Capitalizing on Resources: Creating a Model Consortium of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion Museum Collections

Rebecca S. Levenberg
Seton Hall University

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholarship.shu.edu/dissertations
Part of the Arts and Humanities Commons

Recommended Citation
http://scholarship.shu.edu/dissertations/962
Capitalizing on Resources

Creating a Model Consortium of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion Museum Collections

by

Rebecca S. Levenberg

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of

Master of Arts Degree

Seton Hall University

2004

Approved by

Thesis Advisor

Program Authorized to Offer Degree

MA Program in Museum Professions

Date August 1, 2004
Abstract

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion is a United States Jewish seminary that functions as the academic arm of the Reform Jewish movement. The College has campuses in New York City, Cincinnati, Los Angeles, and Jerusalem, all of which house museums. As an intern at the HUC Museum in New York City in 2003, I noticed the many opportunities HUC Museums were missing. While each campus museum has a unique focus and collection, the four museums do not cooperate either with each other or with the college itself, thereby foregoing the possibility of creating important exhibitions and shortchanging the students and faculty on the four HUC campuses.

As I began thinking about how the museums could cooperate, I developed an interest in consortia. The purpose of a consortium is to pool the resources of a number of institutions and then to make those resources available to all of the consortium members and often to the public as well. Research of various consortia produced four models that seemed particularly appropriate to the situation of the four HUC museums.

- “Home: A Place in the World”, New York, NY
- “Museums at the Crossroads Consortium”, Champaign County, IL
- Art Museum Image Consortium (AMICO)
- Museum Educational Site Licensing Project (MESL)

This thesis begins with a history of Hebrew Union College and of its four campus museums. The historic reasons for the lack of cooperation between the museums among themselves, and between the museums and the colleges within which they operate, will be explored. The advantages of greater cooperation will be outlined and four successful consortium models at other museums will be discussed. Applying what has worked in those consortia to the specific situation of Hebrew Union College, a consortium model for its museums will be proposed.
# Table of Contents

Introduction ............................................................... p.1-3

I. Brief History of Reform Judaism ........................................... p.4-5

II. Founding of HUC .......................................................... p.5-6

III. The HUC Expansion to New York, Los Angeles, and Jerusalem ........ p.6-7

IV. The Union Museum ....................................................... p.7-11

V. Current Status of the HUC Museums ...................................... p.11-16

VI. The Disconnection Between the Museums ................................. p.17-18

VII. Museums and Consortia .................................................... p.18-20


XI. Consortium Example 2: “Museums at the Crossroads Consortium”, Champaign County, IL ........................................ p.21-23


XI. Consortium Example 4: Museum Consortia Integrated within the University as seen in the Museum Educational Site Licensing Project ........................................ p.27-29

XII. Creating a Model Consortium for the HUC-JIR Museums ................ p.29-33

Conclusion ........................................................................... p.34-35

Appendix 1: Lesson Plan from Booth Central Elementary School, Fourth And Fifth Grade Levels ........................................ p.36-37

Appendix 2: Lilith Magazine: The Voice of Jewish Women ................ p.38-41

Bibliography .......................................................................... p.42-44
Introduction

Sometimes one class assignment can impact an entire graduate school career and awaken an unknown interest. During my first semester as a student in the Master’s Program in Museum Professions at Seton Hall University, I was enrolled in “History and Theory of Museums”, a class in which we were asked to write a paper on the history of a museum. After exploring a number of options, I selected the museums of Hebrew Union College, the school that serves as the educational and intellectual center of Reform Judaism. I had been associated with the College for many years having been raised as a Reform Jew. In addition, my husband was a rabbinical student at the New York City campus. Indeed, initially I was a little apprehensive about the close proximity in which the paper would bring my personal and professional lives. Once the research got underway, however, I became quite fascinated with it. Moreover, I received a great deal of support and mentoring from the New York museum staff, which led me to develop a general interest in the role that the four campus museums and Jewish art in general played in the life of Reform Judaism. The unique qualities of Reform Judaism, best expressed by the language of the movement’s central organization of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, also played a role in developing these interests (www.uahc.org):

Throughout history, Jews have remained firmly rooted in Jewish tradition, even as we learned much from our encounters with other cultures. Nevertheless, since its earliest days, Reform Judaism has asserted that a Judaism frozen in time is an heirloom, not a living fountain. The great contribution of Reform Judaism is that it has enabled the Jewish people to introduce innovation while preserving tradition, to embrace diversity while asserting commonality, to affirm beliefs without rejecting those who doubt, and to bring faith to sacred texts without sacrificing critical scholarship.

By the time I had finished the paper, the lines between personal and professional were comfortably blurred, and I decided to work as an intern at the New York HUC Museum during the spring of 2003.

During my short time at the Museum, I experienced several aspects of museum work but, more importantly, I was able to observe first-hand how HUC Museums operate. Among the things I noticed were the many opportunities the HUC Museums were missing. What
struck me most was the disconnect between the museums on the school’s four campuses, located in Cincinnati, New York City, Los Angeles, and Jerusalem. Even though the four campuses have unique programs, they all operate as rabbinical schools with the same core curriculum and central business offices. One would therefore expect a degree of cooperation not only between the schools but also, and perhaps especially between the museums they operate. For, while each campus museum has a different focus and collection, they could all benefit if they pooled their resources. The fact is that the four museums do not collaborate, either with each other or, even with the colleges they are supposed to serve. If the campuses work together on curriculum why don’t they join forces when it comes to their collections? Why, for that matter, is there no connection between the museums and the schools? Why spend time and money collecting in the name of the school if the collections are not used for the school? Why are the students, the future ambassadors of HUC and the Reform movement, not made aware of the collections through classes, tours, or even publicity? In short, why is there no system of cooperation, no consortium in place, to make use of the vast resources amassed by HUC over the past 130 years?

The idea of a consortium is to pool the resources of a number of institutions and then to make those resources available to all of the consortium members. The four campuses of HUC are already connected in several ways, from sharing professors, students, and degrees, to libraries and Board of Directors. A consortium of HUC museums would fully integrate the school while also promoting additional access to the collections for the students and faculty, the greater Jewish community, and the public. Four museum consortia models will be explored in order to shed some light on the use of a collective for HUC’s purposes. In this thesis, I will explore a number of consortia models that are currently in existence, for the purpose of assessing which one might be applicable to the HUC museums. I intend to analyze their strengths and weaknesses, as well as the reasons why a particular model or part thereof is especially suited to the HUC situation.
The first type of consortium to be described is the collaboration, in 1990, between five Manhattan museums called "Home: A Place in the World". This collaboration was created for a one-time use on a local level. It displays how a variety of institutions can work on a joint project while maintaining the integrity and individuality of each institution. The next model that will be analyzed is the "Museums at the Crossroads Consortium", formed by the museums of Champaign County, Illinois. The consortium includes seven diverse museums in Champaign County that work on programs that bring museum resources to the local schools. This collective is regional and therefore works with a relatively small constituency. The Art Museum Image Consortium (AMICO) will be the third consortium surveyed for it displays the advantages and disadvantages of working over geographical distance, with all the financial strains involved. The last consortium to be studied will be MESL, the Museum Educational Site Licensing Project. This was a two-year experiment launched by the Getty that included seven museums and seven universities that worked in a consortium in order to share digital images. It was a well-documented experiment that produced helpful results, which led to several initiatives including the Art Museum Image Consortium (AMICO). The relation of the museums was most similar to that of the HUC Museums.

Given that the museums are an element of HUC-JIR, the academic arm of the American Reform Jewish movement, it is not possible to understand the museums without considering the early stages of Reform Judaism, the founding of the school in Cincinnati, Ohio as well as the school’s expansion in New York, Los Angeles, and Jerusalem. I shall begin my thesis with an exploration of HUC as an institution and the nature and role of the school’s four museums, before I discuss the four consortia. By analyzing what has worked in previous and/or established consortia, and by taking into consideration the specific needs of Hebrew Union College, I hope to come up with a realistic consortium model for the HUC Museums. I hope that, in the process, the benefits of creating a consortium for the college collections will also become apparent.
I. Brief History of Reform Judaism

Jews are a unique people in that the majority of their history has taken place outside of their homeland. This phenomenon is commonly called the Diaspora, or the scattering of Jews around the world after the year 70 C.E., when the Romans ended Jewish sovereignty in the land of Israel through military conquest. Once the majority of Jews lived outside of Israel, they were no longer united under a single government. This ultimately caused a shift in the characteristics of Judaism. Jewish culture after 70 C.E. developed within the context of the various societies in which Jews were living. Jewish culture, therefore, became a pluralistic one in which the influence of Judaism and various secular cultures were combined. This led to a range of Jewish practices that varied depending upon period and country (Oko, 83). Prior to the rule of Napoleon in the late eighteenth century, Jews lived for the most part outside of the mainstream culture of the many countries which they inhabited. With the Napoleonic conquest of Europe, Jews in western and central Europe became emancipated. One of the results of emancipation was the so-called Wissenschaft des Judentums, the scientific study of Judaism. Emerging around the second decade of the nineteenth century, Wissenschaft des Judentums developed from a combination of Jewish emancipation and the already-established notions of Enlightenment. This study was practiced by a younger, liberal generation of Jews who were applying the analytical skills they were learning at the secular universities where they were studying (New Beginnings, 20).

