

Non-Jews in Jewish Families: The Context and Background of Communal Decision-Making

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On Yom Kippur morning, September 25, 2004, Rabbi Janet Marder, spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Am in Los Altos, California, took a dramatic step to recognize the non-Jewish spouses in her Reform community. Addressing the worshipers seated before her, she issued an unprecedented expression of gratitude from the pulpit:

Today I want to recognize and publicly acknowledge for the first time some very important people in our congregation. They are part of Beth Am because, somewhere along the way, they happened to fall in love with a Jewish man or woman.... I do want to tell you how much you matter to our congregation, and how very grateful we are for what you have done.

... Some of you are living a Jewish life in virtually all respects. Some of you are devoutly committed to another faith. Some of you do not define yourselves as religious at all...

What we want to thank you for today is your decision to cast your lot with the Jewish people by becoming part of this congregation, and the love and support you give to your Jewish partner. Most of all, we want to offer our deepest thanks to those of you who are parents, and who are raising your sons and daughters as Jews.... With all our hearts, we want to thank you for your generosity and strength of spirit in making the ultimate gift to the Jewish people.¹

After dozens of non-Jewish congregants joined her on the *bima* (dais), Rabbi Marder paid homage to them with her newly crafted, “Blessing for Non-Jewish Spouses”:

You are the moms and dads who drive the Hebrew school carpool and bring the refreshments to the Shabbaton. You help explain to your kids why it’s important to get up on Sunday morning and to learn to be a Jew. You take classes and read Jewish books to deepen your own understanding, so you can help to make a Jewish home. You learn to make *kugel* and latkes; you try to like gefilte fish; you learn to put on a Seder; you learn to put up a Sukkah. You join your spouse at the Shabbat table—maybe you even set that Shabbat table and make it beautiful.

You come to services, even when it feels strange and confusing at first.... You stand on the *bima* and pass the Torah to your children on the day of their Bar or Bat Mitzvah, and tell them how proud you are and how much you love them, and how glad you are to see them grow into young Jewish men and women.... You have made a painful sacrifice, giving up the joy of sharing your own spiritual beliefs and passing your own religious traditions down to your kids. I hope your children and your spouse tell you often how wonderful you are, and that their love and gratitude, and our love and gratitude, will be some compensation, and will bring you joy.

I ask our congregation to rise in your honor now, as we offer you this ancient blessing from the Torah [the Priestly Benediction, possibly Judaism’s most ancient continuously recited prayer]....

May God bless you; may God keep you;

May the light of the Holy One shine on you;

And may God grant you the precious gift of peace.

Rabbi Marder’s practice has inspired similar innovations in an unknown number of Reform congregations across the country. Orthodox and Conservative leaders have been strongly critical of this practice, as have been some Reform rabbis as well. Still others have applauded this clearly unorthodox initiative (in many senses of the term) to extend a welcome and a gesture of inclusion to the non-Jewish spouses of congregationally affiliated Jewish men and women.

While controversial to say the least, Rabbi Marder's innovation is one of many attempts to draw non-Jewish spouses closer to the Jewish community. Some such efforts center overtly on conversion as an end-objective. Others are more ambiguous or less overt about their desire to see the spouses convert. Still others simply seek to make the non-Jews (and their Jewish spouses and children) feel more welcome, comfortable, and included in Jewish life, with eventual conversion as a distant possibility, if that.

Modalities of Inclusion

As the phenomenon of intermarriage has grown, so too has the presence of non-Jews in Jewish communities, prompting a variety of proposals to devise and extend new modalities of inclusion. One such proposal was advanced by E. Robert Goodkind, outgoing president of the American Jewish Committee, at its one-hundredth Annual Meeting, on May 4, 2006:

How should the Jewish community relate to the non-Jewish spouse of a Jew in a home where Judaism is the only faith and the children are being educated Jewishly? We must embrace such a person! If we do not, we are likely pushing away a friend and highly valued ally of the Jewish people.

I wish to suggest a solution to the barrier that now stands between such a person and participation in the life of the Jewish community. I am proposing that AJC become an advocate for the concept of "citizenship in the Jewish people." While I use the word "citizenship," I am not wedded to it, as there may well be another term more suitable to this concept....

The concept of global Jewish citizenship should be extended to non-Jews who live in Jewish families and raise their children exclusively as Jews ... and [who make] a commitment not to introduce the rituals of another faith into the home.²

Engaged participants in American Jewish life will vary widely in their reactions to Goodkind's proposal or Rabbi Marder's practice. Some may be disturbed, others thrilled, and still others cautiously intrigued. But however they feel about the particular directions offered in these two (among many) responses to the growing number of non-Jews in affiliated or engaged Jewish households, few will deny the seriousness and urgency of the challenges these responses address. Namely:

- 1) How should official voices of American Jewry—congregations, JCCs, communal organizations, schools, rabbis, educators, and lay leaders—respond to the growing number of non-Jews raising Jewish children, participating in congregations and Jewish communities, and in other ways supporting the life of the Jewish people?
- 2) How can these responses and practices balance two objectives that are seemingly in tension: a) welcoming and including non-Jews and their Jewish families; and b) maintaining clear group boundaries that have historically demarcated Jews from others, and are seen by many as essential for preserving a distinctive and vital Jewish community in a modern, open society?

Any serious thinking around the specific issue of non-Jews in Jewish families and community needs to take into account the larger context—the issue of intermarriage in Jewish life. Accordingly, this paper will review the critical relevant evidence pertaining to the nature, causes, correlates, and consequences of Jewish-Gentile intermarriage, encompassing current knowledge and providing the evidentiary base to extend our thinking. We will consider the issue from the

perspective of individuals (family members, spouses, and children) and from the perspective of Jewish population. With this review in place, the paper will proceed to examine the policy-relevant evidence pertaining to the non-Jewish adult in Jewish families, but going beyond this issue, will seek to provoke and enrich our thinking about related policy questions.

Some Preliminaries

We define “intermarriage” or, its equivalent “mixed marriage,” as marriage between a Jew and a non-Jew. A non-Jew is one born non-Jewish who has declined to formally convert to Judaism or even to identify informally as Jewish in a way that is widely accepted by Jewish family, friends, and community. While many rabbis and traditional Jews require conversion to consider someone Jewish, most of the American Jewish population accepts informal switchers to Jewish identity as Jews, even without formal religious conversion with the participation of a rabbi. A marriage of a Jew with a convert (formally or informally) is an “in-marriage,” albeit one of a special sort, sometimes referred to as a “conversionary marriage.”

