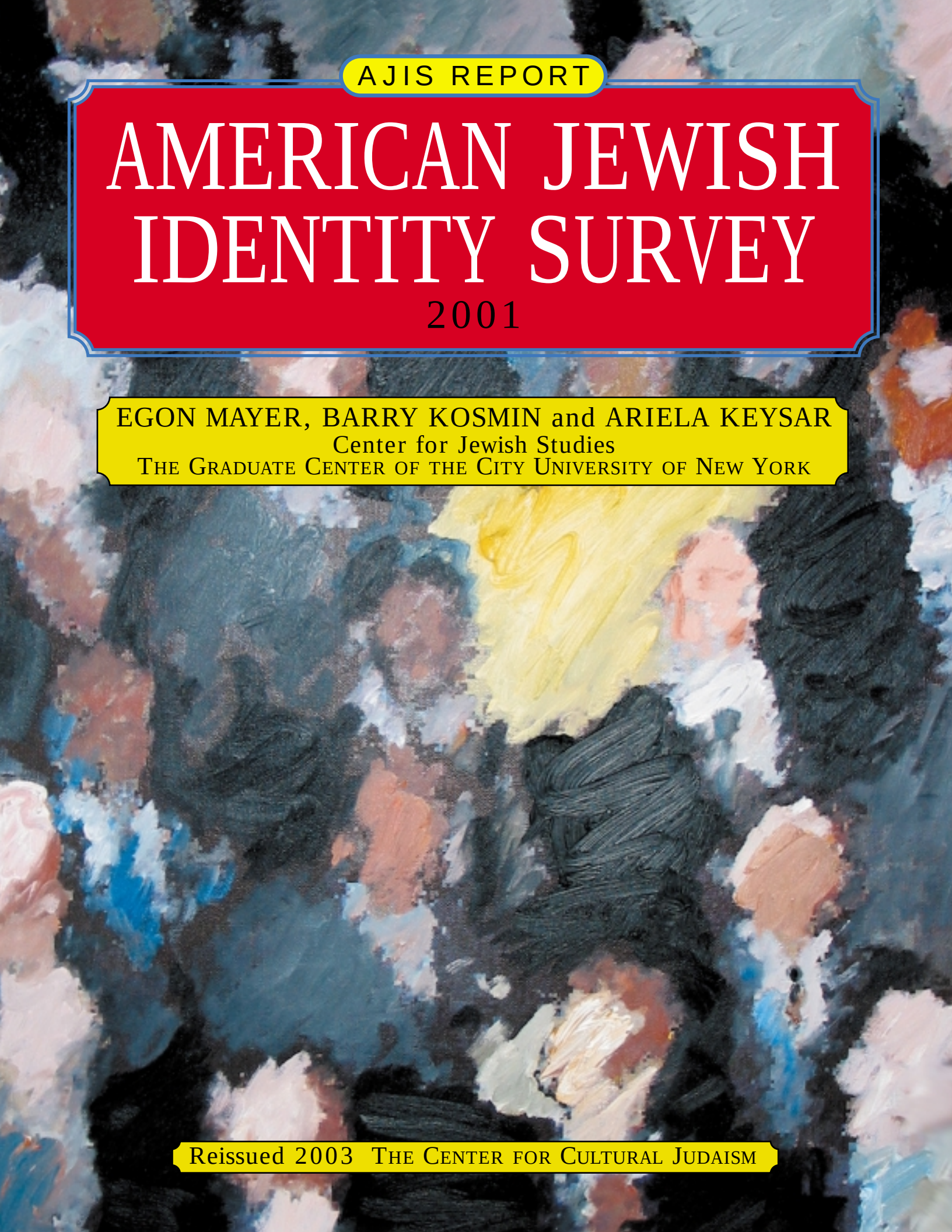

AJIS REPORT

AMERICAN JEWISH IDENTITY SURVEY

2001

EGON MAYER, BARRY KOSMIN and ARIELA KEYSAR
Center for Jewish Studies
THE GRADUATE CENTER OF THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

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AN EXPLORATION IN THE DEMOGRAPHY AND OUTLOOK OF A PEOPLE

EGON MAYER, BARRY A. KOSMIN AND ARIELA KEYSAR

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PREFACE

The Center for Cultural Judaism is very pleased to publish this edition of the important demographic study of America's Jewish population, the only comprehensive data about this population available as of the printing of this publication.

The Center for Cultural Judaism is particularly interested in this study, as our Center was established largely in response to the findings of the American Jewish Identity Survey released by the Graduate Center of the City University of New York (AJIS 2001). Among its key findings, this survey shows that nearly half of America's adult Jews regard themselves as secular or somewhat secular. The number of children born to the secular segment of the Jewish adult population has increased dramatically, up from 307,000 in 1990 to 590,000 in 2001. One-half of American Jews are completely unaffiliated, and do not belong to any Jewish organization or community center.

Despite these figures, non-religious, cultural and secular Jews are vastly under served by existing programs in North America. While the traditional Jewish establishment laments the increase in intermarriage and the decline in the size of our population, few programs have been created to appeal to this large population, which therefore remains on the periphery of Jewish life. Existing programs are limited in their reach because they continue to use conventional models and traditional language to reach a non-traditional population that has an array of alternatives to meet their intellectual, emotional and spiritual needs. Unfortunately, many of these alternatives are not connected to Jewish life.

The mission of The Center for Cultural Judaism is to bring information about this population to the wider Jewish community and academic leadership in North America; to encourage Jewish philanthropy to support this large, under-served population; and to develop programs and services that welcome cultural Jews and offer celebrations, education and communities that are consistent with their beliefs. Our goal is to engage non-religious, secular, cultural and Humanistic Jews in Jewish life, and foster continued pride in our rich and vibrant Jewish heritage.

Myrna Baron, Executive Director
The Center for Cultural Judaism

LIST OF EXHIBITS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Although the present study is the independent work of the authors whose names appear above, the research carried out for this study would not have been possible without the years of selfless dedication to the social scientific study of American Jewry by the National Technical Advisory Committee (NTAC) of the United Jewish Communities (UJC) – formerly Council of Jewish Federations (CJF). It is that group of professional social scientists who established over the course of nearly twenty years the key principles of Jewish demographic research, which forms the methodological backbone of this study.

For more than ten years, from the mid-1980s on, that scientific body was chaired by Professor Sidney Goldstein of Brown University, who guided its scientific deliberations together with its Vice–Chairman, Dr. Joseph Waksberg (Westat Corp.). We, as all others who have carried out social scientific studies of the American Jewish population in the past two decades, shall remain in their debt always.

Indirectly, the study was also made possible by the foresight of Mr. Mandell (Bill) Berman of Detroit, whose generosity and vision helped establish the North American Jewish Data Bank at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. Bill provided the leadership in creating an archive to compile the various social scientific surveys of the American Jewish population carried out in the 1970s and '80s, which resulted in the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey. For more than a decade that survey has been the cornerstone of Jewish demographic research. Because the present study is principally a replication of the 1990 NJPS, it obviously has been structured in virtually all respects on the model established by that seminal work.

The ICR research team provided matchless professional service, further enhancing the fine reputation for quality research they had established in carrying out NJPS 1990.

Finally, we wish to publicly express our appreciation to Mr. Felix Posen and the Posen Foundation, without whose continued interest and generous support this study would not have been possible.

AMERICAN JEWISH IDENTITY SURVEY, 2001

Egon Mayer, Barry A. Kosmin
and Ariela Keysar

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

⇒ Nearly 4 percent of America's 105 million residential households have at least one member who is Jewish by religion or is of Jewish parentage or upbringing or considers himself/herself Jewish.

⇒ The number of such households has increased since 1990 from about 3.2 million to about 3.9 million

⇒ The number of persons living in a household that has at least one member who is Jewish by religion or parentage or upbringing or considers himself/herself Jewish has increased since 1990 from about 8 million to nearly 10 million.

⇒ The number of persons who regard themselves as Jewish by religion or say they are of Jewish parentage or upbringing but have no religion (the "core Jewish" population) has declined from about 5.5 million in 1990 to about 5.3 million in 2001.

⇒ About 3.6 million American adults have a Jewish mother.

⇒ More than 1.5 million American adults have only one Jewish parent (either father or mother).

⇒ The number of persons who are either currently Jewish or of Jewish origins has increased from about 6.8 million in 1990 to nearly 7.7 million in 2001.

⇒ The majority (73 percent) of America's adults who are Jewish by religion or of Jewish parentage or upbringing but say they have no religion believe that God exists. But nearly half of this population regards itself as secular or somewhat secular in outlook.

⇒ About one million American households report affiliation with a Jewish congregation (synagogue, temple, or an independent *havurah*). That number represents an increase of some 15 percent over the 880,000 households reporting congregational affiliation in 1990.

⇒ About 44 percent of America's adults who are Jewish by religion or say they are of Jewish parentage or upbringing report membership in a Jewish congregation (synagogue, temple, or an independent *havurah*).

⇒ The Reform branch of Judaism is the largest in terms of the number of adult adherents: about 1.1 million out of a total of 2.9 million of America's Jewish-by-religion adults.

⇒ The other branches of Judaism in size order are: Conservative Judaism with about 940,000 adult adherents, Orthodox Judaism with about 300,000 adult adherents, Secular Humanist Judaism with about 40,000 adherents and Reconstructionist Judaism with about 35,000 adherents.

⇒ In all, Reform constitutes 38 percent of adult adherents; Conservative represents 32 percent; Orthodox represents 10 percent; Secular Humanist represents 1 percent; and Reconstructionist represents 1 percent. The balance of the population is unknown.

⇒ Nearly one million American adults who are Jewish by religion or are of Jewish parentage or upbringing but say they have no religion are affiliated with some non-congregational Jewish community organization such as a Jewish community center or a Jewish fraternal organization.

⇒ Nearly a third of America's adults who are Jewish by religion or say they are of Jewish parentage or upbringing but have no religion have visited Israel. That figure represents a modest increase from the roughly 28 percent reporting visiting Israel in 1990.

⇒ Nearly 60 percent of adults who are Jewish by religion are married; of those who report being Jewish parentage or upbringing but of no religion, just 45 percent are married. More of the latter group is likely to be separated or divorced or living in a non-marital couple relationship (cohabiting).

⇒ Of all adults married since 1990, who say they are Jewish by religion or of Jewish parentage or upbringing, just 40 percent are married to a spouse who is also of Jewish origins; 51 percent are married to a spouse who is not of Jewish origins and an additional 9 percent are married to a spouse who is a convert to Judaism.

⇒ Of all cohabiting adults who say they are Jewish by religion or of Jewish parentage or upbringing, 81 percent are living with a partner who is not of Jewish origins.

AMERICAN JEWISH IDENTITY SURVEY, 2001

Egon Mayer, Barry A. Kosmin
and Ariela Keysar

INTRODUCTION

America's Jews are divided, perhaps as never before, over a question that would surprise most other Americans who are not familiar with the Jewish heritage or the Jewish community in any way. That question is, quite simply: "Who is Jewish?" At a more subtle level, the questions asked are, "What does 'Jewish' mean?" and "Who gets to decide?" or "How are those who call themselves 'Jewish' or are labeled as such by others signify that identity or social status to themselves and others?"

This report addresses who is Jewish in America today and what that means with respect to adherence to Judaism. What segments of the population adhere to Judaism as the basis of their religious identification, and what segments describe themselves as being of Jewish parentage or upbringing (origins) without any explicit adherence to Judaism as a religion? What is the relative size of those different segments of the over-all American Jewish population? Put somewhat differently, the study addresses the tri-fold question: What do Jews believe? To what do Jews belong? And how do Jews behave? Each of these questions is explored with respect to how its answers help define the contours of Jewish identification and the Jewish population in the United States today.

Exploration of those questions is animated here by a broad observation that has emerged from a recent study of American religious identification.[1] Vast numbers of Americans who regard themselves as Jewish or who are of Jewish parentage and upbringing simply have no faith in the conventional religious sense of that term. They adhere to an identity that is rooted in an ancient faith. But their claim to that identity implies little or no commitment to its religious roots.

That fact and the questions it raises have wide ranging ramifications for a broad network of religious, educational and social service organizations that collectively comprise the organized Jewish community in the United States. Because that community, as all ethnic and religious communities in the United States, is voluntary in nature, its members determine the criteria on the basis of which they include or exclude fellow members, get to decide from whom they seek support so as to sustain the community, and get to decide upon whom and for what purposes they expend the resources and voluntary associations they share in common. Who is defined in and who is defined out matters greatly. So do the criteria on the basis of which such definitions are made.

- ITEM: More Jews than most other Americans respond "None," when asked, "What is your religion, if any?"
- ITEM: More Jews than members of most other American religious groups think of themselves as "secular" rather than as "religious."
- ITEM: Fewer Jews than members of most other American religious groups belong to a temple, synagogue or any other religious institution.
- ITEM: Fewer Jews than members of most other American religious groups agree with the essential proposition of religious belief that "God exists."

Of course, each of these items hinges on a term that itself begs for definition: that is the term "Jews." The first section of this report explores the demographic implications of different definitions of the term. Each of the above items hinges as well on the degree to which group adherence is synonymous with religious belief, practice and affiliation. Those aspects of Jewish identity will be explored in the second half of this report.

The U.S. Constitution guarantees the right[2] of each and every American to form a community with others around ideals, practices or concerns they share in common. Those universally treasured freedoms also make it possible for individuals to lay claim to highly nuanced and distinctive notions of personal identity. Therein lies the paradoxical nature of American Jewish identification. Individuals may form communities that in turn may set their own criteria for membership, particularly with regard to religion. Yet, individuals retain the inalienable right to claim and proclaim whatever personal identification they wish.

In view of Americans' Constitutionally guaranteed rights, the decennial U.S. Census has declined to ask people about their religious beliefs and/or memberships or lack thereof. Therefore, questions about the size and composition of the Jewish population have been left to be answered by voluntary effort.

The present study constitutes one such effort. It has deployed the dispassionate tools of modern social science to address the aforementioned questions, which are often thought to be the province of rabbis, theologians or communal politicians. Any effort to gauge the contours of the American Jewish population must begin with the realization that there are simply no universally agreed upon standards as to who is to be counted within the relevant target population.

