NUMBER AND DISTRIBUTION OF JEWISH HOUSEHOLDS IN RHODE ISLAND, 1970

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The 1963 Population Study of the Greater Providence* Jewish Community enumerated 5,978 Jewish households containing 19,457 persons, Although the 1963 study was the first comprehensive survey of the area's Jewish population, it was possible to obtain some insights into the changing size and distribution of the Jewish population by comparison of the survey's finding with approximations of the 1951 Jewish population emanating from a study of *Group Work and Leisure Time Needs in the Jewish Community of Providence.* That study indicated that in 1951 Greater Providence had about 19,700 Jews living in about 6,000 households. Overall, therefore, the 1951 and 1963 data suggested minimum change in the 12 year interval in the size of the Greater Providence Jewish community.

Despite this impression of general stability, marked change had occurred in the residential distribution of the Jewish population within the area. Whereas 80 per cent of the Jewish population of Greater Providence lived within the city of Providence in 1951, only 57 per cent did so in 1963. Moreover, within the city sharp declines had taken place in the number of Jewish households residing in the South Side and the North End. By contrast, the East Side and the adjoining Pawtucket area increased the size of their Jewish populations during this period. The growth of the suburban communities of Barrington, East Providence, Cranston, and Warwick was dramatic in this period, from 11.5 per cent of Greater Providence's total to 27.5 per cent, with tripling and doubling in size being characteristic of Warwick and Cranston, respectively. Quite clearly, Jews were participating in the very strong suburban movement characterizing the Providence metropolitan area.

Because seven years have elapsed since the 1963 survey and 1970 marks both the taking of the decennial federal census and of initiation of a National Jewish Population Study (NJPS), it seemed desirable to update the 1963 estimates of the size and distribution of Greater Providence's Jewish population. Most important, more current data would permit determination of the extent to which the patterns observed for

*Greater Providence included Providence, Pawtucket, Central Falls, North Providence, Lincoln, Cumberland, Barrington, East Providence, Bristol, Warren. Cranston, Warwick, East Greenwich and West Warwick.

the period 1951-1963 have continued or become accentuated. The implications of such changes for community planning are too obvious to warrant discussion here.

For the purposes of NJPS, the master files of the General Jewish Committee of Providence (now the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island) were to be used as a basis for sampling Rhode Island's Jewish population. Organizing these files for that purpose provided an opportunity to use the records to enumerate by local area the Jewish households in the state (since the 1963 survey, the General Jewish Committee had been enlarged to encompass the entire state, exclusive of Westerly). Available resources did not permit a complete check of the files against all available organization membership lists, as was done in 1963, but a limited check, covering the suburban temple lists was made. Moreover, since no field survey was undertaken, the opportunity did not exist to solicit names of unaffiliated households and of new, unaffiliated residents of the area. The results of this enumeration are therefore more similar in quality to the 1951 material. As such, the 1970 estimates probably underrepresent the total population by at least 10 per cent, but the extent of such underrepresentation is probably heavier in the suburbs where, as is known from the 1963 survey, rates of affiliation are weaker and proportions of new residents are higher. Until a full survey is undertaken, however, the estimates based on the 1970 lists provide the best indication of the size and distribution of Jewish households. Again, in the absence of a survey, no information was obtained on individual persons, so that the 1970 estimates refer to households only.

According to the lists, in 1970 there were 5,678 Jewish households in Greater Providence and 6,235 in the total state of Rhode Island. Comparison of the 5,678 estimate for 1970 and the 5,978 enumerated in 1963 and the 5,934 estimated in 1951, and taking into account that 1970 is probably about a 10 per cent underestimate, suggests that throughout this 20 year period Greater Providence Jewry has remained relatively stable in size at about 6,000 families.

But this continued stability in overall size between 1963 and 1970 again masks significant changes in residential distribution. The period 1963-1970 witnessed continuation of the patterns observed for 1951-1963. The number of Jewish households in the suburbs further increased while the number in the central cities declined, particularly in the older areas of residence.

The list statistics on which the data in Table 1 are based show that

between 1963 and 1970, Jewish suburban households increased by almost 400, from 1,644 at the time of the survey to 2,032 seven years later. This growth of 24 per cent compared to a 16 per cent decline from 4,334 to 3,646 in the number of households in Providence and Pawtucket. As a result of these different growth patterns of cities and suburbs, by 1970, 35.8 per cent of all Jewish households in Greater Providence were in the suburbs (probably more if corrected data were available). This compares to only 11.5 per cent in 1951 and 27.5 per cent in 1963. By contrast, the percentage in Providence-Pawtucket declined from 88.5 per cent in 1951 to 72.5 per cent in 1963 to less than two-thirds, 64.2 per cent in 1970. Clearly, Jewish households, like the general population, continued to move to the suburbs.

But changes were not uniform for the individual suburbs or for the various parts of the central cities. The South Side of Providence, which in 1951 almost equalled the East Side in the size of its Jewish population, declined from 1,871 households in 1951 to 1,012 in 1963. In the last seven years it declined a further 30 per cent to only 725 households. Although not as large, the changes in the North End are even more dramatic. From 817 households in 1951, the North End declined to 330 by 1963 and between then and 1970, it shrank to only 216 households. In contrast, the East Side shows greater stability through the 20 year period, rising some 10 per cent between 1951 and 1963 from 2,067 to 2,296, then evidencing some decline between 1963 and 1970 back toward the 2,000 level. Pawtucket, which grew between 1951 and 1963 from 500 to almost 700 households, also displays some retraction in size to 646, according to the latest estimate. Reflecting these different patterns, the East Side remains the largest single area of Jewish residence, with about one-third of the total Jewish population of Greater Providence; but the South Side's share decreased from 31.5 per cent in 1951 to only 12.8 per cent in 1970, and the North End's from 13.8 per cent in 1951 to only 3.8 per cent in 1970. Pawtucket, after moving from 8.4 to 11.7 per cent of the total between 1951 and 1963, remains at about the 1963 level in 1970.

Changes are equally dramatic, but in the reverse direction, in individual suburbs. The Barrington-East Providence, area, which contained only 74 Jewish households in 1951 and 132 in 1963, increased to 232 by 1970, a 50 per cent increase in the last seven years. Cranston, which more than doubled between 1951 and 1963 from 463 to 1,084, grew at a slower rate between 1963 and 1970 to an estimated total of 1,271. Finally, the Warwick area, including East Greenwich, also displayed

continued growth; following the tripling of its Jewish population between 1951 and 1963 from 142 to 428 households, the number increased by another third to 558 in 1970. But again, it must be emphasized that these suburban estimates are minimal figures because of the nature of the data; a full survey would undoubtedly reveal even greater growth. Given the 1970 figures, each suburb's share of Greater Providence's Jewish population was considerably greater in 1970 than in 1951 and 1963. Whereas Cranston contained only 7.8 per cent of all Jewish households in 1951, it accounted for 22.4 per cent of Greater Providence's Jewish families in 1970. Warwick's share increased in these 20 years from only 2.4 to 9.8 per cent. And although still the smallest of the metropolitan area's groupings, Barrington, East Providence grew from just over one per cent of the households in 1951 to 3.6 per cent in 1970. Quite obviously, despite general stability in the size of Greater Providence's Jewish community, its redistribution away from the center to the suburbs continued between 1963 and 1970, more slowly in the older suburban communities, more rapidly in the newer ones.

State Population

The 1970 estimate provides the first statistics encompassing virtually the entire Jewish population of Rhode Island. Only the town of Westerly is not included in the area serviced by the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island, and its Jewish population is very small. The 1970 data show that for Rhode Island as a whole, there were 6,235 Jewish households. Of these, 5,678, or 91 per cent, are included in the area designated here as Greater Providence. Outside this area, as shown in Table 2, only several Jewish communities exist. The largest is Newport, with 198 households (309 if Middletown and Portsmouth are incorporated with it) followed by Woonsocket with 151 families. Smaller, but probably growing at a faster pace in recent years, is the group of 61 households in South County, many of whom are associated with the University of Rhode Island.

Distribution by Census Tracts

For planning purposes, it is often essential to know the number of persons living in much smaller areas than those which have been used up to now. The Bureau of the Census has been faced with the same need in tabulation of census materials. For this reason, it has subdivided the entire state of Rhode Island into small units — census tracts. The city of Providence, for example, is subdivided into 37 census tracts. Pawtucket has 23, and Cranston and Warwick have 15

each. Through coding the addresses of residents in terms of these census tracts, it is possible to obtain information on the number of Jews living in each census tract, thereby obtaining the basis for ascertaining the extent of concentration of Jewish population in small areal units.

