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As we did not publish an issue of *TIS* in 2024, the winning 2025 essay appears in this issue. We are delighted to be able to reprint the winning essay from the 2024 prize in this issue, with grateful thanks to the author and publishers.

2024 WINNER:

Mary Ann Irwin, "'Women with Hearts' and the Americanization of Jewish San Francisco, 1850–1880," Pacific Historical Review (2023) 92 (4): 538–575. https://doi.org/10.1525/phr.2023.92.4.538.

JOINT RUNNERS-UP:

Kate Burrows, "The History and Present of Hearing Aid and Cochlear Implant Advertising," *Advertising & Society Quarterly*. https://doi.org/10.1353/asr.2023.a905721.

Christine De Matos, "The Home as a Space for Re-education: Imperialism, Military Occupation, and Housekeeping Manuals," *The International History Review*, 46(3), 291-311. Jan.2024. https://doi.org/10.1080/07075332.2024.2303978.

2025 WINNER:

Susan Roth Breitzer, "Sisterhood was Limited: Jews, Intersectionality, and the Second Wave Feminist Movement." Preprint published online 30 July 2024. Final version published in *The Independent Scholar* Vol. 11 (April 2026):4-20.

JOINT RUNNERS-UP:

Gianncarlo Muschi, "Informality, Recurseo, and Entrepreneurship among Peruvians in Paterson, New Jersey, 1960-2001." April 2023. *Journal of American Ethnic History* 42(3): 73-102. DOI:10.5406/19364695.42.3.03

Mark Danley, "Problems and Possibilities for NACO Armed Forces Access Points: The Cases of Serbia and Yugoslavia." *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly*, *61*(2), 119–188. https://doi.org/10.1080/01639374.2023.2189897

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"WOMEN WITH HEARTS" AND THE AMERICANIZATION OF JEWISH SAN FRANCISCO, 1850–1880

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(California, USA)

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Abstract

For San Francisco's female Jewish pioneers, learning to organize and operate charitable societies was an integral step in their Americanization, or assimilation into American culture. Charity work taught women leadership skills and, at the same time, accustomed their fathers, husbands, and sons to limited forms of female authority within the community. In the process, leaders of San Francisco's first female-led Jewish charities transformed themselves as well as their community. In some cases, male support for women's charitable enterprises marked the spread of American Reform Judaism through San Francisco's pioneer synagogues. In other instances, questions regarding the proper place of women intensified community members' adherence to the traditions of their fathers. Even so, by founding and leading charitable associations through the period 1850–1880, "womenwithhearts" transformed Jewish San Francisco, male and female, foreign- and native-born, helping all to become more fully American. The glory of the San Francisco example is that the sources allow us to watch the process unfold, as the female leaders of benevolent agencies trod paths taking them from Jewish immigrants to Jewish Americans, or from well-intentioned but untrained "ladies bountiful" to what Jacob Marcus Rader called the New Woman, the "Jewish social worker."

Keywords: Jewish women's history, San Francisco, nineteenth century, charity, women's activism, Americanization, Emanu-El, Sherith Israel

In the early morning hours of February 16, 1853, disaster struck the steamship *Independence*. Its passengers were on the final leg of their journey to California, having traveled by river, lake, and donkey on the Nicaragua Route, thence to San Francisco. Sadly, just off the coast of Baja California, the steamer struck a rock. Worse still, the boilers exploded as it sank. One hundred and fifty passengers lost their lives, but 283 survived, most with only the nightclothes on their backs (fig. 1).[1] San Franciscans learned of the disaster several weeks later, but they responded at once, in a manner calculated to succeed: they called on local women to help. On March 31, a local newspaper issued "An Appeal to Woman," imploring the city's "ladies of all countries" to take action on behalf of wreck victims.[2] It was up to local women, editors proclaimed, because so many of the survivors were "women and children… far from their homes and the bosom of their families."[3] Their faith was well placed: within ten days, San Franciscans had raised $2,829 (a little over $102,000 in 2022 dollars) for survivors.[4]

[1] *San Francisco Daily Alta California*, "Loss of the Steamer *Independence*!" April 2, 1853, 1; *New York Times*, "Two Weeks Later," April 26, 1853. All cited newspapers are San Francisco-based unless otherwise noted.
[2] *Daily Alta California*, "Total Loss of the Steamship *Independence*," March 31, 1853, 2.
[3] *Daily Alta California*, "An Appeal to Woman," April 1, 1853, 1.
[4] *Sacramento Daily Union*, "Relief," April 11, 1853, 2.

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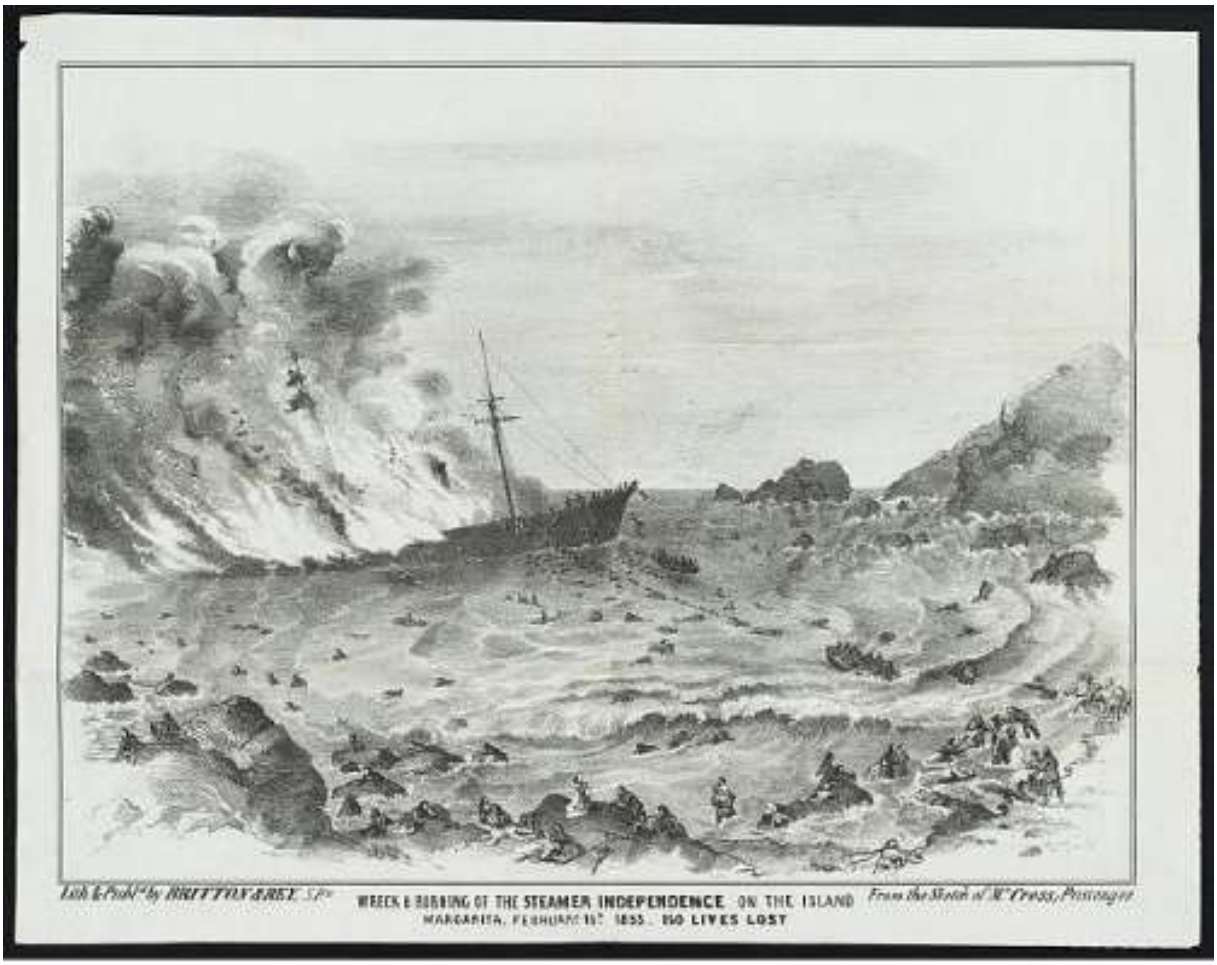

"Wreck & burning of the steamer Independence on the island of Margarita, February 16th, 1853; 150 lives lost; From the sketch of Mr. Cross, passenger" (San Francisco: Britton & Rey, 1853), http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2011661695/

Figure 1. *Newspaper reports about the Independence illustrate the extent to which San Franciscans relied on local women to aid the needy. Source: Britton & Rey, Lithographer, "Wreck & burning of the steamer Independence on the island of Margarita, February 16th, 1853," Library of Congress.*

The San Franciscans who called upon "ladies of all countries" to aid the shipwrecked assumed that all local women were equally prepared to help, ignoring or perhaps not realizing the diversity of languages, religions, and charitable traditions that divided local womenfolk. They did not know how much they were asking of the city's Jewish immigrant women, recent arrivals to the United States and to California. For Jewish newcomers from central and northern Europe, the American tradition of relying on women to relieve the poor was a fairly new concept. Even the American-born daughters of immigrant parents were "greenhorns" in San Francisco, a frontier community that gladly entrusted welfare services to local women, especially services for women and children. When the *Independence* ran aground, the female-run San Francisco Protestant Orphan Asylum was in its second year.[5] Another group of Protestant women that year launched

[5] For San Francisco Protestant Orphan Asylum (SFPOA) history see, among others, SFPOA, *Ninth Annual Report of the San Francisco Orphan Asylum Society* (San Francisco: n.p., 1859), San Francisco History Room, San Francisco Public Library, San Francisco (SFPL), 6; Anna Bissell (Mrs. W. A.) Haight, *Some Reminiscences of the San Francisco Protestant Orphan Asylum* (San Francisco, n.p., 1900),

the San Francisco Ladies' Protection and Relief Society to aid penniless women and their children.[6] That same year, Catholic laywomen held a fair to raise funds to build St. Mary's Cathedral.[7] Local Jewish women did not number in these ranks of organized women.

This study examines the experiences of the Jewish women who founded or supported various charities in San Francisco in the second half of the nineteenth century and compares their activism with that of their non-Jewish peers. Their participation took place in roughly three stages: the pioneer generation of Jewish San Francisco women who set up mutual-aid societies similar to those they had known in Europe (1850–1860); those who established organizations, modeled on those of non-Jewish women's associations, that served Jews as well as non-Jews (1860s–1870s); and those whose service work paralleled and often overlapped with non-Jewish women's organizations, serving the broader community irrespective of nativity, religion, or gender (1870s and beyond). Each stage, with its different level of engagement with the wider society, contributed to their acculturation to American social norms.

But the process reached beyond these individual pioneering women. Their activities drew husbands and other men of the Jewish community into leadership roles in their self-help and benevolent societies. Increased participation in American-style philanthropy by both Jewish women and men paralleled the beginnings of what would become American Reform Judaism. Not coincidentally, members of the growing number of synagogues whose worship more closely resembled Christian forms disproportionately supported the Jewish women's organizations that were adapting to American styles of benevolence. Moreover, the early activism of these Jewish women pioneers, many without formal education or established social status, continued when their educated, American-born daughters built upon the philanthropic foundations that their mothers had laid.

