

Special Articles

Current Trends in American Jewish Philanthropy

BY JACK WERTHEIMER

THE STATE OF JEWISH philanthropy in the United States has been the subject of much anguished discussion in the American Jewish community during the 1990s. Two articles appearing virtually in tandem in major Jewish newspapers late in 1996 illustrate just why there is so much confusion and anxiety surrounding the subject: Under a banner headline reading “Jewish Charities Fare Well,” a news report from the Jewish Telegraphic Agency trumpeted the fund-raising prowess of American Jewish philanthropies.¹ The article noted the extraordinary achievement of Jews (who constitute barely more than 2 percent of the American population) in catapulting 16 local federations of Jewish philanthropy and more than a half dozen other Jewish organizations into the ranks of the top 400 charities in the United States. The United Jewish Appeal, which provides relief to Jews abroad, placed sixth on the list of the largest charities in the nation. The second article, which appeared just one week later, was written by a seasoned and knowledgeable observer of the American Jewish community who asked somewhat ominously whether the time had not come to bid “Farewell to the Great Money Machine?”² Donald Feldstein, a longtime communal executive, contended in this article that

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¹Cynthia Mann, “Jewish Charities Fare Well; UJA Places Sixth,” *MetroWest Jewish News*, Nov. 7, 1995, p. 21.

²Donald Feldstein, “Farewell to the Great Money Machine?” *Jewish Sentinel* (Manhattan), Nov. 15–21, 1996, p. 7.

“dire predictions [about the state of Jewish giving] have been borne out” in at least three ways: (1) For over a decade, UJA-Federation annual campaigns, the major fund-raising efforts of local Jewish communities, have been essentially flat. When inflation is taken into account, there has been a real and noticeable decrease in the funds received through the annual campaigns. (2) The donor base of givers to these campaigns has declined in the past two decades by over 200,000 gifts to all North American federations of Jewish philanthropy: after the Yom Kippur War in 1973, nearly one million gifts were received; by 1994 the number of donors had declined to slightly under 800,000. (3) The share of philanthropy donated to Jewish institutions has continually declined, as ever larger sums of financial contributions by Jews swell the coffers of non-sectarian charities. “The bottom line,” according to Feldstein, “really is that the resources are there. The failure of the UJA-Federation system is a failure to discover a moral or philanthropic equivalent to war and rescue.”

The apparent decline in inflation-adjusted dollars collected through the annual fund-raising mechanism alarms some Jewish leaders, then, not only because it adversely affects the communal budget, but because it may point to a deeper malaise in the organized Jewish community. Does the shrinking pool of donors or the stagnation of revenues, observers such as Feldstein ask, suggest that the major umbrella organizations of the organized Jewish community have lost their way? Are they bereft of a compelling vision? A prominent congregational rabbi acerbically described the state of affairs as follows:

There is a faint Pirandello-like quality about the federations of Jewish philanthropy today. Like the dramatist’s “Six Characters in Search of an Author,” the scores of US federations are now bodies in search of a purpose. It has now become clear that the purposes for which federations were founded originally and the causes which they later espoused have either been achieved or have ceased to be a major inspiration for Jewish philanthropy. The result is that the Jewish community is left with a highly organized and very efficient mechanism for raising and disposing of money but one which is bereft of a purpose.³

In response to such claims, federation leaders contend that the system works well; it is the message that needs more forceful, perhaps sharper, articulation. In the words of John Ruskay, an executive of the country’s largest federation:

³Quoted by John Ruskay in *Historical Change and Communal Responsibility: The Jewish Communal Agenda and the Challenge of Emerging Philanthropic Trends* (The Sanford Solender Lecture, UJA/Federation of Jewish Philanthropies of New York, 1996), p. 7.

The federation system does not need, nor does it seek, new purposes. The mission and broad purposes of the federation system are abiding and the needs to which it responds are prodigious. What it does need and does seek, now that the problems it faces are not imminent risks to the lives of Jews, now that we have outlived and outgrown the hostility of others as a motive for our actions, are compelling ways of articulating our rationale for Jewish life and the federation system.⁴

Still others reject out of hand the suggestion that fund-raising for Jewish causes has declined. Noting that federations raised over \$700 million in 1996 through their regular campaigns and vast additional sums through other sources of revenue, they insist that Jewish philanthropy must be viewed in comparative perspective: "No other comparable philanthropic entity in the world continues to raise on an annual basis such significant sums," argues Stephen Solender, the top executive of the New York federation.⁵

Notwithstanding these pertinent observations, still other observers worry that the entire collective enterprise of American Jewry is in danger, that the organized community is rapidly becoming "a Potemkin community," an outer shell of institutions lacking a broad base of support.⁶ The sociologist Steven M. Cohen, for example, has linked weaknesses in the philanthropic sector to other problems in American Jewry's "public sphere." The latter, he claims, is afflicted by "stagnant centralized philanthropic campaigns, the aging and numerical decline of most long-established membership organizations, widespread resistance to affiliation, alienation, under-utilized buildings, disheartened professionals and lay leaders, petty lay-professional conflicts, and interinstitutional rivalry of an unproductive sort."⁷ For Cohen, at least, the diseased condition of the Jewish "public sphere" stands in marked contrast to the relative health of the Jewish "private sphere," which "encompasses spiritual concerns, education, culture, ritual practice, and such matters." Still, even in this view, the problems of philanthropy point to a pervasive malaise in the organized Jewish community. Simply put, many observers fear that weaknesses in the Jewish philanthropic sector may well be a symptom of degeneration afflicting the wider Jewish community.

The logic of this argument was well articulated by Cohen in an article that appeared in the *American Jewish Year Book* nearly two decades ago.

⁴Ibid., p. 7.

⁵Stephen D. Solender, "Reengineering the Jewish Community: Professional Leaders Respond," *Journal of Jewish Communal Service* 73, no. 1, Fall 1996, p. 12.

⁶Milton Goldin, "A Certain Crisis Today," *Midstream*, June/July 1991, p. 13.

⁷Steven M. Cohen, "Reengineering the Jewish Community," *Journal of Jewish Communal Service* 73, no. 1, Fall 1996, p. 10.

Jewish philanthropy, he contended, “serves not only as a means to finance the broad range of health, social welfare, educational, cultural programs on the local level, national institutions to coordinate local initiatives and define policy, and international efforts, particularly in the realm of rescue and resettlement of Jews in need.” But philanthropy also serves as a form of community building: “A strong philanthropic campaign reflects a coherent and well-integrated Jewish community. A weak campaign implies a partial unraveling of the ties that bind Jews together.” This is because philanthropy has a strong social component to it, including face-to-face solicitation and often solicitation in public settings among peer groups. Philanthropy also creates pools of potential lay leaders, and thereby serves as a mechanism for recruiting volunteers who make it possible for many organizations to function. And philanthropy also has an impact on Jewish political power: “The ability of the organized Jewish community to raise millions of dollars annually cannot help but make a profound impression on political and elected officials. For policy makers, these funds are a tangible measure of the Jewish community’s cohesion and the degree of its support for the State of Israel and other Jewish concerns.” For all of these reasons, Cohen argued, “the vitality of Jewish philanthropy is crucial . . . [for] social coherence, leadership recruitment, institutional coordination, political impact, and, most obviously, the financial security of beneficiary agencies. Questions about the future of Jewish giving, then, are in reality questions about the future of organized Jewry.”⁸

The present essay about current trends in American Jewish philanthropy is animated by a similar understanding of the importance of Jewish giving as a measure of the vitality of the wider Jewish communal enterprise.⁹ Several broad questions are examined here from a dual perspective—for what they suggest about the state of Jewish philanthropy and the condition of American Jewish life: (1) What are the major institutional structures created by American Jewry to raise, allocate, and disburse philanthropic dollars? And how have these institutions channeled Jewish philanthropy in recent years? (2) What do we know about different populations of donors? How does individual giving vary when

⁸Steven M. Cohen, “Trends in Jewish Philanthropy,” *American Jewish Year Book* (hereafter AJYB) 1980, vol. 80, p. 31.

⁹Although this essay seeks to link Jewish philanthropy to the activities of the Jewish community at large, it is not intended as a broad study of trends within the organized Jewish community. I have addressed that theme in my essay “Jewish Organizational Life in the United States Since 1945,” AJYB 1995, vol. 95, pp. 3–98. The present essay serves as a complement to that study.

we examine Jews of different age groups, generations of birth, places of residence, genders, educational achievements, occupations, denominational backgrounds, and levels of Jewish education, religious engagement, and experiences? (3) How have patterns of giving changed among the wealthiest and traditionally most supportive donors? Which new vehicles do they use to contribute funds and how do these affect the broader fund-raising enterprise? These and other questions will be addressed comparatively against the backdrop of broader patterns of philanthropy¹⁰ within American society and analytically for what they suggest about the condition of Jewish communal life in the United States.

THE BUSINESS OF JEWISH PHILANTHROPY

Thirty years ago, *Fortune* magazine ran an editorial in praise of “The Miracle of Jewish Giving.” What was impressive, according to the editorial, was not only the generosity of American Jews who seemed uncommonly willing to write substantial checks for a range of causes—including nonsectarian charities, but also the vast structure created to raise money for Jewish needs: “The campaigns of the U.J.A. and other leading Jewish charities are marvels of organization,” the editorial enthused.¹¹ Marshall Sklare, American Jewry’s premier sociologist at mid-century, began his classic article in *Commentary* on “The Future of Jewish Giving” in much the same way: “Jewish philanthropy—so high is its reputation—has come to serve as a model for scholars, professional workers, and civic leaders who are concerned with the methods and problems of charitable fund-raising. . . . Jewish philanthropy . . . has provided an exemplary case for those who wish to study or improve the state of American philanthropy.” Sklare then quoted a leading communal figure within the American Catholic community, who observed:

The Jews are the most highly organized group in [the local community] of all minority groups, and they have the most intelligent leadership. . . . They’re the only group that can really raise money. They have a real program. . . . They have the Jewish Federation, a fund-raising group, they have their own

¹⁰According to some definitions, philanthropy encompasses the giving of both money and time—that is, voluntary activities. Although some attention is paid here to the relationship between giving and volunteering, this essay is conceived more narrowly as a study of Jewish financial contributions. On some of these definitional questions, see Jon Van Til, “Defining Philanthropy,” in Jon Van Til et al., *Critical Issues in American Philanthropy: Strengthening Theory and Practice* (San Francisco, 1990), pp. 33–34.

¹¹“The Miracle of Jewish Giving,” *Fortune*, Jan. 1966, p. 149.

social service agency, and. . . they have the YMHA. Theirs is a day-in and day-out program, while ours is only for one occasion.¹²

Since it is self-evident to observers outside the Jewish community that Jewish philanthropy is predicated upon a “program” of action, we begin with a discussion of the structure created by American Jews to raise and disburse philanthropic dollars.

The Jewish Philanthropic Structure

The central institution of the Jewish philanthropic enterprise is the local federation of Jewish philanthropy. Beginning with the founding of the Boston Federation of Jewish Charities in 1895, Jews have created federations of Jewish philanthropy to address the needs of their particular locality—a geographic area that first encompassed a city and later also included nearby suburbs; in cases where Jews were more scattered, federations have served Jews in contiguous counties (e.g., MetroWest, New Jersey; Lehigh Valley, Pennsylvania) or even an entire state (Rhode Island). Daniel J. Elazar, in his definitive study of the federation movement, classified the major stages through which federations have passed:

In the first stage the federations were *leagues* of individual operating agencies for joint fund raising of contributions so that every agency received more or less the same proportion of funds that it might have received through independent fund raising, but the amount was larger. In the second stage the federation structures were tightened: they became *confederations* of their operating agencies and began to assume a role in allocating funds based on some overall planning, as well as a balancing of the sources of contributions. In the third stage, they became federations with important community-planning functions entrusted to them, so that their power stems from a combination of fund raising *and* planning. Their new powers include anticipatory planning and the generation of new functions and agencies on the basis of their planning work.¹³

Thus, federations of Jewish philanthropy have evolved from central collection agencies for charities to centralized agencies responsible for communal allocations, budgeting, and planning.

Local federations have taken a number of important steps in recent

¹²Marshall Sklare, “The Future of Jewish Giving,” *Commentary*, Nov. 1962, p. 416.

¹³Daniel J. Elazar, *Community and Polity: The Organizational Dynamics of American Jewry*; rev. ed. (Philadelphia, 1995), p. 218. See more broadly, chaps. 7 and 8. The history of the federation movement is presented in Harry L. Lurie, *A Heritage Affirmed: The Jewish Federation Movement in America* (Philadelphia, 1961) and Philip Bernstein, *To Dwell in Unity: The Jewish Federation Movement in America Since 1960* (Philadelphia, 1983). A concise account appears in Donald Feldstein, “The Jewish Federations: The First Hundred Years,” *Journal of Jewish Communal Service* 72, nos. 1–2, Fall/Winter 1995/1996, pp. 5–11.

decades to expand their influence well beyond their own communities. First, federations merged their campaigns with the United Jewish Appeal, the major body collecting funds to assist Jews abroad. (In many communities, federations even list themselves as the United Jewish Federation.) Such mergers have increased the size of the total campaign proceeds and have propelled local federations to greater involvement with international Jewish needs. Second, through the efforts of the Council of Jewish Federations (CJF), the umbrella agency of all North American federations, local federations became involved in national Jewish concerns beyond the immediate confines of their communities: initially through the Large City Budgeting Council and more recently through the National Funding Councils, many local federations allocate some of their resources to support institutions and initiatives of national scope. The former include national agencies outside the federation structure that work in the field of Jewish community relations (such as the American Jewish Committee, American Jewish Congress, and the Anti-Defamation League), and the latter include programs to address the needs of Jewish students on college campuses or the elderly. Third, through their own initiatives and the efforts of the CJF, federations have gained increased access to government funding programs, which generate billions of dollars to support agencies under the federation umbrella. These three developments have vastly increased the power and influence of the federations and have served as important resources in the process of centralizing ever more Jewish philanthropic and organizational activities under the federation umbrella.¹⁴

Yet even as the federations grow in power, countervailing trends have increased the scope and activities of institutions that operate outside of the UJA-Federation structure. Such institutions either are recipients of philanthropic funding in their own right or in some cases are fundraising organizations that disburse philanthropy according to formulas of their own devising—that is, with little attention paid to the plans and priorities of the federation world. Religious institutions, for example, have mainly operated well beyond the reach of federations. In recent years, the gap between the synagogue and federation worlds has narrowed, but the preponderance of funding for synagogues, Jewish religious schools, denominational agencies of the various Jewish religious move-

¹⁴I have discussed these developments in some detail in my article "Jewish Organizational Life," pp. 22–25, 67–70. The creation of the National Funding Council has introduced a more complex structure for allocations to national agencies. Seven such organizations are funded through pooled money from participating federations, and others are evaluated so that individual federations can allocate resources to them as they see fit.

ments, and other religious institutions is raised quite independently of UJA-Federation campaigns. The same is true of the range of organizations engaged on the national (but not the local) level in the field of Jewish community relations work. The major defense organizations raise their own funds and receive only a scant amount of their budgets from the federations.

A number of major cultural institutions operate the same way: museums such as the Jewish Museum in New York and the Skirball Cultural Center and Museum in Los Angeles run their own campaigns; and perhaps the two largest fund-raising efforts ever undertaken by American Jewish institutions—the United States Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C. and the Wiesenthal Center with its Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles—operate outside of the UJA-Federation structure. Perhaps most important in terms of the sheer amounts of money raised, a host of “friends of” organizations raise vast sums of money for Jewish institutions abroad—principally Israeli hospitals, universities, yeshivas, and even political parties, with smaller sums raised to aid Jewish communities in other lands, especially in formerly communist lands. Finally, new pooled funds have been created to collect and disburse money to particular types of institutions in the United States or abroad that appeal to the ideology of American Jews dissatisfied with the allocations of the UJA-Federation. Any consideration of Jewish philanthropy must take these institutions into account.¹⁵

How Money Is Raised

Carl Bakal begins his discussion of “Why Jewish Fund Raising Is So Successful” with an anecdote illustrating “the guileful, strong-arm techniques of fund raising, some of them unique to Jewish giving.” On the way to a Jewish fund-raising dinner, a father briefs his son on what to expect:

“Now at some point during the dinner, they’re going to call your name. . . . Stand up and say you’ll give one hundred dollars.”

“What do you mean, they call my name?” said the son.

“They call everybody’s name.”

“I’ll give one hundred dollars anyway, but I don’t want them to call my name.”

“You have to let them call your name.”

¹⁵All of these types of institutions are discussed with greater specificity below. The best catalogue of such organizations, classified by areas of activity, appears annually in the directory of National Jewish Organizations published in the AJYB.

“Why?”

“Because if you say you’ll give a hundred dollars, the Katz boy will also give a hundred dollars.”¹⁶

“Card-calling,” the practice illustrated by this story, has long been regarded as the key to understanding “the miracle of Jewish giving.”

Bakal traced the origin of “card-calling” to Joseph Willen, a longtime executive of the New York Federation of Jewish Philanthropies. Willen had concluded that anonymous giving, ranked as the highest form of *tzedakah* by Maimonides,¹⁷ the greatest rabbinic mind of the Middle Ages, was a doomed enterprise: “Anonymous giving, with few exceptions, is poor giving. Most anonymous giving is simply a reflection of a man’s desire not to give.” Instead, Willen built upon Thorsten Veblen’s theory of conspicuous consumption. Willen claimed in his later years that it had struck him as strange “that for a person to show off his wealth by conspicuous spending . . . was considered good form, whereas conspicuous giving was considered bad form. . . . Why couldn’t more modest givers also give conspicuously, simply by announcing their gifts?” Willen enlisted Felix Warburg, a partner at the Kuhn, Loeb investment bank and the son-in-law of the fabled Jacob Schiff, to participate in a card-calling dinner early in the 1930s. “If you do it,” he told Warburg, “it has social status.” Warburg participated, and for decades Jewish fund-raising, especially for UJA and federation campaigns, revolved around “card-calling events.”¹⁸

The system proved a great success in spurring givers to ever larger pledges. Commenting on the technique pioneered by Jewish fund-raisers, *Fortune* magazine observed, “After the formal speeches by visiting dignitaries, the chairman starts calling the roll. Each guest rises as his name is called, and the chairman coolly asks, ‘All right, Jack, what will *you* give?’ Or perhaps, ‘Well now, Morris, you gave \$25,000 five years ago, what will you give *this* time?’”¹⁹ Describing her first UJA dinner in Miami around the time of Israel’s founding in 1948, the hard-nosed Golda Meir recalled how downcast and pessimistic she was before her appeal: “I remember coming down to the [hotel] patio, which was so beautiful, and

¹⁶Carl Bakal, *Charity U.S.A.: An Investigation into the Hidden World of the Multi-billion Dollar Charity Industry* (New York, 1979), p. 397.

¹⁷For a fascinating analysis of rabbinic responsa literature written by Orthodox rabbis in 19th-century Germany who grappled with the tension between modern fund-raising techniques that employ disclosure as a means to solicit more generous giving and the traditional rabbinic preference for anonymous giving, see David Ellenson, “Tzedakah and Fundraising: A Nineteenth-Century Response,” *Judaism*, Fall 1996, pp. 490–96.

¹⁸Bakal, p. 398.

¹⁹“The Miracle of Jewish Giving,” p. 149.

thinking that this I couldn't take. . . . I was sure they couldn't care less. I didn't eat a thing. I drank coffee and smoked my cigarettes with tears in my eyes. I thought 'How can I, in this beautiful atmosphere, speak about what's happening at home?' . . . I was sure that when I got up to talk, they would all walk out."²⁰ In fact, no one walked out and the dinner netted a record sum. Fund-raisers for Jewish domestic and international needs and their counterparts in Israel quickly perfected card-calling dinners and relied upon them to raise ever greater sums.

Card-calling long remained a standard procedure in fund-raising campaigns, despite its alienating effect on some givers. Lay leaders active in campaigns readily admitted decades ago already that the technique pressured people to give. "It sounds kind of brutal, doesn't it?" commented a noted Jewish businessman in the *Fortune* article. "But actually, it's a lot of fun, and what's more—it works."²¹ Surveys of Jewish givers confirmed that asking people to announce their contribution publicly had the effect of shaming half the people polled and encouraging a third of respondents to give more in order to get favorable publicity.²² The scales have been tipping in favor of those who find the practice alienating: whereas a few decades ago, leading philanthropists could admit that card-calling "is awful, but it's the most effective way of raising money,"²³ today it is regarded as doing perhaps more harm than good.²⁴

A second innovation of Jewish fund-raising, however, remains widely in use—the division of campaigns into business, trade, and occupational sectors, as well as into divisions for women, young leaders, and special gifts. One writer claimed that the New York federation, the country's largest, had 118 distinct fund-raising committees, each targeting a specific trade or professional group.²⁵ The system is predicated upon the as-

²⁰Quoted in Deborah Dash Moore, "Bonding Images: Miami Jews and the Campaign for Israel Bonds," in *Envisioning Israel: The Changing Ideals and Images of North American Jews*, ed. Allon Gal (Jerusalem and Detroit, 1996), pp. 259–60. Although she remembered the event as a Bonds dinner, Meir was probably confused. Israel Bonds were first sold in the United States in 1952. See Stewart Ain, "Patt: Bullish on Israel Bonds," *New York Jewish Week*, Mar. 14, 1997, p. 16.

²¹"The Miracle of Jewish Giving," p. 149.

²²Bakal, *Charity U.S.A.*, p. 403.

²³*Ibid.*, p. 403.

²⁴A variation of card-calling that is still widely employed is referred to as an "open caucus." Rather than require every attendee at an event to rise when his or her name is called, this system provides an opportunity for individuals who wish to do so voluntarily to declare their commitment and contribution to the campaign in a public setting. A report commissioned by the UJA, written by Gary Tobin, criticized some fund-raising methods as "embarrassing, strong arming, rude and ineffective," especially the practices of telling donors what to give, which Tobin characterizes as "most offensive." Winston Pickett, "A Tough Look Inward," *Baltimore Jewish Times*, May 15, 1992, p. 37.

²⁵Bakal, *Charity U.S.A.*, pp. 397–98.

sumption that contributors will give larger sums when they are linked to a peer group and solicited within that group: within such a setting it is easier to establish expectations for what constitutes a reasonable level of charitable giving and the peer pressure to elicit even larger sums.

Telephone solicitation remains perhaps the most universally employed technique for fund-raising by the campaigns of UJA-Federation. Such solicitation is done regularly, especially at the outset of each campaign year. But the most intensive solicitation is saved for one Sunday late in each campaign cycle designated as Super Sunday. Typically, a large cadre of professional leaders and lay volunteers call the homes of known Jews in the community to solicit for the UJA-Federation campaign. The approach aims to democratize fund-raising, as it engages thousands of volunteers and most employees of the federation to solicit, and it seeks to reach every Jewish household. In one community of 70,000 Jews, for example, some 800 volunteers gather at one or two sites to work the phones from 9:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M., during which time they solicit between 4,000 and 5,000 gifts totaling over one million dollars. Local congregations often cooperate by designating the previous Sabbath as a "UJA-Federation Shabbat," and rabbis deliver sermons exhorting their congregants to contribute generously to the communal campaign. Clearly, this is not the time when the big givers are solicited, but rather is a bid to adapt the telethon technique pioneered by several nonsectarian charities, a means to reach a broad swath of the local Jewish population.²⁶

The most noteworthy shift in recent years is away from pressure tactics. As a prominent lawyer active in Jewish fund-raising admitted ruefully: "Twenty years ago, when I was soliciting, I had no hesitation in saying, 'This is the tax you owe.' Today I wouldn't dream of telling someone he had to pay his tax" to the Jewish community.²⁷ The entire approach of fund-raisers is shifting to a "donor-centered development model," which requires, according to one federation development executive, a fundamental shift in the culture and vocabulary of federations. Whereas the "old" campaign model relied upon few staff members but many active lay volunteers, who solicited by working their way through a stack of

²⁶For several articles describing preparations for Super Sunday at the Bergen County, New Jersey, federation, see the issue entitled "Time Out for the Jewish Super Bowl," *North Jersey Jewish Standard*, Jan. 24, 1997, pp. 6-7, 34-35. Some campus groups are now experimenting with ways of socializing college students to participate in the communal campaign by signing up as many Jewish students as possible and promising to include their names on an advertisement listing every Jewish student on campus who gave at least one dollar to the campaign, presumably the American equivalent of the biblical "half shekel." See Gary Rosenblatt, "The Half-Shekel Campaign," *New York Jewish Week*, Jan. 24, 1997, p. 7.

²⁷Karen W. Arenson, "Donations to a Jewish Philanthropy Ebb," *New York Times*, Dec. 27, 1995, p. A10.

cards, the “new model”—known as “integrated development”—employs more staff members who “develop relationships with donors . . . [by] discussing their needs, interests, and involvement in federation activities.” Rather than relegate fund-raising to an annual solicitation by a peer, the new method encourages professional fund-raisers to foster an ongoing conversation with donors. The new method requires an intensive investment in fund-raising personnel and also expects the fund-raisers to play a more active role as partners in the process; the older method, by contrast, viewed the volunteer as the primary solicitor, and the professional sat with his or her peers rather than with donors. The new approach is based on the perception that younger donors “want to see and feel their money at work” and insist on being treated as individuals with their own needs and interests. In one community, the implementation of this method rapidly yielded increases in donations, a significant decrease in the number of campaign events, and a five-fold increase in the number of staff members involved with big givers.²⁸

The new approach to fund-raising builds upon the success of nonsectarian philanthropies, as well as Jewish causes outside of the federated structure, that cultivate potential donors. Israeli hospitals and universities, for example, strive to link donors to a particular project that holds a special meaning for them. A benefactor of Ben-Gurion University described how she and her husband visited a few institutions of higher learning in Israel that had benefited from their largesse, but were disappointed to be taken “on general tours and there was no personal guidance.” When they visited Ben-Gurion University, by contrast, they were given a personal tour and met with deans and professors. Through that personal link the family became active in the American Associates of Ben-Gurion University—and shifted virtually all their giving from the UJA-Federation to Ben-Gurion.²⁹ Little wonder that federations are scrambling to compete with the personalized approach of other philanthropies.

In order to reach the smaller contributor, Jewish philanthropies—including UJA-Federation and those outside of its system—also rely on

²⁸Marcia I. Bronstein, “An Integrated Resource Development Approach: The Philadelphia Experience,” *Journal of Jewish Communal Service* 73, no. 1, Fall 1996, pp. 32–37. The UJA has prepared a handbook for fund-raisers that provides a detailed, step-by-step discussion of the implementation of this approach; see *Donor-Centered Cultivation: A Jewish Communal Model for Financial Resource Development* (National United Jewish Appeal, New York, n.d.).

The CJF began to promote this approach in the early 1990s. See Donald Kent and Norbert Fruehauf, *Developing a Total Financial Resource Development Model for Jewish Federations* (CJF, 1993).

²⁹Stewart Ain, “Target Practice: The New Trend in Jewish Philanthropy,” *New York Jewish Week*, Dec. 27, 1996, p. 21.

mass-marketing techniques. We have noted the use of telephone solicitation; mass mailings also are in vogue. Institutions that claim to serve as a bulwark against anti-Semitism seem to enjoy the greatest success with mass mailings—most notably, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) and the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles. The fund-raising prowess of the latter has been described as follows: the Wiesenthal Center has become a “major direct mail fund-raising enterprise outflanking even the ADL in the hunt for anti-Semitic threats to Jewish security. It is (sadly) not uncommon today to see organizations jockeying for position in a contest to determine who among them is ‘toughest’ in fighting anti-Semitism that is waged in the Jewish press and barrages of direct mail appeals.”³⁰ Based on those appeals, the Wiesenthal Center built a list over a 15-year period after its founding that numbers 380,000 regular contributors.³¹

The American Philanthropic Environment

The Jewish philanthropic structure does not exist in a vacuum; indeed, it operates in the unique American philanthropic environment. No society has so enshrined voluntarism and philanthropy as high ideals, and no nation so encourages private giving as does the United States. The American taxation system embodies this approach: it allows individuals to deduct their contributions from their tax returns; it grants tax-exempt status to nonprofit institutions; and it permits the creation of a variety of vehicles for tax-exempt giving, such as private foundations, bequests, charitable trusts, etc.³²

Although it is difficult to assess how much giving in the United States is directly attributable to these tax policies, evidence about patterns of giving suggests that there is an important correlation between tax deductions and charitable giving. For example, a national survey sponsored by the Independent Sector found that the proportion of respondents who claim a charitable deduction on their tax returns declined from 30 percent in

³⁰Jonathan Woocher, “The Geo-Politics of the American Jewish Community,” *Jerusalem Letter/Viewpoints*, Jan. 15, 1992 (Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs), p. 3.

³¹The number was given by Rabbi Marvin Hier, the founding executive of the Center, and is quoted by Judith Miller in *One, By One, By One: Facing the Holocaust* (New York, 1990), pp. 237–38. On the highly successful direct-mail campaign of the U.S. Holocaust Museum, see Jennifer Moore, “Holocaust Museum’s Campaign to Remember,” *Chronicle of Philanthropy*, Mar. 3, 1993, p. 27.

³²Will Maslow recognized the importance of this system when he virtually began his study of the organized Jewish community with a discussion of tax laws. *The Structure and Functioning of the American Jewish Community* (American Jewish Congress, New York, 1974), pp. 14–15.

1989 to 27 percent in 1993; but those respondents who intended to claim the charitable deduction in 1993 gave an average of 2.6 percent of their household income, a figure that is more than three and a half times the percentage of those who did not plan to take the charitable deduction.³³

The American tax structure also encourages a second type of giving. Whereas most money contributed to the annual campaigns of philanthropic organizations derives from income, vast sums are also donated through a variety of vehicles that disburse accumulated assets. Here is a brief accounting of these complicated vehicles, which, as we shall see, play a growing role in contemporary Jewish philanthropy.³⁴

(1) *Outright Lifetime Gifts and Bequests*. The former take the form of cash, stocks, real estate, and other property and are donated as outright gifts by a living donor. This has been described as the “simplest form of endowment gift, [and] unfortunately, is also the rarest.” Bequests, by contrast, are the most commonly used means of producing unrestricted endowments because they require no immediate outlay, but are willed. Both forms of gifts reduce the size of estates and therefore also lower estate taxes; outright gifts also produce immediate income-tax benefits.

(2) *Permanent Endowment Fund Gifts*. These are funds or assets transferred to endowment funds of philanthropic agencies; they generate interest that is then distributed annually. Sometimes these funds have no restrictions placed upon them by donors, and philanthropies can use the interest income as they see fit; more often, these endowment funds are restricted by their donors to certain fields of interest—for research in a particular area, for education, for scholarships. Other endowment gifts are earmarked for interest contributions to the annual campaign, or to a designated agency, or are even more strictly restricted for use by a specific program.

(3) *Philanthropic Funds*. These are also known as *Donor-Advised Funds*.

³³The important national studies sponsored by the Independent Sector repeatedly inquired whether donors to various types of causes claimed charitable deductions. See *Giving and Volunteering in the United States*, 2 vols. (Independent Sector, Washington, D.C., 1994 and 1995), especially Virginia A. Hodgkinson and Murray S. Weitzman, *Giving and Volunteering in the United States: Findings from a National Survey* (Independent Sector, Washington, D.C., 1994), p. 5. I have not found a specific discussion of how the tax structure affects Jewish giving. The impact of new tax regulations regarding the reporting of charitable contributions is discussed in Vince Stehle, “Final Rules on Receipts for Donors,” *Chronicle of Philanthropy*, Jan. 9, 1997, p. 25.

³⁴This discussion is based primarily on two documents prepared by executives at CJF: Donald Kent, “Charitable Gift Planning: A Basic Primer for Jewish Federation Donors (CJF, Mar. 15, 1997); and Gilbert H. Jacobson, “Basic Endowment Vehicles” (CJF Endowment Development Department, Feb. 1988); as well as a handsome packet of material entitled “Helping Others as You Help Yourself,” prepared by the Planned Giving and Endowments Departments of UJA-Federation of New York, 1996.

Although these funds are held by philanthropies, donors have the right to make nonbinding recommendation about the allocation of funds from these trusts. Some of these allocations, in fact, go to other charities. Thus, philanthropic funds held by federations disburse some money from philanthropic funds to non-Jewish causes. Upon the death of the donors, and often their children, the funds become the outright property of the philanthropy. From the perspective of philanthropic organizations, these funds also provide the additional benefit of creating opportunities to intensify relationships with donors, since regular meetings must be held to provide an opportunity for donors to recommend how money should be allocated. Donors of philanthropic funds receive a range of tax benefits comparable to any outright gift to a public charity.

(4) *Supporting Foundations*. These are separately incorporated entities, the majority of whose board members must be appointed by the philanthropy under which the supporting foundation has been established. Unlike the philanthropic funds, supporting foundations continue in perpetuity and thereby serve as vehicles to include successive generations in Jewish philanthropy. They also provide a range of tax benefits unavailable to private foundations. Principal as well as interest may be distributed. Supporting funds and philanthropic funds are vehicles created by federations as a means to tap the growing trend for wealthy families to establish foundations.

(5) *Life Income Plans*. These provide for a range of possibilities. They include: charitable remainder trusts, which establish a fixed payment per year that goes to the donor's children or other designated beneficiaries, while the assets go to the charity; charitable remainder unitrusts, which offer fluctuating payments and also enable donors to make additional, unspecified additions from time to time; pooled income funds, which function as a mutual fund; and charitable gift annuities, which pay the donor a fixed amount of the income on a regular basis. All of these vehicles offer a range of tax deductions for income, estate, and other taxes. Finally, there are plans for making a gift of life insurance, zero coupon bonds, and gifts held in stock that eliminate capital gains and income taxes.

It is difficult to know exactly how much these tax benefits affect the size of gifts, but there is good evidence that as tax laws are periodically adjusted to permit the deduction of asset appreciation, and as tax rates on capital gains fluctuate, large sums of money are shifted from one vehicle to another.³⁵ At the least, U.S. tax policies dramatically assist the phil-

³⁵Thomas Kabaker, "The Shape of Gifts to Come," *Advancing Philanthropy*, Fall 1996, p. 26.

anthropic enterprise. Moreover, many donors prefer to direct their assets to charities of their choice through planned giving, rather than have the government receive more than half their assets through exorbitantly high estate taxes.

By the early 1990s, American private giving amounted to some \$125 billion donated each year to support the educational, welfare, health, cultural, and other services performed by 400,000 nonprofit organizations. The latter collectively employed 6 percent of the American labor force. (Another \$475 billion in revenues comes to these organizations from fees, government grants and contracts, and other income.) This \$125 billion was raised primarily from individuals (82.7 percent); only 4.9 percent from corporations; and 6.2 percent from foundations. The largest percentage of these funds was raised by religious institutions, which in 1991 received 54 percent of the total.³⁶

At first glance, it appears that Jewish giving departs markedly from the contributions of Protestants and Catholics. To begin with, the latter make the majority of their contributions to religious causes, and Jews seemingly do not. Moreover, the largest gifts made by Jews vary from the largest gifts made by their Christian neighbors. A study of wealthy New Yorkers conducted in the late 1980s found that nearly a third of Protestants made their largest donation to a religious congregation, while only 8 percent of Jews made their largest donation to a congregation. Forty-four percent of Catholics made their largest contribution to a precollege school affiliated with the Catholic Church. Jews, by contrast, gave 40 percent of their largest gifts to a Jewish federation or one of its agencies.³⁷ Given the seeming centrality of contributions to federated campaigns, and the claims of federations to serve as the central address of the Jewish community, we begin this report with the money raised and disbursed by federations of Jewish philanthropy.

HOW MUCH IS RAISED AND DISBURSED?

UJA-Federation Fund-Raising

The combined annual fund-raising campaigns of the United Jewish Appeal and the Jewish federations of North America grew in absolute dollars from the \$28–29 million raised between 1939 and 1942 to over \$200

³⁶Julian Wolpert, *Patterns of Generosity in America: Who's Holding the Safety Net?* (New York, 1993), p. 17.

