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THE JEWS OF HOUSTON: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY

by

Elaine H. Maas

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

Doctor of Philosophy

Thesis Director's signature:

Edward P. Hixson

Houston, Texas

April 1973
PREFACE

My study of the Jews of Houston became two studies: one of the Jews of Houston and one of myself. Prior to making this study, I was a peripheral or marginal Jew, but in the process of investigation and research I was brought face to face with my own Jewish identity. This encounter became an experience I had to deal with constantly throughout the study and was, to me, the most exciting and yet traumatic aspect of the study.

Beyond the assets and handicaps of this identity encounter relevant to the study itself (elaborated upon in the Introduction), an asset for my life personally is that I gained my Jewish identity, from which I had formerly fled. I am grateful to Dr. Edward Norbeck, my dissertation director, on many counts, but because it was at his suggestion that I undertook the study of the Jews of Houston, I wish to thank him first for providing the opportunity of an adventure I would not otherwise have had.

Second, I thank the Jews of Houston, for it was the result of my quest among them, as well as in the literature on the history of the Jews, that I emerged glad to be a Jew and proud of my identity. Whatever criticisms there may be of the Jewish formal community of Houston, I now feel it is my community as well.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The research on which this study is based was made possible by a grant from the Southwest Center for Urban Research, Dr. Ralph Conant, Director, Houston, Texas. I am most appreciative of this support.

I am grateful to many persons for aid in the preparation of this study. I wish especially to thank Dr. Edward Norbeck for acting as my thesis director and for providing support and guidance during the study; Professors Mary E. Sheldon and Kenneth Leiter for serving on my committee and for their review of the draft and helpful suggestions; Helena Frenkil Schlam, for graciously allowing me to use her unpublished master's thesis on the early Jews of Houston; the National Jewish Population Survey staff for providing me with information concerning their survey.

Obviously this study could not have been accomplished without the help and support of many individuals and agencies in the Jewish formal community of Houston, in particular the Jewish Community Council. I express my appreciation to the president, executive committee, executive director, and staff of the Council, as well as to the executive directors of the other agencies, the rabbis of the congregations, and various lay leaders, all of whom went out of their way to provide me with the information, permissions, and contacts that I needed. Although space prevents me from listing all of their names, I feel I must acknowledge the specific help of Dan Asher, Ted Freedman, Leonard Gold, Al Goldstein, Rebecca Horwitz, Rabbi Robert I. Kahn, Rabbi William S. Malev, Rabbi Hyman J. Schachtel, and Rabbi Jack Segal.
While it is impossible to name all others who contributed information and time, I must express my thanks to Mimi Cohen for valuable aid of multiple kinds; Shirley Jay for many helpful conversations; Maurice N. Dannenbaum, Eleanor and Frank Freed, and William M. Nathan, for lending historical materials from their personal libraries; Dan Asher, Ted Freedman, Dr. David Mendell, and Rabbi Hyman J. Schachtel, for scanning a rough draft of the study and making valuable comments; Barbara Podratz, a good friend, for providing continual support as well as material assistance; Florence Schwartz and Elaine Byrd, two other good friends, for devoting many hours to mailing and processing questionnaires; Frances Henderson, for her uncanny skill in deciphering my handwriting and her meticulous typing; Mary Sieber, for her indispensable editing, and much more.

A primary debt of gratitude is due to the subjects of the study, all those Houstonians, Jew and Gentile, who contributed directly or indirectly to this research project and without whose help this study could not have been made.

Particularly, I wish to thank all those whom I interviewed, whose names I cannot publicly acknowledge if their anonymity is to be preserved, and all those who took the time to complete my questionnaire. This page is my only means of expressing gratitude to the latter group, for they alone know who they are. I am grateful to both interviewees and respondents for their cooperation and candor.

Finally, I wish to thank my mother, Anna K. Maas, and my sister, Bernice S. Maas, for their assistance, insights, support, and patient endurance. The study is dedicated to them and to the memory of my father, Morris I. Maas.
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INTRODUCTION: GOALS AND METHODS

Goals

This research is a pioneer ethnographic study of the Jews of Houston. Although numerous studies of Jewish populations of large American cities have been published, no study has previously been made of Houston, the sixth largest city, and one of the fastest growing, in the nation.

The focus of the study, which is primarily descriptive, is on the Jews of Houston "as a whole." The goal is to provide a general view of their life rather than an intensive study of a portion of it. Within the limits of time and resources imposed upon the study, it aims to give as rounded an account as possible. An effort has also been made to compare, insofar as possible, the Jews of Houston with Jews in cities elsewhere in the United States.

It is the author's hope that this study makes a contribution to knowledge by providing factual information and that the study will also be useful as a starting point for future, problem-oriented research.

The plan of presentation is as follows:

On the assumption that any group can be understood only if it is viewed in the context of the larger environment in which it exists, Chapter I presents the historical setting, which includes an account of the circumstances to which Jews of the United States in general, and Houston Jews in particular, have had to adapt. A brief historical account of Jews in the United States serves as a backdrop for the history
of the Jews in Houston that follows.

Succeeding chapters describe the Jews of Houston today. Chapter II begins with an overview of the current setting—the general environment to which Houston Jews are adapting today. Part of the current physical and social environment is seen in the sociodemographic data presented, which include information on the size, age, and sexual composition of the Jewish population of the city.

Chapter III presents a more specific picture, of what the Jews of Houston primarily do as "Jews." It describes in detail the Jewish organizations and associations of Houston, which may be said to comprise the "formal Jewish community," and examines some of the outstanding values and norms of the group. Other social features of the Jews of Houston, including the nature of leadership among them, are also discussed.

Chapter IV considers Jewish-Gentile relations in Houston. Topics discussed include Jewish participation in the political and economic spheres of the larger community, friendships and marriages between Jews and Gentiles, anti-Semitism, and certain aspects of Jewish identity.

In Chapter V, Jews describe in their own words how they feel about certain aspects of their Jewish identity.

A final chapter summarizes the findings.

Definitions

Of primary importance in a study of the Jews of Houston is a definition of who is being studied, for the nature of the group of Jews who compose such a population in a sense dictates the methods used and helps to explain some of the limitations involved in such a study.

There are two ways in which Jews in any American city are generally viewed. One view, that of many in the larger Gentile population,
is that all people of Jewish descent are Jews and are part of "a Jewish community." To the Jews themselves, the concept of who is a Jew is more complex, for the definition of who is a Jew has yet to be formulated (Herskovits, 1960:1491). Jews conceive themselves as being Jews in different ways and to different degrees, and some do not so identify themselves at all. Many do not participate in any of the Jewish organizations or associations, secular or religious. Many have little in common with other Jews except the label "Jew."

Moreover, scholars disagree on the criteria by which Jews can be said to be a "community" (Dean, 1958:305; Roseman, 1969:58; Glazer and Moynihan, 1963:140-143; Glazer, 1960:1694; Sklare, 1958:169; Marden and Meyer, 1968:414-416). There is no central organization to which all Jews belong; there is no one ideological view that all Jews hold; many Jews belong to no religious congregation of Judaism yet call themselves Jews. As Glazer and Moynihan (1969) say, "Only a minority are 'Jews' if we use some concrete defining index. Only a minority belongs to synagogues, is sent to Jewish schools, deals with Jewish welfare agencies, is interested in Jewish culture, speaks a traditional Jewish language, and can be distinguished by dress and custom as Jews" (p. 142).

The author, in pointing to the complexity of the definitional problem, merely wishes to emphasize to the reader that there is not one, unvaried, distinctive group of Jews. Rather, there is a Jewish population that contains Jews of varying types.

This study attempts to describe all of the "types" of Jews of Houston, ranging from those who strongly identify themselves as being Jews to those who would prefer not to be Jews. The amount of contact and degree of identification with other Jews vary among the different
types from much to little or none.

Methods

The primary methods used in collecting data were participant observation and intensive semistructured interviews conducted mainly during the year from September 1970 to September 1971. In addition, responses to a mailed questionnaire, sent to a random sample of 1000 Jewish persons, were used.

Because a study of Jews in Houston is a study of a dispersed population (that does not live in a single geographical area), because there is no single organization to which all Jews in Houston belong, and because most Jews are not distinguished physically from most of the larger population, the problem arises of how one finds the "Jews of Houston" to study.

In dealing with this problem, the author used two primary approaches. For purposes of interviewing, a Jew was defined as someone who the author knew (either on the basis of personal knowledge or through identification by informants) would identify himself as being Jewish or whose parents were identified as Jews. (The author is Jewish and a native Houstonian.) The questionnaire was mailed to a random sample of 1000 persons whose names were on the master mailing list of the Houston Jewish Community Council, which attempts to keep an up-to-date list of people thought to be or known to be Jewish in order to appeal to them for donations to Jewish causes. (The limitations of such a list are discussed in Appendix A.)

Participant Observation

Being a Jew and a native Houstonian, the author has had a
lifetime of participant observation of at least certain portions of the Jewish population in Houston. For the year during which the research was conducted, the author fully immersed herself in the Jewish life of Houston, in both its formal and informal aspects, to the degree that she was able. She read with care the one local Jewish newspaper; attended public affairs—Jewish dinners, lectures, panel discussions, and adult study groups; attended meetings of voluntary associations, and also attended religious services at each of the synagogues and temples in the city. Fortunately, the author was allowed to attend some of the major committee meetings of the Jewish Community Council, the formal coordinating organization of the various local Jewish organizations.

Interviews

Besides in-depth interviews of fifty persons who represent a range of characteristics varying in traits such as age, marital status, occupational status, and religious belief, numerous shorter interviews were held on a variety of subjects. No attempt was made to select samples of arbitrary or uniform size in each category. Instead, an attempt was made to see the range of types that existed and to learn the views of the people composing these types. (See Appendix A for further details on procedures employed in interviews.)

Questionnaires

The questionnaire sent to a sample of 1000 Jewish persons elicited a 40% return (400). The factual information obtained from the questionnaires, which was to be a minor part of the study, was used principally for demographic data. Other information obtained from it has been interspersed throughout the text when it could aid in
understanding or substantiating certain parts of the study, or where conclusions could be drawn from a gestalt approach to the questionnaire data.

A replica of the questionnaire and more specific information on sample selection and other details are given in Appendices A and B.

Research Problems

Limitations Inherent in the Study of a Jewish Urban Group

It was known from the outset that limitations would have to be made upon the study since one investigator in a period of only about one year cannot collect information on all aspects of the Jewish population in a large city. As the study progressed and the actual complexity of Jewish life in Houston revealed itself, the necessity for such limitations became even more apparent. A choice had to be made between continuing to try to gain a general view of the life of the Jewish population or a more detailed, but narrow, view of only one aspect or a few aspects of Jewish life.

The investigator chose to maintain a focus on the total group with the goal, as previously stated, of painting a picture of the Houston Jews with broad strokes of the brush.

Although a hazard of such an approach is that the attempt to gain a broad understanding may lead to erroneous impressions, the broad view has the merit of providing a context for future studies which are more specialized.

Personal Limitations of the Author

The fact that the investigator is a native Houstonian and a peripheral Jew (that is, a Jew who participates little or not at all in
the Jewish formal or informal associations and activities existing in the city) has had both advantages and disadvantages for the study.

Among the disadvantages were the author's lack of objectivity in some matters (some previously known to her and some unknown); her taking for granted certain items of information; and the troublesome fact that she had to confront her own identity during the entire research. The author felt self-conscious, apologetic, and guilty for not knowing about Jewish history or the Jewish group in Houston. The fact that she had lived in and would continue to live among the people she was studying was also troublesome, causing her often to wonder: "What will 'they' think about what I am saying?"

Among the advantages were the investigator's having had a lifetime of participant observation among portions of the Jewish population and hence already having a basic knowledge about certain aspects of being Jewish; the fact that although Jewish she was not involved in any of the formally organized groups and thus was not a member of any clique or faction at odds with other cliques and factions. The author's peripheral Jewishness allowed a certain degree of objectivity, for she really did not know very much about the Jews of Houston. Being Jewish and particularly being a member of a Jewish family that had long lived in Houston and was known to many other Jewish people made the author acceptable to some people who might otherwise have been reluctant to participate in the study. (Nevertheless, certain respondents to the questionnaire were still suspicious of the motives of anyone who professed to study the Jewish group.) For these reasons the author was able to interview a wide range of types of Jews, including the so-called marginal or peripheral Jews, who are generally hard to identify.
One incidental source of data was the author’s own response as the study progressed to a growing awareness of herself as a Jew, her self-conceptualization undergoing metamorphosis. She thus herself became a case study in depth, as it were, on what it means for a Jew to encounter and come to terms with his Jewish identity, a factor which is intimately involved in how, why, and to what degree he participates in formal Jewish organizations or identifies with Jewish people.
CHAPTER I

THE HISTORICAL SETTING

General History of Jews in America

Immigration by Jews to the United States came in three main waves: Sephardic Jews (1654-1820), who were primarily Spanish; German Jews (1820-1880), primarily from Germany; and Russian Jews (1880-1924), principally from the Polish parts of Austria and Germany, the Ukrainian provinces of Russia, Rumania, and other parts of eastern Europe, who are often referred to as east European Jews. Although each migration was dominated by one of the above groups, it was not composed entirely of Jews from the regions for which the migrations are named. The number of Jews entering the United States since 1924 has been relatively small.

Handlin (1970) points out that the set of conditions in America to which such immigrants had to adapt differed for each successive wave, and that the process of adaptation for each included changes in Judaism. (Handlin discusses, in addition, a fourth period of adaptation, the time since 1930.) These circumstances, he states, explain the complexity of Jewish life in the United States today.

The following summary draws on some of the views of both Handlin (1970) and Levinger (1935) to outline the distinctive characteristics of the three waves, and the different conditions to which they adapted.

The Early Sephardic Migration (1654-1820)

The Sephardic immigration was actually not a wave, but rather a
small, steady flow of Jews who were primarily of Spanish and Portuguese
descent. After being expelled from Spain in 1492 and from Portugal
around 1497, the Jews had fled to various countries willing to receive
them, mainly Holland, Turkey, Africa, and the early settlements of Euro-
peans in Central and South America. Holland was their principal refuge
in Europe. Dutch tolerance of immigrating Jews was later extended to
her dominions in the New World. Whether by way of gratitude for this
tolerance, as The Jewish Encyclopedia (1901, XII, p. 346) states, or for
other reasons, Jews aided the Dutch in their colonization of South
America.

The first recorded Jewish settlement in America occurred in
1654, when twenty-three refugees from Brazil landed in a tiny ship in
New Amsterdam, later called New York. (The first individual Jewish set-
tiler was Jacob Barsimson, who arrived one month earlier directly from
Holland.) The twenty-three Jews had fled from Brazil when the Portu-
guese recaptured it in 1654. Peter Stuyvesant, the Dutch governor of
New Amsterdam, did not want to accept them in his colony; he tried to
force them to leave by complaining to the directors of the Dutch West
Indies Company of Amsterdam, which was financing the colony. The Dutch
directors overruled Stuyvesant, however, by saying: "... These people
may travel and trade to and in New Netherlands, and live and remain
there, providing the poor among them shall be supported by their own
nation" [emphasis added] (Levinger, p. 61). The Jews have honored this
stipulation throughout their history in America.

Initially Jews in America were not allowed to engage in retail
trade. In March, 1656, the Dutch directors decreed that the Jews could
have all the civil and political rights that were accorded them in
Amsterdam, including the right to own real estate and to conduct trade, but they could not be employed in public service or open retail shops (Jewish Encyclopedia, 1901, XII, p. 347). This ruling affected the future both of the Jews and of the colonies, for it resulted in the Jews engaging in the kinds of economic activities open to them, foreign and intercolonial trade (international commerce), a type of work which fulfilled a need for America and for which the Jews were peculiarly well suited because of their overseas connections.

The Sephardic Jews had been chiefly merchants. Some had been very wealthy, having come from aristocratic and noble families in Spain. They settled in all of the thirteen colonies, but primarily on the seacoast and in a few leading cities, where their merchant talent and connections with other parts of the world could be utilized for developing the trade of the colonies. At the time of the American Revolution, they numbered about 2000 persons, and had established five religious congregations. Many fought in the war of 1776 along with other Americans.

The Sephardic Jews, having brought with them their traditional religious views, organized communities like those they had known in the Old World. They formed congregations within which they could carry on the traditional Sephardic forms of worship; they built synagogues and laid out cemeteries; they provided for the instruction of their children; and they organized to assist the needy and helpless among them (Handlin, p. 11). At the same time, they lived side by side with Gentile neighbors. They discovered that America was a nation in which there was freedom of religion by and large, a separation of religion and state, and a plurality of religions. The Jews themselves contributed to the diversity of the religious scene. This diversity in itself helped
create a milieu in which no single religion dominated, and in which belonging to a religion was important but the existence of diverse religious options was also important (Williams, 1965; Handlin, 1970). In short, the Jews were accepted as part of the American scene. Although few in number (by 1820 they probably totaled no more than 5000), they were well established and respected. They formed a secure foundation for the Jews who were to come.

The German Migration (1820–1880)

The second wave, beginning about 1815 and continuing until the 1890s, was composed primarily of Germans. In contrast with the early Sephardic Jews and the later Russian Jews, each of whom as a group migrated separately, this wave was part of a larger group migrating to America. Among the 5 million Germans of all religions who fled to the New World during this period, about 200,000 were Jews (Levinger, p. 176). This massive flight was caused by a complex of factors: after the Napoleonic war, Germany was bitterly poor, worn out by war, with little hope of recovery in the near future; there was suppression of liberal thought, and the militaristic political climate was particularly hostile toward the Jews (Levinger, p. 177). The largest group of Jewish immigrants came from Bavaria, where the anti-Jewish laws were the most severe. After the restrictive laws were lifted about the middle of the century, however, the immigration of German Jews dropped greatly. From 1860 on, Jews merely represented their share in the general movement.

Unlike the Spanish group, which had been largely a rich and cultured people with pride in their history, the German immigrants were chiefly from the rank and file of the population, poor or middle-class
workers and merchants, with few professional men among them. (The exception was the group of "forty-eighers," as those who fled to America after the unsuccessful 1848 revolt were called, which included many of Germany's most educated and wealthy citizens; for example, the father of the famous Straus brothers came in 1852 [Levinger, p. 185].) Usually they began work in the new land as door-to-door peddlers with packs on their backs. The expanding frontier of America then needed these services; there was room for the peddler.

Since the German Jews arrived at a time when the national frontiers were expanding, they did not settle in only a few cities on the Atlantic seacoast as had the Sephardic Jews, but scattered thinly throughout the nation, including Alaska. Mostly they went to the same places as the non-Jewish Germans, although few Jews became farmers. Cincinnati, for example, became an important Jewish center because it was an important German center. Most of the Jewish communities of this country, including the one in Houston, were founded during the period of German immigration. Initially the typical organization of a German Jewish community followed the Sephardic Jews' pattern. Upon settling, the newcomers immediately founded the institutions of Judaism—a cemetery, a synagogue, and a society for mutual help.

At first the German Jews joined the existing Sephardic Orthodox synagogues. However, they soon withdrew and formed their own congregations, both for social reasons (they were more comfortable with people of their own cultural background) and for ritual reasons (the Sephardic ritual and the German were both in Hebrew, but certain words in the two rituals were pronounced differently and the sequence of prayers was not identical). Formation of independent congregations was also influenced
by the relations between the two Jewish groups. The Sephardic Jews felt themselves superior to the new German immigrants, who could not speak English well and were not Americanized.

Very soon, however, another reason for social separation was added, a desire for reforms in the Orthodox ritual. By now, the Enlightenment, which had pervaded Europe, had reached the New World. During the Sephardic period it had been customary to accept tradition, but now many people caught up in the spirit of the times began to question the authority of tradition and the scriptures, particularly the Old Testament. Everything had to be examined in the light of reason. In addition, the Jews in America, having worked and lived with Gentile neighbors, had acquired many Gentile habits and much of the Gentile manner of thought. There had been some intermarriage and some conversion of Jews to Christianity. Actively participating in the business and social life of their communities, the Jews wanted their places of worship to compare favorably with those of their Christian friends. They wanted their services to be conducted in English, the language they understood, to include sermons, such as the Protestants had, and to have more decorum. Moreover, the Jewish Orthodox service required that men and women be seated separately, the women usually sitting in a gallery, or at the rear, or even at one side. Because the sexes were treated less unequally in America, some Jews soon began to think that men and women should sit together during services. As early as 1824 twenty-three members of an old Sephardic Orthodox synagogue (Beth Elohím) in Charleston, South Carolina, petitioned for such reforms and withdrew from the congregation when their petition was rejected (Levinger, p. 213).

The desire for reforms became part of a growing movement that
ultimately produced Reform Judaism, which is considered a contribution of the German Jews of this period.

Although the Reform movement in America began spontaneously, it took shape only after Isaac Wise, a young rabbi from Germany (which was the seat of the Reform movement) arrived in America in 1846. Fired with enthusiasm from his studies in Germany, he provided the necessary leadership. His success was not without struggle and in fact it took twenty years to organize the congregations who wanted reforms. Finally, in 1871, the Reform congregations united to become the Union of American Hebrew Organizations. In 1875 Wise founded the Hebrew Union College, a theological seminary in Cincinnati for training rabbis in Reform theology. In 1889, the Central Conference of American Rabbis, an association of Reform rabbis, was formed.

This sequence of organization, first a union of congregations, then a theological seminary, and finally a conference of rabbis, became essentially the pattern followed by the other two major divisions of American Judaism, Conservative and Orthodox, as soon as they grew large enough in numbers and wealth to accomplish it. The Conservative movement came after the Reform movement as a somewhat later stage of adjustment. Paradoxically, the Orthodox, as a movement, was the last to develop in America.

According to Levinger, a distinctive characteristic of the German Jews was their love of organization and their tendency to create secular Jewish social institutions. "They took Jewish life out of the synagogue alone, and gave it a dozen centers about which it has revolved ever since" (pp. 188-89). From them came the lodges (i.e., B'nai B'rith, founded in 1843), the unions of congregations, the great charitable
societies, the orphan homes, and all the rest (Levinger, p. 187).

**The Russian Immigration (1880-1924)**

In 1882 the May laws enacted under Czar Alexander III legalized the tyranny over the Jews that had previously existed in Russia in the 1870s. As a result, entire communities of Jews, rich and poor, educated and ignorant, fled from Russia, principally to the United States. This was a massive migration, far larger than the two earlier ones. During the years 1880-1920 approximately two million Jews (70% from Russia, 25% from Austria-Hungary and Rumania) entered the United States (Levinger, p. 265). After 1900, the wave of immigration included in addition to the east Europeans a smaller group of Oriental Jews, some 50,000 in number, from Greece and the Balkans, Asia Minor, and North Africa (Handlin, p. 17).

The America to which these immigrants came no longer afforded opportunities for independent trade. The period of the expanding frontier had ended. The nation was in a period of industrialization and the available jobs were in the cities. For various reasons most of the immigrants settled in New York City; opportunities for employment forced their concentration in the large cities, of which New York was by far the largest; it was the port of entry for most, and poverty often prevented their moving elsewhere; and New York was also attractive because its large Jewish population offered opportunities for fellowship. However, many of the immigrants found their way to Philadelphia, the Boston area, and Chicago.

According to Handlin, these people created problems new to American Jews, for, as laborers, poverty was their lot. Many of them worked
in the garment industry, either at home or in the factories known as sweat shops. Others worked as painters or carpenters, and a few struggled for success in tiny grocery stores or dry goods shops. Low wages and frequent unemployment made them financially insecure and forced them to live in slums. They had no resources to fall back on in time of illness. Their children sometimes went astray and contributed to the delinquency and crime typical of big cities (Handlin, pp. 17-18).

Following Jewish tradition, which regarded the giving of charity as a great virtue, the wealthy and already established Jewish community assisted these east European Jews. However, according to Birmingham (1967), they helped more because they "had to" than because they "wanted to." That is, just as the Sephardic Jews had looked down upon the newly arrived German immigrants, so the German Jews now looked down upon the newly arrived Russian immigrants. According to Birmingham's account in Our Crowd (1967), to the German Jews already here, this new Jewish group was "all sorts of odd things"—socialists, anarchists, Zionists, radicals—and the Yiddish language was described as being "socialistic" and worse. They despised being identified with them. The German Jews felt that "those people" were loud, pushy, aggressive—the "dregs of Europe." Mrs. Loeb, a member of "Our Crowd," is said to have counseled her children not to hurry toward an exit on a train or people "will think you're a pushy Jew." The coining of the pejorative term "kike" is attributed, rightly or wrongly, to German Jews.

Nevertheless, it was the German Jews who came to the aid of the Russian Jews. For, like it or not, in the eyes of non-Jews, Russian Jews and German Jews were part and parcel of the same group. The German Jews therefore looked upon the Russian Jews somewhat as poor relatives
of whom they were ashamed, but whom they felt compelled to help. Consequently, philanthropic organizations providing economic aid and settlement houses giving instruction in "Americanization" were begun. An Industrial Removal Office was set up to redirect immigration away from New York and into the more sparsely settled communities of the South and the West. Galveston, Texas, was one of those to which they were directed.

As the east European Jews became self-sustaining, they began to found their own distinctive institutions, which stressed education and Jewish culture. According to Handlin (p. 18), they created communities to help themselves adjust; founded a multitude of tiny Orthodox synagogues; formed fraternal organizations called "landsmanschaften," composed of folk from various regions; established charitable societies to aid orphans, widows, and dependents; set up afternoon schools for religious instruction; and organized unions, like the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. "The cement that held these activities together was a culture expressed in Yiddish, the Old World language of all east European Jews" (Handlin, p. 19). Their life was even more secularized than that of the German Jew, but it was a Jewish secularism (Levinger, p. 283).

The Jews coming from Russia had a different conception of Jewish life than the German Jews had had as immigrants to America. Whereas German Jews had considered themselves a religious group only, the Russian Jews felt they comprised a Jewish nationality. In Russia, though the many ethnic groups were ruled by a central monarch, each group was viewed as a separate nation and each had its own laws. So Jews in Russia thought of themselves, and others thought of them, as a Jewish
nation. "The Jew in Germany felt that he was a German, in America that he was an American; but the Jew in Russia was a Jew and not a Russian at all" (Levinger, p. 268). The Russian Jews, who had their own courts, language, and customs, had therefore a conception of both Jewish culture and Jewish nationalism—they felt they were a nationality without a land. Consequently, many of the east European Jews with this nationalistic viewpoint who came to America, though they wanted to become full and active Americans, wished to preserve, at least partly, their rich Jewish culture. The Jews in Russia, moreover, were a people (or nation) living in a hostile land. Because of the never-ceasing anti-Semitism, many felt that a homeland of their own was the only solution. It was natural, therefore, that Zionism, a movement to establish Palestine as a national homeland for the Jews, would eventually find much of its support in America among the Russian Jews. (A more detailed account of the Zionist movement in the United States is given in the discussion of the early history of Houston Jews.)

The majority of the east European immigrants had taken their religion for granted, just as their predecessors had; the multitude of tiny synagogues they formed upon coming to America were entirely spontaneous, independent, and strictly orthodox in the Russian fashion. With the passage of time, however, Russian Jews began to fill the ranks of Conservative Judaism, a movement attempted as early as 1867 (Levinger, p. 238) but developed primarily under the leadership of Solomon Schechter, an east European scholar brought to the United States in 1902 to head the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. This was a traditional, or Conservative, seminary that had been founded in 1886 by American Orthodox Jews in an attempt to formulate a reasonable response to
the growing serious challenge posed by the Reform movement, a response that would be more modern than traditional Orthodoxy but more traditional than Reform. (For example, the Conservatives "altered the form of the services, introduced an English sermon, and relaxed some of the rigid regulations bearing on personal life. But they insisted upon the maintenance of the traditional Sabbath and upon the preservation of the dietary laws and other rituals" [Handlin, p. 27].)

Under Schechter, the Conservative movement grew in strength and organization. He put the seminary on a firm foundation and revitalized the association of Conservative rabbis, called the Rabbinical Assembly, that had been founded in 1901. In 1913, the United Synagogues of America, a union of Conservative congregations, was formed. The organizational structure of Conservative Judaism was now complete.

Conservative Judaism, as a "middle of the road" alternative, primarily attracted the new east European immigrants who wanted to be attached to their former rituals and traditions but also wanted to become "Americanized." Handlin says it appealed primarily to the children of immigrants coming after 1880.

The first World War interrupted the flow of Jewish immigration and it was never fully resumed. In 1921, the almost unlimited immigration policy of the United States for European countries changed to a quota system, and in 1924, a new quota system, which limited European immigration even more drastically, virtually closed the gate.7

**Jewish Immigration since 1924**

The only significant Jewish immigration to the United States in the last fifty years has been the small group of refugees from the Nazi
regime who were allowed in between 1933 and 1940 and those who entered as postwar refugees between 1945 and 1954.8

The German refugees of the 1930s differed greatly from the immigrants of the earlier German wave, for most were highly educated professional and business people, many of whom had held important posts in Germany.

The immigrants arriving after 1945 have come from all over Europe and have been of every social level. Because they have come at a relatively prosperous time and have been few in number, they have been easily absorbed. These most recent immigrants have included east European Jews who are members of the Hasidic sects,9 mystics who attempt to preserve their old practices in isolation from the world around them (Handlin, p. 30). Yaffe (1968:19) also mentions the recent group of immigrants from Cuba who form a sizable colony in Miami, Florida, but who keep to themselves (away from other Cubans and other Jews).

Handlin calls the period after 1930 a fourth period of adjustment or adaptation for Jews in the United States, for they "like other Americans have had to struggle with depression, totalitarianism and war" (p. 9).

The Americanization of Judaism

By 1920, three branches—Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox—existed within American Judaism, each representing a greater or lesser degree of change from ancient forms, induced by conditions in the United States.

The Sephardic Jews believed, as Jews for centuries had believed, that the traditional law contained in the Bible and Talmud, i.e., the
written and the oral law, was divine in origin and not subject to modification. Few were really learned in the ancient books of Judaism, but they followed implicitly the teaching of Jewish tradition. They kept the Sabbath strictly, prayed three times a day, wearing their tefillin, and followed the dietary laws. They believed in one God, the prophets, and the future coming of the Messiah (Levinger, p. 211). They came to America at a time when tradition was not questioned.

The Jews from Germany who came to America during the Enlightenment period of the mid-nineteenth century were used to thinking of themselves in relation to a "fatherland," to having the rights and duties of citizenship and to owing loyalty to the nation in which they lived. At the same time, rationalism was leading to questioning of the Bible and to seeing religion as a phenomenon that changed in response to man's changing conditions. These two attitudes of mind led in America to the flourishing of Reform Judaism, a theology that viewed Judaism as a religion only and the United States as its Zion. Its adherents felt they were Americans by nationality; their religion was Jewish. The permanent elements of Judaism were seen to be not the "forms" of religious worship or the rituals but rather the precepts of ethical monotheism. They viewed the Bible as a record of the religious history and inspiration of the Jewish people that had been written by men, not as a divinely dictated book. Similarly, religious laws were viewed as functions of their time and therefore subject to change. For example, just as animal sacrifice had given way to prayer as man and his social milieu changed, so other biblical injunctions (e.g., dietary regulations) were open to modification. Both Orthodoxy and Reform accepted the moral law as expressed in the Ten Commandments, but whereas Orthodoxy stressed the
ceremonial and the Talmud (oral law), Reform placed more emphasis on the ethical law and the Bible, particularly the prophets (Levinger, p. 239). By the end of the 1800s, two branches of Jewish worship existed in the United States—strict Orthodox and Classical Reform—and the Reform branch was gaining in strength.

The second evolutionary development in American Judaism was Conservative Judaism. Initiated by American Orthodox Jews in the 1870s and 1880s and developed by Schechter in the early 1900s, the Conservative movement came into being as a reasonable alternative for those who wanted to retain some of their traditions and yet not be bound by strict adherence to old laws. It especially attracted the new Russian immigrants, who wanted to become Americanized but who were not only not wealthy enough when they first arrived to join a Reform temple but also not yet Americanized enough in their views to want such extreme change from tradition. Their having come from a nation that stressed the "peoplehood" aspect of Judaism was an additional factor for many in not joining the Reform branch. Since Conservative Judaism also viewed Judaism as a historical religion subject to change, but not too much change, "the great intellectual problem of the Conservative movement was how to draw the line between what could be discarded from tradition and what must be preserved" (Handlin, p. 27).

The last branch of Judaism to become Americanized was the Orthodox one represented by the synagogues of the east European Jews. Even though this branch had established a seminary by 1896, a union of congregations by 1898, and an association of rabbis by 1902, it remained the least organized and the poorest of the three divisions. Among the east European immigrants there continued to be numbers of small,
independent Orthodox congregations who neither contributed to nor benefitted from their national organizations (Levinger, pp. 404-5). Their ranks were constantly being thinned by "desertions to the Conservative and Reform camps" (Handlin, p. 27).

According to Handlin, signs of change in Orthodoxy did not really appear until 1945, when a general revival of religion in the United States quickened the interest of some Jews in Orthodoxy. This development, coupled with the fact that by now the Orthodox seminaries were training men who, though traditional-minded, were imbued with a more modern approach toward organization, helped the Orthodox movement grow. More synagogues joined the national organization, and the movement acquired a distinctively American point of view. Orthodoxy made some modifications. While adherents reiterated that the traditional law, divinely inspired, was valid for all times and all places, they added that "... changing conditions might call for new interpretations to draw the appropriate meaning out of the law; but that task could be undertaken only by learned men steeped in the tradition of study" (Handlin, p. 29).

These three divisions still exist in American Judaism, and they continue to be affected by the conditions surrounding them.

Handlin also notes that immigration brought to America certain dissident groups which rejected the dominant religious tradition. For example, among the east European Jews who arrived after 1890 were some secularists who, having rejected the formal religion of Judaism, wished to maintain their identity as Jews on an entirely cultural basis, emphasizing Yiddish rather than Hebrew as their language. The secularist movement had been quite strong in Russia and Poland, particularly among
the Socialists, "who despaired of any traditional solution to the problems of the Old World" (Handlin, p. 29). They had an influence for a time in the New World, but the movement declined in strength as their American-born children became drawn to having a positive religious identification and as the interest in Yiddish culture weakened. (The adoption of Hebrew as the official language of Israel contributed to the lessening of importance of the Yiddish language and literature.)

Another religious development outside the mainstream of Judaism has been the "Reconstructionist" movement, which was begun around 1922 by Mordecai Kaplan. It has influenced many adults of the Conservative branch in some parts of the nation and is causing excitement among some of today's youth. The movement, which stresses the "peoplehood" aspect of Judaism, views Judaism as a civilization, with religion as just one part of it. According to Yaffe (1968:103), it is "the one genuine splinter group in the Conservative movement."

Handlin also mentions that while the 50,000 Oriental Jews who arrived during the Russian immigration long maintained a sense of separateness from other Jews, they too are now feeling the effects of Americanization and are beginning to conform to the general Orthodox pattern. Handlin feels that it is too early to tell whether the Hasidic sects, who arrived after 1945, will be able ultimately to resist Americanizing influences.

The historical pattern of immigration, then, accounted for the religious development which divided a single tradition into three branches. It also accounted in part for the multiplicity of philanthropies and communal organizations that developed as Jews "took care of their own." Immigration created diversity among the Jews, just as it
did in the American society at large.

A Historical Summary of Jews in Houston

The Period of German-Jewish Immigration (1836-1860)

The colonization of Texas by Americans did not begin until 1821, long after the spread in the nation of the first (Sephardic) wave of Jews. Texas was part of that expanding frontier which beckoned to the Germans migrating to this country during the mid nineteenth century, and the first substantial number of Jewish settlers in the state were immigrants from Germany. However, a few Jews from various countries had found their way to Texas in its earliest days. In fact, one, Samuel Isaacks, was among the first American colonists in Texas, Stephen F. Austin's "Old Three Hundred," who came in 1821 when Texas was still a part of Mexico.¹⁰

... Samuel came with his parents Elizah and Hester from Tennessee to Jasper, Texas in January 10, 1820. Elizah and the rest of the family settled here [Nacogdoches?] but Samuel and a friend continued on to Austin's colony. The family was originally from Wales and immigrated sometime in the 1600's ....¹¹

Although Isaacks is the only Jew in Austin's colony of whom there are records, it is said that there may have been others.

By 1831, there were Jews living in Velasco, and then, following this settlement, in Nacogdoches, San Antonio, and Bolivar. A particularly prominent Jew was Henry Castro, a French Jew from a Marrano family, who, between 1843 and 1846, helped to colonize Medina, Texas (an area west of San Antonio), and for whom Castro County is named.

According to Schlam (1970),¹² the real growth of Texas began after its annexation by the United States in 1845, when people began to settle throughout the state. The early settlers came primarily for good,
cheap land, which was also attractive to some Jews. While most Jews were not interested in engaging in agricultural pursuits, they wished to own land in order to put down roots and be independent. For example, Schlam quotes an article written by Lewis A. Levy of Houston in 1850 to a Jewish newspaper advising Jews of central and eastern Europe to leave their homes and come to America, particularly to Texas where

... thousands of acres of land can be bought, within the settled portions of the State, for the small sum of from 25 cents to $1 per acre; good arable, fertile land, where a man can make his living to his liking, and more independent than the Autocrat of Russia, or the Emperor of Austria themselves. Indeed I would not exchange my fifteen acre lot, with the house on it, and the garden around it, which I possess near the city of Houston for all the thrones and hereditary dominions of both those noted persons ... [Schlam, p. 10]

Jews were also in Houston from its beginning. Houston was founded four months after Texas won her independence from Mexico at the battle of San Jacinto in 1836. Some accounts show Eugene Chimene, a Jew from France, as being in Houston in 1835, although this is questionable since Houston was not founded until 1836. (He may have lived in Harrisburg, a city near the site of Houston, which was founded in 1826 and was later burned to the ground by Mexican soldiers under General Santa Ana.) Accounts show that Michael Seeligson had a store in Houston "near the steamboat landing" as early as 1839. He stayed for a short time only and then moved to Galveston, Texas, where he became a prominent politician and mayor. Lewis A. Levy came to Houston between 1837 and 1842. Henry Wiener, according to his own account in an advertisement in a Houston newspaper, was in Houston almost from its founding. Isaac Coleman and Maurice Levy were two other early settlers, Coleman having settled in Houston in the early 1840s after doing peddling through the Texas countryside (Schlam, pp. 4-14).
The most prominent early Jewish settler was Jacob de Cordova. He was a Sephardic Jew who came to Philadelphia from Jamaica as a young boy. He later moved to New Orleans and in 1837 settled in Galveston. He then moved to Houston when it "was beginning to be of note." (He is thus claimed by both Galveston and Houston, but Schlam notes that he is generally thought of simply as a "Texan").

Cordova was an alderman of Houston and a representative of Harris County in the Texas legislature; in 1849 he helped to lay out the city of Waco. He introduced the Order of Odd Fellows into Texas and founded a chapter in Houston. He was an original member of the Houston Chamber of Commerce when it was formed in 1840, and was one of a committee of three appointed to draft its constitution. In 1845, he began a "general land agency" and became a prominent land merchant, buying and selling land in all parts of Texas. In 1852 he moved his main office to Austin, where he published his book, *Texas: Her Resources and Her Public Men* in 1856, as well as several editions of J. de Cordova's *New and Correct Map of the State of Texas*. In 1858, he toured the eastern United States and England to publicize Texas as a place to settle.

Schlam states that even though Cordova was a Jew, the extent of his involvement in Judaism is in dispute. He was not buried in a Jewish cemetery (though his half-brother was), he married a non-Jew, and his descendants do not identify themselves as Jewish (pp. 5-6). However, when Cordova later went bankrupt, the county justice appointed a Jew (Lewis A. Levy) to be one of the three trustees involved (Schlam, p. 7).

In 1850, according to Schlam's calculations, there were possibly seventeen Jewish adults (eleven men, six women) in Houston of a total white population of 1863. A letter from Galveston published in
the *Occident* (the first national Jewish newspaper of importance, founded in Philadelphia in 1843) suggests, says Schlam, that these few Jews and their condition were not atypical in Texas. The letter said:

There are not many Jews in the state; but still you will find a sprinkling of them in every village; some are adhering to our faith, others again are intermarried with gentiles. [Schlam, p. 22]

These seventeen Jewish adults came from a variety of places, including Germany, Jamaica, Holland, England, France, Louisiana, and Ohio; they probably, therefore, represented a mixture of Sephardic and German backgrounds. As a result, the larger influx of Germans who came to Houston in the next decade did not find an established Sephardic social group to whom they had to adapt.

Of the Jewish males listed in the U.S. 1850 census, all were shown as "merchants" with two exceptions—a "confectioner" and a "land agent" (Cordova).

By 1860, there were sixty-eight Jewish adults (forty-two males and twenty-six females, plus forty children) of the total white population of 3768. The majority of the adults were German-born, typical of the general pattern of Jewish settlements throughout the United States at this time. More than half of the men were listed as being merchants and clerks, dealing in wholesale and retail goods. Many had formed partnerships with other Jews; many had become property owners. There were Jews at both ends of the financial spectrum, although none was in the financial bracket of the wealthiest Gentiles. According to Schlam (p. 57), several of the Jewish merchants sold slaves, and some Jews were also probably slave owners.

Communal and Religious Development. As the number of Jews in
Houston increased in the decade from 1850 to 1860, they established, one by one, the traditional Jewish communal institutions. By 1854 they had a cemetery (while all prior references show 1844, Schlam's data indicate that 1854 is the more likely date); in 1855 they formed a Hebrew Benevolent Association, and in 1859 the "Hebrew Congregation Beth Israel" was founded, dedicated, and legally chartered. (Again, Schlam's data contradict the prior references, which give 1854 as the date the congregation was formed and list it as the first Jewish congregation in Texas.) According to a description in the *Occident* (XVIII, 1860, p. 306), the congregation was housed in "a wooden structure, the front of which is used as a Synagogue, the back portion as a meeting room," and was located on several adjoining lots, which it owned, in the middle of the city (Schlam, p. 47). Other sources (Cohen, 1954:16; *Houston Chronicle*, June 19, 1970) indicate that this structure was located either on Austin or LaBranch, between Texas and Prairie. (The congregation exists today, known as Congregation Beth Israel; its temple is located on North Braeswood Street, in the affluent southwest section of the city.)

At the time of its formation in 1859, this first congregation had twenty-two members. In 1860, there were thirty members. Since Schlam's count indicates a total of forty-two adult male Jews in Houston in 1860, it is evident that most, but not all, of them belonged.

The synagogue began as an Orthodox congregation, using the Polish Minhag or ritual. While Orthodoxy is typical of congregations in the United States in this period, the Houston congregation's choice of the Polish Minhag is somewhat surprising, according to Schlam, considering the predominance of German Jews in the city. Schlam (p. 49)
suggests that the reason may have been to underscore the congregation's preference for the Orthodox ritual over the German Reform ritual. She notes that Beth Israel's first president, M. A. Levy, was a former vice president of a splinter congregation in Charleston, South Carolina, formed in 1847 by unhappy Orthodox members of Beth Elohim when their congregation finally began moving toward Reform (see fn. 3).

In any case, Orthodox it was. The congregation's recorded minutes, which begin in 1861, show that separate seats were sold to "ladies" and "gents." The minutes indicate that an attempt was made to enforce the keeping of the Sabbath, implying that some members were not doing so. (Cohen [1954:6] sees this as an index of the congregants' assertion of independence from religious communal control and their desire to integrate into the general community.) The minutes also show that the congregation, as was typical of traditional congregations, served as a community forum where community problems were aired, argued, and resolved.

