Abraham L. Feinberg was born on September 14, 1899, the seventh of ten children of Lithuanian immigrants, Nathan (a rabbi) and Sarah (Abramson) Feinberg. Abraham was born and raised in Bellaire, Ohio, a coal-mining town across the Ohio River from Wheeling, West Virginia.

After graduating from Bellaire High School in 1916, Abraham studied at the University of Cincinnati in Cincinnati, Ohio, and in 1920 earned a Bachelor of Arts degree. In 1924 he was ordained rabbi at Hebrew Union College in the same city.

Rabbi Feinberg served a congregation in Niagara Falls, New York, then in late 1925, returned to Wheeling to accept the pulpit of Eoff Street Temple (predecessor of Woodsdale Temple). He served in Wheeling until January of 1927, when he moved to Temple Israel, the second largest reform congregation in New York City.

After three years of sevice at Temple Israel, on February 28, 1930, Feinberg quit the rabbinate. In his resignation sermon he explained that he had become "disillusioned with the role [he] was expected to play--more a promoter and social director of a complex organization than a pastor of human souls." The resignation was publicized in newspapers around the world and, despite Feinberg's emphasis that he was only quitting organized religion not his personal faith, his announcement precipitated a nationwide debate.

After leaving the rabbinate, Feinberg studied opera in France and wrote his autobiography (later withdrawn from publication "because of its latent sensationalism"). In 1932 he began a new and highly successful career on radio as the romantic tenor "Anthony Frome". For three years "Anthony Frome, Poet Prince of the Airwaves" performed five nights a week on radio and made personal appearances in New York theaters. But in 1935 Anthony Frome bade his fan club farewell and Rabbi Feinberg returned to the rabbinate. Feinberg gave three reasons for leaving his lucrative radio career: his mother's death-bed wish, the imminent birth of his son, and Hitler's rise to power.

Feinberg returned to his rabbinical career at Mt. Neboh Temple, a small Manhattan congregation. After three years at Mt. Neboh, in 1938, Feinberg moved to Denver, Colorado's Temple Emanuel. In 1942 he applied for a chaplaincy in the United States Armed Forces, but was rejected for physical reasons. Then in late 1943, he accepted the pulpit at Canada's leading congregation, Holy Blossom Temple in Toronto, Ontario. There he remained in the active rabbinate for 18 years, and was named one of Canada's "Seven Greatest Preachers," according to a national poll. In 1961 Feinberg retired from the active rabbinate at Holy Blossom Temple. By 1964 he had written his first book, Storm the Gates of Jericho.

Throughout most of his career Feinberg's sermons reflected his support of progressive causes. In Toronto he led a succession of reform causes in behalf of social justice, speaking out against racism, teaching of religion in public schools, economic injustice, and nuclear arms.

Feinberg protested the Vietnam War as immoral, precipitating threats against his life, heckling at speaking engagements and publications of a libelous pamphlet, "The Red Rabbi." In January 1967 Feinberg and three other well-known clergymen journeyed to Hanoi to try to promote peace. After returning he toured the U.S. and Canada on a speaking campaign against the war and wrote his second book, Hanoi Diary, an account of his trip to Vietnam.

While visiting John Lennon and Yoko Ono at their bed-in for peace in Montreal in 1967, Feinberg suggested a slight change in the lyrics of the song "Give Peace a Chance" and sang the song with them. Lennon urged the rabbi to make a record, resulting in Feinberg's phonograph album, "I Was So Much Older Then," recorded in Toronto in 1969. Feinberg and Lennon cooperated on several pro-peace projects in 1969.

After the death of his wife, Ruth, in 1971 Feinberg moved to California for a new start. For four years he served as Rabbi-in-Residence at Glide Memorial United Methodist Church in San Francisco. In 1972
he performed on his weekly radio program "Grey Lib" in Berkeley, emphasizing rights for senior citizens.

In 1976 Feinberg moved to Reno, Nevada to be close to his son, Dr. Jonathan Feinberg. He became active in senior citizen activities, served a local synagogue, and began another radio show. The new show was called "Grey Lib Plus" and ran from the Fall of 1976 to January, 1978. In 1981 his third book, Sex and the Pulpit, was published.


