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## Gender and American Jews

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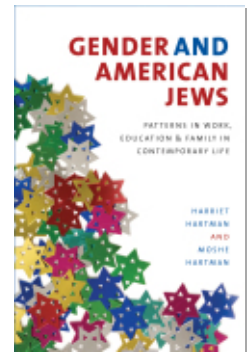
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## Conclusions and a Look to the Future

### DOES GENDER MATTER?

**W**hether or not it is an issue for American Jewish men and women, gender continues to differentiate them in terms of their family behavior, labor force participation, occupational achievement and rewards, expressions and strength of Jewish identity, and the extent to which their Jewish identity affects their family and economic behavior. Although both American Jewish men and women are distinguished by high educational and occupational achievement compared with their counterparts in the broader U.S. society, they have not achieved gender equality, and in some ways there is even more inequality among them than among their less educated counterparts in the broader society.

With regard to gender inequality in secular achievement, finding that American Jews have *not* achieved gender equality is important because in many ways American Jews embody the best chances for gender equality among all subgroups in the United States. In a subpopulation where nearly 90% of the women have the same education as their male counterparts, and nearly 60% of both men and women have at least an undergraduate college degree, one would expect similarity in labor force participation and occupational achievement. And American Jewish women do have high labor force participation rates and occupational achievement. Family roles should not pose as great an obstacle to occupational achievement as they do in the broader population, because American Jews tend to have smaller families on average. But perhaps in keeping with the cultural heritage of familism, American Jewish women tend to respond to family size—not necessarily by dropping out of the labor force (as they used to, according to Chiswick, 1986) but by curtailing their hours of employment. In fact, college-educated Jewish women with children are less likely to be employed

full time than are less educated Jewish women with children under 18 at home. Jewish mothers respond in this way much more commonly than their husbands, placing them in the role of “secondary earner.” Marriage facilitates this pattern, as Jewish mothers who are not currently married are more likely than married Jewish women to be employed full time. This pattern of being a “secondary earner” undoubtedly contributes to the lower occupational achievement of Jewish women compared with Jewish men. Their occupations are not less prestigious, but they earn less income. The disparity between men’s and women’s earnings is quite large, even when education and hours of employment are held constant. As is the case in the broader population, the disparity is greater among those with a college education, and because so large a percentage of the American Jewish population is college educated, the gender gap in income is greater than in the overall population. This lower income results in part from the differential occupations of men and women, common also in the broader population; but also contributing to an income gap may be a history of less career commitment, characterized by periods of part-time employment.

Perhaps this gender differentiation facilitates a division of labor within the family that entails commitment to the family coupled with many hours and much energy devoted to career. But it may be the norm because alternatives are too costly, especially when the supportive infrastructure makes it too challenging to arrange the division of labor differently. That is, unless men’s and women’s jobs truly provide equal rewards (income) for equal human capital, the value of most men’s and women’s family and economic time will not be considered equal (see also Chiswick, 2008, ch. 6). From the income data that we analyzed (although incomplete), it is apparent that American Jewish women are no better off than their counterparts in the broader society, and sometimes are even worse off, in terms of their income compared with that of American Jewish men in similar occupations. Furthermore, unless childcare for young children is provided at a reasonable cost, one parent is likely to remain home with a young child for at least some period of time; whose career is interrupted will be related to the respective values of each adult’s time in the labor force versus time with the family—more often than not, it is the mother’s career. So the economic conditions of the U.S. labor force reinforce a traditional familism that perpetuates a long-standing Jewish tradition: Jewish wives and mothers are the ones who scale back their careers for the good of the family.

