



# National Jewish Population Survey 2000-01

## Conservative Jews

A United Jewish Communities  
Presentation of Findings

February 2004



## Methodological Note

- The NJPS questionnaire was divided into long-form and short-form versions. The long-form version was administered to respondents with stronger Jewish connections (representing 4.3 million Jews, or over 80% of all US Jews). The short-form version, which omitted many questions on Jewish topics—including current Jewish religious denominational preference and synagogue membership—was given to respondents with Jewish connections that are not as strong (representing in total 800,000 Jews).
- In this presentation, data on 1) Conservative Jews and 2) all US synagogue members refer only to respondents with stronger Jewish connections. Data on the total US Jewish population, in contrast, refer to all respondents.



This presentation is divided into six major sections:

- Denominational definitions
- Conservative Jewish population figures
- Conservative denominational “switching”
- Demographic information on Conservative Jews
- Jewish connections among Conservative Jews
- Intermarriage rates among Conservative Jews

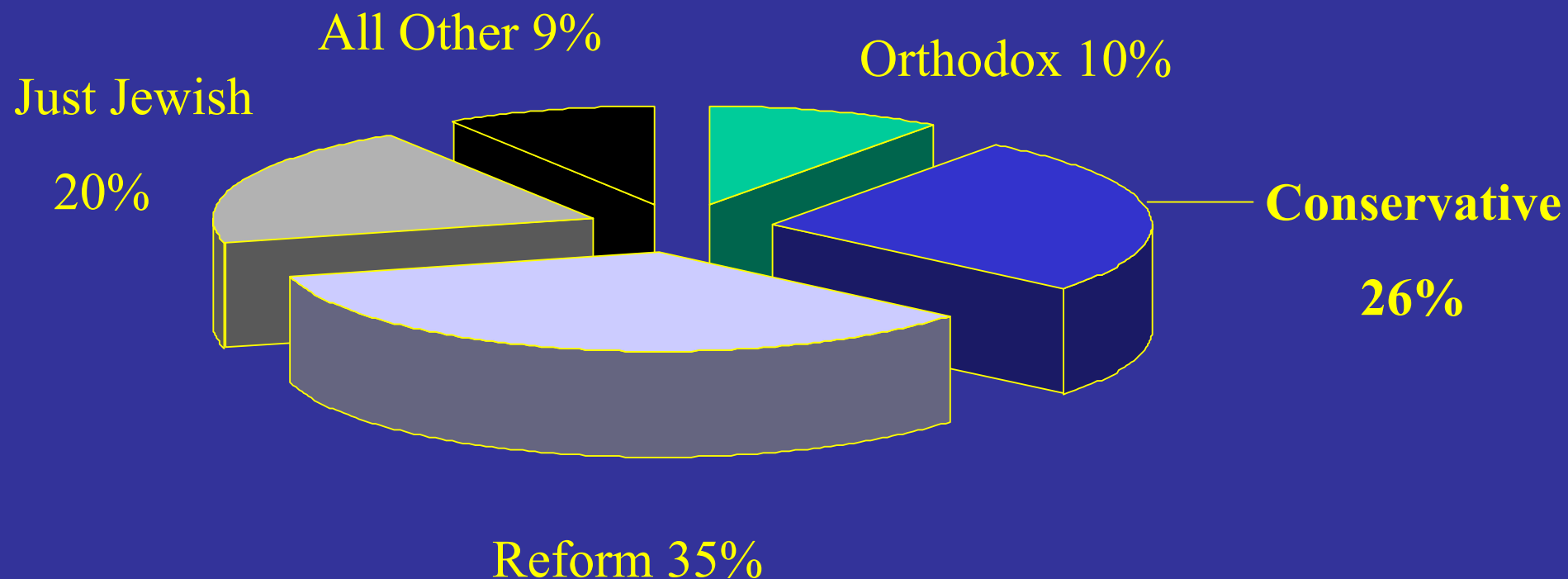
This presentation offers two definitions of Conservative Jews.

The first definition includes all respondents who currently **consider** their Jewish religious denomination to be Conservative.

Unless otherwise specified, this presentation uses the **consider** definition in its findings on Conservative Jews.



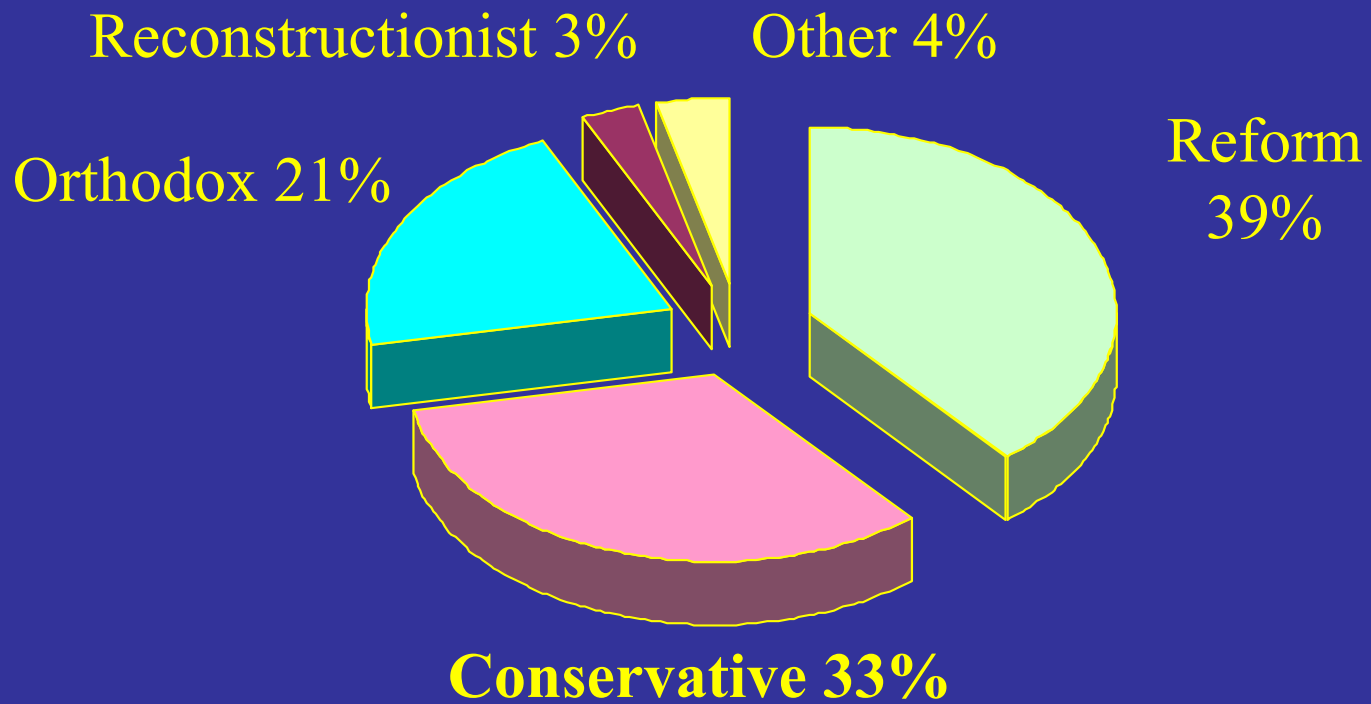
Over one-quarter of American Jewish adults  
**consider** themselves to be Conservative.



