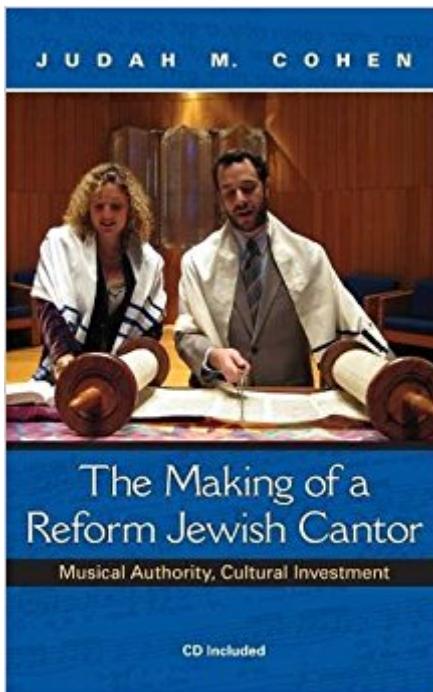


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The Making Of A Reform Jewish Cantor: Musical Authority, Cultural Investment (A Helen B. Schwartz Book In Jewish Studies)



Synopsis

The Making of a Reform Jewish Cantor provides an unprecedented look into the meaning of attaining musical authority among American Reform Jews at the turn of the 21st century. How do aspiring cantors adapt traditional musical forms to the practices of contemporary American congregations? What is the cantor's role in American Jewish religious life today? Cohen follows cantorial students at the School of Sacred Music, Hebrew Union College, over the course of their training, as they prepare to become modern Jewish musical leaders. Opening a window on the practical, social, and cultural aspects of aspiring to musical authority, this book provides unusual insights into issues of musical tradition, identity, gender, community, and high and low musical culture.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I am an oral historian preparing to interview a Reform cantor about her life, training, and experience, and her vision of the future of Reform Judaism. I was just starting my research when I came upon this book. Was it a huge help to me? Yes, it was. First, for an academic-quality work in nonfiction, The Making of a Reform Cantor was extremely readable, which I appreciated, since so many academic books are a collection of potentially brilliant thoughts lost forever in the convolutions of language. Next, the book lives up to its title--the reader really does learn in considerable, but not too great, detail how a Reform cantor is fashioned. Dr. Cohen's account of the school's curricula and

practice was so thorough that I can probably cancel my trip to visit the School of Sacred Music to see for myself. I also appreciated Dr. Cohen's approaching the highly charged arena where cantorial art versus congregational singing is debated. It's a hot topic these days and he handled it nimbly.

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