Schlam provides details on the general religious milieu of Houston at the time of the establishment of Beth Israel. The Morning Star of 1839 noted that the city had 3000 inhabitants and much wealth, but no place for public worship and not one resident minister. The first church was not opened until 1841. By 1866 the Houston City Directory listed ten churches, of which Beth Israel was one.

Schlam felt that, considering the fact that Jews were a small proportion of the total population and that the above religious milieu indicated little "outside social pressure to establish and be part of some religious institution," the establishment of Beth Israel must have grown "more out of internal spiritual and communal needs" (p. 51) than
out of any external pressures. However, she did take due note of the
Sabbath observance petition drawn up in 1861, referred to above, which
stated in part that Gentiles observed their Sabbath and Jews should
adhere strictly to theirs. It showed that some external religious
forces, to which Jews were sensitive, did exist.

Jewish-Gentile Relations. Schlam (p. 26) notes that before the
Civil War one-third of the Houston population was foreign-born and the
prevailing majority was German. The Jews thus shared a common back-
ground with the majority of the foreign population. However, there is
no evidence that Houston's German Jews participated in the formation or
activities of any of the local German clubs. From Frederick Law
Olmsted's comments about his trip through Texas, Schlam concludes that
"being a German and being a German Jew were quite different" in Houston
(p. 27). This pattern is in contrast to the one in Milwaukee, for exam-
ple, where German Jews were active participants in the German life about
them (Swichkow and Gartner, 1963:55).

But Jews did take part in other aspects of the social life of
Houston. Jews were active in both the Independent Order of Odd Fellows
and the Masonic lodges. Several Jews served as officers in the two so-
cieties, and just as today many of those active in the larger community
are also active in the Jewish community, these same men were also the
leaders in the first Jewish society, the Hebrew Benevolent Associa-
tion.22

For additional insight into the probable attitude of Houston
toward Jews, Schlam reports that, on the occasion of the founding of the
Hebrew Benevolent Association in Houston in 1855, an article appeared in
a local paper that said in part:

... We have the pleasure to be personally acquainted with several of the above-named gentlemen [officers named] ... and know them to be among the most kind-hearted, humane, and high-minded business men of our city ... [Schlam, p. 41]

Schlam interprets this article as indicating not that there were underlying doubts about the integrity of Jewish businessmen, but, rather, that some Jews were known and established in the community by that early date. Another significant fact that Schlam feels indicated the community's positive recognition of the Jews in Houston, along with a willingness to accept them into the social and civic life of the community, was the deliberate inclusion of the Hebrew Benevolent Association in the 1856 Fourth of July parade and festivities (Schlam, p. 44).

As further insight into the social position of Jews in the general Gulf Coast area, Schlam quotes a letter written by Michael Seeligson in 1853, just after he had been elected to the post of mayor of Galveston. Seeligson was replying to a congratulatory letter from his friend Isaac Leeser, a leader in the Jewish community in Philadelphia and founder of the Occident:

... I accepted the office not for the sake of lucre, but merely to thwart the designs of a certain clique who, by the by, were preaching publically the crusades against our nation [the Jews]. This is certainly an evidence, if our people would only sustain their rights and privileges in this republican country, and demean themselves accordingly, they can be elevated to any office they aspire. [Schlam, fn. 16, pp. 16-17]

The letter indicates some hostility toward Jews, but as Schlam notes, it is hard to tell if that was the prevalent attitude or just political tactics on the part of Seeligson's opposition. Since Seeligson did win the election, the influence of the group he mentioned was not decisive. It might be well to mention at this point that in Galveston,
a port city located only fifty miles from Houston, Jews attained high positions of respect in public life very early, whereas in Houston there has never been a Jewish mayor.

By 1860, the Jews in Houston were established both as a Jewish community and as part of the larger, general community. Theirs was not the largest Jewish community in Texas (Galveston's probably was), but it was "the only one so organized" (Schlam, p. 56). Galveston had a cemetery by 1860, but other communal developments did not take place until the end of the decade (Schlam, fn. 1, p. 59).

Growth and Reform (1861-1889)

Whereas, in 1860, there were sixty-eight Jewish adults in Houston, Schlam's census tables for 1870 (pp. 71-78) indicate a possible total Jewish population in Houston of 112 adults (sixty-two males, fifty females). They were still predominately merchants. By 1877, the Jewish population of Houston was 461. (The Jewish population of Galveston was 1000.)

As Houston grew as a community, the participation of Jews in that community, as well as within their own Jewish community, also grew. In 1868, Morris A. Levy and Henry S. Fox were part of the group (which included prominent Gentiles, such as T. H. Scanlan and A. Botts) that organized the Houston Ship Channel Company for the purpose of dredging Buffalo Bayou to create a channel for ocean-going vessels. J. Reichman was an alderman of the city, and Henry S. Fox was one of the original directors of the Houston Board of Trade and Cotton Exchange (Cohen, p. 13).

In 1870, the congregation of Beth Israel held dedication
ceremonies for the cornerstone of a new synagogue to be built at Franklin and Crawford in Second Ward (see figure 1), known as the Franklin Avenue Temple, where they remained until 1908. Something of the relationship of the Jews in Houston to the rest of the community can be gleaned by the reaction of the community to the event. According to Cohen (p. 19), the occasion was "duly heralded" and a newspaper account, calling it the great public event of the week, said that no less than 1000 people, including the mayor, aldermen, various other city officials, and Masonic bodies, marched in the parade and that "all classes of Houstonians have taken a warm interest in its inauguration."

Even though Beth Israel had begun as an Orthodox congregation, from the earliest entries in the minutes, which were started in 1861, "there is apparent a basic trend toward Reform" (Cohen, p. 9). The path traced by Beth Israel in moving toward Reform was similar to that taken by many German Jewish congregations throughout America (although Beth Israel may have moved along it more rapidly than many others). That is, it experienced the same dissensions and arguments that occurred elsewhere when one group within a congregation wanted changes and another did not. For example, after the Reform-minded members of Beth Israel had succeeded in 1868 in getting the Minhag American Prayer Book, written by Wise in Cincinnati, adopted for use, the August 1869 minutes note that the books were "stolen," presumably by some of the dissenting members! In 1873, there were again heated arguments over the question of buying an organ. (In 1868, the motion had been heatedly debated and finally tabled. As noted earlier, Orthodox synagogues do not allow the singing to be accompanied by musical instruments.) This time the motion passed. In 1874, Beth Israel joined the Union of Hebrew Congregations
Fig. 1. SYNAGOGUE/TEMPLE LOCATIONS, 1870-1910.
(though financial difficulties caused it to temporarily withdraw shortly thereafter). In 1879 a motion was passed requiring any nonmembers visiting the temple to remove their hats before entering (in Orthodox synagogues, heads of males must be covered). Four years later (in 1883), however, the membership voted down a resolution requiring both members and visitors to remove their hats during services. By 1884, Cohen says (p. 30), the minutes clearly show that a conflict was developing which would result in the first "cleavage" in Beth Israel's history. (A second schism would occur some fifty-five years later.)

The cleavage of the congregation occurred in 1887. By this time the Russian wave of immigration had begun and the number of sympathetic adherents to traditional Judaism had evidently grown to some extent within the congregation. The minority "dissenting" group opposed to reforms withdrew from the congregation and, two years later (in 1889), formed a second congregation, Adath Yeshurun, which adhered to traditional Orthodox views. With the dissenters gone, Beth Israel could continue on the route to Classical Reform unimpeded. Beth Israel became a "temple" (as Reform Jews call their house of worship), not a synagogue (Cohen, p. 23).

An idea of the general development of the Jewish community in Houston at the time of the cleavage (i.e., the community the Russian immigrants found upon their arrival in Houston) can be gotten from the list of "Hebrew Organizations" in the 1886-87 Houston City Directory. They were:

- Lone Star Lodge, I. O. B'nai B'rith (org. 1874) 42 members
- Hebrew Congregation Beth Israel (org. 1859) 60 members
- Young Men's Hebrew Association (org. 1878) 60 members
- Ahavas Scholem (org. 1885) 18 members
- Ladies' Hebrew Benevolent Association (org. 1874) 61 members
- Ladies' Literary and Musical Union (org. 1884) 40 members
The Lone Star Lodge was a chapter of the Independent Order of B'nai B'rith, the first Jewish fraternal order in the United States, that had been founded by the new immigrant German Jews in New York in 1843 as an organization for social life and mutual benefit. As Jews became self-sustaining, the organization turned from self-help to charity for others and then to broad education programs, a developmental pattern generally followed by the east Europeans when they formed their organizations (Levinger, p. 249).

The Young Men's Hebrew Association had been founded initially in New York in 1874 by a group of young German Jews who wanted a partly social, partly cultural (but not religious) group; it was modeled, more or less, after the YMCA, and attempted to unite Americanism and Judaism (Levinger, p. 258).

The president of Ahavas Scholem was P. S. Nussbaum, who was later to become the first president of the Adath Yeshurun congregation.

The Ladies' Hebrew Benevolent Association, if it followed the pattern of the Galveston association by the same name, was an adjunct to the Hebrew Benevolent Association, and was formed to minister directly to the needs of women and children.

The Ladies' Literary and Musical Union, as the name implies, was probably a social and cultural association for Jewish women.

The same City Directory also showed that many more Jews now held prominent positions in the business and civic spheres. One (Henry Fox) was a director of the Houston Gaslight Company; another was president of the Houston Electric Light and Power Company; and John Reichman, the former alderman, was listed as City Secretary and Treasurer. (Of particular interest is the fact that Jews were then associated with the
utility companies, for today in Houston, according to the regional di-
rector of the Jewish Anti-Defamation League, they are conspicuously
absent.)

Thus, similar to conditions elsewhere, Russian immigrants, upon
their arrival in Houston, found an entrenched and prosperous German-
Jewish community.

The Period of Russian Immigration (1890-1925)

Although the Russian immigration to America began in the 1880s,
the first Russian immigrants probably did not begin to reach Houston
until the end of that decade. As has been noted earlier, because of the
large number of Jews in New York City and the abject poverty and problem
conditions there, Jewish leaders embarked upon a program encouraging the
new immigrants to settle in less populated areas of the country. Rabbi
Henry Cohen of Galveston and Jacob Schiff of New York City helped direct
some of this immigration to Galveston. In contrast to the Russians ar-
riving in New York who, finding industrialization in full swing, had to
look for work in sweat shops (Handlin, p. 17), those east Europeans who
came to Texas found a pioneer country where they still could begin as
peddlers, just as the German Jews before them had done.

Whether the majority of the Russian immigrants to Houston came
as a result of the German Jews' attempts to direct immigration away from
New York (and other large cities) or whether they came under other cir-
cumstances is a subject that, to this writer's knowledge, has not yet
been investigated. Presumably, after their arrival in Galveston under
whatever circumstance, they then tended to settle in areas of the state
where they had relatives or friends. One east European immigrant who,
at the age of nine, came with her family to Galveston in 1909 to join
her father, who had arrived five years earlier, said:

We then took the train to Fort Worth . . . We went there because an uncle who was already an established citizen there and who had raised papa [back in Russia] "guaranteed" for us that we would be no burden, etc. In those days, before you could come to America, someone had to make such a guarantee.24

Communal and Religious Development. While the Russian immigrants began coming to Houston in the late 1800s, the majority must have come in the very early 1900s, judging by the number of organizations reflecting east European interests that grew from none (or perhaps one—Ahavas Scholem) in 1886–87 to a few in 1901 to relatively many by 1916.

The kinds and numbers of organizations existing at the turn of the century are documented in a 1901 issue (Vol. 1, No. 1) of the B'nai B'rith Advocate, a newspaper published by B'nai B'rith Houston Lodge #434, the second B'nai B'rith lodge in Houston, which was formed in 1893. (It should be noted, however, that not all organizations existing in the city are necessarily included in the list that follows and other lists cited subsequently.)25 The Advocate listed the following under "Directory of Houston's Jewish Organizations":

Congregations:
    Beth Israel
    *Adath Jeshurun [sic]
    Lone Star Lodge, #210
    Houston Lodge, #434
    *Anschell Hirsch Lodge, #200, Order Brith Abraham
    *Adath Zion Society
    *Bikor Cholim Society
    Young Men's Hebrew Society
    Ladies' Relief Society
    Ladies' Aid Society [formed 1895 and connected with Beth Israel]
    Ladies' Benevolent Society
    *Ladies' Auxiliary, Adath Jeshurun [sic] Congregation

*In this table and succeeding ones in this chapter, asterisks indicate those organizations with primarily east European and/or Orthodox membership, as determined by the author.
In 1906, the Jewish Literary Society was formed; it quickly became a focal point of social activity for Houston Jews and remained so for many years. Between 1906 and 1910, according to the City Directory, five new organizations reflecting east European and/or Orthodox interests were formed.

Also by 1910, two more Orthodox Jewish congregations had been formed. For as the Jewish population grew, Adath Yeshurun, located in the Third Ward on Preston Avenue and Hamilton Street (see figure 1), could not serve all of the city's Orthodox Jews (because it was too strenuous a walk on the Sabbath for those Jews residing in the trans-Bayou districts). Therefore, in 1905, Adath Israel, another Orthodox synagogue and the third congregation to make its appearance in Houston, was formed in the Fifth Ward (see figure 1) to serve these families. When a great number of Jewish families moved into the Sixth Ward (around Houston and Washington avenues), another Orthodox synagogue, Congregation Adath Emeth, was organized in 1910 (Gold, 1939:90-92).

In the period between 1870 and 1908, Temple Beth Israel completed the transition to Classical Reform. As Cohen notes, "Activities surrounding the Temple lose their extra-religious aspect. The congregants no longer use their meetings as a sounding board for their trials and vexations. Decorousness and dignity replace the warmth and excitement that were found in the early minutes" (p. 23). The rabbinical leadership of Beth Israel finally became stabilized (there had been a succession of rabbis since 1860 when the first rabbi, the Reverend Z. Emmich, was hired), with the arrival, in 1900, of Dr. Henry Barnston from England. In 1908, the congregation, again feeling the need for new quarters, moved somewhat south from their building on Franklin and
Crawford to a newly built temple at Lamar and Crawford.

In 1916 the Jewish Literary Society published a history of their group (they had grown from fifty members to 400 in nine years). In this publication they listed the Jewish organizations that existed in Houston at that time, along with their membership number, and the year each was organized. The growing strength of groups with predominantly east European or Orthodox appeal is apparent. The Jewish organizations as listed in the *History of the Jewish Literary Society* (1906-1916) were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Membership</th>
<th>Year Organized</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Adath Emeth</em></td>
<td>75</td>
<td>1910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Adath Israel</em></td>
<td>60</td>
<td>1906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Adath Yeshurun</em></td>
<td>260</td>
<td>1891&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beth Israel</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>1854</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LODGES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Herzl, No. 608, I.O.B.B.</em></td>
<td>200</td>
<td>1908</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houston Lodge, No. 434, I.O.B.B.</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>1893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lone Star, No. 210, I.O.B.B.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Arbeiter Ring, No. 530</em></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Order Brith Jacob, Supreme Lodge</em></td>
<td>66</td>
<td>1909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Order Brith Jacob, Houston Lodge No. 1</em></td>
<td>66</td>
<td>1916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Order Brith Abraham, Anshebell Hirsch Lodge No. 200</em></td>
<td>170</td>
<td>1894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Order Brith Abraham, Zecharya</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosenfield Lodge No. 575</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>1915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Progressive Order of the West</em></td>
<td>170</td>
<td>1904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Sons and Daughters of Zion</em></td>
<td>60</td>
<td>1908</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Houston Zion Society</em></td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council of Jewish Women</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>1913</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Jewish Charities</td>
<td>428</td>
<td>1914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concordia Club [social]</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>1903 [1901]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beth Israel Alumni</td>
<td>190</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Olympic Club</em></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice Institute Menorah Society</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young Men's Hebrew Association</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>1916&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Yiddish Library</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>1912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Houston-Palestine Welfare Society</em></td>
<td>60</td>
<td>1915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Beth Scholom Alumni</em></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ladies Aid Society of Temple Beth Israel</td>
<td>250</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Adath Yeshurun Ladies Auxiliary</em></td>
<td>75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish Literary Society</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>1906</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>Year chartered.

<sup>b</sup>Reorganized.
The Herzl Lodge, a chapter of B'nai B'rith, had been organized in 1906 (Gold, 1939:88) by a group belonging to Orthodox synagogues.

The Arbeiter Ring (Workmen's Circle), organized in 1915 ("by fifteen members of the Houston Yiddish Library--a Jewish literary club . . ." ["Workmen's Circle," 1965:7]), attracted those Jews whom Handlin describes as secularists. They wished to maintain the Jews' cultural identity and preserve Yiddish as a language. They were generally thought of by others as "socialists."

The Concordia Club was a social club which, according to one native Houstonian of that era, "you could not get into if you weren't Reform." (Although the History of the Literary Society gave 1903 as the year the club was organized, the Concordia appears in the City Directory of 1900-01 under "Clubs," indicating that it must have been organized by 1901. The Jewish Literary Society's directory listed the membership as "male.")

The Rice Menorah Society was an organization for Jewish students on the campus of Rice Institute.

The Young Men's Hebrew Association, originally formed in the 1870s, had been dissolved in 1881 and then later revived. (But as with the other organizations, there are discrepancies among sources regarding dates.)

While the Russian immigration to Houston had its share of radicals, socialists, and communists, they were always in the minority in Houston. Replicas of New York socialist organizations, like the Workmen's Circle (Arbeiter Ring) were formed, but they were relatively inconspicuous on the Houston scene.

Zionists were also a minority group in the Houston Jewish
community. Louis A. Freed, a Houstonian of Reform background who was an early leader of the movement, noted that "at the turn of the century . . . there were but a few isolated Zionist groups . . . [in] Texas. . . . [They] were composed mainly of the religious or newly arrived immigrants from Russia" (Gold, 1939:70). The Zionist Circle formed in 1907 was considered "un-American" and "foolhardy" by Houston Jews (Gold, 1939:86).

In fact, the Jewish Literary Society, formed in 1906, was actually organized by a group who had been originally called together to form a Zionist society.

. . . Pursuant to a call issued by . . . a number of young people gathered at 405 Hamilton Street to organize a Zionist society. The meeting place was the vestry rooms of Adath Yeshurun Synagogue. . . . The call failed in its mission, as those answering same were mostly young men and women whose views did not coincide with the views of those issuing the call. These young people felt that a society such as they wished to organize should be on a broader basis than one catering to only one line of thought. [History of the Jewish Literary Society, 1916:5]

The composition of the Jewish Literary Society included the entire range of religious sentiment—Reform, Orthodox, and ultra-Orthodox. Almost the entire young community belonged, showing that, in certain instances at least, the Jews from different divisions did mix.

Relations with Fellow Jews. Similar to the pattern elsewhere, the new immigrants to Houston found primarily an entrenched German Reform community who regarded them as inferior. One native Houstonian informant commented that her mother referred to the new immigrants as the "hinter Berliners" (behind Berlin), and of course, the Russians referred to the Germans as the "Deutscheher Yehudim" (German Jews). But the German Jews in Houston did not engage in this "put-down" behavior to
the extent that the German Jews of New York did. A perceptive and edu-
cated widow now in her nineties, a native Texan, who moved to Houston
from San Antonio in 1913, and who, according to another informant,
though never wealthy, moved in wealthy circles (both Jewish and Gentile),
made the following comment:

... In San Antonio and Galveston, the divisions [German vs.
east Europeans] were more marked than in Houston, which had a
"much more democratic people."

In Houston, differences between social groups were never so
marked ... Because many here were lagging behind in education
and all—they were not really cultivated here. There are two
kinds of culture—"culture of the heart" and "culture of the
mind." Houstonians were not cultured in the broad sense. They
had culture of the heart, so to speak ... 

But even though social distance between the two groups in Hou-
ton was not so noticeable as it was elsewhere, it did exist. "Marriage
between a Reform [i.e., a German] and an Orthodox or a Conservative
[i.e., an east European]," says an east European informant, "would have
been like a marriage between a 'goy' and a 'yehuda.'"

Of particular interest is the comment by the same widow quoted
above who said that it was not so much that Houston German Jews looked
down upon east European Jews as that Galveston Jews looked down upon
Houston Jews in general, including German Jews.

... Galveston thought Houston Jews were impossible! They just
would have nothing to do with us! When they found someone
civilized, they really would be very nice. Galveston was another
"Our Crowd"—even more than San Antonio. They all knew each
other and had something in common—and that something was preju-
dice against east European Jews!

From accounts written about the early history of Galveston, it
would seem that from the beginning, compared to the Jews in Houston, the
ones in Galveston were a more "elite" group, many being related to the
prominent eastern Jews mentioned in Our Crowd. Early pioneers in
Galveston included, for example, the Dyers from Baltimore; Joseph Osterman, originally from Holland and Philadelphia, who married a Dyer sister in Baltimore; M. Seeligson, who was married to Adelaide Gottschalk, aunt of the great composer; and Sam Maas (no kin to this writer), who married the sister of Offenbach of musical fame.27

According to the same informant quoted earlier, when Galveston Jews began moving to Houston [after the 1900 Galveston hurricane], "things started picking up . . . They lent a new tone to Houston." The minutes of Beth Israel evidently reflect this too, for Cohen states that a lethargy prevailed over the congregation, as well as in Houston generally, from 1882 until the early 1900s, when "vitality" returned. According to Cohen, this rejuvenation was due to two factors: the influx of Galveston Jews and the discovery of oil at Spindletop near Beaumont in 1901. It is thought by many informants that Galveston Jews brought "culture" to Houston Jews. One informant said, "Galveston was to Texas what San Francisco was to California."

Relations with Gentiles. According to informants, relations between Jews and Gentiles in both Houston and Galveston were very good. Reform Jews mingled with the community at large, many having prominent positions; with the influx of the Russian Jews, this tendency toward integration continued.

Because the Jews were always a small minority in Houston, even though many tended to settle in the same geographical areas as other Jews of their socioeconomic level (richer and/or Reform Jews tended to live in different pockets of the city than those less rich and/or generally Conservative/Orthodox), their block would still have many more
Gentiles in it than Jews. In contrast to New York then, where, according to informants, Jews would live together in communities and never see anyone else but Jews in their entire lifetime, Houston Jews came into daily contact with Gentiles.

Many Jews in Houston (including the east Europeans) had some Gentile friends. Many (particularly the east Europeans) continued to join the Masonic Order and Eastern Star. Jews were members of the Rotary Club.

One fifty-year-old, third-generation, Reform, native Houstonian pointed out that Rabbi Henry Cohen of Galveston, Rabbi David Lefkowitz of Dallas, and Rabbi Henry Barnston (who became rabbi of Temple Beth Israel in 1900) of Houston had a tremendous influence upon Jewish-Gentile relations.

They believed in integration. . . . Integration is living together, working together, not ghettoizing. We blend together. That's the idea of Classical Reform. . . . We talk of Negro and white integration—we don't mean intermarriage. But simply not thinking the other is the enemy.

Rabbi Cohen of Galveston was one of the most respected men in this part of the country and was held in high esteem by Jew and Gentile alike. Rabbi Barnston, besides being "educated, intelligent, cultured," was also British—and an English accent was still a mark of status in this country to both Gentiles and Jews; this probably helped the "image" of the Houston Jew. The widow quoted earlier said about Dr. Barnston:

When Dr. Barnston came here he was a very young man and a graduate of a college in London and possibly Heidelberg. I don't think his congregation understood him at all and never did.

There was a nucleus here when I came [in 1913], an organization made up of Ima Hogg, Dr. Barnston, Mrs. Cherry, and a few others. They were the nucleus of the symphony, on whose board I served about thirty-five years.
To be sure, some anti-Semitism existed in Houston. (Anti-Semitism is said to have become a "problem" in America only after the 1880s. In the 1870s and 1880s there was some hostility directed toward the Jews as the group improved its position, but the expressions were scattered, with no deeper implications. By the 1890s, however, the hostility became more widespread. It increased after World War I when European attitudes were brought into America, and did not subside until after World War II [Handlin, 1970:30; Glazer, 1960:1699].)

Nevertheless, according to informants, anti-Semitism always seemed to be of a milder form in Houston than that often found in other cities. One seventy-two-year-old matron of east European background, commenting about the relative lack of anti-Semitism in Houston, said, "Whatever happens in the rest of the country never happens as much here," and attributed it to the fact that prosperity in Houston was always relatively higher than elsewhere.

That anti-Semitism was present in Houston to some degree is implicit in an editorial entitled "Caricature of the Jew," which appeared in 1908 in the Jewish Herald of Houston, a newspaper founded in this year. There had been a vaudeville performance during the previous week in which an actor had caricatured the Jew; the actor himself was Jewish. The author of the editorial denounced the Houston Jews who, he said, not only did not stand up and loudly disapprove, but were among those in the audience laughing most loudly.

... The whole proceeding was in bad form, and should be denounced by all Jews. ... Some Jewesses of high social standing enjoyed it thoroughly and recommended it to their friends as a good show. ... 

... The moral is that no relief will come in this matter until Jewish self-respect comes higher and more general than it is at present. ...
The following year (1909) the Jewish Literary Society passed a resolution to boycott any theatre "that would present a Jewish character in any way that would give offence to our people, or cast reflection on them," and "all theaters were so informed of this, and promised their fullest cooperation" (History of the Jewish Literary Society, 1916:13). In 1913, this same group formed a censor committee to see that the Jew was not ridiculed in fact, deed, or play.

An interesting episode recalled by an informant, which occurred around 1911-1912, illustrates something of the nature of Jewish leadership in Houston in this period as regards relations between fellow Jews and between Jews and other Americans. It was rumored that some Jews were involved in "white slavery" in New York City. H. J. Dannenbaum, a native Houstonian and attorney, was asked by a Jewish group (the B'nai B'rith District Grand Lodge #7) to investigate this situation. He did, and discovered that while Jews were not the main instigators, some Jews were involved, and he loudly denounced them. He began leading a crusade for these Jews to be denounced by the Jewish leaders of New York. Some Jews felt he should not defame his fellow Jews. The following comments written in reply by Dannenbaum in an editorial in a 1913 issue of the Jewish Herald typify the rhetoric of the Herald at this time (and presumably that of the leadership of the Jewish Houston community and other Texas Jewish communities):

... The lack of patriotism which subordinates the welfare of our country to the interest of our race, deserves as little consideration as the ravings of anti-Semitism.

According to the informant, Dannenbaum was appointed as special assistant to the Department of Justice to continue the investigation and was subsequently responsible for the passage of the Mann White Slavery Act,
which he helped draft.

Residential Locations. The early business district of Houston was centered around Buffalo Bayou, Main Street, Franklin, Congress, etc., with residences dispersed around it.

As indicated in the history of synagogue development in the city, the Jews at first lived in and around the Third Ward, near the first two locations of Temple Beth Israel (see figure 1). When the east Europeans began moving into Houston, they tended to settle in the Second Ward (around Franklin and Navigation) and Sixth Ward (around Houston and Washington avenues). Jews were therefore somewhat dispersed over the city.

However, the residential pattern in 1913 was perceived differently by the informant (quoted earlier) who moved to Houston in that year:

... They absolutely had a ghetto. They lived on Congress. On Commerce. The Raphaels and Hirsches lived right in town. On Rusk, Walker, and those parts of town—because no one lived much further than McGowan. One or two began to build on Main Street. The Levys built a beautiful home on Gray and Main. ... Some Jews lived among the very wealthy non-Jews on Main. Then Montrose opened up.

During the period from 1915 to 1920, the residential pattern as perceived by the east European matron quoted earlier (who had arrived in Galveston at the age of nine and had lived permanently in Houston since 1915) was as follows (see figure 2):

Most of the Jews still lived in the Third Ward, for the temple [Beth Israel] was still located there. It was referred to as the "silk stocking" district. Many of the Jews lived in the Second Ward, and some were around Washington Avenue in the First Ward. Practically no Jews lived in the Heights.

By 1917 to 1920, a few Jews had moved on the west side of town—into Montrose, Avondale, Westheimer, Hyde Park.
Fig. 2. RESIDENTIAL MOVEMENT OF HOUSTON JEWS, 1870-1950.
Then Washington Terrace [further south] opened up and those Jews who could afford to buy homes moved there.

Then about 1924, Riverside Terrace [further south still] opened. A few Jews began to move there, along with the Gentile population.

The subdivision of Washington Terrace was bounded on the south by Blodgett Street, on the north by Alabama, and on the west by Almeda. Riverside Terrace extended south from Blodgett to North and South MacGregor. Later, North and South MacGregor, winding streets flanking Brays Bayou, would be referred to by the Jews as the "Jewish River Oaks" (River Oaks was an exclusive subdivision that opened around 1915 and which was closed to Jews).

By the end of 1925, then, the Jews were moving further south, along with the Gentile population. Rice Institute, which had opened in 1912, was considered to be "the end of town."

**Synagogue and Organizational Development at the End of the Period.** In 1925 Beth Israel again moved further south, this time from its location at Lamar and Crawford to a handsome new temple located at Austin and Holman streets. The following Jewish congregations were listed in the 1925 Houston *City Directory*:

- Brith Abraham Association [incorrectly listed, as this was a fraternal association]
- Congregation Adath Emeth
- Congregation Adath Israel
- Congregation Adath Yeshurun
- Congregation Beth Israel

All of the above, with the exception of Beth Israel, were Orthodox. That pattern is similar to the one existing elsewhere in the United States at this time, when there were numerous, small independent
Orthodox synagogues.

As has been said earlier, it was the east Europeans who filled the ranks of Conservative Judaism. Though not listed above, the first Conservative congregation in Houston, Beth El, had been formed in 1924. Its charter members were dissidents from within the Orthodox congregation of Adath Yeshurun, who, similar to many other east Europeans elsewhere in the country, felt that the Orthodox was too orthodox. After Beth Israel's move in 1925, Beth El bought the temple at Lamar and Crawford, where it remained until 1945.

An east European informant in describing the congregational choices available in early Houston also made a revealing statement about the characteristics of the Russian immigrant:

Before 1924, the immigrants had only two congregational choices—strict Orthodox or nothing. Even if the immigrant had not been religious, he still could not have joined the Reform temple because he would not have been rich enough! He could not have gone to their clubs, etc. The newcomers had to work, work, study, and work.

Conservative congregations may have formed earlier in some other states and cities, but once one was organized in Houston, it too grew. Later, during the Depression, Beth El would merge back again with Adath Yeshurun and be called Beth Yeshurun (as it is known today), but the congregation would remain Conservative (with a small chapel for the Orthodox). Today, in Houston, as elsewhere in the United States, the Conservative branch of Judaism has maintained a steady growth, rivaling that of the Reform.

The following "Jewish Organizations" were listed in the same 1925 City Directory:
The Middle Period: Stabilization and Conflict (1926-1955)

In 1925 what could be called the "early period" of Houston's history ended; the "tone" of the community had probably been set. With immigration virtually stopped in 1924, the Jewish community in Houston, as elsewhere in the United States, proceeded to develop with its mixed German and east European population.

The remaining historical account is a highly compressed one, but is presented in order to provide at least some historical perspective on developments leading up to the present.

Communal Development. In about 1930, the Westwood Country Club was formed to replace the Concordia. Like the Concordia, the Westwood Country Club was one which "in the beginning you couldn't get into if you weren't Reform" (informant).

By 1936 the Jewish community was ready to organize a Jewish Community Council. An issue of the Jewish Herald-Voice (as the Jewish Herald was now called) commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the Council included the following statement from a letter written on February 4, 1936, to the National Council of Jewish Federations and
Welfare Funds:

We wish to develop and organize a Jewish Community Council which will take care of all Jewish social welfare and philanthropic work, local, non-local and overseas. We have felt the need for such a permanent organization.

The article went on to say that "the letter was sent through the action of a committee appointed by Simon Sakowitz and Joe Weingarten and chaired by Mrs. Max H. Nathan. . . . The Committee voted itself a permanent committee of organization and proceeded to set up the Jewish Community Council of Metropolitan Houston."

Because today the Jewish Community Council is such an important part of the organizational life of the Jewish community, not only in Houston, but all over the United States, it is useful to review briefly the circumstances surrounding its simpler beginnings first in the United States and then in Houston.

Back in the time when the German Jews were engaged in aiding the new east European immigrants, the agencies and funding required to handle the immense needs of these immigrants, coupled with the already existing philanthropic and charitable organizations for their own people, resulted in tremendous duplication of effort and competitive appeals for funds. Clearly a better system of organization was required. Thus, in Boston in 1895, the Federation movement appeared, whereby many of the various local Jewish philanthropic and charitable organizations combined their money-raising appeals into one large annual campaign. Other cities followed suit and formed "Federations" of their local charities. Through the Federation method, more money was raised, competition was avoided, and philanthropy was put on a more dignified basis. By 1932, fifteen Federations had associated themselves into a Council—
National Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds—so they could exchange ideas and discuss their common problems.

In keeping with this steady growth toward combination and cooperation, temporarily in 1934 and 1935 and then permanently in 1939, the two largest committees for raising money for overseas needs, the Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), formed in 1914 to help resettle refugee Jews in all parts of the world, and the United Palestine Appeal (UPA), concerned with resettling Jews specifically in Palestine (the State of Israel was created from part of Palestine), combined their fund-raising campaigns into one joint campaign under the name of the "United Jewish Appeal" (UJA). Later, the United Jewish Appeal combined its fund-raising campaign with that of the local Federations under the banner of the "United Jewish Campaign."

On the local scene, M. N. Dannenbaum, a second-generation native Houstonian, told of the events just preceding the formation of the Jewish Community Council in Houston.

In 1932 Joe Weingarten came to me and said: "Maurice, I know you have to raise money for the B'nai B'rith. And I have to raise money for the Zionists. And Simon Sakowitz has to raise money for the 'Joint' [the Joint Distribution Committee]. Don't you think it would be a good idea to get together and have one campaign"—this was just before World War II—"and we can divide the funds in proportion to the amount that was raised last year?"

I said it was a good idea. And we started campaigning early in 1932. It didn't get very far though because the President closed the banks within a few weeks after we started.

But this led to the creation of the Jewish Community Council a year or so later. And Jack Lightman was the first executive director.

The Herald-Voice article previously referred to went on to say that in 1936, after the letter was written,
... the first meeting of the Council representatives heard a detailed outline of a proposed program, created a public relations committee and set up the machinery for the annual United Jewish Campaign.

About five years after the inception of the Council (in 1941), the Houston Jewish Community Center was begun. (Its immediate predecessors were the YMHAS and YWHA's that had been organized in 1933 at Chartres and Clay streets.) "It was formed as a service to youth so they would have a place to get together in the community without a direct congregational identification" (informant). It first existed as a committee of the Council, but very soon became a member of the Council. Initially its program was conducted in a two-story building owned by the Council at the corner of Caroline and Blodgett; in the late forties, it moved to its own building on Hermann Drive and Almeda.

Synagogue Development. In 1937 another small Orthodox synagogue, Beth Jacob (composed primarily of former members of Adath Israel), was founded in Washington Terrace on Cleburne and Hamilton streets near Albert Sidney Johnston Junior High School. Around 1939, Adath Emeth and Adath Israel moved from Sixth Ward and Fifth Ward respectively to Washington Terrace, Adath Emeth to Cleburne and Ennis and Adath Israel to Truxillo and Live Oak.

In 1943, Beth Israel experienced its second cleavage over a mixture of issues, which included Zionism. The dissenting minority organized a new Reform congregation, Emanu El. (A more detailed account of the split is given later in the section on Zionism.)

In 1945, financial difficulties forced Adath Yeshurun and Beth El to merge and build a new synagogue, called Beth Yeshurun, near the University of Houston on Southmore Street.
Residential Locations. During the 1940s, the majority of Houston Jews still lived east of Main Street (and mainly east of Almeda Road) in Washington Terrace and Riverside Terrace down to North and South MacGregor. (In general, the more Reform and/or wealthier Jews lived further south.) Some of the wealthier Jews were now living around Glen Haven and Underwood streets (behind what is now the Shamrock Hilton Hotel) and a few were in the Post Oak area on the west. Some still lived around Avondale and Montrose. A few, mainly of the older immigrant generations, continued to live in First, Second, and Sixth wards.

The pattern of Jews living in predominately Gentile blocks, even though they tended to live in much the same areas, was still the prevailing one. While Houston as a city was continuing to grow, its physical landscape remained an open, suburban, uncrowded one, with a pace and character typical of many Southern regions—easy-going and relatively provincial.

Relations with Gentiles. As in the earlier days, relations between Gentiles and Jews were good. Houston Jews continued to mix with the community at large, for, as noted earlier, the east Europeans continued the tendency toward integration. Moreover, by now, many east Europeans had repeated the success stories of the earlier German Jews (names like Weingarten and Battelstein were now prominent) and they also were playing significant roles in the development, growth, and civic life of the community.

As in the earlier days, while some forms of anti-Semitism continued to exist in Houston in the 1940s, most of the Jewish residents of the city still felt that it was in milder forms than existed in other
communities. As far as residential locations were concerned, River Oaks still had restrictions against Jews, as did several other areas, such as Shadyside (off Bissonnet, near Institute Lane, behind the Museum of Fine Arts). The same commemorative article in the Herald-Voice referred to earlier noted that in the years 1947, 1949, and 1956 the increasing number of subdivisions having covenants barring Jews was a problem under discussion.

The same article also noted that, in 1949, ads in the local newspapers were arousing social and religious prejudices and that a resolution was passed by the Jewish Community Council condemning them. In the election year of 1952, anti-Semitic literature was flooding Texas and ". . . there was much discussion as to what to do, but little could be done." In 1956, the Council passed a motion to do something about the distribution of Gideon Bibles in public schools, the use of evangelists in public school assemblies, and the formation of religious societies in the high schools.

The Issue of Zionism. From 1933 on, Houston received its share of refugees from Nazi Germany. This influx did not disturb the basic structural life of the Houston Jewish community. However, the German situation did accentuate the problem of where the Jews were to go and brought the issue of Zionism in Houston more to the fore.

Zionism had begun in central and east Europe in the 1890s when the never ceasing anti-Semitism convinced at least one group of Jews that the only solution was for Jews to have a homeland of their own. In its early days, Zionism received very little support from American Jews who, as has been said, were primarily Reform and considered America
their Zion. A few American Jews were sympathetic to the idea of Palestine, at least as a cultural experiment, and there was some support from some of the new east European immigrants, but even most east Europeans considered America their homeland, and Zionism was simply a distraction from their main task at hand of making a life for themselves in this country (Handlin, p. 36).

It was only after World War I that Zionism gained some strength in the United States. During the war, the Balfour Declaration had been passed, saying that Palestine should be a national homeland for the Jews. The League of Nations confirmed it, and there was endorsement by the United States. Because the Jewish refugee problem after the war was so great, and American immigration gates were now closed, resettlement in Palestine seemed the only solution for the homeless Jews of Europe, quite apart from any nationalistic implications. Thus, for the first time, some non-Zionists cooperated with Zionists in establishing a Jewish Agency in 1926 to help Jews immigrate to Palestine. There was on the part of non-Zionists no political or cultural intent involved; it was simply a matter of expediency in helping to settle homeless refugees.

By the time of Hitler, both during and after World War II, the refugee problem became even more critical, for there was literally no place for thousands of refugee Jews to go. Britain had stopped immigration to Palestine in 1939 as an appeasement to the Arabs; even in 1947, when the refugee problem was greatest, Jews were still not allowed in. During this time, according to Handlin (1970:38), American Jews were divided into three groups: a band of confirmed Zionists who regarded a Jewish political state as their ultimate goal; those against, represented by the anti-Zionist American Council for Judaism, which
maintained a position of complete hostility to any view of the Jews as a separate nationality [which they felt appeared to split the allegiance of American Jews]; and the majority, who refused to take either position. Most Jews had no nationalistic ideology but were concerned with where the thousands of refugees could go. Support of the idea of a Jewish State was seen as the only alternative to complete abandonment of the refugees.

The creation of Israel in 1948, according to Handlin (1970:38), clarified the situation by showing that the interest of American Jews in such a Jewish state was primarily humanitarian. Few American Zionists chose to migrate there; their future relationship toward it would be that of philanthropic support. Non-Zionists could no longer argue against the reality of a state that existed. Although they continued to criticize extreme nationalistic tendencies, they also felt obliged to aid Jews overseas. The "middle" majority simply continued to feel some ties of sentiment and religion. They would give philanthropic assistance to Israel for much the same reasons that America would assist other developing countries (Handlin, p. 38).

The situation in Houston regarding Zionism, after the creation of Israel as a state, became much like the general picture described by Handlin. But prior to that time, in the early forties, the issue of Zionism was the focus of a heated controversy in Houston that assumed nationwide proportions within Jewish circles, even receiving coverage in Time magazine (January 17, 1944), and that has had lasting repercussions locally. The rift in the community is still not considered healed by some.

The rift stems from the time in 1943 when the congregation of
Beth Israel, the one Reform temple in the city, found itself divided again, this time over Zionism and the "Basic Principles," a document outlining Beth Israel's adherence to the "cardinal" principles of American Reform Judaism. It is impossible to describe the components of the controversy both accurately and briefly, for accounts and memories vary, and the situation was a complex one. The following summary, which mentions only some of the factors and issues involved, represents a composite of sources.30

In part, the controversy pivoted on the question of which group was to control the future of the congregation. According to informants, the core of Beth Israel's controlling group was composed of Jews, originally from Galveston, who were disciples of Rabbi Henry Cohen, an ardent anti-Zionist. This core group, so it was said, feared losing control to the east European members of Beth Israel, whose numbers had been increasing; many of these newer members had sympathy for more traditional modes of worship. The core group also feared losing control to what they termed a "small, but organized minority" of Zionists within the congregation.

In some ways, then, though it was a power struggle, a basic ideologic difference was involved. The issue was whether the congregation should, in line with its previous history, remain Classical Reform (staunchly Reform in manner of worship and definitely non-Zionist ideologically), the position espoused by Beth Israel's board of trustees, or become neo-Reform (allowing for shades of traditionalism in forms of worship and permitting sympathy with the Zionist movement), a position presumed to be that of many of the east European members.

The pending clash came to head over the question of who would
succeed Dr. Barnston as the senior rabbi at Beth Israel. Rabbi Hyman Judah Schachtel, then a member of the American Council for Judaism, the organization vehemently opposed to Zionism, was the nominee presented by the board of trustees. However, some in the congregation felt that Rabbi Robert I. Kahn, the associate rabbi, then serving in the army on a leave of absence from the congregation, should be the nominee.

At a special meeting of the congregation on August 4, 1943, which has been described as the most hectic and turbulent in Beth Israel's history, Schachtel was elected by a vote of 346 to 91. (Some informants said, however, that the vote did not truly reflect the division of opinion within the congregation, for many members left the meeting early rather than vote publicly.) Although the negative votes were seen by some as votes against Schachtel's anti-Zionist views—that is, as pro-Zionist votes—many of those voting against him were not voting for Zionism per se (most members of the congregation did not know exactly what Zionism was) or against Schachtel personally but for Rabbi Kahn, who they felt deserved the position.

The board of trustees claimed that a small group had voted against Schachtel solely because of his anti-Zionist views and that this group (i.e., the Zionists) posed a threat to Beth Israel's continuing to be guided by the essential principles of American Reform Judaism. As a consequence, the board appointed a committee to draft some Basic Principles to clarify the congregation's Classical Reform position and proposed that they be added to the membership application as a prerequisite for voting privileges. The Basic Principles, as drafted, explicitly defined Judaism as a religion only and unequivocally disavowed a desire for a Jewish state.
At another special meeting held on November 23, 1943, the congregation approved the Basic Principles by a vote of 632 to 168. At this same meeting resolutions, presented by the board, were also approved that condemned the parent bodies of American Reform Judaism for wandering away from the "essentials" of the Reform movement. This latter action contributed to the uproar in the national Jewish community. It was felt by some that Beth Israel was being "used" by the American Council for Judaism to generate support nationally.