The second definition of Conservative Jews only includes households where someone currently belongs to a Conservative synagogue or a temple.

People in those households are defined as “synagogue” Conservative.

Forty percent of American Jewish households (corresponding to 46% of all American Jews) belong to **synagogues**. Among these households, one in three are Conservative:



## Total Population, Conservative Households<sup>1</sup>

All adults (age 18 and older)	1,046,000
Jewish adults	866,000
All children (age 17 and younger)	251,000
Jewish children	211,000
Total population	1,297,000
Jewish population	1,077,000

1. Defined as households with an adult respondent who identifies as Conservative



## Total Population, “Synagogue” Conservative Households <sup>1</sup>

All adults (age 18 and older)	552,000
Jewish adults	503,000
All children (age 17 and younger)	158,000
Jewish children	153,000
Total population	710,000
Jewish population	656,000

1. Defined as households where someone belongs to a Conservative synagogue

Among current adult Jews who were raised Jewish, identification with Conservative Judaism has declined over time.

Raised Conservative and currently Jewish	961,000
Currently Conservative	516,000
Currently non-Conservative	445,000
Raised Jewish and currently Conservative	794,000
Raised Conservative	516,000
Raised non-Conservative	278,000



Nearly half of all adult Jews who were raised Conservative no longer consider themselves to be Conservative.