Under this definition, the most recently estimated national rate of individual intermarriage came to 47 percent. That is, nearly half the Jews who married in 1995-2001 married non-Jews who had not converted, at least not yet, to Judaism.

Intermarriage rates may be calculated on the basis of individuals or couples. The individual rate is always lower than the couple rate. That is, the percentage of couples who have intermarried surpasses the percentage of individual Jews who have intermarried—for the simple mathematical reason that two in-married Jews get only one “vote” in determining the couple rate. For example, in a population of three Jews in two marriages, where one couple is in-married and one is intermarried, one-half (50 percent) of the couples are intermarried, but only one-third of the three individual Jews are intermarried. Consequently, the 47 percent intermarriage rate for Jewish individuals means that 64 percent of the newly married couples with a Jewish partner were intermarriages, and just 36 percent of the couples were in-marriages.³

The Rate: Edging Upward

The 47 percent figure for marriages contracted in 1995-2001 represented a small increase from the previously recorded rate of 43 percent for the late 1980s—a rate that had been erroneously reported earlier as 52 percent.⁴ Thus, after about two decades of rapidly increasing intermarriage from 1965 to 1985, the increase in intermarriage has slowed in recent years, though the rate is still edging upward.

The gradual upward climb in intermarriage can be almost entirely attributed to the shifting composition of the adult Jewish population, with growing numbers who are adult children of intermarried couples and fewer who were raised by two Jewish parents. Driving the overall intermarriage rate upward is the huge gap in the intermarriage rates between these two descent groups. Whereas under a third of the children with two Jewish parents marry non-Jews, over three-quarters of the children with one Jewish parent marry non-Jews. While the overall average intermarriage rate of 47 percent has slightly increased, the two component rates have held fairly steady over the years.

In fact, the rate of intermarriage among children with two Jewish parents may be edging downward. Somewhat paradoxically, more intermarriage also makes for a more Jewishly engaged in-married population. The very prevalence of intermarriage means that marrying a Jew becomes more a matter of an affirmative choice and a result of strong Jewish education and socialization. The frequent exit of intermarried couples' descendants from the identified Jewish population also means that the shrinking minority who are in-married becomes relatively more committed and more intentional about reducing the chances of intermarriage in the next generation. In somewhat simplified terms: More intermarriage means more assimilation, which, in turn, means a growing proportion who are Orthodox or otherwise deeply committed among the in-married, which, in turn, sets the stage for a declining intermarried segment among the smaller, in-married population.

The “PREP Effect”: Parents, Rituals, Education, and Propinquity

Some observers have adopted a fatalistic attitude toward intermarriage, claiming that intermarriage is a random event and little can be done to prevent it. In point of fact, intermarriage is fairly predictable and, by implication, much can be done (and is done, intentionally or not, by parents and families) to significantly influence the likelihood of in-marriage or mixed marriage.

The research is consistent in demonstrating that four factors predict in-marriage, to wit: parents, ritual, education, and propinquity or “PREP” for short. The first factor, in terms of both chronology and degree of influence, concerns the parents, that is, whether the parents of the individual are both Jewish or not. As noted earlier, one's chances of marrying a Jew are strongly influenced by the identity of one's parents: Children of two Jewish parents marry other Jews at a rate almost three times that of children of one Jewish and one non-Jewish parent.

Beyond the religious identity of one's parents, their ritual practice in the home also exerts a substantial effect upon the probability of intermarriage. Whether the children are being raised by one Jewish parent or two, more ritual observance in the childhood years translates into a greater probability of marrying a Jew in the adult years.

Above and beyond the religious character of the home, almost all forms of Jewish education—particularly day schools and Israel travel—raise the odds of marrying a Jew. The only exception is one-day-a-week schools (typically Sunday schools), which seem actually to raise the probability of intermarriage—possibly (and this is speculation) by way of aggregating many children of intermarriages in one place, thereby reinforcing the acceptability of out-marriage.

Last, and by no means least, propinquity is critical—that is, having random contact with other Jews as a result of living in areas with large numbers of other Jews. The power of Jewish residential density is displayed in the sharp variations in rates of intermarriage within metropolitan areas. As a general rule, Jews in older, more established, and more densely settled urban areas find Jewish marriage partners more than those in the suburbs, while those in the suburbs report higher in-marriage rates than those in the more distant exurbs. The pattern in New York is paradigmatic: Intermarriage rises as one moves outward from Brooklyn to Queens to Nassau to Suffolk County. In like manner, on a national level, the West Coast reports far higher levels of

intermarriage than the Northeast, as do smaller towns relative to larger cities, and as do more recent areas of Jewish settlement as compared with long-standing communities. In short, the zip code is a better predictor of intermarriage than Jewish education. The Hebrew school student on Long Island stands a better chance of marrying a Jew than the day school student in Las Vegas.

Several implications flow from this analysis. One inference is that to minimize intermarriage in future generations, intermarriage needs to be reduced in this generation. Second, policies that intensify the Jewish engagement of families with children today serve to reduce the children's chances of marrying non-Jews when they mature. Third, increased participation in all forms of Jewish education—Sunday schools being the one exception—will also make a difference in the long run. Last, the impact of propinquity underscores the utility in promoting Jewish social networks, and in doing what one can to guide young adults to environments (campuses, neighborhoods) where they are more likely to randomly connect with other Jews.

The Children: Fully Jewish, Partially Jewish, and Not Jewish

Nationally, only about a third of intermarried couples are raising their children as Jews, that is, exclusively as Jews. Several issues are embedded in that seemingly straightforward observation.

One complication entails significant geographic variation around the overall national average of about one third. The dozens of local population studies report a wide range in the rate at which intermarried couples raise their children as Jews. Baltimore, with a rate of 62 percent, for example, stands near the top of the range; while San Diego, with a rate of 21 percent rests near the bottom. As a very general rule, cities at the higher end of the range are veteran communities with high rates of communal affiliation and Jewish education.

The other salient issue is the matter of exclusivity in religious upbringing. In raising their children as Jews, intermarried parents vary in several ways. They may raise their children in multiple religious identities, such as Jewish and Christian, or as some surveys put it, “Jewish and something else.” Even when they say they are raising their children only in Judaism, some maintain practices from other faith traditions, such as the celebration of Christmas and Easter or attendance at church services—which they may see as religiously motivated or not.

