JEWISH WOMEN REFORMERS AND JEWISH IMMIGRANT WOMEN:
THE COLUMBIAN COUNCIL OF PITTSBURGH, 1893-1920

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INTRODUCTION

I began this project with an interest in Jewish immigrant women's adjustment to American life. I first examined general patterns of immigration to the United States in the nineteenth century, to determine how Jewish immigration fit into the patterns and specifically, the role of Jewish women in Jewish immigration. I also sought to discover how Jews differed from other immigrant groups, and how these differences affected the establishment of Jewish communities in America.

Immigration to the United States in the nineteenth century falls into two categories: from approximately 1840 to 1880, immigrants came mostly from northern, western and central Europe; after 1880, eastern Europe was the source of what was called the "new immigration." Immigration began to rise significantly in the 1830's; the rate of immigration increased throughout the nineteenth century, due to the expansion of European population and the dislocations brought on by economic modernization, and the demand for manual labor which U.S. industrialization created.¹ Before 1880, immigration from northwestern Europe-- Ireland, Great Britain, Germany and the Netherlands-- accounted for two-thirds of total immigration;² by 1880, the source of immigration had shifted to the southern and eastern countries-- Italy, Russia, Poland, Austria-Hungary, and the Balkans. The shift in the source of immigration most likely occurred because economic development, accompanied by population growth, began in the northwest and spread across Europe.³ Localized catastrophic events-- crop failure, famine, pogroms-- often set off migration from specific countries.
Although immigration has been seen as a movement of dislocated peasants, about half of the immigrants reporting occupations upon arrival in America between 1851 and 1917 came under the category of unskilled general labor and domestic service. These workers sought economic betterment; expanding American business and industry offered them opportunities, and until the 1890's, encouraged immigration to fill the many jobs available. Immigrants tended to settle in cities, attracted by the availability of jobs which urban and industrial expansion produced; moreover, cities corresponded to major ports of arrival from abroad.

The urban concentration of immigrants, especially in the period from 1880 until World War I, heightened the problem of assimilation, as various groups came into close contact in the cities. The influx of foreigners into cities set off fears within American middle-class society; perceiving foreigners as unskilled, illiterate and inherently immoral, native Americans felt that immigrants threatened the prevailing social order. The progressive reformers of the late nineteenth century, aware of the slums, saloons, prostitution, gambling and other vices which they associated with the immigrants' moral deficiency, sought to reform these conditions as a means of social control and preservation of the social order.

Jacob Riis, a Danish immigrant who became a New York City police reporter, exposed New York slum conditions in How the Other Half Lives; his observations, typical of the times, offer stereotypes characterizing ethnic groups. Riis called for the total assimilation of the foreign-born population. In his view, slum conditions would not be changed until the immigrants became Americanized; while he proposed reforms,
his conviction that immigrants were morally degenerate made clear his belief that efforts to alter the environment could affect only the surface of the problem. Education of the poor and the foreign-born in order to inculcate morality was the solution which Riis advocated. 9

Morality was the basis for much reform activity; Richard Hofstadter saw progressive reform as a middle-class movement stemming from the Protestant ethic of personal moral responsibility. 10 In this period of urban expansion, rural Americans who moved to cities were first "confronted with the phenomena of urban life, its crowding, poverty, crime, corruption, impersonality, and ethnic chaos." 11 According to Hofstadter, natives felt that the most objectionable characteristic of the new immigrants was the ease with which they became part of political machines; this political corruption conflicted with the native American faith in each citizen's responsibility to make government "in good part an effort to moralize the lives of individuals." 12 According to Hofstadter, efforts to eradicate urban corruption arose from a sense of moral indignation on the part of the native American middle class, efforts which, despite their success at effecting legislative changes, assuaged the reformers' guilt more than they accomplished actual reforms.

In Urban Masses and Moral Order in America, Paul Boyer explains the moral motivation of the reformers and the various approaches they took. Bewildered by the transition from the rural village to the city, reformers hoped to institute a "general standard of right conduct upon which an enduring moral order could be built." 13 Reform efforts in the 1870's and
1880's aimed to change the moral character of individuals, for early reformers believed that moral deficiency among the poor caused the vices of the city. In the late 1880's, reformers, responsive to new ideas, began to advocate environmental rather than individualistic change as the basis for reform. From the wave of reform impulses that swept middle-class America in the 1890's, two distinct but often overlapping approaches to reform emerged: The coercive, which tried to eradicate vice and impose a higher moral standard; and the environmentalist, which attempted to reshape the physical environment of the city "as a means of elevating its moral tone." Advocates of the environmentalist approach tried to see the good points as well as the failures of the poor, and worked for positive reforms, such as parks, playgrounds, public baths, and cultural facilities; yet, according to Boyer, the moral reform aspect remained their dominant consideration.

The moral reform movements included middle-class women as well as men. In the charity reform organizations of the 1870's, women served as "friendly visitors" who went to the homes of the poor to establish cross-class ties; they used these friendships to transform the moral character of the poor. The social settlement movement involved many educated middle-class women who desired to utilize their education to fulfill their sense of moral responsibility to society. Jane Addams, founder of the Hull House Settlement in Chicago, experienced this sense of uselessness and articulated the need to translate personal responsibility into social action:
It is true that there is nothing after disease, indigence and a sense of guilt, so fatal to health and to life itself as the want of a proper outlet for active faculties. I have seen young girls suffer and grow sensibly lowered in vitality in the first years after they leave school...There is a heritage of noble obligation which young people accept and long to perpetuate. The desire for action, the wish to right wrong and alleviate suffering, haunts them daily. 19

The prevailing ideal of womanhood attributed to women a superior moral nature; reform work was thus an acceptable outlet for these women, as it was an extension of their role as upholder of purity and morality in the home. While women's participation in reform movements did not change their traditional roles, reform work enabled them to leave their homes and engage in public activity. Jill Conway argues that the settlement movement was a social cure for the neuroses of middle-class women. 20 Women, however, were able not only "to create the very institutions which were their vehicle for departure from middle-class feminine life," 21 but also through these institutions to have some impact on social conditions.

These two concerns--the American response to the new immigration and the special roles of women in providing services for immigrants--frame my study of Jewish women and their participation in American Jewish communities. Jewish immigration followed the general trend; before 1880, Jewish immigrants came mostly from Germany, and after 1880, the source of Jewish immigration shifted to eastern Europe. The tension between old and now Jewish immigrants echoed the uneasy relationship between the American middle class, into which many of the earlier German Jews had been absorbed, and urban immi-
grants. Within Jewish communities, however, despite the different extent to which the two groups each maintained their cultural and religious identity, the common Jewish identity mitigated middle-class fears and immigrants' alienation. Jewish women, like other middle-class women, participated in reform organizations, mostly within the Jewish community; out of these efforts grew their concern for the adaptation of Jewish women of the new immigration to urban American life. For one of the major Jewish women's organizations, the National Council of Jewish Women, immigrant women's adaptation became a primary goal. Literacy was a basic need for successful adaptation. Educational programs became a priority for the NCJW, and the demand for these programs and the degree to which they accomplished their goals provide a measure of the effectiveness of reform efforts and the extent of cooperation between the NCJW and immigrant women. Thus, I have focused on the provisions which the NCJW made for women's acquisition of literacy in English.

I further narrowed my study to the Pittsburgh Jewish community. Here the efforts of the local Pittsburgh chapter of the NCJW, the Columbian Council, on behalf of a tiny but concentrated proportion of the city's population were the basis for educational innovation for the entire city. Through my examination of the Jewish population in Pittsburgh, I became aware of three basic issues: 1) the real and pressing need of immigrant women for literacy in English; 2) the question of who was responsible for meeting this need; 3) and finally, the
relatively successful interaction between middle-class Jewish reformers and immigrant women. The women of the Columbian Council recognized the difficulty in meeting the needs of immigrant women for literacy, as these needs varied according to the factors of age, marital status and tradition. Despite this difficulty, the Council assumed the responsibility for educating adult immigrant women, and at the same time, pressured public schools to expand to encompass those who were outside their current scope. Moreover, the Columbian Council's identification of and responsiveness to the real needs of its constituency and its willingness to institute or adapt its programs accordingly, enabled Jewish women reformers to have a real positive impact, both within the Jewish community and in the city as a whole.

... 

In order to appreciate the accomplishments of the Columbian Council, it is necessary first to establish the contours of the culture in which they worked. Relationships within the Jewish communities in America were colored by the differences between German and eastern European Jews. German Jews, who emigrated before 1880, were usually middle or upper-class, educated, and religiously progressive, and desired to become assimilated into Western culture. Reform Jews who settled in America were able to adapt quickly to American life; most of them were small-scale merchants, eager to make a decent living and become respected American citizens. They established businesses and synagogues in American cities and towns and endeavored to become part of the communi-
ties in which they lived. When the new immigration began in the 1880's, newly-established German Jews felt threatened by the influx of mostly Orthodox Jews from eastern Europe. German Jews initially viewed their co-religionists as backward, and feared that the new immigrants would impede their ascent to wealth and power.

