American Jews and Their Social Justice Involvement: Evidence from a National Survey

Steven M. Cohen* and Leonard Fein

*The Hebrew University and the Florence G. Heller/JCCA Research Center

Sponsored by:

Amos – The National Jewish Partnership for Social Justice

Summary

Some key findings The vast majority (about 90%) of American Jews agree with the following statements:

- "Jews have a responsibility to work on behalf of the poor, the oppressed, and minority groups"
- "Jews have a responsibility to work on behalf of Jews who are needy or oppressed"
- "When Jewish organizations engage in social justice work, it makes me feel proud to be a Jew."
- "Jews' involvement in social justice causes is one good way to strengthen ties with other groups in society."
- "American Jews have an impressive history of social justice involvement."

These and other surprising, policy-relevant results emerge from this recently conducted study of American Jews and social justice involvement. The study is based primarily upon an analysis of results from a national survey sample of American Jews (N = 1,002). It examines both the resources and impediments to expanding social justice involvement among American Jews.

To the best of our knowledge, "American Jews and Their Social Justice Involvement**"** is the **largest, most comprehensive study** of American Jewish attitudes toward social justice engagement ever conducted. Never before has a large, nationwide sample of American Jews been asked so many, such wide-ranging, and such detailed questions on their attitudes and active involvement in social justice-related causes and issues.

The sample of Jews from all major Jewish identity profiles provided clear evidence of their **strong support for social justice** and social justice-related themes. Accordingly, from a communal policy perspective, this scientific evidence argues for expanded support for social

justice activities on the part of synagogues, federations, JCCs, schools, and other Jewish organizations.

To illustrate, as noted above, a vast majority endorsed the statement that: "Jews have a responsibility to work on behalf of the poor, the oppressed, and minority groups" (87% agreed, just 13% disagreed). Even more agreed, "Jews have a responsibility to work on behalf of Jews who are needy or oppressed" (92% vs. 8%). They also exhibit sympathy, if not enthusiasm, toward the issues embodied in the conventional social justice agenda. As many as 90% or more favor "reducing the gap between rich and poor Americans," "promoting civil rights for African-Americans and other minority groups," "ensuring freedom of choice for women seeking abortions," "ensuring access to affordable health care," and "promoting tolerance for gays and lesbians" – to take a selection of diverse issues. At the same time, they are quite capable of demurring from what may be regarded as the conventional, liberal-leaning social justice agenda. For example, 55% oppose declaring a moratorium on capital punishment.

The social justice commitment of American Jews is intimately **bound up with their construction of their Jewish identities**. A three-to-one majority affirmed, "A commitment to social justice is at the heart of my understanding of Judaism." By a remarkable 94%-6% majority, the sample agreed, "When Jewish organizations engage in social justice work, it makes me feel proud to be a Jew." Asked to pick the quality that "you consider most important to your Jewish identity," as many as 47% chose "a commitment to social equality," as opposed to 24% who picked, "religious observance," and 13% who selected, "support for Israel."

Respondents widely support synagogues, Jewish federations, and other Jewish organizations engaging in social justice programming. By an 80% to 20% margin, they agree that "synagogues should sponsor more social justice programs and activities," a margin almost identical (82%/17%) with the results for a parallel question on Jewish federations and other Jewish agencies.

Despite their apparent ringing endorsement of social justice themes, when asked directly about the appeal of social justice, the sample is more hesitant: Just 24% find the term, "social justice," very appealing, most (56%) could label it only somewhat appealing, and 21% find it unappealing. We infer that **"Social justice," as a term, is less popular** than specific social justice causes or issues.

The survey also highlighted **some of the obstacles** to mobilizing Jews to engage in social justice activities under Jewish sponsorship. A slim majority agrees that Jews who work for the betterment of society "should do so through non-sectarian organizations and not specifically as Jews." Only a very small number prefer "to help needy Americans" by working with other Jews (15%), or prefer "to promote some social justice cause with" a Jewish rather than non-Jewish group (16%). At the same time, they are not opposed to working with Jews and Jewish groups. Most are indifferent or neutral, no doubt reflecting their full integration into American society and, correlatively, their engagement in social justice activities under non-sectarian auspices. Significantly, not many perceive a their synagogues or organized Jewry as having a substantial social justice agenda.

Alongside the widespread support for social justice issues, smaller but **significant numbers actually volunteer in social justice or related activities.** Just under half the sample (49%) has, at some point, engaged in what they regard as social justice activities. Almost a quarter (23%) of the respondents have done so within the last year. Almost a quarter of them (24%) have ever engaged in such activity via a synagogue, about the same number (23%) that has ever done so through another Jewish organization.

How do these attitudes and activities vary among the population?

The appeal of social justice climbs with **age** (higher among older people) and with **political liberalism**. The more **Jewishly engaged** are more inclined to find Jewish meaning in social justice, as they are also more inclined to find Jewish meaning in other dimensions of Judaism.

Synagogue members, more than others, as also the more traditional Jewish denominations, were more prepared to undertake social justice activities with other Jews and/or in a Jewish group.

With respect to action (volunteering for social justice causes and community service) rather than attitudes, **younger people out-perform older people**. Such activity also increases in line with more **education and income**, as with **political liberalism** and **synagogue membership**.

If attitudes are so favorable, then why are not more Jews engaging in social justice activities under Jewish communal sponsorship?

The evidence points to several principal obstacles to increased mobilization in Jewish social justice activities:

- **Ambivalence:** American Jews are, at times, ambivalent about the term, "social justice."
- **Indifference to Jewish sponsorship:** Many of those committed to social justice are indifferent to undertaking such activities in Jewish contexts and/or with other Jews, and some may even feel some discomfort in predominantly Jewish networks.
- **Inertial inactivity:** Knowledge about social justice and Judaism and interest in social justice work do not automatically yield ongoing and active volunteer involvement.

Positive and widely held attitudes does not always translate into Jewish social justice activity (just as idealistic sentiments often fail to translate in other spheres of human behavior). Knowing the good does not always lead to doing the good.

However, the widespread and even enthusiastic endorsement of social justice engagement among American Jews does suggest an untapped potential for mobilization. Translation of that potential into an ongoing reality depends only on the community's readiness to engage in appropriate community organizing work.

Background

At least since the late nineteenth century, Western Jews have enjoyed a reputation for extensive involvement in social movements, politics, civic engagement, social justice activities, and related phenomena. They have been prominent as critics, philanthropists, organizers, protesters, volunteers, lobbyists, journalists, and so forth.

Those who have engaged in these sorts of activities have assumed a variety of stances toward their Jewishness. Some have denied any connection between their activist involvement and their Jewish origins, even going so far, at times, to proclaim Judaism as the very antithesis of their worldly engagement. Some have been steadfastly indifferent to any connection between their own Jewishness and their commitment to social justice. Still others, including (but hardly limited to) rabbis, educators, and Jewish communal leaders, have seen social justice involvement and related engagement as intimately bound up with, and derived directly from, their understanding of being Jewish.

In the United States, the period of the 1950s and 1960s is often described as a high point of American Jewish involvement in "social justice" activities**.** Jews, both as individuals and as groups, assumed prominent roles in the civil rights movement, in advancing legislation against discrimination, in anti-poverty work, in advocating civil liberties, in partisan political activity, and in protesting American involvement in the Viet Nam war. Their activism at the time would carry forward beyond this period into new arenas for engagement in recent decades, such as environmentalism and movements for gender equality, reproductive rights, and, later, gay and lesbian movements.

Social scientific research in the 1950s and 1960s demonstrated convincingly that Jews then regarded social justice involvement and related engagement as central to their sense of being Jewish (Sklare and Greenblum 1967). To take a telling piece of evidence, interviewers asked the Jews of suburban "Lakeville," Sklare's pseudonymous Chicago suburb, for their image of the "good Jew." Aside from "accept his being a Jew and not try to hide it," the qualities they most frequently cited as "essential" were the following: 1) lead an ethical and moral life; 2) promote civic betterment and improvement in the community; 3) support all humanitarian causes; 4) gain respect of Christian neighbors; and 5) help the underprivileged improve their lot. Four of these five leading items plainly reflect a concern for social justice. In contrast, items

relating to ritual observance and support for Israel trailed the social justice-related items considerably, placing at or near the bottom of the list. Plainly, Sklare's mid-century Jewish suburban respondents believed that to be a good Jew required a significant commitment to social justice.

Continued evidence of the linkage between social justice and being Jewish emerged in several scattered studies conducted since then. In 1988, a national survey of American Jews was conducted by the Los Angeles Times. When asked, "Which of the following qualities do you consider most important to your Jewish identity?" the largest number (50%) chose, "A commitment to social equality," far exceeding the number who chose Israel or religious observance (17% apiece).

Somewhat contrasting evidence emerged from a 1997 national survey of American Jews ("Religious Stability and Ethnic Decline," conducted for the Florence G. Heller/JCCA Research Center). When asked about the desirability of various behavior "for a person to be a good Jew," the item, "work for social justice causes," mustered the support of 50% of the respondents (for "essential" or "desirable" combined), trailing "educate oneself about Judaism and Jewish history" (86%), "support Israel" (73%), and "belong to a synagogue" (67%). The 1997 survey also reported that younger adults expressed less passionate and more neutral attitudes toward various expressions of the linkage between social justice and Jewish meaning and identity (see more details below).

How can these results be squared with those reported by the Los Angeles Times just nine years earlier? In all likelihood, differences in question wording more than the passage of time lay at the heart of this seeming discrepancy.

Comes the question: How do Jews see things now? Do they still highly value social justice work and do they still widely value such engagement as a source of Jewish meaning? And, insofar as they do, in what ways precisely do they care as Jews and as Americans about social justice involvement, and how do they understand the active involvement of some and the lack of involvement of others?

