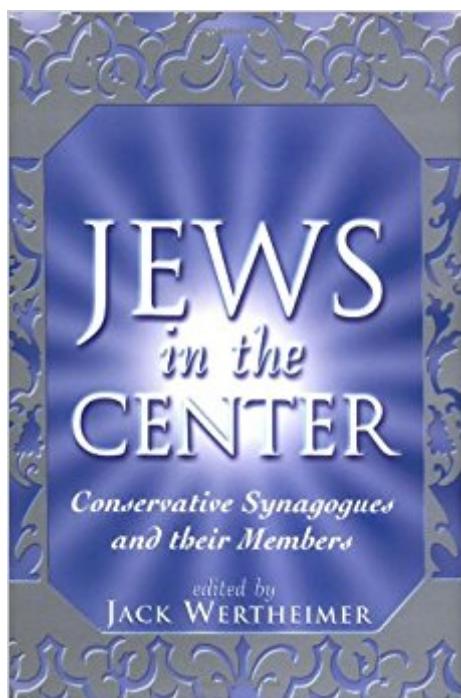


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Jews In The Center: Conservative Synagogues And Their Members



Synopsis

This study of Conservative American Jews examines the largest movement of synagogue-affiliated Jews in the US, a group that outnumbers the combined membership of Reform and Orthodox congregations and a population that adheres to a centrist version of Judaism.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Why do some solidly second- and third-generation American Jews join Conservative Jewish congregations, even as others assimilate and intermarry? Wertheimer (American Jewish history, Jewish Theological Seminary of America; *A People Divided: Judaism in Contemporary America*) has brought together a distinguished team of scholars to examine this question from the various perspectives provided by demography, ethnography, sociology, history, and comparative religious studies. This study provides insight into the mainstream of contemporary American Jewish religious life, showing why people choose to be Conservative Jews, how they become involved in congregational life, and how this involvement helps them maintain a balance between the uniqueness of Jewish religious life and the demands of contemporary American culture. Essential for all sociology and religion collections. D. Olga B. Wise, Compaq Computer Corp., Austin Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Conservative Judaism represents one of the distinctively American variants of Judaism, not fully orthodox, and yet not verging on secularism as Reform Judaism or an ethno-cultural definition of

Judaism does. Centered on the congregation as the central institution of faith, conservative Judaism is an adaptation to American religious life. This fascinating collection captures the tensions inherent in being Jewish in modern America, where Jews remain a distinctive religious and ethnic group.

"Jews in the Center" includes sociological and religious descriptions Conservative congregations, as well as more philosophical discussions of the nature of modern Judaism. The most interesting section of the book consists of Conservative Jews talking about their religious lives. The book repeatedly returns to the theme of commitment: the extent to which practicing Jews must dedicate themselves to their faith, and the cycles they go through at different points in life. (Beliefnet, July 2000) -- From Beliefnet

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