

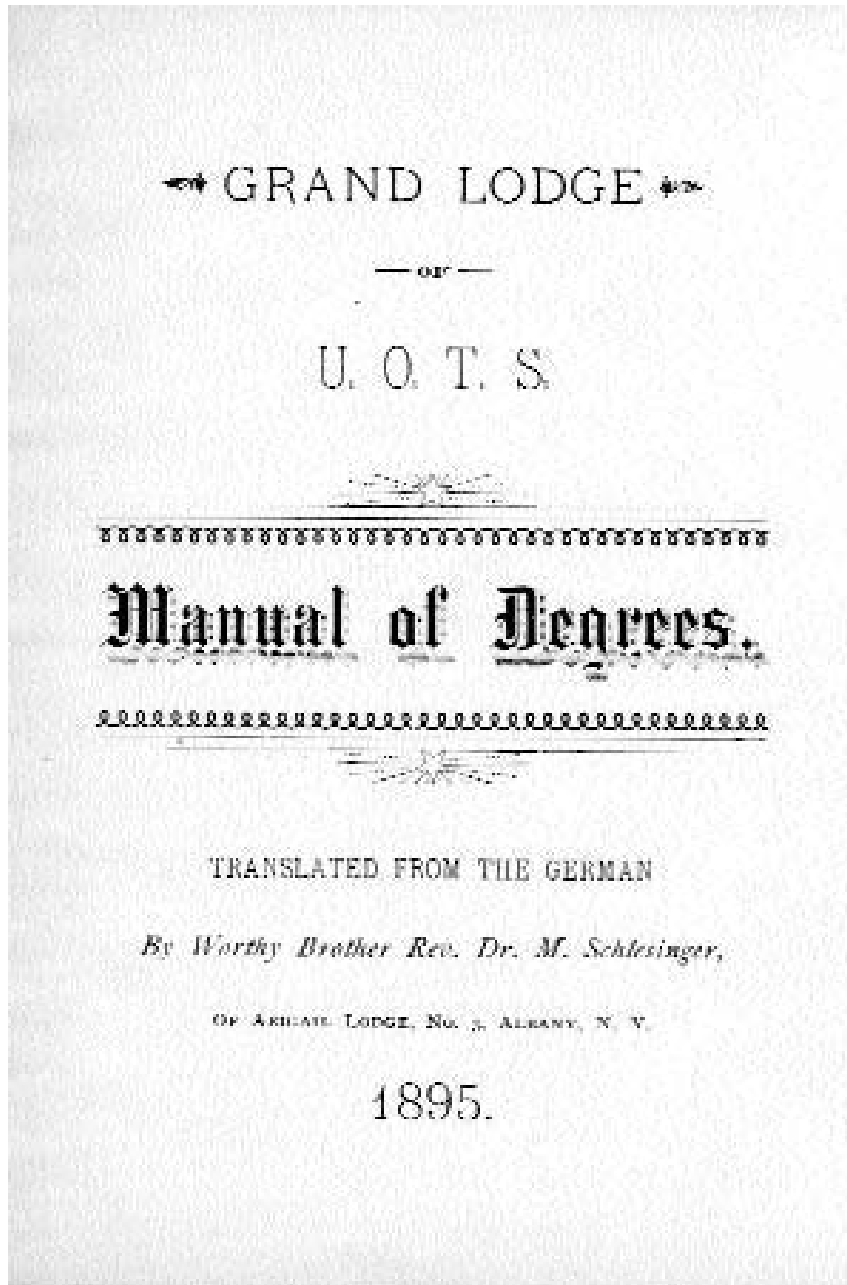
The Independent Order of True Sisters: Friendship, Fraternity, and a Model of Modernity for Nineteenth—Century American Jewish Womanhood

Cornelia Wilhelm

Women, traditionally restricted in public participation and the execution of religious and communal matters, were a major concern of the nineteenth—century debate about reforming Judaism for a modern civil society, enabling the modern Jew to fully participate therein. It has been a theoretical and practical problem for leading Reform Jews to argue for “civic emancipation,” while at the same time find a means for expressing religiosity, and participation in religious ceremonies and social activity, in the wider society.¹

Radical Reform leaders, such as Rabbi David Einhorn, argued that women’s exclusion from certain religious obligations in traditional Judaism was “barbaric” and “degrading” and especially inconsistent with her position in the Jewish family, in which woman was still the center of religious life, education, and domestic piety. During the Breslau Rabbinic Conference in 1846 the status of women was presented as an issue and addressed to be more equalized, but no major practical action toward the equalization of Jewish women was taken.² Only slowly, from midcentury on, was woman’s status in the synagogue changing: separate seating was abolished in the emerging Reform synagogues and family pews were gradually introduced; this made women visible participants of the synagogue and physically placed them within, rather than on the margin of Jewish religious ceremonies.

Similarly, the introduction of synagogue choirs gave women a new and more visible role during religious services. Nevertheless, as individuals women could not be full members of congregations or determine Jewish spiritual life as active participants. While her Protestant sisters were already seeking public spaces for the expression of their religiosity and were playing an important role in the Temperance Movement or among Abolitionists, the Jewish woman’s domain was still the home.³ It took until the late nineteenth century for new spaces in women’s public performance of Judaism to



United Order of True Sisters Manual.
(American Jewish Archives)

open. Women had conquered spaces for their own and independently organized lay activity,⁴ which they began to organize in wider national movements such as the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) and later the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods.⁵

The few early expressions of Jewish female self-awareness and independent organization seen in the 1850s⁶ rarely survived the following decades which were characterized by a tendency toward federation and concentration of smaller charitable groups, putting these active Jewish women under male leadership.⁷ Also, the exclusively Christian spirit of female missionary and social service activists prevented Jewish women from joining hands with their non-Jewish sisters in the emerging Protestant-dominated women's movement.⁸

A remarkable exception to this pattern, however, was an organization which claims to be America's first independent national women's organization—the Unabhängiger Orden Treuer Schwestern, which translates into Independent Order of True Sisters. Founded in 1846, its name was anglicized to the United Order of True Sisters (UOTS) between 1900 and 1918 to maintain the original abbreviation of the German name.⁹ This group used the model of fraternal organization to create a way for Jewish women to enter the public sphere and redefine their new role in both contemporary Judaism and American society.

The formation of a women's lodge was a remarkable development, if only because the character of fraternal organization was a strong expression of masculinity and an all-male society.¹⁰ The Masonic orders and other lodges at the time did not admit women¹¹ and were even regarded as refuges for men who wanted to escape the female-dominated domestic sphere.¹² However, during the 1840s and 1850s the Masonic press published a vivid discussion about the relationship of women to lodges and their interest in lodge life, urging women either to join their husbands' orders or to establish their own lodges.¹³ This was also the context in which the UOTS was founded. The lodge had grown out of an attempt by Henriette Bruckman, wife of the physician Philip Bruckman,¹⁴ to found a ladies' society for women of the newly founded Congregation Emanu-El of New York City.

We know from early records of the Independent Order of B'nai B'rith (IOBB) that the activities of this newly founded Jewish fraternal

order inspired mostly wives of the early B'nai B'rith members to create a similar social organization. The IOBB was formed in 1843 to a large degree by the same men who contributed to the founding of Congregation Emanu-El. The lodge helped foster a feeling of distinct community apart from congregational membership or ethnic background, organized charitable and educational projects, tried to promote a modern Judaism inside and outside the lodge, and attempted to find new expressions of religiosity for American Jews. For Jewish men the existence of the IOBB helped them to merge with American social and religious life and express their Jewish identity in a practical Judaism¹⁵ within a typical American social framework.