Those questions have been much discussed these past two decades and more. They have been the subject of much polemical argument, in particular as neo-conservative Jews have repeatedly predicted the demise of the historic connection between the Jews and liberalism or have argued that Judaism is, in fact, inherently conservative and that the Jews who assume that

Judaism points to liberalism are simply mistaken. (Admittedly, "liberalism" is not the same as "a commitment to social justice. At least some, perhaps many, neo-conservatives and other non-liberals might well claim that they are no less committed to social justice than are liberals, might even claim that their conservative policies are more effective ways to bring justice about. But the association between liberalism and social justice is not only part of the popular culture, at least at first blush; as we shall see when we examine the data; it is very much alive among Jews today. We think, accordingly, that a version of "liberalism" can, with caution, be seen as a surrogate for "commitment to social justice.")

Beyond the polemics, it has seemed reasonable to assume a steady attrition in the Jewish commitment to social justice. The logic would appear to be overwhelming: Jews have become considerably more affluent, and simple self-interest might therefore induce them to abandon economic liberalism (though not other forms of liberalism; see Cohen and Liebman 1997). Then, too, America's great social justice movements of earlier years have all receded in general appeal, and Jews are certainly not immune to societal trends of this sort.

We note as well a question that is rarely raised but to which we devote considerable attention below: Does the institutional Jewish community provide, and/or is it seen as providing, opportunities for social justice engagement?

At least some empirical evidence suggests that the "passionate people" have become considerably less passionate in recent decades. Steven M. Cohen and Arnold M. Eisen's The Jew Within (2000) argues forcefully that American Jews have turned their sights and identities inward. They seem less engaged as activists and volunteers, exhibiting generally less interest in politics, philanthropy, organizations, and, by extension, Israel – all related to the collective aspect of being Jewish in America. At the same tie, the stated agendas and allocation of resources of Jewish agencies no longer appear to place as much emphasis upon wider societal issues. Social scientific surveys suggest significantly less emphasis upon social justice as a Jewish value among younger Jews as contrasted with their elders – as, for example, in the percent who agree that it is at least desirable for a good Jew to work for social justice causes (from 64% in a 1988 national survey of American Jews to, as noted above, 50% just nine years later). (Cohen 1989, 1998.) And American Jews themselves suspect that they (or their Jewish family and friends and associates) are less passionate about social justice. In the nationwide survey we conducted for this study, the American Jewish respondents split evenly as to whether

they believe that "Jews are losing their passion for social justice." Might it be that the half who agree know something about themselves and their friends?

To address these issues, this study considerably fills out the complex picture. The study, based primarily upon an analysis of results from a survey of a national survey sample of American Jews (N = 1,002), examines both attitudes and behaviors of American Jews as they related to social justice involvement. It was commissioned by Amos: The National Jewish Partnership for Social Justice, a newly launched social justice-oriented organization (April, 2001).

Accordingly, this policy-oriented research examines both the resources and impediments to the Amos mission, asking throughout:

1) To what extent are today's American Jews interested in social justice involvement?
2) To what extent do they link social justice commitment with their sense of being Jewish?
3) Which sorts of American Jews can be most easily recruited for social justice activities? And,
4) What are the major obstacles and blockages to mobilizing more American Jews to undertake social justice work under Jewish auspices?

Methods

The survey data analyzed below derive from telephone-administered interviews completed by 1,002 Jewish respondents throughout the United States. The Washington office of Market Facts, Inc., a national survey research company, fielded the survey in two stages, January 18-February 12, 2001 and March 12-20, 2001.

The sampling of rare populations (American Jews constitute less than 3% of the national population) is always a methodological challenge, to put matters mildly. The increasing resistance of potential respondents to surveys (more skeptics, more hang-ups, more slam-downs, and more outright refusals) has further compounded this challenge. Even the highly respected and authoritative (and well-funded) National Jewish Population Studies in 1990 and 2001 experienced significant difficulties in sampling, access, and respondent cooperation.

In light of these difficulties and limited resources, we searched for an acceptable optimum approach. We turned to the Market Facts Inc. Consumer Mail Panel, consisting of about 368,000 American households who have agreed to be surveyed from time to time on a variety of concerns. Of those, at least one Jewish adult was found in about 10,400 households.

The first wave consisted of re-interviews with 536 respondents who, in the winter of 2000, had participated in a mail-back survey on Jewish attitudes toward religion in public life (Cohen 2000). We turned to these known respondents so as to capitalize on numerous previously asked questions on Jewish involvement and socio-demographic characteristics. To supplement these respondents (N = 546), OOPS –QUERY TO STEVE: IS IT 536 OR 546? we launched the second round of telephone-administered interviews (N=466), drawn from the Consumer Mail Panel.

Market Facts drew the sample so as to approximate distributions on the following socio-demographic measures calculated from the 1990 National Jewish Population Study:[1] age,

[1] The 1990 National Jewish Population Study determined that approximately 80% of adults who are Jewish also said that their religion is Jewish (Kosmin et al., 1991: 5-6). Jews who do not identify as Jewish for purposes of religion (so-called "secular" or "ethnic" Jews), report lower levels of Jewish involvement (i.e., observance, affiliation, in-marriage, etc.). Hence, a

education, presence of children, geographic region, and marriage type (in-married, mixed married, never married, other). The appendix contains the list of target frequencies for these characteristics. Panel members had previously reported these and other characteristics, including religious identity, in periodic screening questionnaires.

To what extent and in what manner does this sample accurately reflect or depart from the American Jewish population? To address that concern, we compared the sample with results from the 1990 National Jewish Population Study (see Appendix). We find that this study's sample is substantially older, less married, and somewhat more educated than American Jews at large. The most notable gap between our survey and the population lies in this sample's under-representation of those under the age of 35. As a result, we cannot examine reliably the results for the youngest adults; however, we can still examine the veracity of claims regarding over-time trends in social justice engagement. If American Jews are indeed less committed to such matters, then we would expect to find age-related differences over the 35-80 year old age spectrum, for which the sample contains sufficient numbers of cases for reliable comparisons.

At the same time, and reassuringly, the Jewish identity characteristics of this sample largely match those of the 1990 NJPS sub-sample. The few variations between the sample and the NJPS point neither to a more Jewishly engaged nor to a less Jewishly engaged sample overall than we find in the NJPS. For example, in both cases (the NJPS and this sample), about three fifths attend high holiday services, and about half have mostly Jewish close friends. In both surveys, less than half belong to a synagogue, and just under a third make use of a JCC. (We should note that the course of their adult lives far greater numbers affiliate with such institutions at one or more points..)

---

survey (such as this) based upon a sample who claim to be Jewish by religion under-represents the Jewishly less involved. Consequently, it slightly over-estimates the overall population's levels of Jewish identification, at least insofar as "involvement" and "identification" are highly correlated, as, indeed, they are. Since the more Jewishly involved more often report a Jewish commitment to social justice and other matters, this study somewhat overstates the population's levels of Jewish commitment to social justice involvement.

Though somewhat problematic, the few sampling biases do not impinge upon the substantive conclusions drawn from these findings. In all instances, the inferences we draw rely only upon major tendencies in the data. Minor changes, of the sort that would ensue from modifications in demographic distributions, would not in any way alter the main story line emerging in the following pages.

Comparing the socio-demographic characteristics of the social justice sample with a comparable sub-sample from the 1990 National Jewish Population Study

Socio-Demographic Variables			
		NJPS Sub-sample	**This sample**
Age	65+	18	23
	55-64	15	27
	45-54	17	29
	35-44	27	16
	25-34	24	5
% Married		73	62
Education (Men)	Graduate Degree	30	46
	Bachelor's	35	25
	Less	35	29
Education (Women)	Graduate Degree	22	32
	Bachelor's	33	25
	Less	45	43
State	New York	25	26
	California	13	15
	New Jersey	9	8
	Florida	8	10
	Massachusetts	7	4
	Pennsylvania	6	5
	Maryland	5	3
	Illinois	4	3
	Ohio	3	3
	Other	18	23

Comparing the Jewish Identity characteristics of the social justice sample with a comparable sub-sample from the 1990 National Jewish Population Study

Jewish Background and Identity Variables			
		NJPS Sub-sample	**This Sample**
Jewish Education	Day School	8	6
	Part-time (exc. Sunday)	39	38
	Sunday School	21	29
	Other, none	31	27
Most close friends are Jewish		49	47
No tree on Christmas		77	76
Passover Seder		73	85
Yom Kippur fast		63	61
Shabbat candles		22	24
Service attendance	High holidays or more	59	61
	Monthly or more	27	25
Denomination	Orthodox	7	5
	Conservative	39	32
	Reform	41	35
	Other	14	28
Synagogue member		44	45
JCC User (or member)		30	28
Other Jewish organization member		34	29
Visited Israel		33	36
Very or extremely attached to Israel		36	23
Being Jewish very important		50	41

The Findings

Wide Support for Social Justice: In response to numerous questions, the sample provides clear evidence of American Jews' strong support for social justice and social justice-related themes. A vast majority endorses the statement that: "Jews have a responsibility to work on behalf of the poor, the oppressed, and minority groups" (87% agree, just 13% disagree). Even more agree that , "Jews have a responsibility to work on behalf of Jews who are needy or oppressed" (92% vs. 8%). At the same time, a vast majority rejects the view that "Jews have enough problems of their own without worrying about the broader society" (just 16% agreed, while fully 85% disagreed).

Very widespread positive views of
Jewish involvement in social justice work
[excluded: Not sure responses]

	Agree	**Dis-agree**
Jews have a responsibility to work on behalf of the poor, the oppressed and minority groups.	87	13
Jews have a responsibility to work on behalf of Jews who are needy or oppressed.	92	8
A commitment to social justice is at the heart of my understanding of Judaism	75	25
When Jewish organizations engage in social justice work, it makes me feel proud to be a Jew	94	6
Jews have enough problems of their own without worrying about the broader society.	16	85

In addition, we asked respondents about their views on a number of social causes associated with the contemporary social justice agenda, eliciting large numbers who say they favor these positions (as contrasted with the small numbers in opposition). Significantly, 90% favor "reducing the gap between rich and poor Americans," and almost as many seem willing to help pay for it – 83% favor "expanding government funding of programs for poor people." (The affluent nature of this sample may make these results even more surprising.)

