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Box 66

Folder 10

Kaplan, David. "Mandel Foundation Indicators Report: Jewish Identity and its Relation to Intermarriage." Drafts and comments, 1999.

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MANDEL FOUNDATION INDICATORS REPORT

JEWISH IDENTITY AND IT'S RELATIONSHIP TO

INTERMARRIAGE

Prepared by

David Kaplan

School of Education

University of Delaware

Under contract to the Mandel Foundation

INTRODUCTION

The Mandel Foundation is committed to revitalizing Jewish life in North America through Jewish education. The Mandel Foundation Indicators Project is charged with state monitoring the quality of Jewish education and its outcomes. tonurture How strong is the An important outcome of Jewish education is Jewish identity. This report represents an Jewish identity of Aminican Jour? Has the strength of identity changed effort to document changes in Jewish identity. In addition, this report attempts to provide an over time? Is there a empirical link between changes in Jewish identity and the rate of intermarriage. Answer my these questions is essential for understanding Awai. can Jewish life now and in the fiture R This report utilizes data from the General Social Survey (GSS) a nearly annual a national give that has can household havey conducted by the National Opinion Research Center. The General Social almost every years are 1972 Survey is described in more detail at the end of this report. To monitor Jewish ident). This report is organized as follows. First, we will consider how Jewish identity haschanged over time. This will be followed by an analysis of the rate of intermarriage over-time. Finally, an empirical association between Jewish identity and the rate of intermarriage will be presented. The details of the survey and the specifies of the sample are placed at the end of the Sand its relation to intermaniage, we rely on greations that asked respondents about their correct report. religion, their sporse's religion, and the religion in which they were raigd. Jewish regordents were a sted, "World you call yourself a strong Jew, not very strong Jew, or some what strong Jen?" Although this indicator is rather crude, it is a good first step towards monitoring changes in Jenish identity the second

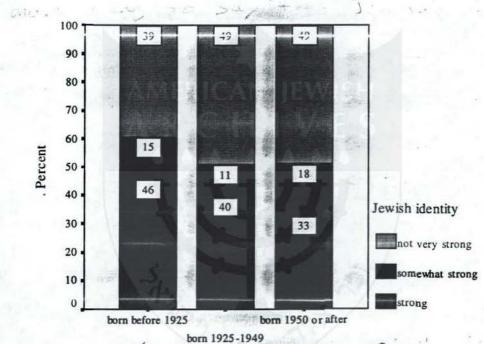
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HAS THE STRENGTH OF JEWISH IDENTITY CHANGED OVER TIME?

Yes! Figure 1 shows a very clear downward trend in "strong" Jewish identity over the birth cohorts. The biggest drop can be seen between the 1925-1949 birth cohort and the 1950 or later birth cohort. The oldest respondents are most likely to call the the the the the second strong strong second strong strong second strong strong second as Jews, regardless if they currently are Jews.

The apparent stability among those reporting "not very strong" Jewish identity is likely due -to changes in the percentages of those reporting "somewhat strong" Jewish identity:

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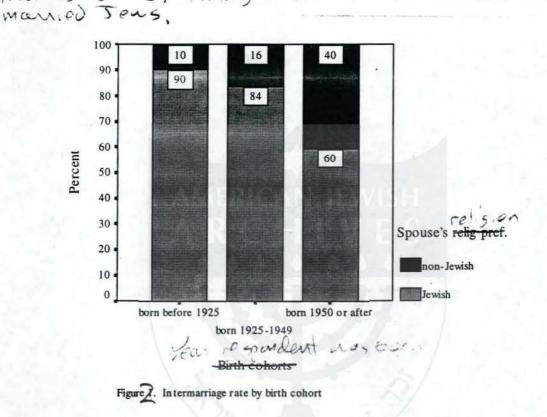
Figure 1

Only 33° percent of Jons Gonn 5 100 1950 call themselves "strong Jens" down from 46 percent of those Gorn Getore 1925.

· Forty-nine percent of those Gorn since 1450 call themselves "not very strong Jens" up from 39 percent of those 360rn before 1923.

HAVE INTERMARRIAGE RATES CHANGED OVER TIME?

- Yes! Consistent with other surveys of Jewish populations, Figure 2 shows a dramatic increase in intermarriage rates over the birth cohorts. in the younger respondents when he is produced in the intermation of the birth cohorts.
- The increase in intermarriage rate is greatest between the 1925-1949 birth cohort and the 1950 or later birth cohorts A many those 60rn from 1925-1949 84 percent War) Jours, A many those 60rn from 1925-1949 84 percent



- Among respondents who claimed to be raised as Jews, the trend among those married to Jews
 is 91%, 85%, and 52%, respectively.
- The 8%-difference among those born in-1950 or later may reflect intermarriage rates among those who, although raised as Jews, are no longer Jews. This suggests a higher intermarriage rate among those who are no longer Jews.
- Figure 2 pertains only to respondents who said they are currently Jenish. Among all those who were raised as Jens (including respondents who are not Jenish any more) rates of manying Jens are all promisor the oldost group, 85 percent for the middle group, and 52 percent for the middle

IS THERE A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JEWISH IDENTITY AND INTERMARRAGE?

- Yes! Figures 3, 4, and 5 show a strong relationship between Jewish identity and intermarriage rate.
 A colder respondents.
- The most noticeable relationship between Jewish identity and intermarriage can be seen for those born after 1950 compared to the earlier birth cohorts. Intermarriage rates are much larger for this group compared to the others. However, the greatest increase in intermarriage occurs among those born in 1950 or later and reporting "not very strong" Jewish identity.

Less than half (47 percent) of those 60/n since 1950 and regort a inst very Frong' Jewish , damity are man to Tens. Born 1925-1949 Born before 1925

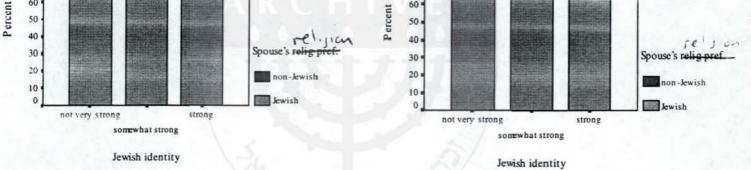


Fig 4. Intermarriage rate by Jewish identity

Percent T-6' Spouse's relig.pref non-lewish lewish not very strong strong somewhat strong

Born 1950 or after

Jewish identity

Fig. 5 Intermarriage rate by Jewish identity

Fig 3. Intermarriage rate by Jewish i dentity

DOES STRENGTH OF JEWISH IDENTITY PREDICT THE LIKELIHOOD OF INTERMARRIAGE?

