

Evaluating the Effects of Jewish Summer Camping in the United States

Harold S. Himmelfarb

The American Jewish community is unusually rich in the types of organized alternative forms of Jewish education available. Chief among these are youth groups, summer camps, and study tours of Israel. In addition, there are numerous forms of adult and continuing education programs and a variety of activities that have been instituted within Jewish schools and synagogues. The growth of these activities has been generally a post-World War II phenomenon, and in many cases even more recent. Therefore, there is not an abundant literature studying their nature and their impact.

During the mid-1960s and early 1970s, American educators generally became interested in more informal and affective modes of education. As part of the general critique of American schools which arose at that time a simultaneous critique of Jewish schools was being made due in part to such trends in general education, and partly to the growing ethnic consciousness among all the minorities in the United States which affected Jews as well. The rising concern over intermarriage and assimilation among the Jews added fuel to the complaint that American Jewish supplementary schools were producing inadequate Jewish identification among their students. Thus, an interest in alternative forms of Jewish education available in the community began to attract the attention of both educators and educational researchers. This paper will review the research on one of these alternatives, often thought of as perhaps the most effective form of Jewish education – Jewish summer camping.

Camps as Educational Institutions

It has been argued that the educational potential of overnight summer camps is tremendous in comparison to other educational institutions:

The camp is a total milieu; it can provide for all age groups – from infant to grandparent – at the same time, and thereby becomes a community of shared experience; the intimacy of the camp setting serves as a backdrop of unparalleled opportunities for self-discovery and interpersonal relationships; in a camp significant models are easily accessible; the time spent in camp is a significant slice of the camper's annual life span and is more rooted in reality than most other efforts which seek to involve the child; a camp staff embraces a wider vari-

ety of talents and abilities than is possible in even the most richly endowed school; and finally, the freedom a camp enjoys in its programming, even where formal study is a significant aspect of camp life, permits experimentation not always possible in the necessarily more limited confines of a school (Ackerman, 1974, p. 278).

Early in the development of summer camps, Jewish educators became convinced of their effectiveness. Janet Aviad (1988, p. 212) reports that during the 1950s, Conservative Judaism's

Ramah (Camps) emerged as a major educational project to which great energies, funds, and talents were directed. The directors, who met all year round to shape the educational program, and the counseling staff who met during the winter months to discuss educational ideas, believed that they were engaged in an enterprise which would change the face of American Jewry.

That belief persists today, based upon the accumulation of much experience and anecdotal data:

...in the space of a month a camper, who was removed from the ambivalence and occasional Jewish self-hatred of his family, and had not previously had the opportunity to live in a Jewishly meaningful setting, could acquire a positive outlook toward Judaism (Weinberger, 1971, p. 247).

Hebrew speaking camps, and others as well, have had a profound influence on thousands of youngsters who, long after their days in camp, still carry the stamp of an intensive educational experience (Ackerman, 1980, p. 135).

Indeed, the most recent, and perhaps the most comprehensive, study of the effectiveness of Jewish supplementary schools has documented the need for major reforms, and has recommended as one partial remedy the integration of Jewish summer educational camping into the school program at three of four school levels identified in the report: grades 3–5, 6–8, and 9–12 (Board of Jewish Education of Greater New York [BJE], 1988).

But what do we really know about the efficacy of summer camps? Have there been any scientific studies of the impact of summer camps? Can these studies tell us anything about how effective the camps are and in what ways?

Empirical Studies

Reviews of the history and development of Jewish summer camps in the United States can be found in Schoolman (1946), Isaacman (1966 and 1970), and Shwartz (1976). Interestingly, despite the nearly four decades that Jewish summer camps have been prominent on the American scene, the considerable financial investment in them, and the commonly held assumption that they are very effective institutions, only a handful of empirical studies have attempted to scientifically assess their impact. All were conducted in the late 1960s and early 1970s. None of them are definitive, but some interesting patterns emerge from careful review.

Gene Levine (1972) surveyed the alumni of the Brandeis Camp Institute (BCI) in

the spring of 1969. BCI was founded in 1941 and by the time of the survey there were approximately 6,000 men and women who had attended the camp for four weeks. Of this number, recent addresses were found for 2,726 persons (about 45% of the total). These persons were sent questionnaires, and Levine's report is based on the 1,449 responses.

