

# Re-examining Intermarriage: Trends, Textures and Strategies

Report of a New Study

**Bruce A. Phillips**

Preface by

**Steven Bayme and David M. Gordis**

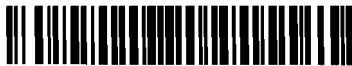
ML43D P481

Phillips, Bruce A.

Re-examining intermarriage :

C.1 [ 1997?].

JE 000901272 00001 1



901272-10

A Joint Publication of



The Susan and David Wilstein  
Institute of Jewish Policy Studies



The American Jewish Committee  
The William Petschek National Jewish Family Center

# Re-examining Intermarriage: Trends, Textures and Strategies

# CONTENTS

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1 The Factors Underlying Mixed Marriage</b>	<b>3</b>
Understanding Mixed Marriage in the American Context	3
Factors Associated with a Reduction in Mixed Marriage	11
The Relative Impact of Each Factor	26
High School Dating Patterns	35
The Adult Children of Mixed Marriage	40
Conclusion	41
<b>2 Understanding the Mixed Married Family</b>	<b>43</b>
A Typology of Mixed Marriage	43
The Children of Mixed Marriages	48
The Prospects for Outreach	57
Awareness of Outreach	66
<b>3 Policy Recommendations</b>	<b>69</b>
Institutional Responses to Mixed Marriage	69
The Sociological Bases of Policy Initiatives	70
Specific Policy Recommendations	72

vi *Contents*

**4 Conclusion 77**

**Bibliography 79**

**Appendix I: Consistency of Jewish Identity Categories  
Between the NJPS 1990 and the 1993 Mixed  
Marriage Survey 83**

**Appendix II: How Jewish Parentage was Ascertained 85**

Jewish Parentage Was Ascertained As Follows For  
Respondents 85

Jewish Parentage Was Ascertained As Follows For  
Spouses 86

Impact on the Analysis 86

**Appendix III: Accounting for the Inconsistency between the  
1990 NJPS and the 1993 Mixed Marriage Survey  
Regarding How Children are Raised in Mixed  
Marriages 89**

# PREFACE

A single statistic has dominated discussion of the extremely rich and comprehensive portrait of American Jewry emanating from the National Jewish Population Study of 1990: 52% of American Jews who married between 1985 and 1990 chose unconverted gentile partners. Though this finding evoked wide and profound concern, it was not at first explored in depth nor were its implications for communal policy examined carefully. Responses took a polarized form. On the one hand, some argued that “the battle against intermarriage is over,” suggesting that a skyrocketing level of intermarriage was inevitable in the open society, and that the only appropriate Jewish communal response was outreach to intermarried couples. Others argued that an exclusive focus on outreach based on an assumption of the inevitability of accelerating intermarriage was a serious mistake, and that this outreach itself had the effect of validating intermarriage from a Jewish communal perspective. They pointed out that mixed marriage was not randomly distributed among American Jews. While intermarriage had become the norm in some sectors of American Jewry, it remained uncommon in others. This suggested that efforts to lower the incidence of intermarriage were not doomed to failure, should be pursued more energetically, and deserved a larger portion of communal resources.

Little attention has been paid to the actual portrait of intermarriage contained within the NJPS. By surveying the most comprehensive cross-section of American Jewry, the NJPS provided a vast database for exploring American Jewry generally, and mixed-marriage in particular. By

probing the data and re-interviewing subjects, researchers could hope to better identify the factors leading to the choice of a gentile spouse, thus making it easier to assess the chances for effective outreach programming to mixed-marrieds.

To explore these issues, the American Jewish Committee and the Susan and David Wilstein Institute of Jewish Policy Studies undertook a joint research project based primarily on the intermarriage data contained within the NJPS. Bruce Phillips of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Los Angeles, a noted demographer and social scientist, was commissioned to direct the research in close collaboration with researchers from the two sponsoring agencies. This preliminary report was prepared by Professor Phillips with the editorial assistance of Rabbi Bernard Barsky. A volume containing the full Phillips study will appear later.

This study, based upon the NJPS and subsequent interviews with the NJPS sample of intermarried couples and additional sample groups in 1993 and 1995, adds substantially to what we know about intermarriage and provides the basis for communal response. It identifies variables which have a direct bearing on the incidence of intermarriage. It suggests that communal investment in programs and experiences that correlate with substantially lower intermarriage rates is likely to have a significant impact on intermarriage rates. Furthermore, since the study demonstrates that only a minority of intermarried couples appears receptive to Jewish communal outreach efforts, it offers for the first time a rational basis for the community to determine which of these activities are most effective and how best to pursue them.

One interesting, though preliminary, finding in this study indicates that the rate of intermarriage has leveled off, and may even be declining. Phillips speculates that this development may be related to the fact that communal leaders, rabbis and parents have begun to speak more clearly and forcefully about the value of marrying within the faith. Jewish communal efforts to reinforce the norm of endogamy are particularly significant in view of the overwhelming acceptance by non-Jews of the prospect of their children marrying Jews, a finding reported on as early as 1983 in an American Jewish Committee study.

An important section of Professor Phillips' study demonstrates in detail the impact of Jewish education on rates of intermarriage. Among other conclusions, he challenges the widely held assumption that only day school education will lower the rate of intermarriage. All Jewish education during the adolescent years is particularly crucial, whether formal or non-formal. It is clear now from this study that

the Jewish community's continued investment in education for its teenagers—apart from the core reason of creating Jewishly literate Jews—will have an impact in reducing the incidence of intermarriage. The adolescent years demand this special focus because questions of dating, marriage and family become critical. Jewish education during the high school years nurtures Jewish dating patterns, and these are probably the strongest predictor of Jewish in-marriage. Generally, those who date Jews in high school are most likely to do so as adults. Establishing patterns of Jewish dating during adolescence, and inculcating norms of endogamy, therefore appear to be critical in Jewish communal efforts to lower the incidence of intermarriage. Youth groups and overnight Jewish camps are identified as particularly significant in this regard.

One specific example of wise communal policy is the landmark resolution adopted in 1991 by the Conservative movement's United Synagogue Youth urging its members to refrain from interdating, and barring officers of the movement from doing so. The resolution was criticized by some who saw it as a violation of individual autonomy and as undermining future efforts at outreach to mixed-marrieds. But this study reaffirms the wisdom and appropriateness of the USY resolution.

In its discussion of outreach to mixed-married couples, the study focused on the intermarrieds' openness to outreach efforts. It did not attempt to evaluate the effectiveness of these efforts in bringing about conversion or encouraging Jewish education for the children. By dividing intermarrieds into subgroups based on the religious patterns of the two spouses, Phillips was able to identify those intermarrieds who expressed the most interest in outreach efforts. The painful reality, however, is that the overwhelming majority of mixed-marrieds are not interested. The most promising target of outreach is what Phillips calls the "Judaic mixed marriage" in which Judaism remains the sole faith practiced in the home. Only about 14% of mixed marriages currently fit this profile. Those divorced from mixed marriages constitute a second target for outreach initiatives. Now, with Phillips' finer discrimination of intermarried family types, even the most enthusiastic advocate of outreach should acknowledge that the community must deal with difficult questions in assessing outreach efforts and deciding on the allocation of resources to provide them. How much effort should be devoted to pursuing intermarrieds who show little interest in outreach efforts? What are appropriate objectives for outreach efforts and how should their effectiveness be evaluated? How should the community respond to the interest on the part of some intermarrieds in outreach pro-

grams which will help them raise their children in two faiths? Are such efforts compatible with Jewish communal interests?

Intermarriage represents a major challenge to Jewish communal stability and continuity. Most Jews, whatever their denomination or ideology, view the high rate of intermarriage as a major problem. This study suggests that the Jewish community can respond to the challenge effectively both through the strengthening of those experiences and programs which are demonstrably linked to a greater inclination to marry within the faith, and by reaching out to those intermarrieds who are most likely to maintain their ties to the Jewish people. The Wilstein Institute and the American Jewish Committee offer this study in the hope that it will help the Jewish community more effectively pursue these tracks.

Steven Bayme, Ph.D.  
*Director, Jewish Communal  
Affairs*  
*The American Jewish Committee*

David M. Gordis, Ph.D.  
*Director, The Susan and David  
Wilstein Institute of Jewish Policy  
Studies*



# INTRODUCTION

In 1991 the Jewish world was shocked to learn from the Council of Jewish Federations National Jewish Population Survey (NJPS) of 1990 that the rate of mixed marriage had reached 52% among Jews who had married between 1985 and 1990. Although that survey contained much other information of value, this single statistic remains its most widely-cited finding, and the one that has raised the greatest alarm throughout the Jewish community.

To better understand the factors underlying this explosion in mixed marriage, the Wilstein Institute and the American Jewish Committee<sup>1</sup> funded two follow-up studies to the National Jewish Population Survey. In 1993, all 1,123 currently and previously married respondents under the age of 50 in the original 1990 NJPS were re-contacted, and 580 were interviewed specifically about intermarriage.<sup>2</sup> In 1995, 256 non-Jewish spouses of mixed married Jews were interviewed. This report is based on that 1993 Survey on Mixed Marriage and the 1995 Survey of Gentile Spouses, along with some re-analysis of the 1990 NJPS.

Chapter 1 identifies the underlying causes of mixed marriage. Chapter 2 describes the texture of the mixed married family and assays the prospects for successful outreach to that population. Chapter 3 presents policy recommendations based on the research.

---

<sup>1</sup>With additional funding from the Whizin Institute and the Levinsonn Foundation.

<sup>2</sup>Respondents who were divorced in 1993 and marginally Jewish respondents were under-represented in the 1993 survey. An extensive methodological analysis, not included here, has shown the overall non-response bias to be minimal, and in the direction of excluding respondents with the weakest Jewish attachments.

# Chapter 1

## THE FACTORS UNDERLYING MIXED MARRIAGE

### UNDERSTANDING MIXED MARRIAGE IN THE AMERICAN CONTEXT

Marriage is the result of both opportunity and willingness. In order for marriages to take place between Jews and non-Jews, there must be opportunities for them to meet in a climate of social tolerance, equality and mutual acceptance. In addition, they must be willing to marry each other. Throughout most of Jewish history, the gentile world's discrimination against Jews, as well as the Jewish community's sense of itself as "a people apart", have effectively isolated Jews from non-Jews. But during the course of the twentieth century, as Jews moved deeper into the mainstream of American society—out of the urban ghettos and into the suburbs, from needle trades to stock trades, from the push cart to the corporate suite, and from the heder to the university—those historical barriers have crumbled. The opportunities for social intercourse with non-Jews have enormously increased, making Jews more attractive as marriage partners. At the same time, generational changes within the Jewish community have increased the degree of willingness among Jews to marry non-Jews.

The decline in discrimination against Jews has been one of the notable achievements of the American Jewish community, which has labored hard and well to reduce anti-Semitism. One indisputable consequence of that work has been the increased willingness of non-Jews to marry Jews. Public opinion polls over the years have con-

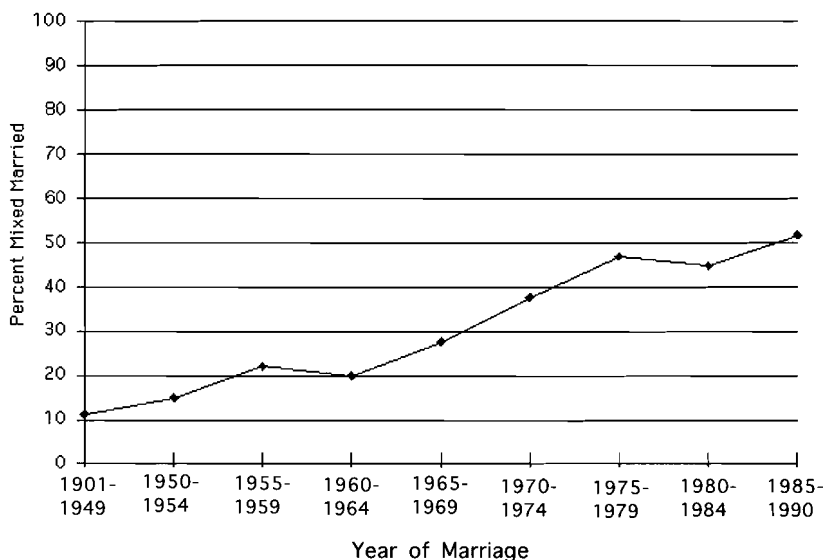
tently shown the increasing acceptance of Jews as marriage partners for non-Jews. With that increased acceptance has naturally come a yearly increase in the rate of mixed marriages (Figure 1-1). David Singer has wryly noted that the increased rates of mixed marriage, so alarming to the Jewish community, have been in good part attributable to Jewish efforts:

A non-Jew might well wonder, then, if American Jews are pleased or saddened by the recent Gallup Poll finding that fully 69 per cent of Americans now approve of marriages between Jews and Christians. (Singer, 1979, p. 48.)

Not surprisingly, the acceptance of Jews as marriage partners by non-Jews corresponds also to an increased tolerance among Jews for such marriages. As Nathan Glazer admits,

there is no denying that attitudes toward intermarriage have become more accepting over time. They have changed strikingly since, for exam-

**Figure 1-1** Cumulative<sup>a</sup> Individual Mixed Marriage 1990 by Year of Marriage



<sup>a</sup>Cumulative mixed marriage includes both currently married and previously married persons. Previously mixed married Jews are divorced, separated, or widowed from a non-Jew.

ple, Sklare's Lakeville study of 1957-58 (the book was published ten years later): 43 percent of the population in that prosperous suburb said that they would be 'somewhat unhappy' if their child married a non-Jew, while another 29 percent indicated that they would be 'very unhappy.' In Boston, 20 years later, negative attitudes toward intermarriage had dropped substantially, and particularly so among the younger age group: 43 percent of those over the age of 60 were very negative, compared to only 5 percent of those aged 18-29. (Glazer, 1989, p. 13.)

The attitudes of both Jews and gentiles toward one another have been profoundly influenced by the Americanization of the Jewish population. With each successive generation, American Jewry has become more upwardly mobile and more assimilated, and therefore more acceptable for, and more accepting of, intermarriage.

### **Generation: The Process of Americanization**

The "Americanization" of an immigrant group is gauged by the number of generations that group has lived in the United States. Each successive generation is more American than the one which preceded it. The foreign-born immigrant generation usually continues to live surrounded by the people, customs, habits and language of its old homeland. The American-born second generation grows up entirely in one country, but in two cultures, the parental culture of the old country and the contemporary culture of the new American homeland. Their third generation children grow up primarily in American culture, with only their immigrant grandparents linking them to the old world. For the fourth generation, whose parents and grandparents are all native-born Americans, there are no living links to the old country.

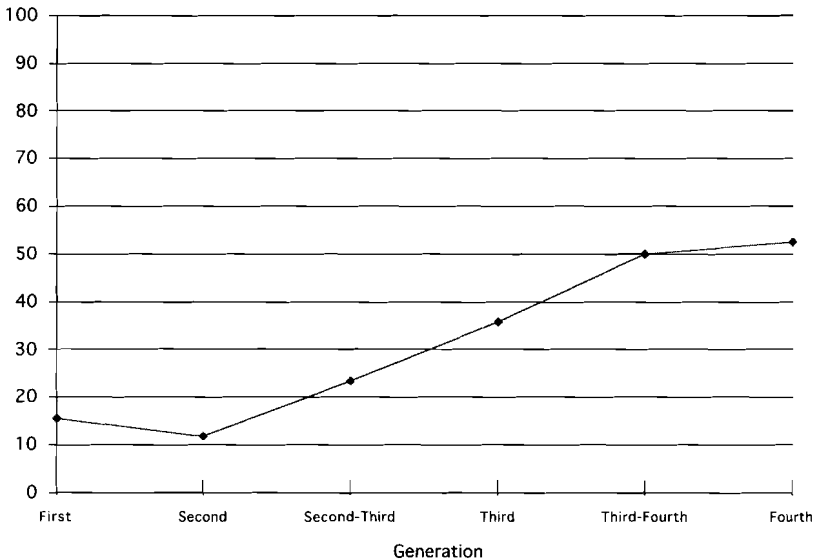
For Jews as well as other groups, generation is closely linked to mixed marriage.<sup>3</sup> That link had already been observed in the second decade of this century. A study of New York City marriage licenses conducted in 1919 found that the children of Jewish immigrants were far more likely to marry non-Jews than were Jews who themselves were immigrants (Drachslor, 1921). Even though the rates of mixed marriage documented in that study were infinitesimal by today's standards, the process had undeniably begun.

---

<sup>3</sup>See Spickard, 1989, for Japanese American mixed marriage; Grebler, Moore, & Guzman, 1970, on Mexican American mixed marriage; Alba, 1976, on Italian and Catholic mixed marriage; Blau, Becker, & Fitzpatrick, 1984 on ethnic mixed marriage in general.

The correlation between generation and mixed marriage grew stronger in the fifties (Rosenthal, 1963), and even stronger in the sixties, with the emergence of the third generation (Goldstein and Goldscheider, 1968). In the 1990's, that correlation continues. The rate of mixed marriage in the first and second generation is below 15%, but increases steadily into the fourth generation, where it approaches 60% (Figure 1-2).

**Figure 1-2** Cumulative<sup>a</sup> Individual Mixed Marriage 1990 by Generation



Generation Defined

Generation	Definition
1st	Foreign born person
2nd	American born person of foreign born parents
2nd-3rd	American born person with one foreign born parent and one American born parent
3rd	American born person with two American born parents, but all foreign born grandparents
3rd-4th	American born person with two American born parents, two foreign born grandparents, and two American born grandparents
4th	American born person with two American born parents, and three or four American born grandparents

<sup>a</sup>Cumulative mixed marriage includes both currently married and previously married persons. Previously mixed married Jews are divorced, separated, or widowed from a non-Jew.

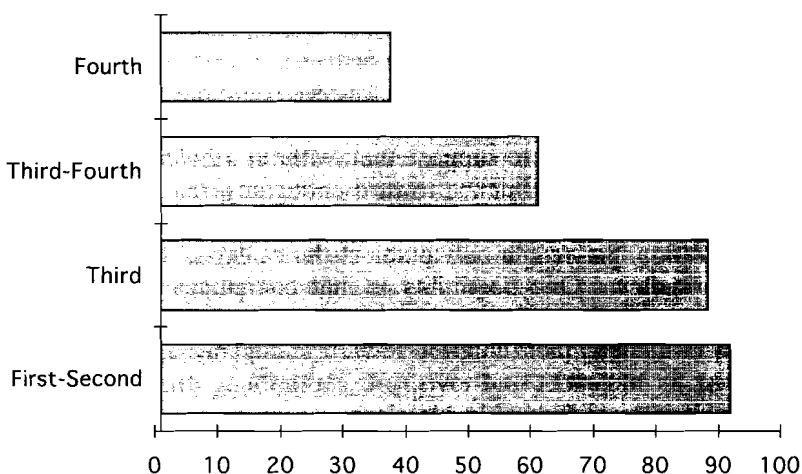
### Multi-Generational Mixed Marriage

The increase in the rate of mixed marriage for each subsequent generation is propelled by a momentum of its own. Each successive generation greatly increases the number of Jews who themselves are products of mixed marriages, and hence are even more likely to approve of, and to participate in, mixed marriages. Nearly ninety percent of third generation American Jews have two Jewish parents. In the fourth generation that figure is less than forty percent. In short, more than sixty percent of fourth generation American Jews are the children of mixed marriages (Figure 1-3).

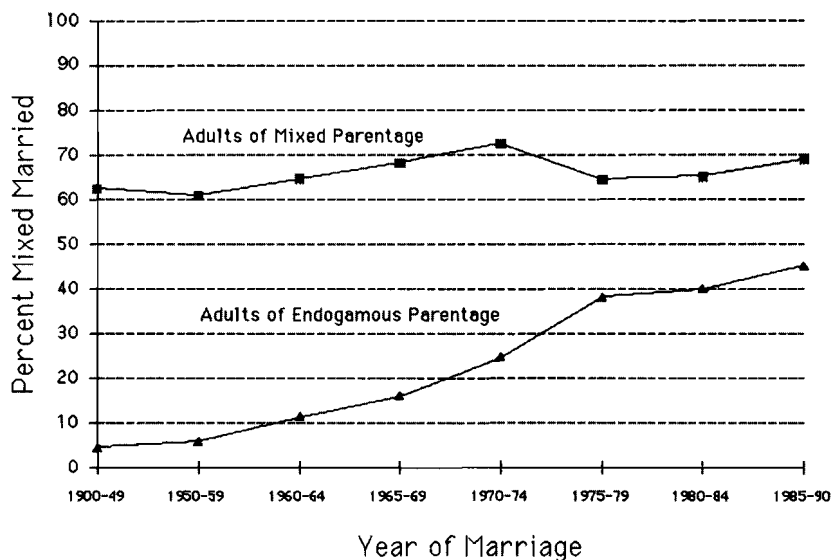
Because there are so many children of mixed marriages in the third and third-fourth generations, Jewish marriage in the 1990's must be divided into two categories: the adult children of mixed marriages and the adult children of two Jewish parents. The adult children of mixed marriages are overwhelmingly mixed married themselves (top line in Figure 1-4). The adult children of two Jewish parents are less likely to be mixed married, even though their rate of intermarriage is steadily increasing (bottom line in Figure 1-4).