Of the 1,012 households in the South Side of Providence in 1963, 580 were concentrated in census tracts 1 and 2, the areas popularly known as the Washington Park and Broad and Elmwood sections of Providence. These two tracts remained the area of greatest concentration in 1970, but the number of Jewish families living in them had declined to 435. Even sharper declines characterized tract 4, the Willard Avenue area, and adjoining tract 3, across Broad Street. In 1963 each contained 140 or so families; by 1970 the number in each was down to 61. What had once been a major center of Jewish residence in Providence was all but deserted by Jews in a span of 20 years. Among all of the 20 tracts contained in the general area classified as the South Side, only two showed noticeable gains — both in what is more correctly regarded as downtown Providence. Reflecting the recent location there of fashionable apartment houses, the number of Jewish households resident in tracts 8 and 9 increased from only 8 in 1963 to 80 in 1970.

Of the ten tracts in the North End, only six had Jews living in them in 1963 and almost half of the 330 Jewish households in the North End lived in tract 23, the Mount Pleasant area. By 1970, the Jewish population was somewhat more dispersed within the North End, but the largest number remained in tract 23. The overall decline in number was, however, also reflected in a reduction in the number of Jewish households in tract 23 from 142 to 101.

The pattern of distribution on the East Side remained generally the same as in 1963; tract 34, centered on Blackstone Boulevard, followed by tract 33, the area north of Rochambeau Avenue, remained the tracts with the largest Jewish populations, although both were below their 1963 levels. The greatest decline was experienced by tract 32, between Cypress Street and Rochambeau Avenue, from 480 in 1963 to 319 in 1970. Although not an area of large Jewish settlement, tract 36, encompassing Brown University and Bryant College, grew from 20 Jewish households in 1963 to 53 in 1970. Despite the redevelopment in the Lippitt Hill area, its Jewish population continued to decline, from 52 households in 1963 to only 37 in 1970.

Pawtucket's Jewish population continued to be very largely concen-

trated in tract 17, the area immediately adjoining the East Side of Providence. Of Pawtucket's 646 households, 450, or 70 per cent, lived in tract 17. None of the other 22 census tracts accounted for more than 20 households, and all but eight had fewer than five families.

Points of concentration tend also to characterize the distribution of Jewish households in the suburbs, although in some the concentration is not as marked as in Providence or Pawtucket.

In 1963, Cranston's 1,084 Jewish households were quite widely distributed, with none of the 15 census tracts containing more than 20 per cent and four containing between 10 and 20 per cent each. In 1970, again no single tract contained more than 20 per cent of Cranston's Jewish households, and five tracts shared the distinction of containing between 10 and 20 per cent each. The largest number of Jewish families lived in tract 10, the Glenwood area. In fact, it grew from 200 households in 1963 to 251 in 1970. The Eden Park area, consisting of tracts 4 and 7 declined some from 328 to 306. By contrast, significant growth characterized tract 6 (Garden City), doubling from 64 households in 1963 to 136 in 1970 and even more so, tract 11 (Oaklawn), which increased from 64 to 147. Tracts 1, 2, 3, and 5, which in 1963 were sizeable areas of Jewish residence, between 80 and 120 households, changed minimally in the interval between then and 1970.

In 1963, Warwick's Jewish households were concentrated in four of the city's 15 tracts: tract 4 (Governor Francis Farms) and tract 3 (Pilgrim Park) each had about 100 families. They were followed by tract 5 (Gaspee Plat) and tract 1 (Massasoit). These same four tracts also accounted for over 70 per cent of Warwick's Jewish households in 1970 and in the same order. Each had grown between 1963 and 1970, but the greatest relative gain was for Gaspee Plat. Of all the other eleven tracts in Warwick, only one showed a significant increase — tract 13, containing the Love Lane Estates area in the south end of Warwick — from 8 to 38 households. Adjoining East Greenwich by 1970 had 37 Jewish households, a further indication of the trend toward extension of the Jewish suburban movement further south in the metropolitan area.

Of the Jewish households in the Barrington, East Providence area, the largest numbers in 1970, as in 1963, were concentrated in tract 304 of Barrington. They accounted for almost one-third of all the 203 households. Tracts 303 in Barrington and 105 and 107 in East Providence each contained between 24 and 29 Jewish households, suggesting the beginnings of new nuclei of Jewish settlement on that side of the Bay.

The other two cities encompassed in the census tract tabulations are Newport and Woonsocket. For Newport, it was not possible to classify by tract 37 households due to omission of their addresses from the tract listings. Of the remaining 159 households, the largest numbers were in tracts 407 and 406, 61 and 54, respectively, accounting for 70 per cent of all classifiable residences. In Woonsocket 97 or two-thirds of the city's 151 households were in tract 2, and none of the remaining thirteen tracts contained more than 10 households.

In summary, the 1970 distribution of Jewish households in Rhode Island shows that an increasing proportion reside in the suburban segments of the metropolitan area. But within both the central cities and the suburbs, there is a generally strong tendency for Jewish households to concentrate residentially within a restricted number of census tracts. Yet even in the short interval between 1963 and 1970, there have been some significant changes as older points of concentration decline, as in South Providence, and as locations in the suburbs show either sustained growth or the formation of nuclei of Jewish households which may be the basis of new points of concentration in the years ahead.

TABLE 1

Distribution of Jewish Households in Greater Providence, 1951, 1963, and 1970

	1951 Estimated		1963		1970	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
SUBURBS	679	11.5	1,644	27.5	2,032	35.8
Barrington[1]	74	1.3	132	2.2	203	3.6
Cranston	463	7.8	1,084	18.1	1,271	22.4
Warwick[2]	142	2.4	428	7.2	558	9.8
PAWTUCKET[3]	500	8.4	696	11.7	646	11.4
PROVIDENCE	4,755	80.1	3,638	60.8	3,000	52.8
South Side	1,871	31.5	1,012	16.9	725	12.8
North End	817	13.8	330	5.5	216	3.8
East Side	2,067	34.8	2,296	38.4	2,059	36.2
TOTAL	5,934	100.0	5,978	100.0	5,678	100.0

[1]Includes East Providence, Bristol, and Warren.

[2]Includes East Greenwich and West Warwick.

[3]1963 and 1970 data include Central Falls, North Providence, Lincoln, and Cumberland.

TABLE 2

Distribution of Jewish Households in Rhode Island, 1970

	Number of Households	Per Cent
Providence	3,000	48.1
South Side	725	11.6
North End	216	3.5
East Side	2,059	33.0
Pawtucket	570	9.1
Central Falls	3	0.1
North Providence	24	0.4
Lincoln	35	0.5
Woonsocket	151	2.4
Northern R. I.[1]	48	0.8
East Providence	78	1.2
Barrington	111	1.8
Warren, Bristol	14	0.2
Newport[2]	198	3.2
Portsmouth	18	0.3
Middletown	93	1.5
Cranston	1,271	20.4
Warwick	500	8.0
West Warwick[3]	23	0.4
East Greenwich	37	0.6
Southern R. I.[4]	61	1.0
TOTAL	6,235	100.0

[1] Includes Cumberland, Smithfield, North Smithfield, North Scituate, and Johnston.
[2] Includes Tiverton.
[3] Includes Coventry.
[4] Includes North Kingstown, Hope Valley, South Kingstown, and Narragansett.

