Generation of Change: How Leaders in Their Twenties and Thirties Are Reshaping American Jewish Life

Jack Wertheimer

The research team:
Sarah Bunin Benor, Hebrew Union College, Los Angeles; Steven M. Cohen, Hebrew Union College, New York;
Sylvia Barack Fishman, Brandeis University; Ari Y. Kelman, University of California, Davis;
Shaul Kelner, Vanderbilt University; Jack Wertheimer, Jewish Theological Seminary

Tishrei 5771

September 2010

AVI CHAI

Table of Contents

Executive Summary 1

Generation of Change: How Leaders in Their Twenties and Thirties Are Reshaping American Jewish Life 7

The Current Landscape of Jewish Programs Available to Jews in Their Twenties and Thirties 9

The Attitudes and Goals of Young Jewish Leaders 13

Influences That Have Shaped These Leaders 24

Policy Implications 34

Appendix: The Research Design 39

A Team Effort 39

The Individual Research Components 40

The Surveys 42

Contributors 44

Acknowledgments 45

© Copyright 2010, The AVI CHAI Foundation

List of Tables

Table 1: Leaders who "strongly agree" with selected issues related to Jewish collective identity (by percent) 14

Table 2: Leaders' comparative worries about threats to Israel, anti-Semitism (by percent) 15

Table 3: Leaders' views on Israel-related policy positions (by percent) 16

Table 4: Giving to Jewish charities for universal purposes or to benefit Jews in need (by percent) 19

Table 5: Leaders "very worried/bothered" about issues related to "continuity" (by percent) 19

Table 6: Leaders' attitudes toward intermarriage (by percent) 20

Table 7: Jewish socialization, education, and integration of Jewish leaders (by percent) 25

Table 8: Time spent in Israel (by percent) 26

Table 9: Levels of Jewish educational experiences (by percent) 26

Table 10: In which denomination were leaders raised? (by percent) 27

Table 11: Current denominational identities (by percent) 28

Table 12: Participation in leadership programs 30

Table 13: Importance of Jewish commitments to nonestablishment leaders by family status 32

Table 14: Distribution of responding leaders by sector 42

Table 15: Age distribution of leaders (by percent) 43

Table 16: Demographic characteristics of leaders in the sample (by percent) 43

List of Graphs

Graph 1: Attachment to Israel (by percent) 15

Graph 2: Dissatisfaction with synagogues and Federations (by percent) 17

Graph 3: Views of various established communal objectives as very important (by percent) 18

Graph 4: Support for progressive causes (by percent) 21

Graph 5: Importance of selected objectives in Jewish life (by percent) 21

Executive Summary

Few informed observers of the American Jewish scene doubt that the present moment is one of rapid change. Institutions that had been in the forefront since the middle decades of the twentieth century are declining in membership and now play a far smaller role than in the recent past. Even more important, the guiding assumptions of the community about its proper relationship to Israel, the responsibilities Jews have to one another, the optimal means to mobilize Jews, and the proper priorities of American Jewish life are under severe scrutiny and often subjected to scathing criticism. Simultaneously, many new initiatives have been launched to reach into every corner of the community, so as to insure that every Jew may find a place. These efforts highlight and also celebrate the sheer diversity of Jewish life, perhaps as never before.

Driving many of these changes are a new generation of Jews in their 20's and 30's who are assuming positions of leadership in established organizations or launching new initiatives to reach their peers in novel ways. Many, in fact, are engaged in both—as insiders working for established agencies and as innovators of new programs. In their writings and public statements, they declare their independence of once sacrosanct ways of thinking and organizing. Anyone interested in the future of American Jewish life will need to understand where these young leaders intend to take organized Jewish life and how they think about Jewish issues.

This report presents the key findings of a team research study conducted under the auspices of The AVI CHAI Foundation to learn about women and men between the ages of 22 and 40 who serve as leaders of Jewish endeavors. As with leadership research generally, the term Jewish leader encompasses a range of activities and roles: Some are leaders because they have spearheaded new initiatives, while others direct the activities of existing groups; some are professionals, and others are volunteers; some are culture shapers, exercising influence through their ideas, their writing, or their performances; others make things happen through their contacts, communications skills and energy. A broad range of Jewish leaders is represented in this report, including activists who eschew the term leadership to describe their own enterprising efforts.

Collectively, members of the research team interviewed over 250 leaders across the country. This interviewing work was augmented by and also informed by surveys that elicited responses from over 4,466 Jewish leaders of all ages, providing a basis to compare younger with older Jewish leaders. For reasons explained in the Appendix on the Research Design, this report does not claim respondents to the survey are precisely representative of the entire population of Jewish leaders. The absence of up-to-date demographic data on trends in American Jewish life makes it impossible to know for sure. In the current study, we can report on the Jewish leaders we encountered but cannot know with certainty how many others there are, let alone how many of their age peers participate in the range of Jewish options.

We therefore limit our quantitative analysis to comparisons of subpopulations—i.e., how one subpopulation of leaders differs from another. Our extensive interviews have served as a further source of data and a means of checking the validity of our quantitative data.

On the most basic level, the research identified thousands of Jews in their 20's and 30's who are sufficiently committed to Jewish life to invest of themselves—their time, energy, and creativity—in leading their age peers. It is simply not true, as some contend, that the American Jewish community is suffering from a dearth of committed and knowledgeable leaders among its younger populations. In communities around the country we encountered such leaders who are reinvigorating established organizations and founding start-ups of all kinds to appeal to niche subpopulations of their peers.

Due to the efforts of young leaders, Jews in their 20's and 30's who wish to get involved have hundreds of potential options. To be sure, far more alternatives are available in the Washington/Boston corridor on the East Coast and the Los Angeles and San Francisco Bay areas on the West Coast than in the heartland. But quite a few communities in places like Atlanta, Denver, and Chicago offer a variety of options for young people who wish to get involved.

Due to the efforts of young leaders, Jews in their 20's and 30's who wish to get involved have hundreds of potential options.

The study also dramatizes the impact of investments in Jewish education by communities, philanthropists, and foundations over the past 20 years. Leaders in their 20's and 30's have benefitted disproportionately from more intensive forms of Jewish education than that received by their peers who do not serve in leadership positions. Nearly 40 percent of young Jewish leaders have attended day school, even though under 11 percent of our survey sample consisted of Orthodox Jews, suggesting that non-Orthodox young leaders benefited disproportionately from day school education.[1] The same can be said of their exposure to other forms of Jewish education. Over two-thirds have attended Jewish summer camps. And most remarkably, more than half of young leaders spent four or more months of study or work in Israel. The high level of Jewish education these younger leaders received augurs well for their responding with depth and thoughtfulness to the serious issues confronting the American Jewish community and offers testimony to the impact of educational investments.

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE ATTITUDES AND GOALS OF YOUNG JEWISH LEADERS WHEN IT COMES TO THE AMERICAN JEWISH AGENDA?

In their responses to our survey and interview questions, Jewish leaders in their 20's and 30's have communicated how they view Jewish life. To state the obvious, these people, by definition, care about some aspect of being Jewish and have strong commitments to create a particular type of Jewish community—one that helps their peers find meaning in being Jewish and that is welcoming and inclusive. This set of goals and the means they use to attain them, many young leaders believe, distinguish their activities from those of the conventional Jewish community.

What types of causes engage younger Jewish leaders? Much of organized Jewish life in the second half of the twentieth century was focused around *protective* activities—defending Israel, fighting for freedom for Soviet Jewry, offering support to the Jewish poor at home and abroad, sustaining Jewish communal institutions, and, more recently, offering stronger Jewish educational opportunities to strengthen weak Jewish identities. The segment of young Jewish leaders who involve themselves with mainstream Jewish organizations—Federations of Jewish Philanthropy, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), American Jewish Committee, American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Anti-Defamation League, and Friends of the Israel Defense Forces, among

[1] This report does not purport to describe the world of young Orthodox leaders in all its variety and complexity, even though Orthodox Jews are represented in our survey data and interviews. To begin with, few Haredi or Hasidic leaders participated in our study, thereby eliminating as much as 60 percent of the Orthodox world from consideration. Those Orthodox Jews who did complete our survey instrument tend to work with non-Orthodox populations—i.e., they are a select and more open group within the larger world of Orthodoxy. More generally, the preoccupations of Orthodox Jews in their 20s and 30's tend to differ from those of their non-Orthodox peers because Orthodox Jews form families and "settle down" at a younger age.

others—and, to a lesser extent, with start-up organizations that engage in Israel advocacy, continues to play a protective role. It is simply not true, as some contend, that younger Jewish leaders want nothing to do with these organizations and their protective causes. Many do, especially among those who are socioeconomically more secure and relate positively to the networking culture of the established Jewish organizations; political and religious propensities also dispose some younger leaders to identify with protective causes.

Two other agendas are simultaneously at work among young leaders. "*Progressive*" causes appeal to some: Jewish leaders involved with start-ups are especially apt to identify with broader social causes—environmentalism, service to the downtrodden (mainly non-Jews), and a variety of social justice causes, including what they regard as justice for the Palestinians.

The third agenda might be labeled *expressive*: Young Jewish leaders want to help their peers find personal meaning in being Jewish. There has been an explosion of interest in Jewish culture—including everything from foods of various Jewish communities to an interest in Jewish languages and folkways to a celebration of Jewish books, music, film, and other artistic productions. A small but noteworthy minority is drawn to experimental forms of Jewish religious expression, usually found outside of conventional synagogues. And more broadly, younger Jewish leaders have created a wide range of opportunities for their peers (and others) to study Torah, explore spiritual questions, and probe what being Jewish means to them.

The emphasis leaders place on *protective*, *progressive*, and *expressive* types of Jewish activities sets groups apart from one another. Put differently, the mix of these three elements shapes the particular culture of organizations for young Jewish adults, whether they are sponsored by establishment organizations or nonestablishment ones. Given the various permutations of belief and commitments, it should be apparent that Jewish leaders in their 20's and 30's do not share a uniform outlook: *They are far from monolithic*.

Several specific issues divide younger leaders and also set some apart from their elders. Those leaders involved with mainstream organizations tend to identify with the protective orientation of those organizations and their investment in Jewish defense. Indeed, some of the establishment organizations have made clear that they will not compromise their positions in order to attract more followers—i.e., they specifically seek out people who are sympathetic toward their protective Jewish agenda. In the start-up sector, parochial Jewish concerns are generally pushed to the margins. Anti-Semitism, advocacy for Israel, and even service to the Jewish needy are of lesser importance than are universal causes or questions of personal meaning.

This does not mean that the nonestablishment types are indifferent to Jewish peoplehood; rather, they relate to the Jewish people in very different terms than do Jewish leaders of an older generation or even their age peers in established organizations. A staggering number of young nonestablishment leaders have been to Israel (over 90 percent) and feel connected to its culture. Many innovative organizations sponsor Israel-related programs—screening Israeli films, sponsoring Israeli musical performances, serving Israeli-style foods, etc. But connection to the Jewish people is expressed through cultural participation rather than through philanthropy, advocacy, and defense.

Nonestablishment leaders also tend to be far more tolerant of criticism directed at Israeli policies and more likely to be conflicted about being associated with Zionism. To illustrate the complexity of their attitudes toward Israel, note the following observation by a central figure in the innovative nonestablishment sector: "All the individuals whom I can think of who are … non-Zionist are very connected to Israel. Some of them work for Israeli organizations. All of them have spent significant time in Israel. There is a whole range of liberal Israeli feelings." One would be hard-pressed to find such stark juxtapositions—"non-Zionist Jews" feeling "very connected to Israel"—among the previous two generations of Jewish leaders.

Jewish peoplehood for the nonestablishment leaders means a celebration of Diaspora cultures, including an implicit or explicit rejection of Israel's centrality for American Jews. Especially for those young Jewish leaders in the largest Jewish communities, the local American Jewish culture with which they identify is rich, diverse, and inclusive.

These views, in turn, are related to their experiences of being Jews in America. Particularly in interviews, some leaders of the nonestablishment sector—with the noteworthy exception of recent immigrants and Orthodox Jews—scoff at what they regard as a "circle-the-wagons" approach to Jewish life.

They do not feel threatened by anti-Semitism, perhaps because few have experienced it firsthand. Some have enjoyed close contacts, including romantic relationships, with non-Jews, and they prefer to avoid us-them distinctions. For this reason, they claim a fair amount of indifference to intermarriage, and instead want to focus on making Jewish life meaningful, including for their non-Jewish friends who attend all kinds of Jewish events.

Depending on where they align themselves on these types of questions, young Jewish leaders hold strong views on the current configuration of the organized Jewish community and the need for new ways of organizing. Not surprisingly, those leaders who are involved with mainstream Jewish organizations tend to harbor positive views of them. The nonestablishment types are quite critical of key organizations—Federations, conventional synagogues, and agencies engaging in protective types of activities.

Nonestablishment leaders are critical both of the agendas pursued by these institutions and of the way they relate to people. Young leaders find fault with the established groups, seeing them as unwelcoming of diversity and as leaving little room for younger Jews to have a say or to advance rapidly within the decision-making structures. They also criticize the values of these organizations, with their emphasis on survivalist or protective issues, and their seeming indifference to questions of meaning, cultural exploration, and other forms of personal expressiveness.

Notwithstanding this criticism, funding for most nonestablishment groups comes largely from older Jews, usually from established organizations, and especially from foundations. For all the talk of a clear division between programs for young Jews and the established community, leaders of start-ups privately admit they could not function without support from established organizations and foundations.

… funding for most nonestablishment groups comes largely from older Jews, usually from established organizations, and especially from foundations.

WHAT HAVE BEEN THE KEY INFLUENCES SHAPING YOUNG LEADERS?

We have already noted the disproportionately high percentage of young leaders who have benefitted from intensive Jewish educational programs. To these we would add leadership training programs run by Jewish foundations and organizations. Establishment organizations run training programs to cultivate and nurture future volunteer leaders. The large majority of leaders of the nonestablishment variety have also gone through leadership training programs. Indeed, the largest, most significant and far-reaching innovations of the past three decades have been the products of an intergenerational partnership in which the grandparents' generation has played a leading role as philanthropists, establishing independent foundations staffed by foundation professionals, who themselves are mainly baby-boomers and Generation Xers, in the service of offering guidance and training to still younger Jews currently in their 20's and 30's. This partnership has fundamentally shaped the character of early 21st century American Jewish life.

Leadership training programs have intentionally shaped its pluralistic culture, created structural forces that undermine tendencies toward denominationalism (outside the world of Orthodoxy) and isolation into separate silos, and, in the process, defined a new American Jewish conversation about youth.

To this we must also add other formative factors initiated by shifts outside the Jewish community. One, of course, is the Internet. Whereas the "Jewish community" used to be shorthand for the organizations that claimed to represent the concerns and needs of Jews, the map of the Jewish Internet landscape today captures a much more variegated and diverse community, sustained across social divisions. The Internet has given both younger and more marginal voices a platform for speaking, broadcasting, organizing, and creating their own communities, while still participating in larger communal conversations.

A second way in which broader American social trends are reshaping this population can be traced to new social patterns of family formation among highly educated populations, including Jews. Like their socioeconomic peers, young Jews are deferring marriage, family formation, and also career decisions. As more young people live out their so-called

"odyssey years" well into the 30's, ever more young Jews are removed from the established organizations of the Jewish community, which have tended to be focused on families with children. Family circumstances have therefore pushed young Jews away from the establishment. Simultaneously, the presence of so many single and childless Jews has also created opportunities for entrepreneurial young Jewish leaders to offer alternative forms of Jewish activities and communities. The growth of a large nonestablishment sector of start-ups must therefore be seen within the context of the new social arrangements of this generation of Jews.

We have no way to know whether the patterns of thinking, organizing, communicating, and connecting, or not connecting, with collective Jewish activities will persist as Jews in the 20's and 30's grow older and form families. It is hard to imagine that all these shifts in outlook merely represent a passing phase. In all likelihood, a considerably reshaped Jewish community is emerging, and with it, a very different kind of leadership, one that will offer its own mix of protective, progressive, and expressive agendas.

WHAT, IN BROAD STROKES, ARE THE IMPLICATIONS OF THESE FINDINGS?

- Jews in their 20's and 30's, and especially their leaders, hold diverse views, some in sync with past conceptions of Jewish life and priorities, and others at variance with them. Particularly within the nonestablishment sector, we see evidence of a growing emphasis on Jewish learning and literacy, the desire to nurture religious and/or spiritual growth, and new understandings of Jewish peoplehood. Funders and policy-makers will have to consider whether to encourage these trends.
- The attitudes of this new leadership toward the key institutions of the organized Jewish community, the values of those institutions, and the way they bring Jews together may presage the emergence of a very different collective system. The way young leaders utilize the Internet and blogs further suggests new ways of organizing and connecting people. It also augurs further shifts in the fortunes of Jewish organizations: Some that had been central in the twentieth century will diminish in significance; new ones with different agendas will take their place. Though it is unimaginable that this process will be done in a planned fashion, given the decentralized nature of American Jewish life, it is possible to imagine the creation of deliberative processes to help organizations and nonestablishment initiatives prepare for the future.
- Established organizations will have to rethink their governance structures to make room for younger Jewish leaders. The latter find ample opportunities outside the Jewish community and also in the nonestablishment sector to rise rapidly to positions of influence. Established organizations tend to place younger people on a slower track, testing them and socializing them into the organizational culture before elevating them to positions of influence. This frustrates many creative young people who have experience taking the initiative in other settings and don't want to "wait their turn." One can acknowledge the virtues of mentoring and grooming as the preferred way in establishment organizations, while also recognizing that time is not working in favor of those organizations.
- For their part, younger Jewish leaders would do well to reexamine their views of the establishment. For all its weaknesses, it played a major role in educating them. Were it not for the substantial investments of older leaders in Jewish education and in the expansion of formal and informal settings for such education, Jews now in their 20's and 30's would not have acquired the Judaic skills and expertise that serve them so well. They might also reconsider what has been created by the national organizations so many of them disdain. The Federation system, the Jewish community relations sphere, the old-line social service agencies, and conventional synagogues all have contributed to a rich and self-confident American Jewish culture. Unquestionably, they all have their shortcomings and are in need of reform. Younger leaders who have been the beneficiaries of those institutions might think about how to revamp them rather than to wash their hands of them.
- The ways these young leaders think about the relationship between Jews and non-Jews, their desire to include the latter in programs, and their openness to intermarried Jews will further erode previously held boundaries of Jewish life. Indeed, the importance of maintaining boundaries between Jews and non-Jews is already being questioned. This new outlook poses particular challenges to some of the denominations, but more generally will require institutions to consider how to approach boundary issues.

