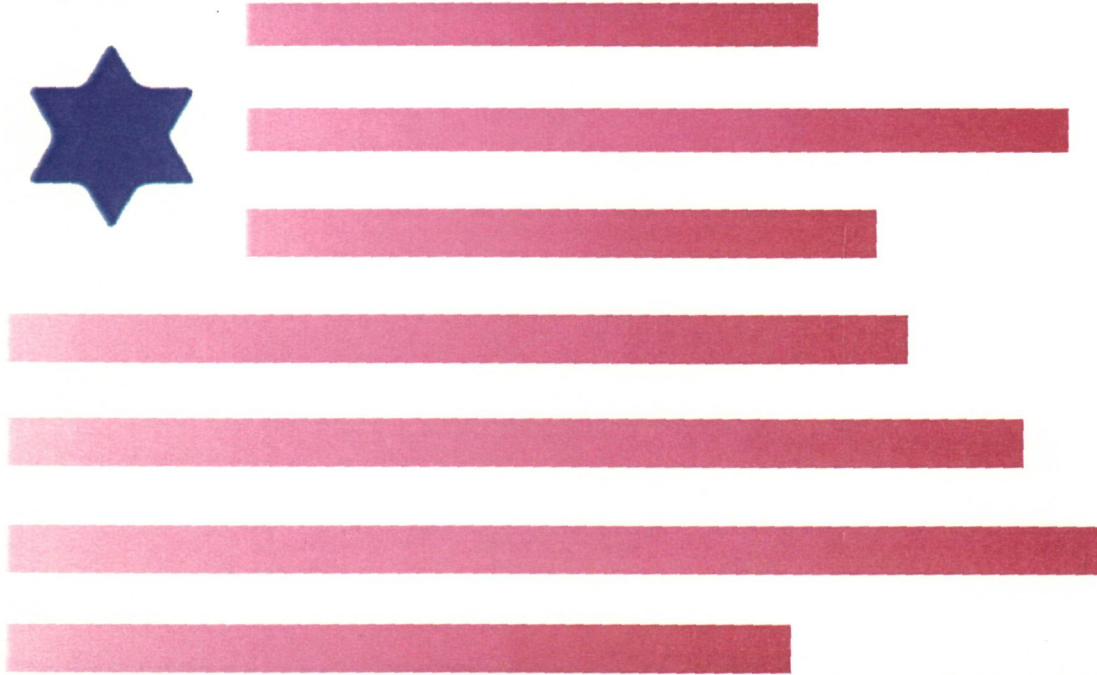


# Adult Jewish Learning in America:



## Current Patterns and Prospects for Growth

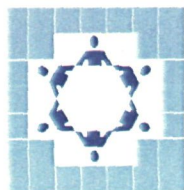
**Steven M. Cohen**

The Melton Centre for Jewish Education in the Diaspora,  
The Hebrew University  
&  
The Florence G. Heller/JCC Association Research Center

**Aryeh Davidson**

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*jointly sponsored by:*



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Research Center



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The Jewish Theological Seminary of America

# **Adult Jewish Learning in America: Current Patterns and Prospects for Growth**

Steven M. Cohen

The Melton Centre for Jewish Education in the Diaspora, The Hebrew University and  
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March, 2001

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## SUMMARY

What is the current extent and nature of Jewish learning in America? What motivations, inhibitions, and social characteristics are associated with Jewish learning? How may JCCs, synagogues and other agencies best address the growing interest in Jewish learning among American Jewish adults?

These are the principal questions addressed in this study, one that relies on the first-ever national survey on adult Jewish learning in the United States. Derived from a mail-back survey of 1,302 respondents nationwide, this study's key findings consist of the following:

- American Jews engage in a **wide variety of learning activities**, including reading books and magazines, attending classes, and going to Jewish museums.
- A **small number** engage in numerous Jewish learning activities; and a large number have never even attended a single lecture or class, as adults.
- Contrary to several measures of ethnic involvement, **younger adult Jews** are just as involved in Jewish learning as their elders.
- Jewish learning is associated with the following characteristics: **higher education**; affluence; wider **cultural involvement**; being female; and, not surprisingly, **Jewish involvement**, observance, and **affiliation** with a synagogue and/or a JCC.
- More respondents were interested in learning about Jewish **food or cooking** than any other subject matter.
- More Jewishly involved and more the active Jewish learners expressed more interest in the more conventional topics of Jewish learning; the less involved and less active are more interested in such topics as **Jewish food, the Holocaust, and Jewish history**.
- Potential learners expressed keen interest in courses of **3-session** duration.
- **Social concerns** (e.g., spending "time with people I like") were critical, especially for currently inactive potential learners, as well as the desire to "**grow as a Jew**".
- Although more report currently engaging in Jewish study at synagogues than anywhere else, **JCCs emerged with synagogues as a favored potential venues for Jewish learning**.

The **policy implications** include the following:

- Support the **diversity** of Jewish learning processes.
- **Expand** the types of Jewish learning offerings and their content.
- Address the interest in **three-session courses**.
- Attend to the **social dimension** to Jewish learning.
- Attend to the motivation to **grow Jewishly** through learning.
- Provide Jewish learning **opportunities in JCCs as well as synagogues**, with possibly different emphases, environments, and surroundings.



## INTRODUCTION

Historically, the pursuit of learning is central to the survival of the Jewish people. As the “People of the Book,” Jews have been perceived as placing a priority on the acquisition of knowledge, skills and particularly the study of Jewish texts. According to rabbinic tradition, the highest form of study is Torah Lishmah, learning for learning sake. Torah Lishmah is viewed as a life-long enterprise inseparable from being Jewish. Regardless of one’s vocation, position within the community, or native abilities, engagement in studying Torah is a cornerstone of being Jewish (Pirkei Avot [Ethics of the Fathers], chapter 4). For Maimonides, the medieval philosopher, physician and legal scholar, the study of Torah, includes all areas of knowledge (e.g. natural science, the arts, humanities) that have the potential to enrich our understanding of God’s world.

Within Judaism, Torah study is participatory. That is, ideally, learning occurs within community – not isolation (Heilman 1983). Figuratively, through study, Jewish learners participate in conversations across centuries and generations, and metaphorically enter into dialogues with their ancestors across the ages. The historian Jacob Katz, in his classic study of the evolution of Jewish community from medieval times to the modern era, demonstrates the power of Jewish learning as a source for socialization and community building (Katz 1961). Learning takes on many connotations and forms. Intellectual study of the text, prayer, singing and even dancing are all aspects of Jewish learning.

In recent times, Jewish learning in America has come to embrace a far more diverse array of content, contexts, and media. A glance at the offerings of Jewish Community Centers, Jewish studies programs, synagogues, and elder hostels testifies to this diversity. Yet, with all that diversity, Jewish learning remains at heart both social and normative. Jewish learning both reflects and enhances Jewish identity.

On the American scene, over the past ten years, the available evidence signifies a marked growth in Jewish learning of various sorts and in several quarters. These include:

- The several programs in Jewish learning for Jewish leaders that began about a decade ago (the Wexner and CLAL initiatives are among the most widely known).
- The numerous synagogue-sponsored courses, lecturers, and guest scholars.
- The classes, workshops, lectures, and other adult Jewish learning programs in Jewish Community Centers, sparked in part by a systematic turn to Jewish education generally initiated as early as 1982.
- The several organized efforts to systematically market structured approaches to Jewish learning. The most prominent include the Florence Melton Adult Mini-School, the Derekh HaTorah program (initiated in Centers), the Me’ah program out of Boston, and Lehrhaus in the Bay area.

Perhaps the best evidence of the rise in interest in adult Jewish learning is the very fact that so many programs and agencies are now competing for Jewish learners. Directly or indirectly, adults who want to learn about Jewish subject matter are prepared to pay for classes, lectures, weekends, travel, books, private tutors and other educational goods and services. The consumer market for Jewish learning apparently has grown significantly in recent years. A parallel trend with respect to adult education is also apparent in society at large.

Indeed, the wider environment for adult Jewish learning has become more fertile and supportive. For example, far more universities are offering courses in Jewish studies (over 400 according to a recent count by the Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life). This phenomenon is reflected in the larger numbers of younger Jewish adults who reported having taken a Jewish studies course (or more) when they were undergraduates. As early as 1991, as many as 18% of New York area adult Jews under the age of 40 reported having taken such a course (Horowitz 1993). As further testimony to the growing interest in Jewish knowledge and culture, publishers have been bringing out more books on Jewish themes, both scholarly and popular, both fiction and non-fiction. Significantly, large numbers of commercially oriented retail outlets find it profitable to devote considerable shelf space to the expanding number of Jewish books. Last, the recent growth of family education programs is but another sign of the interest in Jewish

learning and may be serving for some parents as an additional stimulus to engaging in Jewish study.

Whereas these indicators suggest there is an increase in adult learning, no systematic research has yet focused on the nature of adult learning. Against this background of presumed increased involvement in adult Jewish learning and the paucity of research, the leadership of the Jewish Community Center movement and the Jewish Theological Seminary commissioned this study, the first national survey on adult Jewish learning. They (and we) wanted to better understand the dynamic world of adult Jewish learning activities in the United States. (Canadian Jews could not be included in this study.) Specifically, we sought to address the following questions:

1. What are the sorts of **Jewish learning experiences** that Jewish adults have currently (or recently) engaged in? Where are these experiences situated?
2. What **motivations** are associated with these diverse forms of Jewish learning? Alternatively, what inhibits participation in adult Jewish learning?
3. What is the **market** for alternate modalities of Jewish learning? What are the perceived met and unmet needs of potential adult learners? What subject matter most appeals to the current and potential learners and what are the implications for re-shaping curricula in adult Jewish education?
4. For all the questions outlined above, what are the **characteristics** of the various sub-groups? In simple terms, **who** is learning what, for what reasons, with what consequences, and with what interests?

Although this study focuses upon adult Jewish learning, its value may well extend beyond this specific subject. By looking at adult Jewish learning and those who participate in this endeavor, we also obtain insight into American Jewry more generally. The extent of Jewish learning among various sub-groups, as well as their specific interests, can inform us about these groups' patterns of Jewish identity and their expression.

To help define the study and the landscape of adult Jewish experience, we conducted some initial interviews with individuals and small groups. We asked them to describe how they use their free time, and to what extent that "free time" was devoted to Jewish activities. The following vignettes are excerpted from the interviews and illustrate the variety of experiences individuals consider Jewish activities

A. (42 year old business man): I feel really ignorant Jewishly, especially when I realize my kids know a lot more about being Jewish and how to practice Judaism...I'm part of a study group in the office. It meets twice a month and is led by Rabbi X, he's what I consider very authentic, really engaging, open, and committed to his way of life.... It [the study group] gets me to think and I've started to some reading in Jewish history.

B. (37 year old high school teacher): We get together about once a month, it's our seventh year....For many of us there was a crisis or major event that got us interested in reading more about the Jewish experience. I found [Phillip] Roth really speaking to me and mentioning terms and rituals I thought about for the first time as an adult. ... Sometimes we see a movie that has a Jewish theme, like Schindler's List or recently we saw Keeping the Faith. But it varies, most often it's a book... could be fiction, non-fiction, even a mystery. I don't know if I'd call it Jewish study but for me it's a way of putting more emphasis on Judaism in my day to day life....It's more about sharing, intellectual stimulation, we're really varied in background all Jewish but not by any common definition.... If we met more than once a month, I wouldn't be a regular... My life is really busy, lots of competing priorities.

C. (63 year old retiree): We want something we can do together, we want quality, something that is challenging, but not overly so. It's not going to have any specific practical use. I've done a lot of these elder hostel programs. The Jewish one is more than just knowledge, it's community, I find I get a lot more out of intensive quality time than something with is every week. Unlike the synagogue or JCC classes, it really allows me to go into in great depth.

D. (54 year old psychologist): There is no clear distinction in my mind between my leisure time and Jewish involvement. Both are things I value and do in my free time. It's very much an integration of body, mind, and spirit. Sitting in shul and reading the Tanakh is an example. I don't think I have the patience or time to sit through a class and I can't tolerate lectures.

The research on adult education and learning generally contains the following key findings on adult learning and education that inform this study:

- The boundaries between formal, informal leisure forms of activity are blurred. Adults regard a cruise as a form of learning, as are yoga classes (Edwards and Usher 1997).
- The fastest growing sector of the population is over fifty years of age, and more adults seek opportunities to engage in learning (Merriam and Caffarella 1999).
- As a consumer culture, knowledge is acquired based on its *performative value* for the consumer. Many adults participate in formal learning activities to achieve specific goals or acquire specific skills, such as mastery of a language or historical knowledge (Robinson and Godbey 1999).
- Adults are increasingly reconstructing themselves, forming the consumer base for a growing knowledge business. They see education as a commodity. As such, it can be adapted to what the market demands (Usher, Bryant, and Johnston 1997).
- As knowledge becomes more available and information overload is commonplace, the need for the organization of knowledge becomes more critical and more sought after. The adult educational consumer regards convenience and accessibility as increasingly important.
- The computer and the World Wide Web are expanding the possibilities of meeting the growing learning needs of adults (Merriam and Caffarella 1999; Putnam 2000).

We find evidence of the same sorts of tendencies affecting adult Jewish learning.

## THE DATA

The survey data analyzed below derive from a mail-back questionnaire completed by 1,302 Jewish respondents throughout the United States. The survey was fielded in January, 2000 by the Washington office of Market Facts, Inc., a national survey research company.