In Germany, Wissenschaft des Judentums became so much a part of the nineteenth-century Jewish culture that eventually there was a need for a religious response. It was apparent to many Jews that there was a need for a "new type of rabbi for a new situation" (Meyer, 7). The German-Jewish community responded with a couple of attempts at new seminaries that were dedicated to the scientific study of Judaism. When these schools failed, it was clear that the "new type of rabbi" could only be educated by receiving traditional rabbinic training as well as a secular university education. This situation in nineteenth-century Germany is a prime example of how secular society had an influence
on Jewish religious practices, but it must be noted that there were many Jews who did not change their ways (Meyer, 10). A successful response to the “new situation” did not come along until Isaac Mayer Wise, a rabbi with ideas of modernizing Judaism, moved to the United States in 1846. Rabbi Wise first practiced in Albany, New York, where he was not shy about advocating religious reform. Cincinnati, Ohio was his next destination and there he stayed because he found in that mid-western city an environment that fostered the modernization he craved. Cincinnati had a substantial Jewish population as well as a “pioneering spirit” that many romantically associated with westward expansion. This, Wise thought, would be the perfect setting to start a new kind of school for a new Jewish situation (Meyer, 14).

II. Founding of HUC

Rabbi Wise’s first attempt at modernizing Judaism, in 1855, consisted of the foundation of the Hebrew College, which was not exclusively for rabbinic training, but for higher Jewish learning (Meyer, 15). Unfortunately, the school failed as did two similar institutions started by Jewish communities in New York City (1865) and in Philadelphia (1867). What Rabbi Wise learned from the failure of these attempts was that to modernize Judaism he needed to found a rabbinic school rather than a generalized school for higher Jewish learning. He also realized that there needed to be enough money and students for the school to flourish (Meyer, 16). Wise’s solution was to form a union of synagogues that could give him the support he needed to make the school a success.

Congregations were required to pay union dues, a portion of which was to go directly to the school. By creating a relationship between the school and the congregations, Wise also found a partner in the recruitment of students. It was not until 1872 that five of the Cincinnati synagogues convened and called for a convention of congregations in order to establish a formal union. With twenty-eight congregations gathered in Cincinnati in the summer of 1873, they promptly formed a union, which still exists today as the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC). It adopted a constitution and set as its main

---

1 In December of 2003 the UAHC officially changed its name to the Union of Reform Judaism
goal the formation of a rabbinical school (Meyer, 17). Although it grew fairly quickly, by 1875 the Union still had not reached its monetary goal for the school, even with seventy-two synagogues as members. Regardless, on October 3, 1875, Hebrew Union College, the first permanent rabbinical seminary in the United States, had its opening exercises with Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise looking on as the school's first president (Meyer, 18).

III. The HUC Expansion to New York, Los Angeles, and Jerusalem

Just when HUC had reached the point of being a well-established school, there emerged another rabbinic seminary in New York City in 1922. Rabbi Stephen S. Wise (no relation to HUC's founder Isaac Mayer Wise) founded the Jewish Institute of Religion (J.I.R.) in the city with the largest Jewish population in the United States. Consequently, HUC was thinking about expanding to New York City, but not for the purpose of opening a rabbinical seminary. The newly appointed president of HUC, Nelson Glueck, while understanding that the school needed to have a presence in New York City because of the size of the Jewish population, did not want the seminary to expand outside of Cincinnati. Instead, the college, in 1923, founded a school for the purpose of training religious school teachers. Unfortunately, history was not on their side, and the school closed due to a lack of money caused in large part by the Great Depression (Meyer, 108). The economic environment had a damaging effect on both HUC and JIR. Reform synagogues throughout the country were either merging because of financial problems or closing, both of which resulted in less demand for rabbis. During the 1930's there were more Reform rabbis than there were rabbinic jobs (Meyer, 162). The JIR's financial difficulties did not abate, and after World War II Rabbi Stephen Wise realized that the JIR would have to merge with HUC in order to survive, a merger that both schools had flatly rejected in the past due to ideological differences (Meyer, 164). As the years passed, though, the two institutions found that they did not differ as much as they had in the past, so by mid-1948 the two seminaries began negotiating the merger. It took two years, but by 1950 the merger was complete and the new school, comprising both the Cincinnati and New York campuses, became known as HUC-JIR (Meyer, 168).
Once the merger was complete, HUC-JIR realized that it needed to have a presence on the west coast, specifically in Los Angeles. The southern California city’s Jewish population was expanding rapidly; between the end of World War II and the mid-sixties, it grew from 150,000 to a half of million Jews. In 1947, the UAHC had already set up a teacher-training program called the College of Jewish Studies (CJS.), similar to the school this organization had set up in New York City. In 1948, it was brought under the HUC-JIR umbrella (Meyer, 191). Then-president of the school, Nelson Glueck, expressed his strong opposition to turning the CJS into a branch of the rabbinical school, much as he had opposed expanding into New York City a few years earlier, even though Jewish demographics were clearly showing New York and Los Angeles as the central Jewish cities in the United States. It took a man by the name of Jack Skirball, an HUC graduate turned filmmaker, and some of his influential friends who were active in the L.A. Reform community, to finally persuade President Glueck. Mr. Skirball spearheaded the project and on May 29, 1954, he finally secured a state charter for HUC-JIR to open their L.A. branch (Meyer, 192).

There was yet one more expansion for the College-Institute. This move was a result of the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. A plan originated to create an “HUC House”, a center of operations for the school’s students, faculty and graduates who were studying in Jerusalem. The idea was approved by the Board of Governors in November of 1952 and the Israeli government even offered two acres of land in 1954, but there were a number of political hurdles to overcome with the Israeli government before the Jerusalem branch could finally open in 1963. This was one expansion that President Glueck did not oppose; in fact, he very much supported it for the purpose of archaeological research (Meyer, 208-212).

IV. The Union Museum

Grace Cohen Grossman said, “the evolution of HUC determined the evolution of the museum” (New Beginnings, 17). To understand this, it is necessary to return to Europe to review the early stages of Jewish art collecting. With the liberation of European Jews
The eighteenth century came the first viewings of Jewish ceremonial objects in a non-religious setting. Prior to emancipation, such objects were only found in the synagogue and the Jewish home, but by the mid-nineteenth century they were starting to appear at international exhibitions (New Beginnings, 27). The goal of these exhibitions, such as the 1887 Anglo-Jewish Historical Exhibition at Royal Albert Hall in London, was to preserve Jewish ceremonial objects and synagogues that were in danger of being destroyed. In addition, the Jewish community hoped that by educating non-Jews about their traditions, they could dispel myths about Judaism and counteract anti-Semitism (Jewish Art, 8). It was during this time period that HUC was getting underway in the United States.

While the college did not have a museum when it opened, the collecting of Jewish objects by the college went back to its beginning, even though there is no recorded date of the first acquisition. The majority of the objects acquired in the early years of the college were given as gifts. Acquisitions were not recorded in an orderly fashion until 1913 when the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods (NFTS) recommended that a museum, The Union Museum, be established as an extension of the HUC library. A statement put out by the NFTS explained why they believed this was an important cause: "...ceremonial objects of our religion and history are a heritage. They have their educational functions, and they serve to deepen and sweeten the springs of Jewish sentiment..." (Berman, 5).

The identity of The Union Museum was twofold: it was a Jewish museum, the first in the United States, but it was also a college museum. For a collection to be attached to a college means that those objects are viewed under a certain type of lens—an academic lens. While college museums were not unique at this point in time, it is crucial to take into account the goals of HUC in order to understand how The Union Museum operated. HUC’s vision of the museum was that it should, "...advance knowledge, preserve heritage, and promote understanding..." (New Beginnings, 19). In this way, the objects were not simply meant to be aesthetic, but to display their connection to Jewish history.
(Berman, 2). It must be remembered that HUC was, and is, the academic arm of the Reform movement; therefore, collecting, displaying, preserving, and researching Judaica for academic reasons fell in line perfectly with the school's agenda, especially as an institution based on the “scientific study of Judaism” (New Beginnings, 20).