Levine found that the alumni of BCI tend to be much more involved in Jewish life than we might expect of Jews generally. For example: 96% of those who were married had Jewish spouses; 88% of those who were parents said that they would definitely or probably want to send their children to BCI; 75% declared that they currently were deeply or somewhat involved in Jewish affairs: two-thirds belonged to a synagogue or temple; 80% attended religious services at least on the high holidays; 88% reported reading books about Jews or Judaism during the average year; and 59% reported that they belonged to at least one Jewish group or organization. Of course, because we do not have any measures about their earlier participation in Jewish activities, we cannot know whether these relatively high levels of participation were due to BCI, or some other previous background factor or experience.

The perceptions of the alumni, however, indicated that BCI did indeed have a positive lasting impact upon them. Levine reported that nine out of every ten respondents felt that BCI had been a 'relevant experience' in their life in general, and half of those said that it was 'very relevant'. The data show that half or more of BCI alumni indicated that the camp had a lasting impact upon: what they taught their children (67%), attitudes toward Israel (57%), religious beliefs and practices (50%), pursuit of Jewish studies (49%) development of personality (48%), activities in the Jewish community (47%), and intellectual development (46%). Many fewer persons felt that the camp had a lasting impact on their vocational plans, education plans, choice of mate, or choice of friends. Despite this last finding, 72% of the alumni reported that they had made at least one 'real friend' during the four weeks at Brandeis, and nearly two-thirds were currently in touch with at least one other alumnus.

When asked about which aspects of the camp program were most important to them, these respondents rated discussions with fellow campers as most important. The second and third most important aspects of BCI were the Sabbath rituals, and music and singing. Levine interprets this as showing the importance of group solidarity and experience within the program. Those aspects of the camp which were rated least important were drama and art. According to Levine's interpretation, the latter received low ratings because they enhanced individual talents rather than group solidarity. In the questionnaires, the camp alumni indicated that in addition to whatever affective and intellectual experience the camp presented, it had also become a model for them in how to conduct Jewish family living which they carried into adulthood. For example, one woman who had attended the camp in 1949 stated:

Because of it,...my family has enjoyed a Brandeis feeling about religion, Shabbat and festivals (Levine, 1972, p. 17).

This conclusion is supported by Levine's interpretation of the finding that more recent alumni of the camp have found it less relevant than older alumni. Levine argues (with some supporting information) that it is not because the camp has been less effective in recent years, but because the relevancy of the camp experience becomes heightened when the alumni are involved in raising their own children. Levine concludes:

"Confused young Jews have been converted into thoughtful ones" (Ibid, p. 17).

Unfortunately, the numerous methodological deficiencies in the design and execution of this study raise questions about the reliability of its very positive conclusions:

First, although Levine reports a response rate of 53% by those who were sent the questionnaire (a surprisingly high percentage for a questionnaire of 14 pages in length!), the tabulated responses only constitute a quarter of the total alumni of the camp. Perhaps many alumni whose addresses could not be found were unknown because they were no longer involved in the Jewish community rather than because they had moved. One suspects the former because Levine did find many of the persons who had moved to other parts of the country, and even those who had migrated to other countries such as Israel. Thus, the respondents to his survey probably did not include a substantial number of alumni whom the camp was not successful in influencing.

Another methodological problem with Levine's study is the fact that there is no comparison group. Therefore, we cannot tell whether the very strong positive results in favor of BCI would have been similar to those of alumni of other camps had they been surveyed, or to the attitudes of persons who had not attended any camps.

Third, as mentioned before, the lack of earlier measures does not allow us to conclude that BCI was a factor in the personal changes which seem to have occurred among camp alumni. Since the camp quite uniquely deals with college age persons, a very unlikely age group to attend a four week camp, there is a very strong possibility that these persons (more than others their age) were seeking a Jewish spiritual experience and were desirous of making some changes in their lives. Thus it is questionable whether such rates of success could be expected in a more general population of young Jewish adults.

Despite these methodological problems, the results of this survey are at least suggestive of those aspects of a summer camp program which have the greatest impact on the campers, i.e. peer group fellowship and affective Jewish experiences.

