A Finding Aid to the
Roy A. Rosenberg Papers

Manuscript Collection No. 735
Roy A. Rosenberg was born in 1930 in Baltimore, Maryland. He graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1951 with a degree in Anthropology. In 1955 he was ordained by Hebrew Union College and also became the full time rabbi at Temple Emanu El in Rochester, New York where he had done his student pulpit work. In 1956 Rosenberg left Rochester to become a chaplain for the U.S. Army. He remained in the army both in Arizona and in Verdun, France for two years.

In 1958 Rosenberg became the rabbi at Temple Emanu El in Honolulu, Hawaii. Rosenberg was very active in the local Jewish community during his eight years in Honolulu. In addition to his duties at the temple he was the President of the B’nai B’rith lodge, secretary of the Hawaii Jewish Welfare Fund, President of the Volunteer Service Bureau and founder and chair of the Interfaith seminar program. Rosenberg was also on the Mayor’s Committee for Ethics in Government and an active member of the Waikiki Rotary Club. In 1966 Rosenberg moved to New Orleans and in 1967 became the Head Rabbi of Temple Sinai. He stayed there for a few years.

In 1974 Rosenberg formed the Temple of Universal Judaism, Congregation Daat Elohim in New York City. This congregation was formed to include people historically excluded from congregations. This includes intermarried couples, Jews by choice, non-Jews and people of all sexual orientations and backgrounds. This congregation was more in line with Rosenberg’s open-minded concepts of religion and intellectual curiosity. Although always within Reform boundaries, Rosenberg urged his congregants and colleagues to think more broadly about topics than they might have in the past. He stayed there until his retirement in 1997.

Rosenberg was also a prolific writer and researcher. Some of his best known works are The Concise Guide to Judaism (1990), Everything you Need to Know About Jews and Their History (1997), Happily Intermarried (1997), and Who was Jesus? (1986) among many others.

Rosenberg died in 2001. He was married to Dr. Ruth Rosenberg with whom he and three daughters and two sons.

The papers contain the correspondence, sermons, and writings of Roy Rosenberg, who was a rabbi in Rochester, New Orleans, Honolulu and eventually the Temple of Universal Judaism in New York City. Included in this collection are the outlines and transcripts of sermons that Rosenberg gave throughout his career as well as many articles that he wrote.

The collection is divided into four (4) series: A. Correspondence; B. Subject Files; C. Writings; D. Sermons; E. Audiovisual Material.

The collection is open for use; no restrictions apply.

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

[Description], [Date], Box #, Folder #. MS-735. Roy A. Rosenberg Papers. American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio.

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Subjects: Rabbis
Personal Names: Rosenberg, Roy A., 1930-2001
Media: Sermons

Series A. Correspondence, 1953-2000

Extent: 1.2 linear feet (3 Hollinger boxes)

Scope and Content Note: Contains mainly correspondence regarding Rosenberg’s congregations and research that he was working on. Most interesting in the series are the documents regarding the foundation of Congregation Daat Elohim Temple of Universal Judaism. Rosenberg was the founder of this new kind of congregation which focused more on inclusion than exclusion by inviting intermarried couples to join. The material on Temple Sinai in New Orleans is also an interesting look at a tumultuous yet productive and fulfilling time in Rosenberg’s life.

Box and Folder Listing

Box 1. Folder 1. Army chaplaincy, 1956-1958
Box 1. Folder 2. Correspondence, 1969-1980
Box 1. Folder 3. Correspondence, 1990s
Box 1. Folder 5. Congregation Daat Elohim The Temple of Universal Judaism (New York, N.Y.) constitution, articles of incorporation, minutes.
Box 2. Folder 3. Congregation Emanu El (Honolulu, Hawaii), 1961-1965
Box 2. Folder 4. Congregation Emanu El (Honolulu, Hawaii) ethics on government, 1965
Box 2. Folder 5. Temple Emanu El (Irondequoit, N.Y.) student pulpit, 1956
Box 2. Folder 6. Temple Emanu El (Irondequoit, N.Y.), 1953-1955
Box 2. Folder 7. Temple Emanu El (Irondequoit, N.Y.), 1956
Box 3. Folder 1. Temple Sinai (New Orleans, La.), 1965-1972
Box 3. Folder 4. Temple Sinai (New Orleans, La.), undated
Box 3. Folder 5. Temple Sinai (New Orleans, La.) information about.
Box 3. Folder 7. Rabbinical correspondence, 1974-1975
Box 3. Folder 8. Responses to books, 1990-2000
Box 3. Folder 9. Susskind, David, 1973 April
Box 3. Folder 10. Weddings.
Box 3. Folder 11. Weddings and conversions.

Series B. Subject Files

Extent  2.2 linear feet (5.5 Hollinger boxes)

Scope and Content Note  Contain the topics that interested Rosenberg throughout his life. His interest in the many cultures and religions of the world is evidenced by the subject headings. These files contain his notes on the topics and were often later turned into articles, books, sermons and speeches.

Arrangement  The series is arranged alphabetically.

