CURRICULUM VITAE

ISA ARON

# PERSONAL INFORMATION

Date of Birth: January 17, 1949

Marital Status: Married, two adult sons

Telephone: (213) 765 -2153

# EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

July 1975-June 1977 – Post-doctoral training program at the Center for the Study of Social Intervention, Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Bronx, NY.

Ph.D., June 1975 – The University of Chicago, Chicago, IL, Department of Education, Division of Philosophy and Curriculum. Special Fields: Social and Political Philosophy; Philosophical Methods.

B.A., 1970 – Philosophy Major: Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, PA.

1968-1969 – Junior year abroad: Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Israel.

# WORK EXPERIENCE

2018 – Present

Consultant, Builders of Jewish Education, Los Angeles. Work with congregational schools seeking to streamline and enrich their teaching of Hebrew.

1984-2017

Professor of Education, Rhea Hirsch School of Education,

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, Los Angeles, CA.

Co-director of the B’nai Mitzvah Revolution, a joint project of Hebrew Union College and the Union for Reform Judaism whose purpose is to promote more meaningful and engaging preparation and celebrations of b’nai mitzvah.

Founding Director, Experiment in Congregational Education, a project of the Rhea Hirsch School of Education. The ECE works with congregations throughout the United States, helping them become Congregations of Learners and Self-Renewing Congregations. The project now has full time director and I continue to serve as a Senior Consultant.

September 1992-May 1993

Visiting instructor, Stanford University: Ph.D. concentration in Jewish Education

July 1980-July 1984

Coordinator of Museum Education, Hebrew Union College Skirball Museum, Los Angeles

September 1978-June 1980

Coordinator of the M.U.S.E. (Museum Utilization for Student Education) project at

Hebrew Union College Skirball Museum, Los Angeles

**GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS**

December 2012- 2018

Author of a grants from the Los Angeles Federation and the Union for Reform Judaism in support of the B’nai Mitzvah Revolution.

July 2005 – June 2007

Author of grants from the Commission on Jewish Identity and Renewal of the UJA Federation of New York, the Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Boston, the Nathan Cummings Foundations and others to support a study of synagogue change that culminated in the book *Sacred Strategies*.

June 1992-Present

Author of grants on behalf of the Rhea Hirsch School of Education from the Mandel Associated Foundations, the Nathan Cummings F8oundation, the Covenant Foundation, the Koret Foundation and others, to support the work of the Experiment in Congregational Education.

## September 1985-June 1986

Recipient of research grants for policy studies related to the teacher shortage in Jewish supplementary schools: Grants awarded by the Jewish Educational Services of North America (JESNA) and by the Los Angeles Bureau of Jewish Education.

## July 1980-December 1984

Author of grants on behalf of the Hebrew Union College Skirball Museum’s Department of Education: Grants awarded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Jewish Community Foundation of Los Angeles, and the Cultural Affairs Department of the City of Los Angeles.

## July 1977-June 1979

Author of grant proposals on behalf of the Havurah School Association: Grants awarded by the Max and Anna Levinson Foundation, the Gimprich Family Foundation, and the Program Development Fund for Jewish Education.

## July 1975-June 1977

Post-doctoral Fellowship (an N.I.M.H. Training Grant): The Center for the Study of Social Intervention, Albert Einstein College of Medicine.

Autumn 1970-Spring 1973

University of Chicago Humanities Fellowship.

# BOOKS

*Sacred Strategies: Transforming Congregations from Functional to Visionary.* (with Steven M. Cohen, Lawrence Hoffman and Ari Y. Kelman) Washington, DC: Alban Press, 2010. Winner of the 2010 National Jewish Book Award, in the categories of Education and Jewish Identity.

*The Self-Renewing Congregation: Organizational Strategies for Revitalizing Synagogue Life*. Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2002.

*Becoming a Congregation of Learners: Learning as a Key to Revitalizing Congregational Life.* Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2000.

