normative. It meant holding up Jewish role models; incorporating Jewish motifs and symbols into camp activities and rituals, as well as informal play; using Hebrew or Yiddish words to define camp space and camp time; making camp a place of Jewish cultural production and consumption and connecting Judaism to campers' real life interests and concerns. It involved both pageantry and a "pedagogy of participation."[17]

Instead of attempting to blend American and Jewish cultures, Schaalman tried to provide a setting that was completely Jewish and isolated from the 'secular' outside world. In

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[14] *Ibid.* p. 282.

[15] For a discussion of knowledge-based education and socialization, please see chapter 4. Also see Sales and Saxe 2004. p. 17, "Camp exposes campers and staff to Jewish leaders and role models who exhibit Jewish identity, ruach (spirit), menschlichkeit (being a good person)… We believe that every Jewish camp ipso facto has the potential to socialize Jewish children and young adults into k'lal Yisrael (the Jewish people).

[16] For more on the term 'Hidden Curriculum' see chapter 4.

[17] Jonathan B. Krasner. The Benderly Boys and American Jewish Education. 2011. p. 284.

Schaalman's words, "To the Jewish child in camp, life is a harmony, a unity as against the eternal dualism with which he is forever faced."[18]

While the socialization aspects of camp were embedded through informal and engaging techniques, the education itself was often formal. The basic idea of the camp education program was to keep religious school going during the summer. Though individual teachers, including some known artists, used art to teach and felt generally "freer to employ a range of child-centered and kinesthetic methodologies, including Kilpatrick's project method," on the whole the curriculum was taught as it would have been in religious school.[19] Lessons were held for one hour a day.

Eventually the camp became too expensive to run while maintaining its staff of professional teachers. The formal education hour was cut, and then reinstated with counselors providing the educational content, "but this proved to be unsatisfactory."[20] While the camp eventually lost its educational character, it inspired the creation of other Jewish educational camps.

Cejwin was the first Jewish educational camp, and one of the few that consciously used educational theory to inform their programming. Other programs, such as the Hebrew speaking environment of Massad, were soon founded. Different streams of Judaism came to life at Jewish educational camps as "Yiddishists, Zionists and others demonstrated how camps could shape the 'total environment' available to them to offer

[18] This is a counter idea to 'integration' or 'interaction' – two ideas of how to blend Jewishness with American values discussed in chapter 6. *Ibid.* p. 283.
[19] *Ibid.* pp. 290-1.
[20] *Ibid.* p. 293.

campers a taste of utopia, a seemingly realizable vision of an alternative Communist, Socialist, or Zionist way of life."[21]

When the Great Depression struck, it changed the camping landscape – many camps had difficulty attracting campers, as families could not afford to send their kids to camp. This affected both educational camps and the Jewish recreational camps that were in existence in this early period.

It was not until the 1940s and early 1950s that Jewish educational camping would take off: "the Holocaust, the waning of the Depression, and the explosive rise during the interwar years of domestic anti-Semitism all undoubtedly influenced the 'increased community interest and support for Jewish education' that so many contemporaries [in the Reform Movement] noticed."[22]

During this period from 1940s into the early 1950s, which Sarna calls, "the crucial decade in Jewish camping," the number of new recreational Jewish camps was very small in proportion to the number of educational and religious camps, which included the first movement camps.

Reform Movement Camping

Movement camps developed soon after national youth groups were formed in the Reform and Conservative movements.[23] All of which "developed out of the same concern for safeguarding America's Jewish future that animated the educational revival of the late 1930s and 40s."[24]

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[21] Jonathan D. Sarna, "The Crucial Decade in Jewish Camping." in Michael M. Lorge, Gary Phillip Zola. A Place of our Own. 2006.

[22] *American Jewish Year Book* 347 (1941-42): 234. quoted in *Ibid. p. 3*6.

[23] *Ibid.* p. 40.

[24] *Ibid.*

Camp Ramah in Wisconsin was first, opening in 1947, and was explicitly tasked with teaching Conservative Judaism.

NFTY (originally the National Federation for Temple Youth – now the North American Federation for Temple Youth) was founded the same year. The director of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC)'s youth department, Rabbi Samuel Cook, ran leadership institutes that featured "'classes,' 'services' and 'study,' in addition to 'sports,' 'dramatics,' 'campfires,' 'dancing' and 'fellowship,' and it aimed to 'create a strengthened movement for Reform Judaism.'"[25]

Rabbi Ernst Lorge thought that these programs were a "huge success." He was one of a group of German-born Reform rabbis that had participated in Jewish youth movements in Germany.[26] This group of rabbis, with other rabbis and lay leaders in the Chicago area helped build political support in the Reform community and began to fund-raise for the establishment of a UAHC camp.

As Sarna notes, "On March 29, 1951, the UAHC Chicago Federation, headed by Rabbi Herman E. Schaalman, unanimously approved "the project of building a camp for our youth." [27] The camp was officially incorporated in the State of Wisconsin on May 22, 1952, and dedicated on August 24, 1952. That camp, which as at the time called "Union Institute," had a simple mission, summarized by Schaalman as: "Study and pray, work and play."[28]

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[25] *Ibid.* p. 42.

[26] *Chicago Councilor* (1948); NFTY "First Annual Leadership Institutes" brochure (1948); and Ernst Lorge to Sidney I. Cole (October 22, 1948), all in OSRUI Papers, AJA. in *Ibid.* 42.

[27] *Ibid.* p. 43

[28] Herman E. Schaalman to J.S. Ackerman (July 9, 1951); "Memorandum on Camp Institute" (November 29, 1951); J.S. Ackerman to Mae O. Garland and Sherman Pearlstein (December 27, 1951); Herman Schaalman to "All Rabbis in the Midwestern, Rocky Mountain & Great Lakes Regions of the Union including all the Rabbis in Chicago" (February 26, 1952); Maurice N. Eisendrath to J.S.Ackerman

Sarna gives five ways in which the Union Institute stood out from the other camps existent at the time of its founding:

> The new camp differed markedly from Ramah, Massad, and in fact from all of the other Jewish educational camps that had been established in the "crucial decade" of Jewish camping. First of all, Hebrew played no role at all in the camp. There was no Hebrew in the camp's name, and no Hebrew in its curriculum; nor, for that matter, was there any emphasis on Zionism.[29]
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> Second, most campers attended the camp for two weeks or less. In the initial year, there were "2 two-week Institutes…primarily for young people from Chicago and the Midwest," "a one-week Adult Institute," "2 ten-day Leadership Institutes" sponsored by NFTY, and "a three-day Labor Day Conclave of the Chicago Federation of Temple Youth." Some 442 individuals participated in camp activities during that first year, but none of them devoted their full summer to Jewish living and learning.[30] This same pattern of short "institutes" rather than a full summer of "immersion" became a feature of Union Institute. Its program, like Reform Jewish education as a whole, was essentially supplementary; it left a great many summer weeks open for secular pursuits.
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> Third, Union Institute served a different age range than the other camps; the bulk of its campers were teenagers or adults. An "experimental one-week's session for 11 and 12 –year-olds" was only initiated in 1954 (later in the 1950s, a "junior session" was created for children aged 9-11.)[31] Like Brandeis Camp Institute which, as we have seen, focused on the college-aged, Union Institute initially sought to *transform* its campers. Massad and Ramah, by contrast, sought to *mold* them.
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> Fourth, more than at any other Jewish camp, Union Institute emphasized direct contact with rabbis as a central feature of its program. Visiting rabbis were treated as celebrities, akin to the "professor in residence" at Ramah. They taught the ninety-minute study sessions, led regular "bull sessions" with participants, and were the camps' dominant personalities. Each summer more rabbis offered to come to Union Institute, some of them sacrificing a portion of their vacations in order to do so. Union

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(February 29, 1952); J.S.Ackerman, "History and Purpose of Union Institute" (January 23, 1955); Dedication invitation (December 24, 1952); all in OSRUI Papers, AJA; Goldberg, "The Beginnings of Educational Camping,"8. in *Ibid.* 43.

[29] "An undated fact sheet, probably from 1952, in the OSRUI Papers reports that 'No politics of any sort will be discussed (Zionism, Communisim [sic], etc.). The American Flag will be the only flag raised and lowered.'" in *Ibid.* 43.

[30] "Preliminary Report of Summer Operation of Oconomowoc" [1952], OSRUI Papers, AJA. in *Ibid.* 44.

[31] "Report on Union Institute Program to Chicago Federation, U.A.H.C." (May 27, 1954); 1959 Union Institute Brochure, OSRUI Papers, AJA. in Jonathan D. Sarna, "The Crucial Decade in Jewish Camping." in *Ibid.*44.

> Institute thus promoted closer relations between rabbis and young Reform Jews. Over time, it also stimulated many young people to enter the rabbinate.[32]
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> Finally, and perhaps as a consequence of the deep rabbinic involvement in the program, Union Institute placed a much heavier emphasis than any other Jewish educational camp on promoting spirituality. Indeed, during the opening summer of 1952, religious activities were described in a report to the board as "probably the most successful single facet" of the camp. In addition to regular morning and evening prayers, which were "creatively developed by a committee of young people," there were "cabin prayers at night, and a recitation of prayers before and after each meal." "Very frequently," according to this same report, "a genuine mood of religious devotion was generated at these occasions, and many of the participants were deeply moved by them."[33] Later, these creative services and the whole informal mode of camp worship would have a major impact on the Reform Movement as a whole.[34]

The Union Institute in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin was the first Reform summer camp. It was soon followed by Camp Saratoga (Swig) in California. By 1958, three more UAHC camps were open. Each of these camps was run autonomously at a regional level, though owned by the North American Reform synagogue organization, the UAHC.

Educational ideas and music flowed between the institutions through UAHC meetings, NFTY, and through the fact that many of the camp staff and some of the camp faculty (rabbis, cantors and educators) had experience at more than one camp. For instance, Rabbi Ron Klotz, the former director at URJ Myron S. Goldman Union Camp-Institute (GUCI) was a camper at the Union Institute, and URJ Greene Family Camp director, Loui Dobin, was a songleader at URJ Eisner Camp.[35]

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[32] "Report of the Union Institute Program to Chicago Federation, U.A.H.C." (May 27, 1954); Undated Fact Sheet (probably 1952); Goldberg, "The Beginnings of Educational Camping," 8-9. in *Ibid.* 44.

[33] "Preliminary Report of Summer Operation of Oconomowoc" [1952], OSRUI Papers, AJA. in *Ibid.* 44.

[34] *Ibid.* pp. 43-44. Underlining added.

[35] There are many more examples, including the camp directors at URJ Jacobs and URJ Kalsman, who were Loui Dobin's Assistant Directors at URJ Greene Family Camp, and Rabbi Misha Zinkow, Director of UAHC Swig in the 1980s, who was originally at UAHC GUCI.

The next section of this chapter, an historic overview of education at URJ camps, begins with a focus on the Union Institute at Oconomowoc, as the Union Institute served as a model often copied by other camps. While it may be possible to trace the history of educational ideas as they spread across the movement, the task is in some ways unnecessary. Innovations in music and education seem to have spread very quickly due to the camps relationship to NFTY, the movement of staff from camp to camp, and UAHC facilitation. Even in the first year of Reform movement camping, one of the rabbis who helped start the Union Institute, Rabbi Wolli Kaelter, moved to UAHC Swig, and a group from Swig reportedly visited the Union Institute in its first year of operation to see what Reform camping could look like.[36]

Historic Overview of Education at URJ Camps

There are four main phases of URJ camp education. Each of these phases is connected to the culture of the camps in which they manifest. Like the tapestry of Reform Judaism itself, the ideas behind each these phases never really disappeared, and some camps maintain the strength of older threads, while others emphasize newer ideas. The freedom of our camps to choose how they teach Reform Judaism adds to the ever-changing texture of our movement.

1) Formal Classes

The educational program at the Union Institute, was in many ways similar to the educational camps that preceded it, and was dictated by the small number of campers and the heavy involvement of a number of rabbis. According to Rabbi Herman

[36] Rabbi Herman E. Schaalman, personal letter to Eric Bram, July 16, 1984. in Eric Bram, "Toward a Systematic Approach to Training Staff for UAHC Camp-Institutes." 1985. p. 20.

Schaalman, one of OSRUI's founding rabbis, the program was full of identity forming experiences:

> The main purpose… was overridingly clear and effective, that despite the need for revisions improvement the basic ideas and methods we used proved to be successful even by today's standards. In other words, the informal education setting, the exposure of young people to rabbis, the search for proper texts and ideas around which to structure fascinating study, the experimental nature of our worship which used both the *Union Prayerbook* as well as other sources and creative elements, the structuring of a day that had all the elements of the outdoors, of the recreational, the educational and the religious, singing of Hebrew songs, the reciting of prayers before and after the meal, the experience of *Shabbat*; all of these and many others are still the basic pattern of camping to this day[37]

The one main difference between how previous educational camps had been run and education at the Union Institute, which defines this phase of Reform movement camp education, was the role of the rabbi. The camp was run by a group of rabbis, who worked hard to integrate themselves into the fabric of the camp:

> From its earliest days, the camp involved rabbis in every aspect of the program – not just as teachers, but also storytellers and baseball pitchers. The early summers ran a daily schedule that included hymns and services at flag raising, study sessions with faculty, "bull session," evening services led by the campers, and more typical fare.[38]

And in many ways there was no choice, as the counselors were new and inexperienced, and had not been acculturated into Reform camping culture – because this culture was just being created.

These rabbis were not only working in the trenches during the summer, they also met and held reflective discussions about how the camp should be run, and functioned as

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[37] Rabbi Herman E. Schaalman, personal letter to Eric Bram, July 16, 1984. in *Ibid.* p. 19.

[38] Michael M. Lorge and Gary P. Zola, "The Beginnings of Union Institute in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin, 1952-1970: Creation and Coalescence of the First UAHC Camp." in Michael M. Lorge and Gary Phillip Zola. A Place of our Own. 2006. p. 65.

an unofficial program committee. [39] Minutes from these meetings survive, including a section from 1955 that discusses how involved these faculty members were in shaping the hidden curriculum on camp, and how consciously they created the camp culture:

> It was generally agreed that a controlled environment was essential to the educational processes at Union Institute and that this controlled environment was dependent on staff direction. Mention was made of attitudes and activities in the dining room, cabins, sleeping, etc., and that more emphasis should be placed on group living in the cabins. The problem of clarity of what we wish to accomplish was raised and it was pointed out that only when we know what we wish to accomplish in detail can we utilize the techniques of education to the fullest. Rabbi Weiner raised the question of creativity as a problem and pointed out that to him this is a means. Rabbi Lorge expressed the view that creativity is both to him a means and a goal and that the ulpan technique [intensive classroom instruction employing creative teaching methods, usually for Hebrew language immersion], which emphasizes creativity, was very suitable to special groups, but not necessarily to Instituters. As the discussion ensued it became apparent that it was necessary to evaluate the effect that the Institute sessions in the past have had upon our youth… It was felt that we must constantly evaluate the program of the past and use the evaluation for building future programs that will meet the needs of youth in the reform movement."[40]

This group, consisting of different faculty, still functions at what is now the URJ Olin-Sang-Ruby Union Institute, helping set the educational curriculum. Some of the rabbis, especially those involved in the Chalutzim program, are as intimately evolved in running the educational program as these first rabbis. [41]

Michael M. Lorge, Rabbi Ernst Lorge's son, who was at OSRUI during this early stage, recalls that on the packing list, next to "sleeping bag" and "flashlight" were the words, "English Bible." He recalls that the rabbis led small frontal *sichot* (discussion) as the

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[39] *Ibid.* p. 65.

[40] "Minutes of the [Rabbinic] Program Committee," November 9, 1955, and March 20, 1956. quoted in *Ibid.* p. 66.

[41] Lorge and Zola note, "See "Director's Report at the Annual Meeting of Union Institute," January 23, 1956. See also, "Minutes of the Meeting of the Evaluation Committee of Union Institute," October 10, 1955. (Lorge Papers, AJA). in *Ibid.* pp. 67-8. This also became clear in my phone interviews of Rabbis Michael Weinberg and Steven Bob.

primary source of formal education on camp, generally for campers older than those found on URJ camps today.

2) Staff-Led Programming

In 1955, the Union Institute's first full time camp director, Rabbi Irwin Schor resigned after a single summer at the camp. Among the reasons for his resignation was that he felt the staff at the camp "was 'ingrown' and therefore 'cannot be held responsible for their actions, since they often feel it is their camp, and not that they are a staff of a camp.'" Lorge and Zola editorialize that, "this attitude, which often can have a positive impact as well as being problematic, continues with current staffs. OSRUI and other UAHC camps encouraged and benefit from staff members who grew up as campers."[42]

While the change from faculty-led intimate programming to staff-run programming took a few years to manifest at the Union Institute, the decentralized model that developed is one that was copied, with minor tweaks, across the movement.

After Rabbi Schor resigned from the Union Institute, the decision was made to employ a Jewish educator instead of a rabbi as the camp's director – a policy still followed at OSRUI today. In 1963, Irving B. Kaplan, a Jewish educator, began as the camp's director. While the rabbinic advisory committee was still in place, he saw it as worth the resources to hire an individual onto the staff who was in charge of programming. So in the mid-1960s, Kaplan hired, "Oscar Miller, who had become the camp's overall

[42] Lorge and Zola note, "See "Director's Report at the Annual Meeting of Union Institute," January 23, 1956. See also, "Minutes of the Meeting of the Evaluation Committee of Union Institute," October 10, 1955. (Lorge Papers, AJA). in *Ibid.* pp. 67-8.

education director. The camp's programmatic offerings were broadened with the introduction of educational sessions that featured simulation games and sociodrama."[43]

According to Michael M. Lorge, this was when the camp's current education system was formed. The rabbinic advisory committee helps set the educational agenda, and with a unit's *Rosh Limmud*, the faculty and a group of counselors work in a small group to turn the concept into a learner-centered experience. This small group of counselors, with the help of the faculty: creates the program; makes the resources for the program; briefs the other staff needed; and then facilitates the program. This is a decentralized approach, because Jewish knowledge is disseminated to the campers through the many different counselors, and it is an approach that can incidentally lead to integration. This means that if campers ask their counselors questions about what took place outside of the education hour, the counselors can answer these questions, and, as they wrote the program, the counselors are able to better integrate its lessons into different parts of the day.

The model was run slightly differently at different camps. UAHC Swig used both the education hour and the evening program hours educationally, trying to link the two, and integrated the education theme into select specialty areas, such as art. At UAHC Swig this was possible because the unit-heads, often rabbinical students, were in charge of education and not the counselors directly. This created a blend between the faculty-led model and the counselor model.[44]

This was also possible at UAHC Swig because of another 1960s innovation across the Reform movement camps – the creation of specific units or 'sessions' with a

[43] *Ibid.* p. 76.

[44] Interview with Misha Zinkow, former director of UAHC Swig.

controlled age group based around a theme, and run for variable lengths of time. This meant that educational content was more easily integrated throughout the campers' time as it was theme-based and the theme could be expanded at different specialty areas. [45]

URJ Myron S. Goldman Union Camp-Institute (GUCI) adapted a version of this educational model, brought by Rabbi Ron Klotz after his time at the Union Institute. At URJ GUCI, a rabbinic advisory committee sets the curriculum, which is then distilled by a camp education director into program ideas. These ideas are then taken by unit-heads, who choose which ideas will be run that summer. Programming teams are formed, and counselors write programs, make resources, and run programs with the assistance of faculty. Following the programming, there is an evaluation session to help the counselors learn to be better educators.

URJ GUCI, until 1970, ran both as a NFTY youth group camp, and as a camp for younger children. Only in 1971 were these programs combined. This shift happened in many of the movement's camps as they grew their camping programs. According to the national director of camping at the URJ at this time:

> From the '60's to the present the main effort in Union camping has been to balance educational programming with recreational programming. Our camps have moved from senior camping (high school age) to junior programming primarily junior [high school age] and younger. In these efforts we have been successful primarily establishing a minimum standard for all of our camps in both programming and staffing. The bringing together of the nine separate camps has been long and arduous, but that has been our greatest achievement[46]

[45] Interview with Misha Zinkow, former director of UAHC Swig.

[46] Rabbi Allan L. Smith, former director of the UAHC camping department, personal letter to Eric Bram, October 5, 1984. in Eric Bram, "Toward a Systematic Approach to Training Staff for UAHC Camp-Institutes." 1985. p. 20.

While there was an institutional effort to replicate successful models across different URJ camps, each camp maintained its autonomy, and each camp had its own set of challenges that it faced, from staff, faculty, and outside circumstances.[47]

For many years following the 1960s, many other camps also utilized this decentralized model, including URJ Greene Family Camp. But unlike UAHC Swig, located near the Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion in Los Angeles, many camps found it difficult to find qualified staff, especially senior staff, to run a decentralized education program, and felt a push from their faculty – area rabbis – to allow them to do more direct education at camps.

3) Faculty-Led Programming

Rabbi Misha Zinkow remembers that in the 1980s, camp directors would often complain that they could not find enough qualified senior staff members to run educational programming. This led to camp education delivered mainly by faculty members. According to some accounts, other contributing factors include the will of educators and faculty to make sure that education was handled by professionals that would teach correctly, and the fact that though counselors have the ability to be educators, they "no longer have the appetite" to push themselves to get involved in creative programming.[48]

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[47] The "Camp Counselor and Staff Orientation Manual" produced in 1970 by the Department of Camp and Youth Education of the UAHC informs camps that, "a précis of the camp program should be submitted to the Director of Camp and Youth Education not later than March 1, and the detailed programs not later than April 15." These programs are to have strong religious and cultural programming. There are many other central controlling elements in this document.

[48] Interviews with Michael M. Lorge, Rabbi Misha Zinkow, and Rabbi Ron Klotz. The quote is from Michael M. Lorge.

In camps such as URJ George, URJ Eisner, URJ Crane Lake Camp, URJ Greene Family Camp, URJ Coleman, and URJ Harlam this is the current education model, with slight variations. Recently URJ Greene had the education director and the faculty write the curriculum. There were staff who had responsibilities involving education, but their main roles were to source materials for the programming, not to re-design the professionally written programming for their unit or to run the actual programming. Counselors were asked to run break-out groups or help in different art projects as required, but were not involved in the direction of the program. Much of this type of programming uses different modalities, and tries to be learner centered, but faculty have different levels of experience and ability to make this happen.

This is a very centralized model where faculty are seen as the keepers of Jewish knowledge on the camp. Unless there is a Jewish education specialist at a specialty area, there is little chance that a counselor sitting through a *shiur* could answer questions raised by the experience in later activities, or that a counselor would consciously try to integrate ideas from a *shiur* which they did not help write and have not thought through extensively into another area of camp.[49]

At some camps, like URJ Harlam, there is a very conscious effort to have rabbis participate in the informal fun which takes place at the specialty areas all around camp, as was natural in the early days of the Union Institute.

4) Integrated Models

URJ Jacobs camp made a conscious decision to break out of the system of education set by the College Institute, and instead of having a daily hour of Jewish

[49] *Shiur*, lesson.

education, tries to integrate the education for its older campers throughout the day, and through shorter education periods. Often it is the senior staff presenting this education, but faculty also come onto camp, participate in activity areas, and teach.

Recent research into education on camp has called for more decentralization and integration. The AVI CHAI Foundation commissioned a study from Amy Sales and Leonard Saxe (which later grew into a book), which showed the value of counselor-led programming in helping the Jewish development of counselors and integration in providing a fuller Jewish worldview for campers.[50] When the URJ started its latest camp, URJ 6 Points Sports Academy in 2011 with philanthropic monies through the Foundation for Jewish Camp, it listened to these studies, and created a camp with a well-integrated curriculum, which is described in more detail in Chapter 7 of this thesis.

Currently, many URJ camps are moving towards integrated curricula, and it will be interesting to see how this new thread is woven into the rich tapestry of Reform Jewish education on camp.

The purpose of this thesis is to pick apart the latest thread – integrated curriculum – and to show how it is woven into the current tapestry of our movements. Further, I will give suggestions and recommendations, based on interviews with camp professionals and publications by leaders in the field of Jewish education, as to how to make explicit the integrated curriculum and how to best use this type of curriculum on URJ summer camps.

[50] Amy. L. Sales and Leonard Saxe, "*Limmud by the Lake*: Fulfilling the Educational Potential of Jewish Summer Camps" 2002.

2. Current Education on Reform Summer Camps

Currently, there are thirteen camps owned by the Union for Reform Judaism[51] (URJ), with one new camp opening in 2014. In addition to the camps owned by the URJ, there are three camps owned by URJ congregations and a system of camps (Wilshire Boulevard Temple Camps) that are owned by a reform temple that has recently left the synagogue Union. Each of these camps has its own culture and its own education system. These systems, to varying degrees, follow the models presented in the first chapter of this thesis, with 'formal' classes, staff-led programming, faculty-led programming, and integrated models. These camps are:

- URJ Olin-Sang-Ruby Union Institute (OSRUI) in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin, opened in 1951/2.
- (UAHC Camp Swig in Saratoga, California, 1951/2 – 2003.)
- URJ Myron S. Goldman Union Camp-Institute (GUCI) in Zionsville, Indiana, 1958.
- URJ Camp Harlam in Kunkletown, Pennsylvania, 1958.
- URJ Joseph Eisner Camp in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, 1958.
- URJ Kutz Camp: NFTY Summer Camp Experience for Jewish Teens in Warwick, New York, 1958?
- URJ Camp Coleman in Cleveland, Georgia, 1964.
- URJ Henry S. Jacobs Camp (HSJ) in Utica, Mississippi, 1970.
- URJ Greene Family Camp (GFC) in Bruceville, Texas, 1976.
- URJ Camp Newman in Santa Rosa, California, 1996.
- URJ Crane Lake Camp (CLC) in West Stockbridge, Massachusetts, 1998.
- URJ Camp George in Parry Sound, Ontario, Canada, 1999.
- URJ Camp Kalsman in Arlington, Washington, 2007.

[51] The Union for Reform Judaism was formerly called the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. In one quote below, the individual says "UAHC." The two are the same organization.

- URJ 6 Points Sports Academy, sports specialty camp in Greensboro, North Carolina, 2011.
- URJ 6 Points Science and Technology Academy, science and technology specialty camp to be opened in Boston area, Massachusetts, in 2014.

The four Reform movement camps sponsored by individual congregations are:

- Maurice B. Shwayder Camp in Idaho Springs, Colorado, sponsored by Congregation Emanuel of Denver, Colorado, 1948.
- Wilshire Boulevard Temple Camps (Camp Hess Kramer and Gindling Hilltop Camp), Malibu, California, sponsored by the Wilshire Boulevard Temple in Los Angeles, California, which is no longer a URJ member congregation, 1949/50.
- Camp Teko in Long Lake, Minnesota, sponsored by Temple Israel of Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1955.
- Camp Daisy and Harry Stein (Camp Charles Pearlstein) in Prescott, Arizona, sponsored by Temple Beth Israel of Scottsdale, Arizona, 1975.

I have reached out to these camps, and have interviewed staff or faculty from every movement camp, and a few of the non-URJ owned movement camps.[52] The information gathered through interviews, which took place mostly in the spring of 2012, provides a snapshot of where these camps were, educationally, at the time of the interviews. More detailed information from these interviews is in Appendix A, and many of the concepts that are noted here will be discussed in more detail other places in this thesis. A list of the individuals interviewed appears in Appendix C.

In order to talk more coherently about the camps as a system, I have classified the camps according to the four different phases of URJ camp education. It is hard to categorize many of the URJ camps, as many have individual programs or units that fit under different categories. For instance, programs for the oldest campers, sometimes

[52] I found it harder to get responses from these camps, possibly because these camps are not staffed as full-time as the URJ camps.

called Kibbutz or Chalutzim programs, are generally run differently than the education for the younger campers. Additionally, some camps contain single programs, such as URJ OSRUI's Tiferet program, that follow different educational models than the rest of the camp. And not all camps fit firmly into one educational model – nearly half of the URJ camps feel that they are either shifting towards an integrated model, or are finding the balance between a more centralized model and an integrated model.

To better discuss what unites camp under a specific model, and what makes each model discrete, I found it useful to use Joseph Schwab's four commonplaces of education – *milieu*, *teachers*, *learners* and *curriculum*:[53]

Milieu

The socio-cultural *milieu* that makes up the 'camp culture' at each camp is different. The *milieu* and social expectations are also different within each camp, depending, for instance, on if programming is run in the dining hall, the pool, or the cabin. The *milieu* in part is responsible for the educational model that manifests at each camp, and therefore *milieu* manifests differently in each of the models.

The specific questions that I asked each camp about its *milieu* were:

- When is Jewish knowledge-based learning delivered?
- Is the camp decentralized or centralized?
- Is there integration of Judaism into the specialty areas?

Teachers

Different groups of teachers have different strengths. To over-generalize, faculty (rabbis, cantors, and synagogue educators) are more Jewishly informed, but have been

[53] Schwab, Joseph J., and Roby, Thomas W., IV. 1986. "The Practicals 5 and 6: Finding and Using Commonplaces in Literature and Psychology." Archived at the Museum of Education, University of South Carolina. Accessed from the Gale Education Encyclopedia article "Joseph Schwab."

acculturated into more formal (read: less-engaging) educational modalities. College-aged staff, generally, are more creative and engaging – being more readily seen by campers as role-models – but are less Jewishly knowledgeable. As the rest of this thesis will discuss in various ways, one of the most important choices a camp makes is who delivers the educational content.

Because this question is so key, it was the main factor in the formation of the categories below. The questions that I asked each camp about its *teachers* were:

- Who are the teachers?
- Who writes the curriculum and programs?
- Who runs the programs?

Learners

Ideally, everyone on camp is a learner. Some camps take this idea more seriously than others, and consciously educate staff. Others chose to devote their resources entirely to the campers, often ages six to 15 or 16. (By an agreement with the Union for Reform Judaism, 16 year olds are encouraged to participate on a movement sponsored Israel tour. The only camps I know that do not participate in this agreement are URJ Newman and URJ George.)

Some camps have very different constituencies, and regional differences are real. Staff from two camps felt it especially important to talk about their camper populations, URJ Kutz and URJ Jacobs. URJ Kutz is the only camp that focuses specifically on older campers (ages 14-18). URJ Jacobs feels that participants on the East Coast are more Jewishly literate, and are more self-selecting. According to Jonathan Cohen, the director of URJ Jacobs, he needs to attract twenty-five percent of Reform Jewish children in his region to fill his beds, meaning he attracts children that are less involved in Reform

Jewish life than other camps. In my own experience at another camp away from a major Jewish population center, URJ Greene Family Camp (URJ GFC), I experienced a set of learners that were very different than on the east coast camp, URJ Crane Lake Camp (URJ CLC). Anecdotally, I found that the learners at URJ GFC were more likely to be from backgrounds of interfaith and interracial marriage, and thus to bring different experiences of Judaism with them into the learning sessions.

Loui Dobin, the director of URJ GFC, discusses how expectations surrounding the role of camp and the type of camper that enrolls in camp has changed. Dobin wisely states that, "our children come to camp with more baggage than their footlockers and duffel bags. Increasingly, our camps are required to repair damage done in the everyday world. Some parents send us children to be healed as well as enhanced… As the 'family' has changed, so has the family of the 'typical' camper." Dobin finds that kids now have more medical conditions and are sent with more medication, and the camp now has been involved in suicide prevention and in reporting cases of child abuse. Additionally, Dobin observes that:

> A decade ago, no child came to camp without being at least relatively sure of his or her Jewish roots. Now, some campers have two non-Jewish parents. The Jewish grandparents from a previous marriage are sending their grandchildren to camp. At the UAHC Greene Camp, almost half of our children have one set of non-Jewish grandparents. [We aim to create] *Yom shekulo Shabbat*. A Jewish community where the camper's identity is constantly reinforced and encouraged… For many of our kids, their camp experience is the Shabbat for their year, a time they will look back at as a highpoint of their Jewish lives.[54]

[54] Dobin continues with these moving words: "In camp we have the opportunity to present our campers with models of a more perfect world, one they can aspire to shape and build. At UAHC camps we teach our children that they can make a difference in the world. They learn how to support one another, using the interpersonal skills acquired during the summer. And they know it is possible to live Jewishly in the every-day world because of their experience at camp. Before every session I remind my staff that every camper is the most important person in the world. It might just be that our campers are the saving remnant,

These changes that modern society has made on our campers have affected all of our URJ camps, which affirm the importance of learner-centered education.

Curriculum

The URJ Camps, in their mission statement, state that they hold as their mission a commitment to *Ruach* (spirit), *Kehilah* (community), *Talmud Torah* (lifelong Jewish learning), *Tikkun Olam* (repairing the world), and *Kavod* (respect).[55] These values, meant to socialize participants into Reform Judaism, are embedded into the hidden curriculums on camp and into many of the scheduled periods. The value of *Talmud Torah* is represented at many camps as an education hour. The *curriculum* taught during the education hour often is the trifecta of Torah, God and Israel.

Appendix B contains the exact questions I asked of each camp about curriculum design. All camps taught Reform Judaism, including Torah, God, Israel, *Gimilut Chasadim*, *Avodah*, and other core Reform Jewish values. That being said, the staff at some camps talked more intensely about a focus on specific elements of Reform Judaism. For instance, URJ OSRUI is especially proud of its strong focus on Israel, and URJ Newman has a strong emphasis on *Tikkun Olam*.

The answers to all of the above questions tell about the camp's commitment to education of both its campers and its staff, and inform this categorization:

Closest Fitting Model	Camps
'Formal' Classes	URJ Kutz,
Counselor-Led Model plus Hebrew/Jewish Culture Hour	URJ GUCI, URJ OSRUI

and our camps a vision of the world to come." Loui Dobin. "Focus On: Reform In Transition: When Summer Camp Becomes A Sanctuary." Spring 1991, p. 36.

[55] Union for Reform Judaism Camps and Israel Programs, "Our Mission."

Faculty-Led Model	URJ Harlam, URJ Eisner, URJ Coleman, URJ GFC, URJ Newman, URJ CLC, URJ George, URJ Kalsman, WBTCs, Camp Stein
Integrated Model	URJ 6 Points Sports, URJ Jacobs

'Formal' Classes

URJ Kutz camp resembles the original Union Institute founded in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin in 1951/2 in many ways: it has older campers than most other camps; professionals come to teach intense courses inside of their specialty areas; and there is a high ratio of professional staff to campers.

Education is run like a college campus. Participants can chose from 'major' and 'minors.' The majors take up most of the day, and are run like specialty camps, and fuse Judaism with another topic, such as an art, or leadership. The minors do not all contain elements of Jewish education.

The teachers are professional educators, including many rabbis, that are knowledgeable in their field, and a programming staff for to run programs outside of the main scheduled education times.[56]

Education on camp is, in many ways centralized, as information is held by faculty and staff who control the programming. However, the high-school aged participants gain strong Jewish knowledge and are empowered, through worship and other settings, to use this knowledge.

[56] Interview with Mike Fuld.

Counselor-Led Education plus Hebrew/Jewish Culture Hour (Staff-Led Programming)

The UAHC Swig model of education, which blended the faculty model and the counselor-led education of URJ OSRUI, as was discussed in the previous chapter, no longer exists. While many camps still employ rabbinical students as educational program staff, unit heads are no longer the primary programmers at any URJ camp.

Thus, the only staff-led educational program that survives, therefore, is now counselor-led, and takes place at URJ OSRUI and at URJ GUCI. These two camps are also the only camps that maintained a dedicated Hebrew hour as well as a Jewish education hour until very recently. This hour was changed in 2011 at URJ GUCI from a Hebrew hour to a cultural hour, but this 'extra' hour of education makes these camps unique.

At both of the camps, a faculty advisory committee, who advises the camp's professional staff, sets the curriculum. At URJ GUCI, a camp staff member then creates an educational packet with program ideas, which are presented to unit staff. At both camps, the unit staff breaks into smaller programming units. Advised by faculty, these smaller programming units then create the educational programs.

The counselors are all prepared to assist in the program, and sometimes faculty are used when help is needed. The program is then run, generally in two parts – a *shiur* (experiential lesson) and then a *sicha* (conversation debriefing what was experienced). Following this program at GUCI, the counselors who wrote the program receive feedback from their peers, guided by a senior staff member, as to how the program could have been made even more effective. Depending on the program, sometimes this

educational session can extend into the evening program, or take the place of the evening program.

Education at these two camps is decentralized. The faculty help educate the counselors, who then educate the campers. Incidental integration can happen, with interesting programming sparking conversations outside of the education time, and with counselors able to answer questions on these programs because they are seen as the role-models who ran them, but outside of sometimes integrating ideas into art, there is little other integration.[57]

Faculty-Led Programming

At many camps, the educational content is almost exclusively delivered by the faculty to an entire unit. This can mean having the two to three faculty run the education for the unit, sometimes with help from counselors who are briefed just before the program. It can also mean having the entire faculty (six to ten individuals) running each of the break-out groups, with counselors sitting in the break-out groups.

What is distinctive about groups in this category, compared with 'formal' classes model, is not specifically about the ratio of faculty to campers, or the style of education (which are often similar), but that the role of the *madrich/a* in running the educational program has been minimized.[58] The history of how this model developed through a lack of senior staff and the resolve of the faculty to have more direct control over educational delivery is in the previous chapter.

[57] In the UAHC Swig model, there was a conscious effort to integrate arts and the evening program into the educational programming of the day.

[58] *Madrich/a,* counselor or 'guide'. *Madrichim*, counselors or 'guides'.

Many camps now have a variation of this style of education, including URJ Harlam, URJ Eisner, URJ Coleman, URJ GFC, URJ Newman, URJ CLC, URJ George, URJ Kalsman, WBTCs, and Camp Stein. Some of these camps maintain small counselor programing groups to run evening programs, but these programs are generally not educational, and if they are, the education is rarely linked to the education hour. In fact coordination would be difficult because the counselors do not know what topic the faculty are going to educate on for any given day.

As there are so many variations on how these programs are run currently, referencing Appendix A is more useful than a full narrative description of each camp.

As I mentioned in the previous chapter, this is a highly centralized model. I personally believe, and feel supported by current scholarship in the field, that this model is highly problematic because it does not empower or educate madrichim, who are at a key transitional moment in their lives. If these *madrichim* could be given Jewish knowledge and asked to use it, it could very well affect their connection to Judaism, their Jewish practice, their professional choices and future choice to affiliate.

Integrated Model

The two camps that have fully integrated curriculum, URJ Jacobs Camp and URJ 6 Points Sports Academy run their programs very differently. URJ Jacobs, which runs a 'Faculty-Led' model for its younger campers, delivers education through specialty camps. The camp director sets the educational curriculum, and then hands it to a member of staff to run. This member of staff could either be the head of the specialty camp, if they are Jewishly knowledgeable, or a Jewishly knowledgeable individual, generally a rabbinical student, hired for this purpose. Different summers see different leadership

structures, as different individuals are available. Faculty, who are primarily involved with running education for the younger campers, attend the specialty camps and sometimes help with the education.[59]

URJ 6 Points Sports Academy's educational model is set by its education director and the directorial team, in conjunction with the education director, and centers around Jewish values relevant to the sports camp. Instead of having a set education time, education happens throughout the day, based around a specific theme. The education director mainly delivers the education, but coaches and other staff are asked to help reinforce both the theme and general Jewish values. The evening program serves as a wrap-up of the day's theme. The education on the camp is in transition as I write this, as a new director was just hired.

While these programs present integrated curricula, they are very centralized as well, with a few individuals doing most of the educating. Different versions of integrated curriculum currently run on camps, specifically Habonim Dror, and Netzer Olami camps, discussed in the next chapter, provide a different way of integrating in a decentralized model.

URJ 6 Points Technology Academy is in development, and it is not yet clear how education will be run at this camp, other than that it will be integrated.

[59] Interviews with Jonathan Cohen, Jimmy Stoloff and Andi Feldman.

3. Current Education on Non-URJ/WBT Affiliated Summer Camps

There are at least 143 Jewish summer camps in operation not associated with the North American Reform movement, including: Reform summer camps over-seas; camps run by other movements, from Habonim Dror to Chabad; Camps run through Jewish community centers; independent Jewish camps that have little educational content; and independent Jewish camps founded specifically to teach Judaism.[60]

Some of these camps, including the three-year old Eden Village Camp, use highly trained staff to create a completely integrated Jewish learning environment.[61] Other camps, like Habonim Dror camps in North America, are youth movement camps based around a strong ideology that use college-age staff acculturated into the movement to create an immersive Jewish experience. Still other camps, like JCC camp Chi, have evolved over the past ten years from recreational camps into thoughtful Jewish educational camps, and are building new cultures of engagement around what it means to be a Jewish camp.

Jewish philanthropists have been identified in many interviews and articles as ushering in a new era in Jewish educational camping. This includes both providing funding to start new camps and transforming the Jewish content on existing camps. The AVI CHAI Foundation and the Foundation for Jewish Camp (FJC) have funded programs that provide a Jewish educational training to both camp directors (*Lekhu Lakhem*) and assistant camp directors (*Yitro*). For the last five years, through the AVI CHAI Foundation, JCC camps are able to fund (at two to three times the wage offered at URJ

[60] According to the Foundation for Jewish Camp, "Annual Report", 2011. p. 28.
[61] Eden Village Camp is discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.

camps for equivalent staff) Jewish Programming Directors (*Chizuk* Fellows) for those JCC camps whose directors have undergone the *Lekhu Lakhem* program.[62]

While there is some overlap between how education is run at Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) camps and other camps, there are many differences. Referring to Joseph Schwab's four commonplaces of education – *milieu*, *teachers*, *learners* and *curriculum* – is again helpful here, as they help highlight some of these differences.[63]

Milieu

While each URJ camp has its own unique feel, they are institutions run by professional adult staff for participants. The sociocultural *milieu* on some other camps, such as the Habonim Dror camps is completely different. Run almost entirely with staff under twenty-two years of age, including the directorial staff, there is a feeling of being part of an ideological group of youth who are actively working for change in the world. The *milieu* at a JCC camp, is entirely different again, with participants linked not by a particular interpretation of religious Judaism, or a strong Labor Zionist ideology, but by other factors, such as geography and a historic family connection with a particular camp.

Teachers

URJ camps are the only camps that use rabbis, cantors and educators as camp faculty, who visit for up to two weeks, teach, and then leave the camp community. Some camps, such as the orthodox Camp Stone, have their counselors, who are Jewishly very well

[62] All of this information is available at http://avichai.org/ and http://www.jewishcamp.org/. A history of this relationship can be found here: Joseph Reimer, "Informal Education: The Decisive Decade - How Informal Jewish Education Was Transformed in Its Relationship with Jewish Philanthropy" 2011.
[63] Schwab, Joseph J., and Roby, Thomas W., IV. 1986. "The Practicals 5 and 6: Finding and Using Commonplaces in Literature and Psychology." Archived at the Museum of Education, University of South Carolina. referenced in the Gale Education Encyclopedia article "Joseph Schwab."

educated, serve as its main educators. Other camps, like JCC camps, have a single trained Jewish educator, and rely on volunteers who, though they have been raised in the camp culture, have little educational background. Some camps, such as those in the Ramah movement, use Jewish educators in a somewhat similar way to how the URJ camps use (mostly clergy) faculty.

Learners

URJ Camps teach, on a whole, Reform Jewish youth. Orthodox Jewish youth are members of a different culture, and, in some ways, bring a different set of needs than Reform Jewish youth do. Some JCC camps, including one camp on which I served as staff, Camp Poyntelle Lewis Village, have a large percentage of non-Jewish campers. Some camps, like BBYO camps, focus mainly on the same teen-age demographic as URJ Kutz. Ramah camps struggle with a mixed camper population, including a unique blends of campers that attend Jewish day-schools and campers that do not.

Curriculum

URJ camps teach Reform Judaism. Ramah camps teach Conservative Judaism. Habonim Dror camps teach Labor Zionism. JCC camps, BBYO, and other pluralistic education settings teach Israel and other elements of Judaism that their particular staffs feel comfortable presenting.

With these commonplaces in mind, I have presented a few case-studies of various camps below, from both articles, interviews, and my personal experience. All of these camps have a lot they can learn from URJ camps. URJ camps have much to learn from these camps. At the end of this chapter, I will summarize a few of the lessons and best practices I think are most important, which echo themes present in the current Jewish

camp education literature. Many of these concepts will be discussed at various points throughout this thesis.

Habonim Dror Camps[64]

Habonim Dror, the Labor Zionist youth movement founded from the merger of Habonim and Dror, runs seven summer camps in North America, with each camp holding between seventy and two hundred participants.

For many members of Habonim Dror, summer camp is not their only involvement with the youth movement. Programming runs throughout the year, with the movement's madrichim running an event approximately each month for each camper age group. Summer camp is part of the 'Habonim Dror' journey, which involves being a camper from around ages eight to 15. There is an Israel Tour at age 16. At 17, there is a transition to being a junior counselor, and at around 18 into being a counselor. Ideally, at 18 or 19 a *chaver* spends a year in Israel, living as a Labor Zionist.[65] Upon the return to North America, the youth movement participant serves as a counselor, and by the time they are in their early 20s, participates as a member of the *mazkirut*, the camp and movement directorial team.[66] At this point, around the age of 23, participants age out of active participation in the movement.

While each 'Habo' camp is different, the entire day is open to change based on the educational content. Almost every hour of the day has an educational component. One of the college aged members of the *Mazkirut*, the *Merakez/et Chinuch* sets the *tochnit* for

[64] Interview with Zoey Green, *Merakezet Chinuch* for Habonim Dror North America, 2012/13.
[65] Notice the use of Hebrew, a major part of the movement's ideology. *Chaver,* member.
[66] *Mazkirut*, directorial team.

the summer.[67] *Tochniot* are generally themed, depending on the camp, by day, week, or by the whole session.

