Defining American Jewry From Religious and Ethnic Perspectives: The Transitions to Greater Heterogeneity

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The passage of time has led to considerable changes in the character of the American Jewish population. One of these changes has been the increasing distinction between religion and ethnicity as an expression of identification with the Jewish group. The National Jewish Population Survey 2000/01 was used to examine the attitudes and behavior along religious and ethnic dimensions for respondents who are members and/or self identify with the three major Jewish denominations (Reform, Conservative and Orthodox) and a fairly large group of unaffiliated persons and persons who do not identify with any of these denominations but who do state that they are Jewish. The central question asked is how the configurations of membership (or lack thereof) and self-identification with a denomination (or lack thereof) are related to attitudes and behaviors toward the religious and ethnic dimensions of being Jewish. The results of the analysis indicate that those persons with stronger connections to Judaism, on either attitude or behavior, in general also have a stronger positive connection to ethnic Jewishness than those who express their connection through less traditional religious norms and values.

"To be or not to be, that is the question." While this is a famous quote from one of Shakespeare's plays, it could very well apply to the on-going debate about the status of the Jewish population in contemporary American society. It is also possible that in light of current trends in the Jewish population that the quote should be rephrased as "To be or not to be, IS that the question." This debate about group survival, which has had many variations in the past (as noted by Sarna, 2003-4), reached a new level of urgency and concern based on the results of the 1990 National Jewish population survey (Kosmin et al. 1991). The reported high levels of intermarriage and demographic changes that were likely to impact on the future size and continuity of the community were reinforced by the follow-up National Jewish Population Survey in 2000/01. The issue for the Jewish population, currently estimated at over 5 million, is not one of whether Judaism will continue, even in the longer run, but rather what the community will look like. This paper will attempt to at least partially clarify this issue.

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Historical Basis for Increasing Heterogeneity

There is evidence that along with large numbers of other immigrants, Jews in America as a group are increasingly assimilating or "normalizing" into American society and are going through significant changes from the perspective of moving away from traditional, religious dimensions of the religion. There are a number of important reasons why the United States, after a somewhat rocky beginning, became fertile soil for religious heterogeneity, allowing the Jewish immigrants among others to achieve high levels of success in their new homeland. Among those reasons are the concept of separation of church and state as proscribed by the passing of the first amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1789, which allows tolerance toward all religions and also allows for a variety of religious coalitions; the political environment with a centrist political system that has to date discouraged extremist groups on both the left and the right from acquiring power; and the demographic reality that there has been no indigenous dominant group that claimed rights to religious or political power as large numbers of new immigrants were added to the racial, ethnic and religious mix of the population. Descriptions of how Jewish immigrants adapted to American society can be found in the writings of Howe (1976) and Karp (1998). Over the course of the 20th century and particularly toward its end the American population has undergone rapid demographic and social changes. With these changes came considerable religious diversity within and between religions as described in Kosmin and Lackman (1993) and Hout and Fischer (2002). Eck (2001) suggests that the United States, a historically Christian country, has at the beginning of the 21st century become the world's most religiously diverse nation. She writes that "Will Herberg (1955) had confidently described America as a 'three religion country' – Protestant, Catholic and Jewish. By the 1990's it was Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, Sikh and our collective consciousness of the wide and deep presence of America's Native peoples was greater than ever before." (Eck 2001:14) The Jewish population on the national and local level is part of this changing pattern. This population has undergone social and demographic changes over the course of the 20th century as the population successfully integrated into the social mosaic of American society (Chiswick 1999; Fein 2003-04).

Jewish Religious and Ethnic Connections

In Jewish history it has generally been accepted that Judaism, the religion, and being Jewish in ethnic or cultural terms have been interdependent. Over time in contemporary society it has become clear that the diversity of Jewish identities, as with many other religions, is increasing and that differences exist in the way Jews manifest their connections to the community. The classical "religious" connotation of what it means to be "be Jewish" has over time developed into a discussion about the distinction between religion and ethnicity. The traditional religious commitment is the most durable core of Jewish tribal identity, but this is exactly what is being attacked by the hospitality of American society. Thus, the question is asked, what happens when Jews find themselves in an environment where they are free

from oppression and are free to choose their destiny? Gartner (1974) captured the atmosphere of opportunity for immigrants to practice their religion and retain their culture, as a two edged sword: not only did they have the freedom to practice, they also had the freedom to reject the traditional ties to the old world. Contemporary trends were in fact presaged by Glazer who in 1957 wrote that the Jewish community's "focus would not be religion but something we may call 'Jewishness,' which would be the common element in a variety of activities - religious, political, cultural, intellectual, philanthropic, all of them legitimately Jewish. This type of community, it is hoped, would replace the dying East European Orthodoxy and maintain Judaism in a new form adapted to America." (Glazer 1957:91)

In opposition to those who focus on the appropriateness of an ethnic and essentially secular strategy for Jews, as represented by Dershowitz (1997), there are those, including Hertzberg (1989), Abrams (1997), Susser and Liebman (1999), and Freedman (2000), who propose, although they do not all do this with a great deal of enthusiasm, that the only way the Jewish community will survive as a unified group is to accept the need to return, or continue, on the path of traditional Orthodox Judaism. Freedman (2000) suggests that the future of the Jewish people will rely on there being a larger Orthodox proportion that is more committed in a traditional sense within the overall Jewish population.

There is no doubt that in contemporary America a small but strong Orthodox component of the Jewish community continues to maintain the behavior and customs of traditional Judaism. But, there is considerable evidence that by far the majority of persons who define themselves subjectively as Jewish, operate according to a wide range of customs and practices outside of the Orthodox tradition. There is another approach to examining the way in which "American Jews are Jewish," a term used by Horowitz (2002) in her review of the state of knowledge of contemporary Jewish identity. She discusses a number of ways in which Jewish identity has been examined and, based on an understanding of the diversification of Jewish experience in recent years, she suggests that " the concept of Jewish identity has been expanded to include whatever is personally meaningful to each individual" (Horowitz 2002: 24). This is in keeping with the suggestions by Roof (1998) and Hout and Fisher (2002) that Americans in general are increasingly viewing their religious commitment from a unique individualistic perspective. Horowitz concludes her argument with the statement that "in addition to looking at Jewish practices and involvements in Jewish life, it is essential to examine the subjective, inner experiences of being Jewish." (Horowitz 2002:29)

The analysis to follow uses a quantitative methodology that focuses on a combination of religious and cultural elements of how Jews connect to "being Jewish" and what this may imply for the future of the religion.

American Religious Beliefs and Practice

Immigrant groups adapt in a number of ways to the evolving contact between themselves and the host society. As the Jewish immigrants and their descendents

entered the American mainstream social and economic structures they soon faced a similar problem to most immigrant communities, namely the tension between two poles of existence—assimilation and integration on the one hand, and cultural preservation and group continuity on the other. In the Jewish population, denominational switching among Jews has become more frequent as reported by Lazerwitz et al (1998) and rates of intermarriage have increased dramatically over the past few decades (Rebhun 1999) leading to greater integration into mainstream culture. The issue of increased numbers of mixed marriages is also seen to have an important impact on family life and the socialization of children (Fishman 1999). As shown by Klaff, Mott, and Patel (2006), not only are intermarried couples much more likely to raise their children non-traditionally, but even within denominational groups this is true; when intermarried Conservative, Reform or even non-affiliated Jews say they are "raising their children traditionally" they are much less likely to be following traditional rituals and behaviors then their intra-married counterparts.