These considerations and ambiguities are especially relevant for the persistence of Jewish identity among the descendants of the intermarried. While the children of the intermarried, as a group, are far more likely than the children of the in-married to marry non-Jews, the intermarriage rates go sky-high when these children with a single Jewish parent are raised with multiple religious identities or none. The intermarriage rate for children of two Jewish parents is about 30 percent; for those with intermarried parents raised exclusively as Jews, it reaches 54 percent; and for their counterparts raised as Jewish and something else, it goes as high as 90 percent.

Hence, for policy purposes, it makes sense to focus analytically on the number of children raised exclusively in the Jewish religion. By this measure, currently in-married Jewish parents claim to be raising their children as Jews about 96 percent of the time. For the intermarried, the comparable rate reaches only about 33 percent.

The compound effects of intermarriage over the generations suggest that of those married to non-Jews, just 13 percent or so will see their grandchildren raised exclusively as Jews.

Who, in intermarried homes, are more likely to raise their children as Jews?

One important factor is clearly gender: The religion of the child tends to follow that of the mother. Accordingly, intermarried Jewish women raise their children as Jews about two-to-three times as frequently as their male counterparts. The long-term religious influence of the mother (Jewish or not) is further augmented by the prevalence of divorce. After divorce, mothers tend to retain primary custody of the children. Divorce is especially a consideration in intermarriages, in that mixed married couples exhibit higher divorce rates than the general population.

Beyond gender, the levels of Jewish commitment of intermarried Jewish spouses influence the probability that their children will be raised as Jews. Those with stronger patterns of socialization (more observant parents, more Jewish education) in turn more frequently raise their children exclusively as Jews. Intermarried Jewish women who are day school alumni almost invariably raise Jewish children. In contrast, intermarried Jewish men with only a one-day-a-week Jewish school experience almost invariably raise their children as non-Jews.

Thus, while Jewish education serves to diminish the chances of intermarriage, when intermarriage does occur, a strong Jewish education continues to exert a salutary impact upon Jewish continuity. Not only does it affect one's choice of spouse; it also affects one's children's religious identity and their chances of marrying a Jew. And, as we shall see presently, its effects extend to conversion as well.

Conversion: Correlates and Consequences

Conversion, be it formal with rabbinic officiation or informal by personally switching one's identity, produces a variety of demographically favorable consequences for the Jewish population. Most directly, it results in the addition of the converting adult to the Jewish population. In the case of an impending or existing marriage, the conversion of the non-Jewish spouse also means the conversion of the marriage from a prospective or real intermarriage into a "conversionary in-marriage." Such marriages report reasonably high rates of religious and ethnic activity at levels generally comparable to those reported by the marriages of born-Jews with born-Jews. Commensurate with their relatively high rates of Jewish activity, they also raise their children as Jews about as frequently as other in-married couples, and their children's rates of intermarriage only slightly exceed those who are the children of two born-Jews. In fact, the phenomenon of conversion so thoroughly offsets intermarriage that were more non-Jewish spouses persuaded to convert, from a strictly numerical point of view, the marriage of born-Jews to born-non-Jews would be demographically neutral.

Should the conversion rate exceed 50 percent, out-marriage would actually augment the Jewish population. The arithmetic is straightforward. One hundred Jews who marry each other form fifty in-marriages. If they all out-married, they would establish from 0 to 100 entirely Jewish couples, depending upon how many of their spouses convert. If fifty spouses convert (a conversion rate of 50 percent), they would form fifty in-marriages, displaying the same rate of Jewish household formation as the 100 in-married Jews.

Unfortunately, conversion is a rare, and, in recent years, it is an increasingly rare occurrence. Whereas in the 1970s conversion characterized about a third of non-Jews marrying Jews,

today the rate has shrunk to about half that number (although the rate may creep upward in time, as the non-Jews in recent intermarriages move to convert later in their marriages). The rate of conversion has been falling since the 1960s, in part owing to the increasing acceptance of intermarriage by the larger society.

Contrary to widely held views, the rate of conversion to Judaism did not drop more rapidly after the shift on the part of the Reform Movement to patrilineal descent as well as matrilineal descent as defining who-is-a-Jew. This policy regards as Jewish the child of one Jewish parent, with the proviso that the child evidences acts of Jewish engagement (e.g., Jewish schooling and a bar/bat mitzvah ceremony) and abjures acts associated with other faith traditions. Some have argued that this policy might undercut the interest of non-Jewish spouses in converting, since conversion by the mother was no longer necessary to assure the Jewish identity of the children. But as it turns out, the data display no substantial decline in conversion rates taking place after the 1983 decision by the Reform Movement.

Even if a small number of people in intermarriages convert, conversion is not entirely a random process, but rather is influenced by the gender of the potential convert and the Jewish education of the Jewish spouse. Thus, of the four possible spouses in intermarriages who could convert (Jewish husband, Jewish wife, non-Jewish husband, non-Jewish wife), it is the originally non-Jewish wife who is the most frequent converter. Very few Jews convert to Christianity. Among the non-Jews who convert, women outnumber men by about three or four to one. Confirming this observation, rabbis anecdotally report that their conversion classes are overwhelmingly female.

Another characteristic of converts is that their Jewish spouses are more committed to their own Jewish identities than Jewish spouses in non-conversionary marriages, as evidenced by their higher levels of Jewish education. Apparently, spouses or prospective spouses with more extensive Jewish educational experiences are more inclined to ask their non-Jewish fiance(e)s or spouses to convert, and, just as likely, the non-Jewish partner is more inclined to adopt the religion of their Jewish partners when the latter are well-grounded in their Jewish identities.

The Quickly Shrinking Number of Non-Orthodox Jews

Not only does only a fraction of intermarried couples raise their children as Jews, but the children they do raise as Jews exhibit unusually high rates of intermarriage, setting the stage for further population decline in the coming generations. As a consequence, intermarriage is operating in a number of ways to reduce the number of Jews in the next generation, with its adverse demographic effects largely limited to the non-Orthodox population.

Another consideration links intermarriage with diminished Jewish population numbers—low birthrates. Intermarried couples give birth to fewer children overall than do in-married couples. Thus not only do the mixed-married raise most of their children outside of Judaism; they have fewer children in toto. As a result, three major demographic changes are taking place:

- 1) The number of Jews is shrinking.
- 2) The number of non-Orthodox Jews is shrinking even faster.

- 3) The number of Orthodox Jews is growing, and its proportion of the Jewish population is growing even faster.

To elaborate: The overall impact of intermarriage and birth rates, past and present, can be seen when we compare the number of people in Jewish households for those who are 35-54 with those who are 0-17. It's as if we're comparing the number of parents with the number of children.

