From Integration of Curricula to the Pedagogy of Integrity

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The literature on curricular integration in Jewish education has tended to focus on two basic paradigms. In the first paradigm, the integration of Jewish and general studies curricula represents the aspiration that the graduates of the institution will likewise integrate Jewish and general studies (or “Americanism” or “modernity”) in their lives. In the second paradigm, the integration of Jewish and general studies is conceptualized as a specific form of the more general educational desire for connection making. In this article, I critique specific articulations of these paradigms and argue instead for attention to the pedagogy of integrity.

INTRODUCTION

Imagine an American Jewish day school with an espoused commitment to curricular integration, like so many schools. Imagine, now, that a new principal arrives at the school, attracted and excited by its commitment. Eileen, the principal, is not naïve. She comes to the school from a long career as teacher and educational leader in excellent private schools, eager to bring her expertise to the world of Jewish education. She knows that most Jewish day schools, across the ideological spectrum, include language about integration in their mission statements, and that the lofty language masks confusion about its meaning. Nevertheless, she believes she has detected a sincere commitment to the idea of integration at this school, among both professional
and lay leadership. Just as she is now integrating her own Jewish and professional lives, so too is she determined to provide her new students with the integrated educational experience that she has come to believe can only be found in a Jewish day school. And so, Eileen marshals her forces, forming an Integration Committee, and gives them their first exploratory task: Each of the members of the committee is to come to the first meeting with a proposal for how to integrate the fifth grade curricular unit on colonial America and the American Revolution.

Nancy, one teacher on the committee, eagerly proposes integrating the unit with a parallel unit on the birth of the State of Israel, emphasizing the similarities between the two historical developments. Wouldn’t that be the obvious and natural way to integrate general and Jewish studies, she wonders, while serving the mission of the school? Shlomo is excited by Nancy’s idea. He is attuned to—perhaps mesugah la-davar, obsessed by—the need to develop Hebrew proficiency throughout the school environment, and he had been prepared to propose a focus on the development of Hebrew vocabulary on issues of statehood and government. But now he sees the potential to ally himself with Nancy, if he can get her to agree to co-teach with him. The integrated unit would establish a basis of Hebrew vocabulary along with other conceptual tools, which would then be employed in the study of the two “cases.” Nancy hesitates, wondering if a focus on Hebrew will support her idea, or whether it might undermine it.

Vered, however, wants to focus on the purposes of the study of history. She is adamant that students must be able to see themselves in the history that they study and in this case, she claims, that means uncovering and celebrating the stories of individual Jews. Her proposal for an integrated unit, therefore, has an unambiguous goal: Students should know that there were Jews in the colonies and Jews in the revolution. When someone innocently asks a question about how many Jews there actually were in America before the waves of immigration beginning in 1880, Vered rejects the question. “It’s not a matter of numbers!” she declares. “If we only cared about numbers, we wouldn’t spend any time on Jewish history at all! Everyone knows that history isn’t objective, anyway. We care about the particular things that are important to us, and we shouldn’t have to apologize for that.”

But Kevin, fresh from a masters program in political theory and a summer at Pardes in Jerusalem, respectfully disagrees with his more senior colleague Vered. It’s true that the study of history should never be driven purely by numbers, because the question of historical significance cannot be reduced to the question of what happened to the most people. At the same time, he suggests, the study of history should not be limited to places in which one finds one genealogical ancestors. “I guess I have to admit that I don’t really care about the Jews in the revolution,” he says, “because Madison and Jefferson are my ancestors in a deeper sense—not biologically but intellectually and culturally.” So Kevin has a different idea. He proposes a comparison
of the political debates during the revolution and the attitudes toward monarchy and democracy in classical Jewish sources in the biblical, rabbinic, medieval, and modern periods. “For example,” he says, “wouldn’t it be cool for students to read the critiques of monarchy in 18th century America alongside the critique of monarchy by Abarbanel in Italy at the end of the 15th century, after having experienced the expulsion from Spain?”

Oren has a very different perspective. He believes that the key to integration is for the students to see role models in front of them—teachers who are comfortable in multiple disciplines, rather than cloistered in their own—so he proposes that members of the Jewish studies faculty participate in the teaching of the founding of American democracy, just as the school has experimented with members of the general studies faculty teaching parashat ha-shavua, the weekly Torah portion, on Friday afternoons. But Susan, who teaches rabbinic literature in the middle school, reacts strongly against this. She notes that the time when Jewish studies teachers in American Jewish schools were all immigrants from the old country, refugees with little shared background with American Jewish students, is long gone. “Besides,” she points out, “my students don’t need me to teach them about George Washington to know that I’m active in local and national politics.” Laughing, she asks, “Doesn’t the collection of bumper stickers on my car make that clear?”

Then April, the art teacher, chimes in, declaring that she may have misunderstood the assignment, because she has been thinking about the issue very differently. She has written up a brief proposal for a curricular unit that would juxtapose the study of the art and music of Europe and the art and music of the New World in order to explore the divergent patterns. There’s nothing particularly Jewish about this, she admits, but wouldn’t it be fascinating to think about the ways in which the political schism, represented by the American Revolution, reflects a larger cultural divergence between the Old and the New Worlds? Following murmurings of assent, Sarah picks up April’s idea and extends it further. “Perhaps,” she says, “we ought to make the idea of political and cultural schism into the focus of study? Then we could look around for all kinds of examples. . .Like the split between the two kingdoms in Biblical Israel? Or the split between reformers and traditionalists in the Jewish community in Germany in the nineteenth century? Or,” she continues with some hesitation, “maybe the Protestant Reformation?”

After some moments of awkward silence, Tamar speaks up. Shy and reserved, she almost never speaks at faculty meetings, so when she does, others notice. She’s happy that Sarah introduced the Protestant Reformation, she says, because it highlights how far the discussion has progressed from the original “add and stir” approach, adding something Jewish to the unit on Colonial America. In her view, the curricular challenge is to find the right question or questions to ask, and then to find the right places to look for answers. One kind of curriculum-guiding question is, “What were the significant political and cultural developments in Colonial America, and how did those
developments lead to the revolution?” That question points to a specific historical period as the place to look for answers—and doesn’t seem to leave much room for integration of anything else. Another, very different kind of question is, “What happens in societies that encounter deep and possibly irreconcilable divisions?” To answer that question, it is not immediately obvious which places to look—and Sarah, she observes, was proposing some possibilities. Tamar herself tends to prefer the latter kind of question, she admits, but that may be because she has always been more interested in social theory than in history, and she can understand how others might differ.

Eileen is delighted by the energy that her staff has brought to the task. But which of these ideas should she endorse, if any? What are their relative merits? In what sense are these proposals actually integrating one thing with another thing, and what are those things? What, actually, are the goals of integration? She’s also aware that Beth, who has always taught the fifth grade unit on the colonial period, has decided to play the skeptic, and to remove herself from the committee. In a private conversation, Beth had argued that any effort to integrate would inevitably diminish her instructional time and her ability to accomplish her curricular goals. No one would ask the math teacher to give up pre-algebra for the sake of integration, so why should she be asked to give up her unit on Colonial and Revolutionary America?

It’s a good point, and as Eileen thinks about it now, she remembers that much of what she’s heard about the improvements in the teaching of Jewish studies at the school, in the preceding three to four years, has been attributable to improved clarity about the goals of those specific subjects. Partially as a result of the strength of the local Jewish high school and the increasing number of graduates of the school attending that high school, the culture of “anything goes” in Jewish studies has ceded to a more disciplinary, and disciplined, focus. More and more, the Jewish studies staff are asking themselves what they want the students to know and be able to do and even beginning to ask tough questions about assessment: What they know about how students are progressing toward those goals, and what they know about the school is doing overall, and how they know it.

So Eileen is left puzzling about the contrast between that kind of disciplined thinking on the one hand and the generative, exploratory playfulness of the integration conversation on the other. Then she also recalls a further interesting argument that Beth made. In the same conversation, Beth had explained to Eileen that alongside political, economic, and military history (the kind of history that she herself had learned in school), she works hard to incorporate more recent social and material historical perspectives (the kind of history that she had come to appreciate as an adult). She wants students to see that there are different approaches to the study of history and that each can be interesting and useful, but that they are all fundamentally about the same thing. In that sense, the way she teaches history is already integrated. “My point is—and I tell the kids this all the time—they can’t
compartmentalize what they’re learning into neat little boxes that have nothing to do with each other. Isn’t that what integration is all about?"

And so, Eileen wonders: How do any of these curricular proposals, whatever their merits, actually serve the school’s educational goals? And how might the literature on integration in Jewish education help her think about this situation?