Additionally, earlier analysis of the 2000-1 NJPS (DellaPergola 2005; Klaff and Mott 2005) suggests that the Jewish population has become much more diverse in terms of culture and religious identification. This is, perhaps, not unlike the general American population where religious identification is in constant flux, as documented by Eck (2001). Despite this trend away from formal religious organizations and behavior paths, evidence points to a continued high level of belief in a deity and in spirituality. However, analysis of the small number of Jews in the General Social Survey sample demonstrate that Jewish respondents have lower levels of belief in a God than most Christian denominations, and also lower levels of attendance at religious services than do most Christian denominations. According to Hout and Fischer (2002), in the 1990's one-third of the Americans who answered "yes" when asked if they "had a religious preference" nevertheless said that they attended religious services only once a year or less. The contrast between preference and attendance is also at the core of understanding contemporary Jewish connections to the religion.

Hout and Fisher (2002) discuss this issue and maintain that the cause of being unchurched is disdain for organized religion, not lack of belief in the religion. They suggest that the uniquely American ideology of individualism and freedom has the result of lessening organizational connection (membership) but does not appear to diminish ideology or belief in spirituality. We will examine the views of both those who are members and those who self-identify in trying to understand the intensity of religious attitudes and behaviors.

Measuring Religious Connections: Self Identification and Membership

In any analysis of religion, an essential conceptual issue is how to define and enumerate religious identities. Some analysts use membership data derived from organizational data collection systems while others use a more subjective source based on self-identification, sometimes referred to as preference. Thus there are

persons who self-identify, others who belong to a denomination or congregation, and others who express some combination of these options. In most cases self-identity and membership overlap, but as will be demonstrated below in the analysis, in American society there are considerable numbers of persons who self-identify, but are not members and on the other hand who are members, but do not self-identify with the religious institution. For the most part, (albeit not always), members tend to be a subset of those who self-identify more traditionally with the religion.

Descriptions from two sources are briefly presented to illustrate the complexity of the religious composition of the American population by using membership on the one hand and self-identification on the other hand as descriptors. The adherents (membership) data come from an interactive website, the North American Religion Atlas (NARA) created by The Polis Center, Indianapolis, based on an ongoing data collection system of congregations and membership compiled by the Glenmary Research Center, Nashville, Tennessee (Glenmary Research Center). This data focuses on adherents, defined as members of the religious organizations and their primary family. The general conclusion derived from the NARA data for the country as a whole suggests that while a number of religions have increased or decreased their adherents, the most noticeable change in recent years has been the increase in the percent of number of persons who have either dropped their membership in established congregations or have declared that they have "no religion," suggesting a trend towards non-traditionality.

The second data set is the *American Religious Identification Survey*, ARIS (CUNY 2001). This data is based on religious self identification of a random probability sample of over 50,000 households that was then weighted to reflect the religious composition of the United States population. The ARIS data differs from the NARA data that is based on membership reports for members and their families by religious organizations. Based on the ARIS data for the country as a whole, 80.5 percent of adults self identify with a specific religious group, 14.5 percent claim to have no religion and 5 percent did not provide information. These data support the findings from the General Social Survey (GSS) reported by Hout and Fischer (2002) that there was a sharp increase from 7 to 14% in the decade of the 1990's in the percentage of adults who report having no religious preference (self-identified), after no significant change during the 1970's and 1980's. The percent of persons self-identifying with some religion is considerably higher than the national NARA adherence rate of 60 percent from the same period. It corroborates that a higher proportion of Americans express a self-identity with religion in some way than those who are members of religious institutions.

Taken together, the data from the NARA and the ARIS projects can be interpreted to suggest that there are a large proportion of persons who self-identify with a religion, but are not members of the religious group. The NJPS 2000/01 makes available for the Jewish population simultaneously collected information on self-identification, membership and denominational differentiation of respondents as well as a variety of data on attitudes and behavior. It is not

claimed here that the Jewish experience necessarily applies to other religions, but the data set gives us an opportunity to examine the identification – membership dichotomy across a number of denominations within the Jewish population.

Denominational Self-Identity and Membership among Jews

As noted, Jews have been part of the American landscape since the mid-17th century. The majority of Jews in 17th and 18th century America, whether from Sephardic or Ashkenazi origins, were traditionally Orthodox and maintained Orthodox synagogues in many parts of the country. They followed the strict laws of the Torah, and while participating in the social and economic development of American society, they did not see assimilation as a goal. Over time, with the arrival of new immigrants, the Jewish population evolved an organizational structure with both secular and religious institutional sub-structures. Amongst American Jews denominational differences became meaningful in the context of both history and contemporary structure and organization (Grossman 1998). The earliest formally established denomination was Reform (Meyer 1988). The German Jewish immigrants who arrived in the mid-1800s were ideologically connected to an unsuccessful attempt at assimilation and dual identity in the evolving German nationalism. While in Germany the choice was between being German or Jewish, in the American social environment the Reform movement viewed functional assimilation as a goal and strove to reconcile Jewishness with American life. In the early stages the emphasis was on abandoning traditional Jewish law and establishing a tradition committed to the spirit of Jewish law. Over time Reform Judaism has stressed the personal decision-making about Jewish practice and continues to see the spirit over the letter of the law as the driving force of the denomination. NJPS 2000/01 data estimates that the Reform denomination represents about 38 percent of the identified Jewish population.

Although, as noted, the earlier Jewish settlers were predominantly Orthodox, it was not until the latter part of the 19th century that we see the formalization of organizational structures in the Orthodox and slightly later the Conservative movements, each evolving into an established denomination. Orthodoxy has had a long history in American society, but it was the mass immigration of Eastern European Jewish immigrants that coalesced and strengthened the perspective that modernity and assimilation were a threat to traditional Jewish ways of life and practice (Danzger 1989). Today various forms of Orthodoxy exist, but the prevailing view is that while it is possible to co-exist with the secular society, there can be no compromise on the traditional adherence to *halacha*, the rule of Jewish law as prescribed by the Torah. Thus the Orthodox denomination tends to be the most traditionally segregated from modern American society. According to NJPS 2000/01, the Orthodox population was estimated at about 10 percent.

While Orthodoxy was rejuvenated and developed formal institutions from the strength of the new immigrants at the turn of the 19th century, the Conservative movement grew from two directions at the end of the 19th centu-

ry. A principle impetus was the view by many Jews that the Reform movement had moved too far from traditional Jewish practice. The response was an effort to balance tradition and modernity, where the changes which occurred in the practice would be determined by the basic laws of "*halacha.*" Thus, as the new traditional immigrants became exposed to American society, for both practical and sociological reasons a fair number of them transferred their allegiance to the more modern but still traditionally acceptable Conservative denomination (Elazar and Geffen 2000). In 2000, Conservatives represented about 27 percent of the self-identified Jewish population.

