We Are One
We Are Many
Reaching Potential Givers

Special Presentation to the

International Leadership Reunion
of the United Jewish Appeal
and Keren Hayesod

Brandeis University
Maurice and Marilyn Cohen
Center for Modern Jewish Studies
Gary A. Tobin, PhD
Director

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Acknowledgments

This report is a collaborative effort. From its inception to its completion this project has benefited from the resources and acumen of the staff at the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies and Brandeis University.

This project began with a conversation with Laurence Rubinstein, Senior Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations at Brandeis, who suggested that the Cohen Center investigate the relationship between support for Israel and other forms of Jewish identity, and Jewish patterns of giving.

Dr. Mordechai Rimor, who directs the Center's project on Jewish Information Analysis, supervised the collection of data from various sources. Gabriel Berger, a graduate fellow at the Center, was responsible for obtaining comparable data and preparing graphs for analysis and presentation. Sylvia Biese, the Center's executive secretary, typed all drafts of the report.

Drafts of the report were edited and revisions were made by Dr. Sylvia Fishman, a research associate at the Center, and Lawrence Sternberg, the Center's associate director, who also designed the format and produced the camera-ready copy for the report at the University's Feldberg Computer Center.

Executive Summary

The single most important factor to consider in new approaches to American Jewish philanthropy is that the Jewish "community" is not a single community. It is a collection of communities, the sum of many subgroups, differentiated by generation, age, religious identity and behavior, and socioeconomic class. Therefore, as we approach the 21st century, fundraising in the Jewish community requires multiple appeals, methods of outreach, and more targeted solicitations.

Israel has widespread support—but not for the same reasons for every group. Israel's appeal means different things to diverse groups of Jews. Individual support will not translate into giving unless multiple messages about Israel are packaged, focused, and promoted for different constituencies.

Jews have responded generously in times of crisis such as Operation Moses or the Yom Kippur War. At these times need is apparent and clearly understood. But messages about need and purpose must be made more explicit and specific at other times.

Not only is the Jewish community divided into different groups, but the lives of individual American Jews are divided as well. For the great majority of American Jews today, Jewishness does not control or even color their daily lives, but is relegated instead to infrequent occasions and major life events such as marriage, Bar/Bat Mitzvah or the birth of a child. Both ritual observances and synagogue affiliation, for example, increase when households include school age children and decrease when children leave the home. If we are to effectively reach American Jews today, we must respond not only to divisions between subgroups of Jews but also
to the peculiarly segmented nature of American Jewish life. We must touch individuals when and where their Jewishness expresses itself.

Data Highlights
- More than 33% of the households in most Jewish communities have visited Israel.
- In most communities, at least 70% of all adults do not volunteer any time for any Jewish organization.
- In many communities, at least half of the households have no current affiliation with any Jewish organization.
- A large majority of Jews continue to follow some Jewish rituals, including observance of Passover, Chanukah, and the High Holy Days.
- In most communities, about two-thirds of the Jewish households make a contribution to some Jewish philanthropy.
- Over 70% of all Jewish households in most communities make a contribution to non-Jewish philanthropies.
- The proportion of households making a contribution to the Federation ranges widely by community, from 25% in San Francisco to 61% in Atlantic City.
- Twelve percent of the households in Atlantic City contribute $500 per year or more to all Jewish philanthropies, compared to 24% in Rochester. Most other cities fall in between. This total excludes synagogue and other membership dues.
- In most communities, less than 10% of the households make a contribution of $500 or more to a Federation.
- The vast majority of Jews contribute either nothing at all or less than $100 total annually to all Jewish philanthropies combined.

Reaching Potential Givers

Major Findings
- The vast majority of Jews believe that financial and political support for Israel is important.
- Jews are potentially motivated to contribute based on a wide variety of both domestic and international programs.
- Missions to Israel are highly correlated with greatly increased giving levels.
- Most Jews say that peer group influence is not important in their decision to give, but their evaluation of their ability to give is very important.
- Most Jews do not know enough about the Federation, and other agencies in their community to evaluate their programs and purposes.