Jewish communities had traditionally taken care of their own; by the 1890's, American Jewish communities had established the organizational resources to aid eastern European immigrants, and their attitude toward the new immigrants became more welcoming.

Eastern European Jews emigrating to the United States after 1880 came primarily from Russia. Lack of economic opportunity and intensification of repression and pogroms against Jews motivated mass emigration. Because of their repression and confinement to the Russian Pale of Settlement, these Jews, in contrast to German Jews, retained more strongly their Jewish cultural identity and traditional religious observances; for most of these Jews, Yiddish rather than Russian was the language spoken in the home. Within the Pale, Jews were concentrated in cities; unlike other immigrant groups, they were familiar with urban industrial life. Jewish immigration from eastern Europe contained a high proportion of family groups; the family orientation meant that the number of women and children was much higher among Jewish immigrants than among other immigrant groups. Women comprised 44% of Russian Jewish immigration, and children under 14, 24.43. Jewish immigrants generally intended to make
America their permanent home.

Jewish immigrants tended to be more literate than other immigrant groups. The literacy rate for men was approximately double the literacy rate for women, due largely to Jewish tradition and to educational conditions in Eastern Europe; while these rates account for literacy in any language, Jews tended to be literate in Yiddish. As Jews were almost completely excluded from state secular schools, education was predominantly religious; in Orthodox Judaism, however, religious learning was accessible only to men, while women were taught only enough to keep proper Jewish homes. Secular education, however, was slightly more accessible to women; government schools applied restrictions on admittance of Jews more rigorously to boys than to girls, and parents often hired tutors to instruct their daughters at home.

Educational patterns for eastern European Jews necessarily influenced their adjustment to American life; differences in the education which Jewish men and women received affected the distinctive adaptation of Jewish women in America. The key to this adaptation--attaining basic literacy in English--is the focal point of my study, for on this issue, the desire of Jewish women for education and the goals of Jewish women reformers converged.

Jewish women reformers, like other middle-class women, were expected to conform to American ideals of womanhood. While these women benefitted from Reform Judaism's attempts to accord women more equal treatment
in the synagogue as part of the modernization of religious observance, women were still given sole responsibility for the care of the home and the family. "Philanthropic concern, particularly on a personal level, was considered one of the few activities that might legitimately draw a middle-class woman--a lady--from her home. Charity was considered an extension of the home and family obligations that women bore."31 Jewish women had traditionally participated in synagogue and communal women's philanthropic societies; in America, Reform Jewish women were able to create their own organizations.

In the last two decades of the nineteenth century, middle-class American women were organizing women's clubs which had both social and civic functions. Jewish women, usually excluded from these clubs, began to form their own. From this movement came the National Council of Jewish Women, and ultimately, the Columbian Council of Pittsburgh. The moving force in these endeavors was Hannah Greenebaum Solomon, one of the few middle-class Jewish women included in the membership of the largely Protestant women's club movement. In 1877, she and her sister, Henriette, were the first Jews invited to join the newly-founded Chicago Woman's Club.32 Eighteen-year-old Hannah was aware that this was a departure from the prescribed forms of women's activities outside the home: "To join an organization of 'women'--not 'ladies'--and one which bore the title 'club', rather than 'society', was in itself a radical step, but my parents
approved, for they wholeheartedly endorsed its educational value." 33

Hannah Solomon's participation in the Chicago Woman's Club gave her the resources and organizational experience to found the National Council of Jewish Women. The Chicago Woman's Club was responsible for organizing women's congresses held at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893; at these meetings, Hannah Solomon was made representative of the Jewish women. Believing that Jewish women's participation should take place in a religious context, she organized the Jewish Women's Congress within the Exposition's Parliament of Religions. The goal of the Congress was "to present subjects relating to the Jewish woman, to Jewish problems and the Jewish woman's part in their solution." 34 The Congress was a success, and fulfilled Hannah Solomon's intent to establish a permanent Jewish women's organization, called the National Council of Jewish Women. The Council issued the following statement of purpose:

Resolved, that the National Council of Jewish Women shall 1) seek to unite in closer relation women interested in the work of Religion, Philanthropy and Education and shall consider practical means of solving problems in these fields; shall 2) organize and encourage the study of the underlying principles of Judaism; the history, literature and customs of the Jews, and their bearing on their own and the world's history; shall 3) apply knowledge gained in this work of social reform; shall 4) secure the interest and aid of influential persons, wherever and whenever and against whomever shown, and in finding means to prevent such persecutions. 35

The formation of the National Council of Jewish Women occurred as Jewish immigration from Eastern Europe intensified; the work of social reform among Jewish immigrants
became an increasingly important goal of the Council. The religious bond between German and Eastern European Jews distinguished the work of the NCJW from the efforts of other reform organizations; despite the tension created by cultural and religious differences between Reform German Jews and Orthodox Eastern European Jews, the Jewish identity which they held in common seemed to have precluded social control as the Council's motivation for reform.

In 1893, Pauline Hanauer Rosenberg, the Pittsburgh delegate to the Women's Congress of the Parliament of Religions, returned home to found the local section of the NCJW:

In response to a call issued by Mrs. Hugo (Pauline) Rosenberg, the Jewish women of Pittsburgh and Allegheny (City) convened and organized the local branch of the 'National Council of Jewish Women', to be known as the 'Columbian Council'.

As its first project, the Columbian Council, in cooperation with the Pittsburgh and Allegheny Free Kindergarten Association, raised money for Pittsburgh's first free kindergarten. Although the Kindergarten Association administered the kindergarten, which was open to the entire community, it was named the Columbian Kindergarten in recognition of the Council's dedicated efforts. Early work of the Council also included study circles and lectures, and while there was little interest in study circles, lectures were successful, "and often attended by immigrants who had acquired enough English to understand them."
The composition of the Columbian Council was a factor in the success or failure of these early programs. In Pittsburgh, German and eastern European Jews were less markedly divided than they were in other cities; consequently, the Council was not as dominated by the German Reform elements, as the National Council was. In Pittsburgh, the Columbian Council included both Reform and Conservative women of German background, as well as a small number of recently-arrived eastern Europeans. While the Columbian Council remained primarily Reform in its outlook, the diversity within it forced German Jewish women continually to reexamine their assumptions about the new Jewish community which immigration was creating.

As early as 1880, the Jewish community of Pittsburgh contained 2000 Jews, the majority having come from eastern Europe; by 1889, the Jewish population had doubled, and in 1897 stood at 10,000 Jews in Allegheny county. Jews comprised approximately 1.5% of Pittsburgh's total population in 1890, a proportion which remained fairly constant through the next two decades despite the significant increase in Jewish immigration to Pittsburgh. Although the Jewish population was small, the Jewish community of Pittsburgh maintained a strong identity, for it was concentrated in one section, the Hill District, near the center of the city. Here, Jews were the largest ethnic group; a study of two Hill District blocks done for the Pittsburgh Survey in 1908 found that of 1080 residents, 870 were Jewish. The sense of identity within the Jewish community resulted in the belief of Pittsburgh's Jews in the need to aid newcomers and to
integrate them into the community.

Within this context, Pittsburgh's Jewish community in the 1880's and early 1890's developed philanthropic and educational resources to serve the immediate needs of new immigrants. The Columbian Council, one of the leading philanthropic organizations in the Pittsburgh Jewish community, focused on serving immigrants' immediate need for elementary education; as an organization of Jewish women, the Council was especially aware of the educational needs of immigrant women. The double bond of sex and ethnicity made the work of the Council productive for both groups of women. Because of the organic relationship between the Council and the community it served, as the Jewish community grew, the Council expanded as well. The following chapters discuss the development of the Council's educational programs and its increasing focus on the needs of immigrant women.

Chapter 1 examines the early educational efforts of the Columbian Council from 1893 to 1906. The Council initially responded to the needs of the greatly increasing Jewish immigrant population by providing evening classes in elementary English. In these years, the Council began a long-term cooperative relationship with the neighborhood public schools, which resulted in the Council's convincing the schools of their responsibility to educate new members of the community. The year 1906 marks a turning point, when public schools took over the Council School's classes for adult immigrants. This led to a significant change in the emphasis of Council activities;
Chapter 2 begins in 1906, with the Columbian Council School's transition from School to Settlement. From 1906 to 1909, the Columbian Council broadened its view of adult education, and developed specialized work for immigrant women. The third chapter begins in 1909, when the Columbian Settlement became the Irene Kaufmann Settlement, to which the Council was no longer directly connected. From 1909 to 1919, the Council, the Settlement and the public schools worked independently but cooperatively toward expanding educational programs to include the diverse needs of the immigrant population. As other institutions assumed the various educational functions which the Council had begun, the Council was able to work for immigrant mothers, the segment of its target population for whom existing educational programs were least accessible.