Among the adult children of two Jewish parents, the rate of increase in mixed marriage appears to level off in the fourth generation (Figure

**Figure 1-3** Percent of All Individual Jews with Two Jewish Parents<sup>a</sup> by Generation



<sup>a</sup>See Appendix II for determination of Jewish parentage

**Figure 1-4** Cumulative<sup>a</sup> Individual Mixed Marriage 1990 by Year of Marriage and Jewish Parentage<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Cumulative mixed marriage includes both currently married and previously married persons. Previously mixed married Jews are divorced, separated, or widowed from a non-Jew.

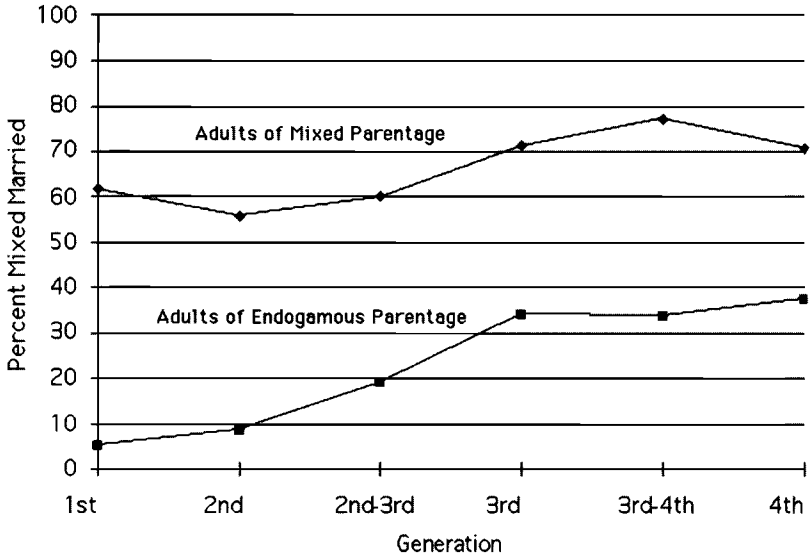
<sup>b</sup>See Appendix II for determination of Jewish parentage

1-5). This may be partly a statistical irregularity due to the fact that the youngest fourth generation Jews have not yet married. When they do, the rate of mixed marriage in the fourth generation will presumably show at least some increase. Nevertheless, we could have expected that rate, even with some of them still unmarried, to be much higher than it is. It seems reasonable to suppose that, without a *bobbe* and *zeyde* in the family to exert an influence toward endogamy, the fourth generation would marry non-Jews at a geometrically higher rate than did the third generation. So we can only guess at the causes of the fourth generation slow down. One possibility is that communal concern about mixed marriage in the 1970's had an impact on in-married Jewish parents, who influenced their children toward endogamy.

### The Phenomenon of Return In-Marriage

Although most adult children of mixed marriages marry non-Jews, a significant minority do not. When the child of a mixed marriage rejoins

**Figure 1-5** Cumulative<sup>a</sup> Individual Mixed Marriage 1990 by Generation and Jewish Parentage<sup>b</sup>



<sup>a</sup>Cumulative mixed marriage includes both currently married and previously married persons. Previously mixed married Jews are divorced, separated, or widowed from a non-Jew.

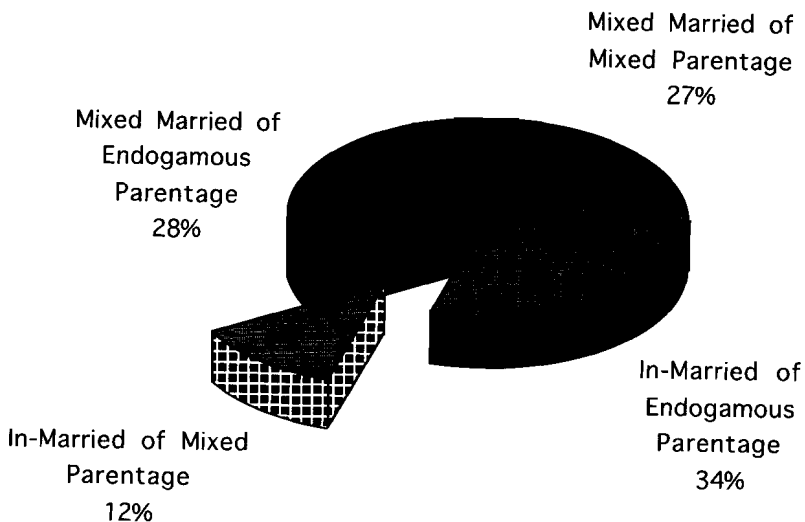
<sup>b</sup>See Appendix II for determination of Jewish parentage

the Jewish community through marriage, we call the phenomenon “return in-marriage.” The statistical effect of return in-marriage, naturally, is to lower the overall rate of mixed marriage from what it would be if all the children of mixed marriages married non-Jews. Without return in-marriage, the rate of mixed marriage would be considerably higher. For example, during the period 1985–1990, the rate of mixed marriage shown in Figure 1-6 was 54%. If all Jews of mixed parentage had married non-Jews, then the overall rate of mixed marriage (i.e., of the children of both mixed parentage and endogamous parentage combined) would have been 66% during this period.

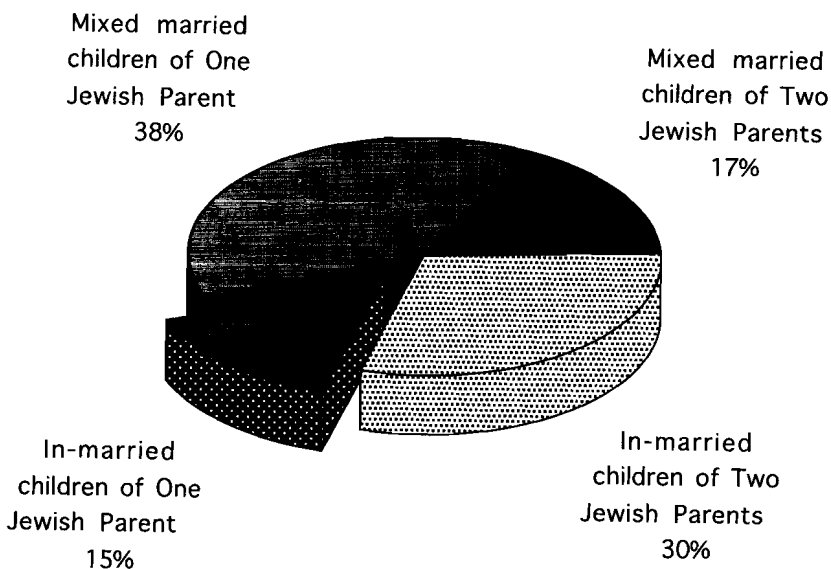
Return in-marriage has also reduced mixed marriage in the third-fourth and fourth generations. Just over half (55%) of all Jews in the third-fourth and fourth generations married non-Jews. But if *all* Jews of mixed parentage had married non-Jews, the overall rate of mixed marriage would have been 70% instead of 55% (Figure 1-7). Clearly an important proportion of in-marriage during the period 1985–1990, and



**Figure 1-6** Impact of "Return In-Marriage" on the Rate of Individual Mixed Marriage in the Period 1985-1990



**Figure 1-7** Impact of "Return In-Marriage" on the Rate of Individual Mixed Marriage Among Third-Fourth and Fourth Generation Jews



among the most Americanized Jews (i.e., beyond the third generation), is accounted for by the adult children of mixed marriage.

## **Summary**

Jewish mixed marriage will remain high in the 21st century, but it is unlikely to become universal. As a result of current mixed marriages, there will be ever more adult children of a non-Jewish parent, and these do intermarry at consistently high rates. So mixed marriage will probably become the norm. Yet there are two important indications that the rate of increase in mixed marriage is not as high as it might be. First, among the adult children of two Jewish parents, the rate of increase in mixed marriage in the fourth generation has slowed down, and may possibly level off. Second, a significant minority of the adult children of mixed marriages have married Jews. If these trends continue, they will slow down the increase in mixed marriage.

Because the rates of mixed marriage have passed the 50% mark, it is natural to focus on the resulting diminution of American Jewry. But this ignores the persistence of endogamy among highly Americanized and socially integrated fourth generation Jewry. We therefore concentrate on identifying those factors which encourage endogamy despite a climate where mixed marriage is becoming the norm.

## **FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH A REDUCTION IN MIXED MARRIAGE**

We have seen that generation and the number of Jewish parents a person has are two of the most important factors influencing mixed marriage. First and second generation Jews rarely marry non-Jews, while adults of mixed parentage do so consistently. Analyses of mixed marriage which have failed to take these two fundamental factors into account can (and do) arrive at erroneous conclusions.

Within the broad context described in the previous section, mixed marriage is not random. Jews with certain kinds of backgrounds and experiences in their family of origin are less likely to marry non-Jews. These include: Jewish observance in the home and parental involvement in Jewish communal affairs; formal and non-formal Jewish education; and the influence of adolescent peer groups.

The analysis of these factors presented in this part of the report is based on the survey of intermarriage among adult Jews with two Jewish parents. Chapter 2 examines the particular dynamics of mixed marriage families.

## The Influence of the Family of Origin

The first experiences of Judaism and Jewish culture take place in the family in which one grows up. This is called here the “family of origin”, in order to distinguish it from the respondent’s current family. An individual’s choice of marriage partner also represents a choice about the kind of family that he or she will have in the future. That choice will obviously be influenced to some degree by the family of origin. Respondents from the most actively Jewish families of origin are in fact the most likely to replicate that family through an endogamous marriage.

For the purposes of this study, the “Jewishness” of the family of origin is a factor both of the level of its religious observance and of the parents’ Jewish communal involvements. Following the methods of the National Jewish Population Survey of 1990, the level of religious observance was gauged by questioning respondents about the lighting of Hanukkah candles, the celebration of Christmas, and the keeping of kashrut<sup>4</sup> in the parental home.<sup>5</sup> The extent of parental involvement in Jewish communal activity was assessed with the following questions:

When you were growing up, did either of your parents ever. . . ?

1. belong to a synagogue?
2. belong to a Jewish organization?
3. serve on the board or committee of a synagogue or Jewish organization?
4. contribute to Israel or any other Jewish causes?
5. ask *other people* to contribute to Israel or any other Jewish causes?
6. do volunteer work for a Jewish organization?

---

<sup>4</sup>The questions were worded as follows:

- a) When you were growing up, did your parents buy kosher meat for home use...All the time, usually, sometimes, or never?
- b) When you were growing up, did your parents. light Hanukkah candles...All the time, usually, sometimes, or never?
- c) When you were growing up, did your parents have a Christmas tree...All the time, usually, sometimes, or never?

<sup>5</sup>In retrospect, questions on lighting Sabbath candles or having a special Sabbath meal on Friday nights would have been more useful than the kashrut question, since these are in fact family experiences. The kashrut question also excludes Reform Jews, who do not keep kosher but have important family Sabbath observances.

**Table 1-1**  
**Percent Mixed Married 1993 by Jewish Observance in Family of Origin Controlling for Generation (Respondents Born and Raised Jewish with Two Jewish Parents\*)**

	<i>Generation</i>		
	<i>First &amp; Second</i>	<i>Third</i>	<i>Fourth</i>
Parents used kosher meat			
Sometimes or never	28%	60%	62%
Usually or always	19%	40%	34%
Parents lit Hanukkah candles			
Usually/sometimes/never	16%	67%	71%
Always	25%	50%	56%
Parents had Christmas tree			
Never	20%	51%	55%
Sometimes or always	73%	74%	73%

\*See Appendix II for a discussion of how Jewish parentage was ascertained for the 1990 NJPS

Our study confirmed that Jewish observance in the parental home was associated with reduced rates of mixed marriage (Table 1-1). Parents' formal membership in a synagogue or Jewish organization, however, had no impact on those rates, unless the parents were also actively involved, by participating on a committee or board, or doing volunteer work (Table 1-2).

Interestingly, parental Jewish philanthropy also had no impact on reducing the rates of mixed marriage—neither giving one's own money to Jewish causes, nor soliciting money from others. This reinforces an important fact about how parental commitment to Judaism influences children. Simply paying dues for synagogue membership, or financially supporting Jewish causes—in other words, a checkbook commitment to Judaism, without a personal commitment of time and energy—makes no impression whatsoever on children.

The influence of Jewish observance and parental communal involvement have an aggregate impact on reducing rates of mixed marriage. These factors were combined to create a Family of Origin Index<sup>6</sup>,

<sup>6</sup>One point was awarded for each of the following characteristics of the family of origin: "usually" or "always" used kosher meat; "always" lit Hanukkah candles; "never" had a Christmas tree; had a parent who served on the board of a Jewish organization or synagogue; had a parent who did volunteer work for a Jewish organization.

**Table 1-2**  
**Percent Mixed Married in 1993 by Jewish Affiliations in**  
**Family of Origin Controlling for Generation (Respondents**  
**Born and Raised Jewish with Two Jewish Parents<sup>a</sup>)**

<i>Affiliation</i>	<i>Generation</i>		
	<i>First &amp; Second</i>	<i>Third</i>	<i>Fourth</i>
Parents belonged to Synagogue			
Yes	27%	53%	57%
No	10%	56%	71%
Parents belonged to Jewish organization			
Yes	17%	52%	49%
No	29%	57%	80%
Parents on board of Jewish organization or Synagogue			
Yes	14%	47%	44%
No	26%	58%	70%
Parents asked others for money			
Yes	19%	46%	57%
No	26%	57%	60%
Parents volunteered for Jewish organization			
Yes	11%	47%	58%
No	33%	60%	61%

<sup>a</sup>See Appendix II for a discussion of how Jewish parentage was ascertained for the 1990 NJPS

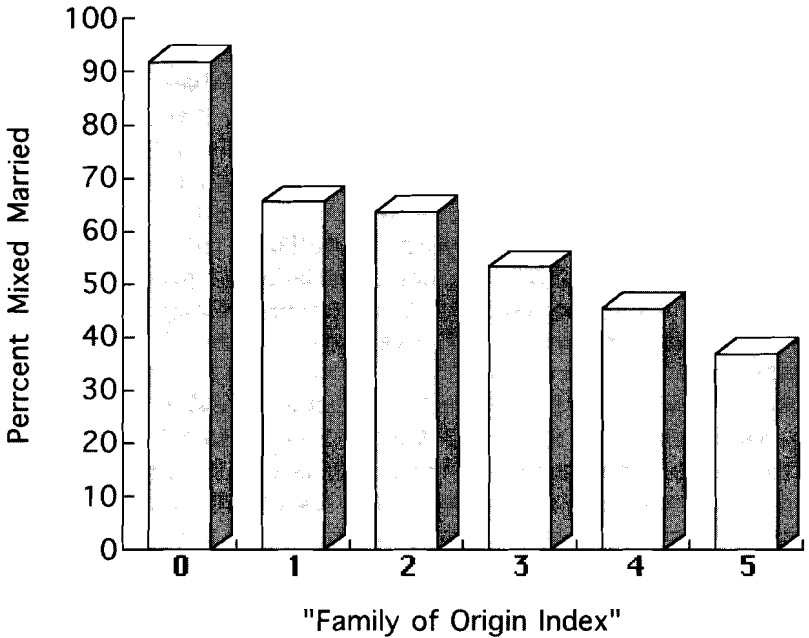
in which a total of five points was possible.<sup>7</sup> Among third and fourth generation respondents of two Jewish parents, the Family of Origin Index correlates directly with rates of mixed marriage: the “more Jewish” the respondent’s family of origin, the lower the rate of subsequent mixed marriage (Figure 1-8).

### **The Impact of Formal Jewish Education**

The child of two Jewish parents typically receives some formal Jewish education over some period of time. We found that formal Jewish education does lower the rate of mixed marriage, but not to the extent and not in the ways reported by other researchers working with the 1990 NJPS.

<sup>7</sup>Respondents with 0, 1, or 2 Family of Origin scores were in the bottom half. Respondents with a score of 3, 4, or 5 were in the top half.

**Figure 1-8** Percent Mixed Married by "Family of Origin Index" (Third and Fourth Generation Respondents with Two Jewish Parents)



\*See Appendix II for determination of Jewish parentage

Two separate groups of researchers have examined the impact of Jewish education on mixed marriage and concluded that day schools are the most important inhibitor of mixed marriage. Rimor and Katz (1993), for example, concluded that “Jewish day schools . . . are the only type of Jewish education that stands against the very rapidly growing rate of intermarriage.” They further noted (p. 48) that “the great majority of day schoolers are married within the faith. . . versus less than half of those who studied in the other types of Jewish schools.” Fishman and Goldstein have also analyzed the NJPS and similarly concluded that Jewish day school education is the most important deterrent to intermarriage:

Compared to those with no Jewish education, therefore, persons who have six or more years of a Day School education are 17.5 percent less likely to intermarry, all other characteristics being held constant. (Fishman & Goldstein, 1993, p. 11.)

The widely quoted conclusions of these researchers, that only or even mostly day school education reduces mixed marriage, require further study. When Jewish parentage and generation are taken into consideration, the impact of day school on mixed marriage is more complex. Most of the day school graduates in the NJPS were first and second generation Jews who rarely married non-Jews regardless of the Jewish education they received. Thus, after controlling for generation, Jewish day school education has no more impact on mixed marriage than does a 2-3 day-a-week Jewish education (Table 1-3). In the third and fourth generations, which are the crucial ones, there were only a few day school graduates. Not until the year 2000 NJPS, at the earliest, will we see the impact of day school education on the mixed marriage rates of third and fourth generation Jews. The conclusions about the impact of day school drawn from the 1990 survey, however, are not supported by the data.

By not controlling for generation, these researchers have also erroneously concluded that the 2-3 day-a-week school has no impact on mixed marriage. This is not the case. Third and fourth generation respondents who had a 2-3 day-a-week Jewish education had lower rates of mixed marriage than those who received a 1 day-a-week or no Jewish education at all. So by not controlling for generation, researchers have over-estimated the impact of day school and underestimated the impact of "supplementary" Jewish schooling on reducing mixed marriage.

**Table 1-3**  
**Percent Currently Mixed Married in 1990 by Jewish**  
**Education and Generation**  
**(Respondents with Two Jewish Parents\*)**

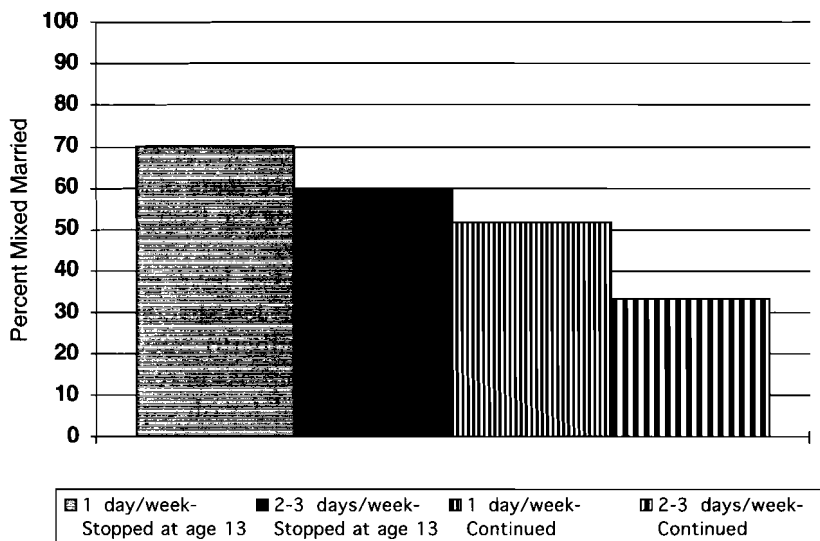
<i>Intensity of Jewish Education</i>	<i>Generation</i>		
	<i>First &amp; Second</i>	<i>Third</i>	<i>Fourth</i>
6+ yrs day school	8%	Insufficient cases	
6+ yrs @ 2-3 days/week	16%	30%	35%
3-5 day school	Insufficient cases		
3-5 yrs @ 2-3 days/week	11%	41%	41%
6+ @ 1day/week	13%	32%	53%
3-5 yrs @ 1 day/week	26%	44%	53%
< 3 years	21%	52%	54%
None	15%	42%	54%

\*See Appendix II for a discussion of how Jewish parentage was ascertained for the 1990 NJPS

The 1993 Survey on Mixed Marriage investigated a different dimension of Jewish education: did the respondent continue beyond Bar Mitzvah? Most Jewish educators lament the “Bar Mitzvah Drop-Out” syndrome so prevalent in the Jewish community (Phillips and Zeldin, 1987), and the Mixed Marriage Survey bears them out.

