A Finding Aid to the
H. Leonard Poller Papers

Manuscript Collection No. 655
Collection Summary

Title H. Leonard Poller Papers
Dates 1960-1994
Collection Number MS-655
Repository The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives
Extent 7.6 linear feet (19 Hollinger boxes)
Language of the Material English

Administrative Information

Biographical Sketch
H. Leonard Poller was born 5 November 1928 in Scranton, Pennsylvania. Poller received his B.H.L., M.A, and then rabbinic ordination from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in 1957. His graduate studies also included work at the Baltimore Hebrew College and the Bellevue/Montefiore Hospitals (for counseling). He went on to receive a honorary doctorate from HUC-JIR in 1982.

Poller's first pulpit following graduation was Temple Oheb Shalom in Baltimore, Maryland. In 1964 he became rabbi at Temple Beth Sholom, Montreal, Canada. At this point he developed a strong interest in the linking of U.S. and Canadian Jewish lay and rabbinic communities. Poller left Canada in 1962 to take a position at Larchmont Temple, in Larchmont, New York where he remained until his retirement in 1994. While at Larchmont he was active in several New York based Jewish and interfaith organizations and led protests against a Larchmont sponsored creche scene. Poller was extremely active in rabbinic professional organizations. He served on executive boards for the Central Conference of American Rabbis, New York Association of Reform Rabbis, Synagogue Council of America, United Jewish Appeal and the World Union for Progressive Judaism. Poller was deeply committed to the work of the Central Conference of American Rabbis- serving on the Executive Board, and as a chairman of both the Liturgy and Publications Committee. Under his direction a major revision of the Gates of Prayer and Gates of Repentance was completed, as well as the publication of numerous new services. Poller stressed the proprieties of Jewish worship and felt that prayer should be used to motivate good deeds and not a "feel-good" ceremony.


Scope and Content
The collection describes the rabbinic and professional activities of H. Leonard Poller, who served at Temple Beth Sholom in Montreal Canada, and at Larchmont Temple in Larchmont, New York. Poller was active in the Central Conference of American Rabbis's liturgical issues. Also of interest is material relating to the Jonathan Pollard case.

Arrangement
Organized into four (4) series: A. Correspondence and Project Files; B. Liturgical Material; C. Sermons and Writings; D. Congregational Materials.

Terms of Access
The collection is open for use; no restrictions apply.

Preferred Citation
Footnotes and bibliographic references should refer to the H. Leonard Poller Papers and the American Jewish Archives. A suggestion for at least the first citation is as follows:

[Description], [Date], Box #, Folder #. MS-655. H. Leonard Poller Papers. American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Provenance
Received from Priscilla Poller, Rye, N.Y., August 2000.

Processing Information

Index Terms
Subjects Liturgies
Series A. Correspondence and Project Files, 1960-1994

Extent 1.8 linear feet (4.5 Hollinger boxes)

Scope and Content Note Materials include correspondence (with reports and other attachments) with rabbis and community leaders along with research material collected for lectures or projects. Of special interest is correspondence and annotated newsclippings related to Jonathan Pollard and the Larchmont, New York creche incident.

Arrangement The series is arranged alphabetically.

Box and Folder Listing

Box 1. Folder 6. Blumberg, Herman, 1960-1989
Box 1. Folder 7. Bronstein, Herbert, 1970
Box 1. Folder 10. CCAR. Jews in Arab Lands Committee, 1973-1974
Box 1. Folder 11. CCAR. Membership manual, 1980
Box 1. Folder 12. Cornish, Howard L., 1961
Box 1. Folder 13. Creche Incident. Responses to Mayor. Larchmont, N.Y., 1975
Box 1. Folder 15. Creche Incident. Larchmont, N.Y., 1980
Box 1. Folder 18. Della Pergola, Luciano, 1966, undated
Box 2. Folder 1. Ethiopian Jews, 1982-1985
Box 2. Folder 2. Fordham University. Contemporary Jewish Thought course, 1978, undated
Box 2. Folder 3. Fordham University. Rabbinic Thought course, 1980-1982
Box 2. Folder 4. General correspondence. A-C.
Box 2. Folder 5. General correspondence. D-Z.
Box 2. Folder 6. Gerber, Janet, 1977
Box 2. Folder 7. Gesher Foundation, 1976
Box 2. Folder 15. Holocaust- television special, 1978
Box 2. Folder 18. Kennedy, Timothy, 1963
Box 3. Folder 3. Lawrence, Gunther and Leah, 1962-1964
Box 3. Folder 4. Lowey, Nita, 1993
Box 3. Folder 10. NYARR, 1986-1987 June
Box 4. Folder 1. Orlinsky, Harry, 1960-1964
Box 4. Folder 3. Photographs, undated