The respondents belong to the Market Facts Inc. Consumer Mail Panel, consisting of about 368,000 Americans who have agreed to be surveyed from time to time on a variety of concerns. Of those, about 10,400 were potentially eligible for sampling for this study in that at least one of the adults was Jewish; of these, we sent questionnaires to 1700 households. Market Facts drew the sample so as to approximate distributions on the following socio-demographic measures calculated from the 1990 NJPS data: age 65 or over, education, presence of children, geographic region, and marriage type (in-married, mixed married, never married, other).

Almost 80% of the 1700 households who received the questionnaire returned them. The high rate of return for this mail-back survey can be attributed to at least two considerations. One is that those who repeatedly refrain from returning questionnaires are eventually dropped from the Panel. According to the Market Facts' professionals, another reason for the high response rate pertains to the content of the study. A survey on Jewish identity bears more inherent interest for the potential respondents than do the consumer issues that are generally the topic of the company's surveys.

The households eligible contained at least one Jewish adult, as previously reported in responses to questions in religious identity in periodic screening questionnaires of each Panel member. The 1990 National Jewish Population Study determined that approximately 80% of adults who are Jewish also said that their reli-



gion is Jewish (Kosmin et al., 1991: 5-6). Jews who do not identify as Jewish for purposes of religion (so-called “secular” or “ethnic” Jews), report lower levels of Jewish involvement (i.e., observance, affiliation, in-marriage, etc.). Hence, a survey (such as this) based upon a sample who claim to be Jewish by religion under-represents the Jewishly less involved. Consequently, it slightly over-estimates the overall population’s levels of Jewish identification, and by extension, their levels of Jewish learning.

We over-sampled in-married Jews with children living at home, regarding this group as especially important for policy-makers. The subsequent analyses applied statistical weights to correct for this group’s over-representation.

To what extent does this sample accurately represent the American Jewish population from which it was drawn? To address that concern, we compared the sample with results from the 1990 National Jewish Population Study (see Appendix A). The current sample is somewhat more Jewishly involved and somewhat more educated than American Jews at large.

Since Jewish learning activities are directly correlated with both Jewish involvement and education, the results here somewhat overstate the frequencies of Jewish learning activities in the population. However, we have no reason to believe that nature of this sample significantly distorts the relationships of Jewish learning with other characteristics. None of the sample biases suggest departures from the American Jewish population in terms of relationships among variables.

## THE FINDINGS

### **Wide Range of Jewish Learning Activities**

We asked about current and previous participation in a broad range of Jewish activities (Table 1). As many as 78% of the respondents had read an article on Israel or a Jewish topic within the last year. For this same period of time, approximately 20% of the participants engaged in one or more structured Jewish learning activities such as attending a lecture, taking a class, going to a study group, or studying Jewish texts. About half as many (10%) engaged in these sorts of activities within the last 2-5 years.

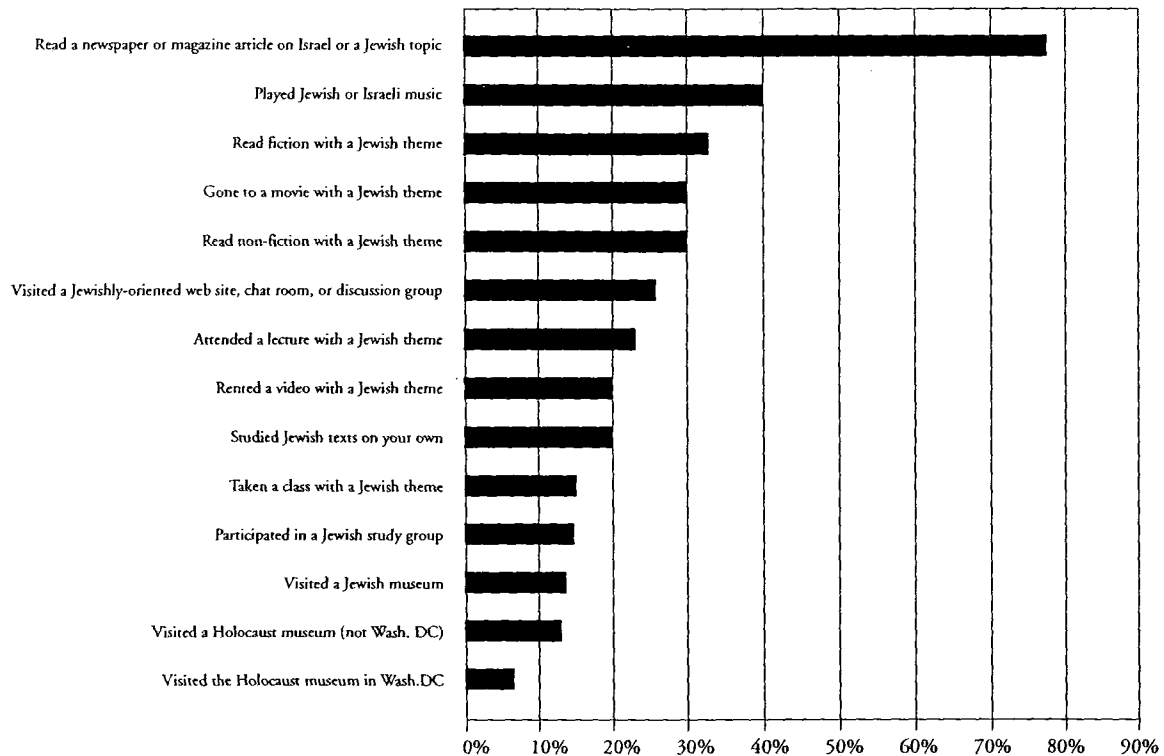
Significantly, about half have never participated in a Jewish study group, about half have never studied Jewish texts on their own, and about half have never ever taken a class with a Jewish theme. Forty-two percent indicated that they have never attended a lecture with a Jewish theme (compared to 24% have done so over the last year). Anywhere between a quarter to 40% of the respondents indicated their participation in leisure activity such as going to a movie with Jewish content, playing Jewish music, reading Jewish fiction visiting a Jewishly oriented Web site or chat room. Of all the activities listed in the survey, visiting the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C. received the fewest responses (6%).

**Table 1. Jewish learning activities undertaken within the last year, by age.**

	<b>Under 45</b>	<b>45 - 64</b>	<b>65+</b>	<b>Total</b>
Read a newspaper or magazine article on Israel or a Jewish topic	75%	78%	82%	78%
* Played Jewish or Israeli music	41%	38%	43%	40%
* Read fiction with a Jewish theme	27%	33%	39%	33%
* Read non-fiction with a Jewish Theme	27%	30%	31%	30%
Gone to a movie with a Jewish theme	26%	28%	38%	30%
* Visited a Jewishly-oriented web site, chat room, or discussion group	38%	24%	18%	26%
* Attended a lecture with a Jewish theme	22%	23%	26%	23%
* Studied Jewish texts on your own	24%	21%	13%	20%
Rented a video with a Jewish theme	22%	20%	18%	20%
* Participated in a Jewish study group	16%	16%	18%	16%
* Taken a class with a Jewish theme	16%	15%	16%	16%
Visited a Jewish museum	13%	15%	18%	15%
Visited a Holocaust museum (not Wash. D.C.)	9%	16%	13%	14%
Visited the Holocaust Museum in Wash. D.C.	7%	6%	6%	6%

\* These eight items comprised the Jewish Learning Index

Jewish learning activities undertaken within the last year



Of note are the distributions associated with visiting Jewish Web sites that are markedly different from those linked with reading and movie going. The latter are more popular among older adults, while the Web as a Jewish learning medium is more popular among younger people, as it is generally among young adults. The Internet will clearly become a more accessible option for Jewish engagement, although with what quality remains to be seen.

Whereas only 6% of the respondents visited the Holocaust Museum in Washington this past year, approximately a third (33%) have visited since the Museum opened in 1990. Clearly, there is a public for visiting Jewish museums, but evidently, many are only one-time visitors. Possibly, so few one-time visitors return to Jewish-oriented and Holocaust museums because they expect little change in the museum experience. Why go back if not much is different? The challenge here is to convert one-time or very infrequent visitors into repeat and return visitors.

### Jewish Learning Across the Life Span

One critical question concerns the variation in Jewish learning by age. The focus on how younger adult Jews differ from their elders derives from the assumption that age-related variations point to recent and future trends in Jewish identity. In other words, we can assume with some caution and qualification, that as younger Jews differ from their elders today, so too will American Jews of the future differ from Jews of the present.

Indeed, a prior JCCA-sponsored study using a Market Facts national sample (Cohen, 1998) presently some striking age-related results. In that survey, younger and older respondents hardly differed with respect to three scales, composite measures of religiosity. Younger Jews were just as religiously committed, God-oriented, and ritually observant as their elders.

However, at the same time, younger Jews in that study were considerably less ethnically identified than their elders. They were less committed to the Jewish people, less supportive of in-marriage, and less attached to Israel. They were also less likely to report having Jewish friends, less affiliated with Jewish institutions, less emotionally attached to those institutions, and less likely to view social justice as an important Jewish value.

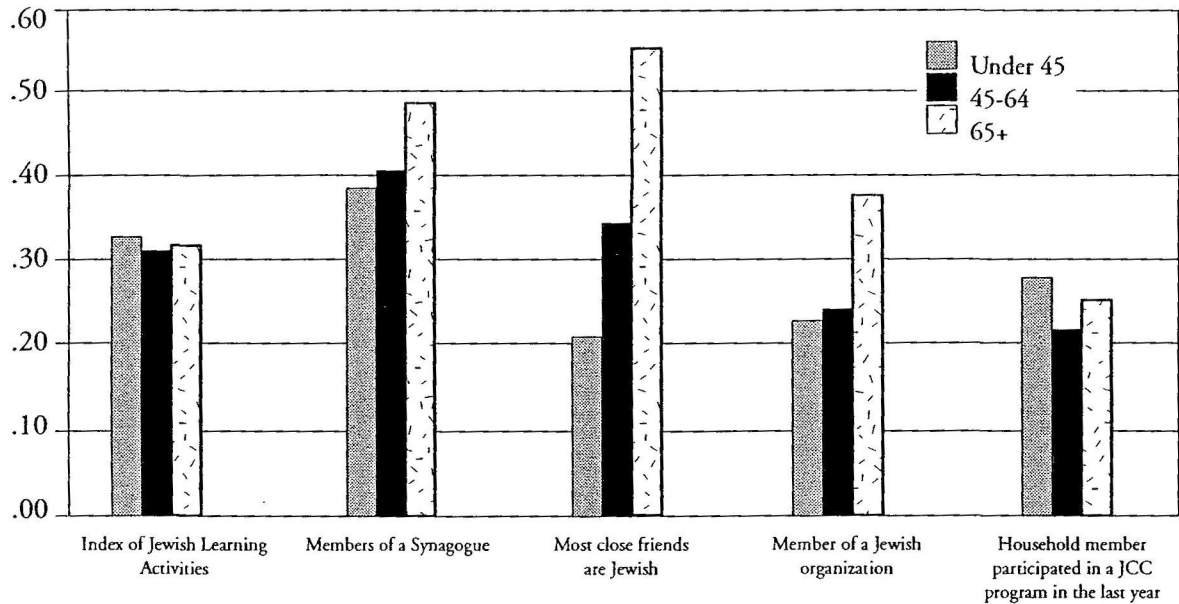
The rise in intermarriage is only partly responsible for the decline in these aspects of Jewish ethnicity. Even when the analysis excluded intermarried Jews (whose growth among younger people partially explains the turn away from Jewish group connectedness, or "ethnicity"), younger Jews (i.e., those who were in-married or unmarried) still scored lower on ethnic measures than did older Jews in similar marital circumstances.

The trend lines in this study (Table 2) largely comport with those discerned in 1997. These data point to weakening ethnic ties as demonstrated in lower levels of several indicators among younger adults. These include in-marriage, in-group friendship, organizational membership, serving on an agency's committee or board, giving to the UJA/Federation campaign, and feeling being Jewish is very important. The only major "ethnic" indicator in this study to run counter to these trends is JCC participation, which is just as frequent among younger adults as among older adults.

**Table 2. Index of Jewish Learning and selected measures of Jewish involvement, by age.** (Entries are percentages, of means if the variable is starred.)

	Under 45	45 - 64	65+	Total
*Index of Jewish Learning Activities (0-100)	33	31	32	32
*Index of ritual practice (0-5)	2.8	2.7	2.8	2.7
*Mean number of days per year in synagogue services	4.9	4.7	5.2	4.8
In-married	70%	82%	93%	82%
Most close friends are Jewish	21%	33%	56%	35%
Member of a synagogue	38%	41%	48%	41%
Household member has joined a JCC or participated in a JCC program in the last year	28%	23%	25%	24%
Member of a Jewish organization	24%	25%	38%	28%
Officer or committee member in a Jewish organization	12%	14%	20%	15%
Gave to the UJA/Federation campaign	27%	39%	57%	40%
Being Jewish is "very important"	46%	48%	52%	49%

Index of Jewish Learning and selected measures of Jewish involvement, by age



At the same time, the few critical indicators of Jewish religious involvement seem stable over the age spectrum. These include ritual practice, attending synagogue services, and belonging to a congregation.

With respect to Jewish learning, those under 45 engage in learning activities on average as much as those 45 or over. The Jewish learning index (see below for details) is stable across all age categories. In this sense, the frequency of Jewish learning behaves more like Jewish religiosity (stable across age cohorts) than like Jewish ethnicity (lower among younger adults). As the same time, though, Jewish learning holds out the promise of counteracting the decline in Jewish ethnic connectedness.