The fourth large group examined in this study are not a denomination, but rather a collection of persons who based on their responses to the survey questionnaire view themselves as Jewish, but do not self-identify with a denomination. This group in fact comprises about a quarter of the population defined as Jewish. Within this category are a range of persons, some who belong to some form of organized group such as the Secular Jewish Humanists or a Zionist movement unaffiliated with a religious denomination. They view themselves as Jewish, but have no formal connection to Judaism as a religion and when asked to self identify themselves in terms of their denomination responded that they were simply Jewish or did not have a religion. This group represents about 24 percent of the Jewishly identified population. (Also, a small denomination known as Reconstructionist Jews was added to the Reform denomination for the purposes of this analysis).

Defining oneself in denominational terms does not necessarily imply membership in an institution, but in the American context denominations are one of the key identifiers of a connection to the Jewish community. Although the denominations spring from the same theological tradition, there are considerable differences between them on a range of issues, as noted by Wertheimer (1999). Lazerwitz et al. (1998), in a study of Jewish denominations based on the 1990 NJPS survey, examined denominational differences on a variety of variables related to involvement with the Jewish community. While there are some exceptions to the ranking on specific variables, and there are interactions between the variables, the general picture obtained was a tendency for the Orthodox to be more involved with Jewish community traditions and organizations, and less involved with the non-Jewish population general community. On the other end of the spectrum, the Reform and those with no preference tended to be less involved with the Jewish community traditions, and more involved with the general American population community. As a result, the multivariate analysis carried out by Lazerwitz et al concluded that "the manner in which our respondents live their lives as Jews in the United States is influenced considerably by decisions concerning their denominational preferences and whether to affiliate with a synagogue." (Lazerwitz et al. 1998:75)

Membership or identification with one of the denominations would also appear to have an impact on the level of interaction with the social, economic

and political structure of the society. This background to both membership and identity in Jewish denominations sets the stage for examining the relationship between membership and identity and the differential level and intensity of identification with being Jewish.

THE CURRENT RESEARCH

The analysis to follow will disaggregate the sample into sub-groups based on membership and self-identification with the main American Jewish denominations. This will be followed by a multivariate exploration of how self-reporting of religion, particularly as it intersects with synagogue membership within contemporary Jewish society, in many respects defines an individual's connections with both religious and ethnic aspects of Jewishness. These two dimensions of religiosity and ethnicity, while obviously to some extent interdependent, are defined by a variety of individual behavioral and attitudinal items reflecting the individual's connections with Jewishness. This analytical approach permits one to more effectively describe the diverse perspectives that the overall population brings to Jewish identity.

The Data Source: The National Jewish Population Survey (NJPS2000/01).
The data source for this analysis is the National Jewish Population Survey 2000/01 (see Kotler-Berkowitz's introduction to this volume for details). The sample on which the current analysis is based includes respondents who (1) stated that Judaism was their current religion; or (2) have a Jewish background (born or raised Jewish, have no current religion yet consider themselves to be Jewish; or (3) persons who consider themselves to be currently Jewish, but also have a non-conflicting monotheistic religious attachment such as Buddhism. This totals 4,147 respondents.

The individual analyses include a modestly smaller number of respondents because in order to be included, respondents had to have responded to all the relevant inputs and outcomes, such as synagogue membership, and the items included in the various scales.

RESULTS

The denominational breakdown of the weighted population by self-identity and membership is presented in Table 1. Each respondent is classified as self-identifying with Orthodox, Conservative, Reform (the three largest denominations) or not self-identifying with one of the denominations. The same denominational classification is used for membership, with the fourth group being those who are not members of a denomination. Of the 96.3 percent of respondents who answered all the relevant questions, 10.8 percent self-identified as Orthodox, 26.7 percent Conservative, 37.7 percent Reform and 24.6 percent noted that

TABLE 1

USA Jewish Population, 2000
Classified by Denominational Membership and Self-Identification

Member		Self-Identification				Total Membership
		Orthodox (1)	Conservative (2)	Reform (3)	Non-Affiliated (4)	
Orthodox	(A)	8.6	1.4	0.5	0.3	10.8
Conservative	(B)	0.3	13.3	1.4	1.0	16.0
Reform	(C)	0.2	1.2	15.2	1.4	18.0
Non-Affiliated	(D)	1.7	11.0	20.6	21.9	55.2
Total Self-Identified		10.8	26.7	37.7	24.6	100.0

Source: NJPS 2000/2001
Note: The 3.7 percent of respondents who did not provide information on denomina-
tional membership or self-identification were excluded from this table.

they were Jewish, but either did not consider Judaism to be their religion or did
not self-identify with one of the three large established denominations. For
respondents classified by membership, 10.8 percent were Orthodox members,
conservative membership accounted for 16%, and Reform accounted for 18 per-
cent of the total. These membership estimates were lower than those self-identi-
fying with those denominations, About 55 percent of the respondents claimed
not to be a member of any denomination. Table 1 thus includes all combinations
of denominational self identification and denominational membership. About 75
percent of the population self-identified as having a preference for one of the
denominations, but only 44.8 percent claimed membership of one of the denom-
inational institutions or synagogues.

Of the 10.8 percent of respondents who had a preference for (self identified
with) Orthodoxy, the substantial majority (8.6 of 10.8% or about 80%) were
members of an Orthodox synagogue. About half of those who had a preference
for the Conservative denomination, were members of a Conservative congrega-
tion with most of the remainder being unaffiliated with any synagogue. And of
the 37.7 percent of those who had a preference for the Reform denomination less
than half were members. Similar to the Conservatives, the majority of the self-
identified Reform were unaffiliated.

In all about 90.6 percent of the weighted Jewish adult population is con-
tained within 6 of the 16 potential groupings identified in Table 1. Three of these

cells, comprising about 36 percent of the sample, both self-identify with and are members of one of the three main denominations (Orthodox, Conservative, or Reform). The mirror image to this is the 22 percent who neither claim denominational affiliation or membership. Additionally, about 32 percent identify with the Conservative or Reform denominations but are not synagogue members. (This 91 percent of the total Jewish population are the focus of the discussion in the next section.) This data demonstrates the complexity of the preference-membership relationship among the Jewishly identified population.

The main diagonal cells represent what will be referred to in this paper as the Conjoint groups, those who are both members of and self-identify with one of the denominations or those who are unaffiliated with a denominational congregation and do not self-identify with a denomination. The off-diagonal cells will be referred to as the Disjoint groups, those who are members of a specific denomination, but do not self-identify with the denomination of which they are members (7.7 percent of the total sample), or those who self-identify, but are not members of the group with which they self-identify (a substantial 36 percent of the total). For example, in Table 1, the conjoint cell B2 contains Conservative members who also self-identify with the Conservative denomination, while the disjoint cell B3 contains those Conservative members who self-identify with the Reform denomination. Disjoint can thus refer to two distinct kinds of individuals. Disjoint *identity* groups are those persons who self-identify with a denomination, but are members of a different denomination or are unaffiliated. For example, of those who self-identify as Conservatives, slightly more than half are not members (13.3 of 26.7 in Table 1). In contrast, disjoint *member* groups include those who are members of a denominational congregation, but self-identify with a different denomination or do not self-identify with a denomination. For example, of those who are members of a Reform congregation, only a small proportion are disjoint members (2.8 of 18.0 percent in Table 1) who belong to a Reform synagogue but do not identify with Reform Judaism.

