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Studies of Jewish College Students: A Review and a Replication*

by Abraham D. Lavender

During the early years of the twentieth century, in the midst of the mass migration of Jews from Eastern Europe (1881-1924), the modal educational level for the American Jewish community was a grade school education or less.¹ Despite their recent arrival and usually low economic status, higher education was early adopted as the major instrument of upward mobility.² This avenue for upward mobility was possible largely because “the tide of Jewish immigration from Eastern Europe coincided with a period of unprecedented expansion in American higher education.”³ Whether this particular avenue of upward mobility was emphasized because of unique features of the Jewish life-style or whether it was selected primarily or entirely because it was a readily available avenue for upward mobility is still debated.⁴

Whatever the reasons, as early as the 1910-1920 decade Jewish students were beginning to enter college on a large scale. With this increase, significant pressure was begun to keep Jewish students out of certain Eastern colleges. Anti-Jewish quotas reached a high point in the 1920s and 1930s, with a number of schools—especially the more prestigious and exclusive private universities—maintaining them until the end of World War II.⁵

With the reduction of quotas and the continued expansion of higher education, the Jewish enrollment in higher education has increased to the point that today an estimated 80-90% of Jewish youth of college age are in college. Indeed, the percentage is so high that the future of the American Jewish community may depend on the effects which the college experience has on Jewish identity.

*Appreciation is expressed to Dr. Jennie J. McIntyre and to Dr. Meyer Greenberg for their assistance and encouragement. Funds for the project were made available by the University of Maryland Computer Science Center.

¹ Marshall Sklare, *America's Jews* (New York, 1971), p. 51.

² Stephen Steinberg, “How Jewish Quotas Began,” *Commentary*, 52, No. 3 (1971), 67-76.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

⁴ Sklare, *America's Jews*; Marian Slater, “My Son the Doctor: Aspects of Mobility Among American Jews,” *American Sociological Review*, 34 (1969), 359-373; Werner J. Cahnman, “Comments on ‘My Son the Doctor,’” *ibid.*, 34 (1969), 935-936.

⁵ Seymour Martin Lipset and Everett C. Ladd, Jr., “Jewish Academics in the United States: Their Achievements, Culture and Politics,” in *American Jewish Yearbook 1971*, ed. Morris Fine and Milton Himmelfarb (Philadelphia, 1971).

The College Experience and Jewish Identity

That Jewish identity is affected by the college experience is generally accepted, but there is considerable disagreement over the extent and direction of this effect.

A negative effect is suggested by Irving Greenberg who states that "by and large, college is a disaster area for Judaism, Jewish loyalty and Jewish identity."⁶ He refers to a number of studies—"from Marvin Nathan's study of 1500 Jewish students at 57 colleges and universities in 1931 to Meyer Greenberg's study of students at Yale in 1940 to the most recent studies by B'nai B'rith"—to draw his conclusion. Wuthrow and Glock⁷ have also recently found similar declines.

A positive effect is suggested by Mansoor. Specifically disagreeing with Irving Greenberg, Mansoor states that "over ninety per cent [of the Jewish students at the University of Wisconsin] have an inherent hostility toward anything on campus that is Hebrew or Jewish. However, hundreds of our students who have come to college without prior commitment to Judaism or Jewish identity have become committed through the courses in Hebrew and Jewish culture on our campus."⁸

A number of writers have seen a mixture of both positive and negative effects deriving from the college experience. Rosenthal concludes that "attendance at and graduation from college served to increase intermarriage, but graduate study lowered the rate considerably."⁹ Liebman notes that "in the last few years there has been increased interest on the part of many Jewish students with Judaism and things Jewish,"¹⁰ but cautions that this may be related more to a decline of the American university than to a rise of Jewish identity. Jospe concludes that "the number of young people who are concerned about their Jewishness and the quality of Jewish life is still small,"¹¹ but that the number is growing—and that this small segment of concerned students has "started to change the panorama of Jewish life on the campus." Even Irving Greenberg, who sees college as a "disaster" area, suggests that the negative effects of college could be offset by the availability of "positive models of Jewishness on campus" which could result from the continued growth of Jewish Studies programs.¹²

⁶ Irving Greenberg, "Jewish Survival and the College Campus," *Judaism*, 17 (1968), 260.

⁷ Robert Wuthrow and Charles Y. Glock, "Religious Loyalty, Defection, and Experimentation Among College Youth," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 12 (1973), 157-180.

⁸ Menahem Mansoor, "The Wisconsin Experience," *Conservative Judaism*, 27, No. 2 (1973), 11.

⁹ Eric Rosenthal, "Studies of Jewish Intermarriage in the United States," in *American Jewish Yearbook 1963*, ed. Morris Fine and Milton Himmelfarb (Philadelphia, 1963), 21.