From 1893 to 1919, the Council's educational work narrowed in scope, but increased in depth; although it was aiding fewer immigrants, its efforts to integrate women into the community were more comprehensive than they had been at the Council's inception. The Columbian Council's identification with the Jewish community and its commitment to helping women to participate fully in that community disproves the idea that social control was the motive for the work of the Columbian Council of Pittsburgh in this period.
CHAPTER 1

EDUCATIONAL INNOVATION, 1893-1906: THE COLUMBIAN COUNCIL SCHOOL

In the first few years of the Columbian Council's existence, before it had established itself securely enough to survey the real needs of the Jewish community, the Council adhered closely to the guidelines of the National Council of Jewish Women. In line with the prescribed programs of the NCJW, the first major educational program which the Columbian Council sponsored was the Religious Mission School, begun in 1896. Although it was called a religious institution, Pittsburgh's Mission School emphasized ethical Judaism, in accordance with the Reform leanings of the Columbian Council. Its training in assimilationist values was part of the NCJW's campaign "to exterminate the Cheder, or purely Hebrew school, which is unAmerican, unprogressive, and unethical in its influence."¹ The Columbian Council Mission School successfully incorporated Americanization in its course of instruction, with the result that "all the pupils seem to have discovered that Americanism must go hand in hand with Judaism."² The Reform nature of the School stirred controversy in the Jewish community; but Jewish women's attack on the cheder, an exclusively male bastion of Jewish learning, provided the opportunity for Jewish girls as well as boys to receive religious education in
the same classroom. The instruction in this classroom, which combined secular and religious values, helped to blur the rigid gender distinctions of traditional Jewish education.

Controversy arose over the Mission School's name, as well as its Reform and assimilationist stance. Some Jews objected to the use of the word "mission" by a Jewish institution; they felt that "mission" had an obviously Christian connotation, which confused Jews about the School's religious affiliation. The Council responded to this criticism late in 1896 by dropping the word "Mission" from its name; thus, it became the the Columbian School. The School enrolled 150 pupils in 1896, presumably the children of poor Jewish immigrants, and was conducted by volunteers. The continuing growth in enrollment led to an offer from Rodef Shalom Congregation, the leading Reform congregation in the city, for use of its rooms, which the School accepted as a temporary arrangement.

The women of the Columbian Council planned to expand the School; in 1897, Cassie Ritter Weil began to look for a suitable location for a settlement house. The settlement house format was introduced in two rooms of a Townsend Street house which the Council rented; here they continued the Columbian School and started kindergartens and sewing classes for boys and girls. When the Council took over the entire house in 1898, the settlement house stayed open all day and in the evenings as its expanded activities gained popularity.
One of the new activities which expansion made possible was the library, begun and catalogued at the Columbian Council School in 1898. The School's library possessed 100 children's books, and kept 500 books in a reading room which was open daily. In response to pressure from the Council, the Wylie Avenue Branch of the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh opened in 1899. Its circulation of 44,511 books to 122,730 people in its first six months of service proved that the Council had correctly assessed the needs of the community, needs which the limited resources of the Columbian Council School were unable to fulfill.

The success of the Wylie Avenue Library showed the interest of the community in education; this interest prompted further expansion of the Council's concern with educating adults. Although the Council was reaching a few women in their homes through individual tutoring and aiding other adults who came to use the reading room, these individual efforts were not enough. The Council's Personal Service work revealed that most immigrants could not speak or understand English; clearly, the most glaring need of the immigrant community, the majority of which was over the compulsory school age, was for instruction in beginning English. Thus, in the fall of 1899 the Columbian Council School began elementary evening classes, mainly for workers "who have not had an opportunity of educating themselves in the elementary branches." More than a hundred people appeared the first night of classes. The School offered instruction
in English, history, literature, arithmetic, penmanship, shorthand and typing. Volunteers, mostly members of the Council or the daughters and friends of Council members, taught all these classes.

The night school continued to expand in both enrollment and curriculum; attendance grew to 216 men and women in the School's second year. Beginning classes studied rudimentary English from Harper's *First Reader* and Badland's *First Lessons in Language*; after two months, students moved on to smaller classes of twenty with texts which included simplified histories of Russia and the United States, a simplified English translation of the Old Testament, Sadlier's *Heroes of History*, and basic reading and spelling books. At the end of four months in the second class, pupils progressed to studies of grammar, composition and geography. These texts were the same ones used by children in elementary schools; elementary texts for adults had not yet been developed. Adults often found it difficult to identify with these texts, which did not address their experience. For example, *Harper's First Reader*, published in 1888, contains stories of children and animals playing games, as this representative lesson shows:

How fast the boy runs with the sled!
This is sport for the boy.
It is sport for the dog.
You can see that it is.
What do you think is the dog's name?
I will tell you. It is Sport.
Is not that a good name for him?
I think it is.
The boy has his book with him.
He has the book in his hand.
He likes to run and play with Sport.
Despite the inappropriateness of the available texts, the night school succeeded in teaching English to adults, maintained a regular attendance rate, and continued to attract new students.

When the Columbian Council School had been operating for four years, it was incorporated in 1900. At the same time the Council purchased a house at 1835 Centre Avenue, combining there its activities of both school and settlement. With more space available, the Council was able to expand its work to reach more of the community:

The very practical English, Bookkeeping, sewing, embroidery, kitchen garden classes, and the public baths were but entering wedges to the Girls' and Boys' and, better than all else, Mothers' Clubs, which soon became factors for untold good in the School neighborhood.\(^{18}\)

The School added classes in stenography, basketry, cooking, dancing and gymnastics. School workers encouraged night school students to participate in clubs as a means of Americanization. By the fall of 1901, the School's average monthly class attendance was 935; the staff included a few trained workers along with 58 volunteers\(^{19}\), "who brought a beautiful spirit of community service and responsibility to the School."\(^{20}\)

In the next year, the School boasted an enrollment of 1412 in classes and clubs, with an average monthly attendance of 1884.\(^{21}\)

The night school filled a pressing need of the immigrant community; it offered the only free classes in English in the city open the entire year. But classroom instruction was only part of the School's
comprehensive approach to: "the advancement of the civic, intellectual and social welfare of the surrounding community," which the School sought to achieve by "guiding the foreign-born to American conditions, encouraging self-improvement, stimulating healthy pleasures, broadening civic interests, and creating ideals of conduct."  

The School maintained its reading room, which was open daily from 8:30 a.m. to 10 p.m.; the reading room was "equipped with current magazines and papers, several hundred volumes, also a reference library, and over 200 books of the Carnegie School Duplicate Library, which give the foreigner his first steps in the habit of reading literature." 

As Roumanian oppression of Jews heightened and Russian pogroms intensified after 1903, immigration increased and the need for the Council's English classes grew. During the 1904-1905 school year, demand was so great that the school had space for only half the students who wanted to enter its classes. The average enrollment was 575 per month and 100 attended summer classes nightly. The neighborhood's Franklin School granted the School the use of a room for its beginning English class, and in 1905, a second room at Franklin School was operating as well. Even before a third class at Franklin School had begun, Columbian School workers and Council members were pressuring the public schools to take over the elementary education work for adults.

In 1906, demand for the Council's English classes intensified; as Addie Weihl, head resident of the
Columbian School, reported:

Our English classes, on account of the increased immigration, grew to such proportions that even with three classes at the Franklin School and three in our building, we had to turn about 60 away on the 1st of November, all begging to be taken in.25

Recognizing that it lacked the facilities to fulfill the demands of new immigrants for English classes, the Council "in desperation... appealed once again"26 to public officials to implement a night school program for the neighborhood. Because the workers of the Columbian School had already established a cooperative relationship with the neighborhood schools, as shown by the willingness of Franklin School officials to let the School use its rooms, this desperate appeal was finally successful. On November 19, 1906, Franklin School started night school classes in elementary subjects, retaining the teachers of the Columbian School "on account of their knowledge of Yiddish."27 These were the first public night school classes in the city; that they began before Pennsylvania passed a bill in 1907 permitting the establishment of schools for "adults, including foreigners, and providing for instruction and employment of teachers for same upon submission of a petition made over the names of at least 20 persons of the school district,"28 testifies to the influence of the Columbian Council in the Franklin School neighborhood. The immigrants themselves, through their overwhelming response to the public elementary classes, pressured public school officials to open an evening high school in 1907. Classes had been planned for 300
students; 1000 attended the first night, "many of whom had learned their basic skills at the Columbian School and Settlement."^{29}

The Columbian Council had responded to the needs of Jewish immigrants through its night classes. When public schools took over these classes, the Council began phasing out its English classes. The Columbian School continued to offer English classes when the public night school was not in session, usually six months of the year. Here, the Council adhered to the NCJW policy of withdrawing from work to avoid duplication of services. Its supplemental classes followed another NCJW policy-- that of stepping in to fill the gaps in existing programs. Partly because the Council consciously sought to offer only those programs which were not available elsewhere, its work was unique in the Jewish community.