The earliest record that documents women's interest in lodge life is an address by Leo Merzbacher delivered at a festival of the newly founded B'nai B'rith Zion Lodge #2 at New York City in 1844.¹⁶ We know that Merzbacher, the rabbi and spiritual leader of Temple Emanu-El, spoke in front of men *and* women, mostly wives of the early B'nai B'rith members, who showed a great interest in joining the organization. Merzbacher displayed a rather conservative attitude toward women as potential members of the order as he explained why women were not allowed membership into B'nai B'rith. Generally, he claimed, they would not need a lodge due to their higher morality. But he also argued, since women would feel insecure about revealing such facts as their age, they could not go through the process of installation and consequently could not be members. Furthermore, since they were not used to criticizing actively and publicly, they would be unable to criticize a member whose errant conduct had been brought before the lodge.¹⁷

During the following two years several attempts to found a society for the women of Temple Emanu-El were rejected by the congregation at large.¹⁸ In 1846, however, Henriette Bruckman found enough support among some of her female friends and among some male family friends, who happened to be leading members of the newly founded congregation and the progressive wing of the IOBB. Her husband, along with his business partner Dr. James Mitchel, William Renau,¹⁹ Baruch Rothschild, publisher J. Mühlhauser, and Rabbi Dr. Leo Merzbacher,²⁰ suggested that the women launch their own secret society, similar to the B'nai B'rith, to give them a platform combining benevolence and education with higher and nobler aims for humanity.²¹ Two years after Merzbacher's rather dismissive

remarks about women as possible lodge members, the group of men did not turn down the women's demand for a fraternal organization, but rather supported the initiation of a lodge exclusively for Jewish women. According to Merzbacher's earlier remarks about women's lack of routine in leadership,²² this stance might have been taken in order to teach the women how fraternal organizations worked and how to build leadership; however, they clearly tried to keep the women out of their own all-male lodge.

Consequently, on April 15, 1846, Emanuel Lodge of the Unabhängiger Orden Treuer Schwestern was founded by Henriette Bruckman, Henriette Berg, Marie Bloch, Marie Felsenheld, Regina Klaber, Clara Lindheim, Fanni Mühlheiser [Mühlhauser], Louise Rothschild, Emilie Solinger, Jette Strauss, and Kati Weiss.²³

The first meeting of Emanuel Lodge took place ten days later under the assistance of Dr. Mitchel and his friends, who introduced the women to the performance of ritual, the degree system, and a jurisdiction, as well as office keeping; they also installed the first officers according to the ritual of the new order: Henriette Bruckman as president, Louise Rothschild as vice-president, Marie Felsenheld as treasurer, and Henriette Berg as secretary.²⁴ By 1851 the UOTS had grown enough to introduce a Grand Lodge as an overarching national platform to connect the local lodges and to help the women handle their organizational and legal matters centrally through the authority of that body. This was the time their male "teachers" drew back from the organization and left all business to the women.²⁵ By then Emanuel Lodge #1 counted over one hundred members, and the organization grew continuously. By the mid-1860s six lodges existed: Emanuel Lodge #1 (New York), B'noth Jeshurun Lodge #2 (Philadelphia), Abigail Lodge #3 (Albany), Jochebed Lodge #4 (New Haven), Hulda Lodge #5, and Jael Lodge #6 (New York).

Comparative research suggests that, at the time, the UOTS was the only exclusively female independent fraternal organization. This meant that in organized fraternal life Jewish women were far ahead of their Christian sisters. Although the Odd Fellows were introducing official identification cards to wives and widows of members by 1846, it took them until 1851 to establish only one degree for the wives of some of their more qualified members.²⁶ This was similar to the Masons, who instituted in 1870 the Order of the Eastern Star for the wives, mothers, and sisters of their members who had ascended to a

master's degree. Unlike the UOTS, none of these organizational endeavors gave women full participatory rights. These organizations were women's auxiliaries. Women could only be introduced through their husbands' membership and degree in the main lodge. None of them constituted an independent women's order. The True Sisters, however, were *never* an auxiliary of the B'nai B'rith. They have always been an independent women's organization in which women alone served as officers. Nevertheless, a common pattern in many cities seems to have been that when the men were organized in the IOBB, their wives developed interest in the True Sisters. Usually belonging to the extreme Reform wing of Judaism, these families seemed to have perceived lodge life as a particularly appealing supplement to the expression of Jewish religiosity within the synagogue. For them, lodge life offered more opportunities for meaningful participation in community life, embracing those whose participation in congregational life was disputed, such as women and intermarried couples. The men who were connected to the UOTS as "friends" or "honorary members" were Dr. Emanuel M. Friedlein,²⁷ probably the most constant companion of the UOTS in New York, Dr. Max Schlesinger and Jacob Labishiner of Albany,²⁸ Maier Zunder and Louis Feldman of Hew Haven,²⁹ and Henry Greenebaum of Chicago.³⁰ In later years they were succeeded by Jacob Furth³¹ of St. Louis, Dr. Kaufmann Kohler of Chicago, New York, and Cincinnati, and Dr. Emil G. Hirsch of Chicago.³²

In general "friendly relations" between the two orders grew out of family connections, but this never exceeded an informal level. We can only speculate on the reasons that an independent female fraternal organization was accepted by some of these liberal men. It is possible that a combination of their intention to maintain their separate sphere within the B'nai B'rith may have been combined with a very clear understanding of what social exclusion and religious restriction meant, along with the conviction that it was necessary to find ways to provide women with a means to define their roles in modern American society, and thus enjoy the benefits of the Jews' civic emancipation in America.

One of the oldest sources concerning the character, aims, and purposes of the lodge in its printed 1864 constitution. The constitution itself makes reference to earlier documents, dating back to 1846, while the 1864 version notes that the earlier constitutions failed to clarify the

true purpose of the organization. The 1864 document declared that it was the true purpose of the lodge to foster mutual intellectual/spiritual and physical support, to uplift women, and to create a public space for women to get together. "[T]hrough frequent meetings we want to get to know each other, exchange and coordinate our opinions and principles, improve our capabilities, increase our knowledge and improve and strengthen our character and work towards mutual understanding and respect among us."³³ In addition, the lodge offered its members mutual support for the sick and widowed and provided a decent burial for its members. Self-confident, articulate, and concerned about possible misunderstandings, the ladies remarked that "the third printed edition of our constitution has given us the desired opportunity to make changes and make a clear statement about the purpose of the society."³⁴ This indicates that they had problems being understood in their real purpose and might have been mistaken as a mere benevolent society. The True Sisters clearly specified that their purpose was not only

- a) mutual aid in emergency and sickness,
 - b) a decent burial of the deceased sister,
 - c) refinement of the heart and mind and moral improvement
- is the purpose of this society,

but particularly the development of free, independent and well-considered action of its members. The women are to expand their activities, without neglecting their obligations as housekeepers, in such a manner, that if necessary they can participate in public meetings and discussions, **besides** [*sic*] the man, not inferior to him."³⁵

Referring to the *Zeitgeist*, the constitution continued to affirm public participation of women in meetings and discussions as the lodge's goal. Since the first article of the constitution stated to exclude anything political and confessionally religious, the lodge likely focused on Jewish social and cultural issues, presumably anything that was in the broadest sense embraced by the concept of *Bildung*.³⁶ Furthermore, the constitution stated that the need to form this society was due to changes in mentality, "thus we have to have the courage, to meet the challenges of the times."³⁷ It is not clear if the women referred to the changes immigration had brought to their lives or, which seems more probable in the historical context, to the challenge

of expressing civic respectability and religiosity, which was so strongly focused on by Congregation Emanu-El.