The Relationship between the Membership-Identity Typology and Basic Indicators of Behavior and Attitude

NJPS 2000/01 includes a battery of questions that permit one to explore how Jews in the different membership-identity groups identify themselves from the perspectives of religious theology and ritual as well as ethnic or cultural dimensions. This typology differentiates between questionnaire items that are defined into four categories; religious and ethnic attitudes and behaviors. The items in these four categories are defined in the notes to Tables 2 and 3.

The decision to designate a question as primarily religious was based on whether it dealt with some aspect of Judaism or religious theology. The decision to designate a question as ethnic was based on whether one did not necessarily have to agree that Judaism was their religion to provide a positive or negative response to the question. The term positive or negative does not imply a subjec-

TABLE 2

Denominational Typology and Religious Attitudes and Behavior (Percentages)

Religious Attitude/ Behavior		O-SI O-M	C-SI C-M	R-SI R-M	C-SI C-NM	R-SI R-NM	NM-SI NM	Total
beliefg	1*	98.0	87.8	84.7	83.9	72.2	63.6	78.5
bj_god	2*	92.1	70.4	59.3	66.3	51.7	44.4	59.7
torah	3*	68.6	12.7	6.6	12.3	8.7	8.4	15.5
bj_syng	4	75.4	33.3	20.8	18.4	7.9	9.4	21.7
bj_jlaw	5	85.6	39.4	17.9	25.3	14.7	15.3	27.0
guiddeci	6*	82.2	39.8	21.3	24.0	11.8	7.8	24.7
imprel	7	90.2	50.3	37.1	27.0	14.0	12.3	31.4
mourned	8	79.1	92.0	87.3	85.2	75.2	61.7	78.0
prayword	9	81.9	81.4	79.6	75.1	67.8	59.9	72.1
treechil	10	95.1	91.8	77.9	87.3	69.9	67.0	78.6
seder	11*	99.5	97.3	94.5	77.6	71.8	54.6	78.6
Hanukah	12	92.9	70.5	67.9	61.5	43.3	37.5	56.9
mezuza	13	97.0	92.2	80.5	74.3	51.9	39.9	66.8
persrel	14	98.1	87.0	79.5	73.6	49.5	33.5	63.8
shulfreq	15*	835	53.5	45.9	23.0	11.5	14.4	39.0
observe	16*	97.8	84.8	71.6	70.1	40.7	26.0	57.9
fastkipp	17*	96.9	77.0	54.4	52.7	33.1	21.1	48.7
candles	18	93.9	51.2	24.6	19.0	9.6	9.4	27.1
koshhome	19	94.7	31.0	7.9	16.9	3.3	8.7	19.5

Description of Variable and Category Used for Cell Percentage

beliefg	1	Do you believe in a God (Yes)
bj_god	2	Being Jewish involves believing in a God (A lot)
torah	3	Torah written by God, God and man, man (Written by God)
bj_syng	4	Being Jewish involves attending a synagogue service (A lot)
bj_jlaw	5	Being Jewish involves observing Jewish religious law – halacha (A lot)
guiddeci	6	Judaism guides important life decisions (Strongly agree)
imprel	7	Religion plays an important part in my life today (Strongly agree)
mourned	8	Have you observed any Jewish mourning ritual (Yes)
prayword	9	Did you ever pray using your own words (Yes)
treechil	10	Did you have a Christmas tree last year (No)
seder	11	Did you hold or attend a Passover seder last year (Yes)
Hannukah	12	Do you light Hannukah candles (Every night)
Mezuza	13	Do you have a mezuzah on the outside of your house (Yes)
persrel	14	To what extent are you personally religious (Somewhat and/or very religious)
shulfreq	15	How often do you attend synagogue (1-3 times a month or more)
observe	16	To what extent do you observe Jewish rituals and practices (Very observant)
fastkipp	17	Did you fast during last Yom Kippur (All day)
candles	18	Frequency of lighting Sabbath candles (Always)
koshhome	19	Do you keep kosher at home (Yes)

O= Orthodox   C= Conservative   R= Reform
M= Member   NM= Non-Member   SI- Self-Identified
Note: Asterisked items are included in scales in the following multivariate analysis section.

tive notion of good or bad, but rather a continuum from greater to lesser con-nection with the religious or ethnic components of Jewishness.

Tables 2 and 3 examine differences between the six principal membership-self identity groups (highlighted in the preceding section) according to their responses to the individual items that comprise the four religious/ethnic atti-tude/behavior items. Note that in Tables 2 and 3 the six selected groups are arranged in columns from left to right. The first three columns reflect conditions where persons in each denomination are both members and self-identified with a specific denomination (Orthodox-Orthodox; Conservative-Conservative; Reform-Reform). These are "conjoint" groups. They are followed by the 2 "dis-joint" groups: MEM_disjoint (11.0% of the sample) and ID_disjoint (20.6% of the sample), as defined above. There is no disjoint Orthodox population cell included in the analysis due to the fact that there are very few Orthodox who are unaffiliated with an Orthodox congregation. The sixth group, those who do not self-identify with a denomination and are not members (21.9% of the sample) will also be referred to as a "conjoint" group. In order to demonstrate the differ-ences between the 6 principal membership-identity groups, the data in Tables 2 and 3 contain the category (or in a few cases multiple categories) that reflect the most positive identification with the religion (Judaism) or Jewish culture (eth-nicity). For example in Table 2 the statement, "Religion plays an important part in my life today," was presented and the answer categories were: *strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree.* In the table we see that 90.2 percent of the Orthodox conjoint group responded *strongly agree* compared to 37.1 percent of the Reform conjoint group. We now sequentially explore the linkages between the individual attitudes and behavior that are linked with the four attitude/behavior categories and the four denominational typologies, in an attempt to clarify the behavior paths and attitudes followed by individuals in the six denominational types.

Religious Attitudes

The questions included in the top half of Table 2 deal with attitude toward theology or philosophy, such as belief in a God and who is seen as being the author of the Torah, three questions asking whether being Jewish implies belief in a deity, feelings about observing Jewish religious laws and attending a syna-gogue service and finally, the extent to which Judaism guides life decisions and the importance of religion in one's life.

Reading each row in Table 2 from left to right suggests a fairly consistent uni-dimensional pattern. Note that for the religious attitude variables the percent positive for the conjoint Orthodox/Orthodox group is high and that for all vari-ables except the two dealing with "belief in God" the percentage drop-off is con-siderable in the Conservative/Conservative and subsequent groups. Notably, while about two-thirds of persons who are not members of a congregation and do not self-identify with the denominations believe in a God, less than 10 percent

believe that the Torah was written by God, or that religion or Judaism are relevant to their lives. This would tend to support the notion that the unidentified/unaffiliated do not necessarily reject a spiritual connection to religion, but are much less likely to participate in the institutional version of the theology and ritual of the religion. This resonates with the approach mentioned above that many Jews may view religion as more of a personal and internally based spirituality whether personally created or inspired by an existing theology. The result of this trend seems to be reflected in the declining affiliation with formal religious institutions rather than a decline in theological connection to a specific deity.

The one exception among the religious attitude variables seems to be a reversal on some of the variables between the Conservative/unaffiliated who have a slightly higher positive attitude than the Reform/Reform group. This suggests that those who self-identify with the Conservative denomination but are not members have a slightly higher positive attitude (or behavior) toward Judaism than do those who are both members of Reform and self-identify with Reform.