¹⁰ Charles S. Liebman, *The Ambivalent American Jew* (Philadelphia, 1973), 131.

¹¹ Alfred Jospe, "Jewish College Youth at the Crossroads," *Jewish Heritage*, 14, No. 3 (1972), 40.

¹² Greenberg, "Jewish Survival," p. 270.

A fourth position—that college does not have any crucial effect on Jewish identity either way—is exemplified by Israel who states that “by and large, Jewish students are far more likely to reflect than reject the religious conventionalism of their parents.”¹³ Rabinowitz also concludes that “the children are, exactly, as they have been taught to be: Jewish and non-Jewish, they are after all the most obedient generation.”¹⁴ Drew concludes that there is not a gap between Jewish parents and Jewish college freshmen in their religious values and beliefs,¹⁵ and Novak concludes that youth are fleeing from “institutionalism, largeness, and the cult of the impersonal,” but not from religion.¹⁶

Despite the large number of Jewish students in college and the importance for Jewish identity which has been attributed by some writers to the college experience, there has been little empirical study of this effect. Part of this neglect is a result of the more general neglect of empirical study of the current aspects of the American Jewish community¹⁷ and part is due to the fact that whereas most Jewish youth are in college, Jewish youth form only a small percentage of college youth. Thus, even though “the age of monumental studies of higher education is upon us,”¹⁸ Drew accurately notes that “few research endeavors, particularly in the field of higher education, have been able to rely upon a large enough sample to allow extensive descriptive statements about a subgroup, for example Jewish students, which constitutes a relatively small percentage of the total undergraduate population.”¹⁹ Part of this neglect may also be due to the general lack of attention given to the Jewish college community by the larger Jewish community. Israel, for example, notes that “we have not been listening to the kids closely enough.”²⁰ Berger notes that “one man on a campus can hardly cope with the demands of a normal census, let alone the huge Jewish student bodies today represented at many universities.”²¹ Other writers, for

¹³ Richard J. Israel, “The Rabbi on Campus,” *Judaism*, 16 (1967), 187.

¹⁴ Dorothy Rabinowitz, “Are Jewish Students Different?” *Change*, 3, No. 4 (1971), 50.

¹⁵ David Drew, “Jewish Students Today: Radical or Conservative?” *Transaction*, 8, No. 12 (1971), 45-48.

¹⁶ Bill Novak, “The Greening of American Jewry,” *Judaism*, 20 (1971), p. 216.

¹⁷ Seymour Martin Lipset, “Jewish Sociologists and Sociologists of the Jews,” *Jewish Social Studies*, 17 (1955), 177-178; Stephen Steinberg, “Reform Judaism: The Origin and Evolution of a ‘Church Movement’,” *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 5 (1965), 117-129; Eric Rosenthal, “The Current Status of Jewish Social Research,” *Midstream*, 17, No. 4 (1971), 58-62.

¹⁸ Joseph Havens, “The Changing Climate of Research on the College Student and his Religion,” *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 3, (1963), 52.

¹⁹ David Drew, *A Profile of the Jewish Freshman* (Washington, 1970), p. 2.

²⁰ Richard J. Israel, “The Hillel Conference of Jewish Students,” *Judaism*, 18 (1969), 464.

²¹ Graenum Berger, “Summary and Conclusions” in *The Psychological Implications of Inter-marriage*, ed. Jack J. Zurofsky (New York, 1966), p. 93.

example Irving Greenberg have also noted the lack of attention and funding given to the Jewish college community.²²

Review of Previous Studies

Because of the lack of any systematic studies of Jewish college students, only random information is available on Jewish college students of the period before World War I. It was not until 1935 that the first systematic nationwide census of Jewish students was undertaken, with similar large-scale censuses being undertaken in 1946, 1955, and 1963.²³ Interspersed with these censuses were some early studies of selected college campuses.²⁴ There have been a few empirical studies of Jewish college students reported in research journals.²⁵ In addition, a few nonempirical articles have been published in research journals.²⁶ The earlier pioneering studies provide some comparative background material.

²² Greenberg, "Jewish Survival," p. 274.

²³ Alfred Jospe, "Jewish College Students in the United States," *American Jewish Yearbook* 1964, ed. Morris Fine and Milton Himmelfarb (Philadelphia, 1964).

²⁴ Marvin Nathan, *The Attitude of the Jewish Student in the Colleges and Universities Towards His Religion* (New York, 1932); Meyer Greenberg, "The Jewish Student at Yale: His Attitude Toward Judaism," *Yivo Annual of Jewish Social Science*, 1 (1946), 217-240; Meyer Greenberg, "Changing Observance of Traditional Jewish Religious Practices: A Study of Generations," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Maryland, 1956.

