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prayer, which closes the morning, afternoon, and evening prayer services. The term "ethical monotheism" itself is generally credited to nineteenth-century Reform Judaism, and remains nineteenth-century Reform's most enduring contribution to Jewish thought. (549)

Paula Hyman, "Who is an Educated Jew?," *Sh'ma: A Journal of Jewish Ideas* (February 2002)

Dr. Paula Hyman (1946–2011) was Lucy Moses Professor of Modern Jewish History at Yale University.

Modernity fractured Jewish experience, destroying the hegemony of rabbinic Judaism and the authority of traditional Jewish elites. Contemporary currents of thought like postmodernism and multiculturalism have challenged virtually all certainties and shaken all canons. No canon is fixed, and all guardians of cultural transmission are required to make hard choices. We are fortunate that the Jewish canon has always been a relatively open one, for the traditional Jewish system of interpretation of classical texts has provided a mechanism for ongoing revision. The development of interpretive strategies, in midrash, for example, as literary scholars have argued, demonstrates a way to recover oppositional strands within traditional texts. Insofar as we focus on the spaces for debate and contestation within the traditional Jewish canon, we acknowledge the need for, and sustain the possibility of, multiple cultural expressions for the diverse people that we are. Although the term "open canon" sounds like an oxymoron, it simply reflects the recognition that every canon is constructed and merits a healthy combination of respect and skepticism and regular revision if it is to speak to its intended audience. A truly "open canon" affords opportunities for choice and for the inclusion of ongoing cultural creativity.

Once we acknowledge that unity is neither possible nor desirable, though, we must ask what models of educated Jews we seek to promote. What, if anything, will educated Jews of different paideias (educational visions and curricula in the broadest sense) share?

I can think of three prerequisites—necessary but not sufficient—for all educated Jews: the Hebrew language (in all its variants, from the Bible to the present—not just street Hebrew); an acceptance of biblical and rabbinic texts as one's own; and a general knowledge of Jewish history. Hebrew is an

essential tool for reading much of what Jewish culture has produced. But it is more than a tool. Without Hebrew there is no visceral, as distinct from intellectual, connection to Jewish creativity across time and space. Accepting Tanakh and rabbinic texts as one's own does not necessitate ascribing to them sacredness or religious authority. But it does necessitate grappling with their meaning and their role in world culture as well as Jewish culture and in the choices that contemporary Jews make. The knowledge of the broad outlines of Jewish history enables us to understand the societal and intellectual contexts in which Jewish culture has developed.

Accepting this core curriculum is only the first step in becoming Jewishly educated. An open Jewish canon in the twenty-first century draws upon a variety of voices and genres. It must embrace all the Jewish cultural products of the past two centuries—that is, the different forms that Jews have chosen to make meaning of their existence as Jews. Secular forms in many languages—including literature, memoirs, folkore, film, and the visual arts—are too often dismissed as lacking in cultural significance.

What I am suggesting, then, is that educated Jews would share a core curriculum of Hebrew language, foundational texts, and knowledge of historical development. They would then follow a multiple-track model of curriculum development, choosing, according to their own interests, from a far broader range of cultural expression than is commonly considered "Jewish knowledge." Although biblical and rabbinic texts would define a core of Jewish knowledge, further learning would not privilege any single genre of cultural production or any single text.

Changes within the past generation necessitate a rethinking of Jewish learning as thorough as the Haskalah critique of two centuries ago. While the majority of Jews have acquired secular education, as maskilim advocated, they have not always applied their knowledge to Judaism or Jewish culture. I am not referring here to the willful ignorance of what modern scholarly inquiry has to say about classical Jewish texts. Rather, I am speaking about the failure of most Jews who consider themselves Jewishly educated to contend with recent trends in studies of culture. ...

The multicultural model, which disputes the very idea of canon (but may also accept the concept of an open canon) and pays heed to the voices that resist and subvert authority, appears quite suitable to the diversity of Jewish patterns of behavior and thought in a post-emancipation world. It mandates willingness to acknowledge the multiplicity of Jewish voices and accept their authenticity. The multicultural model is particularly appropriate

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Vanessa Ochs, "Ten Jewish Sens
(December 2003)

Rabbi Dr. Vanessa Ochs (1953-
University of Virginia.