This study departs from earlier scholarship in several ways. First, it follows Dorothee Schneider in defining "Americanization" as more than the settlement house programs of the late nineteenth- to early twentieth centuries.[8] In its public, most frequently discussed form, Americanization meant native-born Americans encouraging recent immigrants to adopt American norms. Far more significant was the private, largely internal form of Americanization which, explains Schneider, occurred "wherever immigrants arrived, settled, and oriented themselves in an English-speaking world and an industrial economy."[9] In other words, this study focuses on immigrants in the process of Americanizing *themselves*.

Unlike most studies of nineteenth-century American women's charities, this article compares associations founded by Jewish, non-Jewish, immigrant, and native-born women. It challenges existing frameworks by lingering at the middle of the nineteenth century, before the mass immigration of eastern European Jews, when these charity leaders were immigrants themselves, and it concerns itself with the decades before American Jewish women organized as social or

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Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, California ("Bancroft"), 2.

[6] As far as I can determine, San Francisco Ladies' Protection & Relief Society (SFLP&RS) founders were all native-born. See SFLP&RS, *Articles of Incorporation* (San Francisco: n.p., 1855), SFLP&RS Records, 1854–1969, MS 3576, California Historical Society, San Francisco ("CHS"). For SFLP&RS history, see Carol Green Wilson, *A History of the Heritage, 1853 – 1970* (San Francisco: Lawton and Alfred Kennedy, 1970).

[7] Bradford F. Luckingham, "Associational Life on the Urban Frontier: San Francisco, 1848–1856" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Davis, 1968) 54; Ruth Shackelford, "To Shield Them from Temptation: 'Child-Saving' Institutions and the Children of the Underclass in San Francisco 1850 –1910" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1991), 326.

[8] Dorothee Schneider, *Crossing Borders: Migration and Citizenship in the Twentieth-Century United States* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011), 151 – 52. For settlement work, see, among others, Allen F. Davis, *Spearheads for Reform: The Social Settlements and the Progressive Movement, 1890 – 1914* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967); Daphne Spain, *How Women Saved the City* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001); Evelyn Bodek Rosen, *The Philadelphia Fels, 1880 – 1920: A Social Portrait* (Teaneck, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2000), 63, 85 –86; Ellen Eisenberg, Ava Fran Kahn, and William Toll, *Jews of the Pacific Coast: Reinventing Community on America's Edge* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2009), 57 –58, 132 –33, 140.

[9] Schneider, *Crossing Borders*, 151.

political feminists.[10] Many students of Jewish American women's associations touch briefly on the first Hebrew Ladies' Benevolent Society, founded in Philadelphia in 1819, then race forward to the National Council of Jewish Women (founded in Chicago in 1893), or to Hadassah (New York, 1912).[11] Casting charity leaders as proto-feminists is a teleology that makes sense when one reads history backwards, but it reveals little about the lived experiences of the women behind these pioneer entities, and misses the impact that organizing these institutions had upon the women themselves or the communities they served.[12]

The benefit of closely studying the activities of Jewish immigrant women in a given community—say, for example, San Francisco—is that doing so allows historians to watch the process of Americanization as it unfolds, as the female leaders of benevolent agencies trod the path that turned them from Jewish immigrants into Jewish Americans. San Francisco is a good site for study because the city's rapid development and dynamic economy, plus residents' willingness to accept Jews with valuable business connections, allowed the transformation to occur in relatively short order. In fact, by the end of the nineteenth century, charity leadership had refashioned the city's well-intentioned but untrained "ladies bountiful" into, in Jacob Marcus Rader's words, "a new woman: the Jewish social worker."[13] Along the way, San Francisco's "women with hearts" helped Jewish San Franciscans—male and female, foreign-born and native-born—to become more fully American.[14]

In reclaiming the history of San Francisco's earliest organized Jewish women, this study reveals immigrant women learning to be Americans, both by adapting European traditions to the American landscape, and by launching the processes by which they, their families, and their community refashioned received ideas about gender and the place of women in Judaism. Changing rituals and practices in the synagogues attended by San Francisco's organized women reveal how changes in women's participation in communal affairs were integral to the Americanization of Judaism in San Francisco.

To quote the scholar Charlotte Bunch, the goal here is to move beyond "add women and stir."[15] Appraising Jewish immigrant women's charitable activities within a specific community longitudinally and broadly, across several decades and in comparison to other women's organizations, challenges older studies of community formation among ethnic groups. Thaddeus C. Radzialowski and Safia F. Haddad demonstrate the impact of organized women in later time periods in their studies of Chicago's Polish and Syrian immigrant communities in the 1890s and 1920s, respectively.[16]

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[10] William Lawrence O'Neill, *Feminism in America: A History* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 1989); Sybil Lipschultz, *Social Feminism, Labor Politics, and the Law: Women, the Law, and the Workplace* (London: Routledge, 2013).

[11] Karla Goldman, *Beyond the Synagogue Gallery: Finding a Place for Women in American Judaism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009), 60. On Hebrew Ladies Benevolent Societies/Associations see, among others, Mark I. Greenberg, "Savannah's Jewish Women and the Shaping of Ethnic and Gender Identity, 1830–1900," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 82, no. 4 (Winter 1998): 751–74; Evelyn Bodek, "'Making Do': Jewish Women and Philanthropy," in *Jewish Life in Philadelphia, 1830–1940,* ed. Murray Friedman (Philadelphia: American Jewish Committee, 1983), 143–162; Gloria Ricci Lothrop, "Strength Made Stronger: The Role of Women in Southern California Philanthropy," *Southern California Quarterly* 71, no. 2/3 (Summer/Fall 1989): 143–94.

[12] On charity leaders as proto-feminists, see Kathleen D. McCarthy, "Parallel Power Structures: Women and the Voluntary Sphere," in *Lady Bountiful Revisited: Women, Philanthropy, and Power*, ed. Kathleen D. McCarthy (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1990). For a rejection of this formulation, see Anne M. Boylan, "Women in Groups: An Analysis of Women's Benevolent Organizations in New York and Boston, 1797–1840," *Journal of American History* 71, No. 3 (December 1984): 52 – 82.

[13] Jacob Marcus Rader, *The American Jewish Woman, 1654–1980* Vol. II (New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1981), 48. Although it is beyond the scope of the present study, similar transformations might have occurred in other new communities with vibrant economies, rapid population growth, and generally tolerant attitudes toward Jews.

[14] Quote from "Caring for the Poor," *San Francisco Daily Examiner*, December 16, 1888, 10.

[15] Charlotte Bunch, quoted in *Feminist Theory Reader: Local and Global Perspectives*, eds. Carole McCann and Seung-kyung Kim (London: Routledge, 2013).

[16] Thaddeus C. Radzialowski, "'Let Us Join Hands': The Polish Women's Alliance," *Review Journal of Philosophy and Social Science* 2, no. 2 (Winter 1977): 183–203; Safia F. Haddad, "The Woman's Role in Socialization of Syrian-Americans in Chicago," in *The Arab Americans: Studies in Assimilation*, eds. Elaine C. Habopian and Add Paden (Wilmette, Ill.: Medina University Press International, 1969), 84–101.

Careful study of immigrant and ethnic women's self-help, charitable, and reform societies in San Francisco and elsewhere reveals unexamined complexities in the processes by which Jews and other immigrant groups adapted to new environments.[17] Students of ethnic and immigration history will benefit from exploring how immigrant gender roles changed when recently arrived women joined together to aid themselves and others.

THE PIONEER GENERATION: IMMIGRANT JEWISH WOMEN AND VOLUNTARY SOCIETIES IN SAN FRANCISCO, 1850–1860

Understanding the processes by which Jewish immigrant women Americanized themselves begins with discussion of social welfare practices in Gold Rush San Francisco (1850 –1880). From about 800 souls in 1848, the city's population soared over 36,000 in 1852. More than half of the city's residents were foreign-born, hailing from Ireland, France, Germany, China, Italy, South America, and other locales around the globe.[18] The city saw a 163 percent population increase, from 56,800 in 1860 to 149,500 in 1870. In the 1870s, local numbers approached 234,000. Such rapid growth naturally created severe social problems, but few, if any, public structures existed to meet the needs of the destitute, sick, or dying.[19]

Recent arrivals, male and female, representing diverse nations, races, and religions, responded by forming voluntary societies to care for their own. In 1860, San Francisco had 27 privately funded voluntary associations providing social welfare services to African Americans, Protestant and Catholic orphans, dependent and delinquent juveniles, a hospital for British expatriates, a home for sailors, and self-help societies for the Irish, French, Italians, Scandinavians, Spaniards, Swiss, Slavs, and, in common parlance, "Hebrews." Between 1848 and 1879, newcomers created at least 103 benevolent and reform organizations.[20] These private associations met the city's everyday health and welfare needs as well as its emergencies.[21]

Responding to their own rising numbers, Jewish San Franciscans likewise founded self-help organizations.[22] Attracted by the city's rapidly expanding economy, they arrived from other U.S. states and points around the world, including England, Alsace, Russia, Australia, and the German states, especially *Württemberg,* Bavaria, and Posen.[23] By the 1870s, Jews numbered 16,000 of the city's population, about 7 to 8 percent of the total, making San Francisco the nation's second-largest Jewish community.[24] They divided into two associations that provided a variety of services. German speakers organized as the Eureka Benevolent Society in October 1850.[25] Sephardic Jews and Polish speakers formed

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[17] See, e.g., Michael Everette Bell, "Regional Identity in the Antebellum South: How German Immigrants Became 'Good' Charlestonians," *South Carolina Historical Magazine* 100, no. 1 (January 1999): 9–28, 12, 18.

[18] Eisenberg et al., *Jews of the Pacific Coast*, 19.

[19] Mary Ann Irwin, "'Going About and Doing Good': The Politics of Benevolence, Welfare, and Gender in San Francisco, 1850–1880," *Pacific Historical Review* 68, no. 3 (August 1999): 365–96.

[20] *LeCount & Strong's City Directory of San Francisco for 1854* (San Francisco: San Francisco Herald, 1854); *Colville's 1856–1857 San Francisco Directory* (San Francisco: Comm. Steam Press, 1857); Harris, Bogardus, and Labatt, *San Francisco City Directory for the Year Commencing October 1856* (San Francisco: Whitton, Towne, 1856); Henry G. Langley, *San Francisco Directory for the Year Commencing July 1858* (San Francisco: Commercial Steam Press, 1858). Hereafter, all city directories dated 1858 or later are "Langley," followed by year of publication.

[21] See, among others, Luckingham, "Associational Life;" Merle Stewart Jaque, "The Origins of Private Benevolence in California, 1769–1869," M.A. thesis, San Diego State College, 1966; Mitchel Roth, "Cholera, Community, and Public Health in Gold Rush Sacramento and San Francisco," *Pacific Historical Review* 66, no. 4 (November 1997): 527–51.

[22] Fred Rosenbaum, *Visions of Reform: Congregation Emanu-El and the Jews of San Francisco, 1849–1999* (San Francisco: Judah L. Magnes Museum, 2000), 6; Gustav Adolf Danziger, "The Jew in San Francisco: The Last Half Century," *Overland Monthly*, Vol. XXV (April 1895): 385–86; Irena Narell, *Our City, The Jews of San Francisco* (San Diego: Howell-North Books, 1981).

[23] Eisenberg et al., *Jews of the Pacific Coast*, 18–20, 24. On Jewish ethnic diversity at mid-century, see Ava F. Kahn and Ellen Eisenberg, "Western Reality: Jewish Diversity During the 'German' Period," *American Jewish History* 92, no. 4 (December 2004): 455–79.

[24] The largest was New York City. Eisenberg et al., *Jews of the Pacific Coast*, 18–20.