Counselors, who have had to attend many long and thorough leadership training seminars, in addition to their involvement leading events during the year in their region, meet two weeks before camp to actually write the programming. Given resources by the *Merakez/et Chinuch*, the counselors then decide what programs will be run, using the *Chinuch* person as a resource. This planning is done in different small teams of counselors, who are also the *tzevet* for a particular age group.

The education is experiential, and is similar to what I have learned of programs run on UAHC camps in the 1960s and 70s. This model is identical, outside of content, to Reform movement camping outside of North America, as is discussed in the next section below. Programs consist of three parts – a *trigger*, a *method*, and a *sikkum* or *siyyum*.[68] The trigger, known in general education as a 'set induction,' sets the mood for the program. The method is where the main activity takes place, such as watching a movie, building a fort, taking a hike, playing a game, doing an art project, etc. And the *sikkum* or *siyyum* is the wrap-up, which ideally involves a reflective de-briefing for the participants on what they just participated in. This wrap-up is often where a connection is made to Judaism or to Zionism.

Educators in this setting are able to push boundaries of what might be considered acceptable at other camps. The national *Merakezet Chinuch* for 2012/13, Zoey Green, recalls, "I saw a *chug* this summer where they created a fake cult-like group. The group did secret stuff and created an 'underground society.' Only on the last day did the

[67] *Tochnit*, program. *Merkez/et Chinuch*, Education Director.

[68] *Sikkum*, summation. *Siyyum*, conclusion. (When Reuven Kahane uses the term 'moratorium,' I believe he is attempting to translate *siyyum*. I believe 'conclusion' is a clearer translation.)

madrichim show a part of [the iconic movie] 'The Wave.' It blew their minds that they had become a part of that kind of activity."[69]

Each camp deals with 'specialty' areas differently. Some have 'specialists' as members of the general *tzevet*, who just end up leading modalities they are more comfortable with.[70] Others have designated individuals who run a specific area of camp for the different age groups. A recent discussion in the movement has been about bringing in specialists with more skills and training, and bringing them on to camp. The concern is that these individuals do not know how to educate in the Habonim Dror model. One solution is that these specialists spend time training the counselors, and then the counselors run the program in a way they feel works for their campers.[71]

There is a program bank, but it is rarely referred to. Programs are on file back at least to the 1960s.[72] One of the reasons that older programs are not used is because in addition to the creativity brought by each new *tzevet*, Habonim Dror has shifted ideologically after the fall of the Kibbutz movement in Israel. There was disillusionment with Labor Zionism, and a focus on 'Activist Education' on areas like environmentalism and gender issues are now more popular. Zoey Green also sees that an earlier shift away from political activism (writing letters to senators) towards a focus on individual growth is now finding its happy medium.

There has also been a shift in the curriculum from highly focused educational themes, such as "Shtetl," where programs would look in-depth a single topic from many

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[69] *Chug,* course held during an electives period.

[70] *Tzevet*, (leadership) team.

[71] This discussion was interesting for me, as can relates to how we use faculty on camps. Should the faculty teach directly, or is there a way they can teach counselors, who will then re-write and lead the actual program? The solution presented here sounds a lot like education at URJ GUCI and URJ OSRUI.

[72] These documents would be great resources for the American Jewish Archives.

perspectives (shtetl life, to the break down of the shtetl and its aftermath,) to more abstract themes, such as "Revolution," "Exodus," and "Tikkun Olam."

Some of the programs that Green is most proud of include a "Take Back the Night" gender awareness program, which is a yearly program that is run. This is a great program, she believes, because of how well counselors take an important and difficult topic and break it into different subjects based on the maturity level of the different kids.

Green is also proud of the *Avodah* period in the day.[73] As there is a limited (or no) adult presence on camp, the 'chores' fall to all of the youth movement participants, including cleaning bathrooms and chopping vegetables. When framed well, Green has seen this become one of the most meaningful and empowering parts of camp. It is not hard to see why, with the feeling of empowerment and of truly owning one's own youth movement.

A program that exemplifies the creativity of the counselors which Green thought was worth sharing was a Frisbee game. In the game each team represented an Israeli political party. At the same time as the game was happening, there was an Israeli political scenario. Depending on who won each point, each team, based on its assigned political party, would make a decision as to what would happen next in the scenario.

Controversially, in an interview Avi Orlow at the Foundation for Jewish camp stated, "after one summer at a 'Habo' camp a counselor is much more prepared to be a Jewish adult than at a URJ camp." I agree with him. Our movement, though its theology and ideology are different (celebrating rabbis as interpreters of text, and with different kind of respect for received tradition,) can learn much from Habonim Dror in areas of youth empowerment and youth leadership. Because too many members want to continue

[73] *Avodah,* work.

their Habonim Dror journey, Habonim Dror has to turn away counselors. URJ camps struggle to recruit. Elements of this model are accessible to us in the reform movement, especially as this is the model our movement has adopted abroad.

Reform Camps Outside of North America – Netzer Olami

Almost every Jewish youth movement outside of North America, including *Noar Tzioni Reformi Olami*, the International Reform Zionist Youth movement, runs a youth-leadership model similar to Habonim Dror's program as described above.

I have personal experience in this programming, as I spent a year co-directing LJY-Netzer, one of the two British *snifim* – branches – of Netzer Olami. The education is run almost exactly as described above at Habonim Dror, with slight variations across the different camps.

The programs are year-round, and run from ages eight to 23, with recent college graduates running the movements. *Madrichim* gain experience through multiple leadership training sessions and through practical experience during the year-round events tailored to each age group. Rabbis come to camp as guest educators, and run education programs for both the counselors and campers, but counselors shape and run the delivery of education, which is integrated throughout the day.

The *Netzer* journey includes an Israel tour at age 16, for LJY-Netzer, a tour of Jewish Europe (constructed originally by Jeremy Leigh) at age 17, and a year in Israel – *Shnat Netzer* – at age 18/19.[74] North American Jews have recently begun participating in this gap year program, marketed in North America as "The Netzer Year." Israeli members of *Noar Telem* have the option of participating in any of these programs, and

[74] This program is often referred to in its hanging-smichut form as '*Shnat*,' in much the same way as the prayer after the meal is the *Birkat*.

instead of attending *Shnat Netzer*, attend a *Mechinah* program that prepares them for the Israeli army though Reform Jewish learning.

The leadership programs of these movements are also over-subscribed. As participants continue through their 'Netzer Journey,' there are fewer positions towards the top.

Because of different pressures on the youth movements (such as funding by Zionist organizations), the movements outside of North America tend to emphasize *Aliyah L'Yisrael* more than their North American counterparts.

JCC Camps – Camp Chi

Every JCC camp is unique, but every JCC camp that I know of has consciously embarked on a journey into becoming a more conscious agent of Jewish socialization and education. Brad Finkel, Associate Director of Camp Chi (pronounced 'shy') provided a dynamic picture of how his camp takes this role very seriously.

According to Finkel, the JCC's pluralistic approach to camping hopes to bring Judaism alive for campers. The camp provides a 24-hour experience of Jewish living, of *kavod* and *chesed*.[75] He feels that this experience of Jewish living is a model that, if modeled correctly at camp, will extend to the campers' homes

Ten years ago, Finkel says that the JCC camps were all less concerned with Jewish education. Through the philanthropic projects mentioned above – *Yitro*, *Lekhu Lakhem*, *Chizuk* – the camps have been transformed. Camp Chi is a great example of this transformation.

[75] These Jewish values are difficult to define. They can be loosely approximated as 'respect' and 'kindness'.

The directorial team at Camp Chi participated in the Foundation for Jewish Camp's educational leadership programs. Because of this participation, the camp received funding to hire a *Chizuk* fellow – a Jewish educator, paid around $7,500 for their time over the summer. This individual, who has changed every summer, is in charge of running the various educational programs with the day-to-day assistance of the counselors and an Israel educator. While the directorial team sets the framework and provides guidance, the *Chizuk* fellow each summer is given much latitude to run what programs they think are best.

Because of the size of the camp, the *Chizuk* fellow is forced to rely on counselors to deliver the educational content. One of the most helpful groups of counselors are Cornerstone fellows. These fellows are third-year counselors who are given extra training through the Foundation for Jewish Camp.

One of the programs lead by the Cornerstone fellows is the camp's Saturday morning programing. Instead of services, the Cornerstone fellows present a several Jewish values, which they get to choose. They then write and run programs on these values which campers can attend on a rotating basis. According to Finkel, these programs have been very creative, including programs at the pool with kids building rafts, involving Torah texts and time to process what has been happening on camp.

Another group that the *Chizuk* fellow relies on are *shlichim.*[76] *Shlichim* run other an Israel *Shuk* every Friday before Shabbat, and other Israel related programming throughout camp.

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[76] *Shlichim*, Israeli 'emissaries' that participate in the Jewish Agency for Israel's Summer Shlichim Program. I do not know the numbers, but I believe almost every Jewish camp in North America has *shilichim* of some sort.

There are many Jewish educational focuses on camp, from Israel education to acts of loving kindness and social justice work. The way that the camp approaches these various educational topics is that they are portals of entry in Judaism. The camp feels that it must provide many portals so that participants can find the ones that work for them.

Chine In and Chine Out (pronounced like 'shine') are programs which express the camp's Jewish values. Chine In is focused on acts of loving kindness on camp, including helping clean, visiting the sick, handing out Hershey kisses to bring joy to Camp Chi.[77] The counselors try to give a Jewish spin to why this is happening. Chine Out involves community service projects for the local community, including helping food banks, Habitat for Humanity, and animal shelters. These programs, in the best sense of informal education, are optional, but those that do them are helping make this part of the camp culture.

As part of its Israel education, the camp runs a modern Israel history curriculum for seventh through eleventh grader campers and has an 'Israel village' in the middle of camp. Camp Chi recently received a grant to build on its programming to focus on people, the land of Israel and the State of Israel.

The value of community is also important on Camp Chi. The way the camp approaches this is through discussing the role of the individual in community, and the duties each individual has to themselves, their cabin, and the whole camp. This focus is in part accomplished through the way that cabin rules are framed, and the importance of a cabin ritual at night. Time is also taken to emphasize the importance of each individual on camp, from nurses, and janitors to counselors and specialty staff, and to appreciate

[77] Notice the lack of Hebrew vocabulary used by Brad Finkel, compared to the language used in other movements.

how each of these individuals is in a caring role. There is an attempt to create a culture in which everyone on camp can feel free to use Jewish values in their teaching and their work.

According to Finkel, counselors are starting to feel empowered as Jewish educators, especially during Birkat Hamazon, Hamotzi, Flag Raising and Hatikvah. Their success at running small programmatic elements is beginning to show the staff that they can succeed as educators, which Finkel hopes will encourage the staff to begin running programs for their cabins and integrate Judaism into sports and arts.

Finkel believes this is already happening around mealtimes. The meal-time prayers are used as teaching opportunities, with staff providing education on these prayers both in the dining-hall and during informal moments. This is expanded for older campers, where staff try to start many related conversations, such as about food security.

Staff training is important, and in part happens through the fact that much of the JCC staff meets year-round and runs programming throughout the year for participants. Additionally, training is provided during camp, including lunch-and-learns with the *Chizuk* fellow.

One camp tradition that Finkel mentioned that was introduced by a *Chizuk* fellow is a 'Ruach Award,' given out weekly to campers who have displayed camp values. In addition to the giving of a physical reward, a poem written about the camper is read so that others can hear about what the camper did, see the positive reinforcement, and then, hopefully, feel encouraged to emulate the behavior in their own lives. The directorial team was skeptical about the program in the beginning, but it has become an entrenched and positive part of the camp's culture.

Another program that camp Chi is proud of was funded by the Jewish Teen Funders Program. The program created a 'Teen Giving Circle' of twenty teens, with $15,000 to give to other 501c3 non-profit organizations. The group had to really grapple with what criteria it would use to give the money away, and to decide whether give it all to one organization or to spread the wealth. Finkel reports that it was one of the most powerful programs in which he has participated.

To Finkel, the key is that the camp provides many portals into Judaism, including public art, acts of kindness, and Israel programing. He feels that the JCC does a very good job Jewishly, providing a place for youth and counselors to access Judaism in a meaningful way. When kids go home from camp, the camp directorial team, "hopes we have sparked for them a meaningful Jewish experience. So they can continue to live it at home."[78]

Ramah Camps[79]

Jewish education, second only to the safety and welfare of the camp community, is the core of the Conservative movement camps we visited. The Ramah camping experience is focused and shaped by Jewish learning (through prayer, study, ritual, customs, cultural activities) and by living within a community bound by Jewish law. At these camps, it is virtually impossible to separate the secular from the sacred. Jewish values and ethics are taught on the soccer field and Shabbat morning Torah readings are assigned at an evening campfire program. – Amy Sales and Leonard Saxe[80]

The Ramah camps, founded by Jewish educators and producing Jewish educators, are the most highly studied camps in the Jewish camping movement. Every study that I

[78] Interview with Brad Finkel, Associate Director of Camp Chi.

[79] Though not quoted heavily, the books "Ramah at 50" and "Ramah at 60" proved invaluable in writing this section. I would like to thank the National Ramah Commission for the copy of "Ramah at 60" they generously mailed to me at no cost.

[80] Amy. L. Sales and Leonard Saxe, "How Goodly Are Thy Tents: Summer Camps as Jewish Socializing Experiences" 2004. p. 59.

have read confirms that Ramah imparts Jewish values and helps acculturate campers and staff into Jewish living.[81]

Ramah was consciously founded to raise committed Conservative Jews. According to Seymour Fox, former director of the National Ramah Commission:

> Ramah emerged out of an ambitious dream, a carefully considered ideal of educational possibilities. Big questions were asked: What kind of Jews, what kind of people do we want to nurture? What ideas will guide this new camp? What happens when compelling but competing philosophies about the meaning and purpose of Jewish life must coexist within one institution? How should Ramah address the various convictions, controversies, and anxieties prevalent among North American Jews? How can Judaism be transmitted to children and to teenagers as vital, engaging—and necessary?[82]

Started by the Jewish Theological Seminary, the Conservative movement's educational institution, the camp worked consciously to be an educational camp, and not just another Jewish summer camp. It was the first of the educational movement camps.

Fox describes a learning program that in the beginning was, in some ways similar to how it was structured just afterwards at the URJ's first camp, the Union Institute, also in Wisconsin:

> In effect, we were running [in 1947] a school within the camp, complete with its own educational director and staff. The daily classes were mostly text-based, and it was quite possible to spend a large part of the summer on just a few verses. Teaching was considered a full-time job, and the teachers were not given other duties, although multiple tasks would have made more sense economically. They therefore had ample time to prepare for class and were available after classes to any camper who might seek them out.[83]

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[81] Zachary Adam Lasker, "The Education of Ramah Counselors: Madrichim as Educators and Learners." 2010. p. 162. One of the most in-depth studies was done by including one by Ariela Keysar and Barry Kosmin.

[82] Seymour Fox and William Novak, "Vision at the Heart: Lessons from Camp Ramah on the Power of Ideas in Shaping Educational Institutions," 2000. p. 2.

[83] *Ibid.* p. 13.

There was a major difference on the use of teachers, however, in that the rabbis at the Union Institute had more duties than just to teach, and there was always a large rabbinic faculty to students ratio. In Seymour Fox's memory, it appears that the teacher-camper ratio was not always as strong at Ramah as at the Union Institute. There were many other differences as well, especially after the 1960s, when the Union camps made their shift to socio-drama style education presented by campers. The Union camps embraced this shift while Ramah maintained its classroom style:

> Ramah thus operated on the top-down model historically preferred by the Conservative movement: the seminar ruled. …Camp Ramah believed in formal study for everybody. The staff too was supposed to regularly attend classes in camp. The aim was to underscore the idea that our young and old alike, living a full Jewish life meant studying every day… almost nobody was exempt. …Every Ramah camp had a professor-in-residence, most often from the Jewish Theological Seminar. "'Originally,' according to Michael Brown, 'the professor had no formal duties but was to serve as a role model for campers and staff; of a Jew who continues to study.' He would also act as 'a buddy of the director in time of crisis.' Over the years, the professor came to be the guarantor at Ramah 'of the principles of Conservative Judaism'... The professor became the representative and the symbol of the Seminary in camp."[84]

The role of the professional and educator at Ramah is still more similar to the way that many URJ camps use faculty today, than to the more integrated role of rabbis throughout Oconomowoc's history.

One of the defining features of the Ramah movement used to be its emphasis on Hebrew. Ami Hersh, Assistant Director of Ramah Nyack, who has had various other positions within the Ramah movement, bemoans the memory of the older faculty currently serving at Ramah, who claim that the camp was entirely run in Hebrew, though

[84] Jonathan D. Sarna, "The Crucial Decade in Jewish Camping" in Michael M. Lorge and Gary P. Zola. A Place of our Own. 2006. p. 40.

records clearly show that this was not the case.[85] Fox remembers the conversations around the choice to make Hebrew a priority were difficult, but that at least in the beginning, the program was a success:

> After years of success, it may be difficult to appreciate what an outrageous idea it was at the time to try to run a Conservative movement summer camp in Hebrew. Camp Massad was doing it, of course, but Hebrew and Zionism were Massad's religion...
> At Ramah we believed that Jewish education, effectively carried out, would result in young people who were deeply rooted in their tradition through their attachment to Jewish texts, which they would now grapple with because they had already mastered the necessary skills. Once you introduce students into the method, anyone can join the ongoing conversation. In our tradition, there is no way around it: The method must involve Hebrew.[86]

Ramah was audacious, in that it tried to use all of the elements of camp to create not an 'American camp with Conservative Jewish elements' but rather to make the whole camping experience an immersive Conservative Jewish experience. In order to create an intense Jewish atmosphere, the camping movement met with experts in curriculum design, psychology, and in many other fields in what they called the Melton Faculty Seminar during the 1950s and 60s.[87] This group sought to bring the best of modern knowledge to educational delivery on camp, and helped the directors manipulate almost every aspect of camp.

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[85] Interview with Ami Hersh, Assistant Director of Ramah Nyack

[86] The quote is from p. 17 of Fox and Novak. Joseph Reimer specifically addresses Seymour Fox and William Novak, "Vision at the Heart: Lessons from Camp Ramah on the Power of Ideas in Shaping Educational Institutions," 2000, as being a reinterpretation of the past of Ramah. Additionally, Michael Zeldin, Hillel Gamoron, Ami Hersh, and many others feel that Ramah's Hebrew program is no longer a success. Gamoron and Zeldin say that the atmosphere at OSRUI, especially on Chalutzim, is much more immersive than anything currently offered at Ramah.

[87] This group included Joseph Schwab, whose educational commonplaces are found in many parts of this thesis.

Ramah did not just add new programs, it also sought to end classic American elements of camp, including bringing "an end to bugle blowing, social dances on Saturday nights, and color war as the culminating summer activity."[88]

Currently the Ramah movement has eight overnight camps and three day camps. Unlike the URJ camps, which are officially owned by the movement, though they operate locally, the Ramah camps are independently owned and endowed. However, on a whole, the Ramah camps coordinate much better than URJ camps do educationally, with two yearly meetings for the educational directors and though publishing movement-wide curricular pieces which camps have the option of using.

Most of the Ramah camps currently have two periods a day of content-Jewish learning. One is based entirely on Hebrew language and Hebrew language acquisition, and the other is based on Israel, Parashat HaShavuah, and on Chagim.[89] Recently, three or four of the camps have pared down to one total hour of education, attempting to combine the Israel, Parashat HaShaavuah and Chagim lessons with the Hebrew.

While the Hebrew program at Ramah has waned and grown in priority over the years, it is currently on the upswing. The program is either taught Ivrit b'Ivrit, or through more informal instruction techniques that sometimes fail in their attempts to not seem like a classroom.[90] Currently, according to Ami Hersh, Ivrit b'Ivrit is very much in vogue.

The curriculum at Ramah camps attempts to grow on itself summer after summer, but the fact that Ramah campers are a blend of dayschool and non-dayschool campers provides a major challenge for curriculum design. The ratio is as high as 60% dayschool

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[88] Schwartz, S.R., "Camp Ramah: The early years (1947-52)." *Conservative Judaism*, 40, 12-42. 1987. p. 38. in Joseph Reimer, "Vision, Leadership, and Change: The Case of Ramah Summer Camps" 2010. p. 249.
[89] *Parashat HaShavuah*, the weekly Torah portion. *Chagim*, Holidays.
[90] *Ivrit B'Ivrit*, Hebrew taught in Hebrew.

to 40% non-dayschool campers in Ramah of the Berkshires. This forces the camp to try to group campers according to their strengths in a specific subject, which ends up being complicated and makes implementing curriculum that grows on itself difficult.

While Hebrew instruction has changed over the years, the language itself is very prominent at Ramah camps, including signage in Hebrew and the names of activities and buildings. Hebrew is considered by Hersh to be, "the language of the *chadar ochel*" across the Ramah camps – there is a one meal or up to a day a week where Hebrew is the language at the tables; announcements in the *chadar ochel* are done in Hebrew; and all singing, which takes place after meals, is done in Hebrew not in English.[91] T'fillot are done exclusively in Hebrew, and the *Mishlachat* members, Israeli counselors brought in for the summer, are mandated with speaking Hebrew at Ramah.[92]

Every camp has its own curriculum for the Jewish learning period, though there is some coordination between camps through the national office. Hersh is particularly proud of the movement's Israel education, as he points out, "We started the same year Israel was started. Ramah has been a Zionist camp from day one."

Five years ago, Ramah received a grant to look at and re-do how it presents Israel education. The Ramah movement, encouraged by this grant, is now working hard to present a view of Israel that is deeper than "Kotel and falafel Israel." Hersh feels that the curriculum, which he was instrumental in writing, has been generally well received. The only dissention has come from Israeli staff who find it problematic to teach a more nuanced view of Israel.[93]

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[91] *Chadar Ochel*, dining room. This is also true for singing at all other times as well.

[92] *Mishlachat* groups are present on almost every Jewish summer camp, not just Ramah camps.

[93] I have also found Israeli counselors are difficult to break out of their *hasberah* (advocacy) training in order to present a more nuanced view of Israel.

In order to enroll in camp, Ramah campers are required to be in a Jewish educational program during the year. This could be Hebrew High School or a privately scheduled series of conversations with a rabbi. The policy is loose as to what it defines as Jewish education, but the movement does enforce this policy. This policy encourages families and campers to have an ongoing experience of Judaism that escapes the bounds of the summer months.

To further break down the divide between a fully Jewish summer and the rest of the year, the camping movement also has specific projects it considers 'take-home' projects that are started on camp. One example of a project of this sort is spending time on camp building Havdalah sets and learning the liturgy. Campers are then sent home with the physical objects and their knowledge of the ritual, so that Havdalah can be done at home.

The directors of the various Ramah camps set the curriculum for each camp, with some directors outsourcing this job to a Rosh Chinuch – usually a day school teacher that has been on camp for many years. A faculty of teachers runs both the Judaic and Hebrew programs according to their particular strengths. These teachers are usually area rabbis and professional educators, but sometimes can be knowledgeable parents.

The *madrichim* are not used in any official capacity. Once at Ramah camps the education hours were a time that these staff would meet and plan activities for rest of the day, but currently the *madrichim* are being encouraged to sit in to these education sessions, learn, and help with the kids.

Zachary Lasker, who worked on Ramah camps and wrote his doctoral dissertation on staff training in the camping movement notes that there is a huge amount of responsibility and pressure placed on counselors at Ramah:

> In the Ramah environment, a great deal of responsibility is placed in the hands of counselors, often as young as eighteen, who serve *in loco parentis*, and who must draw on the same types of skills possessed by highly experienced parents, social workers, nurses, rabbis, cantors, and teachers so that campers return to their families and communities transformed into stronger individuals than they were before the start of the summer.
> The counselors themselves are another target population for Ramah administrators interested not only in the needs of the paying campers, but also in growing Jewishly literate young adults committed to the values of Conservative Judaism and prepared to impart those values to the next generation.
> Literature, research and anecdotal evidence points to two goals that Ramah camps strive for, as well as the methods to ensure their attainment. The first goal is to train staff to serve as Jewish role models, caregivers, and educators for their campers. The second goal is to prepare these teenagers and young adults for a lifelong commitment to the development of Jewish you, to education, and to continuity as a profession, volunteer, and/or parent.[94]

All of the Ramah camps currently have staff learning during the summer, but because of the great demand on counselor time, this sometimes provides to be challenging. Some Ramah camps only manage to have a single night a week, but others manage to schedule learning opportunities for counselors nearly every night

While Shabbat at Ramah is a day of rest according to the understandings of Conservative Judaism, it is not a rest from education. Lasker points out that at Ramah, Shabbat is used as a deep educational experience, "The goals of Sabbath observance at Ramah are not restricted to campers enjoying a nice communal experience, but also that they understand the ritual practices of the weekly holiday and commit themselves to future observance."[95]

Two recent shifts in Ramah education, according to Hersh, are attempts to update content and to integrate online and multimedia experiences. He notes that these

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[94] Zachary Adam Lasker, "The Education of Ramah Counselors: Madrichim as Educators and Learners." 2010. p. 160

[95] *Ibid.* p. 161

mediums sometimes feel at odds with the camp atmosphere, but that more and more camps are beginning to use these technologies. This is especially a challenge, he feels because they can make the setting seem more formal, and though they can seem so, he believes that education on camp "should never feel like a classroom."

The historic dream of explicitly shaping the hidden curriculum at Ramah camps is still present. Hebrew is heard around the camp in the pool during 'buddy checks,' in the *chader ochel*, on the sports field, and when the camp dances, it is to Israeli hip-hop music. There are small ways that Hebrew is currently integrated as well, including in the cheers used during color war, and through the use of Israeli sports team names. At one camp, kids can learn about new Israeli and Hebrew music by visiting an area of camp where there are headphones and an audio device. The campers can go to this part of camp, pick and try out new music, and share what they have discovered with their friends at their own pace.

The attempt to integrate Judaism into every facet of camp continues into the night, when as the Sh'ma is said at bedtime, there is always a nighttime *kavvanah*, when words of intention about that particular moment are shared.

One of the programs that Hersh is particularly proud of is the Havdalah ceremony at one of the Ramah camps. The ceremony always takes place in the camp's amphitheater space at the end of Shabbat. At the conclusion of the ceremony, there is Israeli dancing, which goes on for over an hour, and has made the whole Havdalah ritual so popular that the camp now has to live-stream the whole event over the internet.

One element of Ramah camps that Hersh thought it was important to mention was the inclusion and integration of special needs campers and staff into the Ramah

camping community. This provides a wonderful opportunity to talk about Jewish values when these participants make their impact on the whole camp population.

Ramah, like other North American camping movements is also a recipient of philanthropic resources. A recent opportunity for Ramah camps has been to participate with the URJ camps in the FJC Kivun initiative, a program to train the individuals running specialty areas in integrating Judaism into their area.[96] Hersh is eager to see how this will effect the sports, songleading, and other elements of both movements.

Ramah camps and URJ camps have much to share with each other. Specifically we can both learn from the amount of reflection put into the shaping and continual running of the Ramah movement, especially in the time of the Melton Faculty Seminar. The process of sharing between the camping movements is organic and ongoing through programs such as the Cornerstone fellowship and the Kivun initiative. Staff do migrate between the two camping movements, such as Sara Beth Berman, who is a Nadiv fellow at URJ Coleman, who also worked at Ramah of the Berkshires. Both camps do things well and are right to share their strengths, but this sharing should not come at the expense of learning from radically different organizations that are stronger on youth and young adult empowerment, such as Netzer Olami, Habonim Dror and Camp Stone.

Orthodox Camps – Camp Stone

Camp Stone is held as an exemplar of a North American summer camp by Avi Orlow and Alex Pomson. Neither claim that Camp Stone is typical of an Orthodox summer camp, and it is not presented here because of its ideology, but rather for its outstanding education program. I have been given access to, but have been asked not to

[96] This program is discussed at more length in several other places in this thesis.

quote directly from a paper by Alex Pomson, written for the AVI Chai Foundation in December 2012, titled, "Summer camp as an incubator of Jewish leadership: The case of Camp Stone." Though I cannot quote from this article, I am able to draw on conversations with Avi Orlow, the education director at the Foundation for Jewish Camp, in order to paraphrase how the education is run at this Orthodox camp.

Before I talk about education at this camp specifically, it is important to note that Orthodox Jewish camping is different educationally from Reform Jewish camping in that the base level of Jewish education is much higher. Counselors and campers both live in a world that contains more overt Jewish content than their Reform counterparts. While Reform camps seek to acculturate participants into living Judaism, Orthodox camps are a fun extension of an already deep experience of Jewish life, and provide a different type of education setting where Judaism can continue to be lived. Practically, this means that staff are more Jewishly knowledgable.

I think that there are two major elements in Alex Pomson's description of the camp that need to be emphasized here – that the camp is consciously a leadership incubator for young adults, and the camp spends an incredible amount of resources empowering its staff to run educational programming.

This learning happens through big, sociodrama style programming, and through smaller individual learning time. Orlow shares that each day, "the whole camp, from director to kitchen staff, spends one hour, the same hour, learning." That many hours of education requires preparation to do well. Therefore the camp holds an intersession in the middle of its two sessions where it sends campers home so the madrichim have time to learn and prepare what they are going to teach during the second session of camp.

Pomson says that Camp Stone serves two populations very consciously – campers and its young adult staff. By empowering its young adult staff to become leaders, it both helps their development and the level of care and investment that they bring to their campers.

The camp has also made a financial commitment to these dual goals by maintaining a very high staff to camper ratio. Pomson reports that there are close to one staff member for every two campers. This is a great for both the staff members, who have a chance to learn and develop their own skills on camp and for campers, who benefit from the individual attention they gain with such a high ratio.

The camp director and other adults on camp are in the background, advising on programming and participating in philosophical discussions with staff. Adults are hired as mentors and supporters of young adults, but not managers. They are asked, though they reportedly find it difficult, to "let go," and let the younger staff run things. Pomson reports that this does mean programming is sometimes more simplified, or organizational mistakes are made because of a lack of experience, but Pomson feels that these minor hiccups yield a much larger gain. These younger staff do everything from driving farm vehicles to running elements of the camp infrastructure – including feeding around 500 people. Because of this responsibility, Pomson feels the counselors are able to develop quickly into responsible leaders.

One can extrapolate Avi Orlow's comments on the Habonim Dror movement to Camp Stone; a counselor given the responsibility of educating and providing logistical support is well prepared to be a Jewish adult.

What Can We Learn from These Camps?

While I hope that individuals will draw their own conclusions from the above vignettes, there are four elements that I want to emphasize, and see as important to Jewish education. Some of these are areas I know have been approached by URJ camp professionals in the past with varying degrees of success. Other areas address needs that have not been recently addressed in our movement, but which would strengthen our Reform Jewish community in deep and powerful ways. These four areas are: youth empowerment, ongoing Jewish education for camp directorial teams, creating a culture of year-round engagement with Reform Judaism that includes camp in the summer and other meaningful community building engagement during the school-year, and the creating a culture where youth are expected by their synagogues, parents, counselors and peers, to be engaging in a specific Reform Jewish journey with specific milestones. Three of these areas, for me, answer the question every Jewish youth worker should be asking themselves after reading this chapter, "Why are Habonim Dror and Netzer Olami's leadership programs oversubscribed while many other camps, including URJ camps, are consistently struggle to find enough counselors and qualified senior staff?"

Youth Empowerment

Habonim Dror, Camp Stone, and Netzer Olami prove that high school and college age youth can successfully run a youth movement and a summer camp. The members of these youth movements, while learning invaluable life skills such as budgeting and child welfare, become owners over their own Jewish identity. In order to teach about Labor Zionism, members of Habonim Dror need to first wrestle with which parts of Labor Zionism they agree and disagree with. They need to sort out what information

they feel comfortable personally teaching to other members of the movement. Trusted with teaching other Jews, they need to do research on the material that they find important to teach, and then to create a framework through which they can transmit this information onwards. This is also a model that seems to be successful at Camp Stone, just as at these other camps, with logistical issues as well as education. Logistical control is just as important as educational, because the hidden (or implicit) curriculum is part of the camp educational package.

North American Reform teenagers and college-age counselors are not any less capable, and in fact are tapped to take on leadership roles with similar demands in their lives outside of camp. Regional board members on the North American Federation of Temple Youth (NFTY), who regularly undergo the difficult process implicit in the creation of an educational program for their NFTY regions, can sometimes find their skills ignored when they attend URJ camps.

If we are serious about creating a strong Jewish identity, we should do all within our power to give youth opportunities, as Habonim Dror and Netzer Olami do, to shape their visions of Judaism through experimentation and controlling the logistics of how Judaism is lived in our institutions.

Ongoing Jewish Education for Camp Directors and Assistant Camp Directors

There is no question that the educational agenda on summer camps is set by the directorial team. The JCC movement's transition to educational camping through its participation in Jewish educational leadership initiatives shows the power of these programs. Many of our camps have participated, or are currently participating in the *Yitro Leadership Program*, run by the Foundation for Jewish Camp and funded by the AVI Chai

Foundation, which provides a Jewish educational leadership experience for assistant camp directors. The partner program for camp directors is not directed towards movement camps.

I am confident many of our camp directorial teams are heavily engaged in their own education, because it is such an important element. It is important to mention education's transformative power, not only for our campers and counselors, but also for camp leadership.

Creating a 'Year-Round' Culture

One of the big discussions in camping at the moment is about "taking camp home." I do not think this is enough. We need to create a year-round way of belonging, which 'takes Reform youth programs home' automatically and as an expected part of participation. More on this will be mentioned more later in this thesis, but it is important to note that there are models for how this can be done well already present in other camps. On Orthodox camps, like Camp Stone, yearlong involvement is a given. Some camps, such as the JCC camps, feel that this will happen naturally through the values taught on camp during the two summer months and through the fact that people live nearby. Others, such as Ramah, require participation in Jewish education during the year.

Netzer Olami and Habonim Dror are not two-month programs. They are youth movements, which happen to run a long program in the summer called 'summer camp.' They also run winter camps, and programing in the other seasons as well. Participants see each other during the off-season, and community and excitement builds for big events.

The URJ summer camps, at several points in their history and in several regions, used to be a place where NFTY programing continued during the summer. If we are

serious about youth engagement, the relationship between these programs needs to be re-imagined so that the summer is an annual gathering of year-long committed Reform Jews.

A Reform Jewish Journey

There is a culture on some URJ camps, but not on others, of a Reform Jewish journey that one takes from the time one begins camp until the time one is too old to be a counselor on camp. This journey includes a summer in Israel (within almost every camp program), and eventually culminates with a summer as a Foundation for Jewish Camp trained Cornerstone counselor. This Jewish Journey is explicit in other movements, such as Netzer Olami and Habonim Dror.

In these movements, there is pressure from respected leaders, from peers, and often from parents to participate in this journey. For Netzer Olami, this Reform Jewish Journey includes a very expensive year in Israel, but synagogues, the movement, and parents are committed enough to make this a priority, because it is part of the journey.

We need to create and advertise a movement-wide Reform Jewish Journey, reinforced by local rabbis, synagogues, our youth institutions, and eventually by the youth themselves. It needs to be a journey that can be believed in. For Habonim Dror and Netzer Olami, this journey, ideally, ends with *Aliyah L'Yisrael*. Many in NFTY and in our URJ camp community feel that the Reform North American journey is designed to direct them into the rabbinate. To be successful, this journey needs genuine end-points that can garner support and buy-in. In addition to rabbinic recruitment, our movement would be well served by a stronger presence of Jewish role models that are working towards as sustainable future, and look to integrate Judaism into their professional lives, no matter what their career path.

These are the lessons that I have learned from these camps: Empowered youth, self-governed through democratic bodies, could make their own choices, and set their own paths. Guided by their interpretations of Reform Judaism,[97] our youth are perfectly capable of forming their own Jewish Journeys and their own vision of a year-round-culture. Decentralization and Integration, the two main concepts that will be discussed in the rest of this thesis, are steps towards youth empowerment in a way that presents Reform Judaism as a compelling and legitimate way of life – a true living Judaism.

[97] Guidance and advice from professionals and rabbis, in my mind, is part of Reform Jewish decision-making.

4. The Magic of Camp Education: Pay No Attention to the Man Behind the Curtain

"On camp… children have ample time, and through an interesting Jewish cultural program the camp can create the necessary environment. Even though the camp may not succeed in imparting a great fund of Jewish knowledge, it can implant a love for and an interest in things Jewish, and arouse in the child a desire for Jewish knowledge. This love, interest, and desire, if properly utilized by thoughtful parents, will mean half the battle won in their struggle to give their children a Jewish education..." – Samson Benderly[98]

There have been many efforts to reveal what is behind the curtain and to experiment with making the magic of camp even more potent. While individual camp directors and advisory committees have been doing this for some time, it is only since the publication in 2002 of a comprehensive study of Jewish camp education and a book based on this research that a body of scholarly literature on 'camp magic' has started to develop.[99]

The conversation has continued both in the formal published literature, by educators like David Bryman, Joseph Reimer and Michael Zeldin, and in internal documents and discussions within the URJ (Union for Reform Judaism) and the FJC (Foundation for Jewish Camp) as these organizations strive to better deliver Jewish education through camping.[100]

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[98] Samson Benderly, "The Camp and the Child" from [the original] Camp Achvah Program, *Jewish Education* 20:3, Summer 1949 issue "Dr. Samson Benderly: Leader in American Jewish Education" p109.

[99] One example of a camp that was very focused on scholarly attempts to bring education into a movement camp was Ramah's advisory board of educators (including Joseph Schwab and other well known names in education). Seymour Fox and William Novak, "Vision at the Heart: Lessons from Camp Ramah on the Power of Ideas in Shaping Educational Institutions," 2000. p. 18.
The original study is by Amy L. Sales and Leonard Saxe, "*Limud by the Lake*: Fulfilling the Educational Potential of Jewish Summer Camps" 2002. The book based on the survey is Amy L. Sales and Leonard Saxe, How Goodly Are Thy Tents: Summer Camps as Jewish Socializing Experiences. 2004.

[100] e.g. Joseph Reimer and David Bryfman, "Experiential Jewish Education" 2008., David Bryfman, "Experiential Jewish Education: Reaching the Tipping Point" 2011, Joseph Reimer, "Beyond More Jews Doing Jewish: Clarifying the Goals of Informal Jewish Education, 2007, including the response articles in

This chapter will look at some of the educational ideas that attempt to describe how learning works at camp. First we will look at the theoretical basis for Jewish camp education, the concept that all experience leads to learning. In order to introduce a working vocabulary. We will then look at one way of categorizing the experiences that happen on camp, between experiences that socialize campers into the Jewish people and experiences that attempt to deliver Jewish knowledge to campers through deep educational experiences. Then we will look at the way these educational experiences are delivered on camp through implicit and explicit curricular tools that are available to the camp educator. Some call these the surface and embedded strategies in camp education. Finally will come a quick reminder of the importance of vision and goals to successful education.

Once we have established these more abstract elements in this chapter, the next chapter will delve into informal and experiential education on camp and two of the current 'hot topics' in camp education, 'centralization versus decentralization' and 'integration.'[101]

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the next edition of the Journal of Jewish Education, and Michael Zeldin, "Making the Magic in Reform Jewish Summer Camps" in Michael Lorge and Gary P. Zola's A Place of Our Own. 2006.

I have been fortunate enough to receive copies of many of these internal documents, which are quoted with permission. A special thanks to Lisa David at the Union for Reform Judaism, to Avi Orlow at the Foundation for Jewish Camp, and to Michelle Shapiro Abraham who serves as a consultant to both of these organizations and wrote many of these internal documents.

[101] One thing to keep in mind throughout this chapter is that this is a developing field with much of the vocabulary in flux. It is also a 'small Jewish world' of education, so some terms used in discussions of Jewish camp education are known to be used differently than they would be in the general education literature, such as the concept of *informal education*. Within the Jewish education world, there are different sets of vocabulary being used as well. While some differences in terminology have real meaning and implications, such as the difference between *informal* and *experiential* education (discussed later in this chapter), others are just the preference of the author, such as *hidden curriculum, implicit curriculum* and *embedded strategies* which all refer to the 'magic' that infuses every detail of camp.

Experience In Education

"The fundamental educational theory of Jewish summer camps is simple: If children associate Jewish life with sweetness - the smell of pine trees, the closeness of friends, laughter in the bunk - what they practice and learn at camp will remain with them for a lifetime. The approach is multi-fold: Shabbat observance, matters of daily life (e.g. song, mealtime rituals, prayer), formal study sessions, informal educational activities, and cues in the physical environment (Jewish symbols, sacred space, Hebrew language, etc.) Judaism is in the air at camp, but it is also transmitted with intentionality." – Sales and Saxe[102]

As was discussed in Chapter 1, from its inception, camping in America has always been considered an educational experience. The first known American camp, William Gunn's Gunnery Camp, which started in 1861, had an explicit focus of creating self-reliant, self-confident adults through experiential education.[103] For William Gunn, this was meant to be supplemental to the formal education his students received in school.

In the early 1900s, John Dewey, an educational philosopher, began to apply the nascent field of psychology to education. His work was influential in the progressive movement in American education, a movement focused on learner-centered education. Many of his writings appealed to Jewish educators in part because he believed minority groups could integrate into American society without assimilating.[104] Through these educators, his ideas made their way into the Jewish educational camping movement.[105]

I outline several of Dewey' relevant assertions here because they shaped some of the first Jewish educational camps, and the theory behind current discussions of both

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[102] Amy. L. Sales and Leonard Saxe, "Summer Camps as Jewish Socializing Experiences" 2008. p. 409.
[103] Gary P. Zola, "Jewish Camping and Its Relationship to the Organized Camping Movement in America" in Michael M. Lorge and Gary P. Zola, A Place of Our Own. 2006. p. 4.
[104] Jonathan B. Krasner, "The Benderly Boys and American Jewish Education" 2011. p. 4. One of these educators, Emmanuel Gamoran, directed education in the Reform movement from 1923-1959.
[105] Joseph Reimer claims that Bernard Reisman (in "Informal Jewish Education in the United States. A Report for the Mandel Commission." New York: Mandel Foundation: 1991) views Jewish informal education as emerging from the dual influences of Dewey's progressive educational philosophy and the practices of social group work. Joseph Reimer, "Beyond More Jews Doing Jewish: Clarifying the Goals of Informal Jewish Education" 2007.

informal and *experiential* Jewish education, outlined in Chapter 5, owes much to these concepts and ideas.

Central to Dewey's educational philosophy is that all of our experiences build our preferences and our habits:

> The basic characteristic of habit is that every experience enacted and undergone modifies the one who acts and undergoes, while this modification affects, whether we wish it or not, the quality of subsequent experiences. For it is a somewhat different person that enters into them. The principle of habit so understood obviously goes deeper than the ordinary concept of *a* habit as a… fixed way of doing things… It covers the formation of attitudes, basic sensitivities and ways of meeting and responding to all the conditions which we meet in living.[106]

This ability to help young Jews form habits of Jewish observance is what gives the immersive environment of camp its potential.

To be reach this potential, Dewey points to a few 'best practices' based in his educational philosophy and tempered through his experiences working in schools. One of the most important of these practices is that education must be learner-centered to be effective. [107] This means that it must start with the learner, their background, and whatever they bring to the experience. Instead of designing a cookie-cutter experience, or simply replicating a best-practice from another institution, Dewey insists that the experience is owned by the learner, and not the educator. [108]

The learner struggling along alone cannot reach the same heights as a learner working with an educator. The role of the educator is both to provide an emotionally and physically safe environment for the learner, but also to help guide reflection following the

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[106] John Dewey, "Experience and Education" 1938. p. 37

[107] *Ibid*. p. 40

[108] *Ibid*. p. 40

experiences. [109] By guided reflection, Dewey is talking about the role of the educator as a facilitator rather than as lecturer telling the student what they should have gotten out of the lesson, since the interpretation of the experience is up to the learner.

Dewey raises two concerns that are not thought of enough when planning experiential, or as he sometimes says *empirical*, education – mis-educative experiences and improvisation.

While we normally do not think of formal learning sessions with a faculty member lecturing as experiential learning sessions, Dewey reminds us that the learners are still having a Jewish experience while being (sometimes) bored out of their minds:

> The belief that all genuine education comes about through experience does not mean that all experiences are genuinely or equally educative. Experience and education cannot be directly equated to each other. For some experiences are mis-educative. Any experience is mis-educative that has the effect of arresting or distorting the growth of further experience…. Traditional education offers a plethora of examples of experiences of the kinds just mentioned.[110]

Too often in trying to deliver good and 'important' information, we neglect the possibility that the learners with whom we are working are associating Judaism and Jewish learning with information overload, sitting still, and missing out on other camp activities. I know I am guilty of ignoring this important teaching.

In trying to be 'fun' and 'engaging' we often become 'spontaneous.' Dewey warns that improvisation is the greatest threat to a proper educative experience. While creating experiential education may seem easier than preparing and delivering a lecture, this is not the case. Experiential education requires forethought and planning to be successful. If an educator is truly looking at all of the resources at their disposal and is committed to the

[109] *Ibid*. p. 64

[110] *Ibid.* p. 25.

learners' education, then the experience will be planned, and not left to chance. Improvised experiences are more likely to give confusing messages, and can needlessly miss out on entry-points into the learning.[111]

These concepts have deeply influenced American education and Jewish education, including the camping world. Seymour Fox, the former director of the Ramah movement, explains that in crafting the Ramah education curriculum, "Jewish education was conceived as character education… Joy and happiness must somehow be correlated with appropriate behavior," an idea that comes directly out of the Ramah movement's exposure to Dewey.[112]

Dewey's effects are also felt in recent discussions of camp education. One of the most respected current scholars on camp education is Joseph Reimer. Using the ideas of modern educational theorist, Lawrence Cremin, Reimer makes it clear still how widely accepted is John Dewey's idea of all experience contributing to learning.[113] From Cremin's work, Reimer draws the following conclusions about good education:

- Good education is "deliberate, systematic and sustained."
- Education involves a transmission of knowledge, an evoking of information from previous experiences, and for the learner to acquire knowledge through their own facilities.