TABLE 3

Distribution of Jewish Households by Census Tract, Greater Providence, 1963 and 1970

Census Tract PROVIDENCE	1963 Number of Households	1963 Per Cent	1970 Number of Households	1970 Per Cent
South Side				
1	232	6.4	147	4.9
2	348	9.6	288	9.6
3	144	4.0	61	2.0
4	140	3.9	61	2.0
5	48	1.3	30	1.0
6	16	0.4	6	0.2
7	32	0.9	14	0.4
8	8	0.2	66	2.2
9	—	—	14	0.4
10	—	—	—	—
11	—	—	—	—
12	—	—	1	0.1
13	4	0.1	2	0.1
14	8	0.2	3	0.1
15	20	0.6	24	0.8
16	—	—	—	—
17	4	0.1	1	0.1
18	8	0.2	3	0.1
19	—	—	2	0.1
20	—	—	2	0.1
North End				
21	24	0.7	6	0.2
22	—	—	11	0.4
23	142	3.9	101	3.4
24	8	0.2	15	0.5
25	56	1.5	25	0.8
26	52	1.4	41	1.4
27	48	1.3	13	0.4
28	—	—	3	0.1
29	—	—	1	0.1
30	—	—	—	—
East Side				
31	52	1.4	37	1.2
32	480	13.2	319	10.6
33	680	18.7	592	19.7
34	812	22.3	775	25.8
35	252	6.9	267	8.9
36	20	0.6	53	1.8
37	—	—	3	0.1
unknown tract	—	—	13	0.4
TOTAL	3,638	100.0	3,000	100.0

TABLE 3 (Continued)

Distribution of Jewish Households by Census Tract, Greater Providence, 1963 and 1970

Census Tract	1963 Number of Households	1963 Per Cent	1970 Number of Households	1970 Per Cent
PAWTUCKET AREA				
Pawtucket				
1	—	—	1	0.2
2	—	—	—	—
3	8	1.1	2	0.3
4	8	1.1	7	1.1
5	4	0.6	1	0.2
6	—	—	2	0.3
7	4	0.6	1	0.2
8	—	—	—	—
9	8	1.1	1	0.2
10	12	1.7	6	0.9
11	—	—	2	0.3
12	4	0.6	14	2.2
13	12	1.7	2	0.3
14	—	—	3	0.5
15	12	1.7	3	0.5
16	16	2.3	20	3.1
17	476	68.4	450	69.6
18	20	2.9	11	1.7
19	4	0.6	4	0.6
20	20	2.9	11	1.7
21	20	2.9	4	0.6
22	24	3.5	17	2.6
23	—	—	5	0.8
Outlying Areas				
108-121	44	6.3	76	11.7
unknown tract	—	—	3	0.5
TOTAL	696	100.0	646	100.0
BARRINGTON AREA				
East Providence				
101	28	21.2	13	6.4
102	8	6.1	8	4.0
103	—	—	2	1.0
104	1	0.8	5	2.5
105	11	8.4	24	11.8
106	—	—	—	—
107	16	12.1	24	11.8
Barrington				
301	4	3.0	7	3.4
302	4	3.0	10	4.9
303	4	3.0	29	14.3
304	40	30.3	60	29.6

TABLE 3 (Continued)

Distribution of Jewish Households by Census Tract, Greater Providence, 1963 and 1970

Census Tract	1963 Number of Households	1963 Per Cent	1970 Number of Households	1970 Per Cent
Warren and Bristol				
305-309	16	12.1	14	6.9
unknown tract	—	—	7	3.4
TOTAL	132	100.0	203	100.0
CRANSTON				
1	92	8.5	95	7.5
2	104	9.6	99	7.8
3	128	11.8	118	9.3
4	204	18.8	172	13.5
5	84	7.7	83	6.5
6	64	5.9	136	10.7
7	124	11.4	134	10.5
8	8	0.7	6	0.5
9	4	0.4	10	0.8
10	200	18.5	251	19.7
11	64	5.9	147	11.6
12	8	0.7	6	0.5
13	—	—	4	0.3
14	—	—	4	0.3
15	—	—	1	0.1
unknown tract	—	—	5	0.4
TOTAL	1,084	100.0	1,271	100.0
WARWICK AREA				
Warwick				
1	56	13.1	76	13.6
2	16	3.7	8	1.4
3	96	22.4	109	19.5
4	100	23.4	117	21.0
5	76	17.8	91	16.3
6	4	0.9	12	2.2
7	—	—	1	0.2
8	8	1.9	2	0.4
9	4	0.9	7	1.2
10	16	3.7	14	2.5
11	4	0.9	7	1.2
12	8	1.9	11	2.0
13	8	1.9	38	6.8
14	4	0.9	1	0.2
15	—	—	1	0.2
West Warwick and East Greenwich				
201-209	28	6.5	58	10.4
unknown tract	—	—	5	0.9
TOTAL	428	100.0	558	100.0

TABLE 4

Number of Jewish Households by Census Tract, Rhode Island, 1970

City and Census Tract	No. of Households
Providence	
1	147
2	288
3	61
4	61
5	30
6	6
7	14
8	66
9	14
10	—
11	—
12	1
13	2
14	3
15	24
16	—
17	1
18	3
19	2
20	2
21	6
22	11
23	101
24	15
25	25
26	41
27	13
28	3
29	1
30	—
31	37
32	319
33	592
34	775
35	267
36	53
37	3
unknown	13
Total	3,000

City and Census Tract	No. of Households
Pawtucket	
1	1
2	—
3	2
4	7
5	1
6	2
7	1
8	—
9	1
10	6
11	2
12	14
13	2
14	3
15	3
16	20
17	450
18	11
19	4
20	11
21	4
22	17
23	5
unknown	3
Total	570
North Providence	
118	1
119	2
120	20
121	1
Total	24
Johnston	
122-124	5

City and Census Tract	No. of Households
Woonsocket	
1	—
2	97
3	4
4	10
5	3
6	10
7	2
8	9
9	1
10	3
11	—
12	1
13	6
14	2
unknown	3
Total	151
Central Falls	
108	2
111	1
Cumberland	
113-114	14
Lincoln	
115-117	35
Smithfield, N. Smithfield, N. Scituate	
128	12
129	3
130	2
131	—
132	12
Coventry	
206-207	2

TABLE 4 (Continued)

Number of Jewish Households by Census Tract, Rhode Island, 1970

City and Census Tract	No. of Households
East Providence	
101	13
102	8
103	2
104	5
105	24
106	—
107	24
unknown	2
Total	78
Barrington	
301	7
302	10
303	29
304	60
unknown	5
Total	111
Warren	
306	3
Bristol	
307-309	11
Tiverton	
31	2
Newport	
405	11
406	54
407	61
408	13
409	10
410	5
411	5
unknown	37
Total	196
Portsmouth	
401	18
Middletown	
402-404	93
Cranston	
1	95
2	99
3	118
4	172
5	83
6	136
7	134
8	6
9	10
10	251
11	147
12	6
13	4
14	4
15	1
unknown	5
Total	1,271
North Kingstown	
501-504	14
Hope Valley	
507	2
South Kingstown	
512-514	34
Narragansett	
515	11
Warwick	
1	76
2	8
3	109
4	117
5	91
6	12
7	1
8	2
9	7
10	14
11	7
12	11
13	36
14	1
15	1
unknown	5
Total	500
West Warwick	
201	5
202	4
203	10
204	1
205	1
Total	21
East Greenwich	
209	37

JEWISH POPULATION OF PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND ESTIMATES AND STUDIES OVER THE YEARS

By Beryl Segal

Several times during the past century interested individuals and groups have attempted to estimate the number of Jews living in Providence. Most of these estimates have been approximations, since accurate statistics have not been available. Canvassers for the United States Census did not record the religion or national origins of the population. Further, one is confronted with the question "What is a Jew?" This question, which has not been answered definitively even in Israel, is certainly no less obscure in other countries. Yet one must answer this question before categorizing persons as Jews or of Jewish origin.

The estimates, arrived at by various means, were usually prefaced by such qualifying words as "almost", "about", or "nearly." They were probably valid within limits and for the most part served the purpose at hand.

Other questions have been confronted in arriving at these estimates. What is a family? A household? How do household and family among Jews differ in their makeup from that prevailing in the general population? How do they differ from those of a hundred years ago? Fifty years ago? A household may signify a whole family group, including grandparents and married children living under one roof. That custom prevailed in rural areas and was probably characteristic of the early Jewish immigrants whose grandparents were given shelter in the home as a matter of course. Yet the term Family as we currently understand and apply it embraces only the immediate family: husband, wife, and unmarried children living at home.

The size of the average American "family" declined from some 4.9 members in 1890 to 3.8 in 1940.[1] As of 1950 it was believed to be in the range of 3.6 to 3.8. In 1940 the median family size (as contrasted with the arithmetical average) was 2.65. The median size of Jewish families in the United States in the same year exceeded 2.65 in only one city among those listed (2.82). In all of the others it was equal to, or generally less than, the national mean. Before 1900 it is unlikely that the size of the Jewish family group differed appreciably from that of the general population. The figure of 4.9 as given above for the average family of 1890 may well have been arrived at by designating in an indeterminate number of cases the extended family in a single

household as the resident "family." The long traditional average family of five possibly derived from this same figure.

A perusal of the recently completed study titled *Number and Distribution of Jewish Households in Rhode Island, 1970* by Doctor Sidney Goldstein of Brown University published elsewhere in this issue*, prompted the author to review various estimates of the Jewish population of Providence made over the years. This paper is a brief resumé of this material.