³⁷Francie Ostrower, *Why the Wealthy Give: The Culture of Elite Philanthropy* (Princeton, 1995), pp. 52–54.

million raised in 1948, the year of Israel's founding. (See table 1.) The annual totals then remained in the \$110–\$130-million range in the 1950s and much of the 1960s, until the Six Day War of 1967 occasioned a significant upward spike totaling \$318 million, of which \$173 million consisted of contributions to an Israel Emergency Fund. Total income in the ensuing years rose gradually from \$233 million in 1968 to \$379 million in 1973. The Yom Kippur War of 1973 brought yet another surge of giving: in 1974, \$686 million was raised. Annual proceeds thereafter dropped somewhat but then began to rise: \$536 million in 1980, rising to \$705 million in 1985, and peaking at \$825 million in 1990. Moreover, several special campaigns to aid in the resettlement in Israel of Jewish refugees, primarily from the former Soviet Union, augmented these sums. In 1990, for example, \$416 million was raised for Operation Exodus in addition to the regular campaign's revenues of \$825 million. In fact, between 1990 and 1995 a total of almost \$1 billion was raised for the resettlement of Jews from the former Soviet Union, in addition to the approximately \$800 million raised by the annual campaigns in each year. Since 1993, the annual campaigns have taken in somewhat smaller sums, remaining slightly under the \$800-million mark, and the special campaigns for resettling Jews in Israel and the United States have virtually come to a halt. In part, the anguish of some observers in recent years about the state of Jewish philanthropy is due to the drop in total annual campaign and special fund revenues, which topped \$1.2 billion in 1990 and have steadily declined by some \$400 million.³⁸

Upon close inspection, moreover, even the annual campaign has been declining when measured in inflation-adjusted dollars. According to the Council of Jewish Federations, for example, the \$798 million collected in the United States and Canada³⁹ through the annual campaigns of feder-

³⁸Data for the years between 1939 and 1991 are neatly encapsulated in a table reproduced by Daniel Elazar, *Community and Polity*, p. 408. The years from 1939 to 1971 are also detailed in S. P. Goldberg, "Jewish Communal Services: Programs and Finances," *AJYB* 1972, vol. 73, pp. 237–42. Data for the most recent years are based upon reports issued by the Council of Jewish Federations: *Helping Your Community Secure Its Vision: Financial Resource Development Institute Kit* (prepared for the General Assembly of the CJF, 1995, unpaginated section). These figures include emergency fund campaigns to aid Israel, such as \$75 million raised in 1983 for Operation Peace in the Galilee; \$56 million in 1985 for Operation Moses; \$50.1 million in 1989 for Passage to Freedom; \$196 million for Project Renewal; and nearly \$1 billion for Operation Exodus. Additional funds for special overseas needs were raised as well. See J. Alan Winter, "Toward an Understanding of the Present and Future of Campaign," 1990 General Assembly presentation, in *Strategic Issues Affecting Philanthropy*, CJF 1990, p. 2. Pledges for Operation Exodus continue to be redeemed through contributions of funds.

³⁹The present essay is devoted to Jewish philanthropy in the United States. However, the data on funds raised by federations include sums contributed by Canadian Jews, since the Council of Jewish Federations, which has compiled these data, is an umbrella organization

ations in 1994 was worth less in inflation-adjusted dollars than the \$620 million raised in 1983; the \$798 million was worth perhaps as little as \$520 million in 1983 dollars.⁴⁰ In fact, the decline in relative sums is even greater when 1991 campaign sums are compared with moneys raised two decades earlier. According to the computations of Gerald Bubis, "the numbers of dollars collected in 1991 rose 240 percent over those in 1971, [but] the consumer price index (CPI), the measure of inflation, rose 340 percent."⁴¹ Put in dollar terms, "when factoring for inflation, the \$800 million of [the regular campaign of] 1991 represented only \$250 million in 1971 dollars," a year when the actual campaign took in \$336 million.⁴² This relative decline in campaign revenues accounts for much of the concern over "Jewish Dollars Drying Up."⁴³

In fact, the fund-raising of Jewish federations must be seen in broader terms. As noted by Barry Kosmin, former director of research for the CJF, federations have placed "a new emphasis on total financial resource development, a long-range strategy to finance the federation system from a variety of funding streams. The primary goal is to build up federation endowment programs and secure in perpetuity some of the wealth of the older generation of loyal givers by means of bequests."⁴⁴ In order to achieve these ends, Financial Resource Development Departments at federations now regard the annual campaign as but one component of a larger fund-raising strategy that also includes programs for endowment development, grant writing, capital campaigns, securing bequests, creating foundations under the auspices of federations, and collaborating with private foundations. This is a far more sophisticated approach to fund-raising, one that owes a good deal of its impetus to the success of university campaigns and the realization that donors want a greater say in

for all North American federations. To put the Canadian contribution to federation fund-raising into some context, readers should note that in 1994, the combined campaigns of federations in Calgary, Edmonton, Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver, and Winnipeg raised approximately \$87.5 million in Canadian dollars. This represented roughly 11 percent of the campaign dollars raised by all 189 federations in North America. For the figures on funds raised by the Canadian federations, see "Campaign Planning Services: Basic Data for Campaign Planning II" (CJF, June 1995), pp. 1-17.

⁴⁰*Helping Your Community Secure Its Vision*, unpaginated.

⁴¹Gerald B. Bubis, "Jewish Dollars Drying Up," *Moment*, Dec. 1992, p. 31.

⁴²Gerald B. Bubis, "The Impact of Changing Issues on Federations and Their Structures," *Jewish Political Studies Review* 7, nos. 3-4, Fall 1995, p. 93.

⁴³Bubis, "Jewish Dollars," p. 28ff.

⁴⁴Barry A. Kosmin, "New Directions in Contemporary Jewish Philanthropy: The Challenges of the 1990s," in "Cultures of Giving II: How Heritage, Gender, Wealth and Values Influence Philanthropy," ed. Charles H. Hamilton and Warren Ilchman, *New Directions for Philanthropic Fundraising* 8, Summer 1995, p. 48.

how their money is spent. For federations, this new approach has been a boon because it has reduced some of the pressure to raise all revenues through the annual campaign. Thanks to the new financing programs, federations have amassed staggering sums of money in a short period of time, money that generates significant interest income that can be used by federations to support new programs and supplement the annual campaigns.

The major vehicles created for such purposes have been federation endowment funds and federation-supervised foundations. The former provide for willed bequests that come to the federation after the death of the donor or outright gifts and charitable trusts transferred during the lifetime of donors. This is how the latter works: A family recently donated a gift of \$2 million to the local federation in the form of a charitable annuity trust. The gift provides interest income to the donors during their lifetimes, after which the Jewish Community Foundation of the particular federation, MetroWest New Jersey, will receive the principal and the annual campaign of the UJA will receive the interest. (The annuity trust usually takes the form of stocks or real estate, rather than cash.) The advantage of this arrangement for the donor is that the money bypasses capital gains taxes; the donor may even take an immediate tax deduction. The federation benefits because it owns the principal and can count on the interest after the death of the donor.⁴⁵ Some of these moneys are clearly designated to serve particular purposes, whereas others are unrestricted.

In addition, as noted above, a variety of new instruments have been created in recent years to enable donors to manage their own foundations under federation auspices. Approximately 7,500 families have established such funds. Some of these are called "support foundations" and others "philanthropic donor-advised funds." Both are nonprofit funds managed under the auspices of federations, but some are donor-advised—that is, the first two generations of the donor's family may advise the federation how it would like the interest of its assets disbursed; after the second generation dies, the funds go into the federation's permanent endowment funds, where federation boards determine how the money will be spent. In 1991 the federation movement began to promote the "Perpetual Annual Endowment" (PACE) in order to solicit endowments "for the perpetuation of annual campaign gifts from loyal donors." Some federations now receive more than 20 percent of their annual campaign revenue from the proceeds of philanthropic funds and supporting foundations; the na-

⁴⁵Abbie Klebanoff, "Largest Lifetime Gift: Rosses Establish Charitable Trust," *MetroWest Jewish News*, Dec. 19, 1996, p. 10.

tional average is 10 percent. The gift, one federation executive remarked, demonstrates how people can continue to give to the annual campaign "when they are no longer with us."⁴⁶ Moreover, donor-advised funds and supporting foundations serve to tie at least one more generation to Jewish philanthropy by encouraging the children of donors to recommend how funds should be spent. It is a tie that federations try to build upon in order to reach the heirs of prominent givers; and for the donors, it offers a means to involve their children and grandchildren in the Jewish community, a generational continuity that is rapidly being lost.⁴⁷

Any assessment of how well federations have done in recent years as fund-raising operations must consider these new philanthropic vehicles in addition to funds raised through the annual campaign, particularly as these funds have grown at a stunning pace in recent years and are aggressively pursued by federation fund-raisers. The \$2-million charitable trust, for example, donated in MetroWest New Jersey, enabled that federation to exceed the \$60-million mark in just three years on its way to its goal of raising \$100 million over a seven-year period for its endowment fund.⁴⁸ Other federations have experienced equal, if not more impressive, growth in their foundation and endowment funds: In Baltimore, endowment funds shot up from \$93.4 million in 1985 to \$262.2 million in 1993. In Atlanta these funds went from \$4.3 million in 1985 to \$32.1 million in 1993. And in Washington, D.C., they rose from \$9 million in 1985 to \$41.4 million in 1993. By contrast, in other well-to-do communities, the endowment funds have remained quite small: in Palm Beach they grew from \$4.9 million to \$11.7 million between 1985 and 1993 and in South Broward from \$3.5 million to \$12 million in the same period. The growth of these funds, in short, is dependent not only on the wealth of the Jewish population, but also on other factors that affect Jewish giving (which will be discussed below).⁴⁹

Leaving aside these variations from one community to the next, the overall growth of assets controlled by federations outside the campaign structure is quite impressive. In 1975, the cumulative assets of federation endowments and foundations throughout North America amounted to less than a quarter of a billion dollars. By 1981, the figure had risen to

⁴⁶Kosmin, "New Directions in Contemporary Jewish Philanthropy," p. 48.

⁴⁷Deborah Kaplan Polivy, "All Signs Point to Endowment," *Journal of Jewish Communal Service* 69, nos. 2-3, Winter/Spring 1993, p. 65.

⁴⁸Klebanoff, "Largest Lifetime Gift," p. 10.

⁴⁹*Something New Under the Sun: Building a Regional Jewish Community in Southeast Florida. Southeast Florida Strategic Planning Committee* (Ukeles Associates Inc., Feb. 1996), exhibit 13: Endowment Trends: South Florida Federations and Others, p. 34.

\$600 million and a decade later it nearly reached \$2.7 billion. Permanent endowment assets tripled to \$1 billion during the same period. By 1995–96, the combined assets of endowments and support foundations under federation control nearly reached \$4 billion. And their growth showed no signs of abating: dollar contributions to participatory funds and support foundations grew almost continually with each passing year during the 1980s and 1990s, adding between \$350 and \$450 million annually in the 1990s to the funds raised by federations in their annual campaign. (See Fig. 1.) Thus, in 1993 the annual campaign took in \$793 million, the special fund to resettle immigrants in Israel received an additional \$78 million, and the other types of funds brought in still an additional \$450 million.⁵⁰ In 1995, annual campaign giving dipped to \$789 million, and the special campaign took in only another \$20 million; but the participatory funds under federation control took in \$578 million and permanent endowments another \$179 million for a total contribution of \$1.6 billion. Thus, the overall sums donated to federation campaigns, endowments, and foundations by donors amounted to over \$8 billion in the six years from 1990 through 1995.⁵¹

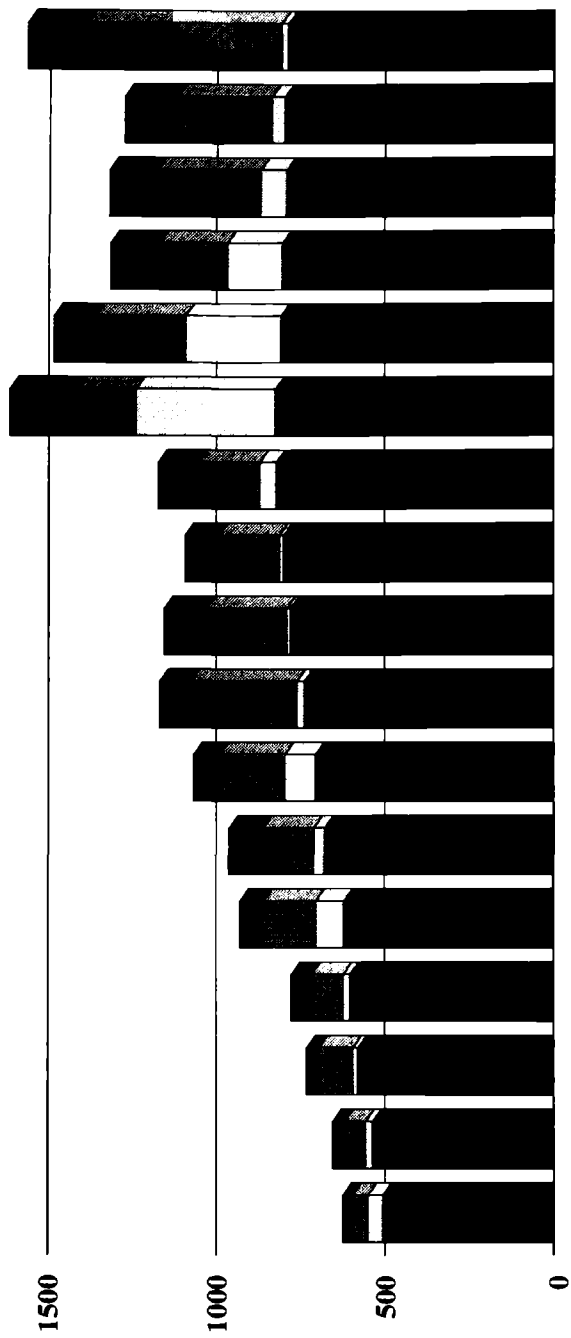
The swelling assets in federation foundation and endowment funds generate interest income that contributes ever larger sums of revenues for federations. But there is still much confusion about whether these sums should simply be added to the revenues of the regular campaign or whether they should serve special purposes. In actuality they go to a variety of causes. This is how Gary A. Tobin has described the range of approaches—and confusion—in the way these funds are utilized by local federations:

The endowment movement has produced a reservoir of funds that may or may not be part of the allocations system. In some federations, the allocations from both the annual campaign and endowments are well coordinated. Some endowments make block grants to the allocations committee. In other federations, the growth of endowment funds has allowed the creation of a parallel universe within the federation system that may or may not intersect effectively. In some federations, the endowment system is almost out of the control of the consensus-oriented model [of federation planning and allocations]. Agencies may be forced to make dual allocation requests through the annual campaign funds to the endowment fund. In some communities,

⁵⁰Kosmin, “New Directions in Contemporary Jewish Philanthropy,” pp. 50–51. Data for the most recent period come from the kit prepared by the CJF Financial Resource Development Department for the 1995 General Assembly, unpaginated.

⁵¹The 1995 figures are taken from data compiled for the “1997 Joint Campaign, Endowment, Marketing, and Planning Professionals Institute” prepared by the Resource Development Department of the CJF.

FIGURE 1. TOTAL FEDERATION CONTRIBUTIONS BY TYPE OF GIVING, 1979-1995 (IN MILLION \$)



	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Endowments	27	35	36	60	69	101	77	92	125	100	121	197	123	146	144	159	179
Foundations	47	62	101	94	156	150	193	316	239	181	180	178	269	202	306	279	578
Special	45	22	16	20	84	33	92	23	11	12	50	416	284	164	78	40	20
Annual	506	536	579	603	620	678	705	738	780	800	822	825	808	804	793	798	789
Total	626	655	732	777	930	961	1,067	1,170	1,155	1,093	1,172	1,616	1,485	1,316	1,321	1,276	1,566

Note: Endowments = permanent endowment funds. Foundations = donor-advised funds and supporting foundations. Figures may not add to totals due to rounding.

agencies cannot make requests of the endowment fund without first clearing them through the planning and allocations process. And in other federations, agencies may go directly to the endowment fund.⁵²

In 1995–96, endowment and foundation grants exceeded \$380 million, and were divided as follows: \$121 million went directly to the annual federation campaign allocation process; \$120 million was used for other local Jewish needs; \$20 million went for national Jewish needs; \$23 million went to overseas Jewish programs; and \$98 million went to non-Jewish causes.⁵³

An accurate accounting of revenues obtained by Jewish federations must include two additional funding sources that are not based on Jewish philanthropy per se but play a role in sustaining federation agencies. One consists of remittances from the United Way. Although data are unavailable on United Way allocations in every community, a report compiled by the Council of Jewish Federations in 1995 contains data on 55 federations, including all of the very largest ones. These federations reported receiving slightly more than \$45 million in 1990–91. By 1994–95, that figure plummeted by 21 percent to \$35.6 million. The largest losses were sustained by the federations in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C., which lost 54 percent, 44 percent, and 40 percent, respectively. Although these cuts came at a time of a 1-percent decline in United Way campaigns, Jewish federations clearly lost a disproportionate share of their United Way allocations.⁵⁴ The trend toward designated giving is primarily responsible for these considerable cuts in allocations. Big givers to the United Way are channeling their money to charities of their choice. Moreover, United Way has been under great pressure to reprioritize its allocations, and Jewish agencies have been downgraded in importance—perhaps because they are supported by Jewish federations.

The second external source of revenues for federation agencies is government funding—and the amounts of that funding dwarf philanthropic giving. At a time of impending federal budget cuts in the United States, the Council of Jewish Federations undertook an analysis of “Government Funding for Human Services in the Jewish Community” in 1995. Based on responses from 45 U.S. federations—including all of the 17 largest federations, almost two-thirds of the large intermediate federa-

⁵²Gary A. Tobin, “Planning, Allocations, and Financial Resource Development in the Federation System,” *Journal of Jewish Communal Service* 72, nos. 1–2, Fall/Winter 1995/1996, p. 15. See also Polivy, “All Signs Point to Endowment,” p. 66.

⁵³“1997 Joint Campaign, Endowment, Marketing, and Planning Professionals Institute” (Resource Development Department, CJF).

⁵⁴*Status Report of the United Way and Jewish Federation Relationship* (Planning and Resource Development Department, CJF, Sept. 1995), pp 3–6.

tions, one-third of the intermediate, and one-fifth of the small federations—the report concluded that total government funding for these 45 federations (out of 189) amounted to over \$3.6 billion. The New York UJA-Federation accounted for almost \$2.5 billion of this sum, which skews the analysis of how dependent most Jewish federations and their agencies are on government funding.⁵⁵ The preponderant amount of these funds came from Medicaid and Medicare payments to health institutions; Jewish hospitals were the major recipients, receiving \$2.58 billion. Jewish nursing homes received another \$550 million.⁵⁶

Viewed differently, Jewish hospitals under federation auspices receive 55 percent of their budgets from government funding. Additional government funding in these communities went to Jewish Family Service agencies—\$134 million (61 percent of their budgets); Jewish Vocational Services—\$135 million (77 percent of their budgets); and Jewish Community Centers—\$13 million (5 percent of their budgets).⁵⁷ The significance of government funding for federations is perhaps most dramatic when we note the sums received by agencies of particular communities, which range from almost \$2.5 billion in New York to \$266 million for some large federations outside of New York; in the smallest cities, the figures range from \$50,000 to \$11,000.⁵⁸ Thus, the preponderant amount of funds supporting human-services agencies under federation auspices in the United States derive from the government, not Jewish philanthropy.

The Religious Sector

By virtue of their control over these vast sums of government money, federations are the largest nonprofit sector of the Jewish community; however, in terms of Jewish philanthropy alone, the federation world is actually the second largest recipient of annual Jewish giving. The largest recipient is the religious sector. Since this reality of Jewish philanthropy is rarely—if ever—acknowledged, some explanation is in order.

The combined annual budgets of synagogues, Jewish denominational

⁵⁵*Government Funding for Human Services in the Jewish Community: Results of the CJF Study: Implications for Advocacy and Planning* (Council of Jewish Federations, Oct. 1995), pp. 3–6. These figures include only dollars for human services—not government funds for refugee settlement or other causes.

⁵⁶The report only included 28 out of 85 nursing homes under Jewish auspices; many of these homes receive virtually no support from federations, but are financed largely through government sources.

⁵⁷*Government Funding*, p. 6. Funding for these agencies came from government programs for the aged, dependent children, etc.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, p. 12.

institutions, and Jewish day schools easily exceed \$2 billion annually—and perhaps are closer to \$2.5 billion. In other words, they take in between \$750 million to \$1 billion more than comes to federations from Jewish sources annually. The religious sector has not received due credit for this feat of fund-raising because it is fragmented, does not compile—let alone publicize—comprehensive information about its revenues, and because much of its funding comes from fees rather than donations.

To begin with the latter point, Jewish religious institutions charge membership dues, fees for seats, and tuition; by contrast, churches do not have formal dues structures and therefore giving to Christian institutions is widely regarded as philanthropic. A recent study of “personal giving in American churches” classifies Protestant congregations in three categories: *tithing churches*, which “see their financial support as coming mainly from members who tithe”; *pledging churches*, or *stewardship churches*, which “favor tithing, but believe it is unrealistic to expect most members to tithe. . . . [They, instead,] strive to have all members pledge, and they ask members to think in terms of a percentage of household income when considering how much to pledge”; and *offering churches*, whose “pastors usually wish that people would tithe or pledge, but they are not forceful in talking about it, and the congregation has no overall sense that tithing and pledging are needed to be in good standing with God and the congregation. . . . Efforts to increase giving tend to stress the quality of the program, the costs of maintaining the building and property, the future vision of the parish leadership, and special projects. In effect, the program to encourage giving is not much different from those of secular organizations who stress their valuable work, their service to the community, and their future vision.”

In short, as the authors of this study note, “the concepts of an annual membership fee and annual dues are rejected by Protestants and Catholics”—even as they form the primary source of financial support for virtually all synagogues.⁵⁹ Presumably, then, all money given to churches is considered as philanthropic, even though the most influential survey of giving and volunteering in America cautions respondents not to count fees for services as part of their charitable giving. But it is doubtful that this prevents most respondents from considering every dollar they have given to a religious organization as charity—even if formal or informal pressures are exerted by the congregation or religious school

⁵⁹Dean R. Hoge, Charles Zech, Patrick McNamara, Michael J. Donahue, *Money Matters: Personal Giving in American Churches* (Louisville, 1996), pp. 98-99; 238, n. 7. All the Catholic parishes included in this study fell into the latter category—i.e., they are “offering churches.”

to pay for services.⁶⁰ Synagogue membership fees and dues should, therefore, also be considered a component of Jewish philanthropy.

The more important reason why giving to Jewish religious institutions is unacknowledged is because no one systematically tracks such giving. The only Jewish religious denomination for which data are available on synagogue budgets is the Conservative movement. In 1993, the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism surveyed its affiliates and asked about the size of their congregational budgets. The mean annual budget for small congregations (under 200 families) was \$120,000, which rose to between \$430,000 and \$750,000 for medium-size (201–599 members) to large congregations (600–799 members), and finally, between \$1.5 million and \$2.2 million for the largest congregations, consisting of 800 and more memberships. When these figures are multiplied by the actual number of congregations in each size category, the total budget of United Synagogue congregations comes to *approximately* \$570 million annually.⁶¹ When we add to this figure the budgets of the denominational institutions of the Conservative movement—its seminaries, congregational and rabbinic organizations, and auxiliaries for men's clubs and women's sisterhoods, let alone its camping movement, the annual budget of this single movement easily reaches \$600 million.

Unfortunately, comparable data are unavailable for the other religious movements of American Judaism. But when we consider that slightly fewer than half (47 percent) of all American Jews who affiliate with a synagogue in the United States are members of Conservative synagogues, we can safely project that the total budgets of the other half of the religious spectrum of Jewish religious institutions are collectively at least another \$600 million.⁶² Although the figures can only be approximated, the an-

⁶⁰The questionnaire employed by the Independent Sector reads as follows: "Listed on this card are examples of the many different fields in which people and families contribute money or other property for charitable purposes. I mean making a voluntary contribution and not with the intention of making a profit or obtaining goods and/or services for yourself." *Giving and Volunteering in the United States: Findings from a National Survey*, 1994, p. 125. Recent rulings by the Internal Revenue Service classify services provided by churches and synagogues as "intangible religious benefits," and therefore taxpayers may deduct their membership fees and synagogue dues.

⁶¹Maurice Potosky and Martin S. Kunoff, "The United Synagogue Databank Survey: An Initial Report," *United Synagogue Review* 47, no. 2, Spring 1995, p. 21. Information on the size breakdown of United Synagogue congregations is based on Jack Wertheimer, ed., *Conservative Synagogues and Their Members: Highlights of the National Survey of 1995–1996* (New York, 1996), p. 43.

⁶²Efforts to obtain data on the budgets of Reform, Reconstructionist, and Orthodox congregations failed for a variety of reasons. But there is no reason to assume that Conservative institutions are more lavishly funded than any others. Moreover, institutions of higher Jewish learning in the Orthodox community, such as advanced yeshivahs, are in some cases

nual budgets of synagogues, denominational organizations, and other religious institutions top \$1 billion annually and in all likelihood exceed \$1.2 billion—that is, a sum only slightly lower than all annual Jewish philanthropic giving to federations.

This figure, however, does not include the budgets of Jewish day schools, which overwhelmingly are under religious auspices. According to researchers at the Jewish Education Service of North America, a national service agency for Jewish education sponsored by the federations, 181,000 Jewish students were enrolled in 630 Jewish day schools in 1994. Approximately 500 of these schools are Orthodox, 65 are Conservative, 50 are trans-ideological, mainly community-wide schools, and 15 are Reform day schools. The authors estimate that “at an average pupil cost of more than \$5,300, the annual cost for day-school operations (excluding the bulk of capital costs) amounts to about a billion dollars annually, nationwide.” They also calculate that federation allocations to day schools cover on average about 12.5 percent of day-school budgets. In other words, the revenue of day schools not covered by federations comes to some \$875 million annually.⁶³

Taken together, then, the Jewish religious sector has revenues in excess of \$2 billion a year, virtually all of which comes from Jewish sources. This makes the religious sector the largest nonprofit sector funded by Jews. To be sure, some of this sector is only partially philanthropic in nature. Tax laws treat tuition for day schools as nonphilanthropic because it pays for a service—private school instruction. But day schools also raise money from donors in order to provide scholarships and to construct and maintain buildings. These efforts rely upon philanthropy. Synagogue membership dues are also treated as charitable contributions. In short, the religious sector takes in huge amounts of Jewish giving. Moreover, this sector also affects others, because, as we will see, families paying for synagogue membership and day-school tuition are hard-pressed to contribute to other sectors of the Jewish community.

larger or offer more comprehensive programs than those of the Conservative movement. Yeshiva University, after all, offers the full range of liberal arts courses in addition to Judaica, and higher-level yeshivahs such as Ner Israel in Baltimore and the Tels Yeshiva in Cleveland are multi-million-dollar operations.

⁶³David Shluker and Leora W. Isaacs, *Federation Allocations to Jewish Day Schools: Models, Principles and Funding Levels* (JESNA, New York, May 1994), pp. 2-3; and David Shluker, “The Federation and Jewish Education,” *Journal of Jewish Communal Service* 72, nos. 1-2, Fall/Winter 1995/96, p. 85.

Giving to Domestic Causes Outside of the Federation Orbit

The revenues of other domestic Jewish organizations outside of the federation network and the religious sector pale by comparison, but they are nonetheless significant and sometimes the objects of controversy about wastefulness. Perhaps no sector is more vilified in this regard than what is known as "the community relations field," a network of national organizations and local agencies that mediates between American Jews and their neighbors.⁶⁴ Local agencies are funded by federations, and the umbrella organization of the Jewish community relations field, the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council (recently renamed the Jewish Council for Public Affairs), is largely funded by the federation world as well. But the national organizations are primarily dependent upon their own sources of revenue. In 1995, the combined budgets of these organizations did not exceed \$80 million. The budget of the Anti-Defamation League was close to \$37 million, followed by that of the American Jewish Committee at nearly \$22 million. Other organizations in this category are the Simon Wiesenthal Center (approximately \$12 million), the American Jewish Congress (\$5.5 million), and the far smaller Jewish Labor Committee, Jewish War Veterans, and Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism.⁶⁵

Still another sphere of domestic communal activity heavily dependent on philanthropic giving deals with cultural and educational concerns.⁶⁶ These include museums, such as the Jewish Museum in New York (which had a budget of \$12.2 million in 1994); specialized archives and libraries, such as the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, which documents the experience of East European Jews who settled in many lands (\$3.2 million in 1995), and the American Jewish Historical Society (with a budget of \$700,000 in 1995); and funds such as the National Foundation for Jewish Culture, which fosters cultural programs, traveling performers and exhibits, and the like (approximately \$1.8 million in 1995). A bit more difficult to classify are institutions of higher learning under Jewish auspices.

⁶⁴In his keynote address to the 1994 General Assembly of the Council of Jewish Federations, Edgar Bronfman proposed the merging or dismantling of the ADL, AJCommittee, and AJCongress, a notion rejected out of hand by Abraham Foxman of the ADL, who observed that these organizations raise funds independently and are not indebted to the federation world or any other central agency. Larry Yudelson, "A Community Trying to Save Itself," *Long Island Jewish World*, Nov. 25–Dec. 1, 1994, p. 17.

⁶⁵These data are compiled from the annual reports of the organizations mentioned. The Wiesenthal figure dates from 1992. For the budgets of these organizations in the early 1990s, see J. J. Goldberg, "Who Speaks for the Jews?" *Jerusalem Report*, July 1, 1993, pp. 29–30.

⁶⁶The spheres of Jewish organizational life are helpfully classified by Daniel J. Elazar in *Community and Polity*, chap. 9.

Some of these are colleges of Jewish study, such as those in Baltimore (the Baltimore Hebrew University), Boston (the Hebrew College), Philadelphia (Gratz College), and Chicago (Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies). The budgets of these centers derive in part from local federation funding, tuition and fees, and also money raised independently.

CLAL, the National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership, with a budget of \$3.3 million, serves as a resource for the education of communal leaders and receives much of its funding from grants and private donors. And then there are the universities such as Brandeis University and Yeshiva University (and also Touro College), which raise huge sums of money from donors, mainly Jews, but much of that funding goes to finance programs that have little to do with the Jewish community—i.e., medical and law schools or the range of departments found at liberal arts colleges. Still, a good deal of the \$159-million budget of Brandeis in 1995 or the budget of Yeshiva University, which exceeded \$200 million, emanates from Jewish philanthropy.⁶⁷ Finally, Hillel, the Foundation for Jewish Campus Life, which serves students on campuses, had a budget of nearly \$6.5 million, of which \$1.4 million came from the B'nai B'rith and another million from federations; the rest was either income or contributions and grants.⁶⁸ (Federations and private grants have been supporting Jewish campus organizations also outside the Hillel structure.)

Rounding out this survey of domestic giving is the relatively new phenomenon of "*tzedakah* collectives." An outgrowth of the Havurah movement of the 1970s, these collectives generally favor causes in the United States and Israel on the left of the political spectrum. Some havurot in Boston, Los Angeles, New York, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., and Northampton, Massachusetts, created such collectives in order to circumvent the large, impersonal federation campaigns and also as a means of expanding fellowship activities into the difficult domain of charitable giving, where normally private decisions about how much each person should give and how worthy recipients are chosen could be explored col-

⁶⁷All figures are taken from the annual reports of these organizations, mainly for the year 1995. Data on CLAL and the National Foundation for Jewish Culture come from reports submitted to the National Funding Councils of the CJF.

⁶⁸Data on CLAL, the National Foundation for Jewish Culture, and Hillel are taken from the "Budget Digest and Program Summaries for Ten Evaluated Agencies" (July 1996) and "Budget Digest and Program Summaries for Seven Evaluated Agencies" (March 1996), issued by the National Funding Councils of the Council of Jewish Federations. Among the domestic institutions, we may note a variety of fraternal organizations, ranging from small *landsmanshaften* (mutual aid societies established by immigrants) to the largest fraternal society, the B'nai B'rith. The budget of the latter runs to approximately \$20 million; approximately half of this is based on fund-raising and the rest derives from dues and fees. *B'nai B'rith Biennial Report, 1995-96*, pp. 30-32.

lectively. Members of the collectives strive to donate between 1 and 2 percent of their incomes to the *tzedakah* fund.⁶⁹

Other collectives have evolved into organizations that make grants to specific types of causes. US/Israel Women to Women aids women's shelters in Israel and other institutions that specifically address women's needs; the Sholem Aleichem Club in Philadelphia donates half its funds to secular Jewish causes and the rest to groups engaged in civil-liberties work and "African-American empowerment"; the Jewish Fund for Justice makes grants to low-income Jewish and non-Jewish populations in the United States with the goal of "assur[ing] that Jews do not become estranged from the daily realities of poverty that once affected us so directly"; Mazon: A Jewish Response to Hunger, founded in 1985 by Leonard Fein, distributes funds to both poor Jews and non-Jews, ranging from Prairie Fire Rural Action in Iowa to the North American Conference on Ethiopian Jewry; Yahad, based in Washington, D.C., lends money to make affordable housing available in the United States and serves as a liaison between Jewish groups and housing advocates; the Jewish Council on Urban Affairs in Chicago responds to urban poverty; Bet Tzedek offers pro bono legal counsel within the Los Angeles Jewish community; the Association of Hebrew Free Loans, based in San Antonio, assists free-loan societies in North America and Israel.

In a somewhat different category is perhaps the oldest of these funds, the Ziv Tzedakah Fund, founded in 1980 by Danny Siegel, who has devoted the past two decades to encouraging greater Jewish involvement in *tzedakah*. The Ziv fund has disbursed grants to a broad range of individuals and families with special needs, as well as individuals it designates as "mitzvah heroes," individuals who give succor to otherwise ignored or abandoned children or adults. Finally, the Shefa Fund in Philadelphia, which was established in 1988, defines its mission as providing "seed and operating funding for innovative and transformational activities that are at the leading, controversial edge of communal concerns." Generally, these funds distribute relatively small sums, ranging from \$1 million granted annually by Mazon to a total of \$2,000 made available by the Sholem Aleichem Club. The collectives are a phenomenon of Jewish philanthropy worth noting, however, because they pool resources from small givers who have a particular ideological outlook and generally make grants to non-Jewish causes in the name of Jewish donors—i.e., they in-

⁶⁹Lawrence Bush and Jeffrey Dekro, *Jews, Money and Social Responsibility: Developing a "Torah of Money" for Contemporary Life* (The Shefa Fund, Philadelphia, 1993), pp. 134-35.

tionally serve as mediators between Jews on the left and various broader American social causes.⁷⁰

International Needs

The precise amount of American Jewish philanthropy going abroad has been the subject of much speculation—based upon inconclusive evidence. The simplest way to track these funds would be at the receiving end—based on accounting by institutions that benefit from American Jewish philanthropy. Such a centralized accounting system exists nowhere. And even in Israel, where the government publishes official statistical data, including information about money flowing into and out of the Jewish state, data on contributions and investments seem to be merged.⁷¹ Matters are further complicated by American tax laws, which treat gifts made directly to foreign institutions as non-tax-deductible. Accordingly, intermediary institutions have been established as funnels for giving to institutions abroad. According to the *Chronicle of Philanthropy*, “Hundreds of organizations raise money in the United States for Israeli institutions. They range from small groups of people who support a particular yeshiva or kibbutz, for example, to large organizations that raise money for Israeli universities or cultural institutions.”⁷² The only way, then, to fully account for the sums transferred by these hundreds of organizations would be to examine the tax filings of each of the nonprofit groups, a laborious process that has thus far proved too daunting to any researcher.

⁷⁰Andrew Silow-Carroll, “Getting Personal,” *Moment*, Oct. 1994, p. 41ff. Bush and Dekro, *Jews, Money and Social Responsibility*, pp. 134–42; Marlene Provizer, “The Jewish Fund for Justice,” in Lawrence Sternberg, *Alternative Jewish Philanthropies: Creating New Opportunities for Giving Among Jews* (Policy and Planning Paper 9, Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University, July 1992), pp. 18–26. See also Ira Silverman, “The New Jewish Philanthropies,” in *Contemporary Jewish Philanthropy*, ed. Kosmin and Ritterband, pp. 205–13.

⁷¹Israeli statistical publications list data on balance of payments under several categories: “personal restitutions from Germany,” “other personal remittances,” and “institutional remittances.” The former is irrelevant to philanthropy, but the latter two categories may include philanthropic giving. In 1994, some \$2.2 billion arrived in Israel under the category of “other personal remittances” and \$1.05 billion under “institutional remittances.” Unfortunately, it is impossible to know how much of the former is investments and of the latter, fees. The figures also do not distinguish between remittances from the U.S. and other countries. See Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel 1995*, no. 46, p. 252. Even after several conversations with helpful Israeli economic representatives in the United States, it was not possible to sort out these data.

⁷²Stephen G. Greene, “Making Friends in America,” *Chronicle of Philanthropy*, June 13, 1996, p. 31.