The Jewish women residents in the Columbian School and Settlement, which served a predominantly Jewish immigrant neighborhood, added to the distinctive nature of the Council's work. To Jewish immigrants, these women offered a model of Americanization with which they could more easily identify because of their common religion. The Settlement's residents and volunteers were aware of their impact on the neighborhood:

The volunteers are not only teachers-- they are examples and types to many under their charge, and they give of themselves in mind and morals, intellect and heart, and they likewise receive in exchange in all these ways.^{30}

The ties of identification were strengthened still further when Jewish women of the Council and the School worked with Jewish immigrant women; although the Council's
early programs appealed to men and women, boys and girls, the Council targeted women for its Personal Service and Immigrant Aid work. Their concern was partly moral; they felt that women immigrating alone faced the greatest threats to their virtue. Cassie Ritter Weil, president of the Columbian Council School in 1903, emphasized its moral concern:

Above all else our School or settlement must stand for the moral side of humanity. While we may not neglect the mind, we must not neglect the conscience.... Much will come from association with the lovely characters of our residents and volunteers....

Volunteer teachers and club leaders, who were mostly women, provided examples of dress and proper conduct for new immigrants, examples with which women in particular could identify.

The ability of students to identify with their teachers may have been a factor in the Columbian School's regular attendance rate. In many cities, the fatigue of long workdays, family responsibilities, and frustration with a curriculum and textbooks designed for young children interfered with the attendance of adult immigrants. While these factors exerted some influence on the residents of the Hill District, the Columbian School's unique position in the city as a Jewish institution offering secular education to a Jewish immigrant community enabled the School to adapt its programs more specifically to the needs of its students.

Even while its night schools were first being established, the Council supplemented its organized classes with individual instruction for women who could not
leave their homes to attend the School. One woman who
"was befriended by the ladies of the Council of Jewish
Women" learned English from Council teachers who
came to her home; she later joined the Council herself.
She and a minority of other women who had been aided by
the Council and eventually became members made the
Council accountable to eastern European women on a more
equal basis. Having eastern European women among its
own membership caused the Council to question its
attitude toward new immigrants. The majority of Council
women, securely middle-class, could easily have followed
the tendency of middle-class reformers to categorize
all new immigrants as lower-class, and therefore hopelessly
different from themselves. However, the cross-class
ties between Jewish women promoted more understanding
and less condescension on the part of the Council.
The presence of eastern European Jews in the Council also
affected the emphasis of the Council's work, which was
directed toward the education of others instead of
toward self-education of its members.

The accomplishments of the Columbian Council are
remarkable, considering that the Jewish population
comprised less than 2% of Pittsburgh's total population.
The schools of the Settlement neighborhood were the
first in the city to offer night school classes, attesting to the desire of neighborhood residents for
education as well as to the successful efforts of the
Council in convincing public school officials of their
responsibility to the immigrants in their community.
The public schools eventually incorporated all the educational innovations which the Council had introduced.36

By beginning its educational work with programs outside the existing scope of publicly funded services, the Council established a basis which enabled it to pressure for the integration of its programs into public services. Through the interaction within these programs between older Jews and new immigrants, shared religious identity strengthened the Jewish community as established Jews welcomed new arrivals. The role of Jewish women in this process was crucial; the women of the Columbian Council initiated educational programs for the Jewish community, and through these programs, became aware of the special needs of immigrant women. The Council would focus increasingly on these needs in the years to come.
CHAPTER 2
FROM SCHOOL TO SETTLEMENT: TIME OF TRANSITION, 1906-1909

When the public schools started handling evening classes in English in 1906, the Columbian Council School was able to give more attention to specialized work. With more space and time available, the School expanded its settlement classes and clubs. The expansion of its settlement work necessitated changing its name late in 1906 from "Columbian Council School" to the "Columbian Settlement", and at the same time asserting its autonomy:

It [the Settlement] is still greatly indebted for the lively interest manifested in its welfare by many women actively at work in the Council, but it is an entirely separate organization, with a separate charter, a separate membership, a separate income, a separate management and a separate life and purpose.²

Throughout this period the Council and the Settlement remained mutually supportive; but each organization pursued lines of action which were adapted to its specialized purposes.

The women actively at work in the Council were increasingly working for women. Once they had obtained public night school classes for the entire community, Council women began to focus their energies more directly on the distinctive problems of Jewish immigrant women. Even as the Council School staff worked toward public night school classes, they were conducting an English class for immigrant mothers, begun in 1906, separately from the evening elementary classes. The immigrant mothers themselves made the School aware of
their special needs, as Cassie Ritter Weil, president of the School, reported:

The mothers' reading class has a peculiar history. It was the result of an attempt to organize a mothers' sewing class. To the astonishment of the Worker they preferred to learn to read and write, and the class was formed.

The astonished worker and the other women of the Council were thus forced to reevaluate the School's assessment of the needs of immigrant women; immigrant mothers proved that their desire for education was great enough that they could articulate it to the women of the Columbian School. The class met once a week, from 3:30 to 5 p.m., a more convenient time than evenings for women with husbands and children. While husbands worked and children participated in other Settlement activities, these women could learn English. Because the class met only once a week, the time commitment it required was a modest one which could be worked into the woman's schedule of domestic responsibilities and paid employment.

The Council's concern for women extended to the necessity of protecting women immigrating alone. In 1905, the NCJW appealed to its Sections to undertake a new kind of work. At the NCJW's Fourth Triennial Convention, Sadie American, president of the New York Section, asked for organized efforts to protect immigrant women:

These girls who suffer, whose souls are killed, suffer thus because they are immigrants, because they come here ignorant of our ways, full of mistaken ideas, with no one to warn them, no one to tell them.... Unless the [Jewish] people take care of the virtue of the women by protecting them
in their ignorance from the traffickers watching

In response to the NCJW’s appeal, the Columbian Council formed its Immigrant Aid Committee in 1906.

Aware of the necessity to determine the needs of Jewish immigrant women before attempting to fill them, the Immigrant Aid Committee hired New York sociologist A. Leo Theuman to survey the needs of Jewish women in Pittsburgh. He recommended formation of an Information Bureau:

The duties of this Bureau are: to give the immigrant girl such information as will help her to choose the proper occupation and eventually to assist her in finding suitable employment; to aid her in getting instruction in the English language, a knowledge of American manners and customs and if necessary, in training her for a certain occupation; also to ascertain the conditions of her home and be of service to her in improving the same.

Theuman also suggested that girls of Russian descent who had been in Pittsburgh for several years should serve as assistants to the Council’s Immigrant Aid workers. These girls would teach English and "get thoroughly acquainted with their pupils, ...interest themselves in their material and moral well-fare,...and...show them how to become good American women, retaining their Jewish faith...." Immigrant women would thus be educated and Americanized by women who had been immigrants like themselves.

On the basis of these recommendations, the Council’s Immigrant Aid Committee implemented a program to meet women immediately upon their arrival. The Committee also helped women to secure housing and employment and to
attain familiarity with American laws, customs and educational facilities. The Committee's work included placing women in English classes at Franklin School or the Columbian Settlement. This work assured that immigrant women's initial contact in Pittsburgh was with a Council worker who spoke Yiddish; through this contact, immigrant women were encouraged to participate in the Council's education and Americanization programs. The Immigrant Aid Committee maintained a welcoming attitude toward the new immigrants, as Mrs. Henry Finkelpearl, chairman of the Committee, explained:

This is not a charity but that of extending the hand of good fellowship to our newly arrived sisters, greeting them and endeavoring to convey to them our knowledge of conditions and our advice. This attitude indicates the Council's commitment to aiding Jewish immigrant women through addressing their common interests as women and as Jews.

The Immigrant Aid work included consideration of all aspects of the individual woman's adjustment to new conditions. Underlying this comprehensive approach was the influence on Council members of a broad-based philosophy of progressive education. The very shift from School to Settlement, with its view of "education" as something more than classroom learning, incorporated this philosophy as well.

John Dewey, educator and educational philosopher, was the most influential spokesman for the new educational theory. His theory is based on the growth of the individual; "[o]nly by being true to the full growth of
all the individuals who make it up, can society by any chance be true to itself." Dewey advocated education which included traditional disciplines as well as art and practical training and stimulated students to satisfy their curiosity in the areas in which they were interested. Educators should, therefore, adapt the educational system to the student rather than molding the student to a narrow educational system. The educational system should also be accountable to the exceptional child, whose impediments to learning were usually environmental rather than inherent.

Dewey believed that the public school was only one of many institutions and interactions which educate; the educative purpose of the school is intentional, while other education is incidental. In order to increase the effectiveness of public education, Dewey proposed that the ideal school would be a community in itself. This idea influenced Pittsburgh public schools, as we shall see later, and also complemented the settlement approach to education.