- With the young leaders' emphasis on social justice, which tends to be about universal causes as opposed to parochial Jewish communal needs, the scope and targets of Jewish service and philanthropy are changing. Can Jewish institutions live with these realities? Will those agencies concerned with parochial Jewish needs find ways to win over those who are mainly concerned about nonsectarian causes? Or will establishment institutions resolve this tension by increasingly attending to both Jewish and universal causes?
- Our study has implications for understanding the relationship between generations, suggesting that in some important ways young leaders think and organize very differently than do older ones. The sheer numbers of nonestablishment programs and initiatives suggest that numerically greater proportions of young leaders stand aloof from establishment organizations. And the new platforms created to express their nonestablishment points of view are also shaking up the previous communal order. Still, it is a mistake to see this story solely through the prism of generational differences: Younger leaders involved with mainstream organizations are in sync with their elders in those types of institutions; and younger leaders in the nonestablishment sector share many perspectives with their elders who are involved with nonestablishment initiatives. There is a great deal of continuity within spheres across generational boundaries. The quest to understand which divides are deepest and where they might be bridged will require nuanced analysis and offers an opportunity for intergenerational conversation.

Our study has implications for understanding the relationship between generations, suggesting that in some important ways young leaders think and organize very differently than do older ones.

- The proliferation of small organizations and initiatives is making it possible to address the diversity of the younger Jewish population far better than in the past. But this positive development, in turn, poses a different question: What holds the multiplicity of organizations, programs, and initiatives together? And are there common concerns unifying American Jews? The coming challenge will be to find overarching causes and commonalities to bridge the fragmenting population of American Jews. For that, we will need a generation of leaders who have the commitment and abilities to strengthen Jewish collective action on a national and international scale.

Generation of Change: How Leaders in Their Twenties and Thirties Are Reshaping American Jewish Life

We live in a moment of dynamic change in American Jewish communal life. Stalwart Jewish institutions of the past century—synagogues, Federations, Jewish community relations agencies, and mass membership organizations—are encountering difficulties in retaining the allegiance of their supporters and recruiting new ones, prompting concern about their future viability. In order to connect with a new generation, some of these established institutions are self-consciously transforming themselves. Simultaneously, many new initiatives have been launched outside of the conventional channels with the aim of reaching niche subpopulations of American Jews. Particularly noteworthy is the host of start-up organizations aimed at younger Jews now dotting the landscape. No one can predict how these various groupings will intersect or forecast the emerging shape of the organized Jewish community. It appears, though, that a new era has dawned in the history of American Jewish collective arrangements.

Jews in their 20's and 30's intent on addressing the Jewish concerns of their peers are driving many of these changes within and outside the established communal structure. Indeed, many younger leaders are convinced that both a new vocabulary and novel institutional forms are needed to speak to the sensibilities of their peers. In their view, shifts in technology, communications, and outlook require Jewish organizations to rethink the nature of collective Jewish life and the ways in which Jews organize. The new approaches of younger leaders are reshaping how all kinds of Jewish institutions articulate their messages, focus their programs, and utilize communications technology to reach their audiences.

This is a report about those leaders, individuals in their 20's and 30's who hold positions of leadership in a broad range of organized Jewish groups. As with leadership generally, no single definition encompasses the many ways Jewish leaders make their mark: Some are leaders because they have spearheaded new initiatives, while others direct the activities of existing groups; some are professionals, and others are volunteers; some are culture shapers, exercising influence through their ideas, their writing, or their performances; others make things happen by virtue of their contacts, communications skills and energy. A broad range of Jewish leaders is represented in this report, including activists who eschew the term leadership to describe their own enterprising efforts, but who demonstrably enjoy a following.

Working under the auspices of The AVI CHAI Foundation, a team of six researchers devoted two years to examining younger Jewish leaders from multiple vantage points. The project began with a sharp focus on how these leaders think about Jewish issues, particularly those concerning Jewish peoplehood and Israel. As we interviewed young leaders, we quickly discovered that their views about the Jewish collective were part of a larger matrix of thinking about what it means to be Jewish in America at this moment. We then expanded our research outward to explore the factors shaping the views of young leaders—the impact of early 21st century American culture, educational and socializing institutions, new technologies, leadership training programs, and broader American social trends.

We also learned how these factors have shaped attitudes about preferred ways of organizing: as individuals taking the initiative in leading, these young people hold specific ideas about the forms Jewish collective efforts should take—i.e., what would appeal to their peers and what would not.

As researchers, we were also struck by the nature of Jewish public discourse about young Jewish leaders. Newspaper articles, online forums, and public meetings lauded the accomplishments of young Jewish innovators. Indeed, an organization called Jumpstart was founded to "nurture innovation" and promote Jewish entrepreneurs. Major foundations created training programs for nonestablishment leaders. Some funds were established to help young Jewish social entrepreneurs, and prizes were offered to reward the most enterprising. And the Jewish press showered accolades on innovative individuals. (The New York *Jewish Week*, for example, has run an annual feature highlighting "36 Under 36," extolling the initiatives of young leaders.) All of this attention prompted us to cast our net widely to learn more about the innovating efforts of young Jewish leaders and also prompted some curiosity about those young people who invested themselves in the work of establishment organizations.

The greatest research challenge we faced was to define the universe we were studying. In the absence of up-to-date data on the number of Jews in their 20's and 30's and the proportions of young Jewish adults involved in any Jewish activity, the precise number of Jewish organizations in which young Jews engage, and the total number of young Jews who play leadership roles, we had to use a multipronged approach to learn about the contours of the population we were studying. We compiled several long lists: One was of organizations in which young Jews engage; another was of gatekeepers who have direct links to and email addresses of leaders in these organizations; and a third list was of people in different parts of the country and in different types of organizations who seem to be playing a leadership role.

Based upon initial interviews and questions we generated among ourselves at our various team meetings, the six members of the research team collectively developed a survey instrument that was circulated to our many lists and contacts, with the request that they spread the instrument to their acquaintances. In time, we also fielded a version of the same survey to the membership lists of five different types of organizations, which yielded more responses from leaders and followers. Quantitative data were also gathered about online hubs to and from which Internet traffic flows on themes related to Jewish life.

In all, 6,773 respondents replied to all or parts of the survey instrument. Of these, 4,466 qualified as "leaders" by their own testimony. Data from these surveys appear in the course of this report. Because this was not a random sample survey, but rather one sent out to our various lists and then spread virally on the Internet, we do not make the claim that our respondents precisely represent the leadership cadre of American Jews; rather, the data are presented to illustrate differences *among categories of leaders* who responded to our survey. (For a more detailed discussion of the survey, see the Appendix on the Research Design.)

This study also relies heavily upon qualitative data gathered by all six researchers. Collectively we interviewed over 250 young Jewish leaders of all kinds and in different parts of the country. We spoke with young rabbis of all denominations who work with Jews in their 20's and 30's; cultural figures who are producing books, music, recordings, films, and art for this population; founders of social justice organizations, communes, blogs, Internet sites, and independent minyanim; and significant numbers of young leaders active in mainstream Jewish organizations as volunteers and as founders of affinity groups for immigrant populations and others with particular traits and common interests. Some team members also attended events run by and for Jews in their 20's and 30's to observe leaders in action.

We supplemented these types of data with sociological literature on trends within the general American population in this age group and with literature on the changing ways in which Americans are organizing. To offer some context, we also drew upon historical literature on changing demography and youth cultures. And to capture regional variations, we were attentive to differences between the scene in the large coastal cities and the so-called heartland, as well as urban versus suburban differences.

The composition of the research team was intentionally devised to offer varied generational perspectives: Three members of the team were themselves under the age of 41 and the other three were baby-boomers. All of us have participated in a variety of establishment and nonestablishment programs; and all of us have had firsthand contact with leadership training programs.

During the course of our many days together, we enacted some of the generational divisions described in our research and also witnessed some surprising meeting of minds across generations.

Our confidence in the reliability of our findings was buoyed by the agreement we found among our individual research projects. Whether we were studying young leaders in one large community such as Los Angeles or interviewing leaders in the American heartland, speaking to organizers of leadership training programs, surveying thousands of young Jewish leaders online, studying the uses of the Internet by Jews in their 20's and 30's or interviewing cultural trendsetters, we heard very similar expositions of how leaders think and experience being Jewish in America at this moment. The individual research components of our collective project complement rather than contradict one another. To guard against the dangers of "group think," we benefited from three outside consultants—Professor Riv-Ellen Prell, Dr. Jack Ukeles and Shawn Landres—who responded to our written work and challenged our perspectives. Given the limitations of knowledge, we had to think about this project as a puzzle in which we pieced together various elements to develop a larger portrait. As with much of social science research, it is the cumulative picture that bears watching.

THE CURRENT LANDSCAPE OF JEWISH PROGRAMS AVAILABLE TO JEWS IN THEIR TWENTIES AND THIRTIES

Discussions about the American Jewish community tend to focus on the broad array of mainstream Jewish organizations operating in various spheres dealing with religion, education, community relations, social welfare, culture, Israel, and international affairs. Jews in their 20's and 30's interested in these issues can and do participate in the work of long-established organizations focused on one or several of these agendas. In addition, they may choose from a rich variety of programs founded over the past ten to 15 years by and for Jews in their age group. Still a third type of institution available to younger Jews is the affinity group, which cater to subpopulations of younger Jews who share common characteristics or interests. What follows is a brief introduction to each of these three types of institutions.

Established organizations: Many of the larger national and even local Jewish organizations run programs for young Jews, especially leadership development programs. Among the most noteworthy are the programs run by the American Jewish Committee, which created ACCESS to involve younger Jews in its work; the same is true of AIPAC, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Friends of the Israel Defense Forces, and the Anti-Defamation League. Most Federations of Jewish Philanthropy have local young leadership divisions, which, in turn, work in concert with the Jewish Federations of North America. All of these groupings sponsor social events, educational programs, and service opportunities. And all also have tracks for individuals who want to get involved more actively. (A small number of conventional synagogues also run special religious services specifically for people in the younger age demographic.)

According to the conventional wisdom, these organizations enjoy virtually no following among younger people—but that is not true. Both our interviews and survey research demonstrate that a portion of young Jews continues to identify with the more traditional agenda of these organizations—i.e., protecting the Jews, advocating for Israel, offering social services to Jews in need, offering educational opportunities—and is attracted by the culture of these agencies.

In marketing themselves to young adults, mainstream institutions try to capitalize on their history, prestige, and experience. They provide entrée for young Jewish adults to meet established Jewish leaders who have made an impact in their own communities and nationally. Such connections may serve as important sources of professional and social networking and also, under the best of circumstances, may lead to a young person finding a mentor. Participants also learn how the Jewish community has addressed certain perennial issues—enhancing community relations, forging alliances with other American groups, engaging in civil rights work, combating anti-Semitism, and lobbying elected officials, whether local, state or national. For some younger adults, this can be a heady experience and certainly one they find compelling. There is something powerful, too, about learning "how things are done" when faced with particular communal challenges; within these circles, experience and expertise are transmitted from one generation to the next. Institutions with a long history of achievement and a network of men and women of professional and social stature offer younger people the opportunity to learn from longtime communal leaders. The established organizations know this and try to woo adults in their 20's and 30's with these inducements.

The mainstream organizations also offer the promise of a distinctive social trajectory for upwardly mobile young Jews. Describing his experiences on a Federation-sponsored mission to Israel, a participant in his 20's captured the heady socioeconomic appeal of being in the company of peers sharing common aspirations. After hearing a woman on the trip describe her father-in-law, a major Jewish philanthropist, he was hooked:

> *… the way that she told that story, it sounded like, "Wow. That's how I would like to be." And, then seeing the women that were on the trip, I thought, "You know what? This … is the kind of wife that I would want to have, and this is the kind of life I would want to have."*

Though these organizations admit they have been slow to respond to the needs and communication methods of younger Jews, they have been playing catch-up—abetted by younger staff members who are attuned to their age peers. This should hardly surprise us, given the survival instincts of long-established institutions. With the support of older leaders, young staff are driving change in these organizations, and though they encounter obstacles, they are reshaping the established organizations.

Nonestablishment Programs: Over the past ten to 15 years, a large network of new programs and institutions has been created by Jews in their 20's and 30's. These so-called start-ups tend to be characterized by the following:

1. They do not hesitate to question the status quo.
2. They seem highly attuned to their clients—younger Jews.
3. They experiment.
4. They network with one another and arrive at innovative solutions.
5. They have the agility to associate seemingly unrelated fields and causes.

Today start-ups operate in the following areas:

- **Religious life:** Independent *minyanim* are prime examples of this trend, as are some of the learning institutions such as Yeshivat Hadar and study circles for young Jews in the Orthodox world, such as Drisha Institute and the long list of classes regularly featured at the website www.bangitout.com.
- **Social justice:** This is probably the hottest corner of the market for younger Jews, drawing people into service programs locally and abroad, environmental work, and policy-oriented programs. To cite just a few with multiple chapters: JCorps volunteers deliver meals, visit the sick in hospitals and the aged in senior citizens homes, and clean up the environment; Avodah participants work in America's urban ghettos; and Hazon concerns itself with food and environmental matters. Local groups engage in similar work in many of the large Jewish population centers.
- **Israel-oriented activities:** The best known of these programs challenge or critique Israeli policies vis-à-vis the Palestinians, but there are also groups that focus on other aspects of Israeli life, such as film, music, environmental protection, and gay and lesbian issues. Thus, while an organization like Encounter stresses its role as "an educational organization dedicated to providing Jewish Diaspora leaders from across the religious and political spectrum with exposure to Palestinian life," a program in Chicago called Club 1948 bills itself as "an alternative connection to Israel, fostering a passion for the soul, spirit and people of Israel." Both are nonestablishment initiatives begun by leaders under the age of 40.
- **New forms of community:** These include the 19 Moishe Houses scattered across the U.S. and the Ravenna Kibbutz in Seattle, which not only offer communal living, but are designed to serve as centers for Jewish conversation and social gathering for the larger community of peers.
- **Cultural programs:** Young Jews who want to combine artistic and musical expressions taken from popular culture with Jewish elements have created new outlets. JDub produces both records and musical events on a national level; E-3 and Kfar offer such programs locally, in Denver and Chicago, respectively.
- **Recreational opportunities:** In locations where young Jews are attracted to the natural scenic beauty, start-ups organize hiking, biking, and skiing trips to offer younger Jews the chance to pursue their love of the outdoors in the company of Jewish peers.

This does not exhaust the list, but illustrates the many spheres in which start-ups have been launched at the initiative of younger Jews.

To a greater or lesser extent, the ethos of many nonestablishment groups is deliberately designed to draw distinctions between

start-ups and mainstream organizations. Some intentionally are directed at individuals who feel alienated from the establishment groups. A Federation staff member in Los Angeles explicitly acknowledged the appeal of start-ups:

> *There are certain people that just don't want to be part of the mainstream, and Federation is mainstream to a large extent. So, I think there are some people that just would rather be with something smaller and maybe more niche-focused … that kind of personality that just doesn't want to do what everyone else is doing. They want to do something different.*

Speaking for nonestablishment groups, a young leader drew distinctions too, stressing the way his group strives for "a little bit of an edge."

> *We don't do stuff in … an institutional setting.… Even though at times we do partner with the establishment, we still carry with us sort of like this anti-establishment, independent,[attitude].… It's like, we're in the YouTube generation; we're in the MySpace generation. We're in the generation of people who … want to express themselves as an individual.… They may not … want something prepackaged.*

In their self-descriptive language, then, the nonestablishment organizers quite consciously set themselves apart from mainstream institutions, even though in some regards they build on earlier establishment initiatives in the realm of Jewish adult education, cultural programming, and social justice efforts sponsored by synagogues, JCCs, and Federations.

Affinity Groups: Still a third type of organization complements the work of the establishment and start-up groups, often hewing a middle course between the two alternatives. Affinity groups tend to be hybrids in that some are directly connected with established institutions but are run entirely by young people and operate with the flexibility and agility of start-ups. Others are founded by leaders over the age of 40 but directed at a younger post-college population. The largest affinity groups cater to new immigrants or second-generation American Jews—adults whose parents immigrated from the former Soviet Union, Iran, Syria, Israel or, more recently, France, South Africa, and Latin America. To this, we might add Orthodox outreach programs designed to expose adults in their 20's and 30's to Jewish rituals and learning. Chabad runs a huge infrastructure of programs specifically directed to single Jews on campus and beyond, as does Aish HaTorah; these efforts are augmented by Modern Orthodox organizations, such as the Manhattan Jewish Experience and Jewish International Connection, specifically geared to younger immigrants from some 25 different countries. Finally, a few nascent efforts now strive to appeal to adult children of intermarried parents, to the grandchildren of Holocaust survivors, or to GLBT Jews in this age group.

Viewed from some distance, it is evident that the three distinct types of institutions for young adults are not distributed randomly across the United States, but are a reflection of local culture and population density. The metropolitan areas with the largest concentrations of young Jewish adults can boast the highest numbers and greatest variety of programs. As might be expected, given their critical mass of Jews, New York City and greater Los Angeles have more programs than any other places in the country, including the largest number of start-ups. Other communities with Jewish populations of more modest size also support quite a range of initiatives. This is especially so of the coastal cities of Boston and Washington in the East and of the Bay Area in the West. All of these cities serve as magnets for young adults attracted to those places from elsewhere—to Washington by the allure of government and policy work, to Boston by the plethora of universities and research opportunities, to San Francisco by Silicon Valley. The size of specific subpopulations also plays a role in explaining the creation of affinity groups: Hence the large concentrations of Iranian Jews in Los Angeles and the large Russian émigré communities in New York, not surprisingly, have spawned programs for young adults drawn from these communities.