On a policy level, these results suggest that Jewish learning appeals particularly to younger, generally well-educated adults. As such, Jewish learning should be a fruitful way to Jewishly engage the very sorts of groups who may otherwise experience dis-engagement from Jewish life.

### More Jewish Learning by —

(Women, the Educated, Culturally Active, Affluent, and In-Married Parents)

To globally assess the amount of Jewish learning activities undertaken by individuals and groups, we constructed an Index of Jewish Learning consisting of eight items. Respondents received one point on the Index for undertaking each of these four activities within the last year: listened to Jewish music, read Jewish fiction, read Jewish non-fiction, and visited a Jewish Web site. They received a point for undertaking each of the following formal study activities within the last five years: attended a Jewish lecture, went to a Jewish study group, attended a Jewish class, and studied Jewish texts. The overall unadjusted mean is just under 2.6 (minimum score = 0, maximum score = 8). For purposes of clarity, we converted this scale to a metric of 0 to 100, by dividing by 8 (the maximum score) and multiplying by 100. Thus, a score of 100 would mean the individual undertook all eight learning activities; and a 0 would mean no such activity whatever.

We examined the extent of Jewish learning across several socio-demographic categories (see Table 3).

#### Gender: Women “Win”

Women moderately surpassed men in their frequency of participation in Jewish learning activities, as meas-

ured by the Jewish learning index, regardless of employment status. Similar findings were reported by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) in the 1980s, for the general population, where women participants in adult learning activities outnumbered men (Valentine, 1997). Robinson and Godbey (1999) cite a number of studies focusing on the ways American use their time where women consistently report reading more than men and more frequently enrolling in adult education programs.

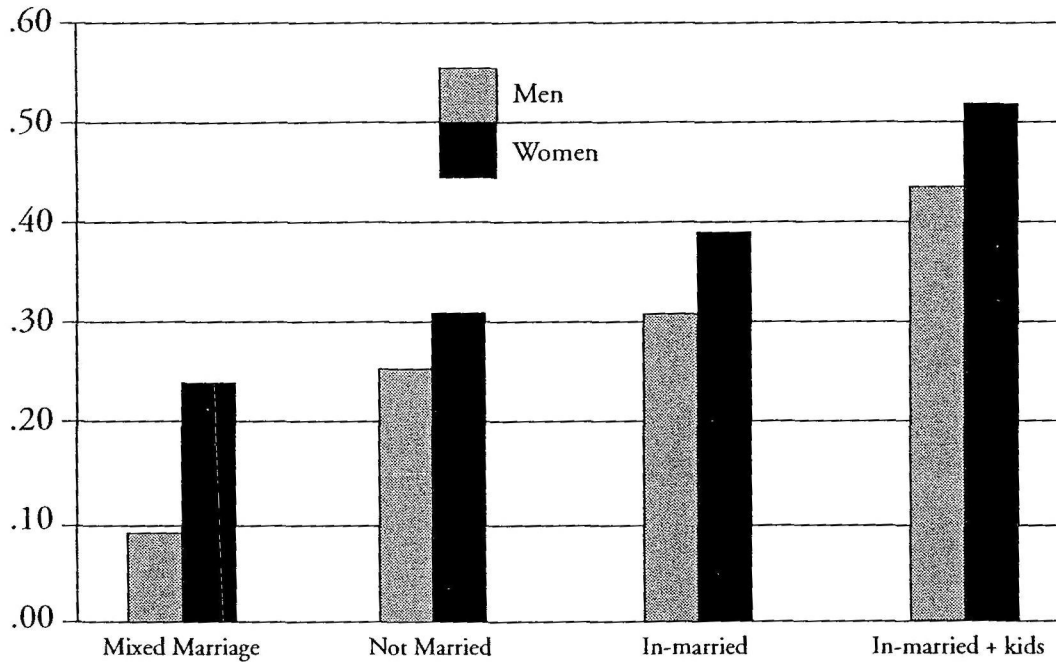
Other research studies on adult Jews found that women were generally more religiously and community oriented, and more invested in their roles as spouses and Jewish parents as compared to men (Cohen and Halbertal 1999; Cohen and Davidson 2000). Within the general population, women are more likely than men to join communal organizations, participate in volunteer work and attend religious services (Robinson and Godbey, 1999). Quite possibly, women see Jewish learning more firmly linked to a constellation of Jewish familial, religious, and communal participation. Jewish women may also be seeking to compensate for weaker experiences in Jewish education as children, even when they assume roles in synagogue life that were once the exclusive preserve of men.

**Table 3. Jewish Learning Index (means) by sex/work status, education, Index of Cultural Involvement, income, and sex/family status**

<b>Sex and Full-time Employment</b>	
Man - not working full-time	28
Woman - not working full-time	35
Man - working full-time	30
Woman - working full-time	34
<b>Educational Attainment</b>	
Post graduate	38
College graduate	32
1-3 yrs college	32
High school graduate	21
<b>Cultural Involvement Index</b>	
High	45
Moderate	33
Low	23
<b>Household income (in 000's)</b>	
\$100,000+	35
\$60-\$99,000	34
\$30-\$59,000	31
Less than \$30,000	27

<b>Sex and Family Status</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>Both</b>
Mixed married	10	24	19
Not married	26	31	29
In-married	31	39	34
In-married + kids	44	52	48

Jewish Learning Index by sex and family status



#### Educational Attainment

Studies of American Jewry in the latter part of the twentieth century point to a direct association between education and Jewish involvement (i.e., the more highly educated are more Jewishly involved; see Cohen 1983). Education bestows benefits in terms of skills, professionalization, and affluence that all contribute to greater, more valuable, and more valued involvement in Jewish communal life. Moreover, since Jews are distinguished from other Americans in terms of their high levels of education, highly educated Jews would tend to be more connected to other Jews by virtue of sharing a characteristic that is distinctive, i.e., they are more educated.

In light of the evidence of a direct relationship between education and several forms of Jewish involvement, it is not at all surprising to find that Jewish learning activity rises with increases in education. Those with a post-graduate degree are involved in Jewish learning to an extent almost double that of those whose education stopped with high school. Those with some college education or an undergraduate degree posted intermediate scores on Jewish learning. This phenomenon is not unique to Jewish populations. Putnam (2000) observed that higher levels of education are associated with continued education.

Not surprisingly, then, those with a demonstrated interest and competence in education generally are more likely to seek out educational activities throughout their life. Jewish learning patterns reflect this tendency. By inference, is that the Jewish learning market is somewhat more educationally upscale than the Jewish population at large.

#### Cultural involvement and Income

We asked several questions about respondents' participation in non-Jewish cultural activities including reading (fiction, non-fiction, audio books, newspapers, professional materials), attending educational programs (classes, lectures), and going to concerts, museums, movies, and plays. We combined all these items into an index measuring cultural involvement, dividing the sample arbitrarily into high, moderate, and low groups of cultural involvement. Those in the high cultural involvement group participated in Jewish learning about twice as much as those in the low group. Involvement in the larger culture, then, is not, as some might think, an impediment to involvement in Jewish learning. Rather than competing for a share of the same limited time, we find that expansion of broader cultural involvement goes hand in hand with expanded partici-

pation in Jewish learning.

We can think of three links between cultural involvement and Jewish learning. On one level, cultural involvement signals social involvement; people who go to concerts, museums, and performances are less likely to be “homebodies.” Second, the culturally involved are also more Jewishly involved. Finally, the culturally involved clearly have an interest in learning and intellectual stimulation.

We found a modest relationship between Jewish learning frequency and income. The more affluent are somewhat more likely to devote time (and money) to Jewish learning. Affluence in part is a reflection of education and in part is a stimulus to cultural involvement, both of which are themselves related to Jewish learning. Within the general population this relationship is stronger (Putnam 2000; Robinson and Godbey 1999).

#### Family status

Familial status also influences participation in Jewish learning activities. Both marital status (be it to a Jew, to a non-Jew, or not at all), as well as having children at home affect the chances of engaging in Jewish learning. The intermarried are clearly least involved in almost all dimensions of Jewish life (Medding, et al. 1992; Phillips 1997). Not surprisingly, they report the lowest scores on the Jewish Learning Index. In contrast, in-married Jews with children at home score highest on Jewish learning, consistent with their high levels of Jewish involvement in other domains (Sklare and Greenblum 1967; Cohen 1983, 1988, 1989). The presence of children is a direct spur to Jewish learning. They bring one into contact with the Jewish institutional world, and provide an immediate reason for parents to seek additional knowledge and skills to function as Jewish parents.

#### “More Jewish” Means More Learning – The Impact of Denomination, Observance, and Affiliation

We are not at all surprised to learn that more Jewishly involved individuals, however measured, engage in Jewish learning more frequently than the less involved. Of interest, is just how these differences play out, and how the Jewish learning “market” is segmented.

Denomination serves as a useful sorting device, where several forms of Jewish commitment and involvement are strongly associated with denominational affiliation. On most measures we find the following gradient (in descending order): Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, and Just Jewish (or other forms of denominational non-affiliation). To be sure, not all those denominationally identified belong to a synagogue of that movement. The vast majority of Orthodox Jews belong to congregations, followed by a majority of Conservative Jews, a minority of Reform, and a smaller minority of non-denominational Jews. Thus to speak solely in terms of denominational affiliation is to overlook some important differences – the synagogue affiliated of all denominations, are closer to each other in terms of their involvement than are Jews, regardless of affiliation. In other words, by failing to differentiate members from non-members, we present a somewhat exaggerated portrait of denominational variations.

With these cautionary observations in mind, we may turn to the findings (Table 4) that shows the strong relationship between denomination and Jewish learning. Learning frequency climbs dramatically as we move from non-denominational, to Reform, to Conservative, to Orthodox. The largest gap is that separating the Orthodox (who score highest on learning frequency) from other denominations (specifically, Conservative Jews who rank second).

With respect to the Jewish Community Center world, our preliminary analyses indicate that JCC members participate more frequently in Jewish learning activities than non-members. Moreover, those whose family members participated in a JCC program in the past year engage in Jewish learning as much as JCC members. Thus, we grouped the JCC non-member participants with the JCC members. By cross tabulating this JCC variable (members and participants) with synagogue members, we derived four categories of affiliation. A small number (16%) affiliate with both institutions, a quarter (26%) belong to synagogues only, a few (8%) affiliate only with JCCs, and half (50%) belong to neither. Over three quarters of JCC members and users also belong to synagogues.



Table 4. Jewish Learning Index (means) by measures of Jewish involvement.

<b>Self-Identified Denomination</b> (includes both synagogue members and non-members)	
Orthodox	67
Conservative	41
Reform	32
Just Jewish	15
<b>Synagogue &amp; JCC Affiliation</b>	
Synagogue + JCC	58
Synagogue only	44
JCC only	38
Neither (Unaffiliated)	17
<b>Ritual observance</b> (scale of 0-5)	
5	64
4	53
3	31
2	20
1	13
0	04
<b>Jewish Typology</b> (Combination of denomination, observance, and affiliated)	
Orthodox	67
Observant Affiliated	60
Affiliated	36
Unaffiliated	17

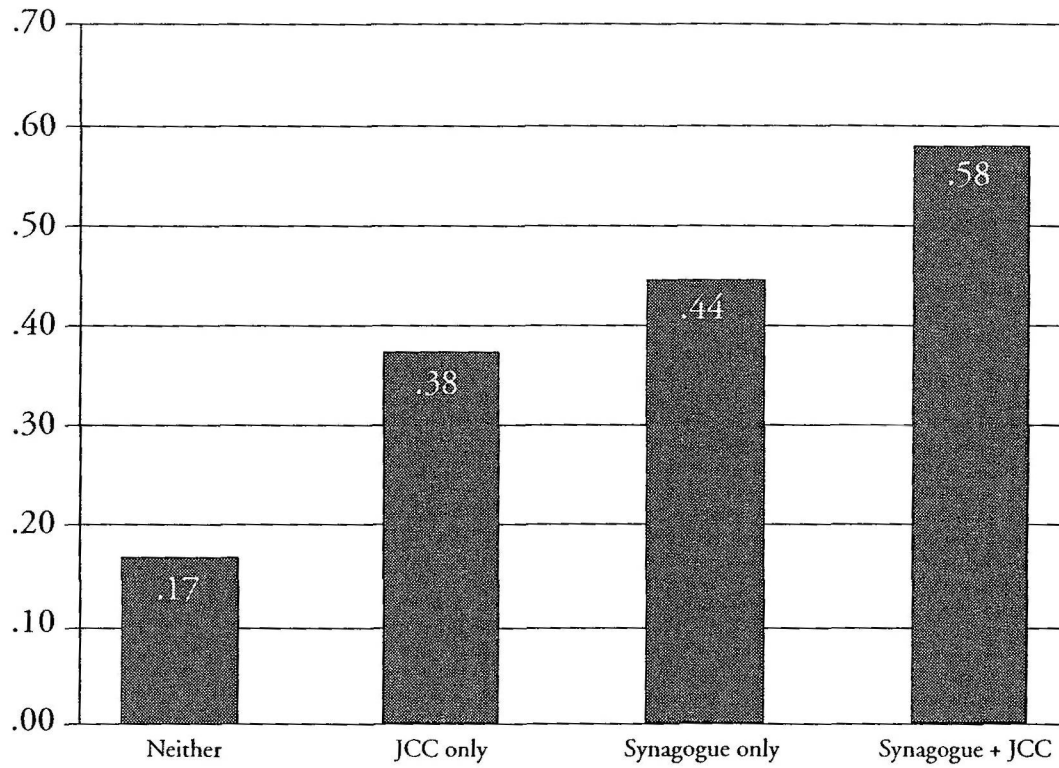
\**Orthodox* = identifies as Orthodox

*Observant affiliated* = identifies other than Orthodox, affiliated with synagogue and/or JCC, and scores 4 or 5 on ritual index