Abraham L. Feinberg died of cancer on October 5, 1986 in Reno, Nevada.

**Scope and Content**

The collection consists of correspondence, sermons, speeches, writings, notes, news articles, financial records, awards, photographs, scrapbooks, sound recordings, and personal items relating to Feinberg's career in the rabbinate and his involvement in liberal and radical causes.

**Arrangement**

Organized into eight (8) series: A. Sermons, Speeches and Writings; B. Correspondence; C. Radio Career; D. Personal Papers and Awards; E. Card File; F. Scrapbooks; G. Photographs; H. Sound Recordings.

**Terms of Access**

The collection is open for use; no restrictions apply.

**Preferred Citation**

Footnotes and bibliographic references should refer to the Abraham L. Feinberg Papers and the American Jewish Archives. A suggestion for at least the first citation is as follows:

[Description], [Date], Box #, Folder #. MS-588. Abraham L. Feinberg Papers. American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio.

**Provenance**

Received from Patricia C. Feinberg, Reno, Nev., 1990.

**Processing Information**


**Index Terms**

**Subjects**

Jewish radicals / Rabbis / Radicalism / Vietnam War, 1961-1975 -- Protest movements

**Personal Names**

Feinberg, Abraham L.

**Corporate Names**

Holy Blossom Temple (Toronto, Ont.)

**Media**

Audiocassettes / Photographs / Scrapbooks / Sermons / Sound recordings

**Series A. Sermons, Speeches and Writings, 1914-1985**

**Extent**

2 linear feet (5 Hollinger boxes)

**Scope and Content Note**

Consists of sermons, speeches, notes, writings and some miscellaneous materials.

**Arrangement**


**Extent**

0.4 linear feet (1 Hollinger box)

**Scope and Content Note**

Consists of sermons, most delivered at Holy Blossom Temple in Toronto, and speeches concerning religious and social reform topics delivered on various occasions, including club meetings and protest demonstrations. Filed separately are "Revolutionary Messages" (sermons) delivered by Feinberg as Rabbi-in-Residence at Glide Memorial United Methodist Church in San Francisco, California, from...
Arrangement
Sermons and speeches dated prior to 1928 are filed in a single folder and a large number of these, dated from 1936-1980, are arranged in alphabetical order by title.

Box and Folder Listing

Box 1. Folder 1. Early sermons and speeches, 1914-1927
Box 1. Folder 5. Sermons and speeches. I-L, 1938-1964
Box 1. Folder 7. Sermons and speeches. R, 1936-1973
Box 1. Folder 8. Sermons and speeches. S-T, 1946-1963
Box 2. Folder 1. Sermons ("Revolutionary Messages"), given at Glide Memorial United Methodist Church, San Francisco, Calif., 1972-1973
Box 2. Folder 2. Sermons ("Revolutionary Messages"), given at Glide Memorial United Methodist Church, San Francisco, Calif., 1974-1976


Extent 0.2 linear feet (0.5 Hollinger box)

Scope and Content Note Consists of speeches and messages delivered by Feinberg "on-air" on program series such as the "Message of Israel" (New York, 1937-1969), "Brotherhood Hour" (Station CFRB, [Toronto?], 1947-1949), "Grey Lib" (Station KPFA, Berkeley, California, 1972), and miscellaneous other programs.

Box and Folder Listing

Box 2. Folder 3. Mid-Day Message and other radio talks on New York Stations, 1935-1938
Box 2. Folder 4. Message of Israel, 1937-1960
Box 2. Folder 5. Miscellaneous, 1939-1961
Box 2. Folder 6. Station CKEY, [Toronto?], 1945-1946
Box 2. Folder 7. Station CFRB, [Toronto?] "Brotherhood Hour.", 1947-1949
Box 2. Folder 8. "Grey Lib" on Station KPFA, Berkeley, California, 1972
Box 2. Folder 9. Channel 9, CFTO-TV, [Toronto?], 1961-1964

Subseries 3. Notes for Speeches and Articles, 1930-1985 (bulk 1970s)

Extent 0.4 linear feet (1 Hollinger box)

Scope and Content Note Consists of handwritten notes and outlines from which Feinberg wrote articles or delivered sermons or speeches. Included are notes made during trips to Europe and Israel in 1949 and 1959, the outline for the sermon announcing his resignation from
Temple Israel in 1930 and notes for lecture series and sermons delivered in the
1970s in California and Nevada.

