



Diverse Issues

Volume 3, No. 2

April - June 2002

Diversity in People: The Jewish People

Who is Jewish?

The answer to this question is not as simple as one may at first imagine. The Israeli government decided on July 20, 1958 that, "Anyone declaring in good faith that he is a Jew, and who does not profess any other religion, shall be registered as a Jew" (Blech, 1999, p. 4). Later in 1960, the Israeli Supreme Court further defined a Jew as someone who is born to a Jewish mother, or converted to the Jewish faith, and is not a member of another religion. Since that time, however, Reform Judaism has considered patrilineal descent as equally valid for determining Jewish status.

The requirements for conversion vary according to the denomination of Judaism one is converting to, ranging from more rigid to less rigid requirements. In the United States, the three major denominations include Orthodox, Reform, and Conservative Judaism. Orthodox Jews are the "fundamentalists" of the faith. They adhere rigidly to all the laws, traditions, and doctrines as received from the past and revealed in the scriptures. They pray in Hebrew, and men and women have distinct and definite roles and responsibilities (Wood, 1995). Reform Jews are more liberal in their thinking and practice. They allow for interpretation of the scriptures to fit more contemporary settings. Conservative Jews maintain a practice somewhere in between Orthodox and Reform Judaism. While "absolute adherence to past tradition is not required, a strong sense of continuity and respect for the past still prevails" (Blech, 1999, p. 10).

In further defining what a Jew is, it is important to note what Jews are not. To speak of a "Jewish race" would be inappropriate; there is no such thing as a "Jewish race." Over centuries of time, migrations around the globe, and acceptance of converts into the fold, Jews have fused with racial blends wherever they lived. Jewish is not a nationality. The Jewish people lived for centuries without a nation (its own land) or government. There are Germans, Poles, Frenchmen, Englishmen, and Americans who profess the Jewish religion. It is more accurate to speak in terms of "the Jewish people." The choice of personal identification is probably the most powerful determinant for someone being a Jew (Blech, 1999, p. 11).

The world's Jewish population was estimated between 13 and 14 million at the beginning of the year 2000. The largest groups are in the U.S., Israel, and the former USSR (Wood, 1995).

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Brief Historical Review

Moses is a major figure in Judaism. As is noted in history, more than 3,000 years ago the Jews were slaves in Egypt. Moses liberated the slaves and led them out of Egypt. Although Moses did not complete the journey, the Jews settled in Canaan, what they believed to be “the promised land.” Canaan later became known as Palestine, and today is called Israel. Jerusalem became the capitol of Israel.

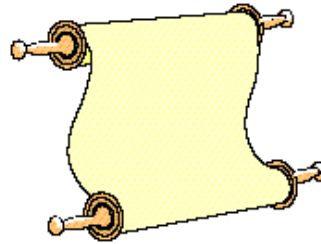
Some 400 years later, the Babylonians conquered the Jews, destroyed their Temple, and took many Jews back to Babylon. After Babylon was conquered by Persia, many Jews returned to Israel and built a second Temple. About 200 years later, however, the Persian Empire fell to the Greeks. This was the beginning of a series of conflicts with Syrian Greeks, who wanted the Jews to abandon their religion, and later the Romans, who destroyed the second Temple and persecuted the Jews, making life intolerable and scattering many Jews to other parts of the Middle East and Europe.

Later, when Arab rulers overshadowed the mighty Roman empire, the Jewish people were treated with respect and lived peacefully with the Arabs, until the Jews refused to adopt the new Islamic religion founded by Mohammad. Additionally, with the rise of Christianity in Europe, hatred toward the Jews grew to the state of national policy in many Christian lands (Blech, 1999). After being forced to live in ghettos and being expelled from many European countries, many Jews settled in North America. The largest waves of European Jews came to the U.S. in the late 1800's.

In 1933, the Nazis came into power in Germany and the Holocaust began. Following the war in 1947, displaced Jews were refused residence in many European countries. Therefore, the United Nations voted Israel into existence, partitioning Palestine into Jewish and Arab sections. The vote passed despite the fact that all of the Arab states voted “No.” On

May 14, 1948, the birth of the State of Israel was announced. War between Israel and Arab nations began immediately after the creation of the State of Israel. It continues today.