Once the museum was officially established in 1913, the objects were supervised by Jacob Z. Lauterbach and Henry Englander, two of the college’s professors. The key person, however, in the museum’s early years was Adolph Oko, the HUC librarian. It was under Mr. Oko that acquisitions and improving the acquisition policy became a priority. Mr. Oko affirmed, “A museum, like a library...must grow and expand to be of any use...And a museum, not unlike a library, cannot ‘live’ by gifts alone. When fed on gifts, it is bound to suffer from both obesity and anemia” (Berman, 5). Under Adolph Oko, The Union Museum attained four substantial acquisitions that formed the core of the collection. The first substantial acquisition was the Joseph Hamburger Collection of coins and medals. The collection was bought by Mr. Oko in 1921 with funds from the NFTS, the original proponents of the museum. The second and third collections were those of Israel Solomon and Dr. Louis Grossman, both acquired in 1924. These were Anglo-Jewish collections of etchings, engravings, medals, and seals (Berman, 5).

Finally, in 1925, the Salli Kirchstein Collection was acquired, which is still today one of the most substantial in the museum’s history.

The formation of the Salli Kirchstein collection was the result of a series of events that began in nineteenth century Germany with a man named Heinrich Frauberger. Mr. Frauberger was the director of the Düsseldorf Kunstgewerbe Museum (Industrial Arts and Crafts Museum) and one of the greatest proponents in his time of collecting Jewish ceremonial objects (New Beginnings, 27). Around the year 1890, Mr. Frauberger began collecting objects of Jewish religious culture and by 1897 he founded the Gesellschaft zur Erforschung Judischer Kunstdenkmale (Society for the Research of Jewish Art Monuments) in Frankfurt. Heinrich was the first trained art historian to recognize the need for collecting Judaica in order to promote the understanding of Jewish culture. Salli Kirchstein, while not an art historian, also recognized this need when he deplored the
absence of Judaica in European museums. He wrote, “In the Ethnology Museum in Berlin, in its all embracing exhibition, in which all the nations of the world, from the most primitive to the most culturally advanced are represented, the Jews alone are absent” (Jewish Art, 10). Salii Kirschstein’s convictions led him to purchase Heinrich Frauberger’s collection in 1908, a purchase which greatly added to his own Judaica collection. By the time Mr. Kirschstein gave his collection of 6,174 items to The Union Museum in 1925, the vast collection fully represented Jewish culture from the Renaissance to the present. (Oko, 83). The collection was so substantial that when it relocated from Germany to the United States it was said that, “…the center of Jewish culture had crossed the sea” (Jewish Art, 11).

HUC librarian Adolph Oko not only acquired significant collections for The Union Museum, he also pushed for museum-appropriate space along with the NFTS and the school’s third president, Julian Morgenstern. Oko argued that while donations were given to acquire objects, there was no money for storage or exhibition space, which resulted in the objects being stored in the basement of the library! A concerned President Morgenstern commented, “Our museum is unique in American Jewry and is invaluable for historical and ritualistic research in the science of Judaism. To provide a fitting repository for it should be the pleasure of American Jewry”. It would not be until 1948, one year after Morgenstern stepped down as president, that the objects began sharing a more appropriate space in the library with the American Jewish Archives. At that time, it also changed its name: The Union Museum became the Jewish Museum of Hebrew Union College. Soon after that essential move, the museum appointed Dr. Franz Landsberger in 1949 as its first official curator. Dr. Landsberger had a solid background in Jewish art as the former director of the Berlin Jewish Museum, but during World War II he was sent to the Oranienberg-Sachsenhausen concentration camp. After the war, he made his way to HUC through the School of Exile, a program the college established for Jewish scholars who were displaced due to the Holocaust (Berman, 6).
The challenge that Dr. Landsberger faced was altering the museum’s function from being merely a collecting institution to a fully operational museum. He took the emphasis off of collecting, only acquiring objects that filled gaps in the collection. The one notable acquisition during Dr. Landsberger’s tenure was comprised of fifteen paintings that were in the Berlin Jewish Museum prior to World War II, an acquisition with which, one can imagine, he had a personal connection. This was made possible by The Jewish Cultural Reconstruction, an institution that collected and redistributed Jewish objects that were confiscated by the Nazis. During his time at the museum, Dr. Landsberger limited the museum to presenting four annual exhibits and two traveling exhibits, but he also devoted time to writing a book entitled *A History of Jewish Art*, the first English book on the scientific study of Jewish art. His successor was Dr. Joseph Gutmann, who took over the position in 1958. Dr. Gutmann’s contribution to the Jewish Museum of HUC-JIR was also significant, even under budget cuts. While lack of funds confined the museum to only displaying one permanent exhibit, the collection was extensively catalogued and studied. Dr. Gutmann acted as a consultant to synagogue museums, and he also offered a course on Jewish art at the college. As a result, twelve rabbinic theses and doctoral dissertations were written on the topic of Jewish art while he was curator (Berman, 7). Under only two curators, the HUC museum developed considerably, putting more emphasis on scholarly work that further reinforced the museum’s connection to the college as well as making valuable strides artistically.

V. Current Status of the HUC Museums

Jack Skirball, the man who made HUC’s Los Angeles branch possible, was also instrumental in creating a museum presence outside of the Cincinnati campus. As was mentioned before, L.A.’s Jewish population had grown so enormously that it had become, and still is today, the second largest Jewish population in the United States after New York. As a result of this, many connected with HUC believed the museum could expand beyond Cincinnati and be used for educational outreach to Jews and non-Jews alike. The positioning of outreach to the non-Jewish community is remarkably reminiscent of the early European exhibitions of Jewish ceremonial objects that aimed at
countering nineteenth century anti-Semitism. In 1965, President Glueck and the Museum Committee of the HUC-JIR Board of Governors voted to move the collection from Cincinnati to Los Angeles (Berman, 8). The collection could not be moved, however, until 1971, when the Los Angeles campus completed their new building on the University of Southern California campus, so that the actual move took place under the school’s fifth president, Rabbi Dr. Alfred Gottschalk. The official dedication of the museum took place on May 17, 1972, and it was opened to the public on October 1, 1972 under the new name of the HUC-JIR Skirball Museum, after the man that made the expansion possible (Berman, 10). The museum’s growth did not stop there, but it expanded even further in 1996 when it was renamed The HUC-JIR Skirball Cultural Center and relocated to its new building designed by Moshe Safdie at the Sepulveda Pass across town from the Los Angeles campus (www.skirball.org).

The museum is currently known as an affiliate of the college and is responsible for a collection of roughly 25,000 objects that include archaeological artifacts from biblical and later historical periods, five centuries of Jewish ceremonial objects, European and American coins and medals, in addition to many works of fine art. The SCC serves over 400,000 people a year through exhibitions, music, theater, comedy, film, family and literary programs – it truly is a “cultural center”. The principal exhibit is “Vision and Values: Jewish Life from Antiquity to America”, an exhibit that follows the 4,000 year history of the Jewish people through to contemporary American culture (www.skirball.org). The overriding theme of the exhibit is to show how people have retained their culture while responding to the American tapestry, a story to which most Americans, Jewish or not, can relate. As such, it only makes sense that it is through this permanent exhibit that the influence of HUC and Reform Judaism can be felt. The original founders of Reform Judaism were responding to the Enlightenment when they opened the canon of Jewish interpretation to include literary criticism, historical analysis and other analytical approaches- all products of secular thought. It is with this in mind that the reader can see that the SCC could not have been a product of any other branch of
Judaism at any other point in history. What better way to demonstrate the influence of America on Judaism than to have a museum dedicated to these reinterpretations?

One might ask what sort of museum presence was left in Cincinnati after the move of the collection to Los Angeles? Even though the core collection was transferred, the Cincinnati museum retained many objects and also received significant support from the Skirball Foundation. It changed its name to The Skirball Museum and continued to function as a museum, even if it was not the central museum any longer. Its permanent exhibit, “An Eternal People: The Jewish Experience”, is expressed in seven segments: Immigration, Cincinnati Jewry, Archaeology, Torah, Jewish Festivals and Life Cycles, the Holocaust, and Israel. In addition to the permanent exhibit, the Cincinnati campus also houses The Archaeology Center at the Skirball Museum, a facility that uses archaeological pieces from the HUC excavations in Israel for the purposes of research and hands-on learning (www.huc.edu). Although there is no active exchange of objects or exhibits, this is one area in which the two campuses of Cincinnati and Jerusalem do cooperate to a certain degree.