For many in the congregation, the central issue was the principle of "fair play," both in regard to the selection of the rabbi and the "forced" imposition of a set of principles, whether or not they agreed with them, as a requirement for voting membership in a Jewish religious community. Many were in accord with the Basic Principles to the extent of feeling that Judaism was a religion only, but were not willing to go so far as asserting anti-Statehood sentiments. Others were upset by the act of controversy itself: in the heated atmosphere of the two special meetings, fanned by the intensive activity in between that served to polarize positions, insults were hurled that are still remembered.

The end result was that some 140 members resigned from Beth Israel (for various reasons) and, in 1944, formed a second Reform congregation, Temple Emanu El. And Houston, according to one informant, acquired the "dubious distinction of being considered a 'hotbed' of the American Council for Judaism." According to another informant, "Houston was unique in its schism over Israel and Zionism, especially at such a critical time as German immigrants fleeing from Hitler and all. We had an ignoble reputation."
As sequels to the controversy, it should be mentioned that Rabbi Kahn, who resigned from his position at Beth Israel in March 1944, accepted the invitation from Emanu El to become its rabbi upon completion of his military service. Upon Israel's becoming a state in 1948, Rabbi Schachtel immediately dropped his membership in the American Council for Judaism and became a supporter of Israel, and the Basic Principles were dropped by Beth Israel soon after.

Although the American Council for Judaism lost impetus, both nationally and locally, after the establishment of Israel, the divisive effects of the Zionism issue within the Houston Jewish community continued for a number of years. Excerpts in the 1961 issue of the Jewish Herald-Voice commemorating the Jewish Community Council's twenty-five years of existence show that in 1952 the Council passed a resolution censoring the American Council for Judaism for statements in the local press impugning the patriotism of its fellow Jews; and in 1957, under the auspices of the Community Relations Committee of the Council, Zionist groups and the American Council for Judaism were brought together to talk over the consequences of unfavorable newspaper publicity.

Houston Jewry after 1955

With the passage of time and the established fact of Israel, Zionism was no longer an issue, even in Houston. Schachtel, formerly anti-Zionist, continued to be a staunch supporter of Israel; in 1967 the Israel Emergency Campaign for funds was held in his congregation. Although many Houston Jews visited Israel, few, including Zionists, went there to live. The overwhelming majority did not want to live there. Although there were still some Houston Jews who wished that the State of
Israel had not been formed, the large majority of them—in Houston as elsewhere in the United States—recognized that Israel was a fait-accompli and felt that they should aid her financially in her struggle for survival.

In 1956 the Jewish community in Houston conducted its first and only survey of itself ("Report on Part I: Survey of the Known Jewish Population of Metropolitan Houston, 1955-1956," by the Population Survey Committee of the Jewish Community Council of Metropolitan Houston, September 1, 1956). The following is a summary of some of the basic findings.

In 1955:

There were thirty-nine member organizations of the Jewish Community Council.

The known Jewish population was 13,504 to 14,854 persons or 4088 households.

Of this population 80% lived in four postal zones—4, 21, 25, and 28 (Bellaire). (While residential locations were dispersed throughout the metropolitan area, no Jews lived in zone 15.) (See figure 3.)

Of this population 81.3% were born in the United States. Over one-half were natives of Houston or were born in the Southwest—"contrary to a widespread view in the community." Of the foreign-born, 72.5% had become United States citizens.

The median age was twenty-seven years—below that of the country as a whole (31.6) but not much below that of Texas (28.8).

The average yearly increase of the Houston Jewish community was estimated at about 2.5% for the past twenty-five years; but over the past fifty-five years there had been a slow but steady acceleration in rate of increase.

The median household size was four persons; 57% of the households were smaller.

This same report also discussed residential "movement" of the Jewish population. It noted that the southeasterly zone of the city
had the largest concentrations of Jewish families, but that major moves were expected toward the southwest. What was not said was that Negroes were beginning to move into these southeast areas. This development, coupled with others, such as the natural growth of the city, was causing the white population, including Jews, to "move away."

The subsequent supplementary reports on the population survey (1957 through 1961) substantiated that trends toward movement into the southwest had continued, and even accelerated in some cases.

One male informant, who moved to Houston from New York in 1963, said: "By 1963, the center of gravity of the Houston Jewish community had already shifted" to Meyerland (zone 35 in figure 3).

During this time, when the Jews were moving out of zone 4, large garden-type apartments began to appear for the first time in Houston. Because of the lack of extended family living situations, many older widows as well as older couples elected to move into these new apartment units, where many of their friends were already living. The Park Lane Apartments, located near Hermann Drive and the Jewish Community Center, were one of the first they moved into; the new apartment and residential development on the west side of Main Street, particularly on and around North Braeswood, attracted many others.

The flux of movement toward the southwest caused the synagogues that had built in the old area (e.g., Beth Yeshurun near the University of Houston) to move to where their people were. One by one, the Jewish institutions--the synagogues and the Jewish Community Center--all moved across Main Street to the "new Jewish area."

Beth Jacob moved across town from Washington Terrace in 1957, first to temporary quarters on its newly purchased land on Turnberry,
then into its own building at this same location. Adath Emeth and Adath Israel followed suit in 1960-61, the former moving into its newly built synagogue at 4221 South Braeswood, the latter transferring to rented quarters. (In 1965 first Beth Jacob and then Adath Israel merged with Adath Emeth at its South Braeswood site to become the United Orthodox Synagogues.) Beth Yeshurun moved to 4525 Beechnut Street, between Stella Link and Post Oak, in 1963. Beth Israel stayed on at Holman and LaBranch, enlarging and modernizing, until 1967, when it moved into its newly built structure at 5600 North Braeswood, near Hillcroft. The Jewish Community Center moved in 1969 from Hermann Drive to its present location on South Braeswood.

Since Emanu El had chosen back in 1945 to locate in the southwestern section of the city (its temple at 1500 Sunset Boulevard was completed in 1949), it therefore did not have to move. Similarly, two new congregations that formed during the late fifties (Brith Shalom [a splinter group from Beth Yeshurun] and the Houston Congregation for Reform Judaism [a splinter group from Beth Israel]) were able to locate their houses of worship from the beginning in the southwest, the new area of Houston growth.

Before looking at the Houston Jews of today, it might be helpful to highlight some of the historical facts that have contributed to their general "tone" as it became set around 1925, and to summarize some of its salient characteristics, for many of these have continued into the present, as shall be seen.

The first Jews in Houston and elsewhere in Texas were not faced
with an established Sephardic or Gentile community to which they had to adapt because they arrived at the beginning. They participated in the founding of both Texas and Houston. In no other state besides Georgia and California have the Jews been so closely associated with its beginnings (Jewish Encyclopedia, 1901, XII, p. 353). However, Jews in Houston, unlike those in some other cities, such as Galveston, never attained positions of political eminence.

Compared with some other American communities begun at much the same time, Houston had a smaller proportion of Jews. For example, in 1850, when Houston had seventeen adult Jews, Milwaukee had seventy Jewish families. As in other cities founded at this time, the Jews in early Houston were primarily merchants, some of whom became prosperous.

By the time of the Russian immigration, even though the industrialization period had arrived and New York Jews had to work in sweat shops, in the South and in Houston there was still plenty of room for expansion and the peddler. The success stories of many of the early Russian immigrants to Houston began in this way. Later newcomers to the city found it equally easy to get established.

An important factor in setting the tone of the Houston Jewish community for years to come was the early dominance of the Classical Reform branch of Judaism (a status it would hold until very recent years when the three branches of American Judaism started becoming more alike). That is to say, the dominant branch of Judaism in Houston was one in which the Jewish religion had lost most of its peculiarities, the temple had become much like its Protestant counterpart, its creed emphasized that Jews were Jews by religion only (omitting the "peoplehood" aspect of Judaism), and its rabbis encouraged integration. All of these
aspects contributed to Houston Jews' not forming a "distinctive" or "different" group within the city.

In Houston, the early prominent or wealthy Jewish families did not unite to form a self-perpetuating elite group. Social distance between groups was not as marked as elsewhere; Houston was seen as a more democratic city. In the eyes of early Galveston Jews (who comprised such an elite), Houston was a city with "culture of the heart but not of the mind."

Houston Jews always formed a very small minority of the city's population. While they tended to live in certain areas, they nevertheless always lived in predominantly Gentile neighborhoods. Contrary to the circumstances in the large and old cities of the United States, where Jews lived in ghettos and had little or no contact with Gentiles, Jews in Houston always mixed with Gentiles to a great extent.

In Houston there were never any extreme groups like the Hasidic Jews. So-called "radical" groups, like the socialists and Zionists, were always in the minority. There was no Jewish wing in the city library, no Yiddish theatre, no Jewish Baker's Union, no Jewish hospital. In other words, Jews in Houston were not a visible, vocal group.

Jews in Houston, like the city's Gentiles, exhibited the same behavioral characteristics as others living in a small Southern city—i.e., they manifested the courtesy and friendliness common to the region. Whereas the crowded urban conditions in large cities like New York promoted the aggressiveness, rudeness, and pushiness that Southerners consider the hallmark of Easterners, the smaller-city, semirural atmosphere of Houston led to a more easy-going, accepting, provincial way of life for Jew and Gentile alike.
In both Houston and Galveston, relations between Jews and Gentiles were always generally good; in both cities many of the Jews mixed with the community at large, participating in cultural and civic endeavors. In both cities, the early rabbis had done much to promote these good relations between Jew and Gentile. While anti-Semitism always existed in Houston, it seemed to be of a milder form compared to that often found in other cities.

Just as the pattern of immigration affected the development of the different religious branches in America, it also influenced the type of organizations that Jews developed. The history of Jewish life in Houston is a reflection of the general national picture, modified by circumstances unique to Houston.
CHAPTER II

THE CURRENT SETTING

Overview

In looking at Houston Jews in the early 1970s, it might be well
to begin by examining the general environment in the United States to
which the Jews of all cities, including Houston, are now adapting. The
generalizations that follow are impressionistic ones based on readings
in the literature (popular and professional), personal observations,
and informants' statements.

Ethnic identity is "in"; cultural pluralism is seen as a desir-
able state, one that should be encouraged. There is a "generation gap"
with youth criticizing the "establishment"; there is widespread use of
drugs by youth. In the American society in general can be seen an in-
creasing advance toward bureaucracy, complexity, impersonality, and
secularism.

Because of ethnic identity being "in," an environment now exists
for the Jews in general, including Houston Jews, in which there is a new
interest on the part of the Gentile in who the Jew is and what he is
really like. This new and more friendly interest (at least on the part
of some) is due to a complex of factors. It is partly attributable to
the rise of black nationalism, which has encouraged appreciation of all
minorities. According to a Time essay ("The New American Jew," June 25,
1965), an age of alienation exists today and "the Jew is looked to as
the expert in estrangement—the perpetual outsider who somehow knows how to keep warm out there." It may be attributable in part to the Six-Day War of Israel, which, according to most Jews, did much to erase in the minds of Gentiles the old stereotype of the Jew as a helpless nonfighter. The accomplishments and pure survival of the State of Israel, which have won the admiration of many Gentiles, may also be factors contributing to the new interest in Jews.

Whatever the reasons, the important fact is that a relatively friendly climate of interest does exist with respect to the Jews in the United States. Without this friendly environment, they would be adapting in very different ways.

From the author's experience and from informants' accounts, in Houston, as elsewhere in America, the general stereotypes of Jews arising from ignorance are still prevalent (e.g., many think all Jews are rich, all Jews keep kosher, all Jews are smart). Anti-Semitism still persists in varying degrees. But nevertheless there is a new mood for cooperation between Gentiles and Jews, a new interest in interfaith dialogue, that is reflected at the formal level in interfaith workshops, panel discussions, and joint community undertakings. Although the Gentile still perceives the Jew as being "different," he appears to the author to be asking the question "Who are you?" in a more friendly vein than formerly.

The growth, bureaucratization, complexity, and secularism that are characteristics of American society in general are equally evident in Jewish communities. Today, the list of Jewish organizations on the national scene (and the local) reads like an alphabetical forest. What may have started out as a small project, organized and run by volunteers
(e.g., the Houston Jewish Community Center), is now a relatively "big
business" headed by paid professionals. In Houston, as in other cities,
has appeared the "Jewish professional," and his numbers grow as the per-
ceived need for his services grows. There also exists within the Jewish
community in Houston, as in other cities, what has been referred to by
Yaffe (1968) as the "Charity Establishment." That is, philanthropy,
which plays so important a part in Jewish life, has become bureauca-
tized.

Just as all urban areas are becoming more alike, so too all
Jewish communities are becoming more similar. (This homogenization is
partly due to the technology of the communication process today, whereby
"cosmopolitans" of various cities and states, and even countries, can
easily meet to discuss issues, physical distance no longer being an
impediment.)

For instance, differences between the three religious branches
of Judaism--Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox--have grown less. This
development is partly the result of the general trend toward seculariza-
tion, and partly due to the fact that Jews have become more homogeneous
today (Goldberg, 1968). That is, the majority of American Jews are now
native-born, most of native-born parents. There are no new immigrants
who have to be "Americanized," who are that different from the rest of
the American Jews.

Country clubs whose membership was once limited to wealthy
Reform Jews are now open to the wealthy of all of the branches. The
American Jewish Committee, once the domain of the wealthy Reform Jew,
now attracts the wealthy east European as well (Yaffe, 1968). Conserv-
vatism has grown in strength and social prestige. Orthodoxy has had a
revival, due to the new ethnic identity quest and the glamour now attached to old, quaint customs. Many youth are also seeking "relevance" in the "real" Judaism and are especially attracted to the spontaneous emotionalism of the Hasidic sects. Zionism is no longer a divisive issue in Jewish communities. In fact, as a result of the Six-Day War, which generally gave American Jews a pride in their identity, Israel has become a unifying communal force.

Jews all over the United States are experiencing problems with their youth. The generation gap, as it were, manifests itself in differences in moral values and sex standards, and in degree of religious identification. Some Jewish youth are "hippies" and participate in the drug culture.

A major concern of the Jewish community as a whole, at least at the level of the professionals, is Jewish identity. Many are disturbed by the lack of a positive Jewish identity among the youth. The rates of intermarriage and mixed marriages are said to be rising. The incidence of divorce and alcoholism, traditionally low among Jews, appears to some to be increasing.

It has been said (Gordon, 1954; Goldstein and Goldscheider, 1968; Van den Haag, 1969) that Jews are becoming, or have become, more like their American Gentile counterpart. Time (June 25, 1965), in the same essay quoted earlier, commented that "while the United States is growing more Jewish, the United States Jews may be growing less so." Gordon (1954) says that there has been behavioral assimilation of the Jews, but not structural assimilation. That is, Jews are behaviorally acculturated and are no different from other Americans, for example, in their attitudes toward religion and their general values, but they have
maintained some separate organizations and institutions.

In a like vein, Look magazine (May 5, 1964) published an article called "The Vanishing American Jew." Van den Haag (1969) and others have raised the question whether the Jew, who has survived millennia of suffering and persecution, will be able to survive emancipation.

This then is the current general atmosphere existing in America and among the Jewish population. Let us now look at the Houston Jews more specifically, beginning with various aspects of their sociophysical environment, such as population size, age and sex composition, and geographical dispersion.

**Sociodemographic Characteristics of Houston Jews**

**Sources of Data**

Up-to-date demographic data for the Houston Jewish population does not yet exist. The one local survey ever made was that done in 1955-56 by the Houston Jewish Community Council. During the year in which the basic research for this present study was undertaken (September, 1970-September, 1971), a national Jewish population survey was being conducted under the sponsorship of the Council of Jewish Federation and Welfare Funds (CJFWF) that included 100 subjects from Houston (Houston's proper representation in the national sample), but the results of this survey will not be available until 1972 at the earliest.

The statistics on Houston Jews given in this chapter are presented tentatively, and are to be read only as approximations and estimates. Data were accumulated in various ways in an attempt to arrive at some notion of basic demographic characteristics. Some data came from
interviews and participant observation during the period of the research. However, the bulk of the information presented was derived from a 40% response to a mailed questionnaire. (See Appendix A concerning representativeness of sample.) It should therefore be understood that statistics regarding "Houston Jews" are based on the Houston Jews "of this sample."

In the presentation of data that follows, the Houston findings are compared with those of national surveys and/or surveys of other Jewish populations. Two particular surveys have been drawn upon—one of the Jewish population of greater Boston (hereinafter referred to as the Boston study) and one of the Jewish population of greater Providence (hereinafter referred to as the Providence study).

The Boston study (Axelrod, Fowler, and Gurin, 1967) was a survey made of the Boston Metropolitan Statistical Area during 1965. Data were obtained from 1567 interviews, the sample being representative of the 70,000 Jewish households in nine community areas.

The Providence study (Goldstein and Goldscheider, 1968) was a survey of the Jewish population of the metropolitan area of Providence, Rhode Island, that began in May 1963. Data were obtained from 1500 interviews, the sample being representative of the 5995 Jewish household units in the area.

The data on the national Jewish population used for comparison have been drawn from the Lakeville study (Sklare and Greenblum, 1967), a 1957-58 study of a Midwest Jewish suburban population, which obtained them from a survey that was conducted by the National Opinion Research Center of the University of Chicago and the Survey Research Center of the University of Michigan at about the same time as the research in Lakeville.
Jewish Population—United States, Texas, and Houston

The Jewish population of the United States in 1963 was approximately 5.6 million persons or about $3\%^2$ of the national population. About 2 million or almost one-half lived in the New York metropolitan area. According to the 1960 U.S. census, as reported by Newsweek (March 1, 1971), Jews are distributed regionally as follows:

- 69.0% North East
- 11.9% North Central (Great Lakes)
- 7.1% South
- 11.0% West Coast

Figure 4 shows the dispersal of the Jewish population by state.

In Texas in 1969, the total population of approximately 10.9 million included about 65,520 Jews. In Houston's total population in 1970 of 1,232,802, the Jews numbered approximately 20,000, or a little less than 2%.

It should be noted, however, that figures on Jewish population can only be estimates, since there is no census taken which requires people to list their religion, and there is no "central registry" for all Jews to sign. Rather, the figure for a city's Jewish population that is listed in the American Jewish Yearbook is based upon an estimate made by the local Jewish Federation, which in Houston is the Houston Jewish Community Council. The Federations attempt to compile such lists primarily for fund-raising purposes. The figure in each case is as accurate as can be obtained until the current national Jewish population survey is completed.

According to the 1955-56 survey by the Houston Jewish Community Council, the Jewish population in Houston at that time [1956] was
approximately 13,504 to 14,854 persons or 4098 households. Supplemental
population reports (based on number of households only) made by the
Council for the years 1957-1961 showed an increase in the number of
households from 4319 in 1957 to 4920 in 1961.

The Houston Jewish population in June, 1970, according to the
Houston Jewish Community Council, was composed of approximately 5600
households; by the end of 1970, the number had increased to approximately
5800 to 6000. The figure of 20,000 cited earlier as an estimate of
Houston's Jewish population in 1970 was arrived at by the Council's mul-
tiplying the number of its name plates (5600) by an index of 3.31, an
index figure used by the Bell Telephone Company for family size. The
1955 Jewish survey made use of a similar index [3.30]. A 10% correction
for underenumeration was then applied to the figure. At the conclusion
of the current national survey, a family index figure will be determined
based on the actual size of Jewish families, which is assumed to be
somewhat smaller than that of families in the total population. The
20,000 figure includes the small Jewish population near NASA (approxi-
mately fifty households) and that outside of Harris County in the Hous-
ton Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (approximately sixty house-
holds); these were not included, however, in the present study, which in
the main is limited to the Jews of metropolitan Houston.

Place of Origin and Length of Residence in Houston

The 1955 survey by the Jewish Community Council stated that
"contrary to widespread opinion" the majority of Houston Jews were from
the South and Southwest and native born. Today the constant comment
heard from Jew and Gentile alike continues to be, "It's difficult to
find a native Houstonian anymore," but the facts are less contradictory. According to the findings of the questionnaire (see table 1), only 32% of the total Jewish population in Houston are "native" (Houston born or reared) or "long-term" Houstonians. (Long-term Houstonians are defined as those persons other than natives who have lived in Houston since 1925.) Southerners in general (including Houstonians) form only a slim majority of the city's Jewish population—approximately 52%. About 15% are from New York and New Jersey.

**TABLE 1**

PLACE OF ORIGIN OF ADULT HOUSTON JEWS (1971)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Houston Born or Reared&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt; and Long-term Houstonians&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Texas and Other Southern States</th>
<th>Non-Southern States&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Foreign Country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>32%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

52% (Southerners) 48% (Others) (N=379)

<sup>a</sup>Includes those whose formative years (i.e., before age twelve) were spent in Houston.

<sup>b</sup>Includes those persons living in Houston since before 1925.

<sup>c</sup>15% from New York and/or New Jersey.

Houston gained the bulk of its new residents, including Jews, after World War II (from 1945 on), for Houston at that time was viewed as a place of opportunity. Some 61% of the city's present Jewish population have come since 1940. Almost one-half (45%) of the Jewish population have lived in Houston twenty years or less and almost one-fourth (24%) ten years or less. Thus, just as Houston in general has had an
influx of "newcomers," so has the Jewish population.

The definition of a "newcomer" varies with the person doing the defining. To long-term and native Houstonians forty years old and over, a "newcomer" is anyone who was not born in Houston, or who was not living there before 1925, or who was not reared there during his formative years (i.e., between birth and about age twelve). A newcomer, thus, to many, is someone not socialized in the Houston milieu.

One of the major factors affecting Houston in general has been the great influx of newcomers. And this influx has affected the city's Jewish life too. For example, many long-term and native Jewish Houstonians now say that when they go to temple or synagogue they no longer see familiar faces. "It used to be that you'd go and know practically everyone there. Now, it's hard to feel at home."

Newcomers, conversely, have their problems. They say: "Houstonians are cliquish, they've all grown up together and have their family and friends and don't let you in," and "It's the natives who are the 'establishment' here and unless you are a native or marry one, you can't get in," and "So all of us newcomers--you know who we're friends with? We're friends with each other."

Residential Dispersion

Figure 5 shows the zip code dispersal of Houston Jews in 1970 as obtained from the Houston Jewish Community Council, and figure 6 shows the locations of the city's congregations and agencies in 1970-71.

Jews live predominately in the "southwest" part of Houston, southwest being a general term used to describe the part of Houston where most middle- to upper-class people live. Within this southwest
district, Jews tend to live in the areas more south and east; the further north and west one goes, the more exclusively Gentile the area becomes.

As indicated in figure 5, approximately 66% of the city's Jewish population (based on a figure of 5800 households) live in zip code areas 25 and 35, the so-called "new Jewish area," In or near this general area are located four of the six religious congregations and all of the other Jewish institutions (the Jewish Community Center, the Jewish Family Service, and the Jewish Home for the Aged) (see figure 6). Apartments in this vicinity have a high percentage of Jewish tenants. The area around one delicatessen on Stella Link is called by some Jews living there the "Borscht Belt." One Gentile informant told the author that the southern part of zip code area 25 is referred to by some Gentiles as "Ghetto Meadow." Meyerland, the name of a large residential subdivision within zip code 35, is a euphemistic term used by Houston Jews to mean "where all of the Jews live." As in earlier days, however, despite the tendency of Houston Jews to live in similar areas, the blocks in which they live remain predominately Gentile. Only in certain apartment buildings do Jews form a majority.

Some 10% of the Jews live in River Oaks, Memorial, and Highland Village (zip codes 19, 24, and 27, respectively), and about 4% live in zip code area 6. River Oaks, as was noted in the early history, is a residential district, founded in 1923, that was long closed to Jews. In the past few years, however, the word is that the restriction against Jews no longer applies. A few Jewish families live there now. The Memorial area is an upper middle- to upper-class area located further west, about a twenty-minute drive from River Oaks. Until very recent
years, it too was closed to Jews, although that fact was not generally known.

Although Jews in America are said to be dispersing throughout the metropolitan areas, living in the suburbs as well as in the central city, and although it has been indicated that Houston Jews live in many parts of the city (albeit 66% live in two zip code areas), one characteristic of Houston that sets it apart from most Eastern cities needs to be made explicit. The Providence study (Goldstein and Goldscheider, 1968) showed that there was a trend for Jews to move toward the suburbs and that such suburbs in Providence attracted a particular kind of Jew, one more acculturated, better educated, and with less ties to Judaism than others.

These findings are not true of Houston. For one thing, Houston has always been thought of as one big suburb, a city that is really still rural in many ways, a "provincial" urban city. So all Houstonians, Jew and Gentile, have (and have always had) a suburban style of life, so to speak. The distinction, therefore, between city and suburb is less apparent than in the East.

Then, too, although the new areas farther out from the city's hub, like Memorial and Spring Branch (which are as close to being suburbs as Houston has), are attracting Jewish residents, it is not just one type of Jew who is moving there. The Jews in these areas include both those who are leaders and those who are inactive in Jewish communal life, those who are extremely wealthy and those who are just "comfortable," long-term Houstonians and "transients" (i.e., corporation men sent to Houston for a few years). The only homogeneity apparent is in regard to age: the Jews in the suburbs are predominantly young or
middle-aged. There are probably several reasons why older Jewish people have not moved to these areas—since many of them cannot drive, they need to be near friends who can pick them up; and to many of them, Memorial and Spring Branch probably seem quite far out from the city. (The situation may change in future years as more parents move to apartments in the area to be closer to their children.) But outside of the similarity in age, the Jews living in these newer areas of Houston are a mixture of Jewish types.

Information suggests that among the Jews in the newer areas a division exists between the more stable population and the "transients." Memorial, in particular, has become an increasingly popular area for Jewish residence. Many wealthier Jews who were native or long-term residents of Houston began building their homes there in the late sixties. Subsequently, many Jewish corporation employees from out of state also moved into the area. (As a service to employees who are being transferred to a new city, many corporations publicize certain areas as being attractive places to live in; Memorial has been one of the areas in Houston so advertised.) These new residents, according to information supplied by a Memorial resident, have been mainly chemists with such companies as Coca-Cola, Shell Oil, and Gulf Oil, geophysicists, or franchise dealers of various kinds. Although they build or buy houses, they stay only a few years before being transferred to another city. As a consequence, according to the same informant, there is a constant turnover in population and therefore in organizational membership in the one Jewish organization in the area, a B'nai B'rith chapter.

The transient Jewish population in Memorial appears to have different characteristics from the more stable Jewish one that lives there.
First, they are generally from the East or from big cities elsewhere. They are not, therefore, synagogue oriented (synagogue affiliation seems to be a characteristic of cities where Jews are a small minority). According to one informant who lives in Memorial, "they [the transients] are not what I would call Jewish oriented. But they want a Jewish identity and Jewish friends. They will ask if a Jewish organization exists in the area and since one [the B'nai B'rith chapter] now does, the women join it. But they join it primarily to meet other people. When they are asked to give money to the Jewish campaign, they are insulted and shocked. They're just not geared at all to giving--they aren't! And especially when they are told that they should give in amounts proportionate to their income!"

The following are some comments made by various Jews concerning the Jewish residential pattern in Houston.

One informant said that she and her husband had moved out to Memorial because her husband did not want his neighbors to know what he eats for breakfast. (It is commonly accepted among Jews that the informal network of communication within a "Jewish area" leaves few personal details undisclosed.) It was not the idea of living with Jews that bothered him--just the fact of no privacy. The amusing part of this, said his wife, was that now there were Jewish couples living on both sides of them, and across the street, there in Memorial! (Evidently, Jews still follow other Jews.)

Another informant, commenting on a leading Jewish family who had moved to Tanglewood (near River Oaks), said that "that took courage, because no other Jews were living out there." Another informant who lived near Spring Branch said that when she moved some of her friends asked:
"'How can you live out there? No one lives out there!' meaning, of course, that no Jews lived out there."

The movement of Jews into the newer, more suburban areas of Houston is extensive enough that some of those living there are concerned about the social life of their children. (The author was told that about 400 Jewish children between the ages of thirteen and seventeen live in the Memorial area.)

However, one informant spoke disapprovingly of the wish of some young Jewish couples living near Spring Branch to form Jewish organizations in the area, especially some for the boys and girls. This informant said: "This is terrible, because the whole point in living with other people is to mix with them, for their children to play with other children, and for people to be together as neighbors. Why did they move out there?"

Some of the Jews living in Memorial have been quoted as saying: "I'm tired of going to Meyerland for my Judaism." They evidently want some Jewish youth and adult groups, associations, and, one would presume, synagogues out in the Memorial area. As one informant put it: "Houston is big enough now to have several Jewish areas. And many Jews don't realize Houston is a big city—and many Jewish kids don't go to Bellaire High School or belong to BBY or AZA!" (BBY and AZA are two Jewish youth groups—one for boys, one for girls.) It was not clear to this writer from just which group of Jews in Memorial—the stable segment or the transients—these opinions had come, or whether it was a majority view.

So far, however, the Jews in Memorial have traveled back and forth to the Meyerland area—the locus for the majority of the Jewish institutions. What future implications these sentiments may have is
unknown. Perhaps a new synagogue and/or satellite Jewish Community Centers may even be erected in Memorial. But at present, the majority of the leaders seem content with things the way they are. It might be noted that the Providence study predicted that a division would occur in the Jewish community there along lines of new and old areas. Any decentralization in the Houston Jewish community could therefore carry risks of lessening the cohesion that is said to exist.

Generational Data

Houston's Jewish adult pattern, as revealed in the replies to the questionnaire seems to be consistent with the general trend among American Jews: the number of foreign-born is decreasing, and native-born and/or native-bred Americans are now in the majority. In Houston, 82% of the adult Jewish population is American born (if children were included, the percentage would be even greater). The second generation (i.e., U.S.-born persons of foreign-born parents) represents the majority percentage (see tables 2 and 3 below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>First Generation (Immigrant)</th>
<th>Second Generation</th>
<th>Mixed Parentage</th>
<th>Third Generation</th>
<th>Fourth Generation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>18.5%</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(N=383)

### Table 3

**Generational Status of Adult Houston Jews Compared to Other American Jews (1971)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>First Generation</th>
<th>Second and Mixed Generation</th>
<th>Third and Higher Generation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Houston (1971)</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providence (mid-60s)</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>40%(^a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston (1957-58)</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nationally (1957-58)</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\)In the Providence study about 20% were fourth generation—in contrast to Houston's 7.5% (see preceding table).

Many factors influence the significance of generational data, especially in connection with "first generation" or immigrant generation. The person's age upon arriving in this country is one important variable; many immigrants arrived in their childhood or early adolescence and hence spent their formative years in America. (Approximately one-half of the Houston Jews categorized in table 2 as foreign-born were reared in Houston.) Similarly, in the category "mixed parentage," the age at which the foreign-born parent arrived in this country would have an important influence on how the child was reared. Moreover, some foreign-born were refugees from Hitler and generally were well-educated and sophisticated persons. Thus, the information of the generation breakdown is, in itself, quite limited in value.

#### Household Composition

In the following tabulation on household composition, "nuclear" refers to a married couple with or without children (or one parent with children) living in one household; "extended" refers to a household that includes at least one relative other than the members of the nuclear
family; and "single" means a one-person household (with or without an unrelated roommate). The nuclear household is the predominant pattern among Jews in Houston, a finding that corresponds to the pattern in other cities (e.g., in the Providence study approximately 85% of the households were nuclear). 7

Responses to the questionnaire showed the following types of households:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Nuclear</th>
<th>Extended</th>
<th>Single</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Houston</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providence</td>
<td>84.8%</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The modal number of children is two.

The Providence study traced a decrease in extended family households and an increase in nuclear ones as the generations progress from immigrant to third generation. Similarly, extended family households are rare in Houston. The widowed parent either lives alone or in a home for the aged--similar to the general pattern in the United States among Gentiles.

Housing

Similar to the findings of the Boston study, the pattern in Houston is about two to one in favor of Jewish families living in houses
that they own. Some 68% live in single-family houses, while only 32% live in apartments. Practically all of those living in houses own them.

Marital Data

Current Marital Status. The majority (80%) of Jews in Houston are married (see tables 5 and 6), which is in keeping with the national Jewish pattern. Kertzer (1967) says that less than 2% of American Jews remain unmarried, compared with 7% to 8% of the total United States population.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Married</th>
<th>Single</th>
<th>Widowed</th>
<th>Divorced or Separated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Houston</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providence</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(N=386)

TABLE 6

CURRENT MARITAL STATUS OF HOUSTON JEWS (1971)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Married</th>
<th>Single (Never married)</th>
<th>Widowed</th>
<th>Divorced or Separated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(N=218)

(N=168)

(N=386)
The data in table 6 also show that, among Houston Jews, more females than males are widowed and/or divorced (men tend to remarry more than women and women tend to live longer than men), a pattern that is generally widespread among the total population, Jewish and Gentile.

**Number of Times Married.** Because Jewish families are thought to have fewer divorces and remarriages than other groups, additional information was requested on the questionnaire as to whether the respondent had been married more than once (see table 7) and if so, whether the remarriage had followed a state of widowhood or divorce. (The latter information was not obtained in the Boston or Providence study.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Times Married</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Once</td>
<td>More than Once</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>(N=206)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>(N=161)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>(N=367)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the total number of Jewish adults in Houston who have ever been married (367 or 92% of the respondents), the majority (88%) have been married only once. (Similarly, in the Providence study, 94% had been married only once.)

Of the 12% who have been married more than once, almost three-fourths have been previously divorced (in almost equal proportions of male and female). Therefore, to obtain a truer picture of the incidence
of divorce among Houston Jews, one would have to add approximately 9% (three-fourths of 12%) to the 7% figure in table 5 for currently divorced persons. In other words, approximately 16% of Houston's adult Jews who have ever been married either are or have been divorced. (That figure actually may be somewhat too high in view of the probable inclusion of some currently divorced persons in both counts.)

Since the data on age and generation from the questionnaire responses have not yet been correlated in regard to divorce, it is not known if the incidence of divorce has increased with generation. In the Providence study, the lowest divorce rates were among the foreign-born, the highest among those born in the United States of mixed parentage.

**Mixed Marriages and Intermarriages.** Interfaith marriages between Jews and Gentiles are a subject of particular interest today. The terms "mixed marriage" and "intermarriage" have been refined to have separate meanings in the professional literature: currently the term "intermarriage" refers to the marriage of a Jew and a non-Jew when the non-Jewish partner converts to Judaism sometime before the wedding ceremony. "Mixed marriage" refers to a marriage in which the non-Jewish partner does not convert to Judaism before the wedding or at any time afterward.

The attitudes of Houston Jews toward such marriages are discussed in Chapter IV, especially as such attitudes concern the current young generation. The present section is concerned with the incidence of mixed marriage and intermarriage within the Houston Jewish population, as revealed in the responses to the questionnaire. (See table 8 below.)
TABLE 8
NUMBER OF MIXED MARRIAGES AND INTERMARRIAGES
AMONG ADULT HOUSTON JEWS (1971)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Intermarriage</th>
<th>Mixed Marriage</th>
<th>Total in Mixed Marriages and Intermarriages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>13% (N=218)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>5% (N=168)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>10% (N=386)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The marriages of about 10% of the total number of respondents to the questionnaire are either a mixed marriage or an intermarriage. (Preliminary tabulations show that this 10% represents a wide age range, the majority being over forty years of age, and includes all of the various generations from immigrant to fourth, with the majority being in the second generation and later.) According to Yaffe (1968:93), approximately 13% of American Jews (including first and second generations) are married to non-Jews. It is also said that more Jewish males marry non-Jewish females than Jewish women marry non-Jewish males. (Whether this statement refers to all generations, including the present one, or just to the past generations is not clear.) The Houston sample confirms the general trend. In both the mixed marriages and the intermarriages, at least twice as many Jewish males as Jewish females are involved.

Age

The median and modal age group of the Jewish adult population in Houston, both male and female, falls in the 40–49 age bracket. As can be seen in table 9 below, approximately 74% of the city's Jewish adult population is over forty years of age. The group in the 20–29 age
category, which appears unusually small, is probably larger than shown, for many persons in this age range may still have been away at school at the time that the questionnaire was distributed. Or it may be that this age group represents those not interested in filling out a questionnaire. But since there is no way of determining the reasons, one can only speculate as to the cause of the low percentage.

TABLE 9

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF ADULT HOUSTON JEWS (1971)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>20-29</th>
<th>30-39</th>
<th>40-49</th>
<th>50-59</th>
<th>60 and over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Houston</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nationally (1957-58)</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Education

Table 10 gives information on the highest level of education attained by respondents to the author's questionnaire:

TABLE 10

LEVEL OF EDUCATION OF ADULT HOUSTON JEWS (1971)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Grade School</th>
<th>Some High School</th>
<th>High School Graduate</th>
<th>Some College</th>
<th>College Graduate</th>
<th>Advanced Degree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Jewish families are noted for the high value they place on
education (however, one older Jewish man said that "now there is too much stress on education by parents") and for the high percentage of their children who go to college. Of those Houston parents responding to the questionnaire who had children of college age or older, about 98% had sent or were sending all of them to college.

Because Houston Jews do tend to live in similar areas, certain public schools in the city have higher percentages of Jewish students than others. Bellaire Senior High, for example, has a high percentage of Jewish students. The school is also known for its high scholastic achievement.

Many Jewish students attend St. John's, an Episcopalian private school, because of its high academic reputation. According to one interviewee, about fifty to sixty Jewish children now attend, forming 10% of the approximately 700 total enrollment--while some fifteen years ago only twenty were enrolled. A few attend Kinkaid, another private school, but because Kinkaid did not admit Jews for many years, some parents say that they feel "funny" sending their child there now. (But one Jewish parent whose children attend Kinkaid said he recognizes that people can change.)

Income

Studies have generally confirmed the financial well-being of the American Jewish population as a whole (Yaffe, 1968; Glazer and Moynihan, 1963). This finding, however, perhaps needs to be tempered by two further observations. Yaffe (1968:252) says that Jews seldom achieve the very highest incomes. "The 'real money' isn't Jewish. And this means the real power isn't Jewish either." And as a 1971 article in Newsweek
pointed out, "most of the sociological portraits of the Jew as a middle-class professional are based on studies of moderate-size communities, such as Providence, R.I., and Springfield, Mass., where the average Jew is indeed more affluent than many of his neighbors" (March 1, 1971:61). But in urban areas across the nation, there are nearly 800,000 Jews living at or below the poverty level of $3743 annual income. Even though poverty is not looked upon as a Jewish problem, as Milton Himmelfarb, director of research for the American Jewish Committee, has observed: "If you are a poor Jew and the poverty council excludes you because you are a Jew--on the assumption that poverty belongs to the blacks or Puerto Ricans--what do you do?" (Newsweek, March 1, 1971:61). In other words, although American Jews are financially prosperous as a group, few of them are at the wealthiest end of the spectrum--and a considerable number are poor.

In Houston the results of the questionnaire indicate that the majority of Houston Jews are also well off. Sixty-seven percent (67%) of the respondents reported incomes of $15,000 and over; 25.5% had incomes between $7000 and $15,000; and only 7.5% reported incomes of under $7000 (see table II).

**TABLE II**
FAMILY INCOME OF HOUSTON JEWS (1971)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Under $7000</th>
<th>$7000 to $15,000</th>
<th>$15,000 to $25,000</th>
<th>$25,000 to $50,000</th>
<th>$50,000 to $100,000</th>
<th>Over $100,000</th>
<th>(N=356)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27 (7.5%)</td>
<td>91 (25.5%)</td>
<td>99 (28%)</td>
<td>93 (26%)</td>
<td>34 (10%)</td>
<td>11 (3%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To Jewish newcomers to Houston, the local Jews seem wealthy. Often, these newcomers are from other countries—e.g., South America—where there are two classes, the very rich and the very poor. Because they are not used to an affluent society, all Houston Jews seem rich. Other newcomers from New York and other large, crowded Eastern cities also see Houston Jews as wealthy.

According to the director of the Jewish Family Service in Houston, there is no poverty among Houston Jews. "We have Jewish ghettos, so to speak, but they are upper middle class. This is unique to Houston. Jews here may feel poor, but they actually aren't."

Any such generalization about the majority of a population, however, overlooks the percentage of poor that do exist, small though it may be. As Himmelfarb suggests, being a minor statistic (i.e., being in a low percentile group) is no comfort. The Boston study pointed out that because the typical Jewish individual is well off, those who are not, suffer even more because they do not match the general pattern.

According to one informant, those Jews in Houston who are really poor do not live near other Jewish people or mingle with them because they are embarrassed about not being successful. These are probably the exception, though. The author has personally known several poor Jewish people who lived in the heart of the Jewish area. One was an older woman who did dressmaking for a living and lived in a one-room apartment where she had to use the bathroom as her kitchen. The apartment was neat and clean, and the woman was very intelligent. Nevertheless, she had little money. Her apartment unit was not at the other end of town or located in a slum; it was in the heart of southwest Houston. Another older woman, who could not exist solely upon her monthly Social Security
check and who was ill, nevertheless woke up every morning at 4:30 a.m. and rode the bus to town to work in a store which often had no heat or air-conditioning. She, too, lived in an apartment in southwest Houston.

Upon being told that there were Jewish poor in Houston, one young Gentile woman replied: ". . . Yes, but you don't see them in shacks, and slums, like other people. That's what I mean."

It is true that one does not see Jewish slums in Houston. This may be due in part to the Jewish value system, which creates a sort of homogeneity of class despite differences in wealth, and which is reflected in where and how one lives, even if one does not have money. Even among the poorer Jews in Houston, the retention of middle-class values is evident. Many studies have documented the fact that the rates of juvenile delinquency, crime, and alcoholism are markedly lower for Jews than for the general population. That pattern seems to exist in Houston. (According to one knowledgeable informant, in the past three or four years, there have been only two Jewish boys in Houston's jail, one of whom was from out of town.)

Another fact which seems to stand out, attesting to the homogeneity of values, is the high degree of interaction in Houston between the "richer" and the "poorer" Jews. There are certainly socioeconomic groupings--this fact is reflected in the membership compositions of clubs, associations, organizations, and friendship cliques. And leaders are generally the wealthier of the Jews. But still there is not a great deal of social distance between rich and poor among Jews. Accounting for this may be the fact that in the synagogues or temples (in spite of the fact that certain congregations attract more of the wealthy Jews) all of the groups share certain customs and aspects of Jewish culture.
Also many of the wealthier Jews remember the background, if not of their parents, then of their grandparents, many of whom were poor, uneducated, and less acculturated. Certain occasions therefore—synagogue services, memorial services, lectures and panel discussions, etc.—throw together the diverse socioeconomic groups on somewhat equal grounds. The result is that the differences between the groups are mainly those of wealth and its accompanying life-style rather than of basic values.

**Occupations**

Glazer and Moynihan (1963) point out that the tone of New York City as a "Jewish" city is communicated in part by the numerous Jewish taxicab drivers, waiters, barbers, and other workers that visitors see daily.

A Korean graduate student living in Houston commented that, whereas New York City seemed like a very Jewish city and a city whose business was controlled by Jews, Houston did not seem to have any Jews!

In Houston, the number of Jewish barbers, taxicab drivers, and waiters is probably very few, although some Jews do work in various service and "lower-status" occupations. To the author's personal knowledge, some Jewish men, for example, are air-conditioning repair men, some sell in hardware stores, some have owned and run automobile service stations, some have been oil rig operators. Some Jewish women are beauty parlor operators (though they usually own their own shop), some are dressmakers (who work at home), and many are salesladies in all types of department stores. The author's questionnaire survey, however, elicited no reliable data on this aspect of the labor force for two reasons: Jews with jobs falling in the "service" category did not necessarily receive the
questionnaire, and this type of occupation did not fall within any of the broad classification categories used for analyzing the data. Information about women's occupations was obtained but was not tabulated for this study.