Nevertheless, some information on philanthropy to international Jewish causes is available. First, there are the sums remitted by federation campaigns to the United Jewish Appeal, the central instrument for channeling campaign funds for international distribution. In 1994 the UJA received a total of \$369.2 million—\$359 million from campaign income and another \$10.2 million from Israel Bonds.⁷³ Campaign money is allocated by individual federations according to a predetermined split between domestic and international needs and funding for the federation apparatus. Currently, some 35–45 percent goes for domestic needs, 15–20 percent for federation expenses, and the remaining 35–40 percent for international needs. (The largest federation, that in New York, claims a 70-30 split in favor of international needs, but that occurs only after considerable funds are set aside for maintaining the federation apparatus and other programs.) In most communities, in fact, campaign allocations to the UJA have been progressively lowered in recent years: the Los Angeles federation dropped its share for international needs from 46 percent in 1989 to 37 percent in 1994; for the first time in decades, the Detroit federation lowered its share for international needs to under 50 percent in the early 1990s; and the Boston community dropped its share for international needs from 44 percent to 34 percent in the early 1990s.⁷⁴ Overall, the UJA share of *campaign dollars* declined from 50 percent to 42 percent nationally over the course of the 1980s.⁷⁵ By 1994, UJA and other overseas agencies received slightly under 40 percent of funds raised by federations in their annual campaigns.⁷⁶ Some of this decline was offset in the early 1990s by the massive special campaign for the resettlement of immigrants from the former Soviet Union, but the trend is to keep larger amounts for domestic needs—especially as concern grows in the American Jewish community about the prospects for “Jewish continuity” in the face of rising rates of intermarriage and indifference among younger Jews.

⁷³United Israel Appeal, *Annual Report 1994–1995*, pp. 22–23. Since Israeli bonds are an investment, they are not treated in this survey of Jewish philanthropy. We may note, however, that approximately \$1 billion worth of bonds are sold annually; 40 percent of this sum was invested by individuals purchasing bonds in denominations between \$500 and \$25,000; the rest was purchased by financial institutions and high-volume buyers. Stewart Ain, “Taking Stock of Israel Bonds,” *New York Jewish Week*, Apr. 8–14, 1994, p. 16.

⁷⁴Larry Yudelson, “The Future Begins at Home: Detroit Federation to Spend Less on Israel,” *Long Island Jewish World*, Mar. 18–24, 1994, p. 16. See also Douglas Feiden, “Jewish Charities Turn to Priorities at Home,” *Forward*, Mar. 25, 1994, p. 1.

⁷⁵Yudelson, “The Future Begins . . .,” p. 16.

⁷⁶“Distribution of Allocations—1994 and 1991,” data compiled by the Council of Jewish Federations, 1997. I am grateful to Norbert Fruehauf of the CJF for sharing these data with me. It should be noted that the 1994 data are based on the averaging of allocations by 70 federations (out of 189) and do not reflect remittances from endowments and philanthropic funds under federation auspices.

UJA funds are divided between a number of organizations, rather than sent directly abroad. We have noted that American tax laws necessitate the creation of such intermediary agencies. But there is also a need to divide UJA money between Israel and Jewish communities in other lands. The largest amount of UJA dollars is channeled to Israel via the United Israel Appeal (UIA), which transmits its funds to the Jewish Agency for Israel. In 1995 the UIA received 75 percent of the UJA funds available for distribution; the remaining 25 percent went to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC)—which runs some programs in Israel but mainly aids Jewish communities outside of the Jewish state, in recent years especially in formerly communist countries—and to the New York Association for New Americans (NYANA), to resettle Jews from the former Soviet Union in the United States.⁷⁷

The funds remitted to the UIA have varied from roughly half a billion dollars in the period 1948–1959, to approximately \$2.3 billion in 1970–1979, to \$3.2 billion in 1980–1989, to roughly \$2.4 billion in 1990–1994. These sums included special funds made available through Project Renewal (a program that matched American Jewish communities with counterparts in Israel for the purpose of creating more tangible bonds between the two) and special operating funds to help settle immigrants from Ethiopia, the Soviet Union, and other lands.⁷⁸ The JDC, the other major recipient of UIA funds, had revenues in 1995 totaling just about \$94.5 million, up from \$88 million the previous year. Some \$68 million came from the United Jewish Appeal and another \$10 million from contributions. It also received about \$2 million from legacies and bequests and \$12 million from investment income.⁷⁹

Some of the activities of these agencies have sparked a good deal of controversy in recent years. Even knowledgeable communal leaders are often mystified by the maze of organizations that funnel money to Israel and the political intrigue that surrounds them. One federation executive acknowledged the sorry state of affairs even as he celebrated improvement: “The veil of secrecy under which the Joint Distribution Committee had operated for so many decades and the twenty years of increasingly resonant criticism of the Jewish Agency for Israel have weakened

⁷⁷United Israel Appeal, *Seventy Years of Partnership, Annual Report, 1994–1995*, pp. 20–22.

⁷⁸*Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁷⁹The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, *1995 Annual Report*, pp. 86–91. The JDC spent about 38 percent of its money in Israel, 28 percent in the former Soviet Union, and 14.5 percent in Eastern Europe. Its largest expenditures went for social services and education—19 percent each, pp. 92–93. For a good update on JDC activities during the mid-1990s, see Alan H. Feiler, “Out of Joint,” *Baltimore Jewish Times*, May 19, 1995, p. 33.

major donor interest and support for these agencies." Both are undergoing major changes, he noted, with the former intent on establishing closer ties to local communities and donors, and the latter moving away from services that could be provided by the government of Israel, "toward becoming the Israeli gateway on the 'living bridge' between the Jews of the Diaspora and the Jews of Israel."⁸⁰ Still, both institutions have suffered much bad press in recent years.

Beyond the political and structural problems of these organizations⁸¹ lies the larger question of whether it is necessary any longer for American Jews to give money to Israel. Individual donors may wish to support a favored cause, but does the state really need philanthropy? ask some. When an Israeli cabinet minister answered this question with a resounding "no" a few years ago, his comments set off a heated debate that brought to the surface a number of complex realities—the prospects for Israeli economic self-sufficiency, especially in the wake of the Oslo accords, the declining importance of philanthropic dollars relative to the Israeli gross national product,⁸² and the declining attachment to Israel of many American Jews. These new circumstances will undoubtedly shape Jewish philanthropic giving to Israel in the future.

As for the present, one of the more intriguing questions about Jewish philanthropic giving to Israel centers on money that is transferred outside of the UJA channel. In recent decades, hundreds of "friends of" organizations have been founded to direct money to specific charitable institutions abroad, especially Israel. According to a report in the Israeli newspaper *Ha'aretz*, "Charities that support specific nonprofit institu-

⁸⁰Wayne L. Feinstein, "One Hundred Years and Still Changing: A View of the Jewish Federation from a Large City Federation Executive," *Journal of Jewish Communal Service* 72, nos. 1–2, Fall/Winter 1995/96, pp. 40–41.

⁸¹Another structural issue prompting much debate concerns the wisdom of merging the United Jewish Appeal's national operation with the Council of Jewish Federations. The on-again, off-again talks founder over fears that the UJA will suffer a serious decline in its portion of campaign dollars and will become subsumed by the CJF. The two organizations are moving toward a partnership to merge office operations. For some discussion of these issues, see Cynthia Mann, "Titanic Charity Merger Runs Aground," *Jewish Sentinel* (Manhattan), May 31–June 6, 1996, p. 14; J. J. Goldberg, "Staggering Toward Democracy," *New York Jewish Week*, June 28, 1996, p. 12; and Samuel Norich, *What Will Bind Us Now? A Report on the Institutional Ties Between Israel and American Jewry* (Center for Middle East Peace and Economic Cooperation, 1994), pp. 35–47.

⁸²Barry Kosmin has argued that a new relationship between Diaspora Jews and Israel must develop based upon a fundamental economic reality: "American Jews have sent \$1.5 billion annually to Israel over the last decade. But the gross domestic product (GDP) of Israel has soared to \$65 billion today from \$20 billion in the 1980s." "New Directions in Contemporary Jewish Philanthropy," p. 43.

tions in Israel have grown so fast in the past decade that they helped to raise \$690 million from outside the country in 1994, compared with \$180 million in 1985.⁸³ This sum, we should note, is roughly twice as large as federation campaign allocations to the UJA. Moreover, it may not include all the giving to smaller charities, such as yeshivahs, let alone contributions to Israeli political parties.⁸⁴

Technically, U.S. tax laws require tax-exempt American organizations that raise sums for foreign charities to control the funds and then allocate their revenues to foreign recipients of their choice (rather than hand them over automatically). "In practice, however, charities rarely decide to direct the money elsewhere than to the foreign group they were created to support," reports the *Chronicle of Philanthropy*.⁸⁵ To illustrate the distinction, we may cite the case of an Israeli agency, Lifeline for the Old, a Jerusalem charity designed to aid the elderly. When its American Friends organization refused to remit funds it had raised to cover the costs of a new building approved by the Israeli agency but not by the American support group, the Jerusalem organization sued to recover what it regarded as its assets. Legally, however, the assets of the "friends" organization did not belong to it. The parties eventually settled out of court, and the assets were turned over to the Jerusalem agency.⁸⁶

Some "friends of" Israeli universities and hospitals have dramatically increased their fund-raising in recent years. The American Society for Technion-Israel Institute of Technology wound up a \$250-million campaign in 1996, concluding a five-year effort. Since its founding, the Technion has raised approximately half a billion dollars, 90 percent of it from American Jews. In 1995 it ranked number 158 among all U.S. charities. The American Friends of Tel Aviv University has broadened its appeal to highlight the university as a cutting-edge institution in medical and military research. By emphasizing its role in the battle against AIDS and Alzheimer's, the "friends" organization has been able to increase giving

⁸³Quoted in Greene, "Making Friends in America," p. 29. The data cited in *Ha'aretz* were apparently supplied by the Bank of Israel.

⁸⁴A good deal of fog enshrouds the question of just how much money American Jews give to support political factions in Israel. Periodically, the subject is investigated by the Israeli press, and sometimes the matter is raised after controversial incidents. In late 1996, after Palestinian Arabs rioted when a tourist tunnel was opened alongside the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, it came to light that an American Jew had helped finance the project and was also helping the Jerusalem Reclamation Project purchase properties in the Muslim and Christian quarters of Jerusalem's Old City. Naomi Project, "Land Mines in East Jerusalem," *New York Jewish Week*, Dec. 13, 1996, p. 42.

⁸⁵Greene, "Making Friends in America," p. 1.

⁸⁶*Ibid.*, p. 10.

in the United States quite dramatically. In 1995 it raised \$12 million, 18 percent more than the previous year, and that in turn was up 20 percent from the year before.⁸⁷ These impressive sums have encouraged smaller Israeli institutions to create their own “friends of” organizations: the American Associates of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev now raises over \$13 million annually, based on a growth rate of 20 percent; Shaare Zedek Hospital in Jerusalem also has experienced growth rates of 10–20 percent annually; the Tel Aviv Foundation brought in \$16 million in 1994, a 70-percent rise in one year; and the American Friends of Rambam Hospital and American Friends of Assaf Harofeh Medical Center have also joined the fray.⁸⁸

The mother of all independent fund-raising for Israeli institutions is Hadassah, the Women’s Zionist Organization of America. Founded in 1912, Hadassah funds a network of hospitals and medical clinics in Israel. Despite fears about its ability to attract younger members, particularly as rising numbers of women enter the labor force, Hadassah remains a powerhouse of American Jewish philanthropy. In 1995 its total revenues amounted to almost \$82 million, of which over \$60 million went to projects in Israel. Hadassah’s endowment and restricted funds exceeded \$205 million in 1995.⁸⁹

Several philanthropic funds disburse money through grants to smaller Israeli institutions. One of the oldest of these is the PEF, the Israel Endowment Funds, Inc. Founded in 1922 as the Palestine Endowment Fund by Louis Brandeis and his followers, after a bitter clash with Chaim Weizmann, the organization has dispensed grants to some 2,000 Israeli organizations. In 1993, it disbursed \$27 million to over 800 institutions. The largest of these grants, \$10 million to Aviad, helps promote cooperation between Orthodox and non-Orthodox Jews in Israel; one of the smaller grants (for \$8,000) helped underwrite riding lessons for the disabled. PEF is a volunteer-run organization. It claims to be a vehicle for the support of specific causes, not an alternative to the UJA, which addresses some of the larger issues. PEF also serves as a screening agency investigating Israeli institutions. Once it certifies them as above-board, other organi-

⁸⁷Ibid., p. 31.

⁸⁸Stewart Ain, “Target Practice: The New Trend in Jewish Philanthropy,” *New York Jewish Week*, Dec. 27, 1996, pp. 20–21. For a partial sampling of “friends of” groups devoted to social, cultural, and religious institutions in Israel, see the “Israel-Related” section in the directory of National Jewish Organizations published in this volume. The listing, however, does not include the many support groups for yeshivahs and other religious institutions.

⁸⁹Hadassah, The Women’s Zionist Organization of America, *Financial Report*, May 31, 1995, pp. 3–4.

zations contribute to them—especially the “*tzedakah* collectives” that have mushroomed in recent years (see above).⁹⁰

As “the exclusive fund-raising agency of the world Zionist movement for afforestation, reclamation, and development of the land of Israel,”⁹¹ the Jewish National Fund (JNF) enjoys a unique place in the roster of organizations channeling American Jewish philanthropy to Israel. The JNF is linked formally to the Israeli government as well as to the major Zionist organizations of the United States. Accordingly, it describes its mission as being “A trustee of, and link between, the land of Israel and the Jewish people.”⁹² It raises approximately \$30 million annually, which is then allocated primarily to land reclamation projects, including afforestation, agricultural projects, and the construction of roads and dams in Israel.⁹³

A more recent addition to the scene is the New Israel Fund (NIF), another of the alternative philanthropic funds, but one that disburses money exclusively in Israel. Founded in 1980 with a budget of \$80,000 contributed by 80 donors, the NIF had 10,000 supporters and revenues of \$6.4 million a decade later.⁹⁴ By 1995 contributions reached \$10.6 million (a 15-percent increase over the previous year), and it received an additional \$1.7 million in the form of a bequest.⁹⁵ In fact, the NIF now solicits a broad range of gifts that parallel solicitation by the UJA-Federation: in addition to unrestricted support, the fund asks for designated gifts, targeted grants to particular grantees, donor-advised gift-giving, matching gifts, bequests, trusts, insurance policies, real estate, and tangible property.⁹⁶ Although its leaders take pains to portray the NIF as a complement to the UJA and have released data indicating that NIF donors also contribute to the federated campaigns,⁹⁷ the fund serves

⁹⁰On PEF, see Silow-Carroll, “Getting Personal,” pp. 41–43, and Philip Goodman, *66 Years of Benevolence: The Story of the PEF Israel Endowment Funds* (PEF, New York, 1989).

⁹¹This is how it describes itself in its listing in the *American Jewish Year Book*. See, for example, vol. 95, 1995, p. 514.

⁹²Jewish National Fund of America, *Annual Report 5755* (1995), pp. 4–5, 10.

⁹³In late 1996, the JNF became embroiled in a controversy over the low sums of funds it actually sent to Israel for these projects. An audit revealed that only 21 percent of JNF money was transferred. See “Money Questions Dog JNF,” *New York Jewish Week*, Oct. 25, 1996, p. 48.

⁹⁴*New Israel Fund—Strengthening Democracy: A Guide to the Issues, Grantees, and Programs of the New Israel Fund* (New Israel Fund, Washington, D.C., 1991), p. iii. See also David Arnow’s report in Sternberg, *Alternative Jewish Philanthropies*, pp. 5–17.

⁹⁵News release, New Israel Fund, 1996.

⁹⁶New Israel Fund, *1994 Annual Report*, p. 18.

⁹⁷*Research Report: New Israel Fund Donor Survey*, prepared by KRC Research and Consulting, Apr. 1992. The survey found that 64 percent of New Israel Fund supporters also

as an alternative for many who are disenchanted with some or all of the allocations of the UJA. The NIF forthrightly supports what it regards as “progressive causes in Israel.” Its largest grantees are SHATIL, “which provides technical assistance and organizational consultation to Israel’s non-profit sector”; the Association for Civil Rights in Israel, which monitors and litigates in support of civil and human rights in Israel; a variety of women’s rights groups; and Arab peace organizations.⁹⁸

Following the Money Trail

Taken together, Jewish philanthropic giving to domestic and international Jewish causes amounted to approximately \$4.2 to \$4.4 billion in 1995—not including United Way and government funding for agencies under Jewish auspices, which would nearly double this total, and not including other important nonprofit institutions such as Jewish community centers, whose combined budgets exceeded \$425 million in 1995.⁹⁹ The figure for Jewish philanthropy breaks down as follows: Federations took in \$1.5 billion in 1995, of which \$600 million was for foundation and endowment funds and the rest campaign or special funds. The religious sector, which includes synagogues, denominational organizations, and day schools, had revenues of over \$2 billion. Giving to Israel outside of the UJA (whose revenues have already been included in the figure for federations) amounted to some \$700 million. And then there are several hundred million dollars earmarked for cultural, religious, educational, and community relations institutions—perhaps as much as \$250–\$300 million.

Contrary to the fears of some observers, these amounts represent a steady increase in Jewish giving—even when inflation is taken into account. The 1975 *American Jewish Year Book* estimated the Jewish community’s gross national product for the fiscal year 1975 as approximately \$2.8 billion, with heavily government-funded hospitals accounting for half that sum. Thus, excluding the government funding, Jewish philanthropy stood at approximately \$1.4 billion in 1975. A decade later, according to Barry Kosmin’s analysis, that sum stood at \$1.8 billion, divided

gave to the UJA as well as to their synagogue. After these charities and their alma maters, the next favorite causes favored by significant percentages of donors were the ACLU and Amnesty International (p. 6).

⁹⁸*NIF Report: The Newsletter of the New Israel Fund*, Spring 1996, pp. 4–6.

⁹⁹On Jewish community center budgets, see David Conn, “JCC Central,” *Baltimore Jewish Times*, May 10, 1996, p. 22. Our figures for Jewish giving also exclude sums contributed by American Jews to non-Jewish causes.

as follows: \$1.28 billion donated to federation campaigns; \$200 million to Israel-based institutions through Hadassah, the JNF, and “friends” groups; several hundred million to American Jewish religious institutions, such as synagogues, yeshivahs, seminaries, and Lubavitch.¹⁰⁰ Even taking into account a rate of inflation that eroded the value of the dollar to the point where roughly \$150 was needed in 1995 to match the value of \$100 a decade earlier, levels of Jewish philanthropy in the mid-1990s remain impressive and continue to rise.

The proportionate allocation of these funds has shifted somewhat. There has been a marked shift in money from the human-services sector to Jewish education. Leaving aside the vast sums expended by families on school tuition, communal money is flowing into educational institutions. To be sure, this shift *preceded by several decades* the communal debate over “Jewish continuity.” In fact, there is little evidence of a marked increase in allocations to Jewish education since the 1990 National Jewish Population Study sparked discussions of the “continuity crisis”—with the notable exception of a few major communities, such as New York, Chicago, and Boston. Instead, the change began in the sixties and seventies: in 1957 slightly over 10 percent of federation money was earmarked for Jewish education, a figure that rose to 21.4 percent (\$16.7 million) by 1973. In 1984, total allocations for education reached \$50 million, comprising 26 percent of all local allocations. This represented a 45-percent increase for Jewish education compared to a 33-percent increase for all other local allocations.¹⁰¹ (See table 2.) As of 1994, roughly one-quarter of allocations by federations went to Jewish education.¹⁰²

By the mid-1980s, day schools were receiving half the allocations for Jewish education, which amounted to 14 percent of their total income.

¹⁰⁰Barry A. Kosmin, “The Dimensions of Contemporary Jewish Philanthropy,” in Kosmin and Ritterband, eds., *Contemporary Jewish Philanthropy in America*, pp. 19–21. The figures for 1975 and 1985 may not be comparable because the former seem to include government revenues going to Jewish hospitals and other human-services agencies. We should also note that Kosmin’s figures seriously undercounted the revenues taken in by the religious sector.

¹⁰¹Gary Schiff, “Funding by Federation and Non-Federation Sources for Jewish Education,” *Jewish Education* 54, no. 2, Summer 1986, p. 32, and David Shluker, “The Federation and Jewish Education,” *Journal of Jewish Communal Service* 72, nos. 1–2, Fall/Winter 1995/96, p. 81.

¹⁰²“Distribution of Allocations—1994 and 1991,” CJP, 1997. As noted above (note 76), these data are based on the averaging of only 70 federations. These figures also do not include special funds for Jewish education established with money from endowments or philanthropic funds.

The other major recipients of funding for education were bureaus of Jewish education; their share was almost 30 percent of the education allocations.¹⁰³ To be sure, some communities have shifted resources more heavily in favor of Jewish education: the overall percentage of local dollars spent on Jewish education by the Philadelphia federation, for example, reaches nearly 40 percent—and half of that goes to day schools; Boston, Los Angeles, MetroWest New Jersey, Miami, and Washington, D.C., each spent close to a third of their local budget on Jewish education; by contrast, the New York federation expended half that percentage (17.6 percent). The Detroit federation allocates the highest percentage of local funds to day schools—20 percent.¹⁰⁴ The shift, then, has been less to overall allocations for Jewish education than to increased support for day schools and other programs deemed vital for Jewish identity formation.

By contrast, human-services institutions receive an ever declining share of federation money. A considerable network of such agencies operates under the auspices of Jewish communities, generally as agencies of local federations of Jewish philanthropy. In sheer numbers, they amount to some 125 Jewish family-services agencies, 105 Jewish nursing homes, 130 agencies for housing the elderly, 225 Jewish community centers in 150 communities, and 26 Jewish vocational services and departments.¹⁰⁵ As discussed above, these agencies receive far more of their funding from government sources, such as Medicaid and Medicare, than from federation allocations. (See Fig. 2.) The ratio is illuminating: hospitals receive 56 percent of their funding from government sources and only 2.5 percent from federation allocations; government funding accounts for 61 percent of Jewish family-services budgets, whereas federation allocations amount to 16.6 percent of those budgets; Jewish vocational services receive 76.6 percent of their funding from government sources and only 7.5 percent from federation sources; and 76 percent of revenues for Jewish homes for the aged derive from government sources and only 4 percent from federation allocations.¹⁰⁶ Although the categories have been somewhat redefined, data from 1977 suggest some significant decreases in

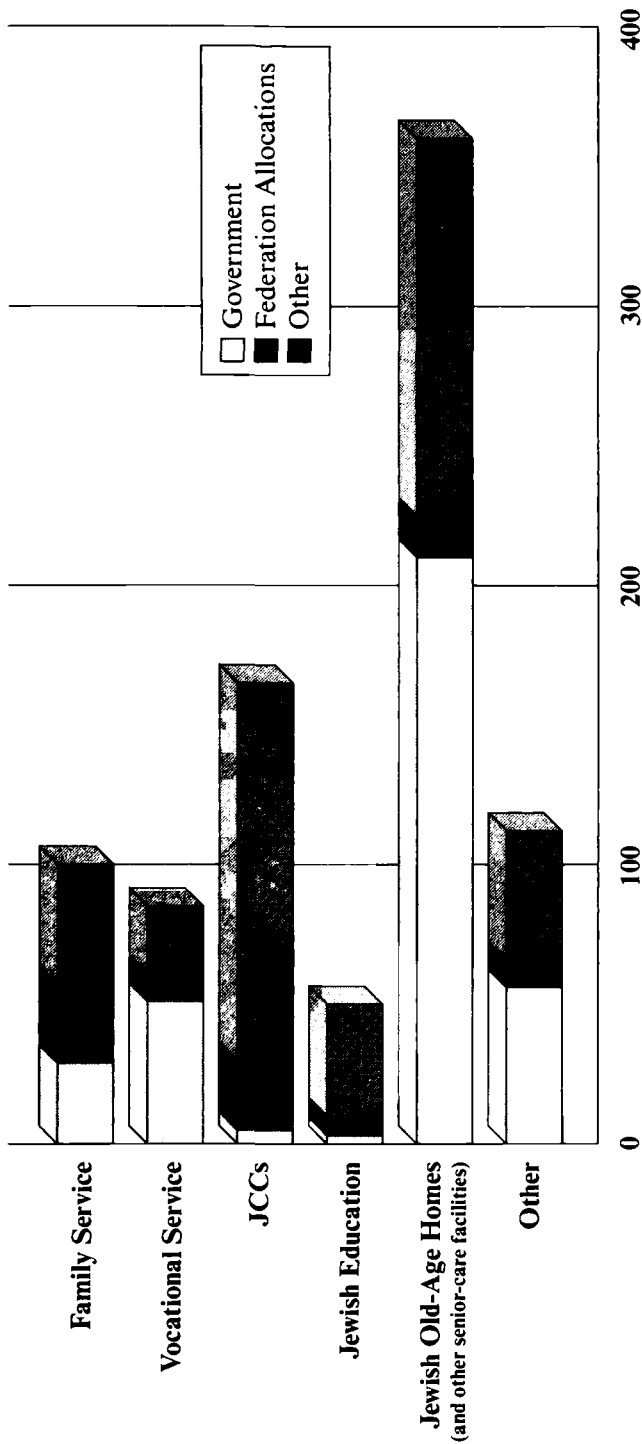
¹⁰³Communal and supplementary schools were getting under 10 percent; the share for Jewish institutions of higher learning decreased from 8.5 percent in 1977 to 5.7 percent in 1984. Schiff, "Funding by Federation . . .," p. 33.

¹⁰⁴The numbers are taken from a graph in the *Baltimore Jewish Times*, Jan. 12, 1996, p. 41, which cites its source as data released by the Council of Jewish Federations.

¹⁰⁵Joan Strauss, "Reinventing the Caring Jewish Community: Getting Started" (Community Planning Department, CJF, May 1996), p. 2.

¹⁰⁶*Government Funding for Human Services in the Jewish Community*, p. 14. As noted above, the inordinate dependence of New York agencies upon government funding skews these ratios.

FIGURE 2. JEWISH FEDERATION SYSTEM FUNDING SOURCES (IN MILLION \$)



(Preliminary results from 58 Federations, including all major cities, except NYC.)

overall federation allocations to these sectors: family and related services received 18.6 percent of their funding for all local services; care of the aged received 10.2 percent; health agencies received 6.4 percent; and employment and vocational services received 3.4 percent. It thus appears that with the exception of vocational services, most human-resources agencies now derive less of their budgetary revenues from federation allocations than two decades ago.¹⁰⁷

The same holds true for Jewish community centers (JCCs), which currently receive 5 percent of their funding from government sources and 15.9 percent from federations. Certainly, the percentage of JCC budgets covered by federation allocations varies considerably: the Baltimore federation covers 33 percent of JCC budgets, as compared to the allocations of other federations, which range from 23 percent in Cleveland to 29 percent in Chicago to 11.6 percent for the JCC of Washington, D.C., to 12 percent of the Seattle JCC budget to 3.6 percent of the budget of the 92nd Street YM-YWHA in New York.¹⁰⁸ The overall direction is clear, however: since 1960, JCCs have received declining proportions of their funds from federations and United Way moneys; in 1991 those combined sources provided 23.3 percent of JCC budgets compared to 30.8 percent in 1980, 36.2 percent in 1970, and 40.2 percent in 1960.¹⁰⁹

The community relations sphere of organized American Jewry has at best remained the same over the years, or may in fact receive a smaller share of all Jewish giving. Compared to their budgets in 1985, the revenues of national organizations such as the Jewish War Veterans, the Jewish Labor Committee, and the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council have declined even in absolute dollars, as has the income of the American Jewish Congress. When inflation is taken into account, the drop in revenues of these organizations is even steeper. The American Jewish Committee has roughly kept pace with the rate of inflation. Only the income of the ADL has grown a bit beyond that rate.¹¹⁰ The major growth in this field has come through the Holocaust museums, which play some role in current community relations work by promoting education about the consequences of bigotry and by bringing different populations of non-Jewish Americans together with Jews. Were it not for

¹⁰⁷"Budgeting Report: Federation Allocations to Local Jewish Services, 1977 and 1978" (CJF, Oct. 1979), table 1.

¹⁰⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 27–39.

¹⁰⁹Marvin Ciporen, Gary A. Tobin, and Joseph Harris, *Fundraising for Youth Programs in Jewish Community Centers* (Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University, May 1994), p. 9. However, 26 percent of the budgets of federations go to centers, camps, and related programs. See "Distribution of Allocations - 1994 and 1991," CJF, 1997.

¹¹⁰These data are based on a comparison of annual reports issued by these organizations in 1985 and 1995.

the creation of the Wiesenthal Center, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, and other such centers, the field would have contracted.¹¹¹

In conclusion, we may note significant shifts in the proportion of funding going to various spheres of the Jewish nonprofit sector, trends that account for some of the unease about the current condition of Jewish philanthropy. Four major patterns are clear: (1) Government funding accounts for approximately half of all revenues of domestic Jewish agencies; the \$3.6 billion flowing from government sources into those agencies roughly matches the sums remitted by Jewish sources to all Jewish agencies, including JCCs and day schools. This figure is somewhat less than for agencies under the auspices of other religious groups: Catholic Charities, for example, receives on average 64 percent of its cash revenues from government contracts and grants.¹¹² (2) The religious sector is absorbing an ever larger share of Jewish resources, a development that goes unacknowledged because it is so difficult to keep track of revenues in this area. Although the percentage of money given by Jews to synagogues does not nearly compare to general philanthropic giving by Americans to churches—a figure estimated as high as 63 percent¹¹³—it may account for roughly one-quarter of all Jewish giving to Jewish causes—i.e., over \$1.2 billion. An equal sum of money is flowing into day schools. Even if this amount is not considered part of the Jewish philanthropic pie, because much of it is payment of tuition fees, the fact that it accounts for a considerable portion of the household budgets of day-school families inevitably affects Jewish philanthropy. (3) The ratio of giving to annual campaigns as opposed to other federation-sponsored fund-raising vehicles is also shifting dramatically. Endowments and foundations are taking in vast sums that generate annual charitable grants almost equal to half the annual campaign totals. (4) The ratio of money flowing to Jewish causes abroad is shifting dramatically away from federated giving. More than twice as much money now goes to Israel through channels other than federations and UJA.¹¹⁴ Donors are increasingly interested in

¹¹¹Approximately 5.3 percent of federation allocations goes to community relations work, but it is channeled primarily to local community relations councils under federation auspices rather than to the independent national agencies. See "Distribution of Allocations—1994 and 1991," CJF, 1997.

¹¹²Julian Wolpert, "The Generosity of Americans: Challenges and Opportunities," paper delivered at the Federation/CJF Leadership Institute, Redondo Beach, Calif., Jan. 26, 1997, p. 6. Wolpert focuses solely on direct service agencies under federation auspices and contends that the dependence of Jewish and Catholic institutions on government funding is the same.

¹¹³Hoge et al., *Money Matters: Personal Giving in American Churches*, p. 11.

¹¹⁴There is a critical difference, however, between UJA money and other funds sent abroad: UJA funds cover operating expenses, whereas other funds are used for operating and capital expenses and endowments.

maintaining direct contact with institutions abroad and targeting their funding to specific types of causes. Moreover, when the large sums going to "friends of" groups are taken into account, giving to Israel does not seem to be declining relative to funding for domestic Jewish needs. It is debatable whether any of these patterns necessarily augurs a turn for the worse in aggregate giving to Jewish philanthropies. More worrisome are trends in giving by individual donors, a subject to which we now turn.

THE DONORS

The Jewish philanthropic enterprise is shouldered by specific populations within the larger American Jewish community. As is true with other philanthropies, a relatively small population of big givers donate most of the money that goes to Jewish causes. But even smaller gifts are not distributed randomly within the American Jewish populace. Rates of Jewish giving vary greatly from one community and region to the next and from one socioeconomic group to the other. Jews of different genders, generations, ages, and family structures contribute differently, and types of Jewish engagement also profoundly affect how much and how regularly individuals donate money to Jewish causes.

Writing in the 1960s, Marshall Sklare contended that American Jews "as a group are extraordinarily generous in their giving; . . . the percentage of Jews donating \$50 or more to individuals (chiefly relatives and friends) and to nonreligious charities was higher than that of any other group."¹¹⁵ Since then, students of philanthropy have viewed Jewish giving in more modest terms. Paul Ritterband and Richard Silberstein concluded in the late 1980s that the percentage of Jews who give to charity is roughly the same as among all Americans, a finding confirmed by the 1990 National Jewish Population Study.¹¹⁶ The more pertinent question, however, is whether Jews continue to give generously to Jewish causes.

¹¹⁵Sklare, "The Future of Jewish Giving," p. 416.

¹¹⁶Paul Ritterband and Richard Silberstein, "Generation, Age and Income Variability," in *Jewish Philanthropy in Contemporary America*, prepublication of papers delivered at a CUNY Graduate Center Conference (North American Jewish Data Bank, Information Series no. 2, 1988), p. 48. The NJPS found that approximately 85 percent of Jews over age 45 and slightly under 75 percent of those under age 45 contributed to some charity. See Ariela Keysar, *Patterns of Philanthropy: New York Versus Non-New York Jewry in 1990* (Working Papers, Center for the Study of Philanthropy, CUNY Graduate Center, 1992), table 1. Thus, Jews continue to have a slightly higher rate of giving compared to the nearly three-quarters of all Americans who claimed household contributions in 1993. See *Giving and Volunteering in the United States: Findings from a National Survey*, 1994, p. 1.

Data compiled by the Council of Jewish Federations shed light on the numbers of donors to federated campaigns. Between 1989 and 1994, that number declined by 11.7 percent. (See table 3A.) In absolute terms this represented a decline from 902,209 gifts in 1989 to 796,911 in 1994.¹¹⁷ The total annual campaign contributions in dollars was down by 2.8 percent, and the average amount of gifts in nearly every category was also down between 5.7 and 1 percent. (See tables 3B and 3C.) The saving grace was an increase of 5.4 percent in the size of the largest gifts, those in the \$100,000 and over category. Such gifts rose from an average of \$209,753 to an average of \$221,047. This meant that the average campaign contribution in North America in fact rose by 10.1 percent from an average gift of \$909 to an average gift of \$1,001.¹¹⁸ These data, however, cover only federated campaigns, which, we have seen, represent a shrinking portion of all Jewish philanthropy in the United States. When such general giving was examined by the 1990 National Jewish Population Study, 56 percent of American Jews claimed to have contributed to a Jewish cause the previous year, and 67 percent gave to non-Jewish causes.¹¹⁹

Locality and Region

The type of community in which a Jew lives is one of the more important variables in determining the likelihood of giving to a Jewish cause. Contrary to what one might expect, the size of that Jewish community is not necessarily a major factor in determining either the absolute number of Jews who contribute to Jewish causes or the sums they contribute. A survey conducted in 1991 found that 91 percent of the Jews of Louisville (Kentucky; around 8,500 Jews) claimed to have contributed to a Jewish charity, whereas only 58 percent of Jews in Orlando (Florida; around 18,500) and 69 percent of Harrisburg's (Pennsylvania) 7,000 Jews made the same claim for the same year. Seventy percent of St. Paul's (Minnesota) 9,200 Jews claimed a contribution to a Jewish charity in the

¹¹⁷"Trends in Gifts and Contributions to Federation Annual Campaigns, 1989, 1994 (All Cities—189 Federations)" (CJF Department of Planning and Resource Development, 1995). The most recent national survey of Americans also provides evidence of a shrinking donor base. A Gallup poll sponsored by the Independent Sector found that in 1995, 69 percent of individuals surveyed claimed to have made a charitable donation compared with 73 percent who said they did in 1993. This represented a loss of 3.8 million households. Susan Gray, "Charities See Bigger Gifts, Fewer Givers," *Chronicle of Philanthropy*, Oct. 17, 1996, p. 9.

¹¹⁸"Trends in Gifts and Contributions."

¹¹⁹Gary A. Tobin, Joel Streicker, and Gabriel Berger, *Jewish Federation of St. Louis Community Study*, Summary Report (Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University, 1995), p. 70.

early 1990s, as did 71 percent of Miami's 270,00 Jews. Thus, whether a community is large or small does not seem to explain rates of giving.¹²⁰

Even absolute sums of money raised do not necessarily correspond to the size of a community. True, the very largest Jewish community in the United States, that in New York, does raise the largest sums. Among communities of comparable size, however, significant variations are evident. (See table 4.) When we examine, for example, communities with between 50,000 and 70,000 Jews, we find sharp variations in dollar sums raised by the federated campaigns: the Jewish community of Atlanta numbers some 67,500 Jews; Bergen County (New Jersey) has 69,000 Jews; Cleveland, 65,000 Jews; and St. Louis, 53,000 Jews. In 1994, the Atlanta federation raised slightly over \$13 million, whereas Bergen County raised slightly more than half that sum (\$7.4 million). St. Louis with 16,000 fewer Jews outpaced Bergen County by raising \$9.8 million. And most dramatically, the federation of Cleveland, a community slightly smaller than Atlanta, raised \$24.5 million. Put differently, with four thousand fewer Jews, the Cleveland community raised more than three times as much money as did the federation of Bergen County.