J. Levi Fuchs (1978), studied groups of Jewish students in Kansas City who were in grades 5-12: day school students, former day school students, afternoon Hebrew school students, and Sunday school students. Fuchs looked at the effects of different types of summer camp experiences on Jewish identity. He found that there was a small correlation between attendance at a Jewish camp and Jewish identification (.17) than attendance at a Jewish day camp (.13). Attendance at nonsectarian day camps or overnight camps were slightly negatively correlated with Jewish identification, but these correlations were not statistically significant. Since Fuchs did not control for background factors which might account for self-selection into camping programs, we do not know whether the small positive effect of Jewish camping was actually a result of the camping or due to the fact that more identifying children attend Jewish camps.

Uri Farago's (1971) study, in contrast, uses both before and after measures. He studied the impact of the 1969 summer on teenagers in Camp Ramah of New England (Ramah at Palmer, Mass.). Three types of data collection were used: participant observation of the campers during the two summer months (the researcher was also a staff teacher); interviews with older campers and staff members, as well as informal discussions with many people involved in the camp; and questionnaires given both to the

campers and to a control group of Conservative Hebrew school students in the Boston area. The observational and interview data are rich in detail with regard to the camp experience. This allowed better ascertainment of the processes that led to the effects deduced from the questionnaire data.

The campers were surveyed at three different times: a pre-camp questionnaire was given to them to complete on the day after arrival at camp, a post-camp questionnaire was administered two days before they left and a follow-up questionnaire was sent to the students 8 months after camp had concluded. Of the 265 potential campers who could have answered the questionnaire, 250 answered the pre-camp survey, 186 responded to the post-camp survey and 140 (53%) responded to the follow-up survey. Comparisons of change could be made only for those who had answered the previous questionnaire. There was no attempt to determine differences between respondents and non-respondents.

The response from the control group was more problematic. Since Hebrew school attendance is a requirement for acceptance to Camp Ramah, there was an attempt to provide a comparison of students with similar Jewish educational backgrounds and ages, but with no camp experience. Eighty students of Hebrew high schools between the ages of 14 and 16 who lived in the Boston area were sent questionnaires, but only 31 students returned the first questionnaire, 21, the second questionnaire, and 20 (25%) the third questionnaire. Nevertheless, the attempt to provide a comparison group in this study is laudable.

A major problem with the Farago study was the fact that the 1969 camp year in New England introduced an experimental program, and it appears that the relative impact of the camp and the nature of that impact was influenced significantly by this experiment. Therefore, it is difficult to draw any general conclusions from this study about the impact of Ramah camps – or even specifically the New England Ramah camp. Apparently, the camp staff in 1969 was strongly influenced by societal trends at that time. There was a desire for less established ways of doing things and for greater personal freedom of expression which would result in more heightened spiritual experiences. The major consequence of this, according to Farago, was that campers were given the opportunity to attend a variety of religious and educational activities rather than traditional classes and prayer services. Eventually, campers chose the option of not attending any such activities or attending them infrequently. This was more true among the older (14 to 16) LTF (Leadership Training Fellowship) students than among the younger (13–14) pre-LTF students who had a more structured program.

The lack of participation in group activities meant more involvement in personal and informal relationships. During this particular summer, social relationships rather than particular camp programs were the part of the camp experience that campers felt had the greatest impact upon them, and which they enjoyed most.

Despite the methodological problems cited above, Farago's study on the subject is the only one that has pre-camping measures and short and longer-term post-camping measures. Therefore, it allows for a more accurate description of the changes that took place due to camping and the durability of those changes.

With regard to the camp's impact on Jewish identity, Farago found the following:

(a) There was a moderate positive change in regard to the Jewish area as a whole. This was due mainly to intensified feelings of closeness to other Jews, though without a change in the degree to which being Jewish – as a sub-identity to other identities

such as being American – was central to the campers. This change in feelings was maintained several months after being home but its extent was evaluated by the campers as less than in past summers.

(b) There was a negative change toward the area of religion in general. This change is accounted for mainly by more negative attitudes toward ritual aspects of Judaism and lower attendance at synagogue services after the summer. Farago argues that because of the experimental approach to tradition in the camp, these aspects of Judaism were reduced in importance among the campers. However, there was a tendency to view Judaism in terms of more ethical and affective approaches to religion, and these aspects of Judaism underwent a positive change among the campers. Nevertheless, "Most campers indicated more positive change in past years both in regard to religious observance and religious values and ethics." (Farago, 1971, p. 350).