Major Policy Implications
- Missions programs to Israel need to be widely expanded. Different groups of Jews, "submarkets," need to be carefully targeted, with specialized recruitment mechanisms and itineraries.
- Leadership development programs must be extensively broadened. Diverse peer groups need to be incorporated into the Federation and UJA leadership circles.
- Better donor feedback mechanisms need to be developed. Current and potential donors do not know enough about institutional programs and purposes.
- More attention must be given to long range campaign planning, research and development.
- New volunteer roles and tasks must be created to involve higher proportions of Jews in philanthropic activity.
Introduction

Jewish fundraising institutions are faced with growing and more complex challenges. The character of Jewish life is changing rapidly. Neighborhood and friendship patterns, organizational affiliation rates, and religious identity are all undergoing dramatic shifts. Both the continuity of Jewish life in the United States and support for Israel are dependent upon an ability to raise funds in this changing environment. New fundraising techniques are required, and successful fundraising techniques of the past must be expanded.

This pamphlet presents some of the emerging trends in philanthropic and volunteeristic behavior of American Jews. This presentation is based on research and analysis currently being conducted at the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies at Brandeis University. The data from this research serve as a compelling and accurate basis for reexamining current fundraising strategies and techniques. These data provide a common knowledge base and point to areas that demand attention, change, and investment of fundraising dollars and hours. New information helps guide both short and long range campaign planning and leadership development.

Since its founding in 1980 the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies has collected all available data regarding demographic trends, religious character, service delivery usage patterns, and philanthropic behavior of Jewish populations throughout the United States. Research has been conducted in communities ranging in size from 10 thousand to 1.75 million Jews. Studies have been done in sunbelt communities in Florida, Texas and California as well as in communities throughout the Midwest and Northeast. Collectively, this research provides a thorough profile of American Jews. Most studies were sponsored by local federations, but several national studies initiated by the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies have also been completed.

This report uses data from a variety of studies. However, due to limitations of space, and inconsistencies in questionnaires utilized by different sponsoring agencies, it is impossible to report findings from each community regarding every topic which will be discussed. We therefore have chosen to use data in an illustrative rather than exhaustive fashion. Communities cited represent the range of data currently available for the topics discussed.

A Profile of American Jewry

Support for Israel

American Jews care about Israel. It has been frequently noted that the single most unifying factor in American Jewish life today is pro-Israel feeling.

Yet the nature of support for Israel may vary dramatically. As a general pattern, support for Israel remains prevalent in Jewish communities throughout the United States. However, while the overall level of support appears high, the intensity of the support and the nature of the commitment that support engenders varies from community to community and from one age group to another.

Younger respondents are somewhat more likely to view financial support for Israel as an option rather than an imperative. For example, 27% of the respondents in MetroWest, New Jersey, said that financial support for Israel was extremely important, while 44% said that financial support was
moderately important. However, nearly one out of every five Jews in MetroWest between the ages of 35 and 44 oppose what is happening in Israel or believe that money could be better spent elsewhere. One-quarter of Jews ages 35 to 44 in Worcester indicated that support for Israel was "not at all important" in their decision to give money to Jewish philanthropies, compared to only 5% of Jews ages 55 to 64.

Similarly, 41% of the Jews in the San Francisco Bay area said that financial support for the Israeli people is very important, another 41% said that it was somewhat important, while only 14% said that it was not important. Yet San Francisco Jews ages 35-44 are the least likely to say that financial support for Israel is very important, with 1 out of 5 saying it is not important.

The affinity for Israel and the central importance of Israel for American Jews is striking. Translating this support into philanthropic activity, however, is quite another matter. For example, in Washington, D.C. when respondents were asked how important support for the State of Israel was to them as Jews, 73% responded "very important." Of this group, however, 48% did not contribute to the United Jewish Appeal Federation campaign.

Substantial proportions of American Jews have visited Israel (see Figure 1). In most communities, at least a third of the households have someone in them who has visited Israel at least one time. In some communities, more than 4 out of every 10 households have someone in them who has visited Israel at least once. When the number of those who indicate they plan to visit Israel in the future are added to those who have already visited, the proportion reaches 60% in most cities in the United States. These figures reflect a noteworthy
increase from the percentage of Jews who had visited Israel by 1971, when the National Jewish Population Study (NJPS) reported that only 16% of Jewish households had individuals who had visited Israel.

Jews who have visited Israel are more likely to make some contribution to Jewish philanthropies than those who have not visited Israel. Some studies show that participation in sponsored missions encourages large givers—persons giving $1000 per year or more—to give even larger gifts.

