

Sensitizing Day School Teachers to Issues in Values Education

Jack Bieler

The following is adapted from a paper presented at the Educators' Council of America Conference, 1990.

A survey of mission statements associated with ten of the leading North American Modern Orthodox Jewish day schools¹ demonstrates that virtually all of these institutions consider two things paramount in the educational programs that they offer: 1) helping students become familiar with and literate in the classical texts and rituals of their Jewish heritage, and 2) contributing to the development of moral, ethical and humane young men and women concerned with the plight of all Jews, and prepared to assume their responsibilities to the larger Jewish community locally, nationally and throughout the world.

Although much has been said about the extent to which day schools do or do not meet these intellectual and cognitive challenges, less has been committed to print.² Regarding the first common objective, among the reasons cited for disappointing Torah proficiency among students are the compromising of criteria in both knowledge and teaching skills when hiring personnel as well as the time constraints imposed by a dual curriculum. As a result, the Modern Orthodox

community in America heavily relies upon the Israel yeshiva experience to rectify many deficiencies³.

Middot Education: The Goal and its Obstacles

□ □ □

It is not unreasonable to expect, however, that the second universally desired goal be a priority immune to these rationalizations. Shouldn't it be a standard minimum criteria of a successful Jewish educational experience, that time spent under the tutelage of Jewish educators teaching Torah—no matter how well or ill-prepared, in an institution of Jewish learning—no matter for how long or short a time period,⁴ must somehow be eventually reflected in higher levels of *middot* and idealism on the part of at least the majority of its graduates, when compared to those who have not received this type of education? Yet, Kedem and Cohen, in reviewing the various theories regarding the relationship between religious education and moral judgment, accept the premise of Graham and Hofman that religious education can positively effect moral development only if "it is believed and accepted with real commitment."⁵ In light of contemporary trends this should be a cause for major concern. Dr. Norman Lamm has recently categorized current attitudes that stand in opposition to religion, "the substitution of experience for tradition as the touchstone of [one's] worldview; a rejection of authority,... a radical individualism... and thus a preoc-

cupation with self; a repudiation of the past and an orientation towards the future;... secularism not as a denial of religion as much as an insistence on its privatization;... and a rejection of particularisms of all sorts and an affirmation of universalism."⁶ Moods such as these are hardly conducive to the strengthening of religious conviction. If it is religious earnestness that is needed for effective moral education, then we are confronted with a serious situation, one that is not simply combated with better teacher preparation, additional classroom hours or a year of learning. While undergraduate and graduate study could do much to improve the craftsmanship of teachers, very specific additional coursework and in-service training is required to combat the contemporary anti-religious attitudes as well as heighten the sense of personal morality and commitment to the importance of defining *middot* as a central concern to be conveyed to students both inside and outside the classroom. Furthermore, given the severely limited time, instead of adding courses and instruction hours,⁷ perhaps an overall approach should be undertaken that will strive to alter the atmosphere throughout the entire school into one that will encourage *menschlichkeit* as a major realizable (as opposed to theoretical) educational goal.⁸ And finally, we have to find the means by which we do not simply wait to "pass the buck" to our Israeli colleagues. Instead we must address our students' ethical sensitivities,

continued

RABBI BIELER, a contributing editor of Ten Da'at, is the Assistant Principal for Judaic Studies 7-12 and Lead Teacher at the Hebrew Academy of Greater Washington, Silver Spring, Maryland.

feelings of responsibility to the community as a whole and to one another, general maturity, and religious commitment and motivation while they are still within our schools and therefore are our responsibilities.⁹

The Teacher as a Middot Model

□ □ □

The first issue that suggests itself for analysis is the attitude assumed by the instructor toward the world of ideas with which he/she is associated, and more specifically the subject matter that he/she is teaching. In order for us to hope that students will incorporate Torah study, mitzvah performance and ethical behavior into their lifestyles, it should be obvious that the instructor must first and foremost be deeply committed to these values and activities both intellectually and practically.¹⁰ Rabbi Emanuel Gettinger writes,

A great danger to be avoided in the teaching of moral values to children is the clash between practice and principle which the child might observe in the behavior of adults. Nothing can do more to demolish in the child's mind any code for ethical conduct than the discovery that the code is not upheld in practice by those people after whom the child patterns his own behavior. The importance of the extreme care that must be exercised in the selection of faculty members of any school cannot be overemphasized.¹¹

The Hazon Ish fleshed out the problem in even more graphic detail:

The relation of a teacher to his pupils requires the most elevated traits of character and the highest level of moral development. A teacher who rebukes his pupils with a vulgar expression or an angry shout does both good and evil. The possible good is that the pupil may recognize his own wrongdoing [that elicited the gruff reaction]. The certain evil however is that the pupil will become accustomed to the vulgarity and bad temper that he sees in his teacher. Imitation is more forceful than theoretical instruction.¹²

Even if we could demonstrate why there is little cause to fear that students might emulate the questionable practices

of their teachers, nevertheless the effectiveness of what is being taught could be seriously impaired were there to be perceived incongruities between the lifestyle of the person teaching and what is being presented in class. Adolescents, in particular, are quick to identify hypocrisy and inconsistency¹³ in an instructor who views material being taught as little more than a cultural, literary tradition that does not require his/her own life commitment.¹⁴ Therefore, to the extent that ethics and morality are viewed as a function of religious observance and are believed to be strengthened via Torah study, should it be perceived that the teacher him/herself does not engage in such practices, the student will also be unlikely to make a deep commitment to either the activities or the ideals and values that are their desired outcomes.