Similar lopsided majorities favor such issues as protecting the environment, and promoting civil rights for minority groups, as well as tolerance for gays and lesbians. Equally, if not more impressive, are the large numbers who choose the more vigorous supportive option of "strongly favor." For example, 96% favor "assuring freedom of choice for women seeking abortions," and 71% strongly favor this position. Almost all, 99%, favor, "ensuring access to affordable health care," and 70% say they strongly favor this item.

Clearly, American Jews remain sympathetic, and at times enthusiastic, towards the conventional, largely liberal, social justice agenda.

Social Justice is an Important Component of American Jewish Identity: The social justice commitment of American Jews is intimately bound up with their construction of their Jewish identities. A three-to-one majority affirms, "A commitment to social justice is at the heart of my understanding of Judaism." By a remarkable 94%-6% majority, the sample agrees, "When Jewish organizations engage in social justice work, it makes me feel proud to be a Jew."

These answers indicate a widespread endorsement of social justice as a specifically Jewish mandate. Respondents connect social justice with their being Jewish, and indeed do so in a variety of ways, as we shall see presently.

Very widespread positive views of the relationship of Jews and Judaism to social justice

[excluded: not sure responses]

	Agree	**Dis-agree**
With their history of persecution, Jews generally have a greater sensitivity to discrimination & victimization of other minorities	91	10
American Jews have an impressive history of social justice involvement	96	4
The Bible strongly endorses the pursuit of social justice	92	8

Jews widely connect social justice involvement with their Jewish heritage, both recent and ancient. More than 90% agree, "American Jews have an impressive history of social justice involvement," and a similar number affirms, "The Bible strongly endorses the pursuit of social justice." They associate being Jewish in the past with social justice, both the near past (American) and the distant past (the Biblical period). The link also resonates with American Jews' sense of the Jewish present. A nine-to-one ratio endorses the statement, "With their history of persecution, Jews generally have a greater sensitivity to discrimination and victimization of other minorities."

It is one thing to say that social justice is important to American Jews' sense of being Jewish. It is another to place that commitment in comparative context with social justice when compared to other important dimensions of Jewish identity. Repeating a question posed by the Los Angeles Times in a 1988 national study of American Jews, we asked our respondents to pick the quality that "you consider most important to your Jewish identity." As many as 47% chose "a commitment to social equality," as opposed to 24% who picked "religious observance," and 13% who selected "support for Israel."

More see "commitment to social equality" as
most important to their Jewish identity
than see "religious observance" or "support for Israel"

Which of the following qualities do you consider most important to your Jewish identity?	**This survey**	**LA Times (1988)**
A commitment to social equality	47	50
Religious observance	24	17
Support for Israel	13	17
Other	16	16
	100%	100%

The comparable LA Times results in 1988 suggest only small changes over the last 13 years. One is struck by the similarity between the two surveys, separated widely by sampling, survey methodology, and the passage of time. The small changes in the figures from 1988 to 2001 may be just happenstance. If they do point to some real underlying change, they suggest a modest decline in hard-core Israel attachment, a significant rise in religiosity, and a statistically meaningless decline in commitment to social equality.

Other survey questions also put the connection between social justice and being Jewish in a comparative framework. Interviewers asked respondents to state the extent to which each of 15 items was meaningful to their being Jewish. More than any other item, respondents chose, "Making the world a better place," with 68% giving it their highest possible rating ("very meaningful"). Following this item, in turn, were "believing in God" (62%), "celebrating Jewish holidays" (51%), and "helping the underprivileged" (43%). It is, we think, interesting that the high-ranking social justice-related items (the "better place" and "underprivileged" questions), score substantially higher than does "social justice" per se; we explore the significance of that difference below.

The meaningfulness of Jewish activities & beliefs:

High rankings for social justice & related activities

For you personally, how meaningful is each of the following for being Jewish? Please answer on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means not meaningful, and 5 means very meaningful.

	(5) "Very Meaningful"	(4) Almost "Very Meaningful"	(1-3) Not Meaningful
Making the world a better place*	68	21	11
Believing in God	62	14	24
Celebrating Jewish holidays	51	23	26
Helping the underprivileged	43	28	29
Creating a Jewish home life	41	22	37
Marrying a Jew	36	16	48
Working for social justice	31	29	40
Having a rich spiritual life	32	30	38
Contributing to charities in general	32	33	35
Caring about Israel	31	29	40
Being part of a Jewish community	28	28	44
Contributing to Jewish charities	19	27	54
Having Jewish friends	16	22	62
Studying Torah or other Jewish texts	13	17	70
Keeping up with Jewish arts, music, or literature	9	18	73

***Social justice-oriented answers, as suggested by the patterns of correlations with "working for social justice," are highlighted.**

Hesitations about the Term "Social Justice": To elaborate, "working for social justice" placed only in the middle of the list of meaningful Jewish activities, although it ranked well ahead of "contributing to Jewish charities" or "studying Torah or other Jewish texts". In fact, the survey provides additional evidence of the more limited popularity of the term "social justice," as compared with allied concepts (e.g., "make the world a better place," "helping the underprivileged"). Despite the ringing endorsement of social justice themes noted earlier, when asked directly about the appeal of social justice, the sample provides an equivocal set of results. Just 24% find the term very appealing, most (56%) label it only somewhat appealing, and 21% find it unappealing.

The appeal of social justice:
for most, only "somewhat appealing;"
though for some, "very appealing"

The term "social justice" is:	
Very appealing	24
Somewhat appealing	56
Somewhat unappealing	17
Very unappealing	4

Varying reactions in surveys to different formulations of the same concept are not at all rare. In point of fact, public opinion research often finds less support for a somewhat controversial cause or movement and more support for the specific positions it espouses. For example, more Americans support equal pay for women or unfettered access to abortions than identify as feminists. We suspect that a similar logic is at work here. Social justice is less popular than specific social justice causes or issues. Apparently, for some, "social justice" carries with it both ambiguity and some unappealing baggage.

Clues as to which sorts of baggage are found in the answers to some questions on the associations evoked by social justice. By a margin of 44% to 6%, more respondents associate the

term social justice with being a liberal than with being a conservative (22% say "both" and 28% say "neither"). Among the major Jewish denominations, more associate it with Reform Judaism (49%) than with Orthodoxy (16%), and 32% see it as associated with Conservative Judaism.

The liberal penumbra of social justice may, in fact, constitute an impediment to its widespread adoption as a central Jewish theme by politically moderate and conservative Jewish leaders and institutions, and perhaps by some Orthodox and Conservative Jews. If such is the case, then social justice advocates may wish to consider an alternative term, or focus more emphatically upon the specific programs and activities that derive from a commitment to social justice. Another strategy, of course, would be to seek to revise the baggage that appears to be associated with the term itself, thereby broadening support for social justice beyond liberals and Reform Jews.

Synagogues, Federations – More Social Justice Programming, But: In light of the widespread support for social justice and its link to being Jewish, it is not at all surprising that the respondents also widely support synagogues, Jewish federations, and other Jewish organizations engaging in social justice programming. By an 80% to 20% margin, they agree that "synagogues should sponsor more social justice programs and activities." This margin is almost identical (82%/17%) with the results for a parallel question on Jewish federations and other Jewish agencies.

In related questions, a vast majority (93%) sees Jewish "involvement in social justice causes" as a "good way to strengthen ties with other groups in society." Large majorities also support public policy engagement with social justice issues, although the margin of support is greater for federations and other organizations (82% in favor), than it is for synagogues (68% in favor). Apparently, in the minds of some, public policy is an arena more suited to the more politically oriented federations than it is to their local spiritual centers and houses of worship and study.

Very widespread support for social justice programming under Jewish sponsorship

[excluded: Not sure responses]

	Agree	Disagree
Synagogues should sponsor more social justice programs and activities.	80	20
Synagogues should actively engage in helping shape public policy on social justice issues.	68	32
Jewish federations and other Jewish organizations should sponsor more social justice programs and activities	82	17
Jewish federations and other Jewish organizations should actively engage in helping shape public policy on social justice issues	82	18
If Jews want to work for the betterment of society, they should do so through non-sectarian organizations and not specifically as Jews.	53	46
Jews' involvement in social justice causes is one good way to strengthen ties with other groups in society	93	7

Support for social justice activities sponsored by synagogues and other Jewish organizations

Do you think this synagogue should increase its support for social justice activities, decrease it, or keep it at about the current level?	
Increase	38
Decrease	1
Keep at current level	59
	100%
Do you think the organized Jewish community should increase its support for social justice activities, decrease it, or keep it at about the current level?	
Increase	47
Decrease	1
Keep at current level	52
	100%

That said, only a relatively small number perceive that their locals synagogues or organized Jewish communities actually engage in a substantial amount of social justice work. We asked the respondents for their impressions of the extent of such activities at the synagogues they know best. In response, just about a quarter could answer "very much." About the same number answer in a similar fashion with respect to the "organized Jewish community in your area." The most frequently offered answer, "to some extent," needs to be seen as equivocal, uncommitted, and, frankly, polite. Hence, about three quarters of American Jews fail to see local Jewish institutions providing "very much" opportunity for social justice involvement.