Religious Behavior

The uni-dimensional pattern found in the ranking of the six groups on the religious attitude variables is repeated in the list of religious behavior variables (in the bottom half of Table 2). The variables range from the extent to which rituals are observed and people attend synagogue services, to whether respondents pray in their own words and keep kosher (Jewish dietary laws) at home. Among these behavior variables the drop-off from the Orthodox group is typically much less than among the religious attitude indicators. This is consistent with the notion discussed earlier that while most respondents do not think that ritual observation and using religion to guide their lives is a mandatory requirement, they nevertheless behave in such a way as to perform many of the rituals as expressions of cultural or ethnic identification. For example, while few unidentified/unaffiliated express any interest in formal (organized) Judaism, over 60 percent have observed a Jewish mourning ritual, over 50 percent have either held or attended a Passover dinner (Seder) in the past year and about 40 percent have a mezuzah (ceremonial scroll) on their outside door.

Additionally, about 72 percent of the affiliated population and about 60 percent of the unidentified-unaffiliated claim to pray in their own words. Again this points to the possibility that lack of connection to the organized theological formalistic aspects of Judaism does not necessarily reflect a low level of spirituality.

Ethnic Attitudes

The variables in the top half of Table 3 deal with attitudes about the more ethnic or cultural aspects of Jewishness. Examples of these variables are attitude about being Jewish, having a sense of belonging to the Jewish people, the importance of being Jewish, and an attitude about the extent to which being Jewish involves supporting Jewish organizations. Again, we find a uni-dimensional pat-

TABLE 3

Denominational Typology and Ethnic Attitudes and Behavior (Percentages)

Ethnic Attitude/ Behavior		O-SI O-M	C-SI C-M	R-SI R-M	C-SI C-NM	R-SI R-NM	NM-SI NM	Total
outside2	20	55.7	68.8	66.0	66.0	63.8	64.4	64.6
jewatt2	21*	93.8	95.1	86.3	82.8	78.0	68.9	82.1
activ5ya	22	43.2	34.7	39.7	21.3	19.6	17.8	27.2
clear2	23*	94.5	89.6	79.3	78.7	64.0	57.1	73.5
bj_orgs	24*	71.1	50.2	31.6	30.8	20.8	14.5	31.3
belong2	25*	95.4	82.6	67.9	65.1	47.5	38.2	60.6
jewimpor	26*	95.7	76.2	54.9	60.7	36.8	29.6	52.4
marryjew	27	92.6	61.5	30.0	34.9	15.1	7.4	26.8
duesjorg	28*	46.1	49.6	44.0	27.1	14.7	11.9	28.5
readbk	29*	93.6	87.3	81.3	66.6	52.8	42.0	65.6
hafriend	30	82.3	47.4	40.0	44.8	35.7	30.3	42.3
jtravel	31*	94.6	80.4	64.6	66.3	55.1	42.4	62.5
israelv	32*	80.2	61.6	42.1	44.3	29.1	25.4	41.6
jdate	33	79.3	49.8	28.2	36.6	23.5	21.1	33.0
friends1	34*	86.4	57.4	44.8	34.1	26.4	23.9	39.9

Description of Variable and Category Used for Cell Percentage

outside2	20	Feel outsider in America because I am Jewish (Strongly disagree)
jewatt2	21	Attitude about being Jewish (Very positive)
activ5ya	22	Level of Jewish activity compared to five years ago (Increased)
clear2	23	I have a clear sense of what being Jewish means to me (Strongly agree)
bj_orgs	24	Extent to which being Jewish involves supporting Jewish organizations (A lot)
belong2	25	I have a strong sense of belonging to the Jewish People (Strongly agree)
jewimpor	26	View of the importance of being Jewish (Very important)
marryjew	27	View of the importance of future spouse being Jewish (Very important)
duesjorg	28	Paid dues to a Jewish organization, but not a synagogue (Yes)
readbk	29	In past year has read Jewish print media (Yes)
hsfriend	30	Proportion of high school friends who were Jewish
jtravel	31	When traveling likelihood of looking for Jewish places of interest (Very likely)
isrealv	32	Ever visited Israel (Yes)
jdate	33	In high school dated Jews or non-Jews (Mostly Jews)
friends1	34	Proportion of closest friends who are Jewish (Most or all)

O= Orthodox   C= Conservative   R= Reform
M= Member   NM= Non-Member   SI- Self-Identified
Note: Asterisked items are included in scales in the following multivariate analysis section.

tern in the ranking of the six groups on the Jewish attitude variables as we move from the orthodox conjoint to the unidentified/unaffiliated group. However, the drop off in positive attitude from the Orthodox conjoint is generally shallower than for the religious attitude variables.

Ethnic Behavior

The final set of variables express ethnic Jewish behavior, and the same pattern in the ranking of the six groups is evident (in the bottom half of Table 3). These variables deal with issues such as paying dues to Jewish non-religious organizations, traveling to Israel, having Jewish friends, and reading material with a Jewish content. These are actions that do not necessarily have a religious connotation. One could expect that the Orthodox respondents would have a fairly high positive response on these behaviors due, for example, to their theological and territorial connection to Israel and their relatively higher levels of segregation in areas that have higher concentrations of Jews and Jewish institutions. There is another way, however, of relating to being Jewish, namely manifesting an ethnic connection without the religious link. It would seem then, if the theories about alternative ways of expressing connection are correct, that respondents who do not consider Judaism to be their religion but are ethnically Jewish would have a relatively high level of involvement on the indicators presented in Table 3, even if this level would not be expected to be as high as the more religiously self-identified persons. In fact, however, the fifth and sixth categories, that include Reform and non-affiliated non-members, fall at the lower end of the range in every variable in Table 3, in most cases with percentages that are considerably lower than the other four groups.

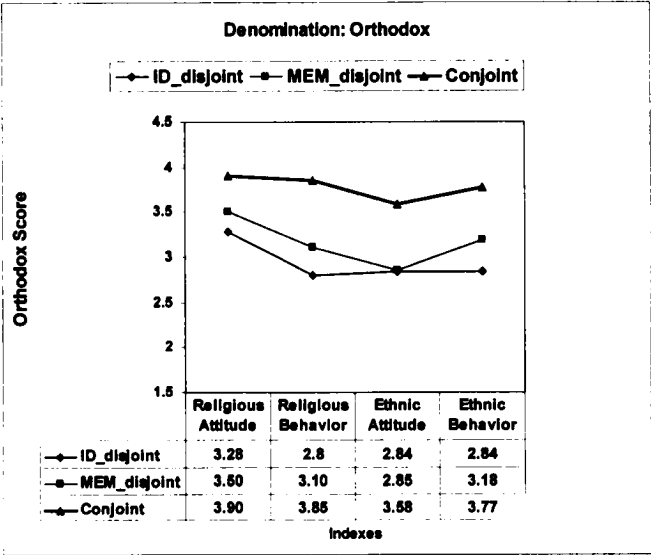*Interpreting Conjoint –Disjoint Differences*

The initial conclusion reached from analysis of Tables 2 and 3 is that there are clear denominational differences in degree of intensity toward the acceptance of the attitudes and behaviors on the dimensions of religion and ethnicity. In the concluding multivariate analysis, we investigate denominational differences for the four cell Jewish identity typology used above and explore differences between conjoint and disjoint patterns of connection.

