

The Contemporary Jewish Family

A review of the social science literature

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THIS article is about the contemporary Jewish family. The basis of our discussion is to be empirical research on the Jewish family. However, a review of the literature shows that while the Jewish community can exhibit limitless energy, and heightened social consciousness under national and sectarian challenge, there is one area where it seems to have failed, and this is the gap in our knowledge of the modern Jew. Chancellor Finkelstein, a few years ago, wrote the following:

There are probably a hundred people and more whose profession it is to discover all that can be known about the Jews in Jerusalem in the First Century; there does not seem to be one who has the same duty for the Jews of New York in the 20th Century. So it comes about that we understand Judaism in the First Century better than we understand Judaism in the 20th. (Sklare, 1958).

Considering the high percentage of Jewish social scientists, it is somewhat surprising that very few have shown interest in studying the Jew. Lipset (1955) pointed out that the phenomena of Jewish sociologists ignoring the Jews as a field of study is more glaring, since the study of the immigrant and ethnic groups is so important in sociology. Since social science research had a rather late development in Europe, information on the Jewish family in Europe is even more scarce. Most of the work on the Jewish family has been written by philosophers, rabbis, journalists, novelists, and sometimes novelists turned sociologists. While it can be said that the Jews in America have been discussed and written about

more frequently than any other ethnic group, the material available is not based on sound scientific data. A number of books have been written exclusively on the Jewish family which emphasize the customs and values, which have been culled primarily from religious writings. To what extent these writings have influenced the every-day behavior of the Jew is hard to say. These are the ideals of a religion, but it would be of interest to see to what extent Jewish families fulfill these ideals. This has become very important, in view of the lack of sophistication of the average Jewish family in the customs and laws of Judaism. A good source of articles on Jews is to be found in the journal, *Jewish Education*. Three articles by Fishman (1957-8, 1959, 1960) and four by Sanua (1962, 1963, 1964, 1965) will be used to provide information on the Jewish family.

Some literature has emphasized a number of characteristics of the Jewish family living in the shtetls of Europe (Zborowski and Herzog, 1952). It was patriarchal in nature. The father, and the mother to a lesser extent, were the authorities and commanded a great deal of respect. It was an extended family, where grandparents were an integrated part of the household, and thirdly, the home was the source of joy, education, and protection. Thus, it provided material, intellectual and emotional rewards. However, with the breakdown of the ghetto walls, and the need for Jewish children to pursue careers in the secular world, the solidarity of the Jewish family was weakened. The increase of intermarriage, particularly in Western Europe and the United States, has made it very difficult for the Jewish family to

maintain its traditional solidarity. In the traditional family, it was possible to instill pride in Judaism, to develop concerns of the spiritual, respect of the aged and parents, obedience, etc.

To what extent these values have continued in the modern Jewish family is rather difficult to assess. With the continuous acculturation, and fractionalization of Jewish life in the United States into Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform groups, there must be some basic changes that have occurred, but have not been adequately evaluated. The following are some of the questions that may be raised. What is the present role of the Jewish father and Jewish mother? What is the pattern of love-hate relationships among members of the Jewish family? Who is the disciplinarian, and who has more influence? What are the attitudes of Jews towards birth control, Jewish education, intermarriage, towards the out-groups? A fundamental question is does the Jewish family provide enough security to reduce mental illness among its members. What are the aspirations of the young? What are their self-concepts as Jews; their attitude towards the establishment of the State of Israel? Furthermore, since the Jewish family cannot be studied in isolation, it would be important to study extra-familial kinship relations. All these questions require systematic study and analysis, and cannot be left, as indicated, to novelists and journalists, or even to non-Jewish researchers who happen to have a Jewish group in their sample. Nevertheless, some effort will be made to present disparate information on the Jewish family, which has been collected from various sources.

I. Demographic Information on the Jewish Family

The following represents some of the empirical findings on the contemporary Jewish family, primarily in the United States. We expect to cite some demo-

graphic information on the Jewish family from two recent sources: a study of Jewish families in a relatively small town, Springfield (Goldstein, 1968) and another in a large city such as Boston (Axelrod and al., 1967). No large scale study of New York, where there is the largest concentration of Jews in the world, is available. However, we expect to supplement present information with references of small scale studies carried out by the writer.