Thus, the inequality in secular achievement that we find in the general American Jewish population is brought home within American Jewish couples. However, compared with couples in the broader U.S. white population, American Jewish couples are more homogamous in education, labor

force participation, and occupation. Although husbands and wives do not make equal contributions to the household income, American Jewish wives in dual-earner couples appear to contribute a higher proportion of the earnings than do wives in the broader U.S. population. Because American Jewish couples are responsive to the number and ages of children in the household, with wives curtailing their hours of employment when there are younger children at home, their resulting average combined hours of work are on the average lower than are those of wives in the broader population. Wives also compensate for their husband's lower income or hours of employment by spending more hours in the labor force. Thus, the typical American Jewish wife's hours of employment fluctuate with family needs; American Jewish wives, as secondary earners, manipulate their labor force commitments to resolve role conflicts and to alleviate the overload accompanying multiple family and career demands. This pattern appears to be that of contemporary American Jews' traditional "familism," facilitated by their relatively high incomes.

These relatively high incomes do not characterize all American Jews. Divorced and remarried Jewish men are less likely to be in managerial/executive, business/finance, or professional occupations, and they have somewhat lower occupational prestige and annual earnings than men in their first marriages. As a result, remarried men are more likely to have wives with a similar or higher level of education, occupation, and income than they do. Intermarried men and women also tend to have less occupational and educational achievement than their intramarried counterparts, in first marriages as well as remarriages, but remarriage itself seems to have an effect in that remarried husbands are more likely to have wives with higher occupational status than themselves. It seems that intermarriage offers Jewish men higher economic status through their wives, particularly men who have lower educational and occupational achievement than their intramarried male counterparts. But in the remarriage, intermarriage, and first-marriage markets, American Jewish women appear to be more marriageable when they have a high education level and occupational potential. So here, too, we find that gender matters in the dynamics of remarriage and intermarriage.

Gender matters for Jewish identity. We found differences between Jewish men and women in the way they expressed their Jewishness and how strong a Jewish identity they had. Generally, women have stronger Jewish identity than men on a wide array of indicators expressing religious and ethnic, private (or personal) and public (or collective) identity. These gender differences are not explained by denominational preference, secular or formal Jewish education, or age. The biggest differences between men and

women's Jewish identity have to do with the factor Belief, a private religious expression of Jewish identity. Jewish women's expressions of spirituality are more highly differentiated from those of men than are the more behavioral expressions of private religiosity measured by the factor Ritual, perhaps because women traditionally have been excused from some of the behavioral obligations expressing religiosity. Women also are more likely than men to understand Jewish identity as involvement in the activities of the Jewish community and to have a stronger ethnic connection to the Jewish "tribe" and culture. They also express more involvement in the public celebrations of Jewish identity. Such gender differences may be one reason for the centrality of Jewish women in perpetuating Jewish religion and ethnicity (see, e.g., Prell, 1999).

Gender differences in the various ways of expressing Jewish identity reinforce findings that women in other religions are more religious than men, as well as findings that women are primary carriers of ethnic identity. Because more men receive formal Jewish education than women, which is related to stronger Jewish identity (for both men and women), some of the gender gap in Jewish identity is reduced. But as women gain access to formal Jewish education, the gender gap in Jewish identity may grow.

One of the reasons for women's stronger identification with Jewishness may be the invigoration that the women's movement has brought to women's Jewish involvement and Judaism in general (Cohen, Hammer, and Shapiro, 2005; Prell, 2007b). In some areas of American Judaism, it is clear that men's Jewish identification and involvement are suffering (Fishkoff, 2008; Fishman and Parmer, 2008; but see also Shapiro, 2007). Although there is a consistent tendency for women to show greater religious involvement across many religions historically and in the United States, Fishman and Parmer (2008) suggest that such findings represent a change from the past for American Jews and particularly for non-Orthodox American Jews.

As we discussed with respect to gender and Jewish identity in Chapter 4, one of the explanations of women's greater religiosity (found not only among Jews) is that women have less of a structural stake in secular status (e.g., they participate less in the labor force and have lower occupational achievement than men). However, among the Orthodox and Conservative, women who are more personally religious (on the Ritual factor) are more likely to have occupations that confer higher status (managerial, business, or professional), are more likely to be in the labor force (Conservative and Reform/Reconstructionist), and are more likely to be employed more hours per week (among the unaffiliated). Our results therefore undermine this structural hypothesis. A clear conclusion is that gender continues to

matter, and indeed matters more than ever, in contemporary American Jewish identity.

