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**THE 1990 CHICAGO METROPOLITAN AREA JEWISH
POPULATION STUDY***

Peter Friedman

Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago

Bruce Phillips

Hebrew Union College—Institute of Judaism

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Chicago completed its third Jewish population study in 1990, concurrent with the National Jewish Population Study. The article reviews the methodology of the most recent Chicago study and analyzes some of the results, which show that while Chicago does reflect many of the national trends, the community is different than one would expect by interpolating national results to the local community. The article also demonstrates the value of local studies to the local community in its planning efforts.

In 1990, the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago conducted its third population study of the Chicago metropolitan area Jewish population in that many decades. It did so while fully aware that there are legitimate issues about the utility of local studies. Nevertheless, local studies will and should continue; however, they cannot substitute for a national study, which is needed to provide an overall picture and analysis of the American Jewish community (Goldstein 1987). Experience from the past decade shows that the sum of local studies does not make for an accurate national picture. Moreover, there is a value in continuing the local studies to provide a richer picture of local American Jewish life; for assisting with local planning efforts; for providing sufficient cases for analysis of certain sub-groups within the national population; and for doing comparative analysis using the community as the unit of analysis. At the same time, national studies may influence the direction of local studies as was the case with the 1990 National Jewish Population Study (NJPS).

This article presents some of the findings of the Chicago Jewish Population Study (CJPS) and makes some comparisons with the national results. In addition to providing an understanding of the findings of this particular community study, the analyses which follow

will address some of the issues which arise during the course of a local study and provide insights that may be applicable elsewhere, not only in other local studies, but in national studies. The topics covered include: a comparison of methods used in the past three local studies, the results concerning "Who is a Jew?," population size and trends, geography of the Jewish population, demographic trends, some selected Jewish identification indicators which show some interesting changes over time, and how the information from this study was used for planning purposes.

METHODOLOGICAL BACKGROUND AND EVALUATION

Chicago's Experience with Population Surveys: The Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago has been a long time proponent of studies of the Jewish population of the city and metropolitan area. Support for applied research benefitted from an academic tradition of research into ethnic communities at the University of Chicago as well as strong professional leadership from the Jewish Federation, which sought to introduce data into decision-making throughout the modern history of the Federation. Louis Wirth, who wrote the first sociological work about the American Jewish community, *The Ghetto* (1928), conducted planning studies for the Jewish Charities in 1944 (renamed the Jewish Federation in 1948). The community was one of the first Federations to have a separate research department, established in the mid-1960s. Although integrated with other departments in the late 1970s, the function of a separate research capability was maintained.

Prior to the use of survey research by the Jewish community, the Chicago Federation adopted various methods for estimating Jewish population size (Beverly, 1954; Rosenthal, 1952; Kaplan, 1966). However, for the past three decades, the community has relied upon results of survey research to develop population estimates and gain other insights into the characteristics of the Jewish population.

The community's first venture into survey research for population projections occurred two decades ago, when the community agreed to expand the number of cases included in the National Jewish Population Study (NJPS) of 1971 so as to permit projections for the Chicago area. The sample design, dictated by NJPS, used a dual sample frame involving lists and area samples. Ultimately, there were 685 completed interviews with Jewish households in the Chicago area—428 selected from households originally selected from the Jewish United Fund (JUF)

list of contributors and prospects and 257 from housing units in census tracts. Areas of projected high Jewish population concentration were sampled disproportionately more than areas estimated to have moderate or low concentrations (Jewish Federation, 1973).

All of the interviews were conducted in person. However, since some of the initial results were considered suspect due to the small sample size, the three areas with the largest Jewish populations were subjected to additional telephone surveys of 1,600 cases selected from listed telephone numbers. The surveys yielded basic household and demographic information required to make Jewish population estimates. The NJPS data from Chicago were extremely helpful in assessing environmental changes for the Community's Long Range Planning Project, which was completed in 1975 (Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago, 1975).

Since the sample size did not permit projections for other regions and clusters of Jewish communities within the Chicago metropolitan area, during the 1970s, the Federation undertook surveys in addition to the initial survey used for validating the population size. The additional surveys, based upon samples derived from listed phone numbers, were used to obtain some relatively basic demographic information about Jewish households. The surveys were conducted on a shoe-string budget using interviewers who called from their own homes. The surveys were supplemented by additional sources of information about the areas covered including census data, community histories, institutional service data and perceptions of community members and service providers about Jewish community trends, needs and issues (Friedman and Nasatir, 1978).

The second Chicago-wide study was begun in September, 1981 and completed in January, 1982 (hereafter referred to as the 1981 study as most of the interviews were conducted in 1981). The questionnaire was based upon a review of questionnaires being used by other federated communities and the specific interests of the Chicago Jewish community. A random digit dialing method was used to locate potentially eligible households. A screener was applied to select those households for which it was reported that at least one Jew (by self-definition) resided in the household (Policy Research Corporation 1982).

The 1981 study covered the entire metropolitan area. However, seven regions were disproportionately sampled. They were regions which either had a higher Jewish density or about which there was

planning interest. The response rate was favorable in that among Jewish households identified in the screener, 75% completed their interviews, resulting in 1,248 interviews (82% more interviews than the 1971 study).

The third study, the focus of this article, was planned to occur simultaneously with the 1990 National Jewish Population Study (NJPS). The intent was to provide some information for comparisons between local and national populations. There were efforts to develop a consortium among three communities which were planning studies so that a joint, efficient and possibly less costly approach could be used for the benefit of the participating communities. These efforts did not succeed for two reasons: the communities were in different phases of planning for participation in a study—one community did not undertake a study; and the organization which was the logical choice as contractor for the local study (and was eventual the contractor for one of the communities) was involved with the national study. Thus, each community made the decision to go it alone. However, they did share information about their studies with each other. (During the next round of studies around the year 2000, every effort should be made to use one firm for the national study and for as many local studies as feasible.)