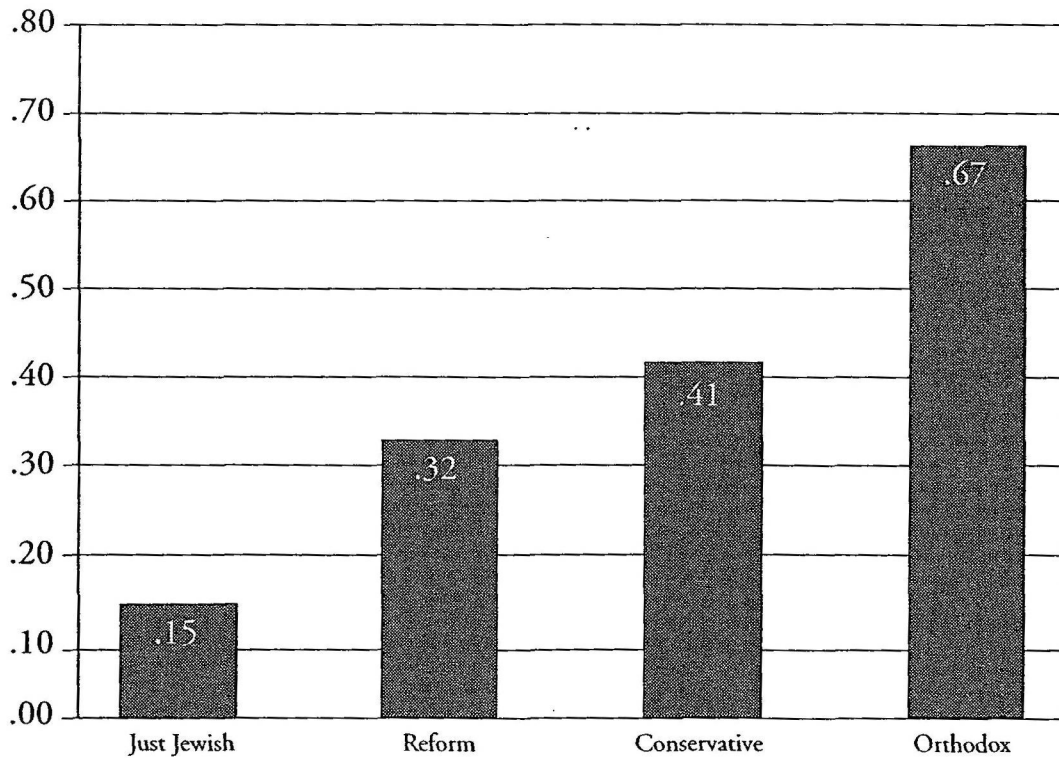
*Affiliated* = identifies other than Orthodox, affiliated with synagogue and/or JCC, and scores 0-3 on ritual index

*Unaffiliated* = does not identify as Orthodox and not affiliated with either a synagogue or JCC

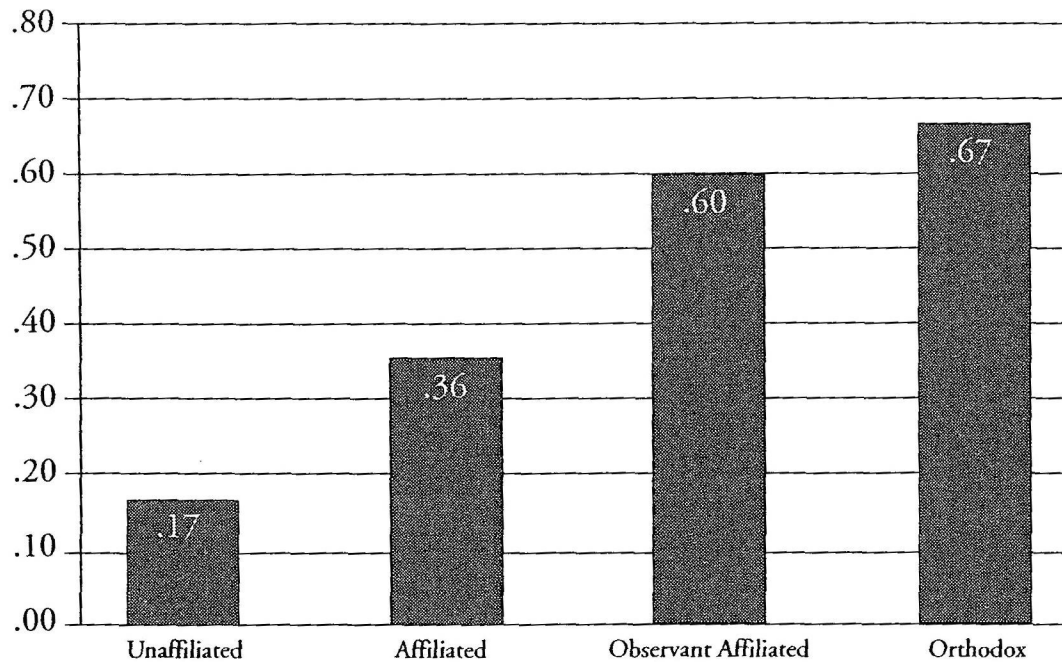
Jewish Learning Index by synagogue and JCC affiliation



Jewish Learning Index by denomination



Jewish Learning Index by Jewish typology



Previous research has documented that those who belong to both institutions are more Jewishly active than those who belong to only one (Cohen 1998). Many observers in Jewish life view JCCs and synagogues as competitive institutions. The current research reinforces the notion that the two are, in fact, mutually supportive institutions.

Those who affiliate with just one of the two institutions report levels of Jewish learning activity about double that of the Unaffiliated. Moreover, those who belong to both engage in Jewish learning substantially more than those affiliated with only one institution. Membership in these institutions both reflects Jewish involvement, and exposes one to recruitment networks that serve to engage individuals in myriad Jewish learning activities.

We find similar results with respect to rituals, as measured by a scale which counted performance of the following: lighting Hanukkah candles (86%); refraining from having a Christmas tree (83%); fasting on Yom Kippur (61%); lighting Shabbat candles (28%); and having two sets of dishes for meat and dairy products (17%). Consistent with the results reported above, Jewish learning frequency increases with each leap in ritual observance. A particularly large gap is associated with the transition from three to four rituals (out of five), a transition that often corresponds to the lighting of Shabbat candles or maintaining separate dishes for meat and dairy products.

These three dimensions combine to form a single, combined measure of Jewish involvement, one that serves as a useful way to segment the population into four groups. At one end of the spectrum are the Orthodox (more precisely, those who identify as such). At the other end are the Unaffiliated, defined as those who belong neither to a synagogue nor to a Center (about half the population). Remaining between these two poles are the affiliated, non-Orthodox. These can be divided into more observant and less observant segments. Those who scored a four or five on the ritual observance scale, roughly corresponding to those who, in addition to lighting Hanukkah candles, fasting on Yom Kippur, and refrain from having a Christmas tree, also light Shabbat candles and/or keep two sets of dishes for meat and dairy products. The others (scoring zero to three) were defined as non-observant. Thus we have: the Orthodox (5% of the sample), the Observant Affiliated (17%), the Affiliated (28%), and the Unaffiliated (50%).

The Jewish learning means follow a predictable order. It is of some interest that the Observant Affiliated score almost as high as the Orthodox. Both groups report levels of Jewish learning that are almost four times as frequent as that reported by the Unaffiliated. The (non-observant) Affiliated engage in learning activities more than twice as often as the Unaffiliated. In sum, the more one is involved Jewishly, as measured by affiliation and practice, the greater the likelihood of adult Jewish learning involvement.

Clearly, these four market segments – defined in terms of Jewish involvement – differ markedly in terms of the quantity of Jewish learning activities they undertake. As we shall see, with respect to many other aspects of Jewish learning, they also display intriguing qualitative differences as well.

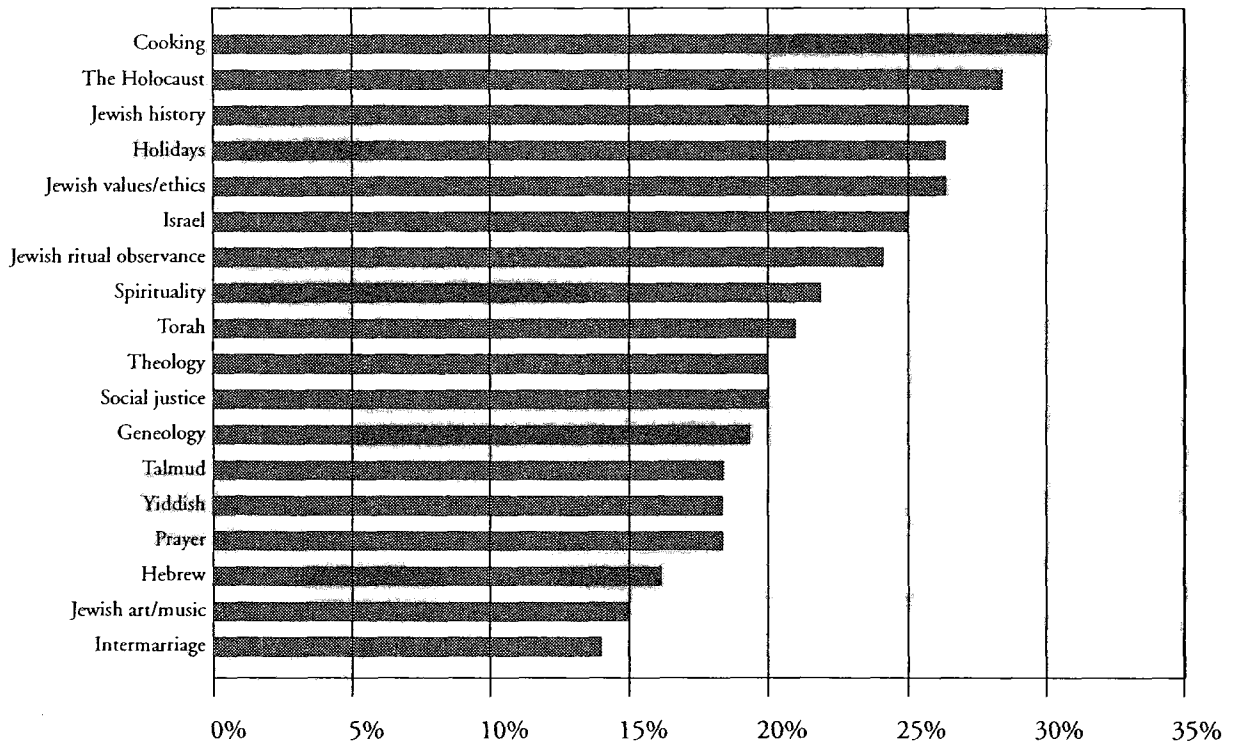
### The Content of Jewish Learning: Sharp Variations in Interest

We asked respondents to react to a list of twenty subject areas, indicating the extent to which they would be motivated to learn about each. (An exhaustive inventory of the subject matter currently available in Jewish adult learning settings was beyond the scope of the current study.) The greatest degree of interest (30%) is in “Jewish food or cooking,” (Table 5) and the least amount of interest was expressed for the area of “intermarriage”(13%).

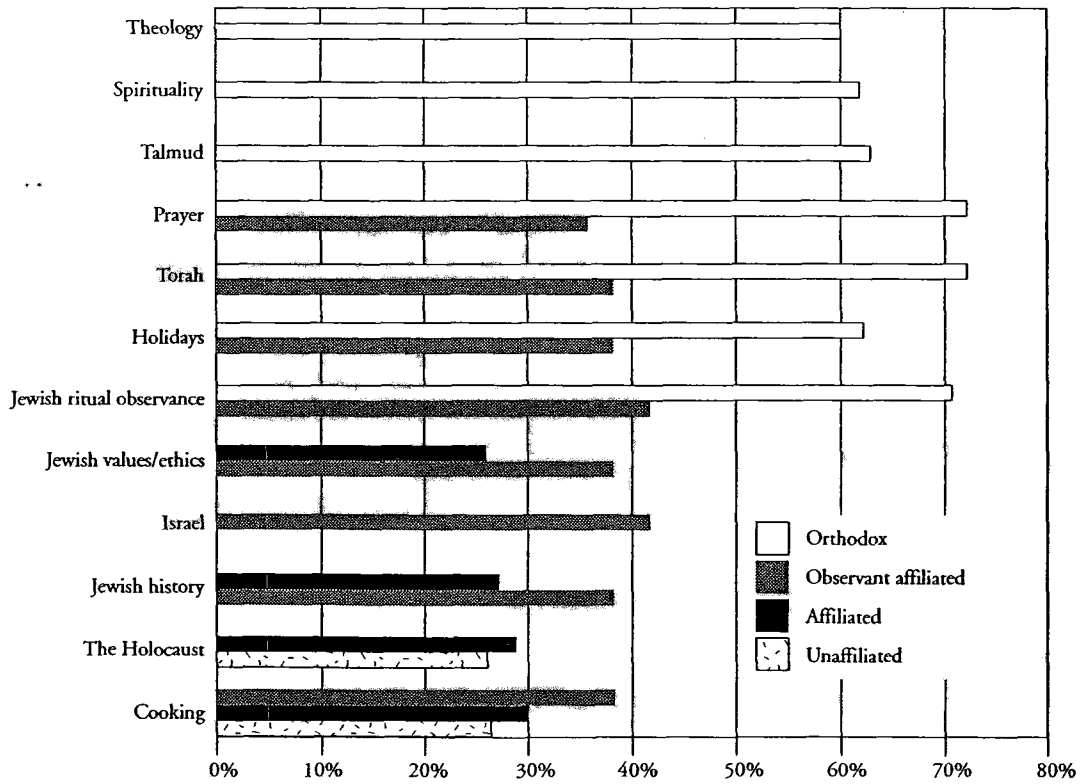
**Table 5. Interest in learning Jewish subject matter by level of Jewish Learning Index and by Jewish Involvement Typology.** (Percent "to a great extent," in response to: "To what extent do you feel motivated to learn about this topic?")