Of those Houston males who reported their occupations\(^8\) (see table 12), the two categories of "professional/technical" and "manager/proprietor" account for the largest percentage (61%), similar to the pattern of Jewish groups elsewhere whenever they live in cities where they are a minority (Glazer and Moynihan, 1963).

### TABLE 12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Professional/Technical(^b)</th>
<th>Manager/Proprietor(^c)</th>
<th>Sales</th>
<th>Clerical</th>
<th>Blue Collar</th>
<th>n.a.(^d)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Houston</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>--(^e)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>13% (N=201)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providence</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
<td>40.7%</td>
<td>20.9%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston (family heads)</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>(combined sales/clerical)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\)The sample drawn upon for male occupations consists of the male respondents only. The occupations of male spouses as reported by female respondents to the questionnaire were not tabulated.

\(^b\)Involving a specialized college degree. (In Houston, 23% are professionals, 6% technical.)

\(^c\)Business executives or officials, or owners of a business.

\(^d\)Employed, but occupation not reported.

\(^e\)Only one respondent in Houston reported a clerical occupation.

The data also show that: (1) 52% of the male Jews currently working are self-employed (similar to the Providence study where 53.5%
were self-employed), a proportion which, according to the Providence study, is generally higher than that in the total population. (2) While it is often presumed that many Jews are in business with relatives (Glazer and Moynihan, 1963), only 10% of the Houston male Jews reported that they are. (3) Some 40% of the males who work have wives who also work. (It is generally assumed that few wives in Jewish families work outside the home, either because of the family's wealth, which would make the wife's working unnecessary, or because of the emphasis on her domestic role, which would prevent her from working [Marden and Meyer, 1968].) (4) Of the total male respondents, 90% are currently working, 8% are retired or semiretired, and 2% are students.

Glazer and Moynihan in discussing occupations of New York Jews said that since the late 1930s, when Jews were prominent primarily in three industries ("clothing manufacture, department stores, and entertainment"), their employment fields have become more diversified. In addition to the above areas, they are now active in light manufacturing, real estate, and building, Jews playing a prominent role especially in the latter (Glazer and Moynihan, 1963:51).

Like the Jews in New York City, many Houston Jews have been attracted to real estate and building, and some have been particularly successful. Many of the apartment builders and developers in Houston are Jewish; fewer Jews are building contractors. Kenneth Schnitzer is one Jew who has figured prominently in the great office building boom in Houston. Among the apartment developers, such names as Harold Farb, Jenard Gross, and Allen Field (now deceased) are among those more generally known. But many other Jews whose names are not as well known buy, sell, and develop land. And most corporations in Houston, Jewish and
Gentile, have diversified their interests to include real estate development of some kind, even though their main business would not be classified as real estate development.

In the past, few Jews have been "corporation" men (Glazer and Moynihan, 1963). However, judging by the influx of corporation men into the Memorial area in Houston, this situation seems to be changing. One young man who has an executive position with a corporation in Houston remarked that he was the first Jew his corporation had known, and that they were surprised that he had made a "good" corporation man. Voicing his own feelings though, he said that Jewish boys were not brought up with corporation experience and so lacked the knowledge to guide them that Gentile males had. He felt that Jews could not compete as well as Gentiles, and in fact would not even be motivated to want to be in corporations. A Gentile informant said, however, that Jewish boys had the benefit of the experience of their fathers and other relatives in operating businesses and so were better able and more motivated to compete in business than their Gentile counterparts.

Further discussion of Jewish occupational patterns in Houston is presented in Chapter IV in connection with Jewish-Gentile relations and Jewish participation in the Gentile world.

For now, having discussed the general milieu and some of the basic sociodemographic characteristics of the Jews of Houston today, let us examine other aspects of the Jewish population in Houston. Chapter III begins with a description of Jewish organizations, since according to the opinion of Gordon (1954) cited earlier in the text on page 76, it is in their separate organizations and institutions that
the Jews mainly maintain their "Jewishness." In the discussions that follow, it should be remembered that the majority of Jews in Houston today are relative newcomers.
CHAPTER III

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF THE HOUSTON JEWISH POPULATION

The bulk of this chapter describes the formal organizations that exist for Jews in the city, for these are the most visible entities that are distinctively Jewish.\(^1\) Many Jews active in formal communal life have come to refer to their organizations and associations, and the events and activities associated with them, as the "formal" and/or "organized" Jewish community.

But in discussing the formal Jewish community, it is important to remember that one is not discussing all of the Jewish population in Houston. Many Jews do not belong to any of the formal Jewish associations. And among those who do, not all participate in them or psychologically identify with them to the same degree.

It can not be said too often that there is not one, unvaried, distinctive group of Jews who are all alike. Rather, there is a Jewish population that contains Jews of varying types. As stated in the introduction to this study, some Jews have nothing in common with each other except the label "Jew," and many know nothing of the communal life that exists.

Even the group of Jews active within the Jewish formal community is not a homogeneous one. It is full of factions and diverse opinions, views, and ideology, both at the organizational level and the individual level—even though the Jewish population today is more homogeneous than
ever before. Moreover, in spite of the multiplicity of umbrella organizations, there has never been (and one assumes never will be) any one group that speaks for all Jews. There can be some unity in times of crisis, but, otherwise, the saying that "if you have two Jews, you will have three opinions" continues to hold true. It is perhaps this very diversity that helps to account for the continued existence and unity of the formal community in the long run, for the various diverse elements contribute a vitality and life that give enjoyment to many of its participants. There is also that about it which serves to divide and lose Jews.

For purposes of discussion only, in regard to such a formal Jewish community, it is useful to view the Jewish people as belonging to one of three major categories: leaders, rank and file, and peripherals (or marginals).

Within the group of leaders of the formal community are the rabbis, the professional community workers (i.e., the paid executive directors and other professional staff of the various agencies and organizations), and the lay leaders. (Sutker [1958] refers to the three groups as "theological elite," "organizational elite," and "lay elite," respectively.) The rank and file are all of those others who, to varying degrees, feel a part of, and participate in, the organizations and activities of the formal community.

The peripherals, or marginals, are those Jews who, for whatever reason, do not participate in the formal community (or if they do, only indirectly through their families). This group comprises both those Jews who do not deny their Jewishness as well as those who do, or at least would like to.
This chapter will begin by describing the number and kinds of organizations, including religious congregations, that exist "out there" for Houston Jews to participate in, or not, as they choose. It then attempts to describe the ebb and flow of the community's year, the communal process as it were. This is followed by an analysis of certain aspects of the system or structure, e.g., leadership and the role of fund-raising. Finally, selected subjective criticisms of both the Jewish formal community and Houston Jews in general, drawn from questionnaire responses and interviews, and the "conservative" image of the Houston Jews are discussed.

Religious Congregations

As of September 1971, there were six Jewish religious congregations in Houston, including three Reform, two Conservative, and one Orthodox.

The three Reform congregations (Beth Israel, Emanu El, and Houston Congregation for Reform Judaism) accounted for 55% of the total affiliated membership, the two Conservative congregations (Beth Yeshurun and Brith Shalom) for 40%, and the Orthodox (United Orthodox) for 5%. It should be noted that some Jews belong to more than one congregation (for reasons that will be discussed later). And, of course, some Jews do not belong to any congregation.

Profiles of the Congregations

The descriptions of the congregations that follow include the stereotypes of each prevalent among Houston Jews. Like any stereotype, they contain some truth and some misrepresentation.
Beth Israel, the first Reform temple and oldest congregation in Houston, has long had the stereotype of being the wealthiest congregation in town and the Classical Reform group. Its handsome building on North Braeswood is referred to by some informants as the "Taj Mahal." Actually, it is no longer Classical Reform (whereas the Houston Congregation for Reform Judaism is), and it probably is no longer the wealthiest congregation, for all of the Houston congregations now have a proportion of wealthy members. (The east Europeans, who generally filled the ranks of the other older congregations, have by now also made their fortunes.) Beth Israel does have more long-term Houstonians among its membership of 1235 households than do the other congregations, and it probably has more older members than is average (its 1965 statistics showed the age median to be fifty-four years).

Emanu El (1390 households), the second Reform temple in Houston, organized in 1944 by the group of dissidents who had withdrawn from Beth Israel, is thought of as being a warmer, more "home-folks" Reform temple than Beth Israel, and one that leans somewhat toward the more traditional symbolism. Emanu El's building, located on Sunset Boulevard across from Rice University, was constructed some twenty-two years ago (in 1949) and at that time was considered to be one of the most progressive temple designs in the country.

In terms of leadership, membership composition, and size, Beth Israel and Emanu El are Houston's major Reform temples. Both congregations have a Sunday school from which boys and girls are confirmed, Bar (and Bat\textsuperscript{2}) Mitzvah ceremonies, and large staffs that include an assistant rabbi, executive director, and a director of religious education.

The third Reform congregation, the Houston Congregation for
Reform Judaism (HCRJ), is a small one, having a membership of only about 100 families. Its congregational building, which is relatively small in size and unpretentious in style, is located in zip code area 27, on Bering Street midway between Beth Israel and the Memorial area (not in the so-called "Jewish area").

Founded in 1958 by a nucleus of long-term Beth Israel members who had withdrawn from Beth Israel for a variety of reasons, probably mainly personal ones, HCRJ now has the stereotype of being "the congregation Jews join when they do not want to be Jews." It is thought that during the forties most of its present congregants were members of the American Council of Judaism, the organization opposed to Zionism, which was considered by many Jews to be "anti-Semitic." While HCRJ does have some members who belonged at least formerly to the American Council of Judaism, so also does Beth Israel. However, the younger congregation is explicitly anti-Zionist. (In the eyes of the main founder of the congregation, anti-Zionism means being against the conception of Israel [or any state] as the homeland for all Jews. However, it does not mean this to the majority of Jews, who, rather, view Israel as a homeland only for those Jews who need one--i.e., refugee Jews. In essence, the former view still adheres to the Classical Reform position taken by Beth Israel before the advent of the State of Israel. Thus, while Beth Israel has the reputation of being Classical Reform, HCRJ is so in fact.) In discussing the ideology of the congregation, its main founder said that the members would not want to follow the example of the United Orthodox Congregation, for example, and "in the presence of senators and the mayor" sing the national anthem of Israel right after the Star-Spangled Banner. "It sounded like a second verse to the national anthem. We wouldn't
have the Israeli flag [either]."

Because HCRJ has an anti-Semitic image, because one of its founders is an outspoken person who, at a meeting within the formal Jewish community, will ask the chairman to make explicit that he is not speaking for all the Jews of Houston, and because the congregation refused to be listed with the Jewish Community Council because of its opposition to the Council's views on Israel, the congregation has been considered somewhat of a pariah group by many in the formal community. (However, by the end of the research for this study, there were indications that this congregation was becoming more accepted.)

Regarding other aspects of HCRJ, the congregation has a Sunday school but there is no Bar Mitzvah unless the parents request it. In contrast to the other congregations, this one has no sisterhood or men's group, although there is a loose association of the women called the "Women's Group." There are no assessments or set dues, in contrast to the common practice among congregations of having graduated dues, assessed in relation to members' means, which they are required to pay. "They [prospective members] state what they want to pay." However, the executive board now will tell a prospective member the approximate congregational cost per family.

The congregants of HCRJ would like to keep the membership small. If it grew beyond 300 families, they would help start another congregation. "Here we're somebody. [At Beth Israel] it's religion by Cardex and Addressograph. Everything in the large congregations is mechanized."

_Beth Yeshurun_, the larger and older of the two Conservative congregations in Houston, was founded in 1945 when two congregations amalgamated—Beth El (originally founded in 1924 as a Conservative
congregation) and Adath Yeshurun (the Orthodox congregation from which Beth El members had originally withdrawn). Its relatively new (built in 1963) and handsome building is located in the heart of zip code 77025, on Beechnut Street. Because of the merger of Orthodox and Conservative, a separate small chapel is provided within the building for use primarily by the Orthodox members who wish to retain their traditional customs. Beth Yeshurun with its 1750 families vies in strength with Beth Israel and Emanu El. All three congregations are "big business" in the sense of having a relatively large administrative structure.

While no strong stereotype exists about Beth Yeshurun, it is thought of as being a "pretty friendly place." The congregants proudly say, "We have the best Jewish education in town." Beth Yeshurun has a day school (the only one in the community), Sunday school (in the process of being phased out since it is viewed as "useless and worse" by the assistant rabbi), Sabbath school, Hillel school, and Hebrew school. Its religious school has been the largest and most developed in the city. (During the course of the present study, all of the congregations were attempting to achieve a stronger Jewish education program for the youth. In fact, this issue was the dominant concern of the formal Jewish community, causing controversies among the various power levels.) The congregants generally have a strong sense of "peoplehood."

Brith Shalom, the smaller Conservative congregation, has a membership of only 220 households. It was organized in 1955 primarily by a splinter group (mainly younger people in the 25-35 age range) from Beth Yeshurun, who, according to one of its founders, broke away mainly because they felt the former congregation was too large. They wanted a smaller congregation so people could know one another and be a more
cohesive group. Thus their constitution provides for a maximum membership of 300 households. They began with ideals of democracy in that there would be equal dues for all and one vote per family. The dues schedule has since been changed and those who can afford to do so, pay more. But the understanding continues, even though it is not written into the constitution, that there will be no names of donors on tablets or plaques (as is customary in the other congregations with the possible exception of the Houston Congregation for Reform Judaism). The congregation does not as yet own a cemetery, but because of the relatively young ages of the members, the need has not been urgent.  

Similar to criticisms of largeness expressed by some members of the Houston Congregation for Reform Judaism, one member of Brith Shalom, in comparing it to Beth Yeshurun, said: "They [Beth Yeshurun] are larger, more institutionalized; their school system is like public school." Brith Shalom also stresses Jewish education and has a Hebrew school, but most of the teaching load must be carried by the rabbi, as there is no assistant rabbi or religious education director.  

The United Orthodox synagogue was formed in 1965 when Adath Israel and Beth Jacob merged with Adath Emeth. Its membership is also small (241 households); but its size, rather than reflecting a congregational preference, is probably due to the small number of Orthodox adherents in the city.  

The stereotype existing about this congregation is that its membership is largely an older, less acculturated, lower socioeconomic group and that "the men there do a lot of praying." It is true that there are many older, less acculturated members, but there are also some younger, native-born, and college-educated members. In fact, as
elsewhere in the United States, Houston's Orthodox congregation is
beginning to attract some of the youth, who often take the position that
if they are going to be Jews, they will be real Jews and practice Ortho-
dox Judaism. However, while more of its members today are wealthy,
educated, and acculturated than in former days, the Orthodox branch in
Houston, as elsewhere in the United States in general, is probably still
"... running third in the social and economic rat race," compared to
the Reform and Conservative congregations (Yaffe, 1968:105).

While United Orthodox is an Orthodox synagogue, according to
some Houstonians the synagogue is not really very Orthodox. One infor-
mant said that, compared to the Orthodox synagogues in Cincinnati, the
one in Houston would be considered Conservative (e.g., men and women
sit together, and while the synagogue has a mikva [a ritual purification
bath], it is rarely used).

The congregation has a rabbi and a cantor, and a Talmud Torah
(Hebrew and religious education classes) for the youth. Similar to the
other congregations, there is a sisterhood, a men's club, clubs for the
youth, and adult study classes.

**Congregational Affiliation**

Some people in Houston, especially the relative newcomers, say
that "synagogues are mainly for belonging to when you have kids in Sun-
day school." But to many native Houstonians and long-term residents,
the synagogue or temple is the central institution of Jewish life next
to the home, and "you should belong, whether or not you belong to any-
thing else." The author was told that the latter sentiment is a common
one among Jews who live in cities with a relatively small Jewish
population. (A rabbi from New York City explained: "It's how they identify.") Thus, in Houston, there is a very high percentage of synagogue-affiliated Jews. Probably only 12% to 20% of the known Jews in Houston are not affiliated with some religious congregation.\(^5\)

Those who do not belong to a congregation include those who feel that the dues are too high (they cannot afford to join), those who have no children or whose children are grown, peripheral Jews who do not care to belong, and agnostics, atheists, and those who do not believe in organized religion. (It should be noted that whether a Jew does or does not belong to a religious congregation does not necessarily correlate with his commitment to Judaism or the Jewish people. Some Jews consider themselves very Jewish but not necessarily Jewish "religiously." Nor does lack of congregational affiliation necessarily mean that a Jew is not a part of the formal community, since he may belong to one or more of the Jewish secular associations.)

The synagogues play an important role in providing opportunities for participation in Jewish communal life. One informant said that she could not imagine how a Jew could live in Houston and not belong to a congregation--"you wouldn't know what was going on."

People involve themselves in the life of the synagogue to varying degrees--from none (they simply send their children to religious school or they attend services a few times a year)\(^6\) to intensive involvement and serving on committees, joining the sisterhoods and brotherhoods of the congregations, teaching in the Sunday school, being advisors to the various congregational youth activities, and/or being on the board of the congregation. Generally, it is adults with children in Sunday school who are most active. Few single or divorced people
(especially those without children) belong to a congregation. According to one divorcee, "single women aren't really welcomed since all of the women are married and don't know what to do with an unmarried woman. You're out of their frame of reference, and they look down on you, really."

There are various reasons why people join, stay, and/or leave a particular congregation, but generally religious ideology is the least of the reasons. They might join for social reasons—either they want their children to mix with a certain social group or they themselves might want to. They might join a particular congregation because their relatives belong. Many a parent whose ideology rests with one congregational type will change affiliation in order to attend services where his children attend. Many join a congregation because they like the rabbi, or, conversely, did not like the rabbi of their former congregation. Some choose a congregation solely on its merits of having a good Jewish education program for children. Some retain dual memberships because they are charter members, or their relatives were charter members, of a particular congregation, but they wish also to belong to the congregation of their choice or the one to which their children belong. Some have changed congregations because they were unhappy with the dues at one. (Now, however, congregational leadership has gotten together on this particular problem: if a member wishes to change affiliation, he will have to pay the same amount of dues at the new temple he joins.)

**Religious Observance and Houston Jews**

Some brief comment is necessary regarding the extent of religious ritual observances of Houston Jews, considering that secularism has
permeated Jewish society as well as the society at large (Van den Haag, 1969; and others).

In Chapter I, it was noted that Reform Jews hold the forms of religion to be less important than the basic ethical precepts of Judaism. (Forms are seen as changing in response to differences in man's conditions.) It was also pointed out that all three branches of American Judaism have become Americanized. Thus, today, even very few Orthodox Jews are orthodox in the sense of keeping most of the 613 plus laws of the Torah.

The majority of the Jews in Houston today do not believe in the divine revelation of the Ten Commandments, nor in the Torah’s being the actual word of God. Results of the questionnaire did show, however, that the majority (84%) believe in God in some form. Of this percentage, about 20% felt that they had a "personal" relationship with God.

Of the Jews who practice certain religious rituals (e.g., lighting Sabbath candles, following dietary laws, observing Yarzeit [the anniversary of the death of a close relative]), many say that they do not practice them for any religious reason. Rather, they observe them as symbols of Jewish identification for their children (or themselves), or because they are "beautiful" customs, or out of respect for their parents. Some committed young Jews observe them because they "want to be reminded they are Jews." Some preserve them out of habit. (In regard to one religious custom, the keeping of the Sabbath at home, questionnaire results showed that 63% of the respondents did not observe it at all, 33% observed it "somewhat" [i.e., lit Sabbath candles and perhaps said the blessing over the wine], and only 1% observed it "strictly" [e.g., performed no manual labor from Friday sundown to
Saturday sundown.

There are signs, however, of a growing respect for tradition, partly (as has been previously noted) as a result of the young who, in looking for meaning, often choose Orthodoxy as being "real" Judaism, and also as a consequence of renewed respect for Jewishness in general since Israel's Six-Day War.

**Other Jewish Organizations**

In addition to the religious congregations, the formal Jewish community includes more than sixty organizations or common interest associations to which men, women, and youth can belong. The explicit functions of these associations vary, but, as in the past, generally fall into one of four categories: providing help for fellow Jews in the United States (organizations with this sole function have decreased in number as Jewish immigration has ceased and the Jew has become more acculturated) and for the city at large; providing help for fellow Jews overseas; fostering community relations (to combat anti-Semitism); and serving as a social and/or recreational outlet (partly because some Jews wish to maintain a distinct identity and partly because Jews are still not fully accepted by Gentiles). Some organizations may exist from sheer momentum or through the self-interest of those involved rather than because they fill a real need, for once institutions are created, they tend to perpetuate themselves. (Also, appeals to merge similar types of organizations still meet with resistance.) With few exceptions, most Jewish organizations always combine both instrumental and expressive functions--i.e., have both a serious purpose and a social aspect.
As in other cities with a sizeable Jewish population, today most of the Jewish organizations in Houston (including those of youth) are affiliates of national organizations or are voluntarily affiliated with a national coordinating body that unites the various local chapters.9 Also, the local chapters, when there are many, have a local umbrella council. In addition, the Houston Jewish Community Council (organized in 1936 and discussed in Chapter I) serves as the formal umbrella organization, concerning matters of common concern, for most of the various local organizations.

A sheet entitled "Delegates to Jewish Community Council, January 1st thru December 31st, 1970," dated May 1, 1970, indicates that the following organizations were affiliated with the Council in 1970:

**Women's Organizations**

- Sisterhoods of 5 congregations
- B'nai B'rith (7 chapters)
- Brandeis University Women
- City of Hope
- Council of Jewish Women
- Hadassah (5 chapters)
- Mizrachi Women
- ORT (2 chapters)
- Pioneer Women (2 chapters)
- Workmen's Circle Ladies Auxiliary

**Men's Organizations**

- Brotherhoods of 5 congregations
- B'nai B'rith (7 lodges)
- Farband
- Jewish War Veterans No. 574
- League for Labor Israel
- Workmen's Circle No. 530

**Other Organizations**

- Religious congregations (5 congregations)
- American Jewish Committee
- Golden Age Friendship Club
- Hebrew Free Loan Association
- Houston Kashruth Association
Houston Zionist District
Jewish Community Center
Jewish Community Center Youth Council
Jewish Family Service
Jewish Home for the Aged
League for Labor Israel
Marcus Levinson--ZOI (Zionist Organization of America)
Westwood Country Club
Workmen's Circle No. 530Y [now defunct]

It should be noted that not all of the formal Jewish organiza-
tions belong to the Council (e.g., the Houston Congregation for Reform
Judaism does not because it does not agree with the Council's views
toward Israel). Some congregations that belong were not listed in 1970
but were by 1971.

As in the past, the various organizations and groups tend to
attract different segments of the Jewish population, but today, because
Jews are more homogeneous, the appeal is based mainly on differences in
age and socioeconomic status rather than deeply felt ideologies.

Some organizations have changed in popularity over the years.
Also, as in earlier years, some organizations that are strong in other
parts of the country are not strong in Houston, and vice versa. Similar
to other cities with Jewish populations, in Houston many more women than
men join and participate in the organizations; while many Jews may
"belong" to organizations (i.e., are dues-paying members), few are really
active in them. (Many organizational leaders said that only 20% or so
of their membership are active.)

The following descriptions of the organizations, which are neces-
sarily abbreviated, are a mixture of "official" fact and subjective
opinion; they draw upon both the formally stated purpose, as gleaned
from official publications, pamphlets, and/or news releases, and the
impressions of some interviewees. Since each organization is a social
system in its own right, to obtain a full understanding of each would require separate in-depth studies, a task not possible within the scope of this project. Thus the following descriptions are presented as tentative ones.

Women's Organizations

As the preceding list of women's organizations affiliated with the Council shows, there are at least ten different organizations (and more if one includes the various chapters) to which women (exclusively) may belong.

Women join the organizations for various reasons; according to some informants, the ideology or formal purpose of the group is the least compelling. The usual reasons are because their friends belong or they would like to become friends with the group of women who do belong. Just as the different organizations attract different age and socioeconomic segments of the population, so the different chapters within an organization do the same. Most organizations, according to one interviewee, have certain groups or chapters that are considered "higher status" by some.

Many women gain great satisfaction from belonging to a particular organization. Participation can serve as a career substitute by providing an outlet for their interest and energies and giving them a sense of accomplishment. (The fact that women often have no business or career explains in large part why more women than men are active in organizations; they have the time and need the involvement.) Some of the women who are so inclined can advance to leadership roles. They are then in a position to attend national conferences and serve on
national boards; their organizational activity thus gives them a career-like chance to travel and to be a "cosmopolitan."

Among the most popular women's organizations are the sisterhoods, Hadassah, and B'nai B'rith. These groups are familiar, at least in name, to most Houston Jews. Not as many are familiar with ORT and Brandeis University Women (relatively new organizations in Houston). There are still other organizations that are not generally known to exist.

Five of the six religious congregations have a sisterhood, or voluntary association for the women of the congregation, which carries on religious, educational, service, and social activities. (The exception is the Houston Congregation for Reform Judaism, which has only a loose association of women.) Generally the sisterhood is responsible for furnishing the pulpit flowers, maintaining the kitchen, providing refreshments after Friday night services, raising funds (through varied programs) to help defray congregational expenses, etc. In addition, members usually support the youth activities of the congregation and engage in community (Jewish and non-Jewish) service projects. The Reform sisterhoods (and brotherhoods) feel that they are more involved in social action and/or service projects than those of the other branches. Each of the sisterhoods belongs to the National Federation of Sisterhoods of their respective religious branch.

Several informants felt that the sisterhoods were the most popular organizations and that "women will do things for a sisterhood that they would never do for another organization." Most women are active (in varying degrees) in their congregation's sisterhood as long as they have children in Sunday school. Only a few older women remain active. The women of the Reform congregations seem to be particularly drawn to
belonging to their sisterhood.

Hadassah (five chapters in Houston), Pioneer Women (two chapters), and Mizrachi Women (one chapter) are nationwide women's Zionist organizations that raise funds for child welfare, medical care, and other projects in Israel. While most Jewish organizations today include some projects or fund-raising related to Israel among their other activities, these organizations are oriented specifically toward Israel. Of these three organizations, Hadassah provides the principal share of support and has the most members, both nationally and in Houston. It is the oldest women's Zionist group in the United States (organized in 1912). The first Hadassah chapter in Houston was formed in 1919 (when being pro-Zionist was not popular). The organization is best known for its support of medical research and hospitals in Israel. It attracts primarily women who are of the Conservative branch of Judaism.  

One Houston Hadassah member said, "Before Israel was accepted, society types [i.e., generally Reform] did not think joining Hadassah was quite the thing. Zionism was taboo. Today there are still relatively few Reform women who belong." The member also said that Hadassah is more work-oriented and less social than other organizations, and that whereas other groups have art reviews, book reviews, and sewing circles, "here we give money and time."

Another Hadassah member said that she preferred Hadassah to other groups for its "study group and fund-raising for Israel." She compared it to B'nai B'rith, which she felt did charity work for projects in the United States—"at least that was what she saw the Houston chapter as doing. She felt that, because there were enough other organizations doing work in the United States, she should put her effort in
Hadassah.

Women's chapters of B'nai B'rith (the oldest Jewish service and fraternal organization in the country) were not established in America until 1922 and in Houston not until 1941. The organization in general is noted for its sponsoring of some of the most important Jewish groups: Anti-Defamation League (ADL), organized in 1913 to combat anti-Semitism; Hillel Foundation (organizations on college campuses for Jewish youth); B'nai B'rith Youth Organizations (BBYO) for under-college-age girls and boys; and the B'nai B'rith Vocational Service. The organization is thought of as being [city-wide] community- and service-oriented.

The women in the seven Houston chapters of B'nai B'rith view their organization as being a vital and real one. Similar to Hadassah members, they see it as one composed of women who "want to work, really do something, not just socialize." It is not, according to them, a "social" group, and they did not join for "status" reasons. According to several members under the age of forty, it, too, attracts primarily women of the Conservative branch. However, according to one older Houstonian, the organization has always attracted Reform women, and "certainly at the beginning it did."

ORT (Organization for Rehabilitation through Training), which has two Houston chapters and is a relatively new organization on the Houston scene, "is a worldwide organization whose basic purpose is to help Jewish people by teaching them modern trades and skills." Because of the continuing migration to Israel of Jews from varied lands, the work of this agency is seen as being important. One Houstonian, who was critical of the organization's bureaucratic structure, nevertheless has continued to give money to the organization because "its real work is
overseas and it is excellent."

Brandeis National Women's Committee (known locally as Brandeis University Women) supports the library at Brandeis University, a non-sectarian coed university in Waltham, Massachusetts. While the male counterpart organization, which in Houston is a "loose" organization known as "Friends of Brandeis," is concerned with financial aid to the university "as a whole," the women's primary goal is "to support, maintain, staff, and furnish the Brandeis Library." Their fund-raising projects include an annual book sale and sponsoring some special project of a cultural nature. They also hold study courses and engage in local service activities. Membership is by word of mouth; the group does not actively seek new members.

One Brandeis member, comparing Brandeis to Hadassah and "maybe B'nai B'rith" and ORT said that "they [the other groups] have much more Jewish consciousness and do most of their work outside this country. My feelings are that it's important to do things here in this country. We believe in doing cultural things, not just Jewish ones."

Brandeis is perceived by some nonmembers as an organization where "they do not have a lot of meetings--just the one yearly book sale for fund-raising, so it doesn't take too much time" (which was an implied criticism). The members were thought to be generally wealthy and sophisticated.

The Council of Jewish Women, the first national organization for Jewish women (formed in the United States in 1893 and in Houston in 1913), is concerned with [city-wide] education, social action, and community service programs. It once was the most popular organization for Jewish women in Houston, with a reputation for attracting primarily
upper socioeconomic Reform women. Yaffe (1968) still refers to it as the organization for Reform women on the upper economic levels. However, in Houston the organization declined in the forties, and only in recent years has it been reactivated by newcomers to the city. According to one long-term Houstonian, "the main reason for the organization's original demise was that they cared too much about credentials—they attempted to be too restrictive in their image." Even though the organization today, according to an active member, "is open to all and is no longer a 'snob appeal' group limited to Reform," it is not one of the more popular groups.12

According to a member, the council still adheres to its original basic principles—i.e., the function of the organization is service and it is community-oriented; fund-raising is secondary, almost minimal; and most of the members are also active in other groups. The organization is seen by its members as being a liaison between the non-Jewish and Jewish formal communities, for (according to a member) non-Jews will contact the Council of Jewish Women, not the sisterhoods.

City of Hope (formerly known as Save-A-Life League) is a national organization that supports a free, nonsectarian medical and research center of that name (City of Hope: Pilot Medical Center) in Duarte, California. While the organization was originally Jewish, today it is nonsectarian. Locally, some presidents have been Gentile, but the majority of the membership is Jewish. The organization has a chapter for young couples, called Keys to the City of Hope.

Included among the groups not generally known to Houston Jews are the Pioneer Women, Mizrachi Women, Workmen's Circle (Ladies Auxiliary), and Jewish War Veterans (Ladies Auxiliary). The few nonmembers
who are aware of these organizations conceive of their members as being
drawn from the lower socioeconomic levels. It is also thought that
their membership, with the exception of Workmen's Circle, is primarily
Orthodox. With the exception of the Jewish War Veterans, they are per-
ceived as having a membership composed primarily of the very elderly
who joined when they first came to this country and "whose whole social
life is their organization." (According to some informants, these
groups of women are sincere, dedicated workers who give in time and
money far beyond their means.)

As stated previously, Pioneer Women and Mizrachi Women are two
of the three women's Zionist organizations in Houston. Pioneer Women
(membership about 100) has two chapters; the newer one is composed of
younger women, many of whom are the daughters of women belonging to the
first chapter. These are women highly dedicated to helping Israel; the
organization ideologically identifies with the "working class" there.
(Nationally, the organization is the women's auxiliary to the male
League for Labor Israel [also referred to as Labor Zionists], which
though once active in Houston in the early thirties exists today "on
paper" only. According to an interviewee, its nearest "brother chapter"
in Houston is Farband, another Zionist male organization.)

Mizrachi Women, the religious group of the Zionist organiza-
tions, formed a Houston chapter in the 1940s. (A national male Mizrachi
organization exists but has no chapter in Houston.)

The organization is stereotyped by nonmembers who are aware of
the group's existence as being composed of "religious fanatics." One
said "their [the organization's] children's projects in Israel had chil-
dren praying three times a day." The stereotype is resented by the
members, who feel that the image is no longer true. "Today most of our members are Conservative and Orthodox in actions and beliefs in just about the same way the majority of Conservative Jews in Houston are—i.e., some keep kosher, some do not; a few observe the Sabbath literally, but most do not." The members are making a concerted drive to change the group's "image." A member said, "In Los Angeles and Dallas, even some Reforms are members." (Similar to the Pioneer Women, a new Mizrachi chapter for younger women was begun, but, unlike the young Pioneer group, it merged with the older Mizrachi group in order to provide needed leadership for them.)

Workmen's Circle Ladies Auxiliary (also known by its Yiddish name of Arbeiter [or Arbeter] Ring, which was discussed in Chapter I) is a fraternal, educational, and service organization that in the past has shown great interest in the Yiddish language and culture. Formed in Houston in 1915 primarily as a mutual aid society for immigrants and encompassing an ideology that some labeled "socialist," the group originally had about 200 members. Today, the ladies auxiliary (formed around 1924) and the men's group meet together, and the total membership is about twenty-five members. They once had a young adults group (No. 530Y) but it disbanded. Their Yiddish school existed from 1926 to 1941 and from 1955 to 1959. In recent years their fund-raising activities have been mainly for children's projects in Israel.

The Jewish War Veterans Auxiliary (not included in the Council's 1970 delegate list) works with the men's group in providing services and social activities for Jewish veterans. Some of its work includes aiding veterans and their families in and out of hospitals, and contributing to the Shriner Hospital for Crippled Children. Similar to the other lesser
known groups, while this one may be popular in some of the large Eastern cities, in Houston the group is not a force. However, similar to some of the other lesser known groups, its members say that they enjoy belonging and that they "have a lot of fun."

Men's Organizations

The organizations in Houston for Jewish men are fewer in number than those for the women, and, because men work at their occupations, fewer men than women join organizations—a typical pattern throughout the United States. But the various men's groups that do exist, like the women's groups, attract different socioeconomic segments of the Jewish population.

The five religious congregations with sisterhoods in Houston also have brotherhoods (sometimes called men's clubs) for the men of the congregation. These and the seven lodges of B'nai B'rith are the most popular of the men's organizations in the city.

Fewer men belong to the Zionist groups, which include the Houston Zionist District and Marcus Levinson Zionist District, two branches of the parent organization, the national Zionist Organization of America (ZOA), founded around 1905; Farband; and League for Labor Israel, also called Labor Zionists and the brother chapter to Pioneer Women. The first two Zionist groups are also open to women; the last exists "on paper" only. Farband, an organization originally formed by some members of the Labor Zionists, today has probably no more than ten members in Houston. The Zionist organizations, nevertheless, are (with the exception of Farband) generally known to exist in the community. (One interviewee, however, feels that they will all cease to function
when the one man who has been the "leading force of the group" is no longer around.)

The least known men's groups are the Jewish War Veterans and Workmen's Circle. As with the women, the men who belong to these two groups, as well as to the Zionist ones, are considered to be generally of a lower socioeconomic class; the two organizations are not a force locally; and similar to the women's auxiliaries, with the exception of the Jewish War Veterans, the membership is considered to be composed of elderly, less acculturated men who joined the groups when they first came to America.

The B'nai B'rith men's lodges are called by Yaffe (1968) the great "middle-class" organization for Jewish males. One of the early aims of this first Jewish fraternal and service organization in America was to become a group that would unite Jews from different religious branches and social groups; there would be no qualifications for membership—financial, social, or ideological. In early Houston, the membership was always mixed, although the early leaders were Reform Jews, by and large. Today the bulk of its membership is Conservative or Orthodox. One member of B'nai B'rith said: "The Reforms are not active, generally speaking. There is no snob appeal. It is an organization for the masses." (This conviction—i.e., that the organization is not status-oriented—seemed to be common among B'nai B'rith members, both men and women.)

As in the women's groups, the various B'nai B'rith men's lodges, in their membership, meeting time, etc., reflect differences in age group and socioeconomic background. For example, one group, the San Jacinto Lodge, was originally composed primarily of men who attended
San Jacinto High School in Houston in their youth and were active in athletics. Another group is composed primarily of professionals--doctors and attorneys.

However, few men today are really active in Jewish organizations in Houston, even in B'nai B'rith. One forty-five-year-old member, a native (mixed third generation) Houstonian and a leader in B'nai B'rith, in talking about B'nai B'rith in particular, and organizations in general, said: "All organizations have changed today to meet the changing world. Meetings are not very important anymore [few attend]. I do not know the real future of them. The reason originally for brotherhood groups was it provided a reason for 'getting out.' Fifty years ago, where did one have to go? If you wanted to get out of the house, where did you go? There was no radio, TV. So the lodge meeting once a month was a big deal. Today, every man is tired when he gets home. [He was speaking of a group of men like himself whose successful widespread businesses require a great deal of travel.] After all the travel and all, it is a pleasure to stay home. It used to be going to Sylvan Beach or Galveston was a major deal. Today one travels to Europe and across the U.S. And in any respect, there is simply more to do."

Organizations for Adults of Both Sexes

Organizations open to both men and women include the two Zionist branches (Houston Zionist District and Marcus Levinson Zionist District) mentioned earlier, which help support a wide range of programs in Israel and Keys to the City of Hope couples club.

One of the few other organizations with both male and female membership is the American Jewish Committee (AJC), a community relations
agency that works both in the United States and overseas (Europe, South America, and Israel). One of the oldest of the national Jewish organizations, it was founded in 1906 by wealthy German Reform Jews (such as Jacob Schiff).

The local AJC organization in Houston has a high status image among those knowledgeable about the Jewish formal community (but many laymen active in the formal community are not aware of the organization, or, if they are, are not aware that it is a membership group in which people may participate). One interviewee, who is a member of the group, called it "the only intellectual organization in Houston." Another said that "the major contributors [financially] to the Jewish community and also to the community at large are most likely to be members of the AJC." Most of the lay leaders belong to it. The author was told by the director that many people would feel uncomfortable in it since it tends to be a self-selecting membership.

Yaffe (1968) points out that the image of AJCs around the country is based primarily on what the organization used to be in the days of the early wealthy German Reform Jews of New York and even later as Reform Jews held the dominant role in Jewish communal life. But today, its members come from all branches of Judaism.

The other major organization active in Houston in Jewish civil rights and human relations is the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), the community relations arm of B'nai B'rith. (The third major community relations group active nationally, the American Jewish Congress, has no affiliate in Houston.) Unlike AJC, ADL has a double constituency. In one sense it has no general active membership as such (individuals would participate only in the sense of being on the executive lay board). But
in another sense all members of B'nai B'rith are automatically a part of ADL since they sponsor ADL. It is similar to AJC, however, in being professionally staffed (i.e., headed by a paid executive director). Since ADL is considered a part of B'nai B'rith, it does not belong to the Jewish Community Council as a separate organization. According to the ADL director, the board is comprised of both B'nai B'rith and non-B'nai B'rith members.

Westwood Country Club, the only Jewish country club in Houston (Atlanta, Georgia, has three such clubs), is a purely expressive organization. Located on an attractive site in southwest Houston (zip code area 36), it functions as a status organization, similar to its Gentile counterparts. Whereas in the past, members were predominantly Reform Jews, today most of the city's wealthy Jews, regardless of religious branch, belong. One interviewee said that it is where the "decisions" of the lay elite are made. Another said that "any Jew who is anyone belongs to Westwood."

The Jewish Community Center is thought by some Gentiles to be an integrating force among Houston Jewry since it is called a "center." It operates as such a force, however, only to the same degree that any of the other organizations do. That is, some people belong (there are membership fees) and use its services; some do not. It has been called a "poor man's country club." (The rich belong to Westwood Country Club.) The center has activities for all age groups—from hobby classes and a summer day camp to health clubs, lectures, and art exhibits. Its facilities include an auditorium, a gym, a swimming pool, a nursery, and a day school; they are housed in a large new building, located on South Braeswood, for which the Jewish formal community is still paying. The
facilities and activities of the center tend to attract primarily those Jews who have a relatively high level of "Jewish consciousness." Approximately 18% of the center's membership is non-Jewish.

Organizations for Older Adults. Golden Age Friendship Club, sponsored by the Jewish Community Center, offers a recreational and social program for the older members of the Jewish population. It is now one of five senior groups sponsored by the center.

As described by an interviewee, the senior adult groups appeal to various socioeconomic segments of the elderly. The more Yiddish-speaking adults, including Pioneer and Mizrahi Women, tend to belong to the Golden Age Friendship Club and the Day Care Center for Older Adults. The more assimilated adults, with similar intellectual interests, tend to belong to the Young Senior Club, Tuesday Club, and Le Chai Men's Club. Similar to other groups, the senior adult groups now have an umbrella organization, the Senior Adult Club Council. It should be noted that only a small percentage of the Jewish population's older adults utilize these groups. Those who do are primarily of the Conservative and Orthodox branches.

Jewish Youth Groups

The Jewish Youth Council is the umbrella organization of the local under-college-age Jewish youth groups. As a result of the youth's wanting a voice in the decision-making of the adult Jewish formal community, the Youth Council is now a member organization of the Jewish Community Council. Its delegate is currently on a major committee of the Council. The following describes the Jewish youth groups represented on the Youth Council.
BBG (B'nai B'rith Girls, six chapters, 218 members) and AZA (Aleph Zadik Aleph, five chapters, 194 members), are youth organizations for girls and boys, respectively, sponsored by B'nai B'rith. Those youth more committed to Judaism would most likely belong to these groups. They generally come from Conservative or Orthodox homes. BIFYT (Beth Israel Federation of Temple Youth, seventy-nine members), and TEFTY (Temple Emanu El Federation of Temple Youth, ninety-nine members) are composed of interested youth from the respective Reform congregations. Those youth who join are generally interested in action- and service-oriented projects.

STP (Sigma Theta Phi, twenty-seven members) and SAR (Sigma Alpha Rho, thirty-nine members) are a sorority and fraternity, respectively, founded around 1939, for high school students. Youth who join these groups are thought to have little interest in Judaism per se and to be interested only in belonging to a social organization. The membership is primarily Reform. The Esquires is a pre-fraternity-age male group whose younger members eventually join the SAR fraternity.

The BBYO (B'nai B'rith Youth Organization) is a local umbrella council composed of representatives from all of the local B'nai B'rith youth groups, male and female.

The B'nai B'rith Youth Groups, BIFYT, and TEFTY are affiliated with their respective national organizations. All have service programs, retreats, and myriad other activities. Similar to adults, some youth are attracted to the "bureaucratic route" and assume leadership roles in the local Jewish youth groups, Youth Council, and the regional or national organization with which the group may be affiliated.

College Groups. Hillel (a national organization sponsored by
B'nai B'rith) and Students for Israel (now called Masada) are two Jewish organizations on the campuses of Rice University and the University of Houston. Similar to Jewish college students elsewhere, few Houston Jewish students join Hillel—the traditional college Jewish organization. One Rice student described it as "kind of Mickey Mouse—with no speakers. And at the U. of H., Hillel is strictly social." She did add that there might be better speakers on the program at Rice now, and if so, she might attend. The campus organization that is attracting Jewish students is Students for Israel, or Masada, a group formed to counteract pro-Arab propaganda. According to a Rice student, the consensus among Jewish college students is that Israel is more important than Judaism.