In Chicago, because of the successful experience with the 1981 study, there was a strong interest in insuring comparability with the previous study as well as with the 1990 NJPS. Hence, the screener questions and the questionnaire design reflect elements of the 1981 local study, the 1990 national study and areas of topical interest to Chicago when the study was undertaken. Interestingly, one consequence of the effort to use several reference points in the construction of the questionnaire is a survey that is not strictly comparable to either the 1981 Chicago Study or the 1990 NJPS.

The study used a dual sampling frame. That is, it sampled from both the list of Jewish United Fund (JUF) donors and prospective donors and conducted Random Digit Dialing (RDD). The overall sample was designed to be sixty-six percent larger than the previous study (projected completed interviews) so that more regions could be surveyed. The JUF list sample was selected from a database of nearly 67,000 telephone numbers designated as residential phones representing donors and prospective donors. Separate samples were selected from each frame and, based upon the household screening results, separate estimates were made of the number of Jewish households represented

by the list and RDD responses respectively (Groeneman and Cue, 1991).

After a brief introduction, respondents in the household were asked the following three screener questions:

1. Do you or anyone else 18 or over living in your household consider him or herself to be Jewish?
2. Were you or was anyone in your household 18 or over raised Jewish?
3. Did you or anyone in your household 18 or over have a Jewish mother or Jewish father?

Persons who answered the first question negatively were then asked questions 2 and 3. If they answered positively to either question 2 or 3, they were considered 'marginal Jews' and given a separate interview.

The screener and interview approach differed from the 1990 NJPS format in two important ways. First, the survey was designed as a one-shot approach; if the appropriate household respondent qualified according to the screener, the interview was conducted at the same time, or a specific alternate time was set up for the interview. NJPS first selected its sample and then went back to interview them, having had several opportunities to confirm the nature of the household. Second, the screening interviewer was straightforward. Unlike the NJPS, the screening was not embedded in a larger framework of additional questions which could conceal the purpose of the interview. In the Chicago study, it was quite clear who was calling and for what purpose. Cost considerations and success with a similar screener in 1981 influenced the choice of approach.

A total of 19,427 household screenings were completed resulting in 2,148 (1,593 list and 555 RDD) completed interviews plus 100 with marginal Jewish households. Interviews with marginal Jewish households were done on a quota basis did not include the full set of questions. The response rates of the sampling and screening process are shown in Table 1. It compares results from the List and RDD sampling frames. It also compares the 1981 and 1990 studies.

The level of cooperation in the 1990 study was lower than in the previous study. The decline in the screening cooperation rate of ten or eleven percentage points (depending upon the sample frame) may be understandable in light of the trend toward higher refusal rates for recent survey research studies. Even the interview completion rate for the List sample, although slightly above that of the RDD, was below

Table 1. Percentage Response Rates for 1981 and 1990 Chicago Jewish Population Studies

| | 1990 Overall | 1990 List Sample | 1990 RDD Sample | 1981 RDD Sample |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Screening cooperation rate | 80 ^a | 81 ^a | 80 ^a | 91 ^a |
| Interview completion rate | 62 ^b | 67 ^b | 52 ^b | 75 ^c |

^a Screening rate is the number of completed screenings with Jewish households divided by [the number of completed screenings and adult Jewish refusals].

^b The interview completion rate is the number of completed Jewish interviews divided by [the number of completed interviews + eligible refusals that were not converted + eligible households that could not be reached after more than 9 contact attempts.]

^c The number of completed interviews divided by eligible Jewish households

that of the response of the previous decade, which used only an RDD sample. We had anticipated even more cooperation in both the screening and interview completion rates for the List sample. We are not certain whether the decline in cooperation reflects the specific questionnaire used, the sponsorship, the interviewers, the fact of greater difficulty in securing respondent participation in recent studies, or some other factor, e.g., increase in telemarketing. In light of concern about the cooperation and completion rates, two further steps were taken. First, there was an analysis, based upon Distinctive Jewish Names (DJN) technique, of those who refused to participate or did not respond. It did not yield any significant differences between those participating in the study and those who refused (Marketing Systems Group, 1991). Second, a follow-up survey of the refusals was conducted. Results do not reveal any significant differences. However, the results are not fully conclusive since the analysis dealt with only a few variables. Moreover, in some instances, the number of cases is small, making it difficult to detect significant differences.

In addition, there was a separate study of Jews residing in institutions, primarily long-term care facilities. A questionnaire was sent to 300 long-term care institutions in the Chicago area requesting the number of Jewish residents above and below 65 years of age. Overall, we received responses from fifty percent of the facilities. However, the response rate was much higher for those facilities which had previously been identified as having Jewish residents. The results yielded a projection of close to 3,150 Jewish residents. To be consistent with past projections, they are not included in the analysis below.

From the viewpoint of the authors, an important contribution of the most recent study derives from the analyses of differences and changes over time between 1981 and 1990. These show trends that seem to be consistent with other studies at the national or local level and can be explained in the context of changes which are occurring both within the American Jewish and general communities. The lack of a 1980 national study limits analysis at the national level to a two-decade span, 1970 and 1990.

FINDINGS

Rather than review all of the Chicago findings, we selected some findings which reflect on unique qualities of the Chicago Jewish community and which also bear on issues of broader concern both to researchers and Jewish communal policy makers.