Jewish Learning Index	Low	Moderate	High	Total	
Jewish food or cooking	23	38	43	30	
The Holocaust	22	35	42	28	
Jewish History	17	36	54	27	
Jewish values/ethics	14	39	55	26	
Jewish holidays	16	36	52	26	
Israel	15	35	52	25	
Jewish ritual observance	12	36	57	24	
Jewish spirituality	11	32	52	22	
The Torah or Bible	9	31	56	21	
Social Justice	12	28	43	20	
Jewish theology (God)	10	28	53	20	
Jewish genealogy	12	24	40	19	
Prayer	8	25	52	18	
Yiddish	11	24	33	18	
The Talmud	8	24	50	18	
Hebrew	7	23	42	16	
Jewish art/music	7	22	35	15	
Intermarriage	12	17	17	14	
Jewish Typology	Unaffiliated	Affiliated	Observant Affiliated	Orthodox	Total
Jewish food or cooking	26%	30%	38%	42%	30%
The Holocaust	25%	28%	34%	44%	28%
Jewish History	23%	27%	38%	43%	27%
Jewish values/ethics	20%	26%	38%	53%	26%
Jewish holidays	21%	22%	38%	62%	26%
Israel	19%	23%	41%	47%	25%
Jewish ritual observance	17%	18%	42%	70%	24%
Jewish spirituality	15%	23%	32%	61%	22%
The Torah or Bible	13%	17%	38%	71%	21%
Social Justice	18%	20%	27%	29%	20%
Jewish theology (God)	14%	18%	32%	60%	20%
Jewish genealogy	16%	21%	22%	33%	19%
Prayer	10%	12%	36%	71%	18%
Yiddish	15%	15%	22%	44%	18%
The Talmud	12%	14%	30%	62%	18%
Hebrew	10%	13%	29%	43%	16%
Jewish art/music	12%	14%	23%	28%	15%
Intermarriage	14%	15%	13%	17%	14%

### Interest in learning Jewish subject matter



### Interest in learning Jewish subjects by Jewish typology



Preferences for subject areas grouped into two major dimensions. (We uncovered the dimensions by way of factor analysis, a statistical procedure that determines clusters of similar response patterns.) One dimension consists of Jewish holidays, prayer, Jewish theology (God), Jewish spirituality, Jewish ritual observance, Hebrew, the Torah or Bible, and the Talmud. The other dimension contains all the other topics (e.g., Jewish history, art, genealogy, food or cooking, social justice, the Holocaust, Israel, Yiddish, Jewish music etc.). Clearly, the first dimension refers to subject matter of a religious nature. The second refers to that which we might call cultural, ethnic, or peoplehood-oriented subjects.

This distinction, of course, parallels differences in institutional cultures surrounding synagogues and JCCs. This finding suggests alternate areas of specialization, where synagogues might focus on religious text study (as most now do) and JCCs would focus on peoplehood-oriented topics, such as Jewish history and culture.

Further insights into the patterns of interest in subject matter can be gleaned from examining the relationships of interests with the extent of learning and with Jewish involvement. That is; how do the interests of the current frequent learners differ from the infrequent learners? Alternatively, how do the Orthodox, Observant Affiliated, Affiliated, and Unaffiliated express different sorts of interests?

Using the index of Jewish learning we divided the respondents into three groups: highly frequent learners (11% of the sample); moderately frequent learners (30%); and infrequent learners (58%).

One thing we learn from this division (Table 5) is that interest in all subject matter increases as the extent of learning increases. Motivation increases for each subject as we move from respondents with less frequent engagement in learning to those with more frequent participation in learning activities. The greater one's prior Jewish learning experiences, the higher the likelihood one will be interested in engaging in additional Jewish learning activities. It also follows that one reason people engage in Jewish learning is that they are interested in Jewish subject matter. (Sometimes, the seemingly obvious is worth stating explicitly.)

In the research literature on adult learning, "prior learning experiences" serve to develop a sense of competence and a comfort level that increases motivation. Adults understandably, are not motivated to engage in learning activities where they feel incompetent or ignorant. If individuals lack facility in reading and understanding a Hebrew text, it is unlikely that such persons will enroll in an adult education program where they think that they need fluency in Hebrew.

Not only does level of interest in Jewish learning increase in relation to previous engagement in Jewish learning, but the patterns of interest also vary. Among the most highly engaged in Jewish learning, the topics that elicit the most interest are: ritual observance, the Torah or Bible, Jewish values and ethics, Jewish history, holidays, Israel, spirituality, prayer and Talmud. For the moderately frequent learners, the topics that elicited the most relative interest are comparable to the highly engaged (ritual observance, the Torah or Bible, Jewish values and ethics, Jewish history, holidays, Israel, spirituality). The topics of Jewish food or cooking, and the Holocaust ranked high on the list and noticeably absent are the topics Prayer and Talmud. Among infrequent learners, only two topics were identified as of relatively high interest: Jewish food or cooking and the Holocaust (at least 25% indicated that they feel motivated to learn more about these topics "to a great extent").

The patterns with respect to Jewish involvement largely resemble those for frequency of Jewish learning. Below (Table 6) is a convenient summary of the results that appear in the bottom panel of Table 5.

Table 6. Major areas of interest in Jewish learning subject matter, by Jewish involvement group.

Jewish Involvement Group	Criterion (percent interested "to great extent")	Relatively most popular subjects (from most to least popular)
Orthodox	60%	Torah or Bible, prayer, ritual observance, Talmud, holidays, spirituality, Jewish theology (God)
Observant Affiliated	38%	Ritual observance, Israel, Torah or Bible, holidays, Jewish values, history, Jewish food or cooking
Non-observant Affiliated	26%	Jewish food or cooking, Holocaust, Jewish history, Jewish values
Unaffiliated	25%	Jewish food or cooking, Holocaust

Clearly, the tone and content of the most desired topics shift as we shift from one Jewish involvement category to another. The Orthodox express the most interest in traditional religious learning, and are the only ones with relatively high interest in Talmud and theology. The Observant Affiliated also emphasize religious topics, but find Jewish history and Jewish food (two more culturally oriented topics) appealing. The list of favored topics for the Non-observant Affiliated includes no subjects that might be seen as strictly religious in character. The Unaffiliated respondents are noted for their very short list of topics and that both (cooking; Holocaust) are quite accessible to the Jewish learner with the least prior background.

The distributions clearly point to the large extent to which subject matter may influence participation. More frequent learners and more traditional Jews (often these two groups overlap) seek topics of a religious and/or text based nature. Not only do these learners experience more intensely Jewish lives, they also have skills and knowledge—competencies in religious practice and text study.

These findings suggest a policy implication: *To reach out to the less frequent learner and the less observant and less affiliated Jewish population, the subject matter made available may need to embrace areas that heretofore have not widely characterized the curricula of many Jewish learning programs. Certainly, the Holocaust has long been seen as such a topic. This study uncovered a second: Jewish food and cooking is an area of great popularity, especially among those least currently active in Jewish learning, and/or most distant from conventional Jewish communal life.*

### The Number of Sessions: Opportunities for 3-Lesson Courses

Typically, Jewish learning courses require a commitment of nearly a semester (ten to fourteen sessions), a year, or even two. Indeed, structured programs that demand commitment to regular classes over a substantial period of time have fared enormously well over the last decade (the Florence Melton Adult Mini-School is the most prominent example of such an approach). At the other extreme, in terms of duration, are the single session lectures or related programs.

We explored the extent to which courses of varying durations might hold out appeal to the various market segments. Respondents were instructed to assume that all their conditions for a Jewish learning program were met: convenient location, convenient time, and the right topic and indicate the likelihood of attending in light of varying numbers of program sessions (one, three, seven, and fourteen). Fifty-four percent (54%) indicated they would "very likely" attend a single-session program, as compared to 37% for three sessions, 16% for seven, and 10% for fourteen. In other words, for this population, participation greatly falls for programs that meet more than three sessions.

The detailed tabulations suggest that the number of sessions is less of an inhibiting factor for more fre-

quent learners and the more Jewishly involved respondents. About three times as many Orthodox as Unaffiliated Jews (Table 7) would be “very likely” to participate in a fourteen session program (25% versus 8%). With respect to a three-session program, the ratio shrinks to 2:1 (56% versus 28%).

The results suggest an important market for three-session programs. These would appeal to all audiences,

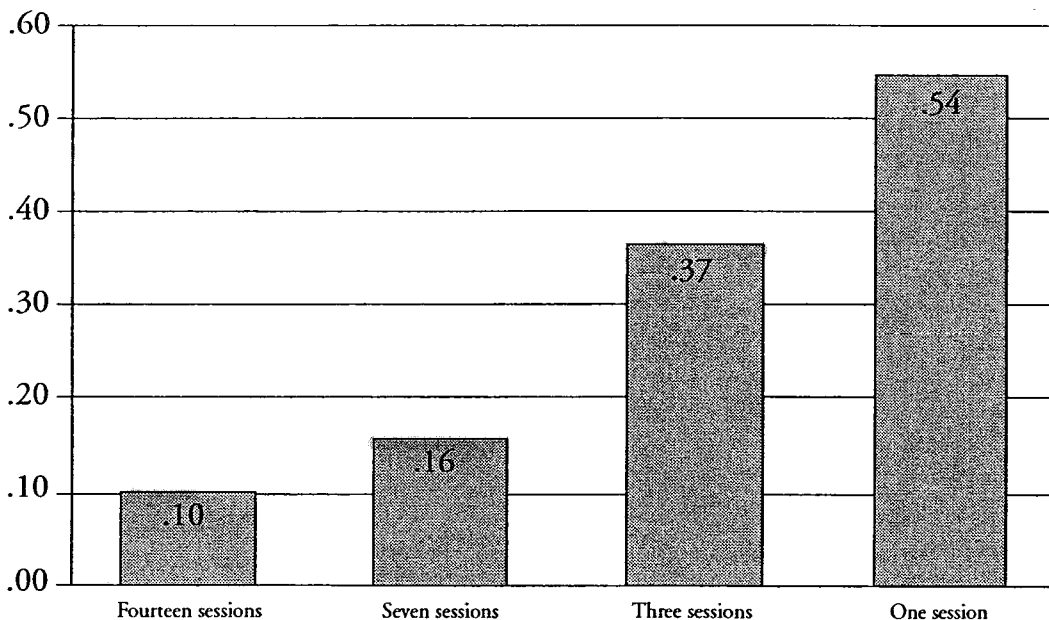
**Table 7. Likelihood of attending Jewish learning sessions of varying duration by Jewish Learning Index and Jewish Typology.**

Question: Suppose some Jewish learning sessions were being held near your on a topic that you found appealing and at a time that you found convenient. How likely would you be to attend sessions of the following durations (Entries are percent "very likely").

Jewish Learning Index	Low	Moderate	High	Total
One Session	38	72	87	54
Three Sessions	22	52	74	37
Seven Sessions	08	22	43	16
FourteenSessions	06	12	26	10

Jewish Typology:	Unaffiliated	Affiliated	Observant affiliated	Orthodox	Total
One Session	41%	60%	75%	71%	54%
Three Sessions	28%	36%	60%	56%	37%
Seven Sessions	12%	14%	27%	33%	16%
FourteenSessions	8%	6%	17%	25%	10%

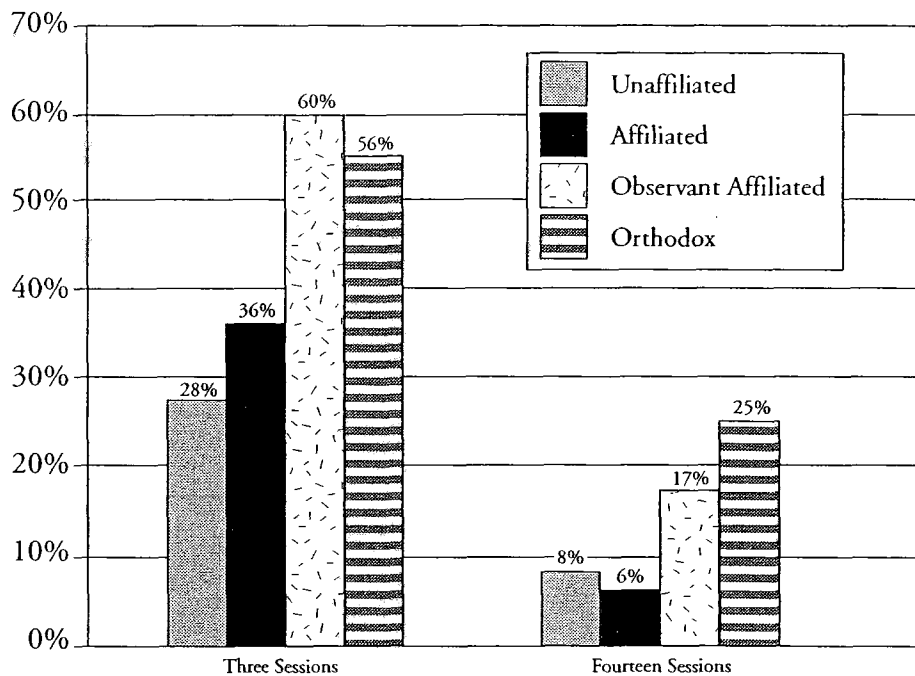
Likelihood of attending Jewish learning sessions by Jewish Learning Index



even the more traditional and the more frequent learners. However, three-session courses would be especially valuable in initiating infrequent learners and the Unaffiliated into an accessible version of regular Jewish learning.



