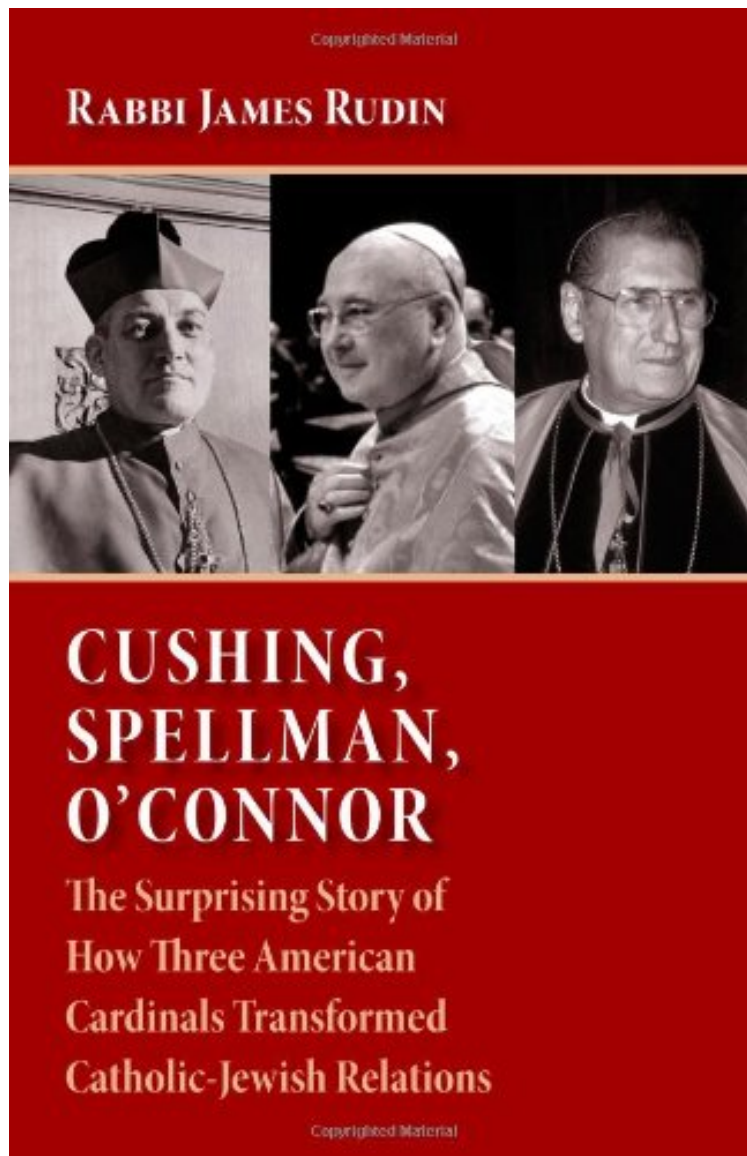


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## Cushing, Spellman, O'Connor: The Surprising Story of How Three American Cardinals Transformed Catholic-Jewish Relations

*Rabbi James Rudin*

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**Rabbi James Rudin : Cushing, Spellman, O'Connor: The Surprising Story of How Three American Cardinals Transformed Catholic-Jewish Relations** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Cushing, Spellman, O'Connor: The Surprising Story of How Three American Cardinals Transformed Catholic-Jewish Relations:

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy jgbrierI found the book to be fascinating and very well written.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. "Spiritually, we are Semites" (Pope Pius XI, Sept 6, 1938)By Anthony BosnickThe three churchmen who are the focus of this book were important figures in helping Catholics and Jews to understand the reality that we are all Semites and to treat each other as if this is true and matters. The contribution of these three cardinals to Catholic-Jewish relations is profound, considering the time in which they lived.My grandfather was Jewish and I Catholic. There was such ambivalence and perhaps even shame in recognizing this Jewish heritage that it was practically never mentioned in my family, and certainly not valued. My mother (who grew up in Chicago in the 1930's) had suffered enough as a child for having a Jewish father, and she did not want to inflict that suffering on us. That gives a good idea of the setting of this account and why these efforts were so significant and pioneering.The book is short and to the point (137 pages). While it does not belabor the background to anti-Semitism in the Catholic Church over the centuries and among Catholics in general, it is a good introduction for those who know nothing or little about the topic. The book was a good review for me even though I have read considerably on the topic and did an M.A. thesis on the coverage which America magazine gave to Jewish issues from 1932 to 1948.It was fascinating to read about Cushing and Spellman and their role in this as they were great and revered Catholic figures when I was young. I even knew about them while growing up in rural north-central Pennsylvania. And O'Connor's role a bit later was also interesting.The book includes a helpful index. If you or a budding scholar you know is looking for a topic for a master's thesis or a doctoral dissertation, you are likely to find some good leads in this book.Highly recommended.2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Two U.S. Cardinals and Vatican II's Nostra AetateBy Rosalie E. LecuyerCushing, Spellman, O'Connor: The Surprising Story of How Three American Cardinals Transformed Catholic-Jewish Relations, by Rabbi James Rudin, has an exceptionally misleading subtitle. I thought it would be about Catholic-Jewish Relations in Boston and New York. Instead, it referred to Cushing and Spellman's influence leading to the passage of the Vatican II document Nostra Aetate. Their American heritage of religious liberty and their active support of Catholic-Jewish relations overcame the European Catholic hierarchy's reluctance to accept the document, drafted and redrafted by Cardinal Bea.I was attracted to the title of the book by nostalgia and the curious use of the word "Surprising." To me, Catholic-Jewish relations were normal, a part of our daily lives, not in any way "surprising." I was a youth in Boston during the early days of "Archbishop" Cushing. The Archbishop confirmed me and presented me with my college degree. In between those years, I saw him at many events. Yes, I heard and easily recognized his "fish-peddler" voice. I knew his sister was happily married to a Jewish man. I also knew of Spellman, since he was a patron of my college, beginning, I believe, from the days of his being pastor of a Newton Centre parish.In my six years of secondary education, I had Jewish classmates, some of whom I still have contact with, more than sixty years after our graduation. Our friendship was based on our interaction at school. Our different religions did not play a part in the school's activities. I, like Archbishop Cushing, had a Boston upbringing of religious liberty under the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.The book is short. It could easily be reduced to a long essay, concentrating on the Vatican II document with a title suitably reflecting the two cardinals' work in its passage. Author Rudin had a personal friendship with Cardinal O'Connor and saw the cardinal's priesthood as "the benchmark by which all present and future Catholic priests must be judged vis-a-vis Jews and Judaism." Since I knew Cardinal O'Connor only by reputation, I cannot assess that benchmark. I do, however, know many present Catholic priests who are open to people of different religions, including Judaism, although they may not be consciously following Cardinal O'Connor's lead.Rosalie E. L'Ecuyer, Fairbanks, Alaska

Highlights the legacy of three amazing, influential Roman Catholic cardinalsIn this highly recommended book, Rabbi James Rudin describes how the vision and commitment of Cardinals Richard Cushing, Francis Spellman, and John O'Connor helped to transform Jewish-Catholic relations in the second half of the twentieth century. Two introductory chapters contextualize their actions and reveal the extraordinary nature of these cardinals' actions.Pithy and accessible, this book will spark lively discussion among church and synagogue study groups. It will also add compelling case studies to seminary courses on ecumenism and interfaith dialogue -- regardless of any given group's position on the ideological spectrum.

Raymond L. Flynn -- U.S. Ambassador to the Vatican (1993-1997) Mayor of Boston (1984-1993) An insightful and riveting book about Catholic-Jewish relations . . . Jim Rudin's book captures the vision and commitment of Cushing, Spellman, and O'Connor. For students of Jewish-Catholic history, this is a must-read.Ed Koch -- Mayor of New York City (1978-1989) "I was privileged to be mayor of New York City in 1984 when John Cardinal O'Connor came to our city, ultimately to become Cardinal, and was blessed and rewarded with his friendship. This book is a wonderful read." s in Religion Theology Offers a well-written and compelling history of the interfaith work of three American born cardinals of the Roman Catholic Church and how they changed the face of Jewish-Christian relations. Congregational Libraries Today An insightful presentation that highlights the courage, vision, and commitment of the three cardinals. .

. . This brief history merits the attention of all people of faith.