Who Is a Jew? One of the more interesting findings, in light of NJPS results, deals with the variety of Jewish identities within the Jewish population and their impact upon Jewish involvement. The following topologies owe a lot to the thinking done at a national level which stimulated us to seek ways to characterize the Jewish identity of our sample differently from those we had used in previous studies. Within the questionnaire, there is a series of questions about adult members of the household which permit more detailed analysis than was available from the 1981 CJPS. These included the following five categories with related options:

1. *Self-definition:* The adult consider him/herself to be Jewish.
2. *Current Religion:* The adult's current religion.
3. *Religion Born:* The religion into which the adult was born.
4. *Religion Raised:* The religion in which the adult was raised.

5. *Jewish Parentage*: At least one of the adult's parents was Jewish.

Children were identified by responses to two questions: one about the current religion, the other about the religion in which the child is being raised. We asked parents to indicate whether their children were being raised Jewish, non-Jewish, nothing or a mixture of Judaism and some other religion.

Within Core Jewish households, i.e., households in which there is at least one person currently identified as a Jew, we differentiated among their occupants based on variations in religious and/or ethnic identity. Every adult and child in a Core household was analyzed individually to insure they were placed in the correct category. We subsumed them under two broad categories: Core Jews and Non-Jews. However, unlike the national study, we separated out children from adults among Core Jews as we did not have sufficient information to classify children into the sub-categories used for adults.

The sub-categories were defined following the format of the national study. Among *Core Jews* we differentiated among: 1) *Jew-By-Religion*: Adult who identifies him/herself as a Jew by religion and was born or raised a Jew; 2) *Jew-by-Choice*: Individual neither born nor raised Jewish (with no Jewish parent) who now identifies as a Jew, although there may have been no formal conversion. 3) *Secular Jew*: Adult who was born and/or raised Jewish, identifies as a Jew, but indicates he/she has no current religion. 4) *Child Born/Raised Jewish*: Child who is being raised as a Jew (and has at least one Jewish parent).

Among *non-Jews* we included: 5) *Formerly Jewish-Adult*: Includes both individuals who were born/raised Jewish but who do not currently regard themselves or their religion as Jewish, as well as individuals who currently regard themselves as Jewish, but maintain another religion. 6) *Non-Jewish Child*: Child being raised in another religion or in no religion. The category "non-Jewish Child" includes children who are raised in both Judaism and another religion as well as children who are being raised in any religion other than Judaism and those who are not being raised with any identifiable religious upbringing. 7) *Non-Jewish Adult*: Individual who was neither born nor raised Jewish and either identifies with a religion other than Judaism or with no religion.

The total population of Core Jews is 261,000. In addition there are 41,400 non-Jews in the core Jewish households. Table 2 shows the

distribution of the various identity subgroups among the Core Jewish households.

The study shows that while the great majority (86%) of persons living in Core Jewish households are Jewish, there is a significant minority (14%) who are not, including even former Jews living with a currently Jewish person(s). The 1981 study did not obtain this same level of detail about the Jewish identity of every adult available in

Table 2. Population in Chicago Area in Core Jewish Households

| Identity of Persons in Core Jewish Households | Numbers | Percentage |
|--|----------------|-------------------------|
| Core Jews | | |
| Born/Raised Jews: Jewish by Religion | 194,600 | 6.4 |
| Secular Jews | 2,500 | 0.8 |
| Jew by Choice | 5,500 | 1.8 |
| Child Born/raised Jewish | 58,400 | 19.3 |
| Subtotal | 261,000 | 86.3 |
| Former Jewish Adults | 5,550 | 1.8 |
| Non-Jewish Children | | |
| Jewish and Other Religion | 4,200 | 1.4 |
| Other Religion | 3,200 | 1.0 |
| No religion | 4,700 | 1.6 |
| Subtotal | 12,100 | 4.0 |
| Non-Jewish Adults | 16,700 | 5.5 |
| Ex-Christian/other | 7,050 | 2.3 |
| Subtotal | 23,750 | 7.8 |
| Total | 302,400 | 99.9^a |

^a Adds up to 99.9% due to rounding.

1990. Even so, the figures show that in addition to the 248,000 Jews (90%), there were 28,000 non-Jews (10%) residing in these Core Jewish households in 1981.

One of the crucial findings of the national study was the importance of being defined as a secular Jew as contrasted with Jew-by-Religion. The national study found that those who do not define themselves as Jews-by-Religion are less likely to be Jewishly identified or involved. (As we show later, significant differences are also observed between Chicago Jews who define themselves as Jews-by-Religion and those classified as secular Jews.) The Chicago study discovered relatively few secular Jews, even when we broadened the operational definition to include those who stated that their religion is Jewish, but denominationally define themselves as "secular." When we look at secular Jews as a proportion of Core Jews, they represent approximately 1%. Even when the broadened definition is applied, or when their children are included, the proportion rises to 2%, but is still significantly below the proportion in the national study which categorized 20% of its core Jewish population as "secular." We do not know for certain why we found so few secular Jews in the Chicago area. Perhaps it is related to the characteristics of the Chicago Jewish community or of the Midwest. We postulate that it is a combination of the large size of the Chicago Jewish community with a strong religious base and the more conservative nature of the Midwest.