To get a sense of the size of growth or shrinkage in the population, we can look at how many Jews were born in any given one-year birth cohort (say, in 1958 or in 1998). We may then compare the number of people in an average one-year birth cohort in the older generation (those ages 35-54) with the counterpart figure for the younger generation (ages 0-17). The comparison yields what may be termed the "continuity quotient," which compares the number of younger people with the number of older people, roughly the age of their parents. A quotient of 100 percent would mean that there are as many in the children's generation as in their parents' generation; a quotient of 200 percent would mean the number of children is twice as large as their parents' generation; and 50 percent, of course, implies that the children are half as many as the adults.

For all people, both Jews and non-Jews, living in Jewish households (families with at least one Jew present), we find a continuity quotient of 95 percent. This figure means that the number of children of any faith living in Jewish households is about 95 percent of the number of all adults, be they Jewish or not. These results tell us that the number of people who are Jewish or related to Jews will, in all likelihood, remain steady over the coming years, without much overall change in either direction.

However, a more detailed inspection shows that stability in overall numbers masks a shift among members of Jewish households from a heavily Jewish population to one that is less predominantly Jewish. Among the children are a large number of youngsters who are Christian, mixed religion, no religion, or undetermined in their identities.

Thus, for Jews alone, the continuity quotient reaches only 67 percent. In other words, the number of Jews among children (0-17) is, on average about two-thirds the number of middle-aged parents. In one generation, the Jewish population size is shrinking by one third.

But this figure obscures some important underlying tendencies. Within the Jewish population, of course, are a small Orthodox and a large non-Orthodox segment, each exhibiting very distinctive tendencies. The Orthodox population displays a continuity quotient of about 192 percent. This figure means that the next generation of Orthodox Jews (barring any eventual gains or losses) should be almost double the current adult generation. This spectacular growth rate is due to both high birthrates and high in-marriage rates.

In contrast, the continuity quotient for non-Orthodox Jews is only about 55 percent—not quite half, but approaching half. Low birthrates and, in particular, low in-marriage rates, underlie this decline. In other words, while the Orthodox have nearly doubled in size in a generation, all the others (the non-Orthodox) have shrunk by nearly half. Thus, not only is the Jewish population changing in size; it is also changing in composition, becoming far more substantially Orthodox. While Orthodox Jews constitute just 8 percent of middle-aged Jews, they comprise fully 22-24 percent of Jewish children under the age of 18.

The size and composition of the Jewish population will not change overnight. Significant shrinkage will set in only as the baby boomers (those born between 1946-64) start to die in large numbers around the year 2030. But the impact of shrinking numbers of Jewish children can already be felt in downward enrollment pressure on non-Orthodox day schools and possibly some Jewish camps. Similarly, the growth in Orthodoxy will take some years to fully develop, but the growth can already be seen in U.S. Census tracts with large numbers of *haredi* residents. Very possibly, the reports of rising *aliya* may be partially due to the expansion of the Orthodox population, the major reservoir of American Jews who are moving to Israel.

Of course, Orthodox growth could be blunted by defections or augmented by acquisitions (*ba'alei-teshuva*). While noteworthy, particularly to family and friends, in demographic terms, neither defections nor acquisitions have been sufficiently large to alter matters much. Given their visibility to family and friends, the *ba'alei-teshuva* have loomed larger in the mind of the Jewish public than in demographic reality. As for movement in the other direction, the once-numerous Orthodox drop-outs formerly supplied a major fraction of the lay and rabbinic leadership of the Conservative and Reform Movements. In recent years, the Orthodox retention rate has grown considerably, such that only a small proportion of adults who were raised Orthodox leave the denomination. In fact, the *aliya* to Israel of several hundred young adult Orthodox Jews annually may be diminishing the ranks of American Orthodoxy more than defections to other denominations.

The changing character of American Jewish demography can be crisply communicated in ways popularized by former Vice President Al Gore and *New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman. Gore and other environmentalists focus on the “inconvenient truth” of the early stages of a meltdown in the polar ice caps as a result of global warming, with a full-blown polar meltdown just a few decades away. In like fashion, the Jewish population meltdown has arrived, with powerful demographic changes plainly evident. Rising intermarriage rates over the years are right now engendering a “meltdown” in the non-Orthodox Jewish population, visible in the dramatic shrinkage in its size—not in generations to come, but in the generation now under 25.

For his part, Friedman's columns highlight the growth of China as the world's fastest-growing large country, which in two or three decades will come to play a dominant role in the world economy. He urges Americans to anticipate and adapt now to this new reality just around the corner. What China is to the world economy, Orthodoxy is to America's Jews. The Orthodox community (or, more accurately, communities) is the looming, burgeoning reality that most American Jews outside of Orthodoxy have yet to grasp. In two decades, the age group that supplies the bulk of communal leadership (35-59) will contain proportionately almost three times as many Orthodox Jews as today's middle-aged cohort. The massive shift toward Orthodox leadership in Jewish life holds significant implications for American Jewish politics, culture, philanthropy, and religious life. Far more than today, by 2020 the Orthodox and the other segments of American Jewry will need to maintain good working relationships so as to provide effective leadership for the entirety of organized Jewry. Accordingly, we need now to address the tensions that often characterize the relationships between Orthodox Jews and their non-Orthodox counterparts in American Jewry.

Beyond Demography: Consequences for Individuals, Cohesion, and Consensus

The 1991 National Jewish Population Study thrust the issues of intermarriage and Jewish continuity to the forefront of the Jewish communal agenda. Certainly some years before, a few isolated voices (most prominently, sociologist Marshall Sklare and *Look* magazine with its cover story in 1964 on the “Vanishing American Jew”) had warned of the growing challenge posed by rising intermarriage. However, only since 1991 has the high and mounting rate of intermarriage come to be seen widely by Jewish leaders as a major problem—and a problem on several levels.

Demographically, it translates into declining numbers of Jews. Some contend that, on a group level, intermarriage can be demographically mixed or neutral, with gains in some families offset by losses elsewhere. But, as argued above, since fewer than 50 percent of intermarried couples raise their children as Jews, the sheer number of Jews in the next generation will fall short of that in the current generation.