- Yes! The results indicate that those with "strong" Jewish identity are approximately 3.5 times more likely to have a Jewish spouse compared to those without a very strong Jewish identity. This effect is statistically significant.
- Those with a "somewhat strong" Jewish identity are approximately 2 times more likely to
 have a Jewish spouse compared to those without a very strong Jewish identity. However,
 this effect does not achieve statistical significance.
- The findings also indicate that the addition of year-of-birth does not dramatically change the relationship between Jewish identity and intermarriage.

The other words, holding constant year-of birth; Jewish identity remains a strong predictor of intermarriage rescuess of year-of -6. The

-GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENTATIONS

JEWISH IDENTITY

 The findings of this study show that "strong" Jewish identity is lower among those born after 1950 than among those of previous birth cohorts.

INTERMARRIAGE:

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 There has been a dramatic increase in intermarriage rate particularly among those born in 1950 or later. The rate is somewhat higher among those who were raised as Jews, reflecting the possibility of higher intermarriage rates among those who no longer identify as Jews.

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- The findings of this study demonstrate a strong statistical association between the strength of Jewish identity and intermarriage.
- Those with strong Jewish identity are much more likely to have a Jewish spouse compared to those without a very strong Jewish identity.
- The relationship between Jewish identity and intermarriage does not depend on the year of birth. This implies that legardless of the year-of-birth, Jewish identity remains an important predictor of intermarriage.

CAVEATS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Causal linkages between Jewish identity and intermarriage cannot be established, and the question of how Jewish identity is formed could not be addressed using data from the General Social Survey.
- Information regarding the Jewish educational experiences of Jewish respondents was not available in the GSS and may be the most important omitted factor relating Jewish identity and intermarriage.
- Future research should establish reliable indicators of Jewish educational experiences and examine linkages between educational experiences, formation of Jewish identity, and intermarriage.

> more to Anext page

THE DATA, SAMPLE, AND METHODOOLGY

The General Social Survey

- The General Social Survey (GSS) is an almost annual household survey conducted by the National Opinion Research Center (NORC). The first survey was conducted in 1972 and since then more than 35,000 respondents have responded to over 2500 different questions.
- The goal of the GSS is to provide high quality social indicator data to the social science research community.

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- The GSS can be characterized in terms of its broad coverage of topics, its use of survey instrument replication, its cross-national perspective, and its attention to data quality.
- The GSS covers a remarkably broad range of topics. Of particular interest to this study are topics related to religious identity and intermarriage.
- For the purposes of assessing the stability or change in social indicators, the design of the GSS stresses replication of items and item sequences. Of relevance to this study, the identical replication of items and item sequences means that subgroups within each survey year can be accumulated across survey years into a total sample. For example, although there were approximately 54 Jewish respondents to the 1972 survey, the total number of Jewish respondents across 1972-1996 was approximately 757.
- Finally, the GSS represents the highest quality in survey sampling design, sampling, interviewing, processing, and documentation. Leading social-scientists design the survey items, the items are pre-tested, and full-probability sampling is used. In addition a high response rate is obtained, and the data go thorough rigorous validation and verification.
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 obtained online, or data can be downloaded for input into other statistical software packages.
- The 655 also has some disadvantages for our purposes, these include:

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Demographic Characteristics of Jewish Respondents to the GSS

- In this section, we describe the general demographic characteristics of the Jewish
 respondents to the GSS. Jewish respondents to the GSS were those who responded that they
 were "Jewish" to the question, "What is your current religious preference?" Respondents to
 this question represent approximately 85% of all those who claimed to be raised as Jews.
- We examine the demographic characteristics of age, sex, educational level, and marital status.
- Demographic characteristics were based on the total Jewish respondent sample size of 757.

AGE

- Across all years of the survey, the average age of the Jewish respondents was approximately 48 years of age with a standard deviation of 18 years. The youngest age group was 18 while the oldest was 89.
- Of particular interest in this study is the analysis of Jewish identity and intermarriage rates by birth cohorts. Table 1 presents the breakdown of three birth cohorts by survey year. The birth cohorts are (a) born before 1925, (b) born between 1925 and 1949, and (c) born 1950 or later.

GENDER

Across all survey years, gender breakdown was 56.1% females and 43.9% males.

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

• The average educational level of the Jewish respondents across all survey years was 14.5 years of education with a standard deviation of 3.3 years. The range shows a minimum of zero and a maximum of twenty years of education.

MARITAL STATUS

 Across the survey years, 61.8% of the respondents reported being married, 6.5% of the respondents reported being divorced, 11.5% reported being widowed, 1.6% reported being separated, and 18.6% respondents reported having never married.

Methodology

Analysis of Jewish Identity

- The strength of religious identity was assessed by responses to the question "Would you call yourself a strong Jew, not very strong Jew, or somewhat strong Jew?" Figure 1 shows trends in Jewish identity across birth cohorts.
- Trends in Jewish identity were based on listwise deleted¹ sample size of 616.

Analysis of Intermarriage Rate

- Trends in intermarriage were based on the sub-sample of the Jewish respondents who were either married, divorced, separated, or widowed.
- Intermarriage was assessed by respondent answers to the question "What is your spouse's religious preference?" Responses were categorized as "Jewish" or "Non-Jewish".
- Trends in intermarriage were based on a listwise deleted sample size of 360.

Relationship between Jewish Identity and Intermarriage

- The statistical relationship between Jewish identity and intermarriage was established using logistic regression analysis.
- Logistic regression yields, among other things, the odds of an event occurring. In the case of
 this analysis, the "event" was whether the spouse was Jewish, with Jewish spouse coded '1'
 and non-Jewish spouse coded '0'.
- Jewish identity was recoded to be able to compare those with 'strong' identity against those with 'not very strong identity' and to compare those with 'somewhat strong' identity against those with 'not very strong' identity.
- The relationship between Jewish identity and intermarriage was based on a listwise deleted sample size of 324.