There is one final component of the Cincinnati campus that needs to be mentioned: The Center for Holocaust and Humanity Education. The Center has recently curated a handful of exhibitions, mainly on the initiative of Director Dr. Racelle Weiman. The exhibitions have been well received by the greater Cincinnati community as exemplary tools for education, including the three most current exhibitions. The first of these exhibitions is “Art of the Holocaust: Teaching Compassion through Art and the Holocaust”. Through 13 panels of drawings and poems, the story of the Holocaust is told through the eyes of children who lived during the era. Themes such as isolation, fear and humiliation are expressed through art, evoking a sense of compassion and relevance for all of the visitors. “Her Story Must be Told: Women’s Voices from the Holocaust” also stirs up an emotional response by telling the stories of 15 women from ten different countries, all of who experienced the Holocaust and now reside (or have family members who reside) in the greater Cincinnati area. Each story highlights a different attribute,
including dignity, choice, hope, faith, and courage, all of which come together to reveal the complete experience of the Holocaust through female eyes. Finally, a 1930’s European attic is the focus of “Mapping Our Tears”, the third exhibition organized by The Center for Holocaust and Humanity Education. Taped testimonies, images and artifacts work in conjunction with the attic setting to literally “map” Holocaust refugees, survivors, liberators, and rescuers from Nazi Europe to their current homes in Cincinnati and the surrounding area. This “living environment” is strongly supported and utilized by Cincinnati Public Schools and Ohio’s Department of Education, for the purpose of meeting statewide educational criteria. The exhibition is not stagnant, but “...will continue to grow and change as new testimonies and artifacts are integrated into the exhibit...People will come back again and again as the dynamic landscape of ‘Mapping Our Tears’ transforms and expands over time. ‘Mapping Our Tears’ will benefit this community and beyond today and for generations to come” (www.huc.edu).

As for the Jerusalem campus, it continues along the road that past president Rabbi Dr. Nelson Glueck had imagined, as a center for archaeological research. As partners during the museum expansion from Cincinnati to Los Angeles, Jack Skirball also provided funding to enable President Glueck’s hope for the Jerusalem campus to become reality. The result of this funding led to the creation of the Skirball Museum of Biblical Archaeology that also comprises the Nelson Glueck School of Biblical Archaeology. The primary functions of this HUC museum are to restore pottery, produce archaeological publications, and exhibit artifacts. The museum is comprised of two galleries, the Horace and Grace Goldsmith Galleries and the Jay Kislak Galleries, both of which are used for the permanent exhibit of artifacts and models from HUC excavations at Tel Dan, Tel Gezer, Tel Arad, and Tel Ira that have occurred between 1963 through to the present. The exhibit is displayed by subject matter, including the dig camp experience, religious belief and cult practice, burial behavior, gates and fortifications, and the story of the Israelite Settlement. One of the most prominent pieces on display is a replica of a 9th century BCE inscription found in 1993 at Tel Dan that refers to the “King of Israel” and to the “King of the House of David”. This museum serves a purpose that
the other three museums could not possibly fulfill because it draws from resources that are only available in Israel, a fact that President Glueck understood and took action to achieve (www.huc.edu).

Unlike the other three campuses, New York did not receive funding from Mr. Skirball, but developed in its own unique manner. When the merger between HUC and JIR occurred in 1950, the integrated school continued to convene in what was the JIR building. The JIR building was simply an extension of Rabbi Stephen Wise’s synagogue, and one can only imagine what about fifty years, a merger, and an influx of students would do to such a space. The College-Institute clearly understood that a new building was needed and was reminded of the Los Angeles campus and its fruitful relationship with the University of Southern California when their new building was constructed. Accordingly, HUC-JIR bought some land in Greenwich Village in the midst of New York University and hired the architectural firm Harrison & Abramowitz, best known for its buildings for the UN and Lincoln Center. The College-Institute also employed Ralph Appelbaum Associates, who were (and are) well known for museum construction, to erect glass cases for display purposes in what would be the Petrie Great Hall of the Brookdale Center. The New York City campus was inaugurated in 1979 at West Fourth Street and Mercer Street in the heart of Greenwich Village, where it still remains today (Rosensaft).

The cases put in by Ralph Appelbaum Associates were put to use about a year after the Brookdale Center opened, showing an exhibit that was meant to explain the relationship between the College-Institute and Reform Judaism. The cases were built in a way that allowed for the combination of displayed objects and written texts, most of which were taken from “Reform is a Verb”, a book by well-respected theologian Dr. Eugene B. Borowitz. The building also came outfitted with the Joseph Gallery, a space that was made possible by a donation given by the Joseph family of Minneapolis (Rosensaft). In the first exhibit catalogue, President Gottschalk comments happily, “...thanks to the opening last fall of our strikingly handsome Brookdale Center, we have the physical
facilities...to provide exhibitions of Judaic art and artifacts for the community...". Once a Gallery Advisory Committee had been formed, the New York City campus was finally able to embark on a major exhibition in 1983. *Eighteen Artists at One West Fourth Street*, guest curated by Edith Peiser, ran from November 23, 1983 to January 18, 1984 in the Joseph Gallery. Composed of loans from twelve different lenders, it featured works of American Jewish artists working in various artistic styles, including Lee Krasner, Roy Lichtenstein, and Max Weber. With the Gallery Advisory Committee in place, exhibits became more regular, but the gallery’s expansion to a museum was largely a result of the combined efforts of Gallery Committee founder Reva Kirschberg, her successor Laura Kruger, and museum director Jean Bloch Rosensaft, who joined HUC-JIR in the fall of 1989 (Rosensaft).

The breakthrough year at New York City’s College-Institute was 1997. *Drawing from the Source: Miriam, Women’s Creativity and New Ritual* was an extremely successful exhibit that ran from March 16, 1997 to April 30, 1997. This show, which exhibited Miriam Cups of Passover made by female Jewish artists, proved to HUC-JIR that they could play a major role in the promotion of Jewish ceremonial art. It was from that exhibit that the core exhibit would be drawn. *Living in the Moment: Contemporary Artists Celebrate Jewish Time*, organized in celebration of HUC-JIR’s 125th anniversary and presenting the works of 153 international artists’ innovative works of Jewish ritual art, became “...a permanent, ongoing presentation of new, outstanding, and innovative works of Jewish ceremonial art, created by internationally recognized artists, which sanctify life and spiritual experience...” (www.huc.edu). As the Gallery Advisory Committee continued to grow, it came to the conclusion that the new museum should not be a collecting institution, but rather a catalyst for the growth of contemporary art illuminating Jewish themes. It also decided to play an active role in promoting Jewish ceremonial art and implementing an educational and outreach component within the college and the greater community. When the College-Institute embarked on its 125th anniversary in 2000, the gallery was swept up in the celebration and renamed the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion Museum (Rosensaft).
VI. The Disconnection Between the Museums

Each of the four HUC campuses followed a distinctive path from their inception, yet they are partners in a single academic institution with one mission. In an ideal world, their distance and campus individuality would not interfere with their common mission, but unfortunately that is not the case. As is the case with many institutions, HUC is embedded in politics, one form of which is competition between the four campuses. The struggle is essentially about the varied strengths on each campus and where the central school administration should be located. The campus in Jerusalem is isolated due to the fact that generally students who are from the United States only spend their first year of study in Jerusalem. In this way, the administration and faculty in Jerusalem are extremely temporary in the lives of American HUC students and throughout the rest of their rabbinical training. On the other hand there are students, usually foreign, who attend the Jerusalem campus for all five years of study and never set foot in any of the U.S. institutions. The identity of Los Angeles is strongly connected with its education school, but it is not thought of as the most academic campus for rabbis. The main struggle in this area is between Cincinnati and New York. Cincinnati maintains the scholarly nature of a rabbinical school and prides itself on being the founding campus. New York, however, is rooted in professional development and can draw on a large number of Jews and Jewish resources available throughout the tri-state area. Today, the majority of American Jewish organizations and institutions make New York their home base, including the mainstream Jewish seminaries. HUC is an exception as it still has its main business offices in Cincinnati. The politics have never been more apparent than three years ago when a new school president took office and became the first president in the history of HUC not to make his home in Cincinnati, but in New York instead.