**Box and Folder Listing**

Box 2. Folder 10. Notes for Sermons/Speeches including resignation and radio, 1930s

Box 2. Folder 11. Notes regarding trip to Israel, 1949

Box 2. Folder 12. Notes regarding trip to Europe, North Africa and Israel for United
Palestine Appeal/Joint Distribution Committee, 1959; and to Germany, 1949, 1949, 1959

Box 3. Folder 1. Notes and articles regarding Jews and Radicalism, the New Left, 1960-1969

Box 3. Folder 2. Notes for speeches, 1960s-1980s

Box 3. Folder 3. Notes and source material regarding Drugs, 1968

Box 3. Folder 4. Notes for sermons given at Shearith Israel, San Francisco, California, 1975-1976

Box 3. Folder 5. Notes for Unitarian Lecture Series given at the Center for Religion
and Life, University of Nevada, Reno, Nevada. Lecture No. 1 "Jesus - A Modern
Jewish View", 1976

Box 3. Folder 6. Notes for Unitarian Lecture Series given at the Center for Religion
and Life, University of Nevada, Reno, Nevada. Lecture No. 2 "The Crucifixion Story
and Anti-Semitism", 1976

Box 3. Folder 7. Notes for Unitarian Lecture Series given at San Francisco. Lecture
No. 3 "Individual Salvation or Radical Social Activism: Key '73 vs. Glide Memorial",
1973

Box 3. Folder 8. Notes for Unitarian Lecture Series given at the Center for Religion
and Life, University of Nevada, Reno, Nevada. Lecture No. 4 "Is God Dead? Does it
Really Matter? or Is Man Dying?", 1976

Box 3. Folder 9. Notes for Unitarian Lecture Series given at San Francisco. Lecture
No. 5 "This Post-Judeo-Christian Age and the Disenchanted Young", 1973

Box 3. Folder 10. Notes and miscellaneous for (4) class lectures regarding "Sex
over Sixty? Over?" given at Senior Summer School, Reno, Nevada, 1978

Box 3. Folder 11. Notes for Speeches/Articles regarding sexual themes, 1981

**Subseries 4. Thesis and Book Manuscripts, 1924-1982**

**Extent** 0.4 linear feet (1 Hollinger box)

**Scope and Content Note** Consists of Feinberg’s (handwritten) thesis submitted to Hebrew Union College in 1924 and hand or typewritten drafts for his unpublished autobiography, Release (1929-1931), and published books, Storm the Gates of Jericho (1964), and Sex and the Pulpit (1981).

**Box and Folder Listing**

Box 3. Folder 12. Thesis, "Prophetic Influences in the Narrative Portions of the
Pentateuch, and their Significances," submitted to Hebrew Union College,
Cincinnati, Ohio, 1924 May 1

1930-1931
Subseries 5. Articles and Miscellaneous Writings, 1922-1985 (bulk 1940s-1970s)

Extent 0.6 linear feet (1.5 Hollinger boxes)

Scope and Content Note Consists of Feinberg’s articles, handwritten or as printed in various newspapers and magazines. Topics include religion, Canada, pacifism and radical social reform.

Box and Folder Listing

Box 4. Folder 8. Published quotations, 1977
Box 4. Folder 9. Articles in Hebrew Union College Monthly, 1922-1938
Box 5. Folder 1. Articles, A-Y, 1939-1985
Box 5. Folder 2. Articles (series), "From a Rabbi’s Watch-Tower," in The Jewish Standard, Toronto-Montreal, 1951 November 1-1952 December 15
Box 5. Folder 3. Articles (series), "From a Rabbi’s Watch-Tower," in The Jewish Standard, Toronto-Montreal, 1953 July-December
Box 5. Folder 4. Articles (series), "From a Rabbi’s Watch-Tower," in The Jewish Standard, Toronto-Montreal, 1954 July-October
Box 5. Folder 6. Articles (series), "Hanoi Diary", original diary and as published in The (Toronto) Globe and Mail, 1967
Box 5. Folder 7. Article, "I’m a Longhair -- and Like it!" with notes and source materials, 1970
Box 5. Folder 8. Articles, speeches and notes regarding Jesus, 1939-1979
Box 5. Folder 9. Article, "Facing Terminal Cancer - A Personal Story.", 1985
Box 5. Folder 10. Articles, printed, A-L, 1936-1984
Box 5. Folder 11. Articles, printed, M-Z, 1936-1984