¹ Listwise deletion is a method of handling missing data wherein any respondent with any missing data on the questions of interest are deleted from the sample for the purpose of the specific analysis.

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The Mandel Foundation is committed to revitalizing Jewish life in North America through Jewish education. The Mandel Foundation Indicators Project is charged with monitoring the quality of Jewish education and its outcomes.

An important outcome of Jewish education is Jewish identity. This report represents an effort to document changes in Jewish identity. In addition, this report attempts to provide an relation empirical link between changes in Jewish identity and the rate of intermarriage.

This report utilizes data from the General Social Survey (GSS), a nearly annual household survey conducted by the National Opinion Research Center. The General Social Survey is described in more detail at the end of this report.

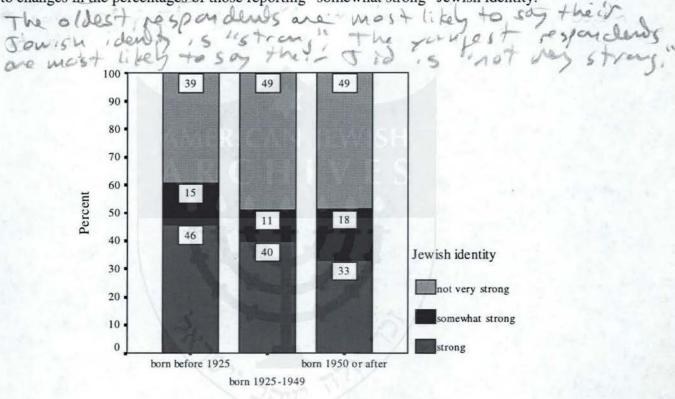
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- Yes! Figure 1 shows a very clear downward trend in "strong" Jewish identity over the birth cohorts. The biggest drop can be seen between the 1925-1949 birth cohort and the 1950 or later birth cohort.
- This trend in Jewish identity is the same among respondents who claim to have been raised as Jews, regardless if they currently are Jews.
- The apparent stability among those reporting "not very strong" Jewish identity is likely due to changes in the percentages of those reporting "somewhat strong" Jewish identity.

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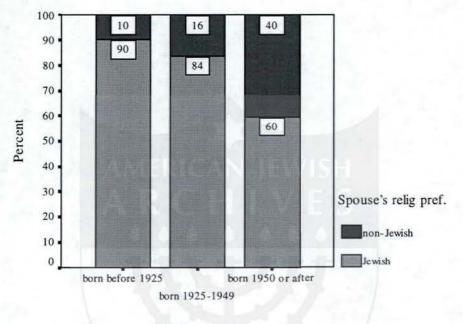


Birth cohorts

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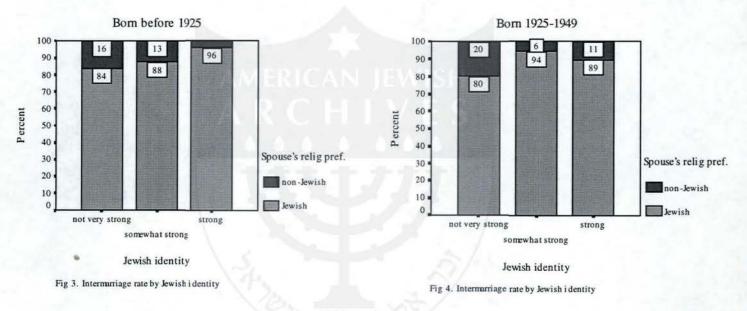
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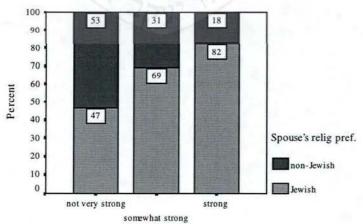
Figure Intermarriage rate by birth cohort

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Fig. 5 Intermarriage rate by Jewish identity

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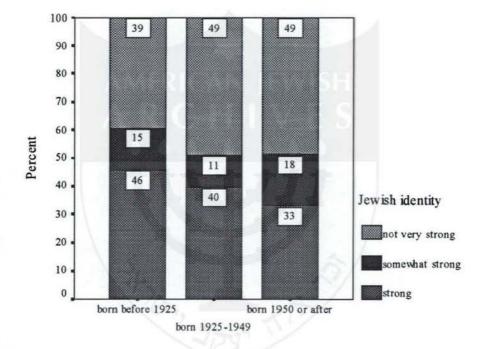
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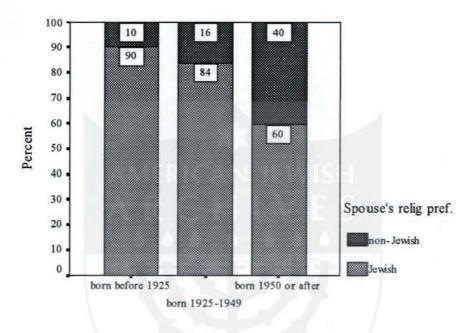
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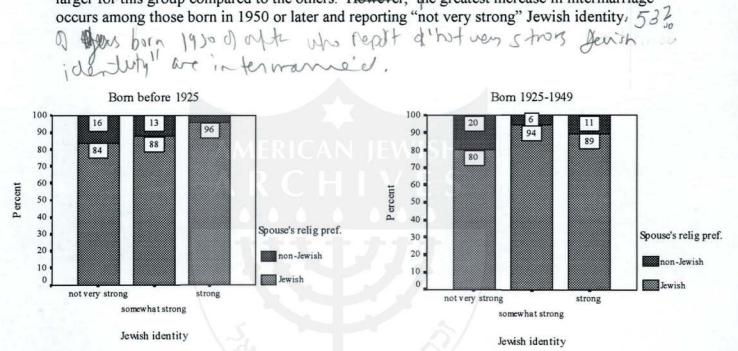


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Born 1950 or after 100 53 31 18 90 80 82 70 69 60 Percent 50 47 I'm wonderin if there is not a way b displan i one groch w colors 40 30 20 10 0 not very strong strong somewhat strong



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- Finally, the GSS represents the highest quality in survey sampling design, sampling, interviewing, processing, and documentation. Leading social-scientists design the survey items, the items are pre-tested, and full-probability sampling is used. In addition a high response rate is obtained, and the data go thorough rigorous validation and verification.
- GSS survey documentation is available on their website. Simple descriptive statistics can be
 obtained online, or data can be downloaded for input into other statistical software packages.