Likelihood of Attending Jewish Learning sessions by Jewish Typology



### The Social Dimension: A Desire for Small Classes with Friends

We asked about various settings and contexts for adult Jewish learning. The two settings found most appealing were: “a class of ten students or fewer” (50%) (sharply in contrast with “twenty or more” (10%)), and “a study group with friends” (32%). Also of interest, was the relatively large number of parents (26%) who indicated a preference for studying with their children. Few respondents evinced interest in more solitary learning contexts, including: “by myself” (15%), or “one-on-one with a teacher” (16%), or using the Internet (12%). The results suggest that for many, Jewish learning is construed as a communal or social act, not a solitary learning experience. On the other hand, the learning setting, to be “very appealing,” requires smallness in numbers and a certain degree of intimacy.

One would think that learning via the Internet and “one-on-one” with teachers would be a preferred mode of learning for participants, in an age expanding technology and personal trainers. As noted above, we found that interest in learning via the Internet varied as a function of age. Whereas the notion of a one-on-one learning experience may be attractive in theory it is not a wide spread vehicle and generally unfamiliar to respondents as a learning option. Our interviews suggest that much of the attraction to participate in a Jewish learning experience is to be with other Jews.

### Jewish Growth and Social Experience: Alternate and Complementary Motivations

Previous research studies indicate that underlying adults choices and preferences are a variety of motivational factors. These include: professional advancement, cognitive interest, normative expectations, social relationships, and family togetherness (Fujita-Starck 1996; Merriam and Caffarella 1999). This sought to better understand the motivation that influence how adults make choices about learning options. We asked respondents to evaluate the extent to which different considerations motivate them to engage in Jewish learning. Included were items that related to Jewish growth, to socializing (“to spend time with people I like”), and to other reasons (“to learn new skills”).

Especially impressive were the high ratings of items that explicitly referred to the Jewish aspects of the motivation to engage in Jewish learning (Table 8). The most frequently endorsed motivation related to growing as a Jew (32%). Respondents also responded positively to the communal or social aspects of Jewish learning, that is, “to meet new friends,” and “to spend time with people I like.”

**Table 8. Motivations for and Jewish learning by Jewish Learning Index.**

To what extent do each of the following motivate you to engage in Adult Jewish Learning?

MOTIVATIONS (Entries are percent answering, "very much")	Low	Moderate	High	Total
To grow as a Jew	16%	46%	75%	32%
To have a positive Jewish experience	17%	41%	60%	29%
To spend time with people I like	22%	34%	49%	28%
To find personal meaning	16%	37%	62%	28%
To feel part of a Jewish community	17%	36%	56%	27%
To have an intellectual experience	16%	37%	53%	26%
To meet new friends	18%	28%	35%	23%
To have a spiritual experience	11%	33%	51%	22%

Particularly striking is the extent to which these mix of reasons shifts with movement from infrequent to frequent learners as well as from Unaffiliated through Orthodox Jews (Table 9). The greater one's involvement in Jewish life the greater the likelihood that individual will indicate interest in pursuing or increasing Jewish engagement. For example, the proportion who very much are moved by the prospect of growing as a Jew rises from 16% among the infrequent learners, to 46% among the moderately frequent, to 75% among the most frequent. With respect to Jewish involvement, the parallel figures increase as well: Unaffiliated (20%), Affiliated (33%), Observant Affiliated (54%) and Orthodox (77%).

**Table 9. Motivations for and Jewish learning by Jewish Involvement Typology.** To what extent do each of the following motivate you to engage in adult Jewish learning? (Entries are "to a great extent")

Jewish Typology	Unaffiliated	Affiliated	Observant affiliated	Orthodox	Total
To grow as a Jew	20%	33%	54%	77%	32%
To have a positive Jewish experience	19%	35%	44%	50%	29%
To spend time with people I like	23%	33%	36%	33%	28%
To find personal meaning	20%	28%	41%	53%	28%
To feel part of a Jewish community	18%	29%	45%	44%	27%
To have an intellectual experience	21%	28%	37%	41%	26%
To meet new friends	20%	27%	26%	25%	23%
To have a spiritual experience	16%	21%	33%	55%	22%

Accordingly, among the least involved in learning and the Unaffiliated, the social reasons for learning are relatively more prominent than the strictly "Jewish" reasons. In fact, it is only among the infrequent learners, and among the Unaffiliated, that "to spend time with people I like" is the most widely endorsed reason for learning.

The policy implication here is clear. Current learners have come to Jewish learning out of specifically Jewish motivations, albeit with an appreciation of the social and communal benefits attached to learning. Not surprisingly, the more frequent learners are drawn from the more Jewishly involved segments of the population. Psychologically, it comports with who they are as Jews and as individuals.

In contrast, the current infrequent learners, many of whom have only tangential ties to conventional Jewish life, are relatively more concerned about the social aspects of learning. Any effort to expand Jewish learning, then, will need to contend with the social needs of the participants. For the current non-learners and the Jewishly Unaffiliated, especially the successful marketing and selling of Jewish learning will need to take into account the relative primacy of social motivations for Jewish learning.

These factors also need to be considered in light of our preceding discussion on culture etc. Individuals are not likely to enroll in a text course, if they have no or little interest or previously acquired ability to read difficult texts. Similarly people are unlikely to attend a lecture or symposium if this is not part of their lives, if they never watch talk shows and do not listen to lectures, they are unlikely to do so just because it is Jewish. If someone is not a joiner, be it a synagogue, JCC, or non-Jewish organization that are not likely to join a group (Wuthnow 1999; Putnam 2000).

### Preferred Venues for Jewish Learning: Synagogues and JCCs

For the minority (29%) who have attended classes in the last five years, we asked them to specify the locations where they had done so. Here we learn of the great dominance of the synagogue (22%) in the current

**Table 10. Locations of Jewish learning by Jewish Learning Index and Jewish Involvement**

**Typology.** (Questions answered only by those who had attended a class or study group with a Jewish theme in the last 5 years.)

Jewish Learning Index	Low	Moderate	High	Total
Synagogue	6%	35%	74%	22%
Jewish Organization	1%	9%	36%	7%
Private home	2%	11%	23%	7%
A Jewish Community Center	1%	9%	22%	6%
Jewish Federation	1%	7%	18%	4%
Jewish school	2%	6%	15%	4%
The Internet	0%	2%	21%	3%
College or University	0%	5%	14%	3%
Elder hostel	0%	4%	5%	2%
Office or work place	0%	2%	7%	2%

Jewish Typology:	Unaffiliated	Affiliated	Observant affiliated	Orthodox	Total
Synagogue	8%	25%	48%	65%	22%
Jewish Organization	3%	7%	17%	27%	7%
Private home	3%	5%	13%	38%	7%
A Jewish Community Center	1%	8%	15%	5%	6%
Jewish Federation	2%	6%	11%	3%	4%
Jewish school	2%	3%	8%	25%	4%
The Internet	1%	3%	9%	12%	3%
College or University	1%	3%	8%	9%	3%
Elder hostel	1%	2%	4%	2%	2%
Office or work place	1%	1%	4%	5%	2%

provision of Jewish learning (at least in terms of classes and study groups).

As opposed to current venues for Jewish learning, we also asked about the appeal of hypothetical locations. In patterns contrasting with their current practice, respondents selected both the synagogue and Jewish Community Center as the most appealing sites for Jewish learning activities, 49% and 44% respectively. These were followed by the university (35%), at home (28%), a Jewish day school (17%), and the office (6%). Clearly, as prospective venues for adult Jewish learning, the synagogue and the JCC emerge as the most important.

Implications for synagogues and JCCs emerge from these findings. Traditionally the synagogue has been known by three names in Hebrew, one of which translates as "House of Study." As the most popular institution for adult Jewish learning in the United States, the synagogue certainly lives up to its name. Among the small group of very frequent learners, almost three-quarters had engaged in learning in the synagogue, over

**Table 11. Appeal of various settings for Jewish learning by Jewish Learning Index and Jewish Involvement Typology.** Question: If you were to engage in a Jewish learning experience, to what extent would you find the following settings appealing? (Entries are percent "very appealing")

Jewish Learning Index	Low	Moderate	High	Total
A synagogue	36%	61%	82%	49%
A Jewish Community Center	36%	54%	59%	44%
A university or college	30%	41%	47%	35%
A home	21%	34%	49%	28%
A Jewish day school	11%	19%	37%	17%
The office or workplace	3%	7%	16%	6%

Jewish Typology:	Unaffiliated	Affiliated	Observant affiliated	Orthodox	Total
A synagogue	34%	57%	71%	78%	49%
A Jewish Community Center	38%	49%	56%	36%	44%
A university or college	33%	40%	40%	13%	35%
A home	23%	31%	32%	51%	28%
A Jewish day school	13%	15%	29%	27%	17%
The office or workplace	4%	6%	8%	13%	6%

three times as many as who had done so in a JCC (74% versus 22%).

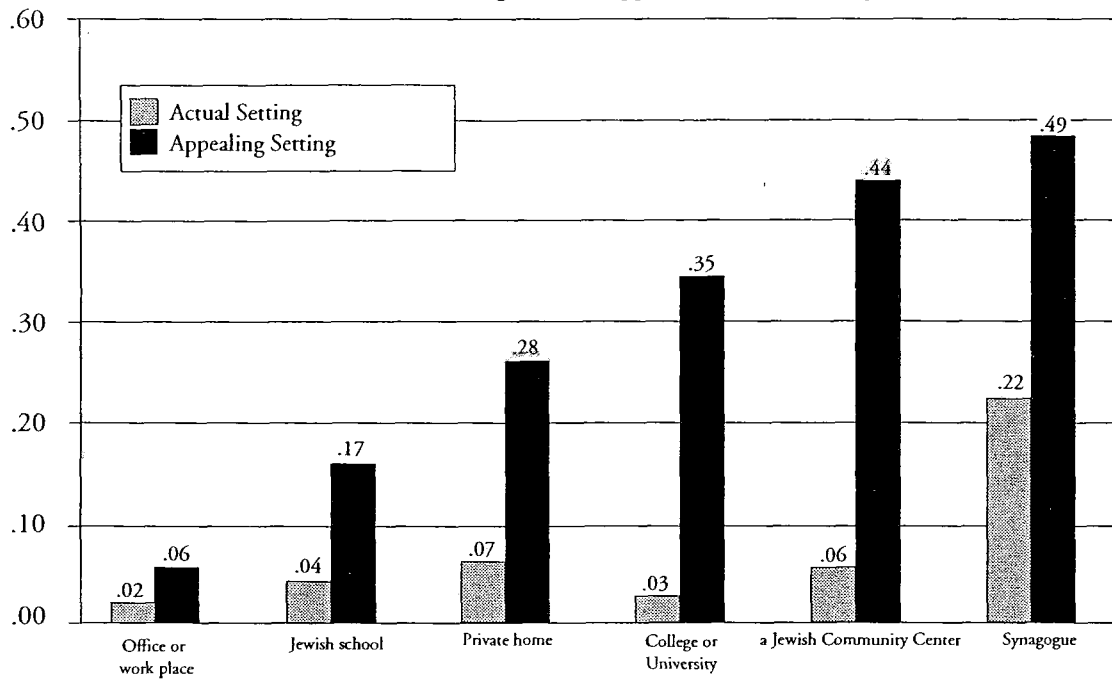
How do we explain the popularity of the synagogue as a locus of current Jewish learning in classes and study groups? Aside from all its other assets, synagogues are numerous and widely scattered, generally at least one is found very near where most Jews live. Nearly two thirds of American Jews (64%) live within 15 minutes of a synagogue. More than two fifths (41%) live within 10 minutes of one. The comparable figures for JCCs are 37% for 15 minutes, and 19% for ten minutes or less. Synagogues are quite accessible, local institutions, often surrounded by concentrated congregants who encounter one another outside the temple, thereby organically reinforcing their bonds of community. Other advantages for synagogues as purveyors of Jewish learning abound. Congregations are also the loci of the most important family life cycle transitions, a place where Jews come to pray, and are professionally headed by Jewishly educated professionals whose very title refers to the educational role ("rabbi" = "my teacher").

The JCCs, in contrast, reach far fewer learners currently. Their smaller number, and the smaller number of American Jews affiliated with JCCs as compared with synagogues, and their greater geographic distance from an ever-dispersing American Jewry are some of the reasons for their limited reach to current learners. However, JCCs can take some encouragement (and maybe learn some lessons) from the fact that so many American Jews find them "very appealing" as a place to engage in Jewish learning. The very large gap between the low levels of current participation in classes and study groups at JCCs (6%) and the readiness of so many to engage in Jewish learning at a JCC (44%) suggests an untapped market of Jewish learners.