(c) There was a fairly strong negative change in the attitude of campers towards Israel. This change was particularly in regard to opinions and policies of Israel and public activities in America with regard to support for Israel. There was no negative change in personal feelings for, or interest in, Israel. Farago felt that the negative attitudes were a consequence of the social climate that was projected by the staff. After a few months at home, the negative effect of the camping experience with regard to attitudes toward Israel had disappeared. "It seems that positive effects of the past reappeared in the favorable climate to Israel which the campers found in their home communities." (Farago, 1971, p. 350).

(d) There was a negative change in the attitude toward Hebrew and the importance of studying Jewish history. Again, Farago argues that this was a result of the climate that developed in the camp with regard to Jewish studies and, in particular, with regard to the use of Hebrew because it had been deemphasized much more than in previous years. Ramah was supposed to be a Hebrew speaking camp, but Hebrew could not be used very much among the younger children and, eventually, it was not used very much among the older group either.

(e) There was an intensified opposition to intermarriage. "The positive experiences the campers had in an isolated Jewish milieu seemed to create a desire to continue such isolation after camp. The camper's opposition to intermarriage decreased again after a few months in a religiously mixed environment at home" (Ibid, 1971, p. 351).

(f) When the LTF group was compared to the younger pre-LTF group, there was a somewhat more positive change toward the Jewish area as a whole in the LTF than in the pre-LTF group. Furthermore, there was a more positive change in attitudes toward religion among the older group after they returned home and a more negative change among the younger group. Farago surmises: "It seems that while the LTF campers learned new, self-styled means for expressing their religiousness in non-traditional ways, the pre-LTF campers had no such means for replacing the traditional sacramental elements to which they developed a negative attitude at camp." (Ibid, 1971, p. 352). On the whole, he felt that generally there were more similarities than differences in the effect of the camp on the campers in the two groups.

Farago attributes many of the changes, whether positive or negative, to effect of the camp climate that season, however, a close look at the changes among the control group indicates that some were probably due to general environmental factors or influences of maturation taking place during the adolescent years. Although it is difficult to rely upon the control group of this study for comparison, it is suggestive of changes

which are occurring at these ages. A look at the tables in the appendix of the Farago study indicates that even where negative changes took place, they were often less negative among the Ramah campers than they were among the control group. Thus, the summer camp program proved to have more positive outcomes than no camp experience, even where changes were negative. Apparently, negative changes regarding Jewish identity among persons of these ages can be expected.

An important implication of this study, which echoes that of Levine, is that the educational efficiency of a camp is the result of the social environment that is produced there. In the Levine study it was both the structured and unstructured social environment, and in the Farago study, because of the experiment within the camp, it was primarily the informal unstructured social environment, which had the greatest impact.

In his conclusions, Farago addresses the issue of greater coordination between what is done in camp and what is done in Jewish schools during the year. He argues that some of the lofty goals of Camp Ramah, particularly with regard to Hebrew language, cannot be fulfilled because many campers do not come with the proper background. Therefore, it is up to the schools to provide that background during the school year.

Perhaps the most important and unique contribution of this study comes from the follow-up data. Farago found considerable attrition in many of the changed attitudes of campers within a few months after their return home. In some cases, such as the development of negative attitudes toward Israeli policies, some might argue that the attrition was for the best. In other cases, such as opposition to intermarriage, the attrition might be considered undesirable. In any case, just as the Hebrew language data suggest the need for integrating camp programming with pre-camp school experiences, the Jewish identity data suggest the need for post-camp experiences to reinforce camp effects. This conclusion is suggested by other studies as well.

Sheldon Dorph's (1976) investigation of the impact of Camp Ramah is one the most sophisticated and elegantly designed studies in Jewish educational literature. He studied the impact of Camp Ramah on the Jewish behavior of its participants and on several attitudinal factors. Dorph chose as his sample teenagers who were enrolled in the Conservative movement's Los Angeles Hebrew High School and those enrolled in a similar Hebrew High School (the *Prozdor* of the Jewish Theological Seminary) in New York.