Methodology

Analysis of Jewish Identity

- The strength of religious identity was assessed by responses to the question "Would you call yourself a strong Jew, not very strong Jew, or somewhat strong Jew?" Figure 1 shows trends in Jewish identity across birth cohorts.
- Trends in Jewish identity were based on listwise deleted¹ sample size of 616.

Analysis of Intermarriage Rate

- Trends in intermarriage were based on the sub-sample of the Jewish respondents who were either married, divorced, separated, or widowed.
- Intermarriage was assessed by respondent answers to the question "What is your spouse's religious preference?" Responses were categorized as "Jewish" or "Non-Jewish".
- Trends in intermarriage were based on a listwise deleted sample size of 360.

Relationship between Jewish Identity and Intermarriage

- The statistical relationship between Jewish identity and intermarriage was established using logistic regression analysis.
- Logistic regression yields, among other things, the odds of an event occurring. In the case of
 this analysis, the "event" was whether the spouse was Jewish, with Jewish spouse coded '1'
 and non-Jewish spouse coded '0'.
- Jewish identity was recoded to be able to compare those with 'strong' identity against those with 'not very strong identity' and to compare those with 'somewhat strong' identity against those with 'not very strong' identity.
- The relationship between Jewish identity and intermarriage was based on a listwise deleted sample size of 324.

Carrots

¹ Listwise deletion is a method of handling missing data wherein any respondent with any missing data on the questions of interest are deleted from the sample for the purpose of the specific analysis.

Demographic Characteristics of Jewish Respondents to the GSS

- In this section, we describe the general demographic characteristics of the Jewish respondents to the GSS. Jewish respondents to the GSS were those who responded that they were "Jewish" to the question, "What is your current religious preference?" Respondents to this question represent approximately 85% of all those who claimed to be raised as Jews.
- We examine the demographic characteristics of age, sex, educational level, and marital status.
- Demographic characteristics were based on the total Jewish respondent sample size of 757.

AGE

- Across all years of the survey, the average age of the Jewish respondents was approximately 48 years of age with a standard deviation of 18 years. The youngest age group was 18 while the oldest was 89.
- Of particular interest in this study is the analysis of Jewish identity and intermarriage rates by birth cohorts. Table 1 presents the breakdown of three birth cohorts by survey year. The birth cohorts are (a) born before 1925, (b) born between 1925 and 1949, and (c) born 1950 or later.

GENDER

Across all survey years, gender breakdown was 56.1% females and 43.9% males.

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

 The average educational level of the Jewish respondents across all survey years was 14.5 years of education with a standard deviation of 3.3 years. The range shows a minimum of zero and a maximum of twenty years of education.

MARITAL STATUS

• Across the survey years, 61.8% of the respondents reported being married, 6.5% of the respondents reported being divorced, 11.5% reported being widowed, 1.6% reported being separated, and 18.6% respondents reported having never married.

JEWISH IDENTITY AND IT'S RELATIONSHIP TO

INTERMARRIAGE:

A REPORT BASED ON THE GENERAL SOCIAL SURVEY

Prepared by

David Kaplan

School of Education

University of Delaware

Under contract to the Mandel Foundation

1

Executive Summary

Purpose

• The purpose of this report is to present data on trends in Jewish identity and to examine the relationship between Jewish identity and intermarriage. The data utilized for this study were responses by Jewish participants to the General Social Survey.

Jewish Identity

- The results of this study demonstrate that "strong" Jewish identity has declined.
- Approximately 33% of respondents born after 1950 report strong identity compared to 40% of the participants born before 1925 and 46% born between 1925 and 1949.

Intermarriage

 Of the respondents in the General Social Survey who were married, widowed, divorced, or separated, there was a dramatic increase in the percentage of respondents with non-Jewish spouses among those born in 1950 or later. Prior to this birth cohort, the intermarriage rate was somewhat stable.

Relationship Between Jewish Identity and Intermarriage

- The relationship between strength of identity and rate of intermarriage was examined by computing the odds of a respondent having a Jewish spouse given the strength of one's identity.
- The findings show that individuals reporting strong Jewish identity were 3 ½ times more likely to have a Jewish spouse than those without a very strong Jewish identity. Individuals reporting a "somewhat strong" Jewish identity were approximately twice as likely as those without a strong identity to have a Jewish spouse.
- The results are virtually unchanged when also accounting for year-of-birth

General Conclusions

- The results show that intermarriage rates are increasing and self-reported strong Jewish identity is decreasing. Changes in these trends are most noticeable among those born in 1950 or later compared to earlier birth cohorts.
- Although causal conclusions cannot be drawn, this report suggests a reliable empirical link between levels of Jewish identity and rates of intermarriage.

DATA SOURCE

- The General Social Survey (GSS) is an almost annual household survey conducted by the National Opinion Research Center (NORC). The first survey was conducted in 1972 and since then more than 35,000 respondents have responded to over 2500 different questions.
- The goal of the GSS is to provide high quality social indicator data to the social science research community.
- The GSS can be characterized in terms of its broad coverage of topics, its use of survey instrument replication, its cross-national perspective, and its attention to data quality.
- The GSS covers a remarkably broad range of topics. Of particular interest to this study are topics related to religious identity and intermarriage.
- For the purposes of assessing the stability or change in social indicators, the design of the GSS stresses replication of items and item sequences. Of relevance to this study, the identical replication of items and item sequences means that subgroups within each survey year can be accumulated across survey years into a total sample. For example, although there were approximately 54 Jewish respondents to the 1972 survey, the total number of Jewish respondents across 1972-1996 was approximately 757.

20

- Finally, the GSS represents the highest quality in survey sampling design, sampling, interviewing, processing, and documentation. Leading social-scientists design the survey items, the items are pre-tested, and full-probability sampling is used. In addition a high response rate is obtained, and the data go thorough rigorous validation and verification.
- GSS survey documentation is available on their website. Simple descriptive statistics can be
 obtained online, or data can be downloaded for input into other statistical software packages.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF JEWISH RESPONDENTS

- In this section, we describe the general demographic characteristics of the Jewish respondents to the GSS. Jewish respondents to the GSS were those who responded that they were "Jewish" to the question, "What is your current religious preference?" We examine the demographic characteristics of age, sex, educational level, and marital status.
- Demographic characteristics were based on the total Jewish respondent sample size of 757.

