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Gender and American Jews

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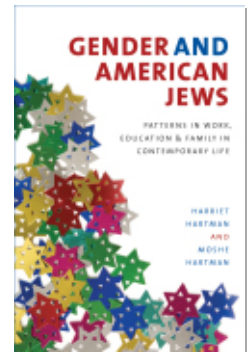
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CHAPTER 6

Gendered Patterns of Jewishness

So far we have considered the Jewishness of the gendered patterns of family and labor force behavior and achievements by comparing American Jews with the broader population and, to some extent, examining the changes in this comparison (at least since 1990). In the second part of the book, we consider Jewishness in terms of the strength of various expressions of Jewish identity, and look at the relationships between Jewishness, family behavior, and labor force behavior and achievements. In this chapter we present our conceptualization of Jewishness and the gender differences in this respect.

In order to consider the relationship between secular behavior and achievement and Jewishness, we need to devise a measure of “Jewishness”—not a simple task. One can express one’s “Jewishness” in multiple ways—simply by being identified as a Jew (e.g., by being born to a Jewish mother and/or father, depending on who is doing the identifying), by identifying oneself as a Jew, by affiliating with other Jews in an organized setting (synagogue, voluntary organization, community center, youth group, etc.), by exhibiting ethnic and/or religious behaviors that are Jewish in nature (the identification of which is itself controversial), by holding beliefs or attitudes that are considered Jewish, or by any combination of these. The possible ways of defining “Jewishness” multiply and stimulate discussion and a variety of opinions. The 2000–01 National Jewish Population Survey attempted to incorporate a wide array of indicators of Jewish identity, so that multiple ways of defining or expressing “Jewishness” could be developed and examined. We used many of these indicators as we developed measures of Jewishness, which are presented in this chapter. This chapter also presents gender differences in Jewishness, as measured in a variety of ways. We begin the chapter with some background to our expectations of gender differences in Jewishness and then discuss our measures of Jewishness. We then present our findings of gender similarity and difference with

respect to Jewishness, and relate them to denominational preference and to formal Jewish educational background.

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC IDENTITY

Much attention has been given to the gender inequality of women in public religious positions of power, to their implied secondary status as expressed in theology, ideology, and language used in religion, and to their relegation to secondary domestic status in contemporary religions. All of these lead us to expect gender inequality in public expressions at least of religious identity. Nevertheless, women have traditionally been more strongly identified with religion than have men. This anomaly has sometimes been attributed to the fact that women are underprivileged (Weber's, 1963 [1922], explanation, supported by Mueller and Johnson, 1975, and more recently by Hertel, 1995) or "socially vulnerable" (Walter and Davie, 1998) and thus, like other disadvantaged people, turn to religion as a compensation. Stark (2002) reviews how religious movements have historically recruited women more successfully than men, and how women outnumber men both in conventional and in new religious movements in the United States. (He suggests that risk aversion may be an explanation, although Schumm, 2004, debates this.) Rayburn (2004) confirms that women see themselves as more religious and more spiritual than men, and also as more spiritual even if they do not consider themselves religious. Ozorark (1996) suggests that women are more likely than men to belong to religions for social and emotional support, following their "ethic of connection" (Walter and Davie, 1998).

Woolever, Bruce, Keith, and Smith-Williams (2006), analyzing data from 18 countries, found that women reported greater feelings of spiritual connection and faith than men, even when education was controlled for. Lefkowitz and Shapiro (2005) suggest that books and educational material that can be obtained on the Internet has increased their availability to groups previously denied access to them, reinforcing women's involvement in religion.

All of these studies support the expectation that American Jewish women will express stronger Jewish religious identities than men. It has also been suggested that because women are less immersed structurally in secular roles (such as careers) than are men, they maintain a connection to religion that men may lose (de Vaus and McAllister, 1987). This is reinforced by historical research, which suggests that Jewish women have played a greater role than men in the transmission of Jewish culture and identity, as men have focused their energy on acculturating themselves to the workforce and general public sphere, and women have maintained religious standards and customs in the home (Hyman, 1995; Kaplan, 1991). Continuing along these

lines, Prell (1999) has analyzed how the American Jewish immigrant experience transferred much of the role of perpetuating Judaism to the intimate relations of family and the public relations of community and institution building, rather than to prayer or individual observance. In fact, Heschel (2004) suggests that women's role in perpetuating Judaism through the home and social institutions paved the way for men to be less observant (as she puts it, using a quote from Hull, 1996, p. 411, "Her unfreedom created his freedom"). This leads us to expect that American Jewish women will also express stronger ethnic Jewish identities than men.

In terms of empirical gender differences in contemporary Jewish identity, analysis of the 1990 NJPS revealed that Jewish women fit the pattern just described, with significantly stronger Jewish identity in terms of the collective rituals and involvement in formally organized Jewish associations, even when age and marital status were controlled for (Hartman and Hartman, 1996a). Women were more involved in informal Jewish circles also, but the gender difference was not statistically significant once age and marital status were controlled for. Women showed weaker observance of the traditional rituals, but the difference was not statistically significant once age and marital status were controlled for. Women did have a significantly weaker background in Jewish education than men, but this did not seem to weaken their Jewish identity (Hartman and Hartman, 2003b).

According to the "structural location" interpretation of gender differences in religious commitment, since women's full-time employment has increased, and women have come closer to parity with men in terms of status-conferring occupations and income, it has been expected that the traditional gender gap in religious involvement would decrease. Because Jewish women are at the forefront of such changes in labor force participation and occupational achievement, it would be expected that any such changes would certainly show up among Jews. However, Becker and Hofmeister (2001), in their research using a national sample of around 1,000, found that not only is women's religious involvement lower when they are employed full time, but so is their spouse's, suggesting that something else is going on. Becker and Hofmeister discuss the possibility that women's employment is accompanied by a greater individualism and a decreased willingness to assume the traditionally gendered roles that are historically associated with religious institutions, echoing some of the suggestions made by Walter and Davie (1998). Therefore, another reason to look at gender differences in Jewish identity is to note the relative parity of secular positions and then to explore how this affects gender differences in Jewish identity.

In our analysis of the 1990 data for both men and women, higher secular academic achievement was associated with greater involvement in the

various aspects of Jewish identity (except for the most traditional rituals; Hartman and Hartman, 1996a). For men, greater labor force participation was also associated with greater involvement in organized Jewish associations and in collective rituals. However, for women, there was a negative relationship between labor force participation and the various aspects of Jewish identity. Controlling for marital status and number of children explained most of this negative relationship, from which we concluded that the connection between Jewishness and labor force participation for women occurred primarily through traditional familistic roles rather than directly through Jewish identity.

Thus, our results did not exactly reinforce the structural location interpretation that focuses on labor force participation, because we found that familism rather than labor force participation was the mitigating variable in variations in women's Jewish identity. Walter and Davie (1998) offer an explanation for the relationship between family roles and greater commitment to religion. However, they suggest that this relationship might lose power with in modern culture. This research, therefore, leads us to expect a greater trend toward equality in expressions of Jewish identity rather than in gender differentiation, and a greater trend toward equality between men and women.

DENOMINATIONAL DIFFERENCES IN JEWISH IDENTITY

Another complexity is introduced by the comparison of Jewish denominations and gender differences within them. In several ways, Jewish identity is expected to vary among denominations and has been shown to do so in the past. Denominations differ in their emphasis on religion and ethnicity, in their emphasis on traditional ritual, and in their attachment to Israel (Hartman and Hartman, 2001). On the other hand, all denominations stress organized and public activities (Woocher, 1986). An initial analysis of the 2000–01 NJPS showed that contemporary Orthodox Jews are more likely than other denominational groups to go to synagogue on a regular basis, to be synagogue members, and to observe most of the traditional rituals, collective or personal (Ament, 2005). They also express stronger subjective identification as Jews, are more strongly attached to Israel, are more likely to have contributed to a Jewish charity, and are more likely to belong to a formal Jewish organization. Those classified as “just Jewish” exhibit the weakest Jewish identity on the same measures. There does not seem to be evidence of a particularly strong ethnic identity compensating for a lack of religious affiliation or of spirituality in place of organized rituals (see also Klaff, 2006). This is a repetition of the pattern found in the 1990 NJPS and the 1991 New York Jewish Population Survey, with Orthodox Jews

expressing stronger Jewish identity on all of the various dimensions of Jewish identity, and unaffiliated, and sometimes Reform Jews, the weakest.

