

November 26, 1979

Dear Rabbi Schachter,

This, for me, is an uncharacteristically angry letter, but there is no way I can excuse what happened to me in Chicagg. It was an act of bad faith to coopt me for a special fund-raising luncheon, fail to inform me when the program was rescheduled, and oblivious to all, send me on my way. I have never shirked my Seminary responsibilities, both academic and extra-curricular. I welcomed the opportunity to speak in Chicago because I view fund-raising as a shared responsibility. Lecturing, however, is also my main source of outside income, and when I do use my repertoire free of charge I like to think my time and effort are not being wasted. To add insult to injury, the United Synagogue office gave me absolutely no guidance, booked me for a ridiculously late return flight (presumably they too had not been informed of the changed schedule), and made no arrangements for my reception. And the coup de grace was an elderly audience of 60 Jews -- the Sunday Morning Regulars. Since Anshei Emeth got me for free, they didn't bother to publicize the lecture, though the rabbi assured me (in the presence of the audience) that had I been I.B. Singer, I too would have drawn a crowd of 1300! So the net result of this folly is that the Seminary subsidized a poorly attended lecture in a synagogue that could well have afforded to pay and that I wasted my precious time and the Seminary's money.

Sincerely,

David G. Roskies