Of some interest are the relative proportions who find one or the other institution very appealing as a place for Jewish learning (Table 11). Among the current frequent learners, the synagogue leads the Center considerably in terms of appeal (82% versus 59%). But among the most infrequent learners, the two institutions evoke equal levels of appeal (at 36%). We find a similar pattern with respect to Jewish involvement. Thus, among the Orthodox, the appeal of the synagogue is double that of the JCC (78% versus 36%). Among the Observant Affiliated the gap narrows (71% versus 56%) and among the Affiliated it is narrower still (57% versus 49%). In contrast, among the Unaffiliated, the appeal of the synagogue actually slightly trails that of the JCC (34% versus 38%).

These figures suggest that both institutions can appeal to Jewish learners from varied backgrounds; how-

Locations of Jewish learning and their appeal by Jewish Learning Index



ever, the populations to which they each most appeal differ somewhat. The synagogues are more appealing to the heavily involved Jewish learners and the more traditionally oriented American Jews. The JCCs are relatively more appealing to less active learners and to those more distant from conventional Jewish life.

## CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Not long ago, Jewish day schools—to take an apposite example—were the nearly exclusive province of the Orthodox and a few others who were almost always heavily involved in Jewish life. In the last twenty years or so, day schools have expanded not merely in number but in reach. Day school students now hail from a variety of backgrounds in Jewish life, with, of course, a continuing concentration among the Orthodox and the more observant. But even though ritual observance is higher among day school families than others, the number of non-observant day school families is so large as to challenge the traditional cultures of those schools (Cohen 1998b). In other words, day schools have grown, and they have grown by breaking out of their Jewishly traditional constituencies.

We find interesting parallels in the Israel Experience for American Jewish youth. For years, participants in educational travel to Israel have been relatively few in number and drawn heavily from the Orthodox, the synagogue and Zionist youth movements, and the Jewish educational summer camps. The initial impressions of the Birthright Israel effort suggest change both in number and in profile. The Birthright Israel recruitment campaigns among college youth (*restricted to those who were never on an organized Israel trip*) ignited widespread interest. They resulted in applications and participation from thousands of youngsters who fell outside the traditional profile of the Israel Experience participant (Saxe et al. 2000).

The performance of numerous Jewish learning endeavors is encouraging in similar ways. Anecdotal evidence regarding Derekh HaTorah, the Florence Melton Adult Mini-School, the Wexner program, the CLAL programs, the Me'ah program, the National Jewish Outreach Project, and others points in the same direction. In all instances, varied as they are by sponsorship, content, format, leadership and population, the programs registered two signal achievements, both quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitatively, they all registered gains in the number of participants in Jewish learning endeavors. Qualitatively, they all claim to have reached adults with little previous experience in Jewish learning.

The patterns in day schools, Israel experience, and adult Jewish learning point to the same sorts of challenges and possibilities. The challenge is both to sharply expand the number of participants and to broaden the character of participants to include those less involved in conventional Jewish life. The possibilities, or more precisely the history of achievement, suggest that these goals are achievable. However, to realize these goals, the offerings in adult Jewish learning need to be expanded, if not adjusted.

This research pointed to some of the adjustments that can be undertaken to broaden the appeal of Jewish learning in the United States. Among these adjustments, and the considerations behind them, are the following:

- **Recognize and support the diversity of Jewish learning processes.** They go beyond classes and lectures to include reading books, using the Internet, going to museums, and listening to music, and educational travel.
- **Recognize that Jewish learning appeals more to those who have prior experience with higher Jewish involvement. Consequently, Jewish learning needs to be geared to that prior knowledge, and align with potential learners' current knowledge and skills.**
- **Understandably, the subject matter of current Jewish learning offerings is weighted to satisfy the interests and needs of current Jewish learners, people who tend to be more observant, more religious, and more affiliated. In contrast, the currently less active Jewish learners are interested in more culturally oriented topics. These include, but are not limited to, Jewish food and cooking, the Holocaust, Jewish history, and Jewish values and ethics. Expanding the appeal of Jewish learning means expanding the breadth of topics now offered.**
- **The time element is crucial** The survey suggested **substantial interest in three-session courses.** The gap between the one-shot lecture and the full-year or semester-long course needs to be filled.
- **The social dimension to Jewish learning is crucial** to attracting new learners, especially those with currently low levels of Jewish learning activity. Learners want intimacy, friendship, and community in addition to Jewish growth experiences.

- A key motivation for potential learners is **to grow Jewishly**, not just the acquisition of knowledge and skills. Personal Jewish growth may flow from acquiring Jewish literacy; but the two objectives are distinctive.
- **JCCs and synagogues hold potential as popular centers for Jewish learning**, with both broad-based and specialized appeal. The populations to which they appeal do overlap, and they do differ from one another. Synagogues are stronger among conventionally involved Jews and learners. The JCCs are relatively stronger among the uninvolved and uninitiated.

These are only some of the implications of this study. Others will evolve with the deliberation of communal leaders, practitioners, rabbis, educators, and academicians.

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## APPENDIX

### Comparison of National Jewish Learning Sample with 1990 NJPS Sub-sample

Any of a number of steps along the way could have contributed to producing a sample unrepresentative of the American Jewish population in one direction or another. From the start, these respondents are "special" in that they have agreed to participate in social surveys. In addition, bias may enter in terms of which potential respondents choose to participate in the survey by completing and returning the questionnaires. To check for such biases, we compared important characteristics of this sample with those derived from the 1990 National Jewish Population Study (Kosmin et al. 1991; Goldstein 1992). To retain comparability to the Market Facts sample, this analysis restricts the NJPS respondents to those classified as Jewish by religion, approximately 80% of American Jewry. Others identify as Jews, but, typically, view their religion as "none," or other non-Jewish responses. "Jews-by-Religion" score higher than others on almost all measures of Jewish involvement. However, the Jewish involvement scores for the 80% who identify as Jews-by-Religion are not all that different from the entire sample of NJPS respondents, of whom they comprise the vast majority.

Comparisons of these respondents with the NJPS distributions drawn reveal striking similarities across a large number of variables (see Table A1, below). Differences are small with respect to marital status (including percent intermarried), geographic location, Jewish friends, fasting on Yom Kippur, Kosher dishes, Christmas trees, religious service attendance, synagogue membership, organizational membership, visiting Israel and denomination. Also quite comparable are the distributions of educational attainment for women. The variations in age distribution can be largely explained by the passage of time and the aging (by ten years) of the Baby Boom generation.

However, in a few instances, the sample in this study departs considerably from comparable respondents in the NJPS. Most notably, this sample over-represents those who light Hanukkah candles and Shabbat candles. At the same time, fewer report having mostly Jewish close friends (a finding that may well reflect, in part, changes during the passage of time since 1990). On balance thought, the findings suggest an under-representation of those most distant from conventional Jewish life, a feature compounded by the unavoidable exclusion of Jews who did not claim to be Jewish by religion. In addition, although women's educational distribution in the two studies closely approximate one another, the men's distribution in the Jewish Learning sample is biased upward relative to the NJPS figures.

In other words, this sample is somewhat more Jewishly involved and somewhat more educated than American Jews at large, and the results for relevant behaviors and attitudes need to be seen in that light. Specifically, since Jewish learning activities are directly correlated with both Jewish involvement and education, the results here somewhat overstate the extent of Jewish learning in the population. On the other hand, none of the sample biases suggests departures from the population in terms of relationships among variables (rather than simple frequencies).

*Table A1. Comparison of Socio-demographic and Jewish Identity Characteristics with the 1990 NJPS.*  
(NSJL = National Survey of Jewish Learning; NJPS = National Jewish Population Survey)

**Table A1. Comparison of Socio-demographic and Jewish Identity Characteristics with the 1990 NJPS.**

(NSJL = National Survey of Jewish Learning; NJPS = National Jewish Population Survey)

Variable	Categories	1999 NSJL	1990 NJPS
U.S. Census Region	Northeast	48%	50%
	Midwest	11%	11%
	South	22%	20%
	West	20%	19%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
Marital Status	Married	59%	64%
	Widowed	6%	6%
	Divorced	10%	7%
	Separated	1%	1%
	Never Married	24%	22%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
Age	75+	7%	6%
	65-74	14%	12%
	55-64	25%	14%
	45-34	27%	16%
	35-44	16%	25%
	Under 35	10%	28%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
Education of Men	Post grad	38%	30%
	College grad	27%	34%
	No BA	35%	36%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Education of Women	Post grad	29%	30%
	college grad	28%	30%
	No BA	43%	40%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
Ritual Observance	Light Hanukkah candles	86%	69%
	Fast on Yom Kippur	61%	59%
	Light Shabbat candles	28%	20%
	Have two sets of dishes (kashrut)	17%	15%
	Don't have a Christmas tree	83%	80%
Jewish Communal Affiliation	Member of a synagogue	41%	44%
	Member of a Jewish org.	28%	34%
	Have visited Israel	36%	31%
	Most close friends Jewish	35%	45%
	Reads a Jewish newspaper	35%	30%
Attendance at Synagogue Services	Monthly +	22%	27%
	A few times a year	25%	22%
	High Holidays	13%	10%
	Not at all	40%	41%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
Denomination (Self-Identified)	Orthodox	5%	7%
	Conservative	30%	38%
	Reform	41%	40%
	Just Jewish	25%	15%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Dear Panel Member,

Your household has been selected for a national survey about adult Jewish learning. The information provided will contribute to the development of a unique profiling of the opinions, beliefs, and practices of contemporary American Jews. All responses, of course, will remain anonymous and compiled together with hundreds of others in the form of statistical summaries. The statistical profile will be available to Jewish organizations and leaders, journalists, and academics interested in these issues. For the research to be valid, it is important that everyone selected complete the survey -- not just those who feel they are "strongly Jewish."

Cordially,

I would like you, the panel member, or another Jewish adult in the household to complete this survey.

1. On how many of the last 7 evenings did you spend a substantial portion of time out of the house?  
 0  16    1  15    2  20    3  17    4  13    5  10    6  4    7  4
  
2. During a typical week, of the four evenings between Monday and Thursday, about how many of those evenings to you spend in each of the following ways? (PLEASE MARK ONE ANSWER FOR EACH ACTIVITY a-f.)

	Number of Evenings				
	0	1	2	3	4
a. Out of the home for work or professional reasons	<input type="checkbox"/> 68	<input type="checkbox"/> 17	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
b. Out of the home for organizational or volunteer, civic, or organizational reasons	<input type="checkbox"/> 74	<input type="checkbox"/> 20	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
c. Out of the home for cultural pursuits	<input type="checkbox"/> 74	<input type="checkbox"/> 22	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
d. Out of the home for leisure pursuits	<input type="checkbox"/> 43	<input type="checkbox"/> 35	<input type="checkbox"/> 15	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
e. Out of the home for other reasons	<input type="checkbox"/> 60	<input type="checkbox"/> 29	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
f. At home	..... <input type="checkbox"/> 19	<input type="checkbox"/> 13	<input type="checkbox"/> 18	<input type="checkbox"/> 22	<input type="checkbox"/> 29

- |  |                             |
|--|-----------------------------|
|  | <b>Yes</b>                  |
| 3. Do you own a personal computer?                               | <input type="checkbox"/> 72 |
| 4. Do you subscribe to AOL or another Internet service provider? | <input type="checkbox"/> 63 |
| 5. Do you have a hobby that involves collecting?                 | <input type="checkbox"/> 46 |
| 6. Do you regularly engage in a musical activity?                | <input type="checkbox"/> 25 |
| 7. Do you regularly engage in an arts or crafts activity         | <input type="checkbox"/>    |
| 8. Do you regularly engage in physical exercise?                 | <input type="checkbox"/> 56 |

## YOUR CULTURAL, EDUCATIONAL, AND ENTERTAINMENT ACTIVITIES

9. During the last 12 months ...

	0	1	2-4	5 or more
a. How many novels or mysteries have you read?	<input type="checkbox"/> 23	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	<input type="checkbox"/> 23	<input type="checkbox"/> 46
b. How many non-fiction books have you read?	<input type="checkbox"/> 23	<input type="checkbox"/> 21	<input type="checkbox"/> 33	<input type="checkbox"/> 23
c. How many audio books have you listened to?	<input type="checkbox"/> 80	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
d. How many concerts or artistic performances have you attended?	<input type="checkbox"/> 28	<input type="checkbox"/> 15	<input type="checkbox"/> 30	<input type="checkbox"/> 27
e. How many museums have you visited?	<input type="checkbox"/> 33	<input type="checkbox"/> 21	<input type="checkbox"/> 33	<input type="checkbox"/> 14
f. How many movies have you seen at movie theaters?	<input type="checkbox"/> 20	<input type="checkbox"/> 9	<input type="checkbox"/> 27	<input type="checkbox"/> 44
g. How many plays have you attended?	<input type="checkbox"/> 39	<input type="checkbox"/> 18	<input type="checkbox"/> 23	<input type="checkbox"/> 20
h. How many video tapes have you rented?	<input type="checkbox"/> 38	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 17	<input type="checkbox"/> 41
i. How many daily newspapers do you read regularly	<input type="checkbox"/> 13	<input type="checkbox"/> 54	<input type="checkbox"/> 24	<input type="checkbox"/> 9
j. How many professional publications do you read regularly?	<input type="checkbox"/> 31	<input type="checkbox"/> 20	<input type="checkbox"/> 33	<input type="checkbox"/> 17
k. How many lectures, not related to Jewish subject matter, have you attended?	<input type="checkbox"/> 57	<input type="checkbox"/> 12	<input type="checkbox"/> 20	<input type="checkbox"/> 12
l. How many classes, not related to Jewish subject matter have you taken?	<input type="checkbox"/> 66	<input type="checkbox"/> 13	<input type="checkbox"/> 14	<input type="checkbox"/> 8