Even if intermarriage were demographically neutral on a population level (and it's not), intermarriage would still present a very widespread source of concern on an individual level. For deeply committed Jews whose grandchildren are raised as non-Jews, intermarriage constitutes a source of great anxiety, as well as pain and disappointment; and it is of little comfort to them that other intermarriages, those raising children as Jews, are producing population gains that offset the losses represented by their own children and grandchildren. With an intermarriage rate of 47 percent, and with an average family size of two children (among people who have had children), it stands to reason that at least 60 percent of American Jewish parents will see at least one of their children marry out, and that at least 40 percent of all Jewish parents will have a non-Jewish grandchild, or one (or more) whose Jewish identity is indeterminate, ambiguous, and unsettled. Thus, even if intermarriage were population-neutral, it still would be the cause of widespread concern and anxiety, particularly among parents who are Jewishly committed.

Culturally, a high intermarriage rate implies, reflects upon, and promotes a decline in Jewish collective identity—that is, the “groupiness” aspect of being Jewish. In general, on social scientific surveys, mixed-married families fall short of in-married families on most measures of Jewish commitment. But as large as the differences in Jewish identity measures may be generally, with respect to widely celebrated Jewish holidays, the gaps are even more pronounced and severe in the areas pertaining to Jewish group belonging and group commitment. Thus, intermarried Jews report far lower levels of Jewish friendships, institutional affiliation, as well as weaker attachment to Israel, and thinner ties to Jewish peoplehood.

Communally, intermarriage provokes controversy and conflict in Jewish life. Arguably, it has deepened the rift between Orthodox and non-Orthodox Jews, and even between Conservative and Reform elites. The relatively more traditional are aghast, not only at the high rates of intermarriage among the non-Orthodox, but at their seeming toleration of, if not indifference to, a phenomenon that is so much at variance with historical and traditional Jewish precepts. Less traditional Jews, who often see themselves as more “progressive” and attuned to modern society, meanwhile, are often anguished and resentful of the most outspoken Orthodox (and others) for seeming to deny their very claim to Jewish legitimacy, and for building barriers, in their eyes, to the entry into Jewish life of their non-Jewish sons- and daughters-in-law, as well as their grand-

children. In very personal terms, in their desire to see their grandchildren raised as Jews, these less traditional Jews believe that matters are not at all helped by attitudes and statements that question their grandchildren's claim to Jewish identity or criticize the intermarried couples for falling in love and getting married.

The Debate: Welcoming versus Engagement

These tensions on the popular or folk level find their parallel on the leadership and elite level. The widespread concern with how to respond to the prevalence of intermarriage and its consequences has spawned considerable controversy, if not at times a fairly acrimonious debate.

Curiously, participants in this debate actually share some assumptions and even some conclusions. Fundamentally, they all agree as to the paramount significance of intermarriage as a critical challenge; and most share grave concerns about the future of American Jewry as well as that of their own friends and family members. They also agree that in-marriage is preferable for Jewish continuity, that conversion to Judaism is a worthy objective, and that the next generation should be raised as and come to identify as Jews.

They concur on yet another crucial point: Whatever we have done, it hasn't "worked," at least not yet. The manifold efforts in Jewish education, congregational renewal, welcoming, taking Judaism public, and so forth—some designed to address the challenges of intermarriage and others designed to make being Jewish more meaningful and engaging—have hardly made much of a dent in the relevant problem areas that matter the most. The incidence of intermarriage continues to mount. So does the large number of intermarried families who remain outside of Jewish communal arenas, leading lives bereft of Jewish practice and meaning, let alone lives dedicated to raising children identifying Judaism as their only religious tradition. One telling statistic: Of in-married Jews with school-age children, about 82 percent belong to congregations; among the comparable intermarried, about only 18 percent are congregationally affiliated.

Where the two camps differ sharply is over how to resolve an apparent contradiction in primary initial objectives and, more specifically, how to balance two messages that seem to collide with one another:

- a) **The Welcoming Message:** Proponents of welcoming as the central strategic response to intermarriage strongly believe that intermarried families should be made to feel welcome in their Jewish extended families and communities. This objective, important in its own right, is also seen by its advocates as a necessary step toward promoting Jewish engagement, Jewish child rearing, and even conversion of the non-Jewish spouse.
- b) **The Engagement Message:** Advocates of Jewish engagement are convinced that welcoming is secondary to efforts to directly engage Jews in being Jewish. They believe we should encourage Jewish young people to make choices consistent with perpetuating Jewish identity and involvement. These include: marrying a Jew; when intermarriage occurs, inviting one's non-Jewish spouse to convert; and, in any event, raising one's children in an unambiguous Jewish environment. In this view, acts of Jewish engagement are necessary for genuine inclusion in a sustainable Jewish life, one that respects tradition, authenticity, boundaries, norms, and the essence of meaningful Judaism.

Both sides argue from instrumental and moral points of view. They have a view of both what's good for Jewish continuity and what Judaism demands of them. The welcoming camp

fears the loss of erstwhile Jews—possibly their friends, family, children, and grandchildren—should the intermarried be made to feel unwelcome, devalued, and excluded. The engagement camp fear the loss of Jews engaged in a meaningful Judaism should intermarried Jews and non-Jews be brought into full participation in Jewish life with no regard to standards, education, boundaries, or normative demands. And the resulting vapid Judaism, in their view, would hold little meaning or attraction to their friends, family, children and grandchildren.

Both camps claim to be pursuing the same two objectives. Those who stress welcoming claim that only a clear emphasis and priority on welcoming stands a chance of producing genuine Jewish engagement. Those who explicitly emphasize acts of Jewish engagement believe they are more welcoming than their ideological opponents who, in their view, fail to explicitly extend the invitation to convert to non-Jews or too eagerly welcome the technically non-Jewish children of mixed marriages as full members of the Jewish people. Thus, the engagement camp believes that engaging Jews is the only effective way to welcome Jews. (With apologies to Monty Python, one camp might take the name Popular Front for Welcoming and Engagement while the other could be called Popular Front for Engagement and Welcoming.)

At the root of the sometimes bitter conflict between the two camps lies the belief of each side that the other undermines its primary objective. The welcoming camp believes that an explicit emphasis on in-marriage, conversion, and Jewish-only child-rearing serves to make mixed-married families feel unwelcome in Jewish life. The engagement camp believes that the seemingly unqualified emphasis on welcoming undermines the motivation of single Jews to date and marry Jews, downplays the value of conversion, and diminishes the likelihood that children will be raised as fully and exclusively Jewish, and not Jewish and something else.

