



## News

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### **Steven M. Cohen, Noted Sociologist, To Consult On National Jewish Population Survey 2000**

*New York - December 18, 2000* - Professor Steven M. Cohen, a well known sociologist of American Jewry who teaches at the Melton Center for Jewish Education at The Hebrew University in Jerusalem, will serve as Senior Research Consultant to United Jewish Communities (UJC) on matters relating to use of data derived from the National Jewish Population Survey 2000 (NJPS 2000).

"Steven Cohen brings a wealth of experience with issues of Jewish identity and longstanding affiliations with a variety of Jewish communal organizations and institutions," said Dr. Louise F. Stoll, UJC executive vice president and chief operating officer. "We look forward to his insights and counsel as the survey moves into its final phases."

Professor Cohen has written or edited a dozen books and over a hundred scholarly articles and reports on issues examining Jewish identity, Jewish education, and Israel-Diaspora relations. He co-authored *Two Worlds of Judaism: The Israeli and American Experiences*, as well as *Cosmopolitans and Parochials: Modern Orthodox Jews in America*, and recently co-authored, with Stanford University Professor Arnold Eisen, *The Jew Within*. Other books include *American Modernity & Jewish Identity* and *American Assimilation or Jewish Revival?*

He has served as a consultant to several agencies including the Jewish Community Centers Association (JCCA), the Jewish Agency for Israel, the United Jewish Appeal, the Charles R. Bronfman Foundation, the Wexner Foundation, the Cummings Foundation, the American Jewish Committee, and the Jewish federations of New York, Detroit, and New Haven. He was recently appointed Director of the Florence G. Heller – JCCA Research Center.

Prior to moving to Israel in 1992, he was a professor of sociology at Queens College in New York, and a Visiting Professor at Brandeis University, Yale University, and the Jewish Theological Seminary.

Using random-digit telephone dialing, Audits and Surveys Worldwide - a top research firm based in New York - is in the process of interviewing thousands of people across the United States to draw an accurate portrait of the American Jewish community.

The resulting profile of American Jewry will include geographic distribution, socio-economic characteristics, family structure, marriage patterns, religious practices and attitudes, levels of Jewish education, philanthropic behavior, perceptions of anti-Semitism, fertility, political orientation, mobility patterns, and relationship to Israel, among many other areas. Findings of NJPS 2000 are expected next year.

"If properly utilized, the NJPS 2000 will serve as a valuable resource for Jewish communal policy makers and practitioners, as well as social scientists specializing in the study of American Jewry," said Bill Berman, co-chair of the NJPS Board of Trustees.

"Through an intense dialogue among lay leaders, professionals, and researchers, we ought to be able to draw some valuable lessons and implications for American Jewry in such areas as Jewish identity, Jewish education, philanthropy, Israel involvement, and human services," Professor Cohen added.

Design of the survey is the result of a multi-year effort by social researchers, statistical experts, Jewish federation and national agency lay and professional leaders, UJC leadership, the UJC Research Department and the National Technical Advisory Committee - all of whom produced a comprehensive questionnaire.

Results of NJPS 2000 will help UJC, Jewish community federations and national agencies to reshape the Jewish communal agenda. "NJPS 2000 will deliver much of the data we all need to strengthen and grow Jewish life in the 21st century," Dr. Stoll said.

*United Jewish Communities (UJC) represents 156 Jewish Federations and 400 independent communities across North America. Through the UJA Federation Campaign, UJC provides life-saving and life-enhancing humanitarian assistance to those in need, and translates Jewish values into social action on behalf of millions of Jews in hundreds of communities in North America, in towns and villages throughout Israel, in the former Soviet Union, and 60 countries around the world. Through the Israel Emergency Campaign (IEC), UJC and the Jewish Federations of North America, in cooperation with their overseas partners, The Jewish Agency (JAFI) and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), are providing human welfare, social and economic assistance and other types of support to Israelis, many of them victims of terror, as they endure a period of extreme challenge.*