[25] Eureka Benevolent Society, *Constitution and Bylaws of the Eureka Benevolent Society, San Francisco, California, Organized*

the First Hebrew Benevolent Society that same year.[26] Founders, like most of the city's Jewish pioneers, were male, and most were bachelors. They delayed marriage until they were financially successful, then imported brides from older communities in the United States or Europe.[27] Their societies provided needed services as well as companionship for lonely men.

Differences in language and worship practices prompted recently arrived Jews to found two separate synagogues. Congregation Emanu-El began in 1851 with members loyal to the *minhag Ashkenazi* ("German custom").[28] Sherith Israel began the same year; many of its members were from Posen.[29] They preferred Polish-language services and the *minhag Polen,* a custom slightly more traditional than *minhag Ashkenazi*.[30] The city's newly arrived immigrant Jewish women likewise divided, following their menfolk into the city's two pioneer congregations.[31] They too would soon found charities of their own.

Additional details about Jewish organizational life merit consideration before turning to the first Jewish women's societies. Like the small number of African Americans lured to San Francisco by the Gold Rush, Jewish newcomers benefited from the presence of an almost universally despised immigrant group, the Chinese, upon whom nativists concentrated much of their vitriol.[32] In addition to white skin and European birth, San Francisco's early Jewish merchants brought valuable commercial connections, which helped them gain early acceptance in what historian Moses Ricshin calls the "unsettled and unstructured West," which offered Jews "a rough-and-ready American welcome" that united diverse newcomers "in bonds of fraternity and solidarity with an ease not matched elsewhere in the country."[33] Adding to their welcome was the Jewish pioneer's determination to care not only for his own, but to liberally support all local charities. As one account puts it, "their gentile neighbors" saw the Jewish pioneer "as a pillar of civil and commercial society," and "among the town's 'best citizens'."[34] The openness of San Francisco society in the Gold Rush era, and residents' respect for the charitably inclined, ensured favorable reception for Jewish charity leaders, male and female.

Adding to the colorful patchwork of entities founded by men of all nations were San Francisco women's associations. Even though men initially outnumbered them by 6.5 to 1, women were quick to organize their own charities.[35] The first

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October 1850, October 2, 1850, n.p., Folder 1, 3, Box 1, Magnes Collection of Jewish Art and Life, BANC MSS 2010/606, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley. Unless otherwise noted, all BANC MSS sources are in the Bancroft Library's Magnes Collection.

[26] First Hebrew Benevolent Society, *Constitution and Bylaws of the First Hebrew Benevolent Society of San Francisco, California, 1862 and 1900, and List of Officers 1853–1900* (San Francisco: L. Rosenthal & Co., 1891), Folder 2, Box 1, BANC MSS 2010/518; Ava F. Kahn, *Jewish Life in the American West* (Berkeley: Heyday Press, 2004), 19.

[27] The precise ratio of Jewish men to women in Gold Rush San Francisco is unknown, but certainly men initially outnumbered women. Jeanne E. Abrams, *Jewish Women Pioneering the Frontier Trail: A History in the American West* (New York: New York University Press, 2006), 6.

[28] Robert Scott Cline, "Community Structure on the Urban Frontier: The Jews of Portland, Oregon, 1849–1887" (M.A. thesis, Portland State University, 1982), xii, at http://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1076&context=open_access_etds, accessed 5-25-19.

[29] Posen was a Polish province that, after 1793, became part of Prussia. Ellen Eisenberg, *Embracing a Western Identity: Jewish Oregonians 1849–1950* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2015), 50–89.

[30] Cline, "Community Structure," xii.

[31] Congregation Emanu-El leaders limited congregation membership to male heads of household until 1921, when female congregants were admitted in their own names. Rosenbaum, *Visions*, 127. More research is needed to determine when other local congregations extended membership to females.

[32] See, e.g., Jean Pfaelzer, *Driven Out: The Forgotten War against Chinese Americans* (New York: Random House, 2007).

[33] Robert W. Cherny, "Patterns of Toleration and Discrimination in San Francisco: The Civil War to World War I," *California Historical Society Quarterly* 73 (1994), 131–41; William Toll, *The Making of an Ethnic Middle Class: Portland Jewry Over Four Generations* (Albany, N.Y.: SUNY Press, 1982), 9, 94; Moses Rischin, "The Jewish Experience in America: A View from the West," in *Jews of the American West*, eds. Moses Rischin and John Livingstong (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1991), 33.

[34] Eisenberg et al., *Jews of the Pacific Coast*, 18–19.

[35] Rosenbaum, *Visions*, 5. According to local directories of this period, sixty benevolent associations were male-led, thirty-eight female-led, four had mixed-sex boards, and one had duplicate male and female boards.

to organize were Protestant women, the wives of four local ministers, who founded California's first charitable society (an orphanage) in 1850.[36] Religious tradition encouraged native-born Protestant women to organize charities, as did the fifty-year legacy of woman-led charity leadership they brought with them to California. In towns and cities across the United States, they wrote constitutions, elected officers, composed annual reports, and raised and distributed funds to aid the sick and poor.[37]

Local Roman Catholic women's charity followed a different trajectory. At mid-century, local bishops throughout the United States directed charitable activities within their own diocese, while orders of women religious performed the work. For their parts, elite and working-class Roman Catholics donated money and volunteered time to these undertakings. As late as 1920, orders of women religious still performed 75 percent of all Catholic-sponsored charity work nationally.[38] In Gold Rush San Francisco, nursing and teaching orders acting under the auspices of the Archdiocese of San Francisco, such as the Sisters of Mercy and Sisters of Charity, managed schools, orphanages, hospitals, and other institutions. Most were foreign-born and, like many local Catholics, Irish.[39] Instead of founding independent, woman-led charities, Catholic laywomen worked behind the scenes. In 1853, for example, the women of St. Mary's Cathedral held a parish fair that netted $7,000 for the church building fund.[40] Six years later, the Sisters of Mercy organized a St. Mary's Ladies' Society. The nuns had two goals: "disseminating piety among the females of the Catholic Church" and orchestrating laywomen's fund-raising activities.[41] Catholic San Francisco laywomen delayed until 1887 before forming an entity independent of church leadership, the Catholic Ladies' Aid Society.[42]

Gold Rush San Francisco's first generation of Jewish immigrant women set yet a third course. Marked differences separated their participation in benevolence work from that of local Protestant and Catholic women, beginning with their understanding of charity. In Judaism, the duty of charity is *tzedakah* (צדקה) which translates as "justice" or "righteousness." *Tzedakah* envisions charity as an ethical obligation and not, as in Christian tradition, an act of generosity.[43] Although Jewish men and women shared equally in the duty of charity, their roles in its administration had not historically been equal. In synagogues throughout northern and central Europe, where most of San Francisco's Jewish pioneers were born, rabbis and male lay leaders had long controlled decisions about social welfare. Synagogue men confined women's roles to the male-led *hevrah kadisha* (burial society), which assigned them only the responsibility for preparing the female dead for burial.[44]

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[36] Irwin, "Going About and Doing Good." See also Anne Firor Scott, *Natural Allies: Women's Associations in American History* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991), 11–79; Nancy F. Cott, *No Small Courage: A History of Women in the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Rosemary Skinner Keller and Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Encylopedia of Women and Religion in North America* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006).

[37] In 1797, for example, New York women formed the Female Society for the Relief of Poor Widows with Small Children. In 1802, it became New York's first charity (male or female led) to incorporate. One year later Philadelphia women drafted a constitution for their Female Association for the Relief of the Sick Poor. In 1812, another New York group founded the Association for the Relief of Respectable, Aged, Indigent Females. Lori D. Ginzberg, *Women and the Work of Benevolence: Morality, Politics, and Class in the Nineteenth-Century United States* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 49, note 27; 39; 73, note 12.

[38] Gwendolyn Mink and Alice O'Connor, *Poverty in the United States: An Encyclopedia of History, Politics, and Policy*, Volume 1 (Goleta CA: ABC-CLIO, 2004), 131.

[39] On the predominance of Irish immigrants, many of whom were Catholic, in San Francisco, see Robert A. Burchell, *The San Francisco Irish, 1848–1880* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980). I was able to trace the ancestry of only a handful of San Francisco nuns, as they generally took new names upon entering their orders. Some personal details appear in histories of the Sisters of Charity and Sisters of Mercy. See, among others, Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, "San Francisco," at http://www.daughtersofcharity.com/who-we-are/heritage/san-francisco/, accessed 5-29-19.

[40] Luckingham, "Associational Life, 54.

[41] The society raised enough money in the early 1860s to build "St. Mary's Hall, a wooden building 60 x 30 feet" adjoining St. Mary's Hospital. Langley, 1864, 26, 560.

[42] Mary Roberts Coolidge, Cora Bell Kimball, and George Thomas Cochran, *A Directory of the Charitable and Benevolent Institutions of San Francisco* (San Francisco: Phillips, Smyth & Van Orden, 1901), 33.

[43] Rabbi Hayim Halevy Donin, *To Be a Jew: A Guide to Jewish Observance in Contemporary Life* (New York: Basic Books, 1972).

[44] Benjamin Maria Baader, *Gender, Judaism, and Bourgeois Culture in Germany, 1800–1870* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press,

The European tradition of synagogue-based charity began to shift in the nineteenth century. Adapting *tzedakah* to fit changing local needs, Jewish women formed independent *hevrot* and expanded their societies' formal duties to include the kinds of charity work common to non-Jewish women. In 1840 London, for example, Louise Rothschild founded the Ladies' Visiting Society and charged members with caring for needy, sick, and dying Jews.[45] Jewish women formed similar societies in France and Germany that combined the traditional task of tending the female dead with something new, distributing aid to the poor.[46]

These were the relatively new charitable traditions that Jewish immigrant women brought with them to San Francisco in the 1850s and 1860s. The outlines of their first local organizations support the findings of historian Rudolf Glanz, who argues that European Jewish women transplanted Old World practices whole to America, then adapted their societies to meet local requirements as needed.[47] It was by these and other small steps that San Francisco's Jewish immigrant women started upon their paths to Americanization.

In August 1855, two groups launched the city's first independent, woman-led Jewish entities. Each group adopted the name "*Israelitischer Frauen Verein*" then translated the name differently into English. One Anglicized its name as "Hebrew Ladies Benevolent Association" (HLBA).[48] The other became the "Ladies' Society of Israelites" (LSI).[49] Both were mutual-aid societies, meaning that members paid into a fund from which members might draw in times of need. Each raised money through member fees and monthly dues: HLBA charged an initiation fee of $1.00 (about $32 in 2022 dollars), then monthly dues of 50¢. LSI's initiation fee was $2.00 with monthly dues of $1.00[50] (see Table 1 following article).

In 1850s San Francisco, numerous challenges stood between HLBA and LSI women and their recognition as Jewish community leaders. Founders hailed primarily from northern and central Europe. Only one—Pauline Dinkelspiel—was native-born (Table 1). Few spoke English fluently; almost all spoke English as a second language. German was the first language of some, while others' native tongues were Polish or Yiddish. HLBA's first president Tandler, was born in Germany, as were LSI's Babette Regensburger, Julia Mayblum, and Sarah Bloomingdale.[51] HLBA initially printed its

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2006), 171; Goldman, *Beyond the Synagogue Gallery*, 64.

[45] Paula Hyman, *Gender and Assimilation, in Modern Jewish History: The Roles and Representation of Women* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1995), 30–32. *Hevrot* is the plural of *hevrah*.