Not as clear may be the variation by denomination of gender differences in Jewish identity. Some reasons to expect difference are that the Reform and Conservative denominations have granted women a public religious role equivalent to the more traditional public religious roles of men, suggesting that there may be a greater trend toward gender equality in Jewish identity in these denominations. Also, as we've already seen, the Orthodox tend to marry younger and have larger families, indicating more traditional familism, which might increase gender differences in many respects. However, some members of the Orthodox denomination have also integrated the feminist claims for gender equality into some of their rituals (see, e.g., Fishman's [2007] description of modern Orthodox Jews). Furthermore, the 1990 NJPS showed more gender similarity in Jewish identity among the Orthodox than expected (Hartman and Hartman, 1996a), so we do not expect a simple relationship between denomination and gender differences in Jewish identity.

GENDER AND JEWISH EDUCATION

Formal Jewish education is associated with stronger Jewish identity, no matter how it is measured (Cohen, 2004), although formal Jewish education is not the only influence on Jewish identity (Cohen, 2007; Hartman and Hartman, 2003b). Formal Jewish education is also associated with stronger "Jewish social capital," that is, networking and associations with other Jews (Hurst and Mott, 2006). Therefore, the relationship between gender and Jewish education is certainly an important one to consider. We do so in this chapter as part of our introduction to the "Jewishness resources" that respondents carry and that we consider in later chapters as they relate to family behavior and roles, secular education, labor force participation, and occupational achievement.

INDICATORS

Jewish Identity

There are two major dimensions along which Jewish identity varies: (1) the religious–ethnic dimension, which differentiates Jewish identity both from other religious identities and from other ethnic identities (Herman, 1977; Himmelfarb, 1982; Phillips, 1991; Sharot, 1991), and (2) the public–private dimension of expressing Jewish identity, a dimension that has gained increasing importance with a more general privatization of contemporary religion (Casanova, 1992; see overview of this trend in religion in McGuire, 2001).

Jewish identity has long been recognized as multidimensional, involving both ethnic and religious dimensions, whose balance fluctuates with historical context and ideology of the particular Jewish movement or denomination in focus. Sharot (1997) documents Jewish movements that are completely religious, which combine ethnicity and religion, and that are completely secular (ethnic). More recently, Gitelman (2003) has documented the primarily ethnic identification of Jews from the former Soviet Union. American Jewish identity has fluctuated in its balance of religious and ethnic identity, both historically and across denominations, as has been reviewed in previous publications (e.g., Diner, 2003–4; Dollinger, 2003–4; Hartman and Hartman, 2001).

The second dimension along which identity varies is whether it is expressed privately, as internal feelings or within the privacy of one's home or close circle of friends and family, or expressed publicly and collectively. The debate over secularization has been centered largely on the declining influence of religion in the public arena, while the evidence of the persistence of personal faith has undermined the prediction that religion would disappear. Rather, the balance of how publicly or privately it is expressed seems to fluctuate over time.

These two dimensions emerged empirically from an analysis of the Jewish identity indicators in the 1990 NJPS (Hartman and Hartman, 2001). The two dimensions divide Jewish identity into four components: (1) the public religious component, composed of religious behaviors performed in public settings such as synagogues; (2) the private religious component, composed of personal or private expressions of religious ritual performed individually or in a private home, or consisting of personal beliefs about religion; (3) the public ethnic component, composed of public activities organized around ethnic themes of peoplehood or nationhood, for example; and (4) the private ethnic component of Jewish identity, comprising personal beliefs about Jewish ethnicity or behaviors performed in private or in a home, such as subscribing to a Jewish magazine.

Recent attention in the sociology of religion has been devoted to the concept of "spirituality," roughly conceived of as personal faith or an expression of personal religious identity. Spirituality has traditionally been studied with regard to non-Jewish religions; its study has been neglected in many studies of Jewish religiosity because the Jewish religion has been characterized more commonly by action than by faith. Perhaps as a result of U.S. society being predominantly Christian, and certainly as both religion and ethnicity become more voluntary constructs for all contemporary groups, studies of Judaism in the United States have recently included

more measures of spirituality to complement indicators of religious practice. Greeley and Hout (2001) show that Jews, like other U.S. religious groups, have increased their expression of spiritual beliefs in the past few decades and that this is not just a spill-over from exposure to other religions but something internal to the evolution of American Judaism itself.

Other researchers have noted the important function of community and communal solidarity within contemporary religion and ethnicity (e.g., Johnson, 2003); that is, public ethnic or religious expressions of identity (depending on whether the community in question is primarily ethnic or religious).

Gender differences in Jewish identity are one of the social issues that can benefit from an analysis of Jewish identity using these two dimensions (religious–ethnic; public–private) and various combinations. Women’s Jewish identity has often been described in terms of private, home-based actions and orientations, both religious and ethnic (Davidman and Tenenbaum, 1994; Sered, 1994). Traditionally men have dominated public religious roles in Judaism, but among the major trends in the past few decades have been the inroads women have made into these roles and their legitimization in them by Reform and Conservative denominations. On the other hand, because of the difficulties of entering such public roles, some women may have become disenchanted with public expressions of religiosity and have made their religiosity private or turned to public ethnic roles, if these offer greater opportunities for their participation. We cannot assume that men and women construct their Jewish identity in the same way, in any of the denominations. Thus, looking at these two dimensions, and their respective emphases in the Jewish identity of men and women in different denominations, can be very instructive for our investigation of gender differences in Jewish identity.

It should be noted that we are examining here the main aspects of Jewish identity as measured in the NJPS survey rather than derived from a comprehensive model of Jewish identity. That is, our analytical results emerge from the data gathered, using a survey which seems to have been somewhat haphazardly developed to test a wide range of Jewish behaviors and attitudes, rather than to test a particular theoretical model (see the critique in Hartman and Hartman, 2003c). If we omit an aspect that others might think is central to Jewish identity, it is probably because it was not systematically operationalized in the survey questionnaire (that is, the survey questions did not adequately measure it).

Let us now proceed to describe the analysis of the variables that were available. The 2000–01 NJPS makes it possible to explore these four components

of Jewish identity much more thoroughly than did earlier NJPS surveys. Extensive questions appear to probe both religious and ethnic orientations to respondents' Jewishness, on both public and private levels. In addition to questions about the observance of Jewish rituals that were also asked in previous national and many local Jewish population surveys, the 2000–01 NJPS includes questions about cultural practices related to being Jewish (such as reading books with Jewish content or traveling to Jewish places of interest), as well as questions about spirituality (such as praying in one's own words and belief in God), subjective feelings about being Jewish, and comfort during services of various denominations. More than 90 indicators dealt with the respondent's "Jewish identity" in some way.

In using these data to study Jewish identity, some researchers have selected what seems to them to represent the main aspects of Jewish identity (e.g., Ament, 2005). Some researchers have used an a priori approach, deciding in advance which variables belong to a particular category such as religion or ethnicity (e.g., Klaff, 2006). Others have confined their studies to variables used in a comparable data set (e.g., Rebhun and Levy, 2006). In contrast, we used an empirical approach to construct indices of Jewish identity, using as many of the variables as possible. That is, we used indices that arose from the data rather than superimposing our own theoretical expectations on the data. Thus, we did not arbitrarily classify the questions as religious or ethnic, subjective or objective, public or private. Such classification often means that the researcher is imposing his/her own expectations on the data, rather than allowing the data to express the way the respondents see the issues. For example, is attending synagogue perceived to be primarily a religious act? Or is its ethnic dimension, expressing solidarity with other Jewish people, as important or more so? Is attachment to Israel a religious or ethnic quality or both? Do respondents make the distinction between "public" (such as attending synagogue) and "private" (such as lighting candles at home) acts, or is this a construct that is meaningful mainly to sociologists of religion? Rather than make assumptions a priori, we used factor analysis to show what indices should be constructed from the data, that is, how variables clustered together according to the responses given.¹ We then interpreted the results of the factor analysis. The advantage of such a method is that it makes use of all of the available indicators and uncovers the construct of identity in the respondents' minds, rather than superimposing a priori expectations. That in many instances the results validated our previous understanding reinforces the theoretical dimensions we have come to understand as Jewish identity; when the results did not, they indicated where the theoretical model needed modification.