Series B. Correspondence, 1929-1987 (bulk 1960-1984)

Extent 1.4 linear feet (3.5 Hollinger boxes)

Scope and Content Note Consists of correspondence, greeting cards, news articles, notes, speeches, poetry,
programs, publicity materials, memorabilia, interview transcript, book contracts, reviews, reports and pamphlets. Series B includes material pertaining to Feinberg's rabbinal career, his support of peace and disarmament movements, his trip to Hanoi, his relationship with John Lennon, his three published books and the phonograph album he recorded.

**Box and Folder Listing**

Box 6. Folder 2. Cards after cancer surgery, 1985
Box 6. Folder 5. Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) - Correspondence and speech, 1977-1984
Box 6. Folder 6. China (proposed trip not taken), 1975
Box 6. Folder 7. Christmas Carol Controversy, 1950 December-1951 March
Box 6. Folder 8. Faber, David and Freda - Correspondence and poetry, 1972-1974
Box 6. Folder 11. Gray Panthers (Maggie Kuhn) - Correspondence and articles,, 1972, 1978
Box 7. Folder 1. Hanoi Trip. Correspondence regarding passport, 1966-1968
Box 7. Folder 2. Hanoi Trip. Correspondence, 1966
Box 7. Folder 3. Hanoi Trip. Correspondence, notes and memorabilia, 1966-1967
Box 7. Folder 4. Hanoi Trip. Visit to Hanoi Prisoner of War Camp - Correspondence, 1967
Box 7. Folder 5. Hanoi Trip. Notes, transcript of interview, speech, 1967
Box 7. Folder 8. Hanoi (post-trip) - correspondence, greeting cards, and articles, 1968-1979
Box 7. Folder 13. League for People's Friendship - correspondence regarding Invitation to East Berlin, 1970
Box 8. Folder 1. Marcus, Jacob Rader, 1956-1980s
Box 8. Folder 3. Nevada State Officials - Correspondence and award, 1977-1982
Box 8. Folder 5. Nuclear Disarmament. Correspondence, (includes Toronto Committee for Disarmament), 1960-1962
Box 8. Folder 8. Nuclear Protest Activities (including Lenten Desert Experience), Nevada, 1982-1983
Box 8. Folder 15. Storm the Gates of Jericho. Correspondence and contracts, 1961-1973
Box 9. Folder 4. Temple Israel of the City of New York - Confirmation Service programs, 1929 June 14
Box 9. Folder 5. World Assembly for Peace (regarding meeting to be held in Berlin, June 1969), 1969

Series C. Radio Career, 1925-1978

Extent 1.8 linear feet (4.5 Hollinger boxes)

Scope and Content Note Consists of newsletters, articles, membership lists, notes, lyrics, correspondence, questionnaires, financial records, publicity materials, program formats, and music.

Arrangement The series is divided into two (2) subseries: 1. Anthony Frome, The Poet Prince; 2. Grey Lib Plus.


Extent 0.6 linear feet (1.5 Hollinger boxes)
Scope and Content Note
Consists of newsletters, articles, membership lists, program proposals, note cards, sheet music and song books relating to Feinberg's radio career as "Anthony Frome." The shipping carton in which these materials were received by the American Jewish Archives was labeled with the following note: "Many, diverse songs, most of them done by "Anthony Frome" on the "Poet Prince" radio program, NBC-WJZ network, 5 nights a week, out of Radio City Studio, New York, 1932-1935. (My name for radio was "Anthony Frome." Abraham L. Feinberg)."