Local lifestyles play a role in determining the nature of programs. Young people tend to be drawn to places like Denver, Seattle, and Phoenix, for example, because they offer magnificent settings for outdoor activities. Thus, outdoor trips for young Jews are common in those communities. A very different set of preoccupations characterizes young adults migrating to New Orleans. Ever since Hurricane Katrina ravaged that city, it has attracted a small but perceptible influx of young Jewish adults who are eager to stay for longer periods to work on policy and rebuilding.

By contrast, the style of young adults in other communities tends in other directions. A Federation staff member in Dallas describes local young adult Jews as primarily business-oriented. Federation programs therefore provide networking opportunities.

In Midwestern cities, young adults tend to marry at younger ages than in coastal cities. This has led to a greater emphasis on couples' programs and parenting advice in the offerings of Jewish organizations; it also accounts for comparatively higher levels of interest in synagogues than one might find in the average young adult population. A very different dynamic is at work in Boston and the San Francisco Bay Area, where so-called "progressive politics" are prominent features of local culture. Not surprisingly, Federations there are also more attuned to the GLBT community than in other places, and Jewish groups concerned with social action and protesting Israeli government policies have inevitably multiplied.

Who sponsors programs and how they are delivered also varies with the local Jewish communal culture. In heavily centralized Midwestern communities such as Chicago and Cleveland, the local Jewish Federation dominates the landscape of Jewish activities. By monopolizing Jewish life in these communities, Federations make it hard for start-ups to thrive. By contrast in other communities, Federations such as Boston and Denver encourage innovators to create start-ups for younger adults.

Two further considerations warrant attention as we consider the impact of local cultures. One is the reality that some communities are gaining new populations, while others are watching their young adults depart in large numbers. Among the latter are communities on Long Island and some of the other suburbs of New York City, where an exodus of younger adults is depleting synagogues and other institutions (with the noteworthy exception of those neighborhoods that are attracting young Orthodox Jews). And the other big population losers are a number of Midwestern cities. In stark contrast, Jewish populations in places like Atlanta, the Bay Area, Denver, Seattle, Washington, D.C., and some Sunbelt communities have experienced a noticeable influx of young adults. The mood of young leaders in such places seems far more upbeat. Not surprisingly, exciting programs have been created in those communities by innovators and also by established institutions to address the newcomers and draw them into Jewish life.

Communities also differ in the kinds of programming they offer for adults in their 20's and 30's. With their concentration of independent *minyanim*, blogs, social action groups, and even affinity organizations, some of the large coastal Jewish communities—those in the Boston/Washington corridor and San Francisco and Los Angeles on the other coast—offer far greater variety of programming for young adults than do many communities in the heartland. It is far more difficult for smaller communities with only limited numbers of young adults to mount a broad array of activities. Ezra Shanken, a founder of E-3 in Denver, which bills itself as "bridging popular culture and traditional Jewish values, with cocktails," put this memorably: "I joke with my friends on the Upper West Side [of Manhattan] that it's hard to see Hadrian's Wall when you live in Rome. This [Denver] is where the battle is."

Still, if one conceives of the effort to engage young Jewish adults as a battle, large numbers of potential participants do not set foot on the field. Based upon figures from the 2000-01 National Jewish Population Study, we estimate that there are somewhere in the vicinity of one to one-and-a-quarter million Jews between the ages of 22 and 40 in the U.S. (Because we will not have a new NJPS in 2010 or apparently anytime in the near future, we lack more up-to-date estimates.) It is impossible to know what percentage of this population actively identifies as Jewish or what proportion participates in any of the activities listed above.

The largest mass of participants attends events requiring the lowest threshold of investment, most commonly a "happy hour" or other social gathering.

Interviews with leaders of all three types of organizations—established organizations, nonestablishment programs, and affinity groups—yield the same overall conclusion: Vast numbers, perhaps the majority, of young Jews do not participate and certainly do not engage in a sustained fashion with any of these groups. A Chabad rabbi working with this population employs the metaphor of a funnel to describe the population of young people in this age group who enter into some form of Jewish group engagement: The largest mass of participants attends events requiring the lowest threshold of investment, most commonly a "happy hour" or other social gathering; gradually, smaller numbers move on to educational or social action programs, until the population shrinks to a fraction of its initial size for sustained activism, regular study, or religious participation. As noted, though, we lack data on the numbers who even enter the funnel.

How, then, does the current population of younger people compare to previous generations in its relationship to organized Jewish life? If the postwar generation flocked to take out memberships in organizations, and the baby-boomers have had more limited involvement, many twenty- and thirty-something Jews seem even more reluctant to join, but rather participate episodically and as the spirit moves them. Personal relevance, if not meaning, drives their willingness to engage.

Highlighting the current spirit, Rabbi Sharon Brous, the founding rabbi of IKAR in Los Angeles, contrasts the previous generation's sense of obligation to join congregations and organizations with the current outlook. In lieu of guilt and obligation, Brous senses "a deep yearning for some kind of communal connection, some very strong sense of identity, and the need to have a meaningful and authentic connection to the Jewish tradition." For Brous, and many other young Jewish leaders, the "unwillingness to sit through Jewish ritual experiences that are not meaningful in some way," and the "unwillingness to engage in Jewish communal experiences that are … not at least striving for some kind of deep and meaningful and purposeful engagement in the world," and "the real reluctance to engage in something that is for the sake of the edifice and not for the sake of the soul and the community and some larger purpose" define the ethos of younger Jews today.

Perhaps precisely for this reason, a plethora of alternatives has been created to draw twenty- and thirty-year-olds into Jewish participation. Where once formal organizations were the name of the game, today conventional institutions have been augmented by many dozens of start-ups and many new types of affinity organizations. A remarkable array beckons those who are interested.

Moreover, the actual ecosystem of programs for young adults cannot easily be divided between the innovative and the conventional. For one thing, participants go where they please, with little regard to who is sponsoring an activity. They don't care whether a Federation or a national organization is sponsoring an event, any more than they care if a start-up is. What matters is the quality of the experience, the presence of people with whom they wish to associate, and the meaning (or pleasure) they can derive from an event. For another, the leaders and organizers of these programs themselves move fluidly from one to the next. Founders of start-ups join conventional organizations, and in some cases, the reverse movement is evident: Innovators are initially drawn into Jewish activity by exposure to Jewish life offered through a formal Federation program or one sponsored by an affinity group.

Where once formal organizations were the name of the game, today conventional institutions have been augmented by many dozens of start-ups and many new types of affinity organizations.

Finally, we must stress that the funding for most of these groupings comes largely from older Jews, usually from established organizations, and especially from foundations. For all the talk of a clear division between programs for young Jews and the established community, leaders of start-ups privately admit they could not function without support from established organizations and foundations.

THE ATTITUDES AND GOALS OF YOUNG JEWISH LEADERS

Given the great diversity of programs attracting Jews in their 20's and 30's, our research sought to capture the range of views within different populations of leaders. We divided our survey respondents into three categories—those serving in leadership roles in establishment organizations, in non-establishment ones, and in some combination of the two. To offer some context, we note in this connection that, depending on their age, respondents to our survey distributed themselves very differently among these three categories. Whereas roughly half of the Jewish leaders in our sample over the age of 50 held establishment positions and over a third were involved as leaders in a mix of establishment positions, only 15 percent were in the nonestablishment sector alone. By contrast, 39 percent of those under the age of 40 were involved in a mix of organizations and as many as 48 percent under the age of 29 and a third of those between the ages of 30 and 39 were involved in the nonestablishment sector. Only 13 percent of those under 29 and 27 percent under 39 were involved in leadership of establishment organizations. (For a more detailed portrait of our survey respondents, see the Appendix on the Research Design.)

In order to highlight the distinctive outlook of younger leaders in all three types of institutions, we compared them with leaders over the age of 40 operating in similar types of settings. The tables and graphs that follow provide us with the chance to compare views held by different types of younger leaders and also between them and their elders.

Connection to the Jewish People

Almost by definition, Jewish leaders of all ages care about some aspect of being Jewish and identify with the Jewish people as a collective. When asked about their sense of belonging to the Jewish people, between 97 percent and 99 percent of leaders in all categories claim to feel personally connected and over 90 percent of all kinds of leaders also claim to feel part of the Jewish community. Differences emerge, though, when we measure the *intensity* of that connection. Table 1 illustrates these differences by highlighting how various categories of leaders registered *strong agreement* with three measures of identification. A higher percentage of older leaders of all types strongly agreed that they have a sense of belonging to the Jewish people, feel part of the Jewish community, and harbor a responsibility for Jews in need around the world than did other types of Jewish leaders. Younger leaders involved with establishment organizations hold the same strong views with nearly an equal degree of intensity. By contrast, leaders in the younger nonestablishment sector claimed less intense agreement. As will be evident throughout our discussion of survey data, older establishment leaders and younger nonestablishment leaders tend to represent the poles, holding the most contrasting views.

Table 1 also suggests that when it comes to feeling a sense of responsibility for Jews around the world, the gap between establishment leaders of all ages and nonestablishment leaders grows considerably. In contrast to the first two questions, which inquire about feelings, the third question implies a course of action: A sense of responsibility for fellow Jews around the world would likely lead to the expectation of some normative behavior. A word of caution is in order here: Though only one-third of younger leaders in the nonestablishment sector *strongly* claim a responsibility to care for Jews in need around the world, another 45 percent agree they have some such responsibility and merely 21 percent of younger nonestablishment leaders claim no such a responsibility.

We then asked the various types of leaders about their anxieties about Jewish security, including the safety of Israel (Table 2). The gap in outlook on virtually all questions between the nonestablishment younger leaders and establishment older leaders was pronounced, and age differences also figured into responses in all categories. Younger nonestablishment leaders seem to resonate least with fears of anti-Semitism at home or abroad. We may speculate as to the causes of these differences: Quite possibly, chronological distance from the Holocaust constitutes part of the explanation for the diminished sense of threat and vulnerability, as does a greater sense of full acceptance in American society. But this does not explain why younger leaders connected with establishment organizations differ from their age peers in the nonestablishment sector over the present danger of anti-Semitism and seem closer in outlook to older establishment leaders. One possibility is sensibility: Younger nonestablishment leaders may wish to focus on the positive dimensions of Jewish life rather than on fear; or younger leaders may divide into establishment and nonestablishment camps based on their personal experiences with anti-Semitism.

Table 1: Leaders who "strongly agree" with selected issues related to Jewish collective identity (by percent)

	Young Nonestablishment	Older Nonestablishment	Young, Mixed	Older, Mixed	Young Establishment	Older Establishment
I have a strong sense of belonging to the Jewish people.	73	80	77	86	75	83
I feel part of the Jewish community.	64	70	71	79	73	78
I have a responsibility to take care of Jews in need around the world.	33	48	47	57	49	51

Table 2: Leaders' comparative worries about threats to Israel, anti-Semitism (by percent)

	Young Nonestablishment	Older Nonestablishment	Young, Mixed	Older, Mixed	Young Establishment	Older Establishment
Threats to Israel's security	23	39	39	56	43	59
Critics of Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state	24	41	38	53	45	57
U.S. anti-Semitism	9	14	13	19	19	19
Anti-Semitism in Europe	13	28	21	34	24	33
Remembering the Holocaust	23	36	35	45	39	45
Fighting anti-Semitism	23	32	38	45	49	49

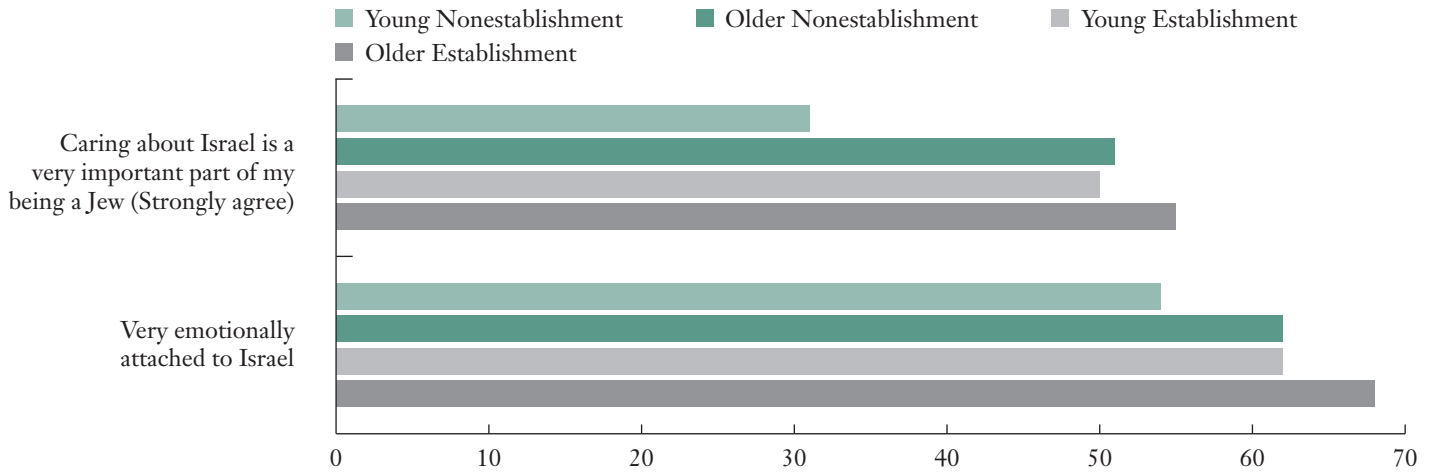
Note: Columns and rows do not add up to 100 percent because respondents were free to identify all developments causing them worry.

Israel

The question of whether younger American Jews are more distant from Israel than their forebears has been the subject of much discussion among sociologists. Are younger Jews less connected than in the past? And if so, is this a result of their age or their life stage? If the former, their views may change as they grow older. If generational, the younger cohort may continue to harbor the same views as they become middle-aged and older. Our study contributes to this ongoing discussion by focusing specifically on leaders, rather than the entire younger Jewish population.

We posed two questions to measure connection to Israel, one about caring about Israel and the other about emotional attachment. In the aggregate, the overwhelming majority of leaders in all age groups claimed to care about and feel attached to Israel, with over 90 percent of older and younger establishment leaders affirming their emotional attachment and nearly 85 percent of nonestablishment leaders claiming such an attachment. When intensity of attachment is measured, however, significant differences appear. Graph 1 presents responses from those leaders who feel *very attached* and *strongly agree* they care about Israel.

Graph 1: Attachment to Israel (by percent)



Older leaders score highest on these questions, followed by younger leaders in mainstream organizations, who largely share the perspectives of their elders in those institutions. A larger gap opens between younger nonestablishment leaders and everyone else. Less than a third of nonestablishment leaders claim that "caring about Israel is a very important part of my being a Jew." Another third claim it is an important part; and another third are either unsure or disagree with the statement.

These gaps in outlook are also reflected when we posed a set of policy questions to leaders. Younger nonestablishment leaders and older establishment leaders offer dramatic contrasts with respect to the importance of defending Israel's actions, views on freezing settlement expansion, and attitudes toward Israel advocacy groups versus "pro-Israel/pro-peace" organizations.

Thus, while 53 percent of older establishment leaders think it important to defend Israel against unfriendly critics, just 18 percent of the younger nonestablishment leaders share this view. A very large majority of nonestablishment leaders support a settlement freeze (77 percent among the young), in contrast with an about even division among the establishment leaders, both older and younger ones. Though nearly half of older and younger nonestablishment leaders are "bothered" by Israel's treatment of the Palestinians, only one-fifth of nonestablishment leaders share that concern.

The nonestablishment leaders are more warmly disposed toward self-styled "pro-Israel, pro-peace" groups than are establishment leaders. As might be expected, these views are reversed with respect to Israel advocacy groups injuring "the chances of engaging younger Jews with Israel." Just 11 percent of older establishment leaders agree with this view, in contrast to three times as many younger nonestablishment leaders.

The differences on these policy issues are not so much attributable to age (which exerts a small effect) as to political camp, where the nonestablishment leaders are more "dovish" and the establishment leaders more "hawkish" on Israeli policy and on the preferred approach to Israel advocacy in America. The presence of leaders of "pro-Israel/pro-peace" groups in the nonestablishment camp is hardly a factor, in that such small numbers of these leaders comprise the nonestablishment camp and therefore they do not skew the results. Rather, the two camps are divided politically, with the nonestablishment leaders leaning left and the establishment leaders closer to the political center (or right-of-center).

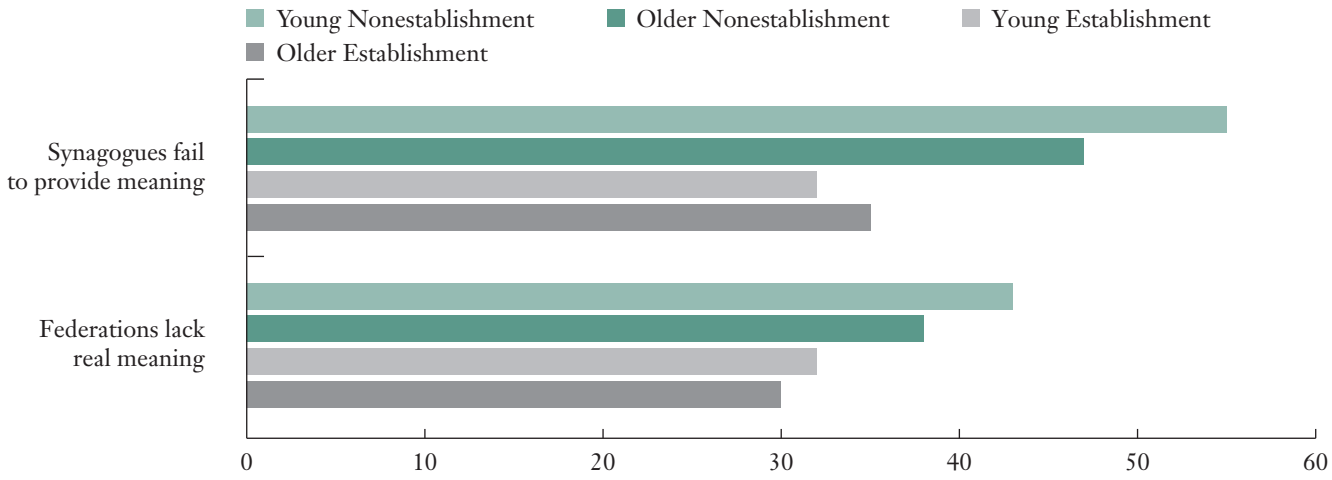
Attitudes toward the Established Jewish Community

Innovative programs and start-ups have been created by young leaders as an alternative to established organizations. It is therefore of some interest to determine how leaders in their 20's and 30's regard mainstream Jewish institutions.