In Springfield, the large majority of the household were concentrated in the two to four person range, (average is 3.2). There are two characteristics which differentiate the Jewish group from the non-Jewish group. For one, there is a stronger tendency among Jews to live as members of families rather than as single individuals, and secondly, there are fewer children in Jewish families. However, the aged group is characterized by a considerable proportion of single person units, particularly of females, which reflects the tendency of aged women to outlive their husbands and continue to maintain their own homes. There is a high rate of marriage, particularly for those 40-49, where 95 percent of all men and women are married. Another striking fact is the low rate of divorce, separations, or more than one marriage. However, a slightly higher rate of divorce is found among the more acculturated suburbanites, the better educated, and Reform Jews. Less than one percent of the men, and only two percent of the women were divorced, in the Springfield study. Eight percent had remarried, but most of them were among the aged, reflecting remarriage after widowhood. Eighty-five percent are native-born. Boston does not differ greatly from Springfield, except that households are smaller (2.6), most are native-born (83%).

In New York, where the writer (Sanua, 1965) conducted a study of fertility among members of different YM-

YWHAs, the socioeconomic status did not affect fertility, a finding contrary to that of the non-Jewish group. The average was two children per family. However, the average number of children in one suburban area was slightly higher than in central areas of the city. In the same study, we found that social class had no effect on the fertility rate. Goldscheider (1965) found that for first generation Jews, socioeconomic status and fertility rate were inversely related, while this was not the case with the second and third generation. We could assume, therefore, that the total percentage of Jews in the United States will go downward, particularly now that Jewish immigration to the United States has about disappeared. Jacobs (1963-1964), in an article entitled, "Population Explosion in Reverse" sounds an alarming note, in view of the dwindling Jewish population in the United States. Based on published statistics, he indicates that while the Jewish population in 1937 represented 3.7 percent of the total population in the United States, by the year 2000, Jews will only account for 1.6 percent of the total population. Bogue (1959) believes that the American Jews "are scarcely reproducing themselves." This is supported by a calculation of the replacement quotas by the Census Bureau, in connection with the 1957 sample survey. Replacement of the white population requires 2.130 live births per 1000 women, single as well as married. Since the fertility rate for Jewish women was found to be 1,749, which is considered lower, it is therefore quite conceivable that the Jewish population may remain static, or even decrease.

One assumption accounting for the low fertility rate of Jews is the pattern of residence, college education, and concentration in white collar occupations. Thus, Jews have fewer children, which has little to do with their Jewishness. The

other assumption is that this is a result of cultural values and minority status, which foster feelings of insecurity that tend to reduce the fertility of Jewish families. Westoff and al. (1961) reported that Jewish couples who expressed a desire to give more materially to their children than they had received tended to have less children.

There are two factors which seem to weaken Jewish solidarity. With the movement of Jews to suburbia, besides the actual change which is taking place in American Jewish life, communal and cultural ties in the cities will weaken in time (Fishman, 1963). The other factor is the pursuit of higher education by Jewish youth. This may lead them away from the concentration of Jewish populations. Furthermore, in view of the increased acceptance of Jews in executive business positions, and manufacturing, which involves a greater dispersal of the Jewish population, the lessened contact with Jewish activities will tend to weaken the ties to Judaism.

As far as Europe is concerned, the declining rate of Jewish fertility was even alarming early in the century. Ruppin (1909) had already pointed out that it was not the fact of a declining birth rate which distinguished the Jews from all other communities, but the rapidity and the intensity of the decline. Engelman (1939) pointed out that while there was a great increase of Jewish population during the 19th Century, primarily limited to Eastern Europe, this expansion was not a specific Jewish phenomenon, but was related to major population trends of the period.

II. The General Characteristics of the Jewish Family

Rabbis, sociologists and laymen have provided a combination of their own personal experience and references to Halachic writing regarding the Jewish family, showing the positive values of

Judaism (Goldstein, 1942; Epstein, 1942, 1948; Kaplan, 1967; Kertzer, 1967; Sherman). Some writers offered a caricature of the Jewish family, often in the form of a novel which is rather unfavorable, particularly to the Jewish mother (P. Roth, *Portnoy's Complaint*). Other writers, like Yaffe (*The American Jews*, 1968) or Van den Haag (*The Jewish Mystique*, 1969) combine their experience with sociological data and with personal irony. In this group, we could also include Memmi's book (1966). Neither a Frenchman nor an Arab, Memmi is considered to be a reluctant Jew, who regarded Jewishness as entirely external, imposed by the oppression of a hostile world. In search of an authentic Jewish identity, Memmi found a way out of his dilemma. Assimilation, he felt, must be considered as a legitimate way out for anyone who desires it, but he himself opted for Jewish identity through Israel. The existence of a Jewish state, he believes, permits the disappearance of "Jewishness."