Box and Folder Listing
Box 9. Folder 10. Lecture/Recital, "Art of Living as Expressed in Song" (on note cards), 1930s
Box 9. Folder 11. Lyrics on note cards for German, French, and Italian songs, 1930s
Box 9. Folder 12. Lyrics on note cards for mainly English language songs, 1930s
Box 9. Folder 13. Sheet music (manuscript) and notes from a program regarding "Love Songs of Many Lands", 1930s
Box X-369. Folder Sheet music - most sung by "Anthony Frome" on "Poet Prince" Radio Program, New York, N.Y., 1932-1935
Box 10. Folder 5. Opera Songs for tenor, 1901
Box 10. Folder 6. World Famous Songs, 1913
Box 11. Folder 1. New Palestinean Folk Songs, Books 1 and 2, 1926, 1933
Box 11. Folder 2. Album of Songs by Victor Herbert, 1927

Extent 1.2 linear feet (3 Hollinger boxes)
Scope and Content Note Consists of correspondence, publicity materials, program formats, questionnaires, financial records, guest books, song lists, lyrics, poetry, song sheets and song books relating to the "Grey Lib Plus" radio show (Seasons 1, 2, and 3), originating in Reno, Nevada, Fall, 1976-January, 1978. Some music and lyrics may have also been used by "Anthony Frome" on the "Poet Prince" radio program in 1932-1935.

Box and Folder Listing
Box 11. Folder 5. Grey Lib Plus 3, 1977
Box 11. Folder 7. Grant from Nevada Humanities Committee, 1976-1977
Box 11. Folder 8. Charge Slips for Recording sessions, undated
Box 13. Folder 2. Songs not sung on Grey Lib Plus - music, lists, lyrics.
Box 13. Folder 3. Songs - lists, lyrics, poems, 1960s
Box 13. Folder 4. Sheet music and lyrics for "Poet Prince" and/or Grey Lib Plus.
Box 13. Folder 5. "Old Time Song Book, with Music", undated


Extent 1.4 linear feet (1 Hollinger box, 1 oversize box)

Scope and Content Note Consists of biographical sketches, articles, cartoons, programs, notes, obituaries, applications, passports, identity/membership cards, presentation booklet, engraved wristwatch, diplomas, awards, rubber stamp, neck pendants, lapel pins, shipping list (prepared by Mrs. Patricia C. Feinberg to accompany this collection to the American Jewish Archives), foreign coins and currency.

Box and Folder Listing

Box 14. Folder 2. Biography in Canadian Profiles, by George Lonn, 1965
Box 14. Folder 6. Obituaries, memorial services, 1986 October
Box 14. Folder 7. High School graduation - speech and article, 1916 June
Box 14. Folder 8. Handwritten defense of behavior during "Love Affair", 1922
Box 14. Folder 9. Chaplaincy application, 1942-1943
Box 14. Folder 14. Shipping list for Abraham L. Feinberg Collection when collection sent to AJA compiled by Mrs. Patricia C. Feinberg, 1990 June
Box 14. Folder 15. Presentation booklet, 1941
Box 14. Folder 17. American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Nevada Civil Libertarian of the Year Award - certificates and related papers, 1986
Box X-369. Folder Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) - certificate of life membership, 1974
Box X-369. Folder Diploma for Honorary Doctor of Law degree from University of Toronto, 1957 May 31
Box X-369. Folder Diploma for Rabbinical degree from Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1924 May 31
Box X-369. Folder Diploma for Honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1957 May 24
Box X-369. Folder Calligraphed quotation "on the occasion of a surprise reception in honor of his eightieth birthday, 1979 September 9
Box X-369. Folder Engraved metal on wood plaque received from Glide Memorial United Methodist Church in honor of 75th birthday, 1974 September
Box X-369. Folder Ceramic tile on wood Distinguished Merit Citation from National Conference of Christian and Jews (NCCJ) and the Nevada Council for religion and the Arts for Gray Liberation Community Service, 1978 October 1
Box X-369. Folder Portrait - pencil sketch by "Barnard.", 1986 April 28
Box X-369. Folder Rolled banner style photocopies of articles featuring Feinberg's activities, 1933-1934, 1967-1969
Box X-369. Folder "Grey Lib" rubber stamp, 1976-1978
Box X-369. Folder Gold colored wrist watch engraved from Anthony Frome Fellowship (AAP), 1935 September 14
Box X-369. Folder Small Peace symbol pin (plastic and metal).
Box X-369. Folder Metal Peace symbol pendant on chain with "Raiza Palatnik."
Box X-369. Folder USSR Prisoner of Conscience" on one side.
Box X-369. Folder Circular metal penknife pendant with initials "AF."