## YOUR TRAVEL ABROAD

10. In the last five years, how often have you traveled abroad for pleasure?

Never  47    Once  16    Twice  13    More often  24

11. In the last five years ...

- |   | Yes                         |
|---|-----------------------------|
| a. Have you visited Israel?   | <input type="checkbox"/> 14 |
| b. Have you sought out sites and places of Jewish interest in foreign countries aside from Israel?                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> 30 |
| c. Have you participated in a Jewish tour or mission to sites and places of Jewish interest in foreign countries aside from Israel? | <input type="checkbox"/> 7  |

## YOUR JEWISH LEARNING ACTIVITIES

12. How recently, if ever, have you... (PLEASE MARK ONLY ONE BOX FOR EACH ITEM a-g.)

	Within The Last Year	From 1 to 5 Years Ago	6 or More Years Ago	Never Did This
Participated in a Jewish study group	<input type="checkbox"/> 16	<input type="checkbox"/> 11	<input type="checkbox"/> 24	<input type="checkbox"/> 48
Studied Jewish texts on your own	<input type="checkbox"/> 20	<input type="checkbox"/> 10	<input type="checkbox"/> 17	<input type="checkbox"/> 53
Played Jewish or Israeli music	<input type="checkbox"/> 41	<input type="checkbox"/> 11	<input type="checkbox"/> 11	<input type="checkbox"/> 38
Visited a Jewishly oriented web site chat room or discussion group	<input type="checkbox"/> 27	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 68
Visited the Holocaust Museum in Washington	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 22	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 68
Visited some other museum dedicated to the Holocaust	<input type="checkbox"/> 14	<input type="checkbox"/> 21	<input type="checkbox"/> 13	<input type="checkbox"/> 52
Visited a Jewish museum dedicated to Jewish life and culture	<input type="checkbox"/> 16	<input type="checkbox"/> 22	<input type="checkbox"/> 18	<input type="checkbox"/> 44

13. Using your own definition of what you consider a "Jewish theme," how recently, if ever, have you ....

	Within The Last Year	From 1 to 5 Years Ago	6 or More Years Ago	Never Did This
Gone to a movie with a Jewish theme	<input type="checkbox"/> 30	<input type="checkbox"/> 36	<input type="checkbox"/> 16	<input type="checkbox"/> 18
Rented a video with a Jewish theme	<input type="checkbox"/> 21	<input type="checkbox"/> 25	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	<input type="checkbox"/> 48
Read fiction with a Jewish theme	<input type="checkbox"/> 33	<input type="checkbox"/> 28	<input type="checkbox"/> 13	<input type="checkbox"/> 27
Read non-fiction with a Jewish theme	<input type="checkbox"/> 30	<input type="checkbox"/> 23	<input type="checkbox"/> 15	<input type="checkbox"/> 32
Attended a lecture with a Jewish theme	<input type="checkbox"/> 24	<input type="checkbox"/> 17	<input type="checkbox"/> 17	<input type="checkbox"/> 42
Taken a class with a Jewish theme	<input type="checkbox"/> 16	<input type="checkbox"/> 13	<input type="checkbox"/> 24	<input type="checkbox"/> 47
Read a newspaper or magazine article on Israel or a Jewish topic	<input type="checkbox"/> 79	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 12

14. In the last 5 years, have you regularly attended any class or study group with a Jewish theme?

Yes 31

15. (IF YES:) Please indicate below where, or under whose auspices, any of the Jewish learning experiences in which you have participated have taken place. (MARK ALL THAT APPLY)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Synagogue 22            | <input type="checkbox"/> The Internet 3                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Private home 7          | <input type="checkbox"/> Jewish Federation 4           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jewish school 4         | <input type="checkbox"/> Elder hostel 2                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> JCC 9                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Office or work place 2        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> College or university 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> Another Jewish organization 7 |

16. If you were to engage in a Jewish learning experience, to what extent would you find the following settings appealing?

- |                              | Very<br>Appealing           |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| a. A synagogue               | <input type="checkbox"/> 50 |
| b. A Jewish Community Center | <input type="checkbox"/> 45 |
| c. A Jewish day school       | <input type="checkbox"/> 18 |
| d. A university or college   | <input type="checkbox"/> 37 |
| e. A home                    | <input type="checkbox"/> 29 |
| f. The office or workplace   | <input type="checkbox"/> 6  |

17. For each of the subjects below, to what extent do you feel motivated to learn more about this topic?

- |                              | To a great<br>extent        |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Jewish holidays           | <input type="checkbox"/> 27 |
| 2. Prayer                    | <input type="checkbox"/> 18 |
| 3. Jewish theology (God)     | <input type="checkbox"/> 21 |
| 4. Jewish spirituality       | <input type="checkbox"/> 23 |
| 5. Israel                    | <input type="checkbox"/> 26 |
| 6. The Holocaust             | <input type="checkbox"/> 29 |
| 7. Jewish ritual observance  | <input type="checkbox"/> 25 |
| 8. Hebrew                    | <input type="checkbox"/> 16 |
| 9. Yiddish                   | <input type="checkbox"/> 18 |
| 10. Jewish art and/or music  | <input type="checkbox"/> 15 |
| 11. Jewish values and ethics | <input type="checkbox"/> 27 |
| 12. Social justice           | <input type="checkbox"/> 21 |
| 13. Jewish history           | <input type="checkbox"/> 28 |
| 14. Intermarriage            | <input type="checkbox"/> 14 |
| 15. The Torah or Bible       | <input type="checkbox"/> 21 |
| 16. The Talmud               | <input type="checkbox"/> 18 |
| 17. Jewish genealogy         | <input type="checkbox"/> 19 |
| 18. Jewish food or cooking   | <input type="checkbox"/> 30 |



18. To what extent do each of the following motivate you to engage in adult Jewish learning?

	<b>Very much</b>
To learn new skills	<input type="checkbox"/> 15
To become a more knowledgeable Jew	<input type="checkbox"/> 37
To become a more Judaically informed parent	<input type="checkbox"/> 18
To have an intellectual experience	<input type="checkbox"/> 27
To have a spiritual experience	<input type="checkbox"/> 23
To grow as a Jew	<input type="checkbox"/> 33
To meet new friends	<input type="checkbox"/> 24
To spend time with people I like	<input type="checkbox"/> 29
To feel part of my local Jewish community	<input type="checkbox"/> 28
To have a positive Jewish experience with other Jews	<input type="checkbox"/> 30
To find personal meaning	<input type="checkbox"/> 28

19. To what extent do each of the following deter you from engaging in Jewish learning?

	<b>Very much</b>
a. Don't have the time	<input type="checkbox"/> 26
b. Not willing or able to pay the financial cost	<input type="checkbox"/> 21
c. Wouldn't feel comfortable	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
d. Wouldn't feel in command of the material	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
e. Wouldn't like the other participants	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
f. Wouldn't like the teacher	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
g. People might expect me to behave or think	
h. in a certain way as a Jew	<input type="checkbox"/> 9
i. The experience would not be very intellectually challenging or engaging	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
j. Not accessible or available	<input type="checkbox"/> 13
k. Child care responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
l. Spending more time apart from my husband/wife	<input type="checkbox"/> 9

20. If you were to engage in a Jewish learning experience, to what extent would you find the following contexts appealing?

	<b>Very Appealing</b>
A class of 10 or fewer students	<input type="checkbox"/> 50
A class of 20 or more students	<input type="checkbox"/> 10
A study group with friends	<input type="checkbox"/> 32
One-on-one with a teacher	<input type="checkbox"/> 16
(IF MARRIED:) Without my spouse	<input type="checkbox"/> 11
(IF A PARENT:) With my children	<input type="checkbox"/> 26
By myself	<input type="checkbox"/> 15
Using the Internet	<input type="checkbox"/> 12
Instructional audio or video tapes	<input type="checkbox"/> 10

21. Suppose some Jewish learning sessions were being held near your home on a topic that you found appealing and at a time that you found convenient. How likely would you be to attend sessions of the following durations: (MARK ONE ANSWER FOR EACH ITEMS)

	<b>Very Likely</b>
One session	<input type="checkbox"/> 55
Three sessions	<input type="checkbox"/> 38
Seven sessions	<input type="checkbox"/> 17
Fourteen sessions	<input type="checkbox"/> 10

#### **BEING JEWISH**

22. How important would you say religion is in your own life?

Very important	<input type="checkbox"/> 33	Not very important	<input type="checkbox"/> 26
Fairly important	<input type="checkbox"/> 38	Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/> 3

23. How important would you say being Jewish is in your own life?

Very important	<input type="checkbox"/> 49	Not very important	<input type="checkbox"/> 12
Fairly important	<input type="checkbox"/> 36	Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/> 2

24. Referring to Jewish religious denominations, do you now consider yourself to be ...(MARK ONE ANSWER ONLY)

Orthodox	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	Reconstructionist	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
Conservative	<input type="checkbox"/> 23	Conservative & Reform	<input type="checkbox"/> 13
Orthodox & Conservative	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	Just Jewish	<input type="checkbox"/> 23
Reform	<input type="checkbox"/> 28	Not Jewish	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

25. About how often do you attend any type of synagogue, temple, or organized Jewish religious service?  
(MARK ONE ANSWER ONLY)

No at all or only on special occasions (a Bar Mitzvah, a wedding)	<input type="checkbox"/>	40
Only on High Holidays (Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur)	<input type="checkbox"/>	13
A few times a year	<input type="checkbox"/>	25
About once a month	<input type="checkbox"/>	8
Several times a month or more	<input type="checkbox"/>	14

26. About how long does it take you to travel from your home to the nearest synagogue and the nearest JCC? (MARK ONE BOX FOR SYNAGOGUE AND ONE FOR JCC.)

	Synagogue	JCC
Less than 10 minutes	<input type="checkbox"/> 41	<input type="checkbox"/> 19
About 10 - 15 minutes	<input type="checkbox"/> 23	<input type="checkbox"/> 18
About 15 - 20 minutes	<input type="checkbox"/> 14	<input type="checkbox"/> 15
More than 20 minutes	<input type="checkbox"/> 14	<input type="checkbox"/> 22
Not sure, don't know	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	<input type="checkbox"/> 26

27. Among the people you consider your closest friends, would you say that ...

None are Jewish	<input type="checkbox"/> 10
Few are Jewish	<input type="checkbox"/> 30
Many are Jewish	<input type="checkbox"/> 25
Most are Jewish	<input type="checkbox"/> 23
All or almost all are Jewish	<input type="checkbox"/> 12

28. Of the following people, who was raised Jewish, and who is Jewish now? (MARK THE "NA" BOX IF THAT QUESTION IS "NOT APPLICABLE" TO YOU.)

	Raised Jewish?	Jewish Now?
	Yes	Yes
You	96	99
Your spouse	79	82
The spouse of your youngest married child	50	53

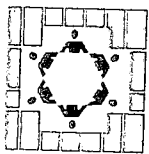
29. How many times have you been to Israel?

<input type="checkbox"/> Never	64	<input type="checkbox"/> Once	22	<input type="checkbox"/> Twice or more	13	<input type="checkbox"/> I lived in Israel	2
--------------------------------	----	-------------------------------	----	--	----	--	---

30. How well do you read Hebrew?

Not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> 43
Can sound out the words, but with little or no understanding	<input type="checkbox"/> 30
Can read the words with some understanding	<input type="checkbox"/> 22
Can read and understand comfortably	<input type="checkbox"/> 6

31. Did you ever ... Yes
- Attend a Jewish day school or yeshiva?  22
- Attend a Jewish afternoon school that met more than once a week?  48
- Attend a one-day--a-week afternoon or Sunday school?  54
- Attend an overnight camp sponsored by a Jewish organization or movement?  33
- Participate in a Jewish youth group?  45
- Visit Israel before the age of 22?  10
- Take any courses in Jewish Studies while at college?  17
- Take part in any activities of a Jewish campus group like Hillel?  27
32. Please answer each of the following questions: Yes
- During the Christmas season, does your household have a Christmas tree?  17
- Does your household usually light Hanukkah candles?  86
- Does your household use separate dishes for meat and dairy?  17
- Do you fast on Yom Kippur?  61
- Does your household usually light candles on Friday night?  28
- Are you currently a member of a synagogue or temple?  41
- Are you a member of a Jewish Community Center (JCC) or YMHA?  11
- Have you or any member in your household participated in any program  
or activity at a JCC or a YMHA within the past year?  9
- Do you belong to any Jewish organizations aside from a synagogue or JCC?  28
- In the past 2 years have you served as an officer or on the board or committee  
of a Jewish organization or synagogue?  15
- Did you contribute to the UJA/Federation in the past year?  40
- Do you subscribe to or regularly receive a Jewish newspaper?  35
- Do you subscribe to or regularly receive a Jewish magazine?  33
- Do you have any children who now attend a Jewish day school or yeshiva?  6
- Do you have any children who now attend a part-time Jewish school?  6
33. With respect to your political views on most issues, do you regard yourself as:
- Very liberal 8    Liberal 31    Moderate 39    Conservative 19    Very Conservative 3
34. Are you ...  Male 46    Female 54



The Florence G. Heller/  
JCC Association  
Research Center

Michael D. Kaplan  
President

Professor Steven M. Cohen  
Director



Jerome B. Makowsky  
Chair

Allan Finkelstein  
President

Jewish Theological Seminary  
William Davidson Graduate  
School of Jewish Education



AND THE BUSH וְהַסִּיחַ  
WAS NOT אֵינָהּ  
CONSUMED נֹכַח

Aryeh Davidson  
Dean

Erma Milstein  
Chair, Board of Overseers