

The Miracle of Intervale Avenue: The Story of a Jewish Congregation in the South Bronx

Jack Kugelmass

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before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Miracle of Intervale Avenue: The Story of a Jewish Congregation in the South Bronx:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Miracle with an expiration dateBy Evan FranklJack Kugelmass did an incredible job in writing both the original book and this mid-90's update. It can be read as anthropology, sociology, ethnic studies, and by now social history. It also raises questions of historic preservation outside of city centers and tourist destinations. As another reviewer has mentioned, the Intervale Jewish Center was torn down in 2012. It is probably safe to assume that the elderly community profiled in this book 30 years earlier has all passed on. However, the fact that a successful book and documentary did not lead to any preservation / restoration campaign for the building itself is troubling. Much of the book deals with the universal dilemma of the elderly trying to determine the legacy they will bequest to future generations (financial and otherwise). Their stories are still alive in this book, now that their "home" is no longer.
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I was interested because I grew up in the Bronx ...By Kevin FitzI was interested because I grew up in the Bronx and passed it for yrs and was curious.
Interesting book
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Jewish Miracle in the South BronxBy Barbara SegalI recently finished reading the book The Miracle of Intervale Avenue: The Story of a Jewish Congregation in the South Bronx, a study written by the anthropologist, Jack Kugelmass. This clearly written and well-researched book

grabbed my attention from the beginning to the end. I cried when some of the people died and cheered when others were able to show the incredible strength to keep going. It is an emotional description of an aged population of Jewish people who decide to stay in their neighborhood which has become overrun with drug dealers and residents who have very different beliefs and values. There are some amazing incidents which are described as the miracles of this story. The congregation manages to attract an unusual collection of members and despite unbelievable hardships and setbacks continues to have services and provide a community for those who choose to come and support one another. I highly recommend this book!

Located in the ravaged urban landscape of the South Bronx, the Intervale Jewish Center is the last synagogue still in regular use in a rapidly changing neighborhood. This unique congregation represents the struggle of individuals to maintain their dignity, independence, and faith over the years. In *The Miracle of Intervale Avenue*, Jack Kugelmass tells the inspiring story of a community that continues to see the area as its own, as a place they steadfastly refuse to abandon despite a major shift in the ethnic demography of the South Bronx and an increase in violent crime. A classic ethnography of American Jewish life, *The Miracle of Intervale Avenue* has now been brought up to date. In a new closing chapter and epilogue, Kugelmass shows how the congregation has adapted to the radical changes in the neighborhood, bringing closure to this poignant work. Now with 38 photographs of the community over the years, the book covers the slow economic resurgence of the South Bronx and discusses the revitalizing effect of the congregation's new members, including blacks and Latinos.

"An absorbing volume which... is part of the foundation for an emerging body of South Bronx literature." -- Daniel Patrick Moynihan
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From the Back Cover
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About the Author
Jack Kugelmass is professor of anthropology and former director of the Folklore Program at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. He has written two television documentaries about the Intervale Jewish Center and is the author of *Masked Culture: The Greenwich Village Halloween Parade*, co-author of *Going Home: How American Jews Invent the Old World*, and co-editor of *From a Ruined Garden: The Memorial Book of Polish Jewry*.