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to the ambiguous position of Jews in Diaspora, who create Jewish culture in the space between being a part of the larger society and apart from it (or, in the words of a recent book, insider/outsiders). The adoption of a multicultural stance, however, requires a recognition of the diversity of Jewish life as a value rather than an unfortunate fact; that is, it requires a conversion of diversity into pluralism.

Living in a multicultural society, we have the opportunity and the obligation to shape a fluid Jewish canon for our own time and for the future. Engaged with the richness of the culture we have inherited, which links us with Jews of other times and places, we must be sensitive as well to the incompleteness of our legacy, to the voices that have been suppressed (women's and others) and to the interpretations that have lacked authority. The legacy of our generation may well be a postmodern hermeneutics of suspicion and a recognition that a diverse people requires cultural diversity.

Vanessa Ochs, "Ten Jewish Sensibilities," *Sh'ma: A Journal of Jewish Ideas* (December 2003)

Rabbi Dr. Vanessa Ochs (1953–) is Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Virginia.

I've heard it said, "I'm not really religious but I like to think of myself as a good Jew." This line references an unarticulated code that many Jewish Americans try to follow—even judge themselves by—a code that overlaps but is not synonymous with the requirements of Jewish law or traditional practice. ...

My understanding of Jewish sensibilities is influenced by two major Jewish thinkers, Max Kadushin and [Irving] "Yitz" Greenberg. What differentiates my list of sensibilities from Kadushin's value concepts and Greenberg's continuum concepts is that I see the sensibilities as categories that emerge primarily from the real lives of a diverse population of Jews, characterizing how Jews self-describe and live out their ideals, rather than as prescriptions imposed by sacred texts.

The Sensibilities

1. Making Distinctions: Havdalah
   Making distinctions matters to us. They may be temporal — such as making a distinction between special times and everyday times.

We take calendars seriously: we honor vacation time, family time, and birthdays. While we celebrate the blessings of everyday life, we understand that special occasions have a holy dimension that we mark. Some distinctions are personal and create new situations, like marriage ceremonies or graduations.

2. Honor: Kavod
   We are aware that we do not live in a social vacuum and that our actions have consequences. We want to be respected. Thus, we aspire to act in ways that will bring honor to ourselves, to our families, and to the communities we belong to. We want to be worthy of honor after we have passed on and our deeds and choices are remembered.
3. Turning: Teshuvah
   We believe it is possible to reflect upon one's life, turn it around, and experience forgiveness from others while also feeling a sense of renewal for ourselves. We are works-in-progress, and self-improvement is always possible. We give ourselves and others opportunities to change.
4. Dignity; Being in the Image of God: Tzelem Elokim
   We seek ways to conduct ourselves and to treat others with the greatest of respect in order to preserve our own dignity and the dignity of each individual and to prevent humiliation. We are aware that dignity is possible only when one is free and self-sustaining. We care about education because having knowledge enhances one's self-respect and ability to live in a dignified manner. We might care about appearances, knowing that dressing appropriately enhances one's self-respect and honors others. We are likely to engage in political, charitable, and volunteer activities (such as mentoring the underprivileged, working for civil rights, or building housing for the homeless) that increase the dignity of others.
5. Saving a Life: Pikuach Nefesh
   We believe that as long as one is healthy there is reason to celebrate. We toast, "L'Chaim!" "To life!" We do not take health, the number one blessing, for granted, and we feel the miraculous nature of every recovery. We understand that life is fragile and go to extremes to save a life.
6. Being a Really Good Person: "Be a Mensch"
   We aspire to be a mensch, someone who acts with compassion toward others. In ourselves and in others, we value the human qualities of being attentive, empathetic, and discrete, and of making sacrifices when necessary. We try to be good friends and neighbors. A mensch's broad reserve of compassio
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7. Keeping the Peace: Shalom
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8. Repairing the World: Tikku
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broad reserve of compassion extends toward all Jews, wherever they live, and toward all people, particularly the vulnerable.