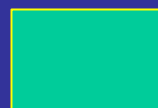
54%



27%



11%



3%



5%



**Conservative**

**Reform**

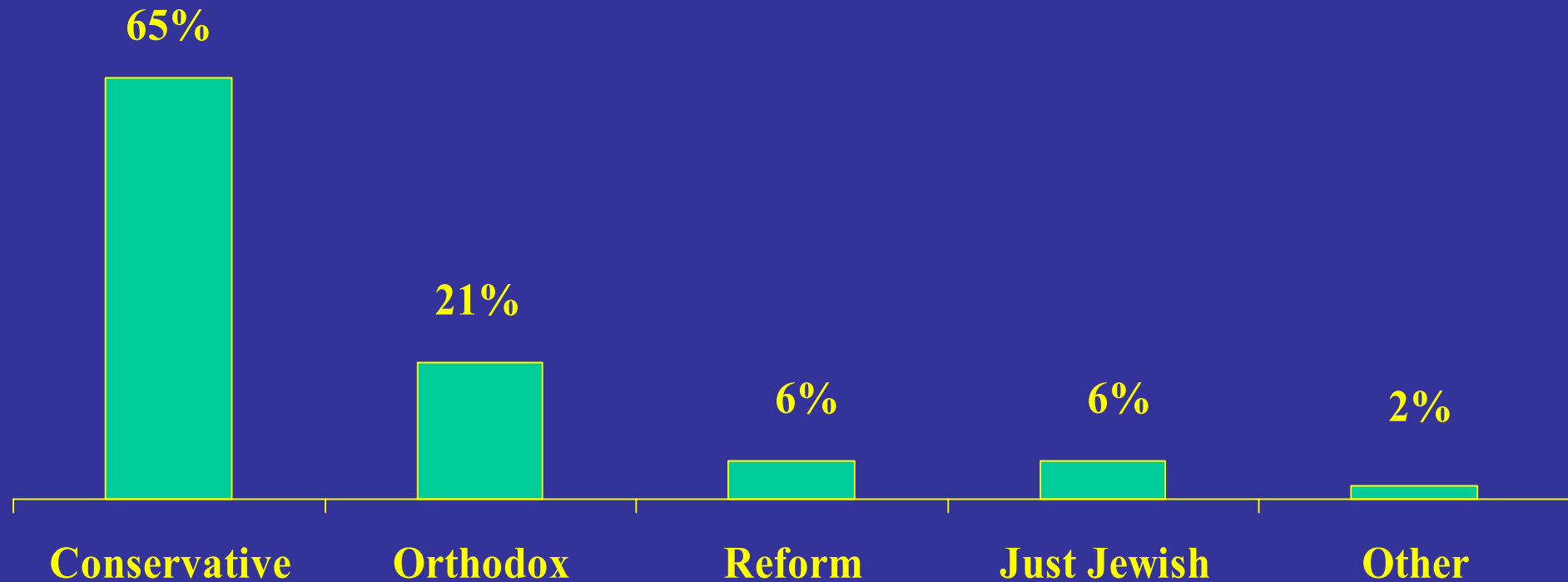
**Just Jewish**

**Orthodox**

**Other**

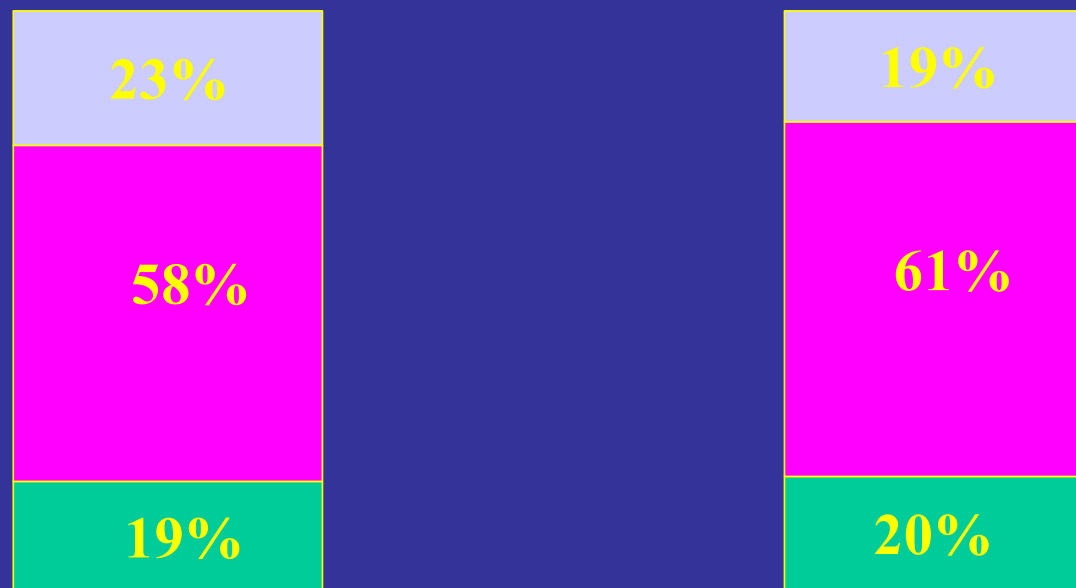
Raised Conservative, Current Jewish Denomination

Of current adult Conservative Jews who were raised Jewish, 2 out of 3 were raised Conservative.



Currently Conservative, Jewish Denomination Raised

The total Jewish population in Conservative households is older than the total Jewish population.