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[111] *Ibid*. 90

[112] Seymour Fox, quoted in Jeffrey S. Kress, "Development, Learning, and Community: Educating for Identity in Pluralistic Jewish High Schools." Academic Studies Press, Boston: 2012. p. 16. These ideas also are present in the current practices in the movement: "Educationally, then, the goals of Sabbath observance at Ramah are not restricted to campers enjoying a nice communal experience, but also that they understand the ritual practices of the weekly holiday and commit themselves to future observance." Zachary Adam Lasker, "The Education of Ramah Counselors: Madrichim as Educators and Learners." 2010. p. 339.

[113] I am not claiming that this idea is Dewey's alone, but rather that he popularized it in Jewish education through the Benderly Boys.

- Education involves more than knowledge; it includes skills, attitudes, values or sensibilities.
- Learning can happen anywhere, but to be education, it must be deliberate, and
- The recipient makes their own learning out of the experience.[114]

There is no question here that guided experience is considered by Cremin to be the main educative agent. For Cremin, as for Dewey, there is an overlap between the acquisition of knowledge and the learning of skills, attitudes, values and sensibilities.

Socialization and Education: Attitudes, Knowledge and Behaviors

"Jewish camps are, either consciously or unconsciously, based on Plato's idea that the community educates and John Dewey's notion that "all of life educates." Dewey said that "above all, [educators] should know how to utilize the surroundings, physical and social, that exist so as to extract from them all that they have to contribute to building up experiences that are worthwhile." – Michael Zeldin[115]

The most recent academic literature generally supports the division of educative experiences on camp into those that socialize participants into camp culture and Jewish life, and those that provide deeper education. This division, created by Joseph Reimer, does have its critics who rightfully point out that there is much overlap between these types of experiences. [116] However these categories are helpful in looking behind the

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[114]Lawrence A. Cremin, *Traditions of American Education*. Basic Books, New York, 1977 as summarized in Joseph Reimer, "Beyond More Jews Doing Jewish: Clarifying the Goals of Informal Jewish Education" 2007.

[115] Michael Zeldin, "Making the Magic in Reform Jewish Summer Camps," in Michael M. Lorge and Gary Phillip Zola, A Place of our Own. 2006. p. 98.

[116] E.g. "Social and emotional dimensions are always present in religious, educational, moral, and aesthetic collective experience… Deepening informal educational experiences requires attention to the simultaneous confluence of social and educational dimensions of human experience, rather than their linear sequence." Harvey Shapiro, "Toward a Holistic Theory of Informal Jewish Education" p. 137.

curtain at the magic of camp, and seeing how URJ camps provide these two types of educative experiences.[117]

One of the challenges facing individuals who serve in the role of 'Education Director' or 'Limmud Director' at URJ Camps is that most educative experiences at camp takes place outside of the designated 'education time.' These learning experiences – including experiencing the mealtimes, figuring out how to live in a communal bunk, and living the daily and Shabbat schedules – all involve learning through socialization. Very quickly after their arrival, campers become socialized into their environment, learning the camp's language, norms, values, customs, traditions, history, mythology, and symbols.[118] The hope at URJ Camps is that this socialization process not only inducts the camper into camp culture, but also into the religious culture of the Jewish people. [119]

Research over the past few years makes it very clear that Jewish camps, on the whole, succeed at socializing their campers into Jewish live. Individuals who attended camp are more likely to light Shabbat candles, to be members of synagogues, and to be

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[117] Joseph Reimer first introduced this idea in: Joseph Reimer, "Beyond More Jews Doing Jewish: Clarifying the Goals of Informal Jewish Education" 2007.
It has been picked up in a variety of articles, notably in a joint article with Bryfman, and in Bryfman's later writing: Joseph Reimer and David Bryfman, "Experiential Jewish Education." 2008. and David Bryfman, "Experiential Jewish Education: Reaching the Tipping Point." 2011.

[118] This is a definition of 'culture' in Amy. L. Sales and Leonard Saxe, "How Goodly Are Thy Tents: Summer Camps as Jewish Socializing Experiences." 2004. p. 49.

[119] It is important to point out that URJ Camps are not the only camps that deal with these educational questions. Zachary Adam Lasker, points out specifically that, "As an agent of informal Jewish education, Camp Ramah has a responsibility towards socialization and education." in "The Education of Ramah Counselors: Madrichim as Educators and Learners." 2010. p. 161.
Jeffery Kress thinks that socialization is an important element of every Jewish educational setting: "Jewish education is marked by explicit goals in these domains (cognition, behavior, affect, spirituality, social relationships, and so forth). Jewish educational settings are expected not only to provide *knowledge about* Judaism but also to assist in the acculturation of students as participating members of the Jewish community." Jeffrey S. Kress, "Development, Learning, and Community: Educating for Identity in a pluralistic Jewish High Schools." 2012. p. 15.

actively involved Jews.[120] The socializing effects of camp have also been documented for campers and staff at URJ camps.[121]

While these socialization outcomes are part of the stated aims of the URJ camps,[122] the role of the Education Director at a URJ Camp generally focuses on another

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[120] To name a few sources that provide quantitative analysis of the socializing effects of camp:
Ramie Arian. "Jewish camping and Jewish renaissance." 2003.
Zvi Bekerman. The Social Construction of Jewishness: An Anthropological International Study of a Camp System. 1986.
David Bryfman. Giving Voice to a Generation: The Role of the Peer Group in the Identity Development of Jewish Adolescents in the United States.2009.
B. Cohen. "The impact of summer camping upon the major North American Jewish religious movements." 2005.
Steven M. Cohen and Laurence Kotler-Berkowitz, "The Impact of Childhood Jewish Education Upon Adults' Jewish Identity: Schooling, Israel Travel, Camping and Youth Groups," 2004.
Steven M. Cohen and Judith Veinstein. "Jewish Overnight Camps:: A Study of the Greater Toronto Area Market." 2009.
Steven M. Cohen. "The Impact of Varieties of Jewish Education Upon Jewish Identity."1999.
Steven M. Cohen, Ron Miller, Ira M. Sheskin and Berna Torr "CAMP WORKS: The Long-term Impact of Jewish Overnight Camp." 2011.
Steven M. Cohen. "Camp Ramah and Adult Jewish Identity." 1999.
U. Farago. The Influence of a Jewish Summer Camp's Social Climate on the Campers' Identity.1972.
Harold S. Himmelfarb, "Evaluating the Effectsof Jewish Summer Camping in the United States." 1989.
A. Keysar and B. A. Kosmin. Research Findings on the Impact of Camp Ramah. 2004.
A. Keysar and B. A. Kosmin. The Camping Experience, 19995-1999: The Impact of Jewish Summer Camping on the Conservative High School Seniors of the "Four Up Study". 2001.
Sales, A. L., & Saxe, L. How Goodly Are Thy Tents: Summer Camps as Jewish Socializing Experiences. 2004.
Sales, A. and L. Saxe. "Limud by the lake: Fulfilling the educational potential of Jewish summer camps." 2002.
Amy. L. Sales Nicole Samuel and Matthew Boxer, "*Limmud by the Lake* Revisited Growth and Change at Jewish Summer Camps", 2011.

[121] Roberta Louise Goodman (lead researcher), "Sustaining Jewish Educational Excellence in URJ Camps" URJ 2008. Internal URJ Resource file (Power Point for Facilitated Session on Findings with YD & LJL staff.ppt) provided by Lisa David, 2012.

[122] "- Provide campers and staff with rewarding, challenging and pleasant experiences in a religious environment, and aid in the development of knowledgeable, believing and practicing Reform Jews. - Provide youth, adults and families with opportunities to experience the fullness of Jewish life through prayer and other meaningful religious experiences. - Translate religious concepts into real experiences, developing or modifying personal character and group behavior in consonance with the ideals of Judaism."
From the URJ Crane Lake Camp/Eisner Camp Handbook

aim of the URJ camps: "We aim to provide opportunities to study Torah at graded levels of understanding and appreciation."

Michelle Shapiro Abraham, who is an influential consultant with both the URJ and the FJC, in conjunction with Adam Weiss, looks at camp as affecting attitudes, knowledge and behaviors:

> **Attitudes** refer to the way young people feel about the Jewish Core Values and how they believe the core values manifest themselves in their lives. They can be measured by pre and post camp surveys, conversations with campers and parents, and as evidenced by the life choices young people make throughout their lifetime.
> **Knowledge** refers to information young people should know such as vocabulary, prayers and information, or skills they should possess, that are central to understanding Jewish core values. The best way to test whether a young person has knowledge is by asking them. The best way to test whether a young person has acquired a skill is by asking them to demonstrate.
> **Behaviors** are observable things that young people actually do, such as light candles or engage in discussion. Behaviors are physical manifestations of the core values. Behaviors are easy to measure because they can be observed (or at least described).[123]

This schematization is not an alternative to Reimer's division of education and socialization, but rather can be used to describe the desired outcomes of these two types of experiences.

Experiences that socialize, in the way the term is used by Bryfman, Reimer, Sales and Saxe, affect the future attitudes and behaviors of participants through group language, norms, customs, and the other components of camp culture. For this to work, it requires the participants to gain knowledge of the culture of the group through their participation. In other words, by being in a dining hall where *Birkat Hamazon* is recited, a

[123] Michelle Shapiro Abraham and Adam Weiss, "What Makes Camp Jewish? And How Can We More Effectively Align Programs to Achieve Jewish Youth Outcomes?" provided by Michelle Shapiro Abraham in draft form in, March 2012. Concepts from this same article also appeared as adapted in URJ materials I received from Lisa David, "ECE – Camp Caravan – MSA", which I received in February 2012, making it clear that the URJ also received and used this document.

camper learns that at this Jewish camp, a Hebrew prayer is said after meals. This is not a deep acquisition of knowledge, but some knowledge is gained simply through participation. There is a danger of this knowledge being mis-educative – such as if the camper sees *Kiddish* and comes to their own conclusion that *Kiddish* is a blessing for the wine instead of a blessing said over the wine to mark the celebration of Shabbat.

Providing learning experiences in addition to socialization has been a hallmark of Jewish camping since the advent of the 'educational camping movement' in the 1950s, when Jewish camps sought not to just provide recreational and social experiences for Jews but to educate the next generation of Jews.[124] This is the type of education that is meant, generally, when we talk about 'education at URJ camps.'[125] These learning experiences are more focused on the acquisition of knowledge. Either this is their total focus, and they are *lishma* – for the sake of learning, or the educational experience is delivered in the hope that the knowledge gained will affect future behaviors and attitudes.

There is a lack of research on the ability of camps to deliver knowledge, and very little published literature exists on how camps can best deliver 'deep' education. This thesis has collected some of the theory and current practice on camp as an agent of education (as opposed to a socializing agent), but does not attempt any quantitative research. Some of the questions that will be raised later in this thesis – including the effectiveness of integration as a replacement for a daily hour of education and the relative effectiveness of centralized Jewish education delivered by faculty versus de-centralized

[124] Jonathan D. Sarna, "The Crucial Decade in Jewish Camping" in Michael M. Lorge and Gary P. Zola, A Place of Our Own. 2006.

[125] Chapters 1 and 2 provide a more in depth history of this type of learning experience at URJ camps, including how it is currently being delivered in our movement's camps.

Jewish education delivered by staff – could be better understood through quantitative research.[126]

Implicit (Hidden) Curriculum: Embedded Strategies

"On camp… children have ample time, and through an interesting Jewish cultural program the camp can create the necessary environment. Even though the camp may not succeed in imparting a great fund of Jewish knowledge, it can implant a love for and an interest in things Jewish, and arouse in the child a desire for Jewish knowledge. This love, interest, and desire, if properly utilized by thoughtful parents, will mean half the battle won in their struggle to give their children a Jewish education..." –Samson Benderly[127]

Given that learning comes through experience, and every object and every individual has the possibility to affect the experience of a learner at camp, then everything and everyone at camp –including the camp facility itself – is an agent of education. Michael Zeldin explains that properly understood, this is the definition of 'curriculum,' especially as the term applies to camps:

> Curriculum can be understood as a 'course to be run,' and in this sense it applies to schools, with their prerequisites and requirements, more than it applies to camps. But curriculum can more aptly be understood as all the experiences that participants have under the auspices of an institution… Curriculum thus involves conceptualizing, creating, molding, and implementing all of the activities and environments camps offer, from the moment campers first see a promotional video or pick up a camp brochure, to the last tear they shed as they drive away from camp, and even as they carry memories back to their homes and communities. Curricular thinking invokes the programs and activities along with the human dynamics among campers and between campers and staff; it includes the policies and procedures the camp invokes, the culture the camp creates and the traditions and rituals that are such a important part of camp life.[128]

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[126] If these studies are ever carried out, the researcher will need to keep in mind that each camp draws different participants, and there is surely no right answer for every camp. However a better understanding of these issues could help many camps make informed decisions based on their populations.

[127] Samson Benderly, "The Camp and the Child" from [the original] Camp Achvah Program, *Jewish Education* 20:3, Summer 1949 issue "Dr. Samson Benderly: Leader in American Jewish Education" p. 109.

[128] Michael Zeldin. "Making the Magic in Reform Jewish Summer Camps," in Michael M. Lorge and Gary Phillip Zola, A Place of our Own. 2006. p. 88.

It is remarkable to read memoirs of how in one type of educational camp, buildings were crafted to express the ideals of the movement and many of the above mentioned curricular tools were used to socialize members to its educational message:

> The efforts to appeal to all sides of person through the camp did not just focus on the human factor 'leader' alone. The camp was also designed to have an educational impact as a whole. Nothing should be left to chance; everything had to be planned down to the smallest detail, "The camp is not something superficial, but expresses the attitudes of the persons who have created it and all their abilities: … honesty - cheerfulness- love of the soil and the land - economic and agricultural understanding - a sense of order - a sense of beauty and life-style…" Alongside the conscious design of the material side of the camp, components of indirect education were just as important if not more important: the staging and ritualization of all activities in camp. The regular rhythm of daily routines with its ritual activities from raising the flag and morning reveille to lowering the flag and sounding the tattoo were designed to achieve a lasting internal stimulation and formation of the participants… "Raising the flag in the mornings and lowering the flag in the evenings were always the most mysterious and festive moments in the day. Soon we also noticed how the maxim of the day and our song in the morning always corresponded to what we then discussed in the training or during the social evening. In this way, a day always fitted completely together." [129]

As can be seen at this camp, which, in some bizarre way, shares it roots with OSRUI and the WBTCs, the magic of camp can be very carefully controlled.[130] The people running

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[129] Schiedeck, Jürgen and Martin Stahlmann,"Totalizing of Experience: Educational Camps" in Heinz Sünker and Hans-Uwe Otto, "Education and Fascism," 1997. pps. 54-80.. The first inside of the larger quote is from a memoir of the Hitler Youth Camps quoted in this piece by Schiedeck and Stahlmann: Schlanghecke, W. (1937) Das Heim im Reichsarbeitsdeinist, Frankfurt/M. (no publisher). p. 10. The second quote is also quoted by Shiedeck and Stahlmann: Guager, G. (ed) (1936) *Mädel im Freizeitlager: Berichte aus pommerschen Sommerlagern,* Potsdam. p. 58

[130] In his personal memoir of the founding of Camp Hess Kramer, Alfred Wolf shares, "You might say that Camp Hess Kramer began when, in my teens, I was culled upon to organize Jewish youth groups in Heidelberg, in a Germany just shaken to its roots by the Nazi take-over. It was then that I realized how much of Jewish values I could get across to young people as we were hiking or camping together under the open sky. After my ordination at the Hebrew Union College, while lecturing at church camps for the Jewish Chautauqua Society, I saw the same idea at work for Protestant religious education." Alfred Wolf and Dan Wolf, "Wilshire Boulevard Temple Camps: The First 25 Years: 1949-1974, A Personal History," 1975.

the camp knew the power of socialization, that "education should evolve primarily through 'experience'…, above all, through the 'experience of community,'" and used community and peer groups to build a positive camping experience through the camp setting. [131]

And this carefully planned and thoughtfully delivered educational message seemed to be successful with those that experienced it:

> What has happened deep inside of them - day after day under the flying flag of the Hitler Youth Movement, in serious creativity and in cheerful, relaxed hours with their comrades - how they have fetched this into themselves - the cool sea breeze, the sound of the sea, the fragrance of the ripening earth, the wood with the dark conifers or the slender beech trees - they cannot say. But they will show it in the office, in the factory, at home, at school, all the many working days throughout one complete long winter up until the next summer camp through cheerful, self-evident fulfillment of duty.[132]

The Hitler Youth Movement's summer camps were effective socializing and educational experiences because they used what is sometimes called the 'hidden' or 'implicit' curriculum on camp.[133] If the Hitler Youth Movement could use these methods to teach

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Ernest M. Lorge, Herman Schaalman and other German-born Reform rabbis who helped found OSRUI "had experienced Jewish camping in Germany." Jonathan D. Sarna, "The Crucial Decade in Jewish Camping" in Michael M. Lorge and Gary P. Zola, A Place of Our Own. 2006. p. 42

[131] Schiedeck, Jürgen and Martin Stahlmann,"Totalizing of Experience: Educational Camps" in Heinz Sünker and Hans-Uwe Otto, "Education and Fascism" Political Identity and Social Education in Nazi Germany. Falmer Press, Washington, D.C.: 1997. pps. 54-80. p. 68.

[132] Guager, G. (ed) (1936) *Mädel im Freizeitlager: Berichte aus pommerschen Sommerlagern,* Potsdam. p. 11, quoted in Schiedeck, Jürgen and Martin Stahlmann,"Totalizing of Experience: Educational Camps" in Sünker, Heinz and Hans-Uwe Otto, "Education and Fascism" Political Identity and Social Education in Nazi Germany. Falmer Press, Washington, D.C.: 1997. pps. 54-80.

[133] The use of this example brings up an uncomfortable question of education that is more relevant to camps than other Jewish educational settings because of their long-term isolation – when does education turn into indoctrination? I will not address that question here, but know that Barry Chazan does address this question in some of his writing. Michael Zeldin in "Making the Magic in Reform Jewish Summer Camps" says that education crosses this line when there is no space for meaningful reflection about what is being taught. As we will see in the discussion of experiential education, reflection is a necessary (and too often neglected, in my experience) part of the educational process.

their beliefs effectively, we can use similar techniques to teach a Judaism of love and peace with similar effectiveness.

Amy Sales and Leonard Saxe assert that camp is 'magical' because it is: an isolated environment different from other environments that is nonetheless physically and emotionally safe; a totally controlled environment that is immersive over a long period of time; built on community which "springs up phoenix-like each year in June"; and through its culture.[134] These are all important elements in the socializing elements of camp, which form the core of Sales and Saxe's work on camp education.[135] However, these elements are also important for educators who seek to deliver knowledge based education as well, even if just for the need to make the educational experience a pleasant one.[136]

The term ''hidden' curriculum is problematic for Zeldin, who asks, "If the camp director is aware that part of the 'hidden' curriculum is to teach Jewish ideas and values,

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[134] Amy. L. Sales and Leonard Saxe, "How Goodly Are Thy Tents: Summer Camps as Jewish Socializing Experiences," 2004. pp. 48-49.

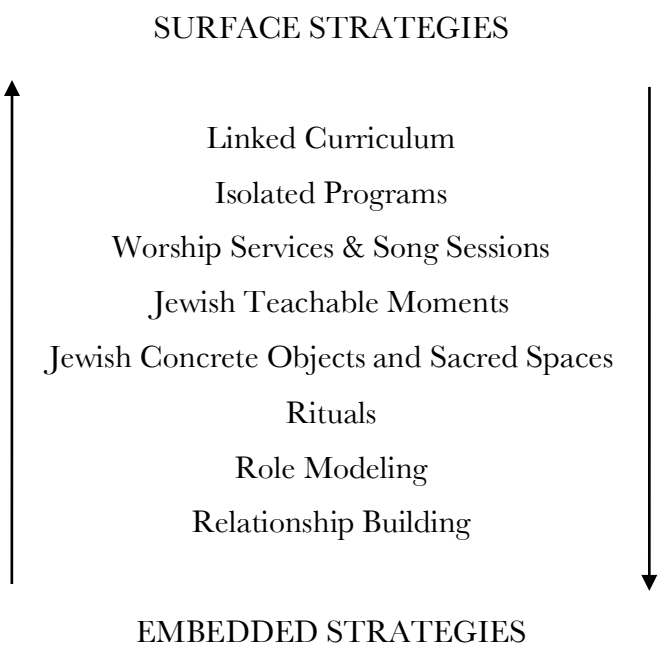
[135] Shira D. Epstein says in her review of the book, "Sales and Saxe note that in the informal Jewish education realm of residential camping, the hidden curriculum is uncovered. In other words, the enculturation into a lived Judaism is not a secondary endeavor - it is the endeavor." Book Review: How Goodly are Thy Tents: Summer Camps as Jewish Socializing Experiences by Amy L. Sales and Leonard Saxe (Brandeis University Press, 2004)," 2005. p. 109

Other researchers agree with Sales and Saxe's findings, and even if they also focus on knowledge acquisition. There are examples from the general literature and from our URJ Camps. On URJ Camps we have Michael Zeldin's article in A Place of Our Own and a study of Jewish Teachable Moments at GFC:
Erik H. Cohen and Yehuda Bar-Shalom, "Teachable Moments in Jewish Education: An Informal Approach in Reform Summer Camp" 2010. pp. 26-44

Here is one example in the general literature:
Gwynn M. Powell, "Research Notes: What Happens to Camp." 2003.

[136] Leonard A. Schoolman reminds us that, ""Creating the proper atmosphere at camp is as important as developing a cohesive and creative program. Indeed, the atmosphere and the program must reinforce each other because these two elements are not really separable. The students' lasting impression of the weekend camp experience will be a blend of all ingredients," in "Religious School Camp Weekend Manual: Experiential Edition" 1970. p. 17.

is it no longer hidden?"[137] Zeldin prefers to discuss 'implicit' and, (one would assume, though he never says the term outright) 'explicit' curriculums on camp. This differentiation, while more accepted in the literature, is discussed in the internal camp documents as 'Surface Strategies" and "Embedded Strategies" by Shapiro Abraham and Weiss. The main advantage to these terms is that the various strategies through which an educational message is delivered can be placed on a continuum based on how 'surface' or 'embedded' the strategy is:



The list of strategies here provides a very good reference for how education is delivered in the camp setting, but it is not an exhaustive list.

[137]For Zeldin, a truly 'hidden' experience – such as a role-play where campers do not know the truth – is problematic because the campers cannot opt-out of the activity. This may also be a factor in indoctrination (see note 133). Michael Zeldin. "Making the Magic in Reform Jewish Summer Camps," in Michael M. Lorge and Gary Phillip Zola, A Place of our Own. 2006. p. 109.

As Barry Chazan reminds us, "Jewish education takes place 'when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.'"[138] This thesis emphasizes knowledge-based education over socialization; thought it is possible to educate on concrete information through the hidden curriculum, it is much more difficult. As Shapiro Abraham observes, "while embedded curriculum techniques are important for enculturation and teaching ritual observance, they are less effective at teaching specific material or text." [139]

This does not mean that embedded curriculum techniques are totally useless for this purpose. For instance, strategically taping information on the Limmud theme or on Israel to the inside of a toilet stall where camp participants cannot help but focus on the information during some of their most personal and introspective moments has the opportunity to be both deeply informative, and also contribute to the *yomam valilah* learning milieu of camp.[140]

Educational material does not tape itself above urinals. And while star-filled summer skies are the perfect backdrops to many havdalah services, the arrangement of the benches and the musicians, the spices harvested from around the camp, the decision of who gets to hold the havdalah candle, and many more factors of the evening that blend seamlessly together for participants are not magic. They are planned and executed choices that can make a magical educational moment for the campers.

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[138] Deuteronomy 6:4–9. Barry Chazan, 'The philosophy of informal Jewish education' 2003. Danny Maseng also expressed the same sentiment when discussing the motivation behind how he ran the integrated education for the *tiferet* art program at OSRUI.

[139] Michelle Shapiro Abraham, "Approaches to Jewish Living: End of Year Report - FJC Specialty Camp Incubator" 2012.

[140] I have seen this been done at both URJ camps at which I have worked, and at educational training sites such as the Isabella Freedman Center.

Unfortunately, when choices are not consciously made, these elements are still providing an educative experience. If the havdalah ceremony seems hastily thrown together right after a well choreographed 'color-war' event, campers and staff see the juxtaposition and learn from it. If a camper pushes her way to the front, or pleads the loudest gets to hold the spice-box, campers and staff will learn from this. If the benches are so spread out that participation in the ritual is difficult for those far away, that will be those participants' experience of this Jewish ritual.

This is true for every element of camp. The fact that the walk to most activities from the boys' cabins is a much more difficult up-hill climb than from the girls' cabins at URJ Crane Lake Camp (CLC) reinforces gender stereotypes. The relative isolation and harder walk for the second oldest group and then the purposeful isolation of the oldest year-group at URJ Greene Family Camp (URJ GFC) delivers a lesson about the importance of those groups.

Every experience at camp can be controlled, for an investment of time or other resources. For instance, it would be much more expensive to change the educational message given by the location of the cabins at URJ CLC, but moving benches to make a more intimate camp-fire havdalah takes minimal effort.

It is the role of the educator to think of all of the experiences a camper undergoes. From their first experience of camp to the last day of camp, from the morning wake-up until bedtime, the educator tries to figure out as many environmental factors that can be used to deliver the educational message.

I will discuss integrated curriculum in Chapter 6, and URJ Six Points Academy in more detail there. But as a preview, this account reveals seven Jewish moments integrated and carefully planned into the daily schedule before 9am:

> At the URJ Six Points Sports Academy, Judaism is touched upon throughout the day. In the morning before breakfast campers chant a boker tov (good morning) chant during the calisthenics before breakfast. There is talk of integrating a "Modeh Ani" stretch into the routine as well. Before the meal the Motzi is said and after the meal, Birkat HaMazon is sung. During the meal, music is played, this is usually "counselors choice" and often includes Israeli rock and Matisiyahu, in addition to Top 40 secular songs. Before the campers head back to their bunks for Nikayon (clean up), a 10 minute set induction is given. This is a brief introduction using a video to teach the Jewish value of the day. Before 9 a.m., there are at least 6 points of exposure to Judaism and we could even call it seven, because the food they eat at the camp is kosher. Throughout the day, the "value of the day" is reinforced by the sports coaches. Three times a week there is a Jewish song session, the bunk counselors are Jewish athletes, and the evening program is called a Laila Tov program in which the counselors help the campers evaluate the integration of the value of the day.[141]

Many of the items on this list are explicit surface strategies, and a few are more embedded. All of these examples observed at URJ Six Points are the result of careful planning.

Scanning the literature on camp education, here is a massively incomplete list of elements of camp that have been manipulated to provide an educational message:

> Building architecture and arrangement ✸ Decorations inside of buildings, such as the chadar ochel ✸ The choice of music played over loudspeakers ✸ The music used for services ✸ The songs used after meals ✸ Stories told around campfires ✸ Seating arrangements ✸ The menu and the food served ✸ Style of clothing (such as Shabbat clothing, or Israeli pioneer style clothing) ✸ Enforcing the use of appropriate language ✸ The way announcements are made ✸ Modes of transportation and travel ✸ Personal hygiene ✸ Bed-time and wake-up ✸ Games and sports that are played ✸ The names of roads, buildings and living facilities ✸ Art objects and art projects ✸Ritual objects ✸ The presence (or lack of presence) of a camp library, and the placement of learning /prayer centers on camp ✸ News bulletins ✸ The use of Hebrew.[142]

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[141] Avram Mandel, "What Religious Schools Can Learn from 6 Points Sports Academy and Jewish Summer Camps" 2012.

[142] List mostly gleaned from:

Barry Chazan 'The philosophy of informal Jewish education' 2003.

Leonard A. Schoolman, "Religious School Camp Weekend Manual: Experiential Edition" 1970.

These are all items that have implications for Jewish education, and not just for dieticians, administrators and other staff on camp in their limited roles. If these individuals see themselves as Jewish educators and have knowledge of the educational vision of the camp, there is a better chance that these embedded strategies will be used to their potential.

One of the most interesting lines in Sales and Saxe's analysis of camp education, *How Goodly Are Thy Tents* shows just how important the embedded strategies are to the camp curriculum, "Overall we witnessed two types of missed opportunities as camp: failure to create opportunities for Jewish learning and failure to capitalize on such opportunities."[143] These two failures are failures not in the education hour, but in the fabric of the camp itself. The challenge, then, is to both create entry points into Jewish learning and to make sure that they are taken and used by staff.

The most important message about these embedded strategies and manipulations of the implicit curriculum is given by the famous educator Joseph Schwab, who acted as an educational advisor to the Ramah movement: "Schwab's first principle was 'planned education' as opposed to 'education by chance.'" If elements of the implicit curriculum are not planned, they still provide education – education by chance. It is the role of the camp education to change them into agents of education that purposefully serve the camp's educational message.[144]

And Daniel Isaacman, "Enriching Jewish Life Experiences in the Camp" 1969.

[143] Amy. L. Sales and Leonard Saxe, "How Goodly Are Thy Tents: Summer Camps as Jewish Socializing Experiences" 2004. p. 73.

[144] Brown, M. "The most important venture undertaken by the Seminary: Ramah in its first four decades." 1999, In S.A.Dorph (Ed.) Ramah reflections at 50: Visions for a new century (pp. 25-88). New York: National Ramah Commission, quoted in Joseph Reimer, "Vision, Leadership, and Change: The Case of Ramah Summer Camps" 2010.

Explicit Formal (Informal) Education on Camp: Surface Strategies

In the general education literature a there is a division between informal, nonformal and formal learning. What we Jewish educators often call 'informal education,' a term that entered the Jewish education vocabulary through "Dewey [in an effort] to delimit instruction in schools from learning outside of schools," is used in the general educational literature to describe the 'implicit' curriculum –learning which happens almost by accident through environmental influences.[145] The European Commission of Communities defines **informal** learning as:

> Learning resulting from daily life activities related to work, family or leisure. It is not structured (in terms of learning objectives, learning time or learning support) and typically does not lead to certification. Informal learning may be intentional but in most cases it is non-intentional (or "incidental"/random).[146]

While this is the definition that has gained acceptance in the general education literature, Dewey's use of the term to delineate the place of the education is still the main use of the term in most of the Jewish literature.

The term '**formal** education' comes from the word "form" and is delivered within "a structured system that includes chronological assessment, specific teacher qualifications, and is often government regulated."[147] This is the type of education that

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[145] Reinhard Zürcher. 'Teaching-learning processes between informality and formalization', 2010.
In "Experience and Education", Dewey is concentrating on the difference between traditional education (a body of knowledge, a set method of transmission in an ordered classroom with an adult curriculum imposed on children) versus a more progressive education. Learning then doing, versus doing and learning from it. This is a different dichotomy than just formal versus informal education. It is more formal versus experiential. (p. 18 bottom).

[146] Commission of the European Communities. *Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality*, Brussels: Commission of the European Communities: 2001.[http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2001:0678:FIN:EN:PDF. Accessed March 27, 2010], as quoted in Reinhard Zürcher. 'Teaching-learning processes between informality and formalization',2010.

[147] David Bryfman, "Experiential Jewish Education: Reaching the Tipping Point," 2011. p. 772.

takes place in a Jewish day-school. Some camp education also fits into this category, especially when delivered by trained faculty in a set education period. The Hebrew program at OSRUI definitely fits into this category, including a cumulative assessment given to campers before the beginning of their final year on camp.

Nonformal education is the term used in general education to discuss programs that fall between random 'informal' education and structured 'formal' education. It is difficult to make this distinction, and according to educators cited in Bryfman, this must be done on the "basis of the degree of *structure* and the degree of *intentionality*: Nonformal education is characterized by some kinds of structure (though different ones from formal educational institutions and processes), and includes some level of conscious intent to achieve learning, whether by overt teaching or other means."[148] These programs also include deliberate and systematic learning, often with an emphasis on skills, but in a less structured atmosphere than formal education.[149]

It is illustrative to sort Michelle Shapiro Abraham's examples of educational strategies, from surface strategies to embedded strategies, into these general-education categories:

Linked Curriculum

The linked educational programs on camp are often considered 'informal' education based to Dewey's definition – they take place outside of school, but the programs in this curriculum are often highly structured and could easily be run without

[148] Nicholas C. Burbules, "Self-educating communities: Collaboration and learning through the Internet." Learning in Places: The Informal Education Reader, Zvi Bekerman, Nicholas C. Burbules, Diana Silberman-Keller, eds. (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2006), pp. 273-284. p. 282. quoted in David Bryfman, "Experiential Jewish Education: Reaching the Tipping Point," 2011. p. 772.
[149] Husén & Postlethwaite Second Edition of the International Encyclopedia of Educational Research, 1994, cited in David Bryfman, "Experiential Jewish Education: Reaching the Tipping Point," 2011. p. 772.

change in a formal setting. These specific programs fall under the category of 'formal' education. There are some linked curriculum that are clearly nonformal in the way that they are presented and run, and some facilitators are exemplary at making these into experiential education. Linked curriculum, therefore, can either be formal or non-formal, depending on the structure of the activity.

Isolated Programs

Similar to linked curriculum, these programs can be run in a structured 'formal' way, or through nonformal methods. There is a tendency to make these programs more non-formal, depending on the time of day they are run at (e.g. evening programs are often non-formal) and who is running them (younger staff tend to have less structured programming).

Worship Services & Song Sessions

These programs are planned educational times in the day, but are much less controlled environments than a classroom setting, and are thus great examples of non-formal education.

Jewish Teachable Moments

By definition, these moments happen during 'normal' life, and are, in the general education definition, true informal education.

Jewish Concrete Objects and Sacred Spaces

The education provided by these objects and spaces is also during the day-to-day living on camp, and is informal.

Rituals

Camp rituals should be categorized with song-sessions and worship services. Even the daily routines which become rituals such as *nikayon* (bunk cleaning) and shower time are planned elements of the day. Whole camp rituals fall under non-formal education, but the daily rituals blur the line between non-formal (unstructured but planned) and informal (random) educational experiences.

Role Modeling

This is clearly informal education as it is happens at almost any moment a respected individual (staff member or older camper) is being observed. Learning (positive and negative) is constant and gathered through lived-life, making it informal.

Relationship Building

Very similar to role-modeling in the fact that it is a pervasive and often unintentional element of camp, and is also informal education.

All of these educational strategies on camp are often considered informal because of their setting, but it is helpful to apply the general education definitions to see if the level of informality in the programming makes the program a formal learning experience, or a non-formal experience.

The goal is not always to have non-formal education, but this is generally what people think about when discussing education at camp. For instance, formal Hebrew instruction is probably more effective than instruction just relying on campers to learn from their environments and through un-structured educational opportunities. Thus

mixing in non-formal and informal to reinforce the lessons learned in a formal setting may be the best way to teach some topics on camp.[150]

The opportunities for all three of these types of education are nearly limitless in a controlled environment such as camp. The next chapter of this thesis will look at the theory behind linked curriculum, isolated programs and Jewish Teachable Moments as they appear on URJ camps.

Before moving on to these specific topics, since educational possibilities abound at camp, educators need to decide which opportunities to take. Deciding which trick to pull out of the bag is a key part of camp magic, and one that must be controlled by the goals, aims objectives and vision of the institution. For an educational camp must have a way of deciding what to teach.

Goals, Aims, Objectives and Vision

When the Foundation for Jewish Camp's education specialist Avi Orlow sits down with camp leaders, he asks them to take out their camp literature, including the daily schedule and a map of the camp. With these materials in hand, he then asks the leaders to name three of the top educational goals of the camp, and then to highlight where on these materials the educational vision of the camp takes place. He encourages the camp's professional staff to ask serious questions about their dedication to their camp's educational goals, and to imagine what their camp would look like if they were to re-distribute the camp's resources into those areas.

According to Seymour Fox, the willingness to spend extravagant resources on staff training and to bringing great educational minds onto camp shows how the vision of

[150] Barry Chazan, The Greening of "Informal Jewish Education" Talks, 2007. p. 177.

Ramah carried it forward.[151] While Reimer shows this to be problematic as a reflection of Ramah's history, it provides an example of how an educational vision can come together.[152]

The appeal of Michelle Shapiro Abraham's work is that it is focused around goals, measures of success, and the creation of strategies to reach these goals. Her work provides examples of how her model is directly applicable to URJ camps. She carefully lays out a selection of Jewish Core Values (goals), Jewish Youth Outcomes (measures of success), and relevant Strategies (both embedded and surface), and shows how these strategies can be used to reach these Cover Values (goals) and Youth Outcomes (measures of success).[153]

The URJ does have a document outlining the goals and aims of its camps.[154] It is up to the director and staff at each camp to interpret these goals and to apply them to camp life. It is clear from discussions with different camps that the emphasis put on education is very dependent on the camp director. As Sales and Saxe observed in their research:

> At all of the camps, the director, sometimes with other senior staff, sets the tone. In addition to performing a myriad of duties related to the camp's health, safety, and financial viability, the director acts as a religious authority. Although influenced by lay boards and other interested parties, decisions about prayer, dietary laws, and the centrality (or not) of Jewish

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[151] Seymour Fox and William Novak, "Vision at the Heart: Lessons from Camp Ramah on the Power of Ideas in Shaping Educational Institutions" 2000.

[152] Joseph Reimer, "Vision, Leadership, and Change: The Case of Ramah Summer Camps," 2010.

[153] Michelle Shapiro Abraham and Adam Weiss, "What Makes Camp Jewish? And How Can We More Effectively Align Programs to Achieve Jewish Youth Outcomes?" Foundation for Jewish Camp internal document, provided by Michelle Shapiro Abraham in draft form in, March 2012. Concepts from this same article also appeared as adapted in URJ materials I received from Lisa David, "ECE – Camp Caravan – MSA", in February 2012.

[154] http://www.urjcamps.org/about/mission/

> education are made by the director on site. Even when following mandates from the national movement, the director governs implementation.[155]

At different points in their career, directors can be more or less focused on the educational potential of their institutions.[156] Those that are very serious about the educational potential have put much time and effort into crafting strong and innovative programs.[157]

As our discussion moves to informal and experiential education and begins to discuss some of the more controversial elements of camp education today (centralization versus decentralization and exclusively providing integrated education versus providing a learning hour) one must remember that every camp is different, and as long as that camp has based its strategies on the camp's vision and its desired outcomes, then that camp's decision must be respected.

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[155] Amy. L. Sales and Leonard Saxe, "How Goodly Are Thy Tents: Summer Camps as Jewish Socializing Experiences," 2004. p. 78

[156] David Berkman at Kalsman in a phone interview described the transition from the first few summers where he was primarily concerned with safety to the current state of the camp, which includes having a *Nadiv* educator funded by the URJ and the FJC to work year-round at the camp and at a community day-school.

[157] Rabbi Ron Klotz and Jerry Kaye are two examples of educators that have kept their camps focused on education. A recent study on what camp directors should focus on to maximize their camps educational potential (Gwynn M. Powell, "Research Notes: What Happens to Camp," 2003.) came up with these suggestions:

"In this study, the conclusions based on the qualitative data suggested that camp administrators may want to emphasize the mission and goals of camp to staff members, set specific boundaries and expectations for campers, create intentional, outcome-based activities and special events, and provide some sort of natural or unique environment for the campers. The camp experience coupled with opportunities for camper intrapersonal and Interpersonal growth lends support to the fact that camp can build an empowered camper and can truly do 'a world of good.'"

5. Informal versus Experiential Education

"On camp… children have ample time, and through an interesting Jewish cultural program the camp can create the necessary environment. Even though the camp may not succeed in imparting a great fund of Jewish knowledge, it can implant a love for and an interest in things Jewish, and arouse in the child a desire for Jewish knowledge. This love, interest, and desire, if properly utilized by thoughtful parents, will mean half the battle won in their struggle to give their children a Jewish education..." – Samson Benderly[158]

Education is consciously delivered through two main 'surface strategies' on URJ (Union for Reform Judaism) camps – a dedicated education hour (shiur/limud/mashehu or otherwise named) and the integration of Judaism into general programming. Not all camps employ both strategies, but all reform camps use one of these two methods. The application of these strategies is generally entrusted to an 'Education Director' (or 'Limmud Director, etc.) and take up the majority of this person's time on our URJ Camps.

There is a dedicated hour of education, which takes place at ten of the reform camps surveyed (see Appendix A), with the only exceptions being on the URJ Henry S. Jacobs Camp and URJ 6 Points Academy. As discussed in the preceding chapter, this education is a combination of formal and 'informal' education.

In the continuation of this thesis, I will be calling non-formal education 'informal' education because that is the term used in the community of discourse of Reform Jewish camping. This chapter will also discuss a new term, 'experiential education' which will be understood to be something different than 'good informal education,' as the term is sometimes used in the literature. Instead 'experiential education' is a type of informal education.

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[158] Samson Benderly, "The Camp and the Child" from Camp Achvah Program, *Jewish Education* 20:3, Summer 1949 issue "Dr. Samson Benderly: Leader in American Jewish Education" p109.

Defining Informal Education

One of the most influential authors on informal education is Barry Chazan, who wrote an often quoted encyclopedia entry on informal Jewish education.[159] In 2007, Joseph Reimer, discussing Barry Chazan and Bernard Reisman's work makes in important point: "Informal education is not what every counselor in a camp bunk or youth leader in a synagogue is doing. It is, rather, an educational approach that requires professional skill, imagination, and planning."[160] Informal education is a skill that needs to be developed, and as has been discussed above, not all programs that happen in a camp setting are true informal education.

I will address the discussion of who should be delivering this education in the discussion of centralized education versus decentralized education, but it should be noted that non-URJ camps that do informal education well, without the use of professional educators spend a lot of their resources training their counselors in informal education.[161]

The border between informal and formal education on camp is often blurred, because the border between 'formal' and 'non-formal' education has something to do with structure and intention. In fact, many authors point out that there is a blurring of formal and informal education in some day schools and in some other formal settings, and this distinction is a modern creation.[162]

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[159] Barry Chazan, 'The philosophy of informal Jewish education' 2003.

[160] Joseph Reimer, "Beyond More Jews Doing Jewish: Clarifying the Goals of Informal Jewish Education" 2007.

[161] Such as Habonim Dror, Netzer camps outside the United States, and other decentralized models where college-aged and younger staff do almost all of the education.

[162] Michael M. Lorge, Gary Phillip Zola, A Place of our Own. 2006. p. 85, David Bryfman, "Experiential Jewish Education: Reaching the Tipping Point", 2011. p. 767, Barry Chazan, 'The philosophy of informal Jewish education' 2003.

What, then, is informal education? Is it simply putting professional educators in informal clothes and holding a class in an informal outdoor setting?[163] Two useful guides are Barry Chazan's entry on informal education, and a book by the Israeli researchers Reuven Kahane and Tamar Rapoport. Kahane and Rapoport seem to base their research mainly on informal education in Israeli youth groups, and are discussing the concept of 'informality' as it applies to 'post-modern youth,' at the same time their conclusions are valuable to this conversation.

Kahane and Rapoport identify five ways in which informal education differs from formal 'systematic' curricula (the headings are my own):

1. Use of Emotion – "Informal curricula fuse cognitive and emotional elements. Cognitive aspects are often transformed into sentiments and vice versa."[164]
2. Experience Centered – "The informal curriculum shapes or modifies subjective experiences and connects them to objective conditions. It does so in three interrelated ways: (1) by interpreting technical experience; (2) by using goals as a means of mobilizing commitment and (3) by providing a context where ideas are transformed into action."[165]
3. Understandable Ideas are transmitted orally through pithy sound bites.[166]
4. Person-Centered Theatrical Learning – "The informal curriculum is dialogical, that is, it takes the form of conversations in which ideas and information are exchanged in a symmetrical way. There is little room for

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[163] "For camp, the challenge is to use the spaces educationally. This does not, however, mean simply using outdoor spaces for 'indoor education.' At one summer camp the Jewish educational program consisted primarily of daily discussions, which were held in an outdoor area known as 'the discussion pits.'" Michael Zeldin. "Making the Magic in Reform Jewish Summer Camps," in Michael M. Lorge and Gary Phillip Zola, A Place of our Own. 2006. p. 99

[164] Reuven Kahane with Tamar Rapoport, "The Origins of Postmodern Youth: Informal Youth Movements in a Comparative Perspective." 1997. p. 119.

[165] *Ibid.* p. 119.

[166] *Ibid.* pp. 119-120.

authoritative or deterministic statements. Moreover, large parts of the informal curriculum are presented in a dramatic or theatrical way. This allows the curriculum to be both imaginative – distanced from reality – and yet related to reality."[167]

5. Symbolic and Creative Elements – The curricula contain both ritualistic and play-like forms that extend the meaning of the session and make it easier to use for social and political purposes.[168]

It is clear from this list that Kahane and Rapoport are discussing a style of programming called a *peulah* (action) in Netzer Olami – the world-wide umbrella organization for progressive youth programming. These programs generally have clear aims, contain a creative experience or piece of learning, and have a discussion contextualizing and deconstructing the experience. While some of the criteria above seem to overanalyze the concept of informal education, they do highlight the lack of structure in the education and the use of creativity and media to deliver an educational message.[169]

Looking more generally to define 'informal' as it applies to youth settings, Kahane and Rapoport suggest that it includes the following elements:

> (1) a recreational nature, (2) an association of equals (or peers), (3) multiple goals, (4) a dual structure [allowing for competition and cooperation, collectivism and individualism, discipline and wildness, etc.], and (5) a moratorium, [a reflection process which allows for social norms to be voiced and confirmed. I think moratorium is a poor translation of *siyyum* – the Hebrew word often used for conclusion or wrap-up].[170]

While much of their research agrees with others in the field, they are unique in discussing a dual structure in informal education. This dual structure is not so much an effect of an

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[167] *Ibid.* p. 120.

[168] *Ibid.* p. 120.

[169] The LJY-Netzer "Hadracha Choveret" contains around 200 ideas for how to put together a creative program.