Box and Folder Listing

Box 4. Folder 1. Abraham and the Promised Land.
Box 4. Folder 3. Affluent society.
Box 4. Folder 5. Aliyah: the Peoples of Israel.
Box 4. Folder 7. Animals, kindness to.
Box 4. Folder 10. Arizona.
Box 4. Folder 15. Authorship of the Bible.
Box 5. Folder 32. God's law.
Box 5. Folder 33. Golden calf.
Box 5. Folder 34. Graduation address. Hawaii.
Box 5. Folder 35. Graham crusades.
Box 5. Folder 36. Gratitude.
Box 6. Folder 1. Haazinu.
Box 6. Folder 3. Hawaii Jewish community.
Box 6. Folder 5. Hebrew Union College notes.
Box 6. Folder 10. Human relations material.
Box 7. Folder 1. Indian philosophy.
Box 7. Folder 2. Intermarriage.
Box 7. Folder 3. Iranian influence.
Box 7. Folder 4. Intellectuals and Judaism.
Box 7. Folder 5. Israel crisis.
Box 7. Folder 6. Israel trips.
Box 7. Folder 7. Jacob and Esau.
Box 7. Folder 8. Jacob's Ladder.
Box 7. Folder 10. Jewish community centers.
Box 7. Folder 15. Judaism and Christianity.
Box 7. Folder 17. Justice and mercy of God.
Box 7. Folder 20. Labor relations.
Box 7. Folder 22. Last of the Just.
Box 7. Folder 23. Law and order.
Box 8. Folder 1. "Let this cup pass from me."
Box 8. Folder 2. Leviticus.
Box 8. Folder 3. Life-cycle situations.
Box 8. Folder 4. Light and darkness.
Box 8. Folder 8. Maya.
Box 8. Folder 15. Names of God.
Box 8. Folder 22. Noah.
Box 8. Folder 27. Patriarchy in Philo.
Box 8. Folder 29. Personal photos.
Box 8. Folder 30. Philosophy.
Box 8. Folder 32. Pharisees and Sadducees.
Box 8. Folder 33. Politics in religion.
Box 8. Folder 34. Post-war Germany.
Box 8. Folder 35. Prayer.
Box 8. Folder 36. The problem and the answer in Job.
Box 8. Folder 37. Prophecy.
Box 8. Folder 38. Public school and religion.
Box 8. Folder 39. Purim and Good Friday.
Box 8. Folder 40. Purpose of religion.
Box 8. Folder 41. Racial prejudice.
Box 8. Folder 42. Redemption.
Box 8. Folder 43. Reform code of practice.
Box 8. Folder 44. Reform Judaism.

**Series C. Writings**

**Extent**  0.8 linear feet (2 Hollinger boxes)

**Arrangement**  The series is arranged alphabetically.

**Box and Folder Listing**

Box 10. Folder 1. "Gods, Priests and Kings in Ancient Israel."
Box 10. Folder 2. Historical biographies.
Box 10. Folder 3. "Mendelssohn."
Box 10. Folder 4. "Law and Morality."
Box 10. Folder 5. Letters to the editor, 1998
Box 10. Folder 7. Publications.
Box 10. Folder 10. Theology papers.
Box 10. Folder 11. "Traces of the Near Eastern Cults of the Moon and the Planet Saturn in the Bible and Rabbinic Literature."
Box 11. Folder 1. University of Maryland, 1946
Box 11. Folder 2. University of Maryland papers.
Box 11. Folder 3. Writings, miscellaneous.
Box 11. Folder 4. Philosophy and Theology.
Box 11. Folder 5. Prize essays.

Series D. Sermons, 1952-1990, undated

Extent 1 linear foot (2.5 Hollinger boxes)

Scope and Content Note The sermons are either in the form of an outline or written out.

Arrangement The series is arranged alphabetically.

Box and Folder Listing

Box 11. Folder 7. "American Jewish history."
Box 11. Folder 15. "Confirmation services."
Box 12. Folder 2. "Daughters of Zelophchad."
Box 12. Folder 3. "Development Fund for American Judaism."
Box 12. Folder 4. "Development of the Jewish Faith."
Box 12. Folder 5. "Dr. Zhivago. Pasternak."
Box 12. Folder 6. "Dreams."
Box 12. Folder 7. "Fortas, Abe."
Box 13. Folder 22. "Sex."
Box 13. Folder 27. "Slavery (Jewish)."
Box 13. Folder 33. "Spies (Shelach Lecha)."
Box 13. Folder 34. "Spies and Revolution."
Box 13. Folder 35. "Spinoza."
Box 13. Folder 37. "Succot."
Box 13. Folder 38. "Tabernacle ( Dwelling of God)."
Box 13. Folder 40. "Thanksgiving."
Box 13. Folder 41. "Thirteen Attributes."
Box 13. Folder 42. "This is my god."
Box 13. Folder 43. "Theology of the Holocaust."
Box 13. Folder 44. "Tisha B'Av."
Box 13. Folder 45. Touro memorial lecture.
Box 13. Folder 46. "Toynbee and Judaism."
Box 13. Folder 47. "Verdun."
Box 13. Folder 49. "What is it for me?"
Box 13. Folder 50. "What is the Way that a Man Should Choose?"
Box 13. Folder 51. "What Jerusalem is."
Box 13. Folder 52. "What Makes a Jew Believe?"
Box 13. Folder 54. "While Six Million Died."
Box 13. Folder 55. "Women."
Series E. Audiovisual Material, undated

Extent  0.4 linear feet (1 Hollinger box)

Scope and Content Note  Contains tapes and recordings of Rosenberg as well as some of his Rotary Club memorabilia.

Container List

Box 13. Miscellaneous.
Box 14. Miscellaneous.