**INTEGRATION OF AND INTERACTION BETWEEN JUDAISM AND MODERNITY**

Thirty years ago Solomon (1978) documented the variety of uses of the term “integration” as well as deep uncertainty about its meaning. He focused in particular on integration in the Jewish day school, the environment that is sometimes considered the natural home of integration however defined (we shall return to this point below). He labeled integration an “educational slogan,” borrowing the term from his teacher Israel Scheffler (1960, pp. 36–47)—a label that can be tossed around without understanding and without commitment—and distinguished three potential meanings of the term: the integration of the secular and religious worlds, the integration of Judaism and Americanism, and the integration of subject matter (i.e., Jewish studies and general studies). Analyzing particular statements, Solomon showed that multiple senses of the term were frequently conflated and, amusingly, that this occurred in literature emerging from institutions that were dramatically different in their theological and pedagogical stances. And he pointed out that if disciplines have their own structures, then “the goal of integration must not overwhelm the distinctions which do exist and which must be retained for the various forms of knowledge to remain authentic” (p. 14).

Thirty years later, few of us are quite so confident that the disciplines have their own distinct and authentic “form of knowledge.” Nevertheless, the basic point is worthy of our attention. The character Beth, above, is surely correct that the subject of history has become a far more diverse enterprise than it once was, and thus, it is hard to articulate precisely what it means for a *non-integrated* curriculum to have its own (disciplinary? methodological? field-specific?) coherence. But she is also surely correct in her argument that the integration of some nonhistorical material into the subject of history carries a significant cost.²

Solomon’s (1978) work made a significant contribution to the field, but almost two decades later, Michael Zeldin—who authored a number of articles

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²I will not elaborate on this point except to note that it frequently emerges in conversations about curricular integration—sometimes as a question about whether curricular integration is purchased at a cost to disciplinary integrity. Practitioners, it seems, are very familiar with efforts to integrate curricula that founder because they end up taking neither discipline with the seriousness that it deserves.
in the 1990s on the topic—could still claim that “there is often confusion about exactly what [is] being brought into relation with what” (Zeldin, 1998, p. 580). Is it two areas of the curriculum, general and Judaic studies? Or two worlds, a religious world and a secular world? Or two aspects of the student’s identity, her “Jewish” identity and her “American” identity? Or perhaps Jewish culture (including that part that is not specifically religious) and American culture (including that part that is specifically religious)? Indeed, while I have taken some liberties with the categories—this is not precisely the way that Zeldin formulates them—it is precisely this sort of confusion that my introductory scenario attempts to dramatize.

Zeldin’s own answer to the question is that the significant counterpart to Judaism—the entity to be integrated with Judaism—is modernity. Thus, in the early 1990s, he formulates the question to which he believes integration is a response: “How can the day school prepare children to live as Jews in a modern, liberal, democratic society?” (Zeldin, 1992). And in the late 1990s, he maintains that “it is useful to think of integrating Judaism and the ‘culture of modernity’. . .[which] includes the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes that are needed to succeed in the environment in which students live” (Zeldin, 1998, p. 580). Zeldin’s articles also contribute to helpful analyses of four structures for the relationship between Judaism and the “curriculum of modernity” (1994), nine rationales for integration (1998), three organizing principles (1998), and more. But for our purposes, it will be helpful to focus on the idea of the integration of Judaism and modernity, and further, on his important introduction of a new term into the discussion: interaction.

The basis of this contribution is Zeldin’s skepticism about whether the old forms of integration are appropriate for the present age.

Harmony, compatibility, and similarity, which dominate the way integration has been discussed and practiced in the past, may be less appropriate for the future. An integrated curriculum that strives to make Judaism fit comfortably with modernity carries with it the danger that it will also make Judaism irrelevant. A Judaism that is only a variant of modernism or Americanism cannot capture the hearts and minds of Jews who are first and foremost modern Americans. The challenge facing Jewish day schools is to create a new vision of integration, one that makes Judaism a positive passion that speaks to Jews with a distinctive voice. (Zeldin, 1998, p. 584).

In a time when no barriers stand in the way of Jews’ acceptance into the non-Jewish world, a Judaism that represents similarity—a Judaism that seems little more than a tepid endorsement of what American Jews already believe—will hold little attraction. “The new vision,” Zeldin continues, “must help Jews answer the question so many Jews find vexing: Why be Jewish?” (p. 584).

In response, Zeldin (1994) offers his new model, interaction, which emphasizes difference rather than sameness. Solomon (1978) notes that the focus on differentiation was already a theme in Marvin Fox’s (1966) discussion,
but Zeldin and, as we will see, his colleagues embrace differentiation with a renewed focus and ideological commitment. The merits of interaction are, first, theological: “differentiation is a central Jewish metaphor and a core theological category” (Zeldin, 1994, p. 8). In addition, differentiation holds educational value:

“When modernity and Judaism are presented to learners as distinct, differentiated ways of understanding reality, the areas of conflict and challenge are educationally potent because they create the disequilibrium that is the catalyst for learning” (p. 9).

But most significantly, interaction is right for our time, fulfilling Zeldin’s charge to “[make] Judaism a positive passion that speaks to Jews with a distinctive voice” (Zeldin, 1998, p. 584). We should not shy away from telling our students, to borrow a phrase from Abba Hillel Silver, where Judaism differs.

Interestingly, Zeldin’s voice is part of a chorus of American Reform voices embracing this position. For example, David Ellenson (this issue) describes the historical evolution from an educational ideology of integration to one of interaction. He notes that “the confidence [nineteenth century Reform] Jews possessed in the icons of occidental culture and their determination to demonstrate the confluence between Judaism and the West cannot be exaggerated,” and this vision informed a model of integration “that has guided liberal Judaism for so much of its history.”3 But in more recent times, the bloom is off the rose; “Jews, like other ethnics in the United States [in the 1970s], were no longer infatuated with the model of the “melting pot.” Indeed, the embrace of ethnic identity especially in the 1960s and 1970s is part of the underlying rationale for the growth of liberal Jewish day schools. “Thus, the very impulse that has given rise to our day schools has been an interactive, not an integrative, one.”4

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3Ellenson’s argument is more compelling as a claim about the history of Jewish educational ideology—which, to be fair, is how it is framed—than about the history of Jewish educational curricula. If “integration” means simply a belief that the values of Judaism and the ideals of Western civilization (as expressed, paradigmatically, in German culture) are harmonious and noncontradictory, and that educational institutions unproblematically ought to pursue both, then there is ample evidence for this belief in the nineteenth and into the twentieth century. But curricular integration surely entails bringing the parts of the curriculum (“Jewish” and “secular”) into dialogue or coherence, or breaking down the barriers between curricular areas in some way. Thus, Ellenson introduces the historical example of the Hasharat Zvi school in Halberstadt, which proclaimed a “blending of eternal religious verities with popular enlightenment in accord with the spirit of the time.” However, the Jewish and general curricula of the school would be characterized better as complementary rather than integrated.

4Ellenson’s article continues with a long example, purporting to show a tension between the rabbinic conception of the relationship between the individual and the community and the modern Western conception (as formulated by Rousseau). Without entering into the details of the example, his point is to show that there is much to be gained from comparing and contrasting the two models—adopting an interactive stance—rather than assuming, for ideological reasons, that they must be susceptible to harmonization. The example is intriguing, but ultimately unsatisfying; see my discussion of the fictional Nancy and Kevin below.
Michael Meyer (2003), too, articulating his conception of the educated Reform Jew, consciously endorses what we might now call an interactive, not integrative, stance. “We have integrated values external to Judaism into our lives,” he writes (p. 150). This should not be misconstrued simply as a negative phenomenon; he notes that “we seek to transmit these [previously ‘external’ values], along with the ones we have inherited from Judaism, to the next Jewish generations.” Nevertheless, it does pose a danger. “We face the risk of being drawn dangerously far from the pole of our Jewish existence in subtle as well as blatant ways. . . . My conception [of the educated Jew] is focused upon the individual who stands within the multiple tensions of autonomy and obligation, integration and separation. . . .” (p. 150).

This situation, for Meyer, points to a pedagogic conclusion: “Only a total education, which relates the Jewish heritage to the non-Jewish, can create an awareness of both points of contact and points of dissonance—or even antagonism—between Jewish and non-Jewish values.” He adds, as a parenthetical afterthought, that his conception implies the “indispensability of a day school education that integrates Jewish with non-Jewish cultural elements” (p. 153).

A bit later, he elaborates on the importance of both “points of contact and dissonance”:

It is therefore an important task of Jewish education to determine where the points of contact and dissonance lie, to make clear to students what Judaism shares with the Western traditions and where it differs from them . . . [If we were able to do this,] they would be in a better position to argue for the intrinsic value of a Jewish life-orientation that is worth preserving . . . and could reject the seductive notion that Judaism offers only . . . universally accepted values. (p. 153)

Like Ellenson and Zeldin, Meyer offers a pedagogic prescription informed by a sense of the demands of the day. Where once Reform was identified with an ideology of embracing Western culture and values, these theorists are now both describing and endorsing a renewed emphasis on difference and distinctiveness. Universalism has given way to a reclamation of particularism.