A. Closeness of the Jewish Family

Balswick (1966) reviewed the literature regarding the closeness of the Jewish family. His overall impression is that there has been very little empirical research dealing with this question of closeness of the American Jewish family, despite the general conviction about this phenomena. Most of the research available was carried out by non-Jewish researchers who happen to have had Jewish subjects in their sample.

Landis (1960) studied the relationship between family relationship and family values of a large sample of college students belonging to various religious groups. He tried to relate parental happiness, closeness to parents, and patterns of parental dominance, divorce rate, willingness to marry, and religiosity of parents and students. Results for the Jewish

groups differed from those for the rest of the sample in practically every instance. Landis found that 80 percent of the Jewish students reported that their parents were happy, or very happy, while the percentages for Catholic and Protestant students were lower.

While religiousness in non-Jewish groups was related to closeness of the family, with the Jewish group, religiousness played no such role. Religiosity was reported to play a major role for only one factor; while 12 percent of Jewish respondents from devout families approved of intermarriage, 60 percent of those from religiously "indifferent" families thought similarly. It is to be noted that 13 percent of Jewish students would be willing to change their faith in the process (p. 345).

Lenski (1961), found that Jews in Detroit visited their relatives more frequently. Furthermore, he found that the greatest influence on the religious beliefs of his Jewish respondents was their parents. Gordon (1959) in his study, *Jews in Transition*, found that Jewish families moving to suburbia did not necessarily reduce the frequency of visits to their parents, who still remained in the city. Thomas, who was in the process of writing a book on Jews when he died in 1947, found from a study of letters (Bressler, 1952) that Jews had a strong awareness of the obligation towards their immediate, and larger extended family.

It seems that while traditional religion has a limited appeal among Jewish students, other values rate extremely high. Maier and Spinrad (1958) found that while 74 percent of the Jewish students gave their highest loyalty to the family as compared to 24 percent of the Catholics, only 10 percent of the Jewish students expressed their willingness to marry outside their religion, as compared with 45 percent of the Protestant students. It would seem that strong affinity to one's

family and a reluctance to intermarry seem to represent a cohesive force to prevent assimilation of Jews to the dominant group. However, this closeness of the Jewish family, which was labelled by Bardis (1961) as "familism", was not found to be any higher than the "familism" of the Protestant family. Bardis defined "familism" as, "the feeling and the conviction among the members of the family that their family unit is worthwhile group demanding loyalty and cooperation of all its members, and one that should be preserved and perpetuated." This contradicts previous research which show that family ties among Jews are exceptionally strong. In this particular study, it was found that there was a positive correlation between "familism" and religiosity.

B. Child-Rearing and Parent-Child Relationships

Benedict (1949) studied child-rearing practices, including swaddling of infants, in a number of European countries, and tried to relate it to an examination of national character. While swaddling is conceived as a first step in the long process of "hardening" a child among the Russian and Polish, swaddling of Jewish children, irrespective of the country, has characteristics all its own. The baby is swaddled on a soft pillow, and in most cases the bindings are wrapped relatively loosely around the baby. The stress is on warmth and comfort, and the confinement of the baby's limbs is regarded with pity and commiseration. In the United States, Durrell (1946), while studying the conceptions of parenthood among whites, Negroes and Jews, found that the latter group tended to be more liberal in their ideas about child-rearing.

It has been found by Gordon (1959) that Jewish parents tend to be excessive in their generosity to make their children happy at all cost. Jewish children would tend to be less respectful of their parents

than non-Jewish children. It was even stated by Yaffe (1968) that many of the Jewish hippies in the Haight-Ashbury section of San Francisco had not been disowned by their parents, who continued to send them checks. This is contrary to what non-Jewish parents did. While Jewish parents may be exasperated by their children, they would not cut them off completely (p. 284).

Whiteman (1960) using instruments supposed to measure child rearing attitudes found that the Jewish group had the least tendency to adhere to a rigid system of beliefs and disbeliefs, or to a system of beliefs hinging on absolute authority. Jewish parents were more likely to interact flexibly and democratically with each other and with their children than the Baptist and the Catholic groups. The majority of measures failed to differentiate between the latter two religious groups.

However, this permissiveness may be possibly more acceptable with the boys than with the girls. In a study of Jewish youth in Wilkes Barre (1965) by the American Jewish Committee, female teenagers were found to be less close to their parents than boys, indicating that Jewish families are less girl oriented. Bell and Buerkle (1962) found that such conflict between mother and daughter was highest among Jewish families, attributing it to the fact that Jewish mothers are still influenced by "tradition" while their daughters attending college have adopted an "emancipated" view of their role. These girls were found to have a closer relationship with their fathers. However, the same researcher presents a different picture once these daughters are married.