Service Agencies

The Jewish Home for the Aged is a ninety-five-bed facility that is open to the elderly Jews of Houston. Its fees are based on the ability to pay; the indigent have preference over those with funds. Its residents are provided with social and recreational service and medical, nursing, and rehabilitation care. (To most of the Jewish elderly, to be sent to the "Old Folks Home" is a terrible fate, one that they hope will not happen to them.)

The Jewish Family Service is a counseling agency for individuals and families faced with personal problems. It also acts as a source of information and referral to other resources. Homemaker services are provided as well as an extensive family life education program. It is exclusively for Jews. While many Jews use its services, many others would not want to go to a Jewish agency for social or emotional problems.

The Hebrew Free Loan Association provides small interest-free
loans. The Houston Kashruth Association is concerned with seeing that
dietary laws are followed in any organization that claims to do so.

While not an organization, any description of the formal Jewish
community in Houston would be incomplete without mention of the Jewish
Herald-Voice, the only local Jewish newspaper. Until his recent death,
the editor D. H. White enjoyed a reputation of being "the intellectual-
in-residence," the "elder statesman" of Houston Jewry; his editorial
opinions carried great weight. Many subscribers read nothing but the
pages that have announcements of engagements, Bar Mitzvahs, and deaths.
Its other readers, however, are apprised of the activities in the formal
community. The paper has been, and continues to be, an integrating com-
munal force.

The organizations discussed above do not exhaust the groups
available for Jews to join, but do comprise the majority. Some organi-
izations exist that one is invited or elected to join, e.g., the Young
Leadership Group (to be discussed later). In addition, there are
various committees, such as the Hospital Visiting Committee (a committee
of the Council which renders aid through the services of a full-time
rabbi to Jewish hospital patients from out of town), whose activities
one may participate in. And there is the umbrella organization of the
formal Jewish community—the Jewish Community Council.

Jewish Community Council

Affiliation with the Jewish Community Council is voluntary, but
all of the various local Jewish organizations eligible for membership
are expected to affiliate and to send delegates. Any organization with
twenty-five or more members, which has been in existence at least one
year, and whose purpose is basically Jewish, is eligible for membership.

As noted in Chapter I, the Council was established in 1936 "when the Jewish community had grown large enough and its problems complex enough to warrant it." As the director of the Council sums up its purpose today: "It is the social planning body and fund raising body of the community. It raises funds [through the United Jewish Campaign] for the local agencies and the national and overseas groups. It is not a functional agency; rather it is a planning and coordinating body."

The United Jewish Campaign, the "United Fund" drive of the Houston Jewish community, is a large annual combined campaign to raise funds for both local and national agencies and services. Houston is like most other American cities in having only one such drive a year (New York City, which has two separate drives, is the exception). The campaign is a major activity of the Council and an important event in the formal Jewish community.

Each participating organization in the Council is expected to send a delegate (usually appointed by the organization's president) to the delegate body of the Council—one delegate for each 100 members with a maximum of four delegates per organization. (At the beginning of 1971, there were 150 members in the delegate body.)

The Council's board of trustees, which determines policy, is composed of twenty-one members from the delegate body, twenty-one members from the Jewish population at large (other than organization delegates), all past presidents of the Council, one member from the Youth Council, two members from leadership levels of the United Jewish Campaign, four members (one of which must be a rabbi) to be appointed by the incoming president, five persons who have never served before, plus...
the executive committee. The slate of nominees for the board of trustees and for the officers of the board (i.e., the executive committee) is drawn up by a nominating committee that has been appointed from the delegate body by the president. It then is voted upon by the delegates at the annual dinner meeting of the delegate body, a meeting which is open to all Houston Jews (many of whom are unaware of the business aspects of the occasion). All members of the board of trustees are then considered delegates to the Council.

Part of the function of the Council as the central organization of the Jewish formal community is to deal with areas of common concern, such as community relations, social planning, and parceling of funds to the various local, regional, national, and overseas agencies. This work is done by many committees and subcommittees, which are composed of Council delegates plus additional persons from the general Jewish population. The most important committees, according to informants, are the Social Planning Committee, the Budget Committee, and the Community Relations Committee.

The Social Planning Committee is supposed to approve the forming of any new organization that will need community funding. (One interviewee said that what often happens in fact is that an organization will begin without such approval and will already be a going concern when the Social Planning Committee is apprised of its intentions. The committee then feels that the new organization must be supported.)

The Social Planning Committee also screens the funding requests of existing local organizations, either rejecting them or recommending their approval, often with modifications, to the Budget Committee. The Budget Committee has the final say in such matters and can decide
counter to the Social Planning Committee's recommendation. It is the Budget Committee that shapes the final recommendations to the board of trustees (who then makes the final decision) on the apportioning of all funds to all beneficiary agencies, local, national, and overseas.

The Community Relations Committee is considered important because it is the group concerned with Jewish relations in regard to the city at large. (Even though the ADL, as an agency, does not belong to the Council, the director participates in it as a member of the Community Relations Committee.)

The above description of the Council's structure and procedures is a simplified overview only. The actual and complex interaction between the Council, the local organizations, and the various individuals in leadership roles will be looked at in greater detail in the section on leadership structure.

It is pertinent, however, to remark here that although the Council is the coordinating body of the formal Jewish community in Houston, from interviews and participant observation, the author concludes that the majority of rank-and-file Jews do not know that the Council even exists. On the other hand, some knowledgeable about the formal community criticize the Council's acting as spokesman for all Houston Jews when all diverse views, they feel, have not been taken into account.

The description of the community cycle that follows attempts to bring the many organizations just described to life and to show something of the way in which the various segments of the Jewish population relate to them and their activities.
Community Cycle

Each year the events of the formal Jewish community in Houston follow a more or less predictable sequence that can be called a community cycle. A 1971 editorial in the Jewish Herald-Voice called it a "season," with an opening and a closing. The editorial said in part:

Summer is a holiday. The last day of Shavuot [the Festival of Weeks, celebrated in late May or early June] is a signal for a hiatus which takes the community on a never-never trip until come either Labor Day or Rosh Hashana . . .

Punctuating the season are the major Jewish religious holidays and the important regular secular events, such as the annual United Jewish Campaign drive, and the annual fund-raising and/or award dinners of some of the major organizations.

In between are the myriad other fund-raising affairs, lectures, organizational meetings, and adult study courses offered by the various associations and organizations. And interspersed throughout are the Jewish weddings, Bar/Bat Mitzvahs, anniversaries, births, and deaths.

The following is a brief description of the pace and sequence of events during the research year of this study, which is representative of the annual cycle. Obviously, not all religious or secular events are covered. The attempt is simply to indicate a general pattern. The Jewish religious holidays that are mentioned are treated most cursorily and only to indicate that they do occur.

In the summer, Jewish community activity has slowed down. Most people take their vacations at this time. While some organizations continue to hold meetings, retreats for youth are held, and news is reported as usual in the Jewish Herald-Voice, there is, nevertheless, a
certain moratorium, as the editorial in the *Herald* put it, that exists in the summer.

However, in September, like the larger society, the Jewish formal community begins to come alive. In this month is held the annual ADL (Anti-Defamation League) Torch of Liberty Award Dinner. In 1971 Ambassador George Bush was the recipient of the award, the first time a non-Jew had been so honored. Whoever the recipient though, there is usually some guest speaker of importance who draws not only a crowd but also financial donations to the event. (One of the primary purposes of such dinners is the fund-raising.) As with other organizations, some ADL affairs are more successful than others, depending upon who the honoree is, where it is given, and who attends. The charge for such affairs, which must cover food costs, ranges from five to fifteen dollars or more.

There are meanwhile membership drives and activities (many of which are for fund-raising) of the various organizations, publicity concerning various lecture series, announcements of the program for the year of the Jewish Community Center, etc. Also, during the research year, a Youth Leadership Conference-Seminar Program was held at the Warwick Hotel. The Young Leadership Group of the Jewish Community Council is a relatively new program in the community; in the main it is open only to a selected group (within the age range of 25-40) who are invited (recruited) to join.

Also during this month, the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds holds its annual national conference (much like the annual conference of any medical or professional group), which is attended by members of all three elite groups. For many of the lay elite (especially
the newer ones), it is a highlight of the year, for they attend seminars, meet the "big names" among United States Jewry, and hear eminent speakers. (Most of the other organizations also hold regional and national conferences during the year, which are attended by the organization's rank-and-file members as well as its leaders.)

Around the middle of September or the beginning of October, the High Holidays occur--Rosh Hashana, which marks the beginning of the Jewish New Year (a time for personal inventory taking), followed ten days later by Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, and the culmination of the New Year. Both days are marked by day-long services at the synagogues and temples; part of the Yom Kippur observance includes a memorial service for the dead, held usually towards the end of the day, just before the concluding services. For many Houston Jews, the High Holidays are the one time that they attend synagogue services. Devout Jews attend both days' services in their entirety. Those Jews who feel a part of the Jewish community but to whom religious services mean nothing, and many peripherals generally attend only the evening or morning service of Rosh Hashana. If they have a close deceased relative they may also (or only) attend the memorial service of Yom Kippur. Most Jews, even if they do not attend services, stay home from their work or school, or keep their children home from school, out of respect for Jews to whom the High Holidays are important. (In the earlier days of Houston, men who owned their own business would close them for Yom Kippur. Today, few do.)

Between Yom Kippur and Rosh Hashana, short memorial services for the dead are conducted at the respective cemeteries of the congregations. These services are another occasion in which most Houston Jews, including
many peripherals, participate. Consequently, they meet relatives and friends whom they may not see otherwise during the year. Such services are an integrating force among Houston Jewry and one means whereby even peripheral Jews often maintain ties with other Jews.

Five days after Yom Kippur is the agricultural holiday of Succoth. In the past, this holiday was observed mainly by Conservative and Orthodox Jews, and even they grew lax as the Jews became acculturated in America. However, with the advent of Israel, the last few years have seen a new pride awaken in American Jews. Renewed interest in the old holidays and customs is evident not only among the Conservative and Orthodox congregations but also the Reform. In 1971, all of the Houston congregations built a "sucçah" (temporary shelter) of some kind (some were elaborate, some simple; in one Reform temple it consisted only of a symbolic canopy over the rabbi's pulpit). The congregants brought box lunches and sat and ate, drank wine, and sang Jewish songs.

Also in October are many award dinners, including the annual Houston Zionist Award Dinner and the annual American Jewish Committee's Max H. Nathan Award Dinner. The Award Dinner given by AJC can usually be counted on to be one of the most glamorous of the dinners. As with the ADL affair, there are the cocktails before dinner, the well-dressed crowd, the well-known speaker. But in comparison to other award dinners, the crowd at the AJC event has proportionately more leaders, more of the well-dressed and sophisticated Jews—in keeping with AJC's reputation of being a status organization. Actually, many of the community leaders appear at almost all of the functions. It is simply that the group present at the AJC affair is less mixed socioeconomically than at any other.
By October the Jewish community has gone into full swing. The Jewish Community Council's different committees are meeting. The controversies and problems within the formal community are being aired; the editorials in the Herald are voicing strong pro and con sentiments about the controversies and other matters of interest. (Some of the controversies and problems during the research year were concern over the drug problem and its effect on Jewish youth; whether or not the Jewish Community Center should remain open on the Sabbath [Saturday]; the issue of better Jewish education for the youth and who should finance and direct the program.) There are various other tribute dinners, fund-raising affairs, and events held by the many organizations, including the religious congregations. Theatre performances, lectures, adult study courses, assorted youth events, as well as tours to Israel, are being offered. Each of the congregations is scheduling activities for both adults and youth. Announcements of the committee heads for the annual Jewish Campaign are being made in the Herald. And there are the ongoing Bar/Bat Mitzvahs, anniversaries, weddings, births, funerals, and tombstone unveiling ceremonies.

In December, Chanukah (the Feast of Lights) occurs. Originally a rather minor holiday, it has gained in popularity in America as an alternative to Christmas. Although Conservative and Orthodox Jews have always celebrated Chanukah, Reform Jews now are also observing it. Even though Jews do not celebrate Christmas per se, they participate in the larger society's holiday season, giving and attending parties, New Year's dances, and celebrations, taking the typical Christmas vacations, etc. In effect, most Jews celebrate two New Years and two Christmases—although about the latter it may be more correct to say that many Jews
celebrate neither Chanukah nor Christmas. Some Jews have a Christmas tree—to others, as one respondent to the questionnaire wrote, it is anathema.

January and February are the months set aside for the annual United Jewish Campaign's fund-raising drive. During these two months no other organization is supposed to raise funds. All activities of the organizations are supposed to be directed toward fostering the main fund drive. The year of this research—1971—a mass meeting was held in January and all Houston Jews were invited to hear a speaker tell of the great need for giving to the drive. Otherwise, in the past usually only the leaders at this point in the season have exposure to speakers and are involved with the campaign. The participation by the rank and file comes much later in the campaign, and then it is not en masse.

As the fund-raising drive picks up momentum (it begins with the "big givers" and filters down to the small ones), toward the end of February or the beginning of March a telethon is held to urge people to give any amount, however small. The final fund-raising events, including the annual Women's Day event, are held around March. On Women's Day, which is organized by the Women's Division of the campaign, all Jewish women who have given or have pledged to give a certain minimum amount are invited to attend a function planned to attract them. Through the previous months, the size of the donation has determined what functions the donor has been invited to attend (i.e., different functions are planned for donors in different financial categories).

In February or March, the Zionist Organization of America (ZOA) gives its annual Purim ball. (Purim is a religious festival observed mainly by Conservative and Orthodox Jews.) In April there is Passover
(Pesach), the holidays which feature a family dinner during which the Passover service (Seder) is conducted. This is another occasion when most Houston Jews participate; even peripherals are cajoled into coming to a family dinner, where they meet with relatives they may rarely see otherwise. (Questionnaire results showed that 84% of the respondents attend a Seder.)

As the final months of the season come to a close, there are dinners honoring outgoing presidents of organizations and final award dinners. The annual Jewish Community Council meeting and dinner (at which the slate of officers is voted upon) is one such affair. While all of these dinners are ostensibly open to the entire Jewish population, many cannot afford them.

The preceding description of the community cycle should not be construed as meaning that all Houston Jews participate in all of the many activities and functions taking place in the cycle year. Probably only a very small percentage participate rather fully. Most rank and file are aware of and participate in only the events and activities of the organizations of which they are members. Even then, if they are not active members—and relatively few Jews are, although many are nominal members of organizations—their participation is generally minimal. It is probably fair to say that the majority of the rank and file participate in Jewish communal life primarily through their family, their informal friendship groups, and their congregational affiliation. By definition, peripheral Jews participate little, if at all.

These degrees of lay participation in the formal community have
been conceptualized by one organizational professional as being a series of concentric circles.

1. At the center is the small core of individuals who are on the boards of the many agencies and organizations, serve on the Jewish Community Council, and contribute heavily to the formal community both in money and in time.

2. Within the next ring are those who are particularly active in one or two Jewish organizations, serving perhaps as president or on the board. Their activity is at the level of these one or two organizations, not of the formal community as a whole. At that level, however, they assume a leadership role.

3. A larger ring consists of those who are active in one or more organizations but not on a full-time basis or with undivided attention.

4. A still wider ring is comprised of those who are affiliated with a congregation, attending services on occasional Friday nights and High Holidays, and who go occasionally to lectures and other public events, but who otherwise have little involvement in formally organized Jewish groups. Their primary social relations, however, are with other Jews.

5. A ring still further from the core includes those with only minimal organizational affiliation. They belong to a congregation and/or give money to the Jewish community and may attend High Holiday services. But for most, their primary relations are with Gentile groups.

6. The outer ring consists of those who do not belong to any Jewish organization and who participate in few (if any) of the events of the Jewish community cycle. It includes both those who identify with other Jews and those who deny the fact of their Jewish identity.

In the terminology used in this study, the first ring is the lay
elite; the second ring constitutes various types of lay leaders, whose
prestige varies. The third and fourth rings are the rank and file, and
the fifth and sixth rings, the peripheral or marginal Jews.

Those who are most aware of the workings of the formal community
as a whole are those who set much of the machinery in motion—the
leaders.

Leadership Structure

Sutker (1958), in writing about the power structure of Jewish
organizational life in Atlanta, Georgia, used the terms "organizational
elite," "lay elite," and "theological elite" to refer to the various
groups of leaders. The concepts are useful in describing the situation
in Houston. For what began as a group of equal Jewish members in an
organized community has now become divided into those who are "experts"
—i.e., professional community workers (to whom the term "organizational
elite" refers)—and those who are "lay" Jews.

Some of the member organizations of the Jewish Community Council
are run by professional community workers: The Jewish Family Service,
the Jewish Home for the Aged, the Jewish Community Center, and the Coun-
cil itself all have paid executive directors hired by lay members of the
local community. The American Jewish Committee and the Anti-Defamation
League, the two strong Jewish community relations groups in Houston, are
also run by professionals, but in these cases the hiring is done by
their respective national organization rather than the local laity.
(According to Sutker, they owe their primary allegiance to the national
organizations who hire them.) But both of these directors have a local
lay board and of course must be approved by, and get along with, the local laity. (These professionals appear to have a somewhat different relationship with the local laity than professionals of other organizations in that they have more independence, or at least are responsible to a smaller group. In contrast, it has been said that the director of the Jewish Community Council, for example, has to have wide-based local support.)

"Lay elite" refers to the group of lay Jews who are the leaders in the formal community--i.e., those who serve on the lay boards of the organizations headed by a "professional" executive director, or on the lay boards of religious congregations, and are generally on the committees of the Council. Generally they are the "big givers"--the ones who give the most money to the United Jewish Campaign. In essence, they pay the salaries of the hired experts. It should be noted that, while reference will be made to women lay elite, the important positions on the boards and the Council are invariably filled by men.

The lay elite can be divided into the following groups: the current group of lay elite; the past group of lay elite, the elders who "are still around if you need them to be an influence"; and the lay elite of the future, the Young Leadership Group (mentioned earlier), which was organized by the Council for the purpose of recruiting and training "young leaders" in the age range of 25 to 40.

"Theological elite" refers to the rabbis of the congregations. Many writers note a trend towards the decreasing importance of the rabbi's role. According to several knowledgeable informants, however, generally in the South, and particularly in Houston, the rabbis continue to play a significant role in the Jewish community and the city
at large. Their opinions still carry great weight—especially within
their own congregation. In fact, in Houston congregations are generally
said to be rabbi-oriented, in contrast to some Eastern cities where con-
gregations are more lay-oriented.

At the level of the Community Council in Houston, however, the
rabbis do not have the dominant role. The congregations are represented
in the Council by laity (there is a delegate from the congregation as a
whole and also one delegate each from the sisterhood and brotherhood);
the rabbis have an association and belong to the Council as representa-
tives of it. The dominant roles in the Council, primarily because of
its fund-raising and fund-dispensing function, belong to the secular
elements—the organizational professionals and certain of the lay elite.
This trend toward the increasing importance of secular elements of the
community at the expense of the theological ones has been noted by
Sutker (1958), Roseman (1969), and others.

Related to this dominance of the secular is a point made by
Roseman (1969:72) concerning leadership and Jewishness. He says that,
typically, [lay] leadership in the Jewish power structure is lax con-
cerning Judaism and Jewishness—almost all are ignorant of anything but
the most elementary facts concerning Jewish history, theology, the
Bible, and Hebrew. But this is not seen as a detriment to their leader-
ship or power, for their community service is based totally on a secular
ethic. (He introduces a historical note to explain that, while before
1880 upper-class Jews were secure and well accepted by the Gentile
establishment, the subsequent mass immigration of Russian Jews had the
effect of changing the status of Jews, resulting in exclusion and dis-
crimination. By 1910 upper-class Jews were faced with a clear choice:
to assimilate, avoiding anything Jewish, or to retreat to the Jewish community and develop there the power and prestige denied them in the general community. Most chose the latter. Since that time, American Jews have become more secure, although they are still excluded from some social circles. They are more comfortable with their Judaism as long as it is minimal and does not interfere with their more important concerns. "Underlying all is still the goal of achieving prominence in the general community."

On the basis of the author's personal knowledge and information from several knowledgeable informants, Roseman's observation seems to hold true for many of the lay leaders in Houston. Many of the lay elite are just as ignorant of Jewish history and religious practice as are many of the rank and file; and they, like the rank and file, vary in their commitment to Judaism. In other words, they are just as much a product of their generation (when to be Jewish was not popular) as are other Houston Jews of the same generation.

**Influence of the Organizational Elite**

All Jewish organizations in Houston headed by an organizational professional have a lay board whose function is to set policy. The professional, nevertheless, has considerable leverage in the situation. He must be hired from the "pool" of professionals recommended by the national organization (and in the words of one lay elite member, "they have a strong union!"). Generally, he has a degree in social work; at the least, he has a social science background, is familiar with the national Jewish scene, and has had training in some profession. He therefore is the expert, and if skillful in interpersonal relations can often
convince the men with the money (the lay elite) to do what he feels it is best to do. Although the lay elite, being the men who are financing the organization, want to have their voice heard, they recognize the need for the professional who will work full time on community matters. The end result is that, although the organizational elite of the community must get along with their individual lay board and the local laity in general, in many instances the laity bow to the recommendations of the professionals.

The influence of the professional on Jewish life today is marked. In fact, at the national level, the expertise and viewpoint of the social sciences seem to be in the ascendancy. This affects local Jewish life through the influence of the national organizations. In part, the function of the national organizations (in particular, the Council of Federation and Jewish Welfare Funds [CFJWF], the umbrella organization for local community councils) is to provide assistance to local groups, and they do so by financing surveys, making recommendations, and creating directions for activities in the local formal communities—that is, along professional goal-oriented lines. Sutker (1958:261) says that the organizational elite have taken over many of the functions of both the theological and lay elite and in addition have acquired new ones that put them in the forefront of personnel guiding the current American Jewish community.

Relationship between the Organizational and Lay Elite

The relationship between the organizational professionals (the experts) and the lay elite (the employers) engenders a potential element of strain, both between the lay elite and professionals and among the
organizational professionals themselves in several ways. Competitiveness exists among the organizational professionals because they need to "look good" to their agency or their board of directors. Some of the lay elite feel that each professional is primarily interested in his own career's success (and that one of the reasons for organizations having an interested lay board is to serve as a check on the staff's empire-building tendencies). However, another lay elite member said, "It's not just the professionals. There is empire-building among both lay leaders and professionals. Both are seeking to get credit—so there's duplication of surveys and reports and so on."

A related form of defensive competitiveness is fostered by agencies having to prove their worth, justify their existence, as it were, to the lay members of the community who control the funds. For example, some laity and organizational professionals have challenged the value of the Jewish Community Center as a high-priority Jewish-supported institution. They ask, "What's Jewish about a ping-pong ball or swimming?" The counter view advanced by that organization's executive director (now deceased) is that the center can play a vigorous, original part in fostering "new forms of Jewish identification, belonging and fulfillment" (Beck, 1961). Similarly, the Jewish Family Service has been asked to explain what is Jewish about counseling techniques for families in trouble; and the need for several community relations agencies that are similar in function has been called into question. As a result, the agencies (i.e., their executive directors) feel called upon to continually prove their worth in order to receive support from the laity.

One informant said that each organizational professional in the
community seemed to have "his rich man." Obviously, the professionals need allies among the lay elite in order to survive. For this reason, much of the competitiveness among the organizational elite in Houston centers around the executive director of the Community Council, who has broad-based support among the lay elite. As central fund-raiser, this organizational professional knows and is in contact with almost all of the wealthy lay leaders, an enviable position in the eyes of many of the other professionals. He also has certain influence and power because of his association with the Council, which, as the formal coordinating body of the Jewish community, has current information on all aspects of the community, is involved in formulating community policy, and serves as the funds-dispensing agency in the community.

A comment is necessary concerning the funds-dispensing function of the Council, particularly as it relates to the leadership role of the Council in the eyes of some in the formal community. One lay informant said that the Council is the leader only to the degree that someone needs money from it. According to some organizational professionals, if the Council gives money, it then is in a position to say how to spend it and certain groups would not want to be under the "thumb of the Council."

While the Council is in a position to approve or disapprove the projects of any local group who asks for local community funds (raised through the United Jewish Campaign), many local organizations neither require nor ask for funds from the Council. For example, the congregations raise their own monies. And most organizations that are local affiliates of national organizations (e.g., B'nai B'rith, American Jewish Committee) rely, at the local level, primarily on their own
membership for necessary funds. However, according to one lay elite member, these organizations are not as free from Council influence as one might think. For, even though their local group receives no money from the Council, most of them sponsor organizations or belong to national organizations that receive some funds from the Council on a local, national, or overseas allocation basis (e.g., the Hillel youth groups at the two local universities, sponsored by B'nai B'rith nationally, receive some funds from the Council through both its local and national allocations; AJC's national organization receives money in the national allocation; Hadassah receives aid in the overseas allocation). Thus, to some degree many of these organizations do come under the influence of the Council in that they would not want to be responsible for decreases in the Council's allocations to their parent organizations or to agencies they sponsor.

The Council and the Lay Elite

As has been said earlier, the work of the Council is carried out by committees, some of which are considered by some Council delegates to be more important than others. According to one member of the lay elite, while it is never stated explicitly, some of the delegates to the Council are considered more important than others; that is, they give more money to the United Jewish Campaign. A correlation develops between the importance of a delegate and the importance of the Council committee to which he is assigned. "You cannot be on the Council unless you give money, and you will find that the more money you give, the more important your job will be." There is an exception here and there on the committees, for the Council does seek a representative viewpoint.
Nevertheless, the lay elite are on the most important committees. (This includes, of course, the board of trustees and its executive committee [composed of officers of the board].)

While one member of the lay elite felt that money is the main criterion for leadership in the Council, some professionals and others of the lay elite considered a potential leader's ability to be articulate and his degree of commitment to Jewish affairs to be equally important. One of the lay elite said that a "feeling," an emotion, for Jewish causes is important. One professional said, "Intelligence, education, and position are the entrées to the power structure." Another community organizational worker said that money and business sense are the requisites for male lay leadership and that the criterion for being one of the female lay elite is "being the wife of a male lay elite member." Several of the male lay elite made the point that, while a leader on the Council has to have a certain amount of money in order to have free time to serve on committees, he does not necessarily have to be one of the biggest givers.

It should be noted that Jews who are socially prominent in the city at large are not necessarily leaders in the Jewish formal community. The term "lay elite" is used in this paper to refer specifically to the latter.

Because of the relatively small size of the Jewish population in Houston, the lay elite group is also small. That means that in effect the top lay leadership take turns serving on the various committees, and that informal communication can exist within this group. In the end, the committee decisions on who is to get what amount of money tend to be determined through such interaction among the lay leaders.
This is not to imply that there is behind-the-scenes collusion among the leaders and that they control the workings of the Council. Healthy debate and interaction take place at the committee meetings, and the personality of an advocate for a particular point of view or project can have a decisive bearing on the committee's decision. Top leaders often have their own views voted down. Moreover, while a core of leaders does exist, no one person, nor even just a few persons, "run things." Power is distributed and fluctuates among a group large enough so that there is some change. (As one professional wryly commented, "The deck is stacked, but it gets shuffled.") But the fact remains that the lay elite make the decisions on the important issues.

The author has been told that the strength of the lay leadership in the Council differentiates Houston from certain other cities. One organizational professional, briefly associated with the Council, bemoaned the fact that in Houston the "laity" ran things and policy changed with each new lay president. According to one member of the lay elite, however, such a policy keeps viewpoints fresh and each president offers a different kind of strength.

**Giving**

**Zedakah**

The activities centered around "giving" seem to be the most exciting ones, the most colorful ones, and certainly the most dominant ones in the Jewish formal community. Fund-raising is the prestige or status outlet of the lay leaders and the raison d'être of some of the organizational professionals. The concept permeates synagogue and organizational life too. Jews are always raising money and/or being asked
to give money. Strategies and techniques of fund-raising or the "culture of giving" are well known among Jews—at least to those Jews who participate in the community or who "read the literature."

Giving, or "Zedakah," is an old and basic value of the Jewish religion. One leader said that Zedakah really does not have an English translation—that its closest meaning is "righteousness." It is charity and justice to one's fellowman. "You don't look down on those who need assistance. The human being is sacred. It is not welfare either; rather, you help a man to help himself—you set him up in business, get him started." There is a biblical passage that says: "Do not glean your wheat fields dry, leave: me for the widows and orphans."

Maimonides said that giving is the highest virtue, and that there were eight orders within the virtue—the highest being when one gives anonymously to an anonymous recipient.

Giving, then, in the sense of Zedakah, is a biblical injunction. God commanded that the poor and unfortunate be helped, and many Jews have been raised to think that they must help their fellowman—Jew and non-Jew alike. However, according to many Jews, history has taught them that the only person who will help a Jew is a second Jew. Hence the Jew—in Houston as elsewhere—views himself as a man with a special burden to bear. That is, while he participates in the life of the community at large, giving time and money to charitable endeavors of a non-sectarian nature, in addition, he must also give to Jews who are in trouble and who need help, because he is Jewish, and because "if a Jew won't help a fellow Jew, who else will?"

Jews appear to have helped fellow Jews in the United States ever since they first arrived in 1654 and promised the Dutch government that
they "would take care of their own." Only their methods for doing so have changed over the years. Today's methods utilize data processing, scientific surveys, etc., reflecting the larger world in which Jews live. The present-day system of fund-raising that has evolved, with its multiple techniques, strategies, and bureaucratic structure (i.e., the Charity Establishment), mirrors the complexity and bureaucracy of the larger world. But the value upon which they are based is still the old one of Zedakeh.

While there are many ways that a Jew expresses his Jewishness, and Jews vary in kind and degree of Jewish commitment and identity, one way that most Jews express their Jewishness is through philanthropy (giving). In fact, for some Jews, giving money to their fellow Jews is the only expression of their Jewishness. One informant called this type of Jew, of whom she knew many, "checkbook" Jews. "They are not really committed, and their only Jewishness is the check they write."

In Houston, and probably in all Jewish communities today, the absolute sine qua non of expressions of Jewishness and Zedakeh is philanthropy directed toward fellow Jews; and moreover, it is that given through the annual United Jewish Campaign. That is, no matter what a Jew gives to other causes in the community at large (and he is expected to make such contributions), and no matter what he gives to any other Jewish cause, he is expected to give money to Jews through the annual United Jewish Campaign.

While the main "giving" activities are those centered around the annual United Jewish Campaign, the concept of "giving" is a thread that runs throughout the entire fabric of the Jewish community. In synagogues, for example, dues are charged to members of the congregations on
a graduated scale based on income, on the principle that one pays dues according to what he can afford and not necessarily according to the amount of services he receives. Thus the more fortunate are expected to pay more to help the less fortunate. The wealthy widow without children in Sunday school, for example, is expected to pay according to her worth—not on the basis of how many children she does or does not have in Sunday school. (However, congregational professionals currently have what they term a "widow problem"—for widows, it seems, when it comes to dues, do not have the same understanding of the principle of Zedakah that their husbands did!)

There are also numerous independent campaigns, even though the purpose in forming a community council to conduct one annual combined campaign was to prevent duplication of fund-raising efforts by myriad organizations, and it has been successful in the main in achieving this purpose. Some organizations who do not appeal to the Council for support (for example, congregations) raise their own monies; some organizations, even though they receive some Council support, need additional funds. These independent fund-raising activities, however, are usually cleared with the Council as to timing and other aspects so that they do not compete with the annual campaign.

The community abounds, therefore, with fund-raising affairs. In fact, so common is the theme of fund-raising that an invitation or announcement of an event not connected with the raising of money often will include the statement "No solicitation of funds." It is as though "unless otherwise noted" an affair can be expected to involve some sort of fund-raising activity.

Jewish fund-raising is extremely successful (Yaffe, 1968). It
is invariably ahead of Gentile fund-raising, a fact that Yaffe feels is even more remarkable when one considers that Jews not only are contributing to their own federations and other Jewish organizations, but are among the most generous contributors to non-Jewish organizations as well (particularly the local United Funds).

Jews are often asked what is the secret of their success in fund-raising. One Jewish executive director of a congregation in Houston, when asked this question by a minister of a Christian church in the city, answered that it was "knowing your people." "You see," he later explained to the author, "they do not know their people. They simply rely on mailed-in contributions or passing the plate." What the director meant by "knowing your people" was knowing how much a person was really worth and hence what he could really afford to pay—and not how much he might like to pay in dues or contribute to building funds. This director believed sincerely in Jews having an obligation to give to those less fortunate.

From comments such as the above, from interviews and observation, and from discussions in the literature, the author perceived two main reasons for the success of Jewish philanthropy. One has to do with the elaborate package of techniques that have evolved around solicitation of funds, which include community pressure in the form of social and/or economic sanctions if one does not give and status rewards if one does give. The other reason is the fact that most Jews willingly submit to the techniques applied, because basically they believe in the principle of Zedakeh underlying it all.
The Annual United Jewish Campaign

It is around the annual United Jewish Campaign that the most elaborate and successful techniques and ceremonies have evolved--i.e., those so well known by Jewish communities throughout the country. The annual campaign is in fact the apex of the "giving" ceremonies, around which much of the communal life revolves, and it is from this group of "givers" that the lay elite emerge.

The real fun of the giving--the colorful aspects--are, or seem to be, the perogatives of only a select group of people--i.e., the lay elite, or as the author once perceived them, "the gang who gets the bang out of giving." The main meetings, conferences, luncheons, and dinners are only for those who can afford them, who can afford to "give." To attend a dinner or luncheon is to pledge money--and the pledges on such occasions range from little amounts ($18.50 minimum during the research year) to thousands of dollars. The fetes for the little pledgers come late in the campaign; for those who give less than $25.00, there is simply a telephone call to obtain the pledge, and as Yaffe notes, "they have to eat at home."

The campaign season starts in September and culminates in the spring, when the goal of the drive is expected to be reached. The pattern of the campaign season is as follows:

At the close of one campaign season, the current president of the Council, the chairman for choosing a campaign director, and the directors of the Council select the general chairman for the total campaign for the next year. The Council's professionals then help the general chairman (who is a layman and in Houston has always been a male) to plan the strategy for the next year. However, even though the
professionals are there to help the chairman and other lay leaders, the
chairman is the one who has the total responsibility. The general
chairman then appoints all other chairmen for the various divisions that
have evolved—e.g., "Big Gifts," "Men's Trades and Professions," etc.—
and the female head of the now important and separate Women's Division.
The general chairman attempts to appoint the various division heads as
quickly as possible. (In August of one year [1971] the chairman for
the next year [1972] announced that he hoped to complete his team "from
female general to the lowest man in the ranks—the team captains" before
the cooler weather set in [Jewish Herald-Voice, August 19, 1971].)
Thus, by early fall, most of the team has "hopefully" been selected.
(The author was told that this did not in fact happen.)

In the early fall, meetings of the campaign lay elite begin.
Preplanning committee meetings are held with the chairmen of the various
campaign divisions getting together among themselves—in "eyeball to
eyeball confrontation"—to decide what each will give. Knowing each
other's financial circumstances, they "don't let each other off the
hook!" The leaders then fan out to talk to their socioeconomic peers.
(An important criterion for such leaders is their ability to influence
others.) Instead of having doctors talk to doctors or lawyers to law-
yers, experience has shown that contact between members of "opposite"
occupations—i.e., men who can "give" or "take away" business from each
other—is more fruitful.

Meanwhile, similar activity has been going on among the Women's
Division. Co-chairmen and vice-chairmen of the various financial sub-
divisions have been appointed, and groups of women meet for eyeball-to-
eyeball confrontation too, though the author understands that the female
sessions are not as "rough" as the male ones.

By January and February the campaign gets in fuller swing, with co-chairmen, vice-chairmen, and workers becoming active. By February or March, all of the lower echelons are involved, with volunteers manning the phones to reach the rank and file in a sort of telethon activity.

Rewards, Sanctions, and Techniques Involved in Giving

Some of the techniques for conferring status can be gleaned from the above description of the campaign season. There is a hierarchy of divisions and a concomitant ranking of chairmen. The heads of the bigger gift divisions are ranked somewhat higher than those of the smaller divisions. The fact that a new title of "Associate General Chairman" has been created for men indicates some similarity between the "culture of giving" and the business sphere, for often new titles are created in a corporation in order to bestow status as a reward. (The author was told that titles and categories change each year—"anything to get more people involved.") The ranking system extends through the pyramid structure of each division, the workers under the team captains being at the bottom of the pyramid and the lowest in rank.

There are other rewards involved too. The leaders during the season have been participating in work sessions, group-dynamics sessions, "missions" to Israel (where they receive the red-carpet treatment "and a study in depth of Israel's needs, and commit themselves to pledges there, although they give them locally"), and the fund-raising dinners. So, that while there has been much work, and a large amount of money has been raised, the leaders have had, nevertheless, a sense of participation, a feeling of being in the middle of things (or, more accurately,
at the top of them), and other rewards, such as meeting with outstanding personalities and having the opportunity to develop leadership capabilities.

Since giving is a prerequisite to assuming a leadership role in the formal community, the status accorded a lay leader can be considered one of the rewards of giving. According to one lay elite member, some people who give sizeable amounts of money to the campaign do not want to be involved in the structure of the formal community. They write their check and are done with it. But some who give money do want to be involved. They want, for a variety of motives, to have a say about how their money will be spent. It is from this group of givers, who, for one reason or another (social status, sense of obligation, or a combination of reasons), want to be, or are willing to be, involved with community affairs, that the lay elite emerge—naturally or by persuasion. It is they who become involved with the Jewish Community Council, serve on its committees, and have a say in how money is budgeted and spent. And it is this group of lay elite that are courted and paid attention to (primarily by the organizational professionals) and to whom the various honors and status are offered. In fact, it was in order to attract larger numbers to this group that the techniques of courting, recruiting, etc., were developed by the national agencies.

The informal sanctions that can be brought to bear on Jews who do not give to the campaign vary according to the extent of their involvement with other Jews. It does not matter to peripherals—whose reference groups are not primarily Jewish—if they are not well thought of by those soliciting funds for the United Jewish Campaign. But for Jews who have their primary relations within Jewish groups, what their
fellow Jews think of them can become a social pressure and a sanction that is meaningful. To some degree then, this social pressure, the desire for approval or the wish to avoid public embarrassment, is one reason why Jews give to the campaign. Even for those who give because of real commitment, social pressure can be effective in causing them to give more than they might ordinarily have done.

Under some circumstances, however, a Jew can be affected by informal sanctions even though he might not care about other Jews or have his primary relations in Jewish groups. According to several organizational professionals, some Jewish professional men and businessmen have lost many dollars worth of business that could have been turned in their direction but was not because some lay member of the Jewish formal community was angry at them for either not giving at all or not giving in amounts appropriate to their income.

Besides these social and economic sanctions, there are other types of pressures that can be brought to bear that have been used in some Jewish communities although not in Houston. In some cities, for instance, Jews are not allowed to join the local country club if they have not given to the campaign (and in amounts considered appropriate). In others, the Federation or Council publishes a book at the end of each campaign—listing the people who gave and the amount of their contribution; in Cleveland such a book is mailed free of charge to every one affiliated with the Jewish community (Yaffe, 1968:193). The use of these procedures has been discussed in Houston, but so far has always been voted down.

One well-known technique of fund-raising used in Houston is that of "card-calling" or "name-calling" at a fund-raising dinner or other
form of meeting. In essence, this device is the granting of status utilizing social pressure. There are refinements and variations of the method, but the principle at work remains the same, for what happens in all of the variations is that a man is publicly asked in front of his socioeconomic peers, many of whom are his personal friends, and others in attendance at the affair how much he is going to give to the campaign (and whatever the amount, he hands in his pledge then and there). Usually, the biggest giver will announce his pledge first, possibly comparing his pledge of this year with that of last year. His peers are then ashamed to give less and try to top his donation. The public competition results in larger contributions.

**Selected Criticisms of the Formal Community**

**Criticisms of Giving Techniques**

Although the annual campaign supports much good work, some Houston Jews are critical of various aspects of it. Some interviewees find the hard-sell methods of name-calling and the like distasteful and insulting. One informant said that she shuddered inside at Jewish rallies when everybody stood up and made public pledges. Some women commented that they felt publicly humiliated at the women's fund-raising affairs in which they were divided into rooms with speakers according to the amounts that they were giving. Another informant said that she has told campaign solicitors who get pledges via phone, "I am giving x amount, but don't dare call me again or I won't give anything."

Many of the older generation said that giving today is a commercial process. "No one gives with the heart anymore--it's all based on computerized statistics." "Giving is not personalized anymore so
that you want to give." An organizational professional, when posed with
the problem, answered the criticism this way:

The problem of getting funds for philanthropic purposes is a
problem for all modern philanthropies—not just those of the
Jews. It's a problem with the United Fund, for example. Today
with the massive numbers of people, there is no "person-to-
person" giving. There is no "satisfaction"—no modern equiva-
ient of the "basket of fruit" that goes to a family.

Some others of the committed (including some of the lay elite)
who give to the annual campaign have mixed feelings: some feel uneasy
about the methods used and wonder whether the end justifies the means.
But their conclusion is usually a reluctant yes, the end does justify
them; the money is needed. There is recognition that we live in a world
where "money talks."

The fact that one must give in order to serve on the Council
also arouses mixed feelings. One lay elite member of the Council,
pondering aloud, said that, in one way, it was not right; but that, in
another way, it was, for she resented people who did not give. "People
should give till it hurts, even if it is only one dollar, and money is
not enough."

Another informant talked about the same issue: "Both the rich
and poor should be on the board [of the Council]. It is not a country
club... If you give $5000, then you're not giving; you're buying.
Money is to be respected—but it is not the only thing! The apex of the
Jewish communal life should not be fund-raising!"

A rationale for the status quo was offered by another informant:
"In the Gentile community, too, it is the rich people of the community
who sit on the boards of universities, symphonies, etc. The Jews are no
different."
Another perspective on this subject came from one of the past presidents of the Council:

A great part of the Jewish community is fund-raising. It's a most vital and important fact. And the man who gives the most, gets the most acclaim. How can you deny it? And he has to give more than $1.50. Sure, he gets the honor he requires. This need is catered to. But he's a man of principle and values too. What's important is that he have a "feeling" for Jewish causes, an emotion, a Jewish feeling. And that he be a decent Jew who cares about others; one who understands the responsibility of Jews to other Jews--here and elsewhere; one who can read about Russian Jews and the tax, for example, and understand his responsibility to cry out about it. He must have a great instinct for the rightness of things. . . . Money [alone] won't get a man the ultimate rewards; he won't get top leadership (e.g., he would not be president of the Council).

Fund-raising should not be an end in itself. Much of the criticism [of fund-raising] is justified. [He muses that they are dealing with volunteers.] What's amazing is how much turns out right. The instinct of people is good on sensitive subjects and the decent thing will prevail, even if it's not immediately popular [speaking of issues decided in the Council meetings]. Ultimately, there's always a decent guy around who will remind people of the right thing to do.

[Thoughtfully] It used to be that Jews learned naturally their responsibilities [aid to fellow Jews]. Today, they learn artificially [i.e., they must be educated, taught, etc.]. In the past, the problem was how to make him into an American; today, it's how to make him into a Jew again.

Other Selected Criticisms

The techniques and machinery that have evolved in connection with fund-raising are not all that is criticized in connection with the Jewish formal community. In fact, the criticisms of Jews concerning aspects of their life in Houston provide one more vantage point, as it were, from which to view the Jews of Houston.

The following comments, which were arbitrarily extracted from some of the questionnaires and interviews, and selected to reveal only negative aspects, are not presented as hard data (for the criticisms
from the questionnaires were not tabulated to ascertain the number of categories or kinds of criticisms, the number of criticisms in each type or category, or the characteristics of those who offered criticisms—certainly important data for proper evaluation of such information). Rather, they were selected only on an impressionistic basis of what seemed to be some prevailing (negative) themes.