Previous research has always stressed the *intensity* (i.e., type and frequency) of Jewish education, but its *duration* turns out to be equally important, especially when the respondent continued into the teen years (Figure 1-9). Both longer duration and greater intensity of Jewish education, each reduces the occurrence of mixed marriage. But it is a striking fact that a low intensity Jewish education which continues into the teen years reduces mixed marriage more effectively than a higher intensity Jewish education which stops at age 13. Respondents who continued past age 13 in even a 1 day-a-week Jewish school were mixed married less often than respondents who ended a more intensive 2-3 day-a-week Jewish education before age 13. So of the two factors, duration and intensity, duration had the greater impact. Of course, duration and intensity work most effectively to reduce mixed marriage when they are combined. Those respondents who continued beyond age

**Figure 1-9** Percent Mixed Marriage in 1993 by Formal Jewish Education (Third and Fourth Generation Respondents with Two Jewish Parents\*)



\*See Appendix II for determination of Jewish parentage



13 in a 2-3 day-a-week Jewish education had the lowest mixed marriage rate of all.

Thus, the emphasis on Jewish day school education as the only, or even a major, deterrent to mixed marriage is misplaced. The importance of continuing a 2-3 day-a-week Jewish education into the teen years has not received sufficient attention.

### **Non-Formal Jewish Education**

In addition to formal day school or afternoon religious school education, our research shows that non-formal Jewish education also has a major impact on mixed marriage. Included in this category are:

1. Jewish day camps
2. Jewish sleep-away camps
3. Jewish youth groups
4. Jewish community center youth programs
5. Israel group programs for teenagers.

(Our analysis here is restricted to third and fourth generation Jews with two Jewish parents. As previously indicated, Jews with a non-Jewish parent have consistently high rates of mixed marriage, and first and second generation Jews have consistently low rates of mixed marriage.)

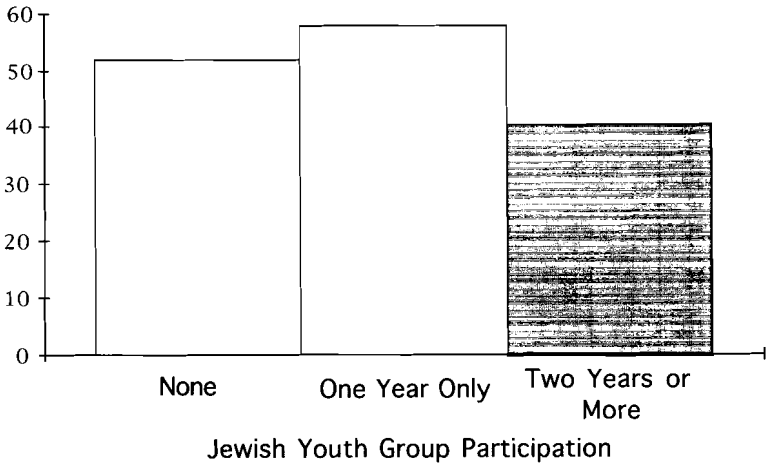
Of the five types of non-formal Jewish education considered, day camp and Jewish Community Center programs had no impact on mixed marriage. However, there was a marked reduction in mixed marriage associated with the following three experiences: two or more years of a Jewish youth group (Figure 1-10); two or more years of Jewish sleep-away camp (Figure 1-11); and Israel trips during the teen years (Figure 1-12).

While Jewish camping and Israel experiences have previously received much attention from researchers and Jewish educators<sup>8</sup>, our study has also demonstrated the striking and hitherto unrecognized impact which membership in a Jewish youth group has in reducing mixed marriage. Respondents whose only non-formal Jewish experience was two or more years of a youth group were mixed married at a lower rate than those whose only non-formal Jewish experience was two or more years of Jewish summer camp (Figure 1-13).

---

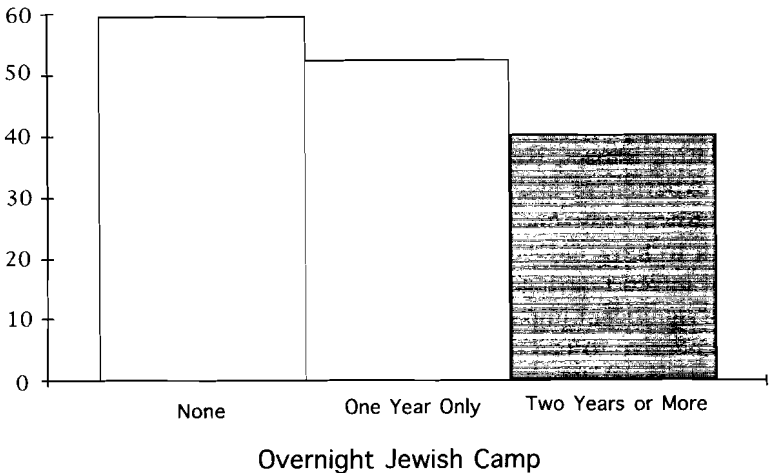
<sup>8</sup>See for example Bubis & Marks, 1975; Mittelberg, 1992.

**Figure 1-10** Percent Mixed Married in 1993 by Youth Group Involvement (Third and Fourth Generation Respondents Born and Raised with Two Jewish Parents<sup>a</sup>)



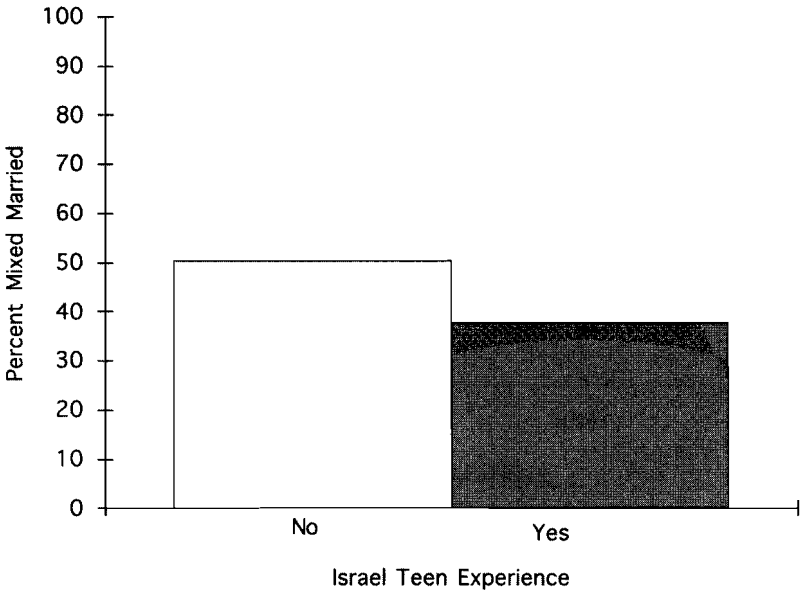
<sup>a</sup>See Appendix II for determination of Jewish parentage

**Figure 1-11** Percent Mixed Married in 1993 by Overnight Jewish Content Camp (Third and Fourth Generation Respondents Born and Raised with Two Jewish Parents<sup>a</sup>)



<sup>a</sup>See Appendix II for determination of Jewish parentage

**Figure 1-12** Percent Mixed Married in 1993 by Trip to Israel as a Teen (Respondents Born and Raised with Two Jewish Parents<sup>a</sup>)



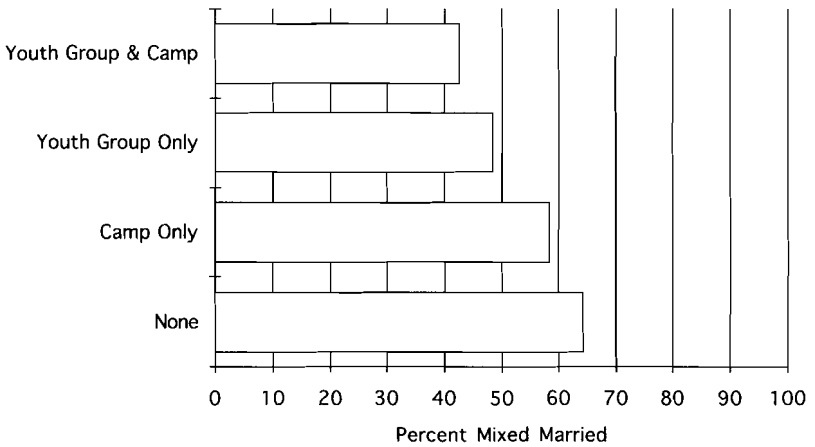
<sup>a</sup>See Appendix II for determination of Jewish parentage

Figure 1-14 illustrates the additional impact of an organized Israel experience during the teen years. Respondents who had been to Israel had also been to Jewish camp and had participated in a youth group. An Israel trip in conjunction with camp and youth group reduced mixed marriage even further.

Most importantly, these non-formal educational experiences have a cumulative impact. Respondents who had been through two of these three experiences had lower rates of mixed marriage than those who had known only one. The small number of respondents fortunate enough to have enjoyed all three of these experiences had the lowest rate of mixed marriage (Figure 1-14).

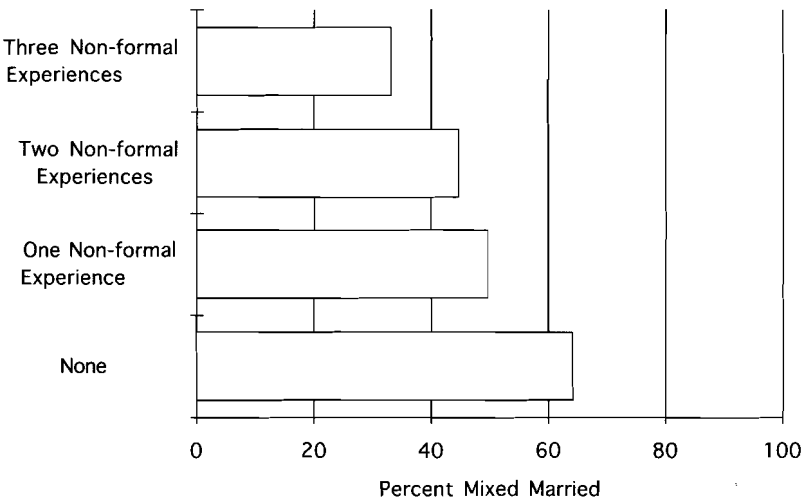
The significant impact of youth groups is important because they are less expensive to run than summer camps or Israel trips. They require neither the maintenance cost and liability insurance for a physical plant, nor the expense of an inter-continental air fare. And yet youth groups have been seriously undervalued as a deterrent to intermarriage. We shall return to this fact in our discussion of the policy implications of the study.

**Figure 1-13** Percent Mixed Married in 1993 by Type of Non-formal Jewish Education (Third and Fourth Generation Respondents Born and Raised Jewish with Two Jewish Parents<sup>a</sup>)



<sup>a</sup>See Appendix II for determination of Jewish parentage

**Figure 1-14** Percent Mixed Married in 1993 by Non-formal Jewish Education (Third and Fourth Generation Respondents Born and Raised with Two Jewish Parents<sup>a</sup>)



<sup>a</sup>See Appendix II for determination of Jewish parentage

## The Role of Adolescent Peer Groups

We have seen the strong impact which Jewish camping and Jewish youth group experiences have on subsequent adult endogamy. It is surprising that informal Jewish education (and youth group participation in particular) should emerge as such a powerful promoter of endogamy. Although Jewish camping depends on some degree of programming with Jewish content, youth groups do not necessarily emphasize intensive Jewish programming at all.<sup>9</sup> What, then, could explain the impact of youth group membership and of Jewish camping on adult endogamy, if not the Jewish content of their programming?

The 1993 Survey on Mixed Marriage strongly suggests that the answer lies in the creation of peer groups among Jewish adolescents. The survey asked these four questions relating to teen peer groups:

1. When you were in high school, what proportion of your friends would you say were Jewish? All or almost all, most, half, some, a few, or none or almost none?
2. When you were in high school, did you go out mostly with Jews, or mostly with non-Jews?
3. When you were growing up, what proportion of the people in your neighborhood would you say were Jewish? All or almost all, most, half, some, a few, or none or almost none?

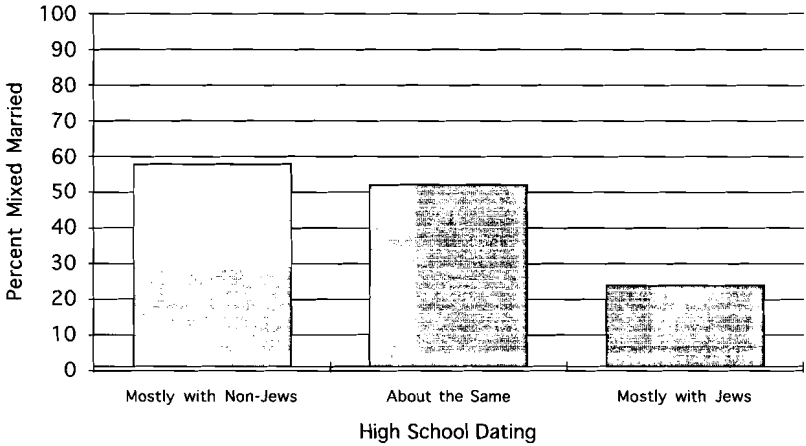
Three patterns of peer relationships in high school are associated with reduced rates of mixed marriage. With regard to dating habits, respondents who dated mostly Jews in high school had by far the lowest rate of mixed marriage (Figure 1-15). Similarly, respondents whose high school friends were mostly Jewish married endogamously at a significantly higher rate than those whose friends were mostly non-Jews (Figure 1-16). And respondents who grew up in predominantly Jewish neighborhoods also were significantly less likely to intermarry (Figure 1-17).

To what extent are these three factors simply a reflection of the Jewish density of the high school and neighborhood? Did the respondents who date Jews do so because their neighborhood high school was predominantly Jewish? Figure 1-18 demonstrates that this is not the explanation. Respondents who dated "mostly Jews" in high school were

---

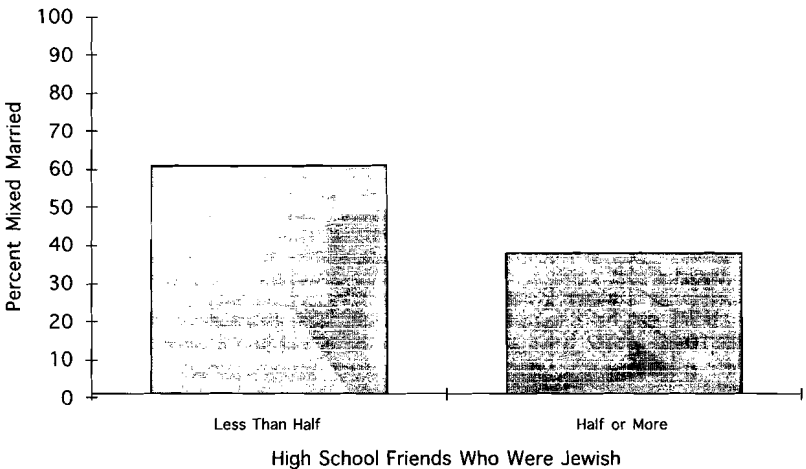
<sup>9</sup>Further study of Jewish youth groups might suggest ways in which Jewish programming could be added.

**Figure 1-15** Percent Mixed Married in 1993 by High School Dating Patterns (Third and Fourth Generation Respondents Born and Raised Jewish with Two Jewish Parents\*)



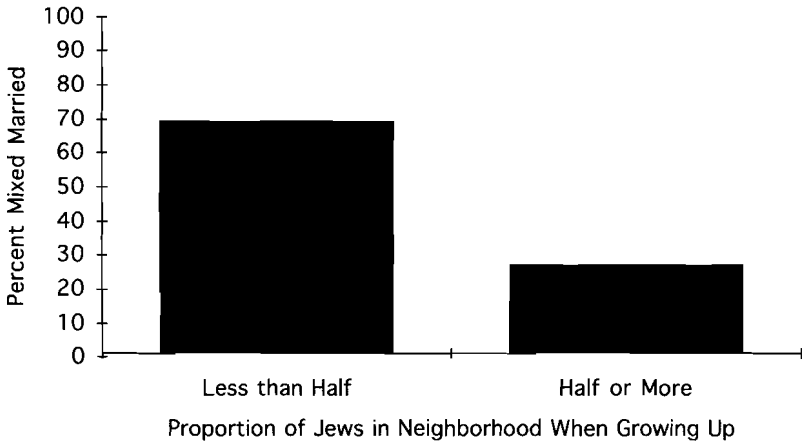
\*See Appendix II for determination of Jewish parentage

**Figure 1-16** Percent Mixed Married in 1993 by High School Friendships (Third and Fourth Generation Respondents Born and Raised Jewish with Two Jewish Parents\*)



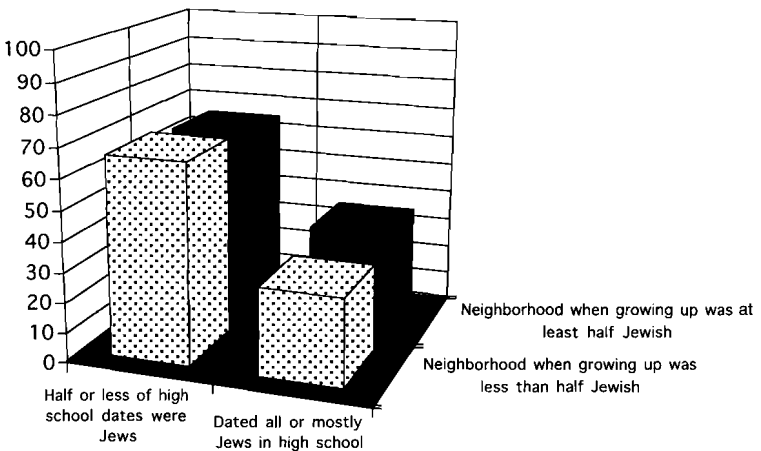
\*See Appendix II for determination of Jewish parentage

**Figure 1-17** Percent Mixed Married 1993 by Jews in the Neighborhood Where Respondent Grew Up (Third and Fourth Generation Respondents Born and Raised Jewish with Two Jewish Parents<sup>a</sup>)



<sup>a</sup>See Appendix II for determination of Jewish parentage

**Figure 1-18** Percent Mixed Married 1993 by High School Dating and Neighborhood Growing up (Third and Fourth Generation Respondents Born and Raised Jewish with Two Jewish Parents<sup>a</sup>)



<sup>a</sup>See Appendix II for determination of Jewish parentage

**Table 1-4**  
**Importance of Marrying a Jew as a Young Adult by High School Dating (Third and Fourth Generation Respondents Born and Raised Jewish with Two Jewish Parents<sup>a</sup>)**

<i>"After high school, or when you were in college, how important was it for you to marry a Jew?"</i>	<i>"When you were in high school, did you go out mostly with Jews, or mostly with non-Jews?"</i>	
	<i>About the Same or Mostly w/non-Jews</i>	<i>Mostly w/Jews</i>
Don't know	1%	1%
Not at all important	65%	24%
Somewhat important	22%	29%
Very important	12%	46%
TOTAL	100%	100%

<sup>a</sup>See Appendix II for a discussion of how Jewish parentage was ascertained for the 1990 NJPS

the most likely to marry Jews as adults, regardless of the proportion of other Jews in the neighborhood when growing up. Respondents who dated Jews in high school did so, not simply because there were other Jews around (although this was a factor), but because it was considered important for them to marry a Jew (Table 1-4), and because they eventually expected to marry a Jew (Table 1-5). Thus, while Jewish dating was facilitated by going to a high school with many Jews in a Jewish

**Table 1-5**  
**Adolescent Expectations of Endogamy by High School Dating (Third and Fourth Generation Respondents Born and Raised Jewish with Two Jewish Parents<sup>a</sup>)**

<i>"When you were in high school, did you expect that you would eventually marry a Jew or a non-Jew?"</i>	<i>"When you were in high school, did you go out mostly with Jews, or mostly with non-Jews?"</i>		
	<i>Mostly with non-Jews</i>	<i>About the Same</i>	<i>Mostly with Jews</i>
Expected to marry a non Jew	17%	9%	2%
No expectations/don't know	50%	52%	26%
Expected to marry a Jew	33%	38%	72%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%

<sup>a</sup>See Appendix II for a discussion of how Jewish parentage was ascertained for the 1990 NJPS



neighborhood, the dating behavior itself is the most important factor, independent of other circumstances.

The experience of high school dating has an independent effect on adult endogamy, even among respondents who had not expected, or had not felt it was important to marry a Jew. Respondents who had “no expectations” of whom they would marry, but still mostly dated Jews in high school, had a much lower rate of mixed marriage than similar respondents who mostly dated non-Jews, 54% to 79% (Table 1–6). Similarly, among respondents who said it had been “somewhat important” to marry a Jew after high school, those who dated non-Jews as frequently as, or more frequently than, they dated Jews ended up mixed married nearly twice as often as those who mostly dated Jews, 60% to 35% (Table 1–7). Even among respondents for whom it had been “not at all important” to marry a Jew after high school, those who mostly dated Jews in high school were mixed married at a lower rate (73%) than those who dated non-Jews as often as, or more often than, they dated Jews (84%).