AGE

- Across all years of the survey, the average age of the Jewish respondents was approximately 48 years of age with a standard deviation of 18 years. The youngest age group was 18 while the oldest was 89.
- Of particular interest in this study is the analysis of Jewish identity and intermarriage rates by birth cohorts. Table 1 presents the breakdown of three birth cohorts by survey year. The birth cohorts are (a) born before 1925, (b) born between 1925 and 1949, and (c) born 1950 or later.

GENDER

• Across all survey years, gender breakdown was 56.1% females and 43.9 % males.

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

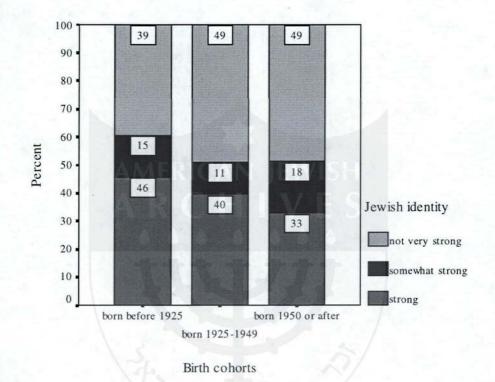
• The average educational level of the Jewish respondents across all survey years was 14.5 years of education with a standard deviation of 3.3 years. The range shows a minimum of zero and a maximum of twenty years of education.

MARITAL STATUS

• Across the survey years, 61.8% of the respondents reported being married, 6.5% of the respondents reported being divorced, 11.5% reported being widowed, 1.6% reported being separated, and 18.6% respondents reported having never married.

TRENDS IN JEWISH IDENTITY

- The strength of religious identity was assessed by responses to the question "Would you call yourself a strong Jew, not very strong Jew, or somewhat strong Jew?" Figure 1 shows trends in Jewish identity across birth cohorts.
- Trends in Jewish identity were based on listwise deleted sample size of 616.

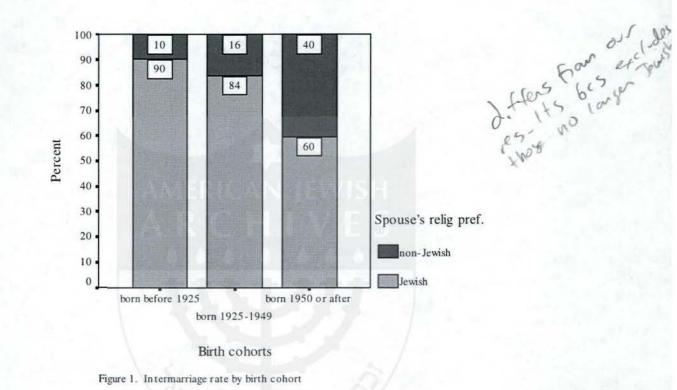


- Figure 1 shows a general decline in "strong" Jewish identity over the birth cohorts.
- The apparent stability among those reporting "not very strong" Jewish identity is likely due to changes in the percentages of those reporting "somewhat strong" Jewish identity.

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TRENDS IN INTERMARRIAGE

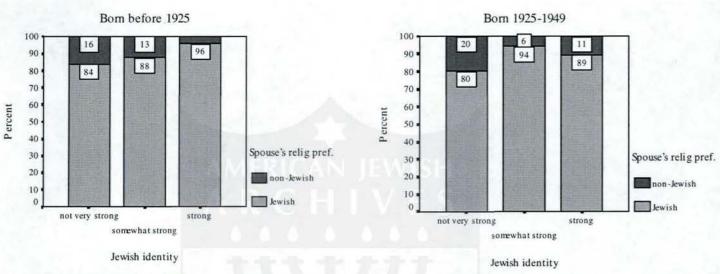
- To study trends in intermarriage, the focus of attention was on Jewish respondents who were either married, divorced, separated, or widowed. Intermarriage was assessed by respondent answers to the question "What is your spouse's religious preference". Responses were then categorized as "Jewish" or "Non-Jewish". Figure 2 shows the trends in intermarriage over the birth cohorts.
- Trends in intermarriage were based on a listwise deleted sample size of 360.



• The results show a clear increase in intermarriage over the birth cohorts. The increase in intermarriage rate is greatest between the 1925-1949 birth cohort and the 1950 or later birth cohort.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JEWISH IDENTITY AND INTERMARRAGE

- This section presents data that relate the strength of Jewish identity to rates of intermarriage
 and examines the extent to which this relationship depends on birth cohort.
- Figures 3, 4, and 5 present the relationship between intermarriage rate and strength of Jewish identity by each of the birth cohorts.





Percent

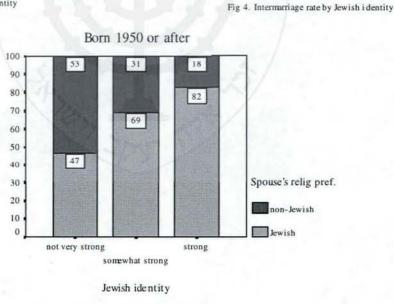


Fig. 5 Intermarriage rate by Jewish identity

- The most noticeable increase in intermarriage rates are among those born in 1950 or later and reporting "not very strong" Jewish identity.
- It also appears that there is a substantial increase in intermarriage among those born in 1950 or later reporting a "somewhat strong" Jewish identity.

• It was of interest to establish whether the strength of Jewish identity was linked to intermarriage. To examine the claim that strength of Jewish identity is predictive of intermarriage, logistic regression analysis was used. Among other pieces of information, logistic regression provides data on the odds of an event occurring. In the case of this analysis, the "event" was whether the spouse was Jewish, with Jewish spouse coded '1' and non-Jewish spouse coded '0'. Jewish identity was recoded to be able to compare those with 'strong' identity against those with 'not very strong identity' and to compare those with 'somewhat strong' identity against those with 'not very strong' identity. Table 1 presents the results of the logistic regression.