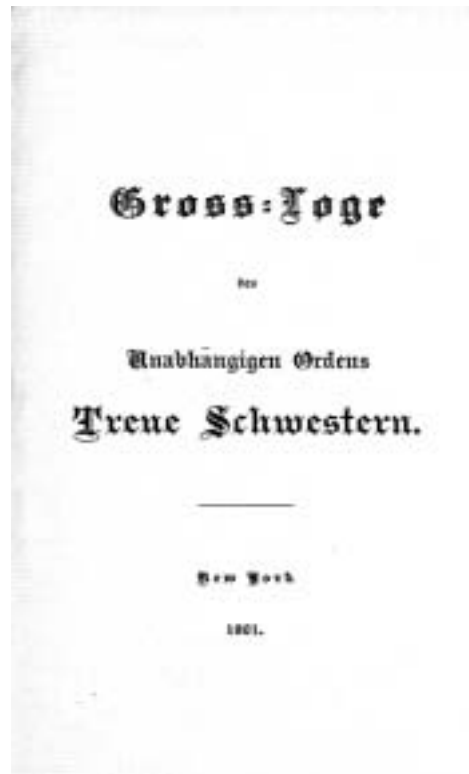
To meet these “challenges” more effectively, they resolved to have “independently and not controlled by anybody founded a free and secret society, the Independent Order of True Sisters” for married and unmarried women from the age of eighteen years.³⁸ This self-confident statement in the order’s constitution described a major landmark in the organizational history of American Jewish women. The women clearly say that they printed the 1864 edition of the constitution, since the true purpose of the organization was not made clear enough in the earlier versions. This indicates that Jewish women had already in 1846 consciously tried to step out of their domestic sphere to make a move toward equality as partners with their husbands. They took the idea of partnership very literally and obviously envisioned that women’s personalities could grow through fraternal organization, just as their husbands’ had in the B’nai B’rith.

In contrast to early female benevolent societies, such as the Philadelphia model led by Rebecca Gratz, the True Sisters were concerned about raising Jewish women’s self-awareness; they first wanted to prepare themselves to participate in society and classified themselves as organizationally independent. Unlike the women around Gratz who did not break with the traditional expressions of piety,³⁹ True Sisters consciously did. They understood that a modernized Judaism would also require women to fulfill *their* part of the Jewish mission, which exceeded Victorian womanhood, because it would involve *all* Jews in the public sphere. Although they used traditional figures of Judaism as models, women were more interested in achieving personal morality according to Jewish ethics than in serving as teachers of Israel. Just like the men in their lodges, women needed to grow first in knowledge and morality to raise their self-awareness. For that reason, the True Sisters stepped out of their traditional roles and adopted an organizational framework only known to men.

We have no record showing that in their early years True Sisters were primarily interested in collecting or distributing money for others, like the Philadelphia Female Benevolent Society;⁴⁰ nor was religious instruction of children among their immediate goals at the time. Instead, they focused on the shaping of a new female Jewish identity and awareness to make them fit for participation in the public

arena. To achieve that purpose—spiritually, intellectually, and economically—they founded a mutual aid society, which under their own directors bound them together and established a tight network for mutual learning, training, and personal growth. This rapidly tied them to a network for communication and solidarity beyond their local communities.

Providing economic security for their sisters and supporting each other “physically” with sick care was very important for the women. A financial system of mutual aid, similar to that of the B’nai B’rith, although with lower contributions and benefits, helped them economically and prevented them from having to accept alms in case of misfortune. Compared to the Philadelphia Female Benevolent Society, which sometimes bitterly suffered from a lack of donors,⁴¹ the UOTS offered a system for the prevention of poverty and dependency, which helped women preserve their self-respect. They charged every member at least a five dollar entrance fee and a quarterly membership fee of one dollar and twenty-five cents. Out of these funds a daily benefit of three dollars was paid in cases of sickness for a maximum of thirteen weeks, and funeral costs up to twenty-five dollars were provided for the sisters. In case of the death of a member’s husband, each member of the lodge paid twenty-five cents into a widow’s fund, out of which two hundred dollars were paid to the widow, while the rest was used to establish an endowment fund. This system of mutual aid among the women created a financial and spiritual



*United Order of True Sisters.
(American Jewish Archives)*

system of female solidarity and support and enabled women to develop a financial basis to afford the charitable, educational, intellectual, and social aims and plans for nonsectarian public outreach.⁴²

Although we can anticipate that many of the True Sisters came from rather wealthy middle-class families and did not have to fear sickness or the death of their husbands for material reasons, the financial basis and benefits gave the organization and its members—single or married—independence and security. The women might have also preferred to be taken care of by other women and close friends in case of sickness—as indicated by Mark Bauman⁴³—thus it might not be an accident that the lodge was started in a doctor’s household. The mutual aid character of the UOTS, which introduced a dependable system of solidarity on the basis of relatively small contributions, guaranteed that the organization was not exclusively for the wealthy, but for those who spiritually supported the higher aims of the group.

Secrecy, the commandment to keep rituals and details about the inner lodge life and projects of charity secret,⁴⁴ gave the order special significance. This protected the exclusive circle of women from unwanted social intrusion and outside influence, which was particularly important during the first decades of its existence.⁴⁵ Secrecy and the close fraternal network served as both a shield and a bond for the young group and allowed women to develop a platform free of intrusion, to develop transformation, and practice the forms of a “new society” while still living within the old order.⁴⁶

The most important difference from other female benevolent societies, however, was that within this newly created secret sphere, True Sisters could act as *spiritual authorities* in the fraternal ritual, accepting, rejecting, and expelling applicants for membership and especially in conferring the degrees of the order. In this respect the women’s lodge was a revolutionary innovation⁴⁷ and absolutely equal to what the men performed in their lodges. For example, unlike the Philadelphia Female Hebrew Benevolent Society,⁴⁸ True Sisters could not simply pay their dues and thus acquire membership in the lodge. They had to be nominated by a full-degree member of the lodge. The main criteria for admission into the order were character and intellectual conduct. A report on the moral conduct, health, and social status of the applicant had to be provided and thoroughly checked by a committee of women before a ballot was cast on the application of a

possible member.⁴⁹ The organization was not only based on friendship and shared values, but also created a sense of moral leadership and authority among the members. Such attitudes restricted membership of the True Sisters to a small circle of women, with the aura of a moral elite. By the late 1890s there were only approximately two thousand members.⁵⁰ Unlike the B'nai B'rith, which quickly grew to a nationwide organization that attracted mainly young highly spirited and mobile immigrant men, the True Sisters were—particularly in their early years—exceptional. All offices of the lodge were held by women only, giving them a chance to build their self-confidence in their organizational capabilities and potential in the articulation of religious and secular issues of women.

The ideal of a “new” Jewish womanhood evolved in the degrees of the True Sisters. This ideal was not really new, but was based on the virtues of traditional figures of Judaism and encouraged the modern Jewess to act within this tradition. A True Sister was supposed to be loyal to her sisters, her people, and her faith, all the while defining a new platform to prove her capable of developing a sense of universal loving-kindness outside the domestic sphere, without neglecting her obligations in the Jewish home.

It is striking that the rules and regulations of the order do not mention anything from which we could conclude that the UOTS was a “Jewish” organization. The Jewish character of the lodge was only developed in the names of the lodges and the ritual and degree system of the order, which named its four degrees after the Jewish heroines Miriam, Ruth, Esther, and Hannah.