## **THE RELATIVE IMPACT OF EACH FACTOR**

We have identified four factors associated with reduced rates of mixed marriage among third and fourth generation children of endogamous marriages:

1. Jewishness of the family of origin
2. formal Jewish education
3. non-formal Jewish education
4. high school dating patterns.

These four factors are obviously interrelated, but it will be useful to understand each one’s relative independent impact on mixed marriage.

### **Does Jewishness of the Family of Origin Explain it All?**

To what extent are formal Jewish education, non-formal Jewish education, and Jewish dating simply reflections of the Jewish atmosphere and socialization within the family of origin? To what extent are the other factors we have identified merely the result of parental influence? For example, is the influence of youth groups really only the influence

**Table 1-6**  
**Percent Mixed Married in 1993 by High School Dating and Adolescent**  
**Expectations of Endogamy (Third and Fourth Generation**  
**Respondents Born and Raised Jewish with Two Jewish Parents\*)**

<i>"When you were in high school, did you expect that you would eventually marry a Jew or a non-Jew?"</i>	<i>"When you were in high school, did you go out mostly with Jews, or mostly with non-Jews?"</i>	
	<i>About the Same or Mostly w/Non-Jews</i>	<i>Mostly w/Jews</i>
Expected to marry a non Jew	87%	Insufficient cases
No expectations	79%	54%
Expected to marry a Jew	46%	32%

\*See Appendix II for a discussion of how Jewish parentage was ascertained for the 1990 NJPS

of the parents who encouraged the respondents to join youth groups? Is the impact of high school dating patterns attributable to the influence of parents who encouraged Jewish dating? Does the family of origin create these experiences for the individual, or do these experiences have an independent association with endogamy and mixed marriage?

It is true that at least some of the impact of formal and non-formal Jewish education is attributable to the family of origin. Respondents from the "most Jewish" families of origin (i.e., those with a score of 4

**Table 1-7**  
**Percent Mixed Married in 1993 by High School Dating and**  
**Adolescent Expectations of Endogamy (Third and Fourth Generation**  
**Respondents Born and Raised Jewish with Two Jewish Parents\*)**

<i>"After high school, or when you were in college, how important was it for you to marry a Jew?"</i>	<i>"When you were in high school, did you go out mostly with Jews, or mostly with non-Jews?"</i>	
	<i>About the Same or Mostly w/Non-Jews</i>	<i>Mostly w/Jews</i>
Not at all important	84%	73%
Somewhat important	60%	35%
Very important	Insufficient cases	19%

\*See Appendix II for a discussion of how Jewish parentage was ascertained for the 1990 NJPS

**Table 1-8**  
**Intensity of Respondent's Jewish Education<sup>a</sup> by Family of Origin Score (Third and Fourth Generation Respondents Born and Raised Jewish with Two Jewish Parents<sup>b</sup>)**

<i>Intensity of Jewish Education</i>	<i>Family of Origin Score<sup>c</sup></i>	
	<i>Bottom Half</i>	<i>Top Half</i>
None	21%	11%
1 day/week, stopped at age 13	27%	18%
2-3 days/week, stopped at age 13	30%	34%
1 day/week, continued after age 13	16%	19%
2-3 days/week, continued after age 13	7%	19%
TOTAL	100%	100%

<sup>a</sup>As reported in the 1993 Survey on Mixed Marriage

<sup>b</sup>See Appendix II for a discussion of how Jewish parentage was ascertained for the 1990 NJPS

<sup>c</sup>One point was awarded if the family of origin "usually or always" used kosher meat, "always" lit Hanukkah candles, "never had a Christmas tree, had a parent who served on the board of a Jewish organization or synagogue, had a parent who did volunteer work for a Jewish organization. Scores of 0, 1, and 2 items were in the "bottom half," and score of 3, 4, and 5 were in the "top half."

or 5 on the Family of Origin Index) received the most intensive Jewish education (Table 1-8), and the greatest number of informal Jewish educational experiences (Table 1-9). The family of origin also influenced dating. Respondents from the "most Jewish" families of origin were the most likely to date "mostly Jews" in high school (Table 1-10), and the

**Table 1-9**  
**Non-Formal Jewish Education by Family of Origin Score (Third and Fourth Generation Respondents Born and Raised Jewish with Two Jewish Parents<sup>a</sup>)**

<i>Non-Formal Jewish Education Experiences</i>	<i>Family of Origin Score</i>	
	<i>Bottom Half</i>	<i>Top Half</i>
No non-formal experiences	65%	31%
One non-formal experience only	30%	45%
Two non-formal experiences	5%	20%
All 3 non-formal experiences	1%	4%
TOTAL	100%	100%

<sup>a</sup>See Appendix II for a discussion of how Jewish parentage was ascertained for the 1990 NJPS

**Table 1-10**  
**High School Dating by Family of Origin Score**  
**(Third and Fourth Generation Respondents**  
**Born and Raised Jewish with Two Jewish Parents\*)**

<i>"When you were in high school, did you go out mostly with Jews, or mostly with non-Jews?"</i>	<i>Family of Origin Score</i>	
	<i>Bottom Half</i>	<i>Top Half</i>
Dated mostly non-Jews or both equally	68%	45%
Dated mostly Jews	32%	55%
TOTAL	100%	100%

\*See Appendix II for a discussion of how Jewish parentage was ascertained for the 1990 NJPS

respondents who dated "mostly Jews" in high school also reported the most parental pressure to do so<sup>10</sup> (Table 1-11).

Yet each of these three factors was also significantly associated with reduced mixed marriage, independent of the Jewishness of the family of origin. Non-formal Jewish education reduced mixed marriage at each level of Jewishness for families of origin (Table 1-12). Similarly, respondents who had received the most intensive formal Jewish educa-

**Table 1-11**  
**High School Dating by Parental Pressure to Date Jews**  
**(Third and Fourth Generation Respondents**  
**Born and Raised Jewish with Two Jewish Parents\*)**

<i>"When you were in high school, did you go out mostly with Jews, or mostly with non-Jews?"</i>	<i>"When you were in high school, how much did your parents pressure you to date Jews?"</i>	
	<i>Some/a little/ not at all</i>	<i>A lot</i>
Dated mostly non-Jews or both equally	60%	40%
Dated mostly Jews	40%	60%
TOTAL	100%	100%

\*See Appendix II for a discussion of how Jewish parentage was ascertained for the 1990 NJPS

<sup>10</sup>The question was worded as follows:

When you were in high school, how much did your parents pressure you to date Jews? A lot, some, a little, or not at all?

**Table 1-12**  
**Percent Mixed Married in 1993 by Non-Formal Jewish Education (Third and Fourth Generation Respondents Born and Raised Jewish with Two Jewish Parents\*)**

<i>Non-Formal Jewish Education</i>	<i>Family of Origin Score</i>	
	<i>Bottom Half</i>	<i>Top Half</i>
No non-formal Jewish experiences	69%	57%
One or more non-formal Jewish experiences	62%	42%

\*See Appendix II for a discussion of how Jewish parentage was ascertained for the 1990 NJPS

tion, even if they had come from families of origin with low levels of Jewishness, still had the lowest rate of mixed marriage (Table 1-13). High school dating shows the same pattern. For respondents from both the "most Jewish" and the "least Jewish" families of origin, dating Jews in high school lowered the rate of mixed marriage (Table 1-14).

Thus, non-formal Jewish education, formal Jewish education, high school dating, as well as the Jewishness of the family of origin, are all independently associated with reduced rates of mixed marriage.

### **The Relative Effects of Formal and Non-Formal Jewish Education**

Formal and non-formal Jewish education reinforce one another in their impact on rates of mixed marriage. The lowest rates of mixed marriage by far are found among respondents who had both a 2-3 day-a-week Jewish education and also participated in one or more non-formal

**Table 1-13**  
**Percent Mixed Married in 1993 by Formal Jewish Education (Third and Fourth Generation Respondents Born and Raised Jewish with Two Jewish Parents\*)**

<i>Formal Jewish Education</i>	<i>Family of Origin Score</i>	
	<i>Bottom Half</i>	<i>Top Half</i>
1 day/week-stopped at age 13	78%	62%
1 day/week-continued after age 13	61%	59%
2-3 days/week-stopped at age 13	63%	45%
2-3 days/week-continued after age 13	44%	30%

\*See Appendix II for a discussion of how Jewish parentage was ascertained for the 1990 NJPS

**Table 1-14**  
**Percent Mixed Married in 1993 by High School Dating**  
**(Third and Fourth Generation Respondents Born and**  
**Raised Jewish with Two Jewish Parents<sup>a</sup>)**

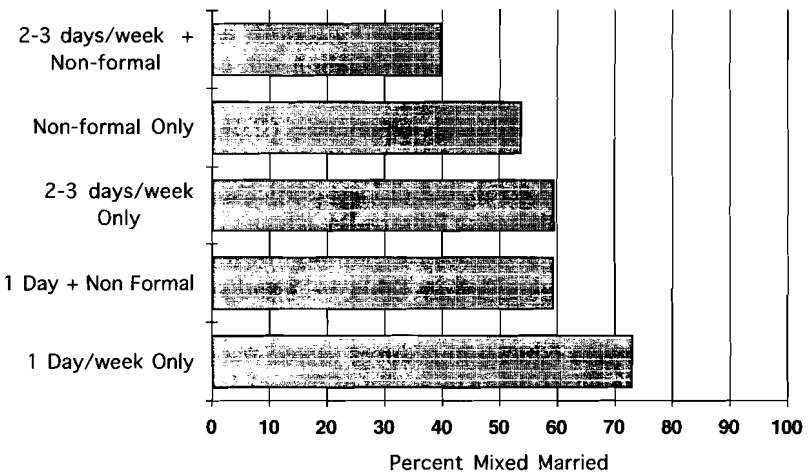
High School Dating	Family of Origin Score	
	Bottom Half	Top Half
Dated mostly Jews in high school	77%	62%
Dated mostly non-Jews or Jews and non-Jews equally	44%	35%

<sup>a</sup>See Appendix II for a discussion of how Jewish parentage was ascertained for the 1990 NJPS

Jewish educational experience (Figure 1-19). Adding non-formal Jewish educational experiences to a one-day-a-week primary Jewish education also significantly reduced the rate of mixed marriage.

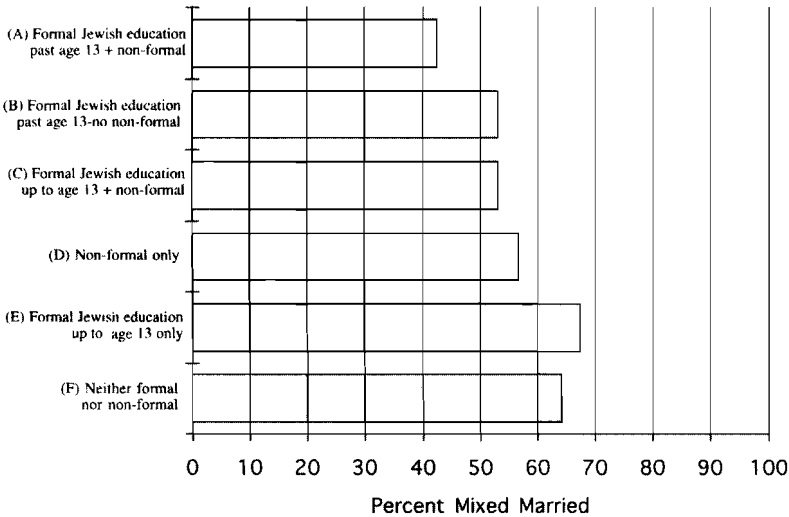
When duration, rather than the intensity of formal Jewish education is examined, the mutual reinforcement of formal and non-formal Jewish education is dramatically apparent. Figure 1-20 combines formal and non-formal education into six distinctive patterns. The lowest rates of mixed

**Figure 1-19** Percent Mixed Married in 1993 by Formal and Non-formal Jewish Education (Third and Fourth Generation Respondents Born and Raised Jewish with Two Jewish Parents<sup>a</sup>)



<sup>a</sup>See Appendix II for determination of Jewish parentage

**Figure 1–20** Percent Mixed Married in 1993 by Non-formal Jewish Education and Duration and Type of Formal Jewish Education (Third and Fourth Generation Respondents Born and Raised Jewish with Two Jewish Parents<sup>a</sup>)



<sup>a</sup>See Appendix II for determination of Jewish parentage

marriage are found in “Pattern A”, respondents who continued their Jewish education beyond the age of 13 and who also participated in at least one non-formal educational experience. “Pattern B” and “Pattern C” show how formal and non-formal Jewish education can compensate for each other. Respondents who ended their formal Jewish education at age 13 but participated in informal Jewish experiences (Pattern C) had the same rate of mixed marriage as respondents who continued formal Jewish study beyond the age of Bar Mitzvah, but did not participate in any non-formal Jewish educational experiences (Pattern B).

The independent impact of formal and non-formal Jewish education on mixed marriage is quantified in Table 1–15 and shown graphically in Figure 1–21. Adding non-formal Jewish education to any kind or duration of formal Jewish education reduces mixed marriage. Similarly, increasing either the duration or intensity of formal Jewish education also reduces mixed marriage. The lowest rates of mixed marriage are found among respondents with the most intensive and longest continuing formal Jewish education who also participated in non-formal Jewish educational experiences.

**Table 1-15**  
**Percent Mixed Married in 1993 by Formal and Non-formal Jewish Education (Third and Fourth Generation Respondents Born and Raised Jewish with Two Jewish Parents<sup>a</sup>)**

<i>Type and Duration of Formal Jewish Education</i>	<i>Non-Formal Jewish Education</i>		<i>% Decrease from Category to Left</i>
	<i>None</i>	<i>One or More Types</i>	
1 day/week-stopped	75%	64%	-11%
1 day/week-continued	67%	56%	-11%
<i>% decrease from category above</i>	-8%	-8%	
2-3 days/week-stopped	63%	41%	-22%
<i>% decrease from category above</i>	-4%	-15%	
2-3 days/week-continued	Insufficient cases	35%	n/a
<i>% decrease from category above</i>	Insufficient cases	-6%	

<sup>a</sup>See Appendix II for a discussion of how Jewish parentage was ascertained for the 1990 NJPS

### Model of Factors Which Influence Mixed Marriage

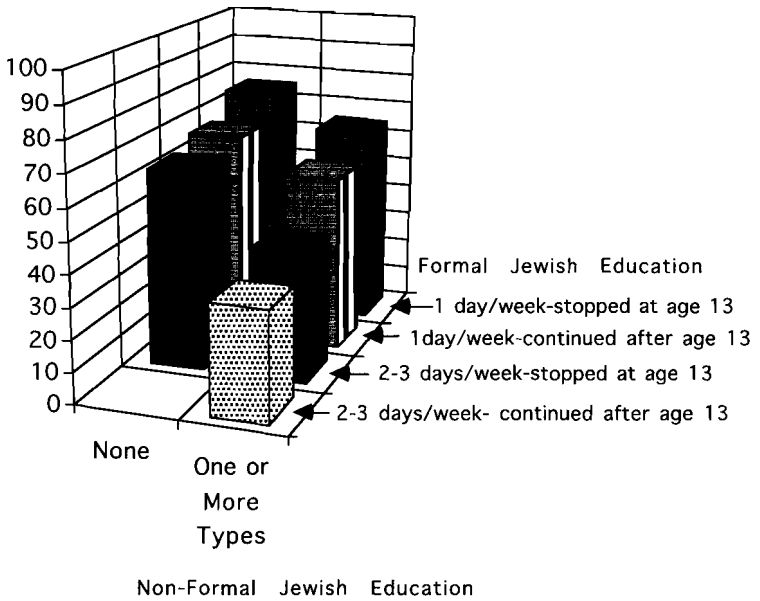
It is still possible to go further with this analysis by creating a model of all the significant factors that influence mixed marriage among third and fourth generation respondents with two Jewish parents. An extensive analysis was conducted to identify which factors influenced mixed marriage independently of the others. The relationships were so clear that they could be reduced to a simple typology (Figure 1-22). This typology combines three components: Jewish education (formal and non-formal), Jewishness of the family of origin, and high school dating patterns.

A respondent is considered to have had a "Jewish education" if he or she had (1) attended a 2-3 day-a-week or day school, or (2) continued his or her Jewish education beyond the age of 13 (even in a one day a week school), or (3) had any of the three informal Jewish educational experiences. Whether a respondent had one, two, or all three of these Jewish educational experiences had little or no impact on the rate of mixed marriage, so any of them could be substituted for the other in creating the "Mixed Marriage Factors Model."

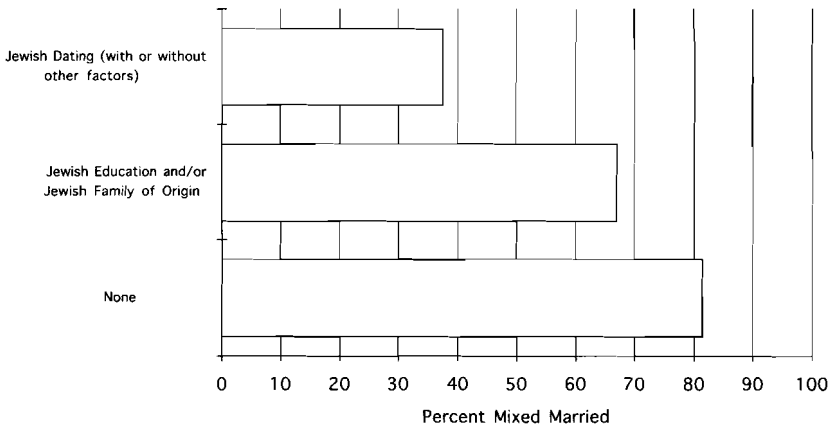
A respondent was considered to have come from a "More Jewish" family of origin if the "Family of Origin Index" was in the top half (i.e.,



**Figure 1-21** Percent Mixed Married by Formal and Non-formal Jewish Education (Third and Fourth Generation Respondents Born and Raised Jewish with Two Jewish Parents<sup>a</sup>)



**Figure 1-22** Percent Mixed Married in 1993 by “Mixed Marriage Factors Model” (Third and Fourth Generation Respondents Born and Raised Jewish with Two Jewish Parents<sup>a</sup>)



<sup>a</sup>See Appendix II for determination of Jewish parentage

a score of 3, 4, or 5). High school dating means that the respondent had dated "mostly Jews" while in high school.

These are not arbitrary divisions. An extensive analysis<sup>11</sup> was used to sort out the independent impact of all the factors discussed above on mixed marriage. The "Mixed Marriage Factors Model" separates those that had an independent impact on mixed marriage and combines those that were inter-correlated.

The highest rate of mixed marriage (81%) is found among respondents who had no Jewish education, had not dated Jews in high school, and came from the least Jewish families of origin. The next highest rate (67%) is among respondents who had either some Jewish education, were in the top half on the "Family of Origin Index", or both, but had *not* dated "mostly Jews" in high school. The lowest rate of mixed marriage (37%) is among respondents who dated "mostly Jews" in high school, regardless of their "Family of Origin Index" or whether they had any formal or informal Jewish education. Thus high school dating is the most significant factor for endogamy. To get a better understanding of why this is so, high school dating and its relationship with current patterns of mixed marriage are examined more closely in the next section.

## HIGH SCHOOL DATING PATTERNS

Respondents who were dating mostly Jews at the time they met their spouses were, not surprisingly, the most likely to have found Jewish spouses (Figure 1-23). Since the dating process begins in high school, respondents who dated mostly Jews in high school were also the most likely to have been dating mostly Jews at the time they met their current (or most recent) spouses (Table 1-16).

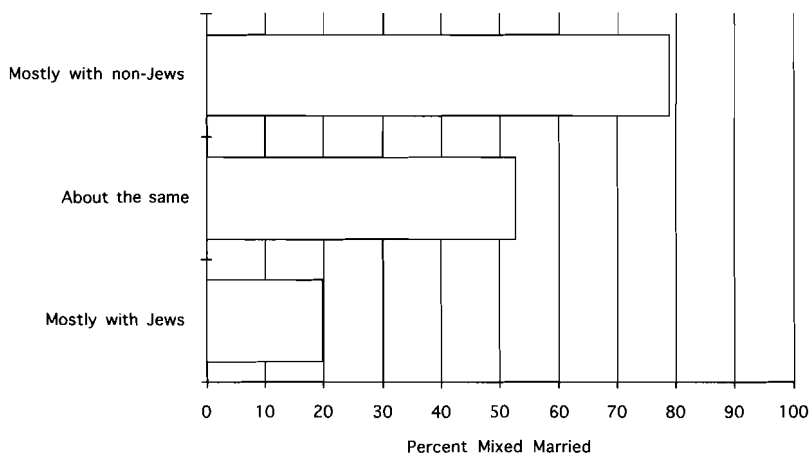
As teenagers pass into adulthood, however, their dating patterns shift both in behavior and intention. Jews of the third and fourth generations who dated mostly Jews in high school will not necessarily continue doing so as adults (Figure 1-24). In fact, only half of the respondents who dated mostly Jews in high school were still dating mostly Jews at the time they met their spouses. Similarly, less than half (43%) of the respondents who dated Jews and non-Jews equally in high school were still doing so when they met their spouses. Most of the rest were dating non-Jews at the time.