#### **DOES JEWISHNESS MATTER FOR FAMILY AND ECONOMIC BEHAVIORS?**

Perhaps an even more significant finding than our gender results is that Jewishness—in many forms—is related to family behavior and secular achievement, even when more conventional explanations of variance like education and age are controlled for. As we have indicated, there are ways in which the distinctiveness of American Jews from the broader U.S. population persists in terms of family behavior, education, labor force involvement, occupation, and occupational rewards of both men and women, and in the comparison between men and women. This in itself is something of a surprise, given increases in the educational level of the broader U.S. population, an increase in women's labor force participation overall, and changes in the economic structure which result in typically "Jewish" occupations being more common. Indeed, many of American Jewish women's family behavior and labor force participation rates have become more similar to those of women in the broader population. However, Jewish women continue to exhibit some signs of "familism" that are less characteristic of women in the broader population who have the same high levels of education. And the occupational differences between American Jews and the broader population remain wide for both men and women. The occupational niches of American Jews have changed somewhat even in the past decade; nevertheless, close to half of American Jewish men and women can be found in only 10 occupations (although which 10 differs between men and women). Goldscheider and Zuckerman's (1984) thesis that the American Jewish community was bolstered and reinforced by educational and occupational similarities and ties seems to be demonstrated by our findings.

Even stronger support for this thesis comes from our finding that the strength of Jewish identity is related to the familistic and economic behavior of both men and women, even after we control for more basic variables like age, education, and (in predicting labor force activity and rewards) familistic characteristics. Confirming our distinction between public and private expressions of Jewish identity, we found that expressions of private Jewish identity are more related to family behavior (also private) than are expressions of public Jewish identity. Reinforcing the notion that women are more religiously oriented than men, we found that their religious identity, as well as ethnic identity, was related to some of their family behavior, whereas among men, only their ethnic identity was related to some of their family behavior. Furthermore, women's family behavior was more likely to be related to some aspect of their Jewish identity than was men's.

The fact that there is an independent relationship to secular achievement, for the most part positive, suggests that the American Jewish community is not completely secularized; its particularistic investments in Jewish social and cultural capital often are related to higher secular achievement, especially for men. This means that Jewish identity does not become irrelevant even when a respondent does not identify with one of the main denominations. We cannot say that Jewish identity has a relationship to secular achievement only among the Orthodox; and we do not find that religious identity (as opposed to ethnic) has its main influence among the Orthodox as opposed to the other denominational groups. In fact, it is much more the case that ethnic identity is related to secular achievement, suggesting that reference groups and social norms may be part of the mechanism by which Jewish identity is related to secular achievement. It may be in its ethnic (rather than religious) function that the Jewish community exerts its primary influence on more secular aspects of contemporary life.

Such findings clearly reinforce Goldscheider and Zuckerman's (1984) "transformation" thesis—that Jewish identity and cohesiveness are at least reinforced if not maintained by the occupational and communal associations of Jews, perhaps as much as but certainly in addition to the religious centers of Jewish life. Thus, identification with an organized denomination is not a prerequisite for identifying oneself as Jewish and having one's Jewishness be related to one's everyday life.

We also found that some family behavior appears to influence religious identity: thus, ethnic feelings of attachment to the Jewish people appear to be weakened by multiple marriages, particularly when the spouse in higher-order marriages is not Jewish. Furthermore, denominational preference differs by marital status (especially being divorced, remarried, and/or intermarried), and we suspect that the divorced, remarried, and intermarried feel more comfortable in Reform or Reconstructionist congregations or not being affiliated with any denomination (i.e., marital status influences the denominational preference rather than the other way around).