[170] Reuven Kahane with Tamar Rapoport, "The Origins of Postmodern Youth: Informal Youth Movements in a Comparative Perspective."1997. pp . 23-5. The numbering and notes are mine.

informal setting as it is the effect of the working towards contradictory goals, which sometimes happens in an informal setting by un-trained teachers.

The exception to this is that informal education in general does have two goals – socialization and education.[171] The intersection between these goals has been discussed above, and while the surface strategies at URJ camps focus on both, the primary is education. These two goals, it should be noted, are not contradictory, as socialization into a Jewish environment comes with an interest in education.[172]

There is unanimous agreement in the field of scholars on the first two points. Michael Lorge and Gary Zola also emphasize the role of community and social intimacy in creating an informal learning environment in their summary of Michael Zeldin's article on camp education.[173] The intimate social setting should not be underemphasized in defining informal education or its application; what makes the 'surface strategy' of informal education effective is the 'embedded strategies' of relationship building and role-modeling. Camp is a community.

While many of the above ideas can be found in Barry Chazan's foundational encyclopedia article on informal education, his definition of informal Jewish education is important not only because of its content, but also because it is the basis of almost all other scholarship in the area. Here is a version of his list with abbreviated descriptions:

1. **Person-centered Jewish education.** The central focus of informal education is the individual and his/her growth…

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[171] Joseph Reimer, "Beyond More Jews Doing Jewish: Clarifying the Goals of Informal Jewish Education" 2007. p. 6.

[172] The sad counter-example to this is in camps where the education hour has a bad reputation, and new campers are taught by disinterested staff and campers who have had bad experiences in the past to hate the education hour before they even experience it.

[173] Michael M. Lorge, Gary Phillip Zola, A Place of our Own. 2006. p. 86.

2. **The centrality of experience.** Informal Jewish education is rooted in a belief that the experience is central to the individual's Jewish development…
3. **A curriculum of Jewish experiences and values.** There are some Jewish experiences that seem to be shared by the majority of informal Jewish educational systems: (1) Jewish holiday and calendar experiences; (2) Jewish lifecycle experiences; (3) studying Jewish texts; (4) Jewish cultural and peoplehood experiences; and (5) acting upon Jewish values… These core experiences and values may be "taught" in a variety of ways, depending upon time, place, and the individual pace of each learner…
4. **An interactive process.** Ultimately the unfolding of the curriculum is determined by the interaction of people with each other and with core experiences. Informal Jewish education is rooted in the belief that the active interchange between students and between students and educators is a critical dimension of Jewish learning…
5. **The group experience.** In informal education, the group is an integral component of the learning experience…
6. **The "culture" of Jewish education.** Informal Jewish education is rooted in the belief that education is ultimately about "creating culture" rather than transmitting knowledge…
7. **An education that engages**. Informal Jewish education intensely engages and even co-opts participants and makes them feel positive about being involved…
8. **Informal Jewish education's holistic educator.** The informal Jewish educator is a total educational personality who educates by words, deeds, and by shaping a culture of Jewish values and experiences. He/she is a person-centered educator whose focus is on learners and whose goal is their personal growth. The informal Jewish educator is a shaper of Jewish experiences. His/her role in this context is to create opportunities for those experiences and to facilitate the learner's entry into the moments. The informal Jewish educator promotes interaction and interchange. One of

> his/her major tasks is to create an environment that enables this interactivity to flourish.[174]

Unlike the Kahane and Rapaport's description of what makes education informal, Chazan seems to be presenting a wish-list or a list of best-practices instead of describing a currently functioning education set-up. At least five of his eight elements of the definition have to do with experiences had by the learner.

Reimer picks up on this, and in a response gives a critique of Dewey as much as of Chazan. His main argument is that experiences need to be narrated and given value, and do not always have intrinsic value by themselves. The role of reflection in shaping educational experiences is a theme in Reimer's work.

My personal critique of this list is that it describes what 'good education' is, instead of simply what 'informal education' is. But maybe what we are striving for in camping environments is truly 'good education' regardless of the level of structure and formality with which it is delivered. It is possible to replace 'informal education' with 'good education', but Chazan's message is still powerful:

> Informal Jewish education deliberately selects Jewish experiences with the conscious intent of affecting the learner. Jewish life is a haphazard flow of events, the outcome of a multitude of historical, political, and sociological forces; informal Jewish education is a conscious effort to shape what Jewish life is. Jewish education chooses to be."

Good Jewish education takes Jewish life, brings it to camp, and through explicit surface strategies shapes it and makes it process-able for the participants.

Cautions Regarding Informal Education

Some best practices of experiential education will be discussed in the next section. Chazan's list is a useful starting point, but training is needed to be a successful informal

[174] Barry Chazan, 'The philosophy of informal Jewish education,' 2003.

educator. This training is available from many community organizations, through youth movements, or through some university programs.

Unfortunately it is easier to caution against what can go wrong in informal education than to list best practices. While one of the often-discussed criterions for informal education in the literature is the 'voluntary' component in participation, this is rarely true of each individual program. The daily schedule is set with education time planned, and campers are not always willing participants. As one camper once stated during a comedy routine on a URJ camp in 2009, "Who would apply to become the Education Director? Someone who really enjoys torturing children? Do they think, 'Hmm… what do I want to do with my summer? Oh! I know! Make a bunch of campers sit through classes in the middle of the summer!'" While this was exaggerated for the sake of the camper's routine, it is important to remember that this education is only recreational to a point, and each program needs to start with its own buy-in, or it will seem like an unnecessary break from summer fun.

There are many stories of informal education programs that purposefully produce warped views of reality for the campers, either for real educational goals or for the amusement of the counselors running the program. Michael Zeldin reminds programmers that they should ask the right questions – not just, "Will this program work?" but "Does your program preserve and enhance the autonomy and dignity of campers? Does it set the stage for their future growth as human beings and as Jews?"[175]

While in the next section there will be a discussion about assessing the affects of experiential education, Zeldin warns that goals are for the educator, not the participants.

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[175] Michael Zeldin. "Making the Magic in Reform Jewish Summer Camps," in Michael M. Lorge and Gary Phillip Zola, A Place of our Own. 2006. p. 110.

While educators may have lessons they are trying to teach, life is fluid, and campers cannot be forced into a specific program. Zeldin emphasizes that goals can change mid-program, and that this is not necessarily a bad thing.[176]

John Dewey warns against excessive informality, which I have seen happen in cases where a younger counselor tried hard to be "cool." For Dewey this style of education goes wrong when there are no organized subject matters, no direction or guidance from authority figures, and there are no references to the past – only the present and the future.[177] Through thoughtful mentoring and training, educators can move past this and learn how to include the 'education' element in 'informal education.'

Experiential Education

The Torah teaching I use most as my guide when it comes to designing informal education is; Do and you will understand. – Deborah Newbrun[178]

The term, "experiential education" has come to replace the term "informal education" in some youth work circles. One youth worker interviewed for this thesis expressed distain over the phrase "informal education," saying, "really, you mean experiential education."[179] The North American Federation of Temple Youth tends not to use the term to describe its education, preferring to simply emphasize the casual nature of the youth movement's education.[180]

Barry Chazan is correct when he observes, "We are already witness to messy highways in talking about informal Jewish education. For example, in some circles the

[176] *Ibid.* p. 158

[177] John Dewey, "Experience and Education" 1938. p. 22

[178] Deborah Newbrun, "Do and You Will Understand/Beyond More Jews Doing Jewish" 2007. p. 132.

[179] Interview with Ross Glinckenhouse

[180] Interview with NFTY Education Director, Beth Avner

phrase, "experiential education" is being used to replace "informal Jewish education.""[181] The confusion of experiential education with all informal Jewish education is a misleading linguistic imprecision. Joseph Reimer is guilty of this, using these two terms, experiential and informal education, to cover the same concepts.[182] Sheldon Dorph, on the other hand, is a partisan for only using the term "experiential education." He feels that one should not use "the dichotomous language of formal/informal that was prevalent in the mid-twentieth century and still embraced by some educators, while our understanding of identity formation and learning has advanced [us to the point where we can only use the term "experiential education".]"[183]

There is some merit to using the term "experiential education," including its simplicity. David Bryfman advocates for using experiential education instead of muddling around with the terms "formal" "non-formal" and the many definitions of "informal." Rather than playing up an "artificial divide between informal and formal settings of Jewish education,"[184] Bryfman wants to "reclaim terminology…

> Re-labeling this enterprise as experiential Jewish education better describes the type of learning that is at the essence of this pedagogy: learning that occurs when the mind meets the heart and is translated into actions, whereby learners experience something, reflect upon the experience, and learn form the experience for themselves."[185]

By focusing on one element of education – the experience itself – it reminds the educator of the importance of what the learner experiences in determining what the learner takes away from the experience.

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[181] Barry Chazan. The Greening of "Informal Jewish Education" 2007.

[182] Joseph Reimer and David Bryfman, "Experiential Jewish Education" 2008. p. 343.

[183] Sheldon Dorph, "Informal: Education? Let's Not Go Back There Again!" 2007. p. 120.

[184] David Bryfman, "Experiential Jewish Education: Reaching the Tipping Point" 2011. pp. 767

[185] *Ibid.* p. 770.

As appealing as this change of terminology is, the truth is that most of the education that takes place on URJ summer camps simply is not centered around experience in the ways described by other practitioners of experiential education. In discussing the professionalization of the field, Bryfman, Reimer and others often quote and reference the Association for Experiential Education, whose members include service learning groups and wilderness survival training groups like Outward Bound. While the experiences in the education hour at URJ camps are carefully crafted and controlled, they are also more limited than these experiences can be. Service learning does happen on our camps, and campers do experience moving natural vistas, but these are not the primary modes of informal education on our camps.

Experiential education can therefore be best defined as a subset of informal (or non-formal) education, but not truly an alternative name for the same idea. Using Bryfman's own definition, which he adapts from the Association for Experiential Education, "experiential Jewish education can be defined as: A philosophy and methodology in which educators purposefully engage with learners in direct experience and focused reflection in order to increase their Jewish knowledge, develop skills and clarify values."[186] As he claims, this type of education does, "take place in summer camps, on trips, in retreat settings, as well as in many day schools,"[187] but other types of education, both formal and informal, also take place in these settings.

Experiential Education Model

Having defined experiential education is a subset of informal education, and not a term that can be used to describe education that falls into the blurry gap between

[186] *Ibid.* p. 773.
[187] *Ibid*. p. 772.

informal and formal education is helpful in looking at models of good experiential education. The programs described by Bryfman, below, meet both Kahane and Rapoport's description of informality and Chazan's list of what makes programming informal. Bryfman identifies the following characteristics as numbering among the defining attributes of experiential Jewish education:

> (1) The focus on the group, (2) the role of educator as facilitator, (3) the implicit nature of challenge within these activities, (4) the framing of the experience within a Jewish context, (5) the active engagement of learners in their own learning, and (6) the role of reflection by individuals upon these experiences.[188]

Many of Bryfman's points have been discussed above as being elements of informal Jewish education (or as elements of 'good' education), but there are some unique elements to experiential education.

The ideas that experience is key in learning, that every experience takes up from previous experiences and modifies subsequent experiences, and that this is how habit is formed all can be found in our earlier discussion on John Dewey.[189] And though Chazan does not advocate the terminology change, he does recognize that some of the power of informal education comes from a focus on experience that, "attempts to create settings which enable values to be experienced personally and events to be experienced in real time and in genuine venues, rather than their being described to the learner."[190]

There is no disagreement that the best education comes from real, rather than fabricated experiences. Rachel Happel, in criticizing the creation of a Jewish experiential education program in a congregational school, recounts why her school decided to move to experiential education:

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[188] *Ibid.* p. 767. The numbering is mine.

[189] John Dewey, "Experience and Education" 1938. p. 35

[190] Barry Chazan, 'The philosophy of informal Jewish education' 2003.

> Most teens can see through fabricated experiences, and our teens were leaving our religious school in great numbers because they felt that their learning was disconnected from their lives. We believed that direct encounters with Jewish life and values, direct participation in meaningful Jewish experiences, including opportunities to reflect on them and find personal relevance, would have the "sticking" power that we needed to keep our students engaged in Jewish and congregational life.[191]

While this can be a big challenge to educators given a set hour on camp in order to work their magic, experiential education does provide a model that can be applied to other informal education programming.

The Group

This model, according to Bryfman and Reimer, is "recreation and socialization leading to challenge."[192] I find this simplification to be less helpful than the defining attributes of Jewish experimental education quoted above from Bryfman. It is, unfortunately, the framework that Reimer focuses on in his own work.[193] It is simply not as rich as Bryfman's attributes, especially since the concepts of recreation – the fun social situation that brings with it a sense of belonging and provides a safe place to be a Jew – and socialization – the knowledge, skills and attitudes gained from group experience – are too closely linked.

This does not negate the basic idea, which overlaps with Michael Zeldin's comments on informal education in general – the camp community deepens the possibilities for learning.

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[191] Rachel Happel, "Creating a Jewish Experiential Learning Program within a Congregational School" in Joseph Reimer and Susanne A. Shavelson, "How Jewish Experiential Learning Works: An Anthology" 2008. p. 12.

[192] David Bryfman, "The Challenge of Experiential Jewish Education," in Joseph Reimer and Susanne A. Shavelson, "How Jewish Experiential Learning Works: An Anthology" 2008. p. 34, and Joseph Reimer and David Bryfman, "Experiential Jewish Education" 2008. pp. 344-5.

[193] Joseph Reimer, "Introducing Jewish Experiential Learning" in Joseph Reimer and Susanne A. Shavelson, "How Jewish Experiential Learning Works: An Anthology" 2008. pp. 4-5

Educator as Facilitator

The role of the educator in informal education is always hard to negotiate because of the struggle between the tendency to want to be on an equal playing field with the participants and the need to retain authority. This is in some ways made easier in experiential education, where it is the role of the staff member to help facilitate an experience. While the power dynamic is necessarily present in the reflection at the end of the process, it is not detrimental to the experience itself, especially if the facilitator asks, "what is it I want the participants to do or experience?" and plans their own role well. The experience of the facilitator's role or power can be used to fullfil the educator's goals for the experience.[194]

Avi Orlow at the Foundation from Jewish Camp recently wrote a document titled "Excellent Experiential Jewish Education," which envisions the educator as abandoning being "the 'sage on the stage' and opt for being the 'guide on the side'."[195] This role as a facilitator does not mean that the staff does not participate in discussions, or can abdicate their place as a role-model, but it means that the staff must be concerned with logistics more than lecturing.

The Association for Experiential Education (AEE) says that this can not always be the case. The AEE emphasizes that facilitators should not just "let the mountains speak for themselves", but to be guides, especially in difficult experiences:

> AEE (2007) puts it this way: The educator's primary roles include setting suitable experiences, posing problems, setting boundaries, supporting learners, insuring physical and emotional safety, and facilitating the learning process... The educator recognizes and encourages spontaneous

[194] Rachel Happel, "Creating a Jewish Experiential Learning Program within a Congregational School" in Joseph Reimer and Susanne A. Shavelson, "How Jewish Experiential Learning Works: An Anthology" 2008. pp. 12-13.

[195] Avi Orlow, "Excellent Experiential Jewish Education Final 2012.doc" sent on request.

> opportunities for learning. Educators strive to be aware of their biases, judgments and preconceptions, and how these influence the learner.[196]

If this seems like a difficult task, that is because it is a difficult task. The balance between leading a group and letting an experience happen can be difficult, and in the section on staffing below, we will discuss this more fully.

Challenge

One of the most powerful elements of experiential education is the idea that the experience should be challenging to the participants. While "learners can appreciate the context that an educator provides for them, it is only when they experience their own struggles to make personal meaning of the site [or experience] in question that true learning takes place."[197] This is what makes an event not just socialization, but also educational.[198] The purpose of education through presenting challenges is not only about acquisition of knowledge and experiences, but also an attempt to help participants integrate it into their more complex selves.[199] "We want participants to feel they are on a Jewish journey," Bryfman states, "and are not simply a member of a Jewish club."[200]

The most common attempt to represent when challenge is helpful or not is Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's work on 'flow'.[201] The key, according to Csikszentmihalyi, is to find a place where participants are not frustrated and not bored. A little bit of challenge requires

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[196] Thomas Lindblade, "Fritz Perls: Gestalt Therapy and Experiential Education" in Sourcebook of Experiential Education: Key Thinkers and Their Contributions, 2010. p. 170

[197] David Bryfman, "The Challenge of Experiential Jewish Education," 2008. p. 36.

[198] Joseph Reimer and David Bryfman, "Experiential Jewish Education" 2008. pp. 346.

[199] Joseph Reimer, "Introducing Jewish Experiential Learning" 2008. p. 5.

[200] David Bryfman, "The Challenge of Experiential Jewish Education," 2008. p. 34.

[201] David Bryfman, Joseph Reimer, Avi Orlow, and others that discuss 'flow,' often cite this work as a primary source: Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience. Harper and Row, New York: 1990.

skill acquisition to move forward, but too much challenge leads to frustration. It is the task of the educator to keep participants in this 'flow' state.[202]

A goal for the educator is to remain challenging, but as Michael Zeldin discussed above, not to 'fake' reality in a damaging way. According to Csikszentmihalyi's symbolic integrationist theory, "[happiness] does not depend on outside events, but rather on how we interpret them," and thus the level of challenge is unique to the participant, and the autonomy of the individual their ability to opt-out must be respected in the development of the program.[203]

Challenge in Jewish settings could occasionally include programing like: a difficult hike; a test of knowledge or sports skills; a seeing an impoverished population through social action work; trying to wrap one's head around the Shoah; and visiting Palestinian communities in Israel. Reimer and Bryfman see Jewish identity as a rich and constant source for challenges, but think that we do not use challenge enough as an educational tool in exploring identity:

> The young Jewish person who struggles to navigate his/her personal identity in the broader context of Jewish tradition at least metaphorically resembles the Boy Scout, who, with compass in hand, attempts to find his way back to base camp. For Jewish education to reach the level of experiential education espoused in outdoor education, it would need to elevate challenge as a fundamental goal and look to stretching learners beyond their comfort zones in many experiential activities.

This has been supported through my conversations with educators who have worked to integrate Judaism into the different specialty areas on camp. In OSRUI's Tiferet arts program, Danny Maseng frequently discussed the role of challenge in pushing students

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[202] David Bryfman, "Experiential Jewish Education: Reaching the Tipping Point" pp. 774.

[203] Quoted in J. Robert Rossman, "Recreation programming: designing leisure experiences (2nd ed.)" 1995. p. 29

both as artists and Jews.[204] Former staff members at URJ Jacobs Camp in charge of the integration of Judaism with sports programming have reported that their biggest failures have come when the activities they led were not challenging enough in their athleticism to participants.[205] For integration to work, challenge is needed both on the side of the Jewish education and on the side of the medium that Judaism is being integrated into.

Framing of the Experience within a Jewish Context

The potential for experiential education to be Jewish experiential education is profound, since Jewish living IS an experience. The trick is to acknowledge that the various 'mundane' happenings in life – from hiking to eating to brushing one's teeth – can all be seen in a Jewish framework. This is Soloveitchik's Halachic Man – someone who sees a pool of water and wonders if it is enough to form a *mikveh*. In a more progressive context, it is about mindfulness and thankfulness for the miracles around us and awareness of our own bodies and what we need to sustain healthful lives. This is a Jewish lens through which we can view life. This is a framework that can be placed around experiences by an educator.

Joseph Reimer points out some low-hanging fruit which help make guided experiences more authentically and traditionally Jewish, including the setting of the program (Israel, a synagogue, the chapel), use of Hebrew and living the Jewish calendar. He also highlights that the experience can be tied to biblical texts, poems by Jewish poets

[204] Phone interview. This is also eloquently stated by Bradley Solmsen: " I would argue that the need and benefit of integrating the arts and Jewish education goes beyond Gardner's (1993) claims in relationship to multiple intelligences… But beyond an understanding that we must be teaching students in a variety of (creative) ways lies additional connections between the arts and Jewish thought and practice. Connecting growth in the arts with growth in Jewish learning will result in higher quality arts education and Jewish education as well." - Bradley Solmsen, "Professional Artists in Jewish Educational Environments" 2008. p. 42

[205] Jimmy Stoloff, personal conversation, and Jonathan Cohen, the director of the camp, phone interview.

or on a Jewish theme, a website from a Jewish organization.[206] I would add music, plays, films and other art forms to his list of easy 'real' experiences that can help frame a bigger experience in a Jewish context.

Active Engagement of Learners in their own Learning

> *Because involved Jews of all ages hunger for the experience of being Jewishly engaged, not simply more knowledgeable about Judaism. They seek to bring more meaning to their otherwise secular lives through the experience of living authentically as Jews. They crave those vibrant moments when they can feel alive in their encounters with the Jewish past and present* – Joseph Reimer[207]

According to one of the first women Jewish youth workers and social workers in America, Miriam Ephraim, the most important part of an educational program is setting the stage, "so that the important elements of the activity are brought within the range of interests of the members."[208] This is one of the goals of both formal and informal education.

This is also one of the advantages that informal and experiential education has over more formal styles of education – the 'hook' can be lived experience with friends in a supportive atmosphere. One of the reasons Reimer associates 'recreation' with experiential education is because this means that there is buy-in by the participant. This is most likely what was missing in the case of the comedy routine at the URJ camp referenced above – the voluntary nature was either assumed, and not worked for or given-up on, and there was no buy-in from the participants in the educational process.

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[206] Joseph Reimer, "Introducing Jewish Experiential Learning" 2008. p. 4.

[207] *Ibid*. p. 8

[208] Miriam R. Ephriam. "Selected Writings of Miriam R. Ephriam" 1966. p. 53.

This idea is was also central to John Dewey's idea of education as a way of both beginning the learning process and pushing forward to the next step, actually thinking about past and present experiences as influencing future experiences. [209]

Role of Reflection

Having an experience is not an easily shapeable educational event. The shaping and internalizing comes from reflection on the event.[210] It is in this process that cognition and emotion blend to create a meaningful outcome to the educational process.[211] It is also through reflection that the experience can be assessed as successfully promoting an opportunity for learning or not , through student journals, performances, peer-to-peer teaching, guided conversations, using the words of great poets or of our tradition, etc.[212]

It simply cannot be taken for granted that because there was an experience there was effective learning from that experience. Reimer points out that a participant on a walk could have headphones on and be staring at the ground, or could be engaged in a discussion of values with others.[213] Both are experiences, and both could have some sort

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[209] "Learning begins with a stimulus, an impulse, a problem, a question… The stimulating impulse creates interest, arouses curiosity… The stimulus also raises the question of how should I respond? What do I want to happen? This Dewey calls desire, a consideration of means and ends. Where do I go now? How do I want to get there? What are the alternatives?... These desires are then acted upon experimentally and the alternatives tried out... resulting in consequences. Dewey applies the pragmatic test, does it work or doesn't it? If it doesn't, try again… If it does, I can generalize from the experience and from a theory... the generalization is available to me as a new learning for future experiences. I have learned something… Learning is thinking about experience." Nold, J. J. (1977) On defining experiential education: John Dewey revisited. Voyageur, 1. Quoted in Thomas E. Smith, Christopher C. Roland, Mark D. Havens and Judith A. Hoyt, "The Theory and Practice of Challenge Education" 1992. p. 42.

[210] John Dewey, "Experience and Education" 1938. p. 64.

[211] Jeffrey S. Kress, "Development, Learning, and Community: Educating for Identity in Pluralistic Jewish High Schools." 2012. p. 13

[212] Rachel Happel, "Creating a Jewish Experiential Learning Program within a Congregational School" 2008. p. 13., and Joseph Reimer, "Introducing Jewish Experiential Learning"2008. p. 4.

[213] Joseph Reimer, "Introducing Jewish Experiential Learning" 2008. p. 5

of learning for the participants. But it is clear that one of the two does not match the aims of the educator. This can only be discovered through the reflection process.

Reimer even goes as far as articulating that, ""too many believe that to provide a 'great experience' is our calling. But I would say our calling lies more in the reflection on the experience and the articulated or embodied takeaways."[214] This process can be much more than a discussion circle asking, "what have you learned?" The evaluation tools mentioned above, plus drama, storytelling, and movement are all techniques that I have seen used very effectively to help participants learn from their experiences and to help educators judge how well the experiences served the stated goals of the educational program.

Reflection makes certain that even after an event has finished, it continues in the group and individual memory, hopefully becoming integrated in its own way into each member of the group as they strive to process what happened and how they reacted to it.[215]

Best Practices

Much of what has been discussed above falls under the 'best practices' for experiential education. Repetition being useful, I think it is appropriate to reinfroce a few concepts discussed above, and a few which were left out:

Ownership – If participants feel that they own and control the program, they are more likely to be invested in it and therefore to learn from it.[216]

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[214] Joseph Reimer, "Continuing the Conversation" 2007. p. 148.

[215] David Bryfman, "The Challenge of Experiential Jewish Education" 2008. p. 33.

[216] H. A. Alexander and Ian Russ, "What We Know About… Youth Programming" 1992. p. 94.

Do Not Force It – Experiences are real. Things go wrong. Individuals, left with autonomy, make decisions unforeseen by programmers. This is ok. It is worse to infringe on an individual's freedom and over-control a program than it is to let the learner have a different experience, which can be explored in reflection later.[217]

Reflect – See the above section on this. Always make time for meaningful reflection.

Achievement (or failure) – Not all experiences have an end, but people remember trying to achieve goals.[218]

Challenging – Try to find an activity that is not easy and is not frustrating. In between these extremes is where achievement, failure, and learning take place.

New – Experiences are always new, even if they are repeated. Participants react differently each time, so do not think that an event that is 'old' is old. It is new for that occasion. Also, new events are exciting, which can generate excitement and buy-in.[219]

Use resources if they are needed – The best programs that Avi Orlow at the FJC could remember seeing across all of the camps he visited were large scale reconstructions of whatever topic was being learned at a specific orthodox camp. Money and manpower were invested to make wine and olive presses, to reconstruct a floor of an ancient synagogue, to recreate a cattle-car for Yom HaShoah and an Israeli 'Lotto' booth. Do not skimp. Build. Be creative.[220] And do not forget about taking trips to see and talk to real people, to walk down real streets, to touch real synagogue upholstery, and smell real city smells.[221]

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[217] J. Robert Rossman, "Recreation programming: desiging leisure experiences (2nd ed.)" 1995. p. 29.
[218] David Bryfman, "The Challenge of Experiential Jewish Education," 2008. p. 33.
[219] *Ibid.* p. 33.
[220] Phone interview with Avi Orlow.
[221] Rachel Happel, "Creating a Jewish Experiential Learning Program within a Congregational School" 2008. p. 12.

Use Judaism - Jewish Space and Jewish Time and Jewish Sources – There is a fantastic experiential tool sitting in the Aron HaKosesh. Use it. Live Shabbat. Live Jewish life. Then talk about it and reflect on the experience.[222]

Ask learners to be teachers – This is one of the most powerful experiences out there. As Bryfman recounts, "In programs where learners are asked to become educators I have routinely observed the search for knowledge becoming extremely personal. The students, now invested in the process of becoming experts, often look for personal connections to the material as they embark on ways to make it more relevant to their peers.."[223]

Reimer gives these following conclusions for Jewish educators to remember: "All these points can be summarized in these simple statements for informal Jewish educators: 1. Do not confuse the program with the experiences. 2. Your primary task is to set a challenging, but safe trail. 3. But stick around for the meaningful conversations. 4. And for learning's sake, do not forget the follow-up."[224]

Challenges

Experiential education is not the answer for every program. The goals of experiential education have less to do with transferring a body of knowledge to a group of learners, but allowing participants to learn from one another in a "Jewish context infused with Jewish values, often focusing on the social and emotional aspects of human development."[225] This is different than other forms of informal education, which put more emphasis on teaching Judaism through knowledge rather than socialization.

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[222] Barry Chazan, 'The philosophy of informal Jewish education' 2003.
[223] David Bryfman, "The Challenge of Experiential Jewish Education," 2008. p. 36.
[224] Reimer, J. 'A response to Barry Chazan: The philosophy of informal jewish education', 2003.
[225] David Bryfman, "The Challenge of Experiential Jewish Education," 2008. p. 34.

There is a tendency to just trust that because a program is experiential, it automatically will be fun, engaging, and educational. In fact:

> Several studies have shown that when experiential Jewish education is successful, there is little doubt that it has tremendous positive impact on the identity development of Jews. However, in the field of experiential Jewish education the gap between successful and less successful educational experiences is large...[226]

It is the job of the lead educator to be aware that not all experiences are created equal, and not all reflections actually leave room for the participants to reflect. We must constantly question and push ourselves to see if programs truly are working.

While experiential education can be successful, it is difficult to measure. Through journaling and other evaluation techniques suggested above, Bryfman recommends that educators try to identify outcomes in the realms of behaviors, attitudes, skills and knowledge. We must keep in mind the meta-question as to what experiential education can achieve, and try to focus our use of experiential education to those experiences.[227]

In this vein, Sales and Saxe point out that a single experience is limited compared to a chain involvement. Habits are formed through repetition. One-off events, and camp is self, constitute just a part of a Jewish journey.[228] When planning events and curriculum, the challenge is to think about this whole journey, and how an experience can become more than just a momentary encounter with something previously unlived.

One suggestion that Reimer and Bryfman have in order to make sure that programs are effective is to ensure that the experiential education includes challenge. Too often, they lament, educators worry about the marketing of the program and create

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[226] David Bryfman, "Experiential Jewish Education: Reaching the Tipping Point" 2011. p. 776

[227] *Ibid.* p. 777.

[228] Amy. L. Sales and Leonard Saxe, "How Goodly Are Thy Tents: Summer Camps as Jewish Socializing Experiences" 2004. p. 12.

purely recreational activities where participants can have fun.[229] It is the personal struggle that makes a memorable experience and inspires deep learning. Recreation exists in many parts of modern society, and while Judaism can be fun, it may do better if provides opportunities for struggle and growth. The emphasis of challenge over fun is one point that Sales and Saxe disagree with: "Ultimately, camp's power as a socializing agent resides in its capacity for fun and friendship. Education at camp - in formal and informal educational activities and in everyday interactions - is like candy, and its ultimate success lies within its sweetness." [230]

Staffing is possibly one of the biggest challenges in implementing any sort of educational curriculum. This is true for all informal education, and is especially true for experiential education. Often it is not enough to find someone who can help facilitate an impactful experience that is at the right level of challenge, and then help create a meaningful reflection. Depending on the experience, the person too must be qualified in the visual arts or music, or whatever the chosen media is in order to properly create and implement the program. It simply is "not possible to implement an educational program using the visual arts or music without a visual artist or musician who is able to collaborate on the planning and implementation of the program."[231]

But there is hope, as we will discuss in the next section.

Staffing Informal and Experiential Education

The biggest variable in programming is staffing. Fantastic staff can: take a bad situation and make it into a fantastic opportunity for learning; take a poorly written

[229] Joseph Reimer and David Bryfman, "Experiential Jewish Education" 2008. p. 349.
[230] Amy. L. Sales and Leonard Saxe, 2004. pp. 75.
[231] Bradley Solmsen, "Professional Artists in Jewish Educational Environments" 2008. p. 42.

program and turn it into one of the most memorable experiences of the summer; and can take a participant with challenging behavior and help them become fully part of a supportive group. Inexperienced staff, or staff that have been acculturated into an unhealthy camp culture, can do the opposite: turning healthy situations into unhealthy ones; taking what could be an exciting program and making it forgettable or boring; and socializing campers into a negative and harmful culture.

Camp culture and Jewish education happen through the staff. If they are well trained, well prepared, feel empowered, feel supported, and are in a culture that is truly Jewish and truly cares, there is a much higher chance that they will be successful. As Saxe and Sales point out, "Whether in leading activities, grasping a teachable moment, modeling Jewish values and behavior, or supporting children as they try on new behaviors, it is the staff members' knowledge, ability to relate to the campers, and facilitation and programming skills that are most critical to success."[232] Resources and time spent training counselors in all of these areas is one of the major elements that can help a camp be set-up for success.[233]

Sales and Saxe in particular emphasize the role of staff in running a successful program. They point out that most of the topics covered in this thesis, from camp culture to curriculum integration, are wholly dependent on staff:

> Jewish camping is rife with opportunities to develop original curricula, to explore new ways of integrating Jewish education into everyday camp activities, and to refine the techniques of informal Jewish education. Programming, however, does not stand on its own but depends almost entirely on staff. Whether in (1) leading activities, (2) grasping a teachable moment, (3) modeling Jewish values and behavior, or (4) supporting children as they try on new behaviors, it is the staff members' (a)

[232] Amy. L. Sales and Leonard Saxe, "Summer Camps as Jewish Socializing Experiences" 2008. p. 409.
[233] Zachary Adam Lasker, "The Education of Ramah Counselors: Madrichim as Educators and Learners." 2010. and Eric Bram, "Training Staff for HUC Camp Institutes," 1985.

> knowledge, (b) ability to relate to the campers, and (c) facilitation and programming skills that are most critical to success. [234]

The skills exhibited by staff (numbered above) are supported by the skills (marked with letters). It is these foundational skills that need to be developed through staff training.

According to a recent article by Zachary Lasker, discussing his study of staff training at Ramah, staff training needs to be focused on wider areas than just how to run a good program:

> Based on his study of thirty-seven camps and ninety-seven outdoor education programs, Dr. Randall Grayson, a psychologist who specializes in applying social, developmental, and organization psychology to help camps better serve campers and staff, advises that good counselor training address knowledge, attitude, and behavior.[235]

Lasker defines knowledge as being the content which ultimately fills and enriches programs. He defines 'attitude' as *kavannah* – intention. But I think it is more superficial than this. While it would be great for counselors to think about the internal *kavannah* they bring to each moment on camp, it is more about the attitude that they show to the outside world, and is closely related to their behavior. Being a role model and doing what needs to be done are the two elements that Lasker emphasizes on behavior in staff trainings.

In training staff, we should not be afraid to model the style of education that they are going to be using. By using informal education and experiential education in our training, the counselors can learn programming methods that they would otherwise not be exposed to. Creative programming methods are not always invented – many are adapted from other successful programs for use in a new setting. Additionally, support

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[234] Amy. L. Sales and Leonard Saxe, "How Goodly Are Thy Tents: Summer Camps as Jewish Socializing Experiences" 2004. pp 74-5. I have added the numbering.

[235] Zachary Adam Lasker, "The Education of Ramah Counselors: Madrichim as Educators and Learners." 2010. p. 165

and feedback after programs are run is key. Though many camps have counselor-in-training programs (often combined with other camp work), I only know of one URJ camp that supports its staff through a first-year staff training program, and ongoing evaluations after each educational program is run, and the camp is more than willing to share its resources.[236]

While the basics of content delivery such as programming skills, and delivery of Jewish Teachable Moments, can be taught relatively quickly in staff training, one of the real challenges is that the content to be delivered through these methods takes longer to acquire. Reform Jewish staff on URJ camps come from different religious school and home experiences, and many do not have the knowledge to produce rich programs or Jewish Teachable Moments themselves. We should not, however, assume that this is true in every case, for many counselors do receive some ongoing Jewish education outside of camp, in day schools, supplementary schools, Hillels, through coursework at college, and through their own interest in Judaism and internet research.[237]

There is no question that knowledge and passion are invaluable for good education to take place and for participants to have positive and meaningful experiences with Judaism.[238] Complicating matters, as has been mentioned above, for integrated curriculum to succeed, not only do the staff have to have skills in Judaism, but to have a high level competence in the medium into which Judaism is being integrated. As one

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[236] Goldman Union Camp Institute runs the Machon program for its first year campers. Ron Klotz, the former director of the camp, has provided me with a copy of this programming, which is innovative, challenging, and fits all of the criteria for 'good experiential education'. He has made it clear that he would love to share the program.

[237] Zachary Adam Lasker, "The Education of Ramah Counselors: Madrichim as Educators and Learners." 2010. p. 167.

[238] Rachel Happel, "Creating a Jewish Experiential Learning Program within a Congregational School" 2008. p. 13. and Barry Chazan, 'The philosophy of informal Jewish education' 2003.

educator who ran a successful integrated program explains: "The high school students we work with respond best to challenging, rich, substantial learning environments. In order to create such an environment, when we integrate the arts into Jewish learning programs we have to engage people who understand and practice the arts at a high level. [239]

There are several challenges in helping the developing high-level staff. Firstly, attitude and behavior are linked to camp culture, and it is easier in an already supportive culture to find staff that are interested in developing their skills. Secondly, is it hard to teach programming skills other than by witnessing other skilled programmers and interesting programs:

> Many Jewish educators are like talented crafts people who can show you what they do, but not easily explain why they do it or what makes it effective. They try out different programs and methods, experimenting to see what works. They gain much satisfaction when they see their students engaged and learning, but find it hard to put into words why one program worked better than another.[240]

Third, there is a culture on URJ camps of not spending enough resources to really train staff in programming. In the Netzer system abroad, counselors just after Israel Tour (16 years old) are introduced into year-long training programs that include week-long residential seminars, training weekends, weekends during the year where staff can practice their skills, and then long residential weekends leading up to the start of camp where programming can be written and refined. All of this is before the on-camp preparation. And these counselors are totally volunteers who do it for the love of the movement.[241] If we were more serious about education on our URJ camps and raising the next generation of educators, we would be working harder to integrate NFTY, junior

[239] Bradley Solmsen, "Professional Artists in Jewish Educational Environments" 2008. p. 42.
[240] Joseph Reimer, "Introducing Jewish Experiential Learning" 2008. p. 2.
[241] I am specifically describing LJY-Netzer in England, but as far as I know RSY-Netzer, and Netzer groups in South America, South Africa, Australia and Germany all function with very similar programming.

youth groups and our camps to provide year long training and support to our counselors in training. Finally, there needs to be a will to implement a culture of Jewish education on camp from the director to the senior staff, to the counselors sleeping in the cabins at night, "Unless staff - from the director, to the specialist, to the bunk counselor - are ready, willing, and able to create Jewish life at camp, it will not happen."[242]

Unique Staff: Israelis and Non-Jews from Abroad

Some URJ camps have a problem with finding enough qualified staff. While the preference is to find staff that has grown up in the camp, or at least in the Reform movement, this is not always possible – especially for specialty areas around camp that require certain certifications or skills. In these situations, staff is generally brought over from abroad, to provide their unique skills. These staff populations create interesting challenges for educators.

The international staff at camp generally falls into two categories – non-Jews interested in seeing America and Israelis. The first group consists of those who speak English and those that have difficulty in English and come from less advantaged nations. The English speakers generally end up being specialists and technical staff, and those who struggle in English work the summer in the behind-the scenes roles, such as in the kitchen. Amongst the English-speakers, there are sometimes Jewish staff members, but this is uncommon.

All of these staff, by being on camp, are serving as role-models for Jewish kids in a Reform Jewish setting. The staff is generally required to model respect in worship, and an interest in education. I have found that members of the international staff can be more

[242] Amy. L. Sales and Leonard Saxe, "How Goodly Are Thy Tents: Summer Camps as Jewish Socializing Experiences" 2004. p. 97.

interested in Jewish education than the Reform Jewish staff. While it is not the direct mission of the camp, providing a place for questions and a place for sharing by these staff members can deeply enrich both their experiences and the experiences of the Jewish members of the camp community.[243]

While every URJ camp has a *mishlachat*, a delegation of Israeli counselors, some camps choose to have an all-Jewish staff, and bring in a large *mishlachat*. Just as with other foreign staff, there are many advantages and disadvantages to the *mishlachat*, and these are sometimes amplified by the size.

Some of the advantages include the presence of Hebrew on camp. This is especially true for some camps that focus on this as a goal. The Israelis bring with them Jewish culture and lived experience of what Shabbat and the Holy Days mean in their homes. They have personal knowledge of Israel, and can use this knowledge in Jewish Teachable Moments throughout the day. Additionally, they represent Am Yisrael – the people of Israel, scattered across the globe, coming together in a single location to learn, laugh, and engage in different kinds of intercourse. The Israeli staff themselves gain from experiencing a different model of lived Judaism, and can bring their experience of Progressive Judaism back to Israel. An additional advantage is that some of the staff brings youth group and informal education experience from Israel.

Some of the issues with the *mishlachat* include the fact that this is a large foreign language group brought together in a strange setting, and the group can develop its own insular identity. Some members struggle with English, and find this frustrating. At

[243] One caution is that sometimes this staff participates in prayer without knowing the words, and for Israelis it can be particularly dissonant to hear their non-Jewish colleagues talking about being Israel, a people separated from the other nations of the world. Also, it is URJ policy that these non-Jewish staff cannot sleep in the same rooms as Jewish children.

different times I have seen *mishlachot* feel that they have not been empowered to really teach Israel, and feel over-worked for doing full-time counselor duties, plus their duties in teaching Israel. Also, the education that they think is needed is sometimes very shallow *hasbarah*, Israeli advocacy, that is not learner centered and requires much pedagogical help.

Solutions involve working together more with the Reform Jewish staff, some of whom have been to Israel, to let them know that these staff are partners that represent American Reform Judaism. Both groups have much to learn from each other.

There are many educational possibilities for both the *Mishalachat* and the non-Israeli international staff. A well engaged international staff can easily deepen the camper's encounter with Judiasm, and an engaged and effective *mishlachat* can help integrate Israeli culture and Hebrew into all aspects of camp.[244] There is no doubt that rhe presence of these groups on our camps should be studied more.

The one group which is under-represented are Progressive Jews from abroad. Many bring skills equivalent to senior staff members by the time they are in college because of their previous youth movement experience. Because their home youth movements are oversubscribed, they are looking for a Progressive Jewish camp to be involved with. There are not many of these individuals each year who cannot find a home in their movement abroad, but this is, none-the-less, a gap in our movement's staff recruitment.

With whatever staff a camp has, there is the question of how it is used educationally – a question that is complicated by the presence of the movement's rabbis, cantors and educators on camp.

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[244] *Ibid.* p. 91.

Centralization versus Decentralization

In 2007, a bit more than a year out of college, I entered into a culture at a progressive Jewish summer camp in England where the oldest person on the camp was 23 years old. From the camp nurse (a medical student) to the unit heads, everyone was in university except for two to three movement workers that were one to two years past graduation. The only adults on the site for the whole camp were the facilities management, and the only adults to visit were the CEO of Liberal Judaism, the board member in charge of youth, and a few speakers we brought in. All education was run by former campers who had at least three weeks to research and write their programs and make the materials for the programs. The theme of the education had been voted on by a democratic vote by the members of the movement. Education, while at a lower level than could have been provided by the movement's rabbis, infused almost every aspect of the camp.

In 2010, I found myself in a completely different culture, at a URJ camp where all programming was written by a trained educator who was not on the site of the camp in the summer. The programming was run by rabbis, cantors and educators while the camp counselors were mostly tapped to bring kids to the *mirpa'ah*, the infirmary, or to help with discipline problems. Programs that did not involve the faculty generally had no Judaic content, even though many of the staff members had grown up as Reform Jews and could have at least tried to provide this content. Education rested in the hands of the faculty, was done at a high level, but almost exclusively rested in the hands of Jewish professionals.

One of the biggest questions facing our URJ camps, along with curriculum integration, is whether we centralize or decentralize education in our camps. The two examples above show extremes of camps that have chosen that either decentralization or

nearly complete centralization is best. But most camps lie somewhere in the middle of this spectrum.

The first place I have seen the issue of using Jewish professionals versus younger counselors in education discussed in the scholarly literature is in the work of Sales and Saxe:

> The extent to which the Judaics program is compartmentalized or integrated influences who is assigned the responsibility for Jewish education. Where Jewish education is compartmentalized, it is centralized in the hands of specialists: rabbis, Jewish educators, Israeli *shlichim*. Where Jewish education is integrated, responsibility for it is shared by specialists and bunk counselors. The ability to integrate Judaics is largely a function of the skill and background of the staff. It is also a reflection of the camp's sense of its Jewish purpose.[245]

A conversation based on their research is helpful in portraying why different camps choose to pick one model or the other.

Integrated/Decentralized Education

As Appendix A shows, only four of the fourteen reform camps surveyed currently have decentralized education models. Two of the camps in this category, GUCI and OSRUI, are amongst the oldest in the URJ system, and have had over their history strong professional leadership that believes in these models. The other two camps in this category, Jacobs and 6 Points, are part of the new trend in camping to integrate their Judaics curriculum with other specialty areas. The first two camps retain their Judaics curriculum as a set hour (or more) in the schedule, and hope that the young educators will be inspired by their roles as Jewish educators to continue to integrate Jewish content into the rest of the day. The two integrated camps try to break down this compartmentalization and formally integrate Judaism throughout the day.

[245] *Ibid.* p. 61.

Education at GUCI and OSRUI and at LJY-Netzer are all run in a similar manner. Professional staff during the 'off-season' prepare resource materials and suggestions for session. Filtered through unit heads, this material reaches the counselors, who are in charge of selecting which topic they would like to work with, and then writing the programming. Some camps have more involvement from professional faculty (OSRUI has the most, then GUCI, and LJY-Netzer has nearly no interaction with faculty), but in all situations, the counselor must do research in order to construct a program that they are proud of. Before the program is run, there is a meeting with the other staff that might be needed to make the program successful, and after the program useful feedback is given as to how the program could have been made even more successful. Saxe and Sales, discussing a similar system at a Zionist camp point out that:

> This process of reviewing activities also makes staff accountable for the daily Jewish/Zionist education they do with their unit. The curriculum, which appears to be centralized and expert-driven, is enacted in a decentralized manner. Its implementation is in the hands of individual bunk counselors working with their unit heads.

After these programs are run, if campers have questions as to content, they can ask their counselors, who were had to do research on the topic in order to write the program. Counselors can also draw on the lesson from the program they wrote, and use it in Jewish Teachable Moments during the day.