---

<sup>11</sup>Using a number of statistical techniques, including analysis of variance and logistic regression.

**Figure 1-23** Percent Mixed Married in 1993 by Adult Dating (Third and Fourth Generation Respondents Born and Raised Jewish with Two Jewish Parents<sup>a</sup>)

"At the time you met your current/previous spouse, did you go out mostly with Jews, or with non-Jews?"



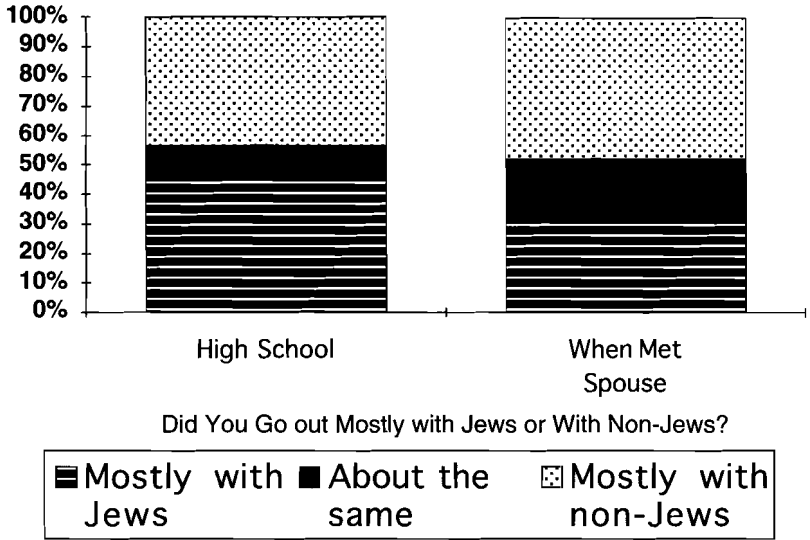
<sup>a</sup>See Appendix II for determination of Jewish parentage

**Table 1-16**  
**Relationship between Adult Dating and Adolescent Dating**  
**(Third and Fourth Generation Respondents**  
**Born and Raised Jewish with Two Jewish Parents<sup>a</sup>)**

<i>"At the time you met your current/ previous husband/wife, did you go out mostly with Jews or with non-Jews?"</i>	<i>"When you were in high school, did you go out mostly with Jews, or mostly with non-Jews?"</i>		
	<i>Mostly w/non-Jews</i>	<i>About the Same</i>	<i>Mostly w/Jews</i>
Don't know	1%	9%	0%
Mostly with non-Jews	73%	36%	24%
About the same	16%	43%	22%
Mostly with Jews	10%	13%	54%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

<sup>a</sup>See Appendix II for a discussion of how Jewish parentage was ascertained for the 1990 NJPS

**Figure 1-24** Percent Mixed Married by High School and Adult Dating (Third and Fourth Generation Respondents Born and Raised Jewish with Two Jewish Parents\*)



\*See Appendix II for determination of Jewish parentage

Endogamous expectations and interest also declined from adolescence into adulthood. Half of the third and fourth generation Jews expected, when they were in high school, to marry another Jew (Table 1-17). But by the time they were in college, only a quarter indicated that it was still “very important...to marry somebody Jewish” (Table

**Table 1-17**  
**Adolescent Expectations of Endogamy**  
**(Third and Fourth Generation Adult**  
**Children of Two Jewish Parents\*)**

*“When you were in high school, did you expect that you would eventually marry a Jew or a non-Jew?”*

Expected to marry a Jew	51%
Expected to marry a non-Jew	39%
No expectations	10%
Total	100%

\*See Appendix II for a discussion of how Jewish parentage was ascertained for the 1990 NJPS

**Table 1-18**  
**Importance Placed on Endogamy as an Adult**  
**(Third and Fourth Generation Adult**  
**Children of Two Jewish Parents<sup>a</sup>)**

*"After high school, or when you were in college, how important was it for you to marry somebody Jewish?"*

Very important	27%
Somewhat important	25%
Not at all important	47%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

<sup>a</sup>See Appendix II for a discussion of how Jewish parentage was ascertained for the 1990 NJPS

1-18). Less than half of the respondents who had expected during high school to marry a Jew were dating mostly Jews at the time they met their current or most recent spouse (Table 1-19).

This attrition in endogamously oriented attitudes and behaviors makes the starting point in adolescence particularly important. While it is true that only half of the respondents who dated Jews in high school continued to do so as adults, it was *only* those respondents who dated Jews in high school who would later be dating Jews as adults. Similarly, only those respondents who had been endogamously oriented as teenagers would be dating "mostly Jews" as adults. Just a mere hand-

**Table 1-19**  
**Adult Dating Patterns by Adolescent Expectations of Endogamy**  
**(Third and Fourth Generation Adult Children of Two Jewish Parents<sup>a</sup>)**

*"When you were in high school, did you expect that you would eventually marry a Jew or a non-Jew?"*

*"At the time you met your current/previous husband/wife, did you go out mostly with Jews or with non-Jews?"*

	Jew	No expectations	Non-Jew
Mostly with Jews	46%	14%	12%
About the same	22%	23%	10%
Mostly with non-Jews	32%	59%	79%
Don't know	1%	4%	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

<sup>a</sup>See Appendix II for a discussion of how Jewish parentage was ascertained for the 1990 NJPS

ful of respondents who dated non-Jews in high school would reverse this behavior as adults.

Thus, attitudes and behaviors associated with endogamy were found *only* among respondents who had started that way in high school. It is not clear from the study why the adolescent patterns are so important, but this finding is consistent with studies of other adolescent behaviors which continue into adulthood. Adults who smoke, for example, begin as teens. Adult criminals usually begin their careers when they are teens. A parallel exists with Jewish mixed marriage. Jews who dated non-Jews in high school married non-Jews as adults. While not all Jewish adolescents who expected to marry endogamously did so, *only* those who started in that direction would end up married endogamously.

Adult Jewish peer contacts also encourage endogamy (Table 1-20). In-married third and fourth generation Jews report that they met their spouses primarily through some sort of Jewish social network. 23% were introduced through friends, another 10% met their spouses on blind dates (presumably arranged by other Jews), and 9% met their Jewish spouses through a Jewish group. In-married Jews were five times as likely as mixed married Jews to have met their spouses on blind dates. A blind date is the purest example of the social network at work.

**Table 1-20**  
**Where Respondent Met Spouse Type of Marriage (Third and Fourth**  
**Generation Adult Children of Two Jewish Parents\*)**

<i>"Where did you meet your current spouse?"</i>	<i>In-Married</i>	<i>Mixed Married</i>
Social Network	33%	20%
Through friends	(23%)	(18%)
Blind date	(10%)	(2%)
Specifically Jewish connection	10%	1%
Jewish group or setting	(9%)	(1%)
Personal ad in a Jewish magazine or newspaper	(1%)	(0%)
Neutral settings	56%	81%
At work	(7%)	(25%)
At school	(22%)	(23%)
At a party or other social occasion	(14%)	(16%)
Random setting	(9%)	(10%)
Non-Jewish group or setting	(3%)	(6%)
Personal ad in a general magazine or newspaper	(1%)	(1%)
TOTAL	100%	100%

\*See Appendix II for a discussion of how Jewish parentage was ascertained for the 1990 NJPS

A “matchmaker” who knows two single Jews “fixes them up”. Why do they consent to go out with someone they have never met? Probably because both are looking to meet other Jews. Mixed married Jews, by contrast, were almost four times as likely as in-married Jews to have met their spouses at work.

## THE ADULT CHILDREN OF MIXED MARRIAGE

We have seen that the phenomenon of return in-marriage has reduced the overall rate of mixed marriage. It will be valuable to examine that group more closely. What factors are associated with return in-marriage among adults of mixed parentage?

We know three things about them from the 1993 survey:

1. whether they were raised as Jews or in some other religion
2. whether the gentile parent identified as Christian or as secular
3. whether they had received a Jewish education.

While most of the adult children of mixed marriage did not chose to marry other Jews, those who did demonstrate the importance of the Jewish socialization experiences analyzed above:

1. Despite having only one Jewish parent, return in-marrieds were raised as Jews (Table 1–21).
2. Their non-Jewish parents were secular, not Christian (Table 1–21).
3. They received a Jewish education (Table 1–22).
4. They dated Jews in high school (Table 1–23).

**Table 1–21**  
**Endogamy Among Adult Children of Mixed**  
**Marriages by Jewish Background of Respondent**  
**and Religion of Non-Jewish Parent**

	<i>Percent In-Married</i>
<hr/>	
Jewish background of respondent	
Respondent was born AND raised Jewish	24%
Respondent was NOT raised Jewish	4%
<hr/>	
Religion of non-Jewish parent	
Non-Jewish parent was NOT Christian	14%
Non-Jewish parent was Christian	4%
<hr/>	

**Table 1-22**  
**Jewish Education and Endogamy Among the**  
**Adult Children of Mixed Marriages**

	<i>Percent In-Married</i>
Received formal Jewish education?	
None	0%
Yes	30%
Participated in youth group	
1 year or less	5%
2+ years	60%
Participated in Jewish camp	
1 year or less	5%
2+ years	63%

**Table 1-23**  
**High School Dating and Endogamy Among the**  
**Adult Children of Mixed Marriages**

	<i>Percent In-Married</i>
Dated mostly Jews in high school?	
No	6%
Yes	45%

## CONCLUSION

Various kinds of Jewish socialization experiences are associated, both independently and cumulatively, with endogamy among third and fourth generation Jews. This applies not only to adults of endogamous parentage, but also to adults of mixed parentage. These experiences reduce the willingness to marry non-Jews. It is possible that norms of endogamy are inculcated directly as part of these socialization experiences, for example by a youth group director or rabbi who leads a discussion about inter-dating. But our research suggests that these norms are mostly inculcated indirectly. Jews who were socialized in their youth seek to replicate their own youth and family of origin when they marry. They find other Jews with the same objectives.





# Chapter 2

## UNDERSTANDING THE MIXED MARRIED FAMILY

What, if anything, is Jewish about the families that are formed by Jews who marry “out of the fold”? How are their children raised? Can the Jewish community reach out and draw them back in? Given the already large and fast-growing numbers of mixed married Jewish families, it is imperative that the Jewish community understand more about them. To this end, we have examined more closely than anyone has before the “texture” of religious or group identity in the intermarried family, as well as the family dynamics related to that identity. In addition to re-examining the data generated by the NJPS, our own 1993 Survey on Mixed Marriage focused on these issues specifically and in much greater depth. Finally, we conducted an additional, parallel, survey of the gentile spouses of mixed married Jews, so as to obtain a more complete and realistic picture of the mixed married family than is possible from Jewish communal surveys that focus on Jews alone.

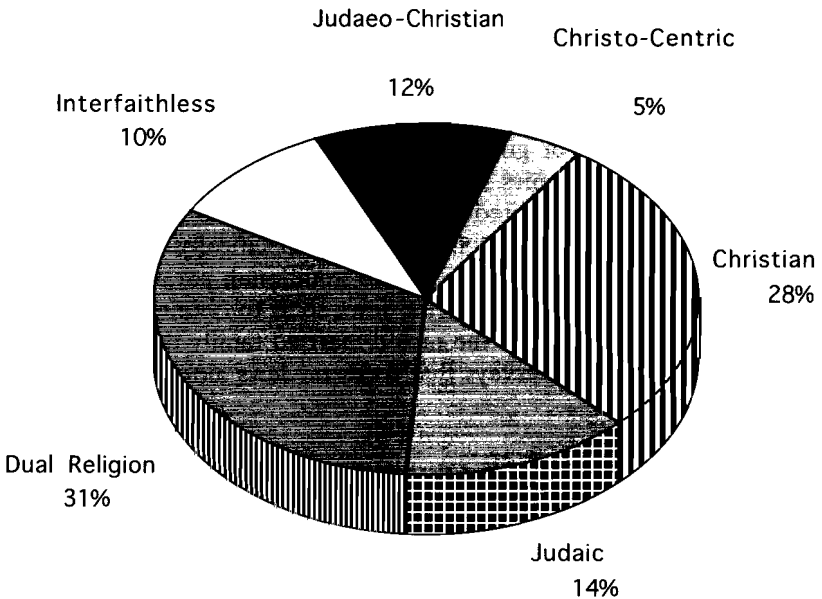
### A TYPOLOGY OF MIXED MARRIAGE

Group identity in modern America, and Jewish identity in particular, is a complex and imperfectly defined construct of such elements as religion, cultural practices, and social ties. To simplify the question of identity for the purposes of this study, we have followed the three-part typology used in the National Jewish Population Survey, which is based on our respondents’ own religious self-definitions.

We divide Jews into three categories: “BJR” (“Born Jews-Religion Jewish”), i.e., those born as Jews who also identify with Judaism as a religion; “JNR” (“Jews with No Religion”<sup>12</sup>), i.e., Jews who identify with no religion; and “JOR” (“Jews of Other Religion”), i.e., Jews who identify with a religion other than Judaism, usually Christianity. Whereas the NJPS did not differentiate among the non-Jewish spouses, we apply its same constructs to them. Accordingly, non-Jewish spouses are divided into two categories: “GC” (“Gentile Christians”), i.e., non-Jewish spouses who identify Christianity as their religion; “GNR” (“Gentile, No Religion”), i.e., non-Jewish spouses who identify with no religion). A third category, the gentile counterpart to “JOR,” would in this case consist of gentile converts to Judaism. These are not included because marriages of Jews and gentile converts are considered in-marriages.

With three categories of Jews and two categories of non-Jews, there are six possible combinations of mixed marriages (Figure 2-1):

**Figure 2-1** Prevalence of Six Types of Mixed Marriage (current marriages only)



<sup>12</sup>Also called “ethnic/secular” Jews in NJPS.

- a. Judaic Mixed Marriages      BJR married to GNR.
- b. Dual Religion                      BJR married to GC.
- c. Interfaithless                      JNR married to GNR.
- d. Christo-Centric                      JNR married to GC.
- e. Judaeo-Christian                      JOR married to GNR.
- f. Christian                              JOR married to GC.

This nominal typology reflects a range of relative Jewish and Christian influences in the mixed marriages. Regardless of whether mixed marriage families are more Jewish or more Christian in their practices and self-identity, such families usually evidence a mixture of influences from both traditions. Even the most Jewish of the couples maintain some Christian practices and connections, and even the most Christian mixed marrieds maintain some level of Jewish practices (Table 2-1 and Figure 2-2).

**Judaic Mixed Marriage**

The most Jewish of the six categories of mixed marriage is relatively uncommon. Just 14% of mixed marriages fall into this category. The balance of religious observance is clearly in favor of Judaism: 86% lit Hanukkah candles compared to 60% who had a Christmas tree; 61%

**Table 2-1**  
**Jewish and Christian Religious Practices in the Home by Type of Mixed Marriage**

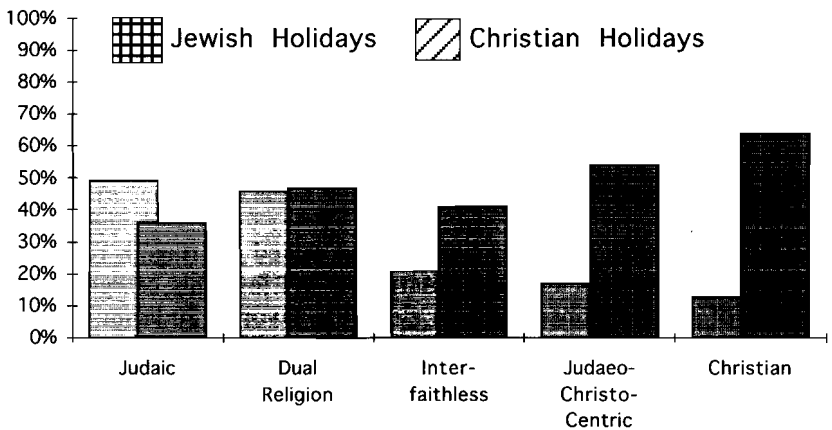
	<i>Most Jewish</i> <-----> <i>Most Christian</i>				
	<i>Judaic</i>	<i>Dual Religion</i>	<i>Inter-Faithless</i>	<i>Christo-Centric</i>	<i>Christian</i>
<b>Jewish Observances</b>					
Lit Hanukah candles	86%	79%	45%	18%	25%
Attended a Seder	61%	61%	24%	27%	17%
Haggadah read at Seder	61%	56%	21%	21%	17%
Jew went to High Holiday services	40%	29%	3%	8%	4%
<b>Christian Observances</b>					
Non-Jew went to church on Easter	0%	26%	0%	30%	42%
Had Christmas tree	60%	78%	83%	81%	87%

attended a Seder where a Haggadah was read, but none went to Easter Sunday services.

### Dual Religion Mixed Marriage

The most common type of mixed marriage, accounting for 31% of all mixed marriages, is the “dual religion” couple. The dual religion cou-

**Figure 2-2** Jewish and Christian Holidays Celebrated by Type of Mixed Marriage (currently intermarried couples)



#### Explanation of Chart

There are a total of 7 possible Christian holiday celebrations, and 10 possible Jewish holiday celebrations. The chart shows the average percentage of all possible celebrations actually celebrated by each type of couple. For example, a score of 100% for Jewish celebrations means that all 10 of the Jewish celebrations were observed; a score of 50% means that half of all celebrations were observed.

#### Christian Celebrations

- Celebrated Easter
- Gentile went to church Easter Sunday
- Jewish partner went to church Easter Sunday
- Child went to church Easter Sunday
- Had Christmas tree
- Exchanged Christmas presents
- Had relatives over for Christmas at own home

#### Jewish Celebrations

- Attended a Seder
- Seder was at own home
- Haggadah was read at Seder
- Celebrated Hanukkah
- Lit Hanukkah candles
- Exchanged Hanukkah presents
- Jew went to synagogue on High Holidays
- Gentile spouse also went
- Had High Holiday dinner at home
- Stayed home from work on Yom Kippur

ple consciously strives to maintain a balance of religious traditions in the household: 79% lit Hanukkah candles and 78% had a Christmas tree; 56% attended a Seder at which the Haggadah was read, and 26% went to Easter services.

### **Interfaithless Mixed Marriage**

Rabbi Harold Schulweis of Los Angeles has conjectured that many “interfaith” marriages are really “interfaithless”, with neither partner serious about their respective religions of origin<sup>13</sup>. Both the Jew and the non-Jew leave their pasts behind and meet on secular ground. Although popular as an image of mixed marriage, JNRs married to GNRs are not common. They account for only 10% of all mixed marriages. They are, however, quite secular. They do not go to synagogue for the High Holidays, nor to church on Easter. Only a quarter attended a Seder.

### **Christo-Centric Mixed Marriage**

Christo-Centric marriages make up only 5% of all current mixed marriages. Apparently Christians (GCs) are not attracted to secular Jews and/or secular Jews are not attracted to religiously committed Christians. Because there are so few cases, and because Christo-Centric couples most resemble Judaeo-Christian couples (described below), these two categories are joined together as Judaeo-Christo-Centrics. The balance of religious observance in this combined grouping is more Christian than Jewish, but not entirely so. Although they celebrate Christmas to a much greater extent than Hanukkah (80% compared to 18%), they are not devoid of Jewish connection. Almost as many Judaeo-Christo-Centric couples attended a Seder (27%) as went to church on Easter Sunday (30%).

### **Judaeo-Christian Mixed Marriage**

The Judaeo-Christian marriage is an unexpected category in which the “Christian” is actually the “Jew.” In this case a GNR has married a JOR. The JOR partner was typically raised as a Christian in a mixed marriage. Judaeo-Christian couples account for 12% of all current mixed marriages, a slightly higher percentage than the interfaithless couple.

---

<sup>13</sup>Rabbi Schulweis made this comment as a member of the Rabbinic Advisory Committee to the 1993 Survey on Mixed Marriage.

## Christian Mixed Marriage

The second most common type of mixed marriage (28% of all current mixed marriages) is made up of two Christians, one of whom is the adult child of a mixed marriage who was raised as a Christian. Some of the “Jewish Christians” identify with no religion any more, while others no longer identify as Jews, but only acknowledge their Jewish descent. As would be expected, these households are the most Christian in practice. Christian mixed marriages are the most likely to have a Christmas tree and to attend church on Easter Sunday. A solid minority of the Christian mixed marriages, however, also evidence some Jewish behaviors. One out of four reported that they lit Hanukkah candles, and almost one out of five attended a Seder. This is not a fluke. The Jewish leanings of this group of Jews raised as Christians are evident throughout the analysis.