The heads of Jewish families of Providence were counted possibly for the first time in 1877. In that year, we are told in *The Organ*[2], the publication of the Congregation of the Sons of Israel and David, that an effort had been made to enlist "our Jewish Brethren" for the purpose of "having all unite and join us in carrying out a noble cause" (i.e. join the congregation). Although 350 circulars were printed for that meeting, only 124 names appeared in the City Directories of Providence and Pawtucket.[3] The names of twenty subscribers to the meeting do not appear in the 1878 directories of either Providence or Pawtucket. There were thus at that time approximately 150 Jewish families in Providence and Pawtucket, numbering some 500 persons. Undoubtedly some of the individuals were unmarried.

King's *Pocket Book of Providence* (1882)[4] noted the existence of two Jewish fraternal orders in the city, the Haggai Lodge of the Independent Order of B'nai B'rith numbering "about 70 members" and the Independent Order of Free Sons of Israel with "nearly 80 members." King does not mention the Isaac Leeser Lodge, Free Sons of Benjamin, founded by Henry Green, also in existence at that time, but not chartered by the State. One may assume that most of the adult males in the Jewish community belonged, for purposes of security and companionship, to one or another of these orders. Some individuals undoubtedly belonged to more than one. Based on these considerations, one may conclude that there were in the 1880's about 200 Jewish heads of families in Providence*.

During 1907, or thereabouts, Harry Cutler, a leader in the Jewish community of the period and knowledgeable in community affairs, gave

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*See page 36.

*The Providence City Directory for 1880 listed about 125 Jewish family names, and that for 1885 about 265. There were additional families, of course, in the Pawtucket-Central Falls area. Mr. Segal's estimate, based on King's account, would therefore be of approximately the right order of magnitude (*R.I.J.H. Notes* 2:86-90 No. 1, June 1956 and 2:119-139, No. 2, April 1957) Ed.

the Jewish population of Providence as "variously estimated as between 7,500 and 10,000".[5] The range given is an indication of the difficulty inherent in determining the size of the population.

In *A Modern City***, published in 1909, Doctor Lester Bradner stated: "The Jewish population in the city may be reckoned today at 8,000 or 9,000, nearly double what it was five years ago." He does not give his authority for this estimate.

As cited by Bernheimer and Kraft,[6] a report issued in 1923 by the Jewish Welfare Board in cooperation with the Associated Y.M. and Y.W.H.A. of New England estimated the Jewish population of Providence to have been approximately 14,400 in 1913 and approximately 16,500 in 1921.

In this report, published in 1934, Bernheimer and Kraft estimated the number of Jewish school children in Providence in 1933 in the following ingenious manner:

"In order to arrive at a . . . basis for the present Jewish poulation, figures of attendance at each public school were obtained for September 21, 1933, which was the Jewish New Year day and for two days following; also for October 10, 1932, which was the Day of Atonement, and for two days following. Ordinarily the attendance on the Day of Atonement in a public school is ascertained for the purpose of calculating the attendance of Jewish pupils; but as this day was on a Saturday in 1933, the New Year was chosen as the next best available holiday indicating the absence of Jewish children. The two days following each of the Jewish Holidays in 1932 and 1933 were chosen so as to make certain that a normal attendance would be obtained, to be compared with the attendance on the Jewish holiday."

This produced an estimated total of 2,694 children aged 6 to 14 years of age. Applying the age grouping of the general population as determined in the United States census of 1930 to the Jewish population, a tentative estimate of some 17,300 could be projected. This extrapolation involved several debatable assumptions. The report stated, however, that "No calculation of the Jewish population is offered at this time since it appears advisable to utilize other methods as a check before a final figure is arrived at."

As an interesting sidelight in this report we learn that, based on the corresponding United States census statistics, the number of white

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**See page 76, this issue of the *Notes*.

foreign born persons whose mother-tongue was Yiddish increased in the 10 year period 1920-1930 from 5,069 to 5,412, "not a very large growth" in the words of the report.

The author has had difficulty in discovering records of population studies for the years 1934 to 1951. Reference to the American Jewish Year Books for the period, however, yields interesting information. In volume 43 for the years 1941-1942[7] estimates are given for the year 1937 based on a study by Doctor H. S. Linfield, Director of the Statistical Bureau of the Synagogue Council of America. In that year the estimates for the State of Rhode Island and Providence respectively were 27,813 and 23,800.

The American Jewish Year Books for the 1948-1949[8] and 1950[1] give a figure for Providence of 25,000, based on United Jewish Appeal statistics for the year 1948.

In 1951 a study titled *Group Work and Leisure-Time Needs in the Jewish Community of Providence*[9] was carried out by the National Jewish Welfare Board at the request of the Providence Jewish Community Center. While not primarily a population survey, it lists the numbers of Jews, the distribution of Jewish households, and a breakdown by age groups. This study was based on lists supplied by the General Jewish Committee of Providence. It estimates the number of Jewish families in Greater Providence (possibly the first use of this term in Providence population studies) as 5,934 and the total Jewish population as 19,698. The population of Providence proper is given as 15,691. The population was distributed among the other areas as follows: Cranston 1,574; Pawtucket 1,700; Warwick 275; East Providence, including Rumford, Barrington, Warren, and Bristol 139; and West Warwick and East Greenwich 207. A smaller Jewish family size of 3.3 to 3.5 was indicated in this study. As regards the distribution of Jewish population in Providence proper, the largest concentration was on the East Side: 6,821 (43 per cent). In descending order the other sections ranged as follows: South Providence, including Elmwood and Washington Park 5,752 (36 per cent); the North End, including Smith Hill, Mount Pleasant, and Elmhurst 2,696 (17 per cent); and the Downtown area, including Olneyville and Federal Hill 422 (4 per cent).

The most authoritative and reliable survey of the Jewish population, both as to numbers and distribution, was conducted by Doctor Sidney Goldstein of Brown University in 1963 under the sponsorship of the General Jewish Committee of Providence. The result was *The Greater*

Providence Jewish Community: A Population Survey[10], a 256 page monograph copiously supplied with charts, tables, and graphs, and widely recognized among sociologists. This survey was addressed to many questions concerning the Jews of Greater Providence, such as religious affiliation and observance, ethnic origin, marriage patterns, fertility, education, occupation, Jewish identity, veteran status, use of the Jewish Community Center, membership in organizations, and many other aspects of Jewish life.

Goldstein stated that "At the time of the Population Study, May and June 1963, *almost 19,600* Jews lived in Greater Providence, consisting of the urban centers of Providence and Pawtucket and the suburban towns and cities of Cranston, Warwick, East Greenwich, and West Warwick on the west side of the Narragansett Bay and East Providence, Barrington, Bristol, and Warren on the east side of the Bay." Some 11,023 in 3,638 households, or 56.7 per cent of the total, lived in the city of Providence proper. These numbers are consistent with the 1951 survey, but smaller than those arrived at in earlier estimates.

In this study the Town of Barrington was designated as a nucleus for the first time, to include such surrounding areas as East Providence (Riverside), Bristol, and Warren. The Jewish population for that group of communities was given as 494 living in 132 households. The Pawtucket area, including Central Falls, North Providence, Lincoln, and Cumberland embraced 2,420 individuals in 696 households. The Jewish population of Warwick, including West Warwick and East Greenwich, numbered 1,560 in 428 households. The East Side of Providence, as expected, still had the largest concentration of Jews with 7,428 in 2,296 households. South Providence now harbored 2,728 in 1,012 households, and the North End only 867 in 330 households.

The drop in the Jewish population of Providence proper from 15,691 in 1951 to 11,023 in 1963 is highly significant, if in fact the figures are comparable. These changes are consistent with a movement to the suburbs as indicated by increases in Barrington from 251 to 494 and in Cranston from 1,574 to 3,960.

This migration to the suburbs, as confirmed in the 1970 survey (see page 36 and footnote), has continued.