Measurement of Jewish Identity (Identity Factors)

We began with the approximately 90 questions in the survey that in some way touched on the respondent's current Jewish identity. We eliminated questions referring to the respondent's childhood or high school years. We eliminated questions that were not asked of a substantial portion of the sample, such as those asked only of respondents who had children, or had been to college, or who said they kept kosher. Even when there was some logic to not asking all those in the sample these questions, we could not assume a priori what their answers would have been. As it was, we still had more than 80 questions.

A factor analysis indicated that five of these questions should be eliminated because they did not have enough commonality with the other variables.² More than half of the variance in the questions could be explained by an 11-factor solution, which is what we use here. We concentrate primarily on the factors explaining most of the variance.

Factor 1 expresses what “being Jewish” means to the respondent. This factor measures the extent to which the respondent agrees that being Jewish is about celebrating Jewish holidays, being part of the Jewish community, attending synagogue, observing *halacha*, having a rich spiritual life, supporting Jewish organizations, learning about Jewish history and culture, remembering the Holocaust, connecting to family heritage, leading an ethical and moral life, making the world a better place, caring about Israel, and countering anti-Semitism. Further analysis of this factor (i.e., a factor analysis of these variables alone) showed that two subfactors were involved: (a) those aspects of being Jewish that reflect involvement in the contemporary Jewish community, including being part of the Jewish community, attending synagogue, celebrating Jewish holidays, observing *halacha*, having a rich spiritual life, learning about Jewish history and culture, and caring about Israel; we call this “Activity”; and (b) those aspects that reflect the ways that being Jewish expresses morals, ethics, and heritage, including leading an ethical and moral life, making the world a better place, connecting to family heritage, remembering the Holocaust, and countering anti-Semitism. This second factor recalls what Heilman (2003–4, p. 59) has termed the connection to a Jewish “moral community”: “For some Jews—particularly those who understand their Jewish identity essentially as a matter of vague ‘heritage,’ are not looking for something that requires too much in the way of activity and concrete commitments, and who are satisfied with symbolic attachments—the Jewish community constitutes above all else a kind of ‘moral community’ . . . a set of moral codes and certainties that offer guidance as to what is the right way to act or believe.”³ We call this “Universal Morality.”

Factor 2 pertains to the performance of Jewish rituals and includes a general question about how much the respondent observes or practices Jewish rituals, as well as more specific indicators: attending a Passover *seder*, lighting Shabbat candles, fasting on Yom Kippur, lighting Chanukah candles, having a *mezuzah* on any door of the home, belonging to a synagogue, attending synagogue, keeping kosher at home,⁴ and feeling comfortable attending Orthodox services. Further analysis of this factor showed that it could also be broken down into two subfactors: (a) the more commonly observed rituals or Jewish practices such as belonging to and going to synagogue, attending a *seder*, lighting Chanukah candles—what has been referred to as collective “ceremony” in earlier studies (“affirming membership in the social and cosmological order”; Alexander, 1987, p. 124) (what we here call “Ceremony”)—and (b) those indicators of stricter daily and personal commitment to ritual, such as keeping kosher at home, lighting Shabbat candles every week, fasting on Yom Kippur, feeling comfortable at Orthodox services, and self-description as more observant (what we here call “Ritual”).

Factor 3 expresses a sense of Jewish “tribalism”—a sense of belonging and commitment to a cohesive ancestral group of people with particular customs, traditions, and values (Lipset and Raab, 1995, p. 8) and to its continuity. It includes the importance of a child’s spouse being Jewish (or converting to Judaism), of grandchildren being raised Jewish, of having and considering it important to have Jewish friends, and of having an understanding that Jews in the United States are distinctive as a cultural, ethnic, religious group or worldwide people. Further analysis (a factor analysis of these variables alone) showed that it too could be subdivided into two components: (a) indicators of personal commitment to Jewish continuity and cohesiveness (“Tribalism”) and (b) indicators of the extent to which the respondent characterized Jews in the United States as a distinctive or exceptional group (“Exceptionalism”).

Factor 4 reflects personal attachment to cultural aspects of Jewish identity. Variables with high loading on this factor include reading books with Jewish content, listening to audio media with Jewish content, reading Jewish print media, seeing a movie or video because of its Jewish content, ability to read Hebrew, participation in adult Jewish education, and looking for Jewish places of interest when traveling.⁵ None of these explicitly indicate religious content, although they may include it. We termed this “Culture.”

Factor 5 reflects personal attachment to religious belief or spirituality, and we call it “Belief.” It includes questions about specific Jewish and religious beliefs as well as the importance attached to Judaism and religion in

general. The variables with high loading on this factor included belief in God, understanding being Jewish as believing in God, the importance of religion in one's life today, the extent to which Judaism guides one in making important life decisions, the extent to which one characterizes oneself as personally religious, and whether one ever prays in one's own words.

Factor 6 reflects involvement with formal Jewish organizations (other than synagogues), which we call "Organizations." This includes attending a Jewish Community Center (JCC) or Young Men's/Young Women's Hebrew Association (YM/YWHA) program, paying dues to a JCC or YM/YWHA, paying dues to any other Jewish organization (except a synagogue or JCC or YM/YWHA), making a contribution to the Jewish Federation (or its local equivalent), and observing a Jewish mourning or memorial ritual (which necessitates participating in an organized group of Jews).

Factor 7 reflects attachment to Israel. It includes familiarity with the social and political situation in Israel, visiting Israel, having family and friends in Israel, being emotionally attached to Israel, seeing Israel as the spiritual center of Jews, believing that Jews in the United States have a common destiny with Jews in Israel and elsewhere in the world, and believing that Israel needs the financial support of American Jews. Further analysis (performing a factor analysis of these variables alone) showed that there were two subfactors: (a) one related to familiarity with the situation in Israel, having traveled there, having relatives and friends there, and personally being emotionally attached to Israel, which we call "Attachment to Israel," and (b) one related to a more abstract understanding of the centrality of the role of Israel for American and world Jews, which we call "Israel's Role Central."

Relating these factors to earlier theoretical understandings of Jewish identity, we certainly can see that the main dimensions of ethnicity and religion are represented (Table 6.1): factors 2 and 5, reflecting aspects of religious identity; and factors 3, 4, 6, and 7, reflecting aspects of ethnic or nationalistic identity. The distinction between public and private is also evident (factor 5, reflecting private beliefs; factor 6, reflecting public involvement in organizations; and the subfactors of 1, 2, 3, and 7, reflecting the subdivision of the factors into personal and public aspects). This supports our earlier analysis of Jewish identity (as expressed in the 1990 NJPS and the 1991 New York JPS) but should not be seen as a real test of the theory, because the questions were not designed explicitly to test it.⁶ Furthermore, the first set of factors actually spans ethnic and religious aspects, and they are the strongest factors in the analysis.

We created factor scores for each of the factors and subfactors just described, by performing a secondary factor analysis on the variables with a

Table 6.1 Two Dimensions Of Variation In Jewish Identity Factors

	Public	Private
Mixed	Factor 1b—Universal Morality	1a—Activity
Religious	Factor 2a—Ceremony	2b—Ritual
		5—Belief
Ethnic	Factor 3b—Exceptionalism	3a—Tribalism
	Factor 6—Organizations	4—Culture
	Factor 7b—Israel's Role Central	7a—Attachment to Israel

Source: Hartman and Hartman, 2006. Questions with high loading on each factor are presented in the Appendix, Table A-4.

high loading on each of the factors. The scores resulting from these secondary factor analyses were used as scores for the Jewish identity indicators. The loadings of the individual variables on each factor can be found in the Appendix, Table A-4. Because the scores are normalized, the mean for each factor for the entire sample is 0.000. Lower scores indicate higher Jewish identity on that factor; higher scores indicate lower Jewish identity on that factor.

Denomination

The 2000–01 NJPS asks respondents for both their denominational preference and their denominational membership, recognizing that, while there is considerable overlap between them, they are in fact two distinct concepts. According to Klaff's (2006) analysis of the 2000–01 NJPS, only a little more than a third of the sample both self-identifies and claims membership (through a synagogue) in one of the major American Jewish denominations (Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform), and another 22% do not self-identify or claim membership in one of these denominations' synagogues. This leaves almost half of the sample who self-identify with one denomination but belong to another denomination's synagogue (or none at all). There are a variety of reasons for such disjunction, including such factors as geographical proximity to a synagogue in the denomination one prefers, family pressures, or financial considerations, among others. Klaff (2006) has analyzed some of the implications for Jewish identity of consonant or disjointed patterns.