Conservative

Total US Jews

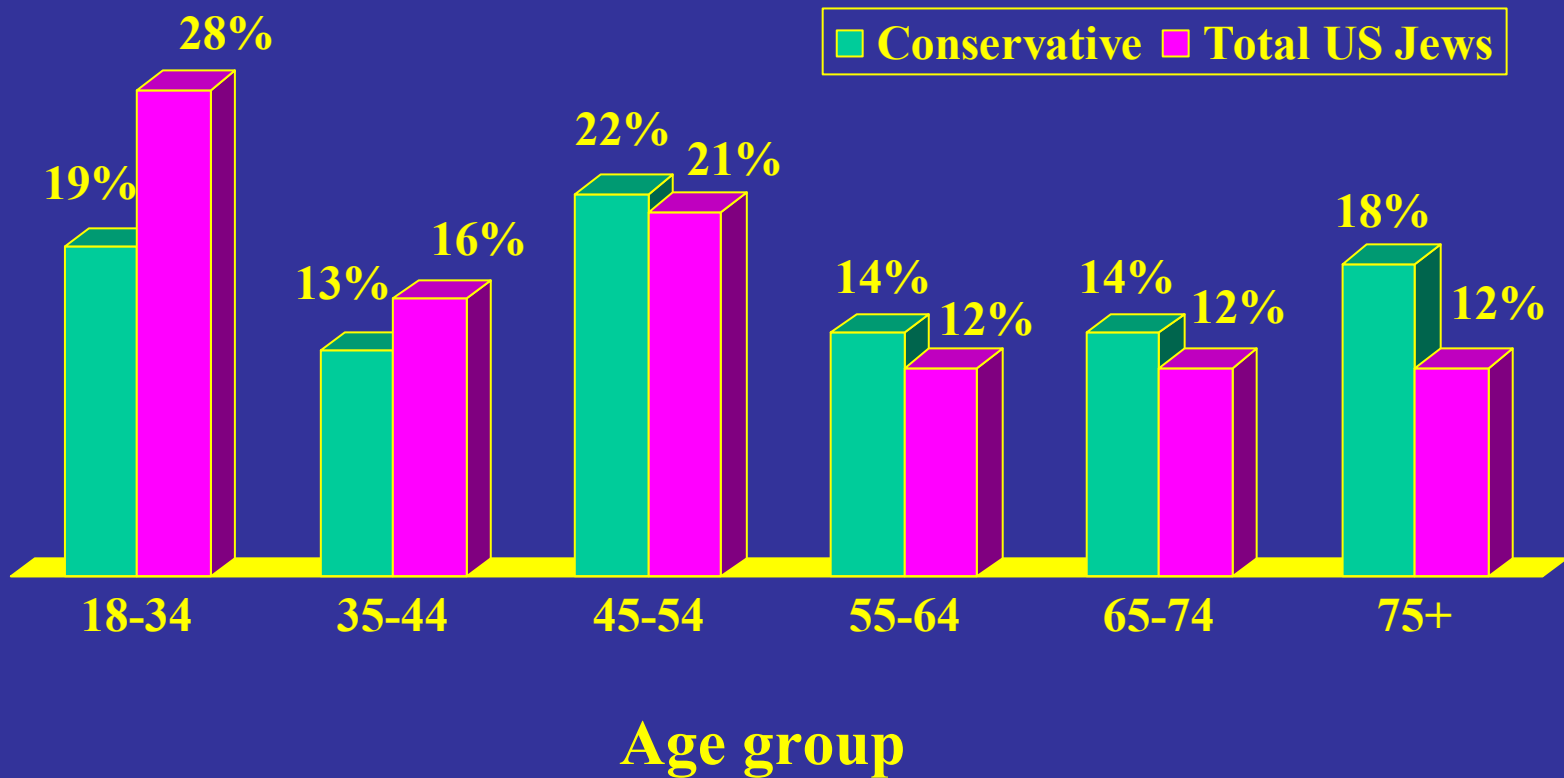
 Children

 Adults 18-64

 Elderly

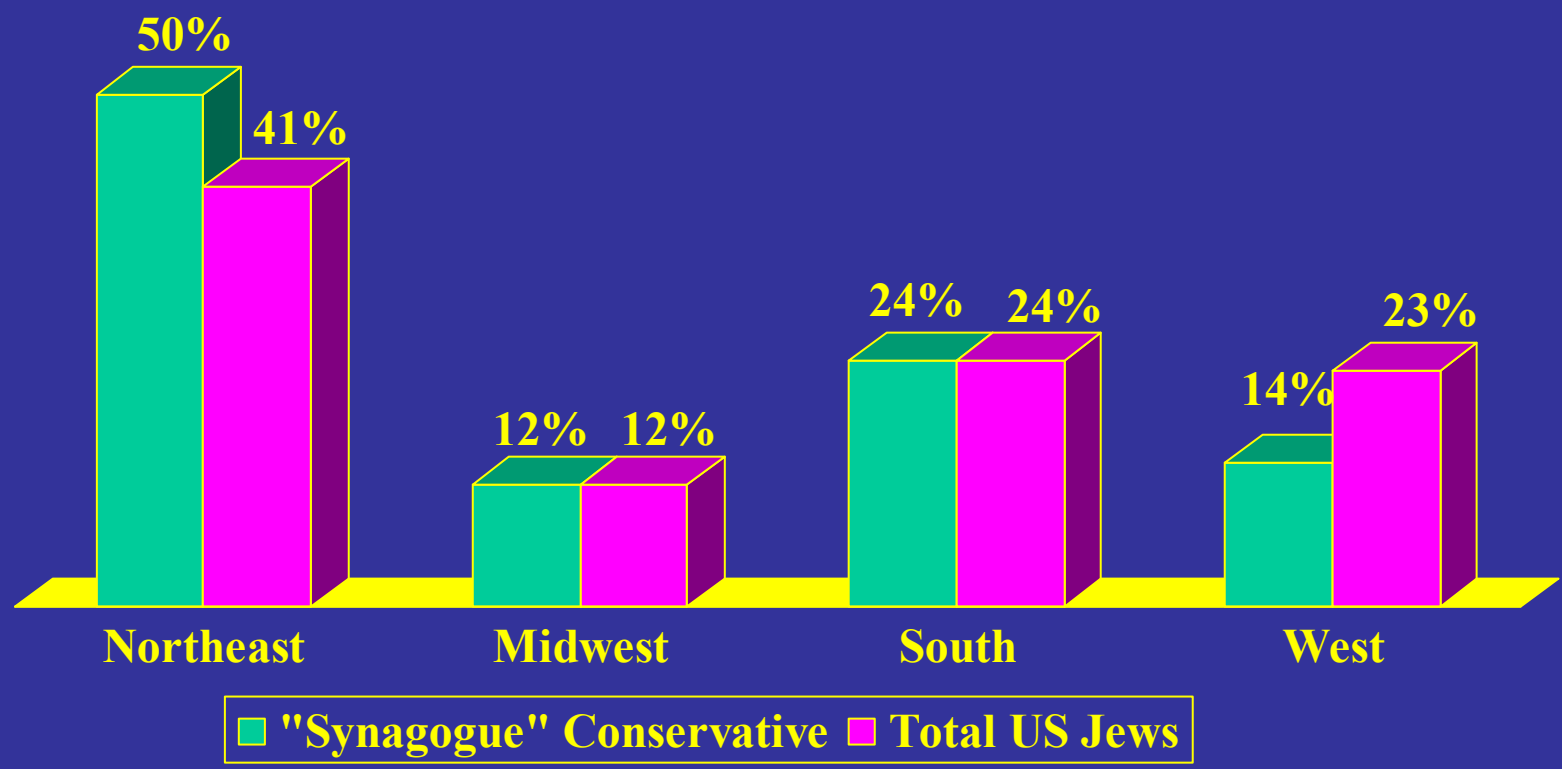


Nearly half of all Conservative adults (46%) are age 55 or older.