Time and Energy for Middot Instruction

□ □ □

Due to the excessive turn-over rate that plagues day school education, there is usually a large percentage of inexperienced teachers during any given academic year who are hard-pressed to get through each teaching day, let alone be expected to devise means by which they can expose their students to issues that would heighten their sense of *middot* and *mussar*. They may have great enthusiasm and devotion to *what* they are teaching, but have not yet mastered the skills of *how* to teach it well. Consequently, there are limited opportunities for teaching the texts, let alone the inner meanings and values-laden issues embedded within them. On the other hand, there are staff members who have taught for many years, and whose teaching techniques and classroom control are laudable. But even if these instructors were wonderful embodiments of what they were teaching when they were originally hired, over the years a certain jadedness and cynicism can set in, accompanied by a loss of religious zeal and enthusiasm. The work-ethic and energy levels become diluted, the inspiration evaporates and the time and commitment needed for deeply thought out presentation, as opposed to simply "covering the material," seems ever harder to come by. Added to this is the workload problem where the number of students and preparations further serve to hamper the serious and appropriate research and creative planning that allows for exciting and meaningful teach-

ing. Extracting values and *middot* from texts and devising creative ways of transmitting them demands considerable energy, time, and serious effort. It is certainly much simpler to merely present the *peshat* and selected *meforshim*, to cover the *daf* without probing particularly deeply for *mussar* themes, to run through the relevant *halakhot* without regard to the concepts that resonate throughout the Shulhan Arukh and which present specific and essential value orientations.

How can we expect to make our students morally sensitive when we subject them to the inexperience of a novice teacher or to the staleness of a tired teacher? Neither group will adequately convince students of the importance of good *middot* and superior character if they are being inadequately taught.

Institutional Responsibility

□ □ □

As such, it becomes the responsibility of the training institutions in which many teachers receive their formative training to ensure that their graduates will be better prepared to enter the classroom¹⁵ and thus begin to function effectively in the shortest possible time.

These institutions, in conjunction with day schools and professional educational organizations, must create ongoing in-service programs, Sabbatical opportunities, conference experiences and the like to better enable teachers to maintain their enthusiasm well into their careers. This ongoing stimulation can provide new approaches and understandings that will ultimately give the students a sense that their learning is relevant and important.

The day schools themselves should provide programs and professional learning opportunities. They must seek means by which their new staff members can gain confidence and competency as quickly as possible as well as ensure that their veteran staff be periodically refreshed, invigorated and stimulated. Peer coaching, weekly joint study periods for the entire Judaic studies staff, visiting educators and teacher trainers, in-house curricular approaches to various subject matter, etc., can help initiate younger teachers as well as invigorate the more experienced ones.

Personal Responsibility

□ □ □

It must be said, however, that one should not solely rely upon programs from without, be they part of one's professional training, in-service educational experi-

We must address
our students'
ethical
sensitivities . . .
while they
are still within
our schools
and therefore
are our
responsibilities.

ences or collegial interaction.¹⁶ If quality education in general, and moral education in particular, are to be priorities then it must be an ongoing personal concern for each instructor. We teach what we know best. We must therefore be engaged in an ongoing attempt to master our subject area, discipline, and modes of thought and behavior. There are two considerations in determining the nature of a teacher's outside learning, at least during the school year. On the one hand, one should not sacrifice the serious preparation necessary for a truly stimulating and meaningful class presentation and/or the busywork entailed, for example, in marking papers or administering makeup examinations, in order to pursue personal learning projects, particularly when they are completely unrelated to what one is teaching in school. It would appear that such activity would be comparable to the halakhic position that refuses to allow Torah scholars in general, and specifically teachers of children, to engage in personal fasts, since the individual will be guilty of, among other things, in the words of the Hafetz Hayim, "*gozlin et habriyot.*"¹⁷ But even if the material studied includes additional commentaries or sources related to what is to be presented in class, if it serves no purpose other than for the edification of the teacher, an argument could be made that such supplementary learning still does not allow the teacher to make the most of his/her time to enhance teaching as well as to relate to students. Dr. Joseph Kaminetsky, after citing Je-

rome Brunner, among others, as advocating that teachers must strive to learn and grow in order to maintain their enthusiasm and vitality, paraphrases an interesting comment of the *Mahneh* in his introduction to *Masekhet Kiddushin*.¹⁸