*A Congregation of Learners: Transforming the Congregation into a Learning Community,* (co-edited with Sara Lee and Seymour Rossel). New York: UAHC Press, 1995.

# PUBLICATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL PAPERS

“Going Beyond Zoom to Enrich Learning in a Part-Time Jewish School,” (with Ziva Hassenfeld) *Journal of Jewish Education* 88:1 (2022).

“Upending the Grammar of the Conventional Religious School,” *Journal of Jewish Education* 80:3 (2014)

"Reverse Engineering the 20th Century Bar/Bat Mitzvah." In *Between Tradition and Modernity: Rethinking an Old Opposition*, edited by Michael Meyer and David Myers. (Wayne State University Press, 2014).

“The Congregational School.” *International Handbook of Research on Jewish Education*, edited by Lisa Grant, Helena Miller, and Alex Pomson. (2011)

“Supplementary Schooling and the Law of Unanticipated Consequences: A Review Essay of Stuart Schoenfeld's ‘Folk Judaism, Elite Judaism and the Role of Bar Mitzvah in the Development of the Synagogue and Jewish School in America.’ *Journal of Jewish Education,* 76:4 (2010).

“Kehillah” and “Beit Knesset Hazon: A Visionary Synagogue.” (with Nachama Moskowitz) In *Learning and Community*, edited by Jack Wertheimer. (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2009)

Aron, I., Cohen, S. M., Hoffman, L. and Kelman, A.Y. “Functional and visionary congregations. *CCAR Journal* Winter, 2009: 10-25, (2009)

 “The Longest Running Social Drama, Now Coming to a Congregation (of Learners) Near You,” *Journal of Jewish Education* Vol. 73 No. 1 (2007): 25-49.

“Contemporary Jewish Education” (with Michael Zeldin and Sara Lee), in *The Cambridge Companion to American Judaism*, edited by Dana Kaplan (Cambridge University Press, 2006).

Realism as the Key to Excellence in Congregational Education. Agenda: Jewish Education Issue #17, Spring, 2004 pp.9-12.

 “Learning as a Portal for Synagogue Revitalization,” with Robert Weinberg. *Jewish Education News,* Winter, 2002.

“Rethinking and Redesigning the Religious School,” *with Sara Lee and Robert Weinberg. Sh’ma,* March, 2002.

 “Shared Leadership in a Congregational Change Effort,” with Laura Samuels. *Journal of Jewish Education*, Vol. 65, Nos. 1 & 2, Spring/Summer 1999.

“Minding the Process in Transformational Change,” *CCAR Journal*, Vol. 45, No. 1, Winter 1998.

“Extending the Chain of Tradition: Reflections on the Goals of Adult Text Study,” with Diane Schuster. Jewish Education, Vol. 64, Winter/Spring 1998.

“Change in Jewish Education: Problems and Paradoxes” with Michael Zeldin, *Agenda: Jewish Education, Spring 1996.*

 “From the Congregational School to the Learning Congregation: Are We Ready for a Paradigm Shift?” Paper prepared for the inaugural conference of the Experiment in Congregational Education, May 1993.

“Building a Research Capability for the Field of Jewish Education.” Report prepared for the Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education, June 1992.

“The Teacher’s Role in Curriculum Reform” *Studies in Jewish Education*, Vol. 6, edited by Asher Shkedi. Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1992.

*Towards the Professionalization of Jewish Teaching*. Report published by the Commission on Jewish Education in North America, Spring 1990.

“Findings of The Los Angeles B.J.E. Teacher Census,” (with Bruce Phillips). Paper presented at the Conference on Research in Jewish Education, held in New York City, June 1990.

Review of Michael Rosenak’s Commandments and Concerns In *American Jewish History*, Vol. 79, No. 1, Autumn 1989.

“The Malaise of Jewish Education,” *Tikkun*, Vol. 4, No. 3, May/June 1989, pp. 32-34.