Similar patterns are evident in even larger communities: the 261,000 Jews of Chicago gave some \$54 million in 1994 to the federation campaign, whereas the 254,000 Jews of Philadelphia gave less than half that sum—\$26.4 million. And in smaller communities, variations are also evident when size is taken into account. (See table 5.) In 1994, Cincinnati with 25,000 Jews raised \$6.9 million; whereas San Jose with 33,000 Jews raised only \$1.5 million; Phoenix with 48,000 Jews raised \$3.8 million, compared to Dallas, whose 38,000 Jews raised \$6.8 million.¹²¹

Per capita giving also varies from one community to the next. In some communities a few big gifts account for a very high percentage of the money raised by federations. (See table 6.) In 1994, eight individual gifts over a quarter of a million dollars accounted for almost one-third of the money raised by the Baltimore federation; in New York, 37 such gifts accounted for 17 percent of all the money raised. By contrast, some quite large and well-to-do communities could not attract gifts of such size. The well-heeled community of Los Angeles, for example, did not contribute a single gift over a quarter of a million dollars to its federated campaign in 1994; by contrast, 10 individual gifts over a quarter of a million dollars accounted for 30 percent of the money raised in San Francisco. We

¹²⁰Ibid., p. 70.

¹²¹"Table I: 1994 Campaign, Groups 1-7: Pledges and Numbers of Gifts by Gift Category" (CJF, June 1995), pp. 7-35.

may note, as well, that the smaller the community, the less likely there was a campaign gift over \$250,000 or even over \$100,000.

Still, per capita giving in many of the smaller Jewish communities is actually higher than in larger ones. Data on the 1993 campaigns illustrates this point. In the largest communities, per capita giving was highest in Cleveland at \$376 and lowest in New York (\$80 per capita) and Los Angeles (\$86 per capita). In some of the smaller communities, per capita giving was significantly higher. The 300 Jews of Waco, Texas, had a per capita giving rate of \$1,267—the highest per capita giving for any North American Jewish community. Remarkably, some of the lowest rates of per capita giving were evident in Jewish communities of some wealth: Rockland County (New York) Jews had a per capita rate of merely \$15 (this for a Jewish population of 55,000), and Orange County (California) with its 75,000 Jews had a per capita giving rate of \$24 in 1993.¹²² All of these patterns suggest that the size of a community affects patterns of Jewish philanthropy far less than a variety of other factors.

Chief among these is the “culture of giving” in particular localities. In his research on patterns of giving in American society generally, Julian Wolpert has noted the existence of significant “differences in generosity from place to place” that are not linked to donor profiles or various other cultural characteristics. For Wolpert, “place and context matter in donor behavior. Places themselves have distinctive and enduring cultures of giving, differences in levels of need and distress, patterns of taste and demand for nonprofit and public sector services, and an idiosyncratic evolution of nonprofit institutions.”¹²³ Wolpert’s analysis rejects the commonly held view that giving is primarily an expression of socioeconomic status and rational decisions. According to Wolpert, philanthropy

is affected as well by emotional, cognitive, and other contextual factors that do not vary so consistently. Generosity is driven by contradictions between our notions of the ideal (moral, aesthetic, and spiritual) and our observations of what is real. Generosity is also the product of reason, as evidenced by such attitudes as “It is better to help now than when things get worse” or “I can benefit from the help I provide.” Generosity also stems from friendship and love, whether for humankind, for one’s community, or for the handicapped. None of these factors are easily captured in surveys nor easily classified for profile analysis. The profiles are necessary as a starting point . . .

¹²²“Campaign Planning Services: Basic Data for Campaign Planning I” (CJF Financial Resource Development Department, June 1994), pp. 13–32.

¹²³Julian Wolpert, “Giving and Region: Generous and Stingy Communities,” in “Cultures of Giving: How Region and Religion Influence Philanthropy,” ed. Charles H. Hamilton and Warren Ilchman, *New Directions for Philanthropic Fundraising* 7, Spring 1995, p. 11.

but are not generally sufficient to tell the whole story. . . . A further hazard in relying solely on the study of donor profiles is the tendency to attribute generosity causally to the particular socioeconomic, life-cycle, or other classification criterion, the so-called ecological fallacy. People do not give because they are middle-aged, affluent, and Episcopalian, even though that donor profile has rather homogeneous giving patterns unlike the generosity of working-class whites with little or no religious affiliation. The more likely explanation is that the profiles are associated with civic, class, and social welfare attitudes that are shaped by the local community context.¹²⁴

This latter observation has led him to focus on “regional cultures of generosity.”

Based on an examination of philanthropic patterns in the 85 largest metropolitan areas and their respective 36 states, Wolpert concludes as follows: (1) American generosity varies significantly from place to place in both level and targeting of contributions. (2) Giving rates are higher where per capita income is higher, distress levels and population numbers are lower, and the political and cultural ideology is liberal rather than conservative. (3) Higher giving rates are associated with greater targeting for services used by donors themselves rather than for the more charitable social welfare services.¹²⁵ For Wolpert, then, the mix of government policies to aid the needy, political attitudes, and private philanthropy creates a culture of giving.¹²⁶ His prime example, significantly, is Cleveland, which is also fabled in Jewish communal circles as having one of the strongest systems of Jewish federated giving in North America. By contrast, some of the cities with the least developed cultures of giving, such as those in southern California, also rank low in Jewish giving. San Francisco ranks higher than Los Angeles in general and Jewish patterns of giving.¹²⁷

Other factors also affect the relative generosity of givers. In some cases, size does play a role because it either strengthens or weakens a sense of community among givers. Tulsa provides an example of how a

¹²⁴Ibid., p. 14.

¹²⁵Ibid., p. 18.

¹²⁶Wolpert's analysis is not without problems. He admits that the rate of generosity varies within states and cities for different charitable causes. Some are more generous in support of health organizations that deal with diabetes than with cancer, for example. And his analysis linking public-sector policies and private-sector giving does not always work, either. Still, it is noteworthy that some of the cities cited as among the most generous for general giving also have very successful federation campaigns. Although Jewish giving accounts for some of the general charitable receipts in a particular locality, Jews alone are not responsible for successful United Way and other campaigns for nonsectarian charities.

¹²⁷Elizabeth Greene et al., “The Midwest's Charitable Advantage,” *Chronicle of Philanthropy*, Feb. 22, 1994, pp. 1 and 26.

city's relatively small size encourages giving. Tulsa ranks 43rd among all U.S. cities but 22nd in philanthropy. Its Jewish federation does comparatively well because nearly every Jew is identifiable; the Tulsa federation of Jewish philanthropy raises more money per capita than any of the top 50 federations. Its campaign director explained some of the benefits of smallness: "When you live in a community where everybody's Jewish, it's very easy to be lost and not be identified. In our community, when you have newcomers, we reach out to them, we welcome them, we educate them where the campaign is concerned."¹²⁸ By contrast, New York ranks far lower in general and Jewish giving because of the anonymity of life in the large metropolis and because so many charities compete for dollars.¹²⁹

Transience plays an important role as well. Just as rates of affiliation with synagogues and other Jewish institutions are lowest in communities with high percentages of newcomers,¹³⁰ so too is Jewish giving. This parallels general patterns of American philanthropy. A representative of the California Association of Nonprofits has observed of philanthropic trends in her state: "People are in transition. . . . They don't invest here because it doesn't feel like a place where they plan to stay. It may have more to do with a psychological feeling than the reality of how many years they've lived here." Fund-raisers in cities with longer traditions of wealth and giving find it easier to get pledges. Their pitch is straightforward: "Your grandfather always gave; your father always gave; *you* just give."¹³¹

An analysis of national Jewish trends underscores the significant differences in rates of giving by Jewish migrants as compared to Jews who have maintained stability of residence. Data from the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey (NJPS), analyzed by Sidney Goldstein and Alice Goldstein, indicated that more nonmigrants (54 percent) were givers than those who had moved in the previous five years. Only one-third of those moving from one locality to another within the same state

¹²⁸Ibid., p. 25.

¹²⁹New York in fact ranks very high as a center of foundation giving, but ranks nearly at the bottom of lists for direct mail, telephone solicitation, and some other kinds of gifts. See David A. Weeks, "America's Ten Best Fundraising Cities," *Nonprofit Times*, Mar. 1994, p. 45. For an analysis that finds an inverse relationship between rates of giving and the size of the Jewish community, see Jonathan Rabinowitz, *Correlates of Social Participation in Jewish Communities in the United States: A Macro Environmental Approach*, unpublished Ph.D. diss., Yeshiva University, 1988.

¹³⁰Jack Wertheimer, *A People Divided: Judaism in Contemporary America* (New York, 1993), p. 48.

¹³¹Greene et al., "Midwest's Charitable Advantage," p. 26.

gave to Jewish causes; 38 percent of interstate migrants were donors. About 41 percent of migrants from abroad reported donations to Jewish causes. There were also age-related variations among these populations: "Only 39 percent of the respondents under age 45 made contributions to Jewish causes, compared to 56 percent of those between the ages of 45 and 64, and almost three quarters of the aged." The researchers' overall conclusion:

Nonmigrants generally were more likely to make contributions to Jewish causes than those who had moved in the past and those who anticipated a move in the future. The proportion giving were lowest among the youngest age groups, who were also likely to have a higher percentage making contributions to non-Jewish causes. A strong contrast is provided by the elderly, among whom the percent of interstate migrants making contributions to Jewish causes is at levels as high or higher than among the nonmigrants, but at much lower levels for giving to non-Jewish causes.

Significantly, however, Jews on the move continue to give at relatively high rates to non-Jewish causes.¹³²

These patterns of giving among mobile Jews have affected the fortunes of Jewish communities that have grown significantly in recent decades through migration. No region has received a proportionately larger influx in recent decades than the American West. A study of federations in the Western states found that Jewish federations there raise less money than their counterparts in other regions (\$95 per capita compared with \$145 per capita); endowments are also much smaller.¹³³ A comparison of Jewish giving and affiliation in different regions makes plain that giving to Jewish causes and federations, specifically, as well as synagogue affiliation, are lowest in the two regions with the highest numbers of interstate migrants—the West and parts of the South; by contrast, the more stable populations of the Northeast and Midwest have higher rates of giving. (See table 7.) But the trends in the West are troubling for the long term because that is the region with the second-largest population of Jews—and the region that continues to attract newcomers. Perhaps, as transient Jews settle down and feel more attached to their new places of residence, they may invest more heavily in local Jewish philanthropies. In the short term, however, that is unlikely to happen, for reasons explained by Robert Putnam's "repotting hypothesis": mobility, he asserts, "like fre-

¹³²Sidney Goldstein and Alice Goldstein, *Jews on the Move: Implications for Jewish Identity* (Albany, 1996), pp. 267–77, 322.

¹³³*Reinventing Our Jewish Community: Can the West Be Won? A Report to the Jewish Communities of the Western United States and the Council of Jewish Federations* (CJF, Dec. 1994), p. 8. The report includes the states of California, Oregon, Washington, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico, and Hawaii. (It also covers the El Paso federation.)

quent re-potting of plants, tends to disrupt the root system, and it takes time for an uprooted individual to put down new roots."¹³⁴

The limited attachment of retirees in Florida to their new place of residence also accounts for their relatively low rates of giving to local causes. Some retirees only reside in Florida for some months each year and then return to their homes further north. Such individuals are often wooed by Jewish institutions and federations both in Florida as well as up north. But even after they make the transition from " 'snowflake' to 'snowbird' to permanent resident in Florida," many do not feel strongly connected to their new homes because their extended families—either their children and grandchildren, in the case of retirees, or their parents, in the case of younger adults—reside in other parts of the country. As a result, one study has concluded, "the family traditions of Jewish communal involvement (and philanthropy) often do not transfer to their new communities."¹³⁵

This sense of detachment has affected Jewish fund-raising in Florida adversely. Between 1989 and 1995 there was a decrease in campaign growth, when inflation is taken into account, and also a decline of 18 percent in the number of gifts in the five federation campaigns in southeast Florida. These federations tend to receive fewer gifts than their counterparts of comparable size in other parts of the country. In fact, several Florida federations rank at the bottom of their size category. They also tend to rank lower in per capita gifts and average gifts. And endowment giving, which we might expect to be higher, given the age of the population, is also low. Why? In the words of a task-force report on this subject: "Many 'foundation' prospects do not feel a sense of identity with their community; loyalties continue to their former communities and the communities of their children."¹³⁶ Thus, a series of factors, including mobility patterns and attachment to place, the stability of a community, and its "culture of giving," determine how many of its Jews will contribute to Jewish philanthropy—and with how much generosity.

Demographic Variables

In addition to migration, a number of other major demographic shifts are reshaping the American Jewish community, and with it, patterns of

¹³⁴Robert D. Putnam, "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital," *Journal of Democracy* 6, no. 1, Jan. 1995, p. 75.

¹³⁵*Something New Under the Sun: Building a Regional Jewish Community in Southeast Florida* (Southeast Florida Strategic Planning Committee and Ukeles Associates Inc., Feb. 1996), p. 5.

¹³⁶*Ibid.*, p. 6.

giving. These include changes in American Jewry's occupational structure, age pyramid, and marital patterns.

The first of these—shifting occupational choices—occasioned much concern in the 1970s when it first became evident that baby boomers—the large population of Jews born in the two decades after World War II—were embarking on very different career tracks than their parents' generation. Far larger numbers of people born in the years after World War II were entering the professions when they came of age in the 1970s; this stood in marked contrast to the propensity of men who came of age just before or after World War II to become entrepreneurs.¹³⁷ This trend alarmed communal officials and observers of Jewish philanthropy because it was not at all clear that professionals could or would play the same role as businesspeople in fund-raising for Jewish causes. Writing in 1980, Steven M. Cohen analyzed the situation as follows:

Younger Jews have been shifting away from those occupations that have been characteristic for federation stalwarts; they are entering the salaried professions rather than becoming independent entrepreneurs. The resulting shifts in type of work (from business to profession) and sources of income (from self-employed to salaried) mean that younger Jews will less often enter the pool of potential multi-millionaires, that group which has most generously supported federation drives in the past. The shift in source of income also means that a smaller fraction of total family income (even if it remains at a high level) will be of the disposable variety.¹³⁸

The consequences of this occupational shift, however, were not limited to the sums of money available for philanthropic giving. As Cohen noted, professionals were less vulnerable to the customary forms of peer pressure and persuasion that elicited large donations from entrepreneurs:

For people in business, charitable giving publicly symbolizes success to their peers. Moreover, when a business person is solicited by a customer, a gift's size can influence his or her commercial prospects. For professionals such as social workers, teachers, or other public employees, however, federation giving entails fewer potential rewards or punishments. A salaried professional's reputation is less firmly tied to public demonstration of material success. . . . Moreover, certain professions—particularly law, medicine, and college teaching—can become a way of life and thus successfully compete with ethnicity as a basis of self-definition.¹³⁹

¹³⁷The impact on contemporary Jewish philanthropy of dramatic changes in women's educational and career paths is discussed in the next section.

¹³⁸Cohen, "Trends in Jewish Philanthropy," AJYB 1980, p. 32.

¹³⁹Ibid., pp. 33–34. Cohen modified this analysis on the basis of empirical data from the Boston Jewish community's 1975 survey. That study indicated significant levels of giving by self-employed professionals. But he maintained that with the shift toward salaried occupations, relatively fewer Jews would amass large fortunes, and fewer Jews would have the incentive to give to philanthropies (pp. 45, 50).

Certain professionals—such as physicians—tend to operate independently and are not easily reachable for solicitation in a group setting. Others, such as academics, pride themselves on their independence from institutional life. With increasing numbers of Jews moving into these professions, some observers worried about the ability of Jewish philanthropies to reach these individuals.

The argument was joined a few years later by Gary Tobin, who rejected what he termed “the myth of the vanishing entrepreneur.”¹⁴⁰ Tobin was far more sanguine than Cohen about the impact on fund-raising of shifts in the American Jewish occupational profile from businessmen to professionals. He argued as follows:

While the proportion of self-employed workers was higher one or two generations ago, the vast majority of those workers were small merchants, peddlers, mom-and-pop store owners and skilled craftsmen such as carpenters or tailors. . . . Like so many views of the “good old days,” the notion that the past was a nurturing ground for millionaires is a romantic view indeed. . . . On the other hand, today’s professionals may be far more entrepreneurial and have greater capital-accumulating potential than their small merchant predecessors. Physicians, lawyers and accountants often invest in stocks, real estate and other capital-accumulating enterprises. Their chances of becoming millionaires are far greater than those of professionals of previous generations. . . . [Moreover, recent demographic studies indicate that the entrepreneurial base is] hardly disappearing. Although it is certainly lower than in previous generations, the “entrepreneur base” still constitutes a significant proportion of each age cohort. Not only are there many professionals who are entrepreneurs, but there are still many “business people” who are entrepreneurs.¹⁴¹

Tobin did concede that there might be fewer “super-wealthy” families to shoulder the major burden of Jewish philanthropy, but he argued that households with two wage earners—in many of them both are professionals—substantial income could be set aside for charitable giving. Tobin stated: “In most Jewish communities significant proportions of the households earn between \$100,000 and \$150,000 or more per year. Many of these households are capable of annual gifts of \$5,000 or \$10,000 per year. Few of them make such donations, of course, but the capacity is there.”¹⁴²

The extent of that capacity, in turn, has also been the subject of debate about the rising cost of Jewish living—and its impact on Jewish philanthropy. In the early 1980s, the Council of Jewish Federations commis-

¹⁴⁰Gary A. Tobin, “Jewish Wealth and Philanthropy: The Myth of the Well Running Dry,” address delivered at the General Assembly of the Council of Jewish Federations, 1986 (CJF, 1986), pp. 6–7.

¹⁴¹*Ibid.*, pp. 7–8.

¹⁴²*Ibid.*, p. 10.

sioned a study to determine how families afford the various costs of Jewish living. The study concluded that families earning \$50,000 in 1983 would not have the discretionary income to pay for synagogue membership, JCC dues, and day-school tuition and also contribute \$500 to the federation campaign.¹⁴³ In the interval, even more Jewish families enroll their children in day schools and stagger under tuition burdens of between \$5,000 and \$10,000 per child—exclusive of all other Jewish educational experiences, such as summer camps. Thus, even in families with two wage earners who are professionals, little discretionary income remains for charitable giving. Families of lesser means are even less likely to affiliate with Jewish institutions or give more than a minimal amount to charities.¹⁴⁴

The shifting occupational profile of younger Jews is part of a larger complex of characteristics that distinguish donors of different ages. Simply put, larger percentages of younger Jews tend not to donate to Jewish causes. An analysis of giving to federated campaigns during the 1980s found that only 20 percent of those who were 25 or younger contributed.¹⁴⁵ Data from the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey show an even lower proportion and indicate that age 45 is the key divide. The percentage of Jews who give to charities goes up significantly after that age and rises even higher after age 60.¹⁴⁶ (See Fig. 3.)

The issue, we should note, is not lower dollar sums donated—a pattern to be expected from younger people who have not yet reached their peak earning years or accumulated assets—but the numbers of younger Jews who contribute at all to federated campaigns.

Some have argued that younger Jews are less apt to contribute because they have been socialized as part of a different generational cohort—and that their outlook will affect their patterns of giving even when they are older. Barry Kosmin has contended that the social outlook of baby boomers is antithetical to the traditional assumptions of Jewish philanthropy. Such giving emanated from ingrained values about the impor-

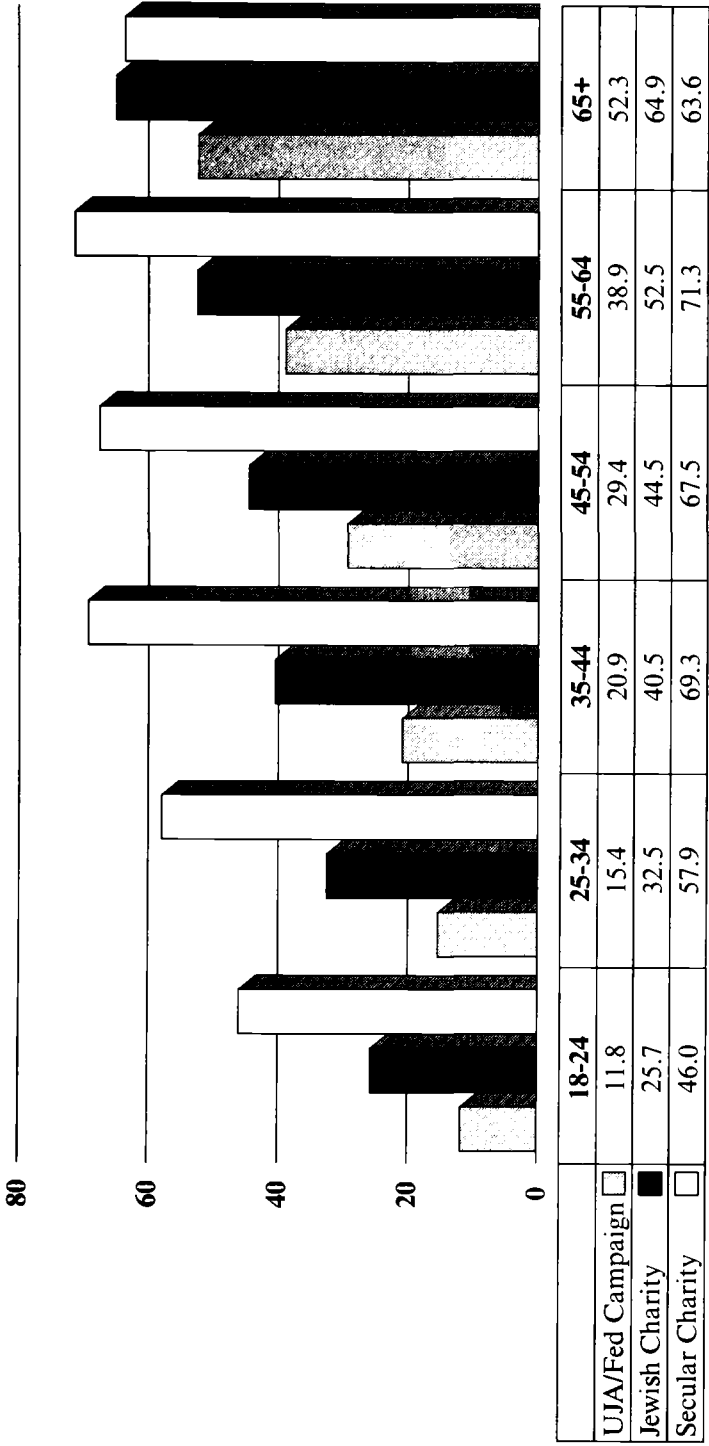
¹⁴³J.A. Winter and L.I. Levin, "The Cost of Affiliation and Participation: Implications for Federations, Agencies, and Communal Organizations" (*Social Policy Report*, CJF, Jan. 1985); Jerry Alan Winter, "Who Could Afford to Be Jewish?" *Moment*, May 1985, p. 38.

¹⁴⁴See the contributions of Barry A. Kosmin and Rela Geffen to the symposium "How Affordable Is Jewish Living?" *Reform Judaism*, Spring 1994, p. 47ff., and Aryeh Meir and Lisa Hostein, *The High Cost of Jewish Living* (American Jewish Committee, New York, 1992).

¹⁴⁵J. Alan Winter, "Towards an Understanding of the Present and Future of Campaign," 1990 General Assembly presentation (*Strategic Issues Affecting Philanthropy*, CJF, 1990), p. 4. This analysis was based on a nine-city sample, rather than a national survey.

¹⁴⁶Keysar, *Patterns of Philanthropy: New York Versus Non-New York Jewry in 1990*, p. 12.

FIGURE 3. PATTERNS OF PHILANTHROPIC CONTRIBUTIONS BY AGE (PERCENTAGES) (NJPS, 1990)



tance of *tzedakah*—Jewish philanthropy—and *ma'asim tovim*—good deeds or voluntarism:

These achievements were based upon very efficient fund-raising techniques geared to a wealthy and very generous elite of donors imbued with a spirit of *noblesse oblige* which was sustained by high levels of emotional solidarity with the recipients. Traditional forms of ethnic and religious attachment that validated and informed this process through appeals to Biblical injunctions such as the command to “ransom captives” or the medieval dictum of Maimonides that the highest form of charity maintains the anonymity of donor and recipient have unfortunately attenuated. Communitarian impulses seem to have been replaced by a rise in consumerism and emphasis on individual autonomy. Philanthropically this generation is less attracted to the “umbrella” concept of the community chest—the United Jewish Appeal-Federation annual campaign. Causes and a preference for designated giving are growing in popularity among donors.¹⁴⁷

Kosmin contends, then, that members of a specific generation—the boomers—were socialized to regard with suspicion large campaigns and impersonal giving. Following this line of reasoning, some fund-raisers contend that boomers need to be solicited very differently than their elders.

Research in the wider field of American philanthropy suggests that a more comprehensive analysis is required to understand generational patterns. According to this research, the American population consists of at least five distinct generational cohorts: (1) *The Lost Generation*: Born prior to 1900, this generation is rapidly dying out and generally plays no major role any longer in giving—except for the bequests they leave. (2) *The GI Generation*: This important cohort was born between 1901 and 1924 and has been characterized as the “the civic type.” Its members tend to be “highly collectivistic.” As one observer noted of them: “One does not beat the Great Depression, win a war, discover a cure for polio, invent the computer, and develop the Social Security system without some collaborative effort!” Members of this generation are still major givers, but mainly as planned givers. (3) *The Silent Generation*: Born between 1925 and 1942, it has been characterized as “Adaptive”: born at a time of great need and coming of age during a time of massive expansion, this generation “suffers from guilt and anxiety.” The claim is made that this generation will leave most of its money to its grandchildren and will be most interested in a technical rather than emotional appeal. (4) *The Boomer Generation*: Born between 1946 and 1964, it is allegedly dominated by “idealists.” Boomers regard direct services provided by an agency as “good” and the overhead and administrative costs of the same

¹⁴⁷Kosmin, “New Directions in Contemporary Jewish Philanthropy,” p. 46.

agency as “bad.” They want hands-on experience and causes that require a sense of “moral commitment.” (5) *The generation after the boomers* (sometimes referred to as “Generation X”), stretching in age from their mid-20s to mid-30s, whose patterns of giving and outlook have been subject to much speculation but little concrete information, because most do not yet participate in philanthropic activities.¹⁴⁸

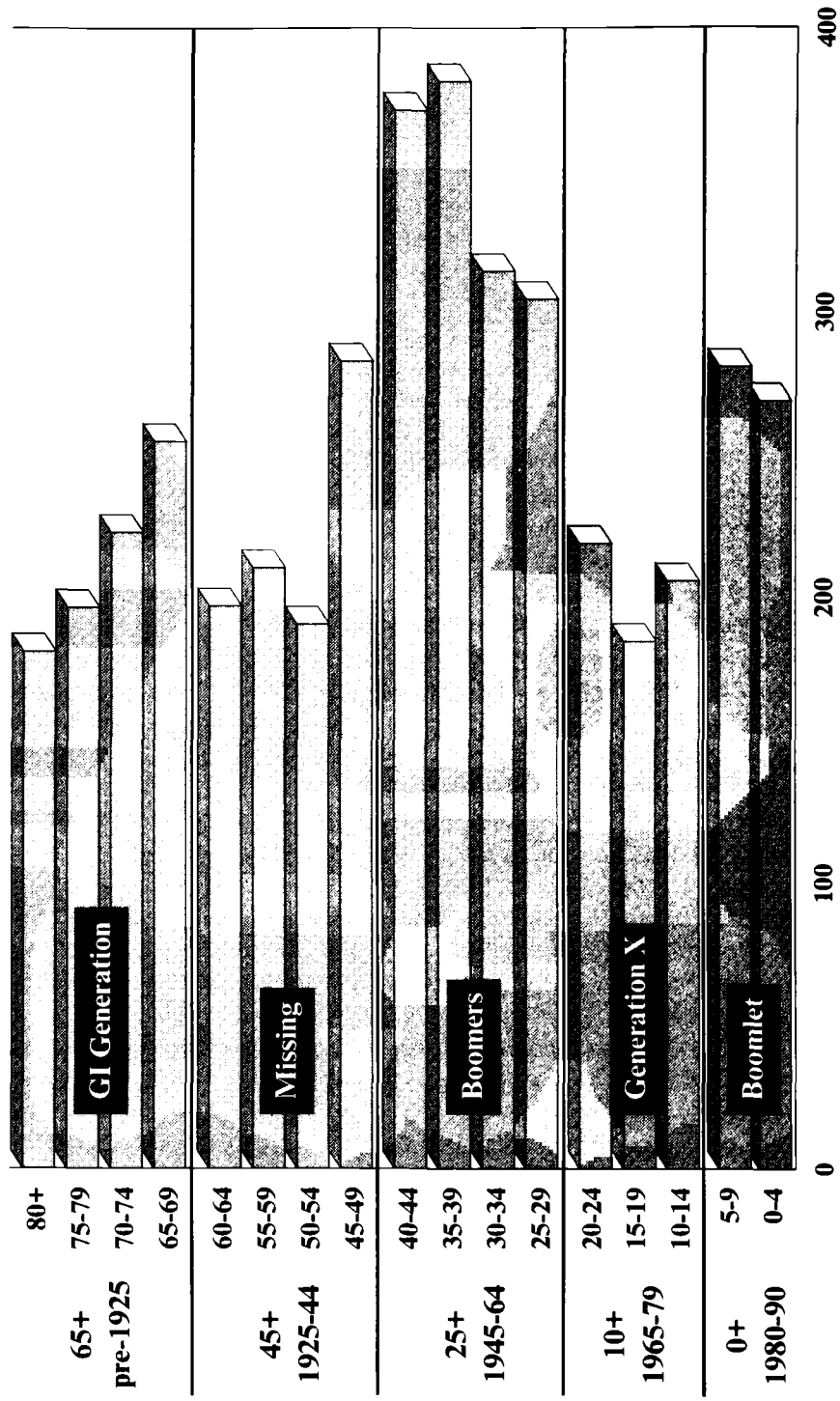
Some students of philanthropy regard a generational analysis as critical in determining the types of charitable causes that will appeal to a potential donor. For example, community-wide or federated campaigns are likely to appeal to the more cooperatively minded GI generation, but will alienate boomers. Organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, which constructs low-cost housing for the poor, and environmental agencies may evoke great interest from boomers, whereas the campaigns of the United Way, Jewish federations, and big hospitals may leave them cold. To illustrate the generational culture at work, Charles Eastman describes a will probated in New York State. The deceased was “a Jewish Boomer who died of AIDS: he left a six-figure amount to the United Nations for care of children in the Central American country where he discovered his spirituality. A lesser amount went to an at-home meal delivery service for people with AIDS. Not one dollar went to the Jewish federation, the hospital that cared for him, or close members of his family, as would be expected from a GI will.” Now, whether this one will is indicative of a pattern of bequests by Jewish baby boomers is impossible to tell at this point, any more than whether the attitudes of the individual were primarily shaped by his experience with AIDS and possible homosexuality. But the beneficiaries of this estate are clearly very different from what we would expect to find in the will of a member of a different age group.¹⁴⁹

Generation is a particularly critical factor in philanthropy because of the age pyramid of American society, generally, and of the Jewish community, in particular. (See Fig. 4.) The sheer numerical size of each generational cohort is different. Most noteworthy is the relatively small size of the so-called Silent or Missing Generation, which is sandwiched between the far larger GI and boomer cohorts. Currently consisting of “empty-nesters” between the ages of 55 and 70, this population is at the height of its earning power. Traditionally, this age group has supplied the

¹⁴⁸Charles L. Eastman, “Philanthropic Cultures of Generational Archetypes,” in Hamilton and Ilchman, eds., “Cultures of Giving II,” *New Directions for Philanthropic Fundraising* 8, Summer 1995, pp. 142–45. Eastman does not discuss the last-mentioned generation.

¹⁴⁹*Ibid.*, p. 142. Eastman notes how important it is to keep generational differences in mind when putting together boards for philanthropies. When members of different generations work together, tensions often rise because they have different conceptions of how to spend money (p. 145).

FIGURE 4. JEWISH POPULATION BY AGE AND GENERATION (THOUSANDS), (NJPS 1990)



volunteer and leadership cadres for Jewish organizations and philanthropies. But it “is currently thin on the ground as a result of low Jewish birthrates during the Depression and World War II years. There are two thirty-something Jews for every fifty-something Jew.”¹⁵⁰ Thus, the age group that normally carries much of the philanthropic responsibility in the Jewish community is too small to shoulder the entire burden; its successor generation, the baby boomers is preoccupied with child-rearing and the high costs of Jewish living.

The Jewish age pyramid, in short, is not distributed in a fashion that is as conducive to fund-raising as it had been when the larger GI generation was in its prime earning years during the 1960s and 1970s.¹⁵¹ Accordingly, some observers warn that Jewish philanthropy will remain flat until baby boomers reach the peak years of their affluence and take up the slack created by the relatively small population of Jewish members of the “Silent Generation”—and even then, there is no guarantee that their philanthropic behavior will conform to that of earlier generations.

Finally, no discussion of generation is complete without reference to a second meaning the term carries—that is, generation of residence in the United States. It is well established that a family’s longevity on these shores profoundly affects its Jewish involvements. In his analysis of how generation in America makes an impact on Jewish giving, the sociologist J. Alan Winter put matters quite bluntly: “Those whose families have been here the longest, at least four generations, are [least] likely to contribute. Specifically, while about 60% of those whose parents immigrated to America contribute to campaigns, only about a third of those whose great-grandparents are the immigrant generation, do so. Overall, then, the most likely contributors are the middle-aged members of the affluent households whose parents immigrated to America.”¹⁵² As rising percentages of Jews are fourth- and fifth-generation Americans, a

¹⁵⁰Kosmin, “New Directions in Contemporary Jewish Philanthropy,” pp. 44–45. Kosmin’s description dates to the early 1990s.

¹⁵¹For a discussion of how the age pyramid in a specific locality or within an ethnic or religious group affects giving patterns, see Judith Waldrop, “Secrets of the Age Pyramid,” *American Demographics*, Aug. 1992, pp. 47–52. Those who track these patterns among Jews also note that by the year 2010, the number of individuals between the ages of 45 and 64 will have grown from approximately one million to over 1.7 million as the boomers age. The assumption is that once they reach their prime earning years, boomers will become as philanthropic as the GI generation. See *Helping Your Community Secure Its Vision* (CJF, 1995).

¹⁵²Winter, “Towards an Understanding of the Present and Future of Campaign,” p. 5. The 1991 survey of Jews in New York also found that by the third and fourth generations in America, Jewish philanthropic activity decreases. See Larry Cohler, “Duelling for Dollars,” *New York Jewish Week*, Oct. 22–28, 1993, p. 25.

broad range of involvements—including philanthropic giving to Jewish causes—may attenuate.¹⁵³

A third demographic variable affecting Jewish giving is family structure. As is the case with their non-Jewish neighbors, rising percentages of Jews live in so-called “alternative families.” Simply put, more younger Jews never marry or have children; and rising numbers of Jews divorce. Since for most Jews, engagement in organized Jewish life is linked to life cycle, and especially parenthood, these circumstances are also affecting Jewish philanthropy. On the basis of survey research conducted already in the mid-1970s, it was evident that “alternative families” would not participate in the life of the organized Jewish community to nearly the extent of conventional and intact families. According to Steven M. Cohen’s analysis, this was in part caused by the “growing estrangement of alternative households from organized Jewry.” Rather than seek institutional support, “these people can now find many individuals like themselves with whom to associate; they expect and demand greater acceptance of their household status as normative; they may even regard that status as permanent rather than transitory. Members of alternative households, then, are in no great need of the support of the conventional community, and are less likely to seek to emulate the behavior of conventional households.”¹⁵⁴ Many of these families, especially single-parent ones, lack the means to contribute significant sums to Jewish philanthropy.