### THE CHILDREN OF MIXED MARRIAGES

Perhaps the single most telling measure of mixed married family dynamics, and the most significant one for a Jewish community concerned about “continuity”, is the upbringing of the next generation. This research focuses on three dimensions of children’s upbringing:

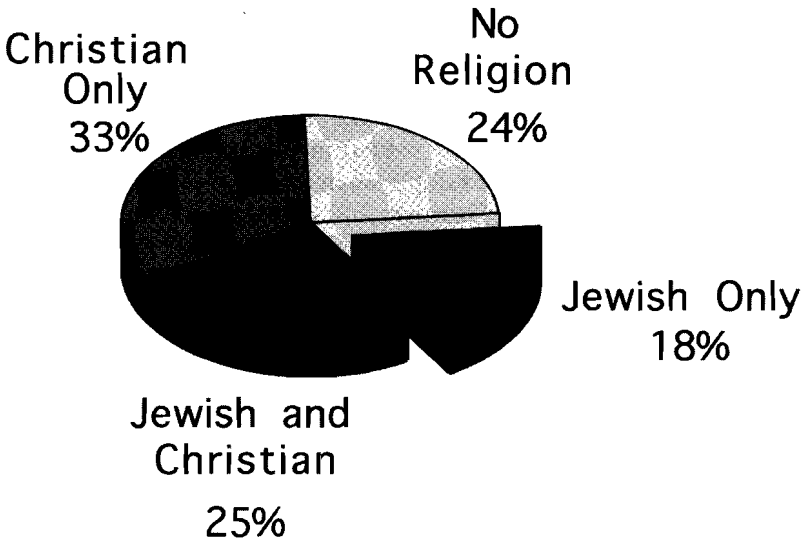
1. *Nominal Identity*, or what religion they are “raised as”, according to the parents’ report of what children are told about their religious or group identity. Overall, just under a fifth of the children are raised exclusively as Jews<sup>14</sup>, a third are raised exclusively as Christians, a fourth are raised as both Jews and Christians, and another fourth are raised in no religion<sup>15</sup> (Figure 2–3).
2. *Formal Religious Education*. Overall, the majority of children six years of age and older in mixed marriages receive no formal religious instruction. Of those who do, children under 12 are most

---

<sup>14</sup>This is lower than, but consistent with, the figure reported by Kosmin in the NJPS. This discrepancy is one instance of what we referred to in the introduction as refinements arising from the greater depth and detail of the Survey on Mixed Marriage and the Survey on Gentile Spouses.

<sup>15</sup>This category also includes a few cases where the child was being raised in an Eastern or “New Age” religion. Since these religions are neither competitive with nor hostile to Judaism, they were put into this “neutral” category.

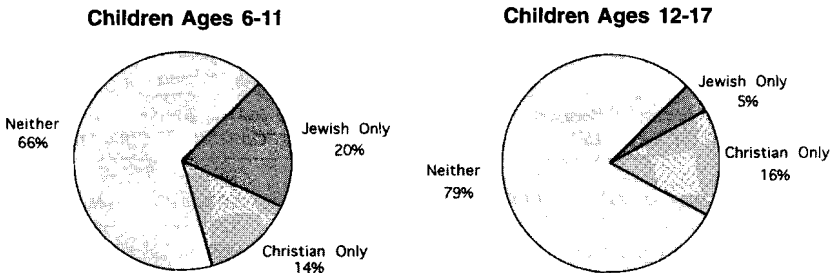
**Figure 2-3** How Children are Raised in Mixed Marriages



likely to receive Jewish religious instruction, but over the age of 12 they are three times as likely to receive formal Christian instruction (Figure 2-4).

3. *Family Religious, Cultural, and Social Environment.* Our construct of family “environment” is a compound measure of factors such as contact with Jews and/or gentiles (in the extended family, the social network, and the neighborhood), cultural and religious lore dispensed within the family, and celebration of hol-

**Figure 2-4** How Children are Raised in Mixed Marriages, Controlling for Age of Child





idays. We find that children “raised as Jews” generally have a family environment with observable Jewish dimensions, even if the child is not receiving formal Jewish education.

Inter-marriage joins two different socio-cultural and religious backgrounds. As a result, each type of mixed marriage displays at least some degree of internal inconsistency rooted in the spouses’ emotional attachment to their pasts. For example, some children in avowedly Judaic families are also raised as Christian; and conversely, some children in families that identify themselves as Christian are also raised as Jews. Nevertheless, our typology of mixed marriage is generally consistent with the overall patterns in a family’s nominal-identity, religious education, and social environment (Table 2–2). These patterns validate the assumption that what people say about themselves will also be reflected in how they live their lives. The “inconsistencies”, to be examined next, suggest that all mixed married families negotiate a balance between two different backgrounds.

**Judaic Mixed Marriages**

The children of Judaic mixed marriages are the “most Jewish” of all children of mixed marriages, but they are less Jewish than children of endogamous couples. They are the most likely to be raised exclusively as Jews, but fewer than half of them (44%) are (Table 2–3). The rest are raised either in no religion (32%), or as both Christians and Jews (23%). Thus, even in the most Jewish type of mixed marriage, one out of four children is being raised jointly as Jewish and Christian.

Between the ages of 6 and 12, the children of Judaic mixed marriages are more likely to receive a formal Jewish education than other chil-

**Table 2–2**  
**Relationship between Religious Instruction Received and How Child is Being Raised (Children of Mixed Marriages Ages 6-12)**

<i>Type of Formal Religious Instruction Received</i>	<i>How Child is Being Raised</i>			
	<i>Jewish</i>	<i>No Religion</i>	<i>Jewish &amp; Christian</i>	<i>Christian</i>
Jewish	67%	0%	23%	0%
Neither	33%	97%	50%	36%
Christian	0%	3%	27%	64%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Table 2-3**  
**How Child is Being Raised by Type of Mixed Marriage**  
**(Natural Children of Married Couples)**

<i>How Child is Being Raised</i>	<i>Judaic</i>	<i>Dual</i>	<i>Inter-Faithless</i>	<i>Judaeo-Christo-Centric</i>	<i>Christian</i>	<i>Divorced From Mixed</i>
As a Jew only	44%	26%	0%	3%	0%	41%
As both Jew and Christian	23%	46%	37%	3%	15%	22%
As a Christian only	0%	21%	0%	41%	70%	26%
In no religion*	32%	7%	63%	53%	15%	11%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*This category includes some children raised in a "New Age" religion, or a religion other than Judaism or Christianity.

dren of mixed marriages, but they are only half as likely to do so as the children of endogamous marriages: 37% compared to 85% (Table 2-4).

The children who are raised as Jews<sup>16</sup> in Judaic mixed marriages live in the most Jewish family environment as compared both with (1) children raised as Jews in other types of mixed marriages, and (2) children *not* raised as Jews in Judaic mixed marriages<sup>17</sup> (Table 2-5). Their families are in contact with the Jewish grandparents more often than with the gentile grandparents, they live in neighborhoods with other Jews, their parents have Jewish friends, and they live in homes with relatively high Passover observance.

**Table 2-4**  
**Religious Education of Children Ages 6-12 by Type of Mixed Marriage (Natural Children of Married Couples)**

<i>Type of Religious Instruction Received</i>	<i>Judaic</i>	<i>Dual Religion</i>	<i>Inter-Faithless</i>	<i>Christo-Centric</i>	<i>Christian</i>	<i>Divorced From Mixed</i>
Jewish only	37%	15%	0%	2%	0%	21%
Christian only	0%	14%	7%	7%	26%	0%
Neither	64%	72%	93%	92%	74%	79%
Both	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

<sup>16</sup>This includes children raised in two religions as well as children raised exclusively as Jews.

<sup>17</sup>Children not raised as Jews in Judaic mixed marriages are being raised either without any religion or, in a few cases, in a "New Age" religion.

**Table 2-5**  
**Jewish Family Environment by How Child is Being Raised and Type of Mixed Marriage**  
**(Natural children with two parents in the home)**

Aspect of Home Environment	Type of Mixed Marriage/How Child is Raised							
	Judaic		Dual		Inter-Faithless	Judaeo-Christo-Centric		
	Not as Jew	As Jew	Not as Jew	As Jew	All children combined	All children combined		
Parents talk to/see Jewish grandparents 1+ times/week	49%	76%	68%	80%	64%	71%	61%	100%
Parents talk to/see gentile grandparents 1+ times/week	36%	50%	58%	42%	24%	48%	68%	7%
At least some of neighbors are Jewish	58%	40%	26%	25%	16%	16%	10%	38%
Parents have Jewish friends	17%	42%	23%	33%	19%	26%	8%	0%
Jewish parent tells Jewish stories to child	90%	91%	53%	79%	80%	50%	59%	100%
Child went to church Easter Sunday	0%	0%	31%	13%	0%	28%	50%	11%
Jewish respondent went to church Easter Sunday	0%	0%	13%	4%	0%	29%	48%	11%
Jewish parent talks to child about what Judaism teaches	90%	85%	47%	59%	10%	78%	61%	86%
Jewish parent talks to child about family history	94%	94%	67%	80%	90%	86%	73%	86%
Mean # of Passover observances (total=3)	1.0	1.8	0.5	1.5	0.2	0.4	0.4	0.8
Mean # of Christmas observances (total=3)	2.7	2.6	2.8	2.5	2.7	2.6	2.9	2.4

Judaic children who are raised in no religion have a less Jewish family environment than Judaic children raised as Jews, but their family environment has a Jewish flavor. Almost all of them have parents who tell them Jewish stories, talk to them about Judaism, and tell them about the history of the Jewish side of the family.

### **Dual Religion Mixed Marriages**

The same pattern of consistency and inconsistency described for the Judaic mixed marriage applies to the dual religion family. Consistent with their parents' religious self-definition, the children of dual religion mixed families are the most likely to be raised simultaneously as Christians and Jews. However, only 46% of them are. An equal number are raised in one religion only, and these divide equally between children raised exclusively as Jews and children raised exclusively as Christians (Table 2-3).

The dual religion family is even less consistent when it comes to formal religious instruction. None of these children received formal instruction in both religions, and most received no formal religious instruction at all. Only 29% of dual religion children between the ages of 6 and 12 had received any formal religious instruction during the year of the survey. These were split evenly between Jewish instruction only (15%) and Christian instruction only (14%)(Table 2-4).

When we say that the dual religion family is inconsistent, we do not mean to imply that its members are disingenuous. These parents are philosophically committed to the idea of two religions in the home. They are, for example, the most likely to agree with the statement that "two religions in the home give the children the best of both worlds." But they find this philosophy difficult to implement. Since most Jewish religious schools meet on Sunday morning, it would be difficult to have a child enrolled in two separate places; and rotating between schools on a weekly basis is not a viable alternative. We take the fact that only half the children were being raised in both religions as indirect evidence of tensions within the dual religion family. We will expand on this theme later on when we discuss divorce.

The family environment of the dual religion family is less Jewish than that of the Judaic family. But children who are raised with any degree of Jewishness in dual religion families—that is to say, as either exclusively Jewish or as both Jewish and Christian—have a more Jewish family environment than children in these families who are raised either with no religion or exclusively as Christians.

Children raised as Jews in dual religion families are exposed to a Jewish social network which is only slightly less Jewish than that of their counterparts in Judaic marriages, but which is more Jewish than the social network of dual religion families in which the children are not raised as Jews (Table 2–5):

1. 80% regularly see or talk to Jewish grandparents, as compared with 76% of Jewishly raised children in Judaic marriages and with 68% of those not raised as Jews in dual religion marriages.
2. Like the children of Judaic mixed marriages, children raised as Jews in dual religion families have more regular contact with the Jewish grandparents than with the gentile grandparents. Children not raised as Jews in dual religion marriages see them almost equally.
3. 33% of children raised as Jews in dual religion families have parents with Jewish friends, as compared with 42% of Jewishly raised children in Judaic marriages, and with 23% of those not raised as Jews in dual religion marriages.
4. One quarter of all children in dual religion families have Jewish neighbors, as compared with 40% of Jewishly raised children in Judaic marriages.

The patterns of holiday observance are particularly striking in the dual religion home. In families where the children are raised as Jews, the level of Passover observance is lower than in Judaic families, but it is three times as high as in families where the children are not raised as Jews. Similarly, only 13% of children raised as Jews in dual religion families went to church on Easter Sunday, as compared with 31% of the children not raised as Jews. (None of the children of Judaic families went to church on Easter Sunday.)

Children raised as Jews in dual religion families experience less Jewish teaching from their Jewish parent than do their counterparts in Judaic marriages, but it is still more than received by children not raised as Jews in dual religion families (Table 2–5):

1. 79% are told Jewish stories, as compared with 91% of Jewishly raised children in Judaic marriages and 53% of those not raised as Jews in dual religion marriages.
2. 59% are exposed to Jewish teachings, as compared with 85% of Jewishly raised children in Judaic families and 47% of those not raised as Jews in dual religion families.

3. 80% are told about the history of the Jewish side of the family, as compared with 94% of Jewishly raised children in Judaic marriages and 67% of those not raised as Jews in dual religion families.

The children of dual religion families, then, are less often raised exclusively as Jews, and less often educated as Jews than are the children of Judaic families, and this is consistent with the assertions of both parents that two religions are practiced in the home. Nonetheless, a substantial minority are raised as Jews, and a smaller but still significant minority were enrolled in a Jewish religious school during the year of the survey. Moreover, there is an observable Jewish environment in many of these homes. That environment may be less pervasive than in Judaic mixed marriages (and certainly less pervasive than in endogamous Jewish homes), but it is there.

The presence of a BJR parent often creates a Jewishly influenced family environment in a dual religion family, even when the children are not being raised as Jews. For example, these children generally have more contact with the Jewish than with the gentile grandparents. The discovery of this Jewish layer in even the least Jewish of the dual religion families is especially significant in light of their large numbers. Just under a third of all children of Jewish intermarriage in America live in such households.

Most important, when it comes to outreach, we will distinguish between Jewishly oriented and Christian oriented dual religion families.

### **Interfaithless Mixed Marriages**

Data exists on only 29 cases of the children of interfaithless marriages, of which only 11 were raised as Jews in some way. Children of these marriages are the most likely to be raised in no religion at all, yet more than one third are raised in two religions. In this regard, the interfaithless family and the dual religion family overlap. Almost half the dual religion children were raised in no religion, and a third of interfaithless children were raised in two religions.

Interfaithless parents, however, are quite consistent when it comes to not giving children formal religious instruction. Only 7% of the children aged 6-12 of interfaithless families had received formal religious instruction in the year preceding the survey (and these were all Christian) (Table 2-4).

The children of interfaithless marriages have more contact with Jewish grandparents than with gentile grandparents, but their other Jewish social networks are weak. Only 19% of interfaithless children have parents with any Jewish friends, and only 16% of the children live in neighborhoods with “some” Jews. Their Jewish parent does give them some *Jewish* content, but no *religious* content. 80% are told Jewish stories, 90% are told about the history of the Jewish family, but only 10% hear about the teachings of Judaism (Table 2–5).<sup>18</sup>

### **Judaeo-Christian and Christo-Centric Mixed Marriages**

The children of these two family types reflect the secular and Christian orientations of their parents<sup>19</sup>: 53% of the children are raised in no religion, 41% are raised as Christians. Only a few children are raised exclusively as Jews (3%) or in two religions (3%) (Table 2–3). Only 9% received any formal religious instruction (mostly Christian) (Table 2–4).

The Jewish elements in the family environment are weak. Only a minority of the children live in neighborhoods with even “some” Jews. Passover observance is almost non-existent. Still, the family environment of Judaeo-Christian and Christo-Centric children is not entirely devoid of Jewish content. A quarter of these children have parents with Jewish friends. And while only 28% accompany their gentile parent to church on Easter Sunday, half are told Jewish stories and, according to their Jewish parents, three out of four children are talked to by these parents about what Judaism teaches (Table 2–5).

### **“Christian” Mixed Marriages**

Not surprisingly, the majority (70%) of children from Christian mixed marriages are being raised as Christians. What is surprising, however, is that another 15% of the children are being raised as both Jewish and Christian, even though the Jewish parent either currently identifies as a Christian or was raised as such (Table 2–3). Equally surprising is that only a quarter of the children between the ages of 6 and 12 were receiving a formal Christian education. The remaining three-quarters receive no formal religious instruction at all (Table 2–4).

---

<sup>18</sup>Because there are so few cases of children from interfaithless marriages in the survey, no distinction is made between those raised as Jews and those not raised as Jews with regard to family environment.

<sup>19</sup>The Christo-centric couple consists of a JNR and a GC; the Judaeo-Christian couple is defined by a JOR married to GNR.

Although only a small minority of these children are being raised as Jews (and not even exclusively as Jews, but as both Jewish and Christian), there are noticeable differences between their family environment and that of the majority who are not raised as Jews at all. They have greater contact with grandparents on the Jewish side, almost no contact with gentile grandparents, rarely go to church on Easter, and a few even attend a Passover Seder (Table 2–5). This suggests to us that there is a residual connection with Judaism among “Christian” Jews who were raised as Christians but no longer identify as such. Although not raised as Jews, they have some kind of emotional attachment to Jewish identification. Other findings presented later support this interpretation.

## THE PROSPECTS FOR OUTREACH

There has been much debate within the American Jewish community about both the appropriateness and the efficacy of outreach to the mixed married population. To date, however, there has been no sustained empirical inquiry regarding its prospects.

In this research we have taken the first step in assessing the prospects for outreach by measuring the appeal of different kinds of outreach programs to mixed married Jews (1993) and gentiles (1995). We did this in two ways. Jewish and gentile spouses were asked how likely they would be to participate in various kinds of hypothetical programs for mixed married couples. Couples with children were asked about their aspirations for their children’s ethno-religious identification.

The discussion of the results must be preceded by two caveats. First, we are assessing only the expressed interest in specific kinds of outreach, not the potential efficacy of such programs in linking the mixed married couple to the Jewish community. Second, some of the outreach programs in which mixed married couples have expressed interest may raise serious policy concerns for the organized Jewish community—for example, programs which teach families how to raise children in two religions. Asking about such programs in the research tells us a great deal about the mixed married couples, but it does not mean that the Jewish community should comply with all of their preferences.

### Judaic Couples

Judaic couples are natural candidates for outreach because Judaism is the only religion practiced in the home. The Jewish partners in Judaic mixed marriages generally want their children to identify as Jews



(some more so than others), and would be uncomfortable were their children to be raised as Christians. The gentile spouses, on the other hand, are largely indifferent to the religion in which their children are raised (Table 2–6). Accordingly, outreach is attractive to them (Table 2–7a+b). A substantial proportion of both the Jewish and gentile partners indicated they would be “very likely” to participate in at least one of the ten outreach programs listed (46% and 40% respectively), and both partners expressed strong interest in “a Hebrew or religious school geared toward the needs of interfaith children.” (30% of the BJR and 25% of GNRs would be “very likely” to participate.)

Aside from this program, in which interest was especially high, the Jewish and gentile partners in Judaic marriages are not interested in the same kinds of outreach. The BJR partners were more interested than their gentile partners in programs related to child rearing. 29% of the Jews, compared to 6% of the gentiles, indicated they would be “very likely” to participate in “a class or program where we could get help with talking to children about God or religion.” 22% of the Jews, compared to 12% of the gentiles, would be “very likely” to participate in “a class or program where we or our children could learn more about Jewish history and culture.” The BJR were also more interested than were the GNRs in the two support groups listed in Table 2–7.<sup>20</sup>

A small but solid minority of the BJR expressed interest in programs oriented to facilitating two religions in the home. 15% would be “very likely” to participate in “a program to help parents who want to raise a child in both religions,” and 16% would be “very likely” to participate in “a class where we and our children could learn about both of the religions in our home.” Because they are secular, the GNR partners were much less interested in these dual religion programs.

The Judaic couple, as could be expected, is the best candidate for outreach. The BJR partners have strong Jewish aspirations for their children, and were interested in a religious school for the children of mixed marriages, learning more about Jewish history and culture with their children, and getting help with child rearing.

Their GNR spouses responded positively to a Jewish religious school for children of mixed marriages. Otherwise, however, they are indifferent both to outreach and to their children’s religious upbringing. This is consistent with their professed secularism. They are not enthusiastic about outreach, but neither would they oppose it.

---

<sup>20</sup>“A support group for interfaith couples”, and “A support group or program which could help us to deal with the different cultural or religious background in our home.”

**Table 2-6**  
**Identity Aspiration Scores\* Of Jews And Non-Jews**

	JUD*		DRL		IFL		JCC		CHR		DIV
	Jew	Gen	Jew	Gen	Jew	Gen	Jew	Gen	Jew	Gen	Jew
It doesn't matter to me whether or not my children think of themselves as Jews/Christians	2.1	4.1	2.4	3.3	4.0	4.8	3.7	3.5	4.2	3.0	2.5
I would feel uncomfortable if a child of mine were raised as a Christian/Jew	4.3	1.5	3.2	2.4	2.5	1.0	2.8	2.7	1.8	2.3	3.4
It is important to me that my children know something about Jewish culture and history	4.9	4.8	4.6	4.8	4.5	4.8	4.6	4.9	4.7	4.5	5.0
It is important to me that my children care about Israel	4.1	n/a	3.5	n/a	3.8	n/a	2.6	n/a	3.8	n/a	4.2

\*Explanation of scores: 5=strongly agree; 4=agree somewhat; 3=neutral; 2=disagree somewhat; 1=strongly disagree.