Series E. Card File of Research Notes and Quotations, undated

Extent 2 linear feet (5 Hollinger boxes)

Scope and Content Note Consists of 3x5 (and a few 4x6) index cards with handwritten quotations or notes pertaining to various subjects, including Judaism, Christianity, faith, Palestine, fear and Churchill.

Arrangement The 3x5 cards are arranged roughly in alphabetical order according to topic or author.

Container List

Box 15. A-D, undated.
Box 16. E-I, undated.
Box 17. I-P, undated.
Box 18. P-S, undated.

**Series F. Scrapbooks, 1925-1971**

**Extent** 7.4 linear feet (1 Hollinger box, 7 oversize boxes)

**Scope and Content Note** Consists of scrapbooks and scrapbook pages containing articles, programs and correspondence pertaining to Feinberg. The scrapbook pages were originally 2 scrapbooks spanning the years 1925-1939.

**Arrangement** The scrapbooks are numbered (1 through 32) and are arranged in roughly chronological order.

**Box and Folder Listing**

- Box 20. Folder 1. Scrapbooks. Part 1, 1925-1939
- Box 20. Folder 2. Scrapbooks. Part 2, 1925-1939
- Box X-370. Folder Scrapbooks, 1-2, 1937-1943
- Box X-371. Folder Scrapbooks, 3-7, 1943-1952
- Box X-372. Folder Scrapbooks, 8-11, 1949-1967
- Box X-373. Folder Scrapbooks, 12-18, 1952-1963
- Box X-376. Folder Scrapbooks, 29-32, 1926-1971

**Series G. Photographs, 1929-1986**

**Extent** 0.4 linear feet (1 Hollinger box)

**Scope and Content Note** Consists of photographic prints, mostly labeled and mostly in black and white. Also included in Series G is a pencil sketch of Feinberg dated 1986 located in oversize box No. X-369). The photographs and picture span the years 1927-1986 and include the following subjects: Abraham L. Feinberg, "Anthony Frome", rabbinical activities (in New York, San Francisco and Toronto), protest demonstrations and pro-peace activities (including trips to Moscow, Berlin and Hanoi).

**Box and Folder Listing**

- Box X-369. Folder Pencil sketch of head and shoulders of Abraham L. Feinberg by "Barnard.", 1986 April 28
- Box 21. Folder 1. Portraits of Abraham L. Feinberg (including Anthony Frome), 1934-1986
- Box 21. Folder 3. Temple Israel, New York, N.Y. - Confirmation class, 1929 June 14
- Box 21. Folder 4. Holy Blossom Temple, Toronto, Ontario, Canada - Installation service for
Series H. Sound Recordings, 1969-1986

Scope and Content Note  Consists of phonograph records and tape recordings.

Arrangement  The series is divided into two (2) subseries: 1. Phonograph Records; 2. Tape Recordings.

Subseries 1. Phonograph Records, 1969

Scope and Content Note  Consists of two items: Feinberg's album, "I Was So Much Older Then," is located in oversize box X-369; and a 7" disc (with autographed dust cover) containing "Give Peace a Chance" recorded by John Lennon and Yoko Ono, with Feinberg's voice in the background, is located in the AJA Rare Documents File.

Box and Folder Listing

Box X-369. Folder Album, "I Was So Much Older Then.", 1969

Subseries 2. Tape Recordings, 1972-1986

Scope and Content Note  Consists of over 100 reels and cassettes of speeches, interviews, a memorial service for Feinberg, "Grey Lib" radio programs (Berkeley, California, 1972) and "Grey Lib Plus" radio programs Reno, Nevada, 1976-1978). Some materials in are located in the AJA Tape Recording Collection.

Box and Folder Listing

Box X-369. Folder Speeches, Lectures, Interviews and Memorial Service, 1972-1986

Box X-369. Folder "Grey Lib," Pilot and Show Nos. 1-9 and unnumbered, 1972