Limited impressions of the extent of
local Jewishly sponsored social justice activities

	Very much	To some extent	Very little, if at all	Don't know
To what extend does the synagogue that you know best sponsor social justice activities?	26	56	19	-
From the impressions you may have about the organized Jewish community in your area, to what extent do you think it sponsors social justice activities?	23	61	16	10

The Sectarian Obstacle: Aside from the limited extent to which Jews see opportunities for social justice work in their synagogues and Jewish communities, the survey points to other obstacles to mobilizing Jews to engage in social justice activities under Jewish sponsorship. To illustrate, despite their lopsided support for social justice involvement and its link to being Jewish, a slim majority agree that Jews who work for the betterment of society "should do so through non-sectarian organizations and not specifically as Jews." With respect to working with other Jews, only a very small number prefer "to help needy Americans" by working with other Jews (15%), or prefer "to promote some social justice cause with" with a Jewish rather than non-Jewish group (16%). On both questions, almost three quarters of the sample say that working with Jewish volunteers or on behalf of a Jewish sponsoring group "does not matter."

Doing social justice work with Jewish groups:

Not much support for or against

	Jewish	**Non-Jewish**	**It does not matter**
If you were volunteering to help needy Americans, would you rather do it with:	15	12	73
Prefer to promote some social justice cause with Jewish or non-Jewish group	16	10	74

The indifference to undertaking social justice activity in a specifically Jewish social or organizational context relates to what may be the classic problem of Jewish modernity: How can Jews, at one and the same time, become an integral part of the larger society, while still maintaining a particular tie to other Jews? Many Jews (and others) see universalism and particularism as in tension, if not in conflict. In like fashion, Jewish universalists (the sort who are most likely to be drawn to social justice work) may be disturbed with that which smacks of tribalism, clannishness, and ghettoization. Commitment to social justice, even a commitment recognized as linked to one's Jewish identity, does not necessarily translate into an interest in undertaking social justice in Jewish contexts. In the universalist's view, Jewish organizations (synagogues, federations), even when disposed to undertake social justice work, do not seem particularly well-suited, by their very sectarian nature, as vehicles for engagement in the wider society. "If I want to be a universalist," (undertake social justice work), they may ask, "why should I do so as a particularist (in a Jewish context)?" " If I want to play out my particularism" (associate with other Jews), "why should I, at that moment, turn it towards universalistic ends?"

The educational task here may well go to the challenge of fashioning a stable and compelling synthesis of Jewish universalism with Jewish particularism. Indeed, some years ago, Leonard Fein began the task of synthesizing universalism and particularism, arguing that the two are mutually supportive, especially within the Jewish tradition (Where Are We? The Inner Life of American Jews. 1988.)

> Jews express at one and the same time a concern for the particular along with their commitment to the universal. … Jews can at one and the same

> time declare their loyalties to other Jews and to all of humankind. Enthusiastically modern before, we now grope toward a post-modern understanding. … It is precisely there, at that intersection [between the universal and particular], that we can discern a Jewish meaning waiting to be formulated. (pp. 196-197).

The task of formulating, articulating, and disseminating that meaning remains before us, and may well touch upon a major challenge to enhancing Jewish social justice involvement within identifiable Jewishly sponsored contexts.

Some Social Justice Activity, Jewish and Otherwise: Notwithstanding the widespread support for social justice issues, evidence of actual social justice or related involvement is far more limited. Just under half the sample (49%) reported that they had, at some point, engaged in social justice activities, defined as they saw fit). Less than a quarter (23%) of the respondents did some social justice activity within the last year, constituting the activist core group (quite a sizable number). About a quarter (24%) have ever engaged in such activity in a synagogue, about the same number (23%) who has ever done so with another Jewish organization.

An activist minority:

Participation, ever or recently, in social justice activities

	Yes
Have you ever participated in any sort of social justice activities?	49
When were you most recently involved in social justice activities?	
In the last 12 months?	23
From 1 to 5 years ago?	12
more than 5 years ago?	12
Never	53
Have you ever participated in social justice activities sponsored by a synagogue?	24
Have you ever participated in social justice activities sponsored by another Jewish group or agency?	23
Have you ever worked in a "Mitzvah Day" sponsored by a synagogue or other Jewish group?	30

These findings notwithstanding, the precise extent and contours of social justice volunteering are extraordinarily difficult to determine. Both conceptual and methodological obstacles are at work. Conceptually, the public is vague and unclear as to how to define social justice. Methodologically, respondents require very detailed and complex questions to get accurate answers as to their history of volunteering, whether in recent times or at some earlier point in their lives.

With these ambiguities noted, the data do point to moderate amounts of volunteering with social justice implications. These are organized around three styles or dimensions: advocacy, service, and activism (the terms, assigned by the researchers, are only of limited precision). "Advocacy" is signified in this study by the questions on volunteering professional skills, serving on boards and committees of groups engaged in social justice work, and working to change public policy. "Service" in this study includes serving food in a soup kitchen, tutoring

low-income children, and providing some other form of direct help to needy individuals (not family or friends). “Activism” is measured here by marching in a walk-a-thon, AIDS-related activities, and working for Habitat-for-Humanity. Clearly, an expanded list of activities might well have picked up more evidence of social justice involvement; as clearly, the tripartite distinction we propose is, inherently, somewhat arbitrary.

A quarter of our respondents tell us that within the past year they have volunteered their “professional skills on behalf of some social just cause or needy individuals,” and 42% said they have done so at some point in their lives. Less frequent, but still notable, were such volunteer activities as serving on a board or committee engaged in some sort of social justice activity (16% recently; 32% ever), and working to change public policy in a social justice area (14%; 28%).

Diverse patterns of involvement in social justice activities

I'm going to read a list of volunteer activities. In each case, please tell me whether you have ever undertaken this activity, and if you have, whether it was in the last 12 months.

	Ever undertaken this activity	**Undertaken this activity in the last 12 months**
Volunteered your professional skills on behalf of some social justice cause or needy individuals	42	26
Served on a board or a committee of a group engaged in some sort of social justice activity	32	16
Worked as a volunteer to change public policy in an area related to social justice concerns	28	14
Marched (or run) in a walkathon for a social cause or similar event	30	10
Served food to poor people, such as in a food kitchen	26	13
Tutored low-income children	24	11
Personally helped people living with HIV/AIDS	16	10
Participated in a Habitat-for-Humanity house-building project	8	4
Provided other direct assistance to individuals in need (aside from close friends or family members), such as providing companionship or running errands	48	35

Over half (57%) the respondents claim to have undertaken at least one of the nine alternative activities in the last year, obviously far greater than the 23% who earlier in the interview claimed to have undertaken any form of social justice activity in the last year. How can we explain the gap between 23% in one case, and 57% for any one of nine volunteer activities included in the questionnaire?

Undoubtedly, respondents define "social justice" work far more narrowly than we might, perhaps differentiating social justice work from what they might call community service or

g'milut hasadim (individual acts of loving kindness). More specifically, half reported having undertaken some form of direct service, and a fifth each reported having engaged in some form of advocacy and some form of activism. (The heavy overlap of service-providers, advocates, and advocates means that the total doing any of these activities rises to just 57%, as reported). Notwithstanding the imprecision of these figures, they do provide a basis for judging which parts of the population are more active, and which less active. As we shall see, social justice attitudes and social justice activities do not always characterize the same parts of the population.

More Detailed Analysis: Variations among American Jews

Several major themes emerge from the foregoing presentation of the frequencies:

1) American Jews lend wide support to social justice.
2) They see social justice as an important component to their Jewish identity, and want their institutions to engage in social justice programming.
3) They are equally comfortable conducting social justice activities in Jewish and non-sectarian contexts, with few specifically seeking social justice engagement under Jewish sponsorship.
4) They engage in fairly widespread social justice activities, particularly direct service, although precise measurement of this engagement is difficult.

How are these attitudes and behaviors distributed throughout the population? How do they vary by sex, age, education, income, family status, political views, and Jewish affiliation? The answers to these questions are relevant not only for better understanding the complexity of orientations to social justice among American Jews, but for strategic planning to appeal to and mobilize American Jewry in social justice endeavors under Jewish sponsorship.

Supporters of Social Justice – Older and More Liberal: The survey allowed us to construct two measures of social justice attitudes that are not explicitly connected with Jewish identity. One consists of the single item reported earlier asking about the extent to which the term "social justice" is appealing. The second consists of favorable responses to the menu of

issue-areas commonly associated with social justice involvement. These include such items as "reducing the gap between rich and poor," "promoting civil rights for … minority groups," and "assuring freedom of choice for women seeking abortions."

The appeal of social justice (measured both ways) climbs with age and with self-declared political liberalism. (When asked to describe themselves politically, 34% answered liberal, 43% moderate, and 23% conservative.)

The finding that younger respondents seem less social justice-oriented than their elders may seem surprising at first. After all, younger people seem more active as volunteers (more about this matter below), and they enjoy an age-old reputation for idealism. Here we must enter a critical caveat: Our sample significantly under-represents the younger age cohorts, and, in particular, to those aged 25-34. Clearly, given the particular importance that attaches to this group, additional study and analysis are not merely warranted but required.

At the same time, however, several bodies of research on Americans generally and Jews specifically comport with the finding of diminished appeal of social justice among younger adults. Robert Putnam (2000) documents a decline in civic engagement, community involvement, and volunteering dating back to 1960. He attributes at least half of this broad-scale decline to cohort replacement, the passing of the World War II generation of mobilized citizens, succeeded in turn by progressively less community-minded birth cohorts. In a related sphere, public opinion research points to a decline in liberalism from a peak represented by the baby boom generation that came of age in the 1960s.

The growth of social justice commitment with increasing liberalism is, of course, not at all surprising. However, the extent to which self-defined Jewish conservatives also find social justice appealing may be surprising. The distances in attitudes between conservative and liberal respondents are not all that large, either with respect to the appeal of social justice or with respect to social issues. Conservatives do, in fact, lag behind liberals in their social justice interest, but social justice and related issues still appeal to substantial numbers of conservatives as well.