Bell and Buerkle (1963) hypothesized that the Jewish wife, when compared to the Protestant wife, is closer and attaches greater importance to her mother than to her mother-in-law as a role model.

Findings in their study indicate that the traditional function of the mothers as a primary role model has been altered to a lesser extent among Jewish wives than among Protestant wives. The investigators reported that 52 percent of the Jewish wives indicated that their relationship with their mothers is "very good", while only 32 percent responded similarly about their relationship with their mothers-in-law. It was also noted that 30 percent of the Jewish wives feel that they fulfill the roles of wives better than their own mothers, while 58 percent gave a similar answer when asked to compare themselves in fulfilling the role of wives with their mothers-in-law.

Other evidence pointing out the tendency for strong bonds between Jewish girls and their mothers is found in an older study conducted by Christopherson and Walters (1958). In their study, Jewish females were least likely to accept advice from their mothers-in-law, when compared to non-Jewish females. Other findings in the study indicate that the Jewish female is more likely to work after having had a child, and 85 percent had no objections to the use of contraceptive devices.

While the Jewish child may have permissive parents and tend to be over-protected, Jewish parents, according to McClelland and co-workers (1955), tend to foster a greater degree of independence in their children compared to Italian and Irish parents. As socioeconomic level rose, the Jewish father expected his children to show signs of independent behavior at an earlier age. This was not the case with the Jewish mother, where the socioeconomic background played no role.

Strodtbeck and al. (1958) found that because of these tendencies for Jewish parents to foster independence, Jews are more willing to take jobs in cities where their parents do not live, that fewer Jewish couples live in the same

neighborhood as their parents, and that young Jews seldom ask their parents' permission to marry. The same study found that Jewish parents are more likely to praise their children for their achievements, and less likely to punish them for their mistakes. However, there is a great deal of pressure on the part of the parents for their children to be upwardly mobile (Strodtbeck, 1957). While Jewish and Italian children have the same occupational aspirations, the latter group indicated that their parents would not be disappointed if they failed to attain white collar occupations. The Jewish youngsters, on the other hand, were accurate in predicting that achieving anything short of professional status would be very disappointing to their parents. Here again, social class made no differences in parental aspirations for their children.

A study conducted by Sanua (1965) in New York City involved the interviewing of 110 Jewish mothers, whose child belonged to a Jewish community center. In half of the cases, it was the mother's decision to send the child to a community center. Percentage for the father was negligible. Very few of these mothers indicated that the Jewishness of the Center was the prime motivation. Mothers were queried about the positive relationship with their children, as well as their husband's relationship with the children. There was only one difference in these relationships. The lower-class father tends to have a less favorable relationship with his children than the rest of the various groups. One-third of the mothers were found to be the sole disciplinarian, and this was not affected by the socioeconomic status of the family. Mothers were asked to give a picture of their child's personality. It was found that among many personality traits and problems, only in three cases were the lower class mothers different from the rest. They mentioned more frequently

that their children do things which irritate them, do not do well in school, and complained about their children's relationship with other children.

C. Who Dominates in the Jewish Family?

Gordon's own observations (1959) in the last three decades leads him to conclude that the Jewish wife today, by virtue of her increased duties and responsibilities with the family, has become the modern matriarch of Jewish suburbia. Because of his preoccupation with his business and career, the Jewish father, according to Gordon, gives little attention to the spiritual and cultural matters that involve his home and family. As a result of this neglect, there has been an increase in interdisciplinary problems among Jewish youth. Gordon finds that not only does the Jewish woman influence religious activities in the home, but also through her activities may even shape the religious pattern of her congregation. In view of her limited Hebrew education, she may not be qualified for this type of leadership.

It is to be noted that in one follow-up study of males who had been attending a Yeshiva school (Pollak, 1962) it was found that Jewish practices were more likely to be maintained in those homes which had observant mothers. Evidence that Jewish households tend to be mother-oriented more than other religious groups is given by Winch, Greer and Blumberg (1967) who asked suburban Chicago housewives about their preference of relatives who could raise their children if anything happened to them and to their husbands. Almost 75 percent of the Jewish mothers named a maternal relative, compared to 31 percent of Protestants and 48 percent of Catholics.

In a survey of high school and college students, Sanua (unpublished study) requested students to indicate which parent had more influence in their

decision-making. Approximately 60 percent of the students indicated that *both* parents were equally influential. With male students, 20 percent pointed out that the fathers were more influential, and 20 percent indicated that the mother was more influential. With the female students, the mothers seem to be more influential than the fathers. Their responses were 30 percent and 10 percent respectively. Whatever conclusions may be drawn from this study, one is that the Jewish family is likely to be more democratic where there is no decided dominance of either parent. Furthermore, it was found that both fathers and mothers object very strongly to interfaith dating on the part of their children.