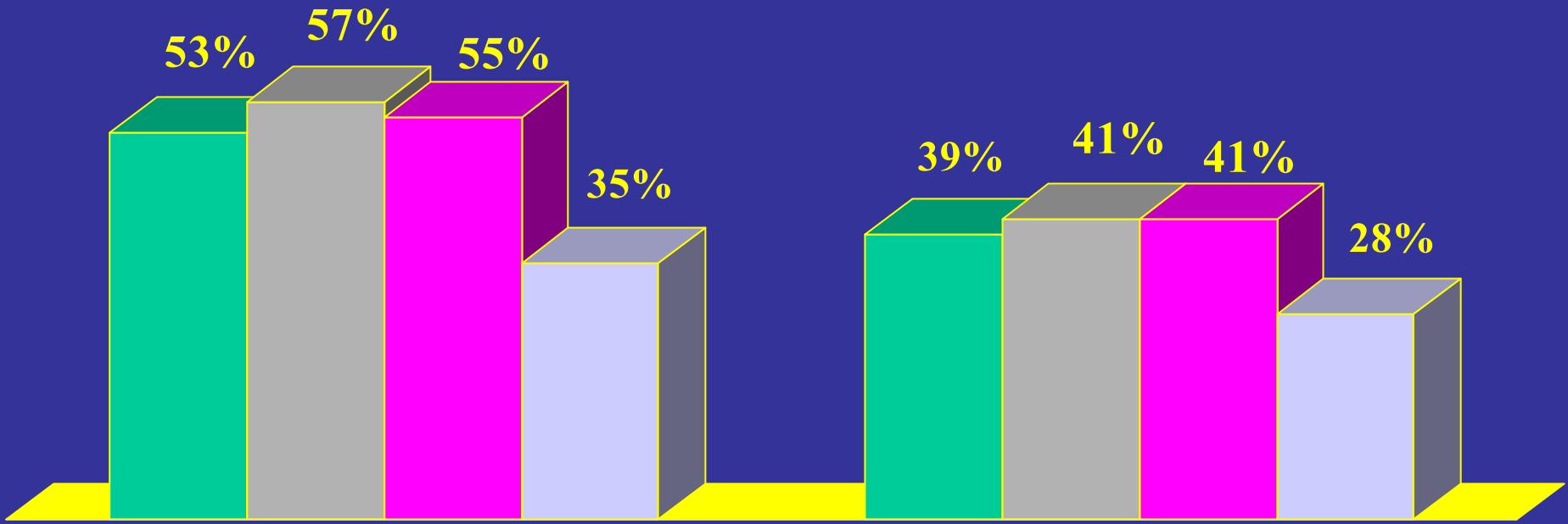


Relative to all US Jewish adults, “synagogue” Conservative adults are concentrated in the Northeast and underrepresented in the West.





Compared to the total US adult Jewish population, Conservative adults have strong social and attitudinal connections to Israel.



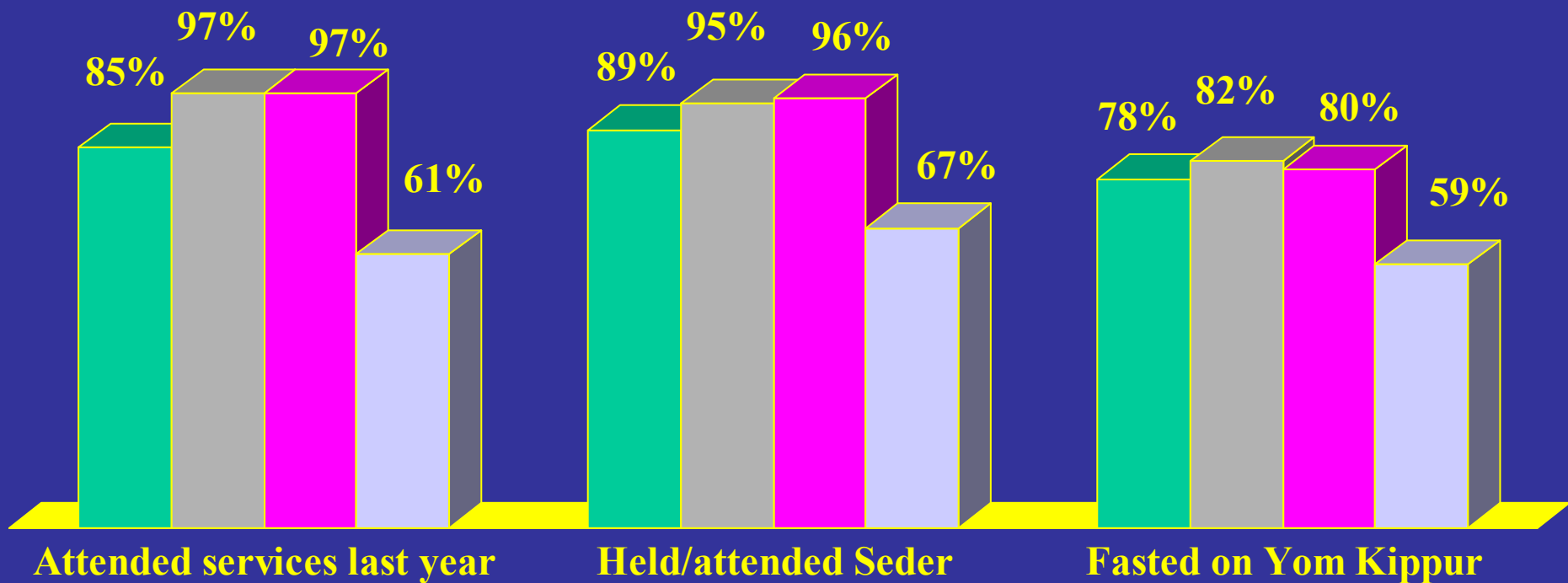
Ever visited Israel

"Very" emotionally attached to Israel





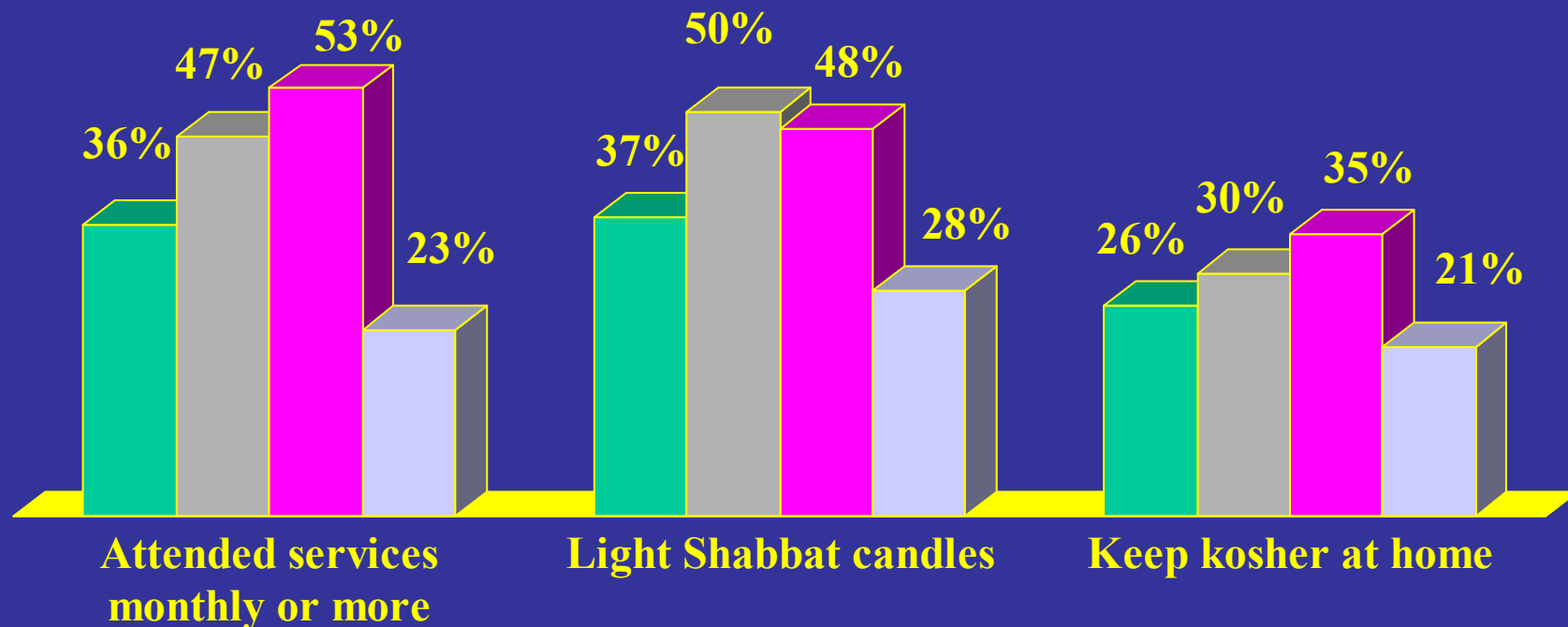
A majority of Conservative adults engages in these Jewish religious behaviors.



