Conservative Jews end era

# Woman to be ordained

**Associated Press** 

DALLAS - Nina Bieber Feinstein's dream was to become a rabbi, even though her religion told her not to challenge the centuriesold laws of the Talmud.

And now, Bieber Feinstein has found that a dream can be stronger than religious tradition.

In May 1986, the Dallas woman, 29, will become one of the first 19 female rabbis in the Conservative branch of Judaism, an event so controversial that many of the 1.5 million members of the country's largest Jewish movement are thinking

about leaving the branch.

The sex barrier will be officially torn down this month when Amy Eilberg, 30, of Bloomington, Ind., is ordained. Bieber Feinstein is a member of the second class of women to be ordained.

Her ordination, she said, will be the culmination of 14 years of deter-mination and disappointments.

"I've always been a very stubborn person," Bieber Feinstein said. "I always hoped I would become a Conservative rabbi. I just never gave up my dream."

She grew up in Los Angeles, where one of her earliest memories is attending synagogue with her par-

She also retains vivid memories of

the way her parents kept a kosher home in accordance with Jewish laws of the Talmud.

"By the time I was in the upper grades of elementary shool, I was the only Jewish kid in school," she "I could have become assimilated and not shown my Jewishness, but I chose to go the other way.

As a teen-ager in Hebrew High School, she heard several young, re-cently ordained rabbis who had come to teach. Soon, they became role models for her.

"They had such a wonderful way of life that I decided I wanted to be like them," she said. "They comfortably observed tradition yet were rais-

ing families in the 20th century."
Bieber Feinstein and her sister became the first teen-agers to lead Saturday morning services at Los Angeles' Sinai Temple.

She later was the congregation's first woman to read from the Torah on Yom Kippur, Jews' holiest holi-

In 1977, she entered the Jewish Theological Seminary of America in

For the next three years, Bieber Feinstein worked toward a master's degree in the Talmud and rabbinical literature, where she met and married rabbinical student Edward M. In 1980, she enrolled in the semi-nary's doctoral program, but left in 1982 to come to Dallas with her husband, who is associate rabbi at Congregation Shearith Israel and director of the Solomon Schechter Academy.

The assembly gave her permission to complete her course work through correspondence.

In November 1983, before she finished her studies, the seminary faculty voted to ordain women rab-

The Rabbinical Assembly followed suit this February. Bieber Feinstein was able to transfer several of her course credits to a rabbinical

She will return to New York this summer to complete her last courses at the seminary and present her "senior sermon" to the faculty and students before being ordained there in May 1986.

Bieber Feinstein does revel in the fact that she'll be a role model for young Jewish girls, but she has an even greater interest in making women feel more comfortable participating in services.

"Some people think this will split Judaism apart," she said of the ordi-nations. "I'm one of the people who thinks it will help. Otherwise, I wouldn't have done it."

## Cambodian teens use art to illustrate violent history

AMES, Iowa — Vouen Chem remembers one pond of civil war followed by four years of murderous frenzy shaded by her beloved mango tree and another full of by the Khmer Rouge Communists and the 1978 invasion blood and bodies.

Underat Nou remembers people being shot for picking up fallen fruit.

These pictures of life in Cambodia are being drawn by

a dozen teen-agers who still remember the terror. While one boy draws only cheerful pictures of Iowa. another talks of playing in the sand and finding a human

'Yet he's doing fine," said Ed Ruppert, a specialist in foster care at the Beloit Center, an agency of Lutheran

Social Services of Iowa, where the kids meet to draw.

The children have survived battles that spilled out of Vietnam, secret U.S. bombings of their homeland, years days ago. ..

Try explaining it all to a 10-year-old. Or ask that 10-

year-old to explain it to you, years later.

The art therapy program helps them deal with the

enormous pain.

Listen to their stories:

VOUEN CHEM, 17: The picture is from 1975, really sad year, really a sad place." An explosion derailed her train as her family was escaping from their village

'So we had to get down from the train and find the water. And when my dad found this pond, all we see was dead bodies and blood ... just like they kill a couple of

### Economy tiring; spending on rise

NEW YORK — In an economy as unusual as this one, odd behavior and expectations don't rattle the atmosphere as they might in more normal times.

There is plenty of odd behavior, especially the high level of consumer spending at a time when the economy seems to be tiring.

Over the five months that ended

Once a Beta,

Beta.

Always a Beta, Everywhere a

consumption spending jumped nearly \$74 billion, while disposable income rose only \$47.1 billion. The difference was made up by savings and loans.

"Have consumers lost their minds?" asks Edward Yardeni, econ-omist at Prudential-Bache. Are they trying to maintain a living standard they cannot afford, he asks? Or are

they simply optimistic about the fu-

If it is the latter they have lots of professional company. At a time when the economic news is turning a bit grey, some of the pros are looking like sunshine itself.

"Weak economy is bullish," says The Wellington Letter, which de-scribes itself as a fundamental and technical analyst of major securities

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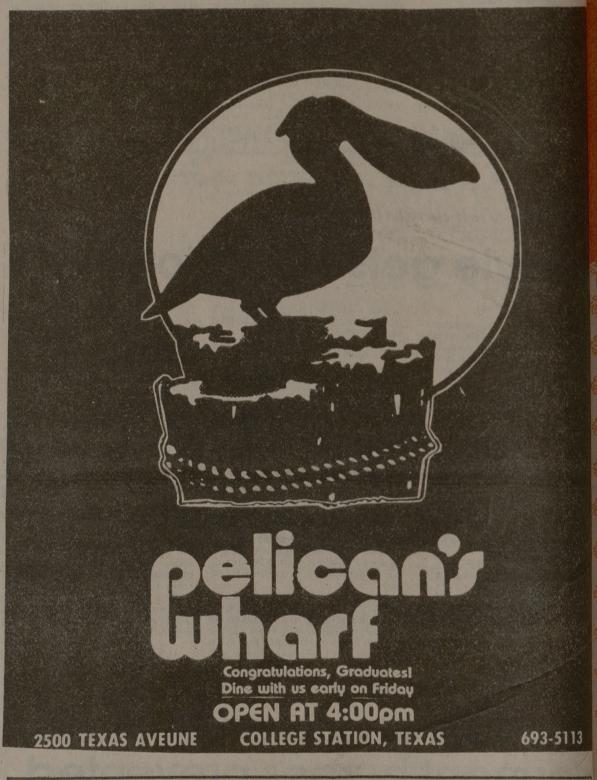
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