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LUCE PRESS CLIPPINGS

"American Reform Judaism: An Introduction," by Dana Evan Kaplan (Rutgers University Press, 305 pages, \$22)

Here's the book American Jews have been waiting for — whether they know it or not! Far more than

"an introduction," it is actually a much-needed, comprehensive guide to Reform Judaism's current sea change.



Rabbi Kaplan tells the tale, from historic roots to today's varied branchings, in compact prose without pretense, an easy-to-follow approach that assures reader understanding. In early 19th-century central Europe, Jews freely exchanged ideas with their Christian neighbors, emulating them in worship as in much else, and many old religious practices fell to Enlightenment. Thus Reform Judaism transferred to America with a primary focus on ethics and social action, plus growing inclusion of those once marginalized: women, gays and lesbians, the intermarried among them.

Now America's own changes, including a burgeoning new emphasis on spirituality, have led the movement to reclaim many of the traditions it formerly scorned, with some inevitably resultant internal conflicts. As Reform Judaism grapples with reforming once again, author Kaplan is a fine one to follow along its various pathways of possibility.

— Harriet P. Gross