The Jewish Community of Indianapolis: 1849 to the Present

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cant (as DeVries sees it) Southern racist traditions, the child-Negro stereotype and the beast-Negro stereotype, and their effect on Monroe's population. While both parts of this work are well researched and fully developed, the two thrusts do not come together as one naturally anticipates. The theoretical portion of the study does not touch directly on the seven families which DeVries focused upon. One searches in vain for the application of the two racist theories to the Bromleys or the Duncansons or the Fosters, all among Monroe's most visible black families. While DeVries discussed members of these families from many different perspectives—such as their ability "to pass" from the black race to the white—nowhere did he explicitly make the nexus between his families and the racial stereotypes which he so fully presented. In spite of this failure to integrate the different portions of the study, both portions have individual merit. DeVries particularly presented a highly worthwhile portrait and analysis of the lives of a small number of black families. Without a doubt, he breathed life into his subjects and thus provided a most interesting biographical approach.

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Judith E. Endelman's The Jewish Community of Indianapolis: 1849 to the Present is an excellent example of local history set in the broader context of American Jewish history. The book contains seven chapters which chronicle the development of the community, from its first pioneer settlers, through the arrival of German and Eastern European immigrations, to the effects of the Six-Day War on Indianapolis Jewry. Endelman, assistant librarian at Indiana University's Lilly Library, successfully argues that "if one is to understand fully the American Jewish experience one must look beyond New York to the dozens of medium-size cities, the regional centers of the West, the South, and the Midwest, which have a history of Jewish settlement dating back to the mid-nineteenth century" (2). She helped to rectify this problem by studying the Jewish community of Indianapolis and its relationship to American and Hoosier culture. The Jewish Community of Indianapolis is an example of ethnic community history that has matured past the "who's who" stage which was predominant in the early days of the discipline. It is a welcome addition to the field of community history in general and Jewish community history specifically.

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Endelman focused on five themes to tell her story. She explained the reasons for and consequences of unity and discord in the community. She characterized the rise and fall of anti-Semitism in Indianapolis and the Jewish community's response. The book analyzes the growth and change in synagogue religious observance and membership. In addition, The Jewish Community of Indianapolis studies the development of the Jewish Federation Council, and the role of Jewish institutions in local politics and community relations.

The opening sections of the study describe the growth of the community from the first pioneers who settled in Indianapolis to the establishment, by 1881, of a thriving German-Jewish community. The author detailed the careers of a few individuals as representatives of the community (an excellent technique); a high percentage of the men worked in the retail trade. In 1884 the Jewish population of Indianapolis numbered 250 and was divided between the Americanized Reform German Jews who lived in the wealthy north side of town and the poor Orthodox Eastern Europeans who were recent immigrants and lived on the older south side.

Chapter three examines the south side of Indianapolis from 1881 to 1920, depicting community life, its organizations and institutions, and its relationship with the German Jews and the Hoosier population. There were tensions between the north and south side communities: one of the points of contention was how to treat the Jewish beggar. The Americanized German community thought the beggar could best be helped by social service efforts which would make him self-supporting. Eastern European immigrants, however, saw the beggar as part of their community, to be given individual support, and in return to help the immigrants by allowing them to fulfill their religious obligation of charity.

In 1924, fifty thousand Jews entered the United States; in the following year only ten thousand. The decrease in immigration was the direct result of quotas enacted in 1921 and 1924. This drop along with the nativism of the 1920s had consequences for the Jewish population of Indianapolis. Endelman described the effects in chapter four, "On Native Ground: The Twenties." The issues examined include: Jewish response to nativism, the Ku Klux Klan and anti-Semitism, the changes in the Jewish Federation, cooperation between synagogues, and the growth of secular institutions. This is one of the most perceptive chapters in the book.

The end of immigration and the growth of a native-born population produced by 1929 a growing middle-class community. The Depression slowed this upward process, but, according to Endelman, it did not hit the community harshly because of its middle-class stability.
Throughout the 1930s the community tried to continue its tradition of “taking care of its own,” although it eventually accepted New Deal relief programs. The second crisis of the 1930s for American Jewry was the rise of Nazi Germany. The American Jewish community was divided on how to respond to international events. Endelman concluded that Indianapolis was not as divided as larger cities; because of its small size, Jewish organizations had to cooperate to save themselves. Then the post-war era brought tranquility to Indianapolis Jewry. Three themes characterized the era: the increase of Jewish content in Jewish center activities, the development of larger childhood and adolescent programs, and the formation of Jewish community relations agencies.

The final chapter, “The Six-Day War and Beyond,” concludes that, “Indianapolis Jewry today is a more unified and uniform community than it has been since the original German Jewish settlement of the mid-nineteenth century” (236). One of the explanations for this is an American-born majority—85.9 percent were American-born by 1978. Another reason for this change was the unifying power of the Six-Day War. The Indianapolis community reacted by both supporting Israel and becoming more community conscious. It established new schools and homes for the elderly. The chapter and the book ends with the slogan “We are one.” Endelman sees this as describing American Jewry today. This is my only disappointment with the book; Endelman could have used her insight to produce a more thought-provoking and far-reaching conclusion for the Indianapolis community.

The Jewish Community of Indianapolis is a well-researched and documented narrative and is a substantial addition to the literature. Endelman avoided the common problem of writing a “who’s who” and placed Indianapolis Jewry in the context of American Jewish history, thus making hers an insightful work and excellent reading. This book is recommended for all those interested in community history, Jewish history, and the history of the Midwest.

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Pilgrims In Their Own Land is a history of five hundred years of religion in America. In it Martin E. Marty begins with European roots, concludes with religious trends in the 1980s, and analyzes and describes the great diversity of American religion in between. Marty is probably