A total of 458 students (out of a possible 512) 9–12th graders returned the questionnaire. The respondents were divided into those who had attended Camp Ramah, those who had attended other Jewish camps and those who had attended no Jewish camp. For analysis purposes, students in the two different locations were kept separate, yielding six groups (three in each city). One of the major reasons for keeping the groups separate, besides possible locational differences, was the fact that the Los Angeles Ramah camp had summer periods of one month and the New York camp had summer periods of two months.

Thus, the design allows for the comparative effects of camping upon students of similar educational background, age, and location. Unlike Farago's study, however, there is no pre-camp measure to accurately gauge the amount of change. Dorph found that there were no significant differences between the groups with regard to family size, type of home dwelling, number of divorced and one parent families, and extent of Jewish youth group participation – except that the Los Angeles group who had

attended 'other Jewish camps' were lower in youth group participation than the New York group who attended 'other Jewish camps'.

Even with such homogeneous groups, there were important differences between New Yorkers and Los Angelinos, with the New Yorkers generally exhibiting more religious behavior. Therefore, Dorph held family religious behavior (FRB) constant when making comparisons. Generally, both family religious behavior and location of residence exercised more powerful influences on teenage religious behavior (TRB) than did camping experience.

In a very detailed analysis, Dorph looked at specific types of TRB and controlled for that same specific behavior on the part of the student's parents. He found that the effect of camping was highly selective. Camping seemed to make a difference on only certain types of religious behavior, and the differences varied by whether the family was higher or lower in their own religious behavior and by whether it was a Ramah camp or some other camp.

For example, Dorph found that (without controls for FRB) New York teenagers ranked higher in daily prayer activity than Los Angeles teenagers. However, when FRB was high, the prayer activity of teenagers did not differ by location or camp type; but when FRB was low, the New York Ramah camp produced greater teenage prayer activity. This is interpreted by Dorph as an "interaction of a location conducive to observance and a camp which reinforces the value of a particular observance" (Dorph, 1976, p. 245). It is not clear, however, whether it is simply the emphasis placed on prayer in the New York Ramah Camp which produces the effect, or whether the longer camp sessions and greater exposure of the New York Ramah campers to Jewish summer camping produces the effect. The amount of previous camping experience is not controlled in this study.

With regard to service to the Jewish community, Dorph found that when FRB was low, New York campers scored significantly higher than Los Angeles campers, regardless what type of camp attended. Los Angeles Ramah students were higher in Jewish community service than those in Los Angeles who did not attend any Jewish camp. With regard to service to the general community, there was a marginally significant difference among camp groups. When family religious behavior was high, the Ramah campers' community service was significantly greater than that of other Jewish campers. When FRB was low, however, there was no significant difference between cities or camp groups.

With regard to the relationship of teenagers to Israel, Dorph found no differences between the groups concerning past experience in Israel. However there were some differences regarding plans to study or live in Israel: when FRB was high, no differences were found between the cities, but the New York Ramah group was higher than the two other New York groups. The Los Angeles Ramah group was higher in this regard only than those who had not attended any Jewish camp. When FRB was low, there were again no differences between the cities, but both camp groups were significantly higher than the non-camp groups.

On the other hand, Dorph did not find any important differences related to camping experience with regard to the observance of public rituals (not attending school on Jewish holidays or wearing a kippah), Jewish study, observance of dietary laws, Sabbath observance, or the giving of charity.

Thus, we must conclude that there is no uniform positive effect of Jewish summer

camp experience on religious behavior, and that the effects of summer camps are highly dependent upon family religious behavior and the general location and environment in which the person lives and attends camp. This is true of Ramah camps and other Jewish camps, although Dorph does point out that in almost no case does the other Jewish camp group or the no Jewish camp group show higher teenage religious behavior than the Ramah group. In many cases the Ramah effect was the strongest. Since we do not know which camps are included in the other Jewish camp group, it is difficult to know whether something important, which could be transferred to other camps, may be learned from the Ramah program.