While the teacher must be 'like an angel,' i.e., an *omeid* (standing stationary),¹⁹ unconcerned with his own growth while teaching his charges, he must, nevertheless, do all he can to understand the basic characteristics of each of his pupils. Such understanding and insight will help him, the teacher, to grow—and cause him to say: 'I have learnt most from my pupils.'²⁰

Apparently the author of the *Mahneh* advocates that activities involving a teacher's personal growth should result in greater benefit to the students rather than serving as a kind of escape by means of self-absorption and involvement with ideas that will never be of use in the classroom. It must be stated that the proper study of *mussar* and *middot*-related issues should never result in esoteric, exclusively personal discoveries. Such learning should not only sensitize the teacher to his/her own individual needs and shortcomings but to the needs, sensitivities, weaknesses, and levels of spirituality of the students, as well as the most effective approach to use with each of them.

Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik explains the role of the nursing teacher/father that God demanded of Moshe in order to counter the paganism of the Jewish people.²¹ According to the Rav, a dichotomy usually exists between the paradigm of a nursing parent as opposed to that of a teacher.

The nursing mother/father teaches, but also carries the child in his/her bosom. She submerges her identity in that of the child, making her own ambitions secondary or nullifying them completely. The needs of the child take precedence over her own life and she becomes one with the child and finds fulfillment through him. There is an emotional fusion of two identities. A teacher, however, retains his own identity and personality; his is an intellectual communication of specific knowledge... We require [as opposed to the sufficiency of the teaching role in the past] the warm embrace as much as the brilliant idea, sympathetic un-

derstanding, true befriending and a human reach out, a suggestion to our modern *mitonenim* [restless, complaining ones] that 'we care'; the teaching role is inadequate.

It is clear that if students are to be inspired to be sensitive to one another, they must spend time in the presence of teachers who are sensitive to them and to their needs.

Teaching Mitzvot as Middot Facilitators

In addition to seriously studying *mussar* and *middot* texts²² it is also crucial for teachers to adopt a particular philosophical and theological stance with respect to mitzvot in general. While the question of whether to seek out *ta'amei hamitzvot* is controversial among Hazal,²³ a case could be made that just as contemporary attitudes and ideologies demand a particular type of teaching, so too a unique general approach to the Torah is necessitated—one that may not have seemed so compelling in the past, but which now may be one of the only tactics left to win over the hearts and minds of students. Dr. Yitzhak Twersky has written how the Rambam very self-consciously, in both the *Moreh Nevukhim* and the *Mishneh Torah*, calls our attention to "ethical doctrines and moral directives reflected in legal prescriptions and in normative summations which at first glance are—or are assumed to be—free of moral motifs."²⁴ Shalom Rosenberg's "anthropological theory" of mitzvot and ethics posits the assumption that the commandments, even the *hukim*, are more than arbitrary loyalty tests to God but are designed to enable the realization of the full potential of each individual's inherent nature by shaping the human personality in accordance with its true essence. Both Dr. Twersky and Prof. Rosenberg call attention to Maimonides' codification of Devarim 28:9 "*Vehalakhtah biderakhav*" as a separate commandment to be understood as a specific charge for the individual to "mold, nurture and sustain an ethical personality."²⁵ A teacher who thinks of mitzvot in these terms will, whenever teaching a passage from Tanakh or Torah SheB'Al Peh,²⁷ be more likely to present the moral emphases within the halakhic aspects of the text, thereby geometrically expanding the opportunities in which students can deal with these issues.²⁸

continued

Confronting Societal Values

As part of the constant goad for ethical development, teachers should attempt to challenge the deepest felt values of those whom they teach. Edward Shils has written,

...the young generation is a victim not of exploitation by industrialists and financiers, politicians and churchmen, teachers and parents, but of a lack of courage and forthrightness [emphasis mine] in these groups. So many concessions have been made to progressive ideas in the raising of children, in the construction of curricula in the schools, and in the flattery of the desires of the young, and the young have no grounds to respect them.²⁹

The question of the degree to which religious studies ought to be presented as a type of prophetic call to revolution against the prevailing values of the time, must of course be balanced by a consideration of the possibility of alienating major portions of the parent and student bodies when these calls for reform and constructive change become too strident and radical. Educators are halakhically considered the *shlichim* [messengers] of the parents, giving the school the mandate to operate and educate their children,³⁰ and a *shaliach* is not entitled to do anything that the *sholeah* [the sender] has not called for.³¹ The conclusion could thus be drawn that teachers and administrators are required to find means by which the values and assumptions of the parent body are supported rather than attacked. However, we also have to consider the principle of *ein shaliach l'davar aveirah*.³² Would a teacher who encourages his/her students to be more serious about *shmirat hamitzvot* or *talmud Torah*, in the face of the communal attitude in general and the disposition of the parents of this student in particular, be defined as acting improperly? If teaching is understood as the process whereby students begin to look critically at the religious and moral values of those around them and consider outlooks, philosophies and alternative lifestyles, then what sort of possibilities should the Judaic studies teacher present to his/her disciples? Understandably, when one's livelihood becomes threatened as a result of critiquing the values of students and their families, the degree of confrontationalism engaged in by the instructor may have to be reconsidered.