Table 3: Leaders' views on Israel-related policy positions (by percent)

	Young Nonestablishment	Older Nonestablishment	Young, Mixed	Older, Mixed	Young Establishment	Older Establishment
It is important to defend Israel against unfriendly critics. (agree)	18	29	35	51	39	53
Bothered by Israel's treatment of Palestinians. (agree)	48	47	28	29	21	20
Israel should freeze settlements. (agree)	77	74	58	61	45	55
Pro-Israel/pro-peace groups injure image of Israel. (agree)	7	10	12	16	20	16
Israel advocacy groups injure chances of engaging young Jews with Israel. (agree)	34	21	21	15	13	11

Graph 2: Dissatisfaction with synagogues and Federations (by percent)



Not surprisingly, younger nonestablishment leaders express more dissatisfaction with synagogues, Federations of Jewish Philanthropy, and the organized Jewish communal system than do older establishment leaders. They are more than twice as likely as older establishment leaders to agree that "most synagogues fail to provide a sense of real meaning and purpose" (58 percent vs. 39 percent), and to have similarly critical views of Federations (46 percent vs. 35 percent).

It is noteworthy that these critical attitudes are more a function of sector (nonestablishment vs. establishment) than of age. Insofar as young people are more critical of the current establishment, either their views reflect their involvement in nonestablishment activities, or (more likely) they have gravitated to the nonestablishment sector owing in part to their dissatisfaction with prevailing options in the established Jewish community. Undoubtedly, some also eschew established organizations and create start-ups in order to act independently; a powerful do-it-yourself current animates many young Jewish leaders.

… a powerful do-it-yourself current animates many young Jewish leaders.

To hone in on the Jewish agendas of leaders, we asked respondents to examine a list of possible objectives for Jewish collective life and to identify those items they most work on as leaders. We also asked leaders to identify agenda items they value highly, even if their own work is primarily focused on other issues. We thus gained insight into those objectives that are of special importance to Jewish leaders in our sample. (See Graph 3.)

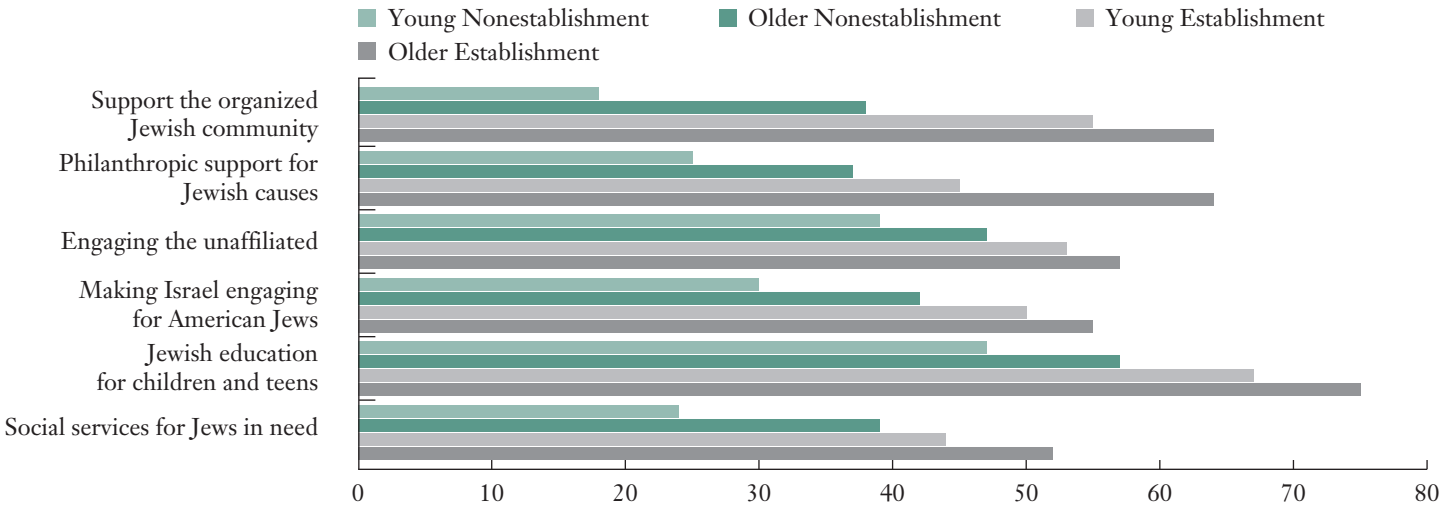
Several of our questions reflect the long-standing commitments of the "system"—the goals of the organized Jewish community and its establishment volunteer and professional leaders. These include:

- supporting the organized Jewish community
- providing social services for Jews in need
- fostering philanthropic support for Jewish life
- making Israel engaging for American Jews and defending Israel against unfriendly critics
- encouraging Jews to in-marry
- maintaining Jewish education for children and teens

These half-dozen objectives correspond to the overall missions of the various mainstream or establishment organizations, such as Federations, human services agencies, synagogues, Jewish Community Centers, Israel advocacy organizations, and educational programs.

Not surprisingly, older establishment leaders react very positively to these objectives; in contrast, younger nonestablishment leaders resonate far less to these causes.

Graph 3: Views of various established communal objectives as very important (by percent)



To take one telling example, the older establishment and younger nonestablishment leaders differed predictably in their attitudes toward the importance of supporting the organized Jewish community. As many as 65 percent of the older establishment leaders rated such support as very important, compared with just 20 percent of the younger nonestablishment leaders.

To older establishment leaders, the good deeds and constructive efforts of these established institutions endow them with evident legitimacy and value. For the younger nonestablishment leaders, the value of these agencies is far from self-evident, and their objectives are neither immediately compelling nor mobilizing.

Here, again, we can see the relative congruence of views among older and younger leaders in the established sector and a meeting of minds between older and younger leaders in the nonestablishment sector on most of these agenda items. Nonestablishment leaders are the least enamored of these objectives; establishment leaders of all ages are more supportive. Younger nonestablishment leaders rate all of the conventional agenda items lower than any other type of leader. Especially noteworthy in this regard is the small percentage of this population that places a high priority on social services for Jews in need.

This, in turn, leads us to questions about patterns of charitable giving, still another measure of how leaders set their priorities. We asked respondents about the extent to which they devote their charitable giving to Jewish causes, and specifically, whether they tend to favor Jewish organizations that channel most of their largess to nonsectarian or universal needs, rather than specifically Jewish ones. These items are reported in the two columns of Table 4 (see page 19) marked "Jewish causes" and "Universal causes under Jewish sponsorship." The third column, labeled "Percent of charity directed to Jewish agencies helping Jews," provides data on the actual percentage of their charitable dollars each group claims to give to Jewish causes whose beneficiaries are primarily Jewish.

The results point to remarkably consistent patterns in which age (older vs. younger) and leadership category (establishment, mixed, or nonestablishment) operate in parallel directions. The comparisons between older establishment and younger nonestablishment leaders are most instructive. The former give more of their charity to Jewish causes, and the latter, when they give to Jewish causes, favor Jewish philanthropies that primarily benefit non-Jews. Among older establishment leaders, giving to Jewish causes to benefit Jews equals 60 percent of total giving; for the younger nonestablishment leaders, it is half that amount—just 30 percent. A closer inspection of the figures for older and younger leaders, and for establishment, mixed, and nonestablishment camps, shows that both age and camp influence the proportions of giving to universalistic versus particularistic causes.

These patterns speak not only to charitable giving, but to larger visions of Jewish life. For younger people associated with the nonestablishment camp, the more compelling

Table 4: Giving to Jewish charities, for universal purposes or to benefit Jews in need (by percent)

	Givers to Jewish causes	Givers to universal causes under Jewish sponsorship	Percent of charitable contributions directed to Jewish agencies helping Jews
Younger Nonestablishment	56	29	30
Older Nonestablishment	66	23	44
Younger mixed	64	22	44
Older mixed	77	21	57
Younger Establishment	71	18	54
Older Establishment	77	17	60

Note: The columns on giving for Jewish and universal needs under Jewish auspices refer to the percentage of the sample who claimed they gave to those kinds of causes. The last column refers to the percent of their charitable contributions respondents claimed they directed to agencies helping Jews.

Table 5: Leaders "very worried/bothered" about issues related to "continuity" (by percent)

	Young Nonestablishment	Older Nonestablishment	Young, Mixed	Older, Mixed	Young Establishment	Older Establishment
Jewish ignorance/lack of Jewish education	40	52	48	60	49	59
Young Jews not interested in Jewish life	33	45	49	61	56	65
High intermarriage	17	25	29	38	35	43
Low Jewish birthrates (very+somewhat)	5	12	10	15	13	15
Distancing from Israel	15	30	25	43	34	39

features of Jewish life are those that cross the boundaries between Jews and non-Jews, between the Jewish community and the larger world. They are especially drawn to helping the most impoverished at home and abroad—and they tend not to see fellow Jews as belonging to that population.

What Should Be Central to the American Jewish Agenda?

The 1990 National Jewish Population Study, with its finding of a high intermarriage rate (first reported at 52 percent and later revised to 43 percent), produced a surge of anxiety and a flurry of communal activity to address a perceived crisis of "Jewish continuity." Scores of Jewish Continuity Commissions sprang up in the Federation world and elsewhere in response to the worrisome demographic trends. Leaders at the time largely agreed that intermarriage signified the weakening of communal bonds and Jewish community. Some saw its explosive growth as a portent of further erosion in Jewish connections and commitments.

Our survey asked, "To what extent are you personally worried or bothered by each of the following issues, challenges, or problems in Jewish life?" Respondents could respond on a scale measuring intensity of feeling, with "very worried/bothered" as one option. Among the items raised (Table 5) were issues central to the discourse over continuity: ignorance and apathy among the young, high intermarriage rates, low birthrates and distancing from Israel. On all these items, fewer young nonestablishment leaders express serious worries than do older establishment leaders. More than twice as many of the older establishment leaders are very worried by intermarriage; twice as many are very worried by distancing from Israel; and establishment leaders are more likely to be very worried about low Jewish birthrates. It is particularly noteworthy that the continuity agenda was a central item in the discourse of the Jewish community when younger leaders were receiving their education and coming of age.

Respondents were also asked more detailed questions about their views of intermarriage, which are reported in Table 6. Consistent with their relative lack of concern for Jewish continuity per se, young nonestablishment leaders differ from other leaders in their far greater acceptance of mixed marriage. In fact, they part company not only from older establishment leaders, but also from older nonestablishment leaders and from younger establishment leaders (their age peers). In short, younger nonestablishment leaders are especially accepting of mixed marriage.

To cite one question of special note, respondents were asked whether they agree that "Jews should marry whomever they fall in love with, even if that person is not Jewish." By disagreeing, a respondent opposed intermarriage. Just under a quarter (24 percent) of the young nonestablishment leaders disagreed with the statement as compared to almost twice that percentage (46 percent) of older establishment leaders. Similarly, the young nonestablishment leaders were least likely to think it important to encourage Jews to marry Jews (18 percent). In sharp contrast, older establishment leaders were far more likely (48 percent) to favor encouraging in-marriage as an important communal or personal objective.

The variations in attitudes toward intermarriage are not at all attributable to variations in intermarriage behavior among the leaders. Overall, of those respondents in our sample who are married, 94 percent are in-married. In-marriage rates are ever so slightly higher among the establishment leaders, but the younger leaders who are married overwhelmingly have wed a Jew. For example, 93 percent of younger nonestablishment leaders who are married, wedded a Jew as compared with 96 percent of their establishment age-peers. They clearly distinguish between their marital choices and those of others.

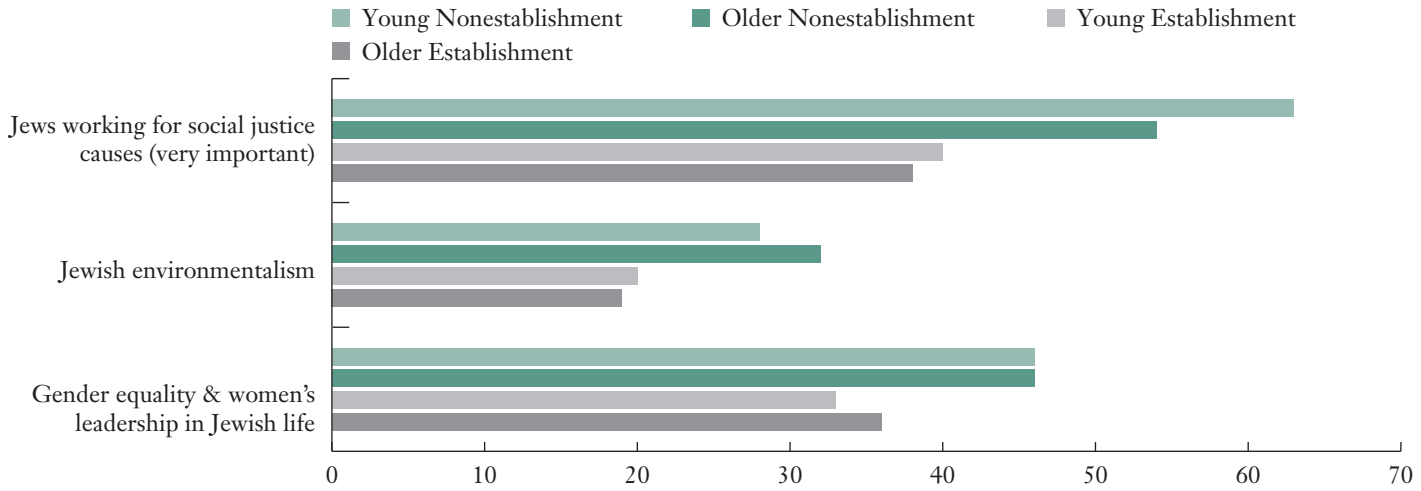
Older establishment leaders tend to view intermarriage as a threat to Jewish life and as a violation of long-standing communal norms. During interviews, younger nonestablishment leaders described intermarriage as an obstacle to Jewish participation, but felt it could be overcome with genuine commitment and involvement. Moreover, they tended to believe that the Jewish community is unwise or not entitled to take a stance on personal choices such as marriage.

Previous research has pointed to the declining levels of commitment to in-marriage within the American Jewish public as a whole, though the same research generally has found the leadership committed to endogamy. Our findings suggest a sharp bifurcation among leaders, with young establishment leaders more likely to hold the line on intermarriage and the nonestablishment sector no longer as committed to endogamy. Still, the responses to the question of how one would respond were a child to intermarry demonstrate that, across the board, Jewish leaders of all ages and sectors preponderantly oppose the intermarriage of their own offspring, with younger non-establishment leaders lagging behind others but still half would be upset if a child of theirs would intermarry. The seeming contradiction between responses to generic questions about intermarriage and the tendency of leaders to want their own children to marry Jews warrants serious analysis.

Table 6: Leaders' attitudes toward intermarriage (by percent)

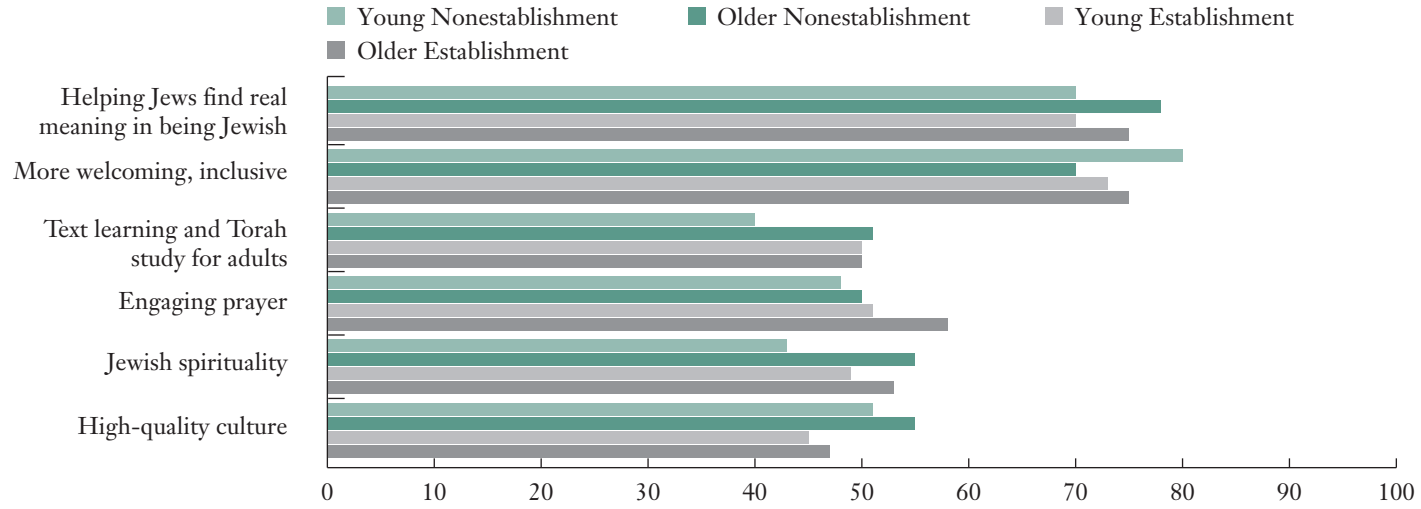
	Young Nonestablishment	Older Nonestablishment	Young, Mixed	Older, Mixed	Young Establishment	Older Establishment
Jews should marry whomever they fall in love with, even if not Jewish. (Disagree and Disagree Strongly)	24	33	39	45	47	46
I would be upset if my child were to marry a non-Jew who did not convert. (Agree Strongly and Agree)	50	61	62	69	68	71
It is important to encourage Jews to marry Jews. (Agree Strongly and Agree)	18	27	36	44	41	48

Graph 4: Support for progressive causes (by percent)



Graph 5: Importance of selected objectives in Jewish life (by percent)

(Percent who say this "best describes" their main work, plus those who say the objective is very important.)