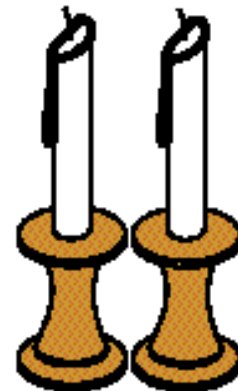
Religious Practices



The Jewish Bible is composed of the body of scripture that Christians refer to as the “Old Testament.” The New Testament is not a part of Jewish scripture.

The term “*Torah*” is the Hebrew term that includes both the written books of the Bible and the interpretations of those books. In some contexts, Torah is used to refer only to the first five books of the Bible. However, in a broad sense, the term Torah refers to the Jewish way of life, including the whole body of Jewish law and teachings.

A portion of the Torah is read in Hebrew each week as part of Jewish community worship. In the course of a year, the entire Torah is read from beginning to end. The holy day is celebrated on *Shabbat*, which runs from sunset on Friday to sunset on Saturday. Friday evening begins with a large meal and is a time for rest, relaxing, and enjoying the company of family and friends. On Saturday morning, the Torah is read at synagogue.



In Orthodox and Hasidic synagogues, men and women sit separately, and children may sit with either parent. In Reform synagogues, men, women, and children sit together. Seating arrangements vary in Conservative synagogues. A sermon given by the rabbi (minister) or a member of the congregation may follow Reading of the Torah. The afternoon is for reading, talking quietly, or private thoughts about God.

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Selected Rituals



Coming of Age - Bar Mitzvah is the term given to a Jewish boy at the age of 13. At this age, he becomes responsible for obeying the commandments. Additionally, he is given the right to take part in leading religious ser-

VICES, to count as one of the minimum number of people needed to perform certain parts of religious services, to form binding contracts, to testify before religious courts, and to marry. Although not required, a ceremony is typically held in his honor. **Bat Mitzvah** is the corresponding term given to a Jewish girl at the age of 12. She too, is formally obligated to observe the commandments. Bat Mitzvah is not recognized by Orthodox Jews.

Marriage - Under Jewish law marriage is essentially a private contractual agreement between a man and a woman. Although it does not require the presence of a rabbi or any other religious official, it is common for rabbis to officiate. The presence of a religious or civil official is required under United States civil law. As part of the wedding ceremony, the husband gives the wife a **ketubah**, the wedding contract. The ketubah spells out the husband's obligations to the wife during marriage, conditions of inheritance upon his death, and obligations regarding the support of children of the marriage. It also provides for the wife's support in the event of divorce. A married woman retains ownership of any property she brought to the marriage, but the husband has the right to manage the property and to enjoy profits from the property. The ketubah is often a beautiful work of calligraphy, framed and displayed in the home.

Death and Mourning - Death is considered a natural process, a part of G-d's plan. Respect for the dead body is of paramount importance. According to Jewish practice, autopsies are discouraged, and if necessary, they should be minimally intrusive. The body is not embalmed and fluids are not removed. Hence, funerals are

arranged quickly and burial is within two days of death. Open casket ceremonies are forbidden. Mourning is divided into several periods of time, each with decreasing levels of intensity. An intense grieving period occurs for one week following burial. During this time close family members do not go to work.

Holidays



Perhaps the most important holiday of the Jewish year is **Yom Kippur**. Yom Kippur means "Day of Atonement," a day set aside to atone for

the sins of the past year. It is celebrated by refraining from work, lighting of candles, fasting for 25 hours, and attending the synagogue. **Rosh Hashanah** is the Jewish New Year. It precedes Yom Kippur by ten days. These holidays generally occur in September, but the exact date varies each year according to the lunar calendar. Other important holidays include Passover (7-8 days in March or April), which celebrates the Israelites' escape from slavery in Egypt, and the Ninth of Av (1 day in August), which commemorates the destruction of the first and second Temples and other tragedies in Jewish history.



Food Practices

The Torah contains specific rules for food consumption and preparation. Foods that are considered appropriate (or "fit") are called kosher. The following are foods that can be eaten (Wood, 1995, p. 27):

- Fish that have fins and scales. Shellfish is inappropriate.
- Meat of birds that eat grain, but not birds of prey. Chickens are kosher, for example, but owls are not.
- Meat of mammals that have split hooves and chew their cud's. Therefore, sheep are kosher, but pigs are not.

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Diversity in the Workplace: The Ten Lenses by Mark Williams - A Book Review

Many have heard the phrase, “We all look at the world through our own set of spectacles.” What we see is “colored” by our own perceptual filters based on what we have been taught, seen, heard, and experienced. And these perceptual filters are *lenses* through which we look at differences such as race, culture, ethnicity, and nationality.