Much attention has focused in the past several years upon internal divisions in the Jewish community over matters of religious practice and communal policy. Books such as that of Jack Wertheimer, *A People Divided: Judaism in Contemporary America* (1993) or that of Samuel G. Freedman, *Jew vs. Jew: The Struggle for the Soul of American Jewry* (2000) have thoroughly laid to rest the notion that America's Jews are homogeneous when it comes to faith, religious practice or belonging. Whether the issue is the role of women in the rabbinate, or public financing of religious education or more esoteric questions such as rabbinic officiation at interfaith weddings or the construction of an *eruv* (a symbolic enclosure of public space for Sabbath observers), students of American Jewry have demonstrated time and again that Jews are often a fractious lot when it comes to matters of belief or its institutional embodiment in the life of synagogues and other Jewish communal institutions. The community is no less divided on questions of personal status within the community.

Traditional Jewish law (*halakhah*), based on thousands of years of Jewish texts, has established presumptive personal Jewish status on the basis of matrilineal descent or formal conversion according to strict religious standards. However, that body of law and custom is widely ignored by the great majority of America's Jews in virtually all facets of their lives. The largest branch of American Judaism, the Reform movement, as well as such smaller movements as the Reconstructionist and the Secular Humanist, formally abandoned the matrilineal standards of Jewish status assignment decades ago and have radically altered as well the criteria for conversion to Judaism. Indeed, one of the key findings of the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey (NJPS 1990) was that a substantial number of individuals declared themselves as 'Jewish' or were so described by their spouses or parents even in the absence of a genealogical basis to such a claim or lack of formal conversion. Partly as a result of such findings in the 1990 study, the term "Jews by choice" has come to displace "converts" in the contemporary lexicon of Jewish demography.

One of the salient findings of this study is that there is a large and growing population of American Jewish adults who are without religious faith. They adhere to no creed nor choose to affiliate with any religious community. These are the seculars, the 'unchurched,' or in the present case the 'unsynagogued.' While this fact may be lamented widely within the organized Jewish community, it in fact reflects a much broader trend in American religious life. The recent *American Religious Identification Survey 2001*, which serves as companion to the present study, found more than 29 million adults who say they have no religion in 2001, up from just a little more than 14 million in 1990.[3] This fact has particular relevance to the study of America's Jews since adults of Jewish parentage who claim no religion constitute more than 3.8 percent of all American adults without religion, while adults claiming Judaism as their religion constitute just 1.6 percent of all American adults who claim a religion.

Since the mid-1960s, when the Harvard theologian Harvey Cox's best selling *The Secular City*[4] ushered in a brief era of academic interest in "secularization," American religion has been widely perceived as leaning toward the more literal, fundamental, and spiritual. Particularly since the election in 1976 of President Jimmy Carter, a self-avowed Born Again Christian, America has gone through a period of religious re-awakening. The academic debate about whether America was becoming a more or less secular society left the Jewish community untouched.

During the very period of that debate, the most notable change in American Jewish life has been the radical transformation of the American Jewish family through interfaith marriage. As a series of studies since the National Jewish Population Study of 1970 has shown, the incidence of interfaith marriage among American Jews had increased several times over, from less than 10 percent prior to 1960 to about 50 percent by 1990. Concern about the impact of intermarriage upon the Jewish future has entirely overshadowed secularism as an independent source of change in most studies of American Jewry. It is at least in part as a reaction to the rather one-dimensional focus of the past decade that this study looks more directly at questions of religious belief and worldview among America's Jews.

METHODOLOGY: AJIS 2001 & NJPS 1990

In order to address the key questions of the study on the basis of scientific observation, we carried out a national survey of the American residential adult population,[5] the second such study to be carried out by this research team since 1990, with a special focus on those who describe themselves as Jewish when asked about their religious adherence or who might be reasonably labeled Jewish by virtue of their family of origins.

The survey on which the findings are based was carried out on behalf of the investigators by the ICR Survey Research Group (Media, Pa.) between February and May 2001. Approximately 3,000 telephone interviews were conducted with adult respondents from randomly selected households over the course of 17 weeks. The survey was designed to replicate both in methodology and in substance a survey carried out by the same company in 1990, which was then called the National Jewish Population Survey.[6]

This study, as the one it replicates from 1990, has had as its first and foremost goal to determine the definition of the term "Jew" or "Jewish" and then to ascertain the size and basic demographic characteristics of the American Jewish population. Because this survey is a replication of one carried out just over ten years ago it also seeks to explore significant patterns of change over time in those demographic characteristics.

Following a research model that was designed by a team of eminent demographers and sociologists for the 1990 NJPS,[7] the current survey also utilized a sample drawn from a universe of American residential households containing at least one person who identified himself or herself as currently or previously Jewish, or of Jewish parentage. In keeping with the voluntary nature of religious and/or ethnic identification, the current survey as its predecessor, depended entirely on the decision of an individual adult to respond to a series of four qualifying questions on the basis of which the researchers could fit them into the appropriate category of whether or not the individual and/or his/her household could be labeled "Jewish."

The sample for the current study, as was the case for NJPS 1990, was obtained by means of random-digit-dialing (RDD). All interviews were conducted in English. Out of all successful contacts, a total of 50,238 respondents agreed to be interviewed.[8]

A series of screening questions at the outset of each interview was used to determine that out of all households interviewed, a total of 1,668 or 3.3 percent qualified to be included in a survey of American Jewish households. Respondents from the selected households constitute the unweighted sample for this study. The screening questions used to determine whether a household would be included in the sample were as follows:

- What is your religion, if any?[9] [For respondents who were married, cohabiting with a partner or formerly married, the question was repeated with reference to the person's husband/wife or partner]. In those instances where the response was something other than Jewish – the majority of cases – the following was asked...

- Do you or does anyone else in your household have a Jewish mother or a Jewish father? In those instances where the answer to this question was negative – the majority of cases – the following was asked ...
- Were you or anyone else in your household raised Jewish? In those instances where the answer to this question was negative – the majority of cases – the following was asked ...
- Do you or does anyone else in your household consider himself or herself to be Jewish?

The sample for the current survey included all households in which an adult respondent indicated that either he/she was Jewish, or someone else in the household was Jewish when asked their religion, or someone in the household had a Jewish mother or a Jewish father, or someone in the household was raised Jewish, or someone in the household considered themselves Jewish for some other reason.

These selection criteria have yielded a typology of qualifying sample households that is visualized below for easy description.

EXHIBIT 1

JEWISH IDENTITY CONSTRUCTS

Household Qualified for Inclusion in AJIS Because Someone Was ...

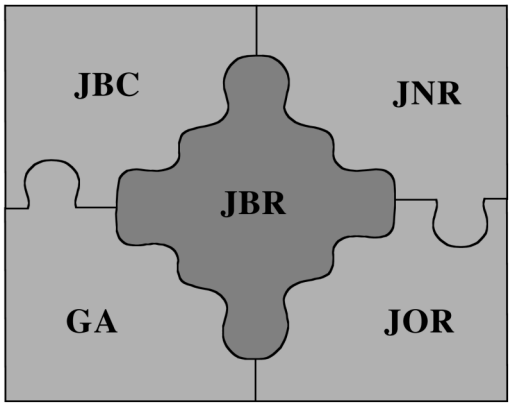
JBC = Jew by Choice

JBR = Jewish by Religion

JNR = Of Jewish Parents & Now of No Religion

JOR = Of Jewish Parentage & Now of Other Religion

GA = No Jewish Adult in HH & only a Child of Jewish Parentage



The five-part typology in Exhibit 1 above is virtually identical to that used to classify qualifying respondents and households in NJPS 1990, though there are a few slight modifications to simplify analysis. NJPS 1990 used eight categories to classify respondents and children.[10] These were:

(a) **BJR**: Born Jews who indicated their religion as Judaism,
(b) **JBC**: Jews by Choice (people who indicated they were not born and/or raised as Jews but at the time of the survey regarded their religion as Judaism,
(c) **JBR**: Jews by Religion (the combination of a + b above),

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(d) **JNR**: Jews who report having no religion,
(e) **JCO**: Respondents who were born and/or raised as Jews but who reported their religion as something other than Judaism,
(f) **JOR**: Respondents who report Jewish parentage but who also indicate they were raised from birth in another religion,
(g) **JCOR**: Children under 18 who are reported to have at least one Jewish parent but who are raised from birth in another religion, and
(h) **GA**: Non-Jewish adults whose households may have qualified because there was a child who had a Jewish parent.

Exhibit 1 does not include a separate classification for children of Jewish parents who are being raised in another religion (JCOR). The above figure also conflates the two categories of NJPS 1990 (JCO and JOR) that sought to identify persons of Jewish origins who now profess another religion. These two categories are treated separately in those analyses where such separate treatment is warranted, such as in the case of measuring the incidence of intermarriage. In the above exhibit the JOR category is intended to encompass both. The exhibit does differentiate Jews by Choice (JBC) and Jews by Religion presumed to be of Jewish origins (JBR). However, both those categories are treated as just JBR for most analytic purposes. The 1990 NJPS differentiated JBCs from BJRs – persons of Jewish religion who were born to Jewish parents – and used the JBR designation as a way of speaking about the two together.

The current survey sought, as did NJPS 1990, to spread the widest possible net in sampling so as to provide an opportunity for respondents to indicate in what way if any they might be Jewish themselves or whether another member of their household might be Jewish in some way. This study did not arrogate to itself the right to define who is Jewish by some *a priori* cultural or religious standard. Rather, it tried to detect by means of the four screening questions whether or not any members of the household would regard themselves as having some connection to either the Jewish religion, a Jewish family or the Jewish people, either on the basis of current identification or on the basis of ancestry, or both.

This approach to constructing a sample of the American Jewish population recognizes the two critical features of Jewish identification, which stem from both ancient sources and the modern condition of Jews in a free and open society. That is, that the condition of "Jewishness" can be the result either of descent or consent, family of origins or faith, and as a matter of fact is often an amalgam of both.

Although the current survey sought to replicate NJPS 1990 in most methodological respects, several important differences must be indicated at the outset. We have already pointed out the slight modification in the opening question, which added the clause, "…if any," to the formulation, "What is your religion?" That change might be at least part of the explanation for the fact that in the current survey a smaller number of respondents indicated their religion as Jewish than was found in 1990. Of course, it is also likely that fewer

American adults identify with Judaism as their religion in 2001 than they did in 1990 – a change independent of the slight change in wording of our questionnaire.

Both the current sample and that of NJPS 1990 are based on omnibus surveys.[11] NJPS 1990 had the benefit of a substantially larger sampling of the population than the present survey. Over the course of year, 125,813 randomly selected Americans were screened to determine the Jewish qualification of their household in 1990. In the current survey, due mainly to budget and time considerations, just over 50,000 American households were screened. However, other innovations allowed for greater efficiencies than were possible in 1990.

In 1990, NJPS was carried out in three stages. The first stage involved the screening of households only in order to identify a sample of qualifying Jewish households. That first stage identified 5,139 qualifying Jewish households, or 4 percent of the total households screened. At a second stage, the initially qualifying households were re-screened to enlist their cooperation with a much longer survey designed specifically for them. What is commonly known as the NJPS 1990 survey was in reality that third stage of the screening and interviewing process. That final stage yielded a total of 2,441 completed interviews. Thus, even though our initial screening used a sample that was less than half the size of its 1990 predecessor, it resulted in a final sample that is only one-third smaller (1,668 vs. 2,441).

In the current study, a single-stage approach was used. Our interviews were also kept much shorter than was the case in 1990. Because the administration of our survey instrument, including the screening questions, required no more than seven minutes on average, it was possible to carry out the AJIS in a single-stage interview. That modification from the multi-stage approach of NJPS 1990 greatly minimized sample erosion. Refusal to the specifically Jewish portion of the survey was a little over 2 percent.

One of the ways in which our interviews were kept brief is that respondents were not asked to provide detailed information about each and every member of the household. Most of the information asked for, with but a few exceptions, pertained either to the respondent or to the entire household.

FINDINGS

DEMOGRAPHY OF HOUSEHOLDS

Among the 50,282 households across the continental United States where a respondent was interviewed, 1,668 qualified as "Jewish" and eligible for the AJIS interview by means of a positive answer to one of the four screening criteria set out earlier. For purposes of clarity, it should be reiterated that the classification of households and respondents followed a somewhat complex set of decision rules. It must also be kept in mind that all information was obtained from one individual respondent in each household, who was furnishing information both about himself/herself and also about other members of the household. A respondent qualified for the present survey either on the basis of religion or of parentage/upbringing if he or she indicated either Judaism as their religious preference or that they were of Jewish parentage and/or upbringing and/or considered themselves Jewish.

When the household weighting system (for details see Methodological Appendix) is applied to these 1,668 households, a national estimate of the total number of households in the continental USA can be extrapolated. Thus, we estimate that there are 3,760,000 households containing at least one person of Jewish background or current Jewish identity. This amounts to 3.6 percent of the 104 million American households. Using the same selection criteria and weighting system, in 1990 the comparative figure was 3,186,000 households. This figure then represented 3.5 percent of 92 million American households. So there has been a slight increase in the proportion of American households, but a substantial net increase, of 574,000, in the actual number of households containing somebody currently Jewish or of Jewish background.

In 1990 the average household size was nearly 2.6 persons, which extrapolated to a total population of 8,100,000 persons residing in qualifying "Jewish" households (excluding the institutionalized population). The average household size in 2001 was 2.6 persons, which extrapolates to a total population of 9,740,000 (excluding the institutionalized population). The number of Americans living in a household where at least one person is of Jewish background or current Jewish identity has increased by 1.6 million over the last decade. Thus the number of households increased by 18 percent and the number of persons in these qualifying households rose by 20 percent in the period 1990-2001.

To place these figures in perspective, according to the U.S. Census there were 281,421,906 people living in the fifty states of the United States on April 1, 2000. A decade earlier the U.S. Census reported 248,709,873 people living in the fifty states. The number of Americans has increased by some 13 percent in the decade between the two censuses.