It is difficult for the museums of the four institutions to rise above campus politics, especially when they have to rely on their local administration for support and exhibition approval. Of course, just as each campus has its own strengths, so does each museum. Jerusalem focuses on archaeology, Los Angeles has the Cultural Center, New York works with contemporary artists, and Cincinnati deals with Holocaust and Reform/HUC
history. Each museum has specific types of resources, resources that are only accessible to the students and faculty on that campus. There is no connection, except in name only, between the four museums, a detriment to the museums, students, faculty, and greater communities in which the schools reside. While the campuses have their struggles, it should not be at the expense of resource accessibility. Cooperation between the four museums could offer wonderful possibilities for all of the HUC campuses.

VII. Museums and Consortia

In order for the HUC museums to work together successfully it would be effective to have a systematic structure such as a consortium. A consortium is a group of individuals, companies, or organizations formed to undertake an enterprise or activity that would be beyond the capabilities of the individual members (www.investorwords.com). While consortia exist in a variety of fields, what are the reasons why university museums would want to embark on such a collaboration? In this day and age, non-profit organizations are in stark competition for money and resources. They are expected to maintain or surpass past successes, yet their assets become more limited with each passing year. By joining a consortium, a museum and/or university is enabled to leverage a greater number of resources and reach out to a larger community than it could do on its own. Of course, there are always two sides to every coin and working in a consortium is no exception.

Advantages of consortia include saving administrative costs, adding value to an institution, sharing resources and expertise, greater efficiency, improving quality, avoiding duplication, and creating more learning opportunities for students, faculty and staff. In short, a consortium is making more from what is available (Dotolo and Noftsinger, 3). On the other side of that coin are disadvantages such as distrust of the consortium process, unwillingness to commit to a plan, lack of personnel, too much emphasis on faculty development as opposed to student administration, and getting caught up in other issues taking place at an institution (Dotolo and Noftsinger, 4). Many of these pitfalls can be avoided if an institution takes the time to go through a self-study process. When considering participation in a consortium a museum and/or university
must be able to communicate information about its institutional culture as well as its needs and concerns. It is impossible to participate in and take advantage of a collaborative effort without first knowing what type of role your own institution will play in it (Dotolo and Noftsinger, 61-62). Once each consortium partner comprehends their individual situation, they can all come together to work towards a shared vision and specifically defined goals from which all members can benefit.

One of the significant debates surrounding consortia has to do with cost savings versus enrichment, otherwise known as quality versus quantity. While a stated advantage of a consortium is "saving money", the truth of the matter is that joint programs (such as consortia) typically are programs that are added on to museums or universities. They enhance the institution, but do not directly save money. In fact, it usually costs money to participate in a consortium. Consortia usually charge membership fees and need to spend time and money to continually update information for the consortium members. While it does literally cost an institution to participate in a consortium, the reality is that no individual institution could afford to offer the vast number of resources that do become available when working in such a collaborative effort. Cooperation takes time, money and energy, but the product far outweighs the process if done effectively (Dotolo and Noftsinger, 107-111). In the book "Leveraging Resources Through Partnerships", the authors list criteria for a successful consortium (Dotolo and Noftsinger, 113):

- Must provide opportunities for sharing that allows some financial relief
- Financially successful when it provides additional benefits and services to an institution, faculty, students, and staff that would otherwise be unavailable
- Shows respect for institutional differences
- Serves members best when it doesn’t stagnate
- Continues to offer flexibility and innovation
- Advances the possibility to experiment, take risks, and challenges us to do things differently

Now that some of the advantages and disadvantages of consortia have been uncovered and criteria for success have been listed, how have genuine consortia models, in all of their variety, operated? The reality of consortia will be explored through four differing
models: Manhattan’s “Home: A Place in the World”, “Museums at the Crossroads
Consortium” in Champaign, Illinois, the Art Museum Image Consortium, and finally the
Museum Educational Site Licensing Project.

VIII. Consortium Example 1: “Home: A Place in the World”, New York, NY
Consortiums come in a variety of sizes, from large multinational partnerships to small
local collaborations. The first consortium example to be explored is small scale and
local, involving member located within the five New York City boroughs. In
collaboration with the New School for Social Research in 1990, Bronx Museum of the
Arts, Brooklyn Children’s Museum, The Jewish Museum, The Studio Museum of
Harlem, and Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum created a series of exhibitions and
programs under the title “Home: A Place in the World”. The consortium was lead by the
editor of the New School’s quarterly Social Research, Arien Mack. With each program
and exhibit focusing on the theme of home and homelessness, Mack describes the
consortium as “an extended meditation on selected aspects of home as experienced in the
recent past and in the present”. All five museums approached the theme uniquely, using
resources from their particular museum to add their voice to the topic (“Home Is Where
This Consortium of New York Museums’ Heart Is.”, 8).

Results of an architectural competition became the topic of the exhibit organized at
Bronx Museum of the Arts, “Visions of Home: Designs for Affordable Housing in the
South Bronx” not only spoke to the theme of the consortium, but it focused on a topic
that is tied to the borough itself, for the South Bronx has long been viewed as the symbol
of urban poverty. Brooklyn Children’s Museum exhibited a show called “Night
Journeys: Home Is Where I Sleep”. It was meant to evoke a child’s experience of home
through sleep rituals and dreams while also bringing across an understanding of the
science of sleep as well as sleep through cross-cultural distinctions (“Home Is Where
This Consortium of New York Museums’ Heart Is.”, 8). Yet, another unique approach
was taken by the Jewish Museum in “Getting Comfortable in New York: The American
Jewish Home, 1880-1950”. This exhibit traced Eastern European Jewish immigrants
from homes on the Lower East Side to the Bronx and Brooklyn, and then on to suburban living in tract housing, highlighting how the traditions of Jewish immigrants merged with American consumerism. A more modern-day theme was approached by The Studio Museum of Harlem with "The Urban Home: Images by Contemporary Black Photographers". In this exhibit, six major United States cities were represented through photographs documenting contemporary black life, with the photographers themselves lending their own thoughts on the topic. Finally, the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum contributed to the joint project by offering a series of educational programs on various types of home furniture, including fireplaces, dining ensembles and the post-World War II housing boom ("Home Is Where This Consortium of New York Museums’ Heart Is.", 9).

Through their unique approaches, this consortium of five museums and one school was able to tackle the difficult topic of insufficient city housing from a number of different angles in order to reach a wide audience on a topic that touches all of our lives. As it is written by Museum News on the consortium, "...together, they represent a breadth of vision larger than the sum of their individual contributions", which is exactly the point of a consortium ("Home Is Where This Consortium of New York Museums’ Heart Is.", 8)! As it can be seen, a consortium does not always have to be an ongoing collaboration, but can also be used successfully for a single project.

IX. Consortium Example 2: “Museums at the Crossroads Consortium”, Champaign County, IL

When a group of museums form a consortium, they not only can pool resources for each of the museums’ benefit but also for the benefit of other educational institutions. “Museums at the Crossroads Consortium”, a collective of seven museums located in Champaign County, Illinois, is an example of how a consortium can play a vital role in an educational system. The seven museums that make up the "Museums at the Crossroads Consortium" are Champaign County Historical Museum, The Orpheum Children’s Science Museum, Early American Museum, Krannert Art Museum, Staerkel Planetarium,
Octave Chanute Aerospace Museum, and Spurlock Museum (www.m-crossroads.org). Through these seven museums, a variety of disciplines converge. The advantages given to the museums themselves by cooperating in this consortium must be remarkable, but the collaboration to highlight in this arrangement is “Museums in the Classroom”, a partnership between “Museums at the Crossroads Consortium” and the Illinois State Board of Education.

In 1995, “Museums in the Classroom” started pairing K-12 classrooms throughout the state of Illinois with the consortium museums in order to provide on-line access to the museum collections. With the help of a competitive grant, the museums and selected classrooms were given Macintosh computers, Virtual Reality software and digital cameras to facilitate the project. The students began by visiting the museum with which they were paired to meet with museum staff and to take digital images of pieces in the collection. After that they worked on projects such as on-line exhibitions, creation of on-line dioramas and even “transporting students back in time” by recreating the Middle Ages to show how people used astronomy tools (www.isbe.net).

The teachers and students at the 15 elementary schools, six middle schools, seven high schools, and one special needs school also had the opportunity to learn from one another through the links on the consortium’s website. Class goals and lesson plans were posted, such as the objectives listed by Urbana Middle School (www.m-crossroads.org):

- Students will understand how museums identify, store, and exhibit artifacts
- Students will become proficient at web based research and web page construction
- Students will discover similarities and differences between ancient cultures

There are also more in-depth plans outlined such as the fourth/fifth grade lesson from Booth Central Elementary on “Turn of the Century Living in Illinois” (see Appendix 1). The website additionally includes a trivia page for the students, a CD-ROM titled “Museums Rule” and an online workbook companion to the CD-ROM. The CD-ROM
allows for the exploration of the objects and activities found at all of the museums while the workbook expands on those themes. The lessons can either be done online by students themselves through the “Kid’s Expressway” link or used by teachers as classroom curriculum by selecting the “Teacher’s Byway” link (www.m-crossroads.org).