Dorph isolated four attitudinal factors which he called Jewish selfhood, camp as a supportive environment, camp as a utopian (ideal) life style, and human concern and sensitivity. He found that generally all camp populations express rather positive perceptions toward camp as a supportive environment, and that in this respect no significant differences appeared between Ramah and other camps. Overall, the Ramah population showed a significantly more positive perception of camp as promoting their Jewish selfhood and as an ideal life style than did the other Jewish campers. The Ramah campers also expressed a marginally significant more positive perception of their camp as an arena of human concern and sensitivity than did the other Jewish camp population. However, he found that there was not much relationship between these attitudes and the teenagers' religious behavior (TRB). Dorph concluded:

While a camp such as Ramah may produce significant attitudinal differences in its campers relating to a sense of Jewish selfhood and an altered image of the worthwhile life in most respects, Ramah has no consistent significant relationship to TRB. ...*The findings point to the central need to create a sociocultural environment within the proximal life arrangements of the city which will facilitate one's living in accordance with religious behaviors he rehearsed and practiced at Ramah* (emphasis Dorph's, 1976, p. 303).

Thus, in contrast to the Levine study, and more in accordance with the Farago findings, this study argues that the impact of summer camps upon campers is not very likely to endure. Once again, the researcher concludes that there is a need for some apparatus to carry over the impact of camping into city life. It should be pointed out, however, that in Dorph's study it seems that where camps do have an effect upon teenage religious behavior, they often have a greater impact upon those who come from families of low religious behavior. This finding is not well developed in the study. Perhaps it indicates that camps can be a powerful mechanism for initiating changes in religious behavior, but they would require reinforcement after the camp experience. Dorph's solution to this problem is the institution of various kinds of parent and family education programs within the city, and in camp-like settings (retreats).

Harold Himmelfarb (1974 and 1979) used multivariate analysis to study the relative impact of summer camps. The study was based on a questionnaire mailed to a combined sample of 5300 households in the Chicago area with distinctive Jewish names, and the alumni or their spouses of a Chicago all-day Jewish high school. A total of 1009 responses were used in the analysis. The study focused on the impact of different types of Jewish schooling on adult religious involvement, but in the process, the correlation between Jewish camping and adult religious involvement was analyzed. Although the response rate was low, and the sample overrepresented persons who were

middle-aged, of higher occupational status, more highly educated secularly and Jewishly, and Orthodox in identification and observance, the findings have some interesting parallels to the studies discussed above.

Himmelfarb asked respondents to record how many weeks they had spent in Jewish and nonsectarian day camps and overnight camps. He found that on nine different measures of religiosity, day camps were very slightly negatively related to religious involvement or not related at all. The highest correlation ($-.08$) for Jewish day camps was with attitudes toward Israel. The highest relationships in all of the camping experiences were found with regard to Jewish overnight camps. In fact, the correlations for Jewish overnight camps were higher than those for the total number of weeks spent in both overnight and day camps. However, even here the correlations were quite low. The highest correlations were $.20$ for ritual observance and $.17$ for cultural involvement ('intellectual-esthetic'). The overall average correlation was $.14$ on his composite measure of 'total religiosity.'

Experience in nonsectarian camps was also quite low, generally having a negative correlation with the measures of adult religiosity. The highest correlation ($-.20$) for nonsectarian camping (a combination of total weeks in both day camp and overnight camps) was with the 'total religiosity' scale. Except for the negative correlations on Jewish day camping, these findings are very similar to those of Fuchs (1978), discussed above.

To analyze the extent of the independent contribution of the camping experiences to adult religiosity, Himmelfarb entered Jewish overnight camping and nonsectarian day and overnight camping into a regression analysis with other variables, such as: hours of Jewish schooling, parents' ritual observance, spouses' ritual observance, and others. He found that with the other variables controlled, neither of the camping variables had any independent effect. Specifically, the low correlation of Jewish overnight camping with adult religious involvement became negligible when the number of hours of Jewish schooling was controlled. (The zero-order correlation between Jewish schooling and Jewish overnight camping was a moderately strong $.34$). This led Himmelfarb to conjecture that

the contribution of overnight camps to adult religious involvement is to channel individuals into environments that have a more lasting effect on adult religious involvement (like Jewish schools) and, perhaps, of supporting the socialization process in those environments (Himmelfarb, 1974, p. 96).

This then is the third study where the researcher concluded that the overall impact of Jewish camp experience must be combined with educational experiences in the city to have an enduring impact.