The population figure amounting to nearly 10 million people far exceeds the widely accepted size of the American Jewish population – commonly estimated at 5.5-6 million. Nor is it suggested here that the larger figure is in any way an estimate of the size of the "Jewish" population. As we shall see, that population figure reflects social as much as biological processes of growth. Indeed, the social process of interfaith and inter-ethnic marriage is the main driving force of the risen population figure. The corollary of this is that a great many among this enlarged population are of another religion and may not identify themselves as Jewish at all, though they are related to somebody of Jewish parentage and/or upbringing. Yet many have distinctive Jewish surnames and so are likely to be regarded as Jews.

Nonetheless, it appears that in the majority of American households in which there is at least one person who adheres to Judaism as a religion, or is of Jewish parentage, upbringing or self-identification, the basis of most of the members' Jewishness is not religion.

The absence of anchorage in religion among so many people who otherwise regard themselves linked at least in part to Jewish parents and/or Jewish upbringing and/or Jewish self-identification, poses a possibly unprecedented challenge for understanding the nature of Jewish community in America. The quest for such understanding is at the heart of this report. In order to do this we must turn our attention from households to the actual people who live in them, especially to adults who identify as Jewish by religion or who describe their parentage or upbringing as Jewish even if they do not identify with the Jewish religion.

DEMOGRAPHY OF POPULATION

The population numbers that will be described below must be treated with some caution since they are all estimates. They are at best indicative of trends and proportions rather than precise projections. Thus, the AJIS figures have been rounded off to the nearest ten thousand so as not to give a false impression of greater precision than such a survey permits. All survey data involve random error and in the cases reported below there are also complex weighting schemes (for details see Methodological Appendix). Although the range of the statistical error in many cases is small, even a 2 or 3 percent range of error may mean hundreds of thousands of people. Baseline numbers may not sum to the same total in all exhibits due to the rounding off of figures. Again, we remind the reader that these are estimates not exact projections.

It should be recalled as well that the AJIS questionnaire, on which the present study is based, sought to identify Jewish adults of the basis of religion, parentage or upbringing by means of the following screening questions:

⇒ What is your religion, if any? If the person did NOT reply "Jewish" they were asked…

⇒ Do you or does anyone else in your household have a Jewish mother or a Jewish father (and is that yourself or someone else in the house or both?) If the answer to this question was negative then the next question was…

⇒ Were you or anyone else in your household raised Jewish (and was that yourself or someone else in the house or both?) If the answer to this question was negative then the final screening question was ...

⇒ Do you or does anyone else in your household consider themselves Jewish?

By this sequenced, four-question screening methodology the survey was able to identify the following distribution of Jewish types of respondents. The nature of the survey process means the population statistics on individuals, in contrast to that for household data, are drawn from 1,215 cases where respondents themselves qualified as "Jewish" during the screening sequence described above. In the remaining 453 households the respondents were non-Jewish members, so the household qualified for inclusion in the survey because someone other than the respondent was Jewish of Jewish parentage.

EXHIBIT 2

Adult Population Classified as Jewish by Four Selection Criteria

(Unweighted sample and weighted population estimate)

	N	%	N	%
Religion	618	51	2,800,000	51
Parentage (not religion)	528	43	2,200,000	40
Upbringing (not parent/religion)	28	2	164,000	3
Considering Self Jewish only	41	4	203,000	4
(Institutionalized estimate)			110,000	2
TOTAL	**1,215**	**100**	**5,497,000**	**100**

NOTE: Each successive criterion excluded the others. People who indicated their religion as "Jewish" or "Judaism" were later asked about their parentage; people who indicated that one or more of their parents was Jewish or that they were raised Jewish were not further asked if they actually considered themselves Jewish.

JEWISH IDENTITY CONSTRUCTS

The four-part segmentation reflected in Exhibit 2 underscores that where religion and ethnicity are not officially established – within the context of a voluntary society like the United States and other western, democratic and pluralistic societies – the simple act of counting the Jewish population involves a negotiation between the social scientist and his/her subject. The population under study here is not defined by any set of geographic or genealogical boundaries. At least in present-day America, it is defined by social-psychological boundaries, largely of its own making. The discovery of the social boundaries is determined as much by the questions asked as by the subjective meaning associated with those questions on the part of the respondent. As with the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey (NJPS) the plan of this study was to spread the widest possible net and provide for as many people as possible to reveal whatever was Jewish about their identity or background.

Neither this survey nor any other can provide the ultimate definition of who or what is a Jew, nor can it establish the fixed boundaries of the American Jewish community. It merely records and collates the answers freely given by a representative sampling of the public to the particular questions that were asked. Furthermore, no respondent was asked to document any claim or answer. In fact the typologies used reflect a key feature of Jewishness in America, namely that it is an amalgam of ethnicity and religion and the fact that this society allows for choice about one's religio-ethnic identity.

Such implicit negotiation produces a variety of persons who might be called "Jewish" either by themselves or by those who wish to study them for different purposes. However, we already have a model for describing and analyzing these findings and that is the widely popular 1990 National Jewish Population Survey (NJPS 1990). This model created a set of Jewish "identity groups" based on a number of acronyms as set forth in Exhibit 1. These identity groups are the result of combining the qualifying criteria as given in Exhibit 2 and the current religious identity self-definitions provided by the respondents themselves to the original ARIS question. This situation reflects the social reality whereby for most of Jewish history "Jewishness" and membership of the Jewish people has been acknowledged as being tied up with an amalgam of elements based upon religio-cultural and familial-ancestry ties.

In order to estimate the size of the child population under 18 years of age, none of whom were interviewed, we classified the children present in the surveyed households according to how the respondent said the children are raised. This allowed us to accurately assign children to three religious categories – Judaism – No Religion – Other religions. In those cases where there was missing data on how the children were being raised, as well as "don't knows" or refusals, they were assigned to the identity group of the adult respondent if s/he was Jewish or to JCOR if the respondent was a Gentile.

In NJPS 1990 and AJIS 2001, in effect three religious identity groups were defined – persons whose religion is Judaism, persons of Jewish background who subscribe to no religion, and persons of Jewish background who subscribe to "other religious groups" (i.e. groups whose religion is other than Judaism). This process in turn allowed us to create a set of three nested populations – a "core Jewish" population – people of Jewish background and descent who adhere to no religion other than Judaism – and two other variants (i.e. people who are of Jewish descent but now adhere to another religion, and people who are related by marriage to persons of Jewish descent). In the aggregate, these three nested populations sum to a total a population of nearly 10 million residing in qualifying "Jewish" households, which we described above. Each of the component sub-populations is described and enumerated below.

JEWS BY RELIGION (JBR)

This population construct is the easiest to designate and explain. It results directly from the national screening of the whole U.S. adult population and consists of those who self-identify as "Jewish" or answered "Judaism" when asked their religion in NSRI 1990 or ARIS 2001. This population consists of two sub-groups: the BJRs – persons born to and/or raised by Jewish parents and currently Jewish by religion, and JBCs – the Jews by choice – persons whose origins by parentage and/or upbringing are not Jewish, but who converted to or adhere to Judaism. In ARIS 2001 the latter respondents were identified by a question that asked if the respondent had ever switched or changed their religion. Interestingly, as Exhibit 3 shows, the number of adult Jews by choice found by both surveys is almost identical – around 175,000 persons.

The weighted total number of adults who were JBRs in 1990 was 3,137,000 but fell to 2,831,000 in 2001. Thus, the directly comparable figures show a decline in this population of nearly 300,000 adult persons or 8 percent. The final 1990 NJPS numbers reproduced in Exhibit 3 result from an upward adjustment after Stage 3 of NJPS 1990 to allow for immigration and other changes over the much longer data collection period of over a year. Using this figure of 3,539,000 suggests an even greater loss among the JBR population since then. The JBR child population appears to have fallen from 855,000 to 700,000, a decrease of 18 percent.

JEWS OF NO RELIGION (JNR)

This category consists of persons of Jewish parentage/upbringing who report they have "no religion," or replied atheist, agnostic, secular or humanist. In addition, those qualified Jewish respondents who reported being of Jewish parentage and/or upbringing but replied "don't know" or refused the religion item, were included in this category since they, too, reported no current religious preference. As is shown in Exhibit 3, the size of this sub-population among adults was 813,000 in 1990, but has grown to 1,120,000 in the intervening eleven years, an increase of about 38 percent. Putting children into the analysis, the size of the JNR population has grown from 1,120,000 in 1990 to 1,710,000 in 2001, an increase of nearly 53 percent.

THE CORE JEWISH POPULATION

Since 1990, social scientists studying America's Jews have adopted the designation "core Jewish" population to refer to those whom most Jewish communal bodies accept without qualification as potential members of their communities. This analytical model was first used in Canada where the respondents can self-identify as "Jewish" on both the ethnicity and religion schedules. The 1991 Canadian National Census enumerated 318,070 Jews on the basis of the religion question and 369,560 on the basis of ethnicity; but only 281,680 persons on the basis of both. The protocol adopted there was to exclude persons of Jewish background who designated a non-Jewish religious group as their religion but to include 'non-religious' Jews as part of the accepted community. In effect, that practice followed the European historical precedent whereby Jews who were *laique* or *konfessionlos* were accepted as members of the community and treated more favorably and quite differently by Jewish authorities from those who converted out or became baptized Christians.[12]

Given the two elements of Jewishness – religion and ancestry – it is analytically useful to suggest that those persons who (a) identify with both aspects of the group's social ties or (b) identify with the groups' ancestry and have chosen no other religion, comprise the "core" group in the population. That designation has also tended to be a good predictor, in terms of empirical evidence, of social ties to the Jewish community, as we shall show in section 2.

EXHIBIT 3

Core Jewish Population 1990 & 2001

Code	Jewish Identity Category	1990		2001	
	ADULTS	Number	%	Number	%
BJR	**Jewish Parent: Religion Judaism**	3,365,000 (*3,137,000*)	61	2,760,000	52
JBC	**No Jewish Parent: Religion Judaism**	174,000	3	170,000	3
JNR	**Jewish Parent: No Religion**	813,000	15	1,120,000	21
	CHILDREN (under age 18)				
JBR *(Includes JBC)*	**Jew by Religion**	856,000	16	700,000	13
JNR	**Jew No Religion**	307,000	5	590,000	11
TOTAL	**ALL AGES**	**5,515,000**	**100**	**5,340,000**	**100**

The "core Jewish" population has diminished over the past decade, due in large measure to the decline in the "Jews by religion" sub-population. The "Jews by choice" sub-population has largely remained constant. The number of Jews of "no religion" has grown considerably both in absolute terms and as a proportion of the total "core Jewish" population. This growth is due to both the secularizing trends that are particularly significant among American Jews, which will be described in the next section, and to social forces arising from the high rate of interfaith marriages, which was highlighted by the 1990 NJPS. The latter trend has produced a large cohort of young adults who are children of intermarriages. In a great many of those marriages the neutral or default option as to how the parents raised their offspring was to choose no faith tradition. In fact, NJPS 1990 found that more children from intermarried homes were being raised in 'no religion' than in Judaism (30 percent vs. 25 percent).[13]

Whatever the actual cause may be for the rise in the numbers of those with no religion, there is clear evidence that there is a secularizing process under way where by the "Jews by religion" component of the "core Jewish" population has fallen from 80 percent in 1990 to 68 percent in 2001. At the same time, the JNR or "no religion" component has increased from 20 percent to 32 percent during this period.

JEWS OF OTHER RELIGIONS (JOR/JCOR)

This population, consisting of those who are of Jewish parentage and/or upbringing or consider themselves Jewish, but who presently adhere to another religion, are designated as JOR. In 2001 they were estimated to number over 2.3 million persons of all ages. This is a mixed population in a number of ways. It contains the children as well as grandchildren of "core Jews." It consists largely of persons who had intermarried parents, possibly intermarried grandparents, and who were raised in the religious tradition of the non-Jewish parent. It also contains a small proportion of people who had two Jewish parents and were

born and raised as "core Jews," but have switched to a non-Jewish religious group. Thus the "other religions" reported include the whole gamut from Catholic, Baptist, Episcopalian to Messianic Jews as well as other religions such as Buddhism, Wicca, Scientology and Unitarianism. In Exhibit 4 we also distinguish between adults, who were all respondents and able to self-identify, and their children under 18 years of age, who were not respondents and are located in this identity groups as a result of their parents' responses.

It is important to enumerate this population, as knowing the size of the "penumbra" allows us to place the "core" in perspective and to measure the magnitude of assimilation. Exhibit 4 indicates there has been rapid growth in the number of adults who fall into the JOR category since 1990. This is due mainly to the high rate of intermarriage that has been a feature of American Jewry since 1970. NJPS 1990 discovered that a plurality of 45 percent of the children from mixed ("core Jewish" and Gentile parent) homes was being raised in a religion other than Judaism.[14] The JCOR child population appears to have increased less spectacularly since 1990 – probably because both marriage and fertility rates fell among Jews of all identity groups during the 1990s. In addition growth in the numbers of JCORs might be expected to level off considering that AJIS has reported elsewhere that the intermarriage rate during recent years has not changed from that of the late 1980s (52 percent vs. 51 percent).

THE JEWISH ORIGINS POPULATION

Ignoring the distinction between "core" and "periphery" segments of the population, one can also speak of a population that is of Jewish descent. This population of Jewish descent or to use an older term 'Jewish extraction' is estimated to have increased from 6.8 to 7.7 million persons between 1990 and 2001. It is enumerated for a variety of reasons. It provides a demographic barometer based on indicators of descent in contrast with that based on indicators of consent such as religious identification. However, when we enumerate Jews we are not just dealing with questions of pure demography or even sociology. The Jewish-origins population is that segment of the American population that has blood or close kinship ties to other Jews. However, such ties may also have social consequences whether in the form of discriminatory incidents on the one hand or in the form of kinship bonds that entail family get-togethers on the other. This segment of Americans is one kind of a "population at risk"[15] – that is a group sharing minimal common characteristics that distinguish them from the rest of American society. In the present case this population includes both those who are currently self-identified as Jewish by religion and those who are Jewish merely by parentage or upbringing.