The major shift in this type of educational setting is from "a care-giver mindset to an educator mindset."[246] If staff can think of themselves not only as baby-sitters but as educators, then, the hope is, that they will start acting like a *dugma ishit*, an example to their students of engaged learners, thus rightfully portraying good and engaging Jewish education as cool and interesting to their campers.

[246] Interview with Avi Orlow, Educator, FJC

This shift in mindset in also crucial when considering that these young adults have a good potential of being both the Jews in the pews and the Jewish professional staff of the future. Therefore these staff should be considered a target audience, because of "The extent to which a person's life trajectory is set during emerging adulthood… [this is] a group for whom camp can offer a potent Jewish experience."[247] Some camps, especially in the Ramah movement, have made the education of these staff a big priority, even including units of staff that come to learn, and not to work with kids. That the camp would spend its resources in this manner shows the dedication of the camp to Jewish learning. Having staff learning from faculty by the pool in the sight of the campers, seeing senior staff gathering in the afternoon for a Hebrew shiur, or other visible signs of learning on camps all can show the seriousness with which a camp takes learning.[248]

One of the most interesting things in the literature on this topic is the presence of testimonials from various scholars about the impact of being a counselor in charge of

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[247] Amy. L. Sales and Leonard Saxe, "How Goodly Are Thy Tents: Summer Camps as Jewish Socializing Experiences" 2004. p. 133. They also point out: "The great majority of staff at Jewish summer camps are between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five, a time of life referred to as emerging adulthood (cf Arnett 2000). This period of life is a recent development in American society that has resulted from several trends: later marriage, postponement of first childbirth, and increases in the percentages of young people attending college and pursuing post-graduate education... " "Indeed, when adults retrospectively consider the most important events in their lives, they most often name events that took place during this period (Arnett 2000)" "[This] is a time when they can explore various options in love, work, and worldview without the oversight of their parents and without the obligation to settle down and earn an adult living. For most people, exploration of life's possibilities is greater during these years than it will be at any other period of their lives. And the decisions they make during this time will reverberate throughout their adulthood... Relevant to the Jewish community is the fact that most identity exploration takes place in emerging adulthood... Identity development is not completed during high school but rather continues through the late teens and into the twenties. Research on religious beliefs supports this view and suggests that these years are also a time when people reexamine the beliefs learned in their families and form a persona set of beliefs based on their own independent reflections (Arnett 2000). Not surprisingly, experiences such as a trip to Israel or a summer at camp have been found to have a greater impact on college students than they do on high school students." p. 15-16.

[248] *Ibid.* p. 137.

writing educational content on their own lives. Ian Russ and Hanan Alexander write that, "Being a camper is fun, but being a counselor is a life changing experience."[249] Michael Zeldin recounts that, "Creating powerful Jewish programming alongside my fellow staff members helped me discover my potential for leadership, for vision, and for understanding complex systems."[250] There is no doubt that if done right, well-supported staff in decentralized systems can gain immeasurably from their involvement.[251]

Staff that are in a poorly supported system not only can provide incorrect and harmful educations to campers, but also can be turned off of any further involvement in Judaism. As has been discussed in the previous section on staffing, training is one of the biggest hurdles. In a decentralized system, staff both need to be trained on how to deliver content (informal education, experiential education and/or Jewish Teachable Movements) and on the substance that will be taught. In the systems above, time is given to the counselors to write and research programs (sometimes with the help of Jewish professionals), to brief others on their program, and then to receive feedback after the program is completed. Time is at a premium on camps, especially when camper-counselor ratios are an issue, and not all camps want to 'burden' counselors with these responsibilities in addition to their primary health and safety responsibilities. Time is especially a premium during the pre-camp preparation period, where health, safety and welfare concerns must come first.

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[249] Quoted in Michael Zeldin. "Making the Magic in Reform Jewish Summer Camps," in Michael M. Lorge and Gary Phillip Zola, A Place of our Own. 2006. p. 105.

[250] *Ibid.* p. 87.

[251] Avi Orlow also thinks that this is the gain of synagogues, for giving responsibility at this impressionable time of life means that staff will be more likely to feel ownership over their Judaism.

Another major concern in decentralized education is in the quality of content delivered. There is no doubt that the quality of content generally suffers when it is delivered by less knowledgeable staff, and there is no comparison between the learning of a college student that was "Bat Mitzvahed" and received the rest of their education through summer camp and that of a professional with at least a Masters in Education. While the argument can be made that innovative content delivery by active role-models in the campers' lives makes up for this discrepancy, some camps have centralized their education delivery in the hands of trained professionals.

Centralized Education

Laura Gurvis, the Assistant Director at URJ Eisner and Crane Lake Camps with responsibilities for education discussed her decision to centralize education at the two camps:

> Madrichim used to be the teachers. They would teach the lesson, which they would get at a meeting, once a week. This was the way it always was until it changed about four years ago. Then faculty did opening shtick, but afterwards the faculty would stand there, looking at cell phones. Why would we prefer to have the madrichim be the teachers while the rabbis were sitting there? I couldn't imagine anyone who would do it better than the faculty, who do it for a living. There was an idea that we were providing training for the madrichim, but that isn't my job. My job is to teach the campers.
> Now madrichim are told they are needed to be understudies. They are there because we need them for the ratio. We don't present them with the program, because they don't end up teaching. The way it works now is that the madrichim are at the mercy of the faculty person – why don't you [the madrich] read the story, or lead a discussion? Some of the faculty are better at this than others. Some faculty are good at including, and sometimes the madrichim sit there. If the kid needs to go to the mirpa'ah and if they need to go to the bathroom, then the madrichim can help.[252]

[252] Laura Gurvis, phone interview, quoted from my typing as she was talking, so phrasing may not be exact.

Gurvis paints a very real picture of how education works at many camps – discussing both how faculty can be under-used in a more decentralized model, and how madrichim are used varies based on the individual faculty teaching.

According to Sales and Saxe, centralization is needed a) when counselors have a lack of Judaic knowledge, and b) where the camp is at odds over its Jewish identity.[253] There is no doubt that compared to the faculty, the counselors have very little Judaic knowledge. But do URJ camps have problems with their Jewish identity? The personal nature of Reform Judaism and ambiguity over what Reform Judaism actually means and stands for does mean that our camps are more likely to centralize their education. In the ideal Reform Jewish world, would we say blessings over rainbows? Would we have organic food in our dining halls? Would all of our discussions take place in Hebrew? How do we observe Tisha B'av? All of these questions end up being outsourced to our professionals, instead of debated and voted on within the camp community, because that is our model – a centralized model. Zionist camps can succeed with decentralized education because their topic is much easier to teach, and in many ways, unambiguous. Reform Judaism's complexity requires its faculty, on some level, to be translators and interpreters of the tradition.

There is also the issue of faculty as camper recruiters which helps lead to centralization. If the rabbi, cantor or educator of a synagogue goes to camp, they are better able to talk about camp to their congregants and should be good recruiters for camp in the future. The experience of the faculty is thus crucially important for many camp directors, who wish to expand their enrollment. Ron Klotz, the former director of

[253] Amy. L. Sales and Leonard Saxe, "How Goodly Are Thy Tents: Summer Camps as Jewish Socializing Experiences" 2004. p. 61.

GUCI explained that he was able to keep his camp in a decentralized model because his own ordination gave him the ability to talk with the other faculty and explain to them their role on camp better. Pressure at other camps to professionalize and centralize education brought by the movement's professionals is possibly harder to ignore for non-ordained camp directors or education directors. This is uniquely a reform movement discussion, based on how we use our camps, and thus does not appear in the general literature.

The biggest disadvantage to centralization is that it means that Jewish Education is reserved for the faculty, and counselors do not think of themselves as Jewish educators, "Rabbis and Jewish educators are seen as the only ones that can deliver Jewish content, including blessings."[254] Therefore counselors do not try to include the faculty's teaching into their own work. This sort of mindset is what allows for an intense Jewishly connected moment to end with kids running off to free-swim and having no follow-up to the experience.[255] If counselors do not assume any part of the educational responsibility, then Judaism lives in the silo erected around it by the daily schedule.

Training Makes Integration/Decentralization Possible

I personally think that fully centralized education, more than intermarriage or secularism or any of the other woes facing our movement, has the potential to kill Reform Judaism. It is through peaking the interest of young Reform Jews in education and in Judaism that we continue to involve them in Judaism for the rest of their lives. There is no better way to do this than to give them ownership and responsibility over educating their peers and the participants on camp, and by supporting them and training them to be able

[254] *Ibid.* p. 61.
[255] *Ibid.* p. 58.

to succeed. The benefits, according to Riemer, are huge when the mindset shifts from simply being a counselor to being an educator:

> [Some learners] come to realize Judaism involves a much deeper search than just seeking an affirming community. They wish to take charge of their Jewish learning and move beyond initial experiences in a camp or youth movement. When people take that initiative, they move beyond pure socialization. They are taking control of their learning process - which, as some theorists postulate, is where education begins to diverge from socialization as a path in human learning.

Many rabbis, cantors and educators have come out of the camp system, and though I know of no formal study, anecdotally, most of these individuals have come from decentralized camps, or have been given specific responsibilities inside the centralized institutions.

The challenge, then, is how to overcome the lack of time, the inexperience, and the lack of knowledge. The lack of time can only be solved through resources and planning – making sure there is enough staff on camp to cover during evaluation and prep periods, and that these times are scheduled and take place. The other two challenges can be solved through training. Bryfman, whose youth participation was in a decentralized system, warns that charisma is not enough, and when planning Jewish education, we need to be serious about training:

> Some may rightly argue that the success of experiential Jewish education is due to the fact that it has, by and large, been facilitated by young adults who in many instances are not much older than the participants themselves. I would argue that the reliance on youth and enthusiasm, instead of training and professional development, is ultimately damaging to the field as it furthers the argument of critics who look upon experiential Jewish education as being less serious and less significant in the lives of young Jews than those institutions that employ more credentialed educators. I also argue that youthfulness and enthusiasm, and training and professional development, are not mutually exclusive and that a balance needs to be met between these two artificial constructs. Whether we call it professional development, training, *hadracha*, or capacity building, the suggestion that young people cannot receive ongoing professional

> development is something that the field of experiential Jewish education must reject. Where organizations have invested in this type of training, the limited data available indicates that a more qualified cadre of experiential Jewish educators has emerged. (Sales, Samuel, Koren, Gribetz, and Reimer, 1997).[256]

Time must be found for training and education, or else decentralized programs will be amateurish, and both our campers and our staff will not be well served.

There is particular hope for URJ camps, as Sales and Saxe think that "decentralization, which pushes Jewish education down into the bunks, is most likely to be feasible in movement camps. In these settings, the counselors typically grew up in the movement and take on their staff positions with a high level of Judaic preparedness."[257] They continue, however, that this hope is still tied to training and learning and tell of a best practice in this regard:

> Even here, however, our observation is that continuing education for counselors is necessary. One religious camp, for example, has designed parallel education for counselors and campers. In their *limud* session, counselors study the same curriculum as the campers, albeit at a more adult level. The idea is to enable counselors to talk about, answer questions about, and make references to the formal Jewish educational curriculum at other times of the day.[258]

This learning, either materials that are relevant to the education being given to the campers, or just *lishmah* – for its own sake – takes time and resources, but is a perfect opportunity for faculty to share their knowledge and garner an appreciation for what goes on at camp.

Sales and Saxe say that the best examples of decentralization do show the use of teacher-friendly materials and a supportive environment. In our discussion on integration,

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[256] David Bryfman, "Experiential Jewish Education: Reaching the Tipping Point" 2011. p. 778.
[257] Amy. L. Sales and Leonard Saxe, "How Goodly Are Thy Tents: Summer Camps as Jewish Socializing Experiences" 2004. p. 62.
[258] *Ibid.* p. 62.

many scholars say that integration only works when everyone involved in the educational setting – including teachers, parents and administrators – is onboard. I think that this is also true at a camp.

Decentralization, at its core, is about empowering staff to teach about Judaism and to better understand what it means to live a Jewish life. In many ways, our next topic, integration, is inextricably linked to decentralization. Both empower staff to take on teaching roles on camp. Decentralization focuses more on the role of bunk-counselors in delivering education, and integration focuses more on the specialty areas, but both are about breaking down the box around Judaism that has formed at some camps. It is about taking Torah from Sinai and giving it to the people. This is our camps' purpose:

> Where Jewish education is compartmentalized, it is centralized in the hands of specialists: rabbis, Jewish educators, Israeli shlichim. Where Jewish education is integrated, responsibility for it is shared by specialists and bunk counselors. The ability to integrate Judaics is largely a function of the skill and background of the staff. It is also a reflection of the camp's sense of its Jewish purpose.[259]

Our camps have intense Jewish purpose, and each camp lives out its purpose in its own way, but decentralization and integration are two tools which should not be discarded in teaching Torah to the next generation of Jews.

[259] *Ibid.* p. 61.

6. Integration

"I went to camp for sports; I did not go for culture." - Rabbi Haskel Lookstein[260]

This chapter will look at what 'integration' means in a camp education context, specifically looking at different theoretical models and best practices of integration. Once we have looked at the general theory, we will apply lessons learned through arts integration to sports integration. This chapter will also look at one way that staff have been able to integrate Judaism into specialty areas with relatively little knowledge and with no prep-time, Jewish Teachable Moments (JTMs).

In the next chapter of this thesis, we will move to the more practical and see how curriculum integration is currently working at different URJ camps. To conclude the thesis, I will suggest a few ways to integrate the curricula at other URJ camps.

Introduction

In the conversation of centralization versus decentralization of Jewish education on URJ camps, I pointed out the connection between a decentralized system and an integrated curriculum. In a moment, I will define integration in a scholarly sense, but the general idea is clear, as can be seen from this quote about compartmentalization versus 'infusing' Judaism from Sales and Saxe:

> Where Jewish education is compartmentalized, it is seen as an activity like any other, fitted into the schedule along with swimming, rocketry, and arts and crafts. Where Jewish learning is infused into any and all activities, campers are as likely to encounter Jewish education in the high ropes course as they are in *limud* (Jewish study)."[261]

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[260] Haskel Lookstein in *Siach Masad - Masad Reminiscences* 1996. Rabbi Lookstein became a prominent Orthodox rabbi and day-school principal.

[261] Amy. L. Sales and Leonard Saxe, "Summer Camps as Jewish Socializing Experiences" 2008. p. 409.

While this is surely an exaggeration, the attraction of integration is its ability to truly make every location in camp a location of Jewish learning.

While there has been talk of 'integration' on camps for a long time,[262] much of the scholarship on the topic has come through the Jewish day school world. While there is some literature discussing integration at camp, this chapter will primarily be trying to translate the lessons learned about curricular integration in day schools to the camp world.

Definitions of 'integration' in the scholarly literature range from the general, such as A. Pomson's, "that process of making connections which is both an enabler and a consequence of deeper understanding"[263] to the more specific such as Michael Zeldin's, "Integration calls for bringing various aspects of the school's learning environment into relationship with one another"[264] and Malkus's, "Traditionally, the question of integration in Jewish day schools has been framed as the intersection - in theoretical conception, as well as in concrete overlap - of Jewish and general studies."[265] Reviewing many definitions of integration in 1979, B.I. Solomon comes to the conclusion that the term is used in three distinct ways in the literature – to discuss, "1. The integration of the secular and religious worlds. 2. the integration of Judaism and America-ism, and 3. the integration of subject matter."[266]

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[262] Dewey, for instance, discussed the concept of integration.

[263] Alex Pomson, "Knowledge that doesn't just sit there: Considering a reconception of the curriculum integration of Jewish and general studies." Religious Education 96(4), 2001. pp. 528-545. p. 533, quoted in Jon Levisohn, "From Integration of Curricula to the Pedagogy of Integrity" 2008. p. 277.

[264] Michael Zeldin, "Integration and Interaction in the Jewish Day School" 1998. p. 579.

[265] Mitchel Malkus, "The Curricular Symphony: How One Jewish Day School Integrates Its Curriculum." Journal of Jewish Education 68:47-57. 2002, quoted in Jeffrey S. Kress, "Development, Learning, and Community: Educating for Identity in Pluralistic Jewish High Schools." 2012. p. 101.

[266] I think it is important to mention that while I and several of the authors quoted use the term 'American' it is important to note that the concepts are similar for any diaspora community. The quote is from Solomon, B.I. "A critical review of the term "integration" in the literature of the Jewish day school in

All of these definitions prove to be helpful in defining integration on camp, which in this specific context, I will define as the integration of Judaism into the 'secular' specialty areas on camp. While in other places in this thesis I discuss the infusion of Judaism into the 'hidden' curriculum, and other techniques for integrating Judaism and camp, in this specific chapter, I will be focusing on specialty areas other than the Jewish education hour, and discuss different theoretical models for the integration of Jewish learning into these parts of camp.

There is no doubt that in situations where integration works, it is powerful. As one day school teacher points out, "Seeing a teacher who normally teaches language arts and math sitting and *davening* with you, or teaching Judaics, or studying with you in a *Beit Midrash*. It sends a message to the kids, and that message is that we integrate who we are in everything we do."[267] Integration has been happening on some camps successfully for many years,[268] and some scholars think that integration is the answer to the lack of time to teach in different educational settings.[269]

However, there is also the very real possibility that integration waters down otherwise sound educational content, and does not let any one subject be taught well. Sales and Saxe relate that integration not done well has made for education that has little impact:

America." *Jewish Education, 46*(4), 24-48.1979. quoted in Mitchel Malkus, "The Curricular Symphony: How One Jewish Day School Integrates Its Curriculum." 2002. pp. 47-8.

[267] 'Tamar' quoted in Mitchel Malkus, "The Curricular Symphony: How One Jewish Day School Integrates Its Curriculum." 2002. p. 52.

[268] "Camp staff should be aware that the integration of Jewish concepts into the overall program of camp must be achieved in natural and meaningful ways… Experience has clearly indicated that with imagination there is no end to the variety of opportunities possible in the camp setting for introducing Jewish values" - Daniel Isaacman, "Enriching Jewish Life Experiences in the Camp" 1969. pp. 18-19.

[269] Mitchel Malkus, "The Curricular Symphony: How One Jewish Day School Integrates Its Curriculum.". 2002. p. 27.

> Every attempt at integration does not succeed. At one camp, for example, the opportunity to make traditional Jewish objects in arts and crafts had little meaning for the children. The arts and crafts director, a non-Jew, did not know how to make the creative process meaningful in a Jewish sense. In other stations, we saw attempts to use Jewish principles to resolve conflicts fall flat.... In the heat of a contested Gaga match, attempts by counselors to apply Jewish values to conflict resolution have little impact.[270]

In their description of integration, Sales and Saxe mention education that borders on non-formal, 'Jewish Teachable Moments' – the gaga pit example – and integration through formal/informal means – the arts example. These are two distinctly different types of integration, and will be discussed separately below.

In 2000, one-hundred percent of URJ camps reported, "Jewish cultural Art, Jewish Education, and Jewish Values incorporated into activities,"[271] but it is not clear if these camps were saying that they attempted to use Jewish Teachable Movements (JTMs) or a more comprehensive integration. It is also not clear to what level the integration was truly happening at this time – this is a self-reported survey, and while the administration of the camp could think that this integration was happening because they asked for it to happen, it does not mean that there was a supported actual program in place.

Integration is increasingly finding its way into camps[272] and is becoming more of a goal as more specialty camps are becoming prevalent. The question is not if it is a good thing if done well, but rather how to do it well. Recent research says that day schools that work on a culture of integration, including having a clear mission, goals and an

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[270] Amy. L. Sales and Leonard Saxe, "How Goodly Are Thy Tents: Summer Camps as Jewish Socializing Experiences" 2004. p. 60.

[271] *Ibid.* p. 39.

[272] *Ibid.* pp. 59-60.

understanding of what integration means for them, are more likely to succeed.[273] If this is true, then we need to discuss more what integration means – both how it is rooted in camp Judaism and how it relates to the secular/Jewish divide that is experienced on camp.

Integration and Camp Judaism

> *The most distinctive educational factor is the pervasive Jewish atmosphere and environment in which the children live while both at play and at study. A variety of social and recreational activities, in which both Jewish and American influences are harmoniously integrated, lead toward a more positive attitude toward Jewish and American values.* - Nathan H. Winter, writing on Samson Benderly[274]

While John Dewey's work does not quite fall under the category "Jewish philosophy," his works have been very influential in the Jewish camping world. While not using the term 'integration,' Dewey discussed unifying students' life experiences with wider social issues. For Dewey, integration was an attempt to foster the school's role in producing democracy in a society of disparate immigrant groups."[275] Meredith Smith, in 1921 seems to have coined the term, discussing Kilpatrick's "Project Method." But Smith used it in a broader sense, discussing the integration of the theoretical and the practical, not two different systems of discourse and thought.[276]

Integration in Judaism is not a new phenomena, and has been taking place as long as there has been an outside culture to try to interact and integrate with. Alex Pomson points out that in the modern era, it is the conservative rabbi often credited with founding

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[273] Mitchel Malkus, "Curriculum Integration in Jewish Day Schools: The Search for Coherence" 2011. p. 484.

[274] Nathan H. Winter, "Jewish Education in a Pluralist Society: Samson Benderly and Jewish Education in the United States" 1966. p. 186.

[275] This section is from Mitchel Malkus, who is summarizing Dewey's The Child and the Curriculum (1902) and The School and Society (1915). "The Curricular Symphony: How One Jewish Day School Integrates Its Curriculum." 2002. p. 47.

[276] William H. Kilpatrick's Project Method is very similar to what we are calling 'Experiential Education' today. 'Discourse' is being used here to represent a system of thought, as Michel Foucault uses it. Mitchel Malkus, "Curriculum Integration in Jewish Day Schools: The Search for Coherence" 2011. p. 88.

Modern Orthodoxy, Samson Raphael Hirsch, who most famously promoted this interaction between Judaism and general culture. Using the term "harmonization," he asserted that, if "in real life a Jew, to perform his duty, as a man and a citizen, should combine Jewish with general culture, so in the nursery of life, in the school, provision should be made for fostering both sides in unison and harmony."[277]

Michael Zeldin finds the roots for this idea in the work of theologian Franz Rosenzweig, who advocated for a "new sort of learning… a learning in reverse order. A learning that no longer starts from the Torah and leads into life, but the other way round: from life… back to Torah."[278] This is an important perspective on the idea of integration, because it does not construct the world as having two distinct realms with no overlap which need to be made to interact or to integrate. Rather Rosenzweig is describing a picture of the world where our life experience can lead us to Jewish learning – an important concept especially for Jewish Teachable Moments.

The Ramah movement, in the words of its former director Seymour Fox, was heavily influenced by the religious vision of Abraham Joshua Heschel:

> Dr. Heschel believed that Jewish rituals and symbols embodied a deep and profound message about the way human beings should live. He viewed Shabbat as a great gift to the world, a sanctification of time in a society where that sanctity was continually being violated. Heschel was amazed, for example, when the dates of certain American holidays were shifted merely for the convenience of having them coincide with a three-day weekend. "Can you imagine changing Rosh Hashanah so that it always falls on a weekend?" he asked.[279]

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[277] Hirsch, S.R., 'On Hebrew instruction as part of general education" Judaism Eternal (1). 1956.: 188-202. quoted from Alex D. M. Pomson, "Knowledge That Doesn't Just Sit There: Considering a Reconception of the Curriculum Integration of Jewish and General Studies" 2001. pp. 528-545. pp. 529-30.

[278] Michael Zeldin. "Making the Magic in Reform Jewish Summer Camps," in Michael M. Lorge and Gary Phillip Zola, A Place of our Own. 2006. p. 106.

[279] Seymour Fox and William Novak, "Vision at the Heart: Lessons from Camp Ramah on the Power of Ideas in Shaping Educational Institutions" 2000. p. 16.

Heschel's wonder at the shifting of the dates of American holidays is a concrete example of the differences between a 'Jewish' world-view, where dates are set, and a 'secular' world-view, where dates can be shifted for convenience. This is also the view of Mordechai M. Kaplan, who viewed Judaism as a civilization with its own values, music, art, and drama.[280]

In Reform Judaism, our view of the world is somewhere between that of Heschel and Kaplan, who see Judaism and Americanism as two discrete discourses and Rosenzweig, who sees a progression between the two. Just as "Steve Plaut suggests that these camps parallel the Zionist endeavor of creating a specifically Jewish culture in a Jewish geography,"[281] I assert that our URJ camps try to create a completely Reform Jewish culture in a Reform Jewish geography. But the real question is – What is Reform Judaism? Reform Judaism itself is a conscious blend of the Jewish tradition and modern sensibilities, so does it make sense to talk of Reform Judaism and Americanism as being two separate discourses?

These questions have practical implications. Why bother to integrate Judaism with archery? Is that something that really happens in a completely Reform Jewish setting? Is that what Reform Jews really do? While the answer can be both 'no' and 'yes' in different respects, there is an inherent contradiction in discussing Reform Judaism as anything other than a blend, a harmonization, and integration, of America and Judaism. The basketball court should not be a foreign island where kids go to act American any

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[280] Miriam R. Ephriam. "Selected Writings of Miriam R. Ephriam." 1966. p. 43. and Seymour Fox and William Novak, "Vision at the Heart: Lessons from Camp Ramah on the Power of Ideas in Shaping Educational Institutions" 2000. p. 15.

[281] Michael Zeldin. "Making the Magic in Reform Jewish Summer Camps," in Michael M. Lorge and Gary Phillip Zola, A Place of our Own. 2006. p. 110.

more than the chapel should be an island of Jewishness on camp, but being in a Reform Jewish setting, both should embody whatever it means to be a Reform Jew. Judaism and modern culture should be blended together to form a livable Reform Judaism in every space of camp. The question is, then, 'How do we teach this blend through living it at our camps?'

Integration or Interaction: Jewish and American Value Systems

Integrating Judaism into the 'secular' parts of the Jewish camp is "a philosophical/ideological approach to building Jewish identity."[282] The way that these two concepts interact and are combined takes a lot of thinking about where these systems are parallel, where they diverge, and how best to teach them. As Sales and Saxe affirm, these are serious questions:

> Many of the issues we studied… concern the possibility of creating a generation of Jews who care deeply about their Judaism yet also hold a world outlook and function successfully as American citizens. And they concern the challenge of transmitting Jewish religion, culture, and pride to a younger generation that has increasingly fewer Jewish role models and influences. The questions that drove this study, however are not solely parochial. They also relate to America's enduring social question of how simultaneously to be a "melting pot" to sustain religious and cultural diversity, and to build a society free of discrimination.[283]

One of the challenges, is that these questions have been answered in many different ways over time and across ideological positions.

When the mass Jewish migrations came to America at the turn of the 20th century, Michael Zeldin relates, the goal of informal education was at first to help the children of

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[282] Mitchel Malkus, "The Curricular Symphony: How One Jewish Day School Integrates Its Curriculum." 2002. p. 56.

[283] Amy. L. Sales and Leonard Saxe, "How Goodly Are Thy Tents: Summer Camps as Jewish Socializing Experiences" 2004. p.xviii.

these immigrants assimilate into America.[284] Integration at this time was about integrating Jews into American culture and showing how well American culture and Judaism aligned.

Zeldin also talks about a different time in Jewish camping, when "camping became a tool in the battle against assimilation, a period of 'periodic inoculations' that would last from year to year, and, if the child received enough 'boosters,' would last for a lifetime."[285] Seymour Fox recounts this in his discussion about the culture at Ramah. In an era when most suburban Jewish families wanted to outsource the education of their children, "the founders of Ramah wanted to go beyond what a school could achieve. [They sought to battle assimilation] by trying to create a special enclave, an entire subculture, they sought to accomplish what the family and the community were no longer willing to do."[286] While some still think of Jewish education and Jewish camping in this way, a more complex understanding of integration has replaced this attitude that Jewish education is primarily part of the battle to prevent assimilation.

Zeldin asserts that the goal of Jewish camping now is living Judaism and living Jewishly, or as Joseph Reimer puts it, "to value Jewish distinctiveness by not allowing our heritage to become blended into the American background." This is challenging, because in Zeldin's words, "many American Jews hold an ideology that blurs the distinction between Jewish and American values."[287] It is the assertion of David Ellenson, Michael

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[284] Michael Zeldin. "Making the Magic in Reform Jewish Summer Camps," in Michael M. Lorge and Gary Phillip Zola, A Place of our Own. 2006. p. 102.
[285] *Ibid.* p. 102.
[286] Seymour Fox and William Novak, "Vision at the Heart: Lessons from Camp Ramah on the Power of Ideas in Shaping Educational Institutions" 2000. p. 10.
[287] Michael Zeldin. "Making the Magic in Reform Jewish Summer Camps," in Michael M. Lorge and Gary Phillip Zola, A Place of our Own. 2006. p. 102.

Zeldin and others that these values systems are separate, and instead of talking of integrating these value systems to the point where "Judaism and American life [are] inextricably interwoven"[288], we should be discussing the interaction between them, point out where they differ, and be proud of the differences.

Adin Steinsaltz taught the following parable about this mode of viewing Jewish life:

> "Jewish life can be characterized as either "marine" or "mammalian." Marine Jews swim in the seas of Judaism. The fullest embodiment of this form of Jewish life is in Israel. Mammalian Jews need to create their own cisterns of Jewish living and learning where they can drink, eat, pray, and learn. Creative Jewish life in the Diaspora best embodies this mode. Jewish camping is a particularly powerful marine experience (Jewish living 24/7 or even 7/5 with day camps) for North American Jews who otherwise live mammalian Jewish lives. While the natural rhythms of marine Judaism are vital and refreshing, the intentionality of creating the conscious appropriation of Jewish values and making Jewish religious decisions is a virtue of North American Jewish life. Hence, my own sense of the goals of "informal" Jewish education is to help us all become amphibious Jews.[289]

According to Steinsaltz, there is a difference between life above-air – the North American Culture – and life below water – Jewish culture. These different settings have different values, and us, the amphibians, must pass between the different environments. The model Ellenson and Zeldin discuss is similar to this metaphor, in that there are different 'physics' within each of these systems – light travels differently, oxygen must be acquired in a different way, objects fall at different speeds. However, the model is limiting in that it does not acknowledge that we can take what is Jewish with us out of the model when we experience the rest of the world, and the outside world will never penetrate the depths of Judaism.

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[288] Michael Zeldin, "Integration and Interaction in the Jewish Day School" 1998. p. 579.

[289] Barbara Penzner speaking B'shem Adin Steinsaltz, quoted in Jeffrey Scheinn, "Becoming Amphibious Jews" 2007. p. 133.

Ellenson says that because of the Holocaust, the lack of strength of the 'melting-pot' metaphor, and the power of personal autonomy, we should be focusing on not purely integrating or synchronizing Judaism with American values, but pointing out the interactions and differences:

> The integrity and wisdom of Jewish tradition and our attempts to reconstitute Jewish community in our modern situation of choice and fragmentation can contribute much to individual Jews and the Jewish community in a world that all too often flounders and its quest for values and identity. By creating schools, and providing a model of Judaism that is not identical to but interacts with the larger world of values and culture of which we are a part, Judaism may make its greatest contribution to individual Jews and our larger society.

At the end, the goal of the interaction is so that students will "confront and contribute to both the Jewish community and the larger world."[290]

Zeldin echoes this sentiment, stating that:

> Camps miss an opportunity when they echo the messages of coalescence that participants have already absorbed (for example, by teaching American values such as sportsmanship as if they were Jewish values). If Jewish values are perceived to be identical with American values, there is no compelling reason to study, adopt, practice, or live by Jewish values.[291]

Several areas of difference that he brings attention to include: the American idea of 'inalienable rights' versus the Jewish idea of 'social responsibility'; the Jewish concept of blessings before and after meals; and the concept of a Shabbat full of oneg, menuchah and t'fillah. Ellenson finds the American individualistic constructions of 'Self' and 'Democracy' to be separate from Jewish tradition's more communal interpretation of

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[290] Jeffrey S. Kress, "Development, Learning, and Community: Educating for Identity in Pluralistic Jewish High Schools." 2012. p. 101.

[291] Michael Zeldin. "Making the Magic in Reform Jewish Summer Camps," in Michael M. Lorge and Gary Phillip Zola, A Place of our Own. 2006. p. 103.

these concepts, and thinks that the interaction of these two values systems is an important concept of study for American Jews.[292]

The educator Jon Levinson finds fault with the work of Ellenson, Zeldin, and the historian of Reform Judaism Michael Meyer's conception of interaction by claiming that a shift from teaching 'integration' to 'interaction' is not necessary as long as students are able to reflect for themselves. I find this a spurious criticism, as education is always helped and shaped by reflection. I think that both the academic integration of Judaism into secular subject and the teaching of the interaction between these different discourses are both helped when teachers reflect with their students on their pedagogy, and thus this critique does not affect the model.

A critique that does affect the model, however, is that Ellenson's construct of what is 'Jewish,' and really all of our constructs are shaped by the community of language that we live in. Judaism is a multi-faceted religion that has contained many value systems at many points in history, and the texts reflect this. While there may be some 'essential' elements of the religion that are unchanging (which I would in fact argue for), it is difficult for me discuss Judaism's view of 'self' as a single perspective. It is also difficult for me to give an unbiased assessment of Judaism's view of 'self,' since I am looking through the lens of my American education. This issue becomes apparent when discussing Zeldin's examples. The 'American' concept of inalienable rights can be traced to Deistic European political theory in the eighteenth century, and is very similar to my conception of the obligations owed to individuals created *b'tzelem Elohim* – in the image of God. Similarly, a feeling of 'social responsibility,' according to Alexander de Tocqueville, is

[292] David Ellenson, "An Ideology for the Liberal Jewish Day School: A Philosophical-Sociological Investigation" 2008. pp. 255-6.

present in patently American civil society. In 'American Grace,' Robert Putnam presents data that praying over meals is much more a part of African-American culture than it is any other group in America. And while the Jewish rituals surrounding the Sabbath are particularistic, the concept of keeping the Sabbath is enshrined in Blue Laws across America. This does not mean that I disagree with Ellenson's concept, but it is much more difficult to point to disparate American and Jewish value systems than he lets on. And while synchrony might not be helpful in providing an answer to the questions "why be Jewish and not just American?" and "what is being Jewish compared to being American?" it is none-the-less inevitable.

Almost all scholars believe that the goal of teaching Judaism as integrated with the rest of society is about the integration of the self – to see the world as a whole.[293] Laurence Scheindlin also adds to this the idea of *yirat shamayim*, which he defines as seeing "the world aided by an awareness of the transcendence," including seeing other and the Other in the world."[294]

While integrating Judaism and secular culture in a Reform Jewish controlled environment is difficult enough, the 'next frontier' that educators and camp directors are looking at is the interaction between Judaism as lived at camp, and Judaism as practiced at home and in the synagogue. Judaism in the two locations can be different, and participants on effective camps have an un-guided process of integrating their 'new-selves'

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[293] Jeffrey S. Kress, "Development, Learning, and Community: Educating for Identity in Pluralistic Jewish High Schools." 2012. pp. 101-2., Jon Levisohn, "From Integration of Curricula to the Pedagogy of Integrity" 2008. p. 283, summarizing M. Zeldin and A. Pomson.

[294] Lawrence Scheindlin, "Integrating Cognition and Emotion" 2008, also referenced in Jeffrey S. Kress, "Development, Learning, and Community: Educating for Identity in Pluralistic Jewish High Schools." 2012.

with their former lives with little reflection.[295] This is not a topic that is covered in this thesis, but it is an ongoing area of work for camp and synagogue professionals.

Challenges with Integration

There are many challenges to implementing the integration of Judaism into the specialty areas on camp. The largest challenge is that, as can be seen from the above discussion, it is not always clear, when breaking down the wall between 'Jewish Education' and 'Baseball,' what it means to integrate the two subjects into one teaching session. Is baseball now a tool to teach Jewish history and theology? Is Judaism simply a bi-word for 'sportsmanship' on the diamond? As planning "requires conscious attention to the question of what it means to integrate Judaism into activities,"[296] planning suddenly becomes the laying bare of one's assumptions and understandings both regarding Judaism and the 'secular' activity that it is being integrated with.

According to Alex Pomson, integration can be confusing and difficult because it is hard to put lofty ideas into practical curricula. Teachers need to live integration in their own lives. Students need to buy into the concept, and it needs to be part of the community culture.[297] Not one of the scholars whose articles I have read for this thesis

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[295] Interviews with Avi Orlow, Jonathan Cohen and David Berkman. This was also a major focus of one the Foundation for Jewish Camping's recent conventions. Reimer tracks this to social change, using the work of R-E Prell. Jewish summer camping and civil rights: How summer camps launched a transformation in American Jewish culture. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 2006. – "Prell (2006) notes that this cultural creativity resulted in an ensuing tension between camp Judaism and the Judaism of most synagogues. 'Camp leaders were decidedly critical of 'suburban Judaism'… What was especially important to many of the camp visionaries and leaders was to communicate the timeliness and relevance of Judaism to American life. They employed a language of relevance, ethics, moral responsibility and choice to teach about Judaism. (p. 11)' - Joseph Reimer, "Vision, Leadership, and Change: The Case of Ramah Summer Camps" 2010. p. 251.

[296] Michael Zeldin, "Integration and Interaction in the Jewish Day School" 1998. p. 587.

[297] Alex D.M. Pomson, "Knowledge That Doesn't Just Sit There: Considering a Reconception of the Curriculum Integration of Jewish and General Studies" 2001. p. 530.

disagrees with these points. Mitchel Malkus adds to this list that curriculum in this system need to be more open, flexible and themed based, but, contradictorily, also need to have focus or else students will not be able to learn.[298] It is just simply easier not to integrate:

> Building a school whose curriculum is suffused with coordination, integration, and interaction is difficult. It is much easier to work in a school in which each subject is taught in isolation, where teachers do not have to plan with one another, where parents are clear about what is being taught and when. Integration in any of its forms requires significant support from the administration of a school, from its Board, and from parents.[299]

The value of integration on education and creating a 'whole human' must be seen as very important if integration is to work.

On the topic of 'value' – it is also generally more expensive to integrate. All integration models require better-trained staff to truly make the models work. Certain models require more staff than are currently in learning environments. And all models require time, a valuable resource, to be set aside from other scheduled activities in order to plan and debrief. Evidence shows though some parents do prioritize the Jewish experience camp provides, even at camps that are known for their strong Jewish education programs, those that do not spend enough resources on their facilities do not survive.[300]

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[298] Mitchel Malkus, "Curriculum Integration in Jewish Day Schools: The Search for Coherence" 2011. p. 92.

[299] Michael Zeldin, "Integration and Interaction in the Jewish Day School" 1998. p. 587.

[300] Michael Zeldin. "Making the Magic in Reform Jewish Summer Camps," in Michael M. Lorge and Gary Phillip Zola, A Place of our Own. 2006. p. 93.

From "**SUSTAINING JEWISH EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE IN URJ CAMPS – 2008**" (provided by Lisa David)

"Why Parents Send Children to This Camp

(Rank the following in order of important with "1" being the highest in terms of how much each item influenced your choice to send your child/ren to this camp:)

	1	2	3	4	5

Another challenge is that it is difficult to measure success in integrated curriculum.[301] This is a very difficult challenge. In the debate between those camps that have done away with an hour of education in favor of integrated education, some[302] have claimed that this means that no meaningful education is happening at these camps. The truth is that we simply do not know if the education at these camps is meaningful unless a study is conducted. So far, there have been no studies with quantitative data, because while it is difficult to measure success, it is not impossible.

There is never enough time on camp, and building an infrastructure with integration, especially models that include team-teaching, require ample planning time and flexible schedules.[303] Malkus Mitchel emphasizes that this time is needed for teachers to both plan and debrief, and Avi Orlow points to the need for campers to also reflect on what happened in the integration experience, in order to truly integrate the Jewish and other lessons that were taught.[304]

For integrated curricula to succeed, according to Malkus Mitchel, the right staffing is crucial:

This camp is a great Jewish experience	**50%**	20%	16%	8%	6%
This camp has a great program	23%	25%	28%	18%	7%
My friends or my child's friends go to this camp	19%	12%	13%	20%	37%
My congregation/rabbi/other professional recommended this camp	20%	10%	10%	22%	38%
This camp is an opportunity for my child to grow	34%	24%	20%	13%	8%

"

"The difference between Modin and Cejwin is that Cejwin was ideological and gritty, while Modin is nicer, picturesque, and offers a wide range of attractive opportunities. Like sailing, windsurfing, white water rafting and wall climbing." Jonathan B. Krasner, "The Magic of Summer Camp" 2012.

[301] Avi Orlow FJC, phone interview.

[302] Ron Klotz and several OSRUI faculty in phone interviews.

[303] Mitchel Malkus, "The Curricular Symphony: How One Jewish Day School Integrates Its Curriculum." 2002. p. 56.

[304] *Ibid.* p. 54, Phone interview with Avi Orlow. Mitchel Malkus, "Curriculum Integration in Jewish Day Schools: The Search for Coherence". 2011. p. 93.

> In addition to the characteristics of openness, flexibility, and being a team player, my research suggested that with respect to the integration of Jewish and general studies, the attitudes of the general studies teacher to religion is an important consideration in hiring faculty that work in schools that support integrated curriculum.[305]

This is a major issue for Jonathan Cohen, the director of URJ Jacobs camp. For the head of his sports specialty camp, he would prefer to hire an individual who personally integrated Judaism and sports in their own lives, but often has to find two individuals to team-teach. He and other camp professionals report that it is hard to find these people, and it is hard to keep any of the summer-staff coming back year after year.[306] According to Avi Orlow, one of the hardest things is to find someone who integrates authentically, "No doubt if you put a dork on the field and try to create conversations, then it is not going to work. If you get a good person, they are great at basketball, know the rules, and they know the texts…. that is true integration."[307]

The last challenge that I will identify here is that not all activities are conducive for integration. Integration that stops the flow of an activity, or mandates rule changes in a well-known game will not make participants happy. One division head relates that he began integrating Jewish education by teaching lessons through changing the rules of games, and frequently stopping the action for teaching. He quickly learned that it was better to allow the game to flow as normal, and to teach inside in air-conditioning while participants were cooling off between sports activities.[308] The challenge is to integrate seamlessly, and not to force Judaism into the activity.

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[305] *Ibid.* p. 92.

[306] Phone interview with Jonathan Cohen.

[307] Phone interview with Avi Orlow, typed as we were speaking, so these may not be his exact words.

[308] Jimmy Stoloff, a Sports Director for a summer at URJ Jacobs camp. This point is also on p. 106 of Michael Zeldin. "Making the Magic in Reform Jewish Summer Camps," in Michael M. Lorge and Gary Phillip Zola, A Place of our Own. 2006.

Models of Curriculum Integration

Models of curriculum integration come both from the day school world, and from the camping world. The camp models seem to be un-aware of the day school models, so it is my hope that this thesis introduces and summarizes these models well enough that they can be better applied to camping.

Before I discuss specific models, it is important to note that integration is as much a frame of mind as it is a specific system. The term is used differently across different camps and different day school cultures.[309] Integration, as noted above, is difficult, so some of the models described below are not commonly used in the day-school world, and one of the most integrated models below was reportedly "beyond the capacity of the [Jewish day] schools within [the author's] study to reach."[310] Looking at the author's research, most of the day schools studied were limited in their integration.

Mitchel Malkus sees three ways that integration happens, and as we look at the different models below, it is helpful to keep them in mind: Instructional Strategies, Curricular Factors, and School Culture.[311]

<u>Michael Zeldin – From Compartmentalization to Interaction</u>[312]

Michael Zeldin believes that integration as a mindset should affect almost every element of school, including: classroom activities; classroom design (social or physical); school culture; books or other learning materials; discipline and management;

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[309] Mitchel Malkus, 2002. "The Curricular Symphony: How One Jewish Day School Integrates Its Curriculum." p. 50.

[310] Boaz Tomsky, "Administrators' Perceptions of Curriculum Integration within Jewish Community Day Schools" 2007. p.iii.

[311] Mitchel Malkus, "Curriculum Integration in Jewish Day Schools: The Search for Coherence" 2011. p. 89.

[312] This section is a summary of: Michael Zeldin, "Integration and Interaction in the Jewish Day School" 1998. pp. 579-590

responsibilities assigned to teachers; how time is allocated; report cards; parent-teacher conferences; open house; and special programs (concerts, fairs, and plays.

As discussed above, he believes that interaction, not integration, should be the goal, and gives the following spectrum, from un-integrated all of the way to interaction. I will change his language slightly from school to camp:

Compartmentalization – This is not integration. There are separate hours for Jewish education and everything else on camp. Judaism is kept to its time-slot. Specialists teach only their subjects – meaning faculty only teach Judaism, and other specialists only teach their specialty area. Bunk counselors only care about the physical and emotional wellbeing of their campers. The concern is about each individual's limited area.

Coordination – There are separate hours of Jewish education and every other activity on camp, but there is an effort to point out when concepts overlap, and the sequence of topics taught are sometimes arranged to purposefully overlap. Each specialist is only in charge of their area, but they are aware what is happening in the other areas of camp. Staff are concerned about both their area, and what is happening in other areas which is relevant to what they are teaching.

Integration – There is a single, unified curriculum in which deliberate efforts are made to bring Judaism and the other areas of camp into contact. Staff teach their own subjects, but Judaic specialists incorporates elements from the specialty area(s) and other specialists and bunk counselors have specific Jewish content responsibilities. They also discuss how Judaism's views and the modern views of their areas are similar and different.

Interaction – There are separate opportunities for Jewish and specialty learning, but also times in which deliberate efforts are made to bring the two into dialogue with one another. Teachers teach their own subjects, but the faculty and the specialists meet and work

together to provide opportunities for interaction. How do Jewish and modern views of the different topics help students to construct their own understanding?

Zeldin also lays out three practical ways in which integration can be carried out:

Option 1 – Start with the specialty areas and see how Jewish concepts, values and skills can be brought into the specialty curriculum. The goal of this style of integration is to add a Jewish dimension to the specialty area or to present general ideas in context of Jewish ideas and values. This is an example of Interaction.