Linking Social Justice with Jewish Meaning – Older, Non-affluent, Liberal, and Jewishly Affiliated: Interviewers asked respondents to assess the extent of Jewish

meaningfulness associated in their minds with several social justice activities and concepts. Responses to four items correlated fairly closely with one another: "working for social justice:" "making the world a better place;" "helping the underprivileged;" and "contributing to charities in general" (as distinguished from Jewish charities). Combining responses to these four items yielded a composite index analysis that measures the extent to which respondents see social justice as a meaningful component of their own Jewish identities.

The linking of social justice with Jewish meaning occurs more frequently among older respondents. The explanation for this gap between old and young lies not so much in their different attitudes towards social justice involvement per se, but rather in the extent to which they find Jewish meaning in their lives. Notably, older Jews also score higher on most measures of Jewish connectedness. They (the older folks) generally find a variety of interests and involvements more Jewishly meaningful than do their children or younger counterparts. Hence, a measure that taps the specifically Jewish side to social justice appeal would necessarily also reflect the older respondents' greater interest in things Jewish.

For fairly straightforward reasons, liberals more often express a linkage between social justice and Jewish meaning. As noted earlier, "social justice" exerts particular appeal for liberals, even though politically moderate and conservative Jews also widely express support for specific social justice related causes and engage in volunteer activities that their liberal counterparts would more readily regard as related to social justice.

The most affluent, those earning over $100,000, score somewhat lower on this index than does the great majority earning under $100,000. The appeal of social justice as Jewishly meaningful is both high and stable across income categories up to the $100,000 level, but then the measure dips somewhat among those earning over $100,000, that is, the most affluent.

Observers have long predicted that Jews' wealth would counteract their liberalism or social justice orientation. While in this sample, Jews seem "immune" to such conservatizing effects at moderate levels of affluence, those with the highest income levels (over $100,000) do indeed seem to retreat from the social justice commitments exhibited by their less affluent counterparts.

Noteworthy as well is that finding Jewish meaning in social justice is higher among synagogue members than among non-members. These patterns suggest that more Jewishly

engaged Jews are more inclined to find Jewish meaning (be it in social justice or, presumably, in anything else) than the less engaged.

The survey question cited earlier on the relative meaningfulness of social equality, religious observance, or Israel provides another useful perspective on the matter. Among the small number of Orthodox respondents in this sample, hardly anyone finds social equality most meaningful, and a clear majority of Orthodox respondents cites religious observance. A plurality of Conservative congregants express a preference for religious observance, with social justice trailing only slightly behind. Reform temple members, though, lean heavily in the direction of social equality. Clearly, the more liberal the denomination, the more who see social justice involvement as the heart of their Judaism and the fewer who see religious observance as the most meaningful dimension of their Jewish identity.

Support for social justice programming in Jewish institutions is measured by an index that combines responses to six questions on social justice involvement by synagogues, Jewish federations, and the organized Jewish community. Here too, **support for social justice programming in Jewish institutions is highest among the oldest segment of respondents and the liberals, and is reduced among the most affluent**.

Rabbis and Jewish educators, for several years now, have emphasized the teaching of *Tikun Olam* (literally, mending the world), an ancient concept in Jewish thought that has of late often been identified with social justice work. It is therefore interesting to note that only a quarter (26%) of the respondents claim to know what the term means, as contrasted with far more, 70%, who claim to know the meaning of *Tzedakah*, a Hebrew word commonly associated with charitable giving.

Claimed familiarity with Tikun Olam is higher among younger people, the more highly educated, the more affluent (owing in part to their higher education), liberals, synagogue members, and the more traditional denominations (who also report more extensive Jewish education). These patterns only loosely resemble those associated with variations in attaching Jewish meaning to social justice. Indeed, further examination finds **almost no correlation between claimed knowledge of Tikun Olam and degree of Jewish meaningfulness associated with social justice.**

This finding certainly gives some pause to the efforts of Jewish institutions and educators (broadly conceived) to stimulate interest in social action by teaching about Tikun Olam,

represented here by proxy, i.e. familiarity with the term. (Presumably, those who profess to know the meaning of Tikun Olam overlap with those who have been exposed to teaching or preaching of Tikun Olam.) Scattered research on education for civic engagement and volunteering suggests that effective education requires both experience and sustained teaching, and that the combination is far more effective than one or the other alone. These findings seem to point in the same direction. They suggest, albeit speculatively, that teaching (or preaching) about Tikun Olam without providing actual hands-on experience will result simply in greater familiarity with the concept, but not necessarily greater perception of social justice as a Jewishly meaningful activity.

Social justice attitudes by

gender, age, education, income, family status,

political outlook, affiliation, and denomination

(1) Find social justice Jewishly meaningful
(2) Support social justice programming in synagogues and other Jewish organizations
(3) Interested in conducting social justice activities with and for Jews
(4) Familiar with Tikun Olam

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
By gender				
Male	39	42	21	27
Female	47	42	19	25
By age				
Under 45	32	41	22	35
45-64	42	40	19	25
65+	58	48	20	21
By level of education				
High school	48	46	18	9
1-3 yrs college	43	39	20	14
College graduate	38	38	20	29
Post graduate	47	45	20	38
By income level				
Less than $30,000	45	46	19	19
$30,000-$59,999	44	44	19	22
$60,000-$99,999	46	41	19	27
$100,000+	39	38	21	36
By family life cycle				
Never Married	39	44	15	25
Previously Married	46	39	18	20
Single Parent	48	48	18	24
Married Parent	46	43	20	28
Married No kids	36	37	23	32
65+ Years	65	54	19	12
By political outlook				
Conservative	38	36	23	20
Moderate	40	37	21	29
Liberal	50	50	17	29
By synagogue affiliation				
Synagogue Member	49	43	25	40
Not a Member	38	41	15	13
By denomination				
Orthodox	63	34	45	56
Conservative	51	43	26	41
Reform	48	45	21	35
Other Synagogue member	37	43	16	37
Non-member	38	41	15	13

Taking Action – Women, Younger Adults, Socially Upscale, Liberals, Affiliated, and Reform: Much of the preceding has explored *attitudes* toward social justice and related topics. Here we turn to *behavior*. Who has engaged in social justice activities, particularly with Jewish groups, and in what sorts of activities have they engaged?

We use several measures to investigate these issues. One measure defines those people who have undertaken social justice activities (self-defined) in the last year (about 23% of the sample). A second combines three questions on whether respondents have ever engaged in social justice activism with synagogues or other Jewish groups. The remaining three measures relate to whether respondents have, in the last year, engaged in any sort of "advocacy work" (21%), "direct service" (50%), or "activism" (19%), as defined by the available list of nine particular social justice activities. (To be clear, these three categories emerged from the analysis and embrace specific activities that seemed to correlate. The labels for these groupings, created by the authors, , can only loosely approximate the items incorporated in these indices.)

To a large extent, the same sorts of relationships with socio-demographic and Jewish identity variables characterize all measures. Thus, on all five measures, **women somewhat outscore men.** This pattern is consistent with research on American and specifically Jewish volunteerism. The literature is divided on how to explain gender variation, but the lead of women in voluntary, community-oriented activities is well established. Among the alternative explanations: women's stronger orientation to family and community; women's greater availability owing to more flexible and/or less onerous career demands; and women's greater religious involvement (itself a reflection of other factors).

For all but one measure, **younger people out-perform older people** in terms of active social justice involvement. The high involvement of younger adult Jews in doing social justice volunteering is critical to the argument of those seeking more social justice programming in Jewish life. If the engagement of young people is critical to the American Jewish future, then their presence in social justice frameworks argues on behalf of providing such frameworks under organized Jewish communal sponsorship.

These results, though, are curious in at least one respect. We can recall the contrary age-related variations in attitudes reported earlier: younger people seemed less enthusiastic about

social justice, especially in terms of its Jewish meaningfulness. This finding (of higher levels of younger adult volunteering), then, comes as somewhat of a surprise. Although younger people claim less interest in social justice and less Jewish meaningfulness in social justice work, they are more active than their elders, even if only marginally so at times. One explanation may lie with the growing levels of education among younger adult American Jews.

Volunteer activities of all sorts rise with higher levels of education and income. Here too, we find **a dramatic association between all indicators of voluntary involvement and rising educational attainment and income**. For example, with respect to the proportion that has undertaken social justice volunteering in the last year, percentages rise from 8% of those with a high school diploma only, to 14%, to 23%, and to 34% of those with a graduate degree. The proportion that has ever volunteered under Jewish sponsorship follows a similar contour with respect to education: 15%, 19%, 26%, and 33%. Relationships of volunteering with income are in the same direction, though not quite as pronounced.

Undertaking Social Justice Activities by gender, age, education, income, political outlook, affiliation, and denomination

(1) Social Justice volunteer this year
(2) Volunteered with Jewish groups
(3) Did advocacy work
(4) Performed direct service
(5) Was an activist

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
By gender					
Male	19	24	18	44	18
Female	25	26	23	53	21
By age					
Under 45	26	29	22	52	20
45-64	23	24	22	52	21
65+	18	26	19	43	15
By level of education					
High school	8	15	12	37	14
1-3 yrs college	14	19	15	44	17
College graduate	23	26	22	52	19
Post graduate	34	33	29	57	24
By income level					
Less than $30,000	13	19	14	43	16
$30,000-$59,999	20	22	20	48	17
$60,000-$99,999	25	27	24	52	19
$100,000+	31	34	25	53	27
By political outlook					
Conservative	13	19	16	47	16
Moderate	20	26	20	48	19
Liberal	31	30	27	55	24
By synagogue affiliation					
Synagogue Member	27	37	27	55	19
Not a Member	19	14	16	45	20
By denomination					
Orthodox	23	37	33	58	16
Conservative	25	36	26	55	18
Reform	30	41	30	54	20
Other Synagogue member	24	31	17	57	24
Non-member	19	14	16	45	20

The associations of volunteer activity with political ideology follow a similar, predictable pattern. Self-defined **liberals are markedly more disposed to volunteering for social justice activities**, be these under general or Jewish sponsorship. The gaps between moderates and conservatives, though in the predictable direction, are not quite as large as between liberals and moderates. Although liberals report the highest levels of activity, conservatives also engage in social justice work. The liberal-conservative gap is least pronounced with respect to direct service to needy or vulnerable groups. Indeed where 55% of liberals report some direct service work, as many as 47% of conservatives do so as well. In all likelihood, conservatives are hesitant to label such work as "social justice," given the association between social justice and liberalism.