On her journey to “true piety” and thus full membership, a True Sister had to pass through four degrees of the order, all connected to a motto that was to heighten virtues based on loving-kindness and friendship. The motto emphasized that Jewish women had additional duties outside the synagogue and home, such as the love of others, friendship in the lodge room, loyalty to the order, and active piety.⁵¹ The availability of a fourth degree, compared to the men’s three degrees, is unique in the fraternal world and suggests that moral superiority was expected from women, a significance which only shows at the UOTS.⁵² The four degrees and virtues connected the women of the UOTS with a strong, sacred bond that was to change their self-awareness and role. To help their members always remember what their commitment was, the UOTS used the phrase

“Love, Faith and Truth” as its motto and greeting, just like the B’nai B’rith did with their motto “Benevolence, Brotherly Love and Harmony.”⁵³ Organized as a ritual of questioning and answering with all lodge members present as witnesses, it meant more than mere education about already existing Jewish values: it indicated a strong and definite commitment to the values of the lodge. Meant to be a strong spiritual experience, initiation to these degrees could even be called an experience of “conversion.”⁵⁴

In a religiously rooted ceremony the candidates were introduced into the system of the lodge, the only platform on which they could live their religiosity equally to men. In an attractive, decorous, and powerful semireligious ceremony, Jewish women could now act as spiritual authorities and confer degrees upon their sisters, judging the moral qualifications of sisters, who typically received one or two of the four lodge degrees at a time.

During the initiation process the sisters were taught about and sworn to the first basic values of the order: love and friendship. “Love your fellowman as children of one Father in heaven, but manifest your fellow feeling especially towards the Sisters of our beloved Order”⁵⁵ described the first obligation a sister had to dedicate herself to as a member of the lodge. “Love thy fellowman as thyself”—typically the moral basis and first commandment of the orders⁵⁶—reminded sisters to surrender self-love, egotism, vanity, and desire for show, pomp, and glitter, which are the seeds for envy, avarice, malice, backbiting, hatred, and other vices. The first step in becoming a True Sister thus meant accepting a lifestyle of feminine virtues such as “industry and economy, simplicity, cleanliness and neatness in exterior appearance.”⁵⁷ Women were to avoid vanity and the emptiness of show. They were to cultivate their minds and hearts so that they grew in knowledge and modesty, in veracity, and in firmness of character. “But we must avoid the vain desire to cover up our lack of culture by a bold conceit, and never imagine that we can elevate ourselves by detracting from others.”⁵⁸ To banish envy out of her heart, slander out of the mouth, injustice out of her deeds, and to practice humanity wherever and whenever she could indicated a True Sister.⁵⁹

Stressing the potential of modern Judaism to be a religion of love and not just one of law, Reform thinkers wanted Christians to understand that loving-kindness was common to Judaism as well as to Christianity.⁶⁰ Brotherly love, expressed in exemplary moralism and

charitable behavior, did not only raise the Jew's respectability in the American religious environment, but also legitimized her engagement in the public sphere. Typically, both men and women, the UOTS, and the IOBB made brotherly love, loving-kindness, and sisterly love the prerequisite of any higher degree. In the women's case, they additionally instructed members to "manifest your fellow feeling especially towards the Sisters of our beloved Order. Assist them if they should be in distress, be a comfort and help to them in time of misfortune and sorrow."⁶¹ This meant the order's first degree was based on universal brotherly love, combined with a proto-feminist aspect and a sense of love and loyalty among the women of the order. Female friendship and support, exemplary moralism, education and refinement of heart and soul, *Bildung*, and knowledge, all typically instrumental in the process of Jewish emancipation,⁶² were commanded to the women. They were to abstain from the idleness of the typical lady, who found an interest in fashion, luxury, self-representation, and vain sociability. Active work, decency, altruism, self-improvement, and social service were the basis for the work of the order.

Passwords for the degrees, such as "Miriam" in the first degree, reflected the particular Jewishness of the UOTS. Miriam was lauded and described as "our lawgiver's sister"⁶³ and as the savior of her brother Moses—whom she supported in his service for her fellow men and people—freedom loving and a model of refined womanhood. This reference suggests an explanation as to why the order was named True Sisters, particularly because this motive is used in the first and introductory degree of the order.

In the second degree friendship was made an obligation. Friendship, creating a bond of loyalty among the sisters, was based on mutual understanding and described as the source of support and sharing among the True Sisters. It was also described as bridging social and religious differences among the women. The second degree ordered the sisters to act without regard to education, religious outlook, or class.⁶⁴ Outlining the friendship between the old woman Naomi and the young Moabite woman Ruth, who left her family to stay with her friend, the new sisters were asked to vow, "I will cling to thee, my Sister, and will not leave thee; whatever happens to thee, happens to me, and thy joy shall be my joy."⁶⁵

Thus "Ruth" became the password to enter the second degree in

the ritual of the order and concluded its first powerful part. Brotherly love (charity, respectability, and public sphere) and friendship (proto-feminist loyalty) introduced the new members to the ethical prerequisites for the transformation into a new person. As with the first two degrees, the third and fourth degrees of fidelity and piety were conferred upon the sisters together.

Esther the Jewess, who lived in captivity with her people and was raised to be queen of the mightiest empire of the time but remained true and loyal to her people, ready to sacrifice herself to suffering humanity, was announced the ideal for the third degree. Using the name "Esther" as the password, the True Sister was sworn to fidelity to herself and then to the values of the order.⁶⁶ Fidelity described a major commitment to the activities and inner life of the lodge: it required the women to attend meetings regularly and work toward whatever project the lodge assigned to the member. The sisters were reminded to do anything they could, to dedicate their lives to elevating and strengthening the order, since any shortcomings and failings or neglect would not only reflect negatively on the order, but also on all affiliated with it.⁶⁷ This commandment might have had a strong influence on the long-term survival of the order, since it did not allow the women to fall back into their old ways, reduce their activities, or withdraw from service. This meant that once the women accepted the commitment to constant moral and intellectual improvement and service to the order, they also accepted a lifelong obligation for them.

The height of the lodge's spiritual identity was finally crowned with true piety. After having proven themselves capable and worthy of love, friendship, and fidelity, the sisters were finally ready

to have a vivid consciousness and unswerving confidence, that God's love and power enfolds us; that His wisdom and justice watches and guides us. It means: Always to aspire to the divine, and so to conduct their lives as to bring it into harmony with God's will. Whoever wishes to be pious must be active, industrious, and diligent, temperate and modest, peaceable and forgiving, forbearing and lenient, just and truthful, grateful and obliging, sympathetic and charitable, self-sacrificing and self-denying.⁶⁸

Time for meaningful prayer, daily if possible, in a quiet moment

was recommended to the sister for self-contemplation and self-scrutiny, to strengthen her obedience to God's law and providence, and to be grateful for God's mercies in devotion to His fatherly love. At the gateway of the passage to true piety the name "Hannah"—the strong, loving, and pious mother of the prophet Samuel who stood firm in misfortune, showed fortitude in adversity, and prayed with authenticity to God—served as the sister's password, describing the final ideal of Jewish womanhood as envisioned by the UOTS.⁶⁹

David Einhorn and Moritz Ellinger suggest that some of the radical reformers put a lot of hope in the UOTS.⁷⁰ Kaufmann Kohler strongly approved their ideal of Jewish womanhood, as we know from his 1869 article "Der Beruf des Weibes" in the *Jewish Times*.⁷¹ Here, Kohler praised the True Sisters as an organization to uplift and refine womanhood and expressed his hope for it to reach as many Jewish women as possible. He described the True Sisters as embodying the ideal of a feminine, introspective, active womanhood. Kohler described Jewish women as the biblical heroines and prophetesses who had always made a key contribution to the survival of virtue and who were an inspiration to true religiosity. Now the women of the nineteenth century were the true carriers of humanity.⁷² He explained "that woman, like the suffering messiah, will have to turn into the triumphant messiah of the future to help humanity to triumph over brutality," since woman has preserved a pure sense of religion and piety.⁷³ Thus women would not adopt the "sad, serious and calculating nature of man," nor seek their domain only in the domestic sphere. Kohler argued, "Only men *and* women make the full picture of humankind,"⁷⁴ and thus argued for men and woman to complement, not to compete, with each other. While the True Sisters held on to their domestic role to preserve Judaism within the family, they redefined and expanded their role at home and in society by trying to merge the essence of true Jewish womanhood with modernity and their extended role in society. The order sought to encourage Jewish women to lead a meaningful and active life, reflecting a rejuvenated and adapted understanding of piety.⁷⁵