²⁵ For example, *The Yivo Annual of Social Science* has published Meyer Greenberg's article in 1946, and Henry Leoblowitz Lennard, "Jewish Youth Appraising Jews and Jewishness," 2-3 (1947-48), 262-281; Jack Nusan Porter, Boris Rackovsky, and Anita Bach Agrillo, "The Jewish Student: A Comparative Analysis of Religious and Secular Attitudes," 15 (1974), 297-338. This last study was a modified replication of Greenberg's Yale study. *Jewish Social Studies* has published Meyer Greenberg, "Social Characteristics of the Jewish Students at the University of Maryland," 23 (1961), 21-37; Simon N. Herman, "American Jewish Students in Israel," 24 (1962), 3-29; Asghar Fathi, "Some Aspects of Changing Ethnic Identity of Canadian Jewish Youth," 34 (1972), 23-30; Eva Etzioni Halevy and Rina Shapira, "Jewish Identification of Israeli Students; What Lies Ahead," 37 (1975), 251-266. *The Jewish Journal of Sociology* published Emanuel J. de Kadt's "Locating Minority Group Members: Two British Surveys of Jewish University Students," 6 (1964), 30-51; Vera West, "The Influence of Parental Background on Jewish University Students," 10 (1968), 267-280; Rina Shapira and Eva Etzioni, "'Individual' and 'Collective' Values of Israeli Students: The Impact of Youth Movements," 12 (1970), 165-179; Bernard Wasserman, "Jewish Identification Among Students at Oxford," 13 (1971), 135-151; Matthew Maibaum, "The Berkeley Hillel and the Union of Jewish Students: The History of a Conflict," 13 (1971), 153-171.

The following have also been published: Charles D. Ward, "Anti-Semitism at College: Changes Since Vatican II," *The Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 12 (1973), 85-88; Simon N. Herman, "The Youth: Jews, Israelis, or Both?" *Judaism*, 22 (1973), 167-172; William B. Helmreich, "How Jewish Students View the Holocaust: A Preliminary Appraisal," *Response*, 9, No. 1 (1975), 101-114; Abraham D. Lavender, "Disadvantages of Minority Group Membership: The Perspective of a 'Nondeprived' Minority Group," *Ethnicity*, 2 (1975), 99-119; Zelda F. Gamson, "The Kibbutz and Higher Education: Cultures in Collision?" *Jewish Sociology and Social Research*, 2 (1975), 10-28; Abraham D. Lavender, "Jewish Inter-marriages and Marriage to Converts: The Religious Factor and the Ethnic Factor," *ibid.*, 2 (1976).

²⁶ For example, *The Jewish Journal of Sociology* published Nathan Glazer's "The New Left and the Jews," 11 (1969), 121-132; Percy S. Cohen, "Student Revolt and Generational Conflict: Phantasy and Reality," 13 (1971), 205-218; David Rudavsky, "A Note on the Teaching of Hebrew in American Colleges and Universities," 14 (1972), 85-92.

While there have been only a few studies concerned with Jewish college students reported in research journals, and many of these (as indicated above) have either been nonempirical or concerned with non-United States students, there has been a plethora of articles either about or related to Jewish college students in non-research journals.²⁷ In the late 1960s and early 1970s a number of articles discussing the political situation of Jewish college students appeared in non-research journals.²⁸ In recent years, emphasis has shifted from politics to the effect of Jewish Studies on college students.²⁹

Despite some suggestions³⁰ that there is an increased scholarly concern with Jews and Jewish life in the United States, the above review indicates that there are few studies of Jewish college youth until the last few years and most of them have not been empirically based. There have been some additional studies that were not reported in journals and hence could not receive much attention.³¹ Thus, as late as 1968 Fein could still justly state

²⁷ Charles I. Glicksberg, "College Youth and the Future of Judaism," *Judaism*, 4 (1955), 42-46; Richard J. Israel, "The Rabbi on Campus," *ibid.*, 16 (1967), 186-192; Donald Feldstein, "Campus Jews and Jewish Institutions," *Midstream*, 16, No. 4 (1970), 58-64; Dorothy Rabinowitz, "Israeli Universities in a Time of Siege," *Change*, 4, No. 2 (1972), 42-47.

²⁸ In 1968 and 1969, for example, *Judaism* published seven articles in this area: Leonard J. Fein, "Dilemmas of Jewish Identity on the College Campus," 17 (1968), 10-21; Milton Himmelfarb, "The Jewish College Student and the Intellectual Community," *ibid.*, 3-9; Irving Greenberg, "Jewish Survival and the College Campus," *ibid.*, 259-281; Richard J. Israel, see above note 20; Joel Harris, "The Conference of the World Union of Jewish Students," 18 (1969), 470-473; Michael P. Lerner, "Jewish New Leftism at Berkeley," 18 (1969), 473-478; Avi Stackenfeld, "On Lerner's New Leftism," 18 (1969), 479-483.