7. Keeping the Peace: Shalom Bayit
   Certain decisions or gestures are made not only because they are appropriate but also because they serve to keep the peace, settle differences, keep a family together, and create harmony instead of divisiveness.
8. Repairing the World: Tikkun Olam
   We hold that each person should find ways to make the world a better and more just place. This stance of compassionate engagement occurs in simple individual ways as well as on larger platforms. We use our money and talents to make a difference. Engaging in world repair, we may feel as if we are "doing a *mitzvah*," doing something that we are divinely ordained to do even though it is our choice. We feel that doing good works justifies our having been put on this earth. If we have been fortunate, we feel responsible to "give back."
9. Maintaining Hope: Yesh Tikvah
   We try to hang on to hope and resist despair. In romance, we believe we will meet our beshert, our intended one. We dream expansively and even set off on uncertain journeys with feelings of promise on the horizon. At the same time, we accept that some things seem fated not to be. When a door closes, we face reality and move on to new possibilities.
10. Memory of One's Ancestors: Z'chut Avot
    We feel connected to the people who came before us. We draw insight and wisdom from the experiences of our ancestors and seek to honor them with our actions. And we expect the same of our children. Thus, we honor our ancestors by transmitting the sensibilities that characterized their ideas and actions onto the next generation.

Regardless of orientation, these sensibilities can help Jews formulate decisions in keeping with one's Jewish "compass" in at least three particular areas: health care, ritual practice, and personal moral choice. ...

These sensibilities help us understand how our Jewishness defines or contributes to the way we live. For example, according to halakhah, sexual relations between an unmarried man and woman are forbidden. Yet Jews who do not heed halakhah concerning premarital sex still bring Jewish consciousness to sexuality. Two sensibilities in particular govern premarital relations. First,

"Saving a Life": the majority of Jews involved in romantic relationships feel duty-bound to take precautions for safe-sex both for themselves and their partners. Second, "Distinctions": many Jews tend to honor both themselves and their partners by maintaining monogamy in relationships.

Drawing upon the ten sensibilities and relating them to a situation at hand requires creative thinking and the ability to juggle. That is, a sensibility that mattered more at one time or to one generation might give way to a different sensibility that now takes precedence. Sometimes multiple sensibilities are at play, and they may compete for the strength of influence. At the core, however, is the weightiness of the sensibilities, what Kadushin calls the "primary factors in the experience of significance."

COMMENTARY BY HANNAH S. PRESSMAN

These texts by Joseph Telushkin, Paula E. Hyman, and Vanessa L. Ochs help us to consider the shape of a comprehensive Jewish education. Telushkin offers a core curriculum; Ochs, a list of essential Jewish values that one might explore and study; and Hyman, a plea to make the canon more inclusive. Further, each scholar proposes criteria that would qualify a Jew as having met the communal standard of knowledge. Yet, perhaps unsurprisingly, none of the formulas is the same.

At their heart, all three texts are about *tokhen*, the modern Hebrew word for content or substance. From this word, a cluster of questions emerges: What should be the actual substance of a Jewish education in the twenty-first century? How do we inculcate authentic Jewish values? What is the connection between Jewish literacy and Jewish identity? Can we draft a list or write a textbook that will satisfy most, if not all, of these (and other) visions for an informed Jewish perspective on the world?

It is not a coincidence that the meaning of the word *tokhen* in biblical Hebrew extends to include measuring, estimating, and weighing. In Exodus 5:18, Pharaoh declares that, despite lacking the necessary straw, his Israelite slaves still have to deliver "the *tokhen*, quota, of bricks." In 1 Samuel 2:3, having finally given birth to a son, the grateful Hannah hails the Lord as "an all-knowing God; by Him actions are *nitkenu*, measured." These aspects of *tokhen* serve as an apt metaphor for the intellectual notion of content: a substantial idea has measurable weight and impact. Our idioms follow suit. A student gradually piles up her knowledge "brick by brick"; a deep discussion can likewise be called "weighty."

What, then, is the measure of an educated Jew? This essay will consider points of overlap and divergence among the three texts, suggesting how they

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1 Ilene Cooper, review of *Jewish Literac*
Jewish Religion, Its People, and Its Histo
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2 Jon A. Levisohn, "Redeeming Jewish Lit