The settlement, in its broad range of programs and its emphasis on social interaction, made intentional the education which it provided to supplement the public school, while allowing for a wider range of results in the individuals it served. Realizing that its constituency had not been subject to the patterns of socialization on which American public schools were based, the Columbian Council and Settlement consciously
attempted to augment existing public education with activities which took into account the experience of their participants. At the same time, the Council sought to reshape public school programs to the desires of new Jewish immigrants, for whom education was a priority. The Columbian Council took the idea of the school as a community and turned it around, using the community as a school for adults whose needs lay outside the traditional scope of public education. Dewey theorized about the child; the adult woman whom the Council was aiding functioned mainly in her home, and often in her workplace as well; both were outside the realm of traditional education. Yet the Council easily applied the parts of the philosophy which were relevant to its target group—immigrant women. The Council retained the focus on the individual, and reformulated its other aspects into programs for adult immigrants. Council records do not cite Dewey as a direct influence; yet, because the Council was a social reform organization, operating in cooperation with other progressive movements of the period, its members were almost certainly aware of the progressive theory of education. The Council kept a record "of all Educational movements in the city with a view of cooperating when necessary."\(^9\)

Despite the extent of the Council's educational work and its promotion of alternative methods of education, the Council continued to cooperate with the public schools, and to attempt to change them when necessary. Indeed, the Council itself was often the agent of change; the public school takeover of evening elementary classes.
resulted from the Council's recognition of its limits and its belief in the responsibility of public institutions to educate new Americans. The settlement approach did not prevent the Council from working with, and encouraging its constituency to attend, the public school. The idea of the public school's accountability to the exceptional child was easily expanded to include the adult immigrant, whose presence in the educational system also posed an exception to which the school had to adapt.

A strong, optimistic belief in the influence of environment characterized the Council's approach to education; on this basis, they sought to assure the salutary influence of public education which would accommodate the distinctive factors influencing Jewish immigrants. Belief in the influence of environment was also the underlying principle of the Council's philanthropic and social endeavors. Even in its early years, the Columbian Council School had been conscious of its multiple roles in shaping the environment of the community:

The place is a home in the life of its residents, an institution in the service of its friends, a school in the work of its teachers, a clubhouse in the social uses of its neighbors, a civic organization in the interests of the community, a settlement in the choice of its location.

The settlement, by its very presence in the neighborhood, directly enriched the environment of Jewish immigrants of the Hill District and attempted to cultivate the educational impulses present in the community.
The desire of Jews for education has been widely recognized; this desire was often a motive for emigration. Many of the respondents in the first Oral History Project of the Pittsburgh Council of Jewish Women cite American educational freedom as one of their reasons for emigrating. However, economic exigencies in many cases deprived immigrants of the educational opportunity they had anticipated; when questioned about any disappointments they may have experienced in their early years in Pittsburgh, women respondents in the Oral History Project frequently, and sometimes bitterly, discussed the financial circumstances which cut short their education. Their desire, however, remained, as did the need to attain literacy in English. Therefore, self-education—self-motivated education outside the public school or the organized classes of the Columbian Council School—became an important concern which meshed with the Council's comprehensive view of education.

The Columbian Settlement continued to play a role in self-education through its clubs, lectures and reading room; these educational endeavors were informal and relaxed. The public library, which many immigrants utilized, complemented the Council's approach to self-education. In the late nineteenth century, the public library was just beginning to see itself as an institution for popular education: "[T]he educational objective of the public library is to provide the means by which adults-- and especially those forced to leave school to earn a living-- can continue their education." As one Pittsburgh immigrant woman explained:
I had to leave school after the eighth grade because my mother died and I had to keep house for my father and sisters. I used to go to the Wylie Avenue Branch Library and read all the newspapers and books.15

This was a fairly typical pattern of continuing education for a significant number of Jewish immigrant women. The children's librarian of the Wylie Avenue Library remarked on the "number of grown people [who] visit the library every evening,"16 many of them Jews, who were learning English through reading the books in the children's room.

The children themselves were often agents of Americanization for their mothers at home, and used the extended services of the public library in these efforts: "One bright-faced little Hebrew said he read out loud to his mother. He has quite exhausted our stock of histories and biographies in words of one syllable."17 Another method of bringing education into the homes was through the circulating home library, a small case of books which the public library placed in one child's home, where other neighborhood children would gather.18 As the parents in these homes often did not speak English, the presence of the library and its users may have aided in the education of the adults. While the library, like the Settlement, provided services for which there was a demonstrated need, the success of its services depended on the motivation of the people for whom they were designed. This motivation was particularly strong among Jewish immigrants:
Three small girls came to ask for a home library for fifteen persons, and wanted help about organizing a study club. They range between 13-15 years and are enthusiastic. They are all Jewesses.19

Familiarity with diverse institutions-- the public library, the public school, the settlement, the workplace-- exposed the immigrant to a variety of Americanizing forces and educational experiences. The combination of social, cultural, educational and vocational activities at the settlement, the public schools and the public library affected many aspects of immigrants' lives and drew them into participation in the life of the community. This participation enabled the immigrant to become less isolated through the social interaction which inevitably resulted from class and club activities; the immigrants could thus perceive themselves as members of an American community while retaining their Jewish identity.

This, then, was the dual purpose of the Columbian School and Settlement-- educating immigrants for participation in the community without losing their Jewishness. The shift from Jewish-sponsored to public night school classes therefore had significant implications for the Council's commitment to each of these objectives. As important as it was to extend public education to encompass adult immigrants, the Council relinquished its opportunity to educate and Americanize Jewish immigrants through Jewish teachers in a Jewish institution.
At first, both goals were maintained, even as the night schools came under secular control; when the publicly-funded Franklin School began its night classes, its retention of Yiddish-speaking teachers from the Columbian School eased the transition and maintained ties to the Jewish community. The immigrants' ability to identify with Jewish teachers as models of Americanization thus continued, at least in the transition period. Increased immigration, which had exerted pressure on the Council's facilities and led to public school classes, also heightened the need for integrating the growing number of immigrants into the community. Within the public night school, Jewish immigrants could begin to see themselves as part of a larger group--an American neighborhood--rather than just as a member of the Jewish community of the Hill District. Although the student body of the Franklin night school was almost entirely Jewish, the change in setting affected the Jewish students, as Americanization was now being taught in a secular rather than a Jewish institution.

The public night school was a positive influence in the community in that it expanded the consciousness of the Jewish immigrants of the Hill District and freed the workers of the Columbian Settlement to concentrate on other aspects of immigrant aid and adjustment. The Council anticipated that with fewer classes to conduct, their energies could be spent with pupils in most need of assistance. The public school takeover did, however, have its drawbacks, among them the loss of such personal attention to students. The settlement workers, by the
very nature of their work, were more familiar with immigrants, needs and had been able to provide a more specific education in the early years of the Columbian Council School, when there had been fewer immigrants. Public school education was less tailored to the needs of Jewish immigrants, but its existence enabled the Columbian Settlement to extend its other programs to fill these needs through alternative channels.
CHAPTER 3

CHANGING PROGRAMS FOR CHANGING NEEDS: SPECIALIZED WORK FOR WOMEN, 1909-1919

The Columbian Council began on a small scale; it took its first goals from the National Council of Jewish Women, who advocated religious education for children. But the Pittsburgh Council quickly learned the needs of its local constituency and altered its programs accordingly. First, the Council realized that the need of adult immigrants for educational programs was greater than that of children; children were more easily served by the public schools. But, particularly after 1905, increased immigration intensified the demand for adult classes in English, and the Council attempted to fill this demand. Second, in 1906, when its facilities were no longer adequate, the Council turned to the public schools and encouraged them to take responsibility for the special needs of the adult immigrant within the educational system. Finally, even after public night schools began, the Council continued to educate those who remained outside the existing system, especially immigrant mothers who could not attend school at night. The changing emphasis of Council programs illustrates its flexibility, its responsiveness to the community, and its commitment to the needs of those whom other institutions overlooked. The Columbian Council School and Settlement's innovation and expansion of programs in the years before 1909 attest to the successful conjuncture of the Council's
objectives and the desires of the community it served.

In 1909, the Columbian Settlement underwent a new and more dramatic transformation. It had again outgrown its quarters and its programs had expanded so greatly that its directors sought a sizeable outside donation to finance a new facility. Their search ended when Mr. and Mrs. Henry Kaufmann agreed to donate $40,000 to the Settlement as a memorial to their daughter, Irene, after whom the new building was named. The new facility and the expansion it represented provided the occasion for restructuring the relationship between the Council and the Settlement. For several years, the Settlement had operated separately from the Council, although "[i]t was still tied to the Council by having the officers of the Council ex-officio, members of the board of trustees of the Settlement." After 1909, however, the Settlement was controlled by men. The change in leadership did not drastically alter the types of programs which the Irene Kaufmann Settlement offered, but it did make official the Council's separation from the Settlement. "[T]he CJW waived its right as Parent and Founder of the Institution and gave the Columbian School into the keeping of the Irene Kaufmann Settlement." The Council continued to support and cooperate with the Settlement, but was now free to intensify its efforts to address the need of immigrant women. Because the Council, the Settlement and the public schools were simultaneously working toward similar goals between 1909 and 1919, the following chapter deals with each
goal and the concurrent and complementary programs of
the institutions.