At one level, I have introduced Ellenson and Meyer alongside Zeldin to suggest a particular consensus among contemporary Reform Jewish leaders. At the same time, however, a careful reading of the texts that I have cited must attend to a kind of rhetorical inflation, in which the narrow questions of curriculum theory tend to get conflated with larger and more general ideological and even theological considerations. Universalism and particularism, public schooling versus private schooling, religious identity versus ethnic identity, ethics versus ritual, and the most fundamental question of whether Judaism (in its most rational form) represents a pure manifestation of the
ideological truths of Western civilization, as Abraham Geiger or Hermann Cohen might have argued—all these are significant dynamics in the evolution of Reform Jewish ideology in the modern period. But we ought to be careful about conflating them too hastily. And in our case, we ought to be particularly careful about suggesting that they easily map onto a set of options on the question of curricular integration.

To spell this out, consider Nancy in the hypothetical case above, who seems to represent something like a classical integration position. She wants the students to encounter something Jewish (the birth of the State of Israel) that is parallel to the non-Jewish object of study (the birth of the United States) and presumably wants to emphasize their sameness. Kevin, on the other hand, seems more attuned to a comparison between the American political tradition and the Jewish political tradition that would make room for difference. Nancy, that is, represents a more traditional sense of integration, while Kevin represents a stance of interaction.

But immediately, we might notice that things are not so simple. First, neither Nancy nor Kevin has set up a curricular integration that represents an encounter between Judaism, on the one hand, and modernity, on the other. Rather, their comparison is of two objects of study within a particular discipline or subdiscipline: political-diplomatic history in Nancy’s case, and intellectual history in Kevin’s. If we were to point this out to them—if we were to say something like, “Don’t you think that it’s important to have the students think about the relationship between Judaism and modernity?”—they might say, well, sure that’s important, but real teaching doesn’t operate at that level of abstraction. Real teaching should not try to “make clear to students what Judaism shares with the Western traditions and where it differs from them” so that students can be equipped “to argue for the intrinsic value of” Judaism, as Meyer (2003, p. 154) argued. That kind of pedagogy is overly argumentative, even doctrinaire. And thinking about “Judaism” and “modernity” is too general; we need some points of access to the broad topic, some focus that can frame an inquiry for the students.5

Second, the contrast between Nancy and Kevin hardly seems as stark as the contrast between universalism and particularism or between the conceptual models of integration and interaction. That is, Nancy seems a bit more inclined (at least initially) to emphasize sameness, and Kevin seems a bit more attuned to difference. But unless Nancy is a single-minded ideologue—unless

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5Note here that Kevin’s proposal—while not quite a comparison of “Judaism” and “modernity”—might represent one fruitful approach to operationalizing Zeldin’s model. He does, after all, want his students to compare and contrast one rich intellectual source (18th century American political theory, which is certainly an important contributor to modern culture) with another (some selection of Jewish political tradition). Still, it seems significant that Kevin is motivated by what we might call intradisciplinary considerations—that is, by the idea that the comparison of these two intellectual traditions will be generative for the students’ thinking about political theory—rather than by the urge to demonstrate to them how and where Judaism differs. See the following paragraph in the main text for more on this.
she sees sameness and harmony everywhere—any robust exploration of the two examples in her class will surely consider the relevant differences between them. Conversely, we can easily imagine that Kevin is not particularly interested in interaction for the purpose of identity formation. If he were to read the quotes from Zeldin, Ellenson, and Meyer above, he might respond with some confusion. It’s certainly true, he might say, that Judaism is a rich, complex, and distinctive textual tradition representing a distinctive set of ideas. But, he might continue, that idea—the Judaism is a distinct tradition—is more accurately characterized as his assumption. It’s not the point he’s trying to prove to the students or the idea that he wants them to affirm (or, as Meyer said, “argue for”). He’s really much more interested in the pedagogic potential of comparisons; by having the students consider and explore alternative frameworks, he might say, he will enrich their understanding of both. So he doesn’t disagree with these theorists, exactly, but their arguments seem largely irrelevant to the actual historical inquiry that he wants to frame.

The case is fictional, of course, so the observations are merely suggestive. Beyond these observations, however, we might also wonder about some other aspects of Zeldin’s picture. The discussion—in Solomon, in Zeldin, and in Ellenson and Meyer too—has focused on the claims for integration in Jewish day schools. This seems only natural, because day schools are the Jewish educational institutions that are responsible for teaching the whole curriculum. Indeed, that is one very strong reason why so many—represented by Eileen, the head of school in the introductory scenario above, as well as Meyer and others—believe that the day school represents the best hope for an integrated identity.6 But this claim should not go unexamined.

6“[Curricular integration] has been one of the main justifications of the day school movement” (Lukinsky, 1978, p. 9). Others, like Ellenson, see the embrace of Jewish day schools (especially among liberal American Jews) as a sociological marker not, or not merely, of suburban affluence among the Jewish community and the erosion of civic participation in general, but in particular of an embrace of ethnic identity. I would not deny that the latter factor has played a role. But it would be simplistic to assert a kind of one-to-one correspondence between day schools and the resurgence of particularism. Thus, the question of how the community educates for something that we might call “interactive particularism” is not limited to how we construct the integrated curricula in Jewish day schools. It may also be worth considering a very different perspective on why integration is such a focus in Jewish day schools, in particular, by asking about the particular anxieties that integration is meant to address. Alongside ideological anxieties about inclusion in American culture and society, and about the relationship between parochial fields of knowledge and universal ones, and perhaps too (as Ben Jacobs has suggested in a personal communication, June 2006) the need to identify a distinctive niche for marketing purposes, there may also be a very practical anxiety about the proliferation of subjects. It is a common trope in progressive educational theory that life is lived in an integrated fashion in a way that the experience of studying four or five school subjects is not. Once we increase those four or five to eight or nine, as is common in Jewish day schools, the experience of the student becomes hopelessly fragmented. As Jack Bieler (2000) writes, “All too often it appears to day-school students that, rather than attending a single school, they are studying in eight or nine different schools that are coincidentally located under the same roof” (p. 18). If this is true, however, it is worth noticing that curricular integration—making connections among some of those eight or nine different schools—is not the only solution to the problem.
What prevents a supplementary school from making integration, or interaction, an educational goal? Time, of course, is one factor: given the limited amount of time to focus on Jewish studies, a supplementary school might be unwilling to “sacrifice” some of that precious time for the purposes of integration or interaction. But how is this any different than Beth’s objection in the case above? If it is conceivable that Beth might be convinced to abandon her need for coverage, in the service of larger and loftier educational goals—if a compelling argument can be made that links curricular integration with the desired learning outcomes—then surely supplementary school teachers might be convinced to do so as well. Moreover, there is nothing about the limited amount of time available to a supplementary educator that would necessarily demand one model instead of the other. The fact that the students study English and math and social studies at the local public school has no bearing on whether she inclines towards an emphasis on sameness over difference. But the main point is while there is something intuitively correct about the association of an agenda of integration (or interaction) with the educational milieu of the Jewish day school—given that school’s willing acceptance of responsibility for the education of the whole child, typically manifest in the “dual curriculum”—it remains quite unclear just how the institution that happens to teach both language arts and Torah, both history and Hebrew, effects some outcome called “integration.”

Another issue has to do with the distinction between integration and interaction, not at the level of pedagogy (as discussed above, regarding Nancy and Kevin) but at the level of experience. Zeldin writes that “interaction and integration are alike in that both approaches bring Judaism and the general studies curriculum into contact with each other” (Zeldin, 1994, p. 6). In other words, both reject any kind of strict bifurcation or compartmentalization of the curriculum. But the question remains: how does the fact that the students study English and math and social studies at the local public school affect the way the supplementary school teaches? Is it possible to teach both language arts and Torah, both history and Hebrew, while maintaining an integrated curriculum? If so, what is the nature of that integration? And if not, what are the practical reasons why the discourse about integration is a hallmark of day schools and not supplementary schools, of course. Stakeholders in the supplementary system presumably expect that these few hours are the time when the students will learn whatever Jewish content knowledge they “need” (especially, what they need for the purposes of their b’nai mitzvah performances). And it’s much harder to effect integration when the Jewish studies teachers do not know, because they do not work alongside, the general studies teachers. But in principle, there’s nothing that prevents a supplementary school from constructing the educational experiences that make an integrated identity (or, with Zeldin, an affirmative choice on behalf of Jewish distinctiveness) their primary educational goal, and the notion of preparing students to live Jewish lives in a modern, liberal, democratic world surely applies equally well to supplementary school settings. To clarify, this is not itself an argument against Zeldin’s conception of integration—but we ought to at least consider whether the association of integration with Jewish day schools is merely an artifact of contingent circumstances, or whether there’s some deeper connection that remains to be understood and articulated.
of the two spheres. But there is more to be said here. After all, encountering different curricula is merely a subset of the larger phenomenon of encountering differences in the world in general. What do we do when we encounter difference? What happens, for example, when we discover that our practices or understandings are not shared by others? We can reject those other practices or understandings, of course; we can say that they are morally inferior, epistemically suspect, or practically ineffective. But even when we do, we are always in the position of making sense of them, of incorporating those differences into our own understanding, of subsuming them into a unified or integrated worldview. Sometimes we do this well and sometimes poorly. We do it poorly when we quickly label another understanding of the world as misguided. We do it poorly when we are too quick to assimilate the other practice into our own categories and do not linger long enough to appreciate the differences. But to the extent that we understand anything—to the extent that we construct our own understanding, whether nuanced or clumsy—we are necessarily integrating that phenomenon into our prior experience. We are expanding our perspective to incorporate this new thing, or to use Gadamer’s well-worn metaphor, fusing the horizons. In other words, integration is fundamental to learning anything new.