These relationships between expressions of Jewishness and secular patterns of family and economic behavior undermine the notion that religion and ethnic identity are separate from secular behavior. Rather, American Jewish patterns of family and economic behavior are influenced by and influence patterns of American Jewishness. This phenomenon is not confined to women, whose Jewish identity is stronger than men's, but can be found across the spectrum of American Jews. The relationship is, however, stronger for intramarried Jews and Jews affiliated with the more traditional Orthodox and Conservative denominations, especially in terms of economic behavior.

Just as we found Jewish identity and denominational preference to be related to familistic behavior, age cohort and education retain similar relationships with family behavior, as in the broader population. Thus, religious and ethnic influences on family behavior appear to coexist—or even compete—with other social influences, sometimes being more important, sometimes as important, and sometimes less important. Also, early patterns of familistic behavior have an important influence on subsequent familistic behavior. For example, early marriage, which is related to Jewish identity and, for women, being Orthodox, has a strong effect on age at birth of first child, and this is the strongest predictor of a woman's fertility. Thus, Jewish identity not only directly affects a particular family behavior, but also affects it indirectly through past influences on family behavior, which increases its importance.

These interrelationships between Jewishness, family characteristics, and economic behavior indicate the continuing importance of multiple expressions of Jewishness and their reinforcement through nontraditional venues such as common occupations and their accompanying social and cultural networks.

Denominational preferences are reflected in different patterns of family behavior and as a result in different patterns of women's labor force participation and occupational achievement. Denominational groups tend to differ with respect to labor force and occupational achievement, particularly among women, and particularly in comparisons of Orthodox and non-Orthodox Jews. It should be noted, however, that among women in particular, ethnic Jewish identity has different relationships to secular achievement in different denominational groups. Thus, among the Orthodox, personal ethnic Jewish identity is weaker among women who are more involved in the labor force. Among Reform and Reconstructionist women, there is also a negative relationship between personal ethnic identity and labor force involvement. But among Conservative women, personal ethnic identity is higher among those who are active in the labor force. Therefore the impact of the Jewish community does not seem to be unified.

Some of the denominational differences among women can be explained when we control for family characteristics. Some of the denominational differences among men can be explained by the somewhat lower educational attainment among Orthodox men. Denominational groups appear to exert two kinds of influence on secular achievement: they reflect norms about familism, which are related to age at marriage, age at birth of first child, and number of children, which in turn are related to women's labor force involvement and subsequent occupational achievement. They also reinforce high secular achievement, particularly among men. Many of the denominational differences can be explained by variations in the strength of Jewish



identity in its various forms. Therefore, when we control for expressions of Jewish identity and denomination, expressions of Jewish identity are more closely related to secular achievement than is denominational preference.

Cohen and Eisen (2000, p. 192) conclude that “Jews no longer seek American integration. They have in full measure achieved it, and as a result can consider options . . . once viewed as threatening to Gentile acceptance.” Perhaps the extent to which American Jews allow their secular behavior to relate to their Jewish identity is another sign of accepting their Jewishness and allowing it to permeate their lives. Although their work was not based on a representative sample of American Jews, Cohen and Eisen (2000, p. 196) found that “the Jews we met tend to place Jewish commitment at or near the center of that which is enduring in their ‘self-concept.’” The extent to which we find Jewish identity related to the secular aspects of the lives of American Jews whom we study reinforces the notion that Jewish identity is part of their central “self-concept” and not compartmentalized to symbolic or fragmented religious experiences.