Option 2 – Have two curricula that are planned to run parallel: Jewish education and specialty area education, each with their own subjects, target concepts, skills, and values. The goal of this is to see how Jewish ideas and values can enrich the specialty areas and how modernity (the specialty areas) add to Jewish studies. Because these are done in parallel, it is possible to draw connections [if there is reflection.] This is an example of Coordination.

Option 3 – The core curriculum "topics are chosen and then introduced to students from the vantage point of a variety of disciplines, including Jewish history, practice, and thought. The goal of the core curriculum is to model for students how to bring a wide range of perspectives to bear on a single topic."[313] This is an example of Integration.

Zeldin's model is easy to apply to URJ camps, which fit mainly into compartmentalization, coordination, or integration. I do not currently know of a camp that practices interaction, because it requires the specialists also to be Jewish educators. It requires a different staffing setup than many of the camps currently employ.

[313] *Ibid*. p. 582.

Mitchel Malkus – Theme Based Education and Team Teaching[314]

Jon Levisohn, in his article titled, "From Integration of Curricula to the Pedagogy of Integrity," rightly points out that all school subjects are cultural constructs.[315] This is a profound statement that changes the game on camp. We label the morning worship service "T'fillah" in our schedules, but the time spent alone on a hike is "Teva". On camps that have a "bunk period" dedicated to group bonding and relationship building, does this suddenly stop in "Soccer"? In discussing how the *tiferet* art program worked at OSRUI, Danny Maseng emphasized that only the meal times were sacrosanct and could not be played with, but the lines between art, prayer, performance, education (etc.) were all blurred.

One of three ways of integrating, for Mitchel Malkus, is through a theme-based approach, rather than having a compartmentalized subject-based approach to education. This means that instead of having "Art" and later "Jewish Education", their schedule says, "Creation", or rather than separate "Soccer" and "Jewish Education " or "T'fillah", there is "Mind, Body, Spirit". The new item on the daily schedule is used to combine the

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[314] The material in this section is drawn from two of Malkus's articles:
Mitchel Malkus, "Curriculum Integration in Jewish Day Schools: The Search for Coherence" 2011. and Mitchel Malkus, "The Curricular Symphony: How One Jewish Day School Integrates Its Curriculum." 2002.

[315] Jon Levisohn, "From Integration of Curricula to the Pedagogy of Integrity" in *Journal of Jewish Education* 2008. p. 274.
Mitchel Malkus discusses the debate on this shift in education: "Critics of integrated curriculum argue that the disciplines of knowledge are weakened when schools move away from a subject-separate approach (see Bloom, 1987). Advocates of curriculum integration have responded by pointing out that the subject-separate approach in schools represents a hardening of categories that does not exist naturally in the disciplines of knowledge (Klein, 1990). Disciplines, they argue, are fluid at the edges and often combine with other disciplines. Instead of being opposed to the disciplines of knowledge, Beane (1995) suggests that curriculum integration maintains the integrity of individual subjects while shifting their function from "ends" to "means" within education." - Mitchel Malkus, "Curriculum Integration in Jewish Day Schools: The Search for Coherence" 2011. p. 89.

two topics. The downside of this is that there is no specific learning of a 'traditional knowledge base,' something that camps do not generally transmit anyway. This could be an issue for a specialty camp that is trying to teach a sports skill at a high level.

There seem to be two ways to run theme-based education. The first is through moving away from traditional disciplines, and the second is through finding a theme for the entire day, week, or camp session. Every staff member knows this theme, such as "God's Love of Man" and tried to integrate it into their area of control on camp (or their newly named area based on the theme). This camp-theme based approach, according to Avi Orlow at the Foundation for Jewish Camp, is one of the most robust forms of integration.

Similar to this is Malkus's second way to integrate, by organizing different subjects around Core Concepts and Essential Questions. This means that every subject area of the day makes sure to include a discussion around a theme like, 'How do you see God's presence in our world?" or another big question. This does not specifically mean that there is any real integration between subjects, but it helps students link how the different specialty areas relate to a bigger question.

J. Beane is quoted by more than one Jewish scholar as a proponent of this type of education, which enhances "personal and social integration through the organization of curriculum around significant problems and issues, collaboratively identified by educators and young people, without regard for subject-area lines."[316] To my untutored eyes, Beane seems to be presenting an adaptation of Kilpatrick's Project Theory, where participants

[316] Beane, J., Curriculum integration: Designing the core of democratic education. Teachers College Press, New York: 1997. p. 19. quoted in Mitchel Malkus, "The Curricular Symphony: How One Jewish Day School Integrates Its Curriculum." 2002.

learn from working on a specific project (in this case theme) instead of learning about a 'discipline of thought'.

Malkus admits that his own studies have shown that this generally leads to poor results, and suggests that it is easier when there are big topics like 'history' (or 'God', 'Torah' and 'Israel') as the theme, rather than the smaller topics of learning many educators would like to integrate into specialty areas. This can be seen by thinking through how it might work on camp, where few Essential Questions could really be carried from swimming to lunch to Ultimate Frisbee with integrity and without forcing the conversation.

One strategy that does seem to yield good results according to Malkus's research is Team Teaching. Team teaching is the introduction of teachers of different specialties into the same teaching setting to share space and to playfully move between the subjects. On camp, this would be the inclusion of a faculty member or Jewish education specialist to co-lead a session with another specialty instructor. Malkus does not make clear if it matters if the topic in the classroom is traditional, like "boating" or theme-based like "Israel's Coasts", but it seems that his research is primarily about the introduction of Judaic specialists to traditional subjects.

At many camps, bunk counselors accompany their campers to the bunk's daily activities,[317] but they do not team teach the activities. General counselors are not able to team teach just because they are Jewish. They need to be educated on the Jewish themes relating to the topic and they need time both to prepare the topic and to work with their co-leader on the specific lesson plan. A Jewish education specialist (or a faculty member) would also need preparation time with the co-leader, and, ideally, a time to debrief after

[317] URJ Eisner travels less by bunks than other camps, so this does vary across the camps.

the session. Instead, either faculty or well prepared Jewish education specialists, such as members of the *mishlachat* (the Israeli staff), would need to fill this role.

One of the reasons team teaching is effective, according to Malkus, is that students see their teachers have the ability and knowledge to cross outside of their limited subject area. Another benefit is that the Jewish and general studies teachers play equal roles, showing that both subjects are of equal importance. Malkus describes one class that he was observing: "The teachers in this class engage both the students and one another in conversation and while it appears to me that Na'amah has prepared the lesson, it is also clear that the two teachers see themselves as part of a team."[318]

While this type of education seems appealing if done correctly, Jeffery Kress thinks that reflection time replaces the need for theme-based integration, "Integration through self-reflection focuses on the recipient… and his or her ability to make connections among educational experiences and the evolving self." Individual reflection can lead to personal growth, and can be used to make connections across, "the diverse developmental settings in which a youth participates."[319] This may be true with older participants, but most students (and even adult earners) are helped when topics are clearly integrated for them. I do not know if this reflection would take place unless it was scheduled at the end of every period of the day, and at the end of every day.

Malkus's conception of integration is not, to my knowledge, practiced at any URJ camp (other than curricular integration, which was attempted at URJ Newman for the first time in 2012, and at URJ Jacobs when single teachers that are able to teach both

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[318] Mitchel Malkus, "The Curricular Symphony: How One Jewish Day School Integrates Its Curriculum." 2002. p. 52.

[319] Jeffrey S. Kress, "Development, Learning, and Community: Educating for Identity in Pluralistic Jewish High Schools." 2012. p. 102.

Judaism and their specialty area cannot be found). Both re-naming subjects and re-assigning staff as team-teachers are workable suggestions for URJ camps if the logistics can be ironed out.

Fogarty – Fragmentation to Integration[320]

Robin Fogarty provides a very comprehensive model as to curriculum integration. Fogarty's different stations along the curriculum integration spectrum are separated into two categories – integration within a discipline, and integration across disciplines. It is possible that Michael Zeldin's model is an adaptation of Fogarty's model, as some of the ideas between these thinkers is similar, but it is worth showing Fogarty's whole model:

Single Discipline:

Fragmented – There are separate and distinct disciplines, taught by different people, generally in different locations.

Connected – Within each specialty area, content is connected.

Nested – Within each specialty area, the teacher targets multiple skills and tries to draw connections across these skills.

In all three stations of integration, the focus is on a single specialty area, but different skills and concepts are sometimes drawn on, so that they can foster a deeper understanding and be made more relevant to real-live situations.

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[320] This section is summarized from Alex Pomson and Boaz Tomsky's separate works:
Alex D.M. Pomson, "Knowledge That Doesn't Just Sit There: Considering a Reconception of the Curriculum Integration of Jewish and General Studies" 2001. pp. 528-545. and
Boaz Tomsky, "Administrators' Perceptions of Curriculum Integration within Jewish Community Day Schools" 2007.
These works, in turn, are summarizing:
Fogarty, R. "Ten ways to integrate curriculum. *Educational Leadership*. 49:2, 61-65. 1991, and "The Mindful School: How to integrate the curriclua" Palatine, IL: Skylight Publishing, Inc. 1991. and Fogarty, Robin and Judy Stoehr. 1995. *Integrating curricula with multiple intelligences*: *Teams, themes and threads*. Palatine, Ill.: IRI Skylight.

Across Disciplines:

Sequenced – Topics are scheduled, so that they appear in multiple specialty areas at the same time. I cannot think of a way to apply this to the specialty areas on camp.

Shared – Two disciplines are joined together over a single focus.

Webbed – A general theme is chosen, and different specialists drawn on elements of the theme that work in their specialty area.

Threaded – A specific skill, project, or question links together many of the specialty areas.

Integrated – The topic and content of many specialty areas overlap.

Fogarty's continuum is a more complete break-down of the concepts of theme-based curricula and curricula based around core concepts and questions, as are discussed by Malkus. These more exacting levels of integration may be helpful to camp professionals that are thinking about webbing or threading parts of their curricula. The major difference between Fogarty, Malkus and Zeldin, is that in Fogarty's model, the specialists themselves would often need to be the Jewish educators. At some camps, where specialists are either Israelis or Reform Jews, this is a possibility if they are prepared and given enough support. However, some camps bring in non-Jewish specialists from either the local area (especially for swimming) or from abroad. It would be impossible for these specialists to implement a webbed or threaded curriculum, and would need team-teachers.

Jacobs, Ross and Olsen[321]

There are two other day-school integration models that are discussed in the Jewish curriculum integration literature.

A. Ross and K. Olsen's model is specifically about team-teaching. To quickly summarize, either classes have a single teacher who does not integrate, two teachers who team-teach, or one person who can integrate. This is one of the only models that recognizes that beyond planning and curriculum design, it is the staff which make integration happen (or not happen) on the ground.

H. Jacobs presents a model similar to Fogarty's model, except for the addition of two levels of integration that are simply not possible at camp – one which structures a curriculum based on a participant's questions, and one that which is taught to the learner based on their more general interest and behaviors. The only time this happens on camp outside of specific projects, is when faculty are asked to come into cabins late at night and present a story or a piece of learning tailored to the group's (usually problematic) behavior during the day. In addition to creating a model, Jacobs also provides three questions for institutions to ask when thinking of adopting a model: 1) Is there enough time in the schedule to make it work? 2) Are staff capable and supportive of the model? 3) Will we be teaching what we need to teach if we use this model? This third question may not seem relevant to camp, but if the course is working towards a red-cross certification, then there are requirements that must be met. Similarly the professional educators – the

[321] This section is summarized from Boaz Tomsky, "Administrators' Perceptions of Curriculum Integration within Jewish Community Day Schools" 2007. He is using as a guide: Jacobs, H. "Interdisciplinary curriculum: Design and Implementation" Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development: 1989. and Ross, A. and Olsen, K. "The way we were…the way we can be: A vision for the middle school through integrated thematic instruction" (2nd ed.) Kent, WA: Books for Educators, Covington Square:1993.

rabbis, cantors and educators – all have a level of education that they like to see met at camp, and many are not afraid to express their feelings if this level of education is not met.

Shapiro Abraham – Specialty Camp Models[322]

Michelle Shapiro Abraham, analyzing the Foundation for Jewish Camp's specialty camps, sees four different types of integration on camps that she thinks are good examples for both specialty camps, and any camp that tries to present Jewish learning in a meaningful way. Her four models do not seem to be cognizant of the models discussed above, but provide a fresh look at how integration can be characterized.[323]

Full Integration – Judaism is seamlessly and naturally woven into every aspect of camp. She uses as an example Eden Village Camp. At Eden Village, where the goal is to make the world again like the Garden of Eden, while working on a farm, the text on *peah* is read and discussed even as corners of fields are left for the needy. Art is about creating Jewish sacred objects, theater is about Jewish values. Topics and themes are chosen because they work with what is happening on camp, not just because of their Jewish learning potential.

This is a challenging model, because it requires very highly trained staff and administration, but it shows to campers that Judaism can just be a part of daily life.

Putting this model against the criteria established by Zeldin, Pomson and others is difficult, because in some ways there is no integration or interaction happening – The camp is simply a completely Jewish environment without non-Jewish 'specialty areas' that do not fit the camp's vision and aims. Team-teaching is not needed, because the staff are

[322] Michelle Shapiro Abraham, "Approaches to Jewish Living: End of Year Report - FJC Specialty Camp Incubator" Foundation for Jewish Camp, internal document provided by the author, dated 4 March 2012.
[323] I have been asked not to quote directly from the Foundation for Jewish Camp document in which these models are discussed, and therefore I am paraphrasing (sometimes at length) the relevant material.

individuals who try to live this in their own lives. It may be possible to replicate this on a URJ specialty camp, but not in a camp with more 'general camp' activities.

Spiral Integration – The curriculum is broken down into well crafted mini-lessons that build on each-other throughout the day. This is the case at URJ Six Points Sports Academy, where a value is introduced during a breakfast ritual, applied to their sport during a water break, discussed informally during the day by the staff, and expanded upon during the evening. At Adamah Adventure, another summer program, staff at the beginning of hikes (the camp's specialty area) are provided with a binder full of themed mini-programs. These programs are run during breaks throughout the day. At the end of the trek, there are programs which are meant to test for an evidence of understanding.

Shapiro Abraham cautions that these spiraled mini-programs must not be seen as destroying the 'flow' of the activities, and cannot be forgotten as business of the day takes over.

Specialty Driven – The camp aligned with this model, Ramah Outdoor Adventure, has hourly education, but it is themed and participates in the topic of the camp – environmentalism and outdoor living.

Specialty driven integration seems to only be possible at a specialty camp, but other camps can imitate this by having the same theme run across its educational hour and across its specialty areas, as discussed by Malkus.

Developmentally Driven – This model is very similar to specialty driven – the learning modalities used in the specialty areas are used during the education time, but at the

summer program Passport NYC the education is much more crafted towards reaching where campers are developmentally.

This is similar to H. Jacobs's presentation of integration models that seek to integrate through using the interests of the learner, instead of set subjects.

Michelle Shapiro Abraham's Models are helpful because they are based on real camps that are actively trying to make their Jewish education relevant and exciting for campers.

Dan and Lydia Medwin – Modular or Progressive, Judaic or Specialty Based[324]

In the summer of 2009, URJ Jacobs camp first integrated its curriculum. The education directors at the time, Lydia and Dan Medwin, working with Michelle Shapiro Abraham, after several years of practice and experimentation, created the following model. These models were based upon work with the unit heads on the camp, and Dan and Lydia's own experience. The (unpublished) document they produced is much more detailed than I am describing below, and should be read by any URJ educator thinking of how to integrate curriculum on their own camp.

D. and L. Medwin's model is that curricula are either Modular or Progressive, and either Specialty content based or Judaic content based:

"*Modular* – Curriculum is based on a collection of chronologically interchangeable modules e.g. - a project-based curriculum, or stand-alone skills"

or

[324] Dan and Lydia Medwin, "Models of Integrated Jewish Education." 2009.

"*Progressive* – Curriculum has a specific progression; each lesson builds upon the previous. i.e. - the order of lessons is critical to comprehension."

"*Specialty content based* – The content of the specialty area provides the framework and structure within which the Judaic content is integrated."

or

"*Judaic content based* – The Judaic content is the subject matter for which the specialty material is brought to help explore or explain."

They acknowledge that these categories are not hard-and-fast, and that the lines are sometimes blurred. The summer of 2009, the camps were run in the following combinations:

"*Arts* – Modular (with progressive elements), Specialty based"

"*Adventure* – Progressive, Specialty-content based"

"*Digital Media* – Modular, Judaic content based"

"*Sports* – Progressive, Judaic content based"

D. and L. Medwin noted that in future years, different staff might select different models, and I know that this has been the case. Michelle Shapiro Abraham's more recent model bears striking resemblance to this model ("Specialty Driven" versus "Specialty Based" and "Spiral Integration" versus "Progressive"), which is unsurprising, seeing as she was involved in the creation of this model.

While some of these models are more theoretical and some are more practical in application, they all have a real impact on camp and campers. All of these models require high-level staff in both Judaism and the specialty areas able to seamlessly integrate Judaism into their teaching; but this is not the reality on many camps. This being the case, how can integration be done well? What lessons can we learn from others that have succeeded at integrating Judaism into the specialty areas?

Best Practices for Integrating Judaism into Camp

While the next chapter of this thesis will look at integrated curricula being run on URJ camps, there are several best practices that can be learned from other camps and integrated into URJ camps. Many of these do not specifically integrate Judaism into the individual specialty areas, but rather create a culture of learning on camp.

On one camp that Avi Orlow at the Foundation for Jewish Camp thinks others should emulate, every Shabbat every camper is required to have a *chevrutah* – a one-on-one learning session – with a staff member. From some of the kitchen staff to the camp director, everyone gets excited to be involved in an intimate learning experience.

On another camp, Orlow discusses the placement of staff members who simply learn during the summer. These staff present their learning at the end of the summer to the campers, but their primary purpose is to be seen around camp as a community of learners. While this model, for financial and staffing reasons may not work on a URJ camp, there senior staff and other staff could always make time to be seen learning around camp in public locations. On some URJ camps senior staff do meet before Shabbat for a few words of *Torah*, but this is generally a private moment.

Intentionality and attention to detail breed their own opportunities for integrating Judaism into camp more deeply. Both Avi Orlow and Ellen Nemhauser (at URJ Coleman) discussed campfires as a settings that can be constructed with intentionality to be Jewish experiences. Which stories are told? What songs are sung? If staff is willing to have the discipline to put the time in, the opportunity to be creative in this and other evening programs is nearly endless.

Eden Village Camp is just one example of how naturally Judaism and *teva*, nature, go together. Sales and Saxe tell of various different camps that they visited where they saw: nature appreciation and awareness; blessings said over the various plants, animals, and miracles in nature; tikkun olam games; and other integrations of Judaism into outdoors and outdoorsmanship.

One big way that Judaism is integrated into certain camps is through Hebrew. This is true at Olin-Sang-Ruby Union Institute (OSRUI),[325] but is becoming less true at other camps, including Goldman Union Camp Institute, which has replaced its hour of Hebrew instruction each day with education linked to 'Jewish culture'. By integrating Hebrew into a specialty area, that aspect of camp is no longer purely 'American' or 'secular' but is instantly infused with Jewish language and culture. Rafi Stareshefsky remembers his time at Massad, one camp that was successful in this mission:

> Everything was taught in Hebrew. There was no English on an official basis in camp: Every announcement was in Hebrew; everything in the dining room was in Hebrew; at the water front the life guards spoke Hebrew unless there was an absolute emergency and they had to get your immediate attention. The camp was "meshuggah" on this one thing. If

[325] Hillel Gamoran. "The Road to Chalutzim: Reform Judaism's Hebrew-Speaking Program." in Michael M. Lorge and Gary Phillip Zola, A Place of our Own. 2006.

> you were playing [base]ball and said an English word, it was the equivalent of a curse word and was considered a technical foul. If you were at bat and said something in English, you would have a strike. If you were pitching and said something in English, a ball would be called on the batter. It was a very subtle kind of reward and punishment system. But it worked.[326]

The total immersion of campers in Hebrew required a high level of knowledge by both the staff and campers, and a camp dedicated towards this goal. In the baseball example above, this is a 'rule-change,' a way of integrating Judaism into sports that will be discussed more below, but unlike most changes, this one is small and uses the consequences inherent in the game (balls and strikes).

In addition to the specialty areas, the dining hall was a major place that Hebrew was acquired:

> A Massad dictionary was handed to every new camper, the first day. You looked at this thing and didn't know how to use it; but once you knew how to use it, it was great. You sat down in the dining room, and the first thing you saw on the table was a Hebrew menu - at every single meal. It was the counselors job, at each meal, to pick up that menu, go over the items on it, and make sure the kids understood what they were, by showing, not by saying: *gezer* - carrot. It was *gezer*, and you held it up and showed it to them. The amount of Hebrew that was learned was absolutely remarkable…. My counselor was Hillel Rudavsky. I remember that he loved to eat. He used to say: *na leha'avir et hem'at ha-botnim* – that's peanut butter – *veha-ribah* – that's jelly. So I learned the Hebrew for peanut butter and jelly.[327]

Through calling items exclusively with their Hebrew names, having role models using Hebrew, and thoughtfully many small details, such as the menu, to make learning happen, Massad was able to infuse camp with this element of Judaism.

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[326] Rafi Stareshefsky in Siach Masad - Masad Reminiscences, 1996

[327] Haskel Lookstein in Siach Masad - Masad Reminiscences, 1996

Future work can be done expanding on Hillel Gamoran's look at Hebrew at OSRUI, specifically looking at the work of Etty Dolgin, a long time educator who has successfully made immersive Hebrew a success in a Reform camp environment.

There are many more 'best-practices' a few of which will be explored in the upcoming conversations on arts and sports, a few of which appear in the description of URJ programming, and many others that I either have not found in my research, or have simply overlooked.

Best Practices in Specialty Areas: Arts

> *As a painter has to make a series of choices in composing a work, so a Jew, we are teaching, has to make choices of how to compose Shabbat. As an artist's identity is reflected in compositional choices, so a Jew's identity is reflected in the ways he or she chooses to observe Shabbat or holidays. We aspire to help our Jewish educators find tools to help our students grow, expand their Jewish palates and consider the fullest repertoire that is available to them within Judaism.* – Bradley Solmsen[328]

There are many articles on how to integrate Judaism and the arts. Some programs, like OSRUI's *Tiferet* program already do this successfully, and I do not have much to add to the conversation myself. The reason I am focusing on best practices in the arts, is because the lessons learned in arts integration are easily translated to sports integration.

While there are many ways Judaism and art integration could be discussed, I am going to use Peretz Prusan-Wolf's schematization of three 'Ideas' that must be kept in mind and five "rules" that must be followed in successfully integrating Judaism and the arts. Some may find his framework arbitrary, but it is a useful organizing tool for the thoughts of others on this particular flavor of integration.[329]

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[328] Bradley Solmsen, "Professional Artists in Jewish Educational Environments" 2008. p. 48.

[329] Peretz Prusan-Wolf, "Creative Arts in the Jewish Classroom" 1998. p. 300.

Idea #1 – "Artists and teachers work together in a collaborative effort to create a learning environment, be it formal or informal. The arts should compliment the learning process. The arts should not be a supplement [something else you are doing]. Therefore, the rules of lesson planning can be applied to that experience."

One of the challenges of using art as a modality through which to teach Torah is that art is not just another modality – "it is art".[330] Art is a complex field by itself, with culture and discourse imbedded within it, and needs to be treated as an entire field, not just as a tool to teach Judaism. Integration using art is not just roughly forcing Judaism and art together. To make it appear seamless, we need to "first of all appreciate the different nature of art from education in order to appreciate the kind of 'stitching' required.[331]

When integrating Judaism and art, it is possible to do either 'art *lo lishma*', for the sake of Jewish education, or 'art *lishma*', for the sake of making art. It is helpful to define which is the main cloth, and which is the accent piece.[332]

Idea #2 – "Jewish teachers and artists have been bringing Torah to the people since Moses and Bezalel. Moses was a teacher of Torah. Bezalel made the space in which some of its practices could be carried out."

Art is everywhere around us, and can often find its place in the hidden curriculum. Robbie Gringas points out that reflection and processing are helpful, but we also learn

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[330] Robbie Gringas, "Art: Educating with Art Without Ruining it" 2011. p. 339, and Ofra Backenroth, "Incorporating the Arts in Jewish Education" 2008. p. 335.
[331] Robbie Gringas, "Art: Educating with Art Without Ruining it" 2011. p. 353
[332] *Ibid.* p. 345.

from our environments, including such subtle art pieces as well-designed placemats.[333] Another artist and educator, Ofra Backenroth finds that the 'subliminal' hidden curriculum expressed through art can help find voice to concepts that underlie the main lesson, like feminism, Jewish values and ethics, spirituality, and self-expression.[334] All teaching is performance, and every curriculum contains a hidden curriculum. Moses and Bezalel are both elements of bringing the *Shechinah* – the Divine Presence – into the people.

Idea #3 – "*Hiddur Mitzvah* is the Talmudic principle that every *mitzvah* must be accomplished as beautifully as possible. It is a *mitzvah* to teach beautifully. It is a *mitzvah* to make beautiful objects which we then use in doing *mitzvah*."

Rule #1 – "Art time is not busy time. Art experiences should be learning experiences. If you cannot answer the question, 'Why are we doing this project?' just as you might respond to the question, 'Why are we learning the *Birkat Hamazon*?', you are wasting time."

Art, even *lishma*, for the sake of art, is in an educational setting. Robbie Gringas asks us to be aware of this, and to not be too caught up on skills if the lesson is about comprehension and understanding. However, it is still art, and the education should not make it too sloppy and not fun for the learners even when the emphasis is on education and moral lessons.[335]

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[333] *Ibid.* p. 352.

[334] Backenroth, O. A. (2004). *The Blossom School: Teaching Judaism in an arts-based school*. Unpublished Doctoral dissertation. JTS, NY. quoted by the author in Ofra Backenroth, "Incorporating the Arts in Jewish Education" 2008. p. 335.

[335] Robbie Gringas, "Art: Educating with Art Without Ruining it" p. 346.

Rule #2 – "Teachers are artists. They take raw curricular goals and fashion them into learning."

Rule #3 – "Artists are teachers. They take raw curricular goals and fashion them into learning."

Rule #4 – "Art is more than making stuff. Art is changing environments, creating heirlooms, placing Jewish ritual objects in the home."

The definition of art used by Gringas is by Richard Anderson, "Art is culturally significant meaning skillfully encoded in an affecting and sensuous medium."[336] This is a powerful definition of art, as it highlights that art is a medium through which meaning is encoded. Though he presses the meaning of 'performance art' to my untrained eye through his example, it is clear and evocative in explaining 'encoding':

> When an observant Jew enters a house, she does not make a speech about her connection to the history of the Jewish people. She does not quote from Deuteronomy, nor does she attempt to explain her emotional connection to her Jewish roots. She most certainly does not express her fear of demons, her belief in the divine, or talk about the feeling of security she has on entering a house that may not be her own. She probably would not tell us all about the tenth plague in Egypt. She will simply reach out her hand, touch it gently to the decorative mezuzah on the doorpost, and then kiss her hand… This evocative combination of movement and the visual arts that says so much with such concision and beauty is an excellent example of skillful encoding.[337]

It is this symbolism which must be preserved for art to be art, and not just spilled paint on a canvas, or metal hammered into an abstract shape. For it to be art, the 'answer' – the code – can be over-taught, thus destroying the experience of an 'affecting and sensuous medium.' When watching a movie or a performance piece, or looking at a

[336] *Ibid*. p. 339.

[337] *Ibid.* p. 343.

picture for the first time, if the code to understanding it is over-delivered, it can ruin the experience. [338]

Art used to teach Judaism needs to integrate with it Jewish thought, Jewish terminology, and/or Jewish context, or else it lacks the 'culturally significant meaning.' An interesting example of this that Gringas provides is that after a movie, and Israeli cinema project handed out a chevruta page that applied rabbinic issues to the film. Using the tool PaRDeS as applied to art while explaining its origins can also provide this Jewish framework.[339]

Gringas also encourages the interpretation of art through art to maintain the integrity of the endeavor.[340]

Rule #5 – "If you make stuff, an object, it must pass The Test. What is The Test? When I was in the boy scouts, just before setting out on a trek, a senior scout would take our backpacks and toss them, one by one, into the air. The well made packs survived. A paper cup wrapped with foil fails The Test. Take the object you are making (Kiddush cup, Menorah, tzedakah box) in your hand and say, 'This is something that every Jew should have in his/her home. I would be proud to have this on my table.' That's The Test."

There is no question that low quality and shoddy equipment weakens the experience of art, and its ability to be an effective teaching tool.[341]

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[338] *Ibid.* p. 345.
[339] *Ibid.* p. 352.
[340] *Ibid.* p. 351.
[341] *Ibid.* p. 347.

Robbie Gringas beautifully portrays the importance of a well-done reflection at the end of an interaction with art, by warning that this reflection, if done too soon or in a jarring manner, can ruin the educative potential of the art:

> We might link a powerful arts experience to a gust of wind in autumn. A culturally significant, skillfully encoded, affecting and sensuous experience has rushed through us like a swirl of wind in a pile of dry leaves. Our thoughts and emotions are blown about in a whirlwind of confusion and passion. The educator's first instinct will be to rush to offer the student tools to catch the leaves, to offer the student contextual boxes in which to place them, and even encourage the student to disregard some awkward leaves that blew too far. Yet, the longer it takes for the "leaves of experience" to settle in our souls, the more the student realizes that a new context, a new understanding is required in order for the settling to begin, the more likelihood there is a deeper learning to take place. A kind of learning that affects not just the students' knowledge base or tear ducts, but affects and shifts their identity. Following this image, it should be in the interests of the educator to encourage the leaves to take their time in settling, to allow the final breeze of the art experience to continue to swirl as long as possible, so that the final settling can have greatest long-term impact on the Jewish identity of the student.[342]

It can also be jarring to move out of the experience of art, and into the theoretical in reflections. Gringas asks that the reflections be specific to the art that was experienced, instead of generally about the state of the world.[343] Questions should be open-ended, and chosen to generate discussion. Instead of asking about preference, one might ask why they think they may have a preference, or why they identified with a part of the experience.[344] Finally, Ofra Blackenroth emphasizes that thoughts and feelings go together, and that the emotional aspects of the experience need to be reflected on as much as the cognitive elements.[345]

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[342] *Ibid.* p. 348.

[343] *Ibid.* p. 351.

[344] *Ibid.* p. 352.

[345] *Ibid.* p. 337.

Integration of Judaism into the arts is a rich field with many articles, compared to the integration of Judaism into sports, which I have only found in memoir material, and not in the scholarly literature. I think that many of the lessons learned from integration into arts can be directly applied to integration of Judaism into sports.

Best Practices in Specialty Areas: Sports

"If you want to help someone develop a good Jewish background,

give them a good Jewish playground."[346]

Below, I have adapted Peretz Prusan-Wolf's schematization of three 'Ideas' that must be kept in mind and five "rules" that must be followed in successfully integrating Judaism and the arts, and done my best to apply them to sports as well. I have also done my best to adapt Robbie Gringas's work, and include my own notes. There are specific elements of sports – such as rules – which hold more firmly than in arts, and some of these elements specific to sports will be discussed at the end of this chapter.

Idea #1 – Coaches and teachers work together in a collaborative effort to create a learning environment, be it formal or informal. Sports should compliment the learning process. Sports should not be a supplement [something else you are doing]. Therefore, the rules of lesson planning can be applied to that experience.

Sports are never 'just' sports. There are complicated social dynamics between campers. There are skills and strategies that were taught by different friends or coaches which surface during game-play. Sports *l'shma* – for sport's sake – is often group bonding time. Sports *lo l'shmah* – for the sake of education – is when athletic competition is used to deliver a greater educational message.

[346] An adage quoted in Andy Koren, Steve Weisman and Robin Shuler, "6 Points on 6 Points" 2012.

Idea #2 – Jewish teachers and athletes have been bringing Torah to the people since Jacob wrestled with a Divine Being. Jacob both lived Jewishly and was able to compete in high-stakes competition.[347]

The idea of 'sports' is not foreign to Judaism, and we have histories of both Jewish participation and of being spectators. In the realm of participation:

> Consider the talmudic figure of Resh Lakish, who began his career as a bandit and gladiator before redirecting his energy to Torah study under the tutelage of Rabbi Yohanan. Like many former athletes, Resh Lakish couldn't stay away for long. In tractate Gittin he returns to the arena, signing a lucrative deal with an ancient sports agent.[348]

In addition to Resh Lakish, in orthodox Judaism, Rabbi Moshe Feinstein was able to find sources that supported a ruling that playing sports professionally was not contrary to Jewish law, as long as the chance of injury is low.[349]

There is a debate in the Babylonian Talmud in Avodah Zarah on if a Jew can attend a gladiatorial match, which is full of frivolity and possible blood-letting. Some rabbis permit it, because a Jew can support for a leniency and save the lives of gladiators, or can serve as a witness if a Jewish gladiator is killed, so his widow can remarry.[350]

Idea #3 – Hiddur Mitzvah is the Talmudic principle that every *mitzvah* must be accomplished as well as possible. It is a *mitzvah* to put in one's best effort. It is a *mitzvah* to take care of oneself and one's body.

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[347] This is one example that can act a parallel with B'tzalel as an artist and a Jew. What it meant to 'live Jewishly' at this time can only be imagined as it fits into the mythic history of the Jewish people as portrayed in the *TaNaCH* and interpreted in the rabbinic literature.

[348] Micah Stein "Is Football Treif?" 2012.

[349] *Ibid.*

[350] *Ibid.*

There are non-competitive sports camps, where campers only engage in sports where there are no winners.[351] Parachute games and the like breed cooperation, but life skills are gained through competitive sport. Losing and winning well are both skills, and it is a level of *hiddur mitzvah* to encourage competition inside a safe environment where sportsmanship is a value.

Rule #1 – Sports are not busy time. Sports experiences should be learning experiences. If you cannot answer the question, 'Why are we playing this game?' or 'Why are we learning this skill?' just as you might respond to the question, 'Why are we learning the *Birkat Hamazon*?' you are wasting time.

The sports game, even if it is sports for the sake of playing sports, is happening on an educational camp, and can be used to work on sportsmanship, to build community, to improve skills, etc.

Rule #2 – Teachers are athletes. They put in their best efforts, often against an active defense, to entertain and inspire.

Rule #3 – Athletes are teachers. They put in their best efforts, often against an active defense, to entertain and inspire.

Coaches do not only try to coordinate the individual efforts of different players into a winning effort, they try to teach in the process.

[351] The long-time facilities manager at URJ Kutz Camp was a member of the Hungry Hollows Co-op (commune) community, which ran a non-competitive games camp a short walk from my childhood home in New Jersey, and many of my friends worked at this camp, including one who was the director of non-competitive games.

Rule #4 – Sport is more than just playing games. Sport is about the self and society, making human achievements with bodies fashioned in the Divine Image, and respecting others through the rules of the game, especially when there is the opportunity to step outside of these rules for personal gain.

In a spiritual discussion on God and living a Godly life, Aharon Lichtenstein gives sports play as an example of how in every part of our lives we must reach towards the Divine:

> The world of sports is, in a certain sense, trivial; mature adults are running around trying to put a ball through a hole. Nevertheless, moral qualities can and do come into play: cooperation, team play, an attempt to get the maximum out of yourself, etc. The inherent effort of the person himself, or the loneliness of the long-distance runner in his isolation, are very significant moral elements. While one need not accept the British belief that the battle of Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton, there is no question that within the essentially trivial world of sports, real moral greatness and real moral degradation can be seen. If you see someone on the basketball court who wants only to shoot and score, and defense means nothing to him, this is not simply disturbing to another basketball player, but is morally repugnant.[352]

Campers that do not excel at sports can learn sportsmanship, teamwork, and a pride in their ability to play to their personal best. In inter-camp competition, campers can learn that they represent more than just themselves, but a team that represents not only their camp but the Jewish people – something that does not end when their time at camp comes to an end.[353]

In addition to physical preparedness and mental toughness, spirituality also has its place in sports. Besides the ritual pre-game prayers which are more familiar to Christian

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[352] Aharon Lichtenstein, "LECTURE #2 In All Your Ways, Know Him: Two Modes of Serving God" from "DEVELOPING A TORAH PERSONALITY" 2012.

[353] Stephanie Handel, "Put Me In Coach, I'm Ready To Play - Today: Berkshires" 1993. pp. 4-5.

athletes than Jewish ones, "there are moments of gratitude, of hope, of pain and loss on and off the field." Camp provides a Jewish framework to support these spiritual experiences, including the experience of Shabbat, when we can rest after a hard week of work and building skills.[354]

While it might be hard to take the definition of art as "culturally significant meaning skillfully encoded in an affecting and sensuous medium" and apply it to sports, I am still tempted to try. Sport contains culturally significant meaning encoded in action. Athletes act out their personalities and beliefs on the field. Some athletes think that their individual statistics are more important than winning, that they are invincible, or that it is beneficial to injure other players. Some athletes through their conduct off of the field show how much they value human dignity. All of these actions have meaning encoded in them, consciously or unconsciously. Our campers can learn to consciously embed in their actions the lessons they want others to learn.

Rule #5 – If you play a game, it must pass The Test. A game of football played on a bumpy field with a deflated ball fails The Test. Look at the activity taking place and say, 'This is an activity that any Jewish mother or father would be proud of their son/daughter playing? I would be proud if I saw one of my children playing this game.' That is The Test.

[354] Andy Koren, Steve Weisman and Robin Shuler, "6 Points on 6 Points" 2012.

Monkey-in-the-middle, and other games that rob participants of their dignity do not have a place in a Jewish environment. Games played without the proper safety equipment or gymnastics without a trained spotter are violations of Jewish law. [355]

Sports are experiential education, and the role of challenge and reflection, as discussed above in the larger discussion of experiential education, are still important. As in arts, reflection should not be handing a participant a ready-made summary of what happened. Participants should be allowed to cool off, and make their own reflection on what they just experienced.

Questions should be specific and applicable, rather than general. For instance, instead of asking "Does race affect the way we treat others?" try, "What do you think about the decision made at this point in the game – would you make the same decision?" Arts could be a useful reflection tool for sports as well, using movement, drawing or painting to describe emotions and actions that take place in a game situation. [356] What Ofra Blackenroth emphasized in arts also holds for sports: thoughts and feelings go together, and the emotional aspects of the experience need to be reflected on as much as the cognitive elements.[357]

[355] Micah Stein "Is Football Treif?" 2012.

[356] Robbie Gringas, "Art: Educating with Art Without Ruining it" 2011. p. 352.

[357] Ofra Backenroth, "Incorporating the Arts in Jewish Education" 2008. p. 337.

Sports are also a perfect place for campers to learn simple Hebrew, and many camps have used sports as a vehicle for Hebrew instruction.[358] Campers who feel motivated to win are motivated to learn the words needed to reach their goal.

Sports are also a place that small 'surface' changes can change the mindset. Instead of having a 'shirts' and 'skins,' teams can be called by cities in Israel, by the names of real Israeli sports clubs, two different values being taught, or different Reform Jewish rabbis influential in Germany in the 1900s – whatever the learning goal is for the day. These small changes to the hidden curriculum make integration all the more powerful.

The right staffing is needed for this integration to work. As Avi Orlow points out, "No doubt if you put a dork on the field and try to create conversations, then it is not going to work. If you get a good person, they are great at basketball, know the rules… and knows the texts – there is the true integration."[359]

One of the challenges in integrating Judaism into sports, is that sometimes Judaism takes over the lesson, and rules are changed in order to make a point. This is useful to a point, but disruptions in the flow of normal practice and play can be frustrating to participants. A 'ball' being awarded if a pitcher uses English, is a good instance of where a rule change is subtle and integrated well into the game. Playing basketball with kick-balls to discuss Cain and Abel, and Cain not knowing his strength changes the game entirely to a point where it can become frustrating and not worth using sports to teach the point.

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[358] OSRUI (according to Marina Teckteil), Massad (Haskel Lookstein in Siach Madad - Masad Reminiscences 1996), and Ramah (Stu Binder, "Put Me In Coach, I'm Ready To Play - Today: New England" 1993) to name a few.

[359] Telephone interview.

It is my belief that there are many ways that sports and Judaism can be better integrated on our camps, especially in short, themed segments. In Chapters 2 and 7, I explain how currently education is delivered at both URJ Jacobs and URJ Six Points. In Chapter 9 of this thesis I give recommendations as to how many of these techniques – including doing education and reflection during 'water-breaks,' staffing with high-level staff, and spending more time on skill development than on scrimmages – can be implemented on other camps. One element of sports integration that is lacking at many of our camps (but not all) is true integration of Judaism into Maccabia, Color War, or whatever each camp calls its full-camp intensive sport competition, usually held at the end of a session. Some camps do this well, but other camps do not make this a priority. It is in the intense, challenging experiences guided by peer support that Judaism can play a real role, but it is often made secondary to 'fun'. The Olympic village employed chaplains, and there is a great opportunity for Judaic education specialists to actively try to fill this role in these moments on camp.

Jewish Teachable Moments

One teaching method that often accompanies integration is the use of Jewish Teachable Moments (JTMs), in which a life situation is turned into a learning experience, often by a staff member, who introduces a piece of 'Torah' to a participant in order to provide context and meaning. Some JTMs take place in a stolen moment, and others can end up being a larger conversation that takes up a significant amount of time. They can happen in one-on-one scenarios, or be content delivered to a large group.

The phrase "Jewish Teachable Moments" applies to two distinct types of 'teachable moments' – (1) a spontaneous lesson derived from an unplanned happening or

(2) a planned interaction with scripted talking points delivered during a larger program. The second type of 'JTM' is how the camps that Michelle Abraham Shapiro categorizes as using 'Spiral Integration' deliver their educational content. I will call this type of teachable moment 'curricular JTMs' because they are structured, often through lesson plans.

The first type of JTMs, which I will call 'spontaneous JTMs' are not tied to a specific integration model, but rather are a sign of decentralization on camp, where counselors see themselves as educators, and feel empowered to share their knowledge and personal narratives and thus to affect the lives of campers. The spontaneous moments, along with the curricular moments, are part of integrating Judaism into the fabric of camp, "If our goal is fostering integrity, those spontaneous occasions [when a teacher needs to raise a cross-curricular question] may be no less important than formally integrated curricula."[360]

The concept is not new – the idea of a 'teachable moment,' while popularized in the 1950s, is at least as old as 1917.[361] Eric Bram uses the term in his thesis, dated 1985.[362] What is new is that in 2002/3, there was a concerted effort by the Foundation for Jewish Camp (FJC) and the Covenant Foundation to popularize JTMs in the Jewish camping world. The program, run by informal educators and well known musicians Naomi Less and Peri Smilow, started at GUCI in 2003, and was expanded amongst

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[360] Jon Levisohn, "From Integration of Curricula to the Pedagogy of Integrity" 2008.

[361] Popularized in: Robert James Havinghurst. *Human Development and Education,* 1952. p. 7. Oldest source I have seen (from Wikipedia): Brandenburg, Walter E. *The Philosophy of Christian Being.* Sherman, French. 1917. p. 84. Retrieved on 2009-08-01.

[362] Eric Bram, "Toward a Systematic Approach to Training Staff for UAHC Camp-Institutes" 1985. p. 10.

several other camps – eventually becoming integrated into the FJC's Cornerstone Fellowship.

The main goal of the program was to initiate spontaneous JTMs, and to help counselors see themselves as Jewish educators. Less and Smilow asked:

> Can we equip counselors to be able to respond in the moment, to moments that arise, and transfer those moments into Jewish teachable moments? By definition Jewish Teachable Moments are moments that happen spontaneously where there is a response that can happen. We found that (1) counselors need to have the pedagogic knowledge, then (2) counselors need to be able to identify those moments. Thirdly, they need training so they can actually translate those moments into their own authentic speech. So, we developed a methodology, and did some teaching around it…[363]

Less and Smilow found that counselors often tried to use JTMs in negative moments, so they focused on positive reinforcement, and turning to Jewish sources put together a training manual that camp directors and senior staff could run on their camps during staff orientation.[364]

The program was conceived as a way of activating counselors to be able to use their Jewish selves and their own Jewish narrative, and to connect with campers during the five moments when campers are most impressionable: wake up, going to sleep, meals, rest period, and clean up.[365]

The only full scholarly article on JTMs is by Erik H. Cohen and Yehuda Bar-Shalom, and focuses on research conducted at Greene Family Camp in 2004. While the

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[363] Phone interview with Naomi Less. Typed as she was talking, so it is as close as I can get to quoting her here.

[364] Foundation for Jewish Camp, "Jewish Teachable Moments: A Training Guide of Creating Connection, Teaching, and Sharing Moments between Counselors and Campers." Naomi Less and Peri Smilow (uncredited). 2003 (undated).

[365] Naomi Less attributes this to educational consultant Lou Bergholz.

educational frameworks and theory they apply to their research provide good insights into Jewish Teachable Moments, their research seems to have been conducted without a deep understanding of what was really happening on the camp that summer.[366] They also do not differentiate between curricular and spontaneous JTMs.[367]

Some of the advantages of JTMs include the feeling that every moment on camp was Jewish and the decentralization of education.[368] Jeffery Kress, who mentions JTMs passingly, says that they can help develop a 'developmental ecology' and a feeling of constant learning in a setting.[369]

Cohen and Bar-Shalom also mention several challenges they saw around camp, including: the Israelis and the American staff felt very differently empowered as Jewish educators[370]; there was a push-back against what some felt was surface level 'sound-bite' style education, so faculty members (reportedly) added more structured time at night in bunks[371]; the counselors felt that they did not have enough Jewish knowledge to respond to camper's real-life situations[372]; JTMs sometimes broke the flow of a fun activity and felt

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[366] Phone interview with Debbie Massarano, the education director at the time of the study. They thought the entire curriculum was replaced with a JTMs model, which, according to Debbie, is not true. They also seemed to have confused some shiurim as JTMs.