Commentary also had several articles related primarily to the political situation: Martin Peretz, "The American Left and Israel," 44, No. 5 (1967), 27-34; Diana Trilling, "On the Steps of Low Library," 46, No. 5 (1968), 29-55; Stephen Donadio, "Black Power at Columbia," 46, No. 3 (1968), 67-76; Nathan Glazer, "The New Left and Its Limits," 46, No. 1 (1968), 31-39; Walter Laqueur, "Reflections on Youth Movements," 47, No. 6 (1969), 33-41; Seymour Martin Lipset and Earl Raab, "The Non-Generation Gap," 50, No. 2 (1970), 35-39. *Midstream* published Kenneth Braiterman, "The Micro-Generation Gap," 16, No. 3 (1970), 31-37; Jonathan Braun, "The Student Revolt and the Jewish Student," 16, No. 3 (1970), 41-44.

²⁹ Examples of articles on Jewish Studies are: Marshall Sklare, "The Problem of Contemporary Jewish Studies," *Midstream*, 16, No. 4 (1970), 27-35; Baruch Levine, "Defining Jewish Studies," *Conservative Judaism*, 27, No. 2 (1973), 3-7; Menahem Mansoor, see above note 8; Paul Ritterband, "The Pattern of Growth of Jewish Learning," *Conservative Judaism*, 27, No. 1 (1973), 4-20; Alfred Jospe, "Objectivity Versus Advocacy," *Conservative Judaism*, 27, No. 1 (1973), 20-24; David Weinstein, "The Consortium and Jewish Studies," *Conservative Judaism*, 27, No. 1 (1973), 25-29; Sara Feinstein, "Judaic Studies as Liberated Education," *Conservative Judaism*, 27, No. 1 (1973), 29-34; Jacob Katz, "Emancipation and Jewish Studies," *Commentary*, 57, No. 4 (1974), 60-65; Robert Alter, "What Jewish Studies Can Do," *Commentary*, 58, No. 4 (1974), 71-76; Jacob Neusner, "Two Settings for Jewish Studies," *Yivo Annual of Jewish Social Science*, 15 (1974), 204-224; *idem*, "Jewish Learning in America," *Response*, 9, No. 3 (1975), 67-77.

³⁰ Victor D. Sanua, "A Review of Social Science Studies on Jews and Jewish Life in the United States," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 4 (1964), 71.

³¹ Geraldine Rosenfeld, *What We Know About Young American Jews: An Annotated Bibliography* (New York, 1970).

that what we have to rely upon for the time being "is a mixture of intuition and experience, and some educated hypothesizing."³²

There are some suggestions that the situation regarding the scarcity of empirical studies of Jewish college students may be changing. In 1970, for example, Drew published *A Profile of the Jewish Freshman* based on national data gathered by the American Council on Education. Several doctoral dissertations on the identity of Jewish college students have also been completed in the last few years, including Sherrow's in 1971, Zak's in 1972, Lavender's in 1972, and Garte's in 1973.³³ Encouragement for further attention to the Jewish college community has also come from the American Jewish Committee's 1972 Task Force Report on the future of the American Jewish community.

The suggestion of a change in the situation is encouraging. We need, however, not only to describe the situation today, but also to gain some idea of the dynamics of the situation on the college campus in the past. The comparisons necessary for this approach are limited because of the lack of research in the past and because recent studies generally have not attempted to replicate earlier studies.

A Replication Study

The 1971 study by this author³⁴ studied the student body on the same campus as that studied by Greenberg in 1949.³⁵ While not a total replication of the 1949 study, this survey was partly based on the 1949 study and replicated some of the areas researched in the earlier study sufficiently to allow a temporal comparison of the changes in some social and religious characteristics.

This comparison is particularly helpful because in both time periods the Jewish student community at the University of Maryland represented a broad, rather than a narrow, segment of the Jewish college community. Greenberg stated in his 1949 study that the Jewish students at the University of Maryland belonged "to the middle range among American Jewish college students, with few sharp extremes."³⁶ The students in the 1971 study also

³² Fein, "Dilemmas of Jewish Identity," p. 11.

³³ Fred Solomon Sherrow, "Patterns of Religious Inter-marriage Among American College Graduates," Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1971; Itai Zak, "Jewish Background, Self-Esteem, Jewish-American Identity, and Attitudes Toward Israel," Ph.D. dissertation, New York University, 1972; Abraham D. Lavender, "Dimensions of Pluralism: An Examination of the Generational Hypothesis," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Maryland, 1972; Sumner H. Garte, "The Relationship Between Ethnic Identification and Academic Achievement in Jewish College Students," Ph.D. dissertation, Loyola University of Chicago, 1973.

