



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE
AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

**A Finding Aid to the
Association of Orthodox Jewish Teachers of
the New York City Public Schools Records**

Manuscript Collection No. 719



**The Association of
Orthodox Jewish Teachers**
of the New York City Public Schools

Collection Summary

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| Title | Association of Orthodox Jewish Teachers of the New York City Public Schools Records |
| Dates | 1963-2003 |
| Collection Number | MS-719 |
| Repository | The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives |
| Creator | Association of Orthodox Jewish Teachers of the New York City Public Schools |
| Extent | 4.8 linear feet (12 Hollinger boxes) |
| Language of the Material | English and Hebrew |

Administrative Information

Biographical Sketch

Professional Orthodox Jewish teachers "having found that the viewpoint of Orthodox Jewish personnel working for the New York City school system have not been represented by any existing organization" founded the Association of Orthodox Jewish Teachers of the New York City Public Schools, "whose policy it will be to abide by the decisions of the leading orthodox Torah authorities in all matters which may be of a religious nature."

Founded in 1963, the purpose of the AOJT was:

- To promote the welfare of the Orthodox Jewish personnel employed by the New York City School system.
- To encourage, assist, and defend the religious practices of the Jewish personnel employed by the New York City school system.
- To act as spokesman for Orthodox Jewish teachers in matters relating to religious observance and upon any occasion deemed necessary.
- To provide a forum for the exchange of cultural, social, and professional affairs of the Association of Orthodox Jewish Teachers.
- To provide guidance and assistance towards the orientation and recruitment of new and future Orthodox Jewish teachers.
- To promote an atmosphere of religious and racial understanding among all teachers and their students regardless of race, religion, or natural origin, and to help safeguard the rights of all children in the pursuit of their religious observances.
- To cooperate with other organizations in order to achieve mutual understanding and fulfillment of their objectives.

The AOJT sponsored many activities designed to benefit its membership. Its Political Action committee sought to limit school activities during Shabbat, and to allow teachers to more easily take time off for Jewish holidays such as Yom Kippur. They also sought to guard their membership against employment discrimination, which led the AOJT to vigorously support the "merit" system of education hiring, instead of an "affirmative action or "quota" system that would consider race and ethnicity a factor in to promote diversity in New York Public Schools.

Aside from these political activities, the AOJT also sponsored numerous social and professional programs. Its Social committee supported local activities, such as ice skating, while the Tours committee organized vacations to Florida and Israel; the AOJT even attempted to buy land in Israel so Orthodox teachers could make aliyah and settle near each other.

The AOJT also sponsored professional education conferences that members could attend and still keep Shomer Shabbat. For students, the AOJT organized Akiva culture clubs in the public schools. In some schools these clubs had more than 100 students, while other clubs were less successful and had as low as five members.

Scope and Content

The records of the Association of Orthodox Jewish Teachers of the New York City Public Schools span the years 1963-2003, though the bulk of materials fall within the years 1971-1975. The records include meeting minutes, correspondence in regards to the activities of the AOJT, publications and circulars, reports, travel plans and documents, and nearprint.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged in one (1) series: A. General.

- Terms of Access** The collection is open for use; no restrictions apply.
- Preferred Citation** Footnotes and bibliographic references should refer to the Association of Orthodox Jewish Teachers of the New York City Public Schools Records and the American Jewish Archives. A suggestion for at least the first citation is as follows:
[Description], [Date], Box #, Folder #. MS-719. Association of Orthodox Jewish Teachers of the New York City Public Schools Records. American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio.
- Provenance** Received from the Association of Orthodox Jewish Teachers, New York, N.Y., December 2002.
- Processing Information** Processed by David Greenberg, July 2005.

Index Terms

- Subjects** Education / Jews -- New York (State) -- New York / Orthodox Judaism
- Corporate Names** Association of Orthodox Jewish Teachers of the New York City Public Schools
- Media** Minutes

Series A. General, 1963-2003

- Scope and Content Note** Contains information about the Akiva clubs organized by the AOJT, information about community relations, plans for dinners and conventions, plans and accounts of trips to Florida and Israel, political actions and social activities organized, and minutes and letters sent by the Executive committee.
- Arrangement** Records are arranged alphabetically by topic, then by date.

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