Patterns of Affiliation

Jews move in and out of both Jewish organizations and synagogues at a rapid pace. They are really organizational consumers, not lifelong participants or loyal members. Consequently, most Jews usually join to utilize specific services and do not volunteer their time for organizations (see Figures 2 and 3). They are very unlikely to develop institutional/organizational loyalties and often do not build friendship and communal networks through the organizations that they use. Jewish fundraising efforts must recognize the temporary nature of Jewish affiliation and not rely upon institutional loyalties as a major motivation for giving for most of the Jewish population.

Overall, synagogue membership seems to have increased since 1971 (see Figure 4). Generally, more individuals affiliate with a synagogue at some point in their adult lives, yet the picture is not consistent from community to community. Affiliation is affected both by community size—Jews in small communities are more likely to affiliate, and by location—those in Western communities are least likely to affiliate. Another important factor mitigating against synagogue affiliation seems to be

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 2</th>
<th>Volunteer No Time</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage of respondents reporting they volunteer no time for Jewish organizations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boston</td>
<td>80%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Atlantic City</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltimore</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington, D.C.</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worcester, MA</td>
<td>70%</td>
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<tr>
<td>MetroWest</td>
<td>69%</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 3</th>
<th>Organizational Membership</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage of households with an individual who belongs to a Jewish organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miami</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas City</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltimore</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlantic City</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>MetroWest</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denver</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the newness of a Jewish community—Jews in more established communities are more likely to affiliate than those in the most recently settled areas.

Therefore, cities with larger Jewish populations such as Chicago (44%) and Boston (41%), have lower levels of affiliation, while higher levels of affiliation are prevalent in cities with smaller Jewish populations such as Nashville (78%), Kansas City (66%), and Worcester (67%). Midwestern communities such as St. Louis (66%), Cleveland (61%), and Milwaukee (56%), have higher affiliation rates than in Western communities such as Phoenix (33%), or Los Angeles (26%).

Current synagogue affiliation rates alone do not indicate which households have affiliated at some time in the past or will affiliate in the future. In those demographic studies which asked not only “Do you belong?” but “Have you belonged?” and “Will you belong?” the proportion answering “yes” generally reaches above 80%. Thus, the vast majority of Jews will at some point in their adult lives be members of synagogues. Synagogues may be serving educational, service, and other needs, not necessarily primarily religious ones. Whatever the motivation for joining, however, households currently affiliated with synagogues are far more likely to make a contribution to Jewish philanthropies than the non-affiliated. Strengthening synagogue life, as well as other community building endeavors, will likely have long-term positive effects on communal fundraising efforts.
Religious Identity and Observance

The overwhelming majority of Jews continue to identify themselves and behave as Jews. Most Jews attend synagogue at some time during the year, send their children to schools to obtain a formal Jewish education, observe some Jewish rituals, and are supportive of the State of Israel. However, for most contemporary Jews, Judaism is part of their lives as Americans, but typically it does not affect their everyday lives. Judaism is a component of their lives, not a framework.

Most American Jews continue to observe certain religious rituals, but relatively few observe rituals which demand regular practice. For example, between 75% and 85% of all Jewish households in most communities say that they attend a Passover Seder, but kashrut and Shabbat observance have shown a decline (see Figure 5).

Regardless of the age group, region, or the city size, the vast majority of adult Jews still attend services at least once a year (see Figure 6). They are still defining themselves religiously as Jews. Furthermore, the number of those who report that they never attend now is sharply reduced if it excludes those households that have attended before but stop for health reasons, for example, or will attend in the future, after family formation.

Fundraising techniques must be devised to tap this American form of Jewish identity, to promote and build it at the same time. Failure to build upon the base of marginal Jewish identity will exacerbate the tendency among an ever increasing proportion of the Jewish population to limit their involvement in Jewish philanthropy to making small, marginal gifts.
Internmarriage

Rates of internmarriage vary from community to community and generally are highest in the West. In Kansas City, Denver, Phoenix and San Francisco, for instance, a majority of Jews under 35 who have married since 1980 have spouses who were not born Jewish. Conversion rates are dropping. Over the next ten years, intermarried couples will constitute an ever increasing subpopulation in Jewish communities. These households are significantly less likely than in-married households to make contributions to Jewish philanthropies.

Mobility

High mobility characterizes the Jewish population in the United States, just as it characterizes the general population. The single greatest population movement in the past twenty years has been the migration of Jews from New York and elsewhere in the Northeast and Midwest to Southern Florida. The Southern Florida Jewish population has grown by hundreds of thousands. There has also been rapid growth of sunbelt communities, such as Phoenix, Atlanta, and San Diego. These newer communities constitute radically different fundraising environments and require new institutional approaches.