Population Trends: During the two decades under study (1971 through 1990), the Jewish population has remained relatively constant at around one-quarter million Core Jews. Taking into consideration that the estimates are affected by the different methodologies and sampling areas, the consistency in numbers is noteworthy. Among the factors which affect the numbers are: a) an influx of Jews from the former Soviet Union and b) young adults who continue to move into the city. The first factor, immigration, is a result of national and local Jewish communal policy. From 1971 to 1990, close to 12,500 refugees, primarily from the Soviet Union, came through the formal channels of resettlement via the Chicago Jewish community (An additional 7,000 have arrived through mid 1994.) The influx of younger Jews to Chicago is apparent in the comparison of birth place by different age cohorts. Table 3 compares the 1981 findings with those of 1990. It shows there is a higher proportion of young adults (18-29 years old) moving into the Chicago area in 1990 than in 1981. They gravitate to Chicago for a variety of reasons related to education and employment, although for some the presence of a large Jewish community is also

attractive. The latter group is also the most mobile. Those in it could move elsewhere if their needs are not met.

The population size is, of course, also influenced by outmigration. Unfortunately, we cannot measure outmigration effectively. However, we do know that in addition to young single adults, elderly have also left the city.

Finally, it is clear that the population is changing with regard to family composition, age composition and Jewish identification. Each of these factors will have some bearing on the future population size of the Chicago Jewish metropolitan community.

Table 3. Percent Distribution of Birthplace by Age: Respondents and Spouses: 1981 and 1990

| | 18-29 | | 30-39 | | 40-64 | | 65+ | | Total | |
|--------------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|------|------|------|-------|------|
| | 1981 | 1990 | 1981 | 1990 | 1981 | 1990 | 1981 | 1990 | 1981 | 1990 |
| Chicago | 72 | 50 | 64 | 62 | 72 | 65 | 51 | 59 | 66 | 61 |
| Other | | | | | | | | | | |
| USA | 21 | 41 | 30 | 33 | 17 | 27 | 29 | 23 | 21 | 29 |
| Foreign-Born | 7 | 9 | 6 | 5 | 11 | 8 | 20 | 18 | 13 | 10 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Individual and household characteristics: The age distribution of the Jewish population is important since it has a strong bearing upon communal planning for service needs of different age groups. During the two-decade period in which we have studied the Chicago area Jewish population, the age structure of the Jewish population shows predictable trends. For example there is the continuing impact of the baby boom (ages 40-49) generation (see Table 4). As the baby boomers mature, the average age increases. However, the increase in the average age is mitigated by an increase in the number and proportion of Jewish youngsters, age five and under, who are the children of the baby boomers. The percentage of children five and under in 1990 was 8.0% compared with 4.6% nearly one decade ago (and is reflected in the growth of early childhood programs). This rate of Jewish population growth among the youngest cohort will not be repeated in

the following decade since the baby boom generation will be followed by a smaller cohort and because of the intermarriage rate.

Interestingly, the non-institutionalized elderly population (65 and older) did not grow over the past decade. It remains relatively constant at 14.3%. Such consistency may be due to migration of elderly to the West and South. However, when looking at households, we find that one out of every five households has one or more elderly persons living in it.

Table 4. Percent Distribution of Ages in Chicago Jewish Population: 1981-1990

| AGE | 1981 | 1990 |
|-------|-------|-------|
| 0-5 | 4.6 | 8.0 |
| 6-17 | 15.3 | 14.2 |
| 18-29 | 19.3 | 14.0 |
| 30-39 | 16.5 | 16.3 |
| 40-49 | 13.0 | 17.2 |
| 50-64 | 16.8 | 16.0 |
| 65+ | 14.5 | 14.3 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 |

Household Structure: The trends in household structure found in the present study are consistent with previous changes, although the rate of change is declining and the current structure is remarkably similar to the national structure. The trends are shown in Table 5. The last column presents data from the NJPS and enables a comparison with the results from the 1990 Chicago study.

First, there continues to be an increase in the number of Core Jewish households in Chicago, from 97,700 in 1971 to 120,000 in 1990. Concomitantly, there has been a decrease in the number of Jewish persons per Core Jewish household from 2.58 in 1971 to 2.17 in 1990.

The two most dramatic shifts relate to the increase in single adults and the corresponding decline in two-parent households with children at home. The percentage of married couples without children has stayed constant while the actual number of such households has grown during the two decade period.

Similar to the national study, so-called "normative" Jewish households with two Jewish parents and Jewish children (below 18 years of age) are a minority of the population. They constitute 20% of all households. The national figure is close to 17%.

During the period 1981 to 1990, the rate of change in the kinds of households was much less dramatic than in the previous decade. For example, while there was a reduction of nine points in the percentage of married couples with children at home during the 1970s, there was only a drop of another two percentage points from 1981 to 1990. Similarly, the percentage of single adults grew by nine points in the 1970s and by less than two between 1981 and 1990. National studies of the general population have also noted the slowing down of changes in household structure.

Table 5. Percent Distribution of Core Jewish Household Structure: 1971-1990

| | 1971 | 1981 | 1990 | 1990 NJPS |
|---|------|-------|-------|-----------|
| Married Couples without children at home | 29 | 28 | 29 | 28 |
| Married Couples with children at home | 45 | 36 | 34 | 32 |
| Single-Parent Families | 4 | 5 | 4 | 6 |
| Single Adults | 22 | 31 | 33 | 34 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Total HHs (n: 000s) | 97.7 | 107.7 | 120.0 | 2,700.0 |

At the same time, there are some important changes which are accelerating within families. Remarriage is a prime example, as shown in Table 6. The 1981 study noted that a significant proportion (15%) of intact families with children at home involved family mergers through remarriage. The percentage has now risen to 24%. Table 6 shows that in 1990 one married couple in five (20%) whose oldest child is six or younger includes a previously married spouse. The percentage of remarried families rises to 28% in households with the oldest children in the 6 to 17 year age range. The increases between the two studies are consistent with higher divorce rates. Another way of looking

at the data is to suggest that although at any one time single-parent families comprise slightly more than ten percent of all households with children under eighteen years of age, given current rates of family dissolution, one of four Jewish children could be living in a single-parent household some time during their childhood.