Outreach to school-aged children from the consortium has also gone beyond the walls of the classroom, especially displayed in the “Passports to Adventure” initiative that was taken in 2000. Essentially the passports, which were made to look like actual passports, were issued to kids in four Illinois counties and the goal was to have the passport stamped by all of the museums by August 31, 2000 in order to receive prizes by the program sponsors. Prizes were minimal, ranging from free slices of pizza to water slide passes at a local amusement park, but they encouraged kids to visit the many museums in their local area. As the president of the Orpheum Children’s Science Museum, Carolyn Baxley, said “What we’re doing is creating more opportunities and incentives for children to visit our museums and see all of the wonderful resources we have to offer” (Bloomer, 1). That quote perfectly captures what a consortium such as “Museums at the Crossroads Consortium” can accomplish with the right technological and human resources.

X. Consortium Example 3: Art Museum Image Consortium

Between 1994 and 1997, The Getty Information Institute oversaw a project called the Museum Educational Site Licensing Project, or MESL. The project was established in order to determine the conditions for distributing digital images from museums to universities for educational purposes. While the details of this experiment will be outlined in the subsequent section, the important aspect to note for now is that MESL was only an experiment. Once the project commenced in September of 1997, the Getty and others involved in MESL were concentrating on the research and results of the project, but there were members of the MESL committee who wanted to apply the momentum that was built up from MESL to form a concrete organization that would manage digital images. In March 1997, Max Anderson, one of the MESL committee members and
liaison for information technology to the Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD), proposed to his fellow museum directors to establish such an organization (Bearman, 73). Throughout the following months, the AAMD had a number of planning sessions and by August of that year, 25 museums had jointly outlined principles, defined licensing terms, and agreed upon the services that the digital image consortium would offer. The majority of the museums that participated in the planning sessions joined as members of the Art Museum Image Consortium (AMICO) when it was formally established in October of 1997 under the AAMD (Bearman, 73-74).

AMICO currently has 39 museum members, over 300 subscribers and more than 100,000 digital images, operating under this mission (www.amico.org):

*The Art Museum Image Consortium (AMICO) is a non-profit corporation made up of museums with collections dedicated to provide educational access to and delivery of cultural heritage information by creating, maintaining and licensing a collective digital library of images and documentation of works in their collections.*

Besides the administration of educational licenses, AMICO is based on collaboration between institutions so that digital images are used for educational purposes. AMICO strives to encourage museum images to be used broadly and in a way that was not possible before certain technological advances. A mission such as the one stated above falls directly in line with the mission of the majority of American museums, which is a mission that focuses on a non-profit institution whose duty it is to use the objects in their collection to educate, first and foremost. In other words, AMICO is simply another avenue for a museum to further its educational goals. With technology, museums can now reach a much wider public and engage audiences beyond their building limits.

The structure of AMICO can easily be divided into the four areas of Members, Distributors, Subscribers, and Users, a model which has been referred to as a "social contract" in which each participant is motivated by a common vision. The procedure that links the four types of participants is the key to AMICO (Bearman, 74). A "Content
Levenberg 25

Holding Institution" or Member can join AMICO on a Full or Associate level and is defined as an institution with a collection of art. Full Members participate in AMICO by voting for the Board of Directors as well as having museum staff members participate on AMICO committees. They also annually contribute digital multimedia documentation, in which AMICO suggests a rate of 500 works per year. AMICO does not financially help institutions digitize their collections so consequently it is the responsibility of each institution to finance their own digitization process. Finally, once a work has been submitted, it is the museum’s responsibility to enhance that document if and when the technology becomes available. Associate Members also participate on AMICO committees, but cannot vote for the Board of Directors. They are not obligated to contribute to the Digital Library, but if they so choose, then they are held to the same criteria of schedules and specifications as Full Members, except that they do not need to contribute a specific number of works annually. For both Full and Associate Members, dues are based on the institution’s operational budget. Paid annually, they range from $2500-$5000 (www.amico.org). As a member of AMICO, an institution has access to the entire Digital Library, but it is clear that there is great responsibility attached to an AMICO membership.

The second group of participants comprises the “Content Distributors”, who also pay a fee to AMICO. AMICO does not provide access to the digital information itself, but came to the conclusion that by using a variety of Distributors, special needs could be met by various types of Subscribers. This model allows the content of AMICO’s Digital Library to be integrated into and accessed through the Distributor’s systems. All of AMICO’s Distributors (Cartography Associates, H.W. Wilson, Research Libraries Group, SC Ran, and VTLS) are accessible worldwide, with exception of OhioLink and University of Michigan, which are only Distributors for schools in their system. A Distributor such as RLG is an organization for libraries and research organizations, whereas OhioLink is specifically geared towards higher education in the state of Ohio (Trant, 42-43). The Distributors collect licensing fees, maintain subscriber codes, and facilitate requests for additional rights, among other services. As a result of these
services, AMICO permits the Distributors to charge their Subscribers to recover the licensing fee they pay to AMICO (Bearman, 77).

In order to be a Subscriber to AMICO, an institution has to be an educational establishment. It cannot redistribute any part of the AMICO Library or use the contents of the Digital Library for commercial purposes. There are over 300 Subscribers to AMICO, which include schools throughout the United States, Australia, Canada, China, Greece, Hong Kong, Israel, Lebanon, The Netherlands, The United Kingdom, and of course, all of the Museum Members. Finally, the Users are the individuals who actually access the information, such as the students at subscribing schools and staff of member museums. Just as the other types of participants in the AMICO system, users are only allowed to make use of the Digital Library for educational purposes (www.amico.org).

AMICO clearly demonstrates the advantages and disadvantages of a consortium. On the positive side, a museum member has access to the Digital Library that includes all of the images submitted by the members, which can be used by the museum for a variety of educational pursuits. The museum member is also reaching a much wider audience than it could ever reach by traditional means. The fact that digital images from The Cleveland Museum of Art are at the fingertips of subscribers from Australia to the United Kingdom is phenomenal! Benefits also include shared expertise that Members can exchange in AMICO committees and conferences, the development of standards and “best practices” in order to normalize the field, and the joint responsibility taken by all participating parties in protecting the licensed intellectual property.

There are also some drawbacks to a consortium like AMICO. Only six Members out of 39 are outside of the United States, and even those six are from Canada and the United Kingdom, restricting the available images to those from western countries. Due to this, AMICO cannot be used exclusively by any educational institution, but only as a supplement. There is also the financial issue, which can be a double-edged sword. A museum has to come up with their own funding to digitize their collection and to pay the
annual fee to AMICO. While the annual dues are not too costly, the digitization of an entire collection is quite costly, between the equipment, human resources, and maintenance. Even if a museum can budget enough money to add to the AMICO Digital Library annually, it would take years to digitize an entire collection, by which time the technology may become obsolete. The result is that AMICO’s library reflects numerous gaps, even though it provides an amazing resource!

XI. Consortium Example 4: Museum Consortia Integrated within the University as seen in the Museum Educational Site Licensing Project

In 1994 the Getty Art History Information Program commenced an experiment called the Museum Educational Site Licensing Project (MESL). It was the result of conferences and meetings that had started to address issues associated with digital images and their use in educational settings. This short-term project was developed in order to gather a collection of images and information from a range of museums in order to digitally distribute it to universities – in other words, a consortium. The institutions which formed the MESL consortium included seven museums and seven universities: Fowler Museum of Cultural History, International Museum of Photography at George Eastman House, Harvard University Art Museums, Library of Congress, Houston Museum of Fine Arts, National Gallery of Art, National Museum of American Art; American University, Columbia University, Cornell University, University of Illinois, University of Maryland, University of Michigan, University of Virginia. Headed by a committee that consisted of Maxwell Anderson, David Bearman, Howard Besser, Clifford Lynch, and Jennifer Trant, MESL had five objectives:

- Define the terms and conditions for the educational use of digitized museum images and information distributed over campus networks.
- Develop, test and evaluate procedures, mechanisms, and standards for the collection and dissemination of digital images and information.
- Propose the framework of a broadly-based system for the ongoing distribution and educational use of museum images and information.
- Document and communicate experience and discoveries of the project.
- Begin to examine the impact of broad distribution of digital images on both museums and universities.
The basic MESL model was set up so that the content suppliers (museums) were responsible for producing digital images of works in their collection along with the corresponding descriptive metadata (describes image content) and then sending that digital material to a central distribution service. The central distribution service then made copies of the images and dispersed them to all seven of the participating universities. From that point, the universities were each responsible for getting the images out to their user community through creating a local MESL website. With each university developing and maintaining its own website and each museum responsible for digitizing their own images and sending them to the distribution service, the workload was divided fairly and effectively (McClung and Stephenson, 29). Some of the stumbling blocks encountered by this model were selection of images, faculty support, necessary curriculum adjustments, a need for standards in the digitization process, and the fact that museums and universities would have to realize that their common goals were more important than their individual goals (McClung and Stephenson, 53).