³⁴ Lavender, "Dimensions of Pluralism."

³⁵ Greenberg, "Changing Observance."

³⁶ Greenberg, *ibid.*, p. 21.

belonged to the large middle range with few extremes. Comparisons with the recent national sample of Jewish college freshmen³⁷ for example, suggest that the 1971 sample is generally typical of the larger body of Jewish college youth in the United States. In both studies the Jewish students comprised a minority of the students at the University of Maryland (11.2% in 1949, 15.1% in 1971). However, in both 1949 and 1971 the surveys were significant because of the large number of Jewish students (975 in 1949, 3,745 in 1971) and because of their availability through a Hillel Foundation, Jewish fraternities and sororities, and other Jewish organizations.

This situation—minority status, but sufficient number and organization to make possible a viable, but voluntary, minority life within the dominant society—is particularly appropriate when one considers the future of the American Jewish community. The growing Jewish migration from the northeast to less Jewishly-populated areas is the most important demographic factor related to the future of the American Jewish community,³⁸ and it is precisely the situation typified by the University of Maryland—a college-educated minority living in a community where a Jewish-oriented life is available but voluntary—that will increasingly characterize the American Jewish community.

Methodology

The sample for the 1971 study consisted of 489 Jewish undergraduate students. These students represented the respondents (81.5%) from a sample of 600 undergraduates, chosen at random from the 3,745 Jewish undergraduate students identified at the University of Maryland. Questionnaires, with two follow-ups, were sent to the students in May and June of 1971. The 1949 study analyzed characteristics in greater depth than the 1971 study. Greenberg, for example, utilized questionnaires and then supplemented these with interviews for more data on some items, whereas the 1971 study utilized only questionnaires. However, the 1971 study was broader in scope. Greenberg had questioned 180 students, all of them freshmen, whereas the 1971 study questioned 489 students representing all classes. The following sections discuss some of the comparisons for freshmen.

Social Background of Freshmen: 1949 and 1971

Greenberg's subjects were "third generation" Americans, "that segment of the Jewish community which will soon become its largest and, eventually,

³⁷ David Drew, *A Profile of the Jewish Freshman*.

³⁸ American Jewish Committee, *The Future of the Jewish Community in America: A Task Force Report* (New York, 1972).

dominant element." Only 8% of the paternal grandfathers and 51% of the parents (fathers, 43%, mothers, 59%), but 97% of the freshmen had been born in the United States. By 1971, 16% of the paternal grandfathers, 88% of both fathers and mothers, and all of the freshmen had been born in the United States. The third generation is now the largest segment of this Jewish community, with the fourth generation beginning to be sizeable (16%).

As in the 1949 study, the families of the Jewish freshmen of the 1971 study follow the general trends of Jewish immigration. In the 1949 study, only 7% of the families had migrated to the United States before 1880, 89% migrated from 1880 to 1929, and only 4% had migrated from 1930 to 1949. In the 1971 study, 4% had migrated through 1880, 87% had migrated during the 1881-1930 period, and 9%—partly reflecting the addition of more years to the latest period—migrated from 1931 to 1971. The smaller percentage in the 1971 study than in the 1949 study for the earlier period may also be due to the fact that the present Jewish community is farther removed in time from its immigrant origins, and that those with the oldest ancestries in the United States may be less likely to know the decade of their ancestors' migration. In the 1949 study, for instance, 13% of the freshmen did not know the family's migration period, whereas in the 1971 study 28% did not know.

Greenberg notes that 91% of his sample came from the metropolitan areas of Baltimore, 30 miles to the north of the University, or from the metropolitan area of Washington, D.C., in a suburb of which the university is located. Only 2% came from outside these areas, reflecting (p. 21) "the [university's] policy of preference in admissions for residents." In the 1971 study, 51% of the freshmen came from metropolitan Baltimore or Washington, whereas 30% came from outside these areas. The movement of the last few decades from cities to suburbs is also reflected in the 1971 study. Whereas 53% of the students had been born in the cities of either Baltimore or Washington, and only 3% born in the suburbs of these two cities, only 20% of the students still lived in these cities while 31% lived in the suburbs of these two cities. As in the 1949 study, the 1971 sample was overwhelmingly urban rather than rural—98% urban in 1949 and 94% urban in 1971.

The fathers in the 1949 study were heavily (72%) represented in the "proprietor, manager, or official" occupational category, whereas only 14% were professional. The remaining 14% were salesmen and clerical workers (8%), craftsmen (5%), and other skilled workers (1%). By the time of the 1971 study, however, the corresponding percentages were 37, 47, 12, 3, and 1.