And so, the contrast between integration and interaction begins to lose some of its power. When we understand differences between this practice and that one, we are situating both of them within a larger construct in which both are intelligible. When we compare ideas from American and Jewish political theory about monarchy and democracy, or when we compare cases of political and cultural schism, we are developing concepts that apply across the cases precisely in order to articulate those differences. We are, in other words, integrating the cases no less than if we were to pretend that the differences did not exist. If this is so, then Zeldin’s case—that interaction serves the particular needs for Jews in our time to construct a distinctive identity that they can affirmatively embrace, in a way that integration does not—begins to seem somewhat more tenuous.

Finally, and most fundamentally, the argument on behalf of interaction presented by Zeldin, Ellenson, and Meyer seems to rest on a questionable assumption—they may not want to embrace the assumption, as we will see, but the argument may rest on it nonetheless—about the relationship between educational experience and the formation of character and identity, namely, that one becomes something as a result of studying that thing. Stanley Fish (2008) recently put the claim this way. “The premise is that the examples of action and thought portrayed in the enduring works of literature, philosophy and history can create in readers the desire to emulate them.” Fish is thinking about studying literature and philosophy, not about encountering an integrated curriculum, but the point is quite similar.
Admire the selfless act with which Sidney [sic] Carton ends his life in “A Tale of Two Cities” and you will be moved to prefer the happiness of others to your own. Watch with horror what happens to Faust and you will be less likely to sell your soul. Understand Kant’s categorical imperative and you will not impose restrictions on others that you would resist if they were imposed on you.

To which we might add something like this: “Explore a curriculum in which, for example, Jewish and general studies are integrated, and you will become an integrated intellectual personality.” Or: “Consider the distinctiveness of the Jewish tradition over against the Western tradition, and you will embrace the distinctiveness of Judaism for yourself.” Or alternatively, “You will increase the likelihood of doing so.” The issue here is not certainty versus probability, but rather, the very idea that studying something is a way to become that thing.

But Fish is skeptical. “It’s a pretty idea,” he writes, “but there is no evidence to support it and a lot of evidence against it.” The study of literature and philosophy does not necessarily have the salutary effects for which its advocates might hope. A successful inquiry into a particular subject doesn’t necessarily change the character of the inquirer—and if it does change the character of the inquirer, it does so in complicated ways, not simple ones. For elaboration, we need look no further than Zeldin himself, who writes, for example, that “areas of conflict and challenge are educationally potent because they create the disequilibrium that is the catalyst for learning” (Zeldin, 1994, p. 9). In this sentence, Zeldin is arguing implicitly that we learn through experiences of certain kinds; that disequilibrium is a characteristic of educative experiences; that exposure to certain kinds of conflict and challenge can foster this state of disequilibrium; and that curricula are nothing more than ways of structuring the experience of the students—in this case, structuring the experience of conflict. This is an account of educational experience far more nuanced than the simple idea that studying an integrated curriculum makes one an integrated personality. And yet, this kind of nuance is frequently lost when the case for interaction is made according to the argument that studying distinctiveness will help students to be distinct.

Thus, when she reads Zeldin, Eileen’s problem is not solved. She appreciates the emphasis on distinctiveness rather than similarity—but the idea of interaction, as a conceptual framework, does not help her evaluate the various proposals generated by her staff.

INTEGRATION AS THE MAKING OF CONNECTIONS

Alex Pomson’s (2001) treatment of curricular integration in Jewish day schools adopts a fundamentally different approach to the subject. He proceeds on the assumption that “some measure of integration or interrelationship” is
a worthy objective in the curriculum of the Jewish day school, an assumption which “has been as likely to be grounded in theocentric assumptions about the essential unity of the created world as in child-centered and psychological conceptions of holistic education” (p. 529).

That is, when asking the question of why integrate, one kind of reason has to do with how children learn, but another derives from beliefs about the nature of the created world. In Joseph Lukinsky’s (1978) words, “The integration of Jewish and general studies in the day school should indeed stem from the assumption that truth is one” (p. 14). But implementing these ideas has been difficult. Thus, despite this shared assumption, Pomson observes that educators “[have] struggled to articulate the kinds of educational realities which might realize this principle” (p. 529).

After articulating what he calls a “catalogue of difficulties” (p. 532) associated with integration—both practical and conceptual—Pomson tries to reframe the discussion by adopting a perspective from outside of Jewish education, on integrative learning or multi-disciplinary integration. A key point, he argues, is to reconceptualize integration as “a continuum of possibilities, rather than . . . one pole in a stark choice between the integration or the compartmentalization of teaching and learning” (p. 533). Borrowing here from Fogarty (Fogarty, 1981; Fogarty & Stoehr, 1995), who has articulated a series of different models for integrating within and across curricular areas, Pomson describes integration as “that process of making connections which is both an enabler and a consequence of deeper understanding” (p. 533).

This focus on making connections turns our attention away from the particular form of those connections—and away too from the abstract conceptual or theological discussions about the nature of knowledge or, in Jewish contexts, about the relative positions of Jewish and general studies—and toward the process or activity itself. Pomson is therefore drawn to the following conclusion of his theoretical discussion: “An integrative curriculum is one in which subject matter is utilized in a particular generative fashion, so that students are enabled to make connections within and across it” (p. 534). The idea of “connections” is paramount, with little concern for whether these connections are about similarities or about differences. Indeed, as I argued above, understanding differences as well as seeing similarities entails bringing disparate objects together, into one larger framework, and thinking through how they are connected.

Pomson’s article then continues by examining a case in Jewish education, the King Solomon High School in London. Pomson offers a careful description of this nominally Orthodox school; for our purposes, the specifics of the setting are not important, but the school does provide examples of different instances of connection making at various points along the “continuum of possibilities.” One example is a mishloah manot (food gifts) project for the holiday of Purim. Assigned to deliver mishloah manot to a center for Jewish elderly, students were required to (a) seek guidance from traditional Jewish
texts about the practice, (b) investigate what foods are appropriate for these elderly, and (c) manage the project financially. Pomson is aware that this example, and others, may simply seem like good progressive pedagogy. But this is the force of conceptualizing integration as a continuum, a conceptualization that can make room for projects that encourage the making of connections in the service of carrying out an authentic task. It may not represent the full-blown integration of Jewish and general studies, but on the other hand, it does represent an infusion of purpose and motivation into otherwise merely academic studies. If integration entails a process of making connections, then this project may well satisfy that criterion.

In a second example, the school devoted two months to a project on the biblical Book of Ruth (Pomson, 2001, pp. 539–540). This entailed

a. studying the biblical text in Jewish studies,
b. rewriting the narrative in a “contemporary theatrical style” in English class,
c. comparing the themes of the text with Shakespeare’s depiction of the Jew as outsider in *Merchant of Venice*,
d. studying the theme of strangers and immigrants in British history, with particular attention to the return of Jews to Britain,
e. producing theater posters in Art class,
f. planning set designs in Technology class, all in the service of
g. performing their original musical based on the biblical story.

Individual aspects of this project might conform to Zeldin’s models of integration or interaction, especially within (c) or (d). (Although note that here again, the object that is being integrated with Jewish studies or Jewish culture is not “modernity” but a specific topic in non-Jewish literature or history.) Overall, however, the project is characterized by a proliferation of connections among the different components. “In all cases, student learning was propelled and deepened by associations and interactions between different parts of the curriculum web” (p. 540).

For our purposes, what is significant here is not a particular approach to the implementation of curricular integration but the underlying conception of the topic—in other words, not what the teachers at the school did but what Pomson makes of what they did. Borrowing from Pring (1973), Pomson calls these instances of “weak integration,” in the sense that they do not represent efforts to effect a synthesis of disciplines.