Table 6. Two-Parent Families with Children at Home in Which One/Both Married Spouse(s) Were Previously Married: 1981-1990

| Age of Oldest Child | Percent of Married Couples | |
|---------------------|----------------------------|------|
| | 1981 | 1990 |
| Under 6 | 17 | 20 |
| 6 - 17 | 18 | 28 |
| 18+ | 6 | 20 |

Employment of both spouses is another major component of contemporary family structure. Table 7 shows the employment status of married couples controlling for whether or not there are children at home and the age range of the children. Within each category there is a comparison of 1981 data with 1990. The subtotals reflect the percentage of households in which both spouses work, full or part-time. Several trends and differences are evident. The proportion of households with dual employed spouses has increased (if only marginally) in all households. In fact, among all categories, the majority of married couples are both within the labor force.

The largest change is among the families with small children. In 1981, only 36% of both spouses were employed; now that figure has risen to 52%. In all categories, we find more couples engaged in full-time work. The increase in the percentage of couples working may reflect economic necessities in combination with changing expectations about women in the labor force. That is, families may find it necessary for both spouses to work to provide for their children and to create a lifestyle they deem desirable. Needless to say, the increase in the number of working couples may have consequences for childcare needs and for the level of involvement in Jewish communal activities, given the competition for their time.

Intermarriage: Another change which is affecting the Jewish family is the increased rate of intermarriage. We looked at intermarriage by couples, rather than by individuals, in order to compare the 1990

Table 7. Labor Force Participation of Married Couples: Percent Distribution: 1981-1990

| Married with Children at Home: | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|------|-------|------|------|------|
| | Age of Oldest Child | | | | | |
| | Under 6 | | 6-17 | | 18+ | |
| | 1981 | 1990 | 1981 | 1990 | 1981 | 1990 |
| Both Full-time | 18 | 22 | 28 | 29 | 22 | 45 |
| Full/Part-time | 18 | 30 | 27 | 31 | 27 | 21 |
| Subtotal | 36 | 52 | 55 | 60 | 49 | 66 |
| Full-time/At Home | 56 | 40 | 29 | 35 | 32 | 17 |
| Other | 8 | 8 | 16 | 5 | 19 | 17 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Married Without Children at Home: | | | | | | |
| | Age of Older Spouse | | | | | |
| | 18-39 | | 40-64 | | | |
| | 1981 | 1990 | 1981 | 1990 | | |
| Both Full-time | 67 | 84 | 37 | 47 | | |
| Full/Part-time | 14 | 6 | 23 | 14 | | |
| Subtotal | 81 | 90 | 60 | 61 | | |
| Full-time/At home | 9 | 5 | 25 | 22 | | |
| Other | 10 | 5 | 15 | 17 | | |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | | |

results with those of 1981. Hence, all of the percentages refer to couples, not to individuals as the national data do. However we do provide some comparable data from the national study. Table 8 compares current information about intermarriage with data from the

previous study. Data for three kinds of current marriages are shown: 1) those in which both spouses were born and raised as Jews and now identify as Jews, 2) those in which one spouse was born and raised as a Jew and one spouse has either formally converted or informally identifies as a "Jew-by-choice," and 3) those in which one spouse was born and raised as a Jew and one spouse is not currently Jewish.

The percentage of marriages between someone born Jewish and a spouse who was not, i.e., an intermarriage, among all marriages increased by only seven percentage points. However, this increase represents nearly a fifty percent increase over the percentage of intermarrieds from the previous decade.

The data show significant changes when age groups are compared between 1981 and 1990. Among the 40-49 age group, the percentage of intermarriage has more than doubled; it rose by more than 33% in the 30-39 age group and by close to 50% in the youngest age group, 18-29. Since many Jewish adults do not marry until their 30s and 40s, the impact of the number of intermarriages among the 18-29 age group is lessened. However, the trend toward intermarriage is very apparent. We are also beginning to see, in small numbers, intermarriages of Jews-by-Choice to non-Jews or to other Jews-by-Choice. These kinds of marriages are expected to increase in the next decade.

The figures for intermarriage in Chicago are still below the national figures, which according to the NJPS show that 28% of all marriages involving at least one currently identified Jewish spouse are mixed married couples. We are inclined to attribute the difference to the particular characteristics of either the Chicago Jewish community or of the Chicago community at large. For example, the size of the Jewish community has been found to be negatively correlated with rates of intermarriage. A study of the relationship among various community characteristics, based upon secondary analysis of local Jewish population studies conducted during the early to mid 1980s, shows that the absolute number of Jews in a city is an important correlate of certain Jewish characteristics. Both synagogue affiliation and intermarriage rates are inversely correlated to city size, that is, the larger the Jewish population, the lower the synagogue affiliation rate and also the intermarriage rate. An explanation for this correlation lies in the fact that a higher absolute number (and hence density) of Jews provides both more opportunities for in-marriage and alternatives to affiliation for Jewish involvement and interaction. (Rabinowitz, 1988: 69, 74).