In the same year that the Columbian School and Settle-
ment became the Irene Kaufmann Settlement, the Columbian
Council was chartered and incorporated as the Pittsburgh
Section of the National Council of Jewish Women, signalling
a minor change in its perception of itself. The public
night schools and settlement work were now functioning
independently, leaving the Council to develop its woman-
oriented Immigrant Aid Department and to work toward
reform of existing institutions.

The two goals complemented each other, although the
connections were not always direct, and the process by
which they were achieved sometimes brought the women of
the Council into conflict with the community they sought
to serve. The drive to centralize the Pittsburgh school
system best illustrates this conflict. In 1909, Pittsburgh
schools still operated according to a state
law passed in 1838 which divided the state into school
districts corresponding to minor political divisions;
in cities, these districts consisted of city wards. The
Pittsburgh Survey, conducted in 1908, considered
the ward school district one of the "archaic social
institutions" still present in the city. The Council
and other progressive groups in the city worked together
toward its reform. Settlement workers, who had assisted
the compilers of the Survey, and Council members advocated
centralization of the Pittsburgh school districts,
which they hoped would produce a more efficient, less
corrupt school administration. Some immigrants, however, opposed centralization, for they felt that it would take away their power. Here the Council’s progressive goals conflicted with the desires of its constituency. The success of the Council’s efforts to facilitate Hill District immigrants’ identification with their community in this case worked against the Council’s vision of what was best for that community.

Despite the opposition of some city residents, the Pittsburgh school system became centralized in 1911, when the Pennsylvania School Code was enacted. As a result, evening school programs were consolidated and expanded throughout the city under the Department of Evening Schools and Extension Work. This expansion ultimately worked in favor of the communities which had earlier opposed school reform. The Superintendent of Schools reported in 1913:

The Evening Extension Work was projected along many new lines of popular interest and practical worth. Notable among the new features were self-directing social centers, free public lectures, people’s choruses, civic and literary clubs; besides many additional lines of class instruction in the evening schools...

The expanded programs were popular, and attendance nearly doubled between 1912 and 1913.

Evening schools also offered many classes specifically for women. In 1913, they served

...more than forty-three hundred women, ... necessitating about two hundred different classes each week. These women represent employees in factories, stores, offices, domestic service and homemakers, and the women are anxious to become more efficient in the work.
In addition to women's classes in domestic science, sewing and cooking, evening schools also taught "practical hygiene, emergency, and nursing to large classes of women."\textsuperscript{12} The Board of Education considered these classes, conducted by women physicians, to be "the most popular demonstration of how really valuable professional advice may be brought directly to the people...."\textsuperscript{13} The significance of public night school classes for women lies in the Board of Education's recognition of women's practical educational needs, which the Council, through its pressure to reform the school system, had helped to engender.

Board of Education reports do not indicate the number of Jewish women in the women's classes; however, the following figures give some idea of the proportion of Jewish women in evening schools. Of Franklin School's total enrollment of 2464 in 1913-14, 939 were women; the School's location in the Hill District meant that most of these students were Jewish. The combined enrollments of the Franklin School and Fifth Avenue High School, both in the Hill District, were the highest in the city, comprising 20.1\% of the total night school population. Elementary English classes enrolled 6147 students throughout the city, two-thirds of whom were foreign-born; 35\% of these were Russian Jews. Russian Jews made up 94\% of the enrollment of Franklin School's elementary English classes.\textsuperscript{14}

The comprehensive evening school program established by the new Board of Education incorporated the educational
innovations of the Columbian School and progressive theories of education. Progressive reformer Robert A. Woods called the Columbian School and Settlement a "pacemaker to the public schools, in the matter of evening industrial schools, recreative centers, and vacation schools." The extent of evening school classes and the availability of school buildings as social centers attest to the influence of the settlement work of the Columbian Council and the progressive idea of the school as a social center. The 1915 Report of the Board of Public Education describes the far-reaching programs and goals of the Evening School and Extension Work:

It has been the aim of the Board of Public Education to provide for the boys and girls forced out of day school on account of economic necessity, an opportunity to learn the English language, to prepare the new American for the duties, responsibilities, and privileges of Citizenship, to interest home-makers in healthful and wholesome living, to encourage lovers of Music and Art, to accommodate groups of persons interested in physical recreation, and to co-operate with voters and tax-payers for mutual benefit in civic affairs, through open discussions and instructive lectures.

The public school was well on its way to joining the Council and the Irene Kaufmann Settlement as an institution for progressive education.

The principles of the Evening School and Extension Work reflect the influence of the philosophy of progressive education:

In all lines of educational extension, especially as expressed in the evening school work, the major emphasis should be placed upon the student rather than upon the course of study. Subject matter for evening classes should find constant interpretation in terms of practical experience. Matter which has no direct or helpful relation to the daily life of the pupil, which does not stimulate his ambitions
for a larger and wider sphere of activity, should be rejected as obsolete or useless. The evening school is pre-eminently for the pupil and the selection of material must always be made in view of his present and personal needs. 18

By 1915, Pittsburgh public schools were using new texts, written especially for adult immigrants. One of these texts, Sara R. O'Brien's *English for Foreigners*, attempted "to give foreigners in as short a time as possible a practical working knowledge of the English language and, at the same time, to enable them to become better acquainted with their new environment." 19 Its lessons addressed students' practical needs and actual experience. Emphasis on the individual and on practical needs made the evening schools more attractive to Pittsburgh's immigrant population. By remaining accountable to immigrants' needs, the Board of Public Education hoped to ensure the "continued attendance and quality of work which it considered "the evidence of ultimate success." 20 Following the precedent set by the Columbian School and Settlement, the Board of Education endeavored to instill in the evening schools a "spirit,... both in the work and the worker" which would "make for a richer and larger community life." 21

While the public schools expanded and took on many of the functions which the Council had originally performed, the Council played a supportive and supplemental role. The Council maintained responsibility for the interests of the Jewish immigrant population within the public school system. In 1911, the Council inaugurated two Penny Lunch Stations in public day schools, in the Springfield and Franklin Schools. Of Franklin
School's 1300 students, nearly 1200 were Jewish. Despite its own leanings toward Reform rituals and customs, the Council provided kosher lunches for them, respecting the traditional dietary observance of the eastern European Jews and thus preserving Jewish culture within American secular institutions.

The Council's Immigrant Aid work became increasingly important in these years. In 1912 the Immigrant Aid Committee extended its work to provide a Protective Service for Girls. The Service, conceived as a "Jewish Big Sister Movement", aimed to prevent delinquency by improving home conditions, aiding in employment, and providing wholesome recreation. Big Sisters would help to prevent delinquency by serving as examples of proper moral conduct within the context of their friendships with immigrant girls.

After functioning for seven years, the Immigrant Aid Committee finally obtained its own office space in November of 1913, when the Council opened headquarters at 707 Forbes Avenue. In its own new home, the work of the Immigrant Aid Committee "became more effective than it had been." The Council's commitment to aiding immigrants on their arrival and its record of success in this area resulted in the B&O Railroad's granting to the Council "the privilege of having someone designated by this [the Immigrant Aid] Committee meet the immigrant trains...." With the aid of the Pittsburgh Federation of Jewish Philanthropies, a paid worker, Ella Neft, assumed this responsibility in 1913.
In addition to meeting immigrants on their arrival, the Immigrant Aid Committee continued the efforts it had begun in 1906 to place women in English classes. The Committee cooperated with the Irene Kaufmann Settlement and the public schools to ensure educational opportunities for newly-arrived Jewish immigrants. Consequently, summer classes were held at the Settlement in 1914, and the following winter, when night schools were about to close for the long vacation period, the Immigrant Aid Committee induced the Board of Education to shorten the vacation. When night schools were again scheduled to close in March of 1915, the Board of Education, in response to pressure from the Council, promised to keep the schools open:

The Board of Education instructed that the Franklin St. Night School should be kept open for an indefinite period or as long as the attendance would warrant. Thereupon the Council had postal cards printed in Yiddish and mailed to the pupils attending the classes in the other schools which had closed informing them that they could register at the Franklin St. School. The average attendance during the winter period was over 1400 and one night 1900 were enrolled.27

In addition to meeting immigrant women at their trains and placing them in classes, Ella Neft attended these classes to keep in close touch with immigrant women, thereby maintaining the women's identification with the Council and ensuring that their needs were being met in the public night schools. Displaying their special sensitivity to the plight of immigrant women, Immigrant Aid Committee members also persuaded the Board of Education to begin a class at Franklin School for adults.
who could not attend the evening school. This class, which met from 3:30 to 5 p.m., supplanted the Council's classes for immigrant mothers.