After the time of formation and learning during the 1850s, a period for which we unfortunately lack documentation, we find a few records that describe some of the order's activities in the late 1850s and during the following years. It is especially in the circles of radical Reform Judaism where the women leave their mark: both David

Einhorn and his friend, the layman and active member of the B'nai B'rith, Moritz Ellinger,⁷⁶ seem to have monitored the development of the women's order closely. We learn from their journals and papers, the *Sinai* and the *Jewish Times*, for example, that in the 1850s, as part of an organized body, UOTS women could actively participate in public discussions and invite community and intellectual leaders to their lodge meetings. Before the Civil War, for example in 1859, UOTS women of New York publicly invited high-ranking intellectual and spiritual leaders, like Dr. David Einhorn, to their festivities and meetings. The tone and rhetoric of the invitation to Einhorn reflected a great self-confidence and self-awareness of the women, who publicly and bluntly criticized the *Sinai* for only addressing male Jewry: "Rev. Dr. D. Einhorn in Baltimore! We take the liberty to send the editor of the *Sinai* an invitation to our festival and would strongly appreciate, to find the courageous fighter for light and truth among our dear guests. **Although the *Sinai* seeks only his brothers**, it can be assured to find True Sisters in us, sincerely the devoted Festival-Committee of Emanuel Lodge No. 1 of the Independent Order of True Sisters."⁷⁷ As if it were natural for women to belong to the readers of the *Sinai* and publicly communicate their activities through the journal, the women addressed one of the most important intellectual leaders of the American Reform movement in the *Sinai*. Einhorn's public reaction to the invitation, as published in the *Sinai*, leaves no doubt that the UOTS was well known and highly esteemed in Reform circles and that this public type of social and intellectual exchange was seen as typical for the UOTS:

The editor's office feels the need to publicly express its thanks for the honor and deems this expression of religiosity important, since in America it is **generally** still the women who slow down religious progress and are seeking their religious center in the kitchen. And still has woman, who has proven to be in her quiet, but even more intensive work an old and powerful tool for the procreation of religiosity in Israel, the high duty to take on the lead to pass on a lively, not a stiff and old-fashioned Judaism, particularly in this country, where the dollar is worshipped ("der Dollarvergötterung"), where most men are business oriented and neither know the Sabbath nor the holidays.⁷⁸

A quarter century after their founding, we learn that meeting the challenge of secrecy successfully raised the women's respectability and the ability to achieve spirituality, which was frequently in question by their communicative behavior, such as talking and flirting, during the services.⁷⁹ In men's eyes, the ability to be quiet and keep a secret qualified them to propagate their definition of piety, as evidenced in 1871 in the *Jewish Times* by Moritz Ellinger, who praised the order and its potential: "It was claimed that they had shown that they were able to keep a secret and keep silent, the time had come when they must break their silence, and must speak so loud as to enlist the attention of their numerous sisters. They have shown their ability to speak and speak well, they must also write, their lodge rooms must be turned into lecture rooms, and the press must be made and enlightenment diffused. He [Ellinger] had no doubt that the Jewish press would gladly devote a department to their cause and open their columns to their representative women."⁸⁰

It took until the mid-1880s for the True Sisters to follow Ellinger's appeal. In October 1884 they founded their own paper, *Der Vereinsbote*, a monthly publication of the Cäcilie Lorsch Fortbildungsverein, a suborganization of the UOTS, which was edited by them under the assistance of Emanuel Friedlein. In 1897 the True Sisters attempted to reach a larger audience.⁸¹ To meet this goal they discontinued the *Vereinsbote* and started the *Ordens Echo* in August 1897, a monthly publication that addressed women outside the order and served as an important source for identifying the focus of the organization, its history, and charitable projects after the order had come of age. Unfortunately, only copies from the 1890s and later have survived.⁸² Encouraging "*Bildung und Herzensbildung*," education and refinement of the intellect and heart was the declared purpose of the order.⁸³ Bianca B. Robitscher, though, stated in the *Echo* that its goal "first and foremost [was] the development of free, independent action of its members."⁸⁴ By the turn of the century the paper actively tried to stimulate discussion among Jewish women about political, cultural, and social issues—some of which were probably carried out silently within the lodges—on such topics as "the Zionistic Question,"⁸⁵ "A Trip through Europe,"⁸⁶ or "Modern Hebrew Literature."⁸⁷ We also learn from the *Echo* that in 1905 a large Schillerfestival was organized in New York by the Hadassah Lodge, which "felt a special calling" to do so, since it was founded on Friedrich von Schiller's birthday,

“Germany’s most favorite poet.”⁸⁸ The strong cultural involvement these women still had with the Old World found expression in the discussion of the concept of *Bildung* and the advice to use the Maimonides Fee Library of the Independent Order of B’nai B’rith in New York City, which had, as the *Echo* stressed, a major collection of German literature. However, “in English you will find everything.”⁸⁹ The fact that the German background of the True Sisters played a great role culturally in lodge life, and that German was the language spoken in most lodges until the end of the First World War, without a doubt added to the exclusive character of the lodge.⁹⁰ This strong cultural tie prevented Jewish women of non-German background from identifying with the UOTS. From the *Echo* we learn, however, that the women also strongly identified as American citizens in their publication of President McKinley’s speech to the American people during the Spanish-American War.⁹¹

Most important, though, modern women was a major point of discussion, and the *Echo* pleaded for the social acceptance of women moving into business and the legal profession and using the opportunity of education to make their lives better.⁹² Indeed, by the 1890s the UOTS, although small in number, had grown into an influential, and most important, a Jewish women’s organization.

Introducing a national organization for women, the order helped American Jewish women reach beyond their individual communities, as expressed in both their constitution and their degree system. The network they created was so strong that sisters who traveled or moved with their husbands immediately enjoyed the hospitality and sociability of the local UOTS lodge, and thus had a circle of friends sworn to the same values and were free of being marginalized by just following their husbands. Sisters frequently reported about their travels and their experience visiting another lodge as a joyful one: Johanna Kohler, the wife of Kaufmann Kohler, found a friendly welcome and broad support among her New York sisters when she moved to their city from Chicago. Her membership in the UOTS quickly introduced her to a new circle of like-minded women with whom she could share her interests and join the practical and intellectual work of the organization.⁹³ She continued, however, to be identified as the New York representative of Johannah Lodge #9 of Chicago.⁹⁴ Upon moving to Cincinnati in 1903, after her husband became president of the Hebrew Union College, she strongly favored

and actively contributed to the founding of Ruth Lodge of Cincinnati.⁹⁵

Clearly, by the 1890s the self-awareness of the lodge had expanded, and their annual conventions, usually held in New York where the lodge maintained its own clubhouse,⁹⁶ became major social events, framed in large social and cultural programs—smaller but similar to the B'nai B'rith Conventions—which the True Sisters attended with their husbands.⁹⁷ The financial situation and organizational development of the UOTS justified its growing self-confidence: by the late 1890s fifteen lodges of the UOTS controlled the substantial sum of nearly sixty thousand dollars,⁹⁸ which grew to over one hundred and seven thousand dollars by the beginning of the First World War.⁹⁹