[46] Benjamin Maria Baader, "Rabbinic Study, Self-Improvement, and Philanthropy: Gender and the Refashioning of Jewish Voluntary Associations in Germany, 1750–1870,"; in *Philanthropy, Patronage, and Civil Society,* ed. Thomas Adam (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004); Tobias Brinkmann, "Ethnic Difference and Civic Unity: A Comparison of Jewish Communal Philanthropy in Nineteenth-Century German and U.S. Cities," in Ibid. At midcentury, private individuals in Germany had begun to form voluntary associations with constitutions, bylaws, annual reports, etc., but I do not know if those forms were common among European Jewish women's societies. Andreas Richter and Anna Katharina Gollan, "Charitable Organisations in Germany: Overview," Thomson Reuters Practical Law, at https://uk.practicallaw.thomsonreuters.com/3-632-5987?transitionType=Default&contextData=(sc.Default)&firstPage=true&bhcp=1#co_anchor_a429246, accessed 5-27-20.

[47] Rudolf Glanz, *The German Woman in America: Two Female Immigrant Generations, 1820–1929*, Volume II (New York: KTAV Publishing, 1977), 125.

[48] *Israelitischer Frauen Verein* [Hebrew Ladies' Benevolent Association] of San Francisco, *Constitution & Bylaws of the Israelitischer Frauen Verein of San Francisco, Organized August 12, 1855*, n.p., n.d., Folder 2, Box 1, BANC MSS 2010/606The HLBA later took the name Ladies' *United* Hebrew Benevolent Society (LUHBS). LUHBS, *Constitution of the Ladies United Hebrew Benevolent Society with a List of Officers from Date of its Organization [August 1855] and List of Members* (San Francisco: M. Weiss, 1876), Folder 2, Box 1, BANC MSS 2010/606.

[49] No internal records survive. City directories include Ladies' Society of Isrealites (LSI) listings with names of officers and trustees, frequency, place, and times of meeting, and numbers of dues-paying members. LSI later changed its name to "Jewish Ladies' Relief Society." "Year of Charity Work Successfully Closes: Jewish Ladies Relief Society Holds 45th Annual Meeting and Election of Officers," *San Francisco Call,* January 17, 1902, 12; Jewish Ladies' Relief Society, "Forty-Eighth Annual Report [1904–1905]," January 25, 1905, n.p., Folder 2, Box 1, BANC MSS 2010/606.

[50] HLBA, *Constitution & Bylaws*, 9.

[51] Information about officers' nativity and family relationships found in census records for 1860, 1870, and 1880, and city directories.

constitution in German and conducted meetings in that language.[52] Even foreign-born leaders who had been in the United States for years, like Fanny Tandler, did not necessarily speak English fluently.[53] As students of formal Americanization programs have observed, immigrant wives were often slower to master the language than their husbands, for whom success depended upon language proficiency.[54]

The city's newness compelled society leaders to be flexible in proposing services. Recognizing that calls for aid would be unpredictable, LSI founders simply promised that they would assist "Hebrew women under all circumstances of need."[55] The HLBA's commitment was similarly broad: "The object of this Association shall be to relieve persons in sickness, poverty and distress, and to respectively assist at and to the expenses for their burials."[56] Both groups offered women the comfort of Jewish sisters in times of distress. HLBA's constitution bound volunteers to visit ailing members at home and to "render them assistance." If leaders found the society's funds inadequate to meet members' wants, they promised to enlist the "other charitable societies in this city" to ensure that the needy received proper care.[57] Membership meant that HLBA women would not face crises alone. LSI went even further, extending its services beyond members to any needy Jewish woman in the city. In its 1863 directory listing, LSI promised to aid "persons in sickness, poverty and distress," "to attend the dying, and to bury the dead females of the Israelitish faith."[58]

These services were important in a community with so few adult Jewish women. Indeed, both groups offered services that leaders themselves might need. A twenty-year old bride when she became LSI's first treasurer, German-born Sarah Bloomingdale's only family in San Francisco was husband Emanuel.[59] Julia Mayblum likewise had no local family. Born in Bavaria, she and husband Moritz reached San Francisco by way of South Carolina. When she joined LSI's board in 1861, Julia's closest female relation was her three-year old daughter.[60] During her first year as HLBA president, Fanny Tandler's only female relations in San Francisco were her daughters, the eldest of whom was twelve.[61]

Leaders faced time constraints as well. Several of the women discussed here eventually became wealthy, but most were not when they arrived. Many were needed in their family businesses, such as LSI's first president, Babette Regensburger. Husband Henry and his business partner, David Stern, could not have managed their business, the St. Nicholas Hotel (fig. 2), without their wives' labor.[62] In 1860, the St. Nicholas was home to David and Caroline Stern, the Regensburgers,

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[52] Eisenberg et al., *Jews of the Pacific Coast*, 42.

[53] The 1850 U.S. census shows Tandler in Louisville, Kentucky, in 1850 with three children, one nine years old, all born in Kentucky. *1850 United States Federal Census, Louisville District 2, Jefferson, Kentucky*; Roll: *206*; Page: *215b*xxx (hereafter "U.S. Census," followed by city, state, year).

[54] Elliott Robert Barkan, *Immigrants in American History: Arrival, Adaptation, and Integration* (Goleta, Cal.: ABC-CLIO, 2013), 205.

[55] Langley, 1862, 477.

[56] HLBA, *Constitution*, 3.

[57] HLBA, *Constitution*, 24.

[58] HLBA, *Constitution*, 3; Langley, 1863.

[59] The 1856 directory lists only one Bloomingdale (Emanuel). According to the 1870 census, Sarah's first child was born in California in 1858. Before coming to San Francisco, Emanuel Bloomingdale lived in St. Louis, Missouri, where he became a naturalized citizen. Find A Grave Index, "Sarah Bloomingdale," http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi; and census data; Ancestry.com, U.S. Census, 1870; San Francisco, California; Roll: M593_79; Page: 170B; Family History Library Film: 545578. California State Library. Sacramento, Cal.; Great Registers, 1866-1898; Collection Number: 4-2A; CSL Roll Number: 44; FHL Roll Number: 977099.

[60] Only one listing for Mayblum (Moritz) appears in the 1861 city directory. The 1860 census found Moritz in San Francisco with Julia and daughter Clara, born in California in 1858.

[61] The 1856 city directory listed only one Tandler (Abraham). In 1850 the Tandlers shared a home with business partner Jacob Lang, his wife, and their children. The Lang and Tandler families arrived together in San Francisco aboard the steamer *Cornelia* in March 1853. Thus Fanny knew at least one adult Jewish woman in San Francisco when she co-founded HLBA. U.S. Census, 1850; Louisville District 2, Jefferson, Kentucky; Roll: 206; Page: 215B; San Francisco Ship Passenger Lists Vol. I [1850–1864], Rasmussen, Louis J. San Francisco Ship Passenger Lists Vol. I [1850–1864], Baltimore, MD, USA: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1978.

[62] In this era, San Francisco was home to two David Sterns. One was born in Bavaria in 1820, emigrated to New York City, married Fanny Strauss (sister of pant-maker Levi Strauss), and arrived in San Francisco in 1853. The second David Stern, innkeeper husband of LSI president Caroline, was born in Baden in 1827 and came to California by way of Texas. Intriguingly, the 1859 directory

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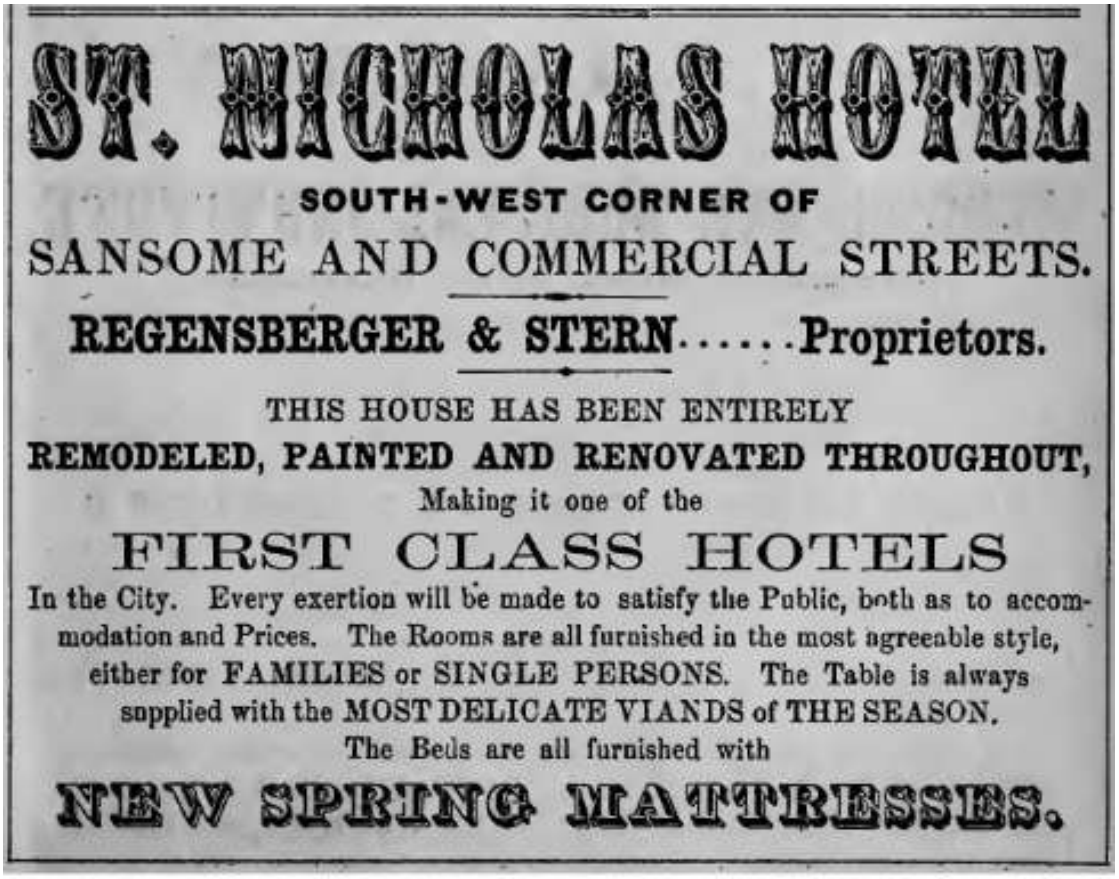
their combined six children aged one to ten years, and fifty-one lodgers. Babette, Caroline, and a staff of six provided all the comforts of home, including meals, to paying guests as well as their own families.[63] The women also maintained a kosher kitchen that lured single men to their table with advertisements for "the most delicate viands of the season."[64]



ST. NICHOLAS HOTEL

SOUTH-WEST CORNER OF

SANSOME AND COMMERCIAL STREETS.

REGENSBERGER & STERN.....Proprietors.

THIS HOUSE HAS BEEN ENTIRELY

REMODELED, PAINTED AND RENOVATED THROUGHOUT,

Making it one of the

FIRST CLASS HOTELS

In the City. Every exertion will be made to satisfy the Public, both as to accommodation and Prices. The Rooms are all furnished in the most agreeable style, either for FAMILIES or SINGLE PERSONS. The Table is always supplied with the MOST DELICATE VIANDS of THE SEASON.

The Beds are all furnished with

NEW SPRING MATTRESSES.

Henry J. Langley, The San Francisco Directory for the Year Commencing July, 1860 (San Francisco: Valentine & Co., 1860), 517.