EXHIBIT 4

Jewish & Jewish Origins Population 1990 & 2001

Code	Jewish Identity Category	1990		2001	
		Number	%	Number	%
JBR/JNR	**Core Jews (all ages)**	5,515,000	81	5,340,000	69
JOR	**Adults of Jewish Parentage: Other Religions**	625,000	9	1,470,000	19
JCOR	**Children of Jewish Parentage: Other Religions**	707,000	10	880,000	12
TOTAL	**Jewish & Jewish Origins Population**	**6,847,000**	**100**	**7,690,000**	**100**

It is important to remember that political antisemitism in the West throughout the twentieth century was based on biology or descent – scientific racism – rather than religious prejudice as such. Genocide against Jews was rationalized on the basis of supposedly detrimental biological, inherited characteristics of the Jew and it used a "racial" classification to define its victims not a religious one. It is still the case that Jewish communal defense organizations feel morally bound to defend so-called "half Jews." Since many JORs bear "Jewish" surnames, they may continue to be regarded as "Jewish" by others. Moreover, because religion is not the only basis for Jewish identification, some JORs also self-define as "Jewish." Given the recent advances in genetics, knowledge of the size of the biological population set out in Exhibit 4 also has scientific merit and possibly medical consequences as we learn more about the role of genetics in health and disease.

THE 'HALAKHIC' ADULT JEWISH POPULATION

Since the time of the Prophet Nehemiah and the return of Jewish exiles from Babylonia, Jewish law or *halakhah* has defined an individual's status as a Jew solely through the maternal line. A person born to a Jewish mother was presumptively Jewish. (We shall ignore the issue of conversion here and thus the need to deal with the *halakhic* status of the JBC population) The definition based on *halakhah* is still adhered to by the Orthodox and Conservative branches of Judaism in the U.S., as well as by Israel's Ministry of the Interior (for citizenship but not immigration purposes – see below). The Reform, Reconstructionist and Secular Humanist branches of Judaism have abandoned the *halakhic* criterion and fully accept individuals as presumptively Jewish if either parent is Jewish and the individual was raised as a Jew with no adherence to another religion.

Because a *halakhic* definition of who is Jewish is relevant for important segments of American Jewry, particularly for marriage purposes, the exhibit that follows describes how many adults from each Jewish identity type population meet such a definition. The AJIS questionnaire included a specific and detailed parentage question directed to all qualifying respondents (in addition to the non-specific parentage option in the screening process). Respondents were asked if both parents were Jewish and if not, whether it was their mother or father that was Jewish. It must be emphasized that no proof was asked for and no respondent was asked about the *halakhic* status of any converts in their ancestry's maternal line.

The findings in Exhibit 5 are new information since NJPS 1990 included parentage only as a module question for a small segment of the study sample and the results were never reported. The percentages in the "*halakhically* Jewish" category represent the proportion of each sub-population that reported Jewish ancestry in the maternal line.

EXHIBIT 5

Parentage of America's Jewish Adults 2001

AJIS 2001	JBR	JNR	JOR
	N= 2,930,000	**N= 1,120,000**	**N= 1,470,000**
Jewish Parentage	*Percent*	*Percent*	*Percent*
Both Parents	78	37	7
Mother only	6	21	27
Halakhically Jewish	**(84)**	**(58)**	**(34)**
Father only	3	25	28
Neither, Refusal, DK	13	17	37
TOTAL	**100**	**100**	**100**

Total Adult Population with a Jewish mother = 3,610,000

How should we interpret the finding that 84 percent of JBR Jews are "*halakhically* Jewish?" Any analysis of these figures has to bear in mind both methodological and conceptual issues. Who are the remaining 16 percent? First, 5 percent of the JBR respondents refused to answer this question either because of ideological or privacy objections. Second, the JBR population contains as we have seen above a considerable number of Jews by choice and we assume adoptees. Obviously, none of these persons had Jewish birth parents.

Caveats notwithstanding, a clear pattern emerges in Exhibit 5. JBRs are much more likely to be *halakhically* Jewish than JNRs, who in turn are more likely to be *halakhically* Jewish than JORs. These data also confirm that the majority of the JOR and the JNR populations are indeed the children of intermarried parents. It is perhaps surprising to learn that more than one-third of the JOR population, close to half a million people, could be Jewish using *halakhic* criteria (this would include those who switched out of their Jewish religion). Since 7 percent of JORs have two Jewish parents, we can confirm that there has been considerable switching from out of the "core Jewish" population to other religions as well in recent decades. The JOR statistics on parentage also provide an indication of the size of the recent demographic losses among American Jews that we can attribute to intermarriages and the institutional failure to attract these potential members to Judaism. The fact that more JORs are found in the residual category row suggests that there are more grandchildren of "core Jews" among JORs than among the JNRs.

The total number of Jewish adults defined on a matrilineal or *halakhic* basis is 3.6 million, a figure which is about 10 percent smaller than that defined as the "core Jewish" adult population in Exhibit 3. However, the gender of the Jewish parent does seem to affect the identity group distribution.

Looking at the same figures from the vantage point of solo Jewish parentage, there are about 808,000 adults whose only Jewish parent is their mother and 780,000 adults whose only Jewish parent is their father. Among the former, 22 percent reported their religion as Jewish and another 29 percent indicated "no religion." Among the latter only 11 percent reported their religion as Jewish or Judaism and 36 percent indicated "no religion." Nearly half among the former and slightly more than half among the latter report adherence to a religion other than Judaism. Just 5 percent of those with two Jewish parents report adherence to a religion other than Judaism.

THE TOTAL AMERICAN JEWISH POPULATION

Now that the various Jewish identity group populations have been defined and enumerated we can bring all these estimates together in one table. Exhibit 5 compares the structure of the American Jewish population in terms of its widest definitional reach in 1990 and 2001. We now also add a new category, GA. This designates persons who have no Jewish background or descent but reside in a household with someone who is within the 7.7 million Jewish ethnic origin/ancestry population. In so doing we return to the total national population numbers of nearly 10 million first established from the household count.

This total population can be envisaged as a large kinship network. It is the maximum number of Americans who can be said to have some family or kinship connection to Jews. This total may be of little practical consequence to Jewish religious and communal bodies. Nonetheless, there may be a number of theoretical reasons to count this population as such. In the American context, this population may well have distinct political, cultural and consumer interests, which distinguish it from the wider U.S. population. As we have noted earlier, within a variety of historic or scientific contexts, this population could well be thought of as a "population at risk." This population is also a meaningful entity in the context of the State of Israel's Law of Return as amended in 1970.

That law provides the possibility of unrestricted immigration into Israel for those we have categorized as "core Jewish" – along with their spouses, children and grandchildren as well as those descendents' immediate families. It is that law which has required the State of Israel in recent decades to grant automatic citizenship to hundreds of thousands of refugees from the former Soviet Union or Ethiopia, countries that have supplied so many recent *olim* (immigrants*)* to the national home of the Jewish people. Exhibit 6 estimates the population numbers for America's "Jews" and their immediate kin if they were counted on the same basis.

EXHIBIT 6

Total American Jewish & Kindred Population 1990 & 2001

(Weighted Data)

CODE	JEWISH IDENTITY CATEGORY	NJPS 1990		AJIS 2001	
	ADULT POPULATION	Number	Cum. Pct.	Number	Cum. Pct.
BJR	Jewish Parentage & Jewish Religion	3,365,000	**41**	2,760,000	**28**
JBC	Not Jewish Parentage, But of Jewish Religion	174,000		170,000	
JBR	**Jewish by Religion (Regardless of Parentage)**	**3,539,000**	**43**	**2,930,000**	**30**
JNR	Jewish Parentage & No Religion	813,000		1,1200,000	
	ADULT CORE JEWISH POPULATION	**4,352,000**	**53**	**4,050,000**	**41**
JOR	Jewish Parentage & Other Religion	625,000		1,465,000	
	TOTAL ADULT JEWISH ORIGIN+JEWISH POPULATION	**4,977,000**	**61**	**5,515,000**	**56**
	CHILD POPULATION				
JBR	Core Jewish Parent's Religion Judaism	856,000		700,000	
JNR	Core Jewish Parent of No Religion	307,000		590,000	
JCOR	Core Jewish or Jewish Ancestry Parent of Other Religion	700,000		880,000	
	TOTAL JEWISH ORIGIN+JEWISH CHILDREN	**1,863,000**	**83**	**2,170,000**	**78**
GA	Non-Jewish Adults in HHs with Core Jewish & Jewish Origin Pop	1,350,000		2,165,000	
	TOTAL PERSONS IN QUALIFYING JEWISH HOUSEHOLDS	**8,200,000**	**100**	**9,850,000**	**100**

NOTE: In 1990, 100,000 was added to the estimate of the total adult Jewish population (JBR) to take into account those living in non-residential households such as nursing homes, dormitories, prison, the military or in hospitals. In addition the 1990 NSRI Adult JBR population of 3,137,000 was adjusted upwards by another 128,000 after Stage 3 of NJPS. In 2001, 110,000 was added to the estimate to account for institutionalized population and those un-enumerated in Alaska and Hawaii.

SOCIAL PROFILE OF SUB-POPULATIONS

In order to better understand the changing balance of the various Jewish identity type populations, we have sought insight into their socio-demographic composition. As we have seen earlier from the proportion of children under 18 years in each category, each sub-population has rather different adult age structures. In Exhibit 7 we set forth a variety of social indicators, which were collected during the ARIS data collection process. These social characteristics indicate that, indeed, the three major sub-populations are distinct entities. However, these are descriptions of the outcomes of complex social dynamics and one must be careful about drawing any conclusions concerning the relationship between Jewish identity types and other social attributes.

For instance, when comparing the educational attainment or income of JBRs and JORs, we cannot assume that adherence to Judaism produces more college graduates or higher incomes among its adherents than other religious groups, nor can we assume that persons with high incomes and a college education are more attracted to Judaism. These outcomes are mediated through many variables and social processes.

Moreover, it is important to remember that most people do not live in isolation. Particularly those who live in family households are part of a complex structure. Certainly, not all JBRs or JNRs reside in homogeneous households. The recent high rates of inter-religious and inter-ethnic marriages mean that significant proportions in all three identity-type populations reside in mixed households, particularly with non-Jewish (GA) partners.

These partners not only influence our respondents' Jewish identity type decisions but they also influence social indicators such as combined household income and the choice of region of residence.

EXHIBIT 7

Socio-Demographic Profile of Adult Jewish Identity Types

Social Characteristics	JBR – Jews by Religion	JNR – Jews of No Religion	JOR – Jews of Other Religions
Number of adults	**2,930,000**	**1,120,000**	**1,470,000**
Proportion of Male /Female	49/51	52/48	45/55
Median Age	51 years	44 years	42 years
Percent Married	59	45	59
Percent of Married With Jewish Spouse	77	16	Not Applicable
Percent College graduates	58	57	36
Percent F-T Employed P-T	49 13	56 13	63 13
Percent Registered Voters	85	76	85
Percent Democrat v. Republican	55 13	41 13	28 40
Percent own their home	77	67	69
Median annual Households Inc	**$72,000**	**$58,000**	**$54,000**
Region of Residence			
Percent in Northeast	43	26	20
Percent in South	26	31	36
Percent in Midwest	10	9	13
Percent in West	21	34	31

Exhibit 7 describes each of the key segments of the Jewish and Jewish-origins population with respect to a wide variety of social characteristics. It underscores a number of ways in which these sub-populations are distinct from one another. Jews by Religion (JBRs) are clearly older, likely to live in smaller households and are likely to be financially better off than the other two sub-populations. The majority is married, and in the great majority of cases they are married to another Jewish person. They are also concentrated in the Northeastern part of the United States and politically most likely to be Democrats.

Jews of No Religion are likely to be younger than JBRs, more likely to live in the Western United States, and more likely to be politically independent. They are less likely than JBRs to be married, and if married, are most likely to be married to someone not Jewish. They are about as likely as JBRs to be college graduates, though their income is likely to be smaller.

As expected, JORs are sociologically the most different from JBRs. They are also younger than the other two groups; they are far less educated than either previous group and

less well off economically. They are more likely to be Republicans and more likely than the other two groups to live in the South.

Findings concerning the social characteristics of the "core Jewish" population have consistently underscored its distinctiveness with respect to the age structure and educational attainment of its adults. Particularly Jews by Religion comprise a significantly older population. More than twice as many of this group are seventy years of age or older than is characteristic of the rest of America's adults. Those who are of Jewish parentage or upbringing, but of another religion, are much younger than Jews by Religion. That fact suggests that the growth of this segment of the population is a relatively recent development – most likely the product of the growth of interfaith marriages in the past several decades.

GEOGRAPHY OF AMERICA'S JEWS

The final item of demography explored in this section of the report is the geographic distribution of households in which one finds either persons who are Jewish by religion or persons of Jewish parentage or upbringing. As is well known, the American Jewish population has been historically concentrated in the Northeastern part of the United States. Indeed, its acculturation in America can probably be charted – though such undertaking is beyond the scope of this report – along a line that would describe the progressive dispersal of the Jews throughout the entire U.S.

The decline in the number of the JBR population is probably among the most significant finding of AJIS 2001. Some of the explanation of this phenomenon is the continuing high incidence of interfaith marriage among Jewish young adults and their parents since the end of the 1960s. However, many commentators believe changes in Jewish patterns of residence that involve dispersal and the break-up of Jewish neighborhoods is also a contributory factor. Goldstein and Goldstein (1996)[16] have stressed the importance of migration as a factor in the loosening of Jewish religious and communal ties. This happens when Jews migrate out of the large cities to suburban and ex-urban areas, but even more significantly when they migrate regionally. Therefore, the final two exhibits in this section of the report look at the regional distribution of the "core Jewish" population with respect to the four major regions of the United States.

As is clear from the Exhibit 8, each of the four regions includes states with large as well as small populations. Given the size the sample that serves as the basis for this study, the larger states are more reliably represented than the smaller ones. Therefore, the exhibit that follows provides estimates of the distribution of the Jewish population for each region, but not for each state within the regions.

Movement from the institutionally complete, i.e. well-organized and structured Jewish communities of the Northeast to the "sunbelt" is thought to be particularly eroding of Jewish ties. The AJIS findings for the "core Jewish" population in Exhibit 8 show that this regional migration trend continued through the 1990s. Whereas in the 1970s and 1980s Jewish migration was more often to the West, that trend has now slowed and the net movement is from the Northeast to the South. The South does not just mean Florida but anywhere south of the Mason-Dixon line and there has been considerable Jewish migration to the Washington, D.C. area, Georgia and Texas.