Mark Williams, CEO of the Diversity Channel, has consulted with and conducted numerous workshops on diversity for managers and employees at Fortune 1000 companies. Over time, he has identified and classified ten patterns of thought and behavior, which were dubbed “The 10 Lenses.” This concept is detailed in his book entitled, *The 10 Lenses: Your Guide to Living and Working in a Multicultural World*.

Based on research, Williams has found these patterns are “identifiable, predictable, and at the heart of a person’s beliefs and actions with respect to race, ethnicity, nationality, and culture” (p. 2). Not only do these lenses influence our behavior and actions in our personal life, they have great influence in the employment arena as well. A manager’s ability to recognize and develop strengths in employees across diverse populations; to create human resource systems that address the needs of diverse employee populations; and the organization’s ability to communicate with and respond to a diverse customer base, are all influenced by the lenses through which the organization views the world.

How do we develop our individual lenses? According to Williams, our lenses are made up of our layers and our legacies. Our layers are “the obvious and not so obvious individual characteristics which make us who we distinctly

are at any given time in our lives.” These include race, gender, ethnicity, nationality, religion, educational level, socioeconomic status, organization role, etc. Each of us prioritizes the layers that are most important to us, and they become a part of our core identity. Even when two people share some of the same layers, they may prioritize these layers differently. The result is that they view the world through different lenses.

Our legacies are “the historical events and situations which are important to us as members of different races, ethnic groups, etc.” These may have been personally experienced or shared in stories by our parents or important others. Each lens interprets historical events differently. When we communicate and interact with others, we bring our layers and legacies with us to the interaction.

The following is a brief description of each of the Ten Lenses:



- Assimilationist - People should submerge individual and cultural differences to “fit in” to the dominant culture.
- Colorblind - Race, color, and ethnicity should be ignored; consider only a person’s individual characteristics.
- Culturalcentrist - Emphasis is placed on one’s culture. Racial and ethnic minorities should detach from the dominant society so they can maintain their own cultural norms and customs.
- Elitist - Family, wealth, and social class entitle privilege to the select few.
- Integrationist - Racial barriers should be broken, allowing people from different cultures to live together in harmony.
- Meritocratist - Personal merit is the only worthy criteria for opportunity.

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- Multiculturalist - The diversity of cultures should be celebrated, for they enrich our country.
- Seclusionist - Separation of the races preserves the character and quality of the race.
- Transcendent - Our common divine origin transcends racial, ethnic, cultural, and national identity. The only race is the human race.
- Victim/Caretaker - Minorities deserve compensation for the continued impact of past oppression.

Each of the lenses has inherent strengths and weaknesses. Further, the Ten Lenses are not mutually exclusive. We all have preferences for several lenses. Depending on the particular situation, we may select one or more of them.

As stated earlier, the lenses that people in the organization use can influence business behavior. Additionally, it is noted that at the systems level, the lenses are usually embedded invisible within the human resource management system - how we recruit, hire, place, compensate, evaluate, mentor, and train employees.

As a part of a model for assessing our human resource systems, Williams suggests that we first determine the lens(es) through which each of our human resource management systems is being managed and implemented. Then identify the strengths and weaknesses that particular lens(es) contributes to the system's ability to enact the desired Human Resource Management strategies.

As Mark Williams suggests, "Perhaps the central task of this century will be to create a world where we neither deny the richness of our cultural differences nor allow them to divide us." (p. 3).

In *The Ten Lenses: Your Guide to Living and Working in a Multicultural World*, a chapter is devoted to each of the ten lenses. Each chapter includes an archetypal character reflecting the

lens, a profile of the lens, it's strengths and weaknesses, an historical perspective on the lens, and the impact that the lens can have on the organization's human resource system and legal position. Additionally, Williams introduces the concept of an Eleventh Lens, which he describes as the "highest expression of the other ten lenses."

For additional information, visit the www.thediversitychannel.com and take the lenses survey to determine your lens preference.

Source: Williams, M. A. (2001). *The Ten Lenses: Your Guide to Living and Working in a Multicultural World*. Herndon, VA: Capitol Books, Inc.

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- Any edible plants, the milk of kosher animals, and the eggs of kosher birds.

Additionally, birds and mammals are considered kosher only if they are killed with a single, swift cut by a trained slaughterer. The blood must be removed by soaking, salting, and rinsing. Jewish food producers ask a rabbi to supervise the production of certain foods to certify it as kosher. Further, meat and milk may not be eaten together. Many Jews have separate sets of dishes for meat and milk products. Some even have separate refrigerators and separate dishwashers for the two sets of foods and dishes.