POPULATION STUDIES
PROVIDENCE AND RHODE ISLAND

Year	Sources: See Text	Providence Population	Providence Households	Greater Providence Population	Greater Providence Households	Rhode Island Population	Rhode Island Households
1877	The Organ Providence and Pawtucket Directories	400	124	500	150		
1882	King's Pocket Book of Providence Providence and Pawtucket Directories 1880 and 1885				200		
1897	A Modern City	3,800-5,000					
1907	Harry Cutler	7,500-10,000					
1909	A Modern City	8,000-9,000					
1913	Jewish Welfare Board	14,400					
1921	Jewish Welfare Board	16,500					
1934	Bernheimer and Kraft	17,300					
1937	American Jewish Yearbook Volume 43	23,800				27,813	
1948	American Jewish Yearbook Volumes 50 and 51	25,000					
1951	Group Work and Leisure-Time Needs	15,691	4,755	19,698	5,934		
1963	Greater Providence Jewish Community	11,023	3,638	19,457	5,978		
1970	Sidney Goldstein, this issue		3,000		5,678		6,235

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[8]American Jewish Year Book. Vol. 50, 1948-1949. The Jewish Publication Society of America, Phila., 1949. Pages 651-689

[9]Group Work and Leisure-Time Needs in the Jewish Community of Providence. Preliminary Report of the Self-Survey of the Social, Cultural, and Recreational Needs of the Jewish Community of Providence, Rhode Island. Prepared with the assistance of the National Jewish Welfare Board. Study requested by the Providence Jewish Community Center. Sponsored and Organized by the General Jewish Committee of Providence, Inc. 1951

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"COMMUNITY" AND THE PROVIDENCE JEW IN THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY

By Mania Kleinburd Baghdadi

Background

The sense of community has been traditionally held important to ethnic minorities, especially the Jews. What did this sense of community mean to Jewish immigrants to Providence or to their children, who personally confronted the spectrum of alternatives from total assimilation to total self-segregation? Few chose either extreme; most Jews have managed to balance Jewish identity with adoption of American values. Will Herberg[1] argues persuasively that Jews of different national origins have resolved the conflict between ethnic community and the hitherto apparent institutionalized and subtle American pressure to assimilate by retaining religion rather than distinct national origin as a source of self-differentiation. Since Americans by numerous surveys overwhelmingly manifest faith in religion qua religion, Jew can be Jews in religion and American in nationality. I would modify Herberg's analysis by adding that intra-faith social service or philanthropy serves as another significant source of self-identification for Jews, and that the establishment of the state of Israel has strengthened the sense of the peoplehood of the Jews.

Herberg's provocative analysis leads us to study the changing importance of the concept of community to Jews. For my study, I have chosen the period when the Providence Jewish "community" was irrevocably altered by the coming of the Eastern European Jews. The adjustments made to the conflicts in culture among Jews determined the nature of the community today. The terminal dates of the study are not precise, for there are few watersheds in social history, but let us say that the period under discussion begins at the turn of the century when immigration was well under way and ends in the 1930's when it had largely ceased, and the Providence Jews were involved in a reordering process to adjust to the enlargement and disorganization of the community.

When the Eastern European Jews began arriving in numbers in the 1880's, they found German Jews who had been residents in Providence for numbers of years. The stage was set for conflict in norms and concepts of community between the two groups. The German

Jews who had come to the United States in the early nineteenth century had left behind small scattered communities which had neither abundant nor distinguished leaders. These immigrants' religious ideals had been diluted by the Enlightenment and the political turmoils of the nineteenth century. The German Jewish immigrants of the mid-nineteenth century were as oriented to German culture as they were to Jewish tradition. Neither group of German immigrants had a sense of Jewish community on arrival, and the process of settlement in a strange land tended to loosen whatever group ties existed.[2] The German Jews in Providence established religious institutions which merged in 1874 to become what is known as Temple Beth El (Congregation of the Sons of Israel and David), a few lodges and a ladies' charity organization. The center of their communal activity remained the synagogue, to which not all German Jews belonged.[3] One had to await the Eastern European immigrants to find the rapid growth of religious and secular Jewish associations.

The community experience of the Eastern European Jews was considerably different from that of the Germans. Jews in Eastern Europe had been traditionally granted some financial, juridical, and religious autonomy which had fostered the growth of a structure within each community, known as the *kehillah*,* through which rabbinical and lay leaders enforced religious precepts and governed the private and public life of Jews. At its height in seventeenth-century Poland, the *kehillah* combined a strong executive with a network of voluntary associations. Communal regulations were administered by elders, elected from the wealthy and learned, who were assisted by paid town officials: the rabbi, rabbinical judges, clerks, inspectors, and administrators. Associations of ordinary citizens specializing in ministering to community needs (such as burial of the dead, care of orphans, education in the Talmud) and representing special interests were all under the authority of the *kehillah* council.

At its height the *kehillah* council had some authority over the fund-raising and internal disputes of associations, and on occasion helped select officials. New associations, even new synagogues, had to be ratified by the council. The *kehillah* structure was considerably weakened between the seventeenth and the nineteenth century owing to the economic and social disorganization consequent upon the destruction of the Polish state and to the anti-rationalistic, anti-legalistic

*Self-governing community.

Hasidic movement. By the mid-nineteenth century a measure of equilibrium had been reached which strengthened orthodoxy and community[4]. The *kehillah* was subjected to repeated onslaughts in the late nineteenth century and twentieth century, but it remained a flexible and viable institution. To most Eastern European Jews, especially before the turn of the century, community meant a structure of associations, and perhaps executive leadership, which strongly enforced group norms.

Eastern European Immigrants

Some Eastern European Jews reacted to the discrimination against them by Austria, Prussia, and Russia after the dismemberment of Poland by forming Zionist or socialist associations. These had become full-grown organizations by 1900, and operated outside the *kehillah* structure. The definition of community of the Jews involved differed from that of both German Jews and that of other Eastern European Jews. Whether Zionists, socialists, or trades unionists, they operated a full range of secular organizations aimed at economic and political advancement. They also promoted Yiddish language and literature.[5] Their organizations, Yiddish culture, and the synagogue formed for them the parameters of their Jewishness.

Eastern European Jewish immigrants to Providence arriving before and after the turn of the century confronted both an established German Jewish community as described above and an America which discouraged both ethnic separatism and community strength. In order to achieve a measure of economic and social success, immigrants had to forego Yiddish for English and otherwise adjust to American ways of life. The loss of the central structure of associations, which they did not transplant, meant that newly founded associations would be more prone to disintegration from apathy or internal dispute.[6] Nevertheless, Eastern European Jews attempted to transplant to America the associations and the congregations of their original home, and enriched it with a community life hitherto unknown to American Jews.

Eastern European Jews arriving in America organized their associations around the concept of *landsmanschaft.** Synagogues and associations for self-help and socializing were organized among residents of the same European home town or general area. Examples in Provi-

*Fraternal society composed of immigrants from the same town or village (shtetl) in "the old country."

dence were the Yelisabethgrad Progressive Benevolent Association organized in 1906. "To promote the general welfare of its members and for charitable and social purposes; also to provide sick benefits for members," the Lubliner Sick Beneficial Association (1906), and the First Odessa Independent Association (1907). Trades organizations and societies to meet community needs were established as they had been in Europe. Labor unionists and Zionists also established organizations for workingmen's relief, culture, and Zionism.[7]

I have tried to suggest that Eastern European Jews arriving before the turn of the century were separated emotionally and experientially from German Jews already resident in Providence, and that the distance between German Jews and Eastern European Jews was not just economic or educational. The situation was considerably complicated after the turn of the century. Not only did Eastern European Jews arrive with varying kinds of communal experiences after the turn of the century, as earlier detailed, but a second generation had come to adulthood with concepts of community which diverged from that of their parents, who had arrived before the turn of the century.

The generational factor contributed to the internal fragmentation of the Jewish population in Providence. It has been hypothesized that a cycle of three generations is significant in the history of ethnic community. First generation Americans in a strange land find refuge in ethnic, social and self-help associations, churches, and culture. Forced to scramble economically no matter what their earlier status had been, first generation Americans sought stability and continuity in churches and religion.[8] In the case of Eastern European Jews, the community sense was especially strong and therefore ethnic separatism was marked. Second-generation Americans, according to Herberg, are more subject to mobility owing to opportunities for education. They are more torn in their loyalties between the Americanism they participated in outside the home and the ethnic life they shared at home. In general, they choose one of three options: they either become passionate defenders of ethnicity and function as mediators between ethnic culture and American culture; or they repudiate ethnic culture; or they vary between the two. In general, they create social institutions paralleling those of Protestant America, to which they were denied entrance, and they deny the orthodoxy of their parents. The religious and social institutions created by the second generation varied greatly from those of the first generation, and were perpetuated by the

third generation who have resolved the conflict between ethnicity and Americanism without abandoning Jewish identification.[9] During the period under discussion, among Eastern European immigrants, the first and second generations predominated, thus providing a source of internal community conflict and tension which complicated differences between German and Eastern European Jews and among Eastern European Jews. To attempt to define the parameters of community in Providence in the period becomes a complicated task.

I have attempted to tackle one aspect of the problem of assessing the impact upon the Providence Jews of the community or communities in which they lived. How is the Jewish Community reconciled with the existence of, and increase in, conflicting and divergent subcommunities? In addition, I will relate hypotheses about the effects on the community of the Eastern European migration and of the generational change specifically to the history of Providence.