Beta	S.E.	Chi-square	df	Sig	Odds Ratio
1.2404	.3567	12.0941	1	.0005	3.4571
.6639	.4517	2.1607	1	.1416	1.9423
1.0538	.1884	31.2880	1	.0000	
	1.2404 .6639	1.2404 .3567 .6639 .4517	1.2404 .3567 12.0941 .6639 .4517 2.1607	1.2404 .3567 12.0941 1 .6639 .4517 2.1607 1	1.2404 .3567 12.0941 1 .0005 .6639 .4517 2.1607 1 .1416

Table 1. Logistic regression of spouses religions preference on Jewish identity¹

 The results indicate that those with strong Jewish identity are approximately 3.5 times more likely to have a Jewish spouse compared to those without a very strong Jewish identity. This effect is statistically significant. In addition, those with a somewhat strong Jewish identity are approximately 2 times more likely to have a Jewish spouse compared to those without a very strong Jewish identity. However, this result does not achieve statistical significance. Table 2 presents the results of the same logistic regression with the addition of year-of-birth.

Table 2. Logistic regression of spouses religious preference on strength of Jewish identity and year of birth.

Variable	Beta	S.E.	Chi-Square	df	Sig	Odds Ratio
Strong v. Not strong	1.1284	.3650	9.5594	1	.0020	3.0906
Somewhat strong v. Not strong	.7326	.4654	2.4781	1	.1154	2.0804
Year of Birth	0403	.0108	14.0525	1	.0002	.9605
Constant	2.5687	.4766	29.0435	1	.0000	

- The results indicate that the addition of year-of-birth does not dramatically change the relationship between Jewish identity and intermarriage.
- In other words, holding constant year-of-birth, Jewish identity remains a strong predictor of intermarriage.

¹ Beta is the logistic regression coefficient, S.E. is standard error, Chi-square is the test of significance for the logistic regression coefficient.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENATIONS

JEWISH IDENTITY

• The results of this analysis show that "strong" Jewish identity is lower among those born after 1950 than among those of previous birth cohorts.

INTERMARRIAGE:

 There has been a dramatic increase in intermarriage rate particularly among those born in 1950 or later.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JEWISH IDENTITY AND INTERMARRIAGE

- The results of this study demonstrate a strong statistical association between the strength of Jewish identity and intermarriage.
- Those with strong Jewish identity are much more likely to have a Jewish spouse compared to those without a very strong Jewish identity.
- The relationship between Jewish identity and intermarriage does not depend on the year of birth. This implies that regardless of the year-of-birth, Jewish identity remains an important predictor of intermarriage.

CAVEATS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Causal linkages between Jewish identity and intermarriage cannot be established, and the question of how Jewish identity is formed could not be addressed using data from the General Social Survey.
- Information regarding the Jewish educational experiences of Jewish respondents was not available in the GSS and may be the most important omitted factor relating Jewish identity and intermarriage.
- Future research should establish reliable indicators of Jewish educational experiences and examine linkages between educational experiences, formation of Jewish identity, and intermarriage.

Hi all. I hate to bombard you with email. But here's the latest off the press. Using the sample selection in the first report (Robinson/Gamoran), the results of the logistic regression are virtually unchanged. Odds are a little lower overall but not much.

As per Gail's question of the contribution of education, I looked at a couple of things. First, the average level of education for the pre-1925 cohort is 12.7 years of education. For the other two cohorts it's about 15.5 years. Next, I added education to the logistic regression of identity. It seems that adding education does not change the odds as reported. Education does make a significant contribution - such that for every 4 years of education (an arbitrary number), the odds of marrying a Jew increases about 1 1/2 times. Next, I added the interaction of the strong v. not strong category by education. This tells me if education moderates the difference between those with strong v. not strong identities in terms of the odds of marrying a Jew. Shoom d'var. :-)

David

David,

The quality of your work is absolutely outstanding. If only we could raise research in Jewish education to this level! It's a real pleasure to work with you.

I have two substantive comments, one stylistic issue, and a couple of minor editorial points:

SUBSTANTIVE COMMENTS

1. The first substantive issue concerns a strategic decision you made, which is different from the decision I made in the earlier version of this work. I don't know which decision is better, but I'd like to open it up for discussion.

In your analysis, I believe you have excluded those who were RAISED JEWISH, but whose current religion is not Jewish. In Figure 1, for example, I would include all persons who were raised as Jews, and categorize them by four categories as adults, instead of the three you have listed: (1) no longer Jewish; (2) not very strong Jews; (3) somewhat strong Jews; (4) strong Jews. I prefer this approach because it addresses the issue of Jewish continuity across the generations, which I believe is the major substantive concern.

Your decision to exclude the no-longer-Jewish has important implications for Figure 2. Whereas we found an intermarriage rate for those born in 1950 or later of 52%, the rate you report is 40%. I believe the main reason for the difference is that we took RAISED JEWISH as the denominator, but you are using CURRENT JEWS. There is a big difference, obviously. Again, if we want to understand changes in the Jewish population over time, I think we need to take those who were raised as Jews as the baseline.

Note that intermarriage may be a cause as well as a consequence of leaving Judaism – we can't tell the difference with these data (as you point out for strength of identity). In my view that's another reason for including all those who were raised as Jews in analyses like that in Figure 2. If we exclude those who were raised as Jews but who do not report "Jewish" as their current religion, we are missing some of the intermarriage that is occurring. In my approach, we would be counting persons who left Judaism and then later married non-Jews as intermarried, but from the standpoint of intergenerational change I think that is appropriate.

2. Your report does not take advantage of the fact that the surveys were carried out over a 20 year period. It is written as if the data came from a single cross-section, when in fact they come from repeated cross-sections. I understand the reason for your approach – there are too few cases to separate cohort and period effects. That is, you can show changes over time, and changes over cohorts, but you can't separate the time effects from the cohort effects because there are too few cases. The question is, which do we want to present? In the previous version of the report, we emphasized the period effects, but presented the cohort effects as a backup. You have jettisoned the period effects in favor

of the cohort differences. Why did you make this decision? I agree that simpler is better, so maybe this is for the best, but I'd like to talk it over.

STYLISTIC COMMENT

3. I find the report extremely accessible. It is direct and crystal-clear. It is simple without oversimplifying. It is written for an educated audience. The question is, will non-researchers find it accessible? We will need to get some advice on this matter.