[367] This is admittedly an unfair comment, because I am coining these terms here. But my point is that when they discuss JTMs, they discuss a huge range of educational moments.
Erik H. Cohen and Yehuda Bar-Shalom, "Teachable Moments in Jewish Education: An Informal Approach in Reform Summer Camp" 2010. pp. 26-44

[368] Erik H. Cohen and Yehuda Bar-Shalom, "Teachable Moments in Jewish Education: An Informal Approach in Reform Summer Camp" 2010. pp. 31, 33.

[369] Jeffrey S. Kress, "Development, Learning, and Community: Educating for Identity in Pluralistic Jewish High Schools." 2012. p. 96.

[370] Erik H. Cohen and Yehuda Bar-Shalom, "Teachable Moments in Jewish Education: An Informal Approach in Reform Summer Camp" 2010. p. 38.

[371] *Ibid.* p. 32.

[372] *Ibid.* p. 40.

like a waste of time[373]; lessons were repeated, because counselors did not know what content was delivered before their session[374]; and it took more time to prepare for some counselors because of the open-ended nature of the endeavor[375].

Cohen and Bar-Shalom have suggestions as to how to avoid and learn from many of these challenges:

1. Camp may need to offer training or to hire staff trained in this method.
2. Staff and counselors need sufficient knowledge to be able to answer questions quickly and concisely yet not superficially, and
3. Ongoing in-service training for staff and counselors is beneficial in allowing them to evaluate JTMs they led or attended, and to discuss ways in which to incorporate the method into upcoming activities.[376]

These suggestions are relevant to all forms of education that appear on camp.

The Covenant Foundation and FJC initiative to push for integration and decentralization through JTMs has born fruit at many camps, through Cornerstone Fellows who think of themselves as Jewish educators. I only know of one camp, URJ Jacobs, where spontaneous JTMs (as mentioned before) have become part of the fabric of camp. This was through the work of both the camp director, Jonathan Cohen, his many Jewish Education specialists, and the staff and campers who have taken 'JIT-ems' to heart. When the camp director, hearing over the walkie-talkie a conversation where senior staff found a seemingly insurmountable logistical obstacle, radios the words, "*Im tirtzu, ein zo*

[373] *Ibid.* p. 34.
[374] *Ibid.* p. 34.
[375] *Ibid.* p. 33.
[376] *Ibid.* p. 37.

agadah, JiTeM!!!" (If you will it, it is no dream. – Theodore Herzl), it sets a powerful culture for the rest of camp.[377]

While it may be difficult and require a lot of work to produce this type of constant integration of Judaism into camp, Cohen and Bar-Shalom think it is worth it, since it makes Jewish education more holistic and more informal across all of Joseph Schwab's four commonplaces of education – the staff and counselors, the participants, the curriculum, and the social context of the camp.[378]

Conclusion

Integration is as much "a process of how teachers and students think and work as it is a specific product", according to Mitchel Malkus's research.[379] This is an important observation, for this chapter has outlined many different forms of curriculum integration. The main similarities between Michelle Shapiro Abraham's model's Developmentally Driven Integration and Eden Village's Full Integration is in the commitment to integration, more than the methods.

Just as how in day schools, Jewish integration looks different in every school, at every camp, integration is different. In day schools:

> Almost all administrators reported distinct advantages for such implementation within their schools. These advantages included: greater appreciation of one's own religion, increase of relevance in subject matter, breaking down barriers between the curriculum, being more beneficial

[377] Story reported to me by Jimmy Stoloff

[378] Erik H. Cohen and Yehuda Bar-Shalom, "Teachable Moments in Jewish Education: An Informal Approach in Reform Summer Camp" 2010. p. 31.

[379] Mitchel Malkus, "The Curricular Symphony: How One Jewish Day School Integrates Its Curriculum." 2002. p. 49.

> and meaningful to the students, and improving communication and teamwork among the staff.[380]

In the same way, while integration can look different at every camp, it is sought after for its positive qualities.

This chapter gave several ways that the amorphous idea of 'integration' can be understood: as referring to how a program breaks down the barriers between 'secular' and 'Jewish' subject headings; as referring to programs staffed by individuals who are trained in both Judaics and in a secular field; and as referring to specific curriculum designs that promote content delivery across academic fields. There is no question that camp provides a great laboratory to experiment with integration:

> The separation of camp from the outside world and the close-knit quality of the camp community make it possible to live Judaism at camp in a holistic fashion… This easy co-existence of the Jewish and the American, the sacred and the profane, is perhaps a more curious outcome of the marriage of Jewish education and camping.[381]

Integration into arts and sports have their own challenges, as do Jewish Teachable Moments. But integration in all of its forms is a mindset. It is accepting that Judaism and everything that happens on camp are inextricably intertwined, that Judaism and the specialty areas must live in a symbiotic relationship so that both may gain from the interaction.[382] Our URJ camps must be able to show our participants that Reform Judaism, a mingling of Jewish values and modernity, is a real way of living, or else

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[380] Boaz Tomsky, "Administrators' Perceptions of Curriculum Integration within Jewish Community Day Schools" 2007. p.iv.

[381] Amy. L. Sales and Leonard Saxe, "How Goodly Are Thy Tents: Summer Camps as Jewish Socializing Experiences" 2004. p. 50.

[382] Michelle Shapiro Abraham, "Approaches to Jewish Living: End of Year Report - FJC Specialty Camp Incubator" 2012.

participants will leave a compartmentalized environment inspired by a Judaism that fits only into tiny fragments of their life outside of camp.

7. Integrated Curricula at URJ Camps

Our URJ camps, dedicated to providing "a creative setting for Jewish learning and living, through integrated and confluent religious camp programming," succeed in many ways in integrating Judaism into the fabric of camp.[383] This section contains the ways in which either the faculty or professional staff at a camp have indicated that their camp brings Judaism into what would otherwise be a secular part of the camping experience.

As discussed previously, integration is as much a mindset as it is a specific practice; so the programs listed here fall under many different models of integration. As can be expected, 'Full Integration' is the rarest form of integration found on URJ camps, as a majority of our camps have compartmentalized structures. This does not stop these camps from finding small and innovative ways that they can introduce Judaism into different elements of camp that are not always thought of as Jewish moments in the daily schedule.

This chapter is organized by the size of the program, which can range from small programs to full camp integration. Only programs that I know about are listed here. Some camps may have under-reported their integrated programs, and others are simply not included at all in this list, because they did not provide specific information. Still, the list is long and provides an interesting glimpse of how integration is already happening at many of our camps.

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[383] Union for Reform Judaism Crane Lake and Eisner Camps, "Our Camp… Our Mission… Our Goals… Our Aims and Objectives…."
brought to my attention by Ross Glinkenhouse.

I try to specifically indicate where programs have the effect of decentralizing education through helping the staff on camp realize their role as Jewish educators.

Integration into Individual Programs and Creating Jewish Moments

There are many rituals and individual programs on our URJ camps that transform the secular into the sacred. Moments that otherwise might have passed un-marked are enshrined in tradition, and moments that may have been mundane are elevated in purpose and deed. Here a few of those programs:

B'rit Kehillah (or B'rit Kodesh): Many URJ camps make the traditional discussion of bunk rules into a holy experience of making a covenant. Some camps involve faculty in the discussion. At the end of the session, the campers are asked to sign a document that they helped create which serves as a sacred agreement between themselves and the counselors, thus bringing Judaism into the discussion of what kind of community campers would like to live in for the summer.

Tracking Food Waste: URJ Camp Kalsman tracks the leftover food waste, to try to reduce the environmental impact of the camp. The camp is cautious to do this in a way that does not encourage under or over-eating, but rather provides a Jewish way of looking at food consumption and waste.

Abstaining from Water-fights and Shampoo/Shaving Cream Fights: Many camps have traditions of water-fights, especially on hot days. Sometimes these water-fights can expand and including tie-die, shaving cream, and other products. At URJ Coleman, the Judaic staff and the faculty explicitly do not participate in these activities, and make it clear that they are abstaining because these activities are not 'Jewish' in the way they waste precious resources, and introduce pollutants into the water-supply.

Bedtime Rituals: Bedtime rituals appear at many URJ camps, having been a past project that the FJC Cornerstone program asked third year counselors to bring back to their individual camps. On some camps this means that whole units hold a nightly circle to wrap-up each day. Others do this in the cabins. Often these rituals include Jewish content. Some camps end with what is affectionately called the '*Sh'mashivenu*' – the bedtime recitation of the *Shema* combined with the singing of *Haskiveinu*. Faculty are rarely involved in bedtime rituals, making them a place were bunk staff can create deep connections with their campers.

Bus rides: Dead time on buses can be filled with a movie selected just to kill time, or, as at URJ Coleman, with Jewish song or a Chassidic story. The participants are a 'captive audience' and this is time that can be used to create educational and group bonding moments.

Social Justice Programming: Many camps, including URJ Newman, GUCI, and URJ Coleman feature social justice projects in their local communities. These volunteering opportunities are put into a Jewish framework, and show participants that Reform Jewish living includes *tikkun olam*. Mark Covitz, the director of GUCI, tells that the camp had planned a one-off *tikkun olam* project which lasted for a short period of time. At the end, one of the kids refused to get on the bus, because there was still work to do. Understanding this participant's reasoning, social justice projects became an ongoing project at the camp.[384]

URJ Newman is a shining example of a camp that has many avenues into *tikkun olam* and living a Jewishly engaged life through social justice initiatives. Erin Mason, one of the camp's assistant directors, tells of units that focused entirely on food justice,

[384] Phone Interview, Mark Covitz

Muslim-Jewish relations, lobbying, sustainable farming, and a major fund-raising tradition for HIV-AIDS research.[385]

Ritual Status Changes: On URJ Coleman, the transition into the oldest age-group, *chalutzim*, is done in a *mikveh* ceremony, and includes ritual immersion.

Maimonides at the Climbing Wall: One program which has been run on several camps is pairing a lesson on Maimonides's levels of *tzedakah* with physical climbing. There are several one-off programs like this which integrate Judaism into just one program at a specialty area, including:

'All-in-the-same-boat' Story: Telling a folk story about how the Jewish people are 'all in the same boat', which involves one person deciding to bring a drill onto the boat, just to make a hole under their own seat. This program and the Maimonides program are not boating or climbing '*lishmah*' – but rather are using the activity areas as props or modalities to teach a specific Jewish lesson.

J(i)TMs: As has been discussed above, many camps use Jewish Teachable Moments. They are especially a part of the culture at URJ Jacobs.

Seudah Shlishit Evaluations: During the 'third meal of the day' – often a snack eaten before sundown on Shabbat – some camps, including URJ Newman, ask campers to evaluate their week. The *Rashim* (*Rashei Eidah,* Unit Heads) read them and compiles them into a document for the assistant directors to read. This program uses the traditional Jewish moment on Shabbat to be reflective about the week, which helps the camp staff to be more reflective practitioners.

Gardening Program: At Wilshire Boulevard Temple Camps (WBTCs), at URJ Crane Lake Camp (URJ CLC), and at a few other camps, gardening has found its way onto camp.

[385] Phone Interview, Erin Mason.

Attempting to merge Judaism with food consumption and nature, at some camps this is its own specialty area, and at others this is a side-project.

Shabbat Shiurim: On WBTCs, each Shabbat a couple of CITs and professional staff teach from their hearts. This is a way that Judaism is decentralized and shown to be influential to these individuals that have a strong personal connection with campers.

Shabbat Boxes: On WBTCs, each *Eidah* (unit) selects at random a box that has a Shabbat educational activity inside. Before Shabbat comes in, the unit then undertakes the randomly selected project. These can range from making c*hallah* to discussing, at an age appropriate level, Martin Buber's concept of an I – Thou relationship.

Yom Sport/Maccabia: Many camps make their Color War into a Jewish educational moment. Only OSRUI has a parallel Jewish version of Color War – others are content to integrate Judaism into their camp's rituals surrounding this major event. Camps are very proud of their Color War traditions, which include many great ideas for integrating Judaism. Some camps have an explicitly Jewish theme, others require Jewish elements to infuse different songs and chants. One camp has a bid process for its Maccabia that generates long counselor written documents filled with ideas of how to integrate the teaching of Jewish values into the competition.[386]

Specialty Area or Unit Based Integration

Here are a few ways that Judaism is integrated either into specialty areas, or into age-specific units at URJ camps. These are grouped together because they are both formal 'units' on camps that often have their own 'unit heads' or 'specialty directors'.

[386] URJ Coleman, as related by Sara Beth Berman

Camps have been very imaginative as to how these different units/areas can be used to bring Judaism to life.

The Arts, Sports and Adventure: The summer of 2012 was the first year of the FJC and Avi Chai funded Kivun Initiative. Kivun is a training program for camp specialists, seeking to teach how to integrate Judaism into one of four specialty areas – music, arts, sports and 'adventure.' The program, run in four different locations on camps that already attempt to integrate the specific areas with Judaism, was run only for URJ and Ramah camp specialists this year. Participants learned to think of themselves both as specialists that use Judaism as a tool to teach what it means to be a great actor, musician or athlete, and as Jewish educators who use the modality of their specialty area to teach Judaism.

There are many programs integrating Judaism and the arts – including theater, music, and the visual arts – on our camps. Mostly these programs are reported as major successes. But, as David Berkman, the director of URJ Kalsman, relates: while silk painting a *tallit* and making *muzuzot* are always very popular art activities, there are always kids who use the opportunity to make "angry clowns."

Because it is not part of the URJ system, WBTCs are not able to participate in the Kivun initiative, and instead hired a Jewish content specialist in 2012 to look for 'low hanging fruit' in the specialty areas, specifically with Art, Dance, Wilderness, Ropes Course, Video, and Gardening – many of the same areas that the Kivun initiative focuses on. Their goal is to seamlessly and authentically weave Jewish moments in these areas of camp.[387]

[387] Interview with Doug Lynn, the director of WBTCs (and former asst. director at URJ Eisner).

The *Tiferet* Unit at OSRUI is a specific unit dedicated to the arts, and uses staff who themselves integrate Judaism and their art form to create an immersive experience.[388] *Chagigah* at URJ Newman is a similar experience.

Teva, Tzofim, Hiking, Israeli Dance, Tarbut and Limmud/Shiur/Chinuch: At URJ Coleman, URJ Eisner, and URJ Harlam, different specialty areas have been combined into the Jewish education hour to make that hour more exciting and to show the connection between these areas and Reform Judaism. The combination is different at every camp, and some camps use this as an opportunity to centralize Tzofim, Israeli Dance, Tarbut, etc. into the hands of the professional staff. Other camps use this as a way of decentralizing education, and empowering specialists as Jewish educators.

Moshav, Kibbutz HaTzofim, Rishonim, Tour La'Agam: Some URJ Camps have outdoor adventure units, including OSRUI and URJ Newman, that focus on integrating Judaism into outdoor experiences. These are often more decentralized, and have counselor-led education in intimate, small group settings.

Chalutzim: Most URJ camps have their oldest units living separately in a *kibbutz* type environment, which closely fall into the 'Total Integration' style of Jewish living. While there may be specific education time, almost every element of these experiences is tailored to fit the educational mission of the unit – often a preparation for the next year's Israel Tour. Sometimes these units have a separate food arrangement from the rest of camp, such as on URJ Greene Family Camp (URJ GFC) which helps emphasize the communal living aspects of the program.

[388] Danny Maseng and his discussion on the role of integration and challenge in this program are discussed in chapters 5 and 6.

Chalutzim at OSRUI follow many of the above points, but will also be discussed in the following section, because the immersive Hebrew situation are part of a wider camp-wide program to teach Hebrew.

Avodah Programs: Many Counselor in Training programs try to integrate Jewish learning into youth leadership *hadracha* education. The level to which these elements are integrated in the programing is dependent on the unit head.

Machon at GUCI: I believe GUCI is unique in trying to continue *hadracha* training that integrates reflective Jewish learning for first year counselors. It is a program that other camps should seriously consider adopting in whatever form will work best at their camp. As mentioned previously, Ron Klotz, the former director of GUCI has made clear his willingness to help the spread of this program.

Camp-Wide Integrated Programming

Jonathan Cohen (JC), the director of URJ Camp Jacobs remembers attending a conference in New Orleans with the other URJ camp directors. During this conference, the Senior Vice President of the URJ, Rabbi Danny Freelander, gave a presentation about *Mishkan T'fillah*, the new prayerbook. During his presentation he apparently divulged that he wished the URJ camping system was more concerned with education. Following this presentation, over lunch at The Court of Two Sisters, a few camp directors – JC specifically remembers URJ Greene Family Camp director Loui Dobin – started to voice their frustration over the perceived requirement that URJ camps do an hour of education every day.

At some point in the conversation, Jerry Kaye at URJ Olin-Sang-Ruby Union Institute (OSRUI), the first URJ camp, queried something to the effect of, "who told you

have to do an hour of education all day? When OSRUI opened, we did an hour of education, and every other camp since has copied us."

JC relates that this, for him, was a major "ah-ha" moment:

> If I don't have to do an hour of formal Jewish education every day, then suddenly that gives me time to do other things. I feel like the best education on camp is counselor to camper in the cabin. Shiur and Limmud are at the bottom of the list in the range of effectiveness:
> Counselor experience 1
> Shabbat 2
> Good song sessions 3
> Having Israelis Teach 4
> Living on Jewish Time 5
> ….
> Education Hour ?
> But we were still spending a lot of money on it. Why am I spending my money on the worst hour of the day, how can I make it more meaningful by moving it around?
> I did reading on the modalities of learning, and I came to understand that Shiur/Limmud was attractive to talky girls, and unattractive to everyone else.
> If you are willing to sit there and talk about things, then you'd like it. If you don't have the communication skills its not good.[389]

Jonathan Cohen also felt that it was lowering the potential number of campers he was attracting to his camp, since the education was not as participant focused as it could be. Unlike camps on the East Coast which possibly self-select for campers more interested in Jewish education, URJ Jacobs draws in a much higher percentage of the market of Reform Jewish children interested in camp, and he felt the camp's education component needed to be more engaging to suit his camper-base.

URJ Jacobs Camp – Specialty Driven Integration

JC's solution was to offer education, for older units, integrated into specialty camps. Campers choose which specialty they would like to spend the summer focusing on,

[389] Phone interview with Jonathan Cohen, typed as he was talking, so some sections may be periphrastic.

and that specialty camp has Jewish education integrated into it, customized for their interest. The major shift was doing away altogether with an hour of education, and instead delivering smaller units of education throughout the day. The younger units and the oldest unit do not follow this model.

The theme of the camp rotates each year, and is picked by JC. The model has been running since 2007. JC selected a more difficult topic in 2009 to test the model – Jewish History. While there was no qualitative analysis, he believes the model did succeed, with each area of camp taking themes from the larger topic and customizing the lessons for their area.

The specialty camps are run by either a single person who is able to integrate Judaism and the specialty, or by two individuals that can cover both areas. JC says his ideal is to find a single person, but this often is not possible. It has been one of his biggest struggles to find staffing year after year for these programs.

In addition to the 'spiraling' curriculum that present lessons on the theme with ideally increasing challenge and knowledge, spontaneous Jewish Teachable Moments are part of the camp culture. The Foundation for Jewish Camp had an educational consultant, Natalie Goldfein, help the program take off at Jacobs, but even with her help, the program was having trouble moving beyond a surface level.

JC feels that the summer of 2009 was a breakthrough, beyond the success at teaching Jewish History. The directorial team worked hard to reframe JTMs from being just about the application of pithy Jewish sayings to being about personal experience in a Jewish context. The staff felt liberated because instead of having to be experts on randomly memorized text, they just needed to be themselves, remembering their experiences in a Jewish context. It has become part of the culture because all of the new

counselors have now been 'JiTuMed' for five years. In three more years, the oldest counselor on camp will have grown up with JiTuMs as part of the camp culture.

The faculty have bought into the system, and spend time around camp doing activities. Because the region does not have many faculty, each can carve out their own time at camp and create their own portfolio.

As will be discussed in the 'challenges' section later in this thesis, there are many issues with this model that are acknowledged by the camp staff itself.

In spite of these weaknesses, URJ Jacobs as a unique camp in its demography and faculty situation, has been able to implement a model of both spontaneous and curricular JTMs in order to create a passionate and meaningful experience that many report strengthens Jewish identity.

URJ Six Points Sports Academy – Spiral Integration

In 2008, the Foundation for Jewish Camp, in conjunction with the Jim Joseph Foundation, held a competitive process where 'seed-money' was awarded to start four Jewish specialty camps – camps that are focused around a specialty area. The camps, including URJ Six Points Sports Academy, opened in 2009. All four of these camps have been discussed in the previous chapter on Integration, because being a Jewish sports (or arts/nature/adventure) camp requires integration.

A more detailed description of the program can be found in the section on 'Spiral Integration' in Chapter 6, but the main attempt of the camp is to have high level, challenging sports instruction with small curricular lessons introduced throughout the day. One educator who observed the camp noticed these entry points into Judaism sprinkled liberally throughout the day:

> At the URJ Six Points Sports Academy, Judaism is touched upon throughout the day. In the morning before breakfast campers chant a boker tov (good morning) chant during the calisthenics before breakfast. There is talk of integrating a "Modeh Ani" stretch into the routine as well. Before the meal the Motzi is said and after the meal, Birkat HaMazon is sung. During the meal, music is played, this is usually "counselors choice" and often includes Israeli rock and Matisiyahu, in addition to Top 40 secular songs. Before the campers head back to their bunks for Nikayon (clean up), a 10 minute set induction is given. This is a brief introduction using a video to teach the Jewish value of the day. Before 9 a.m., there are at least 6 points of exposure to Judaism and we could even call it seven, because the food they eat at the camp is kosher. Throughout the day, the "value of the day" is reinforced by the sports coaches. Three times a week there is a Jewish song session, the bunk counselors are Jewish athletes, and the evening program is called a Laila Tov program in which the counselors help the campers evaluate the integration of the value of the day.[390]

The faculty at the camp appreciate this, and find that the overall effect is that, "6 Points as a true sports camp, yet one that, also, in profound ways, allows Judaism to be expressed with a vibrancy and holism not often seen in other settings."[391]

URJ Six Points Science and Technology Academy - TBD

In 2012, seed money was awarded by the Foundation for Jewish Camp to different organizations hoping to start four more specialty camps. Among the successful grant applications was a URJ proposal for a Science and Technology camp in the Boston area. A director has just been hired, starting in October 2012, and the camp hopes to open its door in 2014, integrating the teaching of science and technology education with Reform Judaism.

[390] Mandell, Avram. "What Religious School Can Learn from 6 Points Sports Academy and Jewish Summer Camps." 2012.

[391] Andy Koren, Steve Weisman and Robin Shuler, "6 Points on 6 Points" 2012.

URJ Olin-Sang-Ruby Union Institute - Hebrew

Part of the OSRUI journey is to learn Hebrew. One of the oldest units on camp, Chalutzim, is envisioned as a Hebrew-only unit, and requires a Hebrew proficiency test to get in. For the faculty and staff that helped construct this environment, Hebrew was (and is) and integral part of Judaism, and bringing Hebrew into camp is bringing Judaism into camp.

Some ways that Hebrew is integrated on camp include:

> All of the announcements are made in Hebrew in every unit. The building location are in Hebrew – *mirpa'ah*, *chadar ochel*. In fact all of the places on camp and all of the times of the day are in Hebrew: *Minucha*, not rest-hour, etc. It is taken for granted. We have *shacharit* and *ma'ariv* in every unit every day. If we have a special day program, the question is what time is *t'fillah*, never if we are going to have it.[392]

These elements, combined with the fact that Hebrew is taught daily in its own building location, and many other parts of the hidden curriculum conceived by the long-time director of the Hebrew program, Etty Dolgin, make this program work.

Chalutzim is considered the top experience of the camp. It is staffed with counselors that all have a suitable level of Hebrew proficiency, and runs for seven weeks. The program focuses on the spoken language, not on the written language. Kids are given a taste of the youth-leadership which pervades the camp though the form of youth-run programming, by running their own programming two nights a week.[393]

The faculty and staff limit themselves to talking Hebrew so much so that campers are sometimes surprised when they learn that these individuals also speak English. The prayer book used in this unit on camp is the prayer book from the Israeli Reform

[392] Phone interview with Michael Weinberg, one of the faculty, with Simcha Bob, with responsibility for the Chalutzim program at OSRUI.

[393] In the conversation on centralization versus decentralization, there is a much deeper discussion of how this type of education works at OSRUI and GUCI.

Movement – *Avodah Shebalev*, and when participants write their own creative prayers, they do so in Hebrew.

When the campers participate in general camp activities, such as sports, those camp specialists that can run their activity areas in Hebrew do so, but this is dependent on who is teaching. One advantage at OSRUI is that counselors are not simply bunk counselors, but are also involved in running some of the specialty areas, and know the educational themes that are being emphasized on camp.

The faculty help advise on the programming, and have a major buy-in to the system, helping to preserve knowledge from year-to-year and helping counselors to best teach their campers. Currently, on OSRUI, things seem to work, and Hebrew integration is simply taken for granted.[394]

URJ Crane Lake Camp and URJ Kalsman

Three URJ camps received funding for a *Nadiv* educator, facilitated by the Foundation for Jewish Camp. URJ Crane Lake Camp (URJ CLC), URJ Kalsman and URJ Coleman now share a full-time educator with an area day-school. URJ CLC and URJ Kalsman have used this opportunity to begin looking at more explicitly integrating Judaism into camp.

URJ Kalsman is considering adopting a program similar to URJ Jacobs camp, where Jewish education is integrated explicitly into the specialty areas, and the faculty of the camp are spread across these areas based on their interest.

[394] Michael Weinberg and Phyllis Sommer.

URJ CLC started with a weekly theme, introduced at Havdalah, and integrated into the specialty areas by the Kivun fellows, and emphasized at night during the 'Lilah Tov' ritual.

URJ Camp Newman – Towards Theme Based Spiral Integration

Last year, URJ Newman decided to focus on two elements of camp that they felt were going well, and could be made a more significant part of camp. One of the focuses was on Shabbat, to make it even more of a welcoming and joyful time on camp. The other focus was on Jewish values.

URJ Newman felt that it taught Jewish values, such as *tikkun olam*, very well. There was a feeling that the camp's staff are skilled in making every moment of the day a Jewish teachable moment, and through role-modeling Jewish values. However, these were all implicit in the camp environment and not explicit. The decision was made, therefore, to select Jewish values and *middot* that were already happening on camp, and to make it explicit that these values permeate every hour of the day.

The concept, is to break down the silo around Jewish education, and let it, one day at a time, one *middah* at a time, permeate every moment of camp. The first year, the plan was to maintain the *Mah Eidah* (Jewish education hour), but to use it as a stepping stone into this integration.

Because of the length of West Coast camp sessions (the longest session is thirteen days) these *middot* can be repeated in rotation.

The plan is to introduce the *middah* in the morning, again at meals and specialty areas, and Jewish education time, and to emphasize this *middah* during later unit time. These values would also be matched with what is happening naturally at camp. For

instance, at the beginning of camp, with *Kehillah Kedosha*. This would have a skit to introduce it, talks in sports about the value of having a team, art projects that involve collaboration, during *Z'man Eidah*, unit time, discuss cabin unity, and at the end of the day have a wrap-up in two parts – both as a collective and during the *Shema* and *Haskiveinu* ritual at the end of the day.

This new program requires that information be given to counselors and department heads, including sample lessons and how everything links together, so that the program can be implemented with integrity throughout the day. Faculty and staff then work together around camp to implement this spiral curriculum design.[395]

URJ Harlam – Moving Towards a Spiral Integration Model

URJ Harlam has had two summers of moving towards more experiential education where faculty travel with units and are expected to help reinforce the themes taught in the education hour during the rest of the day. This is a more centralized approach at a spiral curriculum, where the shiur is the entry point to Jewish education, and faculty, through their presence in other areas at camp, try to create other entries to Judaism throughout the day.[396]

URJ Kutz- Integration for Teens

URJ Kutz: NFTY's Campus for Reform Jewish Teens (URJ Kutz) is not discussed widely in this thesis because of its unique age range, session structure, and use of expert staff.

[395] This section is a paraphrase of my conversation with Erin Mason, Assistant Director of URJ Newman.
[396] This section is paraphrased from my conversation with Vicki Tuckman, Assistant Director of URJ Harlam.

Kutz's model is based on a college campus, with ten different intense specialty areas, from song-leading to youth-group leadership. These 'majors' take up ten hours a day, six days a week, and are taught by professionals in the field that have academic or professional credentials in the are they are teaching, and personally integrate their Judaism into their professional lives. For instance, digital media specialist is a professional in the field, and the arts person is a curator for Israel Museum. There are also minors, taught in hour long blocks, that range from Talmud to Ultimate Frisbee.

Assistant Director Mike Fuld emphasizes that the camp does not have an education hour because, "Everything we do is Jewish. Judaism is integrated into everything we do, and our program staff serve as examples, as Jewish role models." For instance, in digital media, the professional discusses video piracy not only as an artist, but as a Jew. The camp has been using this model for many years, and the camp is self-selecting for participants that are interested in the intense and challenging atmosphere the camp presents.

URJ Kutz does employ 'Resident Assistants' (RAs) that help the teens to decompress and process the day, helping make sacred time for the cabin group, and developing their own deep Jewish relationships with their participants. RAs help the teens to frame their varied experiences with respect, honor and humility, and are given much training to this effect. [397]

Conclusion

Most URJ camps integrate in many small ways, and quite a few have taken a look at their programming to see how they can thoughtfully make Jewish education more

[397] This section is paraphrased from my conversation with Mike Fuld, Assistant Director of URJ Kutz.

organic. For many this means planning through identifying those moments on camp that are ripe for Jewish integration. In the next chapter, I will discuss what I think are some of the best models that can be adopted by URJ camps, and discuss how they might be adopted.

Following this section, I will present the challenges and opportunities that the various Jewish professionals I have interviewed have raised, before finally presenting a few concrete recommendations for integration and decentralization on URJ camps.

8. Towards an Explicitly Integrated Curriculum for URJ Camps

An immersive Reform Jewish experience is a preview of the world redeemed. How do you imagine the messianic era? This is how a Reform Jewish summer camp should be operated.

While elements of this vision differ for all of us,[398] there are some elements that, as Reform Jews, we hold to be core to this vision, such as *t'fillah*, *tzedek*, *g'milut chasadim*, and a belief that everyone should be treated with *kavod*, being created *B'tzelem Elohim*. The URJ explicitly states that:

> The mission of the URJ Camps and Israel Programs is to enrich and transform lives by strengthening Jewish identity, teaching Jewish knowledge, instilling Jewish values and cultivating lifelong friendships within a vibrant and fun community of living Reform Judaism. We fulfill our mission through our commitment to the following core values: *Ruach* (spirit), *Kehilah* (community), *Talmud Torah* (lifelong Jewish learning), *Tikkun Olam* (repairing the world), and *Kavod* (respect).[399]

As much as we profess these values, and do our best that they are integrated into all of the institutions of Reform Judaism, especially as controllable an environment as our summer camps, we all can do with a reminder once and a while of what are the real goals of our institutions.

This chapter is organized around Joseph Schwab's four commonplaces of education, to discuss how each of these would be transformed in "a vibrant and fun community of living Reform Judaism."[400]

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[398] Is the language of Hebrew important to your vision? The same is true for many involved with Olin-Sang-Ruby Union Institute. Social Justice and the eradication of HIV/AIDS? URJ Newman may be more your cup of tea. Communal living? URJ Greene Family Camp has a powerful Kibbutz experience. Reform Judaism holds a plurality of views of what an ideal world looks like.

[399] Union for Reform Judaism Camps and Israel Programs. "Our Mission."

[400] *Ibid.*

Milieu

URJ Crane Lake Camp (URJ CLC) director Debby Shriber tells of a camp she worked on previous to her time at URJ CLC, where she worked to shift the camp's culture. There was a camper on this non-URJ camp, who later became a member of the senior staff, nicknamed Ostaf. Ostaf was nicknamed during one of his first summers on camp, and loved the fact that his counselors had shown him special attention by gifting him a nickname, something he thought was a special term of endearment.

It was only later that someone pulled him aside, and told him the hurtful truth – the reason he was nicknamed Ostaf was that his counselors decided to call him Fatso, but to keep it a secret by reversing the letters. Though he was hurt by the insult, he was even more wounded by the fact that he had been tricked by people he had come to love and admire, his counselors.[401]

While this story did not take place at a URJ camp, and we hope it would never take place under our supervision, many of us do know similar stories that have taken place on URJ camps. Many of us have sat through senior staff meetings where aspects of a camper or counselor are discussed in demeaning language. In these conversations on URJ camps, I have never heard anyone step up to the plate and say anything to the effect of, "This is against our camp culture. This isn't a Jewish conversation." In an explicitly integrated camp culture, difficult truthful conversations can still take place, but there is only room for conversations which treat individuals as being created *B'tzelem Elohim*.

[401] I remember this story from when I was in staff orientation from my summer working at this non-URJ camp where Shriber had just started working as the director. The story takes place before Shriber began as the camp's director, and presumably was known to her because Craig (Ostaf) was still on senior staff at that other camp when she was hired.

We have inherited various institutional cultures that take time and effort to change. Institutional memory at a camp takes at least eight years to have a total reset, and at camps with a tradition of long-serving faculty members and senior staff members that return summer after summer, even longer.[402] But there is no reason that we cannot work towards building this ideal camp culture now. *Lo alecha ham'lacha ligmor, v'lo atah ben chorin l'hibatel mimena* – It is not on you to complete the task, but neither are you free to quit from it.[403]

Many camps are well on the way to creating this kind of camp culture – a generous, caring community that respects personal autonomy, values learning, and finds ways to celebrate the individuals that live its values in their lives. URJ Kutz camp, taking a page from the North American Federation of Temple Youth's behavior management procedures, even frames moments when individuals do not live up to the highest standards of the community in a Jewish light. For those that 'miss the mark,' the gate of *T'shuvah* is open to them through a mentoring program. This program, shaped by a mentor, gives participants an opportunity to return to their circle of friends after undergoing a process of repentance.

Before each summer, every camp should make a list of Reform Jewish values that its stake-holders find important, such as *Ivrit*, *Tikkun Olam*, *Mitzvot Bein Adam L'Havero*, *Mitzvot Bein Adam L'Makom*, *Kehillah Kedosha*, and do Avi Orlow's exercise of highlighting in the camp's printed materials, such as on a camp map and in the daily schedule, where each of these values appears. If there are values that do not appear in different areas of

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[402] The 'eight years' to reset institutional memory comes from Jonathan Cohen, who says that this is the time that it takes for most campers to finish their camp journeys – from campers to staff and then out of the camp system (hopefully until they have their own children).

[403] M. Avot 2:21

camp, then the question must be asked of why the camp is offering these specific activities, if they are not part of the camp's mission. [404] Alternatively, the conversation could be about how the goals can be made manifest in these areas in a deep and meaningful way.

What I am proposing, contrary to the title seen at the front of this thesis, is not the 'integration of Judaism' into 'American' or 'secular' aspects of camp, but rather the creation of a space and a time that aims to be exclusively a manifestation of Reform Judaism.[405] Some of our camps achieve this, but all of our camps need reminders to constantly work towards this goal.

Subject Matter

We teach Reform Judaism at our summer camps through lived experience. Sports, arts, swimming and boating are all different modalities that are used to teach what it means to be a Reform Jew in North America today. In Reform Judaism there is a place for *Torah Lishmah* – learning for its own sake – but Reform Judaism is also about living a life in modern society.

Our camps should reflect this. On camps with an education hour – Limmud, Shiur, etc. – learning takes place *lishmah*. But Reform Judaism is also about living a full life in modern society guided by the Jewish tradition. It is appropriate to have specialty areas on camp, because these are aspects of modern Jewish life. But there should be no

[404] Phone interview with Avi Orlow at the Foundation for Jewish Camp.

[405] Reform Judaism is a religion that integrates the technological advances of the day. When I asked Ron Klotz, the former director of GUCI, about how he integrates Judaism into behavior management, he replied, using his words, that the idea, at its core, is "bullshit." I believe that good behavior management is good behavior management. Adding Jewish phrases can weaken or strengthen the intervention based on each situation… but good behavior management is <u>already</u> Jewish.

such thing as *omanut lishmah* on our URJ camps.[406] The real subject should always be Judaism. How do Reform Jews make art? How do Reform Jews compete? How do Reform Jews relate to potentially dangerous activities, such as swimming and boating? These are all core questions that are taught by experiencing life at our camps.

It is also possible to use these different modalities to teach Judaism *lishmah*, and in order to make learning more fun. But Judaism taught through a modality, as has been discussed in the chapter on integration, needs to be done in a way that maintains the integrity of both the modality and the Jewish lesson.

Staff

URJ Greene Family Camp's director, Loui Dobin, has a reoccurring nightmare: There are cars full of eager campers lined up at the gate to camp, waiting for the session to start. Preparing to open the gates and officially starting the session, Dobin looks over his shoulder, and realizes that the only thing behind him is the physical plant of the camp – there are no staff to support him. He is the only one there.[407]

Our camps are not wood, water and metal, laid out on top of dirt; they are the campers and staff which inhabit these structures. Many camps have a directorial team, faculty, a senior staff – which divides into 'areas heads,' 'unit heads,' and 'programming team' – and staff that can be grouped under titles like 'support staff,' 'counselors,' 'specialists,' 'shlichim,' and 'foreign staff'. Every individual that volunteers for or is paid by the camp is part of the education team. They must be trained to think like a member of the education team, working towards the goals and aims of Reform Judaism.

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[406] Contrary to the previously cited opinion of Robbie Gringas, "Art: Educating with Art Without Ruining it" 2011. p. 345.

[407] Recounted from staff meetings at URJ GFC in 2009.

This goes beyond being trustworthy, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind and cheerful. It means that all staff must be engaged in a reflective learning process about what it means to live as a Reform Jew. This is even true for the non-Jewish staff, who are being asked to serve as a *dugma ishit* – a personal example – to the campers. While the hope is that the staff embody this positive example in their personal lives, it must appear in their professional lives while they are representing the institutions of Reform Judaism.

To this end, staff should be given the opportunity to model Reform Judaism for their campers. This means that they should be given learning opportunities, and opportunities to teach. They should be given space to make informed decisions, even if the results of these informed decisions are not what the faculty or senior staff would chose.

As Reform Jews, our staff do not see themselves outside of camp only as 'specialists' or as 'bunk counselors' – only as athletes, artists, musicians or only as Jews. They integrate themselves. Through shared leadership opportunities they should be given the chance to show how they integrate to their campers.

All staff need support both through mentoring and through personal supervision. A truly Reform Jewish setting would make sure that at the most basic level, the mental health needs of everyone in the community are met. Ideally, everyone would be given the chance to grow professionally and Jewishly during the summer.

This is a formative time in the lives of many staff, and a perfect opportunity for the staff, with help of faculty and peers, to take ownership of their Jewish identities.

Campers

Campers are all individuals who find themselves in a sacred community for different reasons. Each camper learns differently and experiences camp differently.

Campers have different relationships with different staff members. Some campers enjoy the Jewish learning aspects of camp, but do not come back after a single year. Others struggle to tolerate what they see as the Jewish aspects of camp, but come back years after year because of *kehilah kedoshah*, full of friendships and community that develops over the summer.

A truly Reform Jewish summer camp is a camp that some campers will think they hate, and others will think that they love.[408] A Reform Jewish camp treats both of these types of campers equally, with respect and dignity and nurtures their independence.

Some camps provide rich communal living arrangements for older campers, helping them navigate the complexity that comes with living in a Jewish community. All camps should provide a safe space for campers to make mistakes, to receive constructive criticism and to grow.

Ideally, camps would provide many activities and many role models, so campers, though on a guided journey, can find their own way of being a Reform Jew.

Conclusion

How a camp prays its *Birkat Hamazon* says a lot about how the camp relates to all of these educational commonplaces in its living of Reform Judaism. Each camp has its own culture around the blessing. The liturgy is theologically difficult to accept, and must be actively wrestled with to be made into a prayer able to pass the lips with conviction for many Reform Jews. The prayer requires leaders and followers, but does not require professional Jews to lead the prayer 'successfully'. Jewish prayer asks for *kavanah*, but can also be done within the camp's mandate of being vibrant and fun.

[408] I personally wrote letters home every night when I was a camper, telling my parents how much I hated camp. One of which I accidently addressed to the camp office, instead of my parents. Oops.

What text does your camp use? Who set this text? What was the process for selecting this text? Does anyone understand the text? Who controls how the prayer is recited? What is done to help those praying have *kavanah*? What is done to make this experience of Judaism vibrant?

Sales and Saxe relate four different experiences they had on summer camps with the prayer:

> [At the first camp,] campers easily quiet down for the blessing, which is led by a designated bunk. The blessing is sung respectfully, with multi-part harmony. At another camp, the Jewish educators are like guards patrolling during a highly abbreviated version of the Birkat Ha'mazon. At a third camp, Birkat Ha'mazon is treated as a fun song. A staff member explained: "We've turned it into a song with clapping and with movements. Its not really treated as if its a prayer - although it is a prayer and we're saying it for a reason. The kids think of it more as a song, and a way to end the meal with festivity. It's a positive thing." At a fourth, the blessing has become a chant, with campers engaging in lots of pounding, hand motions, funny sounds, and silly, made-up lyrics.[409]

Sales and Saxe are discussing aesthetics, which are important in showing power dynamics, and in seeing if the campers seem like they are enjoying the experience or are being forced to participate. They did not survey the campers and counselors for understanding of the text, or, more importantly, explore how this experience affected future opportunities for Jewish practice. Different camps will prioritize the aesthetics, understanding, and the 'positive and repeatable experience' aspects of saying this prayer.

The *nimshal* is education on camp. The education requires leaders and followers, but does not require professional Jews to 'successfully' be taught. The programming requires *kavanah*, and an understanding of content, but can also fit within the camp's

[409] Amy. L. Sales and Leonard Saxe, "How Goodly Are Thy Tents: Summer Camps as Jewish Socializing Experiences" 2004. p. 87.

mandate of being vibrant and fun. There are an unlimited number of topics that can be educated on, and camps must select which of these to emphasize.

On what topics does the camp educate? Who sets this 'text'? What was the process for selecting this 'text'? Does anyone understand the 'text'? Who controls how the 'text' is taught? What is done to help those learning obtain *kavanah*? What is done to make this experience of Judaism vibrant?

Living Judaism is Decentralized Judaism

The way Judaism is lived on camp starts with the priorities and interpretation of the director, and (depending on the camp) the faculty. But if it stops there, and Judaism is kept in a sacred silo, in the *aron hakodesh*, the camp has failed. Moses takes the Torah out to the people, and the *Shechinah* dwells within them. *Lo bashamayim hi*.[410]

Part of Reform Judaism is informed decision making. The decisions of what to educate on, and complex Jewish knowledge may be exclusively held by the director and the faculty, but staff must do the actual educating. They must struggle with the questions of how to best present and frame knowledge. Formerly, at URJ Newman (at the time, UAHC Swig) all programming was done in pairs, in *chevruta,* because programming is study.[411]

To have living Judaism, we need camps that teach *hadracha*, and not just health, safety, and welfare – camps that teach how to be a *michanech*, and not just a baby-sitter while faculty lead programs.[412] To have living Judaism, our camps need to allow counselors, if not campers, to wrestle with the words of Birkat Hamazon, to struggle with

[410] It [the teaching / the Torah] is not in Heaven. Deut. 30:12.

[411] Interview with Misha Zinkow, former director of UAHC Swig.

[412] *Michanech*, educator.

Judaism's applicability to their favorite specialty area, and to truly question how Judaism can be lived in their own lives.

True integration and true decentralization are difficult. In the next chapter I will provide some specific suggestions of how integration could look at URJ camps. In the final chapter I will present the challenges and opportunities raised by the various Jewish professionals I have interviewed, and conclude with recommendations as to how we can overcome these challenges and make our camps more fully into Reform Jewish environments.

9. Practical Ways to Bring Integration to URJ Camps

I have the following realistic ways that URJ Camps can continue to integrate their curriculum to a higher extent. Some of these require financial resources or more planning time, but they are all realistic models, many of which are already in place on various camps in the movement. Many of these ideas are elements that can be combined to create a more complete program.

Use the Hidden Curriculum

Decorations and drawings on walls, songs on a theme, the food served at meals, the way counselors dress, and many other small cues can be built into the fabric of the camp which help convey the educational message. At UAHC Swig, every themed session would have its own song, a pop-song re-written, with the educational message embedded into it.

Team-teaching

Instead of simply asking faculty and bunk-staff to travel with units, ask them to team-teach with specialists. Assign Jewishly knowledgeable staff (*chavrei hamishlachat*, counselors that could serve as Jewish education specialists, or faculty) to either provide a Jewish framework that links the different specialty areas being visited, or to focus their energy on integrating Judaism into a single specialty area. This requires planning and debriefing time where the specialist and the Jewish knowledge staff can coordinate.

Themes

Have a broad theme that everyone on camp is supposed to educate on over a specific period of time – from a day, to the entire summer, depending on how many

themes one wants to cover, and in what depth. This requires time and/or resources spent educating the staff on this theme. Most theme based programs have an opening program and a wrap-up.

'Water-break' Binder

Create a collection of 5-20 minute education programs that are easy to run. Place these programs and all of the resources needed to run them, in binders specialized for each activity area. The programs can then be adapted by staff and run during water breaks. This works best if there is an expectation of how many programs will be run over a given time period, and if there is a greater educational arch that these programs fit into.

Combining the Jewish Education Hour with other Specialty Areas

By running Jewish education and *teva*, or ropes/challenge together, it means that there are fun and engaging modalities that are natural to use with the camp's Jewish education, making it more interesting and fun. Every area at camp can potentially be combined with the Jewish education hour, including swimming and horseback riding. How much more fun would Jewish education be, if it happened at the pool every day?

