

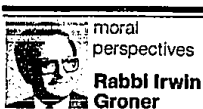
Mixed marriage is hard on kids

NOTHING is more deeply imbedded in American tradition than the right of a person to choose his own mate.

Yet young people often find that the exercise of this right raises difficult problems, particularly if they happen to fall in love with people with different religious backgrounds from their own. To make matters worse, they often get conflicting advice.

Some friends say: "Don't marry out of your religion, or you'll regret it the rest of your life. Religion goes deep, you can't compromise it."

Others insist: "Religious differences don't matter. Husband and wife differ in many ways. This makes marriage interesting. You have to adjust. It isn't always easy, but love



moral perspectives
Rabbi Irwin Groner

finds a way." WHEN A MAN and woman are drawn to one another, select one another from among many, feel a physical attraction and a congeniality and an affection amounting to a deep hunger. It is very difficult to dissuade them from the covenant of marriage because of religious difference.

Common interests, some similarity in levels of intelligence and aspects of personality, a sharing of ba-

sic values — these seem more important in the long run than the church or synagogue in which one worships.

And yet life's experiences teach the fundamental truth that a marriage concerns more than the husband and wife.

MARRIAGE INVOLVES relationships with the families and religious communities in which the husband and wife have had their origin and childhood associations.

These influences, over the years, can add to the emotional burdens and stresses of the marital relationship.

Children present the greatest challenge to those who enter mixed marriages. The psychological welfare of a child, his emotional and mental health, are fundamentally dependent upon the security of the home, the strength of the marriage, and the ways in which the parents affirm their shared outlook about faith, religious holidays and spiritual values.

If parents are in conflict over religion, the religious factor can play havoc with the welfare of their children.

A RECENT case involving the struggle for custody of children in a divorced family depicts a nightmare in real life.

A judge has threatened to jail a Roman Catholic mother for taking her two daughters to church. Her former husband, the divorced father, is Jewish. He was granted spiritual

custody of his daughters.

The mother received physical custody of the children and was ordered by the court to rear the children in the Jewish faith of their father.

The case is unusual in the decision of the court to divide the child's religious and secular nurture and growth.

The mother, who had promised to raise the children as Jews, began taking the children to church, hung a crucifix on the wall in each child's bedroom and added additional religious observances in the home.

Meanwhile, the children have gone to the synagogue on Saturday for worship, and to mass on Sunday.

In the custody hearing, the mother said she wished to raise the children in both faiths. The father contended that such an up-bringing would be psychologically harmful, and the judge agreed with him.

THIS CASE should be considered and reflected upon by all men and women who are considering marrying outside of their religious community.

Religious intermarriage can impose great hardship, not only by consenting adults, but upon the children of such marriages who are the innocent victims of conflicts that cannot be resolved and commitments that cannot be compromised.

Rabbi Irwin Groner is with Shneur Zedek Congregation in Southfield.

OU women offer new scholarship

An organization of women employees and spouses of employees has established a "critical difference scholarship" at Oakland University.

A \$250 check will be awarded to a single head of household for the 1988-89 academic year by Women of Oakland University.

The intent is to assist a determined student who, without the scholarship, might otherwise not be able to continue his or her education.

"It can be overwhelming for a student who is trying to complete a college degree while taking care of family, work and financial responsibilities," said Barb Llegl of Troy, secretary of the office of University Relations and scholarship committee chairwoman.

Applicants must be a single head of household, have completed at least 18 credits and have had their college education interrupted at some point for at least one year. A minimum grade point average of 2.0 is required.

Applicants must include a letter of recommendation from a former teacher, professor or employer. They should also include a letter explaining how this scholarship would make a critical difference to them in the academic year.

Scholarship applications are available from the OU Financial Aid Office. The recipient will be announced June 1.

Child custody is Bar topic

Michael A. Robbins, Farmington Hills resident and partner in the Birmingham law firm of Victor, Robbins & Bassett, will speak on "Child Custody and Visitation" at State Bar seminar on divorce.

Sponsored by the Family Law Section of the State Bar, the seminar runs from 8:45 a.m. to 5 p.m. Thurs-

day, Feb. 2, in Michigan Inn, 16400 J.L. Hudson Drive, Southfield.

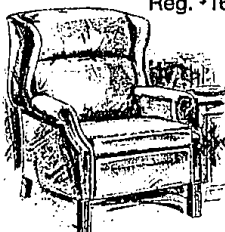
Robbins is a frequent lecturer on family law and teaches family law through Oakland University. He is a member of the Family Law Council of the State Bar.

For registration information, contact his office at 646-7177.

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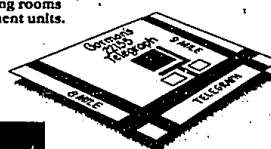
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