Synagogue members report higher levels of social justice activity than do non-members. The gap between members and non-members is the most pronounced with respect to ever having performed social justice work under Jewish sponsorship (37% for congregants, and just 14% for non-members).

The gaps between congregants and non-congregants can be explained by several features of synagogue belonging: Membership in a congregation (or any other community association) signifies an overall readiness to be involved in community affairs, one expression of which is social justice volunteering. Congregational membership also exposes one to networks that seek volunteer assistance. Beyond these considerations, congregational membership also signifies higher levels of education, income, and religiosity, all of which are associated in their own right with many forms of volunteering. Both synagogue membership and social justice involvement, then, are outgrowths of civic and social engagement, generally conceived. Joiners are more active, and activists more often join groups of all sorts.

The denominationally linked differences with respect to social justice attitudes and activities, albeit quite small, are intriguing**. Reform Jews slightly lead Conservative and Orthodox Jews in social justice activities** undertaken in the current year; in social justice activity ever under Jewish auspices; in recent involvement as an activist. The results with respect to advocacy are uneven. With regard to direct assistance, the small sample of Orthodox Jews very marginally outscores the other two major denominations.

Insofar as the small gaps are significant, these results are consistent with those presented earlier. More liberal-oriented respondents (such as Reform Jews) are more comfortable using

"social justice" to describe their volunteer activities. In contrast, direct service activities – helping needy individuals – is not a particularly liberal (or, in denominational terms, Reform Jewish) phenomenon, such that Orthodox Jews and political conservatives report doing them as often as their more liberal counterparts. Apparently, when Orthodox Jews or politically conservative Jews engage in direct service, they hesitate to label such activities "social justice" work.

These results point up the distinctiveness of social justice attitudes and actual volunteer behaviors. The two sometimes bear different, if not contradictory, relationships with socio-demographic and Jewish identity characteristics. Moreover, more conservative people may undertake social justice activities (as might others as well) and, at the same time, refrain from attaching the social justice label to their volunteer work.

Conclusions: Challenges and Opportunities

The evidence in this study includes much that should encourage those who seek to recruit Jews, whether Jewishly affiliated or not, to social justice involvement under Jewish auspices.

- **Resonance:** American Jews resonate positively with themes and social issues associated with social justice.
- **Linkage:** They see a strong link between social justice involvement and their identities as Jews.
- **Reward:** Quite apart from any benefits that may accrue the "mended world," they see such work as enhancing important alliances and deepening Jewish pride.
- **Interest:** They profess an interest in Jewish institutions expanding social justice programming.

At the same time, several challenges and obstacles to recruiting Jews to social justice activities under Jewish sponsorship emerge from the data:

- **Ambivalence:** American Jews are, at times, ambivalent about the term, "social justice." The term is variously and ambiguously understood. It is associated with political liberals and Reform Jews, perhaps causing others to shun it.
- **Indifference to Jewish sponsorship:** Many of those committed to social justice are indifferent to undertaking such activities in Jewish contexts and/or with other Jews. They may even feel some discomfort in predominantly Jewish networks. The universalism that typically inheres in social justice work may conflict with the particular needs of Jews.
- **Inertial inactivity:** Knowledge, education, and interest do not automatically translate into action. Holding favorable social justice attitudes is only weakly connected with performing social justice activity.

The ambiguity surrounding the term, "social justice," demands some attention by Amos leadership and other like-minded advocates. The ambiguity derives from the several available meanings of social justice.

Some understand "social justice" as focused primarily, if not exclusively, upon ameliorating the conditions of the needy or vulnerable – people who are impoverished, ill, handicapped, oppressed or are subject to deprivation of rights and opportunities. Alternatively, others see social justice as applicable to all sorts of endeavors to make the world a better place, such as protecting the environment, enriching culture, or improving community life.

Yet another point of ambiguity concerns whether social justice connotes individual acts of loving-kindness (e.g., visiting the sick, lending money, collecting food for the hungry). Alternatively, for some, social justice work connotes primarily advocacy work aimed at bringing about systemic social change (such as through legislation or institutional change). Some social change advocates, in fact, hold a dim view of what they regard as "band-aid" work. In their view, such work only superficially and temporarily addresses the concerns of the needy; it fails to make enduring contributions to the quality of their lives, deals with symptoms rather than with causes. So: does social justice work consist exclusively of advocacy, or does it also extend to individual acts of charity, compassion, and loving-kindness?

Yet one more distinction of special relevance here is the extent to which Jewish social justice work is intended to target specifically Jewish causes and individuals. More traditional Jews tend to believe they discharge their Tikun Olam obligations by working exclusively for and with other Jews. Others believe that collective endeavors by Jews on behalf of universal causes constitute today's highest form of Jewish social justice activity. Still others believe that only a mix of targets (specifically Jewish and universal) is most appropriate.

Another strategic issue concerns whether and how to shape the Jewish public's understanding of "Jewish social justice," now so generally associated with political liberalism and religious progressivism. One objective might be to clarify the public understanding of the term so as to elicit more enthusiastic support, especially among population segments that are more culturally conservative or religiously traditional. Alternatively, one might decide to abandon use of the term "social justice" in favor of a term that carries with it fewer political or cultural connotations, such as "community service." (But that, of course, appears to understate advocacy.) Yet a third approach (aside from re-packaging or abandonment) would frankly acknowledge and emphasize the link between social justice and the conventional left-liberal agenda, and argue for its adoption by Jewish communal agencies whose members are often quite sympathetic to that agenda.

The survey also highlights the indifference or resistance of potential social justice activists to working with Jews and with Jewish organizations, contrasting sharply with what must have been quite different attitudes among American Jews in the 1950s and 1960s. At that time, the perception of antisemitism, the numerous and thick ties among Jews, their residential and occupational concentration, and their high rates of involvement in Jewish institutional life, all operated to bring Jewish social justice activists to work along side one another, both in Jewish and non-sectarian settings. Even if they studiously avoided involvement in formal Jewish organizations and engaged in social justice work only as individuals, circumstances in mid-century conspired to throw together large numbers of activists who "happened to be" Jewish. Those circumstances no longer obtain. Jews who are social justice enthusiasts no longer are inevitably drawn to one another. And some – an indeterminate number – are not only "not drawn," but actually regard social justice universalism as contrary to, and "purer than," Jewish communal particularism.

The seeming contradiction between the universalist social justice impulse and the particularist aspect of collective Jewish action, poses a complex challenge. Jewish thinkers and educators will need to work harder at devising and disseminating the argument that social justice engagement and Jewish institutional involvement are not inherently antithetical. In fact, just as certain religious and ethnic traditions have acquired reputations for social justice involvement (churches of all stripes do so all the time), so too can and should Jews work for social justice *as Jews*, or so the argument would go. But then: no matter how eloquent the argument, how does one ensure that it will have a hearing among those who are, for whatever the reason, totally unconnected to the organized Jewish community?

Another possible response would be for synagogues and other Jewish agencies to explicitly and demonstratively welcome the participation of non-Jews in their social justice programming, just as churches generally present no barriers to non-church members participating in church-sponsored social justice activities. One could even imagine synagogues and Jewish organizations jointly sponsoring activities with non-Jewish agencies to encourage greater ethnic/religious heterogeneity in the make-up of volunteers and planners. Historically, Jewish institutions have often allied with representatives of beneficiary populations (e.g., inner city churches). The suggestion here is to expand such forms of Jewish/Gentile partnership to include

upper-middle-class institutions (churches, non-sectarian volunteer agencies) that would lend both the appearance and the reality of a truly multi-group volunteer effort.

Essentially, these several possibilities all build on the perception that there are multiple constituencies for the expansion and enhancement of the Jewish social justice enterprise. Synagogues that are satisfied with an annual mitzvah day need encouragement to broaden and extend their horizons; Jewish agencies need to be made aware of the desire of their constituents for a more vigorous social action agenda; those among the unaffiliated who are indifferent – that is, not opposed – to social justice involvement under Jewish auspice need to have the message of such auspice be delivered to them; those who have ideological problems with what they see as an unwarranted Jewish particularism need to be addressed in still other ways. As we see it, a mixed strategy can, in fact, vastly expand the involvement of Jews in social justice work, and the development of such a trend would also develop an expanding momentum of its own.

Jewish Social Justice and "Jewish Continuity"

One of Amos' key working assumptions is that expanding social justice opportunities under Jewish sponsorship will serve to Jewishly engage those who are not particularly involved in conventional Jewish life, and thereby promote what has come to be known variously as "Jewish continuity," "renaissance," or, simply, Jewish communal vitality. Today's seeming paucity of Jewish social justice programming – the thinking goes – sends two alienating messages to social justice-oriented Jews. One such message is that synagogues and Jewish organizations fail to provide the settings where such individuals can act out their deeply felt commitments, making it very unlikely that they will turn to organized Jewry in any real way. The other unfortunate message is that the Jewish community, and by extension, Judaism have little to say about matters of ultimate significance. Of course, the expansion of Jewish social justice activity would counteract these messages for those individuals – if the "new message" were designed to reach them.