However, all things being equal, perhaps the guidelines for the Torah educator should be informed by the following biting Talmudic comment: "*Amar Abaye: Hai tzurbah miRabanan demerahmim laih bema' matah, lav mishum dema'alei tefai, elah mishum deloh mukhah lehuah bemilai deShemayah.*" Abaye said: If a scholar is loved by the townspeople, their love is not due to his excellence but to the fact that he does not rebuke them for neglecting spiritual matters.³³

Once a teacher begins to tackle the anti-traditional and religious attitudes and values of students, there are other ethical issues that should also be of concern. According to Shils,³⁴ the most pervasive problem that stands in the way of younger people developing strong ties to traditional beliefs is the fact that the affluence of our society has made it impossible to establish a relationship between exerting effort, being punctual and performing competently, and a concomitant receipt of income that enables one to purchase moderate but regular pleasures with one's hard-earned income.

If nothing has to be earned, then the objects of desire become limitless. The search for intense gratification becomes predominant...The craving for intense pleasures renders the workaday world intolerable. As a result, the institutions that are part of the workaday world and the institutions with which they are associated become repugnant. The way of life which they recommend has no attractions. Moral preaching, filled with cliché is repellent to those who have eschewed or have been unable to enter the workaday world. The preachers, lay and ecclesiastical, speak to deaf ears. Insofar as they are heard at all, they sound like the enemies of intense pleasure.³⁵

Ironically, according to Joseph Schultz, it was these very values of hard work and delayed gratification now under siege, that allowed religious Jewish immigrants coming from Eastern Europe to rapidly acclimate into Protestant America.³⁶ He suggests that the values of developed intellect, dedication to material success, the desire for a society of law and order were common to both the Puritan and Lithuanian traditions. But like Shils, he notes that times have changed: "...the religious base in which these traditions were anchored has long since eroded; consequently the intellectual smugness, the

crass materialism and the arrogance of power which were held in check by the piety of the Puritans and the *Mitnagdim*, have run rampant in the secular lives of their descendants."³⁷ While it could be argued that Orthodox day school students and their families, at least on a surface level, are hardly secularists in terms of external behavior, there are those who already have categorized the Modern Orthodox as "religiously observant secularists who may be meticulously observant of the law, but whose values and attitudes are shaped by the surrounding secular culture."³⁸ On the one hand, can the Torah educator afford to be oblivious to the threat to traditional Jewish values that exposure to and internalization of the "live for the moment" mentality of general society poses? On the other hand, will he/she be able to change the situation, short of alienating those whom he/she is trying hardest to influence? The educator who cares about morals and *middot* will take on the challenge, and deserves to be encouraged in all of his/her attempts.

The Middot of the Classroom Work Ethic

The acquiring of ethical values and attitudes is seen by S.R. Hirsch³⁹ as part of good classroom management. Among the qualities he lists that can effect the mental skills and sense of responsibility of students, qualities that he includes under the rubric of moral issues, are: a) the development of mental energies: concentration, reflection, memorization, creative thinking by drawing upon knowledge already acquired; b) obedience, readiness to comply with a superior will, self-control, punctuality, the attempt to provide one's most perfectly possible performance of work imposed, to learn to take pleasure in work, self-discipline; c) social qualities arising from working with others, modesty, friendliness, team spirit; d) neatness, harmony of form engendered in drawing, feeling for logical harmony, etc. While one could claim that these are qualities that were characteristics of the European school of the 1850's, nevertheless one has to wonder whether the extent to which we, as parents and as teachers, indulge our children has not only made them difficult to control, but also has eroded their moral development. And, inversely, the teacher who demands adherence to standards and the striving for perfection and work well-done might also be contributing to the *middot* of the indi-

The text that students should be studying is the living texts of their instructors.

□ □ □ □ □

vidual outside of the classroom context. Furthermore, the lack of professional training often impedes even those who would be prepared to require students to do outside work, but who never were provided a framework in which to explore how to properly do so.

Honesty as a Central Middah

□ □ □ □ □

Whereas the intensity of one's work ethic as well as the quality of the work that a student is expected to submit are subtle reflections of ethical behavior, perhaps the most overt form of *middot* training in the classroom is that which is associated with cultivating honesty. While heredity and parental values are often cited as responsible for lapses in honest behavior, there are many who blame the teacher and the messages conveyed by classroom standards. There are those who feel that the degree to which cheating takes place is a reflection of the amount of effort that teachers expend in their work. It isn't cheating alone that bothers school officials, but rather that the cheating can be traced primarily to the teachers. "The amount of cheating depends upon the teacher in charge," stresses an Ohio schoolman. "If the teacher is conscientious and monitors the exam," he said, "there will be little cheating, if any."⁴⁰ It is instructive to include Stephen Lowell's⁴¹ categorization of the lack of teacher conscientiousness that directly contributes to student dishonesty:

a. *An attempt at an exciting game between pupils and their middle-class-oriented teacher.* The teacher has to make clear to

the students the difference between playfulness and serious breaches of morality, a stance that can come only from an individual very conscious of such distinctions due to his/her own strong ethical sensibilities.