***Figure 2**. Advertisement for St. Nicholas Hotel in San Francisco city directory for 1860. Source: Henry G. Langley,* The San Francisco Directory for the Year Commencing July 1860 *(San Francisco: Valentine & Co., 1860), 517.*

identifies Henry Regensburger and "C. Stern" (e.g., Caroline, not David) as the hotel's proprietors. U.S. census lists for Texas 1850, California 1852 state census, and U.S. census for 1860; Langley, 1859, 232.

[63] In 1860, U.S. census-takers listed St. Nicholas residents' names, including those of innkeepers and their families. In 1870, census-takers identified David's occupation as "keeps boarding house," and entered ditto marks below for Caroline's occupation. This was atypical for the era: census-takers usually identified wives' occupation as "keeping house." This suggests that the Sterns identified Caroline as co-manager of the boarding house. U.S. Census, 1860, San Francisco, California; Roll: M653_67; Page: 475; Image: 475; Family History Library Film: 803067; U.S. Census 1880; San Francisco, California; Roll: 76; Family History Film: 1254076; Page: 359A; Enumeration District: 143; Image: 0676.

[64] Langley, 1859, 187; 1860, 209.

Other founders were equally pressed for time, since most were wives and mothers who could not afford paid household help.[65] Thirty-four when she became LSI's first president, Regensburger bore eight, possibly nine children (not all survived).[66] Thirty-year-old Sarah Rich juggled her duties as HLBA's first treasurer with four children under the age of four. HLBA's Charlotte Castle was a nineteen-year-old bride when she arrived in San Francisco in 1854; she bore nine children over the next two decades.[67] LSI's treasurer Bloomingdale produced six children between 1855 and 1865, as did LSI vice president Leah Sutro. When she agreed to serve HLBA in 1855, Caroline Wolf was a nineteen-year-old bride with a six-month-old baby. In 1867, her last year as an LSI director, Caroline had eight children aged one to twelve years.[68] Louisianian Dinkelspiel, who came to San Francisco in 1861 as a seventeen-year-old bride, had four children under the age of five when she joined the LSI board in 1868. By 1900, she had borne nine children, although only seven survived.[69] Despite these challenges, in 1855, Jewish immigrant women founded San Francisco's first woman-led mutual-aid societies and created services that they and other women surely needed. San Franciscans clearly valued these organizations since both continued to serve the community for the next sixty years.[70]

BECOMING "LADIES BOUNTIFUL": THE AMERICANIZATION OF JEWISH WOMEN'S AID ORGANIZATIONS

Local Jewish immigrant women embarked on their next phase of associational life in the 1860s, when they created two explicitly philanthropic organizations. The new entities opened to Jewish immigrant women the role of "ladies bountiful," a position already familiar to leaders of elite native-born Christian women's associations. The new entities illustrate historian Karla Goldman's observation that American Jewish women's associations incorporated "forms offered by the American environment" to blend Old and New World models.[71] In the process, local charity leaders broadened their engagement within the Jewish community and furthered their own processes of self-acculturation.

In April 1864, twenty-five local women founded "for benevolent purposes" the Association of the Daughters of Israel (ADI), which collected funds "to assist widows and orphans."[72] Founders were the wives of well-established businessmen: ADI's first president, for example, was Getta Scholle, whose husband Jacob was a partner in Scholle & Bros., a New York–based company that imported and manufactured clothing and dry goods.[73] ADI's first secretary was married to Benjamin Hagan, Congregation Emanu-El lay-leader and salesman with W. Steinhart Bros.[74] Louisa Steinhart, whose husband William was the "W" in W. Steinhart Bros., was ADI's treasurer in 1867.[75] The ADI remained active in San Francisco through 1880. Its existence reflected the growing prosperity of the city's pioneer generation as well as its assimilation of American patterns of elite, woman-led charity.

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[65] The exceptions were Sophie Waldrow Cohen and Rachel Behrendt. See Table 1.

[66] Comparison of census data in 1850 Texas, California's 1852 state census, and the 1860 U.S. census suggest the death of at least one Regensburger child. Child mortality rates were high among the city's pioneer Jewish families. In 1860, Emanu-El lay-leader Henry Seligman counted 18 child deaths among the congregation's 227 families. U.S. Census 1850; Rio Grande, Texas; Roll: M432_909; Page: 509A; Image: 57; California State Census 1852; Roll #: 4; Repository Collection #: C144:4; Page: 415; Line: 29; U.S. Census 1860, San Francisco, California; Roll: M653_67; Page: 475; Image: 475; Family History Library Film: 803067; Kahn, *Jewish Voices*,179.

[67] Birthplace data derived from U.S. Censuses for 1850, 1860, 1870, 1880, and 1900, and California State Census of 1852.

[68] Information on HLBA and LSI founders' ages, nativity, and children found in 1850, 1860, 1870, and 1880 U.S. census records.

[69] Kahn, *Jewish Voices*, 252; Rosenbaum, *Visions*, 57; Meyer, *Western Jewry*, 86; Langley, 1868, 1869; U.S. Census, 1870, San Francisco, California.

[70] In 1915, the (male-led) Eureka Benevolent Society absorbed HLBA and LSI. Federation of Jewish Charities, *Ninth Annual Report of the Federation of Jewish Charities, December 31, 1918* (San Francisco: n.p.), 1.

[71] Goldman, *Beyond the Synagogue Gallery,* 60.

[72] Langley, 1865, 606; 1871, 876. No internal records survive. Its first directory listing appears in 1865, the last in 1880. Despite the timing, ADI listings do not mention the Civil War.

[73] Jacob and William lived in San Francisco, brother Abraham in New York. Langley, 1865, 392.

[74] Langley, 1865, 606, 207. Listings for Benjamin and Mrs. Hagan placed them at the same address.

[75] Langley, 1867, 666.

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Another explicitly philanthropic association, the Hebrew Ladies' Sewing Society (HLSS), appeared in April 1869.[76] Leaders used donations and members' dues to purchase materials to be made into clothing and household goods. The women met every Wednesday at a local hall and produced the finished goods themselves, which they distributed free to "disabled, unprotected and needy persons," regardless of religion or gender.[77] HLSS women met weekly well into the twentieth century.

The HLSS represents the second phase in the self-acculturation of San Francisco's Jewish immigrant women. Sewing circles abounded throughout the United States, but not among local Jewish organizations. HLSS founders likely borrowed wholesale from another local group, the San Francisco Ladies' Depository, founded in 1866.[78] Ladies' Depository managers raised funds via donations and member dues to purchase cloth and notions but, unlike HLSS, Depository women did not make the goods themselves. Instead they distributed the materials to needy women to finish at home and then sell in the Depository store.[79] HLSS women would certainly have known of the group: local newspapers routinely praised it, encouraging readers to join and to shop at its store.[80] The HLSS reveals Jewish immigrant women adapting American forms of benevolence to suit their own needs: weekly meetings gave Jewish women occasion to socialize with women like themselves while each fulfilled her duty of *tzedakah*.

HLSS leadership in the 1870s also reveals the growing complexity of associational life among American Jewish women. In 1873, the president of San Francisco's HLSS, Maryland-born Lina Hecht, lived in Boston.[81] Day-to-day management of the group fell to her San Francisco vice president, German immigrant Sarah Sloss.[82] The two women became transcontinental conduits of information. In 1872, for example, San Francisco's HLSS staged a "Calico Ball," an elegant affair in which tuxedoed men vied to outbid each other for handmade goods crafted by HLSS women. A few years later, Lina borrowed the Calico Ball fund-raiser idea for Boston's HLSS.[83] On either coast, the HLSS shows Jewish women—both native- and foreign-born—adopting the social welfare strategies prevalent among women of other faiths.

Yet real differences existed between organizations founded by native-born Christians and Jewish immigrants. An excellent example is San Francisco's First Hebrew Ladies' Mutual Benefit Association, founded by a group of Jewish men in January 1864 to care for ailing Jewish women. In their first directory listing founders promised to provide "ladies of the Hebrew faith" with "a physician and medicine," to pay weekly benefits to the sick, and to cover members' funeral expenses. By 1872, the organization boasted 116 dues-paying members; it continued operations through the turn of the century.[84] The group was not unusual among American Jews: men elsewhere in the United States also organized to aid needy Jewish women. In 1854, for example, men founded the New Orleans Association for Relief of Jewish Widows

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[76] Langley, 1873, 859. No internal records survive. According to city directories, the organization was founded in December 1869.

[77] Langley, 1873, 1868. On American women's sewing societies, see Scott, *Natural Allies*, 52–53.

[78] Two groups called HLSS were founded in 1869 in Boston and San Francisco, but I am unsure which is oldest. The Boston group was inactive in 1878, when Lina Hecht revived it. Jonathan D. Sarna, Ellen Smith, Scott-Martin Kosofsky, *The Jews of Boston* (Boston: Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Greater Boston, 1995), 223; Ellen Smith, "Lina Frank Hecht, 1848–1921," Jewish Women's Archive, Encyclopedia, at http://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/hecht-lina-frank, accessed 5-29-19.

[79] Ladies' Depository, *Annual Report of the Ladies' Depository, Constitution and Rules for the Government of the Ladies' Depository of San Francisco* (San Francisco: Edward Bosqui, 1867), CHS.

[80] Between January 1867 and October 1870, the *Daily Alta California* published thirty-nine appeals for volunteers and advertisements for sale of Ladies' Depository merchandise, typically on the first page. See, e.g., "Ladies' Depository," March 28, 1867, 1; "The Ladies' Depository: Annual Report of the Managers, Financial Matters, Etc.," November 9, 1869, 1; "Annual Report of the Ladies' Depository," November 6, 1870, 1.

[81] Lina's husband Jacob was one of four brothers and relations (Abraham, Isaac, Marcus H., and Louis Hecht Jr.) engaged in bicoastal commerce in Boston and San Francisco as Hecht Brothers Co., manufacturers and dealers in leather, bindings, boots, and shoes. Louis Jr. was also a partner in Buckingham & Hecht, wholesale boot manufacturers., 1873, 295, 123.

[82] Sarah's husband Louis was partner with Lewis Gerstle in Alaska Commercial Co. Rosenbaum, *Visions*, 58, 62.

[83] *Daily Alta California*, "Calico Invitation Ball," February 10, 1872, 2.

[84] No internal records survive. City directories include the group from 1867 through 1905, always with male directors. The group does not appear in directories published after 1905.

and Orphans of the Jewish Faith.[85] Between 1848 and 1860, men in New York City likewise formed many Jewish benevolent societies, often to aid needy women. In each case, membership was restricted to women but only men were officers.[86] Yet the First Hebrew Ladies' Mutual Benefit Association had no peers among Christian charities in Gold Rush San Francisco, where male—and female-led entities consistently formed same-sex organizations to care for members of their own sex, especially in medical matters.[87] Only the European custom of male control over communal affairs can explain the anomaly of a male-led San Francisco voluntary association providing health-care services to women.

When Jewish immigrant women organized their first local charities in 1850s and 1860s San Francisco, they were not necessarily thinking about Americanizing themselves or others. And yet this is what happened. For example, at mid-century, American custom dictated that white, middle-class married women identify publicly by their husband's names rather than their own. In 1855, native-born Sarah Allen, president of the Ladies' Depository, used her husband's initials to identify as "Mrs. L.H. Allen."[88] In contrast, in 1856, Bavaria-born Babette Regensburger, LSI's first president, gave directory compilers her own name, "B. Regensburger," rather that of husband Henry.[89] Local directories published the first name of HLBA's Fanny Tandler through the seven years of her presidency.[90] In 1859, LSI's Amelia Sutro shared her first name rather than that of husband Adolph.[91] In time, however, the newcomers adapted American forms. After 1862, Fanny Tandler was always "Mrs. A. Tandler." In 1865, ADI's Getta Scholle gave her own initial, but thereafter she was "Mrs. Jacob Scholle."[92] From the 1860s forward, LSI and HLBA leaders appeared in city directories demurely cloaked behind their husbands' names.