In their charitable projects the True Sisters were typically concerned about women, their health, and their education. One of the group's larger charitable projects in the late 1890s was the creation of a hospital fund, a modern kind of health insurance for its members.¹⁰⁰ Besides the hospital fund, the order had two sub-organizations: the Cäcilie Lorsch Fortbildungsverein for women, and the New York Philanthropic League. The Fortbildungsverein was an educational society for women, founded in 1881 in memory of Cäcilie Lorsch,¹⁰¹ which by 1898 owned thirty-five thousand dollars; the New York Philanthropic League,¹⁰² created in 1888, constituted a network for the New York lodges of the UOTS and helped them oversee their finances and coordinate their work in the city. Since substantial amounts of money were dedicated to the league by several New Haven businessmen, we can conclude that the order had earned high respect in the male Jewish world, too.¹⁰³

Historians have proof of countless charitable activities of the lodges in the 1890s besides the Fortbildungsverein, the hospital fund, and the Philanthropic League: fund-raising balls, the financial support of charitable organizations and projects, the People's Synagogue and Hull House of Chicago, the support of Jewish manual training schools, the support of Ruth Home for Working Girls in Chicago, and the Public Art School Society. The UOTS helped create penny lunches for schoolchildren and distributed Thanksgiving Day baskets to the needy. It even helped young girls complete their education.¹⁰⁴

It was more than appropriate when in 1896 Hannah G. Solomon, first president of the National Council of Jewish Women, said that the

council would “cherish cousinly feelings” for the True Sisters.¹⁰⁵ Her cousin Lizzie Barbe and sister Mary Haas grew up with her in the house of Michael and Sarah Greenebaum in Chicago.¹⁰⁶ These young women had developed a strong female friendship and common identity in their youth and likely were introduced to the True Sisters through Sarah Greenebaum, after whom the second Chicago lodge of the UOTS was named.¹⁰⁷ Besides their cosmopolitan and liberal family background, early membership and affiliation with the True Sisters might have taught them a socially active style of Jewish womanhood and encouraged them to run an organization.

In the 1890s the connections between the two organizations were close and supportive of each other,¹⁰⁸ although the exact dynamics among the new and old organizations are not known, and what motives the female membership had to join either group. Nevertheless, during the formative years of the American Jewish women’s movement, there was a remarkable overlap of the leadership figures, such as Carrie Simon, Johanna Kohler, Lizzie Barbe, Mary Haas, Julia Felsenthal, Sara Hart, Babette Mandel, Blanche Stolz, and Pauline Witkowsky, most of whom were members of Johannah Lodge #9 of Chicago and who also took active leadership roles in the young National Council of Jewish Women. In addition, another pattern can be surmized: mothers, who were members of the UOTS like Sarah Greenebaum or Mina Schottenfels, successfully passed on a modern notion of Jewish womanhood to their daughters, Hannah Greenebaum Solomon and Sara X. Schottenfels, who became attracted to a more timely form of club life, such as the NCJW.¹⁰⁹

This is just one result of a comparison of leadership among the two Jewish groups in the Chicago area, but it suggests that future research about American Jewish women and their organizational behavior should not neglect Jewish fraternal organizations. Also of importance is Jewish women’s participation in the women’s lodges of the Masons and Odd Fellows, which allowed them to share religiosity and sociability with their Christian friends before modern women’s organizations were born. One can only speculate why Jewish women succeeded in forming their own independent lodge—a rare phenomenon.¹¹⁰ Nevertheless, the Independent Order of True Sisters must be regarded as a noteworthy and early attempt to bring emancipation to Jewish women by exploring new organizational forms of establishing modern Judaism in America. This endeavor

suggests that fraternal organization served not only as a training ground for the acculturation of Jewish men, but might have been particularly attractive for Jewish women to redefine themselves in the new American environment.¹¹¹ Since they lacked organizational alternatives, the lodge might have provided a rare framework for the expression of religiosity based on the Old Testament and helped to open spaces for the definition of their role in lay activity in modern Judaism.

What we know from the Independent Order of True Sisters suggests a pattern that might modify our current picture of Jewish women lagging behind their Protestant sisters as activists in the public sphere. This pattern and its impact is still to be explored in detail and should include both Jewish women's orders and fraternal lodges in general, some of which started to introduce a limited degree for women in the 1850s or 1860s and might have become an arena of activism for the wives of the many Jewish Masons and Odd Fellows.¹¹² From such research we might also learn about the chances and limits of social interaction across religious boundaries between Jewish women and their Protestant sisters in nineteenth-century America.

*Cornelia Wilhelm is a fellow of the Department of Modern History at the University of Munich. Research for this article was provided by the German Marshall Fund of the United States and a Lowenstein-Wiener Fellowship of the American Jewish Archives. She is the author of *Bewegung oder Verein? Nationalsozialistische Volkstumspolitik in den USA*, published by the German Historical Institute in Washington, D.C. She is currently writing a study of the *B'nai B'rith from 1843 to 1914*.*

NOTES:

1. Michael A. Meyer, *Response to Modernity: A History of the Reform Movement in Judaism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 137–40.

2. *Protokolle der dritten Versammlung deutscher Rabbiner abgehalten zu Breslau, vom 13 bis 24. Juli 1846* (Breslau: Verlag von F.E.C. Leuckart, 1847), 253–66.

3. Karla Goldman, *Beyond the Synagogue Gallery: Finding a Place for Women in American Judaism* (Cambridge Mass: Harvard University Press, 2000), 4. See also Pamela Nadell, *Women Who Would Be Rabbis, A History of Women's Ordination* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1998), 13. Until the end of the nineteenth century, the only possibility for women to speak publicly to their congregations was during their confirmation ceremonies, introduced by Reform congregations in the 1840s and 1850s.

4. Riv-Ellen Prell, "The Vision of Woman in Classical Reform Judaism," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 50 (1982): 575–89

5. Faith Rogow, *Gone to Another Meeting, The National Council of Jewish Women, 1893–1993* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1993) and Linda Gordon

Kutzmack, *Woman's Cause, The Jewish Woman's Movement in England and the United States, 1881–1933* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1990).

6. Goldman, *Beyond the Synagogue Gallery*, 141.

7. *Ibid*; 135.

8. *Ibid*; 141.

9. "Independent Order of True Sisters" is the literal translation of "Unabhängiger Orden Treuer Schwestern." It is important to stress this difference with the current English name "United Order of True Sisters," as it gives different information about the character of the organization. We can anticipate that the UOTS was consciously labeled "organizationally independent" from similar orders such as the B'nai B'rith. Similarly, the Independent Order of B'nai B'rith made clear that they were not an extension of the Odd Fellowship and the Independent Order of Odd Fellows to mark their break from the United Order of Odd Fellows in England. When the women increasingly adopted English in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, they tried to translate their name and discovered that they would have to change their abbreviation from UOTS to IOTS. Since they wanted to maintain the old abbreviation of the lodge's name, they chose to carry the English name "United Order of True Sisters."

10. Mark C. Carnes, *Secret Ritual and Manhood in Victorian America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989) and Mark C. Carnes, ed., *Meanings for Manhood. Constructions of Masculinity in Victorian America* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1990).

11. Mary-Anne Clawson, "Nineteenth-Century Women's Auxiliaries and Fraternal Orders," *SIGNS* 12 (1986): 40–61. An exception were eighteenth-century French noblewomen, who were accepted into mixed lodges; see Janet M. Burke, "Through Friendship to Feminism: The Growth in Self-Awareness among Eighteenth-Century Women Freemasons," *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Western Society for French History* 14 (1987): 187–96.

12. Lynn Dumenil, *Freemasonry and American Culture 1880–1930* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 25–26.