Some of the most common themes cited were criticisms of the Jewish formal community for being too materialistic, impersonal, and bureaucratic and of Houston Jews as a whole for being cliquish, unfriendly to newcomers, and too status- and money-conscious.

Comments on the questionnaires related to the theme of materialism included these: "All the Houston Jewish community cares about is making money." From a relative newcomer: "Houston is a very good place for Jews to live if they have money and live in Memorial or Meyerland—otherwise forget it. I have never encountered a group more concerned with status and material wealth." "The only 'important' people are the 'money' people." "I know Jews have to always do the best—but do they have to build the largest and most ostentatious synagogues?" "Disraeli said, 'Jews are just like other people, only more so.' We could collectively benefit by being a little less 'more so,' especially when it comes to materialism."

The charge of impersonality was particularly directed toward the synagogues and/or temples, and the Jewish Community Center. Some informants referred to the large congregations as "corporate religion." Some potential new members (and some former and existing members) of congregations said that "all they care about is your dues, getting your money. They don't care about your relationship to Judaism." One interviewee
commented on the desirability of congregations being smaller but was not optimistic about changes. "They have to remain big to pay the salaries and all. If many smaller groups held services in various smaller chapels, where would you get the money for the rabbi of each chapel?"

Another mused that, if synagogues were smaller, they could not offer many benefits such as excellent day schools, good adult education, and more experienced rabbis.

Some view the Jewish Community Center as big, unfriendly, and impersonal. Some youth (below college age) said: "It is simply too bureaucratic." "It's like being in a jail." An adult said, "It's not friendly." D. H. White, the late editor of the Herald-Voice, in commenting about such remarks, said:

> It's a creature of the times. They must do more business this year than last year. It affects communal life as well. You have to show how successful you are.

When he was asked, "Successful to whom?" he replied:

> Bigness is the name of the game in this generation. This generation will go down in history as the "greatest mortgage collectors" in the history of the Jewish people. They'll have more to pay off in a single generation than all of the past generations put together. . . . A congregation with 1100 families--it's better to have four congregations. But they want to worship in the biggest sanctuary, with air-conditioning and all, and this requires money. The values of the outside community are bigness and money and all, so the Jews, like others, follow these values.

Some commented about the high dues of both the Center and synagogues/temples. "J.C.C. [Jewish Community Center] dues are for the wealthy or the charity families--not inbetween." "[A Jew] should be able to attend the Holiday services at any synagogue and also participate in the Jewish Community Center, whether he is able to afford the dues or not--and not have to wait for this fact to be decided by an advisory board and be made to feel humiliated by having to ask or plead
his case in detail." One informant voiced the sentiment that "you have to pay to pray." One questionnaire comment was: "The synagogues are too money hungry. If you do not pay what they want, you cannot be a member plus you cannot buy tickets for the High Holidays."

But congregational professionals say that no one is denied membership because he cannot afford to pay. One rabbi of a Reform temple said emphatically, "We carry many people on the books who pay nothing. If they have it, yes, by all means they pay. But not if they don't! And certainly this is the case at this temple!" And he reiterated a theme heard throughout the research for this study: "The Jewish system is arranged so that those who cannot pay, do not; those who can pay, pay for those who cannot."

One comment written by a forty-two-year-old male, native Hostonian combined the themes of impersonality and materialism in regard to his Conservative congregational affiliation:

There is a need by Jewish people to "belong" to a synagogue. To the average (I feel) family it is so difficult (and sometimes impossible) to financially adhere to what synagogues require of their members. I put quotations around the word "belong" because I am a member of a synagogue but I really feel I don't "belong."

There is certainly a lack of communication between the synagogue and its members (as applies to me). Your question 27 [about whether one feels "more" or "less" Jewish now] is influenced by this situation. It has turned me sour to a great extent on religion-in-the-synagogue due to the synagogue's attitude towards its members. It has reached the point that I belong only because of my children. I can't afford to belong but where your children are concerned you cannot "not afford" anything.

I sincerely believe that this situation is causing many Jewish people to become "separated" from religion. I recognize that I have "religion" within myself and that I have a Jewish heritage but I feel I'm being abandoned by the closest refuge we have, the synagogue.

Regarding bureaucracy in the secular organizations, one member of the female lay elite said that most presidents of organizations have
only two concerns—"to meet their fund-raising quota and to show a gain in membership. They don't try to avoid duplication or gear their local projects to the larger local or national scene."

In regard to the negative aspects of Houston Jews as a whole, one informant from New York, who had lived in Houston for seven years, said, "I find that most Jews in Houston are more interested in their social status than anything else." Another commented: "There are other cities—such as San Antonio—where Jews as a group are much less status-conscious than they are here, a condition making it much easier to socialize freely with all groups rather than a clique to which one belongs based on status." One informant, noting a need for social clubs for young adults, to be organized either through the Community Center or the synagogues, said, "Young marrieds need to meet each other so that Houston will not be so 'clicky.'"

Though not a common theme, one view that is evidently representative of some Jews, especially those of the older generation not raised in the Houston milieu, was expressed thus by a fifty-seven-year-old interviewee who had lived in Houston for twenty years: "What Jewish community? There's no place to be Jewish anymore. At the Center, no one speaks Yiddish. Jewish boys can't rent rooms because long hair hooligans go there and use the rooms free. The synagogues are not Jewish either. The synagogues and Jewish Community Center are all too busy trying not to be Jews, trying to show the Gentile world we are no different. Even at the synagogue, the Methodists visit. Today if you ask someone if they are Jewish, they say 'my father was.' We knew we were Jewish."

This informant went on to sound the theme of changing values
that is common among many people, especially the older generation:
"There used to be more understanding among people, a feeling that a
person is a person. . . . People used to have time to have tea with one
another and visit. Now they are off in their Cadillac to somewhere.
. . . Trouble is they are too affluent." Similarly, the late D. H.
White said "People don't take time to visit. The art of 'schmoozing'
(chatting) is gone. Jewish people used to read, go to meetings, attend
lectures. For example, there was the Jewish Literary Society. . . .
Today they are aping the Gentiles too much. This is consciously done.
They don't feel secure in their Jewishness or American life. Yet they
don't have the temerity to go across the street and join the Christian
church."

Other long-term Houstonians also bemoaned the change in Jewish
values. They commented that Jewish children are spoiled today; while
Jewish divorce may still be less than the Gentile average, Jewish
divorce has risen; there is not the closeness within families there used
to be.

These criticisms of the formal and informal Jewish community in
Houston can perhaps be fitted into a larger perspective if it is re-
called that the Jewish group as a whole in Houston (as elsewhere) con-
tains many diverse elements. No one segment (in the history of the Jews
in America) has ever been able to speak for the whole group, for all of
the Jews. Although external events (at times of crises) have required
cooperation and unity, have asked for the Jews to speak with one voice,
as it were, basically there cannot be one voice because of the group's
diversity.

Yaffe (1968) said that, without "quite intending to at the start," the UJA and the local federations, when they combined their annual fund-raising drives (in the United Jewish Campaign) became "a collective voice for the Jewish community. In short, the Charity Establishment" (Yaffe, 1968:188). In other words, their voice has become the strongest voice among Jews, even though it is not the only one. According to Yaffe, because of the way that the Jewish formal community's organizations are related today, the secular fund-raisers have won a competition for being the ones to set group ideals or norms, which revolve around money. They justify the norms by saying that survival of the Jews is the number one necessity and that it costs money to survive. They speak now of Israel and Soviet Jewry requiring financial aid from American Jews.

But the theological voices in the Jewish community say that other values must be considered if there are to be any "Jews" left to survive. Critics of the fund-raisers say that they must pay attention to other elements in the community--those without much money, the intellectuals, the young people, the very religious Jews--and not just the rich. "As long as Jewish philanthropy is adjusted to only one standard--raising the largest possible amounts of money . . . as long as it [Jewish philanthropy] offers its ultimate respect only to those who can give a lot, it will alienate those who can't. The Charity Establishment must face up to this difficulty, must treat it not as a problem in technique, but as a serious crisis in values, or else, in a generation or two, it will be in real trouble" (Yaffe, p. 202).
The "Conservative" Image of Houston Jews

An aspect of the Jewish population in Houston that has not yet been discussed but which needs at least to be touched upon concerns the so-called conservative reputation (i.e., the low profile) of Houston Jews as compared to Jews in New York and other large Eastern cities.

Southern Jews, according to Kertzer (1967), are less overtly Jewish than Eastern Jews. "The Southern and Southwestern Jew today seeks no flight from Judaism, but he wants it in a quiet, unobtrusive way" (Kertzer, 1967:268).

This low-profile characteristic is evident among Houston Jews, according to some observers. A Houston Jewish professor, formerly of New York, said that Houston Jews are afraid to see their names linked with that of someone on the radical left. Some Eastern Jews now living in Houston have called Houston Jews "timid," "afraid to be Jews," and "apers of Gentiles."

Houston Jews answer such implied criticisms in a variety of ways. Many long-term and/or native Houstonian Jews say: "We're not like New York or other cities, just as Yankees are different from Southerners." "We take pride in being like other people and yet Jewish at the same time." A relative newcomer sees the differences this way: Houston is not as "ethnically" Jewish as many other cities, but it is more "organizationally" Jewish (and cohesive).

One native Houstonian, a recent graduate of Brandeis University, commented on the difference between being a Jew in a large Eastern city and being one in Houston: "In New York, for example, schools are closed on the Jewish High Holidays. People do not have to belong to synagogues to be Jewish because their whole neighborhood is Jewish. In Houston, by
contrast, there are only certain clearly delineated places where Jews are not afraid to 'stick out' and be Jewish—e.g., in the synagogue or temple. In their total life-space, only certain small areas are designated as 'Jewish' behavioral regions."

The conservative image of the Houston Jewish population is probably deserved to some extent if it is equated with being low profile "ethnically" and not being "vocal" exponents of "social justice" as a (Jewish) group. It is distorted to some extent if it is taken to mean that Houston Jews do not espouse and act on an individual basis in regard to issues of social justice. Certainly in the city's early history, Houston Jews were not a highly visible, vocal group. They tended rather to meld with the community at large. Today, they still do.

Because Houston Jews, in the opinion of some, are not outspoken supporters of issues of social justice, the following question was included on the questionnaire: "Do you think that Houston Jews are too cautious about speaking out on racial or other controversial issues?" Almost half (47%) replied "no," 25% were "undecided," and 27% replied "yes." (Several people qualified their answers by saying it depended upon which age group was being referred to, or which issue was being discussed.)

But the fact that approximately half of the questionnaire respondent group were satisfied with the low profile of Houston Jews in the community at large does not mean that there have not been, and are not now, some Houston Jews who publicly espouse so-called liberal causes and candidates. And this minority of action-oriented liberals includes a range of types from the intellectual to the less educated, from the wealthy to the poor. It also does not mean that other Houston Jews do
not hold so-called liberal views. As one agency head told the author:
"Houston Jews are still in the liberal range. It is just that, within
that range, they lean to the right compared with Jews of some other
cities."

This chapter has described to some degree the Jewish communal
life in Houston. In order to provide a fuller picture of the Jews of
Houston, the next chapter explores other aspects of Jewish life in
Houston--i.e., relationships between Jews and the larger community.
CHAPTER IV

JEWSH-GENTILE RELATIONSHIPS IN HOUSTON

Since the subject of Jewish-Gentile relationships is a broad one, only selected aspects will be explored. On one level, it is a matter of groups and group relations, of Jewish participation in the everyday life of the organized community at large—i.e., in the business and political spheres, and in the civic, organizational, and social life of a city as a whole. On another level, it involves relationships between individuals—i.e., friendship and marriage between Jew and Gentile. The negative face of the subject is anti-Semitism, which has both objective and subjective aspects—economic or social discrimination that may exist, along with perceptions of it by some of the Jewish population. These, in turn, are intimately connected to aspects of Jewish identity. For purposes of convenience, each of these aspects of Jewish-Gentile relations in regard to Houston's Jews will be discussed separately, but, as will be seen, they are so intertwined that they cannot really be separated.

Jewish-Gentile Relations in the City at Large

Jewish Participation in Occupational and Political Life

From early days, as the history of early Jewish life in Houston showed, there has in general been an easy acceptance of Jews in Houston, and Jews have figured prominently in the growing business life of the city. Economic and social discrimination has existed but it has been
minimal compared to that in some other American cities. And similar to conditions elsewhere in the United States, there has been a continuing decline in the economic and social discrimination that did exist. For example, today there are no longer quotas for Jewish medical students at Baylor College of Medicine; some Jewish lawyers are now employed in the large law firms; Jewish children attend private schools formerly closed to them (i.e., Kinkaid); Jews live in certain neighborhoods once restricted to them.

However, also similar to the pattern in other parts of the country, even though discrimination has declined in Houston, it persists in what Yaffe (1968) calls the places where it really counts—for example, in the large banks and in the large industries and corporations.

As recently as 1970, a survey made by the local ADL and AJC (Jewish Herald-Voice, June 11, 1970) showed that discriminatory practices existed in the larger industries operating in Houston today. The article claimed that the discrimination was reflected in the recruiting procedures at universities, which bypassed Jewish students for the jobs—by design or accident. According to the survey, of the 367 officers and 186 directors in twenty-eight of the major corporations in Houston, only 2 were Jewish. And of the 341 key management personnel representing fifty-two companies in the petrochemical industry, only one could be identified as Jewish.

The article emphasized that the importance of eliminating such discriminatory policies lay in the fact that today the age of the little businessman, the entrepreneur, is past; business is in the hands of large corporations and chains. To deny Jews access to the large companies is to deny them a chance to compete.
In the political arena, as in the early days, Jews still do not attain high political office. Until the city election of 1971, when one Jewish man was elected as a councilman, there had not been a Jew on the Houston City Council since the city's early years when some Jews served as aldermen. A current state representative is the only Jewish legislator ever to be elected from Houston. The author was told that in a recent local political campaign a Jewish woman running for the office of precinct committeeman asked a Gentile friend if saying that she was active in her Jewish sisterhood would be a help or a hindrance. More of the latter, she was told. Among Jews the feeling is that, if a Jew running for public office has a Jewish-sounding name, the odds are against his winning.

There have been few Jewish judges. One was Judge Henry J. Dannenbaum, discussed in the history of the early 1900s. More recently, another was a municipal judge of the city's Teen Jury court (which was in existence for only one or two years). But one local Jewish attorney, in attempting to clarify the significance of these two appointments, noted that "there are never any Jewish judges in the criminal courts--where it counts!"

Even though there are many Jewish attorneys in Houston, similar to the situation elsewhere in the United States, up until the last few years none figured in any of the city's large or prominent law offices. Now, similar to the pattern elsewhere, the large law firms are hiring some Jewish men. According to one local Jewish attorney, a Gentile friend of his who was in one of these large firms that had hired three or four Jews said the firm was now referred to as "the Jewish law firm."

Regarding banks, one young member of the lay elite said that
none of the large important banks are owned by Jews—"just the smaller, newer, suburban ones, a recent phenomenon." However, there is one relatively large (fourth in size in deposits and resources but, according to its past vice-chairman, "a poor fourth compared to the other Houston banks") bank owned by a Jew—the Houston National Bank, which in 1964 merged with the Tennessee Bank and Trust Company. Founded by H. S. Fox (as noted in the early history), it is today, according to the recently deceased Jewish advisory chairman of the board (before retirement, he was vice-chairman of the board), the only bank in Houston operating under its original charter. The former vice-chairman said that, in contrast to other banks, "it has Jewish executives and would continue to do so even after the merger."

True to the general pattern in the United States in which few Jews own banks but many are on their boards (Yaffe, 1968), Jews in Houston have been (as was noted in the early history), and are, on the boards of several large banks. The Taub family has been represented on the board of the Texas Bank of Commerce since the days when Sam Taub was chairman of the board; today his brother, Ben Taub, is still a board member. However, one Houston businessman said that, with the exception of Sam Taub, who actually had a hand in running the affairs of the bank, today's Jewish board members are in actuality "yes" men only, without any real power.

One reaction to the status of Jews in the political and occupational world in Houston today comes from a member of the Young Leadership Group, who also happened to have received and answered the mail-out questionnaire. He said that even though he had a positive Jewish identity, and was highly committed and involved in Jewish community affairs,
in answer to the question whether he would have preferred not being born a Jew, in all honesty he would have to reply yes. He realized that such an answer meant that he felt some goals were not obtainable for Jews here. "Big, top establishment affairs are not open to Jews. They are closed and are for the WASP establishment. When, for example, a meeting goes on to decide whom to back for mayor, the Jewish boys are not asked to the caucus... But--there is a 'junior' establishment coming up [and he cited by name some of the current entrepreneurs of the city who have been extremely successful], who may be different when they get up there, since they are friends with and have business relations now with Jewish peers. But for now, it's still Gus Wortham et al. The law firms and accountants are all tied up with them. The big insurance firms, banks, oil and gas are still very much WASP controlled. They are afraid that if a Jew buys, he'll put in three Jewish vice-presidents and, then, there go the three slots for their boys. They expect their own sons to move up in the business." According to one successful Jewish businessman, if Gentiles feel this way it is strictly a competitive situation, not a discriminatory one; the Jews would feel the same if they were in their position.

**Jewish Participation in Civic and Social Life**

As far as citywide organizations in Houston are concerned, Jews have always participated in the various civic groups, particularly in the charitable ones. It should be noted too that, as in the early days, some rabbis are among those who participate most and feel that it is important to do so.

As one Jewish professional put it: "We Jews are part of the
total Houston community. . . . We participate as people in the life of Houston. You will find that Jewish names predominate in all of the charitable endeavors of a nonsectarian nature. . . . You name an organization and I'll name Jewish people involved." (He went on to express a theme repeated many times by interviewees, the essence of which was: We are regular, interested Houstonians but we have in addition a special burden to bear because we are Jews. So we must give and participate in Houston communal life like everybody else, but, in addition, we must give to Jewish life and causes too. "If we don't help our fellow Jews, who will?" The obverse apparently holds equally true: Jewish fund-raisers say that a Jew who does not give to nonsectarian causes does not give to Jewish ones either.)

For example, on the 1970 letterhead of the United Fund, which lists the names of the board of trustees and the executive committee, 10 of the 121 names on the board and 2 of the 23 names on the executive committee are prominent Jews, including the chairman of the board. Maurice Hirsch, currently president emeritus of the Houston Symphony Society, is another Jew who is well known locally. Ben Taub, for whom the city-county charity hospital is named, is a Jew who has played a significant role in Houston's development. Leopold Meyer, president of the board of the Texas Children's Hospital, and chairman of the annual Pin Oaks Championship Horse Show, which raises money for the Texas Children's Hospital, is another distinguished citizen of Houston. (Currently, Bernard Sakowitz, son of Tobias Sakowitz, is serving as president of the Houston Chamber of Commerce.)

Jews have been on the boards of many Houston hospitals, universities, and foundations—including, for example, Methodist Hospital,
Baylor College of Medicine, University of Houston, heart and cancer re-
search foundations, Houston Council on Human Relations, and so on. The
Jewish Institute for Medical Research, located in the Medical Center,
was built with money donated by Houston Jews, but they are in no way
otherwise involved. That is, the Institute is Jewish in name and origin
only.

Generally, then, Jew and Gentile in Houston do get together in
formal organizations. In the civic community, influential Jews and
Gentiles sit together on boards of nonsectarian institutions and groups.
Organizationally, male Jews belong to the Rotary Club (and have for the
past thirty years), the Kiwanis Club, the Chamber of Commerce, profes-
sional associations, and Arabia Temple Shriners. Jewish women belong to
garden clubs, the League of Women Voters, Volunteers in Public Schools
(VIPS), and professional auxiliaries for women.

But, according to some Gentile informants, Jews are not con-
sidered part of the city's top elite society. Jewish women do not be-
long to the Junior League, and, with a few exceptions, Jews do not be-
long to the better Gentile country clubs. When some Gentiles were asked
which Jews they would consider "society," most named only one--Maurice
Hirsch. One Gentile informant, commenting on the few Jews present at
top Gentile society affairs, said: "When there is a large party--400 to
700 people, then some Jewish people will be there." Only one other
couple besides the Hirsches were mentioned as being Jews "who might be
seen at a Lovett or Abercrombie debutante party." Some Jewish leaders
have perceived that "one or two converted Jews are on the fringe only"
of the elite society. But the "Jet Set" and "Beautiful People" crowd,
the group who figures prominently in the local social columns, does
include some Jews.

Jewish-Gentile Relations between Individuals

Friendships

From interviews, and from "free" comments on the questionnaires, it appeared that many different types of Jews (i.e., from different parts of the United States, from different religious backgrounds, etc.) have non-Jewish friends and feel comfortable with them. Some said whom they felt comfortable with depended upon the individual person.

On the questionnaire, 55% to 57%, or just over half of the respondents, said that their friends were "all, or almost all, Jewish." Some 24% said that their friends were about "half Jewish and half Gentile," and about 16% had a "few or no" Jewish friends.

Some Jewish people who do not have Gentile friends do not feel comfortable with Gentiles. Such feelings were revealed during interviews. For example, one female lay leader said that even though she was raised in a small town where there were only a few Jewish families and all of her friends were Gentiles, today she feels as though she is on a "different wave length" from most of them. She gave as an example her non-Jewish neighbor who had "kicked her daughter out of her house," and who had no certain hours to eat and cooked "just sometimes," leaving her family to grab sandwiches as they could. (A more basic reason for this woman's avoidance of Gentiles, however, may be her previous experiences of feeling rebuffed by Gentiles.)

As another example, a member of the male lay elite in his mid-
forties, a native Houstonian of mixed third generation, said that he did not socialize with Gentiles because he felt that there were still
too many latent hostilities and that feelings could be hurt on both sides.

Another male leader, a native Houstonian of mixed third generation, married to a Gentile who converted to Judaism, also in his mid-forties, said that he had worked with interfaith groups for four or five months "and then, after it's over, you don't see each other again. We have nothing in common." When asked if he was sorry about this, he replied: "I am an independent individual. If they want me, I'm available." He supplied one reason why Jews belong to Jewish organizations: "Most of what's Jewish is knowing Jewish people. When I go to a cocktail party of a Jewish group, I know the people, and you talk to those people you know."

Another question on the questionnaire asked the respondent if he thought Jews should mix more with Gentiles. Since 74% replied that they thought they should, it would seem an indication that Jews would like to have more interaction (19% were undecided, 7% said no). It was interesting that quite a few of those responding to this question represented the implication that any one person should say what another person or group should or should not do. The gist of the comments was: "If one wants to, they should. It is all an individual matter. Jews 'as a group' or anybody 'as a group' should not do anything. Individuals are who is important—it is they who are doing the doing."

**Mixed Marriages and Intermarriages**

There have been numerous articles on the presumed rising rates of intermarriage and mixed marriage and the ensuing threat to Jewish survival. It is very difficult ever to ascertain the exact number of
intermarriages and mixed marriages, but the assumption is that they are increasing among the young, and that the incidence increases with the generational distance from the immigrant generation. In an article on "Interrace Marriage in the United States" in the 1970 edition of the American Jewish Yearbook, Arnold Schwartz said that "compulsory" endogamy has changed to "preferred" endogamy. Such seems to be the situation in Houston today.

Parental Attitudes. From the interviews, the one hypothesis the author would have been certain of in regard to anticipated responses on the questionnaire was that while most Jewish parents would prefer their child to marry a Jew, these same parents would say that there was a great possibility that their child might in fact marry a non-Jew. And this hypothesis was indeed supported: of the respondents with children of datable age, 83% said that they preferred their child to marry a Jew, but 50% replied that their child might in fact not marry one. Another 25% were undecided; only 25% were fairly certain that their child would marry a Jew. In other words, three-fourths of the parents felt that their child might marry a Gentile.

Clearly, the prospect of their children marrying non-Jews was a source of concern to the majority of parents. A generation or two ago, some parents would have practically disowned their children if they had married a Gentile; at the least many would have felt shamed before their friends. But today's parents know that they are not alone in having the "problem." The majority say that they do not "disapprove" of intermarriage or mixed marriage (most laymen use the two terms interchangeably), nor would they "disown" their child—it is simply that they would prefer
their child to marry someone Jewish. (Although less desirable, the next best option would be their child's marrying a Gentile who converts to Judaism.) The reasons most often given by the parents of the under-twenty-five generation, as well as by parents of the older generations, for continuing to prefer Jewish marriage partners are that "marriage is difficult enough," and "it's better if you have a similar background," and "in an argument in a mixed marriage, you might be called a damned Jew." Another reason for not wanting mixed marriage for their child is the feeling that the two families could not be as close. They felt that in Jewish marriages, "in-laws" ("mischpoche"), because of mutuality of backgrounds, could have a warm relationship, whereas latent animosities would prevent close relationships between mixed in-laws.

But not all Jews prefer Jewish marriages. Some—though they are probably a minority—say that marriage is a strictly personal matter and not a religious one. Some say it would depend on who the person was—what his qualities were. One third-generation native Houstonian said: "A college president, a doctor, my neighbors—I'd be proud if my child married any one of them. We were raised with Christians and Jews."

One reason given by a Jewish leader for preferring that his child marry a Jew is that among Jews his son could have the "pick of the lot" whereas among Gentiles this would not be the case. The feeling prevails that "top society" Gentiles would not want to marry a Jew.

At a recent panel discussion on intermarriage at one of the congregations (it drew a large crowd), the two theological members of the panel, a Reform rabbi and a Conservative rabbi, presented the typical arguments against intermarriage stated above, and cited in addition the necessity for intramARRIAGE if the Jews were to survive as a group. The
Reform rabbi noted that, at the national level, the Central Conference of American Rabbis has been attempting to put pressure on Reform rabbis not to marry any non-Jew who has not converted. Before 1948, the Reform branch's general postulate was that Judaism was a religion only. Among some Reform leaders in Houston and Galveston, this point of view still persists. But the "official" Reform organization now sees Judaism as perhaps something more—as a "people" (Yaffe says the east Europeans have invaded the ministry too). And it sees mixed marriage as a dangerous threat to the survival of Jews as a people. Its position is that a mixed marriage (as opposed to an intermarriage) should not be sanctioned by a rabbi.

In short, the current parent generation is concerned about Jewish-Gentile marriage. One Jewish adult remarked that a new pastime he delights in is reading the engagement announcements in the Jewish Herald-Voice to see whether the name of the intended spouse is Jewish or not.

Youth's Attitudes. Implicit in the above discussion is the fact that the majority attitude among Jewish youth toward mixed marriage is different from the majority view of the parental generation. (And there are differences between the two generations in attitudes on other subjects too; as noted in the overview in Chapter II, the "generation gap" has cut across ethnic and religious boundaries.)

Since such differences also reflect different attitudes on the part of youth toward Jewish-Gentile relations and Jewish identity, youth's views will not be discussed here but in a later section of this chapter after Jewish identity has been considered as a separate subject.
Suffice it to say at this point that while Jewish youth also present a range of opinion concerning marriage--from those who say they probably would marry a Jew to those who say they probably would not--those who say they probably would, say so for a different, and more positive, reason than the parental generation: that is, not because marriage to a Gentile would cause problems, or they might be called a Jew in an argument, but because Judaism is important to them. Also, in contrast to the majority of parents, youth appear to have few qualms, if any, about marrying a Gentile who converts.

Antisemitism

Any discussion of Jewish-Gentile relations must involve a discussion of antisemitism, which by dictionary definition is hostility toward Jews. The word "antisemitism," however, means different things to different people. Some think of it as mainly economic and social discrimination. For others, it is mainly discrimination in a violent form. Still others think of it in terms of social insults.

As Theodore Freedman, the director of the Anti-Defamation League in Houston and a southern director of ADL, noted, antisemitism can be latent and virulent and of a gutter type; it can also be polite and subtle. It can be expressed consciously and unconsciously, and it can be manifested verbally as well as in "action" type of behavior. When he was on a local radio talk show recently, one woman listening at home, who called in to the station to ask him a question and did not like his response, said to him: "Maybe Hitler didn't kill enough of you people"--obviously a verbalization of antisemitism. What all of the expressions have in common is a degree of hostility--directed toward Jews by Gentiles.
It is important to realize, however, that anti-Semitism in America has always been different from the European variety. In Europe it has been a state policy; in America it has never had any legal status, has never been governmentally sanctioned. When it has occurred, it has been sporadic and impulsive. However, as Yaffe (1968) says, this does not mean that people in America have not felt hostile toward Jews. They have, and most often it has taken, and still takes, the form of social and economic discrimination.

How do Houston Jews perceive the anti-Semitism in Houston today? While it is important to document the anti-Semitism that may exist in fact, it is just as important, if not more so, to learn how the Jewish people perceive the anti-Semitic climate, whatever it is in fact.

Even though the previous discussion on Jewish participation in the community at large showed that a degree of social and economic discrimination exists in Houston, the majority of Houston Jews say that they have experienced little overt anti-Semitism. In interviews and on the questionnaires, the overwhelming majority perceive Houston as being a good place to live—for one reason because of the relatively low level of anti-Semitism. (Many said Houston was a good place to live for anyone!)

As an example of a positively expressed opinion, a prominent older, native-born, Houston Jewish businessman said that while those Jewish organizations who devoted themselves to fighting anti-Semitism in the "executive suites," including those of banking, were claiming discrimination, no such discrimination existed in his experiences and he was sorry that the Jewish group was making such a loud noise about it. In fact, he felt that often the Jewish groups "saw" anti-Semitism
where it did not exist and that this fact in itself hurts the Jews. "Often we Jews carry a chip on our shoulder." This is not to say that he does not feel anti-Semitism exists—he does. Only "Jews here do not feel it as a disadvantage. The relationship is, in fact, rather exemplary in my opinion." The exception, he said, had been the Humble Oil Company, which actually "had a rule that they would not hire Jews and this was a matter of tremendous concern to the Jewish community." He noted that since Standard Oil of New Jersey had bought Humble Oil, the policy may have changed. He also said that "the first president of Humble was Harry Weiss and it was rumored that he was a Jew, although not a practicing one." But it was a rumor, and he was not sure. He personally "had never felt rejected any place."

In general, then, he felt that while anti-Semitism existed it "was not so flagrant as to be an affront." And this, in fact, seemed to be the general tone of the comments made on the questionnaire in answer to the question of whether or not Houston was a good place for Jews to live. Most respondents perceived that anti-Semitism existed in Houston but felt that it was not now manifest. Some comments were: "There is little anti-Semitism here," "Houston is a prosperous city and so there is little anti-Semitism here," "Anti-Semitism is here—-but it is 'latent.'"

The director of the ADL in Houston, in commenting on the level of anti-Semitism in the city, said that there was less "gutter" type of anti-Semitism in Houston than elsewhere. "We do not have the ranting, lunatic kind like that of a Gerald L. K. Smith, but we do have anti-Semitism. And the fact there are no Jews in high places in the Humble Oil Company, the telephone company, the Houston Lighting and Power, or
gas company, means something must be going on somewhere."

It might be noted that Jewish organizational professionals tend to see more anti-Semitism than laymen do, probably because they have facts that the laymen do not have. It is the business of the community relations agencies to deal with anti-Semitism at a professional level so that it does not affect the lives of Jews.

Oscar Cohen (1960:14) has noted that a rise in tensions is accompanied by an increase in prejudice toward Jews—as the proverbial scapegoat is sought. Lipset has said in an article (Houston Chronicle, January 3, 1971) that world anti-Semitism is on the rise. The point has been made (American Jewish Yearbook, 1970) that the important fact about anti-Semitism in America today is not that people are for anti-Semitism, but that they are not committed against it. Therefore, some professionals feel that anti-Semitism could become a problem in the United States as a whole, for they recognize that a latent germ of anti-Semitism is there. Theodore Freedman put it this way: "Anti-Semitism is like arthritis—at least in Western society. We take aspirins, etc., to hold it in check; there is pain, but we live with it and try to keep it under control." In his view, interfaith dialogues and the "friendly question, who are you?" are limited to a small core group and do not extend much beyond. He feels that "while there has been a decline of anti-Semitism in the upper echelons, it still appears to be pervasive."

Although the majority of Jews in Houston say they have experienced little overt anti-Semitism, this does not mean that they have not perceived anti-Semitism in the subtle forms. However, it was apparent in the interviews that many Jews tend to discount the subtle forms, whatever the psychological costs.
The following are some examples: A retired man, in his early
sixties, who in his working years was an oil-pump operator, when dis-
cussing early anti-Semitic incidents that happened to him, showed the
philosophical attitude taken by many Jews who are recipients of anti-
Semitic insults. "I couldn't have been anti-Semitic [i.e., a Jew who
hates other Jews]; I wasn't raised in a ghetto. I was born in Waco in
1910. I was called a Jewish Baby, a kike. I felt like a black person
feels today. I wanted to be like everybody else. I wasn't anti-Semitic
in actuality—but I had a feeling inside that I wished I wasn't Jewish.
I had it up until I married S. Then, I associated with Jewish people
and read history. I realized there is something different about the
Jews. The Gentiles are subconsciously anti-Semitic. They can be your
friend. But they are indoctrinated with a certain kind of propaganda.
They may say: I'm going down to the damn Jewish store to get some
shoes. They may like the man. It's just a subconscious indoctrination
with a certain philosophy." He went on to say that when he worked out
in the oil fields thirty years ago, he often would read books out on
the field. One day one of the men said to him: "How come you're dif-
ferent [from the rest of the Jews]?" "Have you ever known any?" he
would ask.

He continued: "Today is different from thirty years ago.
Still, even those who now rationally understand, even they slip. . . .
They are patronizing, without realizing it. I think my thirty years
out there [in the oil fields] made a big difference. I was no shrinking
violet. I can't be when I'm angry. You have to teach them. They were
surprised when they found a Jewish merchant they liked. I told them if
they looked, they would find more. Of course, thirty years ago there
was more difference between a Jew and a Gentile than there is now."

As another example, some people who said that they had experienced little anti-Semitism nevertheless described personal experiences that were obviously anti-Semitic incidents. An illustration of the point is the following: A retired Conservative Jew in his seventies who had lived in Houston since he was sixteen years old, when asked if he had experienced much anti-Semitism, replied, "No, there was very little here." But he added that he personally had never been in a position to encounter any--"for one reason, because I have always worked for Jews. Sure, there was discrimination at medical schools, certain businesses, etc." When asked if he had even been called "sheeny" or "kike" when he was little, he answered with emotion, "Oh, my God, yes! Did I ever." And then he proceeded to describe incidents when he was young in which some boys had thrown rocks at him and his two friends because they were Jewish, and other unpleasant episodes. He also recalled an experience when he was a married adult and the father of several children. He and his family were very close friends with their neighbors, a non-Jewish family. (To illustrate how close the two families were, he said that the respective daughters borrowed each other's clothes without asking, and his wife accompanied the other wife to the hospital when she was ill.) But one day as he and his wife were walking out of the other couple's home, the non-Jewish couple's three-year-old daughter said to him, "Go away, you bad Jew." He and his wife were "crushed." They felt that the daughter must have learned it from her parents, and that, therefore, the friendliness of the couple had been a sham.

Even the elderly widow who mixed so well with the non-Jewish society of Houston in the early days illustrated the Jew's habit of
looking at an incident with detachment: She said that when Gentiles first met her they would call her "Mrs. Levy," because so many Jews at that time were called Levy. She did not feel insulted, though. She felt that they really did not know her name. She would simply correct them and say, "My name is not Mrs. Levy, it is Mrs. ____." (She may in fact have been correct—that because there were so many Levy's they simply assumed she must be a Levy too, and no insult was implied. Yet the possibility also exists that the Gentiles were thereby in effect "lumping" her and all Jews in the same category.)

Of course, these are incidents related by older generations. Times have changed and as one interviewee in his fifties who was raised in a New York City ghetto put it: "Today's sixteen- or seventeen-year-olds have never been called 'Jew Bastard.'" (The same respondent in answer to the question of "Who is a Jew?" said: "I'll tell you who can tell you who a Jew is. The one who always hates Jews. He knows. The Jews themselves are never sure who they are. But ask them! They give wonderful descriptions.")

Thus when Houston Jews of all ages (except those under twenty-five, perhaps) say that they have never experienced any anti-Semitic incidents, many do not mean that they have never heard insults or an anti-Semitic joke. They simply mean that whatever has happened has not been important enough to injure them or cause them any trouble or grief that is worth mentioning. It is almost as if such random-type remarks or incidents were to be expected. "After all," as one interviewee put it, "the non-Jew usually has a stereotype of a Jew and does not really know what he is like."

There are other patterns of thought or action in the general
society that imply a hostility (and hence a form of anti-Semitism) to the Jew which Gentiles may not be aware of. For example, the fact that Gentiles will not let Jews cease being Jews—that they refer to a converted Jew as still a Jew—means to Jews hostility on the part of the Gentiles. Whether it is or is not hostility, it is a very real form of external pressure that keeps Jews being Jews. The prevalent recognition by a majority of Houston Jews that "a Jew can not stop being a Jew" or "once a Jew, always a Jew" is illustrated in this story told by D. H. White, the recently deceased editor of the Jewish Herald-Voice:

I used to travel with a trio on brotherhood. We went to Center-ville (a small city in Texas). The chairman was Methodist, and there was an Episcopalian minister on the platform. He was six feet, five and a half inches tall, dressed like a typical Texan—with high boots, a Stetson hat. His name was McGonigle. The chairman with great to-do and enthusiasm said he wanted me to meet him. And he introduced him to me as "the only Jewish member of the board." His [McGonigle's] grandfather had been Jewish. And that is the reason he wanted me to meet him.

The fact that Gentiles perceive of Jews in terms of unfavorable stereotypes also implies to the Jew hostilities—as does the fact that Gentiles judge all Jews by the actions of one Jew (what Antonovsky [1960] refers to as "collective accountability" and which will be discussed in greater length below). Moreover, even though a particular Jew may not have personally experienced overt discrimination or hostility, he has experienced it through knowledge that he is identified with the Jews as a group, toward whom hostility and discrimination have been directed. He is, in other words, a member of a demeaned group. And he is a member of that group whether he wills it or not, for the label "Jew" is an ascribed one.

It should be noted that the aspects of anti-Semitism just mentioned do not bother all Jews. Although they have been discussed as
manifestations of hostility, the Jews being interviewed did not necessarily use the term "hostility." However, it was clear to the interviewer that hostility was what they meant. Furthermore, from the interviews, the responses on the questionnaires, and personal observation, this author concluded that even though most Houston Jews feel that they have never been personally rejected nor have suffered from anti-Semitism, many, whether they realize it or not, nevertheless display some of the "scars" (certain kinds of sensitivity and anxiety) that are said to be typical of reactions to anti-Semitism.

For example, one kind of sensitivity is manifested, according to Antonovsky (1960), in the attitude that Jews should display higher standards than Gentiles "because we are a minority and hence must be on our best behavior." Sometimes this sensitivity is referred to as having to be the "good" representative: one must personally refute the negative stereotypes of Jews (Clark, 1967; Yaffe, 1968). One Houston woman in her mid-forties, a liberal, perceptive person, said in an interview that she was always conscious of having to show herself in as good a light as possible around Gentiles--because she might be the only Jew they would ever meet. She had passed this message on to her son when he was about to attend a camp where he would be the only Jew--but she subsequently had some pangs of regret that she had done so. (He said she'd spoiled the whole summer for him!) She was not sure she had done right--but she said, in retrospect, that she would do it again. Some other interviewees made such typical statements as: "You have to be doubly careful when you're in the minority."

Another kind of sensitivity that can occur among people who are members of a demeaned minority group, though it has not been generally
noted, is the almost-compulsion to identify their group membership. An intelligent, personable Gentile male, who moves in mixed social circles that include some of Houston's wealthy Jewish couples, said: "One thing about the Jewish people—they will quickly tell you they are Jewish, directly or indirectly." Many Gentiles have mentioned this fact to the author and have not understood why the Jewish people do this. But the Jew wishes to let the Gentile know what he is, wishes to "withhold" no information, in case it will make a difference to their relationship.

Still another kind of sensitivity, or anxiety, is the fear that behavior on the part of one Jew will bring repercussions upon other Jews—what Antonovsky (1960) calls a sense of "collective accountability," and Levin (Gordon, 1954) refers to as a sense of an "interdependence of fate." Antonovsky (1960) showed that although most American Jews said they had no problem in being Jews and Americans, a traumatic event (such as the Rosenberg case) revealed their unconscious anxiety. (He concluded that the sense of collective accountability will remain as long as Jews feel that they have not been fully integrated into society.) To probe this sort of sensitivity among Houston Jews, one question on the questionnaire asked: When President Kennedy was assassinated, did you immediately pray the assassin wasn't a Jew? Surprisingly, only 44% responded that they had. About 48% said that the thought never had occurred to them and 6% disagreed. (However, there was some ambiguity about the wording of the question. Some said it was not the "first" thing they had thought about and so answered "no.") In the interviews, replies were more consistently indicative of such a sensitivity, and especially so when the subject of Abbie Hoffman was brought up.
For example, even an elite, acculturated, Reform female Jew who mixed with the Gentile world, had Gentile friends, and blamed Jews for creating their own ghettos and being afraid to mix with Gentiles said: "I don't think there was a Jew alive who didn't cringe when they heard Abbie Hoffman's name. . . . We all squirm when leaders of violence happen to be Jewish." Interestingly, her husband, who was proud of being Jewish, considered Judaism a great heritage, and felt that Jews were a little better than anyone else, said he never identified Hoffman as being a Jew.

Responses to another question on the questionnaire, asking specifically if the respondent felt ultimately bound up with the fate of the Jewish people, showed that 81% felt "ultimately bound."

However, interviews did indicate that such scars are becoming less evident as the environment is perceived to be more friendly to Jews and as anti-Semitism is perceived to decline. One interviewee, a member of the lay elite, said he felt less responsible for the actions of, say, an Abbie Hoffman than he would have in earlier years. "I no longer feel as much that I have to identify with every Jew."

Sometimes sensitivity to being Jewish results in a hypersensitivity that manifests itself in one of two opposite extremes (both sides of the same coin, so to speak)—chauvanism (whereby a Jew considers Jews to be better than anybody else, and/or flaunts his Jewishness) or self-hatred (whereby the Jew accepts the society's view of his group as being inferior). (According to some authors [e.g., Clark, 1967], the ultimate of self-hatred is rejection of one's own group by assimilating into the majority, often through conversion.) Some self-hatred becomes Jewish anti-Semitism, whereby Jews are sensitive to the "bad" traits in other
Jews and condemn them.

On the questionnaire, 20% of the respondents either replied that they would have preferred not being born Jewish, or were undecided, or left the space blank. (The author perceived that a blank space usually meant that the respondent cared enough about Jews that he hated to put in print that he would prefer having been born not a Jew.) The young member of the lay elite quoted earlier who saw the WASP establishment as closed to Jewish boys said he would have preferred not being born Jewish. Since his verbal comments and his responses to the other questions on the questionnaire indicated that he was proud of being Jewish, his case offers one interpretation of this contradiction—i.e., that while he wants to be a Jew, he does not want to be discriminated against for being one. That may also be the interpretation of some of the other negative responses to the question, although one of the organizational professionals implied that only "peripherals" or uncommitted Jews would give a negative answer. (However, another one of those who did mark that they would prefer not being Jewish was definitely not only a committed Jew but one who worked as an organizational professional.)

Thus, at the least, the above illustrations show that some Houston Jews perceive that they have some handicaps in the larger community, and that if they had a choice, they would prefer not being Jewish. Is this a psychological scar? Presumably, for some, the motive is so-called self-hatred. For others, it may be realism, just as one might perceive that being a man affords better opportunities than being a woman.