Each camp is concerned that the other operates well within earshot of the very people they are trying most assiduously to influence. The welcoming camp believes that the intermarried, possibly their children, will be alienated from Jewish involvement by the normative demands and critical perspectives of the engagement camp. The engagement camp believes that the non-married, possibly their children, will come to find intermarriage acceptable precisely because the welcoming camp manages to smooth the entry of intermarried families into Jewish communities with nary a word of critique for their having intermarried in the first place, nor an explicit word of encouragement for the non-Jewish spouse to convert to Judaism.

A New Status for Non-Jewish Spouses as “Allies”

It is in this contentious context that calls for developing a new status for those non-Jewish spouses who are “allies” of the Jewish people (borrowing the terminology from the gay subculture, where “ally” is used to refer to straight people who support the social and political struggles of gay people). A well-conceived effort to make such non-Jews feel welcome in Jewish communities ought to hold obvious appeal for the welcoming camp. At the same time, such an effort may well pave the way to full conversion, a matter of interest to both camps, but certainly appealing to the engagement camp. Moreover, since this exploration and deliberation deals with a status distinct from classical conversion, it avoids a religious minefield where conflicting denominational and rabbinic approaches would probably doom any such effort at the outset.

To address the advisability and feasibility of proposals to formally recognize supportive non-Jews in Jewish families—be it along the lines advocated by Rabbi Marder, Robert Goodkind or others—we first need to survey the available evidence as to the character of these individuals and their families. Who, and how many, are they? How do they identify religiously? How are they raising their children? To what extent do they affiliate with congregations and of which denomination? To what extent do they practice Jewish ritual in the home or introduce Christian faith practices? What are the various relevant configurations of such individuals, and how many of each configuration are present in the population?

To address these questions and their implications, we again turn to the National Jewish Population Survey of 2000-01.

Recognizing Non-Jews in Jewish Families: Questions to Be Addressed

Proposals to recognize non-Jews in Jewish families give rise to a number of questions. Among them are those relating to the nature of the recognition: the title to be conferred (e.g., ally, friend, citizen, associate, *ger toshav*,⁵ etc.); the process or ceremonies, if any, that might take place; and who would bestow the status (a rabbi, for example). Also of concern are the rights and obligations that would ensue: What may “allies” do that other non-Jews could not (serve as an officer of a congregation, for example)? What honors or functions would be reserved for full-fledged Jews (by birth or conversion)? What would be proscribed for incumbents of the new status (liturgical honors come to mind)?

Beyond questions relating to the nature of the new status are those relating to the desirability from a policy point of view. Would this innovation have the desired effects of drawing families further into Jewish life? Would these families be more likely to promote the socialization of their children as Jews, as committed Jews, and as Jews who would in-marry? Would this new institution further blur the boundaries between Jews and others? Alternatively, would it help “regulate” the border, providing a clearer understanding of which non-Jewish spouses have publicly declared their interest in casting their lot with the Jewish People (even if they would rather not—or not yet—convert to Judaism), and which decline to do so?

While these and related questions lie beyond the scope of this paper, they follow logically upon a more fundamental question that this paper can indeed inform. It is the question of eligibility: Who would qualify for inclusion as a “citizen of the Jewish People” or some other comparable status? Some may propose that individuals qualify for the new status simply upon the basis of self-declaration. Yet if declared interest in being recognized as a citizen—or ally or friend—of the Jewish People is seen as insufficient for this new status, then what criteria indicating genuine attachment to the Jewish People would qualify someone for such recognition? Conversely, on what basis, if any, would we want to reject potentially qualified incumbents of this status?

The passages by Rabbi Marder and Robert Goodkind cited at the outset of this paper offer a useful starting point for exploring alternative criteria for inclusion and criteria for exclusion. Implicit within the two passages (which differ in their criteria for eligibility) are several features of those eligible for recognition, be it by Marder’s public recognition ceremony or by Goodkind’s proposed award of some new status such as “citizen.”

Both passages suggest areas of overlap in their underlying conceptions of eligibility. Most fundamentally, both approaches encompass non-Jews who, for the most part, are married to Jews and are not ready (as least as of yet) to convert. Also embedded in both approaches is the expectation that, if the couples in question have children, they are raising their children as Jews. Goodkind requires that the offspring be raised “exclusively as Jews,” while, in comparable fashion, Marder refers to non-Jewish parents who, with their Jewish spouses, provide their children with a Jewish home and a Jewish education. In addition, for Marder explicitly, but perhaps implicitly for Goodkind, they are members of congregations—people whose families belong to the synagogue and who appear at High Holiday services.

Yet in one important way, the two proposals part company. For Goodkind, candidates for Jewish citizenship must refrain from introducing “the rituals of another faith into the home.” In contrast, Marder explicitly recognizes and thanks both those with no faith attachment (in line with Goodkind) and non-Jews who identify with other faith traditions such as Christianity (in contrast with Goodkind’s more restricted proposal).

Taken together, the two approaches cited at the outset of this paper, then, hinge on five distinct criteria:

- Synagogue membership
- Raising children as Jews
- Jewish practices, such as observing major annual holidays
- No Christmas tree in the home (as an indicator of another religion in the home)
- No adherence to Christianity, or other non-Jewish faith traditions

How many non-Jews married to Jews meet these criteria? To what extent do these criteria overlap, such that many people qualify on multiple criteria? And, what is the true meaning of these criteria with respect to the underlying question of who can be seen as genuinely an ally, friend, or potential “citizen” of the Jewish People?

The NJPS contains evidence relevant to all these criteria and can help us understand their import. We may unpack the sociological meaning of the indicators by examining their relationships with one another. For example, what does it mean for the non-Jewish spouse to identify with another religion as opposed to identifying with none at all? What are the implications for Jewish involvement in the home or raising the child as a Jew?

Congregational Membership as a Key Criterion

We begin with some raw numbers. The NJPS yields an estimate for the total number of intermarried households as 680,000. Of these, over 100,000 belong to congregations. Of those in congregations, of those with children, about 9-in-10 raise their children as Jews—the few who are not raised Jewish may well be, in many cases, the children of the non-Jewish spouse from a previous marriage. Beyond the 100,000 are more than 30,000 intermarried couples who are raising their children as Jews, but who are not, at least at the time of the survey, members of congregations.

A methodological footnote: These numbers are conservative (“low-ball”) estimates. Recent analyses seem to confirm earlier reports that the NJPS underestimated the Jewish population.

Also, according to some researchers (at the Maurice and Marilyn Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies at Brandeis University), the NJPS especially underestimated the intermarried and other marginally identified Jews. The numerical implications of these considerations are not precise, but do suggest an expansion on the order of 20 percent to 25 percent. With this qualification in mind, this analysis uses the lower numbers derived from the original survey, but cautions that all raw figures may be downwardly biased. These considerations have little, if any, impact on percentage calculations or upon relationships between variables.