■ Conservative ■ "Synagogue" Conservative ■ All synagogue members ■ Total US Jews

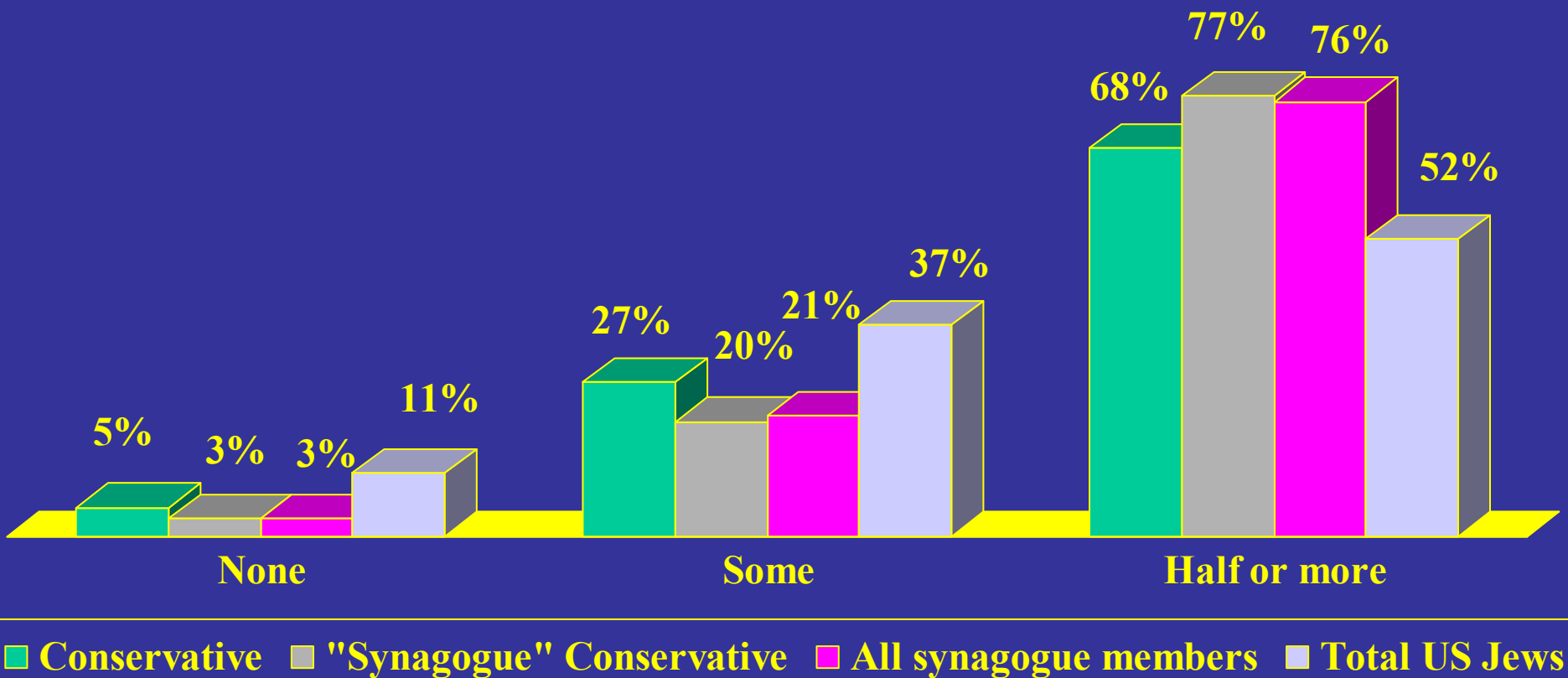


About one-quarter to one-half of Conservative adults engages in these Jewish religious behaviors.