Conclusions

In summary, despite the general impressions of Jewish educators that Jewish overnight camps have a very strong impact on their campers, and despite the fact that the participants and alumni of such camps generally have great praise for their experiences and feel that the camps have had great impact upon them, there is not much empirical proof of enduring behavioral effects. There are some differences between

studies about which aspects of Jewishness are most affected by the camping experience; these probably stem from the different emphases in the camp programs. The greatest impact seems to be in the creation of emotional attachment to Jewish things and to Jewish friends, but the studies raise questions as to whether these affective feelings have any impact upon religious observance or participation in the Jewish community.

The most positive results come from Levine's study. It is possible, though, that his findings are not accurate, since his study is the one with the fewest controls, and perhaps the most biased sample of respondents. However, it is also possible that the Brandeis Camp experience is really a much more potent educational program than Ramah or the other camps attended by respondents in these studies. Alternatively, it may be that since the Brandeis Camp is dealing with college-age students, this period of life is one which has a more potent impact upon subsequent adult behavior. Himmelfarb's (1974 and 1979) study, for example, found that Jewish organizational activities during the college-age years had a more lasting impact on adult religious involvement than did such activities during early or middle adolescence.

There is no doubt that more definitive studies of Jewish summer camp experiences need to be conducted, but existing studies do lend a sobering skepticism to the many claims of their tremendous impact. The studies clearly show that Jewish overnight summer camps do have a positive impact on their campers. In fact, some of the studies found that they have their greatest impact on those who need it most – those from families that are low in Jewish identification. However, the studies also show that the impact of the camping experience fades over time. In retrospect, it seemed to several of these researchers that the lack of reinforcing experiences during the school year, impeded the potential of camps to have an enduring impact. The recent BJE (1988) study called for the integration of summer camp and school programming to enhance the effectiveness of supplementary schools. Also the studies reviewed here suggest the need for such integration to enhance the effectiveness of summer camps.

References

- Ackerman, W.I. (1974). "The Present Moment in Jewish Education" in: Sklare, M. (ed.), *The Jewish Community in America*. Behrman House, New York. pp. 249–282.
- Ackerman, W.I. (1980). "Jewish Education Today" *American Jewish Year Book*, Vol. 80. pp. 130–148.
- Aviad, J. (1988). "Subculture or Counterculture: Camp Ramah", in: Aviad, J. (ed.) *Studies in Jewish Education*, Vol. 3. Magnes Press, Jerusalem. pp. 197–225.
- Board of Jewish Education of Greater New York [BJE] (1988). *Jewish Supplementary Schooling: An Educational System In Need of Change*. New York.
- Dorph, S.A. (1976). *A Model of Jewish Education in America: Guidelines for the Restructuring of Conservative Congregational Education*. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, New York.

- Farago, U. (1971). *The Influence of a Jewish Summer Camp's Social Climate on the Camper's Identity*. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Brandeis University, Waltham.
- Fuchs, J.L. (1978). *Relationship of Jewish Day School Education to Self-Concepts and Jewish Identity*. Unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles.
- Himmelfarb, H.S. (1974). *The Impact of Religious Schooling: The Effects of Jewish Education Upon Adult Religious Involvement*. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, The University of Chicago, Chicago.
- Himmelfarb, H.S. (1979). "Agents of Religious Socialization", *The Sociological Quarterly*, Vol. 20. p. 477-494.
- Isaacman, D. (1966). "Jewish Education in Camping," *American Jewish Year Book*, Vol. 67. pp. 245-252.
- Isaacman, D. (1970). *Jewish Summer Camps in the United States and Canada*. Unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, Dropsie College.
- Levine, G.N. (1972). "An Adventure in Curing Alienation: Alumni's Reflections on the Brandeis Camp". *Jewish Education*, Vol. 41, no. 4. pp. 10-18.
- Schoolman, A. (1946). "The Jewish Educational Summer Camp - A Survey of Its Development and Implications". *Jewish Education*, Vol. 17. pp. 6-15.
- Shwartz, S. (1976). *Ramah - The Early Years, 1947-1952*. Masters dissertation, Jewish Theological Seminary, New York.
- Weinberger, P.E., (1971). "The Effects of Jewish Education." *American Jewish Year Book*, Vol. 72. pp. 230-249.