Joining a congregation and raising one's children as Jews (the two phenomena are related—both for the in-married and intermarried) are fairly common choices for the in-married, but rather uncommon choices for the intermarried. Among the in-married of two born-Jews, almost all (98 percent) raise their children exclusively in the Jewish religion; for the conversionary in-married, the figure is somewhat lower (87 percent), with the remainder raising their children in no religion. But for the intermarried, just 25 percent claim to be raising their children religiously in Judaism, and only in Judaism. (Published reports of higher rates of Jewish child rearing among the intermarried often rely on looser or “softer” operational definitions of children's Jewish identity; these definitions qualify the children as Jewish by way of additional questions, e.g., if religion is none, “Do you consider your child Jewish?” No such “stretches” are needed to qualify 98 percent of the children of in-married Jews.)

Joining a synagogue is even a more selective act than choosing to raise one's children as Jews, in that fewer Jews, in-married or intermarried, join a congregation than raise their children as Jews. At any point in time about 60 percent of in-married households are synagogue members, as are just 15 percent of intermarried homes. Synagogue membership climbs when children enter their elementary school years in the lead-up to bar/bat mitzvah. In such homes, affiliation rates exceed 80 percent for the in-married, but barely reach 20 percent for the intermarried.

This gap in affiliation rates can be explained by the diminished tendency for intermarried couples to raise their children as Jews. Of those who do so, about an equal number join a synagogue as among the in-married. For both in-married and intermarried couples, the decision to raise Jewish children is closely linked to the decision to join a congregation. The former leads to the latter, recalling the New Testament verse, “A little child shall lead them” (also the inspiration for a 1962 publication that attributed the rise in church membership in midcentury to the rise in birthrates).

To be sure, in-married and intermarried Jews join different sorts of congregations. In-married Jews are about evenly split among the three major denominations. In contrast, hardly any intermarried couples who affiliate do so by way of Orthodox congregations (6 percent). Some (24 percent) belong to Conservative synagogues, and the largest number (62 percent) join Reform congregations.

But despite all these distinctions, synagogue membership—for in-married and intermarried alike—remains a predictor of, and a near guarantor of, religious engagement in the home. Congregants report far higher rates of ritual observance than noncongregants, for both the in-married and intermarried population segments. By one measure, the proportion observing the widely celebrated holidays (Passover, Hanukkah, Yom Kippur, and Rosh Hashanah), the in-married average rate of observance is almost double that of the intermarried.

However, as large as the gap between the two segments is for the entire population of married Jews, it is significantly reduced when we restrict comparisons of in-married and intermarried to those who belong to congregations (i.e., the majority of the in-married and a small, self-selective minority of the intermarried). In fact, the gap between in-married and intermarried disappears entirely when we compare congregants from the two sorts of marriages within the same denomination. That is, among Conservative affiliated families, rates of holiday observance are nearly universal (over 90 percent) for both in-married and intermarried households. Among Reform affiliated families, the rates are also equal (at about 87 percent on average).

In short, with respect to Jewish child rearing and the observance of the most widely reported religious practices, congregants in any particular synagogue who are intermarried closely resemble their fellow congregants who are in-married. This pattern suggests that for purposes of defining eligibility for the new status (of “allies” or “citizens”), synagogue membership is not only a convenient marker. It is a virtual guarantor of raising Jewish children and engaging in Jewish practice in the home, two accompanying criteria for defining those non-Jews married to Jews who may be considered likely candidates for the new status, if they so choose.

Christmas Trees and Christian Faith: Not Quite a “Deal-Breaker”

But what of the presence of non-Jewish faith or practice? What are the implications of these elements for the relationship of non-Jews in Jewish households to the Jewish people? In particular, does adherence to Christianity (or other non-Jewish faith) imply a markedly different relationship with the Jewish People, one so different that some policy-makers would hesitate to invite such religiously identified non-Jews to partake of the newly created status? The same question might be asked with respect to the presence of Christmas trees, perhaps the most popular non-Jewish practice undertaken in Jewish households.

To answer these questions, some preliminaries are in order. Of the non-Jewish spouses in intermarried homes, about two-thirds identify with another faith tradition, generally Christianity, and the remaining one-third are reported as having no religious affiliation.

As for Christmas trees, as many as 61 percent of intermarried homes report their presence, far more than in in-married and conversionary households (5 percent and 20 percent respectively). Christmas trees are more prevalent when children are present, and less prevalent in households that belong to congregations.

More detailed analyses reveal some complex associations, in intermarried households, between these two indicators of Christian involvement and such indicators of Jewish involvement as holiday observance, providing children with Jewish schooling, and the decision to raise children exclusively in the Jewish religion. In fact, the relationships differ for the intermarried population at large, and the small subset that belongs to congregations.

One might think that more Christianity in the home (as denoted by the faith adherence of the non-Jewish spouse or the presence of a Christmas tree) generally translates into weaker Jewish engagement (as measured by holiday observance and child-rearing decisions). In fact, the results are quite variable and seemingly paradoxical at times.

For example, in the population of intermarrieds at large (that is, containing few congregants and many non-congregants), the impact of Christian adherence by the non-Jewish spouse is the reverse of what might otherwise be anticipated. As compared with non-Jewish spouses who profess no religion, Christian spouses have homes that score *higher* on all forms of Jewish engagement. Such homes are slightly *more* likely to celebrate Jewish holidays, and significantly *more* likely to raise their children in the Jewish religion exclusively and to send them to Jewish school. In fact, for both child-related decisions, intermarried homes with Christian spouses, as compared to those with no-religion spouses, are almost twice as likely to make such decisions.

For Jewish continuity purposes, then, the status of “no religion” is more pernicious than that of affirming an alternate faith. No religion on the part of the born Christian spouse is often accompanied by no religion on the part of the born Jewish spouse—and no religion on the part of the child. This pattern suggests that no religion for all is one way that spouses with initially discrepant religious backgrounds manage to harmonize their religious differences.

Alternatively, the presence of a Christian faith commitment on the part of the non-Jewish spouse may signify that the spouse values religious identity of some sort, making him/her more interested in seeing the child raised in a faith tradition, even Judaism, rather than none at all. The rabbis of medieval times may have been onto this phenomenon when they declared that Jews were better off in towns where a church was present than in one where none could be found. In any event, these results contain no *prima facie* evidence supporting the notion that Christian faith adherence makes non-Jewish spouses any less qualified to be regarded as an ally, friend or citizen of the Jewish People.