EXHIBIT 8

Regional Distribution of Core Jewish Population 1990 & 2001

Region[17]	NJPS 1990	AJIS 2001
Northeast	44	38
South	22	27
Midwest	11	12
West	23	23
TOTAL	**100**	**100**

DEMOGRAPHY AND IDENTITY

The classification scheme we have used to describe the Jewish population reflects the acknowledgment on the part of social scientists of the widely accepted modes of status assignment within the Jewish community itself. In the language of social science, such assignment is both ***ascriptive*** and ***achieved***. One can be born into the "Jewish family," but one can also join the Jewish people. Thus, Jewishness is widely considered to be a product of ***descent*** and/or ***consent***. But, in a voluntaristic society both criteria depend on a subjective decision by the individual. Except for purely heuristic purposes, no one can be assigned a religious and/or ethnic identity they reject.

Since fixing the social boundaries of the Jewish population is very much an ideologically based decision, it is necessary to recognize that the size and structure of the American Jewish population is inevitably an issue for legitimate debate. In replicating the methodology and analytical framework of NJPS 1990, AJIS has offered the possibility to measure changes among these Jewish sub-populations. As a result it provides useful insights into the nuances of social and demographic changes during the 1990s.

In the new millennium, the so-called core Jewish population is both smaller in size and as a fraction of the American population than it was just a decade earlier. Time series data show that the population referred to as "core Jewish" in the 1990 NJPS consisted of approximately 5.5 million people including adults and children and constituted about 2.2 percent of the total U.S. population. In 2001 this population, surveyed using the same methodology and calculated using same definitions, had fallen to 5.3 millions and less than 2 percent of the U.S. population. In contrast the expanded Jewish ethnic origin population, including individuals who did not necessarily consider themselves currently Jewish by religion nor subscribe to any other religious group but were Jewish by descent has grown. It consisted of less than 7 million people and constituted 2.7 percent of the total U.S. population in 1990 but to more than 7.5 million persons by 2001 and a little over 2.7 percent of the total U.S. population. On the other hand, the expanded Jewish population has grown considerably as has the total population in Jewish households.

Perhaps most significant is the apparent growth of Jewish identity types outside of the Jewish by religion category. The number of adults and children in the "Jews of No Religion" category has grown considerably and the growth was nearly equal to the loss of adherents to Judaism. These numbers suggest that of the total core or effective Jewish adult population,

27 percent have no religion. While most of these people undoubtedly consider themselves Jewish (as there is very little denial of Jewish ancestry among contemporary American Jewish adults), their Jewishness is apt to be more ***ascriptive*** than ***achieved***. Another significantly enlarged group is those adults who are (self-)reportedly of Jewish parentage or upbringing but now profess a religion other than Judaism. Their number has increased more than 100 percent from 625,000 in 1990 to more than 1.4 million in the current survey.

The socio-demographic profile of the main Jewish identity type populations has shown that they differ considerably on many key indicators such as age, education, economic status and region of residence. To this information we must also add the parentage data shown in Exhibit 5, which suggest that these populations differ in their Jewish attachments due to the varying patterns of intermarriage in their families.

It might be thought that the identity group populations are a largely artificial creation without communal significance, but in fact they are a social reality and even of personal relevance. In the fluid and diverse society of contemporary America individuals move in and out of groups, social networks, beliefs, organizational memberships and personal relationships, including marriages. Parents can chart the movement of their children through these identity groups. We can envisage on the individual level that at certain periods in the life cycle – particularly in their college years – a young adult could move quite quickly between the population categories. A Jew by religion (JBR) at high school could easily decide to become a Jew of No Religion (JNR) on the campus and then begin a spiritual journey that takes them into Buddhism or a Hindu ashram so that they in effect enter the Jew of other religion (JOR) category. A friendship or relationship with another person, such as marriage may well lead them back to the JBR category if their new spouse follows Judaism, but they could also be influenced to enter the JNR population. The exhibits above record the aggregate result of hundreds of thousands of such individual identity changes and spiritual journeys. Choices and decisions as to the nature of individuals' ties to Judaism and the Jewish people are being made constantly. What AJIS and NJPS have recorded in effect are two still photographs, for 1990 and 2001, showing the result of a myriad of permanent or temporary positions with regard to Jewish attachment but we must remember that in reality this is a continuously unfolding movie with a cast of millions.

In the analytic section that follows, we report on several indicators that help describe the religious ideas, affiliations and associations held by adults who describe themselves as Jewish by religion or of Jewish parentage or upbringing. Because this report is principally interested in religious beliefs, outlook and possibly related affiliations, all statistical generalizations from now on will refer to adults, persons who are at least 18 years of age, unless otherwise noted in a particular exhibit. Thus the remainder of the present study focuses primarily upon adults who acknowledge themselves to be either JBR/JBCs (2,930,000) or JNRs (1,120,000) for an effective "core Jewish" adult population estimated to number 4,050,000 persons.

DIMENSIONS OF IDENTITY: RELIGIOUS OUTLOOK, BELIEFS AND AFFILIATION

The study of America's Jews over the past several decades has been filtered largely through the lens of one organizing construct, the concept of identity. The uses of this construct are far too varied and numerous to review here. Dashefsky and Shapiro (1974) have offered a useful review of the dimensions and significance of the concept. One of the most consistent applications of the concept of identity in the study of American Jewry has been as a tool to differentiate segments of the Jewish population in more or less binary categories with respect to their more intense or less intense connectedness or engagement or bondedness to Judaism, the Jewish people, Jewish institutions, Jewish values, or Jewish culture.

It is interesting to contemplate the reason such binary differentiation has become so appealing in the study of America's Jews in recent decades. But that question cannot be addressed here. However, it is important to recall, if only for the purpose of tracing the history of ideas, that for the first half of the twentieth century, the concept of identity was virtually absent from social scientific studies of American Jewry.

Historically, definitions of identity were always important in the context of *halakhic* questions about personal status. Absent concerns about *halakhah* or about the political rights of individuals, "Jewish identity" is merely one of a number of possible concepts by means of which human beings can be classified, grouped, and examined in meaningful categories. Particularly in an environment where individuals may hold multiple notions of self, and hold membership in multiple, non-continuous communities and associations, establishing any fixed notions of identity are problematic. One of the hallmarks of contemporary American society in particular is that individuals can lay claim to a variety of identities, like so many "screen names" in cyberspaces, with varying degrees of commitment to each. The relative salience of these diverse identities can fluctuate within the psychic economy of the individual as a result of evolving circumstances. In such an environment, it becomes difficult to speak of anyone's identity as a permanent fixture of the self.

Prior to the relatively recent fascination with questions about "Jewish identity," the population studied under the Jewish rubric was presumed to be known by its genealogy, history or ecology, and the principal differentiating construct through which its variations were to be understood was the concept of generations. All sorts of diversity within the U.S. Jewish population, from residential patterns to socio-economic attainment, from social integration to theology and religious affiliation, were understood as a function of the social distance the individual had traversed from the moment of immigration to the time of study. Thus, the typical distinctions between the "first generation," the "second generation," the "third generation," and so forth were thought to be the principal vectors along which much of American Jewish life was to be rendered comprehensible.

There is no clear record in the annals of the social scientific study of American Jewry of any collective decision to abandon the concept of generations as a useful interpretive construct. But, for all intents and purposes, by the end of the 1960s it was abandoned on a wholesale basis. Marshall Sklare and associates' watershed studies of a mid-western Jewish

community known as the "Lakeville Studies" are probably as good a benchmark as any to fix the moment in the history of the social scientific study of American Jewry when the concept of identity advanced to the foreground. The title of the first volume of those famous studies, *Jewish Identity on the Suburban Frontier* (written by Marshall Sklare and Joseph Greenblum, 1967), served as well as any collective proclamation to those [of us] who entered the field in the later half of the 1960s: the concept of generations was *passé* and the concept of identity was "in." While the concept of generations had neatly linked Jews to their history, its usefulness as an interpretive construct became increasingly attenuated by that history, as fewer and fewer of America's Jews were anything but American-born children of American-born parents.

The emergence of the post-war baby-boom generation as the demographic fulcrum of the population served as a powerful stimulus to the development of a new interpretive schema for understanding variations in American Jewish life. The growing historical amnesia of this demographic segment coupled with its idiosyncratic attachments to diverse Jewish institutions, practices, bits of history, ideology and above all psycho-emotional bonds to family made the concept of identity a most useful metric along which to measure degrees of Jewish identity.

The concept also had appeal to [Jewish] social scientists who seemed to want to affirm a kernel of uniformity at the heart of an immense amount of diversity that kept cropping up in empirical studies of America's Jews. As with the concept of <u>generations</u>, the concept of <u>identity</u> allowed the widest array of the population to remain anchored to some indivisible principle of unity alluded to by the concept itself. However much the diversity might be among America's Jews, so long as they could be said to possess a "Jewish identity" one could presume the existence of an ineluctable bond setting the group apart from all others.

Do Jews actually have something called a "Jewish identity?" Did they have something called "generational status?" Well, they do and they did to the extent that social scientists were able to fit such theoretical constructs around the messy nuances of shared experience.

The point of this brief excursion into the recent history of ideas about the American Jewish experience is to suggest that the dominant constructs which have shaped our thinking about America's Jews have left out something of potential importance to our understanding of the subject at hand. What's been left out in most instances is the subjective self-understanding of Jews: what Jews think about each other, what they think about Judaism, about religion in general, and what they think of the central institutions of the Jewish community. Although the concept of identity would appear to be more responsive to subjectivity than is the concept of generations, in its application it has been used as an objective instrument with which to differentiate those possessing greater or lesser amounts of Jewish identity, as if such differentiations actually corresponded to something concrete and real in people themselves.

Since it is widely assumed that identity is acquired and sustained through processes and structures of identification, social scientists working with the concept have willy-nilly utilized indicators of identification (e.g. the performance of *mitzvoth*, participation in and affiliation with Jewish communal institutions, and conformity with Jewish cultural and religious norms in general) as measures of the strength of Jewish identity – which itself can

hardly be observed. The problem with this mode of measurement of something as elusive as identity is that the measures often produce anomalies. People who might have strong psychological attachment to their personal sense of Jewishness can and do score low on behavioral or objective measures of identification. Moreover, in recent years, with the growing incidence of intermarriage in the American Jewish population, there have been at least some instances of people scoring fairly high on measures of Jewish identification even if they happen not to be Jewish.

How else would one describe a Hebrew-reading, generous philanthropist to Jewish causes, who attends synagogue services weekly with his wife and day-school-attending children, but as someone with a "strong Jewish identity" – if only the person were not a non-practicing Catholic. And how else would one describe an successful leader of a rock band, with several pierced body parts, who emigrated from Israel to the U.S. as a child and his only serious attachment to his heritage is a deep commitment to using his music to raise money for orphaned children in various war-torn parts of the world, but as someone with a "weak Jewish identity." But, this person has never forgotten the meaning of *tzedakah*. Of course, in both these examples it becomes readily apparent that the concept of "strong" and "weak" as applied to identity and, indeed, the very notion of identity can quickly become anomalous, failing to capture important aspects of human attachment or disconnectedness. Recent studies by Bethamie Horowitz (*Connections and Journeys*) and by Steven Cohen and Arnie Eisen (*The Jew Within*) have begun to come to grips with the growing anomalies of the concept. These studies have had to make sense of increasingly lumpy data, which suggest that people lay claim to Jewish ideas, images, experiences and even institutional affiliation and participation in often highly idiosyncratic patterns that defy the kind of linear or holistic interpretation that the concept of "Jewish identity" would imply.

But, as we have learned many years ago from historian of science, Thomas Kuhn,[18] anomalies point to the presence of dominant paradigms that often serve as blinders to possible sources of new knowledge. We contend here that the prevailing use of "Jewish identity" has served as such. As a concept through which much of American Jewish life has been viewed in recent years, it has prevented attention to other conceptual frameworks with which the behavior and attitudes of people answering to the label "Jewish" in one form or another might be profitably studied. Indeed, the very group in which "Jewish identity" may be studied is itself a matter of contention.

THE CONCEPT OF OUTLOOK

Quite apart from the foregoing critique, the positive contribution we seek to make to the understanding of the contemporary American Jewish experience is the introduction of the concept of "outlook." Its use here represents an attempt to apply in practical research the concept German phenomenologists have referred to as *weltanschauung* (sometimes defined as worldview or world-outlook).[19] Introduced into American sociology through the work of Alfred Schutz and his students, Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, the concept of *weltanschauung* was meant to resolve one of the fundamental paradoxes of social science: ***how to construct objective statements about what is essentially a subjective realm of experience***. That paradox is all the more resistant to resolution when the subjective states social scientists are trying to describe include (as they nearly always do) ideological positions or value-laden behavior about which the social scientist himself/herself can hardly claim neutrality.

To address that paradox, those following in the intellectual footsteps of the phenomenologists have sought interpretive concepts that are clearly rooted in the language and worldview of the people whose ideas and behavior are to be interpreted. Thus, the task of the social scientist is to trace the chain of meaning by which groups of individuals link their thoughts to deeds, their deeds to social relationships or associations, and their associations to institutions, which in turn reinforce the entire chain.

The concept of "outlook" appears to us to be particularly well suited to describe the broad orientation of people to ideas they treat as plausible and to the very criteria by which they bestow plausibility. The value of this concept is that it is drawn directly from the ordinary experience of the everyday life of people and employs a metric or method of measurement that emerges directly from the language of that experience.

In the present instance we employ "outlook" both as a useful interpretive tool as well as a term that is readily understood by ordinary people in daily discourse about their own lives. The concept easily lends itself to binary distinctions because people often differentiate themselves that way as for example: optimistic and pessimistic, liberal and conservative, or worldly and provincial.