For additional information, consult the references below.

References:

Blech, B., Rabbi (1999). *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Jewish History and Culture*. New York, NY: Alpha Books, Macmillan Publishing.

Rech, T. (2001). *Judaism 101*. <http://www.jewfaq.org>.

Wood, A. (1995). *Judaism*. New York, NY: Thomson Learning.

Diversity Activity: Is That A Fact?

Time needed: 30 minutes

Appropriate age level: Youth grades 6-9

Materials: A set of *Fact/Opinion Statement Cards* for each group of four to five participants (see directions below).

Objectives

- Participants will articulate the difference between fact and opinion.
- Participants will identify ways to clarify or qualify statements of opinion.

Introduction

Understanding the difference between fact and opinion is critical to our ability to examine our reactions to events and people. Stereotypes and prejudices are often based on opinions that are perceived as facts.

Procedure

1. Write three examples of facts on one side of the board and three examples of opinions on the other side of the board.

Examples of facts:

- George has blue eyes.
- This room has four windows.
- There are 50 states in the U.S.

Examples of opinions:

- This room is too warm.
- Math class is boring.
- The best cars are made in the U.S.

2. Ask participants to identify the statements of fact and the statements of opinion. Label each group.
3. Have participants work with partners to come up with definitions for the words “fact” and “opinion.” Choose a group definition, using a dictionary if necessary.
4. Divide participants into small groups of four to five people each. Provide each group with a set of *Fact/Opinion Statement Cards*. Ask one person in each group to “deal” the cards out to the group’s members until all of the cards have been distributed.
5. Have each small group divide its workspace into three areas; one labeled “Facts,” another “Opinions,” and the third “Need More Information.” Have participants work together to place the statements in the appropriate areas according to the definitions they agreed upon earlier.
6. Ask participants to examine the statements in the “Need More Information” category. Have them work together to identify sources of information that would prove or disprove the statements.

Debriefing

When the small groups have completed their work, bring the whole group back together to discuss the process. Use the following questions to check participants’ understanding of the difference between fact and opinion.

1. How can you tell whether something is a fact or an opinion?
2. What makes it difficult to decide if something is a fact or an opinion?
3. When you were working in small groups, did everyone agree on which statements were fact and which were opinions? Could any of the opinion statements be considered facts if we had more information or if the statement were more specific?

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4. If you're not sure whether something is a fact, what can you do?
5. Why is it important to know whether something is a fact or an opinion?

Create sets of Fact/Opinion Statement Cards by writing the following statements on blank index cards, one statement per card. Add or substitute statements of your choice.

- * Girls are smarter than boys are.
- * Americans are friendly.
- * The world is a better place now than it was 100 years ago.
- * Today is a beautiful day.
- * This is the best school in the whole town.
- * Most people in Honduras are unhappy.
- * Americans love French fries.
- * Men are usually taller than women are.
- * There is more farmland in the United States than in any other country.
- * Most people in Africa live in urban areas.
- * Women make better teachers than men.
- * The U.S.A. is the richest country in the world.

Adapted From: World Wise School, United States Peace Corps

Diversity Around the State: Congratulations to Two Diversity Award Winners




Karen Thomas, Family and Consumer Science extension educator with Lackawanna County, received the *2002 Vice President's Award for Diversity and Public Service*. Karen was honored for her outstanding leadership in convening the **Lackawanna County Diversity Coalition**, whose mission was to foster an awareness, understanding, and appreciation of diversity through education, interaction, and cooperation. The Coalition began

with representatives of 20 community service agencies in November of 1996. Some of the Diversity's Coalition's accomplishments include: an educational quarterly newsletter developed by members; a free community speaker series, which addresses a large number of diverse topics; a train-the-trainer diversity training for human service agency members; cultural programs for youth including Headstart, middle and high school students; and celebration of cultural arts. The coalition continues to be a thriving collaboration today.

Judy MacRone, a 4-H/youth-development extension educator in Delaware County, received the *College of Agricultural Sciences 2002 Diversity Achievement Award*. Judy was recognized for her commitment to foster an environment in which diversity is understood, valued, and promoted and who demonstrates leadership in the elimination of discrimination. Judy has made special efforts to reach out to and program with special-needs populations. Some of her activities have included: adaptation of 4-H materials for use by teachers of special needs students; coordination of a weekly special-needs youth group; running an indoor gardening program for secondary-level autistic children; and helping to increase the participation of differently-abled youth from 5% in 1990 to 12% this year.