The method I have chosen to gauge most effectively the feeling of individual Jews for the nature of their community is oral history. I prepared a set of questions designed to elicit evaluative rather than factual answers. After a series of questions intended to identify the respondent as to age, length of residence in America, status as a first or second generation American, and rough socioeconomic status of his family, the respondent was asked to evaluate the role of specific institutions in creating a Jewish community. Institutions submitted for evaluation included synagogues, mutual benefit societies, Yiddish language and culture groups, social organizations, philanthrophic organizations, and the neighborhood in which they lived. The respondents were encouraged to add to this list. They were also asked if a Jewish community existed in Providence and what that community meant to them. I interviewed eleven Jews who lived in, or immigrated to Providence in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century.

Before discussing the results of the interviews, I should like to point out some of the problems of the method. The most obvious problem was my own relative inexperience, which resulted in my altering the schedule as I gained familiarity with the method. The aims of the study, however, never changed. Since the questions were not meant to be standardized, this was not a serious problem. Apart from problems of technique, the interviewer has to deal with the faulty memory, bias, or even lying of the respondent; it is the job of the interviewer to set the situation to facilitate communication.[10]

Selection of Subjects for Interview

I had the additional problem of selection of the interviewees. The decision regarding whom to select was made pragmatically. Only a limited number of interviews could be done, so a random sampling method was impossible. Not only is the representative nature of the group not assured, but it seems likely that the Jews interviewed are and were among the more active members of the Jewish population of Providence, as they were suggested by other active members of the community. One can make allowances for this factor, however, in making conclusions. All the Jews interviewed seem to be of middle or upper middle class origin, which may limit the degree to which the conclusions are applicable to all Jews in Providence.

In order to see the degree to which the general uniformity of socioeconomic status of the interviewees decreases the value of the interviews, let us look at the statistics on the socioeconomic status of the Jewish community in 1963 according to Sidney Goldstein. He points out that of Jews aged 65 and over in 1963 (all but one of our interviewees fit in this category), 63.1 per cent of the male first generation Americans and 74.2 per cent of the second generation Americans are either professionals or managers. Figures are comparable for Jews aged 44 to 64.[11] Of the eight males interviewed, the past occupations of seven were ascertained: six were or had been in managerial or professional occupations, and one was in a semi-professional occupation. Most females, first and second generation, over 65 in 1963 had been clerical or sales workers, with a small percentage in managerial positions.[12] The occupations of two of the three females were ascertained: one was a clerical worker; the other had been a manager. We do not have enough numbers in the sample for it to be either representative or unrepresentative. Clearly the sample is not ideal; but, since we are interested in the perceptions of individuals in the community and are not necessarily writing about the community as a whole, the evidence is not unacceptable. If the data are representative, they are representative of the large sector of the Jewish population who have done well and maintained ties to the Jewish community.

In factors other than socioeconomic status and degree of interest in either religious, organizational, or cultural Judaism, there is a fairly wide spectrum of experience represented among the interviewees. Four of the interviewees were first-generation Americans, six were second generation Americans, and one is a third-generation American.

The third generation American is the only "German" Jew in the group; all the other interviewees are from the Eastern European migration. This percentage is fair, as the Eastern European Jews considerably outnumber the German Jews. The dates of immigration range from 1874 to 1921. Three of the interviewees were female; eight were male. One of the interviewees lived in Woonsocket. His experience in a smaller community than Providence helped me to clarify several ideas, but I shall not specifically mention him in this paper.

Concept of Community Related to Generation

In the following section, I propose to compare the concepts of community and the Jewish affiliations of individuals, first, second, and third generation Americans, who shared the experience of living in Providence in the twenties and thirties of this century. The second generation Americans interviewed were asked to compare their lives and affiliations with those of their parents who had arrived in Providence before the turn of the century; the results will be compared to the results of the interviews of the first generation who arrived after the turn of the century, and also to the second generation interviewed.

The recollections of the second generation Americans interviewed of the associational and religious interests of their parents' generation reinforces our theory about the attempt of the Eastern European immigrants before the turn of the century to transport community institutions to their new home. Of the four questioned about the importance of mutual benefit societies, all assessed them as important in their parents' generation, but not as much in their own. The reasons given are variations on the theme of different socioeconomic and cultural experiences of the two generations. As one interviewee put it, his parents and their contemporaries had lodges and such associations in order to socialize and to help one another and the newer immigrants. Associations were a necessity for them because they came as strangers. Lodges gave them some place to go for entertainment, for they could neither afford nor gain access to clubs. These lodges, he continued, are not necessary today because adequate Jewish and non-Jewish institutions exist to the effect that Jews are neither dependent or isolated. The other second generation interviewees took a pragmatic view towards their lack of interest in first generation mutual benefit societies. One mentioned the age factor as important; when he had returned to Providence from law school he had joined

and quickly resigned from such an association, for he was a young man and they were all old. He stated that these groups served as a means of camaraderie for lower economic groups; presumably his own mobility meant that other kinds of organizations were of greater interest. In general the second generation shared a pragmatic view towards these associations; none mentioned the issue of community in regard to them. The first generation obviously failed to transmit the concept of *landsmanschaft* to the second generation. If those of the second generation were interested in community, perhaps they were interested in organizing it in their own home, Providence, rather than in perpetuating the ties of their parents to the European town from which they came. One of the interviewees did belong to a mutual benefit society which drew people from the entire city, the Touro Fraternal Association. One interviewee, A, who did not seem to have been as upwardly mobile as the other interviewees had been, did not comment on the declining importance of these associations. She remarked that her husband had belonged to a lodge and joined a second when the first went out of business. We shall see that she represented the greatest degree of continuity in institutional affiliation among the persons interviewed.

Not only did the associational affiliations change from the first generation who came to Providence before the turn of the century to their children's generation, but the religious content of their Judaism changed as well, despite the fact that the parents of all the interviewees had attempted to preserve the religious tradition by providing for their religious education either in *cheder* (Hebrew school) or by private tutor. The change sometimes occurred from Orthodoxy to Reform, as in the case of one interviewee, a professional, whose parents had been Orthodox and who had attended *cheder* after school, but who had joined Temple Beth El as an adult. Another interviewee, a wealthy businessman, described himself as a religionist. He believed, he affirmed, in religion *per se;* he could be any religion—Protestant, Catholic, or Jewish. One needed religion to face life, he believed. An information sheet he handed me about himself noted that he was a contributor to both a Conservative synagogue and a Reform temple. The other interviewees made smaller religious changes than he. Two of the interviewees, both professionals, made the transition from Orthodoxy to Conservatism in their generation; one commented that he had not been active in the synagogue in the period, although he had been a member. Only one interviewee, identified as A above,

remained Orthodox into adulthood. She later became Conservative for a practical and not a religious reason: the Conservative temple made provision for children going to the synagogue, while there was no provision for children to attend the orthodox *shul* (synagogue).

It is significant that most of these middle and upper middle class people who had been active in the Jewish community in Providence made the break with Orthodoxy. Mobility may be the key determinant in breaking with Orthodoxy, along with the factor of Americanization. The second generation could not speak Yiddish, and they may not have been well versed in Hebrew. It would be interesting to learn whether the decline in Orthodoxy began in the first generation as a response to economic and cultural pressure or was original to the second generation. We can obtain some indication by examining the first generation cases we plan to discuss. But the experiences of the first generation interviewees who came to Providence in the 'teens and 'twenties may have been different from those of the first generation before the turn of the century, because the community was larger and social and economic conditions were different. There is some negative indication from the revelation of A, who remained Orthodox into her adulthood, that her father had helped establish an Orthodox *shul* and that he had attended both morning and evening services. One wonders if continuous and strong Orthodoxy on the part of members of the first generation was related to a higher incidence of Orthodoxy in the second generation. Whether it was or was not related, it is apparent that the meaning of Judaism did change significantly from the first to the second generation.