The spiraling rate of intermarriage is the other major trend affecting Jewish family life. Since the mid-1980s, over half of all marriages involving a Jew have been interfaith marriages, a fact attested first by the 1990 National Jewish Population Study (NJPS) and more recently by a slew of local demographic surveys conducted after 1990. Intermarriage militates against many forms of Jewish involvement, including participation in Jewish philanthropy. Data from the 1990 NJPS indicate that “while the propensity to donate to secular charities does not vary between endogamous and exogamous couples, the likelihood of giving to a Jewish charity declines from 62 percent to 28 percent of households annu-

¹⁵³Writing in the late 1980s, sociologist Paul Ritterband linked this pattern of generational decline to a combination of cultural factors and general distance from Jewish life: “With each generation after the second,” he wrote, “the probability of giving to the Federated Jewish campaign declines.” The second-generation Jews “were still nurtured by Old World memories and traditions related by their parents but are sufficiently westernized to appreciate the need for the style of large-scale, bureaucratized philanthropy.” Third- and fourth-generation Jews, by contrast, are less likely to be moved “by the moral imperatives of the Jewish religious tradition and are less likely to be formally affiliated with the Jewish community and thus less accessible to Jewish charitable campaigns. Simply stated, third- and fourth-generation Jews are less likely to be asked to give.” Paul Ritterband, “The Determinants of Jewish Charitable Giving in the Last Part of the Twentieth Century,” in Kosmin and Ritterband, eds., *Contemporary Jewish Philanthropy in America*, pp. 61–63.

¹⁵⁴Cohen, “Trends in Jewish Philanthropy,” p. 48.

ally.”¹⁵⁵ Contributions to UJA-Federation campaigns plummet even further; whereas 45 percent of entirely Jewish households contributed in 1989, only 12 percent of interfaith households gave to federated campaigns.¹⁵⁶ Only a small minority of intermarried families are prepared to donate to Jewish causes, a sobering finding when we consider how many Jews are now in such marriages.

Women

During the 25 to 30 years since the feminist revolution, women have significantly altered their relationship to the field of Jewish philanthropy. This is the case with women whose main source of wealth derives from their husbands' income as well as those who earn substantial sums independently. Their patterns of contributing to federated campaigns have changed, as has their giving to newer types of Jewish philanthropies—particularly those that further feminist agendas.¹⁵⁷

Primarily because of their longer life spans, women in American society control rising amounts of assets. A study by the National Council for Research on Women, conducted in 1994 and based on Internal Revenue Service information, claimed that 60 percent of the wealth in the United States is owned by women; “wealthy women are more likely than men to make charitable bequests (48 percent as opposed to 35 percent); and younger women especially are giving money to support social action causes. The National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy report[ed in 1994] that women overall are more likely to give to charitable organizations than men (81 percent compared to 69 percent).”¹⁵⁸

These trends find their parallel in the Jewish community, particularly as women married to men who were part of the so-called GI and Silent Generations outlive their husbands and inherit huge sums of money. Not

¹⁵⁵Kosmin, “New Directions in Contemporary Jewish Philanthropy,” p. 44.

¹⁵⁶“All Jewish Households Four Times More Likely to Contribute to Campaign” (CJF Joint Institute for Campaign, Endowment and Marketing Professionals, 1996).

¹⁵⁷During this same period, women have pressed for greater recognition as volunteers, for the elimination of “glass ceilings” that prevent them from rising to high executive and volunteer positions with federations and other major philanthropies, and for a proportionate role in decision making based on the funds raised by women's divisions. Some of these issues are discussed in my essay “Jewish Organizational Life in the United States Since 1945,” pp. 92–93. See also Alice Goldstein, “New Roles, New Commitments? Jewish Women's Involvement in the Community's Organizational Structure,” *Contemporary Jewry* 11, no. 1, 1990, pp. 49–76; Susan Weidman Schneider, “Jewish Women's Philanthropy,” *Lilith*, Winter 1993, p. 6ff., and the ongoing work of Sylvia Barack Fishman, including *A Breath of Life: Feminism in the American Jewish Community* (New York, 1993).

¹⁵⁸Susan A. Ostrander and Joan M. Fisher, “Women Giving Money, Women Raising Money: What Difference for Philanthropy?” in Hamilton and Ilchman, eds., “Cultures of Giving II,” *New Directions for Philanthropic Fundraising* 8, Summer 1995, pp. 67–68.

surprisingly, planned giving and foundation-relations departments at federations have begun to pay special attention to this market of potential donors. One study found that among major (\$50,000-plus) endowment commitments to federations, women accounted for 36 percent, with the remainder made by either men or couples. Thirty-seven percent of these endowment gifts came from women who had donated under \$100 to campaigns, but when it came to bequests, these women left far larger sums to federations. Childlessness, not current giving level, was the best predictor of endowment commitment. Fewer than 20 percent of elderly Jewish women were childless, but they accounted for 80 percent of the major endowment gifts received from women, according to this study.¹⁵⁹

The trend to gender equality has also meant that women play a far greater role in deciding on family contributions to philanthropy. Reporting on a series of interviews, Susan Weidman Schneider claims that many women speak of their resolve to channel family philanthropy to causes dear to themselves. She concludes: "Wives are more likely to make family financial decisions along with their husbands, and advocate for causes they want their husbands to support. It also means that a Jewish wife is likely to feel entitled to make philanthropic donations in her own right and in her own name, even if she is not earning at par with her husband or not earning at all."¹⁶⁰

One measure of such engagement in philanthropy is the impressive growth of funds contributed to the women's divisions of federations. By 1976, over 11 percent of money raised by federated campaigns came from women's divisions, a percentage that rose slightly higher a decade later.¹⁶¹ According to one report, the women's division of UJA raised 20 percent of funds by the early 1990s.¹⁶² In smaller communities and where retirees gather, women's campaigns represent an even larger share: in South Florida, for example, where elderly retired women constitute an important share of the population, women's divisions raise over 30 percent of the total. More generally, the percentages raised by those divisions rise in inverse relationship to the size of the community: in large cities they represent 12 percent of the total campaign, a figure that rises to 22 percent in small cities.¹⁶³ (Some questions have been raised concerning the growth of funds coming to women's divisions: Are women actually giv-

¹⁵⁹Kosmin, "New Directions in Contemporary Jewish Philanthropy," pp. 50-51.

¹⁶⁰Schneider, "Schneider, "Jewish Women's Philanthropy," p. 12.

¹⁶¹Barry A. Kosmin, "The Political Economy of Gender in Jewish Federations," *Contemporary Jewry* 10, no. 1, 1989, pp. 18-19.

¹⁶²Schneider, "Jewish Women's Philanthropy," p. 29.

¹⁶³Kosmin, "The Political Economy of Gender," p. 19. Kosmin contends that women's-division giving is far less apt to be dominated by a handful of "big givers," in contrast to the general campaigns (p. 20).

ing more, or are family gifts now going to the women's divisions because performance pressures are greater there than in other sectors of the annual campaign?)

Women's divisions and certain women's philanthropic organizations went through rocky times during the 1970s and 1980s. For one thing, feminists regarded gender segregation as demeaning; for another, as women entered the labor force in larger numbers, fewer women had the time to volunteer for such organizations. In the 1990s, however, these philanthropic campaigns have become more attractive. They often serve as forums for women's concerns; they seem able to solicit funds in a fashion that women find more congenial; and they provide a power base for women who wish to exercise some influence over the priorities of the Jewish community.¹⁶⁴

The impact of labor-force participation on the participation of Jewish women in philanthropy is the subject of no small measure of debate and polemic. It is beyond dispute that since the 1970s, the numbers of Jewish women entering the labor force have grown considerably, a development linked to rising levels of educational attainment. Jewish women are three times more likely than white women generally to graduate from college and four times more likely to complete postgraduate degrees.¹⁶⁵ Moreover, Jewish women participate in the labor force at significantly higher levels than just a few decades ago: in 1957, 25.5 percent of women aged 25–34 worked outside the home, a figure that rose to 35.5 percent for those aged 35–44, and to 38 percent for Jewish women aged 45–64. By 1990 three-quarters of women aged 25–44 worked outside of the home, and nearly two-thirds of women aged 45–64 were employed in the labor force.¹⁶⁶

There is a great deal of interest in how these women relate to Jewish philanthropy, especially to so-called “alternative philanthropies” that promote egalitarianism and a variety of other “progressive” causes. As the director of one such fund has put it: “The reason women respond so

¹⁶⁴Some of these themes are discussed by Kosmin in “The Political Economy of Gender,” p. 27, which stresses that women's divisions created “a secure base . . . to enter the power nexus by breaking the old-boy network's monopoly of key nominating committees.” Others are more critical of the women's divisions for not being sufficiently militant on feminist issues. Susan Weidman Schneider quotes one male executive as claiming that “what's missing in federations' women's divisions is that there is no feminist culture. The younger or feminist-identified women look for organizations that are starting to model something fresh.” “Feminist Philanthropy,” *Lilith*, Fall 1993, p. 17.

¹⁶⁵Kosmin, “New Directions in Contemporary Jewish Philanthropy,” table 2, p. 46. See also table 3, p. 9, for data on the educational attainments of Jewish men and women of different age groups.

¹⁶⁶Carmel Ullman Chiswick, “The Economics of American Judaism,” *Shofar* 13, no. 4, Summer 1995, p. 7.

strongly to social change philanthropy is because women have a better chance at playing a leadership role."¹⁶⁷ Still, as the strong campaigns of women's divisions and more traditional Jewish women's philanthropy groups such as Hadassah attest, many women either support both types of philanthropies or are active in the more traditional ones.¹⁶⁸

Finally, we must note that marital status still plays a critical role in women's giving. Some women's organizations draw their membership almost exclusively from among married women. Hadassah, for example, attracts only modest numbers of never-married or divorced women.¹⁶⁹ And more generally, volunteer and philanthropic activity is tied to marital status. In a study of the Rhode Island federation, the demographer Alice Goldstein found that volunteering for Jewish causes was highly correlated with marriage, whereas volunteering for non-Jewish causes was not.¹⁷⁰ Undoubtedly, some of the alternative Jewish philanthropies and "young leadership" divisions succeed far better in encouraging single women to contribute and participate. Matters are still further complicated when women are married to non-Jews. Although a third of American Jewish women are in interfaith marriages, only 5.5 percent of Hadassah members are intermarried.¹⁷¹ Some federations are apparently more successful in getting Jewish women who are intermarried to participate. For some, in fact, Jewish philanthropic work for a cause not directly linked to religion offers a means to participate in Jewish activities.¹⁷²

Jewish Identification

As the previous discussion of intermarriage suggests, there are important correlations between giving to Jewish causes and other forms of Jewish identification. To begin with, religious identification is critical for Jews, as it is for Americans, generally. Survey research by the Independent Sector has repeatedly found "a strong relationship between respondents' levels of involvement in religious organizations and their levels of

¹⁶⁷Quoted by Schneider, "Feminist Philanthropy," pp. 16–17.

¹⁶⁸On women who "cross over" from "Jewish 'renewal' organizations, women's issues groups, and progressive social causes" to the more traditional philanthropies, see Schneider, "Feminist Philanthropy," p. 14. Susan A. Ostrander and Joan M. Fisher write with some regret and anger "that women may not make much difference in how and why philanthropy is practiced." "Women Giving Money, Women Raising Money: What Difference for Philanthropy?" *New Directions for Philanthropic Fundraising* 8, Summer 1995, p. 70.

¹⁶⁹Barry A. Kosmin, "Doers' Profile," *Hadassah Magazine*, Jan. 1994, p. 21.

¹⁷⁰Alice Goldstein, "Dimensions of Giving: Volunteer Activity and Contributions of the Jewish Women of Rhode Island," in Kosmin and Ritterband, eds., *Contemporary Jewish Philanthropy in America*, p. 97.

¹⁷¹Kosmin, "Doers' Profile," p. 20.

¹⁷²Schneider, "Jewish Women's Philanthropy," p. 9.

giving and volunteering both to religion and to other charities."¹⁷³ In 1993 about eight in ten respondents who claimed membership in religious institutions reported household contributions to a charity, as compared to 64 percent of nonmembers of religious institutions. Moreover, regular worship attendance correlates strongly with all forms of philanthropy: roughly 44 percent of Americans who attend services weekly claim to contribute to health organizations, as compared to 18 percent who never attend or 23 percent of those who claim to attend services only a few times a year. Similar patterns obtain for Americans who claim to have given to educational institutions or environmental agencies.¹⁷⁴

Even though many forms of Jewish identification do not neatly jibe with measures of religious identification commonly employed to study Christians, there are some important ways in which Jewish philanthropic behavior matches these general patterns. For example, congregational membership and worship attendance correlate strongly with Jewish giving, just as they correlate with general patterns of giving in this country. Synagogue members are most likely to give all their charitable dollars to Jewish causes. And regular attenders have the highest percentage of giving to Jewish causes.¹⁷⁵ Data from New York indicate that of those under the age of 40, fewer than half say that someone in their household contributed to a Jewish charity during the previous year; but that figure drops to 10–20 percent among those who never attend a synagogue. By contrast, over 90 percent of those who claim to attend synagogue once a week or more contribute to a Jewish charity. This strong correlation between synagogue attendance and giving, according to David Schnall, is rooted in a “religious world view, as much a mitzvah as prayer and study. The synagogue helps mold and shape this impulse [to giving], providing focus and fostering its religious valence.” Moreover, “the synagogue is where giving happens. It is where community develops, where friendships and social influences are forged to encourage

¹⁷³*Giving and Volunteering in the United States: Findings from a National Survey*, 1974 ed. (Independent Sector, Washington, D.C., 1994), p. 92.

¹⁷⁴*Giving and Volunteering in the United States 1994: Trends in Giving and Volunteering by Type of Charity*, vol. 2 (Independent Sector, Washington, D.C., 1995), pp. 59, 89, 119. The data are based on a 1993 survey. For some discussion of the relationship between charitable and religious behavior in American society generally, see Robert Wuthnow, *God and Mammon in America* (New York, 1994), chap. 8; Robert Wuthnow, “Religion and the Voluntary Spirit in the United States: Mapping the Terrain”; and Virginia A. Hodgkinson, Murray S. Weitzman, and Arthur D. Kirsch, “From Commitment to Action: How Religious Involvement Affects Giving and Volunteering,” in *Faith and Philanthropy in America: Exploring the Role of Religion in America's Voluntary Sector*, ed. Robert Wuthnow and Virginia A. Hodgkinson, et al. (San Francisco, 1990), pp. 3–21, 93–114.

¹⁷⁵Mordechai Rimor and Gary A. Tobin, “Jewish Giving Patterns to Jewish and Non-Jewish Philanthropy,” in Wuthnow and Hodgkinson, eds., *Faith and Philanthropy in America*, p. 135.

charity. . . . Synagogue membership is also a link to other arms of the Jewish community."¹⁷⁶

Since only a small percentage of non-Orthodox Jews under the age of 40 attend synagogue services regularly, it is evident that denomination must be taken into account as well. Data from the 1990 NJPS indicate that members of synagogues across the denominational spectrum give to Jewish causes at roughly the same rate: 80 percent of Orthodox and Conservative synagogue members do so, as do 72 percent of members of Reform temples.¹⁷⁷ Upon closer examination, the data reveal differences in charitable preferences. (See table 8.) Roughly a quarter of Reform Jews give only to non-Jewish causes; and roughly 6–7 percent give only to Jewish causes; about 20 percent do not give to any charity; and 45 percent give to both kinds of charities. Conservative Jews in New York are more likely than Reform Jews to give only to Jewish causes. (This is true of 21 percent, a figure that drops outside of New York to 13 percent.) Approximately half of all self-identified Conservative Jews give to Jewish and non-Jewish causes, 16 percent claim they make no charitable contributions, and 12 percent of those in New York and 16 percent in the rest of the country give only to non-Jewish causes. Orthodox Jews in New York have the highest percentages that give only to Jewish causes (34 percent) or to Jewish and non-Jewish causes (55 percent) and the lowest percentages that claim to contribute only to non-Jewish causes (5.7 percent) or to make no contributions whatsoever (5.7 percent). Orthodox Jews outside of New York are more likely than those in New York to give to non-Jewish causes only (12 percent) and also to claim no charitable contributions at all (20 percent; 45 percent give to Jewish and nonsectarian causes).¹⁷⁸

A complex of other Jewish behaviors also correlates positively with high rates of Jewish giving. This complex includes ritual observance, travel to

¹⁷⁶David Schnall, "Tzedakah Rises with Synagogue Attendance," *Jewish Sentinel* (Manhattan), Sept. 15–21, 1995, p. 8. For a sampling of literature on Jewish religious teachings about philanthropy, see Jacob Neusner, *Tzedakah: Can Jewish Philanthropy Buy Jewish Survival?* (Atlanta, 1990); M. Tamari, *With All Your Possessions: Jewish Ethics and Economic Life* (New York, 1987); and Anita H. Plotinsky, "From Generation to Generation: Transmitting the Jewish Philanthropic Tradition," in "Cultures of Giving: How Region and Religion Influence Philanthropy," ed. Charles H. Hamilton and Warren Ilchman, *New Directions for Philanthropic Fundraising* 7, Spring 1995, pp. 117–131.

¹⁷⁷Wertheimer, *Conservative Synagogues and Their Members*, p. 42.

¹⁷⁸Keysar, *Patterns of Philanthropy*, pp. 8–10, and graph 2. Whether Orthodox Jews give as regularly as Jews of other denominations to federated campaigns or restrict their giving to Orthodox causes is the subject of some speculation. On the basis of research conducted in the late 1980s, Samuel C. Heilman claimed that modern Orthodox Jews give approximately 63 percent of their donations to Orthodox causes, and more right-wing individuals give 83 percent. Samuel C. Heilman, "Tzedakah: Orthodox Jews and Charitable Giving," in Kosmin and Ritterband, eds., *Contemporary Jewish Philanthropy in America*, p. 139. The leading legal authority of the latter group, Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, was asked "whether it was permissible for Orthodox Jews to contribute funds to Jewish federations inasmuch as

Israel, friendship and association patterns, and voluntary activity for Jewish causes.

Ritual Observance. Jews who report not fasting on Yom Kippur tend to give only to non-Jewish causes or not to make any contributions.¹⁷⁹ More generally, it has been shown that the more Jews observe their religion, the more they tend in the aggregate to participate in Jewish life and philanthropy.¹⁸⁰ After correlating a range of Jewish religious practices with types of charitable giving, the 1991 population study of New York Jews, for example, found that “non-givers are less religiously observant than contributors to Jewish charities, [but] they are more religiously observant than those who give only to general charities. Donors to ‘general only’ charities are the least religiously observant (hence the most secular).”¹⁸¹

Travel to Israel. Based upon his analysis of demographic surveys conducted in the mid-1980s in MetroWest New Jersey, the San Francisco Bay area, Dallas, Cleveland, and Rhode Island, Gary Tobin found that “[w]hile it is true that an impressive percentage of American Jews who have never visited Israel contribute to Jewish philanthropies, it is nevertheless clear that the association between visiting Israel and giving to Jewish philanthropies is strong. Encouraging an individual to visit Israel may result in increased contributions to Jewish philanthropies, regardless of levels of identity or commitment to Jewish philanthropies at the outset.”¹⁸² He goes on to claim that the amount given is also related to visits to Israel. About two-thirds of the \$1,000-plus givers in Rhode Island, 69 percent of those in MetroWest New Jersey, 64 percent of those in Dallas, and 86 percent in San Francisco had been to Israel. Conversely, “the lower the contribution level, the lower the proportion who have vis-

such funds were generally administered by non-Orthodox Jews and portions of the funds were appropriated to the religious institutions of the *kofrim* (heretics), Reform and Conservative Jews. Rabbi Feinstein was disposed not to allow Orthodox Jews to contribute to these charities. However, he indicated that it was permissible . . . to do so if the monies designated by the charities for Orthodox institutions exceed the contributions made by Orthodox Jews. In this way, Orthodoxy and its institutions would be strengthened and Reform and Conservative Judaism and their institutions would be diminished.” David Ellenson, “The Vision of *Gemeindeorthodoxie* in Weimar Germany: The Approaches of N.A. Nobel and I. Unna,” paper delivered at a conference on “Circles of Community: Collective Jewish Identities in Germany and Austria,” Univ. of Indiana, Mar. 18, 1996 (typescript, pp. 26–27). Feinstein’s responsum is in his *Iggrot Moshe, Yoreh Deah*, no. 149, pp. 298–99. I am grateful to David Ellenson for sharing his research with me.

¹⁷⁹Keysar, *Patterns of Philanthropy*, p. 9.

¹⁸⁰Steven M. Cohen and Paul Ritterband, “Will the Well Run Dry? The Future of Jewish Giving in America,” *Response*, Summer 1979, p. 10.

¹⁸¹Bethamie Horowitz, *1991 New York Jewish Population Study* (UJA-Federation of New York, 1993), pp. 77–90.

¹⁸²Gary A. Tobin, *Israel and American Jewish Philanthropy* (Policy and Planning Paper 5, Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University, Fall 1990), pp. 22–26.

ited Israel.” (This analysis does not consider whether travel to Israel is but one of a constellation of Jewish identifications that might account for higher rates of Jewish giving or, for that matter, whether travel to Israel is an expression of cosmopolitanism, which may be the critical factor in giving.)

Friendship and Association Patterns. Data from the 1990 NJPS indicate that Jews who live in neighborhoods they describe as “very Jewish” and who claim that all their friends are Jews have the highest rates of giving to Jewish causes. Conversely, those Jews who give only to non-Jewish causes tend to live in non-Jewish neighborhoods and have no or few Jewish friends.¹⁸³

Voluntary Activities for Jewish Causes. Based upon an analysis of demographic surveys in four communities—Dallas, MetroWest New Jersey, Rhode Island, and the San Francisco Bay communities—Gabriel Berger found that “in the non-Jewish realm, contributing money leads to giving time; while in the Jewish sphere, the path may follow the opposite direction: volunteering leads to making contributions to Jewish organizations.”¹⁸⁴ But there is no necessary correlation between performing volunteer work for a Jewish organization and donating money to it. Some of the biggest givers tend not to invest time in volunteer activities; but volunteers generally also donate some philanthropic dollars to the cause in which they have invested their time. Still, most Jewish households do not volunteer any time for any purpose because “voluntarism is a highly committed and involved behavior.” One study of several Jewish communities found that “only about a quarter of the households volunteer any time for either Jewish or non-Jewish purposes. Even fewer households, 8 percent each, volunteer six hours or more for either Jewish or non-Jewish purposes. . . . Of those who do volunteer time for Jewish purposes, 35 percent volunteer for non-Jewish purposes as well. Of those who do not volunteer time for Jewish purposes, only 16 percent give any time for non-Jewish purposes.”¹⁸⁵ Thus volunteering for a Jewish organization corre-

¹⁸³Keysar, *Patterns of Philanthropy*, graph 6: Patterns of Philanthropic Contributions by the Jewishness of the Neighborhood, and graph 7: . . . by Jewishness of Friendships.

¹⁸⁴Gabriel Berger, *Voluntarism Among American Jews* (Research Report 5, Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University, March 1991), pp. 45–46.

¹⁸⁵Rimor and Tobin, “Jewish Giving Patterns to Jewish and Non-Jewish Philanthropy,” pp. 150–56. The authors reflect upon the relationship between giving to non-Jewish and Jewish causes. While the majority of American Jews give to both types of philanthropies, Rimor and Tobin found that Jewish households tend to give in a more random fashion to non-Jewish causes. In general, they also tend to give considerably less money to non-Jewish causes. The authors claim “on the basis of the minimal median gift estimation . . . that at least two-thirds (perhaps even more) of the philanthropic dollar coming from Jewish households is going to Jewish philanthropies” (pp. 146, 148, 154). Big givers, we will shortly see, depart from this pattern and donate most of their money to non-Jewish causes.

lates with giving to that organization but not nearly as positively as other forms of Jewish engagement.

Summing up the key Jewish determinants of giving, Paul Ritterband concludes:

Those who are most likely to respond positively to a solicitation to the [federated] campaign are older, higher-income members of Conservative synagogues who are members of other Jewish organizations as well, and whose friends are Jews. These are the people who form the backbone of the campaign, upon whom participation in the campaign can be depended. . . . These are the rank and file of the campaign and probably the rank and file of many other pan-Jewish communal efforts."¹⁸⁶

In the aggregate, the donor base of givers to Jewish causes is drawn largely from those sectors of the Jewish population that are engaged in a range of other Jewish activities.¹⁸⁷

MAJOR DONORS

Our discussion of the donor base for Jewish philanthropy has thus far focused almost exclusively on the rank and file. But it is a truism of fundraising, especially in the Jewish community, that vast sums are contributed disproportionately by a relatively small group of big givers. Trends within this population have prompted the greatest worry among observers of Jewish philanthropy.

The Relative Significance of Big Gifts

Some of the concern has been based on fears that the richest Americans are becoming more selfish and less likely to shoulder the philanthropic burden. This fear about broader trends within American society has been laid to rest through a careful examination of giving patterns among Americans of different economic levels. Here are some of the key findings: "Households in the upper five income categories (\$40,000 or more in 1991 dollars) contributed 65 percent (or \$45.6 billion) of the total reported contributions in 1989 and 66 percent (or \$40.7 billion) of the total reported contributions in 1991. Households in the bottom eight income categories contributed 35 percent (\$24.7 billion) of the total reported contributions in 1989 and 34 percent (or \$20.5 billion) in 1991. . . . The lower income levels contribute far less in absolute terms than do

¹⁸⁶Ritterband, "The Determinants of Jewish Charitable Giving," p. 68.

¹⁸⁷This is not necessarily true of big givers, whose Jewish engagements vary greatly.

higher income categories."¹⁸⁸ Moreover, in 1989 the 20 percent of households with the lowest incomes (less than \$15,800 annually) contributed 5.7 percent of total contributions, while the 20 percent of households with the highest incomes (\$49,020 or above) contributed 45.6 percent of the total. In short, it appears that both the highest and lowest income groups are paying their share. The middle income groups, whose incomes range from \$31,000 to \$80,000, contribute less than their share of income. It is simply not true, as some have alleged, that upper-income households are stingy and lower-income households are generous.¹⁸⁹

Similar patterns characterize Jewish giving, which, if anything, rests even more heavily on the wealthy. A study of one affluent community in Morris and Essex counties, New Jersey, found for example that 95 percent of Jews in the highest income bracket (over \$150,000 a year) gave to a Jewish philanthropy.¹⁹⁰ Moreover, it has been the case for many decades that a very small stratum of wealthy Jews contributes the major share of all philanthropy. Studies conducted in the 1960s in a few communities bore out this truth: in Los Angeles, 2 percent of donors accounted for more than half the money contributed; in Chicago, 3 percent gave 55 percent of all donations; and in Philadelphia, 2 percent of donors gave just about two-thirds of all money raised by the federated campaigns.¹⁹¹ By the early 1980s, it was estimated that 40 percent of total gifts to Jewish federated campaigns came from 1 percent of the donors. And between two-thirds and three-quarters of such funds were raised from 3 percent of the Jewish givers.¹⁹² This base of givers has contracted still further: by 1990, half of all funds raised through federated campaigns in North America came from one-half of 1 percent of Jewish households.¹⁹³ A few years earlier, 1 percent of givers contributed 60 percent of federation funds.¹⁹⁴ If anything, then, Jewish philanthropy is even more dependent

¹⁸⁸Paul G. Schervish and John J. Havens, "Wherewithal and Beneficence: Charitable Giving by Income and Wealth," in Hamilton and Ilchman, eds., "Cultures of Giving II," *New Directions for Philanthropic Fundraising* 8, Summer 1995, p. 85.

¹⁸⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 88–89.

¹⁹⁰Rimor and Tobin, "Jewish Giving Patterns to Jewish and Non-Jewish Philanthropy," p. 141.

¹⁹¹Sklare, "The Future of Jewish Giving," p. 421. These figures already represented a narrowing of the donor base. It was estimated that in 1948, 6.5 percent of American Jews donated 76 percent of all money raised; and in 1952, 4.5 percent of all givers accounted for 70 percent of the money raised. See Arnold Gurin, "Financing of Jewish Communal Programs," *AJYB* 1954, vol. 55, p. 128.

¹⁹²Richard Silberstein, Paul Ritterband, Jonathan Rabinowitz, and Barry A. Kosmin, *Giving to Jewish Philanthropic Causes: A Preliminary Reconnaissance* (North American Jewish Data Bank, New York, Nov. 1987), p. 2.

¹⁹³Bubis, "Jewish Dollars Are Drying Up," p. 30.

¹⁹⁴Norbert Fruehauf, "The Bottom Line: Major Gifts to Federation Campaigns," in Kosmin and Ritterband, eds., *Contemporary Jewish Philanthropy*, p. 173.

upon large givers than are general charities: these commonly employ "the '80-20' rule of thumb, which states that 80 percent of the gifts will be given by 20 percent of the membership of any organization. It fits churches." But it does not fit Jewish philanthropy.¹⁹⁵

One other important rule seems to characterize the philanthropy of big givers: "Overall wealth is more important than income, especially when wealth increases to very high levels."¹⁹⁶ Thus while high income levels play a role in giving and even more so in volunteer activities, large donations come from assets rather than earned income. Both of these factors have suggested to some students of Jewish philanthropy that the sources of wealth must be monitored.

All the evidence suggests that a great deal of wealth exists within the American Jewish population. According to one analysis of the Forbes Four Hundred list of wealthiest Americans, 125 out of the 400 are Jewish. Jews, who represent 2½ percent of the American populace, constitute 31 percent of the very wealthiest. Gary Tobin has contended that "if they are similarly represented in the 1,000 or 10,000 most wealthy families in the United States, or even if they are represented at a far lower rate, the number of wealthy Jews is great indeed."¹⁹⁷ The critical question, then, is not whether there is wealth in the Jewish community, but whether wealthy Jews contribute to Jewish philanthropy.

Family Foundations

Family foundations are now the major vehicle for philanthropic giving by big donors. This trend holds true for Jewish families, who currently maintain over 3,000 such foundations,¹⁹⁸ thereby comprising close to one-tenth of the 34,319 independent foundations in 1995.¹⁹⁹ By 1994, the assets of all American foundations reached nearly \$200 billion and they col-

¹⁹⁵Dean R. Hoge, "Explanations for Current Levels of Religious Giving," in Hamilton and Ilchman, eds., "Cultures of Giving: How Region and Religion Influence Philanthropy," *New Directions for Philanthropic Fundraising* 7, Spring 1995, p. 54.

¹⁹⁶Schervish and Havens, "Wherewithal and Beneficence," in Hamilton and Ilchman, eds., "Cultures of Giving II," *New Directions for Philanthropic Fundraising* 8, Summer 1995, p. 105.

¹⁹⁷Tobin, "Jewish Wealth and Philanthropy," p. 8.

¹⁹⁸Evan Mendelson, "New Ways of Giving," *Sh'ma* 27/516, Sept. 6, 1996, p. 3. There is no systematic means to count the precise number of Jewish family foundations. Some foundations may have Jewish-sounding names but are controlled by non-Jews. At best, it is possible to identify foundations that are known to give some of their grants to Jewish institutions and then their tax filings can be scrutinized to monitor their grants programs. For this reason, estimates of their actual numbers vary.

¹⁹⁹*Foundation Giving: Yearbook of Facts and Figures on Private, Corporate, and Community Foundations* (The Foundation Center, New York, 1996), p. x.

lectively distributed over \$11 billion in grants.²⁰⁰ Two of the 20 largest foundations, as measured by total grants awarded, contribute significant sums to Jewish causes—the Annenberg Foundation and the Weinberg Foundation.²⁰¹ The former has assets of almost \$3 billion, and the latter is worth nearly \$1 billion.²⁰² But most family foundations controlled by Jews have more limited assets.

Foundations offer a number of attractions to wealthy families—not the least of which are tax advantages. In addition, foundations offer private individuals the opportunity to be influential in a highly public manner—but with little accountability. Family foundations can determine on their own which social needs are worthy of funding and which types of programs can best address those needs.²⁰³ A recent analysis of foundations underscored yet an additional advantage that accrues to families that get involved: “Private wealth has always been influential. But when it is transformed into a foundation, it takes on (or at least is increasingly judged by) another image and coloration: No longer is the use of wealth simply the expression of personal whim and ego; rather, the credibility of a considered evaluation of community welfare is the expectation—if not always the record—of modern philanthropy.”²⁰⁴ On the negative side there are also some hazards: (1) “Success in a family business or acquisition of a family fortune does not transpose easily into successfully operating a family foundation. Family businesses and fortunes are usually disciplined by the bottom line and hierarchical, often patriarchal, management; family fortunes sooner or later become divided or inherited and end up under individualized control. Foundations, with a single corpus and collective decision making, are quite another proposition.” (2) “Distinguishing personal from social priorities is yet another hazard. To what extent should family obligations be expressed in foundation giving—obligations either imposed by the legal or felt need to honor the founder’s charitable interests or insinuated by family members wishing to give to favored charities?” (3) “The price is a commitment to go beyond personal whim and advantage to an equitable and serious consideration of social need. This acquired ethic . . . is often not adopted or is ignored.” (4) Foundations are subject to much closer scrutiny through government regulations and public expectations. “The day of sequestered philanthropy, of founda-

²⁰⁰Ibid., pp. 1, 3.

²⁰¹Ibid., p. 36.

²⁰²The Mandel Family Foundation, which invests heavily in the field of Jewish education, will soon have assets in the vicinity of \$1 billion, too.

²⁰³Paul N. Ylvisaker, “Family Foundations: High Risk, High Reward,” *Family Business Review* 3, no. 4, Winter 1990, p. 331.

²⁰⁴Ibid., p. 332.

tions acting quietly and nonresponsively in the shadows, is waning, if not already over."²⁰⁵

In order to learn more about the giving patterns of Jewish family foundations, the tax filings (990-PF federal returns) of approximately 165 of the largest known Jewish family foundations were examined. (It should be noted that families channel their money in complex ways to suit their tax and other needs, and therefore not all giving by family foundations is necessarily reflected in these returns.) Two primary considerations served as criteria for selecting specific tax filings: whether a family foundation is known for its giving to some Jewish causes and whether it made grants in excess of half a million dollars annually. (In a few cases, the sums were closer to \$400,000.) Tax filings generally dated to the years 1993–94; in a few cases the data come from 1992. Our central concern was to learn more about the allocations of family foundations to different types of causes.²⁰⁶

The 165 family foundations we examined cumulatively gave away over half a billion dollars in the year studied.²⁰⁷ Nearly 60 percent of these dollars went to non-Jewish causes. This dovetails with a CJF study of giving by the 45 largest private foundations with Jewish interests, which computed the figure for grants going to non-Jewish causes in 1991–92 as 63 percent. As for the grants that went to Jewish causes, the lion's share of giving went to federation campaigns (12 percent). This was followed by grants to Jewish cultural institutions in the United States (almost 10 percent); and then by giving to schools and secular institutions abroad (presumably mainly in Israel), which came to nearly \$40 million or about 8 percent of all grants. Two-and-a-half percent went to Jewish religious institutions in the United States, and only 1 percent went to Jewish religious institutions abroad.

A look at the 21 Jewish foundations on our list that each gave grants totaling over \$5 million per year reveals the extent of Jewish generosity to the world at large. Virtually every one of these gave over two-thirds of their grants to non-Jewish causes. And some of the largest, such as the Annenberg, Milken, Newhouse, and Cummings foundations, gave well over four-fifths of their grants to non-Jewish causes in the year we studied. A notable exception is the Weinberg Foundation in Baltimore, which

²⁰⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 332–33.

²⁰⁶This research was conducted in cooperation with staff members at the CJF. I am particularly indebted to Cheryl Sandler, now of the UJA-Federation of New York, and former director of the CJF's National Foundations Initiative.

²⁰⁷Tax filings for only one year were examined for each foundation, but in some cases the returns available were for 1992, in other cases for 1993, and in still others for 1994.

made grants totaling \$44 million in 1993, 42 percent of which made its way to Jewish causes.

On the other side of the ledger, there are some foundations that give all or nearly all their gifts to Jewish causes; these include the Avi Chai Foundation, the Beren Trust, the Kekst Family Foundation, and the Aaron and Lillie Straus Fund. Others, such as the Samuel Bronfman Foundation, the Dorot Foundation, the Koret Foundation, the Recanati Fund, the Jack and Pearl Resnick Foundation, the Samuel and May Rudin Foundation, the Judy and Michael Steinhardt Foundation, and the Wexner Foundation, allocated between two-thirds and three-quarters of their grants to Jewish causes. It should be added that some of these families have established endowments and foundations at federations to handle their giving to Jewish causes, and others have established other channels to give directly to either Jewish or general causes. As Charles Bronfman explained it, while some foundations make grants only to specific types of projects, "other Jewish giving and other non-Jewish giving, are done through other pockets."²⁰⁸ The Wexner family, for example, has a range of foundations, and the allocations of one do not reflect the allocations of the other. The same is true with at least four separate Milken Family Foundations. Still, the overall picture is of family foundations that are channeling the majority of their wealth into non-Jewish causes.

We also examined the 990-PF federal tax returns of a sample of smaller foundations with Jewish-sounding names scattered through a random group of states. The pattern of giving by these smaller foundations—their grants amount to a few hundred thousand dollars annually—is quite similar to the larger family foundations. A few give only to Jewish causes—including religious ones. But most give high percentages to non-Jewish causes—hospitals, orchestras, art centers, theaters, and the like.