If these traditional preoccupations of the organized Jewish community no longer resonate with some sectors of the younger leaders, what are some of the new concerns that animate them? Three types of concerns especially highlight the tendency of young nonestablishment leaders to embrace so-called "progressive" causes that their elders tend to regard as of lesser significance. They are: social justice causes, Jewish environmentalism, and gender equality (Graph 4). For example, just 39 percent of older establishment leaders think it important for Jews to work for social justice causes. In contrast, the comparable figure for younger nonestablishment leaders reaches 64 percent. The pronounced left-liberal tendencies among nonestablishment leaders, both of the younger and older sets, (83 percent of younger nonestablishment leaders identified themselves as Democrats and political liberals, whereas 72 percent of younger establishment leaders self-identified as Democrats and 56 percent as liberals) find expression in their sympathies for progressive causes in a Jewish context.

Finally, we turn to an examination of religious and cultural goals for organized Jewish life. We asked Jewish leaders how they rate the importance of enhancing the quality, inclusiveness, and meaningfulness of Jewish settings. As noted in Graph 5, leaders of all types were largely in agreement in their support of such efforts. Only small differences, if any, separated older from younger leaders or establishment and nonestablishment types.

What Does this Range of Views Suggest?

Based upon these survey data and also some 250 interviews with young Jewish leaders in all kinds of settings, several larger patterns become evident. To state the obvious first: These people, by definition, care about being Jewish and have chosen to invest themselves—their time, energy, and creativity—in volunteer and/or professional service to engage their Jewish peers. They also have strong commitments to creating a particular type of Jewish community, one that helps their peers find meaning in being Jewish and that is welcoming and inclusive. This set of goals and the means they use to attain them, many young leaders believe, distinguish their activities from those of the establishment Jewish community.

Both of these goals—meaningfulness and inclusiveness—are indicative of a larger set of values, which focuses on the personal and internal. Categories such as obligation, Jewish destiny, and tribal allegiances do not resonate, but actually repel. And yet, these leaders are seeking to draw other Jews into the orbit of Jewish activity. The quest for personal meaning and commitments to universal social justice at times, but not always, stands in tension with Jewish collective responsibility.

What, then, does engage younger Jewish leaders? Much of organized Jewish life in the second half of the twentieth century was focused around *protective* activities—defending Israel, fighting for freedom for Soviet Jewry, offering support to the Jewish poor at home and abroad, sustaining Jewish communal institutions, and, more recently, offering stronger Jewish educational opportunities to strengthen weak Jewish identities. The segment of young Jewish leaders who involve themselves with establishment Jewish organizations—Federations, Friends of the IDF, AIPAC, AJC, ADL, and JDC—and, to a lesser extent, with start-up organizations that engage in Israel advocacy, continues to play a protective role.

Simultaneously, two other agendas inspire other young leaders. "*Progressive*" causes appeal to some: Jewish leaders involved with start-ups are especially apt to identify with broader social causes—environmentalism, service to the downtrodden (mainly non-Jews), and a variety of social justice issues, including what they regard as justice for the Palestinians. For the majority of young Jewish leaders, a liberal political orientation is also part of the mix, as was most evident in the "Great Schlep," designed to get out the vote of elderly Jews in Florida for Obama.

The third agenda might be labeled *expressive*: Young Jewish leaders want to help their peers find personal meaning in being Jewish. This has prompted an explosion of interest in Jewish culture—including everything from foods of various Jewish *edot* (ethnic communities) to an interest in Jewish languages and folkways to a celebration of Jewish books, music, film, and other artistic productions. It also extends to an interest by some in Jewish religious expression, although mainly outside of conventional synagogues and rather in independent, usually non-denominational, *minyanim*. And it extends to study: Young Jewish leaders have created a broad range of opportunities for their peers to study Torah, explore spiritual questions, and probe what being Jewish means to them.

The emphasis leaders place on *protective*, *progressive*, and *expressive* types of Jewish activities set groups apart from one another. Indeed, the mix of these three elements shapes the particular culture of organizations for young Jewish adults, whether they are conventional or nonconventional programs.

Given this project's strong focus on peoplehood/Israel issues, our research team collected a great deal of data in various forms on these topics. Here, too, we see a spectrum of views. Those leaders involved with establishment organizations tend to identify with the protective orientation of those agencies. Indeed, some of the organizations have made clear that they will not compromise their positions in order to attract more followers: They seek out people sympathetic toward their Jewish commitments—and they find them.

Younger nonestablishment leaders are far more likely to strike universalistic chords. One variation on this theme was forcefully expressed by Rabbi Dara Frimmer, a Los Angeles-based congregational rabbi active in numerous social justice efforts: "Don't keep kosher, that's fine; don't keep Shabbat, that's fine; marry a non-Jew—whatever. But understand that it will take away your Jewish identity if you don't fight for justice." Her neighbor in Los Angeles, Rabbi Sharon Brous, explained her commitments in different terms: "We needed to organize and have a voice, and [affirm that] Judaism had something to say about what's going on in the world, and yet I wasn't hearing it being said anywhere." Brous wanted to build a community that would be "an incubator to experiment with the redefinition of what community could be in the Jewish world that would be rich and resourceful and would be healing and would be deeply challenging and would integrate social justice and

spiritual practice." Rabbi Melissa Weintraub, the founder of Encounter, explained why young nonestablishment leaders recoil from "us/them" thinking, observing that they do not wish "to be restricted to the tribe," desiring instead to "identify with other groups, serving other groups, or being in community with other groups."

This push-back against Jewish particularism and tribalism also translates into a more nuanced and complicated relationship that young nonestablishment leaders have with Israel. A staggering proportion of them have been to Israel (over 90 percent) and, as noted, over half have spent more than four months on a study program in Israel. They are not indifferent toward Israel. Many nonestablishment organizations sponsor Israel-related programs, screen Israeli films, sponsor Israeli musical performances, and serve Israeli-style foods. But they range across the spectrum in the tolerance they display for criticism of Israeli policies. As Aaron Bisman, the president of JDub Records and one of the most centrally placed innovators, has put it: "All the individuals whom I can think of who are … non-Zionist are very connected to Israel. Some of them work for Israeli organizations. All of them have spent significant time in Israel. There is a whole range of liberal Israeli feelings." Moreover, for some who identify strongly with self-styled "progressive" causes, engagement with and criticism of Israel is seen as the way to keep Jews in their camp involved. As Rabbi Sarah Chandler, another leader in the nonestablishment sector, states: "My Israel activism is not primarily coming from a place of Zionism; it is coming from a place of caring about modern liberal Jews' ability to stay connected to Jewish life." She adds, if Israeli policies go unchallenged "that type of attitude undermines the ability of people in my age cohort not only to have a relationship with Israel, but to have a relationship with Judaism as a whole."

Nonestablishment leaders also have a complex relationship with the Jewish people. Whereas their establishment peers engage in protective activities to rally support for Israel, raise funds for vulnerable Jews around the world, and address communal needs by supporting Federation campaigns, the nonestablishment leaders understand peoplehood in very different terms. For them peoplehood is a celebration of Diaspora cultures, including, implicitly or explicitly, a rejection of Israel's centrality. Especially for those young Jewish leaders in the largest Jewish communities, the American Jewish culture with which they identify is rich, diverse, and inclusive. For them, Jewish ethnicity is not anathema. Quite the contrary, they feel a strong attachment to their own Jewishness and perceive it in cultural, rather than tribal, terms. They see Jewish ethnicity as a context for building community and searching for meaning, rather than as a value in itself or as a necessary bond for self-defense.

Especially for those young Jewish leaders in the largest Jewish communities, the American Jewish culture with which they identify is rich, diverse, and inclusive.

Younger leaders embrace the particulars of Jewish culture, seeking out Jewish music, books, foods, comedy, and other cultural performances, as well as family styles and religious rituals as the primary expression of their ethnicity. They also revel in sharing these cultural experiences with their non-Jewish friends and reject the types of boundaries that would separate them from those friends.

These views, in turn, are related to their experiences of being Jews in America. Particularly in interviews, young nonestablishment leaders scoffed at the "circle-the-wagons" approach to Jewish life. They do not feel threatened by anti-Semitism, which few have experienced. They also have enjoyed close contacts, including romantic relationships, with non-Jews and prefer to avoid us-them distinctions. For this reason, they claim a fair amount of indifference to intermarriage, and instead want to focus on making Jewish life meaningful, including for their non-Jewish friends, who attend all kinds of Jewish events.

Depending on where they situate themselves on these types of questions, young Jewish leaders hold strong views on the current configuration of the organized Jewish community and the need for new ways of organizing. Not surprisingly, those leaders who are involved with conventional Jewish organizations tend to harbor positive views of them. The nonestablishment types are quite critical of key organizations—Federations, conventional synagogues and agencies engaging in "protective" activities. They are critical both of the agendas pursued by these institutions and of the way they communicate, citing the allegedly closed cultures that do not welcome diversity and leave little room for younger Jews to have a say.

These nonestablishment leaders also are critical of the values of the mainstream organizations, with their emphasis on survivalist or protective issues, and their lack of openness to matters of meaning, cultural exploration, and options for personal expressiveness.

INFLUENCES THAT HAVE SHAPED THESE LEADERS

Educational and Denominational Factors

To understand some of the formative influences that have shaped the outlooks of Jewish leaders in their 20's and 30's, the research team inquired about specific factors in their backgrounds as Jews, as well as broader social trends that have affected their age cohort. Regarding the former set of influences, we asked leaders for information about their parents' participation in Jewish life and their own Jewish educational experiences and religious upbringing. In all of these areas, younger Jewish leaders are considerably different from their Jewish age peers.

Take the matter of parental participation in Jewish life (Table 7). In comparison to older leaders, higher percentages of younger Jewish leaders in almost every category report that when they were growing up, their parents attended synagogue twice a month or more. Those reported rates of parental synagogue attendance (in the vicinity of one-third or higher) exceed adult participation rates for the Jewish community at large. Interestingly, in all categories of leadership, younger Jewish leaders attend synagogue more frequently than did their parents.

Even more telling are the rates at which the parents of younger Jewish leaders played leadership roles in the Jewish community. The parents of about one-fifth of younger Jewish leaders were communal professionals, and over 60 percent of the leaders' parents themselves assumed an active role in Jewish life. A survey of all Jewish twenty- and thirty-year-olds would not find comparable rates of parental Jewish engagement. For the majority of younger Jewish leaders, the apple did not fall far from the tree.

When we turn to the educational experiences of younger leaders, their exposure to Jewish education is disproportionate to the rest of their peers. Over one-third of younger leaders attended day schools, a figure that rises to 40 percent for the young nonestablishment leaders. This datum is even more striking when we note that only between 10 percent and 11 percent of the leaders were raised Orthodox (Table 9), which suggests that those young leaders raised in non-Orthodox homes disproportionately attended day schools. We might surmise that day school education was one factor that gave these younger leaders the self-confidence to assume leadership roles. The same may be said for other forms of Jewish education: The rates of participation by these leaders in Jewish summer camps, youth movements, Hillel, and other forms of Jewish education are extraordinarily high, suggesting that many of the young leaders were groomed rather than having bloomed on their own.

Over one-third of younger leaders attended day schools, a figure that rises to 40 percent for the young nonestablishment leaders.

Comparing older with younger leaders, we see perceptible increases in Jewish socialization and education among the latter in their childhood and adolescent years. As children, higher percentages of younger leaders attended religious services in the company of their parents than did older leaders. In addition, younger leaders (of all types) were far more likely than their older counterparts to have participated in Jewish educational experiences such as day school, camp, youth groups, and Hillel.

At the same time, in contrast with the age-related patterns for socialization and education, we find that social segregation from non-Jews (a standard barometer in the assessment of group cohesiveness and distinctiveness) operates in the other direction. However we measure close ties with Jews and non-Jews, the young nonestablishment leaders are more integrated and less segregated than older establishment leaders. The differences may be small, but they all fall in the same direction. As we move from older to younger, from establishment to nonestablishment, higher percentages of respondents report having non-Jewish parents, high school friends, and romantic partners.

In the Jewish population at large, those who are more socially segregated from non-Jews also report having had more extensive and intensive Jewish educational experiences. Here, perhaps

Table 7: Jewish Socialization, Education, and Integration of Jewish Leaders (by percent)

	Young Nonestablishment	Older Nonestablishment	Young, Mixed	Older, Mixed	Young Establishment	Older Establishment
Jewish Socialization						
Attended services 2 or more times a month						
Mother	36	25	31	27	38	23
Father	35	30	34	32	38	29
Self	42	39	37	42	44	36
Parents were communal professionals	24	10	20	11	20	6
Parents active in Jewish life	63	56	61	60	64	55
Parents lit Shabbat candles	67	63	64	67	66	61
Participated in forms of Jewish education						
Day school	40	21	34	21	38	17
Jewish youth group	69	71	67	71	72	68
Jewish camp	71	68	70	65	71	57
Hillel	80	51	72	52	74	46
Worked as a Jewish educator	70	67	69	61	65	46
Social integration						
Both parents Jewish	89	95	89	94	89	95
High school friends mostly Jewish	52	68	52	69	52	70
Had a romantic relationship with a non-Jew	70	67	68	59	57	58

paradoxically, younger leaders of all kinds, in comparison with their elders, report higher levels of socialization and education, but lower levels of social segregation. *One implication of this finding is that day school education and, more generally, Jewish educational experiences have not led to social segregation among young Jewish leaders.* Products of intensive Jewish educational programs eventually do interact with non-Jews.

Higher levels of social integration (as measured by the number of non-Jewish intimates) by younger leaders correlate with their attitudes toward various aspects of Jewish collectivity. Younger nonestablishment leaders who have more non-Jewish intimates, not surprisingly, are less concerned with boundary issues in Jewish life, more open to intermarriage, and less preoccupied with protective types of Jewish activities.

We find similar age-linked patterns with respect to long-term study (or work) in Israel (Table 8). Almost *all* Jewish leaders, young and old, nonestablishment and establishment, have spent time in Israel (from 92 percent to 96 percent), about two-and-a-half times the rate for all American Jews having been to Israel. Birthright Israel contributed to Israel visits, although its presence is limited to those under 40 in all three sectors: 15 percent of the established younger leaders, 22 percent of the mixed, and 21 percent of the nonestablishment leaders under 40 went on a Birthright trip.

Table 8: Time Spent in Israel (by percent)

	Have you ever been to Israel?			
	Yes, I have spent four or more months studying or working there.	Yes, but I have NOT spent four or more months in a single visit.	No, I have never been there.	Total
Younger Nonestablishment	56	40	4	100%
Older Nonestablishment	46	46	8	100%
Younger Mixed	56	38	6	100%
Older Mixed	42	53	6	100%
Younger Establishment	55	37	8	100%
Older Establishment	30	62	8	100%

Table 9: Levels of Jewish Educational Experiences (by percent)

	Young Nonestablishment	Older Nonestablishment	Young, Mixed	Older, Mixed	Young Establishment	Older Establishment
Very high	31	13	25	15	28	10
High	32	30	32	28	33	28
Moderate	20	28	20	26	20	24
Low	17	29	23	31	19	38
Total	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

More remarkable are the large number of leaders who have spent time in an Israel-based program lasting four months or longer, such as a university, *yeshiva* for males or *midrasha* for females, or one of the many types of options under the umbrella of the Masa Israel Journey program. About 56 percent of younger Jewish leaders of all types have participated in such long-term programs. In contrast, just about half as many (30 percent) of older establishment leaders have spent as much time in Israel on a single visit.

Time spent in Israel, along with Jewish educational experiences in the United States, has had an impact on the levels of Hebrew competence claimed by leaders. More than twice the percentage of younger establishment and nonestablishment leaders describe their competence in Hebrew as "good" or "excellent" than do older establishment leaders (48 percent vs. 21 percent). Similar self-ratings characterize leaders when they are asked to assess their ability to interpret a sacred text in the original Hebrew. Among younger nonestablishment leaders, 48 percent rated themselves as "good" or "excellent," while only a quarter of older establishment leaders assessed their own skill levels this high.

Combining several Jewish educational factors—attendance at day school, camp, youth group, Hillel, Jewish studies courses, Israel study programs, etc.—we created an overall index ranging from "Very high" to "Low" (Table 8) in order to determine how those in each category of leadership ranked. Most striking were the contrasts between younger nonestablishment leaders and older establishment ones. Among the former, nearly one-third had a very high level of Jewish educational attainment, and only 17 percent had a low level. For the older establishment leaders, by contrast, the numbers are essentially reversed: One-tenth received very high levels of Jewish education while over one-third were exposed to only low levels of Jewish education. By every measure, the extent of Jewish education grows from old to young. (Young establishment leaders also report high levels of Jewish education.)

Several observations flow from these patterns. First, Jewish educational options have expanded significantly in the United States over the past two decades, providing new kinds of opportunities to benefit younger Jews than had been available to their elders. Younger leaders, particularly, have benefited greatly from these communal investments. Indeed, one way to measure the impact of significant communal funds directed to Jewish education in the wake of the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey (as part of the so-called Continuity Campaigns) is to note just how many younger Jewish leaders were beneficiaries of those investments. *Looking at the leaders who have emerged from those programs may offer philanthropists and Federations a measure of satisfaction that their money has helped nurture a new generation of leaders. In turn, young leaders themselves might reflect on the extent to which they are indebted to those funders for offering them rich Jewish options.* Second, *a well-rounded Jewish education is increasingly becoming a functional prerequisite for assuming Jewish leadership positions—not yet for all, but for the preponderant majority*. We may speculate on the consequences of this new reality. Perhaps, the improved and multipronged forms of Jewish education to which younger Jewish leaders were exposed are driving their inclination to foster high-caliber educational and cultural programming for their peers. Their standards tend to be higher than those of their elders. The positive side of this development is a rising bar of expectations, which can only benefit American Jewish religious and cultural life. The negative side is that a large gap may be opening between the well-educated Jewish leadership and the more poorly educated Jewish rank-and-file among their age peers.