Rather, they are instances of an epistemologically less ambitious attempt to use more than one discipline in the pursuit of a particular inquiry. . . . In this context, they seek to enable students to gain and apply knowledge from both Jewish and general disciplines as they construct meaning, make sense of their world, or, simply, solve problems. (Pomson, 2001, p. 543)
They are not guided by grand ideals but by an “eclectic,” “piecemeal” process of establishing connections. Significantly, no teacher is master of the integrated curriculum; at most, individual teachers can only encourage and facilitate connection-making.\(^9\) In place of integration conceived as a relatively static curricular \textit{product}, Pomson articulates—and advocates—“integrative teaching and learning” as a \textit{process}.\(^{10}\)

But the first point of critique is to wonder about the use of terms like “discipline” and “inquiry” and “problem.” How would we possibly frame the Book of Ruth project as a response to a problem that confronts the students? Some aspects of the project look like inquiries—for example, the comparison of the Book of Ruth and the \textit{Merchant of Venice}, and the study of immigration (including Jewish immigration) in British history. But notably, these are precisely the ones that fit within Zeldin’s very different framework. In the first example, it is true that the students use a variety of resources to help them carry out their assignment—traditional Jewish texts to learn about the guidelines for \textit{mishloah manot}, research on nutrition or the care of the elderly to make judgments about appropriate foods, practical tools to manage the finances of the project. In this sense, the project admirably focuses on seeking knowledge to address a need. But there is little reason to think that the students relate to the need as a \textit{problem}, a genuine problem that calls for thoughtful exploration, as opposed to a technical challenge imposed on them by their teachers.

As for the use of multiple disciplines—Pomson had proposed, as a description, that these “are instances of an . . . attempt to use more than one discipline in the pursuit of a particular inquiry” (p. 543)—one might certainly hope that the planning of set design in Technology class (in the second example) is an opportunity to use a set of tools and to develop the skills of using those tools effectively and imaginatively. But it seems quite a stretch to say that the students are employing the discipline of technology to address a problem that is also, differently, addressed by the disciplines of history or dramaturgy. A different, simpler, and more accurate way of describing the situation is to say that the dramaturgical task generated a problem (the need

\(^9\)Compare Zeldin (1992), who encourages the development of “integrated teachers,” who “should have knowledge in both curricular areas, should understand and be committed to integration, should feel comfortable as Americans and as Jews, and should be open and flexible in their teaching style” (p. 14). I do not intend, of course, to demean such teachers, whose talents surely are invaluable; I merely note that Pomson’s model does not rely on such talented teachers.

\(^{10}\)The proliferation of terms can be confusing. Zeldin (1992) offered four models of integration: (a) parallel, (b) contextualizing, (c) integrated, and (d) integrating. In the third, instructors develop a curricular unit in the service of the goals of integration. In the fourth, on the other hand, “the teacher’s aim is to help students discover for themselves the relationships between Judaism and the curriculum of modernity, by pointing out some relationships and then encouraging students to search out others on their own” (p. 14). That is, Zeldin has in mind a relative open-endedness, in which the inquiry is framed by the question, “What is the similarity and difference between Judaism and modernity?” By way of contrast, Pomson is advocating for “integrative teaching and learning” as a teaching stance that prioritizes connection-making of various kinds.
for sets that served certain purposes) that could be solved by the use of the tools of technology. And, in the first example, while it’s certainly true that traditional Jewish texts look and sound different from the data that emerged from the interview with a social worker about what foods are appropriate for the elderly, the idea that the students were therefore engaged in “both Jewish and general disciplines” seems overstated. Are they doing Jewish studies? Are they doing qualitative research? We might rather say, more simply, that in each case, they retrieved information from an appropriate resource to answer a question.

Finally, notice that Pomson is as concerned (with reason!) about the potential \textit{inertness} of knowledge as he is concerned with its potential \textit{fragmentation}. He titles his article “Knowledge that Doesn’t Just Sit There,” and the two examples he provides are heavily laden with tasks that are active, that involve doing things in the world, not just with one’s mind. The point of the first exercise is to actually bring gift packages to the elderly. The culmination of the second example is the performance of the musical play based on the biblical story. In each case, the tasks include learning how to do things that we might call “practical” rather than intellectual: managing the finances of a project, planning a set design. Even interviewing a social worker about the elderly seems more active—and practicing the skill of interviewing seems more “practical”—than looking up information in a book.

But if this is so, then we might wonder whether the force of Pomson’s examples lies less in their successful connection making among different curricular areas and more in their activity or practicality. We might wonder, more importantly, whether these categories can really be sustained. In what sense is the skill of interviewing a social worker inherently different from the skill of, say, researching a term paper? In what sense is managing the finances of a project different from, say, managing one’s time in any project? In what sense is the performance of a play different from, say, the performance of a textual interpretation offered orally or in writing? To be sure, all these activities may well be valuable—and in particular, they may be particularly important in order to provide a richer and more variegated set of learning experiences to children, some of whom may well be more suited to some rather than others. So the question here is not about whether these are good and constructive learning activities. Rather, the question is how to \textit{think} about them, and in particular, how to think about them as examples of curricular integration.

It will be helpful, here, to introduce another perspective on curricular integration in Jewish day schools, that of Barry Holtz (1980). Reflecting on his personal experience teaching in a Jewish day school, he notes a lack of interest in and commitment to classical Jewish text study, relative to other curricular areas. He hypothesizes that “because of the nature of our curriculum in Jewish studies, for far too many students, Jewish learning lives in a peculiar world of unreality. It is a world culturally isolated, strange, and
irrelevant. It is a world that denies or ignores the interaction of Jewish and non-Jewish thought and experience. . . ” (p. 549). We do not know, of course, if this is the reason for the phenomenon that he has noticed (and we certainly cannot extrapolate from his experience to those of others in that time or in the present). But the hypothesis generates, for Holtz, a desire to try something different.

That new approach, what he calls “thematic integration,” would entail the development of courses that “would be seen as neither Jewish nor secular subjects—or rather, they would be seen as both” (Holtz, 1980, p. 552). Such courses would trace a theme in both Jewish and general literature, not to set up a competition between them or to draw distinctions between them—not primarily to explore “where Judaism differs”—but simply in order to provide a wider field of exploration that encompasses the multiple cultural inheritances of American Jewish students. As an example, Holtz describes the experimental course that he developed, on the theme of “The Loss of Paradise.” Not surprisingly, the course opens with a study of Genesis, but expands from that foundation to encompass later literature, both general and Jewish. One unit considers the use of Eden in political utopianism, general and Jewish. Another unit studies the “pastoral tradition,” from its Greek roots in Theocritus and Vergil to Shakespeare and Thoreau. This kind of course, Holtz suggests, is surely not a cure-all, but it might begin to address the “need for more diversity in the Jewish educational sphere” (p. 556).

How does Holtz’s proposal compare to Pomson’s? In one sense, they seem quite similar. Holtz, like Pomson, seems energized by the potential for abundant connection-making. Eclecticism is embraced. The boundaries of what might be included in this kind of thematic integration are limited, it seems, only by the imagination. So we might well want to employ the description “integrative teaching and learning” to this case as well. On the

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11 It seems significant that Holtz’ model is familiar to many of us from the contemporary American university, which has largely adopted the principle of lehrfreiheit (the freedom to teach) on which the nineteenth century German university was founded: the professor is free to research and teach what and how he or she wishes. In practical terms, this has meant that university “curricula” are often loose collections of thematic courses, guided primarily by the instructors’ intellectual interests. The strength of this system is the vitality and creativity and diversity of the course offerings (and, importantly, the investment of the instructors in their subject); the weakness is the lack of accountability to an overarching conception of what students ought to learn in their course of study. Holtz (1980) is aware of this weakness, which is why he clarifies that “I am not calling for an end to the teaching of Bible or Talmud in a ‘non-integrated’ fashion” (p. 549); there should always be a place, he believes, for the rather more narrow pursuit of the goals of the specific Jewish Studies subfields.

12 However, whereas Pomson clearly articulated his position that no one teacher need be the master of multiple disciplines, the strength of Holtz’s example comes from the creativity and passion of the individual instructor who does possess expertise in (if not multiple disciplines then at least) multiple literary traditions. Clearly, that expertise need not lead to frontal lecturing or a transmission model of teaching; it can, rather, serve as the crucial pedagogical content knowledge necessary for framing a compelling, generative, and substantive inquiry.
other hand, Holtz never suggests putting on a play, or performing an act of public service as part of the course. He seems unimpressed, in this article at least, by the idea that learning has to be “practical.”\(^{13}\) It does not even seem accurate to say that he is proposing the integration of multiple disciplines, something called “Jewish studies” and something else called “general studies.” Instead, the eclecticism is contained within the bounds of a particular discipline, the study of literature, the tools of which are directed to a set of diverse texts from diverse traditions.\(^{14}\) If we are looking for an example of taking a problem, a substantive question, and constructing an inquiry to pursue that problem in multiple locations, using the establishment of connections as an instrument to foster deeper learning, without getting distracted by the (legitimate but conceptually distinct) issue of theoretical/intellectual inquiry versus learning something “practical,” Holtz’s model fulfills that description more accurately than does Pomson’s. The point here is not that Holtz’s example is “better” than Pomson’s—surely each have their respective virtues, and once again, I am not interested in evaluating the actual learning activities—but rather, that the comparison of the two highlights the way in which Pomson’s example falls short of his own conceptual model.