The larger import of these findings is that a great deal of wealth in Jewish hands is leaving the Jewish community and enriching a variety of non-sectarian causes. In part this is occurring because either the original donors of foundation assets or their heirs are disconnected from the Jewish community. From the perspective of Jewish philanthropy, the loss is more intensely felt when the second and third generations that sit on foundation boards opt out of Jewish life and channel money to causes that may be quite removed from the priorities of the original donor. With spiraling rates of intermarriage spurring disaffiliation from the Jewish community, some heirs of major donors to Jewish causes have severed their ties to Jewish philanthropy. Based on interviews with the heirs of some major givers to Jewish causes, Egon Mayer concluded that "substantial Jewish family

²⁰⁸*The Impact of Foundations with Jewish Interests on the North American Jewish Community* (The 1993 Brin Forum, Cohen Center, Brandeis University, Mar. 1994), p. 7.

fortunes pass out of the orbit of the organized Jewish community because the inheritors of those fortunes do not inherit the legacy of their parents' and grandparents' Jewish philanthropic impulses. Thus, the cistern of Jewish communal funds needs to be replenished from ever-new sources, rather than being able to depend upon constant well-springs."²⁰⁹

In other cases, donors endow a foundation but offer little or no guidance on how it should allocate its grants. The fabled billion-dollar estate of Harry and Jeanette Weinberg of Baltimore floundered for years before its board defined a direction. To an extent, the same was true of the foundation created by Nathan Cummings, a major giver to Jewish causes. When Cummings gave a \$230-million bequest to his private foundation, he provided little guidance as to how the money should be spent. Under the direction of an outside consultant, his children and grandchildren developed a program plan for grants in the fields of health, the arts, and Jewish affairs; eventually, environmental causes and "community grants" were added to allow future generations to guide giving. The upshot was that in 1993, 86 percent of the Cummings Foundation's grants went to non-Jewish causes, for a total of over \$9 million. The bulk of the funds to Jewish causes, approximately \$1.5 million, went to secular Jewish educational and cultural causes.²¹⁰

Equally important, wealthy Jews are earmarking ever larger percentages of their giving to non-Jewish causes because they are no longer excluded from the inner circles of those philanthropies. For much of this century, after all, Jewish donors were not wooed by elite cultural philanthropies the way they were by Jewish federations and the UJA. But especially in the 1980s, major cultural institutions, such as museums, theaters, orchestras, and elite universities, began to elect Jews to their boards. As one well-to-do philanthropist put it: "Fifteen to twenty years ago, it would be unheard of for a Jew to be the [officer] of" a prestigious cultural organization. Not surprisingly, since the status rewards were so much greater within the Jewish community, big givers traditionally directed most of their philanthropy to Jewish causes. But when the rewards became greater in nonsectarian circles, big givers shifted their attention. In some cases, Jews even created new opportunities for themselves by giving generously even before they had won access to the boards of those institutions. One fund-raising consultant stated matters bluntly when he advised boards of cultural and educational institutions to consider that "if the Jewish rich were generous when treated as inferiors, think of the

²⁰⁹Egon Mayer, "Intergenerational Philanthropic Slippage: The Case of Children of Major Jewish Philanthropic Families in New York City," in Kosmin and Ritterband, eds., *Contemporary Jewish Philanthropy in America*, p. 147.

²¹⁰Deborah Brody, "Built to Last," *Foundation News*, Jan./Feb. 1993, pp. 20-21.

possibilities when they were actually seated on boards of major universities, symphony orchestras, museums, and opera companies.” In addition, as American corporations and universities have opened their once closed doors to Jews and hired them in executive positions, successful Jews have begun to give generously to the causes favored by their non-Jewish counterparts. After interviewing a population of major Jewish philanthropists in New York, Francie Ostrower concluded that “class identity . . . overshadows ethnic affiliation with respect to philanthropy.” As Jews win greater social acceptance and as barriers to occupational mobility have fallen, well-to-do Jews have shifted their patterns of giving to non-Jewish causes.²¹¹

Designated Giving

The creation of family foundations as vehicles for giving is part of a larger trend that has serious implications for Jewish philanthropy. Whereas in the past, giving to federated campaigns meant that the donor relinquished decisions about priorities to communal planning committees, the trend today is for donors to decide on their own where money should go. Foundations generally create a grants policy based on their own understanding of where the needs lie and which beneficiaries are deserving. More generally, big givers are insisting on the right to designate how their money is spent — an approach that directly contravenes a basic assumption of Jewish federations, namely that setting priorities and planning for the needs of the Jewish community should be done by a central body.

One problem this creates is duplication. Especially when there are so many smaller foundations, each with its own grants policies, there is much overlap and waste. To address this problem, a Jewish Funders Network has been established expressly to assist foundations. Some 150 funders gather annually to exchange information on funding initiatives and to learn from each other about planning.²¹² Many foundations deal with the problem of duplication by staking out their own agenda and defin-

²¹¹This discussion is based on Ostrower, *Why the Wealthy Give: The Culture of Elite Philanthropy*, chap. 2, especially pp. 50–62. Ninety-four percent of the wealthy Jewish donors she studied gave their largest gifts to causes outside the Jewish community (p. 66).

²¹²Mark Kramer in *The Impact of Foundations with Jewish Interests . . .*, p. 29. See also Evan Mendelson, “New Ways of Giving,” which acknowledges that “overlap, duplication and wasted dollars can result from foundations acting without communicating with each other and the central communal planning structure. Independent funders . . . need to learn or be reminded of the importance and effectiveness of a communal pool of funding that sustains the Jewish infrastructure” (p. 4).

ing their personality through their priorities. As a consequence, they favor the off-beat and "innovative," leaving conventional Jewish institutions to their own devices.

But the deeper problem with this approach is that it destroys any hope for coherent planning in the Jewish community. Jewish resources are allocated by hundreds of separate boards, some knowledgeable, many not, about the needs of the larger Jewish communal enterprise. "Gone are the days, if they ever existed," writes Sol Polachek, "of either donor or communal willingness to accept blind subservience in resource allocation. We see the rise by individuals and communities who want greater impact in decision making involving resource allocation. A primary manifestation of this is the increasing trend for the designation of funds."²¹³ One reason for this shift is that charitable causes are competing with each other with ever greater intensity. A second is the expectation donors bring that philanthropies must be oriented to them and their needs. Leading the way has been the United Way, which introduced the donor option approach. "According to the United Way, 82 percent of the donors queried in a recent survey said that they wanted to be able to have the option of designating their gifts. 80 percent of the same respondents indicated a desire to be asked their opinion on distribution decisions."²¹⁴

To cope with this new orientation in philanthropy, some have proposed a set of criteria for designated giving. Here is a sample list of "do's and don'ts": (1) A designated gift should not be "allowed to occur without having it tied into a larger communal philosophy." (2) "There should be a formal local structure to evaluate programs or projects which would benefit from designation." (3) "Designation should be something more than a marketing tool." (4) "Designation should only be allowed while maintaining the concept of unified giving. Therefore, it must be over and above the annual gift." (5) "Designations should never be allowed where they might leave the community open to undue and unfair pressure or blackmail." (6) "Designation should, wherever possible, be broad enough in scope so as to avoid overly specific programs or projects which have no relation to communal priorities and goals."²¹⁵

But as philanthropies are forced to compete more intensely with one another, and as the worldview of donors is increasingly oriented to their own needs and wishes, it is doubtful that Jewish causes will be able to withstand the push to designated giving. Symptomatic of this trend was

²¹³Sol Polachek, "Approaches to Designated Giving," *Strategic Issues Affecting Philanthropy* (CJF, 1990), p. 19.

²¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 20. In actuality, a far smaller percentage exercise their option to advise.

²¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 23.

the decision of the Oakland, California federation to institute a new policy for 1997, which asks donors to contribute to the general campaign and then also to designate one of four areas for additional giving—social justice, education, Israel, and spiritual renewal.²¹⁶ Presumably, if one of these areas proves unpopular, it will languish due to insufficient funding.

Thus, even as it is evident that major giving continues to support the Jewish community energetically, two significant shifts have occurred in recent decades that are remaking the field of Jewish philanthropy. One is the hemorrhaging of money out of the Jewish community to non-Jewish causes. Scarcely a week passes without reports of major multi-million-dollar gifts by Jews to universities, orchestras, museums, hospitals, and other worthy institutions. Sometimes these donors contribute as well to Jewish causes, but usually they limit their giving to a mere fraction of the sums they bestow on non-Jewish institutions. A named chair at a Jewish institution goes for a fraction of the cost of a similar chair at a university. A building endowed at a cost of \$25 or \$50 million at a hospital or symphony is at best matched by a far, far smaller gift to a Jewish cultural or religious institution.

Equally significant for the future of Jewish philanthropy is the turn to designated giving. Writing of this “most troubling” trend, John Ruskay of the New York UJA-Federation observed: “A number of Jewish philanthropists are beginning to question whether to continue providing regular significant support for the total community, for our common communal enterprise. They prefer to direct their major giving to those institutions with which they feel a closer personal association. Who [he pointedly asks] will tend to the infrastructure of programs that serve the total community if our most generous supporters shift to a kind of boutique philanthropy?”²¹⁷ Although many observers point to rampant individualism as the underlying cause for this shift in patterns of giving, a second factor must be considered as well: resistance to federated giving by big donors represents a form of assimilation to the norms of American elite giving. In her study of wealthy donors, Francie Ostrower flatly asserts a fundamental truth: “Major elite philanthropy virtually never goes to umbrella organizations.”²¹⁸ As wealthy Jews assimilate to the norms of their class, they will give decreasingly to Jewish umbrella organizations.

²¹⁶Teresa Strasser, “Oakland Federation’s Donors Can Target Gifts,” *MetroWest Jewish News*, Jan. 9, 1997, p. 38.

²¹⁷John Ruskay, *Historical Change and Communal Responsibility*, p. 19.

²¹⁸Ostrower, *Why the Wealthy Give*, p. 55.

CONCLUSION

A balance sheet of contemporary trends in Jewish philanthropy requires an accounting of the considerable resources that continue to be funneled to Jewish causes, as well as a recognition of some significant shifts in giving that are potentially deleterious. On the positive side, there is great wealth in the Jewish community and still much generosity. The sums donated to Jewish causes continue to grow at a robust pace. Whereas the annual campaigns of Jewish federations are declining in absolute and certainly in inflation-adjusted dollars, other sources of revenue flowing to federations are making up the difference — particularly the large sums going to endowment and philanthropic funds controlled by federations. American Jewish philanthropic support for overseas Jewish needs also remains strong, but more of it is now channeled directly to institutions abroad rather than mainly through the United Jewish Appeal. Moreover, the vitality of Jewish philanthropy becomes even more impressive when the long-unacknowledged sphere of religious giving is recognized: the combined sums given by American Jews to support synagogues, denominational institutions, day schools, and religious camps more than equal all other forms of giving to domestic Jewish causes.

Somewhat more worrisome, perhaps, is the increasing dependence of these causes upon a shrinking base of donors. Ever growing percentages of Jewish philanthropy are contributed by a continually declining number of Jewish givers. From the perspective of many fund-raisers, this trend is insignificant, particularly as the wealth of family foundations and the sheer sums they contribute more than offset the loss in dollars by small contributors. As long as a few big donors are prepared to support Jewish institutional life lavishly, it matters little to these fund-raisers whether there are 200,000 fewer donors to federated campaigns.

But from the perspective of those concerned with drawing Jews into further engagement through the federation model, it matters a great deal. At least for the past three decades, federations have redefined themselves as primarily “community-building” institutions rather than as fund-collecting agencies. This redirection has involved a major reorientation in mission: federations “shifted from a primary focus on helping American Jews integrate into American life successfully to a basic concern with maintaining and enhancing their Jewish life in the face of the ‘threat’ of freedom in North America.”²¹⁹ Participation in the redefined federation system — as givers and as volunteers for its myriad committees — was now seen as a means of participation in the life of the Jewish commu-

²¹⁹Donald Feldstein, “The Changing Client System of Jewish Federations,” in Kosmin and Ritterband, eds., *Contemporary Jewish Philanthropy in America*, pp. 220–21.

nity, working “for the creative survival of the Jewish people.” But as the numbers of Jews who participate in federation giving and volunteering decline, and as the entire operation becomes increasingly dependent on a small population of well-heeled givers, the community-building function may well give way to what Gerald Teller characterizes as a “corporate model”: leaders will act out of “good business sense and not out of a commitment to consensus and covenant.”²²⁰ In short, as the donor base shrinks and as donors insist on designated giving, the model of communal partnership and planning will weaken.

Also troubling are the broader demographic and social patterns that are recasting Jewish philanthropic life. If trends of the last decade hold true, the vast majority of Jews in interfaith marriages will not give to Jewish causes, resulting in a further shrinkage of the overall Jewish donor base. This will hit especially hard if children of big givers intermarry and direct their giving to non-Jewish causes. There is a strong likelihood that the heirs of today’s communal stalwarts will not be available to continue the philanthropic tradition of their families, and that huge sums of money accumulated by highly committed Jews will be inherited by individuals with tenuous connections to Jewish life and philanthropy.

Also worrying but far less certain are the trends within the vast cohort of baby boomers, who are rapidly approaching their peak years of earning income and acquiring assets (including their parents’ estates). Current trends among this population suggest that not only are boomers less apt to contribute to Jewish causes but when they do give, their philanthropy tends to be more tailored to their specific ideological commitments than to umbrella campaigns. More pessimistic observers of this population fear that the cancerous growth of individualism²²¹ will shape their lifelong patterns of association and giving, distancing them from networks of civic engagement and organization.

As the baby boomers age, they may modify their patterns of giving, particularly as they come to understand how philanthropy also enhances their own lives and serves as a force for community building. Jewish philanthropy in the late 20th century is far less directed to aiding the poor than it is to supporting the institutions needed by the donors themselves. Paul Ritterband and Richard Silberstein have put it well:

Increasingly, the campaign does not represent the transfer of wealth from the haves to the have-nots. Increasingly, the campaign is an expression of

²²⁰Gerald A. Teller, “The Jewish Community: A Partnership or a Corporation?” *Journal of Jewish Communal Service* 71, nos. 2–3, Winter/Spring 1995, pp. 200–04; and Bubis, “The Impact of Changing Issues on Federations and Their Structures,” pp. 103–04.

²²¹Robert N. Bellah et al., *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life* (Berkeley, 1985), p. vii.

communal involvement, i.e., paying one's dues literally and metaphorically. The dependent faction of the Jewish population grows ever smaller. Increasingly, Federation dues constitute user's fees.²²²

Donald Feldstein, a longtime federation leader, has urged the Jewish community to make this plain as a means of heightening interest in giving to federated campaigns. Rather than emphasize the "old distinctions between two client systems"—wealthy donors and impoverished recipients—he observes that "the bulk of contributors to that system [and recipients] are one and the same group."²²³ This is true in general of philanthropy in the United States, where between 80 and 90 percent of the nonprofit sector is "devoted to enhancing the variety and quality of our civic life and has little to do with charitable activities."²²⁴ The same is true of Jewish philanthropy, which primarily enriches the quality of Jewish life through its support of institutions that Jews require to live well-rounded Jewish lives—synagogues, educational institutions, community centers, cultural institutions, and the like. Some communal leaders hope that as donors come to appreciate the ways in which their own lives are transformed by these institutions, they will increase their levels of support. While it is far from certain that these types of programs can generate the same excitement and engagement as stirring campaigns in times of war and rescue, there is reason to believe that for the foreseeable future, enough Jews will heed the call to participate in and enhance the quality of Jewish life—for themselves and for all Jews.

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²²²Ritterband and Silberstein, "Generation, Age and Income Variability," p. 49.

²²³Feldstein, "The Changing Client System of Jewish Federations," p. 225.

²²⁴Wolpert, "The Generosity of Americans: Challenges and Opportunities," p. 7.

TABLE 1. AMOUNTS RAISED BY ANNUAL AND SPECIAL CAMPAIGNS OF UJA/FEDERATION, 1939–1996 (IN MILLIONS)*

Year	Annual Campaign	Year	Annual Campaign (+ Special)
1939	\$28.4	1979	\$506 + 45
1942	29.3	1980	536 + 22
1946	131.7	1981	579 + 16
1948	205.0	1982	603 + 20
1950	142.1	1983	620 + 84
1955	110.6	1984	678 + 33
1956	131.3	1985	705 + 92
1960	126.0	1986	738 + 23
1965	131.3	1987	780 + 11
1967	317.5	1988	800 + 12
1968	232.6	1989	822 + 50
1970	298.2	1990	825 + 416
1973	378.8	1991	808 + 284
1974	685.9	1992	804 + 164
1975	491.1	1993	793 + 78
		1994	798 + 40
		1995	789 + 20

*Includes special campaigns but excludes contributions to endowment and philanthropic funds.

Source: Daniel J. Elazar, *Community and Polity*, rev. ed., 1995, p. 408, table 12.3, 1939–1975 figures. Council of Jewish Federations, Development and Marketing Division, 1979–1995 figures.

TABLE 2. FEDERATION CAMPAIGN ALLOCATIONS TO JEWISH EDUCATION,
1937–1993

Year	Percentage of Campaign Allocations Going to Jewish Education	Dollar Amount
1937	5.45	\$528,831
1947	8.89	2.2 million
1957	10.15	3.9 million
1973	21.4	16.7 million
1980	24.0	34.5 million
1984	26.0	50.0 million
1990	26.2	77.3 million
1993	23.2	60.0 million

Source: David Shluker, "The Federation and Jewish Education," *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, Fall/Winter 1995/96, p. 81.

TABLE 3A. TRENDS IN GIFTS TO FEDERATION ANNUAL CAMPAIGNS, 1989, 1994* (ALL CITIES—189 FEDERATIONS)

Gift Category	1989		1994		% Increase of Gifts
	# of Gifts	% of Total Gifts	# of Gifts	% of Total Gifts	
Under \$100	467,409	51.8	365,877	45.9	-21.7
\$100-\$999	322,503	35.7	317,015	39.8	-1.7
\$1,000-\$4,999	82,809	9.2	84,807	10.6	2.4
\$5,000-\$9,999	14,682	1.6	15,062	1.9	2.6
\$10,000-\$24,999	9,847	1.1	9,444	1.2	-4.1
\$25,000-\$49,999	2,926	0.3	2,714	0.3	-7.2
\$50,000-\$99,999	1,127	0.1	1,124	0.1	-0.3
\$100,000 + over	906	0.1	868	0.1	-4.2
Total \$10,000 +	14,806	1.6	14,150	1.8	-4.4
Total \$1,000 +	112,297	12.4	114,019	14.3	1.5
Total Campaign	902,209		796,911		-11.7

*These numbers are projected from the results of the 107 responding Federations to reflect the total campaigns for these two years.

Source: CJF Department of Planning and Resource Development, 1995.

TABLE 3B. TRENDS IN CONTRIBUTIONS TO FEDERATION ANNUAL CAMPAIGNS, 1989, 1994* (ALL CITIES—189 FEDERATIONS)

Gift Category	1989		1994		
	Contribs. (\$)	% of Total Contribs.	Contribs. (\$)	% of Total Contribs.	% Increase Contribs.
Under \$100	16,359,325	2.0	12,073,950	.5	-26.2
\$100-\$999	86,753,235	10.6	83,057,875	10.4	-4.3
\$1,000-\$4,999	151,044,048	18.4	147,648,808	18.5	-2.2
\$5,000-\$9,999	87,135,383	10.6	87,992,353	11.0	1.0
\$10,000-\$24,999	131,597,988	16.0	124,827,074	15.6	-5.1
\$25,000-\$49,999	88,153,307	10.7	81,266,407	10.2	-7.8
\$50,000-\$99,999	69,278,319	8.4	69,051,615	8.7	-0.3
\$100,000 + over	190,036,071	23.2	191,869,200	24.1	1.0
Total \$10,000 +	479,065,685	58.4	467,014,296	58.5	-2.5
Total \$1,000 +	717,245,116	87.4	702,655,457	88.1	-2.0
Total Campaign	820,357,676		797,787,282		-2.8

*These numbers are projected from the results of the 107 responding Federations to reflect the total campaigns for these two years.

TABLE 3C. TRENDS IN AVERAGE GIFTS TO FEDERATION ANNUAL CAMPAIGNS, 1989, 1994* (ALL CITIES—189 FEDERATIONS)

Gift Category	1989	1994	% Increase Average Gift
	Average Gift (\$)	Average Gift (\$)	
Under \$100	35	33	-5.7
\$100-\$999	269	262	-2.6
\$1,000-\$4,999	1,824	1,741	-4.6
\$5,000-\$9,999	5,935	5,842	-1.6
\$10,000-\$24,999	13,364	13,218	-1.1
\$25,000-\$49,999	30,128	29,943	-0.1
\$50,000-\$99,999	61,471	61,434	-0.1
\$100,000 + over	209,753	221,047	5.4
Total \$10,000 +	32,356	33,005	2.0
Total \$1,000 +	6,387	6,163	-3.5
Total Campaign	909	1,001	10.1

*These numbers are projected from the results of the 107 responding Federations to reflect the total campaigns for these two years.

TABLE 4. GIFTS TO FEDERATED CAMPAIGNS IN CITIES OF VARYING SIZES, 1994
(LARGEST COMMUNITIES)

Community	Jewish Population	Total Dollars Raised	Per Capita Giving (1993)	Gifts over \$10,000	
				% of All Dollars	% of All Donors
Atlanta	67,500	\$13,050,000	\$195	58.4	3.0
Baltimore	94,500	22,220,000	235	72.	2.1
Bergen County	69,000	7,411,000	110	55.2	1.0
Boston	214,000	21,326,000	102	64.3	1.6
Chicago	261,000	54,101,000	206	58.9	2.1
Cleveland	65,000	24,504,000	376	63.2	2.1
Detroit	96,000	26,000,000	273	65.4	2.9
Los Angeles	490,000	40,024,000	86	56.2	2.2
MetroWest NJ	121,000	18,619,000	167	57.4	1.9
Miami	166,000	18,500,000	96	47.4	2.3
N.Y. City	1,450,000	116,159,000	80	65.4	2.3
Palm Beach County	93,500	14,200,000	209	56.5	2.3
Philadelphia	254,000	26,405,000	104	55.9	1.2
Pittsburgh	45,000	9,589,000	210	50.5	1.6
San Francisco	128,000	18,150,000	138	63.4	1.7
St. Louis	53,000	9,760,000	187	65.1	1.8
Washington, D.C.	165,000	17,550,000	117	55.7	1.1

Source: "1994 Distribution of Jewish Federation Funds Available in Communities," Groups 1-5, Council of Jewish Federations, Dec. 1995; Campaign Planning Services: Basic Data for Campaign Planning II," Council of Jewish Federations, June 1995.

TABLE 5. GIFTS TO FEDERATED CAMPAIGNS IN CITIES OF VARYING SIZES, 1994
(SELECTED INTERMEDIATE AND SMALL COMMUNITIES)

Community	Jewish Population	Total Dollars Raised	Per Capita Giving (1993)	<i>Gifts over \$10,000</i>	
				% of All Dollars	% of All Donors
Buffalo	17,000	\$2,709,000	\$169	22.2	.7
Cincinnati	25,000	6,990,000	266	49.8	2.5
Columbus	17,000	6,296,000	365	72.0	2.5
Dallas	38,000	6,807,000	171	58.8	2.4
Harrisburg	7,000	1,860,000	288	57.6	1.3
Jacksonville	7,300	1,286,000	164	53.4	1.0
Kansas City	19,100	4,200,000	212	60.7	2.3
Memphis	8,500	2,486,000	281	49.1	1.2
Milwaukee	28,000	8,398,000	296	69.0	3.6
Minneapolis	31,500	10,165,000	444	70.0	2.2
Phoenix	48,000	3,807,000	79	39.1	1.3
San Diego	70,000	6,150,000	91	56.3	1.5
San Jose	33,000	1,550,000	51	32.7	.7
Sarasota	13,000	2,650,000	205	29.4	1.2
Seattle	29,300	5,202,000	171	62.7	2.0
Worcester	10,000	1,900,000	204	55.3	2.4

Source: "1994 Distribution of Jewish Federation Funds Available in Communities," Groups 1-5, Council of Jewish Federations, Dec. 1995; "Campaign Planning Services: Basic Data for Campaign Planning II," Council of Jewish Federations, June 1995.

TABLE 6. LARGE GIFTS TO FEDERATED CAMPAIGNS IN CITIES OF VARYING SIZES, 1994

Community	Gifts over \$100,000	
	% of All Dollars	% of All Donors
Atlanta	25.2	.2
Baltimore	43.7	.2
Chicago	24.6	.1
Cincinnati	10.2	.1
Columbus	43.8	.3
Cleveland	32.5	.2
Detroit	28.1	.1
Los Angeles	16.3	.1
New York	30.2	.1
Palm Beach	15.7	.1

Source: "1994 Distribution of Jewish Federation Funds Available in Communities," Groups 1-5, Council of Jewish Federations, Dec. 1995; "Campaign Planning Services: Basic Data for Campaign Planning II," Council of Jewish Federations, June 1995.

TABLE 7. JEWISH GIVING AND AFFILIATION IN DIFFERENT REGIONS OF THE UNITED STATES

	West	Midwest	South	Northeast
Percent contributed to Jewish charity, 1989	52	67	65	64
Percent contributed to Federation-UJA, 1989	35	50	53	45
Percent households with synagogue membership	28	54	40	45

Source: *Reinventing Our Jewish Community: Can the West Be Won? A Report to the Jewish Communities of the Western United States and the Council of Jewish Federations* (CJF, Dec. 1994), p. 35. These data refer to entirely Jewish families only.

TABLE 8. PATTERNS OF PHILANTHROPIC GIVING BY JEWS OF DIFFERENT DENOMINATIONS (NJPS 1990) (PERCENTAGES)

	Orthodox Jews		Conservative Jews		Reform Jews	
	N. Y. Only	Rest of U.S.	N. Y. Only	Rest of U.S.	N. Y. Only	Rest of U.S.
	Non-Jewish giving only	5.7	12.1	12.2	16.2	25.4
Jewish giving only	34.0	17.2	20.6	13.2	7.5	6.2
Both Jewish and non-Jewish causes	54.7	44.8	48.9	51.5	45.5	45.6
Does not give	5.7	20.7	16.0	16.7	19.4	20.7

Source: Ariela Keysar, "Patterns of Philanthropy: New York Versus Non-New York Jewry in 1990," Working Papers, Center for the Study of Philanthropy, Graduate School and Center of the City University of New York. Based on the 1990 National Jewish Population Study.

Israeli Literature and the American Reader

by ALAN MINTZ

THE PAST 25 YEARS HAVE BEEN a heady time for lovers of Israeli literature. In the 1960s the Israeli literary scene began to explode, especially in terms of fiction. Until then, poetry had been at the center of literary activity. While S.Y. Agnon's eminence, rooted in a different place and time, persisted, the native-born writers who began to produce stories and novels after 1948 never seemed to be able to carry their efforts much beyond the struggles and controversies of the hour. Then suddenly there were the short stories of Amos Oz, A.B. Yehoshua, Aharon Appelfeld, and Amalia Kahana-Carmon, followed by their first and second novels. These writers were soon joined by Shulamit Hareven, Yehoshua Kenaz, Yaakov Shabtai, and David Grossman. Into the 1980s and 1990s the debuts of impressive new writers became more frequent, while the productivity of the by-now established ones only intensified.

What was different about this new Israeli literature was the quality and inventiveness of its fictional techniques and its ability to explore universal issues in the context of Israeli society. There was also a new audience for this literature; children of immigrants had become sophisticated Hebrew readers. Many of the best books became not only critical successes but best-sellers as well.

Was this a party to which outsiders were invited? Very few American Jews knew Hebrew well enough to read a serious modern Hebrew book, so that even if they were aware of the celebration, they could not hear the music. But soon English translations began to appear: Yehoshua's short-story collection *Three Days and a Child* in 1970 and his novel *The Lover* in 1978, Oz's *My Michael* in 1972, Appelfeld's *Badenheim 1939* in 1980, Shabtai's *Past Continuous* in 1985, and Grossman's *See Under: Love* in 1989, with many others in between and after. The translations were generally of high quality and published by good houses, and they received mostly enthusiastic and discerning notices in major critical venues, such as the *New York Times Book Review* and the *New York Review of Books*.

For those involved with modern Hebrew literature as teachers and scholars, this was a moment to savor. Hebrew literature had reached its first great flowering in Eastern Europe at the turn of the century in the works of Mendele Mokher Seforim, Hayim Nahman Bialik, Yosef Hayim Brenner, and Micha Yosef Berdichevsky; it had attained another high

point with Agnon and Uri Zvi Greenberg in Palestine between the two world wars. In this early phase of the Zionist revolution, it was often literature that led politics. Long before the Yishuv, the Jewish community, prospered, sophisticated masterworks in modern Hebrew were being written and read. With the establishment of the State of Israel, the roles were reversed, and it took time for the impressive social, political, and military accomplishments of the new enterprise to be matched by the same resourceful innovation on the front of the literary imagination. When the two finally came together, as happened in the 1970s and 1980s, the combination was powerful. Not since the time of the Bible and the ancient liturgical poets had so much that was so good been written in Hebrew. When, after a period, the English translations of these works began to appear, a unique opportunity presented itself. Scholars of Israeli literature could now turn to the Jewish public and say, "Look here! This is what we've been talking about; this is what has been so exciting!"

The response, to put it mildly, was underwhelming—the excitement turned out not to be infectious. When measured in objective terms, it is difficult to argue that Israeli literature has enjoyed anything more than a very limited success in the United States. Despite strongly favorable notices, Israeli novels in translation have not sold very well.¹ A few have done respectably and gone into paperback, but many of the key texts are out of print entirely, as anyone who tries to put together a syllabus for a college course in the field quickly discovers.

Even if commercial criteria are set aside, the record remains equivocal at best. When it comes to the generality of committed Jews who are affiliated with Jewish institutions and are involved with the life of the community, it is difficult to find much recognition of the names of Israeli writers, not to mention experience reading their works. In the case of the elite of the community—rabbis, educators, lay and professional leaders of organizations and federations—the name recognition may be there, but familiarity may extend only to the political views of the writers, for example those of Oz or Grossman, and not to their main literary work. Even university teachers of Jewish studies tend to regard Israeli literature not

¹Exact sales figures are nearly impossible to obtain. Publishers regard these figures as proprietary information, and for a variety of reasons, are not willing to disclose them. What figures mean altogether is also rather slippery, because the number of books shipped to bookstores is often much more than the number actually sold, and this is further complicated by subsidiary rights of various sorts. In the end, because authors are paid only for books sold, it is only from royalties that sales figures are derived. The availability of information depends on the author's willingness to share it and his or her record keeping. I wrote to the authors discussed later in this essay with the hope of shedding more light on their relative success in America. Some responded sympathetically; some not at all. But none was able to provide the information I was seeking.

as a manifestation of current cultural creativity that makes claims on them as intellectuals, but rather as one area of academic specialization among others.

In the end, however, the muted reception of Israeli writing in the United States by Jews is less a reflection of the absolute number of its "users" than a sign of a failure of these writings to become part of the intellectual discourse and cultural repertoire of the American Jewish community. One might reasonably have hoped for more, given the relationship of involved American Jews with Israel. Certainly, the Zionization of American Jewish life is a striking phenomenon of the contemporary Jewish scene.² While only a small number of American Jews are Zionists in the classical ideological sense, the vast majority are pro-Israel in their attitudes, and a significant number are attached to Israel in a variety of ways. In addition, American Jews buy books: they buy fiction and works of general interest in higher proportions than the general public; and they buy many more books of Jewish interest than they did in the past, judging from the explosion in recent years of titles dealing with Jewish life and the Holocaust. Moreover, it is not the case that the Israeli novels under discussion are unapproachable or unenjoyable, as witnessed by their enormous sales in Israel. Sales of 40,000–50,000 copies, which are not uncommon for a successful novel in Israel, would be counted a substantial success even in the United States. Given the tiny proportion of readers in Israel to readers in America, the numbers are astounding.

The lack of response to Israeli literature in the United States is highlighted by a comparison with the situation in Europe. For nearly a decade, sales of Israeli literary works (including, occasionally, volumes of poetry) translated into European languages have been steadily increasing. Exact sales figures are hard to come by, but the number of new titles translated each year gives some indication of the current situation. In Italy, during the 1970s and 1980s, only two or three titles appeared yearly on average; beginning in 1989, the number began to climb, reaching 12 in 1994. In Germany, five or six titles appeared yearly until 1988, when the number began to climb dramatically to reach 27 in 1994. In the United States, by contrast, translations reached their peak in 1989, when 27 were published, but then dropped down to below 20 in 1994.³

It is startling to contemplate the fact that in Germany, a country with a tiny Jewish population, the same number of translations of Israeli literature now appear as in the United States. After Germany comes France

²For a useful summary of these attitudes, see Eytan Gilboa, *American Public Opinion Toward Israel and the Arab-Israeli Conflict* (Lexington, 1987).

³I am grateful the Institute for the Translation of Hebrew Literature and its director, Nili Cohen, for sharing information about the sales of Israeli literature in Europe.

in number of titles translated, and then Italy, Spain, and Holland, with a scattering of titles in Polish, Swedish, Portuguese, Arabic, Greek, and Chinese.

More important, perhaps, than the quantitative dimension is the fact that important new Israeli writers in Israel can become familiar to European readers, while American readers, including American Jewish readers, have no inkling of their existence. Orly Castel-Bloom, for example, is regarded as the most brilliant practitioner of an audacious, postmodernist sensibility in Israeli writing. French, Dutch, and German readers can sample four of her titles, while none of her books have appeared in English. Itamar Levy's *Letters of the Sun, Letters of the Moon* (1991) is the most important recent Israeli contribution to the representation of the inner experience of the Arab; it will soon appear in Italian, French, German, and Spanish, along with two other books of Levy's. Savyon Leibrecht is an accomplished short-story writer who is central to the rise of women's writing in Israel. She is being translated not only into Italian and German, but also into Chinese. Neither Levy's nor Leibrecht's books have appeared in English.

We return then to the question: Why is it that when Israeli literature has come of age and finds itself in the midst of its greatest boom, American Jewish readers, so cultured and so committed to Israel, evince little interest in it? Some answers to this question suggest themselves, having to do with the differences in the reading habits of Americans and Europeans, with the general fate of the audience for serious fiction in America, and with the deep ambivalence American Jews feel at the prospect of encountering the realities of Israeli society. Our first order of business, however, is to focus on the actual record of the reception of Israeli literature in the United States. It needs to be underscored that the failure of this literature to secure a broad audience is only part of the "career" of these books on these shores. The other part is the fact that Israeli novels are acquired and translated and published by prestigious commercial houses without subsidy; that they are reviewed thoughtfully in respected journals; that they make their way into bookstores and public, synagogue, and university libraries, and onto the lists of book clubs and reading circles, as well as the syllabi of college courses and adult education offerings. And, of course, they are purchased and actually read by thousands of people. All this is a tangible reality that demands attention.

The Dynamics of Reception

How does a piece of writing written in Hebrew and produced in Israel get translated, published, reviewed, distributed, read, and discussed in America? What are the constraints and mediations that favor some works over others?

The English translation of an Israeli novel may be said to represent, in publishing terms, a double survival. The book first has to get itself published in Israel before it becomes a candidate for the exceedingly smaller ranks of books published in a foreign language. How it joins these ranks is related to the publishing scene in Israel and the changes that have occurred in it over the years.

During the first decades of Israel's existence, the key publishing houses were allied with political parties and the kibbutz movements: Sifriyat Poalim, Hakibbutz Hame'uhad, Am Oved, and others. Beginning in the 1970s, these institutionally backed publishers were made to share the market with commercial houses such as Keter and Zemora-Beitan, which conducted themselves much more like their American counterparts. This shift, which echoed the larger retreat from ideology and the move to an open-market economy, produced complicated consequences. On the one hand, it made it easier for women, Oriental Jews, and other marginalized groups to get their voices heard in the literary marketplace and to connect with new audiences for literature. On the other hand, quality writing had to pay its own way and could no longer depend as much on institutional subsidies. The publishing scene became more driven by the search for best-sellers, whose appearance was attended by intensive public-relations campaigns.

How then does a writer get translated into English once his or her work has achieved some success in Israel? It is easier for some than for others, of course. Established writers such as Oz and Yehoshua and, by now, Grossman, have long-term contracts with publishing houses that have become their "homes" in America: Oz with Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Yehoshua with Doubleday, and Grossman with Farrar, Straus & Giroux. Anything major that they write will almost automatically appear in English. (The justice of this arrangement is another matter. Many critics think that Oz's last several novels are inferior to the work of several younger writers who remain untranslated. But this appears to be a general state of affairs that is not special to the case of translation.)