Explanation of codes: JUD=Judaic; DRL=dual religion; IFL=interfaithless; JCC=Judaico Christo-Centric; CHR= Christian; DIV=divorced from mixed marriage; Jew=Jewish respondent in a mixed marriage; Gen=gentile respondent in 1995 survey of gentile spouses in mixed marriages.

**Table 2-7a**  
**Percent of Respondents "Very Likely" to Participate in Specific Outreach Programs by Type of Mixed Marriage and Respondent**

Outreach Program	JUD <sup>a</sup>		DRL		IFL		JCC		CHR		DIV	
	Jew	Gen	Jew	Gen	Jew	Gen	Jew	Gen	Jew	Gen	Jew	Gen
Percent very likely to participate in 1+ outreach programs	46%	40%	47%	55%	27%	28%	15%	25%	12%	42%	28%	28%
A support group for interfaith couples	15%	2%	18%	15%	0%	0%	4%	11%	3%	15%	15%	15%
A support group or program which could help us to deal with the different cultural or religious background in our home	14%	7%	23%	18%	6%	0%	1%	21%	2%	4%	10%	10%
A class or program where we could learn about what Judaism has to say about current problems in modern life	10%	14%	22%	13%	9%	8%	5%	25%	1%	20%	11%	11%

<sup>a</sup>Explanation of codes: JUD=Judaic couple; DRL=dual religion couple; IFL=interfaithless couple; JCC=Judaic Christian couple; CHR=Christian couple; DIV=divorced from mixed marriage; Jew=Jewish respondent in a mixed marriage; Gen=gentile respondent in 1995 survey of gentile spouses in mixed marriages.

**Table 2-7b**  
**Percent of Respondents with Children "Very Likely" to Participate in Specific Outreach Programs by Type of Mixed Marriage and Respondent**

Outreach Program	JUD*		DRL		IFL		JCC		CHR		DIV	
	Jew	Gen	Jew	Gen	Jew	Gen	Jew	Gen	Jew	Gen	Jew	Gen
A Hebrew or religious school geared toward the needs of interfaith children	30%	25%	22%	20%	0%	0%	0%	17%	6%	6%	20%	20%
A program to help parents who want to raise a child in both religions	15%	7%	33%	12%	14%	10%	0%	17%	12%	20%	17%	17%
A program to help parents decide about religious observance in the home	8%	4%	14%	12%	4%	0%	0%	5%	4%	13%	20%	20%
A class where we or our children could learn about both of the religions in our home	16%	11%	36%	26%	19%	0%	0%	17%	8%	12%	27%	27%
A class or program where we or our children could learn more about Jewish history and culture	22%	12%	36%	32%	19%	15%	7%	23%	6%	14%	34%	34%
A class or program where we could get help with talking to children about God or religion	29%	6%	23%	18%	10%	0%	3%	17%	5%	16%	19%	19%
A class or program where we could get help with talking to children about death	13%	8%	16%	20%	0%	0%	8%	17%	8%	21%	25%	25%

\*Explanation of codes: JUD=Judaic couple; DRL=dual religion couple; IFL=interfaithless couple; JCC=Judeao Christian couple; CHR= Christian couple; DIV=divorced from mixed marriage; Jew=Jewish respondent in a mixed marriage; Gen=gentile respondent in 1995 survey of gentile spouses in mixed marriages.

## Dual Religion Couples

Both the BJR and the GC spouses in “dual religion” couples professed the greatest interest in outreach overall, but mostly on their own terms. They were more interested than all other couples in the two programs designed for dual religion families: “a class where we and our children could learn about both of the religions in our home”, and “a program to help parents who want to raise a child in both religions.” The BJR partners were more enthusiastic about these two outreaches than were their GC spouses. 36% of the BJRs and 26% of the GC spouses would be “very likely” to participate in “a class where we and our children could learn about both of the religions in our home.” The gap between them is even wider with regard to “a program to help parents who want to raise a child in both religions.” 33% of the BJRs, but only 12% of the GCs, would be “very likely” to participate. Perhaps the BJR partners feel they need more help, since Judaism is the minority religion and it does not recognize the legitimacy of Christianity. Christianity does recognize the legitimacy of Judaism, but only as a precursor to Christianity. The subordinate position of Judaism within Christianity is less problematic for the GCs than for the BJRs.

From a traditional Jewish point of view, Christianity is hostile to Judaism, and the notion that both faiths have equal standing in a dual religion home may puzzle and even offend traditional Jewish sensibilities. This is a solidly American idea, however. Playwright Israel Zangwill observed almost a century ago that intermarriage is the ultimate melting pot. The dual religion couple is the American Judaeo-Christian heritage in microcosm. From within this latter perspective, many dual religion couples view their Jewish heritage positively. They are more interested than all other mixed married parents in “a class or program where we or our children could learn more about Jewish history and culture.”

The Jewish partner is moderately more committed to raising Jewish children than the gentile partner is to raising Christian children. The BJRs desire their children to think of themselves as Jewish slightly more than the GCs desire their children to think of themselves as Christian. The GCs are more comfortable with the prospect of a Jewish child than are the BJRs with the prospect of a Christian child. But this is only a matter of degree. Neither spouse is greatly troubled by the prospect of their children identifying with their partner’s religious tradition. Indeed, this is consistent with the overall parity in how the children are raised.

Any outreach program will certainly attract dual religion families. Their commitment to Christianity is as problematic as their interest in Judaism is sincere.

### **Interfaithless Couples**

There were only 19 interfaithless couples with children in the 1993 sample, and only 9 of the interfaithless gentile spouses were interviewed in 1995. These small numbers limit the scope of the discussion, but their religious indifference does come through. Neither partner cares much whether the children think of themselves as Jews or Christians, the gentile partner even less so than the Jew. The prospect of a child being raised in the other partner's religious tradition doesn't bother either of them because neither partner identifies with a religious tradition.

The JNR partners displayed minimal interest in outreach overall, but were unexpectedly interested in the kinds of programs that appeal to dual religion couples: (1) "a class or program where we or our children could learn more about both of the religions in our home", and (2) "a program to help parents who want to raise a child in both religions." Why would an avowedly secular Jew be interested in programs to create a dual religion home? Perhaps they think of these as a way to deal with cultural or ethnic differences they have already experienced. This interest is consistent with the patterns of child rearing discussed above. A solid minority of interfaithless couples were raising their children simultaneously as Jews and as Christians. Perhaps this is a mechanism by which to link the children with their extended families and/or both ethnic backgrounds.

### **Judaeo-Christo-Centric Couples**

Judaeo-Christian and Christo-Centric couples were the least interested in outreach overall. They are surprisingly similar to interfaithless couples in their acceptance of each other's religious/ethnic backgrounds. Neither partner is particularly committed to any religious tradition.

The one area of interest to Judaeo-Christo-Centric couples is all the more striking given the religious indifference otherwise expressed by these couples. The gentile partners (some of whom are GNRs and some of whom are GCs) were strikingly open (and more open than their Jewish spouses) to "a class or program where we or our children could learn more about Jewish history and culture." 23% would be "very likely" to

participate. How do we account for this Jewish interest on the part of the gentile spouse? Our interpretation is that the gentiles in mixed marriages are aware of their spouse's Jewish origins, no matter how tenuous. There may be some self-selection at work in the 1995 sample, in that the most Judaeophile of the gentiles were the most agreeable to participation in the survey. Thus, the scope of gentile interest may be overstated, but its sincerity is not. Jews make up less than 3% of the population. Even a tenuous Jewish background adds uniqueness to such individuals which sets them apart from other Americans. When a gentile marries an individual who is only even "half Jewish", they are embracing that Jewish half as well.

### **Christian Couples**

In theory, Christian mixed marriages should be the least likely candidates for outreach. The "Jew" in such marriages, after all, was either raised as a Christian or identifies as such now. For the most part this is true. The Jewish partners show negligible interest in outreach from the Jewish community, and are comfortable with their children being raised as Christians.

There are two surprising findings which require comment in the context of outreach. The JORs feel strongly that their children should know something about Jewish culture and history and they even feel strongly that their children should care about Israel. Their links to the Jewish people, though weak, are acknowledged.<sup>21</sup>

The GC partners in Christian mixed marriages show some enthusiasm for outreach from the Jewish community.

### **Divorced Mixed Marrieds**

Jews who are divorced from mixed marriages constitute a special category in our survey, which included both currently and previously married Jewish respondents from the NJPS. The children of Jewish single parents still have a non-Jewish parent, even if that parent no longer resides in the home. Jews divorced from mixed marriages are especially important candidates for outreach both because of their considerable numbers and because of the interest they express in it

The divorce rate among mixed marriages is double the rate among endogamous marriages (Table 2-8), and in the 1993 Survey on Mixed

---

<sup>21</sup>They did, after all, agree to be interviewed in 1989 and in 1993.

**Table 2-8**  
**Percent Divorced From First Marriage in 1990**  
**By Intermarriage, Controlling For Age**  
**(Respondents & Jewish Spouses with Two Jewish Parents\*)**

	<i>In-Marriages</i>	<i>Mixed-Marriages</i>
<i>All marriages</i>	16%	30%
<i>Respondents under 45</i>	14%	25%
<i>Respondents 45 +</i>	16%	42%

\*See Appendix II for a discussion of how Jewish parentage was ascertained for the 1990 NJPS

Marriage, divorced Jews accounted for one out of five respondents who were currently or previously mixed married.<sup>22</sup> We call them “divorced from a mixed marriage”.

Only the Judaic couples are more Jewishly oriented than respondents divorced from a mixed marriage. The children of dissolved mixed marriages who currently live with the Jewish parent are almost as likely as the children of Judaic marriages to be raised as Jews: 41% as compared with 44% of Judaic children (Table 2-3). However, almost half (48%) are still being raised as Christians (either as dual religion or exclusively), reflecting the influence of the former spouse. They were the second most likely to be receiving a Jewish education, second only to Judaic couples (Table 2-4). Formerly mixed married Jewish single parents also manifested substantial interest in outreach (Table 2-7).

There are two plausible explanations for these Jewish commitments and connections. The first is that religious and/or cultural differences were a contributing factor to the divorce. The second is that following the divorce, the Jewish partner turned back to the Jewish community for support. Both explanations are consistent with each other and with the data.

Divorce and mixed marriage are strikingly associated. Mixed marriages are twice as likely as in-marriages to end in divorce (Table 2-8). Divorce is highest among dual religion marriages, followed by Christocentric and Christian marriages (Table 2-9). The fact that divorce rates are highest where religious differences are greatest, suggests that religious differences may have played a part in the divorce. Internal evi-

<sup>22</sup>These divorce rates are under-estimates, since divorced persons were under-represented in the 1993 survey. Jews who were divorced in 1990 were the most likely to have moved by 1993 and thus were less likely to be reached and re-interviewed.



**Table 2-9**  
**Percent Currently Divorced\* by**  
**Type of Mixed Marriage**

<i>Type of Mixed Marriage</i>	<i>Percent Divorced</i>
Judaic	15%
Dual Religion	25%
Interfaithless	11%
Judaeo-Christo-Centric	9%
Christocentric	22%
Christian	17%

\*These divorce rates are under-estimates since divorced persons were under represented in the follow-up survey. Jews who were divorced in 1990 were the most likely to have moved by 1993 and thus were less likely to be reached and re-interviewed.

dence from the survey supports this interpretation. Respondents and their gentile spouses who did not yet have children were asked about the religion(s) in which future children would probably be raised:

1. Have you and your spouse ever discussed in what religion you would raise your children if you had any?
2. If yes, what religion would that be?

Jewish respondents were far more likely to say that their children would be raised as Jews (56%) than were their gentile spouses (31%) (Table 2-10). The greatest disparity was found among dual religion couples. Both projected rates are dramatically higher than the actual current rate of 18%, but the responses of the gentiles in these households appear to be substantially closer to present reality.

### AWARENESS OF OUTREACH

Outreach to the mixed married population is not a hypothetical proposition. Programs already exist in many Jewish communities. Not surprisingly, awareness of outreach programs was highest among Jews in Judaic couples, although less than half of these couples indicated they were aware of such programs (Table 2-11). Jews in dual religion couples were much less aware of outreach programs, but the interfaithless and Christian mixed marrieds were almost entirely ignorant of them. Interfaithless Jewish respondents have minimal interest in religion to

**Table 2-10**  
**Religion in Which Mixed Married Jewish and Non-Jewish Respondents Say Future Children Will Be Raised**

<i>"Have you and your spouse ever discussed in what religion you would raise your children if you had any?" [IF YES] "In what religion would that be?"</i>	<i>Jewish respondent in a mixed marriage</i>	<i>Gentile respondent in a mixed marriage</i>
Jewish only	56%	31%
Christian only	9%	39%
Some other religion only	6%	0%
No religion	2%	5%
Both Jewish and Christian	18%	12%
Both Jewish and some other religion	2%	0%
Don't know	5%	14%
Refused	3%	0%
TOTAL	100%	100%

begin with, and "Christian" Jewish respondents have little knowledge about or contact with the organized Jewish community. They would not run across any notice of outreach programs. Compared with respondents in Christian mixed marriages, Judaeo-Christo-Centric respondents are unusually aware of outreach programs (16%). This is consistent with the unexpected Jewish links they have revealed throughout the analysis.

Respondents who are divorced from mixed marriages have an unexpectedly low awareness of the outreach. This might be the result of selective attention: they are no longer married and thus would not pay attention to notices of outreach efforts. Just as likely, and more disturbing, is that the divorced respondent has fewer connections to the

**Table 2-11**  
**"Are You Aware of Any Programs for Interfaith Couples in Your Community?"**

	<i>Judaic</i>	<i>Dual Religion</i>	<i>Inter-Faithless</i>	<i>Judaeo-Christo-Centric</i>	<i>Christian</i>	<i>Divorced from Mixed</i>
Yes	37%	22%	5%	16%	6%	11%
No	63%	78%	95%	84%	90%	89%
Don't Know	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%	0%
Total	100%	100%	100%	0%	100%	100%

**Table 2-12**  
**"Have You Attended a Program or Class for Interfaith Couples?"**

	<i>Judaic</i>	<i>Dual Religion</i>	<i>Inter-Faithless</i>	<i>Judaeo-Christo-Centric</i>	<i>Christian</i>	<i>Divorced from Mixed</i>
Yes	39%	59%	0%	36%	63%	0%
No	61%	42%	100%	64%	37%	100%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Jewish community. They were, remember, only half as likely as intact Judaic couples to have enrolled their children in religious school.

The patterns of actual participation differ from the patterns of awareness. Of the couples who were aware of outreach programs, actual participation was highest among Jews in dual religion and Christian couples, followed by Judaic couples (Table 2-12). This may be a function of the availability or attractiveness of outreach programs in a given community<sup>23</sup>. The data are too sketchy to draw strong conclusions about why different types of couples do or do not participate. Two points can be made however. First, the potential market for outreach is far from saturated. And second, most of the few "Christian" Jews who were aware of outreach programs in their community participated. This further validates our interpretation that some of these adults who are products of mixed marriages have a sincere interest in finding out about the Jewish side of their lineage.

---

<sup>23</sup>For example, a respondent might be aware of programs in the community, but they might not be offered in a convenient location or at a convenient time.

# Chapter 3

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

### INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSES TO MIXED MARRIAGE

In the wake of the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey, two positions have crystallized for a Jewish communal response. We call them the in-reach and out-reach positions. Proponents of outreach, as sociologist Mervin Verbit explains, "...usually despair of changing the overall character of Jewish identity in America and predict that the intermarriage rate will not decline significantly as a result of any Jewish policy or program." Thus, the proponents of outreach look to linking the intermarried family to the Jewish community. Rabbi Lavey Derby has argued that "...the Jewish community as a whole is not about to turn its back on any Jew who might potentially and reasonably be attracted to Jewish life" (Derby, 1992, p. 333). A second argument is that the stakes of outreach are too high to ignore. Dr. Barry Kosmin, who directed the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey, insists that the vitality of the Jewish community in the next century depends on the outreach efforts undertaken at the close of this century (Kosmin, 1990, p. 210):

How successful the organized Jewish community is in the task of recruitment, outreach, and conversion will decide whether in the year 2020 there will be an elderly, vulnerable, and fast-diminishing Jewish population of 4 million Jews in this country, or a demographically well-balanced and expanding population of 7 million.

On the other hand, proponents of in-reach, such as Dr. Steven Bayme of the American Jewish Committee, worry that outreach programs encourage further mixed marriage:

Does the existence, for instance, of workshops for intermarried couples under the auspices of Jewish communal organizations in and of itself signal communal acceptance and even endorsement of intermarriage? (Bayme, 1990, p. 217.)

Is our objective to make peace with intermarriage or to take action against it? Do we want to convince the non-Jewish partner to convert to Judaism? Do we simply want to incorporate nonconversionary intermarried couples into the community in the hope that they and their children will ultimately choose a Jewish lifestyle? (Price, 1990, p. 225.)

In-reach proponents give the highest priority to committed Jews at the core of the Jewish community. They consider the mixed married population to be on the margins of Jewish life, and thus “focus on the more strongly identified center of the Jewish community, to prevent its slipping toward the periphery” (DellaPergola, 1991). Instead of trying to bring intermarried couples back, in-reachers want to stabilize or even reduce the rate of mixed marriage. They argue that prevention can work to keep intermarriage in check, and has done so in the past:

It is precisely because we have continued to maintain the Jewish communal preference for in-marriage that intermarriage rates have not risen even further. (Bayme, 1993, p. 9.)

Without the efforts already made to promote Jewish endogamy, in-reachers argue that mixed marriage would be as high as 90 per cent (Bayme, 1992, p. 338).

## **THE SOCIOLOGICAL BASES OF POLICY INITIATIVES**

The in-reach and outreach positions are based on competing sociological propositions about mixed marriage. Since our research has now examined these propositions empirically, both positions can be evaluated on an objective basis.

## **The Inevitability of Mixed Marriage**

The out-reachers claim that mixed marriage is the inevitable product of modernity. They note (Cohen, 1988; Goldscheider, 1984) that Jewish mixed marriage in pre-Holocaust Europe was already approaching current levels. In-reachers claim that mixed marriage is not inevitable. They advocate the promotion of endogamy because they believe in the efficacy of intervention efforts.

Our research supports the in-reach position. Jewish socialization experiences have been shown to reduce mixed marriage. The greater the number of interventions, the lower the rate of mixed marriage. Interventions even reduced mixed marriage among adult children of mixed marriage.

Two words of caution regarding in-reach are in order here. (1) Mixed marriage will remain a permanent feature of the American Jewish experience, even with unlimited interventions. That is the impact of Jewish participation in the open society. (2) Proponents of in-reach have focused on too narrow a range of interventions. Moreover, they have favored the most expensive ones, such as day school subvention and trips to Israel. They should broaden their advocacy to include youth groups, summer camping, and supplemental schools. They should also focus more intently on the teen years.

## **The Social Meaning of Mixed Marriage**

For outreach to have an impact on mixed married couples, those couples must be interested in a Jewish connection. Proponents of outreach base their optimism about this connection on the assumption that mixed marriage is not in and of itself a defection from the Jewish community. Earlier in the century it may well have been a way to escape the Jewish community. But as Jews have become more integrated into American society, mixed marriage has become simply the frequent consequence of that integration, and no longer a means to attain it.

The outreachers borrow here from the earlier debate on the "transformation versus assimilation" interpretation of American Jewry.<sup>24</sup> Precisely because it has become so common, mixed marriage has taken on

---

<sup>24</sup>See, for example, Cohen, 1988; DellaPergola, 1991; Glazer, 1989; Goldscheider & Zuckerman, 1984; Goldscheider, 1986.

a different meaning. Rather than being an expression of emotional distance and even disdain for the Jewish community, it has become an increasingly accepted part of being Jewish in America. It does not necessarily imply any negative attitudes toward Jewishness.

Our research also provides support for the outreach position. A number of positive Jewish aspirations were expressed by mixed married respondents across the entire spectrum of mixed marriage. Even some of the “Christian” Jews expressed a desire to connect with Jewish history and culture. When it comes to raising and educating children, most mixed married parents have opted for a neutral zone between the two religions.

Three cautionary words regarding outreach are in order. (1) Even some of the most Jewish of the mixed married couples maintain Christian observances in the home. In most mixed married families, Christian observances are more prevalent than Jewish ones. (2) The role of gentile partners in making decisions about the family tends to be overlooked by researchers and policy makers alike. Although gentile spouses showed some degree of openness to Jewish outreach, they were less enthusiastic than their Jewish partners. The burden of Jewish connection falls on the Jewish partners, who must ultimately go it alone. (3) Some outreach programs in which mixed married couples showed substantial interest, may not be acceptable to the Jewish community—for example, a program to teach about both religions in the home.