Second Generation

It has been seen that the second generation interviewees rejected the institutions of their Eastern European parents. What did "community" mean to them? For most of these upwardly mobile individuals, active in Jewish affairs, their primary tie to community, apart from the religious affiliation varying in intensity as discussed above, appears to be through Jewish philanthropic and public service agencies. While some of these institutions, such as The Miriam Hospital and the Jewish Home for the Aged of Rhode Island, were established in their parents' generation, the second generation turned these institutions into a network of large-scale, efficiently funded, and federated agencies parallel to the Protestant public service agencies of

the surrounding American society. These institutions, rather than being organized around the *landsmanschaft* ideal of their parents, served all of the Jews in the area. Community became an abstract concept, for the differences among the Jewish population in Providence prevented personal ties from developing. Ties were established for practical purposes, such as cooperation in building the Jewish Community Center. Let us look at the evidence. Four of the second generation interviewees served or led such agencies as the Jewish Family and Children's Service, the Home for the Aged, and The Miriam Hospital. One interviewee specifically mentioned that he had helped to convert such an agency from its small-scale operation in his mother's generation to the large institution it became. For these people, the philanthropic and public service institutions they discussed seem to be most important to their Jewish identity.

One of the second generation interviewees, A, did not seem to have participated in the conversion of these Jewish institutions by the second generation. She seems to have maintained comparatively among this sample the greatest degree of continuity in institutional affiliation from her parents' generation. She manifested a loyalty to the section in which she grew up, South Providence, as evidenced by her return there to live after her marriage. She did not, like the others, participate in the movement to the East Side of Providence. She also had a strong sense of neighborly ties: neighbors were to her like an extended family within which one shared and received comfort and help. Unlike the other interviewees, she saw community separation primarily along the lines of rivalry between the residents of the North End, who unjustifiably felt superior, she said, and the residents of South Providence. She noted no difference in the average length of residence between the inhabitants of the two sections, though she did say that the inhabitants of the East Side and North End tended to be richer than those in South Providence during that period. She resented conversion of the institutions in such manner as we have noted, for she believed that the wealthy had taken over the organizations, which the people in Providence had started on a small scale, and without giving them credit.

Having thus far examined the community affiliations of the second-generation interviewees, let us relate each to his definition of the term "community." When four were asked if they thought a Jewish community existed during the period 1900 to 1930, two answered

yes and two answered no. A answered no, for she believed the rivalry between the sections abridged community. Both the yes votes were tied to a vagueness about what community meant. One answered that it did exist, but he was not sure how. The other asserted that there was a Jewish community when there was more than one Jewish family for they presented a problem to the outside community. He saw community arising from the needs to provide for self-protection and to care for internal problems. This is a negative view of community, with inadequate provision for ties between community members, unlike that of the first generation which built associations on positive ties between people, specifically their home town.

One interviewee, B, who replied no to the question above, had the most clear-cut view of community. Community meant organization to him; and, while the structure which he envisioned was similar to the *kehillah,* it was a *kehillah* shorn of orthodox rabbinic leadership and the ethnic base. Planning was central to it, although it was planning using the tools of social science and the advice of experts, as well as the experience of other Jewish and Protestant organizations and models. The community it was to encompass was held together only by location of residence and identification with Judaism. While the *kehillah* implied uniformity of norms and practice, diversity would be provided for in the structure envisioned. He did not call this structure a *kehillah*; indeed, he identified the *kehillah* as a ghetto structure. But the organization he envisioned would serve the same purposes of leading and uniting the Jewish population. It was in two parts. One aspect of it was its character as a federation of philanthropic and social service agencies for fund-raising and cooperation in administration of charity. Organization of charities into federations for more efficient operation was a part of the Progressive movements ideology as applied to the urban setting. In federating charities, second generation Americans were both emulating contemporary trends in American philanthropy and manifesting an increased business awareness growing out of their socioeconomic position.

The other aspect of the organization envisioned was its role in community planning. Unlike the *kehillah,* where planning was based on factors of tradition and Biblical law, secular social scientists and experts would aid in the determination of policy. The emphasis on social science and expertise was another aspect of the Progressive ideology. Yet B still felt that some mediation was necessary between

the Jew and the outside community: like the *kehillah,* the community organization would serve as a spokesman for the Jews. However, unlike the *kehillah,* the community structure he envisoned would be based on democratic principles. Individual groups and opinions would be represented, although B had some reservations about the structural details involved. The community did not exist for B until the establishment of the General Jewish Committee* provided such a structure.

The second generation manifested a range of variations from the first generation concept of community. All of them in some way showed the influence of one generation of Americanization. Although I did not ask about the non-Jewish affiliations of the interviewees, three of the five voluntarily attested to their activity in non-Jewish or community-wide organizations. The second generation had multiple affiliations arising out of professional, business, socioeconomic status, and community of residence. Denominational affiliation was important to them, but ethnic ties were circumscribed by socioeconomic and cultural factors. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the second generation manifested some alienation from the outside community. Individuals noted that regardless of the wealth or education they had attained, certain jobs or clubs were not open to Jews. As a result, they formed their own clubs. One interviewee remarked that one significance of The Miriam Hospital was that Jewish doctors could find employment there. B, who was active in community affairs, stated that he considered Jews to be unique, that they are looked upon as unique by the community without, and that they owe it to themselves to make themselves unique. Assimilation would occur, he added, but civilization would continue to remind him and his contemporaries that they are Jews. It is difficult to judge how much of the sense of difference the interviewees manifested was related to the Hitler experience. Some of it is undoubtedly due to their own experiences with anti-Semitism during the period. B noted that as a child he faced hostility from non-Jewish children. Other interviewees also remembered this hostility.

The second generation interviewees reached their adulthood in the 'teens and 'twenties of this century. They were the contemporaries of immigrants who arrived at this time. How did the experi-

*Now the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island.

ence of the latter with community compare with the experience of the former?

Immigrants of the Twentieth Century

The immigrants arriving in the first decades of the twentieth century brought with them the same range of community experiences which the nineteenth-century Eastern European immigrants had had. More of the former may have been Zionists or socialists or labor unionists, for these movements were full-grown by 1900; it is also possible that less of them were acquainted with a strong tradition of community experience, as the oppression of the Russian had resulted in weakening of the *kehillah* structure. Nevertheless the same range of experiences existed. The Providence which greeted them was different from that which had greeted the nineteenth-century Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe. Jewish institutions of various sorts catering to both the first and second generations were well established. On the other hand, the second generation presented a model of socioeconomic success based on Americanization, and the inter-war years presented good economic opportunities.

What was the religious and associational affiliation of the Jews who came in the first decades of the twentieth century? All four interviewees were Orthodox upon arrival: H and I remained Orthodox to the present, although both temporarily experimented with Conservatism; G became Conservative in the period; and F now belongs to a Reform temple, although she had attended an Orthodox synagogue when she arrived. How did H and I differ from F and G? H's attitude toward community differed from first generation Americans before the turn of the century in that he does not seem to have the expectation of a community structure. Although his primary foci of Jewish experience were the mutual benefit society and the synagogue, the two had lost their Eastern European ethnic base. The mutual benefit society he joined was, he said, a community-wide one, meaning that the new ethnic base was Providence Jews. More important to him was the synagogue, which he felt united Jews and gave them a sense of belonging somewhere. Community took on a personal cast for him; it was related to the sharing of life experiences and religious rituals. Of the first generation interviewees, his community experience most resembles the model of the Eastern European immigrants who came to America, although it differs in that the *landsmanschaft* ideal is missing, along with the provision of strong central leadership of the community.

Significance of Religious Affiliation

For I, who remained Orthodox, the primary Jewish affiliation was with nationalistic or Zionist organizations. Like the model of the Eastern European Jews outside the *kehillah* structure set up earlier in the paper, he was not interested in any other social or charitable association. Although the Zionist organization to which he had belonged was partly a fraternal organization, it was primarily nationalist and Zionist. His secondary Jewish affiliation was religious; he described himself as religious but not observant. His religious beliefs can be seen as related to the fear of dissipation of Jewish culture and are thus tied to his stress of nationalism and Yiddish language. His objections to Reform and Conservative Judaism were that their reinterpretation of religion reduced reverence for Jewishness and the Jewish ideal, and were related to assimilation. Presumably the continuity of religious tradition and ritual insured group identification. He objected to organizations which he believed caused a decline in religiosity among their members, for example the Arbeiter Ring. Orthodoxy was therefore important to him, for it was central to the integrity of Jewish culture.

F, who did not remain Orthodox, did not experience religion as centrally as did H and I, who remained Orthodox. F's primary source of identification was Yiddish culture and the Arbeiter Ring, with its cultural and pro-labor functions. Her husband had been a tailor, and by her admission they were not comfortable financially. For example, they could not afford to belong to a *shul,* although her husband attended one. However, when she became Americanized, she said, she abandoned Orthodoxy. Economic factors also influenced her ability to be active in Jewish institutions in other ways: she stated that she could not be as active in the Arbeiter Ring as she would have liked to be, for she had to care for her family and work to help support it. Economic factors were also central in the case of G, who joined a Conservative congregation two years after immigration in order to serve as its teacher; the shift in this case from Orthodoxy to Conservatism was dictated by the need to earn a livelihood. His primary affiliation became the synagogue as a religious and social institution, but he also belonged to a mutual benefit society which was a loan society rather than a social organization.