… a large gap may be opening between the well-educated Jewish leadership and the more poorly educated Jewish rank-and-file among their age peers.

As we consider the Jewish influences shaping leaders, a word is in order about denominational affiliation. Shifts in denominational identity from childhood to the present—and how these shifts vary among establishment and nonestablishment leaders—tell us much about changing patterns of affiliation. To begin with, the distribution of denominations in which Jewish leaders were raised was not at all proportionate to the relative popularity of each religious movement in the wider Jewish community. Among all kinds of leaders, the plurality was raised in Conservative Judaism, while far smaller percentages (sometimes half the number) claim they were raised in the Reform movement (Table 9). This is surprising considering that Reform has been the largest of the movements for at least two decades.

When asked about their current denominational identification (Table 10), leaders of all stripes tend to have shifted their allegiances from the movement in which they were raised. Comparing childhood with current patterns of denominational identity, we find that establishment Jews maintain or move toward affiliation with the Conservative or Orthodox movements, whereas among younger nonestablishment leaders, Orthodoxy and "post-denominational" identity are increasingly attractive, even as the nonestablishment leaders are abandoning the Conservative label. Among younger nonestablishment leaders, two-thirds of those raised Reform shift affiliation as adults.

Table 10: In Which Denomination Were Leaders Raised? (by percent)

	Young Nonestablishment	Older Nonestablishment	Young, Mixed	Older, Mixed	Young Establishment	Older Establishment
Orthodox	11	13	9	13	12	14
Conservative	46	42	41	49	44	49
Reform	27	25	27	21	28	22
Reconstructionist	2	1	3	1	0	1
Postdenominational	2	1	3	0	2	0
Other Jewish	10	15	13	12	10	11
Not Jewish	2	4	4	4	5	4
Total	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Table 11: Current Denominational Identities (by percent)

	Young Nonestablishment	Older Nonestablishment	Young, Mixed	Older, Mixed	Young Establishment	Older Establishment
Orthodox	9	11	15	10	20	10
Conservative	21	30	29	44	40	53
Reform	9	10	17	20	19	23
Reconstructionist	6	10	4	6	5	5
Postdenominational	35	23	18	13	6	5
Other Jewish	20	16	17	7	10	3.8
Total	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

While 91 percent of the older establishment leaders identify with a denomination, about half that number (45 percent) of the younger nonestablishment leaders affiliate with any religious movement. For the older establishment leaders, denominational allegiance is a prevalent, if not necessary, social identification. For the younger nonestablishment leaders, it is an option, but clearly not compelling. None of this should surprise us. Research on the allegiances of younger Christians indicates great fluidity and transient identification with the mainstream Protestant movements. Similar patterns of change are at work among their Jewish counterparts. *Judging from the dramatic shifts in allegiance among younger leaders, especially in the nonestablishment category, we may observe that American Judaism is undergoing a significant reconfiguration of denominational identification.*

Leadership Training Programs

The past decades have seen substantial attention and resources devoted to advancing the notion that a vibrant American Jewish future depends on empowering new, primarily young, individual Jewish leaders and innovators to reshape Jewish life in accordance with the needs of their communities and of the times. Forty years ago, one would have been hard-pressed to speak of a field of Jewish leadership development transcending institutions and denominations. Leadership development, such as it was, was defined and tracked by career area, denomination, and institution. Movement-specific seminaries ordained rabbis and invested cantors to work in the synagogues of the sponsoring denomination. Teachers' colleges trained educators to work in Jewish schools. Graduate programs in social work and Jewish communal service prepared professionals for employment by Federations of Jewish Philanthropy and the agencies they support. Jewish civic organizations independently ran their own donor-development, volunteer-engagement, and continuing professional education programs. Even for children and teenagers, initiatives in youth leadership were specific to the religious and Zionist movements, and even summer camp-specific.

Contrast this with the present state of affairs. Today, neither the seminaries nor the graduate programs in Jewish education and nonprofit management have monopolies on the professional training of their students. Through programs such as the Schusterman Rabbinical Fellowship Program, the Wexner Graduate Fellowship, and the now defunct Professional Leaders Project large numbers of those studying toward Jewish sector professional degrees are also receiving their professional socialization through independent leadership development programs, alongside colleagues from other seminaries and graduate schools. Early and mid-career professionals can continue this type of transinstitutional, transdenominational leadership development in programs like the Center for Leadership Initiatives' Tzimtzum program, Jewish Funds for Justice's Selah initiative, and (until recently) Synagogue Transformation and Renewal's Professional Education for Excellence in Rabbis program (STAR PEER). Volunteer activists and donors take part in similar programs such as Reboot, Grand Street, ROI, and the Wexner Heritage Program, all of which are independent of the particular Jewish organizations in which their participants are exercising their leadership. Teenagers and college students are being cultivated as future

leaders by nondenominational foundation-based programs such as the Bronfman Youth Fellowships in Israel, the Dorot Fellowship in Israel, AVI CHAI's Cornerstone Program for camp counselors, and the Rose Youth Foundation in Denver. In addition, activists, leaders, and social entrepreneurs can find support to create new initiatives and institutions through change-cultivation programs with names like Joshua Venture, Bikkurim, PresenTense, and Jumpstart.

In short, a new institutional field that did not exist in the 1970s is now flourishing. Its hallmark is the cultivation of individual leadership and innovation through non-degree-granting programs that complement or supplement the professional training offered by seminaries and graduate schools. No umbrella organization or professional association oversees Jewish leadership and change initiatives. And the culture of these programs is designed to foster trans-denominational partnerships, rather than rivalry. Professionals involved in the various ventures intuitively recognize one another as engaged in a common enterprise and easily identify a similar set of names when asked to list other players in the field. Programs tend to be organized and funded along similar lines, as initiatives of independent Jewish foundations or as the foundations themselves (i.e., as operating foundations).

Their work usually shares common structural elements. Typically, a committee applies stringent admissions criteria to select among individual applicants, who are grouped into cohorts and provided with retreat-based learning and networking opportunities for a specified period, and then cultivated afterward through alumni engagement efforts. The programs often look to the same literatures and vocabularies to conceptualize their work. They draw on overlapping sets of consultants and researchers to aid them. The programs also regularly select many of the same recipients (although not necessarily at the same stage in the recipients' career lifecycles.) Additionally, their professionals interact with one another formally and informally in a variety of Jewish communal gatherings.

Contrary to the assumptions of the "young Jewish leadership" field itself, the largest, most significant, and most far-reaching innovation of the past three decades has neither been driven by youth nor been associated with the enhancement of individual talents and capabilities. Rather, it has involved the creation of a new institutional mechanism for defining and accomplishing the work of the American Jewish community. This new mechanism is the private philanthropic foundation. Its genesis can be traced (in addition to its roots in the U.S. tax code) to an intergenerational partnership between philanthropists born before World War II together with baby-boomer and Generation X Jewish communal professionals who provide leadership training for twenty- and thirty-year-olds.

The creation of the Jewish foundation sector has been and remains a potent agent for communal change. It has revolutionized the American Jewish polity, transforming it from one built around centralized and communally governed philanthropy into one built around multiple independent power centers with few, if any, formal bonds of accountability toward one another. In exchanging the checks and balances of the Federation system for the flexibility and speed of the independently operating private organization, the foundations have seized the agenda-setting power once wielded by the Federations. Whether we are speaking of the growth of day schools, the prioritization of Israel experience travel, or any number of other major communal changes since the 1980s, we can see the investment priorities of private foundations fundamentally shaping the character of American Jewish life. This is true of Jewish leadership training as well. The foundation sector has built the field, enshrined in it the counterculture's ethos of pluralism, created structural forces that undermine tendencies toward denominationalism and isolation into separate silos, and, in the process, defined an entire American Jewish conversation about youth. Needless to say, a combination of other factors within American society more broadly and internal to Jewish life, specifically, have abetted these changes; still we ought not underestimate the impact of foundations as major drivers of the Jewish communal agenda.

The conversation sparked by foundations teaches us something important, and quite unexpected. If we consider the personal capacities commonly understood to be central to the cultivation of leadership and innovation—vision, risk, change, and effectiveness—we can see that these capacities are also equally viable as descriptors of the organizational strengths of independent foundations. The foundation world has created a model of personal leadership in its own image.

No doubt, there are problems with this enterprise. Foremost among them, the celebration of youth and of novelty distracts attention from the alternative model for thinking about

generation and innovation that the foundations themselves embody. Bringing together professionals and lay people who represent four generations, the foundations have established a model of innovation that transcends the rhetorical dichotomies of young versus old, lay versus professional, and entrepreneurial versus establishment. The reality that they embody is far more complex, far richer, and far more generative than the communal conversation that they have helped create.

Bringing together professionals and lay people who represent four generations, the foundations have established a model of innovation that transcends the rhetorical dichotomies of young versus old, lay versus professional, and entrepreneurial versus establishment.

Through their lavish funding of leadership training programs, foundations have also shielded themselves from the kind of stinging criticism directed by nonestablishment leaders at established organizations (noted above). One would be hard put to find a serious critique of the culture of any one foundation, let alone an analysis of the successes and failures of these foundations collectively and their leadership training programs. The foundations have been exempt from the very sort of criticism they encourage young people to level at "establishment" institutions. (Members of the research team have not been unmindful of their own complex relationships to these programs. This project, after all, has been conducted under the auspices of a foundation, and every member of the research team has been a participant in leadership training programs as a fellow and/or as a teacher.)

In case there is any doubt about the reach of the leadership training programs, we note in Table 11 the average number of such programs in which the leaders in our sample have participated. If leaders over the age of 40 commonly have participated in one leadership training program, younger leaders have benefited from more opportunities, with the nonestablishment types averaging 2.2 programs. These programs not only impart skills, knowledge, and motivation. They also serve to integrate their participants into social networks of others in the "leadership class" who share ideas and ways of approaching Jewish issues.

Table 12: Participation in Leadership Programs

	Number of leadership programs experienced
Younger Nonestablishment	2.2
Older Nonestablishment	1.1
Younger Mixed	1.9
Older Mixed	1.3
Younger Establishment	1.6
Older Establishment	1.0

The Internet

No discussion of Jews in their 20's and 30's can ignore the powerful impact of the Internet during their formative years and as their medium for communication. The "viral" nature of media on the Internet and the ability of people to share information quickly and cheaply now make it possible for Jews to announce programs and organize gatherings at no cost, thus facilitating the growth of local start-ups, even as the Internet also creates the option for Jews to engage in a global Jewish conversation.

The vitality of this new forum means that information is exchanged and received in constantly changing ways. Moving from a television commercial to a YouTube video does not alter the content, but it does change the context dramatically. The Internet, therefore, is not just a better version of a letters to the editor column or an online version of a call-in show. It means that those organizations that, in previous generations, had claimed to be the "central address" or represent the "voice" of American Jews no longer do so with the same power and dominance they once did. The openness and ease-of-access of the Internet have altered the dynamics of Jewish communal life by changing the ways in which information circulates and empowering new people and organizations to shape what that information means.

Blogs add yet another dimension, offering a very inexpensive, easy-to-update platform for posting information. Group blogs like Jewschool, Jewcy, and Jewlicious are among several platforms offering voice to a stable of writers, while some individuals, such as the blogger who calls himself Frumsatire, post their own blogs to an attentive audience of readers. On top of this, various organizations offer commentary through their own blogs, and many traditional news outlets, such as the *Jerusalem Post* and the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, embed blogs in their websites.

All of these sites contribute to a lively conversation taking place within the American Jewish community, largely outside of the establishment organizations, illustrating just one way in which the Internet has opened up a whole new arena for communal engagement, debate, and organizing.

The Internet has given younger and more marginal voices a platform for speaking, broadcasting, organizing, and creating their own communities.

The virtual sector has shifted the terms and structures of Jewish communal debate while also expanding the chorus of voices contributing to that debate. As a venue for conversation and engagement in which practically anyone can engage, the Jewish virtual sector has shifted the balance of communal influence and power from the relatively few establishment organizations to a more broadly diffuse aggregation of websites and blogs. Widely-read blog posts like those exposing sexual abuse in a few Orthodox *yeshivot* or popular viral videos like the one promoting the Great Schlep during the 2008 presidential campaign are examples of just how powerful the virtual sector is and how it has reshaped the communal conversation in ways previously unimaginable.

Given the prominence of information distribution online over the more traditional Jewish communal media such as Federation-sponsored newspapers, it is clear that the Internet has redefined the Jewish public and private sectors. It is a relatively independent sphere for Jewish communal engagement and involvement, in which traditional organizations vie for positions of leadership with younger ones, where newer voices occupy central positions within the overall landscape of Jewish websites, and where influence s manifested by the ability to contribute to and shape the direction of the Jewish communal conversation.

The Internet makes possible new interventions in Jewish communal life and also models a different structure of Jewish life—decentralized, multidimensional, diverse, and offering a different sensibility about what constitutes community from that of established organizations. Blogs are but a manifestation of this larger tendency.

Some have argued that these uncoordinated relationships make for a healthier, more decentralized conversation, and the lack of coordination is part of what lends the network its overall dynamism. This looseness has been a crucial factor in the emergence of new leadership within it.

Whereas the "Jewish community" used to be shorthand for the organizations that claimed to represent the concerns and needs of Jews, the map of the Jewish Internet landscape today clearly captures a much more variegated and diverse community, sustained across social divisions. The Internet has given younger and more marginal voices a platform for speaking, broadcasting, organizing, and creating their own communities, while still participating in larger communal conversations. The emergence of online technologies has opened up the possibilities for new forms and formulations of leadership, and these voices are spurring the Jewish virtual sector to vie for prominence with its public and private counterparts. The leaders are those who have most successfully leveraged the new technology on both of those planes, and who, more importantly, continue to activate their social networks both online and off.

In short, both establishment and nonestablishment leaders have come to rely heavily upon the Internet as a tool for communication and exercising influence.

Though in some important ways subversive of established organizations, the Internet also offers those institutions a new set of platforms to promote their messages and recruit followers. Websites and Internet communications strategies are integral to every organization's ability to reach out to members and effect change in their communities. The Internet is not replacing older modes of community engagement, but it has become integral to the ability of those older models to adapt to Jewish life in the twenty-first century. It is also central to the efforts of nonestablishment leaders to spread their message, mobilize followers, and broadcast the alternatives they offer. In short, both establishment and nonestablishment leaders have come to rely heavily upon the Internet as a tool for communication and exercising influence.

Table 13. Importance of Jewish Commitments to Nonestablishment Leaders by Family Status

Jewish Commitments	Single	Married without Children	Married with Toddlers	Married with School-aged Children
Committed to Organized Jewish Community	34.38	37.22	36.40	40.00
Survivalist Orientation	28.87	31.84	28.74	34.70
Progressive/Social Justice	49.46	48.41	46.78	41.78
Expressive	49.87	51.42	58.76	60.34
Pro In-marriage	55.58	57.73	64.46	70.24
Attached to Israel	72.90	77.78	79.57	83.73
Day School Proponent	53.67	55.84	62.73	65.41

Note: These figures represent intensity of commitment on a scale of 1 to 100, with the higher figures indicating greater importance attached to an item. The survivalist orientation refers to a preoccupation with the Holocaust, anti-Semitism, in-marriage, and the defense of Israel. The progressive category includes social justice, environmental, gender, and Israel pro-peace concerns. And the expressive category encompasses valuing text study, exploration of meaning, Jewish education, spirituality, and prayer.

Demographic Traits

A number of demographic traits correlate with the attitudes of younger Jewish leaders. When we correlate how intensely leaders are moved by Jewish commitments with their age, we find a perceptible but modest increase in Jewish protective commitments as we move from younger to older age cohorts. Those leaders under the age of 29 are the least likely to register strong anxieties about anti-Semitism, the defense of Israel, and intermarriage, while those 30 to 39 register higher levels of concern. The trajectory of concern rises with each ten-year age cohort. Conversely, preoccupations with social justice, environmental causes, and dovish views on Israel wane from one age cohort to the next. Even among the nonestablishment leaders, this pattern holds true. This is not to say that all or even most differences in outlook wash away with age, but rather that younger leaders gravitate a bit closer to their elders as they grow older.

The same patterns are evident when we account for family status (see Table 13). Younger leaders who are single tend to take positions at greater variance from their older counterparts with far more intensity than do young leaders with children, let alone those with school-aged children. The gaps are largest around continuity issues, where singles are less invested, and progressive causes, where singles are more invested than married leaders with children. Within the sector of nonestablishment leaders the same patterns obtain: Jewish protective concerns increase among those with children, and commitments to social justice causes wane a bit.

Along with age and family status, two traits particularly set apart the protective types from those more concerned with progressive causes—generation in America and adherence to Orthodox Judaism. In our study of patterns in Los Angeles, a high proportion of leaders who were involved in establishment organizations and had a survivalist posture vis-à-vis Israel, anti-Semitism, and assimilation were immigrants or children of immigrants, hailing from Iran, Israel, South Africa, and England. One leader who emigrated from Iran with his parents when he was a child commented that he was kept up at night worrying about "whether or not my grandkids will be Jewish." His "biggest fear is the security of Israel and the strength and vitality of the Jewish community in Los Angeles." Another leader whose parents were from Israel was concerned about the security of the Jewish people in Israel and elsewhere. About the Holocaust, he said, "We can't just think that it won't ever happen again."

Orthodox Jews form still a second group of leaders who tend to have a more survivalist orientation. True, some Modern Orthodox leaders are involved in social justice groups, but as one moves along the Orthodox spectrum from modern to centrist to *Haredi*, protective impulses strengthen considerably. Orthodox outreach programs tend to stress discussions about Israel, the connections between the Jewish people in many lands, and the responsibility of Jews to one another. For a variety of practical reasons, our survey was not completed by Orthodox Jews beyond the Modern subgroup, and in that sense, the sample underrepresents the protective establishment subpopulation.