A basic linear regression modeling procedure was used to produce mean differences between groups to examine the relationship between the typology identified in Table 1 and a set of four constructed indices based on a subset of variables included in Tables 2 and 3. These variables have been chosen from the tables because they appeared to have high face validity in representing the concepts that are operationalized. The items selected for inclusion are asterisked in Tables 2 and 3, and represent religious attitude, religious behavior, ethnic attitude and ethnic behavior, respectively. They are the four outcomes, or dependent variables in the general linear model analyses that follow.

For each index the values were ordered from positive to negative as related to Judaism or Jewishness. The values were summed over the variables in each index

FIGURE 1

Orthodox Denomination
Mean Differences Between: Conjoint[1], ID_disjoint[2] and MEM_disjoint[3] Groups on
Religious Attitude, Religious Behavior, Ethnic Attitude and Ethnic Behavior Index

Denomination: Orthodox

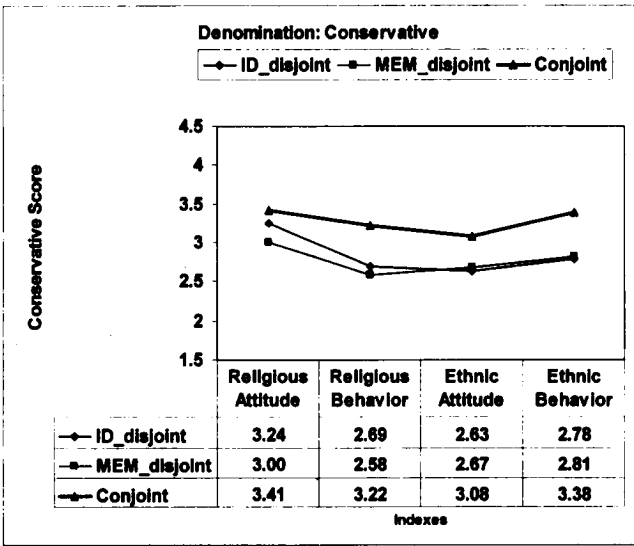|	Religious Attitude	Religious Behavior	Ethnic Attitude	Ethnic Behavior
ID_disjoint	3.28	2.8	2.84	2.84
MEM_disjoint	3.50	3.10	2.85	3.18
Conjoint	3.90	3.85	3.58	3.77

Indexes

Total Orthodox Members= 431; Total Orthodox Self-Identified= 431
1. Conjoint = self-identified and member of denomination [N = 343]
2. ID_disjoint = self-identify with a denomination, but are members of a different
   denomination or are non-affiliated. [N = 88]
3. MEM_disjoint = Member of a denomination, but self-identify with a different
   denomination or do not identify with a denomination. [N =88]

and then each index was collapsed into four new categories based on frequency
distributions of the combined scores. These four indices all had reasonably high
alpha coefficients, between .67 and .76, in a factor analysis we completed. The
new categories were then used as the input to the general linear model.

A General Linear Model (GLM) was used to examine the extent to which
membership and self-identity had differential impacts on the four indices. The
procedure was a multivariate ANOVA with two within subject factors – behav-
ior and attitude, and two between subject factors. The procedure used calculated
a mean score, with a maximum score of 4, on each of the four indices for the three
denomination groups (conjoint, disjoint self-identity, and disjoint member) and
the unaffiliated group. Using this output it is possible to compare mean scores
between denominations and between indices. For example, on the religious atti-
tude index (Figure 1) the mean score for the Orthodox conjoint population is
3.9, out of a possible maximum of 4, as compared to a mean of 3.5 for disjoint
members (member of Orthodox congregation, but does not self-identify) and a

FIGURE 2

Conservative Denomination
Mean Differences Between: Conjoint[1], ID_disjoint[2] and MEM_disjoint[3] Groups on
Religious Attitude, Religious Behavior, Ethnic Attitude and Ethnic Behavior Index

Denomination: Conservative

→ ID_disjoint → MEM_disjoint → Conjoint

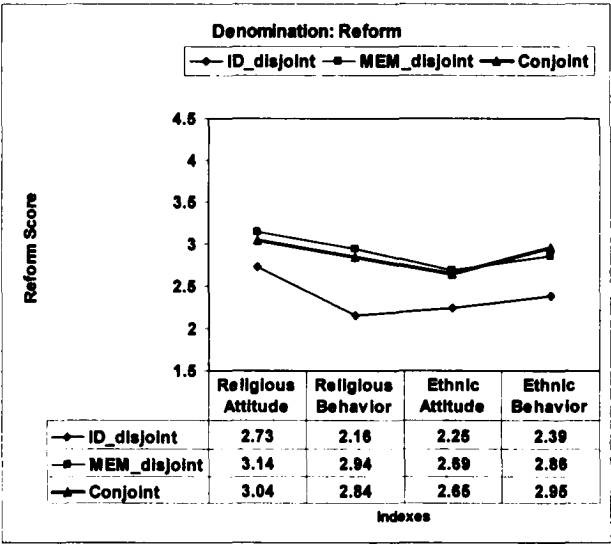|	Religious Attitude	Religious Behavior	Ethnic Attitude	Ethnic Behavior
→ ID_disjoint	3.24	2.69	2.63	2.78
→ MEM_disjoint	3.00	2.58	2.67	2.81
→ Conjoint	3.41	3.22	3.08	3.38

Indexes

Total Conservative Members= 639; Total Conservative Self-Identified= 1074.
1. Conjoint = self-identified and member of denomination. [N = 531]
2. ID_disjoint = self-identify with a denomination, but are members of a different
    denomination or are non-affiliated. [N = 543]
3. MEM_disjoint = Member of a denomination, but self-identify with a different
    denomination or do not identify with a denomination. [N = 108]

mean of 3.28 for disjoint self-identified (identify with Orthodoxy, but are not affiliated as a member). What this analysis does is clarify the relative importance of denominational self-identity and membership as predictors of religious and ethnic attitudes and behaviors. We have already explored connections with individual behaviors and attitudes. We now quantify this further, and at another level. To the extent that the individual and aggregate items evidence similar connections with the religious/ethnic attitudes and behaviors, our confidence in their face validity is significantly enhanced.

The output from the GLM is presented in graph form for each of the denominations and for each of the indices. Figures 1 through 4 each contain three lines representing the *conjoint* mean score, the *disjoint self-identity* (ID_disjoint) mean score and the *disjoint membership* (MEM_disjoint) mean score on the index. A line contains four points representing the conjoint and disjoint mean score on each of the four indices for each of the four denominational groups. Mean scores for each of the four groups by the conjoint and two disjoint indicators are pre-

FIGURE 3

Reform Denomination
Mean Differences Between: Conjoint[1], ID_disjoint[2] and MEM_disjoint[3] Groups on
Religious Attitude, Religious Behavior, Ethnic Attitude and Ethnic Behavior Index

Denomination: Reform

	Religious Attitude	Religious Behavior	Ethnic Attitude	Ethnic Behavior
ID_disjoint	2.73	2.16	2.25	2.39
MEM_disjoint	3.14	2.94	2.69	2.86
Conjoint	3.04	2.84	2.65	2.95