b. *Lack of balance in regard to schoolwork among subjects and in regard to certain days of the week.* Teachers who refuse to be sensitive to the overall workload of students and the entitlement of other subject areas to also assign outside work, directly contributes to students feeling that they have to cut corners in order to compete.

c. *Not explaining to students the extent of the harm involved in school dishonesty.* Teachers who have not developed for themselves strong moral stances will have difficulty in taking moral stands with their students.

d. *Many teachers do not often grade homework.* The extent to which students are made to feel that there is a lack of real feedback in terms of their homework encourages them to copy and thereby save time for other things.

e. *Teachers may encourage cheating by the types of tests they give.* Certain formats of tests are easier to copy while a teacher who uses the same exam year after year is practically inviting students to take advantage of the information available to them in order to unfairly obtain a respectable grade.

f. *Failing to supervise during an exam is encouraging dishonesty.* Students who study seriously deserve protection from those who are unscrupulous about how they take exams. If they don't receive it, they will either resent the teacher and lose respect for what he/she teaches, or even come to the cynical conclusion that they might as well also be dishonest in order to keep up with the accomplishments of others.

g. *Teachers who publicly belittle low grades put pressure on students not wishing to be embarrassed to cheat.* Students shouldn't be able to rationalize their dishonesty by pointing out the unfairness of the teacher.

h. *The unwillingness of teachers to confront cheating students.* Teachers are afraid of "turning a student off" or dealing with a charge of having unfairly accused a student. Yet they should realize that such reticence is undercutting the moral structure not only of the classroom, but also of the entire school.

i. *Problems with the manner in which teachers grade student work.* If teachers refuse to give partial credit, students stop feeling that it's worthwhile trying to do the work, and will be influenced to seek easier, more productive means by which to do well.

The difficulties faced by overloaded day school Judaic studies teachers in properly assigning and grading homework, and designing tests and returning them, graded fairly, with constructive comments, and quickly, are well-known to any professional in the field. However, not requiring serious outside student preparation and failure to follow through on assignments and exams undermines lessons on responsibility, self-discipline and honesty. What emerges from Lowell's evaluation is that not only is the professional performance of the teacher being questioned, i.e., whether or not the students are being helped to properly learn the subject matter, but so are the effects of the instructor's "hidden curriculum" on his/her students. Measures must be taken to guarantee that students are not unintentionally encouraged to become increasingly unethical, via the inability of their teachers to meet their day-to-day classroom obligations.

Conclusion

□ □ □ □ □

In conclusion, special training both before and after assuming a teaching position, personal study of texts both primary and secondary, the commitment to seeking out an ethical philosophy of mitzvot, and the commitment to demand excellence in deportment as well as classwork, will all result not only in improved education but in a teacher's renewed awareness of the role played by *middot* in his/her interactions with others. This will hopefully lead to the ongoing internalization of these values so that the teacher becomes, rather than only the verbal dispenser of such *hashkafot*, the embodiment of a *ba'al/ba'alat middot*. The text that students should be studying is the living texts of their instructors.⁴² The best teaching is that of example, and that is what we must all aspire to become for our students as well as ourselves. Not only should students strive to be *meshamesh* their teachers, but these same instructors should make great efforts to be worthy of such *shimush* and of ultimate personal emulation.

□ □
continued

FOOTNOTES

1. Schools that responded to my written request for a copy of their mission statements were:
Columbus Torah Academy
Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto
Hebrew Academy of Greater Miami
Hebrew Academy of Greater Washington
Ramaz School
United Talmud Torahs of Montreal
Yavneh Academy (Bergen County, New Jersey)
Yeshivah of Flatbush
Yeshiva University High School (Boys)
Yeshiva University High School (Girls)
2. The original critical evaluation appearing in print by a day school "outsider" was Milton Himmelfarb's "Reflection on the Jewish Day School" (*Commentary*, 30:1, July 1960). Short reflections upon what day schools leave to be desired can be found in "The Jewish Day School: A Symposium," *Tradition*, 13:1, Summer 1972. A more recent, thorough and specific analysis by an "insider" is "A Critique of the American Jewish Day School" by Harold Goldberg in *Tradition* 19:4, Winter 1981, p. 292. Goldberg points to deficiencies in the knowledge of American day school graduates that he encountered in Israel, in terms of Hebrew language, familiarity with elementary Hebrew texts, halakha, recognizing different formats for traditional Jewish identity, and Jewish philosophy. In "Reaching Modern Orthodox Youth" (*Ten Da'at*, 3:2, Winter 1989), Mayer Schiller refers to Modern Orthodox education's "poorly imparting basic skills to a disinterested audience." In "The Israel Experience: A Closer Look from Israel" (*Ten Da'at* 5:1, Fall 1990, pp. 35-6), Norman Amsel refers to similar comments by Israeli Torah educators with regard to American students' knowledge of Hebrew and study skills with respect to *limudei kodesh*. In July, 1991, during a discussion between North American Jewish educators working on the Mandel Institute-sponsored Modern Orthodox Syllabus Project, and educational leaders associated with three of the Israeli institutions attended by many of the best American day school graduates, it was noted that Israeli teachers feel that their students from the *golah* are unable to read with fluency and understanding, cannot independently prepare commentaries on Humash such as Ramban, find great difficulty in organizing and writing serious research papers that call upon them to use and integrate several primary sources, and do not display familiarity with the basic everyday halakhic issues such as those entailed in *Shabbat* and *Kashrut*.
3. I think that a case could be made in particular for the quality of learning among female day school graduates studying at Israeli institutions. Many of the problems that are faced in America—see my "Issues Concerning Torah Education for Women" in *Ten Da'at* 3:3, Spring 1989—do not influence the policies and levels of Torah study that schools like Michlelet Lindenbaum, Michlelet Moriah, Orot and others are now offering. The fact that these institutions are reporting that girls are beginning to opt to remain a second year also bodes well for women's Jewish educational opportunities and achievements in the coming years.