Marital status suggests another point of comparison between charities founded by women of different faiths. Irrespective of religion or nativity, women faced legal difficulties transacting business in their married names, even in the community-property state of California.[93] This is why the native-born women who founded the San Francisco Protestant Orphan Asylum Society named male trustees to handle its legal affairs, as did the San Francisco Ladies Protection & Relief Society.[94] When Jewish immigrant women organized their own self-help and charitable agencies, they followed the lead of their Protestant peers and named men to their boards.[95]

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[85] Bauman, "Southern Jewish Women," 34–78; 60–61, note 12.

[86] Nathan M. Kaganoff, "Organized Jewish Welfare Activity in New York City (1848–1860)," *American Jewish Historical Quarterly* 56, no. 1 (September 1966): 27–61, 33.

[87] Rickey Hendricks, "Feminism and Maternalism in Early Hospitals for Children: San Francisco and Denver, 1875–1915," *Journal of the West* 32 (1993): 61–69.

[88] Sarah Allen was at least a third-generation American, born in New York to New York–born parents. U.S. Census, 1880; San Francisco, California; Roll: 74; Family History Film: 1254074; Page: 48D; Enumeration District: 063; Image: 0531; Find A Grave, "Sarah H. DeWitt Allen," at http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=139556071&ref=acom, accessed 5-29-19.

[89] Harris, 1856, 130, 503. Custom decreed that widows might use their own first names. For example, Mathilda Esberg's first name never appeared in a city directory before her husband's 1896 death. Thereafter, city directories included her first and last names, plus "widow."

[90] Harris, 1856, 130.

[91] Langley, 1859, 389. Amelia Harris wed Adolph Sutro in 1855. William R. Huber, *Adolph Sutro: King of the Comstock Lode and Mayor of San Francisco* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 2020).

[92] Langley, 1867, 670.

[93] California's 1849 constitution included protections for married women's property rights but subsequent legislation and case law undermined those protections. Donna C. Schuele, "'None Could Deny the Eloquence of This Lady': Women, Law, and Government in California, 1850–1890," in *Taming the Elephant: Politics, Government, and Law in Pioneer California*, eds. John F. Burns, Richard J. Orsi, and Marlene Smith-Baranzini (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 169–98.

[94] Lecount & Strong, 1854, 258. San Francisco Ladies' Protection & Relief Society, *Constitution and Bylaws with a List of Members, August 4, 1853* (San Francisco: n.p., 1854); *Articles of Incorporation* (San Francisco: n.p., 1855). According to U.S. census records, SFPOA founders were all native-born.

[95] HLBA, *Constitution & Bylaws*; LUHBS, *Constitution*. I am not sure if LSI began with male trustees, but after 1862 (the year LSI incorporated), directory listings name male trustees. Langley, 1862, 561.

ORTHODOXY, REFORM, AND FEMALE-DOMINATED CHARITY IN JEWISH SAN FRANCISCO FROM THE 1870S ONWARD

In the 1850s, Jewish immigrant women embarked on their first phase as San Francisco community leaders, launching organizations based on European models. In the 1860s and 1870s, as they absorbed new patterns of charitable activism, they broadened their engagement in Jewish community affairs. Yet Jewish women's path to local civic engagement remained different from that of women of other faiths. Nothing better illustrates this difference than the state's first orphanages. As previously mentioned, in October 1850 local Protestant women met to discuss the need for an orphanage. Six months later, nine orphans moved into the newly opened asylum, built entirely by private funds raised by the women themselves.[96] Six days after the Protestants met, the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul spurred local Catholics to build their own orphanage. The Roman Catholic Orphan Asylum opened two years later, operated by the Sisters under the direction of the Archdiocese of San Francisco.[97]

Although Jewish orphans surely existed, it took Jewish San Franciscans two decades longer than neighbors of other faiths to found the state's first Jewish orphanage, at least in part because the decision was in male, rather than female, hands (fig 3).[98] In January 1869, the fraternal order B'nai B'rith announced plans to build a combined orphanage and old folks' home, hoping, in part, to reduce the expense of supporting deceased members' widows and orphans.[99] Disagreements within the community stalled opening the orphanage for several years. At last, in September 1872, the Pacific Hebrew Orphan Asylum (PHOA) opened with nine residents.[100] The need for such a facility was soon apparent: within two years, the PHOA housed forty-two children.[101]

Divisions within Jewish San Francisco account for that community's delay in founding an orphanage. Language and ethnicity were sticking points, as were doctrinal disagreements. Non-Jewish San Franciscans seemed largely unaware of the differences between themselves and their Jewish neighbors. Indeed, local men were so accustomed to woman-run orphanages that, when the PHOA opened, city directory compiler Henry G. Langley simply assumed that Jewish women were in charge. Langley incorrectly identified PHOA in 1872 and 1873 as one of five "noble organizations … controlled by ladies" in San Francisco.[102]

However, once local men agreed to organize the PHOA, Jewish immigrant women swept in and began actively caring for the orphans. Even before the PHOA opened, members of the Hebrew Ladies' Sewing Society decided to focus solely on sewing for orphans.[103] Others organized as the PHOA Ladies' Visiting Committee. For immigrant women with little formal education, the PHOA Visiting Committee was the ideal charity, providing a new yet comfortably familiar way to performing their duty to serve those in need. For some women, the orphanage provided their first entry into community service. In 1873, Louisa Wormser, a thirty-eight-year-old wife with two older children living at home, joined the Ladies' Visiting Committee.[104] She served alongside forty-two-year-old Hannah Gerstle, mother of six. When she joined the committee in 1874, Hannah Walter was a twenty-six-year-old mother with two young children.[105] She devoted the next thirty years to caring for orphanage children.

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[96] Irwin, "Going About and Doing Good," 30.
[97] James Flamant, "Child-Saving Charities in this Big Town," *San Francisco Morning Call*, May 28, 1893, 18.
[98] Reena Sigman Friedman, *These Are Our Children: Jewish Orphanages in the United States, 1880–1925* (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1994).
[99] International Order of B'Nai B'rith, Grand Lodge No. 4, *Proceedings of the Sixth Annual Meeting, January 17, 1869* (San Francisco: Hebrew Observer, 1870), 11.
[100] The first PHOA facility was located in rented quarters at 1517–1519 Mason Street. Pacific Hebrew Orphan Asylum (PHOA), *Synopsis of First Annual Report, 1871–1872*, 3–4, Folder 5, Box 1, BANC MSS 2010/606; Langley, 1872, 481.
[101] PHOA, *Synopsis*, 3–4.
[102] Langley, 1872, 52.
[103] PHOA, *Second Annual Report of the Pacific Hebrew Orphan Asylum & Home Society for the Fiscal Year 1872–1873* (San Francisco: n.p., 1873), 10.
[104] Information about leaders' ages and families drawn from 1870 and 1880 U.S. censuses.
[105] U.S. Census, 1870; San Francisco, California, Roll: M593_85; Page: 840B; Image: 258; Family History Library Film: 545584.

Figure 3. *The Pacific Hebrew Orphan Asylum, circa 1900. It occupied the block bounded by Hayes, Grove, and Scott streets. Courtesy of Jewish Family & Children's Services of San Francisco, The Peninsula, Marin and Sonoma Counties*

Pioneer charity leaders also became orphanage visitors. In 1877, LSI treasurer Babette Heller added PHOA visitor to that work.[106] Delia Fleishhacker, thirty-four-year old mother of six and president of the Hebrew Ladies' Sewing Society, orchestrated PHOA fund-raisers.[107] Sarah Sloss likewise entered public life via the orphanage. She joined the HLSS the year it decided to focus on sewing for the orphans. Thirty-seven years old, wife and mother of four, Sloss had delayed charity work until her youngest was four years old.[108] She then left servants in charge of her household and began an earnest charity career thirty-five years long.[109] The PHOA shows San Francisco's first generation of Jewish immigrant women embarking upon form of public engagement that historians call "maternalism," wherein women extended their domestic responsibilities for nurturing the young into the community at large.[110]

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[106] Langley, 1873; PHOA, *Sixth Annual Report PHOA... Fiscal Year 1876–1877* [September 1877], n.p., Folder 5, Box 1, BANC MSS 2010/606.

[107] PHOA, *Sixth Annual Report*.

[108] Langley misidentified HLSS vice president Sarah Sloss as "Mrs. L. Schloss" in Langley, 1873, 859. Husband Louis Sloss appears in the 1873 directory, but no one named "L. Schloss."

[109] PHOA, *Fourth Annual Report PHOA ... Fiscal Year 1874–1875* (San Francisco: n.p., 1875), Folder 5, Box 1, WJHC Collection 78/01.

[110] See, e.g., Irwin, "Going About and Doing Good," 366; Yvonne Zylan, "Maternalism Redefined: Gender, the State, and the Politics

Doctrinal and language differences certainly factored into the years that passed between the founding of Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish orphanages. But the most telling difference between these communities of faith was male support—or lack of it—for female leadership. The closer Jewish males clung to religious orthodoxy, the less likely they were to accept feminine control over social welfare services. Indeed, to track male support for local Jewish women's charities (Table 1) is to mark the path of American Reform Judaism as it moved through San Francisco.

San Francisco's Congregation Emanu-El was the first to move toward reform. Among other things, this included Rabbi Elkan Cohn's 1860 decision to eliminate the *mechitsa* (partition) that separated females from males in the synagogue and to switch to mixed-gender seating, which had long been the custom among Protestants and Catholics. Cohn chose a Sabbath service to introduce the change, explaining that Judaism had far too long "excluded women… from many privileges to which they are justly entitled."[111]

Congregation Emanu-El lay-leaders took reform one step further when they publicly endorsed Jewish women's societies. From 1855to 1880, ten Emanu-El lay-leaders ratified woman-led social welfare activities by serving as HLBA and LSI trustees.[112] Their wives were even more enthusiastic: in the same period, eighteen Emanu-El wives served on the boards of Jewish women's groups, often for multiple terms.[113]

It was a different story at Congregation Sherith Israel, which retained elements of orthodoxy through the 1860s. A loosening began in April 1870, when Sherith Israel lay-leaders voted to eliminate the women's gallery.[114] Allowing families to sit together had little to do with support for gender equality: leaders hoped the change would improve male attendance.[115] Sherith Israel's conservatism is reflected in members' refusal to serve on the boards of woman-led societies. Throughout this period, only five Sherith Israel lay-leaders publicly endorsed the HBLA by serving as board members; none served the LSI.[116] Sherith Israel women were just as conservative; from 1855 to 1880, only five Sherith Israel women assumed leadership positions with Jewish women's groups.[117] Although Sherith Israel families endorsed mixed seating, they did not necessarily endorse expanded roles for women within the community.

An inverse relationship between religious orthodoxy and support for female-led societies continued as new congregations appeared in the 1860s and 1870s. In November 1863, a group of Emanu-El congregants left to form Congregation Ohabai Shalome.[118] The protestors had no objection to family seating, yet Ohabai Shalome lay-leaders and their wives declined to serve on the boards of Jewish women's organizations. The same was true of the conservative Congregation Beth Israel, founded in 1862.[119] Although leaders opted for family seating, no Congregation Beth Israel

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of Day Care, 1945–1962," *Gender and Society* 14, no. 5 (2000): 608–29; Seth Koven and Sonya Michel, *Mothers of a New World: Maternalist Politics and the Origins of Welfare States* (New York: Routledge, 1993); Theda Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992).