#### **DOES JEWISHNESS INCREASE GENDER INEQUALITY IN SECULAR ACHIEVEMENT?**

One argument that has been advanced regarding the spillover from inequality in traditional public religious roles is that stronger Jewish involvement in traditional Judaism may result in greater inequality in educational and occupational achievement. However, our findings suggest that Jewishness does not increase gender inequality in secular achievement more than it does through its familistic effect, which does result in gender differences in family roles and consequent labor force involvement. On the contrary, gender equality in education and occupational achievement between husbands and wives is more common among the Orthodox than other denominational groups. It is also more common among the intermarried. What the two groups have in common is a somewhat lower educational and occupational achievement among men; there is also a greater concentration of Orthodox women than women of other denominations in professional occupations, which contributes to the findings. As we found in our analysis of the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey, there is no evidence that traditional Jewishness increases gender inequality in secular achievement. Nor is there evidence that stronger Jewish identity is related to any sort of “marriage penalty” against American Jewish women’s educational or economic achievements. On the contrary, women’s higher education and potential occupational achievement appear to be attractive in the American Jewish marriage market. Although there is a “child penalty” in terms of labor force involvement, it seems to have decreased somewhat since 1990.

## TRENDS

We would like to be able to show the ways in which American Jews' secular achievement is changing, the directions of gender equality or inequality, the distinctions of American Jews from the broader population, and how Jewishness is related to family behavior and secular achievement. We can point in some directions, but not in a definitive way. Our ability to do so is circumscribed by a number of parameters. There are several comparisons we can employ to show change in a cross-sectional sample such as ours. The first is a comparison of age cohorts. We undertook such a comparison in a number of places in our analysis. However, because American Jews finish their education late (often in their 30s, because they undertake graduate and professional training), marry late (also often in their 30s), and have children late (also often in their 30s), it is difficult to separate life-cycle effects from cohort effects. That is, if we compare the 25–34 age group with the 55–64 age group, we cannot be sure whether those in the younger age group have completed their education, started a career, or finished (or even started) having children. The 35–44 age group is involved in intensive raising of young children, more so than the 45–54 or older age group. The 65 and older age group is beginning to retire, and it is difficult to compare their secular achievement with that of younger cohorts. That leaves us with a comparison of 45- to 64-year-olds—not a very definitive group for determining trends. In most of our analyses of secular achievement, age (cohort) did not have a significant relationship with the dependent variables, suggesting that there are not major changes from the younger to the oldest cohort once education and family characteristics are controlled for.

A second type of comparison is between the current analysis and that performed using the 1990 sample. For example, we saw that there are many ways in which the differences between American Jews and the rest of the white population in the United States have narrowed since 1990. Educational differences, particularly among women, are diminishing and are reflected in narrower differences in labor force participation rates and hours of work. Especially when age, education, and family roles are controlled for, we find increasing similarity from 1990 to 2000–01 between American Jewish labor force participation patterns and those of the broader population, especially among women. However, occupational distinctiveness remains and does not appear to be narrowing (also confirmed by Chiswick 2007).

Compared with 1990, there is somewhat more educational homogamy among American Jews, and fewer “traditional” differences defined by husbands having more education than their wives. These trends toward homogamy, and less traditionalism, mirror trends in the broader society. The

pattern of dual earning has become more common among American Jews since 1990, aligning American Jews with the overall society.

But on some measures of secular achievement, such as occupation and income, we run into more difficulties in making a comparison between the two time periods. The U.S. Census changed its classification codes from 1990 to 2000 in such a way that it is difficult to make precise comparisons between the two years, except in a very general way (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2003b). The 1990 NJPS did not collect data on individual earnings, so that we could not compare American Jewish wives' contributions to household income in 2000–01 with those in 1990.

Similarly, because the 2000–01 NJPS expanded the measurement of Jewish identity to such an extent, our analysis of how Jewishness is related to secular achievement is quite limited. We found, in 1990, for example, that “the relationship between Jewishness and labor force participation is mainly indirect, through accepted patterns of gender differentiation in the family” (Hartman and Hartman, 1996a, p. 293). But that is not what we found in our current analysis. We discovered that several aspects of Jewish identity had direct effects on educational achievement, labor force participation and hours of employment of women, occupational distribution, occupational prestige, and income—even when family characteristics, education (for the labor force variables), and age were controlled for. But we are hesitant to conclude that Jewishness is becoming more central to American Jews' lives (secular or otherwise), because of the differences in measurement and in analysis. We do think this is a trend worth considering in future research and in the analysis of other data sets, whether they be local or national.