4. Walter Ackerman in "Jewish Education Today," *American Jewish Year Book 1980*, JPS, Philadelphia, p. 141 summarizes the research of Ribner, Bock and Himmelfarb with regard to the minimum number of hours of Jewish education needed to make an impact upon the learner in terms of lifestyle and values. John Sigel, David August and Joseph Beltempo in "Impact of Jewish Education on Jewish Identification in a Group of Adolescents" (*Jewish Social Studies*, Vol. 43, 1981) suggest that while the number of hours spent in Jewish studies is significant, whether those hours take place during an individual's early years, adolescence or college years is also a variable that is important to consider.

5. Peri Kedem and Debbie Waid Cohen, "The Effects of Religious Education on Moral Judgment," in *Journal of Psychology and Judaism*, 2:1, Spring 1987, p. 5.

6. Norman Lamm, *Torah U-Madda*, as quoted by Jonathan Sacks in "Torah Umadda: The Unwritten Chapter," in *L'Eylah*, No. 30, September 1990, p. 12.

7. Already in the 1850's, Rabbi S.R. Hirsch wrote in an essay entitled "On the Place of Ethical Training in School Children" (*Judaism Eternal*, ed. and trans. I. Grunfeld, Soncino Press, London, 1956, p. 175), "It [the school] would not be able to fulfill its tasks in the field of instruction if it were to include among its direct and primary tasks the moral education of its pupils and if for instance it were to subject any of their moral shortcomings to a systematic cure."

8. See my "The Day School: A Modern Orthodox Jewish Community's Reflection or Guiding Light," in *Ten Da'at* 5:1, Fall 1990, pp. 27-9.

9. Mayer Schiller during the course of his presentation at the October 1989 ECA conference, noted that each time one of his former students who had been markedly indifferent and perhaps even hostile to things Jewish, returns from learning in *Aretz* he displays greater devotion to Torah and mitzvot as well as a heightened seriousness about life in general. This constitutes a powerful question regarding the individual's previous school experience, as well as the inability of his former teachers to have found the right manner by which to motivate him to realize his now apparent potential. While all sorts of changes precipitated by studying in Israel could be cited in the interests of defending ourselves from such implied criticism, e.g., heightened personal maturity, being removed from family and friends, having a greater number of serious role models, identity crises, etc., nevertheless the comment should provide serious food for thought for the North American Jewish high school educator.

10. The Talmudic passage that is often cited as the paradigm of demanding from a teacher of Torah not only outstanding erudition and pedagogic competency, but also moral and religious excellence is contained in Moed Katan 17a. In answer to an inquiry from Rabbi Yehuda as to what to do with a scholar whose public activities were giving rise to scandalous stories, Rabbah ben Bar Hana quotes Rabbi Yohanan's interpretation of Melakhi 2:7. "*Ki siftei kohen yishmeru da'at ve'Torah yevakshu mipihu, hi malakh haShem Tzevakot huh*"

(For the lips of the priest should be a repository of knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth; for/when/if he is the messenger/angel of the Lord of Hosts) — meaning, that if the teacher is endowed with qualities similar to one of God's angels, they should seek the law at his mouth; but if not, they should not seek the law at his mouth. The Talmud states that despite the importance of the individual as a teacher of Torah, Rabbi Yehuda nevertheless put him into *herem* on the basis of the requirement that a Torah teacher of necessity must be the embodiment of his teachings. The inverse of the implications of the source of Moed Katan cited above appears in Hagigah 15b, where the student-teacher relationship between Rabbi Meir and his apostate Master, Elisha ben Avuyah is described. And while the Talmud quotes verses that Rabbi Meir could have used to refute the implications of Rabbi Yohanan's understanding of the passage in Malakhi, [eg Mishlei 22:17; Tehillim 45:11] the Talmud asserts that either the case of Rabbi Meir is so exceptional due to his own brilliance (see Eiruvin 73b) that we cannot use him as a paradigm or that while Rabbi Meir's example could be emulated by others in terms of studying with a teacher of questionable personal behavior and outlook, nevertheless "*Hah begadol, hah bekatan*" — permission to engage in such learning arrangements applies to an adult, one whose personal orientation and disposition is thought to have already somewhat solidified and therefore is relatively immune to internalizing more than the actual material; whereas younger, impressionable individuals, as yet unformed religiously and morally ought not to be allowed to study under such conditions.