Another factor is genre. Short stories have always been a hard sell in translation, although Israeli publishers and readers are more sympathetic to first books of stories than are their American counterparts. Often, as was the case with Oz's *Where Jackals Howl*, stories that were written and published at the outset of a writer's career have to wait until there is a successful novel (for Oz it was his second novel, *My Michael*, which was his debut work in English) before a publisher agrees to bring out the earlier stories.

Although the "serious" novel has long reigned as the genre of choice in translation, mysteries and thrillers are now mounting a challenge. Israeli readers have long had to satisfy their appetite for detective novels and mystery stories by recourse to the many translations into Hebrew

from English and French, the two languages in which this type of material has reached high levels of sophistication and variety. At present, however, accomplished Hebrew writers like Yoram Kaniuk, Shulamit Lapid, and Batya Gur are turning out mysteries that are rooted in the particularities of Israeli life which, in the tradition of Ruth Rendell and P. D. James, aspire to be something much more than entertainments. The success of Batya Gur's recent detective series, including *The Saturday Morning Murder* (1992), *The Literary Murder* (1993), and *Murder on a Kibbutz* (1994), are cases in point.

Then there are works that resist translation and writers who resist having them translated. Amalia Kahana-Carmon is one of the key figures in the New Wave that reshaped Israeli fiction in the 1960s and 1970s, and the most important precursor of the current boom in women's writing. She is usually grouped together with Oz, Yehoshua, and Appelfeld and spoken about with the same high regard. Yet whereas interested English readers are familiar with the work of the latter, Kahana-Carmon is locked away in a secret garden. In part, it is a concealment of her own making. It is said that she has never permitted her work to be rendered into English because she believes it to be untranslatable.⁴ While her stance is idiosyncratic, it is not entirely a conceit. Her classic work explores the imaginative and fantasy life of female protagonists, and the highly lyrical and figurative language she uses to represent these inner states is indeed difficult.

Sometimes the size and subject matter of a book are simply too imposing. By most accounts, S. Yizhar's *The Days of Ziklag* (1958) is the best Hebrew novel of the 1950s, the first important native Israeli novel, and the only work of the Palmah-generation writers to transcend the strictures of socialist-positivist aesthetic. Still, the novel runs to some 1,143 pages in Hebrew—Hebrew usually translates up to a third longer in English—and while it is set during the War of Independence and follows a fighting unit in the southern campaign, there is no conventional plot and no stirring battle scenes. The power of the novel stems almost entirely from the internal monologues of the young soldiers and the elaborate nature descriptions of the northern Negev. *The Days of Ziklag* has never been translated into English, although the German rights have been bought by Suhrkamp in Frankfurt.

Another example of an untranslated work is Haim Be'er's *The Time of Trimming* (1987), a long novel that examines the boundaries between Orthodoxy and ultra-Orthodoxy by focusing on a small army unit staffed

⁴One short story by Kahana-Carmon that is available in English is "Na'ima Sasson Writes Poems," trans. Arthur Jacobs, in *Ribcage: Israeli Women's Fiction*, ed. Carol Diamant and Lily Rattok (New York, 1994), pp. 48-70.

by religious Jews and charged with burying soldiers who die in action or in training accidents. Be'er is one of the best of a small group of writers who probe the religious world of Israeli society using novelistic tools. (His first novel, *Feathers* [1980], is set in the ultra-Orthodox Jerusalem neighborhood of Ge'ula during the fractious controversy over accepting German reparations in the 1950s.) Although centering a long novel like *The Time of Trimming* on an army burial unit may work well with Israeli readers—the book was quite successful—it may well not resonate with the American reading public.

Personal relations, personal contacts, and personal presence also play a role in determining which books get translated. There are literary agents who represent Israeli writers, and the Institute for the Translation of Hebrew Literature in Tel Aviv acts in the role of agent on behalf of individual writers in promoting and negotiating contracts for publication abroad, although more in Europe than in America. But the personal exertions of authors remain important. A good example is Yoram Kaniuk, a writer of comic grotesque fictions who lived in New York for many years in the 1950s and 1960s. Kaniuk is one of the best published Israeli writers in America, with six or seven books to his credit—from *The Acrophile* in 1961 to *His Daughter* in 1989. It would be surprising if Kaniuk's long sojourn in New York did not make it easier for him to get his work published here. He is an important writer, but his hefty representation in English is out of proportion to the standing he is accorded by most critics and readers in Israel.

Yehoshua Kenaz and Yeshayahu Koren, on the other hand, are two highly reputed writers who have been laboring for as long as Kaniuk but have only recently seen some of their work appear in English: Kenaz's *After the Holidays* (1987) and *The Way to the Cats* (1994) and Koren's *Funeral at Noon* (1996). How their work got translated makes a related point. Both authors have been published in America by Alan Lelchuk's Steerforth Press, a small quality publishing house located in Hanover, New Hampshire. Lelchuk is an American writer who for a long time has taken an interest in Israeli writing; together with Gershon Shaked, he edited the important collection *Eight Great Short Hebrew Novels* (1983). Lelchuk's familiarity with the literary scene in Israel—and the flexibility afforded by a small press—have drawn him to some very fine writers who have been overlooked by the industry giants. Ted Solotaroff, who for many years was Yehuda Amichai's editor at HarperCollins, is another example of a powerful editor within the publishing world whose commitment to Israeli writing has been an important factor in establishing careers and advancing reputations.

Authors have to be lucky in their translators, and Israeli writers by and large have been. The major exception is Agnon. While he is regarded by

many as the greatest Hebrew prose writer, he wrote in a learned pseudo-naïve style that laid many traps for translators; two of his great novels, *The Bridal Canopy* (1937) and *A Guest for the Night* (1968), do not come across as particularly magisterial in English.⁵ The current group of Israeli writers, in contrast, works in styles that are more recognizably novelistic and are laden with fewer allusions to classical texts. Therefore, with some of the exceptions noted above, their work does not present obstacles to good translations.

In the corps of translators into English, there are two preeminent figures. Dalya Bilu is a translator of enormous energy and scope, who has worked with most contemporary Israeli writers; born in South Africa, her translations have a slight Anglo rather than American hue. Hillel Halkin, who is American, has also worked with a wide spectrum of current writers, although he has devoted considerable time to brilliant translations of classics of modern Hebrew and Yiddish literature, including the works of Mendele, Shalom Aleichem, Brenner, and Agnon. There is another group of translators who are principally associated with a single writer: Nicholas DeLange with Amos Oz, Betsy Rosenberg with David Grossman, and, recently, Jeffrey Green with Aharon Appelfeld. In each of these cases, a writer has found a translator who has a special affinity for his work and who can be relied upon to provide a continuity of voice from work to work. Other accomplished translators include Zeva Shapiro, Seymour Simckes, Richard Flantz, Philip Simpson, and Barbara Harshav.

Getting Noticed

Once a Hebrew book is translated into English and published in the United States, it embarks on an uncertain journey of dissemination, which moves along two tracks. One is a commercial track related to marketing, advertising, shipments to booksellers, and sales. The other track involves the growth of a book's critical reputation as formed by published reviews, word-of-mouth comment, and standing within the academy. Sometimes the two tracks move forward together, but sometimes not. Certain publishing projects can be born into more privileged circumstances than others and given better chances before they enter the world. An enthusiastic editor can build momentum for a book by getting the sales people excited about it; and their interest makes a great deal of difference when it comes to convincing the large chains like Barnes & Noble to carry

⁵An exception is Hillel Halkin's translation of *A Simple Story* (Schocken, 1985). See also the translations of some shorter texts collected in *A Book That Was Lost and Other Stories* by S. Y. Agnon (Schocken, 1995), edited by Anne Golomb Hoffman and Alan Mintz.

the book and display it prominently. An advertising budget certainly helps, as does a budget for a book tour. If an author can present himself or herself well in English, personal appearances in the form of book fairs, talk shows, campus and bookstore readings, and consulate-arranged parties can provide an important edge.

There is no denying that published reviews play a role in the commercial dissemination of books. A glowing notice in the *New York Times* is important for sales. Not to be underestimated, however, are the low-profile but influential services that preview new books for libraries and bookstores such as *Publishers Weekly*, *The Kirkus Report*, and *Library Journal*. Book reviews, like movie and restaurant reviews, certainly function on one level as consumer reports, which are read with an eye to deciding whether a given book may be worth acquiring. Yet on another level reviews have a life of their own, which has to do with the making of reputations and with the general circulation of ideas. For the curious literate person, the ritual of sitting down, bagel in hand, of a Sunday morning to read through the *New York Times Book Review* is not an activity whose goal is to locate a desired commodity in a catalogue; it is an opportunity to eavesdrop on culture and find out what people are talking about in the world of ideas.

The book supplements and daily reviews of the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Los Angeles Times* and the *Chicago Tribune* probably have the greatest impact on sales. But in intellectual and literary circles they carry little weight as compared to a number of smaller journals which usually publish their reviews too late to have an effect on the crucial initial sales of books. Reviews in the *New York Review of Books*, *Commentary*, the *New Republic*, the *Nation*, the *New Leader*, and *Midstream* tend to be longer, more nuanced, and more ambitious in seeking to relate the book at hand to larger complexes of ideas and cultural phenomena. In these intellectually influential journals the main challenge is getting noticed. Only a small number of the serious books published in a given season are chosen to become the subjects of these deeper and more extensive essays. Israeli literature has been moderately successful in competing for this scarce intellectual air time. It has been aided by the fortuitous fact that some editors are not only familiar with the Israeli cultural scene but also read Hebrew. Neal Kozodoy at *Commentary* and Leon Wieseltier at the *New Republic* are two cases in point. It has also helped that there are figures of great intellectual authority who are actively concerned with Israeli literature. Chief among them is Prof. Robert Alter of the University of California-Berkeley, whose writing on the subject comes in the context of his distinguished contributions to many areas of the humanities. The late Irving Howe, who was an intellectual presence in so many areas, also urged attention to Israeli literature in the 1970s and 1980s.

Critics like Alter and Howe, by example, underscore the role of reviewers and reviews as mediators between cultures. Translation is surely the great step in the process by which a work of literature written in one language and culture reveals itself to another language and culture. But it is book reviews that serve as the forward stations that first receive and process the messages sent by the foreign culture. It makes a significant difference whether these stations are occupied by "insiders," who are conversant with the cultural discourse of the foreign society, or by "outsiders," for whom the foreign culture remains foreign. In reality, of course, there is a continuum between the two; and in no sense does this distinction privilege the perceptions of one over the other. Nevertheless, being an insider is different because it brings with it a special burden of judgment. Knowing not just the work itself but the societal and cultural formations from which it emerges forecloses a kind of innocence and opens up another set of responsibilities.

When an insider reviewer writes about Israeli literature in a national publication, important possibilities open up. Such writing is unlikely to be parochial; rather it will seek to make connections to the general world of literature and current ideas. Such writing enhances respect for the subject and legitimizes its inclusion in the discourse of American culture. And there is always the hope that, having found the matter of a review intriguing, readers who have no previous associations with Israeli literature will pick up the book, read it, and take an interest in the subject.

Ten Books/Six Authors

To gain a better sense of the reception of Israeli literature in the United States, it is useful to look at how key works have been treated by reviewers in major national and Jewish publications. Such reviews, of course, represent only a part of a reception process that unfolds on many levels and never approaches closure. Thus, it would be revealing to check the acquisitions of libraries (university, city, Jewish community, and, especially, synagogue) and the borrowing patterns of their users. Many groups, especially synagogue sisterhoods and Hadassah chapters, have book circles or periodic programs in which book reviews are given. It would be informative to know how often Israeli literature is discussed and the reactions to it that are voiced. Even in the case of published reviews, examining local Jewish community newspapers would represent a different level of search, one that is beyond the scope of the present study. There are dozens of community papers; many carry notices by local reviewers, while others carry syndicated columns. Undoubtedly only certain works of Israeli literature in translation get selected for attention at this level, and it would be telling to find out which do and which do not, not to mention what is said about them.

The discussion that follows focuses on ten books by six authors. They are listed here with the Hebrew publication date given in parenthesis: Amos Oz, *My Michael* (1968), translated by Nicholas DeLange, Alfred A. Knopf, 1972; Amos Oz, *Elsewhere, Perhaps* (1966), translated by Nicholas DeLange, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1973; Amos Oz, *Where Jackals Howl* (1975), translated by Nicholas DeLange, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1981; A. B. Yehoshua, *Three Days and a Child* (1962), translated by Miriam Arad, Doubleday & Co., 1970; A. B. Yehoshua, *Early in the Summer of 1970* (1972), translated by Miriam Arad, Doubleday & Co., 1977; A. B. Yehoshua, *The Lover* (1977), translated by Philip Simpson, Doubleday & Co., 1978; Shulamith Hareven, *City of Many Days* (1972), translated by Hillel Halkin, Doubleday & Co., 1977; Yaakov Shabtai, *Past Continuous* (1977), translated by Dalya Bilu, Jewish Publication Society, 1985; Aharon Appelfeld, *Badenheim 1939* (1979), translated by Dalya Bilu, David R. Godine, 1980; David Grossman, *See Under: Love* (1986), translated by Betsy Rosenberg, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1989.

These particular books have been chosen for examination because they generally represent the first appearances of the authors in English, thus affording us an opportunity to see the beginnings of their American careers and the initial reactions to their work. The review publications surveyed are those tracked by two standard references: the *Book Review Index* and the *Index to Jewish Periodicals*. These guides cover major national and Jewish journals; they do not, however, index major newspapers except for the *New York Times*. In any case, the aim of the exercise is not to document case histories of individual works, but rather to look for broader patterns of response to major works of Israeli literature. These patterns, in fact, organize themselves under four general headings.⁶

THE STATUS OF ISRAELI LITERATURE AS LITERATURE

Whether Israeli literature should be taken as a direct reflection of the embroiled and besieged nature of Israeli society or should be regarded as a more removed literary artifact has been an important consideration

⁶There is an additional subject that should be mentioned in passing without making it a separate category: the tendency to compare Israeli writers to better-known Western writers. Oz is compared to Hemingway, Camus, and Plath and is even called a Levantine Jane Austen. In Yehoshua's case, names invoked include Kafka, Mann, Chekhov, Faulkner, Simenon, Gide, Hawthorne, and Pinter. Shabtai reminds reviewers of Proust, Balzac, Faulkner, and Joyce. Appelfeld evokes Edward Hopper, Mann, Kafka, and Proust. In Grossman's case it is Garcia-Marquez, Faulkner, Rushdie, Melville, Joyce, and Kafka, in addition to Bruno Schulz. The purpose of all of this glorious name-calling is both to domesticate the foreignness of these writers by comparing them to familiar masters and also to make claims for their nonparochial importance.

for reviewers since the first important translations began to appear in the 1970s. This issue comes to the fore in Richard Locke's surprised reaction to Oz's *My Michael*, in the *New York Times* (May 25, 1972):

[A]dvance rumors hardly prepare one for this first translation of his major work. *My Michael* is anything but a provincial achievement; it has nothing to do with noble kibbutzim, Sten guns and sabras, nor with the Talmudic dryness of Israel's Nobel Prize-winner, the late S. Y. Agnon. It's quite the last kind of book one expects from a young writer living in the midst of a melodramatic political situation, for *My Michael* is an extremely self-conscious and serious psychological novel, slow, thoughtful, self-assured and highly sophisticated, full of the most skillful modulations of tone and texture.

Alan Lelchuk makes a similar point in reviewing Shabtai's *Past Continuous* in the *New York Times Book Review* (April 21, 1985): "No kibbutz utopias here, no Jerusalem mystique, no Zionist uplift, no sabra heroics—in other words, no magical society."

Locke and Lelchuk write against the background of a popular perception of Israel fostered by such American books—and their Hollywood versions—as Leon Uris's *Exodus*. In this version Israel exists only as a beleaguered and vulnerable nation populated by idealistic soldier-farmers. Certainly, American Jewish organizations labored mightily during the first decades of Israel's existence to reinforce this image. Yet this is not the actual world revealed in Israeli fiction, as Faiga Levine remarks in reviewing Oz's *Where Jackals Howl* in *Book World* (May 31, 1981): "[the] characters are not the joyous prototype kibbutzniks of the United Jewish Appeal posters." For many reviewers, the encounter with Israeli literature in translation, experienced as sophisticated and nuanced literary art, comes as a radical surprise.

Israeli literature in translation has often been welcomed by reviewers for its truth-telling capacity. Lily Edelman, for example, writing about Yehoshua's *Early in the Summer of 1970* in the *National Jewish Monthly* (April 1977), argues that the book provides a "key" to "the malaise, the despair, the somber reckoning of the soul that constitutes the stuff of the contemporary Israeli nightmare." While she finds the translation of his stories flawed, she considers them "indispensable for any reader desirous of touching truth about the contemporary Israeli mood and situation."

Far-reaching claims for the truth-telling function of Israeli literature are also advanced by James S. Diamond in *Conservative Judaism* (Winter 1979), the journal of the Conservative rabbinical organization. Writing as both a rabbi and a scholar of Hebrew literature, Diamond urges his fellow rabbis to take Israeli literature with full seriousness. His text is Yehoshua's *The Lover*, whose plot centers about deviance and family dysfunctionality. It would be a "grave misreading," Diamond argues, to regard *The Lover* as a "pulp novel best serialized in a women's magazine." He continues:

What I . . . wish to claim is that [*The Lover*] offers as revealing an insight into post-Yom Kippur War Israel as any political, economic or sociological tract of the last two or three years. The novel was written during the months preceding the May, 1977 election and can be read as a fictive presentation of the context in which the Labor-led coalition was repudiated. By exposing the immoralities and the emptiness of much of life in Israel today, Yehoshua is tacitly reaffirming a rational Zionism of humanism and moral development. It is antithetical to the mythic Zionism that celebrates Jewish power, blood, and soil.

Some reviewers have discerned a collective dimension in Israeli literature that sets it apart from other writings. This point emerges most forcefully in discussions of Shabtai's *Past Continuous* and Appelfeld's *Badenheim 1939*. In reviewing *Badenheim 1939* in *Partisan Review* (Winter 1982), William Phillips makes the bold claim that "[i]t is the weight of the *Badenheim* theme that forces one to reexamine the ideas about fiction that we have inherited from both the modernist and avant garde traditions." Writing at a time when there was much talk in literary circles about the "disappearance of the subject," Phillips sees in Appelfeld's work the centrality of historical events as they are experienced by a people or a society as a whole. At the heart of Appelfeld's fiction, he maintains, are historical and social forces rather than individual psyches.

Irving Howe puts forward a similar claim in reviewing *Past Continuous* in the *New York Review of Books* (October 10, 1985). Taking note of the dozens of characters who populate the novel, Howe indicates:

One soon comes to feel that one "knows" a good many of them, for [Shabtai's] is an art of the representative, an art of the group. A community is releasing its experience, a generation is sliding toward extinction: the community, the generation of "labor Israel," socialist Zionism, which was central in the creation of the young country but has by now—say, the late 1970s—succumbed to old age and debility. If there can be such a thing as a collective novel, then *Past Continuous* is one.

Sven Birkerts echoes Howe's point in the *New Republic* (May 27, 1985) in observing that Shabtai takes the stream-of-consciousness mode of writing, which is "by definition a subjectively centered idiom" and turns it "into a means for expressing the collective life of an extended human network."

While Shabtai's and Appelfeld's novels are surely distinctive in giving expression to a collective dimension, this element is touched upon in the critical response to the full range of Israeli writings, including recent postmodernist and "post-Zionist" narrative. Again and again, the point is made: Israeli literature, despite individual realizations, is about the nation as a whole.

THE MASTER THEMES OF ISRAELI LITERATURE

In the case of the reception of Israeli literature in the United States, it is fair to say that every reviewer reports on a new work in translation from within some previous conception of what the enterprise is about. Each reader “realizes” the meaning of the work according to what is most relevant to his or her concerns. These conceptions—variously called by literary theorists “master plots” or “meta-narratives”—are elaborated by reviewers from within their own interpretive frameworks. What are the master themes that reviewers discern in the Israeli writings under consideration here?

For many reviewers, without doubt, the master theme of Israeli literature is life under the conditions of war. Anatole Broyard goes directly to this issue in his review of Oz’s *Where Jackals Howl* in the *New York Times* (May 22, 1981): “What is it like, the emotional life of people who exist in a constant state of crisis? Does the political cheat, or does it intensify, the personal? Do deeply felt causes constrict or expand character?” Broyard’s answer is that they constrict. He thus finds Oz’s writing powerful, but his characters lifeless and controlled by principles and fixed ideas. This is a widely shared view of Israeli literature as a whole. It expresses a sympathetic understanding of the constraints under which Israelis live; it identifies those constraints and the unremitting and tragic conflicts that produce them; and it expresses a detached inquisitiveness about the nature of behavior under these conditions.

Another key theme that emerges in discussions of Israeli literature is the “Arab question.” This is the case despite the fact that the subject has only a slight presence in the works being considered here. Israeli literature has largely construed Israeli reality internally, with the Arabs largely excluded from the literary imagination. With the arrival of Oz and Yehoshua on the scene, the issue began to open up, but only in sporadic and partial ways.⁷ Still, the “Arab question” is much on the mind of reviewers. For example, while Oz’s *Where Jackals Howl* contains only one story—“Nomad and Viper”—in which an Arab character is portrayed, A.G. Mojtabai, in his review in the *New York Times Book Review* (April 26, 1981), argues that the “most haunting issue” raised in the book “[i]s that of exclusion, dispossession—the question of Isaac and Ishmael, why one son is favored and the other not.” Praising *Where Jackals Howl* as “strong, beautiful, disturbing,” Mojtabai locates its distinction in grap-

⁷A real breakthrough occurs with the character Naim in Yehoshua’s *The Lover*. For the first time in Hebrew literature, the inner life of an Arab is explored and the character is allowed to speak in his own voice. Yet this genuine innovation goes largely unnoticed in the reviews.

pling with "a dimension of the Israeli experience not often discussed, of the specter of the other brother, of a haunting, an unhealed wound."

In reviewing Oz's *My Michael* in *Time* (July 3, 1972), A. T. Baker points to the Arab twins who appear in Hannah Gonen's dreams as the factor accounting for the novel's "smashing success" in Israel. He continues: "The passion that animated the early founders of Zion has cooled. The new passionate people are the Arab fedayeen, and in some small dark recess of the national psyche, the Israelis are jealous." It is this political reading of the novel that Robert Alter seeks to counter in his treatment of *My Michael* in the *New York Times Book Review* (May 21, 1972). "Any consideration . . . of a Palestinian Question," Alter maintains, is "irrelevant to [Hannah's] conjuring with the Arab twins, who represent an alluring, threatening dedoublement of the male principle, an image of suppressed desire to submit to brutal sexual forces."

Writing in the *New York Review of Books* (December 21, 1978), Alfred Kazin also takes up the "Arab question" in considering Yehoshua's *The Lover*, a novel in which the Arab theme is indeed conspicuous. He observes: "What I value most in *The Lover*, and never get from discourse about Israel, is a gift for equidistance—between characters, even between the feelings on both sides—that reveals the strain of keeping in balance so many necessary contradictions." The "gift for equidistance" that Kazin identifies here refers not to political discourse, but to imaginative discourse, in which the impacted conflicts are not resolved, but rather observed with varying degrees of sympathetic distance.

Other efforts to identify master themes of Israeli literature focus on internal changes within Israeli society, especially the transition from what Amos Elon has called the generation of the founders to the generation of the sons. While this is a central preoccupation of Oz's early work, it did not force the attention of most reviewers until Shabtai's *Past Continuous* placed it unavoidably between the cross hairs of critical focus. That novel begins and ends with both the death of one of the members of the founding generation (Goldman's father) and the suicide of his son (Goldman). In his extraordinarily perceptive review of *Past Continuous* in the *New York Review of Books* (October 10, 1985), Irving Howe underscores the point that the novel takes off from one of the conventions of Western literature—the "myth of historical and moral decline." The generation of Goldman's father, Howe argues, was seized by "a tremendous yearning for social and moral transfiguration, a leap through history, a remaking of souls" that culminated in the establishment of the State of Israel. In the aftermath of that state-making enterprise, he observes, the founding fathers have slumped into an "irritable mixture of rectitude and cynicism," while their children are caught up in despair and dissipation.

The theme of generational decline as depicted by Shabtai in *Past Continuous* is put in perspective by Sven Birkerts in his review in the *New Republic* (May 27, 1985):

The transformations that other nations have undergone over centuries have in Israel been compressed into decades. The elders were faced with clear obstacles and did what had to be done. Goldman and Israel and Caesar have had no such luck. To them has fallen the task of defining the values of the culture, and they do not know where to begin.

In reviewing a broad sampling of Israeli literature in *Commentary* (January 1978), the present author argues that the speed with which change has occurred in Israel under conditions of war has produced a powerful current of nostalgia and a strong desire to escape history. I point to a number of works, most especially Shulamith Hareven's *City of Many Days*, that give expression to a yearning for the Mandate period as a time when the cleavages between Jews and Arabs and among Jews themselves had not fully hardened, and when the possibilities of individual identity, even for women, had not yet been overwhelmed by historical necessity.

Between the individual and society stands the family, and some observers of Israeli literature see the disintegration of the family as yet another master theme. Once again, it is Shabtai's *Past Continuous* that provides the focus for critical discussion, since, in addition to being "about" the disintegration of families, the novel is structured at its very core by an interlocking network of family relations. Highly dysfunctional families also populate Yehoshua's fiction, a point stressed by reviewers of *Early in the Summer of 1970*. Writing about Yehoshua's *The Lover* in the *New York Review of Books* (December 21, 1978), Alfred Kazin notes that the family is the "traditional center of Jewish existence," but that in Yehoshua's work it is a center that dramatically does not hold.

Amid the search for master themes, the more perceptive reviewers have not lost sight of the fact that much of Israeli literature is given over to an engagement with the basic elements of human experience. The persistence of the nonrational, the crushing of sons by fathers, the corrosive effects of isolation and repression—these are some of the themes that have been identified in the review literature. This whole area is brought nicely into focus by Lily Edelman in her review of Yehoshua's *Early in the Summer of 1970* in the *National Jewish Monthly* (April 1977): "[I]n a masterly mix of realistic detail and bemused perception, Yehoshua raises the particular to the universal. War of husband vs. wife, Arab vs. Jew, and nation vs. nation is transformed into man's battle against himself, against his ideas, his goals and purposes, man's eternal, unrelenting struggle against nature, society and God Himself."

THE DIASPORA CRITIQUE OF ISRAELI LITERATURE

American Jews are Diaspora Jews, and the way in which the Diaspora is represented in Israeli fiction—an infrequent occurrence, be it noted—can generate strong responses on the part of readers. A good example is David Stern's review of Oz's *Elsewhere, Perhaps* in *Commentary* (July 1974). The novel depicts a Diaspora Jew, Siegfried Berger, who embodies a kind of radical evil unlike that of any of the other characters in the novel. Stern finds Berger's character to be "embellished by Oz with all the grotesque flourishes that once marked the typical anti-Semitic caricature of the Jew." Stern goes on to declare that "Israeli literature, if it is ever to mature, will undoubtedly have to confront the critical issue of the relationship of Diaspora Jewry to Israel and the relation of Israel to Diaspora Jewry, in all its troubled complexity. . . . The novel fails precisely where the imagination might have offered insight into the nexus of Zion and Diaspora."

The differing political views of American Jews about the Israel-Arab conflict also provide a standpoint for interpreting Israeli literature, although this happens less frequently than one might expect. This political angle is especially evident in the way in which some reviewers treat Grossman's *See Under: Love*. The "politics" of the novel is by no means clear, but because Grossman has revealed his distaste for the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza in *The Yellow Wind* (which was written after *See Under: Love*, but published in translation in the United States before it), there exists a kind of invitation to connect the two books. This connection as seen from the political left is developed by Adina Hoffman in *Tikkun* (March/April 1990):

[E]qually fierce [in *See Under: Love*] is Grossman's admonition against an understandably but woefully misguided reliance on the past as eternal justification for the present. No doubt he would contend that the bankrupt moral state of Israel's present policies is due in part to the too frequent sounding of Holocaust alarms, designed to drown out the din of Israel's own aggressive actions against others.

From the political right, Ruth Wisse develops a very different point in her scintillating review of *See Under: Love* in the *Boston Globe* (March 26, 1989). She also invokes *The Yellow Wind*, but does so in order to identify a weakness in the novel:

For all its invention, there is no moral tension in this book of the kind that derives from the decisions of protagonists who must take reality into account in the conduct of their lives. Instead, the author pits his imaginative will and his will to innocence against the human condition. In fact, readers familiar with *The Yellow Wind* . . . will recognize here the same dilution and avoidance of moral complexity that distorts his reportage of Arabs and Jews on the West Bank.

Among the issues that figure importantly for some American Jewish reviewers but find little resonance in Israeli literature is feminism. Israeli literature of the 1970s is not rife with portrayals of self-actualizing women, yet this is the lens through which Gloria Goldreich, writing in *Hadassah Magazine* (May 1972), sees Hannah Gonen, the troubled heroine of Oz's *My Michael*. For Goldreich, Hannah is a "woman, programmed into women's work—marriage and motherhood—struggling to free herself and become her own person." Another issue is baldly stated by the unnamed reviewer in *Choice* (April 1979), who, after generally praising *The Lover*, opines—with an enormous reserve of naivete—that the only weakness in the book "is its rather shallow treatment of Judaism and its religious values." The present author has expressed disappointment—less naively, I hope—with Grossman's failure to draw upon the enormous and varied repertoire of responses to catastrophe in classical Hebrew sources.

THE RELATIONSHIP TO THE HOLOCAUST

In sheer quantitative terms, one is struck by the large number of reviews of Holocaust-related novels such as *Badenheim 1939* and *See Under: Love*, as against the works that focus on contemporary Israel. *Badenheim 1939* and *See Under: Love* are impressive works of fiction, but the breadth of their reception cannot be explained by their inherent artistic achievement alone. One cannot help noting that publications which had previously barely acknowledged the existence of Israeli literature wrote—often glowingly—about Appelfeld's novel. These include *Newsweek*, the *Christian Century*, the *Nation*, the *National Review*, *Partisan Review*, *Present Tense*, *Punch*, *Sewanee Review*, *Tradition*, the *Voice Literary Supplement*, the *Wilson Library Bulletin*, and *World Literature Today*. The expanded list of publications covering *See Under: Love* includes the *American Book Review*, the *Boston Review*, *Commonweal*, the *Los Angeles Times Book Review*, *Review of Contemporary Fiction*, and the *West Coast Review of Books*.

What is most telling about the critical reception of *Badenheim 1939* and *See Under: Love* is that for most reviewers the fact that they are written in Hebrew by Israelis from within the enterprise of Israeli literature is largely irrelevant. To be sure, Nehama Ashkenazi, writing in *Tradition* (Summer 1982), points out Appelfeld's connections to Hebrew writers like Brenner and Agnon. Similarly, in his treatment of *See Under: Love* in the *New Republic* (May 15, 1989), Hillel Halkin is careful to situate Grossman's Holocaust novel in the context of his previous non-Holocaust writing and to identify the Hebrew stylistic devices and period echoes in the work. When all is said and done, however, the generality of review-

ers approach both novels in terms of the solutions they offer to the problem of representing the Holocaust in literature. It is as if these novels were contributions made to world culture by Israeli literature in which the origin of the gifts, while perhaps noted, is not terribly important.

Moreover, these works belong to a very privileged circle. Edmund White concludes his review of *See Under: Love* in the *New York Times Book Review* (April 16, 1989) with this encomium:

In a few mythic books, such as Faulkner's *Sound and Fury*, Gunter Grass's *Tin Drum*, Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, large visions of history get told in innovative ways. *See Under: Love* may be a worthy successor to this small but awesome canon.

Badenheim 1939 is everywhere compared to Kafka, and after calling the book a "small masterpiece," Irving Howe, also in the *New York Times Book Review* (November 23, 1980), identifies Appelfeld as a "spiritual descendant of European modernism, though he lives in Israel and writes in Hebrew."

It may be pointless to try to prize apart the two components of this phenomenon: the fact that these are books about the Holocaust and the fact that they are significant literary achievements that depart from the conventions of Israeli literature. It seems fair to say, however, that no work of Hebrew fiction whose subject is contemporary Israeli society, no matter how outstanding its artistic realization, is likely to garner the amount of attention and admiration won by Appelfeld's and Grossman's Holocaust novels.

If It's So Good, Why Don't People Read It?

If this extended sojourn among the reviewers has proven anything it is that in at least one place in American culture, even if that place is not a broad avenue, Israeli literature is being taken seriously and written about thoughtfully. What we have sampled is only a selection of early books by key writers; the volume of critical discussion would be amplified considerably if we went on to include later works by Oz (*Perfect Peace*, *Black Box*, *To Know a Woman*, and others), Yehoshua (*Late Divorce*, *Five Seasons*, *Mr. Mani*, *Open Heart*), Appelfeld's many novellas, Meir Shalev's *Blue Mountain* and *Esau*, Grossman's *The Book of Intimate Grammar*, and others.

Having documented this solid critical reception, we are brought back to the question of why Israeli literature in translation has had disappointing sales and failed to make an impact on the American Jewish community. Answers to this question are necessarily conjectural, but a few lines of analysis suggest themselves.

The relative success of Israeli literature in European countries in comparison to America, to begin with, can tell us something about the reading habits of Americans in general. Because Europe is divided into small countries, European readers have long been accustomed to reading in translation, not to mention the fact that many can read in another language altogether. If you are Dutch or Swiss or even German or French and you are a reader of literature to begin with, you will as a matter of course find yourself reading translations of serious literature. This is due to a number of factors. Among them is the awareness of an interdependent European identity and the plain fact that the literary systems of smaller countries are expanded and enriched by translations into that language. The result is that European publishers and readers are not just open to but often eager for translations of good works of fiction. And this is completely separate from whatever interest in Israel and the Jews is satisfied by these works.

Americans are very skittish when it comes to reading literature in translation, and publishers know this better than anyone. The world of published books already written in English is perceived to be so extensive and so polymorphous that given the limited time Americans have for reading to begin with there is no pressing need to look farther afield. Reading literature in translation also reminds Americans of college courses when they were required to read difficult works of European modernism or long continental novels. This applies to American Jews, as well. Even if they buy more or read more books and even if they are interested in Israel and the Jewish world, there is nowadays no lack of domestically produced books to answer their needs.

American Jews who wish to engage Israel through reading fiction, moreover, do not have far to look. Beginning with Leon Uris's *Exodus*, there has been a steady stream of popular novels covering this territory. More recently, one sees an increase in multi-generational family sagas written from the point of view of female protagonists. What is common to most of these works is a focus on heroic moments in the history of the state of Israel: its founding struggle against the background of catastrophe and world war, the capture of Eichmann, the Six Day War, the raid on Entebbe, and so forth. In reading these paperback sagas, American Jews are using literature to connect to Israel in a way that characterizes a much larger pattern: They are using Israel to buttress their own identities. The glow of the heroic-romantic version of Israel abets this process; the moral realism of the Israeli literature we have been discussing apparently does not.

Israeli literature, it would seem, is experienced by some as disquietingly subversive. The point is made affectingly by one reader at the very be-

ginning of the arrival of the first translations of the new Israeli writers. Jerome Greenfield's review of Yehoshua's early stories in the *Jewish Frontier* (December 1970), the magazine of the Labor Zionist movement in America, records the difficulty in squaring the existential despair reflected in the stories with a constructive and uplifting vision of Israel. The violence and emptiness of Yehoshua's characters in these stories provides an interesting test case because the potentially disturbing content does not derive from slice-of-life actualities of Israeli society but from a deeper and more universal vision of the human condition. This is one type of "difficult" material, but the reaction to it typifies the larger problem of reconciling the vicarious investment of Diaspora Jews in a certain vision of Israel with the way that society is experienced and represented by its writers.

Greenfield's sense of disorientation is worth quoting at length because it expresses what must have been a sincerely felt dilemma for many readers.

In the space of some half century [Israel] has succeeded in creating a new type of society, a new type of man. Granted that the image we get of this new society and man is often polished over by public-relations efforts of various Zionist organizations or ideology-blinded observers. Yet there is, by common agreement, an irreducible core of truth to this image, attested to not only by the objective achievements of Israel and Israelis in peace and war but also by the thousands of outsiders who have been visiting the country every year over the past decades and come away invariably entranced by the open vigor of its life style, the uncomplicated patriotism of its people, the direct affinity they feel for their natural environment, their simple, unself-conscious ease in the general social milieu—which often stir American Jews so deeply, beset as they are with the many complexities of their own intricate, hyphenated existence in the U.S. And the problem that Yehoshua poses is how we are to relate his unrelenting morbidity, the invariable isolation of his protagonists, their destructive self-negation, their total unadjustment to their forests, their deserts, their climate and cities to this other image we of Israeli life and, indeed, that Israelis have of themselves.