In fact, Barth (1969:17) conceives of ethnic identity as being similar to sex. He says that it is a superordinate status, one that
defines the constellation of other possible statuses that a person may assume; and it is imperative, one that can not be temporarily set aside by other definitions of the situation. One interviewee's casual remark illustrated the unconscious acceptance of this fact, for when asked if she was glad that she was a Jew, she answered in part: "... are you glad you're a woman? Some days you aren't..."

**Jewish Identity (Selected Aspects)**

**Pressures and Pulls**

Implicit in the topic of Jewish-Gentile relationships is the assumption that there are two distinct groups—Jew and Gentile. The previous section discussed a major external pressure that has kept Jews being Jews. Anti-Semitism (or hostility toward any group qua group) has the effect of drawing an invisible but firm boundary around the individuals comprising the group, who may otherwise have nothing else in common.

Today it is assumed that because there is less anti-Semitism, there is less external force on Jews to remain Jews. And, in fact, the problem is now seen by various authors as one not of anti-Semitism but of Jewish identity: Will Jews remain Jews now that they are no longer forced to be?

But there were Jews before Christian hostility, and the assumption of no external forces is perhaps premature. In the following discussion, we will consider some of the forces (pressures as well as pulls) still mitigating both for and against the survival of the Jews as an identifiable group.

Gordon (1954) says that there are three reasons why nonstructural
assimilation (as opposed to behavioral acculturation) of the Jewish group has not taken place: Some of the majority do not want it; some of the minority do not want it; and there is no neutral ground to assimilate to.

In a sense, Gordon's third point, that there is no neutral ground to assimilate to, is one of the external pressures still existing, for within the American culture is the expectation that people will belong to one of the three major religious groups--Protestant, Catholic, or Jewish. To belong to "nothing" is an uphill struggle. (One Houston Jewish academician, married to a non-Jew, said that the problem in raising their children to be neither Christian nor Jew was not in the child's being, or not being, part Jewish, but in being "nothing." The children would come home from school and ask why they did not go to Sunday school like everyone else did. The pressures were so great that he could understand why some of his colleagues decided to belong to a "nominal something.")

As a consequence, for Jews to become assimilated into the world of the majority means giving up their religion and becoming Christian. Several interviewees (including both an older, long-term Houstonian female and a thirty-one-year-old male) said: "I'd give up my religion if he [the Gentile] gave up his, but why should I give up mine for his?" In addition, these and some other respondents, including a young college student, said: "If you have to belong to something, then Judaism is as good as, if not better than, the other religions."

One might say there is even a stubbornness invoked by Gentile pressure on Jews to quit being Jews. As one woman with atheistic beliefs but with a strong Jewish identity put it: "If I decide to drop
Judaism, it won't be because somebody decided for me. Hitler just strengthened my feelings."

However, it should be pointed out that there are some Jews who do not want any neutral territory. They are happy being Jews and want to remain as such—for a variety of reasons, ranging from full acceptance of the totality of the Jewish religion and cultural heritage to those who identify only with the heritage.

Although religion has become less important to everyone, Gentile as well as Jew, one of the pulls to be Jewish for many Houston Jews—including some youth—is the personalized nature of the religion. "You can take as much or as little of it as you want." "It has none of the haunts any of the other religions have." "You don't have to go through anyone else [such as Jesus] to get to God."

Also many Jews feel that some form of organized religion is necessary. One member of the male lay elite, a native Houstonian, said: "I believe in moral standards. And they cannot be perpetuated without religion. . . . So, to the mass of people, religion cannot be perpetuated without ceremonies and all of the formality that goes with it—buildings, institutions, etc. Conscience would not always make them do the right thing."

Even though the Jewish religion is still one of the pulls for many Jews, other internal pulls to remain Jews have weakened over the years. As a result, the adult generation seems to the young (and some adults) to have accepted the form of Judaism but not the content—to be Jews in name only. Adler (1966) says it is the pathos of the contemporary Jew that he is as ignorant of his past as his Christian neighbor. Thus, there are many Jews today who, in accepting their label, have
"felt" Jewish without knowing how or why. They are ignorant of their history and their religion. They are Jews mainly because they were born Jews.

The fact that Jews have often become nominal Jews is partly in response to the environment to which they were adapting. In the past, being different was not valued. Gentiles did not take a friendly interest in what Jews might really be like. Israel's Six-Day War had not been fought and won. As a result, the majority of American Jews became acculturated to the point of being very much like their Gentile counterparts. However, they were still labeled Jews, a fact that they attempted to come to terms with in a variety of ways. (And, many, according to Adler [1966], attempted to escape from Judaism, which set them apart, often by muffling the distinctiveness of their faith or converting. Rosenberg [1964:136] said that in the mid-1930s, when Jews cast off their Jewishness, they cast off their Judaism as well.)

Today, the environment is different. Ethnic diversity is popular. Israel is an accomplished fact. Thus, an external force still exists, albeit of a different kind. This time it is a friendly pressure: "Be a Jew, and tell us what it means." The search for identity by the Jewish youth ("How am I Jewish? What is a Jew?") is part of the general search for identity by all American youth.

The Six-Day War in 1967 perhaps marks a turning point, for it had the effect of causing Gentiles to raise their estimate of the Jews (or so 85% of the questionnaire respondents felt) and hence of improving the Jews' self-image.

As the external environment became one in which there was interest in Jews and in Israel, and a desire to learn more about the Jewish
people, many of the Jews in Houston (as elsewhere) who had never before been interested in the history of their people developed such an interest too. Adult study classes in Hebrew, in Jewish history, and in Israeli folksongs and dancing became popular. And those who could afford to visited Israel. As was noted in the chapter on the Jewish formal community, for the leaders of the community, the "big givers," "study missions" to Israel were arranged. Among the youth, pilgrimages to Israel became popular and a motive for learning Hebrew and wanting to be Jews. In fact, one adult Jewish woman said that "Israel has become the Foreign Legion for Jewish youth."

In a sense, then, there is an external pressure today (a positive one) to be Jewish—to have a heritage, an identity with roots. There is pressure for Jews to look for pulls. This, in particular, is what some of the youth are doing. And the adults (at the levels both of the family and of the organized community) are trying to present some pulls. But just as there is a range of types of adults—from those who are Jews only because they were born so to those who are Jews because they feel pulled to it for a variety of reasons (e.g., the personalized religion aspect, the heritage, the need for identity and roots, the fulfilling aspect of the faith and religion), so youth responses range from those who are finding pulls in Judaism to those who are not.

There are other pressures and pulls still existing that are acknowledged less often. One internal pressure often keeping a Jew a Jew is that he would not want to hurt his parents by ceasing to be a Jew. (This pressure still exists today although it is diminishing as parents accommodate themselves to the probability of their children becoming involved in a mixed marriage.) Or he might feel a certain
loyalty to the Jewish group as a whole; he would feel guilty, a traitor, if he left the group. (This pressure has also probably decreased. But young Jews in mixed marriages are not necessarily converting to another faith.) Also, many Jews feel a sense of obligation to the Jewish formal community, for "the only person who will do something for a Jew is another Jew."

Another pressure is undoubtedly the memories or sensitivity to history that many adult Jews have in regard to past periods of acute anti-Semitism, as in Spain under the Moors during the fifteenth century, in Russia under the czars, and in Germany under Hitler (as well as knowledge of latent anti-Semitism in the United States, as in the KKK). This anxiety is evident in the following comment from a questionnaire respondent: "Right now it [the position of Jews in Houston] is favorable with only a slight undercurrent of anti-Semitism, but who can say what the future will hold?" D. H. White, the former editor of the Jewish Herald-Voice, in viewing the historical course of Jewish assimilation, said: "Whenever the Jews have started to assimilate, they have been brought up loud and short."

Some additional pulls that are implied elsewhere might be made explicit here—e.g., that, given the fact that a Jew (rightly or wrongly) perceives he can not advance or is not welcome in the larger world, he tends to find security in the Jewish group and to have positive feelings about being in it. Some are attracted to the leadership roles that they are able to assume in the Jewish community. Some Jews, whether or not they feel rejected by the Gentile world, simply enjoy being with Jews and being involved in their communal affairs.
Consciousness of Kind

There are other aspects of Jewish identity that are difficult to classify as either a pressure or a pull. One is "consciousness of kind," the awareness that one is a member of a minority group. To some Jews, it is a disagreeable pressure; to others it is a pleasant pull.

Herman (1970) says that members of a minority, more than others, are conscious of being marked off from certain others. Adler (1966) says that to be a Jew in a Christian world is to be conscious of being "different," for being a minority is a breach in the wall of homogeneity of the major culture; it is being an outsider, a deviant. The Western world is Christian; the Jew is not. He may not be a fervent follower of his religion; he may even doubt its value or validity; but his birth has stamped him a Jew. And this makes him "different."

Several Houston Jews illustrated this feeling. One long-term Houstonian, a sensitive, handsome, well-liked, perceptive female Jew with Gentile friends as well as Jewish ones, said about being in Israel (she had made four trips there): "You are aware that you are a Jew in a Jewish country. You function differently. I can't explain it. It's a good feeling. [But] I wouldn't want to live there."

Another long-term Houstonian, in her mid-fifties, unaffiliated with a congregation (but with a strong Jewish identity), whose son had recently married a non-Jew, said about her visit to Israel: "In Israel you are not conscious you are a Jew, just as in America you're not conscious of being an American, but you are conscious of being a Jew here."

One fourth-generation American and a native Houstonian, a member of the female lay elite, speaking of Jews in general, said: "I can sense another Jew." Another informant said that she attended a meeting
where she had no idea of who was or was not Jewish, and had not thought about it. But one of the members, during the meeting, had occasion to refer to her own Jewishness (not the informant's) and "immediately, I just felt a bond with her. We had something in common."

However, it should be noted that a prime characteristic of many Houston Jews is the very lack of such "consciousness." For example, one native Houstonian, third-generation female Jew, when asked if she felt Jewish answered: "Every once in a while. I identify when the subject is brought up, but otherwise I don't think about it."

Another respondent, a fourth-generation Reform male who had lived in Houston for fifty-one years, and was "proud of being a Jew religiously," noted on the questionnaire that he "did not feel Jewish." And he added: "What does one feel when you feel Jewish?"

**Jews and Israel**

Related to the subject of "consciousness of kind" are the feelings of Houston Jews towards the State of Israel, especially as regards the often stated or implied charge that Jews have or could have "dual loyalty."

Similar to Jews elsewhere in America, even though there is pride and interest in Israel, few Houston Jews (including Zionists) want to move there to live. Rather, they see their ties as philanthropic ones. In response to the question, "Would you want to live in Israel?", the answer on the questionnaires and in interviews was almost consistently a negative one. The percentage of questionnaire respondents saying no was 86%.

In answer to the question of whether or not they would want to
visit Israel, 62% of the respondents to the questionnaire said they would like to do so. About 18% said that they had already done so. Another 18% had no desire to visit Israel and 2% were undecided. If the questionnaire is a valid indicator, some 80% of the Houston Jewish population have at least enough interest in Israel to have visited or to say they would like to visit it.

But, regarding the effect of Jewish "ties" to Israel, some Gentiles have accused American Jews of having a dual loyalty to Israel and America, with the implication that, in a showdown, Jews would not always have the best interests of the United States at heart.

When this subject was broached during interviews, and the question asked if dual loyalty could be a problem, the overwhelming majority of Jews said that they saw no problem involved, and that their loyalty was to the United States. Some said that they could never even imagine a situation arising in which they would have to make such a choice, for the values of the two countries were not that diverse. Some said their loyalty was to the people of Israel, not the State of Israel. (They meant that their interest was not political but philanthropic.) When pinned down to a hypothetical situation where such a choice would indeed be necessary, they said, but with sadness, that their loyalty would still be with the United States. And, in fact, most Jews realize that without a United States there would be no Israel.

There are some Houston Jews who steadfastly continue to wish that Israel had been formed as a state with a mixed population of both Arabs and Jews, instead of just a Jewish state. Some of the leaders of the community, as well as some of the involved and committed rank and file, expressed this viewpoint. Their reasons, however, were all
oriented not to what might be best for refugee Jews, but to "what the
Gentiles might think." Their concern (which illustrates one kind of
sensitivity that can result from anti-Semitism) was not that Jews would
in fact have dual loyalty, but that the Gentiles might think they would.

**Attitudes toward Group Survival**

Yet another aspect of Jewish identity that is neither a pressure
or pull is the attitude Jews may have toward the importance or desir-
ability of survival of the Jewish group "as a whole." How do Houston
Jews feel about this subject?

Despite the range in feelings of individuals toward their Jewish
identity, illustrated in the self-views that follow, most (not all) of
those interviewed, when asked outright if they wanted the Jewish group
to continue, did, but, as usual, their reasons varied.

Some felt that, as a group, the Jewish people played a kind of
gadfly role in society that was good for society. Informants expressing
such an opinion included the editor of the *Jewish Herald-Voice* and one
female graduate student. In a similar vein, a member of the lay elite
remarked that "the Jews have been the religious conscience of the
world."

Some Jews did not want to see the extinction of Jewish culture
and traditions. One high-school-age youth, raised Reform, said,"I
couldn't care less about the temple, the prayers, the rabbis--but the
culture and traditions of the Jewish people are magnificent, and for
this to go down the drain, and not be preserved, would just be tragic."

Many Jews expressed a desire for the continuation of the Jewish
people even though they could not say exactly why. One older Reform
woman, a native Houstonian, for example, when asked if she felt the Jews should continue as a group, replied not with a yes or a no, but simply with a shrug of the shoulders and, "Well, they always have, haven't they? And for five thousand years, or whatever, so I guess they always will." Many adults seemed to take the posture now (a posture that seems to have resulted from Israel's Six-Day War) that "maybe there's something after all to this being Jewish." Many seemed just as surprised as Gentiles that they are still around.

In a different vein were remarks by those who said that if other groups continued, then they wanted the Jewish group to continue. (These were the same people who said, "If you have to belong to something, then Judaism is as good as, if not better than, most other religions." And they felt that it was unfortunate that groups had to divide people and wished it were not so.)

Some wished to see the Jewish group continue for the sake of those who wished to belong to it. (For example, a professor from New York who was in a mixed marriage and was not raising his children as Jews, although he considered himself a Jew, said he would want the group to exist because "I'd like to see everybody be whatever he wished to be.") And some would want Jews to continue as a group simply because they would hate to see the extinction of any group.

However, in a negative vein, a few said they would not mind if Jews as a group disappeared. One third-generation Reform woman, a peripheral, expressed such an opinion but then added—"They won't, though. There always have been Jews. Always will be. Who'd they jump on? Who'd they blame for everything? . . ."
Views of Youth

The remarks in this chapter have concerned mainly the adult generations, among whom, for many, there are still some indices of sensitivity or so-called scars of anti-Semitism. Among the youth there appear to be almost none.

The younger the person, the more he tends not to view his identity as a Jew as a "label" qua label. That is, he feels that the label "Jew" is overriding or important only if he chooses to so regard it, and certainly he does not view it as having a demeaned status. (Thus, as perceived hostility has declined, so have certain negative aspects of Jewish identity [such as Jewish self-hatred].)

As regards youth's decisions on whether their Jewish identity will be important to them, their responses vary, much as do those among adults, from those who find no value in being Jewish to those who do (for a variety of reasons). Some are leaving the group in essence (whether or not they convert), but others are finding their way to new forms of Judaism.

An important point should be made as regards the possible effect of youth's attitudes on mixed marriage to Jewish survival. While to many Jews, a mixed marriage is considered a potential loss of Jews to the group, Schwartz (1970:103) points out that an important but heretofore neglected variable to consider is whether the couple's "network" of other persons and groups has been (or is) an "integrating" [into the Jewish group] or "separating" one. Such a variable is important to consider even among Jewish couples, for many couples who are Jewish "in name only" have children who have no "pulls" and who then marry out of the faith; conversely some mixed marriages produce children who have a
strong sense of Jewish identity, and they perpetuate the Jewish group from choice. Thus mixed marriage in itself does not necessarily mean loss of members to the Jewish group.

Some youth, in contemplating mixed marriage, hope to create a neutral situation in which neither the Jew nor the Gentile asks the other to give up what he is, but they attempt to have the best of both worlds based on a sharing of moral values. For the children of today's under-thirty generation, such an attempt may work, for it may come to represent a majority view.

What the future holds for Jewish-Gentile relations only time will tell. For, as was stated at the beginning of the section, there have been, and still are, forces mitigating both for and against the survival of the Jews as an identifiable group. In the complex equation of what makes a Jewish group, both external and internal forces contribute. And today it is difficult to say which proportion is which. Perhaps the answer will never really be known until no anti-Semitism exists and there really is freedom of choice to be or not to be a Jew. For adults, this is hard to envision. For youth, it is not.

The self-views that follow illustrate many of the themes touched upon in this, and other, chapters.
CHAPTER V

SELF-VIEWS: JEWISH IDENTIY IN HOUSTON TODAY

Jews in Houston reveal the same complexity and diversity in ways of being Jewish and seeing themselves as Jews that characterize Jews elsewhere. There is diversity in views not only within family units but also among individuals of similar generation, age, and sex.

To show the total spectrum of opinion in regard to Jewish identity that exists in the Houston Jewish population is beyond the scope of this study. All that is attempted in the accounts of self-views that follow, which are drawn mainly from interviews and are not a representative sample of either Houston Jews or those interviewed, is to show how some of the Jews in Houston feel about some of the aspects of their Jewishness.

Adults

Some adults feel very positive about their Jewishness, although for different reasons and in different ways.

One older woman is a long-term Houstonian from an elite Reform background and the widow of an early founder of Zionism in Texas, who later became a Zionist herself. She has had many socially prominent Gentile friends and has lived in a world of both Jews and non-Jews, feeling comfortable with each. She states:

"I've always been proud of being a Jew. And I've always wanted to talk about the forms we believe in. And they [non-Jews] have always
appreciated it because 'some of my best friends were Christians.' Not
the deep dyed-in-the-wool Christians because they are too prejudiced,
but the other kind. In Luling, my closest friends were non-Jews. I
would go to the Baptist church, and the Episcopal church, and I spent
one full year in a Catholic convent. I always felt a part of the group
I was with, and they felt the same way."

Many other Jews (younger as well as older generations) have had
comfortable experiences with Christians that contributed to their feel-
ing at home in the Gentile world, which is viewed as hostile by some
Jews. Another long-term, third-generation Reform Houstonian recalls the
following experience of her grandmother in the early days of Houston:

"I had a very wise and very devout grandmother. She would go to
the temple on Crawford and McKinney twice a day. It had a lot of steps
though." Her grandmother lived across the street from the Second Pres-
byterIan Church on Main. The day came when her grandmother was in a
wheel chair and could no longer go up the steps of the temple twice a
day. "So, when she wanted to say her prayers, she and the nurse walked
across the street to the church, where they always had a seat saved for
her on the first row. She'd sit there with her Hebrew prayer book and
say her prayers." She added, "And I could do the same thing. It
doesn't make any difference if you're a Jew or a Christian, if you be-
lieve in God."

The fact that the above informant felt comfortable with Chris-
tians did not mean that, unlike most Jews, she rejected the ascriptive-
ness of the label "Jew." I asked her, "If you can say your prayers
anywhere, and religion isn't very important, what makes you a Jew?
What's a Jew?" And she replied: "You're born a Jew. That's a fact."

Many of the older generations, even—especially—the most ardent Reform and anti-Zionist Jews, who believe that Judaism is just a religion, nevertheless have a commitment to the Jewish community and to the faith in which they were born. The following are comments by one such man who is a third-generation native Houstonian, an elder lay elite, a member of Rotary for thirty years:

"We believe we are a religion and not a nationality. We've always supported Israel, but I don't believe in it as a statehood. I identify with Judaism [i.e., the Jewish religion]."

I asked: "If you see Judaism as a religion only, do you believe in the continuation of the Jewish people?" His reply was:

"Jews have a mission, a charge to spread the concept of the unity of God, of mankind, and to carry out the Ten Commandments. . . . I can't buy Christianity because of the birth and death of Jesus. I gave a talk to the Rotary and told them so. I believe the Bible was written by men inspired by God, but subject to human error. . . . I can't accept Mohammedanism either. I want something I'm tied to [Judaism] and I've got it."

The following is a view of a third-generation native Texan, an anti-Zionist Reform male one generation younger than the above quoted male. He also illustrates the Jewish value of independence and individualism. He is one person who will stand up at a public meeting and say
he does not want any organization to speak for him by saying they are speaking for "the Jews of Houston."

When asked if he thought Judaism should be kept alive, he answered:

"Lots of good have come from [the Jews]. . . . I want my kids, like everyone else does, to have a better Jewish education than I did. But my brand of Judaism! Some [Reform Jews] say I'm a 'goy.' But this goes on within the Orthodox too--they call other [less orthodox] Jews 'goy.' They think we're materialistic, secular, not spiritual. I guess we are. . . . I don't want to be Christian. If I did, I'd be one.

"I cannot accept I'm a Jew by nationality. I'm a native-born American. . . . Most people don't even know what a 'Semite' is. To be a Jew is not a matter of race or nationality. One can be a Jew and not a Semite and vice-versa."

He also equates his being outspoken—even though he is thought of by many Jews as a self-hating, anti-Semitic Jew—as being part of his identity as a Jew. "I'm not looking to be an outcast. But if being popular is your aim, then you shouldn't be a Jew. That's what Judaism is all about. All religions are. Be your own mind. From Joan of Arc on. . . . You can't just go with the mob. Being against the mob is not a virtue either."

Some with a strong Jewish identity see Jews as more than a religious group, viewing them as a "people"—although "people" is diversely defined. The personalized aspect of the religion is also stressed. The following comments are by the sixty-five-year-old editor of the Jewish
Herald-Voice, now deceased, a man called by one newspaper reporter the "intellect-in-residence" of Houston Jewry. The author had asked him, "If Jews could melt away [for he did not feel that Christians allowed Jews to assimilate], would you want them to?" He replied that he would not. The following are his reasons (interspersed with the author's questions):

"Jews are instinctively left of center and this makes for progress, and they have prodded Christianity and the rest of the world wherever they live.

"Their prophets and codes were ahead of the time. They were individuals who lived hard. Time didn't stand still. They had to plan for the future to meet the requirements of living. . . ."

Q. You said Jews "instinctively" stood left of center. Do you think this is something born into the Jews, or that God really chose them for this role—-that it's from some supernatural power?

A. It's a question of the proper genes in the proper perspective. The strong stayed and the weak dropped out. . . . It is a matter of some men just happening to think or say the right things at the right time, and others who could follow stayed with it.

Q. Are Jews a race then?

A. They are not a race, but they are a people. They've picked up some nonconformists along the way—blue eyes, etc. Intermarriage is of no consequence though. A lot of people worry about intermarriage. But there is no need to because the weak ones drop out anyway—whether
or not they intermarry. The strong ones remain.

Q. Would you then accept converted non-Jews as full Jews?
A. Yes. There are people with instincts for involvement in a personalized religion. Judaism has none of the haunts that other religions have, and you do not have to go through Jesus [to get to God].

A prominent Jewish psychiatrist in Houston, who was raised in New York, but who has lived in Houston for many years, a member of a Conservative congregation, says that the Jewish family is the oldest family on earth. In discussing the relationship of Jewish identity to basic self-identity, he said: "Everyone needs roots, and to negate your Jewishness is to deny your very existence, for you deny your ancestors." He felt three levels existed: "The floor, the basic level, is to not deny your ancestors, your Jewishness; the second is to affirm it, to be proud of your Jewishness; and the third is to use creatively your Jewishness in your life."

He did not feel he was particularly "religious" but he viewed religion as just one part, one strand, of the Jewish people. He gave the following analogy: "Like concrete needs steel [the reinforcement] in it to make it strong, so religion is the steel of the Jews. Without the steel, the concrete is not strong. But without the concrete, the steel is no good. You need both. And so Jews need both—the religious and the nonreligious aspects."

He continued with a perceptive view on youth and Jewish identity: "What the youth object to today is the form without the content.
That is, there must be priorities. When we are more concerned with the form [religion] than with the process [content], people rebel. Youth do not want the compulsiveness, rigidity, inflexibility. They want it to be there (like the good parent) if they need it. Some people are rigid, inflexible, etc. Rabbis are one such group. But we have enough offshoots of all kinds to keep the whole in balance—and that is how it does balance. First one kind of offshoot, then another, etc."

Some Jews have a pride in being Jewish that comes from a finding of Judaism after having denied it. Such is the case of the following thirty-two-year-old woman (she said, "It's the roots you hate to give up") who was born in Czechoslovakia and came to America when she was seven or eight years old. She married an engineer and for many years she and her Jewish husband ignored their Jewish background. Today she is affiliated with a Conservative congregation. She said: "I am Jewish because I accept almost totally the values of the Jewish faith. . . . By finding my particularism, I found my universalism."

She feels she has a "wedding of both the intellectual and emotional aspects of Judaism," both of which are necessary to her. That is, besides a feeling of community and peoplehood and roots (which she called emotional aspects), she needed, and found, an understanding on an intellectual level—a "deep level, not just a superficial one." (She had gone to many churches—Unitarian, Baptist, Episcopalian. The Unitarian came the closest to filling her needs, but, in all of them, she felt they were worshipping men.)

She does not believe that Jews are better than anyone else or
that they are chosen people or a "light unto other nations." "That's abhorrent. It's a very personal thing."

She does not believe in a supernatural God, but she does believe in structure and order, values and ethics. When asked if she believed in an hereafter, she replied: "No. That's why Judaism has this appeal. It says do all of these things now--this is it. What's good about Judaism is you can take as much or as little as you want. You are not bound by dogma."

Some people who are born Jews and who say they are atheists will, when asked if they are Jewish, say, as did one university professor, "I am of Jewish descent." He does not wish to be connected with the Jewish community.

But there are many people who are born Jews and who consider themselves atheists, and yet who say they have a strong Jewish feeling and sense of Jewish identity. They identify with the "peoplehood" aspect of Judaism.

One such Jew, a woman in her early fifties, who has lived in Houston several years, said: "I have no religious feeling, but I have a strong Jewish feeling. Everybody needs some identification."

To her, Jewish identity is being a part of what's been going on for five thousand years. "Jews are resilient, bright people. They contribute to humanity on every level."
Others who are not atheists and do not identify with the "peoplehood" aspect are nevertheless drawn to the sense of heritage.

One academic professional, affiliated with a Reform temple, a refugee of Hitler's Germany, who mixes with both the Jewish and Gentile worlds, in trying to grope for words to express his deeply felt sense of identity as a Jew (although "not in the religious sense"), said:

"It's the heritage . . . it's a spirit of identity . . . it's a way of looking at the world, an approach to life. I can't spell it out. It's instinct and philosophy . . . a way of looking at one's fellowman, a sense of one's purpose here [on earth]. It's not a doctrine, not a tradition, it's more a mode of life."

He feels an emotional affinity to other Jews. He met a Jewish family in Brazil last summer; they had an instinctive rapport within two hours. "It has nothing to do with Friday night services." He would agree with those who say that Jews are "a community of fate."

In a similar vein, a forty-year-old male Reform Jew, a Texas college graduate and native small-town Southerner who has lived in Houston since college days, said:

"Being Jewish is like belonging to an order." It's an organization his father belonged to, and his father, back to Moses. "It's like belonging to a fraternity. It's my heritage. As far as religion, I don't believe in any of it. But if there was no temple, there'd be no Jews. . . . The older I get, the more Jewish I feel."

Among those Jews who can be said to form the great middle ground of Jews (they accept their ascriptive label, are neither necessarily
proud nor ashamed of being Jewish, and identify with the Jewish formal community) are those who feel to a more or less degree the pulls of religion. They would probably say, "I feel Jewish but I don't know how or why."

One long-term Houstonian over sixty-five years of age, Reform, and of an east European background, who came to Houston at the age of nine, when asked how she was Jewish replied: "I had a Jewish mom and papa." When asked if she would rather have not been born Jewish, she replied: "Well, it would've been a lot easier..." And she said: "You seem to think the only good people are the Jews. If you were a good Christian, you'd be a good person too. But as long as there are a lot of different religions, I guess there might as well be Judaism too. What I'd really like, I guess, is some sort of universal religion."

A Reform female, a college graduate in her late forties, born in a small town in Texas, who has lived in Houston for about twenty-three years, wrote the following comments on the questionnaire. They are quoted almost in their entirety since they sum up many of the characteristics typical of Houston Jews, especially the sense of feeling at home in the Gentile world yet being secure in their Jewish identity.

"I have never felt a particular pride in being Jewish, nor have I ever been ashamed of it. I have always felt that I was just like anyone else. However, I am glad that I'm Jewish and I would not want to embrace any other faith. I like being Jewish. I might say that, rather than loyalty to the Jewish people, I feel a bond with them.

"I very strongly feel that there should be more real friendships
between Jews and Gentiles, and I am grateful that I have three or four close friends who are Christians. These friendships were made in a small town and date back to childhood and are deep and lasting relationships. I have made no such friendships in Houston. I condemn the situation and yet I contribute to its existence.

"Rituals mean nothing to me and what ritual we may observe in the home we do because of the children. On the other hand, I am often deeply moved by the services, especially during the High Holy Days, and I frequently, in my home, read portions of the Union Prayer Book and the Bible. Also--from a clinical standpoint--you might be interested in the fact that I own a copy of the New Testament, given to me by a Christian friend, and occasionally I read certain passages, simply for their beauty of expression.

"One last comment--I honestly believe that Judaism is the best religion in the world. It is the most logical, and it teaches a better way of life because it places responsibility on the individual."

A woman from New York who has lived in Houston for eighteen years and who claims her views are typical of the New York Jew who is not Orthodox said, "Judaism to me means on Friday night I feel very Jewish if I make chicken soup." She joined a Conservative congregation because "Reform is too reform for me, and Orthodox is too orthodox." But she wants the congregation she belongs to to be a synagogue (as opposed to a Reform temple) even if she does not understand what goes on in it.

In answer to the question, "What makes a person Jewish?" she answered: "I respect and love and cherish my parents who were Jewish."
I was brought up to be a Jew and to hold my head up high that I was, and it was something passed on to me."

She would be a little "hysterical" if her children married non-Jews. "I wouldn't condemn it. I wouldn't expect it either." Why? "I don't know. Just because I'm Jewish and my mother was and her mother before her, and because of society, I suppose." She explained the latter statement by saying, "My circle is primarily Jewish. They'd almost expect it."

(Her children have visited almost every church in New York and Houston, for she feels it is important to know the other side and respect it.)

In the group of peripherals are those who neither deny nor abandon their Jewishness, but who probably dislike being a Jew. They do not psychologically identify with Jewish groups; their major reference groups are Gentile.

The following remarks are those of an over-sixty, third-generation descendent of a prominent Reform Houston family, an attractive woman socially prominent in the non-Jewish world of national "establishment" figures, now married to a non-Jew (her first marriage, a short one, was to a Jew). She has no Jewish friends now--only Gentile ones.

"When I was a girl, I had no consciousness of being Jewish. I went to temple when it was on Crawford. I went to a private school, my friends were Gentiles. But I had Sunday school friends too."

Q. What is being Jewish to you? How are you Jewish?
A. People look down their nose at you. You're not seen for
yourself. There's always discrimination. It makes you a little mad.
It's like if you're born a Catholic. It's a definition. They say if your mother is Jewish, you are.

Q. Would you care if the Jewish people vanished, and just ceased to be?

A. It's okay with me. But it's impossible. There have always been Jews, always will be. Who'd they jump on? Who'd they blame for everything?

Q. How do you feel about Israel?

A. I'm not a Zionist. I'm an American citizen here. That comes first. Judaism is a religion, not a state. But I admire Israel. It's the first time in history they got up and fought!

As an illustration of the effect of Israel's Six-Day War on some peripheral Jews: at the close of the interview, she proudly told the author that at a recent party she had, for the first time, fussed at someone for saying something anti-Semitic!

Another, but younger, third-generation peripheral Reform Houston Jew, a woman in her mid-forties, who does not psychologically identify with the Jewish formal community, nevertheless decided to send her children to Sunday school so they would have some religious identification. She ended up sending them to a Jewish Sunday school so "she wouldn't be the one to drop the ball after five thousand years. . . ." An important aspect of her comments, which follow, is the change they show in Jewish
identity between her generation and her young children's.

She said that even though her children attended Sunday school for only a few months they now have a Jewish identity "as a matter of fact." "One [child] wears a necklace with Hebrew letters. I don't know what it means. They have a very distinct sense of being Jewish and discuss it with their friends. It's part of the identification. They say, 'So and so goes to church. I'm Jewish.' They say it just as a factual part of the identity of different people." And the interesting thing to the mother is that they ask why others are different from them—not why they are different from others.

The following excerpts from an interview—a conversation held with both a husband and wife—illustrate the differences that exist not only between generations, but between husbands and wives. Both spouses are third-generation, of Reform and Southern backgrounds, but the husband is from a Zionist background and the wife is not. She speaks adamantly; he responds softly and coolly.

She: If I was not born a Jew, I'd probably be a Unitarian. You and your mother think Jews are better than anyone else. That's arrogant and it burns me up.

He: Jews are more interesting people.

She: I'm Jewish by religion, not race.

He: You don't know anything about the religion.

She: I can't stand fund-raising. I shudder inside at Jewish fund-raising rallies where everybody stands up [to announce their financial pledges].
He: I don't know why you do.
She: When we first married you thought everybody was anti-Semitic. You were reluctant to form fast friendships with Christians. Now you have many close friends who are Christians.

He: But my closest friends are Jewish.

(Apropos of Abbie Hoffman:)

She: We all squirm when leaders of violence happen to be Jewish.
He: I never identified Hoffman with being a Jew.

(Apropos of wanting the Jews to remain or disappear as an identifiable group:)

She: Down deep, I think assimilation is the only solution.
He: Saying if Jews disappeared is begging the question, for then they would be no problem anymore. Besides, persecution of Jews doesn't have anything to do with religious aspects.

She: Well, it's not the only solution, but a solution.

(Author: But if Jews could cease to exist?)

He: They never have.

(Author: But if they could?)

He: Okay. If they could cease to exist . . . I'm not sure they have a purpose. They are supposed to teach people to live in accordance with biblical ethics, but they don't. But the country wouldn't be as interesting a place.
Youth (College Age)

Houston Jewish youth want to know intellectually why and how they are Jews; they want to be "themselves," whatever they may be. Some are asking questions as to who they are (as far as their Jewish identity is concerned) and seeking answers in new forms of Judaism. Others simply do not care; they feel their being Jewish is of no consequence.

One twenty-four-year-old mixed-third-generation, native Houstonian female, Reform, who is a graduate student in a Northern school, is considering marriage to a non-Jewish boy. Her mother asked her if she would at least ask the boy to convert to Judaism. Her reply was: "If I asked him to convert, I'd have to convert to Judaism first." She does not feel that she is "labeled" Jew. If she is labeled anything at her Northern university, she feels, it is "Texan."

In contrast, another third-generation, native Houstonian female, Reform, who was doing graduate work in Judaic studies in Houston, said when asked if she would marry a Gentile: "I doubt it. . . . It's not only that he'd have to convert, he'd now have to love Judaism, love Israel, want to visit Israel. I have nothing against anybody else marrying a Gentile. I just don't think it'd work for me." This particular interviewee had majored in religion, and felt she had "learned to prefer the Jewish religion." Typical of many of the current youth generation, she was seeking "more" Judaism.

To her, "... being Jewish is a feeling. The rituals help you have the feeling. That's one thing wrong with Reform--there is no choice among rituals, there is nothing. The kids don't know about them. But Reform at least keeps some Jews in the fold." And some of them may turn to more rituals later in life--as she did.
She said, "The purpose of Judaism is to always remind you you're a Jew. Judaism is a way of life... That's one purpose of the ritual. ... Judaism is hallowing the everyday...."

Another third-generation, twenty-four-year-old college graduate, daughter of a committed lay elite family, said: "I am ultra Reform. I identify with Israel. (But I don't care to visit there anymore!) I give money and time to Jewish organizations. But I don't identify with Jewish people socially--as far as friendships or dating is concerned." Yes, she would marry a non-Jew. Her parents would not be "upset"; a more moderate term, like "disturbed," would be more accurate. She would bring up her children as Jewish, though, because she feels that Judaism is the freest religion of all.

Concerning Israel and dual loyalty she said: "I'm an American first. Even if there was a war, which I'd hope would never happen, I'm still an American. My country means more to me than religion or other groups. I'm an American, right or wrong." When she was younger, she wished she were not Jewish. But now that she is mature, with an inner security, she does not care. If people want to shun her or choose her, it's all right with her.

The following two male views point up some of the same contrasts seen in the women's views.

One male native Houstonian, raised in a Conservative congregation, who is a recent graduate of an Eastern university, is one of the few Houston Jewish youth who have participated in some of the innovative
approaches to Judaism. For that reason, he is more representative of Jewish youth elsewhere in the country. He belonged to a "Havurat" ("fellowship") Shalom (community seminary), a group that wishes to eliminate the synagogue--i.e., the expensive buildings with the mortgages and the extensive staffs--and practice Judaism in a simple way. The young adherents also feel that there should be a pluralism of the different Jewish modes within the Jewish formal community.

Utilizing the terminology of the social scientists, he speaks in terms of "life-spaces" for Jews and how in Houston "there are only some clearly delineated areas where Jews are not afraid to 'stick out'--in Jewish places, such as the synagogue, for example." He sees Houston as many Jewish outsiders do--as a city where Jews are "so affiliated only because they want their kids to date other Jews."

Another male college student and third-generation native Houstonian, son of a committed lay elite family, Reform, who does not date Jewish girls and would not marry one, says: "Another three generations and there'll be no Jewish center in the U.S., no reason to be Jewish here. Jews and American Christians are becoming so much alike. The Jews have taken over some Christian aspects (such as the Protestant ethic), and the Christians have assimilated many Jewish values and vocabulary. Thus, what will be the point of being Jewish? You are not being anything different. Israeli Jews will be something else--no one knows for sure just what kind of Jew will develop there. But there is where Jews will be." This young man says he wants to live in Israel only because of the pioneering spirit there, not because it is a Jewish
state but because it is like America in its early days. He recognizes that, as Israel grows, it probably will become like all urbanized, bureaucratic, modern countries. But for now, that is where he feels he can personally do some good, and participate in growth. He does not believe in organized religion, "but if you have to belong to something, then Judaism is better than most. . . ."

In spite of the relatively few views presented, many of the themes discussed in the preceding chapter are touched on in these brief profiles.
CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY

This account of the Jews of Houston has attempted to present as rounded a picture as possible within the limitations of time and resources imposed upon it.

It began with a history of the Jews in America in general, and in Houston in particular, on the premise that one must know the past in order to understand the present. The summary of early American Jewish life shows that the history of the Jews' migration to the United States influenced both the branches of the Jewish religion that developed and the types of secular organizations that the Jews instituted.

Besides providing a historical perspective, the summary of the early history of the Jews in Houston attempts to make explicit and account for some of the Jewish group's salient characteristics, which had taken form as early as 1925.

Jews were among the early pioneers of Houston and were intimately involved in its development, participating in its civic, cultural, and, to some degree, in its general social life.

Houston Jews have always formed less than 2% of the city's total population. Even though they have tended to live in certain areas of the city, their neighborhoods have been predominantly Gentile, resulting in day-to-day interaction between Jews and Gentiles. Such relationships between Gentiles and Jews (of all religious branches and of the
different immigration waves) were generally good. The suburban, un-crowded, living conditions in Houston encouraged friendliness and neighborliness.

The Jews of Houston have never formed a truly distinctive group within the city for various reasons that, in addition to their small number, and their residential dispersion and daily contacts with Gentiles, include the lack in Houston of extreme Jewish sects, such as the Hasidic Jews, and perhaps the fact that the Reform branch of Judaism (the branch most similar to Protestant denominations) was long the dominant religious congregation among Houston Jews.

The situation of Houston Jews, therefore, has been markedly different from that of Jews in big Eastern cities with large Jewish populations. East European Jews in these cities lived in exclusively Jewish areas, which resulted in their having minimal contact with Gentiles and the development of a distinctive Jewish way of life that retained many Old-World customs.

From an early time the Jews of Houston were a highly acculturated and integrated group that was used to a suburban way of life, a description that only in recent years has come to characterize Jews in America in general.

Today, Houston Jews who are native born or long-term residents [in Houston before 1925] constitute a minority (32%) of the city's total Jewish population. Two-thirds of the city's present Jewish population came to Houston after 1940.

A study of Houston Jews today is, therefore, a study of a mixed population (in length of residence in Houston and in place of rearing), but the variations probably have less significance now than they might
have had thirty years ago. According to various surveys, American Jews and all Jewish formal communities are today becoming more alike in the following ways: most American Jews are now native-born or native-bred; they have generally been exposed to and affected by environmental forces that are more similar than they formerly were; and they have generally become unified in their support of Israel. Due in part to a general trend toward secularization, religious differences have also diminished. The three branches of Judaism are becoming more similar, and the attitudes of many Jews toward Jewish traditions are also becoming more nearly alike.

It may nevertheless be true, however, that despite the greater homogeneity in the American Jewish scene, today's Houston Jews continue to be more like the early Jews of Houston than they are like Jews in the larger American cities. Many of the characteristics of early Houston Jews are still evident today. Although Houston is now the sixth largest city in the United States, Jews still comprise less than 2% of the city's population, still have predominantly Gentile neighbors (despite the tendency of most Jews to settle in the same geographic areas), and still are relatively invisible as a distinct group. Life in Houston still has a suburban quality, whether one lives close to the downtown business district or relatively far away. In a manner of speaking, Houston is still one large suburb.

Houston has long had a boom-town character as a result of its expanding growth and general prosperity. It has been a city providing economic opportunities. Just as the east European Jews repeated the success stories of the German immigrants before them, accomplishing in one generation what it took New York Jews two generations to attain,
today's newcomers to Houston, both Jew and Gentile, also find it relatively easy to establish themselves financially. There is perhaps a connection between Houston's boom-town conditions, in which it is possible to become wealthy quickly, and the fact that the Jewish population in the city never developed an entrenched elite group that persisted.

Relations in Houston between Jew and Gentile continue to be generally good, with Jews participating in the civic and, to some degree, the social life of the city at large. As in the past, although many Houston Jews have attained relative wealth, the real power remains in the hands of WASPs. In Houston, unlike conditions in the neighboring small city of Galveston, Jews have rarely held high elective political offices.

Even though some social and economic discrimination exists in Houston, both long-term residents and newcomers among Jews still perceive the city as having a relatively low level of anti-Semitism, which appears to be due in part to the city's relative prosperity. In common with Jews elsewhere, however, most Jews in Houston feel that anti-Semitism always exists as a latent possibility. Despite the relatively little anti-Semitism they have experienced, many Houston Jews, even the most acculturated, without realizing they are doing so, reveal in their views and statements some of the so-called scars of anti-Semitism that appear to be common among Jews elsewhere in the United States.

Organizationally, the Jewish formal community in Houston has developed similarly to other Jewish communities of the nation in mirroring trends toward bureaucracy, complexity, and secularism present in the larger society. Secular organizations have proliferated, leading to the development of local umbrella organizations in which the influence of
national umbrella organizations is evident. Activities centered around the cultural value of giving have become computerized, resulting in what some people call the Charity Establishment. The United Jewish Campaign is a major communal event, and prestige in the Jewish formal community at the level of the Jewish Community Council, in the main, is a function of generous financial contributions. The organizational professional is very much on the scene, to the extent that the leadership in the formal community can now be said to be distributed among three groups—the lay elite (lay leaders), the theological elite (rabbis), and the organizational elite (professionals).