I imagine the logistic regressions will need to be omitted (unless we decide the report is aimed at a researcher audience), but the odds ratios could still be reported without going into the details of the logistic regression. For example, you could just report that those who say they are not very strong Jews are three times more likely to be intermarried, and those whosay they are somewhat strong are twice as likely, compared to those who describe themselves as strong Jews. That is a powerful finding.

My view is that after addressing the substantive issues, we should turn the report over to our editor, Nessa Rapoport, and ask for her help in designing it for a general audience.

MINOR EDITORIAL NOTES

4. Remove the apostrophe from "it's" on the cover.

5. When referring to the association between two variables, an editor once told me to use "relation" rather than "relationship." I thought that was good advice and have followed it ever since. It is simpler without loss of meaning.

6. On p.3, it is awkward to speak of "approximately" 54 and 757 cases. Those seem like exact numbers to me.

8. On p.8, captions for tables 1 and 2 need apostrophes in "spouse's". Also, typo in spelling of "religious" in caption for table 1.

7. At the bottom of p.8, I would avoid the term "predictor," since we can't really say that strength of identity is temporally prior to intermarriage. I would change "remains a strong predictor of" to "remains strongly associated with".

8. P. 9, general heading, typo in spelling of "recommendations"

MANDEL FOUNDATION INDICATORS REPORT

JEWISH IDENTITY AND ITS RELATION TO

INTERMARRIAGE

Prepared by

Adam Gamoran

University of Wisconsin

Ellen Goldring

Vanderbilt University

David Kaplan

University of Delaware

Under contract to the Mandel Foundation

INTRODUCTION

An important goal of Jewish education is to nurture Jewish identity. How strong is the Jewish identity of American Jews? Has the strength of Jewish identity changed over time? Is there a link between changes in Jewish identity and the rate of intermarriage? Answering these questions is essential for understanding American Jewish life now and in the future.

This report uses data from a national survey that has been conducted almost every year since 1972. The survey is described in more detail at the end of this report.

To monitor Jewish identity and its relation to intermarriage, we rely on questions that asked respondents about their current religion, their spouse's religion, and the religion in which they were raised. Jewish respondents were asked, "Would you call yourself, a strong Jew, not very strong Jew, or somewhat strong Jew?" Although this indicator is rather crude, it is a good first step towards monitoring changes in Jewish identity.

The Mandel Foundation is committed to revitalizing Jewish life in North America through Jewish education. The Mandel Foundation Indicators Project is charged with monitoring the quality of Jewish education and its outcomes.

HAS THE STRENGTH OF JEWISH IDENTITY CHANGED OVER TIME?

- Yes! Figure 1 shows a clear downward trend in "strong" Jewish identity over time. The oldest respondents are most likely to call themselves "strong Jews" while the youngest respondents are most likely to call themselves "not very strong Jews".
- Only 33 percent of Jews born since 1950 call themselves "strong Jews", down from 46 percent of those born before 1925.
- Forty-nine percent of those born since 1950 call themselves "not very strong Jews", up from 39 percent of those born before 1925.

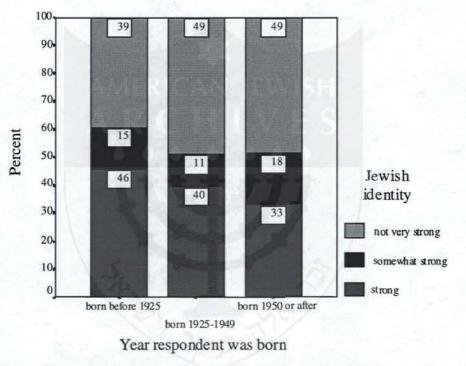


Figure 1. Strength of Jewish Identity by year of birth

HAVE INTERMARRIAGE RATES CHANGED OVER TIME?

- Yes! Consistent with other surveys of Jewish populations, Figure 2 shows a dramatic increase in intermarriage rates with younger respondents more likely to intermarry.
- The increase in intermarriage rate is greatest between those born from 1925-1949 and those born in 1950 or later. Among those born from 1925-1949, 84 percent married Jews. Among those born since 1950, only 60% married Jews.

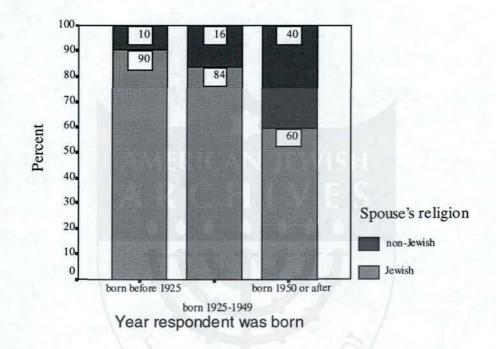
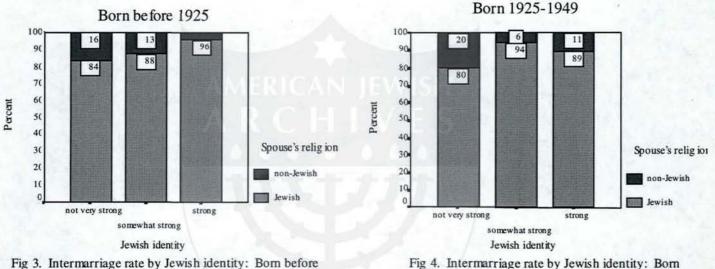


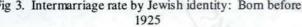
Figure 2. Intermarriage rate by year of birth

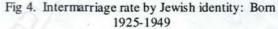
• Figure 2 pertains only to respondents who said they are currently Jewish. Among all those who were raised as Jews (including respondents who are not Jewish any more) rates of marrying Jews are 91% for the oldest group, 85% for the middle group, and 52% for the youngest group.

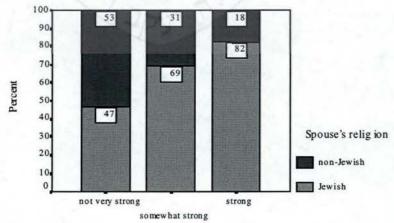
• IS THERE A RELATION BETWEEN JEWISH IDENTITY AND INTERMARRAGE?