#### **IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

Concern has been raised over the extent to which the 2000–01 NJPS is representative of the American Jewish population, as we noted in our introductory chapter. This concern extends, for example, to whether the mean annual earnings that we present are truly representative of the earnings of American Jews. We do not have a solid affirmative answer to this. With regard to earnings, we would exercise considerable caution in generalizing to all American Jews. And this concern is one of the main reasons we do not feel comfortable engaging in an extensive analysis of the changes that occurred between 1990 and 2000–01.

But when it comes to relationships between Jewish identity and earnings or occupational prestige, or gender differences in expressions of Jewish identity, we feel more confident that such relationships are likely to be representative of American Jews and that our analyses can at least lay a

foundation for further research. One of the strengths of this data set is the potential it provides for analyzing the relationships between many different expressions of Jewish identity and other types of behavior.

Have all types of Jewish identity been taken into account in the 2000–01 NJPS survey? Here we would venture to say no. We are aware of several contemporary developments in expressions of Jewish identity that are not tapped by the questions in this survey—expressions that are particularly relevant to gender and Jewishness (see also Kaufman, 2005). For example, one of the most interesting transformations that has taken place among Orthodox and Conservative women is the prevalence of women’s prayer groups, as well as their increasing participation in study groups for women (or allowing women to participate in more traditional institutions of learning). Rosh Chodesh (first of the month) groups, organized by and primarily for women, are becoming much more common in many congregations and signal women’s increasing participation in public religious roles. This development has been documented in ethnographic studies (see, e.g., El-Or, 2002). However, these expressions of Jewish identity are not queried in the NJPS. As such, the NJPS can be criticized for focusing on the “concepts and paradigms most meaningful to men’s lives” (Davidman and Tenenbaum, 1994, p. 143); that is, it includes the public religious behavior more common to men, but not the behaviors more apt to reflect women’s involvement in public religious roles.

Furthermore, the NJPS lumps religious and ethnic activities (e.g., a Bible study group is lumped with a book club), making it difficult to differentiate religious and ethnic public activities. Having accurate information about ethnic activities is particularly important for understanding gender differences in Jewish identity. Previous research suggests that women’s ethnic commitment to Jewish identity is more exclusive than men’s (Davidman and Tenenbaum, 1994). From the NJPS, however, we know nothing about the interface between Jewish ethnicity and work relationships (e.g., whether respondents care if they have Jewish colleagues at work or whether they tend to lunch with Jewish colleagues at work), whether the Jewishness of the residential environment influences what schools they send their children to, or how important it is that their neighbors are Jewish. Because interpersonal relations are so important to women, these might be key questions for understanding men’s and women’s respective roles in the assimilation process among Jews, as well as in the maintenance of a cohesive ethnic identity.

In studies of contemporary religious identity in the United States, there is much discussion of the privatization or individualization of religion and religious beliefs. Here is another example in which the current data set falls

short of what is desirable. Only one question in the survey clearly expresses this orientation by asking about resistance to outside authority (“I am bothered when told the right way to be Jewish”). Indeed, it loaded by itself on the fourteenth factor of the 14-factor solution. But one indicator out of more than 80 is not enough for a proper analysis of this individualistic orientation to being Jewish. It is possible that this is not a central orientation of Jews<sup>1</sup> or that there simply were not enough questions to adequately represent respondents’ orientation to this expression of Jewish identity. Are respondents bothered when told the “right” way to pray? To eat? To observe rituals? To contribute money to the welfare of other Jews? Does the problem have to do with who is telling them the “right” way to be Jewish (fellow Jews, rabbis, authorities in Israel)? We do not know, because the orientation was not systematically covered by the questionnaire, and therefore we could not adequately analyze this aspect of Jewish identity.