For the purposes of our analysis, we use denominational identification rather than membership or formal affiliation. Respondents were asked, "Thinking about Jewish religious denominations, [what] do you consider yourself to be?" Respondents were grouped according to their first response

to this question (multiple responses were allowed) into the four main American Jewish denominations (Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, or Reconstructionist) and those who did not identify with these or any particular denomination (which we refer to as “unaffiliated”).

Jewish Education

Formal Jewish education has many forms. Adults take occasional classes or participate in ongoing programs of study; children may go to a private Jewish day school in lieu of a public elementary, middle, or high school. Many synagogues and some community centers have supplementary classes on weekday afternoons and/or Sunday, and some have “Sunday School” once a week. The content varies in terms of history, explanations of and celebrations of holiday rituals, learning Hebrew, and learning the prayers and prayer structure. Before a Bar or Bat Mitzvah, children usually learn the weekly portion they will recite, often in Hebrew and often including the liturgical trope they will use to chant it. Traditionally this training has been most common for boys, who are called up to the Torah in each of the denominations; in the past 20 or 30 years, it has become more common for girls to be called up to the Torah as well, at least in the Reform and Conservative traditions. Many of the gender differences in formal Jewish education can be traced to the Bar or Bat Mitzvah event. Fewer adolescents continue on with formal Jewish training, but some do, as we will see later.

To study the extent and kinds of contemporary formal Jewish education, respondents were asked whether they had ever received formal Jewish education, and if so, what kind (day school, supplementary school more than one day a week, supplementary school only one day a week—Sunday School—private tutoring, or something else), and for how many years during grades 1–8 and grades 9–12.

GENDER DIFFERENCES ON JEWISH IDENTITY FACTORS

Comparing men and women’s scores on the Jewish identity factors, we find that women express stronger Jewish identity than do men on all but two of the factors (Figure 6.1). This is true for their concept of what being Jewish means, collective rituals, tribalism (personal or with regard to Jews in the United States), attachment to culture or to formal Jewish organizations, religious belief, and opinions about Israel’s role for world and American Jewry. In the case of the more Orthodox rituals and practices, the gender difference is in the opposite direction but is not statistically significant, and in the case of personal attachment to Israel, men indicate stronger attachment than women. The latter result, the only statistically significant finding

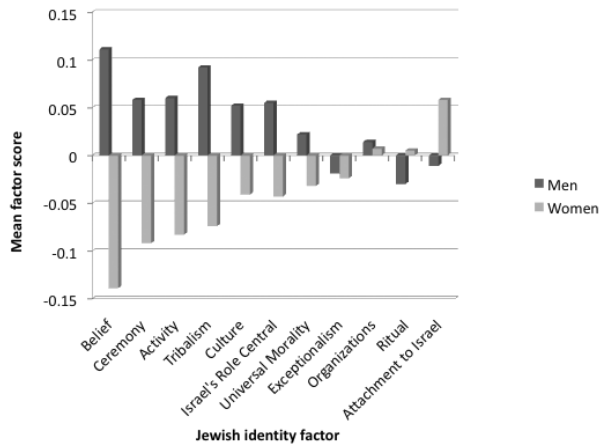


Figure 6.1. Mean scores on Jewish identity factors, by gender.

in which men express stronger Jewish identity than women, stems from men's greater familiarity with the current political and social situation in Israel; there are no gender differences with respect to the other three questions making up the index (level of emotional attachment to Israel, having close friends or relatives living in Israel, or number of visits to Israel).

These results thus reinforce conclusions based on previous studies of other religions, that women are more religious or spiritual, more involved in religion (in various ways), and more engaged culturally and socially as well. Their connection to the Jewish people, whether expressed by what they think being Jewish means, their perception of American Jewish exceptionalism or tribalism, their personal connection to being Jewish, and their own participation in collective rituals and formal organizations, is stronger than that of Jewish men. The gender differences are strongest for some of the private (Belief) and public (Ceremony) religious expressions of Jewish identity, and weaker for some of the ethnic expressions of Jewish identity (Israel's Role Central, Organizations).

DENOMINATION AND JEWISH IDENTITY

There are basically three patterns of denominational difference in Jewish identity, which apply to both men and women. On eight of the factors, the Orthodox express the strongest identity, including the belief that being Jewish means involvement in the current Jewish community and practices; practice of the stricter rituals; personal "tribalistic" attachment to the Jewish people; attachment to Jewish culture; religious belief; participation in formal Jewish organizations; and attachment to Israel. On some of these

factors, Orthodox Jews are very different from the other groups, as in, for example, their stricter observance of rituals; on others, there is a less dramatic difference, as in personal attachment to the Jewish people. On most of these factors, Conservative Jews have the next strongest identity, Reform Jews the third strongest, and the unaffiliated the weakest. On the halachic rituals, however, the unaffiliated scores indicate stronger identity than the Reform scores, which probably reflects the upbringing of the currently unaffiliated, many of whom were raised Conservative or Orthodox; however, the difference between the Orthodox and the other denominations in this respect is especially large. For an example of this pattern, see Figure 6.2 (note that lower scores indicate stronger identity).

On a few factors, the expressions of Jewish identity of the Orthodox are not significantly different from the Conservative, and sometimes not from the Reform either. In terms of the more common ceremonial rituals and practice, analysis of variance shows us that there is no significant difference between the Orthodox and Conservative groups, and there is only a weak difference between them and the Reform denomination (Figure 6.3). All three are significantly different from the unaffiliated, however. In terms of feeling that Jews in United States are a distinct group, there are no significant differences between the Orthodox and the other denominational groups; however, the unaffiliated score significantly lower than the Conservative or Reform groups on this. The Orthodox and the Conservative denominations do not differ significantly in terms of their participation in formal Jewish organizational life, nor do they differ in terms of attaching importance to Israel's role for worldwide and U.S. Jewry. Both see Israel's

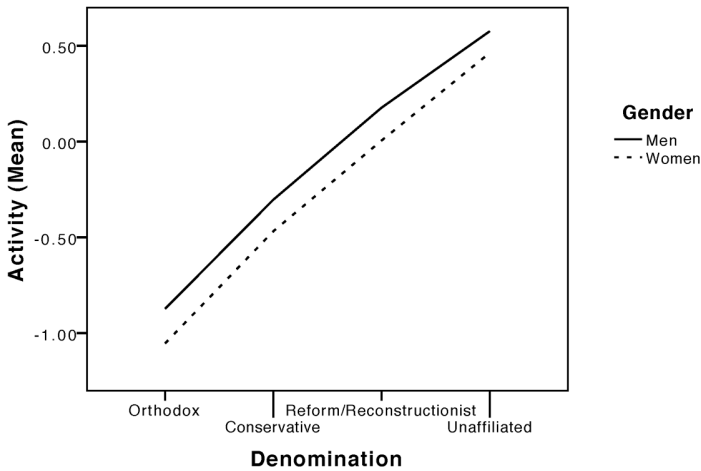


Figure 6.2. Mean scores on Activity factor, by denomination and gender.

role more centrally than do the Reform groups or unaffiliated. In terms of personal attachment to Israel, the Orthodox have significantly stronger attachment than all of the other groups, the Conservatives express the next strongest attachment, and the Reform and unaffiliated are lowest in attachment and not significantly different from each other.

It is interesting that on two of the factors the Orthodox are quite low in comparison with the Reform and Conservative denominational groups: in terms of expressing being Jewish as a universalistic kind of ethics or family heritage (Universal Morality), the Orthodox are much lower than the Conservative or Reform groups (who are not significantly different from each other) (Figure 6.4). This factor expresses almost the opposite of a particularistic identification, defining being Jewish in a way that does not differentiate it from affiliation with other U.S. religions or ethnicities except that it includes countering anti-Semitism. This, too, is a resistance to particularism. The Orthodox, however, do not fight particularism and therefore would be less likely to define being Jewish in this way.

