

(Ebook free) Homelands: Southern Jewish Identity in Durham-Chapel Hill and North Carolina (Judaic Studies Series)

Homelands: Southern Jewish Identity in Durham-Chapel Hill and North Carolina (Judaic Studies Series)

Leonard Rogoff

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Leonard Rogoff : Homelands: Southern Jewish Identity in Durham-Chapel Hill and North Carolina (Judaic Studies Series) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Homelands: Southern Jewish Identity in Durham-Chapel Hill and North Carolina (Judaic Studies Series):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy SSMust read for those who live in the South.

Homelands blends oral history, documentary studies, and quantitative research to present a colorful local history with much to say about multicultural identity in the South. Homelands is a case study of a unique ethnic group in North America--small-town southern Jews. Both Jews and southerners, Leonard Rogoff points out, have long struggled with questions of identity and whether to retain their differences or try to assimilate into the nationalculture. Rogoff shows how, as immigrant Jews became small-town southerners,they constantly renegotiated their identities and reinvented their histories.The Durham-Chapel Hill Jewish community was formed during the 1880s and 1890s, when the South was recovering from the Reconstruction era and Jews were experiencing ever-growing immigration as well as challenging the religious traditionalism of the previous 4,000 years. Durham and Chapel Hill Jews, recent arrivals from the traditional societies of eastern Europe, assimilated and secularized as they lessened their differences with

other Americans. Some Jews assimilated through intermarriage and conversion, but the trajectory of the community as a whole was toward retaining their religious and ethnic differences while attempting to integrate with their neighbors. The Durham-Chapel Hill area is uniquely suited to the study of the southern Jewish experience, Rogoff maintains, because the region is exemplary of two major trends: the national population movement southward and the rise of Jews into the professions. The Jewish peddler and storekeeper of the 1880s and the doctor and professor of the 1990s, Rogoff says, are representative figures of both Jewish upward mobility and southern progress.

From Publishers Weekly This delightful new book uncovers the history of the Jewish community in Durham, N.C. Rogoff opens with the German Jews who made Durham their home in the decades after the Civil War, describing their efforts to adapt to a new land and start businesses. Rogoff doesn't just treat the Jewish bourgeoisie; he also writes of the working-class Russian workers who came to do the dirty work (literally) of the booming tobacco town. But the book is not merely an encyclopedic chronicle. At its heart lies a question: what does it mean to be both Southern and Jewish? Rogoff discusses how Jews dealt with anti-Semitism how they handled the backlash against the so-called Jew Deal (the New Deal), for example, and how they coped with exclusion from the local country club. He examines the hardships faced by the Jews who, after 1900, began to enroll in Trinity College (now Duke University) and UNC. And he describes the triumphs of E.J. "Mutt" Evans, Durham's first Jewish mayor, who will be familiar to readers from his son Eli Evans's masterful memoir, *The Provincials*, about growing up a Southern Jew. This is a thorough, highly readable book that combines scholarship and storytelling. In fields too frequently given to antiquarianism local history and American Jewish history Rogoff's book shines. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc. "Homelands is the best monograph published thus far detailing the life cycle of small southern Jewish communities. Separating myth from reality, the book does a marvelous job intertwining changes in community identity and demographics and providing insights into contemporary concerns for group continuity. This is a model community study."