So in addition to sampling issues and non-responses, there are gaps in the survey questionnaire we used for our analysis, which might be corrected with more careful attention to the theoretical bases of the questions as well as contemporary developments. Such criticism should not detract from our analysis of the existing data; we believe we have contributed to a better understanding of contemporary American Jews with our research. But it should be taken into account in the design of future research on this population.

In addition, some of the issues we raised would be better addressed with different research designs. To study the gender dynamics of family strategies in coping with childrearing and occupational advancement, longitudinal analysis of labor force involvement, fertility, and occupational changes would be much more helpful in unraveling patterns of dual earning and how they change over the life course. We discerned a pattern of wives being “secondary earners.” To what extent does this affect wives’ occupational achievements? To what extent are the changes in wives’ labor force involvement a result of conscious decision making with which each spouse is satisfied? To what extent are the patterns carryovers from traditional roles? Without a better understanding of these dynamics, it is difficult to predict the kinds of changes we will see in the future. Perhaps women’s labor force involvement has reached a saturation point, as long as traditional childrearing arrangements are dominant. Perhaps there is dissatisfaction with this “secondary earner” arrangement, in which case change may be more likely. Without knowing the decisions made at each point in time and how the partners feel about these changes, we are limited to the kinds of analyses presented here. And, in fact, we cannot know how much gender matters without understanding how couples feel about the inequalities in their lives.

Such understanding also calls for more in-depth, qualitative interviewing. We have several good examples of such research design, including Cohen and Eisen's (2000) and Horowitz's (2000) work, and more is needed to ascertain the role Jewishness plays in Jews' secular lives. Some observational analysis and perhaps focus groups would also help us to understand the mechanisms by which denominational norms have an impact on individual behavior, evidence of which we highlighted throughout our analysis.

### **PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS**

Some of you who have reached this point in our book are wondering whether our research has any practical implications. We'd like to think so. We will focus on the following six points:

1. *The failure of American Jews to achieve gender equality in their economic roles and in the family division of labor.* Although it is at a high level, Jewish women's education has not reached the same level as men's; and despite Jewish women's training, their tendency to scale back their labor force involvement for family reasons may interfere with greater occupational achievement and rewards. An infrastructure of support in the Jewish community for working women, such as childcare, would ease the tensions in dual-career families and perhaps make it possible for highly qualified Jewish women to obtain more return for their labor force investment.

Our findings with regard to the labor force in general are actually mirrored by findings of gender difference in Jewish communal organizations: "Despite the fact that Jewish women are highly qualified to assume leadership of the Jewish community, focus groups revealed women have not yet achieved parity in the board room, in the synagogue or in key positions of professional leadership" (Cohen et al., 2005, p. 5). Community organizations would do well to confront the "glass ceilings" in their own organizations, and help harness the talent and leadership of qualified women for their own benefit.

2. *Jewish families' continuing commitment to high-quality family life and childrearing.* Although American Jews marry later than other Americans, start having children later, and have fewer children, their commitment to the family is evident in several of our findings. The lower rate of divorce, the longer duration of first marriages, the way Jewish mothers respond to having a child under the age of 3 at home, the pattern of secondary earning, by which Jewish wives' labor force involvement fluctuates according to family need—these are all indications of commitment to the family. Although some see family values unraveling, we would perhaps favor the

glass half-full approach and suggest that the family strengths of the Jewish community should be reinforced and supported through both institutional infrastructure (such as childcare support) and opportunities to acknowledge the Jewish family's strengths and strategies.

3. *Women's juggling of familial obligations and career opportunities and commitment.* Marriage makes it possible for mothers and wives to scale back their hours of employment and to care for young children. This may not always be in the family's best economic interest. In about 20% of families in which both spouses are employed, wives earn more than their husbands. Does the traditional pattern undermine the family's economic prospects? This is an issue that should be addressed; sometimes a nontraditional pattern may work better for a family's interests.