The second factor demonstrating this pattern is that of belief in Jewish American exceptionalism, perhaps because the Orthodox are less likely to

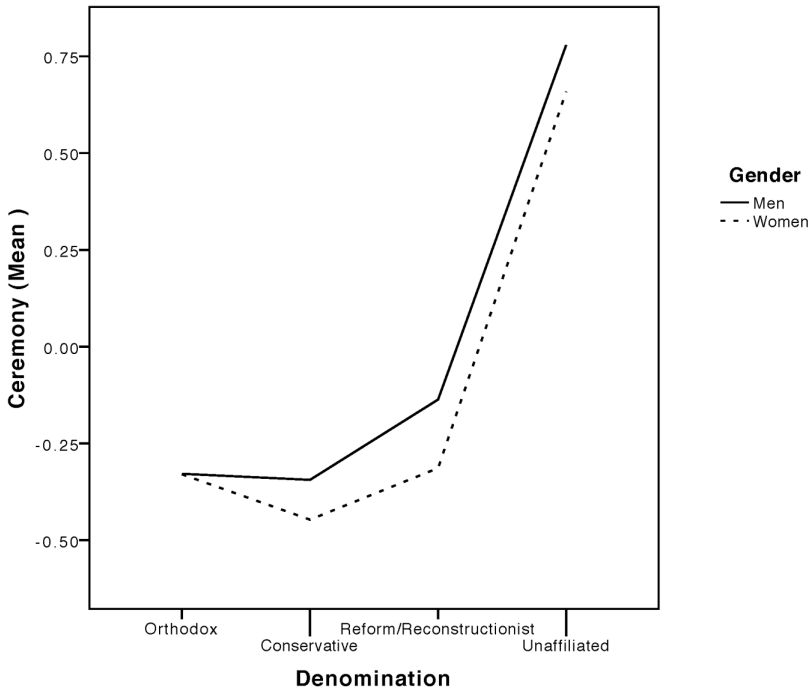


Figure 6.3. Mean scores on Ceremonies factor, by denomination and gender.

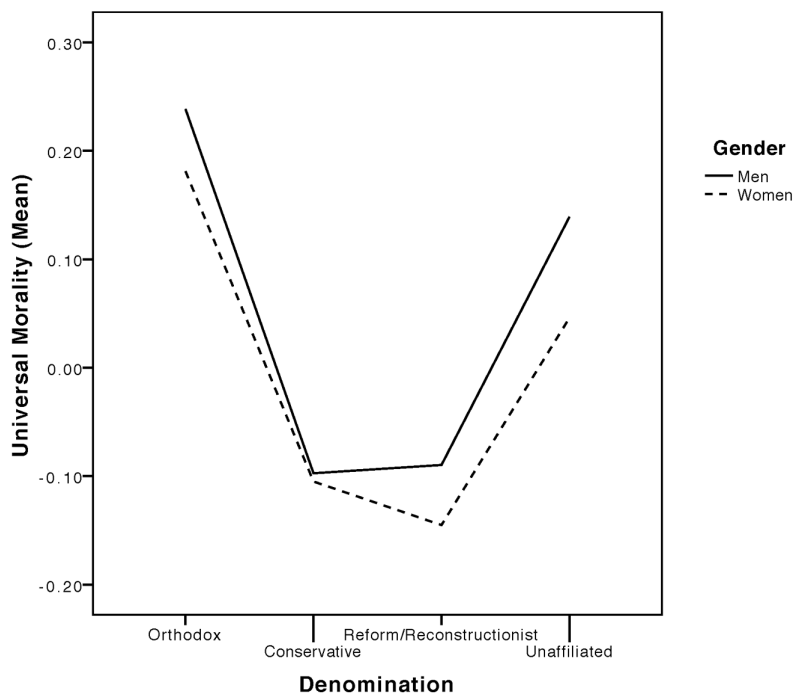


Figure 6.4. Mean scores on Universal Morality factor, by denomination and gender.

characterize American Jews as a cultural or ethnic group rather than a religious group.

These denominational patterns are the same for men and women, analyzed separately, with little variation, with one exception. On the factor Exceptionalism, Orthodox women are much more likely to express this attitude than are Orthodox men, Conservative women are somewhat less likely to express it than Conservative men, and Reform and Reconstructionist women are somewhat more likely to express it than Reform and Reconstructionist men. As a result, we get a curvilinear pattern among men but not among women. All of the affiliated women express this type of Jewish identity more strongly than unaffiliated women, with Reform and Reconstructionist women expressing it most strongly among women.

Gender Differences in Jewish Identity by Denomination

With respect to gender differences by denomination, one expectation was that there would be a greater gender difference among the Orthodox than among the other denominations, whose allocation of public religious roles

primarily to men and greater familism suggested greater gender differentiation; however, our findings from 1990 did not suggest this pattern.

In the 2000–01 NJPS data, there is only one factor on which the Orthodox groups show a significant gender difference from the other denominations: the practice of halachic rituals (Table 6.2). This is in accordance with the expectations of gender difference with respect to ritual performance. However, the differences between Orthodox women and women in the other denominations, like the differences between Orthodox men and men in the other denominations, far outweigh any gender difference within the Orthodox group. It is interesting that, with respect to the collective and more commonly practiced rituals and celebrations, among the Orthodox there is no significant gender difference, but among the other denominations women are more active than men.

Significant gender differences, with women expressing stronger Jewish identity than men, remain for three factors in all denominations: women express stronger religious beliefs than men, stronger (tribalistic) attachment to the Jewish people than men, and a greater tendency than men to express “being Jewish” as being active in the current Jewish community and practices. These consistent gender differences across all denominations reinforce expectations based on previous studies that women are personally more involved and committed to being Jewish with respect to both religion and ethnicity than are men.

For attachment to Jewish culture or participation in formal Jewish organizations, the gender difference is not statistically significant when denomination is controlled for. In terms of attachment to Israel, gender differences among the Reform groups are statistically significant, and they show that although women have greater personal attachment to Israel than men, men are more likely to consider Israel’s role important. This suggests that women keep up the personal connections that allow Israel to have the central role men think is important. In the other denominational groups, the pattern is similar, but statistically the significance is either very weak ($p < 0.1$) or not significant.

Gender, Denomination, Education, Age, and Jewish Identity

Now we add the variation in Jewish identity introduced by (secular) education and age or birth cohort. Education can be seen as an indicator for “structural immersion,” or investment in secular roles; such investment, usually greater for men, has been suggested as an explanation for the fact that men are less invested in religious identity than women. In terms of age, the older generation supposedly had more traditional ways of “being

Table 6.2 Jewish Identity Factor Scores (Means), by Denomination and Gender

Jewish identity factor	Type of identity factor ^a	Orthodox		Conservative		Reform/ Reconstructionist		Unaffiliated	
		Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
		Activity	-0.873	-1.054*	-0.303	-0.468*	0.177	0.005*	0.576
Ritual	-1.551	-1.772*	-0.274	-0.187	0.380	0.417	0.300	0.284	
Belief	-0.847	-1.057*	-0.340	-0.453*	0.184	-0.114*	0.764	0.459*	
Tribalism	-0.852	-1.105*	-0.349	-0.458*	0.210	-0.014*	0.516	0.573*	
Culture	-0.944	-1.049	-0.284	-0.360	0.208	0.070*	0.491	0.451	
Attachment to Israel	-0.953	-0.787	-0.198	-0.127	0.192	0.279*	0.218	0.204	
Universal Morality	0.238	0.181	-0.097	-0.105	-0.090	-0.145	0.139	0.046	
Ceremony	-0.329	-0.330	-0.344	-0.447*	-0.137	-0.314*	0.779	0.638*	
Exceptionalism	0.084	-0.044	-0.113	-0.025	-0.069	-0.110	0.071	0.084	
Organizations									
Israel's Role Central (n) ^b		-0.315 (199)	-0.464 (210)	-0.256 (446)	-0.264 (613)	0.049 (619)	-0.069* (841)	0.434 (527)	0.324 (609)

^a *Pub* denotes public; *Priv*, private.

^b Unweighted *n* in parentheses; calculations performed using person-weights provided with dataset.

*T-test between men and women within the denomination statistically significant at $p < .05$.

Jewish,” which may be changing among younger cohorts. This cohort difference may, however, be confounded by life-cycle differences: younger people have a less established family situation, less money, and are more involved in career building; older people may be more emotionally attached but may have less stamina and fewer resources for active participation in the community. So age may reflect cohort differences in identity orientation or life-cycle changes in identity involvement. In a previous analysis (Hartman and Hartman, 2006), we showed that there are significant differences in the scores of different age groups on almost all of the Jewish identity factors. The exceptions are the first factor expressing that being Jewish is involvement in the contemporary Jewish community and the factor expressing religious belief. For all of the other factors, an analysis of variance shows statistically significant variation by age. The pattern of variation, however, is complex.