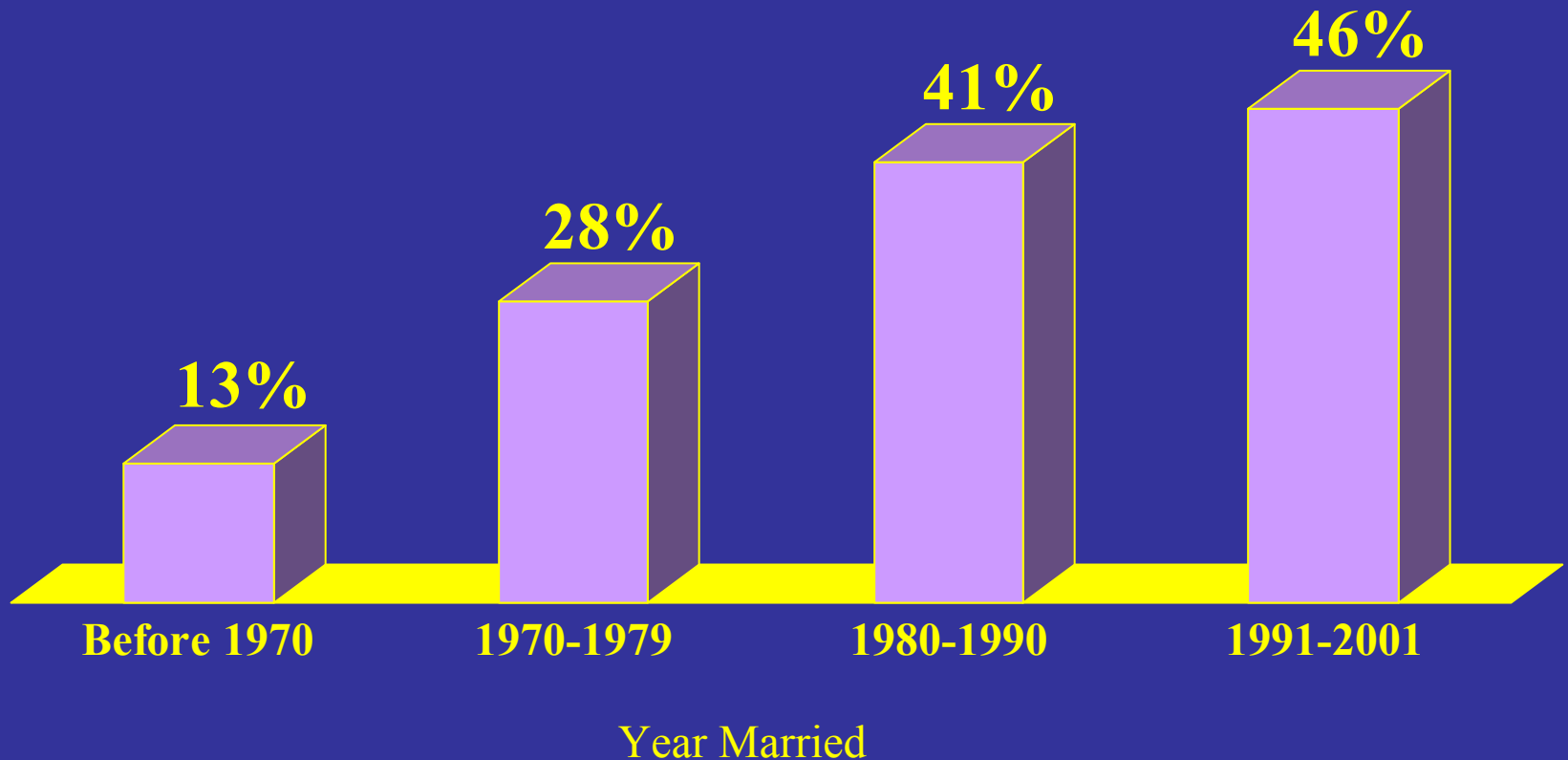
Most Conservative adults report that half or more of their closest friends are Jewish.