Economic comparisons are not as easily made between the two studies because of different economic measures utilized. Greenberg utilized the ABCD Economic Classification of the Psychological Corporation (p. 26), whereas the 1971 study utilized family incomes. Making comparisons with

Table 1
Economic Classification of Parents

	1949 Study			1971 Study	
	ABCD Economic Classification			Family Income	
	% Total U.S.*	% Sample		% Total U.S.**	% Sample
A (Highest)	10	5	Over \$25,000	6	37
B	20	57	15,001–25,000	20	40
C	30	32	10,001–15,000	27	16
D (Lowest)	40	6	Under 10,000	47	7
Total	100	100		100	100

*Psychological Corporation data; see Greenberg, 1956, pp. 54, 226.

**Paul A. Samuelson, *Economics* (New York, 1973), p. 83.

the total United States population with the respective measures, however, some idea is obtained of the change in economic status from 1949 to 1971 (Table 1). Although the Jewish families had a higher overall economic status than the total population in 1949, they were underrepresented in the highest economic level. Greenberg suggested that this was due to the “custom among upper economic groups to send their children to private universities of higher status.” (p. 54). Whatever the reason, this situation had changed much by the 1971 study. Whereas the families of the 1971 sample were economically much better off in comparison to the total population than those of the 1949 sample had been, however, it is noted that the proportion in the lowest economic category remained about the same.

In the 1949 study, 83% of the fathers and 88% of the mothers were between the ages of 40 and 54, with the average age of the fathers being 49 and the average age of the mothers being 46. This composition remained basically the same in the 1971 study, with 82% of the fathers and 96% of the mothers between the ages of 40 and 54. Fathers averaged 50, and mothers averaged 46.

The parents of the 1949 sample had an average of 2.65 children. The parents of the 1971 sample had an average of 2.91 children, perhaps reflecting the “participation of Jews in the baby boom” following World War II.³⁹ It is interesting to note that the freshmen in the 1971 study planned to have 2.59 children. Since the number of children expected is generally higher than the number actually born,⁴⁰ it is suggested that the 1971 sample population may not reproduce itself!

³⁹ Calvin Goldscheider, “Fertility of the Jews,” *Demography*, 4 (1967), p. 196.

⁴⁰ Sidney Goldstein, “Completed and Expected Fertility in an American Jewish Community,” *Jewish Social Studies*, 33 (1971), 212-227.

Table 2
Synagogue Attendance of Parents

	1949 Study		1971 Study	
	% Father	% Mother	% Father	% Mother
At least once a week	11	3	10	6
At least once a month	14	7	20	13
4-11 times annually	41	45	42	40
High Holy Days only	23	31	16	19
Rarely/never	11	14	11	22
Total	100	100	100	100

Religious Background of Freshmen: 1949 and 1971

The synagogue attendance of the fathers and mothers of the two samples is similar, with the 1971 sample having a slightly higher average attendance (Table 2). In both samples the mothers of the students attend synagogue less frequently than do the fathers, but the difference between fathers and mothers remains almost the same for the two periods.

The two samples did differ on other measures of religious observance, however. Greenberg found, for example, that 67% of the parents observed Rosh Hashanah two days, 28% observed it one day, and only 5% did not observe it at all. In the 1971 sample, the respective percentages were 60, 36, and 4. Thus, while the percentage of parents who observe Rosh Hashanah remains the same, the extent of observance is decreasing slightly from two days to one day. This change possibly reflects greater adherence to Reform Judaism which observes only one day of Rosh Hashanah, and thus may reflect a change in method of observance rather than a change in extent of identity.

On the other hand, observance of kashruth has apparently decreased greatly among parents from the 1949 sample to the 1971 sample. In 1949, the percentage of parents who observed kashruth in the home ranged from 50% who kept two sets of dishes to 71% who did not eat pork products. Outside the home, only about 15% observed kashruth. In 1971, only 36% of the students said that their parents observed kashruth inside the home, with only 8% observing it outside the home. Exact comparisons can not be made here because of different terminology used in the two studies, and the findings must thus be interpreted with caution. Nevertheless, the suggestions are of a large decrease in the observance of kashruth.

Table 3
Student Place of Residence During School Year

	1949 Study	1971 Study		
	% Males/Females	% Males	% Females	% Total*
At home	36	18	11	16
Dormitory	49	59	80	66
Fraternity or Sorority house	6	11	3	8
Off-campus house	8	9	6	8
With relatives	1	2	—	1
Total	100	100	100	100

*Standardized for sex.

The parents in the two samples also reflect the changing affiliations within Judaism. In 1949, 47% of the parents were identified as Orthodox, 32% as Conservative, 18% as Reform, and only 3% were not identified with any of these divisions. By 1971, only 14% of the parents identified themselves as Orthodox, 59% as Conservative, 22% as Reform, 3% as “Jewish” and 2% were not associated with any religious identification.