11. Rabbi Emanuel Gettinger, "Education for Moral Behavior," in *Building Jewish Ethical Character*, ed. J. Kaminetsky, M. Friedman. The Fryer Foundation, New York, 1975, p. 90.

12. Hazon Ish quoted by Marvin Fox, "Character Training in the Face of Environmental Pressures," in Kaminetsky and Friedman, p. 97.

13. See Chapter 1: "Crap Detecting" in Neil Postman and Charles Weingartner, *Teaching as a Subversive Activity*, Dell Publishing, New York, 1969.

14. Emanuel Rackman in "Getting on Course Again: A Plea for Moral Education" in *Jewish Education*, 45:3, Summer-Fall 1977, p. 11 writes,

...too many students are being turned off by bad models. Are our teachers themselves good models? Are our teachers exemplars of what are morality and ethics? Alas too many students are being turned off by teachers rather than subject matter. Too many students in the day schools are being turned off by a lack of ethical behavior on the part of their teachers and principals more so than by the heretical musings of their friends and themselves.

I would add that the issue of teacher modeling applies not only to questions of belief and ethics, but also to whether the teacher believes in the value of secular studies, whether he/she believes that girls should study certain aspects of Torah SheB'al Peh, whether it is

important to be concerned with the needs of the less religious, whether the State of Israel is a religious value, etc.

15. The importance of apprenticing teaching candidates for day schools with master teachers for concerted periods of time prior to their actually entering the field, should be a high priority on the training institution's lists. Furthermore, arrangements should be made whereby these individuals give classes to the age groups that they will eventually be teaching within the context of Shabbatonim, NCSY conventions, summer camps, etc. The teaching experiences in these settings should be supervised by seasoned educators who will be able to provide guidance and feedback. Additional experience will not only lead to smoother functioning within the classroom, but also to a greater sense of confidence and competence, which in turn further promotes chances of teaching success at a much earlier point in one's career. In *ASCD Update*, 32:8, October 1990, p. 3, the importance of year-long paid internships for novice teachers is discussed in the review of a report entitled, "The Teaching Internship: Practical Preparation for a Licensed Profession."

16. Unfortunately, due to financial considerations, inability to convince principals of the importance of conferences for the development and improvement of members of their staffs leading to lack of administrative support and encouragement for teachers to attend professional meetings, teacher demoralization to the point of not wishing to spend "spare time" engaged in any sort of pursuit that is associated with school, etc., the number of teachers who avail themselves of learning opportunities offered by conferences are regrettably few. This situation should be aggressively dealt with in order to raise the level of the profession not only with respect to specific ethical issues, but all things having to do with education in general and Jewish education in particular.

17. "Stealing from people," since, when fasting, a teacher may be in a weakened condition and therefore unable to properly dispense responsibilities (*Shulhan Arukh, Orach Hayyim 571:2*, Mishna Berurah, *siman katan heh.*) Such an approach might also call into question the ethical propriety of pursuing a graduate degree in a field unrelated to education when such studies can be demonstrated to take away from the individual's performance in the classroom.

18. Dr. Joseph Kaminetsky, "Ethics in the Classroom" in J. Kaminetsky and Friedman, pp. 101-2.

19. The idea that angels have a stationary quality is based upon the description found in *Yehezkel 1:7*, "Veragleihem regel yesharah" (And their feet were like a straight/single foot), suggesting an inability for free movement. This serves as the basis for the halakhic requirement to keep one's feet together during the *amidah* — see *Shulhan Arukh, Orach Hayyim 95:1*.

20. The final quote is a reference to the statement on *Ta'anit 7a* "U'mitalmidai yoter mikulam." Usually the phrase is taken in a cognitive context in the sense that the questioning of students makes the teacher understand better what he/she has studied. Here the

implication is that the need to study the student provides a type of knowledge for the teacher that could never be obtained by exclusively relating to the recorded ideas and concepts within the texts of Jewish tradition. An evocative *hakirah* that this line of reasoning leads to is whether what is derived from one's students is a kind of unique knowledge that can be obtained in no other way, or is the possibility being suggested that by learning "your students" you have more fully understood what you might have learned, only less intensely or dramatically from *seforim*?