On several of the factors, the older age groups express stronger Jewish identity than the younger age groups. For example, those aged 45 or older express more strongly than those under 45 the viewpoint that being Jewish means following universal moral guidelines and heritage. It is possible that this reflects the “baby boomer idealist” mentality.⁷ Older cohorts also express greater involvement in collective rituals, a greater personal “tribalistic” connection to the Jewish people, greater attachment to Jewish culture, greater involvement in Jewish organizations, and greater personal attachment to Israel. Some of these, such as greater involvement in Jewish organizations and greater personal attachment to Israel, may certainly be related to life-cycle differences—older people having more opportunity to become personally acquainted with Israel, for example, and more time to devote to Jewish cultural and organizational pursuits.

Younger cohorts, on the other hand, tend to be more involved in stricter rituals (which may reflect the resurgence of Orthodoxy among the younger cohorts); the youngest cohort is also quite involved in more common ceremonial and collective rituals, and they tend to have a clearer sense of the distinctiveness of Jews in the United States. Both young and old are more supportive of Israel’s role for world Jewry than the baby boomer generation.

Because these patterns may differ by gender and education, and because there is a larger proportion of women among the oldest cohort (women tend to outlive men), we thought it important to look at gender differences in Jewish identity controlling for both age and education. Because of the differences in Jewish identity by denomination, we also thought it important to control for denomination. To determine whether there are significant gender differences in the various expressions of Jewish identity

once age and denomination have been controlled for, we used an analysis of variance for each Jewish identity factor, with gender, age, education, and denomination being the independent variables. Using an analysis of variance allows us to look at the variation introduced by each category of the independent variables—for gender and for denomination, Orthodox, Conservative, Reform/Reconstructionist, each of which is contrasted with the unaffiliated denominational group. Age and education are introduced as continuous covariates. The unstandardized effects are presented, along with whether or not they are statistically significant (at a $p < 0.05$ level). The magnitude of the effect for each variable is determined after the other variables in the model have been controlled for (Table 6.3). In Figure 6.5 we present the adjusted mean scores of men and women for the Jewish identity factors, after the analysis of variance controls for age, education, and denomination.

The results show that women have significantly stronger Jewish identity in almost of its expressions even when age, education, and denomination are controlled for. Thus, the suggestion that gender differences are a result of “structural immersion” (in secular roles) is not supported by this analysis, as gender differences remain significant even after education is controlled for. Similarly, the suggestion that women are more strongly identified with the various expressions of Jewishness because they are older is not supported, as gender differences remain significant even when age is controlled for. Furthermore, controlling for denomination does not undermine most of the gender differences just described.

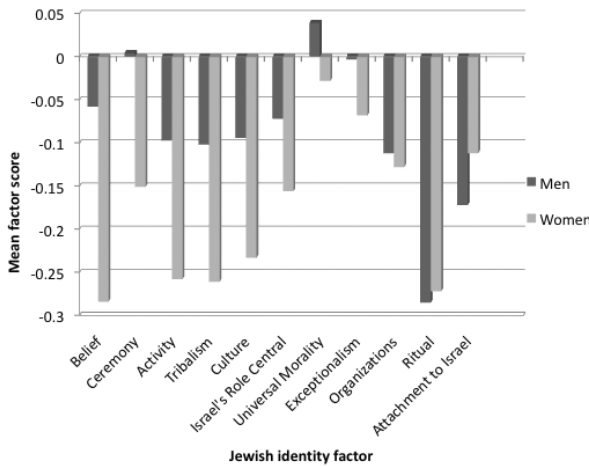


Figure 6.5. Mean scores on Jewish identity factors, by gender (controlling through analysis of variance for age, education, and denomination).

Comparing the unstandardized coefficients across factors allows us to see where the gender differences are the greatest. The biggest differences between men and women's Jewish identity are with respect to the factor Belief, a private religious expression of Jewish identity. This factor reflects spirituality, and the results are consistent with the aforementioned research by Rayburn (2004) and Woolever et al. (2006). Jewish women's expressions of spirituality are more highly differentiated from those of men than are their more behavioral expressions of private religiosity measured in the factor Ritual, perhaps because women traditionally have been excused from some of the behavioral obligations expressing religiosity. Compared with men, women also are more likely to understand Jewish identity as involvement in activities of the current Jewish community, have a stronger ethnic connection to the Jewish "tribe" (Tribalism) and culture (Culture). They also express more involvement in the public celebrations of Jewish identity (Ceremony). Gender differences in other expressions of Jewish identity are smaller, but in the same direction seen for women expressing stronger Jewish identity than men.

The analysis presented in Table 6.3 also shows that the Orthodox are differentiated from the other denominations primarily in terms of the private expressions of Jewish identity, as the unstandardized parameter estimates for being Orthodox are greater for the private expressions of Jewish identity (in the top half of the table) than for the public expressions of Jewish identity (in the bottom half). Self-identification as Conservative or Reform/Reconstructionist is also related to stronger Jewish identity on almost all factors, but the differences between public and private expressions of Jewish identity are much smaller for these denominations.

A higher level of education is related to weaker expressions of private religious Jewish identity and an understanding of being Jewish as being active in the current Jewish community, but with stronger expressions of Jewish identity in terms of the public religious and ethnic factors. Age has a weak but significant effect on some of the Jewish identity factors, indicating stronger Jewish identity among older Jews, independent of the fact that more older Jews are women and older Jews tend to be less educated than younger Jews. But the effect of age is quite small and not statistically significant in almost half of the expressions of Jewish identity.

In summary, women express stronger Jewish identity than do Jewish men, independent of their denomination, education, and age; Jews identifying with a denomination express stronger Jewish identity than Jews who do not, independent of gender, education, and age; and education is related to the ways in which Jews express their Jewish identity, independent of gender, denomination, and age.

Table 6.3 Multivariate Analysis of Variance of Jewish Identity Factors, by Denomination, Gender, Education and Age

Jewish Identity Factor	Type of identity factor ^a	Gender	Orthodox	Conservative	Reform/ Reconstructionist	Education	Age	R ²
Activity	Priv (mixed)	0.172*	-1.527*	-0.934*	-0.494*	0.026*	0.000	.252
Ritual	Priv religious	-0.013	-1.872*	-0.525*	0.095*	0.035*	0.003**	.372
Belief	Priv religious	0.226*	-1.489*	-1.008*	-0.573*	0.068*	0.001	.254
Tribalism	Priv ethnic	0.159*	-1.638*	-0.979*	-0.518*	-0.021	-0.009*	.273
Culture	Priv ethnic	0.139*	-1.496*	-0.774*	-0.310*	-0.136*	-0.003*	.209
Attachment to Israel	Priv ethnic	-0.060**	-1.183*	-0.346*	0.041	-0.164*	-0.006*	.163
Universal	Pub (mixed)	0.067*	0.098**	-0.171*	-0.183*	-0.063*	-0.003*	.252
Ceremony	Pub religious	0.155*	-1.070*	-1.133*	-0.950*	-0.067*	-0.002	.233
Exceptionalism	Pub ethnic	0.065**	-0.058	-0.136*	-0.119*	-0.155*	0.010*	.076
Organizations	Pub ethnic	0.016	-0.625*	-0.548*	-0.292*	-0.062*	-0.010*	.145
Israel's Role (Unweighted μ)	Pub ethnic	0.085*	-0.776*	-0.667*	-0.403*	.057*	0.000	.091 (.2580)

^aPub denotes public; Priv, private.

*Significant at $p < 0.05$; **Significant at $p < 0.10$.

JEWISH EDUCATION

In this section we explore gender differences in formal Jewish education, and relate these to Jewish identity differences shown in the preceding section. According to the 2000–01 NJPS, more than three-quarters of American Jews report having received Jewish education between the ages of 6 and 17.⁸ There is a clear gender difference, with more than 80% of men and slightly more than 70% of women reporting having had some formal Jewish education. Most of this education took place before the ninth grade for both men and women, and there is a gender gap at both younger and older levels of Jewish education (Table 6.4). One reason for this gap is most likely that more men received at least some formal Jewish education leading up to their Bar Mitzvah, and because fewer women had a Bat Mitzvah than men had a Bar Mitzvah, there was more impetus for men to receive a Jewish education than women.⁹

Among those who had some formal Jewish education, men were slightly more likely to have gone to Hebrew school (55.1% compared with 46.5% of women), whereas women were more likely to have attended Sunday School (35.4% compared with 24.0% of men). This may also be because more boys need to learn Hebrew for their Bar Mitzvah.