But the potential impact of expanded Jewish social justice opportunities extends beyond the specific individuals who may be recruited to particular social justice programs and activities in synagogues and other Jewish institutions. In point of fact, the expansion of social justice programming may lend credibility and plausibility to American Judaism even beyond the

specific circle of activists who might be attracted to volunteer. In summarizing the conclusions of Rosabeth Kanter, sociologist of American religion Nancy Ammerman writes the following pertinent words:

> People are more committed to an organization [and, we may add, a community or a religion] when they have meaningful work to do, when they feel a sense of attachment to others in the group, and [most pertinent for our present concerns] when they see the group as representing a moral good that allows them to transcend merely personal interest. (Ammerman 1997, 51).

The argument for Jewish social justice programming ought to be seen in this larger context of promoting Jewish meaning. Many Jews cannot articulate a compelling answer to the question, "Why be Jewish?" In response, communal leaders, agencies, and educators have advanced one or another answer that apparently have resonated with some segments of American Jewry. In recent years, some have focused upon spirituality, prayer, healing, God, and related matters. Still others have, with some notable success, focused upon text study. Both spirituality and text-learning have, indeed, been at the heart of numerous successful efforts to build and re-build Jewish communities in North America. Both dimensions lend meaning and purpose to Jewish existence, providing answers to the question, "Why be Jewish" and supplying, in Ammerman's terms, "a moral good that allows" Jews "to transcend merely personal interest."

That said, as this study demonstrates, social justice concerns also seem to resonate with wide numbers of Jews – in fact, the data suggest, likely more than do spirituality and text study. If social justice commands as much interest and significance as the data indicate, then it very well behooves organized Jewry to invest in social justice work, just as it has previously turned to spirituality and Jewish learning.

Nor, as we trust is obvious, do we see all this as a zero-sum game, in which some Jews specialize in text study, others in spirituality, and still others in social justice. That will sometimes be the case – but it will also happen that we generate more "complete" Jews, Jews who are adept at wrestling with Judaism's multiple meanings and implications.

But note: The summary message we seek here to convey is that relying on positive, widely held attitudes and better social justice Jewish education will likely be inadequate to produce the desired results. So far, at least, they have not been up to the task of mobilizing American Jews; they have failed to tap the potential this study reveals.

The key objective here, we believe, is not aimed so much at changing American Jews' attitudes toward social justice involvement. After all, if this study shows anything, it shows that Jews are sympathetic, even enthusiastic about social justice engagement, at least in theory. They also clearly connect social justice to their notions of Jewish meaning. Accordingly, the key challenge is not so much to change their fundamental attitudes, but to convert their sympathy and enthusiasm into action. Accordingly, we suspect that smart organizing and community work will be needed to transform the potential of Jewish social justice involvement into a more visible and powerful reality. This study could not address the actual extent and quality of Jewish social justice programming. but clearly these are areas that require thoughtful attention.

Mobilizing people, even those sympathetic to one's principles and agenda, remains a tricky and elusive enterprise. The extent to which American Jews continue to hold attitudes sympathetic to social justice involvement and even social justice commitment linked to their identities as Jews is truly remarkable. At the same time, in the view of Amos leadership and others, the extent of social justice activity by American Jews, both that performed under all auspices and that under specifically Jewish sponsorship, is inadequate – inadequate in relation to the need, inadequate as an expression of belief..

Clearly, the "right" attitudes and even the right education may be – on the bais of these data, are -- insufficient to automatically provoke an outpouring of volunteering for social justice causes under Jewish sponsorship. The ideals and sentiments of American Jewry may hold great potential for such involvement, but institutional initiative will be required to turn predisposition into action. The provision of volunteer opportunities, effective recruitment, and proper handling of volunteers and activists will all be necessary components of any effort to significantly increase Jewish social justice engagement on the part of American Jews.

Demographic Balancing Targets for Drawing the Market Facts Sample

(Based upon the 1990 National Jewish Population Study)

I. Marital status:			
Married to a Jew:	48%	Married to a non-Jew:	13%
Never married:	24%	Widowed or divorced:	15%
II. Education:			
Graduate degree:	31%	BA (4 years college):	27%
Some college:	19%	High school grad:	23%
Less than HS grad:	0%		
III. Age:			
65+:	15%	< 65:	85%
IV. Children in household:			
Children age 0-17 at home:	22%	No children at home:	78%
V. Region:			
New York:	26%	Other, Northeast:	20%
Florida:	10%	Midwest:	12%
Other, South:	11%	West:	21%

The National Survey on Social Justice and American Jews

Sponsored by Amos, The Jewish Coalition for Social Justice

Prof. Steven M. Cohen, The Hebrew University, Principal Investigator

1. Do you think that people today do enough for others, or do you believe that people should make more of an effort to help others?

Do enough	**10%**
Make more of an effort	**90%**

Now I'll read a list of social causes. I'd like to know your feelings about each. For each cause, would you say that you strongly favor this cause, favor it, oppose, or strongly oppose this cause? [DO NOT READ: Not sure]

	Strongly Favor	Favor	Oppose	Strongly Oppose
2. Protecting the environment	**56%**	**42%**	**1%**	**1%**
3. Reducing the gap between rich and poor Americans	**31%**	**59%**	**9%**	**2%**
4. Expanding government funding of programs for poor people	**27%**	**56%**	**14%**	**3%**
5. Assuring freedom of choice for women seeking abortions	**71%**	**25%**	**3%**	**2%**
6. Declaring a moratorium on capital punishment	**15%**	**30%**	**37%**	**18%**
7. Reducing sex and violence on television	**38%**	**45%**	**16%**	**2%**
8. Promoting civil rights for African-Americans & other minority groups	**44%**	**50%**	**5%**	**1%**
9. Ensuring access to affordable health care	**70%**	**29%**	**1%**	**0%**
10. Raising the minimum wage	**39%**	**50%**	**9%**	**2%**
11. Promoting tolerance for gays & lesbians	**45%**	**47%**	**6%**	**2%**
12. Strengthening family values in America	**51%**	**45%**	**4%**	**0%**
13. Strengthening gun control laws	**59%**	**29%**	**8%**	**5%**
14. Promoting human rights in other countries	**31%**	**59%**	**9%**	**2%**
15. Fighting antisemitism	**72%**	**27%**	**1%**	**1%**
16. Promoting religious rights for all forms of Judaism in Israel	**49%**	**47%**	**3%**	**1%**

17. If you were to spend about an afternoon a week working on behalf of the homeless, which would you rather do …

--- work in a homeless shelter, or	**33%**
--- work with a group advocating better services for the homeless	**55%**
--- Both	**6%**

18. If you were making a financial donation on behalf of the hungry, would you prefer to donate to

--- a soup kitchen, or	**83%**
--- an advocacy group lobbying the government to alleviate hunger	**12%**
--- [DO NOT READ, BUT ACCEPT]: Both,	**4%**

19. If you were volunteering to help needy Americans, would you rather do so with

a Jewish group,	**15%**
or a non-sectarian group,	**12%**
or does it not matter to you either way?	**73%**

20. If you had to choose among equally needy people, would you rather help people who are Jewish, or those who are non-Jews?

Jews	**42%**
Non-Jews	**3%**
Other response	**56%**

	Yes,	**No, Not sure**	**[Not asked]**
21. Have you heard the Hebrew phrase, "Tikun Olam?"	**42%**	**58%**	**--**
22. (IF YES) Do you think you know what it means?	**26%**	**16%**	**58%**
23. Have you heard the Hebrew phrase, "Tzedakah?"	**70%**	**30%**	**--**
24. (IF YES) Do you think you know what it means?	**60%**	**9%**	**31%**
25. Have you ever worked in a “Mitzvah Day” sponsored by a synagogue or other Jewish group?	**30%**	**70%**	**--**

Now I'd like to ask you a few questions about the term, "social justice."

26. As you understand the term, "social justice," is it something you associate with

being a liberal,	**44%**
with being a conservative,	**6%**
with both or	**22%**
with neither?	**28%**

27. Is "social justice," something you associate

with Judaism,	**8%**
with Christianity,	**0%**
with both, or	**69%**
with neither?	**23%**

28. [IF JUDAISM OR BOTH] Of the three major types of Judaism in America – Orthodoxy, Conservatism, and Reform – in your mind, which, if any, do you associate with social justice involvement? [TICK ALL THAT ARE MENTIONED]

Orthodoxy	**16%**
Conservatism	**32%**
Reform	**49%**
[None]	**3%**

29. Do you find the term, "social justice,"

very appealing to you,	**24%**
somewhat appealing,	**56%**
somewhat unappealing, or	**17%**
very unappealing?	**4%**

30. Have you ever participated in any sort of social justice activities?

Yes,	**49%**
No,	**51%**

31. [IF YES] When were you most recently involved in social justice activities? Was it

the last 12 months,	**23%**
the last 5 years, or	**12%**
more than 5 years ago?	**12%**
[Never]	**53**

32. (IF YES to Q. 31) Have you ever participated in social justice activities sponsored by a synagogue?

Yes	**24%**

33. (IF YES to Q. 31) Have you ever participated in social justice activities sponsored by another Jewish group or agency

Yes	**23%**

34. If you were volunteering to promote some social justice cause in America, would you rather do it with

a Jewish group, or	**16%**
a non-sectarian group,	**10%**
or does it not matter to you either way?	**74%**

35. If you were marching for some social justice cause and there were a Jewish contingent in the march, would you

prefer to march with the Jewish contingent,	**54%**
or not? [non-Jewish or it doesn't matter]	**46%**

36. As a Jew, which of the following qualities do you consider most important to your Jewish identity:

a commitment to social equality, or	**47%**
religious observance, or	**24%**
support for Israel,	**13%**
or what? [Other/Don't know]	**16%**

Now I'm going to read some activities & behaviors that some people associate with being Jewish. For you personally, how meaningful is each of the following for being Jewish? Please answer on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means not meaningful, and 5 means very meaningful.