We introduce yet another obvious binary distinction that has a great deal of common-sense meaning as well as utility, but which has been surprisingly absent from scholarly discourse about modern American Jews. That is the distinction between those who describe their outlook as "religious" and those who describe their outlook as "secular." Though people, including Jewish adults, will often describe themselves as "religious" or as "secular" in ordinary discourse about their views of life, that distinction is hardly found in any of the voluminous literature of the past several decades dealing with Jewish identity. Perhaps because this distinction has not been much used, it has also not had the invidious connotations in differentiating segments of the Jewish population from one another.

Since the end of the nineteenth century, there has been a growing recognition among students of religion that the theologies and institutions embodying religion have been transformed by the process of secularization. Max Weber described secularization as the "disenchantment of the world" – a characterization of the process of rationalization he

adopted from the poet Friedrich Schiller.[20] By this process Weber sought to capture the psychic and cultural transformation in which magical elements of thought and symbolism are progressively displaced by empiricism and rationality. Harvey Cox (*The Secular City,* 1966) described secularization as "the deliverance of man 'first from religious and then from metaphysical control over his reasons and his language'… the dispelling of all closed worldviews, the breaking of all supernatural myths and sacred symbols." On the wider societal level, Peter Berger defined secularization as "the process by which sectors of society are removed from the domination of religious institutions and symbols."[21]

It is now widely recognized that the process of secularization is dialectic: the more that hearts and minds become "disenchanted," the more institutions that have specialized in the promotion of the "enchantment" process lose plausibility and authority. The more such institutions lose plausibility and authority, the less the psycho-emotional processes of "enchantment" are inculcated in the hearts and minds of individuals.

How far the process of secularization has progressed in different societies since the end of the nineteenth century, whether the process is unidirectional or not, and what its consequences are for social and political organization and human welfare, is the subject of ongoing debate among sociologists and theologians as well as politicians and social planners. Our more limited concern here is to discern the extent to which this process has taken hold within the Jewish population and in what manner it might be expressed.

It is the contention here that the degree of secularism in the outlooks of America's Jews is an important source of differentiation in the U.S. Jewish population, yet it is not so subtle as to require deep, long qualitative interviews or life-course studies. People could be asked quite directly to describe whether they think their outlook is mostly religious or mostly secular. Their replies to such a question yield a distribution of answers that readily appear to be associated with a whole host of other indicators of opinion, belief, affiliation, association, and practice as well as demographic attributes.

The value of studying people's "outlook" as a means by which to differentiate various segments of the population is that it allows the social scientist to step out of the circular logic of the identification-identity paradigm. The concept allows one to view the "objective" facets of behavior associated with affiliation and identification as the consequence of ***meaningful intentionality***. To say that someone is "secular" or "religious" is at once both respectful of their own subjective perceptions about the universe and also makes no unwarranted inferences about the strength or weakness of their psychic attachment to their heritage, their ancestry or their group loyalty – as the concept of "Jewish identity" implicitly does. It thus allows social scientists to characterize the subjective state of mind of the observed population without imposing a possibly invidious construct like ***identity***.

The current survey, as did NJPS 1990, has made a clear distinction between the religious affirmations, beliefs, affiliations and practices of Jews and their identity claims as members of a people. However, the current survey went one step further than NJPS 1990 in allowing respondents to differentiate themselves in terms of self-perceived degrees of "religiousness." Perhaps even more importantly, the current survey unlike NJPS 1990 provided for a direct comparison between Jewish respondents and respondents of other religions with respect to a major dimension of "religiousness."

Beyond the question of adherence ("*What is your religion, if any?*"), the first question bearing on religious orientation asked respondents to place themselves along a continuum of positions in response to the following: "*When it comes to your outlook, do you regard yourself as: (a) religious, (b) somewhat religious, (c) somewhat secular, or (d) secular?"* This question was also asked of a large, representative sample of American adults who are neither Jewish by religion nor of Jewish parentage or upbringing. Therefore, the current survey has made it is possible to place the religious outlook of Jewish adults or adults of Jewish parentage or upbringing in the wider context of American patterns, as shown below.

EXHIBIT 9

Outlook of Jews by Religion and Adherents of Selected Other Religious Groups

<<<<<<< OUTLOOK SCALE >>>>>>>

RELIGIOUS GROUP	Secular	Somewhat Secular	Somewhat Religious	Religious	TOTAL
Assemblies of God	0	3	20	72	1,106,000
Churches of Christ	0	3	30	65	2,603,000
Methodist	1	5	51	42	14,150,000
Mormon	2	7	21	68	2,787,000
7th Day Adventist	3	4	19	73	724,000
Baptist	3	4	37	54	33,830,000
Lutheran	3	7	48	41	9,580,000
UCC/Congregationalist	4	5	55	34	1,378,000
Jehovah's Witnesses	5	3	18	73	1,331,000
Catholic	6	7	50	33	50,873,000
Episcopalian	7	8	52	32	3,451,000
Buddhist	7	15	46	24	1,082,000
Muslim	9	9	49	32	1,104,000
Jews by Religion	27	17	42	11	2,831,000
Jews of No Religion*	52	12	17	6	1,120,000
No religion (non-Jews)	40	13	28	8	28,361,000
U.S. TOTAL ADULTS	**10**	**6**	**38**	**37**	**208,000,000**

***NOTE**: Jews of No Religion includes people who are Jewish by virtue of parentage or upbringing, but when asked about their religion, they answer "none."

Exhibit 9 highlights several important points about the religious outlook of America's Jews. First, with the exception of Jews or non-Jews who profess no religion, Jews by Religion are the most likely to describe their outlook as "secular" or "somewhat secular" among all major religious groups. This exhibit shows that more than 40 percent of America's Jewish adults (who identify as Jewish by Religion) describe their outlook as "secular" or "somewhat secular." That figure increases significantly when the parameters of the Jewish population are defined to include those who see themselves as having no religion but describe themselves as being of Jewish parentage or Jewish upbringing. Among those of Jewish ancestry who identified with no religion, 70 percent said they were secular or somewhat secular. By contrast, among those of Jewish ancestry who now profess another

religion, just 22 percent and 16 percent respectively indicated their outlook as "secular" or "somewhat secular." Among American adults in general, the figure was 16 percent.

In addition to the question of outlook, survey respondents were asked about their belief in God, belief in miracles, prayer, and the general benefit of a belief in God. The replies are statistically summarized in exhibits below. Inasmuch as the great majority of Americans, be they Jewish or not, profess a belief in the existence of God, our analysis probed to see whether there is any difference in the intensity or quality of that belief. The survey asked of respondents whether they agree (strongly or somewhat) or disagree (strongly or somewhat) with the proposition: *God performs miracles.*

EXHIBIT 10

Belief that God Performs Miracles: Jews by Religion and Adherents of Selected Other Religious Groups

<<<<<<< BELIEF SCALE >>>>>>>

RELIGIOUS GROUP	Disagree Strongly	Disagree Somewhat	Agree Somewhat	Agree Strongly	TOTAL
Assemblies of God	0	1	1	98	1,106,000
Churches of Christ	5	2	15	77	2,603,000
Methodist	2	4	18	74	14,150,000
Mormon	1	3	7	88	2,787,000
7th Day Adventist	0	1	1	98	724,000
Baptist	1	1	8	90	33,830,000
Lutheran	2	5	22	69	9,580,000
UCC/Congregationalist	0	13	31	54	1,378,000
Jehovah's Witnesses	5	4	13	74	1,331,000
Catholic	1	4	22	71	50,873,000
Episcopalian	3	6	28	59	3,451,000
Buddhist	9	11	40	41	1,082,000
Muslim	3	6	14	72	1,104,000
Jews by Religion	11	17	31	36	2,831,000
No religion *	7	11	31	47	29,481,000
U.S. TOTAL ADULTS	**2**	**4**	**18**	**73**	**208,000,000**

***NOTE**: Includes Jews of No Religion

Since the question about "*God performs miracles*" was asked only of those who agreed (either strongly or somewhat) that "*God exists*," the pattern of answers in Exhibit 10 is especially instructive. It underscores, yet again, that Jews who are adherents of Judaism are nevertheless quite different in their religious worldview from other believers. More than a fourth of Jewish adult believers disagree (somewhat or strongly) that "God performs miracles." As we shall see in Exhibit 11, adults of Jewish parentage or upbringing who do not adhere to any religion are far more likely to disagree with the statement, "*God exists*," and *a fortiori* with the statement, "*God performs miracles*."

EXHIBIT 11

Belief Indicators by Type of Jewish Classification

		Qualifying Adults			
		JBR	JNR	JOR	TOTAL
	N=	2,930,000	1,120,000	1,470,000	**5,520,000**
Religious Orientation Indicators		%	%	%	%
"*Do you agree or disagree that God exists?"*					
Disagree strongly		5	17	3	**7**
Disagree somewhat		9	6	1	**7**
Agree somewhat		23	29	14	**22**
Agree strongly		54	35	80	**56**
DK/RF (not determined)	A	9	13	2	**8**
"Do you agree or disagree that 'God helps me?'"		**NOTE:** This was asked only of those who agreed that "God exists."			
Disagree strongly		15	32	2	**16**
Disagree somewhat		15	10	6	**13**
Agree somewhat		25	20	13	**21**
Agree strongly		34	20	76	**41**
DK/RF (not determined)	B	10	18	3	**9**
"Do you agree or disagree that 'God performs miracles?'"		**NOTE:** This was asked only of those who agreed that "God exists."			
Disagree strongly		11	11		**7**
Disagree somewhat		17	21	8	**15**
Agree somewhat		31	28	14	**25**
Agree strongly		36	28	76	**48**
DK/RF (not determined)	C	5	12	2	**5**
"Do you agree or disagree that 'God hears prayers?'"		**NOTE:** This was asked only of those who agreed that "God exists."			
Disagree strongly		10	13		**8**
Disagree somewhat		13	10	4	**10**
Agree somewhat		27	39	12	**24**
Agree strongly		44	25	82	**53**
DK/RF (not determined)	D	5	13	2	**5**
"Over the course of your life, have you become more or less of a believer in God or the Divine?"					
More		38	30	74	**44**
Less		19	26	8	**18**
No change		37	33	16	**32**
DK/RF (not determined)	E	6	11	2	**6**

Taken together as well as individually, the five panels (A-E) of Exhibit 11 provide further depth and validation to the over-all outlook questions summarized in Exhibits 9 and 10. About 14 percent of respondents who identified themselves as Jewish by Religion could be classified as atheists or agnostics. Among those who indicated Jewish parentage and/or upbringing, but who profess no religion, about 26 percent can be characterized as atheist or agnostic. In other words, about 623,000 adults out of a total of the approximately 4 million who comprise what has been called the "core Jewish" adult population (about 17 percent) hold beliefs that can be described as atheist or agnostic – those who might be described as the "hard-core seculars." Such a state of non-belief is found in about 1 percent of all American non-Jewish adults**.**

It is further instructive to note that a substantial minority of those who profess a belief in God nevertheless do not believe that God performs miracles or that God helps them. About 30 percent of those who identify their religion as Judaism and profess a belief in God disagree somewhat or strongly with the proposition that "*God helps me*." Among those who are of Jewish parentage or upbringing but say they have no religion – though they profess a belief in God – about 47 percent disagree somewhat or strongly with the proposition.

The data on outlook and beliefs underscore the point that America's Jews differ quite a bit on the fundamentals of religious faith. The data further underscore the point that secularism and unbelief are nearly as varied as the more conventional divisions among the main branches of Judaism.

Exhibit 12 summarizes the pattern of relationship between one's position along the religious-secular continuum and whether one agrees ("somewhat" or "strongly") with the four statements of belief outlined above.

EXHIBIT 12

Beliefs About God By Position Along the Religious-Secular Continuum

(Percent Who Agree "Somewhat" or "Strongly" With Each Belief)

<<<<<OUTLOOK CONTINUUM>>>>>>>

BELIEFS	Religious	Somewhat Religious	Uncertain/ DK/Refused	Somewhat Secular	Secular
God exists	94	90	50	78	53
God helps me	86	71	33	53	31
God perform miracles	92	68	72	60	46
God hears prayers	90	76	73	55	55
BASE TOTALS	**340,000**	**1,300,000**	**180,000**	**580,000**	**1,300,000**

NOTE: Totals **include only JBR and JNR categories**; each cell is of 100 percent. E.g. 94 percent of those who described themselves as "religious" agreed either "strongly or "somewhat" with the proposition: "*God exists,*" while just 53 percent of those describing themselves as "secular" do so.

Exhibit 12 suggests a notable if not perfect association between how people describe their outlook along the spectrum of "secular-religious" and what they affirm about God-beliefs. Among those who describe their outlook as "religious" or "somewhat religious," 90-94 percent agree (strongly or somewhat) with the proposition: *God exists*. By contrast, among those who describe their outlook as "secular," just 53 percent agree (strongly or somewhat) with the proposition about God's existence. The other indicators of God-beliefs similarly differentiate between those who describe their outlook as religious and as secular.

Parenthetically, it is worth noting here that there is a casual and widely presumed association in the general literature about American Jews between secularism and assimilation into American society. Yet, the data on religious beliefs among American non-Jews would suggest that, in fact, secularism and especially atheism are far from normative in American society at large. As such, secular Jews could hardly be said to be assimilating into American culture. Quite the contrary: their distinctive pattern of secularism and non-belief may well set them apart.

Looking at the four God-belief statements as basis of predicting outlook lends specificity to the differences between the secular and the religious. Of all who agreed (strongly or somewhat) with the proposition: *God exists*, just 19 percent described their outlook as secular and 14 percent as somewhat secular. By contrast, 62 percent described themselves as religious or somewhat religious.

At the other end of the spectrum, of all those who disagreed (strongly or somewhat) with the proposition: *God exists*, 71 percent described themselves as secular and another 11 percent as somewhat secular; just 16 percent described themselves as religious or somewhat religious.

This exercise in statistical association underscores the validity of ordinary discourse about such matters in the common-sense language of everyday life. When people describe

themselves as "secular" or "somewhat secular," they apparently do hold beliefs with respect to God that are quite different from those who describe themselves as "religious" or "somewhat religious." These designations are not simply *ad hoc* figures of speech. Indeed, about 43 percent of those who describe their religion as Jewish when asked: *What is your religion, if any*, nonetheless describe themselves as secular or somewhat secular.