[111] Rosenbaum, *Visions*, 46–47, quoting I. Harold Sharfman, *The First Rabbi: Origins of Conflict Between Orthodox & Reform: Jewish Polemic Warfare in Pre-Civil War America: A Biographical History* (London: Pangloss Press, 1988), 395. Rosenbaum suggests Emanu-El moved to family seating around 1860.

[112] Goldman, *Beyond the Synagogue Gallery*, 64; Hyman, *Gender and Assimilation*, 30–32.

[113] Analysis based on city directories and surviving association records.

[114] Kahn, *Jewish Voices*, 155.

[115] Goldman, *Beyond the Synagogue Gallery*, 96–98.

[116] Analysis based on annual city directory listings of Sherith Israel lay-leaders and HLBS and LSI trustees and counselors. Although no Sherith Israel lay-leaders served as trustees or counselors, congregants might have supported LSI financially and otherwise.

[117] The five women are Sarah Zlottwitz Rich, Leah Meyer, Mrs. M. Lichtenstein, Caroline Newman, and Jeanette Ephraim.

[118] The conflict centered on Emanu-El leaders' decision to read the Torah in a three-year cycle. The breakaway group favored a one-year cycle. Kahn, *Jewish Voices*, 184. Use of the lower case in "reform," "conservative," and "orthodox" follows contemporary local usage. In 1893 Sherith Israel secretary Alexander Badt explained that San Francisco's six congregations divided into three groups: "the orthodox or old-fashioned, the medium or partly progressive, and the reformed Jews." Badt classed Emanu-El as "the reformed kind," Beth Israel and Sherith Israel as "conservatively reform," Ohabai Shalome as "conservative," and Shaare Zedek and Beth-Menahim Streisand as "strictly orthodox." Alexander L. Badt, "Our Hebrew Folk," *San Francisco Call*, March 6, 1893, 8. Formalization of these terms lay many years in the future, but San Franciscans were aware of these distinctions.

[119] Badt, "Our Hebrew Folk," 8.

men or women joined the boards of woman-led Jewish organizations from its founding through the 1880s.

Newer, more orthodox congregations rejected all elements of reform, including family seating. In 1870, a faction defected from Sherith Israel to form Congregation Shaare Zedek; the new group maintained its orthodoxy, including the women's gallery, well into the twentieth century.[120] Those leaders, too, declined to endorse the city's pioneer Jewish women's associations by serving as directors or trustees. Similarly, no leaders of Congregation Nevah-Zedeck (founded in 1874) or Congregation Beth-Menahim Streisand (1880) lent their names to the boards of woman-led societies.[121]

Instead, leaders of conservative congregations such as Sherith Israel, Ohabai Shalome, and Beth Israel, and orthodox groups (Shaare Zedek, Nevah-Zedeck, and Beth-Menahim Streisand) created male-led *chebras* (mutual-aid societies).[122] Rejecting American models of benevolence, orthodox and conservative San Franciscans hewed to European tradition by keeping charity in male hands.

The role of women in San Francisco congregations was the defining characteristic that distinguished one from another. Likewise, support for a wider role for women in public life was the key marker for congregations making the shift from European orthodoxy to American Reform Judaism. The experiences of Emanu-El congregants, male and female, fit the patterns historians find among middle-class Jews elsewhere in the United States and Europe. In the United States, writes historian Paula Hyman, by midcentury American Jewish leaders had "adapted themselves, and their Judaism, to the prevailing bourgeois model" in which "religion fell naturally within women's domain" and, with religion, responsibility for charity. Because elite Jewish men were "busy with worldly concerns," community leaders were often glad to hand off the duty of good works to wives and daughters.[123] In nineteenth-century Germany as well, writes Marion Kaplan, middle-class Jewish women were more likely than their fathers and husbands "to continue ritual observance." In this way, women "mediated the acculturation of their families within middle-class German society" and, at the same time, the women strengthened "their families' ethnic and religious ties to Judaism."[124] As a result, concludes Susan L. Tananbaum, wherever they settled, Jewish women "spearheaded an even broader reorganization of modern Jewish life."[125]

The 1850s and 1860s saw local Jewish women founding separate women's societies that focused primarily on needs within the Jewish community. This pattern changed in the 1870s, when they entered their third phase of development as local community leaders. San Francisco was swept up in the national charity kindergarten movement in 1878, when Felix Adler came to town. The German-born rabbi's son, philosopher, and reformer had founded New York's Free

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[120] Congregation Shaare Zedek's early leaders were immigrants and early arrivals to San Francisco, including its first president, sixty-one-year-old Polish immigrant Abraham Watters. "Abraham Watters," http://www.jmaw.org/abraham-watters-early-pioneer-synagogue-founder-san-francisco/, accessed 5-29-19.

[121] Beth-Menahim Streisand first appears in Langley in 1880. For more about local congregations, see "The Jewish New Year," *San Francisco Call,* September 22, 1892, 2; Badt, "Our Hebrew Folk," 8; Langley, 1868, 746.

[122] In strictly orthodox communities, the term *chebra* denotes two types of associations, one religious, the other philanthropic. Sol Steinmetz, *Dictionary of Jewish Usage: A Guide to the Use of Jewish Terms* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005), 28. San Francisco's Chebra Beth Yisrael, formed 1868, was the religious kind; it ultimately became the conservative Congregation Beth Israel. Langley, 1868, 751. San Francisco's other seven *chebras* were the philanthropic kind. Little overlap in leadership occurred between the city's two dominant male-led Jewish charities, Eureka Benevolent and First Hebrew, and the eight *chebras* formed between 1850 and 1900.

[123] Hyman, *Gender and Assimilation in Modern Jewish History*, 24–26.

[124] Marion Kaplan, *The Making of the Jewish Middle Class: Women, Family and Identity in Imperial Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 144; Marion Kaplan, "Gender and Jewish History in Imperial Germany," in *Assimilation and Community: The Jews in Nineteenth Century Europe*, eds. Jonathan Frankel and Steven J. Zipperstein (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 200–1.

[125] Susan L. Tananbaum, "Jewish Women, Philanthropy, and Modernization: The Changing Roles of Jewish Women in Modern Europe, 1850–1939," in *Dutch Jewry in a Cultural Maelstrom, 1880–1940*, eds. Judith Frishman and Hetty Berg (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2007), 140.

Kindergarten the previous year, and soon convinced local leaders that San Francisco must have kindergartens too.[126] Adler and other promoters of early childhood education viewed kindergartens as equal parts charity and reform school, geared as they were towards Americanizing immigrant families and instilling middle-class morals in the children of the working poor.[127] Within months of Adler's visit, the Silver Street Kindergarten (fig. 4) opened in the city's working-class, heavily immigrant South of Market district.[128] A second kindergarten opened on Jackson Street in 1879.[129]

Kindergarten work reveals local Jewish immigrant women and their U.S.-born daughters fully embracing the American system of female-dominated charity and, with it, expanded roles for themselves in public life. Jewish women enlisted *en masse* in the kindergarten movement. Women with no prior charitable experience volunteered, as when twenty-nine-year-old Alice Arnold Hecht became a founding member of the Silver Street Free Kindergarten Society in 1878.[130] Women already engaged in the city's pioneer Jewish charities also became involved. In 1884, Hebrew Ladies' Benevolent Association president Rachel Behrendt joined the board of the Pioneer Kindergarten Society; Blemma Hecht of the PHOA Ladies' Visiting Committee became a manager of the Pioneer Kindergarten Society.[131]

Kindergartens were bridging institutions for Jewish immigrant women, integrating them into voluntary associations dominated by Protestants and Catholics. For some, service to local kindergartens was their first experience working closely with non-Jews. In 1881, leadership of the Golden Gate Kindergarten Society brought Sloss into the orbit of famed author, educator, and public-school superintendent John Swett, as well as some of the West Coast's most powerful women, such as Jane Lathrop Stanford, wife of former California governor Leland Stanford, and Phoebe Apperson Hearst, wife of miner, businessman, and politician George Hearst and mother of future newspaperman William Randolph Hearst.[132]

Whether they relished their wives' and daughters' entry into public life or not, Jewish community leaders could not fail to see how it raised their status among San Franciscans of all faiths. Male and female alike basked in the praise that San Franciscans lavished upon benevolent Jewish women. In 1867, the *Daily Alta California* urged citizens to attend the fund-raising concert put on by the "noble women" of HLBA.[133] Local newspapers never tired of praising the good done by HLSS.[134] In 1888, San Francisco's *Daily Examiner* lauded May (Mrs. Ignatz) Steinhart for her "open-handed and widespread benevolence" to all, irrespective of religion, which earned her "the admiration and gratitude of even those not in the circle of her own faith" (fig. 5).[135]

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[126] Meyer, *Western Jewry*, 13, 122–23; San Francisco Free Kindergarten Society (SFFKS), *A History of the Silver Street Kindergarten, San Francisco, July 23, 1878* (San Francisco: Murdock & Co., 1881), 5.

[127] Carol Roland, "The California Kindergarten Movement: A Study in Class and Social Feminism" (Ph.D. diss., University of California Riverside, 1980), 196.

[128] Patricia L. de Cos, *History and Development of Kindergarten in California*, prepared for the Joint Legislative Committee to Develop a Master Plan for Education, Kindergarten through University, April 2001, 16, at https://www.loc.gov/item/2001387539/, accessed 5-29-19; Kathleen Anne Adams, "Kindergarten and Community: The Silver Street Kindergarten of San Francisco, 1878–1906" Ph.D. diss., University of California, Riverside, 2010).

[129] Golden Gate Kindergarten Association, *Thirteenth Annual Report of the Golden Gate Kindergarten Association* (San Francisco: George Spaulding & Company, 1892), 133; Shackelford, "To Shield Them," 517; Langley, 1893, 78.

[130] SFFKS, *A History*. Alice Arnold (Mrs. Marcus H.) Hecht was born in the United States to a German-born father and U.S.-born mother.

[131] Langley, 1894, 82. Blemma Rosewald (Mrs. Issac J.) Hecht was born in the United States to Bavarian immigrant parents.

[132] Alexandra M. Nickliss, *Phoebe Apperson Hearst: A Life of Power and Politics* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2018); Mildred Nichols Hamilton, "Continually Doing Good: The Philanthropy of Phoebe Apperson Hearst, 1862–1919," in *Women and Politics: California from the Gold Rush to the Great Depression*, eds. Cherny, Irwin, and Ann Marie Wilson (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011), 88.

[133] *Daily Alta California*, "Grand Concert in Aid of the Funds of the Hebrew Ladies' Society," September 23, 1867, 2.

[134] See, among others, *Daily Alta California,* "Pacific Hall," July 18, 1870, 1; "Calico Invitation Ball," February 10, 1872, 2; "The Hebrew Ladies' Sewing Society," February 22, 1872, 2; "Grand Amateur Dramatic Musical Entertainment and Ball!" March 8, 1874, 4.

[135] "Caring for the Poor," *San Francisco Daily Examiner*, December 16, 1888, 10. May (Mrs. Ignatz) Steinhart was sister-in-law to Louisa and William Steinhart. See Table 1.

