

## Process Paper

Being Jewish is an important part of my identity. I recognized the prominence of Reform Judaism in the United States compared to other Jewish movements and wanted to understand its roots. My research highlighted the progressive nature of Reform Judaism, which led to questioning why Reform Judaism evolved with cultural changes while other Jewish movements adhered to traditional, religious values. This inquiry revealed Rabbi Alexander Schindler's work promoting outreach. Further research on Rabbi Schindler highlighted the threat of interfaith marriage to Judaism and showcased Rabbi Schindler's bold 1978 Outreach Speech as paving the way for major changes in Reform Judaism.

Researching Rabbi Schindler and his Outreach Speech was difficult. His papers are held at the American Jewish Archives in Ohio. Although I could view an index, source documents are not digitized. Reference librarians at the archives were invaluable. They scanned countless documents spanning months of requests as my research developed and evolved. They also introduced me to Rabbi Judy Schindler, one of Rabbi Alexander Schindler's daughters.

I was separately introduced to Lisa Frankel, another one of Rabbi Schindler's daughters. Lisa and Judy were giving of their time and resources. They provided first-hand accounts of the motivations behind, and importance of, outreach and inclusion to Rabbi Schindler. They also shared pictures and mementos from their family archives. The knowledge and resources gained from their involvement provided insights that could not have been obtained elsewhere.

Few books and other secondary sources examine Rabbi Schindler and his Outreach Speech. These were frequently shallow and in limited circulation. Therefore, the majority of my research was conducted through papers and articles discussing and assessing outreach efforts.

Once my research was complete and my prose prepared, I designed concept boards to organize my website. This allowed me to select the strongest quotations, photos, charts, and videos to accompany the written words. It also highlighted weaknesses.

Finally, I built the website. I worked tirelessly to learn the new platform and overcome technical obstacles. The design and layout were continuously adjusted until I had created a website that would embrace the viewer and showcase the significance of outreach to Reform Judaism.

I knew from the start that I wanted to build a website to present my research. I love technology and its vast flexibility and creativity. I wanted readers to share my interest and curiosity in the topic. Videos and spoken words convey emotion and afford a connection beyond text and still photos. The interactive nature also fosters reader engagement.

Rabbi Schindler boldly broke traditional, exclusionary barriers of Judaism to encourage outreach and inclusion to ensure the continuity of Reform Judaism. Faced with skyrocketing rates of intermarriage, Rabbi Schindler recognized that rejecting interfaith couples from Reform Judaism posed a serious threat to the Reform Movement. Ascribing a stigma to interfaith couples or the non-Jewish partner would drive these people and their children away from Judaism. Rabbi Schindler's revolutionary 1978 Outreach Speech addressed issues that had been the source of continued controversy and division within the Jewish community.