Finally, socioeconomic status also correlates strongly to identification with nonestablishment versus establishment organizations. This became especially evident as we conducted our qualitative research and observed gatherings of different organizations. Young Jews involved with establishment and nonestablishment organizations tend to cluster in different occupations. Through social and professional networks, they are targeted for particular organizations because of their occupation, and their participation in those organizations helps them to accrue social capital and to advance in pursuit of their professional goals. The aesthetic or "style" differences between organizations correlate to the socioeconomic and occupational traits of leaders and participants. These differences are not surprising, given correlations noted by sociologists more generally between socioeconomic status/occupation and cultural practices/ideology. Social and cultural capital is crucial to young Jews' communal engagements and the perpetuation of establishment and nonestablishment spheres.

Commenting on the volunteer leaders of establishment organizations she met, one researcher on the team noted their tendency to cluster in the for-profit fields of law, business, and finance. This is so for the leaders of Friends of the IDF, AIPAC, Guardians (a senior citizens home), and, of course, the professional divisions of Federations, such as the Legal and Real Estate Divisions. By contrast, most of the lay leaders she encountered in nonestablishment organizations are public interest lawyers, educators, artists, professionals in other Jewish organizations, and other nonprofit workers. A former professional at the Progressive Jewish Alliance described the lay leaders there as people who were involved in civil rights movements, including "a lot of lawyers and a lot of professors." The Reboot website describes its participants as "an eclectic and creative mix of people from the literature, entertainment, media, technology, politics, social action and academic realms."

Related to the occupational difference are differences in economic means. This is how a leader of Friends of the IDF described the target group for his events: "They like going out to night clubs, to restaurants, and socializing. They are also either very successful in business or very upwardly mobile." Similarly, a lay leader of the Guardians, which supports a senior citizen home, described his group as "very Hillcrest, very Brentwood Country Club," naming two prestigious and heavily Jewish country clubs in West Los Angeles. He said, "We see a lot of the old money. A lot of people get involved because their parents were involved." Even so, he said, many of the most active leaders are not from "old money," but are "upwardly mobile … young Jewish professionals."

Establishment organizations plan events with such a crowd in mind, finding mansions or a trendy club as the venue, serving the highest quality cocktails and hors d'oeuvres, and, offering valet parking. One Federation's Real Estate and Construction Division featured a "See and Be Scene Young Leadership Cocktail Party" at an art gallery. An AJC professional said that some young participants are attracted to "the upper-class nature of the receptions." Some people, she said, "want to be in the room with … elegant and important people and drink champagne."

In contrast, when leaders of nonestablishment groups talk about the aesthetics of their events, words like "edgy" and "provocative" come up more often than "sophisticated" and "glamorous." "If your idea of being Jewish is going to the big … club events that are put on by the Federation and the Israeli Consulate, …that's not necessarily who we're reaching. We're reaching a very different crowd," observed a young leader of a nonestablishment organization. It is quite apparent that the venue of events, programs, even the newsletters of establishment versus nonestablishment groups differ aesthetically and are designed to appeal to different socioeconomic groups.

The purpose of noting these demographic differences is not to suggest that as young leaders grow older, form families, and become more financially secure, they will necessarily change their views. It certainly is not our intention to dismiss the views of the leaders we have studied as "merely" a passing stage. Rather, it is to add further nuances to an already complex account. This report has argued throughout that younger Jewish leaders do not hold monolithic views, and that substantial differences separate them from one another and from older Jewish leaders. In correlating demographic features to outlook, we further complicate the story. Some young leaders may well modify their current views as their circumstances change; others probably will not.

The larger question, as we conclude this report, is how to assess the relative significance of the three sectors in which younger leaders operate—the establishment, the nonestablishment, and those involved in a mix of the two.

We have already noted the extent of social crossover between these groupings: Rather than finding fixed and impervious boundaries separating the establishment from the nonestablishment sectors, we noted how easily individuals move fluidly between the two. Yet with all this movement, the question still remains: Which set of ideas and values is capturing the imagination of young Jewish leaders? Establishment leaders tend to be far more concerned about protective issues—anti-Semitism, the security of Israel, Jewish continuity, Jewish communal services, and intermarriage; nonestablishment types are far more interested in what they regard as progressive causes, such as the environment, social justice for all, aid for the downtrodden, and pro-peace approaches in the Middle East, as well as creating opportunities for expressive encounters at cultural events, religious services, and study sessions. The former are also far more positively inclined to the structures and approaches of mainstream organizations, while the latter seek alternatives, focus mainly on local, rather than national or international Jewish concerns, and seek a far more open, pluralistic, and flexible set of Jewish options than are currently offered by the established organizations.

The strength of the nonestablishment sector is rooted in its being in sync with large swathes of the American Jewish population, especially the nonaffiliated sector. It has been given enormous support and encouragement by well-endowed foundations that have worked to nurture nonestablished leaders and in the process have promoted their perspectives. The nonestablished sector is associated with innovation and start-ups, thereby symbolizing the new and original, even if many of its forms are generic to the current youth culture. And to a great extent, the nonestablishment sector dominates the youth cultural scene, which lends it great reach and authority.

The establishment sector of young Jewish leaders is not lacking in its own resources. A substantial amount of its energy derives from recent immigrants or children of immigrants who resonate to protective themes, as do Orthodox Jews and *baalei teshuva* (newly Orthodox Jews), who collectively constitute a growing proportion of the engaged American Jewish populace. The established sector also has the benefit of money and connections. On balance, those who gravitate to roles as lay leaders in the established organizations are professionals and successful business people who enjoy the networking and mentoring offered by mainstream organizations. The established organizations seem to benefit from socio-demographic trends: As younger Jewish leaders grow older, form families, and rise up the socioeconomic ladder, some tend to move more in the direction of the established causes and institutions. Finally, younger leaders in the establishment sector have already brought some of the newer techniques of communication and more flexible ways of decision-making into the structures of mainstream organizations, thereby rendering those agencies more competitive.

The jury is still out. Members of the research team envision different scenarios for the future, with some seeing the nonestablishment leaders as the trendsetters who are reshaping the culture for their peers, and others imagining a future in which nonestablishment and establishment agencies will coexist and fructify one another, where the movement of ideas and personnel will cross-fertilize both sectors, and where convergence, rather than schism, is likely. However one comes out on this question, our lively internal debates ought to be replicated in many sectors of the American Jewish community, for the eventual resolution of these questions will have profound implications for the future direction of Jewish communal life in the United States.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

1. The population of Jews in the 20's and 30's, and especially their leaders, hold diverse views, some in sync with past conceptions of Jewish life and priorities, others at variance with them. For the foreseeable future, establishment and nonestablishment institutions will likely coexist. This mix of programs and outlooks is creating a new communal reality. It seems reasonable to assume that we are watching the American Jewish communal structure change before our eyes. Some organizations are withering and disappearing; others are thriving, and new ones are emerging. These shifts are not caused solely by the actions or inaction of younger Jews, but their preferences are having an impact. The communal system is changing, and all players will have to be mindful that the system we have known since the end of World War II is rapidly reconfiguring. We are living in a dynamic moment, not a time of across-the-board decline.

2. Not only is the map of organized Jewish life changing, but the multiplication of small organizations and programs geared to every conceivable niche population is creating a community lacking a center. Fragmentation and localism are the order of the day. One nonestablishment leader imagined organized Jewish life of the future as looking "like a forest, but a forest of bonsai trees, not a forest of redwoods…. There will be many small trees that are all separate entities serving separate populations with very small ecosystems that support them." This formulation is dramatic, but probably overstated. It is not at all clear that large institutions will disappear and that only localism will prevail. If the reality is otherwise, how will the vast conglomeration of organizations, institutions, programs, and initiatives hold together? And how do we bridge the divide between those who prefer local, face-to-face associations over large organizations, on the one hand, and those who regard national organizations working in tandem as essential to the effective pursuit of Jewish interests and advocacy? These questions point to the need for sustained thinking about Jewish communal life in the emerging new world.

3. It is striking how small a role gender plays in the patterns of leadership we have examined. The one notable exception is that in our sample males constitute a majority (56 percent) of older establishment leaders while some 65 percent of nonestablishment younger leaders are females. The greater involvement of younger women accords with patterns sociologists have noted in recent years. Some have hypothesized that when younger men marry and have children, they will become more involved in Jewish life and the balance of males to females may become more equal. The larger import of our findings, however, is that egalitarian practices in most sectors of the Jewish community have led to significant levels of involvement on the part of women in philanthropic and organizational leadership, especially in the nonestablishment sector.

4. Particularly within the nonestablishment sector, we see evidence of a growing emphasis on Jewish learning and literacy and a desire to nurture religious and/or spiritual growth. There is much to this agenda that is healthy and serves as an important corrective to misplaced priorities in the past. Key institutions such as the national organizations, the denominations, and foundations should consider how to foster these trends as a means to strengthen American Jewish life.

5. To be sure, some of those institutions may take umbrage at the approaches of nonestablishment leaders to Israel. After five decades of relatively strong consensus on Israel, we are witnessing far greater dissensus. As they assess the significance of these changes, organizations and foundations with a protective orientation would do well to attend to the language of discourse about Israel and then determine whether disagreements are actually based in ideology or sensibility. Criticism of Israeli politics is not necessarily identical with hostility to Israeli society. In the nonestablishment sector, which harbors the sharpest critics of Israeli policies, we find large numbers of leaders who have studied in Israel, are fluent in Hebrew, and feel connected to Israeli culture. It remains to be seen whether Jewish organizations can find ways to encourage conversations about Israel that bridge the differences, even as they allow for disagreement.

6. Similarly, challenges arise in regard to peoplehood issues. A substantial population of young leaders retains a protective posture on matters of anti-Semitism, support for Israel, insuring Jewish communal services to the Jewish needy, and connection with Jews abroad. And a significant number of younger leaders are inclined to offer service to non-Jewish populations. Perhaps, it is time to test whether a larger conversation can be launched to define particularistic Jewish missions. What might such missions entail? And how might they be synchronized with the desire of many younger Jews to offer service to nonsectarian causes?

7. Given the range of views about the proper Jewish agenda and how to implement it, how can we best foster serious conversations among all the players, including older and younger leaders, establishment and nonestablishment ones? Too often, communal conversation has tended either to spotlight younger leaders who are invited to share their dissenting views as outsiders or to focus on older leaders who fret about the missteps of the next generation. The more useful way to approach the emerging communal reality is to break down some of the barriers. Our team project intentionally included three researchers from the baby-boomer generation and three under 41, so that we could speak—and argue—across generational lines. Fostering such conversation is not only tactically advantageous; it also acknowledges the diversity of views within generations and sectors of Jewish involvement. We will need honest brokers to mediate among the diverse groups and interests.

8. A number of the large Jewish foundations have assumed a role in training young Jewish leaders. We have noted how influential their leadership programs have been, but have also observed their tendency to favor nonestablishment types over establishment types. If foundations seek to serve as honest brokers and evenhanded change agents rather than as advocates for one type of Jewish leader, they need to reconsider their relationship to establishment leaders. Who, after all, will see to the stability and sustainability of organized Jewish life, if not the established organizations? Moreover, given the diversity of the Jewish population, why not invest in young establishment leaders along with those in the nonestablishment sector?

9. Establishment organizations will have to rethink their governance structures to make room for younger Jewish leaders. The latter find ample opportunities outside the Jewish community and also in the nonestablishment sector to rise rapidly to positions of influence. Establishment organizations tend to place younger people on a slower track, testing them and socializing them into the organizational culture before elevating them to positions of influence. This frustrates many creative young people who have experience taking the initiative in other settings and don't want to "wait their turn." One can acknowledge the virtues of mentoring and grooming as the preferred way in establishment organizations, while also recognizing that time is not working in favor of those organizations.

10. For their part, younger Jewish leaders might reexamine their views of the establishment. For all its weaknesses, it played a major role in educating them. Were it not for the substantial investments of older leaders in Jewish education, in the expansion of formal and informal settings for such education, Jews now in their 20's and 30's would not have acquired the Judaic skills and expertise that serve them so well. They also might reconsider what has been created by the national organizations that so many of them disdain. The Federation system, the Jewish community relations sphere, the old-line social service agencies, and conventional synagogues all have contributed to a rich and self-confident American Jewish culture. Unquestionably, they all have their shortcomings and are in need of reform. Younger leaders who have been the beneficiaries of those institutions might think about how to revamp them rather than to wash their hands of them.

11. The ways young leaders think about the relationship between Jews and non-Jews, their desire to include the latter in programs, and their openness to intermarried Jews suggest a major shift is under way in how Jews think about the boundaries of Jewish life. Indeed, the very notion that there ought to be boundaries may further erode. This trend is likely to deepen the chasm separating the Orthodox from all other types of Jews. For those who care about that divide, serious thought will have to be devoted to bridging those worlds.

12. As new and successful organizations grow, primarily led by young people, what funding structures are available when start-up grants are completed and Federations and foundations lack the resources to offer help? Do we need a new mechanism to ensure an ongoing funding relationship between the start-ups and potential supporters, either locally or nationally?

13. The Internet offers an extraordinary opportunity to link Jews because it can serve as a platform for the dissemination of Jewish ideas and a recruiting vehicle for Jewish causes. Studying patterns of usage, we have found that on the local level, users prefer a single central portal to gain access to local programs and news. Communal leaders should consider developing local hubs in places where such portals do not exist. By contrast, no single portal will work on the national and international level, where users expect far more diversity. The still larger question is how to leverage the Internet to broaden connections among Jews.

14. We have already posed the question of whether younger leaders can be placed on a faster track to exercise influence within the established organizations. But there is also a second question: Can these organizations alter their way of doing business so that the means of communication—"flat" ways of organizing and the absence of hierarchies that characterize the start-up sector—can penetrate the cultures of the establishment organizations? Is there a way to bring the creativity and entrepreneurship of young Jewish leaders into the structures of the mainstream organizations? Established organizations will also have to consider whether they are prepared to support young leaders who care about their core concerns but want to go about furthering those causes in new ways.

15. Our study has implications for understanding the relationship between generations, suggesting that in some important ways young leaders think very differently than do older ones, but in other ways that there is a great deal of generational continuity within sectors: Young leaders involved with mainstream organizations are in sync with their elders; and young people in the nonestablishment sector share a common outlook with their elders in that sector and, to a large extent, with the foundations that have trained them. Rather than conceive of the present shake-up in Jewish communal activities as driven by generational divides, it may be more useful to acknowledge that other fissures have opened, that young leaders themselves are far from monolithic in their views, and that as Nina Bruder, the director of Bikkurim and herself one of those younger leaders, has put it: "The outsiders are really insiders." Most of the young leaders we studied are products of the American Jewish community, even if they have in some instances put their own spin on some of the core values they imbibed. They continue to engage in the same conversation, but are not necessarily replicating the institutional structures in which those conversations took place or arriving at the same conclusions as their elders.

16. Finally, let us not forget that Jewish leaders of all ages and outlooks share a fundamental commitment to strengthening Jewish life. All are trying to improve programs in order to attract more Jews in their 20's and 30's to participate. And all agree that only a minority of the potential market of younger Jews has been reached. It will require the talents of all Jewish leaders to develop the means to draw the majority of young Jews into active Jewish engagement. If nothing else, this is a common cause to which all Jewish leaders can subscribe, even if their solutions differ.

Appendix: The Research Design

A TEAM EFFORT

The research team set out to learn the ways Jewish leaders in their 20's and 30's think about Jewish issues, organize programs for their peers, and are formed. Initially, the greatest challenge we faced was the absence of basic information about the universe we were studying. As no national population study of American Jews has been conducted over the past decade, we lacked up-to-date information on the total numbers of Jews in this age group and the proportions who involve themselves in any form of Jewish activity. There is also no comprehensive directory of programs, initiatives, and organizations addressed to this age population.

The research team was able to remedy the latter problem, but we still lack reliable information about the universe of Jews in their 20's and 30's overall, and those involved in Jewish activities. This project, therefore, makes no claims about either the proportionate weight of younger Jews who participate in Jewish programs or the relative numbers of Jews and Jewish leaders in their 20's and 30's who participate in the programs of establishment organizations versus nonestablishment ones.

Through the efforts of Tali Berkovitch, a graduate student in Jewish Education at New York University, the team was able to compile several long lists: of organizations in which young Jews engage; of gatekeeper organizations that have direct links to and email addresses of the leaders of these organizations; and of names of people in different parts of the country and in different types of organizations who seem to be playing a leadership role.

During the half year before the project fielded a survey, all six members of the research team spoke at length with Jewish leaders. Collectively over the course of the project, team members interviewed at least 250 young Jewish leaders of all kinds in different parts of the country. We interviewed rabbis of all denominations who work with Jews in their 20s and 30's; cultural figures who are producing books, music, recordings, films, and art for this population; founders of social justice organizations, communes, blogs, Internet sites, and independent *minyanim*; and significant numbers of young leaders active in mainstream Jewish organizations as volunteers and as founders of affinity groups for immigrant populations and others with particular traits and common interests. Some team members also attended events run by and for Jews in their 20's and 30's in order to observe the leaders in action.

We then supplemented these types of data with sociological literature on trends within the general American population in this age group and also on the changing ways in which Americans are organizing themselves communally. To offer some context, we drew upon historical literature on changing demography and youth cultures. And to capture regional variations, we were attentive to differences between the scene in the large coastal cities and the so-called heartland, as well as urban versus suburban differences.

Based upon initial interviews and questions that we generated at our various team meetings, the six members of the research group collectively developed a survey instrument. This was circulated to our many lists and contacts, with the request that the recipients spread the instrument to their acquaintances. In time, we also fielded a version of the same survey to the membership lists of five different types of organizations, which yielded more responses from leaders and followers. Quantitative data were also gathered about which Jewish Internet sites are most often visited and serve as key connectors to other sites.

By drawing upon different kinds of data—interviews, field observation, survey responses, and sociological and historical literature—we were able to cross-check our findings and inferences. Working as a team, we met every few months for two-day sessions at which we critiqued one another's work and strove to understand the larger implications of our individual research projects. We also benefitted from the perspectives of three outside consultants. The collected chapters on our research itemized below, and upon which this synthetic report is based, will appear in the form of a book scheduled for publication in 2011.