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Figure 4. *Silver Street Kindergarten, 64 Silver Street, near Third, ca. 1879. Source: CA.gov, "19th Century Kindergarten Uncovered in San Francisco," at https://dot.ca.gov/caltrans-near-me/district-4/d4-popular-links/forward-issue-3 /kindergarten, accessed 7-17-23.*

More importantly, the public praise heaped upon Jewish women proclaimed them the social equals of Christian "ladies bountiful." In the 1888 article mentioned above, editors drew no distinction between Phoebe Hearst and Jane Stanford, the undisputed titans of California society, and Jewish charity leaders May Steinhart, Gerstle, and Sloss. Editors praised all equally as "women with hearts."[136] By engaging in good works, Jewish women had narrowed the social distance between themselves and their peers of other faiths. These women were integral to solidifying the "rough-and-ready American welcome" that Jewish San Francisco enjoyed, and in building the "bonds of fraternity and solidarity" of which San Franciscans were so proud.[137]

[136] "Caring for the Poor, *San Francisco Daily Examiner*.
[137] Rischin, "The Jewish Experience in America," 33.

***Figure 5**. This sketch of May Friedlander (Mrs. Ignatz) Steinhart appeared in an 1888 newspaper article praising San Francisco's "women with hearts." Source:* San Francisco Daily Examiner, *December 16, 1888, 10.*

CONCLUSION

More research is needed—for example, in Philadelphia, Norfolk, and other cities discussed here—to trace the impact of women's charity work in Americanizing leaders and their communities in the decades preceding the settlement-house era. Jewish San Franciscans entered that era in 1894 when they launched the Emanu-El Sisterhood for Personal Service. Aiming to aid recent eastern European immigrants, the Emanu-El Sisterhood looked just like the charities with which local Jewish women were already familiar.[138] Women already active in local community services promptly joined.

The charities that immigrant Jewish women founded were temporal bridges, uniting generations of women in good works. The daughters of the women discussed here often apprenticed in the same charities, in what historian Sarah Wilkerson-Freeman calls "a chain of intergenerational activism."[139] In the twentieth century, those daughters became what Rader calls "the New Jewish Woman," moving into careers in the "helping" professions, especially social work. One example will suffice: Louisa Steinhart, born in Germany in 1842, was treasurer of the Association of Daughters of Israel. Her daughter, Aimee D. Steinhart, born in San Francisco in 1879, attended the University of California at Berkeley and trained as a social worker (fig. 6). Aimee commanded such respect that, in 1918, California's governor appointed her to the state commission for Mothers' Pensions.[140] State office would have been inconceivable to Louisa, but Aimee was simply continuing work that her mother's generation had begun.

[138] Emanu-El Sisterhood for Personal Service, *Constitution and By-Laws of Emanu-El Sisterhood for Personal Service of San Francisco, California, Adopted January 24, 1902* (San Francisco: PHOA, 1902).

[139] Sarah Wilkerson-Freeman, "Two Generations of Jewish Women: North Carolina, 1880–1970," *Southern Jewish Historical Society Newsletter* (July 1989): 3–6.

[140] *Emanu-El*, "Miss Amy Steinhard [sic] Named Member of Mothers' Pensions Body," December 27, 1918, 4.

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***Figure 6**. Portrait of Amy Steinhart Braden by Arnold Genthe, 1903, Source: Portrait file of The Bancroft Library, BANC PIC 1905.00002--POR, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley*

The self-help and charitable societies that the city's first Jewish women leaders created were significant agents of Americanization for the leaders themselves. In the 1850s, Jewish immigrant women retooled European models to meet their own needs. In the 1860s and '70s, they extended their reach, engaging in "American-style" charity on behalf of any and all who were in need. In the second half of the nineteenth century, their evolving programs represented a break from older European models of Jewish social welfare, in which rabbis and synagogue lay leaders oversaw poor relief. Kindergarten work took immigrant Jewish women and their daughters one step further, engaging them in work designed to reform the poor and working classes, regardless of nativity, faith, or gender, and to "Americanize" more recent immigrants, in the public sense of the word, inculcating in them the mainstream, middle-class norms that Jewish immigrant women themselves had only recently mastered.

Founders of the city's pioneer Jewish women's associations probably did not set out to abandon orthodoxy or to transform women's roles within Judaism. Yet they were integral to the forces that carried some Jewish San Franciscans from orthodoxy to reform. As leaders of independent Jewish mutual-aid societies and charities, newcomers from Germany, Poland, England, and elsewhere learned how Americans managed poor relief. In the process, along with their male kin, they inched toward reformulated gender roles within their congregations and the American Jewish community at large.

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Table 1 *San Francisco Jewish Charity Leaders, 1850-1880, drawn from California and U.S. census data, city directories, and institutional records.*

Leader (birth–death) birthplace	Husband (birth–death) birthplace	Number of Children	Leadership Age	Congregation	Leader's Affiliations	Husband's Affiliations
Rahel "Rachel" **Behrendt** (1846–1910) Prussia	Herman Behrendt (1834–1890) Prussia	0	31	unknown	Hebrew Ladies' Benevolent Association (HLBA) president, 1876–1880; Pioneer Kindergarten Society director 1894	Pacific Hebrew Orphan Asylum (PHOA) bequest 1890
Sarah Livingston **Bloomingdale** (1835–1898) Prussia	Emanuel Bloomingdale (1822–1893) Prussia	6	20	unknown	Ladies' Society of Israelites (LSI) treasurer 1855	unknown
Jane Rosenbaum **Brandenstein** (1838–1904) Germany	Joseph Brandenstein (1827–1910) Germany	11	56	Emanu-El	Emanu-El Sisterhood for Personal Service (EES) member 1894, 1895	PHOA trustee 1871, 1872, 1906; patron 1873; Eureka Benevolent Society (EBS) vice president 1867, 1868
Charlotte Levy **Castle** (1832–1912) England	Frederick Levy Castle (1830–1893) England	9	44	Emanu-El	HLBA member, 1874; EES member, 1894, 1896	Boys & Girls Aid Society, trustee 1876; EES, member 1894
Sophie Myers Waldrow **Cohen** (1814–1903) England	Samuel Hyman Cohen (1818–1890) England	0	42	unknown	HLBA secretary 1856, 1857, 1858, 1860, 1861, 1863, 1864	unknown
Beatrice Lucille Bachman **Dinkelspiel** (1874–1952) California U.S.A.	Samuel L. Dinkelspiel (1864–1930) California U.S.A.	2	31	Emanu-El	Jewish Ladies Relief Society member 1905; EES director 1916	Emanu-El president; Federation of Jewish Charities; Young Men's Hebrew Association
Pauline Hess **Dinkelspiel** (1844–1907) Louisiana U.S.A.	Lazarus Dinkelspiel (1843–1900) Baden, Germany	9	24	Emanu-El	LSI trustee 1868, 1869; Pacific Hebrew Orphan Asylum, donor 1872; EES member, 1894–1896	Emanu-El trustee 1865; treasurer, 1867; trustee 1870; vice president 1872–1874; EBS life member 1878
Mathilda Hirschfeld **Esberg** (1850–1934) New York U.S.A.	Mendel Esberg (1834–1896) Germany	5	44	Emanu-El	EES director 1894, 1896, 1897, vice president 1899, 1902, 1917, 1922, president 1909–1917; German Ladies General Benevolent Society vice president 1904; PHOA Ladies Auxiliary 1906–1907; Board of Managers 1910–1911	Boys & Girls Aid donor 1896
Delia Stern **Fleishhacker** (1839–1923) New York U.S.A.	Aaron Fleishhacker (1820–1898) Bavaria	8	36	Emanu-El	Hebrew Ladies Sewing Society (HLSS) president 1875, vice president 1877, 1880; EES member 1894	EES donor 1894
Hannah Greenebaum **Gerstle** (1839–1930) Bavaria	Lewis Gerstle (1824–1902) Bavaria	7	35	Emanu-El	PHOA member 1873; Ladies Visiting Committee 1880, 1881; EES treasurer 1894, 1896–1897, 1899, 1901–1904; director 1908–1909; honorary vice president 1917	PHOA member 1873; EES advisory board 1894, 1896–1899
Alice Arnold **Hecht** (1849–1922) Pennsylvania U.S.A.	Marcus H. Hecht (1844–1909) Germany	4	29	Emanu-El	San Francisco Free (Silver Street) Kindergarten Society trustee 1878; Pioneer manager 1884; EES member 1894, 1896, 1899	unknown

(continued)

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TABLE 1. *(continued)*

Leader (birth–death) birthplace	Husband (birth–death) birthplace	Number of Children	Leadership Age	Congregation	Leader's Affiliations	Husband's Affiliations
Blemma Rosewald **Hecht** (1844–1905) Maryland U.S.A.	Isaac J. Hecht (1832–1895) Germany	5	33	Emanu-El	HLSS president 1877; PHOA visitor, 1876, 1881, 1887; Pioneer manager 1884	unknown
Caroline "Lina" Frank **Hecht** (1848–1921) Maryland U.S.A.	Jacob H. Hecht (1834–1903) Germany	0	33	Emanu-El	San Francisco: HLSS, president 1873; Boston: Hebrew Ladies Sewing Circle, Hebrew Industrial School for Girls, Women's Educational and Industrial Union, National Council of Jewish Women	unknown
Helen **Hecht** (1863–1918) California U.S.A.	unknown	0	30	Emanu-El	Pioneer Kindergarten treasurer 1893, 1904; EES director 1908, 1911–1912, 1916–1917	unknown
Frances Koenigsburger **Helbing** (1833–1896) Bavaria	August Helbing (1824–1896) Bavaria	4	39	Emanu-El	PHOA patron 1872; EBS president 1861, treasurer 1863, 1882–1885, trustee 1867	EBS founder 1849, president 1861, 1885, treasurer 1863, vice president 1881–1883; PHOA patron 1872
Babette Tupper **Heller** (1832–1888) Bavaria	Martin Heller (1821–1894) Bavaria	7	45	Emanu-El	PHOA patron 1872, Ladies Visiting Committee 1877; LSI treasurer 1872–1877, 1880	Emanu-El trustee 1861, treasurer 1862, vice president 1863–1867, 1880–1894, trustee 1876, 1877, 1880; LSI counselor 1875–1876
Mrs. **Lichtenstein** (unknown)	M. Lichtenstein (unknown)	unknown	unknown	Sherith Israel	HLBA trustee 1856	Sherith Israel trustee 1876–1877, 1880
Julia **Mayblum** (1829–1911) Germany	Morris (Moritz) Mayblum (1820–1888) Germany	1	35	Emanu-El	LSI Secretary, 1861; trustee 1864–1865; president 1868	EBS trustee 1861, 1863; treasurer 1864–1868; Emanu-El trustee 1862, 1867, 1868
Leah Weintraub **Meyer** (1838–1910) Prussia	Charles Meyer (1828–1893) Prussia	8	22	Sherith Israel	HLBA trustee 1860, president 1868	Sherith Israel trustee 1861–1862, vice president 1863–1864, president 1867–1868, 1870, 1872–1875; First Hebrew Benevolent Society (FHBS) president 1863, 1868, 1875; HLBA trustee 1860, councilman 1864; PHOA trustee and vice president 1871
Caroline "Carrie" Heller **Newman** (1853–1935) Alabama U.S.A.	Juda Newman (1848–1934)	2		Sherith Israel	PHOA Ladies Visiting Committee 1893; EES donor 1895; LSI treasurer 1897, 1905, trustee 1902	Sherith Israel trustee 1880; PHOA trustee 1900, 1906–1907, 1909
Babette **Regensburger** (1820–1903) Germany	Henry Regensburger (1809–1865) Germany	8 (9?)	34	Emanu-El	LSI president: 1855, 1856, 1864, 1865, trustee: 1861–1862; secretary 1867; counselor, 1868; German Ladies General Benevolent Society vice president, 1876, 1894	EBS vice president 1863–1864

(continued)