Indexes

Total Reform Members= 719; Total Reform Self-Identified= 1506.
1. Conjoint = self-identified and member of denomination. [N = 607]
2. ID_disjoint = self-identify with a denomination, but are members of a different denomination or are non-affiliated. [N = 899]
3. MEM_disjoint = Member of a denomination, but self-identify with a different denomination or do not identify with a denomination. [N = 112]

sented at the bottom of each figure. The total number of cases included is 3994 and is identical to those defined as having all the inputs for the various analyses in the data source section. The conjoint and disjoint definitions coincide with those utilized in the preceding analyses. Note, however, that each respondent is counted twice in the disjoint totals as they can be classified both ways (a self-identifying Orthodox who belongs to a Conservative synagogue is both an ID_disjoint Orthodox and a MEM_disjoint Conservative). Adding the Conjoint totals and the ID_disjoint totals equals 3994 and adding the Conjoint totals and the MEM_disjoint totals results in the same total.
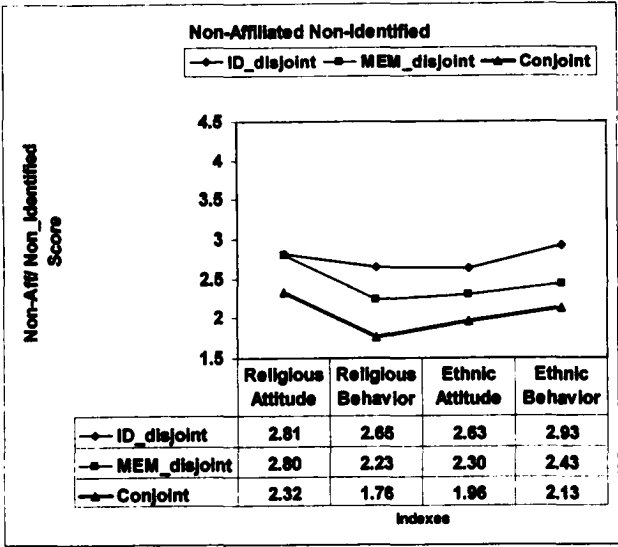
DENOMINATIONAL DISTINCTIONS

An Overview
   As would be expected, conjoint scores for the Orthodox are the highest on all four indices (Figures 1 through 4) and except for a slightly lower score in the

FIGURE 4

Non-Affiliated/Non-Identified

Mean Differences Between: Conjoint[1], ID_disjoint[2] and MEM_disjoint[3] Groups on Religious Attitude, Religious Behavior, Ethnic Attitude and Ethnic Behavior Index

Non-Affiliated Non-Identified

	Religious Attitude	Religious Behavior	Ethnic Attitude	Ethnic Behavior
ID_disjoint	2.81	2.66	2.63	2.93
MEM_disjoint	2.80	2.23	2.30	2.43
Conjoint	2.32	1.76	1.96	2.13

Indexes

Total Unaffiliated= 2205; Total Unidentified= 983.
1. Conjoint = unidentified and unaffiliated [N =875]
2. ID_disjoint = unidentified, but are members (affiliated) of a denomination.
   [N = 108]
3. MEM_disjoint = NON-Members of a denomination, but identified with a denomination
   [N = 1330]

ethnic attitude index, they manifest a consistently high positive level across the indices. They would be expected to demonstrate a higher degree of positive connection with the religious behavior and attitude indices, and the results support this. Less clear a priori, is that a similar pattern would be evidenced with respect to the ethnic attitudes and behaviors. For those Orthodox in one of the disjoint groups, the pattern is similar, but not surprisingly, the religious and ethnic average scores on all the indices are somewhat lower. They nonetheless are still higher then for the other denominations. It is worth noting that between the two Orthodox disjoint categories, membership alone is related to stronger religious and ethnic behaviors then the converse—Orthodox identification without synagogue membership.

For Conservatives, the conjoint individuals (Figure 2), who account for only about 40 percent of that group, score lower than the Orthodox on all indices. With the possible exception of the religious attitude index, the two disjoint group scores essentially coincide with each other, suggesting that at least at the group

level, self-identification and membership appear to have similar impact on the other behavior/attitude scores. Additionally, as with the Orthodox, the conjoint group, which has a more homogeneous connection with the denomination, once again has easily the highest ethnic scores, albeit not as high as for the conjoint Orthodox group.

For the Reform conjoint group, which includes 40 percent of all Reform, the index scores are lower than both the Orthodox and Conservative (Figure 3). For this group, the conjoint scores are typically identical with MEM_disjoint (who are denomination synagogue members but do not identify with the denomination).

For the unaffiliated and non-identified, the conjoint scores are considerably lower than the other groups. The non- affiliated, non-identified conjoint group is well below the Reform on all scores. This is not surprising as conjoint for this category is essentially the least Jewishly connected of all groups, as they are not affiliated with any denomination and do not self-identify with any denomination.

Even this brief synthesis at first glance suggests that the more traditional denominational groups, the Orthodox and Conservative as expected have higher scores on the religious indicators with this also being true for the conjoint and disjoint denomination subsets. The patterns are more erratic for the Reform and non-affiliated groups, as will be considered and partially interpreted below. The focus will be on interpreting denominational connections to ethnic attitudes and behavior.

Denominational Conjoint and Disjoint Distinctions

For those who are members but not identifying with their denomination, the disjoint Orthodox members have the highest scores on *all* the indices. Thus, the ethnic as well as the religious factors are of considerable importance to these individuals. Interpretation is a little difficult because those belonging to an Orthodox congregation but not identifying with Orthodoxy are in all likelihood a heterogeneous group, which can in some instances include conversions, those belonging because of family tradition, or indeed, proximity to an Orthodox synagogue.

Everything being equal, it was anticipated that for the disjoint categories, denomination membership without identity might be more clearly positively linked with the indices than the converse. First, except where geographic location or economic circumstances interfere, identifying but not joining might imply for many a lesser interest or connection with a specific denomination. For instance, identifying could represent a historical artifact of childhood or earlier in life—but not extreme enough to warrant membership or even seeking a geographically proximate residence. Arguably, it might also be suggestive of an intellectual affiliation with the tenets of the denomination but no particular strength of feeling for the formal denomination or perhaps, the denominational local institution(s).

However, this expectation was only partially realized. The disjoint Reform *members* have slightly higher scores on all four indices than the disjoint Conservative members. In contrast, those who identify with the Conservative movement but do not belong to a synagogue have higher scores on all four attitude

and behavior scales then their Reform counterparts, consistent with expectations. The first noted inconsistency may partly reflect a possibility that Reform members who do not self-identify as Reform belong to the Reform synagogue for reasons of convenience or spousal preference, but retain their previous religious perspective.

This might suggest that self-identification is of greater importance (from a traditional perspective) for the Conservative than the Reform, while membership appears more relevant for the Reform. A selection process may be operative where Reform membership is drawing on relatively more traditional individuals then is true for the Conservative. Additional research on relative movements of Reform and Conservative identifiers and members across denominational lines in recent years may also help clarify this unanticipated finding. It is consistent with the trend of more movement of Conservative identifiers to Reform membership than vice versa.

The above patterning also seems to be consistent with research carried out by Hartman and Hartman (1999) on denominational switchers, where they found that switchers tend to be more strongly identified in some ways than "stayers," partly because they are either moving downwards (Conservative to Reform, for example) and bring their former orientations with them, or they are moving into a group with stronger ethnic and religious identification and show their strong commitment to doing so by being even more strongly identified than the "stayers" in their new group. One should note also that the majority of those who self-identify with Reform but are not Reform members (54.8%) do not belong to any of the other denominations.