THE INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH COMPONENTS

Sarah Benor: "Young Jewish Leaders in Los Angeles: Strengthening the Jewish People in Conventional and Unconventional Ways"

Jewish leaders talk about "mainstream" or "establishment" organizations like Federation and American Jewish Committee in contrast to "innovative" or "nonestablishment" ones like Progressive Jewish Alliance and JDub Records. This paper investigates how this distinction is constructed rhetorically and how the young leaders of these organizations differ. Jews involved with establishment groups tend to be in for-profit professions (law, finance, business) and have an upper-class orientation, while those involved with nonestablishment groups tend to be in nonprofit professions (education, arts, government, NGOs) and have an unconventional orientation. Those involved with establishment groups tend to feel a sense of responsibility toward Jews, sometimes from a survivalist perspective, while those involved with nonestablishment groups tend to feel responsibility toward the most needy and reject the survivalist narrative of continuity. At the same time, there is a great deal of overlap between what has been called the "innovation ecosystem" and the Jewish communal establishment. Many leaders are involved in both, and organizations learn from and collaborate with one another. This paper offers recommendations as to how these spheres can continue to thrive and interact in order to engage Jews in their 20's and 30's and ultimately strengthen Jewish life in Los Angeles and around the world.

Steven M. Cohen: "From Jewish People to Jewish Purpose: Establishment Leaders and their Nonestablishment Successors"

This essay reports on the results of an opt-in survey of Jewish leaders throughout the United States. It elicited the participation of leaders of many varieties: young and old, across the religious spectrum (although excluding the more traditional Orthodox), and from organizations regarded as established or mainstream as well as those seen as nonestablished or so-called "innovative." While about 6,000 respondents participated, over 4,000 could qualify as "leaders" by their own testimony.

We found that younger leaders differ from their elders, and that the nonestablishment initiatives in which many of them are involved differ in similar ways from the establishment organizations, which are more characteristic of middle-aged and older Jews. The variations by age and type of organization are interrelated and mutually supportive. Older leaders more often lead establishment organizations, and younger leaders tend toward the nonestablished. At the same time, the differences in attitudes found between older and younger Jews (be they established or nonestablished in involvement) resemble the differences between established and nonestablished leaders (be they older or younger in age). In fact, on many attitudinal dimensions, the most extreme polar positions were occupied by older establishment leaders on the one hand and younger nonestablishment leaders on the other.

Steven M. Cohen: "Protective, Progressive, Expressive: Three Impulses for Innovative Organizing among Young Jews Today"

Not all "innovative" groups are alike. They differ considerably, as this study demonstrates with its in-depth examination of rank-and-file members associated with six innovative groups. Far from exhibiting uniformity, or even near-similarity, the six groups of constituents range in the extent to which they are Jewishly engaged. The groups range, as well, with respect to matters of Jewish survivalism, communalism, and protectivism. In short, not all innovative groups share the typical ethos of innovative leaders; some (two, in particular, in this selective study) exhibit attitudes akin to those shared by mainstream leaders.

Perhaps the most significant contribution of this study is to point out the failure of the prevailing concept of "innovation" in contemporary Jewish life to embrace those who are innovating out of what may be called a "protective" motivation. The major institutions in the "innovative ecosystem" and their funders have clearly recognized innovators in spirituality, learning, and culture—the "expressive" dimension to innovation. And they have identified a wide swath of social justice initiatives—the "progressive" dimension. But, for understandable reasons, they have failed to encompass groups that advance particularistic visions of Jews in the world and have a sense of an embattled and threatened Jewry—those embodying the "protective" dimension. A truly inclusive definition of contemporary innovation among younger adult Jews ought to extend to this dimension as well, even though (or especially because) it stands in political and cultural tension with the explicitly or implicitly progressive forces found within the other areas of Jewish innovation today.

Sylvia Barack Fishman, with **Rachel S. Bernstein** and **Emily Sigalow:** "Reimagining Jewishness: Contemporary Young American Jewish Leaders and Culture Shapers"

Focusing on Jewish culture reveals that younger American Jews frequently embrace the particulars of Jewish culture but reject "us and them" constructions of ethnicity. Jews in their 20's report a strong attachment to Jewish ethnicity, but define Jewish music, food, books, comedy, cultural performances, family styles, and religious rituals as the *primary* expressions of their ethnicity. Their vision is global rather than tribal or even national. Global social justice is for many a burning passion that they take personally. Artistically and intellectually, younger leaders, artists, and entrepreneurs are fascinated by Jewish multiculturalism—expressions of contemporary and historical Jewishness in remote, far-flung corners of the world—and by interactions between Jews and non-Jews.

Ari Y. Kelman: "A Central Address or Decentralized URLs? Mapping the Jewish Virtual Sector"

This essay examines Jewish websites and blogs, paying primary attention to the links between them. What emerges is a detailed accounting of the relative significance of certain sites within the overall Jewish Internet landscape. The essay also surveys two localized networks of Jewish websites: those catering to the San Francisco Bay Area and those catering to Greater Los Angeles. Among the study's key findings are the significance of information-sharing sites, the prominence of sites that cater to diverse audiences of religious and non-religious Jews, the importance of blogs in leveling the online communications landscape, and the preponderance of sites that cater to younger audiences and present a more youthful editorial voice.

Shaul Kelner: "In its Own Image: Independent Philanthropy and the Cultivation of Young Jewish Leadership"

The past 30 years have witnessed the creation of a new institutional field on the American Jewish landscape. Over 50 programs with budgets ranging from the hundreds of thousands to the millions of dollars are now engaged in cultivating individual Jewish leadership and innovation through transinstitutional and transdenominational, non-degree-granting programs that complement or supplement the professional training undertaken by seminaries and graduate schools. Through oral histories, this study traces the emergence and evolution of this field of Jewish leadership and change initiatives (JLCIs). It focuses attention primarily on the field's grounding in the world of private philanthropic foundations, which, it is argued, are the most significant factor shaping both the development of the programs and the way that the intersection of youth, leadership, and change is now being understood, discussed, practiced, developed, and studied within the Jewish not-for-profit sector. Examination of the JLCI field will also shed light on the revolution in Jewish communal philanthropy from the Federation-driven centralized model that dominated in the Cold War era to the foundation-driven decentralized model that prevails today.

Jack Wertheimer: "Mapping the Scene: How Young Jewish Adults Engage with Jewish Life Today"

To understand the roles assumed by Jewish leaders in their 20's and 30's, we first require a map of the programs, organizations, and initiatives available to Jews in this age group who wish to get involved. This essay surveys the three major categories of Jewish programs—those run by established Jewish organizations, by start-up or nonestablishment groups, and by affinity groups. The latter especially are examined because they reflect the various niche populations that are being served—the Orthodox, new immigrants, the GLBT sector, children of intermarried parents, and those attracted by Orthodox outreach programs. Within each category, adults in their 20's and 30's can find

religious, study, social action, cultural, and recreational programs. The range of options available to young Jews differs from place to place and is often a function of the density of population. Those communities with a large number of younger Jews field far more programs than do smaller communities. But cultural factors play a role too in determining the options: the influence and power of local Federations of Jewish Philanthropy, the types of younger Jews attracted by the local economic climate, the diversity of the population, local trends in family formation, and a range of other social considerations. The study contrasts various communities and pays special attention to what is available to younger Jews in the heartland, away from the large coastal Jewish communities.

THE SURVEYS

The research team fielded online surveys to two kinds of populations. One was a questionnaire directed to self-declared Jewish leaders of all ages. The second was a slightly tailored instrument sent to the email lists of five specific organizations to elicit data from both the local leaders and the rank-and-file. The latter helped us develop profiles of the outlooks of people who gravitate to specific types of organizations. In all, 6,773 respondents replied to all or parts of the survey instrument. Of these, 4,466 qualified as "leaders" by their own testimony. Data from these surveys appear in the course of this report. Because this was not a random sample survey, we do not make the claim that our respondents precisely represent the leadership cadre of American Jews; rather, the data are presented to illustrate differences in outlook and characteristics among *types of leaders* who responded to our survey.

We defined establishment organizations as the following:

- Federations
- Jewish Community Centers
- Conventional synagogues
- Human services agencies
- Israel advocacy organizations established by older Jewish leaders to train younger spokespeople.

The nonestablishment organizations consist of:

- Independent *minyanim*
- Social justice groups
- Culturally-oriented endeavors
- Online sites and blogs
- Environmental groups
- Service agencies founded by young people
- Israel-related groups founded by younger leaders

We demarcated these two spheres based on community discourse as reflected in our interviews and press reporting, which tended to draw sharp lines between them.

Some types of organizations did not fit the establishment/nonestablishment classification neatly: philanthropic foundations, religious schools, adult learning initiatives, unspecified national organizations, and unspecified local organizations. Their areas of engagement were those that were not particularly distinguished by older or younger age profiles, nor by much systematic overlap with one sphere or the other, nor by distinctive social attitudes. Some leaders hold leadership positions in either establishment organizations or nonestablishment ones; others hold positions in both types; and a small fraction hold leadership positions exclusively in institutions that do not fall neatly into either camp (Table 14).

Table 14: Distribution of Responding Leaders by Sectors

Leadership classification	Number of cases	Percent
Establishment	1,690	38
Mixed	1,702	38
Nonestablishment	1,074	24
Total	**4,466**	**100**

Based on this process of classification, several patterns emerged: The establishment population consists of people who overwhelmingly hold leadership positions in conventional congregations (as do about two-thirds).

About a quarter of the establishment leaders exercise leadership in Federations, and smaller numbers lead JCCs, human services agencies, and Israel advocacy groups. Beyond these types of agencies that constitute our operational definition of "establishment," these leaders infrequently hold leadership positions in agencies that are not clearly establishment or nonestablishment, such as schools, adult learning initiatives, and miscellaneous organizations.

The nonestablishment category consists of leaders in independent *minyanim*, cultural initiatives, and social justice groups. A very small number of nonestablishment leaders are found leading "pro-Israel/pro-peace" groups.

In our sample, there is a pronounced shift from the establishment to nonestablishment organizations as we move from older to younger age cohorts. Older leaders are heavily concentrated in establishment organizations, while younger ones are heavily weighted to the nonestablishment sector. Similarly, establishment leaders are older, and nonestablishment leaders are much younger. Those in the mixed category are neither much older nor much younger than the average respondents in this leadership sample. To illustrate: Among those in their sixties, half are in establishment organizations, and 14 percent in the nonestablishment sector. Among those in their 20's, the proportions are almost reversed: Just 13 percent are in establishment organizations and 48 percent in nonestablishment ones (Table 15).

Table 15: Age Distribution of Leaders (by percent)

Age	Establishment	Mixed	Nonestablishment	Total
60+	50	36	14	100%
50-59	48	38	15	100%
40-49	41	38	22	100%
30-39	27	39	34	100%
29 and under	13	39	48	100%

Table 16: Demographic Characteristics of Leaders in the Sample (by percent)

	Young Nonestablishment	Old Nonestablishment	Young, Mixed	Old, Mixed	Young Establishment	Older Establishment
Gender						
Male	35	44	37	50	46	56
Female	65	56	63	50	55	44
Married	50	82	56	87	75	90
Incomes						
$100K+	12	36	14	49	27	56
$60-$99K	21	33	27	23	33	24
LT $60K	67	31	60	28	40	20
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
Population Concentration						
New York	32	20	28	19	21	16
Boston	12	10	8	5	4	3
San Francisco	6	4	5	3	6	3
Los Angeles	6	6	6	6	4	4
Outside of major Jewish population centers	37	49	46	57	56	61

Beyond age variations, the two camps exhibit quite different demographic profiles in other ways (Table 16). Younger nonestablishment leaders are mostly women (65 percent), while older establishment leaders are mostly men (56 percent). Gender distributions for all other groups also tilt toward women. In short, the transitions from establishment to nonestablishment and from older to younger leaders are associated with a growing presence of women and a diminished presence of men. Why this should be so is a question requiring exploration. Less surprisingly, far higher percentages of establishment leaders than nonestablishment ones are married.

As might be expected, older leaders report higher incomes than younger leaders, while within age groups, establishment leaders report higher incomes than nonestablishment leaders, with mixed leaders falling between the other two camps in income. Accordingly, large income gaps separate older establishment leaders from young nonestablishment leaders. More significantly, younger establishment leaders and even those in the mixed groups report far higher earnings than those in the nonestablishment sector.

Finally, several cities show notable concentrations of leaders who are younger and more likely to be part of the nonestablishment sector. Among these, most prominent are New York, Boston, San Francisco, and Los Angeles. By contrast, these areas report relatively fewer leaders who are older and part of the establishment sector. In areas of the country outside the seven major areas of Jewish population, leaders are more often older and more often establishment rather than nonestablishment.

A final note about the surveys: Were the universe of Jewish communal leaders known and bounded, and if it were possible to obtain a reasonably diverse and random sampling of their email addresses, we could have relied upon more customary and rigorous sampling methods. In our project, the world of establishment Jewish organizations is ambiguous and diverse, and the nonestablishment enterprises even more so—more fluid, less bounded, and less conceptually defined—making the viral sampling technique the only economical and expedient choice. In fact, one purpose of the study was to determine the content and boundaries of the establishment and nonestablishment domains.

The impossibility of following more standard sampling techniques underscores and heightens all the usual qualifications regarding the reliability of survey data and the need to carefully and cautiously interpret their implications. We cannot make the claim that our respondents are precisely representative of the whole, because we do not know about the whole. But we can make internal comparisons: How do different categories of leaders stack up to one another on a range of questions?

Contributors

Sarah Bunin Benor is assistant professor of Contemporary Jewish Studies at Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion (Los Angeles). She received her Ph.D. in Linguistics from Stanford University in 2004. She teaches about American Jewish language, culture, and community, and she has published several articles on Jewish languages, Orthodox Jews, and Yiddish and Hebrew influences on the English of American Jews. She founded and edits the Jewish Language Research Website and is writing a book entitled *Becoming Frum: How Newcomers Learn the Language and Culture of Orthodox Judaism*.

Steven M. Cohen, a sociologist of American Jewry, is research professor of Jewish Social Policy at HUC-JIR, and director of the Berman Jewish Policy Archive at NYU Wagner. In 1992 he made *aliyah*, and taught for 14 years at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Previously, he taught at Queens College, with visiting appointments at Yale, Brandeis, and JTS. With Arnold Eisen, he wrote, *The Jew Within*, and with Charles Liebman, *Two Worlds of Judaism: The Israeli and American Experiences*. His current research interests focus on the emerging patterns of Jewish identity and community among Jews in their 20's and 30's. He also serves as research director of Synagogue 3000, and director of the Florence G. Heller / JCCA Research Center.

Sylvia Barack Fishman is chair of the Department of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies and professor of Contemporary Jewish Life at Brandeis University, and co-director of the Hadassah Brandeis Institute. She is the author of seven books and numerous articles. Two of her recent works, *Choosing Jewish: Conversations about Conversion* and *Double or*

Nothing? Jewish Families and Mixed Marriage have created lively scholarly and communal discussion. Her most recent book, *The Way into the Varieties of Jewishness*, explores changing understandings of Jewish peoplehood and faith from biblical times to the present day.

Ari Y. Kelman is an assistant professor of American Studies at UC Davis. He is the author of *Station Identification: A Cultural History of Yiddish Radio in the United States* and the editor of *Is Diss a System? A Milt Gross Comic Reader*. He is also the coauthor of a number of influential studies of contemporary Jewish life and culture, including studies of cultural activities attracting young Jews, the impact of deferred marriage on Jewish social patterns, and the rise of independent *minyanim*.

Shaul Kelner is assistant professor of Sociology and Jewish Studies at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee. He is the author of *Tours that Bind: Diaspora, Pilgrimage and Israeli Birthright Tourism* (NYU Press, 2010). Prof. Kelner received his Ph.D. from the City University of New York, which he attended as a Wexner Graduate Fellow. He has been a fellow of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem's Institute for Advanced Studies and a visiting scholar in Tel Aviv University's Department of Sociology and Anthropology.

Jack Wertheimer is professor of American Jewish History at the Jewish Theological Seminary and director of the Center for Research and Policy at The AVI CHAI Foundation in New York. Most recently, he has directed projects for the foundation on trends in American Jewish education and Jewish supplementary schools; the former culminated in an edited volume entitled *Family Matters: Jewish Education in an Age of Choice*, and the latter resulted in *Learning and Community: Jewish Supplementary Schools in the 21st Century*. Reports about these projects are available at AVI CHAI's website – www.avichai.org.

Acknowledgments

The research team acknowledges with appreciation the support of The AVI CHAI Foundation at every step of our work. Arthur Fried and Mem Bernstein have been engaged with this project from its inception, offering wise counsel and asking tough questions, because they recognized the project's potential for uncovering rich data on emerging trends in the American Jewish community. Yossi Prager, AVI CHAI's Executive for North American operations, and Deena Fuchs, the Foundation's Communications Director, have served as valuable sounding boards and insightful readers of draft reports, giving generously of their time and advice. The research team benefited from ongoing interactions with three consultants, Professor Riv-Ellen Prell, Shawn Landres, and Dr. Jack Ukeles. Their responses to our work have sharpened our thinking, exposed us to outsiders' perspectives, and increased our confidence that our individual and collective findings are important. Tali Berkovitch played a significant role in making contact with a broad range of young Jewish leaders and helping to disseminate our online survey instrument. We offer thanks to the ever-efficient and helpful Ezra Kopelowitz and Debbie Perla, the heads of Research Success, who managed our survey. As this report neared completion, Roselyn Bell served as a meticulous and highly constructive copy editor.

Notes

Notes

Notes

USA
The AVI CHAI Foundation
1015 Park Avenue
New York, NY 10028
Phone: 212-396-8850
Fax: 212-396-8833
E-mail: info@avichaina.org

Israel
Keren AVI CHAI
44 King George Street
94262 Jerusalem
Phone: 02-621-5330
Fax: 02-621-5331
E-mail: office@avichai.org.il

www.avichai.org