- Yes! Figures 3, 4, and 5 show a strong relation between Jewish identity and intermarriage rate.
- The most noticeable relation between Jewish identity and intermarriage can be seen for those born 1950 or later compared to the older respondents. Intermarriage rates are much larger for this group compared to the others. The greatest increase in intermarriage occurs among those born in 1950 or later and reporting "not very strong" Jewish identity. Less than half (47 percent) of those born since 1950 who report a "not very strong" Jewish identity are married to Jews.









Born 1950 or after



Fig. 5 Intermarriage rate by Jewish identity: Born 1950 or later

DOES STRENGTH OF JEWISH IDENTITY PREDICT THE LIKELIHOOD OF INTERMARRIAGE?

- Yes! Those with a "strong" Jewish identity are approximately 3.5 times more likely to have a Jewish spouse compared to those without a very strong Jewish identity. This effect is statistically significant.
- Those with a "somewhat strong" Jewish identity are approximately 2 times more likely to have a Jewish spouse compared to those without a very strong Jewish identity. However, this effect does not achieve statistical significance.
- Taking year-of-birth into account does not dramatically change the relation between Jewish identity and intermarriage. In other words, Jewish identity remains a strong predictor of intermarriage regardless of year-of-birth.

CONCLUSIONS

JEWISH IDENTITY

• The findings of this study show that "strong" Jewish identity is lower among those born in 1950 or later than among those born earlier.

INTERMARRIAGE:

 There has been a dramatic increase in intermarriage rate particularly among those born in 1950 or later. Among those who are currently Jews (including converts), 60 percent are married to Jews. Among all those who were raised as Jews (including converts out of Judaism) only 52% are married to Jews.

RELATION BETWEEN JEWISH IDENTITY AND INTERMARRIAGE

- There is a strong statistical association between the strength of Jewish identity and intermarriage.
- Those with strong Jewish identity are much more likely to have a Jewish spouse compared to those without a very strong Jewish identity.
- The relationship between Jewish identity and intermarriage does not depend on the year of birth. Regardless of the year-of-birth, Jewish identity remains an important predictor of intermarriage.

THE DATA, SAMPLE, AND METHODOOLGY

The General Social Survey

- The General Social Survey (GSS) is an almost annual household survey conducted by the National Opinion Research Center (NORC). The first survey was conducted in 1972 and since then more than 35,000 respondents have responded to over 2500 different questions.
- The goal of the GSS is to provide high quality social indicator data to the social science research community.
- The advantages of the GSS are its broad coverage of topics, its use of survey instrument replication, its cross-national perspective, and its attention to data quality.
- The GSS covers a remarkably broad range of topics. Of particular interest to this study are topics related to religious identity and intermarriage.
- For the purposes of assessing the stability or change in social indicators, the design of the GSS stresses replication of items and item sequences. Of relevance to this study, the identical replication of items and item sequences means that subgroups within each survey year can be accumulated across survey years into a total sample. For example, although there were 54 Jewish respondents to the 1972 survey, the total number of Jewish respondents across 1972-1996 was 757.
- Finally, the GSS represents the highest quality in survey sampling design, sampling, interviewing, processing, and documentation. Leading social-scientists design the survey items, the items are pre-tested, and full-probability sampling is used. In addition a high response rate is obtained, and the data go thorough rigorous validation and verification.
- GSS survey documentation is available on their website. Simple descriptive statistics can be
 obtained online, or data can be downloaded for input into other statistical software packages.
- The GSS also has some disadvantages for our purposes. These include.
 - 1. Causal linkages between Jewish identity and intermarriage cannot be established, and the question of how Jewish identity is formed could not be addressed using data from the General Social Survey.
 - 2. Information regarding the Jewish educational experiences of Jewish respondents was not available in the GSS and may be the most important omitted factor relating Jewish identity and intermarriage.
- Future research should establish reliable indicators of Jewish educational experiences and examine linkages between educational experiences, formation of Jewish identity, and intermarriage.

Demographic Characteristics of Jewish Respondents to the GSS

- In this section, we describe the general demographic characteristics of the Jewish respondents to the GSS. Jewish respondents to the GSS were those who responded that they were "Jewish" to the question, "What is your current religious preference?" Respondents to this question represent approximately 85% of all those who claimed to be raised as Jews.
- We examine the demographic characteristics of age, sex, educational level, and marital status.
- Demographic characteristics were based on the total Jewish respondent sample size of 757.

AGE

• Across all years of the survey, the average age of the Jewish respondents was approximately 48 years of age with a standard deviation of 18 years. The youngest age group was 18 while the oldest was 89.

GENDER

• Across all survey years, gender breakdown was 56.1% females and 43.9% males.

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

• The average educational level of the Jewish respondents across all survey years was 14.5 years of education with a standard deviation of 3.3 years. The range shows a minimum of zero and a maximum of twenty years of education.

MARITAL STATUS

• Across the survey years, 61.8% of the respondents reported being married, 6.5% of the respondents reported being divorced, 11.5% reported being widowed, 1.6% reported being separated, and 18.6% respondents reported having never married.

Methodology

Analysis of Jewish Identity

- The strength of religious identity was assessed by responses to the question "Would you call yourself a strong Jew, not very strong Jew, or somewhat strong Jew?" Figure 1 shows trends in Jewish identity across birth cohorts.
- Trends in Jewish identity were based on listwise deleted¹ sample size of 616.

Analysis of Intermarriage Rate

- Trends in intermarriage were based on the sub-sample of the Jewish respondents who were either married, divorced, separated, or widowed.
- Intermarriage was assessed by respondent answers to the question "What is your spouse's religious preference?" Responses were categorized as "Jewish" or "Non-Jewish".
- Trends in intermarriage were based on a listwise deleted sample size of 360.

Relationship between Jewish Identity and Intermarriage

- The statistical relationship between Jewish identity and intermarriage was established using logistic regression analysis.
- Logistic regression yields, among other things, the odds of an event occurring. In the case of this analysis, the "event" was whether the spouse was Jewish, with Jewish spouse coded '1' and non-Jewish spouse coded '0'.
- Jewish identity was recoded to be able to compare those with 'strong' identity against those with 'not very strong identity' and to compare those with 'somewhat strong' identity against those with 'not very strong' identity.
- The relationship between Jewish identity and intermarriage was based on a listwise deleted sample size of 324.

¹ Listwise deletion is a method of handling missing data wherein any respondent with any missing data on the questions of interest are deleted from the sample for the purpose of the specific analysis.

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