Beyond these points, however, a more fundamental worry about Pomson’s argument is about purposes. What purpose does this process of integrative teaching serve? What happens when students make these connections? For Holtz, the point of “thematic integration” is to address a kind of malaise in Jewish studies (in Jewish day schools) that is due, in part, to its isolation from larger spheres of discourse; “Jewish learning,” he writes, “lives in a peculiar world of unreality” in the Jewish day school (p. 549). The meta-argument of a thematically integrated course is that “the life of the mind throughout Jewish history is crucial, serious, and not out on the margins of experience” (p. 552); the way to advance that meta-argument is by taking Jewish texts as seriously as non-Jewish texts are taken, in the pursuit of a particular thematic inquiry. The various connections that are

\(^{13}\)The tension between connection-making among ideas, as represented here by Holtz, and connection making between ideas and practices, as represented here by Pomson, is not unique to Jewish educational discourse but appears as a recurrent tension in the recent literature on “integrative learning” in higher education as well. The Association of American Colleges and Universities’ 2002 report on integrative learning focused on the need for students to “adapt the skills learned in one situation to problems encountered in another: in a classroom, the workplace, their communities, or their personal lives” (p. 21). Thus, in some contexts, the paradigm example of “integrative learning” is the senior thesis or similar capstone project. In other contexts, the paradigm example is social justice work or civic engagement that flows from classroom learning.

\(^{14}\)It is true that Holtz’s example includes fiction as well as non-fiction, and many subgenres too. Nevertheless, all the literature that he proposes to encounter with the students, even the Jewish sacred texts, are approached with a common cultural-anthropological stance. All the texts are interrogated to determine their ideational positions on a set of questions. I have little doubt that, as part of the inquiry, Holtz is also interested in the literary-analytic question of how they convey their ideational positions—but the ideational position is primary. In fact, one might argue that the elegance of Holtz’ example derives from this clarity of focus.
made are positive, to be sure, but Holtz does not propose any identity-related outcomes.

Pomson, on the other hand, maintains that integrative teaching and learning serves larger purposes. He does not have in mind a deep confrontation between cultures, as Zeldin does. The kind of connections that he hopes to encourage—and that he describes in his examples—make knowledge active, rather than passive or merely rote; motivate students; and imbue their learning with greater significance. Of course, these are not goals that are particular to Jewish studies or Jewish education. On the contrary, they are aligned with the goals of the general educational theorists whose ideas he borrows and adapts. But underneath the pedagogically or psychologically instrumental connection making is something more ambitious.

Recall Pomson’s reference at the outset to “theocentric assumptions about the essential unity of the created world” (p. 529), which ground a desire for integration of all bodies of knowledge. Consider, too, his use of the phrase “Jewish and worldly wisdom” (p. 543), or his reference to Samson Raphael Hirsch’s position—innovative and bold in its time—that a Jew must harmonize both Jewish and general culture in his or her persona (p. 530). It’s clear that what is at stake, for Pomson as for Zeldin, is not merely a more robust and active understanding of particular Jewish practices or texts—not merely “knowledge that doesn’t just sit there”—but something like an integrated Jewish identity. Pomson, like Zeldin, wants students “to see the world as whole.”

Thus, he wonders in his conclusion “whether the cases described here can be classified as a blending or integration of Torah and worldly ideas” (Pomson, 2001, p. 543). Do they rise to that level? For Pomson, the answer is yes. “I would argue. . .that it is the particular distinction of these instances to reflect a view of integration as praxis, that is, as an initiation into diverse practices which embody different wisdoms” (p. 543). What he is after is not merely knowledge but something that seems like “initiation” into a set of practices. He continues:

“In a milieu which is powerfully shaped by the limited Jewish cultural literacy of students, these cases exemplify how students might be encouraged to make sense of their world in an integrated fashion. . .In this way they contribute. . .towards the development of Jewish personalities” (pp. 543–544).

The idea of “mak[ing] sense of the world in an integrated fashion”—like Zeldin’s phrase, “to see the world as whole”—expresses the deeper concern for curricular integration in Jewish education that its proponents have always desired.

At the same time, this demands critical attention. How is it that interviewing a social worker about the elderly creates an integrated Jewish identity? In what sense do the students, giddy from their successful creation and implementation of a musical performance based on the story of Ruth,
have Jewish personalities that are significantly different from students who have merely studied the Book of Ruth alone, and how has their educational experience of “integrative teaching and learning” contributed to that difference? Pomson’s logic of connection-making is diametrically opposed to Zeldin’s logic of the interaction between Judaism and modernity: where Zeldin endorses a focused response to the question of what should be integrated with what, and why, Pomson hopes to throw open the doors. All connections, it seems, are potentially educative. If we were to ask Pomson the question that has bedeviled the thinking on integration since Solomon—what is being integrated with what?—he would respond by telling us that the question is wrong-headed. And yet, we cannot avoid returning to the question of what Jewish educational outcome this integrative teaching is supposed to effect, and how?

As with Zeldin, above, Pomson is a sophisticated educational thinker who knows well that ideas are not merely transferred from a teacher’s lesson plan to the mind of the student. But as before, the justification for curricular integration seems to rely on hidden assumptions that, when surfaced, seem problematic. In the case of Zeldin’s conception, the assumption was that knowledge about similarity or difference between Judaism and the culture of modernity would manifest itself in the identity of the student. In that case, we asked: why should studying distinctiveness help a student to be distinct? In the case of Pomson’s conception, the assumption is that the activity or process of making connections between Judaism and other things—between Jewish texts and set design, between the halakhot of mishloah manot and the nutritional needs of the elderly—will manifest itself in the identity of the student. But here, too, we have to ask: Why should this loose and eclectic activity of “making connections” help a student to be connected? In both cases, the general skeptical question is this: why should doing integration in school make one integrated in one’s life?

And so, when Eileen reads Pomson, her questions remain. The idea of connection making as the heart of integration seems generative, but it lacks a criterion for selecting particular kinds of connections over others.

THE PEDAGOGY OF INTEGRITY

My skeptical questions about the purposes of integration—as well as my questions along the way about the apparently obvious connection between curricular integration and Jewish day schools, and about the distinction between integration and interaction both pedagogically (in terms of how the pursuit of a particular inquiry focuses not on similarity or difference for their own sake but rather on understanding the object of study) and experientially (in terms of how we encounter difference and integrate those differences into our conceptions), and about what it means to integrate something that we might want to call the discipline of Jewish studies with
something else, and about the potential for confusion of the problem of fragmentation with the problem of inertness—all these worries should not be misconstrued as a global skepticism about integration in general. There is surely something significant that keeps curricular integration on the Jewish educational agenda, despite the practical difficulties in the way of implementation and despite the conceptual difficulties of articulating precisely what it entails.

We may find ourselves continually mystified by the variety of possible objects of integration, as well as the variety of possible models and justifications. We may respect Zeldin’s question—“How can the day school prepare children to live as Jews in a modern, liberal, democratic society?”—but find it too limiting. We may endorse Pomson’s emphasis on “making connections,” but find it too generic. We may also note with some puzzlement that even the staunchest proponent of integration in Jewish education does not believe that all curricula ought to be integrated, all the time. Nevertheless, the images of well-designed activities, such as those found in the literature (or some of those with which I began this paper), are still attractive and exciting. Conversely, the images of fragmentation are deeply disappointing: Holtz’s (1980) example of the students who do not know that the same Greek culture that brought us democracy also brought us the religious oppression of Antiochus; the students who study the history of Zionism divorced from the context of nineteenth century nationalism and colonialism; the students who explore ancient Mesopotamia and ancient Egypt but never wonder about their relationship to ancient Israel; or Dorph’s (2008) example of the novice teachers who cannot work out for themselves how to think about Genesis alongside modern cosmology.

What is it that makes those integrating activities attractive? Conversely, what is it that makes those images of fragmentation so disappointing? Perhaps we recognize the activities as potentially exciting opportunities for the development of a certain capacity, a certain habit of mind, a disposition to bring what one learns into an engagement with what one already knows, to the maximum extent possible. Perhaps we recognize those images of fragmentation as indicators of an inadequately nurtured capacity, an insufficiently developed habit of mind, a weak disposition to integrate one’s experience. Perhaps, that is, the activities are opportunities for the practice of integrity, and the images of fragmentation are indicators of a lapse of integrity.