What that figure suggests is that identifying one's self with a religion does not preclude thinking of that identification in secular terms. As such, it appears that a secular outlook and its associated beliefs or lack thereof, as held by many Jews, are not synonymous with a lack of Jewish identification. Rather, outlook and beliefs are distinct components along with identification of a stock of knowledge and a wellspring of affinities that link individuals to larger social entities from a family to a community to a people.

On the other hand, it must be acknowledged that the association between God-beliefs and outlook is not perfect. There appears to be some overlap between a self-described secular outlook and an affirmation of God's existence. Conversely a self-defined religious outlook does not preclude rejection of a belief in God's existence among a small minority.

It remains to be seen below what is the association between one's position along the religious-secular continuum and the more objective indicators of Jewish communal affiliation.

Exhibit 13 looks at how America's Jewish adults identify with the organized denominations of the Jewish community, broken down by their position along the religious-secular continuum.

EXHIBIT 13

Identification With Branches of Judaism Among Jewish-by-Religion Adults

(Percent of Each Branch that is "Religious" or "Secular")

<<<<<OUTLOOK CONTINUUM>>>>>>>

BRANCH OF JUDAISM	Religious	Somewhat Religious	Uncertain/ DK/Refused	Somewhat Secular	Secular	TOTAL Percent
Secular Humanist*		14		19	67	**100**
Reconstructionist*		20		65	15	**100**
Orthodox	56	28	2	2	12	**100**
Conservative	7	54	4	14	21	**100**
Reform	7	43	2	18	30	**100**
Just Jewish	7	20	13	22	38	**100**

NOTE: categories provided by respondents in reply to: "*What branch of Judaism do you identify with, if any?"* Total includes **JBR adults in residential households only**.* These categories are based on very small samples, making generalizations difficult.

Exhibit 13 calls attention to a number of interesting insights. First, it suggests that those with a "secular" or "somewhat secular" outlook are to be found in each of the key branches of American Judaism. About 30 percent of the total in the above exhibit characterize their

outlook as "secular." Despite the small sample, one would expect the majority of those who identify with the Secular Humanist branch of Judaism describe themselves as secular. By contrast, the majority of those identifying with the Orthodox branch of Judaism describe themselves as "religious." Interestingly, nearly half of those who identify with the Reform branch describe themselves as "secular" or "somewhat secular," as do more than a third of those who identify with the Conservative branch of Judaism.

It should be emphasized that the figures in the exhibit above pertain only to adults who described their religious identity as Jewish. These figures should not be read as a direct measure of the actual membership of the branches of Judaism that are described in the exhibit. First, the exhibit does not include the children of these adults. Moreover, the survey did not inquire of adults of Jewish parentage and upbringing who said they have no religion whether they identify with any of these branches. Inconsistent as it may seem, there are people who say they have no religion, yet might nevertheless identify with one or another of these branches of Judaism, possibly for reasons that have nothing to do with religion. As we have seen in earlier exhibits that deal with outlook and beliefs, people are prone to considerable ambiguity and inconsistency.

The preceding exhibit also should not be taken as an indication of the type of synagogue, temple, or congregation that America's Jews affiliate with. As will be shown below, that is an entirely different matter.

SYNAGOGUE AFFILIATION

Because affiliation with a religious congregation is generally regarded as a family or household attribute, the exhibit below describes the distribution of affiliation on the basis of households. For comparison purposes, the households have been grouped according to the Jewish classification of the respondent.

EXHIBIT 14

Affiliation With Temple, Synagogue or Congregation

	Qualifying Households by Respondent Type				
	JBR	**JNR**	**JOR**	**GA**	**TOTAL**
N=	1,547,000	600,000	705,000	908,000	**3,760,000**
	%	**%**	**%**	**%**	**%**
Affiliated	50	12	7	12	**26**
Not Affiliated	46	81	90	80	**68**
DK/RF (undetermined)	4	7	3	8	**6**
TOTAL	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

NOTE: The category "GA" in this exhibit refers to households in which the respondent was neither Jewish by religion nor of Jewish parentage or upbringing, but someone else was Jewish.

As shown in Exhibit 14, half the households that contain at least one adult who reports his/her religion as Jewish are affiliated with a synagogue. Other types of households where at least one adult is of Jewish parentage or upbringing, but does not identify with the Jewish

religion, are much less likely to be affiliated. Taking just the JBR and JNR categories, which comprise the so-called core Jewish population of NJPS 1990, it appears that about 40 percent of those households report affiliation with a synagogue. On the other hand, it is interesting to note that between the two other categories (JOR and Other) that include households where the respondent is not Jewish but someone else is, 11-12 percent also report synagogue affiliation.

In sum, about 26 percent of all the households included under the broad umbrella of this survey report indicate affiliation with a synagogue, temple, congregation or *havurah* – yielding a total of just over one million households. It is useful to recall here that NJPS 1990 reported a total of 880,000 affiliated households.[22] Therefore, the number of American Jewish households affiliated with a Jewish congregation of some sort appears to have grown by about 15 percent during the course of the past decade. To be sure, the number of "qualifying Jewish households" grew by nearly 22 percent during the same period – though that growth includes a great increase in the number of households in which no one is currently Jewish but only of Jewish parentage or upbringing as well as households in which adults are cohabiting without marriage. Both those household patterns generally run counter to synagogue affiliation.

The exhibit that follows examines the relationship between household synagogue affiliation and respondents' outlook as measured by the religious-secular continuum. For obvious reasons, only respondents who indicated they are either JBRs or JNRs are included in the analysis.

EXHIBIT 15

Synagogue Affiliation by the Religious-Secular Continuum

<<<<<<OUTLOOK CONTINUUM>>>>>>>

SYNAGOGUE AFFILIATED	Religious	Somewhat Religious	Uncertain/ DK/Refused	Somewhat Secular	Secular	TOTAL
YES	69	59	9	39	21	**1,600,000**
NO	29	36	50	58	76	**2,100,000**
No Answer/DK/Ref	2	5	41	3	3	**200,000**
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	**100%**
TOTAL Number	**400,000**	**1,360,000**	**300,000**	**600,000**	**1,300,000**	**3,900,000**

NOTE: categories provided by respondents in reply to: "*Is anyone in your household affiliated with a synagogue or temple?"* [**Total N = JBR/JNR adults** in residential households]

The findings in Exhibit 15 confirm, yet again, the substantial difference between the secular and the religious. Most Jewish adults or adults of Jewish parentage or upbringing who are not synagogue members are apt to have a "secular" or "somewhat secular" outlook. However, it is also interesting to note that nearly a third of those who report synagogue membership in their household also describe their outlook as secular or somewhat secular.

The presence of those with a secular outlook within a congregational setting suggests that synagogues fulfill a function at least for some people that is not strictly speaking

"religious." At the same time, the fact that just 20 percent of those who describe their outlook as "secular" (and 40 percent of those who describe their outlook as "somewhat secular") report an affiliation with a synagogue suggests that most secular Jews probably lack institutional anchorage in the Jewish community. By contrast with the "secular" and the "somewhat secular," about 70 percent of those who describe their outlook as "religious" and 60 percent of those who describe their outlook as "somewhat religious" report synagogue affiliation. That pattern extends to non-synagogue Jewish institutions as well.

JEWISH ORGANIZATIONAL AFFILIATION

Besides inquiring about synagogue membership, our study inquired as well into membership in such "non-religious" communal institutions as a Jewish community center (JCC) or other fraternal or social organizations. As the exhibit below demonstrates, those who are members of a "non-religious" Jewish community organization are nevertheless more likely to describe their outlook as "religious" or "somewhat religious." Those who are not members of such organizations are more apt to describe themselves as "secular" or "somewhat secular."

EXHIBIT 16

JCC & Other Organizational Affiliation by Religious-Secular Continuum

(Weighted Data)

<<<<<<OUTLOOK CONTINUUM>>>>>>>

AFFILIATED WITH A JCC ETC.	Religious	Somewhat Religious	Uncertain/ DK/Refused	Somewhat Secular	Secular	TOTAL
YES	42	33	12	28	13	**980,000**
NO	56	62	47	69	84	**2,730,000**
No Answer/DK/Ref	2	5	41	3	3	**220,000**
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	**100%**
TOTAL Number	**400,000**	**1,360,000**	**300,000**	**600,000**	**1,300,000**	**3,900,000**

NOTE: categories provided by respondents in reply to: "*Is anyone in your household affiliated with a Jewish community center or some other Jewish community organization?"* [**Total N = JBR/JNR adults** in residential households]

Looking at these same findings from the perspective of the "secular" and the "religious" sub-populations, more than three times as many of those describing their outlook as "religious" (42 percent) report membership in a Jewish community center or some other Jewish community organization as those who describe their outlook as "secular" (13 percent).

In short, it appears that a "secular" outlook is associated with a relatively low level of affiliation with the organized Jewish community in general. Indeed, our survey suggests that those who are "secular" or "somewhat secular" are also likely to have proportionally fewer Jewish friends than those who describe their outlook as "religious" or "somewhat religious."

JEWISH FRIENDSHIP NETWORK

To be sure, friendship networks are likely to be related to one's affiliation with voluntary community organizations. Those who are members of a synagogue or a Jewish community center are more apt to make friends there. Nonetheless, the relative difference in the Jewish density of the friendship networks of the "seculars" and the "religious" suggests that these two broad segments of the American Jewish population inhabit different social universes. That difference may have far-reaching implications for the future of the American Jewish community.

EXHIBIT 17

Jewish Friendship Network by Religious-Secular Continuum

(Weighted Data)

<<<<<<OUTLOOK CONTINUUM>>>>>>>

PROPORTION OF FRIENDS JEWISH?	Religious	Somewhat Religious	Uncertain/ DK/Refused	Somewhat Secular	Secular
All or most	45	28	16	22	15
About half	16	33	17	25	25
Some	22	23	15	23	35
None	11	14	22	24	23
D/K or Ref	6	2	30	6	2
TOTAL Number	**400,000**	**1,360,000**	**300,000**	**600,000**	**1,300,000**

NOTE: categories provided by respondents in reply to: "*What proportion of your closest friends would you say are Jewish?"* [**Total N = JBR/JNR adults** in residential households]

These findings are particularly significant in a larger historical context. NJPS 1990 reported that 45 percent of those who were Jewish by Religion described their friendship network as "all or mostly Jewish."[23] In our current survey, just 20 percent of those who are Jewish by Religion describe their friendship network as "all or mostly" Jewish. Thus, it appears that there is a general trend for Jews to have a less densely Jewish friendship network than was the case a decade ago. Indeed, as shown in the exhibit above, only among those who describe their outlook as "religious" does one find 45 percent who have a friendship network that is "all or mostly" Jewish.

ISRAEL

One of the most significant ways in which Jews have expressed their solidarity is through their commitment to and involvement with the State of Israel. Indeed, it might be argued that because Israel is essentially a secular state, whose founding was inspired by the secular ideology of Zionism, it has served as a unifying symbol for Jews throughout the world. This survey, as NJPS 1990, sought to explore the extent to which American Jews continue to identify with or remain committed to Israel.

Our survey explored these issues by means of two questions: one pertaining to visits to Israel, the other pertaining to emotional attachment to Israel.

EXHIBIT 18

Visiting and Attitude Toward Israel by Religious-Secular Continuum

(Percent)

<<<<<<<<OUTLOOK CONTINUUM>>>>>>>>

ISRAEL	Religious	Somewhat Religious	Uncertain/ DK/Refused	Somewhat Secular	Secular
VISITED					
Yes	47	41	29	26	23
No	51	54	41	69	74
Uncertain/DK/Refused	2	5	30	5	3
FEELING ATTACHED					
Not attached	14	29	31	40	55
Somewhat attached	21	42	23	39	25
Very attached	58	23	12	15	15
Uncertain/DK/Refused	7	6	34	6	5
TOTAL N for each Q	**400,000**	**1,360,000**	**300,000**	**600,000**	**1,300,000**

NOTE: [**Total N = JBR/JNR adults** in residential households]

Surprisingly, there is nearly a linear relationship between where American Jews locate themselves on the religious-secular spectrum with respect to their outlook and their attachment to Israel. Those who are more religious are more likely to have visited and are more emotionally attached to Israel; the more secular are less likely to have visited and are less emotionally attached to Israel. Twice as many of those who describe themselves as "religious" have visited Israel than those who describe themselves as "secular" (47 percent compared with 23 percent). Similarly, more than three times as many of those who describe themselves as "religious" say they are "very attached" to Israel as compared with those who describe themselves as "secular" (58 percent compared with 15 percent).

The reason there appears to be such a consistent disconnection between secularism and Israel is obviously a lot more difficult to understand than the disconnection between secularism and affiliation with Jewish communal institutions. But, the facts are plain enough to warrant a serious search for the underlying mechanisms that appear to weaken the social bonds that link Jews to one another among those whose outlook is secular or somewhat secular.

However, historical context is once again an important framework in which the above findings must be viewed. NJPS 1990 reported 31 percent of those who described themselves as Jewish-by-Religion and 11 percent of Jews who did not identify with Judaism as a religion had visited Israel at least once.[24] Our current survey found that more than 38 percent of Jews by Religion have visited Israel at least once as had 17 percent of those who describe themselves as of Jewish parentage or upbringing but not of the Jewish religion. It appears, whatever its ideological significance might be, Israel has become a travel destination for an increasing proportion of America's Jews. However, that fact does not appear to bear any direct relationship to the relative distribution of the secular and the religious among America's Jews.

CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

BY FELIX POSEN

This study of American Jewish identity began with a quest to describe the contours of the American Jewish population and the meaning that religion might hold for them. The data presented has illuminated that quest and has provided significant comparisons with which to delineate the size and shape of the population of interest here.

The two key questions were addressed by this study:

- What are the changes in the composition of American Jewry since the landmark 1990 National Jewish Population Survey, and

- How do America's Jews define themselves with respect to a continuum of beliefs ranging from religious to secular?