It is interesting that among those with some formal Jewish education, there is no gender difference in the number of years of education they received (an average of 6.5 years for both men and women; last two rows of Table 6.4). In terms of informal education, men appear to have experienced more sleep-away Jewish camp experience than women, although almost half of both men and women went to a Jewish day camp.¹⁰

When we look at gender differences in Jewish education by denomination, we see that there is no gender difference among the Orthodox—about 90% of both men and women received formal Jewish education (Table 6.4). But among the Conservative, Reform/Reconstructionist, and unaffiliated, more men received formal Jewish education than women. There is a greater gender difference among the unaffiliated than the Reform/Reconstructionist groups, a greater gender difference among the Reform/Reconstructionist than the Conservative groups, and a greater gender difference among the Conservative than the Orthodox groups. This is reflected by (or stems from) the larger difference by denomination among women than among men. Perhaps the need for training for Bar Mitzvah, more common among boys, narrows the differences between denominations for boys more than for girls.

Among those who had some formal education, there is little gender difference in the length of formal education within any of the denominations. The length of education for both men and women varies by denomination:

Table 6.4 Jewish Education of American Jews, by Gender and Denomination

Denomination	Formal Jewish education, grades 1–12 (%)	Mean years of Jewish education, grades 1–8	Mean years of Jewish education, grades 9–12	Mean years of Jewish education, grades 1–12	(n) ^a
<i>Orthodox</i>					
Men	91.4	6.4	3.6	9.0	(199)
Women	89.1	6.3	3.9	9.1	(210)
<i>Conservative</i>					
Men	92.3	5.5	2.8	6.9	(446)
Women	79.7	5.5	2.9	6.7	(613)
<i>Reform/ Reconstructionist</i>					
Men	89.3	5.1	2.7	6.0	(619)
Women	73.6	5.2	2.9	6.2	(841)
<i>Unaffiliated</i>					
Men	66.4	4.6	2.6	6.5	(527)
Women	51.7	4.5	2.9	5.1	(609)
<i>Total</i>					
Men	83.8	5.3	2.9	6.5	(1,791)
Women	77.0	5.3	3.0	6.5	(2,273)

^aUnweighted *n* in parentheses; calculations performed using person-weights provided with dataset.

among the Orthodox, the average length of formal Jewish education is about 9 years; among the Conservative, about 6.8; among Reform/Reconstructionist, 6.1 years; and among the unaffiliated, about 5.9 years.

Jewish education is more common among the younger generations. A gender difference persists but is smaller among the younger than the older (Figure 6.6). Among those 65 and over, 84% of men and 63% of women had some formal Jewish education; among those 18–24, 88% of men and 79% of women had some formal Jewish education. The differences by age cohort are greater for women, which accounts for the narrowing gender gap. The length of formal Jewish education is also longer for younger cohorts, probably because of a proliferation of Jewish day schools (Cohen, 2004), but there are few gender differences in the length of education within each age group (as we saw for the total and for each denomination).

We can see from Figure 6.7 that even though there is variation between the age cohorts in each denomination, both denominational and gender differences persist at every age. Thus, in the oldest group shown (55+),

there are gender differences in formal Jewish education—some of them much wider than among the younger generation—in every denomination, but especially among the unaffiliated. Gender differences are narrower in the 45–54 age group in all denominations and have almost disappeared in the youngest age group (18–44) for Orthodox and Conservative. Denominational differences are greater among the women than the men in each group, including the youngest; and the unaffiliated are more differentiated from the rest of the denominational groups in the younger cohort, in terms of having had some formal Jewish education.

In sum, gender differences are apparent in whether respondents received formal Jewish education and what kind of Jewish education they had, but among those who had some formal Jewish education, there is little difference in length of education by gender. The gender gap in formal Jewish education is smallest for the Orthodox and greatest for the unaffiliated (perhaps because denomination makes a bigger difference for women than for men and perhaps because of the widespread celebration of Bar Mitzvah by men, which necessitates a modicum of formal Jewish education). We also find a narrowing of the gender gap in formal Jewish education among the younger age groups, owing primarily to the increasing preponderance of formal Jewish education, especially for women.

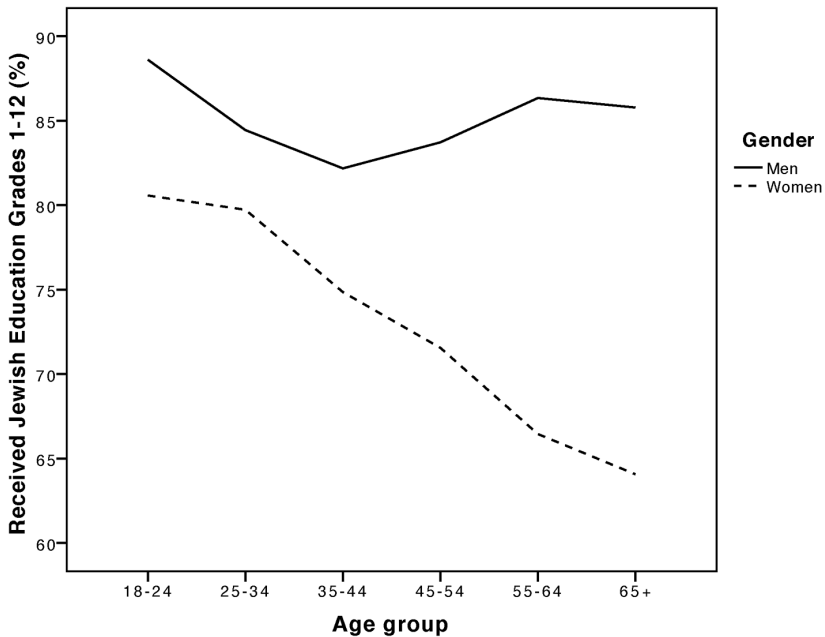


Figure 6.6. Percentage receiving Jewish education, by age group and gender.

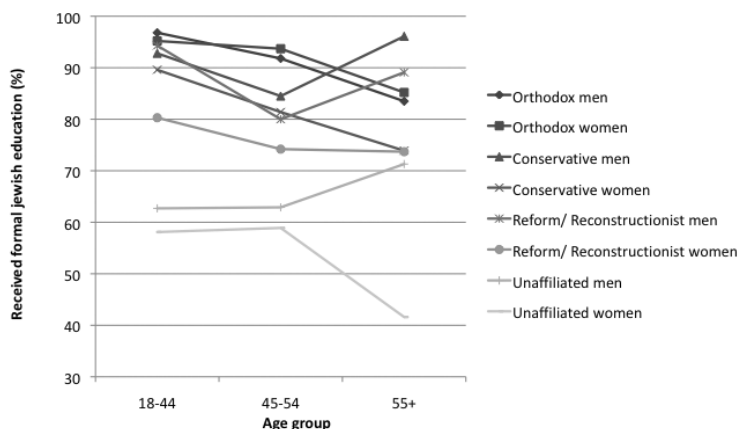


Figure 6.7. Percentage receiving Jewish education, by age group, denomination, and gender.

Jewish Education and Jewish Identity

Both the amount and type of formal Jewish education have been shown to be related to stronger Jewish identity, as measured by intermarriage, percentage of closest friends who are Jewish, ritual observance, membership in a synagogue, feeling that being Jewish is very important, and attachment to Israel (Cohen, 2007; Cohen and Kotler-Berkowitz, 2004). We have shown that men are more likely to have received formal Jewish education than women, especially among the Reform/Reconstructionist groups and those who do not identify with any denomination. Yet women tend to have a stronger Jewish identity on most of the factors, as we have demonstrated. Thus, our next questions were whether formal Jewish education affects the strength of Jewish identity as we have measured it, whether its impact was different for men and for women, and whether it narrows or widens the gender gap in Jewish identity.