To answer our earlier question as to how those who remained Orthodox differed from those who converted to Reform or Con-

servatism, it is possible that remaining Orthodox was related to both a well-defined concept of one's relation to Judaism as a religion and to a related notion of the importance of the integrity of one's Yiddish culture. The interplay of these factors with economic necessities and hopes was possibly determinant in the matter of religious observance.

Although economic factors may have worn down Orthodoxy, all four interviewees had maintained their belief in the importance of Yiddish language in keeping Jews together. F noted that the Workman's Circle operated a Yiddish school to train the second and third generations in Yiddish so that they could talk to their parents and grandparents. She noted that she considered Yiddish more important than Hebrew, because few could speak Hebrew. G agreed as to the function of Yiddish, as did I and H, the more Orthodox interviewees. I had spoken Yiddish all the time; consequently, he noted, his English was poor.

Neighborhood As a Source of Affiliation

Another source of Jewish affiliation for two of the four first-generation interviewees was neighborhood. H noted that Jews had difficutly getting housing and would purchase two to three family houses to rent to other Jews. For F, neighborhood was very important; neighbors were like an extended family, and crises were shared. She asserted that even when people moved, they found the same situation in the neighborhood to which they had moved. Geographical mobility did not alter ties, which might be evidenced in neighborhood groceries which were informal meeting places.

The first-generation interviewees who arrived in the first few decades of the twentieth century presented anything but a united version of the meaning of Jewish community. They differed in religious interest and organizational affiliation. Some were Zionists, other were not. Some repeated the experience of the communities in which they had lived in Eastern Europe; others did not. Within the first generation in the 'twenties, no community existed; rather, there were overlapping and distinct sub-communities of Jews. Their contemporaries, the children of the nineteenth century Eastern European immigrants, also represented a variety of sub-communities in the Jewish population.

German Jews

Having thus shown the variety of sub-communities in the Eastern European Jewish population of Providence, let us now examine the experience of the German Jews who lived in Providence. It is safe to say that there was a separation within the Jewish population in this period between Eastern European Jews on the one hand, and German Jews on the other, although this separation was being eroded by the Americanization and mobility of the second generation of the Eastern European Jews, some of whom even joined the Reform temple. Two of the first generation interviewees noted wariness of the German Jews: one noted his fear that their emphasis on Americanization would lead to the destruction of Jewish civilization; the other noted her resentment of the German's feeling of superiority based on education and greater Americanization, and their consequent mutual avoidance of each other's institutions.

Of the five second generation Americans interviewed, four discussed their relations with the Germans. A, who had emphasized neighborhood identification, saw the German-Eastern European rivalry as part of the rivalry between the North End and South Providence. Another interviewee denied any rivalry; he had joined a Reform temple and noted that any splits existed because of the factor of Americanization, with each group maintaining its own social circle. A third interviewee noted that the two groups hated each other, but that the country club had brought them together, emphasizing the argument that the difference between the two groups was narrowed by the upward mobility of the second generation Eastern European Jews. One interviewee who spoke most about this matter assigned as the reason for the difference between the two groups a discrepancy in attitudes toward community. Some first and second-generation Eastern European Jews were Zionistic, while Germans were "super-Americans" who were opposed to ethnic identification and Zionism.

An interview with a third generation German Jew who was a contemporary of the other Jews interviewed tended to reinforce the last interpretation. Her primary affiliations in the period were the Reform temple. The temple was a place of religious activity and a place to go for social activity with other German Jews. She noted that mutual benefit societies had been important in her grandparents'

generation, but not in her own. Yiddish was not of interest to her. She had spoken English, and her grandparents had insisted that she learn German. She herself noted the rift between the Eastern European Jews and the German Jews, which she asserted prevented the existence of a "homogeneous" Jewish community. She attributed the difference between the two groups to the greater Americanization of the German Jews: the Eastern European Jews tended to be Orthodox, while the Germans were Reform; the former were Zionist, while the latter looked upon America as their haven and were interested in not being too different from their fellow Americans; the former spoke Yiddish, while the latter spoke English. In sum, she associated Reform Judaism with certain mores which were more American than European and, it is implied, Orthodoxy with mores which were European. Judaism meant for her the temple, her friends, and her source of identification. She did not feel the threat of assimilation that the Yiddish culturalists did. It is obvious that, wide as was the range of experience of the Eastern European Jews in Providence, there was still disagreement between them and the German Jews over concepts of community.

The 'Twenties and 'Thirties

These disagreements existed in the 'twenties and 'thirties, while at the same time certain factors operated to reduce them. Since J's analysis is perceptive, I shall follow it. The reasons for the reduction of the gap between the German Jews and the Russian Jews relate to the Americanization of the first generation and the second generation and the increasing socioeconomic status from generation to generation. The trend away from Orthodoxy, the trend towards speaking of English, and the increasing prosperity of all the Jews brought the two groups together. Germans and Russians became acquainted in business and in social institutions. They were joined in fund-raising campaigns for such things as the Jewish Community Center, and as youths they were joined in the Young Men's Hebrew Association (YMHA). The one issue which operated to divide them, which could not be bridged by the above factors, was Zionism, and to the extent to which Eastern European Jews varied in income and in degree of Americanization, there still existed reasons for the lack of unity in Providence among the Jews in the period.

The community remained diverse and disorganized, but in the

'twenties some Jews were disgruntled with disorganization in regard to social service and attempted to unite the community by imposing a central structure which would federate Jewish organizations. These attempts failed in the 'twenties, but continued in the 'thirties when even a *kehillah* structure was considered. The latter was a bone of contention between its supporters and the more Americanized Jews, who considered it a ghetto structure. Zionism was also a bone of contention between the various supporters of community organiztion. One of the interviewees talked about this problem and noted that, in the absence of organization, a small group of wealthy and influential Jews formed an interlocking directorate of Jewish philanthropic institutions so that they could be coordinated. This informal organization of philanthropies continued until the organization of the General Jewish Committee, established not only to federate organizations, but also to engage in community planning. The latter was a controversial aspect of the new organization, perhaps because the power entailed might abridge individual interests, given the diversity of opinion as to what was important to a Jewish community among the Providence Jews. It is also possible that a structure with the power to plan might have been thought to resemble the *kehillah,* even though planning was done along rational, not traditional modes. This interviewee noted that the General Jewish Committee did not engage in community planning as much as he had hoped it would. In essence, it remains a federation of associations, although it also serves the important function of being spokesman for the community.

The attempt to create community out of the heterogeneity which characterized the Providence Jews in the 'twenties and 'thirties was a limited one, for the Eastern European communal structure was neither possible or even desirable because of the varying concepts of Jewish community among the population. These concepts were formed by amalgamations of European experience with the American setting, and as has been seen their overwhelming characteristic was variety. The new community which all could agree on, however, was based on location of residence in America, specifically Providence, and the need and desire to coordinate the operations of Jewish philanthropic and public service institutions to increase efficiency in use of resources, and the need to have a spokesman for the community in times of external threat or convergence of inter-

ests. The attempt by the Eastern European Jews to reestablish their community life in America as they had known it in Europe was but a passing phase in the history of Jewish community life.

NOTES

[1]Will Herberg, *Protestant, Catholic, Jew* (New York, 1960), pp. 22-23 and *passim.*

[2]Arthur A. Goren, *New York Jews and the Quest for Community: The Kehillah Experiment,* 1908-1922 (New York, 1970), p. 13.

[3]*Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes,* III (May, 1962), 200.

[4]Goren, *op. cit.,* pp. 7-9.

[5]*Ibid.,* pp. 11-12.

[6]*Ibid.,* pp. 1-2.

[7]*RIJHN, II* (June, 1956), 21-84.

[8]Herberg, *op. cit.,* pp. 9-11.

[9]*Ibid.,* pp. 17-19, 22-23 and Sidney Goldstein, *Jewish Americans: Three Generations in a Jewish Community* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, C1968), pp. 8-9.

[10]Cf. John Madge, *The Tools of Social Science: An analytical Description of Social Techniques* (New York, 1965) and Leon Festeinger and Daniel Katz, eds., *Research Methods in the Behavioral Sciences* (New York, C1953).

[11]Goldstein, *op. cit.,* p. 82.

[12]*Ibid.,* p. 84.

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