III. *Intermarriage*

For a thorough coverage of intermarriage, the reader is referred to Berman's book (1969). Europe, even before World War I, provides us with startling figures on the rate of intermarriage. Barron (1953) in his analysis of Jewish intermarriage in Europe, observed that throughout Jewish history, Jews have intermarried more in prosperous times than in times of economic depression and social oppression. Thus, in Western Europe, where Jews were numerically few and "emancipated" in the sense that they enjoyed full civil rights, they intermarried proportionately more than Jews in Eastern Europe. In Italy, intermarriage was so high that almost all Jewish families had Christian relatives. In Lithuania, the rate of intermarriage was only .39 percent.

Engelman (1929) found that between the years 1888 and 1900, the rate of intermarriage among Jews in Switzerland was growing faster than the rate of intermarriage among the general population. In Germany, Engelman (1935) found that the ratio of Jewish mixed couples per 100 endogamous Jewish

marriages had risen from 20.3 in 1901-1905 to 56.0 in the years 1956-1929. In Berlin, the ratio was 74.6 during the same period. It was found that almost 2 percent of the children born to mixed couples were brought up in the Jewish tradition.

Rosenthal (1963) wrote an extensive article by stating that the ethnic-religious bonds which hold the Jewish community intact are weakening, and he refuses to give credence to the suggestion that third generation Jews are returning to the practices of Judaism of the first generation. On the basis of his survey in Washington, D. C., he reports that the rate of intermarriage for third generation Jews of 17.9 percent, and that 70 percent of the children of mixed marriages were lost to the Jewish group. The rate of intermarriages in small towns and rural areas is higher than the rate of intermarriage in the larger cities. Rosenthal (1963) reports that the rate of intermarriage among Jews in Iowa is 42.2 percent. Living on college campuses also tends to increase the rate of intermarriage.

Prince (1962), on the basis of 194 questionnaires answered by intermarried couples, in the United States, found that Jewish males intermarry three times more frequently than Jewish females. Marriages between Jews and Protestants are more common (58.2%) than marriages between Jews and Catholics (41.8%). In Jewish-Catholic marriages, children are usually reared in the mother's religion, and in Jewish-Protestant marriages, children are raised in the Jewish faith in the ratio of two to one, quite different from the ratio in Germany early in the century.

Possible forces leading to intermarriage have been studied by Heiss (1960). He found that the data on intermarried Jews suggests they had weaker family ties during childhood. As to marital out-

come, Protestants appear to be least affected by intermarriage, while Jews and Catholics seem to carry an additional burden brought on by intermarriage. The author hypothesized that strong church and family pressures are responsible for this added burden.

Goldstein and Goldscheider (1968) found that intermarriage is more frequent among the third generation than among the immigrant group. Interestingly enough, the rate of conversion to Judaism by the non-Jewish partner is higher among the third generation than among the second generation. Sklare (1965) hypothesized that because of their more liberal values, Jews have become less and less objectionable to non-Jews as marriage partners.

A recent statewide study on intermarriage was carried out by Christensen and Barber (1967) in Indiana, where state registers, as in Iowa, include the religious identification. The following represents a summary of the findings. 47.6 percent of all marriages pertaining to Jews were interfaith marriages. Mixed Jewish marriages show proportionately more civil weddings, more grooms and brides who were previously married, who married at older ages, and who engaged in higher level occupations and resided in urban centers. Mixed Jewish marriages had the highest rate of divorce and, there was less pre-marital pregnancies among mixed Jewish marriages. What is important to remember is that when family ties in Jewish families are loose during childhood, this leads to a higher frequency of intermarriage. Thus, the preservation and solidarity of the Jewish family, and close relationship between parents and children would tend to prevent this increasing rate of mixed marriages among Jews. However, Mayer (1961) discusses some of the external factors regarding the causes of intermarriage. He maintains that inten-

sified anti-Semitism will increase the ratio of Jewish males marrying Gentile females rather than Gentile males marrying Jewish females.