Social Characteristics of Freshmen: 1949 and 1971

Greenberg stated that his sample was 65% male and 35% female, “the normal ratio in the University during this postwar period” (p. 65). In the 1971 study, the sample was 41% male and 59% female. Part of this change is due to the fact that 1971 is not a postwar period to the same extent that 1949 was—male enrollment is increased in postwar years—and part reflects the increasing number of females attending college. The over-representation of females in the 1971 sample—they comprise only 47% of the total undergraduate student body at the University of Maryland—may reflect the fact that it is a Jewish sample.

In the 1949 study, 94% of the freshmen were between the ages of 17 and 20, but in the 1971 study all the freshmen were in this age range. Of the 180 freshmen in the 1949 sample only one was married while in the 1971 sample none was married. As shown in Table 3, more students in the 1971 sample live in dormitories and fewer live at home. This might suggest that there would be less parental influence in the social and cultural lives of the 1971 students or that the Jewish parents no longer insist on supervising the social lives of their children. This study did not gather data on social and cultural attitudes and behavior but since, as noted below, the parent-

student difference in the religious area is less than it was in 1949 that may also be true of social standards. At any event, the larger percentage of students living away from home may simply be the result of changes in the University's admissions policy and not necessarily reflect a desire of Jewish students to "escape" strict parental supervision nor parental complicity with the students' "escape."

Religious Characteristics of Freshmen: 1949 and 1971

As shown in Table 4, the synagogue attendance of the students in the 1971 study decreased from that of the students in the 1949 study. The percentage who attend synagogue weekly remains the same, but the percentage who attend monthly has increased in 1971, as has the percentage of those who attend 4 to 11 times annually. There is a major decrease in the number of those who attend only on High Holy Days, and a major increase in those who attend rarely or never. These findings suggest that synagogues are retaining their hold on the more observant but are losing contact with those students who used to attend only on High Holy Days. Overall, the result is a decrease in synagogue attendance because of the loss of the former "2-day-a-year" observers.

Table 4

Student Synagogue Attendance and Difference between Parent-Student Attendance

	1949 Study % Males/ Females	1971 Study			1949 Study Difference	1971 Study Difference
		% Males	% Females	% Total*		
At least once a week	2	0	5	2	-5%**	-6%
At least once a month	6	11	8	10	-4%	-7%
4-11 times annually	38	36	56	45	-5%	+4%
High Holy Days only	39	18	16	17	+12%	0
Rarely/never	15	34	16	26	+2%	+9%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%		
Rosh Hashanah Attendance						
Two Days	59	34	64	47	-8%	-13%
One Day	39	46	27	37	+1%	+1%
None	12	20	9	16	+7%	+12%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%		

*Standardized for sex.

**“-” indicates student percentage lower than parent percentage; “+” indicates student percentage higher than parent percentage.

In the 1949 study (Table 4), 59% of the students observed Rosh Hashanah two days, 29% observed it one day, and 12% did not observe it at all. In the 1971 study (standardized for sex), the respective percentages were 47, 37, and 16, a small increase in the percentage of students who do not observe Rosh Hashanah. As with parents, the major change was from two-day observance to one-day observance.

In 1949, the percentage of students who observed some form of kashruth in their homes before entering college ranged from 11% who did not eat any non-kosher meat to 32% who did not eat pork. In 1971, however, 39% of the males and 34% of the females stated that they keep kashruth in their parents' homes. As with the parents, these figures are not strictly comparable because of more specific terminology in the 1949 study, but the findings do suggest that the observance of kashruth has not decreased among the students in the interval from the 1949 study to that of 1971. This is perhaps partly due to the fact that this particular university pioneered in the establishment of a Kosher Dining Club for students.

The students in the two samples also reflect the changing affiliations within Judaism. In 1949, 25% of the students identified as Orthodox, 36% identified as Conservative, and 29% identified as Reform, while 10% did not identify with any of these divisions. In 1971, only 2% of the males and 8% of the females identified as Orthodox, whereas 42% of the males and 50% of the females identified as Conservative, and 35% of the males and 30% of the females identified as Reform. For males and females, 2% were "Jewish", whereas 19% of the males and 11% of the females did not identify as Jewish at all.

Comparison of Parent-Student Differences: 1949 and 1971

Much literature has been written in recent years on the alleged "generation gap" between parents and students.⁴¹ This study allows a comparison to be made between the amount of parent-student difference in 1949 and the amount of such difference in 1971, and it is to this comparison that this paper now turns.