Integrity is a virtue.15 As a virtue, it is a quality of character, a disposition, a component of identity. It is not something we do—not a skill—but

15The philosophical literature on integrity is substantial and interwoven with many other issues in moral theory. See, for example, Frankfurt (1988), who is credited with the “integrated self” view of integrity; and Cox, La Caze, & Levine (2003). This is not the place to conduct a comprehensive review, but for the most part, that literature focuses on working out the nature of moral integrity, while largely avoiding intellectual integrity. As will become clear, I argue that we ought not bifurcate the moral and the intellectual, but rather, that we ought to see them as two facets of the same virtue.
an aspect of who we are. When we usually talk about integrity in common speech, we use the term to mean honesty of a particular sort. That is, we do not typically say things like, “I asked him whether he had embezzled the money and he answered me with integrity.” Instead, we praise the integrity of people who seem to be enacting their (and our) ethical principles. A typical case would be something like this: “I’ve always admired Carol for her professional integrity. She never changes her professional judgment to curry favor or advance her own interests.” Integrity, then, is taken to mean not simply “being honest with other people,” but rather something like “being aligned with yourself”—with the expectation that, as a result, one acts in an ethical fashion with others.16

On the other hand, we also use the term to refer to objects; we talk about the structural integrity of a bridge, for example. When we say this, we are referring to its wholeness, its intactness. All of the pieces are doing what they ought to be doing (in particular, they are all capable of bearing the load that they ought to be bearing). Of course, there’s no particular reason why the two usages must necessarily be related and etymology is rarely dispositive evidence for meaning (much less philosophical or psychological insight). But when we think about these two usages, we can discern a common idea of an entity—either a person or an object—in which the various pieces or parts are all appropriately engaged with one another. Dis-integration, or fragmentation, on the other hand, refers to a situation where the pieces have become disengaged from one another, where they are no longer part of the whole. The “piece” in question can be a strut or a brace, in which case the structure is in danger of collapsing; or it can be a moral principle, in which case the principle no longer governs the actions of the person.

We also, however, sometimes talk about “intellectual integrity,” especially when someone is willing to admit that they are wrong in the face of compelling arguments or evidence. But intellectual integrity is not merely a synonym for humility or openness. Instead, like moral integrity, it points to the idea of an entity in which the various pieces—or various ideas or intellectual commitments—are all appropriately engaged with one another. The absence of intellectual integrity is demonstrated when a person does not acknowledge (first, to herself) that an idea or an intellectual commitment has become disengaged, for example, when it lies inert or when its implications

16Throughout this article, I focus on integrity as a quality of the individual, alone. But in this paragraph, I have gestured towards one small way in which we can begin to see the way in which integrity has an outer-directed quality as well, namely, the curious fact that we consider an agent to be a person of integrity when she acts in accordance with her principles only if we happen to believe that those principles are worthy. Guignon (2004, p. 150ff.) calls this the distinction between a personal virtue and a social virtue, and Glaser (in press) argues for a connection between preserving one’s own integrity and preserving the integrity of the tradition in which one is located. This point is deserving of careful consideration in the development of a pedagogy of integrity, but I cannot do so here.
contradict other ideas or commitments. So integrity as a virtue points to an epistemological stance, related to the “theocentric assumptions about the essential unity of the created world” to which Pomson (1991, p. 529) referred, but different: It is a stance that claims that, all other things being equal, a more comprehensive picture is better, because a broader perspective enables one to see more, and unification (of data, of evidence, of experience) is an ideal.

In fact, both moral and intellectual integrity—and since there is little reason to imagine that the moral and the intellectual occupy two distinct spheres of virtue, we need not continue to bifurcate them—might mean more than this. The virtue of integrity, that is, might mean not only the condition in which all the pieces are appropriately engaged, but the capacity to maintain that condition on an ongoing basis, the capacity to compare new ideas with old ideas to see how they fit, the capacity to encounter new moral situations and see how they change one’s perspective—and the motivation to do so. Integrity entails a disposition to integrate oneself, to seek out the fissures in one's knowledge and experience and overcome them, to actively interrogate what one knows and how one knows it. Objects do not do this, of course; the bridge either has or doesn’t have structural integrity. But humans do.

I have spent some time elaborating the concept of integrity because I recognize that the way that I am using the term is new—employing its natural usages but also extending them just a bit. But I believe that integrity is the best term we have for what we are actually looking for in our discussions of curricular integration, and that focusing on integrity may help make sense of the questions that we have encountered along the way. In particular, integrated curricula and integrative teaching and learning can potentially contribute to the development of integrity, but only indirectly. Like any virtue, we can and should nurture the virtue of integrity through practice, fostering the habit of seeing connections, of comparing and contrasting, of wondering how this new idea relates to any other ideas that one has. No amount of exercise will guarantee its development—any more than the exercise of charitable

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17If this is so, then inertness is not unrelated from fragmentation: inert ideas are disengaged from the larger inter-connected web of ideas that a person actively holds. In this sense, Pomson’s goal of “knowledge that doesn’t just sit there” is insightful. What requires further clarification, however, is what kind of “activity” we ought to seek. Must the inert idea engage with the world in some way manifest in observable action?

18Of course, the idea of a fully integrated self is an unattainable ideal; no one can reasonably be expected to constantly monitor everything that she learns in the light of everything that she knows. It’s hard to even imagine how that would be possible. So, like other virtues, integrity is not the kind of thing that one either has or does not have, or the kind of thing that one either exercises or does not exercise. Instead, we should think about the person with integrity as doing a certain thing—changing her mind, asking a question—in those situations when it is appropriate to do so. And when is it appropriate to do so? To employ the unavoidable circularity at the heart of virtue discourse, it is appropriate to do so in those situations when a person with integrity would do so. In the abstract, the circularity may be frustrating; in practice, it mirrors how we actually evaluate situations and moral agents.
giving guarantees the development of generosity—nor is there one specific mode of integration (or interaction) that necessarily serves to develop integrity more than others. On the other hand, one can create the proper conditions for integrity by anticipating and removing particular obstacles.

Now, while the introduction of the virtue of integrity into the conversation about curricular integration is new, and while I have built my argument via a critique of others’ conceptual frameworks, I have reason to believe that my focus on integrity as a virtue—a shift in focus from curricular integration to the pedagogy of integrity—may be viewed sympathetically, because it picks up on threads already present in the literature. Consider, for example, Zeldin’s (1994) claim that “interaction encourages students to develop intellectual flexibility and the commitment to search for creative and original forms of understanding” (p. 17). I am hesitant about the assertion that “interaction encourages x,” because of my concerns about the theoretical framework, but I appreciate his articulation of the x in question—the goal of “intellectual flexibility and the commitment to search for creative and original forms of understanding.” That description comes close to what I have described as integrity.

Solomon (1978), too, was alert to the danger of focusing on the creation of a product, either within the curriculum (an integrated curriculum) or within a person (an integrated personality). “Rather than seek to communicate a predetermined, fixed view of the world,” he wrote, “the day school might attempt to develop individuals able to seek unity for themselves. . . . The ‘integrating individual’ might perceive each new experience and fact as a challenge to be assimilated into an ever expanding yet unified picture of reality” (p. 15). This picture, while it does not name the virtue of integrity, represents a similar focus on individual capacities and an individual’s stance towards the world.

And Lukinsky (1978), especially, seems to gesture towards something like integrity as the proper goal. “A great deal of work may be done by teachers to ‘integrate’ the parts of a curriculum,” he writes, “but in many cases the main value may be derived by the faculty rather than the students” (p. 19). The curriculum as presented to the students is “a ‘rhetoric of conclusions’ which they are to learn just like anything else.” But this will not accomplish anything. Instead, he continues, “the goal is ‘integrating behavior,’ that the students be able to relate things studied to one another and to life” (p. 19). His language of behavior is unfortunate; clearly he does not mean that they should simply carry out these actions, by rote. Rather, they should do so out of an intrinsic commitment to the value of the activity. Virtue, philosophers often note, combines the capacity to act in a certain way and the motivation to do so.

But then, he continues, “the problem is how to get the student to practice searching for connections, for broader generalizations, for system and pattern” (p. 19). In other words, the educational challenge is to figure out
what kind of educational activities are likely to foster this kind of activity—and not just activity but well-ingrained habit or disposition. The goal is not integrated knowledge itself, nor even integrative teaching. The teacher has a role to play here, of course, as the one who structures the activities and who models certain kinds of intellectual activity, but for Lukinsky (1978), the focus of attention must be on the students’ disposition: “the growing integrating attitude is crucial” (p. 20).

The lines that I have quoted in the last few paragraphs suggest that Zeldin, Solomon, Lukinsky, and perhaps others might endorse a reframing of the discussion in terms of the virtue of integrity, or a refocusing from curricular integration to the pedagogy of integrity more broadly. They might see this contribution to the conversation as a way of situating their own conceptions in a larger framework, while avoiding the problematic implication that studying an integrated curricular unit is a straightforward way to effect the integration of the individual student. (It does not; particular learning experiences can only nurture or hinder the development of the virtue of integrity.) But these lines do not indicate specific curricular or pedagogic practices.

How, then, should someone in Eileen’s position choose among particular approaches? What does the pedagogy of integrity look like, in any particular setting? Her first step must be an assessment, to whatever extent possible, of the particular threats to integrity faced by these particular students—with an emphasis on the particular, not the programmatic or generic. What is the nature of the fragmentation that the particular pedagogy of integrity hopes to ameliorate? What are the obstacles to integration that must be removed, in this particular situation? What are the characteristic forms of dis-integration that ought to be addressed—and how might she address them in a manner that nurtures the virtue of integrity among the students?