The Franklin School administration recognized the example which the Council's educational programs set, and commended the efforts of Ella Neft. In a letter to the Council's Immigrant Aid Department, John Anthony, principal of the Franklin School, praised her work for the 1914-15 school year:

Miss Ella Neft has rendered valuable service to the Franklin Evening School during the present term. Her careful and systematic work with the recent American has greatly augmented the Evening School Attendance. We have found her work so helpful that we have sought to have other people engage like workers.28 The Council's Immigrant Aid work was so successful that it also received commendation from the Federal Inspector of Immigrant Aid in Pittsburgh, who called it "the best work being done for the immigrant in this city."29 The Immigrant Aid office aided 2000 immigrants between 1914 and 1915, including cases sent from NCJW headquarters at Ellis Island and from the Hebrew Sheltering and Immigrant Aid Society of New York, whose president specifically requested that the Pittsburgh Council undertake the work.30 With the onset of World War I, however, immigration was greatly curtailed; the Council suspended its direct immigrant aid in 1916. The Council was prepared to resume the work when circumstances again demanded it:

When once immigration is again begun we will be well equipped to do the entire Jewish work for the city, for it is our intention to employ an ex-
experienced social worker, together with two trained Yiddish speaking assistants (one for day service and one for night duty) to prosecute the work thoroughly, from our central building.31

The war years seemed to promote within the Council an even more specific focus on its programs for women. Although the war limited the Council to "more intensive than extensive work"32 and forced it to sacrifice its headquarters and Labor Bureau, it maintained the Protective Service for Girls. The Council was even able to extend the Service from girls sixteen years and older to those over thirteen years of age. During the war, both the Council and the Irene Kaufmann Settlement cooperated with the Red Cross, planted War Gardens, sold Liberty Bonds and War Savings Stamps, and nursed the wounded; they also initiated sewing and knitting circles, for which they recruited immigrant women.33

The Council also followed the Americanization program established by the NCJW Department of Immigrant Aid:

With its long and intimate knowledge of the immigrant girl and her mother, the Department defined for the Council that phase in Americanization that is a coherent part of its Immigrant Aid activity, namely, the elimination of illiteracy among alien girls and women.34

Given the Council's history of providing elementary education and its more recent emphasis on educating women, this goal was implemented easily, without the need to begin any new programs.

During the war years, the Irene Kaufmann Settlement took an even broader view than the Council in its role in the Americanization of the community. The Settle-
ment's Americanization program subscribed to the Americanization principles of the Federal Government:

The use of a common language for the entire nation.

The desire of all peoples in America to unite in a common citizenship under one flag.

The combatting of anti-American propaganda, activities and schemes, and the stamping out of sedition and disloyalty wherever found.

The elimination of causes of disorder and unrest, which make fruitful soil for the propaganda of enemies of America.

The abolition of racial prejudices, barriers, and discriminations, and of immigrant colonies and sections, which keep peoples in America apart.

The maintenance of an American standard of living through the proper use of American foods, care of children and new world homes.

The discontinuance of discriminations in the housing, care, protection, and treatment of aliens.

The creation of an understanding of and love for America, and of the desire of immigrants to remain in America, to have a home here and to support American Institutions and laws.35

These goals, prompted by the anti-foreign, anti-alien sentiments which the war engendered in the United States, display the government's concern with the problem of immigration and its desire to assimilate the foreigner. The Irene Kaufmann Settlement was more openly assimilationist than the Council; it pledged its full support for the Government's patriotic principles of Americanization.36

With regard to Americanization work which involved the public schools, the Settlement and the Council had similar goals. The Settlement stated with pride its history of cooperation with the neighborhood schools and its current efforts of "urging in every possible
way, now more than ever before, our immigrant neighbors to learn the English language, and to secure their first citizenship papers. The nurses and neighborhood worker from the Settlement directed to the nearest school "all men and women, whom they found could not speak the language and who were not citizens."

The McKelvey School, another Hill District elementary school, was opened as an evening school and community center, at least partly through Settlement pressure. In 1918, the Settlement and the neighborhood evening schools canvassed the aliens and non-English-speaking residents of the neighborhood in order to stimulate night school attendance:

While no special classes were held in English and Citizenship at the Settlement, individuals and special students were given instruction when the circumstances justified. As far as possible, everybody was encouraged to attend the public evening school classes.

Educational work of the Settlement extended beyond interest in public night schools. A weekly lecture series begun in the fall of 1918 selected topics in cooperation with the neighborhood schools and the Wylie Avenue Library, "with the result that reference books are looked up in the library, and the subject of the lecture is taken as a topic in history, composition, or literature, etc., in school." The Settlement also offered to let the public schools use its kindergarten rooms. The Board of Education accepted the offer, as the Settlement's facilities proved to be better than those in the Miller School. The kindergarten enrolled 132 children in 1918, and held mothers' meetings with an average
attendance of twenty-six women.

These meetings included addresses by qualified persons on special topics, such as 'The Care of Children,' 'Food Conservation,' as well as celebrations on the various holidays. To get the mothers to do their bit during the war a Knitting Club was organized, which met every Wednesday afternoon.41

Through its cooperation with the public schools and its work with children, the Settlement's Americanization program reached immigrant mothers as well.

Activities specifically for women were a significant part of the Settlement's overall program:

The work of the Girls' and Women's Department consists of the organizing of group activities according to the needs of the community; procuring leaders for these groups; planning and preparing parties, entertainments and various musical and literary programs; acting in the capacity of an older sister or mother in cases where advice is needed; and encouraging young people to strive for higher and better ideas through the proper use of their leisure time. The work outside of the Settlement consists in visiting the homes of the girls; establishing a friendly relationship with the families, and in becoming familiar with the school, play and working conditions of the girls and women.42

Girls' clubs included social, literary and dramatic activities; classes in cooking, housekeeping, sewing, dancing, first aid, crafts and public speaking enrolled both women and teenagers. The Settlement's club and class work for women served a social and recreational function, and encouraged community participation. The Department's concern with wholesome recreation and moral development echoed the goals of the Council's Protective Service for Girls. The Settlement, like the Council, sought to aid and advise women through establishing friendly relationships between Settlement workers and
immigrant women.

The Settlement and the Council shared another goal at this time—the provision of scholarships at all levels of education, to both men and women. The Irene Kaufmann Scholarship Fund, set up by Henry Kaufmann in 1917, gave more than thirty college scholarships in the 1917-18 school year, and planned "to extend the benefits of these scholarships to grammar and high school pupils, who for financial reasons, would otherwise not complete or go ahead with their education." By 1919 these plans had been realized, and scholarships included nineteen college, one business college, four high school, and two grammar school. Two women received fellowships in social work programs which included surveying the needs of the community. The Settlement displayed its support of local social research and its interest in training future settlement workers through this specialized scholarship program.

The Council's Altruistic Committee also provided scholarships, "assisting poor boys and girls or men and woman [sic] into securing for themselves an education which shall ultimately mean self-support for those assisted." Only eight scholarships were given in 1916-17, five to men and three to women, but these took into account a broad range of educational and personal circumstances, from tuition in the University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy to keeping a boy in high school by paying his mother what he would have earned had he left school. The Council "bought for a nurse at the Montefiore
Hospital, her uniforms and other necessary paraphernalia [sic],"\(^{46}\) and paid the tuition of a young woman in Duff's Business College. "This girl worked in a stogies factory and was becoming tubercular. With our help she was able to give up her position there and study stenography."\(^{47}\) This work incorporated the Council's emphasis on helping young immigrant women to secure safe employment and to improve their living conditions. Even the scholarship to the high school boy, which aided his mother as well, maintained the Council's focus on women. The Council's explicit goal in its scholarship work was not charity, but rather providing the means by which individuals could become self-supporting.
CONCLUSION

By the end of World War I in 1918, the Council had been functioning for twenty-five years. The first generation of Council members had grown up along with the groups of women it had first served. In these years, the membership of the Council changed as old members retired and new members joined. Some of the eastern European immigrants whom the Council had aided had by this time become members. External changes in the Jewish community and the nation influenced the programs which the Council established in the next few years. The growing Jewish community was expanding from the Hill District into neighborhoods east of the city, offering a greater challenge to the Council's outreach work. Immigration had slowed considerably, alleviating the Council's responsibility for direct aid to immigrant women on their arrival. However, the need to integrate immigrants who had arrived just before and during the war remained. World War I had intensified American nativism; increasing anti-foreign sentiment heightened the Council's commitment to an ideal of Americanization which included retention of the immigrant's cultural and religious identity. These external changes meant that there was still a real need in the Jewish community for the educational work of the Council, but necessitated that the Council refocus its work. While the principles of the Council's educational work remained the same, its programs responded flexibly to the new challenges.
One of the new challenges which the Council faced was that of training women for citizenship. The passage in 1919 of the Nineteenth Amendment granting women suffrage changed the definition of women's citizenship; hence, women now needed to become literate not only to function within the community, but also to vote. In responding to the pressing need to educate women for the vote, the Council's educational endeavors assumed an explicitly political focus.