Extent 1.4 linear feet (3.5 Hollinger boxes)

Scope and Content Note Materials include minutes and correspondence relating to Pollard’s interest in Reform Jewish liturgy and the appropriate CCAR committees. The series also contains correspondence and drafts of specific manuscripts published by the CCAR.

Arrangement The series is arranged alphabetically.

Box and Folder Listing

Box 5. Folder 12. AIDS service, 1989
Box 6. Folder 1. CCAR. Liturgy Committee. Correspondence; minutes, 1984-1987
Box 6. Folder 2. CCAR. Liturgy Committee, 1988-1989
Box 6. Folder 3. CCAR. Liturgy Committee, 1990-1992
Box 7. Folder 1. Ethiopian Jews Service, 1988
Box 7. Folder 2. Five Scrolls, 1985
Box 7. Folder 5. Gates of Prayer, 1972-1989
Box 7. Folder 8. Gates of Shabbat, 1989
Box 8. Folder 3. Interim Sabbath prayerbook, 1990
Box 8. Folder 5. Liturgical Conference. South Bend, Ind., 1985
Box 8. Folder 8. Quabbabat Shabbat, undated
Box 8. Folder 12. Sha-arei HaDerech. Translators Prayerbook, 1988
Box 8. Folder 13. Shaari Musar, 1984
Box 8. Folder 16. U-venei Yerushalyim (Israel's 40th Anniversary), 1987
Box 8. Folder 17. Wedding liturgy, 1990

Series C. Sermons and Writings, 1960-1994

Extent  4 linear feet (10 Hollinger boxes)

Scope and Content Note  A partial index to the sermons from 1973-1988 are available at the front of the series.

Arrangement  Sermons are filed first, arranged alphabetically, followed by speeches/articles.

Box and Folder Listing

Box 9. Folder 1. Index to sermons, 1973-1988
Box 10. Folder 1. Sermons. Cl-Cr.
Box 15. Folder 7. Sermons. Selihot.
Box 16. Folder 2. Sermons. Si - Sm.
Box 16. Folder 10. Sermons. Ti- Tr.
Box 16. Folder 11. Sermons. U.
Box 17. Folder 1. Sermons. V.
Box 17. Folder 2. Sermons. Wa - We.
Box 17. Folder 5. Sermons. Wi - Wis.
Box 17. Folder 7. Sermons. Y-Z.
Box 17. Folder 8. Yom Ha'atma'ut.
Box 18. Folder 1. Yom Kippur, 1966-1972
Box 18. Folder 2. Yom Kippur, 1975-1976
Series D. Congregational Materials, 1961-1992

Extent 0.4 linear feet (1 Hollinger box)

Scope and Content Note Contains materials relating to H. Leonard Poller's pulpits at Congregation Oheb Shalom (Baltimore, Md.), Temple Beth Shalom (Montreal, Quebec), and Larchmont Temple (Larchmont, N.Y.).

Arrangement The series is arranged chronologically. Within each congregation, the materials are arranged alphabetically by topic.

Box and Folder Listing

Box 19. Folder 1. Congregation Oheb Shalom (Baltimore, Md.) Cemetery Committee, 1963
Box 19. Folder 3. Temple Beth Shalom (Montreal, Quebec), 1962-1965