IV. *Mental Illness and Psychological Problems in the Jewish Family*

A major book on the epidemiology of mental illness (Srole et al., 1962) includes important data on mental illness among Jews. The study was conducted in Midtown Manhattan and shows differences in rates of mental illness among Jews and non-Jews. More non-Jews were admitted to state mental hospitals, yet more Jews are treated in private mental hospitals. The disparity between the two groups is greatest for out-patients, where the ratio is 4 to 1, with more Jews being treated on an out-patient basis. Thus, Jews have a larger percentage of mildly impaired individuals. This tends to reduce the percentage of Jews who are considered to be seriously impaired. According to Srole et al. (1962) the very low percentage of very serious mental impairment among Jews is due to the following reasons:

...mobilization of anxiety about the instability of the Jewish exilic environment may historically have been established as a conditioning pattern of the Jewish family structure. In one direction, such anxiety, subsequently magnified in the adult by extra-family life conditions, may be reflected in our findings of an unusually large concentration of Midtown Jews in the sub-clinical mild category of symptom formation. On the other hand, this large component of historically realistic anxiety, as generated in the Jewish family, may function prophylactically to immunize its children against the potentially disabling sequelae of the more severe pressures and traumas of existence.

In another major epidemiological study conducted in New Haven by Hollingshead and Redlich (1959) the findings were similar. Jews in New Haven, as in New York, have the highest ambulatory treatment rates and total patient frequencies in comparison to Protestants

and Catholics. A review of the literature on the subject of mental illness among Jews led Orlansky (1946) to reach the conclusion that Jews have more neurosis because of the taboos and inhibitions of Mosaic law to the unconscious "incest motive" resulting from exceptionally close ties within the Jewish family to exclusion from manual activity and seclusion into a world of life predominantly cerebral and to the tensions of minority life.

However, this higher percentage of Jewish patients under treatment would undoubtedly be affected by their readiness to seek psychiatric help. This was tested by Srole and Langner, who asked respondents an open-ended question posing certain psychiatric problems in an hypothetical family and inquiring about the most appropriate action which should be pursued. Jewish respondents, in comparison to the Protestant and Catholic groups, suggested far more frequently (49.2 percent) that the psychotherapist is the most appropriate source. The percentages for the Catholic and Protestant groups were 23.8 and 31.4 respectively.

The authors of the Midtown study hypothesized that the religiosity of the parent would affect the mental health of their offspring. Only 31.1 percent of the Jews indicated that religion was very important to their parents, while the percentages for Protestants and Catholics were 40 and 67.4 respectively. In correlating the mental health of the Jewish respondents and their parents' religiosity, the data did not offer any significant findings. However, in view of the limited size of the Jewish sample, the authors feel that their results are inconclusive. Findings for the Protestant and Catholic groups indicated that the lower the religiosity of the parents of lower and middle class respondents, the greater their impairment rate.

Rinder (1963) reviewed the literature of American Jewish urbanites and even made some predictions on the basis of his study. It is his contention that if the Jewish family patterns continue to prevail, the overall rate of impairment will remain below average. However, if catastrophes such as economic collapse, or racial and religious hostility would erupt and be directed against the Jews, patterns could be reversed; the rate of neurosis would decrease and the rate for psychosis would increase.

V. Sexuality

Sexuality in the Jewish family seems to lean towards a more open, non-Puritanical attitude. Sex is accepted and discussed with some self-imposed restraint. Chastity and virginity are highly prized, while pre-marital intercourse is frowned upon. The best information on the sexuality of the American Jew is still the Kinsey Report. Kinsey, Pomeroy and Martin (1948) found that as far as total sexual outlet, which would include masturbation, the least active among the males belonging to different religious groups is the Orthodox Jew. The Jewish 'inactive' is fourth in line, with Protestant 'inactive' and Catholic 'inactive' being more sexually active. However, as far as marital intercourse is concerned, Jews are found at the opposite end of the continuum, at all age levels, with Orthodox Jews being least active and non-observant Jews being most active sexually. The frequency of sexual activity of the Orthodox Jew is obviously related to his strict observance of the laws in Leviticus.

In 1954 Klausner (1961) conducted a survey on sex patterns, using the Kinsey interview method in Israel, with a sample of unmarried males and females. He found that the males in Israel had about the same order of activity as the males in the United States. In his sample, the

females had about five times the number of orgasms in their twenties as those studied by Kinsey in the United States. Thus, Israeli females were found to have the same frequency of sexual activity as the Israeli male. There is no dating culture in Israel, so that pairing off can be a rather transient affair. Klausner (1961) carried out a similar study with Iraqi Jews who had recently immigrated to Israel. The total sexual outlet of the Iraqi male was found to be slightly lower than that of Kinsey's American sample. However, the total outlet of Iraqi females is considerably less than that of the males, but still remains slightly higher than Kinsey's finding among American females of the same educational and economic status. However, almost all of the sexual activity of the unmarried Iraqi female is solitary. Males experience their sexual outlets with lower class females and prostitutes. This is consistent with the culture where the sexes are separated in the Middle East.