“The Relationship between Research and Practice in Jewish Education: Can We (And Should We) Close the Gap?” *Jewish Education*, Vol. 56, No. 4, Winter 1988.

“Caring and Principles: Opponents or Partners,” in *Philosophy of Education*, 1988, proceedings of the forty-third annual meeting of the Philosophy of Education Society.

“Where Will the Next Generation of Jewish Teachers Come From?” *Journal of Reform Judaism*, Fall 1987.

“Dealing with the Teacher Shortage: Has the Time for Concerted Action Finally Arrived?” (with Adrianne Bank), *Journal for Jewish Communal Service*, Fall 1987, Vol. 64, No. 3, Spring 1988, pp. 264-270.

“Instruction and Enculturation in Jewish Education,” paper presented at the Conference for Research on Jewish Education, Los Angeles, June 1987.

“Dealing with the Shortage of Teachers,” (with Adrianne Bank), in *To Build a Profession: Careers in Jewish Education*, edited by Joseph Reimer (Waltham, Massachusetts: Brandeis University, 1987).

Contribution to a Symposium on “The Jewish School Teacher Today and Tomorrow,” (with Adrianne Bank), *Jewish Education*, Vol. 25, No. 1, Spring 1987.

“Pathways from the Ivory Tower: The Relationship Between Research and Practice in Education,” Paper presented at the Spring 1987 meeting of the California Association for Philosophy of Education.

“Dealing with the Shortage of Supplementary School Teachers,” (with Adrianne Bank), report of a research project sponsored by JESNA (Jewish Education Services of North America), Fall 1986.

“To Create Liberal Philosophy of Jewish Education,” *Religious Education*, Vol. 81, No. 4, Fall 1986.

“Is it Possible to Create a Normative-Synthetic Philosophy of Education?” Paper presented at the Spring 1986 meeting of the California Association for Philosophy of Education.

“The Jewish Education Gap,” *Reform Judaism*, Vol. 13, No. 3, Spring 1986.

“The Burgeoning World of Jewish Art,” *The Pedagogic Reporter*, Vol. 36, No. 1, January 1985.

“Deweyan Deliberation as a Model for Decision-Making in Jewish Education,” in *Studies in Jewish Education*, Volume 2, edited by Michael Rosenak, Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1984.

“The Dilemma of Jewish Education: To Learn and To Do,” with David Ellenson, *Judaism*, Vol. 33, No. 1, Winter 1984.

“Teaching as Sharing,” *The Melton Journal*, No. 14, Spring 1982.

“Moral Education: The Formalist Tradition and the Deweyan Alternative.” *Moral Development, Moral Education, and Kohlberg*, edited by Brenda Munsey. Birmingham: Religious Education Press, 1980.

“New Alternatives in Jewish Education,” *Sh’ma*, Vol. 8, No. 156, September 1, 1978. Co-editor (with Joseph Reimer and Cherrie Koller-Fox) of issue and co-author of lead article.

Review of The Collected Works of John Dewey: The Middle Works, Volumes I and II, School Review, Vol. 86, No. 1, November 1977.

“Dewey’s Theory of Valuation: A Response to N.C. Bhattacharya,” *Educational Theory*, Vol. 27, No. 2, Spring 1977.

“Moral Philosophy and Moral Education II: The Formalist Tradition and the Deweyan Alternative,” *School Review*, Vol. 85, No. 4, August 1977.

“Moral Philosophy and Moral Education: A Critique of Kohlberg’s Theory,” *School Review*, Vol. 85, No. 2, February 1977.

“Alternative Jewish Education: The Havurah School Model,” (with Jay Greenspan, Janice Rous and Michael Wolf) *Response*, No. 30, Fall 1976.

Social Science and Social Action: A Philosophical View.” Paper presented at the National Training Institute for Community Psychology, Sterling Forest, New York, March 1975.