The Council's success in its past programs for women enabled it to formulate an appropriate and effective program to educate women for citizenship. The Council formed its Americanization Committee in 1920 to concentrate on the Americanization of "Jewish foreign-born women and girls, especially those who, for various reasons, cannot attend evening schools but who can attend afternoon schools twice a week." The Council planned to canvass the neighborhoods with large Jewish immigrant populations to recruit women for these classes, "with the Assistance of the Mothers' Clubs of the C.J.W. religious schools, the various synagogues, and the cooperation of the leaders of the various groups of women in the different districts...." The Americanization program was implemented by volunteers who organized groups of students. A volunteer taught each group until it grew to fifteen members; at this point, the Board of Education provided a paid teacher.

Even if a group consists of only five women, a comfortable room in a public school and all
necessary supplies such as books, outlines, study charts, etc., will be provided. The chairman [of the Americanization Committee], who has taken the teachers' training course in Americanization at the University of Pittsburgh,...will guide this work. She will organize the groups and train the women.4

The support for these efforts which the Council received from the public schools continued the cooperative relationship which the two institutions had established over the previous twenty years. Through classes organized and taught by women for women, the Council maintained its distinctive woman-to-woman focus. As women, Council members were especially sensitive to immigrant women's family responsibilities. Thus, they organized a Kindergarten Committee to care for children while their mothers attended classes. This supplemental service made school attendance possible for many mothers.

The Council's focus on providing afternoon classes for women who could not attend evening schools indicated the narrowing of its target group. By 1919, the public schools had accepted responsibility for many of the educational programs which the Council had initiated. The Council continued to avoid duplication of work by serving women whose need were not being met by existing programs. The classes for immigrant mothers were conducted with the hope that once the Council had established the work, public schools would assume the responsibility.

Americanization, in the Council's view, went beyond training women for citizenship; it involved welcoming women as Council members as well. Mrs. Meyer Seegman,
Chairman of the Americanization Committee, explained that "not only should English be taught, but that the rudiments or fundamentals of club proceedings be introduced by suggestion and natural methods rather than by direct means."5 to introduce club proceedings "by natural methods," the Council probably ran the English and citizenship classes as though they were clubs. In this way, immigrant women could translate their experience in the classes directly to participation in the Council. Within the classes, the club structure reinforced the commonality between the two groups of Jewish women. Teachers and students were equals; the teacher served as club leader in order to share rather than to impose her knowledge.

Between 1893 and 1920, the lines between old and new immigrants in Pittsburgh had blurred as women whom the Council had integrated into the Jewish community became Council members. In 1920, the National Council of Jewish Women set the following goals for its Immigrant Aid and Americanization work:

More intensive work must be done by us; surveys in housing, immigrant education, in industry must be made; co-operation with agencies interested in other phases of community life sought; closer personal relations between our members and the new immigrant effected. The women and girls whose lives have been so embittered by European conditions are in greater need of sympathy and intelligent understanding than ever before. And it is the rare privilege and responsibility of the Council of Jewish Women through its national Department of Immigrants Aid and the allied committees to bring them that sympathy and that understanding and to interpret for them American life and customs.6

The Pittsburgh Council adopted these goals and took them
still further. Instead of simply bringing understanding to immigrant women, the Council brought them into its membership and fostered the more productive understanding which came from their relation to immigrant women as equals. The bonds of sex and ethnicity which characterized the relationship between the Council and immigrant women precluded social control as the Council's goal; instead, the Council sought to enable immigrant women to become full participants in the Jewish community with which Council members identified themselves.
NOTES
INTRODUCTION


2 Easterlin, p.479.

3 Easterlin, p.484.

4 Oscar Handlin, The Uprooted (Boston: Little, Brown Co., 1951), p.34.

5 Easterlin, p.482.


7 Easterlin, p.482.


9 Jacob Riis, How the Other Half Lives (New York: Hill & Wang, 1957)


11 Hofstadter, p.176.

12 Hofstadter, p.9.

13 Boyer, p.ix.

14 Boyer, p.162.

15 Boyer, p.175.


17 Boyer, p.150.


21 Conway, p.309.


23 Panitz, p.118.


26 Kuznets, pp. 69-71.

27 Kuznets, pp. 95-7.

28 Kuznets, p.81.


30 Oral History Project.

31 Baum, et. al., p.30.


33 Solomon, p.43.

34 Solomon, p.86.

35 Solomon, p.90.


I derived the percentage of Jewish population in Pittsburgh by combining Census data on Pittsburgh's total population with Selavan's figures on the Jewish population of Pittsburgh.


CHAPTER 1


First Triennial..., p.133.

Selavan, p.33.

Selavan, p.34.

Selavan, p.34.

Selavan, p.34.

First Triennial..., p. 133.

Zugsmith, p.3.

Selavan, p.39.

Zugsmith, p.4.

Selavan, p.54.

Selavan, p.54.

Selavan, p.54, citing Fourth Annual Report to the Board of Trustees of the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh for the Year Ending January 31, 1900.

Selavan, p.36.

Selavan, p.41, citing Jewish Criterion, September 15, 1899.

Selavan, p.42.

Selavan, pp. 52-31

At this time, each city ward operated its public schools under its own board of directors. Pittsburgh public school administration was not centralized until 1911.

CHAPTER 2

1 Council School...1907, p.6.

2 Council School...1907, p.6.

4 A. Leo Theuman, "Report to the Immigrant Aid Committee of the Columbian Council," September 22, 1906, p.3.

5 Theuman, p.3.

6 Council records for this period tend to refer to women only by their married names. I have attempted to find the Council women's own names and to use these whenever possible.

7 Zugsmith, p.12.


10 Selavan, p.126.

11 Council School...1902-1903, p.5.

12 Oral History Project.

13 Oral History Project.

14 Robert Ellis Lee, Continuing Education for Adults Through the American Public Library, 1833-1964, p.17.


17 Day Book, August 21, 1899.


19 Day Book, July 22, 1899.

20 Council School...1907, p.11.

CHAPTER 3

1 Zugsmith, p.22.

2 Council School...1907, p.5.
3Zugsmith, p.22.
4Zugsmith, p.19.
7Selavan, p.86.
8North, pp. 270-284.
10Board of Ed., 1913, p.23.
11Board of Ed., 1913, p.83.
12Board of Ed., 1913, p.95.
13Board of Ed., 1913, p.95.
14Pittsburgh Board of Public Education, Department of Evening Schools and Extension Work Report, 1913-14 (Pittsburgh, 1914), pp.12-16.
16The Columbian Settlement was not the only Settlement in Pittsburgh. However, its pioneering work in the city's educational programs, and its success in obtaining the first public night schools in the city, allow for the conclusion that its direct influence on public education was greater than that of other city settlements.
20Evening Schools...1915, p.13.
21Evening Schools...1915, p.13.
23 Zugsmith, p. 28.

24 Zugsmith, p. 28.


26 Zugsmith, p. 13.


29 Council Yearbook, 1916-17, p. 36.

30 Council Yearbook, 1916-17, p. 50.

31 Council Yearbook, 1916-17, p. 50.


33 Ninth Triennial..., p. 353; IKS Yearbook, 1918, p. 47.

34 Ninth Triennial..., p. 187.

35 Irene Kaufmann Settlement, Yearbook, 1916-17, p. 43.

36 IKS Yearbook, 1916-17, p. 34.

37 IKS Yearbook, 1916-17, p. 34.

38 IKS Yearbook, 1916-17, p. 34.

39 IKS Yearbook, 1918, p. 15.

40 IKS Yearbook, 1918, p. 32.

41 IKS Yearbook, 1918, pp. 51-2.

42 IKS Yearbook, 1918, p. 47.

43 IKS Yearbook, 1916-17, p. 38.

44 IKS Yearbook, 1919, p. 10.

45 Council Yearbook, 1916-17, p. 33.

46 Council Yearbook, 1916-17, p. 43.

47 Council Yearbook, 1916-17, p. 43.
CONCLUSION

1 The volume of post-war Jewish immigration did not increase until 1920; from March to September, 1920, the NCJW aided more than twice as many immigrants as it had from May, 1917 to the spring of 1920. Between 1919 and 1920, immigration increased dramatically. The NCJW had assisted only 11 immigrants in July of 1919; in July of 1920 1558 received assistance. NCJW Ninth Triennial... p.201.


3 Bulletin, p.5.


5 Bulletin, p.5.

6 Ninth Triennial..., p.209.
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