Aware of the respect Yehoshua's work has been accorded in Israel, Greenfield knows that the contradiction cannot be "rationalized away" by taking the stories as "sickly atypical." Instead, he works toward the difficult realization that our understanding of Israel needs to be enlarged to accommodate what is learned from Yehoshua's writing about the "persistence of human irrationality and destructiveness and the need of such feelings for outlet at the expense of civilized, constructive rationality." This is a learning that is courageously arrived at but hardly celebrated. Although the reviewer has learned something about how Israelis "deal with their inner lives," the conclusion of the review leaves some question as to whether the native admiration of American Jews for Israel can re-

main unaffected by the unwished-for insights thrust upon them by Israeli literature.⁸

From its inception Hebrew literature has always seen itself as a truth-telling literature. In this it is really no different from the serious literature of all advanced cultures which propose to offer a critical representation of the way we live now. As a genre, the novel itself, from the days of the knight from La Mancha to the present, has taken as its goal replacing illusion with reality. Whatever the perfection of artistry and literary form, truth-telling is an appealing quality only to those who want to know the truth. For American Jews, reading Israeli literature in translation must feel like eavesdropping on the internal squabbles of a family whose dirty laundry one does not want to see because it is too troubling to one's own purchase on purity.

Israeli literature is likely to remain important to those who have a different kind of relationship to Israel, to those who have discovered these writers in college courses, and to serious readers of fiction generally. The circumscribed compass of that aggregate reflects a larger truth about the Jewish people at the end of the 20th century: the drifting apart, in what seems to be an irreversible tectonic process, of American Jewry and Israeli Jewry.

⁸The anonymous reviewer in *Choice* (May 1977) had this caution to offer about *Early in the Summer of 1970*: "One admires Yehoshua's noteworthy technique, but his negativistic, almost nihilistic, philosophy makes one hesitate to recommend this work to a general college audience, and then only after they had been exposed to other writers, such as Agnon."

A Study of Jewish Denominational Preferences: Summary Findings

BY BERNARD LAZERWITZ, J. ALAN WINTER, ARNOLD
DASHEFSKY, AND EPHRAIM TABORY

IN THE UNITED STATES, perhaps more so than in any other society, the expression of a preference for a religious denomination is an individual, voluntary choice. Nobody is formally required to affiliate with a religious organization or even to identify with one of the many religious denominations in the United States. Thus, the decision to identify with a particular denomination or to join a religious organization can be seen as a significant personal decision expressing how one wishes to live in the world and how one stands on important existential questions. Consequently, as Jews have adapted to an open, pluralistic American society, denominationalism has become an integral aspect of American Jewish identification.

For Jews, the choices concerning denominational preference and synagogue membership express what it means to be a Jew in the United States. In particular, within the context of the voluntarism and individualism of the American way of life, the individual American Jew defines his or her religious preference in response to two related questions: (1) should one's Jewish identity be based on modern, Western models of acceptable identities, or should it be based on traditional Judaic models, such as those embodied in Jewish law (Halakhah) as set forth in traditional Jewish texts? and (2) should Jewish identity be essentially religious, based in the synagogue or temple, or should it be essentially ethnic, based in the history and traditions of the more or less autonomous, self-governing Jewish people, such as found in the shtetls of Eastern Europe or the modern state of Israel? In the United States, the choice of denomination largely entails deciding among three broadly defined branches of Judaism: Orthodoxy (including ultra-Orthodox and modern variants), the Conservative denomination, and the Reform movement.

Note: This article is adapted from *Jewish Choices: American Jewish Denominationalism*, by Bernard Lazerwitz, J. Alan Winter, Arnold Dashefsky, and Ephraim Tabory (State University of New York Press, Albany, N.Y., forthcoming), by permission of the publisher. It is part of the SUNY Series in American Jewish Society in the 1990s, Barry A. Kosmin and Sidney Goldstein, editors.

The basic difference among these variations is their stance vis-à-vis the competing claims of Halakhah and traditional Jewish texts, on the one hand, and the norms of Western, liberal society, on the other. The Orthodox tend to resolve issues that arise in the light of Halakhah and tradition. The Conservative movement tends to follow the practices and norms of American society when doing so can be justified by Halakhah and tradition, or at least be seen as consistent with it. The Reform movement gives precedence to the norms of liberal society and does not regard Halakhah as binding, although it does maintain allegiance to specifically Jewish theology and ethics.¹

The findings of this study support the contention that the decision to affirm a denominational preference and/or to join a synagogue is associated with important aspects of one's Jewish life. Moreover, this association is above and beyond the influence of socioeconomic and demographic factors long thought by sociologists of religion to be determining factors of denominational preferences. Of course, in an open society, such as the United States, in which individuals freely choose their religious affiliations, boundaries within and between major faith groups are fluid and permeable. Thus, it is not uncommon for an individual Jew raised in one denomination to choose another as an adult or to marry somebody who is not Jewish.

Despite the fluidity and permeability of denominational boundaries, American Jews can be grouped into eight basic categories that represent the combinations of their decisions about religious preference and affiliation. Analysis of the 1971 National Jewish Population Survey² has shown that important insights into Jewish life in America can be gained from a study comparing and contrasting these basic categories. The eight categories result from the combination of the simple distinction between those who join a synagogue and those who do not and the fourfold distinction among denominational orientations: one category for each of the three major denominational preferences (Orthodox, Conservative, Reform) and a fourth for those with no denominational preference.

The eight resulting categories, and their percentages in the Jewish population in the United States,³ are:

¹The small Reconstructionist movement and the even smaller Union for Traditional Judaism are spinoffs from Conservatism; the former does not regard Halakhah as binding; the latter is closer to Orthodoxy in its views.

²Bernard Lazerwitz, "An Approach to the Components and Consequences of Jewish Identification," *Contemporary Jewry* 4, 1978, pp. 3-8; Bernard Lazerwitz and Michael Harrison, "American Jewish Denominations: A Social and Religious Profile," *American Sociological Review* 44, 1979, pp. 656-66.

³These percentages may differ, due to rounding, from those cited later in the text.

1) those who express a preference for Orthodox Judaism and are synagogue members (5 percent);

2) those who express a preference for Orthodox Judaism, but who are not synagogue members (2 percent);

3) those who express a preference for Conservative Judaism and who are synagogue members (23 percent);

4) those who express a preference for Conservative Judaism, but who are not synagogue members (17 percent);

5) those who express a preference for Reform Judaism, and are members of synagogues (16 percent);

6) those who express a preference for Reform Judaism, but who are not synagogue members (22 percent);

7) those who, while they express no denominational preference, are, nevertheless, synagogue members (2 percent). Some of the members of this grouping may regard themselves as "just Jews," people who wish to affiliate with other Jews and join a synagogue because there is no other Jewish organization with which to affiliate in their Jewish community; and

8) those who express no denominational preference and who are not synagogue members (13 percent). This category or grouping may include those who regard themselves as "just Jews." They may be carryovers of the various secular Jewish movements: Jews who are indifferent to religion but who remain active in any of the wide variety of secular Jewish voluntary associations, such as the Federation movement or B'nai B'rith. The grouping may also include those who wish to have no Jewish religious or ethnic involvement.⁴

This paper presents selected summary findings from a much larger study analyzing responses to the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey⁵ and, where applicable, the 1971 National Jewish Population Survey as well. The authors identify and analyze the general social, economic, and demographic characteristics of individuals in the above categories. However, the primary focus is on how choice of denomination and synagogue affiliation relates to other aspects of Jewish behavior, what changes have occurred in the 20-year period between the two surveys, the extent to which individuals change denominational affiliation from childhood to adulthood, and the rate of intermarriage. The paper concludes

⁴The number of interviews with respondents who consider themselves Orthodox, but are not synagogue members, and the number who have no denominational preference, but yet are synagogue members, are each too few for some sophisticated statistical analyses. Thus, results from such analyses are based on only the remaining six combinations of denominational preference and synagogue membership.

⁵See Barry Kosmin et al., *Highlights of the CJF 1990 National Jewish Population Survey* (Council of Jewish Federations, New York, 1991).

with some thoughts about the future size and composition of each denomination.

The Two Surveys

The 1971 NJPS data were obtained from a combination of samples from local Jewish federation lists and an area cluster sample design for Jewish housing units not on federation lists. The 1990 NJPS sample was obtained by selecting residences from among all U.S. residential telephones by a process of Random Digit Dialing (RDD).⁶

The first requirement of any Jewish population survey is to decide whom to include as a Jew. The 1971 survey did not ask directly about religious preference, recognizing that Jews can regard themselves as Jewish by religion or as Jewish in an ethnic sense. It asked respondents, "Are you Jewish?" This direct question was qualified by responses to subsequent questions about whether a respondent was born Jewish, was currently Jewish, or had a father or mother who was born Jewish.

The 1990 survey determined who is a Jew by initially asking screening questions about religious preference. If the household respondent said "Jewish," the screening questions stopped and the household was deemed eligible for the survey. If the response was "not Jewish," further questions were asked about whether the person or anybody else in the household considered themselves Jewish, was raised Jewish, or had a Jewish parent. The 1990 survey was, then, designed to include respondents who are not currently Jewish but who have recent Jewish ancestry.

To insure comparability between the two surveys with regard to Jews who have no current religious preference, the approach of the first survey is followed. In the first survey, those respondents who were raised as Jews but said they had no religious preference at present were placed into a category called "no Jewish denominational preference." The same approach has been followed with those eligible for the 1990 survey who claimed no religious preference.⁷

⁶The one-stage 1971 survey yielded 5,790 interviews at a 79-percent response rate. The 1990 process, using a screening interview, obtained a probability sample of households in which at least one resident was then Jewish or had a Jewish parent. The survey obtained 2,441 interviews through the use of a two-stage interviewing procedure which first screened all telephone sample respondents for eligibility and, some time later, recontacted them for the actual interview. The response rate for the initial screening interview was 63 percent; the initial response rate among those screened and actually interviewed in the second stage was 68 percent, for a two-stage, combined (.63 x .68) rate of 43 percent. After clarification of final eligibility, the final response rate is nearly 50 percent.

⁷To insure comparability between the 1971 and 1990 surveys, the handful of Reconstructionists were recoded as Conservative, the denomination in which their movement

Our analysis of Jewish denominational preferences excludes respondents who have converted from Judaism to another religion or who were never Jewish themselves, even if they had a Jewish parent. Such respondents were rare in the first survey. However, the 1990 survey includes 536 respondent households in which all the members consider themselves as Christian and as never having been Jewish even though one of them had a parent who was born Jewish. Since the individuals concerned are not considered Jewish by our definition, our analysis eliminates members of these 536 (22 percent) survey households and some 25 (1 percent) respondents who, while originally Jewish, had converted to another religion. Converts to Judaism, are, of course, counted as Jews. The effort to establish consistency in the definition of who is a Jew in our analyses of the two surveys results in our using only 1,905 of the original 2,441 interviews for 1990.

Denominational Preference and Synagogue Membership: General Characteristics

It is clear that having a denominational preference and belonging to a synagogue have become prevalent among Jews in the United States. More than 85 percent of all respondents in 1990 specify a denominational preference; 47 percent claim to be synagogue members currently; an additional 19 percent claim past synagogue membership. All told, nearly two-thirds (66 percent) of all respondents are now or have been synagogue members.

The major trend over the years with respect to Jewish denominational preferences has been the continual decline in the proportion of Orthodox among American Jewish adults, from 11 percent in 1971 to 6 percent in 1990 (see table 1). (Our data, as noted below in the discussion of denominational switching, do not support claims for a return to Orthodoxy.) During this same time period, those who prefer the Reform denomination grew from 33 percent to 39 percent. Preference for the Conservative denomination and the proportion of Jews without any denominational preference have remained nearly constant during this time span, around 40 percent and 14 percent, respectively, as has the proportion who are synagogue members. However, there has been an increase

began. Respondents who said they were "traditional" or "traditionalist," an even smaller group than the Reconstructionists, were recoded as Orthodox. Respondents who indicated they were "just Jewish," "secular Jews," or in any case not Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, Reconstructionist or traditionalists, were classified into a category of "no denominational preference."

in synagogue membership among the Orthodox and a decrease among the Reform (see table 2).

While the proportions of the American Jewish adult population in 1990 who prefer the Conservative or Reform denomination are just about equal, Conservative Jews are more likely to join synagogues. Those who prefer the Conservative denomination constitute 51 percent of synagogue members, while the Reform, only 35 percent. A solid majority of Orthodox and Conservative Jewish adults are synagogue members. Only a minority (43 percent) of Reform adherents are synagogue members. Thus, while Reform may be on its way to being the denomination preferred by a plurality of American Jewish adults, that preference is often not accompanied by actual membership in a synagogue or temple. As one would expect, only a small proportion of Jews without a denominational preference are synagogue members.

The Orthodox and Conservative denominations have more adherents who are 60 years old or older than do the other two categories (see table 3). The Orthodox, however, also have a sizable proportion between 20 and 39 years of age, as do the Reform and those with no denominational preference. The Conservative grouping appears to be the aging one.

Furthermore, 44 percent of Orthodox homes have children 17 years old or younger, more than any of the other groupings, although not much more than the 40 percent among Reform synagogue members. The denominational "extremes," thus, have the greatest growth potential. In any case, households with children 6 to 17 years old are clearly most apt to include synagogue members. Having children of Jewish school age is strongly associated with joining synagogues (see table 3).

With regard to socioeconomic status, members of Reform and Conservative synagogues rank highest (see table 3). Reform Jews who are not synagogue members and those with no denominational preferences are next highest in socioeconomic status. The lowest-ranking groups on socioeconomic measures are Orthodox Jews and Conservative Jews who are not synagogue members.

Denominational preference is also related to political views (see table 5). In 1990, by far the most politically liberal were those respondents with no denominational preference. Reform Jews, whether synagogue members or not, and Conservative synagogue members were next most likely to consider themselves liberal politically. Conservative Jews who were not synagogue members and Orthodox Jews were the least likely to consider themselves political liberals.

Jews with no denominational preference, an extremely well-educated and politically liberal grouping, are seldom to be found in Jewish religious or communal institutions. A large minority (42 percent) of this group, even if married to Jews, have Christmas trees. In households of Jews

with no denominational preference but who are married to Christians, Christmas trees are found in a large majority (74 percent). Such Jews are also at least twice as likely as any other category of Jews to be in a household which includes a church member or to attend church services. The frequency of their church attendance, however, is considerably less than that of Protestants or even of Protestants with no denominational preference, as reported in the National Opinion Research Center's General Social Surveys for 1985 to 1989 (the most recent comparable date available to the authors). It would appear, then, that Jews with no denominational preference, even those with Christian spouses, are not themselves practicing Christians but are secular Americans who may have a tree at home during the Christmas season, a symbol even many Christians take to be secular.

Denominational Preference and Synagogue Membership: In-Depth Analysis

In the previous section, we reviewed the general characteristics of individuals with different denominational preferences and of those with and without synagogue membership. In this section, we summarize the results of multivariate statistical analysis designed to reveal the importance of denominational preference and synagogue membership above and beyond that of demographic and socioeconomic factors.

The statistical technique used in this part of our study is path analysis.⁸ This technique, like regression analysis, enables us to determine the influence of one variable on another while holding statistically constant the influence of many other variables.

The variables that we use, in order of their appearance in the relevant equations, are: (1) demographic variables, namely, gender, age, the number of minor children in the household, marital status, and number of generations one's family has been in the United States; (2) socioeconomic variables, namely, the level of secular education, the occupation of the family head, and family income; and (3) Jewish background factors: Jewish characteristics of the childhood home and years of Jewish education in one's youth. By placing these three sets of variables first in the equation, the influence of demographic and socioeconomic factors as well as of Jewish background factors is statistically controlled when we look at the significance of denominational preference and synagogue membership which come next in the equations. Thus, this statistical technique enables us to determine whether or not denominational preference and syn-

⁸Hubert Blalock, *Theory Construction: From Verbal to Mathematical Formulations* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1969).

agogue membership are related to a number of other aspects of the respondent's Jewish and non-Jewish involvements above and beyond the influence of demographic characteristics, socioeconomic status, and the Jewish background of the respondents.

The particular aspects of our respondents' Jewish involvement in which we are interested are: attendance at religious services, religious practices at home, involvement with Jewish primary groups, activity in Jewish voluntary associations, and orientation toward Israel. We are also interested in the respondents' involvement with community organizations in the non-Jewish community.

We comment first on the relationship of the various control variables to our central variables, denominational preference and synagogue membership, and then on how the two central variables are related to measures of involvement in Jewish life and in the general (non-Jewish) community.

None of the demographic factors and none of the components of socioeconomic status are related to denominational preference at a statistically significant level. However, the relationship between the number of generations a respondent's family has been in the United States and denominational preference falls just short of statistical significance. First-generation Americans may still be more likely to be Orthodox, the second more likely to be Conservative, and the third, Reform, though the data do not convincingly show that to be so.

Childhood Jewish background (the denomination in which one was raised) is, however, related to denominational preference, as is Jewish education. In other words, while denominational preference is not based on demographic and socioeconomic factors, the choice is influenced by early Jewish education or childhood Jewish background, and, possibly, by the number of generations one's family has been in the United States.

Synagogue membership is more strongly related to our control variables than is denominational preference. For example, older respondents and those with higher family income are more likely to be synagogue members. The moderate relationship between gender and synagogue membership falls just short of statistical significance. Finally, those with school-aged children are more likely to be synagogue members than those without. Synagogue membership is not related to childhood Jewish background; however, it is related to both Jewish education and denominational preference.

Denominational preference is strongly related to other indicators of religiosity, above and beyond the influence of demographic factors, socioeconomic status, and Jewish background. In particular, it is strongly related to synagogue membership and attendance and to religious practices in the home. It is also strongly related to involvement with Jewish primary groups. However, denominational preference is at most weakly

related to involvement with Jewish community organizations and only moderately related to the respondent's orientation to Israel. The more traditional a denomination is, the less active are its adherents in non-Jewish communal organizations.

Interestingly, the relationship between denominational preference and orientation to Israel forms something of a U-shaped curve—highest among the Orthodox, at one end of our spectrum, but lowest not among those with no denominational preference, at the other end, but among the Reform, with the Conservatives between the Orthodox and those with no preference.

Synagogue membership, again above and beyond our control variables, is moderately related to the frequency of home religious practices. Some of these practices, especially those relating to Passover or Hanukkah, are perhaps as much expressions of involvement with the Jewish people and its heritage as they are observances of religious ritual. Thus, they may be relatively common among both synagogue members and nonmembers. In any case, synagogue membership is moderately related to involvement with Jewish community organizations, i.e., with Jews outside the confines of the synagogue. Finally, synagogue membership is not related to either the respondent's orientation toward Israel, to Jewish primary group involvement, or to involvement in organizations in the general, non-Jewish community.

There are important differences in the pattern of relationships with other variables for denominational preference and synagogue membership. Denominational preference is indicative of a broader, more communal orientation toward Judaism and the Jewish community. On the other hand, synagogue membership involves people in institutional influences not likely to be encountered outside of the synagogue and heightens participation in the more institutionalized aspects of Jewish life.

Religious and Community Involvement: 1971 and 1990

The existence of two generally comparable National Jewish Population Surveys, 1971 and 1990, provides a rare opportunity to compare Jewish Americans at two different times. In making such comparisons, every effort was made to render the 1971 and 1990 analyses as similar as possible, variable by variable, index by index. The results are summarized below.

On the whole, when the denominational groupings are contrasted with regard to Jewish religious and Jewish community involvement in 1971 and 1990, the Orthodox, the most involved in 1971, remain the most involved in 1990, followed by the Conservatives. Reform Jews are the next most involved; those with no denominational preference are the least involved (see table 4 for 1990 data). Moreover, the comparative analysis of the 1971

and 1990 surveys indicates that denominational preference and synagogue membership have retained, and even slightly increased, their correlation with other aspects of Jewish identity in the nearly two decades between these two surveys.

The comparative analyses also indicate that there has been a moderate increase in synagogue attendance and in observance of home religious practices along with a considerable strengthening of the orientation toward Israel. In contrast, there has been a decline in involvement in Jewish primary groups and a moderate decline in activity in both Jewish and non-Jewish organizations.

Overall, it would appear that Jews in the United States are gradually stabilizing their religious practices while reducing their degree of involvement with other, non-synagogue features of Jewish communal life. In other words, the meaning of being a Jew in the United States has increasingly come to focus on the twin pillars of religious involvement and Israel and not on whom one socializes with or on membership in a Jewish organization.

The pattern with respect to involvement in the general, non-Jewish community is somewhat different from that of Jewish involvement. In 1990, the Jewish adults most active in general community organizations were Conservative and Reform synagogue members and those with no denominational preference. The Orthodox were the least active in general community organizations, while Conservative and Reform Jews who were not synagogue members held an intermediate position with respect to activity in the general community (see table 5).

Denominational Switching

The analyses summarized above indicate the importance of denominational preference. However, in a society in which religious identity and denominational preference are matters of individual choice, the boundaries between denominations may be rather permeable. One result is individuals changing or switching from the denominations of their parents to others as adults. Overall, 44 percent of American Jewish adults have switched from the denomination of their childhood to another as an adult. This frequency of change is somewhat more than the 15 to 35 percent reported for white Protestants.⁹

⁹Paul D. Sullins, "Switching Close to Home: Volatility or Coherence in Protestant Affiliation Patterns," *Social Forces* 72, 1993, pp. 399–419; Darren Sherkat and John Wilson, "Status, Denomination and Socialization Effect on Religious Switching and Apostasy," research paper, Department of Sociology, Vanderbilt University, 1992.

Tables 6, 7, and 8 illustrate the permeability of denominational boundaries among Jews in the United States. More specifically, they highlight the historic decrease in the proportion of Orthodox Jews in the United States. This decrease appears whether one compares the denomination in which a survey respondent was raised with his/her present denominational preference or whether one looks at changes over the number of generations a respondent's family has been in the United States.

In the course of the lives of respondents to the 1990 survey, the proportion who are Orthodox Jews has declined considerably, with 22 percent reporting being raised Orthodox and only 6 percent declaring it a current choice. Although the popular media have claimed there is a return to Orthodoxy among American Jews, the data do not support such a claim. There does exist a *ba'al t'shuvah* movement,¹⁰ a movement of some previously nonobservant Jews into the Orthodox fold. However, their numbers are rather small. Overall, the data show that few adults switch to the Orthodox denomination, and the grouping is dominated numerically by those who were reared as Orthodox Jews.

The proportion who prefer Conservative Judaism appears relatively stable (around 40 percent). However, the appearance of stability belies changes in the composition of the Conservative population. It results from the fact that the Conservative denomination gained enough adherents from among those reared as Orthodox to offset its losses to the Reform denomination (some 28 percent of current Conservative Jews were raised Orthodox; the same percent switched from Conservative to Reform).

The major beneficiary of Jewish interdenominational movement has been the Reform denomination. While just 26 percent of survey respondents report being raised Reform, 39 percent claimed this denominational preference as adults in 1990.

Those with no denominational preference constitute an unstable category. Almost as many adults adopt a denominational preference, even though not raised with one, as decide against having a denominational preference despite having been reared with one.

The major trend in the denominational switching among Jews in America has been from a more traditional to a less traditional denomination (34 percent, versus 10 percent from a less to a more traditional denomination). The Conservative and Reform groupings include noticeable numbers of switchers, although both groups are still dominated numerically

¹⁰Herbert Danzger, *Returning to Tradition: The Contemporary Revival of Orthodox Judaism* (New Haven, 1989); Lynn Davidman, *Tradition in a Rootless World: Women Turn to Orthodox Judaism* (Berkeley, 1991).

by those who grew up and stayed within their ranks. Since those who switch into these denominations are somewhat more religiously observant and Jewishly involved than those who grew up and stayed in them, American Jewish denominations may then be “pulled” in more traditional directions by their “incoming” people. Those who move into the Orthodox denomination have potentially less impact on that denomination because they are seeking to adopt a level of religious behavior that they consider higher. They look to Orthodox Jews as role models to emulate. Such is not the case with regard to those who move to less traditional movements.

Intermarriage

Traditionally, Eastern European Jews viewed marriage as a mechanism to meet the communal concern for the preservation of the Jewish people and their religion. Jews in America have largely adopted the modern notion that marriage is essentially a means to express mutual romantic wishes. Thus, one would expect the frequency of intermarriage in American society to vary with the degree of acceptance of modernity; that is, to be lowest among the Orthodox, somewhat higher among Conservatives and highest among Reform Jews. The data do indeed show that denominational preference is clearly related to whether one marries a Jew or not, as is synagogue membership, the other expression of Jewish identity focused on in this study.

As expected, the more traditional the denomination, the lower the rate of intermarriage. Also as expected, synagogue members are less likely to be intermarried than nonmembers. Finally, the intermarriage rate has been increasing since 1960 for all types of Jews, whatever their denominational preference or lack of one and whether or not they are synagogue members.

In 1990, among those identifying as Orthodox, 93 percent had spouses who were born Jews, as did 82 percent of Conservative Jews, 60 percent of Reform Jews, and 41 percent of Jews with no denominational preference.

Synagogue members, in each denomination, are somewhat less likely to intermarry than nonmembers. Among married synagogue members who are currently Orthodox, 98 percent are married to spouses who were born Jewish; among married Conservative synagogue members, 88 percent; and among married Reform synagogue members, 66 percent. Unfortunately, the NJPS data do not allow us to determine the temporal or causal relationship between synagogue membership and intermarriage.

Among the couples married between 1970 and 1990, 89 percent of those identified as Orthodox include two partners born into Jewish families or who now consider themselves Jewish even though not reared as

such; for those couples now identified with the Conservative denomination, 63 percent include two spouses born into Jewish families or who are converts into Judaism. For those identified as Reform Jews, only 44 percent are couples who are both currently Jewish; and for those couples with no denominational preferences, only 18 percent (see table 9).

Converts to Judaism are most often found in the ranks of Reform Judaism. Indeed, 24 percent of Reform synagogue members are such converts, compared to 8 percent of Conservative synagogue members and virtually none among members of Orthodox synagogues. The Jewish individual with a non-Jewish spouse generally does not convert out of Judaism. However, many of the respondents who were raised in Orthodox or Conservative homes but who married non-Jews have shifted to a less traditional denominational grouping or to having no denominational preference.

A positive sign for Jewish continuity is that a respondent who is a Jew by choice, or whose spouse is one, is generally (78 percent) a synagogue member (see table 10). Moreover, such couples are much more Jewishly involved than those who are in religiously mixed marriages. Conversion, then, appears to more often indicate a significant change of identity than a change for convenience's sake.

Intermarriage has varied outcomes with respect to whether the children are reared as Jews. A crucial factor is whether or not the originally non-Jewish spouse becomes a Jew by choice. Where that happens, the children are apt to be reared as Jews. In 97 percent of conversionary couples, children are being reared as Jews. Gender also makes a difference. When the wife has a Jewish background but the husband does not, a majority (52 percent) report raising their children as Jews; where the reverse is the case, and only the husband has a Jewish background, only a minority (25 percent) are raising their children as Jews. Overall, fewer than 40 percent of households where there is a religiously mixed marriage are raising their children as Jews.

Conclusion

American Jews express their relationship to Judaism and to the organized Jewish community through decisions concerning denominational preference and synagogue membership. Taking such "Jewish stances" goes a long way toward expressing what the individual takes being Jewish to mean living in American society. Among the three major denominations, the Orthodox are still the least assimilationist; the Conservatives are still in an intermediate position between the Orthodox, on one side, and the Reform and those with no denominational preference, on the other.

The analysis presented above suggests that as Jews have become an integral part of American life, those who wish to remain Jewish increasingly define Jewishness in terms of Judaism, that is, in terms of religion rather than in terms of informal contacts with other Jews and participation in Jewish voluntary associations devoted to charitable or other causes. An orientation toward Israel, however, also remains an important, and increasingly significant, component of Jewish identity.

The process of Americanization, with all its benefits, presents a challenge to those concerned with the long-term survival of Jewish life in America. The composition of the American Jewish population of the next generation will, to a sizable degree, be a result of a substantial population exchange with the rest of the American population within a society in which interfaith boundaries are clearly permeable. According to projections made by the present authors, just 36 percent of the next generation of Jewish children will have parents both of whom were themselves born Jewish. That is, no more than 36 percent will have four Jewish grandparents. The percentage is projected to be somewhat higher (58 percent) in families with Orthodox and Conservative denominational preferences, and lower (24 percent) in families where the preference is for the Reform denomination and in families without a denominational preference.

Most of the non-Jewish population that joins the Jewish population will likely do so as Reform Jews. As a result, the Reform and, to a lesser extent, the Conservative movements will face the problem of socializing into their communities a considerable number of children from families with one parent who was raised as a Christian and who has family ties to the Christian community. It is to be expected that many children with such backgrounds, especially if the Jewish parent has no denominational preference or affiliation, will have limited ties to the Jewish community or will disappear into an American secular melting pot.

Although the 1990 NJPS shows the Orthodox denomination having lost about one-third of its adult day-school graduates to other denominations, primarily the Conservative, there are signs that Orthodoxy has reached the bottom of its population decline. With an increasingly effective education system, an above-replacement-level birthrate, and very low intermarriage rate, the Orthodox denomination could well experience a slow but steady increase in its small percentage of the American Jewish community.

Although the Conservative denomination has lost a substantial proportion of its young people to the Reform denomination, any further decline may be stemmed by an increase in the proportion of its children who attend Conservative Jewish day schools, which seem to be particularly effective in aiding denominational retention. The Conservative denomination may drop behind the Reform as the largest denominational prefer-

ence; however, there are likely to be more Conservative than Reform Jews among future synagogue members.

If the trends up to 1990 continue into the next generation, the Reform denomination can be expected to experience further growth and to become the most common denominational preference. Continued switching from the Conservative to the Reform denomination, in conjunction with the considerable ability of the Reform denomination to retain its young, plus some gains from conversions associated with intermarriage will aid this process.

Finally, the proportion of the American Jewish population with no denominational preference will depend a good deal upon how many of the substantial number of Jews marrying non-Jews join its ranks. If having a denominational preference is increasingly accepted as an important way of participating in American society, then the future ranks of Jews with no denominational preference, especially among those married to other Jews, should decline, or at least remain relatively stable.

TABLE 1. JEWISH ADULT DENOMINATIONAL PREFERENCE AND SYNAGOGUE MEMBERSHIP, 1971 AND 1990 (PERCENTAGES)

A. Denominational preference of all respondents		
	1971	1990
Orthodox	11	6
Conservative	42	40
Reform	33	39
No preference	14	15
Base	100	100
N	5790	1905
B. Denominational preference of synagogue members		
	1971	1990
Orthodox	14	10
Conservative	49	51
Reform	34	35
No preference	3	4
Base	100	100
C. Denominational preference of non-synagogue members		
	1971	1990
Orthodox	7	4
Conservative	35	31
Reform	33	41
No preference	25	24
Base	100	100

TABLE 2. JEWISH ADULT SYNAGOGUE MEMBERSHIPS BY DENOMINATIONAL PREFERENCE, 1971 AND 1990 (PERCENTAGES)

Denomination	Synagogue Membership	
	1971	1990
Orthodox	66	72
Conservative	57	59
Reform	51	43
No preference	11	13
For all adults	48	47
N	2429	752

TABLE 3. DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS BY ADULT JEWISH DENOMINATIONAL PREFERENCES, AND SYNAGOGUE MEMBERSHIP, NJPS, 1990 (PERCENTAGES)

Characteristics	Orthodox	Conservative		Reform		No Preference
	Member	Member	Not Member	Member	Not Member	Not Member
A. Women	48	53	53	53	50	41
B. Age of adults:						
20-39 yrs.	46	32	37	42	48	44
60+ yrs.	30	32	31	16	20	26
C. Generation in U.S.:						
Foreign-born	28	11	7	5	4	10
U.S.-born parents	23	44	46	70	67	56
D. Socio-economic status:						
Univ. graduate	64	70	52	80	63	65
Family income \$80,000+	7	26	11	35	20	17
E. Children:						
5 or younger	26	13	13	17	15	19
6-17 yrs.	18	16	9	23	12	13

TABLE 4. PERCENT HAVING HIGH LEVELS OF JEWISH INVOLVEMENT BY ADULT JEWISH DENOMINATIONAL PREFERENCES, NJPS, 1990

Jewish Involvement Indicators	Orthodox Member	Conservative		Reform		No Preference Not Member
		Member	Not Member	Member	Not Member	
Jewish education (8+ yrs.)	54	59	33	39	20	19
Synagogue attendance (25+ times/yr.)	76	30	7	18	2	2
Home religious practices ¹	91	57	23	21	10	5
Jewish primary groups ²	92	57	35	31	16	10
Jewish org. activity ³	74	64	26	52	21	6
Involved with Israel ⁴	75	51	30	28	20	19

¹Shabbat candles; Kiddush; Hanukkah candles; kosher home.

²Most friends Jewish; neighborhood Jewish; opposes intermarriage.

³Member several Jewish organizations; works 20+ hours per month for Jewish organizations; gave money to Jewish organizations.

⁴Number of visits to Israel; emotional involvement with Israel.

TABLE 5. ADULTS WITH A HIGH LEVEL OF GENERAL COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND LIBERAL POLITICAL OUTLOOK, BY DENOMINATION AND SYNAGOGUE MEMBERSHIP, NJPS, 1990 (PERCENTAGES)

Indicators	Orthodox	Conservative		Reform		No Preference
	Member	Member	Not Member	Member	Not Member	Not Member
General community org. activity ¹	17	42	27	44	31	44
Politically liberal	23	40	34	39	44	56

¹Member several general community organizations and also gave to non-Jewish charities.

TABLE 6. CHILDHOOD AND CURRENT DENOMINATIONAL PREFERENCES FOR ALL ADULT JEWISH RESPONDENTS, NJPS, 1990 (PERCENTAGES)

Denomination	Childhood	Current
Orthodox	22	6
Conservative	39	40
Reform	26	39
No preference	13	15
Base	100	100

TABLE 7. CHILDHOOD DENOMINATION BY CURRENT PREFERENCE FOR ALL ADULT JEWISH RESPONDENTS, NJPS, 1990 (PERCENTAGES)

Is Now	Was Raised			No Pref.
	Orthodox	Conservative	Reform	
Orthodox	24	1	0	5
Conservative	52	62	9	20
Reform	16	28	79	28
No preference	8	9	12	47
Base	100	100	100	100

TABLE 8. ADULT DENOMINATIONAL SHIFTING BY GENERATION IN U.S., NJPS, 1990 (PERCENTAGES)

Denomination	Preference in 1st U.S. Gen.		Preference in 2nd U.S. Gen.		Preference in 3rd+ U.S. Gen.	
	As Child	Now	As Child	Now	As Child	Now
Orthodox	41	21	40	9	10	3
Conservative	27	43	35	50	40	34
Reform	12	19	14	28	36	48
No preference	20	17	11	13	14	15
Base	100	100	100	100	100	100

TABLE 9. FAMILY TYPES FOR JEWISH MARRIAGES OF 1970 TO 1990, BY DENOMINATIONAL PREFERENCE, NJPS, 1990 (PERCENTAGES)

Denomination	Both Partners Born into Jewish Families	One Partner Convert-In	One Partner Jewish, One Partner Christian	One Partner Jewish, One Partner None or Other	Base
					100
Orthodox	83	6	6	5	100
Conservative	54	9	24	13	100
Reform	30	14	43	13	100
None	15	3	55	27	100

TABLE 10. MODES OF JEWISH INVOLVEMENT OF JEWS MARRIED 1970 TO 1990, BY TYPE OF MARRIAGE, NJPS, 1990 (PERCENTAGES)

Jewish Involvement	Both Partners Born into Jewish Families		All Convert-In Marriages	Heterogeneous Marriages	
	Orth.	Cons.		Cons.	None
Synagogue member					
Yes	83	64	50	22	19
No	17	36	50	78	81
Jewish org. activity index					
High	76	54	44	12	15
Moderate	17	36	28	30	31
Low	7	10	28	58	54
Jewish primary group involvement index					
High	93	64	39	4	3
Moderate	7	26	34	15	16
Low	—	10	27	81	81
Synagogue attendance					
12 or more per yr.	80	42	19	8	11
3-11	13	30	33	27	16
1-2	7	23	37	45	54
0 times	—	5	11	20	19
N (couples)	30	107	86	74	158