Relabeling

Combine the different 'disciplines' practiced around camp in a natural manner that breaks down the barriers between them and Jewish education. 'Areas' are artificial constructs. Rename different 'time-slots' and 'activity areas' so that they combine multiple disciplines naturally. Why do we teach "soccer"? Instead have a "Team building" period, which just happens to take place on the football pitch. Teach "Personal Adventure" which happens to take place at the tower, or "Talmud Torah" which involves learning

how to swim. The possibilities are endless. This requires planning, because qualified staff needs to be at each activity area. Additionally, it is a shift in mindset, and requires buy-in.

Hebrew

Not every camp has the same culture as URJ OSRUI. Making Hebrew an intrinsic part of URJ camping requires determination from the directors and faculty. If making Hebrew a part of daily life is important to you, then there is plenty of material from Masad, OSRUI, Ramah, and other camps/camping systems that have done this with varying degrees of success in the past. To make this successful, according to Michael Weinberg, who helps run the *Chalutzim* program at OSRUI, "You need leadership that is singularly focused to the idea. The how-to, is simple, but you need to build the culture for it. In order to start building the culture, you have to find people who are *mishugah* for it."[413]

Jewish Education Specialists

For camps that centralize education, such as URJ Crane Lake and URJ Eisner, and are worried about the quality of the education programming if the camp were to decentralize, appoint Jewish education specialists that would be in charge of that specialty area of camp.

A more ideal model would be to have a Jewish education specialist living with each bunk. These individuals would receive extra training during the year on informal and experiential education, including on how to run a reflection group, and how to apply their knowledge to the bunk setting. During the summer they help integrate Judaism into

[413] Phone interview.

every part of camp, (including the Jewish education session, sports, arts, etc.) and help tie everything into the educational curriculum of the camp.

10. Conclusion: Challenges, Opportunities and Recommendations

The camp professionals I interviewed for this thesis were very candid in their discussions of the opportunities and challenges to integration on their camps. Here, I collect their thoughts, and add a few of my own. At the end of each section, I give a few recommendations for URJ summer camps that wish to integrate and decentralize Judaism. The challenges and opportunities provide snapshot of where our movement is currently. I hope that the recommendations provide a glimpse into our future.

Leadership

Challenges

To integrate and decentralize, camps need to have the will-power to do so. This starts with the director. For some camp directors, integration and decentralization are priorities. But this is not true at every camp. It is nearly impossible to integrate and decentralize Jewish education if the director is not supportive of the initiative.

Parents' Expectations – When parents send kids to URJ Kalsman and to the Wilshire Boulevard Temple Camps (WBTCs), they often ask, "How Jewish is your camp?" with the implication that if the camp is too Jewish, then it is not the right choice for their children.[414] Interestingly, research shows that cost is significantly more prohibitive to parents than how 'Jewish' a camp is.[415] But the camp directors that discussed this challenge with me were worried enough to mention it as a concern.

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[414] Doug Lynn and David Berkman. Michael Weinberg, faculty at OSRUI, thinks this is regional.

[415] 50% of first-time parents said cost was prohibitive, while 13% said "It's too Jewish" in a market survey in California. Cohen, Steven. "Jewish Overnight Summer Camps in Southern California: A Marketing Study." 2006.

Opportunities

Many directors and assistant/associate directors at URJ camps are on-board with the idea of integration, and grew up in camps with decentralization. Additionally, many of these individuals are committed to their own education and growth as Jews and as educators.

Recommendation

For integration and decentralization to work, the directorial team needs to believe in their importance. I recommend that our camp directors and day school directors meet to discuss what integration and decentralization can look like in Reform Jewish settings.

Faculty

Challenges

Faculty are respected professionals. Most faculty are their own bosses in every part of their lives other than camp. Decentralization requires *tzimtzum* on the part of the faculty.[416] Faculty are an important part of our camps, not only because they help recruit campers, but because they represent the highest levels of knowledge and personal commitment to Judaism. Whatever program is put in place needs to be done with faculty buy-in.[417]

[416] Vicki Tuckman, Assistant Director of URJ Harlam and Misha Zinkow, former director of UAHC Swig both used this terminology in reference to faculty's presence on camp. The rabbis I interviewed were willing to confront faculty on the need to allow others to lead.

[417] According to Ron Klotz, former director of URJ GUCI, "The problem is a political issue – the rabbis have political clout. Only a rabbi as a camp director has the power to say, 'You are out of line. It isn't your role. Your job is to support the staff." There is a lot of pressure on camp directors. They need the rabbis for recruitment. " – Ron Klotz, phone interview, quoted by typing as he was talking.

Expectations – Even if the director of the camp and the staff of the camp have bought into a system of decentralization and integration, "the faculty [are] a challenge," according to URJ Jacobs director, Jonathan Cohen. "[The camp has chosen to] do something in a particular way with a particular philosophy. We must keep them in the loop, and managing their expectations of what the camp is like."[418]

URJ Kalsman director, David Berkman is worried because in an integrated model education is spread throughout the day and does not always take place when faculty is present. Berkman fears that faculty "are going to worry, 'How are we going to know that every day the kid is getting the right amount of Jewish education?'" Berkman's philosophy relates Jewish education to food, "I'm not concerned that every meal is a balanced meal – one day may not be as good as the others. If the day is mostly spent in the pool – it is [going to be] harder [to integrate] than art or adventure or music. I think it is going to be a challenge to get the faculty to think about education in a period greater than 24 hours."

Faculty as Experiential Educators – Not all faculty are great experiential educators, and faculty training is not traditionally part of our camps' remit. Therefore it may be harder to help faculty reach their educational potential in a more integrated and decentralized system.

Opportunities

Individuals who once would have served on the faculty of URJ camps are now hired as full-time employees at some of our camps. Vicki Tuckman, an assistant director at URJ Harlam, has a pet theory that this is because, "more women who are now

[418] Phone interview.

working in the field, who are expanding the definition of what it is to be a rabbi. [Camp] has become our rabbinate. For some it is a second profession, and is very not-for-profit Judaism. I am a camp rabbi, not the director of a camp. This is unique to the URJ."

The Foundation for Jewish Camp (FJC) Nadiv program, which places a professional educator on the staff of a camp, sharing time with educating in a Jewish day school, also accomplishes this. Currently URJ Greene, URJ George, URJ Harlam, URJ Coleman, URJ Crane Lake, URJ Newman, and URJ Kalsman employ professional educators or rabbis in positions other than 'director.'

The inclusion of faculty into the professional staff allows for integration to be planned during the 'off-season,' and for an individual that show faculty how decentralized education is working on camp in a non-threatening manner.

Recommendation

For integration and decentralization to work, the faculty needs to have 'buy-in' and believe in their importance. I think that if our camps ask faculty to be more involved in mentoring individual staff members all-year round, they will see the importance and success of decentralization and integration.

Entrenched Camp Culture

Challenges

Integration is a mindset. Even if the director and professional staff are willing to try integration, there are staff members who have been on camp for up to eight years and 'know; how the camp is traditionally run. Even new staff are acculturated into knowing 'the way things used to be.' For integration and decentralization to work, they need to be implemented with respect to the entrenched camp culture.

Opportunities

Camp culture can change quickly, if there is the will to do so. URJ Crane Lake Camp was purchased by the movement as a secular sports camp. Everyone who has recent experience on the camp sees that, "the culture has really changed. Now we have a lot of song-leading specialists and have limmud specialists."[419]

Recommendation

Along with buy-in from the directorial team and the faculty, staff need to be convinced that decentralization and integration – which means more work for them – is beneficial to the camp and to their own development as Jews. I believe that providing additional support and training for staff will help build buy-in.

Create a Year-Round Culture and A Lifelong Journey

Challenges

Reform Jewish Informal Education does not have a year-round culture or an explicit lifelong journey. As has been mention in Chapter 3, these are both present in other camps, even in all of the other reform youth movements around the world (*Noar Tzioni Reformi Snifim* – Netzer groups).

Limited cooperation and coordination with the North American Federation of Temple Youth (NFTY) is a missed opportunity. NFTY provides another informal learning environments that require similar teaching skills, such as running and writing programming. Some of the staff who sit through faculty led programs on URJ camps are talented programmers and have had valuable reflective experience in NFTY.

[419] Lauren Chizner. I also worked at this camp, and feel its Jewish credentials are as legitimate as any of the older URJ camps.

NFTY is a setting where staff can, and do, learn the basics of the educational program. The lack of cooperation between these two parts of our movement severely limits the effect that either can have on our movement's youth.

Opportunities

Professionalization of youth workers in the URJ – The URJ now has a professional organization for youth workers, the Reform Youth Professionals Association (RYPA), which is an attempt at professionalizing youth work in the movement. While this organization is primarily directed at NFTY, many of the individuals in RYPA work on camps, and the professionalization of their work is positive.

HUC-JIR Certificate in Jewish Education for Adolescents and Emerging Adults – The Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR), the Reform movement's seminary, is now offering a certification in youth work. My hope is that this professionalization of the field will not lead to more centralization, but rather instruct individuals on the power of decentralization as a teaching tool.

URJ Campaign for Youth Engagement – The Reform movement is now focusing on its youth, hoping to create more camps and to fill more beds on the existing camps. An individual that has a track record of using integration as a teaching tool, Bradley Solmsen, is running the program.

Stronger Connections to Netzer Olami – The URJ has the opportunity to build stronger bridges to *Netzer* movements around the world, teaching their leaders Jewish knowledge, and learning *hadracha* from them. [420] Some *Netzer* groups (such as LJY-Netzer, based in the UK) have more *madrichim* who wish to continue on their *Netzer* Journey than the

[420] *Hadracha*, leadership.

movements can accommodate in their summer programs. Our camps could benefit from hiring these Reform Jewish staff, who are looking to continue their Jewish journeys, rather than hiring other foreign staff.

Foundation for Jewish Camp – The Foundation for Jewish Camp (FJC) has brought the philanthropic resources of the Jewish community to bear on Jewish camping.[421] After research, the FJC found several areas of camp that they could improve through philanthropically funded programing. These include: programs to help train and retain more experienced staff; programs to help give directors and assistant directors a more full Jewish education; a program to place professional educators on camp staff; and specific programs training specialists in integration.

Recommendation

For education at our camps to be at its best, we need to sell participants on a Reform Jewish journey, one that can start at camp or at home, and continue (and be relevant) throughout the rest of the year.

Our camps and youth movement need to create a year-round culture of participation and sell a vision of a lifelong Jewish journey.[422]

Reform Judaism is multi-vocal and complex

Judaism is a multi-vocal tradition, where dissenting opinions are preserved. Different manifestations of Judaism have been accepted as 'right' during different periods of history. The Jewish view of capitol punishment is complex. Jewish views on sexuality are many and diverse. Judaism, as a subject matter, is difficult to teach. Reform Judaism

[421] For an account of this phenomena, see: Joseph Reimer, "Informal Education: The Decisive Decade - How Informal Jewish Education Was Transformed in Its Relationship with Jewish Philanthropy" 2011.
[422] Both of these ideas are discussed in more detail at the conclusion of chapter 3.

is even more difficult, as it is additionally burdened with the questions of how Jewish values are "really different than universal values? How do we distinguish the Jewish from universal?"[423]

I believe there is no easy answer to this, but that we must get our staff involved in this struggle.

Integrated Education sometimes means 'Less Education'

While many camp professionals are enthusiastic about the possibilities of integration, others see integration, especially in programs that do not have an additional education hour, as an abrogation of Reform Jewish camping:

> [Integrated education] is another way of not having an educational program. It is a way of explaining away the commitment to Jewish education. I think that is a spin… JC [Jonathan Cohen, the director of URJ Jacobs] jumped at something he wanted to do anyway. He wanted to do it because that is what sells.[424]

In talking with a staff member from the summer of 2012 at URJ Jacobs camp, they admitted that too often the time dedicated to Jewish education was around twenty minutes a day.[425]

We must be conscious of this, and actively get our staff involved in making sure education is infused throughout the day.

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[423] Erin Mason.

[424] Ron Klotz, former directors of URJ GUCI, when asked about the conversation at the Court of the Two Sisters in New Orleans, which sparked Jonathan Cohen's decision to try integrated education for the first time.

[425] Interview with Andi Feldman, part of the education team in 2012.

Staff

Challenges

Staff training and turnover – I think the largest issue at URJ camps is staff training and preparation.[426] Most staff only receive a week of training before camp, focused mostly on health, safety and welfare. In other camping systems where integration and decentralization happen successfully, more time is spent in training staff so they can be educators as well as assuring health and safety.

This would be made easier if camps had the same staff year after year, but many, including URJ Kutz, find that "staff retention is our really big challenge."[427]

There is also a need to hire and retain the 'right' staff. This means staff that are both positive about the educational curriculum,[428] and authentic in their specialty area (if they are specialists) and their Judaism.[429]

Jonathan Cohen at URJ Jacobs sometimes wonders if this staff exists. If this staff does exist, then we are not putting enough resources into recruiting them. If they do not exist, then we are not putting enough resources into 'making' them through training.

Overburdened – Staff are overburdened. Integration and decentralization require time. Educational sessions require: planning time; time to make or acquire resources; time to prepare other staff for the program; and time to evaluate how the program went. Some camps do all of this. Some camps have moved away from this model because "counselors

[426] Eric Bram and Zachary Lasker are at least two individuals who agree, dedicating their thesis and dissertation research to the training of staff for camp. Eric Bram, "Toward a Systematic Approach to Training Staff for UAHC Camp-Institutes" 1985 and Zachary Adam Lasker, "The Education of Ramah Counselors: Madrichim as Educators and Learners" 2010. Lasker's article is a summary of his doctoral dissertation.

[427] Mike Fuld, Assistant Director.

[428] Erin Mason, Asst. Director, URJ Newman.

[429] David Berkman, Director, URJ Kalsman and Doug Lynn, Director, Wilshire Boulevard Temple Camps.

were failing with camper care."[430] No matter how much time is spent in training, some, including Vicki Tuckman, feel, "we just don't have enough time to change the staff into being these intentional Jewish role models. They are also learning child development, and learning names and dealing with fights. There is a lot on their plates."

Non-Jewish – Some camps employ non-Jewish staff in their specialty areas. These staff may not sleep in the same place as campers, but nonetheless serve as role models and teachers of Jewish values. This can be make integration and decentralization difficult.[431]

Opportunities

When staff are given the opportunity, resources and support to be Jewish educators, even in limited settings, they shine. Staff at URJ Jacobs are great at delivering Jewish Teachable Moments (JTMs). Staff at OSRUI and GUCI deliver the educational programs at those camps. The staff at Habonim Dror and Netzer Olami camps are very similar to our staff, and can run those movements both logistically and educationally. Given a chance to take ownership of a program and make it their own, staff will often feel invested, and create fantastic programming.

This benefits the camps, but also helps engage youth at a crucial part of their lives when they have to start make decisions about how to live Jewishly on college campuses away from their home communities.

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[430] Erin Mason

[431] Erin Mason. On the other hand, Lauren Chizner, former co-Limmud Director and faculty member at URJ Crane Lake Camp paints a different story: "We love the international staff. We especially love how much they embrace Judaism. Last summer during *yom limmud*- they soaked all of the learning up. They want to learn. They are the ones at services who are singing and dancing. They are not a challenge or an obstacle – they are more into it than our Jewish staff. The issue is Jewish counselors who look at the [faculty led] Limmud hour as time off."

Recommendations: Staff Empowerment and Staff Training

For decentralization and integration to work, we need to look at how Habonim Dror, Camp Stone, and Netzer Olami (see Chapter 3) are empower their youth and therefore retaining and training quality staff.

For integration and decentralization to succeed, and the proper amount of camper care to be present, we need to make sure we support our younger staff with the proper resources, training, and mentorship.

This is an area in which we simply do not invest enough resources. Train during the off-season. Hold retreats for college students over the winter, over spring break, and at other times when people can come together. Staff are our constituency, maybe more-so than campers, because they are at a transitional point in their lives. The more we can get them to engage in meaningful Jewish life, the more they will be involved for the rest of their lives. The Jewish camp community must become a year-round Jewish community for our college students.

Danny Maseng claims that the following factors are what made *Tiferet*, the arts integration program at OSRUI, successful during the time he ran the program. Notice in his list the importance of staff that are well trained and can be trusted:

1. It is always about the teachers – [An integrated program] is only going to be as good as the teachers. This stuff is not going to work, unless you have the best teachers that are into teaching
2. Philosophy and language used need to be unified. The entire faculty needs to be on the exact same page, but the faculty needs to be different from each other. They have the same goal, but the individual is different. You need to know how to select the right people who are capable on turning on a dime. If you say, "lets do it now, not in nineteen hours," they shouldn't say, "What the heck."

3. There has to be an understanding that the students are the beginning, end and raison d'être. This is the sacred work of teaching them. Everything you do needs to be towards pushing them to that end.
4. You need a mature, expert group of people, who have no problem shifting in and out of authority – I work non-hierarchically. The unit is my responsibility, but you'll only hear that once. Now I don't care who is running the program, it is the person who has the best idea. Step up.
5. Be very fluid. Rabbis and cantors can't have an ego about who is running programs. It is hard in the beginning. I trusted [my co-leader's] judgment on what ideas to go forward with. He wouldn't have asked unless he thought this was good.
6. Hire people you trust as much as you trust your spouse. They are your everything. They are really there. They get what you are saying. They will do what it takes to make it work. [432]

As I have stated in Chapter 3 of this thesis, in my experience on *Netzer* camps, I have seen that empowered youth, self-governed through democratic bodies, can make their own choices and set their own paths. Guided by their interpretations of Reform Judaism,[433] our youth (especially the college-aged staff that we trust with our kids) are perfectly capable of forming their own Jewish Journeys and their own visions of a year-round culture. Decentralization and integration are steps towards youth empowerment in a way that presents Reform Judaism as a compelling and legitimate way of life – a true living Judaism.

Integration and decentralized education look different on every camp, but these are two aims that our movement needs to work towards in order to prove the value of Reform Judaism as a way of life to both campers and staff, and thus to ensure its survival

[432] Phone interview with Danny Maseng. Typed as he talked. He talked slowly, so this should be accurate.
[433] Guidance and advice from professionals and rabbis, in my mind, is part of Reform Jewish decision-making.

into the future. Thus, by working towards realizing our visions of Reform Judaism on camp, we are doing our part in bringing about a time when it is perpetually Shabbat.

Appendix A

Camp	'Best Fit' Educational Model	Daily Dedicated Education Hour?	Daily Dedicated Hebrew Lesson?	Who sets the Curriculum?	Who writes the individual programs?	Who primarily delivers the actual educational programs?	Do you have a program bank?
URJ OSRUI	**Counselor-Led plus Hebrew/Jewish Culture Hour**	Yes	Yes	Faculty	Faculty + Counselors	Faculty + Counselors	Yes
URJ GUCI	**Counselor-Led plus Hebrew/Jewish Culture Hour**	Yes	Just moved away from this	Faculty, Education Director	Counselors	Counselors write the program with the assistance of faculty/senior staff, and run it mainly by themselves, with some faculty input when they need help.	Yes
URJ Henry S. Jacobs Camp	**Integrated**	No	No	Director, Education Director, Faculty?	Education Director	Education Director and Faculty	Yes
URJ 6 Points Academy	**Integrated**	No	No	Education Director	Education Director	Education Director and other staff	Yes
Wilshire Boulevard Temple Camps	**Faculty-Led, moving towards Integrated**	Yes	No	Director, Education Director	Education Director and other staff	HUC students	Yes
URJ Camp Kalsman	**Faculty-Led, moving towards Integrated**	Yes	No	Education Director	Ed. Director has decided on a theme with the faculty help, staff (asst. unit heads) and faculty all help to implement it	The faculty and staff from the units run the program for the education director	Programs are based on a different theme every year* - I assume this means no?
URJ Camp George	**Faculty-Led, trying to move towards Counselor-Led**	Every other day, in rotation with culture.	No	Dean of Jewish Living (Education Director), Faculty, Jewish Living Staff (Ed Staff)	Education Director, some input from Faculty/Ed. Staff	Faculty, with counselors as group leaders and facilitators	Yes
URJ Camp Newman	**Faculty-Led, moving towards Integrated**	Yes	No	Faculty, Director, Education Director	Faculty and Education Staff	Faculty with counselors	Yes
URJ Camp Coleman	**Faculty-Led, moving towards Integrated**	Yes	No	Unit specific Programming Specialists	Faculty and Education Staff	programmers run programs with counselor-led breakouts/stations when appropriate. faculty sometimes helps with facilitation.	Yes
URJ Greene Family Camp	**Faculty-Led, moving towards Integrated**	Yes	No	Faculty, Director, Education Director, Madrichim, Mumchim, and Education Specialists	Faculty, Educators and Counselors	Faculty write some programs and lead them; counselors write some programs and lead them	Yes
URJ Camp Harlam	**Faculty-Led, moving towards Integrated**	Yes	No	Assistant Director	Assistant Director, Faculty sometimes adapt	Faculty + Counselors	Yes
URJ Crane Lake Camp	**Faculty-Led**	Yes	No	Faculty, Education Director, and an Asst. Director at Eisner	Faculty and an Asst. Director at Eisner	Faculty and/or the senior staff run the entire program, with counselors sitting in groups and participating, but not running the program.	Yes
URJ Eisner Camp	**Faculty-Led**	Yes	No	Faculty, Education Director, and an Asst. Director at Eisner	Faculty and an Asst. Director at Eisner	Faculty and/or the senior staff run the entire program, with counselors sitting in groups and participating, but not running the program.	Yes
Camp Daisy and Harry Stein (Formerly Camp Perstein)	**Faculty-Led, moving towards Counselor-Led**	Yes	No	Education Director, Camp Director, Congregational Rabbis (camp is owned by a congregation)	Education Director, Camp Director, Congregational Rabbis (camp is owned by a congregation), Unit Heads	Faculty and/or the senior staff generally start and end the program, with counselors in charge of break-out groups or stations depending on the activity.	No

Camp	Are programs recycled in their entirety?	Is this done over some sort of a planned cycle?	Have there been changes in that fact that there is/is not a daily Limmud/Mashehu/ Shiur (or otherwise named) hour for dedicated Jewish education?
URJ OSRUI	No	No	No
URJ GUCI	No	No	The largest change is from having had a dedicated hour of Hebrew, which is now an hour of education linked to Jewish culture.
URJ Henry S. Jacobs Camp	No	No	Yes. The young units still have this. The older units now have integrated programming in specialty camps.
URJ 6 Points Academy	Yes	Working on creating a cycle	New Camp
Wilshire Boulevard Temple Camps	Yes	Yes	The curriculum was random thematic programming- no cycle, random good stuff.. but nothing cyclical. Now 3 years cycle – God, Torah, Israel
URJ Camp Kalsman	(did not discuss this Assume no,)	(did not discuss this. Assume no.)	Now have a Nadiv Educator who is looking at this. May move to totally integrated education.
URJ Camp George	Yes	Yes - Every two years.	Dean of Jewish Living position is new, and Is working on improving the education.
URJ Camp Newman	?	?	This is changing now
URJ Camp Coleman	Yes	Yes	From what I understand, Coleman's educational program has been modified significantly in the last few years. This summer was one of the first (maybe the first?) that we had a dedicated programmer for each unit. This allowed for connection with campers, which led to deep knowledge of what they wanted to do, and how they could handle different programs. There is a ton of time spent on education, but we could do way better on the educational program preparation in the off season, which is where I come in, as I'm starting a year-round curriculum project here.
URJ Greene Family Camp	Yes	Yes	In the last 10 years we have changed from delivering education to groups of 100+ campers at a time to small bunk-sized groups. We have given faculty greater ownership over the program. We have more faculty coming each summer. We tried to have an integrated education program with no shiur hour - but have returned to a more formalized program. Counselors have less planning time with faculty - something we would like to change. T'fillah is by bunk on weekdays and is much more creative and interactive. We have a new curriculum. We have a full time education director. We have an elective Hebrew program that is successful. We have created 2 new units (with education programs)
URJ Camp Harlam	Yes	Yes	No
URJ Crane Lake Camp	Yes	Yes	Education theme used to rotate God-Torah-Israel for whole camp, now have educational theme for specific units. Limud has always existed, though we are experimenting with infusing Judaism in specialty areas as well.
URJ Eisner Camp	Yes	Yes	no.
Camp Daisy and Harry Stein (Formerly Camp Perstein)	No	Yes	Jewish education has changed tremendously at our camp over the last decade. Prior to about 15 years ago, Judaic programming was sporadic and non-thematic. It was planned by counselors based only on their Jewish knowledge. Now, we have a full-time educator or educators, typically HUC students or Jewish Day School teachers. The educational theme is based on a three-year cycle of God, Torah, and Israel. The educational programming is systematic, thematic, age-specific, and occurs daily or almost daily.

Camp	Have there been changes in that fact that there is/isn't a separate hour for Hebrew instruction every day?	Have there been changes in who sets the curriculum?	Have there been changes in who writes the individual programs?	Have there been changes in who primarily runs the actual learning sessions?
URJ OSRUI	No	No	No.	No.
URJ GUCI	The largest change is from having had a dedicated hour of Hebrew, which is now an hour of education linked to Jewish culture.	No	No	No
URJ Henry S. Jacobs Camp	No.	No	Yes, This is evolving year after year. It was the faculty and the education directors. Now it is the education directors which sometimes are the same people as the specialty-camp heads.	No?
URJ 6 Points Academy	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a
Wilshire Boulevard Temple Camps	No	?	Constant rabbi who does this professionally.	no
URJ Camp Kalsman	no.	Now there is the Nadiv educator.	Now there is a Nadiv educator.	No, but this is being looked at.
URJ Camp George	no.	No.	Dean of Jewish Living position is new, and is in charge of this.	There is an effort to give more responsibility to Madrichim
URJ Camp Newman	Moving towards integrated curriculum.	?	?	?
URJ Camp Coleman	We used to have this, but don't any more.	Well, now that we have me as the Nadiv Educator/Program Director, it's different. I'm a consistent, year-round employee from year to year and my management of the camp curriculum is going to be more consistent. When we made suggestions for changes during the summer, it was known that I would be working on them during the year. I also have full support of my director which helps. He has the vision and the passion - now he has an employee to do the ground work!	Programmers write programs. That's been consistent. I've done some more writing this summer, but I think there's always program director and faculty contributions.	No
URJ Greene Family Camp	We used to have this (12 years ago) and have brought it back as an elective with good success.	Yes - we now have a full time education director (as of 2008)	Changed from education staff to faculty to combo faculty/counselors/education staff	Faculty are much more involved.
URJ Camp Harlam	No	Assistant Director has more control now.	Assistant Director has more control now.	No
URJ Crane Lake Camp	no.	Yes. It was written by the Education Director and faculty. Now it is set by asst director.	Yes. It was written by the Education Director and faculty. Now it is set by asst director. Faculty adapts and improves the lessons we are given	No
URJ Eisner Camp	no.	Yes. It was written by the Education Director and faculty. Now it is set by asst director.	Yes. It was written by the Education Director and faculty. Now it is set by asst director.	No
Camp Daisy and Harry Stein (Formerly Camp Perstein)	No. We have never had Hebrew Instruction beyond B'nei Mitzvah tutoring.	Yes, the curriculum development process is very much a team effort between camp director, congregational rabbis, educator(s), and senior camp staff. In the past, curriculum development was done on the fly with guest educators, camp counselors, and camp leadership	Yes, when we changed the educational process overall to make it thematic and daily, the educator or educators would do most of the planning (and implementation) with only peripheral input from other camp staff. Now, writing the programs is a total team effort, including the educator(s), the leadership staff, and the congregational rabbis.	Yes, we have gone from totally counselor-run (15+ years ago) to educator-run to unit head/counselor-run.

Camp	Have there been changes in the use of a program bank?	Have there been changes in the recycling of programs over a cycle?	Does your camp have an educational plan of how it integrates Judaism into the specialty areas on camp?	Does your camp emphasize the use of Hebrew in the specialty areas?/Emphasize the choice of Jewish team names, etc?	Are there Jewish elements to your Color War/Maccabbia?
URJ OSRUI	No.	No	(Tiferet) - Art	Debatable	Yes, + Judaica Bowl
URJ GUCI	No. The program bank has been present for about 40 years. While it is available, it is not typically used by programmers.	No	No	Yes	There is always a Jewish study theme which goes along with this.
URJ Henry S. Jacobs Camp	?	?	Yes. There are Jewish specialty camps that make up URJ Jacobs.	Yes?	?
URJ 6 Points Academy	N/a	N/a	Yes. This is a Jewish specialty camp.	Depends on Coaches	Yes
Wilshire Boulevard Temple Camps	yes - cyclical	yes - cyclical	Yes- NEW - - Jewish content specialist- to work in our specialty areas – picked low-hanging fruit - specifically with Art, Dance, Wilderness, Ropes Course, Video Specialist, Gardening Specialist. Up the level of content that goes into those areas – seamlessly and authentically weave Jewish moments in the arts.	no.	Didn't discuss this.
URJ Camp Kalsman	No.	N/A	Working on this.	Didn't Discuss this.	Didn't discuss this.
URJ Camp George	The two-year cycle is new.	The two-year cycle is new.	There is a big push to integrate Israel education into the fabric of camp.	Didn't Discuss this.	There are Judaic themes, and are working to strengthen this.
URJ Camp Newman	?	?	It is currently creating a plan, and beginning to integrate.	?	?
URJ Camp Coleman	No	Not really, as far as I can tell. We have "classic" programs, but they're generally what we call "kef" programs, which means that they're fun but don't have much content.	Yes	No	Yes
URJ Greene Family Camp	No	We created a new curriculum that began in 2009. We are now thinking of moving to a new iteration - but still working on brainstorming its structure.	Yes	No	Yes
URJ Camp Harlam	Spiraling programming is new.	Spiraling programming is new.	Faculty are asked to be around and participate.	?	?
URJ Crane Lake Camp	No	We just recycled programs for the second time.	Different answers from different respondents	No	No
URJ Eisner Camp	No	We just recycled programs for the second time.	Kind-of.	No	?
Camp Daisy and Harry Stein (Formerly Camp Perstein)	No	No. We pretty much re-do the curriculum every year, using only bits and pieces from prior programs.	No	Yes	Only very minimal... Some Hebrew cheers, Team captains lead t'fillot in the spirit of Maccabia

Camp .	Which Model of Curriculum Integration Best Fits your Camp?	Respondants
URJ OSRUI	Jewish education happens in the Jewish education hour, t'fillah happens during the set t'fillah time, and we hope counselors will thread educational concepts or values through the various activities over the day/week/session. (i.e. through the delivery of Jewish Teachable Moments)	Based Primarily on Interviews with Michael Weinberg and Phyllis Sommer, Faculty
URJ GUCI	Jewish education happens in the Jewish education hour, t'fillah happens during the set t'fillah time, and we hope counselors will thread educational concepts or values through the various activities over the day/week/session. (i.e. through the delivery of Jewish Teachable Moments)	Ari Ballaban, Summer Director of Jewish Education
URJ Henry S. Jacobs Camp	Jewish education and/or t'fillah are facilitated by education specialists, who take time out of 'specialty' activities to have educational reflection/lessons.	Based Primarily on Interviews with Jonathan Cohen, Director and Andi Feldman, Summer Education Staff
URJ 6 Points Academy	Jewish education and/or t'fillah are fully integrated into the running of the 'specialty' areas, either through a single individual teaching both Judaism and the specialty area, or through having a Jewish educator and a specialist co-plan the session.	Various Articles and Conversations, including with Tina Hughes
Wilshire Boulevard Temple Camps	Camp is in transition. Currently: Jewish education happens in the Jewish education hour, t'fillah happens during the set t'fillah time, and we try to integrate Jewish values, rituals and traditions throughout the day. Moving to: Jewish education and/or t'fillah are facilitated by education specialists, who take time out of 'specialty' activities to have educational reflection/lessons... or ....Jewish education and/or t'fillah are fully integrated into the running of the 'specialty' areas, either through a single individual teaching both Judaism and the specialty area, or through having a Jewish educator and a specialist co-plan the session.	Based on Interview with Doug Lynn, Director
URJ Camp Kalsman	Camp is in transition. Currently: Jewish education happens in the Jewish education hour, t'fillah happens during the set t'fillah time, and we try to integrate Jewish values, rituals and traditions throughout the day. Moving to: Jewish education and/or t'fillah are facilitated by education specialists, who take time out of 'specialty' activities to have educational reflection/lessons... or ....Jewish education and/or t'fillah are fully integrated into the running of the 'specialty' areas, either through a single individual teaching both Judaism and the specialty area, or through having a Jewish educator and a specialist co-plan the session.	Based on Interview with David Berkman, Director
URJ Camp George	Jewish education happens in the Jewish education hour, t'fillah happens during the set t'fillah time, and we hope counselors will thread educational concepts or values through the various activities over the day/week/session. (i.e. through the delivery of Jewish Teachable Moments)	Based on Interview with Noam Katz, Dean of Jewish Living
URJ Camp Newman	Changing from Jewish education happens in the Jewish education hour, t'fillah happens during the set t'fillah time, and counselors are charged with linking the various activities over the day/week/session. (i.e. through Jewish Teachable Moments) to Jewish education and/or t'fillah are fully integrated into the running of the 'specialty' areas, either through a single individual teaching both Judaism and the specialty area, or through having a Jewish educator and a specialist co-plan the session.	Based on Interview with Erin Mason, Asst. Director
URJ Camp Coleman	Jewish education happens in the Jewish education hour, t'fillah happens during the set t'fillah time, and we hope counselors will thread educational concepts or values through the various activities over the day/week/session. (i.e. through the delivery of Jewish Teachable Moments)	Sara Beth Berman, Nadiv Educator
URJ Greene Family Camp	Jewish education happens in the Jewish education hour, t'fillah happens during the set t'fillah time, and we hope counselors will thread educational concepts or values through the various activities over the day/week/session. (i.e. through the delivery of Jewish Teachable Moments)	Ana Bonnheim, Asst. Director
URJ Camp Harlam	Jewish education happens in the Jewish education hour, t'fillah happens during the set t'fillah time, and we hope counselors will thread educational concepts or values through the various activities over the day/week/session. (i.e. through the delivery of Jewish Teachable Moments)	Based on Interview With Vicki Tuckman, Asst. Director
URJ Crane Lake Camp	Jewish education happens in the Jewish education hour, t'fillah happens during the set t'fillah time, and we try to integrate Jewish values, rituals and traditions throughout the day.	Lauren Chizner, Education Dirctor/Faculty and Sarah Lauing, Nadiv Educator
URJ Eisner Camp	Jewish education happens in the Jewish education hour, t'fillah happens during the set t'fillah time, and we try to integrate Jewish values, rituals and traditions throughout the day.	Based Primarily on Interview Laura Gurvis, Asst. Director
Camp Daisy and Harry Stein (Formerly Camp Perstein)	Jewish education happens in the Jewish education hour, t'fillah happens during the set t'fillah time, and we hope counselors will thread educational concepts or values through the various activities over the day/week/session. (i.e. through the delivery of Jewish Teachable Moments)	Jodi Woodnick, Director

Appendix B

Questions used in phone interviews and on an online questionnaire:

Phone Interview Questions:

1a) An overview of the history of education on URJ camps

- How is education currently run on your camp?
    - Who sets the curriculum?
    - Who writes the individual programs?
    - How are faculty used?
    - How are the madrichim used?
    - Is there a program bank?
        - Is this used?
        - Why or why not?
    - What are the main subject areas taught?

1b) Current practice in education programs on URJ camps

- In your personal experience, what changes have taken place in education at your camp?
    - Have there been changes in:
        - Who sets the curriculum?
        - Who writes the individual programs?
        - How faculty are used?
        - How the madrichim are used?
        - The material taught?
    - In what ways do you try to shape the 'un-programmed' time on camp?

2a) An overview of Jewish education at other Jewish 'educational' camps: BBYO, Young Judea, Netzer Olami, Ramah, Habo, etc..

- In your personal experience, what changes have taken place in education at your camp?
    - Have there been changes in:

        - Who sets the curriculum?
        - Who writes the individual programs?
        - How faculty are used?
        - How the madrichim are used?
        - The material taught?
    - In what ways do you try to shape the 'un-programmed' time on camp?

2b) Synthesis of the URJ and other camp models

- What current trends do you see in camp education?

3a) Current integrated curriculum run on our URJ camps

- How do you explicitly integrate Judaism into your camp culture?
    - Do you have any materials I can look at that address Judaism and your camp culture?
    - Do you have any 'best practices' in integrating Judaism into your camp culture?
        - Do you know of any other camps that do have a 'best practice?'
- How do you explicitly integrate Judaism into 'behavior modification' or 'discipline' on camp?
    - Do you have any materials I can look at that discuss Judaism and behavior modification at your camp?
    - Do you have any 'best practices' in integrating Judaism into behavior modification at your camp?
        - Do you know of any other camps that do have a 'best practice'?
- How do you explicitly integrate Judaism into the 'specialty' or 'general camp' areas of your summer camp?
    - Do you have any materials I can look at or programs previously written that attempt to integrate Judaism into areas other than the 'limmud' or 'shiur' program?
        - Do you know of any other camps that do have a 'best practice'?

4) The challenges in implementing these models.

- What do you think the major challenges are to implementing a more explicitly Jewish camp culture at your camp?
- What do you think the major challenges are to implementing a more explicitly Jewish system of behavior modification at your camp?
- What do you think the major challenges are to integrating Jewish content into the specialty areas on your camp?

5) <u>The opportunities which currently exist in our camps that could assist in the implementation of these programs.</u>

- What would be your first steps in creating a more explicitly Jewish camp culture at your camp?
    - What long-term opportunities do you think are our there to assist you in this?
- What would be your first steps in creating a more explicitly Jewish system of behavior modification at your camp?
    - What long-term opportunities do you think are out there to assist you in this?
- What would be your first steps in integrating Jewish content into the specialty areas on your camp?
    - What long-term opportunities do you think are out there to assist you?

Online Questionnaire:

Dear URJ Camp Educator's Cohort-

I'm working on my rabbinic thesis on how Judaism is integrated into camp, specifically focusing on how Judaism can best be integrated into the specialty areas on our URJ camps. The main reason I chose this topic was to be helpful to you and to future camp educators.

Below is a survey that will help me (and camp educators in the future) with a snapshot of how education is currently run at your camp. I would GREATLY appreciate you taking the time (5-20 minutes, depending on how long you want to spend) filling this out.

I have talked with many of you over the phone. If we spoke, and any question seems repetitive, please feel free to skip it – I already have your answer recorded.

Thank you so much for your help! If you have any questions, please feel free to e-mail me or call me.

I know the check-boxes don't always work. Please just **bold** your answer.

L'shalom-

Jordan Helfman

Student Rabbi, HUC-JIR Cincinnati

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URJ Camps Education and Curriculum Integration Survey

Personal details.

Name:

Camp:

Tafkid (Position on Camp):

Preferred way to be contacted for possibly follow-up questions:

Overview of Jewish Education on Camp:

Do you have a daily Limmud/Mashehu/ Shiur/Chinuch (or otherwise named) hour for dedicated Jewish education?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you have a separate hour for Hebrew instruction most days?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Who sets the curriculum? (feel free to select more than one)

☐ Faculty ☐ Education Director ☐ Camp Director

☐ CCAR Representative ☐ Madrichim/Counselors

☐ Mumchim/Education Specialists

Other:

Who writes the individual programs? (feel free to select more than one)

☐ Faculty ☐ Education Director ☐ Camp Director

☐ CCAR Representative ☐ Madrichim/Counselors

☐ Mumchim/Education Specialists

Other:

Who primarily delivers the actual educational programs?

☐ Faculty and/or the senior staff run the entire program, with counselors sitting in groups and participating, but not running the program.

☐ Faculty and/or the senior staff generally start and end the program, with counselors in-charge of break-out groups or stations depending on the activity.

☐ Counselors write the program with the assistance of Faculty/senior staff, and run it mainly by themselves, with some faculty input when they need help.

☐ Limmud/Mashehu/Shiur Specialists run the programs.

☐ The Eydah tzevet (unit team) runs the programs.

Other:

Do you have a program bank?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Are programs recycled in their entirety?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Is this done over some sort of a planned cycle? (Feel free to check ‘yes’ even if you just aspire to have such a cycle)

☐ Yes ☐ No

Changes Since You've Been At Your Camp:

Have any of the above items changed since your involvement in camp? If so… how? (If this is too long to type, please feel free to set up a time to call me, and I'll record your answers…)

Have there been changes in that fact that there is/isn't:

A daily Limmud/Mashehu/ Chinuch (or otherwise named) hour for dedicated Jewish education?

A separate hour for Hebrew instruction every day?

In who sets the curriculum?

In who writes the individual programs?

In who primarily runs the program?

In the use of a program bank?

In the recycling of programs over a cycle?

Curriculum Integration:

Do you have an educational plan of how your integrate Judaism into the specialty areas on camp?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you emphasize the use of Hebrew in the specialty areas?/Emphasize the choosing of Jewish team names, etc?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Are there Jewish elements to your Color War/Maccabbia?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Examples?:

Which Model of Curriculum Integration Best Fits your Camp?

☐ Jewish education happens in the Jewish education hour, t'fillah happens during the set t'fillah time, and we try to integrate Jewish values, rituals and traditions throughout the day.

☐ Jewish education happens in the Jewish education hour, t'fillah happens during the set t'fillah time, and counselors are charged with linking the various activities over the day/week/session. (i.e. through Jewish Teachable Moments)

☐ Jewish education happens in the Jewish education hour, t'fillah happens during the set t'fillah time, and we have a theme which links the various activities over the day/week/session.

☐ Jewish education and/or t'fillah are facilitated by education specialists, who take time out of 'specialty' activities to have educational reflection/lessons.

☐ Jewish education and/or t'fillah are fully integrated into the running of the 'specialty' areas, either through a single individual teaching both Judaism and the specialty area, or through having a Jewish educator and a specialist co-plan the session.

Other:

Are there programs/ rituals/ideas that you are particularly proud of from your camp that integrate Judaism into the camp culture or into a specialty area?

Do you/does your camp have any special ways of integrating Judaism and behavior management (aka discipline) together?

Challenges/Opportunities:

What are the major challenges you see to further integrating Judaism into the fabric of your camp (or into the specialty areas)?

What are the major opportunities?

Follow-up/Resources:

Do you think it would be helpful for me if we set up an interview to further discuss education at your camp?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ We already talked!!!

Are there any resources that you have on curriculum integration, or anything else above, that you think would be useful, and you would be willing to share with me?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Thank-you so much for taking your time to complete this survey!!!! - Jordan

Appendix C

I would like to say a big 'Thank You' to all of these individuals, who gave of their time to make this thesis possible.

Individuals Interviewed between 1 March and 29 Nov. 2012

- Rabbi Ami Hersh, Assistant Director, Ramah Nyack
- Student Rabbi Andi Feldman, Education Team, URJ Jacobs Camp
- Rabbi Avi Orlow, Education Director, Foundation for Jewish Camp
- Beth Avner, Education Director, North American Federation of Temple Youth
- Brad Finkel, Assistant Director, JCC Camp Chi
- Chazzan Danny Maseng, Former Co-Director, Tiferet, URJ OSRUI
- David Berkman, Director, URJ Kalsman
- Debbie Massarano, Former Education Director, URJ Greene
- Doug Lynn, Director, Wilshire Boulevard Camps
- Rabbi Ellen Nemhauser, Outgoing Education Director, URJ Coleman
- Rabbi Erin Mason, Assistant Director, URJ Newman
- Student Rabbi Jimmy Stoloff, Former Education Team, URJ Jacobs Camp
- Jeffery Kress, Associate Professor of Jewish Education and Academic Director of the Experiential Learning Initiative, Jewish Theological Seminary.
- Jonathan Cohen, Director, URJ Jacobs
- Laura Gurvis, Assistant Director, URJ Eisner and Crane Lake Camps
- Lauren Chizner, Limmud Director and Former Faculty Member, URJ Crane Lake Camp
- Rabbi Mark Covitz, Director, URJ GUCI
- Rabbi Michael Weinberg, Faculty (Chalutzim), URJ OSRUI
- Michael Lorge, Faculty, URJ OSRUI
- Michelle Shapiro Abraham, Educational Consultant to URJ Camps
- Mike Fuld, Assistant Director, URJ Kutz
- Rabbi Misha Zinkow, Former Director, URJ Swig

- Naomi Less, Educator, Foundation for Jewish Camp
- Rabbi Noam Katz, Dean of Jewish Living, URJ George
- Rabbi Phyllis Sommer, Faculty, URJ OSRUI
- Rabbi Ramie Arian, Former Director, Foundation for Jewish Camp and Young Judea
- Rabbi Ron Klotz, Former Director, URJ GUCI
- Ross Glinckenhouse, Staff, URJ Crane Lake Camp and Founding Member of the Reform Youth Professionals Association
- Sara Beth Berman, Nadiv Educator and Program Fellow, URJ Camp Coleman
- Rabbi Steven "Simcha" Bob, Faculty (Chalutzim), URJ OSRUI
- Student Rabbi Tina Hughes, Coach and Educator, URJ 6 Points
- Rabbi Vicki Tuckman, Assistant Director, URJ Harlam
- Zoey Green, Merakezet Chinuch, Habonim Dror North America

Respondents to Online Questionnaire

- Student Rabbi Ari Ballaban, Former Director of Jewish Education, URJ GUCI
- Sarah Lauing, Nadiv Educator, Director of Jewish Life, URJ Crane Lake Camp
- Lauren Chizner, Limmud Director, URJ Crane Lake Camp
- Rabbi Ana Bonnheim, Associate Director, URJ Greene Family Camp
- Sara Beth Berman, Nadiv Educator and Program Fellow, URJ Camp Coleman
- Jodi Woodnick, Director, Camp Daisy and Harry Stein (formerly Camp Pearlstein)

Provided Other Information and Help

- Lisa David, Associate Director of Camping, URJ
- Rabbis Dan and Lydia Medwin, Former Education Team, URJ Jacobs

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