21. See Bamidbar 11:12. *Reflections of the Rav: Lessons in Jewish Thought*, adapted from lectures of Rabbi J. B. Soloveitchik by Abraham Besdin, Dep't. of Torah Education and Culture in the Diaspora of WZO, Jerusalem, 1979, pp. 157-8.

22. See the introduction of the Ramhal to *Mesilat Yesharim* on why he felt it important to write the *sefer* and how he hoped it would be used.

23. e.g. Rabbi Yaakov's statement on Sanhedrin 21b, and both pro and con sources cited by Ramban on Devarim 22:6.

24. Dr. Yitzchak Twersky, "On Law and Ethics in the Mishneh Torah: A Case Study of Hilchot Megillah II:17" in *Tradition* 24:2, Winter 1989, p. 138.

25. Shalom Rosenberg, "Ethics," in *Contemporary Jewish Religious Thought: Original Essays on Critical Concepts, Movements and Beliefs*, ed. Arthur Cohen and Paul Mendes-Flohr, The Free Press, New York, 1987, p. 197. The "anthropological theory" connotes an approach in contrast to the "deontological theory" whereby commandments are to be carried out because we are commanded to do so and the "teleological, utilitarian theory" which posits that the commandments and the social system based upon them is designed to create the greatest good for society, but not necessarily for the individual.

26. Twersky, p. 143.

27. H.C. Schimmel in "Morality and Halacha—The Moral *Sevarah*", *L'Eylah*, No. 28, Sept. 1989, pp. 24-6, presents an interesting discussion illustrating how independent thinking is employed in several places in the Talmud in order to arrive at moral positions in the face of contrary evidence provided by various textual sources, e.g., Pesahim 25b; Bava Metziah 62b; Makkot 9b.

28. Kohlberg's pedagogic technique for attempting to heighten a student's moral level is described in *Promoting Moral Growth from Piaget to Kohlberg*, (ed. J. Reimer, D. Paolitto, R. Hersh, Longman, New York, 1983) p. 147 as follows:

...the creation of cognitive conflict is one of the two main roles of the moral educator. Fostering dialogue is the major vehicle for doing this. It is the teacher's role to encourage social exchanges that expose students to stages of moral reasoning above their own stage, and to stimulate them to move beyond their present patterns of reasoning.

It would appear reasonable to not only apply such techniques to "Heinz's Dilemma"—see

Lawrence Kohlberg, *The Psychology of Moral Development: The Nature and Validity of Moral Stages*, (Harper and Row, San Francisco 1984), p. 640 [for an halakhic treatment of this dilemma, see Mark Dratch, "His Money or Her Life? Heinz's Dilemma in Jewish Law," in *Journal on Halacha and Contemporary Society*, No. 20, Fall 1990, pp. 111-29], but also to various Biblical and Talmudic incidents and even halakhic disputes, particularly those of an Aggadic nature. Much of this literature could be approached as representing clashes of values arising from the dilemmas in which the *Avot* and *Imahot*, *Shotfim* and *Melakhim*, *Tannaim* and *Amoraim* find themselves.

29. Edward Shils, "Tradition and the Generations: On the Difficulties of Transmission," in *The American Scholar*, 53:1, Winter 1983-4, p. 37.

30. Kiddushin 29a. The *beraitah* specifically refers to a father's obligation to teach his son Torah. With respect to mothers teaching their offspring, there would appear to be the possibility of a *kiyuv* even if no *hiyuv* is extant. In terms of teaching daughters, all are in agreement that even if women do not have the obligation of studying Torah, still they must learn the laws that are directly applicable to themselves. See Elyakim Ellinson, *Halshah VeHaMitzvot*, Torah Department, Jerusalem, 5735, pp. 166-7. If mothers and fathers are not teaching such material to their daughters, then it becomes incumbent upon the school to do so. One administrator of a girl's high school reported to me that there is much more practical halakha being taught now since it is felt that the educators can no longer rely on parents to teach their daughters these rudimentary laws and practices.

31. Bava Kamma 102b.

32. Bava Batrah 10b. A messenger is not entitled to place responsibility for a questionable and/or prohibited act upon the sender, but must rather personally accept such accountability, for nothing forces a messenger to carry out the mission.

33. Ketubot 105b.

34. Shils, p. 34.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 35.

36. Joseph Schultz, "Judaism and the American Experience," in *Judaism*, 1976, p. 190.

37. *Ibid.*

38. David Singer, "Symposium: The State of Orthodoxy," in *Tradition*, 20:1, Spring 1982, p. 71.

39. See fn. 7.

40. "When Students Cheat, It May Be Teacher's Fault," in *Nation's Schools*, Vol. 77, Feb. 1966, p. 63 quoted in Stephen Lowell, *Promoting Honesty in the Classroom*, J. Weston Welch, Portland, ME, 1983, p. 11.

41. *Ibid.*, pp. 14-6.

42. *Kiddushin 33b* draws the analogy between standing for a *sefer Torah* and one who is the embodiment of the contents of that Torah. This should not only be a formalistic ritual, but also a goal for the Torah teacher to strive after for him or herself.