Table 8. Intermarriage by Age of Respondent: Percent Distribution 1981 and 1990

| Type of Couple | 18-29 | | 30-39 | | 40-49 | | 50 and Over | | Total | |
|-----------------------------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|------|-------------|------|-------|------|
| | 1981 | 1990 | 1981 | 1990 | 1981 | 1990 | 1981 | 1990 | 1981 | 1990 |
| Born Jewish & Born Jewish | 66 | 52 | 71 | 53 | 88 | 71 | 93 | 95 | 83 | 74 |
| Born Jewish & Jew By Choice | 7 | 1 | 6 | 9 | 3 | 9 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 6 |
| Born Jew & Non-Jew | 27 | 47 | 23 | 38 | 8 | 20 | 6 | 4 | 13 | 20 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 99* | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

* Adds up to 99 percent due to rounding.

Interestingly, results from the Chicago study show that even within a metropolitan area, those persons who are intermarried tend to live in areas of lower density Jewish population. That is, 43% of all mixed married households live in areas which account for only 16% of all core Jewish households in the metropolitan area (parts of the city, the south and west suburbs). The move to these regions may occur after the intermarriages and reflect an interest in finding areas which are not as overtly Jewish as the more dense areas in the north-northwestern suburbs and north side of the city.

The consequences of intermarriage will be felt by the children in these families. The total number of children living in all Core Jewish households is 70,400. Some 58,300 (83.9%) of these youths are being raised Jewishly. In mixed married households, i.e., households in which there is one Jewish spouse and one non-Jewish spouse, with children under 18 living at home, 37% of the children are being raised as Jews; 53% are being raised in some other religion or in a mixture that may include Judaism; and slightly over 10% of children in intermarried households are not being raised in any religion. The national figures revealed that in the same kinds of households, 29% of children below 18 are being raised Jewish, some 41% are being raised in a non-Jewish religion, and nearly 31% are not being raised in any religion. The figures do show that in Chicago there are more children being raised Jewishly and in some kind of religion and relatively few being raised with no religion at all.

It is also interesting to look at how children are being raised in mixed households in Chicago, when controlling for their age. Table 9 shows that the percentage being raised as Jews in intermarriages varies by age, from 24% for those under six years old, to 50% for those in the 6-12 age group; and to 40% for those between 13-17. There are two possible interpretations, neither of which can be fully supported without additional information and more cases. The first is that families with younger children are different from families with older children and that the proportion of children raised exclusively Jewish will remain at one-quarter even when these children are older. Perhaps, as a recent analysis of NJPS data suggests (Keysar, Mayer and Kosmin, 1993), the characteristics of the parents are important. The analysis discussed the impact of the parents' religious identification, education, secular and Jewish, and generation—in—the—U.S., among other factors in reviewing the likelihood that a child of a mixed married household

Table 9. Religion of Children From Mixed Marriages by Age of Children: Percent Distribution

| | 0-5 | 6-12 | 13-17 | Total |
|----------------------|-----------------|------|-------|-------|
| Jewish | 24 | 50 | 40 | 37 |
| Other Religion | 24 | 27 | 51 | 29 |
| Mixed (Jewish/other) | 35 | 17 | 5 | 24 |
| None | 16 | 6 | 4 | 10 |
| Total | 99 ^a | 100 | 100 | 100 |

^a Adds up to 99% due to rounding.

would be identified as Jewish. The other possibility is that intermarried parents change their views when children reach school age and they are confronted with decisions about religious education. This suggests a dynamic view towards childhood Jewish identity formation.

Jewish Involvement: Another area of the study worth discussing involves the various indicators of Jewish identity and involvement. The 1990 study used some of the indicators from the previous study and added some others. The wording for the various indicators, however, was not consistent either between the two studies or between the 1990 Chicago study and NJPS. Thus, some attention must be paid to the wording of the survey questions when drawing inferences.² As with NJPS, some indicators related to the involvement of the respondent, while others pertained to practices observed by the household.

The various indicators pertain to: 1) religious practices; 2) civic-organizational involvement; 3) ties to Israel; 4) Jewish social ties; and 5) Jewish education. The data were analyzed for metropolitan Chicago as a whole for 1990, then compared with the NJPS results for core Jewish households, and by various sub-groups in our Chicago sample: secular Jewish respondents (using a broad definition of secular Jew to include respondents who indicated they were Jews by religion, but "secular" by denomination), entirely Jewish households (i.e., in which only core Jews reside) and mixed households (with at least one core Jewish household member). The data are presented in Table 10.

Several observations can be made. First, comparisons between the NJPS and CJPS show, for the most part, that the Chicago community

Table 10. Percent Distribution of Jewish Identity Indicators

| | Respondent/ Household | Total CJPS '90 | Total NJPS '90 | Secular Jews | Entire HH Jewish | Mixed HH |
|---|--------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------|---------------------|-------------|
| RELIGIOUS PRACTICES | | | | | | |
| Light Hanukkah Candles | H | 84 | 74 | 21 | 75 | 54 |
| Participate in Passover Seder | H | 93 | 80 | 49 | 95 | 85 |
| Fast on Yom Kippur | R | 59 | 49 | 17 | 61 | 48 |
| Attend Synagogue-Monthly or More | R | 26 | 23 | 1 | 33 | 15 |
| Attend Synagogue-Never | R | 16 | 25 | 54 | 12 | 30 |
| JEWISH CIVIC-ORGANIZATIONAL | | | | | | |
| Current Synagogue Member | H | 44 | 33 | 3 | 50 | 19 |
| Previous Synagogue Member | H | 20 | 22 | 13 | 21 | 16 |
| Jewish Voluntary Work | R | 30 | 18 | 2 | 34 | 16 |
| Contributed to Jewish Philanthropy-1989 | R | 76 | 56 | 24 | 82 | 51 |
| Belong to Jewish Organization | R | 40 | 28 | 5 | 46 | 21 |
| ISRAEL TIES | | | | | | |
| Visited Israel | R | 39 | 26 | 21 | 46 | 15 |
| Have Family or Close Friends in Israel | R | 37 | 25 | 19 | 40 | 26 |
| JEWISH SOCIAL TIES | | | | | | |
| All or Almost All Friends Jewish | R | 35 | 38 | 7 | 42 | 9 |
| Live in Area of 1000+ Jewish Households | H | 78 | NA | 38 | 82 | 62 |
| JEWISH EDUCATION | | | | | | |
| Received Formal Jewish Education | R | 81 | 70 | 33 | 80 | 83 |
| Participated in Adult Jewish Education | R | 29 | 14 | 3 | 31 | 21 |