The answers to these questions unfolding from this study will have a profound effect on what American Jewry decides to do during the coming decades in shaping its own self-definition and creating suitable educational initiatives to secure its future. In light of the clear trend toward increasing secularism, every Jewish communal institution and every Jewish educational effort must grapple with the widespread skepticism among large segments of the Jewish populace toward religious ideas, ideals and institutions. The fact that secular Jews appear to outnumber any of the religious branches of American Judaism compels a search for alternative sources of group identity and solidarity that must be found within the culture, civilization and history of Jewry in addition to the sources of tradition and faith. Those sources must be mined and cultivated in educational programs that are offered to all segments of American Jewry regardless of their religious affiliation.

The findings of this survey suggest that the time is long overdue when those who do not identify with the main religious streams of Judaism (Reform, Reconstructionist, Conservative, Orthodox) can be dismissed as "just Jewish." The organized Jewish community must seek to understand in greater depth and respond with greater creativity, sensitivity and a wider array of educational opportunities to those whose Jewishness has often been dismissed as virtually an empty vessel.

Secularism is a serious source of conviction for some Jews, as well as a serious existential condition for a great many more. For some it is a source of a wonderfully rich and creative life; a fount of science, literature, humanistic learning and political conviction. For others, it is a source of dissatisfaction with prevailing religious ideas and institutions. Whatever its functions, secularism in Jewish life must be appreciated and supported as a potent source of identification and motivation. As such, it must be utilized by the organized Jewish community for all the positive opportunities it affords. A secular Judaism needs to reclaim its patrimony and learn to take charge of the levers of communal education so as to assure the creative engagement of future generations of modern American Jews.

APPENDIX

THE METHODOLOGY OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH IDENTITY SURVEY 2001

The American Jewish Identity Survey (AJIS 2001), carried out under the auspices of the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, replicates the methodology of the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey. As in 1990, the sample is based on a series of national random digit dialing (RDD) surveys, utilizing the GENESYS Sampling Systems of all known U.S. residential telephone numbers, and conducted through ICR, International Communication Research Group in Media, Pa., as part of its EXCEL and ACCESS national telephone omnibus services.

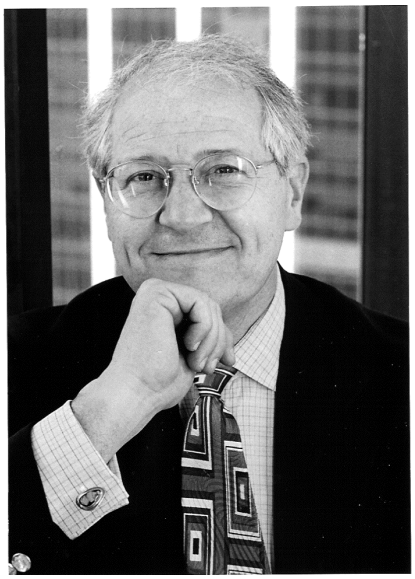
Respondents were interviewed from February through June 2001, using the CATI (computer assisted telephone interviewing) system. The field period was five days, which included both weekdays and weekends. Within a household, an adult respondent was chosen using the "last birthday method" of random selection. In theory, every adult in every household with a telephone in the U.S. had an equal chance of being selected for interview. Five attempts were made to speak to a respondent at each number that was selected before the computer chose another household.

The sample gives proportionate coverage across the contiguous 48 states of the U.S. and employs basic geographical stratification at the Census Division level. In order to reflect the nation's geography accurately, the replacement number was usually drawn from the same area code and exchange. This means that a non-responding telephone number in South Texas, for example, was replaced by another number in South Texas, and that one in Miami was replaced by another in Miami.

In all, 50,284 U.S. households were successfully interviewed yielding a total 1,668 households in which at least one person qualified as Jewish or of Jewish background on the basis of four "screening questions."[25] In the 1990 NJPS survey, the wording of the first screening question was "What is your religion?" In the 2001 AJIS survey, the clause, "…if any" was added to the question. A subsequent validity check based on cross-samples of 3,000 respondents carried out by ICR in 2002 found no statistical difference between the pattern of responses according to the two wordings.

The data from each of approximately 50 independent RDD surveys were aggregated and then weighted to reflect current estimates of the U.S. adult population, 18 years of age or older, by demographics and geography. The overall sampling error associated with AJIS at the 95 percent confidence level is +/- 2.4 percent. Greater sampling errors are associated with smaller sub-samples.[26] Using the most conservative approach, with a base of all residences contacted, the estimated response rate is 16.1 percent. Eliminating households deemed not eligible raises the response rate somewhat to 18.2 percent.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



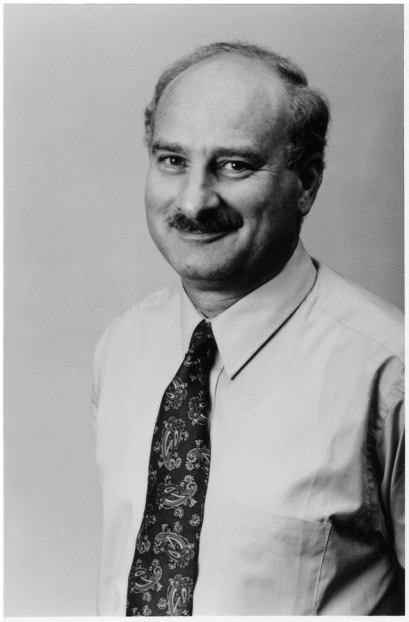
EGON MAYER, PH.D.

Egon Mayer is professor and chairman of the Sociology Department at Brooklyn College. Dr. Mayer recently served as the leading sociologist on the study of American Jewish Identity Survey (AJIS 2001) and American Religious Identification Survey (ARIS 2001), the first studies in North America to examine secularity as well as religiosity.

Dr. Mayer maintains a website devoted to Rudolf (Israel) Kasztner, a heroic rescuer of Hungarian Jews during the Holocaust. He is also the Founding Director of the Jewish Outreach Institute, a non-profit organization committed to helping intermarried families integrate within the Jewish community.

Dr. Mayer is a widely sought-after lecturer and author of major studies in Jewish studies and Jewish intermarriage, including *Intermarriage and the Jewish Future, Children of Intermarriage, Conversion of the Intermarried,* and *Rabbinic Officiation and Intermarriage*. His widely acclaimed book, *Love & Tradition: Marriage between Jews & Christians,* was published by Plenum Publishing Co. in 1987. Dr. Mayer is also author of a book on the Orthodox and Hasidic communities of Boro Park, Brooklyn, *From Suburb to Shtetl,* published by Temple University Press.

Born in Switzerland and raised in Budapest, Hungary, Dr. Mayer immigrated with his family to the United States during the Hungarian Revolution of 1956. He received his B.A. from Brooklyn College in 1967, his M.A. from the New School for Social Research in 1970 and his Ph.D. from Rutgers University in 1975. Dr. Mayer and his family live in Laurel Hollow, New York.



BARRY KOSMIN, PH.D

Barry Kosmin is a sociologist and executive director of JPR/Institute for Jewish Policy Research, a London-based think-tank. He directed the now-famous 1990 National Jewish Population Survey for the Council of Jewish Federations. He is a former member of the faculty of the Ph.D. Program in Sociology at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, where he was also Founding Director of the North American Jewish Data Bank.

Dr. Kosmin has conducted research on demographic, social, educational, political and economic aspects of Jewish communities in the UK, USA, South Africa and elsewhere. He began his communal career as Research Director of the Board of Deputies of British Jews and went on to become Research Director of the Council of Jewish Federations in New York.

Dr. Kosmin is joint editor of the SUNY Press monograph series in *American Jewish Society in the 1990s* and the Routledge journal *Patterns of Prejudice.* He is the author of over 20 books and research monographs and more than 50 scholarly articles. His most widely quoted work is *One Nation Under God: Religion in Contemporary American Society* (Harmony Books 1993; Crown Trade Paperbacks 1994) co-authored with Seymour Lachman. His most recent publication is a volume jointly edited with Paul Igansky, *A New Antisemitism? Debating Judeophobia in 21st -Century Britain* (Profile Books 2003).

Born and educated in England, Dr. Kosmin holds degrees from the Universities of London, McMaster (Canada), and Zimbabwe.

ARIELA KEYSAR, PH.D.

Ariela Keysar is a demographer and Senior Research Fellow at the Center for Jewish Studies of the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. She is the Study Director of the CUNY American Jewish Identity Survey 2001.

Dr. Keysar is also the associate director of the ongoing Longitudinal Study of American and Canadian Conservative Youth under the auspices of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. The longitudinal study has followed a cohort of young Conservative Jews, starting in 1995 with the Bar/Bat Mitzvah Survey, and continuing in 1999 with the High School Survey and in 2003 with the College Years Project. The 2003 phase includes a telephone survey, as in the first two phases, as well as a unique series of face-to-face and online focus group sessions.

She is a co-author of *The Next Generation: American Jewish Children and Adolescents* (SUNY Press, 2000), a socio-demographic analysis of how young American Jews are raised and socialized, based on the National Jewish Population Survey of 1990.

Dr. Keysar is a member of the National Technical Advisory Committee of the United Jewish Communities for the National Jewish Population Survey (NJPS) 2000. She was born and raised in Israel and holds a B.A. in statistics and an M.A. and Ph.D. in demography from Hebrew University of Jerusalem in Israel.

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

[1] Barry Kosmin, Egon Mayer and Ariela Keysar, *American Religious Identification Survey, 2001* (New York: The Graduate Center of the City University of New York).

[2] The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guarantees: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

[3] The questions that produced these results varied slightly from 1990 to 2001. In the earlier survey the question was, "What is your religion?" In the later survey the question was, "What is your religion, if any?"

[4] Harvey Cox, *The Secular City* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1965)

[5] By population we refer here to the residential population, not including those who are living in institutional settings such as military, hospitals, nursing homes or prisons. See Methodological Appendix for more detailed methodological discussion.

[6] The National Jewish Population Survey of 1990 was sponsored by the Council of Jewish Federations. That survey was directed by Dr. Barry A. Kosmin, one of the co-principal investigators of the current survey. Then as now, Dr. Ariela Keysar was the Senior Analyst. That study was carried out in cooperation with the Mandell Berman Institute-North American Jewish Data Bank at the Graduate School of the City University of New York.

[7] The survey methodology of NJPS 1990 was designed by a National Technical Advisory Committee headed by Professor Sidney Goldstein (Brown University) and Mr. Joseph Waksberg (Westat Corp.). More than a dozen other demographers, sociologists and social planners participated in NTAC designing the methodology and content of that study. For more details on the methodology and findings of the screening phase of NJPS 1990, see Sidney Goldstein and Barry A. Kosmin, "Religious and Ethnic Self-Identification in the United States 1989-90: A Case Study of The Jewish Population," *Ethnic Groups* v 9 (1992) pp. 219-245; also Sidney Goldstein, "Profile of American Jewry: Insights from the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey," *American Jewish Yearbook 1992;* Joseph Waksberg, "The Methodology of the National Jewish Population Survey," in Sidney and Alice Goldstein, *Jews on the Move: Implications for Jewish Identity* (Albany, NY., SUNY Press, 1996).

[8] A fuller report of the interviews with all households is to be found in our report on *American Religious Identification Survey 2001*.

[9] The addition of the clause, "if any" was a slight modification from 1990. It was inserted in the current survey to avoid any implication by the question that a respondent had to have a religion. This change may well have contributed to the increase in the number of those indicating "no religion" in the current survey over the 1990 survey.

[10] See *Highlights of the CJF 1990 National Jewish Population Survey* (New York: Council of Jewish Federations, 1991), pp. 4-5. Hereafter referred to as *Highlights*.

[11] Two simultaneous omnibus surveys were administered by ICR-International Communications Research Corp. (Media, Pa.). Each contacted several thousand randomly dialed households each week during the study period and administered a variety of consumer-related questions. Our questions came at the end those series of questions. See Methodological Appendix.

FINDINGS

[12] For the case of Canada see Barry A. Kosmin, "A religious question in the British Census," *Patterns of Prejudice*, v. 32, n. 2 (1998), p. 45. All religious communities in Europe were and in some places still are legally chartered corporate entities, with authority granted by the state to determine group membership. In Denmark and Germany, for example, the state grants authority to the corporate Jewish community to retain a portion of individuals' taxes for communal services. Whom the corporate community counts as a member determines the group's tax base. Obviously, the same person cannot be claimed by two different religious entities.

[13] Ariela Keysar, Barry A. Kosmin and Jeffrey Scheckner, *The Next Generation: Jewish Children and Adolescents*, (New York: SUNY Press, 2000), p. 49.

[14] Keysar, et al, *ibid*. 49.

[15] As used here, the concept of "population at risk" is drawn from actuarial science. It refers to a group whose shared characteristics make it likely that they will have certain common life course experiences, either adverse or favorable.

[16] Sidney Goldstein and Alice Goldstein, *Jews on the Move: Implications for Jewish Identity* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1996).

[17] Northeast includes CT, RI, MA, NH, VT, ME, NJ, PA and NY; Midwest includes OH, MI, IN, IL, WI, MO, IA, MN, KS, NE, SD and ND; South includes FL, GA, SC, NC, VA, WV, DC, MD, DE, AL, MS, TN, KY, LA,TX, AR and OK; West includes NM, AZ, CO, UT, NV, WY, ID, MT, CA, OR and WA. Hawaii and Alaska are not included in AJIS.

[18] *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962)
www.emory.edu/EDUCATION/mfp/Kuhnsnap.html

[19] Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality* (New York: Doubleday Anchor Book, 1966, 1967). p. 15 "The sociology of knowledge must first of all concern itself with what people 'know' as 'reality' in their everyday non- or pre-theoretical lives."

[20] Hans Gerth & C. Wright Mills, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 51.

[21] Peter L. Berger, *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of A Sociological Theory of Religion*, (New York: Doubleday, 1967), p.107.

[22] See *Highlights*, p. 37

[23] See *Highlights*, p. 35

[24] See *Highlights,* p. 35

APPENDIX

[25] The four screening questions were: "What is your religion, if any?" "Do you or does anyone else in your household have a Jewish mother or a Jewish father?" "Were you or anyone else in your household raised Jewish?" "Do you or anyone else in your household consider himself or herself to be Jewish?"

[26] AJIS 2001 detailed methodology can be found in the report on the American Religious Identification Survey 2001at www.gc.cuny.edu/studies/aris_index.htm

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