13. "Masonry and the Ladies," *Masonic Review* (hereafter, *MR*) (January 1853), 203–6; "The Ladies" and "Ladies and Masonry Again," *MR* (March 1853), 342–44; "The Lady Freemason," *MR* (May 1853), 77–79; "The Ladies—Their Right to Become Freemasons," *MR* (August 1853), 287–88; "A Female Freemason," *MR* (May 1857), 87–91.

14. Dr. Bruckman was a member of the Cultusverein, out of which Emanu-El grew. "The Order B'nai B'rith," *Jewish Times* (hereafter, *JT*), April 15, 1870, 106.

15. Secretary's Report: "Primarily it must be clearly understood, and proclaimed at all proper places and occasions, that the Order B'nai B'rith stands for the Union of the Jews throughout the world, for their higher development, mentally, morally, and socially; that is for 'Practical Judaism' The Synagogue teaches the tenets of our faith; the Order attempts to carry them out in practice in all relations of life. Between both there is full accord." *Proceedings of the General Convention of the IOBB 1900*, 34, IOBB-Archives.

16. Dr. E. M. Friedlein, "Mitteilungen über den Orden," *JT*, March 25, 1870, 58; April 1, 1870, 73; April 8, 1870, 90.

17. *Ibid*.

The Independent Order of True Sisters:

18. Ibid.
19. Edward E. Grusd, *B'nai B'rith, The Story of a Covenant* (New York: Appleton Century, 1966). Renau was, among others, a founder of the B'nai B'rith. Merzbacher and Mitchel joined soon after the founding.
20. Bernhard N. Cohn, "Leo Merzbacher," *American Jewish Archives* 5 (1954): 21–24; Leon Freeman, "America's Synagogue Supreme," *American Hebrew*, October 6, 1929, 591–94; also see the entry in the *Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, 497.
21. Mildred L. Braun, "A History of Johannah Lodge No. 9, United Order of True Sisters," (n.p., probably 1955), SC-1841, The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives (hereafter, AJA); "Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of Emanuel-Lodge UOTS," *JT*, April 28, 1871, 13.
22. Friedlein, "Mitteilungen über den Orden," *JT*, March 25, 1870, 58; April 1, 1870, 73; April 8, 1870, 90.
23. "Der Erste Geheime Frauen-Orden," *Ordens Echo*, September 3, 1897, 1; and Braun, "A History," 8, SC-1841, AJA.
24. "Der Erste Geheime Frauen-Orden," *Ordens Echo*, October 6, 1897, 2.
25. "Bildung einer Großloge U.O.T.S." (printed version of original minutes), Festschrift zum 50. jährigen Jubiläum, New York 1896: Press of Philip Frank, 22: Archives of the Temple Emanu-El, New York, courtesy of S. Kirschberg.
26. James L. Ridgely, *History of American Odd Fellowship, The First Decade* (Baltimore: James L. Ridgely, 1878), 330.
27. "Unser Ehrenmitglied Dr. Emanuel M. Friedlein ist nicht mehr!" *Ordens Echo*, July 9, 1897, 3; "Dr. Emanuel M. Friedlein, Ehrenmitglied," *Ordens Echo*, May 15, 1911, 1; "Dr. Emanuel M. Friedlein," *Ordens Echo* August 5, 1897, 3. "Vierzig Jahre," *Ordens Echo*, November 6, 1897, 3; and "Dr. E. M. Friedlein's 85th Birthday," *The Menorah* (May 1892), 328–29.
28. "Vierzig Jahre," *Ordens Echo*, November 6, 1897, 3.
29. Minutes of Meeting of Jochebed Lodge #4, New Haven, First Meeting of September 6, 1863, MS # 21, Box 6, Folder A, New Haven Colony Historical Society (hereafter, NHCHS).
30. Braun, *A History*, 10. According to the history, the idea of a women's lodge was suggested by Henry Greenebaum of Chicago in 1873, who had been familiar with the lodges on the East Coast. The relationship the women developed with Henry Greenebaum must have been very close, as Braun indicates that the women called him "little uncle Henry."
31. "Miriam Lodge #17, U.O.T.S.," *Ordens Echo*, February 15, 1912, 1; "Echoes of the Order," *Ordens Echo*, February 15, 1913, 2.
32. Kaufmann Kohler, "Der Beruf des Weibes," *JT*, May 21, 1871, 188–89; Kohler writes, "Though I am really not a friend of closed societies, I really want to wish good luck to a society, that has strongly contributed to the refinement and uplift of woman, even though it has created a lodge. May—I do not want to suppress this wish—grow a large society of honorable women out of the lodge of the True Sisters. May they in any case be successful in intellectual refinement charity and education, as it has been until now..." See also "An Official Visit to Johannah Lodge No. 9, Chicago," *Ordens Echo*, March 16, 1906, 2; and "Johannah Lodge No. 9," *Ordens Echo*, March 7, 1898, 1. Both daughters of David Einhorn—Johannah Kohler and Mathilde Hirsch—were members of Johannah Lodge #9, which, unlike most of the other lodges that met outside the

synagogue, met in the vestry rooms of Temple Sinai.

33. "Constitution des Unabhängigen Ordens Treuer Schwestern," (n.p., 1864), 5; UOTS, Albany, N.Y., 1. Translated from the German by C. Wilhelm.

34. Ibid; 5.

35. "Constitution des Unabhängigen Ordens Treuer Schwestern," bold print in the original.

36. Ibid. 1.

37. Ibid. 5. According to the historical context out of which the order grew, such as the searching for new forms of Judaism and adapting Judaism to American religiosity and society, "the challenges of the times" might mean to find ways and means for the modernization of the Jewish woman's role as a leader in her faith in America.

38. "Constitution des Unabhängigen Ordens Treuer Schwestern," 1-5.

39. Dianne Ashton, Rebecca Gratz: *Women and Judaism in Antebellum America* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1997), 161, 222.

40. Ibid. 219.

41. Ibid. 219.

42. "Constitution des Unabhängigen Ordens Treuer Schwestern," 4.

43. Mark Bauman, "Southern Jewish Women and Social Service Associations: Some Ruminations Concerning Significance," (unpublished paper presented as a Starkoff Fellowship Lecture, The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, August 11, 1999).

44. "Constitution des Unabhängigen Ordens Treuer Schwestern," 1. The order stated its secret character in the constitution. We do not know details about their secret conduct, but we can anticipate the UOTS copied the IOBB or the Odd Fellows in their interpretation of "secrecy." Julius Bien, "The History of the Order B'nai B'rith," Chapter VI, *The Menorah* (January 1886), 289-93; and Aaron Grosh, *Odd Fellow Manual* (Philadelphia: H. C. Peck and Theo Bliss, 1860), 18, 59.

45. For an extensive explanation about the function of secrecy in Masonic and fraternal organizations, see Manfred Agethen, *Geheimbund und Utopie, Illuminaten, Freimaurer und deutsche Spätaufklärung* (München: Oldenbourg, 1984), 127. See Goldman, *Beyond the Synagogue Gallery*, 141, for the problems women's organizations faced in reaching independence from male dominance.

46. Agethen, *Geheimbund*, 153.

47. For more information on the history of women as spiritual authorities, see Nadell, *Women Who Would Be Rabbis: A History of Women's Ordination, 1889-1985* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1998).

48. "The Constitution of the Female Hebrew Benevolent Society, Philadelphia 1838," SC-9574, AJA.

49. See Minutes of Johannah Lodge #9, Chicago, February 21, 1895, MS Coll. 74, Box 1, Chicago Jewish Archives (CHJA); *ibid*; 11 and Minutes of Jochebed Lodge #4 New Haven, January 10, 1864, MS #21, Box 6, Folder A, NHCHS.