We can see clearly from Figure 6.8 that both gender and formal Jewish education have an impact on strength of Jewish identity. Among men, those who have received formal Jewish education have a stronger Jewish identity than those who have not, with respect to every aspect that we have measured; a similar impact can be seen for Jewish women. At the same time, among those with or without formal Jewish education, women have a stronger Jewish identity than men with respect to almost every aspect measured. There are two exceptions to this pattern. First, with respect to the observance of personal rituals, men are more observant than women among those with no formal Jewish education; and among those with formal Jewish education, there is no gender difference. Second, men have a stronger

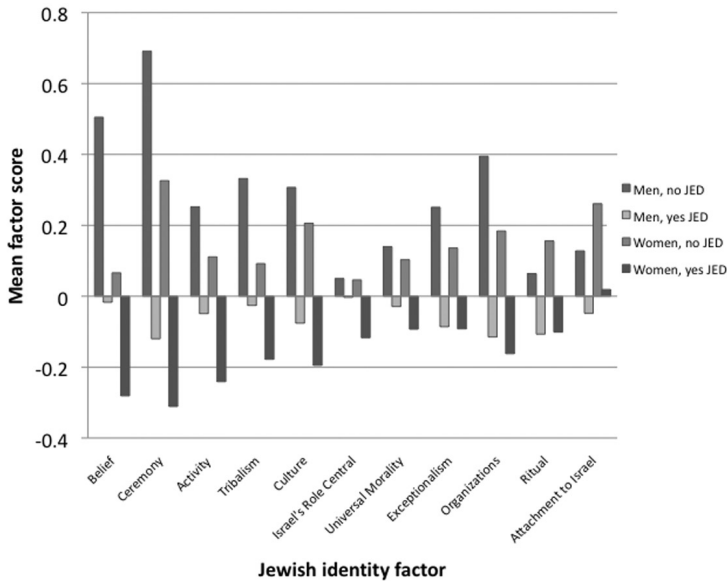


Figure 6.8. Mean scores on Jewish identity factors, by Jewish education (JED) and gender.

personal attachment to Israel—the main reason being, as already mentioned, that men are more familiar with the political and social situation in Israel than women are, and this gap remains even when men and women have received Jewish education (current familiarity with the Israeli situation is influenced very little by formal Jewish education).

Finally, we added years of Jewish education to the multivariate analysis of variance of each Jewish identity factor (presented in Table 6.3), controlling for denomination (with dummy variables of Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform/Reconstructionist), education, age, and gender (Table 6.5). The results show that gender differences remain statistically significant even when we control for years of Jewish education, denomination, education, and age. The three exceptions are Ritual (which we saw earlier), Attachment to Israel, and Organizations (which we saw earlier as well). This multivariate analysis of variance gives us adjusted means for each identity factor for men and women, once denomination, education, age, and years of Jewish education have been controlled for. The resulting means are presented in Figure 6.9. If we compare the results in Figure 6.9 with those in Figure 6.5, we see that the main effect of taking into account Jewish education is that men’s scores on the identity factors are somewhat strengthened; however, the basic differences between the genders change very little.

Table 6.5 Multivariate Analysis of Variance of Jewish Identity Factors, by Denomination, Gender, Education, Jewish Education, and Age

Jewish Identity Factor	Type of identity factor ^a	Gender	Orthodox	Conservative	Reform/ Reconstructionist	Education	Age	Years of Jewish education	R ²
Activity	Priv (mixed)	0.190*	-1.428*	-0.883*	-0.470*	0.031*	0.000	-0.023*	.267
Ritual	Priv religious	0.001	-1.786*	-0.479*	0.130*	0.045*	0.002*	-0.023*	.391
Belief	Priv religious	0.248*	-1.368*	-0.934*	-0.528*	0.078*	0.000	-0.027*	.268
Tribalism	Priv ethnic	0.176*	-1.485*	-0.897*	-0.466*	-0.015	-0.010*	-0.028*	.283
Culture	Priv ethnic	0.186*	-1.266*	-0.648*	-0.23*	-0.116*	-0.005*	-0.049*	.245
Attachment to Israel	Priv ethnic	-0.022	-0.961*	-0.232*	0.130*	-0.148*	-0.008*	-0.042*	.190
Universal	Pub (mixed)	0.092*	0.151*	-0.133*	-0.158*	-0.058*	-0.004*	-0.010*	.026
Ceremony	Pub religious	0.187*	-0.835*	-1.015*	-0.8598	-0.053*	-0.004*	-0.046*	.263
Exceptionalism	Pub ethnic	0.069*	0.003	-0.112*	-0.098*	-0.156*	0.010*	-0.018*	.085
Organizations	Pub ethnic	0.035	-0.487*	-0.474*	-0.247*	-0.049*	-0.010*	-0.029*	.164
Israel's Role (Unweighted <i>n</i>)	Pub ethnic	0.081*	-0.814*	-0.672*	-0.413*	0.052*	0.000	-0.002	.099 (2406)

*Significant at $p < 0.05$.

^a *Pub* denotes public; *Priv*, private.

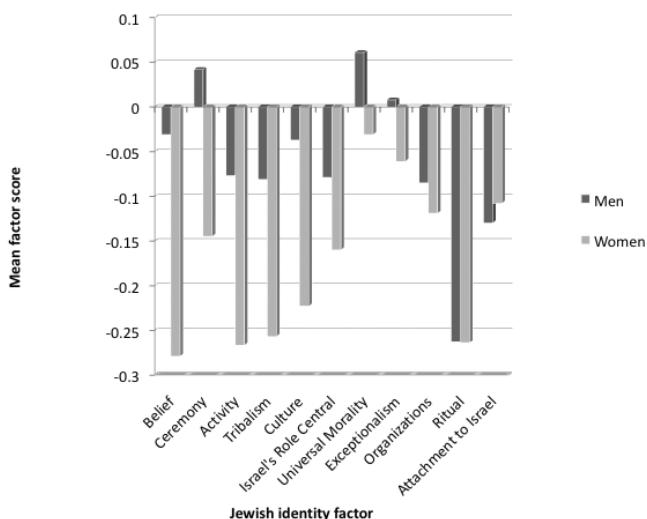


Figure 6.9. Mean scores on Jewish identity factors, by gender (controlling through analysis of variance for age, education, denomination, and amount of Jewish education).

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

We began this chapter by presenting a number of reasons to expect little gender difference in Jewish identity. The greatest gender differences in religiosity have been found in relation to belief and spirituality, which are only one part of Jewish identity. American Jewish men and women both have invested highly in secular achievements, given their high educational level and occupational standings, so that the “structural location” thesis of gender differences in religiosity was expected to be muted in this population. Furthermore, women’s involvement in the labor force in the past was associated with weaker Jewish identity, even as men’s involvement in the labor force was associated with stronger Jewish identity; and as women’s labor force participation has continued to increase (men’s more or less remaining stable), this might weaken women’s gender identity relative to men’s. Another reason for women’s stronger religious and ethnic identity in the past has been the reliance on family during immigrant transitions and diasporas, which preclude institutional establishments; with many American Jews being third- and even fourth-generation Americans, this impetus for women’s stronger identity was expected to be dampened. The growth of gender equality in public religious roles among the larger Jewish denominations in the United States (Reform and Conservative) might also be expected

to spill over into greater gender equality in both private and public expressions of individual Jewish identity.

On the other hand, gender differences in spirituality have been found even when education is controlled for. Moreover, the persisting centrality of the home and voluntary institutions in transmitting Jewish identity suggests the continuation of women's greater involvement in Jewish identity compared with men. Finally, the increased accessibility of formal Jewish education to women, as well as men, with the concomitant strengthening of Jewish identity, could be expected to result in the persistence of gender differences found in the past, albeit at stronger levels of identity.

So it was with considerable interest that we demonstrated persisting gender differences in expressions of Jewish identity of all types—religious, ethnic, public, and private. Although gender differences were most apparent in religious belief and public rituals (the Ceremony factor), gender differences were significant with respect to indicators of both public and private ethnic identity as well. Furthermore, these gender differences persist even when age (which controls for life cycle and birth cohort), denomination, secular educational level, and exposure to Jewish education are controlled for. The denomination with the strictest gender division in terms of ritual practice and public religious roles is indeed characterized by gender difference in Jewish identity; however, the gender differences among the Orthodox are actually narrower than among the other denominational groups, and in many respects are greatest among the unaffiliated. Moreover, there is no significant gender difference in ritual observance among the Orthodox: women do not fall significantly below the level of ritual observance that men express, despite men's having more obligatory commandments to perform. Women do not appear to be daunted in their identification with Jewishness by any inequalities in public religious roles that persist in some of the denominations. Women continue to receive lower levels of formal Jewish education, especially unaffiliated and Reform women, but having less formal Jewish education does not appear to weaken their identity. In addition, gender differences persist when exposure to formal Jewish education is controlled for.

As we turn to the following chapters, we ask whether women's stronger Jewish identity is also reflected in a stronger relationship between their Jewish identity and their family behaviors and secular achievements than we find among men. In Chapter 8, we also explore further the thesis of "structural location," examining the relationship between Jewishness and labor force participation and occupational achievement.