



## **Jews of South Florida (Brandeis Series in American Jewish History, Culture, and Life)**

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When we think of Jewish South Florida, we may think first of the generation of aging Jews who moved to South Beach from the 1940s to the 1970s to create a rich Yiddish culture on the shores of the Atlantic Ocean. Yet these “snowbirds” are just one group in what has become an increasingly diverse South Florida Jewish population. The tri-county area of Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach is home to a community of more than 625,000 Jews—about --10 percent of American Jews—and comprises nearly 200 congregations, 3 major Jewish federations, 20 Hebrew day schools, a world-recognized Holocaust memorial, and more. Yet no single book offers an overview of this vital Jewish community.

The South Florida Jewish community is distinguished from other Jewish communities in the U.S. by its diverse population. Like the post-war generation of snowbirds, tens of thousands of retirees (most from the Atlantic seaboard but some from cold climates elsewhere in the United States), currently live in “gated communities,” like Century Village in Boca Raton, and maintain strong ties with the communities they left behind. But the Jewish community in South Florida also has a distinctive Latin flavor, which began with the post-Castro migration of Cubans. Hispanic Jews have moved to South Florida from several Latin American nations, and these Spanish-speaking Jews have worked hard to maintain their cultural heritage even as they have adapted to life in the United States. South Florida is also home to the largest community of Holocaust survivors in the country. More recent Jewish immigrants from Arab nations, the Soviet Union, and Israel have added to the distinctive diversity of Jewish life in South Florida.

Jews of South Florida offers a history of the development of Jewish life in the region, from its modest start at the end of the nineteenth century to the beginning of the twenty-first century. Culture and Community, Part I, begins with demographic and historical overviews of Jewish settlement in South Florida. Essays in this section examine diverse Jewish populations: Cuban Jews, Sephardic Jews, Jewish life in Broward County and Boca Raton, Jewish retirees on South Beach, and Holocaust survivors. Individuals and Institutions, Part II, contains essays on gangster Meyer Lansky and activist Rabbi Leon Kronish; a photo essay commemorating synagogues; essays on Jewish education in South Florida; the Greater Miami Chapter of the National Council of Jewish Women; and the Dora Teitelboim Center for Yiddish Culture, which strives to invigorate the waning Yiddish culture that once thrived on South Beach.

With more than 130 historical and contemporary photographs, this unique book offers a fascinating look at this tenacious, yet remarkably diverse, Jewish community.

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