## **SPECIFIC POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Interventions**

The Jewish community will continue to face the occurrence of mixed marriage. But that does not imply there is nothing to be done to avert or reduce it. We have discovered several variable factors influencing the rate of mixed marriage. Many of these factors can be shaped, modified, and translated into policy initiatives within the Jewish community to influence the future rates of mixed marriage.

We have identified certain variables that deserve closer attention than they have received so far. These include (a) the more intensive types of supplementary Jewish education, (b) peer group experiences at the high school age, and (c) high school dating patterns.

1. A variety of educational experiences, not just limited to day schools, needs to be promoted. The organized Jewish community has over-emphasized one-dimensional responses, such as, "day school is the answer" or "sending Jewish teenagers to Israel is the answer." Our research clearly indicates that this kind of approach is wrong. Different Jewish socialization experiences were shown to have comparable impacts on a reduction in the rate of mixed marriage. *More important, this research also demonstrates that the greater the number of different socialization experiences, the lower the rate of mixed marriage.*
2. Increased attention must be given to dating patterns, peer group influences, and Jewish involvements during the *high school years*. In this regard, Jewish youth groups have been a neglected resource. Equally important is the continuation of some form of Jewish education into the high school years. This is critical for Jewish socialization. Ironically, the early efforts of the Reform movement to replace Bar Mitzvah with confirmation at age 16 would be consistent with this approach. Perhaps Bar Mitzvah could be postponed until age 16, or a new ceremony (such as an Israel pilgrimage) could be introduced to coincide with the end of the high school years. Some new "rite of passage" is needed to encourage young people to continue their Jewish involvements throughout these critical years.

### **Specifying the Rate of Mixed Marriage**

A sound communal policy to address the phenomenon of mixed marriage cannot be based on simple, undifferentiated percentages describing a rapid, one-way rise in intermarriage. The numbers must be addressed with more discrimination. It is clear, of course, that mixed marriage will continue the attrition of the American Jewish community. But the rate is not increasing in a straight line upward, as the most pessimistic observers of American Jewry had predicted.

It is important, for instance, for the numbers to distinguish between the marriage patterns of the adult children of mixed parentage and the adult children of endogamous parentage. Return in-marriage is a case in point. Because an endogamous marriage is the equivalent of two mixed marriages, return in-marriage among the children of mixed parentage has already reduced the rate of mixed marriage from astro-



nomical to merely skyrocketing. Communal consternation about mixed marriage generally fails to note these back-flowing currents.

## **Outreach**

Even the most creative outreach efforts may not have an impact on more than a quarter of the mixed married families. But this does not negate the potential benefits of successful outreach, since one endogamous marriage is the alternative to a pair of mixed marriages. Moreover, the impact of “return in-marriage” on stabilizing the current rate of mixed marriage demonstrates that even minor trends can have a major impact on the overall rate of mixed marriage.

Outreach, however, should not be directed bluntly, as if to a single, undifferentiated population of mixed marrieds. Precious communal resources need to be applied where they will do the most good, and some kinds of mixed marriages are more open to outreach than others. Not even all of those will be open to the kind of outreach efforts currently envisioned within the Jewish community. Appropriate strategies need to be articulated which take into account the different sub-groups of mixed marriages. Each of the six groups described above has its own needs and its own reasons for being interested in outreach.

Judaic couples should be the prime candidates for outreach. The Jewish partner is more interested in outreach than the gentile partner who, though not opposed to the family’s Jewish involvement, has no particular stake in it. For a Judaic family to become Jewishly involved, the burden falls on the Jewish partner. This fact should inform the kind of outreach made.

Jews divorced from mixed marriages are a second category for outreach. They are in fact more numerous than Judaic couples. While they represent a cross section of previous mixed marriages, most came from “dual religion” couples, and there is reasonable evidence that their marriages may have broken up in part over religious differences. Two out of five of the children of these single parent families are being raised as Jews, but only half as many are receiving a formal Jewish education. This may reflect financial and/or custody issues with the former spouse. The issues facing this population are different from those facing the intact Judaic couple, and outreach efforts should take this into account.

Dual religion couples are a third category for outreach, but they are problematic. The outreach would have to take place by addressing the two religions present in the family. Nonetheless, outreach to them ought to be seriously considered for two reasons: (1) they are the most nu-

merous type of mixed marriage, and (2) at least a quarter of such couples have demonstrated some Jewish commitments. This is evidenced by two findings. First, some of them raise their children as Jews and even more have expressed an interest in doing so in some way. Second, some have already participated in outreach programs (and to some extent Christian couples fall into this category).

Not all mixed married families are alike, and there are important differences among the dual religion households as well.

1. Dual religion families in which the child is receiving a formal Jewish education and/or participates in informal Jewish education can be reinforced in these efforts. Even though the gentile parent is an identified Christian, the child is a participant in Jewish education.
2. Dual religion families in which the child is *not* receiving a formal Jewish education, but is being raised exclusively as Jew, can be encouraged to take the next step. There are two barriers to this: (a) making contact with a family that may not be connected with the Jewish community, and (b) creating a strategy to cope with the fiscal barriers (e.g., membership dues and religious school fees) that the gentile spouse might not wish to hurdle.
3. Dual religion families in which the child is being raised in both religions pose a special problem. We now know that they would be very interested in a class where they could learn about both religions. Should the Jewish community openly compete with Christianity in such families?

# Chapter 4

## CONCLUSION

The results of the 1993 and 1995 surveys on mixed marriage, and their analysis in the foregoing report, have clearly demonstrated that the conventional ways of looking at mixed marriage are no longer adequate to the complexity of this phenomenon at the end of the twentieth century.

First, and stating the matter with deliberate provocativeness, we should no longer ask why Jews marry non-Jews, but rather why they marry other Jews. As Jews become completely Americanized (by the fourth generation) and discrimination declines, there are few barriers to marriage with gentiles, who outnumber Jews more than thirty to one. Our study has shown that the third and fourth generation Jews most likely to marry other Jews are those who, as teenagers, *planned* to marry Jews; and that specific Jewish experiences during their teen years help create Jewish teen peer groups that encourage this motivation toward endogamy.

Second, our study indicates that we must stop thinking about the mixed married population as an undifferentiated group. The typology introduced here demonstrates the usefulness of thinking about mixed married couples according to the balance of religious commitments in their homes.

Third, as a consequence of refining our typology of mixed married families, we recognize that outreach efforts need to reflect their variety. The dual religion couple, for example, will not be reached in the same ways as the Judaic couple.

Finally, we must credit the inherent attraction of Judaism itself, which, as our findings have shown, consistently draws participants in mixed marriage families back into its fold. Adult children of mixed marriage, whom many observers of the Jewish scene have written off, make up a critical proportion of recent in-marriages. (This is the phenomenon we have called “return in-marriage”.) Further, about one in five adults of mixed parentage who have married gentiles have nonetheless articulated a desire to maintain some sort of Jewish connection. Clearly it will be difficult for them to make that connection, and they are the least likely sector of the mixed married population to become integrated into the Jewish community. Yet it is precisely this combination of Jewish marginality and Jewish aspiration that should give us hope for the viability of an American Jewish community in the twenty-first century.

# BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alba, Richard D (1976). Social Assimilation Among American Catholic National-Origin Groups. *American Sociological Review*, 41, 1030–46.
- Bayme, Steven (1990). Changing Perceptions of Intermarriage. *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, 66(3), 213–223.
- Bayme, Steven (1992). Ensuring Jewish Continuity: Policy Challenges and Implications for Jewish Communal Professionals. *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, 68(4), 336–341.
- Bayme, Steven (1993). *Intermarriage and Communal Policy: Prevention, Conversion, and Outreach*. American Jewish Committee.
- Berman, Louis A. (1968). *Jews and Intermarriage*. New York: Thomas Yoselof.
- Blau, Peter M, Beeker, Carolyn, & Fitzpatrick, Kevin M (1984). Intersecting Social Affiliations and Intermarriage. *Social Forces*, 62(3), 585–605.
- Bubis, Gerald B, & Marks, Lawrence E (1975). Changes in Jewish Identification: A Comparative Study of a Teen Age Israel Camping Trip, a Counselor-in-Training Program, and A Teen Age Service Camp (Booklet No. 1). Florence G. Heller-JWB Research Center.
- Chazan, Barry (1991). What is Informal Jewish Education? *Journal of Jewish Communal Service* 67(4), 300–308.
- Cohen, Steven M. (1988). *American Assimilation or Jewish Revival?* Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.
- Cohen, Steven M (1994, December). Why Intermarriage May Not Threaten Jewish Continuity. *Moment*, p. 54–57, 89–90.
- DellaPergola, Sergio (1991). New Data on Demography and Identification Among Jews in the U.S.: Trends Inconsistencies and Disagreements. *Contemporary Jewry*, 12(annual), 67–98.
- Derby, Lavey (1992). Outreach, Intermarriage, and Jewish Continuity. *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, 68(4), 331–335.

- Drachsler, Julius (1921). *Inter-marriage in New York City*. In *Studies in History, Economics, and Public Law No. 213* New York City: Columbia University.
- Fishman, Sylvia Barack, & Goldstein, Alice (1993). *When They Are Grown They Will Not Depart: Jewish Education and the Jewish Behavior of American Adults*. CMJS Research Report 8. Maurice and Marilyn Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University, and JESNA.
- Glazer, Nathan (1989). *New Perspectives in American Jewish Sociology*. In S. Bayme (Ed.), *Facing the Future: Essays on Contemporary Jewish Life* (pp. 3–22). New York: KTAV Publishing House Inc. and the American Jewish Committee.
- Goldscheider, Calvin, & Zuckerman, Allen s. (1984). *The Transformation of the Jews*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Goldscheider, Calvin (1986). *Jewish Continuity and Change*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Goldstein, Alice, & Fishman, Sylvia Barack (1993). *Teach Your Children When They are Young: Contemporary Jewish Education in the United States* (CMJS Research Report No. 10. Maurice and Marilyn Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University, and Jewish Education Service of North America.
- Goldstein, Sidney, & Goldscheider, Calvin (1968). *Jewish Americans: Three Generations in a Jewish Community*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Grebler, Leo, Moore, Joan W, & Guzman, Ralph C (1970). *The Mexican-American People: The Nation's Second Largest Minority*. New York: Free Press.
- Kosmin, Barry, Lerer, Nava, & Mayer, Egon (1989). *Inter-marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage among American Jews, 1982–1987*. North American Jewish Data Bank.
- Kosmin, Barry (1990). *The Demographic Imperatives of Outreach*. *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, 66(3), 208–223.
- Kosmin, Barry (1991). *Highlights of the CJF 1990 National Jewish Population Survey*. Council of Jewish Federations.
- Massarik, Fred (1974). *Jewish Identity: Facts for Planning*. Council of Jewish Federations.
- Massarik, Fred, & Chenkin, Alvin (1973). *United States National Jewish Population Study: A First Report*. In M. Himmelfarb (Ed.), *American Jewish Year Book, 1973* (pp. 264–306). Philadelphia and New York: Jewish Publication Society and the American Jewish Committee.
- Mayer, Egon (1979). *Inter-marriage Among American Jews: Consequences, Prospects, and Policies*. National Jewish Conference Center, Policy Studies 1979.
- Mayer, Egon (1983a). *Children of Inter-marriage*. American Jewish Committee-Institute of Human Relations.
- Mayer, Egon (1983b). *Inter-marriage and the Jewish Future*. American Jewish Committee-Institute of Human Relations.
- Mayer, Egon (1985). *Love and Tradition: Marriage Between Jews and Christians*. New York: Plenum.
- Mittelberg, David (1992). *The Impact of Jewish Education and an 'Israel Experience' on the Jewish Identity of American Jewish Youth*. In P. Y. Medding (Ed.), *A New Jewry? America Since the Second World War* (pp. 194–218). New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Phillips, Bruce, & Zeldin, Michael (1987). Jewish Education as a Communal Activity: Patterns of Enrollment in Three Growth Communities. *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, 123–136.
- Price, Ronald D (1990). Outreach to the Intermarried: Understanding the Risks and Setting Priorities. *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, 66(3), 224–234.
- Rimor, Mordechai, & Katz, Elihu (1993). *Jewish Involvement of the Baby Boom Generation* (Mimeo -full report No. MR/1185B/E). Louis Guttman Israel Institute of Applied Social Research-Jerusalem Israel.
- Rosenthal, Erich (1963). Studies of Jewish Inter marriage in the United States. In *American Jewish Year Book* (pp. 3– 52). American Jewish committee.
- Schmelz, U. O., & DellaPergola, Sergio (1983). The Demographic Consequences of U.S. Jewish Population Trends. In D. Singer & M. Himmelfarb (Eds.), *American Jewish Year Book* (pp. 141–187). New York and Philadelphia: American Jewish Committee & Jewish Publication Society.
- Singer, David (1979, July 1979). Living with Inter marriage. *Commentary* (pp. 48–53).
- Spickard, Paul R (1989). *Mixed Blood: Inter marriage and Ethnic Identity in Twentieth-Century America*. Madison Wisconsin: Univ of Wisconsin Press.
- Verbit, Mervin R (1994). Inter marriage in the United States. In G. Wigoder (Ed.), *Encyclopedia Judaica Decennial Book, 1983–1992* (pp. 56–64). Jerusalem: Keter.
- Zangwill, Israel (1909). *The Melting Pot*. New York: MacMillan Press.

# Appendix I

## CONSISTENCY OF JEWISH IDENTITY CATEGORIES BETWEEN THE NJPS 1990 AND THE 1993 MIXED MARRIAGE SURVEY

Some observers have raised doubts about the accuracy of the religious self-definitions in the National Jewish Population Survey which form the basis of the mixed marriage typology used here.<sup>25</sup> Our investigation indicates that they are a highly reliable analytical tool, and that they are consistent with the religious behaviors and attitudes of both the Jewish and non-Jewish spouses. The Jewish self-definitions are consistent with both religious beliefs and behaviors. Jews by religion have only slightly stronger religious beliefs than ethnic Jews, but practice many more Jewish observances. “JOR” Jews are more “religious” than Jews by religion, in that they have a stronger belief in God and say that religion is more important in their lives. But they do not practice many Jewish religious observances. These differences are consistent with dozens of studies of religion which show Jews to be more secular than Christians. Thus, the “JOR” Jews who largely identify with some form of Christianity (and in most cases were raised by a non-Jewish parent) have a Christian-like level of religious belief. Because of this belief, as will become evident, they are interested in maintaining some connection with their Jewish roots.

---

<sup>25</sup>See, for example, Cohen, 1994.



# Appendix II

## HOW JEWISH PARENTAGE WAS ASCERTAINED

### JEWISH PARENTAGE WAS ASCERTAINED AS FOLLOWS FOR *RESPONDENTS*

1. If the respondent was included in Module 1 (n=800 + cases) then Q119I, which asked which parent was Jewish, was used.
2. If the respondent was re-interviewed in 1993, then the data for that question were used to fill in the parentage of the respondent. Steps 1 and 2 above filled in data for 1254 (or 68%) out of 1844 ever-married respondents.
3. The parentage of the remaining 590 ever-married respondents was estimated using questions 19 and 20 (Born Jewish, raised Jewish). A respondent who was both born and raised Jewish was classified as having two Jewish parents. A respondent who was not both born and raised Jewish was classified as having only one Jewish parent.

What degree of error was thereby introduced? To find out, I took the respondents' who were re-interviewed in 1993 and compared their Jewish parentage as reported in 1993 with how they were born and raised as reported in 1990. Overall the born and raised question was an accurate predictor of parentage: 94% of the respondents who reported in 1990 that they were both born and raised Jewish turned out to have had two Jewish parents as reported in 1993. Similarly, 98% of the respon-

dents who reported in 1990 that they had been born and raised as Christians, turned out to have only one Jewish parent as reported in 1993.

<i>Pattern of Q19 + Q20 in NJPS90</i>	<i>Answer to Parentage in 1993</i>			
	<i>One Jewish Parent</i>	<i>Two Jewish Parents</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>N=</i>
Born & Raised Jewish	6.2	93.8	100.0	455
Born Jewish Only	64.5	35.5	100.0	31
Raised Jewish Only	40.0	60.0	100.0	5
Born & Raised Christian	97.6	2.4	100.0	42
Born & Raised Other/None	94.3	5.7	100.0	35
Other Combinations	100.0	0.0	100.0	12

- There were two exceptions to this degree of accuracy: respondents who were raised but not born Jewish and respondents who were born but not raised Jewish. Their Jewish parentage was not well predicted by questions 19a and 20a, but there were only 35 such respondents whose Jewish parentage was not established by the 1993 study or Q119I. The Jewish parentage for these respondents was assigned at random so as to eliminate any bias.

### **JEWISH PARENTAGE WAS ASCERTAINED AS FOLLOWS FOR SPOUSES**

The Jewish spouses in NJPS 1990 (N=763) were included in the analysis to produce the *individual rate of mixed marriage*. Q119I did not apply to them, nor were they re-interviewed in 1993 (only respondents were re-interviewed). The parentage of the spouses was estimated using questions 19b and 20b (Born Jewish, raised Jewish). A spouse who was both born and raised Jewish was classified as having two Jewish parents. A spouse who was not both born and raised Jewish was classified as having only one Jewish parent. The Jewish parentage for spouses who were born Jewish but not raised Jewish or raised Jewish but not born Jewish was assigned at random so as to eliminate any bias.

### **IMPACT ON THE ANALYSIS:**

How certain can we be then about the Jewish parentage of respondents and Jewish spouses in NJPS 1990? I focus here on those married in the

period 1985-1990, which is the period under examination. Let us look at respondents first. There were 340 respondents in NJPS who had married in the period 1985-90. Of these, the parentage of 100 (29%) was known from the 1993 survey, and the parentage of 64 was known from Q119I. An additional 35 respondents were re-interviewed in 1993 and were included in Module 3. Thus, the parentage of 59% of the 340 respondents married in the period 1985-90 was known either from Q119I, the 1993 survey, or both. There were 135 cases which were neither included in module 1 nor re-interviewed in 1993. These respondents were *both* born and raised Jewish, or *neither* born nor raised Jewish. We know already that their Jewish parentage can be predicted with over 90% accuracy from Q19 and Q20. Thus out of 340 respondents who married in the period 1985-90, there were only 13 who were mis-classified as to Jewish parentage.

<i>Source of Correction</i>	<i>One Jewish Parent</i>	<i>Two Jewish Parents</i>
Data from 1993 Survey	22	78
Data from Q119I in 1990 NJPS	28	36
Data from both 1993 Survey & Q119I	8	27
No data available-no correction made	51	84
Case was randomly assigned	4	2
Total	113	227

Of the 105 Jewish spouses who married in this period, 3 were randomly assigned. The remaining 102 were classified according to the responses to q19b and q20b. Thus no more than 10% of them (i.e., 10 persons) are known to have been mis-classified. Of the 445 respondents and spouses who married in the period 1985-90, 23 (10 spouses + 13 respondents) would have been misclassified.

Thus we can say with 95% certainty that in the period 1985-1990:

1. One third of the adult children of mixed marriage were return in-marriages.
2. One out of four in-married Jews had a non-Jewish parent.
3. Without the phenomenon of return in-marriage, the current rate of mixed marriage would be 64% instead of 52%.

# Appendix III

## ACCOUNTING FOR THE INCONSISTENCY BETWEEN THE 1990 NJPS AND THE 1993 MIXED MARRIAGE SURVEY REGARDING HOW CHILDREN ARE RAISED IN MIXED MARRIAGES

This figure is lower than the 24% reported by Barry Kosmin (1991) in *Highlights of the CJF 1990 National Jewish Population Survey*. There are three possible explanations for this discrepancy. First, the question was not asked in the same way. The 1990 NJPS asked about the religion or religious background of each member of the household as part of the household roster in the NJPS questionnaire. In the 1993 Survey on Mixed Marriage, respondents were asked a more direct and detailed question:

Starting with the oldest, please tell me how this child is being raised: As a Jew only, as a Christian only, in some other religion only, in no religion, as both a Jew and a Christian, as a Jew and some other religion, as a Christian and some other religion.

Second, because mixed marriage refers, by definition, to couples, the NJPS missed asking about the mixed marriage status of two kinds of respondents: those who were divorced from a second marriage, and those who were currently "separated" (i.e. neither married nor di-

vorced). Thirdly the NJPS questionnaire asked only about the first marriage in such cases. The 1993 Mixed Marriage Survey was able to include both of these types of respondents, which increased the proportion of mixed marriages and consequently lowered the proportion of children in the household raised exclusively as Jews. Finally, under the more detailed scrutiny of the 1993 survey, some respondents and spouses turned out to be “less Jewish” than they appeared to be in 1990.

If the exact proportions are different, the conclusions of the 1990 NJPS and 1993 Mixed Marriage Survey are the same: fewer than one quarter of the children of mixed marriages are raised exclusively as Jews. They are more likely to be raised as Christians, or in no religion, than to be raised as Jews.