Today less than half of the Jewish population in many cities was born in the place in which it currently resides. In most metropolitan areas between 5% and 10% of the population are planning to move. Some communities, particularly larger cities in the sunbelt, may find 15% to 20% of their households moving in and out of the metropolitan area at any given time.

Recent migrants have not established long-term connectedness and commitments to Jewish organizations and institutions, and are more difficult to locate and involve in Jewish communal life. Therefore, affiliation rates are particularly low in sunbelt growth communities, which also have high rates of relatively recent arrivals.

Neighborhood Patterns

A fundamental change in the character of Jewish neighborhoods has occurred. If a neighborhood is 40%, 20%, or even 10% Jewish, that now constitutes a Jewish neighborhood. Furthermore, many Jews live totally outside areas of dense Jewish concentration. Thus, the data show that even where there are relatively high concentrations of Jews in an area, predominantly Jewish areas are rare in almost all United States cities. This trend is most pronounced in places like Phoenix, San Francisco, Kansas City, and other cities in the Western and Southwestern states. Of course, some ethnically identifiable Jewish neighborhoods still thrive, but for the most part, even in places like Baltimore, Cleveland, St. Louis and Pittsburgh, most Jewish neighborhoods are simply where many Jews live, and not necessarily predominantly Jewish. This mobility and dispersion makes Jews much harder to find and involve, both for contributions and volunteer commitments.

Household Composition

Married adults with children in the household now constitute a distinct minority of households in every Jewish community in the United States for which we have data. This traditional family configuration, usually considered to be the type of Jewish household most likely to affiliate, participate in organized Jewish life, and contribute to Jewish philanthropies, was the core around which most communal life was organized.
We Are One, We are Many

In the 1950s and 1960s the traditional family accounted for between 60-75% of the households in Jewish communities. By the 1980s the traditional family unit accounts for between 25-35% of the population.

Due to delays in marriage and family formation most Jews enter the organizational and institutional networks much later than did their parents a generation ago. Therefore, the time span available to develop philanthropic attachment to these institutions is usually delayed and often reduced.

Occupational Profile

There are many myths about increased professionalism among Jews. Current data indicate that fears that all young Jews would become professionals—and thus not be able to contribute to Jewish philanthropies at the same rate as their businessman predecessors—are largely groundless. In 1971, the National Jewish Population Study showed that 62% of Jewish adults were employed in occupations that were professional or managerial, a very high proportion compared to the general population. But recent data indicate that the proportion of Jewish professionals has not continued to rise in most cities. In some cities the proportion of those in professional and managerial positions is slightly higher than it was in 1971, but in others it is slightly lower.

The occupational profile of Jews is quite diverse. The percentage of Jews involved in sales and entrepreneurial positions in some cities has actually increased since 1971. Furthermore, today's Jewish professionals, such as physicians and lawyers, often invest their money much as businessmen do.

Reaching Potential Givers

Jews and Giving

Contributions to Jewish Philanthropies

In most Jewish communities, 60% or more of Jewish households make a contribution to some Jewish philanthropy (see Figure 7). While only 60% of the households in the San Francisco area make a contribution, the figure climbs to 73% of those in Rochester, New York, and over 80% of those in Atlantic City. Yet the gift levels are relatively low. Only 24% of those in Rochester, for example, contribute $500 per year or more total to Jewish philanthropies. This figure excludes synagogue membership and other dues (see Figure 8). The figure drops to 16% for MetroWest and Washington, D.C., 14% in Baltimore, and 12% in Atlantic City. Thus, a large majority of Jews either give nothing at all or if they do give it is less than $500 per year total to all Jewish philanthropies.

As a percentage of income, these giving levels represent less than 1/2 of 1% of income, and do not include assets. In general, contributions to Jewish philanthropies are woefully inadequate if set against any reasonable standard of 5%, 10%, or 20% of income or some more modest proportion of assets.