Realized advantages were that it was a tangible scholarly resource, it increased student interest in viewing the original works after being exposed to the digital version consequently creating new museum audiences, and it invigorated scholarship in both the universities and museums (McClung and Stephenson, 21-63).

MESL was successful in disseminating about 10,000 digital images for educational purposes, but officially ended in July of 1997 (Besser, Issues). The overarching point of conducting this project was to discover the advantages and the drawbacks for using such a system in the future, an objective that was accomplished. As the final report from February of 1998 concluded, “MESL made a contribution to our understanding of higher educational use of digital museum documentation, but left a number of critical issues unresolved,” (Bearman, 72). The one major benefit is that this experiment proved that such a consortium is possible and that it can bring museums and universities into a new era of collaboration, best expressed by University of Maryland art historian Sally M. Promey (McClung and Stephenson, 21):
Levenberg 29

At the heart of the MESL project has been the idea of collaboration: among students in a single course and in different courses; between different professional constituencies in a single institution and between the two principle types of participating MESL institutions...As scholars and educators in museums and universities, we share commitments to the preservation, elucidation, and interpretation of visual cultural heritage.

XII. Creating a Model Consortium for the HUC-JIR Museums

As I have hopefully demonstrated, there is a need for a consortium of HUC Museums. By creating such a collaboration, the vast number of resources on each campus would be available to all four campuses including its museums, students, faculty, and greater Jewish communities. The structure that I am proposing is one that would fully integrate the museums into the schools, correcting an important shortcoming within the current structure. One of the central issues that my thesis has highlighted is that the museums operate somewhat independently of the greater HUC institution. How can the museums cooperate when they do not communicate with the greater institution? In order for this consortium to successfully operate, it must have a central authority, such as a committee. An HUC Museum Committee would consist of the museum directors on each campus, one faculty member from each campus, one student representative from each campus, one HUC board member, and one additional Skirball Cultural Center staff member. The 14 members of the committee could meet using HUC's already-existing teleconferencing system. The Skirball Cultural Center would need to play an integral role in the establishment of this consortium because it is the only HUC museum that operates outside of its local campus as well as having resources, such as a significant full-time staff, that the other three campuses cannot support. While the Committee would be equally comprised of members from all four campuses, office space, technology support, and a staff member would operate out of Los Angeles.

Due to the distance between all four museum locations as well as the benefits that are known from projects such as MESL and AMICO, it is imperative that the permanent collections of the HUC Museums be digitized and accessible online. The process of digitizing would take place over a five to seven year period because it is time consuming
and costly, therefore it realistically could not be accomplished on a short-term plan, especially for the 25,000 works in the collection at the Skirball Cultural Center (www.skirball.com). The digitized collection would be accessible to the four Museums, faculty, and students through the HUC website in which they would log in with a username and password. The site should also be accessible to UAHC congregations for a small annual fee. With an average of 900 congregations in the Union, for a fee of $36 per year would produce a total of $32,400 (www.uahc.org). The Museums could use that money to accomplish the digitization and then to maintain the digitized collection. A portion of that money could also be used as a stipend for a Los Angeles education student to work as an intern on the project. With this structure, the collections would be a resource open to the entire affiliated Reform Jewish community, even beyond the college, and hopefully would encourage Jewish educators throughout the country to use HUC Museums in their schools and programming.

The calendar of exhibitions themselves would be a simple system in which every year, one campus would be responsible for the traveling exhibition, although the other three campuses would still participate. While the curating campus would develop the exhibition ideas, the HUC Museum Committee would approve the final themes so that exhibitions would be suited for all campuses. The exhibition would open on the campus that curates the show and then be shown for three months on each campus. An example of an annual schedule, if the Los Angeles campus curated, would be as follows:

- Los Angeles: exhibition opening, February-April
- Jerusalem: May-July
- New York: August-October
- Cincinnati: November-January

Each campus would exhibit the show for about two and half months, considering travel time, installation, and de-installation. One important point to consider is that the exhibition should always be shown on the Jerusalem campus during the months of May-
July because Jerusalem is a fully operational campus during the summer with the first year students beginning sometime in May or June (www.huc.edu). While the stateside campuses offer summer class sessions and programming, the Jerusalem campus is without question the most active during the summer months.

The idea of this consortium is not to have every single exhibit travel, but for the campuses to have access to a variety of resources for collaborative exhibits as well as individual exhibits. Working on one significant traveling exhibit annually allows the Museums to collaborate without losing their individual identities. There are other collaborations that could come out of an HUC Museum Consortium as well, such as partnerships with national and international Jewish institutions. In 2002, one such opportunity presented itself with Lilith Magazine, the feminist Jewish magazine. The magazine contacted the New York HUC Museum to help them curate an exhibit to commemorate their 25th anniversary (www.Lilith.org). *Lilith Magazine: The Voice of Jewish Women* opened at the New York campus in January of 2003 and then started traveling in March of 2004 to various Jewish community centers and small synagogue museums throughout the country (see Appendix 2). The collaboration with HUC New York made sense given that Lilith Magazine offices are located in New York, but the theme of Jewish women is one that speaks to a larger audience. This situation perfectly displays how capitalizing on the ties that each campus has, the greater institution can benefit. As a national magazine, Lilith has a far-reaching audience but by collaborating with HUC in particular, it furthers the partnership between the Reform community and the greater Jewish community. Unfortunately, the exhibition has not made it to any of the other campuses, but it is something that we are working towards. Many other opportunities are possible between the HUC Museums and various Jewish organizations such as the Joint Distribution Committee, the Federation, Reform Judaism Magazine, the National Association of Jewish Chaplains, the Central Conference of American Rabbis, and so on (www.uebc.org). By working together in an HUC Museum Consortium, the institution and the Reform movement itself could have far-reaching partnerships and influence that just is not possible with the current staggering of resources.
Staggering of resources is also an issue when dealing with development. The fundraising policy of HUC is that no campus is allowed to individually fundraise, but instead HUC raises money as one institution and then disperses the monies to each campus. While this certainly breeds some dissent, the policy keeps the institution tied together. Although the Museums have a line in the budget, they do have to fundraise and seek grants individually by campus (Rosensaft). This clearly separates the Museums from the rest of the HUC institution. By forming a consortium, the collections and staff resources could not only be shared, but fundraising efforts could be consolidated as well. With respect to at least the traveling exhibitions and digitizing process, the Museums could appeal to four different “markets” instead of just one, in addition to appealing to those outside of the campus cities such as congregations that use the digital collection.

The final component to an HUC Museum Consortium is the direct benefits it could bring to the student body. The Museums have a captive potential audience working and studying in the same building, yet they are not informed or educated about the Museums or the exhibitions. With each exhibit, traveling or local, the Museums should focus some of their public relations on the faculty and students at least two weeks in advance, instead of the 24-hour notice that is currently given. There should also be two or three tours for each exhibit, especially for faculty and students, offered at various times to accommodate their schedules: one morning tour, one tour during lunch, and one in the early evening. Currently there are no such tours and those already on campus have to “tag along” on a public tour. As the available exhibition space in all museums is small, none of these tours would represent a great commitment of staff time - a half hour per tour should be sufficient. A promising step has been taken on the New York campus with respect to student interaction with the Museum. New York has been given the task of piloting the new statewide curriculum, including a class that is being developed by history professor Carol Balin on Jewish art and history (Rosensaft). It is a step in the right direction and hopefully it will be seen as a crucial component of the core curriculum for student rabbis, cantors, and educators. By having one required course on Jewish art that uses the
resources of the campus Museums, the students will carry their knowledge into the field as professionals and be vocal ambassadors for the HUC collections.
Conclusion

The four campuses of HUC are joined in administration, curriculum, and mission, but their museums do not share a partnership. Such a partnership or consortium would benefit the museums as it would help them towards common exhibition goals, boost fundraising efforts, and increase access to their collections for faculty, students, and the larger Reform community. After the exploration of four consortium models, it is clear that there are a number of possible approaches, each with their own benefits and drawbacks. HUC could learn from them, taking into consideration their own history and needs. In “Home: A Place in the World”, five museums in New York City approached one common theme to create five different exhibits using the resources unique to their own institution (“Home Is Where This Consortium of New York Museums’ Heart Is.”, 8). All four of the HUC Museums have unique collections from which, combined through a consortium, all campuses could benefit. “Museums at the Crossroads Consortium” in Champaign County, Illinois, pooled the resources of local museums for the benefit of elementary, middle, and high schools so that students had a hands-on learning experience that would bring the class topics to life(http://www.m-crossroads.org/). Likewise, HUC Museums are located in the same building as the HUC students and therefore, could lend a hand in bringing Jewish history and education alive.