Diversity Calendar

<p>June 2002 Gay and Lesbian Pride Month <i>1st Navajo Treaty Day</i> - U.S. Commemorates the anniversary of the 1868 treaty between the Navajos and the U.S. government. <i>2nd Corpus Christi</i> - Christian. A time of popular Eucharistic devotion. <i>6th D Day</i>- U.S. Commemorates the day the U.S. troops landed in Normandy, leading to the ending of WWII. <i>7th Red Earth Native American Cultural Festival</i> - One of the world's largest intertribal gatherings by over 200 tribes in Oklahoma. <i>9th Race Unity Day</i> - Baha'i. Promotes racial harmony and understanding. <i>14th Flag Day</i> - U.S. Honors the U.S. flag as a symbol of patriotism. <i>16th Father's Day</i> - Honors all fathers in the world. <i>Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev.</i> - Sikh. Commemorates the death of the 5th guru of the Sikhs and the first Sikh martyr. <i>19th Juneteenth</i> - U.S. Observes the 1863 Emancipation Proclamation that freed the slaves. <i>21st Solstice</i> - International. The 1st day of summer in the northern hemisphere and the 1st day of winter in the southern hemisphere. <i>23rd Pentecost</i> - Coptic & Eastern Orthodox Christian. Celebrates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles following the Ascension of Jesus. <i>24th San Juan Day</i> - Puerto Rico. Commemorates the birth of St. John the Baptist. <i>28th Stonewall Rebellion</i> - U.S. Commemorates the protest in NYC by gays and lesbians for equal rights against police harassment.</p>	<p><i>14th Bastille Day</i> - France. Observes the freeing of the prisoners from the Bastille prison, which began the French Revolution. <i>17th Munoz-Rivera Day</i> - Puerto Rico. Celebrates the birthday of Luis Munoz-Rivera, a Puerto Rican patriot, poet, and journalist. <i>18th Tisha B'Av</i> - Jewish. Mourns the destruction of the first and second Temples of Jerusalem and other tragedies in Jewish history. <i>20th Umi no bi</i> - Japan. Holiday that honors the importance of the sea in Japanese culture. <i>23rd Birth of Haile Selassie I</i> -Ethiopia, Rastafarian. <i>24th AsalhaPuja</i> - Buddhist. Celebrates Buddha's first sermon and the delivery of the Wheel of Truth to the world. <i>Pioneer Day</i> - Mormon. Honors the Mormon pioneers who first settled in Utah in 1847. <i>26th Anniversary of the Signing of the A.D.A.</i> - U.S. <i>31st Feast of St. Ignatius Loyola</i> - Spain. Celebrates St. Ignatius Loyola who founded the Jesuits.</p>
<p>July 2002 <i>1st Canada Day</i> - Canada. Marks the joining of the Canadian provinces into the Dominion of Canada in 1867. <i>4th Independence Day</i> - U.S. Celebrates the signing of the Declaration of Independence by the 13 colonies, forming the U. S. <i>8th Martyrdom of the Bab</i> (sundown) - Baha'i. <i>13th O-Bon</i> - Japan. Also called Feast of Lanterns. A time to remember one's ancestors.</p>	<p>August 2002 <i>1st Emancipation Day</i> - England, Trinidad, Tobago. Celebrates the abolition of slavery throughout the British Empire in 1833. <i>9th International Day of the World's Indigenous People</i> - U.N. <i>15th Assumption Day</i> - Christian. Celebrates the assumption of the Virgin Mary's body and soul into heaven. <i>26th Women's Equality Day</i> - U.S. Honors the 1920 ratification of the 19th Constitutional Amendment giving women the right to vote. <i>31st Janmashtami</i> - Hindu. Festival to honor Lord Krishna. <i>Solidarity Day</i> - Poland. Commemorates the 1980 formation of the first Polish labor union, named Solidarity.</p> <p><i>Sources: Professional Development Group, Inc. The National Conference for Community and Justice</i></p> <p><i>Diverse Issues is authored by: Patreese D. Ingram State Extension Specialist Diversity Education</i></p>  <p><i>Department of Agricultural and Extension Education 323 Agricultural Administration Building University Park, PA 16802 E-mail: pdi1@psu.edu 814-863-7439</i></p>

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