Most Jews are failing to meet their obligations of tzedakah. Generally, a slight majority or less make any contribution whatsoever to the Jewish federation, and most of these gifts are quite small. Overall, more than 9 out of every 10 households contribute less than $500 per year to the Jewish federation. Most communities find no more than 3% to 8% of all households contributing more than $500 per year to the federation. While contributions by most households to Jewish philanthropies in general are very small, they are even more meager to the centralized campaigns of Jewish federations.
Jewish and non-Jewish Philanthropic Activity

It should not be assumed that contributions are low to Jewish philanthropies in general and federations specifically, because philanthropic dollars are being allocated to non-Jewish philanthropies. The data indicate that, generally, more than 70% of all Jewish households make some kind of contribution to a non-Jewish philanthropy (see Figure 7). The range is from 71% in MetroWest to 77% in Baltimore. In other words, Jews are slightly more likely to make some kind of contribution to a non-Jewish philanthropy than to a Jewish philanthropy.

However, a smaller proportion is contributing more than $500 per year to non-Jewish philanthropies than to Jewish philanthropies (see Figure 8). Generally, 10% or less contribute $500 per year or more to non-Jewish philanthropies. The exception is Rochester, where 1 out of every 5 households makes a contribution of $500 per year or more to non-Jewish philanthropies.

In general, though, households that give $500 per year or more to non-Jewish philanthropies are also the ones who contribute $400 per year or more to Jewish philanthropies. The vast majority of Jewish households are contributing either nothing or small amounts to both Jewish and non-Jewish philanthropies. While Jewish philanthropies in general are collecting large totals, the data indicate that even among the wealthy, and even among those who contribute, the capability to give is much larger. In short, most Jews give nothing or very little, and of those who do give many are capable of giving much more.
Reaching Potential Givers

Decisions to Give

The data from Worcester and San Francisco indicate that the decision to give is largely influenced by the individual's assessment of his/her ability to give. Therefore, it can only be concluded that the vast majority of Jews have no standards or benchmarks—or perhaps they choose to ignore them—about what reasonable philanthropic behavior should involve. It is likely that many Jews with incomes of $100,000 per year or more, for example, do not understand that a total of a $500 gift to Jewish philanthropies is far below their ability. Many Jews have failed to learn the proper standards of Jewish giving.

Peer Giving

It is well known that face-to-face solicitations are the most effective means of producing larger gifts. Yet in most communities the large majority of Jews report that peer influence is not at all important in their decision to give. These findings were reported in Rochester, Worcester and San Francisco, for example. Even among the top leadership of the Women's Division of the Council of Jewish Federations, while 58% said that peer influence was important in their decision to contribute, nearly 4 out of 10 disagreed (see Figure 9).

This may be due to several factors. First, proper standards may not be stated or put forth in ways that effectively influence giving. Second, most Jews are outside of peer groups that positively affect their philanthropic lives. In other words, many Jews are unresponsive to peer influence because they have no peers who are either giving, giving adequately, or soliciting them properly. Most Jews are outside of those peer group circles that produce higher giving, while many within
giving circles are not being properly approached or solicited by those who could effectively influence them.

Figure 9
Peer Influence
Percentage of respondents reporting peer influence as "important" or "very important" in decision to contribute to philanthropy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women's Division, CFF</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rochester</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worcester</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco</td>
<td>18%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Gaining Jewish Support

A wide variety of motivating factors could possibly elicit the support of most Jews. While many do not give or give very little, it is not because they are opposed to the purposes and programs for which the monies will be used. Indeed, in every city from which data are available, widespread support exists for programs for Israel, Jewish education, programs to help the elderly, programs to combat antisemitism, and a wide range of other programs. The failure of the campaigns to expand more effectively rests on an inability to reach potential donors, make the case effectively, provide proper feedback, and clearly state the messages.

Most Jews are inclined to give to support a wide variety of programs within the Jewish community, but their lack of knowledge, involvement, and contact with Jewish fundraising institutions are primary deterrents to campaigns reaching their potential. In one community after another, the respondents do not know enough about the services, the agencies, and programs offered in the Jewish community to evaluate them. Even among those who contribute $1000 per year or more, many philanthropists know little about the service delivery systems and the institutions that provided those services within their own Jewish communities. More feedback to donors about the relationship of the federation to agencies is essential, as is more information on how monies are spent in Israel. Clearly, what federations do with the funds that are raised is simply unknown to the vast majority of potential givers, both those who give nothing at all and those who give, but could give more.
Conclusion

The changing profile of the Jewish community and associated changes in patterns of philanthropy and volunteerism require careful research and analysis. The need for continued examination has become critical. Research can help us understand why Jews choose to give and how they can be motivated to give more. Only better information can help guide both planning and action. Using research as guideposts, the greater potential of American Jewish philanthropy will be achieved.