Total NJPS refers to core Jewish household

NA = Not Applicable

has a higher level of involvement and identification than the national population. NJPS, of course, represents an average of all areas within the United States. The data also show that secular Jews have a much lower level of identification and involvement. Differences also exist between the households which are entirely Jewish and those (mixed) households which include both Jews and non-Jews. These data parallel the differences observed in NJPS.

There are two additional questions which can be raised about the findings. The first relates to any bias in the response because the respondent over- or understates their level of identification or involvement. Such bias may result from a social desirability pressure to respond positively to questions regarding Jewish involvement or from general ignorance on the part of the respondent who either is not aware of certain behaviors on part of themselves or other members of the household or is confused about them (see Sudman and Bradburn, 1982). The second question refers to the dynamic nature of Jewish life and the fact that at different points in time a respondent may be active and at other times inactive. We certainly know that there are higher and lower periods of involvement during the different phases of the life-cycle. The most recent questionnaire does obtain information about past and current synagogue involvement and past and current Jewish education. However, the relevant questions pertain to long timespans, while for communal policy makers, shorter term changes are important. We will provide an example below that relates to annual decisions to be involved with the federated campaign.

Since we used a dual sampling frame, including a sample of households in the Jewish United Fund (JUF) files as well as a random sample of households that were not in the files, there is an opportunity to review these two questions by comparing the responses in the survey to the questions about contributing during the previous twelve months (1989) to the JUF, the local federated campaign, with the information in the files.³ Of course, such analysis cannot serve as a proxy for all other indicators of Jewish involvement or identity, nor does it reveal intentions or reasons for behavior—only the fact that the behavior is the same or different from that reported by the respondent.

The initial response to a question regarding campaign contributions in the previous twelve months yielded results that showed more than half of the respondents maintained that they had given to the JUF in 1989. The other half either said they did not, were not sure, refused to answer the question or were not asked as they had stated that they did

not make any philanthropic contributions in general or specifically to Jewish causes. The results of the verification of the responses are shown in Table 11. Overall, there is a high percentage overlap between stated and verified behavior. Almost all (88%) of the verified contributors to the JUF are, in fact, aware that they are contributors. Of the 12% who were not aware they were contributors, more than half were not aware they contribute to Jewish causes. Among the non-givers, four of ten maintain they do not give at all to Jewish philanthropy. Close to a third, however, are mistaken contributors (i.e., say they give but are not listed as contributors). In addition to the social desirability bias, there may also be other factors working, such as lack of knowledge, a contribution by some other member of the household, etc. In Chicago, many non-contributors also receive a few editions of the federated newspaper, the *JUF News*, which is sent to the entire mailing list two times a year. They may be confusing receipt of the newspaper with contributing.

Table 11. Verification of Stated contributions to the Jewish United Fund: 1989

| "Contributed to JUF in Past 12 months" (1989) | Verified status | |
|--|-----------------|-----------|
| | Giver | Non-Giver |
| Yes | 88 | 32 |
| No | 3 | 22 |
| Do Not Know | 2 | 4 |
| Did Not Give to Jewish Charities | 7 | 42 |
| Total | 100 | 100 |

Finally, some of the contributors or non-contributors may also be mistaken about whether they made a pledge in 1989, since their status may change from year to year. We selected a subsample of 212 cases from the total sample for further analysis. Unfortunately, analysis indicated that the subsample is not a completely random sample of our population study. Nevertheless, the results are very interesting. When we trace actual giving experience during a three year period, 1991 through 1993 (excluding 43 cases, 21%, which could not be verified as we could not locate accounts perhaps due to a change of address), we

found that: a) six out of ten contributors from 1989 continued to give during the three year period, but that 17 (11% of the verified givers from 1989 in this subsample) became non-givers; but, conversely, b) a significant proportion, slightly over half, of the non-givers in 1989 became contributors sometime during the 1991-93 period. Even if this result proves to be overstated, it shows there may be changes in Jewish identification and involvement over a short period of time.

The issue raised by this analysis goes beyond the question of who contributes one year or another. For example, it raises the question of whether contributors feel they are in any way contributing to the central community organization or simply to just another organization. It also raises the issue of whether a contribution is based on a long term commitment or merely on a fluctuating interest or the availability of what they conceive to be disposable income. The issue also touches upon the relationship between the larger community and the federated system. The issue, of course, can also be framed vis-à-vis other institutions as well. For example, there is the question of the meaning of affiliation with synagogues or Community Centers to those who are members. These organizations are, of course, different from JUF, fulfilling different functions, but the question of whether their constituencies relate to them as "consumers" and not as members with some commitment to the institution should be examined. Our analysis of available data will not give us the answers to these questions; however, they may provide important background information to help us better frame the issues before us.