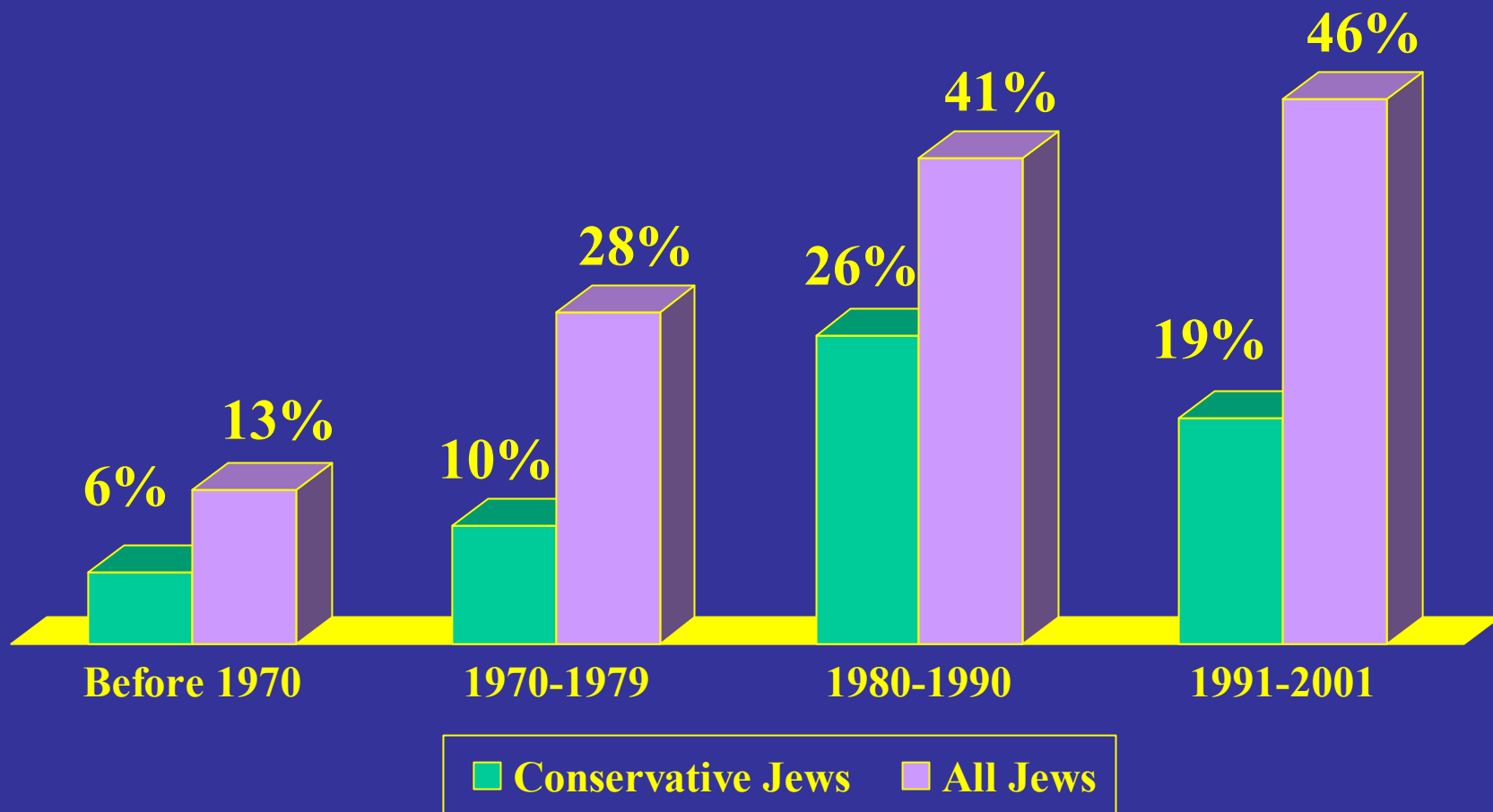
## Definitions of Intermarriage

- Jews married to non-Jews are defined as intermarried.
- Jews married to Jews are defined as in-married.
- Converts to Judaism are included in the analysis.
- Intermarriage statistics exclude non-Jews married to non-Jews, even if one of them was Jewish at an earlier point in time.
- The intermarriage rate applies to individuals, not to couples.
- The intermarriage rate includes only current intact marriages.

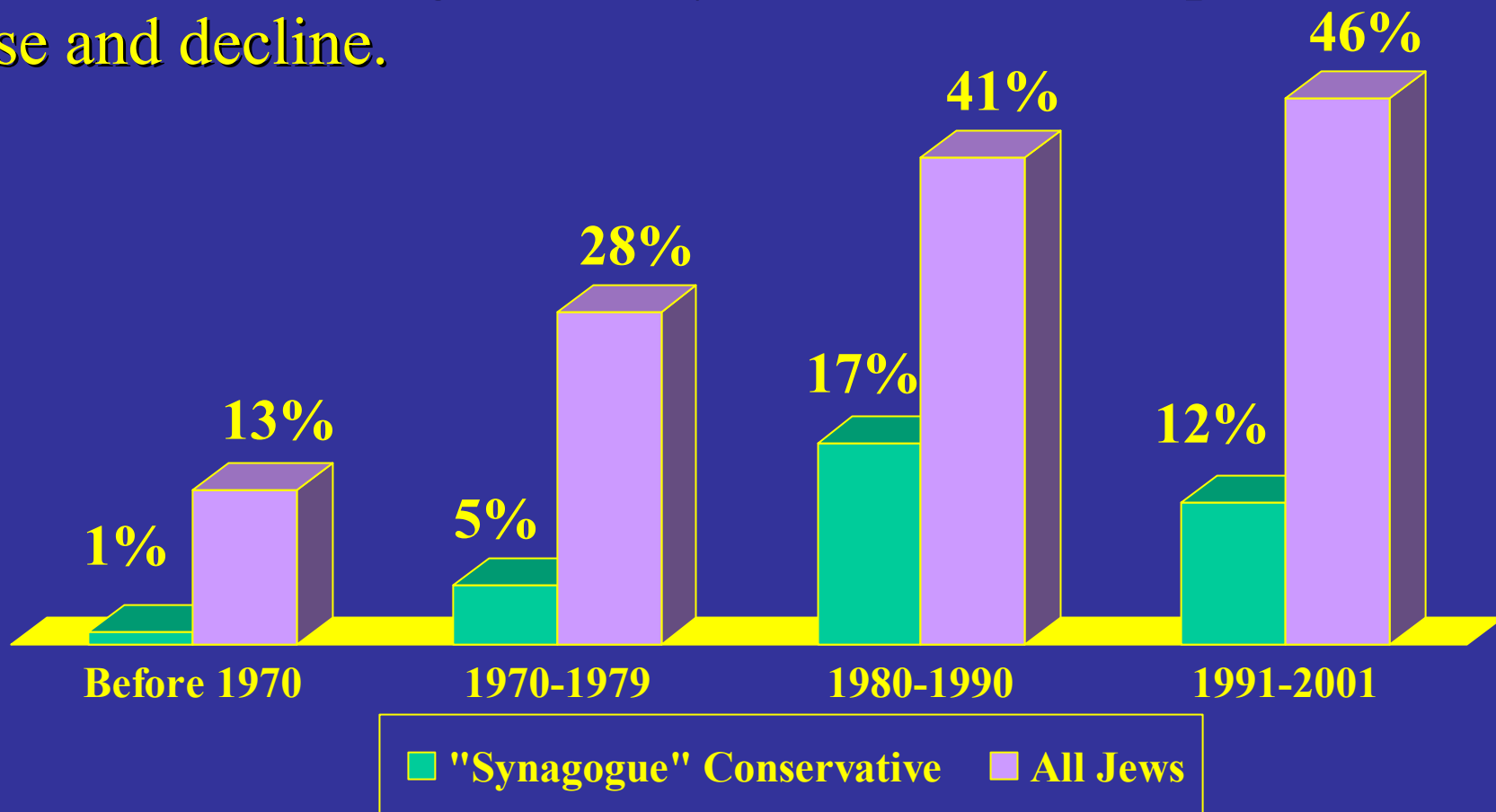
For all American Jews, rates of intermarriage have increased since 1970, but the rate of increase has slowed since the 1980's.



Conservative intermarriage rates rose significantly in the 1980s but declined during the past decade.



Among “synagogue” Conservative Jews, intermarriage rates are not as high but they follow the same pattern of rise and decline.





Questions?