	1	2	3	4	5
37. Celebrating Jewish holidays	**5%**	**5%**	**17%**	**23%**	**51%**
38. Believing in God	**9%**	**3%**	**13%**	**14%**	**62%**
39. Caring about Israel	**5%**	**8%**	**27%**	**29%**	**31%**
40. Making the world a better place	**1%**	**1%**	**9%**	**21%**	**68%**
41. Having a rich spiritual life	**4%**	**7%**	**27%**	**30%**	**32%**
42. Studying Torah or other Jewish texts	**19%**	**19%**	**32%**	**17%**	**13%**
43. Marrying a Jew	**21%**	**10%**	**17%**	**16%**	**36%**
44. Creating a Jewish home life	**9%**	**8%**	**20%**	**22%**	**41%**
45. Having Jewish friends	**15%**	**12%**	**34%**	**22%**	**16%**
46. Helping the underprivileged	**2%**	**5%**	**23%**	**28%**	**43%**
47. Being part of a Jewish community	**9%**	**9%**	**26%**	**28%**	**28%**
48. Working for social justice	**3%**	**8%**	**29%**	**29%**	**31%**
49. Keeping up with Jewish arts, music, or literature	**15%**	**22%**	**36%**	**18%**	**9%**
50. Contributing to Jewish charities	**9%**	**14%**	**32%**	**27%**	**19%**
51. Contributing to charities in general	**2%**	**5%**	**28%**	**33%**	**32%**

52. If you had to choose, which is more important to you as a Jew …

Studying Torah, or	**6%**
working for social justice,	**56%**
or are they both equally important?	**36%**

53. If you had to choose, which is more important to you as a Jew …

Having a rich spiritual life or	**15%**
working for social justice,	**29%**
or are they both equally important?	**54%**

54. Overall, to what extent does Judaism have relevance for your life as an American citizen and for the issues you care about as an American? Is it

very relevant,	**38%**
somewhat relevant,	**48%**
a little relevant,	**12%**
or not at all relevant?	**6%**

Now I'm going to read you a number of statements. In each case, do you agree strongly, agree, disagree, or disagree strongly?

	Agree strongly	Agree	Dis-agree	Disagree strongly
55. Jews have a responsibility to work on behalf of the poor, the oppressed and minority groups.	**52%**	**35%**	**6%**	**7%**
56. Jews have a responsibility to work on behalf of Jews who are needy or oppressed.	**68%**	**25%**	**3%**	**5%**
57. Jews have enough problems of their own without worrying about the broader society.	**7%**	**9%**	**14%**	**71%**
58. If Jews want to work for the betterment of society, they should do so through non-sectarian organizations and not specifically as Jews.	**31%**	**22%**	**19%**	**27%**
59. With their history of persecution, Jews generally have a greater sensitivity to discrimination & victimization of other minorities	**70%**	**21%**	**4%**	**6%**
60. American Jews have an impressive history of social justice involvement	**74%**	**22%**	**2%**	**2%**
61. When Jewish organizations engage in social justice work, it makes me feel proud to be a Jew	**72%**	**22%**	**3%**	**3%**
62. The Bible strongly endorses the pursuit of social justice	**66%**	**26%**	**3%**	**5%**
63. Jews' involvement in social justice causes is one good way to strengthen ties with other groups in society	**73%**	**20%**	**3%**	**4%**
64. A commitment to social justice is at the heart of my understanding of Judaism	**46%**	**29%**	**11%**	**14%**
65. Synagogues should sponsor more social justice programs and activities.	**49%**	**31%**	**9%**	**11%**
66. Synagogues should actively engage in helping shape public policy on social justice issues.	**37%**	**31%**	**11%**	**21%**
67. Jewish federations and other Jewish organizations should sponsor more social justice programs and activities	**53%**	**33%**	**6%**	**9%**
68. Jewish federations and other Jewish organizations should actively engage in helping shape public policy on social justice issues	**51%**	**31%**	**8%**	**11%**
69. American Jews are losing their passion for social justice involvement	**24%**	**26%**	**15%**	**36%**

70. [IF AGREE OR SOMEWHAT AGREE]: Does that [Jews' loss of passion for social justice] bother you?

Yes	**80%**
No	**20%**

71. Does the synagogue that you know best sponsor social justice activities? Would you say

very much,	**26%**
to some extent,	**56%**
or very little if at all?	**19%**

72. [IF ANSWERED VERY, SOMEWHAT, or LITTLE-NOT]: Do you think this synagogue should

increase its support for social justice activities,	**38%**
decrease it,	**1%**
or keep it at about the current level?	**59%**

73. [IF ANSWERED VERY, SOMEWHAT, or NOT]: Is this synagogue

Orthodox,	**11%**
Conservative,	**46%**
Reform, or	**41%**
Reconstructionist?	**2%**

74. From the impressions you may have about the organized Jewish community in your area, to what extent do you think it sponsors social justice activities? Would you say,

very much,	**23%**
to some extent, or	**61%**
very little if at all?	**16%**

75. [IF ANSWERED VERY, SOMEWHAT, or LITTLE-NOT]: Should the organized Jewish community in your area

increase its social justice involvement,	**47%**
decrease it, or	**1%**
keep it at about the current level?	**52%**

76. Are you a member of a Jewish organization aside from a temple or synagogue?

Yes **35%**

77. Are you a member of a board or committee of a synagogue or another Jewish organization?

Yes **15%**

I'm going to read a list of volunteer activities. In each case, please tell me whether you have ever undertaken this activity, and if you have, whether it was in the last 12 months.

	Ever undertaken this activity	Undertaken in the last 12 months
78. Served on a board or a committee of a group engaged in some sort of social justice activity	**32%**	**16%**
79. Worked as a volunteer to change public policy in an area related to social justice concerns	**28%**	**14%**
80. Volunteered your professional skills on behalf of some social justice cause or needy individuals	**42%**	**26%**
81. Marched (or run) in a walkathon for a social cause or similar event	**30%**	**10%**
82. Participated in a Habitat-for-Humanity house-building project	**8%**	**4%**
83. Tutored low-income children	**24%**	**11%**
84. Served food to poor people, such as in a food kitchen	**26%**	**13%**
85. Personally helped people living with HIV/AIDS	**16%**	**10%**
86. Provided other direct assistance to individuals in need (aside from close friends or family members), such as providing companionship or running errands	**48%**	**35%**

I'm now going to read you a short list of national Jewish organizations. In each case, are you familiar with this organization?

87. The Anti-Defamation League	**94%**
88. Hadassah	**95%**
89. The New Israel Fund	**13%**
90. The Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations	**20%**
91. The Jewish Fund for Justice	**13%**
92. American Jewish World Service	**24%**
93. The Jewish Council on Public Affairs	**24%**
94. Mazon (MAH-ZONE)	**26%**

Now I have just a few questions about Israel, and we'll be finished.

95. To what extent do you feel attached to Israel? Are you

very attached,	**23%**
somewhat attached, or	**49%**
not attached?	**28%**

96. With respect to Israel's search for peace with the Palestinians, do you think the Israeli government should be

more conciliatory than it has been,	**26%**
less conciliatory, or	**32%**
just as conciliatory as it has been?	**42%**

100. As you may know, on issues of peace and territory, Israelis are divided between doves and hawks. With which do you identify with more –

the Israeli doves or	**44%**
the hawks?	**26%**
[don't know, refused]	**28%**

Thank you for completing this important survey.

Biographical Notes on Professor Steven M. Cohen

STEVEN M. COHEN, a sociologist of American Jewry, is a Professor at the Melton Centre for Jewish Education at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, as well as the Director of the Florence G. Heller – JCCA Research Center.

He has written or edited a dozen books and scores of scholarly articles and reports on such issues as Jewish community, Jewish identity, and Jewish education. With Arnold Eisen, he wrote a new book on American Jewish identity entitled, *The Jew Within: Self, Family and Community in America*. Steven is also the co-author of *Two Worlds of Judaism: The Israeli and American Experiences,* as well as *Cosmopolitans and Parochials: Modern Orthodox Jews in America*. His earlier books include *American Modernity & Jewish Identity* and *American Assimilation or Jewish Revival?*

He has consulted the UJC, the Jewish Theological Seminary, the Jewish Agency for Israel, the Andrea and Charles Bronfman Philanthropies, the Wexner Foundation, the Cummings Foundation, the American Jewish Committee, as well as the Jewish Federations of New York, Detroit, and New Haven, and other Jewish communal agencies.

Before making aliyah in 1992, he was a professor of sociology at Queens College in New York, and a Visiting Professor at Brandeis University, Yale University, and the Jewish Theological Seminary.

Reference List

Ammerman, Nancy Tatom. 1997. *Congregation and Community*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Cohen, Steven M. 1989. *Content or Continuity*. American Jewish Committee

———. 1998. *Religious Stability, Ethnic Decline*. FGH/JCCA Research Center.
———. 2000 *Religion and the Public Square: Attitudes of American Jews in Comparative Perspective*. Philadelphia: Center for Jewish Community Studies.
Cohen, Steven M. and Arnold M. Eisen. 2000. *The Jew Within.* Indiana University Press.

Cohen, Steven M. and Charles S. Liebman. 1997. "Explaining American Jewish Liberalism: Unraveling the Strands." Public Opinion Quarterly. [check]

Putnam, Robert. 2000. *Bowling Alone.* New York: Simon and Schuster

Sklare, Marshall and Joseph Greenblum. 1967. *Jewish Identity on the Suburban Frontier*. University of Chicago Press.

Leonard Fein. 1988. *Where Are We? The Inner Life of American Jews*. New York: Harper and Row.

1990 National Jewish Population Study [This citation probably need more info. DH]

Los Angeles Times in a 1988 national study of American Jews [This citation needs more info. DH]