USE OF SURVEY RESULTS FOR PLANNING

Each of the Chicago area studies has been used by the local community for a variety of educational and planning purposes including: a) the decision to locate facilities, b) providing a rationale for service initiatives, c) educating the community d) campaign, and e) facilitating better relationships between Federation and congregations by providing information which is of assistance to them. Our experience has led to the conclusion that the data from a survey are only one of the pieces of information needed to be factored into planning or policy decisions. Sometimes survey data merely serve as background information for policy discussions (Friedman 1984). At other times, the data are valuable for a particular decision (e.g., placement of a facility in relationship to the size and age of the Jewish population in a specific

area). However, in no case have the data alone been sufficient to fully address the issues surrounding communal policy. The data need to be supplemented by information about needs, about institutions, agency service statistics, organizations, the role of Jewish and non-Jewish organizations (if related to service need) in providing service; the kinds of resources available; values and priorities. A thirty to forty minute survey of a random sample of individuals should not be expected to provide all of the data needed in the complex process of communal decision-making.

Goldscheider (1991) addresses the lament of policy makers that it is often difficult to translate the data from surveys into communal policies to improve the quality of Jewish life. He notes that one of the problems is the focus of surveys upon individuals, while policies focus upon the institutions. He cautions,

Until we examine the linkages of these community and institutions contexts to the quality of Jewish life, our understanding of the continuities and changes of the American Jewish community will be limited and our policy and planning will not be effective.

Although his caution refers to the "quality of Jewish life," it holds for many other planning and policy issues as well.

Nevertheless, these limitations notwithstanding, the availability of survey data certainly enhances the policy and planning process. Some examples from both the 1981 and 1990 studies suffice to show how the data may be useful:

1993 Jewish Federation Priorities Study: The data from the 1981 and the 1990 studies were integrated with qualitative data as part of an environmental scan to show the major changes within the Chicago Jewish community over a three decade period. The scan provided the background for the discussion of priorities.

1993 Identity and Continuity Task Force: The Task Force, which has involved direct participation of eighteen major Jewish organizations in the Chicago area and numerous other organizations through a series of local community forums, has provided an excellent opportunity to share the findings of the National and Chicago Jewish Population Survey with Jewish organizational professionals and volunteers. Data have been extremely helpful, more, it should be noted, in the comparison made among various groups in the total population than in examination of the

percentages pertaining to a particular indicator of Jewish identification. For example, comparisons were made between households with only Jews in them and mixed households; among households with unrelated individuals and married couples without children (below 40; over 40); and among married couples with children of varying ages (below six years of age; 6-17; and 18 and over) and single parent households. Further, the information on Jewish identity has been used to provide a context for discussing the needs of specific areas in community forums held in different areas of Chicago.

Community Sub-regional Planning: Concurrent with a Priorities Study, the Federation is looking at regions within the metropolitan area to assess their needs. The data from the most recent population study, combined with data from previous studies, provide a context for the qualitative and institutional analyses to assess needs.

Development of the Synagogue Affiliation Fairs: An analysis of the data from the 1981 study led to a focus upon the dynamics of congregational affiliation. Specifically, data were used to focus attention on the fact that households join, drop out and possibly rejoin and that certain people are more likely to join at certain points in the life cycle than others. Regional meetings were held with area synagogues to discuss the findings and to show that they need not think of the situation as a zero-sum game in which every increase in one congregation's membership entails a loss of another congregation's membership. In several communities, the congregations agreed to develop a synagogue fair in cooperation with the local community center to demonstrate that there was no major conflict between these two institutional spheres. While the results have been modest in demonstrating that many more individuals or families affiliate because of these fairs, the concept has spread to all areas within metropolitan Chicago. This cooperative relationship would not have been possible without the data from the Population Study. The data provided a basis for bringing area congregations together. Moreover, information from the study about affiliation and the Jewish population helped frame the issues discussed.

CONCLUSION

There is clearly a need for a national survey. The sum of local studies cannot provide a complete national picture. At the same time,

however, communities cannot rely merely upon national data for their local planning.

Results of the Chicago Jewish Population studies show that while there are legitimate methodological issues and concerns which can be raised about local studies, on the whole, the trends reveal a picture which is consistent with the national picture, moderated by the perspective of a local community. Chicago is not simply a five percent view (its approximate proportion of the total national core Jewish population). It is important to take into consideration the context of the community and its institutions. There are some interesting insights from the local study that can contribute to addressing some of the issues raised at the national level or in other communities (e.g., the dynamics of philanthropic giving over time and the fact that many more households are involved Jewishly over time than is apparent when only a one-time snapshot is used). And finally, using the information in the appropriate manner can be helpful in local planning and policy development.

NOTES

* The opinions expressed in this paper are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago. The authors appreciate the assistance of Linda Berkowitz in preparing data for the article.

¹ If we present the information by the proportion of Jews marrying non-Jews and control for when they were married, the Chicago data reflect a percentage, approximately 24%, for the most recent period, 1985-1990, which is below that of the national rate of 52%. We do not know if this difference is merely an artifact of the sample. However, the trends are the expected direction (i.e., more intermarriage) and there is a consistency between the 1981 and 1990 data.

² While questions about the same topic were asked, the responses provided often differed. For example, the Chicago study inquired as to whether respondents, or their household, observed a given annual ritual "every year," "most years," "only some years," or "never." The responses in NJPS, on behalf of the household, are 'all the time,' 'usually,' 'sometimes,' or 'never.'

³ In neither study was the identity of individual givers included either in the data analysis or in presentations of the results. As promised to the participant, information is reported only about the aggregate, not on an individual basis.

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