50. "Achtundvierzigste Jahresversammlung der Ehrwürdigen Gossloge UO.T.S.," *Ordens Echo*, July 15, 1898, 2.

51. UOTS, ed; *Ritual*, Albany, N. Y., 1895, 1-22.

52. Noel P. Gist, *Secret Societies: A Cultural Study of Fraternalism in the United States* (University of Missouri Studies 15, 1940), 67.

53. See for example correspondence published in the *Ordens Echo*, September 9,

1900, 1.

54. As Margaret Burke described the attainment of all degrees for eighteenth-century French women's masonry. See Margaret Burke, "Freemasonry, Friendship and Noblewomen: The Role of the Secret Society in Bringing Enlightenment Thought to Pre-Revolutionary Women Elites," *History of European Ideas* 10 (1989): 285.

55. UOTS, ed; *Ritual*, Albany, N.Y. (1895). 5. Quoted from the English version of the *Ritual*.

56. Timothy Smith, "Biblical Ideals in American Christian and Jewish Philanthropy, 1880–1920," *American Jewish History* 74 (1984): 3–26. Although Smith refers to a later period, the IOBB and the UOTS seem to fit this pattern.

57. UOTS, ed; *Ritual*, Albany, NY 1895, 9.

58. *Ibid.* 10.

59. *Ibid.* 6.

60. Timothy L. Smith, "Biblical Ideals," 3–26. Although a very early example for this ideal, the B'nai B'rith is a typical example of Jewish philanthropy based on the idea of "brotherly love," which it made its motto. "The fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man" was seen as the sum of the ten commandments and the essence of the ethical values of both Christianity and Judaism. Particularly Reform Judaism took this motto as a platform for the reinterpretation of the idea of the Jewish mission to the gentile world as a sign for strong exemplary moralism. In lodges especially "brotherly love" became a common motto. See "Brotherly Love," *MR* (May 1846), 175, and "Über den Gott der Rache und das 'Princip der Liebe' im Judentum—Ein Brief an einen Freimaurer," *Die Deborah*, in several volumes, May 18, 1866, 183; May 23, 1866, 187; June 1, 1866, 190–91; June 8, 1866, 194–95; June 13, 1866, 198; June 22, 1866, 203.

61. UOTS, ed. *Ritual*, Albany, N.Y. (1895): 7.

62. David Sorkin, *The Transformation of German Jewry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 81–104.

63. UOTS, ed; *Ritual*, Albany, N.Y. (1895): 7.

64. *Ibid.*, 8–9 "Therefore, our second degree teaches us: Let not such low incentives rule you within the sacred precincts of our lodge rooms. The opportunity is given to you to study the character and disposition of the Sisters. Examine closely and let your choice be governed not by appearances, but by personal worth. The rich, the older, the more experienced and cultured Sister must elevate the poor, the younger, the less experienced and less cultured, if she be worthy of her friendship."

65. UOTS, ed, *Ritual*, Albany, N.Y. (1895): 10.

66. *Ibid.* 13.

67. *Ibid.* 12. The salute of this degree was a strong symbol of loyalty which the UOTS used in its early seal: "As our salute of this degree, we raise both hands, locked into each other, so to signify that, with united force, we shall work together in Fidelity."

68. UOTS, ed; *Ritual*, Albany, N.Y. (1895): 14.

69. *Ibid.* 15.

70. *The Sinai*, IV (1859): 87–88.

71. Kaufmann Kohler, "Der Beruf des Weibes," *JT*, May 21, 1869, 188–90.

72. *Ibid.*; Karla Goldman, "The Ambivalence of Reform Judaism: Kaufmann Kohler and the Ideal Jewish Woman," *American Jewish History* 79 (1990): 479. Goldman quotes here from two publications of Kaufmann Kohler: "Das Frauenherz oder das Miriamsbrunnlein im Lager Israels," *JT*, February 17, 1871, 812; and *Woman's*

Influence on Judaism, (1906): 274.

73. Kohler, "Der Beruf," 190.

74. Ibid. 189.

75. "The Position of Woman Among the Jews," *Ordens Echo*, April 8, 1901, 1.

76. Ellinger, Friedlein, and Einhorn knew each other from childhood in their old communities around Fürth in Northern Bavaria. Friedlein had first met Einhorn there at the Talmud school of Rabbi Shelome Fegersheim, who was the grandfather of Moritz Ellinger. See *The Menorah*. May 1892, 391–92.

77. *The Sinai*, IV (1859): 87–88 The bold passage is also bold in the original.

78. Ibid.

79. Goldman, *Beyond the Synagogue Gallery*, 101.

80. "Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of Emanuel Lodge, U.O.T.S.," *JT*, April 28, 1871, 134.

81. *Der Vereinsbote*, July 9, 1897, 2, MS Coll. 638, Series A, Box 1, AJA.

82. Mary E. Olson and Karl J. R. Arndt, *German–American Newspapers and Periodicals 1732–1955*, vol. 1 (Heidelberg: Quelle und Meyer Publishers, 1961), 387. Olson and Arndt list the *Vereinsbote* and the *Ordens Echo* under the latter's name and claim the paper started in 1885; unfortunately, the first volumes of the paper are no longer available.

83. "Das Goldene Jubiläum," *Ordens Echo*, February 7, 1901, 2. Paper read by Worthy Sister M. G. Haas before Sarah Greenebaum, Lodge No. 16, *Ordens Echo*, February 15, 1908, 3; "Noemi Lodge No. 11," *Ordens Echo*, February 5, 1898, 2.

84. Bianca B. Robitscher, "Our Principles," *Ordens Echo*, May 15, 1912, 2.

85. "Jochebed Lodge No. 4," *Ordens Echo*, February 5, 1898, 2.

86. Minutes of Meetings of Johannah Lodge #9, Chicago, October 3, 1895, MS # 74, Box 34, CHJA.

87. Ibid, December 7, 1895, MS #74, Box 34, CHJA.

88. "Eine Schillerfeier," *Ordens Echo*, May 15, 1905, 3.

89. "Bildung," *Ordens Echo*, March 15, 1905, 2; "Maimonides Free Library," *Ordens Echo*, July 15, 1898, 1.

90. The use of German was gradually abolished after the 1890s. Johannah Lodge #9 had a lengthy discussion about the introduction of English, which was heavily commented on by the *Chicago Staatszeitung*, the local German newspaper. Finally Johannah #9 adopted the English language in March 1895. Minutes of Meetings of Johannah Lodge #9, February 7, 1895; March 7, 1895; April 18, 1895, MS #74, Box 1, CHJA. It took until 1918, though, for German to be introduced as the official language; see circular of Emma Schlesinger, December 9, 1918, I–58 (United Order True Sisters, Naomi Lodge), Box 6, American Jewish Historical Society, N. Y., (hereafter, AJHS).

91. "Thanksgiving Day for American Victories," *Ordens Echo*, July 15, 1898, 1.

92. "A Plea for Wide Awake Women," *Ordens Echo*, September 15, 1906, 1; "The New Woman," *Ordens Echo*, September 15, 1911, 3; "Why Women Should Study Law," *Ordens Echo*, May 15, 1906, 3; "To Be Or Not to Be a Modern Woman," *Ordens Echo*, May 15, 1913, 4.

93. "Echoes of the Order," *Ordens Echo*, February 15, 1913, 2, and Proceedings of the Meeting of Johannah Lodge #9, Chicago, October 3, 1895, MS #74, Box 1, CHJA.

94. "Achtundvierzigste Jahressitzung der Ehrwürdigen Grossloge U.O.T.S.," *Ordens Echo*, July 15, 1898, 2.