Regarding the least connected group that has no identification, it is useful to conclude that within this non-identified, non-affiliated category, those who are members of a specific denominational synagogue but do not identify with any denomination do indeed score higher then the mirror image group. This is indeed consistent with expectations.

Ethnicity and Denominational Affiliation or Non-Affiliation

Focusing on the conjoint groups for the three denominations, ethnic attitude scores decline from 3.58 for the Orthodox to 2.65 for the Reform and the ethnic behavior indices from 3.77 to 2.95, respectively. Arguably, it is suggested that for these most connected denominational groups, religious and ethnic declines are relatively comparable; in no way could it be suggested that they are substitutes as one moves down the traditionality scale.

An issue of importance is to attempt clarification, within the context of denomination, religiosity, and ethnicity, of having no denominational connection, and how this all may link to ethnic strength of affiliation. If one accepts the argument that the 24 percent of the Jewish population who are neither members nor self-identify with a denomination are likely to connect in some way that reflects Jewishness, but not religion, one would expect this to appear on measures that focus more on ethnic or cultural items than on the religious dimension. The

results on this issue, under the assumption that our indices are relatively valid, are mixed. Before highlighting results, it need be noted that the definitions for the non-affiliated non-identified group are somewhat different than for the denominational groups. Conjoint means an individual is unidentified with and not affiliated with any synagogue. MEM_disjoint means that an individual is NOT a member of a synagogue but identifies with a denomination and ID_disjoint is the mirror image to this.

First, the most religiously disconnected are the conjoint subset and have the lowest scores on all the indices, including the ethnic attitude and behavior scores. The next lowest index scores are for the MEM_disjoint group, who are non-members of any denomination but do identify with a denomination, followed by the ID disjoint individuals who claim no denominational identification but belong to a synagogue. These individuals have higher scores on all except the religious attitude index. Thus, within this non-affiliated and/or non-identified group, synagogue membership has a stronger positive connection with ethnicity then either the conjoint or MEM_disjoint group. This group also has a higher religious behavior score, undoubtedly linked with synagogue attendance although causality remains unclear. The above is certainly consistent with the knowledge that there is a subgroup of Jews who for a variety of reasons choose to remain independent of denominational identification for reasons that could be social, historical, or intellectual. By virtue of being a member of a denomination, they retain at least vestiges of observance. Indeed, 11 percent of the non-affiliated belong to a synagogue.

A hypothesis central to this paper is that the non-affiliated who claim neither membership nor affiliation with a denomination may none the less claim Jewish identity not so much for religious reasons per se but more for personal, ethnic, or cultural identification, which might have strong contemporary or historical bases. The items in the ethnic attitude and behavior indices provide some evidence supporting this supposition. Table 3 shows that while the connections may be weaker for the ethnic attitudes and behaviors of the non-affiliated/non-self-identified, they are nonetheless relatively substantial for attitudes such as "being Jewish," "having a clear sense of what being Jewish means to me," and several other items and behaviors such as involvement with Jewish organizations, Jewish friendship networks, visiting Israel and being culturally connected through Jewish reading materials and Jewish-related travel. These connections translate into far from trivial ethnic attitude and behavior indices, particularly for those who are in the "disjoint" categories, and either identify with a denomination or are members of a denomination, but not both (see Figure 4).

INTERPRETATION: "FROM WHERE COMES THE LIGHT": THE ISSUE OF CONTINUITY THROUGH RELIGION OR THROUGH ETHNICITY

As noted earlier there are proponents of the view that in the American environment there can indeed be a successful dichotomy between religion and ethnicity, and that a Jewishly based environment not connected to religion or its denominations can survive in a viable format. The argument made is that Jewish continuity can succeed by individuals expressing their Jewishness in more personal and non-institutional forms or in viewing their identity in alternative ways. Based on the analysis of the NJPS 2000/01 data carried out in this paper we can now review the results of a statistical response to the different or alternative ways of "being Jewish."

Summarizing the results of the analysis, the data clearly indicate that the stronger the traditional religious connection to Judaism, on either attitude or behavior, the stronger the positive connection to ethnic Jewish identity. This is not unlike the results of a study carried out by Levine (1986) who concluded that: "The data in this study seem to support those who say that Jewish communities will survive only on the basis of a strong Judaism, a return to, or a continuation of, some degree of religious commitment." (p. 339)

The data also tend to support the conclusions reached by Lazerwitz et al (1998) in their analysis of denominational differences in the 1990 national Jewish population survey. They conclude that, "The major trend in the denominational switching among Jews in America has been from Orthodox to Conservative to Reform" (p.89) and that, "on the whole, denominational switchers tend to be less Jewishly involved than those who stay in the denomination in which they were reared." (p. 89)

Many years ago the author listened to a young Rabbi expound on the reason for retaining a strong connection to the more traditional beliefs and practices of Judaism. The Rabbi proposed that at night when we see the light coming from a star in the sky we actually see light that has left the star many years before. If the star were to expire, we would still see the light for many years, but eventually the light would go out. He drew the analogy with the transmission of beliefs and practices that make up the basis of a religion and its beliefs and practices. It is not clear as to the scientific merit of the astrological argument, but it perhaps has an analogy that is relevant to the results presented in this paper. The results suggest that conformity to traditional Judaism, as a primary form of socialization and group cohesiveness, expressed through structured ritualistic practices, parallels very closely levels of ethnic behaviors and attitude. Lower levels of one coincide very closely with levels and attitudes for the other. Unless these connections change substantially, it might well be that as connections get looser, as evidenced by declines in membership, and/or self-identification, as well as specific denominational attachments, that religious *and* ethnic connections with the religion, both attitudes *and* behaviors, will become weaker.

There are a number of cautions that need to be introduced here. First, no consideration was made in the current analysis of demographic or socio-economic characteristics of the population. It is possible that controlling for age, gender, education, intermarriage, political ideology, among other potential independent variables, may influence the relationships found (or the conclusions). Of course, it may also be suggested that the addition of other "controls" in the analysis could damage interpretation. After all, we do not live in a"controlled" world; and the linkages highlighted in this research represent the face of contemporary Judaism. Second, it is possible that additional research will introduce yet another direction for Jewish identity. Sociological theory suggests that in every Diaspora society the immigrant group adapts in a number of ways to the evolving contact between it and the host society. If the purpose of "being Jewish" is a focus on the structural success of the community or to feel personally satisfied with one's inner self, for example, then other "ways" of strong identification with being Jewish may indeed exist and be successful. If, however, one of the requirements of members of a community is to contribute in some way to the institutions or to have ongoing participation with community institutions, then the current analysis suggests that a move toward less formalistic connections to both Jewish religious and cultural rituals and practices does not auger well for future institutional stability and support. In the open marketplace of American lifestyle many of the persons who self-identify themselves as being Jewish seem to have less need for specifically Jewish organizations. The results of the current analysis do not suggest that alternative strategies for pursuing Jewish connections are not appropriate or will not with time justify a break in the interdependent relationship between religion and ethnicity. However, those who propose these alternatives need to match ideological hope with empirical evidence.

Note: For References, refer to the Bibliography at the end of this issue.