Some students may consider classical Jewish texts irrelevant or obsolete; whatever they learn will never be integrated into the rest of their experience. For such students, structured exercises in which Jewish texts are related to contemporary circumstances may provide hospitable conditions for the practice of integration in the service of integrity. Or, as in the Holtz (1980) example, perhaps students do not see classical Jewish texts as worthy of their critical attention. In that case, his proposal to teach thematically—encountering Jewish texts alongside other texts and probing the teachings of each, not for the sake of comparison of the traditions, primarily, but for the sake of the exploring the question at hand more deeply—may well be an appropriate response.

On the other hand, other students may value classical Jewish texts to so great a degree—or they may believe that they are ideologically bound to so value them, whether they actually do or not—that they are unable or unwilling to see value in other kinds of texts. Certainly, the traditionalist
rhetoric around “Torah im derekh eretz” (“Torah and general culture”; the slogan associated with the educational approach of Samson Raphael Hirsch) in the nineteenth century and “Torah u-Madda” (“Torah and secular knowledge”; adopted as the motto of Yeshiva University in 1946) in the twentieth both represent responses to a particular threat to integrity, namely, the devaluation or at least suspicion of all “secular” knowledge. In Bieler’s (2000) view, it remains “vital to be able to demonstrate [to modern Orthodox students] that, in fact, the various areas of knowledge are complementary, making up a unified whole” (p. 18). For students for whom the questions of revelatory knowledge versus scientific knowledge are genuine ones, comparative analyses may serve well—even better than abstract theological or halakhic arguments.

Some students may need time and space to consider the relationship between Judaism and modern culture, including (as Zeldin recommends) where they differ. Other students may need to work on two aspects of their identity, the American and the Jewish. Others may need to practice a very different kind of integration, an integration of the religious ideals of the Jewish tradition with the lived ethical lives that they see around them. Alternatively, some students in some educational settings may suffer from a kind of temporal dis-integration, in which ideas and experiences in one school year are insufficiently linked to ideas and experiences in the next. And others, perhaps Pomson’s students, must overcome the sense that school subjects are “merely academic.” None of these is the “right” way to do integration; all of them should serve the paramount view of fostering integrity, and should keep that goal in view. The question that Eileen must ask, the question to be asked of any effort at integration, is: How does this particular educational exercise foster the integrity of the students? The answer must never be an assumption that the students will become what they learn. Instead, the answer must always be that the exercise will afford the students an opportunity to engage in a specific intellectual practice—a practice that is underdeveloped or under threat, a practice that needs attention, a practice that is as yet unlearned.

Demanding this kind of analysis before determining a curriculum may seem unreasonable. But in fact, it’s not so different from the kind of analysis that a teacher ideally ought to do within any subject. What kind of history should one teach, for example? In “covering” the colonial era, should one focus on the military and diplomatic history, the social and material history,

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19Bieler (2000) calls attention to this need within the Orthodox community: “If integration is a value, then it is extremely important that the adult staff include a critical mass of individuals who embody such an integrated approach not in the their teaching, but also in terms of how they live their lives” (p. 20).

20Scheffler (1991) notes, “Often the topic of integration in the curriculum is treated as if it concerned only the synchronous bridging of the various subjects, with scant attention given to bridging across time. But the educational life of the child is continuous...” (p. 114).
the intellectual history? The answer to this question cannot be answered in
the abstract; it can only be responsibly answered on the basis of an assess-
ment of what kind of educational encounter a particular set of students
requires, in order to foster what kinds of understanding. It can only be
answered provisionally, for the particular moment and setting, perhaps
even for the particular student. In integration, too, Eileen’s question about
which curricular option to choose can only be responsibly answered on the
basis of an assessment of what kinds of educational encounter a particular
set of students needs—what kinds of integrative habits they need to prac-
tice, in response to what kinds of specific threats to integrity—in order to
foster what forms of integrity.

But the focus on integrity as the goal also undermines an over-reliance
on curriculum dedicated to the purpose of integration. After all, fostering
integrity doesn’t stop. The making of connections happens everywhere,
spontaneously: any time an opportunity to make a connection arises, any
time a question emerges, or especially when—in the informed view of the
teacher of integrity, attuned to where the students are—a question ought to
emerge but does not. If our goal is fostering integrity, those spontaneous
occasions may be no less important than formally integrated curricula. What
is needed in those moments, from the teacher, is not integrative teaching
per se but openness, reflectiveness, a willingness to explore possible chal-
lenges, and a patient refusal to accommodate fragmentation or compart-
mentalization. Do these students, who just celebrated Chanukah, recognize
the complicated interaction of Greek and Jewish culture? Have these students
considered the relationship between nineteenth century colonialism and the
development of Zionism? Are these students thinking about the similarities
and differences between ancient Mesopotamia and ancient Israel—not to
mention the similarities and the differences between the ways that we are
studying them? Raising and pursuing these questions are central compo-
nents of a pedagogy of integrity.

Moreover, the focus on integrity reshapes the question about discipli-
narity, interdisciplinarity, and multidisciplinarity. Beth, the teacher reluctant
to give up her time for the goal of integrated curriculum, is not an unsympa-
thetic character in this story. Her claim about the integration of social and
political history is not merely special pleading; it is, indeed, a difficult chal-
gen to think about both of these subfields and to find ways for them to
speak to each other, and she might well be able to frame her goals in terms
of the fostering of intellectual integrity. Indeed, once we start thinking about

21It is also true that those spontaneous connections will occur more frequently the more that the
teacher understands the particular intellectual and cultural experience of the students, including espe-
cially the experience in school. This suggests an additional value to building a community in schools
with shared language and common agendas, even aside from the construction of formally integrated
units.
teaching toward integrity, we also must weigh the integrity of single disciplines, even without the kind of blending of subfields in Beth’s example.\textsuperscript{22} The counterargument, if Eileen is to make one, must be made not at the general level of what kind of teaching fosters integrity—since Beth can claim that her “nonintegrated” history teaching also fosters integrity—but at the very particular level of what the school hopes that the students will learn about, in this case, Colonial and Revolutionary America, and what the school hopes the students will learn through studying that topic.

What this also suggests is that, as Pomson argued, the ideal of a pedagogy of integrity is not limited to Jewish educational contexts but is shared with other educational contexts as well. But what is different, in Jewish educational contexts, are (some of) the particular threats to integrity. Here, we return to the question of why integration seems so closely associated with Jewish day schools. Earlier I noted that some of the arguments for integration might seem just as relevant to supplementary schools; we can easily imagine a creative educational leader in a synagogue Sunday school arguing, in an echo of Zeldin, that the primary focus of the curriculum ought to be an investigation of where Judaism differs from contemporary American culture, or arguing, like Holtz, for a thematic focus that treats classical Jewish texts as intellectual resources alongside the best of non-Jewish Western culture. In the Jewish day school context, however, the questions and concerns about how students think about Jewish texts, practices and ideas alongside general subjects are frequently unavoidable. Are Jewish texts being treated with the same critical rigor as texts in English or History? Are the ideas that emerge in one context considered in another, or ignored? In other words, perhaps the association of integration with day schools is driven not so much by the opportunities that the all-day school offers, but by the persistent anxiety that we are creating, in David Eliach’s phrase, a “split personality in a compartmentalized mind” (Cohen, 2002, p. 101)—leading to efforts such as those that Pomson describes, establishing an eclectic range of connections to and from Jewish texts, practices and ideas, or like Holtz’, in which the curriculum is, in effect, an argument for using our best and most critical thinking in relation to both Jewish and non-Jewish sources.

Thus, I have proposed here that something has been missing from the conversation about curricular integration in Jewish education, that our conceptualization of integration has been incomplete. What we most desire is not the curricular product and not the teaching process, which are both ultimately of instrumental value, but the habit of mind, the disposition, the aspect of character, the virtue. And so, what we ought to aim for is not integrated curricula primarily and not even integrative teaching and learning, but a pedagogy of integrity—teaching toward and learning with integrity in the specific sense of a capacity and a desire to establish connections,

\textsuperscript{22}See footnote 1 above. My thanks to Jonny Ariel for this point.
examine differences, overcome fragmentation, unify fields of learning and experience. Turning our focus from curricular integration to the pedagogy of integrity allows us to name our goal directly. It enables us avoid the trap of imagining that studying something helps us become that thing—studying integrated curricula helps us become integrated selves—by identifying the virtue that we are seeking to cultivate. And perhaps most importantly, it concentrates our attention on the threats to integrity. What problems are we trying to solve? What are the obstacles in the way? In what specific sense do we believe that students—the students in front of us in our particular situations—are dis-integrated, and how might any particular learning opportunity alleviate that fragmentation? These are the criteria against which Eileen, and we, ought to assess the appropriateness of any proposed integrative initiative.

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