The Art Museum Image Consortium revealed the benefits and possible drawbacks of delivering of digital information to educational institutions, whether museums or universities. It showed how crucial it is that responsibility of such an immense task is shared by all stakeholders (Bearman, 77). In order for an HUC Museum Consortium to be successful, all campuses must be committed to working towards common goals, from fundraising to traveling exhibition themes. Finally, the Museum Educational Site Licensing Project was an experiment that demonstrated how art information and images could be truly integrated into a university setting (Bearman, 72). HUC has the advantage of having all of the needed resources at their disposal; a consortium would allow those resources to be integrated into the classroom, into more than 900 Reform congregations, and for partnerships between the four Museums as well as the greater Jewish community. There is a range of possibilities for the diverse collections of the HUC Museums, but the
resources can only be used to their full potential with the support of the HUC institution and by working together in an HUC Museum Consortium such as the one outlined in this thesis.
Appendix 1:
Lesson Plan from Booth Central Elementary School, Fourth and Fifth Grade Levels
Summary Written by Janet Seibert and Marianne Brooks

Our Museum title last year was Turn of the Century Living in Illinois. We are continuing with that, but we have adapted things to fit our curriculum.

Our lesson is on Village Life in Rural Northeastern states. In fourth grade, one specific area we discuss is Old Sturbridge Village (which is introduced in our textbook). We read and discussed our selection in the book, then we discussed what types of clothing, furnishings, tools, and toys were used during that time period and how they have changed with the times. We observed and compared these changes. We then (right from our own classroom) went on the Internet to the Old Sturbridge Village site and actually took a virtual tour of this village. It is the largest history museum in the Northeast. The museum re-creates the daily work activities and community celebrations of a rural 19th century town. The students can actually see the past — ex. a blacksmith hammering links in a chain, a farmer yoking oxen, etc. As we went through this site we watched how things have changed to our present time. After that tour, we also did the virtual tour of the Betsey Ross home. They were two wonderful sites.

Then our fifth graders, who were involved as fourth graders last year with our Museum grant, came in and introduced and explained the pictures they had taken from the Early American Museum. We also had them show the panoramic views, pictures, and actual rooms they had taken when we visited the Wilbur Mansion, to the class. We then compared this to what we had seen on our virtual tours. Some of the students have also visited our local antique shops and added information from what they had seen there.

The fourth graders were then encouraged to search at home and bring in and share any artifacts or pictures of artifacts that they had found at home that were similar to what we had been studying.

The fourth graders then made little books depicting three artifacts they had enjoyed learning about and compare it to the present time. They drew or colored or cut pictures from magazines to show old vs. new. (Some of the examples used were irons, baby walkers, dolls, and saws.)

Fourth graders then shared their little books with the Fifth graders who will be studying colonization of America. To begin their Fifth grade unit the Fifth graders who were involved last year with the Museums, showed their panoramic views of the Wilber Mansion and their pictures taken from the Early American Museum to their classmates.
Internet sources we used were:

Old Sturbridge Village- http://www.osv.org/

Betsy Ross Homepage- Take a virtual tour of Betsy's house at http://www.libertynet.org/iha/betsy/index.html

We also used pictures from the Early American Trades coloring book by Peter F. Copeland; Dover Publications, Inc. New York 1980

This was a great learning experience.
Appendix 2:
*Lilith Magazine: The Voice of Jewish Women*
Assembled by Rebecca S. Levenberg

Lilith
The independent Jewish women's magazine

**LILITH MAGAZINE: THE VOICE OF JEWISH WOMEN**

**TRAVELING EXHIBITION**

**INFORMATIONAL PACKET**
Title
LILITH Magazine: The Voice of Jewish Women
An exhibition celebrating more than 25 years of charting Jewish women's lives

Description
LILITH Magazine: The Voice of Jewish Women, an exhibition celebrating more than 25 years of the award-winning independent Jewish women's magazine, documents the impact of feminist Jewish journalism during the pivotal years 1976-2003. The exhibition includes fine art illustrations for the magazine, original manuscripts, iconic photographs, and memorabilia supporting Jewish women's roles in the world. It addresses diverse topics such as women rabbis and cantors, women and Jewish ritual, Jewish community, public celebrations, scholarship, health and healing, images of Jewish women, “unheard” women of the Diaspora, intimate relationships, and body image. In each city where the exhibition is mounted, local artifacts will be included in the displays of Jewish women's activism and scholarship.

"LILITH Magazine is the activist public voice for a changing community of Jewish women. With compassion and forthright reporting LILITH tackles controversial issues that are frequently ignored or discredited. LILITH has created a forum in which divergent opinions can be heard without censure, in which women, often isolated within their own communities, are reassured and directed to the resolution of their situations. LILITH is not the traditional 'self-help' magazine. Through thought-provoking articles, first-hand memories, and feisty letters LILITH has created a roadmap of opportunities for contemporary women," remarked Laura Kruger, Curator of the exhibition when it launched in 2003 at Hebrew Union College in New York City.

Read by an estimated 25,000 readers each quarter, LILITH Magazine presents investigative reports on breaking news such as “J.A.P.-baiting” on college campuses, clergy abuse, body image and eating disorders, new rituals and celebrations, cutting edge scholarship; news briefs; memoirs; first-person stories; reviews of books, film, and music; fiction, poetry, art, and photography. In addition to showcasing the work of writers such as Cynthia Ozick, Grace Paley, Letty Cottin Pogrebin, Nessa Rapoport, Blu Greenburg, Dara Horn, and Myla Goldberg, the magazine presents the works of emerging Jewish women writers and “forgotten” foremothers of past generations.
Physical Features
- 1 donor/contributor panels, gator board, 48" x 36"
- 1 opening panel, 24" x 36"
- 1 banner announcing the exhibit—says "Lilith Magazine: The Voice of Jewish Women" suitable for hanging above the panels or in a window of the gallery facing outward. Gator board, 36" x 96"
- 20 posters with magazine covers, 24" x 18" each
- 10 documentary panels, gator board, 48" x 36" each
- 5 t-shirts (to be hung on dowels or hangers, or to be framed)
- 4 clear acrylic wall pockets for photocopied reproductions of articles, 10" x 10"
- 2 loose-leaf binders with covers and table of contents of all Lilith Magazines
- copies of recent issues of Lilith magazine for perusal by visitors at the exhibition site
- copies of the current issue provided gratis to visitors

Required from Exhibitor
- 2 shelves or reader tables for fixed copies of Lilith Magazine, 6-8 feet long
- table for sign-in book, suggestion box, free magazines, magazine order forms
- attractive box or urn where visitors can deposit subscription forms and comment sheets
- 6 black or white display cases with plexi lids, 36" x 15" x 7"

Materials Supplied
- all materials listed under "Physical Features"
- back issues of Lilith Magazine
- 4 special-interest article reprints, one page each, relating to the panel subjects
  * Exhibitor will photocopy these for distribution at the exhibit on an as-needed basis
  * Other back-issue articles can be supplied to meet specific educational needs of each community.
- brochures describing the exhibition and inviting visitors to subscribe to Lilith

Loan Fee: $3,000
Lilith Magazine: The Voice of Jewish Women

Exhibition Request Form

Institution:

Address:

E-mail:

Phone #:

Contact:

When would your institution like to schedule the exhibition?

Choice #1: start date: __________ end date: __________

Choice #2: start date: __________ end date: __________

*Time should be added to include installation & de-installation

For further questions please contact:
Rebecca Levenberg
Traveling Exhibition Coordinator
(201) 936-5589
rslevenberg@yahoo.com

Please return Request Form at your earliest convenience to:
Lilith Magazine
250 West 57th Street
Suite 2432
New York, NY 10107
Phone: (212) 757-0818
Fax: (212) 757-5705
lilithmag@aol.com
Primary Sources


**Secondary Sources**