VI. Religiousness and Identification in the Jewish Family

Lazerwitz (1962) found that Jews rate second lowest in church attendance while Episcopalians have the lowest rating. On the other hand, both of these groups have the highest percentage of membership in voluntary organizations. In another study, Lazerwitz (1961) examined factors which could be associated with synagogue attendance. While the number of children has no effect, there is a slight increase in synagogue attendance among families with younger children. No relationship was found between the extent of one's educational background and synagogue attendance. Lazerwitz also found that Jews residing outside the New York cosmopolitan area tended to have more extensive educational background, higher income, and attended synagogue more frequently. In

Washington, (Bigman, 1957) it was found that a large percentage of families do not belong to synagogues for the following reasons: "We won't join until our children are old enough", or "our children are grown now."

Sherman (1963) pointed out in a recent study that "cultural religion" is gaining steadily. In many cases, Jews are absent from holiday religious services conducted in synagogues since hotels, resorts and cruises advertise holiday services. This enables some people to enjoy worldly pleasures and at the same time feel that they are meeting their religious obligations.

Sklare (1967) in the Lakeville Study, found that 33 percent of the advanced-generation German group became former synagogue members, compared to only 12 percent to 18 percent among second-generation East Europeans and others, after they have passed the "peak school" period when they feel the need to provide education for their children. Those who have high or moderate home observance hardly become non-affiliated during the "post-school" period. However, those who have low home observance, the drop is from 75 percent to 56 percent. The drop of those with low synagogue attendance is somewhat sharper, from 64 percent to 36 percent.

What about Jews who are strongly alienated and largely integrationist-minded? The Lakeville Study included such Jews. Sklare found to his surprise that this type of Jew continues to maintain a circle of friends which is primarily Jewish and not much different from the synagogue-affiliated Jew. He indicates, however, that thoroughgoing research on this type of individual is necessary if we are to arrive at a definite explanation for this puzzling behavior. However, he assumes that one of the reasons for the strongly alienated Jew to maintain his

Jewish contacts is that in intimate social relationships he feels more comfortable with Jews than with non-Jews. This "Jewish clannishness" may represent a residual form of Jewishness, a "holding operation" preliminary to the assimilation of the individual. Whether the old pattern of prejudice or discrimination will continue in the future and represent a counter movement is not really known, but, according to Sklare, this prejudice and discrimination has already declined rather sharply. It is possible that the new generation will feel quite comfortable with the Gentile clique.

The meaning of Jewishness was the subject of a symposium which appeared in *Commentary* (Podhoretz, 1961). A total of 31 young Jewish intellectuals from various disciplines were asked to indicate the meaning of Judaism to them, and its prospects in the future. A similar venture was conducted in 1944. In comparing the responses given on these two dates, Podhoretz found that the responses given in 1961 indicate far less bitterness than those given in 1944. On the whole, today's intellectuals do not reject Jewishness, nor do they rush towards it with great enthusiasm. Very few express any sense of commitment to it. Some indicate that the American Jewish community is indistinguishable from the middle-class American community in general. They are against "chauvinism" and "parochialism". However, the symposium is permeated with an atmosphere of idealism, an idealism which many of the contributors themselves associate with their being Jewish. In further issues of *Commentary*, numerous letters sent to the editors were printed in the journal, some congratulating and others expressing dismay at the poor choice of intellectuals with an "adolescent's understanding of their faith".

Jospe (1963) has written on what he

calls the "pediatric knowledge" which Jewish students have on Judaism. Payne (1963), a non-Jewish professor in the South hypothesized that Jewish students, because of their background, would be more familiar with the Old Testament than Protestant and Catholic students. However, he was surprised to find that Jewish scores were no higher than those of non-Jews, which led Payne to the following conclusions:

We thought that because Jewish life is so intimately tied with Old Testament history, tradition and philosophy, these students would be much more familiar with these materials than the Protestants. Their failure to demonstrate this can be interpreted possibly as a tendency for younger Jewish persons to pay less attention to these materials and, as such, would reflect a tendency to disregard traditional bases of their faith.

VIII. *The Jewish Family in the State of Israel*

A complete change of Jewish family life occurred before the establishment of the State of Israel, when groups of Jews, primarily from Eastern Europe, emigrated to Palestine and established a unique type of cooperative settlement, the kibbutz, based on socialistic philosophy. All resources were pooled, and individuals were expected to contribute according to their ability. In most kibbutzim, children are raised in nurseries, with peer groups, and are permitted to visit with their parents at the end of the day. They were not raised as members of individual families, but as members of their communities.