The most general findings in regard to religious observance can be made utilizing the overall religious observance scores obtained in the two studies. Greenberg, utilizing a 7-category classification of levels of religious observance, found that the average level of religious observance for students was 17% below the average for the parents. The 1971 study, utilizing an 8-

⁴¹ See, for example, S. N. Eisenstadt, *From Generation to Generation* (Glencoe, Illinois, 1956); Lewis S. Feuer, *The Conflict of Generations* (New York, 1969); and American Jewish Committee, *The Future of the Jewish Community in America*. Feuer claims that Jewish parents and students are the epitome of the generational conflict in the United States.

Table 5
Observance of Kashruth: Parent-Student Difference

	1949 Study	1971 Study
Do not eat pork products in home	-39%*	na**
Do not eat meat with milk in home	-39%	na
Keep kashruth in home now	na	0%

*“-” indicates student percentage lower than parent percentage; “+” indicates student percentage higher than parent percentage.

**NA indicates that comparative data is not available on this item.

category classification of levels of religious observance, found that the average level of religious observance for students (standardized for sex) was 11% below the average for the parents (15% for males and 4% for females). Thus in overall terms, there is less of a “gap” between parents and students in 1971 than in 1949.

When three items on which comparisons are possible between the two studies are analyzed separately, however, the findings vary. With synagogue attendance (Table 4), for instance, the percentage of students who rarely or never attend has increased greatly (mainly due, as noted, to a decline among those who previously attended only on the High Holidays), while there has not been a comparable change in this direction for parents. The “gap” in observance of Rosh Hashanah between parents and students has increased

Table 6
Identification with Divisions of Judaism

	1949 Study			1971 Study				
	%	%	P-S	%	Students			P-S
	Par-ents	Stu-dents	Differ-ence*	Par-ents	M	F	Total***	Differ-ence***
Orthodox	47	25	-22%*	14	2	8	5	- 9%
Conservative	32	26	+ 4%	59	42	50	45	-14%
Reform	18	29	+11%	22	35	30	33	+11%
“Jewish”	na**	na	na	3	2	2	2	- 1%
None	3	10	+ 7%	2	19	11	15	+13%
Total	100	100		100	100	100	100	

*“-” indicates student percentage lower than parent percentage; “+” indicates student percentage higher than parent percentage.

**NA indicates that comparative data is not available on this item.

***Standardized for sex.

from 1949 to 1971 (Table 4), but this is mainly accounted for by the greater tendency among students than among parents to change from two-day observance to one-day observance. On the other hand, the findings in Table 5 indicate that there was a big parent-student “gap” in home observance of kashruth in 1949, but that this difference has disappeared in 1971, primarily because of the big decrease in the observance of kashruth among the parents. 17% of the 1971 students responding live with their parents or relatives (Table 3) and are undoubtedly influenced to follow their parents’ practice or non-practice with regard to kashruth. But since the percentage living away from home is so much larger in 1971—83% of the Jewish students live in residences where they do have an independent choice in regard to kashruth—it would make a “non-gap” with regard to kashruth particularly interesting. In fact Table 5 shows a 0% student-parent difference with regard to kashruth. Actually, it would take a massive return to kashruth on the part of parents or children—the 1971 study antedates the full force of the Jewish counter-culture’s return to various forms of observances, at least on the campus of the University of Maryland—to create such a “gap.”

Finally, it is noted that the shift of affiliations within Judaism continues (Table 6). Orthodoxy continues to lose its youth. Conservatism has gained among both parents and students. However the gain has been much larger for parents than for students so the gap is actually greater in 1971 than in 1949. In fact, in 1971 there were more Conservative parents than Conservative students, a reversal of the pattern found in 1949. Reform has increased by a small amount among both parents and students so that the parent-student difference remains similar for the two time periods. A noticeable change is evident among students who classify themselves as “none” when asked religious identity. The percentage of parents who were classified as “none” remained basically the same in the two time periods, but the number of students classified as “none” increased in 1971 so that the parent-difference was much greater in 1971 than it was in 1949.

Conclusions

Jewish college students are below their parents in their overall Jewish religious observance and identity. This difference varies according to the measure of observance or identity. The extent to which this difference is uniquely caused by the college experience is not known, but it is interesting to note that—whatever the causal relationship between college attendance and Jewishness—the parent-student difference was not so great in 1971 as it was in 1949. Possibly the college experience today is not as negative as it was in 1949, or possibly there are more positive effects to offset the negative effects. Despite the lessening of the parent-student differences, however, some findings of this study—e.g., the number of students of Jewish back-

ground who do not identify as Jewish today—suggests that optimism is not warranted and that much more attention must be given to the consequences of the college experience among Jewish students. Finally, it must be remembered that this paper has been concerned only with college freshmen, and not with upperclassmen, since comparisons with the 1949 study were not possible for upperclassmen.⁴² Thus, the remarks of caution made above concerning freshmen would apply even more where the entire college group is concerned.

⁴² The 1971 study did include upperclassmen, and comparisons are available from the author.