Also, about 12% of Jewish mothers with children at home are not married. They may need even more support than two-parent families.

Like women in the broader society, Jewish women find that balancing a career and a family is not easily accomplished, and there are no recipes for guaranteeing success. Recognizing the possible family constellations among American Jews, and analyzing ways in which the community can support these situations, is incumbent on the Jewish community leaders.

4. *The importance of Jewishness in secular activities.* A most important finding of our research is that Jewishness matters to American Jews in their secular activities. We think this is an indication that Jewishness is important to American Jews, that it helps to guide their mundane orientations in addition to filling spiritual needs. Its influence on family behavior is divided between religious and ethnic influences; its influence on labor force involvement and achievement is tied to a greater extent to ethnic influences. We think this demonstrates the continuing (or renewed) importance of the Jewish community in influencing norms of behavior and orientations. One practical suggestion that derives from this is that the American Jewish community may be receptive to learning more about what Jewish tradition and contemporary Jewish thinking have to say about family behavior, labor force involvement, and occupational commitment. Opportunities to discuss contemporary dilemmas with respect to these issues may well fall on receptive ears.
5. *The interaction of intermarriage, secular achievement, denomination, and Jewish identity.* American Jewish men who have married non-Jews on average have lower educational and occupational achievement than their intramarried counterparts; part of their motivation for intermarriage may be to gain social status, as their marriages, especially if they are remarriages, are more likely than those of their intramarried counterparts

to be marriages to women who have the same or higher educational and occupational achievements as theirs. This raises the question of whether the normative expectations of high education and economic achievements have pushed these sons away from the Jewish community and, if so, whether this is desirable.

Intermarried Jews are more likely not to identify with any particular denomination, or to identify themselves as Reform or Reconstructionist. Their Jewish identity tends to be weaker than that of those who express a denominational preference, and Jewish identity is not as closely related to their family behavior and secular achievement. Although none of this is unexpected, our empirical results confirm that this is a process of weakening ties to Jewishness and its impact.

6. *Denominational differences, especially between the Orthodox and the non-Orthodox, and the unaffiliated and the affiliated.* Paradoxically, we found that the very ways in which American Jews are more distinctive from the broader U.S. population do not correspond with the ways in which traditional Judaism or stronger Jewish identity affects family behavior and to some extent economic achievement. One reason for this is the very different patterns found among Orthodox Jews as compared with non-Orthodox Jews. The early marriage, the relatively early years of childbearing, and the large number of children in Orthodox families stand in stark contrast to the delayed marriage, delayed childbearing, and small families of the majority of American Jews. This different family pattern may be related to the somewhat lower educational attainment of Orthodox Jews, as well as their somewhat different occupational niches. Some of this behavior (such as early marriage, especially for women) is motivated by their religious commitment. However, most of it is related to ethnic identity and to practical considerations (e.g., which spouse has more education and therefore a higher earning potential, how many young children need care at home).

What was striking to us is that Jewish identity, particularly ethnic identity, affects all denominational groups' secular behavior. However, each denominational group may be exerting somewhat different influences because of its composition and its expectations about family and secular behavior. We find, indeed, evidence of how the myriad varieties of contemporary American Jewishness (Fishman, 2007) maintain some of their variety. And we find evidence that even those who have not found a denominational group to identify with continue to relate their secular behavior to their Jewish identity. Bringing these connections into public discourse, so that Jews find strength in their diversity and in their communality, would seem to be a worthwhile endeavor.



In conclusion, we set out to further pursue our studies of gender (in)equality among American Jews. What we found was a much more nuanced picture of how gender, Jewishness, denominational preferences, family behavior, and secular achievement are interconnected in a dynamic way. Undoubtedly, these interconnections will continue to evolve as the surrounding contexts develop. We look forward to following these developments.