In another type of agricultural settlement, the moshav, the family unit lives together in its own quarters, although the land and marketing is managed on a cooperative basis. The arrival of Jews from North Africa and Arab countries, with their traditional patriarchal family structure, has resulted in a generational conflict. The family structure is being

eroded by the acculturation process of the younger generation to the liberal values characteristic of society in Israel.

An early study of life in the kibbutz was carried out by Spiro (1963), an anthropologist. He found that survival in the kibbutz depends on the identification with the group. There is an absence of intensive acquisitive drives, an absence of intense success drives, and a willingness to assume social responsibility. The question which Spiro raises is the permanency of these values with the new generation. Because of ideological reasons, the old generation were able to be rather staunch in their purpose to carry on successful kibbutz life. However, will the children be able to maintain the ideology of their fathers?

Rabin, (1965) a psychologist, was interested mainly in comparing children raised in the kibbutz and children raised by nuclear families. In an article he wrote in 1959, he reported that kibbutz-reared children have more positive attitudes towards the family than non-kibbutz children. The girls of the non-kibbutz group had more positive feelings towards the father, and the boys in the kibbutz group had more positive attitudes towards the mother. Since the establishment of the State of Israel, the conditions of national life, with the influx of new immigrants, has affected kibbutz life. According to Blitsten (1963), kibbutz life in Israel is weakening and bound to disappear in time.

The most recent work on the family in the kibbutz was carried out by Bettelheim (1969). He spent seven weeks in Israel studying communal rearing practices in a kibbutz which was less radical than the kibbutzim studied by Rabin and Spiro. While he collected objective information, his book reports only on his informal observations. He felt that individuals raised in the kibbutz felt no need to push ahead, but neither do they have

the impulse to push anyone down. Bettelheim feels that while such people do not create science or art, nor are they leaders or great philosophers, or innovators, perhaps it is they who are "the salt of the earth without which no society can endure." (p. 320). Because both parents and *metapelets* gratify and frustrate, the child's attachment is not deep to any one of them. As the child grows older, he realizes more and more that security and survival needs come from the larger peer group, the kibbutz, while parent and *metapelet* become less and less important.

However, it would be of interest to see what is the overall status of the family in Israel. Rubinstein (1970) recently pointed out that the family is still paramount in Israel, in spite of the generation gap in politics as well as within the family. He bases his conclusions from research undertaken by Dr. Rina Shapiro and Dr. Ephraim Youkman of Tel Aviv University. The researchers found that first-year students at Tel Aviv University have strong dependency needs towards their families. 96 percent of the students of Oriental origin admitted such dependence; 88 percent of the students from East European origin; and 83 percent of students of West European origin. The major role that the family plays in the life of these students was corroborated when they were asked to list the values according to their priority. Peace and liberty were the first two values selected, and a happy family was third in line; true friendship was ninth, and good living was twelfth.

Conclusions

In this review of the contemporary Jewish family, the emphasis has been on empirical studies of Jewish life in the United States, where the social sciences are more advanced than in European coun-

tries, and therefore more information is available. However, journalistic writings on the modern Jewish family in Europe likewise indicate that there is a weakening of the bonds which were so characteristic of traditional Jewish family life.

Even in the United States, we cannot consider our own review as satisfactory, in view of the limitations in scope and depth of the available research. Most of what is available comes from non-Jewish sources, and therefore information on the Jewish family is incidental to the study. In most of them, there has been little control of the family background of these Jewish families, such as level of education, synagogue identification, social class, small-town or large city Jews, etc. Thus, the field of Jewish social science is characterized by a general apathy and lack of vigor, despite the intellectual resources which have been so characteristic of the Jewish community.

It seems that there is a crying need for American Jewry to develop a research instrumentality worthy of its reputation. Cities such as Brussels, Buenos Aires, London, and Jerusalem have institutes of research centers on contemporary Jewish life, but there is none in New York. Wessel (1948) had already pointed out that the student is handicapped by the fact that there are no national institutes for the study of family life where multidisciplinary or integrated studies may be pooled. We assume that one reason for this general dearth of research is the reluctance of Jewish social scientists to study differences among groups, since the emphasis in the United States' melting pot is on similarities. The few differences which have been established should serve as an impetus towards the pursuit of knowledge in the social psychology of the Jew. Margaret Mead has already pointed out that a study of Jewish personality offers an opportunity to study cultural dynamics.

It is our feeling that if a secure place is to be developed for Jewish social science, a well-financed organization should be established with the responsibility to encourage, initiate, and support research, and to disseminate its findings. To enhance the prospect of community support, such an organization should be established within the framework of a prestigious institution of higher learning.

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