The results for Christmas trees, on the other hand, are more in keeping with conventional intuition. In the population at large, the presence of Christmas trees is indeed strongly associated with lower levels of Jewish engagement in the home. Those without a tree are about twice as likely to raise their children exclusively as Jews and about twice as likely to send their children to a Jewish school. They also more often celebrate the popular Jewish holidays.

Between the two indicators of Christian involvement, the presence of the Christmas tree is more predictive of Jewish disengagement than is the faith commitment of the non-Jewish spouse. This pattern might suggest to some that eligibility for the new status be denied to those who have Christmas trees in their homes. But the patterns for the intermarried among synagogue members alone suggest a different inference.

Among intermarried families who are synagogue members, just over half report Christmas trees at home. But, with respect to the relationship between Christmas trees and Jewish child rearing, the relationship for synagogue members is far weaker than it is for all intermarried homes. The presence of a Christmas tree among the special subset of intermarried congregants does still mean a diminished chance of raising children in Judaism exclusively, but the difference from homes with no tree is quite small: 76 percent raise their children as Jews in the former instance versus 86 percent in the latter. For those who have entered congregations, then, Christmas trees do differentiate, but not very much.

In like fashion, among the congregationally affiliated, we find only minor differences in Jewish engagement levels between those where the non-Jewish spouses maintain a Christian identity and those with a no-religion identity. In fact, for this subpopulation, the relationships, such as they are, are the reverse of those observed for the population at large.

All of these results suggest little utility to differentiating intermarried families with respect to their Christian engagement, provided they are synagogue members. Even if it were practical to do so, there is no apparent reason to restrict the award of a new status of attachment to the Jewish people to synagogue members who abjure aspects of Christian faith involvement.

Conclusion: The Synagogue as Locus

The widespread occurrence of intermarriage, as well as its powerful problematic impact on Jewish continuity, both for individuals and the Jewish population at large, has engendered a concerted effort, on many fronts, both to counter the untoward effects of intermarriage and to address the underlying issues the phenomenon touches upon. Some responses, such as the emphasis upon Jewish education, are relatively noncontroversial. Other responses, generally those pertaining to how to relate to those who are already intermarried, predictably and understandably provoke both conflict and controversy. It is no surprise that diverse understandings of the meaning, demands, and best interests of Judaism lead to some very contrasting approaches to dealing with an issue that touches so intimately and directly upon the lives of most Jewish families in the United States.

Proposals to somehow recognize the Jewishly engaged non-Jewish spouses of intermarried Jews raise the prospect of both bridging these ideologically driven differences and advancing the communal response to intermarriage. Recognition of these people, or the creation of a new status, carry little of the religious “freight” associated with conversion per se. Recognition falls short of conversion, thereby sidestepping the differences that divide rabbis and lay leaders of the major denominations.

Moreover, the research offers suggestive evidence that strengthening the tie of non-Jewish spouses to Jewish group identity may produce some desirable outcomes. Most directly, it stands to reason that they, and perhaps their families, will feel more readily enticed into synagogue life. More pointedly, the evidence certainly argues for the value of outright conversion of non-Jewish parents as a way to largely counter the deleterious effect of intermarriage upon Jewish continuity in their children. By extension—and this argument is admittedly speculative—a step in the direction of greater public identification with the Jewish People, while short of conversion, may well produce some of the same effects in the children, that is, more firmly rooting them in exclusively Jewish, rather than partially Jewish, identities.

Last, the research also points to a convenient and socially acceptable marker of eligibility: synagogue membership. Non-Jewish spouses whose families belong to synagogues constitute the most Jewishly active segment of the intermarried. They are large enough in number to be consequential demographically and culturally, yet they are small enough to constitute a very selective minority of the intermarried. In the vast majority of instances, these families are raising their children as Jews. Symbolically, joining a synagogue is in itself an act of affiliation with the Jewish community, and demands with it an act of financial support for Jewish life in general and Jewish education in particular. Congregational membership as a criterion for eligibility carries another advantage: It is easy to administer. It is relatively unambiguous and requires no probing into the faith, practice, or private lives of the non-Jewish candidates for recognition as specially related to the Jewish people.

Neither the presence of a Christmas tree nor the maintenance of Christian identity on the part of the non-Jewish spouse seems to have much consequence for the Jewish engagement of those few intermarried families who are congregational members. Neither the probability of raising the children as Jews nor the frequency of Jewish holiday observance seems diminished by these two indicators of Christian engagement. Accordingly, rabbis—or others who might publicly recognize the Jewish association of non-Jewish spouses who are congregants—need not be overly concerned with the personal faith or practice of these individuals.

Finally, the synagogue as locus for the public recognition of non-Jewish spouses as allies, partners, friends, or citizens of the Jewish People offers one more advantage: It may well set the stage for full conversion. Congregational rabbis are in the best position to teach toward and conduct formal conversions. The availability of the new status will give them one more instrument or incentive with which to entice non-Jewish spouses who are so inclined to move toward complete conversion—turning themselves into Jews, and their intermarriages into in-marriages.

While probably feasible, and possibly advantageous, the ultimate desirability of creating a new status and a new ceremony for non-Jewish spouses of Jewishly engaged intermarried families is not at all a given. Many questions must be addressed, many ambiguities resolved, and many pitfalls examined. Yet the urgency of the issue of intermarriage in our time, the depth of controversy surrounding it, and the possibility of an ameliorative innovation all argue for serious consideration of the proposal. The implementation might be along the lines practiced by Rabbi Marder, or that advocated by Robert Goodkind, or it may be informed by some other worthy approaches, real or theoretical. The end shape of the proposal is unknown; but its consideration and the discussion it will provoke cannot help but be useful and valuable.

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Endnotes

1. See <http://www.betham.org/sermons/marder040925bl.html>.
2. See <http://www.ajc.org/site/apps/nl/content2.asp?c=ijIT12PHKoG&cb=1591361&ct=2395143>.
3. These figures are based on the National Jewish Population Survey (NJPS) 2000-01, sponsored by the United Jewish Communities. See <http://www.ujc.org/page.html?ArticleID=46253>.
4. These figures are from the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey. See <http://www.ujc.org/page.aspx?id=46254>.
5. See Shaye J.D. Cohen's comments on the historical basis of the term *ger toshav*, in his essay in this volume on pg. ____.