The many organizations on the local scene reflect the history of Jews in America. However, some organizations that are strong elsewhere are not popular in Houston. Some have never been strong locally (for example, American Jewish Congress), and some that once were weak are now strong, such as Hadassah, a Zionist organization. The increased popularity of this organization is due in part to the fact that Zionism is no longer an issue, either nationally or locally. Indeed, Israel has become a unifying factor within Jewish communities, for it is now evident that few American Jews, even ardent Zionists, wish to live in Israel. Rather, the majority look upon it as a refuge for Jews without homes and deserving of their philanthropic support. Some Jews in Houston strongly desire to visit Israel whereas others do not.

In regard to religious congregations, Houston is unlike the large Eastern cities but similar to other smaller or Southern communities in that Jews feel it important to belong to a synagogue or temple. This circumstance may perhaps be explained by their proportionately small numbers and their desire to affiliate for the sake of identity.
Reform Judaism continues to have strong appeal among Jews in Houston but is not the dominant force it was in earlier days. Classical Reform is still represented by one of the small congregations in the city, but on the whole the Reform branch of Judaism in Houston is tending to become more traditional than in the past, perhaps as a part of the sentiment of nostalgia evident in the entire nation, as well as reflecting the new pride in Judaism. The Orthodox branch appears to be moving toward the Conservative position, in part reflecting the general national trend toward secularization. As in many other cities, Orthodoxy has increased in prestige as some Jewish youth, in their search for identity, have turned to traditional forms. Nevertheless, as measured in numbers of congregational members, it remains the weakest of the three branches of Judaism in Houston.

Rabbis in Houston, as in the past, play a significant role in the Jewish community. Unlike the situation in some Northern and Eastern cities, congregations in Houston are said to be rabbi-oriented; that is, the rabbis have strong influence over their lay boards. Houston rabbis also have stature in the city at large and are recognized by many Gentiles as leaders in the Jewish community. Rabbis of some congregations in Houston have always mixed with the larger population, feeling that it was important to do so.

Despite the rabbis' strong position vis-à-vis their congregations, theirs is not the strongest voice in the Jewish Community Council, which is the umbrella organization of the formal community and the body that organizes and directs the United Jewish Campaign. There it is secular elements—in the persons of the lay elite and the Council's professionals—which play the dominant role.
Because the Council is concerned with matters of community-wide significance and dispenses funds to various local, state, and national agencies, and because it is the coordinating body of the formal Jewish community, a considerable amount of power and influence naturally accrues to the Council and to the people involved with it from day to day. The Council has become in a sense the formal voice of the Jews of Houston, even though some individuals feel that the Council is not sufficiently representative of all the elements in the population to serve as its official spokesman. Affiliation with the Council is voluntary, and although most Jewish organizations belong, some do not.

In spite of the Council's central role in the formal community, most of the rank and file of the Jewish population do not know that it even exists, much less who its executive director and board members are. Only those deeply involved in the organizational life of the Jewish community are aware of the workings, the factions and the competitive interplay of the Council. These knowledgeable ones form a relatively small group.

Participation in the Houston formal Jewish community has been conceptualized as a series of concentric circles, with the center rings consisting of those most fully involved; as the rings get farther from the center, participation decreases correspondingly. In the outermost rings, where participation is minimal, if it occurs at all, are the peripheral or marginal Jews.

In regard to Jewish identity, the range among Houston Jews is also wide. The fact that they have never been an outwardly "ethnic" Jewish group does not mean that a complex diversity of Jewish identification has not existed among them. As one informant put it, New York
Jews are ethnically Jewish and Houston Jews are organizationally Jewish. Although small Jewish populations such as that of Houston are not considered "representative" and hence have been given short shrift in Jewish community surveys and analyses, popular and scholarly, of Jewish Americans, to ignore them results in failure to note the variant ways of being Jewish. Houston has always had its proportions of Jews who were proud of being Jews, those who were sorry they were Jews, and those who simply accepted the fact of their Jewishness without knowing how or why.

Evident among Jews in Houston, as among Jews in many other cities, is a new interest and pride in things Jewish. This development appears to have been fostered by the increased regard for ethnicity in the nation in general, the associated interest of Gentiles in Jews and Israel, and by the existence of Israel as a Jewish state (particularly since the Six-Day War, which increased the Jews' self-esteem regarding their Jewish identity). Perhaps more than any other factor, the creation of Israel has injected new life into the formal Jewish community of Houston.

However, the same milieu that has produced new pride and interest in things Jewish is also causing many Houston adults to be concerned about their children in regard to their Jewish identity. They are disturbed by the rising rate of mixed marriages and the fact that many young people consider their Jewish identity irrelevant to their lives.

Like their Gentile counterparts, many Jewish young people in Houston care little about religious differences among people, seek "relevance" in general, and take "the establishment" (both Jewish and Gentile) to task for not living by its professed values. In looking for answers, some are finding intrinsic worth in Judaism and being
Jewish; others are not.

It seems that there have always been, and still are, both external and internal forces favoring and discouraging the survival of the Jews as a distinctive group in Houston (as elsewhere). At present, the existence of a distinguishable group seems assured for an indefinite period.
NOTES

NOTES TO CHAPTER I: THE HISTORICAL SETTING

1See Handlin (1970:17). According to Levinger (1935:261), the immigrants are generally spoken of as Russian Jews because they came primarily from Russia or near Russia and because the language and customs of these east European Jews gave them a fairly well-marked unity, as contrasted with the Spanish and German Jews.

2After the Revolution of 1776, there were about 3000 Jews in the United States, mainly of Spanish origin; in 1840, there were about 15,000, still primarily of Spanish origin. By 1880, there were about 250,000 Jews in the United States, most of whom were German. In 1928, there were 4.2 million Jews, mostly from eastern Europe (Levinger, pp. 11, 176, 265).

3Since the German migration had barely begun, it would seem that the majority of members would have been Sephardic. But, according to Levinger (p. 213), the congregation included a large proportion of German Jews, although it had been founded by the Sephardim and followed their ritual, as well as their custom of complete religious domination over the members of the congregation. The splinter group, the "Reformed Society of Israelites," lasted eight years before lack of money and opposition from the main congregation caused it to disband. However, a few years later reforms were introduced within the original congregation after the destruction of its synagogue by fire. The new cantor and preacher of the congregation advocated putting an organ in the new building, an action that the majority of the congregation approved. (Orthodox ritual does not allow musical instruments in the service; such a congregation would be called Conservative today.) This time, the members of the minority group objecting were Orthodox, and they resigned to form a strictly Orthodox congregation. After the Civil War, the two congregations united again (Levinger, pp. 214-15).

4It was in Germany that the Enlightenment took root; the necessity for "reforms" in the Jewish service was first preached there about 1810. But while the Reform movement began in Germany, it flourished only in the fertile soil of America (Levinger, 1935).

5During the period of Russian immigration American Jewry increased eleven times as fast as the population of the nation as a whole, and became fourteen times as large as it had been before the period began (Levinger, p. 265).

6Between 1870 and 1905, more than a third of the Jews of east
Europe left their homes; 90% came to the United States, and most settled in New York City (Birmingham, p. 290). According to Glazer and Moynihan (1963:138-39), in 1880 about 80,000 Jews lived in New York City, representing about 4% of the population. By 1910 there were close to 1.25 million Jews in New York City, representing more than a quarter of the city's population, a proportion they have maintained ever since. By 1924, the city had almost 2 million Jews.

7The 1921 quota law specified that each country could send to the United States each year 3% of the number of persons of that nationality living in America in 1910. The Immigration Act of 1924 changed the quota to only 2% and changed the base year to 1890 ("Immigration," World Book Encyclopedia, 1968,X, p. 70). Since the Russian Jewish immigration did not begin until 1890, the quota of Jews admitted thereafter was severely limited.

8About 140,000 came between 1933 and 1940 (Yaffe, 1968:18). A Displaced Persons Act in 1948 permitted some 400,000 newcomers to the United States, of whom 16% were Jews. In 1953, a supplementary measure allowed a few more in. In all, about 100,000 Jews came to the United States in the postwar years (Handlin, 1970:22).

9These Hasidic Jews (about 12,000 in number) have settled in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn. Yaffe (1968:19) says they are the most orthodox of the Orthodox; they are the ones seen from time to time on New York subways wearing black hats and earcurls.

10The following is a brief summary of important dates in the history of Texas. In 1821 Moses Austin secured a contract with the Spanish government to bring some 300 settlers into Texas, which was then a part of Mexico. Moses Austin died, but his son, Stephen F. Austin, carried out the contract.

In 1836, Texans under General Sam Houston fought a battle for independence at the San Jacinto Battlegrounds and, defeating the Mexican troops, declared Texas a sovereign republic.

It is said that the smoke had hardly cleared from the battlefield when two brothers from New York, John K. and Augustus C. Allen, established the city of Houston "at the headwaters of Buffalo Bayou" and promoted it in newspapers throughout the East and North.

Texas joined the Union in 1846 and became the twenty-eighth state. In 1861 Texas joined the Confederacy and in 1870 was formally readmitted to the Union.

Houston was the temporary capital of Texas from 1836 to 1840 (at which time the capital was moved to Austin), a fact Schlam (1971) attributes to Houston's early attractiveness and its becoming a "boom-town." The fact that Houston was located only fifty miles inland from the Gulf on a navigable stream made it a center for both land and water transport.

By 1850 Houston was the third largest city in Texas; it remained so in the 1860s, later becoming larger than its competitors, Galveston and San Antonio. When the railroad came to Texas in 1850, Houston's importance was further enhanced; by the time of the Civil War it was the railroad center of Texas (Schlam, p. 3).
From personal correspondence (during this research) with descendants of Samuel Isaacks now living in Nacogdoches.

Sources. While various articles have appeared about Jews in Texas, until recently little had been written about the early days of Jews in Houston. However, in 1971 Helena Frenkil Schlam completed her master's thesis on "The Early Jews of Houston," a study of the Jews in Houston before 1860. To the author's knowledge, it is the only re-searched and documented study that has been done on Houston Jews of this era. The thesis is as yet unpublished, but Schlam has graciously consented to the use of her material in this study. She also shared with the author many of her original sources and in the course of several conversations discussed her findings. The material in this section on the early life of Jews in Houston before 1860 is based largely on Schlam's work.

The recorded minutes of the Beth Israel congregation for the years 1861 to 1954, which have been compiled by Anne Nathan Cohen into a book, The Centenary History (1954), proved to be a primary source of information on Houston Jews after 1860. Since Beth Israel was the only congregation in Houston up to 1889, and the congregation was a "community" affair, much of the community's life is recorded in its minutes.

Other primary sources for the years after 1861 include city directories, records, census information, etc. Jews who had lived in Houston in the early 1900s were able to provide information on the 1900-1925 period.

Schlam (p. 31) quotes a letter written in 1858 by an early Jewish settler, Jacob de Cordova, which substantiates the fact that Jews did not generally respond to encouragement from national Jewish leaders, such as Isaac Leeser, "to give up trading" and become farmers or ranchers. Cordova's letter said in part: "Since Texas is essentially an agricultural country, immigration of the Children of Israel is very limited."

According to Schlam, facts on early Jews in Houston are especially difficult to ascertain, for no census of any kind was undertaken in Texas before 1850. U.S. Census data are available for 1850 and later, but are not too helpful in compiling a study of Jews, since religion was not included in the questions and names alone are not a sufficient identification of Jewishness. Schlam, therefore, used cemetery records, newspaper announcements and articles, membership lists of congregations and Jewish organizations, and whatever other devices she could to identify Houston's Jews. While she undoubtedly made some errors, her findings are probably the most accurate to date.

According to Schlam (p. 15), some Jews came to Texas directly from Europe to the port of Galveston. Steamship advertisements of passage to New Orleans and Galveston appeared in 1848 on covers of German publications.

Schlam's Tables 1 and 2 show the following distribution of places of origin of Houston Jews in 1850:
Germany . . . . 4
Prussia . . . . 2
Jamaica . . . . 1
Holland . . . . 1
England . . . . 1
France . . . . 1
United States . . 4 (one each from Louisiana, Ohio, Missouri, Virginia)

In Houston in 1850, 32% of the total free population was foreign-born. Of these foreign-born, the German-born predominated (71.1%). In 1860, 36.7% of the Houston population was foreign-born, with the German-born still predominating (60.4%). Of this number of German foreign-born, the German Jews represented about 8.3%. Thus, the German Jews represented a small part of the total German population in the city. However, they were a majority of the total Jewish population, for forty-three of the total Jewish population of sixty-eight adults were German-born (Schlam, pp. 25, 26).

The census of 1860 showed twenty-seven merchants, nine clerks, one carpenter, one cigarist, "and one H. Church P. (Hebrew Church Pastor?)" listed. Three men listed no profession. Schlam (fn. 50, p. 36) concludes that Jews owned from 12% to 20% of the city's mercantile establishments.

Of twenty-six Jewish heads of households, sixteen held real estate, all but four being valued at over $1000 (Schlam, p. 37).

While six non-Jewish merchants valued their taxable possessions at over $250,000, none of the Jewish merchants were in this league, although three had values of $25,000 and six gave their worth as $9000 or more. Some listed no personal estate or real estate (Schlam, pp. 30, 31).

The Hebrew Benevolent Association was (according to Schlam) probably formed by those who started the cemetery, for one of its purposes was to care for the cemetery as well as to help fellow Jews in distress. The Occident (the first national Jewish newspaper) heralded it as the "first regular Jewish Society in the State of Texas," noting that its organization was notably American, from election of officers to printing of rules and regulations (Schlam, p. 42).

Schlam says (pp. 38-46) that while the standard encyclopedic entry gives 1844 and 1854 as the years in which the cemetery and the Beth Israel congregation respectively were established, these dates cannot be correct. She established that the formation of the cemetery could have been no earlier than 1852 and no later than 1854 (p. 41), and that it was therefore the second and not the first Jewish cemetery to be established in the state, Galveston's being the first. Similarly, according to Schlam's research, Congregation Beth Israel was not formed in 1854; rather, the formation, dedication, and incorporation of the congregation all took place in 1859. If this information is correct, Houston loses the distinction accorded it all these years of having had the first Jewish cemetery and congregation in Texas.
22Of seventy-five Master Masons of Holland Lodge, No. 1, in 1856, seven Jews were listed (Schlam, p. 28). Of the eight officers of the Hebrew Association, six were active in Masons or Odd Fellows, and two were active in both (Schlam, p. 27).

23Although Adath Yeshurun was formed in 1889, it was not incorporated until 1891.

24This informant went on to say that most of the immigrants who had settled in Fort Worth were from Lithuania. When she and her family moved to Houston permanently around 1915, they found that most of the settlers in Houston were from Galicia "and there was a difference." For example, she described her reaction to visiting an Orthodox synagogue in Houston in 1917:

The women were divided from the men and sat upstairs! We only went there once! Even in Fort Worth they didn't have this separation. Evidently the town that settled Fort Worth was less religious and had more rebels than Houston! There developed in Houston, in fact, a friendly rivalry of sorts between "Lithvaks" and "Galitzianers." The Lithvaks considered themselves more educated and superior to the Galitzianers. Marriages between the two groups became common, however, even though Lithvak parents often initially viewed the potential match with dismay, according to the informant.

25Data on early organizations are presented as tentative, for there are discrepancies and contradictions among sources as to numbers and kinds of organizations and their year of formation and/or dissolution. For purposes of this study, the precise dates are not as important as the broad trend, and the lists presented here are probably accurate enough to illustrate this. However, intensive research (not possible within the scope of the present study) to clarify and correctly document such data would be of value.

26Descendants of Rabbi Emmich are still living in Houston. He was the maternal grandfather of M. N. Dannenbaum, quoted later in this study.


28From a personal interview with M. N. Dannenbaum, nephew of H. J. Dannenbaum.

29While Handlin (1970:37) gives 1926 as the date Americans helped create the Jewish Agency, Levinger (1935:472) gives August 1929 as the date the Jewish Agency was finally organized in Zurich, Switzerland.

30The information in the text was based upon the following sources: Report of the President on Behalf of The Board of Trustees, "Annual Report, Congregation Beth Israel, Houston, Texas, May 30, 1944"; Cohen (1954:53-58); the personal files of William M. Nathan (lent to the
author by Mr. Nathan), a former member of Beth Israel who resigned after the controversy; and the recollections of informants.

NOTES TO CHAPTER II: THE CURRENT SETTING

1The national survey, which aims for a representative cross section of Jews in the United States, will include 10,000 Jewish households, and is the first national and comprehensive survey undertaken. (The information obtained will be used to aid Federations in Jewish community planning and will provide, for the first time, accurate information on the Jewish population of the United States. Heretofore, only various local community studies were available, made under a variety of conditions, utilizing a variety of methods, etc.)

According to the research directors of the national survey, the country was divided into thirty-nine strata, each stratum consisting of communities or areas with approximately the same number of Jews. In the first stratum, which includes cities with the largest Jewish populations, every such city is included in the sample. In other strata, sample cities and areas have been selected; Houston was chosen as a sample area for one stratum. Therefore, while Houston's sample size is small and "thus no detailed work can be done on it," it nevertheless corresponds to Houston's "proper representation in the national sample."

2Marden and Meyer (1968:7) obtained the estimate of the Jewish population from the American Jewish Yearbook for 1964.

3Figures from the American Jewish Yearbook for 1970; the editors note that they are somewhat inaccurate, because the total Texas population figure does not include members of the armed forces while the Jewish estimate does.

The editors of the yearbook also note that the figures on Jewish population for 1969 were not updated from those for 1968 both because preliminary data showed few major changes and because they expected to have new figures for 1970 based on the current national Jewish population survey.


5The fact that data on population, congregational memberships, etc., were obtained at various times during the research period accounts in part for the approximate nature of the information in the text and, in some cases, for its inconsistency or apparent inaccuracy.

6Since this research was completed, several other Jewish organizations, including a new congregation, have been formed in the Memorial area.

7The three categories of households (nuclear, extended, and
single) were used in order to have comparable classifications with the Providence study. However, the variety of situations revealed in the responses to the questionnaire (especially among females) suggests that a more complex classification system might be more useful. For example, the following situations should perhaps be separately accounted for: one-parent households with young children ("one-part nuclear"); an adult son or daughter (single, divorced, or widowed) living with an older parent ("one-part extended"); two or more single adults living together who are of the same sex and are not related ("expanded single").

Marden and Meyer (1968) correctly point out that an accurate estimate of the occupational distribution of Jews in the United States is difficult to make, since studies from different localities have used differing job classifications that are often not comparable. Despite this problem, they proceed to discuss the character of the Jewish labor force on the basis of the available data.

This present study follows their example. The occupational findings are presented as an indication of the characteristics of the Houston Jewish male labor force, even though there has been a difficulty in proper classification.

For purposes of comparison, the occupational categories used in the Houston study (professional/technical, manager/proprietor, etc.) were similar to those of other studies. A difficulty in classifying often resulted, however, when a respondent failed to give enough information on the questionnaire for his occupation to be matched to one of these categories. Therefore other data, such as income, were also utilized in an attempt to determine the proper category.

The author came to the conclusion that aside from this technical problem there is an even more basic flaw in such classification schemes in general: by reducing all employment data to a relatively few occupational categories, much important information is lost, resulting in ambiguity as to the meaning of the classifications. For example, in most studies, there seems to be no distinction made between being a proprietor of a "low status" business and a "high status" one. That is, one man might be the sole owner and only employee of a janitor cleaning service yet be listed in the owner/proprietor category, along with the one-man owner of an exclusive ladies' dress apparel shop. Clearly, the two jobs are not the same. It is important to know whether a man works for someone else or is self-employed, no matter what the business, but it is also important to know the nature of the business. In many studies, there appear to be superordinate categories which determine classifications of occupations; the procedure is questionable in itself, but worse, it is not made explicit. Does being an "owner or proprietor" supersede type of occupation? For example, is an insurance salesman who is an independent agent listed as a "salesman" or as a "proprietor"? Has the professional who works for himself been listed as a "professional" or a "proprietor"? Also, how is the occupation of "buyer," a common one for Jews, classified under this scheme? In other words, the categories are neither mutually exclusive nor adequate in scope. Clearly, a better and more standardized scheme of classification is needed.
NOTES TO CHAPTER III: SOCIAL ORGANIZATION
OF THE HOUSTON JEWISH POPULATION

1Because organizations are "visible," it is this aspect that usually receives the most attention in any study of a Jewish population (and the present study is no exception), but it should be noted that this approach is to the neglect of other important, though less visible, aspects (such as the informal networks and relationships that exist, family life, etc.).

2The Bat Mitzvah ceremony for girls who have reached their thirteenth birthday is a ritual counterpart of the Bar Mitzvah ceremony for boys. It was begun approximately thirty years ago by some Conservative congregations (Kertzer, 1960:89).

3According to a member of Brith Shalom who had conducted research on attributes of the congregation's membership in 1969, "because the original members became older, and like tends to attract like," by 1969 the modal age group was 43 years for the men and 41 for the women.

4By the end of 1972, a religious educational director had been hired.

5There is no way of knowing exactly what percentage of Houston Jews do not belong to any congregation. According to the Houston Jewish Community Council, approximately 40% are not affiliated. But when the total number of congregationally affiliated households (4930) is subtracted from the total Jewish population (5600 households), a figure of some 670, or 12%, remains. Since some Jews belong to more than one congregation, and the number of unidentified Jews is always an unknown, it can only be guessed that 12% to 20% of the known Jewish population in Houston do not belong.

6While synagogue affiliation is considered important in Houston, regular synagogue/temple attendance for religious services is deemed less so by the majority of religious congregants. It is a well-known fact among Jews (in Houston as well as elsewhere) that the majority of Jews attend the synagogue/temple for religious services only on the High Holidays and/or occasional Friday nights (usually when there is a Bar/Bat Mitzvah service for a friend's child, a memorial service for a deceased relative, or some other special occasion). The data from the questionnaire (shown below) confirm this general pattern:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pattern of Attendance at Synagogue/ Temple Services</th>
<th>Percentage of Persons Attending</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never, rarely, or occasionally</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Holidays only and/or occasional Bar/Bat Mitzvahs</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular attendance (Friday nights once a month or more)</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular plus (every Friday night and more--i.e., Saturdays, Sundays, or daily)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Some 8% were "not certain," and 8% did not believe in God.

Not all data on ritual observances from the questionnaire were tabulated.

See S. P. Goldberg, The American Jewish Community: Its Structure, Role and Organizations, a pamphlet published by Women's American ORT (1968), and Jewish Communal Services: Programs & Finances, 15th ed., a pamphlet published by the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds, August 1970, for a more complete summary of national organizations and the structure of the American Jewish formal community.

The following table compares Jewish men and women in Houston as to the types of organizations they participate in.

**TYPES OF ORGANIZATIONS IN WHICH HOUSTON JEWS ARE ACTIVE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Jewish only</th>
<th>Gentile only</th>
<th>Both Jewish and Gentile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Yaffe (1968) notes that while other Zionist organizations have dwindled almost out of existence, Hadassah has steadily gained in popularity. He attributes this vitality to the fact that, at the level of the rank and file, it ceased being Zionist long ago. Its members are sympathetic to Israel but in much the same way that other American Jews are—they like the country, but would not want to live there.

One woman active in the organization's redevelopment in recent years says:
In Houston the schism between Emanu El and Beth Israel practically destroyed the Council and only about five or six women kept it going "on paper." It was only when new women came to the city and felt it should be redeveloped that the organization grew again.

The definition used in this study is more limited than Sutker's. Sutker's definition is: "The lay elite consists of adult Jews who are not dependent for their livelihood as paid workers in Jewish community affairs and who have prestige and/or power in the social, political, economic or cultural life of the city of Atlanta or in Jewish affairs" (1958:249).

NOTES TO CHAPTER IV: JEWISH–GENTILE

RELATIONSHIPS IN HOUSTON

For example, one incident that she related to the author occurred five or six years ago (she realized that the situation might have
changed by now) when she was called by the symphony group to work in their drive, and she accepted because she did want to work with them. (At that time, according to her, Houston Jewish women were rarely called to participate in such fund-raising drives and never in leadership positions.) But, "of all things," she was put into an "all-Jewish group" and, moreover, the Jewish group were given the door-to-door type of solicitation (which has the lowest status of all fund-raising roles). She called the woman who had recruited her and told her that this was not the right type of thinking. She was not called upon again. (Today, the Jewish woman is a national leader in Jewish women's organizational life.)
APPENDIX A. RESEARCH METHODS

Interviews

Questionnaires
APPENDIX A

RESEARCH METHODS

Interviews

The author conducted in-depth interviews of approximately fifty to sixty people from the Jewish population of Houston, representing a broad range of types and personal characteristics. They included members of both sexes and of the different generations, college youth and high school youth, persons with high-status occupations as well as those with lower status occupations, long-term Houstonians and relative newcomers, single and married people, leaders in the Jewish formal community and rank-and-file community members, peripherals as well as committed Jews, Jews in mixed marriages and intermarriages, atheists and religiously committed Jews. There was no attempt to interview either an equal number or a proportional sample in each group. Rather, the author's goal was to discover the range of types that existed and to learn their views. This interview "population" also included some of Houston's rabbis, the executive directors of all local Jewish organizations run by professionals, and, in some instances, members of their staffs.

The interviews were open-ended but always covered certain topics: attitudes toward Jewish identity (Are you glad you are a Jew? How are you a Jew? Do you think it is important that the Jewish people continue?); Israel and the issue of "dual loyalty"; perception of the city's Jewish "community" (who the leaders are, how it functions, what the character of the different social groups is, etc.); Jewish-Gentile relations (and sensitivity to anti-Semitism). Most often the respondent covered the majority of these areas spontaneously in the course of the interview, and only a few specific questions had to be asked directly. That is, the topic emerged in the interviewee's own context, without words being "put into his mouth" (a condition of importance to this investigator). In the interest of achieving full rapport, which questions were asked, and which direction the interview took, depended upon the particular interviewee. Exploration of certain topics was fuller with some than with others. Notes were taken during the interview and written up as soon afterwards as possible.

In addition to the formal interviews, which lasted from one to three hours (and sometimes were followed by telephone conversations), numerous other shorter, topic-oriented interviews were held with a variety of people.

Besides the planned interviews, there were many spontaneous ones.
Whenever the author found herself in the company of someone who was Jewish (or not Jewish), he or she was interviewed; any chance conversation or meeting became "grist for the mill."

**Questionnaires**

A mail-back questionnaire was sent on August 17, 1971, to a random sample of 1000 Houston Jews whose names appeared on the master mailing list (of name plates) of the Houston Jewish Community Council. The Council attempts to keep an up-to-date list of people in the Houston area known to be, or thought to be, Jews, primarily for the purposes of appealing to them for funds for Jewish causes.

This list is compiled from names given to the Council by organizations to which Jews belong, from word of mouth, from scanning the city directory for Jewish-sounding names and then verifying them, etc. Even though the Council does a good job of locating "hard-to-find" Jews, there is no way of knowing how many Jews in Houston remain unidentified.

The Council's master list is divided into two sections: an "active" file, composed of names of those who contribute to the yearly United Jewish Campaign, and an "inactive" file, composed of those who have not contributed to the campaign in the last five years or so. (The latter is referred to by the Council staff as the "deadhead" file.)

The random sample was chosen so as to include names from the active and inactive files in their respective proportions to the total known Jewish population in Houston. (By March, 1971, when the list was utilized, the known Jewish households in the city numbered approximately 6000, 700 to 800 of these being "inactive" and approximately 5300 being "active.")

To select the random sample, the author threw a pair of dice; beginning with that number, every sixth name plate in the "active" list was pulled. Similarly, for the "inactive" file, after another throw of the dice, beginning with that number, every seventh name plate was chosen. (Because the National Population Survey staff were conducting their field work in the Houston area at this same time, eight names were removed from the author's random sample in order to prevent duplication with their list.)

Since a condition of the author's being able to utilize the Council's master mailing list was that she would not keep or make any copy of the names obtained, the name plates were printed directly onto the envelopes to be mailed out. Enclosed with the questionnaire were an instruction sheet and a letter explaining the purpose of the study which noted that the questionnaire required no signature and all information obtained was to be anonymous. A self-addressed stamped envelope was also enclosed for the return of the questionnaire to the author.

Since the questionnaires were anonymous, and no record was made of the names used, there was no way to follow up on the questionnaire,
either to prod recipients into responding or to ascertain the characteristics of those who did not return it.

Of the 1000 mailed, approximately 400, or 40%, were returned. Four responses from the NASA area were not utilized, since NASA residents do not actively participate in the Houston Jewish formal community.

When the returned questionnaires were divided into groups according to congregational affiliation and those with no congregational affiliation, the proportions of each matched fairly well (significant at the .001 level with the chi square test) the known proportions of memberships in each of the congregations as well as the estimated proportion of unaffiliated. Thus, given all of the limitations inherent in the nature of such a sample, even though technically one can not generalize to the whole of the Jewish Houston population on the basis of the sample, one can do so with some degree of confidence.

The sample used included 174 females and 228 males. The numbers in each congregational group are shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Congregational Affiliation</th>
<th>Houston Jewish Population (5600 households)</th>
<th>Questionnaire Sample (402 households)</th>
<th>Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of Households†</td>
<td>Percentage of Total Population</td>
<td>Number of Households</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Orthodox</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brith Shalom</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beth Yeshurun</td>
<td>1750</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emanu El</td>
<td>1390</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beth Israel</td>
<td>1235</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houston Congregation for Reform Judaism</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None (unaffiliated)</td>
<td>670 (est.)</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

†Totals as of July 1970.

The major purpose of the questionnaire was to gain some demographic information (since the results of the national Jewish Population Survey would not be available until the next year or so) and other kinds of factual information. Certain subjective questions were also included, however, in an effort to take advantage of the audience being reached. Most of these were suggested by data obtained from the author's interviews and observation; some were taken from the national survey questionnaire.

Since the questionnaire was to be but a minor part of the study, only certain major variables--such as occupation, education, income--were tabulated. The main purpose of the questionnaire was served, but due to limitations of time and resources, the richness of the responses (in answers to questions and in free comments) has yet to be mined.
APPENDIX B. FORMS

Questionnaire Cover Letter
Questionnaire Instruction Sheet
Questionnaire
RICE UNIVERSITY
HOUSTON, TEXAS
77001

DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY AND SOCIOLOGY

August 12, 1971

Dear Fellow Houstonian:

For my doctoral dissertation at Rice University, I am engaged in a descriptive account of the Jewish population of Houston. Part of this study will consist of responses to the enclosed questionnaire being mailed to a random sample of the population known to be, or thought to be, of Jewish descent (of which I am a member). Your cooperation in filling out the forms is solicited as your responses are an important part of the study.

The questionnaire requires no signature; all information obtained is anonymous. The results should be of benefit to the Houston community; and since a national Jewish population survey is now in progress, it will be interesting to compare some facts about Houston Jews with those of other cities. The Houston Jewish Community Council is aware of this study and has offered its cooperation.

I realize that some of you who receive this questionnaire consider yourselves Jewish only by virtue of having been born a Jew, and as such, may think you should not reply. But, please, do reply, for part of the purpose of the study is to show the diversity that does exist among Jews in both the degree and kind of their Jewish identification.

Even though the forms may "appear" long, the questions are such that they can be filled out easily and quickly, requiring only the checking of certain words or statements or filling in of blanks.

The success of this survey depends upon your willingness to take the time and effort to answer the questions. I thank you for your time and cooperation. I hope you may even "enjoy" answering some of the questions.

Very sincerely,

[Signature]

Elaine Maas
Doctoral Candidate
Behavioral Science Graduate Program
GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS
(Not to be returned with completed questionnaire)

WHO IS TO FILL OUT THE QUESTIONNAIRE: note: In order to assure an equal number of male and female responses, half of the forms have been printed on GREEN paper and half on WHITE paper. Every other envelope has had a GREEN color form put into it.

FOR MARRIED COUPLES:
If you receive a GREEN color form, the male head of household fills it out.
If you receive a WHITE color form, the female spouse fills it out.

FOR MIXED MARRIAGES:
The Jewish spouse is to fill out the form, regardless of its color.

FOR SINGLE HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS:
Fill out the form, regardless of its color.

MAILING BACK THE QUESTIONNAIRE:
Please mail back the completed questionnaire as soon as possible using the self-addressed stamped envelope that has been enclosed. (Please do not return the cover letter or this instruction sheet.)
If you happen to be out of town when this arrives, please fill out the questionnaire and return it to me just as soon as you return.

HOW TO REACH ME FOR YOUR QUESTIONS:
If you have any questions or comments, call me at the following number (the call can be anonymous):

Residence: 668-3331

Thank you for your cooperation.
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF THE JEWISH POPULATION OF HOUSTON
Elaine Maas, Ph. D. Candidate
Behavioral Science Graduate Program, Rice University

PART I

Please give the following information about yourself by filling in the blanks and/or checking (✓) the appropriate categories. Leave blank any question that does not apply to you. Put a question mark (?) if you do not know the answer.

SEX: Male    Female    AGE: ______

BIRTHPLACE
(City and State or Foreign Country)

If you were not born in Houston, what year did you come here to live and how old were you at that time? Year ______ Age ______

Where were your formative years spent? (City and State or Foreign Country)

Self

Your spouse's (if married) ______

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION

Are you affiliated with a congregation?

If yes, which one(s):

Beth Yeshurun
Brith Shalom
United Orthodox
B'nai Israel
Houston Congregation for Reform Judaism

Other ______

RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

How often (on a yearly average) do you attend synagogue or temple services? (check as many as apply)

Never
High Holidays
Occasional Bar/Bat Mitzvahs
Festivals like Purim, Succoth
Simchat Torah
Daily, or almost daily
Saturdays
All, or almost all, Friday nights
Friday nights about once a month

Other (specify) ______

Which of the following religious or cultural observances are practiced in your home?

Passover Seder (home or elsewhere)

dchanukah
Purim
Succoth
Observance of Sabbath (If you check this, please say how)

Do you keep kosher in your home?

No    Yes, strictly    Yes, somewhat

Do you follow "kashrut" (dietary) laws outside your home?

No    Yes, strictly    Yes, somewhat

During the Christmas holidays, do you display a Christmas tree?

Yes    No

On High Holidays, do you: (check as many as apply)

Close your business
Stay home from work
Fast all, or part of day, on Yom Kippur

None of these

Do you have Jewish ceremonial objects in your home?

None
Menorah
Mezuzah
Other

Do you generally read Jewish magazines, newspapers, and journals such as:

Jewish Herald-Voices
Commentary
Jewish Digest

(Over)
GENERATIONAL BACKGROUND
Parent's Birthplace (city and state or name of foreign country):
Mother
Father
Grandparent's Birthplace (city and state or name of foreign country):
Mother's mother
Father
Father's mother
Father

MARITAL DATA
Current marital status:
____ Single (never married)
____ Married
____ Divorced
____ Separated
____ Widowed

Have you been married more than once?
____ Yes
____ No

If yes, was remarriage due to:
____ Divorce
____ Widowhood
____ Was previous spouse Jewish?
____ Yes
____ No

Are you Jewish by birth or converted to Judaism?  ____ Born Jewish
____ Converted

Is your current spouse:  ____ Born Jewish
____ Converted to Judaism  ____ Not Jewish

Has any member of your family married a non-Jew?  ____ Yes
____ No

EDUCATION
Check the highest level of formal education received by you and your spouse.
____ No formal education
____ grade school
____ some high school
____ high school graduate
____ some college
____ college graduate
____ advanced degrees

If you are in college now, what year?
____ Which college?

HOUSING
Do you live in:
____ an apartment
____ a single family dwelling
____ other

Do you:
____ own
____ rent

Your zip code:

INCOME
Check the category that most closely approximates your annual family income:
____ under $7,000
____ $7,000 to $15,000
____ $15,000 to $25,000
____ $25,000 to $50,000
____ $50,000 to $100,000
____ over $100,000

OCCUPATION
Are you at present:
____ Working for pay or profit
____ Housewife
____ Retired
____ Unemployed
____ Student
____ Other (specify)

Do you work for:  ____ Self
____ Others

Please describe your main occupation as specifically as possible (e.g., a chemist for a large corporation, a salesclerk for a small retail store, etc.):

If married, does your spouse work for pay or profit?  ____ Yes
____ No
____ Parttime

If yes, what is his/her main occupation?

Are you or your spouse in business with a relative?  ____ Yes
____ No

If you are a student, what occupation do you intend to pursue?

HOUSEHOLD
Please list yourself and all other people who live in the same household with you and give relationship (son, husband, etc.).

____
____
____
____
____
____
____
____
____
____
____
____
____
____
____
____
____

How many children do you have?
____ Give ages:

How many attend, or have attended, college?

VOTING
Do you think of yourself as a:
____ Democrat
____ Independent
____ Republican
____ Other

If you marked "other" or "independent," do you, as a rule, vote for the Democratic or Republican candidate?
____ Democratic
____ Republican

Do you generally take an active part in political campaigning?  ____ Yes
____ No
PART II
ATTITUDES AND OPINIONS

In the following statements or questions, check (✓) the answer that most nearly represents your view. Choose only one answer, unless otherwise indicated. Feel free to write any comments as you go along using space beside the question or the last sheet of the questionnaire which has been provided for your comments.

1. I feel Jewish but I can't explain how or why.
   ___ 1) Agree
   ___ 2) Disagree
   ___ 3) Undecided
   ___ 4) I do not feel Jewish

2. I am ultimately bound up with the fate of the Jewish people.
   ___ 1) Agree
   ___ 2) Disagree
   ___ 3) Undecided

3. The Jewish people are the ones I feel most at home with.
   ___ 1) Agree
   ___ 2) Disagree
   ___ 3) Undecided

4. If I could have chosen, I would have preferred not being born a Jew.
   ___ 1) Agree
   ___ 2) Disagree
   ___ 3) Undecided

5. Judaism is just a religion (and not a nationality or people).
   ___ 1) Agree
   ___ 2) Disagree
   ___ 3) Undecided

6. I am: (Choose one.)
   ___ 1) Proud to be Jewish
   ___ 2) Not proud nor ashamed
   ___ 3) More sorry than proud
   ___ 4) No opinion

7. When I first heard President Kennedy was shot, I hoped to God the assassin wasn't a Jew.
   ___ 1) Agree
   ___ 2) Disagree
   ___ 3) Undecided
   ___ 4) That aspect never occurred to me

8. I consider myself a religious person, irrespective of whether or not I go to temple or synagogue or observe Jewish traditions.
   ___ 1) Agree
   ___ 2) Disagree
   ___ 3) Undecided

9. I feel that the Jewish people have a "mission" to fulfill in the world.
   ___ 1) Agree
   ___ 2) Disagree
   ___ 3) Undecided

10. I believe in God. (Check as many as you agree with.)
    ___ 1) Yes
    ___ 2) I am not certain
    ___ 3) No
    ___ 4) As a moral conscience
    ___ 5) As a supernatural power
    ___ 6) I believe in something, but I do not know what
    ___ 7) I feel I have a personal relationship with God
    ___ 8) Other

11. If I could easily switch to another religion, I still would not, mainly because: (If more than one apply, mark the most important reason with a "1", the next most important with a "2", and so on.)
    ___ 1) I am glad I am Jewish
    ___ 2) If I did, it would hurt my parents
    ___ 3) If you have to belong to something, Judaism is as good as, if not better than, other faiths
    ___ 4) I can't imagine converting to another faith, whether or not I believe in Judaism
    ___ 5) I feel a certain loyalty to the Jewish people
    ___ 6) I would never really be accepted by the Gentiles
    ___ 7) Religion is not that important
    ___ 8) I would switch, if I could do so easily
    ___ 9) Other (specify) __________________

12. Would you prefer your child to marry a Jewish person?
    ___ 1) Yes
    ___ 2) No
    ___ 3) Undecided

13. Might your child marry a non-Jew? (Answer only if you have children of dating age.)
    ___ 1) Yes
    ___ 2) I doubt it
    ___ 3) I don't know

14. Do you date, or have you dated, non-Jews?
    ___ 1) No
    ___ 2) Yes, sometimes
    ___ 3) Yes, regularly or quite often

15. Would you today—if you were eligible—marry a non-Jew?
    ___ 1) No
    ___ 2) Yes, but only if he or she converted to Judaism
    ___ 3) Yes, whether or not he or she converted to Judaism
    ___ 4) Undecided

(Over)
16. Whether or not you would marry a non-Jew, in what religion would you rear your child?  
   __ 1) Jewish  
   __ 2) Don't know  
   __ 3) Other (specify) ___________________  

17. Do you have any Negro social friends?  
   __ 1) None  
   __ 2) A few  
   __ 3) Many  

18. How many of your close friends are Jewish?  
   __ 1) None  
   __ 2) A few  
   __ 3) About half  
   __ 4) All, or almost all  

19. When you are out with your friends, do you discuss Jewish topics?  
   __ 1) Rarely, or never  
   __ 2) Sometimes  
   __ 3) All, or most, of the time  

20. Do you think that Jews should mix more with Gentiles socially?  
   __ 1) Yes  
   __ 2) No  
   __ 3) Undecided  

21. Can you define "Zionism"?  
   __ 1) Yes  
   __ 2) Not exactly  
   __ 3) No  

22. Concerning a visit to Israel:  
   __ 1) I have already visited it  
   __ 2) I would like to visit it  
   __ 3) I have no particular desire to visit Israel  

23. Would you like to live in Israel?  
   __ 1) No  
   __ 2) Yes  

24. Regarding the Six Day War and its effect on the status of U.S. Jews in the eyes of non-Jewish Americans, do you believe:  
   __ 1) It raised the status of the Jewish people in the eyes of American non-Jews  
   __ 2) It created more problems than it solved for the Jewish people in the U.S.  
   __ 3) It made no difference to the American non-Jew  

25. For U.S. Jewry, Israel should be the following:  
   __ 1) A haven and possible refuge  
   __ 2) The symbolic home of all of the Jewish people  
   __ 3) Just another democratic nation  
   __ 4) Other (specify) ___________________  

26. Do you think that Houston Jews are too cautious about speaking out on racial or other controversial issues?  
   __ 1) Yes  
   __ 2) No  
   __ 3) Undecided  

27. Have you ever felt "more" or "less" Jewish than you do now?  
   __ 1) Yes, more Jewish  
   __ 2) Yes, less Jewish  
   __ 3) No, I feel the same  
   If you marked "1" or "2", can you say why?  

28. Even though you may observe some Jewish rituals or attend synagogue/temple services, does it mean anything to you?  
   __ 1) Yes  
   __ 2) No, not really  
   If "no, not really" do you do it for:  
   __ your parents  
   __ your children  
   __ the symbolic value  
   __ other  

29. Have you personally, in the past 12 months, experienced anti-Semitism?  
   __ 1) Yes  
   __ 2) No  
   __ 3) Undecided  
   IF "yes", could you describe what happened?  

30. Other than above, how much anti-Semitism have you personally experienced in your lifetime?  
   __ 1) None  
   __ 2) Very little  
   __ 3) A moderate amount  
   __ 4) A great deal  

31. Has being Jewish affected your choice of occupation?  
   __ 1) Yes  
   __ 2) No  
   __ 3) Undecided  
   IF "yes", can you say how?  

32. Are you active in fighting anti-Semitism?  
   __ 1) Yes  
   __ 2) No  
   __ 3) Undecided  
   IF "yes", how are you active?
YOUR COMMENTS

Please feel free to comment on any aspect of this questionnaire or on any aspect of the Jewish population in Houston in general that you feel would be pertinent to my study.

It would be particularly helpful if you would give me your views on the following two questions:

1. Compared with other cities, do you feel that Houston is a good place for Jews to live or not so good a place? Please discuss why you feel the way you do.
2. Which needs of the Jewish community are not being met by the Jewish community?
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