

A myth exists that Jews can embrace the cultural components of Judaism without appreciating the legal aspects of the Jewish tradition. This myth suggests that law and culture are independent of one another. In reality, however, much of Jewish culture has a basis in Jewish law. Similarly, Jewish law produces Jewish culture.

In this book, Roberta Rosenthal Kwall argues that Jewish culture is shallow unless it is grounded in Jewish law. She develops and applies a paradigm that departs from the understanding of Jewish law solely as the embodiment of Divine command, and explains why both law and culture must matter to those interested in forging meaningful Jewish identity and transmitting the tradition.

Roberta Rosenthal Kwall is the *Raymond P. Niro Professor of Law* at DePaul University College of Law.

“A brilliant exploration of the relationship between law and culture in the context of Judaism. Kwall offers a provocative thesis and impressively analyzes a myriad of contemporary topics. This book is a ‘must read’ not only for all interested in Judaism, but for all who are studying the relationship between law and culture.”—**ERWIN CHEMERINSKY**, Dean and Distinguished Professor of Law, Raymond Pryke Professor of First Amendment Law, University of California, School of Law, Irvine

“*The Myth of the Cultural Jew* will change the way in which people think about the development of Jewish law. It is the first book to apply to Jewish law the method of cultural analysis used in secular legal studies. Kwall uses this method to address the critical question for Judaism today—What kind of Jewish religion and identity will be viable for the future? It is a ‘must read’ for anyone interested in Judaism or Jewish law.”—**RABBI ELLIOT DORFF**, Rector and Distinguished Professor of Philosophy, American Jewish University

“*The Myth of the Cultural Jew* is a fascinating book. It grapples with the challenges that face all of us in the contemporary world. Kwall writes a powerful and relevant message for the religious and non-religious alike. This book will lead you to a deeper understanding of who you are as a Jew in the 21st century.”—**RABBI ASHER LOPATIN**, President, Yeshivat Chovevei Torah Rabbinical School

“*The Myth of the Cultural Jew* is well-written and compelling. It should be required reading at universities and centers of Jewish learning. The book is an invaluable guide to how various forces shape the Jewish psyche.”—**FERN SIEGEL**, *The Huffington Post*